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A HISTORY OF PERFECT MASTERS

by a student of Sant Mat

(Sawan-Kirpal tradition - see also [Science of Spirituality](#) website).

I Introduction

The path leading to the union of the soul with the Oversoul- *Sat Purush/Sat Naam* or *al-Haqq* is known as *Sant-Mat*, *Guru-Mat* or *Sufi-Mat* of the *Murshid-e-Kamils*- perfect Masters. *Sants* and *Kamil Murshids* developed their faith and teachings within the cultural ambit of Hinduism and Islam, both of which emphasize the worship of *Kaal Purush*- Negative Power, largely through exoteric worship, rites and rituals etc. The faith of *Sants* and *Kamil Sufis* went beyond this stage- to the worship of '*Akaal Purush*'- Positive Power and rose to debunk both the *Pandit* and the *Maulvi*. Although non-believers in *Karma-kaand* or *Shari'a*- the exoteric method of worship, they often tolerated these practices, while enjoining the esoteric method of worship within the human body-temple. Popular Hindu and Islamic names of God, such as *Ram* and *Allah* were also used by them, while clarifying that their *ishta*- diety was a higher one. Central to the path is the need for a *Sant-Satguru* or *Kamil-murshid* and contact with '*Naam*' or '*Ism-e-A'zam*' through the practice of '*Surat-Shabd Yoga*' or '*Sultan-ul-Azkaar*'.

Sant-Mat, the pristine path of Spirituality, can be traced back to Kabir (the 2nd of the 16 sons of the Lord, *Gyan*), who took birth by the names of *Sat-Sukrit*, *Munindra* and *Karunamaya* in the previous ages, and indeed comes time and again. He appears to work closely with Nanak (possibly, *Vivek*, the 3rd son of the Lord) to fulfil his mission to liberate beings from the clutches of the Negative Power- Mind and Matter and take them back to the region of the pure Spirit, *Sach Khand* or *Muqaam-e-Haqq*.

Sant-Mat is where the real *Sant* is. Even when a *Sant* lineage comes to an end in a particular locale, lesser masters or even mere priests take over the vacated 'throne'- thus, due to the 'factionalization' and 'institutionalization' over a period of time, scores of thrones such as Kabir-panth, Nanak-panth, Dadu-panth, Sikh-panth, Radhasoami-panth etc. continue to the day in the name of bygone *Sants*. The real diamond, thus, remains hidden somewhere amidst a heap of fakes. This is all in accordance with the celestial drama in Kabir's 'Anurag Saagar', wherein *Kaal* clearly states his intention of creating clones of *Sant-Mat* to delude the true seekers.

I The Sufis (India/Central Asia)

The term, 'Sufi' appears to have its origin in the Greek, 'Sophia'- wisdom, but generally it is taken to be derived from ;Suf'- wool, the undyed woolen garb worn as a sign of renunciation life based on poverty and mendicancy, which was rejected by the Prophet. However, it is a collective word for orders practicing a variety of mystic doctrines, risen in protest to the rigid formalism of orthodox Islam 'of the Law', spiritual ecstasy, illumination and liberation being their focus. It is interesting that despite the Prophet's decree against them, poetry, music and dance thrived with the Sufis- the Orders of Whirling Dervishes of Rumi, Howling Dervishes and Wandering Dervishes are well known. While Sufism had its roots in Arabia and flourished in Iran, it found its firm feet in India with advent of Islam in the early decades of the millennium. *Khanqahs* (Sufi retreats) were created all across the Islamic world, especially along important trade routes. The Mongol invasion in 13th century also hastened Sufi migration to India. Among the earliest Sufis in India was Hazrat Daata Ganj (d:~1089) of Lahore. Four well-known Sufi schools prospered in India:

1. **Suhrawardia:** Ziauddin Abul Najeeb (d:1167) first came to Sindh from Baghdad, and, among others,

were: Hamidu'ddin Nagauri (d:1274), Sheikh Taqi of Jhusi (d:1384), Mohd. Shah 'Alam Bukhari (d:1475), Baha'u'ddin Zakariyya Multani (d:1262), Saiyyed Jalalu'ddin Kasi (d:1605), who spread its message to Gujarat, Punjab, Bihar, Bengal and Deccan.

2. **Chishtia**: founded by Abou Abdulla Chishti in Iran is the best known Sufi order in India. It came through Muinuddin Chishti of Ajmer (d:1236), to be followed by Khwaja Qutbu'ddin Bakhtiar 'Kaki' (d:1235), Sheikh Faridu'ddin 'Ganj-e-Shakar' (d:1264), Nizamuddin Aulia (d: 1325), Amir Khusrau, Malik Mohd. Jayasi (d:1541), Sheikh Salim Chishti (d:1572) who spread it in north, west and south of India.

3. **Qadiriya**: founded by Sheikh Abdu'l Qadir Jilani (d:1166) in Baghdad, came to India through Saiyed Mohd. Ghaus of Uch (d:1552), to be followed by others like Hazrat Miyan Mir (d:1634) who laid the foundation-stone of the Golden Temple at Amritsar, Mullah Shah, Dara Shikoh (the elder brother of Emperor Aurangzeb), Inayat Khan, Bullehshah (d:1768), Shah Jalal, Makhdum Shah, spreading it to Kashmir, Punjab, Bihar and Bengal.

4. **Naqshbandia**: founded by Khwaja Wahauddin Naqshband of Turkey, came to India through Khwaja Baqi Billah (d: 1603) and Sheikh Ahmed Farooq 'Sirhindi' (d:1624), and has been popular in Punjab and Kashmir. They conducted their devotions in silence. However, their stature was not that of *Kamils*.

Suhrawardias live in extreme poverty, spending time in *Zikr*- remembrance. Chishtias are known to be fond of '*Chilla*' (solitary stay for 40 days) and *Sama*- dances with jingling anklets, reciting the *Kalma* loudly. *Qawwali*, invented by Amir Khusrau, is a representation of the inner sound. Qadiriya do *Zikr* in both loud and low voice. Naqshbandias recite the *Kalma* in a low voice, follow *Shari'a* and *Habs-e-Dam- Prana Yoga*.



Maulana Jalalu'ddin Rumi



Khwaja Hafiz Shirazi

Prominent among the celebrated Arabic Kamil Sufis were: Shamsu'ddin Tabrizi (d:1247), 'Attar (d:1220), *Maulana Jalalu'ddin Rumi* (d:1273), Sa'di (d:1293), *Khwaja Hafiz Shirazi* (d:1389) and Rabi'a al-Adaurya 'Basri' (d: 801). Hasan of Basra (d: 728), his disciple Wasil ibn Ata (d: 749), Ibrahim ibn Adham (d: 777), Maaruf al-Khirki (d: 815), Abu Yasid al-Bistami (d: 815), Ahmad ibn Khabit (d: 820), Dhul Nun (d: 859), Abu Yasid al Bistami (d: 815), Harith al-Muhasibi (d: 857), Mansur al-Hallaj (d: 992), Abu Sayid (d: 1049), al-Ghazzali (d: 1111), Omar Khayyam (d: 1123), Sanai (d: 1131), Ibn Arabi (d: 1240), were some of the other prominent Sufi mystics.

Many Indian *Sufis*, such as Amir Khusrau (d: 1325), Sultan Bahu (d:1691), Bullehshah (d: 1758), Waris Shah (d: 1766), also wrote in Hindi, Punjabi and Sindhi. Amongst the more recent prominent Indian Sufis

are: Mir Taqi Mir (d: 1810), Khwaja Mir Dard (d: 1785), Shah Niyaz Ahmad (d: 1833), Khwaja Haidar Ali Atish (d: 1846), Mirza Asad Ullah Khan Ghalib (d: 1869) and Muhammad Iqbal (d: 1938).

