



IK ONKAAR



**The Sikh Religious Award
Study Work Book
For
Grades (9-12) Youth**

American Sikh Council

Formerly known as World Sikh Council - America Region

***The
American Sikh Council
Sikh Religious Award Book***

*By
Kirpal Singh Nijher*

***For
Any Scout***

***Who
In his/her***

***Chardi Kalaa
(The Perpetual Spirit of Ascendency)***

***Aspires to be
a
Citizen of the World***

Wishing

***Sarbat Daa Bhalaa
(Prosperity of All)***

Acknowledgements

This is to acknowledge all the effort, ideas and constructive input given by many individuals associated with the American Sikh Council, formerly known as World Sikh Council – America Region.

A special thanks to the members of the Boy Scout Task Force namely S. Kirpal Singh, Dr. Manohar Singh, S. Kuldeep Singh and Dr. Satpal Singh for all their great contribution and constructive feedback in bringing this work to fruition. Thanks to S. Kavneet Singh for his long term vision, planning and overall effort to bring out four workbooks from grades 1 -12.

Thanks to the two young Sikh Eagle Scouts, S. Karanveer Singh and S. Sherveer Singh in taking time to read the draft, by giving constructive ideas, suggestions and finally making this a reality.

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SIKH GURUS THE DIVINE MASTERS OF THE SIKH WAY OF LIFE

Guru Nanak Sahib:

Guruship Period: (April 14, 1469 – Sept 18, 1539 NS) = 70 yrs.

Every child, irrespective of his or her ethnicity or nationality, is born as an image of God. Which means, that at the time of birth, every child, like God, is full of all the godly attributes of goodness and is free from any kind of fear from or hate towards anyone. That is precisely the reason why any new born doesn't hesitate to go to anyone who chooses to pick him or her up with affection. The situation starts changing as the child starts growing up, however.

Depending upon the extent of confusion caused by prejudice, hate, bigotry, bias, partisanship, enmity, dishonesty, and falsehood, that prevails in the surrounding society, the child slowly and steadily starts picking up those negative attributes and in the process ends up losing his or her original Godly goodness and sense of direction. Some of us lose our godly qualities at a much faster pace than others, while some special individuals among us are not only able to keep their Godly attributes intact through out their lives, but are able to help others and teach others to regain their divinely gifted godliness.

For our good fortune **Guru Nanak Sahib**, the founding father of the Sikh Way of life was such a special person. His conscience was intimately and completely connected with the ultimate source of Divinity, the One Creator of us all. Guru Nanak Sahib was born on Vaisakh 1, 1525 BK (April 14, 1469 CE NS), at Talwandi Raja Bhoi, presently known in his memory, as Nankana Sahib. However for some traditional reasons his birthday is generally celebrated all around the globe in the month of November.

In spite of the fact that Guru Nanak Sahib was born and brought up in an era of massive confusions of class and caste divisiveness, enmity, falsehood, surrounded by the chaos generated by the tyrannical rulers and deceptive religious leaders of that time; he turned out to be the special individual possessing the very ultimate godly qualities of being *Nirbhau inrBau* and *Nirvair inrvYr*, meaning without fear or hate. Being empowered with such a conscience he ended up delivering a completely unexpected message that flew against every wind of his time.

He declared that irrespective of our superficial man-made divisions, all of us are children of our one common parent, the Timeless one Creator of us all. Therefore we are all **equal** members of our one human family. There is none amongst us who is high or low. Our divine Parent is equally accessible to all of us; and that ONE does not reside somewhere out there at some far off distant place in the sky or anywhere else, but rather resides within us not even an inch away.

Therefore to converse and be with our divine parent, we do not need any intermediary to act on our behalf. All that we need to do is to demolish the wall of falsehood (of our over inflated ego) that is separating us from The One. The feat, that is possible, by simply regaining of our lost godly goodness. Furthermore, Guru Nanak Sahib also cautioned that in our zeal to unite and converse with our divine parent no cleverness of any kind, or practices like Soch (ritualistic cleansing), Mone (self imposed solitude), Teerath (Holy dips), wearing of Mundran (Yogic ear rings), Vibhoot (covering body with Ash), Tilak (wearing of a frontal mark), etc, or, any other kind of meaningless mechanical ritualism are of any avail.

Nanak Sahib travelled more than 15,000 miles on foot to far and wide places of the globe to get his message through. During his journeys he went to the religious centers of each of the major faiths to hold discussions on every important issue of human divinity. To hold his discussion with scholars of all the prominent belief systems of his time, he first traveled to places like Sultanpur (Punjab, South Asia), Saidpur (modern day Eminabad in Pakistan), Tulamba (modern Makhtumpur, Dist Multan, Pakistan), Panipat, Kurkshetra, Hardwar, Joshi Math, Gorakh Mata, Aoudhya, Paryag, Varanasi, Gaya, Patna, Dhubri and Guwahati in Assam, Nanakmata, Tanda Vanjara (Distt Rampur), Kamroop (Assam), Dhaka (Bangladesh), Puri, Cuttock, etc, in North India, Then, on his 2nd journey he traveled towards South India and Sri Lanka during the years 1506 -1513 visiting pretty much all the famous Hindu and Buddhist Centers of Learning like Bidar, Somnath, Dwarks, Ujjain, Mathura etc. Next on his 3rd journey, he travelled northwards to meet Yogic, Sidh, and Tibetan Scholars at places like Ladakh, Kargil, Amarnath, Sri Nagar, and Barmula etc. Next he went towards West, visiting Mecca, the Major learning center of Islamic, and visited various other places including Bagdad, Syria, Turkey, Tehran, Kabul, Kandhar and Jalalabad, etc. During his journeys he had some very intimate exchange of ideas with all kinds of religious scholars.

Furthermore to keep his message secure for the benefit of all the generations to come he penned down his Word (Gurbani) that he brought and received with the direct connection of his conscience with the Almighty. His Word, in its original is preserved in the Sacred Sikh scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) for everyone to read, understand and benefit from.

Thus Guru Nanak Sahib did not keep his experience of staying connected to the Almighty just for himself, but rather he made it available to all for getting empowered to enjoy the same level of bliss that the Guru Sahib enjoyed.

When one reads Guru Nanak Sahib's writings in the sacred Sikh Scripture SGGS with a bit of deeper understanding, then one does start getting a feeling, as if he or she is directly talking to the Almighty. It is such a powerful experience that starts touching the inner cords of one's inner-self changing one from within. It is this very invisible inner change that consequently starts becoming visible through one's improved outer behavior and actions. Of course the extent of gains achieved depend upon our

love for God, and His creation, and not upon the cleverness of any meaningless ritualism.

After Guru Nanak Sahib, the succeeding nine Guru Sahibs lit by the enlightenment of Guru Nanak Sahib carried the torch of 'The Sikh way of life' forward upto the year 1708; when the Guru-ship (i.e. Teacher-hood) was transferred over to the sacred Sikh scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS); the embodiment of the Sikh teachings.

On the social front his message is very simple and straightforward. He advises that, in order to get connected with The One;

- 1) Kirat Karo; Earn your living through honest means.
- 2) Wand Chhako: Share it with others.
- 3) Naam Jupoo: Regain your godly goodness by becoming truthful and honest.

During their periods of Guru-ship each of the succeeding Guru Sahibs added their contribution in deed and Word to enhance and convey the message of the Sikh Way of life, adding their own fragrance to this bouquet of flowers that they inherited from Guru Nanak Sahib. Today, in the modern world, that bouquet's fragrance (in the form of SGGS) is available to every member of the human family, just a click away on the Internet.

The brief share of each of the fragrances added by the succeeding nine Guru Sahibs is explained in the succeeding chapters.

Questions:

Q1. Who is Guru Nanak and what is his message to humanity?

Q2. Name five prevailing rituals in our society. And briefly explain, what are Guru Nanak Sahib's thought about such rituals?

Q3. What was the purpose of Guru Naanak Sahib's travels to different places, and what was his prime mode of travel?

Q4. What is Gurbani? Why should we read it?

Q5. Why do we need to connect to our real being, our consciousness?

**Guru Angad Sahib, the 2nd Nanak:
Guruship Period: (Sept 18, 1539 – Apr 16, 1552 NS) = 13 yrs.**

Guru Angad Sahib was born on Apr 18, 1504 NS, at 'Matay Dee Saran' near Mukatsar, Punjab, and at birth he was named as 'Lehna' by his father Baba Pheroo Mal, and his grandfather Baba Narayan Das Trehan. For their livelihood the family was in the business of running a shop in the village. The uniqueness of this village was that on the positive side it was very good for business being located on a main highway; while on the negative side, it being equally accessible to all kinds of bad elements, therefore was open to frequent robberies. Unfortunately, it fell victim to a massive robbery in the year 1520 that virtually ended up destroying the entire village. As a result, most of the villagers decided to move out. In this exodus, Bhai Lehna's family having been equally affected, first moved to village Harikay on the banks of river Satluj, and from there, to village Khadoor.

Also in the year 1520 Bhai Lehna got married to Bibi Khivee daughter of Bhai Devi Chand of village Sanghar; and the couple had their first son named Dasoo in the year 1524 followed by two daughters Bibi Amro (1526), Bibi Anokhi (1535), and second son Dattoo in the year 1537.

The family was dedicated, committed and God fearing. Like the vast majority having been affected by the centuries old surrounding customs and cultures popularized and promoted by the clergy, thought that mere empty ritualism of performing pilgrimages to so-called holy places, taking dips in holy waters, or worshiping special images or idols, with sincerity and dedication is a real religion, and hence the righteous way to go.

Thus, having grown up in the midst of the above mentioned kind of belief system, Guru Angad Sahib (with his childhood name of Bhai **Lehna**) was a young man of 28 years of age, when in the year 1532, he met Guru Nanak Sahib at Kartar pur (presently located in Pakistan) for the first time in his life. It was on the recommendation of one of his friends named Bhai Jodh that Bhai Lehna decided to slightly change the schedule of his religious journey to meet Guru Nanak Sahib. In actuality he was on his yearly pilgrimage to a worship place in the Himalaya Mountains; where people go to worship an imaginary goddess named Vaishnu Devi.

However after spending a couple of days at Kartarpur, and having a heart to heart conversation with Guru Nanak Sahib he decided to stay with the Guru, and proceed no further. That was a "That's it" moment, in which struck by an instant transformation Bhai Lehna abandoned all of his plans to go to the mountains, or on any other such ventures. He right away understood the futility of all the meaningless rituals that he has been wasting his yearly time upon.

He could immediately see that his present day fervors of bowing to some lifeless statues misperceiving them to be some sort of personification of the life giving

Creator Master; staying entangled in some meaningless rituals to please some lifeless idols with offerings of all kind of goodies, mistakenly hoping for fulfillment of some kind of wishes, and traveling long distances to take some holy dips at some far off places with the misunderstanding that some how such dips are capable of washing away the effects of the yearly misdeeds done etc were nothing but traps set up by some religious charlatans. Hence such activities are nothing, but a complete wastage of time and energy.

Thus, captivated by the beauty and depth of Guru Nanak Sahib's message, Bhai Lehna immediately got busy in shedding off his religious misperceptions, and started on his new journey of understanding the real 'Sikh Way of life' from the Master. Consequently, lead by his passion for grasping the truth, he in a very short time ended up becoming a role model of having absorbed Guru Nanak Sahib's Word and the concepts of sewa (service of humanity), religious discipline, righteous character, divinity and real human behavior. The progress was so remarkable that in a matter of seven years, Guru Nanak Sahib recognizing Bhai Lehna's sense of commitment and dedication, renamed him as **Angad**, (meaning a part of Guru's own body), and before his death appointed Bhai Lehna as his successor; the **2nd Nanak, Guru Angad**.

Thus inheriting the Light of Guru Nanak Sahib's divinity, and the treasure of his writings, Guru Angad Sahib moved back to his village Khadoor, and opened up another Sikh center. Over there his very first action was to open up the first school in the Punjab region with an objective of empowering and uplifting the common folks from their centuries old quagmire of ignorance, superstitions and nonsensical enslavements. Guru Angad Sahib had completely understood that the root cause of such a massive state of hopelessness, and helplessness was the lack of education amongst the general masses; who as a result were being kept under oppression and control by a select few.

Furthermore, Guru Angad Sahib was also aware of the fact that in order to impart education at a quicker pace, it will need to be done in the common man's language by providing Punjabi (the common language of the region) an independent identity. Therefore instead of sticking to the prevalent use of foreign languages of Sanskrit and Farsi being in vogue in the religious and official communications; he chose to take upon him the task of standardizing and promoting the Punjabi alpha-bet in the Gurmukhi script. --- It was this particular choice that impacted, and is still impacting the Sikh culture in a big and positive way.

Furthermore, it was Guru Angad's standardization of Punjabi in the Gurmukhi script that a few years later culminated as the first step in the formation of the sacred Sikh Scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Wherein along with the writings of other Gurus and religious personalities, the writings of Guru Angad Sahib are also preserved under the title name of Mohalla 2nd (i.e. 2nd Nanak).

The other major program that Guru Angad Sahib put in an immediate motion was the emphasis on people's health. Thus in order to help people to adopt a healthy life

style, he promoted bodybuilding and playing of competitive sports; and to promote such activities he established wrestling rings, sports centers and sports stadiums. As a result annual competition in different sports became a regular feature of the ongoing activities.

Also while working on the physical part of health of people, the program to improve their healthy inner-self was not overlooked either. For this part, availability of free help to learn reading and writing was made a regular feature of every Sikh Center of learning. Wherein, learning to understand and grasp the essence of Sikh Way of life in its practical application was promoted and taught through the advocacy of earning one's living through honest means, sharing the fruit of their labor with the less fortunate in the spirit of Sewa (selfless service), while keeping the mind attached to divine virtues.

Guru's Langar (free kitchen), where everyone, and anyone who came to any Sikh Center of Learning was provided with free food; the tradition that at present is still in vogue at every Gurdwara around the globe even today.

Furthermore, to promote equality of women, and to demonstrate the practice of Sewa in its practical form, the person who was designated to be responsible for an uninterrupted running of the Guru's Langar was a woman by the name of Mata Kheevie; Guru Angad Sahib's wife. Her act of Sewa of providing a soothing touch to everyone by very lovingly listening to their problems; and providing her healing touch by serving them with Kheer (a very popular sweet dish). Her mellifluousness to take care of all those who partook food in the Langar is mentioned in Sri Guru Granth Sahib in the following Words;

ਬਲਵੰਡ, ਖੀਵੀ ਨੇਕ ਜਨ, ਜਿਸੁ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਛਾਉ ਪੜਾਲੀ ॥
ਲੰਗਰਿ ਦਉਲਤਿ ਵੰਡੀਐ, ਰਸੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਖੀਰਿ ਘਿਆਲੀ ॥

Says Balwand that Kheevie (wife of Guru Angad, like her husband) is a very noble woman, who provides a very soothing and densely protective leafy shade to every (turbulent hearted) person. ... And the way in the Langar (of Guru's Company) is distributed the spiritual wealth; the same way Kheevie (in Guru's Langar) distributes the bounty of kheer - the rice pudding with ghee, that is like sweet ambrosia.

... (SGGS: Pg 967)

On the political front, Guru Angad Sahib had good relations with the establishment also; and as a result, in the year 1540, Humayun the Moghal Emperor of India also visited the Sikh Center at Khadoor Sahib.

Before breathing his last on Apr 16, 1552 NS, Guru Angad Sahib bestowed the sewa of Guruship on his very dedicated, learned and respected colleague Bhai Amardas declaring him to be the 3rd Nanak, Guru Amardas.

QUESTIONS

Q1. Where was guru Angad Sahib ji born and why did his parents and he move to Khadur?

Q2. What were the popular rituals that were mandated for people? Who was benefitted by these practices?

Q3. Who was Bhai Lehna? Did he, somehow get transformed by Guru Nanak Sahib? If so how?

Q4. What was His first great service to humanity at Khadoor? Why was it so essential?

Q5. Name at least two major contributions of the 2nd Guru Sahib.

Q6. Who was Mata Khiwi? Why does her reference come in Guru Granth Sahib?

Guru Amardas Sahib, the 3rd Nanak:
Guruship Period: (Apr 16, 1552 – Sept 16, 1574 NS) = 22 yrs.

Born on May 23, 1509 NS (some believe 1479), Bhai Amardas was a young man of 35 years of age when in the year 1544 he met Guru Angad Sahib for the first time. Even though, Guru Angad Sahib's daughter Bibi Amro was married to Bhai Amardas's nephew since 1540, but somehow they never got a chance to meet one another.

One day, Bibi Amro was singing, a particular Gurbani (Guru's Word) hymn in a very melodious tune. Hearing her sing, Bhai Amardas got very impressed by the melody and the message of the contents of the hymn that she was singing. Thus he asked Bibi Amro, whose Bani is she singing? She replied that it was the Gurbani of Guru Nanak Sahib; whose present day successor happened to be her father, Guru Angad Sahib.

Hearing that Bhai Amardas became interested to meet Guru Angad Sahib. At that moment of his life just like Bhai Lehna's younger days of his entanglements in pilgrims to Vaishno Devi etc, Bhai Amardas was also entangled in his yearly visits to Hardwar, a Hindu place of worship, also situated in the Himalaya Mountains. Before meeting Guru Angad Sahib, he also had already been on pilgrimage to Hardwar for more than 20 times, but with no tangible results.

Thus when Bhai Amardas on his return journey from Hardwar met Guru Angad Sahib, and had some heart to heart talks with the 2nd Nanak; then like Bhai Lehna, Bhai Amardas also got struck with his life's 'This is it' moment. As a result he too decided to dedicate rest of his life to the Guru's cause. Just like Bhai Lehna (Guru Angad Sahib), Bhai Amardas also got completely absorbed in the 'Sikh Way of Life' and went all out with full dedication, sewa, and hunger for learning. Again the result was that just 8 years later Guru Angad Sahib before his death, appointed Bhai Amardas Sahib as the 3rd Nanak to carry the Sikh movement forward.

Guru Amardas Sahib's first action after becoming the Guru was to open another Sikh Center at Goindwal (in Punjab) in order to provide educational opportunities to a wider section of the society, that otherwise were mostly uneducated. Therefore, to carry out this monumental task in a systematic way, he divided the total area under the Sikh influence, into 22 Sikh dioceses called Manjees, and 52 Sub-centers called Pihrhees. Wherein, the responsibility of carrying out education to each and every area of influence under each Manjee and Pihrhee was assigned to learned individuals, well versed in the Sikh Way of Life, and considered to be persons of unquestionable integrity and honesty; worthy of respect.

Next, to promote the equality of women, Guru Amardas Sahib appointed quite a substantial number of women preachers to head the dioceses and sub centers. It, for sure was something completely unheard of in those times of human existence. It was an unimaginable reformative action plan that was way ahead of its time, especially in that setting of complete male domination.

Also to empower women to gain some self-confidence Guru Sahib very strongly advised that no Sikh woman will wear a veil, a custom that had been designed to make women feel inferior, weak, untrustworthy enticer, unequal, and not independent enough to walk freely without being completely veiled.

Furthermore, for promoting a respectful treatment of women, and protection from any kind of religious suppression Guru Amardas Sahib worked very hard for the elimination of the **evil practice of Satee**; a Hindu custom wherein, on the death of a Hindu male, his wife was quite often, brain washed (in the name of religious honor) to perform an act of self-immolation called 'Satee' that is nothing but a horrifying suicide.

In the above mentioned ceremony of 'Satee' a married woman is made to believe that the most splendid and magnificent way she can/should express her love for her dead husband is to lay down with his corpse at the time of his cremation, and get burnt alive to get reduced to ashes.

Furthermore, as per the 'Satee' practices, in case any woman upon feeling the heat of the burning pyre happened to understand the gravity and reality of the situation tried to escape from the fire, then, she was pushed back into the fire by force till she met her terrible death. Interestingly, no such custom had/has ever existed (or exists) for any Hindu male; who may need to express his love for his wife by self-immolating himself by laying down with the corpse of his dead wife.

For all such women, who in their misunderstanding, stupidity or social pressures happened to perceive any such act of being 'Satee' to be something magnificent or glamorous, Guru Amardas Sahib provided the following understanding by explaining to all gullible women as to; who is/should be known as a real 'Satee'? And who is not a 'Satee', by any stretch of the imagination! - Guru Sahib advised as follows;

ਸਲੋਕੁ ਮਃ ੩ ॥ ਸਤੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜੋ ਮੜਿਆ ਲਗਿ ਜਲੰਨਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਬਿਰਹੇ ਚੋਟ ਮਰੰਨਿ ॥੧॥ ਮਃ ੩ ॥ ਭੀ ਸੋ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਸੀਲ ਸੰਤੋਖਿ ਰਹੰਨਿ ॥ ਸੇਵਨਿ ਸਾਈ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਿਤ ਉਠਿ ਸੰਮਲੰਨਿ ॥੨॥ ਮਃ ੩ ॥ ਕੰਤਾ ਨਾਲਿ ਮਹੇਲੀਆ ਸੇਤੀ ਅਗਿ ਜਲਾਹਿ ॥ ਜੇ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਪਿਰੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਤਾ ਤਨਿ ਦੁਖ ਸਹਾਹਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੰਤ ਨ ਜਾਣਨੀ ਸੇ ਕਿਉ ਅਗਿ ਜਲਾਹਿ ॥ ਭਾਵੈ ਜੀਵਉ ਕੈ ਮਰਉ ਦੂਰਹੁ ਹੀ ਭਜਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥੩॥ ... ॥੫੧॥ ੨੮੭॥

(O Sisters, understand that) those women who, decide to burn themselves along with the corpses of their dead husbands are not called 'satees'. ... Instead they alone are recognized as real 'Satees', who (in their state of extreme love with their living husbands) feel as if dead; just from the thought of being separated, Says Nanak. . ||1||

(Furthermore), those women should alone be known as real 'Satees', who abide by their faithfulness and contentment; and take care of their husbands with full sincerity, always staying mindful of their lifelong commitments (towards their marriages). ||2||

The real 'Satees' always stay friends with their living husbands, willing and determined to walk together to face the intensity of every kind of fiery problems that life brings on. Thus those real 'Satees' alone, who, come to really know their husbands as their own, become capable of happily facing such pains without complaining.

However on the other hand, those who (in their un-Satee behavior), never care even to know their husbands O Nanak, how can they ever learn to face any such fiery obstacles of life successfully? Especially if they have an attitude to quickly run away from the slightest problematic situations of life leaving their partners in the lurch, not giving even a hoot whether their partners live or die. ||3|| ... (SGGS; Pg 787)

Next, in the same way, to uproot similar centuries old evil of caste discrimination amongst the masses, and to unite them into one human family, Guru Amardas Sahib made partaking of Langar (co-dining together as equals) mandatory before meeting him. The motto was "Pahilan Pangat, Phir Sangat." meaning "Go first, to sit together to dine, and then join the congregation." This practice of co-dinning together had been a part and parcel of the Sikh Way of Life from the times of Guru Nanak Sahib; however what Guru Amardas Sahib did different was to enforce it with greater vigor. 'Guru's Langar in the Sikh faith is not just a place for dining where people go to eat, but an institution where a Sikh learns the art of Sewa (selfless service) that provides him/her the understanding to be able to cook, clean, and learn to serve every member of the human family with love and respect, and without any kind of discrimination.

Next, to alleviate the general problem of public water shortage, he got quite a few wells dug in the area. One of the most popular historic wells, the Bowlee (a large sized well, where one goes down using stairs to fetch water) is still there at Goindwal Sahib for everyone to see. This well is 84 steps down into the ground. Such a design of this well was an absolute necessity of those times, because no water pumping technology was in vogue to pump water from such wells with deep water tables.

On the spiritual front quite a bit of Gurbani (the Guru's Word), has been revealed by Guru Amardas Sahib; that is also enshrined in the sacred Sikh Scripture SGGS under the title name of Mohalla 3rd (i.e. 3rd Nanak). Out of his many Gurbani revelations, a composition named 'Anand i.e, a song of 'Bliss' is a very popular. A part of this composition is sung at the conclusion of every Sikh function.

Before his death, on Sept 16, 1574 NS Guru Amardas Sahib Sahib bestowed the Sewa of Guruship on his son-in-law, Ramdas; declaring him to become Guru Ramdas Sahib, the 4th Nanak. This event is described in detail in the sacred Sikh Scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib on page 923 for every Sikh to take guidance from. This composition named 'Sudd' i.e, a message from the Almighty explains how to take death in the spirit of eternal ascendancy by singing the praises of the Timeless Creator, while staying away from any quagmire of mechanical ritualism, or wailing or crying.

Questions

Q1. In his earlier years what was the focus of Bhai Amardas ji's spiritual life? Where did he use to go every year?

Q2. What made Bhai Amardas to meet Guru Angad Sahib? And, what made him stay there?

Q3. What is Guru Amardas Sahib's contribution towards the respect and freedom of women?

Q4. Briefly explain the evil of Satee. Do you see any merit in it?

Q5. How a woman can be a best wife according to Guru Amardas ji?

Q6. What are Guru Amardas Sahib's spiritual contributions?

Guru Ramdas Sahib, the 4th Nanak:
Guruship Period: (Sept 16, 1574 – Sept 16, 1581 NS) = 7 yrs.

Guru Ramdas Sahib was born on Oct 9, 1534 NS in Lahore (presently in Pakistan). His childhood name was Bhai 'Jethaa', and he was only 7 ½ years old when he lost his father Baba Hari Das. As a result his mother Daya Kaur brought him to her maternal village Basarkay. There, Bhai Jetha became very close to Bhai Amardas (later on Guru Amardas Sahib), who helped and mentored Bhai Jetha to become an exemplary young man.

When Bhai Amardas moved to Khadoor Sahib to join Guru Angad Sahib, the 2nd Nanak, then, Bhai Jethaa also started visiting and spending quite a bit of time at Khadoor Sahib. This provided him a great opportunity to be in the company of Guru Angad Sahib as well.

After getting the sewa (selfless service) of Guruship (succession) from Guru Angad Sahib, Guru Amardas Sahib moved to Goindwal with his family; then, Bhai Jethaa being a part of the family as well, moved along with the family to Goindwal as well. Furthermore, Bhai Jetha being an exemplary young man, Guru Amardas Jee found him to be a perfect match for his daughter Bibi Bhani. As a result Guru Amardas Sahib married Bibi Bhani to Bhai Jetha on Mar 1, 1554 NS. And out of this matrimony the couple had three sons named Prithi Chand, Mahadev, and Arjan born in the years 1557, 1560, and 1563 respectively.

Thus having stayed in direct contact with Guru Angad Sahib for 8 years, and then with Guru Amardas Sahib for almost 32 years, Bhai Jethaa Jee got an extensive training, experience, and understanding of the Sikh Way of Life, along with the in depth knowledge of the up to date writings of all the Guru Sahibs. Along with that he also got experience of practically completing every kind of public project, whether it was digging of wells, Sarovars (water reservoirs to collect rain water), or planning and laying out townships. Therefore in the year 1564 he was given the responsibility of planning, and establishing the walled city of Guru Kaa Chak (Amritsar). A job he started with full sincerity.

Thus in the year 1574, when it came to selecting a successor by Guru Amardas Sahib, there was no better person than Bhai Jetha. Therefore, before his death Guru Amardas Sahib gathered everyone including his extended family around him and bestowed the sewa of Guruship on Bhai Jetha, i.e, Guru Ramdas Sahib, the 4th Nanak.

During his tenure of mere seven years, Guru Ramdas Sahib got two Sarovars named Santokhsar, and Amritsar completed by 1578. This is what put the development of a planned city of Guru Kaa Chak in motion for the new inhabitants, with Sarovars built for fulfilling the needs of water for general use, numerous wells for drinking water, Inns for travelers, shops of every kind for business, and craftsmen of different professions for assistance, etc.

Furthermore, in the midst of such an action oriented agenda Guru Ramdas Sahib also revealed a substantial amount of Gurbani (Guru's WORD) that is preserved in the sacred Sikh scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib for everyone to read and benefit from.

One out of the many compositions of advice that Guru Ramdas Sahib revealed is about the daily discipline that any learner of the 'Sikh Way of life' is expected to live by. In this hymn, providing guidance for building an active divinely inspired, truthful, and action oriented life, he advises as follows,

ਮਃ ੪॥ ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਅਖਾਏ ਸੁ ਭਲਕੇ ਉਠਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ॥ ਉਦਮੁ ਕਰੇ ਭਲਕੇ ਪਰਭਾਤੀ
ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਕਰੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਰਿ ਨਾਵੈ॥ ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਪੁ ਜਾਪੈ ਸਭਿ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਪਾਪ ਦੇਖ ਲਹਿ ਜਾਵੈ॥ ਫਿਰਿ
ਚੜੈ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਗਾਵੈ ਬਹਦਿਆ ਉਠਦਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ॥ ਜੋ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਏ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ
ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੈ ॥ ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਦਇਆਲੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਸੁਣਾਵੈ ॥ ਜਨੁ
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਧੂੜਿ ਮੰਗੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਆਪਿ ਜਪੈ ਅਵਰਹ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਾਵੈ ॥੨॥

One who calls him/herself a Sikh (student) of the Guru, the True Guru; rising every morning contemplates upon the Divine virtues of the Creator Master; And making such an effort every morning; after bathing and cleansing immerses in the Nectar of Spiritual Immortality of Naam, the fountain of Divine virtues (of being Truthful, Righteous, Honest, Virtuous, Morally upright, just and noble etc.) .

Then following the instructions of the Guru, s/he keeps the Divine Virtues of the Creator Master close to heart with constant reminders to the self; and as a result gets freed from all kind of vices and transgressions.

Then, as the day progresses, s/he keeps the mind focused on the Guru's Word, (keeping busy in an honest day's work) whether sitting down or standing up, stays mindful about the Divine Virtues and Commands.

Thus the GurSikh (Guru's student) who stays focused on the qualities of my Supreme Master, with every breath and partaking of every morsel of food - that GurSikh becomes pleasing to the Guru's mind. Furthermore, s/he, unto whom my Almighty Master becomes kind and compassionate - upon that GurSikh, the Guru bestows his blessed Teachings.

Therefore (in humility), Servant Nanak also begs for the dust of the feet of such a GurSikh, who her/himself stays focused on Divine Virtues, and inspires others to stay mindful about them as well. ||2|

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Thus carrying on his selfless service to humanity all his life Guru Ramdas Sahib before breathing his last on Sept 28, 1581 NS, he bestowed the Sewa of Guruship on his youngest son; declaring him to be the next Guru, Guru Arjan Sahib, the 5th Nanak.

Questions:

Q1. In his childhood, was Guru Ramdas Sahib known as Bhai Lehna? If not, then who was Bhai Lehna, and what was Guru Ramdas Sahib's childhood name?

Q2. Why did Guru Amardas choose Bhai Jetha for his daughter Bibi Bhani?

Q3. What was Guru Ramdas Sahib's contribution for betterment of the society? Name some big projects that he took over to complete his mission.

Q4. What was Guru Ramdas Sahib contribution towards building the city of Amritsar? Name some strategic steps that he took to make it happen.

Q5. What did Guru Ramdas Sahib advise his Sikh, to do everyday?

Guru Arjan Sahib:

Guruship Period: (Sept 28, 1581 – Jun 16, 1606 NS) = 25 yrs.

Born on May 2, 1563 NS, Sahibzada Arjan was the youngest of the three sons of Guru Ramdas Sahib and Bibi Bhani. Thus being born in the Guru's house and possessing natural inclinations towards divinity he was not only surrounded with opportunities of gaining top class spiritual as well as temporal education, but also had the first hand guidance to learn the 'Sikh Way of Life' directly from two Guru Sahibs, one a dad, and the other a grandpa.

In addition, being surrounded by top class teachers like Baba Budha, Baba Mohri, Baba Mohan, his very learned mother Bibi Bhani, and others he learned Gurmukhi, other major languages, Gurbani, music, mathematics, construction, and training in horse riding and Shastar vidya (handling weapons). Furthermore, having done sewa (selfless service) in the Guru's free kitchen he had completely internalized the sense of humility and sweetness as his natural human traits. During his growing up years having become an integral part of all the projects that his dad and grandpa were involve in, he also acquired a very keen insight about tackling major problems.

Thus in the year 1581, when it came to finding a successor for Guru Ramdas Sahib, Sahibzada Arjan was a very natural and obvious choice; even though he was the youngest son of the Guru. Historically the selection criteria in the Guru's house for a successor, has always been one's ability and not any kind of hierarchy. Thus on Sept 28, 1581 NS, before his death Guru Ramdas Sahib bestowed the sewa of Guruship on Guru Arjan Sahib.

During his Guruship the most important task that Guru Arjan Sahib took upon his shoulders was the writing, editing, and the compilation of the sacred Sikh Scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS), known as Pothi Sahib at that time. For the information of those of us who may not know; the entire 1429 pages of SGGS are divided into different sections; which are set to different musical measures, called Raagas. Wherein the selection of each Raaga depends upon the nature of the emotions being conveyed through each passage.

It was Guru Arjan Sahib, who, very meticulously sorted out, and arranged the entire treasure of Divine writings consisting of; a) The five Sikh Guru Sahib's own writings (including Guru Arjan Sahib's), and, b) the writings of various other spiritual Teachers of both Hindu and Islamic background; belonging to various classes and castes of the social structure. These collections of writings of various spiritual Teachers of both Hindu and Islamic background were collected by Guru Nanak Sahib during his journeys, and were included in SGGS by Guru Arjan Sahib, because those writings were in consonance with Sikh Teachings.

To establish the admissibility and consonance of any hymn to be included in Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Arjan Sahib used the touchstone of the '(pRmuKu aupdyS)

Parmukh Updesh' the Prime message of Sikh Doctrine that advocates an uncompromising Oneness of the Creator, Oneness of His Creation (that emanates from the ONE), and the Oneness of Human family (of all equal offspring of the ONE). The Parmukh Updesh reads;

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥

*“There is **THE ONE**; who is the Supreme Truth, the Creator, Omnipresent, without fear or enmity, A Timeless Reality, beyond birth or death, self-existent; (And is) **Known by the Guru’s Grace.**”*

Furthermore Guru Arjan Sahib also weeded out all that spurious material that over time had been thrown into the mix by the vested interests to adulterate the Sikh teachings. The sewa of the task to scribe Pothis Sahib was bestowed upon Bhai Gurdas Ji.

Thus after the completion of such a monumental task of reading, sorting, editing and arranging the entire treasure of writings in Raagas, and in a logical and strict order of authorship, composition, paragraph and hymn numbering, and getting the Pothis Sahib scribed etc, Guru Arjan Sahib gave humanity the gift of a collection of divine writings that (with a small addition later, by the 10th Nanak) became the sacred Sikh scripture called Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The first ceremonial installation of this canon of Sikh Teachings (called Pothis Sahib at that time) took place on Sep 1, 1604 NS.

On the building front; in the years 1588-1590 Guru Arjan Sahib constructed the first Gurdwara Sahib in Amritsar, known as Darbar Sahib or Golden Gurdwara Sahib. In its architect he interjected three very special features, namely; --- 1) Installation of **four** doors on the boundary wall, that symbolizes that the Gurdwara Sahib is open to all coming from any direction of the globe, irrespective of their caste, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or any other societal discriminating criteria. --- 2) After entering every visitor goes down a staircase into the complex; symbolizing his/her entry into a place of humility, rather than a place of arrogance. --- 3) After stepping down into the complex, all visitors, circumnavigate the walkway around Darbar Sahib, and in the process forgetting their discriminatory differences, unite together at The One entry door to the Gurdwara Sahib, to become One united human family, that enters into the Darbar Sahib of Golden Gurdwara Sahib as Equals.

To alleviate the water shortage in the surrounding areas Guru Arjan Sahib got built numerous wells; a Sarovar (water reservoir) at Taran Taaran; A Bowlee (well with stairs) at Chhona Mandi Lahore; Ramsar the 3rd Sarovar at Amritsar; and a six prong oxen-run well at Chh-Harta, near Amritsar.

To take care of the very sick and destitute he established an Ashram (leprosarium) at Taran Taaran for the lepers; and Langars (Guru’s free kitchen) for the needy. For encouraging natural environment and healthy eating habits he established a garden at Ghukewali that till today is called ‘Guru Kaa Baag.’

Furthermore, he established the Townships of Kartarpur in Jalandhar district, and Hargobindpur in Hoshiarpur district. Thus, benefiting from such a large-scale progress in the implementation of projects of public welfare, lots of people, Hindus as well as Muslims in the area started embracing the Sikh Way of life.

Thus with the on going progress, lots of people including Muslims (belonging to the religion of the ruling class) started getting benefited. However such a magnitude of progress didn't turn out to everyone's liking, especially the nervous and narrow-minded Muslim clerics of the region who considered themselves to be the knights of the emperor and protectors of Islam. They considered every Muslim as their possession, and hence, considered it impermissible to the Muslims to seek guidance from Guru Sahib or anyone else. Therefore on every little thing these clerics complained to the establishment against Sikhs and their Guru Sahibs.

Nonetheless, at that time Akbar, a secular and broadminded ruler was the Mogul Emperor of India and he had good relations with the Sikh Guru Sahibs. As a result when he came to the Sikh center at Goindwal Sahib, he sat and partook food with the common folks in the Langar (Guru's free kitchen). Therefore the Muslim clerics in spite of their constant complaining could not do much. However, the situation took a dramatic turn with the death of Emperor Akbar on October 29, 1605 NS.

After Akbar's death, his son Jahangir took over the reign; and under the heavy influence of Muslim clerics lead by Sheikh Ahmed Sarhandi replaced the state's secular policy of Emperor Akbar with a policy of repression with the non-Muslims.

Considering Emperor Jahangir to be an unfit ruler, his son Khusro declared a revolt against his father. And when coming from Mathura to Lahore, he happened to cross, the river Satluj near Goindwal, an important Sikh town. This was more than enough for the clerics to incite and misguide Jahangir. Furthermore, having received reports of large-scale conversions of Muslims to the Sikh faith Jahangir in his Tuzkay Jahangiri had already described the Sikh Centers as a "Jhooth dee Dukaan" (a shop of falsehood). Jahangir wanted to close all Sikh centers of learning.

