

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥

*Bhallee Amar Das Gun Tere
Teri Upma Tohe Ban Avay*

LIFE OF GURU AMAR DAS JI



The Saviour of Mercy

Publishers:

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy

Dedication

Guru Amar Das Ji

"The Honour of the Unhonoured; The Strength of the strengthless;
The Home of the Homeless; The Respect for those who have none;
The Support for Unsupported; The Hope for Hopeless; The
Calmness for Calmless; The Prophet of all prophets; The Time for
Timeless; The Liberator of the Captives; The Protector of the
Unprotected; The Benefactor of poor".

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy

2nd Floor, Wisma Tatt Khalsa, No. 24, Jalan Raja Alang,

50480 , Kuala Lumpur , Malaysia

Tel : 03-26971350 ,

Email: sggsacademy@gmail.com ,

Website: www.sggsacademy.com

A Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy Publication

Contents

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION	XIV
PREFACE	XVIII
1. INTRODUCTION	19
1.1 Guru Amar Das Ji	19
1.2 Guru Ka Langgar	19
1.3 Offering for a Day	20
1.4 Gurbani	20
1.5 Selfless Service.....	21
1.6 Preaching of Sikhism.....	21
1.7 Uplifting Woman's Status	21
1.8 Sri Amritsar Sahib	22
1.9 Vesakhi.....	22
1.10 Boali Sahib.....	22
2. EARLY LIFE	23
2.1 Family Background	23
2.2 Birth	24
2.3 Siblings	24
2.3.1 Bhai Isher Das	24
2.3.2 Bhai Khem Rai	25
2.3.3 Bhai Manak Chand.....	25
2.4 Physical Appearance	25
2.5 Childhood.....	25
2.6 Education	26
2.7 Marriage	26
2.8 Children	27
2.9 Spiritual Quest.....	27
2.10 Pandit Durga's Prophecy	27

2.11	Realisation	28
2.12	Search for A Guru	29
2.13	Bibi Amro Ji.....	29
2.14	Listening to Gurbani	29
2.15	Quest to Meet the True Guru.....	32
2.16	Meeting Guru Angad Dev Ji.....	32
2.17	Passion for Food from Guru Ji's Plate	33
3.	BABA AMAR DAS JI'S SELFLESS SEWA	35
3.1	Serving Water	35
3.2	Water for Guru Ji's Ishnaan	36
3.3	Meditation.....	36
3.4	Annual Awards	36
3.5	Refusal to Return.....	37
3.6	Selfless Service (Niskaam Seva)	37
4.	BLESSINGS ON BABA AMAR DAS JI	41
4.1	Rainy Cold Winter	41
4.2	Blessing Baba Amar Das Ji.....	42
5.	ESTABLISHMENT OF GOINDWAL	45
5.1	Bhai Gonda Meets Guru Ji.....	45
5.2	Founding of Goindwal	47
6.	QUALITIES OF GURU ANGAD DEV JI.....	50
6.1	Guru Angad Dev Ji's Visit to Goindwal	50
6.2	Virtues of Guru Angad Dev Ji	50
7.	SUPERSTITIONS IN KHADUR SAHIB	53
7.1	Prideful Tappa	53
8.	GREATNESS OF BABA AMAR DAS JI.....	55
8.1	The Touch of Salvation	55
8.2	Love for the Guru.....	55
8.3	Respect for the Guru	57

8.4	Recognition by the Guru.....	57
8.5	Inauguration of Guru Amar Dass Ji.....	58
8.6	Baba Amar Das Ji as the Third Guru	59
9.	GURU AMAR DAS JI'S DAILY ROUTINE.....	62
9.1	Darbar Sahib.....	62
9.2	Guru Ka Langgar	63
9.3	Bhai Kesu Das Ji.....	63
9.4	Chola Sahib	63
9.5	Daily Policy	64
9.6	The Sikhs.....	65
9.7	Pehle Pangat Phir Sangat	65
9.8	Glory of Guru Amar Das Ji.....	66
10.	BUILDING GOINDWAL SAHIB.....	67
10.1	Shortage of Timber.....	67
10.2	Bhai Saawan Mal Ji.....	68
10.3	Bhai Saawan Mal in Haripur	69
10.4	Dead Prince Became Alive	70
11.	THE HARIPUR KING BECOMES A SIKH	71
11.1	Glorified Saawan Mal.....	71
11.2	Solving the Timber Shortage in Goindwal Sahib	71
11.3	Life in Goindwal Sahib.....	72
11.4	Saawan Mal in Haripur	72
11.5	Saawan Mal's Refusal to Return.....	73
11.6	Guru Ji Summons Saawan Man	73
11.7	Saawan Mal's Preparation	74
11.8	The Forgiver Guru.....	74
12.	KING HARI CHAND AND SACHAN SACH.....	76
12.1	King HariChand Meets Guru Ji	76
12.2	The Young Queen	77

12.3	King HariChand Leaves Goindwal	77
12.4	Bhai Sachan Sach.....	78
12.5	Bhai Sachan Sach and the Young Queen	78
13.	BHAI DATU JI.....	81
13.1	Bhai Datu Ji's Envy.....	81
13.2	Bhai Datu Ji Kicks Guru Ji.....	83
14.	GURU AMAR DAS JI LEAVES GOINDWAL.....	84
14.1	Guru Ji in Isolation.....	84
14.2	Bhai Datu Ji Ignored by the Sanggat	84
14.3	Bhai Datu Ji Repents	85
14.4	Guru Ji's Absence	85
14.5	Baba Buddha Ji	85
15.	APPEARANCE OF GURU JI.....	88
15.1	The Search for Guru Ji.....	88
15.2	Guru Ji's Command	88
15.3	Baba Buddha Ji Penetrates the Wall.....	89
15.4	Guru Ji Established Sann Sahib	90
15.5	Guru Ji Returned to Goindwal Sahib	90
16.	DEVOTED SIKHS	92
16.1	Bhai Paro Julka Ji.....	92
16.2	Bhai Lalo Ji	93
16.3	A Pathan.....	93
17.	OBEDIENT SIKHS.....	95
17.1	Sikhs of Dhaley	95
17.2	Bhai Mahesha Ji.....	95
18.	THE RUINS OF SHEIKH'S HOMES.....	97
19.	SALVATION OF SIKHS	99
19.1	Bhai Lalu Ji, Bhai Durga & Bhai Jivanda	99
19.2	Bhai Jagha Ji	100

19.3	Bhai Kahnu Ji, Bhai Maeaa Ji & Bhai Govind Ji	101
20.	ADVICE TO SIKHS	103
20.1	Bhai Jodh Ji.....	103
20.2	Bhai Prithimal Ji & Bhai Talsa Ji.....	103
20.3	Bhai Malan Ji.....	103
20.4	Bhai Ugarsain Ji, Bhai Ramu Ji & Bhai Deepa Ji.....	104
20.5	Bhai Gopi Ji, Bhai Ramu Ji, Bhai Mahita Ji & Bhai Mohan Mal Ji & Bhai Amru Ji	104
20.6	Bhai Gangu Ji & Bhai Seharu Bharu Ji.....	104
20.7	Bhai Ugru Ji, Bhai Taru Ji, Bhai Jhenda Ji & Bhai Puro Ji	105
20.8	Bhai Maliyar Ji & Bhai Seharu Ji	105
20.9	Bhai Bhula Ji.....	105
20.10	Sikh from Dhaley	105
21.	INTRODUCING RAM DAS JI.....	107
21.1	Birth	107
21.2	Earning a Living	107
21.3	Goindwal.....	107
21.4	Marriage	108
21.5	Children	108
22.	BIRBAL.....	110
22.1	North Assignment.....	110
22.2	Goindwal.....	110
22.3	Egoistic Birbal	110
22.4	Guru Ji's Advice.....	111
22.5	Birbal's Warning	111
22.6	Guru Ji's Verdict.....	112
23.	THE BLESSED GOINDWAL.....	113
23.1	A Widows Dead Son Rises	113
23.2	The Story of Typhoid Fever	113
24.	VESAKHI CELEBRATIONS IN GOINDWAL	116

24.1	Vesakhi Celebration	116
24.2	Ram Das Ji's Sewa.....	116
25.	COMPLAINTS AGAINST GURU JI	118
25.1	Acceptance by All	118
25.2	Opposition by Upper Class.....	118
25.3	Complaint to King Akbar	118
26.	RAM DAS JI IN KING AKBAR'S COURT.....	120
26.1	The Hearing in King Akbar's Court	120
26.2	King Akbar's Judgement.....	121
27.	RAM DAS JI'S LOVE FOR GURU.....	122
27.1	A Robe for Guru Ji.....	122
27.2	A Mango for Guru Ji.....	122
27.3	Arriving in Goindwal.....	123
28.	MASSIONARY TOUR & PANDIT DURGA.....	124
28.1	Missionary Tour	124
28.2	Pandit Durga	124
28.3	Guru Ji's Audience	125
28.4	Choice in Blessings.....	125
28.5	The Great Bestower.....	127
29.	CONSTRUCTION OF BOALI SAHIB	128
29.1	Proposal for Boali Sahib	128
29.2	Ground Breaking Ceremony	128
29.3	Construction of Boali Sahib.....	128
29.4	Ram Das Ji's Selfless Service (Sewa)	129
30.	RAM DAS JI'S RELATIVES.....	130
30.1	Meeting Ram Das Ji.....	130
30.2	Praising Guru Amar Das Ji	130
30.3	The Annoyed Relatives	131
30.4	Honouring Ram Das Ji.....	132

31.	MAI DAS VESHNO	133
31.1	Intention to Meet Guru Ji	133
31.2	Preference for Ritual.....	133
31.3	Going to Dwarka	134
31.4	Divine Voice.....	134
31.5	Quest for Guru Ji's Darshan	135
31.6	The Divine Realisation.....	136
32.	BHAI MANEK CHAND	137
32.1	Releasing Water in Boali Sahib	137
32.2	Appointed as Mentor.....	137
32.3	Preaching the True Way of Life.....	138
33.	KING AKBAR'S FAITH IN GURU JI.....	139
34.	GANGU SHAH BESI KHETRI	140
34.1	In Guruji's Presence	140
34.2	Back in Business	140
34.3	A Call for Sewa.....	141
34.4	In Guru Ji's Service.....	141
34.5	The Ever Forgiving Guru	142
35.	THE OBEDIENT WIFE OF KABUL.....	143
35.1	Service for Boali Sahib.....	143
35.2	Obedient Wife from Kabul	143
35.3	The Returns of Selfless Sewa.....	144
35.4	An Ancient Story	144
35.5	The Blessings.....	145
36.	GURU'S BLESSING IN GOINDWAL	146
36.1	Service to Mankind	146
36.2	Guru Ji's Community Kitchen (Langgar)	147
36.3	Rama Ji and Ram Das Ji.....	147
36.4	A Question by Sikhs.....	148

37.	A TEST OF ENDURANCE.....	150
37.1	Guru's Response	150
37.2	The First Day.....	150
37.3	The Second Day.....	151
37.4	The Third Day	151
37.5	Conclusion.....	152
38.	THE LIBERATOR.....	153
38.1	Greatness of Boali Sahib	153
38.2	SANT SIDHARAN	153
38.3	A Childhood Friend	154
38.4	A YOGI	155
39.	GURU JI'S FAMILY	156
39.1	Baba Arthmal Ji	156
39.2	The Birth of Yogi (Baba Anand Ji)	156
39.3	The Recitation of Anand Sahib	156
39.4	Baba Arjani Ji.....	157
39.5	Baba Mohan Ji	158
39.6	Baba Sansram.....	158
40.	THE FORGIVER.....	160
40.1	A Sage (Tapa).....	160
40.2	Matho Murari.....	162
41.	BRAHMAN KHEDA SOINI & GONDA'S SON	165
41.1	Kheda Soini	165
41.2	Bhai Gonda's Children	166
42.	HUMBLENESS AS WAY OF LIFE	169
42.1	Proud Pandit Beni	169
42.2	Bhai Phiria and Bhai Ketara	172
43.	GIVING LIFE TO A CHILD, THE VISIT OF AKBAR.....	174
43.1	The Pleasant Goindwal	174

43.2	Life to Lifeless.....	174
43.3	Goindwal - Free of Death.....	175
43.4	King Akbar's Visit	175
44.	BIBI BHANI JI & BHAJ LANGGAH JI	178
44.1	Bibi Bhani Ji	178
44.2	Bhai Langgah Ji.....	178
44.3	Sikh Way of Life.....	180
45.	MERCIFUL GURU.....	181
45.1	Greatness of Langgar	181
45.2	Guru Ji's Routine	182
45.3	Bibi Bhani Ji's Sacrifice.....	182
45.4	Blessings on Bibi Bhani Ji.....	183
45.5	Guru Arjan Dev Ji's Childhood	184
46.	BELOVED SIKH	186
46.1	Bhai Paro	186
46.2	Baba Mohri Ji.....	187
47.	GURU RAM DAS JI BLESSED WITH THE THRONE.....	189
47.1	Blessings of Age.....	189
47.2	Inauguration of Guru Ram Das Ji.....	189
47.3	Baba Mohan Ji	190
47.4	Baba Mohri Ji.....	191
47.5	A Plead from Guru Ram Das Ji.....	192
48.	GURU AMAR DAS JI'S JYOTI JOT.....	193
48.1	Bhai Datu Ji	194
48.2	Merging into Formless Form.....	194
48.3	Final Rites.....	195
49.	SUMMARY	196
50.	TWENTY-TWO MANJI'S.....	201
51.	GURBANI	202

51.1	Compositions.....	202
51.2	Prosody.....	203
51.3	Music.....	203
52.	VARAN BHAI GURDASS.....	205
52.1	Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 9).....	205
52.2	Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 10).....	206
52.3	Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 11).....	207
52.4	Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 12).....	208
52.5	Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 13).....	209
53.	GURU AMAR DAS JI IN A GLANCE.....	210
53.1	Missionary Work.....	210
53.2	Sikh Ceremonies.....	211
53.3	Gurbani Compilation	211
53.4	Against Caste Discrimination.....	211
53.5	Gender Equality	212
53.6	Forbid Alcohol	213
53.7	Guru Ka Langgar	213
53.8	Character and Personality.....	214
53.9	Tributes	214
53.10	Sikh Way of Life.....	216
53.11	His Philosophy	216
53.11.1	Guru	217
53.11.2	Selfless Service (Niskaam Sewa)	217
53.11.3	Universal Love	218
53.11.4	True Congregation (Sat-Sangat):	218
53.11.5	Detachment	218
53.11.6	Almighty's Name / Kirten	219
53.11.7	Devotion and Humility	220
53.11.8	Divine Grace	220

53.11.9	Bliss and Union	221
---------	------------------------------	-----

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy

“Aayoo sunan paren ko Bani”

The mortal has come to this world to hear and utter the Guru’s word.

In 1708, our beloved 10th Master Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, blessed us with an everlasting gift of life - **DHAN SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI**.

The alphabet, content and the message of the one Almighty was presented to us directly by our Gurus. Sikhs are truly blessed with an original and authentic source.

Gurbani is our Guru. Reading and understanding His message is our first step towards knowing our Guru.

The Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy Trust was specifically set-up to address this need - to develop a systematic modular method for *Gurmat* Studies that helps bring *Gurbani* to everyone. Today, the Academy brings to you a systematic and comprehensive *Gurmat* education syllabus organized in a modular format, tailored to today’s lifestyle.

The Academy’s programs are designed with the aim of developing learned Sikhs who will be able to read and understand *Gurbani*, have pride in their rich heritage and celebrate the greatness of the Sikh religion.

The Academy currently offers the following courses:

- Learn Gurmukhi in 3-months Course
- Gurmukhi Reading Course
- Gurbani Foundation Course
- Diploma in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Course
- Advance diploma in Guru Granth Sahib Ji Course
-

Learn Gurmukhi in 3-months Course

This course is designed for adults. Using speed learning techniques and the phonics method, a beginner with no previous knowledge of the Gurmukhi alphabet is taught to read Sri Japji Sahib over a period of 12 hours. The course is conducted over a period of 12 weekends. This method has been tried and tested and over 1,100 students, with little or no knowledge of Gurmukhi, were able to read Sri Japji Sahib in front of the entire congregation. !!!

Gurmukhi Reading Course

This course is presented to students who have successfully completed the Learn Gurmukhi in 3-months and for those who wish to improve their fluency reading in Gurmukhi.

Gurbani Foundation Course

Designed for individuals with basic and intermediate knowledge of *Gurmukhi*, this course is to introduce foundation knowledge for the reading of *Gurbani*. This is an interactive course that works on developing confidence and interest of the participant. The focus will be on the pronunciation of alphabets, practice of muharni and understanding Gurmukhi phonics.

With only 12 hours of investment over 6 weeks, the student will be able to read fluently Sri Japji Sahib, Anand Sahib, Kirten Sohila, Dekhni Ongkaar, Vaar (Majh & Ramkali), Bhagat Bani, Sehaskriti and Gatha. In addition, short sakhis from the life of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji will be shared with the students.

Diploma in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (“SGGS”) Course

This course is designed to give students a comprehensive knowledge on the reading and deeper understanding of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as well as an in-depth history of the Bhagats and Gurus.

- **SGGS reading** – provide the essential techniques and knowledge in reading Gurbani with proper pronunciations and punctuations. The subject is delivered over 8-volumes which covers Ang 1 to Ang 1430 of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, with guided notes on pronunciation and punctuations. The delivery adopts a collective interactive method to encourage students to read in a group and thereby improve by listening. Includes a line-by-line English Translation based on Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji translation with added information in simple day to day English language
- **Understanding Gurbani** – uses a contemplative learning method to enhance the understanding by describing the word, adding on the line-by-line approach and the entire shabad’s conceptual meaning. Includes learning the historical facts to when Gurbani was recited.
- **Sikh History** – adopts inventive (resourceful) method which emphasises the learning of Sikh history including major milestones that helped shape the course of the Sikh religion. The syllabus contains various authentic historical references

Advance Diploma in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (“SGGS”) Course

This course is designed to give students a comprehensive knowledge in relation to the following:

- Gurbani Pronunciation
- Gurbani Kav
- Gurbani Viakaran
- Gurbani Raag

The above is delivered over 2 years, through 4 semesters.

The course is conducted over 4 years, divided into 8 semesters (17 weeks per semester) = 48 months = 128 weeks = 256 hours only

All these courses provide a means for Sikhs to understand their religion, learn about their heritage and most importantly, connect us with the Almighty

Currently, over 1,000 students are pursuing this course at our Academy Centers

A must for every Sikh who wants to know his Guru and HIS divine philosophy that today stands as an example before the world.

The syllabus is prepared by Sikh Scholars based on universally accepted references within the Sikh Diaspora.

To-date the Academy has received the following accreditation:

Nov 2006	-Singh Sahib Giani Jaswinder Singh Ji - Head Granthi of Sri Harminder Sahib, Amritsar, approves & releases the Academy's syllabus.
Mar 2007	-Takht Sri Harminder, Patna Sahib gives official recognition (Perman Petar) to the Academy, endorses Academy's materials and appoints Bhai Paramjit Singh Ji as Jatherdar.
Dec 2008	-Singh Sahib Bhai Gurbachan Singh Ji, Jatherdar of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, grants Akal Takhat Sahib's official recognition (Perman Petar) to the Academy
Dec 2010	-Singh Sahib Giani Balwant Singh, Nandgarh - Jatherdar, Takhat Damdama Sahib, Sabo Ki Talwandi, endorses Academy's work and materials.
Dec 2010	-Singh Sahib Giani Kulwant Singh - Jatherdar, Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Sahib, Nanded.

These courses are now offered in Malaysia, Thailand and Australia with ongoing deliberations for set in India, Indonesia, New Zealand and United Kingdom, in collaboration with local Gurdwaras and Sikh Societies.

Join the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy to read Gurbani, understand Gurbani and learn the History of our Gurus. It is the divine route towards a spiritual enlightened life which gives a precise meaning to life by which the reality of truth is understood through our eternal Guru. This will lead us to a blissful, contented, merciful, faithful and meaningful life.

The entire syllabus is prepared based on globally accepted references within Sikh communities across the globe.

Academy Centres

Malaysia

Currently, over 800 students are attending these courses at the Academy's headquarters in Wisma Tatt Khalsa, Kuala Lumpur and 28 centres all over Malaysia. The age group of the students ranges from as young as 5 to 70-years old. Here you will see families coming together once a week to attend classes, thus encouraging family bonding in accordance to the famous phrase - "*A family that prays together stays together*" (*in this case learns Gurbani together*).

Bangkok, Thailand

December, 2008 saw the Academy branching out to Bangkok, Thailand. We currently have close to 150 students who are currently undertaking the Learn Gurmukhi in 3 months, Gurbani Foundation Course and the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Diploma course.

Australia

In April 2009, His Excellency Singh Sahib Gyani Gurbachan Singh Ji, the Jathedar of Sri Akaal Takhat Sahib, Amritsar launched the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy centres in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide.

In September 2009, Mr John Brumby, the Victorian Premier launched the commencement of classes in Blackburn Gurdwara, Melbourne.

We currently have four centers with active classes in Melbourne, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Woolgoolga and Murwillumbah. The other centers are expected to commence classes soon once the logistic matters are sorted.

Do join the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy to develop your spiritual interest. Learn to read *Gurbani* and relate it with the history of our Gurus, in order to have a better understanding of *Gurbani*. It is through *Gurbani* that we learn to live a more virtuous life. It is the divine route towards a spiritually enlightened life by which the reality of truth is realized through our eternal Guru. This is the true path to a blissful, contented, merciful and meaningful life.

All you need to bring along is the thirst for knowledge and your commitment to achieve your goal, for Bhai Gurdass Ji says in his *Kabit 111*:

Charan saran gur aek paindaa jaa-i chal

Satgur kot paindaa aagay ho-i layt hai

Walk even one step towards the Feet of the Guru;

And the True Guru will walk millions of steps to welcome you.

To Know Your Guru, Is To Love Your Guru



PREFACE

“Bhalle Amar Das Gun Tere, Teri Upma Tohe Ban Avay - Life of Sri Guru Amar Das Ji”

The Life of Sri Guru Amar Das Ji aims to provide a detailed narration of life of Sri Guru Amar Das Ji – Our Third Guru. The contents are based on the authentic and prominent historical references and evidence which is truly comprehensive.

Whilst there are many English translations available within the community, these are usually available in the form of summarized ‘sakhis’ or analytical works carried out by renowned scholars. This is a first attempt to provide a detailed narration of Sri Guru Amar Das Ji’s life in simple English language based on the authentic and prominent historical references and evidence which is truly comprehensive.

It is hoped that by reading this book, readers, especially those who are more literate in English will have a glimpse of the unparalleled and merciful life of our Third Guru

We would like to stress that this is a modest attempt to contribute to the Sikh community and whilst every effort has been taken to ensure that the quality and accuracy of the information is of the highest standards, there is still room for improvements. In particular, the language can be further improved and we call upon volunteers who have a strong hold on the English to further improve this 1st edition.

We also look forward to your valuable feedback so that we can improve this 1st edition. We are a very young group and thus have a lot to learn and improve. It is only with the Blessings of our beloved Guruji and HIS beloved Gursikhs that we will be able to improvise the current work in the service of Khalsa Panth.

In the service of Khalsa Panth

Editorial Board

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Academy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Guru Amar Das Ji

Guru Amar Das Ji, Guru Nanak the third, was a vibrant and the most aged among all the other Sikh Gurus. Guru Amar Das Ji believed in the equality of all humans.

Guru Amar Das, is referred to as "an incomparable Guru" in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, 'Bhalle Amar Das Gun Tere, Teri Upma Tohe Ban Avai'. Not in the sense of unparalleled qualitative superiority or imperial spiritual status, for, according to Sikh doctrines there is no social hierarchy in the world of the Spirit and no gradation of excellence or rank amongst God's prophets or men otherwise 'manifestation of God Himself'. The Sikh scripture refers to all true prophets and men filled with the Holy Spirit, as 'co-equal and entitled to utmost reverence'. But there are differences of identity and in the aroma of the time-climate in which the prophets and the messengers of God manifest themselves and operate. It is in this sense that Guru Amar Das is referred to as 'incomparable' by Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji¹.

1.2 Guru Ka Langgar

Guru Amar Das Ji strengthened and further institutionalized the tradition of 'Guru ka Langgar', the free communal kitchen and made it obligatory that those seeking his audience must first eat in the langgar and made it compulsory for the visitors who came to see the Guru, to eat first, saying that 'Pehle Pangat Phir Sangat' (first sit with commoners and share the same food in Langgar then join the Guru's Congregation).

Once the emperor Akbar came to visit Guru Amar Das Ji and he ate the coarse rice in the Langgar before he could meet Guru Ji. He was so much impressed with this system that he expressed his desire to grant some royal property for 'Guru ka Langgar'. Although Guru Ji declined it with respect, he insisted and donated a large piece of surrounding land to the house of Guru Nanak.



¹ An Incomparable Prophet Guru Amar Dass by Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh

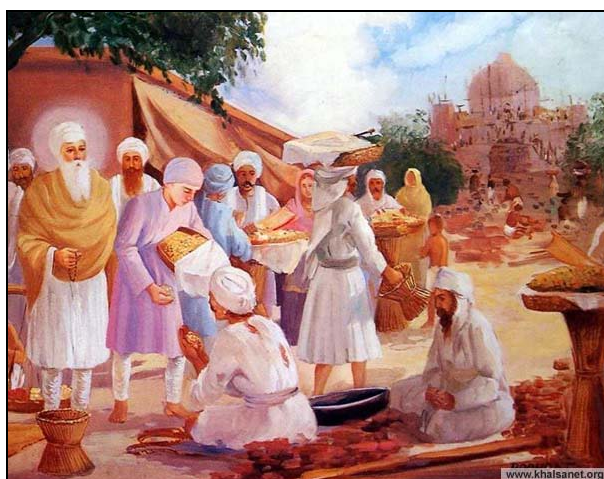
1.3 Offering for a Day

Guru Amar Das Ji only accepted offerings which would be consumed within a day and any extra offering was declined as Guru Ji believed that Guru's kitchen must serve only fresh food delivered daily. At mid night all the remaining raw and cooked food was fed to the livestock or thrown into the river, including vessels filled with water that were emptied.

1.4 Gurbani

Guru Amar Das collected an anthology of writings including hymns of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Angad Dev Ji and added his own as well as those of other Hindu and Muslim saints whose poems conformed to the teachings of Sikhism. All of these were in Punjabi and easily understood by the common people. When a learned Brahmin once questioned the Guru; "Why do you not impart instruction to your disciples in Sanskrit, the language of gods in which all the Hindu lore is written, but in their mother-tongue, like Punjabi, the language of the illiterate mass." To this Guru Amar Das replied; "Sanskrit is like a well, deep, inaccessible and confined to the elite, but the language of the people is like rain water - ever fresh, abundant and accessible to all." He said; "I want my doctrines to be propagated through every language which the people speak, for it is not language but the content that should be considered sacred or otherwise."

Guru Ji concentrated mainly on the Gurbani and distributed it in the form of 'Gutke' (compilation of different Banis) in many different areas. This was essential as to restrain the mixture of self made poems by unfaithful people into Gurbani. For the above task, Guru Ji chose his grandson Baba Sansram Ji². Baba Sansram Ji wrote Gurbani and at the same time learnt the meaning of Gurbani from Guru Ji.



² Baba Sansram Ji was the son of Baba Mohan Ji who was the elder son of Guru Amar Das Ji

1.5 Selfless Service

Guru Amar Das Ji came to the sanctuary of Guru Angad Dev Ji at the age of 72 years. He spent 12 years serving Guru Angad Dev Ji devotedly without a single day of absence. He maintained his routine through the most extreme seasons and endeavoured the most challenging tasks in serving selflessly.

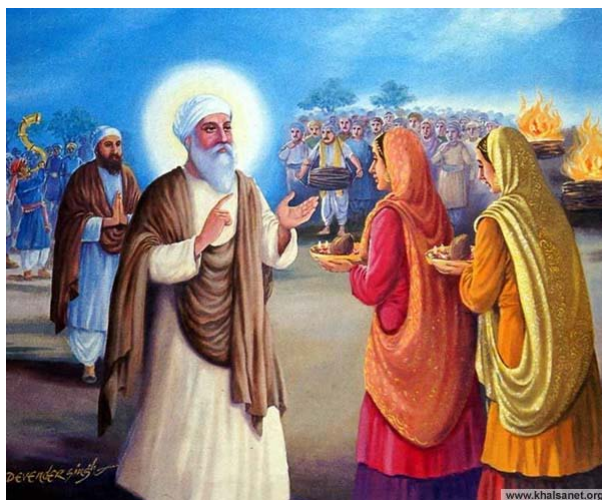
Guru Amar Das Ji was criticized by various people for taking the refuge at the house of his nephew's in-laws in his old age. However he quietly continued to serve the Guru and Sangat by focussing on Almighty's meditation.

Even after becoming the Guru, he spent his time personally attending to the cure and nursing of the sick and the aged. Guru Amar Das Ji was a very caring and a loving Guru.

1.6 Preaching of Sikhism

During the Guruship of Guru Amar Das Ji, steps were taken to organize the scattered Sangat into a unified whole by what was called Manji system. His whole spiritual domain took the shape of 22 Manjis (Dioceses). The person in charge of the Manji would deliver the message of the Guru. He was a devoted Sikh who was blessed by Guru Ji before he was appointed to that position. His function was to preach the mission Guru Nanak, to keep the Sangat in touch with the Guru. Guru Amar Das Ji established another organization called Peehris system. Ladies were in charges of the Peehris, and their objective was to lit the flame of Guru's word and spread the fragrance of Almighty's Name (Naam) among women. Bibi Bhani, Bibi Dani and Bibi Pal were some of the most revered heads of the different Peehris. Guru Amar Das had given authority to his 146 apostles to go and spread the fragrance and glory of Almighty's Name (Naam) in as many regions. Out of these 146 apostles, 94 were men and 52 women.

1.7 Uplifting Woman's Status



The status of women in Indian society at that time was very low. Guru Amar Das not only preached the equality of people irrespective of their caste but he also fostered the idea of women's equality. When the husband died, the wife either voluntarily burnt herself on the pyre of her husband or was thrown into the fire without her consent. The woman who did perform this act was called a Satee (truthful). Guru Amar Das carried out an active campaign against the practice of Satee. He gave special attention to the improvement of the status of women and thus prohibited this practice and preached in favor of widow marriage.

Thus he raised the status of women and protected the rights of female infants who were killed without question as they were deemed to have no status. These teachings met with stiff resistance from the Orthodox Religious Leaders.

1.8 Sri Amritsar Sahib

Seeing the rapid expansion of Sikhism, Guru Amar Das asked his son-in-law and trusted follower Bhai Ram Das Ji (later Guru Ram Das Ji) to oversee the founding of another city. He wanted him to dig a tank there and to build a new township. Bhai Ram Das Ji first purchased the lands for the price of 700 Akbari rupees from the landlords (Zamindars) of Tung. Here he started the digging on the tank. This new township called Ram Daspur would in due time become present day Amritsar, the holiest city of the Sikhs.

1.9 Vesakhi

Guru Amar Das Ji initiated the large gathering of Sikhs with the first ever such gathering that was called on the first day of the month of Vesakh (mid-April).

1.10 Boali Sahib

Guru Amar Das constructed a Well called "Baoli Sahib" at Goindwal Sahib having eighty-four steps and made it an established Sikh centre for the first time in the history of Sikhism.



2. EARLY LIFE

2.1 Family Background

There was a village called Basarke³ which is about thirteen (13) kilometres south-west from Cherta in Amritsar district. A good-natured man named Bhai Ram Narayan migrated with his family to this village. He belonged to the Khatari cast and was well known for his good reputation and religious background. His origin was from the Bhalle lineage which originated from, Ram Chander⁴ Ji's brother by the name of Bharat⁵. Later Bhai Bishen Das was born who was a sweet-spoken and virtuous person⁶. He performed meditation and after striving for a few years he became a successful business man.

Bhai Bishen Das Ji was blessed with a son who was named Har Ji. Har Ji was raised in a holistic environment and after getting married to Bibi Milwali (who was a very wise lady) he migrated to Gillwali on the periphery of Amritsar near Lahore. Har Ji started trading raw grain and his business was very successful from which he earned a great amount of wealth⁷. Bhai Har Ji was blessed with a son, who was name Tej Bhan Ji (Tej Mal)⁸.

Bhai Tej Bhan Ji was married at a young age to Mata Lachmi Ji⁹ also known by the name of Mata Roop Kaur¹⁰, Lakho Ji¹¹, Lakhmi Ji¹² and Sulakhani Ji¹³. After a few years Bhai Har Ji returned to his village Basarke with his wife leaving behind his son to take over his business in Gillwali. Bhai Har Ji started the same business in Basarke where he was successful as well. After living a righteous life Bhai Bishen Das passed away in Basarke and Bhai Har Ji took his remains to Hardwar to rest them in the Gangges River. But while in Hardwar, Bhai Har Ji also passed away¹⁴.

The responsibility of the business came upon Baba Tej Bhan. By nature he was a very contented and pious person therefore he couldn't manage the business. Baba Tej Bhan Ji

³ During Guru Amar Das Ji's time this village was very large which included Kotli Mie and Kotli Naseeb. There is a large lake, Bibi Amro Ji's memorial and Guru Amar Das Ji's Well which was built to fulfil the villager's water needs. - Parbat Meran by Satbir Singh

⁴ The Prophet of Thretha Yug who was the son of King Dasrath of Ayudhya

⁵ Mahima Perkash, Gur Pernali & Kavi Gulab Singh Ji

⁶ Panth Perkash – Gyani Gyan Singh Ji

⁷ Bansavalinama: Charan 3

⁸ Gurbertap Suraj Granth Ras 1, Ansu 7 – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

⁹ Gurparnali – Gulab Singh, Gurbani Path Darshan- Sant Gyani Gurbachan Singh Khalsa Bhindranwale

¹⁰ Gurbertap Suraj Granth Ras 1, Ansu 7 – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

¹¹ Bansavalinama- Kesar Singh Chhibber

¹² Panth Perkash – Gyani Gyan Singh Ji

¹³ The Life of Guru Amar Das Ji-Bhai Jodh Singh

¹⁴ Parbat Meran by Principal Satbir Singh

then returned to his village in Basarke leaving behind the business in Gillwali, the entire family business was scaled-down to a small retail shop in Basarke but he never gave up¹⁵. As time passed his family grew therefore the earning from the shop was not enough, he then started to trade by moving from one village to another. Baba Tej Bhan Ji and his wife Mata Roop Kaur did intense meditation while performing all household duties.

2.2 Birth

As time passed Baba Tej Bhan Ji was blessed with a son who was the embodiment of humbleness. The baby was named Amar Das (Guru Amar Das Ji), defining the new born as the servant of Almighty. No one knew that one day this baby will be blessed with the most supreme throne and the entire world would prostrate before him.

Baba Amar Das (Guru Amar Das Ji) was born in Basarke village, Amritsar district in Punjab, on Friday, Vaisakh Sudhi 14th, Samvat Bikermi 1526, (5th May 1469 A.D.)¹⁶. Some historians¹⁷ are of the opinion that Baba Amar Das Ji was born in the year 1536 Bikermi (1479 A.D.). However, there is no dispute over the month and day. He was the eldest son of Baba Tej Bhan Ji. His mother's name was Mata Lachmi Ji (also known as Roop Kaur)¹⁸.

2.3 Siblings

Guru Amar Das Ji was the eldest and he had three younger brothers. Their brief introduction is as follows;

2.3.1 Bhai Isher Das

Bhai Isher Das was a very knowledgeable person and he was blessed with a son who became the greatest scholar in Sikh Religion, known as Bhai Gurdas Ji who composed Vara and Kabit. He was selected as the first writer of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. His remarkable work (Vara & Kabit) was honoured by Guru Arjan Dev Ji as the Key to understand Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. He served four (4) Gurus (Guru Amar Das Ji, Guru Ram Das Ji, Guru Arjan Dev Ji and Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji) and was blessed with the sight (darshan) of eight (8) Gurus (Guru Angad Dev Ji to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji)

¹⁵ Mahima Perkash

¹⁶ Gurbertap Suraj Granth-edited by Bhai Vir Singh, Philosophy of Sikhism by Dr. Sher Singh, Gurbani Path Darshan- Sant Gyani Gurbachan Singh Khalsa Bhindranwale

¹⁷ The Sikh Religion Vol II – Macauliffe, Gurpuran Nirnei - Historian Karam Singh, A Short History of the Sikhs-Teja Singh & Ganda Singh and The Sikhs-Khushwant Singh

¹⁸ According to Mahima Perkash is Mata Lakho Ji which seems to be a nick name originated from Mata Lachmi Ji whereas Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha author of Mahan Kosh gives her name as Mata Sulakhni (Lachmi) Ji. However it must be noted that during the olden days when a new bride comes to her in-laws after marriage, she was given a new name.

2.3.2 Bhai Khem Rai

Bhai Khem Rai Ji was a humble person and his son was Saawan Mal Ji who was sent to Haripur by Guru Amar Das Ji to bring back timber for the construction of houses in Goindwal.

2.3.3 Bhai Manak Chand

Bhai Manak Chand was a much respected person as he was a very hardworking and he continued the inherited family business. His son Bhai Jasoo Ji was married to Guru Angad Dev Ji's daughter Bibi Amro Ji¹⁹ and she introduced Guru Nanak's house to Baba Amar Das Ji. She was the turning point in Baba Amar Das Ji's life.

2.4 Physical Appearance

Bhat Kelashar wrote in gurbani that Baba Amar Das Ji (Guru Amar Das Ji) had a handsome physical appearance with a divine mark (Padham) on his right hand, his face had extra-ordinary glow with all the sustaining power (Sidhi) of the world and all eighteen miraculous powers (Ridhi).

Kavi Santokh Singh wrote in Gur Pertap Suraj Granth that Baba Amar Das Ji was short in height, had beautiful eyes which sharp ends, his lips were red like radish pods, his neck was like a shell (sankh), he had beautiful hair and his beautiful long arms reached his knees. These were the signs of a highly spiritual person. He had a tough and a strong body which served Guru Angad Dev Ji for twelve years even at the elderly age of 72.

2.5 Childhood

Baba Amar Das Ji was educated by his father at home. At a young age he started assisting his father in business. He sat in the shop the whole day helping in what ever way he could. Once in a while he went out with his friends to play, while playing he would emphasize on the importance of practicing a truthful and a honest life. Whenever he saw a needy person, he would bring him along to his house to offer food and clothing²⁰.

Baba Amar Das Ji had no fascination for Maya. He remained focused and would spend entire nights in the Almighty's meditation²¹. Whenever any saint or a group of saints

¹⁹ According to Trumpp and Abdul Latif – Bhai Manak Chand was very poor as he had only one horse on which he loads his trading materials and moves from one village to another therefore it was a great noble act of Guru Angad Dev Ji by getting his daughter to be married to his son.

²⁰ Panth Perkash – Gyani Gyan Singh Ji

²¹ Mahima Perkash

came to the village he would insist they stayed as long as possible. He would arrange for the lodging and serve them with devotion²².

2.6 Education

Although the historians are silent about Baba Amar Das Ji's formal education that was based on the vast body of hymns (Gurbani) compiled in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji there was no doubt that Guru Amar Das Ji was well-versed in scriptures, religious philosophies and the spiritual wisdom. The ease and lucidity with which He alluded to other religions, its philosophical postulates and ritual in his compositions established his credentials as a man of profound learning. Early in His life he must have acquired working knowledge of languages and calculations that helped him as a trader who purchased and sold commodities in the village.

2.7 Marriage

Being focussed in Almighty's meditation he avoided any discussion initiated by his parents about marriage. Therefore, all his three (3) younger brothers got married before him. After a few years of explanation about the importance of household life in performing religious acts and achieving goals of a human life, Baba Amar Das Ji agreed to get married. His marriage took place in the village of Sanakkhatra which is located twenty miles south from Syalkot and 10 miles east from Pasrur Nagar. He was married to Bhai Gopal Das (also known as Dewi Chand) and Mata Jaswanti's daughter Mata Ramo Ji (also named as Mansa Devi²³) on Sunday, 7th Magh 1557 Bikermi (19th January 1500A.D.)²⁴.

After marriage, Baba Amar Das Ji and Mata Ramo Ji (Mata Mansa Devi) lived together happily with utmost love and affection. Both of revered the Almighty. They would meditate together. During the day, Mata Ramo Ji would attend to the domestic affairs and Baba Amar Das Ji would take care of the business.

Mata Ramo Ji was a very strong hearted person and an epitome of selfless service. She complimented Guru Amar Das Ji's intelligence and endurance. She was never upset and never said anything that would hurt another person.

Mata Ramo Ji was born on Friday in the month of Chet in the year 1542 Bikermi (1485A.D.) and she passed away in Goindwal on Monday, 17th Poh 1628 (31st December 1571A.D.)

²² Panth Perkash – Gyani Gyan Singh Ji

²³ Panth Perkash – Gyani Gyan Singh Ji

²⁴ Sri Gurdwara Darshan – Gyani Thakur Singh Ji (Printed Decemeber 1923)

2.8 Children

Baba Amar Das Ji was blessed with two (2) daughters and two (2) sons. The eldest was Bibi Dhani Ji²⁵. Mata Ramo then gave birth to another daughter Bibi Bhani Ji on Sunday, 27th Magh 1591 Bikermi (13th December 1534 A.D.). After two years, Mata Ramo Ji gave birth to a son Baba Mohan Ji on Thursday, 7th Vesakh 1593 (18th April 1536 A.D.) and three years later, Baba Amar Das Ji was blessed with another son Baba Mohri Ji on Monday, 9th Savan 1596 (21st July 1539 A.D.).²⁶

2.9 Spiritual Quest

After spending half a lifetime in striving to earn a decent household living, Baba Amar Das Ji realized that life was just passing by without any advancement in spiritual life, he thought of venturing out in order to find the ideal spiritual path that would make life more meaningful. Babaji decided to search for the truth while avoiding any sinful activity which may arise in the quest of truth i.e. to remain truthful always. Babaji was determined to find the righteous path in the present life to ensure eternal life after passing away. Without righteousness life may be influenced by happiness or sadness that add to Karma which caused a person to be reborn to and die countless times. One had to be conscience of life, to be truthful and righteous, without which death would approach with the horrific angels of death (jamdooth) snatching the soul out of the body, then it would be too late to regret. We should not waste our entire life merely accomplishing worldly deeds.

Babaji decided to quest for spirituality by visiting and meditating at sacred places. These places were ideal for that purpose. It is only possible to meditate at a young age, because when a person grows older, he would lose the physical strength of doing so. At that time the Gangga River was considered the most sacred place to meditate and ablution of sins. Babaji decided to visit the sacred place in order to fulfill his quest, once in six months. Babaji walked bare footed all the way and performed rituals there and sat at the banks of Gangga and meditated without any desire for rewards. By meditating, Babaji became free from greed, anger or lust and developed a blissful life. The same blissful state of mind was maintained on the journey back at home. Babaji stayed six (6) months at home and continued meditating.

2.10 Pandit Durga's Prophecy

Years passed by and when Baba Amar Das Ji was on the twentieth trip back from the Gangga River [by now Babaji was quite old in his early seventies], Babaji rested on the

²⁵ Parbat Meran – Principal Satbir Singh

²⁶ Sri Gurdwara Darshan – Gyani Thakur Singh Ji (Printed Decemeber 1923), Bansavalinama – Bhai Kesar Singh Chibbar

way home by diverting to a village called Mihrra. There lived a famous Brahmin from the Thambi lineage known as Durga. During that time most of the pilgrims on the way to or from Gangga River took shelter in Durga's house. The Brahmin treated all the pilgrims with outmost respect. Babaji took shelter from the intense heat of the afternoon sun at his house too.

Pandit Durga possessed knowledge of astrology and palmistry. He foresaw in this courteous pilgrim a man of tremendous power, thus far unknown and unrevealed. While Baba Amar Das Ji was taking rest, the astrologer Pandit Durga was pleasantly surprised to observe the lotus mark (charan padam) on the feet of Baba Amar Das Ji. A man with such a mark on his feet is, in astrological parlance, an extra-ordinary being. He was either a manifestation of the Almighty Himself or a chakarvarti emperor who wields authority in all directions. Pandit Durga strived to provide all the possible comforts and hospitality to Baba Amar Das Ji who was a mighty soul in the garb of a pilgrim.

Before resuming his journey the next morning, Baba Ji offered some cash donation which the Pandit politely declined saying that he would receive a handsome offering only when the Baba Ji had reached the height of glory and greatness. Referring to the lotus mark on Baba Ji's feet, the Pandit made a prediction that he would either be a towering spiritual leader or a mighty ruler commanding universal allegiance.

2.11 Realisation

Now on the way back Baba Amar Das ji met a Bhramchaari Sadhu (a Celibate monk) who had firm (strict) beliefs. Babaji and the Sadhu started talking about spirituality and together they narrated religious stories. Babaji and the Sadhu remained together the whole day and at night took shelter in nearby village. The next morning they continued their journey. As they were traveling together they developed a good friendship and started sharing the food they brought for the journey. Babaji decided to ask the Sadhu to follow him back to His village. The Sadhu agreed and at home Babaji treated the Sadhu with outmost respect. At night the Sadhu went to the roof (top floor) of the house to rest. Babaji accompanied him. There Babaji and the Sadhu start sharing their personal experiences about their spiritual journey. As they were conversing, the Sadhu asked Babaji about His Guru and the Mantra on which He meditated and how did He get it? Babaji told the Sadhu that up to that day He hadn't embraced any Guru despite his efforts to search for a True Guru. Babaji told him that he was in a desperate search of a True Guru through whom He may obtain an opportunity to perform selfless service and obtain the Mantra which only a True Guru can bestow.

Listening to the above the Sadhu was very disappointed and told Babaji that all his meditation, pilgrimages, fasting and efforts had gone to waste. The disappointed Sadhu further said that he had been working very hard to achieve higher spiritual stage but after meeting Babaji all of them had been washed out. He said, "I didn't know that the person

with whom I have become so close and shared my food with has been a Ni-gura (a person who never embraced a Guru). Now I have lost all the good and spiritual deeds I've performed and am now in deep anxiety of what awaits me next." He further said that he would not believe that after reaching such an old age Baba Amar Das Ji was still without a Guru which was a sign of misfortune. By now the Sadhu was angry and after saying the above he left immediately.

2.12 Search for A Guru

That day onwards Baba Amar Das Ji was very disheartened and the quest to meet a True Guru was carved deep in the heart. Babaji prayed with great humbleness before Almighty to grant his wish. He was in such a state of mind that consuming food was no more desirable and sleep was abandoned. There was only one objective of living, and that was to continually pray to attain a True Guru. Tears endlessly flowed from Babaji's eyes which were filled with so much of devotion as if Gangga flowed eternally and Babaji's heart trembled in torment of being separated from the Guru. He even undertook a vow to remain without food and sacrificed His life until the true Guru bestowed his blessings upon Him.

2.13 Bibi Amro Ji

Baba Amar Das Ji had a younger brother and his name was Bhai Manak Chand. Bhai Manak Chand had a son by the name of Bhai Jasoo Ji. He was a very learned and enlightened person with realisation of the Almighty.

Guru Angad Dev Ji's daughter, Bibi Amro Ji was married to Bhai Jasoo Ji. After marriage she left the house of Guru Angad Dev Ji and stayed at her in-laws. Like her husband, Bibi Amro Ji was also a very intellectual person and she stayed at her in-laws for a long time.

Nobody knew the virtues of Bibi Amro Ji. She always kept herself busy with the housework and she would not do anything before getting the permission of the family members. She would get up during the early hours of the morning and take her bath. After that she recited Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Hymns (Gurbani) with love.

2.14 Listening to Gurbani

One morning, while churning yogurt, Bibi Amro Ji was reciting Guru Nanak Dev Ji's hymns (Gurbani). She recited the Gurbani with full concentration and was enjoying the moment. At the same time, Baba Amar Das Ji was desperately in search of a perfect Guru and he was very worried. He did not sleep the whole night thinking and regretting because he still had not embraced a Guru as he was already 72 years old. There were only 3 hours left to sunrise when Baba Amar Das Ji heard the sweet melody of Gurbani which was being recited by Bibi Amro Ji and had the desire to hear more of it.

For a moment, the guilt feeling of not embracing a Guru in his life disappeared, Baba Amar Das Ji felt something struck his heart and it was melting and his conscience was awakened. He started walking towards the direction the voice was coming from. He stood behind a wall and was listening to the Gurbani; in his mind he was hoping that Bibi Amro Ji did not see him as he wanted her to continue reciting the Gurbani.

Baba Amar Das ji stood there for quite a while, and listened to the Gurbani. Finally, He could not stop himself and he walked towards Bibi Amro Ji and asked her, "What were you reciting while churning the yogurt?" Baba Amar Das Ji continued, "My dear daughter please do recite the hymn (Gurbani Shabad) once again. I was dead earlier but after hearing this hymn (shabad) I'm alive again. It's like I've been given nectar (amrit) and I have got a second chance to live. That's a great help to me". Upon hearing this, Bibi Amro Ji smiled and started reciting the shabad again.

ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ , ੧ ; ਘਰੁ ੧ ॥

Maaroo, First Mahl, First House:

ਕਰਣੀ ਕਾਗਦੁ ਮਨੁ ਮਸਵਾਣੀ ; ਬੁਰਾ ਭਲਾ ਦੁਇ ਲੇਖ ਪਏ ॥

karṇee kaagad man masvaanee buraa bhalaa du-ay laykh pa-ay.

Actions are the paper, and the mind is the ink; good and bad are both recorded upon it.

ਜਿਉ ਜਿਉ ਕਿਰਤੁ ਚਲਾਏ , ਤਿਉ ਚਲੀਐ ; ਤਉ ਗੁਣ ਨਾਹੀ ਅੰਤੁ ਹਰੇ ॥੧॥

ji-o ji-o kirat chalaay ti-o chalee-ai ta-o gun naahee ant haray. ||1||

As their past actions drive them, so are mortals driven. There is no end to Your Glorious Virtues, Almighty. ||1||

ਚਿਤ ਚੇਤਸਿ ਕੀ ਨਹੀ ; ਬਾਵਰਿਆ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਸਰਤ ; ਤੇਰੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਲਿਆ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

chit chaitas kee nahee baavri-aa. har bisrat tayray gun gali-aa. ||1|| rahaa-o.

Why do you not keep Him in your consciousness, you mad man? Forgetting the Lord, your own virtues shall rot away. ||1||Pause||

ਜਾਲੀ ਰੈਨਿ , ਜਾਲੁ ਦਿਨੁ ਹੂਆ ; ਜੇਤੀ ਘੜੀ ਫਾਹੀ ਤੇਤੀ ॥

jaalee rain jaal din hoo-aa jaytee gharhee faahee taytee.

The night is a net, and the day is a net; there are as many traps as there are moments.

ਰਸਿ ਰਸਿ ਚੋਗ ਚੁਗਹਿ ਨਿਤ ਫਾਸਹਿ ; ਛੂਟਸਿ ਮੂੜੇ ਕਵਨ ਗੁਣੀ ॥੨॥

ras ras chog chugeh nit faaseh chhootas moorhay kavan gunee. ||2||

With relish and delight, you continually bite at the bait; you are trapped, you fool - how will you ever escape? ||2||

ਕਾਇਆ ਆਰਣੁ , ਮਨੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਲੋਹਾ ; ਪੰਚ ਅਗਨਿ ਤਿਤੁ ਲਾਗਿ ਰਹੀ ॥

kaa-i-aa aaraṇ man vich lohāa panch agan tīt laag rahee.

The body is a furnace, and the mind is the iron within it; the five fires are heating it.

ਕੋਇਲੇ ਪਾਪ ਪੜੇ , ਤਿਸੁ ਊਪਰਿ ; ਮਨੁ ਜਲਿਆ , ਸੰਨੀ ਚਿੰਤ ਭਈ ॥੩॥

ko-ilay paap parhay tis oopar man jali-aa san^{ee} chint bha-ee. ||3||

Sin is the charcoal placed upon it, which burns the mind; the tongs are anxiety and worry. ||3||

ਭਇਆ ਮਨੂਰੁ ਕੰਚਨੁ ਫਿਰਿ ਹੋਵੈ ; ਜੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਤਿਨੇਹਾ ॥

bha-i-aa manoor kanchan fir hovai jay gur milai tinayhaa.

What was turned to slag is again transformed into gold, if one meets with the Guru.

ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ , ਓਹੁ ਦੇਵੈ ; ਤਉ ਨਾਨਕ , ਤ੍ਰਿਸਟਸਿ ਦੇਹਾ ॥੪॥੩॥

ayk naam amrit oh dayvai ta-o naanak taristas dayhaa. ||4||3||

He blesses the mortal with the Ambrosial Name of the One Almighty, and then, says Guru Nanak, the body is held steady. ||4||3||

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji –Ang 990)

The above Shabad treats the mind as a sheet of paper with virtues and evils written on it in the ink of human conduct. The marvels of Almighty are beyond reckoning. The mortal being (Jiv) should meditate on Almighty otherwise he would remain caught in the snares of worldly pursuits. Without Almighty's remembrance all the virtues possessed by mortals will be rotten therefore virtues alone cannot disentangle man from allurements as they create a micro level of ego. The five passions of lust, anger, greed, attachments and pride heat up the human frame with fuel of sins. What is left in the end is the vice or dregs which can still be converted into gold by the Guru. The elixir of Almighty's Name bestowed by the Guru will provide bliss and contentment.

