

GURU GOBIND SINGH

Difficulties Which the Guru Faced

Guru Gobind Singh was fired with zeal to endeavour for the fulfillment of his mission. But his path was beset with many impediments. When Guru Tegh Bahadur bequeathed to his son, the defense of Dharma (Righteousness), the extirpation of its enemies and the firing of hearts with patriotic fervour Guru Gobind Singh was only nine. But he enshrined this legacy in his heart. He had no experience but of the inspiring self-sacrifice of his father made for Righteousness. The task before him was stupendous, he had no resources, no estate, no wealth, only a handful of Sikhs to give offerings, just enough for bare sustenance. Facing him was the formidable force of Islam whose sway stretched from the shores of the Indian Ocean to the peaks of Himalayas and touching the boundary of Burma on the east.

Destiny had pitted a penniless recluse (fakir) lodged in a corner of the vast country against this redoubtable Islamic empire, finding him most suitable for this task. It was imperative for a fighter of Guru Gobind Singh's caliber to carry out the loving command of his father. What could he do in the face of the armed might of a pitiless and savage tyrant like Aurangzeb? An unfledged novice of nine pitted against a crafty and powerful potentate. Even then he decided to free Hindus from the Muslim yoke and rid India of this oppressive Muslim rule. *He was not an enemy of Islam nor had he anything to gain by such animosity.* He was against such Muslims who, under the garb of Islam, were perpetrating ungodly acts of cruelty and were Muslims in name only. He was the enemy of these savage and cruel butchers who regarded the shedding of blood of non-Muslims and denigration of their religions as holy acts.

Guru Gobind Singh resolved to oust such people. But the fulfillment of this mission seemed well nigh impossible. The ill was diagnosed and the medicine prescribed, but it was very difficult to obtain. He however, procured it at last. But how this Vaid Gobinda went about administering this medicine, with what wisdom and what success, needs a detailed analysis to be fully understood.

The very exercise undertaking this task was beset with innumerable impediments and problems. He was a Youngman just past childhood. His kith and kin were hostile to him owing to his succession to Guruship. The Sikhs were suspect in the eyes of the Government of the times. But he was endowed with a heart which scoffed at all troubles, was undaunted by impediments and hardships, unperturbed by problems and uncowed by any grief. A man blessed with such a heart had not taken birth in India (among Hindus) for thousands of years. This peerless heart was inspiring him. But there was no material to work upon.

He wanted to shield his people from the insolent and tyrannical hand of Aurangzeb. He wanted to free his country and Hindu Dharma from the clutches of the corrupt and cruel administration. But he found his countrymen lacking in everything. They were spineless, cowardly, hypocritical, busy in harming and accusing one another, sans unity, determination and sense of honour. There was nothing to bring them together and nothing in them to bind them to a common cause. Disgrace and decline was in evidence everywhere. The Hindus were beset with extreme selfishness. There was no one to lend an ear to their complaints and to succour them. The Kashatrias had lost their valour, the Brahmins their all after effacing others. The Hindu had lost his self-respect, honour and possessions. There was no sense of security. They faced perpetual danger.

Such was the general state of affairs, when Guru Gobind Singh was brimming over with zeal for nationalism and defense of Dharma. He was determined to restore the honour of the people, allay their sufferings and free them from tyranny. He was also conscious of his inexperience, destitution and utter lack of help of any kind from any quarter. We can well imagine his predicament. His patriotic fervour boiling over contrasted with the chilling cowardice and utter despondency of the people. But he was endowed with a heart, undaunted by obstacles, undeterred by hardships, uncowed by the hopelessness of the situation, unawed by the stupendous might of the Mughals. He viewed the situation in everything, fallen in all aspects. He found certain questions nagging his mind and demanding attention and solutions. Only after resolving them could the Hindus be saved.