Thus misguided with such a notion, on June 8, 1606 NS Jahangir ordered the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib as per the Quran. In response Guru Arjan Sahib voluntarily proceeded to Lahore, where the emperor's orders were carried out on June 12, 1606 NS. As per the Islamic practice, Guru Sahib was extensively tortured for four days by making him sit on a hot iron plate with fire lit under it, while hot sand was poured over his head and body. Then after four days of extreme torture his badly damaged body was thrown into the river Ravi. This is how a great Torchbearer of peace, humility, and divinity kissed martyrdom at the hands of Islamic bigotry.

Expecting the obvious, before going to Lahore, seeing darker days ahead, Guru Arjan Sahib bestowed the sewa of Guruship on his son Sahibzada Hargobind with the

instruction to get prepared militarily. Thus on June 16, 1606 NS Guru Hargobind Sahib became the 6th Nanak.

Questions

Q1. How many brothers did Guru Arjan Sahib have?

Q2. Guru Arjan Sahib was the youngest son but why he was chosen to be the heir?

Q3. What was the greatest task ever completed by the Guru and what was the impact of such a magnanimous accomplishment?

Q4. What was the reason for Guru Arjan Sahib's martyrdom?

Q5. Did Guru ji ever waiver from His stand? What did he command his son to do?

Guru Hargobind Sahib:

Guruship Period: (June 11, 1606 – Mar 19, 1644 NS) = 38 yrs.

Born on July 5, 1590, NS Sahibzada Hargobind was the only son of Guru Arjan Sahib and Mata Ganga Ji. He was almost 16 years of age, when his father Guru Arjan Sahib, started his journey to Lahore to kiss martyrdom at the hands of Jahangir, the Mogul Emperor. Therefore before starting his journey, Guru Arjan Sahib bestowed the sewa of Guruship on Sahibzada Hargobind to become the 6th Nanak. Before his departure, the final instruction that Guru Arjan Sahib gave Guru Hargobind Sahib was; that, in order to carry on the Sikh mission of protecting the helpless and the weak, now has come the time for the Sikhs to start getting prepared to become the complete Saint-Soldiers of Guru Nanak's vision.

Thus, right away, Guru Hargobind Sahib started his Sewa by bringing the 'Saint-Soldier' aspect of the Sikh Way of Life to the forefront. This is the aspect that directs a Sikh to become a Saint-Soldier, in order to serve and help the down trodden and the helpless with an unflinching commitment. Therefore to develop such an ideal personality traits every Sikh is advised to be a Saint at heart, while being an unflinching soldier in action with the vision;

ਸੁਰਾ ਸੇ ਪਹਿਚਾਨੀਐ ਜੁ ਲਰੈ ਦੀਨ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ ॥ ਪੁਰਜਾ ਪੁਰਜਾ ਕਟਿ ਮਰੈ ਕਬਹੂ ਨ ਛਾਡੈ ਖੇਤੁ ॥੨॥੨॥

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He alone is known as a real valiant warrior, who fights in the defense of the poor and the helpless. And while on this path (of an unflinching commitment) never abandons the field of this fight even if cut piece by piece. ||2||2||.

Thus to infuse such a spirit in a multitude of common masses, who had been badly beaten up through centuries of slavery, dehumanization, and oppression, the Guru Sahib started wearing two swords on his person; one called the sword of 'Piri' representing the spiritual aspect of Sikh Way of Life; and the second one called 'Miri' representing the soldier (temporal) aspect. Consequently, to bring such a transformation in the society the first order of business was the introduction of organized military training on a wider scale. For this, those Sikhs who were already trained in the art of fighting were divided into different troops called Jathas; and the members of the wider Sangat (Sikhs at large) were encouraged to join such Jathas.

Furthermore, for increasing the mobility and effectiveness of such Jathas, member of the Sangat were requested to bring horses and weapons in the future as offerings to put the plan in motion. Also, to get everybody in shape, martial games and competitive sports were introduced as a regular part of a Sikh's life.

To protect the city of 'Guru Kaa Chak (Amritsar)' from the onslaught of enemies, a protective boundary wall, along with watchtowers and a fort named Lohgarh were also built.

For promoting self-reliance, self-confidence, ability to resolve community disputes within itself, and taking major decisions on behalf of the wider Sangat (people) the institution of Akal Takhat was established to resolve judicial and Temporal matters within the community instead of going to the tyrannical establishment for resolutions.

Also, while working to make the concept of Piri/Miri a regular part of the Sikh Way of life none of the other projects of public welfare were put on any kind of hold. Unabated, two new Sarovars (water reservoirs) named Santokhsar and Kaulsar were built to meet the ever-increasing demand for the city water.

Next, the unpredictable excesses from the Islamic establishment being a part of regular life; Emperor Jahangir, instigated by the fabricated misinformation of the Governor of Lahore summoned Guru Hargobind Sahib to Delhi in the year 1617. And on Guru Sahib's arrival in Delhi, ordered him arrested and held in Gwalior fort along with other political prisoners (the Rajas of various principalities).

During the succeeding years, as a result of a serious illness of Emperor Jahangir, culminating into some soul searching by him regarding his past actions, the political situation in the country, including Guru Sahib's relations with the Emperor improved. As a result, the Emperor having re-evaluated his mistake of ordering the execution of Guru Arjan Sahib in haste, that was very clearly based upon some serious misinformation decided to reconcile and rectify his earlier error.

Thus on the advice of his close confidants, the Emperor decided for an early release of Guru Sahib from the fort in 1619. In response however Guru Sahib refusing to be released alone, convinced Jahangir that he should release all other political prisoners along with him as well. The Emperor agreed, with a promise that he will order the release of all those prisoners, who will be holding on to Guru Sahib's clothes on his release. The idea was to minimize the number of persons released. However in order to get all the political prisoners released Guru Sahib got a special robe tailored, that had 52 long strings. Thus on Nov 22, 1619 NS, he along with 52 Rajas (Rulers of principalities) holding the strings of the Guru's robe walked out of the Gwalior Fort to freedom. This day is known as "Bandi Chhod Diwas"

Following the development of the kindred relations, Jahangir met Guru Sahib at Goindwal on Feb 12, 1620 NS; at Kalanaur on Feb 23, and from there they went to Lahore. By now Jahangir had also become aware of the persons who had conspired and misled him to order the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib, 13 years ago. As a result he put the instigating cleric Sheikh Mohammad Sarhandi in jail, and handed over Chandu Shah (the person responsible for the actual execution) over to the Sikhs. Who, in turn punished him appropriately.

Thus continuing their friendship; in summer of 1620, Guru Sahib and Jahangir went to Kashmir; and from there, after visiting quite a few Sikh Sangats en route Guru

Sahib came to Guru Ka Chak (Amritsar) on Jan 13, 1621 NS, the day, when the whole city of Amritsar was lit with lamps.

Then, after a few years of calm, following the death of Jahangir on Oct 28, 1627 NS, **his son, Shah Jahan** became the **new Emperor**. Like the early years of his father he also started falling into the snares of the Muslim clerics; who as their normal psyche hated non-Muslims and enjoyed disrupting their activities. Encouraged by such a political environment, the Muslim rulers in Lahore attacked Guru Sahib in Amritsar by sending Mogul forces under the command of Mukhlis Khan Gorakhpuri on Apr 29, 1634 NS. The intent was to disrupt Guru Sahib's daughter Veero's wedding scheduled for April 30, 1634 NS. A fierce battle took place, in which, with quite a bit of loss of life on both sides, the Mogul forces lost.

Similarly, there were quite a few other battles like the one at Mehraj on Dec 31, 1634 NS to disrupt Guru Sahib's religious tour of Punjab; and the one at Kartarpur on May 12-14, 1635 NS. In this battle, Painday Khan, a well known Muslim fighter attacked Guru Sahib, because the Sikhs were asking his son-in-law to publicly apologize for his action of stealing expensive articles from Kartarpur. In this, three day battle Painday Khan along with quite a large number of Mogul soldiers and Sikhs lost their lives.

Thus to avoid any further bloodshed, on May 15, 1635 NS Guru Sahib started his march to move to Kiratpur; a place in Himalaya Hills, away from Lahore. However on his way, he and the Sikhs accompanying him were attacked quite a few times; but they were successfully able to fight their way through, leaving behind a legacy of being a very able fighting force. As a result quite a few Hindu Rajas brought themselves under the protection of the Sikhs

Thus continuing his sewa from the new place, with not much further interruptions from Lahore; Guru Hargobind Sahib, before his death on March 18, 1644 NS, bestowed the Sewa of Guruship on Guru Har Rai Sahib, the 7th Nanak.

Questions

Q1. What aspect of Sikh way of life did Guru Hargobind Sahib emphasize that every Sikh needs to practice?

Q2. What is the Sikh aspect of Piri-Miri? Why do you think, these ideals are so essential for any human being?

Q3. Do you think any human being, weak in body and mind can live a truthful life? And can help uplift others?

Q4. Who was the new emperor, in the time of Guru Hargobind Sahib? What kind of administrator do you perceive him to be? How many battles were fought by the Sikhs?

Q5. What are the most desirable character traits that a human should learn to practice in order to lead a dignified life? Are they, living life like a king?

Q6. What was the basic reason for Guru Hargobind Sahib refusal to exclusively get released from Gawalior fort, without the release of the other political prisoners?

Guru HarRai Sahib:

Guruship Period: (Mar 18, 1644 – Oct 19, 1661 NS) = 17 ½ Yrs.

Born on Feb 1, 1630 NS, Guru HarRai Sahib, was a grandson of Guru Hargobind Sahib, and son of Baba Gurditta and Mata Kishan Kaur. From the very beginning he was a very sensitive child; always aware of pains and sufferings of other's and busy in trying to help everyone in whatever way he could. His sensitivity was not limited only to humans, but extended much beyond; to animals, as well as plants and trees. This combination of traits didn't go unnoticed, as his grandfather Guru Hargobind Sahib watched him play. As he grew up, he showed a very keen and determined interest in medicines, horse riding, and weapons as well.

Therefore when it came to passing on the responsibility of House of Nanak to the next successor, Guru Hargobind Sahib recognizing his grandson HarRai as a real personification of a Saint-Soldier with a very soft, sweet, warm, humble, benevolent, and firm heart, bestowed the sewa of Guruship on Guru HarRai Sahib, who was only 14 years of age.

For supplying free medicines to the sick and ailing; Guru HarRai Sahib got a garden of medicinal trees planted at Kiratpur and brought in many medical and horticulture experts to Kiratpur area for advancing the research and experimentation of natural medicinal cures. In a few years the institution became so popular, that when it came to treating a chronic disease of Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Emperor Shah Jahan; the medicines were sent from Guru HarRai Sahib's dispensary.

Thus having cordial relations with the establishment, Guru HarRai Sahib travelled extensively in Punjab area to carry his message of the Sikh way of life. In his zest, he visited places like Kartarpur (Jalandhar), Goindwal, Droli (Moga), Kurukushetar, etc, quite a number of times. For his residence he basically operated from Kiratpur; where his wife Bibi Sulakhani took care of their three children, namely Sahibzada RamRai (son), Bibi Roop Kaur (daughter) and Sahibzada Harkrishan (son).

However, living in an era of political uncertainties, and religious bigotry; dangers were always around the corner. It always was a matter of time, when, the danger could show up at your doorsteps, even uninvited. In the year 1657 that is precisely what happened. Emperor Shah Jahan, the ruler of Agra, and Delhi thrones fell ill, and declared his elder son Dara Shikoh as his successor. However a much craftier younger son Aurangzeb declared a revolt against his dad's declaration, and came to fight the imperial forces, that were led by Dara Shikoh. In the ensuing battle on June 14, 1657 NS at Shamoogarh, Aurangzeb won, and Dara Shikoh ended up running towards Lahore to gather more forces.

On his way to Lahore, Dara asked Guru HarRai Sahib, if he will help in case Dara Shikoh battles Aurangzeb again. Guru Sahib, seeing Dara's cause as a just cause, said

yes, but Dara never gathered any forces or enough courage to confront Aurangzeb. Instead, he decided to run farther away from Delhi towards Multan.

Finally Aurangzeb caught him and got him beheaded on Sep 13, 1659 NS. Aurangzeb had already jailed his father Shah Jahan (the renowned builder of Taj Mahal) in Agra Fort, where Shah Jahan became mentally ill, and died in the year 1666.

After being firmly on the throne, Aurangzeb started to deal with all those who helped Dara Shikon in his times of crisis. Not finding much against Guru HarRai Sahib, he summoned him to Delhi anyway, asking him to explain certain Words in the sacred Sikh scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) that some Muslim clerics found objectionable.