After listening to the shabad again, Baba Amar Das Ji felt very happy and said "My aim from now on is the same as was told by the composer in the shabad. I'm no longer young, I'm old as if a rusted metal which is of no value, but if a rusted metal is touched with the sorcerer's stone (paras) it becomes gold, if a rusted metal like me can meet the Guru I'll be a pure gold. I believe this hymn (shabad) is written on my heart. It was meant for me and this is my path". While saying this Baba Amar Das Ji asked, "Who wrote this shabad and from whom did you obtain it? Is the author of this shabad still alive? After listening to this shabad I feel so happy that I love this shabad. This shabad is meant to release me from my entire burden"

Upon hearing this Bibi Amro Ji replied very humbly, "Dear respected Babaji, this shabad is written by the Great Guru Nanak Dev Ji, which, by reading it gives us good rewards. Guru Nanak Dev Ji has written lot more other shabads as well, which by reading can help us cross this ocean of life. My father listens and reads these shabad's of Guru Nanak Dev Ji

with lots of love, twice a day. The rababi's (musicians) also sing to my father these shabad of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's twice a day. Guru Nanak Dev Ji is now in SachKhand, and he has given the Guruship to my father. I sat near my father and listened to the shabads, and that's how I memorized these shabads. Guru Nanak Dev Ji preaches the Gurbani because the baani cleanses all our sins. There are some Sikhs who meditate on the baani and by staying away from worldly desires their minds are focused in the meditation of Almighty's Name (Naam). By doing this they have cleansed their mind.

2.15 Quest to Meet the True Guru

After listening to the greatness of Guru and Gurbani, Baba Amar Das Ji said, "My dear daughter listen to me. Please do me a favor; please take me to your father. I can't bear not seeing him. Please take me there. I'm old and alone, I have no one else in this world, I have no knowledge and I have no abilities. Oh my dearest daughter, you have saved me from dying and have given me a new life". Upon hearing this, Bibi Amro Ji said, "you are the senior member of this family, why wouldn't I listen to you? You are like my father-in-law, I've always respected you like I respect my father, but I'm scared of one thing, how can I go back to my father's house without informing him first that I'm coming? I meet my dear Satguru with full respect. I always stay within his will, this way I keep him happy. I wouldn't go back without obtaining his consent or invitation. I would not go back there without getting the permission of my in-laws. I'm only scared if he gets angry upon knowing that I came back without my-laws permission. This is what I'm scared of". Hearing this, Baba Amar Das Ji replied, "You need not worry, because the Satguru, the true Guru knows every reason of what ever is happening. The Satguru never gets angry. After he sees my love for his sight (darshan), he will keep me with him as his servant and he will show me the path to salvation." After hearing the request of Baba Amar Das Ji, Bibi Amro Ji prepared to leave for the house of Guru Angad Dev Ji. She asked for the doli and sat in it.

2.16 Meeting Guru Angad Dev Ji

There was a cool breeze at the time when they left to Khadur, the place where Guru Angad Dev Ji was residing. Bibi Amro Ji was hoping that this journey turns out to be a fruitful one. As they were going slowly, Bibi Amro Ji saw the village Chivar, she said "Oh my dear father, it would be kind to wait here near the village, I will first go the house and see my father, and then I will take you there. I will ask for permission for you to see him and then if he allows you can stay with him".

Bibi Amro Ji reached the house of Guru Angad Dev Ji. She went in and met her father with happiness and sincerity. She sat on the ground close to Guru Angad Dev Ji, and Guru Ji asked, "I didn't call for you, so how come you are here? What is the reason for your visit? Why didn't you bring along the person who came with you?" Upon hearing

this, Bibi Amro Ji said, "I'll go now and bring him to you. I told him that without your permission I cannot come back, but he persuaded me as he was very eager to meet you".

Bibi Amro Ji then got up and went on to bring Baba Amar Das Ji from the place where she had left him. Her heart was filled with happiness when she brought Baba Amar Das Ji to Guru Angad Dev Ji's court (darbar). When Baba Amar Das Ji got the darshan of Sri Guru Angad Dev Ji, he saw Guru Angad Dev Ji's face glowing like a lotus that blooms in a pond. Guru Angad Dev Ji was unaffected by attachment, jealousy, happiness or pain just like a lotus flower that grows in a pond (from the mud) but rises above the dirt around it.

Due to worldly relationships, Guru Angad Dev Ji stood up when he saw Baba Amar Das Ji coming into the court (darbar). This was because Baba Amar Das Ji was the elder brother of Bibi Amro Ji's father-in-law. Baba Amar Das Ji held Guru Angad Dev Ji's feet before Guru Ji could hug him. Baba Amar Das Ji said "Today I came as a servant and not as a Kurram (daughter's father-in-law). I'm not worthy of your hug, please take me as your servant". After asking Guru Ji about the well being of the family, Baba Amar Das Ji was satisfied and asked Baba Amar Das Ji to sit beside him.

Then Guru Angad Dev Ji asked Baba Amar Das Ji, a few more worldly questions. After a while a sewak from the kitchen came before Guru Angad Dev Ji and said, "Guru Ji the food is ready." Upon hearing this Guru Angad Dev Ji stood up. At that moment Baba Buddha Ji and many other Sikhs were already in the langgar hall. All Sikhs were sitting in panggat and amongst them Guru Angad Dev Ji was the centre of focus. Baba Amar Das Ji also joined the other Sikhs in the panggat.

After having the food, Baba Amar Das Ji went outside and sat there alone. In his mind he was only thinking of the greatness of Guru Angad Dev Ji and all of his doubts were cleared.

2.17 Passion for Food from Guru Ji's Plate

The following day, Baba Amar Das Ji, joined the panggat again to have food. This time when he sat in the panggat he thought, "Guru Angad Dev Ji is the "pooran" Guru, he would surely know what is going in my mind now, and he will give me the remaining food from his plate without me asking him".

When Guru Angad Dev Ji had his langgar he knew what was on in Guru Baba Amar Das Ji's mind. Once he was finished with his langgar, he called one of the sewadars and told him, "Pass on my plate with this remaining food to the person sitting over there (Baba Amar Das Ji). He had desired to eat the remaining food". Upon hearing this Baba Amar Das Ji's heart was filled with happiness and he had the Guru Ji's Sat Pershad (True food) delightedly. After having the food his heart and mind was purified, he had no worries. He had peace of mind and all of his doubts were cleared.

With single mindedness he sat there and the whole day passed. When it was time for food to be served he sat in the panggat again and had what ever was being served in the langgar happily. After having his food, he sat single-mindedly and sang the praises of Guru Angad Dev Ji. Baba Amar Das Ji kept on doing this for a few days. He came for langgar and then he stayed outside the whole day and was back for langgar again the following day. After that, Guru Angad Dev Ji did not call him and did not have a word with him again. He met Guru Angad Dev Ji, during langgar and ate langgar in the panggat with Guru Angad Dev Ji but he never mixed around with the sanggat. He chanted Almighty's Name; he had decided that, "I'll never go anywhere else, I'll remain here".



3. BABA AMAR DAS JI'S SELFLESS SEWA²⁷

When many days passed by, Baba Amar Das Ji thought in his mind that it is important to perform selfless service (sewa) in order to obtain Guru's blessings. "Although this does not affect Guru Ji at all, as there is no desire in Guru Ji's mind, it is my duty to do Guru Ji's sewa with love.", thought Baba Amar Das Ji.

In earlier times many used to abstain from food and water as a means to go into meditation. Yet others performed penance by sitting in the water, or bear the rain without any clothes on. Some also lifted their hands up for long durations and others would meditate standing on one leg. Yet there were those who would hang upside down in order to impress Almighty. But in the Dark Age of Kalyug the best penance was performing selfless service (sewa) for others which will impress Guru Ji. Among the services that one can offer is by serving the true congregation (Sat Sangat) which includes serving water, bringing fire wood for langgar, fanning the sanggat and Guru Ji and by chanting Almighty's Name.



3.1 Serving Water

Washing Guru Ji's feet, preparing food and other selfless service (sewa) which is done together by the Sat Sangat would bring greater returns than any of the difficult methods mentioned above. Baba Amar Das Ji made up his mind that he himself would bring the adequate quantity of water required by the true congregation (Sat Sangat) and also for Guru Ji's ishnaan (bath).

Baba Amar Das Ji met all the Sikhs and requested, "Honor me the sewa to serve water". Upon their permission, he carried the pitcher on his head to bring water. Where langgar

²⁷ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 16) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

was made he provided water and at the same time he will serve water to the Sikhs. He addressed everybody very politely.

3.2 Water for Guru Ji's Ishnaan

Guru Angad Dev Ji took his bath three hours before dawn. Therefore, before Guru Angad Dev Ji woke up, Baba Amar Das Ji ensured that the required quantity of water was ready for Guru Ji's bath. The first day he walked barefootedly backward intending not to show his back to Guru Ji till the border of Khadur Sahib which was approximately 7.4 km and continued to walk barefootedly for another 2.4km to Bias River²⁸ with the large pitcher. Upon arriving he filled the pitcher with water but the pitcher was extremely heavy and after several attempts he could not raise it out of the river. At last he dipped himself into the river and placed the bottom of the pitcher on his head and rose from the river. Although the physical body had no strength the determination of Baba Amar Das Ji empowered him to perform sewa with passion and patience even in adverse conditions. First he would help while Guru Ji took His bath and then wash Guru Ji's clothes and the balance of the water would be kept for washing the sangat and Guru Ji's feet.

When Baba Amar Das Ji went to Guru Ji he was already 72 years old. At that time due to his age Baba Amar Das Ji's body had become weak, yet he continued his sewa with love. Without idleness, he would diligently fill the pitcher and bring the water for Guru Ji. He paid no attention to his body, house or family and treated Guru Ji as his everything.

3.3 Meditation

Baba Amar Das Ji isolated himself and seldom communicated with anyone. In his mind there was only Guru Ji's picture and no one else. He had left his family, home and also forsaken wealth. People around him started to make fun of him commenting that he had chosen this path at such an elderly age. Baba Amar Das Ji continued to do selfless sewa for Guru Angad Dev Ji for many years. He was not concerned about his personal needs such as clothes and food and focused only upon the sewa. Physically he did sewa of Guru Ji and mentally kept his thoughts immersed in Guru Angad Dev Ji.

3.4 Annual Awards

After one year of water sewa, Guru Angad Dev Ji gave 1.5 meters of cloth to Baba Amar Das Ji. He took the cloth and tied it on his head, treating it as Guru Ji's blessing . Day and

²⁸ Guru Amar Das Ji used to walk 9.6km to the Bias River at about 12.00 am(midnight) and return with the pither full of water so the total distance that Guru Amar Das used walk barefootedly was 19.2km daily. Till today this practice is continued in Takht Sri Sachkhand Hazur Sahib, a Gaggria (Pither) Sikh walks barefootedly to bring water in a pither from River Godawri daily for the washing of Sukh Asthaan (where Guru Gobind Singh Ji merged into His formless form).

night he performed the challenging Sewa, and whenever Guru Ji needed water he would be most delighted to serve.

3.5 Refusal to Return

Some people from Amar Das Ji's village came over to ask him, "Let's go back, meet your friends and relatives. They are thinking about you. Why are you staying here? What are you achieving by staying here? You are undergoing all kinds of trouble and physical pain here." Humbly he answered them, "No one is mine and neither do I belong to anyone. Now my Satguru Ji is my world, He is my house, He is my father and mother and till the end, He will be my shelter. No one will follow us once we are gone but at that time Guru Ji will be there to support us. The purpose of me being here is to serve Guru Ji and there is nothing else that satisfies me." Upon hearing this, the villagers went back to their village with anger and disappointment.

3.6 Selfless Service (Niskaam Seva)

Baba Amar Das Ji did Guru Ji's sewa without ego and day by day the love towards Guru Ji increased. He did not listen to the others nor tell them anything. In his mind the Guru Ji's feet were his destiny. When the following year passed, SatGuru Ji gave him the second piece of white cloth. Amar Das Ji accepted this gift from Guru Ji and immediately he tied it around his head.

Baba Amar Das Ji realized that his lifespan was decreasing but his love towards Guru Ji was increasing and the amount of sewa for Guru Ji was great. Whenever the ignorant people around him teased him, he would ignore their comments and never paid heed to the worldly affairs. Although his body was getting physically weaker, he was imbued in Guru Ji's divine love.

In the third year, Guru Ji gave him another one and a half meters of cloth to Baba Amar Das Ji. Guru Angad Dev Ji never spoke to Baba Amar Das Ji directly. At times he would sit next to Him and at times far away from Him. Baba Amar Das Ji's hands and feet had changed color due to bringing cold water for Guru Ji's ishnaan and his skin was tearing apart and water was flowing out of the wounds. All this never created any doubt in Baba Amar Das Ji's mind and never affected his sewa for Guru Ji.

Three hours before sunrise he would wake up and will fill the pitcher with water for Guru Ji to take His bath. Baba Amar Das Ji washed Guru Ji's feet properly, he made Guru Ji's bed and then attached himself to remembrance of Almighty's Name (Naam Simran). He also delivered all the water and wood that was required for langgar. Later he joined the pangat for his meal.

He washed all Guru Ji's dishes, and during summer when the weather was hot, he would fan Guru Ji. Before Guru Ji went to bed, Baba Amar Das Ji cleaned Guru Ji's bed sheet and

made the bed for Guru Ji. Once there was an abscess on Guru Ji's toe which caused discomfort to Guru Angad Dev Ji. Baba Amar Das Ji would treat it with a warm compress in order to reduce the discomfort. He collected all the pus from Guru Ji's toe in his mouth before spitting it out.

In the fifth year, Guru Ji gave Baba Amar Das Ji the fifth piece of cloth and the sixth year another cloth. In the seventh year, when Guru Angad Dev Ji was sleeping, Amar Das Ji put Guru Ji's toe in his mouth. Upon doing this, it enlightened Amar Das Ji's mind, as the sun diminishes all darkness. He felt the power of this miracle. He felt that he was gifted with some sort of magic that could cure Guru Ji's abscess. One day he thought "What is the point of me having these powers if I am unable to cure the abscess on Guru Ji's feet." Baba Amar Das immediately acted on this idea and managed to heal Guru Ji's foot.

When Guru Angad Dev Ji woke from sleep, he was astonished when he saw that his toe was cured. Guru Ji was wondering, "How can this happen, how come I am not feeling any pain, what happened in my sleep that the moment I got up my foot is perfectly fine". Guru Ji realized that Baba Amar Das Ji had preformed this miracle.

Guru Ji called upon Baba Amar Das Ji and told him "What have you done, couldn't you control your powers? Guru Nanak Dev Ji had bowed before this body of mine, and as such this hardship is legitimate. I have always taken it as a gift which reminded me of my beloved Guru Nanak Dev Ji. But now look at what you have done. From now onwards never show your powers no matter whatever happens. Saints never show their powers to anyone even if they might be beheaded, they never perform any miracles. By demonstrating your spiritual powers, the power reduces and by enduring it increases. These are all given by the supreme Almighty and all we need to do is remember Him."

Upon listening to this, Baba Amar Das Ji folded his hands and said "Oh Guru Ji, please forgive me. From now onwards I will only do things after taking your permission." After hearing this, Guru Angad Dev Ji was very pleased and he forgave Baba Amar Das Ji and told him not to perform any more miracles. Then Guru Angad Dev Ji's toe swelled with pus as it was before.

Baba Amar Das Ji spent 11 years doing Guru Ji's sewa and was given a total of eleven pieces of cloth. Baba Amar Das Ji was always deeply in contact with the remembrance of Almighty's Name (Naam Simran). He never spoke nor listened to anyone. He was ever ready to do sewa.

For eleven years, Baba Amar Das Ji performed sewa and his clothes were all worn out. His feet and hands were worn too. He never cared about how the food tasted. These worldly aspects no longer played an important part in his life. He would sit and listen to Kirtan. People were astonished at his sincere selfless service (sewa). They started saying "Small is his body, yet his strength is exempted. His hair has turned white and skin turned sluggish, but yet he does immense sewa. He keeps Guru Ji's infected toe in his mouth. He brings water for Guru Ji in the wee hours of the morning and will bathe Guru Ji with

love. Hot or cold, summer or winter, rain or shine, all this does not affect Baba Amar Das Ji's selfless service (sewa) towards Guru Ji. With great devotion and sacrifice he carries out the sewa. And with this hard work he has made this birth worthwhile. Although all this is done by Baba Amar Das Ji, Guru Angad Dev Ji doesn't pay much attention to him. Guru Angad Dev Ji makes Baba Amar Das Ji sit next to him, but he never talks or asks him anything". That's how the Sikh Sangat commented about him.

Others said, "Baba Amar Das was chased out from his house, he does not have any money with him. Guru Angad Dev Ji provided him shelter and food. Everyone has disowned him. That's the reason he is so quiet. He is without shelter, and devoid of respect. Day and night he is just loiters around and does some service (sewa). He is only here to consume food and never longs for anything else. He has the fear deep in his heart of being chased out from here, as such obeys everyone's instructions".

That's how people commented about Baba Amar Das Ji without knowing the reality. They did not know that one day Baba Amar Das Ji will be the King of all Kings. There won't be anyone who was as generous and broadminded as Baba Amar Das Ji. Upon hearing all these comments, Baba Amar Das didn't show any kind of emotion as it meant nothing to him. He was deeply attached to the selfless service (sewa) equally for everyone.

Macauliffe mentions Baba Amar Das Ji's routine as follows:

"He rose at Goindwal a watch before day and proceeded to the river Beas to take water to Khadur for the Guru to bathe. Meanwhile, he repeated the Japji and generally finished it half-way between Goindwal and Khadur. After hearing the Asa-Ki-Var in Khadur, he fetched water for the Guru's kitchen, scrubbed the cooking utensils and brought firewood from the forest. Every evening he listened to the Sodar and the daily vespers and then shampooed the Guru. After putting him to rest, he returned to Goindwal, walking backwards in his supreme reverence for his spiritual master. The half-way spot where he used every morning to finish the Japji is called the Dandama or breathing place?"

* Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion II P.35



4. BLESSINGS ON BABA AMAR DAS JI²⁹

In this manner by overcoming happiness and sadness, Baba Amar Das Ji continued to do sewa, without being bothered about people's opinion about him.

4.1 Rainy Cold Winter

One night, there was pitch darkness. Due to the slight drizzling rain there was mud all around. People were all crouching due to the bitter cold of winter. Some people draped themselves in cotton blankets or got heat from fire to get rid of the cold.

Then came amritvela (time of nectar), and it was time for Guru Ji to take his bath. Baba Amar Das overcame his laziness and took the pitcher (gagar) in his hands. He filled it with water and held it on his head, and got ready to come back. Baba Amar Das Ji walked forward with slow steps.

On the way back, in his mind the only worry was that his legs should not slip causing the pitcher to drop and water to spill causing delay in Guru Ji's bath time. On the way, there was house of a 'Julaha'³⁰ where there was a pit dug in the ground and the water created mud all around.

Due to the drizzle, it became muddier. The heavy clouds became darker and Baba Amar Das was unable to see the way clearly. There was a stump that was drilled into the ground in front of the 'Julaha's' house. The stump was used as a support for weaving cloth. When Baba Amar Das passed by the Julaha's house he accidentally hit his leg against this stump and fell into the pit nearby. Even though he was unable to balance himself, he didn't allow the pitcher filled of water to fall. Slowly he placed the pail on his head. He did not want Guru Ji's bath to be delayed.

At that time the 'Julaha' and his wife who were resting, having heard the noise asked "Who is outside there? Who fell, are you a thief or someone else? Please give us an answer". Listening to the 'Julaha' Baba Amar Das Ji replied, "I am the Guru Ji's servant, I am carrying water for him".

Upon hearing this 'Julaha' replied "Who can be there in this cold weather and darkness? It is raining and heavy clouds are all around. It is also so muddy outside." 'Julaha's wife replied "At this hour there can be no other than the homeless 'Amru' who is wandering around. He does not rest in peace, hence he is wandering around as he is homeless. He always eats till his stomach is full and doesn't talk to anyone. He has left his home, bears

²⁹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 17) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

³⁰ Julaha - Caste's hereditary occupation of weaving

with people's teasing and lives close to the Tapa (Guru Angad Dev Ji). He is unashamed and has no regard for what people say about him."

Baba Amar Das replied "I was homeless before embracing the True Guru but now I'm not homeless. I do serve my master Guru Angad Dev Ji who is the greatest. You are saying this because you are crazy (kamlee), you don't even have the awareness of the greatness of the giver/bestower of gifts to the universe." Saying this, Baba Amar Das continued his journey carrying the pitcher on his head. Guru Angad Dev Ji was ready for his bath. Guru Ji was standing at the spot where he takes his bath. When he knew what happened, he understood the steadfastness of Baba Amar Das who he himself wanted to test.

4.2 Blessing Baba Amar Das Ji

When Baba Amar Das arrived at Guru Ji's place he didn't mention anything at all. He continued to do sewa as he usually did. He washed Guru Ji's feet and helped with the necessary. The 'Julaha' wife became mad as soon as Baba Amar Das replied to her. She started to bite and speak senselessly.

Baba Amar Das was with Guru Ji all the way till morning. Guru Ji knew everything that had happened. Guru Ji called Baba Amar Das to come near him. Baba Amar Das touched Guru Ji's feet, folded his hands and stood in front of Guru Ji. Baba Amar Das obtained the sight (darshan) of Guru Ji's face which was full of love.

Guru Ji said. "Baba Amar Das, tell me the whole incident that took place early morning. What and how it happened, when you were in a hurry carrying the pitcher filled with water? Who spoke to you and in which manner?" Baba Amar Das folded his hands and replied "Guru Ji you are the all knowing, the bestower of the universe. Even without telling you anything, you know everything. I won't hide anything from you, Guru Ji. I'm afraid that I won't be able to relay the whole incident in a proper manner". Listening to this Guru Ji asked for both the 'Julaha' and his wife to be present there.

When the 'Julaha's wife came and had the sight (darshan) of Guru Ji, her madness was cured, and she became normal as before. Then Guru Ji asked "Tell me the whole truth, what happened last night? If you try to hide anything, you will face all kind of difficulties in life".

The 'Julaha' got scared; knowing that Guru Ji's words becomes reality." If I don't tell the truth I will definitely suffer in life." he paused for a while thinking. He then told the truth "I heard some noise outside the house, and asked what is the noise outside there?. My wife was awake and aware of what was happening at that time. My wife replied "It is homeless 'Amru'". Then Baba Amar Das called her crazy (kamlee) and she became mad instantaneously. Now after having Your sight (darshan) she is cured. I am in fear of not being able to narrate the incident accurately."

Then Guru Ji asked Baba Amar Das “Was this what happened?”. Baba Amar Das replied “She called me homeless, which is true. As long as the mind doesn’t recognize the real-self (Atma), one is truly “homeless”. It (the mind) does not know its abode (home) as such wanders aimlessly. However when the ‘Julaha’s wife doubted the true Guru Ji’s sewa, I was not able to take it and called her crazy (kamlee)”.

Listening to Baba Amar Das explanation, Guru Ji was touched with the humbleness. Guru Ji was also very impressed with the immense sewa done by Baba Amar Das Ji over the long duration of time. To bless Baba Amar Das, Guru Angad Dev Ji said: “You are the home of the homeless; The respect for those who have none; You’re the support for those without support; The one that all can depend on; You are the strength for the weak; There shall be no other stronger than you; You are the calmness for those in turmoil; And the prophet of all prophets; The one who can turn around time; And the one who can free all from shackles; You have the ability to create and destroy; The one who provides for all.”.

After bestowing Baba Amar Das Ji with these 12 blessings, Guru Ji was immensely pleased with Baba Amar Das and hugged him.

Again Guru Ji spoke “Now we are one and there is no difference between us, you are the same as me. Just as when other river meets with Ganges it becomes Ganges; like the rain drop that meets the ocean and becomes the ocean itself, now we are the same. When a spark/flame meets the fire it becomes the form of fire, we are the same and there is no difference between us.”

“By prevailing in your body, good deeds will be done for all mankind.” In this manner, as Guru Ji was very pleased with Baba Amar Das Ji, Guru Ji had made them one and the same. By striving in performing selfless service (sewa) of the True Guru (Satguru) one is showered with blessings. All the sincere selfless service done for Guru Ji is never wasted; all the needs are fulfilled.

Then Guru Ji took water and cleaned Baba Amar Das and presented him with new beautiful clothes. Guru Ji then said “I will make you sit on my throne (place) and pass the Guruship (Gurgadhi) onto you”. Guru Ji announced to everybody (sangat) “Baba Amar Das has now taken my roop (form/place). There are no differences between us, We have become one now”. Guru Ji declared “No one can claim themselves Guru beside Guru Amar Das”.

In calm and sweet voice Guru Ji ask Baba Amar Das “How many children do you have and where are they?” Baba Amar Das folded his hands and replied “Guru Ji you are all knowing yet if you ask I will reply. With your grace I have two sons, Mohan and Mohri and also two daughters Dhani and Bhani”.

Guru Ji then told Baba Amar Das Ji, “I am saying this for your own good. You must leave Khadur Sahib and find another place to stay. When Guru Nanak Dev Ji passed the Guruship (Gurgadhi) to me, he said : “Leave this place where I am living now, and look

for another place to stay.” That is when I came to Khadur Sahib and stayed here for a couple of years.

Baba Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das continued to stay at their father’s (Guru Nanak) place. In the same way you must now find another place as your base. Stay there and spread the knowledge. Dasu and Datu will continue to stay here; when they do not see you they won’t be jealous and will not be able cause any disruption”. After uttering these instructions Guru Ji rested.

5. ESTABLISHMENT OF GOINDWAL

5.1 Bhai Gonda Meets Guru Ji³¹

The next day Guru Angad Dev Ji sat with the sanggat regardless whether they were poor or rich or from a high or low caste. A Khatri by the name of Gonda came to see Guru Ji. He bowed his head with respect and folded his hands humbly and said, “Guru Ji, you are great. A lot of people listen and respect you. Those who are intelligent praise you. Everyone obeys you. Guru Ji my village is infested with ghosts and giants (evil spirits) of many types. They have made my village a home. No one can stay there now. In the day time all villagers get together to build a wall but when night comes the ghosts break the wall. Take how much of land you need, but please come and fulfil my wish and free my village.

Guru Ji asked Bhai Gonda, “How did all this happen? When did the ghosts infest the village? How did the village become empty? Bhai Gonda explained everything to Guru Ji.

“I had an argument with my relatives regarding the rightful ownership of the ancestor’s land. The senior council members of the village tried resolve the matter but unexpectedly the argument turned very serious. The case was taken to the court of Delhi. In the court I was required to vow on my claims for the ancestor’s land. In greed I did not hesitate to take a fake oath and I lied on my faith. The judge gave a judgement and I won the case and got back my village. The deceitful act have attracted the evil spirits to migrate into the village and the other residents started to leave the village. More and more evil spirits came to the village and it has become a centre of ghost occupancy. Please help me Guru Ji. By lying I got this as a punishment for my insincere act. With your presence in my village the place will become pure.”

Guru Angad Dev Ji decided to ask his sons to go to the village. The sons were very egoistic and never obeyed Guru Ji but they always wanted Guru Ji’s throne. First Guru Ji asked his elder son, Bhai Dasu ji to follow Bhai Gonda Ji to free the village from evil spirits. Bhai Dasu ji disagreed and said, “How am I going to live among these evil spirits? How am I going to build my house there? My village is Khadur Sahib. I will never leave Khadur.”

Then Guru Ji asked his youngest son, Bhai Datu ji to go to the village but he too turn down Guru Ji’s request. Bhai Datu ji said “Guru Ji, we are staying in Khadur Sahib, why do we need to go there? We can sing the praises of Almighty by residing here. People come from all over to fulfil their needs here. Why should we travel one place to another! There will be a lot of people with such problems so how many people do you want us to

³¹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 18) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

follow to solve their problems? What has it to do with you Guru Ji, whether people survive or don't?

After hearing this, Guru Ji looked at Baba Amar Das Ji and said "Purkha (Man)! Please go with Bhai Gonda and build a beautiful village. With respect Baba Amar Das Ji prostrated before Guru Ji and obeyed Guru Ji's instructions. "How do I go about implementing your instructions, Guru Ji" said Baba Amar Das Ji. Guru Ji instructed Baba Amar Das Ji to dig the land of the village from the East side and then level the whole place and start building houses for people to live in.

Guru Ji also gave him a stick. Guru Ji said "Take this stick along and show this stick to the evil spirit, once it is shown to them, they will not come back anymore. Where ever you step, the land will be pure for you to build a house for yourself and for people to stay in. Bhai Gonda is very rich. He will build a beautiful house for you and name the village after Bhai Gonda Ji. Both my sons are scared of evil spirits and they do not know the greatness of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Whatever you do, always think that Guru Nanak Dev Ji is performing himself for you". After listening to this, Baba Amar Das Ji followed Bhai Gonda Ji to his village.

Baba Amar Das Ji had a lot of respect and love for Guru Angad Dev Ji. Churamani Kavi Bhai Santokh Singh Ji depicts the love with an example of a tree, love for Guru Angad Dev in Baba Amar Das Ji's heart is like a tree where the faith is like a circle around the tree to hold water for penetration to the roots and obeying Guru Angad Dev Ji's orders at all time is like watering the tree daily. To remember Guru Angad Dev Ji day and night is like the bark of the tree whereby the permanent meditation strongly holds just like the roots which are holding the large tree and supply all the required energy. Good virtues like truth, contentment, mercy, faith. in Baba Amar Das Ji are like the branches spreading the tree. This tree bares fruits of self realisation or knowledge of Almighty (Atam Gyan) and the juice of bliss is obtained by the most fortunate Baba Amar Das Ji. This tree (of love) grows rapidly and has been stationed permanently in Baba Amar Das Ji's pure heart

As Baba Amar Das Ji was about to leave, his eyes welled up with tears. Guru Ji came forward to meet him. Baba Amar Das Ji cried on Guru Ji's feet feeling very sad that he has to leave. As Baba Amar Das Ji walked away from Khadur Sahib, Baba Amar Das Ji walked backwards as always with full respect for Guru Ji.

On the other hand, Guru Ji's sons were very egoistic. Guru Ji tested his sons but they failed. All the Sikhs knew that Baba Amar Das Ji obeyed Guru Ji and has been devotedly doing sewa with respect and love. Guru Ji's sons took things for granted because Guru Ji was their father and thus did not have any humbleness in doing sewa.

As Guru Nanak Dev Ji gave the Guruship to Guru Angad Dev Ji because of love and humbleness in obeying the command and performing sewa, in the same way Guru Ji will bless his throne to Baba Amar Das Ji. On his journey to the village, Baba Amar Das Ji recited Japji Sahib.

5.2 Founding of Goindwal³²

Baba Amar Das Ji went with Gonda. They were walking very slowly while reciting Japji Sahib. Although Baba Amar Das Ji's body was very old he was still of great support to every one. When he reached the third koh (approximately 7.4km), he put his hands together and laid face down. When Japji Sahib was completed the thoughts of Guru Angad Dev Ji came to his mind. He sat down and sang the praises of Guru Angad Dev Ji.

Then he faced towards Goindwal and walked without any fear. He was holding the stick which Guru Ji gave him with full respect. Upon reaching Gonda's village he placed his hand in front and showed the stick to the ghost. Fire came out from the stick and the ghost felt the heat. They could not stand the heat even for a second.

Their bodies were burning and they could not even take care of their clothings. Fathers could not save sons, brothers deserted brothers. Husbands left their wives and ran away. Some fell on the land and fainted. They experienced a huge disaster and hence they left the place immediately. They were shouting while running in all four directions. As Baba Amar Das Ji moved the stick, they felt more and more heat. Some were pleading to be spared and not to be tortured. "We have been here for a long time please spare us. Do not wave the stick in front of us. We will leave now." they pleaded. There was a lot of commotion and all the ghosts ran away.

At that time there was a demon staying there. She was close to her full term of pregnancy. She saw the whole scary incident with her eyes. She was scared and started running. She did not even notice her caring husband nearby. She was running in a frightened condition. In this panicked state she delivered two babies. One of them fell and pricked his eye against a very sharp thorn. As a result, the eyeball of the baby ruptured. When this child grew older and was well known with the name of Kana Dev (one eyed) demon. He was staying in a fort in Bathinda. Guru Gobind Singh Ji blessed him and that is when his name became famous.

The second child broke his hands by falling onto the ground. The demon took both the children and covered them in a piece of cloth. After a few years they grew up but both stayed at different places. One stayed in Masurpur and the other in Bathinda. This was the situation of the ghosts and none of them stayed there any longer.

In the meantime, Baba Amar Das was standing and watching a different beautiful view. There was the River Bias nearby in which its pure water was flowing. There were many types of birds chirping sweetly. It was just like a Ganga flowing. Near the river there was a beautiful spot. On both sides of the river there was soft sand. There was a tarred road

³² Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 19) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

heading towards Lahore and those going to Delhi also passed this place. People were living on either side of the Bias River.

Just as Guru Angad Dev Ji had instructed, Baba Amar Das Ji said “Satnam” and took the pure water and sprinkled it everywhere so that the ghosts would not come back. He took Guru Ji’s stick and drew a boundary around the whole area. Then ‘Kerah Pershad’ which was to be distributed to the Sanggat was brought. Gonda was very happy.

Immediately, Baba Amar Das Ji stood up and did Ardaas (humble request). He then sang the praises of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Angad Dev Ji. After completing the Ardaas ‘Kerah Pershad’ were first served to Baba Amar Das Ji and then to the rest of the sangat. Baba Amar Das Ji instructed the sangat to start the construction from the east.

They prayed at the feet of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and started the ground breaking ceremony. After that there was no more evil spirits seen and no houses were demolished. Earlier when someone wanted to build a house, it would be demolished by the ghost. But now no house was demolished and all stood firm. Gonda was very happy to see this. He spent a lot of money, got a lot of laborers and hired a lot of skilled workers. It was then that Baba Amar Das Ji pronounced to name the town after the name of Gonda. He named the town Goindwal and announced it to everyone. When a few houses were ready, only then Baba Amar Das Ji left for the sight (darshan) of Guru Angad Dev Ji.

He very humbly bowed to Guru Angad Dev Ji. He clasped his hands together and said “As per your instructions, the task is completed and the town is almost ready. The workers are doing their work and a few houses are ready.” Guru Angad Dev Ji was very pleased and said “Now listen to me. Bring all your family members and start to live there. If there is anyone else who wants to stay there, build a house for them too. Your place is with me. Whenever you wish you may come and visit me and stay in Khadur Sahib. Now go to Baserke and meet your family with love. You have been here for a very long time and have never gone to meet your family. Go and bring your whole family and migrate to Goindwal.”

After getting the blessing of Guru Ji he left for his village. Upon reaching the village he met everyone. He informed everyone “Guru Ji is very happy with me and He has blessed me with all kinds of greatness. Now Guru Ji has instructed that the whole family to migrate to Goindwal. Do not delay and follow me. It is a nice town and the houses are very tall.” Those who agreed with Baba Amar Das Ji went along with him. They all arrived at Goindwal. They got all the happiness that they all deserved.

Baba Amar Das Ji went to Khadur Sahib for the darshan of Guru Angad Dev Ji. When he returned to Goindwal, he walked backwards for 7.4km, facing Khadur Sahib. At the 7.4km he will stop and do prayers (ardaas), then turn his face towards his home and start walking. Some Sikhs have even said that when Baba Amar Das Ji went to the river to collect water for Guru Ji he would walk backwards and return with his face facing toward Guru Ji.

Baba Amar Das Ji brought water from the Bias river to bathe Guru Ji. While on his way to fetch the water he will walk backwards while on the way back his face will be facing Guru Ji. When he reached this spot, he bowed his head and then proceeded to town. He always did his work and the sewa of the Guru with love.

In the past, Parasram had done great meditation. He had meditated for thousand of years in the jungle. Only then he obtained the powers of Vishnu, and yet he was not a complete Prophet. But Baba Amar Das Ji was able to make Guru Ji happy within eleven years and became the Almighty's complete form and blessed thousands of people.

That is why the selfless service (sewa) of Guru Ji and the true congregation (Sat-sangat) is very important. Rather than doing meditation for thousand years, this sewa is much greater. Now and in future, those who perform selfless service (sewa) with love, will attain salvation.

Baba Amar Das Ji's brothers and his son-in-law, Rama and his nephews all came along with them. All of them built their homes in Goindwal and stayed there. In this manner all his relatives and friends stayed with Baba Amar Das Ji and were happy. They all attained greatness, people looked upon them and they received a lot of happiness. All friends and relatives thought that it was a good idea to stay with Baba Amar Das Ji and considered it to be a blessing to stay with him in the village.

6. QUALITIES OF GURU ANGAD DEV JI³³

6.1 Guru Angad Dev Ji's Visit to Goindwal

One day, Guru Angad Dev Ji decided to visit Goindwal. Guru Ji was compassionate and heeded the dire longing that Baba Amar Das Ji had for his sight (darshan). He walked slowly and was drawn by the intense love of Baba Amar Das Ji. Guru Ji could no longer resist the supplications made by Baba Amar Das Ji. Someone from the sanggat informed Baba Amar Das Ji, "Guru Ji is on his way here." Baba Amar Das Ji was extremely delighted to receive this news. He immediately rushed to receive Guru Angad Dev Ji. Just the thought of getting a glimpse of Guru Ji brought tears to Baba Amar Das Ji's eyes. Upon receiving the sight (darshan) of Guru Ji every pore of Baba Amar Das Ji's body was quivering with bliss.

Baba Amar Das Ji was speechless and overcome by emotion. He could only stand before Guru Ji with his hands folded. Upon seeing Baba Amar Das Ji's state Guru Ji immediately embraced him and showered him with the following praises: "You have bonded me with the deep and sincere love that you have shown. Your birth is a blessing to this world. I am obligated to be present wherever I am remembered with sincerity. I have come here today because I have been tugged by the affection shown by you. Now let us go. Show me your dwelling." Baba Amar Das Ji showed Guru Angad Dev Ji all the houses that had been built. After inspecting all the houses Guru Ji rested at the scenic spot by the Bias river.

Baba Amar Das Ji accompanied Guru Ji back to Khadur. He stayed in Khadur for a few days. He served Guru Ji tirelessly and did simran all day long. Then Guru Ji permitted Baba Amar Das Ji to return to Goindwal. Baba Amar Das Ji walked backwards facing Guru Ji (towards Khadur). Such was the respect and love he had that he did not want his back to be turned towards the Guru. After walking backwards for 7.4km, he bowed down in reverence and then he walked facing Goindwal for the next 2.4km. This spot, which is two miles from Goindwal is well known in Sikhi.

6.2 Virtues of Guru Angad Dev Ji

Guru Angad Dev Ji's virtues were countless. He was the epitome of calmness and was completely desire-less. It was as if devotion manifested itself as Guru Angad Dev Ji, and came into this world. Happiness or sorrow never affected him. He considered respect and disrespect of him as equal. He never showed worldly superficial love or jealousy to anyone. His concentration was always on his formless form (Brahm Sarup) and always

³³ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 20) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

remained merged in it. The Almighty is not affected by any vice and is unreachable by mind and speech. He cannot be understood through the Buddi (intelligence) and is untouched just like the petals of the Lotus. He cannot be destroyed by weaponry nor be burnt by fire. He cannot be blown away by wind. He does not drown in water and is absorbed in the space. Death cannot swallow (destroy) Him as He is the Almighty. He manifests every where himself although He cannot be seen with bare eyes just like a rope assumed to be snake in the dark, therefore in the ignorance (darkness) the creation seems to be true (snake) but in light (knowledge) it is only he himself (rope) appearing in numerous forms. In the same manner Guru Angad Dev ji seems to be human but he is the Almighty himself.

He is the light of sunlight and other such sources of light. It is through His support that they are able to shine. He is the tiniest among the tiny (meta-physical). Through the mind, action sensors and knowledge sensors he cannot be known. He is the greatest among the great and no matter how powerful one is, one cannot find His limits. It is known to exist in a great form. Without him even the eye cannot flicker and not a single thought can develop even for a split second. He is deeply hidden, hence, he cannot be understood fully. Even his form and color is not known.

Since his form is awe-inspiring (wonderful), he is hence called 'Wahe'. The next syllable 'Gu' means darkness – implying toward the darkness within oneself created by ignorance. Finally 'Ru' is the light that is essential to illuminate and dispel all the darkness of ignorance. That is how the name 'Waheguru' is derived. Such is the greatness in the name of 'Waheguru'.

Guru Angad Dev Ji has taken the physical form of 'Waheguru' and is the perfect portrayal of devotion and yet does not reveal himself as Waheguru. Infact he always claimed himself to be the servant of Waheguru. "We should discard all traces of arrogance, greed and desires from within ourselves. Accept the will of the Almighty. Serve the Saints and always participate in the true congregation (Sat sangat) with full concentration. Never claim recognition and remain humble. Love God whole heartedly, and make this supplication "I am nothing. You are the one doer who gets things done and is omnipresent. Sing the praises of Waheguru (kirtan) and listen to it intently. Strive to do simran all day long and in doing so, you will be taken care of in both worlds."

Guru Angad Dev Ji kept his true identity hidden from everyone. He would only talk to Sikhs who had true love and devotion. Laxmi (Goddess of Wealth) would regularly do sewa in Guruj's court. All kinds of miraculous powers (riddiya and siddiya) are forever present at Guru Ji's feet awaiting for the Master's instructions. However Guru Ji shuns these powers and does not even glance at them. They cannot show their greatness to Guru Ji and stand quietly before him. Guru Ji himself is the ocean and source of all powers and miracles but yet does not flaunt them.

He conceals his greatness so well that one would not even be able to guess that Guru Ji is in fact the possessor of such vast powers. There has been no other and will never be anyone who has been able to withstand and contain their greatness and powers as Guru Angad Dev Ji. Having the ability to destroy all three world, the great Guru still tolerates the sufferings of mere mortals.

7. SUPERSTITIONS IN KHADUR SAHIB

7.1 Prideful Tappa³⁴

Khadur Sahib was inhabited mostly by the tribe of Khaira Jats. They were farmers who had accepted an ascetic (a local Tapa) as their mentor. The yogi practised celibacy and impressed the people with his miraculous powers. He was, perhaps, a local variation of the yogis and sidhas who Guru Nanak encountered, as recorded in the Sidh Gosht. The Tapa of Khadur sahib was jealous of the growing popularity of Guru Angad Dev Ji whom he scoffed as a merit man unfit for austerities and piety associated with a man of religion. The hypocrisy of the arrogant ascetic soon came to be exposed.

The months of June, July and August in Panjab are marked by the blazing sun, occasionally made bearable by dark clouds. The tillers of land welcome rain which lowered the temperature and irrigated fields for sowing crops. The prolonged absence of rains threatened the farming community with dreadful consequences. The village of Khadur sahib and the surrounding area witnessed a severe drought. In the hour of distress, the village folk sought the intervention of the Tapa who promised to perform a miracle only if Guru Angad Dev Ji was asked to leave the village. The cultivators urged Guru Angad Dev Ji to leave their village. Guru Ji advised them to bear with the Almighty's Will (Phana) patiently.

Guru Angad dev Ji and his followers moved out of Khadur sahib and settled on the periphery of the village of Khan, situated six (6) miles to the south of Khadur.

Baba Amar Das Ji, who was not present at Khadur Sahib when the incident occurred, felt the agony of shock on knowing it later. He reminded the simple-minded people that the promised rain had not come. The Tapa tried to dodge the excited mob who pressed the yogi for rains. When the evasive tactics of the ascetic were brought to the notice of Baba Amar Das Ji, Baba Ji suggested to the distraught villagers that rain would fall on the field where the Tapa's body was taken before sunset. The suggestion was translated into action immediately as day was nearing end. Ultimately the rain came but the egoistic Tapa met his wretched end as his body was torn into pieces. Baba Amar Das Ji persuaded the Khaira Jats to plead for forgiveness from Guru Angad Dev Ji. Baba Amar Das Ji along with the Khaira Jats came to Khan.

Upon arrival Baba Amar Das Ji greeted Guru Angad Dev Ji, Guru Angad Dev Ji turned away and refused to look at Baba Amar Das Ji as he was fully aware of what had happened. He knew that Baba Amar Das Ji had performed a miracle and everyone at Khadur Sahib was aware of it. This upset Guru Ji as he had never ever performed any

³⁴ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 21) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

miracle during the entire Guruship. Seeing this, Baba Amar Das Ji tried to face Guru Ji in the other direction but Guru Ji turned his back again to Baba Amar Das. Guru Ji said “You have shown the great miracle, you have not acted like a saintly person”

Baba Amar Das Ji felt very bad. Just as Baba Amar Das Ji was about to reply, Guru Ji turned his face away again, for the forth time.

Baba Amar Das Ji pleaded “Hey Guru Ji, please forgive me, this was my ignorant mind at work. I will not repeat the same mistake again; I will never allow my self to surface. Tappa insulted you; I could not tolerate his defiance, which led me to reveal Your greatness. From now on I shall only act in the way you wish, and will never go against your wishes.” Guru Ji forgave Baba Amar Das Ji and made him sit next to Him.

8. GREATNESS OF BABA AMAR DAS JI

8.1 The Touch of Salvation³⁵

After getting blessings from Guru Angad Dev Ji, Baba Amar Das Ji together with some other Sikhs left for Goindwal. They too followed Baba Amar Das Ji's practice of walking backward. While Baba Amar Das Ji, the master of miracles was walking backward his feet stepped on a bone of a human being. The sinful person, to whom the bone belonged to, was liberated from hell. He was made free from all the painful punishment. Thereafter, he took the form of a human body. While others watched in amazement, he walked away.

Baba Amar Das Ji then walked back to Goindwal and spent the night at his house. The next morning, he departed for Khadur Sahib for the sight (darshan) of Guru Angad Dev Ji. There, one of the Sikhs who had followed Baba Amar Das Ji narrated the miraculous event about the bone coming to life to Guru Angad Dev Ji while sitting in true congregation and that the manifested being had walked away without having any conversation with Baba Amar Das Ji.

After listening to the story, Guru Angad Dev Ji requested Baba Amar Das Ji to sit near him and explained "You have been blessed by Almighty. You have always performed all types of selfless service (sewa) in the house of Guru Nanak. No one can comprehend or describe your goodness and the amount of blessings that this sewa has given you. But remember you must not show any miracles. You have accidentally brought a being to life, but people have taken this to be a miracle of some sort. In the same way, you may bring life to many others, but this will not do you any good. So, please take my advice and never forget it. Whenever you crave for Darshan, I will personally come to see you."

Clasping his hands in prayer, Baba Amar Das Ji said "Guru Ji, whatever pleases you is good, whoever goes against your wish, will never be happy. I am the servant at your feet, I always crave for your sight (darshan) and am never contented without it. As for the rest, whatever pleases you shall be for my own good." Baba Amar Das Ji took the advice and went back home to Goindwal that evening.

8.2 Love for the Guru³⁶

After being separated from Guru Angad Dev Ji for many days, Baba Amar Das Ji could not bear the pain of separation any longer. Without seeing Guru Ji, he was not at peace. Day and night his heart was not at ease and he couldn't even sleep. In the day he didn't

³⁵ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 24) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

³⁶ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 25) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

consume any food because he didn't feel like eating. There was no longing for food or water. Baba Amar Das Ji was spiritually merged as one with Guru Ji, however, he still could not bear the physical separation. He was sad seating among everyone. He never felt like speaking or listening to anybody.

Baba Amar Das Ji thought to himself that by meditating on Guru Ji's name he would be able to call upon him. "For my sake Guru Ji himself may come. However, the journey may tire Guru Ji. I will not be happy if this happens".

"Without having a glimpse of Guru Ji's sight (darshan), how can one achieve any peace? I shall go to Khadur and see Guru Ji. But then again this may be against his wishes and that is wrong as well." he thought to himself.

Baba Amar Das Ji was very restless and kept thinking of what could be done. Day and night he has been requesting Guru Ji to see him. On the other hand, Guru Angad Dev Ji who is the King of the Universe, knew everything about his servant's longing.

When he saw his servant in dilemma, he thought to himself that this was like the thirsty earth begging for clouds to shower rain on it. Upon realizing Baba Amar Das Ji's love, Guru Ji decided to fulfill his wish and prepared to leave. When he was nearing to Govindwal, Baba Amar Das Ji got up at once to receive Guru Angad Dev Ji. He came to pay respects and with a lot of love within him he moved ahead to meet Guru Ji. Baba Amar Das Ji's eyes were filled with tears and he fell at Guru Angad Dev Ji's feet.

Guru Ji caught hold of him from his arms and embraced him. There was a lot of love from both sides. Hand in hand they walked. But they did not go into town. They saw a beautiful spot at the River Bias. Both of them chose a soft spot and sat there.

When Baba Amar Das Ji met Guru Ji, he achieved great happiness. Baba Amar Das Ji sat on a lower ground facing Guru Ji. The extent of Guru Angad Dev Ji's greatness and depth of knowledge is unknown to many.

Guru Angad Dev Ji said to Baba Amar Das Ji " You are one with me, there is no difference between you and me. You are my image. You are always in my thoughts. I have a lot of love for you. Contemplate on spiritual knowledge. Put aside all other thoughts. Let go the love for your body and accept it as false. Let it go as it is not lasting. Whatever takes birth will one day die. So think of it as false and let it go.

Whatever we see on earth will end or be destroyed one day. Recognise your true self. Only the real-self (Atma) is lasting as it is part of Almighty (Waheguru). It is the real-self (Atma) which is the true form of bliss and is the ultimate reality. Waheguru is unique and immortal. We are here to give people advice as servants of Almighty. Elaborate and stress on meditation among the sanggat so that the Sikhs will follow this path." Guru Angad Dev Ji gave this priceless advice on Ultimate Knowledge (Atam Gyan).

The generous Guru Ji made Baba Amar Das Ji just like him just as a torch is lighted from another torch. Then the king of universe got up from his sitting place and embraced his sewak hard with affection and walked along with him saying Dhan! Dhan!

8.3 Respect for the Guru

While walking, Guru Angad Dev Ji held Baba Amar Das Ji's right hand in His left hand. After walking quite a distance, unintentionally Baba Amar Das Ji's left arm swung just a few inches leading Guru Ji. Seeing this Guru Amar Das Ji became very worried. He believed that he had committed a serious offense by disrespecting his beloved Guru Angad Dev Ji.

Thinking of this as an offence Baba Amar Das Ji stopped moving his arm. Baba Amar Das Ji thought to himself "I cannot think of this arm as mine, it has committed a sin by leaving the Guru Ji behind. I will not do any work with this arm and never ever claim this arm as mine. As long as I am here in body on this earth, I will not do any work with this arm." He immediately lifted his left arm and placed it to his chest and kept on walking with Guru Ji. Since that the day, Baba Amar Das completely ignored his arm by fastening it permanently with a sling to his chest. He only utilised his right hand to perform his daily routine and serving the Sangat at Goindwal.

Baba Amar Das Ji had immense love and respect for Guru Angad Dev Ji therefore he had embraced Sikhi deep into himself. Guru Angad Dev Ji heard from a Sikh that that Baba Amar Das Ji had ignored his arm and Guru Ji was very pleased with Baba Amar Das Ji's persistence and the reverence. Before leaving Goindwal, while releasing Baba Amar Das Ji's arm sling, Guru Ji uttered Dhan (Great)! Dhan (Great)! Baba Amar Das Ji followed Guru Ji to Khadur Sahib.

8.4 Recognition by the Guru

Guru Angad Dev Ji thought to himself that Baba Amar Das Ji would be the most appropriate Guru to deliver divine virtues and sermons to the people. People will get together and meditate on the True Almighty's Name (Satnam) and will obtain spiritual bliss. Baba Amar Das Ji will liberate millions of human beings by preaching the practical way of living a balanced life based on the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

When they reached Khadur Sahib, Guru Ji sat on his throne. Guru Angad Dev Ji was very happy with Baba Amar Das Ji and spent the whole day conversing. In the evening Guru Ji said to Baba Amar Das Ji "Now you may go back to Goindwal".

After getting permission Guru Amar Das Ji walked backwards towards Goindwal. After walking about 7.2 km, Baba Amar Das Ji contemplated upon Guru Ji and bowed facing Kahdur Sahib. When he was 2.4km away from Govindwal Baba Amar Das Ji faced towards the town and started walking.

Baba Amar Das Ji always contemplated on Guru Angad Dev Ji's appearance. Whenever he spoke he only said Guru Ji's name and listened to the Almighty's praises (kirten). He saw and listened to nothing else beside this. He committed his total self to Guru Ji. Whenever Baba Amar Das Ji did Simran, he obtained the sight (darshan) of Guru Angad Dev Ji.

8.5 Inauguration of Guru Amar Dass Ji

Guru Angad Ji said, "Dear beloved Baba Amar Das! Listen, now you come and sit at my place. This is the great throne of power and righteousness, sit on it and spread enlightenment." Then, Guru Angad Dev Ji told the Sikhs to give Baba Amar Das Ji new clothes and then Guru Ji called upon Baba Buddha Ji to put the tilak on Guru Amar Das Ji's forehead³⁷. Guru Angad Dev Ji then said, "Meditation (Bhagti), freedom from worldly desires or attachments (Vairag), union with Almighty (Jog) and ultimate knowledge (Tatt Gyan) are the four treasures which are given to you. Use them as you wish and bestow these four treasures to those who are worthy. There will not be any want and these treasures will keep increasing." continued Guru Angad Dev Ji.

"It is the holy name 'Waheguru' which will liberate one from the vicious cycle of birth and death. Make people repeat this name. Look, the nine treasures are standing in front of you and on the other side are the eighteen miracle powers. The entire wealth and prosperity of the Universe is standing in front of you. Angels who are full of knowledge are here today and they are obedient to you." said Guru Angad Dev Ji

Then, Guru Amar Das Ji said with great respect, "I don't want anything to do with them. What do I need them for? I do not need them because your lotus feet are residing within me. Oh my master! You know what is in everybody's mind. You are aware of everything. Please read what is in my mind too. My only wish is to have You alone within my mind at all times."

