

Guru Arjan Dev Ji

1563-1606

Early Life

- Son of Guru Ramdas Sahib and Mata Bhani Ji
- Born at Goindwal Sahib on April 15, 1563
- Learnt Gurmukhi script and Gurbani from Baba Budha ji.
- Learnt many different languages like Persian, Hindi and Sanskrit.
- Siblings: Mahadev and Prithi Chand.
- He was Guru Amar Das ji's favorite. Guru Amar Das ji (maternal grandfather) called him: Dohita, Bani ka Bohitha
- Became Guru at the age of 18

Early Guruship period

- After becoming Guru, Guru Ramdas ji moved to Amrtisar (called Guru ka Chak at that time). (Guru Ramdas ji started this)
- Took over the management of construction and establishment of the city
- Encouraged Sikhs to set aside a *dasvandh* for the Guru's fund and to remit it through an accredited Masand
- Encouraged Sikhs to engage in business and increase in prosperity.
- In 1589, laid foundation of Darbar Sahib
- Emphasised on importance of Sangat
- Founded Tarn Taran in the year 1590 and Kartarpur (near Jalandhar) in 1594
- These cities became centers of trade and helped the prosperity of the surrounding trcts.
- Opened an asylum for lepers in Tarn Taran and invited top Hakims (Doctors) of those times to come and serve there.

Prithi Chand

- Prithi Chand was Guru Arjan Dev ji's elder brother and was jealous of the Guru. He wanted to become Guru
- During the construction of Amritsar when Sikhs sent money and supplies he would divert those for his own interest
- In 1595 when Guru Hargobind ji was born, Prithi Chand became more hostile.
- Prithi Chand allied himself with Sulhi Khan and tried to harass Guru. Sulhi Khan died by falling into a live kiln.

Compilation of Guru Granth

- Greatest work of Guru's life
- Guru wanted to ensure unity of belief and practice
- Collected genuine writings of earlier Gurus and added his own.
- Some pothis were with Baba Mohan in Goindval. Guru Arjan went personally and brought these pothis to Amritsar. (The story that Guru Arjan dev ji recited a shabad, "Mohan tere uche mandar.." to please baba Mohan is totally false. Guru never praised anyone but the true lord. The word Mohan in this Shabad refers to God).
- At Ramsar, Guru Sahib with the help of Bhai Gurdas ji compiled the Aad Granth.
- Bani from earlier Gurus, his own Bani, and Bani from Bhats and Bhagats was structured and added to the Granth
- In 1604, the Granth was completed and first prakash was done at Darbar Sahib Amritsar. Baba Budha ji was appointed the first granthi.

Akbar's doubts and his visit

- While the Granth was still in preparation, the enemies of Guru told false stories to Akbar about the Granth and said that it maligned the Hindu and Muslim religions.
- Akbar personally visited Guru at Goindval towards end of 1598 and had some passages read to him
- After listening to the passages and contemplating he expressed a deep appreciation of the Granth
- Until Akbar was alive he supported the Guru and did not let anyone harm to Guru and Gurughars

Shahidi

- Jehangir was Akbar's son and succeeded the throne after Akbar's death in 1605
- Jehangir was not a liberal man and promised his supporters that he would defend the Mohammedan religion
- When he came to power his close ministers both fundamentalist Hindus and Muslims started complaining about Guru Arjan Dev ji and Sikhism as such saying that, "simple minded Hindus and Muslims were falling in Sikhi's fold. Therefore, Sikhi should be put to an end or brought under the fold of Islam".
- Chandu was one such guy close to Jehangir. Guru Arjan Dev ji had refused to marry Guru Hargobind's daughter and that had hurt his ego
- Another false allegation was made on Guru Arjan Dev ji: that of helping Khusro (who was Jehangir's rebellious son).
- Jehangir got Guru Arjan Dev ji arrested and handed to Chandu who then tortured Guru Sahib for 3 days. The Guru was made to hit on redhot iron plate and was given other unimaginable tortures. After which his body was thrown in the river Ravi on May 30, 1606.

Sakhi - Guroo Arjan Dev Jee and Buddhu Shah

Buddhu Shah was a resident of Lahore and was a big businessman. His work was to get bricks that had been moulded and baked in kilns by labourers, and then sell them on. His trade was flourishing, so much so that bricks were even being bought from him for government works.

Once, when Buddhu Shah had a large order for bricks, he went to Guroo Arjan Dev Jee and asked that Guroo Jee may ensure that all the bricks placed in his newly started kilns would be well baked. Guroo Jee said that in order for this to happen, Buddhu Shah must serve Sangat with langar.

So Buddhu Shah did just that, and invited Sangat to his house in order to feed them. Whilst the Sikh devotees were taking their meals, Bhai Lakhu Jee (also called Bhai Kamaliya by the village men) reached the gate of Buddhu Shah's house. Seeing the torn dress of Bhai Lakhu, Buddhu Shah who was standing at the gate, ordered Bhai Lakhu to go away, saying that he would not be given food, as he was too late. Bhai Lakhu remained standing outside the closed gate.

Sakhi - Guroo Arjan Dev Jee and Buddhu Shah

After the Sikh devotees had finished their meals, one Sikh offered a prayer that Buddhu Shah's bricks may be well baked and earn him lots of money. However, outside Bhai Lakhu could be heard saying, "I am hungry and need some food. Feed me, or else your bricks will remain unbaked."

When Buddhu Shah checked his bricks, they were still unbaked. He was very cross, for he had done as the Guroo had instructed him and had fed the Sangat, yet Guroo Jee had not ensured that his bricks had been baked. He went to visit Guroo Arjan Dev Jee to express his anger.

"Are you sure that nobody was left hungry?" asked Guroo Jee. "Everybody was fed until they were full, except one beggar who came too late," replied Buddhu Shah. "A beggar?" questioned Guroo Arjan Dev Jee. "Yes, someone known by the name of Bhai Kamaliya."

Guroo Arjan Dev Jee replied, "In accordance with the words of Bhai Kamaliya, the bricks of your kiln remained unbaked as you refused to feed a hungry man. However, the prayers of a Sikh devotee can neither go unheeded. Therefore your bricks will fetch the same price as the baked ones despite being unbaked."

Sakhi - Guroo Arjan Dev Jee and Buddhu Shah

Buddhu Shah was very pleased to sell unbaked bricks at the rate of baked ones. From then on, he grasped the truth:

God listens to the hungry and naked, and grants the wishes of those who give clothes to the naked, food to the hungry and help to the needy.

Source: <http://www.sikhee.com/Guroo-Arjan-Dev-Jee-and-Buddhu-Shah.htm>

Sources

- A short story of The Sikhs - Teja Singh, Ganda Singh
- <http://gurmatacedmy.org>
- <http://www.sikhee.com/Guroo-Arjan-Dev-Jee-and-Buddhu-Shah.htm>
- <http://sgpc.net>