

# **The Second Nanak**

***Guru ANGAD Ji***

**January 21, 2026**

**By the  
Dedicated Sewadars  
of  
Sri Hemkunt Foundation**

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## Preface

Sri Hemkunt Foundation Inc. was established in 1980, over four decades ago in New York, USA. The Foundation's primary objectives are to help children and youth ages 6-25 years old raised in the Western Hemisphere learn Sikhi, develop public speaking skills, and feel proud of being a Sikh.

We do this through educational books on the Sikh Gurus' lives, Sikh history, and Sikh philosophy; and by providing youth opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge of Sikhi and skillfully communicate their understanding to others.

The main Foundation-sponsored event is an annual Symposium. Participants compete in five age groups: 6-8 years, 9-11 years, 12-14 years, 15-17 years, and 18-25 years. For each group, an age-appropriate book is prescribed. The Symposium encourages participants to critically examine various topics and answer a set of questions in specified time from a podium. Participants are graded for content and oratory skills.

Every year, there is a three-tier competition. In the first tier, nearly 2,500 children and youth participate in local competitions in the USA, U.K., and Kenya. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier, about 400 participants compete. These are the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> position holders in the local competitions. The final and international level is the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier, where nearly 125 participants compete. These are the 1<sup>st</sup> position holders of the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier competition.

For many years, the Foundation had used books published in India, the U.K., etc. However, the Foundation received valid criticism from parents, participants, and judges almost every year that some of the books used for the Symposium competition were unsatisfactory. The English vocabulary, sentence structure, and context were not appropriate for the Western participants and audience. Many of the stories and Sakhees inappropriately highlighted "miraculous" aspects rather than logic and common sense.

To remedy this situation, a few years ago, the Foundation decided to venture into writing the books itself so that suitable books are used for

the Symposium and annual competition. Dedicated Sewadars of the Foundation volunteered for this Seva.

The current book is meant for the 6-8-year-old age group. An attempt has been made to present Guru ji's teachings in a logical manner. The book uses simple, easy-to-understand language and avoids references to events and places that would not normally be familiar to the intended Western school-age participants. It is crucial to ensure that the students' focus is on key concepts and messages within the book. The teachers and parents are expected to be fully involved in helping students understand the depth of the material, rather than remembering only historical facts. The Foundation aims to use this book for the annual Symposium - Speech Competition. Detailed information regarding the yearly International Symposium is available at the website [www.hemkunt2.org](http://www.hemkunt2.org).

Both English and Panjabi versions of the books have been posted on our website. Sunday Schools run by Gurdwaras are welcome to use these books for free, and no permission is required from the Foundation for using the books.

Any suggestions and comments for improving the book are always welcome.

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# 1. Early Life of the Second Nanak

**1504 (birth):** The Second Nanak, Guru Angad Ji, was born on March 31, 1504, in a village named Matte-Di-Sarai, near Muktsar in a region called Panjab. The name he was given at birth was Lehna. His father's name was Baba Pheru ji, and his mother's maiden name was Ramo, but she was called Daya Kaur after her marriage. Baba Narayan Das Trehan was his grandfather. Their family home was at Matte-di-Sarai. Baba Pheru Ji owned a small retail shop in this village.

**1523 (age 19):** Bhai Lehna married a lady called Khivi and had two sons (Dasu and Datu) and two daughters (Amro and Anokhi). Baba Pheru Ji's extended family was forced to leave their ancestral village when it was invaded by the Mughal army and Baloch militias who had come with Babar. The invaders would steal and destroy the property of the people who lived in the villages. Baba Pheru Ji, along with his family, moved to Khadur village beside the River Beas, near Tarn Taran, a small town about 15 miles from the city of Amritsar.

**1524 (age 20):** Bhai Lehna started helping his father manage the family's store. While dwelling in Khadur, Bhai Lehna and his father organized a yearly pilgrimage of devout Hindus to Jawalamukhi in the lower Himalayan mountains, sacred to those devoted to goddess Durga.

**1526 (age 22):** After his father passed away, Bhai Lehna continued to lead the group of devotees on the yearly pilgrimage. For the next six years, he led the group traveling from Khadur along the river Ravee, close by a village named Kartarpur. Guru Nanak Ji had established a Sikh community at Kartarpur in 1521.

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## 2. Captivated by Guru Nanak Ji

**1532 (age 28):** Guru Nanak ji had established Kartarpur in 1521 and continued living there until his last days. He encouraged everyone to live a spiritual life through his example while being a householder and an ordinary farmer. Guru Nanak Ji often traveled to neighboring areas to teach people a new Sikh way of life, a path without rituals—Involving a genuine, honest, and sincere love of all of the creation (humans, animals and plants) as a way of respecting the benevolent Creator (Akal Purakh).

Guru Nanak Ji had followers in many places, including Khadur. One of them was Bhai Jodha, who lived in Khadur. One day, Bhai Lehna heard Bhai Jodha singing the hymn “Asa di Var, Pauri 21” composed by Guru Nanak Ji. This verse deeply moved Bhai Lehna. Bhai Jodha was reciting the following:

ਜਿਤੁ ਸੇਵਿਐ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਸੋ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸਦਾ ਸਮਾਲੀਐ ॥  
ਜਿਤੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਪਾਈਐ ਆਪਣਾ ਸਾ ਘਾਲ ਬੁਰੀ ਕਿਉ ਘਾਲੀਐ ॥  
ਮੰਦਾ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਕੀਚਈ ਦੇ ਲੰਮੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲੀਐ ॥  
ਜਿਉ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨਾਲਿ ਨ ਹਾਰੀਐ ਤੇਵੇਹਾ ਪਾਸਾ ਢਾਲੀਐ ॥  
ਕਿਛੁ ਲਾਰੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਘਾਲੀਐ ॥੨੧॥

jit seviaai sukh paieeaai so saahib sadhaa sam(h)aaleeaai | | jit keetaa paieeaai  
aapanaa saa ghaal buree kiau ghaaleeaai | | ma(n)dhaa mool na keechiee dhe  
la(n)mee nadhar nihaaleeaai | | jiau saahib naal na haareeaai tevehaa paasaa  
ddaaleeaai | | kichh laahe upar ghaaleeaai| |21|| SGGS, p.474

**Spiritual Meaning:** Always remember the Creator inside your heart. Thinking about Him makes you feel truly happy and peaceful inside. Everything you do comes back to you. Since you must live with the results of what you do, it doesn't make sense to work hard at doing bad things. Look to the future! Don't do mean or naughty things, because they won't help you later. Live your life in a way that keeps you close to the Creator's love. Keep walking on that good path, because it brings kindness and happiness into your life.

