

Guru Har Rai

His Life and Teachings



THE LIFE & TEACHINGS OF

**GURU
HAR RAI**

AMRITA SHARMA

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CHILD OF WAR

It was February 26, 1630. There was great rejoicing and celebrations in the house of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. The good news of the birth of Guru's grandson, son of his eldest son, Bhai Gurditta, had just spread to the whole Sikh community. All the people had gathered outside his house, and were as jubilant as the Guru. There was a spirit of festivity, and sweets were distributed to all. The Guru gave gifts of money and clothes to the poor of the town.

The family priest was also consulted and the child was then named Har Rai. The Guru was very happy with his grandson, and held him lovingly in his arms. He knew that this grandson of his would one day be the Guru of the Sikhs and guide them spiritually. He had been highly disappointed in his elder grandson, Dhir Mal, but all his doubts as to the succession had been put to rest, with the birth of Har Rai. The Guru also adored Har



Rai because he was the son of his favourite son, Bhai Gurditta. He had always felt that Bhai Gurditta resembled Guru Nanak a lot. He was inwardly aware that the flame of Guru Nanak, that was now passing through him, also illuminated his son Bhai Gurditta and his grandson Har Rai.

With such pious souls around, Guru Hargobind felt that he could concentrate wholeheartedly to the problems that the Sikhs faced from the Mughals. He had seen two Mughal rules in his time. One of them was Jahangir's who had initially extended a hand of friendship, but later grew jealous of Guru's power and authority, and so tried to overthrow him. Various battles were fought between the Mughal army and the Guru's Sikhs, and the Mughals had to often take a beating. Even when Shah Jahan ascended the throne, his policies too were intolerant and hostile towards the Sikhs. So Guru Hargobind had to maintain a huge army to defend his religion and his Sikhs from the Mughal rulers, who were set to wipe them from the roots.

Such were the troubled times that Har Rai grew up in. He had seen his father and grandfather going for battles against the powerful Mughal army. He had heard heroic

tales of how they fought the Mughal generals, and routed the enemy. He had seen his grandfather's skill with the sword, and admired him for it. He had also seen the Guru betrayed by men he had trusted like Painde Khan, Chandu and Asman Khan. They had once been very close to him. But the worst blow came when his own brother, Dhir Mal, conspired with the Mughals against his grandfather.

It so happened that Painde Khan, who was Guru Hargobind's most trusted commander, left the Guru in arrogance and joined the Mughal army. Then, he decided to attack the Guru with the help of the Mughal army under the leadership of Painde Khan. Dhir Mal, the Guru's elder grandson, knew that Guru Hargobind was not too fond of him, and that he would never appoint him the Guru as long as he lived. Thus he decided to make use of the strained relations between the Mughal rulers and the Sikhs. Perceiving this to be the best opportunity he wrote to Painde Khan secretly, and offered his full assistance. He also suggested that if they attacked the very night they would be able to catch the Guru and his army unawares, and even take over the fort and the treasures.

On receiving the letter, Painde Khan acted immediately on Dhir Mal's cue and attacked that very night. Although the Guru and his army were caught unprepared, they fought valiantly and wrecked havoc in the Mughal camp.

Har Rai later got the news that his grandfather slew Painde Khan with his sword, while his father, Bhai Gurditta, killed Painde Khan's son-in-law, Asman Khan, with his arrow.

PREPARING TO LEAVE

This was the battle where Guru Hargobind lost seven hundred brave soldiers. So much of bloodshed had aggrieved him deeply. He had no regrets about the battle with the Mughals, but he felt that the price he had paid was too high. He prayed for each and every one of the martyrs, and blessed their souls. It was this combination of valour and softness that made Guru Hargobind a soldier-saint. He was daring, courageous, and a great warrior, but he was deeply moved by the agony and sufferings of his people.

In fact, this is where Har Rai resembled his grandfather so much. As a child, Har Rai had admired the valour and grit of his father and grandfather. But he was equally sensitive and sympathetic in nature. On the one hand, he too believed that it was fair to take up arms for the right cause while, on the other, he felt deeply wounded by hurt and pain he saw or caused.



One day, when he was walking in his garden he stumbled and accidentally disturbed a shrub. At this the flowers of that shrub dropped on the ground before him. Seeing this Har Rai began to cry. He was deeply pained to see the flowers break away from the plant, and the injury caused to the shrub in the process. This was very much like his father and his grandfather who, in the course of the battle, had displayed similar reactions.

When Guru Hargobind killed Painde Khan he was deeply moved. He even took out his shield and put it on his face to protect him from the sun's glare. On the other hand, Bhai Gurditta after slaying Asman Khan sat by his side and cried because the two men had played together as children. It was this synthesis of courage and fortitude on the one hand and benevolence and compassion on the other, that made Guru Hargobind, Bhai Gurditta and Har Rai, the reflections of the divine light of Guru Nanak. And while these qualities gave them the strength to do right, it sometimes also made them weak. This is why Guru Hargobind did not want any more bloodshed unless absolutely necessary. He decided that the Sikhs needed a break from



the fighting and bloodshed. And so, he thought of retiring to Kiratpur, which was a quiet and a peaceful place in the Shivalik Hills of the Himalayas.

When he informed his family and the Sikh community about it they were happy, and applauded his decision. Everyone prepared to go except his elder grandson, Dhir Mal. Though Dhir Mal's treachery was not hidden from anyone, he was still a part of the Sikh community. Everyone expected him to come along to Kiratpur with the others, but he refused. At that time he was very friendly with the Mughal Governor at Jullandhar, and so wished to stay on in Kartarpur. Hearing his decision, Guru Hargobind was most pleased to leave him behind. And within no time, the Sikh Guru left for the elysium heights of Kiratpur with his family and close associates.

After they left, Dhir Mal took complete charge of family property at Kartarpur including the Holy *Granth*. Around that time a Sikh devotee named Bhai Biddhi Chand was making a copy of the holy book and had reached almost half way. He wanted to carry the original with him so that he could complete copying the rest of the text as soon

as possible. But when he went on to ask Dhir Mal for it, he refused to part with it. He was also aware that the Sikhs would continue to come to Kartarpur, since it was one of their pilgrimage sites. And so, he knew that it would be an asset to have the Holy *Granth* with him, especially when he would claim his guruship to the Sikh community. He made sure that all the Sikhs who came to pay their respects to the holy book, visited him too. This he felt would make it easier for him to be the Guru in the future. He even delved upon his Mughal connections to become the Guru, since he was well aware that Guru Hargobind would never consider him over his father and his younger brother. Thus he held on to the Holy *Granth* for all the wrong reasons.

When Guru Hargobind heard about it he was least affected. He told his troubled devotees that the Holy *Granth* belonged to the Sikhs, and they would themselves claim it back from Dhir Mal, when the time was right.

THE HIMALAYAN YEARS

In Kiratpur, Guru Hargobind decided to stay out of the Mughal rulers' path, to avoid any further confrontation with them. He was well aware of the fact that Har Rai had been exposed to the viles and bloodshed of war much before his time. He felt that Har Rai being a sensitive child would be quite affected if he saw any more sufferings.

There were times when he would be deep in thoughts, with that aggrieved and lost look in his child-like eyes that really touched Guru Hargobind. He felt deeply moved that Har Rai had not only seen death and destruction around him, but could also feel the pain of it. All this made him more determined to keep Har Rai away from any more sufferings. But it seemed that their share of sufferings was not yet over.

On one unfortunate day, Bhai Gurditta passed away. He had gone hunting with his friends when one of his companions shot a

cow mistaking it to be a deer. When the villagers heard of it they were wild with rage. They caught hold of the hunter and would have beaten him to death if Bhai Gurditta had not intervened. He explained to them in his calm and serene way that it was all an accident, and his friend had meant no disrespect to the sacred animal. He even offered to compensate for it, but the villagers would not hear of it. The situation had become so tensed and volatile that Bhai Gurditta, who had the ability to perform miracles, touched the cow with his cane and it came alive.

When Guru Hargobind heard of it, he was very upset. He rebuked his son for playing with God's work. Seeing his father so distressed, Bhai Gurditta felt really guilty and unhappy. He went to the shrine of a Muslim saint, Buddhan Shah, and passed away. For Guru Hargobind, it came as a real shock. He had placed a lot of expectations and hopes on his saintly son, and had hoped that he would carry on his work after him. But all his hopes were shattered at the untimely demise of his son. Har Rai too felt the loss of his father very deeply. He had grown up admiring and emulating his grandfather and



'his father, and now suddenly his life felt incomplete. He had found as much love and support in his father as Guru Hargobind had in his son. And now the death of their most beloved person in their lives, brought Guru Hargobind and Har Rai closer than ever before.

The Guru now began to see a clear reflection of Bhai Gurditta in Har Rai, and it gave him the strength to get over his son's death. Though Guru Hargobind did not consider Dhir Mal a part of his family anymore, but at Bhai Gurditta's death hour he felt that as per custom, Dhir Mal should accept the traditional turban since he was the elder son. They also asked him to get the *Holy Granth* which was to be read at Bhai Gurditta's funeral service. Dhir Mal, however, refused the invitation and did not send the holy book either. From then on, Dhir Mal was considered dead for the Guru. He now began to put all his interest and concentration on Har Rai. He kept Har Rai always in his company, and included him in all the work that he did. It was clear to everyone now that Guru Hargobind was going to make Har Rai his successor. Some even felt that he had wanted Bhai Gurditta to be the

next Guru, but since he was dead, the Guru now wanted Har Rai to take over what was due to his father.

This decision, however, did not make others in the family very happy. In fact, it was very much in keeping with the prophetic warning that Guru Amar Das had given his daughter Bibi Bhani that there would be unpleasantness and heartburnings at every step in the succession of Gurus. Here too, Guru Hargobind's own wife pleaded him to consider his sons, Suraj Mal, Ani Rai and Tegh Bahadur, before his grandson Har Rai. But the Guru was adamant. Of one of his sons, Tegh Bahadur, he said that he would one day become a Guru, and his glory would spread far and wide, but for now Har Rai was the most deserving for the throne of a Guru.

THE GURU'S CORONATION

Soon after, a day was fixed finally to announce Har Rai as the new Guru, and install him formally on the throne of the Gurus. Guru Hargobind sent an invitation to all the people of the Sikh community to come to Kiratpur. There, before a big gathering of Sikhs, he recited verses from the Holy *Granth*, and offered prayers to Guru Nanak. Then, holding Har Rai by the hand seated him on the Guru's throne, and declared him the new Guru of the Sikhs. He then asked Bhai Budha's son, Bhai Bhana, to apply the customary sacred tilak to Har Rai. After this, Guru Hargobind made a ritual offering of five paise, a coconut and flowers, and bowed before the seventh Guru of the Sikhs.

It was the year 1644. Guru Hargobind felt that he had now done his duty, having appointed a new Guru who would lead the Sikhs forward and guide them spiritually. Now that Har Rai was the Guru, there were a



few things Guru Hargobind wanted to pass on to him. He told Har Rai to continue living in Kiratpur, and to keep away from the Mughals as much as possible. Moreover, he did not want Har Rai to maintain a large army of soldiers, which would make the Mughal rulers feel threatened in any way. He told Har Rai to keep a force of two thousand two hundred mounted soldiers which would be just enough to defend himself against the Mughals, if the need be, but nothing more. Furthermore, he did not want Har Rai to direct his time and energy in futile and endless battles against the Mughals. He had realised in his lifetime that continuous warfare not only meant loss of his men and their resources, it even distracted them from their religious duties. He was aware, however, that troubled times lay ahead for the Sikh Gurus, and he wanted the Sikh community to be strong and ready for it mentally. This is what he asked Har Rai to keep in mind and hence stay out of the Mughal ruler's way.

Though Guru Har Rai was in no way averse to fighting, for the sake of his faith, he realised the wisdom of Guru Hargobind's words. He assured Guru Hargobind that they would never initiate war against the



Mughals, and added that he would concentrate more on serving their community, their people and their faith to the best of his abilities. The Guru blessed his grandson and laid back in peace. With every passing day, he knew that his end was near.

One day, he called his son Tegh Bahadur to his bedside. Blessing him heartily, he told him to go to the village of Bakala in Amritsar district along with his mother. He was to stay there till the time came for him to commence his holy work. Tegh Bahadur touched his father's feet and prepared to leave. The Guru then called his whole family and all the Sikhs to his bedside, and asked him not to mourn his death. He told them that only his body was dying; but his spirit would still be alive and shining in Guru Har Rai. Then placing his hand on Guru Har Rai's head, he passed away in peace.

The whole Sikh community felt aggrieved at Guru Hargobind's passing away. But since they were promise bound not to mourn they turned to their seventh Guru, Guru Har Rai, who was now their spiritual leader, at the tender age of fourteen.

THE DIVINE WORK BEGINS

Though Guru Har Rai was only fourteen years old, he had a wise head on his shoulders. All the Sikhs who had seen and known him as a child were aware of the fact that while Guru Har Rai was young in age, he was old in thought and experience. He had experienced the ordeals of the Sikh community as they bravely faced the Mughal attacks and conspiracies. He had seen the treachery of trusted people early in life, and still lived in its dark shadow; he had seen his own brother conspire with the Mughals to overthrow their own grandfather, so that he could get the Guru's throne after him. He was proficient in the art of fighting and use of arms, but he also knew how to use it judiciously. All these qualities not only established the faith of the Sikh community firmly in him, it also endeared him strongly to them all.

By now, people had come to perceive his strength of character and his kind heart. He had a heart that was filled with compassion and love not just for his near and dear ones, but even for those unknown to him. As per his grandfather's instructions, Guru Har Rai did not maintain an army of more than two thousand two hundred soldiers, and devoted all his time to serving the poor and the needy.

Gradually, the Sikhs began to grow stronger once again under Guru Har Rai's leadership, and he began to guide them back to the religious path. He had agreed whole heartedly with Guru Hargobind that the Sikh community was still in its growing stage, and needed to preserve its energy and resources for bigger battles ahead instead of wasting it in petty squabbles with the Mughals. Guru Har Rai told his Sikhs that for the Mughals, 'war' was a way of life; but for the Sikhs, 'religion' was a way of life, and that was where they would make their progress.

By now the Guru had a son named Ram Rai, who was being brought up by the whole Sikh community in Kiratpur. The Guru used to often go on hunting expeditions with his Sikhs. This was again one thing that he had in common with Guru Hargobind. But unlike

him, Guru Har Rai never killed the animals that he hunted. He would catch the wild animals and keep them as pets. He had a large reserve area where he set them free, and enjoyed watching them. He loved all living creatures and made sure that no one ever harmed them. He strongly believed that it was a sign of the highest order to hurt no one or cause pain or suffering of any kind, by his deeds. He would often quote these lines by Baba Farid, in the daily meetings of the Sikhs:

“All men’s hearts are jewels;
It’s wicked to cause anyone grief or pain.
If you desire to see the dear Lord,
Cause no grief or pain, to anyone’s heart.”

To him all men were children of God, and those who were evil were only badly misled. He strongly believed that whoever came in their shelter deserved to be forgiven, and to be treated as one of God’s man whatever his deeds may be. He said that repentance was a great quality which brought back the sinner from his evil ways on to the right path. Anyone who repented for his sins, deserved to be forgiven from the heart, with all ill feelings and grudges forgotten. All these golden words touched the hearts of his men and they tried

hard to follow his teachings in their day-to-day life.

In a short span of time, the Sikh community had come closer and become stronger than ever before. They were beginning to understand the teachings of Guru Har Rai, and became more tolerant and forthcoming in their interaction with people of other caste and creed. Also, the practice of serving free food in the Guru's langar played a major role in bringing about this development in people's thinking. It had been a regular practice since the days of Guru Nanak to operate a free kitchen for the devotees.

Under Guru Har Rai, this culture also underwent a development. The Guru gave clear instructions that the food should always be available in the langar, and should be open to everyone who came there to eat. He specifically told his devotees that whoever came to the door should not go away disappointed. He stressed that if they were unable to feed even one man who came to their kitchen, then it would be akin to a sin. He also told his followers that all visitors, irrespective of their religion and caste, were to be treated with the same devotion and

hospitality as they would a relative of theirs. Sometimes, the Guru would happily go without food in order to feed all the people who had gathered around. Seeing this, the devotees too began placing the needs of others over their own. It was one of the achievements that made Guru Har Rai very proud of his men and very pleased in them.

The Guru regularly held court and exchanged views and opinions with his Sikh devotees. They would gather before him and listen intently to his gentle words. They would gaze in his deep saintly eyes and be mesmerised by his teachings. Guru Har Rai used to enjoy the hymns from the Holy *Granth* more than anything else. He would sit for hours on end, while his choir sang the holy hymns. These hymns were sung according to the various *hindustani* 'ragas' or musical measures, which added to its beauty and grace. So struck was Guru Har Rai by the holy hymns that he would go in a trance listening to its music and words. He felt an immediate link with Guru Nanak, and all the revered Gurus after him whenever he heard these hymns. To Guru Har Rai, these were the most beautiful expression of the devotion a Sikh felt for Guru Nanak and his

successors. He held it in great esteem and it was as sacred to him as Guru Nanak himself. He gave a lot of respect to the holy words, and entreated every Sikh to do the same.

Once, when he was resting on his couch, a Sikh came into the room in the course of doing his work. He was casually singing hymns from the Holy *Granth*. Suddenly the Guru recognised the holy verse and rose from his bed and sat up straight in respect of the holy word. When the Sikh asked him why he did so, he explained that the Guru himself is embodied in the hymns of the Holy *Granth*. And when one respects the holy scripture, one shows his respect for the Gurus too.

Guru Har Rai took great pleasure in the holy book. He used to choose passages from the *Guru Granth Sahib* and the Sikhs recited it during their daily prayers. He would also take great pains to explain the divine message of these sacred words to his followers so that they could learn to live by it, and become better Sikhs. He did so because he was aware that many Sikhs, who recited verses from the book, could not understand it so well. He did not mind that since he knew that even without understanding its true meaning the Sikhs read it from their heart,



and with complete devotion. He had as much faith in his people as they had in him. Since he was very young and only in his twenties, he showed close and personal relationship with each and everyone of his disciples. He would often smile when they read their verses without understanding it, and yet never chided them.

One day, however, a few of his disciples approached him and humbly asked him if there was any use in reading the holy scripture without really understanding anything at all. At that time, the Guru just smiled and let the question pass. A few days later, they left for a village to help some poor and needy people. When they reached the outskirts of that village, Guru Har Rai noticed that there lay a broken pot which was once used to store butter. He asked one of his disciples to pick up one of the pieces and get it over to him. The man did as he was told, and as the Sikhs gathered around him to see what the Guru was trying to do, he showed them a small chunk of butter that had stuck in one corner of the pot. Since it had been in the sun for sometime, the butter had started melting slowly. Pointing to the thin streak of melted butter, Guru Har Rai told his devotees that

this is exactly what happened when they read the Holy *Granth*. Even if they read it without understanding, some of it does get stored in some corner of the mind provided it is read with devotion. Moreover, when the warmth of understanding is applied to it at any point of time, it surely yields wisdom. All the Sikhs present there, understood Guru Har Rai's point clearly and all their doubts were dispelled. From then on, they began reading and reciting the Holy *Granth* with more devotion and reverence than they had ever done before. They also began to hold Guru Har Rai in great reverence for making everything look so simple.

AMITY WITH THE MUGHALS

Guru Har Rai was also well-versed in medicines. Having spent his childhood in the Himalayan region he had grown familiar with most of the trees, shrubs and herbs present there. He was well aware of the medicinal value of the various herbs that grew on the Shivalik Hills, and he began to use them not just for his Sikhs, but for all the poor and needy that came to him for help.

In no time, word had spread around about his medicinal skills, and people thronged his house for some medicine or the other. Guru Har Rai was very grateful to God for providing him with his abilities, and he saw it as one more source by which he could serve his fellow-men. He asked his Sikhs to open up a free dispensary from where anyone could describe his ailment, and pick up his medicines free of cost. When Guru Har Rai saw the number of people suffering with some ailment or the other, he felt aggrieved. He



asked his Sikhs to buy medicines from other places too and keep it in their dispensary. Some of the medicines were so rare and expensive that the poor people could never afford it. In fact, the Guru ensured that his dispensary kept all kinds of medicines for the poor. He felt most satisfied when he was able to alleviate their pain in any way. Most people who had benefited from Guru's medical centre willingly accepted his faith and sang his praises far and wide. Guru Har Rai had earned more devotees by his kindness and good deeds than the Mughals did by force.

With the passage of time, the Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan too realised that the Sikh community was a peace-loving one, and posed no threat to his kingdom. Like the Guru, he also felt that nothing would come of continuous warfare between them, and so he tried not to provoke any ill-feelings in the Sikhs. He too had heard of the way in which the Guru took care of his people and he admired him for it.

Shah Jahan was getting old and he had begun to appreciate the peace-loving ways of Guru Har Rai. His own four sons were a source of great worry to him, and he had begun to feel the strain of his sons vying for

the throne. His eldest and favourite son, Dara Shikoh, was the apparent heir but faced a huge threat from his third son, Aurangzeb, who was not only very shrewd but cunning too. In order to get rid of Dara Shikoh, he had tried many plots so that he could ascend the throne.

One day, he was told by his men that a tiger's whiskers could be highly poisonous. So, he had these added to Dara Shikoh's food after bribing the royal cook. As expected, when Dara Shikoh ate those, he became seriously ill. Shah Jahan had doctors and fakirs brought to his palace, from all corners of the country, but no one could come up with a remedy to cure the prince. They all said that only a special kind of medicine made from some rare herbs could cure the prince, but they had no idea where to find that herb. Shah Jahan's heart broke with sorrow, and he had almost given up hope on his son's recovery when one of the local doctors suggested that he ask the Guru for that rare medicine since he was well informed about herbs. At this, Shah Jahan immediately dispatched some of his men to Kiratpur with a humble and polite letter from him, requesting him to provide the medicine and save the young prince's life.

When those men reached Guru Har Rai he was holding his court, and was surrounded by all his men. When the Guru's Sikhs saw the Mughal soldiers approaching, they felt that the king was once again back to his challenging games, and they were immediately on their guard. But Guru Har Rai told them to first enquire what they wanted. When the soldiers informed them of their errand, the Guru bade them welcome and had his men take care of them, while he arranged for the rare medicine. Some of the Sikhs tried to tell the Guru that Dara Shikoh was the son of the enemy, who had been responsible for the death of so many of their men. At this, Guru Har Rai patiently explained to them that at that moment the emperor had come to his doorstep full of hope for help, and there was no way that he was going to disappoint him. He also told his men that at such times one should lay aside all grievances and complaints, and offer as much help as one is capable of. To him, on the one hand, it was a sign of humility in the enemy to come to his enemy's doorstep seeking help. While on the other hand, it was a sign of greatness to forget everything else and lend a helping hand. The Guru then handed over the medicine to the

soldiers with a letter instructing the king as to how the medicine was to be administered. He also asked to be informed when the prince recovered.