After listening to Guru Amar Das Ji, Guru Angad Dev Ji advised him, "You will get everything that you desire without even asking for it. You are the creator and your commands will be fulfilled forever. In every way, your power is the greatest. Whether you ask for it or not, all the powers are with you. You are the 'Guru' of the entire world. You are given the throne of the power and righteousness. Instruct each and everyone to meditate the True Almighty's Name (Satnam). By listening to your instructions, your Sikh servants will become great devotees. Bless thousands of people by putting spiritual knowledge in their hearts."

Saying this Guru Ji, took 5 paisa and a coconut from Baba Buddha Ji. Guru Angad Dev Ji stood and went around Guru Amar Dass. Guru Ji followed the tradition that had been going on in Guru Ji's court ever since Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He kept the 5 cents in front and

³⁷ In accordance Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 27) the Guruship tilak was marked by Guru Angad Dev Ji Himself

put the coconut on Guru Amar Dass Ji's lap and kept standing. Then, he touched his forehead on Guru Amar Dass Ji's feet and gave the throne to him and told everyone, "My beloved sons and Sikhs, those who wish to remain with me till the end, should get up and bow before Guru Amar Dass Ji." After listening to Guru Angad Dev Ji, Baba Budda Ji was the first one to get up and greet Guru Amar Dass Ji. After that, all the Sikhs prostrated before Guru Amar Dass Ji and greeted him.



8.6 Baba Amar Das Ji as the Third Guru³⁸

When Guru Amar Das Ji was installed as the Guru many people came from far and near for his sight (darshan). They were wonder-struck at Guru Ji's radiance. He was like the sun that gives light to everyone. After completing the last rites of cremation of Guru Angad Dev Ji in Khadoor, Guru Amar Das Ji went back to his house in Goindval. Guru Ji, the master of needy ones, went up and locked himself in the attic room (chubara) and started deep meditation. Guru Ji never came out and neither did he talk to anyone. In his meditation he became one with the ocean of bliss, the Creator of the world. When a person is enlightened, he attains the knowledge of the entire universe which is so vast, complex and limitless that it is beyond the comprehension of ordinary human beings which cannot be even comprehended by the Vedas as from the author Brahma. Who could be such wise that can elaborate the creation of the Almighty. Guru Ji's meditation was stationed completely in consistent and was never abandoned like a lover who attained the bliss.

Guru Ji stayed in this blissful state for a long period of time. Meanwhile when the Sikhs found out that Guru Ji had gone to Goindval they all went there hoping to get his sight

³⁸ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 29) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

(darshan). After waiting for sometime they became restless and started thinking of ways to persuade Guru Ji to come out of his room. They felt that Guru Ji should come and meet the sanggat just like Guru Nanak Dev Ji did during his time. He should not isolate himself from the sanggat. They were thirsty for the sight (darshan) of the Guru just like the partridge (chekoor) who sits up the whole night staring at the moon.

They requested Baba Buddha Ji to help them in their mission. Baba Buddhaji declined, saying "Guru Ji is the knower of all hearts. He is fully aware of your desire to see him. When he is ready to shower his mercy on us he will give his sight (darshan).

The Sikhs were unsatisfied with Baba Buddha Ji's reply but kept quiet. Their longing to see Guru Ji was increased day by day. Their condition was like the pied cuckoo bird that is waiting for the rain patiently so that it will get a few drops of water and the Chakwa (bird) who awaits for the sunset to meet his lover Chakwi (female bird). Their condition can also be likened to the bride who is separated from her beloved husband and is suffering in silence, waiting for the day when she will be united with her husband again.

Finally, when they could wait no more, they decided to seek the help of Bhai Belu Ji who was very close to the Guru Ji and stayed in the Guru Ji's service daily, upon whom Guru Ji blessed happiness. He performed all the service (sewa) with love by standing alert all the time waiting for Guru Ji's command. Upon receiving instructions from Guru Ji he acted immediately otherwise he stood all the time at Guru Ji's door waiting for instructions, in this way he devoted his life in the service of the Guru Ji and Guru Ji was very happy with him. Baba Buddhaji together with some Sikhs went to Bhai Belu Ji and said, "These Sikhs have been eagerly awaiting Guru Ji's sight (darshan) for the past seven days. They are like the lotus flower that wilts without seeing the sun."

Bhai Belu Ji replied, "I will do as you wish and hope that your desires are fulfilled. "Saying this Bhai Belu Ji told all the Sikhs to follow him and wait in front of Guru Ji's room. Bhai Belu Ji went inside and made his humble request to Guru Ji. "Oh my beloved Guru Ji, the knower of all hearts, your Sikhs are waiting outside with great love in their hearts and are hoping for your sight (darshan). They are your devout Sikhs and their condition now is like the dried tree that is yearning for water and like the son who is longing to meet his father."

After hearing Bhai Belu Ji's request, Guru Ji told him to set up a tent and lay down carpets and to tell the Sikhs to sit down. Bhai Belu Ji did as he was instructed. Shortly after that, Guru Ji came and sat on the throne and gave his sight (darshan) to the Sikhs. Sitting on the throne Guru Ji looked like the king of the whole universe. He was the third form of Guru Nanak Dev ji just like a king changes his costume in the same manner Guru Amar Das Ji appeared as Guru Nanak Dev Ji in the third costume just like an actor appears in many different forms and roles. Although the physical form had changed the light was the same in all the forms. Those Sikhs who were highly spiritual were able to recognize and maintained their faith throughout the change of Guru Ji knowing that the same light

(*joth*) in all three forms of Guru Nanak. The Sikhs asked for permission to come closer to give their offerings and also to bow to the Guru Ji. They were in bliss because they were granted the sight (*darshan*) of their beloved Guru. They sat together to discuss lovingly the many virtues of Guru Angad Dev Ji. Just like when the sun appears the darkness of the world disappears, in the same way the Sikhs were experiencing the darkness in their minds being replaced by the light of knowledge from the Guru Ji. Their desires were all fulfilled and they were shown the path to salvation. Many of the Sikhs who had come with the fire of desires felt their hearts becoming pure and calm in the presence of the Guru.

When the kirtan was started by the rababi's, the Sikhs were filled with bliss hearing the Guru's shabad. Guru Ji who is omnipotent had the power to destroy sins and even revive a dead person. Wherever Guru Ji went he taught the people how to get connected to Almighty's Name (*Naam*) through *simran* and meditation. Baba Buddha Ji and the Sikhs sang the praises of the Guru. They said, "Guru Ji, you are the manifestation of Almighty Himself reincarnated into a human form in this dark age of Kalyug to save humanity. You have removed the fear of death from the heart of the Sikhs. You are omnipresent and have taught the Sikhs how to meditate on Almighty's Name. You have also blessed them with happiness. You are one with Almighty who is the ocean of knowledge. Oh Guru! Your secrets are not known to anyone. Demigods and humans are all at your service, Oh Victorious one! In this dark age of Kalyug, you have the ability to destroy sins. The whole world is bowing to you in reverence. You save even the sinners. Please have mercy on us and save us also. You are our protector. You are desireless, destroyer of sins, fulfiller of all our desires, destroyer of enemies, you cannot be conquered and you do not come into the cycle of birth and death. You are our only support now. Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Angad Dev Ji have left us physically. You are our Guru now. Please bless us so that we can do *Naam simran* (rememberence) and be saved from this world.

After listening to the Sikhs, Guru Ji answered," This will be most appropriate practice that I will always reside among the Sikhs and always fulfill all their wishes. "The Gursikhs are very fortunate that who ever meet them all their pains and sorrows will be vanished".

Later after speaking to the *sangat* Guru Ji descended from the throne. In this way, Guru Ji regularly gave sight (*darshan*) to the congregation (*sangat*) and set with them and helped them to get rid of their attachment to this world. Guru Ji liked lion vanishes attachment liked deer. Bhai Santokh Singh Ji says that I have attained contentment (*santokh*) by the sight (*darshan*) of Guru Ji.

9. GURU AMAR DAS JI'S DAILY ROUTINE³⁹

After meditating for seven days, Guru Ji came out of his room and started his daily routine as follows. Three hours before the first sight of sunrise, during the ambrosial hours (*amritwela*) Guru Ji woke up knowing the most beautiful time for meditation. With Guru Ji's command Bhai Belu Ji went to the Beas river to bring water in a pot for Guru Ji to take his bath. Bhai Belu Ji helped Guru Ji to have his bath. He helped Guru Ji to wash his hair and beard with yogurt and massaged his body with a mixture of flour, oil and some fragrant material which made the skin soft and nice. After a thorough bath to purify the body Guru Ji would change his clothes and then proceed towards the *darbar* (royal court). Here Guru Ji would sit and meditate in this blissful state for a long time. Seeing the Guru in such a state of bliss even the great yogis and deities like Brahma and Shivji bowed down in reverence to him.

9.1 Darbar Sahib

After the meditation, in the morning, the *ragis* who were skilled in playing the *rebab* (a kind of musical instrument like violin) were called upon to sing in the true court (*Darbar Sahib*). They sang Gurbani in many raags in accordance to time. Everyone present would obtain great pleasure listening to their kirtan. The ragis sang the praises of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Angad Dev Ji as how they have blessed the entire creation. Upon listening to the praises the word 'Dhan' (great) was recited by itself from the mouth of the *sanggat* and there was awe after listening to the praises as Guru Ji helped the world after which their minds were part of lotus feet of Guru Ji. Truly the ambrosial nectar (*amrit*) showered during the ambrosial hours (*amritwela*). The *sangat* loved Guru Ji very much because of his benevolent nature. The people who came during *the amrit vela* were blessed and showered with the nectar of Almighty's Name (*Naam*). Their minds were always attached to the holy feet of the Guru. Only the blessed souls reached there during the ambrosial hours. Their hearts were filled with love and devotion and they were blessed with virtues. They had realized that the remembrance of Almighty's Name (*Naam Simran*) was the only way to salvation in this world which was temporary and full of deceit, falsehood and treachery. With Almighty's Name (*Naam Simran*) they were able to connect themselves to the Creator and their egos were eliminated eventually and their souls purified. In this way they became enlightened and were liberated from the cycle of birth and death which every human being has to suffer.

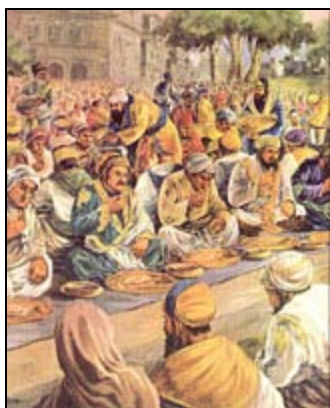
After the *simran* session, Guru Ji mingled freely with the *sanggat*. During this time Guru Ji would fulfill the needs of his Sikhs. Although Guru Ji fulfilled both the spiritual and

³⁹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 30) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

worldly desires of the *sangat* he was closer to people who had more noble desires like the quest for spiritual enlightenment.

9.2 Guru Ka Langgar

This session carried on until lunch when the cook came to announce that food (*langgar*) was ready. Guru Ji together with the *sangat* proceeded towards the *langgar* hall. Upon reaching there a Sikh washed Guru Ji's holy feet and he would enter the *langgar* hall. Everyone was considered equal here and free sitting on the floor was practiced. No one was discriminated because of his race or creed. Guru Ji and the *sangat* looked splendid sitting together. Guru Ji ate very little. His food was plain porridge with no salt but the *sangat* was treated to sumptuous meals with many different kinds of dishes. After they had eaten, they left and a second group of people were then served.



9.3 Bhai Kesu Das Ji

In the evening Guru Ji came and sat in the true court (Darbar Sahib) again. In the *sangat* was a man by the name of Kesu Gopal who was very wise and learned. He was very devoted to Guru Ji. In his heart was the desire to give a sermon in the true court in the presence of Guru Ji. He thought that if Guru Ji liked his sermon, he might be blessed by him. Knowing what was in his heart Guru Ji allowed him to give explanation on the history to the *sangat*. After his lecture (*perchar*) the *raagis* were called upon to sing hymns (*gurbani*). They sang in many different *raags*. This was how the evenings were spent in the true court. When the night came Guru Ji retired to his room to rest.

9.4 Chola Sahib

Guru Ji's attire was always white made of very soft material which is only used once. Guru Ji would change into another attire daily and the used attire was blessed to the poor people. In this manner a new robe is delivered to Guru Ji every morning.

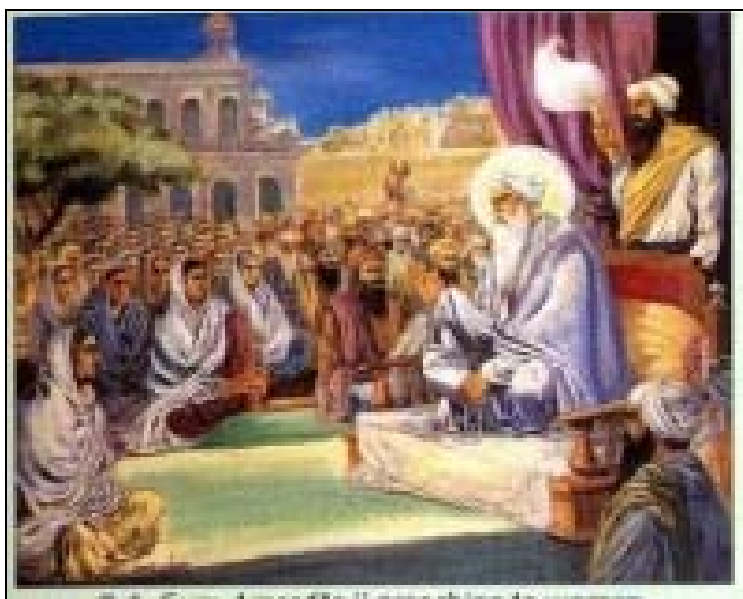
9.5 Daily Policy

Guru Ji had given strict instructions to the Sikhs that nothing should be stored for the next day at the free kitchen (Langgar). All the rations that came on that day were cooked completely. Many different varieties of dishes were made and served in the *langgar*. Any extra food was given away to the poor and also fed to the animals. The next day fresh food was prepared with the rations that were donated on that day. Even the water in the pitchers was thrown away before they went to sleep. Money was also not accumulated in the house. Guru Ji wanted the Sikhs to have faith that God will take care of their needs just like He takes care of the needs of the birds in the forest and the beggars on the roads.



9.6 The Sikhs

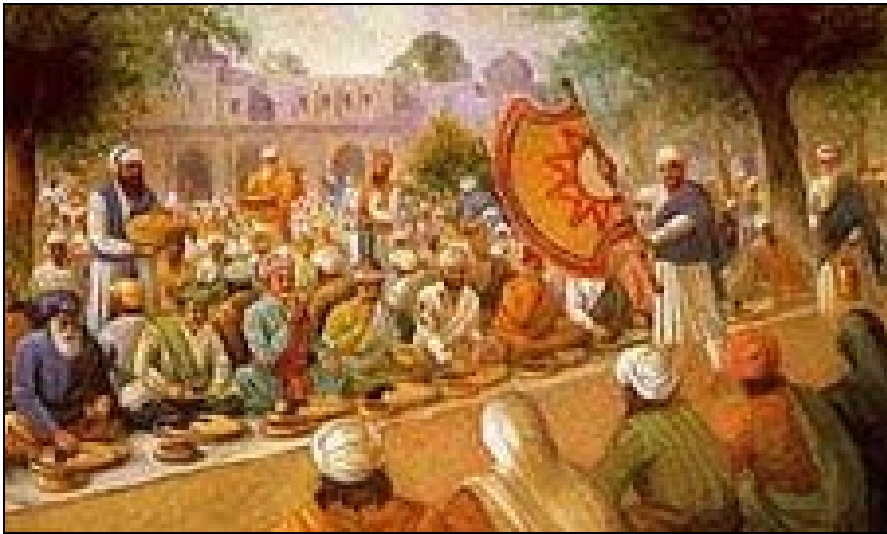
The Sikhs recites 'Waheguru' all the time and wishes each other by saying 'Peri Pavna Satguru' (touch the feet of the True Guru) with utmost love and devotion for Guru Ji. Even among them they had a lot of love as well. Unfortunately, even at that time, there were some people who were not happy with the new way of life and the equal standard among all castes preached by the Guru. They failed to understand that the path shown by Guru Ji was the right path to the salvation of the soul. In this dark age of *Kalyug* no one can attain salvation without meditation (*Naam simran*).



9.7 Pehle Pangat Phir Sanggat

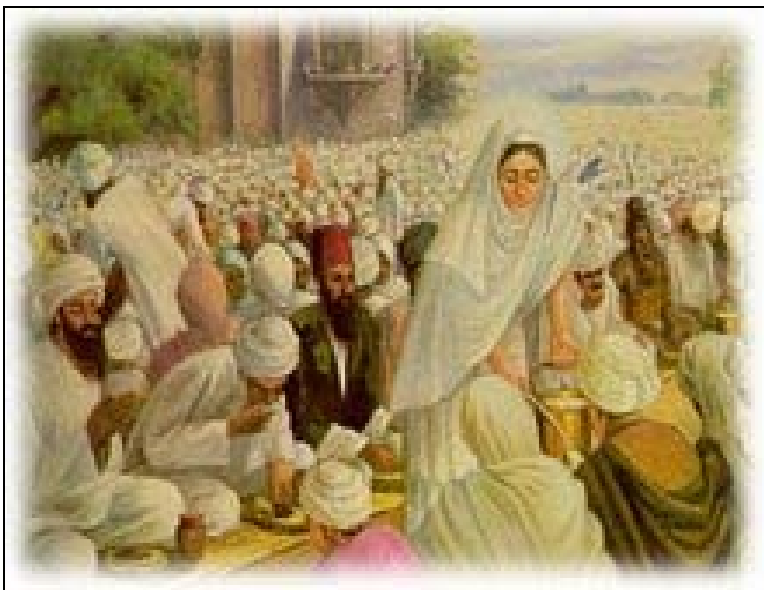
Anyone who wished to have Guru Ji's *darshan* had to sit together with everyone and have *langgar* before he was allowed into the true court (Darbar Sahib) to meet Guru Ji. Those who declined to sit together with everyone were not allowed in. Therefore, the ones who held strong to their beliefs in the caste system went back without having the sight (darshan) of Guru Ji. The ones who ate even a bite from the langgar were welcomed to the darbar and have the sight of Guru Ji. The devoted Sikhs brought rations which were then used to prepare *langgar*. The Sikhs brought many offerings but Guru Ji only kept what was required for that day. Everything else was returned.

People from all over the country came. Some of them were the followers of Guru Nanak Devji and some were the followers of Guru Angad Dev Ji. They knew that Guru Amar Das Ji was the third Guru. Guru Ji fulfilled all their desires even before they revealed them. Who ever came to have the sight of Guru Ji brought along gifts to be presented before Guru Ji, based on Guru Ji's practice, only those gifts are accepted which could be consumed or used for that particular day, other extra gifts were not accepted.



9.8 Glory of Guru Amar Das Ji

The story of Guru Ji's greatness spread day by day and the daily Almighty's meditation was revealed before the world. Many Sikhs who followed Guru Ji's instructions to recite 'waheguru' with every breath became enlightened. They attained powers to perform miracles. The news of this spread and many people came to Goindwal to settle down. They built their homes there and also opened up businesses there. Everyone who came there did well. They were blessed with health and happiness.



10. BUILDING GOINDWAL SAHIB⁴⁰

10.1 Shortage of Timber

Guru Amar Das Ji was a true Guru. He not only showed his Sikhs the right path to salvation but he also fulfilled their worldly desires. One day Bhai Balu made a request to Guru Ji, 'Oh my true Guru you are always merciful to the Sikhs. Many people from all the four castes have come to this place to live here so that they can be close to you, but due to the shortage of timber they are unable to build their houses. Because of this problem, they have become very agitated. With your blessing, this problem can be solved. Men and women can live happily with their families. All the other materials that are required to build the houses are available except the timber. They have come to see you about this problem because they feel no one else can help them but at the same time they are afraid to voice it out to you.' Upon hearing from Bhai Balu Ji, Guru Ji was delighted and gave confidence by uttering "Tell them not to worry anymore. They will get all the timber they need to build their houses."



⁴⁰ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 31) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

10.2 Bhai Saawan Mal Ji

Guru Ji called upon Saawan Mal, his nephew⁴¹ to go to Haripur and make arrangements to obtain logs of timber from there and send to Goindwal through the river Beas. Hearing this, Saawan Mal with folded hands said to Guru Ji, “Without any money how can I obtain the timber from there! No one is going with me there. What can I do alone? How can I get this people who live in the hills to listen and obey me. They have never heard of the greatness of the Guru. Please tell me how to accomplish this mission? Perhaps if I have the ability to perform miracles, the king might become impressed with me and become a Sikh. Maybe then I might be able get the logs of timber as requested. Guru Ji replied, “Everything will happen as you desire.”

When Saawan Mal’s mother heard about this, she was very upset as he was her only son and she loved him very much. She started shivering with fright and having palpitations. She went immediately to see Guru Ji and said, “I have only one son and I have heard that in the hills there are many witches who might attack my son and eat his heart. He will have no one to turn to for help. Please have mercy on me and spare him so that I can live in peace. He is very simple and the witches are very crafty. They will bewitch him and he will not be able to come back.”

Understanding her fears, Guru Ji who is the ocean of mercy, consoled her, “Your son has nothing to fear from the spirits and witches. He has immense spiritual strength which will protect him. Fifty –two brave men and all the witches are at his command. He has also won over all the deities as well as the demons. He is very strong and you don’t have to worry about him”. After hearing what Guru Ji said she was consoled and went home feeling confident that Guru Ji will protect her son from all the evils.

Later, Guru Ji called Saawan Mal to come and sit next to him and said, “Take this handkerchief which has the power to perform miracles. With this you can bring a dead person to life and if you so wish you can kill a person with it. Whatever your wishes are, it can be fulfilled. Even the deities and demons will be in awe of you. Please go now to the hills to complete your mission without any doubts and fear. Your command will be obeyed there and also in the three worlds.”

Saawan Mal took the handkerchief from Guru Ji and was very pleased. With folded hands he said, “Now our mission will be accomplished. The people will agree to anything after seeing miracles being performed.”

As soon as he put the handkerchief on his head he was enlightened. He could see all the spiritual powers in front of him in all their splendour. He bowed in reverence to Guru Ji.

⁴¹ Guruji’s younger brother Bhai Khem Rai Ji’s son

Later he went to say goodbye to his mother and other family members saying, "Please don't worry about me. I have been blessed with great spiritual powers."

10.3 Bhai Saawan Mal in Haripur

After saying goodbye to them he left his family members and started his journey towards the hills. After traveling for sometime he finally reached the town of Haripur. He was absolutely awe-stricken by the natural beauty of the whole place, the jungle, the gardens, the many varieties of plants, flowers, fruits and animals. Even the people there were dressed very elegantly in beautiful colors. The women there were also very beautiful. They had slim necks like that of the pigeon and slim waists just like that of the lion, agile bodies, moon-like faces, eyes like the leaves of the lotus flower, red lips like the rose flower and beautiful black hair. They were so stunning that even the yogis were not able to resist their beauty. Without any doubt they were the most beautiful women on the earth.

Saawan Mal noticed that everyone in this kingdom was quite rich. As he came nearer the palace grounds he heard the sounds of people crying. As he approached the palace he saw thousands of people gathered together and wailing loudly. He called aside one of them and asked, "Why is everyone crying? What tragedy has occurred here that has made everyone to be so sad?"

The man answered, "Our beloved king's only son has passed away. The king, queen and all the people here are in extreme sorrow. The king is very shattered by this tragedy. He has lost control of himself. He has taken his turban off and was seen pulling his hair and now he has fainted. The queen is also in a similar situation. She is overcome with grief and her heart is full of sorrow. Seeing the king and queen in such a condition everyone is in mourning."

Hearing this, Saawan Mal thought to himself, "This is the perfect place for me to perform a miracle. If I bring back to life the prince, all the people will start believing in me and become Guru Ji's followers. This is indeed a great opportunity." He started walking towards the entrance of the palace. There he saw the queen in deep sorrow, tears flowing freely from her eyes. Her clothes were in disarray and she was groaning and lamenting. She was pulling her hair and hitting her head, face and thighs with her palms. Everywhere there was crying. As he entered inside he saw the king who was overwhelmed with grief and had fainted. The ministers were also wailing. No one was consoling one another because everyone was in deep sorrow. Some of them were remembering the prince saying, "Our prince was very good-looking and he gave so much happiness to everyone. The king, queen, ministers and the people all loved him very much. He was our support and now God has taken him away."

Seeing everybody in such deep sorrow, Saawan Mal felt pity in his heart and decided to help them. He called aside one of the ministers who was sitting beside the king, took him

to a quiet place and said, “A big catastrophe has occurred here, but with the Guru Ji’s blessing, I can bring your prince to life again if you can accept my condition. All of you, together with the king and all his people will have to believe in one Almighty by embracing the True Guru. Please convey my message to the king.”

The minister was very pleased to hear this. He went straight to the king and said, “A great saint who professes to be the Sikh of Guru Nanak Dev Ji is here and says that if the you agree to believe in Almighty alone by embracing the True Guru, he can bring your son to life again. Then all the people here also will have to be his followers in order for him lead to the True Guru.”

Hearing this, the king felt as though his ears were filled with nectar (amrit). He said, “We will all become his disciples. We will embrace him as our Guru. Tell him to make my son alive again and we will serve him as he wishes. Bring him here quickly or else we will all die together with the prince.”

The minister went quickly to Saawan Mal and brought him before the king. The king fell at his feet and then, very respectfully, told him to sit down. The king said, “Please make my son alive again and we will all follow your command. We will serve you day and night.”

10.4 Dead Prince Became Alive

Saawan Mal said, “Bring the dead prince here. Tell everyone to retreat, stop crying, sit down in silence and start meditating on Waheguru (Almighty’s Name). Have faith in the True Guru (Satguru), be patient and be happy.”

The dead prince was brought immediately and put in front of Saawan Mal. All of them looked very confused and perplexed. Saawan Mal removed the cloth covering the prince’s face. He told them to bring some water. He took the handkerchief and washed one end of it in the water. Then he squeezed the water from it into the prince’s mouth and at the same time said *Satnam*. As soon as the handkerchief touched the prince’s face he started breathing again just as Lachman was revived by the water from the evergreen (Sanjivani) plant. The prince opened his eyelids. The king came forward quickly and hugged him. The queen kissed his forehead. The prince then got up.

11. THE HARIPUR KING BECOMES A SIKH⁴²

In everyone's home there was great tranquility and rejoicing. The king with great zeal started giving alms to the poor. At the door of his fort drums and flutes were played; poets and singers sang. Also played were the sitar, violin and large drums. Earlier where people were unhappy and miserable, now there was tranquility and rejoicing.

11.1 Glorified Saawan Mal

The king and queen together with their ministers went to see Saawan Mal. With hands together they presented gifts and garlands. Waving whisks they bowed glorifying Saawan Mal.

Saawan Mal was taken in a palanquin (*Palki*) to the palace. There he was given food and drinks. An expensive bed was laid for him and everyone in the kingdom came and paid homage. A canopy made of soft cotton decorated with golden flowers and lace was put up. Services and praises were showered on him. Everyone was very surprised to see this miracle and said "This Guru Ji is great and capable because he has brought to life the King's dead son". Eventually the King and his followers became Sikhs. They prayed to Waheguru. In return they received peace, happiness and had their wishes fulfilled.

11.2 Solving the Timber Shortage in Goindwal Sahib

Saawan Mal then told the king "My house is on the banks of the River Beas. There is a need for many long pillars (planks). Tie up the timber pillars to make rafts and float them in the river. Send along a few capable swimmers so that the rafts can reach the town of Goindwal. There they can help to pull out the rafts". When the king of Haripur heard this he sent a number of his employees to find wood. The wood was cut and chiseled to form round timber pillars which were tied to form rafts. These rafts were set afloat accompanied by a few good swimmers.

When the rafts arrived in Goindwal they were removed from the river. Guru Ji instructed the construction workers to start cutting up the rafts to free the timber pillars (planks) which were distributed among the people of Goindwal to make their houses. These included the Guru Ji's family, the Brahmin families, the twenty-two sects of Katheri's and anyone else who was interested in making their home in Goindwaal. Guru Ji then divided the available land amongst the people who had

⁴² Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 32) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

received the planks. Only the most fortunate ones had such opportunity to stay in Goingwaal sahib. Houses were made and everyone lived there without fear.

11.3 Life in Goindwal Sahib

The water of the river Beas is as pure as the Ganges. The water of the Ganges removes all sins and makes one pure. Some believe that a dip in the Ganges gives salvation. A dip in the river Beas on the other hand gives instant rewards. Those who dwelled on His Name and dipped into the river were able to see Him in the form of Guru Amar Das Ji. The holy words of the Guru Ji are simple and not as difficult as the language in the Vedas.

Food was served all day long at the Guru's abode and people of all races ate there. Guru Ji made a ruling that whoever wanted to have an audience with him must first eat in the common dinning hall. Any remainder food was fed to the animals and if there was still food left after feeding the animals, it was thrown into the river so that the living things in the water also received food from the Guru Ji's kitchen. During the night, before the midnight all the extra raw food, sundries material and cash balance is never brought forward to the next day, therefore is then donated among all who are present. Everyone was delighted and feasted merrily. Quickly the city that the Guru Ji build flourished. Anyone who came there with a wish had their wish fulfilled after they had an audience with the Guru Ji.

11.4 Saawan Mal in Haripur

Saawan Mal made Haripur his home and he was well respected. Even, the king himself washed Saawan Mal's feet and so did others who comes to his service. He greeted the people with clasped hands and showered them with love. He fulfilled their wishes with the miracle handkerchief given to him by the Guru Ji. People came with all kinds of wishes: some asked for sons, others asked for wealth, health and many others things. When their wishes were granted they were delighted and showered him with gifts and spoke highly of him. Saawan Mal had his followers were astonished by the miracles he performed.

The king and queen served him extensively at all time and accepted all his requests without any hesitation due to fear. Expensive clothing and good food mixed with raisins and nuts was prepared specially for him. Servants waited on him all day long so that his every request was instantly fulfilled. Eventually Saawan Mal thought "Guru Ji has received enough timber pillars (planks) to complete the houses and the most of the houses should be completed by now with some still being constructed. Now it is time for me to seek an audience with Guru Ji".

11.5 Saawan Mal's Refusal to Return

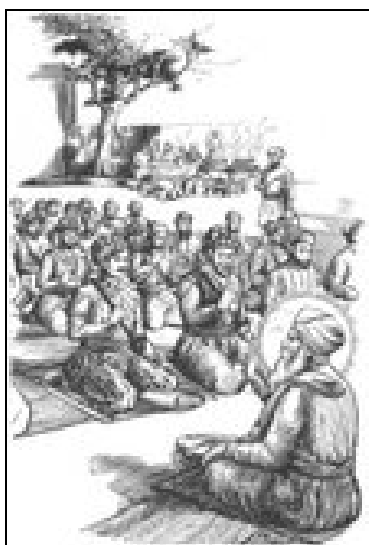
Saawan Mal knew that his mission in Haripur was completed and he should return to Goindwal Sahib and seek an audience with Guru Ji. He knew that, the miracles, he performed were because of the handkerchief Guru Ji had given to him.. If he visited Guru Ji he would have to return the handkerchief because the purpose for which it was given had been completed. He thought he will again become an ordinary man without any powers and nobody will respect him anymore. Only the Guru Ji's greatness will be manifested.

Saawan Mal therefore decided "I will stay here. The people here including the king himself pray to me, serve me and present me with many wonderful gifts. If I go to Goindwal I will get nothing. I should therefore stay here. Anything I desire I can achieve through my power and I will be known throughout the world. After contemplating thoroughly, he decided to stay put in Haripur and decided not to return to Goindwal.

11.6 Guru Ji Summons Saawan Man

After many months the supreme spirit Guru Ji realized that Saawan Mal had become materialistic. He then sent a written command (Hukamnama) to him via a Sikh. Saawan Mal read the message and replied "The king does not allow me to leave. I will come in a few days time". Guru Ji realized that this was just an excuse and immediately commanded the handkerchief "Hey handkerchief! Goindwal needs you here, come back immediately".

Hearing this the handkerchief instantly appeared in front of Guru Ji and Saawan Mal was left empty handed. Upon observing Guru Ji's ability, Saawan Mal was repentant and said to himself that he had committed a great sin by not listening to the Guru Ji.



11.7 Saawan Mal's Preparation

After spending a couple of days in a disturbed state of mind Sawan Mal thought "I shall depart to Goindwal to have an audience with Guru Ji together with the King, Queen and my disciples. There I will fall at his feet and beg for forgiveness. I will touch Guru Ji's feet in Goindwal together with everyone from Haripur and beg for forgiveness from Guru Ji by leading the Haripur people. The anger of elder's is just like fire which can be put down by pouring the water of humble apology. Tranquility will not be achieved by any other means. If I try to twist the issue it will be like putting ghee into the fire.

He then told the king "My Master lives in Goindwal and with his blessing I came to Haripur and gave you and your people great happiness. Now I want to visit my Master and I invite you to come with me. An alliance with him is pure through which there is peace here and in the other worlds. Take great gifts to him and in return get his blessing. Bring along your queens, rich ministers and the ordinary people".

The king agreed to do what Saawan Mal told him and started making preparations for the journey. He arranged for a palanquin for Saawan Mal and the elephants and horses were given new harnesses. The Queen and the King's other consorts sat in palanquins. They started the journey and the king was very happy. In everyone's mind was "We are going to meet the great Guru Ji".

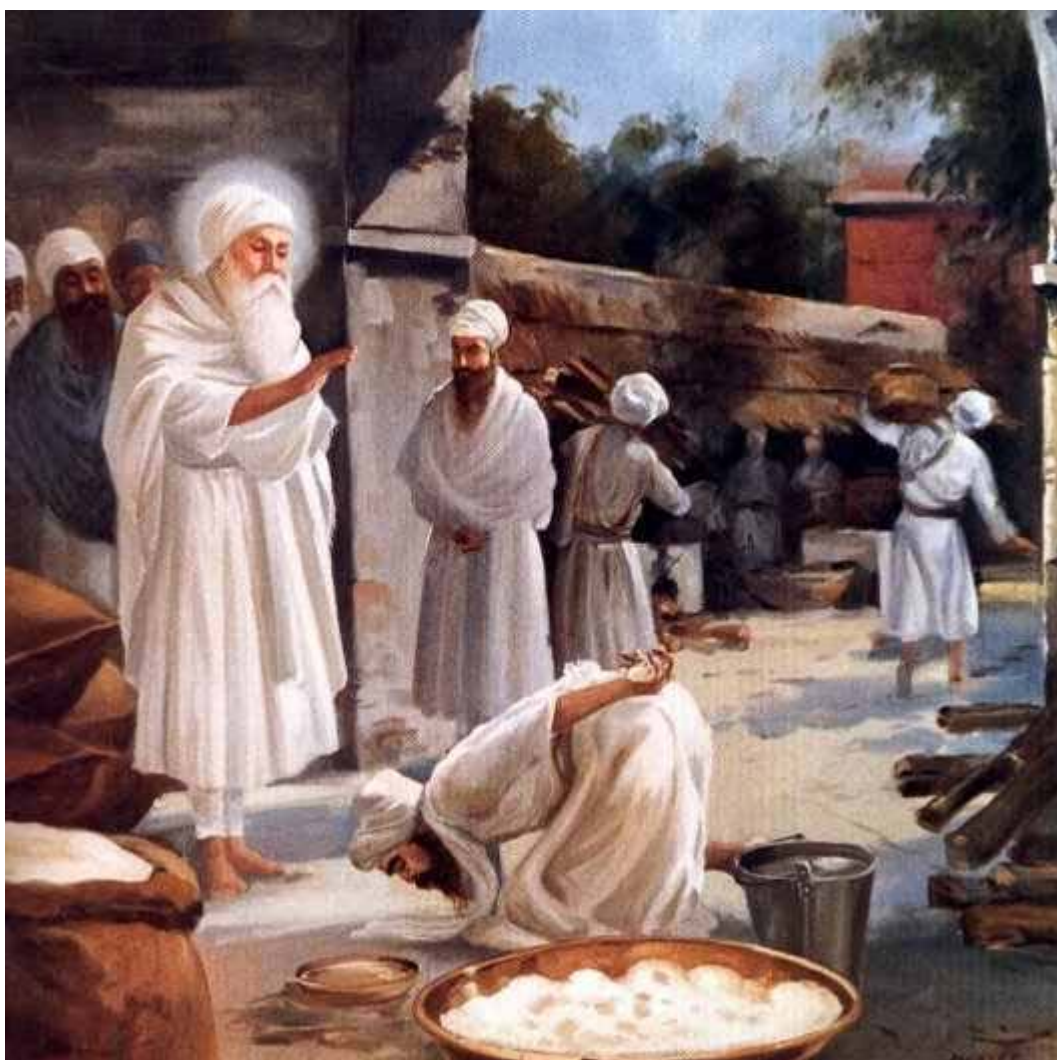
11.8 The Forgiver Guru

On reaching Goindwal town they disembarked near the banks of the river Beas. Saawan Mal went to meet his Sikh friends and was happy to know everyone was well. Then feeling shameful and with his head held low he went to meet the True Guru. He knelt at Guru Ji's feet and prayed. Love kindled in his heart and Saawan Mal said "I am your Sikh and am also like your son and servant. I have faith that you will forgive me as you have forgiven many others. It is common knowledge that younger people will err and the older and more mature will forgive. Advise me and comfort me. Do not keep any of my misdeeds in your mind. When any follower misbehaves the Master will forgive him because he is treated as family. You are the Great Spirit and knows everything so what else can I say?" He stood in front of Guru Ji with hands clasped together.

The Great Guru Ji smiled and said "I would like to bless salvation to all my Sikh, servants and sons but your ego increased and therefore, I did that with great concern in my mind for you. The handkerchief given to you has spiritual powers and you became absorbed in its powers. You became arrogant and forgot the path of prayer and devotion. This would have caused you your salvation therefore, I took back all

your powers by recalling the handkerchief to destroy your selfishness. How that you have realised and seek forgiveness I bless you with the handkerchief and grant you all other powers as well. I have authorised you to lead Haripur together with all its King and residents. My support for you will never decrease, be happy and you will eventually be near me in the other world. Roam without fear for ghosts, evil spirits and witches will all be under your authority. If you keep your powers contented within you then you shall have all my blessing. You may ask for any service you desire from your followers and they will obey as well as serve you day and night. You have earned this by serving the house of Guru Nanak. Continue to meditate on the True Name (*Satnam*)". Thus Saawan Mal received happiness in both worlds.

Salutations to Guru Amar Das Ji , by reciting His Name all pain is dispelled.



12. KING HARI CHAND AND SACHAN SACH ⁴³

Saawan Mal was very happy to have received bliss in both the worlds. He now understood that there is no one greater than the Guru. He realised that what Guru Ji did was right. Now his ego was destroyed and he had been empowered to lead the people of Haripur as well as beibg blessed with the power of the spirits.

12.1 King HariChand Meets Guru Ji

Saawan Mal with folded hands pleaded before Guru Ji, “The King of Haripur, his army, his ministers, his queen, and his other wives have come. With your permission they would like to meet you and fulfill their wishes. All their sins can be cleansed and they can become pure after meeting you. They consider you to be the Great Spiritual Being”.

Guru Amar Das Ji the said “First everyone must eat in the common dinning hall. The king can bring all to me but women must not come”. On hearing this Saawan Mal begged, “O Great One, all his wives have come with great hope of meeting you. Fulfill their wishes too as they have traveled from a far. If they are not allowed to see you they will be disappointed and will lament (sulk) unhappily. Be compassionate and meet with them for they have come with faith. So do invite them too”.

Then Guru Ji said “Ask all the women to wear white clothing and no one must hide their faces under a veil. Only then can they come and meet me. They must also eat in the common dinning hall without reservation before coming to meet me”.

On hearing this Saawan Mal went to where the King and his people were waiting. He said “I tried in many ways to ask Guru Ji to allow your wives to meet him but He does not allow. All the women can bow to him from outside without seeing him but if they want to meet Guru Ji then they have to dress in white clothing before coming and they must not cover their face”. The king agreed to this condition and was very happy.

Everyone ate at the common dinning hall then the King took his wives to change their clothing. All the women wore white clothing and none of them covered their faces. Guru Ji stood on the upper floor holding on to a stake (peg). There was a window near the stake and through this window Guru Ji showed himself to his followers and all those who wanted to see him. Those who wanted to see him stood below the window and paid their respect. Guru Ji never accepted any gifts. He only

⁴³ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 33) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

accepted food for the day. This practice was established by the Guru Ji and all those who were close to him knew this practice.

The King also came to the window and stood below it. He tried to present gifts to Guru Ji but the Sikh explained the practice to him and he then moved away from the window. Next the ministers went followed by the army personnel to pay their respects.

12.2 The Young Queen

The senior queen followed by the other queens paid their respects to Guru Ji in turns. When the youngest queens approached the window she hide her face with her scarf. She was new, thus was very shy and forgot Guru Ji's instructions. On seeing her Guru Ji said "Hey insane lady, why have you come if on seeing me you have covered your face?" She suddenly lost her sanity, took off her clothes and ran out. People gathered around to stop her. When the King heard the narration of Guru Ji's words he was taken aback. Guru Ji's word hit their target just as the arrow that left Sri Ram Chander's bow never went to waste.

The king continued to stay there for a few more days. Everyday he paid his respect. The queen who ran away was never found because she ran off into the jungle. The king together with his followers ate in the Guru Ji's dining hall. He was always afraid he may do something wrong thus he always remained humble.

12.3 King HariChand Leaves Goindwal

When the king was ready to leave, Guru Ji said to him "Saawan Mal is your mentor serve him with affection and sincerity. He brought life to your dead son and he has also fulfilled many of your wishes. He will continue to fulfill your wishes and through your faith in him all your troubles will be distanced. He is your region's Guru. Serve him with affection as you did before".

The king agreed and said, "We will always remain under his will. To everyone a son is equivalent to their own life. By reviving my son he has given me a great gift. Who is better than him who has your blessings. The king then left for Haripur. He continued to meditate on Almighty's Name as well as continued to serve Saawan Mal. His ministers and the rest of his people also believed in him and continued to present him with gifts. Saawan Mal frequently visited Goindwal and stayed there for a few days at a time.

12.4 Bhai Sachan Sach

There was a servant who went into the jungle to collect wood for the Guru's kitchen. He was an orphan and had nothing belonging to him; the only one thing he had was the love for Guru Amar Das Ji. He was not knowledgeable too. He enjoyed reading, writing, speaking or listening to worldly matters. He did not know how to pray. He was happy performing selfless service and always spoke the truth. Standing, sitting, going to or coming from the jungle he only spoke the truth and in his mind he meditated on the Guru Ji's Name.

As time passed, everyone knew him as the truthful speaker therefore, he was given the nickname 'Sachan Sach'. The people had a lot of compassion for him as they loved him and always called upon him. Later when they saw his devotion they praised him. He never said no to anyone who asked him to do anything. The people were very happy with him and thus Guru Ji too was very happy with him. On whom Guru Ji showered his grace, the Creator of the three worlds was also kind and merciful towards him. On whom the Creator showered his grace, every living soul in the universe also showered grace upon him.

12.5 Bhai Sachan Sach and the Young Queen

Sachan Sach covered himself with a blanket thus he was called the man with the blanket. He always did service in Guru Ji's kitchen. He went to go into the forest to collect firewood. One day as he was gathering wood in the jungle, the insane young queen of the King of Haripur came running towards him with a frightened look on her face. Her hair was all over her head and she was naked. She roamed the jungle in that state. She caught hold of Sachan Sach from the back and jumped on his back by holding his neck. She started biting his face and scratching his body with her nails. Sachan Sach tried his best to get free of her but was unsuccessful. He became very scared. He was injured and blood was dripping from his body. He then used all his strength to push her away. Then he took a big stick and hit her twice to scare her off. She left him and ran back into the jungle. She was mentally unstable and unaware of what she was doing.

Sachan-sach quickly gathered as much wood as he could, tied it into a bundle, put them on his head and started to walk back to the town. As he walked he kept looking back because he was scared that she might reappear. He reached Goindwal with blood oozing from his wounds and very little firewood. Everyone who saw him asked "Who did this to you? Where did you go?" The Guru Ji called him and asked "Who did this to you? Who caused these injuries? Who has hit you? Blood is oozing from your wounds and you are in a frightened state. Who obstructed you from collecting firewood for cooking? You were out for so long, come narrate your encounter".

Sachan Sach clasped his hands together and said “In the jungle there is a women possessed by a demon. Her hair was untied, her body was naked and on seeing me she came and caught hold of me. With her teeth she bit me and with her nails she clawed me. With great difficulty I freed myself. I will not go there any more because I am afraid she will kill me. She did not let me collect the firewood because seeing her made me very frightened. My luck was good I managed to free myself; otherwise she would have killed me. I called for help but no one was nearby to help me. I will go to a different place to find firewood”.

On hearing his story, Guru Amar Das Ji said,” Do not be frightened of her. She is not a demon. She is one of the queens of the King of Haripur. She has become insane and is not in her senses. When you go to the jungle tomorrow take my sandal along. When she comes near you, touch her forehead with the sandal and she will become sane again. Then bring her to me”.

When the people heard this, they were astonished and they said to Sachan Sach “Do not be afraid. Go to the same place in the jungle”. The next day Sachan Sach went into the jungle. As soon as she saw him she started shouting. With a few leaps she came close to him. When she jumped to catch him, Sachan Sach immediately touch her head with the Guru Ji’s sandal. As soon as her head was touched she regained her sanity and sat down. She realized that she was naked and was ashamed. She crouched down remembering the instant when Guru Ji used the word insane on her.

Then she said “Hey Gursikh ! Give me clothes so that I can cover my body. I want to meet Guru Ji and ask for his forgiveness for not following his command. I have been in great difficulty and now I am aware of my body. By seeking audience with the Guru Ji and by his grace all my difficulties will be gone. Now take me to the town”.

On hearing her request, Sachan Sach gave her his blanket. She covered her body with the blanket. Both Sachan Sach and the queen appeared before Guru Ji. Guru Ji smiled on seeing them together and said, “Both of you should live together as husband and wife. Sachan Sach, your service has borne fruit, go home and meditate on Almighty’s Name. Take my other sandal as well. If anyone has the disease of the mind (stress, insane), body (cancer, etc.) or a pain caused by other mediums (snake or insect bite, accident, virus, etc.), touch the sandal and all their difficulties will be gone. Any word that you utter will remove all the curses. Live without fear in your home. Wherever possible start a religious group”. Their marriage was solemnised immediately in Guru Ji’s presence and they were were honoured with a ‘Manji’ one out of the twenty-two ‘Manjis’ which was the most supreme status at that time to represent the Guru. By the grace of the Guru Ji, they were able to perform miracles. Guru Amar Das Ji uplifted Sachan Sach to a level as high as the Sumeer Parbat. Having blessed him with a wife, Sachan Sach was freed of all his pain and sorrows. Happy with the upliftment, Sachan went back home and practised Sikhi. He also helped many others in achieving their goals.

He would cure the sick by even the touch of his shoes. Many would remedy their pain and the cursed would also free themselves of curses through him. He was praised throughout the country as he removed many of their difficulties and made them happy. It was clear to people in the village Sekhonpur (Ferozpur), that their pain would go away as soon as they touched his shoes. Until today, Guru Ji's sandal is inherited by their generation in the same village.

13. BHAJ DATU JI⁴⁴

Guru Ji blessed many with divine knowledge and freed them of the cycle of birth and death. But the selfless service (Niskaam Sewa) of the True Guru is only obtained by those with blessings. The sangat used to flood the darbar daily to have the darshan of Guru Ji. They'd bring gifts for Guru Ji but he would not accept them. He would only accept goods required for preparation of langgar for the day. Langgar used to be served continuously throughout the day beginning with breakfast at dusk. In the evenings, Guru Ji used to join the sangat to have langgar.

He used to have dhal without salt and used to eat very little. The sangat used to eat a variety of dishes, some sour and some sweet. Langgar used to be served to all, irrespective of race and creed and irrespective of the time of the day. Guru Ji's praises were sung all around and the Sikhs remained contented all the time.

13.1 Bhai Datu Ji's Envy

However, when Guru Angad Dev Ji's son, Bhai Datu Ji heard about this, he could not tolerate this and was very jealous of the good that people had to say about Guru Ji. He said "These are the praises belonging to my house."

After Guru Angad Dev Ji merged with his formless form (Jothi Jot), Baba Buddha Ji together with all the Sikhs accepted Guru Amar Das Ji as the next Guru. At that point, Bhai Datu Ji took away the turban that was to be tied for Guru Ji, and tied it onto his own head. He often sat on Guru's throne in Khadur Sahib but nobody acknowledged him. The sangat never came to pay their respect to him. He tried to preach but none acknowledged him as their Guru.

No one bowed to him and neither did he receive any gifts from the sangat. He was hence very angry and upset, and his heart was filled with jealousy. He tried proclaimed himself as the Guru, but he was unsuccessful without the support of the Sikhs. His neighbours used to instigate him by saying "Despite being the son of Guru Angad Dev Ji, you are left without anything. No one comes to see you and no one asks about you. You have also not received any gifts. You are similar to a dead body and you've failed to secure the great throne of your father. Some Khatri (Guru Amar Das Ji) comes from far away has instead come forward and secured the throne. Kings of other nations pay their respects to him, present gifts to him and bow to him. There is always a big crowd in Goindwal, all rushing to see him."

⁴⁴ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 34) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Such comments given by his friends used to irritate him further. Although he was aware of Guru Amar Das ji's greatness, he was blinded by the bad company that continued to embroil him in jealousy. He could not tolerate the insults any more, he thought to himself that he had even tried to proclaim himself as the Guru, but he could not succeed without the support of the sangat.

Thereafter he concluded "I shall kill Guru Amar Das Ji first and then take over his throne. I am the rightful proprietor of my father's throne, what could someone else have to do with it". With these thoughts, he decided to go to Goindwal Sahib.



13.2 Bhai Datu Ji Kicks Guru Ji

Upon arrival in Goindwal Sahib, he came directly to the place where Guru Ji was leading a divine congregation. Bhai Datu Ji came in anger and sat beside Guru Amar Das Ji on the throne without prostrating before him.

The True Congregation (Sat-Sangat) was in progress. The people were paying respects to Guru Ji. Some of them were engrossed in meditation while others were playing the rebab and singing Almighty's praises. Guru Ji was looking radiant in the holy congregation. Seeing this, Bhai Datu Ji became furious. He could not tolerate the glory of Guru Ji. He stood up and came close to Guru Ji. After observing Guru Ji's body in the state of unmanageable anger, Bhai Datu Ji kicked Guru Ji very hardly.

Guru Ji's body could tolerate the force and Guru Ji fell from his throne. Guru Ji quickly picked himself up and went towards the feet of Bhai Datu Ji. Instead of being angry, he hold Bhai Datu Ji's feet and started to rub his feet with his hands and said "I have been doing sewa for a long time and I am getting very old also. That is why my body has become very tough and your feet are very gentle. Your feet might have felt the pain when my hard bones hit against them. Please forgive me. You are the blessed son of Guru Angad Dev Ji. You have tolerated this pain due to your love for me. I did not rise when I saw you approaching me. The pride that I had in me, you have taken it away. Thank you for giving me the reminder by hitting me. What other sewa can I do for you, please tell me. I will do as you say, please do not be angry."

In anger, Bhai Datu Ji said "What pretence have you been up to. I have gained Guruship. Everyone had bestowed upon me the Guruship, but how have you ended up getting people to pray to you. You have announced yourself as the Guru. I am upset because of this. I do not like this pretence. The sangat comes and goes. My father was a very straightforward man, you had served him earlier. But instead, you have learnt to lie and enhance your own ego by becoming Guru yourself. My father asked you to develop the Goindwal village but you have instead declared yourself the owner of it. You need not do anymore of our sewa here. Please leave this place immediately." Stunned, the sangat stayed mum throughout the episode.

The sangat stayed put in their position and said nothing. At dusk , everyone returned home. Guru Ji proceeded to his room whilst Datu stayed put at the same place with some of his friends.

14. GURU AMAR DAS JI LEAVES GOINDWAL ⁴⁵

Guru Amar Das Ji considered that arguments and misunderstandings are not good and should not be further augmented therefore Guru Ji made a decision to leave Goindwal Sahib after midnight. He left alone without taking anything along, even without his sandals.

14.1 Guru Ji in Isolation

He found a beautiful place located just before the Basarkay. He secured a cow keeper double storey house and secluded himself in meditation in the house, leaving a note at its door reading “Whoever opens this door will not be considered as my Sikh and neither will I be his Guru. He would loose all the happiness in this world as well as the next world and I will not protect him thereafter.” Upon writting the notice Guru Ji closed the doors from inside and sat in unmovable posture in the concentration of the real-self. His meditation was so deep that will never be affected by anything. All of him is immersed in Almighty in a very blissful state. Guru Ji hide himself in a manner that no one would ever notice his presence.

14.2 Bhai Datu Ji Ignored by the Sangat

The next morning, when the sangat found Guru Ji missing from Goindwal, the search for Guru Ji commenced everywhere. Bhai Datu Ji was however, pleased to hear about Guru Ji’s absence. Bhai Datu Ji took over all belongings of Guru Ji including his robes and took over the throne. He started to await for sewadars to pay their respect to him.

None from the sangat paid respect to him. Instead, they were very upset over his disrespectful act and took an alternative route when finding Bhai Datu Ji in their way. The Sikhs were very upset and said “His greed has caused so much damage”. All the Sikhs stayed the whole day at their places and no one went to Bhai Datu Ji.

Noting that the sangat did not want to accept him, Bhai Datu Ji became depressed and made preparations to leave the place with all Guru Ji’s valuables. In the evening, he left for his village with some of his own servants. On the way, as it got dark, a group of dacoits cornered Bhai Datu Ji. Bhai Datu Ji’s servants ran off leaving him behind. The dacoits robbed him off all the valuables that he had collected.

