

Guru Arjan Dev

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Editorial changes only.
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Karamjit Singh
&
Rajinder Kaur

Guru Arjan Dev

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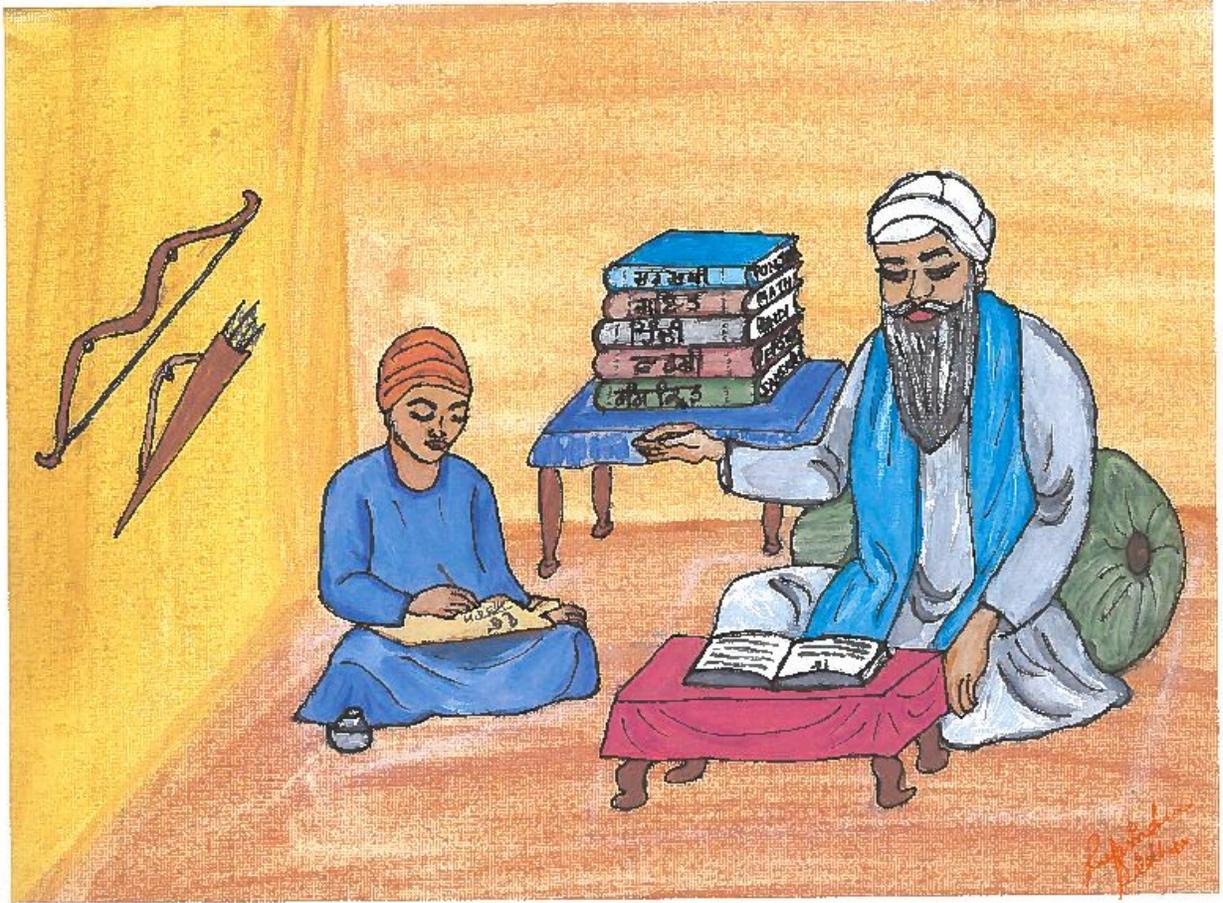
1. Education and Marriage

The fifth Guru of the Sikhs, Sri Guru Arjan Dev ji was born on April 15, 1563 AD in the village Goindwal, Amritsar, Punjab. He was the youngest child of fourth Guru Sri Guru Ramdas ji and mother, Bibi Bhaani ji. Bibi Bhaani ji was the younger daughter of third Guru Sri Guru Amardas ji. She is the only woman in Sikh history to have the honor of being a Guru's daughter, a Guru's wife and a Guru's mother. Guru Ramdas ji along with Bibi Bhaani ji served at Guru's institution after their marriage and lived at Goindwal. Arjan Dev ji received love and care from his grandfather and also learned to recite sacred hymns.

Guru Amardas ji paid great attention to Arjan Dev's education. Arjan Dev ji learned Gurmukhi script from Baba Budha ji. His uncle, Mohri imparted knowledge of Arithmetic and the village Priest taught Arjan Dev ji Devnagri (Hindi script). Muslim Priest taught him Persian and Pandit Beni imparted knowledge of Sanskrit. Arjan Dev became an expert in music. He composed hymns in accordance with Raags (musical notes). He classified the hymns of Guru Granth Sahib according to the Raags. He was an excellent horse-rider and archer.

Arjan Dev ji was married to Mata Ganga ji on June 19, 1589 at the age of 26. Mata ji was the daughter of Bhai Krishan Chand of village Mau, India. Arjan Dev Ji arrived here the day before the wedding. The village is now famous for Arjan Dev ji and Mata Ganga ji wedding. Presently, it is called Gurdwara BILGA. Arjan Dev ji's chola, pyjama, Batva, Dushala, Simrana Mala and Chandan ki chawanki are kept at this gurdwara.

Every year on the occasion of marriage of Arjan Dev ji and Mata Ganga ji, a great fair is held here over three days. On the last day, the holy clothes of Guru Sahib are displayed before the closing ceremony of Diwan.



2. A Lesson in Obedience

One day in the year 1581 (when Arjan Dev ji was 18 years old), Guru Ramdas ji's cousin, Sihari Mal came from Lahore to invite Guru ji to come to Lahore and attend his son's marriage. At that time, Guru Ramdas ji was busy with the construction of the city of Amritsar, and thought of sending one of his sons to attend the marriage instead. He asked his eldest son - Prithi Chand to go. Prithi Chand knew that, the time for Guru Ramdas ji to merge into the Supreme Being was near. Prithi Chand was afraid that he might be deprived of the succession to the leadership of the Sikhs if he was away at Lahore at that time. So he replied, "Dear father! you know that I look after offerings from devotees. This work will suffer if I am not here."

