In the process of development of human civilization we sometimes see there is decline of 'dharma' (righteousness). Some power greedy peoples try to amass wealth and rule through unfair means, which sows the seeds of 'adharma'. But, it is also a fact that good and evil always co-exist in the universe. For most of the time, between good and evil, there is balance, a harmony as it were, due to the influence of sages and wise teachers. But, there are moments in the world history, in the different eпоche or yugas, when this balancing process is disturbed. There is concentration of evil in a person or group of persons. The common masses, the sages and great teachers, are slighted, persecuted and rendered powerless to do good. All other means of restoring the balance and harmony of the universe fails when there is decline of dharma in a particular society or in the world as a whole and there is confusion and chaos everywhere, then someone with the grace of Almighty God stood up with a sword to save 'dharma' is known as "Dharmayudh".

According to Indian tradition, four are the purusharthas i.e. the goal or ideals of human life which are- Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth, material prosperity), Kama (joy of love), and Moksha (final bestitude in perfect freedom from bonds of misery). Moksha (salvation) is called 'Parama Purusartha', the highest ideal of humanity. Dharma is the fundamental means to attend the other three goals. Hence, it is accepted by the wise as the first and foremost of all the purusarthas. It is the path of righteous conduct that leads man to worldly prosperity (eartha and kama) as well as Moksha (final bestitude).---1. But, majority of men in their ignorance, forget the first and the last, and run after worldly pleasure, resorting to unrighteous means. As a result they suffer all through life. Misery is the inevitable result of adharma. No doubt the common masses sometimes do unrighteous acts but when the rulers themselves for the
fulfillment of other two virtues (earth and kama) try to achieve them by way of unrighteous means, they are called 'adharmies or tyrants.' Those who fought for dharma (righteousness) are called saint-soldiers. As Lord Krishana says to Arjuna:

"Lucky are soldiers who fought in such a war, for them it is an easy entry into heaven".-------2

"But if you persist in ignoring dharma, your dignity and sva-dharma are lost, and you expose yourself to shame".-------3

"Your shame will never end. Shame is worse than death to a man of honour."-------4

Quran and Hadith both have also attached great importance to jihad. What is jihad? Jihad means struggle, to struggle one’s utmost. It must be appreciated at the outset that this word is used for non-violent struggle as opposed to violent struggle. One clear proof of this is the verse of the Quran (25: 52) which says: Perform jihad with this (i.e. the words of the Quran) most strenuously. In the light of this verse of the Quron, jihad in actual fact is another name for peaceful activism or non-violent activism. Where qital is violent activism, jihad is non-violent activism.-------5

Guru Nanak Dev says:

"He who dedicates himself to the service of others in the world, he gets a seat of honour in the Lord’s court."-----------6

"They who remembered not 'Rama', in their time, are now accepted not even if they short 'Allah'.
Some warriors return to their homes and from them others ask about the welfare of their kins (on the battle-field). Yea, in the lot of some it is so writ, that (with the spouses gone) they will wail in anguish their whole lives. Sayeth Nanak, “that what the Lord willeth hath come to pass, else what could the man do of himself.” ————7

In the same manner Guru Gobind Singh in the second part of Gain Probodh Granth, in an answer to Jivatmas explains that “the practical philosophy of the world is four-fold, namely raj-dharma, dan-dharma, bhog-dharma and moksha-dharma.”——8 Raj dharma means a ruler should rule in a just and honest manner. In the same manner all the subjects (citizens) should also perform their duty honestly whichever is assigned to them. The bhog dharma implies the pursuit of wealth, artha, earthly love and kama. Dan dharma means to help others. Moksha dharma means one should attain moksha (mukti).

Sikh teaching is that the four dharmas should be followed simultaneously, are the same for every one, ruler and the subjects, women and men. Essence of Sikh teachings on the matter is that all human beings should decide their life to the one God and the service of their fellow human beings, regardless of caste, status, creed, class or sex.

Guru Nanak Dev commended “Nam, Dan, Isnai”— meditation (Nam-simran), alms giving and cleanliness (probably both physical and moral), as the way of life for the Sikh. Today these are expressed as ‘Nam japna, kirit karma, vand chakna’——9. Meditation, work and alms giving, but the emphasis upon a properly balanced life remains unchanged.

In this world when downfall in religion sets in, when vis-à-vis human values, aggression, force, bigotry, political injustice, social hatred, pride and
madness amidst abundance of money enter society on the political atmosphere, then the rulers became cruel, butcher; nothing worth the name of religion and moral values remain in their rule. In other words we may say that when dharma is in decline, then someone with the grace of Almighty God comes to this world to save dharma (righteousness).

As in Bhagvat Gita Lord Krishna says:

"Yada yada hi dharma-sya glanir bhavati bharata; Abhyu-ttha-nam adharma-sya tada ’mananam srijamy-aham paritara-naya sadhu-nam vina-saya ca dus-krtam dharma sams thapana-rthaya sam-bhavami yuge yuge.”

Whenever there is decline of righteousness (dharma) and unrighteousness (adharma) is in the ascendant, O Arjuna, then I appear (or manifest Myself). I appear from time to time for protecting the good, for transforming the wicked, and for establishing Dharma, the world order.