⁴⁵ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 35) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

14.3 Bhai Datu Ji Repents

Bhai Datu Ji went home empty handed. He even lost all of his own belongings including clothes and jewelry. The leg, with which he had earlier kicked Guru Amar Das Ji, was in great pain. At home, he cried “I have done a huge misdeed. I set off to rob the valuables of Goindwal but ended up loosing my own belongings as well. And my leg, with which I kicked, is now in great pain.” Embarrassed, he never came out of his home and never told anyone of his misdeeds.

His leg was in great pain. He was suffering for his disrespect towards Guru Ji and his refusal to seek forgiveness from Guru Ji. He thought “I will be totally embarrassed in the midst of the sangat, they will look down on me.” As a result, he used to spend the whole day at home, suffering in pain.

14.4 Guru Ji's Absence

Back in Goindwal, the sangat got together in a congregation. They were very depressed without Guru Ji's presence just like flowers that would not blossom without the sun, the people without the King, the deities without Inder (king of heaven), the birds without their wings, wives without their husbands, the trees that dry without water in the same way the Sikhs were burning in pain without their beloved Guru. Sikhs begin to think within their individual intellect on the whereabouts of Guru Ji and exchanged opinions among them.

Some said “Guru Ji's in deep meditation and has gone Sachkhand to enjoy eternal bliss of the Almighty. Observing the anger of Guru Angad Dev Ji's son, he has left all of us. He has no qualms about leaving both worlds are the same to him and he lived here for his Sikhs.” Some others said that Guru Ji had gone to the forests as he could not tolerate Bhai Datu Ji's misdeeds. Some was the opinion that Guru Ji might have migrated to another country where there are a lot of servants to bless his sight to the fortunate ones.

14.5 Baba Buddha Ji

Despite all these assertions, they could not conclude. So the sangat got together and concluded, “Baba Buddha Ji will definitely know about Guru Ji's whereabouts. Baba Buddha ji is just like a minister in the house of Guru Nanak. Lets go to him where ever he resides, he will find our Guru for us where ever he is as we are not able to trace him from any other source”. Poet Santokh Singh illustrates the condition of Sikh were just like the condition of Sri Krishna's wives when he disappeared.

Uttering this, the Sikhs were in tears and heart broken. Together all of them, sought the audience of Baba Buddha Ji, served degg and knelt before him with bowed heads. Standing with their hands clasped, they sang Baba Buddha Jis praises and pleaded “There

is no difference between you and Guru Ji, only two bodies with one spirit (joth). You are the protector of Sikhs just like a ship in an ocean, you are captain (leader) of the Sikhs. You are the one who inaugurate the new Guru. You are always in consistent state of mind immersed in the divine knowledge and posses the ability to understand the thoughts of all living beings. The whole sangat is standing before you. Please be our savior and lead all the Sikhs. Despite of your vast divine knowledge and spiritual powers, you have always chosen not to let these powers/miracles surface. Please bless the sangat, that has come to your sanctuary.”

Listening to the sangat, Babaji said “Please tell me what is troubling all of you. I will do all that I can do to assist. Please explain to me clearly”. He continued “Only by serving a Sikh, one will attain great rewards and the service of sangat is very difficult to find as on whom the Guru is pleasant will be blessed the opportunity of serving the Sikhs.”

The sangat, again in clasped hands, said “The sangat is very depressed without Guru Ji. Where is Guru Ji? We feel like the sun has suddenly set. We don’t know whom shall we rely upon anymore, to whom shall we bow. Just like the moon rests in the stars, Guru Ji rests in the sangat. Whoever you inaugurate as Guru, the sangat will bow to (This is because the sangat had assumed that Guru Ji might have been replaced by a new Guru and this will be known only to Baba Buddha Ji, who has been bestowed with the ability to attain knowledge of all the happenings in the Guru’s house.)”

Listening to the sangat’s request, Babaji went into meditation. For twenty-four minutes, Babaji did not even open his eyes and sat peacefully in full concentration. He searched for Guru Ji in all three worlds (loks) but failed to visualize Guru Ji. After a while, Babaji realized that Guru Ji had gone into hiding and started searching for Guru Ji. He found Guru Ji in a wooden house, immersed deep meditation with the door locked. Babaji then opened his eyes.

He thought to himself “If I reveal to the sangat of Guru Ji’s whereabouts and his meditation, then my powers will surface. And it is not good to show miracles. Hence, I must find an alternative method to relay the information of Guru Ji’s whereabouts to the sangat to enable the Sangat to have the sight of Guru Ji.”

He then told the sangat “Guru Ji will vanish all our pains therefore do not worry. Guru Ji, the protector of all, will bestow you your wishes. Meditate on him with all your love, you will attain Guru Ji and he will take care of you. Now, please go back to Goindwal and I will also come with you.”

Leading the sangat, Baba Buddha Ji walked to Goindwal. Without Guru Ji, neither Goindwal nor Guru Ji’s home appeared pleasing to the eyes, just like the heavens without Inder. Baba Buddha Ji proceeded directly to the balcony at the top floor (chobara) and pleaded “Hey Satguru Ji, look at the sangat, they are depressed and their homes are liveless. Without you, they are misreable, they’ve lost appetite. Please bless us, give us your sight (darshan) and free us of this pain.”

After the prayer, Baba Buddha Ji joined the sangat and asked “How did this tragedy occur? When did Guru Ji leave? Please tell me about the tragedy first, only then will we proceed to search for Him.”

The sangat said “Guru Angad Dev Ji’s son, Bhai Datu Ji, came over and he kicked Guru Amar Das Ji. The same night, Guru Ji left us, and we do not know of his whereabouts. After his departure, Bhai Datu Ji took over Guru Ji’s belongings and later left the place. Bhai Datu Ji took everything except, Guru Ji’s beloved horse, which is still at Guru Ji’s house. He could not take the horse with him as the horse had refused him and threw him off to the ground. He insisted to take her along but his many attempts failed. This clever horse is very much loved by Guru Ji. She did not allow Bhai Datu Ji to use her and as such, he only left her, but took everything else with him.

15. APPEARANCE OF GURU JI ⁴⁶

15.1 The Search for Guru Ji

After hearing the horse's story, Baba Buddha Ji was very pleased and said "This horse of Guru Ji looks like one with miracles. She will not allow anyone else to sit on her other than Guru Ji himself. That is why Bhai Datu Ji left her back. Now, decorate her beautifully. Start by bathing her with clean water. Then light incense sticks for the fragrance of sandalwood and place a garland of flowers around her neck. Decorate the saddle with beautiful cloth. And let her loose so that she can be free to locate Guru Ji and the sangat can then follow wherever she goes." Everyone agreed to Baba Ji's suggestion. They decorated the horse as instructed by Baba Buddha Ji and then the horse was set free.

The horse walked slowly on her own and the sangat followed suit in search of Guru Ji. Babaji and the sangat were amazed to see her movements. At times she would shout aloud and at other times she walked elegantly in silence. From afar, she saw a house. On seeing the house, she stopped immediately and started shouting aloud. She then walked towards the house, ran around the house and finally walked towards the entrance of the house. She bowed her head and shout aloud once again. Amazed, the sangat cried "Guru Ji does not appear to be anywhere around here and this horse refuse to move forward."

Looking at this, Baba Buddha Ji explained "Look, the horse is standing at the entrance of the house although we are unable to even see the door. Firstly she ran around the 4 corners of the house (parkarma), covering distances away from the 4 corners and finally bowed in submission. Now, she is standing confidently at the entrance, which explains that Guru Ji must be here."

15.2 Guru Ji's Command

Then Babaji walked around the 4 corners of the house, stood in front of the house and observed the door at the entrance carefully. He then said "All of you, please come here, I have discovered something. Look at this note with the handwriting of Guru Ji. I will read aloud please listen carefully the words of instruction of Guru Ji to the sangat "Whoever opens this door will not be my Sikh and neither will I be his Guru and I will not protect in this world and the next world (after death) whoever goes against my wish."

The sangat became stunned and speechless after hearing the contents of the note. They could not even insist on seeing Guru Ji as that would be against his wishes. The sangat stood silently looking at each other. They said "Can there be any way in which we can have Guru Ji's sight (darshan)". Worried, all of them approached Baba Buddha Ji and said

⁴⁶ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 36) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

“You have guided us all to this place and now, no one else can find a solution to Guru Ji’s prohibition, other than yourself. Please bless the sangat. Please find a solution and let us have the sight (darshan) of Guru Ji.” Upon listening to the sangat request Baba Buddhaji contemplated the matter and realised that breaking down the door is not the solution as a Sikh should never go against his Guru Ji’s instruction.

15.3 Baba Buddha Ji Penetrates the Wall

Listening to this, blessing the sangat, Baba Buddha Ji said “Guru Ji has instructed that anyone who opens this door will be disobeying Guru Ji’s instruction. However, if another entrance is made to go into the house, the instruction will not stand (applicable). If we stand in prayer requesting for his forgiveness afterwards, Guru Ji will definitely forgive us because Guru Ji only knows how much we love him”. All in the sangat stood in a prayer (Ardaas) and then prostrate (obeisance) in respect to Guru Ji. The sangat then proceeded to the rear side of the house and started to create a hole in the wall by removing the bricks with sharp object.” Sangat was amazed to discover the hole was made in the east direction whereas the actual door was on the west direction.

Through the new entrance, Baba Buddha Ji walked very calmly into the house. Guru Ji, the master of universe was seated in deep meditation without any movement at all. Babaji immediately fell on the feet of Guru Ji, touched Guru Ji’s feet and stood in front of Guru Ji. As Guru Ji’s feet were touched, Guru Ji’s meditation was broken and the house of mercy (Guru Ji) opened his eyes. Seeing Babaji, Guru Ji asked “Why did you go against my instructions?”

Babaji said “Hey Guru Ji, I did not go against your instructions. I did not enter through the front entrance but created an entrance at the back to come in.”

“You have left the Sikhs depressed without your presence. While you sit here in isolation, the world is in darkness. Why do you want to isolate yourself from the Sikhs. They are in pain without you. You possess all power within yourself and you are able to do everything as you wish. You are the physical form of Almighty yourself; all the three parts of universe (Akash lok, Mat lok and Patal lok) are in your command. Why are you hiding and whom are you afraid of, please come out and bless the sangat with your sight (darshan) to allow them to enjoy your presence and touch your feet. Please remember the advice of Guru Angad Dev Ji that is to protect the Sikhs by encouraging them to chant on the Almighty’s Name.”

Listening to Babaji, Guru Ji was impressed and said “You are very great. For service of others, you have done everything. You have become the pillar of strength of Sikhi. The universe is filled with the great fire of jealousy. Contentment, knowledge and concentration are being burnt as woods in it. The army of attachment has overpowered the world which has destroyed the divine virtues and caused destruction even the deities are not spared from the influences of the Dark Age (Kalyug). The Dark Age has caused

great turbulence even the learned and uneducated ones has been submersed and indulged in wrong doings. Observing this, I have come to isolate myself here.”

Upon listening Babaji replied “You are yourself the creator of these plays of the universe and you are the observer as well. It’s your game; you create some and destroy some. You are the form of life for all the living being and provide all the living aids required at all times. Please bless your depressed sangat with your darshan and free them of their pain. Please grant them their wishes as your character has always been the forgiver.”

Guru Ji replied “Now, rise and open the door and let me have the sight of the sangat, this is all because of your contributions.” Babaji was very pleased with the remark. He immediately rose, touched Guru Ji’s feet and demolished the brick wall constructed to seal the door and call upon the sangat. The sangat was extremely pleased with the invitation to come in and rushed in with utmost love in their hearts and offered their gift at Guru Ji’s feet. Soon the whole hall was occupied by sangat sittings and piles of gifts was before Guru Ji there were not even a little place left for one to stand.

15.4 Guru Ji Established Sann Sahib

As soon as the whole sangat sat down, Guru Ji said “This is all the contribution of Baba Buddha ji. He has tolerated so much pain upon himself to please the sangat. Whoever sees the wall which was torn apart to create this entrance, will never have to encounter the angles of death (Yamduts). Baba Buddha Ji is savior of the sangat just like a ship on the ocean and will always be the vehicle for salvation. He is the limit of Sikhi, beyond him there is no more Sikhi. By uttering Baba Buddha Ji’s name much sins will be vanished immediately.”

15.5 Guru Ji Returned to Goindwal Sahib

Baba Buddha Ji humbly requested before Guru Ji, “The horse is still outside waiting who has guide us to you. Hey Lord, the house of mercy, please rise and sit on the horse and come back to your home in Goindwal”. Guru Ji then proceeded out of the house. The horse bowed in front of Guru Ji. She kept making sounds through her nose, obviously happy to meet her Lord.

While caressing the horse’s neck and sat on the horse while remembering Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Guru Ji sat on the horse. Baba Buddha Ji walked along as Guru Ji’s horse guide. The sangat walked along and soon reached Goindwal to enjoy the bliss of Guru Ji’s presence thereafter. The return of Guru Ji in Goindwal was celebrated very grandly, candles was lighted in the whole town and all the residence came to visit Guru Ji. Sweet dishes was distributed open heartedly to everybody, some brought garland of flowers and some brought fruits.

Guru Ji sat on his throne again and bless his sight (darshan) as before to all his Sikh family. Even the abroad living sangat is also visiting Guru Ji and fulfill their wishes and leave to their homes after a few days. Guru Ji's praises is being enlighten at all ten direction. Guru Ji then settled himself in Goindwal and Baba Buddha Ji stayed on a few more days to enjoy the company of Guru Ji. Then came the day for departure of Baba Buddha Ji. Clapsing his hands, Babaji asked for leave from Guru Ji and departed home.

16. DEVOTED SIKHS ⁴⁷

Guru Ji does not feel happy nor sad, he is always in peace, in one mind. Guru Ji is the centre of forgiveness. He did not praise or belittle anyone and always looked upon everyone with compassion.

16.1 Bhai Paro Julka Ji

Guru Ji was always observed by the learned that realized that while being the greatest, Guru Ji had the most humility. Among them was Bhai Paro Jhulka of the Daley village. He was very much one with Almighty. He knew of the greatness of Guru Ji and always pondered on Gurbani.

He longed to have the sight (darshan) of Guru Ji. One day, he approached Guru Ji. After saluting Guru Ji, he sat beside Guru Ji, his heart filled with love for Guru Ji. Sensing his love, Guru Ji called him “Parmhans (Prime Swan)”. Listening to this, Bhai Jhulka ji was spiritually enlightened and blessed with ultimate knowledge (puran gyan).

He obtained all the treasures (Nidh) and powers of sustaining (Sidh) and miracles (Ridh) and used to always focus on Guru Ji’s feet when performing his chores. He rose above the worldly platform. From then on, he used to long for Guru Ji’s sight (darshan) and lived with him every other day.

One day, while he was travelling towards Guru Ji on a horse, the horse started moving in great speed, almost flying in the air like a bird. At the same time, a Nawab of Dehli was also travelling along the same route. His battalion was accompanying him on elephants. He was mesmerised to see the flying horse. Pleased to see the miracle, he immediately approached Bhai Paro ji. He fell on the feet of Bhai Paro and Bhai Paro immediately blessed him with his blessed sight.

Enjoying the bliss of the darshan of Bhai Paro, Nawab’s heart was filled with love. He said “O, Saint, what is your name? Where are you going and where are you from. For Almighty’s sake, please make me your servant”.

Bhai Paro answered “My name is Paro. With great love, I am going to have the sight (darshan) of my Guru Ji”. Nawab asked “Where does your Pir (Guru) live, take me along so that I too can have his sight (darshan). Great is your Guru, to whom you go to.”

Bhai Paro answered “You will have to leave your battalion, your valuables behind, and then you may have the sight (darshan) of my Guru Ji and present him with some fruits.” With love, Nawab, handed over the battalion to his son and said “Perform the service of the King and forget about me.”

⁴⁷ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 37) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Nawabji then followed Bhai Paro to see Guru Ji. Saluting Guru Ji, the Nawab sat down. Guru Ji was pleased to see him and said “Great is Bhai Paro, who has himself swam across the materialistic worldly ocean and is now encouraging others to swim across the ocean as well. The best thing is to meet the Almighty’s beloved ones and to talk to them, with which ones doubts are erased.”

Bhai Paroji then told Guru Ji the whole story. Guru Ji then blessed the Nawab and freed him of the cycle of life and death. Nawab was totally soaked in the love of Guru Ji and stayed on thereafter to enjoy the bliss of Guru Ji’s blessings.

16.2 Bhai Lalo Ji

In the Dhaley village, there was another Sikh by the name of Lalo. He used to enjoy the company of Bhai Paro. He would dwell in Almighty’s name and Gurbani the whole day. One day, while Bhai Paro was about to leave to see Guru Ji, Bhai Lalo requested that he be given the sighty (darshan) of Guru Ji as well. He said “With your blessings I may be able to escape the cycle of life and death. I would like to surrender myself to Guru Ji. Sikhs are always of service to others. Guru Ji has blessed you enormously.”

Listening to this, Bhai Paro was touched. He took Bhai Lalo with him to Goindwal. Upon reaching the darbar of Guru Ji, Bhai Lalo collected and rubbed the dust of Guru Ji’s darbar all over his face, forehead and body. Then, he proceeded to have langgar. He went inside the darbar and saw Guru Ji. He felt on his knees and saluted Guru Ji. His eyes were feasting the darshan of Guru Ji with a never-ending contentment.

Guru Ji said “Lalo is fully soaked in Almighty’s love”. Listening to this, Bhai Lalo felt the ultimate bliss (parm-anand). His mind was remained contented and focussed on Gurbani thereafter.

One day, Guru Ji was so pleased that he made Bhai Lalo the mentor of the invisible (gupt) world. The people of the invisible (gupt) world was instructed to adore Bhai Lalo’s feet. The invisible community started to pay their respect to Bhai Lalo and would travel from far to see him. They would also adhere to his commands (hukam). They’d would stay in obeisance before Bhai Lalo and do as he wished.

16.3 A Pathan

There was a Pathan who was an acquaintance of Bhai Lalo. He was a businessman who used to trade internationally. He used to transport his goods though sea to the various islands. One day, his ship blasted due to a hurricane and all the goods in the ship sunk in the sea. The Pathan, however escaped as he drifted on a plank into a new island. He wondered “Where this place is and what the name of this place? Who are this people living on this island?”

The people that he had seen were actually the ones who leave in the invisible (gupt) world (lok). Seeing a human being on their island, they all started to laugh. They said “This is the home of the invisible, where have you come from?” The terrified Pathan replied “I am from Punjab. I drifted here after the blast of my ship.” One of them asked “Do you know Bhai Lalo?”.

The Pathan was very happy with the question and replied “I live near Bhai Lalo. I also see him and salute him, he is a great saint, I love him dearly.”

Immediately, they had him seated with respect. When the Pathan started singing the praises of Bhai Lalo, he started to take deep long breath and had teary eyes. When they saw him crying, they lok asked “Why are you crying, we are all the followers of Lalo, we will do as you please.”

The Pathan replied “Let me see Lalo, he has blessed me greatly. I have left everything in Punjab, I want to go home.”

They gave him two precious stones and said “Please present these precious stones to Bhai Lalo, and take whatever jewelry and precious stones that you wish for yourself.” Pathan was very pleased. They requested that he closed his eyes and he was then sent home. When he opened his eyes, he was at home in Punjab. He then presented the two stones to Bhai Lalo Ji and saluted him and told him the whole story. He said “Hey saint, it is with your blessings that I have returned home.”

Bhai Lalo brought the two stones to Guru Ji’s darbar and Guru Ji said “We have embeded within our hearts the precious stone (rattan) called Naam”. Please throw these two stones into the river. Do not get attached to these stones. Taking Guru Ji’s instructions, Bhai Lalo threw the stones into a river, where the waters were running deep.

17. OBEDIENT SIKHS⁴⁸

17.1 Sikhs of Dhaley

There was a Sikh by the name of Deepa, Malu Shahi in the village Deley, who was devoted to Guru Amar Das Ji. He and some other Sikhs followed the Sikh maryada closely, including Kidari. There were seventy-two (72) such Sikhs that secured salvation from Guru Amar Das Ji. Some of their stories are presented below:

17.2 Bhai Mahesha Ji

Bhai Mahesha was a very well known and rich Sikh who lived in Sultanpur. When he heard of Guru Ji, his heart was filled with love and he proceeded to Goindwal. He was extremely excited to have the sight (darshan) of Guru Ji.

He first had langgar and then proceeded to see Guru Ji. He then sat near Guru Ji and repeatedly saluted Guru Ji and was enjoying the bliss of Guru Ji's sight (darshan) without a blink of eye. Guru Ji asked him "What have you come here for, where are you from and whose teachings have you been following. You seem to be doing some prayers in your mouth."

With his hands clasped, Mahesha replied "Prabhu ji, I have come to seek solace from you. Relying on the strength of your Naam I have come here, with which all my pains will disappear and I will cross this difficult ocean. I have given up hope in others, I have decided to practice your path for forever."

Guru Ji replied "You will not be able to continue practicing the path of Guru Nanak. If you wish to be mine, you must give up all your riches and luxuries. Once you are penniless, people will ridicule you and ask you what have you gained as a Sikh. Then you will be sad and regretful."

Mahesha replied "I will sacrifice my mind, body and wealth on you, even if I loose everything, I do not want anything, I will only embody your love. I have given up on everything, please keep me protected in the sanctuary of your feet."

Seeing his determination, Guru Ji blessed him by placing his palm on Mahesha's forehead. Guru Ji made him his Sikh but continued to test him by taking away his wealth little by little. As Mahesha lost all his wealth, people started to ridicule him "What have you done, what have you gained by being a Sikh?"

Despite having no food or clothes to wear, Mahesha replied "I have obtained the great love of Guru Ji, which cannot be erased. This love will keep me away from pain. Maya is

⁴⁸ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 38) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

false, just like our dreams, how can we take Maya along with us to the next world. At one point you will have to give up maya, either while alive or after death. I have got rid of this false Maya and instead secured the true love of my Guru. I will now enjoy the ultimate contentment and am no longer afraid of anything". After this, Mahesha did not speak to anyone again.

He then left to Guru's darbar. Guru Ji said "You will have a lot more wealth than you had earlier, your this world (lok) and the next (parlok) is now blessed (safal)." Bhai Mahesh was then blessed with a lot of wealth. Similarly many other Sikhs achieved salvation and the Sikh panth progressed. Whoever surrenders himself to Guru Ji, will obtain ultimate knowledge (brahm gyan).

18. THE RUINS OF SHEIKH'S HOMES ⁴⁹

Hearing of the greatness of Goindwal, some Sheikh's also decided to reside there and started living amongst the Sikhs.

The Sikhs used to sing praises of Guru in congregations and the Sheikhs used to watch this all the time. Their children never could tolerate this and played naughty pranks to disturb these events. When the Sikhs used to go the Well to fill water, the Sheikh boys would blast their pitchers (ghere) with little stones.

When this continued, the Sikhs made a request before Guru Ji, "The Sheikh boys have always attacked our pitchers." Guru Ji replied "Bring the water in leather bags (mashka) instead." The boys however did not stop. They blasted the leather bags using arrows. The Sikhs saw Guru Ji again and complained about the boys.

Guru Ji then said, "Bring water in your brass pitchers (gagar)". The boys continued to throw bricks at the pitchers and damage them. Their parents did not stop them, instead they were happy seeing these pranks.

The Sikhs complained to Guru Ji again. Guru Ji did not reply and neither did he give any instructions this time. Their pranks continued. They even attacked some Sanyasis who had also come to fill water. One day, a stone thrown by one of the pranksters, hit one of the Sanyasi. The rest of the Sanyasis attacked these boys and tore some of their clothes

At the same time, some Turk soldiers had stopped by and as they were to leave early in the morning, a strong hurricane stopped them. Their donkeys (khecer) could not withstand the strong wind and as a result, they ran back to their shelters. One of them ran into the house of one of the Sheikhs that had enmity with Guru Ji's house. The rest of the donkeys followed suit and entered neighbouring Sheikh homes.

The next morning, the Turks searched for their donkeys but in vain. Just as they were about to leave without the donkeys, one of the soldiers heard the cry of a donkey from one of the Sheikh homes. The soldier marched towards the house and took away his donkey. The Turk soldiers were very angry about this. They went to the Sheikh houses and virtually destroyed all their belongings. They also killed the Sheikhs some were hanged while others were strangled and beaten to death.

When the Sikhs related this to Guru Ji, he replied "Listen to this valuable conversation between a Sikh and a Saint.

Sikh : What happens to one who does bad to others?

Saint : If one does good and receives bad from others, one should not attempt to take

⁴⁹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 38) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

revenge of the one who does bad.

Sikh : But if he continues to do bad?

Saint : He should do only good, continue to do good. And because the bad continues to do nasty things to the good, he will have to pay for it; so much so that he will soon lose the ability to do bad, he will die.

Then Guru Ji said “One shall reap whatever one sows. The humble ones will gain. Almighty will always take care of his servants.

19. SALVATION OF SIKHS ⁵⁰

19.1 Bhai Lalu Ji, Bhai Durga & Bhai Jivanda

Three Sikhs; Bhai Lalu a wise man, Bhai Durga and Bhai Jivanda; came to Guru Amar Das Ji's sanctuary. After prostrating before Guru Ji, they started doing seva by staying in Goindwal.

One day, all three sat near Guru Ji and with folded hands made a request for Guru Ji to treat them as His own and bless them with His sermons, "Dear most respectful Guru Ji, bless us such a sermon (upadesh) that will lead us towards salvation".

Guru Ji replied "There is nothing better compared to performing selfless service for others without any preference (Par-Upkaar). Who so ever does serve in this manner will achieve a constant state of happiness and everlasting bliss. There are three ways that one can perform selfless service to benefit others. Understand this in your hearts and practice accordingly;

"First, if you have money with you, share it with the poor who you believe are in need. Those who are poor or orphans, donate clothes and food to them. When you see someone in difficulty or pain; have sympathy. Give as much as you can and attempt to relieve that person's difficulty or pain.

Second, speak the truth. Attempt to resolve other people's problems. If you have knowledge or a particular skill; then teach that to others voluntarily.

Thirdly, in your mind wish others well always. Never even think of doing something which may hurt others."

Guru Ji summarised, " In summary; firstly, share what you have with those in need, secondly, share your knowledge & speak the truth and thirdly, be a well-wisher for all without discrimination."

Guru Ji continued, "These three are the virtues; through which you can take away the pain or sadness of others. Of all donations, the best is to donate food. Do this always. It is because of food; humans live. Hence, there is no other donation that is comparable to the donation of food. It does not matter whether the food is cooked or not; more importantly; never say no to donating food when you see someone hungry. No matter; whether it is day or night; when it comes to giving food; do not think twice; give without a further thought. Do not see whether the receiver is of a high or low caste. Give food until that person is satisfied."

⁵⁰ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 39) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

All three Sikhs listened and accepted Guru Ji's teaching with faith. They then practised all the three ways of performing selfless service types of 'parupkaar' and gave food to the needy. This was how Sikhs lived. They came to Guru Ji for darshan (sight) with love and through seva they receive the blessings of Bhagti. At the end, they attained salvation-became one with Guru Ji.

19.2 Bhai Jagha Ji

One day, a Sikh by the name of Jagha came to see Guru Ji. He came to Goindwal and bowed his head to Guru Ji. Seeing many Sikhs with Guru Ji; he was very pleased and said "I wish for my salvation. One day I met a yogi and I made a plea to him." In reply, the yogi said "Family, house and relatives; consider these as attachments (bhandan). Leave them and be a ascetic (fakir) and then come to me. To receive salvation, embrace my teaching; leave your home and the troubles that come with it." The Sikh then asked Guru Ji; "I wish to ask; how does one attain salvation and how does one's mind and heart becomes pure?" "How does one receive the blessings of Meditation (Bhagti); through which, one attains the Almighty." Guru Ji, knowing that the Sikh had full faith, said "Don't have the desire to leave your family life. If by abandoning your family life, you are able to meet Almighty; then why do the ascetics (fakirs) come to towns. Then these ascetics (fakirs) are always engaged in arguments with the traders during their visits to the town. Their entire day is wasted in demanding for gifts and donations."

"Gurmukhs maintain a household life and do bhagti whilst being a householder. They attain salvation and will not go into the circle of birth and death. Just like a lotus flower; although its roots are in mud; its focus is always o

in the Sun. Similarly; Gursikhs should earn a honest leaving (kirti) and share their earnings with the needy; and then use the balance for themselves. In this way, his count od virtuous deeds (Pun) increases. Whereas for a fakir who eats from others; the returns (fruits) of his meditation and penance is shared with the donors thus his virtues reduce. Those who serve such ascetics (fakir) would gain a part of the fruits (Phal) from his meditation and penance. Whereas a Gristi or a householder does not lose his good deeds; instead by doing seva he benefit from the good deeds to others."

Guru Ji concluded, "Just like a cow which is fed with grass and the owner gets milk in return, similarly by serving a person who meditates on the Almighty's would share a portion of his good deeds which is the bliss of real-self (Atma), Earn an honest living and serve the Saints; and with your mind meditataion on the Almighty. In this way, you will achieve salvation quickly. Therefore, do not abandon your family life, but focus on Guru Jj's sermons (Gurbani)."

Bhai Jegha Ji was enlightened and convinced that a family (Gristi) life is the most supreme practice in this Dark Age (Kaljug). He accepted Guru Ji's teaching in his heart and started practising it accordingly. He immediately started doing Guru Ji's seva.

19.3 Bhai Kahnu Ji, Bhai Maeaa Ji & Bhai Govind Ji

Bhai Khanu and Bhai Maeaa were father and son. Both came and were blessed with the sight (darshan) of Guru Amar Das Ji. With them, came along Bhai Govind Bhandari. All three of them humbly requested “Dear Guru Ji, we are here to embrace your sanctuary. Please bless us with such sermon by which we will obtain all the good virtues.”

Listening to their request, Guru Ji said “In this world, among all the other virtues performing Almighty’s meditation (Bhagti) is the most supreme virtue. Through Almighty’s meditation (Bhagti), a person will obtain all the good virtues. Pleasing the Almighty alone enables a person to obtain the entire treasure of virtues. Whenever the creator or the giver of virtues blesses a persons; then there is no other immeasurable virtue left to be obtained.”

Upon listening to Guru Ji, the Sikhs asked, “How can we meditate (Bhagti) and what are the methods of Meditation (Bhagti)? Please enlighten us so that we would develop love to meditate (Bhagti).”

Guru Ji said, “There are three (3) levels of meditation. The first level of meditation comprises of nine (9) types of different practices which builds the foundation of meditation. The second level of meditation is called “Prema Bhagti” which means the meditation of love; and the third level of meditation is called “Pra Bhagti” which means the meditation which goes beyond the physical body.

First, the nine (9) practices which when performed will dispel all pains and sadness.

1. Listen to Guru Ji’s teachings with faith, love and full concentration.
2. Recite the Almighty’s discourse (Katha) and sing His praises (Kirten).
3. Meditate on the Almighty’s Name with every breath and consistently while performing all worldly affairs.
4. Serve the True Guru as the physical (Sargun) form of the Almighty and concentrate on his lotus feet;
5. Offer food and clothing to Saints.
6. Attend the true Congregation (Sat-Sanggat) in a Gurdwara, prostrate (Metha Tekna, Bhandnaa) and then circumambulate (parkarma) around the Guru Ji. To create a more soothing environment burn incense, ghee light, sprinkle perfume and flowers.
7. Acknowledge the Almighty as the Master and treat oneself as His servant. Recognise that the body, mind and wealth are the Almighty’s gifts. The relationship between a Master and servant must akin to a wife who only thinks or serves her husband and no one else.

8. Establish a relationship by making the Almighty your best friend and accept His Will readily. In this manner, always accept Almighty's Will as favourable and never question Him.
9. Acknowledge that the body and wealth belongs truly to the Almighty. Abandon worldly attachments by recognising that everything that we see, hear and feel belongs to the Almighty hence such person will remain in constant state of mind.

The above are the nine (9) practices of the first level of meditation. If a person performs even one of the above devotedly he or she shall attain salvation. If one performs all the nine, then definitely all the doubts will be vanished."

Guru Ji continued, "Now listen to the second level of meditation which is known as the meditation of love (Prema Bhagti). There is none more superior in comparison to this meditation. Like a green unripe fruit from the tree, is still bitter. But when the fruit is completely ripe; the colour will change to yellow or red and the taste is very sweet. Similarly the person who has love for the Almighty. Initially, his heart cries for the Almighty's sight (darshan) and his mind is very restless to see the Almighty. Due to separation from the Almighty; he feels pain and sadness. He takes deep breaths and is unable to speak. Sometimes he sings the Almighty's praises and sometimes he just sits down quietly. As his love for the Almighty increases his appetite for food or thirst for water reduces. Day and night he immerses deeper in love for Almighty. His pain and restlessness increase due to separation from the Almighty. He becomes pale. Whenever someone talks about his beloved Almighty; he attentively listens.

Acknowledging, the Almighty's presence within, his love for the Almighty keeps on increasing. As his company with the Saintly (who only discuss the Almighty) extends; he begins to see Almighty in everyone. Then his face glows. His mind becomes satisfied and his mind stops wondering.

Then he begins to feel of bliss within through the realisation of real-self (Atma). He achieves the steadfastness of the mind and focuses his mind on knowledge. Thereafter, one reaches the third level meditation which is known as Pra-Bhagti (means beyond the physical form). When one is able to see the creator within the creation only then one is considered to have met the Almighty."

Guru Ji concluded, "If you want to know your real-self; then the union between this being (Jiv) and the Almighty must be attained. Almighty's characteristics are that He is True (Sat – everlasting), Empowered (Chetan – power) and Blissful (Anand – without doubt). Therefore, if someone perform such meditation; definitely he will become one with Almighty." All the three Sikhs who listened were enlightened and they obtained bliss.

20. ADVICE TO SIKHS ⁵¹

20.1 Bhai Jodh Ji

Bhai Jodh was a cook for Guru Ji. He was a Brahmin who performed sewa with utmost humility. He presented all donations of the sanggat to Guru Ji and utilized all of it in the preparation of langgar. The remaining groceries were fed to the buffalos. If not eaten by the buffalos, the groceries would be thrown in the river. Even if there was excess water left in the pitcher, Jodh would throw it away. He would not keep anything for the next day.

Jodh continued to obey Guru Ji and his comand with much love. He would only eat langgar which was left over at the end of the day. He would serve all who came to the kitchen (Langgar) selflessly. He would prepare food for them at whatever time they arrived. He was never lazy and would always feed everyone without discrimination. Impressed with his service (sewa), Guru Ji blessed him with the Almighty's Name (Naam). He attained the ultimate bliss (Atam Anand) thereafter obtained the state of contentment (Santokh).

20.2 Bhai Prithimal Ji & Bhai Talsa Ji

One day, Guru Ji arrived at a village called Bhelley. Bhai Prithimal and Bhai Talsa came to see Guru Ji and sat by his side. Being arrogant, they said with pride "We are of the same creed. Guru Ji replied, "A Guru does not have any race or creed. This physical body has no permanent identity, it will get old and perish away. Nobody will recognize the creed of the body in the next world. In the next world (parlok), there is no value for creed and physical strength. After death, the soul deals with other new souls. Only a few souls are categorised as the selected ones and these are the good ones." The same is mentioned in the shabad of Guru Nanak Dev Ji that creed and strength are traits which are not recognized in next world. Bodies born here, perish here itself, they do not accompany anyone in to the next world. Those who have remembered the Almighty and performed service towards the humanity, have then honor preserved. After listening to this, both Sikhs prostrated before Guru Ji.

20.3 Bhai Malan Ji

A Sikh by the name of Bhai Malan came to Goindwal and fell at the feet of Guru Ji and prayed "Please guide me, with which the rest of my pain shall vanish".

⁵¹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 40) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Guru Ji replied “Please abandon your pride, perform the sewa of saints and you shall be happy. With humility and love, feed the saints. Focusing on love for Guru Ji, give them clothes, perform simran and then only then will you achieve salvation. He followed Guru Ji’s advise and started performing sewa of the sangat with utmost love.

20.4 Bhai Ugarsain Ji, Bhai Ramu Ji & Bhai Deepa Ji

One day Ugarsain, Ramu and Deepa came to Guru Ji and Guru Ji said “Organise community kitchen (langgar) for the people (sangat) who come to Goindwal. Rise early in the morning and take a bath. Read Guru Ji’s shabad with concentration and ponder on its meaning or listen from others and contemplate over it for the rest of the day. For a while, withdraw yourself from other tasks, listen to the meaning and read Gurbani aloud. Continue to earn your righteous living day and night and for one hour and thirty six minutes (four gheri) try to keep the mind focused on the Almighty through the Guru. All your desires will be fulfilled and you will attain salvation. The Almighty will be impressed with such love and He shall fulfill all your desires and will not allow you to be defeated in the next world. Contemplate Guru Ji’s shabad with a focussed mind and sing aloud Almighty’s Name (Naam).” All the Sikhs listened to Guru Ji’s sermons and followed it closely to improve their livelihood as Gursikhs.

20.5 Bhai Gopi Ji, Bhai Ramu Ji, Bhai Mahita Ji & Bhai Mohan Mal Ji & Bhai Amru Ji

Bhai Gopi, Bhai Ramu, Bhai Mahita, Bhai Mohan Mal and Bhai Amru came to see Guru Ji and said “Please give us the sanctuary of your feet. Please bless us with your sermons in order for us to be saved from the world entanglements”. Guru Ji replied “attachments are main cause for one to be entangled in worldly commitments. Everyone is engaged in this wicked devil (attachment). Humans have forgotten the Almighty which is why there is so much. So, abandon your attachments and only then you will be able to love Almighty”. Listening to this, the Sikhs asked Guru Ji “How can we abandon our attachment?”

Guru Ji replied “Consider your bodies to be false, which will perish away. Slowly, abandon attachments of worldly materials from your conscious and bring it close to your real-self (Atma). Always be forgiving and do not have ill intentions for other. Do not get upset or angry with harsh words of others.” Having listened to Guru Ji, they followed the advice.

20.6 Bhai Gangu Ji & Bhai Seharu Bharu Ji

Gangu and Seharu Bharu came to see Guru Ji, they were very depressed. Observing their condition Guru Ji said “Always share your food with others kindly, speak sweetly, do not be offended by the harsh words of others. First feed the Gursikhs, and only then eat the

left overs. Always meditate on the Almighty's Name (Naam) and stop worshipping the graves."

20.7 Bhai Ugru Ji, Bhai Taru Ji, Bhai Jhenda Ji & Bhai Puro Ji

Ugru, Taru, Jhenda and Puro came to see Guru Ji and asked how they can attain salvation. Guru Ji replied "In this age (Kalyug – The Dark Age), one must live a honest living and share the earnings. In the earlier ages (Yug), people used to perform Yag, a ritual to please the deities. Equal to the Yag is offering food to the poor and needy in this age. Pray to the Almighty devotedly and worship the Almighty's worship as part of your life. You will attain all happiness in life by instilling love for Waheguru in your hearts and embrace True Guru's teachings in your hearts while living among family members."

20.8 Bhai Maliyar Ji & Bhai Seharu Ji

Maliyar and Seharu came at Guru Ji and fell on Guru Ji's feet and Guru Ji said "Perform service for the fellow Sikhs selflessly. As apart of the service (sewa), sew clothes and donate to them and wash their clothes by which the dirt (of evil desires) within your mind will be cleansed as well. Akin to clean bodies, your hearts will also glow. Only then, you will be able to develop true love for the Guru and true congregation (Satsangat) will help to maintain the purity of the mind. By performing service (sewa) of the Guru selflessly, you will develop humility, faith and love within yourself which will further enhance your concentration to meditate on the Almighty's Name.

20.9 Bhai Bhula Ji

Bhai Bulla Ji was a Pandit. As a Padda (teacher) his duty was to teach. One day he came into Guruji's darbar and asked Guruji on how he could attain salvation when he was not able to do any other service (Sewa) for Guru's congregation, as nobody would give him any opportunity, he being a Brahmin. Guruji blessed him and said, "Read Gurbani with love and then explain the meaning of Gurbani to the Sanggat. Teach Sikhs the Guru's path, write books on Gurbani and distribute them to all the Sikhs. This is the service (Sewa) which will lead you to liberation."

20.10 Sikh from Dhaley

One day, the Sikhs of Dhaley got together to see Guru Ji and Guru Ji said "On Mesya (dark night or moon-less night), Sangrand (full moon) and Gurpurbs (Guru's days), lit lights (deepmala). All of you should get together on Gurpurbs and organized large gathering (Jodhmela) and prepare karah parshad. That can be served in the name of the

Guru and join the true congregation to sing the Praises of Almighty (kirtan). Donate clothes to the needy and food to the hungry. If one of the society members is desperately in need of something, help him by getting together and perform a humble request (Ardas). Bring along the materials that you are able to share with the needy to the Dharamsala (Gurdwara) as the common ground where everyone's needs can be fulfilled without any discrimination. Adopt this practice in your vicinity as a community project in which everyone participates and no one can claim the gratitude alone. This shall be the basis to perform selfless service. Whenever there is an auspicious day, celebrate by organising a true congregation (Jodhmela) and serve food (Guru Ka Langgar). Inspire children and grandchildren to follow this practice as this way of life has been adopted since the very beginning. A person who embraces a pure lifestyle by adopting the Guru's sermon shall obtain enormous happiness. Bliss is attained by singing Gurbani with love and faith."

21. INTRODUCING RAM DAS JI ⁵²

Kavi Santokh Singh Ji says, I bow in reverence to the lotus feet of Guru Amar Das Ji who is able to change the turmoil river of fire into cool waters and eradicate all pain and sorrows of his devotees.

21.1 Birth

On Thursday, Katak Sudhi 2, 1591 (2nd November 1534 A.D.), baby Ram Das was born to a highly respected ancestry that originated from Luv, the son of Sri Ram Chander (Prophet of Threta-Yug). The people of Lahore rejoiced with happiness and there was an abundance of food for everyone. It was literally like a 'river of milk' flowing through the city.

Since birth, Ram Das Ji was bestowed with powers to keep away the curse of death, he grew up to be an intelligent obedient youth.

21.2 Earning a Living

His father Haridas Ji, one day called Ram Das Ji and said, "Your carefree and play full days are over now. It is time for you to earn a living". "Yes, I shall do as you say father," replied Ram Das, "I am always at your service".

The next morning, his mother boiled some chickpeas, and gave it to her son saying, "Son take these and sell it in the bazaar," The Merciful Guru Ji carried the basket of peas to town. He sighed, his winsome sighs appealed to many, and those close to him.

A holy man called out to Ram Das and asked to be served. Ram Das Ji gave him a fist full of peas, but he wanted more. Ram Das then attempted to give him a second and a third helping, but the man did not accept the food. Overcome with generosity, Ram Das decided to give him all and overturned the contents of the basket.

His father was very angry, seeing Ram Das coming home empty handed. He could not bear to look at his father's red angry eyes. He felt very sad and cried.

21.3 Goindwal

One day he followed the sangat who were on their way to Goindwal to see Guru Amar Das Ji. The pilgrims stayed for a few days and then returned to Lahore. Ram Das Ji stayed in Goindwal to serve the Guru Ji and the sangat.

⁵² Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 41) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

21.4 Marriage

The respectable wife of Guru Amar Das Ji one day told Guru Ji, "Our daughter Bhani ji has matured into a young woman. It is time to find a suitable suitor for her and arrange an engagement ceremony". Guru Ji called a Brahmin who was a match-maker. He spoke to the Brahmin, while sitting near a window, "Hey wise one, plan well and select a right partner for my daughter".

The Brahmin asked immediately, "Dear Prabhu Ji, would you consider someone who looks like him?" The Brahmin beckoned at a youth who stood outside the window. He was Ram Das Ji. Guru Amar Das Ji paused for a while and then said, "I would like to speak with him".

Ram Das Ji entered and greeted Guru Ji with folded hands, and sat near him. Guru Ji asked, "Who is your father? Where do you come from?" Ram Das Ji answered, "My father's name is Haridas and my name is Ram Das and I belong to Khatri caste of Sodhi lineage, we live in Lahore".

Guru Amar Das was pleased to meet Ram Das Ji and decided that he would be the most suitable husband for his daughter. Guru Ji immediately wrote to Ram Das Ji's father and invited the family to Goindwal. They accepted the invitation and agreed to the marriage of their son. A date was set for an engagement ceremony, and very soon afterwards a marriage ceremony was solemnized for the couple⁵³. There was great rejoicing and the newly-united families were happy.

Ram Das's parents then returned to Lahore, but Ram Das stayed back to serve Guru Ji. He was very obedient and did anything that the meritorious Guru Ji wanted.

21.5 Children

A few years later in 1604 (1547 A.D.), Prithi Chand, who would unfortunately grow up to be a very coniving and conceited man, was born. He was brought up with a lot of love and attention. A second son, a beautiful baby named Mahadev was born and everyone was very happy.

⁵³ 'Both Guru Amardas and his wife agreed that Bhai Jetha - who was later to become Guru Ramdas - was a suitable match for Bhani. They formally made the proposal to him and he was overcome with joy. The wedding took place at Goindwal early in 1553. Guru Ram Das later composed the following hymn of thanksgiving to God: "The Lord has accomplished the work; he has come to wed a holy bride." (SGGS Ang 775)' -Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion, II, p.91

On Tuesday, Vesakh Vadi 7, 1620 (14th April 1563 A.D.), morning, Sri Arjan Dev Ji was born. He was like the full moon that lighted up the skies that night.

Most of Sri Arjan Dev's formative years were spent in his maternal home, which was in Goindwal. Sri Arjan Dev Ji grew up and married Bibi Ganga Ji who was a peace-loving woman, and Sri Arjan Dev Ji loved her dearly.

22. BIRBAL ⁵⁴

Emperor Akbar had a minister by the name of Birbal who was a Brahmin. He was well respected by Akbar and he was consulted before any important decision was made. Therefore he was always escorted Akbar.

22.1 North Assignment

During that time, the collection of taxes dropped drastically as revolting increased in the north. Birbal offered himself to lead an army to defeat the rebels as he was very proud of himself. Akbar was very pleased and said, “You are great, without you the matter can never be resolved as no one dares to stand against you”. Akbar gave him a large battalion with the best ammunitions, observing the strength of his army Birbal was over confident and said “I will kill all your enemies immediately”. Akbar was overwhelmed and gave him royal authorisation letter which read, “To all the Khatris who are residing in the village and town are summoned to pay one rupee and obey all the commands of Birbal”. Birbal’s ego was further augmented and he left Delhi with his large army.

22.2 Goindwal

Birbal travelled from one place to another collecting taxes and everyone adhered to his instructions. He reached the bank of river Beas and crossed the river together with his army. Birbal camped at Goindwal, his soldiers went in Goindwal and they identified the tax payers from Khetri sect. They summoned them to visit Birbal with an offering of one rupee each. Upon hearing this the Sikhs together with Guruji’s relatives reported the latest development and sought Guru Ji’s advice as they were worried that if they refused to meet Birbal, he will be annoyed.

22.3 Egoistic Birbal

Guru Amar Das Ji instructed two Sikhs to meet Birbal on his behalf and inform him that this is a Guru’s town which is non profit making and is entirely maintained based on the Almighty’s aid. Therefore, food can be supplied to feed the whole battalion but cash money is neither collected nor given to anyone as this is the system adopted. The Sikhs went to Birbal’s camp and escorted by his people they went to Birbal and said, “This place is blessed by the presence of Guru Nanak in his third form, Guru Amar Das Ji. Guru Ji blesses his sermons to all. He has organised community kitchen (Guru Ka Langgar) which

⁵⁴ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 41) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

serves food to everyone equally. Guru Ji does not accept monetary offering nor do he give any. Have faith and let us know how much food needs to be delivered to you.”

Birbal replied, “Go and collect one rupee from all the residents here and register them for future collection as well. Don't try to give me excuses as this rule will never be waived. Why are you telling me about the Guru as I have nothing to do with it. If the tax is not paid in time I shall punish all of you here.”

22.4 Guru Ji's Advice

The Sikhs came back to Guru Ji and said, “the egoistic Birbal is ignorant and kept on insisting for the tax otherwise he will attack, as he is accompanied by thousands of soldiers.” Upon listening to the Sikhs, Guru Amar Das Ji smiled and said, “Whoever obtains the worldly honors, becomes intoxicated with ego and loses his conscience and therefore becomes arrogant that none is his equal. Without serving a True Guru or obtaining Almighty's Name one will bear a lot of pain. Under the influence of ego, one commits various sins without knowing that the power lasts for a short period and one loses the opportunity to liberate oneself from the cycle of birth and death. Such person is short sighted who never looks beyond the present and never realises that the wealth will never accompany after death. The angel of death shall appear and take along this being (Jiv) into the next world. The being (Jiv) is forced to follow naked and all alone. Birbal too, does not realise that death is very close to him as he is influenced by the sweet maya.”

The Sikhs asked Guru Ji, “What shall we do now? If we refuse to obey his instruction he will punish us. He will not hesitate to act as he is ignorant about the greatness of the Guru” Guru Ji concluded, “Why are you worried? Have faith and see what the Almighty does. This fool will only understand when he has bear the consequences, go immediately to his camp to watch and listen to their conversation.”

22.5 Birbal's Warning

Two Sikhs reached Birbal's camp site and sat with the others near the entrance. Just then, two messengers, who seemed to be in a hurry, arrived. They were sent by Akbar. The Sikhs also heard Birbal's man complaining to him, “There are many Khatri men in this village. In spite of being called to register with us since morning, they have not come. It is almost night-fall now, tell us how shall we deal with them?”

Birbal replied, “it is getting dark. We shall stay here for the night. Tomorrow we will bring them here by force”.

The Sikhs hurried back to tell Guru Ji what they had seen and heard, “Tomorrow there is going to be trouble and they are planning to harm us”. Guru Ji replied, “Nobody knows what is going to happen tomorrow. They are not even going to spend the night here.

Their shelter here will be demolished and they will all leave. Do not worry. Go home and sleep peacefully. The Sikhs went home.

Meanwhile, Birbal read the emperor's message which stated, "There is trouble in the western side. The enemy has robbed our stations. Move your army and reach this destination as soon as possible. You have a big army, use force and achieve victory".

Birbal made an announcement, "Get ready to leave early in the morning!" His command was echoed throughout the big army. Early next morning, amidst the sounding of trumpets Birbal and his men mounted their horses and left the village, taking their dismantled tents with them.

Before they left, the trouble makers wagged their tongues again, "The Khatri of this village did not show up, neither did they submit any money. Who has given them so much courage to defy you? What makes them so proud? They showed no regards for your command and were unafraid to say, 'accept our food'".

Birbal answered proudly, "We have to leave in a hurry now. When we return we shall see their Guru Ji and demand ten times more money. They have insulted me by not giving me the money I asked".

22.6 Guru Ji's Verdict

The above message was delivered by a man to Guru Ji. He also said, "Birbal is very angry with you. He says when he returns he is going to punish all of you. He will capture and torment you until you give him all your money. Why did you not give him the money?"

Hearing the threatening message, Guru Amar Das Ji said, "Now he will not return. He will get buried in the ice and rot. This conceited man will die! How can anyone who disrespects Guru Nanak's House ever prosper? He deserves instant death".

Birbal traveled far and pushed his army through a valley of snow-covered mountains. Just as they faced their enemy and were ready to fight, they were buried by an avalanche of thick snow. Birbal tried to escape, but the extreme cold stiffened and froze him. He collapsed. Soon there was a severe snow storm which buried Birbal and his large army of soldiers.

Guru Ji's verdict is the reality and the utmost truth. Once uttered, even the deities and demons cannot change it.

23. THE BLESSED GOINDWAL ⁵⁵

23.1 A Widows Dead Son Rises

One night while Guru Amar Das Ji was sleeping he was suddenly awakened by loud distressed cries of a woman from the village. The Destroyer of Pain and Sorrow then called out to his sewak and said, “Why is this woman crying? What could be her problem?” Bhai Belu said, “She is calling out for her son. I am not sure whether her son is sick or he has died”. Guru Ji said, “You go now and find out what her problem is, then come back and tell me”.

Bhai Belu went down to the village and confirmed his suspicions. The woman’s son was dead. He returned and informed Guru Ji. “This woman who had only one son, was afflicted by typhoid fever. He became very weak and it was the fever which killed him”. “Tomorrow the dead boy will rise. Now go and tell the woman not to cry. I will literally capture the typhoid fever and cage it up”, said the compassionate Guru Ji.

Bhai Belu left hurriedly to give the woman the good news. The next morning, the villagers brought the dead body and left it outside Guru Ji’s house. Guru Amar Das Ji touched the body with his lotus toe, and praise be with the Guru Ji, the dead boy was very much alive!

23.2 The Story of Typhoid Fever

Then Guru Ji worked another miracle. He called out to the typhoid fever and changed it into an infant. Guru Ji put chains on its feet and hand-cuffed its wrists. Next he locked it up in an iron cage. Saying “It has disobeyed my command and sneaked into the village. I gave my assurance to the villagers that as long as I am alive no parent or parents will see their son die. It paid no heed to my promise, but instead had claimed the life of this widow’s son, right before her eyes. It deserves a different punishment which will discourage other forms of diseases to rear their ugly heads in this community of Goindwal”.

Thus trapped, typhoid fever (T.F.) in the form of a young boy stayed in the cage for several days. It did not eat the food that was offered with sympathy and was hungry and very weak. It pleaded to Guru Ji’s sewaks, “I hope a merciful person comes along and negotiates for my freedom”. The people of the village heard its cries but paid no attention to it.

