

"From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married. Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come. When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound. So why call her bad? From her, kings are born. From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all. O Nanak, only the True Lord is without a woman. That mouth which praises the Lord continually is blessed and beautiful. O Nanak, those faces shall be radiant in the Court of the True Lord." (SGGSJ, p.473)

Service as a Way of Life

Sikh dharma is a way of achieving a connection with God by serving humanity from the heart. This extends to everything Sikhs do, including helping with a charity or doing some voluntary work. Sikhs are unique in providing shelter and food to everyone as an integral part of their spiritual tradition at their places of worship, the Gurdwaras. Many Gurdwaras in India feed 100,000 people a day, which is approximately 4 million people per year.

Also Bhai Ghanaya, a famous Sikh saint, is the founder of the world's first 'Red Cross' called Sevapanthis which administered water and medicine to both friend and foe on the battlefields.

"You shall find peace doing Seva, selfless service without reward" (SGGSJ, p.25)

"Whoever has good destiny inscribed on his forehead, applies himself to Seva, selfless service without reward" (SGGSJ, p.1142)

Not Averse to Wealth Creation

Sikh dharma does not see wealth or family as a hindrance to spiritual practice. Sikhs are encouraged to live and contribute to society and apply a spiritual consciousness to everything they do. This is in contrast to the asceticism and rejection of worldly life rooted in the other Indian spiritual traditions including Hindu, Buddhist and Jain dharma's.

"Such a servant understands everything. Amidst all, his soul is unattached. Such is the way, O Nanak, of the Lord's servant." (SGGSJ, p.275)

"While laughing, playing, dressing and eating, he is liberated." (SGGSJ, p.522)

"He sleeps, wakes, rises up and sits down without anxiety; he laughs and cries without anxiety. Says Nanak, she who has cheated the world - that Maya is cheated by the humble servant of the Lord." (SGGSJ, p.1217)

"The Gurmukh laughs, and the Gurmukh cries. Whatever the Gurmukh does, is devotional worship. Whoever becomes Gurmukh contemplates the Lord. The Gurmukh, O Nanak, crosses over to the other shore." (SGGSJ, p.1422)

"Why do you tear apart your fine clothes, and take to wearing a rough blanket? O Nanak, even sitting in your own home, you can meet the Lord, if your mind is in the right place." (SGGSJ, p.1383)

Honourable History

Sikhs have an amazing and honourable 500 year story of survival, service and love. This is in contrast to many of the major world religions which have forcefully converted people, murdered, raped and looted all in the name of their religion.

Hand-in-Hand with Science

Sikh dharma has never had a problem with modern science and indeed both are considered to be useful tools to enable humans to understand Truth. Science deals with the physical world whereas spirituality deals with the non-physical world.

What Makes Sikh Dharma Unique?



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Introduction

Sikh dharma is truly a spiritual tradition for the modern age. It has many uniquely revealed truths and spiritual tools which have been given to help progress humanity to a higher level of consciousness.

The World's Only Multi Faith Scripture

The Sikh scripture, the Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (SGGSJ), is the world's only multi faith scripture which includes the work from saints of many different religions, spiritual traditions and social status. It is also one of the only scriptures to have been written and authenticated by the authors themselves.

The World's First Interfaith Institutions

Sikh spiritual institutions such as the Golden Temple were the world's first interfaith centres where people from all walks of life including Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Yogis and Sikhs were freely welcomed to worship God in their own way.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji - A Universal Teacher of Humanity

The 1st Sikh Master, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, is the only Prophet or Messiah to be revered by such a wide variety of religious groups including Buddhists as Nanak Lama, Muslims as Hadhrat Baba Nanak, and Hindus, Yogis and Sikhs as Guru Nanak.

Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji - Protector of the "Freedom of Religion"

The 9th Sikh Master, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, is the only Prophet or Messiah to give his life for the right of 'Freedom of Religion' for Hindu dharma, which was a faith other than his own. The giving of his life was a universal statement that all of humanity should be free to practice whatever faith they wish, without prejudice.