It could have been the first time Bhai Lehna had heard the praises of the Creator so clearly expressed in his language – Panjabi. He easily understood the verse, and its message touched his soul. He attained

peace. He requested Bhai Jodha to sing some more hymns, and Bhai Jodha gladly sang some more verses. Upon asking about the author of the hymns, Bhai Jodha explained that these hymns were created by Guru Nanak Ji, who was living in Kartarpur. Bhai Lehna's desire to meet Guru Nanak Ji grew, and he decided to pass through Kartarpur to have a glimpse of Guru Nanak during the yearly pilgrimage to the shrine.

One day Bhai Lehna was taking his family and the group of pilgrims to Jawalamukhi. He talked them into taking a break on their journey at Kartarpur, telling them that they could perform two religious acts on one pilgrimage. They could visit Guru Nanak, whom some believed to be a beloved of the Creator and whose inspiring company was sought by many people. Then afterward, they would continue to pay respects to the goddess Durga at the Jawalamukhi shrine in the Himalayan mountains.



After telling his groups of devotees, he rode his horse towards the village of Kartarpur for a glimpse of Guru Nanak. On his way, he met a person who was walking from his fields towards the village. Bhai Lehna asked him the directions to the Dharamsala (a Sikh center of religious learning,

which later came to be known as a Gurdwara), where Guru Nanak Ji held his spiritual teaching sessions. This person asked Bhai Lehna to follow him, as he was going there as well. When they reached the door of the Dharamsala, the person suggested to Bhai Lehna to fasten his horse and go through the door.



Upon entering the room, Bhai Lehna saw that the person who had shown him the way was sitting on the seat of the Guru. Bhai Lehna bowed in respect and sat on one side, deeply regretting that he rode his horse while Guru Ji had walked on foot.

Bhai Lehna was fascinated by Guru Nanak's simple clothing and humility. He may have imagined Guru Ji living in a big mansion, sitting on a fancy, extra-soft pillow, wearing clothes and a head covering decorated with jewels, and perhaps even a necklace of rare stones. Such an image of the Guru would have been like Bhai Lehna's idea of a Hindu deity.

However, in Guru Nanak, he saw nothing of that sort. He only saw the

simplicity of a man doing hard work in the fields with his own hands. Guru Ji's style of living was simple and humble, and he lacked pride and ego. Guru Nanak Ji's depth of wisdom and grace made the biggest impression.

While he was still absorbed in thinking about all of this, Guru Nanak Ji asked his name. Bhai Lehna replied that his name was Lehna, and he was leading a group of his villagers on a pilgrimage to the shrine of goddess Durga. Guru Ji told him that it was better to directly love the creation instead of gods and goddess, deities who had to ask the Creator to fulfill the wishes of devotees. Guru Ji also explained the real purpose of life was that everyone should seek to live a truthful life. He explained the importance of remembering the One who has created everyone and everything. Bhai Lehna attended the evening service with the congregation. He then stayed overnight and participated in the morning service as well.

Upon hearing and experiencing the words of wisdom from Guru Ji, he felt that his way of thinking had changed. Bhai Lehna told the Hindu pilgrims that he had obtained peace of mind while listening to Guru Ji's discourses. He was convinced that he had found his purpose and did not have to look or go any further. Bhai Lehna had come to Kartarpur to pay a casual visit and was transfixed for life. He dedicated himself to the service of Guru Nanak Ji, became his Sikh (student disciple), and began to live at Kartarpur.

On the fourth day of his stay, Guru Nanak Ji suggested that Bhai Lehna go back home, inform his family, and come back to Kartarpur if he wished to. Bowing to the Guru, Bhai Lehna returned to Khadur and entrusted the responsibility of his store to his eldest son Dasu. After some days, Bhai Lehna, accompanied by his wife, Mata Khivi, returned to Kartarpur to live with and learn from Guru Nanak Ji.

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### 3. Transformed by Guru Nanak Ji

**1532-39 (age 28-35):** According to Hindu teachings, members of the religion were divided into four castes based on their birth<sup>(1)</sup>. Those at the lowest of this 4-level caste system were called Shudras (untouchables). They were not considered worthy of respect, and they were not even allowed to enter a temple, let alone worship. Bhai Lehna was a so-called upper caste Hindu and probably had the same feeling towards Shudras. However, Guru Nanak believed that all humans were created by One Creator and were equal. During his communications with Bhai Lehna, he took many steps to see that Bhai Lehna learned to love and respect everyone equally.

Guru Nanak Ji stood for a casteless and classless society in which no one was superior. Equality for everyone was set in place from the beginning of the Sikh way of life. In comparison, we still see today the world divided by class, color, and background.

People of the three Hindu upper-caste – Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas in order– did not respect the lower caste group (Shudras). The latter were forced to perform lowly jobs to make a living. Ironically, these jobs were assigned by the upper caste groups to the lower caste. According to the stories (sakhees written many years later) about Guru Ji's life, for seven years (1532-39), Guru Nanak Ji gave many so-called lowly jobs to Bhai Lehna, which according to the Hindu religion, should have been performed only by those belonging to the lower caste. He is said to have done this to help Bhai Lehna experience the hardship Shudras had to endure to perform the difficult jobs, and to help him develop feelings of empathy and respect for (so called) Shudras.

The sakhees also say that Guru Nanak Ji put Bhai Lehna through many tests to evaluate his devotion to the Sikh way of life. Guru Ji was convinced of Bhai Lehna's understanding and practice of basic Sikh beliefs through these tests. He also put some other followers, including the Guru's two sons, through similar tests. Over a period, it became clear to Guru Nanak Ji and everyone around him that Bhai Lehna was the only one deserving to be the next Guru. Bhai Lehna had rid himself of ego, and

Guru Ji was grateful for that.

Some stories of the “tests” recorded as Sikh history are listed in Appendix 1. These tests do not appear to be realistic or believeable. They do not test Bhai Lehna for the qualities that would make him the most suitable candidate to be the next Sikh Guru.

But Guru Nanak Ji did thoroughly evaluate Bhai Lehna’s commitment, humility, and understanding of Sikh principles, including if he treated everyone respectfully and equally. Over the seven years, he had been with Guru Nanak Ji at Kartarpur, Guru Ji’s presence and teachings completely transformed Bhai Lehna. He learned and willingly practiced the principles of the new Sikh way of life being built during his lifetime, which included *seva* and dealing with others with humility, integrity, kindness, and truth.

Guru Nanak Ji saw the transformation in Bhai Lehna. It became clear to Guru Nanak Ji that Bhai Lehna had understood clearly and internalized all of Guru Ji’s teachings. He had become fully capable of teaching and sharing the principles of Sikhi.