I The Sants

Sant-Mat has remained with us for aeons in the *Hindustani* plain of North and West of India. Amongst the oldest mentioned Sants are Bhakt Jaidev (possibly of Bengal, who wrote 'Geet Govind' in the late 12th Century) and Sant Veni, Sant Sadna of Sindh, a butcher by caste (early 14th Century), *Namdev* the calico printer, who was one of the five great Sants of Maharashtra (others being Gyandev, Eknath, Samarth Ramdas and Tukaram), who died in village Ghuman in Punjab (where Baba Jaimal Singh Ji was later born) and Sant Trilochan.



Meerabai



Surdas



Tulsidas

Sant-Mat received its major boost with the coming of Kabir of Benaras, weaver by caste (d:1518), of the *Nirgun* school, who is considered to be the 'Father of *Sant-Mat*'. Other Sants who lived around Kabir's age are: Sain (barber), Ravidas (cobbler), Pipa and Dhanna. *Meerabai* (d:1545), *Surdas* (d:1562) and *Tulsidas* (d:1623) are Sants who rose via the *Sagun* school of devotion. This was the age of the reformist *Bhakti* movement. Among other *panths* or lineages of *Sants* were those of Dadu (d:1603) of Rajasthan including Rajjab and Sundardas; Bawri (16th Cent.) including Beeru, Yaari, Bula, Gulal, Bhikha and Paltu; Malukdas (d:1701) of Allahabad, Dariya (d:1780) of Bihar; Charandas (d:1782) of Delhi; Garibdas (d:1777) of Chudani in Haryana.

While Dharamdas succeeded *Kabir* at Benaras, it was left to *Nanak* (d:1539) in Punjab (who is said, by some, to have been initiated by Kabir alongside or inside a river in his Astral form) and the nine following 'Sikh' gurus. *Gobind Singh* is said to have died in 1708 at Nanded. He is said to have initiated one Ratnagar Rao Peshwa, who in turn initiated one Amritrao or Shyamrao, also in the Peshwa family, who disappeared from Pune after refusing the Peshwa crown and surfaced at Hathras in U.P. to be known as *Tulsi Sahib* whose 'Ghat Ramayan' is well known. He was succeeded by Swami Ji Maharaj Shibdayal Singh of Agra, during whose time *Sant-Mat* received a further boost. While Rai Shaligram, propounder of Radhasoami faith succeeded him at Agra, the mantle was passed on to a soldier-disciple, Baba Jaimal Singh to propagate *Sant-Mat* in Punjab. Swami Ji Maharaj and Baba Jaimal Singh of Beas were respectively in the mould of Kabir and Nanak.

The 20th century witnessed '**Gracious Sants of the Century**' who presented *Sant-Mat* as a science and spread it across the globe, beginning with *Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji* (d:1948), *Sant Kirpal Singh Ji* (d:1974), who set up 'Ruhani Satsang' at Delhi, bringing leaders of various religious faiths on a single platform, opening up an inter-faith dialogue; and in the person of *Sant Darshan Singh Ji* (d:1989)- who founded 'Sawan Kirpal Ruhani Mission', adopted the Sufi metaphor of the '*Saqi*' (Divine Cupbearer) in his Urdu poetry- in him the twin streams of perfect Masters- the *Sufis* and the *Sants*, appear to have merged, proclaiming their unity. He coined terms such as 'Positive and Negative Mysticism' and 'Soulergy'/'Innergy', and spoke of the 'Challenge of the Inner Space'.

Currently the torch is being carried forth by the living Master, ***Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj***, who with his background as a Communications Engineer-Scientist presents Spirituality as Mother of all Science. He speaks of the 'Ecology of the Soul'. It is through his efforts, we are seeing the dawn of *Sat Yuga*- the 'Golden Age of Spirituality', bringing Love, Unity and Peace to human-kind across the globe.

