

## LIFE OF GURU ANGAD, THE SECOND GURU

### CHAPTER I

IN Matte di Sarai, a village about six miles from Muktsar in the Ferozpur district of the Panjab, once lived a trader called Pheru. He subsequently removed to the village of Harike, where he found a better opening for commerce. His wife's maiden name was Ramo, but after her marriage she was called Daya Kaur. She is described as a lady of gentle disposition, charitable, and religious. Four hours before day on the 11th of Baisakh in the Sambat year 1561 (A.D. 1504) a son was born to them. He received the name Lahina. In due time he wedded a lady called Khivi, a native of Matte di Sarai. His father grew weary of Harike, and with his own family and Lahina's returned to Matte di Sarai and lived there. Lahina's wife there gave birth to a daughter called Amro and to two sons who were named Dasu and Datu.

When Matte di Sarai was sacked by the Mughals and Baloches, Pheru and Lahina's families went to live in Khadur, now a famous Sikh town in the Tarn Taran sub-collectorate of the Amritsar district. While dwelling there Lahina organized a yearly pilgrimage of devout Hindus to Jawalamukhi,<sup>1</sup> a place sacred to Durga in the lower Himalayas, where fire issues from the mountains.

There lived in Khadur a Sikh called Jodha whose

<sup>1</sup> A place in the Himalayas where flame issues from the mountain. It is held sacred by Hindus, who make it an object of pilgrimage. It appears from one of Seneca's letters that the ancient Romans worshipped similar places, such as springs of hot water, sources of rivers, &c.

practice it was to rise every morning three hours before day and repeat the Japji and the Asa ki War. One pleasant night when gentle zephyrs cooled the heated air, Lahina heard a voice which awakened his emotions as it sang the following :—

Ever remember that Lord by worshipping whom thou shalt find happiness.

Why hast thou done such evil deeds as thou shalt suffer for ?

Do absolutely nothing evil ; look well before thee.

So throw the dice that thou mayest not lose with the Lord,

Nay, that thou mayest gain some profit.<sup>1</sup>

As Lahina attentively listened, his mind obtained peace. After daybreak he asked Jodha who had composed that stimulating hymn. Jodha duly informed him that it was his Guru, Baba<sup>2</sup> Nanak, then dwelling in Kartarpur on the bank of the Ravi. Devotion was kindled in Lahina's heart by all that he had heard from Jodha ; and he longed to behold the Guru, it is said, as the chakor<sup>3</sup> desires to see the moon.

Lahina was conducting his family and his company of pilgrims to Jawalamukhi, but he induced them to break their journey at Kartarpur, telling them that they could perform two religious acts on the one pilgrimage. They could visit Guru Nanak, whom many persons believed to be beloved of God, and whose holy company was desirable and ought to be sought by all men. They might afterwards behold the flame goddess of Jawalamukhi. Lahina's advice was adopted and he was enabled to offer his obeisance to the Guru. The Guru, on observing his kind heart and amiable disposition, inquired who he was and

<sup>1</sup> Āsa ki Wār.

<sup>2</sup> Bāba means father. The word was and is frequently applied to Guru Nānak.

<sup>3</sup> The Greek partridge.

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whither he was going. Lahina told him his name and errand, on hearing which, the Guru spoke to him of the True Creator. His discourse made such an impression on Lahina that he threw away the bells with which he had provided himself to dance before the goddess at Jawalamukhi. He congratulated himself on his good fortune in meeting the Guru, and said he no longer felt an inclination to worship in a heathen temple.