Emphasis on Spiritual Experience

Sikhs do not merely believe in God. Sikhs experience the oneness of God directly and feel God in everything they do. Sikh dharma is a purely experiential way of life.

"Along this path to our Husband Lord, we climb the steps of the ladder, and come to merge with Him." (SGGSJ, p.7)

"As metal merges with metal, those who chant the Praises of the Lord are absorbed into the Praiseworthy Lord." (SGGSJ, p.18)

"By personally experiencing the Personality of the Guru, one's own personality is uplifted, and one's light merges into the Light." (SGGSJ, p.27)

Sikh dharma is not Dogmatic

The Sikh Scripture is true "Religion of Self" where everyone has a personal relationship with God. It does not place emphasis on any of the following: Priestly class, pilgrimage, praying in a particular direction, praying on a particular day, fasting, meaningless rituals, idol worship, superstition, body mutilation, asceticism or celibacy.

Unity of God

Sikh dharma supports the idea of the unity of God i.e. Raam, Allah, Jehovah and Vaheguru are the same supreme entity by different names.

"The Muslim God Allah and the Hindu God Paarbrahm are one and the same." (SGGSJ, p.897)

"O Allah, O Raam, I live by Your Name." (SGGSJ, p.1349)

Unity of Humanity

Sikh dharma supports the idea of the oneness of humanity which cuts across religion, race, caste, nationality, sexual orientation, culture and gender. There are no chosen people of God or specific religious group which have reservations in 'heaven'.

"There is only one breath; all are made of the same clay; the light within all is the same." (SGGSJ, p.96)

"The clay is one, but it has taken many forms; I recognize the One Lord within them all." (SGGSJ, p.480)

"He bestowed His Grace on Adam, the father of mankind" (SGGSJ, p.1161)

"They are spiritual heroes, of noble birth, who vibrate upon the Lord God. The Kh'shatriyas, the Brahmins, the low-caste Soodras, the Vaisha workers and the outcast pariahs are all saved, meditating on the Lord."

Nanak is the dust of the feet of those who know his God." (SGGSJ, p.300)

"Recognize the Lord's Light within all, and do not consider social class or status; there are no classes or castes in the world hereafter." (SGGSJ, p.349)

Gender Equality

Sikh dharma started the movement of complete Gender Equality 500 years ago. The dharma had women bishops in the 15th Century! Sikh women have also led Sikh armies and have held top positions in all aspects of life. In Sikh dharma, anything a man can do, a woman can do.

The light of God sits equally within both men and women:

"In the earth and in the sky, I do not see any second. Among all the women and the men, His Light is shining. ||3|| In the lamps of the sun and the moon, I see His Light. Dwelling among all is my ever-youthful Beloved. ||4|| In His Mercy, He attuned my consciousness to the Lord." (SGGSJ, p.223)

Both men and women are described as beautiful soul brides of God:

"Her Husband Lord is Beautiful; His Body is forever fresh and new. The True One does not die, and shall not go. He continually enjoys His happy soul-bride; He casts His Gracious Glance of Truth upon her, and she abides in His Will. ||4|| The bride braids her hair with Truth; her clothes are decorated with His Love. Like the essence of sandalwood, He permeates her consciousness, and the Temple of the Tenth Gate is opened. The lamp of the Shabad is lit, and the Name of the Lord is her necklace. ||5|| She is the most beautiful among women; upon her forehead she wears the Jewel of the Lord's Love. Her glory and her wisdom are magnificent; her love for the Infinite Lord is True. Other than her Beloved Lord, she knows no man. She enshrines love for the True Guru." (SGGSJ, p.54)

A challenge to men to accept women as equals and as being inherently good. This is the direct opposite view held by the other Indian dharmas with their focus on asceticism and shunning of women: