THE NOTION OF MARTYRDOM IN SIKHISM

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ABSTRACT
Martyrs are source of inspiration and symbol of heroism, courage and extreme devotion in every religious tradition. They play influential role in deciding the fate of their communities. Their death for religious cause encourages the future generation to fight for religious cause. Martyrdom is a central concept in Sikhism. In Sikhism, martyrdom is the culmination of one’s devotion and fulfilment of socio-religious obligations. A true Sikh accepts death for the sake of religion as a divine blessing and divine command of the Supreme Being. He is always ready to die for upholding the eternal message of Sikh Gurus. In Sikh history, there are countless martyrs, who sacrificed their life in their struggle against foreign invaders and barbaric Mughal rulers. The Sikh martyrs had opposed the political absolutism, religious fundamentalism and violation of human rights. Sikh Gurus laid down the supreme sacrifices for the sake of victims of political tyranny and religious bigotry and they suffered unendurable persecution. They fought for religion and liberation of vulnerable, demoralized people, suffer death in their holy struggle against political oppressors, and choose death at the time when they were asked to choose between life and death.

KEYWORDS: source, courage, Sikhism.

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