Shah Jahan's joy knew no bounds when the soldiers arrived with the medicine. After taking the medicine the prince recovered in no time. So overcome was Shah Jahan with gratitude that he forgot all the old enmity between the Muslims and the Sikhs, and realised the greatness of the Guru. He was about to send messengers to the Guru to inform him about the recovery and well-being of Dara Shikoh. But then, he decided to go personally and thank him for saving his son's life.

Soon the news of Shah Jahan's arrival reached the Guru, and he welcomed the emperor with all due respect and honour. Shah Jahan bowed to the Guru and expressed his gratitude heartily. He sought the Guru's blessings and begged him to accept his hand of friendship. The Guru willingly agreed because he was always in favour of cordial relations between them, since it meant peace and prosperity not just for his men but for the whole country. Besides, he was also won over by Shah Jahan's humility and sincere wish



towards friendship. Guru Har Rai embraced Shah Jahan and accepted his friendship. The Sikhs were also happy since they too had seen too much of bloodshed in the recent past, and did not want anymore of it.

The period to follow was that of peaceful co-existence of the Mughals and the Sikhs, but unfortunately it was very short lived. Shah Jahan fell ill and was imprisoned by his son Aurangzeb, who became the new Mughal emperor. Since Aurangzeb did not like the Sikhs much, everyone knew that the friendship was bound to end.

DARA SHIKOH AND THE GURU

Aurangzeb had not only usurped the throne, but even fought with his elder brother, Dara Shikoh, and drove him away from the kingdom. So shrewd a political ruler he was, that he did not want Dara Shikoh to be alive anywhere. He ordered his men to bring back Dara Shikoh, dead or alive. There was a reign of terror throughout the country, and most people feared troubled times ahead for everyone. It was around this time, in 1656, when the Guru was twenty-six years old, that his second son, Harkrishen was born. The Guru was very pleased with his second-born, and knew that he would carry on the work that had been assigned to him.

Meanwhile, the Guru too had heard of the unfortunate turn of events in the Mughal court. But despite his disappointment he made up his mind to keep away from the new Mughal ruler as much as he could. Aurangzeb, meanwhile, had publicly declared

Dara Shikoh a traitor, and also announced that whoever protected Dara Shikoh or offered him shelter would be severely punished. As a result of this declaration no one dared to help Dara Shikoh even though many people had full sympathy for him. He ran from place to place, corner to corner, in hiding, but he could not find any shelter anywhere.

However, it so happened that while Dara Shikoh was on the run, escaping from Aurangzeb's soldiers, he came upon Guru Har Rai. He was well aware that the Guru had saved his life once and was sure that he would save him again. As he had expected, the Guru did not disappoint him. He welcomed him warmly and promised to protect him against Aurangzeb's army as best as he could. He offered him food and drink, and bade him rest in peace. Meanwhile, his family tried to dissuade him against helping Dara Shikoh, since it meant going against the Mughal king and thus inviting trouble. Even the Sikhs asked him if it was wise to protect the prince against Aurangzeb's orders, and thus incurring his wrath. At this, Guru Har Rai told them that as per the holy scriptures the Guru embraces whoever comes to him for



protection. He told them that a true religious teacher did not look into a person's caste or deeds whenever someone sought his help in the process. Hearing this, the devotees realised that Guru Har Rai was only practising what he was preaching. He had not refused Dara Shikoh protection because the latter had actually landed at their doorstep to seek help. They all bowed to the Guru and stood by him willingly and reverently. They waited on Dara Shikoh warmly, and gave him all the help he needed.

Guru Har Rai in the course of his conversation with the royal prince, found to his pleasant surprise that he was not only very scholarly and religious, but was also pious and God fearing. Dara Shikoh even confessed to Guru Har Rai that he was not at all interested in the throne of Delhi, and that he would have been happy if set free to follow his spiritual pursuits. But he was well aware of the fact that Aurangzeb felt threatened by him regarding the throne, and would be insecure as long as he was alive.

When Guru Har Rai heard this he was really pleased. He promised Dara Shikoh that he and his men would fight the advancing army of Aurangzeb's soldiers so that the

prince could escape in the meantime. And likewise, when the Mughal army reached the Beas river, near the Shivalik Hills, Guru Har Rai sent his powerful force to fight the Mughal army. When the Mughal soldiers saw the thundering army of Sikhs advancing swiftly towards them, they left the ground and withdrew. This gave Dara Shikoh ample time to escape farther away. However, cunning as Aurangzeb was, he and his men chased Dara Shikoh to the farthest corner. They had him executed on religious grounds by falsely accusing him of betraying the Islamic religion.

When Guru Har Rai heard of it he was deeply anguished. He had known Dara Shikoh to be a pious man, and he offered prayers for him so that his soul could rest in peace.

THE BETRAYAL

The whole episode of Dara Shikoh, however, had turned Aurangzeb against the Sikhs. Since he had become king by unfair means he was over protective and insecure about the throne. After he had gotten rid of Shah Jahan and Dara Shikoh, he turned his attention to the Sikhs, who, he had been informed, maintained a reasonably large and powerful army. He immediately saw this as a threat not only to his kingdom, but even to his religion. Aurangzeb was a very devout Muslim, who followed the religious principles strictly, and demanded that everyone show the same respect and devotion. He was already made aware of Guru Har Rai's power and was afraid of the popularity the Sikh religion was gaining everyday.

Aurangzeb, who was the most intolerant amongst all Mughal rulers in terms of religion, wanted to convert everyone to the Muslim faith. He did not want any other

religion, besides Islam, to exist. He was totally against the Hindu religion and had ordered most of the temples and idols in sacred and religious places like Mathura, Varanasi, Brindavan, Ajmer to be demolished and desecrated. Moreover, when he saw the popularity of Guru Har Rai he feared that the Sikh religion would soon spread throughout the country. At first, he wanted to attack the Guru and have him killed. But he was aware of the strength and courage of the Sikh army. He also realised that it would turn all the Sikhs against the Mughal empire. On the other hand, he thought that if he could convert Guru Har Rai to his Muslim faith, then he would gain the whole Sikh population in his Islamic fold. He already bore a grudge against the Guru for helping his rival Dara Shikoh, and now he decided to work on a plot by which he could either exterminate the Guru or convert him to the Muslim faith. Either way, he decided to end the Sikh religion during his lifetime.

So, he decided to invite the Guru to his court. He had also been informed by his men of the miracle-making power of the Guru. This gave him a valid reason for inviting him to his court. Aurangzeb had it all planned out.

He had decided to ask the Guru to perform some miracles in his court. If the Guru succeeded then he would accept him as a man of God and try to convert him to Islam, and if he failed then he would have him imprisoned for helping Dara Shikoh and hence going against the emperor's orders. This would give him a legitimate reason to execute him. He then quickly dispatched his men to Guru Har Rai with the invitation.