After getting negative response of Prithi Chand, Guru Ramdas ji asked his second son - Mahan Dev. who was of saintly nature. He replied, "Reverend father! I have nothing to do with the customs and rituals of this world. I have no interest in attending the marriage." On hearing the refusal of two sons, Guru Ramdas ji asked the third son - Arjan Dev who was 18 years old at that time- if he would go to Lahore. Arjan Dev ji respectfully accepted Guru ji's instructions to go to Lahore. Guru Ramdas ji asked Arjan Dev to remain in Lahore until he is asked to return.

As instructed by his father, Arjan Dev ji started holding daily congregation for public, once the marriage was over. Arjan Dev ji would meet with holy men including Saint Mian Mir, and exchange his views with them. After waiting for several months, Arjan Dev ji wrote to Guru Ramdas ji allowing him to return. The letter fell into Prithi Chand's hands. Prithi Chand did not give the letter to Guru Ramdas ji to insure that Arjan Dev ji is not called back. Arjan Dev ji wrote a second letter. It was also intercepted by Prithi Chand. Arjan Dev ji sent a third letter through a Sikh and instructed him to hand it over to only Guru Ramdas ji. When Guru Ramdas ji got the third letter, he asked Prithi Chand for the previous two letters. Prithi Chand denied receiving the two letters. Prithi Chand's house was searched. Both the letters were recovered from his house.

Guru Ramdas ji immediately sent Sikhs to Lahore to bring back Arjan Dev ji. Guru Ramdas ji felt that the time to depart from the world was coming near. He decided that his youngest son, Arjan Dev, alone was fit for the Guruship. He made his decision known to his Sikhs. They agreed with him. Then he met with his principal Sikhs. He came down from his seat. He seated Arjan Dev ji on it in the presence of assembled Sikhs. He asked Baba Budha ji to put the mark of Guruship (tilak) on Arjan Dev's forehead. He then bowed before Arjan Dev ji and said, 'Sri Arjan Dev is the Guru now. As one lamp lights another, so has the Guru's light or spirit passed onto him. Thus Guru Nanak's light and spirit have come to dwell in him. He is the fifth Guru Nanak.' This happened on August 28, 1581 AD.

3. Acceptance as True Guru

Prithi Chand, the eldest son of Guru Ramdas, thought that it was his right to become the Guru after his father. But his father had given the Guruship to Arjan Dev - the youngest son. Prithi Chand became mad with anger. He spoke to Guru Ramdas in harsh & angry words. He said to Guru Ramdas, 'You have denied me my right to become Guru. You are favoring your youngest son. I will remove him and would declare myself the Guru.'

Guru Ramdas suggested Prithia Chand that it was not right for a son to fight with his father. He desired him to accept his decision like a good son. But Prithi Chand continued to speak in harsh language. He repeatedly said, 'You have made a wrong decision. I will undo what you have done. I will drive Arjan Dev away. I will become the Guru in his place. I don't accept your unjust decision.'

On the following day, Guru Ramdas ji set out for Goindwal. He took Guru Arjan Dev with him. There he bade farewell to his dear ones, departed from this world and merged into the Supreme Being. This happened on September 1, 1581 AD.

Soon after that Guru Arjan Dev ji returned to Guru-ka-Chak (presently known as Amritsar). There he began to carry out his duties as the fifth Guru of the Sikhs.

Prithi Chand, on the other hand declared himself to be the Guru. He sent out his men to make it known that he was the Guru. Many Sikhs were deceived by his men. When the Sikhs came to Amritsar with their offerings, Prithia's men took them to him. Thus all offerings went to Prithi Chand . Guru Arjan Dev ji was left with no income. Still he managed to run the Guru's kitchen with whatever little he had. He remained calm and busy in reciting God's name. He took no steps against Prithi Chand . Guru Arjan Dev Ji's had full faith in God. He believed that truth would succeed and falsehood would fail.

Prithi Chand played another trick. While he took offerings from visiting Sikhs, he sent them to Guru Arjan Dev ji's langar for food. The Guru did not mind this. He provided the best possible food for all in the langar. But it was not as good as it used to be in former days. He and his wife had often to live on minimum food. Sometimes it was a little coarse food, only once a day. But they were content.

This went on for some time. One day Bhai Gurdas came from Agra. He was a cousin of Bibi Bhani ji, Guru Arjan Dev's mother. He was wise and learned. He was heartbroken to see poor quality of food taken by the Guru ji and his wife. He became very sad to see what was happening.

Bhai Gurdas ji made up his mind to do something about it. He met with principal Sikhs like Baba Budha ji. He discussed the matter with them. Baba Budha ji met with visiting Sikhs at a place called Pipli Sahib. He explained to them about the tricks being played by Prithi Chand. Other prominent Sikhs went out in all directions. They informed the Sikhs of what was happening at Amritsar and the Sikhs resumed offerings to Guru ji. The Guru's langar became well-provided. Soon the truth became known far and wide. All Sikhs accepted Guru Arjan Dev ji as the true Guru.

4. Harmandir Sahib

The foundation stone of the historic building of Harmandir Sahib was laid by a non-Sikh in December 1588. It was - Muslim Saint Hazrat Mian Mir ji of Lahore. Guru Arjan Dev ji chose Hazrat Mian Mir ji to lay the foundation because he wanted to give true message of religion to the world promoting interfaith dialogue and interaction. Harmandir Sahib has four doors, one in each direction - North, East, South & West. It signifies that men/women from any direction, caste can enter the house of God.

During 1400s, the site had a small lake. It was surrounded by a wooded area. Travellers and holy men used the site for meditation and rest. Visitors recognized it for its tranquillity and pure, sweet water. Historical records show that Gautama Buddha stayed for some time at this ancient lake, even recommending it as a place for Sadhus and Rishis to meditate.

Although, there is no 'paper trail' to prove the claim, it is thought that the land was gifted to the Guru Ram Das's daughter as a present on her wedding to Guru Arjan.