As oppression increases, tyrant rise their heads, the pitch darkness of ignorance obscures everything, most of the peoples descends to the level of beasts; due to ignorance man’s intellect to know truth from falsehood, righteousness from unrighteousness, justice from injustice gets lost; there is confusion and coas everywhere; then spiritual persons, prophets, great holy men, under the inspiration of Supreme Lord, in complete obedience to His will, adopt a number of methods to guide society and the powers that be. At some place such holy persons brought social, political and religious change through using mental powers. But, at other places the lives of tyrants (adharamies) enveloped in the incurable darkness have to be finished by the use of arms. Such a war, which is fought to save dharma, is known as 'Dharmyudh'.
War in the defence of righteousness is regarded as proper by the Sikhs. The tenth Guru (Guru Gobind Singh) actually said, I have no other ambition than to wage a war of righteousness \((Dharmyudh)\). In this Sikhs assert that Guru Gobind Singh was only pursuing Guru Nanak Dev, who spoke out against tyranny by other means. The interpretation of these words is that it was only such a struggle that could be justified, not one undertaken for self-aggrandizement.

Guru Gobind Singh laid down five conditions of such a war. Such conditions are:

1. It should be as a last resort; when all other means have failed it is permissible to draw the sword.
2. War should be waged without enmity or desire for revenge.
3. Territory should not be annexed, and property captured in the course of the war should be restored. Looting or the takings of booty are strongly forbidden.
4. The army must be made up of soldiers committed to the just cause. Mercenaries should not be employed and conditions must match the righteousness of the war. Sikhs are called to be \('Saint- Soldiers.'\) \(Rahit-Namas\) command them \('not to drink or smoke, not to molest the women folk of your adversaries.'\)
5. These conditions being met war might be engaged in with the minimum of force but regardless of the odds and outcomes.—11

Certain verses in Quran also convey the command to do battle (jihad). Following are the some of the circumstances which may justify such a battle:

1. The first point to be noted is that aggression or the launching of an offensive by the believers is not totally forbidden. It is permissible, but with certain provisos. We are clearly commanded in the Quron: Fight for the sake of God those that fight against you, but do not be aggressive.
2. Only defensive war is permitted in Islam. Such a war is one in which aggression is committed by some other party so that the believers have
to fight in self-defence. Initiating hostility is not permitted for Muslims. The Quran says: “They were the first to attack you.” Furthermore, even in the case of the offensive being launched by an opposing group, the believers are not supposed to retaliate immediately. Rather in the beginning all efforts are to be made to avert war, and only when avoidance has become impossible is battle to be resorted to inevitably in defence.

3. According to Quran there was one form of war which was time-bound strictly in relation to its purpose. This was to put an end to fitna. “Fight them until fitna is no more.” Fitna signifies that coercive system which had reached the extremes of religious persecution. In ancient times this coercive political system prevailed all over the world. This absolutism had closed all the doors of progress, both spiritual and material. At that time God commanded the believers to break this coercive system in order to usher in freedom, so that all doors of spiritual and material progress might be opened to man.

It is due to above mentioned principles of Holi-War (Dharmyudh) that Guru Gobind Singh should not be compared with any of the army generals of the world as this comparision is not correct. The Guru never wanted wars, but these were thrust upon him every time. He fought battles but did not occupy an inch of anybody’s territory. After the battles he forgave people and behaved as if nothing had happened. Kings and generals of the world fought to enlarge their territories, collect booty and to plunder other’s property. Attacks were made on the weaker nations simply to grab wealth and annex their territories. People were killed on the battle fields like ants and yet their hearts did not move. They bothered very little for the suffering humanity. Before their very eyes, women in thousands were widowed; property worth lacks was burnt, innocent children were orphaned. But, on the other hand, Guru Gobind Singh was a warrior with a difference. He fought battles in a different way. After the battle of Muktsar, he went straight into the battle-field and moved about lifting the heads of the dead and putting them into his lap, wiping their faces with a piece of cloth, one by one. It was
heart-rending sight. The guru's Sikh Bhai Kanahiya, served water to the
wounded Hindus and Muslims in the battle of Anandpur. He did not observe
any distinction between a friend and a foe.-------13

S.R. Bakshi writes Guru Gobind Singh was not a political aspirant but
toiled throughout only for uplifting the down trodden. No comparison can be
made between him and Napoleon or Charles-12 of Sweden. They plundered
the world at a large but the Guru saved humanity from being looted.
Napoleon plundered wealth and crushed under his feet several peace loving
nations of Europe. He played with the peace of the world. He became a
dreadful that people called Napoleon 'The Great Unloved'. He had all the
humanity and mercy in him.-----14

Guru Gobind Singh appeared on the scene and he himself explained
his mission and the objective that he sought to achieve. This aim is similar to
the one that was explained by the founder of Sikhism Guru Nanak Dev with
the slogan 'Na koi Hindu na musalman' (there is no Hindu, no Muslim) and
started to preach the name of Lord. The tenth Guru openly confirmed the
same objective for which the Almighty God has arranged this mission in
universal order to reform the society of self-respecting people. The tenth
Guru merely claims that he is chosen instrument of that Almighty God for the
redemption of the world.

