

www.boss-uk.org

info@boss-uk.org



Guru Nanak Dev Ji

Gurus

Guru Nanak Dev Ji

Guru Nanak Dev Ji was born into the turbulence of the middle ages at Talwandi today called Nankana Sahib, now in Pakistan. Bhai Gurdas Ji an eminent Sikh poet and historian writes:

*'The rulers had become ruthless,
carrying butchers knives under their sleeve for slaying the poor..
The light of the moon, the Divine Truth too had disappeared,
The darkness of the moon-less night had engulfed the world,
Such was the time when Guru Nanak was born'*

The climate was one of political strife, religious fanaticism and bigotry. The social structure of society itself had become corrupt.

There are numerous incidents, in Guru Ji's young life which show he was a divinely enlightened soul, but it was in 1497 when Guru Ji received his Divine Call. He was bathing in the river Vayen nadi when he disappeared under water and failed to resurface. Local people became concerned when they noticed his clothes on the river bank, but he was nowhere to be seen. Most assumed that he had drowned. Bebe Nanaki the sister of Guru Nanak Dev Ji refused to believe the worst, she had recognised Guru Ji's divinity.

On the third day Guru Nanak Dev Ji was seen walking from the river at the same point he had disappeared. When he spoke he explained that he had received a call from God, and he would travel to spread the message that had been given to him. During his communion with God, it is said in the Janam sakhis, that Guru Nanak Dev Ji was initiated with Amrit from the hands of God.

Through Guru Ji's teachings he brought hope and optimism to a world which was rapidly decaying morally and spiritually. Guru Ji emphasised the following tenets:

- Monotheism: Belief and worship of the One True God, Guru Ji gave us the Mool Mantra, which contains the fundamental essence and philosophy of Sikh teaching. it is found at the beginning of the Sikh Scriptures Guru Granth Sahib Ji which was originally compiled by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. The message of the Mool Mantra is a universal one not confined to Sikhs alone. the opening phrase dispels the Hindu belief that there are many Gods. the Mool Mantra also challenges the Muslim notion of a favoured nation, for if God has no enemies he cannot hate anyone:

*There is but One God, Truth is His Name,
He is the Creator, without fear or enmity,
He is immortal and beyond births and deaths,
Self-enlightened and realised by the kindness of the True Guru,
True before time began, True during the four ages,
He is True now and will forever be True.*

- Rejection of ritualistic and superstitious practices: Guru Ji preached against the hollowness of conventional beliefs and mechanical rites (rituals) and urged a personal and living faith. At Hardwar he threw water to his fields, which were several hundred miles away, to explain that in the same way the water could not reach his fields, the water the Brahmins were throwing to their ancestors in heaven, millions of miles away would not reach them.
- That the whole creation (world, universe etc.) functions under God's direct command.
- The importance of guidance of a True Teacher, who would escort human beings towards the path of God. (Guru Nanak Dev Ji received direct guidance and initiation from God).
- Salvation the true purpose of this human life can be obtained by the practice of
(a) Nam Japna

One should meditate on God with true love and devotion:

*In thy heart's garden, plant, like seeds, the Guru Word
and water thy garden with love and all your orchards shall bear precious fruit.*

The Guru's word gives right direction and guidance to the mind the originator of good and bad actions which is often dominated by selfishness and evil, in this way the ego is destroyed and God's will/command is accepted as the guiding force.

(B) Kirit Karni

Guru Ji preached, that we should work hard and earn truthful living. Guru thought that people were meant to live together in the world and that religious people were not to hide from the world on monasteries, jungles to pray or to beg for alms. The purpose was for goodness not to leave society but to contribute to its development.

(c) Wand Chhakna

For the benefit of the whole human society share with others by giving freely your time money and labour. This is exemplified in Gurdwaras by langar (free kitchen). The concept of langar is for people to share the food together and dispel societal inequalities. Today Wand Chhakna extends to include running free community hospitals, day centres, community and supplementary schools and many other types of voluntary service.

It is difficult to summarise Guru Ji's contribution to the world, but during his time he was a champion of freedom and equality. He raised the profile of women in society and said:

'Why condemn her, who gives birth to Kings and Saints ?'

He opposed child marriage, female infanticide and widow burning. As a world teacher and peace maker, he reconciled many warring groups and hostility between different religious groups. He was fair to everyone and rejected the claim of his son to hereditary Guruship. Only the most deserving person who proved by worth in test would earn the Gurgaddi (Guruship).

Guru Ji realised the Divine presence in all people and so valued every human being and practised universal brotherhood, he regarded all mankind as one family and as such all forms of discrimination were taboo.

His Standing in society was exemplified when he passed in to God's Divine Court. The Hindus who consider him to be there Guru wanted Guru Ji's body for cremation and the Muslims who considered him to be their Pir (Holy Guide) claimed the body for burial.

Guru Ji was known as:

Baba Nanak Sah fakir, Hindu Ka Guru, Musalman ka Pir

Guru Nanak, King of holy men, Guru of the Hindus and Pir of the Muslims

Guru Ji laid down the basic tenets of Sikhi, and brought optimism and hope for every one. Through self-discipline the practise of these basic tenets and supplication for grace the ideal/perfect human being would be born known in Sikhi as Gurmukh (God oriented being). This perfect person who abides pure amongst the impurities of the world can help others to be like him and thus establish a just and pure society on this earth. (Raj Karega Khalsa).