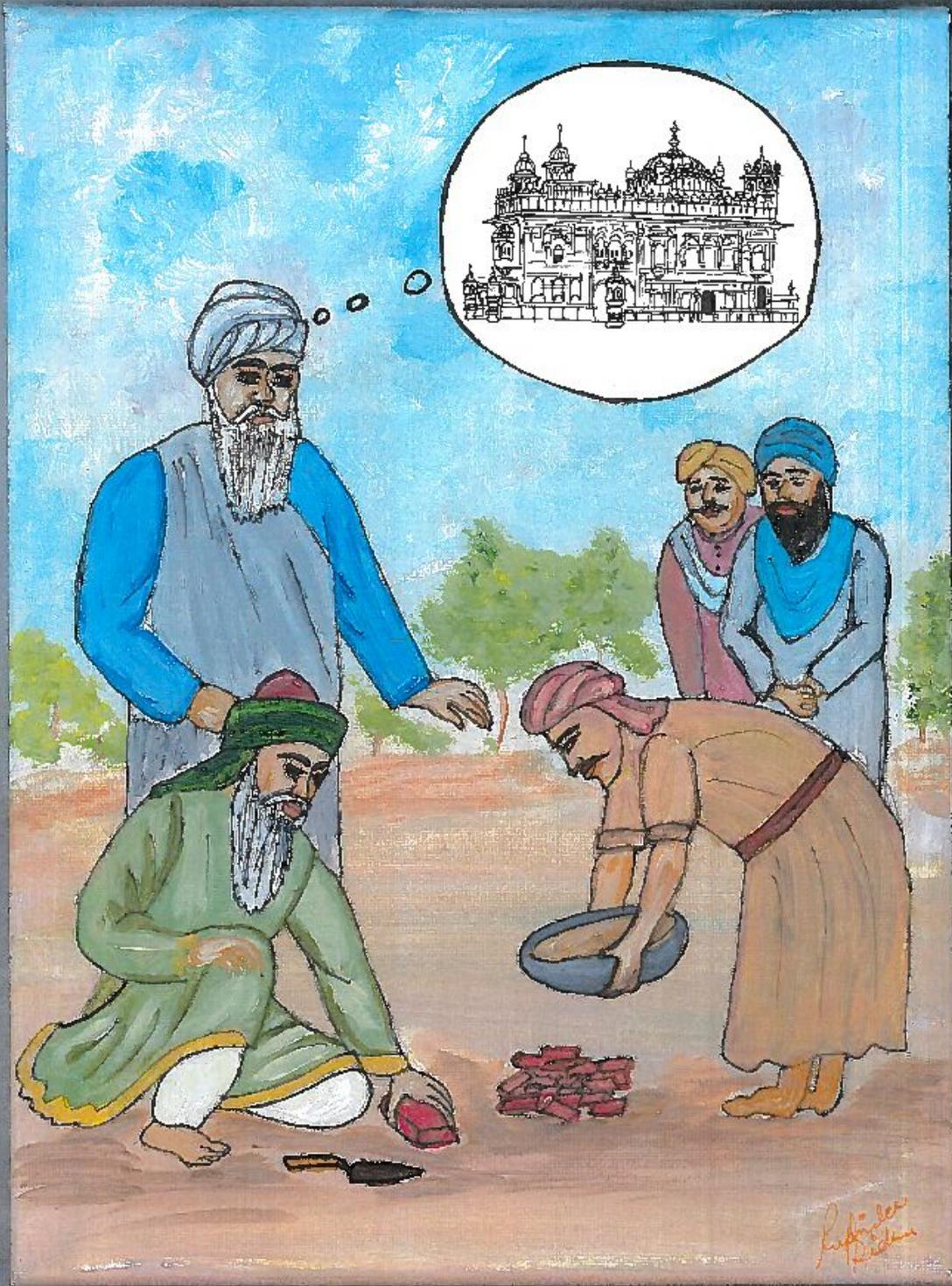
The lake was enlarged and a small community was established during the leadership of the fourth Guru (Guru Ramdas, 1574-1581). It was during the leadership of the fifth Guru (Guru Arjan, 1581-1606), that Harmandir Sahib was built. It was completed in 1601.

Harmandir Sahib and Amritsar were developed simultaneously. The city was formerly known as Ramdaspur. Up on construction of Harmandir Sahib, it became known as Amritsar. Guru Ramdas ji encouraged traders and businessmen to settle in the city with the development of the Guru Ka Bazaar and the market at Chowk Passian. Fifth and sixth Gurus jees expanded the city. Wells and baolis were constructed to supply water to the ever growing groups of pilgrims. The garden, Guru Ka Bagh was laid out to the south-east of the Harmandir Sahib. The area surrounding

Harmandir Sahib was developed into markets, gardens, homes and residential areas. Guru Arjan Dev ji also lived in one of these newly constructed houses.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was very generous in his patronage of the Gurdwaras. But, the Harmandir Sahib especially held special place in his heart that it holds for all Sikhs. Maharaja Ranjit Singh contributed tons of gold to cover the exterior walls of two upper floors' ornately fashioned metal panels of Harmandir Sahib. The beautiful dome, shaped like an inverted lotus, which sits above the curved bangaldar roof of its Shish Mahal, alone was covered in 220 lbs. of the precious metal.

(The SGPC in March 2005 has prohibited Sikhs from referring to the Sri Harmandir Sahib as the Golden Temple.)



Rajinder
Rishin

5. Bhai Manjh

The real name of Bhai Manjh was Tiratha but was known by his last name - Manjh. He was a landlord of village Kangmai, Hoshiarpur. Bhai Manjh was a follower of Sakhi Sarwar (a religious sect). He constructed Pirkhanas (places for worship), in the nearby villages to propagate his faith.

Once Bhai Manjh set out to make a pilgrimage to Nigaha Pir. His friends and admirers also accompanied him. While returning home he met a Sikh who was reciting hymns of Guru Nanak Dev ji. Bhai Manjh was impressed to hear the melodious hymns. Bhai Manjh expressed his desire to meet Guru ji. The Sikh said that at that time Guru Arjan Dev ji, the fifth Nanak was guiding the Sikhs and he was residing in the city of Amritsar.

Bhai Manjh took leave of his followers and friends and reached Amritsar. On meeting Guru Arjan Dev ji, Bhai Manjh said, "My Lord! I want to become your Sikh, please accept me." Hearing these words, Guru ji smiled and said, "You are a devotee of Sakhi Sarwar. It is very easy to become a disciple of Sakhi Sarwar. But it is very difficult to become a true Sikh. A true Sikh subdues five passions of evil⁽¹⁾ and becomes as humble as dust."

Hearing the advice of the Guru, Bhai Manjh said, "My Lord! I am ready to get rid of five vices." Guru said, "Brother Manjh, you can not have two opposite beliefs. A pot can be filled with either water or oil but not both at the same time." These eloquent words of the Guru ji impressed Bhai Manjh. He understood the reality and the truth. He decided to follow Guru's path. He resigned as chief of the village. He distributed his land among the poor.

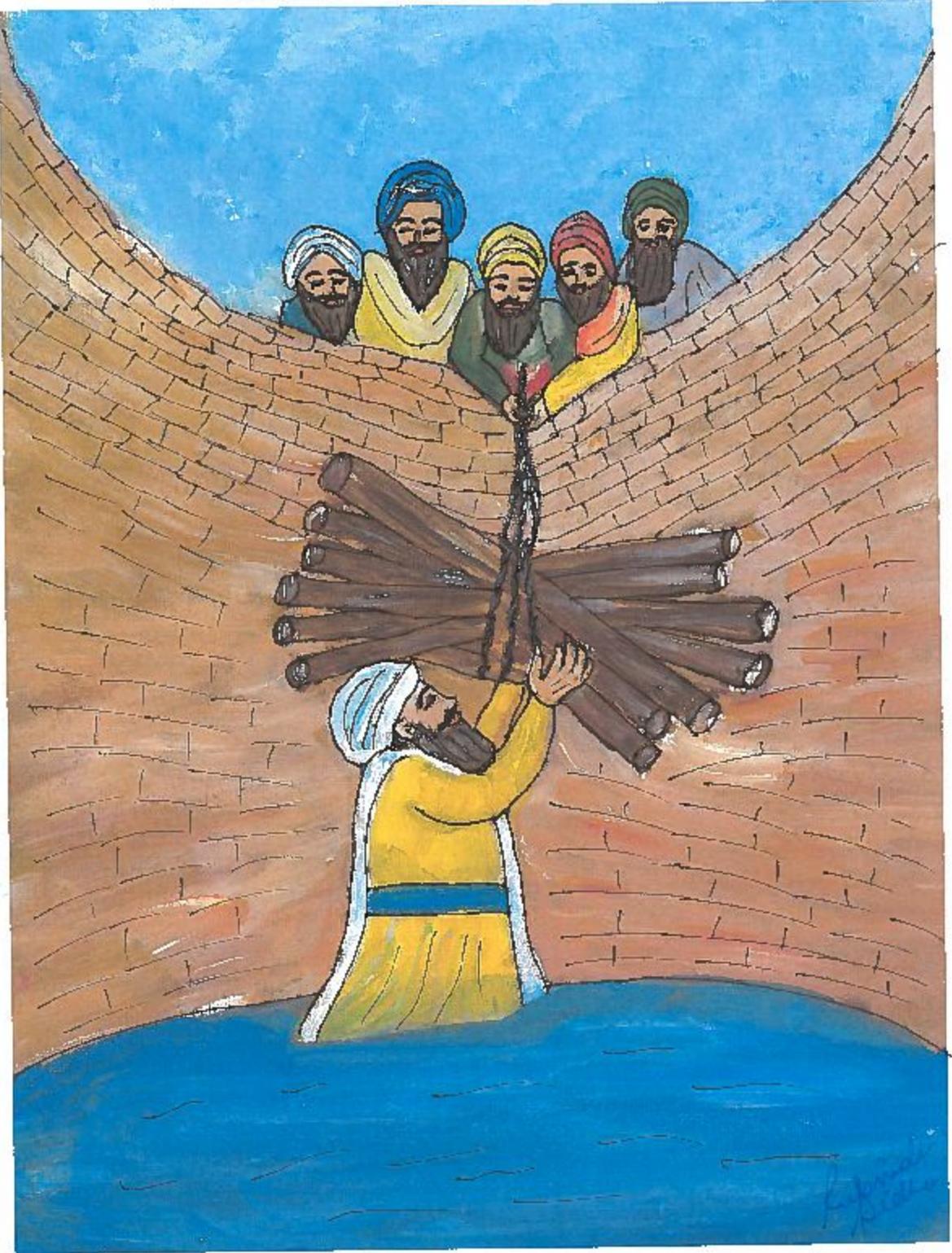
He and his wife reached Amritsar. Bhai Manjh presented himself in the service of Guru ji. He undertook the responsibility of cutting wood in the forest and bringing it to the *langar* (community kitchen).

(1) Lust, anger, greed, attachment & conceit (ego).

One day, while Bhai Manjh was returning from the forest with a bundle of firewood on his head, there was a thunderstorm. It was so severe that one could not find his way. Swept by the wind, Bhai Manjh fell into a well. Even in the well, Bhai Manjh did not let the bundle of wood fall from his head. He kept it dry for use in Guru's kitchen. He continued reciting the Guru's word.

Volunteers in the kitchen realized that it is already dark and Bhai Manjh has not returned yet. They set out towards the forest in his search, calling him loudly. When they reached the well, they heard his voice from the well. The Sikhs hung a rope in the well and said, "Brother Manjh! Please catch hold of the rope and climb up." Bhai Manjh replied, "Please pull up this bundle of dry wood first. I will come next."

By the time Bhai Manjh came out, Guru Arjan Dev ji also reached the well. Guru ji said, "Bhai Manjh, I am very pleased with your service. Ask for something." Bhai Manjh replied, "Respected Guru ji, You have already bestowed me with spiritual bliss. I do not need anything else." Guru Arjan Dev ji appointed him as a preacher and asked him to return to his village to propagate Sikhism.