That these Masters, who have been with us in recent times are *Param-Sants*- the very highest cosmic beings is without doubt. Three of the recent Masters who have come in a single family are the 'divine Trinity', who are known to come together. Only the Masters know their own true self, but we can surmise that Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj was an *avataar* of Kabir/ Paltu/Swami Ji and the living Master, Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj is an *avataar* of Namdev/Nanak/Baba Jaimal Singh Ji (the '*Janma Sakhi of Guru Nanak*' written by Bhai Bala also clearly mentions that Nanak's prophesy that He Himself shall be reborn to bring about the New Age). It is scarcely surprising that since the announcement of the dawn of the 'Golden Age' (*Sat yuga*) in 1974 by Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj (in the presence of the then Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi)- perhaps the same as Tulsidas/Tuli Sahib of Hathras, at Delhi, doors have been opened to one and all for receiving the gift of '*Naam*', with only conditions of ethical living and vegetarian, non-intoxicating diet being imposed.

I Lineage of Current *Sant-Mat* Masters



SANT NAMDEV JI MAHARAJ (1270 – 1351)

Namdev was born at Pandharpur, Maharashtra to Nam Dam Sheth and Gona Bai Ji. He married Raj Bai (Gonai). A Calico Printer and Tailor by profession, he would earn just enough to keep his family going.

While feeding milk to deity of Vishnu, or "Vitthal" one day, he was upset at its not accepting the drink and refused to budge until it actually did so. Skinning the bark of tree for his mother's medicine one day, he was so pained at its "bleeding" that he gave up the act. Meeting seers such as Gyandev, he realised the need for a Guru. He found a leper lying at the Nagnath temple with his feet upon the idol. At his protesting, the leper told him to put them where the Lord did not exist. Touched deeply, he carried the leper outside, only to find the radiant form of a handsome youth. Thus initiated by his Guru Visoba Khechar, he gave up *Karma-kaand* (external observances). "Vitthal" now became the name of the Supreme Lord to him. His lyrical

"Abhangs" (hymns in Marathi) are the oldest compositions of a Sant known to us. They denounce external observances and are full of love for the Lord. He travelled with Gyandev to places such as Rajasthan.

He left his home at the age of 27, travelling for 25 years to Gujarat, MP, Rajasthan, UP, Bihar and Punjab. He constructed the "Namiana" tank at Bhattiwal, Gurdaspur district and another at Ghuman, Batala district. He passed away at Ghuman, where it is said the temple turned around for him. It was at this very place that centuries later, another saint, Baba Jaimal Singh Ji was to be born.



SANT KABIR DAS JI MAHARAJ (1398 - 1518)

Kabir was found in a lotus pond near Benaras by Neeru and his wife Neema who adopted him and named him Kabir (the Most High). He had a son, Kamal and a daughter, Kamali by Mata Loi. Though a Hindu by tradition, he was a Muslim by upbringing. He said he had been sent by the Lord himself. He was a weaver by profession. He died at Magahar, considered a damned place, and both Hindus and Muslims claimed the body.

Although, Ramanand Ji was his outer Guru, ultimately it was Kabir gave Ramanand Ji true knowledge. In fact, in the previous 3 ages, he revealed his names as: Sat Sukrit, Munindra and Karunamaya. In his present age birth, he mentions Jaidev and Namdev among lineage of his Gurus. He is revered even today by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike. His verses are included in the 'Aadi Granth' of the Sikhs.

He is the first Perfect Master to have revealed the secrets of the entire creation to world at large (see his two verses, both entitled: "Kar Nainon Deedar"). He met with opposition from Pandits and Maulvis alike. Sultan Sikandar Lodi attempted to punish him by various means such as by drowning, by fire and by mauling under an elephant's feet. His verses, though encompassing the highest secrets of *Sant-Mat*, clearly remain close to the common man's heart even today. He often uses strong language to denounce the prevalent ritualism. Of his works are 'Bijak', 'Granthavali', 'Shabdavali' and 'Anurag Saagar'. The King of Benaras was among his disciples. He had a galaxy of renowned disciples such as: Dharamdas Ji, Mir Taqi, Ganaka Ji, Pipa Ji, Dhanna Ji, Sadana Ji etc.



