

## A CALL TO THE KHALSA

Appeal to the Sikhs to Be Loyal to India, their Motherland – Past Sacrifices and Triumphs of the Khalsa Recalled – Teachings of Sri Guru Govind Singh Exalted.

VANDE MATARAM !

KHALSA

“He whose soul no slavery fills,  
He who rides the flery steed;  
And to righteous, oppression kills;  
He is of the Khalasa,  
He alone, and none but he.”

- Guru Govind Singh.

“The insatiable Goddess of Duty,” said he, “demands a bloody sacrifice! Is there any one amongst you who will tear his heart out and pour forth his blood instantaneously to propitiate this hungry Goddess?” At this the surging multitude sunk into death-dumb silence!

It was in the year of 1698 A. D. that one of those historical moments which make or unmake an epoch dawned its eventful light on the scenes of Anandpur. There were called the innumerable disciples of the great Guru and from far and near, Punjab had sent her hundreds and hundreds of stalwart hearts and fiery souls to wait on the pleasure of their youthful leader. Anandpur—the city of Joy—had extended her welcoming hands and fragrant flowers and smiling fields, engaging walks and golden tents, had invested the whole scene with the awe and beauty of a fairyland. At last the auspicious day dawned, and the sea of human mass began to move and converge at the appointed place. Thousands of the faithful disciples, painting different pictures

of the probabilities of the coming event before their mind's eye stood on the the tiptoe of expectation. Suddenly configure—young and commanding stalwart rushed forth from the central tent, and jumped upon the platform with lightning-like rapidity. From his eyes beamed a noble flash, round his face shone a resplendent halo and in his hand bristled a sharp, naked, dazzling sword!

At this sudden emergence of the commander the infinite multitude, in spell-bound awe, stood hanging on the lips of the young conjurer. The well-known figure raised aloft the dazzling sword, and pointing to its burning flame, in tones irresistible and deep began to let his disciples know his will and pleasure. His lips moved and like the rumblings of the volcano, came out the deep, distinct words.

“I want to soak this sword into the blood of man. The insatiable Goddess of Duty demands a bloody sacrifice ! Is there any one amongst you who will tear his heart out, and pour for the his blood instantaneously to propitiate this hungry Goddess?” At this the surging multitude sunk into death-dumb silence.

A moment's calm and stood forth a man out of the thousands and offered himself as a candidate ready to be slaughtered by the Guru's sword as a victim, on the altar of the hungry Goddess if that would procure the redemption of his nation. He was at once taken to the central tent a moment passed and the terror struck eye of the multitude witnessed a stream of blood rushing forth from the tent-the first sacrifice was offered –and lo ! The commanding figure jumps back again from the tent to the platform and raising aloft the oozing and red sword. “I want to soak this sword into the blood of man,” said he, “the insatiable Goddess of Duty demands a sacrifice. Is there amongst you a second one who is ready to pour forth his blood to propitiate this Kali-the Terrible ? If so let him stand up !”

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And from the faithful many a second one did stand up. He too was taken into the tent a moment passed a bloody stream flowed out of the tent and the thirsty commander again rushed to the platform again waved the terrible sword again demanded a victim and again found his disciples *not* wanting though he repeated thos bloody ordeal five times in succession.

These five victims were the first khalasa and the young godhead, that blood-thirsty commander, was our hero-Shri Guru Goving Singh !

Those alone who not only believe in the truth of a principle but are ready nay greedy, to catch at the first opportunity of offering their breasts to be thrust in by a pointed steel so that the uncompromising Goddess of Duty might be propitiated-they alone are the khalasa-the liberated-the chosen. To test and to choose such martyr spirits from amongst his disciples this fiery ordeal was gone through, and those who passed triumphantly through it were taken by the Guru in the tent one by one, each time killing a goat instead, without letting the rest know of this substitution, and when the fifth martyr was chosen the Guru asked all of them to come out, and declared these as the first khalasa-the liberated. These five proved that the Bharat race was not dead, that the inherent powers of the Mother were, only slumbering and that there were in the nations heart potentialities, which if but a master voice can evoke them out, would flame forth to

avenge the national injuries, to redeem the national honor. These five were the five elements out of which the great Guru wanted to evoke a nation. So on the first of Balsakh in Samvat, 1756 (1699 A.D.), the Guru held a great Durbar at Kesgah. It was an imposing scene. The Guru dressed in a right royal dress, sat on his throne, and round him he seated the chosen five. He dressed them with his own hands in suits as gleaming as the beams of their eyes and declared that as the birth of the great Khalasa, the protector of the native faith, the liberator of the native soil. To consecrate this new-born strength he brought water with his own hand from the river flowing by in an iron pan, placed the pan in the midst of the assembly and began to stir it with the point of his own khanda—the sword given to him by the Divine hand itself.

Unsurpassed is the magic of great minds. What willpower he transmitted and through what channel from his mind to that water-in-the-iron-pan, none can imagine. Mysterious accents fell from his lips the Japji and Japsahib, all the while the divine conjurer went on stirring the water. It was not the water that he stirred, but it was the latent energies of the Hindu race that he stirred and roused and evoked. Then he took the water in his hand, ordered the chosen five to stand by and sprinkling that cooling drop on them, *touched* their eyes with mystic concentration of look—and behold! The eyes of the whole race were *opened*, for within a decade of this historical Touch the name of the Hindoos was raised aloft, the battle of freedom begun and the crowns quaked and thrones trembled as soon as the Guru touched the eyes of his Sikhs with that water in his hand. Ah, the very name of the initiation was Amrita—the nectar of *immortality*!