When the Guru received the royal summons he read it very carefully and perceived that there was some mischief involved in it. He had a long debate with his Sikhs about it in his court. Some were of the opinion that the Guru should go otherwise the king would definitely take an offence if he refused. The others, however, smelt something fishy in the invitation. They reminded the Guru that it was Aurangzeb himself who had usurped his father and imprisoned him, and had also killed his elder brother, Dara Shikoh, who was the rightful heir to the throne. They also told him that the king might want to avenge the aid that the Guru gave to the prince and so they warned him against going to his court. It was like going straight into a trap. Most people agreed

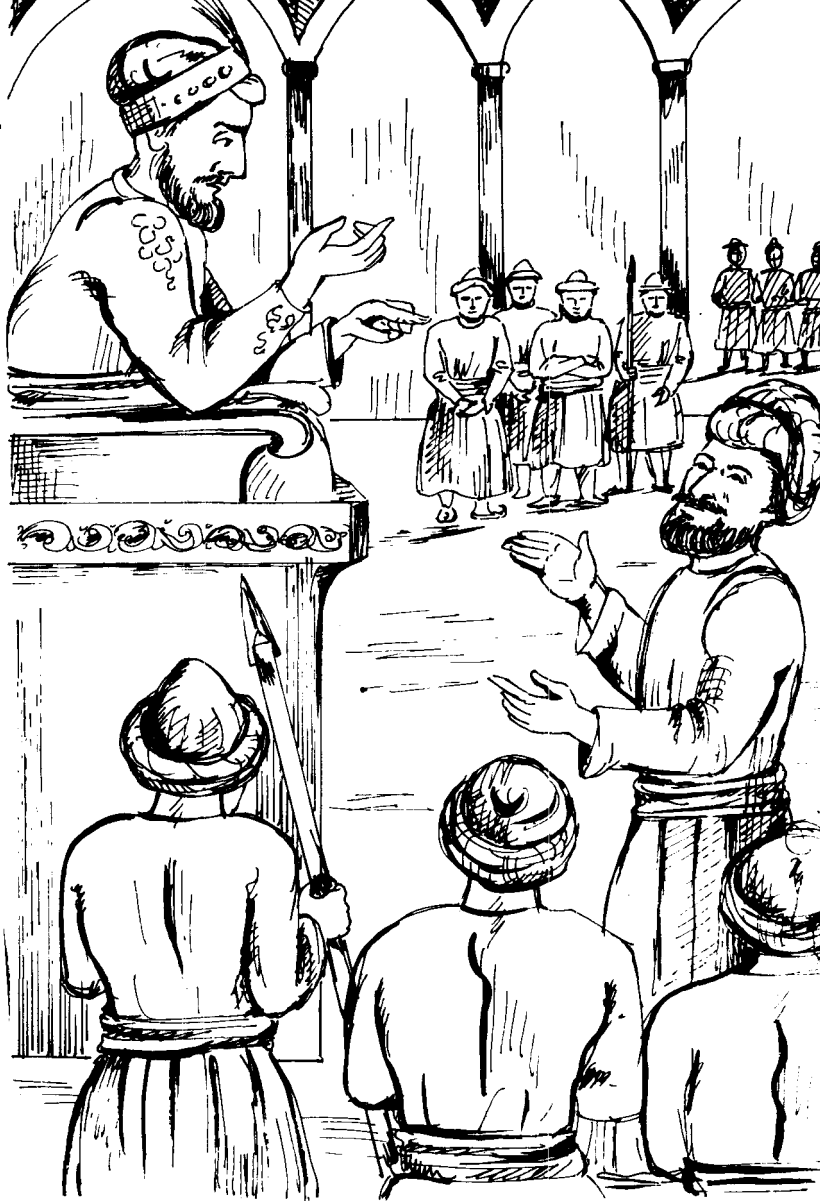
to this except Ram Rai, the Guru's eldest son. He strongly suggested that the invitation by the emperor should be definitely accepted. He was also of the opinion that friendship with the Mughals would prove to be beneficial for the whole Sikh community.

Guru Har Rai heard everyone's views, and although he agreed with his son he also felt that it could be a plot of some kind. But Ram Rai was persistent, and finally, it was decided that Ram Rai himself would go to the Mughal court instead of the Guru. This was to serve the purpose of honouring Aurangzeb's invitation, and at the same time to find out what his real intentions were, without endangering the Guru's life.

Before Ram Rai left for Delhi, Guru Har Rai called him to his chamber. There he gave him strict instructions of how and what to do once he got there. He told him strictly not to indulge in miracles even if the king asked him to. He reminded him over and over again that miracle-making was strongly against the Sikh faith, and also told him how Guru Hargobind had reprimanded his sons Baba Atal and Bhai Gurditta for interfering with God's ways. He also stressed strongly that he was going to the Mughal court not just as his

son, but as his representative and that of the whole Sikh community. His other instructions to Ram Rai was to carry himself with dignity, to uphold his religion with respect, and to keep the sanctity of the Holy *Granth* intact. He particularly told Ram Rai to interpret the holy scripture in no other way than what was originally meant.

When Ram Rai finally reached the Mughal court, he was asked to read the Holy *Granth* and explain it to the people in the court. So Ram Rai began reading the holy scriptures. Soon he came upon a line in the scripture that read: "The ashes of the 'Muslim' got into a potter's clod". Immediately, there was an uproar in the court as all the courtiers objected strongly to it. Ram Rai who wanted to cause no displeasure to the Mughal king, quickly pacified the court by saying that it was a mistake made by the calligraphist. He went on to say that the original line was: "The ashes of the 'faithless' got into a potter's clod." Aurangzeb was so pleased with him for this, that he presented a 'jagir' (piece of land) to him in return. This thrilled Ram Rai so much that when Aurangzeb asked him to perform some miracles for them, he immediately obliged. He forgot all about Guru Har Rai's



instructions, and performed one miracle after another for the pleasure of the king and his courtiers. He was then presented a robe of honour by Aurangzeb, which pleased Ram Rai to no end.

The news of all these events soon reached Guru Har Rai, and he was extremely upset. He was not distressed that Ram Rai had not obeyed his instructions, but he was more hurt by the fact that his son had compromised the Holy *Granth* in such a shameful manner. For days, Guru Har Rai felt ashamed that Ram Rai was his son, and because of him the whole Sikh community and all the Gurus had been put to shame. He recalled how angry Guru Hargobind had been when his son had performed a miracle, even for the good of his community. And here, Ram Rai had gone and made a big mockery of it before the Mughals. He refused to think of Ram Rai as his son anymore, and openly declared that he was alienating him forever from the Sikh community for the cowardice and lowliness he had shown in the Mughal court. He even sent a message to Ram Rai asking him to never return to the Sikh community.

Some felt that the Guru was being very harsh on his son, but gradually they realised

that for him his religion was more important than anything or anyone else. He could bear all sort of pains, but he could not bear any blemish on the Sikh religion and especially on the Holy *Granth* which he equated with Guru Nanak himself. When the Sikhs saw this they began to respect him more and hold him in greater reverance than before.