In response, Guru HarRai Sahib sent his elder son RamRai along with a copy of SGGS to Delhi. Over there, RamRai having gotten intimidated by the Emperor chose to replace **one Word** of SGGS with one of his own, while explaining the meanings. His, such a sacrilege made Aurangzeb very happy. However when Guru HarRai Sahib found about the infraction, he did not take such a cowardly action lightly. As a result for that mistake Guru HarRai sahib snapped his relations with RamRai forever considering him to be unfit for carrying out any responsibility that demanded clarity, conviction and courage. Even though a little later RamRai did apologize for his mistake, but the mistake was considered to be too serious for a complete forgiveness.

Thus, on Oct 19, 1661 NS, when it came time for Guru HarRai Sahib to find his successor before his death, he bestowed the sewa of Guruship on his younger son Guru Harkishan Sahib, the 8th Nanak.

Questions

Q1. What was the unique contribution of Guru HarRai Sahib to the Sikh Way of life?

Q2. What was he most passionate about? And what was the result of his efforts?

Q3. How was, Dara Shikoh helped by Guru HarRai Sahib?

Q4. During Sikh Guru Sahib's era; who were Aurangzeb, Shah Jahan and Dars Shikoh? How were they related? Who did what to whom?

Q5. Why did RamRai sacrilege Gurbani? How did Guru HarRai deal with RamRai's this cowardly act?

Guru Harkrishan Sahib:

Guruship Period: (Oct 19, 1661 – Apr 15, 1664 NS) = 2 ½ Yrs.

Born on Aug 4, 1652 NS, Guru Harkrishan Sahib was the youngest son of Guru HarRai Sahib, and the great-grand son of Guru Hargobind Sahib. He was nearly 9¼ years of age when his father Guru HarRai Sahib bestowed him with the Sewa of Guruship. Despite his tender age, when he was bestowed with such a heavy responsibility, he managed it with lot of grace and humility. By his time, over a period of almost 200 years, a large Sikh brotherhood had come into existence that was spread over a very large area. Thus people were regularly coming to Kiratpur to meet to get spiritual guidance from the Guru Sahib.

Having been born and brought up in the Guru's house, Guru Harkrishan Sahib was well versed in the Sikh Way of Life. He personally supervised every kind of arrangement that was done to take care of the visiting Sangat. He had taken this training directly from his father Guru HarRai Sahib.

Every visitor who came to meet Guru Harkrishan Sahib was very pleased with his love, affection and sense of hospitality, except his elder brother Baba RamRai. Who, in his heart of hearts felt that he being the older son of Guru HarRai Sahib should have been given the Sewa of Guruship instead of Guru Harkrishan Sahib. Therefore, to stake his claim he came to Kiratpur to drum up some support. However since everyone knew about the previous fiasco that he created when he met Aurangzeb, nobody paid him any attention.

Therefore, frustrated RamRai went back to Aurangzeb to complain to him about his claim. Hearing his complaint, and hoping to cash in on his disgruntled state, Aurangzeb gave him some money and a piece of land as an immediate restitution, and summoned Guru Harkrishan Sahib to Delhi to explain the situation.

Guru Harkrishan Sahib received those summons on April 2, 1664 NS at Kiratpur, and started getting ready to go to Delhi immediately. On his way to Delhi, he met many Sikh Sangats (congregations) en route his way.

When he reached a township named Panjokhrhaa; then in the Sangat (congregation) there showed up a very scornful Brahmin named Lal Chand.

Who, came into the Sangat with a very dubious and sinister plan in his head, and an over inflated ego about his knowledge of Gita (a Hindu sacred book). To carry out his nefarious plan he sat by the side of Guru Sahib; and (misperceiving Guru Sahib as just some not very informed small child) mischievously asked him if Guru Sahib could answer some of the passages from Gita that Lal Chand pretended to have difficulty in comprehending.

Understanding the mischief, Guru Sahib replied; of course, why only me, ask any of these Sikhs standing around me for your answer.

In our case unlike your practice of keeping education confined to only the upper castes; we educate every Sikh to be knowledgeable about religious scriptures of other faiths as well. For us caste division, or limiting of education to any particular class or caste means nothing. Therefore feel free to ask your question from any of these Sikhs.

Lal Chand being intoxicated with the arrogance of him being the exclusive knowledgeable scholar of Gita around; didn't believe the Guru Sahib and thought "how can so many Sikhs be so knowledgeable about Gita, that is not even written in their Punjabi language, but is in Sanskrit? Thus without a moment's hesitation he took up the challenge, and spotted a person by the name Chhajoo Ram, who by the Hindu hierarchical division of castes was a low-caste 'Jheever' (water carrier). Seeing him dressed up in very simple clothes, Lal Chand perceived him to be the least knowledgeable person around. Hence he pointed towards him and asked, "Can that Sikh explain to me the meanings of Gita?"

In response, Guru Sahib smiled a bit, and asked Chhajoo Ram to oblige Lal Chand with the meaning of the section of Gita that Lal Chand wanted to understand. When, Chhajoo Ram explained the in depth meanings of the said paragraph, Lal Chand got stunned. His arrogance of him being the exclusive learned person around, instantly melt away; and he immediately bowed down to the Guru Sahib and asked for forgiveness.

Thus marching forward, making their stops at various places, the group reached Delhi on April 5, 1664 NS, where Guru Harkrishan Sahib stayed at the Bungalow of Raja Jai Singh Mirza. Very next day on April 6, 1664 NS, Baba Teg Bahadur (younger brother of Guru Harkrishan Sahib's Grandfather), met Guru Harkrishan Sahib. Baba Teg Bahdur was returning back from a religious tour of Central and Eastern part of India. Meeting one another for the first time, they discussed various issues about the future of the Sikh Revolution, and attitudes of Mogul administration etc. Here Baba Teg Bahadur advised Guru Harkrishan Sahib to stay cautious about Aurangzeb's crafty ways, during his scheduled meeting with him.

At the parting time Guru Harkrishan conveyed to Baba Teg Bahadar his inner vision stating that his end is approaching near; therefore after him Baba Teg Bahadar should take up the Sewa of Guruship as the 9th Nanak. Next day Baba Teg Bahadar left for Punjab.

On April 8, 1664 NS Guru Harkrishan Sahib went to meet Aurangzeb in his Darbar; where Guru Sahib was treated with full respect and honor. After the normal formalities of inquiring each other's well being, Aurangzeb asked Guru Sahib a couple of questions.

To Aurangzeb's question, "why has your father chosen you as the Guru instead of your elder brother Ram Rai? Guru Sahib's replied that Guruship in the Sikh way of life is not anyone's personal property that needs to be passed on to someone in an hierarchical way; but rather is a spiritual social service that Guru Har Rai has assigned to someone he though fit.

To the second question, "being a Guru, do you have any power to perform miracles? If so, show me a miracle?" Guru Sahib's replied that as per the Sikh thought, showing a miracle is the most disastrous thing to do; because it will be an act, where one will need to walk on a path to defy the Orders (Laws) of the Almighty. Furthermore, God, the Creator is the ONE and ONLY ONE Miracle and nothing else.

Man's only miracle is to not to forget the Divine Attributes of that Almighty.

Following this meeting, Guru Harkrishan Sahib took leave; and on his way back listened to the problems of people suffering from an epidemic of small pox; however already not having been feeling well, he possibly got infected with the virus; and reaching back in the Bungalow he fell ill resulting into him breathing his last on April 15, 1664 NS .

However before his death in a reply to a question from the congregation as to "in whose guidance are you leaving us behind?" Guru Sahib replied, "Baba of Bakala (Guru Teg Bahadar) will be the 9th Nanak."

And thus after the completion of the final rites of Guru Harkrishan Sahib, the congregation went to Bakala in Punjab; and on August 25, 1664 NS did the Ardas (Prayer) of bestowal of Sewa of Guruship on Guru Teg Bahadar, the 9th Nanak.

QUESTIONS

Q1. Why was Guru Harkrishan Sahib chosen to be a Guru?

Q2. How did he handle the inflated ego of a so-called Brahmin Lal Chand at Panjokhra?

Q3. Why was Guru Harkrishan Sahib summoned to Delhi?

Q4. Where and with whom did he stay in Delhi, and who met him there that he confided in about his health, and the future course of Sikh movement?

Q5. What was his message to the Sikh Sangat (congregation) before he breathed his last?

Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib: the 9th Nanak
Guruship Period: (Apr 15, 1664 – Nov 24 1675 NS) = 11 Yrs.

ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ ॥
 ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਨਿ ਰੇ ਮਨਾ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਤਾਹਿ ਬਖਾਨਿ ॥੧੬॥ ... (SGGS: Pg 1427)

Says Nanak, O my mind, listen; one who neither frightens anyone in anyway, and nor feels intimidated from anyone; that person alone is called spiritually wise. //16//

In the history of mankind there are uncountable chronicles, wherein, while fighting for a right to free exercise of their **Own** faith, quite a few **religious leaders** have achieved martyrdom; except the unique martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, the 9th Divine Teacher of the Sikhs. He perhaps is the only exception, wherein, as a matter of principle the **leader of One Particular Faith** (the **Sikh faith**) ended up kissing martyrdom for the protection of the Right of free exercise of **Someone Else's faith** (the **Hindu faith**). That in fact was in direct contradiction to his, own beliefs, and in which he personally had little belief.

It was the year 1675, when a delegation of terrorized and exhausted **Hindu Brahmins** of Kashmir approached Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib for help. They were the victims of an official policy of religious intolerance, intimidation and forcible conversion of Hindus into Islam. They had already tried and failed to get any help from any other quarter, whether such a source was judiciary, executive, or some kind hearted Muslims, high-powered rich Hindu officials, or Priests.

Thus, after listening to the predicaments of the helpless Hindu Brahmins, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib decided to go to Delhi to intervene on their behalf. Furthermore, knowing fully well that he will not return alive from such a venture, he, before leaving, bestowed the Sewa of Guruship on his son Gobind Rai with instructions to get people prepared for the worst, and he proceeded to Delhi to confront the forces of darkness that were terrorizing the meek and helpless.

Born in 'Guru Da Chak' (Amritsar) on Oct 31, 1621 NS, Baba Tyagmal was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind Sahib and Mata Nanaki Jee. From the early childhood he had a very keen interest in the Sikh Way of Life and its core principle of becoming a Saint-Soldier. Along with his scriptural knowledge of the sacred Sikh Scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib, he turned out to be an excellent horse rider and a superb swordsman as well.

Baba **Tyagmal** was only 14 years old when a need arose for him to display the level of his swordsmanship in his first combat. It was an unexpected battle that was thrust upon his family by the Islamic rulers in Lahore, with the intent of disrupting the marriage of his sister, Veero. Wherein, witnessing Tyagmal's impressive

swordsmanship, his father Guru Hargobind Sahib renamed him as **Teg Bahadur**; meaning a sword brandishing warrior.

As a young man Baba Teg Bahadur took upon himself the duty of taking the message of the Sikh Way of life to the neighboring areas of Punjab during the years 1644-1656; and then to the far off places in central and East India in years 1657-1664. During these years he travelled extensively to places like Hardwar (1657), Agra, Allahabad, Banaras, Gaya, Patna, and then to Assam. While on his journey eastwards, his son Gobind Rai was born at Patna on Jan 1, 1661 NS. (Some scholars have placed Gobind Rai's birth date on Jan 5, 1666 NS; that does not seem to correlate correctly with events of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib's life.)

Back home in Punjab, Guru Har Rai Sahib, the 7th Nanak, before his death on Oct 19, 1661 NS bestowed the Sewa of Guruship on his son Guru Harkrishan. At that time Baba Teg Bahadur was on a tour to Patna in East India, far away from his home base in Punjab. After learning about the death of Guru Har Rai Sahib in Punjab, he decided to come back home. Thus, in Oct 1663, leaving his son Gobind Rai and his wife Mata Gujri Jee at Patna, he started his journey back towards Punjab; reaching Paryag on Jan 3, 1664 NS, he reached Delhi on Apr 5, 1664 NS.

On reaching Delhi, Baba Teg Bahadur met Guru Harkrishan Sahib on Apr 6, 1664 NS, stayed with him for two days; and on Apr 8 marched on to Punjab and reached Bakala. During his brief stop in Delhi, he and Guru Harkrishan Sahib discussed various issues about the future of the Sikh Revolution, and attitudes of Mogul administration. Here Baba Teg Bahadur advised Guru Harkrishan Sahib to stay cautious about Aurangzeb's crafty ways.

Also during the same meeting Guru Harkrishan Sahib not feeling very well (probably affected by the widely spread small-pox epidemic), conveyed to Baba Teg Bahadur his inner vision stating that his end is approaching near; therefore after him Baba Teg Bahadur should take up the Sewa of Guruship. Thus after Guru Harkrishan Sahib's death on Apr 15, 1664 NS; and as per his directions, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib assumed the Sewa of Guruship on August 25, 1664, NS as the 9th Nanak.