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*(1) All ten Gurus (Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh Ji) emphasized, taught, and practiced a casteless, classless community and society. Their message was that there is only one Creator, and every human being (male and female) is created equal. Unfortunately, Sikhs even now are far from that ideal in their attitudes and behavior. Many Sikhs use their last name to identify themselves with their family. Some of these family names are associated with the place they came from or their ancestors' caste before becoming Sikhs. Some Sikhs still try to find a marriage match for their sons or daughters within their “caste”. Some Gurdwaras have even been established in the name of various sub-castes. These practices are not in accordance with Sikhi.*

## 4. Bhai Lehna Selected as Second Nanak

**1539** (*Guru Nanak Ji 70-years-old and Bhai Lehna 35-years-old*): Bhai Lehna was actively involved in every aspect of Guru Nanak Ji's life at Kartarpur. He would participate in all kinds of *seva*, *keertan*, and *katha* (teaching and discussing Gurbani). He also helped organize the *langar* (communal kitchen) program, and the hosting and lodging of visitors. Guru Ji had already tested him in various ways and had found him fully capable of continuing the teaching, spreading, and practice of Sikhi.

Guru Nanak Ji was confident that the new way of life he had created could now be led and further practiced, organized, and expanded by Bhai Lehna. Bhai Lehna had spent seven years in the service of Guru Nanak Ji at Kartarpur. Guru Ji was sure that there was no spiritual difference between the two of them and was aware of Bhai Lehna's spiritual abilities. Bhai Lehna had become inseparable and almost like a part (*Ang*) of Guru Nanak.

Hence, Guru Nanak Ji personally selected and anointed Bhai Lehna as his spiritual successor, as the Second Nanak, on September 7, 1539. To signify to Sikh followers that they should not distinguish between him and his successor Guru, the Second Nanak, Guru Nanak Ji gave Bhai Lehna a new name, Angad, meaning part of him.

Guru Nanak Ji then handed over his *pothi* (book) containing all his Gurbani compositions (*baanees*) to Guru Angad Ji. This book also had compositions of Baba Farid, Bhagat Namdev, Kabir, Ravidas, and others, which Guru Nanak Ji had collected during his lengthy missionary travels. The *pothi* was the same book that the *Qazis* (Muslim religious leaders) had referred to when Guru Nanak Ji had visited Mecca. The *Qazis* had asked Guru Ji that, as per his *pothi* (meaning the book of compositions that he carried with him to Mecca), who is superior – Hindu or Muslim? Guru Nanak Ji had replied that everyone's deeds determine their spiritual merit.



Guru Nanak Ji departed from this earth (*joti jot samaey*) on September 22, 1539. After that, Guru Angad Ji left Kartarpur and moved to Khadur (near Goindwal). He established a new base and religious center for the Sikh community. Guru Angad Ji diligently carried forward the teachings of Guru Nanak Ji in both letter and spirit. Soon, he became well known for his wisdom. Even religious persons like yogis and *sants* of different paths visited him in Khadur and held detailed discussions on the Sikhi way of life.

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## 5. A Sikh is Bold and Fearless

**1540 (age 36):** An interesting historical event is associated with the Gurmat school established by the Second Nanak for teaching Sikhi<sup>(2)</sup>.

Humayun, the Mughal emperor, had lost his battle against Sher Shah Suri. To save his life, he fled towards Iran bordering Afghanistan, known as Khurasan. He had crossed the river Beas at Goindwal. Some of his well-wishers suggested that he visit Guru Angad Ji, the Second Nanak, at Khadur, only a few miles away.

When Humayun reached Khadur, the Second Nanak was busy teaching children under the shade of a tree. Guru Ji continued teaching instead of interrupting the class and greeting the Mughal emperor. Guru Ji intended to have a dialogue with the visitor after the class was over. Humayun felt insulted for not getting immediate attention that he thought he deserved as the ruler. To frighten Guru Ji, he drew his sword and threateningly waved it in the air. Seeing this, Guru Ji smiled and remarked that the sword should have been used on the battlefield and not to frighten or impress unarmed religious people. Humayun realized his mistake and was sorry for his action.



Guru Ji had conveyed a vital lesson to Sikhs. He had shown by example that they should be bold, brave, and clear-headed. They should fear no one and respect a person only for their qualities and not for their wealth, political status, or power. The Second Nanak had demonstrated the Gurbani concept of *Nirbhau*.

*(2) During the Mughal empire, the official language was Persian. Opening schools and teaching local languages was discouraged, even forbidden. It was difficult for non-Muslims to get educated. The Second Nanak was courageous to set up a school and teach the local Panjabi language spoken by the public.*

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## 6. Establishment of Goindwal

**1546 (age 42):** During the Second Nanak's time, the area where the city of Goindwal is presently situated was the ancestral property of a person named Goinda. He wanted to establish a city in memory of his ancestors. However, his relatives were jealous of this and did not let him build the city. The land was on the riverbank and the highway connecting Lahore and Delhi. Guru Ji considered it an appropriate location for establishing a new Sikh center. When Goinda came to the Second Nanak for help, Guru Ji agreed to help build the town.



Guru Ji assigned the work of establishing the new town to Bhai Amar Das (who later became the Third Nanak). Bhai Amar Das, as he was known at the time, had joined the Second Nanak's congregation in the year 1541. As instructed by Guru Ji, Bhai Amar Das performed seva in the langar program. Guru Ji further suggested that Bhai Amar Das bring his relatives from Basarke to the new town once it had been established. Bhai Amar Das followed Guru Ji's instructions. In so doing, he also brought Bhai Jetha (who later became the Fourth Nanak). Bhai Jetha was an orphan and a distant relative of Bhai Amar Das, and he was only 12 years old at the time.

The new town was named Goindwal. It thrived and continues to be a crucial Sikh center, and it proved vital in the spread of Sikhi in the region.

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## 7. Rituals Do Not Please God

There is a story of a 'Tapa' (hermit) associated with the life of the Second Nanak. Tap is a practice or penance, and it is a Hindu religious ritual. Some parts of this story may not be historically accurate, but it has a relevant message for everyone, even now.

The story goes that before Guru Angad Ji moved to Khadur; a Tapa lived in the area. This person was fooling innocent people by boasting of his miraculous powers and black magic. People were either scared that he might bring them harm or were falsely hopeful that he might bless them with wealth. They used to bring him food and money.

When Guru Ji moved there and started teaching how to live a virtuous life, people became aware of the Tapa's cunning tricks. They stopped visiting Tapa, and his source of donations dried up. He got upset.



There was no rain that year in the area and crops had also dried up. The Tapa started scaring people that the 'Rain god' was upset because Guru Ji was doing everything contrary to Hindu scriptures. He argued that Guru Ji treated Brahmins and Shudras as equal. Instead of being a hermit, he

preferred the life of a householder. The Tapa added that such actions of Guru Ji were bound to cause disaster. He suggested that they ask Guru Ji to either bring rain or leave the village. He promised to perform rituals to please the Rain god and bring rain once Guru Ji had left the village.

Guru Ji left the village to expose Tapa's mischief. The Tapa recited verses from Hindu religious texts and performed rituals but failed to bring rain. People understood that it was a trick. They dragged the Tapa through the fields. He got badly hurt. People begged Guru Ji to return to the village. Guru Ji came back and explained that rituals do not please God. He advised them not to be misled by rituals. He also told them that instead of punishing the Tapa, they should have pointed out his mistakes and forgiven him.