6. Construction of Tarn Taran

In the year 1590, Guru Arjan Dev ji reached village Khara from Khanpur while on his mission of showing the right path to the misguided public. He was fascinated by the scenery of the place. Cool breeze and a pool were enhancing the charm. He thought of building a city at that place. He bought the land. Baba Budha offered the prayers and Guru Arjan Dev ji himself laid the foundation stone of the city known as Tarn Taran on April 15, 1590.

Guru Arjan Dev ji enlarged the small pool. The name Tarn Taran, since appropriated by the town itself, originally belonged to the sarovar. It literally means, 'the boat that takes one across (the ocean of existence)'. Tarana in Sanskrit is a raft or a boat. According to Sikh tradition, the water of the old pond was found to possess medicinal properties, especially efficacious for curing leprosy. For this reason the sarovar was known as Dukh Nivaran.

Guru Arjan Dev ji also started construction of a home for the lepers near the pool. A large quantity of bricks was required for this purpose. He got kilns laid to bake bricks for this particular purpose. Amir Deen, son of Noordin learned that the bricks being baked for the construction of the pool of Tarn Taran were very good. He forcibly took away those bricks from the kilns for the construction of Noordin inn. This resulted in the stoppage of work of lining of the pool of Tarn Taran. In 1766, Sardar Budh Singh and Sardar Jassa Singh Ramgarhia dismantled the foundations of Noordin inn and brought the bricks to Tarn Taran and paved the surroundings of the pool.

7. Satta and Balwand

Satta and Balwand, father and son, were musicians at the Guru's institution. Once Satta requested Guru Arjan Dev ji, "My daughter is getting married in few days. I need help with the expenses." Guru ji said, "You can have all that is offered by devotees today." At the end of the recital, all that was offered was given to them. But, they were not pleased even after getting all the money because on that day the offering was below average.

Prithi Chand planned to use this incident to incite Satta and Balwand against Guru ji. Prithi Chand called them and said, "You are dumb. Guru Arjan Dev had forbidden devotees from giving offerings today because he had promised to give all of it to you. Devotees come to listen to your recitation. If you stop your recitals, the devotees will stop going to him. He gets offerings only because of your recitation."

Satta and Balwand did not realize that Prithi Chand wanted to use them to harm Guru Arjan Dev. Accepting Prithi Chand's suggestion, they did not reach Guru's institution the next morning for recital. Guru Arjan Dev sent Sikhs to their house to come for recital. Both of them refused and used derogatory words about Guru's institution. Guru Arjan Dev said, "They have got spoiled. Let no one bring them before me. The Sikh who comes to me to plead for their forgiveness, will get his face blackened, mounted on a donkey and paraded in the streets." Guru Arjan Dev himself started the recital with musical instrument. Devotees joined Guru ji in the recital. Guru ji blessed devotees with the gift of musical recital of Guru's word.

When Satta and Balwand heard that Guru ji himself was singing the devotional songs and the number of devotees had also been increasing day by day, they repented. They were looking for forgiveness from the

Guru. But no Sikh was ready to meet with them. When they went out, the people turned their faces towards the other side. They felt completely isolated.

At last they were advised to go to Bhai Ladha of Lahore, who was the only man who could help them. They met Bhai Ladha. Hearing their story Bhai Ladha said, "You have done a great mistake by speaking evil regarding the house of Guru Nanak. I am ready to help you but the Guru has laid down strict conditions. Anyone helping you would have to ride a donkey with blackened face. When Satta and Balwand repeatedly requested him, Bhai Ladha blackened his own face, rode a donkey and drove towards Amritsar. Satta and Balwand accompanied him. They reached the house of the Guru. They knocked the door. When Guru ji came outside he recognized Bhai Ladha. Guru ji asked Bhai Ladha to dismount. Bhai Ladha fell at the Guru's feet. Guru ji said, "Bhai Ladha, you are a great well-wisher of the poor, but these men had slandered the house of Guru Nanak. A slanderer of the house of Guru Nanak can't be pardoned. But if they want to be pardoned then they should praise the house of Guru Nanak with the same tongue with which they had maligned it." Satta and Balwand agreed to do this. They wrote 'Satta ate Balwand Di Vaar' in Raag Ramkali. This Vaar was included in Guru Granth Sahib ji. It is on pages 966 to 968.

8. Popularity of Sikh Gurus

Followers of Guru Nanak had begun to increase under the illuminating and guiding light of Guru Arjan Dev ji. The Guru's message of peace and harmony in such tragic times when the Mughals were inflicting barbarous acts on the masses rang a chord with public. Both Hindus and Muslims were impressed with the Guru's message. Large number of people started coming to the Guru's congregation in the newly constructed Harmandir Sahib. Guru Arjan Dev Ji's popularity increased the orthodox Muslims' hatred for Guru ji.

A large number of the Punjabi tribes converted to Sikhism, mainly from Hinduism and also some from Islam. Due to the purity of the Guru's message and his enormous popularity, even Muslim pirs became followers of Guru Arjan Dev Ji. Hindu saints, yogis and siddhas became Sikhs and adherents of the Guru. For the first time, the young Sikh religion became the prominent popular religion of Punjab.