⁵⁵ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 42) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

One day a group of devotees came from the Della village for the inspiring 'darshan' of Guru Ji. They presented gifts and prostrated at Guru Ji's lotus feet and sat down. Guru Ji was happy to see them, Guru Ji told them, "All my Sikhs here lead a very peaceful and contented lives. There is nothing that they lack here. They have been able to reap the fruits of their devotion and service by serving the true congregation (sat-sanghat)". They stayed in the good company of Guru Ji for a few days.

Now, this group had also seen this 'innocent-looking' but gravely weak child trapped in the cage. They felt very sorry for it and before they returned to their village they decided to convince Guru Ji for its release. "Maharaj Ji, this child will die if it is not released. It has become very weak, and is desperately pleading like a beggar to be set free".

Guru Amar Das Ji cautioned them, "If you desire its release, then take it with you and make sure it does not enter this village again". It looks remorseful due to the harsh punishment it has received.

Taking the frail-looking boy, the group of devotees headed by Bhai Lalo left Goindwal after thanking Guru Ji for his gracious hospitality and blessings, they received during their stay in Goindwal.

They walked many miles, and then the boy (typhoid fever) folded its hands and spoke to Bhai Lalo, "I am very weak and tired and unable to go any further. I am very hungry as I have not eaten for a long time. Give me permission to have a meal. Then when I am satisfied, I shall continue the journey with you".

Bhai Lalo who was very caring said, "we will be reaching a village very soon, there we will buy flour and lentils, to cook a meal for all of us. You too will be able to eat as much as you like. It's not very far. There are other varieties of food that you can choose from. After the meal we can all walk slowly again. This way you will not be tired".

The boy (typhoid fever) gave a quick reply, "My food is right here. I seek your permission to eat. If you do not grant me permission, then I shall not eat". Bhai Lalo, without any hesitation replied, "Okay, go ahead and eat what you want, while we wait for you. We shall continue with our journey when you return".

Not far from their path, a dobi was washing clothes, and hanging the laundry to dry. The boy (typhoid fever) ran towards the dobi and sprang on him like a hungry beast. The dobi, collapsed with fright and extreme pain. The boy (typhoid fever) stuck its sharp fang like teeth into the dobi's artery and sucked the helpless dobi's blood, rendering him dry and dehydrated. It then broke a clay pot, picked up a broken piece in the shape of a dish and filled it with blood. It carried it in its hands and brought it along to show Bhai Lalo saying, "Look at this, this is my kind of food! I had been hungry for a long time but you have mercifully saved me from starvation and prosecution". Bhai Lalo and the other Sikhs who had witnessed the savage attack on the dobi were utterly shocked and afraid of its incredible and savage characteristics.

They felt ashamed and regretted going against Guru Ji's wishes. Bhai Lalo thought, "It was securely chained and caged by Guru Ji, why did I let it out? It is a vicious devil! By a twist of bad fate it is free now".

Bhai Lalo then commanded the boy (typhoid fever) to return. He said "You turn back now! I am going to take you back to Guru Ji's place. I am not going to take you with me. You attack and cause pain and misery to humans. You are a big sinner! Guru Ji will trap you again, then where will you get blood for food?"

The boy (typhoid fever) answered, "I will live within your command and do as I am told. In future whoever hears or tells the story of our encounter and praises the name of the Great Guru Amar Das Ji, will release my hold on the affected patient and go away. Pardon me now and leave me here. Do not undo the good deed you have earned by compelling me to return to Goindwal".

Bhai Lalo and the others then decided to leave the figure of typhoid fever behind, while they continued their journey to the village of Della. This is how the dreaded disease, feigning innocence, escaped from the cage of Guru Ji.

24. VESAKHI CELEBRATIONS IN GOINDWAL ⁵⁶

24.1 Vesakhi Celebration

One day, Bhai Paro made a humble request to Guru Ji. “I have observed that the Sikhs come all around the year in their respective groups for your darshan and after receiving your blessings they go back. They do not get the opportunity to intermingle with other Sikhs who come from different places on other occasions. As a result of this, there is no love among them. It will be a good idea to organize a huge gathering and invite everyone to participate in it. This way they will be able to meet people from different countries, areas and places in order to develop a relationship among themselves”.

Guru Ji was very pleased with this suggestion and said, “Bhai Paro, you have a great idea. In fact, I was thinking of doing something like that too. Your suggestions will give great benefits and opportunities for liberation to the Sikhs. You can go ahead and invite all the Sikhs to Goindwal on the first day of Vesakh month (mid April). They can come and celebrate Vesakhi together and attend true congregations as well”.

After getting Guru Ji’s approval Bhai Paro immediately sent out invitations to all the regions where the Sikhs lived. The people were very excited and pleased to receive special invitations from their Guru. They waited eagerly for the auspicious day so that they could celebrate Vesakhi with their Guru. As the occasion came closer their excitement also increased.

After autumn came spring with colourful flowers blooming everywhere. The climate became very pleasant and the people started making arrangements to travel. They formed small groups and carried offerings for Guruji and began their journey towards Goindwal.

A big crowd gathered at Goindwal. Among the crowd, Guru Ji looked like the moon surrounded by birds that are enamoured by the moon (chakoors). The people took turns to receive blessings from Guru Ji. They placed their offerings in front of Guru Ji and bowed to him in reverence. Many were busy performing selfless service for the gathering (sanggat). The people were very happy to be given the opportunity to intermingle with other Sikhs from different places. They sat together and glorified their Guru. Everyone was enjoying the festival very much.

24.2 Ram Das Ji’s Sewa

During the gathering, Guru Ji asked, “Where is Ram Das Ji? I have not seen him”. Bhai Belu answered, ‘Ram Das Ji could not find the time to come here because he is busy

⁵⁶ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 43) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

fulfilling the needs of all the people in the gathering (Sanggat). He has seated all the people in lines and serving them food and water. He is trying his best to make them comfortable in every way, even fanning them if they feel hot. Everyone is very pleased with him.'

Guru Amar Das Ji was very pleased to hear this and answered, 'Ram Das Ji is a great person. He is performing service with a sincere heart. He also shows a lot of love and respect for me. He will be blessed with great miraculous powers. Any person who performs selfless service for the Sanggat will receive blessings. Ram Das Ji's lineage will grow. He will be highly respected in this world and also the next world. By serving the Sanggat, he is obtaining more blessings than he will obtain even by serving me. He will obtain a very high position in both the worlds. He will enlighten many people in this world'.

Meanwhile, people intermingled in the congregation. Friendships and love grew among them. The Sikhs treated one another with a lot of respect. The singing of devotional hymns (kirtan) could be heard everywhere. People meditated on the name of Waheguru.

Guru Ji then declared that Vasakhi will be celebrated in this way every year.

25. COMPLAINTS AGAINST GURU JI⁵⁷

Meanwhile, there were a group of people who were very unhappy with the type of events taking place in Goindwal. They were envious of the Guru's house and always kept themselves busy by slandering the Guru. They were extremely upset to see ever increasing glory and listening to Guru Ji's praises by the Sikhs.

25.1 Acceptance by All

After the celebrations were over, the Sikhs went back to their homes and started relating the events to other Sikhs. "Guru Ji has initiated a new system. He has done away with the caste system. People of all castes sit together and have their meals. No one is discriminated against because of their caste. Everyone is given equal respect. Guru Ji gives charn-amrit and blesses everyone to become Sikhs. People sit together and meditate on Almighty's Name (Naam)".

25.2 Opposition by Upper Class

Upon hearing the praises of Guru Amar Das Ji from the Sikhs who participated in the first ever Vesakhi celebration, the Khatri and Brahmins were very upset and they started bad mouthing by complaining, "What hypocrisy? Whatever happened there is really unpleasant. In future people will have no respects for the Brahmins and the Khatri, our respected status will be tarnished. All the four castes have been combined into one caste. People belonging to different caste are made to sit together to have their food. The old religious system has been totally disregarded. A system that has been practised by our ancestors and also approved by the deities has been vanished. We have no choice but to file an official complain to the King about this matter. He is the only one that will be able to stop all this".

25.3 Complaint to King Akbar

They finally decided to send their leaders to Lahore and have an audience with the King. On arrival to Lahore they met King Akbar and pleaded, 'We came here to appeal justice from you, Oh King. It is your duty to protect our religion traditions from being abused and misinterpreted. There is a person who calls himself Guru Amar Das Ji who resides in Goindwal. He is going against the well established system. The previous traditions have been completely disregarded by him. He does not follow the practices written in the holy books of Hinduism (Surthis and Simritis) and he is introducing new practices in

⁵⁷ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 43) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

accordance to his own mind. The Mantar that he uses is also different. He has discarded Ram's Mantar and has preached his followers to meditate on the word "Waheguru". This had never happened in the four Ages (Yugs). We hope you can take action against him so that our traditions and religion are preserved which will surely maintain stability in your kingdom". After listening to their complaint, King Akbar said, "Have full confidence in me. I will definitely look into this matter seriously and provide justice to you if your complaints are legitimate. I do understand your concern but remember in our kingdom we have many different religions and their respective leaders. Therefore, I have to call upon the defendant to defend himself against your accusations. I can only make my judgement after hearing the case from both sides".

They decided to stay on in Lahore, until the case filed by them is resolved. They wished that the King will take action against Guru Ji. These Brahmins and Khatri were very arrogant of their high caste and were hoping that the King will put a stop to whatever Guru Ji had started.

After a few days Akbar sent a message to Guru Ji, "Religious leaders have made a complaint against you. You are summoned to attend the court session in Lahore and defend yourself against the allegations. If you don't wish to defend yourself then you are directed to halt all your religious activities and and adhere to the traditions and practices of your fore-fathers."

26. RAM DAS JI IN KING AKBAR'S COURT⁵⁸

When Guru Amar Das Ji received a court summons from the emperor, King Akbar, Guru Ji decided to send a representative on behalf of him to Lahore. Guru Ji appointed Ram Das Ji to act on his behalf as the defendant. Ram Das Ji was an educated and loyal disciple of Guru Ji.

Guru Amar Das called him and said, "My son, Brahmins have been blinded by their conceit. They are very envious of our faith and have hopes of eradicating it. They have taken their complaints to the court of the emperor. You depart immediately to Lahore as our representative and with your peaceful and diplomatic ways defuse the accusations against our faith".

Ram Das Ji stood up and pleaded. "Hey Satguru Ji, you are very virtuous. I am incapable of doing anything other than being committed to your love. How can I debate in the court when I have no knowledge of Gyaithri Mantar, and other ancient scriptures? I am ready to speak up before them even if their numbers are in a few hundreds. How can I bear to hear them slandering you! I need your blessings in this endeavor. Please preserve my dignity!".

Guru Amar Das Ji, the Merciful Guru Ji, upon hearing to Ram Das Ji's humble request said, "Son, you have no cause to fear! When you look at your right arm, you will immediately obtain the right answers to all their queries, regarding all the four Vedas and six Shastres. Gaining an insight into such divine knowledge, Son! You shall have my blessings. Be fearless and speak with conviction. And so shall it be. My son you will become a great scholar! The creators of the shastres, the Brahmins will not be able to question you any further. All the heavenly devtas and demons will honor you!".

Ram Das was relieved to hear Guru Amar Das's assuring speech. He made quick preparation and left for Lahore. He stayed a night in his house, and the next day he went to King Akbar's court.

26.1 The Hearing in King Akbar's Court

King Akbar summoned all his ministers, including the influential and wealthy. The Brahmins and pundits were also present. King Akbar began the hearing by asking the plaintiff (Brahmin & Khatri), "Present your case by first reading out your complaints about the Guru? Speak up about the concerning religious issue disputed".

Among those present were some who were envious with the establishment of the Sikh faith. They complained, "Guru Ji and his followers who belongs to Kathri cast have

⁵⁸ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 44) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

initiated their own faith. They do not follow the teachings of the Vedas, nor do they read the Gyaithri Mantar during prayers, instead they recite something they call 'Gurbani' ”.

King Akbar looked at Ram Das Ji and asked, “In your religion, Gyaithri Mantar are supposed to be read on all the time, why then don't you recite it? What kind of a Hindu-Kathri religious sect are you from?

Ram Das Ji remembered Guri Ji's timely instructions and glanced at his right arm. By doing so, he became an instant scholar! And guided by Guru Ji's grace he was able to answer Akbar with confidence. “I shall recite the Gyaithri prayers for you and all those who wish to hear. I shall also fulfill your desire by giving you its meanings, but I shall not be answerable to the resulting merits and demerits after my recitation. (According to Hindu believes Gyaithri prayers must be conducted in a sacred place and not among the non-believers).

Ram Das Ji then recited the Gyaithri prayers in an acceptable tune and explained its meanings. With the blessings of Guru Amar Das he was able to perform wonders. He than began to introduce the beliefs of the Sikh faith by beginning on the subject of 'Oangkar'. Listening to his preaching the breeze seemed to seize and stand still. The hard stones turned soft. The astonished listeners were very touched and satisfied by Ram Das's Godly-assisted performance. The proud scholars (Pandits) fell silent. Everyone gazed lovingly at Ram Das Ji and he became an instant celebrity.

26.2 King Akbar's Judgement

King Akbar too was very impressed; he said to the Brahmins and Khattris, “God and a holy man are numbered as two. But there is no difference between the two, as they have merged as one. You all cannot challenge him. He is very precise and true! Your believers are misguided. His believes are based on the Vedas and the Purans. Tell me what other kind of text have you been referring to? Now, you all are speechless. He has already recited the Gyaithri and clarified its meanings. If you are all well versed in it as assumed, then go ahead and ask him questions, otherwise acknowledge his presence and honor him”.

Hearing King Akbar's conclusion and judgment the accusing plaintiff group felt dejected and remained silent. The case was dismissed immediately and they then made a hasty retreat to their homes.

27. RAM DAS JI'S LOVE FOR GURU⁵⁹

27.1 A Robe for Guru Ji

Ram Das Ji stayed one night at his house in Lahore, love for Guru Amar Das Ji was enshrined in his mind. The next day he started his journey back to Goindwal, on the way he passed through the Lahore town where he saw a very beautiful cloth. He contemplated in his mind that a robe made from this cloth will be very suitable for Guru Ji as this was the most beautiful cloth that he have ever seen but Ram Das Ji did not have enough money to purchase it. Still he did not want to walk away without purchasing, tailoring and presenting it to Guru Ji. Ram Das Ji stood in front of the shop and within his mind he purchased the piece of cloth, tailored it to Guru Ji's robe and while standing there he presented it to Guru Ji and assisted Guru Ji to wear the robe with his focussed concentration.

At the same time, Guru Amar Das Ji was sitting on his throne in the midst of the congregation in Goindwal, while sitting Guru Ji's body started to move, he raised his arms and as though he was securing knob of a robe. The Sikhs who were sitting in the congregation were surprised as they could not comprehend any reason for Guru Ji's movements. They humbly asked Guru Ji, "Dear Guru Ji, while sitting on throne, we saw that you were moving your body and we could not comprehend your gestures, please be merciful to explain as we know that your actions are beyond comprehension". Guru Ji said, "Ram Das was assisting me in putting a robe on me which he purchased and toiled while standing in Lahore town". Upon listening to the explanation everyone bowed in reverence before Guru Ji.

27.2 A Mango for Guru Ji

Ram Das Ji continued his journey from Lahore, on the way he passed through a bazaar where he saw unseasonal Mangoes being sold. The Mangoes looked very fresh and delicious and such riped mangoes were never seen in Amritsar before. Concluding that the mangoes were very rare, he decided to purchase some for Guru Ji as one should never go empty handed to someone greater. He went to the seller and asked, "How much would this mangos cost?" the seller replied, "One Rupee". Ram Das Ji immediately purchased the mangoes and walked as fast as he could to reach Goindwal as early as he could. On the way back he had to stay a night in a village, early morning on the next day he stated walking again hoping to meet Guru Ji as he was thirsty for Guru Ji's darshan'. Soon he reached a village called Bherowal which was adjacent to Goindwal.

⁵⁹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 44) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Ram Das Ji was holding the mango in his hand all the while to protect it. Due to the hot weather and the heat produced by his hand, the mango cracked and the juice started leaking out. Within his mind he thought that the mango will soon rot and would not reach Guru Ji. Ram Das Ji focussed his concentration on Guru Amar Das Ji and did a prayer very humbly (Ardaas), "Dear Guru Ji, I offer this fruit before you now. This unseasonal mango juice is leaking out and would not reach you therefore please be merciful and fulfil my wishes by consuming this fruit now." After the prayer Ram Das Ji consumed the mango. At the same instant in Goindwal, Guru Amar Das Ji started moving his mouth and he was eating the same mango which was offered by Ram Das Ji. After a while he took out the seed and called Bhai Belu Ji and said, "Secure this seed properly in the drawer, I will need it again once more". Bhai Belu Ji kept the mango seed as instructed by Guru Ji.

27.3 Arriving in Goindwal

After some time Ram Das Ji arrived in Goindwal and from a far distance he was overwhelmed with Guru Ji's presence. His eyes were fixed on Guru Ji's feet just like a bee that sits on a flower and fell at Guru Ji's feet. Guru Ji raised him by holding his arms and honoured him. The embrace between a Guru Ji and Ram Das Ji at that moment depicted enduring and everlasting love.

Guru Ji asked, "Tell me what happened in Akbar's court? How did you response to them? and how did Akbar find them guilty? With folded hands Ram Das Ji said, "Dear Guru Ji, I could not comprehend what happened in Akbar's court. I never knew Gyaitari mantrar earlier but when I looked at my right arm as instructed by you, instantly I obtained complete knowledge and when I uttered 'Ek Oangkar' everyone remained silent, thereafter no one spoke anything." Upon listening, Guru Ji was very pleased and asked, "What did you bring for me, as you have come from a well established town". Ram das Ji clasped his hands together and said, "You know everything, how the robe was presented without paying the cost as that cloth was suitable for you. Then I purchased a off-season mango but when I reached Bherowal it cracked and juice started leaking out, through concentration and faith I offered the mango to you". Guru Ji was very pleased with Ram Das Ji conviction and said, "I have consumed the mango that you have offered me through your concentration. The mango was very sweet and I have preserved the seed". Bhai Belu brought the seed and showed it Ram Das Ji and he was astonished. He immediately prostrated at Guru's feet and recognised Guru Ji as the Almighty himself.

28. MASSIONARY TOUR & PANDIT DURGA ⁶⁰

28.1 Missionary Tour⁶¹

In 1553, Guru Amar Das undertook a missionary journey to the eastern and south-eastern parts of the Punjab. He first visited Pahoa, Kurukshetra and Jamuna on the occasion of the Abhaijit festival to preach the Guru's way to the thousands of pilgrims who had gathered there. It is wrong to say, as some biased historians have written, that Guru Amar Das undertook the pilgrimage to holy places to appease the Hindus who were alleged to have been dissatisfied with his rejection of caste restrictions and ancient rituals.

The Guru preached to the crowds that the Abhaijit solar eclipse was a natural phenomenon and there was no merit gained by fasting and bathing on this occasion. The best pilgrimage is bathing inwardly in the Holy Name. Guru Ram Das Ji subsequently composed a Shabad (hymn) to expound the message to Guru Amar Das Ji to the congregation at Kurukshetra, Jamna, Hardwar and places en route.

"A sight of the true Guru (Amar Das) is the real bathing of the Abhaijit festival" (SGGS Ang 1116).

"The true pilgrimage is meditation on the Holy Name and a dip in the divine nectar" (SGGS Ang 687).

Huge crowds followed the Guru's party because the tax-collectors did not collect the pilgrim tax from the Guru. The rush was great at Hardwar where the local gentry gathered in a central place to hear the Guru's discourse.* The Guru also held discussions with Yogis, Jain Digambars, Sanyasis and the exponents of the six systems of Indian philosophy and won their love and respect. There is a Gurdwara at Kankhal in memory of the Guru's visit.

28.2 Pandit Durga

Guru Amar Das Ji arrived in village Mihrara accompanied by a large company of sanggat. The devotees recited the Almighty's Name (Naam) and Almighty's Praises (Kirtan) while they camped outside the village. A Durga-Devi worshipping Brahmin lived in this village, he was known as Pandit Durga.

⁶⁰ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 50) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

⁶¹ G.S. Mansukhani: Guru Ram Das, p.32 & Summary of Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 45,46,47,48 & 49) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Guru Ji had encountered this Brahmin along the way to a pilgrimage before Guru Ji was proclaimed the title of 'Guru'. The Brahmin, who was an astrologer, was able to read the future of Baba Amar Das while he was asleep. He predicted that Baba Amar Das will be great and famous one day.

The Brahmin noticed the gathering near the village and asked one Sikh, "Why is there a gathering of Sikhs here? Who is the dignitary that everyone is honouring?"

The Sikh answered, "Guru Amar Das Ji is the third Guru of Nanak's House. He is very virtuous. People from far and near always stay by his side. He is able to fulfill everyone's noble desires by his extra-ordinary capability. The Guru Ji is elderly and his caste is Khatri. People obtain peace and happiness with his 'darshan' and moreover they do not have to pay to see him. They realize the worldly benefits they would reap in his presence and therefore there are crowds at all times".

After hearing the praises of Guru Amar Das Ji, the Brahmin was beginning to recollect glimpses of a meeting with a holy man many years ago. "I now remember, many years ago I read the sole of a man's foot which had a mark depicting a status of greatness. Now could he be the same man? Or may be it was another? I have to see him".

28.3 Guru Ji's Audience

The Brahmin decided to see for himself and went to Guru Ji's camp. Standing before Guru Ji the Brahmin recognized Guru Ji, as the man from the past. "Yes, he looks like the same man I met, years ago," thought the Brahmin. He was happy and went closer to greet Guru Ji, and then he sat down. To clear all doubts he sat scrutinizing Guru Ji with a fixed gaze until he was sure of himself.

Feeling confident, the Brahmin said, "Hey Prabu Ji, I am the same Brahmin you met some years ago. I saw an image of a lotus on the sole of your foot and predicted that you will be a great man one day. But I did not ask payment for my service. Remember, I told you that when you become famous, I shall come and ask from you anything that I want and you had agreed to my request. Fortunately that long awaited day have come! Surely now, you can give me what ever I want, but first refresh your memory and try to remember your commitment to me".

28.4 Choice in Blessings

Guru Amar Das Ji was happy to meet the Pandit Durga and said, "Your prediction is great! Now you too may get ready and brace yourself to receive anything you want. There is no delay in the House of Guru Nanak! Lots of people have been blessed with sons, daughters and good-looking spouses, and other worldly things that they desired. Ask for anything you want. Now you can live the life of your dreams! If you feel that you do not want the worldly short-spanned happiness that will not accompany you forever,

than you ask for the never ending happiness that awaits in the after-life, and that too, by escaping from the treacherous cycle of life and death! Think, before you speak. You can be happy in this life or in your next, choose between the two”.

The hopeful Brahmin now found himself in a conflicting situation and could not make up his mind. He thought, “If I ask Guru Ji happiness in the after-life, I will be joining the company of the improvised and will be begging around. I may even lose the little comfort that I have been enjoying all this while. If I ask for happiness in this life, then I shall never lack in any necessities, and get all the wealth and comforts that this life can provide me. But when my life expires, the ‘Jam’ (Messenger of Death) will cast me into hell. Which one of the two wishes shall I ask for?”.

The Brahmin, whose mind was clouded by a web of uncertainties was silent for about twenty-four minutes, until Guru Ji broke his silence. “Hey Pandit, why are you silent? Ask! Ask and make your wish. However great or unusual your request may be, I shall fulfill it,” said the gracious Guru who wanted to honor his promise.

Seeing Guru Ji in a good mood, the Brahmin felt encouraged by Guru Ji words. He lowered his head and spoke slowly. “When you bless the gift of the Almighty’s Name (Naam) to a man, without giving him wealth the life is incomplete as no one would respect him. And without the worship of Naam, the humans are cast in a world of persecution. I do not think it is wise of me to wish for anything as both are required. I leave the decision to you. You are free to offer whatever pleases you, for right now, I am very confused. Dear, Guru Amar Das Ji, I plead to your generosity, please cleanse and straighten the paths of both lives. Please bless me with wealth and comfort in this life and peace and happiness in the hereafter”.

Pandit Durga continued, “If you bless your devotees with the Naam, they generally lead a life of poverty and hardship. They are deemed as an unprivileged lot in society. It is difficult to understand the nature of your gifts. If you make a man wealthy, his wants and desires expand. He does not feel the urgency of Naam worship and attracts the attention of the Messenger of Death who waits ready to prosecute him in hell. In both the worlds, your generous gifts are very attractive. Your sewaks are granted ‘mukti’ and their souls are at peace. I am in no position to ask, as I am helpless. I rest my request with you, you know best. Please fulfill my wish according to your will. What if your sewak is blessed with all the comforts he can think of in this world but lives a life of purity? What I am trying to say is please be merciful and bless me with happiness in both worlds”.

Making an appealing speech, the clever Pandit bowed before Guru Ji and asked for the best gifts in both lives!

28.5 The Great Bestower

Guru Amar Das Ji was very amused by the Pandit's crafty reply. He smiled and said, "Now get ready to receive the happiness of both worlds. Immediately from now onwards you will be rewarded with all the comforts and happiness in the two worlds that you so seek. You will amass a lot of wealth during your life but do not forget Almighty's Name (Naam). Do remember (simran) Almighty's Name (Naam) with sincerity and the Messenger of Death will not claim your soul when you die. You will be guided to Sachkhand where you will find bliss and happiness among the good souls".

Blessed by the generous Guru Ji the lucky Brahmin was bestowed with happiness in both worlds. He had struck a good bargain that any astrologer had ever dreamed of. He greeted the Guru Ji and went home happy and satisfied. He became wealthy, lead a honest and good life, and lived happily ever after.

29. CONSTRUCTION OF BOALI SAHIB⁶²

Guru Amar Das Ji, the third Guru, was good natured and very caring. He was always seeking ways to improve the lives and souls of mankind in the village of Goindwal and elsewhere. He envisioned a dream project that became a reality. His great wish was to dig a sacred well where the devotees could dip and cleanse their minds and souls.

29.1 Proposal for Boali Sahib

One day Guru Ji revealed his plans during a gathering, “It is a need of time that we dig a tank, which will be like a sacred pond, for the good of mankind. It will be a prominent destination for the pilgrims, where all irrespective of caste and creed will enjoy a bath in its blessed waters. The news of this project should be made public and to attract the skilled and voluntary work force.”

Bhai Paro was assigned to the duty of a publicity delegate. His mission was to inform the village heads of the many provinces around Goindwal, about the impending construction, and to ask for their assistance to locate the experts in this field.

29.2 Ground Breaking Ceremony

The good news spread fast and within a few days many people left their country-side and came to Goindwal in droves. They came carrying digging tools and baskets. They were very eager to serve Guru Ji before whom they bowed and greeted with great respect and humility. Guru Ji was happy to see them. He distributed a mixture of sweets to them. After some rest, Guru Ji walked very enthusiastically leading the ‘sanggat’ to the proposed site which was near the Bias River. Baba Buddha Ji was given the honour to mark the opening ceremony. He dug some earth with a hoe, filled a basket and then emptied it elsewhere. Those who had brought digging tools along, started digging and those with baskets, got busy filling them with soil and then lifting and carrying them away on their heads. Thus began the great ‘sewa’ to fulfill Guru Ji’s dream.

29.3 Construction of Boali Sahib

Guru Ji was very pleased with the overwhelming support from everyone, Guru Ji watched his sewaks at work with great pleasure and satisfaction. He stood by giving them guidance and inspiration. The workers were honoured to be observed by Guru Ji’s flower-petaled eyes, which were so lovely. Just as the workers toiled throughout the days

⁶² Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 51) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

digging the well and disposing the soil, some good cooks prepared the food for the working-staff and others. Many others donated money which was used to pay the hired workers. The hard-working devotees who loved Guru Ji, worked with good intentions obtained bliss and had their desires fulfilled. Daily there were new additions to the labour force, and the hired help were paid two ‘annas’ a day. Many Sikhs upon hearing of Guru Ji’s venture, which was going to be an attraction and pride of the pilgrims, came to Goindwal for Guru Ji’s ‘darshan’.

The news was delivered in the province of Lahore (which was the birth place of Ram Das Ji who was the son-in-law of Guru Amar Das Ji). People were informed, “Satguru Ji has started a project of making a tank where pilgrims can dip and erase the burden of their sins, and have their wishes fulfilled.” Guru Ji’s project received great publicity and many people flocked to Goindwal out of curiosity. Some were ready to volunteer their services. Everyday crowds thronged the locality some were seen coming while others were leaving.

When the tank was finally ready it was called “Boali Sahib.” It was and is still known as a sacred place where pilgrims bathe and receive Guru Ji’s blessings.

29.4 Ram Das Ji’s Selfless Service (Sewa)

Guru Ji’s son-in-law, Ram Das Ji, and unassuming and hard-working youth worked among the dirt-covered labourers. He maintained a great respect for Guru Ji and did every thing within his capacity to please him. The basket of wet earth which he placed on his head, smudged his head and face and stained his clothes, yet undeterred worked on. Guru Ji was aware of Ram Das’s devotion and he too, in return loved, the faith-full and virtuous, Ram Das Ji.

30. RAM DAS JI'S RELATIVES ⁶³

A group of pilgrims set forth from Lahore to go to the sacred banks of the Gangga River. The party consisted of Ram Das Ji's affluent relatives, neighbours and friends. They decided to stop in Goindwal which was on their way. They spoke among themselves, "Now this is the place where Haridas's son Ram Das stays. Ram Das brother stayed in Lahore to look after his parents and the property, while Ram Das blatantly stayed away from his house preferring to stay with his in-laws. Let us pay a visit to see how he is faring. Definitely he must be getting the respect that befits a son-in-law. What kind of profitable trade could he be engaged in? What is so attractive about this place that has made him desert the wealth, status and comforts of his home?"

30.1 Meeting Ram Das Ji

The conservative and inquisitive bunch, then walked toward the construction site. Just then by an act of coincidence Ram Das who was carrying a basket of soil on his head came face to face with them. Ram Das Ji's face, body and clothes were stained by the soil and he was unrecognizable. He emptied the basket quickly and walked towards them greeting respectfully, "Ram Ram" and "I touch your feet". The snobbish visitors were shocked beyond belief seeing Ram Das Ji stained with mud and working among the labourer. He looked so deplorable to their narrow-minds.

His appearance angered the elderly relatives. Others found him amusingly funny. Without acknowledging his humble greetings they had only harsh words to say to him. "You are a disgrace to your ancestors. You live in your in-laws house and work like a labourer! You have taken birth in the Sodhi family and dishonoured it by your shame-full behaviour. What else could be more demeaning than this? Which Khatri in his right mind will do what you do? While there are other decent jobs that befit your background, you choose to do hard labour. You have not only shamed us but you have degraded yourself in our circle of society."

30.2 Praising Guru Amar Das Ji

After leashing their anger and mocking Ram Das Ji the elite group was startled to see Ram Das looking so passive and cool. He bravely endured all the harsh remarks of his elderly relatives and former colleagues. He paused and smiled at them, and then said, "Sad to say, that you do not understand the Greatness of Guru Amar Das Ji who is the destroyer of pain and sorrows. Just by one intending glance at his devotee he is able to

⁶³ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 51) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

erase his millions of patches of bad-luck. Those who have asked for 'mukti' have been liberated as well. He teaches us to love God and get close to Him through prayer".

Ram Das Ji continued, "The Supreme Being, who the Yogis have been trying to reach throughout the ages, is attainable through this Satguru. Even the very little sewa done by anyone is accounted for. People return home blissfull and feel blessed when their desires are fulfilled. Everyone who comes here is very keen to perform any form of sewa for the Guru Ji to evoke his blessings. A person who comes here and does not feel the importance of performing selfless service (niskaam sewa), I consider him to be unfortunate and of low morals. Only a fortunate person is able to serve Guru Ji. No other earthly task can be more meritorious than labouring for you Guru Ji".

30.3 The Annoyed Relatives

Ram Das Ji's relatives and friends were too blinded by conceit and their aristocratic upbringing, that they failed to discover the spiritual message that Ram Das Ji was trying to convey. They still argued and laughed at his life-style, believing him to be penniless and deprived. In the evening they were treated to food from Guru Ji's langgar, after which they adjourned to Guru Ji's home with a long list of complaints. Stiff with pride, the ill-mannered upper-class, did not prostrate in reverence before Guru Ji, but instead sat down while saying, "Ram-Ram". Guru Ji welcomed them politely.

An older relative by the name of Manggal spoke very snobbishly and accusingly at Guru Ji, "You have attained the status of a Guru and are old enough to know the protocol of dealing with the high and low caste. The society of the upper-class expects privileged attention from their relatives especially if they are the in-laws. You are the supreme Guru. Does it not occur to you that we belong to the distinguished Khatri class who should be pampered and assigned distinguished jobs. One of our relative, here has not been getting good treatment. We consider this as an insult to our high ranking family. We wish to see him work in a more respectable section."

Just then, Ram Das Ji too joined them. He was happy to see Guru Ji, whose sun-like rays radiated on Ram Das's happy face which seemed to bloom like a lotus flower. Ram Das humbly bowed and greeted Guru Ji. This humble reverence felt as though one bee was collecting nectar from its favourite flowers. Ram Das Ji's devotion to Guru Ji angered and humiliated the pompous relatives who angrily gabbled on, "He too was born in our family. His behaviour is atrocious and shameful. He left home when his father passed away and the unlucky youth has taken refuge in his in-laws house. He mingles with the inferior classes, carrying a shovel in one hand and a soil-laden basket on his head, spilling some of its contents on his face and clothes. Hey Guru Amar Das Ji, you have over looked his upper class status. He has not been allotted a decent job and therefore our family name has been tarnished. Now, we demand you to assign him to a suitable job".

Guru Ji looked at Ram Das Ji who sat among them looking very tranquil and happy. He came forward and crouched before Guru Ji, seemingly like a bee gathering nectar from an exotic flower. Guru Ji felt proud and happy and thought, “The river of my love has meandered into his heart, and its strong currents have carried away his negative inhibitions. He is inspired by my love and has become liberated. He is unaffected by the authoritative behaviour practiced by his snobbish clan and believes every human-beings to be equal.”

30.4 Honouring Ram Das Ji

Guru Ji then looked at addressed the Lahore visitors, “I consider him fit enough and blessed him with a canopy to shelter the entire universe. You have felt offended because you are not the devotee of the Guru, neither have you cherished any love for the Almighty. If it was not for Ram Das Ji, say if he was not born in your family, then all your ancestors and descendents would have been cast into hell!”

Ram Das Ji, folded his hands and pleaded, “It is your good nature to forgive , Guru Ji, forgive and save the sinners. They are ignorant and helplessly trapped in the net of materialism.” Guru Ji was very touched by Ram Das’s request and was prompted to say, “Hey Ram Das you are great! By performing selfless sewa, you have won my heart. You have taken great pains to serve and understand me.”

Finally the arrogant aristocracts left after realizing their upper-class image did not carry any weight in the sacred place and society of Guru Ji. Ram Das Ji continued serving Guru Ji with renewed love and vigour.

31. MAI DAS VESHNO⁶⁴

Mai Das was a staunch vegetarian who consumed the food cooked according to his own rituals. He was the devotee of Lord Krishna and meditated (bhagti) without any expectation (nishkam). He engaged himself in the company of saints and uttered "Krishna Krishna" at all times. He only meditated and did nothing else. His concentration stayed focussed on Sri Krishna's physical form at all times which was pictured as his eyes like the petals of a flower and his curled hair hang over his cheeks and these eliminated all forms of pain. His smile was beautiful and impressed his devotees.

31.1 Intention to Meet Guru Ji

He had heard of the greatness of Guru Amar Das ji. Many Sikhs told him about Guru Ji. He longed to have the darshan of Guru Ji and many days passed by. He thought of going to see Guru Ji several times. After some time, he came to the vicinity of Guru Ji. He stood at the entrance and requested a Sikh to seek Guru Ji's consent for darshan. Guru Ji replied "If he wishes for my darshan, go and have food at the common kitchen (langgar) first. Once contented, then come and see me." Listening to this, Mai Das became suspicious "Don't these people consider one's caste and creed when preparing langgar". I shall not partake in langgar that is prepared in this way. I shall always remain pure. Without this purity, how will I benefit from the darshan?"

31.2 Preference for Ritual

He stood a while and thought to himself "Without having langgar, I cannot have Guru Ji's darshan, but if I proceed to have langgar, I will go against my religious principles. Therefore, I shall not have darshan of the Guru because I have vowed to eat in accordance with my religious rites. But people say that Guru Ji has tremendous powers. I have not had his darshan but many others have and achieved salvation. What wrong did I do to not gain his darshan?" He became so depressed over it that he could no longer live in his house. He assured himself that "I shall go to Dwarka. I shall only quit regretting once I have the darshan of Krishan Ji. His devotion and love for Krishan Bhagvan hurried him without any hesitation and he continued to meditate "Hari hari". He had no any other wish in his mind other than to meditate and he continued to pray, "Hey, Krishan Ji, give me darshan, I shall go to Dwarka to have your darshan".

⁶⁴ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 52) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

31.3 Going to Dwarka

On his way to Dwarka, he passed a thick forest which was isolated from world with no sign of people around. At the same time, the clouds started to gather followed by strong winds and lightning. In the midst of the terrible weather, he decided to fast. He could not find any food to break his fast. He started to shiver as the day started to get cold and he could not trace anyone else to seek assistance. He could not even find a proper shelter. He felt very hungry as he could not find any food to break his fast. As the day got dark, he was unable to find any place to sleep. He continued to walk. He suddenly found shelter under a tree. But he could not sit down or sleep. He stood there meditating "Krishan, Krishan". He stood there all night. He was so attached to Krishan Ji and had no other wants. He wanted to see Krishan Ji alone.

Looking at his devotion, Krishan Ji thought "Without me he has no other to rely on. He is standing alone in this terrible forest". Krishan Ji wanted to see him happy. Krishan Ji took another form and delivered food in front of Mai Das and walked away in another direction. Mai Das thought "I am a staunch follower. Who brought this here without complying with the religious rites. I shall only eat in a pure place, otherwise my reputation will be tarnished if I consume this "kecha bhojan" (dal and rice is considered as raw food 'kecha bhojan', only deep cooked food is considered 'peka bhojan'). If the food had been deep fried like puri etc I would have eaten and satisfied my hunger". He was very hungry but did not eat the food as it was considered raw 'kecha'.

Knowing his concerns, Bhagvan Krishan delivered cooked food and moved away. Mai Das thought "There is no one in this terrible jungle. First I received raw (kecha) food and knowing my concern, cooked (peka) food has been delivered to me. Who brings this food, cannot be known. No one can know what's going on in my mind other than Sri Krishan. Surely Sri Krishan must have brought this food for me. Without giving me darshan, Krishan Ji had come here twice and returned. He ran around in all corners thinking about this but could not trace anyone. His love for God grew instantly. He weeped and cried aloud without any control over himself. He sang aloud, "Hey forgiver of all sinners, Hey Krishan, please do not look at my weaknesses, Please give me darshan just like you gave me food." In this way, he continued to sing praises of the Lord and continued to consider himself to be the lowest.

31.4 Divine Voice

Hiding in a corner, Krishan ji said "Hey Mai Das, You are my devotee, you have shown tremendous love for me. But listen to your one mistake. Where there is love, ritual or practice should not be confused. If one pays more attention to the ritualistic practices alone which are without love, they become mere rituals. That is why you have lost out. When you went to visit Guru Amar Das Ji in Goindwal, your suspicion drove you to

protect your practice. You did not get Guru Ji's darshan and therefore you abandoned love in order to protect your ritualistic practice. Now, return to Goindwal, and attain Guru Ji's darshan. Be a true devotee and see Guru Ji. Do not have any suspicion and have his darshan with love.

Listening to this, Mai Das, full of regret said, "Yes, I have done a big mistake but how will I get his darshan. Guru Ji is the creator of all and knows everything. Adhering to mere ritualistic practices made me to be doubtful. Now, I shall meet Guru Ji with a sincere heart."

31.5 Quest for Guru Ji's Darshan⁶⁵

Mai Das was extremely anxious to have Guru Ji's darshan. He started walking very fast towards the town of Goindwal. After walking for some time he was exhausted. He rested during the night and traveled during the day. On the way he meditated on Lord Krishan Bhagwan but his concentration was focussed on Guru Amar Das ji, who was the physical form of Almighty himself. He thought to himself, "I hope Guru Ji will appear in his beautiful, graceful and praiseworthy self with four (4) arms and garlands. I have great desire to see him in that form."

He finally reached Goindwal after traveling for many days. He went to the community kitchen to have some food and then went to meet Guru Ji. He saw Guru Ji exactly the way he had desired to see him.

Guru Ji had changed his form. He had a big body, long hands, a crown on the head and his face was shining like the sun. He had a sharp nose and bright eyes. The forehead was wide and his lips were red. He wore ear-rings that were hanging down his cheeks and looking beautiful. His curly hair fell gracefully on the shoulders. His yellow robe swayed slowly as the wind blew. His feet were well structured and full of grace. People who touched his holy feet were enlightened and filled with bliss. His nails were beautiful. The ornaments he wore were very beautiful. His waist was like that of a lion and he wore a belt. The face glowed like the moon. He was holding a 'trishul' and a lotus flower in two hands. The other two hands were holding a shell and a wheel. The sweet scent of sandalwood was emanating from him. There was so much beauty radiating from him that millions of suns and moons could not equal it. He was the reincarnation of God and had the power to confer bliss on everyone.

Seeing such beauty Mayi Das was totally bewildered and at a lost for words. He closed his eyes and saw the same vision in his mind's eye. He kept his eyes shut for some time and continued admiring the image. Sometime later when he finally opened his eyes, he

⁶⁵ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 53) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

saw Guru Ji back in his normal form. He had changed his form to fulfill Mai Das's desire to see him in Lord Krishan's form.

31.6 The Divine Realisation

Guru Ji called Mai Das to come close to him. He came and prostrated respectfully before Guru Ji and was blessed. Mai Das's heart was filled with love for Guru Ji and he started praising him, "You are great. You have liberated many souls in this period of Kalyug. You are merciful to the poor. My salutations to you! You are the creator of the world. You have no beginning and no end. You are like the great ocean whose depth cannot be measured. Sorrow does not touch you. You have created the fourteen worlds and started the world drama. You exist in everyone and yet your presence cannot be seen. Everything is an extension of you. You are the root and the whole universe are your branches. You create beings, sustain them and later destroy them. No one knows your limits except yourself. You have created five (5) sense organs from the five (5) elements. Everything on the earth is your creation. Whoever is blessed by you loses his arrogance and becomes your ardent follower. He accepts everything in his life as your blessing and is always happy. All these affairs are recorded by you.

Mai Das continued, "You are an ocean of mercy, ocean of knowledge, king of kings and there is no one like you. In this period of Kalyug, you have taken a human form and your powers are not visible to people. You are the third Guru of the Sikhs and you have saved many people. People who do selfless service are blessed by you. You have started a new tradition in this world and anyone who follows it have been liberated from their difficulties. Oh great Lord, may you always be victorious! Please have mercy on me and save me! Make me the dust of your feet so that I can always have your darshan and get rid of all my misconceptions accumulated during my previous births."

Guru Ji smiled at him and said, "Mai Das, stay here with me. I will introduce you to your Mentor after the next eight days. Meanwhile stay in Goindwal and mingle with Sikhs in the sanggat. You will be blessed with the vision of Almighty when you have achieved a desire less state."

Mai Das obeyed Guru Ji's hukam with folded hands, having got rid of all his previous doubts.

32. BHAJ MANEK CHAND ⁶⁶

The Sikhs in Goindwal were busy digging a huge well (Boali Sahib) under Guru Ji's instructions. Everyone participated in this service so that the task could be completed. The work was carried on daily and finally they reached the water level. But to their dismay, they found that the soil at the water level was very hard, like a rock. They tried their best to break the huge boulders but were unsuccessful. They tried many times but failed in their attempts. Finally they decided to discuss the problem with Guru Ji.

32.1 Releasing Water in Boali Sahib

Guru Ji listened to their problem and then called upon a Sikh by the name of Manek Chand. He was a khatri by birth and had a very strong solid physique. His profession was to break rocks and stones. Guru Ji said to him, "Manek Chand, take this hammer and go and break the boulders in the well". Manek Chand came forward and prostrated at Guru Ji's feet to receive his blessings. Guru Ji patted him on his back after which he went immediately to complete the task given to him. He hit the boulder with such great force that it broke straight away causing a great gush of water to fill the well. The force of flowing water caused Manek Chand to lose his balance and he fell in the water. Manek Chand couldn't be seen anymore and everyone thought that he had drowned in the strong currents of water. They came quickly to Guru Ji and related what happened at the well.

Guru Ji told them, "Manek Chand is a precious ruby. He is not dead. Bring him to me." The Sikhs brought Manek Chand's body and placed it near Guru Ji. Guru Ji touched Manek Chand's forehead with his right leg toe. Manek Chand sat up and it looked as though he had just awakened from his sleep. Guru Ji then touched his head. The darkness of ignorance was dispelled from his mind and he was enlightened with ultimate knowledge. He was blessed with spiritual powers and was given a new name by Guru Ji. His new name was 'Jivrah'.

32.2 Appointed as Mentor

Guru Ji called Mai Das and said, "I have appointed Manek Chand as your Mentor. Please show love and respect for him. He will guide you with Gurmantar and make you a Gurmukh." Guru Ji gave him a scarf made of wool and said, "Remain in True Congregation and always join the company of Sikhs and meditate on Almighty's Name. From today you will be called a Bhagat. All your difficulties will be destroyed. Now

⁶⁶ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 53) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

proceed to your district and preach others to enlighten them to meditate on Almighty Name (Satnam)”.

Mai Das was extremely happy to hear Guru Ji's advice. He prostrated in front of Manek Chand and accepted him as his Mentor. Both of them then prostrated in front of Guru Ji to receive his blessings. Both of them were blessed by Guru Ji. They expressed their gratitude to Guru Ji for destroying all their sins. Worldly happiness and salvation are both in Guru Ji's hands and to whosoever he pleases, it is given to them.

32.3 Preaching the True Way of Life

Later both of them returned to their homes. They made great efforts to educate people and teach them to meditate on Satnam and also to become gursikhs. People started having faith on them because their desire and wishes were fulfilled. Whatever they spoke came to pass.

Every first day of the month both Mai Das and Manek Chand came for Guru Ji's darshan and obtained his blessings after which they returned to continue with the task given to them with great commitment. They received a lot of praises from people during their life time and after death they attained salvation.

Meanwhile Guru Ji continued to bless many people and made them Gursikhs. Guru Ji being the physical form of Almighty himself was an ocean of unconditional love. Whosoever came to him was blessed with peace and bliss.

33. KING AKBAR'S FAITH IN GURU JI ⁶⁷

When Akbar was waging war against the Rajputs, he could not conquer the Fort of Chitor. He then sent his messenger to deliver his plea to Guru Amar Das Ji and said "I have done massive service of the Pirs and Fakirs and they have always been pleased and granted me my wish but I can't seem to concur the Fort of Chitor. That is why I have come to with clapsed hands."

Guru Ji replied "You will conquer the Fort once the digging at the Boali reaches the water bed (ie when the water comes out)." Akbar's messenger remained there until the water bed surfaced and noted that the Fort was conquered at that point. The messenger took note of the time and date of the event and returned to King Akbar; only to find out that the Fort had been conquered at exactly the same time. Discovering this, Akbar was very pleased and felt the urgent need to meet Guru Ji. He praised Guru Ji to everyone "Guru Nanak is the Almighty himself, there is no doubt about it. He protects his devotees at all times. He is beyond the religious boundaries; He is responsible for the salvation of many Hindus and Muslims. I shall go to Goindwal to meet Him. "

⁶⁷ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 54) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

34. GANGU SHAH BESI KHETRI ⁶⁸

There lived a Khetri from Besi sect by the name of Gangu Shah, who was a businessman. He had invested huge capital to run his business daily. He worked very intelligently and continued to expand his wealth. One day, he made massive losses. No one sympathised with him. Even those who borrowed his money, refused to return his money. He was very saddened by this. He was very dissatisfied with his friends and relatives, who were also his business associates. When he was totally broke, he heard the praises of Guru Amar Das Ji being sung. Longing for Guru Ji, he thought “I shall get rid of my pain by seeking support from Guru Ji.”

34.1 In Guruji's Presence

With this thought, he came to see Guru Ji. Before meeting Guru Ji, he had his langgar. And then, with love, he approached Guru Ji and felt very happy after seeing Guru Ji. “Please protect me, protect me” he said and placed his forehead on the feet of Guru Ji.

When he sat next to Guru Ji, Guru Ji said “Hey, Gangu, how are you”. Gangu then shared all his sorrows with Guru Ji, “Hey, Prabhuji, I have made a great loss in my business.” Guru Ji replied “Now go to Delhi, build a house there and perform selfless service (niskaam sewa) of the people there without any discrimination. You shall attain a lot of wealth, don't worry.”

34.2 Back in Business

Listening to Guru Ji, he left for Delhi and built a house. Coincidentally, a Mughal who had with him hundreds of thousands of gold coins, was wondering around. He wanted to remit the coins and withdraw in Lahore, for which he had asked around the whole of Delhi. Nobody was prepared to grant him the remittance for such a large amount as those days money was transferred using the available physical transportation and were often robbed. As he was wondering around, he approached Gangu's house and said “I would like to transfer this amount of gold coins to Lahore, therefore can you produce a cheque for this amount?”. At this point, Gangu recalled Guru Ji's words “You shall reap profits.” He replied “I shall issue you a cheque for the remittance of the required amount to you immediately”, he took all the coins from the Mughal. He then wrote down a cheque, which the Mughal took with him to Lahore.

Gangu delivered the coins immediately to Lahore. When the Mughal reached Lahore, he requested from the respective banker, “Take this cheque from me and let me have the

⁶⁸ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 54) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

gold coins. The banker immediately delivered the coins which were delivered to him and handed it over to the Mughal. The Mughal was very pleased and left with the coins. With this, Gangu's business started to flourish again and people started to trust him. People of the country started recognising him as a wealthy individual, as he could produce a darshani hundi worth 1 lakh.

34.3 A Call for Sewa

Many years passed. A poor Brahmin came to see Guru Ji and said "Guru Ji, I have a daughter at home who is not married. I have come to you, with a hope to get some money for my daughter's marriage from you. Debt and a strong enemy can cause pain but an unmarried daughter in the house causes more pain." Guru Ji then wrote a letter to Gangu Shah which said "Please donate 50 rupees to this Brahmin". The Brahmin took this letter to Gangu Shah. Upon reaching Delhi, when he handed over Guru Ji's letter to Gangu Shah, Gangu was very surprised. He kept quiet and did not give any money to the Brahmin. Saddened, the Brahmin returned home."

The Brahmin then approached Guru Ji again. Knowing what had happened, Guru Ji said "Gangu has become selfish due to his abundant wealth." Guru Ji contemplated that "Maya always behaves this way, it disorientates the mind to the extent that the owner even forgets his Guru. This greed causes a lot of pain later. Greed makes one disillusioned." Guru Ji then gave money to the Brahmin, who then proceeded to get his daughter married.

34.4 In Guru Ji's Service

From that day onwards, Gangu's wealth started to dwindle until it finally finished. Very soon, he became very poor and understood where he had gone wrong. "I had turned away from my Guru and that is why I lost all my wealth. Without Guru Ji, nobody can protect me. It is only proper for me that I become Guru Ji's sewak. I shall perform his sewa in every way. I shall sweep the floor, carry buckets of water on my head and perform all types of sewa". He then left Delhi and headed towards Guru Ji's place.

At that time, the Boali was under construction and he participated in the construction Boali Sahib as a hard labourer. Knowing this, Guru Ji still did not call him and did not say anything to him. Gangu had few clothes on him and he carried bricks on his back all the time to perform sewa. He left all his earlier ways and even ignored his daily meals. He was too engrossed in the selfless service until he lost himself in the love for Guru Ji. He stopped talking to others and neither did he pay any attention to the conversation of others. As his sewa progressed, his mind and conscience become engrossed in God.

34.5 The Ever Forgiving Guru

His undivided love and dedication for God grew so strongly, that Guru Ji could no longer keep away from him. Guru Ji then called him, smiled and said “Hey, Gangu come here, all your sorrows have come to an end.” Gangu immediately held Guru Ji’s feet and placed his forehead on them. He then stood in front of Guru Ji with his hands clasped and said “Engrossed in maya, I had turned away from you. Please accept me as your own and forgive me. Keep me in the sanctuary of your feet”. Listening to this, Guru Ji called upon him and blessed him with new clothes and placed his palm on Gangu’s forehead. Guru Ji then asked him to utter Almighty’s Name (Satnam) and said “You are now blessed with all the wordly wealth, salvation, abundance of food and miraculous power by Guru Nanak’s house. Now return to your hometown and practice the Guru’s way of life. Preach the same to the others as well. He bowed to Guru Ji before departing. His mind remained attached to Guru Ji. He continued to praise Guru Ji and commenced true congregations (sat-sanggat) in his hometown. His uttered words would come true and many became Sikhs through his company (sanggat).

35. THE OBEDIENT WIFE OF KABUL ⁶⁹

35.1 Service for Boali Sahib

The Sikhs were performing their respective tasks in constructing Boali Sahib with lots of love. Whoever were blessed by Guru Ji, would immediately attain enlightenment. The tasks included processing of the bricks and transporting them on their heads. None of the Sikhs would talk to each other, they were very engrossed in performing as much sewa as possible. They would take the bricks to the skilled workers for the construction of the wall in the well.

As they continued their service (sewa), Guru Ji continued to fulfil each and every servant's (sewaks) wishes.

35.2 Obedient Wife from Kabul

There was one Sikh who lived in Kabul. His wife was very obedient to him. She would love him all day long and never thought of another man. Due to her obedience, she attained the ability to perform miraculous power. She could appear at any place she wished in a split second. She would travel thousands of miles in a second. She had other powers too. When she found out about the on-going construction of Boali Sahib, she rushed to participate and be apart of the labour force. She thought to herself that "By doing a little sewa, the rewards are great. Who would ever want to miss the chance of doing such great sewa?" she said.