In Bachitara Natak he writes the Lord sent me for the sake of
religion. On His account I have come into the world to extent the faith
everywhere, seize and destroy the evil and the sinful. As history shows during the
time of Guru Gobind Singh the forces of tyranny, injustice, oppression and
discrimination became so highly aggressive that it was considered essential to
wreck them and protect the oppressed from further onslaughts. To the people,
Guru pointed out their weaknesses, and exhorted them to awake and arise.
Similarly, frank and out-spoken were his feelings about the rulers of that time. In
order to accomplish that noble objective and also to consummate, thereby, the mission ordained and the task assigned to him by God Himself Guru writes as under:

"I have come into this world for this avowed purpose, The Supreme Lord has sent me here to uphold dharma, He has appointed me to establish the order of the Khalsa and spread true religion. I have taken birth—to exalt the virtuous and uproot evil doers".-------15

Some couplets from Asa M. 1 Ashtapadis as uttered by Guru Nanak Dev reads as follows:

"Now the soldiers have been told to dishonour them and carry them off. Yea, if the Lord Willeth, He Blesseth with Glory, if He Willeth, he Punisheth. If one foresee-eth and fore-thinketh, why should he be punished thus? The kings had lost their heads and revelled in revelries. But now that the writ of Babar prevails, not even the princes get bread to eat. The Muslims have lost their prayer-time and the Hindu of worship, yea. And how can the Hindu women without a bath and plastering their kitchen-square, anoint their forehead with the saffron-mark?-------16

In Bhagvat Gita we see, Sri Krishna prepares Arjuna to fight a holy war (Dharmayudh) against the wicked and violent to save dharma:

Lord Krishna says:

\[ \text{Savadharmam apic " Aveksya na Vikampittum arhasi,} \]
Likewise consider your own duty, then too you have no cause to quail for better than a fight prescribed by law is nothing for a man of the princely class.

"Yadrcchaya C’opannam svargadvaram apavrtam sukninah
Ksatrityah, parth, labhante yuddham idrsam"--------18

Happy the warriors, who become involved in such a war as this presented by pure chance and opening the doors of paradise.

"Atha cet tvam imam dharmyam
samgramam na karisyasi tatah
svadharman kirtim ca hitva papam avapsyasi"--------19

But if you will not wage this war prescribed by your duty, then, by casting off both duty and honour, you will bring evil on yourself.

Here, we see unless and until man makes conscious effort to be in tune with law of laws i.e., Dharma, all lead him nowhere. Dharma alone can resort to him the peace and bliss which he seeks. All talk of world peace is meaningless until man learns to find peace within himself. With unrest within, unrest without should not surprise us. This is the sorry plight of man in the present century. What is necessary, therefore, is the proper understanding of the dharma in the three-fold aspects. Everyman ought to be conscious of his duties towards his fellow beings, towards his nation or country and towards human kind in general. Secondly, there should be positive aspiration to lead an ethical life, cultivating more and more virtues, and discarding with an effort of will and practice, the vices and evils that have some how become associated with us.
Finally, a correct understanding of religion free from all narrow, bigoted and fanatical ideas should be developed and a cosmic outlook should be cultivated. Henceforth, one should save dharma.

As Manu proclaims:
"Dharma eva hato hanti,
dharmo raksati raksitah, tasmad
dharmo na hantavyah"-------20

Dharma, being destroyed, destroys everything; and being preserved, preserves everything. Therefore, dharma should not be destroyed. Indian methodology as also the religious literature elsewhere is replete with stories which drives home this truth. The history of civilization also testifies to it.

The aim of Sikh philosophy like Bhagvat Gita is twofold. It has a spiritual as well as a social message. The social is complementary to the spiritual. One is not divorced from the other. There is no dichotomy between the two; rather, they go hand in hand with one another. The former fulfils itself in the latter.

Harbans Singh writes Guru Gobind Singh left no one in doubt. Writing a finis to Krishanavtar, he said:
"I have cast into the popular tongue the story of Bhagwat.
This I have done with no other purpose, Lord, except to glory
the holy war.--------21

In the light of the Guru Gobind Singh's teachings, not only all the activities of men and women have a spiritual goal, but the spiritual attitude and the Divine vision permeate all actions in their day-to-day life. With sincere devotion to God, man must in this world in a spirit of detachment, fortified with
the power of discrimination and dedicate the fruit of all his work at the feet of God and in the service of humanity. In this way, man develops the capacity to move both Godward and manward.

The Sikh teachings are universal in character. They are not exclusive in any manner or sense. They are applicable to any clime or time. They can be practised by anyone in any situation. Earnestness is the only criterion that is demanded of the aspirant.

