

Khanda

The Sikh Emblem

KHANDA has a great significance for the Sikhs. It is the emblem of Sikh Culture. If we look at Sikhism, we realize that it is very symbolic. What that mean is that if we were to stand as a Sikh in a crowd of thousands it's quite easy to distinguish us as a Sikh. This was obviously the intention of the Tenth Guru. The Khanda as a Sikh symbol is also a very distinct one and interesting. All the individual items of the Khanda are Sikh weapons.

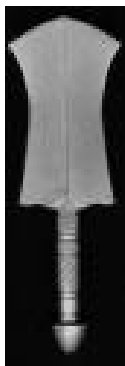
It consists of two Kirpaans on the sides, one chakkar (a circular flat ring) and one Double edge sword in the middle. Even though it has three different parts, the name given to this symbol is driven from the middle double edge sword, which is Khanda. For the sake of this article we will call the double edge sword as "Khanda" and the whole configuration as "Khanda symbol". There are a few different configurations available about this symbol these days, but the most common and well adopted configuration is shown in the picture.



We can see the Khanda symbol as a main part of our Nishaan sahibs, it is printed or embroidered on Rumaalas and also engraved on historical weapons. Also, we can find this symbol used on historical books, printed hukamnaamas, and a lot of other literature related to Sikhi.

Let's try to see the importance of different parts of this symbol in simple words based on the opinions of different experts.

Khanda (as a part of the symbol):



Khanda is the main part of the symbol. It is a double edged sword is placed centrally in the middle of the symbol. It appears like Roman numeral one and is believed that it represents one God. Its double edges symbolize to cut evil both ways. Some authors also add its significance as high spirits, rights, freedom, justice and sovereignty of the Sikhs. Khanda is also used to prepare Amrit. The original Khanda Guru Gobind Singh Ji used to prepare the Amrit on the Baisakhi of 1669, is at display in the Gurdwara Kes-Garh, Anandpur Sahib.

Chakkar:

The Chakkar represents God's power. The Chakkar being a circle without a beginning or end symbolizes the perfection of God the infinite power associated with it. Circle means continuation of life. This is a symbol of all-embracing divine manifestation including everything and wanting nothing, without beginning or end, neither first nor last, timeless, and absolute. The Chakra was also used by the Sikhs as one of the war weapons against injustice and oppression. Almost all Sikh warriors used to wear it on their turbans in the eighteenth century.



Kirpaans:



The Chakkar is surrounded by two curved swords called Kirpaans. These two swords symbolize the twin concepts of Meeri and Peeri - Political and Spiritual authority introduced by Guru Hargobind Ji. A Sikh must put equal emphasis on spiritual aspirations as well as obligations to society.

On the left side is the sword of spiritual sovereignty, Peeri. And on the right side is the sword of political sovereignty, Meeri.

There must always be a balance between the two and this balance is emphasized by an inside circle (chakkar). The Kirpaan is also one of the five Kakkaars.

Proper uses of symbol:

Even though there are not any written guidelines available to where to use and where not to use this symbol, still there are few things which can be discussed based on common understanding. We should always respect our Khanda symbol. We should avoid using it on things which are not directly associated with Sikhi. It is also good for us to use the standard configuration and not to alter it with our own creativity. Size, and color can be different but the main parts used to create this symbol should not be other than the Khanda, Chakkar and Kirpaans.