GURU NANAK DEV JI MAHARAJ (1469 - 1539)

Nanak was born at Talwandi (Nankana Sahib) to Kalu and Mata Tripta, who were Bedi Kshatris. He married Bibi Sulakhani and had 2 sons, Srichand and Lakshmidas. He was taught Farsi and Accountancy. His father tried to involve him in family business, but he spent the money to feed holy men instead. He was then sent to his sister's at Sultanpur and was employed at Nawab Daulat Khan's grocery store.

He was given darshan and initiated by *Sat Purush* himself in the form of Kabir Sahib when he was aged 27 on a riverbank (whom he is said to have later met physically at Varanasi in 1542). He travelled 4 times to East: upto Assam and Burma, South: upto Sri Lanka where 'Pran Sangli' was written, North: upto Tibet and Mt. *Sumeru* in the Astral Plane where he met Siddhas and Naths and West: Baghdad, Iran, Mecca, Kabul. Hindus and Muslims alike loved him alike and holy men visited him from afar. He is said to have met Sheikh Ibrahim in the lineage of Baba Farid. Emperors Babar and Humayun came to him. Baba Budha, who "crowned" 5 of the Gurus was a prominent disciple of his. 'Jap Ji', 'Asa di Var', 'Rahi Ras', 'Sohila' and 'Sodar' are his prominent works, besides the verses in 'Granth Sahib'.

Towards the last part of his life, he settled at Kartarpur, which he founded on banks of river Ravi. During the

last years he witnessed the brutal sacking of Saiyidpur by Emperor Babar. Upon his death, his body was also claimed by both Hindus and Muslims. Monuments raised at the spot were swept away by the river. It was here the city of Dera Baba Nanak came to be built.

GURU ANGAD DEV JI MAHARAJ (1504 - 1552)

He was born "Lehna" at Matte ki Sarai, district Ferozepur to Pheru and Mata Daya. He married Bibi Khivi and had a daughter, Amro and 2 sons, Datu and Dasu. He was initially a devotee of *Shakti* and used to go on annual pilgrimage to Jwalamukhi. He came across one Jodha, a devotee of Guru Nanak in his village, Khadur and during one such pilgrimage, after hearing 'Asa di Var', he visited Guru Nanak at Kartarpur and remained on at his feet for ever. He served his Guru with great devotion and passing the difficult test of implicit obedience to construct a broken wall during rain and eating of a corpse (which turned into a sweet-dish!), he was chosen his successor. He was very fond of children and considered them worthy of emulation.

He would take care of the sick and lepers. The institution of Langar was greatly expanded by him. A few of his verses are included in 'Granth Sahib'. Emperor Humayun, having been defeated by Shershah, visited him. Angered at having to wait, he wished to kill the Guru, but his sword would not come out of his scabbard, but was forgiven and given the boon of victory. Guru Angad devised the Gurmukhi script and had Guru Nanak Ji's biography written by Bhai Bala, who was associated with him since childhood and accompanied him on his journeys along with Bhai Mardana, a Muslim Rabbab-player. He passed away after handing over successorship to Amar Das, after duly testing him.

GURU AMAR DAS JI MAHARAJ (1479 - 1574)

Born to Tejbhan Bhalla and Mata Lakshmi at Basarke. He married Bibi Mansa Devi and had 2 sons, Mohan and Mohri and 2 daughters, Dani and Bhani by her. He lived a simple life as farmer and trader.