THE PEOPLE'S GURU

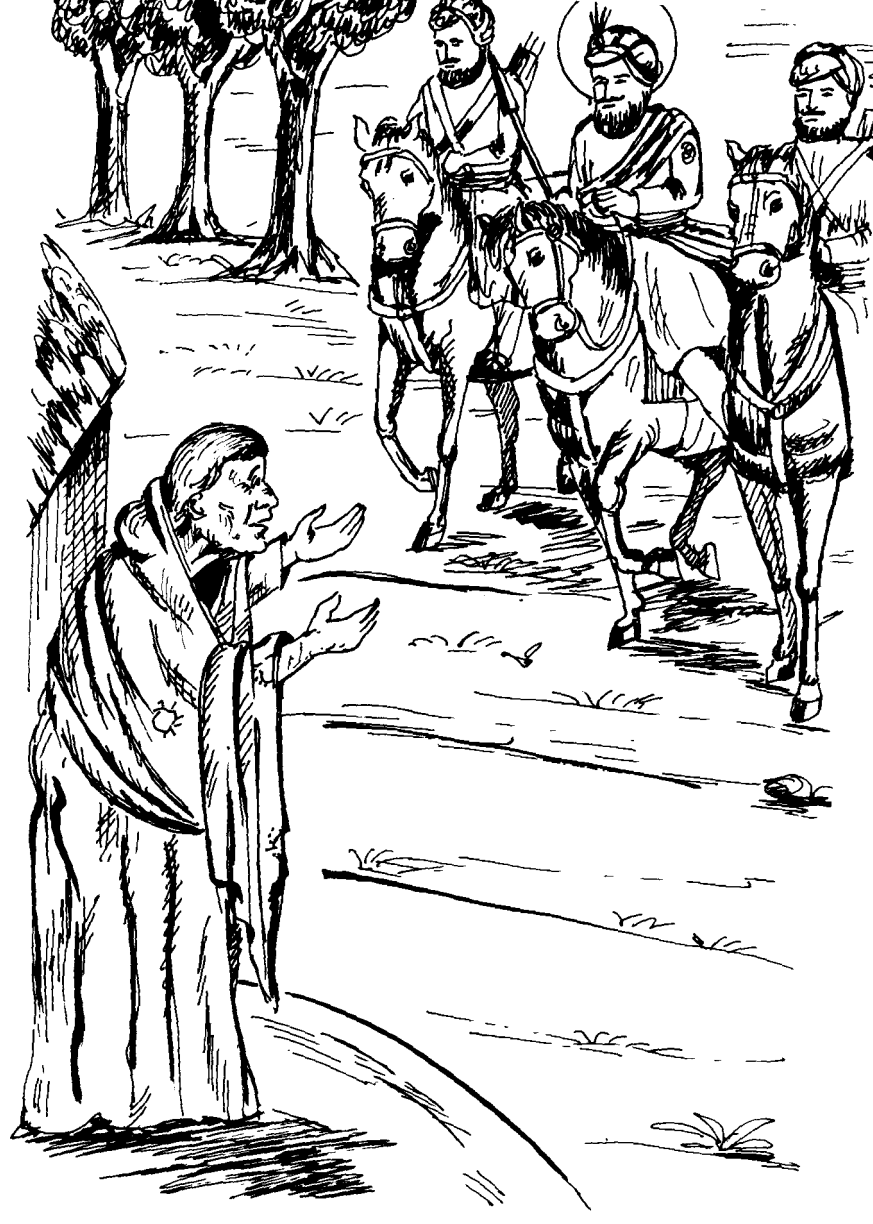
Guru Har Rai was very close to his disciples. He was not only accessible to them, but also willing to listen and sort out their problems. He shared a very personal and intimate relationship with them. He was their friend, philosopher and guide in religious matters as well as in matters of everyday life. This ability to relate to each and every of his devotees endeared him to all of them. They never hesitated to put forward their doubts, their misunderstandings and their problems to their Guru, since he heard them all patiently and attentively.

He thought a lot about their welfare and their development not just as a community but as better Sikhs. He had schools and hospitals opened everywhere, and tanks dug at regular intervals for the convenience of his people. His free dispensary was never out of stock, and he made sure that the langar was never out of food. He also involved people in

all his activities and plans, and made them an important part of all his decisions. He was always open to ideas and suggestions by his people, and often acted on it. If it proved correct he would praise them all and express his gratitude, and if it proved wrong then he quietly took the responsibility on himself for it.

His devotees loved him a lot and never stopped thinking of him even when he was far away from them. One such incident happened when Guru Har Rai was out hunting. Though the Guru never killed animals he used to love to go hunting off and on. He would often catch the wild animals and then set them free.

One day, it so happened that the Guru was out hunting with his men. As they were passing through a village on the way to the forest, the Guru suddenly turned his horse towards a particular house and stopped. He then knocked on the door and waited. An old woman, looking tired and weary, opened the door. But when she saw that the visitor was none other than Guru Har Rai her joy knew no bounds. Her face lit up completely and she touched his feet and washed it with her tears. Then she ran inside and came out with the food she had cooked. The Guru beamed at her,



and without dismounting from his horse he ate the food with great relish. All the Sikhs present were amazed at the sight since the Guru had not even washed his hands before eating, and this was something he had never done. They looked on in amazement as the Guru savoured each and every mouthful of the simple food. After finishing the meal he thanked the old woman heartily, and then went on his way. The old woman looked on after him, long after he was gone, She could not believe her good fortune.

The next day, when they were all making preparations for the hunting trip some of the Sikh devotees packed some food along, just in case the Guru felt hungry on the way. But that day, the Guru never once asked for food, nor the next day or the few days after that. Everyday the disciples would pack food for him in case he wanted to eat, but he never did. Then one day, the Sikhs in the hunting group finally, asked the Guru why he had gone to the poor woman's house to eat, uninvited, when he had never felt hungry during his hunting trips. At this the Guru smiled and told them that they were wrong to think that he had been uninvited. On the contrary, he assured them that since she was very old she

could not travel all the way to the Guru's place. Hence she always prayed for the Guru to pay her a visit, and eat the food that she cooked for him. And the day he had gone was the day when she had been sure he would come. When the devotees heard this they could not believe that the old woman's faith could do such a thing.

The next time, when they passed by that village, they went to the old woman and asked her if it was indeed true. She then revealed that she longed for Guru Har Rai to eat at her place, but she never had enough money for the meal. That day, she had managed to earn five paise by spinning some cotton in the neighbourhood with which she had bought flour and pulses. And after the food was cooked, she had prayed again for the Guru to come and eat her humble meal. That was when the Guru had heard her prayers and answered it immediately by landing at her doorstep. All the Sikhs were astonished at the whole incident, and their faith in their Guru's greatness became more strong.

Around that time, a Sikh devotee who had just come from Kabul in Afghanistan paid a visit to Guru Har Rai. He brought to the Guru's notice that the Sikhs in Kabul were quite neglected. He told him that there was no

spiritual teacher there to guide the people, and so they were having great difficulties understanding their religion. As a result of this, they were highly confused and easily misled.

Guru Har Rai immediately decided to send someone to Kabul to cater to the spiritual needs of his devotees there. For this he wanted someone who not only respected and revered Sikhism, but even understood it clearly enough to explain it to others in simple terms. Among his devotees was a very devout and scholarly Sikh, Bhai Gonda. He used to serve the Guru with great devotion and recited God's name with utmost sincerity and reverence. Guru Har Rai had often noted his devotion and was very pleased with him. So, he decided that Bhai Gonda would be the ideal person to go to Kabul in his place, and guide the Sikhs on the true path.

When the Guru invited Bhai Gonda to his room he explained the mission to him. Bhai Gonda was to go to Kabul and preach his religion there to the Sikhs. He told him to teach them the power and glory of God's name, and train them to follow the daily routine that devotees followed in this country. He also asked Bhai Gonda to serve the holy

men and pilgrims in the same way he served his Guru, and to feed them with the offerings he received from his devotees. He also asked him to maintain the free kitchen there, just as it was done here. Setting down these duties he asked if Bhai Gonda was willing to go. At this, the devotee bowed to the Guru and said that he was honoured to be entrusted with such a duty. Guru Har Rai also told him of the dangers involved since Kabul was a Muslim country, and a religious leader like him could face a lot of unpleasantness and dangers. The Guru was quite familiar with the attitude and approach of the Muslims to people of other religion. But Bhai Gonda was unperturbed. He touched the Guru's feet for the trust and divine task he had bestowed upon him. He then took his leave and prepared for the journey. Guru Har Rai was touched by Bhai Gonda's devotion and blessed him with his heart.

