



Guru Ramdas Ji

1534 - 1581



Early Life

- Born at Chuna Mandi, Lahore (in Pakistan), on Sep 24, 1534 as Bh Jetha
- Son of Mata Daya Kaur ji (Anup Kaur ji) and Baba Hari Das ji
- Parents were poor and passed away at the age of 7
- Grandmother took Bh Jetha to Basarke where he sold boiled grams for a living
- Guru Amardas ji noticed Bh Jetha during a visit to Basarke and took him and his grandmother to Goival Sahib
- Bh Jetha did a lot of sewa in development of Goindwal Sahib and took active part in Guru Amardas Ji's congregations
- With his sewa and passing a lot of tests, he won Guru Amardas Ji's confidence and was married to Bibi Bhani and had three sons: Mahadev, Prithi Chand and (Guru) Arjan Dev.
- Accompanied Guru Amardas Ji on long missionary tours
- He became famous for his piety, devotion, energy and eloquence.
- Guru Amardas Sahib found him capable in every respect and worthy of the office of Guruship and installed him as Fourth Nanak on september 1, 1574.

Development of Amritsar

- Guru Ramdas Sahib laid the foundation stone of Chak Ramdas or Ramdas Pur, which is now called Amritsar.
- For this purpose he purchased land from the zamindars of the 3 villages
- Bhai Sahlo Ji and Baba Budha Ji, the two devoted Sikhs were assigned the supervising work.
- The new city (Chak Ramdas Pur) flourished soon as it was situated at the centre of international trade routes.
- It grew into an important center of trade in Punjab after Lahore.
- Guru Ramdas Sahib himself invited many merchants and artisans from the different walks of life and trades.
- Later on, it proved to be step of far-reaching importance. It provided a common place of worship to the Sikhs and paved the way for the future guidelines for the Sikhism as a different religion.

Contributions

- Lavan: Guru Ramdas Sahib strengthened the Sikhism a step further by composing Four Lawans and advised the Sikhs to recite them in order to solemnize the marriages of their children.
- Strongly decried superstitions, caste system and pilgrimages
- Wrote 638 hymns in SGGS

Sakhi - The ultimate test

When Guru Amar Das wanted to select his successor just like the first two Gurus (and all the Sikh Gurus starting from the Guru Nanak Dev). The Guru asked both of his sons-in-law, Rama and Jetha to make him two platforms beside the Baoli at Goindwal. He held out the promise without telling them about the Guruship that he who did the better work in his eyes should receive the greater honour. When they completed their platforms, the Guru went to inspect them. Both the platforms were declared to be defective and they were asked to throw them down and rebuild them. In obedience to his command, new platforms were erected. These were also disapproved and ordered to be dismantled. On this Rama the elder son-in-law refused to build it a third time. He demurred, "The Guru hath grown old and his reason faileth him". Jetha's work was subjected to the same rigorous standard. He continued to build platforms which were then dismantled each time pronouncing it faulty by the Guru. This process was repeated seven times. Ultimately, Jetha clasped the Guru's feet and humbly addressed him : " I am a fool; pray have regard for thy duty (bird) to me as thy son. I am erring and of mean understanding, while thou possessest all knowledge." On hearing this Guru smiled and embraced him affectionately saying, "Jetha is a perfect being who hath become incarnate and the world following him shall be saved" The Sikhs were astonished on witnessing Jetha's marvellous devotion and obedience, and henceforth began to recognize him as the image of the Guru.

Sources

- <http://www.gurmatacademy.org/gurus/guru-ramdas-ji/>
- <http://www.sikh-history.com/sikhhist/gurus/nanak4.html>