His companions, who had grown weary of waiting for him, at last pressed him to continue his journey to Jawalamukhi. They said that, though he was the leader of their party, yet he forsook them on the road and in a strange country. They further represented that it was written in the holy books of their faith, that he who threw any obstacle in the way of those who were doing penance, giving alms, fasting, going on pilgrimage, or getting married; who through laziness or fear of growing weary failed to worship Durga, the giver of wealth and holiness; or who having made a vow relinquished all efforts to accomplish it, was a great sinner, and his wealth and sons should all perish. Lahina coolly replied that he was prepared to suffer every calamity that might occur to him, but he would not forsake his true Guru. He had obtained such peace of mind while listening to his discourses, that he said he had already derived all the advantage he could have hoped for from the worship of the goddess. He then decided to discontinue his pilgrimage and abide with the Guru.

The Guru, on seeing his daily increasing devotion, said to him one day, 'I must give thee something; but first go home and settle thine affairs, and when thou returnest I will initiate thee as a Sikh.' Upon this Lahina returned to Khadur, and told his wife what had happened and the spiritual change which had been wrought in him by meeting Guru Nanak, whom he described as the bestower of happiness both in this world and the

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next. He said he had determined to place himself for the future at the Guru's feet. After a stay of some days at his home, during which he procured a new suit of clothes for himself and a bag of salt for the Guru's free kitchen, he set out, accompanied by his nephew, for Kartarpur. On arriving at the Guru's house he was respectfully received by Sulakhani, the Guru's wife, who told him that the Guru was in his fields, and would be home by evening. If, however, Lahina desired to see him at once, he might go to meet him. Accordingly Lahina, making over the bag of salt to Mata Sulakhani, went straightway to the Guru.

The Guru had collected three bundles of grass for his cows and buffaloes, and he desired to have the bundles taken home; but, as the grass was wet and full of mud, his ordinary Sikhs slunk away from the task. He then asked his sons Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das to carry the bundles. They too evaded the duty, saying that there was a labourer coming who would take them. Lahina, who had just arrived, made his obeisance and said, 'Consider me as a labourer, and give me this work to do.' The Guru repeated his wish to have the bundles taken to his house. Lahina asked for assistance to lift the bundles on his head, and he would then carry them. The Guru said he might take as many as his strength permitted. Lahina, gathering strength from his enthusiasm, took up the three bundles, and walked with them in company with Guru Nanak to his house. On the way the dripping of the moist mud from the grass soiled his new clothes.

When they arrived, the Guru's wife, seeing Lahina's state, asked the Guru if it were a proper thing for him to impose such menial labour on a guest and soil his new clothes. The Guru, she said, was depriving the Sikhs of their faith through his great want of consideration. The Guru replied that God had put the bundles on the head of the man who was

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fit to carry them. His wife, not understanding the Guru's hidden meaning, rejoined, 'See, his clothes from his head to his feet are fouled with the mud which has been dripping from the grass.' The Guru replied, 'This is not mud; it is the saffron of God's court, which marketh the elect. Even one of these bundles was difficult to lift. He hath acquired divine strength, and lifted all three.' On looking again the Guru's wife observed that the mud on Lahina's clothes had really changed to saffron. The three bundles are held by the Sikhs to symbolize spiritual affairs, temporal affairs, and the Guruship.

It was Guru Nanak's practice to rise three hours before day and go to bathe in the Ravi. After his bath, he used to recite the Japji, meditate on God, and sing His praises till day dawned. He was always attended by Lahina, who took charge of his clothes, and performed for him any other offices he required. Three other Sikhs—Bhai Bhagirath, Bhai Budha, and Bhai Sudhara—on seeing Lahina's constancy and devotion to the Guru, thought that they too would perform meritorious service for him, so they proceeded in the early morning to the bank of the river to wait on him. It was the winter season, black clouds gathered, cold winds blew in gusts, and hail began to fall. The three men became quite benumbed, and were with difficulty able to make their way home shaking and shivering. It was only by warming themselves at the fire that they recovered the use of their limbs. Lahina endured the cold as if it had been the mildest weather. When the Guru at sunrise came out of the water, he congratulated Lahina on his endurance, and said he had attained salvation, which was the main object of human birth.