Guru Gobind Singh possessed infinite knowledge, supremacy, power, strength, might and vigour. He was devoid of any personal interest in the activities he was engaged. His only motive was welfare of the society as a whole. He was child when his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur was martyred by the Mughals in 1675, in order to protect man’s right to freedom of worship. The execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur made a great impact on young Gobind. He realized that the adversary meant to destroy the very essence of secularism and the universal doctrines of the Sikh faith. It was now his duty to resist the enemy with all the means at his disposal, for not only was it a battle of survival but also to uphold human ideals and to save Dharma. The Guru’s mission in life became clear to him. He began to prepare himself to undertake the future responsibility of the Sikh Panth, to take the cause of oppressed against the tyranny of an autocratic state. In his autobiography which forms part of the Bachitra Natak, incorporated in the Dasam Granth these thoughts are clearly evident in his compositions.

The most important and significant task that Guru Gobind Singh had to accomplish was to instill the spirit of fearlessness, valour and sacrifice into the minds of the people, along with a firm faith in Supreme Lord and the Truth, so that the common masses may be strong enough to fight against the persecution and tyranny of the Mughal rulers and defend their honour, self-respect, dignity and freedom. The first nine Gurus had tried to combat the situation mainly by building up the moral fibre of people through moral and spiritual teachings, though at one stage, when forces of evil and unrighteousness became ruthless,
resulting in the martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev, the fifth Guru, the sixth master Guru Har Gobind adored the sword signifying that spiritual elevation and physical strength both might be necessary to resist oppression. Later on, the manner in which Guru Tegh Bahadur was beheaded at Chandni Chowk, Delhi, under the order of Aurangzeb, strengthened this belief and Guru Gobind Singh took up the concept in a big and systematic way.

Guru Gobind Singh might not have felt so bitter at the martyrdom of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, for he had himself exhorted him to make the sacrifice but he must have certainly felt concerned for two reasons firstly, at the cowardice shown by the majority of his followers who were so afraid of Aurangzeb’s wrath that they did not have the courage to pick up the Guru’s body; and secondly, such a supreme sacrifice by the ninth Guru could not move the tyrant mind of Aurangzeb. Such a calamity was bound to give an edge to Guru Gobind Singh’s determination to wage a war against the high-handedness and persecution of the rulers and to transform his followers into a community of fearless and dauntless solideirs; for he was convinced that mere passive resistance would not do. He, therefore, decided to create a strong and organized force of Saint-Soldiers as a challenge to the cruel rulers of time. In Bachitara Natak Guru Gobind Singh himself writes these words:

"I came into the world charged with the duty
to uphold the right in every place, to destroy,
Sin and evil. O you holy men, Know it well in your hearts
That the only reason I took Birth was to see that righteousness May flourish, that the good may Live and tyrants be torn
out by Their very roots."----------22

Such a stupendous task called for the spiritual, social and emotional uplift of the people; so it had to be tackled on different planes. Guru Gobind Singh showed marvelous understanding of the situation and organized things accordingly. As regards the spiritual uplift, he exhorted people to continue to
derived inspiration and strength from *Akal Purkh* (Supreme Lord), and commended Kirtan, satsang, simran and the recitation of Gurbani as had been enjoined by the previous Gurus. But at the same time he also gave a different and new concept of *God* and depicted ‘Him’ as a *Sword, Soldier* and *Warrior* too. This was obviously done due to two reasons firstly, to inspire Sikhs to be brave soldiers so that they might be able to fight falsehood and tyranny and uphold the cause of truth and justice, secondly, to be a saint to save *dharma*; it becomes formost duty of a saint to save himself so that the *dharma* (rightousness) may sustain. In *Bachitara Natak* Guru Gobind Singh further writes to elaborate *Chandi charitra*:

*At first, I bow to thee, O sword. Nanak adoreth thee; Angat, Amar, Ram Dass, thou Blesseth all the thee; Arjan, Har Gobind Guru And even Har Rai; Hari Krishan whose holy sight; All the grief destroys; Then, thou, blesseth Tegh Bahadur; With the treasures nine; And bliss, now, servant thine. The Lord created first, the sword, which begot universe; Natures's Pangeant, Holly thee, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh. Heaven handing sans support, hills, oceans, earth. And made all gods devils grim, set as rivals fierce; And then, O sword, thou Durga made. The devils pride to pierce.*——23

In other couplets of *Bachitara Natak* Guru writes:

“*Sword, that smiteth in a flash that scatters the armies of the wicked in the great battle-field; O thou symbol of the brave. Thine arm is irresistible, thy brightness shineth fourth, The blaze of the splendor dazzling like the sun. Sword, thou art the protector of saints*”.——24
"Thou art the scourge of the wicked;
Scattered of sinners I take refuse in thee.
Hail to the Creator, Saviour and Sustainer,
Hail to thee; Sword Supreme."------25

Here, we see, Guru Gobind Singh symbolized sword with that of Supreme Lord and made use of it to save dharma. That is why such a war of Guru with Mughal ruler Aurangzab is known as 'Dharmyudh' like battles of Mahabharata and Shri Rama’s battle with Ravana as envisaged in Hindu Epics.

Thus, we can say attainment of spiritual integration pre-supposes social integration according to the Sikh philosophy. And the social response of the person is to be maintained with a greater understanding, affection and sense of mutual relationship, even after the spiritual integration. Because, according to Sikhism service to mankind leads service to God. Thus, service to Guru said to yield spiritual realization.