It was not only the physical man who drank the water or immortality, but the moral man and the political man too was touched by the magic hand of the Guru. He proclaimed a great and glorious republic, based on the eternal verities of Unity of God and brotherhood of man. All the demoralizing iniquities that had crept into society were swept off and the equality of man was restored. The Sikhs of the Guru are one-equal and free. They all belong to the same caste—the caste of warriors warring incessantly for the triumph of truth, for the glory of God and for the liberation of man. Thence forward every man who drinks this Amrita ceases to be a coward and becomes a “singh”—a lion. To remind them of their divine mission warring incessantly for the extirpation of injustice and oppression they are underperpetual vow and Sanyas. The Sikhs must not shave, the “lion” cannot shave his mane. They must wear round their arms the symbol of their unfulfilled and ever to be fulfilled vow—the Kara not of gold, nor of silver, but of iron. In

order that in the fight of Duty not one moment should find then lax; they must have their loins ever girded up with the athletic kacch and he is no khalasa who is found without a sword. You can deprive a Sikh of his life but you cannot deprive him of his sword-he clutches at it with such a grip that though his life goes away the sword of the Sikh warrior still remains indissolubly fixed in his fist. These are the famous "*Punch ka karas.*" The five k's-the kesh, kangha, kaccha and kara and kripan. So transparent in their simplicity, so poetic in their significance, so appealing in their tradition are these symbols, that instead of compromising the ideal they go to beautify its abstraction by investing it with a poetical concreteness. All those who test this order of immortality are "Bhais" brothers-have got the same father, the same mother, the same place of birth-Patna. They partake of the prasad out of the same bowl, they dress in the same uniform they all are the servants of the same Akal purukh-the Immortal One, the Timeless Being. Great was Plato when he wrote his ideal "Republic," great was Lyeurgus when he translated his military ideal into the gigantic fact of a Spartan State but greater by far is the republic of this great Indian. This khalasa of our Guru Govind Singh. A great commonwealth, rejecting the ignorance of the human nature of the first and the physical excess of the latter, so beautifully balanced in its philosophical and practical aspects that philanthropy ceases to be weak and becomes as tender as a philanthropic nurse.

Such was the birth of the great Khalasa. The Guru himself tells us in his autobiography that he was sent to this earth to the "glory of God and to the liberation of man," by extirpating the wicked and the tyrannical. Before death he was asked who was his successor. He took up the Granth, enthroned it and declared that no human being can succeed him as a leader of the Khalasa, but the Khalasa was to be led and commanded and ruled by the *principle* alone. "Whenever," said the dying Guru, "five of any disciples assemble, there know me to be present."

"My disciples !" O Guru, where are those "my disciples ?" To be your disciples, to be your Sikhs is to be a lion, a singh, is to tolerate no oppression, is to be a lifelong warrior-not to prostitute the sword in the furtherance of *Wrong*, but to consecrate it by the propagation of *Virtue*. When, oh when, shall we find such "my Sikhs" to the number of five-for then our Guru will be present amongst us, and when again Guru Govind is present amongst us, good God ! then the woe and the degradation and the downfall of our race and soil is gone forever. Indeed such five men as he breathed into life on that first day of Baisakh are sufficient to ennoble a whole nation.

Over the whole forest the jackels of famine and tyranny and treachery are stalking victorious- where is the singh . . . . point of his own khanda-the sword given to him by the Divine hand itself.

For Punjab alone the Great Guru and his sons and followers poured forth their blood in unmeasured quantities-and now the whole body of the motherland from Hymalayas to Cape Comorin is dying, her life blood sucked off. Punjab, where every stone has a tale of some Sikh martyrdom to tell; Bengal, where Guru Tegbahadur and Nanak lived and preached; the Deccan where the ashes of the mighty dead are treasured in by the Godavari, are groaning under the death disease. Patna, the very birthplace of the Khalasa is a weeping slave and Anandpur, the city of joy is buried under the heap of treachery and shame. The Guru told the Brahmins that to repeat the prayers is no Dharma, but to act the prayers is the real Dharma. Will he not hurt the same lance at us when he sees us repeating his prayers like parrots-unconcerned amidst the wallings and weepings of three hundred millions-as if that was a music keeping tune of our Japjis and Shabads. The sword which he gave to protect Dharma and Desh-has not that very sword traded on treachery ?

A Sikh was hailed as a patriot by the motherland at home and as a hero by the world abroad. But, Oh shame ! Now Sikh has become a nickname for treachery at home; a synonym for a laborer or a kooli on the coasts of both the Pacific and the Atlantic.

But this cannot last long. The Guru will not leave us. Even as he said the sparrows shall kill the hawks. The trumpet call of duty is sounded and it is never too late to mend.

Therefore, awake, oh Khalasa arise, oh Khalasa and never again shall we to fallen !

Sat-Shri-Akal !!!