



Sri [Dasam Granth](#) Sahib

At present there is considerable controversy surrounding the authorship of parts of the collection of the writings of Guru Gobind Singh, the Dasam Granth. The history of this scripture is as follows: The collected writings of Guru Gobind Singh are known as Dasam Granth ("Scripture of the Tenth Guru"). The writings of the poets in his court comprise a different scripture, known as Vidiya Sar ("Pool of Knowledge"). According to a famous history of the Sikhs written in 1843, Suraj Prakash ("Rising of the Sun"), 52 scholar-poets and 7 pandits always lived in the court of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The writings of the poets were written on paper in fine script, and according to Suraj Prakash, the weight of this Vidiya Sar was "9 maunds."

On the night of 5 December, AD 1705, Guru Gobind Singh left his court in Anandpur, after a long siege by Hindu and Muslim armies. During this departure, the Guru's possessions, including both the Dasam Granth and Vidiya Sar, were carried away by the strong current of the flooding Sarsa stream. However, in those days it was customary to make copies of Guru Gobind Singh's writings and the writings of the poets. In addition to the 52 poets and 7 pandits, 39 scribes had lived in Guru Gobind Singh's court. Because of the faith of his devotees, copies of Guru Gobind Singh's writings

always exceeded those of the poets, and these copies were kept safely with many devotees.

After Guru Gobind Singh left his mortal body in 1708, religious-minded people began trying to take care of his writings. First of all, Bhai Mani Singh Shahid (martyr), who was at that time Head Priest at Amritsar and also a great scholar, with great efforts collected the writings of Guru Gobind Singh and compiled one copy thereof.

Bhai Kesar Singh Chhibbar whose family had been diwans (administrators) of the Gurus, including his great-grandfather who was diwan of the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Gurus, whose grandfather and father were diwans of Guru Gobind Singh, and who himself attended Mata Sundri Ji (wife of Guru Gobind Singh) has written in his 1769 book known as Bansavalinama Das an Patshahian Ka ("Lineage of the Ten Kings"), "This book which contained the life stories of avatars was compiled by Bhai Mani Singh. He provided travel expenses for various people. One Sikh brought a large amount of cash. That cash was used by Bhai Mani Singh to make payments to the Sikhs for expenses in searching for the writings of Guru Gobind Singh."

Only Mata Sundri, Bhai Mani Singh Shahid, and Bhai Shisha Singh (who stayed with Mata Sundri in Delhi and was compiling the Dasam Granth) can know about the authenticity of Dasam Granth. Later, Baba Deep Singh Shahid, Bhai Sukha Singh, and many other religious workers collected the writings of Guru Gobind Singh and edited the Dasam Granth. Among those birs (copies) of Dasam Granth, those written by Bhai Mani Singh Shahid, the one in the library of Sangrur, and the one in Moti Bagh Gurdwara, Patiala, are at present kept safely. The Dasam Granth preserved at Patna Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Gobind Singh, is also famous. But in these Dasam Granth birs, the bands (sacred writings) are not written in the same order, nor is their number equal. The reason is that as and when the devotees found copies of the writings, they included them in their collections. Those who had greater means for making these collections were certainly more successful in collecting more bands. But from those birs, many bands are the same and appear to be written from the same one source. It was due to the unavailability of proper means of collection that there were differences in the size and shape of the birs. At first people called the collection Bachittar Natak. Later it was known as Dasmen Patshah da Granth. But now the Holy Book is called Dasam Granth.

Bhai Desa Singh, known as "Rahitnamiya" (writer of a famous Rahitnama, or ethical code, of Sikhs), son of Bhai Mani Singh Sahid, has written in his Rahitnama. I had a vision of Guru Gobind Singh.

He said from his mouth:

"Oh Sikh, listen to what I say:
In the beginning I wrote Jaap,
Then I uttered Akal Ustat—
This is like the recital of Vedas.
Then I wrote Bachittar Natak—
In that the story of the Sodhi lineage is told. Then two Chandi Charitras were compiled And
poets appreciated the poetry in them. Then I recited Giyan Prabodh ["Source of Knowledge"]
I described that, and all the wise people understood.
Then came the stories of the 24 Incarnations,
Then the Masters of Datta Taraye [a saint who had 24 masters] were told,
Then Bachittar Bakhiyan ["wonderful descriptions"] were made;
Those were also called one scripture.
If a fool reads them, he becomes wise.
Then in Shabd Hazare the stories of all kings were told.
Then 404 Stories were made;
They described the guiles of women [and men]."

