KARAHA PRASAD

(The Sacred Food)

Karaha Prasad is sacred pudding prepared according to the prescribed method. It is distributed after every ceremony in Sikh religion. Guru Nanak invented Karaha Prasad when the Sidhs came in company incarnated as old people without teeth and asked for food to test Guru Nanak's power. Then Guru Nanak ordered his followers to make Karaha Prasad from the resources available.

The ingredients of Karaha Prasad are:-

1. Wheat flour
2. Clarified butter (Ghee made from butter).
3. Sugar (All three in equal quantity by weight, water should be equal to the weight of all three ingredients)

Preparation before preparing Karaha Prasad

1. To prepare Karaha Prasad preparation is made like this:
2. First of all kitchen is swept clean.
3. The utensils are well cleaned and washed thoroughly.
4. The person who prepares the Karaha Prasad is a Sikh (Who believes in the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib)
5. The person who prepares the Karaha Prasad must have taken bath and should be bare-footed.
6. Head should be covered.
7. While engaged in preparing the Karaha Prasad he repeats Japji Sahib or such portion of it as he has committed to memory.

Method of Preparing Karaha Prasad:-

1. First of all sugar is dissolved in water in a pan (some people use iron pan) and placed on fire to simmer.
2. All the impurities are removed from the sugar which arise as forth, as the syrup comes to the boiling point. Impurities are removed with the help of sieve.
3. When all the impurities have been removed and the syrup is clear, it is strained and put in another vessel, kept ready for use.
4. It is kept boiling hot.
5. Ghee is placed in the pan (some people use iron pan) and brought to boiling point.
6. Flour is added and continuously is stirred with spatula so that no balls are formed.
7. If the quantity is too much then flour is added gradually while the mixture is kept stirring till the whole of the flour has been put into boiling ghee.

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8. The heat of the furnace is kept steady so that it does not burn the mixture.

9. When the flour is thoroughly cooked it changes its colour from white to a cream or yellowish tint like the colour of almonds.

10. It then begins to emit a peculiar smell of fresh biscuits or fresh baked warm bread.

11. When this happen the sweet hot syrup which had been kept handy is poured gradually into it.

12. If the syrup is put too early the Halva (Karaha Prasad) would remain sticky.

13. If it is put too late, the ghee would separate from the flour, colour will change and its taste will become bitter.

14. The good Karaha Prasad is the result of mixing the syrup at the right time.

Presenting before Guru Granth Sahib:-

1. Karaha Prasad is just put in another clean utensil and is covered with a clean piece of cloth.

2. It is placed on a clean stool in front of the Guru Granth Sahib.

3. In the presence of Guru Granth Sahib the first five and the last stanza of Anand Sahib is recited aloud. So, that every one in the congregation can hear it.

4. The Ardas is offered and the pudding is tucked with sacred Kirpan for acceptance.

5. After this before the distribution to the congregation of Karaha Prasad, the share of the five beloved ones is set apart and given away to any five baptized Sikhs present in the congregation

6. The share of the person in attendance of Guru Granth Sahib (Granthi) is put in a small vessel and is placed anywhere safer and closed to Guru Granth Sahib. The person can eat it after getting up from that place.

7. The person who doles out (distribute) the Karaha Prasad among the congregation does so without any discrimination. He doles out Karaha Prasad equally to the Sikh, the non Sikh or person of high or low caste.

8. While doling out the Karaha Prasad no discrimination should be made on consideration of caste or ancestry or being regarded by some as untouchable of persons with in the congregation.

What should not be done?

1. While preparing Karaha Prasad only wheat flour is used. Suji and besan should not be used.

2. Dry fruit is not used in Karaha Prasad.

Why we cross Karaha Prasad with Kirpan.

Crossing Karaha Prasad with Kirpan means that it has been accepted and sanctified by the Guru for distribution in the Sangat. In the beginning, when offerings were presented to the Guru, he received them personally by touching them with his hand.

During the later days the Guru used a 'Kirpan' or 'Arrow' to accept the offerings. The same practice was adopted by the Sikhs to accept and sanctify Karaha Prasad.

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