Thus, to take his message to the people in the Majha region, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib started his campaign with a visit to Amritsar Darbar Sahib on Dec 5, 1664 NS. On arrival Baba Mohri Jee welcomed him and Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib held an open darbar (congregation) at the present day Tharha Sahib and then moved on to village Wallaa. From there, moving through localities like Gukhewali, Nijheran wala, Taran Taaran, Khadoor, Goindwal, Daroli (near Moga) and reached Talwandi Sabo, the present day Damdama Sahib. There, to meet the water shortage in the town, he got a Sarovar built that got completed on April 23, 1665 NS.

Next, moving through present day Haryana Guru Sahib reached Keeratpur, and on Jul 4, 1665 NS, he established Chak Nanaki (Anandpur Sahib), thus starting a new Sikh Center to serve the people in that area. During his Guruship he wrote a substantial

amount of Gurbani that is included in the Sacred Sikh Scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

While at Chack Nanaki Guru Sahib had an encounter with the Muslim authorities. He was arrested and taken to Delhi along with his fellow Sikhs for hunting in the jungle; the reason being that under the Islamic oppression nobody except a Muslim had the right to possess a weapon and/or to hunt. ... Irked by such a violation Emperor Aurangzeb issued orders to execute the Guru Sahib as well as the accompanying Sikhs. However on the intervention of Kanwar Ram Singh s/o Raja Jai Singh Mirza sanity prevailed, and everyone got released.

Then after staying at Ram Singh's house for a couple of days in Delhi, Guru Sahib got on with his eastwards tour. After completion of the above tour he came back to Chak Nanaki (Anadpur Sahib); where on Jun 10, 1675 NS a group of 16 Kashmiri Brahmins accompanied by a Sikh named Kirpa Ram Dutt came to see the Guru Sahib to seek his help. This request was in connection with an administration- sponsored campaign of forcible conversion of helpless Hindus into Islam in Kashmir. Having found that the representative group has already been to all the major Hindu centers namely; Kedar Nath, Badri Nath, Puri, Dwarka, Kanchi, Mathra, etc including influential High Rajput officials working for administration, and nobody daring to help; Guru Sahib asked the visiting Brahmins to go back and convey to the Governor of Kashmir that 'If he could convert Guru Teg Bahadar into Islam, then all of the Hindus of Kashmir will automatically convert.'

Thus being well aware of the consequences of such a message, Guru Sahib On July 23, 1675 NS did Ardas (Prayer) for transfer of Sewa of Guruship to his son Gobind Rai; and voluntarily started his journey towards Delhi on July 26, 1675 NS.

On the administration side Aurangzeb (the Islamic Emperor of India who, ascended to his throne by imprisoning his father Shah Jahan in Agra Fort, and killing all of his brothers) got Governor's message in this regard at Hasan Abdal; and issued his orders to arrest Guru Sahib immediately.

Thus as per Aurangzeb's orders, Governor of Sahrind arrested Guru Sahib from Malikpur (en route to Delhi) along with three accompanying Sikhs named Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das, and Bhai Dyala. He kept them in his custody for four months in Fort Bassi Pathana, and continuously tortured them to make them submit. Sheikh Saif-ud-din was assigned the duty to convert Guru Sahib to Islam, the mission that he could not accomplish. Therefore, as a result Aurangzeb (planning to return to Delhi) ordered that Guru Sahib and his companion Sikhs be put in an iron cage and sent to Delhi. Accordingly, they arrived in Delhi on Nov 16, 1675 NS.

In Delhi Guru Sahib (and his three companions) were handed over to Shahi Kazi Abdul Vahar Voohra for conversion to Islam or to be executed. Thus the Shahi Kazi asked the Guru Sahib to show a miracle, or choose between 'conversion to Islam, or death'. To which Guru Sahib replied that as per Sikh beliefs showing a miracle is a

disastrous thing to do; because it will be an act, where one will need to walk on a path to defy the Divine Orders (Laws) of the Almighty. Furthermore he recognizes God, the Creator to be the One and the Only One Miracle around and nothing else.

Next, on the choice between 'Islam or death' he replied that one's religion being a matter of one's personal choice, there is absolutely no reason, why anyone should convert to any religion under the threat of death. Therefore Guru Sahib's answer to such a choice was a firm 'NO'. Thus, finding that none of the intimidations were working on the Guru Sahib the Shahi Kazi Abdul Voohra ordered the resumption of the cycle of Islamic torture.

Consequently the extreme form of Islamic torture began and continued unabated for 6 days. To further throttle the intensity of torture up to its inhumane heights in order to intimidate and press Guru Sahib to submit, his three companions were made to kiss martyrdom one by one in front of him. In the process, Bhai Dyala was boiled alive; followed by Bhai Mati Das sawed alive into two halves; and Bhai Sati Das wrapped in a bale of cotton and set on fire for a very painful and slow torturous death. However nothing could shake up Guru Sahib's determination, or to make him budge from his stand.

Thus finding none of the tortures to be of any avail to intimidate; Guru Sahib was beheaded on Nov 24, 1675 NS evening, at a location where at present stands the Gurdwara Sis Ganj in Delhi (near the Red Fort). After the beheading, Guru Sahib's body was left lying there to be cut into four pieces the following morning, and to be hung on all the four sides of the city.

For further intensification of intimidation of the masses, there were orders that if anyone dared to touch Guru Sahib's body or tries to dispose it off, then he/they will meet the same fate as that of the Guru Sahib and his companions. However, in spite of such terrorizing orders in vogue, that is exactly what a group of Sikhs dared, and did.

Finding an opportunity in the security around the site of martyrdom, a Sikh named Bhai Jaita along with his companions got hold of Guru Sahib's head and took it to Chak Nanaki (Anandpur Sahib) in Punjab; where the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib cremated the head with full honors. Also another Sikh named Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara and his sons got hold of the body; took it to their house; and set the house on fire for cremation. Today, Gurdwara Rakab Ganj in Delhi stands on that site.

This is how, in the year 1675, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, the 9th Nanak laid down the solid foundation, for the Principle of '**Right of Freedom of Religion, for all**' with his blood. ... The act, that ultimately ended up changing the history of the region in a big way.

QUESTIONS

Q1. What do you feel about the Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib's action against the oppression of masses?

Q2. Why did the Kashmiri Brahmins come to Guru Sahib's refuge, when they had so many powerful temporal religious seats, many Kings and political heads to get their help from?

Q3. What was the childhood name of the 9th Guru Sahib? And, why was he renamed Teg Bahadur?

Q4. What was he involved in for the most part of His life? Name some parts of Indian continent where he went to spread the message of Love and Equality?

Q5. How did he take care of the problems of Kashmiri Brahmins? What were its consequences?

Q6. Who went with Him to Delhi? Why were they arrested and what were they asked to do if they wanted to stay alive?

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib: the 10th Nanak

Guruship Period: (July 26, 1675 – Oct 20, 1708 NS) = 33 Yrs.

Born at Patna (Bihar, India) on Jan 1, 1662 NS (some scholars believe it to be Jan 5, 1666). Sahibzada Gobind Rai was the only son of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and Mata Gujri Jee. At the time of his birth Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib was in Assam, busy in conveying the message of the Sikh Way of Life to the masses. After coming back from Assam he stayed at Patna for a while, and then left for Punjab in the year 1664, leaving Sahibzada Gobind Rai behind in his mother Mata Gujri Ji's care. Reaching Punjab, he got busy with the Sewa of Guruship bestowed upon him by the 8th Nanak Guru Harkrishan Sahib. Therefore, Sahibzada Gobind Rai stayed at Patna during his early years; where he was taught to read Bihari-Hindi, Sanskrit and Persian.

Finally in the year 1670, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib arranged for Sahibzada Gobind Rai and Mata Gujri Jee to come to Punjab. Having been away from Punjab for a long time, Mata Gujri Jee, en route to Bakala, first took Gobind Rai to his Nankay (his mom's village) at Lakhnaur on Sep 11, 1670 NS. Then, after reaching Batala, and staying there for a couple of years, they reached Chak Nanaki in March 1672.

While at Chak Nanki, Sahibzada Gobind Rai got extensive training to work along with his father Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib till the year 1675; when on July 23, 1675 NS Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, (before his departure to Delhi to kiss martyrdom) did his Ardas (prayer), and bestowed the responsibility of the Sewa of Guruship on Guru Gobind Rai (Singh), declaring him to be the 10th Nanak.

Military Preparation: Thus, to move forward in the face of a very cruel and barbaric martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, the first step that Guru Gobind Singh took was to advise the Sangats (Sikh congregations) to stay calm, and to get well organized and prepared for defending and freeing themselves from the prevailing, extremely tyrannical religious bigotry of the fanatic Islamic ruling class. For such task of uplifting the extremely demoralized and oppressed people of the land, inflicted with centuries of helpless slavish existence, he started extensive military training. To do this, he directed the Sangat to bring quality horses, and weapons etc to put the plan in motion.

To boost the morale and standard of warfare, he got prepared the Ranjit Nagaara; a big drum that could be heard for miles; challenging the enemy to dare to come near to face the consequences.

Completion of Sri Guru Granth Sahib: Furthermore, for uplifting the spiritual morale along with the military preparations, he also got the final version of the sacred Sikh Scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib completed in the year 1678 by adding the Gurbani (Word) of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib at Damdama Sahib, Anandpur (Please note that some believe it to be had done at Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo much later).

Program for Body Fitness: In Mar 1683, Guru Sahib started the yearly competition of Martial games and sports like horse riding, wrestling, body building and martial art of Gatka at Hola Mahalla. These programs are still in vogue at Anandpur Sahib, more than 330 years later.

Sikh Center at Paonta Sahib: Next to better serve the Sangats (congregations) in the hilly areas, on April 30, 1685 NS Guru Gobind Singh Sahib established a new Sikh Center at Paonta Sahib at the request of Raja Medni Parkash of Nahan. Guru Sahib stayed in Paonta Sahib for more than three years providing spiritual as well as military training to his Sikhs.

Battle of Bhangani: While at Paonta Sahib, the Battle of Bhangani took place on Oct 1, 1688 NS. It was an attack on Guru Sahib by Raja Fateh Shah of Gharhwal. The basic cause of this attack was the fear, and jealousy of the neighboring hill Rajas, who were irked by the increasing influence of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's teachings of equality and empowerment of the downtrodden common folks.

In this battle Raja Fateh Shah having lost a large number of his men got badly defeated while quite a few Sikhs lost their lives as well. After the battle Guru Sahib stayed in the area for about a month and on Nov 10, 1688 NS came back to Chak Nanaki (Anandpur Sahib).

Establishment of Forts: To further solidify the defenses; on April 16, 1689 NS, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib drove down the foundation stakes of Anandpur Sahib and surrounding Forts of Anandgarh, Lohgarh, Taragarh, AgumGarh, and Fatehgarh.

Battle of Nadaun: In March 1691, Governor of Lahore, attacked the Hill Rajas under the command of Alaf Khan; a very powerful and renowned general. The Hill Rajas requested Guru Sahib for help. Guru Sahib sent his forces for the battle, and after a fierce battle Alaf Khan's forces lost, and were chased away.

Thus in face of the Islamic attack, on Apr 14, 1692 NS: the hill rajas of 22 principalities got together at Bilaspur and Mandi, to seek Guru Sahib's protection. Guru Sahib as the chief patron promised them protection and came back to Anandpur Sahib.

However, with the death of Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur on Sep 29, 1692 NS, his son Ajmer Chand came under the complete spell of a bigoted Brahmin named Parmanand; who very passionately hated Guru Sahib's Teachings of '**equality of all**', which were in direct conflict with the all pervading practices of Caste Division, based on the Hindu premise that '**All Humans are born unequal**'.

Such a transformation in the attitude of Ajmer Chand resulted in an un-resolvable development of cracks between the otherwise very co-operative relations between the Guru Sahib and Ajmer's late father; Raja Bhim Chand.

First attack on Anandpur: Aug 30, 1695 NS: ...To avenge the stunning defeat of Nadaun, the Deputy Governor Dilawar Khan of Lahore sent his son Rustam Khan to attack Anandpur. However because of flood caused by heavy rain his forces couldn't cross the flood stream to confront the Sikh forces waiting on the other side; Thus Rustam Khan ended up going back, empty handed.

Phase of an Eternal Confidence Building: Before announcing the next phase of eternal confidence building, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib started a yearlong tour of Malwa region in Apr 1693. Then, in order to enable the Sikhs to be able to display their commitment and confidence to the 'Sikh Way of life' openly and unhesitatingly, he issued a Hukamnama (proclamation) on Apr 3, 1695 NS. In this proclamation he directed the Sikhs to not cut or shave their hair anymore, and to stop the pervading Brahminical custom of shaving off hair at the time of marriage or death etc. In addition, he decreed that in future every Sikh will wear a Karhaa (Steel bracelet) as an emblem of commitment to the Sikh Way of life, and will keep his/her children's hair intact from birth.