Once Lahina thought to himself, 'The Guru endureth great cold in performing his penance. It is not right that his servant should live in comfort.' Accordingly before day next morning he too entered

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the water, and only came out at sunrise, by which time his body was nearly frozen. He fell down at the Guru's feet, and the Guru's touch had the effect of restoring the natural heat of his body. All the Sikhs were astonished on seeing the Guru's kindness to the man who had voluntarily become his servant, and endured well nigh unendurable hardships for him.

## CHAPTER II

The Guru now began to enter on a systematic trial of the devotion of his Sikhs. One winter's night, as heavy rain was falling, a part of the wall of his house fell. The Guru said it must be repaired at once. His sons said it was now midnight and very cold, but they would send for masons and labourers in the morning, who would do the necessary repairs. The Guru replied that there was no need of masons and labourers. The Guru's work must be performed by his Sikhs. Everybody was silent except Lahina, who at once stood up and began to repair the wall. The Guru's sons and other Sikhs went off to sleep. When Lahina had to some extent restored the wall, the Guru said, 'That is crooked, throw it down, and build it up again.' Lahina did so, but the Guru again professed not to be satisfied. The foundation must be moved back, which meant that the wall must be thrown down again, and built up for the third time. Lahina obeyed his master's order, but the master again expressed his dissatisfaction, and asked to have the wall again destroyed and again rebuilt. Upon this the Guru's sons told Lahina that he was a fool to obey unreasonable orders. Lahina, putting himself into a respectful posture, replied that a servant should make his hands useful by doing his master's work. The Guru then said to his family: 'You know not this man's worth. He used every year to visit the shrine of Durga. Now, having met the Guru, he hath remained to serve the true God.'

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The Guru and his disciple grew daily more pleased with each other. In proportion as the Guru instructed him, divine knowledge entered his heart. The Guru's sons grew jealous of the devoted servant and disciple, and took no pains to conceal their dislike. Probably in order to still the enmity which daily increased, the Guru suggested that Lahina should return for a time to Khadur. The Guru said : 'Thy father, mother, and relations are much distressed at thine absence from them. Wherefore return to Khadur, tarry there for some time, and cause God's name to be repeated. I myself lived there once in the house of Satbharai. My bed is still there. Thou shalt behold me in Khadur as if thou wert near me.'

Lahina, who was the essence of obedience, at once proceeded to Khadur. On his arrival it became known that he had spent three years with Guru Nanak, and had made great progress in virtue and spirituality. Accordingly, everybody went to pay him homage. Among others Takht Mal, the head man of the city, went to touch his feet. Lahina said to him, 'This must not be, since thou art in every way of higher rank than myself ;' but Takht Mal knew of the power Lahina possessed to render him spiritually perfect, and would not abate a jot in his devotion to him. He pressed Lahina to give him religious instruction by which he might be saved. Lahina accordingly repeated to him the following hymn of Guru Nanak :—

God will regenerate those in whose hearts there is love ;  
He will make them happy with gifts, and cause them to forget their sorrows.

There is no doubt that He will assuredly save them.

The Guru cometh to meet those for whom *such destiny* hath been recorded,

And will give them for their instruction God's ambrosial Name.

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They will walk as it pleaseth the true Guru, and never wander a-begging.<sup>1</sup>

Why should he, for whom God's court is at hand, bow to any one else ?

The porter at God's gate will ask him no questions whatever.

Man shall be saved by the words of those on whom God looketh with favour.

There is no one to advise Him who sendeth and recalleth man. God knoweth how to do all things ; He destroyeth, constructeth, and createth.

Nanak, the Name is the reward of him to whom the Gracious One showeth favour.<sup>2</sup>

On hearing this the doors of Takht Mal's understanding opened, and divine knowledge shone on him. All the Sikhs, believing Lahina to be even as Guru Nanak, went to do him homage. Bread was daily made and distributed to visitors, and the devotion of the people daily increased.