To strengthen people emotionally and mentally, Guru Gobind Singh gathered a large number of poets and intellectuals to bring out such literature as might inspire confidence, self-respect, manliness and heroism in the people and rouse them intellectually and emotionally to resist oppression so that they might revolt against the evil forces and fight for truth, freedom and justice. His court was adorned by 52 poets and scholars of repute. With their co-operation he used to hold big poetic symposia where people listened to the inspiring poems of select poets of the time. Pandits famous for their learnings were employed to translate important Sanskrit works into Hindi and also teach that language to the Sikhs. When some scholars under the leadership of Pandit Raghunath refused to import instructions to the Sikhs as there were men of low caste among them and at that time it was believed that according to the shastras the teaching of Sanskrit to the shudras was forbidden. The Guru dismissed this group forthwith and sent his five disciples Bhai Karam Singh, Bhai Vir Singh, Bhai Ganda Singh, Bhai Saina Singh and Bhai Ram
Singh to Benaras for the purpose. The Sikh scholars then translated into Hindi the Mahabharta, Ramayana, Upanishidas etc. In his 42 years of turbulent life spent mostly in fighting, the Guru found time enough to study Sanskrit, Hindi, Persian and Punjabi. He was a gifted scholar, poet, saint and soldier. His personal contribution in creating this type of literature is most remarkable.

Bachitra Natak and Chandi-di-var are his most significant and valuable literary works which set the people afire to meet the challenge of their time. He proved to be a versatile genius, a first saint poet who diagnosed the disease and prescribed the remedy which was to rehabilitate man’s rightful place, prestige and dignity. The Guru felt that the age of truth, righteous, satyug had passed away and in the age of Kalyug the evil forces had become dominant.

To estore equilibrium between dharma and adharma, right and wrong, good and evil, just and unjust, lawful and unlawful, Guru Gobind Singh wanted men to take up the sword, because mere passive resentment or non-violence could no longer succeed against the mighty and vicious forces of evil. As the fifth Guru Arjan Dev and ninth Guru Tegh Bahadur had already tested the path of non-violence for the purpose.

Saint-Soldier:

The traditional system of values in India demands only one of the three virtues viz., Saintliness, Soldierliness and Generosity. It envisages each of these virtues in different persons. A saint is not supposed to think of or do anything worldly, much less be a soldier. In fact, there is a complete separation between the spiritual and the temporal.

But the Sikh Gurus however preached a whole life religion for the full and balanced development of an individual as well as for society. Sikh teachings are meant for harmonious development of an individual. It was not enough to be
merely a saint, unconcerned with the rest of the world, or to be soldier without spiritual concerns. It was necessary to be both saint and soldier with a generous and charitable disposition. Prof. Bhagat Singh writes, Guru Gobind Singh was primarily a man of religion and a man of God with Divine origin as he himself writes in Bachitra Natak:

"God send me, then I took birth and come into the world. As he spoke to me so I speak unto men, I bear no enmity to anyone".—26

Guru Gobind Singh’s divine mission and godly personality had endeared him not only to his Sikhs who were always ready to lay down their lives for him but to a large number of Muslims also, that included Nawab Rahim Khan and Karim Khan of Patna, Sayyid Bhikhan Shah, Pir Araf Din and Pir Buddhu Shah. Mughal Generals like Mainmum Khan and Sayyid Beg who came to fight against him (Guru Gobind Singh) realized the justice involved in their attacks and knowing about the divinity of the Guru, bowed before him and came over to his side. Prince Bahadur Shah who had come to take action against the Guru befriends him and sends suitable presents on knowing his mission. Nihang Khan of Kotla, Rohela Pathan, Nabbi Khan and Ghani Khan, Qazi Pir Mohammad and Qazi of Bahlopur and Rai Kahla, the Choudhary of Jagranon and many others helped the Guru at very critical movements of his life. They have risked their own lives for the Guru because they had realized that his cause was just and his fight was not for power nor directed against any community but in pursuance of a divinely mission to which he was wedded from the very beginning of life.—27

As one couplet from Guru Granth Sahib reads:

"He, who loses his self, attains all he yearns for; And through the Guru’s words, enters into the true communion with the Lord. He gathers Truth and deals nothing but Truth. Sacrifice, O sacrifice am I to the Lord, where
Prases, night and day, I sing. Thou art mine,
O Master, and I Thine through thy word is my
Glory, Blessed, Blessed is the time, when I
Come to love the truth one; And by serving the
(Lords) Truth attain True Glory”

(The Assembly of the Saints) is a Garden, in which are
the shady Trees of immense girth, and they yield the fruit
of the Lord’s Nectar- Name. O Wise one, contemplate
this wise, That you mount to the State of Nirvan.

In the fellowship of the Holy, the foes become friends. In the
fellowship of the Holy, one is free from evil. In the fellowship of Holy, one bears
malice towards none. In the fellowship of the Holy, there is no flattering from the
path. In the fellowship of the Holy, no one remains no good. In the fellowship
of the Holy, one meets the Lord God.