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## 8. Importance of Virtuous Qualities

This story is about a rich man. It is associated with the teachings of the Second Nanak. This story may not be historically accurate. But it has a valuable message.

The story goes that when the Second Nanak visited Harike village, many people came to see Guru Ji and listen to his spiritual teachings. Amongst them was a wealthy man that owned 72 villages and considered himself a local chief. He saw the Second Nanak sitting on a wooden platform while listeners were seated on a carpet. The rich man did not join the people, and he went straight to the platform and sat next to Guru Ji.

Guru Ji started his teachings in Gurbani (*katha*). It mesmerized the rich man. He had never heard such words of wisdom. From the Second Nanak's enlightened message, he realized that not wealth but virtuous qualities such as humility, respect, kindness, politeness, understanding, and generosity made a person great.



He also realized that people had been pretending to show him respect. But this was only for his wealth and not for him as a person. He

understood that a person earns respect only for his virtuous qualities and behavior. He got off the platform and sat with the people on the carpet.

Guru Ji's discourse taught that the richness of the mind and spirit is vastly superior to worldly wealth. The rich man started developing the virtuous qualities that he had learned from Guru Ji. His attitude and behavior towards others changed drastically. Soon, people were talking of his virtues, and he earned their genuine respect.

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## 9. Always Accept the Creator's Will

This is a story of Bhai Jeeva associated with the life of the Second Nanak. Bhai Jeeva used to perform *seva* in the *langar*, the communal kitchen. Once, because of a severe storm, he was unable to prepare food in the *langar*. He was upset and complained about it to Guru Ji. He was expecting a blessing from Guru Ji such that in the future, a storm would not interfere in preparing food for the *sangat*, the local Sikh congregation.

Guru Ji explained to him that one should always accept the Will of The Creator (*hukam rajai chalna*). The seeking and giving of so-called blessings from religious people (*sants*), to interfere with the Creator's Will (*Hukam*), is wrong. Guru Ji suggested that the relationship between a human being and the Creator should be viewed as a relationship between a lover and a beloved. To receive true love, the lover (human being) should understand the Beloved's (the Creator's) nature and behave accordingly.



If someone behaves contrary to this, and does not accept the Creator's Will, they cannot become a spiritually enlightened. There is nothing to be gained by going on pilgrimages, engaging in empty rituals, studying religious texts just for arguing with others, or making donations only to show off their wealth. Instead, everyone should seek to understand the

Creator's will and always accept it willingly. The Creator is our well-wisher and is merciful. The Creator's *Hukam* (command) is for the benefit of all His creation. One should accept the Creator's Will under all circumstances. The following verse of the Second Nanak in SGGS explains this message.

ਏਹ ਕਿਨੇਹੀ ਆਸਕੀ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਗੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਸਕੁ ਕਾਂਢੀਐ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਰਹੈ ਸਮਾਇ ॥  
ਚੰਗੈ ਚੰਗਾ ਕਰਿ ਮੰਨੇ ਮੰਦੈ ਮੰਦਾ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਆਸਕੁ ਏਹੁ ਨ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿ ਲੇਖੈ ਵਰਤੈ ਸੋਇ ॥੧॥

eh kinehee aasakee dhoojai lagai jai || naanak aasak kaa(n)ddeeaai sadh hee  
rahai samai || cha(n)gai cha(n)gaa kar ma(n)ne ma(n)dhai ma(n)dhaa hoi  
|| aasak eh na aakheeaai j lekhai varatai soi || 1 || SGGS p. 474

**Spiritual Meaning:** *If someone loves others more than the One Creator, that love is not true. Nanak says a real lover is one who always remembers and loves only the Creator. If someone says, "I love the Creator when good things happen, but not when bad things happen," then that love is not real. A true lover loves the Creator all the time, no matter what happens.*

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# 10. The Second Nanak's Important Contributions

The appointment of Guru Angad Ji as successor of Guru Nanak Ji, the founder of the Sikh religion, was an event of far-reaching importance in the evolution of Sikhi. Religious practices started by Guru Nanak Ji were continued and reinforced by Guru Angad Ji and Mata Khivi Ji, wife of Guru Angad Ji. The Second Nanak embodied the spirit of his great predecessor and built the infant faith through his dedication and global vision for the continued development of a new religion.

As the Second Nanak, he made several major contributions to strengthen and expand Sikhi. His actions in four important areas are listed below:

**Gurmukhi Script and Education:** A simple and basic Panjabi alphabet and script existed at the time of Guru Nanak Ji. At that time, the Panjabi language was written in the Landa or Mahajani script. This script had no symbols for the vowel sounds, so the reader had to figure out the writing correctly.

Therefore, there was the need for a script that could reproduce the sounds of the compositions that Guru Nanak Ji was writing in the *pothi* (book) that he later handed over to the Second Nanak. The Second Nanak further refined the Gurmukhi script in 1541 to better align it with locally spoken Panjabi. The true meaning and message of both the Guru Jis' compositions (*baanee*) could then not be changed or misunderstood by any reader to suit their purpose. This complete script with phonetic symbols became known as the Gurmukhi script.

Guru Nanak Ji had used the earlier version of the Gurmukhi script for recording his compositions. The improved Gurmukhi script accurately conveyed the sounds of Guru Nanak Ji's and the Second Nanak's compositions. It admirably served its intended purpose. Over the years, it has helped maintain the purity of all our Gurus' *baanees* as initially composed.