In the years after the passing of Guru Gobind Singh, the Sikhs were engaged in battles and struggles, due to which they could not prepare the Dasam Granth in proper form. With the beginnung of the Singh Sabha movement in the late nineteenth century, scholars directed their attention toward the religious scriptures and Sikh history. The Gurmat Granth Parcharak Sabha Amritsar collected 32 copies of the Dasam Granth. After five years of deliberations in the second floor of Sri Akal Takht, Amritsar, these eminent scholars clarified the differences in the birs and published their report in 1897 A.D. In accordance with that report, the present form of the Dasam Granth came into existence. The bands included in it are as follows:

1. Jaap
2. Akal Ustat
3. Bachittar Natak
4. Chandi Charitra
5. Chandi Charitra II
6. War Bhagauti Ji Ki
7. Giyan Prabodh
8. Chaubis Avtar [incarnations of Lord Vishnu]
9. Up Avtar [Brahma and Rudr]
10. Shabd Hazare
11. Swaiye
12. Khalsa Mehma
13. Shashtar Nam Mala
14. Charitropakhiyan
15. Zafarnama, Hikayat

In the above report, Giani Sardul Singh, the scholar who was charged with writing the committee report, agreed that the whole Dasam Granth is written by Guru Gobind Singh, and all doubts were ended. Nevertheless, sometimes sceptical articles continued to be written. Replies were then given by Sikh scholars.

In 1902 A.D., Bhai Bishan Singh of Sangrur, son of Bhai Gurdial Singh Anandpuri, wrote the book Dasam Granth Sahib Kisne Banaiya? ("Who Created the Tenth Granth?"). According to the method and style of the writings and much other evidence, he proved that the Dasam Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh.

In 1935, Bhai Sher Singh of Kashmir wrote a book, Dasmesh Darpan ("Mirror of the Tenth Guru") in which he gave many proofs that the Dasam Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh.

In 1937, Dr. Jaswant Singh of Lucknow published a series of articles in [amrit](#) magazine. This was scholarly research in which after great effort, giving many proofs from the scripture itself and the style of writing, he concluded that the whole book was written by Guru Gobind Singh.

In 1955, Dr. Tarlochan Singh published his scholarly writing in 4 consecutive issues of Sikh Review, giving the history of the compilation of the Dasam Granth. He provided solid proofs that all the writings in Dasam Granth are those of Guru Gobind Singh.

In 1955, Bhai Randhir Singh, eminent member of Sikh History Society Amritsar, wrote a book entitled Dasme Patshah Ji ka Granth da Itihas ("History of the Tenth Guru's Granth"). After 20 years of labour collecting proofs, he firmly established that the Dasam Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh. This book was published by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandak Committee. The first printing was sold out within a few days of its publication, and there was great demand from the public. Ultimately, three printings were made of this publication.

In April 1959, Sardar Kapoor Singh, I.C.S., published an article in the Gurmat Prakash magazine and proved that the whole of the Dasam Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh.

Dr. Taran Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala, published a book in 1967 entitled Dasam Granth Roop te Ras ("Dasam Granth's Form and Taste"). He proved that the whole of the Dasam Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh. This book was published by the Guru Gobind Singh Foundation, Chandigarh.

In 1980, Giani Harbans Singh, Chandigarh, wrote the book Dasam Granth Darpan ("Mirror of the Dasam Granth"), and proved that the entire Dasam Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh.

Professor Piara Singh Padam wrote a book entitled Dasam Granth Darshan, printed in 1968, again proving that the whole scripture was written by Guru Ji.

Pandit Tara Singh Narodam, in his writing, has concurred that the whole of Dasam Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh.

Bhagwant Singh Hari, son of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, wrote Dasam Granth Tuk Tatcara ("Line Index of Dasam Granth"), published in 1969. The preface of this book is written by Dr. Balbir Singh, who was younger brother of the famous scholar Bhai Vir Singh. In that preface, he has written that the entire Dasam Granth is the writing of Guru Gobind Singh.

After 1955, people began research of Dasam Granth to obtain PhD degrees. In 1955 Dr. Dharam Pal Ashta and in 1959 Dr. Harbajan Singh proved in their research papers that the entire Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh. In 1961, Dr. Parsini Sehgal offered her research paper along the lines of the former two scholars. Dr. Lal Manohar Upadhiya of Benares University, Dr. Om Prakash Bhardwaj of Agra University, Dr. Sushila Devi of Punjab University, Dr. Shamir Singh of Guru Nanak Dev University, Dr. Mohan Jit Singh of Usmaniya University, Dr. Bhushan Sach Dev of Punjabi University, Dr. Nirmal Gupta of Punjabi University, etc. about two dozen scholars wrote their Ph.D. and DLit research papers on the subject. They have all agreed that the Dasam Granth was written by Guru Sahib.

