

Who are Sikhs?

Sunday 3rd of July 2005 Manvir Singh Khalsa - Guest Columnist (KP)

I am a Sikh!

I am born and brought up in this county.

The turban and unshorn hair are part of the Sikh uniform.

No one believes me.

They think I am part of the Taliban.

They think I am an Arab.

They think I am supporting terrorism.

I keep telling everybody:

"No! I am a Sikh!

Sikhs are not part of the Taliban.

Sikhs are not Muslims.

Sikhs are not Arabs."

"Are you part of Islam" people ask?

"Are you an offshoot of Hinduism" others say.

"I have never heard of Sikhs" says another.

**॥ ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥ ਅਲਹ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਪਰਾਨ ॥੪॥**

I am not a Hindu, nor am I a Muslim. My body and breath of life belong to Allah - to Raam - the God of both. ||4||" (Ang 1136)

Sikhs are a distinct people.

Sikhs are a distinct nation.

Sikhi is a distinct religion of peace, love and equality for whole humanity.

Sikhs worship the One Supreme Truth, the One Ocean of Mercy, the One Creator Lord.

Sikhs do not keep fasts, go to pilgrimages or pray to idols.

Sikhs follow three principles of constantly remembering the Lord, living and working honestly, and sharing with others.

Racists say "Get the rag off your head!"

Ignorant people say: "Why do wear that hat?"

Misguided Sikhs say, "Turban or no Turban what does it matter. Sikhs should move with the times and learn to integrate with society."

"I think you are mistaken", I say.

"My turban is not a hat.

My turban is not a mere piece of cloth.

My turban is a gift which I cannot discard."

**॥ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਖਾਸ ॥ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੇ ਹੋ ਕਰੋ ਨੀਵਾਸ**

The Khalsa is my distinct image. Within the Khalsa I reside." (Guru Gobind Singh Ji)

I explain,

"My turban is a crown blessed upon my head by my Father, Guru Gobind Singh Ji."

"My turban is a crown of grace, dignity and honour."

"My turban is a crown which protects my head, keeps my hair tidy and is the image of my Father."

"It's backward to keep your hair!" says one person.

"What is the point of cutting your nails and keeping your hair" says the cunning person.

"There is no significance in today's world of unshorn hair," says the Sikh who has been led astray.

**॥ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਮਾਰੈ ਅੰਤਰਜਾਮੀ ॥ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਮਾਰੈ ਆਵੈ ਕਾਮੀ ॥ ਰੋਮਿ ਰੋਮਿ ਰਵਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੂਰੈ  
ਕੀਨੋ ਦਾਨੁ ॥੧॥**

The Naam, the Power of the Lord's Name, is the Inner-knower of my heart. The Naam is so useful to me. The Lord's Name permeates each and every hair of mine. The Perfect True Guru has given me this gift. ||1||" (Ang 1144)

Defending my identity and religion I say:

"You are mistaken dear friend".

"My hair is not useless.

My hair is a gift, a tool, and a technology bestowed upon by body by the Creator Lord.

Each and every hair on my body has a practical and spiritual function.

Each and every hair on my body is like electric wires, which vibrate and pick up spiritual energy.

Each and every hair on my body vibrates the energy, the power and spiritual force of meditating on the Lord.

The hair on top of my head protects my skull and brain.

The hair above my eyes prevents sweat and water going into my eyes.

The hair on my body insulates my body, keeping me warm in the cold, and cool in the heat.

The hair under my armpits prevents friction and irritation when moving my arms.

My nails are dead material, which are cut to be hygienic, or they would snap off by themselves gradually.

My nails are cut to be clean and tidy, and my hair is combed twice daily to remove dead hair to be tidy.

My nails are not part of the Sikh uniform.

"I see! That is amazing" says one person.

"Fair enough, I am sorry" says the cunning person.

"We have beautiful religion, a great gift given to us and we are so lucky to be blessed with such a technology and honour"

says the Sikh who was led astray.

Don't hide your faith and identity. Share it with the world.

Don't be ashamed of who you truly are, walk with your head held high.

Remember brothers and sisters your image is the manifestation of Guru Gobind Singh Singh Ji & Mata Sahib Kaur.

Be inspired and inspire others.

Manvir Singh Khalsa can be reached at [manvir\\_singh\\_khalsa@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:manvir_singh_khalsa@yahoo.co.uk)

<http://www.panthic.org/news/129/ARTICLE/1494/2005-07-03.html>