It has sometimes been asserted that Guru Nanak was a pessimist.
There is no evidence to support this view. He stated the principle that oppression
should be resisted by asking the Emperor Babur to release the prisoners he had
taken in capturing Saidpur and reminding him of duty to rule with justice.

Actually, Guru Gobind Singh’s use of military force was simply
change of method, not of principle. This is clearly visible in the similarity of the
philosophy of life and the ideology preached by Guru Gobind Singh and the
earlier Gurus starting with the founder of Sikhism Guru Nanak Dev.

It is very much clear from the writings of Guru Gobind Singh that he
did not propagate any new philosophy or worldview. He was in fact, only
elaborating, in the context of somewhat different socio-political situation, what
Guru Nanak stood for in his own time and space. To be able to achieve the
interaction of the temporal and the spiritual was Guru
Nanak's most significant contribution to the totality of the Indian way of life.

A couplet from Guru Granth Sahib reads:

"He the Lord, is on all the earth and upon the waters;
and that alone happens what He Wills. He alone brings
sustenance to all, for there is not another without Him."--------30

According to Guru Nanak there is only one Supreme God (Ek Oungkar), ever existent, who created the universe. There is one Father and we all are His children. This implies the equality of all human beings and discard the caste system or discrimination based on birth.

Guru Gobind Singh also emphasized the same concept and enjoined on the Khalsa not to believe in any other deity as the creator. He wrote in the Akal Ustat:

"God is the One, so first of all Him I salute.
He made earth, heaven and Netherlands.
He is the root of all created things."-------31

Here are the some of quotations from Kabir which have become proverbs in Punjabi language through Adi Granth:

I am the Kotwal.
I respect the saints and punish the evil doers.---- Ram Kali

Kabir

Listen and talk to saints, whenever they meet you
Keep silent, whenever you come across an infidel.----Gaund

Kabir

All are intoxicated, none is awake
The thieves have broken open the house.------Basant Kabir ---32

Guru Gobind Singh, too, expressed the same spirit. He writes in *Bachitra Natak*:

"Those who call me God,  
shall fall into the depths of hell;  
Greet me as God's Humble servant only;  
Do not have any doubts, as this is true."--------33

In the views of Guru Nanak, God created the universe out of love. He (God) is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of this universe. There are number of references in Guru Nanak’s compositions which pertain to the creative activity of God. For countless aeons there was undivided darkness. There was neither earth nor heavens but only the infinite order of God that was responsible for the creation of the universe. Guru Nanak uttered:

"Thou art the creator of all creation,  
who is, will be, and will go not ever,  
who created the universe of various  
species, colours and kinds;  
And who watches all what He creates  
And as and what suits His Glory and  
Pleasure".--------34

"God not only creates world but also loves it  
and in doing so sustains it.  
He who created the world watches over it  
Appointing all to their various tasks".--------35

God, the one is creator and sustainer  
And so too He is Destroyer.
apart from Him there is no other.  
Having destroyed, He builds and  
Having built He destroys. Having  
filled the sea He causes it to dry up and  
then fills it again for He, the one beyond  
care and anxiety has the power to do it”.

Guru Gobind Singh’s views about creation of this universe are not different from that of other Sikh Gurus. He says:

“Oceans and months and hills of Golden hue,  
Fishes and turtles, serpents like seshnags-  
All these in countless number, He has made.  
Likewise the female deities and Krishanas  
And Brahm's sons, incarnate Vishnus too  
The Lord God made, defiant of all lists.”

He further says:

“The animals that walk on land, all are made by the Lord and shall by way of death in Him be absorbed.  
Just as a potent light sinks into dark or dark is set to flight by the flash of light, same way from Him all creatures have sprung up. And ultimately in Him are dissolved.”

Above mentioned sayings of both the Gurus, Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh clearly reflect their saintly personality. Only a saintly person can talk about such holy things. Sikh Gurus not only talked about spiritual things but taught spirituality throughout their whole life to all persons irrespective of caste, colour, sex, creed, religion and country.
It may be asserted that the Sikh religion as advocated by Guru Nanak and all other Sikh Gurus stand for peace, without advocating pacifism as a cult or creed. The Sikh tradition dating from the fifteenth century has been characterized, on the one hand, by the spiritual pursuit tempered with ethical conduct of a puritan nature, and by intermittent struggle to maintain the ideantity of the community, on the other.

K. S. Duggal writes, to strive for peace inwardly and to fight for maintenance of social identity against political odds, has been the lot of the Sikhs ever since the time of Guru Nanak (1469-1539). His nine successors, until the departure of the tenth Guru from the scene (1708 A.D.) nurtured the community on the spiritual cum social path indicated by Guru Nanak. During the testing time, the eighteenth century to be precise, the community bereft of the guidance and leadership of the Guru in person, faced grim struggles, constant battles and persecution, with rare fortitude born of the inspiration provided by the Guru's teachings.

