



The following information is to the best of our knowledge at this time. As we continue to research, it may change.

Article #1:

Sant Hazara Singh – Yogi Bhajan’s First Teacher

Yogi Bhajan often spoke about the different teachers he studied with. Teachers of yoga, meditation, and dharma presented themselves as he passed through the phases of life and he studied with all of them. But there was one man who changed and directed Yogi Bhajan’s life like no other - Sant Hazara Singh.

Sant Hazara Singh was born in the early part of the 20th century somewhere in the vicinity of Lahore, in what is now Pakistan. When he was a young child, his village suffered a devastating earthquake and he was the lone survivor of his family. Small and alone, he walked to Lahore as a penniless orphan. He did not know the name of his family or his village, being too young when it was all destroyed.

At that time, the great Sant Baba Sohan Singh of the Baba Bidhi Chand Dal was in Lahore and in a chance meeting he adopted the young Hazara into his family. Baba Sohan Singh was the 10th leader of the Baba Bidhi Chand Chhina lineage. Baba Bidhi Chand was a great hero in the Sikh tradition and a devoted servant of Guru Hargobind Sahib. He is best remembered for his daring acts of bravery of returning two beautiful stallions to Guru Hargobind, Gulbag and Dilbag, that had been stolen by the Mughals. It is written that Guru Hargobind declared, “*Bidhi Chand Chhina Guru Ka Seena!*” This means, “Bidhi Chand Chhina is the heart of the Guru.”

Sant Hazara Singh grew up near Amritsar in Sursingh Sahib, the historical village of Dal Baba Bidhi Chand. He served Baba Sohan Singh with love and devotion and they were rarely separated. He made his bed on the floor under Babaji’s cot in case he needed something in the night, and he served him throughout his life without fail.

Because the transmission of Kundalini Yoga was held secret, it is unknown where and when Sant Hazara Singh mastered Kundalini Yoga, although it is confirmed that he did not study yoga from Baba Sohan Singh. When he was of age, Baba Sohan Singh sent



Sant Hazara Singh to Gujranwala to set up his own taksal (teaching center). It was here, from Sant Hazara Singh, that the young Harbhajan Singh first studied Kundalini Yoga as a child. Yogi Bhajan often spoke of his teacher with devoted respect and speechless awe.

“Do you know that I still do not recognize the face of my grandfather and my teacher? I never ever looked up at their face, but I can accurately draw their feet. It is a state of consciousness, not what you know or what I know.” July 16, 1981

Yogi Bhajan was a faithful student of Sant Hazara Singh throughout his school years. Not only did Sant ji teach him many of the kriyas that we practice today, but also the essence of Sikh Dharma, including its history and martial arts. Yogiji often told amazing stories of Sant Hazara Singh, giving us a glimpse of what that life must have been like. In 1995, he said at Khalsa Women’s Training Camp in Espanola,

“I went through a very tough teacher...He brought out of me, not the man, not the godly man, not the great man, but a real human. There's nothing in the world I can pay to him in tributes, in compliments, and in thanks. He did the most wonderful job. I used to say I was a nut, but he tightened all my nuts so good that I became the best. And that's why [I say that] calamity is my breakfast, tragedy is my lunch, and treachery is my supper... What else do you want after this? Is there anything else that can bother you? If you can eat all these three things and digest them, you are the best person.” July 4, 1995

Around 1945, Sant Hazara Singh called his students individually to his room for a final audience. Yogi Bhajan told us how apprehensive the young Harbhajan Singh, now a teenager, was about that meeting. On one hand, it was electrifying to be called to Sant ji’s room for a private meeting, but on the other hand, it could have easily been something very confrontational and unpleasant! To Harbhajan’s surprise, Sant Hazara Singh said that he was leaving Gujranwala for good and that Harbhajan Singh, 16 years old at the time, was now a master of Kundalini yoga. He told him at that last meeting that Harbhajan would never again see the face of his teacher.

Sant Hazara Singh left Gujranwala and returned to the service of Baba Sohan Singh in Sursingh Sahib, his childhood home. As the British were preparing to leave India, Jawaharlal Nehru visited Amritsar and the Nihungs of the Baba Bidhi Chand Dal. He asked Baba Sohan Singh to send a representative to Delhi to represent the issues of the



Nihungs in the new Indian government. Baba Sohan Singh sent Sant Hazara Singh as their representative. He served in Delhi as part of Nehru's team of advisors, wearing his distinctive long white robes and orange dumalla turban.

From Sursingh Sahib, Sant Hazara Singh moved to the village of Doraha and then to the village of Sanaur, where his descendants live today.

Yogi Bhajan never lost his love for his teacher. When he was posted to Amritsar in the 1960's, he sent word to Sant Hazara Singh humbly requesting permission to see him. But true to his word, Sant Hazara Singh denied the request and Yogi Bhajan never saw the face of his teacher again. Sant Hazara Singh passed away in 1972.