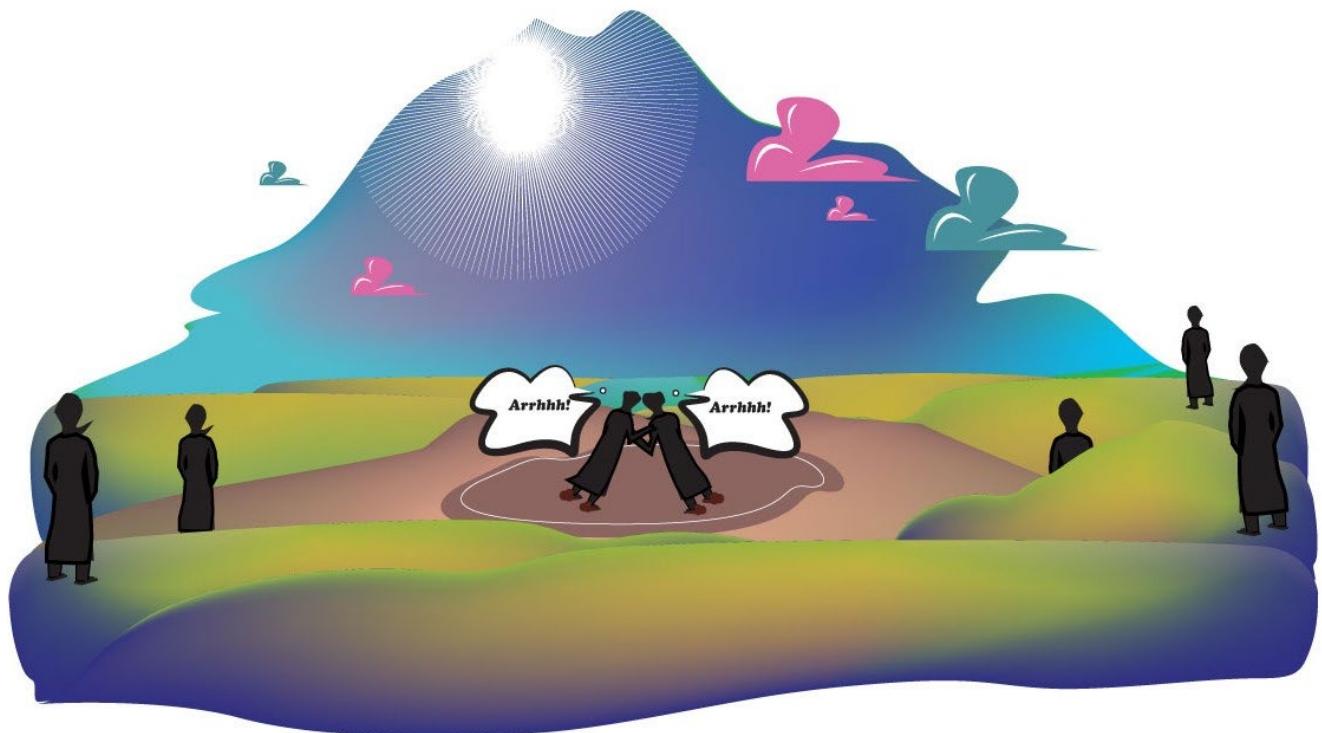
The Second Nanak used this Gurmukhi script to help educate children, adults and the public, especially the poor and the oppressed. By providing education and the means of communication to common folk, he made sure that they would no longer be dependent on the religious or political establishment to pursue their own economic, educational, or spiritual goals. This development was his way of empowering people to achieve their personal goals in life.

The development of the Gurmukhi script also helped the early Sikh community disassociate themselves from the widespread ritualistic religious tradition. During that time, the Sanskrit language was used almost solely by Brahmins since it was the language of the Vedas, the Hindu religious texts. People of the so-called lower caste and the untouchables were banned from reading any religious literature. This control of the language had helped the Brahmins maintain the 'superior' status of the so-called upper castes. The development and increased use of Gurmukhi by the educated Panjabis challenged this discriminatory behavior. It also enabled the Sikhs to create, share, and expand their impartial and accessible spiritual writings – as they did not have to depend on Sanskrit texts and vocabulary.

Creating this new Gurmukhi script was thus revolutionary for many reasons. It gave the people who spoke the Panjabi language an identity, enabling them to express their thoughts without any language barriers. The Second Nanak was also able to easily distribute to the public the valid message of Guru Nanak Ji's and his own (the Second Nanak's) compositions, written in the new Gurmukhi script.

**Physical Fitness:** The Second Nanak also inspired people to lead healthy lives. He told them that physical fitness helps them take up higher goals in life. He took a great interest in physical fitness and encouraged his followers to participate in sports after their morning prayers. He urged people to compete in physical competitions to be involved in wrestling bouts (*mal akharas*). The focus on physical fitness was his way of doing away with social taboos of "lower" caste people who were not allowed physical contact with those from higher castes. Thus, he built upon the

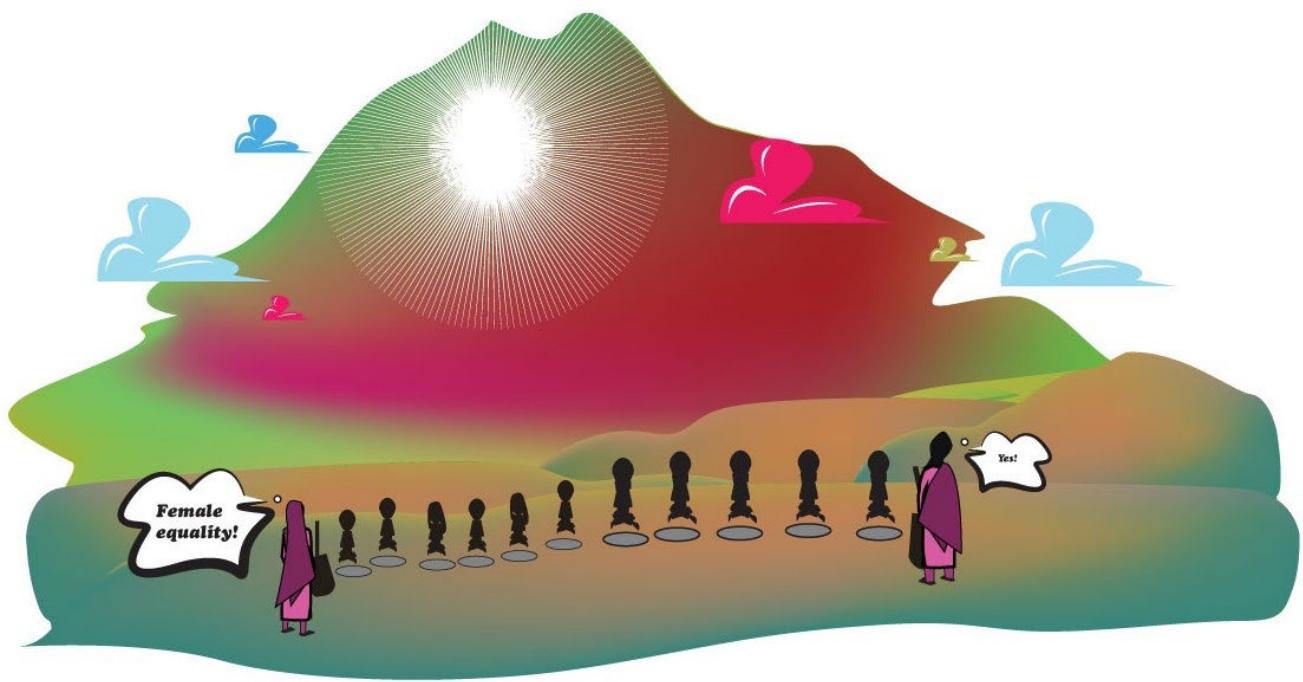
foundation laid by Guru Nanak Ji and helped develop a spiritually enlightened, educated, and healthy Sikh community without discrimination of caste and the 'untouchability' of the so-called Shudras.



**Women's role and status:** During the time of Guru Nanak Ji and the Second Nanak, the status of women in India was shameful. A woman was considered inferior to a man, regarded as a source of temptation, and confined to her home. Women were not allowed to participate in public life. Guru Nanak Ji had preached that man and woman were equal before the Creator. He had welcomed women to the Sangat, had offered them seats side by side with men, and had given them religious rights that had thus far been denied to women by the society. By word and deed, the Second Nanak reinforced Guru Nanak Ji's emphasis on gender equality.