She would travel from Kabul in the morning and would perform selfless service (sewa) the whole day. She would dig sand and carry it on her head. She would also transport the bricks with much love and enthusiasm. She would not speak with anyone and would always keep her mind attached to the feet of Guru Ji.

At night, she would travel back to Kabul to cook for the family. She would return for sewa the next morning. She would continuously do simran while performing sewa. Seeing her, the Sikhs were astonished and they knew nothing about her. They said "While doing sewa, she moved her hands in a rythm as if she was rocking a cradle. Where did she come from?" They could not even ask her about it as she would be engrossed in sewa with so much of love.

They would think "She is so hardworking; she continues to do sewa diligently." Many days passed and the Sikh sangat was puzzled. They got together and approached Guru Ji and asked "Dear Prabhu Ji, a lady comes here everyday; she does sewa with all of us. In the evenings, she would disappear without any clue. In the mornings, she appears again

⁶⁹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 55) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

in front of us and does sewa like the others. Also, while doing sewa, she moves her hand in and out. We are totally confused and do not understand. We want to know from you about her. Who is this? Where does she come from? How does she return home and how does she appear and disappear. Please tell us and remove our doubt”.

35.3 The Returns of Selfless Sewa

Guru Ji replied “In Kabul, I have a Sikh. She is his wife and she loves him very much. She is always impatient to perform Guru Ji’s service. She treats her husband equal to God and abides by his every wish. She has never thought of any other man. She always maintains her concentration in the Almighty and does not talk to anyone. Her husband has educated her about Guru’s sewa. Because of the sewa, she has attained powers with which she can be present at whatever location she wishes. In the morning she comes for sewa and in the evening she returns home to Kabul.

When leaving in the morning, she leaves her son in the cradle. While doing sewa in Boali, she is aware of her child’s well being and continues to rock his cradle. While being here she continues to attend to her child with love. At the same time, she also carries out the sewa with love. At night, she returns home to take care of her household chores and meets her son and husband and attains happiness. For a wife, there is no greater faith than to be obedient to her husband, with which she can gain great powers. Before this, there was another obedient wife, who maintained darkness for 10 days. She had so much of power that she could ensure that the sun did not rise for 10 days.”

35.4 An Ancient Story

Listening to this, the sanggat asked “Please tell us about this katha”. Guru Ji replied “There was one Rishi who was known as Mandav. He was the son of Mand. He was meditating in the jungle when some thieves looted the King’s palace. While running away with their loot, they saw Mandav meditating in the jungle. Considering that he is a rikhi, they left a very valuable necklace with Mandav. The thieves went home and the rikhi continued his meditation. During this time, the caretakers of the King passed by. When they saw the necklace with the Rikhi, they immediately arrested him. He tried to explain to them that he had been meditating but they would not listen. They then tried to hang him on a gallows but due to his meditation, he did not die. He was very angry with Dharamraj and said “Hey, you foolish Dharamraj, you are doing injustice. Without any sin, you are trying to execute me. I shall curse you. I meditated all my life and lived without any sin, you have hanged me.

Dharamraj then replied “You are reaping the reward of your earlier deeds (karma). When you were a child, you did the same to an insect. That is why you have been given this punishment. The Rikhi then replied “Is this fair, childhood is an age where we have no control over our thoughts. How can one be punished for acts committed during one’s

childhood? From today, please change your practice. Like I say, a child has no realisation at such an early age. That is why one should not be punished for an act committed during childhood". It is believed from that time onwards an exception for children has been granted.

While Mandav was being hung, an obedient wife who was carrying her crippled husband on her head passed Mandav and did not look at him. Her husband accidentally hit his gallows (hanging structure). This happened as it was very dark. When her husband hit Mandav, Mandav was very annoyed. Immediately, he cursed the obedient wife "When the sun rises, your husband, whom you are carrying on your head shall die."

The wife, whose name was Sateewaty, was very saddened by the curse and said "My husband touched you without us realising it. If indeed my husband shall die upon sun rise, then the sun will not rise at all. If you can then give life to my dead husband, only he would be able to bring back the sun to this world"

As she had uttered, the sun did not rise and 10 days passed without it. All deities then met and prayed to Almighty to bless life to her husband.

35.5 The Blessings

Therefore, an obedient wife has many powers, with which she can be present everywhere. That is why she could travel to Kabul and return immediately. For one, she is an obedient wife and on top of that, she does a lot of sewa. Those who perform meditation while living a family life, there is no one like them."

After listening to Guru Ji, the sanggat said "You are great, the giver of all powers". Then Guru Ji, called the obedient wife and said "You and your husband shall attain ultimate knowledge of the real-self and in the end, you shall both be one with me".

In her remembrance a bazaar is named after her name in Amritsar which is called Mai Sewan Bazaar.

36. GURU'S BLESSING IN GOINDWAL⁷⁰

36.1 Service to Mankind

As a means of service to mankind (par-upkar), Guru Ji introduced the concept of selfless service (sewa) by organising the construction of first ever Boali Sahib. Whoever participated in the completion of the Boali Sahib and performed sewa with love, Guru Ji immediately blessed them. Guru Ji's kingdom was the centre for salvation. Whoever participated in construction sincerely, would be rewarded with mukti (salvation). Guru Ji is similar to the 'Parjaat' (a tree believed to be in the heaven which fulfills any wish made under it).



Like the radius of the tree, true congregation (sat-sanghat) surrounds him and like the leaves of the tree, his great attributes are manifested. And the ultimate knowledge (brahm gyan) of real-self is pleasing just like the fruit of a tree. The service (sewa) of Guru Ji's feet is equivalent to the emergence of a seed in the fruit. The skin which covers the fruit is like the meditation (bhagti) which conceals the seed. The various locations where Sikh religion is being spread is represented by the tree's branches. The consideration of truth and false is represented by the flowers, which all devotees crave for.

⁷⁰ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 56) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

The disciples (Sikhs) who comes to plead before Guru Ji, return with their wishes fulfilled in an instant. Only those who were blessed would be able to appreciate and love Guru Ji. Guru Ji is the Giver to all and owner of limitless miracles. Whoever recognises and acknowledges this fact, would attain salvation. Guru Ji was very sympathetic and therefore, could never see others in pain and would always endeavour to free them from their misery. How can I⁷¹ describe his greatness, there is too much to describe while my comprehension is limited. I should only sit and pray in his feet.

The existence of those who refused the sewa of such a Guru, is worthless. Guru Ji is able to bless one in a split second and destroy the pain of millions of birth. Even with little sewa, Guru Ji was very much pleased and provides the sewadars a higher seat than of the deities. Guru Ji says “In the future when the Sikhs who visited Boali Sahib, their love will be known to me. They would attain the highest level of salvation. This Boali Sahib is created for them, which will provide service to the entire mankind.”

Such was the grace of Guru Amar Das Ji whose intentions in the benefit of mankind extend beyond the boundary of time. Those who do not adhere to such a Guru, will be the weakest of all.

36.2 Guru Ji's Community Kitchen (Langgar)

Day and night Sikhs would crowd the Boali and have their langgar there. Many Sikhs prepared langgar, some brought along rice and some lentils for preparation of food in community kitchen (langgar). They do not keep the excess food (langgar) at night for the next morning. They would only prepare enough for everyone to eat without any discrimination. Food (Langgar) is prepared for thousands of people. Guru Ji is usually served with food (langgar) in pangat before everyone else. Afterwards, the sanggat is served with delicious dhal and rice. Many other vegetables are prepared and bread made of atta flour is prepared for all who visits Goindwal.

Food in Guru Ji's community kitchen (langgar) was served from early morning after the completion of the early morning session (Asa Dhi Vaar) until late night. No one was deprived of food and they were served very respectfully until they were entirely satisfied. Food was served to the needy and for those who participated in the construction of Boali Sahib. Everyone sat on the floor in rows (panggat) to have their langgar including Guru Ji himself.

36.3 Rama Ji and Ram Das Ji

Guru Ji had two daughters Bibi Dhani Ji and Bibi Bhani Ji who were very fortunate (blessed), full of bhagti (meditation) and intelligent. Their husbands were Rama and Ram

⁷¹ Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Das Ji respectively. They loved Guru Ji very much as their father-in-law and their Guru. They both participated in the construction of the Boali Sahib and also encouraged others to participate. In the evenings, Ram Das Ji would collect all the baskets used in transporting soil and place them in one location. The next morning, he would redistribute the baskets to the crowd that came forward for the voluntary service. In the same way, he would also take care of the special tools belonging to the skilled workers. With lots of love and commitment, he would perform selfless service of Guru Ji. In the same way, Rama Ji, also performed sewa.

They would never procrastinate the sewa and would encourage others to participate. Guru Ji loved his son-in-laws immensely and embraced them in his Heart as his devoted disciples. The crowd of Sikhs observed them and their commitment in performing selfless sewa, they would make assumption based on their observations. Some would say, "Rama Ji is loved more by Guru Ji. He would take over the Guru's throne. He is always abiding Guru Ji's orders and is not lazy to perform sewa." Other Sikhs would say "Ram Das Ji shall be the next Guru, Guru Ji is very happy with him because he is very humble."

They would never expect gratitude from others and continued to perform continuous sewa all day long. Guru Ji was very pleased with them.

Other than the older Sikhs, who knew Guru Ji dearly, the rest of the Sikhs continued to speculate about his two son-in-laws. The older Sikhs would say "They are humble, they love everyone the same, they love Guru Ji and trust him undividedly, they have all positive traits, with which Guru Ji is fully pleased. We see all these traits in Ram Das Ji. That is why, he will eventually be Guru. We are considering the happiness of Guru Ji, he has always loved Ram Das Ji more."

36.4 A Question by Sikhs

One day, a big crowd of the Sikhs came for the darshan (sight) of Guru Ji. There were some leaders amongst them who with clasped hands, asked Guru Ji "You are forever full of good traits. You are always with your sewaks. Guru Nanak Dev Ji chose a sewak over his own children as the next Guru. Similarly, Guru Angad Dev Ji chose you (in view of your immense sewa) over his own children. You have also regarded your sewaks similarly. Your two sons-in-laws are also your greatest sewaks. Both do sewa immensely and are always drenched in sewa. They perform selfless sewa of the sanggat and they participate actively in the construction of Boali Sahib with full dedication. In every way, they are equal as you cast the same blessings on everyone. We are always speculating, as both appear the same to us. You have blessed both and treat them the same. But sometimes, we have observed that you love Ram Das Ji more and he too does a lot of sewa, day and night. Between the two, who is greater and more pleasing to you? How will the Sikhs know of your views and love for the two? Please bless with your response to all this question in order to respite all the speculations. Please let us have your views.

At this point, Guru Ji, who knew every thought of his Sikhs, and who always wished to bless happiness to his Sikhs, prepared to provide the answer.

37. A TEST OF ENDURANCE⁷²

37.1 Guru's Response

Guru Ji answered "There is a prevailing rule in this world and salvation can only be attained by conforming to this rule (maryada), however the state of love uplifts a person far beyond the circle of rules. The Almighty dwells within a person who is completely drenched in love and is absorbed in the Almighty, whoever continues to enhance this love consistently. Without love, there is little benefit in simran and sewa, please know this. Let me put them on a test to judge their love. The Almighty is attained only through immense love. I shall now test for you, who among this two has more love for Almighty. Please do not inform them about this, keep this a secret. I shall free you of your speculation as to who will be my successor."

37.2 The First Day

Guru Ji then called Rama and Ram Das Ji to see him and Guru Ji walked along with them to the Boali. Guru Ji held a stick to assist his weak and aged body to walk. Standing at a suitable location, he pointed out to Rama "Please make a place for me to sit." Again, standing at another location, he looked at Ram Das Ji and requested "Please make a place for me to sit here."

He then said, "Please construct the bench like this. I shall sit on the bench constructed by Ram Das Ji in the morning and in the evenings on the bench made by Rama Ji". After explaining the task, Guru Ji left. Both of them started to construct the bench and were occupied with it the whole day. In the evening Guru Ji returned. He first saw the bench which was built by Rama and said "This is not constructed properly; it doesn't look good for sitting. All your efforts have gone to waste. Even the surface of the bench is rough. Quickly demolish this and do not delay. Listen to me carefully. Please construct one with a smooth surface and make sure it is a good bench." Rama was disappointed to hear Guru Ji's comments and defended himself "I have built it according to your specifications. Why do you not like it? It is very well made as a sitting piece. Sikhs will be able to do your darshan upfront while you sit here. I am not at fault in this, I have built it according to your instructions. I have strived to build the bench well, just like you specified". Rama continued to insist but Guru Ji kept to his comments. Guru Ji drew a line with his stick and said "Pls reconstruct it in this fashion." Guru Ji then left and proceeded to the other end where Ram Das Ji was waiting.

⁷² Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 57) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Ram Das Ji bowed to Guru Ji's feet and stood. Guru Ji inspected his bench and said "You have failed to understand my instruction. The bench is not fit for my sitting, please demolish it." After listening to Guru Ji, Ram Das quickly demolished the bench and humbly said "Please forgive me for this mistake. I am of little intelligence and that is why I could not understand your instruction. Hey, Guru Ji, please explain to me once again." Again Guru Ji drew a line on the ground with his stick and explained.

"Both of you, please reconstruct the benches".

37.3 The Second Day

The next morning, both Rama and Ram Das Ji, started to build the benches afresh, as instructed by Guru Ji. Using bricks and mud, the two occupied themselves with the task. The next day, Guru Ji, proceeded to Boali in the evening where Rama's bench was built. After inspecting the bench, Guru Ji said "You have not done it well, not like I wanted it to be. Demolish it and reconstruct a new one. Without using your intelligence, you are wasting your effort." Listening to this, Rama thought to himself, "I have corrected myself and constructed this well. I have made the bench exactly as you wanted it. This fits well as a beautiful sitting place. Others seem to praise it. How can I demolish this? How can I construct one which is better than this one? Guru Ji insisted that a new one must be built and said "Use your skill and intelligence to construct the bench."

Moving on to Ram Das Ji, Guru Ji inspected the bench and said "This is not constructed properly as well. I am not pleased with it. Demolish this and build a new one. It seem that you did not understood my instructions". Ram Das Ji thought and said "Your intelligence is way beyond mind. Please bless me. Due to my lack of intelligence, I have again made a mistake, please forgive me this time. Pls give me your instructions again and I shall complete it accordingly". Guru explained again with the aide of his stick.

37.4 The Third Day

The next morning, both Rama and Ram Das Ji, started to build the benches afresh, using the best of their intelligence. The third day, Guru Ji, came again. After inspecting Rama's bench, Guru Ji said "Hey Rama, you have not followed my requirements and specifications. I don't like it at all. I have explained to you many times but you have not been able interpret my instruction properly." Listening to this, Rama thought to himself "What is wrong, I dont understand. Guru Ji is old now and he is unable to remember what he had said earlier". After a while Rama said "I have constructed the bench according to your specification and used my best ability to do it". I have made the bench exactly as you wanted it. This fits well as a beautiful sitting place. Others seem to praise it. How can I demolish this? How can I construct one which is better than this one? Guru Ji insisted that a new one must be built and said "Use your intelligence to construct the bench." Rama Ji refused to demolish the bench and build another one.

Guru Ji then approached Ram Das ji and said “Again, this is not well done, I have told you many time, but you cannot understand. It is not done like the one I illustrated to you. You have wasted your effort in construting the bench”.

Ram Dasji felt very bad for himself and lowered himself and grabbed Guru Ji’s feet “I am without any knowledge and always make mistakes. You are ever forgiving and that is why you have repeatedly forgiven me despite my repeated mistakes. I am such a fool. I can only comprehend things based on my limited intelligence. Without you I am nothing. Please tell me how can I construct this properly. I am very weak and am unable to understand your instructions.” He then wrapped a piece of cloth (sign of being a servant) around his neck and said “Hey Prabhu, please forgive me”.

37.5 Conclusion

All the Sikhs who were observing this, were very impressed by Ram Das Ji’s humbleness as a true disciple. Guru Ji was also fully pleased and thought that Ram Dasji is fit to be made the next Guru. Guru Ji said “I am pleased with his sewa. He has never thought of himself. Drenched in meditation of love day and night, his mind has been completely purified.” With this, the doubts of the Sikhs were cleared and they then considered Ram Das Ji as the deserving beneficiary of Guruship. Guru Ji then went home and annouced “Ram Das Ji is a great person, many will receive salvation in his company. I have nothing to give him as he has attained the greatest status from his sewa”.

38. THE LIBERATOR⁷³

38.1 Greatness of Boali Sahib

In Guru's darbar a treasure has been revealed. Guru Ji is showering the sanggat with four boons (Dharam, Arth, Kaam & Mokhs i.e Faith, Wealth, Fulfillment of wishes & Salvation) in an instant. The shrine with the greatest deed has been created. Whoever does sewa in Boali Sahib becomes blessed. This shrine has great benefits, whoever takes bath in it achieves great pleasures.

The Boali Sahib is filled with holy water that is so pure, clean and beautiful. In it, eighty four steps have been constructed. When the merciful Guru Ji was counting the number of steps, he said, "When a Sikh with great love visits Boali Sahib, takes a bath in the holy shrine and who with full concentration recites a Japji Sahib on each step, will be saved from the death and birth cycle of 8.4 million incarnations". If one takes bath in the holy Boali Sahib with some other wishes, will be fulfilled as well.

This Boali Sahib cleanses sins; its holy water is very pure. It gives happiness to all the visitors. By drinking the holy water ones mind becomes pure. One, who takes a bath, donates and attains happiness after reciting gurbani, will receive the gift of salvation, with that they will be saved from the noose of death.

Everybody is enjoying Boali Sahib, singing the praises of Guru Ji, "Great is the Guru who has done this good deed on us, whoever comes under his shelter is saved".

38.2 SANT SIDHARAN

Once there was an carpenter who did a lot of sewa. He carved slabs of wood to make steps and he did all sort of sewa that he could find. In order to reach the holy water in the Boli Sahib, he did the sewa of building seven steps, which made it easier to obtain the holy water for drinking or bathing purposes.

Observing the selfless sewa by the carpenter, Guru Ji was very pleased. Guru Ji summoned for him. The lucky carpenter came to Guru Ji and bowed his head at Guru Ji's feet. Guru Ji placed his hand on the man's forehead and blessed him with Satguru mantra. Guru Ji named him Sant Sidharan. His heart was filled with the divine knowledge.

Guru Ji told him, 'Your sewa has been accepted; now return to your village, meditated and be happy. The carpenter being so blessed agreed immediately. Upon returning to his home, he did a lot of meditation and attained great peace.

⁷³ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 58) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

38.3 A Childhood Friend

Once there was a group of people who were on their way to take bath in the Ganga river. On their way to the Ganga River they came across the place where Guru Amar Das Ji lived. The group rested in Goindwal. One of the group members was a childhood friend of Guru Ji. He came to meet Guru Amar Das Ji. Giving respect to Guru Ji he bowed his head. At that time Guru Ji was at Boali Sahib. With much love Guru Ji asked him, how he was getting on. The man was a very kind person, Guru Ji said to him “Why have you troubled yourself by traveling so far, with so much difficulty you are going to cover long distance. Hey loved one, I am only telling you this for your own good that this Boali Sahib contains the Ganga water, have faith and without any doubts consider this as Ganga water. Take a bath and whatever wishes you have will be fulfilled without any doubts, then go home and sing the praises of Almighty”.

The kind man listened to Guru Ji and took a dip in Boali Sahib, but he had a doubt in his mind that how could this Well be equivalent to Ganga river?

After sitting there for some time, he informed Guru Ji, “Hey merciful Guru Ji! From home I came in a group and with lots of excitement I wanted to take a bath in the Ganga River. I intend to visit Hardwar with the group and complete the ritual by taking dip in the Ganga river. I have to go there for my ancestors, after that I shall return to Goindwal.

When Guru Ji saw that he was doubtful, Guru Ji said, “You may proceed with your plans to go to Hardwar, please bring along some water from the Ganga River for me in this bowl”. After getting permission and the bowl from Guru Ji he left and reached the banks of the Ganga River where he took a dip to complete the ritualistic task for his ancestors.

Before he returned, he remembered Guru Ji’s request. He held the bowl in his hand and went into the Ganga river. When he dipped himself in the river the bowl dropped from his hand. He could not find it, he tried very hard but failed. All his group members left, but he still could not find the bowl. He caught up with his group but he could not bring back the Ganga water. After much traveling he finally reached Goindwal.

After bowing his head before Guru Ji he said very sadly, “I could not fulfil the sewa that was given to me. You requested for the Ganga water but I came back empty handed. I had the bowl in my hand but when I went down into the Ganga river the bowl slipped from my hand and dropped into the river. I could not find it; I tried very hard looking for it but could not find it. I consider this to be my bad luck”

After listening, Guru Ji said, “ Don’t worry, the bowl has reached me. The waves of the Ganga river have brought the bowl here, if you don’t believe me, you can go and look in the Boali Sahib. From there you can take out the bowl and fill it with the Ganga water.

After listening to Guru Ji’s pleasing words, he went into Boali Sahib, he saw the clear and pure water of the Boali Sahib. With his own eyes he saw the bowl there. After seeing

this miracle he was very surprised. He came out of Boali Sahib and quickly fell on Guru Ji's feet. He said, "Guru Ji I have been ignorant, I did not see your greatness, you have brought Ganga into Boali Sahib. I did not listen to you, Dear Guru Ji, I have disobeyed your orders, please forgive me". After listening to him, Guru Ji gave him the blessing of the true Almighty's Name, all his troubles and worries were removed and he was blessed with happiness.

38.4 A YOGI

One day as Guru Ji was sitting, a Sidh Yogi came, he prostrated before Guru Ji and said, "From the moment the Guruship was given to you, I have been longing for your darshan. Now finally I have been fortunate enough to have your darshan. I have been meditating for a long time through which I have attained magical power to control peoples minds. But even with such super-natural powers I failed to attain peace of mind, although I have many followers who believe in me. After much pondering, I have come to a conclusion that after striving through so much penance to attained this ability, I have not obtained any happiness".

The Yogi continued, "Dear Lord of happiness, please keep me in your refuge, bless me so that I am able to attain peace. I have been longing for peace from a very long time, please fulfil my wishes".

Guru Ji considered him to be his devotee and said to him, "Leave this physical body and return (reborn) in another body, than come to me and I shall bless you with peace and happiness".

After listening to Guru Ji's response the Yogi left. Feeling so much of love for Guru Ji, and a detached state of mind from the world, the Yogi left his body on his own wish through the tenth door (Dasam Dwar).

The Yogi's wish was fulfilled as he was blessed to be born in Guru Ji's family in his next life.

39. GURU JI'S FAMILY ⁷⁴

Guru Amar Das Ji had two sons. The elder son was Baba Mohan Ji and the younger son was Baba Mohri Ji. Baba Mohan Ji remained perpetually immersed in love with Guru Ji, he practised honest and truthful living. Mohan Ji always stayed calm with his knowledge and meditation. He never had any negative thoughts in his mind. He preferred to stay in isolation and never liked talking or speaking to anyone. He had all the good virtues in him thus he was very calm all the time.

39.1 Baba Arthmal Ji

Guru Ji's second son was Baba Mohri Ji who was very intelligent. He was more into worldly and family affairs. His first son's name was Arthmal. He was a great devotee and very lucky to be born in Guru Ji's family.

39.2 The Birth of Yogi (Baba Anand Ji)

The Yogi who came to see Guru Ji, who had performed a lot of bhagti (meditation) and therefore with Guru Ji's blessings, he was born in Guru Ji's house.

Guru Ji the knower of all, when heard about the news of the new born grandson, told Belu Ji "The new born baby boy who took birth as Mohri Ji's son, he who fulfilled his desires by getting born here, please bring him to me". Upon listening to Guru Ji he went and informed Baba Mohri Ji about Guru Ji's request. Belu Ji wrapped the child in a cloth and took him in his hands and slowly walked towards Guru Ji. Everyone said that the child was very lucky. Guru Ji carried the child and put him on his laps while the family was very happy in receiving a new family member.

39.3 The Recitation of Anand Sahib

Guru Ji then said to Bhai Belu Ji, "In previous life this baby was very highly spiritual saint who came back in this human form again, the desire of his heart is to attain the supreme Almighty, as such he is born in our family. Therefore I name him Anand, he will be a great saint and he would obtain all the divine virtues. I will bless him with the knowledge of Almighty's Name and Gurbani for which he took this birth. The title of the Gurbani will also be named Anand, this Gurbani will fulfill the desire of the person who

⁷⁴ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 59) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

reads, listen or contemplates with love and respect. I shall now utter (ucharna) the Gurbani now.”

After telling this to Belu Ji, Guru Ji started composing the well known Gurbani, Anand Sahib. Guru Ji, in complete passion (full love) composed Anand Sahib while his newly born grandson cradled in his lap. Guru Ji composed Anand Sahib until the 38th Pauri.

As the grandson was named Anand, the bani also were named Anand. Guru Ji then handed the child over to Bhai Belu Ji and he took him immediately to Baba Mohri Ji's house. Bhai Belu Ji handed over the child to Baba Mohri Ji's wife. She was very happy to see her son. Upon Bhai Belu Ji's return, Guru Ji said “Belu, now take the small drum (dholki) in your hands, go up the house roof (kothi), while playing a pleasant rhythm and sing the Anand Sahib, which will bless bliss (Anand) to everyone.”

Guru Ji continued, “This bani is full of greatness, whoever listens to this Gurbani (hymn), whatever he/she wishes would be fulfilled. All Sikhs should read this Gurbani everyday. This bani is a source of bhagti and salvation moreover this bani is made for the entire world to read and understand thus to attain salvation. This bani fulfills ones desires, whoever reads it with love, would obtain all the everlasting happiness (bliss)”.

Hearing Guru Ji's orders Bhai Belu Ji took the small drum (dholki) and went up the roof and started singing the Gurbani with a loud melodious voice and who ever heard the Gurbani, instantly developed the desire to meditate.

This Gurbani gives peace of mind, meditation and is full of divine knowledge (Gyan). Guru Ram Das Ji later added one pauri (39th pauri) and Guru Arjan Dev Ji completed Anand Sahib by adding another one more pauri (40th pauri). The Anand Sahib was then completed in 40 pauri. Whoever reads this Gurbani completely (40 Pauri) during the wee hours (Amritvela), shall be connected directly with the supreme Almighty.

39.4 Baba Arjani Ji

After some time, Guru Ji's third grandson was born. His name was Arjani. He was a great bhagat (devotee) of Guru Ji in his previous life. During birth he had not enough blood therefore he was born dead. Baba Mohri Ji's wife weeped over the death of her new born baby and took the child to Guru Ji's presence. She placed the baby's body at Guru Ji's feet while tears were flowing from her eyes. In an instant the baby become alive upon the graceful touch of Guruji's feet and she was overjoyed. After some time the child passed away again and his mother brought the child back again to Guru Ji and did benti to Guru Ji “Maharaj, you are the savior and helper of the world, you are our Guru, please bless me, please bring my dead son back to life.”

Hearing the sadness of his daughter in law, Guru Ji eyes filled with Mercy(Kirpa). The child came back to life again and he was named Arjani. Guru Ji had 3 grandsons who were all Baba Mohri Ji's sons. Guru Ji then said that “Day by day the family shall grow”

hearing this, the family was very happy. This was the description of Baba Mohri Ji's life. Now we shall hear Baba Mohan Ji's katha.

39.5 Baba Mohan Ji

Baba Mohan Ji had no attachment, and he had attained salvation while living. He never had desires and was a true devotee full of peace and a very calm personality. He always sat alone in his house and meditated. His room doors were always closed, as he did not speak to anyone. One day the doors were kept closed and Baba Ji went out for a walk. Guru Ji called upon His Sikhs and asked them to find Baba Mohan Ji and bring him to the house. The Sikhs went on looking for him, but he was not seen anywhere. After some time he appeared in his room and all the Sikhs saw him. Some times only some Sikhs could see him while the others couldn't. Sometimes he would sit without covering his head, eat with his two hands, speak loudly and sometimes he remained completely silent.

Upon observing Baba Mohan Ji's routine and character, Guruji's wife Mata Ramo Ji (Mata Mansa Devi) came to see Guru Ji and said, "Guru Ji, with your kirpa the insane people become wise and even the dead become alive and YOU also fulfills all your Sikhs desires. Mohan was always very wise but now he has become a mastana (one who is totally immersed with innerself and totally isolated from the world). If YOU knew about this earlier then why did you get him married? Our daughter in law is very sad and I feel very regretful, she does not speak neither is she happy, she feels sad when she sees how lucky other women who have children are. She does not wear nice clothes. Looking at her I feel sad too."

Guru Ji then said, "There isn't any difference between me and Mohan. We are one soul in two bodies. Mohan Ji is a complete pure soul. You say my daughter in law is an orphan (anaath), go and tell her to wear beautiful clothes and take her along to Mohan. Ask her to touch Mohan Ji's charan and request humbly. When Mohan Ji sees her then she will be blessed with a son." After listening to Guru Ji, Mata Ji immediately spoke to her daughter-in-law. She took her to Baba Mohan Ji's room, he saw his wife and blessed her.

39.6 Baba Sansram

Later Baba Mohan Ji's wife conceived and gave birth to a son. Guru Ji was informed about the good news and all the family was very happy and they name the child Sansram. He was a great bhagat (devotee) in his previous life. After a few days, Sansram's mother passes away. Guru Ji took care of that child and when he grew up he received Gurmukhi education under Guru Ji's supervision and soon he started to write Gurbani. He wrote all the Gurbani Shabads (hymns) composed by Guru Angad Dev Ji and Guru Amar Das Ji. Sansram while writing and reading Gurbani and staying with Guru Ji, attained ultimate knowledge of spiritual life. Kavi Santokh Singh says, "whoever listens and reads this katha with full attention, his desires would be fulfilled. Those without children, who fall

in love listening and reading this katha of Guru Amar Das Ji, will be blessed with children, and all their desires will be fulfilled.

Bhai Sansram Ji is known as the first writer of Gurbani followed by Bhai Gurdas Ji during Guru Arjan Dev Ji's time and Bhai Mani Singh Ji during Guru Gobind Singh Ji's time.

40. THE FORGIVER⁷⁵

Guru Ji is full of blessings and blesses happiness to everyone without any discrimination. Those unlucky ones who go against Guru Ji will have to pay for their bad deeds. As the sunrise ends the world goes in physical darkness but there are unlucky people who are blinded in ignorance while the sun of knowledge (Guru Ji) is rising high. Such ignorant ones will only obtain sadness. Everyone sings the praises of Guru Ji, after being blessed with his darshan and wishes are granted.

40.1 A Sage (Tapa)

There was a sage (Tapa) living in Goindwal. He could not tolerate hearing the praises of Guru Ji. This Sage (Tapa) was a friend of a Yogi in Khadur Sahib (please refer to Section 7.1). Guru Amar Das Ji gave that Yogi what he deserved as he had insulted Guru Angad Dev Ji.

For no reason, this Tapa went against Guru Amar Das Ji. He talked bad about Guru Ji. All this did not bother Guru Ji because he is the giver of happiness and was always in meditation. Time passed by, Boali Sahib was ready and arrangements were made to open the sarovar for ishnan. All the Sikhs, Workers, Saints and Businessman were invited by Guru Ji for lunch via a written invitation. Everyone accepted Guru Ji's invitation.

But the Tapa rejected the invitation and was burning in jealousy. Guru Ji had Sikhs invited him a few times but this Tapa that was immersed in the world of maya, rejected the invitations repeatedly. Guru Ji the source of religion and destroyer of falsehood, attachments, ego and jealousy and evil, made an announcement, "Whoever comes to the Guru Ji's house and eat in the community kitchen (langgar), will be given one (1) rupee" but when the Tapa did not come, Guru Ji then made the second announced, "Whoever comes to the Guru Ji's house and consumes the langgar, 2 rupee will be given to them" but when the Tapa still did not come, Guru Ji then increased the offer to five (5) rupees and the announcement was made.

Again the Tapa did not come but there was greed in his mind and then Guru Ji promised to give 10 rupees. At the end, Guru Ji decided to give away a gold coin. The Tapa's was greedy and he made an excuse to send his son. He couldn't enter the door so he carried his son on his shoulder and climbed over the wall. His son fell from the top and broke his leg and started crying loudly. Seeing this, everyone knew how greedy the Tapa was and this made him very embarrassed.

⁷⁵ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 60) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

At that moment Guru Ram Das Ji was standing and serving the langgar to everyone. When he heard about this incident he uttered the following salok;

ਸਲੋਕ , ਮਃ ੪ ॥

Salok, Fourth Mahla:

ਤਪਾ ਨ ਹੋਵੈ , ਅੰਦ੍ਰੁ ਲੋਭੀ ; ਨਿਤ ਮਾਇਆ ਨੋ ਫਿਰੈ , ਜਜਮਾਲਿਆ ॥

He is not a Tappa, who is being suppressed by greedness within his heart, and who constantly chases after Maya.

ਅਗੋਦੇ ਸਦਿਆ , ਸਤੈ ਦੀ ਭਿਖਿਆ ਲਏ ਨਾਹੀ ; ਪਿਛੋਦੇ ਪਛੁਤਾਇ ਕੈ , ਆਣਿ ਤਪੈ , ਪੁਤੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਹਾਲਿਆ ॥

When this Tappa was first invited, he refused the offered charity; but later he regretted and sent his son, who was seated in the congregation.

ਪੰਚ ਲੋਗ ਸਭਿ ਹਸਣ ਲਗੇ ; ਤਪਾ ਲੋਭਿ ਲਹਰਿ ਹੈ ਗਾਲਿਆ ॥

The village elders all laughed, saying that the waves of greed have destroyed this Tappa.

ਜਿਥੈ ਥੋੜਾ ਧਨੁ ਵੇਖੈ , ਤਿਥੈ ਤਪਾ ਭਿਟੈ ਨਾਹੀ ; ਧਨਿ ਬਹੁਤੈ ਡਿਠੈ , ਤਪੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਹਾਰਿਆ ॥

If he sees only a little wealth, he does not bother to go there; but when he sees a lot of wealth, the Tappa forsakes his vows.

ਭਾਈ , ਏਹੁ ਤਪਾ ਨ ਹੋਵੀ , ਬਗੁਲਾ ਹੈ ; ਬਹਿ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਵੀਚਾਰਿਆ ॥

Dear Brother, Saints got together and decided after contemplating that that he is not a Tappa, he is only a stork who is trying imitating the swans like Saints.

ਸਤ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਤਪਾ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕਰੈ , ਸੰਸਾਰੈ ਕੀ ਉਸਤਤੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਹੋਵੈ ; ਏਤੁ ਦੋਖੈ , ਤਪਾ ਦਯਿ ਮਾਰਿਆ ॥

The Tappa slanders the True Primal Being, and sings the praises of the material world. For this sin, he is cursed by Almighty.

ਮਹਾ ਪੁਰਖਾਂ ਕੀ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕਾ , ਵੇਖੁ ਜਿ ਤਪੈ ਨੋ ਫਲੁ ਲਗਾ ; ਸਭੁ ਗਇਆ ਤਪੈ ਕਾ ਘਾਲਿਆ ॥

Look the fruit that Tappa gathered, for slandering the True ones; all his labors and penance have gone in vain.

ਬਾਹਰਿ ਬਹੈ ; ਪੰਚਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਤਪਾ ਸਦਾਏ ॥ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਬਹੈ ਤਪਾ ; ਪਾਪ ਕਮਾਏ ॥

When he sits outside among the elders, he is called a Tappa; but when he sits within the congregation, the Tappa commits sin.

ਹਰਿ ਅੰਦਰਲਾ ਪਾਪੁ ; ਪੰਚਾ ਨੋ ਉਘਾ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖਾਲਿਆ ॥

Almighty has exposed the Tappa's secret sin to the elders.

ਧਰਮਰਾਇ ਜਮਕੰਕਰਾ ਨੋ ਆਖਿ ਛਡਿਆ , ਏਸੁ ਤਪੈ ਨੋ , ਤਿਥੈ ਖੜਿ ਪਾਇਹੁ ; ਜਿਥੈ ਮਹਾ ਮਹਾਂ ਹਤਿਆਰਿਆ ॥

The Righteous Judge, Dharamraj said to the Messenger of Death, "Take this Tappa and put him with the worst of the worst murderers."

ਫਿਰਿ ਏਸੁ ਤਪੈ ਦੈ ਮੁਹਿ ਕੋਈ ਲਗਹੁ ਨਾਹੀ ; ਏਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਹੈ ਫਿਟਕਾਰਿਆ ॥

No one is to look at the face of this Tappa again. He has been abandoned (cursed) by the True Guru.

ਹਰਿ ਕੈ ਦਰਿ ਵਰਤਿਆ ; ਸੁ ਨਾਨਕਿ , ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ ॥

Guru Nanak speaks and reveals what has taken place in the Almighty's Court.

ਸੋ ਬੂਝੈ ; ਜੁ ਦਯਿ ਸਵਾਰਿਆ ॥੧॥

He alone understands, who is blessed and adorned by Almighty. ||1||

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji – Ang 315)

Satguru Ji who is merciful and full of kindness was sitting down together with everyone else in the panggat and gave food to the Tappa's son, and everyone then rebuked at the

Tapa and said that Satguru Ji is full of goodness, whoever comes into his sanctuary, gets liberated unconditionally.

40.2 Matho Murari

There were once a Khatri named Prem. He was an orphan. He was infected with leprosy and was very weak and his hands and legs were rotten and broke off from his body. Nobody wanted to go near him because of his scary looks and the stench. Everyone hated him, a lot of flies were on him and he carried a pail around his neck. He would crawl everywhere he went and people who pity him would put food in his pail. This is how he passed his time. Prem was very sad and depressed.

One day he heard about the greatness of Guru Amar Das Ji. Hearing the greatness of Guru Ji he was so overloved as if he had found the most valuable treasure ever. He felt a lot of love for Guru Ji in his heart and thought of Guru Ji in his mind. When he left the love of Guru Ji he speaks loudly. Hearing him all rich and poor people came to see him. Whatever came to his mind was spoken. He did not have any knowledge of Raag, poetry or hymn. Without knowing anything he cried and said, "I have now found my body back, Hey people listen, I am telling something very great, I have found back my body that I had lost before (Geya Kesotha Ledha Phir)". He chanted simran and had been longing to meet Guru Ji. He crawled and thought of Guru Ji in his mind and he received a glimpse of Guru Ji so his sins were washed away.

After crawling for a very long time he reached Goindwal, and he felt very happy as if he had obtained the nine treasures of the world and mystical powers. He pulled himself to the front of Guru Ji's darbar and with a lot of faith in his heart he rubbed the dust of sanggat's feet on his face, head and body. He sat there for a long time.

Seeing this, the sanggat said "Hey, Kori (Leper) you cannot get the darshan of Guru Ji, only those people whom Guruji wishes to bless with his darshan get to see Him."

Hearing this he felt sad and said "If I don't get the glimpse (darshan) now, my coming here is useless, I will not get anything in this world. I am so unlucky. Then Prem thought to himself "I will not go anywhere until I get the darshan of Guru Ji even though it means that I die here. Cursed is my life, I shall die and be here in front of my Guru Ji. He sat there and did not leave the place. He had lots of love for Guru Ji, he kept on repeating Guru, Guru, Guru, sometimes in a loud voice and the sanggat that passed by would hear him. He sang loudly "I have found my self back" (Geya Kesotha Ledha Phir) he sang loudly hoping that Guru Ji would hear, the people who visited Goindwal would stand and listen to him. Some sanggat were attracted to the way Prem sang and would ask him to sing again and at the sanggat's request he would sing again and again.

Day and night he was thirsty for the glimpse of Guru Ji. Prem ji said to himself, "I must have done a lot of bad sins in my past life and that is why I have to go through this grief

in their life. The whole world gets to see Guru Ji but I do not get the chance. I thirst for the darshan and there is no other place better than this one". However his faith in Guru Ji developed as he thought to himself, "Definitely, one day my sins will get be forgiven and I shall not leave the door of Guru Ji until then. Dead or alive, I shall have full faith in my Guru".

The sanggat serve him food and he would sit in one place the whole day. At times when he became emotionally depressed, his yearning for Guru Ji became intense, he would fall to the ground and would start crying. He would cry as he wanted Guru Ji's darshan. Seeing all this some Sikhs sympathized with him and did a humble request before Guru Ji, "there is a leper who is in so much of sadness, he is always sitting at your doorstep (darbar) and he sings your praises. He wants to get a glimpse of you but we don't understand what he means by the phrase (I have found my self back - Geya Kesotha Ledha Phir) that he sings daily"

Upon hearing the request, Guru Ji said, "I know what he means, he is expressing his grief on his past deeds which have caused him to be infected by the disease and hope that I will cure him. Such love and faith for the Guru would definitely liberate him. He spends many days singing aloud with hope that his voice could one day reach me". Guru Ji, the omniscient, knew the love that Prem had for him and he had abandoned all worldly desires.

Guru Ji was very pleased and told the Sikhs, "Bring him to the place where I take my daily bath and bathe him with the water collected in the ditch so that his body can be cured. Cover his whole body from head to toe, then bring him to me". Sikhs overwhelmed to hear Guru Ji's order and told Prem, "wake up, your prayers have been answered". They bathe him with the water (jal) and brought him to Guru Ji. Guru Ji the giver of blessing looked at him and exposed his head from the cloth. Just as Guru Ji showered his blessing through his sight upon Prem, his body was totally cured from the disease and he became very handsome. He was given a new attire to wear. Gurmantar (Waheguru) was given to him and Guru Ji named him Murari.

Guru Ji then said, "Is there anyone who is willing to get their daughter married to Murari and she shall be blessed with peace and happiness in this life and there after (lok and parlok)". A man named Siha from Khatri sect came forward with folded hands and said "Guru Ji, I have a daughter, please get her married to Murari". Siha knew that his wife will not agree to this proposal and to avoid any argument, he told her, "Guru Ji was asking about you and has requested you to go and do langgar sewa the whole day". When his wife went off to do the sewa, Siha took his daughter (Matho) to Guru Ji. As soon as they arrived Guru Ji got Murari married and blessed the couple with meditation and liberation (bhagti and mukti). Guru Ji made a person who was living in hell into a saint. Guru Ji blessed Murari with the best that anyone could ever dream of.

Everyone who saw and heard about the incident was amazed. They saw the greatness of Guru Ji, make happen whatever he wanted. Guru Ji is the helper of his servants and the destroyer of all evils. Prem obtained everything just within a moment. He was cured and then he got married as well. Later in the day Siha's wife heard about this in the langgar hall. She was so sad and came crying to Guru Ji and said "you have given my daughter to an orphan who is also a leper. Hearing this Guru Ji laughed and said "Murari is my son, and I have got him married to your daughter and your daughters name is Matho. Whoever utters the name of Matho Murari shall get whatever they desire. Matho's name will be uttered first and then Murari. Whoever visits them, will be saved from diseases. They are the most blessed ones". Hearing this Siha's wife went back to her house. Guru Ji then said "Hey Matho Murari, now you shall go and spread the Almighty's Name (Naam) to all, spread the knowledge and the greatness of Sikhi and live happily in your home. Whatever you may say will be fulfilled because now your meditation has been fully accepted therefore, you have attained the supreme bliss. Whoever comes and meets you, will be liberated, as well"

Matho Murari continued to sing Guru Ji's praises in their home, whoever came and met them, would obtain happiness. This was how Guru Ji showered his blessing onto the world. That is why Guru Ji was known as the giver of blessings. This is the way the sinners became saints and attained salvation. Whoever showed love for Guru Ji will definitely be blessed with Kam (fulfilment of desires), Arth (wealth), Dharam (Faith) and Mokhs (Salvation) most of all.

41. BRAHMAN KHEDA SOINI & GONDA'S SON ⁷⁶

41.1 Kheda Soini

There was once a Brahmin name Kheda Soini. He was a true devotee of Durga and devoted in his prayers. A lot of people came to see him and persuaded him to lead their group on a pilgrimage to Durga's shrine. The group of people went on the pilgrimage while fasting twice a year.

Once during the pilgrimage, Kheda Soini was accompanied by a group of people and they reached Guru Ji's village (Goindwal). He was very eager to have the sight (darshan) of Guru Ji. He came and stood in front of the door leading to Guru Ji. Then the Sikhs' told him that before entering Guru Ji's court (darbar) please go to the kitchen (Langgar hall) and have your meal and only then you will be allowed to meet Guru Ji. After hearing to that Kheda Soini thought to himself, "How will I be able to comply with Guru Ji's condition by consuming food which is served in the Guru Ji's kitchen (langgar). I am always so particular and I follow strictly to the Brahmin code of conduct in preparing food. In Guru Ji's kitchen all sorts of people participate in preparing the food. Those who have ultimate love for Guru Ji can forgo their principles, but I can't do that".

Having these thoughts in mind, he turned backward and did not go into Guru Ji's court (darbar). Together with his group he started his journey home. After leaving Goindwal and traveling for approximately five (5) kilometers they got tired and decided to rest. As he was sleeping he had a nightmare.

He was terrified and he prayed to Durga, "I am your devotee, please save me from this scary demons that have surrounded me. Please don't allow them to kill me. Take them away from me. What sin did I commit that I have to face this scary situation?"

In the dream Durga explained to him, "you are able to see me because you are my devotee. You are being terrified because you have declined to meet Guru Ji. I will only consider you my devotee if you get the blessings of Guru Ji. Guru Ji has come to save this universe. Guru Ji is always merciful, millions of people are being blessed with a true way of life. Now remove all your doubts and proceed to get Guru Ji's blessings". After listening to this, he bowed his head. Soon after that he woke up from his dream. He was in a state of shock.

In the morning, with love and regards for Guru Ji he left for Goindwal. As soon as he reached Goindwal, he first went to have langgar and then went for Guru Ji's darshan.

⁷⁶ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 61) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Upon reaching Guru Ji, he fell on Guru Ji's feet. Guru Ji said, "Hey Brahmin, tell me why did you come to see me?" Kheda Soini then narrated the entire incident to Guru Ji and begged Guru Ji to bless him and remove all the doubts that he had.

After listening to him Guru Ji smiled and said, "even if you say it happens the way you have explained, doubts can only be dispelled if one gets the vision of the supreme power in its original form, it's not possible for you to have vision of the supreme power, you don't have enough endurance. If the supreme power appears in front of you, you will not be able to withstand that, ponder this in your mind".

After hearing this, Kheda Soini said "Please show it to me, I will be able to take it, what ever happens". Guru Ji instructed Bhai Belu to hold Kheda Soini's hand and take him to the top of the attic floor. Bhai Belu did just that, held him by his hand and took him to have the vision of the supreme power (Almighty). There he saw and fell unconscious and looked as though he was dead.

Bhai Belu narrated to Guru Ji the incident and the Guru Ji said, "Carry him and bring him here". Kheda Soini was brought and placed before Guru Ji. Guru Amar Das Ji held him from his chin, woke him up and made him sit up straight. It looked as though a dead man had come alive. He opened his eyes and saw Guru Ji and begged Guru Ji to take him in his refuge.

Guru Ji said to him, "Hey Kheda Soini, you are my devotee, before this you prayed to the deity, now you shall repeat the Gurmantar (Waheguru) instead. Who ever you meet, spread the teachings of Guru Nanak. Guru Ji looked at him with lots of blessing and with that he attained the gift of divine knowledge. He went back home filled with blessing from Guru Ji. He was able to help and dispel the sorrows of other beings. Who ever came in contact with him was saved from the noose of death. He spread Sikhi to far off places. He visited Guru Ji very often.

Whoever Guru Ji showers his blessing onto; he together with his/her family attains salvation. Kheda Soini's spent his life in accordance to Guru Ji's orders. Upon the completion of his lifetime, he left for sachkhand.

41.2 Bhai Gonda's Children

Bhai Gonda who came to Guru Angad Dev Ji and requested Guru Ji to free his village was invaded by evil spirits, Guru Angad Dev appointed Guru Amar Das Ji to follow him to his village which is now known as Goindwal (refer to Chapter 5).

Soon after Bhai Gonda died, his children did not have the same love and regards that he had towards Guru Ji. They always felt that the town they lived in belonged to them and that they were the most powerful and greatest. They were jealous that all the donations were being made to Guru Ji directly, and there was free flow of food served. They felt that previously there was very less profit in Guru Ji's court (darbar) but now uncountable

amount of money was flowing in and it was time for them to take charge. This ignorant people despite being around Guru Ji still could not realise his greatness. They were similar to those people who reside in the sacred places of pilgrimage but remain ignorant just like the darkness which stays below a candle. They don't even bother to take bath in those sacred places instead day and night they are involved in their worldly deeds. Those who come from far distance with lots of respect and love in their hearts took baths in the holy places. They are the ones who obtained great blessings and all their sins were removed.

This arrogant people, who had bad thoughts were about to commit a very evil deed. They sat near Guru Ji. This people who were filled with greed came and spoke rudely to Guru Ji, "If you want to stay in this town happily, you have to share a certain portion of your income with us. We do respect you in every way, but please send our share of income to our house. You have been staying here for quite a number of years and received all sort of gifts. Before this your income was negligible but now it has increased as everybody respects and believes in you".

Listening to such words, Guru Ji who is the giver of salvation spoke in a very polite manner, "Go to the langgar hall and eat as much as you want. Food is prepared for people from all over the world. All hungry devotees come to eat and nobody stops them. Consider all the devotees to be my family. Everyone comes here to fulfill their wishes. Your father never asked for anything, instead greed has driven you here. We don't accept any cash or any sort of wealth here other than the needful of a day. We do not save anything at home; we have nothing to give you because we don't have the money that you are asking for in our home".

Upon hearing Guru Ji, they said, "We only want money, and we don't ask for anything else, give our share of wealth. Everytime langgar is served here. The sangat comes here all the time. A lot of wealth comes at your door. People come here from all over the world with lots of love and humility. Even Kings and leaders come here. They offer various types of treasure, so give us our share"

Hearing this Guru Amar Das Ji said "You are very greedy for worldly wealth but you will only obtain food in Guru's house, please get rid of all the greed, why are you attached to all this and come to argue with me".

In return they said "We will go to the Emperor in Delhi and lodge a complain against you and will get what we deserve." Guru Ji replied very calmly, "Do as you wish and do not have the hope for cash in return". They got up in anger and went back home. As they reached Delhi they told everyone about this.

One of Bhai Gonda's sons went to King's Akbar's treasurer to lodge an official complaint. He was a fool because he did not realize that there was a Guru Ji's disciple sitting next to the treasurer. The disciple told the treasurer about this. They were all chased out of the court. They felt very embarrassed and ashamed. They came back and spent the rest of

their life in depression and lost everything that they had. In grief, their health worsened and soon they died. The Messengers of death (jamdoots) caught them and punished them.

When everyone heard this, they all said “The bad people were punished by the Almighty”, Guru Ram Das Ji later uttered the following Shabad in relation to this incident which took place in Goindwal;

ਸਲੋਕ , ਮਃ ੪ ॥

Salok, Fourth Mahla:

ਮਲੁ ਜੂਈ ਭਰਿਆ , ਨੀਲਾ ਕਾਲਾ ਖਿਧੋਲੜਾ ; ਤਿਨਿ ਵੇਮੁਖਿ , ਵੇਮੁਖੈ ਨੋ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

The slandering cynic sent out his faithless servant, wearing a blue coat which was blackened, filled with filth and vermin.

ਪਾਸਿ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਕੋਈ ਬਹਣਿ , ਜਗਤ ਮਹਿ ; ਗੂਹ ਪਤਿ , ਸਗਵੀ ਮਲੁ ਲਾਇ , ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਆਇਆ ॥

No one in the world will sit near him; the self-willed Manmukh (ego-oriented) fell into manure, and returned with even more filth covering him.

ਪਰਾਈ ਜੋ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਚੁਗਲੀ ਨੋ , ਵੇਮੁਖੁ ਕਰਿ ਕੈ ਭੇਜਿਆ ; ਓਥੈ ਭੀ ਮੁਹੁ ਕਾਲਾ , ਦੁਹਾ ਵੇਮੁਖਾ ਦਾ ਕਰਾਇਆ ॥

The faithless cynic was sent to slander and back-bite others, but when he went there, the faces of both he and his faithless master were blackened instead.

ਤੜ ਸੁਣਿਆ, ਸਭਤੁ ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚਿ ਭਾਈ ; ਵੇਮੁਖੁ ਸਣੈ ਨਫਰੈ ਪਉਲੀ ਪਉਦੀ, ਫਾਵਾ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ,ਉਨਿ ਘਰਿ ਆਇਆ ॥

It was immediately known everywhere, O Siblings, that this faithless man, along with his servant, was kicked and beaten with shoes; in humiliation, they returned to their homes.

ਅਗੈ ਸੰਗਤੀ ਕੁੜਮੀ ਵੇਮੁਖੁ ਰਲਣਾ ਨ ਮਿਲੈ ; ਤਾ ਵਹੁਟੀ ਭਤੀਜੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਆਇ ਘਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

The faithless cynic was not allowed to mingle with others; his wife and niece then brought him home to lie down.

ਹਲਤੁ ਪਲਤੁ ਦੋਵੈ ਗਏ ; ਨਿਤ ਭੁਖਾ ਕੂਕੇ ਤਿਹਾਇਆ ॥

He has lost both this world and the next; he cries out continually, in hunger and thirst.

ਧਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਹੈ ; ਜਿਨਿ ਨਿਆਉ ਸਚੁ , ਬਹਿ ਆਪਿ ਕਰਾਇਆ ॥

Blessed, blessed is the Creator, the Primal Being, our Master; He Himself sits and dispenses true justice.