When Babur invaded India, on seeing his inhuman, cruel, anti-social and irreligious acts Guru Nanak remarked:

“Hearing of the invasion of Babur millions of Muslims divines prayed for his halt, but he burnt all the age-old temples and the resting places, and the princes, cut into pieces, were thrown to the winds. Yea, not a Mughal was blinded (by God) no miracle, no charm, saved the man from disaster, the Mughals and the Pathans grappled with each other and the swords clanged on the battles field. And while the Mughals fired their guns, the others put their elephants forth. But they whose fortunes were the losers at the Lord's Court, death forsure was in their lot. The Hindu and Muslim and Rajput women had some their veils torn off, while others were licked by the flames.”

In the views of Guru Nanak, life is the most precious gift of God given to man and meant to be lived with honour and dignity. He says:
"The kings had lost their heads and revelled revelries.
But now that the writ of Babur prevails, not even the
Princes get their bread to eat".--------41

Guru Nanak confronted Babur and condemned his attack and the atrocities committed by his troops on innocent victims, in his famous composition Babarvani. At the same time he castigated the Lodhi rulers for not being adequately prepared to meet the aggression. He held them responsibility for the failure to protect their subjects. He did not advocate ahimsa in the face of such naked aggression. Drawing on his own philosophy of love, he said:

"God has protected Khurasan; and brought terror to Hindustan. But our creator-Lord takes not the blame upon Himself and so has made the Mughal the Angel of Death".----------42

Guru Nanak had no armies. But, his message was clear. He was preparing the masses for armed resistance to onslaught and freeing them from unscrupulous elements. It took almost a century for society to grasp this message and building upon the efforts of the earlier Gurus.

Guru Har Gobind, the sixth Guru, raised an army that challenged then mighty Mughal Empire in three successful battles. Actually the martyrdom of the fifth Guru (Guru Arjan Dev), gave the alarm to Guru Har Gobind that there are sterner days ahead. He felt the need of warrior class too. Hence, he tried to transform the peaceful saintly Sikh society to warrior community as well in order to bring to a logical end, the teachings of the founder of Sikhism (Guru Nanak Dev).

Prior to Guru Gobind Singh, the sixth Guru, Guru Har Gobind had started a new tradition of Miri-Piri (though in essence, it had taken its birth during the period of Guru Nanak and was followed by the subsequent Gurus)
when he wore two swords at the time of his accession, one to depict his spiritual power (called *piri*) and the other to represent his temporal power (called *miri*).

Dr. Gurdev Singh Hansaraw writes, “the idea of *Miri* was not designed to serve any selfish motives or for any political ends”. In fact, it was entirely meant to give a new shape to religion, which should suit the changed circumstances and also to spread and defend righteousness in a fearless and dauntless manner. Sikhism has always favours and upheld the freedom of different faiths. Force is never to be allowed to serve to any narrow religious purpose.”

Guru Gobind Singh writes in ‘Bachitra Nanak’:


It means, those of Baba (Guru Nanak) and those of Babur, God himself makes them both. Know the former thus: as the king of religion. Guess the latter thus: as worldly king. They who fail to render that what is due to the (House of) Baba. The minious of Babur seize them, and inflict severe punishments upon such deflectors. In addition, their worldly goods and property are looted and taken away.

In the praise of The Sword, Guru Gobind Singh writes:

> “Thou art the subduer of countries, the destroyer of the armies of the wicked, In the battle-field Thou adorn the brave Thou bestow happiness on the good, Thou terrify the evil, Thou scatter sinners. I seek Thy protection. Hail to Thee, O’ Sword.”
The Guru again says in Bachitara Natak:

"I bow to the Holder of the mace,
I bow to the Arrow and the Musket.
I bow to the Sword, spotless, fearless and
unbreakable, I bow to the Sword and the Rapier
Which destroys the evil."----------------46

Guru Gobind Singh's concept of Saint-Soldier corelates the values of the 'Church' and those of the 'State' (as was prevalent in Europe) where the function of the Church is to impart moral direction to the State in order to facilitate the function of the later for ensuring equality, justice, welfare etc. to mankind in every possible way. In Sikhism, the ideology of Miri-Piri has not been restricted to a particular person of a particular class just in the case of Pope in Europe, the Khalifa in Arab countries and the Brahmin class as in olden days in India; rather it is required to strictly follow the moral codes of religion while living his daily temporal life. In other words, the foremost duty of Sikh is to protect righteousness (dharma) with the right use of his martial capacity. This mode of life is often termed as 'Sant-Sepoy' (Saint-Soldier) in Sikhism. Since the ancient days of Hinduism there two types of persons viz. Saint (Yogi) and Soldier (Sepoy) have been held in high esteem. But, Guru Gobind Singh has inculcated both the qualities i.e. spiritual (Yogic) and temporal (physical) in all his Sikhs.