On reaching Kabul, Bhai Gonda immediately began the work assigned to him by his Guru. He assembled all the Sikhs together and got a Gurudwara built, where they had their daily prayers and recited hymns from the holy book. He then explained the holy scripture to the Sikhs, and cleared

their doubts very patiently. He even started the langar there as instructed by the Guru, and soon people from all over Kabul began gathering there. Bhai Gonda also made sure that the Sikhs followed the daily routine laid down by the Guru.

One day, while he was busy preparing the *Japji* for their daily prayers, he had his thoughts fixed on Guru Har Rai as usual. But on that day, he concentrated so hard on Guru's feet that he went into a trance and became unconscious. In his mind, he was holding his beloved Guru's feet with his hands and touching his head with it. This gesture was felt by Guru Har Rai most distinctly, who was miles away from Kabul.

At that time, the Guru was holding his court, and was busy in a discussion with his men. The minute Bhai Gonda held his feet in his imagination, Guru Har Rai became intensely aware of it. He could feel the clasp and he smiled to himself, knowing very well that it was none other than his dear devotee in Kabul who was holding him captive like that. He continued sitting and listening to his men. His devotees also noted that the Guru was sitting in a very awkward and uncomfortable position with his feet close



together, but they did not ask him anything. Soon it was time for lunch, but the Guru refused to budge even after the announcement was made. He asked his men to go and have their lunch, and that he would soon join them. But the Guru did not get up even after the second shift of lunch was past. He had been sitting in the same position for hours, and had not even eaten anything.

When the Sikhs could not contain their curiosity any longer, they asked him why he would not move or have his lunch. At this, the Guru smiled and told them that it was Bhai Gonda, in Kabul, who had clasped his feet and would not let him go. He was not going to withdraw his feet from his devotee and so he had to wait till Bhai Gonda let him go. He then told his Sikhs that he would rather go without a meal one day than disappoint a devotee so sincere and dedicated as Bhai Gonda. The Guru thus remained like that for hours, even after the sun had set in the western sky. By this time, Bhai Gonda had come out of his trance, feeling refreshed after touching his Guru's feet. He bowed to the Guru and repeated God's name before getting back to his work. It was then that Guru Har Rai stretched his legs and finally, got up. He told his Sikhs that Bhai Gonda had finished

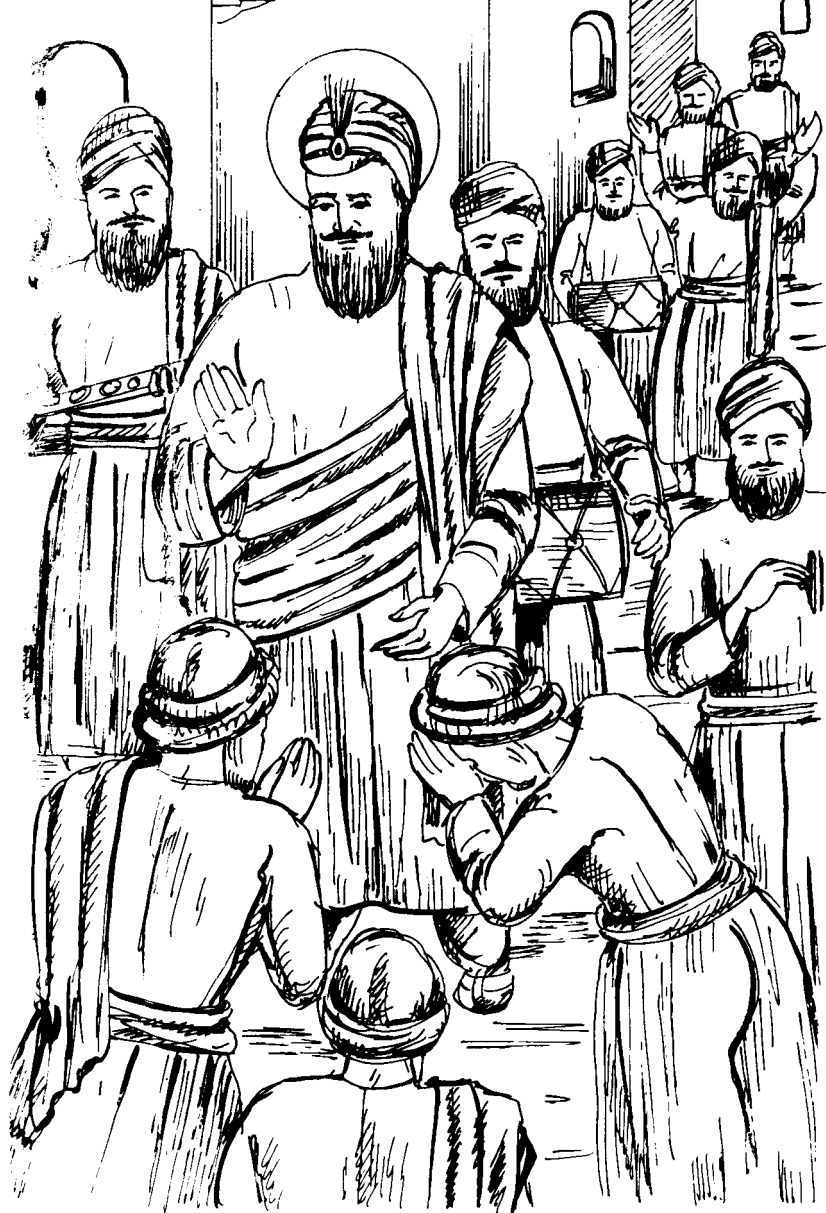
his prayers and so, he could now have his dinner.

All the Sikhs present were amazed to hear that the Guru could see and feel whatever was happening so far away from him. Once when Bhai Gonda happened to come for a short visit to the Guru, the Sikhs asked him about the incident. When an amazed Bhai Gonda answered that he had indeed, clasped Guru Har Rai's feet in his mind, they told him everything. Although he was as amazed as the other Sikhs were he was so overcome by Guru's love for him and all his devotees, that he began to cry tears of joy. Since then his devotion became so firm that he remained the most dedicated Sikh till his last breath.

The Guru used to visit Kartarpur quite often because that was still a holy place for the Sikhs. Though Dhir Mal, his elder brother, was still residing there and would cause all kinds of disturbances whenever the Guru was there, he still visited the Sikhs and blessed them. Some of the Sikh followers would be very irked by the fact that Dhir Mal was still in possession of the Holy *Granth*, and they requested permission to procure it back from him. But Guru Har Rai told them to have patience since one day it would be back where it really belongs. He assured them that

as long as they carried the Holy *Granth* in their hearts and held it in sincere reverence, they would be true and faithful Sikhs. All the people in Kartarpur would flock the street and sing his praises whenever he came to the city. The Guru would bless them all and entreat them to be better Sikhs.

On one such earlier visit, Guru Har Rai had blessed a brahmin who had come pleading to him for a son. After a few years when the Guru visited Kartarpur again, the same brahmin come to see him. He had the limp body of a boy in his arms, and he was crying incessantly. When the Guru went up to him and asked him what the matter was, he explained that the child had been ill for some time and despite the medication, he could not survive. He lay the child's body at the Guru's feet and begged him to revive the boy. At this, the Guru calmly tried to console him and said that every man who is born has to die someday. He told him that no one was granted an eternal life and he himself was not going to live forever. But the man wailed endlessly and said that he would sit outside the Guru's house without food or water and give up his life. The Guru again explained to him that he could not interfere with God's ways. But the poor man would not hear of it. No matter how



much the Guru dissuaded him, he sat outside the Guru's house with his dead child in his arms.