In this, as in other aspects of his life, the Second Nanak did not work alone. His wife and partner, Mata Khivi Ji, assumed the role of a vital woman leader in the Sikh community who contributed significantly to the practice of Sikhi. She played a major role in enlarging the participation of women in leadership positions in the community. She was instrumental in maintaining the institution of *langar*, where all were invited to come and eat together.

Initially, Mata Khivi Ji personally served food to the community members and visitors who would come to see Guru Ji. Her action symbolized Sikh teachings, emphasizing humanity in every person and eliminating any distinctions or caste discrimination. Mata Khivi Ji did her *langar* service in a skillful and selfless manner and evoked respect among the people. Women were usually not seen in any leadership positions during those times. Her role in that capacity was unique and revolutionary.



Mata Khivi Ji also made sure that the food being served in *langar* was wholesome. Often, many people who came to see Guru Ji were poor. Mata Khivi Ji would open-heartedly and lovingly offer everyone tasty and nutritious food. She was described by the contemporary minstrel Balwand as a big shady tree affording much-needed comforting shade to everyone. Her role and praise for her by name is recorded in SGGS.

To this day, after every service, visitors to a Sikh gurdwara witness congregations that participate in *langar* together. As Guru Nanak Ji had taught and practiced at Kartarpur, and as the Second Nanak reinforced at Khadur, *langar* emphasized that service to fellow humans was an important tenet of the Sikh way of life. Soon, the practice caught on, and it became a tradition for congregation members to serve others.

**Missionary Tours:** The Second Nanak visited the key places and religious centers established by Guru Nanak Ji for preaching Sikhi. He also found new Sangats (Sikh communities) in Punjab and thus strengthened the public's understanding and practice of Sikhi. He also helped develop the new town at Goindwal, near Khadur. He appointed Bhai Amar Das (later, Guru) to supervise its construction.

The period of his Guruship was a crucial one. The Sikh community, being in its infancy, faced several challenges. The Hindu community in the region wanted to put an end to the newly established Sikh religion. Also, Guru Nanak Ji's son Sri Chand's Udasi sect (which practiced seclusion instead of the life of a householder) and other Yogis (who performed religious rituals of various kinds) continued to challenge Sikh beliefs and the Sikh way of life..

Even though Guru Nanak ji had established clear tenets of Sikhi, the danger was that the Sikhs (not Sikhi) could drift back to Hindu practices if followers of the new religion did not fully understand and practice the teachings of the first and second Nanaks. At this hour of severe testing of the blossoming faith, the Second Nanak lived Guru Nanak's tenets of Sikhi in their true spirit. The consistent practicing of the Sikhi tenets enabled Sikhi to further strengthen its own separate religious identity, building upon the strong foundation of Sikhi teachings and practices that Guru Nanak Ji had first taught.

**Anointing the Third Nanak: 1552 (age 48):** Before his death, the Second Nanak anointed Bhai Amar Das as the next Guru, the Third Nanak, instead of one of his two sons. To protect and preserve the compositions and teachings of Guru Nanak Ji, he included his own compositions in the *pothi* (book) he had received when he became the Second Nanak. He presented the updated *pothi* (book) to his successor Guru and asked him to set up a Sikh center at Goindwal. Guru Angad ji, the Second Nanak, then breathed his last (*joti jot samaye*) on March 29, 1552.

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# 11. Evidence that Guru Nanak Ji Gave his *Pothi* to the Second Nanak

Professor Sahib Singh, the highly respected scholar of Sikhi, has dealt with this topic convincingly in his many books, including “*Gur Itihaas, Patshahi 2-9*”, published by Singh Brothers, Amritsar. He concludes that Guru Nanak Ji recorded his compositions, collected Bhagats' compositions, and preserved them in a *pothi* (book). He then personally handed over this *pothi* to Guru Angad Ji when he anointed the latter as the Second Nanak. A summary of the discussion on this topic is given below.

We know that Bhai Lehna (before he became Guru Angad Ji) lived with Guru Nanak Ji in Kartarpur for seven years (1532–1539). Bhai Lehna followed Guru Nanak's every spiritual instruction with the utmost respect and was always in his company. Hence Bhai Lehna had firsthand knowledge of Guru Nanak Ji's teachings and all the Sikhi-related spiritual practices he taught.

It is essential to mention that the famous story that Guru Angad Ji asked someone named Bhai Bala to write about Guru Nanak Ji's life story (*Janamsakhi*) is not true. Professor Sahib Singh's book “About Compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib” shows conclusively that Bhai Bala was a fictional character. The so-called “*Bhai Bala Janamsakhi*” was written by someone else during the last years of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, i.e., more than 150 years after Guru Angad Ji's demise in 1552 (See Professor Sahib Singh's conclusion in “About Compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib” p. 193).

Guru Nanak Ji lived for 18 years (1521–1539) at Kartarpur. He also built a Dharamsala at Kartarpur, where people met twice a day (morning and evening) as a congregation. It is hard to believe that the assembly used to take place for 18 years with only verbal *baanee* compositions.

Guru Nanak Ji would undoubtedly have used his own hand-written, carefully preserved compositions of *baanee* to teach Sikhi to his many

followers. It is not correct to say that Guru Arjan Ji or some other Guru Ji collected Guru Nanak's *baanee* from Sikhs as it was scattered all over.

As noted in Chapter 4, Guru Nanak Ji had recorded all his compositions in a *pothi* (book), along with some compositions of Bhagats that he had personally collected during his extensive missionary travels. This *pothi*, with all the *baanee*, was handed over personally by Guru Nanak Ji to Guru Angad Ji when he anointed him as the Second Nanak.

Guru Angad ji then used the *baanee* in this *pothi* to spread the teachings and *baanee* of Guru Nanak Ji to the growing community of Sikhs. He also closely aligned some of his compositions with the *baanee* of Guru Nanak Ji. Convincing evidence for this conclusion is given in the next chapter.