He went to the river *Ganga* on pilgrimage each year and worshipped in the *Vaishnav* tradition, but was always on lookout for a perfect Guru. One day, he was deeply touched by Guru Angad's daughter singing Gurbani and thus came to find his Guru's feet. He would serve his Guru- filling water, collecting firewood and cleaning utensils, despite his age of 73 years. He would travel to Goindwal, which was founded under his direction, without showing his back towards Khadur. He fell into a weaver's pit during heavy rains while filling his Guru's pot at river Beas, but was found reciting 'Jap Ji' when extricated. His Guru embraced him and pronounced him 'Saviour of the downtrodden'. When kicked by Datu, Guru Angad's son, he begged to be forgiven for his old bones hurting his feet. His *Langar*- free kitchen, famous for serving all, had Emperor Akbar for a visitor. His wife one day pointed to a handsome youth, "Jetha" selling gram, saying she desired a son-in-law like him. That youth came to marry his daughter and to become his successor, Guru Ramdas.

He constructed the pond "Santokh Sar" at Goindwal and laid foundation of the pond at Amritsar. He set up 22 religious centres across India. At Emperor Akbar's bidding, he visited Hardwar on a pilgrimage to mollify the Hindus who charged him of defiling their faith. His verses are included in the 'Granth Sahib'. 'Anand' is his best known work, which is sung during festivals.

GURU RAM DAS JI MAHARAJ (1534 - 1581)

Born "Jetha" at Lahore to Haridas Sodhi and Mata Daya, he married Bibi Bhani, daughter of Guru Amar Das Ji and had 3 sons, Prithichand, Mahadev and Arjan Dev. His Guru, pleased with him for passing tests such as repeated construction of a portico and with Bibi Bhani for supporting his 3-legged cot while he meditated upon it, gave them boon that Gurudom would remain for generations in their family, but would be full of

tribulations since she had dammed the flow of its tradition.

He was destituted at an early age and had to struggle hard for his living and traded in boiled gram. He was known to be truthful and gentle from his very childhood and was a model of humility and served the needy with all his heart. He did great physical sewa during the construction of the tank at Goindwal. He created the holy city Amritsar and its holy pond. Thereafter he busied himself in his mission's. He appointed "Mansads" for spreading the faith and his fame spread far and wide and many holy men came to his feet. Srichand, Guru Nanak's son, who founded the 'Udasi' faith, visited him and asked the reason for his long beard and was greatly pleased when he replied that it was for wiping his feet. His bani compiled in the 'Holy Granth' is full of love and devotion to the Guru. He found his son, Arjan most obedient of his sons as he readily agreed to go to a wedding at his bidding. His two jealous elder sons tried to do away with Arjan's letters seeking to return, but were exposed. He passed away after handing over his mantle to Arjan Dev Ji.



GURU ARJAN DEV JI MAHARAJ (1563 - 1606)

Arjan Dev was born at Goindwal to Guru Ramdas Ji and Mata Bhani (daughter of Guru Amar Das Ji). He married Bibi Ganga and had a son, Har-gobind in 1652. He passed away at Lahore on the banks of river Ravi. He was the first Guru to succeed his father, after proving himself worthy. He constructed many lakes, founded many cities and organised the mission very efficiently. He also collated the *Banis*- verses of the previous perfect Masters with great effort and published 'Granth Sahib', that includes his own verses. 'Sukhmani' is the best known of his writings, others being 'Bawan Akhari' and 'Barahmasa'.

He completed the tank at Amritsar and began construction of Harmandir temple in 1589. He also founded cities of Taran Taran and Kartarpur. His elder brother, Prithichand, having been deprived of his father's succession, opposed him. Amongst his tormentors were Chandushah, chieftain of Lahore, whose daughter he refused in marriage to his son, and the Pandits and Mullahs.

He was accused at the court of Emperor Jahangir of being critical of both Hinduism and Islam and of befriending his younger son, Khusrau, considered a traitor. He was fined Rs. 2,00,000, which he refused to pay. He was then punished by Chandushah by being seated on a pan over burning fire, with burning hot sand poured over him upto his neck. He suffered in silence in obedience to the Will of the Lord. On the fifth day, he passed away after appointing HarGobind Ji as his successor.