ਜੋ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕਰੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੂਰੇ ਕੀ ; ਸੋ ਸਾਚੈ ਮਾਰਿ ਪਚਾਇਆ ॥

One who slanders the Perfect True Guru is punished and destroyed by the True Almighty.

ਏਹੁ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ; ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥੧॥

This Word is spoken by the One (Almighty) who created the whole universe. ||1||

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji – Ang 306)

42. HUMBLENESS AS WAY OF LIFE⁷⁷

42.1 Proud Pandit Beni

There was a Pandit by the name of Beni, who was very intelligent and well versed in his knowledge of the divine scriptures, having memorized most of them. He travelled extensively, locally and abroad and was very proud of his vast knowledge. Whenever he would hear of a learned person, he would rush to the scene to benefit from discussions with the individuals. He would declare upfront that "Should one fail in the discussion, then the winner shall earn the ownership of the loser's reading materials".

The public would come to hear his discussions with high expectations. Whenever he was victorious in the discussion, he would snatch away the books of the loser. The rich showered him with money after listening to him. He would travel all around with a big bundle of books, loaded on a camel. With this, he was very proud and many students of his accompanied him to gain more knowledge. Beni said "Travelling on this earth, I shall conquer the entire world, no one will be able to compete with me where knowledge is concerned. Nobody shall be equivalent to me".

One day, while travelling, he reached Goindwal and established his station there. Here, he heard of the pure teachings of the true Guru, which was fast spreading in the entire world. He longed to meet Guru Ji. At that time, Guru Ji was resting outside his residence, close to the Boali. Later, while everyone was having a glimpse (darshan) of Guru Ji, Beni approached Him. With much respect and gratitude, Guru Ji invited Beni to sit next to him and he was pleased when Guru Ji asked him about his well being.

At that time, a large crowd was in the audience of Guru Ji; having their wishes fulfilled, both for this world (lok) and the next (parlok). Looking at the crowd, Beni felt very proud and he said to Guru Ji, "Meditation (tap), pilgrimage, fast and donations are great virtues and there are many other such deeds (karam). In fact, deeds (karam) purify one's heart, with which a human being attains salvation. There is however, no emphasis for such virtues in your religion. How will these people attain salvation? If you wish to do them good, then you must find a solution to this. You must get them indulged in these virtues to purify their minds. Give them advice, similar to the ways stipulated in the divine scriptures (Shasteras)."

Guru Ji replied "Meditation and other ritualistic deeds (karams) like yug (continuous feast for others) were the karams of the earlier 3 ages (Satyug, Tretha and Duapar).

⁷⁷ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 62) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

Those rituals are not required to be performed in this age (Kalyug) in order to attain salvation. Without food, the physical body cannot survive. Then how can one perform meditation or Yug without any support of financial and internal strength (shakti). If in today's world, one desires to perform ritualistic deeds, how can he complete his task within his lifetime⁷⁸ because human beings are heavily engaged in their daily affairs. Without any spiritual and worldly powers in this age, how can one practise the same faith? In this age, one will have major difficulty performing these rituals and while pursuing a place in heaven, one may end up in hell. No one can attain salvation through ritualistic deeds (karam-kand) because these good deeds are followed closely by pride (hankar). There is great difficulty in completing the rituals and their returns are very little.

In Kalyug, only those in power attain justice. Rituals such as meditation and other great deeds cannot match the selfless service (sewa) performed in a Guru's guidance. With simran, one shall attain salvation. Listening or reciting the Almighty's Name alone is enough to attain salvation. In Kalyug, there is no other virtue greater than remembering the Almighty. Without it, no one can attain salvation. Just like oil cannot be extracted from sand (reth). Without Almighty's name (Naam), meditation and other deeds are useless. Other deeds often act against the performer because the performed deed creates ego, which ultimately becomes the cause for one to enter the cycle of birth and death. With selfless service (Niskaam Sewa) and Almighty's remembrance (Simran), pride is removed but in ritualistic deeds, it is amplified. Hence, pride is the root of sins. Those who want to be liberated, must always stay away from pride.

With the knowledge which you have accumulated, you have taken the form of light. You must hence enlighten others with this great knowledge. Instead, you keep falling in the dark and telling others "please swim accross the ocean of the world". You are presently in so much pride, as though you are very certain of winning over the three worlds (heaven, hell and this world). You have not won your mind over, instead you have created many enemies. By defeating others, what have you gained? Thousands of Sikhs have been saved through simran and staying away from pride. Scholars (Pandits) often are ruined by their own pride."

Listening to this, Beni thought "I have become proud because of my knowledge. Only those who are without pride can attain salvation and they evade sins by doing simran. Guru Ji is right; I shall also free myself from pride". He then asked "I have collected and contemplated a lot of knowledge, and that is why I have developed pride over time. That is why I could not perform the Almighty's meditation. I only performed

⁷⁸ The human age in Satyug was 100,000 years, in Tretha-yug it was 10,000 years, in Duapur Yug it was 1,000 and now in Kal-yug is only 100 years – Reference Varan Bhai Gurdas Ji

ritualistic deeds. I became proud through my discourse with other intellectuals. I have not known the virtues of true congregation (satsangat) and salvation. Through your advice, I have now understood the Almighty's path and have not purified my innerself. Please bless me and keep me away from pride. What shall I do to stay away from lust, anger and pride, please bless me and advise me?" Guru Ji replied by composing the following Shabad;

ਮਲਾਰ , ਮਹਲਾ ੩ ; ਘਰੁ ੨

Malaar, Third Mahl, Second House:

ੴ ; ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

There is only one Almighty without duality (Eak), life of the entire creation (Ong), creator (kaar), true form in all ages and time dimensions (Sat), destroyer of the darkness of ignorance (Gu) and illuminator of knowledge (Ru), Grace (Persad); i.e. Almighty who is the life form of all is obtainable only with the Guru's grace

ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਗਿਰਹੀ ; ਕਿ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਉਦਾਸੀ ॥ ਕਿ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਅਵਰਨੁ ; ਸਦਾ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ॥

Is this mind a householder, or is this mind a detached renunciate? Is this mind beyond social class, eternal and unchanging?

ਕਿ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਚੰਚਲੁ ; ਕਿ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ॥ ਇਸੁ ਮਨ ਕਉ ; ਮਮਤਾ ਕਿਥਹੁ ਲਾਗੀ ॥੧॥

Is this mind fickle, or is this mind detached? How has this mind been gripped by possessiveness? ||1||

ਪੰਡਿਤ ; ਇਸੁ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਕਰਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਅਵਰੁ ਕਿ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਪੜਹਿ ; ਉਠਾਵਹਿ ਭਾਰੁ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

O Pandit, O religious scholar, reflect on this in your mind. Why do you read so many other things, and carry such a heavy load? ||1||Pause||

ਮਾਇਆ ਮਮਤਾ ; ਕਰਤੈ ਲਾਈ ॥ ਏਹੁ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਕਰਿ ; ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਉਪਾਈ ॥

The Creator has attached it to Maya and possessiveness. Enforcing His Order, He created the world.

ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ; ਬੂਝਹੁ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਸਦਾ ਰਹਹੁ ; ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਸਰਣਾਈ ॥੨॥

By Guru's Grace, understand this, O Siblings of Destiny. Remain forever in Almighty's Sanctuary. ||2||

ਸੋ ਪੰਡਿਤੁ ; ਜੋ ਤਿਹਾਂ ਗੁਣਾ ਕੀ ਪੰਡ ਉਤਾਰੈ ॥ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ; ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੈ ॥

He alone is a Pandit, who sheds the load of the three qualities. Night and day, he chants the Almighty's Name alone.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ; ਓਹੁ ਦੀਖਿਆ ਲੇਇ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ ; ਸੀਸੁ ਧਰੇਇ ॥ ਸਦਾ ਅਲਗੁ ; ਰਹੈ ਨਿਰਬਾਣੁ ॥

He accepts the Teachings of the True Guru. He offers his head to the True Guru. He remains forever unattached in the state of Nirvaanaa (beyond pain).

ਸੋ ਪੰਡਿਤੁ ; ਦਰਗਹ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥੩॥

Such a Pandit is accepted in Almighty's Court. ||3||

ਸਭਨਾਂ ਮਹਿ ਏਕੋ ; ਏਕੁ ਵਖਾਣੈ ॥ ਜਾਂ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਖੈ ; ਤਾਂ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੈ ॥

He preaches that the One Almighty is within all beings. As he sees the One Lord, he knows the One Lord.

ਜਾ ਕਉ ਬਖਸੇ ; ਮੇਲੇ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਐਥੈ ਓਥੈ ; ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ॥੪॥

That person, whom Almighty forgives, is united with Him. He finds eternal peace, here and hereafter. ||4||

ਕਹਤ ਨਾਨਕੁ ; ਕਵਨ ਬਿਧਿ ਕਰੇ ਕਿਆ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਸੋਈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ; ਜਾ ਕਉ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ; ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਬੇਦ ਕੀ ; ਫਿਰਿ ਕੂਕ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥੫॥੧॥੧੦॥

Says Nanak, what can anyone do? He alone is liberated, whom Almighty blesses with His Grace. Night and day, he sings the Glorious Praises of Almighty. Then, he no longer bothers with the proclamations of the Shaastras or the Vedas. ||5||1||10||

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji – Ang 306)

Then Guru Ji related the meanings of the shabad to him. Listening to this, the Pandit's pride was removed. He realised that Guru Ji was right and he started to love Guru Ji. When Guru Ji looked at him again, he was eternally blessed, awakening from his years of sleep in ignorance. While sitting, he went into deep meditation (semadhi) and opened his eyes after quite a long time. Looking at this, Guru Ji said "Pandit ji, you are blessed and you have dispelled all your pains." Pandit Beni's mind was fully contented and he started to sing praises of Guru Ji. He stayed with Guru Ji for several days. Leaving all his cravings, he dwelled in love. The many books loaded on the camel were then thrown in to the river. He attained ultimate calmness (shanti), staying away from all vices.

42.2 Bhai Phiria and Bhai Ketara

There were two Sikhs by the name of Ketara and Phiria, who lived with Guru Ji. They did immense sewa. One day Guru Ji was very impressed when he saw them and decided to present them with a gift. He called them and asked "Tell me about your living conditions. Who rules that country? What are you doing to prepare yourself for the next world (parlok)? Whatever it is, stop it and focus on the Sikh way of life through the Almighty's Name (Waheguru)". With their hands elapsed, they answered "Dear Guru Ji, Yogis (the ones with torn ears) are the rulers and they are powerful because of their magical powers. They sing the praises of their leader who is known as Gorakh. They do not go to deities or perform holy pilgrimages. These ignorant people do not have faith, they do not meditate and do not believe in God. They do not utter a word of worship. These materialistic, selfish people do not listen to us. They will never repent without your blessings".

Guru Ji replied, "Now you may return to your home and sing the praises of Almighty and preach Guru Nanak's teachings".

Phiria and Ketara replied "Their strength is retrieved from the charm (Mantar) that has given them powers and they do not treat or understand anyone else as equals. They would kill those who come in their way."

Guru Ji was very pleased with both of them and said, "You shall receive enormous powers and from now onwards yours uttered words will come to pass. The Yogis charms shall not work against you. Wherever these Yogis stay, you are to get rid of them and destroy their homes. They will run away from you. Create the place of faith (dharamsala) in every village and sing the Almighty's praises. Get them to meditate on the Naam and partake in community service. In this manner, purify the whole country. People shall then come to meet you and even bring their pleas to you".

Guru Ji then blessed the two with all the nine treasures (ridhia) and miraculous powers (sidhia) before their departure. They first approached the large centres (Mathe) of the Yogis. One of the Yogis tried to scare the Sikhs at first, after which he tried to perform his charms (jantr mantr) but the charm worked against the Yogi. His body started to burn up. Knowing that the Sikhs had greater powers than him, he ran away, followed by his followers. The Sikhs then destroyed the centre and the rest of the people who observed this were discussing among them, "Yogi were known as our great Pir (Religious Leader). Now all of them has abandoned their centers and ran away. These people must be very great. Let's go to them and ask them who are they and who sent them here. These people are not afraid of the Yogi, they even destroyed his centre. "

When the crowd surrounded them, the two Sikhs started to sing Gurbani (hymn) and the crowd listened peacefully to the holy Praises of Almighty (kirtan) and started to sing along. They soon started to dwell into meditation and adopted Guru Nanak's way of life (Gurmukh). They would have their wishes fulfilled immediately. They established a beautiful Place of Faith (dharamsala) and continued have true congregations (Satsang). They also then destroyed all the math of Gorakh and replaced them with dharamsala. Staying away from the evil charms, Sikh beliefs were spread widely. Bhai Phiria and Bhai Kethara continue to spread the message of Guru Nanak accross the country and would sometimes return to visit Guru Ji .

43. GIVING LIFE TO A CHILD, THE VISIT OF AKBAR ⁷⁹

43.1 The Pleasant Goindwal

Satguru ji is everforgiving. None is equal to Guru Ji, who is able to provide protection for all the four (4) ages (yugs). Guru Amar Das Ji showered his blessings to Goindwal. Just like Sri Ram Chander Ji kept Ayudhia close to his heart and he kept its citizens happy, Sri Krishan Ji protected the people of Dwarka from any misfortune; Guru Ji protected Goindwal.

Not only were they protected from worldly miseries, even death could not approach them. If an individual passed away before his time, Guru Ji would bring him to life again. No one died in Goindwal and everyone continued to live with the blessings of Guru Ji. If any individual passed away, the family members would bring him to Guru Ji. Then Guru Ji would enable the individual to have contact with Guru Ji's feet and immediately the dead would be alive again. He would then return home by walking back on his own two feet.

Due to Guru Ji's blessings, the people of Goindwal lived happily and the more intelligent individuals stayed away from any form of problems. Every family grew, laziness was eliminated and they became richer. They had plenty to feast on and had little to worry. They would sing praises of Guru Ji "Dhan, Dhan" and would bow to him in reverence.

Guru Ji had instructed Belu that "Please report to me about those who are miserable so that Guru Nanak's house may free them of their misery."

43.2 Life to Lifeless

An old widow lived there. She had an obedient son, whom she raised very painstakingly. Due to the absence of her husband, she loved her son endlessly. One day, her son had fever and immediately after that he passed away. It was past midnight when she realized that he had died. She started to cry aloud "Hey son, I have raised you and have yet to see any happiness, where have you gone. Please take me along with you, I shall also leave my body. What can I do without you, I was only dependent on you".

She continued to cry aloud. In her misery, she started to pull her own hair and cried very loud. She would not calm down. Guru Ji was awakened by her loud cries. The widow had brought her son to Guru Ji's home. When he heard her loud cries, he could not tolerate the pain. He called Belu and said 'Who is crying in pain, please stop her and calm her

⁷⁹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 63) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

down. Time of Nectar (Amritvela) is a fruitful time to sing Almighty's praises and keep silent until its dawn. Once the sun rises, she shall be freed of her pain".

Belu immediately came out and said to the widow "Guru Ji has asked you to keep quite as it is Amritvela. Once sun rises, your son shall awaken and be alive again. Now, don't cry aloud. Sit here and sing His praises". Listening to him, she thought "My son shall live again" but because of the immense sadness, she cried even louder "Hey Satguru ji, I only depend on you. I have nobody besides my son in this world. I am very miserable. I have come to your door, please take this into consideration." She continued to cry and pull her hair.

Belu came back and said "Dear Guru Ji, I have tried to calm her down but she does not listen, she is crying even more now. The widow's son has died. Guru Ji quickly came out and approached the widow. He brought his feet close to the child's body and touched it. The dead child immediately rose to life. The widow and her son bowed to Guru Ji in reverence and returned home happily.

43.3 Goindwal - Free of Death

Guru Ji went inside and said to Belu "It's not good to bring the dead to life. So after this, no young man or woman shall die so long as I am here in Goindwal." Immediately Guru Ji instructed the Messengers of Death (Yam), "Do not come here and take away any souls." Guru Ji stayed in Goindwal for twenty-two (22) years and for the said period, there were no deaths. All families lived happily. In the same way, Guru Ji would reverse each and every one's misery.

Nobody could reverse Guru Ji's deeds. Guru Ji would do as he pleased as it is in his hands to make or break anything in this world. Guru Ji would also prevent diseases from coming into Goindwal.

43.4 King Akbar's Visit

At that time King Akbar had come from Delhi and had established his station on the banks of the Bias River. On his way to Lahore, he stopped at Goindwal. One of the Sikhs approached him and said "Hey King, Guru Amar Das Ji, who had given you a sermon which turned out to be true, lives in this place". Akbar thought "He has reminded me of the Chitor Fort (refer to Chapter 33 for details)". He immediately felt like having Guru Ji's glimpse (darshan). He sent a representative to inform Guru Ji of his arrival. Guru Ji was at that time sitting next to the Boali Sahib. Bhai Belu said "Oh, Lord, the King (Badshah) of India is here. With love, he has come to have your darshan".

Coming out of his tent, Akbar set out to see Guru Ji. From the tent onwards, Akbar walked barefoot towards Guru Ji. He was dressed in beautiful clothes and jewelery. The numerous diamonds and stones were shining and were obviously very expensive. These

reflected his greatness. He was led by his Minister who proudly held a gold decorated piece of stick. With respect, Akbar obtained Guru Ji's darshan and sat down calm and collected. Guru Ji thought "He has not had his langgar while sitting down equally with everyone else". Guru Ji then told Akbar that one must consume food in Langgar before having an audience with him. Akbar agreed and together with Guru Ji he walked to the Community Kitchen (Langgar Hall).

While sitting down waiting for food, Akbar asked Guru Ji, "Guru Sahib, what shall I eat."

Guru Ji replied, "Our langgar has dhall (without salt). I eat that and that keeps me full for the day." Surprised, Akbar thought "He is old but his beautiful form gives him great divinity" With his hands clasped, he said "Bless me. That is food of barkat (prosperity), please give me the same food. You are the the physical form of the God. Whatever you said becomes the truth. I am blessed with your darshan. Bless give me the prosperous food so that I shall be contented and pleased."



Guru Ji realized that Akbar has requested for food with lots of love and said "Belu, my food, if it is ready, please bring it here" Quickly Belu left and brought the saltless dhal in a plate and presented it to the King Akbar. He then took his first bite. He felt the unusual taste and ate it to the content of his heart and enjoyed it very much. His second bite tasted sourish. Surprised he said "What is the matter, the second bite taste different from the first, how is this possible? And then, his third bite also tasted differently tasted of salt.

His fourth bite tasted like sweet rice porridge (kheer). As he continued to eat, he was more surprised. He actually was experiencing the pleasure of all the six (6) tastes. He had never tasted such tasteful food since birth and that too from a saltless dhal.

Contented, he washed his hands after the meal. He then clasped his hands and said “I cannot describe your greatness. You, emerged with God, are complete in every sense and you give pleasure to everyone. If you will bless me, please take this token of appreciation. If I can ever do your sewa, I will consider myself liberated and will attain eternal peace”.

Guru Ji smiled and said “I have no craving for anything. Guru Angad Dev Ji has blessed me with limitless gifts which are endless.

King Akbar together with his Ministers repeatedly said “Please do not return this” and handed over the title of many villages to Guru Ji, which shall be discussed in other chapters where Guru Ji will initiate the establishment of Amritsar. Guru Amar Das Ji accepted the villages for Guru Ram Das Ji considering the future in which the House of Guru Nanak will expand further.

44. BIBI BHANI JI & BHAI LENGGAH JI⁸⁰

44.1 Bibi Bhani Ji

Guru Amar Das Ji showered blessings unto his Sikhs and people in need. Guru Ji's younger daughter Bibi Bhani Ji did his sewa throughout the day. She was the manifestation of love and meditation with her form of praise. She was a good and wise person. She never thought of Guru Ji as her father but more as a Waheguru. She took good care of Guru Ji. Guru Ji was very happy with her determination to do sewa. She was full of bliss and devotion .

One day she did a pleaded humbly to Guru Ji “ Dear Father (Pita Ji), our relatives are very rich, due to their richness, they have become egoistic. They wear expensive clothes and lots of jewellery.”

Hearing this, Guru Ji saw a brick and said “This one brick is equivalent to all the gold and if this brick can make all the jewelleries, take it in your hands.”

Said Bibi Bhani Ji “Pita Ji, you are the knower and doer of all”. She saw the brick shining like gold, obeying Guru Ji's instruction she picked up the brick.

Guru Ji then said “Melt this brick and use the gold on you and your children's”.

With lots of blessing Guru Ji advised “I will pass over everything in future therefore, whatever that you require and desire, please ask in advance”. Bibi Bhani Ji obeyed Guru Ji's instruction and did utmost sewa that made Guru Ji happy at all times.

44.2 Bhai Langgah Ji

In Goindwal, about 7.5 kilometer (3 Koh) away, there was a village called Talwandi. There lived a man from the khatri caste who was a Sikh. He was called Bhai Langgah Ji and he had only one leg. Bhai Langgah Ji brought curd for Guru Ji's daily breakfast and would serve Guru Ji with lots of love. He served Guru Ji daily, even during bad weather Bhai Langgah was always on time. He walked with the support of a stick because of his broken leg.

One day as he was walking, he was stopped by his village leader who made fun of him. He forcefully took Bhai Langgah Ji's stick and said, “Hey Langgah! You are going through so much of hardship and difficulty you visit Guru Ji. In your condition with so much of suffering you walk to Guru Ji to deliver curd to him for his daily consumption. Your sewa

⁸⁰ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 64) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

is not worth it as Guru Ji in return has not given you anything. Guru Ji has made dead people alive and the whole world knows his miracles, what bad deeds have you done that Guru Ji has not showered any blessing onto you?”

Bhai Langgah Ji replied “Please don’t stop me, time is slipping away, my Guru Ji is great, and whatever that Guru Ji wants he is capable of performing it within split of a second. Guru Ji always sees well in everyone and that is what he wants his Sikhs to be as well”.

Bhai Lenggah Ji took the stick back from that man and started walking in a rush as he was already late. Guru Ji came to have langgar and he was served with breakfast but Guru Ji kept on sitting there without putting anything into his mouth. The sanggat that was there to have langgar just sat there watching Guru Ji, because no one eats before Guru Ji.

Bhai Belu Ji asked, “Guru Ji, why aren’t you eating, what has happened? The sanggat is waiting to have langgar and no one has eaten yet”.

Guru Ji replied, “The food will not be eaten as long as Bhai Langgah Ji doesn’t reach here, he has been stopped and ridiculed by his village leader.”

Bhai Langgah ji finally reached Goindwal. He immediately prostrated before Guru Ji and placed the curd in front of Guru Ji. Guru Ji then had langgar together with everyone else. After having langgar guruji asked Bhai Langgah Ji, “Why did you take so much of time today, you came late today?”

Bhai Langgah with folded hands narrated the incident to Guru Ji “My village leader made fun of me, he said that if I have done sewa for you, then why am I not being blessed with a leg. He took away my stick and after some time he gave it back to me. That is why I was delayed, right after that I left immediately.”

Guru Ji then said “You may go now and visit Shah Hussain and get your leg cured, meet him respectfully and there should not be any delay for you now onwards”. Obeying Guru Ji’s instructions, Bhai Langgah Ji went to Lahore to meet Shah Hussain. Shah Hussain was a type of person that never allowed anybody to come close to him. Whoever came close was chased away with a stick.

Shah Hussain did not do anything to Bhai Lenggah as he was sent by Guru Ji. Shah Hussain asked him in a loud voice, “where are you from?” Bhai Langgah Ji sat in front of Shah Hussain with folded hands narrated the whole story. Shah Hussain got very angry and took a bigger stick to hit Bhai Langgah Ji. Bhai Langgah Ji got up quickly to run away, while running he realized that his other leg was cured and functioning normally as the other leg. Bhai Langgah was very delighted and he held Shah Hussain’s feet and said, “You have cured my leg and this is your greatness”.

Shah Hussain replied, “The doer and the curer is someone else. Guru Amar Das Ji is the protector of all; he does it all and gives the praises to others. Please go and live in the refuge of Guru Ji, and touch Guru Ji’s feet on my behalf. Have faith only on Guru Ji and no one else.”

Everyone was amazed with Guru Ji's blessings, some of them are just beyond our understandings. Guru Amar Das Ji smiled when Bhai Langgah Ji came back to see Guru Ji. Guru Ji rewards his sewaks for all their good deeds and blesses them with divine knowledge. All the Pirs, Fakirs, Sadhus and Saints witnessed everything and were there to get Guru Ji's darshan.

44.3 Sikh Way of Life

One day, a lot of Sikhs were sitting in the presence of Guru Ji. Baba Buddha Ji who was a wise Sikh, asked Guru Ji, "Dear Guru Ji, how would a Sikh be blessed by you, please bless your sermon by which a Sikh obtains salvation and he/she may not be subjected to come back again in the death and birth cycle"

Upon listening Guru Ji with his beautiful voice spoke the words of nectar, "Whoever that obeys the hukam are my beloved Sikhs, they should get up during the first peher (3 hours after midnight, i.e 3 am) of the day and take their bath. Concentrate on Almighty in their heart and recite the words of Gurbani A Sikh must control his/her minds and focus on the Almighty's Name (Naam) during the day, work hard during the day to earn a honest life, serve the Saints and do not desire for unlawful relationships and property. Sikhs should not slander and gossip. They should be sad with other people's pain and be grateful with others people happiness. They should not eat without hunger and sleep without being sleepy. Whoever sleeps without feeling sleepy will reduce their age and those who eats without feeling hungry will get all kind of sickness.

They should remember the Almighty with every breath and must always remember the Almighty's Name (Naam). One should always live in Guru Ji's orders (hukam) and should never blame Almighty. One should not have ego, lust, anger and attachment. While performing service (sewa) one should not show off, by doing this their good deeds will be reduced and it will be considered a false act. The Almighty's Name (Naam) and taking a bath during the wee hours should not be forgotten at any time. One should never listen to any slandering of Waheguru at any time, if this happens one should just leave the place and go away. Leave all the desires and jealousy, one should only think of the Naam. There is nothing greater than doing selfless sewa to the benefit of others and meditate on the Almighty's Name (Naam). One should always participate in true congregation. One should be in love with Gurbani, while reading and singing with love one should have faith and confidence that I have attained salvation".

Guru Ji's advice was heard by all with full love, devotion and concentration. Guru Ji's advice gives happiness, all those who heard this were attached to Guru Ji's feet.

45. MERCIFUL GURU ⁸¹

Guru Amardas carried on the mission of his predecessors with great sincerity and devotion. He set before the Sikhs the ideal of Sewa and honest living.

45.1 Greatness of Langgar

Just like the sky is omnipresent everywhere, Satguru Ji is also omnipresent everywhere. Whoever recognises this will receive the blessings of Guru Ji. One day, Guru Ji approached the langgar hall with fellow Sikhs. Guru Ji was contented upon having some oats (free of salt) and drinking water. An elaborate langgar containing 6 types of tastes and spices was prepared, which was taken by everyone else while sitting in a Pangat. Khir (rice porridge), made of excellent quality rice and mixed with ghee and sugar, was also prepared. The variety was made tastier with the addition of masala. Wheat bread (capati), which was prepared soft and light, was also served.

Seeing the varieties, Baba Buddha ji said “Dear, ever forgiving, Guru Ji, food of many varieties have been prepared and has been enjoyed by everyone. But, you have only eaten the salt free oats? It is not appropriate that the Sikhs eat such good varieties and you only have the tasteless oats. Whatever food you wish to have should also be eaten by the Sikhs. This is the custom of the Sikhs. They should not eat such varieties without your participation. I have been waiting to express my feelings to you for a long time but only managed to do so today.”

Guru Ji was very pleased with Baba Buddha’s comments and said “Do not see me any different from everyone else. I reside within everyone. If everyone (Sangat) is happy, so am I and if they are sad, I shall be the same. The food that is tasty to the Sangat reaches my taste as well.” At that time, Guru Ji had just eaten and was gargling. Pointing at his gargle, Guru Ji said “See, all the tastey varieties are now in my mouth”. When the gargle was disposed, the sanggat observed that it contained particles of the various food items that they had had. Even particles of the khir could be seen.

Undoubtedly, Guru Ji existed in all his Sikhs. Guru Ji provided food to his Sikhs and ate their food as well. Showing particles of all varieties in his gargle, Guru Ji said “Whatever was in my mouth, I have shown to you. Whatever food the Sanggat eats with love, shall reach me. Sanggat is not different from me. Please consider me and the sanggat as one.” Babaji was very pleased with Guru Ji’s words and placed his forehead on the lotus feet of the Guru.

⁸¹ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 65) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

According to Latif, a Muslim historian:

When he was asked why he did not eat what the Sikhs ate in the Free Kitchen, he replied: "Whatever the Sikhs eat nourishes me too, for there is no difference at all between us." At another time, he told the congregation that just as a mother feels happy to see her children eat and relish delicacies, in the same way the Guru feels happy when the Sikhs - his children - dine together. (Mahomed Latif: History of Punjab p.250)

45.2 Guru Ji's Routine

The crowd of the Sikhs grew bigger and they all learnt this valuable lesson from Guru Ji. They brought this great custom of a Sikh into their lives and stayed away from negative thoughts. Guru Ji was a great follower of maryada, getting up in the wee hours of the night and performing all that is required of a Sikh. He would cleanse himself with the water from the Boali Sahib. Then only will he get into his clean robe and sit in a quiet corner to immerse himself in meditation and bliss. Enjoying the bliss of his meditation until the next morning, Guru Ji would give darshan to the satsangat that would start gathering early in the morning. He would listen and enjoy hymns sang by the sangat. He would stand all the way, supported by a pillar. Because of his old age, Guru Ji's body was weak. The sangat would observe him in meditation. Once the langgar is ready, Guru Ji would join them to partake langgar.

Guru Ji would always immerse himself in bhagti and award others with all kinds of gifts.

45.3 Bibi Bhani Ji's Sacrifice

One morning, when Guru Ji had just risen and was about to take his bath, his daughter Bhani, came for his darshan. Guru Ji had always been pleased with her for her dedicated commitment for selfless sewa. Preparing to bathe, Guru Ji seated himself on a wooden platform. As soon as he closed his eyes and focused his concentration on his inner self, one of the legs of the platform gave way. When Bhani saw this, she thought to herself "If Pita Ji moves towards the broken leg, he will certainly be shaken and his concentration will be broken. And this concentration, which the jogis long to have is very valuable. He will be distracted.

She looked around to see if she could substitute the broken leg with another object. In desperation, she quickly placed her hand to substitute the broken leg so that her father would not feel any shock. A sharp end of the broken pillar penetrates through her palm and blood started flowing. With the support of her arm, all four legs of the platform became even. Her soft ladylike hands however, experienced tremendous pain. But for fear that the platform may shake, she did not remove her hand and maintained her patience. A task which would have even been difficult for men, Bibi Bhani performed it religiously due to her strong devotion to her father. She did not move until it was

morning and maintained her portrait posture throughout. Her arm and hands were numb and soon her arms went red as blood gushed through her veins.

As Guru Ji's meditation ended, his eyes opened and he saw his daughter seated next to him. He then looked at her arms flowing of blood. Her veins had swelled and filled with blood. Guru Ji asked "What are you doing while seating here? Where is this blood coming from? Your arms look very strained." The blessed Bhani answered "Pitaji, I saw this platform without one leg. As I could not find any object to replace the broken leg, I volunteered by hand in replacement. I was afraid that there might be an interruption in your meditation and because of that I continued to maintain the stability of the platform with my hand. Coming down from the platform, Guru Ji removed her hand from under the platform. Looking at the injured palm and strained arm, Guru Ji said "How could you tolerate such pain?"

Bibi Bhani said "Pitaji, I have no knowledge, I cannot perform your sewa. I have longed for it day and night, you are God. By having your glimpse (darshan), my eyes are blessed. By doing your sewa, my hands are blessed. The heart in which you dwell, is also blessed and the feet that walk to attain your glimpse (darshan) are also blessed. Those who do your sewa are wholly blessed".

45.4 Blessings on Bibi Bhani Ji

Pleased with his daughter and her selfless service, Guru Ji said "Your child will be blessed and will be a subject of devote (pooja) of others. There will be a lot of happiness and bliss. Whoever performs his sewa, will be blessed. In the next generations also, there will be great personalities who will have great following. They would destroy enemies with weapons (shastar) and will lead thousands to salvation. The Sodi lineage shall be greatly praised. You have attained this through your meditation and selfless service (Sewa). In all three dimensions of time (past, present and future), there is no lady like you, there never was and there never will be. Your father is a Guru, your husband, will be a Guru and your son will be a Guru and you grandson shall be the Guru with temporal and spiritual authority continued by your great grandsons as well. How else shall I praise you as nobody can be equated to you".

Bhani immediately clasped her hand in prayer and praised Guru Ji in her heart with great reverence. She then went home, attaining the highest throne herself in the entire universe.



45.5 Guru Arjan Dev Ji's Childhood

One day, Arjan Dev Ji, who was then a child, was playing around the house. In his play, Arjan Dev Ji slowly came into Guru Ji's room and approached Guru Ji, who was sleeping on a bed. The servants were resting at that time as this was considered their a rest time.

When Bibi Bhani saw her son near Guru Ji, she ran towards him. Smeared with sand, Arjan Dev Ji was holding one side of the bed. When Bibi Bhani came close to him, he continued to hold the bed and stood there. Seeing this, Guru Ji said, "Do not take him, let him stand here." Guru Ji then held the child in his hands and feeling his heavy weight, Guru Ji said "This will be a Great Guru of the world, my grandson is a huge ship of bani who will liberate millions of sinners". At that point, Arjan Dev Ji lifted his feet and placed them on the bed. Seeing this, Guru Ji said "You are impatient to sit on the throne now itself. You will attain this from your father, be patient."

Bibi Bhani was extremely pleased to listen to her father utter words of blessings. She placed her child at Guru Ji's feet and then carried him to her room. She took care of all

her three sons and performed the sewa for her father. Similarly, the blessed, Ram Das ji also performed his sewa day and night.

46. BELOVED SIKH

46.1 Bhai Paro

One day Guru Amar Das Ji called Bhai Paro Ji. Bhai Paro Ji led a spiritual life like the swans (hans), very pure and was described as being able to separate water from milk.

Guru Ji said, "I have this thought in mind to inaugurate you as the next Guru. The pure swans liked the Sikhs are my beloved ones; I bless you with all the power and blessing to benefit the entire universe.

Bhai Paro Ji fell at Guru Ji's feet and said "Please give me your blessing, Prabhu Ji, I love to remain as your humble disciple and the Guru's throne only suits my Guru, please bless me with your discipleship (Gursikhi)".

Bhai Paro Ji fell at Guru Ji's feet and said "please bless me, forgive me if I have unintentionally refused to obey your command." Hearing this Guru Amar Das Ji said "If your wish is only to be a Gursikh, return to your house now and abandon your physical form and do not delay, your love is with me my beloved, come and merge in me. Paro! By merging with you, I shall in my next form flourish in this world and I shall fulfill all desires of Sikhs. I will bless all the Saints and destroy the enemies" hearing this order Bhai Paro Ji clasped his hands and in his mind he did bandna (bow before Guru Ji) and he left home immediately.

He told everyone that everything in this house belonged to his Guru Ji. He then abandoned his body just like an elephant takes out the garland of flowers from its neck. Bhai Paro Ji merged in Guru Amar Das Ji. A man, from the village Dhelay spread the news of Bhai Paro Ji leaving his body. He was loved by all his fellow Sikhs, everyone had high regards for him and there was no one like him. He was a great warrior who bravely defeated all evil desires. Satguru Ji then said, "Bhai Paro Ji has merged into the realm of calmness (anand dey saagar)".

Guru Ji then continued "Those who do not abandon worldly possessions, lose the gamble of their life. Those who have never heard the Almighty's praises and do not utter His Name despite participating in true congregation (Satsang) are totally useless."

Guru Ji called his youngest son, Baba Mohri Ji. He came and prostrated before Guru Ji. Seeing Baba Mohri Ji and the Sikhs, Guru Ji said "Bhai Paro was my beloved Sikh, and he has left his physical body, now go to the village Dhelay and perform his final rites". Hearing this, Baba Mohri Ji got onto a horse and left. He took along six Sikhs with him. On reaching the village, they went straight to Bhai Paro Ji's house, respectfully and with their hands clasped.

Everyone started talking about Bhai Paro Ji that there was none other like him. They all folded their hands and said "Dear Guru's beloved son, Bhai Paro Ji had no attachment and

he has left his 3 offerings for Guru Ji. He left one small beautiful horse, which is so talented that no other horse can beat it. He also left some wealth and some fine clothes”.

Listening to this, Baba Mohri Ji spent the night in Bhai Paro Ji's house. The next morning during wee hours (Amritvela), Baba Mohri Ji left the village after completing final rites of Bhai Paro Ji. When Baba Mohri Ji reached Goindwal, he told all the stories of Bhai Paro Ji to Guru Ji. He gave the wealth, clothes and the horse to Guru Ji, the three (3) things that were left by Bhai Paro for Guru Ji.

Guru Ji then gave all those offerings to Ram Das Ji and with lots of love Guru Ji said “I am giving you the three (3) things, that are from Bhai Paro Ji, please accept them. The beautiful and talented horse, the beautiful clothes and spend the money however you wish. No one else has the right to these things other than you.” While accepting the gifts, Ram Das Ji praised Guru Ji. Ram Das Ji was very humble and was always doing sewa. Guru Ji blessed his Sikhs and fulfilled their wishes. Goindwal was very crowded; everyone wanted to get liberation, whoever Guru Ji blessed received the 4 boons (Dharm, Arth, Kam & Mokhs).

46.2 Baba Mohri Ji

One day Baba Mohri Ji was talking with his good friends. While having the discussion, Baba Mohri Ji said, “Ever since I was born, I have never seen one hundred thousand in cash at one place at one time, Guru Ji does not accept wealth in cash. Whenever cash is offered, Guru Ji declines immediately. Such wealth in cash can never be obtained from Guru Ji's house at any point of time. I will never have a chance to experience to count one hundred thousand in cash ever.”

Guru Ji knew Baba Mohri Ji's desire. Guru Ji then thought of clearing the doubts of Baba Mohri Ji. The next day Guru Ji allowed the sanggat to offer five (5) cents each. Hearing this all Sikhs started offering 5 cents to Guru Ji and in a short time lots of cash was collected. Guru Ji then told Baba Mohri Ji to count all the money and spend as much as he wished. Baba Mohri Ji was very happy looking at the big amount, after counting the money his hands turned black. He tried washing many times but the stain did not go.

Guru Amar Das Ji said, “Now you have seen the results of wealth, whoever likes it, he turns black and their heart too turn black. If the wealth is collected and kept at home, they should know that this wealth would not go with them when they die. One who loses it becomes sad. Happiness is only obtained when one elevates oneself from the attachment of wealth. This wealth has destroyed many people. Therefore one should accumulate the wealth of the Almighty's Name (Naam), and with this wealth one gets the happiness, the pain of death is dispelled.

Upon listening to Guru Ji, Baba Mohri Ji realised the truth. For the rest of his life, Baba Mohri Ji never thought of collecting wealth. He remembered all Guru Ji's advice and practised these teachings, therefore he obtained bliss.

47. GURU RAM DAS JI BLESSED WITH THE THRONE ⁸²

In a jungle where sandalwood trees are found, their fragrance is passed onto all surrounding trees which smell like sandalwood too; in a similar manner Guru Ji reforms all human beings into him.

Goindwal is a place of recitation. It's the greatest place of devotion where beings reside close to Guru Ji. The place where religion, richness, achievement and salvation is obtained. People are blessed with gifts. Whatever comes to Guru Ji's mind is fulfilled.

47.1 Blessings of Age

One day after a bath Guru Ji was sitting down when Bibi Bhani Ji came to visit. Upon seeing his daughter Guru Ji uttered, "Ram Das is going to leave his body soon, tell me what will you do? In a blink of eye, this body, which is perishable, will leave us and we will not be able to stop it".

The wise Bibi Bhani Ji had total faith in Guru Ji words. She thought to herself "whatever Guru Ji is saying has to be true" immediately with folded hands she humbly said, "What else can I do, what a widow is supposed to do, that is what I will do. Whatever you command me to do I shall do".

After listening to her, Guru Ji said, "Hey wise and thoughtful daughter listen, Ram Das Ji's body will maintain and he will do meditation of the Almighty. This is my blessing onto you. Ram Das's life has come to an end today, nothing can be done, please understand. Now I shall give my remaining life to him." After saying this Guru Ji called for Ram Das Ji and made him sit by his side and explained. "Dear Son, your life has come to an end. I know that I will live till the age of 112 years. Now I will give 6 years 11 months and 18 days of my remaining life. Live your life in meditation of the Almighty. There will not be any difference between you and me. We are one now, like the water from a pitcher when poured into the ocean becomes one, the same way you and I are one. Just like in your heart the love for God abides the same way you have become one and convinced me with your love".

47.2 Inauguration of Guru Ram Das Ji

Guru Amar Das Ji looked at Bhai Belu Ji and said, "Go and look for a nice coconut and bring it to me, quickly bring it to me. You will be saved from the Messenger of death

⁸² Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 67) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

(jamdoots), you will be saved from the desires of the mind, and you will receive all the happiness. Your ego and attachments will vanish. Give Ram Das a bath and dress him in beautiful clothes. Do this quickly while singing the shabads of Gurbani and take the full bliss (anand). Then prepare other materials for my departure. The time to leave my body is nearing”.

Just as commanded by Guru Amar Das Ji, Ram Das Ji was given a bath and he was dressed in new clothes. Guru Amar Das Ji welcomed Ram Das Ji.

It was Bhadron Sudhi 13, 1631 (29th September 1574)⁸³, Guru Amar Das Ji held Ram Das Ji's hand and made him to sit on the Guruship throne. From Ram Das Ji's forehead a beautiful radiant spiritual light could be seen. It was like the King of Lights had been bestowed on the throne, together with eighteen (18) miraculous powers as the world will recognize Guru Ji as the most powerful. Baba Buddha came forward and placed the mark (tilak) on Guru Ram Das Ji's forehead. Guru Amar Das Ji placed tray with coconut and five (5) paisa on Guru Ram Das Ji's lap and went around Guru Ram Das Ji. Then, he touched his forehead on Guru Ram Das Ji's feet and gave the throne to him and made Guru Ram Das Ji the owner, the King, the master of all the three (3) worlds.

Then Guru Ji told Bhai Belu Ji, “Ask Mohan Ji and everyone else to come here now. Go and give them my order and ask everyone to come quickly.” Bhai Belu Ji quickly instructed other Sikhs to announce Guru Ji's order.

Listening to this order, all the Sikhs started saying that Guru Ji is getting ready to merge into his formless form and has bestowed the Guruship to Guru Ram Das Ji. People started coming to see Guru Ji as instructed. All the Sikhs came before Guru Ji. Both Guru Ji's sons also arrived at the darbar and the darbar was full of sanggat.

47.3 Baba Mohan Ji

Guru Amar Das Ji said to both his sons “Please bow before Guru Ram Das Ji, he has served the house of Guru Nanak with humbleness. He has the gift to tolerate the intolerable. Baba Mohan Ji who was very light hearted (mastana) and was never bothered about anybody said before the entire Sanggat. “I am not going to bow before him. You have given him everything. For a long time he has been taking shelter in our house. It is not right for him to sit on this throne. This treasure belongs to us. Just like how we have so many relatives living with us happily. Ram Das ji is also like them. Then why are you giving him this throne? We are your children and this throne is ours. Thus I will never bow before him. We are the sons of the owner of this throne.”

⁸³ Three (3) days before Guru Amar Das Ji merged into his formless form (Jyoti-Jot)

47.4 Baba Mohri Ji

Listening to all this, Baba Mohri Ji started to contemplate and started reflecting on the events that had taken place during the similar occasions when Guru Nanak Dev Ji blessed Bhai Lehna Ji his throne and made him Guru Angad Dev Ji. Then Guru Angad Dev Ji also did the same by bestowing the throne to Guru Amar Das Ji. Baba Mohri Ji continued to ponder that only the blessed ones are granted with such honour onto whom the Almighty himself bestows his blessings and their selfless service (sewa) is accepted. Although somebody is jealous about the Guru, they can never harm Guruji in anyway, instead the jealous person suffers in pain his entire life. Thus, by obeying Guru Ji wishes, all greatness is obtained.

After pondering thoroughly, Baba Mohri Ji stood up and he was followed by everyone else. Baba Mohri Ji then fell on Guru Ram Das Ji's feet and everyone said "Dhan, Dhan". Baba Mohri Ji is the first son of a Guru who accepted the inaugurated Guru with so much of respect and love. He is known as the most obedient one.

Baba Sri Chand and Baba Lakhmi Das refused to accept Guru Angad Dev Ji as the Second Guru. Baba Dasu Ji and Baba Datu Ji also refused to accept Guru Amar Das Ji as the Third Guru. Now, during the Fourth Guru's inauguration Baba Mohan Ji also refused to accept Guru Ram Das Ji. Therefore in Sikh History Baba Mohri is the first in obeying the orders of the Father Guru as for him Guru Amar Das Ji was a Guru and the physical form of the Almighty himself. He put aside the claims as a son and yearned for Sikhi.

Everyone (Sangat) prostrated before Guru Ram Das Ji's and sat down. Guru Amar Das Ji then spoke "Dear Mohri, tell us what you know of Guru Ram Das Ji, after me how would you address him, tell me to what you really feel and understand."

Hearing this Baba Mohri Ji folded his hands and said, "My beloved Father (Pita Ji), I have known the first Guru was Guru Nanak Dev Ji, second was Guru Angad Dev Ji and third one is you the knower of all, and the same way the forth form is Guru Ram Das Ji."

Hearing this everyone was happy, Guru Ji was very pleased and blessed Baba Mohri, "Mohri, you are the blessed one and you have realised the truth, you will always remain in my mind, and now there is no secrets and doubts between us anymore. Now onwards you are a Saint, your twenty-one (21) generations will be bestowed". Hearing this Baba Mohri Ji then asked Guru Ji "When Dharamraj (Righteous King) asks for the accounts of deeds performed in this world (Lekha), my generations will be bestowed once my accounts are cleared".

Said Guru Ji, "As long as Guru Nanak is here, your accounts have been deleted by Dharamraj. You will not be subjected to hearing in Dharamraj's court, you will be brought directly to me using a different path as you are the true Sikh and you are blessed. Your generation will grow bigger and they will all be blessed with the Sikh way of life

and they will all love the abode of Guru Nanak and will never put their faith in any other.”

47.5 A Plead from Guru Ram Das Ji

When Guru Ram Das Ji heard all this, his eyes filled with tears and said “Guru Ji please bless me with Sikhi (discipleship) and make Baba Mohri Ji the Guru. I am only your servant but Baba Mohri Ji is your obedient son who is qualified in every manner for the honour. I prefer to meditate at Baba Mohri Ji’s feet.”

Guru Ji was very happy hearing this and said “ These blessings were supposed to be given to you, and now it is the time for me to execute the preordained act to keep and fulfil the word, my generation will not have any doubts and dislike anyone, flourish the love and live as one” All the family got together and Bibi Bhani Ji with folded hands, said “ Dear Pita Ji, you have blessed the family with Guruship and please bless the family so that the sacrifices required in near future to retain the glory of truth and justice is dutifully delivered”. Guru Ji then said, “The Guruship will now onwards stay within the Sodhi clan. However, the future Gurus will have to face many challenges as Maya will now be allowed into the house of Guru Nanak, just as how the river flows, even though we try to stop the flow, it will somehow flow through. When Maya met Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Guru Ji instructed Maya to stay 30km (12 koh) away from the abode of Guru Nanak. Guru Angad Dev Ji kept Maya at a distance of 15km (6 koh). Now she is standing at my doorstep and trying hard to come in. It will only come when there are doubts and misunderstandings”.

Guru Ji then blessed Bibi Bhani Ji and declared Guru Ram Das Ji the next Guru of the jagat (world).

48. GURU AMAR DAS JI'S JYOTI JOT⁸⁴

Baba Buddha Ji marked Guru Ram Das Ji's forehead with the 'tilak' of Guruship. Guru Amar Das Ji placed five cents and a coconut (narial) before Guru Ram Das Ji and looked with so much of love. Then he circumambulated (parkarma) around Guru Ram Das Ji with his hands folded followed by Baba Buddha Ji. Baba Mohri Ji then bowed before Guru Ji. All Sikhs then meditated. This way Guru Amar Das Ji gave the throne to Guru Ram Das Ji and now Guru Ji was prepared to merge into his formless form (Jyoti-Jot). Guru Amar Das Ji's eyes were like the flower blossoms and with glowing face gave peaceful advice to all his sikhs to get rid of all their sadness.



⁸⁴ Sri Gur Pertap Suraj Granth (Raas 1, Ansu 68) – Churamani Kavi Santokh Singh Ji

48.1 Bhai Datu Ji

Wherever the news reached that soon Guru Ji will be merging into his formless form, everyone came to have the glimpse (darshan) and to get blessing from Guru Amar Das Ji. Guru Angad Dev Ji's son Bhai Datu, who kicked Guru Ji once, was also present there. Bhai Datu Ji's leg ankle was still aching since he hit Guru Ji. Datu Ji never came to see Guru Ji because he was ashamed and thus did not ask for forgiveness all this while.

Then when he heard that Guru Amar Das Ji was leaving his physical form, he told himself that he should go and ask for forgiveness, otherwise his pain would never end. Datu Ji realized that he has been very bad. So he thought to himself that now is the opportunity to get the blessings and beg for forgiveness. So after contemplating, he immediately left to see Guru Ji.

When he came to Guru Ji, he put his head at Guru Ji's feet and said "I have come to your sanctuary, I have come to your sanctuary" Guru Ji seeing Bhai Datu Ji quickly held him up and asked him to sit next to him and then Guru Ji said "Your coming here has blessed me, I am blessed to see you, what can I do for you. Please let me know so that my life can be fulfilled".

With his hands folded, Bhai Datu Ji says, "Dear Guru Ji, I am guilty, I was a fool and kicked you. My jealousy over powered me and secondly I had mixed with the wrong company that made me a mad person. Now I want to repent of all that I have done. I did not come to you because I was ashamed. Dear Guru Ji, please bless me. You who sees good in all. Please bless me."

Hearing Bhai Datu Ji, Guru Ji said "You are the beloved son of my Guru, I am your servant (daas). I am ready to leave this physical form. Now Guru Ram Das Ji is the Guru as I have given the Guruship throne to him. You have to understand, be a wise man and please keep away all doubts. When Guru Ram Das Ji's son sits on the throne of Guruship, there will come a time when he will come to you, meeting you he will touch your feet and then all your pains and sorrows will be dispelled."

Guru Angad Dev Ji's elder son, Dasu Ji was also was blessed with bliss upon meeting Guru Amar Das Ji.

48.2 Merging into Formless Form

All the Sikhs applauded Guru Amar Das Ji for his greatness and contributions. Guru Amar Das Ji then said to everyone, "I have now merged with Guru Ram Das Ji, please see me in Guru Ram Das Ji, I have given the Guruship throne to him. Whoever respects him will obtain all the happiness". All praised Guru Ji and folded their hands. They all prostrated before Guru Ji. That day was the full moon (Puranmasi) of the month Badhon

(October) when Guru Ji merged into his formless form. Guru Ji then looked at this sons and said “prepare immediately for all the necessary things” Baba Mohri then asked Guru Ji “ how would you want the ceremony to take place Guru Ji” Guru Ji replied “ it should be just like how it is done in Guru Nanak’s house”.

Guru Ji then gave advice to everyone, “Dear All, earn a truthful living and be successful in life; whenever unpleasant moments come into life remember the Almighty, all pains will be dispelled and desires shall be fulfilled.”

Guru Ji then looked at everyone, and said “my sons, brothers & relatives, after my merger please do remember the Almighty and sing His praises”.

It was Bhadron Sudhi Puranmasi, 1631 (1st October 1574). Then in everyone’s presence, Guru Ji then lay down on his bed and put a blanket over his head covering his face and merged into His Formless Form (Jothi Jot). His total age was 105 years 4 months and 1 day. Guruji completed 21 year, 5 months and 14 days of glorious Guruship.

48.3 Final Rites

In Goindwal, all the ladies got together and sang shabads from Gurbani. Guru Ram Das Ji with Baba Mohri Ji, Baba Buddha Ji and Bhai Belu Ji got together to bathe (ishnaan) Guru Amar Das Ji’s body. After giving the bath they placed Guru Ji on a flat bed (biban) and carried it on their shoulders. There were all kinds of instruments played (dhuna) and lots of flowers were put on Guru Ji. Gurbani Kirtan was sung and some Sikhs did ‘Chour’ over Guru Ji.

Everyone threw the flowers on the bed in which Guru Ji was carried. All of them reached the riverbank. There were thousands of people surrounding the place. Guru Ji then was placed there and on the pyre made of sandalwood. Ghee and lots of fragrance were put on the woods. Guru Ram Das Ji then handed the fire to Baba Mohri to light the pyre from top and all the four directions.

All of them then came back and sat at Boali Sahib and started talking about the greatness of Guru Ji. Everyone was thinking and chanting on Guru Ji’s name and everyone was sad.

Guru Ji the owner of miracles had blessed his Sikhs and removed their sadness and those Sikhs who did sewa with love and concentration were blessed with the representation of Guru’s house in all the twenty-two districts. They were blessed with the skills of teaching others the Sikh way of life. There were no limits on Guru Ji’s blessings. Even the prominent scholars and devotees praised Guru Ji. Kavi Santokh Singh said that Guru Ji is also the Master of all the deities and he has blessed them as well. Therefore, Guru Ji is the greatest among the greatest.