Demolition of Masand System: Feb 23, 1698 NS: The Masand system (of official appointment of Sikh preachers) started by the 2nd Guru Sahib worked wonderfully until the 9th Guru. Originally the system consisted of appointing very dignified respected and educated persons to make the Sikh Teachings available to everyday folks, and to bring their offerings back to the central pool to run the public projects. It worked superbly until the 9th Guru. However with passage of time it turned into a family affair; because the progeny of the succeeding Masands started claiming this responsibility as a hereditary right, rather than becoming suitable or fit for it by getting educated. Therefore, as a result undignified, corrupt, and uneducated persons started populating the system, turning it into a farce. Therefore, Guru Gobind Singh Ji ended up demolishing it completely by turning the power back to the local Sangats (congregations) to manage their affairs in the light of the Sikh Teachings.

The Final formalization of the Institution of Sikh Initiation: It was the first day of the Bikrami month of Vaisakh, when a large number of Sikhs gathered at Anandpur Sahib on April 14, 1699 NS. It was in response to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's directive that invited people for this special occasion, wherein a major program was to be unveiled to set the future direction of the Sikh faith. In one documents titled 'Bhat Vahee Bhadson Pargana Thanesar' this occasion is described as under;

‘ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਹਲ ਦਸਮਾਂ ਬੇਟਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਸਾਲ ਸਤਰਾਂ ਸੈ ਪਚਾਵਨ ਮੰਗਲਵਾਰ ਵੈਸਾਖੀ ਕੇ ਦਿਹੂੰ ਪਾਂਚ ਸਿਖੋਂ ਕੇ ਕਾਂਡੇ ਕੀ ਪਾਹੁਲ ਦੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਰਾਖਾ। ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੈ ਦੈਆ ਰਾਮ ਸੋਪਤੀ ਖਤਰੀ ਬਾਸੀ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਆ ਖਲਾ ਹੁਆ। ਪਾਛੈ ਮੋਹਕਮ ਚੰਦ ਛੀਪਾ ਬਾਸੀ ਦਵਾਰਕਾ, ਸਾਹਿਬ ਚੰਦ ਨਾਈ ਬਾਸੀ ਬਿਦਰ ਜ਼ਫਰਾਬਾਦ, ਧਰਮ ਚੰਦ ਜਵੰਦਾ ਜਾਟ ਬਾਸੀ ਹਸਤਨਾਪੁਰ, ਹਿੰਮਤ ਚੰਦ ਝੀਵਰ ਬਾਸੀ ਜਗਨਨਾਥ ਬਾਰੋ ਬਾਰੀ ਖਲੇ ਹੁਏ। ਸਬ ਕੋ ਨੀਲ ਅੰਬਰ ਪਹਿਨਾਇਆ। ਵਹੀ ਬੇਸ ਅਪਨਾ ਕੀਆ। ਹੁਕਾ, ਹਲਾਲ, ਹਜਾਮਤ ਹਰਾਮ, ਟਿਕਾ ਜੰਝੂ ਧੋਤੀ ਕਾ ਤਿਆਗ ਕਰਾਇਆ। ਮੀਣੇ ਧੀਰਮਲੀਏ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਈਏ, ਸਿਰਗੁੰਮ, ਮਸੰਦਾਂ ਕੀ ਵਰਤਨ ਬੰਦ ਕੀ। ਕੰਘਾ, ਕਰਦ, ਕੇਸਗੀ, ਕੜਾ, ਕਛਹਿਰਾ ਸਭ ਕੋ ਦੀਆ। ਸਭ ਕੇਸਧਾਰੀ ਕੀਏ।

*Guru Gobind Singh the Tenth Master, son of Guru Teg Bahadur Jee; in the year 1755 (of Bikrimi Calandar), Tuesday, the Vaisakhi day, gave **Kanday Kee Pahul** to five Sikhs, and named them Singhs. First Daya Ram Sopti Khatri, resident of Lahore came forward. Following him one after the other, stood up Mohkam Chand, Chheepaa -Calico printer, resident of Dwarka; Sahib Chand Naa-ee-Barber, resident of Bidar Zafrabad; Dharam Chand Jawanda Jat-Farmer, resident of Hastnapur; and Himant Chand Jheever-Water Carrier, resident of Jagan Nath. (Then the Tenth Master) made everyone to dress up in sky blue; having dressed himself in the same way as well. Then he decreed the prohibition of **Hukkaa**-Tobacco smoking, **Halaal**-the meat sanctified by Islamic ritual, **Haraam**-misbegotten wealth, **Tikaa**-the ritualistic Brahminical frontal Mark, **Janjoo**-the Hindu sacred thread, **Dhoti**-a loose garment worn by Hindu males. Directed everyone to stop dealing with **Meenhaas**-descendants of Prithi Chand, **Dheermalee-ay**-followers of Dheermal, **Sirgum**-Fake Sikhs with shaved/cut hair, and **Masands** - the corrupt preachers in the Sikh garb. He bestowed everyone with **Kangha**-Comb, **Karad-Kirpaan**, **Kesgee**-Turban or Dastaar (to protect uncut hair), **Karhaa**-the steel bracelet, and **Kachheraa**-breeches. Made everyone a **Kesadhari** - a wearer of uncut long hair.*

This was an occasion where Guru Gobind Singh Sahib provided the final form of Sikh initiation called 'Khanday Dee Pahul'. This is a ceremony whose total emphasis is on character building through directing the new adherents to strictly observe the do's and don'ts expressed in the above document. To establish the process of the desired character building on an unshakable firm foundation of unflinching commitment, the Guru Sahib made the first five Sikhs (mentioned in the above document) to walk through the test of 'sharp edge of the sword.'

To test the commitment of the adherents to the 'Sikh Way of Life' the Guru Sahib is said to have come out with a naked sword in hand and asked for a head to be sacrificed. Bhai Daya Ram stood up to the challenge and offered his head. Guru Sahib took him into a tent set up a little distant away. A few moments later the Guru came back with his sword dripping with blood and asked for another head; the challenge to which Bhai Mohkam Chand responded; followed by Bhai Sahib Chand, Dharam Chand, and Himmat Chand responding to similar challenges one after the other.

Then after a bit longer pause, Guru Sahib and all the five Sikhs, in-distinguishably dressed up in similar sky blue dresses, and renamed with the suffixes '**Singh/Kaur**' came out after partaking 'Khanday Dee Pahul'; the nectar of the Double edged sword (meant to be distributed to the initiated Sikhs) was prepared by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib in association Mata Sahib Kaur Jee, a very prominent Sikh lady of his times; wherein to prepare the nectar, they both (representing the equality of man and women at the crowning moment of the initiation ceremonies of the Sikhs) mixed water with sugar crystals in a bowl stirring it with a Khanda, the double edged sword, while continuously reciting Gurbani. Then everyone in the room, one by one partook that Khanday Dee Pahul directly from the same bowl establishing an institution of a common bond of brotherhood/sisterhood.

Next the five Sikhs thus initiated, were authorized to represent the Guru for further initiations of any number of new adherents. Who, could further get subdivided into groups of fives to carry out the process forward resulting into a completely decentralized process of modern times; wherein at present, any group of five formally initiated Sikhs who practice the Sikh Way of Life with commitment are authorized to further initiate any number of new adherents in a similar way in the presence of the sacred Sikh Scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

The Sikh uniqueness about their initiation is that, having no belief in any kind of special priesthood, no set of any particular persons are considered sacred to carry out the initiation. All one needs is a group of any five 'practicing Sikhs', ready to initiate the new adherents into the Sikh Way Life; and those taking the Pahul must be willing and prepared to do so.

On the said Vaisakhi occasion, a very large number of adherents are said to have taken 'Khanday Dee pahul'.

Attacks continued: With the very open challenge to the caste division through **Guru Sahib's Final formalization of Sikh Initiation**, and its vast impact on empowerment of the down trodden, the caste ridden Hill Rajas became panicky, with Raja Ajmer Chand in the lead. As a result harassing skirmishes with the Sikhs became a routine affair, resulting in loss of life on both sides. To the surprise of the Hill Rajas, every time they tried their hands in skirmishes with the Sikhs, they ended up losing. In August-September 1700, Ajmer Chand's men attacked four Sikh posts, in four consecutive days; and got defeated every time. Therefore, for the next big attack they waited and planned for about five years.

Second wave of invasions in 1705: In spite of his earlier defeats Ajmer Chand the Raja of Bilaspur did not give up his jealousy with Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. As a result he attacked Anandpur Sahib on Mar 28, 1705 NS once again. However after two days of fighting he lost the fight and went back for a bigger invasion with the help of other Hill Rajas, and the Governor of Sarhind in command of imperial forces. On Apr 14, 1705 NS, Guru Sahib sensing a bigger invasion upon Anandpur Sahib decided to send all those Sikhs, who were living there with families, to their villages. He also sent Mata Sahib Kaur, and his wife Mata Sundri to Burhanpur. As a result, those that were left behind were Guru Sahib, his mother Mata Gujri jee, his four sons and approximately 500 Singhs.

As expected, on May 19, 1705 NS Ajmer Chand with the help of a large contingent of additional Moghul and Hindu Raja's forces put on an indefinite siege around Anandpur Sahib. However nobody dared to attack the Sikhs. The siege continued for seven months; and finally on Dec 20, 1705 NS, under the written assurance of a message written on the Quran said to be written by Emperor Aurangzeb Guru Sahib along with the Sikhs decided to leave Anandpur Sahib. As a result on the Dec 20-21 night 1705 NS the whole contingent at Anandpur Sahib was divided into different

troops, and they left one after the other and went towards Keeratpur, with a group of Sikhs assigned to protect any attacks from behind.

In this move Guru Gobind Singh Sahib went towards Kotla Nihang, while Bhai Jiwan Singh's troop consisting of 100 Sikhs confronted the invading forces; that having thrown all the written promises to the wind started attacking from behind. Thus fighting through this continued barrage of attacks Sikhs reached river Sarsa; and suffered heavy losses while trying to cross the flooded river. However they succeeded in taking Guru Gobind Singh Sahib along with his family and 45 Sikhs across the river. From here Mata Gujri Jee and younger Sahibzadas got separated from the rest and went to village Saherhi accompanied by their long time helper Gangu (a Brahmin), while the rest ended up marching towards Rooparh.

Guru Sahib along with his group of Sikhs spent the night of Dec 22-23, 1705 NS at the house of Nihang Khan, and on 24th Dec 1705 NS reached Chamkaur with the help of Alam Khan son of Nihang Khan. Somebody however reported about their whereabouts to Police in Rooparh; As a result forces of Melerkotla put seige around Chamkaur; fighting started and the two elder sons (Sahibzadas) of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib and 38 Sikhs kissed martyrdom on that day.

However at night Nabi Khan and Gani Khan succeeded in taking Guru Sahib to Machhiwarha; where they spent two nights at Jiwan Singh's house before escaping to Talwandi Sabo on Dec 26, 1705 NS. While escaping he was dressed as a Muslim Peer (holy man), in the company of Kazi of Ajmer and four Muslims, and thus he reached Talwandi Sabo (present day Damdama Sahib) on Jan 31, 1706 NS.

Martyrdom of younger Sahibzadas and Mata Gujri Jee: On the other side, with the betrayal by their servant Gangu, and the Masands of Village Saherhi (hoping for heavy rewards), the younger sons (Sahibzadas) and (Mother) Mata Gurjri of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib were handed over to the police in Morinda. From there, they were sent to Sahrind to be dealt with by the Governor of the area, Wazir Khan. In Sahrind, Governor Wazir Khan, after failing to make the 7 and 9 year old young Sahibzadas to fall for his offers of allurements (of comforts of an excellent life) or to make them yield to his threats (of death) gave them the final choice between 'Islam or death'. The allurements and threats to which, the un-intimidated Sahibzadas responded with a firm unequivocal 'NO'.

As a result on Dec 28, 1705 NS, Wazir Khan ordered the younger Sahibzadas to be put to death by bricking them alive. As a result they were brutally killed the next day; and Mata Gujri was thrown to death from the Burj (tower) of Fort of Sahrind. Their cremation was done by decendants of of Diwan Todar Mal.

After the Escape; Guru Gobind Singh Ji stayed at Talwandi Sabo till Oct 29, 1706 NS. During this period he is said to have completed the final draft of the sacred Sikh Scripture Guru Granth Sahib by entering the writings of his father Guru Teg Bahadar Sahib. (Note: One similar draft was also completed earlier while Guru Gobind Singh

Sahib was at Anandpur Sahib.) This final draft is called the 'Damdama Sahib beerh'; the copy that at present adorns every House of Sikh Prayer.

Next on Oct 29, 1706 NS he started his journey down south, and meeting Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh found out that Emperor Aurangzeb wanted to meet him. However on Apr 3, 1707 NS he got the news that Aurangzeb has died. As a result Guru Sahib helped Shahzada Muazam (Bahadar Shah) militarily in getting the throne to become the next Emperor.