It is difficult to understand Sant Hazara Singh's mandate to never see Yogi Bhajan again. However, we find an indication of his meaning in Yogi Bhajan's words on "lineage." He gave this teaching many times and in many different ways, highlighting it as one of the important lessons of the spiritual path. Yogi Bhajan said, *"Serve the legacy, not the lineage. Those who serve the lineage never live, those who serve the legacy never die."* March 1, 1992

It was a hard lesson, but this helps us understand why Sant Hazara Singh so firmly severed the physical bonds of attachment between the teacher and his student.

Yogi Bhajan learned from the many saints and yogis who impacted his life. Yet when he referred to his "teacher," it was of Sant Hazara Singh that he spoke. This glistening jewel of a man has faded silently into history, as was his humble wish. But we, the students of Yogi Bhajan, remain grateful for the legacy of wisdom and ancient knowledge that he passed on and that has become our Dharmic path.

Article Authored by Shanti Kaur Khalsa



Article #2:

Over the years, I have heard that Sant Hazara Singh may have once been jailed. However, no one could confirm that or tell me for how long he was in prison or even what the circumstances were except to say that it had something to do with the fight for India's independence from Britain. Thanks to a discussion with Baba Partap Singh ji at his cozy home in Punjab, we now know the story. And yes, indeed, Sant Hazara Singh was once sent to jail.

In 1934, the struggle for Indian independence was in full swing and civil disobedience was the call of the day. India and Pakistan were still one country then, and the British Government was trying desperately to hang-on to colonial rule of the subcontinent. The Sikh Nihungs¹ were not easily controlled and when the British governor instituted a maximum legal length of the Sikh kirpan², the Nihungs of Lahore promptly disobeyed. The Sikh leader Baba Sahib Singh Ji and the entire Buddha Dal³ were imprisoned in Lahore jail.

Baba Sohan Singh Ji was the leader of the Baba Bidhi Chandi Dal based in Amritsar, and Sant Hazara Singh was his devoted student. They were very close and rarely separated. When Baba Sohan Singh found out that the Sikhs had been jailed he immediately traveled to Lahore with his people. There, they steadfastly served the Buddha Dal by fighting the case in court and by preparing food for the Sikhs while they were in jail.

In Lahore, there are many places sacred to the Sikhs. One of them is Shaheed Ganj in Naulakha Market, near the old Lahore Fort, where tens of thousands of Sikhs were killed nearly 200 years earlier. In 1745, under brutal rule of the Mughal governor Zakaria Khan and then Mir Manu, to be a Sikh was outlawed and a campaign of genocide unfolded. Historians believe that over 250,000 men, women, and children were slaughtered, many of them at this spot. The Sikhs hold Shaheed Ganj as sacred ground in remembrance of this vast loss of life and erected a Gurdwara⁴ there in the early 1800s. Sometime around 1910, the local Muslim government administrators took control of Shaheed Ganj and converted the Gurdwara into a Mosque.

The confiscation of this Gurdwara really upset the Sikhs and although they pursued it vigorously in court, they had been unsuccessful. When Baba Sohan Singh relocated to Lahore to serve the

¹ Nihungs are the Sikh order of warrior-saints.

² Kirpan is the traditional sword or dagger worn by Sikhs and is considered an article of faith.

³ A "Dal" is a Sikh group, organized in a military fashion under a single Jethadar or leader.

⁴ A Gurdwara is a Sikh temple.



Buddha Dal, this desecration of sacred ground was often discussed and fiercely debated among the Nihungs. One hot summer afternoon, Baba Sohan Singh and Sant Hazara Singh set out to right the wrong. In the hours after lunch, when the markets were closed and people napped in the hazy heat, Baba Sohan Singh and Sat Hazara Singh went alone to Naulakha Chowk and destroyed the mosque, planting the Sikh flag instead.

When people returned from lunch and saw what had happened, pandemonium broke out! The police arrived to control the mob and Sant Hazara Singh was arrested. He refused to let Baba Sohan Singh submit for arrest, taking the full brunt of the charges. Sant Hazara Singh appeared before the lower court and the case was ruled against him. Sant Hazara Singh was jailed, and the Mosque was promptly rebuilt.

Sant Hazara Singh spent five months in prison until the case was heard in the British High Court on December 1, 1934. British Governor Sir Herbert Emerson found in favor of the Sikhs since the spot had originated as a Sikh Gurdwara. Sant Hazara Singh was released and cleared of all charges, returning at once to the side of Baba Sohan Singh. On July 1, 1935 the British Government authorized the building of Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj.⁵

India independence from Britain occurred in 1949 and Lahore became part of Islamic Pakistan. The ownership and management of Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj has remained contentious since that time. The last court case was dismissed in favor of the Sikhs on May 6, 1996 and it successfully continues as a Sikh Gurdwara today. Once you enter Naulakha Bazaar, there is a small door on the left side in-between two shops with an inscription "Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj." The Evacuee Trust Board maintain it, and both Sikh and Muslim prayers are recited there daily.⁶

Article Authored by Shanti Kaur Khalsa

⁵ *Twists and turns in the history of Naulakha Bazaar*, by Majid Sheikh published February 28, 2016 www.dawn.com

⁶ <https://www.worldgurudwaras.com/historical-sites/gurdwara-shaheed-ganj-singh-singhnian-naulakha-bazar-lahore>