

# The story of the Blessed Five

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of Sikh's, called together a huge crowd of Sikhs to join him for a meeting on Vaisakhi Day, in 1699. When all were expecting to hear words of comfort from the lips of their Guru, they were surprised to see him with a drawn sword in his hand, announcing: "**I want a head.**"



There was a big silence, but the Guru went on repeating his demand. Twice more the Guru issued his invitation to the crowd.

Then one man came forward. Guru Gobind Singh took him into his tent. After a while he came out by himself and in his hand was a sword covered in blood! The crowd gasped and started to disperse.

Then the Guru asked again and amazingly another man stepped forward and went into the tent with the Guru. Yet again the Guru came out of the tent alone, with blood on his sword. The Guru asked for another volunteer, and another man stepped forward and went into the tent similarly followed by a fourth. Finally when a fifth man stepped forward and went into the tent with the Guru, the crowd wondered how many more men must die. But this time to everyone's joy, the Guru came out of the tent with his sword and the five men walking behind him, still alive!



'This was a test,' the Guru explained, 'to see who has faith in their Guru'. After dressing the five in handsome clothes, the Guru declared that they were the "**Panj Piaras**" or his "**Five Beloved**". Coming from different Hindu castes (social ranks), they became the first members of the new "Khalsa Order" and he gave them the last name of "Singh" while the women were called "Kaur" meaning "princess".

The Guru then put water in a steel bowl to which Mata Sundri, his wife, adding some sugar. While saying his prayers he stirred the water (amrit) with a short steel sword (symbolizing strength) and sprinkled it over the five in a simple initiation. The purpose of adding sugar to the water while stirring with a sword is to remind the Khalsa that strength must always be balanced by a sweetness of temperament. The Guru then asked the Five Beloved's to now initiate him in the same way as he had done, so that he too could become a member of the Khalsa Panth, with the words: "The Khalsa is the Guru, the Guru is the Khalsa".