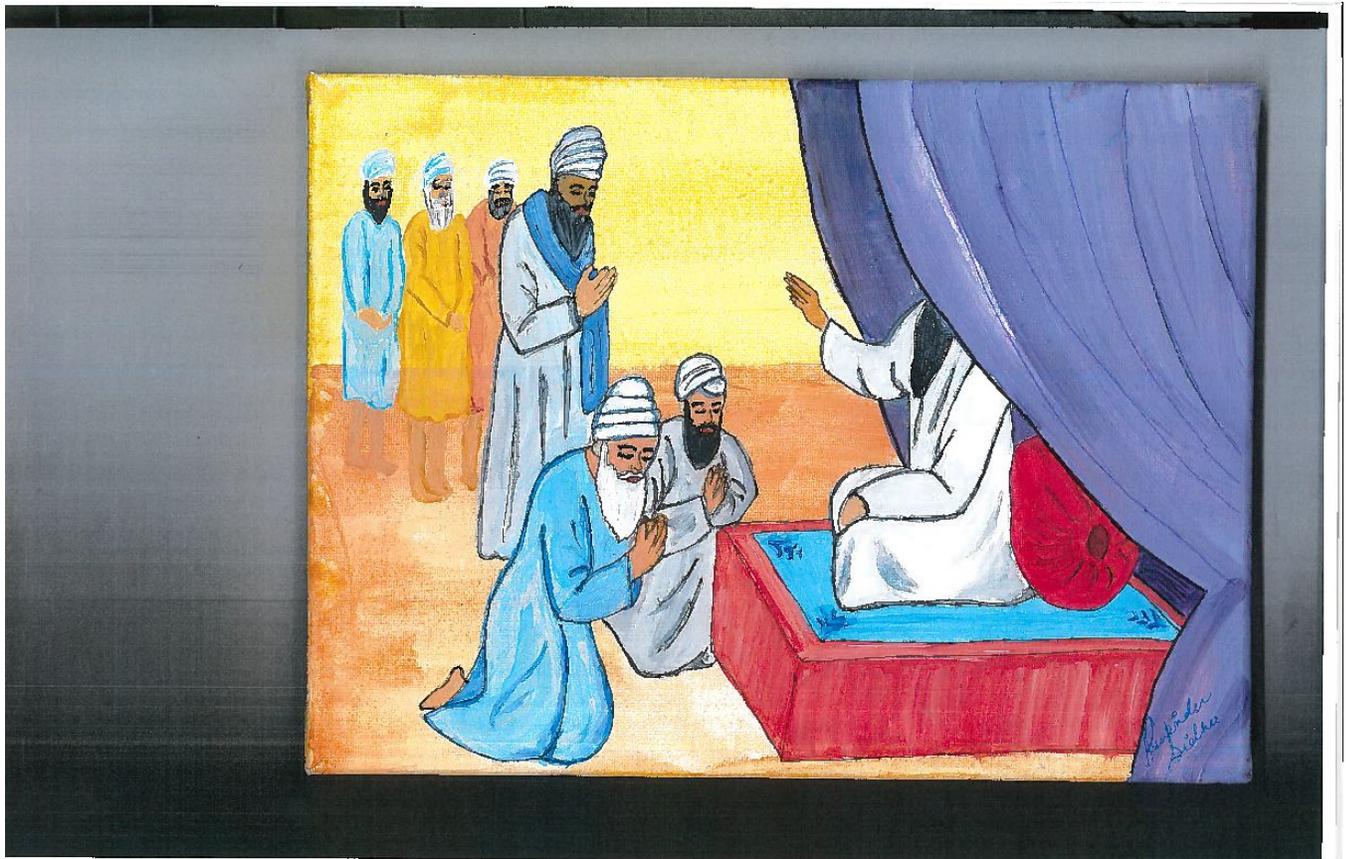
Guru ji founded many villages, towns and cities and constructed numerous wells in Punjab. Peace and prosperity was once again returning to this region. Although the masses living in Punjab were happy with this development, the Mughal leaders in Delhi were upset.

Guru Ramdas had introduced the institution of Masands (representative of Gurus at far off places) along with the principle of Dasvand (a Tenth of an individual's income payable for the Guru's Langar - Common Kitchen) and for other acts of benevolence on behalf of the poor.

In 1598, the Guru ji requested Emperor Akbar on behalf of the local peasantry to get the excessive land tax reduced. This initiative gave Guru ji a new status. **Guru Arjan Dev Ji was known as Sacha Patshah (True Emperor).** The Guru had come to guide, govern and influence the lives of the Sikhs both in the temporal and the spiritual matters. Mughal Emperor

Akbar had already been convinced of the reverence of the Sikh Gurus. During one of his campaigns he came to Goindwal and visited Guru ji. Akbar sat on the floor among men of other castes and ate the simple food in the Langar. Only then he was able to meet with Guru Amardas ji.

A Muslim Pir, the Saint, Mian Mir of Lahore had great affinity with the Gurus. Opinion and words of the Pir were immensely revered by Akbar. On one occasion, allegations against Guru Arjan by a few impostors (Prithi Chand and his son Meharban) and some jealous Brahmin priests were dropped based on Mian Mir's recommendations.



9. Adi Granth Sahib

Guru Nanak Dev ji kept a written record of the Word of God as and when these were revealed to him. This record is known as the Pothis (the Book). It explains the ultimate truth and the way of realizing it. He also recorded in that book the hymns of the saints which he collected during his long journeys. The Book was always handed over to the next Guru when the leadership of the faith was transferred to the successor.

Guru Arjan Dev received the Book when he became the Guru. Guru Arjan Dev decided to compile and edit the Book in a specific manner so that nobody may be able to alter it. One reason for this was that in those days Prithi Chand and Meharban had compiled their own books in which they had written ballads in the praise of saints and prophets and started misleading the Sikhs. Teachings in Meharban's book were not consistent with Sikh philosophy.