49. SUMMARY

FATHER	Baba Tej Bhan Ji
MOTHER	Mata Lachmi Ji (Roop Kaur Ji)
GRANDFATHER	Baba Har Ji
GREAT GRANDFATHER	Baba Bishen Das Ji
GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER	Baba Ram Narayan Ji
FATHER-IN-LAW	Baba Gopal Das Ji (Dewi Chand Ji)
MOTHER-IN-LAW	Mata Jaswanti
LINEAGE	Bhalle of Khatri caste
DATE OF BIRTH	Friday, Vaisakh Sudhi 14, 1526(B) – 5 th May 1469 A.D
PLACE OF BIRTH	Basarke, District Amritsar
WEDDING	Sunday, 7 th Magh 1557 Bikermi (19 th January 1500A.D.)
MEHAL (WIFE)	Mata Ramo Ji (also knowns as Mata Mansa Dewi) Born : Friday, Chet, 1542 (March 1485 A.D.) Jothi Joth : Monday, Poh 17, 1628 (31 st December 1571 A.D.) Total Age : 86 years 9 months
CHILDREN	Bibi Dhani Ji & Bibi Bhani Ji (1534), Baba Mohan Ji (1536), Mohri Ji (1539)
GURUSHIP	25 th March 1552 A.D. at Khadur Sahib (3 days before Guru Angad Dev Ji, Jothi Joth) Chet Sudhi 1, 1609 (Bikermi)
AGE AT GURUSHIP	82 Years 11 months 10 days
TOTAL AGE	105 years 4 months 1 day
TIME AT GUR GADHI	21 years 5 months 14 days
LIFE SPAN	1469-1519 Household Life 1519-1541 Devotion for Gangga River 1541-1552 Life in company of Guru Angad Dev Ji 1552-1574 Guruship Period
REGIMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emperor Humayun (1530-1540 A.D.) Sher Shah Suri (1542-1545 A.D.) Islam Shah (1545-1555 A.D.) Emperor Humayun (1555-1556 A.D.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emperor Akbar (1556-1605 A.D.)
CONTRIBUTION IN GURBANI	Anand Sahib, 869 Shabad, Salok, Chands in 17 Ragas
JOTHI-JOT DAY	Bhadron Sudhi Puranmasi, 1631 (1 st October 1574)
JOTHI JOT PLACE	Goindwal Sahib
ESTABLISHMENT OF GURDWARAS	<p>Gurdwara Janam Asthan – Located in Basarke, Amritsar. Guru Amar Das was born in this place.</p> <p>Gurdwara Damdama Sahib - 3 km from Goindwal, also commemorates Guru Amar Das who used to halt there briefly during his daily journey from Goindwal to Khadur carrying Beas river water for Guru Angad's morning bath. The present building was constructed in the 1960's by Sant Bhurivale, whose followers continue to administer it.</p> <p>Gurdwara Sri Darbar Sahib (Angitha Sahib) :- This place is particularly important as Guru Amar Das Ji fell down after hitting a stake while bringing a pitcher of water from Goindwal Sahib. This stake of tree 'Karir' became green again by the touch of Guru's feet. It grew to be a huge tree and until the year 2004 it was brought down by Kar Sewa group who build the Gurdwara again. It is a very unfortunate event that we fail reserve it for our future generations however a portion of the tree is kept in a glass frame. It is at this place that Guru Angad Dev Ji merged with his formless form and Guru Amar Das Ji Sri Guru Ram Das Ji & Guru Arjan Dev Ji also used to halt here while on their way to Amritsar. Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji after getting married his daughter Bibi Veero Ji at Jhabal, stayed here for some time along with his family. Gur Har Rai Sahib accompanied by his 2200 armed soldiers came from Kartarpur, he also rested here for a night. The ninth master Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib Ji also came from Baba Bakala to pay a visit to this holy place.</p> <p>Langgar Sri Guru Amar Das Ji- in the vicinity of the Darbar Sahib in Goindwal Sahib, is a largesized refectory, with kitchens attached.</p> <p>Gurdwara Sri Chubara Sahib - in a different complex which was once the residence of Guru Amar Das and his family, is the attic in which the Guru himself lived. It is a small room with a still smaller room entered through it. The Guru Granth Sahib is seated in the front room on a silver pdlaki or portable canopied throne. This room has doors covered with silver. The interior is decorated with stucco work inset with reflecting glass pieces and intricate designs in many colours.</p> <p>Killi Sahib- a small wooden peg (killi in Punjabi) now covered with a silver sheath, is fixed in the front wall of Sri Chubara Sahib on the outside. Guru Amar Das, used to meditate in the standing posture holding on to this peg for support. An embossed design on an antique brass plate above the Killi Sahib depicts Guru Nanak Dev Ji, flanked by Bhai Bala and</p>
ESTABLISHMENT OF	

GURDWARAS (Cont'd)	<p>Bhai Mardana, sitting under a tree. Another embossed sketch shows Guru Amar Das and his sons, Baba Mohari and Baba Mohan.</p> <p>Gurdwara San Sahib, Basarke, Dist. Amritsar- Guru Amar Das was forced to leave Goindwal by Datu the son of Guru Angad who was jealous at not being named the Guru by his father. Please refer Chapter 13 and 14 for detailed narration.</p> <p>Gurdwara Sahib Tisari and Satvin Patshahi Thanesar- this gurdwara is located near Lal Bahadur Shastri Market on the fringe of Thanesar proper, Ambala near the famous Nabhi pligrimage place of Hindus. Guru Ji stayed here for seven days and uttered the Shabad “Jaise dharthi uppar megula brasat hai kia dharthi medhe pani nahi”. Please refer to Chapter 28. Guru Har Rai Ji also this place therefore this Gurdwara is in the common memory of Guru Amar Das and Guru Har Rai,</p> <p>Gurdwara Sahib Kurukshetra- Guru Ji visited this place in the month of July in the year 1556. Guru Ji was visited by prominent scholars and Guru Ji was accompanied by thousands of people because the Tax officer declared that whoever follows Guru Ji will be exempted from paying tax. Please refer to Chapter 28</p> <p>Gurdwara Sahib Kankhal- this gurdwara is located at the bank of River Gangga which is two miles south from Hardwar. Guru Ji came here to meet a Sikh by the name of Dhana and stayed here for two days. Please refer to Chapter 28</p> <p>Gurdwara Sahib Pind Bhai Bahlol, Lahore- this gurdwara is located 7.2 kilometers north Kasur. Guru Ji visited a Sikh by the name of Bahlol.</p> <p>Boali Sahib- is a large, open well, 8 metres across. Its water level is reached through a covered passage comprising a flight of 84 steps. A wide pointed archway opens on a domed clearance, four steps below the ground level. The ground breaking ceremony was solemnised on Tuesday, January 1559. On its cupola is painted with multicoloured floral designs and portraits of Guru Amar Das Ji, Guru Ram Das Ji, Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The area between the arch and the coping is covered with portraits of the Ten Gurus, and those of Baba Mohari Ji, Baba Mohan Ji and Baba Anand Ji. Other paintings depict scenes from the life of Guru Amar Das. Most of the steps are covered with marble slabs donated by different devotees, the earliest of these being dated 1963 Bk/AD 1906. The lotus dome above the entrance has a tall gold-plated pinnacle with pinnacled kiosks and solid decorative domes around it. Please refer to Chapter 29 and 32</p> <p>Thara Sahib Sri Guru Amar Das Ji- is a marble-lined platform, with a pinnacled canopy of white marble supported on cylindrical columns, at the entrance to Sri Baoli Sahib. It marks the site where Guru Amar Das used to sit supervising</p>
---------------------------	--

**ESTABLISHMENT OF
GURDWARAS (Cont'd)**

the digging of the Baoli.

Sri Darbar Sahib or **Prakash Asthan Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji**- adjacent to Sri Baoli Sahib, is a square hall with a sanctum in the centre where the Guru Granth Sahib Ji is seated. daily congregations take place in this hall.

Guriai Asthan Guru Ram Das- marks the spot where Guru Ram Das was anointed Guru. A brass plate donated by a descendant of Guru Amar Das in 1920 has etched on it the scene of the ceremony in which Bhai Gurdas is holding a whisk over the head of Guru Ram Das, Baba Buddha is putting the saffron mark on his forehead and Guru Amar Das is standing behind Baba Buddha, while Baba Mohari is touching the feet of Guru Ram Das and Baba Mohan is sitting in meditation on a deerskin. Next to them are figures of 22 prominent Sikhs on whom Guru Amar Das is said to have bestowed manjis, the insignia of appointment as preachers in their respective districts.

Khoo Bibi Amro Ji :-This holy well was dug by Guru Amar Dass Ji on the request of Bibi Amro Ji to fulfill the needs of pilgrims. Bibi Amro Ji was the daughter of Guru Angad Dev Ji.

Janam Asthan Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji- is a room, in the same compound as Sri Chubara Sahib, where Guru Arjan was born. Now Sri Guru Granth Sahib occupies this room.

Chubara Baba Mohan Ji- marks the spot where Baba Mohan, the ascetic son of Guru Amar Das, used to live in attic floor an upstairs room (chubara, in Punjabi). It was here that Guru Arjan received from Baba Mohan the pothi containing Gurbani for use in the compilation of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The present room in which the Sri Guru Granth Sahib is seated is on the ground floor. Among the relics preserved in the Chubara Sahib complex is the palanquin in which the pothi's were carried to Amritsar and then brought back to Goindval.

Khuh Guru Ram Das Ji and Jyoti Jot Asthan Bhai Gurdas Ji- is the sign for a separate Gurdwara, to the west of Sri Chubara Sahib, commemorating Bhai Gurdas, who passed away here, and Guru Ram Das, the khuh or well sunk by whom is still preserved in the compound in front.

Gurdwara Amb Sahib also called **Bhairowal Sahib**- is situated in the Bhairowal Village of Taran Taaran Distt. This Shrine related to Guru Angad dev, Guru Amar Dass & Guru Ram Das. The White coloured building is situated in between the green fields feels like a heaven.

Gurdwara Chaapri Sahib- is situated in Chapri Village in Tarn Taran Distt. This Gurdwara is the holy place where Guru Angad Dev, Guru Amar Dass, Guru Arjun Dev, Guru Har Gobind, Guru Tegh Bahadur and Makhan Shah Labana came

**ESTABLISHMENT OF
GURDWARAS (Cont'd)**

while preaching. The well here, known as Ath Gutha Khuh, was build under the supervision of Guru Har Gobind. Guru Sahib blessed this place and said any person who is suffering from athrah disease would be cured if he bathes here on 8 Sundays with a pure heart.

Jyoti Jot Asthan Patshahi 3- a small marbled pavilion next to Guriai Asthan, was built on the site of the room in which Guru Amar Das merged into his formless form on 1st October 1574. Guru Ram Das also merged into his formless form in that room exactly 6 year 11 months and 18 days later.

50. TWENTY-TWO MANJI'S

1. Ganggu Shah Besi Khathri- Ambala
2. Bhai Soan Mal- Nagoke, Majha
3. Bhai Manek Chand-
4. Bhai Lalo Ji- Daley pind
5. Bhai Paro Ji-
6. Bhai Rang Das Ji- Ambala
7. Bhai Murari Ji- Lahore
8. Bhai Darbari Ji- Majitha, Amritsar
9. Bhai Fera Ji- Mirpur, Jammu
10. Bhai Mahesha Dir- Sultanpur
11. Bhai Cuha-Dherhan Khatri- Gurdaspur
12. Bhai Kedari Ji-Lumba Khatri- Batala
13. Bhai Sukhan Ji- Yamyal, Rawalpindi
14. Bhai Allah Yar Khan- village Della,
15. Bhai Sadaran Ji- from Goindwal
16. Bhai Raja Ram Ji- Brahmin
17. Bhai Rang Shah Ji- Melu, Jalandar
18. Bhai Mai Das Ji- Pind Daruli, Lahore
19. Bhai Handal Ji- Amritsar
20. Bhai Kheda Ji- Pind Khem Karan, Majha, Lahore
21. Bhai Sachan Sach Ji- Lahore
22. Bhai Beni Madho Ji- Lahore

51. GURBANI

51.1 Compositions

Guru Amar Das composed Gurbani (hymns) in 17 Ragas and their total number is 874. He wrote 171 Chaupadas, 91 other Padas including Ashtapadas, Chhants, 430 Salokas, 85 Pauris and 97 Pauris of special compositions like Kafi, Patti, AThhaniva, Satvara, Anand and Sohilay. The different types of poems and the use of different ragas show his keen sense of welding melody to poetic technique.

His well-chosen diction offers an insight into his mind and soul. At the same time, his words reflect the ethos, the culture and the tradition of the Sikh Faith. Though apparently the words have a connotation and significance, they throw ample light on the personality of the author and the philosophy of his time and the milieu. Above all, apart from the semantic nuances of phrases, there is the echo of psychological reflection and intuitive visions as we go into their deeper study.

Let us, for example, take the Anand Sahib which has a special place in his compositions. Though idealism and a vision of man's ultimate goal of bliss are presented here, it touches very often the reality of contemporary life, the ritualistic deeds - the hypocrisy of the outwardly religious, the fallacy of outer cleanliness and purity of the so-called holy living.

The aim of devotional poetry is not giving delight to the mind or the satisfaction of the reader's aesthetic taste, but the revelation of higher values and a glimpse of the ultimate destiny of man. Western thinkers have realised that the function of sacred or higher poetry is the affirmation of universal truths and moral values. In the Anand Sahib, Guru Amar Das deals with man's quest for happiness and how to obtain true bliss. A human being has a body, mind and soul. All the three are interlinked. The Body is the chariot; the Mind is the charioteer; the Real-Self (Atma) is the owner of the chariot, while the sense-organs are the horses and desire is the road. The soul and the mind are subject to the tendencies of the sense-organs. The soul is a part of Divinity. Man cannot realise his divine element on account of the veil of Maya. He regards himself as separate from Almighty. This obvious superstition or duality is removed by the Guru. The Guru makes man realise his divine nature. He becomes Gurmukh or Sanmukh. The others are the worldly wise: those who follow their self or ego. They are called Manmukh or Bemukh. They are overwhelmed by worldliness. They direct their sense-organs - eyes, ears, skin, nose and tongue - towards mundane and evil pursuits and not towards spiritual efforts (Sadhana). The control of sense-organs and total surrender to Almighty's Will and constant meditation is needed to enter the Mansion of Bliss. Almighty, the Ocean of Bliss is man's ultimate goal and destination.

51.2 Prosody

The Guru's poetic style is flexible and varied. He uses different numbers of padas in Chhants and Sohilay. In his Patti, Alahaniva and Anand, he does not slavishly follow the rules of prosody; rather he modifies them according to the nature of the theme and feeling. Like a seasoned poet, he uses images, symbols and figures of speech to highlight his message. The images of the love-torn bride and the pied cuckoo - Babeeha (SGGS Ang 1282), are taken directly from every-day life. So also we come across a number of gems of alliterative poetry:

"Har jeev Nirmal Nirmala Nirmal mum vasa" (SGGS Ang 426)

"Maya mamta mohini" (SGGS Ang 643)

"Gahir Gambhir Gunee Gaheer" (SGGS Ang 1234)

"Sahijay Sach Samai" (SGGS Ang 1249)

51.3 Music

Guru Amar Das knew many more ragas than those used by him for his hymns. Though he has not used Kedara raga, he had referred to it in Var Maru: "Among melodies, Kedara is deemed good, O brother, if through it one loves the Name and one associates with the Saint's society and enshrines affection for the True Almighty" (SGGS Ang 1087).

Guru Amar Das has made a reference to Gujri raga. This raga was first formulated by Raja Man Singh Tomar of Gwailor, in honour of his Queen who belonged to the Gujar caste which is supposed to be a comparatively low caste. Just as the Raja transformed a peasant woman into queen, in the same way the Guru can change a common man into an ideal man - a man of God: "Low is the caste of the milk-maid, but when she ponders over the Guru's hymns, and night and day repeats Almighty's Name, she attains to her Spouse" (SGGS Ang 516)

Bilawal which literally means bliss becomes truly felicitous, when it is used as a medium for meditation: "Beauteous is Bilawal's melody and tune, if through the Guru's word, one fixes his attention on the Lord" (SGGS Ang 849).

In Wadahans raga, the Guru makes a pun on the word Wadahans to high-light the efficacy of this raga. If it is used for singing the praise of the Lord of Truth, one becomes a supreme swan - one endowed with discrimination to sift water from milk and falsehood from truth.

"Those who are imbued with the Divine World and clasp the True Name to their hearts
are the great swans" (SGGS Ang 585).

Similarly, Ramkali which literally means the bud of God will blossom into the blooming lotus, if it is used for singing the Holy Name: "Through Ramakali raga, I have enshrined Almighty in my mind and have become embellished. When by the Guru's word, my heart-lotus blossomed; the Lord blessed me with the treasure of His devotion" (SGGS Ang 950).

Guru Amar Das avoided using ragas like Deepak, Hindol and Megh which are against the spirit of Kirtan. After all Kirtan is intended to lead man to spiritual development and salvation: "Through the infinite hymns of the Guru, day and night, I ever sing the praise of the Lord" (SGGS Ang 593).

"In this dark age, singing of God's praise is indeed a beacon - light for the world"

(SGGS Ang 145).

"When I sang the Lord's praises, the Divine light was kindled and I was shown the way" (SGGS Ang 86).

52. VARAN BHAI GURDASS

Bhai Gurdass Ji uttered four Pauri's in Vaar 24, depicting the principals and events from Guru Amar Das Ji's life.

52.1 Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 9)

ਅਛਲੁ ਅਛੇਦੁ ਅਭੇਦੁ ਹੈ; ਭਗਤਿ ਵਛਲੁ ਹੋਇ, ਅਛਲੁ ਛਲਾਇਆ॥
 ਮਹਿਮਾ ਮਿਤਿ ਮਿਰਜਾਦ ਲੰਘਿ; ਪਰਮਿਤਿ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ॥
 ਰਹਰਾਸੀ ਰਹਰਾਸਿ ਹੈ; ਪੈਰੀ ਪੈ, ਜਗੁ ਪੈਰੀ ਪਾਇਆ॥
 ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸੁਖਫਲੁ ਅਮਰਪਦੁ; ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਬ੍ਰਿਖਿ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਫਲੁ ਲਾਇਆ॥
 ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ਚੇਲਾ ਗੁਰੁ; ਪੁਰਖਹੁ ਪੁਰਖ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਮਾਇਆ॥
 ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਵੀਹਿ ਵਿਸਵੇ ਹੋਇ; ਇਕੀਹ ਸਹਜਿ ਘਰਿ ਆਇਆ॥
 ਸਚਾ ਅਮਰੁ; ਅਮਰਿ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ ॥੯॥

Achhal achhed abhed hai; bhagati vachhal hoi achhal chhalaia.

Mahima mit mirjad lang; parmiti paravar na paia.

Raharasi raharas hai; pairi pai, jag pairi paia.

Gurmukh sukh phal amarpad; amrit brikh, amrit phal laia.

Gur chela chela guru; purakhu purakh upai samaia.

Varataman vih visve hoi; ikih sahaj ghari aia.

Sacha amar, amar varataia.

PAURI 9 (Guru Amar Das)

Almighty is undeceivable, indestructible and non-dual, but because of His love for His devotees He is sometimes deluded by them (as in the case of Guru Amar Das). His grandeur has crossed all the limits and being beyond all the boundaries none could know about his extent. Among all the codes of conduct, the code of conduct of the Guru is the best one; he falling at the feet of Guru (Guru Angad Dev Ji) has made the whole world bow at his own feet. The pleasure fruit of the Gurmukhs is the state of immortality and on the tree of nectar (Guru Angad Dev) Guru Amar Das, the nectar fruit has grown. From the Guru emerged the disciple and the disciple became the Guru. Guru Angad the Cosmic spirit (Purakh) having manifested the supreme spirit, (Guru Amar Das), himself merged in the supreme light. Going beyond the perceptible world, he established himself in equipoise. Thus, Guru Amar Das has spread the true message.

52.2 Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 10)

ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਪਰਚਾਇ ਕੈ; ਚੇਲੇ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੁ, ਗੁਰੁ ਤੇ ਚੇਲਾ॥
 ਵਾਣਾ ਤਾਣਾ ਆਖੀਐ; ਸੂਤੁ ਇਕੁ ਹੁਇ ਕਪੜੁ ਮੇਲਾ॥
 ਦੁਧਹੁ ਦਹੀ ਵਖਾਣੀਐ; ਦਹੀਅਹੁ ਮਖਣੁ ਕਾਜੁ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ॥
 ਮਿਸਰੀ ਖੰਡੁ ਘਿਉ ਮੇਲਿ ਕਰਿ; ਅਤਿ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਾਦ ਰਸ ਕੇਲਾ॥
 ਪਾਨ ਸੁਪਾਰੀ ਕਥੁ ਮਿਲਿ; ਚੂਨੇ ਰੰਗੁ ਸੁਰੰਗੁ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ॥
 ਪੋਤਾ; ਪਰਵਾਣੀਕੁ ਨਵੇਲਾ ॥੧੦॥

Shabad surat parachai kai; chele te gur gur te chela.

Vana tana akhiai; sut ik hoi kapar mela.

Dudhu dahi vakhaniai; dahiahu makhan kaj suhela.

Misri khand ghio mel kar; aat vismad sad ras kela.

Pan supari kath mil; chune rang surang suhela.

Pota; paravanik navela.

Absorbing consciousness in the Word, the disciple became Guru and the Guru disciple. Warp and weft are separate names but in the form of yarn they are one and are known as the one, cloth. The same milk becomes curd and from curd is made butter to be used variously. From the sugar cane juice are prepared the lump sugar and other forms of sugar. Mixing the milk, sugar, ghee etc. many dainty dishes are prepared. Likewise when betel, betel nut, catechu and lime are mixed, they produce a beautiful colour. In the same way the grandson Guru Amar Das has been authentically established.

52.3 Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 11)

ਤਿਲਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਫੁਲ ਅਮੁਲ ਜਿਉ ; ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਸੰਧਿ ਸੁਗੰਧ ਫੁਲੇਲਾ॥
 ਖਾਸਾ ਮਲਮਲਿ ਸਿਰੀਸਾਫੁ ਸਾਹ ; ਕਪਾਹ ਚਲਤ ਬਹੁ ਖੇਲਾ॥
 ਗੁਰ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੈ ; ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲਾ॥
 ਦੁਨੀਆ ਕੂੜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬੀ ; ਸਚ ਮਣੀ , ਸਚ ਗਰਬਿ ਗਹੇਲਾ॥
 ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵ ਦੁੜਾਇਅਨੁ ; ਜਿਉ ਮਿਰਗਾਵਲਿ ਦੇਖਿ ਬਘੇਲਾ॥
 ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ; ਪਿਛੇ ਲਗੇ ਨਕਿ ਨਕੇਲਾ॥
 ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਚਾ ; ਅਮਰਿ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ ॥੧੧॥

Til mil phul amul jiu ; Gursikh sandh sugandh phulela.

Khasa malmal sirisaph sah ; kapah chalat bahu khela.

Guru murat gur sabad hai ; saadh sangat mil amrit vela.

Dunia kuri sahibhi ; sach man , sach garab gahela.

Devi dev duraian ; jiu mirgavali dekh baghela.

Hukam rajai chalana ; pichhe lage nak nakela.

Gurmukh sacha ; amar suhela.

As sesame mixed with flower becomes scented oil, likewise the meeting of the Guru and the disciple makes a new personality. Cotton also after passing through many processes becomes cloth of different varieties (similarly the disciple after meeting the Guru obtains a high position). Only the Guru's word is the idol of Guru and this word is received in the holy congregation in the ambrosial hours of the day. The lordship of the world is false and the truth must be caught hold of proudly. Before such a truthful person, the gods and goddesses run as a group of deer take to their heels on seeing a tiger. People, accepting the Will of Almighty and wearing the nose bar (of love) move (calmly) with Guru Amar Das. Guru Amar Das is the truth incarnate, blest one *gurmukh*, the Guru oriented.

52.4 Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 12)

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਹੋਆ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਹੁ ; ਅਚਰਜੁ ਅਮਰ , ਅਮਰਿ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ॥

ਸੋ ਟਿਕਾ ਸੋ ਬੈਹਣਾ ; ਸੋਈ ਸਚਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਚਲਾਇਆ॥

ਖੋਲਿ ਖਜਾਨਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਦਾ ; ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਚੁ ਮੇਲਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ॥

ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ਕਰਿ ; ਚਾਰਿ ਵਰਨ ਲੈ ਪੈਰੀ ਪਾਇਆ॥

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਇਕੁ ਧਿਆਈਐ ; ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ ਮਿਟਾਇਆ॥

ਕੁਲਾ ਧਰਮ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਸਭ ; ਮਾਇਆ ਵਿਚਿ ਉਦਾਸੁ ਰਹਾਇਆ॥

ਪੂਰੇ ; ਪੂਰਾ ਥਾਟੁ ਬਣਾਇਆ ॥੧੨॥

Satgur hoa satgurah ; acharaj amar , amar varataia.

So tika so behana ; soi sacha hukam chalaia.

Khol khajana sabad da ; saadh sangat sach mel milaia.

Gur chela paravan kar ; char varan lai pairi paaia.

Gurmukh ik dhiaei ; durmat duja bhau mitaia.

Kula dharam gursikh sabh ; maya vich udas rehaea.

Pure ; pura thaata banaia.

From the true Guru (Guru Angad Dev) becoming the truthful Guru, Amar Das has enacted a wondrous feat. The same light, the same seat and the same will of Almighty is being spread by him. He has opened up the storehouse of word and has made the truth manifest through the holy congregation. Making the disciple authentic, the Guru has put all the four caste (varnas) at his feet. Now all becoming *gurmukhs* adore the one Almighty and evil wisdom and duality have been wiped out of them. Now the duty of the family and the teaching of the Guru is that one should be detached while living amidst maya. The perfect Guru has created the perfect grandeur.

52.5 Guru Amar Das Ji (Vaar 24, Pauri 13)

ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਆਦੇਸੁ ਕਰਿ ; ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਬਦ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ॥
 ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਦਿਤੁ ; ਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਦੇ ਸੈਂਸਾਰੁ ਤਰਾਇਆ॥
 ਕਲੀਕਾਲ ਇਕ ਪੈਰ ਹੁਇ ; ਚਾਰ ਚਰਨ ਕਰਿ ਧਰਮੁ ਧਰਾਇਆ॥
 ਭਲਾ ਭਲਾ ਭਲਿਆਈਅਹੁ ; ਪਿਉ ਦਾਦੇ ਦਾ ਰਾਹੁ ਚਲਾਇਆ॥
 ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਗਹਣਗਤਿ ; ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਇਆ॥
 ਅਪਰੰਪਰ ਆਗਾਧਿ ਬੋਧਿ ; ਪਰਮਿਤਿ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ॥
 ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ; ਨ ਆਪੁ ਜਣਾਇਆ ॥੧੩॥

Aad purakh ades kar ; aad jugad sabad varataia.

Nam daan isnan dir ; gur sikh de seansar taraia.

Kalikal ik per huai ; char charan kar dharam dharaia.

Bhala bhala bhaliayah'u ; piou dade da raah'o chalaia.

Agam agochar gahan gat ; sabad surat liv alakh lakhaia.

Aparampar agadh bodh ; permit paravar na paia.

Aape aap ; na aap janaia.

Having worshipped the primal Almighty he made the word pervade all the *yugs* and even before the ages (*yugs*) i.e. before the advent of time. Instructing people and teaching about the remembrance of Almighty's Name (Naam), charity and ablutions, the Guru has taken them across the materialistic worldly ocean. The Guru provided four legs to dharma which had remained one *legged* earlier. Guru Amar Das Ji belonging to Bhalla lineage is the form of goodness who benefited the entire world with his goodness by further extending the way shown by his (spiritual) father and grand father (Guru Angad and Guru Nanak). Teaching the skill of merging the consciousness in the word, he has brought people face to face with that imperceptible (Almighty). His glory is unapproachable, invisible and deep; its limits cannot be known. He has known his real self but even then he has never attributed any importance to himself.

53. GURU AMAR DAS JI IN A GLANCE

Guru Amar Das greatly valued human life and regarded it as a wonderful opportunity for working towards salvation. The body is the temple of God and as such, it should be looked after and not mutilated or mortified.

The body which can confer benefit on oneself and others, must be cherished by all. He elaborated the idea with a simile. Just as a tree, if preserved will bear blossom and fruit, in the same way, if the body is cared for, it can practise charity and meditation.⁸⁵

**Surrender your body, soul and wealth to the Guru and submit to his Will
to win Almighty** – Guru Amar Das Ji (SGGS Ang 918).

53.1 Missionary Work

Guru Amar Das realised the importance of building up the Mansion of Sikhism and making it solid and second to none. He organised missionary work throughout India with the help of his devoted Sikhs. The Manjis were established wherever there was a sizeable population of his devotees.

Moreover, he issued a directive that all the Sikhs would assemble twice a year either at the Guru's centre or at the Manji of their area, on the first day of Vesakh (April), and at Diwali festival (November). Goindwal became a place of Sikh gatherings after the construction of Baoli Sahab.

Moreover, the sanctity attached to this spot on account of its long association with the Third Guru made it a kind of holy place, as an alternative to Hardwar.

Guru Amar Das took steps to keep the Udasi sect separate from Sikhism. There was a basic difference between the two sections. The Sikhs believed in family-life, while the Udasis believed in celibacy. The Udasis wanted to join Sikhism on their own terms to which the Guru did not agree. Narang observes in his connection: "The Sikhs were once for all separated from Udasis, and raised above asceticism, were free and fit to follow their course of national progress". (G.C. Narang: Transformation of Sikhism, p.33)

⁸⁵ Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion, II, P.73

53.2 Sikh Ceremonies

Guru Amar Das laid down Sikh ceremonies, so as to make Sikhs distinct from the Hindus. He prescribed the marriage ceremony, when one of his Sikhs, Bhai Dayala, complained to him that the Brahmins had refused to perform his daughter's marriage. Guru Amar Das made the recitation of Anand Sahab and Ardas compulsory for a Sikh wedding. The new ceremony "constituted a distinct break with Hinduism". (Tara Chand: History of Freedom Movement in India, II, p.396)

Similarly, Guru Amar Das gave special directions for a Sikh funeral when he was to leave his mortal coil. His grandson, Baba Sundar has mentioned the funeral ceremony in Ramkali Sadd (SGGS Ang 923). Hymns in Almighty's praise are to be sung before and after the cremation. No pandit, no lamps, and no immersion of the ashes in any holy river is necessary for the funeral ceremony of a Sikh. Moreover, there is to be no crying or lamination, because death is a natural and inexorable event and takes place according to Almighty's Will.

53.3 Gurbani Compilation

Guru Amar Das had obtained a collection of the hymns of Guru Nanak and Guru Angad from the second Guru when he succeeded the latter in 1552. To these he added his own compositions. Guru Ji appointed his grandson, Baba Sansram as the writer. This Pothi was later given by Guru Ji his son Mohan and it therefore was called Mohan Pothi. It was this collection of hymns which Guru Arjan obtained from Baba Mohan when he wanted to compile the Adi Granth in 1604. It may be noted that the compilation of hymns made by Guru Amar Das and known as Mohan Pothi also contains the compositions of many India Bhagats and saints⁸⁶. The reasons for the compilation of the Mohan Pothi were the demand for copies of hymns as the number of Sikhs was increasing and the need to exclude spurious anthologies of hymns containing Kachi Bani or fake compositions.

53.4 Against Caste Discrimination

It must be noted that Guru Amar Das had earlier undertaken a crusade against the Hindu caste system. The institution of langar was one of the many steps intended to break the caste system and the taboos about purity of cooking. The Guru spoke boldly against the caste system: "This body is made of five elements. It is subject to hunger, thirst, joy, sorrow, birth and death. It perishes and no caste goes with the soul to the next world. The Guru recognises no caste"⁸⁷.

⁸⁶ Cole and Sambhi: The Sikhs, p.46

⁸⁷ Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion, 11, p.84

53.5 Gender Equality

Guru Amar Das opposed the practice of Satee among the widows⁸⁸. 'Satee' literally means 'one wedded to truth' and its accepted meaning is 'a virtuous wife.' True Satees are those who honour their husbands in their hearts and not those who burn themselves on the funeral pyre. He said:

*Sateean eha na akhian jo marhian lagg jallan, Nanak satian janiann je birahe chot marran.
Nanak so satian janiann sil santokh rahann*

"A virtuous wife is not one who burns herself alive with her dead husband. She indeed, would be a sati who dies through shock of separation. But, says Nanak, a true sati is she who bears the shock of separation with courage and lives her natural span of life in a disciplined, dignified and virtuous manner." (SGGS Ang 787).

On the other hand, Guru Amar Das favoured widow remarriage, because he believed in family-life. He encouraged the Sikhs to have a marriage-partner after the death of their previous partner. Death is a natural phenomenon and as such it should be taken as a matter of course. Guru Amar Das believed in the uplift of women. He discouraged the practice of veiling among women. Sikh women were forbidden the covering of their faces both inside and outside the congregation.

Guru Amar Das, over four hundred years ago, appointed and ordained a large number of women preachers under the nomenclature of 'the Sacred Stools', pirhian. And is on record that, at least one woman was ordained and appointed as a Sikh bishop, Mathura Devi, wife of Murari. This is a truly remarkable phenomenon in the history of world-religions and marks a most new insight into and makes a most liberal estimation of the innate capacities of woman in relation to the highest spheres of human activity, the religion.

Guru Amar Das Ji blessed equal rights and respect to womens in comparison to other faiths. "If women had not received permission to enter the Buddhist Order, the good religion would have lasted for a thousand years, but now, O, Ananda, because of women entrants, it will decay and wither after five hundred years." -Mahaparinibbansutta

⁸⁸ From times immemorial, in our country, it has been recognised as the true test of a sati that she cremates her living body along with that of her dead husband. The premier and ancient Brahmapurana lays it down as "the highest duty of the woman to immolate herself after her husband, since this is commanded by the Veda as a path greatly reputed in all the worlds "(satrinamyan parodharma yadbharatu anuvesnam vede ca vihito margah sarva lokeshy pujitah-80, 75).

53.6 Forbid Alcohol

Guru Amar Das forbade the consumption of alcohol. In one of his hymns, he exhorted his followers to avoid intoxicating wines and liquors. He wrote: "One man brings a vessel filled with wine and fills a cup therefrom, by drinking which, intelligence departs and madness enters and man cannot distinguish between what is mine and yours and is accursed. Drinking it, one forsakes one's Lord and is punished at His Court. Yes, drink not this vicious wine, under any circumstances" (SGGS Ang 554). By devising new practices and rejecting the old and futile ones, Guru Amar Das made Sikhism quite separate from Hinduism. As one writer puts it: "He wished to construct a fence to protect it from the evil practices". Thus his work and achievement is a turning point in the history of the Sikh Gurdwara.

53.7 Guru Ka Langgar

It was in the context of these hoary traditions and notions that Guru Amar Das set up his institution of free common kitchen. The langar now deemed as a necessary adjunct of every sizeable Sikh Gurdwara. The Guru made partaking of food in his langar as a prerequisite condition for seeking his audience and coming to his presence. The king and the prince, the rich and the pauper, the high caste and the low caste, the Hindu and the Muslim, all had to, and as the chroniclers tell us did comply willingly with this requirement. A Hindu common kitchen wherein all must eat together is simply unthinkable, while there did exist, in medieval, India, the institution of free and common kitchens maintained by Muslim Sufi darveshas and holy men.

It is on record (Favaid-ul-Fuad) that Nizamuddin Aulia, following the precedent of his spiritual master, Sheikh Farid Shakaraganj, always insisted on a 'visitor' to take food first in his kitchen and then come to his presence. The Aulia often used to quote a hadith that says that, "he who paid a visit to a living person but took no food there, in fact, visited a dead man."

The institution of free community kitchen (langar), which Guru Amar Das perpetuated, proven to be distinct and distinguishable in principle and objective of merely a free kitchen. In three respects the institution of the Langgar is altogether a novel and revolutionary phenomenon in the history and climate of India:

- a. The food offered is essentially a trans-substantiated host, symbolising universal brotherhood of man.
- b. The food is referred to nutrition and health, regarding it as a gift from God.
- c. The concept of food-blemishes to just one comprehensive blemish, that the food eaten must be clean, health-promoting and obtained through just and fair means.

All these revolutionary ideas Guru Amar Dass propagated and integrated to the Sikh way of life.

53.8 Character and Personality

Guru Amar Das was essentially a man of peace and humility. When the Sikhs complained to him of the harassment caused to them by the Sheikh residents of Goindwal, he advised them to remain patient, they broke the jars of Sikh women when they went to the village-well to fetch water. Again the Guru advised restraint and said: "It is not proper to take revenge". He avoided conflict with Datu, the son of Guru Angad and retreated to Basarkay. He forgave Datu who had kicked and abused him. He said to his followers: "If one ill-treats you, bear it for three times and God Himself will fight for you for the fourth time and extirpate your enemy". He taught his Sikhs forbearance, self-control and compassion and reiterated the need of piety and devotion. His simplicity is evident from the fact that he kept only one spare dress for himself and gave away all other possessions in charity. Kalsahar Bhatt has called him Parbat Meran, that is, strong and firm in his patience like the Meru mountain in the Himalayas. The jealousies and the complaints of the caste-conscious Brahmins and Khatri and his refusal to pay them in the same coin show his saintly character. His enemies, in spite of their constant mischief, could not disturb his peace of mind.⁸⁹

Moreover, his devotion to Guru Angad and his love of Sewa for over eleven years won him the respect and admiration of the congregation. His sweet personality was amply reflected in his writings and the events of his life. He was an ideal man and matched up to his definition of the superman found in one of his hymns: "The ideal man, through the Guru, enjoys internally the status of wedded wife and bears the Lord in his heart. For he who speaks sweetly and is humble in his ways, enjoys the bed of the Spouse" (SGGS Ang 31).

53.9 Tributes

Balwand and Satta, the musicians of the Guru's court, composed the following verses on Guru Amar Das with whom they had intimate personal contact: "He made divine knowledge his steed and chastity his saddle, On the brow of truth, he strung the arrow of Almighty's praise. In the age of utter darkness, he rose like the Sun. He sowed the seed of Truth and reaped its fruit" (SGGS Ang 967).

Kalashar Bhatt paid his tribute to Guru Amar Das as under: "The Guru is the hero of Truth, powerful in humility, good-tempered, and with his holy congregation remains absorbed in the unimical Almighty. The Guru's white standard of fortitude is seen on the bridge to Almighty's realm, from the very beginning" (SGGS Ang 1393).

⁸⁹ Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion, II, p.70

Jalap Bhatt extolled the Guru in the following words: "Seeing the Guru's vision, the disciple is blessed with the Lord's meditation, service, truth and contentment Whosoever seeks the Guru's refuge is liberated from the account of the city of death" (SGGS Ang 1394).

Sal Bhatt paid his tribute to the Third Guru as under: "Holding the bow of faith in his hand, the Guru aimed the arrows of meditation and humility, Being fear-free, with Almighty in mind, the Guru plunged the spear of the Name and thereby, He destroyed the five demons of lust, wrath, avarice, attachment and pride" (SGGS Ang 1396).

Bhikha Bhatt eulogised the Guru in the following words: "He overpowers lust and wrath and his mind wanders not again; He abides in Almighty's realm and realises His will through His meditation" (SGGS Ang 1395). During the last two hundred years, the contribution of Guru Amar Das to the development of Sikh faith has been adequately recognised and appreciated.

C.H. Payne regarded the Guru as "a zealous preacher who gained many new followers"⁹⁰.

Cunningham affirmed that Guru Amar Das was "active in preaching and successful in obtaining converts. He found an attentive listener in the tolerant Akbar. He saved the infant church from early death by wholly separating the passive and recluse Udasis from the regular Sikhs"⁹¹.

Trumpp, a German scholar, who wrote a commentary on the Adi Granth, remarked: "His compositions are simple and clear"⁹².

M. Latiff, a Muslim historian called him "a successful teacher" and further added that his "zeal in preaching combined with his genial habits and affable disposition secured for him many converts to the new faith"⁹³.

I. J. Bannerjee regarded his pontificate as a land-mark in the history of Sikhism and observed; "The Guru introduced a number of reforms and changes in the ceremonies connected with marriage and death"⁹⁴.

⁹⁰ C. H. Payne: A History of the Sikhs, p.31

⁹¹ J. D. Cunningham: A History of the Sikhs, p.45

⁹² E. Trumpp: Adi Granth, p.LXXIV

⁹³ M. Latif: History of the Punjab, p.250

⁹⁴ I. J. Banerjee: Evolution of the Khalsa, Vol 1, p.167

53.10 Sikh Way of Life

The life of Guru Amar Das is an example of how an ideal man lives in this world. His Sewa (voluntary and selfless service) of Guru Angad and the entire Sangat (congregation) which he did for a period of more than eleven years, is a model of holy and ideal living. The purpose of Sewa is the elimination of the ego, which is a hurdle in the way of universal love remembrance of Almighty's Name. Ego has to be over-come through humility and works of charity. Even when the disciple does good deeds, worldly people criticise him. However, if he does not take to heart what others say and shows patience and practises for-bearance, people will ultimately realise the value of his work and wisdom.

Guru Amar Das' attitude to Datu the son of Guru Angad, is a great lesson for every Sikh. Datu kicked the Guru but the latter did not retaliate and quietly left the village. He never minded the apparent insult in the presence of the congregation. On the contrary, he showed exemplary patience and thus won the respect of his followers. Similarly his forbearance and humility in the face of hostility and aggression of Gond Marwaha, Tappa and the Brahmins of Goindwal is a testimony to his saintly nature. The story of Prema the leper whom he cherished and brought back to good health and later got married is an outstanding example of his benevolent disposition and his great compassion.

One day, Bhai Budha lovingly asked Guru Amar Das on behalf of the sangat, to tell them of the Sikh discipline in daily life. The Guru replied as follows: "Listen, O Sikhs of the Guru! Get up early at dawn and take a bath. Then sit in a corner and collect your mind and recite the Holy name till sunrise with concentration. Then go about your daily work or profession and earn your living honestly. Do not tell lies or speak ill of others. Share your joys and sorrows with your fellow beings. Resign yourself to Almighty's Will and do not find fault with the doings of the Creator. Do not run after transitory pleasures of this world. Give up deceit, jealousy, and covetousness. Always seek the company of the good and the virtuous. Mould your conduct according to the instructions of your religious guide".

53.11 His Philosophy

Guru Amar Das laid down the universal highway for every seeker of Truth. In this connection, following are His uttered Shabads in Gurbani. Guru Amar Das learnt the Sikh way of life from his predecessors and emphasised the important role of the Guru in guiding the discipline. Fortunately, we have now the permanent guidance of Sri Guru Granth Sahab which contains the message and the instructions of the Gurus.

53.11.1 Guru

According to Guru Amar Das, the Guru is a kind of boat or ship to ferry man across the world's tempestuous ocean, or a ladder for spiritual ascent. Guru Amar Das says in this connection:

"Imbued with the Name, the True Guru is the ship in the Dark Age" (SGGS Ang 552).

"By serving the Guru, man saves his capital; the Guru is a ladder or boat of salvation. Guru Nanak says, he who loves Almighty receives the quintessence. The true Lord is attained through the true mind." (SGGS Ang 1279)

The Guru destroys the disciple's ego through humility and service:

"Guru Nanak says, by meeting the True Guru, man's self-will is destroyed, and the True Lord comes to dwell in his mind" (SGGS Ang 560).

"Without the Guru, man cannot perform Bhakti and cannot love the Holy Word" (SGGS Ang 1417).

"Divine knowledge and the jewel of Naam are obtained from the Guru; after subduing desire, the mind remains stable within" (SGGS Ang 1044).

The Guru holds the key to the spiritual treasure. Guru Amar Das says in his connection:

"In the True Guru's hand is the key. None else can open the door. By perfect fortune, the Guru is met" (SGGS Ang 124).

"Virtues are accumulated and vices disappear. With the Guru's help, one merges in Almighty's Name" (SGGS Ang 361).

Commenting on the three-fold aspect of the Guru - Almighty, the perfect man, the Shabad (Gurbani), Guru Amar Das concludes that all the three constitute a single Reality:

"There is one Bani (divine gospel) uttered by the only Guru and one Shabad (Almighty's Name) to ponder upon" (SGGS Ang 646).

"Everyone talks of bliss, but bliss is obtained through the Guru" (SGGS Ang 917).

"The perfect Guru showed me the Almighty, and through the Guru's Shabad (Gurbani – hymns), I realised him" (SGGS Ang 592).

53.11.2 Selfless Service (Niskaam Sewa)

The Guru also teaches the disciple the true way of service of all creation, without any show or motive. The disciple must submit himself to the guidance and the will of the Guru:

"When one does the service of the Guru, the mind becomes pure and finds refuge in the true real-self home" (SGGS Ang 120).

"Through the service of the Guru, one gets real happiness, which cannot be found anywhere else" (SGGS Ang 548).

"Guru Nanak says, if one follows the Will of the Guru, one naturally merges in the Truth" (SGGS Ang 1249).

53.11.3 Universal Love

The Guru recognised the validity of all religions and revelations and prayed for universal welfare.

"Dear Almighty, do save this burning world through Your Grace, Save it by whatever way it can be saved" (SGGS Ang 853).

All men and women are equal, because they are Almighty's creation:

"From the unique Almighty come all forms and colours. The air, water and fire are kept together amongst all" (SGGS Ang 160).

"The whole world is made out of one clay, but the Potter has fashioned it into vessels of many kinds" (SGGS Ang 1128).

53.11.4 True Congregation (Sat-Sangat):

The Company of the pious is beneficial to the disciple for his spiritual progress. Guru Ji calls mammon a snake and holy-men snake charmers. In the society of saints, man learns Sadhana (spiritual practice) and the secret or technique of Naam Simran (Remembrance of Almighty's Name). Almighty's elixir is relished in the saint's congregation. The company of like minded pious persons strengthens the devotee's conviction and provides him a lot of moral support in his spiritual effort. Guru Amar Das says in this connection:

"Come Dear Saints; let us speak of the gospel of the Ineffable Almighty" (SGGS Ang 918).

53.11.5 Detachment

Through the Sikh leads a family life, his mind does not get involved in worldly matters. He does not renounce the world, but rather its worldliness and mammon. Guru Amar Das describes the life of the Gurmukh (God-orientated person) in the following words:

"the Guru-orientated becomes desireless and attain to supreme bliss. In house-hold, they remain unattached and imbibe affection for the Lord. Sorrow and separation cling not to them and they remain happy in the Lord's Will. Nanak says, they ever remain imbued with their God and He blends them with Himself" (SGGS Ang 1249).

The disciple does actions but they are done without the ego or the self and as such, these "detached" actions bring no reactions:

"He alone is above actions (Nihkam) who reflect over the Guru's hymns. Within his mind is the divine knowledge and thereby he effaces his ego" (SGGS Ang 128).

53.11.6 Almighty's Name / Kirten

Guru Amar Das affirms that the Almighty's Name is within every being (jeev), but its secret is imparted by the Guru to him/her. Kirtan or the singing of Almighty's praises (glories) disassociated man from his physical environment and takes him to the inner consciousness. Since Kirtan is the singing of Almighty's Praises which equally same to Almighty's Name, man feels the presence of the Guru. Then the Guru takes him to the Shabad and thus the meditation of the Almighty's Name produces an inner joy, which is called Amrit Ras or Har Ras.

"Imbued with Almighty's nectar, I now easily sing His praise and my tongue utters the Almighty's Name" (SGGS Ang 1049).

"The tongue tastes the Almighty's nectar; the mind is drenched with the Almighty's love, and the mortal medicines on the True Name. The inner well is brimful with the Almighty's ambrosia. Through the Name's meditation, the tongue draws and drinks it" (SGGS Ang 570).

Guru Amar Das realised that bliss is obtained by singing the Lord's praise and His glory:

"Within the minds of devotees is bliss. They are imbued with the love of the True Almighty. Night and day, they ever sing the praises of the Pure One and are easily absorbed in the Praiseworthy Almighty" (SGGS Ang 122).

"In the minds of such friends of Almighty is bliss. They contemplate on Guru's Shabad (hymns), they enshrine Almighty's Name within their minds, their pain is dispelled and the Creator blesses them with Divine Light". (SGGS Ang 549).

Almighty's Name is the sweetest delicacy. It removes all sorrows. It is the surest way to salvation:

"O my Soul, supremely sweet is Almighty's Name. It is the destroyer of sins and fears of millions of births. By the Guru's grace, the Unique Almighty is seen" (SGGS Ang 1233).

"Let some one see and study the Shastras and Simiritis, Without the Name, none is liberated" (SGGS Ang 229).

But one must listen the Shabad and contemplate and put it into practice:

"Within this body are the nine treasures of Almighty's Name and they are attained by contemplating on the Guru's word" (SGGS Ang 754).

"Man melodies of joy play for one in whose mind the Almighty's Name abides" (SGGS Ang 917).

The benefits of meditation on Almighty's Name or the singing of hymns are significant. Firstly, just as soap removes dirt, in the same way, Almighty's Name washes clean the inner consciousness of man. Secondly, it smoothens the path of meditation (Sadhana) and

helps in the life of service, piety and noble action. The disciple carries out his daily chores with a sense of peace and joy.

53.11.7 Devotion and Humility

Devotion is nothing but love and respect for the Guru and Almighty's Name. The devotion finds expression in conduct and action. Look at Guru Amar Das' love of Guru Angad. Even while accidentally stumbling on a stormy wintry night, he minded the pail of water meant for the bath of his Guru. He thought of his beloved Guru then, instead of his own fall or injury.

"If one forgets the Beloved for a moment, what kind of devotional service is it; one whose body and soul are soothed by the True Almighty's Name never allows his breath to go to waste" (SGGS Ang 35).

The disciple surrenders his all; body, mind and soul to the Guru and Almighty who are eventually one:

"Surrender your body, soul and wealth to the Guru and submit to his Will to win the Almighty" (SGGS Ang 918).

53.11.8 Divine Grace

Without Almighty's grace, the devotee's efforts may not succeed. Man does his best to please Almighty and yet not get near Him. Sikhism is essentially a religion of grace. Sadhana or spiritual effort or what is called Kamaee has to be blessed by the Almighty in order to bear fruit. Man may sow the seed, water the plant and supervise the crop, but what harvest can he reap if there is flood or snow:

"If an account is called for, by Almighty, who could satisfy Him? Accounting cannot bring any satisfactory result The True Almighty Himself grants pardon and having forgiven blends Himself" (SGGS Ang 111).

"By God's grace, the mortal serves the Guru and through God's grace, the service is performed. By God's grace, the mind is controlled, and by His grace the mind becomes pure" (SGGS Ang 558).

Almighty in His grace can awaken a sleeping being (Jeev) in ignorance and give him enlightenment and wisdom:

"He who has made the being (jeev) sleep shall awaken him. By the Guru's instructions he obtains understanding" (SGGS Ang 112).

When the disciple serves the perfect Almighty, he gradually imbibes His virtues and walks in His Way:

"If you walk according to His Will, you shall be like Him whom you serve" (SGGS Ang 549).

53.11.9 Bliss and Union

In Anand Sahib, Guru Amar Das has given in detail the gospel of bliss and the means to achieve it. Firstly, he has pointed to the hurdles that lie in the way and which have to be crossed. These hurdles are: argumentation, worldly wisdom, neglect of higher values, ritual, false-hood, hypocrisy, duality, greed, avarice, ego; in short the manifestations of maya. The responsibility of the family and professional career and commitment to the community are real challenges to test the mettle (ability to cope) of man. Secondly, the Guru has mentioned certain positive steps which the disciple has to take in order to develop his spiritual life. The association with the Guru, the sincerity of meditation (Sadhana), selfless service the company of the holy, the performance of, or listening to Kirtan or Gurbani, the relish of Nam Ras, the direction of organs of perception (Knowledge Sensors) like eyes, ears, nose, skin the tongue and organs of action (Deed Sensors) like mouth, legs, hands, anus, the urinary and others to higher goals, and finally the acceptance of God's Will are some of the necessary steps towards the earning of God's grace. When the Knowledge (Sahaj) stage or Tenth Door (Dasam duaror) Turya (ultimate spiritual state in which the differences of being and Almighty vanishes) is attained, all sorrows and maladies vanish, the fear of death is overcome and divine melody is heard within, and ineffable joy is experienced. The devotee shines with an inner radiance and wisdom which make him feel the presence of Almighty within himself.

"There has been much speculation about what Anand (Bliss) is, but the Word of the Guru now makes the matter clear. The Anand is to be ever with God, the gift of His Grace and mark of His love. God, in His Mercy, destroys the impurities and limitations of the human ego and bestows upon him the true knowledge and everlasting existence. The man when freed from the gravitational pull of the world of corruption becomes weightless and purified with Truth, that is, the Word." (SGGS Ang 917)

He is Jiwan Mukht, liberated while alive and he/she merges in the Ocean of Bliss:

"Some rare Gurmukhs (Guru-Oriented) becomes liberated in life he easily blends with Him, the True Almighty" (SGGS Ang 232).

Merger in the Infinite is the final goal of human life. It is difficult to describe this condition. Like a dumb man who cannot tell the taste of a sweet fruit after eating it, the devotee - intoxicated with the divine nectar, cannot depict the state of bliss, because it is beyond the experience of the physical senses.

"He who soars above the nine gates (organs) and hears the playing of the celestial melody in the Tenth gate is liberated" (SGGS Ang 110).

"Their hearts remain saturated with Almighty's elixir and their mental pride is destroyed; their mind-lotus blooms and their meditation are dissolved in Almighty" (SGGS Ang 26).

Guru Amar Das relates his own experience of the state of beatitude in the following words:

"There, one neither sleeps nor hungers; he lives in peace in the true Nectar of Almighty's Name; Guru Nanak says, pain and pleasure cling not to man; there is the illumination of the All-Pervading Soul". (SGGS Ang 1414).