As a matter of courtesy, then Emperor Bahadar Shah honored Guru Sahib on Aug 7, 1707 NS, and promised that once in full control, he will provide justice in connection with martyrdom of younger Sahibzadas. However Bahadar Shah got entangled in quelling the defiance of his brother Kam Bakhsh, and never fulfilled his promise; unintentionally or knowingly.

In the mean time, Wazir Khan Governor of Sahrind sensing an atmosphere of closeness between Emperor Bahadar Shah and Guru Sahib sent his representatives to Bahadar Shah with substantial amount of money; that changed Bahadar Shah's attitude. Thus sensing the change in Bahadar Shah's attitude Guru Sahib decided to part ways, and stayed at Nanded (present day Hazoor Sahib), when on Sep 7, 1708 NS Bahadar Shah proceeded further down south.

While at Nanded, Banda Singh Bahadur met Guru Gobind Singh Ji and took from him, the Khanday Dee Pahul on Sept 16, 1708 NS. Next on Guru Sahib's blessings on Oct 18, 1708 NS, Banda Singh started his journey towards Punjab, to shake Punjab up.

However the same evening on Oct 18, 1708 NS while sleeping, Guru Sahib was attacked and stabbed by Jamshaid Khan. Wherein, in spite of being badly injured Guru Sahib killed Jamshaid Khan on the spot.

Thus having been grievously injured Guru Sahib breathed his last on Oct 20, 1708 NS, and was cremated on the bank of Godawari, at Nanded. (Note: It seems that the attackers attacked Guru Sahib with the secret approval of Bahadar Shah (a common practice amongst the kings). Because on Nov 12, 1708 NS Bahadar Shah presented a Khilet (robe of honor) to the son of the Guru Sahib's assassin; Jamaid Khan. (Ref: Akhbarat-i-darbar-i-mualla)

An unparalleled Unique Action: After getting treated for the stab wounds for a couple of days, Guru Sahib sensing his end to be near, took a very unique and final action of his Guruship; an action that has no parallel in human history; He bestowed the eternal Guruship (succession) of spiritual understanding to the teachings of the sacred Sikh scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib;

**by
Declaring**

**Sri Guru Granth Sahib
to be
The Eternal Living Guru of the Sikhs.**

Today, as reminder of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's above Commandment, the following couplets, are sung by each Sikh congregations, at the conclusion of each of their Sikh functions;

ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ, ਤਬੈ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ । ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ।
ਗੁਰੁ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਮਾਨਿਓ, ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ, ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੇ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੈ, ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਹਿ ।

As ordained by the Timeless; thus was established the Panth, of the pure ones.
So, to all Sikhs is the Order; to recognize the Granth as their eternal Guru.

Accept (the Word of) Guru Granth Sahib as the manifestation of the divine Guru.
As those who seek to meet The One; will find Him in the Shabad (the divine Word of Guru Granth).

Questions:

Q1. What was Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's childhood name? And, what event in his life triggered him to change his childhood name, to become Gobind Singh?

Q2. How old was he when he became the Guru? And what was the reason for his Father to bestow the sewa of Guruship upon Him?

Q3. What are the 'personality traits that a common man needs, to lead a dignified life with' were revealed by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib? And, through what mechanism did he do it?

Q4. Explain, why Guru Gobind Singh Sahib never gave up his fight against any political as well as religious oppression or suppression?

Q5. For a successful life, should the discipline of mind and body go hand in hand? If yes, then explain what special action Guru Gobind Singh Sahib took to inculcate such a trait in the Sikhs?

Q6. In the Sikh way of life context, explain the statement: “Physical death is a natural process but the death of consciousness is the real death”.

NOTE: Please take notice that all the historic dates in this document are based upon the (NS) Nanakshahi Calendar dates; that in turn are converted into CE dates.

What is Nanakshahi Calendar?

Like every other modern calendar, Nanakshahi Calendar is the latest addition in the arena of calendars that is meant to sort out confusions about historic dates stemming from the presence of so many calendars in different zones of the world.

Since the dawn of civilization, men in every part of the globe have been trying to figure out 'time' in order to use it to their advantage. There is no question that 'time' plays a very big role in every human activity, whether the activity involves figuring out some optimum 'time' to sow some crops, or simply to go and meet someone to keep up some personal engagement.

Unfortunately however, to figure out 'time' the ancient scholars didn't have the luxury or availability of any kind of modern tools like watches, calculators, or computer loaded with all kinds of very precise mathematical and scientific information available today, at the click of a button. All that they had at their disposal was the availability of witnessing some approximate but intricate movements of heavenly bodies in the sky, or some visible environmental changes around on the ground to figure out 'time.' - Given the tools they were working with, we in modern times cannot help concluding that with the limitations of their resources, they did a fantastic job.

Today we find that in the construction of a Calendar, it becomes pretty complex even to decide about some basic elements of the Calendar; which on surface may look pretty simple! For example, if someone simply asks us, "How many days are in a year?" What will be our answer? Just pause for a few moments and think before proceeding further.

Many of us will definitely answer the above question saying, 365 days; whereas someone else may end up replying 366 days, 365 ½ days, 365 121/500 days, 365 64/250 days, 365.24 days, 365.26 days, 365.2421875 days, 365.25636574 days, 354 days, or 355 days etc. Isn't it mind-boggling? Interestingly however, all the answers written above are correct depending upon the criteria, format and the extent of accuracy that one happens to use to answer the posed question.

Thus in the light of modern day knowledge about the complexity of the situation; before attempting to upgrade any dates of an earlier calendar to become relevant for the modern times, one has to very clearly understand; - #1 the history of the concepts and criteria used in the earlier Calendar; - #2 the modern concepts and criteria used in the modern day calendar that the date is to be upgraded to.

It is well known that 'all that', the earlier scholars had available to base their calculations upon, were their long time observations of natural phenomenon surrounding them. Wherein the major phenomenon that they observed for their 'time' calculations were; - 1) the very precise regularity in the waxing and waning of Moon between days of 'New Moon' and 'No Moon'. Based upon which, they came up with a Lunar Calendar that was very helpful for fixing the dates of many of their celebratory occasions. However they quickly found that such dates were **not** solidly connected with the Sun; hence were not of much help to predict the seasons easily. As we know today; the reason is the difference of approximately 11 days between the length of the Lunar year of approximately 354 to 355 days, versus the Solar year of 365 or 366 days.

Thus to confront the problem, they went after the parameters of the Sun, and its regularity of motion. As a result they found that the yearly movement of the Sun in the sky seemed to be fairly connected with the seasons, and quite accurate in repeating itself in its yearly journey of approximately 365 or 366 days.

Therefore based upon their set of observations regarding Sun, the Eastern as well as Western Scholars in their respective zones came up with the Solar Calendars consisting of 365 to 366 days in a Solar year. However to tackle the issue of the start and finish points of their respective 'Solar years' and the ways to divide the year into months, weeks and days; they ended up with their own reference points in the sky to base their calculations upon. Some far away stars in the zodiac were selected to become their particular reference points.

As a result, the Eastern scholars in India named their earlier calendar as Bikrami (BK), while the Western scholars named their earlier Calendar as Julian (JL). In the modern day language both of these calendars were/are based upon the 'time' calculation system that is called **sidereal time**.

To admire the greatness of the above tasks, let us remind ourselves that it was that time in human history when many amongst us considered our puny little mother earth (a small part of our tiny little Solar system) as the center of the universe that is nearly infinite.

Next, after the passage of quite a bit of time (approx 1600 years) the Western astronomers noticed that in spite of their original belief that they had nailed their calendar pretty accurately with the motion of the Sun; they realized that the seasons over the years have retrograded quite a bit. Their calculation showed this shift to be of 11 days. Therefore after quite a long tug of war (more than 150 years) between the scholars, administrators, and the clergy they decided - 1) to advance their Julian calendar by 11 days. - 2) to replace it with a calendar, in which the seasons will not shift like the previous calendar anymore.

The abovementioned decision was implemented in September 1752, as per which 11 days of that month were made to disappear from the records of the Western history

by designating the date of September 3, 1752 as September 14, 1752. Thus, the new Calendar that started on September 14 (Actually older September 3) was called the Common Era (CE) Calendar.

To get rid of the problem in the earlier calendar that brought in so much heartache due to its inability to keep pace with the season, the first step was to identify the root causes of the problem, and then to fix it, and to get rid of it permanently. The root cause of the problem in the previous calendar was identified to be the locations of the **earlier** reference point, that was located in a wrong field of vision; a very **slowly retrograding** far off star constellation in the zodiac.

Therefore to correct the aberration the **new** reference point was moved to a **fixed** point on the Sun's own ecliptic. This is what has permanently nailed the yearly seasons permanently, to the motion of the Sun. The 'time' based upon such a set of calculations is called '**Tropical Time**'; that is the foundation stone of the Common Era (CE) calendar imbedded in Western history, and the Nanakshahi (NS) calendar imbedded in the Eastern history.

Thus, both the CE and NS calendars, in complete unison are busy in sorting out the confusions emanating from various types of historic calendars (Lunar, Solar, Lunar/Solar, astrological, sidereal, etc), and upgrading their dates to become relevant in modern times.

QUESTIONS.

Q1. What is Nanakshahi Calendar?

Q2. What are the very common Eastern and Western calendars prevalent today?

Q3. How time was calculated in olden times and how is it done today?

Q4. What, according to you is the most appropriate method to calculate time?

Instructions:
How to use
The Workbook for the Scout

1. The Scout is expected to read a chapter a week and then answer the questions at the end of the chapter.
2. The time frame to comfortably finish the book is about 12 weeks. There is no specific time of completion.
3. The Scout can confer with his/her parent and/or counselor to ask questions or advice.
4. Once all the activities are complete the Scout must have a Board of Review. This requires the Counselor, along with one or two other adults from the Gurdwara to ask questions of the relevance of what he/she has learnt and how it applies to their daily lives as a Scout.
5. Once the Board of Review is complete, the parent and then the counselor sign off in the 'workbook'.
6. The parent or counselor can get in contact with American Sikh Council (ASC) sikhscoutsusa@gmail.com contact@americansikhcouncil.org and send in a copy of the certification and application pages so that ASC can mail in the 'Sikh Award Medallion' with a 'Certificate'.
7. The Scout will be presented the 'Sikh Award Medallion' and the 'Certificate' at the Gurdwara by getting the Scouts and Adult Leaders from his Troop to join the sangat (congregation) and be honored in everyone's presence.
8. The Scout will be presented the Scouts Religious Square Knot at the Troop Court of Honor.

Instructions: Counselor's requirements and responsibilities

- The Counselor **must** have Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Youth Protection Training certification (a simple 30 minutes online test) and follow the same guidelines.
<https://myscouting.scouting.org/layouts/MyScouting/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2flayouts%2fAuthenticate.aspx%3fSource%3d%252f&Source=%2f>
- The Counselor **must** be a Saabat Surat (with uncut hair) Sikh and must believe and abide by the Sikh Rehait Maryada (Sikh Rules of Moral Conduct -
<http://sgpc.net/Sikh%20Reht%20Maryada%28Eng%291.pdf>)
- The Counselor must have the maturity to understand the level of the child (Scout) and be able to relate appropriately.
- The Counselor should have enough knowledge that he/she is able to communicate, either speak or listen patiently to the child (Scout) while guiding him/her through the 'workbook'.
- The Counselor should be sensitive to the child (Scout) because each one comes from a different background with varying levels of observance to Sikh Rehait Maryada.
- The Counselor must not be disparaging towards the Scout and be respectful even if the Scout's views may differ.
- Once all the activities are complete the Scout must have a Board of Review which requires the Counselor along with one or two other adults from the Gurdwara to ask what the Scout has learnt (15-30 minutes) from the workbook and how it applies to his/her daily life as a Scout.
- The parent or counselor can get in contact with American Sikh Council (ASC) sikhscoutsusa@gmail.com
contact@worldsikhcouncil.org and send in a copy of the

'certification and Sikh Religious Award application pages' so that ASC can mail in the 'Sikh Award Medallion' with a 'Certificate' which should be presented in the presence of the Scouts from the Troop and the sangat (congregation) at the Gurdwara by any of the responsible Gurdwara Trustee or Committee members.

- **If a counselor is not available please get in touch with the American Sikh Council (ASC) and we will arrange for one.**

Sikh Religious Award Workbook Grades 9 -12
Certification

Scout Name: _____

Troop: _____

Council: _____

Date Applied: _____

Scout's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Counselor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Counselor's Name: _____

Counselor's Address _____

Counselor's Tel: _____

Counselor's Email: _____

Sikh Award Application Form

Submit one application per order

Shipping Address: Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Day Contact _____ Email _____

Candidate Information:

Name _____ Grade _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Gurdwara Associated _____

Gurdwara Information:

Name of Gurdwara _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Counselor's Name: _____ Tel _____

Counselor's Email: _____

Certificate of Eligibility by Counselor:

I certify that the candidate has successfully completed the requirements of the program and presented his/her work for final approval.

Signature _____ Date _____