After all this research, it is clearly evident that this scripture is great not only due to its religious aspects but also due to its literary merit. The scholars who have studied the Dasam Granth have written great praises of the high standard of its poetry.

Today the Dasam Granth is being kept open with reverence at Takht Patna Sahib, Takht Sach Khand Hazur Sahib Nander, and all gurdwaras maintained by Nihang Singh. In these places, its meanings are being explained and hukamnama (holy commandment for the congregation) is also being taken from the scripture.

As for the writings of the poets in Guru Gobind Singh's court, a few parts of Vidiya Sar have survived and have been published by Bhai Vir Singh as Kavi Darbar of Guru Gobind Singh ("The Poet's Court of Guru Gobind Singh"). The compiled writings of one of those poets was also published about one hundred years ago as the book Asmodh Bhakha. It has long been out of print. Comparison of the surviving writings of the poets with the writings of Guru Gobind Singh shows that their writing style is clearly different.

[This article has been prepared by Bhai Kirpal Singh, the resident research historian of The Gobind Sadan Institute for Advanced Studies in Comparative Religion. Many of the historical documents mentioned herein are available for study in the library of the Gobind Sadan Institute.]

Call to scholars

To help set the controversies over the authorship of the Dasam Granth to rest, His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh has called for anyone who has proof that Guru Gobind Singh did not write the Dasam Granth to come to Gobind Sadan Institute in Delhi to present those proofs. Transportation, accommodation, and meals will all be provided by Gobind Sadan to any such scholars.

His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh also invites questions about Dasam Granth to be sent to him via email at www.dasamgranth.org, fax at 91-11-680- 1653, or mail at Gobind Sadan Institute, Gadaipur, Mehrauli, New Delhi 110030. Babaji will answer all such questions personally.

Potential of Dasam Granth

His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh explains the significance of Dasam Granth: I think that if the Dasam Granth is published and read in many languages, our limited ideas and boundaries will all vanish. In Dasam Granth, the Guru has not spoken only about one religion, one community, or one people. Dasam Granth speaks about the whole world. It includes descriptions of Mata Durga, Lord Krishna, and Lord Ramchandra_of all great personalities from Sat Yuga to Kali Yuga. Reading it, one's enmity will end. One will recognize that Guru Gobind Singh has not come for one community or one caste. He came to uplift all humanity. He came to awaken the power within people. He came to give humanity what we need to avoid mistakes and overcome our weaknesses.

In Dasam Granth, Maharaj has written that all cowardice can end. Thus he has explained enlightened wisdom; he has written in detail about bravery to develop our courage, and also about being brave

without being egotistical. As he explained in the fourteenth chapter of Bachittar Natak. his autobiography, "God became pleased with me. He continued to dictate and asked me to keep on writing. These are the commandments of God; I want them to reach everywhere.

What has always impressed me most about Guru Gobind Singh is that he is a breaker of boundaries. When he goes so far as to say, "Temple and mosque are the same, Hindu worship and Muslim prayer are the same," we should say to him, "You have said this, but what are we doing? This is your teaching, but what teaching are we giving?"

Where there is talk of boundaries, do not listen to it, because therein anger, hatred, and conflict will be created, and these are not good. Love is good. Guru Gobind Singh has said, "Listen all of you, for I am telling the truth: Only those who have deeply loved God have realized God." God is love, and if there is no love, then there is nothing.

In Dasam Granth, Guru Gobind Singh has written the detailed history of the Four Ages. It is my desire that by reading this Holy Book we will come to know something about what happened in each era, how the battles were fought, how the peace-loving people rose up for the sake of peace, and how they loved each other. If people come to feel all this, then in the process they may also feel God.

[If you question the Dasam Granth], there is no need for anger. First read the entire scripture, think about it, and then question. Why be angry?

Dasam Granth Website

A special Internet website concerning the Dasam Granth is being launched by Gobind Sadan as part of its continued effort to serve the universal, barrierbreaking mission of Guru Gobind Singh. On this website will be found the complete Punjabi translation of the Dasam Granth, articles and seminar papers about Dasam Granth, historical documents pertaining to the Dasam Granth, news stories concerning the Dasam Granth, and a discussion forum. The website address is www.dasamgranth.org.

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