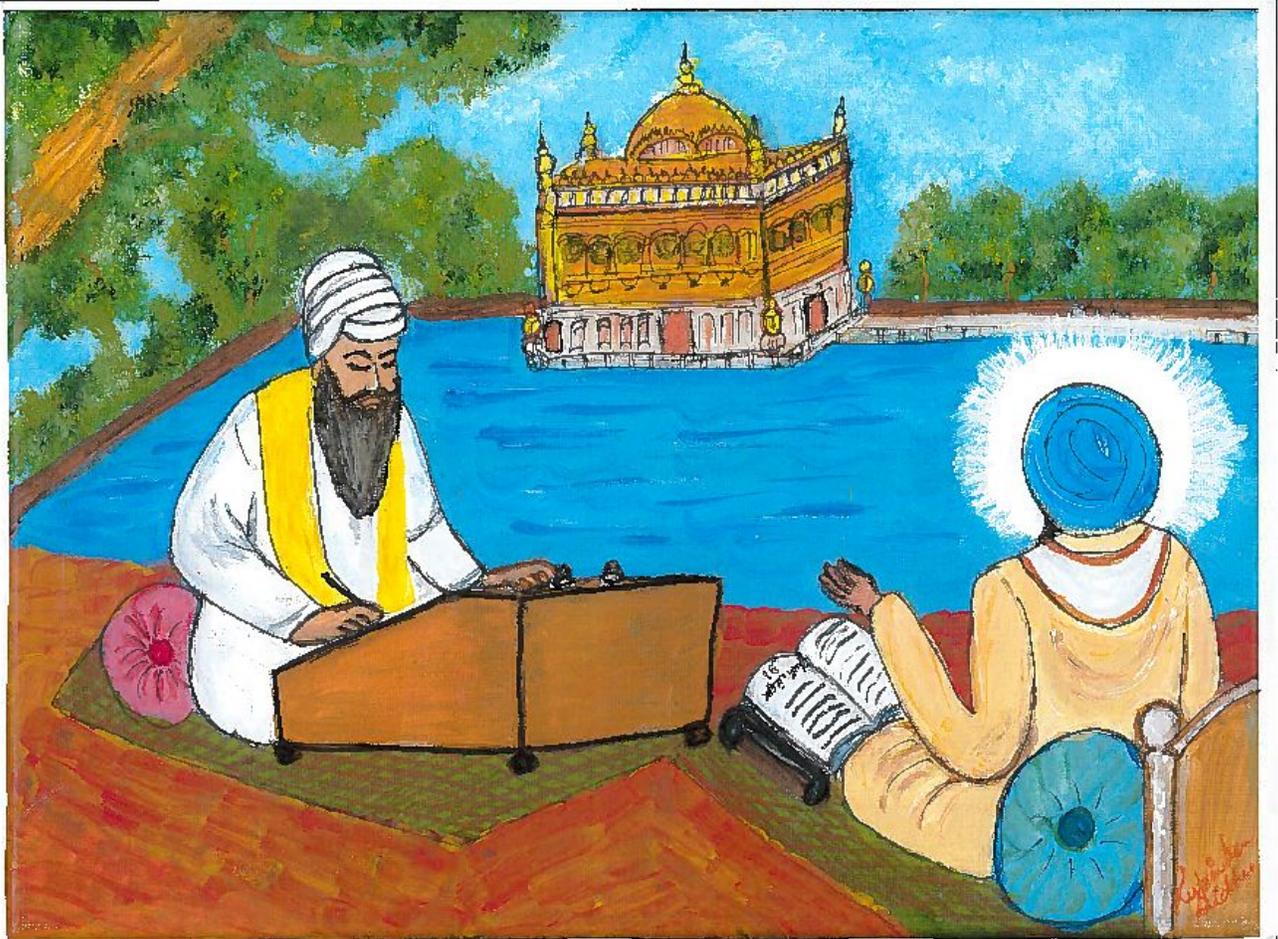
Guru Arjan Dev ji assigned the duty of scribing to Bhai Gurdas. In the original book, hymns were written as revealed. Guru Arjan Dev ji arranged the hymns in accordance with musical modes. It took three years to compile Adi Granth. When the word of preparation of the Granth spread, many holy men came to Guru Arjan Dev ji at Amritsar to get their hymns included in this Granth. The Guru included only those hymns which were consistent with the standard of the True Word.

Compilation of the Holy Book is a very valuable achievement of Guru Arjan Dev Ji. The Holy Book is presently known as Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Compilation has four characteristics.

- 1. To preserve the original treasures editing made it impossible for anyone to alter it*

2. *More than half of the Guru Granth Sahib consists of Guru Arjan Dev ji's own holy compositions.*
3. *The Granth Sahib throws considerable light on the contemporary political and social life.*
4. *Guru Arjan Dev ji included spiritual compositions of various saints e.g. Shaikh Farid, Bhagat Kabir, Bhagat Ravidas, Dhanna, Namdev, Ramanand, Jai Dev, Trilochan, Beni, Pipa and Surdas. These saints belong to different times, beliefs, sects, and castes from high to low.*

After compilation, the Granth Sahib was formally installed in the Harmandir Sahib on August 30, 1604. Granth Sahib became the touchstone of the True Word. Baba Budha ji was appointed the first *granthi* (one who reads and interprets the Granth).



10. Jahangir and Guru Arjan

The Sikh religion became very popular during Guru Arjan Dev ji. It was making rapid progress. People from different castes were becoming Sikhs. Even Muslims accepted Guru Arjan as their guide and religious teacher. Muslim priests (*Qazis and Mullahs*) did not like this. They on the other hand wanted all non-Muslims to convert to Islam. But just the opposite was happening. Guru Arjan Dev ji was standing in their way. Muslim priests began to conspire against Guru Arjan.

The first three Mughal emperors (*Babur, Humayun and Akbar*) were kind and just to people of every religion. They even made friends with Sikh Gurus. When Akbar's son - Jahangir became the emperor. his policy and views were the opposite. He wanted to spread Islam.

Muslim priests met Jahangir. They spoke against the Guru. They urged him to stop the spread of Sikhism. They advised that if it is not done soon, few Muslims will be left in the country. The only way to do this was to put an end to Guru Arjan Dev ji's life. The Emperor promised to act accordingly.

At this time, Jahangir's son - Khusrau - rose against him. He wanted to become the emperor replacing his father. He fought against Jahangir. Khusrau lost the battle. He ran towards Lahore. Jahangir went after him. Jahagir wanted to catch and punish him. He knew that many people had helped prince to rebel against him. As he went along, Jahagir made enquiries to find out who had helped Khusrau. Jahagir punished as many of them as he could catch. He passed by Goindwal and Tarn Taran. He made a halt at Goindwal. He made inquiry at Goindwal, too. Nobody said a word against the Guru. If the Guru had helped Khusrau, they would certainly have said so to Jahangir. But, The Guru had a number of enemies like Chandu, Prithia, some Brahmins and Qazis who were looking for a reason to complain against the Guru.

Jahangir reached Lahore. After some time he got ready to return to Delhi. The enemies of Guru Arjan decided to act. They made up a false story against Guru ji . They met Jahangir and said to him, 'Khusrau met Guru Arjan Dev ji at Goindwal. He asked for help from the Guru ji. The Guru prayed for his success against Your Majesty. He also gave him a large sum of money.'