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## 12. Similarities of the *Baanees* of Guru Nanak Ji and the Second Nanak

Professor Sahib Singh has dealt with this topic in detail in his book “About Compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib,” published by Lok Sahit Prakashan, Amritsar. He compares the compositions of Guru Nanak Ji and the Second Nanak. The many similarities of their thoughts and words show conclusively that the Second Nanak undoubtedly had Guru Nanak Ji’s compositions with him. Some **examples** are given below:

	<i>Guru Nanak ji’s Baanee</i>	<i>Second Nanak’s Baanee</i>
1	<i>Bhukhia bhukh na utrai jeh banaa purian bhaar.</i> Jap Ji	Bhukhia bhukh na utrai, gali bhukh na jaye. Nanak bhukha ta rajai, jeh gun keh guni samaye. Majh ki Var
	<i>The Creator cannot be realized within me through ritualistic practices pertaining to eliminating desire even if I am able to fulfill my past, present and future desires.</i>	The hunger of man is not satiated merely by talking. Nanak says: the hunger of man can be satiated only if he praises the Creator and merges in Him.
2	<i>Amrit vela sach nao, vadaei vichar. Karmi aavai kapra, nadri mokh doar. Nanak evai jaaneeyai, sabh aapai saciyaar.</i> Jap Ji	Doha sirain aapai khasam, vekhai kar viopai. Nanak evain janiai, sabh kich tisai rajai. Majh ki Var
	<i>The main goal in life (Vela) is to fill my days with God’s sweet wisdom (Vichaar). This means I should spend time thinking about how good and wonderful the Creator is. God is real (Sach), God makes the rules (Nao/ Niyam) for the universe, and God is the greatest of all. The best way to feel God inside my heart is to try my very best to be good and ask for His kindness. Guru Nanak says: This is the way to find God and to become full of goodness, just like Him.</i>	He, the Creator Himself is the judge at both ends, and He Himself decides. Nanak says: know this that all is in His Will.
3	<i>Chaakar lagai chaakri, je chalai khasmai bhai. Hurmat tis nu agli o vajoh bhi doona khaaye.</i> Asa di Var	Chaakar lagai chhakri, naalai gaarab vaad. Galaan karai ghanerian, khasam na paaye saad. Asa di Var
	<i>A servant does true service when it is done with love for the one, they serve.</i>	A servant who serves but also acts with pride and fights cannot win the master’s

	<i>Such a servant is greatly respected, and they receive double the reward.</i>	love. They may talk a lot, but they won't get the master's blessings.
4	<i>Sabhhi salaah, jinni dhiaya ik man, Seyee poorai saah, vikhtai oopar larh mooey... Sabhai vela vakhat sabh, jo athi bhaao hoey. Majh ki Var</i>	Sayee poorai sah, jinni poora paaiya. Athi vepervah, raithian iktai rang... Chouthai pahar sabha kai, sutian oopjai chao. Majh ki Var
	<i>They who praise the Creator in the early morning, with the single-minded devotion, they alone are the kings. They at the right time have grappled (with themselves). If one fears (in love) the God, day and night, then all times are sacred for His Worship.</i>	They alone are the true kings, who have attained to the Perfect God. Day and night, they are in ecstasy, imbued with the love of the One alone... In the fourth watch of the early morning, they are awakened and, in their mind, wells up joy.
5	<i>Pehal basantai aagman, pehla molio sohe. Jit mauliyai sabh mauliyai, tisai na maulio koye. Suhi ki Var</i>	Pehal basantai aagman, tis ka karo vichar. Nanak so salahiai, jeh sabsai de adhar. Suhi ki Var
	<i>The spring brought bloom first, but the Creator was in Bloom earlier still. He, through Whom everyone blossoms, needs no one else for Him to flower.</i>	He, who first brought the Spring, reflects your mind on Him. Nanak ways: Praise Him, Who brings sustenance to all.
6	<i>Jin kiya tin dekhya, kya kahiyai re bhai. Aapnai janai karai aap, jin vaarhi hai laayee. Raag Tilang</i>	Aapai janai aap, aapai aanai ras. Maru ki Var
	<i>He, Who created, He sustains, O Brother, what one can say about it. He knows everything and He alone is the doer, Who created all this Expanse.</i>	The The CreatorThe Creatoralone knows and does and does it right.

The above comparison shows that the Second Nanak was highly familiar with Guru Nanak's *Baanee*. There is a remarkable similarity in the message. Even the choice of almost similar words to express them further supports this conclusion. He also further detailed some of the basic principles of Sikhi first taught and shared by Guru Nanak Ji.

The similarities noted above are possible only if the Second Nanak had Guru Nanak Ji's *baanee* in his possession and was deeply inspired by these compositions. He would without a doubt had regularly recited the Guru Nanak Ji's *baanee* himself. He would have relied on it for conveying the message of Sikhi to the public during his entire period of Guruship (1539-1552) as the Second Nanak.

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# 13. Highlights of the Second Nanak

1504 – 1552

Born on:	March 31, 1504
Born at:	Village Sarai Naga (Matte Di Sarai), Punjab
Parents:	Father - Baba Pheru Ji Mother - Mata Ramo Ji
Wife:	Mata Khivi Ji, married on January 1520
Children:	Two sons - Dasu and Datu Two daughters - Amro and Anokhi
Accession to <i>Gurgaddi</i> :	September 7, 1539 (age 35)
<i>Gurgaddi</i> to next Guru:	January 22, 1552 (age 48)
Died on: (Joti Jot)	March 29, 1552 (age 48)
Highlights:	<p>Through his own life and conduct, Guru Angad Ji demonstrated the principles of <i>nishkam seva</i> (selfless service) to humanity, complete surrender to the <i>Shabad Guru</i> and the will of the Creator, and disapproval of extravagant and dishonest behavior.</p> <p>Guru Angad Ji:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Contributed 63 Shabads and Saloks (revealed verses), now recorded in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib.</li><li>Formalized the present form of the Gurmukhi script.</li><li>Maintained and developed the institution of <i>langar</i> started by Guru Nanak Ji.</li><li>Traveled widely and established several new centers for teaching, practicing, and promoting Sikhi.</li><li>Started the tradition of Mall Akhara emphasizing physical well-being to go along with spiritual development.</li></ul>

## Appendix 1

### Bhai Lehna's Tests

Some of the prevalent stories of the alleged 'tests' given to Bhai Lehna by Guru Nanak ji for determining his suitability as the next Guru, as recorded in popular *sakhees* (life stories of the Gurus written much later), are given below.

1. One story is that one day, upon reaching Kartarpur, Bhai Lehna went to the fields where Guru Nanak Ji was working. Guru Ji was removing weeds from the rice fields. He got some bundles made of stems of rice plants. He then asked Bhai Lehna to carry three bundles to his (Guru Ji's) home, and he placed them on Bhai Lehna's head. The plant stems were to be used as feed for cattle. Muddy slush was dripping out of the bundles, and Bhai Lehna's new silk clothes got dirty. Carrying muddy slush on his head might have been the first time that Bhai Lehna was asked to do the work of a low caste person. He might have expected such low work to be given only to a person of the Shudra caste. Nevertheless, he did not hesitate at all and respectfully followed Guru Nanak Ji's instructions.



2. Another story is that one day, Guru Ji went out to an open well to take a bath. While returning, his bath mug fell into a pool of filthy water. Per Hindu religious teachings about caste divisions and

hierarchy, only persons of the Shudras caste step into such filthy water. Guru Ji could have asked a Shudra person around him to retrieve the mug. However, he instructed Bhai Lehna to do it. Bhai Lehna unhesitatingly obeyed. He stepped into the filthy water and retrieved the mug.