With a view immortalizing the new spirit, Guru Gobind Singh initiated the order of 'Khalsa' on Baisakhi day, March 30, 1669. On this day large number of Sikhs gathered at Anandpur from all parts of India. The Guru rose early, as usual and sat in meditation. He then donned his uniform and arms, and appeared before the assemblage. While addressing himself to his Sikhs, he (Guru) drew his sword and said, "I want today a head let anyone of my true Sikhs come forward. Is not there a Sikh of mine who would sacrifice his life for dharma and for the Guru?" When Guru reiterated his demand for
the third time, the five Sikhs namely Daya Ram from Lahore, Dharam Dass from Delhi, Muhkem Chand from Dwarka, Himmat from Jagannath and Sahib Chand from Bidar stood up one by one and offered their heads to their true Guru. Three of these five were shudras by caste and among two others one belong to keshatrya and another one was jat by caste. All of them formed nucleus of the new self-abnegating, martial and casteless fellowship of the Khalsa. These devoted spirits, popularly known as ‘Pench-Piyaras’ (the beloved five), were blessed by the Guru. They were enjoined to help the poor and fight the oppressor, to have faith in one God and to consider all human beings equal, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, race, religion and sex. A brave death in battle-field for a righteous cause was set out as a noble and worthy end.

Guru Gobind Singh writes:

“Grant unto me this boon, O Lord, that I may never be deterred from doing good deeds, I should have no fear of the enemy when I go to battle, and turned victory certainly to my side. In my mind there is but one desire that I may ever be singing Thy praises. And when the time comes, I should die fighting in the field of action.”

“Deh siva bar mohe ehai; shubh karman to kabhun na tarun. Na darun ar so jab jaie larun, nishche kar apne jeet karun. Aru Sikh hou apne hi man kau, eh lalach hau gun tau uchrun. Jab aav ki audh nidan bane, at hi ran mai tab jujh marun)”

Guru Gobind Singh in Chaubis Avtar writes:

“Jab jab hoat arist apara; Tab tab deh dharat avtara.
Kal sabhan ko pekh tamasa; Untahkal Karat hai masa.”

Whenever, morality, ethics, righteousness are thrown to winds, Incarnations appear on the earth to eliminate evil and dispel wickedness and to re-establish goodness.
Ardaman Singh Bhayee writes Guru Ramdass Samarth, the Maratha Saint, met the sixth Nanak, Guru Har Gobind Singh at Srinagar in 1634, the Satguru import to him the teaching that the essence of Sikhism is to be an ascetic within and a prince without. Arms mean protection to the weak and the poor, and destruction to the tyrant. Guru Nanak's teachings was to transcend the little ego but not to renounce the world---------49

Some couplets from Guru Granth Sahib read :-

"He who conquerts, himself, wins the battle (of life).
Glorious is he, who fights his ego and his sense of otherness. He who vanquishes his self and so dies in life through the perfact Guru's Word. And conquires his mind, receives the Lord and is decked with roves of a warrior." ------50

"One can win the battle in God's Eyes, If one dwells on the Lord's name, through the Guru's grace. Then by practising good in life, One sheds all one's sins, And dwells on the Perfact Guru's Infnate Word. They, who are inbued with the Lord's name, with love in their heart; Them, Nanak, The Guru-God blesses with His Grace.-------51

After baptizing Panj-Pyaras, Guru Gobind Singh himself was baptized by them, thereby emphasizng the essential equality of all Sikhs. The five were accorded the temporal authority of the Guru so that they became the basis for the democratic method of administration, and even today, any five true and worthy amritdhari Sikhs can represent the Guru's authority in the Khalsa Panth. The Guru also felt himself in the relationship of a father to his Sikhs, and the ceremony of Amrit Parchar brings his followers, into the vast family fold of his sons and daughters. He had a deep and abiding love for this family, and a touching humanity and gratitude towards them for all they had done to support his fight for justice. This attitude is clearly related in a verse from Shabd Hazare:
All the battles I won against tyranny I fought with the devoted backing of these people; Through them only have I been able to bestow gifts. Through their help I have escaped from harm; The love and generosity of these Sikhs Have enriched my heart and home. Through their grace I have attained all learning; through their help in battle, I have slain all my enemies. I was born to serve them, Through them I reached eminence What would I have been without their kind and ready help? There are millions of insignificant people like me. True service is the service of these people; I am not inclined to serve others of higher castes; Charity will bear fruit in this world and the next. If given to such worthy people as these. All other sacrifices and charities are profitless. From top to toe, whatever I call my own, All I possess or carry, I dedicate to these people.”------52

Prof. Bhagat Singh writes;

Guru Gobind Singh was first and foremost a saint and a Guru. None, but a true saint with a complete resignation to the will of Lord, could have behaved as he did during the whole of his life and especially at the times of the graviest crisis of his most eventful life when the Guru got some respite from the Mughal attacks, His wife Mata Sundri and Sahib Kour remitted with him at Damdama, Mata Sundri looked around and enquired, where are our four sons, my most beloved Master? Hundred of people that had assembled there were submerged in deep grief on hearing of this enquiry but the Guru replied with perfect equanimity and in sweet words that, “All his four sons have gone into the lap of ‘Akal Purkh’. They are not dead, they have attained an eternal life. They belonged to Him and they have gone back to their real Father (God). They were a trust with us. Thank God they have been gracefully returned to Him. All these hundred and thousands of Sikhs are Thy sons.”---53 This type of attitude towards life, family and dear ones is not that of a worldly person but that of a great saint.
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