At last, a group of Sikhs went up to the Guru and pleaded him to grant the brahmin his child. They felt that the other religious communities would feel that the Guru was not keen on saving the life of a poor brahmin. At first the Guru did not agree at all and said that he did not want to prove anything to anyone by his miracles. But the Sikhs persisted, and finally, the Guru agreed but only on one condition. He asked the gathered assembly of Sikhs if anyone amongst them was willing to give up his life for the dead boy. The Sikhs were completely caught unawares. No one was ready to pay such a price for the boy's life, and so they all stood in silence. The Guru asked again since he said he could exchange one life for another. But again, no one replied. When he asked for the third time, one of the Sikhs from the group called Jivan, came forward and volunteered to give up his life for the boy's. At this, the Guru blessed him for his generous heart and ordained that he would find a place in heaven for it. With that the man suddenly slumped on the ground, and immediately after, the little boy came to life. The whole crowd cheered, and the

brahmin touched the Guru's feet. Guru Har Rai then turned to the assembly and told his Sikhs that blessed was the man who had embraced death so that his life could be of some meaning. He said that by saving the life of the young boy by sacrificing his own, Jivan had earned sainthood, and told his people to learn from his selfless act. He also emphasised that the best life was one spent in serving one's fellowmen, and that the smallest good deed was better than the grandest good intention. If one's life gives joy to others, it's a life well spent; and if you hurt even one person in any way, then it's a shame to be alive, he said. He addressed every Sikh and said that a good Sikh was not afraid of death, especially for a good cause; a good Sikh valued the life of others over his own; a good Sikh feared nothing but fear itself, and a good Sikh feels rewarded in the happiness of others by his acts. This is what he meant when he asked them to be better Sikhs, he said.

According to Guru Har Rai, Jivan had set an example of selfless service of men by his sacrifice. The next day special prayers were held for him at their darbar.

AN EARLY DEPARTURE

The Guru was now about thirty-one years of age, and he felt that so much more was still to be done in his lifetime. But he suddenly fell ill, and day by day his condition worsened. His Sikhs tried all sorts of medicines, but nothing worked.

When Guru Har Rai found that he could not cure himself, he realised that it was time for him to leave. His health deteriorated so quickly that his disciples feared that he could die any day. Guru Har Rai too realised that he had to settle a few things before he left, of which the most important was to appoint the next Guru. His elder son, Ram Rai, was absolutely out of question ever since he had committed sacrilege by misinterpreting the Holy *Granth*. Although Guru Har Rai's younger son, Harkrishen, was only five years old at that time, Guru Har Rai appointed him as the next Guru. Though Harkrishen was still a child, as far as years went, Guru Har

Rai had seen in him the promise of a good spiritual leader. He asked Bhai Bhana to apply the tilak on his forehead and perform the coronation ceremony before the whole Sikh community. All the Sikhs bowed to their Guru's decision, and paid their respects to Guru Harkrishen.

Soon after Guru Har Rai called his son to his room and gave him a few instructions. He told him to serve the Sikh community faithfully, and dedicate his life in making it more strong. He warned him about Ram Rai and told him to look out for him since he was sure to do some mischief or the other. He asked Harkrishen to direct all his activities and resources on making the Sikhs spiritually, morally and religiously strong. He also asked his son to maintain an army that was big enough only for defence against sudden attacks by the Mughals, and no more. He strictly instructed Harkrishan to never meet Aurangzeb in his lifetime since he knew the ruler to be cunning and shrewd, who would only harm him and the Sikh community. With all these instructions, he told his successor to take good care of the Sikhs. Assuring his Guru of abiding by it all, Harkrishan touched his father's feet and took his blessings.

Finally, the Guru asked the whole Sikh community to come near him. He blessed them all and asked them not to mourn his death. Then passing on the flame of Guru Nanak to his successor, Guru Harkrishan, Guru Har Rai breathed his last and left for his heavenly abode. It was the year 1661, and yet another page turned in the holy history of the Sikh religion.

EPILOGUE

Guru Har Rai was the seventh Guru of the Sikhs, and was put to the throne of the Guru, when he was all but fourteen years of age. He died at the age of thirty-one, but for the seventeen years that he was the Guru of the Sikhs, he made his own contribution to the growth and development of the Sikh community.

Guru Har Rai was a Guru who wanted to lead his people by example. He never preached to his people anything that seemed like hollow speeches. He made his point in course of day to day activities, and explained to his people how they could improve their lives by improving themselves. He was very close to his devotees, and they often approached him with all their doubts and problems without any hesitation. He was always available to them and patiently sorted out their problems. He never forced his opinions on them. Instead, he wanted them to

change for the better on their own will, and not because he pressurized them. This is how he contributed towards making the Sikhs a morally strong community. He also encouraged team work and involved himself with the others in all the activities. He made sure that all the Sikhs worked, prayed and sang together. Thus spreading a feeling of unity and harmony amongst them and giving the Sikhs a distinct identity of their own. They also learnt to express themselves fearlessly. Though the Guru would often make his own decisions, but he would still hold discussions and debates, and encourage his devotees to talk things out in such a way that they finally reached the right decision. This process gradually, began to sink in and over time, the Sikhs began to take just decisions on their own. Guru Har Rai regarded this as a major achievement of his life.

What endeared him most to his people was his simplicity. Guru Har Rai was the epitome of simplicity, since he led a simple life, and even respected simplicity in others. He not only believed in simple living but even inspired others to do so. Even the thought that he expressed or the way he interpreted

and explained the holy scripture to the Sikh devotees was in most simple language. There were many Sikhs who at first read the Holy *Granth* without understanding it, but when they asked their doubts he made it look very simple.

Guru Har Rai used to even value true and sincere devotion in his Sikhs. He wanted them to believe in, and have full faith in Guru Nanak and the Holy *Granth*. He was most touched by sincere devotion and never failed to appreciate it. He respected and loved true devotees as much as they loved him. That is why the Guru visited the old woman's house and ate her simple meal happily. Moreover, he forewent his lunch because a devotee in a far-off place had thought of him lovingly; and he was moved to tears when Jivan sacrificed his life for a young boy. He said that if one was devoted to the Guru, then one was showing respect and devotion to all the other Gurus before him too.

Guru Har Rai was also very respectful of the Holy *Granth*. He considered it the sacred relic of Guru Nanak and a jewel of the Sikh religion. He felt that if one exhibited any disrespect towards the Holy *Granth*, he was being disrespectful towards Guru Nanak

himself. He began his day reciting verses from the holy book and then listening to his devotees sing the hymns after the daily prayers. Though Guru Har Rai did not add anything to the collection of holy verses, he appreciated it very much and held it in utmost reverence. By explaining its beautiful verses to his devotees, he inspired them to follow these principles in their daily life.

Guru Har Rai's tenure as a Guru, occupies a very significant place in the history of Sikhism. The period before Guru Har Rai was marked by violence and bloodshed. But after Guru Har Rai became the spiritual leader he brought about a period of peace, of spiritual progress, and love and harmony among the Sikhs. It was a period when he actually moulded the Sikhs into men of courage, determination, iron-will and devotion. His major contribution was in uniting the Sikhs into a strong and an unbeatable force. He was aware of the troubled times that lay ahead for the Sikhs, and he wanted them to stand up bravely for it. He did all this by persuasion, and not by force.

He embodied in his person, the very essence of Sikh religion which emphasized strongly on love, harmony, devotion and

single-minded service to humanity. Though he died at such an early age, he left nothing incomplete or undone. His work, that he did with so much simplicity and devotion, has contributed a great deal in making Sikh religion what it is today.



Titles in this series:

Guru Nanak Dev
Guru Angad Dev
Guru Amardas
Guru Ram Das
Guru Arjan Dev
Guru Hargobind
Guru Har Rai
Guru Harkrishan
Guru Tegh Bahadur
Guru Gobind Singh