On hearing this, Jahangir became angry. He had already made up his mind to put an end to Guru Arjan Dev Ji's life. He had made up his mind based on Muslim priests' advice. He found a good excuse to punish Guru ji. Jahangir did not make any inquiry. He did not try to find out the truth. He had no intention to do so. The fact is, no such report had been made to him at Goindwal or at any other place.

He said to his men, 'Go to Amritsar, arrest the Guru, and bring him to Delhi.' He ordered his officers to put Guru ji to death with torture. He gave these orders and left for Delhi. His men went to Amritsar, arrested Guru Arjan Dev ji, took him to Lahore and handed him over to the Emperor's officers.

11. Merger with God

Guru Arjan Dev ji reached Lahore and Jahangir's officers were to carry out his orders regarding Guru Arjan Dev ji. They began to make plans for torturing the Guru. Chandu, an enemy of the Guru, was one of those officers. He said to them, I shall carry out the Emperor's orders. Hand over the Guru to me. I shall kill him with torture. The officers agreed at once. Chandu took the Guru to his palace in Lahore.

Guru ji told Chandu, 'I bear no enmity or ill-will against anyone. All happens as God wills. I am prepared to accept His Will. You may do what you like.'

Chandu began to torture the Guru. On the first day, the Guru was not given anything to eat or drink. He was not allowed to sleep. He bore all this very calmly. He kept meditating, repeating His Name, and reciting Holy hymns.

The following day, Chandu made the Guru sit in a big copper vessel filled the vessel with water. He ordered his men to light a fire under the copper vessel. The water began to boil. It scalded Guru's body. But the Guru sat calmly and quietly. He did not cry, not even sigh. Guru Ji felt no anger against those who were torturing him. He went on praying to God. He prayed for strength to bear everything with calmness and courage. He went on repeating His Name, 'All is happening, O Lord, according to Thy Will. Thy Will is ever sweet to me.' The boiling water made the Guru's flesh soft and painful. Blisters appeared all over his body.

On the third day, Chandu ordered his men to heat sand red hot in iron pans and Guru ji was made to sit on this red hot sand. "Pour the red-hot sand on his head and body." The persons engaged in torturing him were wet with sweat uncomfortable because of the heat. It was the hottest

summer month. But the Guru kept calm and quiet. He uttered no cry. He felt no anger against those who tortured him. He kept thinking of God. He kept repeating His Name. He kept repeating, 'Thy Will is eversweet to me, O Lord!'

Hazrat Mian Mir was a great Muslim saint of Lahore and a friend of the Guru. He was greatly respected by all Muslims. Even Emperor Jahangir had great respect for him. Hazrat Mian Mir heard of what was happening to Guru Arjan Dev ji. He got angry on hearing this news and went to see the Guru. On seeing the Guru being tortured, Hazrat Mian Mir cried out in grief and pain. He said to the Guru, 'May I appeal to the Emperor for your release? May I ask him to punish those who are hurting you?'

The Guru replied, 'No brother, all is happening in accordance with God's Will. Men who stand for Truth have often to suffer. Their sufferings give strength to the cause of Truth. Go, brother. Pray for me. Pray for the success of my cause. Pray for victory to Truth.'

On the fourth day, the Guru was made to sit on an heated red hot iron plate. The Guru's flesh began to roast. Then burning red-hot sand was poured on his body. The Guru sat calm and quiet. He uttered no cry. He felt no anger against the torturers. He sat with his mind fixed on God. He kept repeating His Name. He kept repeating, 'Thy Will is eversweet to me, O Lord!'

On the fifth day, the Guru was taken to the river Ravi. He was thrown into the running river. His body was too weak with all the tortures he had undergone to stand up against the fast-flowing water. His body got washed away. He merged with God.

The place where Guru Arjan Dev ji merged with God, stands a beautiful gurdwara called Gurdwara Dera Sahib. Presently, it is in Pakistan. For Sikhs, it is a sacred place. Every year, a big gathering, called Jor Mela, was held there on the day on which the Guru left for his Eternal Abode. Sikhs used to visit it in large numbers every day.

12. Highlights of **Guru Arjan Dev ji** {1563 - 1606}

Born on: April 15, 1563.

Born at: Goindwal, Amritsar

- Father – Guru Ramdas
- Mother – Mata Bhani
- Guru's wife - Mata Ganga ji
- Sahibzada - Hargobind

Accession to Guru gaddi: September 1, 1581 at Goindwal.

Bani: Total number of hymns 2218 in 30 Ragas, e.g. Sri Rag, Asa, Basantu, Majh, Gujari, Gauri and Suhi etc.

His Message: In his Sukhmani, recited in Rag Gauri during the years 1601-1604; he describes the essence of true life, the union of Soul with the Supreme Being and great importance of the Guru and the saintly people in one's life.

Special Contribution: He compiled the Granth Sahib in the year 1604; now revered as The Guru Granth Sahib by the Sikhs.

- He enjoined the Sikhs to contribute one tenth of their righteous earnings, called Dasvandh, for community purposes. This measure was undertaken to strengthen the Sikh Movement, economically.
- He was the first martyr who laid the foundation of great Sikh tradition of Martyrdom.

Cities Founded and Construction Work: He completed the construction of tanks of Santokh Sar in 1588.

- Started the construction of Harmandir Sahib in 1588.
- Started the work of digging of a tank at a place, now known as Taran Taran Sahib in the year 1590.
- He founded a city named Kartarpur in Dist. Jalandhar in 1594. and Sri Hargobindpur on the banks of river Bias.

Succession to Guru gaddi: Guru Sahib nominated his son, Hargobind as the sixth Guru of the Sikhs.

Joti-Jot Samaye: May 30, 1606 at Lahore, Pakistan.

World Events 1563-1601

- 1563 - Francisco de Ibarra explores New Mexico, USA
- 1564 - Peace treaty of Troy between England and France
- 1564 - William Shakespeare was born
- 1568 - Alliance between England and Netherlands
- 1589 - Walter Raleigh established Virginia Colony, USA
- 1600 - Queen Elizabeth I grants Charter to East India Company
- 1605 - Gunpowder Plot to blow out England's parliament and James I
- 1607 - Captain John Smith explore and founder of Jamestown, USA