The Guru, knowing Lahina's devotion, went to visit him in Khadur. Lahina and his wife fell at the Guru's feet, and placed everything they had at his disposal. The Guru taught Lahina contempt for the world, discrimination, and divine knowledge. Having thus made him spiritually wise with excellent instruction, the Guru returned to Kartarpur, leaving Lahina in Khadur. While reciting the prayers taught him by the Guru, the time passed speedily for Lahina. Hopes, desires, and worldly love all vanished, while his spiritual love and devotion were all centred on God. As gold is tried by the touchstone, so did Guru Nanak try Lahina, and find him pure and altogether fit for the exalted office of Guru.

Henceforth Lahina never went into the town. He remained absorbed in spiritual thought and love of the Word. The only time he left his house

<sup>1</sup> That is, they will not suffer transmigration.

<sup>2</sup> Sūhi.



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was when he went to the border of a tank outside Khadur, where he used to lie down in incessant and unwavering meditation on God.

Guru Nanak, knowing Lahina's devotion, was not very long in paying him another visit, and thus addressed him: 'Thou hast performed excessive devotions. I cannot endure that thou shouldst suffer any longer. Between thee and me there is now no difference. None of my Sikhs hath such faith and confidence in me as thou, and therefore I love thee most of all. Thou art verily Angad a part of my body. I congratulate thee.' Saying this the Guru embraced him, and took him to Kartarpur.

While at Kartarpur Guru Nanak found time to attend to agriculture. He sowed several fields of corn which gave him an unfailing supply for his kitchen, from which he fed all comers, Musalmans as well as Hindus. Once, when there was an unusual crowd of visitors, continuous rain fell for three days, and it became impossible to light a fire or cook, so that there was nothing to eat for his guests. The Guru went out into the fields, taking with him his sons Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das. He explained to them his difficulty, and how improper it would be that his guests should want for anything as long as they sought shelter with him. His sons replied, 'How can we satisfy such a crowd in this heavy rain? Whence can we obtain sufficient bread?' The Guru said, 'Climb this kikar tree, shake it, and it shall rain fruit and sweets to satisfy our visitors.' Sri Chand replied, 'Nothing can fall from kikar but thorns or bitter fruit.' The Guru then addressed his other son: 'Climb this tree and shake it.' Lakhmi Das replied, 'Hath such a thing ever been done before? Have sweets and pastry ever fallen from trees?' The Guru then told Angad to do what his sons had refused. Angad with great alacrity climbed the tree, shook it, when down fell heaps of

every conceivable form of Indian sweetmeats. When the Guru's guests had partaken thereof and satisfied their hunger, they began to sing praises of the Guru and his faithful disciple. Angad promptly explained that such power was not in himself. It was divine knowledge not sweetmeats which dropped from the tree. It was all the miraculous effect of the Guru's words. The Guru on hearing this said, 'My words are profitable, but only they who obey them shall obtain the fruit thereof.' It was then for the first time the Guru's sons and many of his Sikhs realized the value of obedience.

The Guru had by now well tested Lahina's devotion, but at the same time deemed it proper to make further trial, principally with the object of humbling the pride of his sons, and convincing them and his disciples that Lahina alone was worthy to succeed him. On one occasion near midnight, when the sacred songs had ceased, and all except the Guru had retired, he called his sons, told them that his clothes were soiled, and asked them to take them at once and wash them. They replied that all the wells had stopped,<sup>1</sup> that it was dark, and that, even if by any means they succeeded in washing the clothes, they could not dry them at that hour. When it was day they would procure a washerman who would perform the required service. The Guru said it would be well if they went themselves at once and washed them. They replied, that, if he could not wait till morning, he had better put on other clothes. Upon this the Guru addressed himself to Angad. Angad at once took up the clothes, whereupon day dawned, and he found the wells on the outskirts of the city in motion. He rapidly washed and dried his master's clothes. On returning with them in an incredibly short space of time, everybody

<sup>1</sup> Water in the Panjāb is most generally raised by Persian wheels which are worked by bullocks or buffaloes.