

## Sikh Ceremonies



### The Sikh Ceremonies

All the Sikh ceremonies like birth, baptism, marriage and death are simple, inexpensive and have a religious tone. They are held in the presence of *Guru Granth Sahib* and include *Kirtan*, the singing of appropriate hymns for the occasion, saying of *Ardas* - formal prayer, and the distribution of *Karah Parshad*, sacred food, to the congregation. The baptism ceremony called *Amrit*, is the most important of all Sikh ceremonies.

- The Naming Ceremony
- Turban Tying (Dastar Bandhi)
- Baptism (Amrit Sanskar)
- The Sikh Marriage
- The Death Ceremony

Ceremony means observance of formalities on some solemn occasion or performance of religious rites. It is a formal act to mark the sacredness of an occasion. The Sikhs call the ceremony as "Samagam." The ceremony is thanks giving act and there is always an aim to pray to God for His Grace. According to Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the ceremonies are useless if the dirt of ego is not cleansed from the hearts (495).



Sikhism believes in true and active Bhakti and not outer or ceremonial Bhakti. The ritualism and formalism is an outer guise and not true devotion to God. Some people think that God can be attained by performing ritualism and rites. According to Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Burnt are those rites and formalities that make me forgetting my Beloved?

There are very few recognized ceremonies in Sikhism. The Sikh ceremonies mark the solemnity of religious occasions which are not of ritualistic nature. The Sikhs give more importance to the cultivation of moral values and spiritual development.

Sikhism is against blind rituals, ceremonies, customs or traditions. Some of the ceremonies are celebrated by the Sikhs in one or the other form. The good sign is that almost all the Sikh ceremonies are to take place in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. After performance of the ceremonies, *Karah Parsad* and *Guru Ka Langar* are served.

The Sikhs have disciplinary outfit in the form of Amrit ceremony. The Sikhs believe that religion is not a matter of individual concern. There is need of uniform discipline to spread religious teachings. Teja Singh writes, "As is God, so is the Guru and as is the Guru, so must be the follower" The Guru gifted the Sikhs with five articles of faith. So it is must for the Sikhs to wear them.

The Sikh religion is very simple. It does not believe in blind dogmas. It is so simple a religion that it believes in praying and chanting the praises of God in a simple way.