3. On another morning, when Guru Ji opened the front door of the Dharamsala, he found a dead rat. According to Hindu tradition, dead animals were always handled by someone of the Shudras caste. Nevertheless, Guru Ji asked Bhai Lehna to pick up and throw out the dead rat. Immediately upon hearing the command, Bhai Lehna picked up and threw the rat out without any hesitation.
4. One winter night Guru Nanak Ji instructed Bhai Lehna to go to the river Ravee and wash the dirty laundry. The river water was frigidly cold, being the winter season. Washermen (Shudras) routinely performed this difficult work to make a living. A person of an upper caste had no idea of the hardship involved. Guru Ji wanted Bhai Lehna to experience it to develop empathy and understanding for the poor and oppressed.
5. One day, Guru Ji dressed very differently from his usual clothes,

carried a big stick in his hand, and ran towards the forest. Many people witnessed this unusual situation, were curious, and followed Guru Ji. After a short while, Guru Ji threw some candies from his bag. Some people began but then stopped collecting candies. Then, after some time, Guru Ji threw some coins. Some of the people who were still following him first began but then stopped collecting the coins. Next, Guru Ji started hitting anyone who was still following him. Everyone except Bhai Lehna stopped following Guru Nanak Ji. Guru Ji asked Bhai Lehna why he was not going away when all others had left him. Bhai Lehna replied that he had no one except him (Guru Ji) to go to. Others had their homes and shelters to go back to. No harsh treatment by Guru Ji could dampen Bhai Lehna's love and devotion towards him.

Although these and other stories from the popular *sakhees* are claimed to be true, these 'tests' for determining Bhai Lehna's suitability to be the second Guru are **not** likely to have happened in the manner described in the above stories from the *sakhees*. They are not aligned with Guru Nanak's spirituality and beliefs, and do not test Bhai Lehna for the personal qualities and in-depth understanding of Gurbani that would make him the most suitable candidate to be the next Sikh Guru.

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# Significant World Events

## Around the period of the Second Nanak

1501	The world has a population of around 435 million – about one-eighteenth of today's population of 7.8 billion, as of March 2020.
1502	Christopher Columbus begins his fourth and last journey to the Caribbean. He still believed that the islands he had found laid off the coast of India.
1510	Portuguese ships are heavily armed with cannons and dominate the Indian Ocean. India these days has a population of around 105 million. India today has a population of about 1.6 billion.
1521	Charles V was elected as the Holy Roman Emperor. Pope Leo X allied himself with Charles against Martin Luther.
1526	The printing press was introduced in Stockholm, Sweden.
1526	From Kabul, a Muslim tribal leader, Babar, has been making a series of raids through the Khyber Pass into the Indus Valley, seeking plunder. At Panipat, he defeated Ibrahim Lodi – an Afghan who has ruled much of India since 1489.
1535	Henry VIII breaks from Catholicism and declares himself head of the Church of England.
1543	Nicolaus Copernicus is dead. He defied Church doctrine with the publication of his work "On the Revolution of Heavenly Bodies," explaining his theory that the earth and other planets revolve around the sun, rather than the sun around the earth.
1543	Michelangelo paints the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.
1551	In Geneva, Robert Estienne, also known as Robert Stephanus, was the first to print the Bible divided into standard numbered verses.

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1. *Sikh Tavareekh (Part One, 1469-1708)*, by Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2014; and his *Sikh History – 1 (Ancient Punjab & Guru Period, 1000 OE-1708 CE)*, 2011. Published by The Sikh University Press, Belgium. Distributors: Singh Brothers, Amritsar.
2. *Gur Itihas (Patshahi 2-9)*, by Professor Sahib Singh, 1996, and its 7<sup>th</sup> print 2018. Singh Brothers, Amritsar.
3. *About Compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, by Professor Sahib Singh, 1996, Lok Sahit Prakashan, Amritsar; and his *Aad Birr Baarae*, 1970, and its 8<sup>th</sup> print 2001. Singh Brothers, Amritsar.
4. *Prophet of Devotion – Guru Angad Dev*, by Jaswant Singh Neki, Distributor - Singh Brothers, Amritsar.
5. *Kudrati Noor, Jeevani Sri Guru Angad Dev*, by Satbir Singh, New Book Company, Jallandhar.
6. *Bed Time Stories 6*, by Santokh Singh Jagdev, Sikh Missionary Resource Center, England.
7. *Stories from Sikh History 3*, by Kartar Singh *et al.*, Hemkunt Press, New Delhi, India.
8. SGPC website, <http://sgpc.net/ten-guru-sahibs/guru-Teg-Bahadar-sahib/>
9. Google search, world events.

# **Suggested Questions**

Chapters 1 and 2:

**Q.1:** What made Bhai Lehna come to Guru Nanak Ji at Kartarpur, and why did he stay with him for many years?

Chapters 3 and 4, and Appendix 1:

**Q.2:** What were Guru Nanak Ji's main teachings, and how and why did he select Bhai Lehna as his successor and give him the name Guru Angad?

Chapters 5 and 6:

**Q.3:** What was Guru Angad's main responsibility as Guru when he became the Second Nanak, and how did he go about fulfilling it?

Chapter 7:

**Q.4:** What did Guru Angad Ji teach his followers about the religious rituals and superstitions that people practiced or believed in at that time?

Chapters 8 and 9:

**Q.5:** What key values and beliefs did Guru Angad teach to the Sikh community, and how did he do so? Give examples.

Chapters 10 and 13:

**Q.6:** What main activities did Guru Angad Ji focus on during his Guruship period, and how did these strengthen the Sikh religion? Give examples.

**Q.7:** How and why did Guru Angad Ji empower women, and how did Mata Khivi Ji also do so?

Chapters 11 and 12:

**Q.8:** How do we know that Guru Angad Ji had the complete

*baanee* of Guru Nanak Ji in his possession, and how did this *baanee* help him as Guru?

**Q.9:** Did Guru Angad Ji's own *baanee* provide the same messages as Guru Nanak ji's *baanee*? Explain, with some examples.

All chapters:

**Q.10:** Which teaching(s) from Guru Angad Ji's life will you try to implement in your life and why? Explain, with examples.

# Books by Sri Hemkunt Foundation

1. *Guru Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 6-8).
2. *Second Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 6-8).
3. *Third Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 6-8).
4. *Fourth Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 9-11).
5. *Fifth Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 9-11).
6. *Sixth Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 9-11).
7. *7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Nanaks* (English & Panjabi, for ages 12-14).
8. *The Ninth Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 12-14).
9. *The Tenth Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 12-14).
10. *The Sikhs 1718-1801* (English & Panjabi, for ages 12-14).
11. *Sikhi for Me – Here and Now*, with Bhupinder Singh and Paramjit Singh Sachdeva (English; & Panjabi, *Sikhi Maere Laee—Aethe atae Hunn*, 2025).  
*The Message of Bhagats in Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, with Bhupinder Singh and Paramjit Singh Sachdeva (English & Panjabi, 2020).