GURU HAR-GOBIND JI MAHARAJ (1595 - 1644)

Born with the blessings of Baba Budha (the 'elderly one') to Guru Arjan Dev and Mata Ganga at Badali, who foretold of his crushing his enemies. He had son Guruditta and Ani Rai by wife, Bibi Damodari, Atal Rai and Tegh Bahadur by Bibi Marwahi and Surya Mall by Bibi Mahadevi.

He survived several attempts on his life by his father's enemies such as Prithia. The 6th Sikh Guru on were forced to involve themselves in politics due to the misdeeds of the Emperor towards the 5th Guru. At his coronation, Guru Har-gobind took to warrior's clothes and sought weapons as gifts. He started carrying two swords- one for *Piri*- spiritual needs and other for *Miri*- worldly needs.

He appointed 52 bodyguards who laid foundation of the Sikh army. He was taken captive by Emperor Jahangir while hunting as his guest, thanks to machinations of Chandushah, his father's arch-enemy and held at Gwalior fort. He was released along with several kings due to efforts of one, Wazir Khan. Chandushah was disgraced eventually for not handing over Guru Arjan's garland to the emperor. He built "Akal Takht" near Golden Temple at Amritsar, where weapons were stored. He also built the Kaulsar pond

at Amritsar with the money bequeathed by Bibi Kaulan, who came to him at behest of Sufi Miyan Mir. Empress Noorjahan also came for his darshan. When the Sikhs captured Emperor Shahjahan's pet vulture for attacking another bird, a battle broke out between the Sikh and Mughal armies, which the Sikhs won. Two other battles followed. He thus brought Sikhs great glory. He had his son, Har-rai coronated by Bhai Bhanna, son of Bhai Budha and passed away at Patalpuri.

GURU HARRAI JI MAHARAJ (1630 - 1661)

Second son of Guruditta, elder son of Guru Har-gobind and Mata Nihal. He sent special medicines at the bidding of Sufi Miyan Mir to treat Dara Shikoh, Emperor Shahjahan's elder son. Dara went to meet him at Kiratpur, but eventually met him on the banks of river Beas. He sent his elder son, Ramrai to Emperor Aurangzeb's court to answer charges that he was campaigning against Islam and was befriending Dara Shikoh. However, Ram-rai's suggestion that a certain shlok in the 'Aadi Granth' needed correction did not please him and he was not given successorship. Instead, it was given to his younger son, Har-krishan.

GURU HAR-KRISHAN JI MAHARAJ (1656 - 1664)

Born to Guru Har-rai and Mata Krishan Kunwar, he ascended the throne when only 5 years, 3 months old. His elder brother Ram-rai, who was away to Delhi at that time, became bitter. The emperor sent Raja Jaisingh of Amber to invite the Guru to his court, but he first refused stating it was against the ideals of his predecessors. However, he later relented and headed toward Delhi.

On the fourth day of journey, he was stricken with chicken-pox. He passed away at Bala Sahib after appointing one, Baba Bakle as his successor.

GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI MAHARAJ (1621 - 1675)

He was youngest son of Guru Har-gobind Ji and Mata Nanki. He went to live in Bakla after death of Guru Hargobind Ji. Upon Guru Harkrishan's death, one, Makkhan Shah who wished to offer 500 sovereigns to the Guru. After testing the 22 Sodhi families of Bakla, found Tegh Bahadur Ji most suitable. He married Bibi Gujri of Kartarpur and a son, Gobind Singh was born to them at Patna.

He left Kiratpur on account of the harassment of his brother Dhirmal, Ramrai and other Sodhis and founded the city of Anandpur and began his mission there. Later he also travelled to Malwa, Agra, Allahabad, Benaras, Gaya and Patna. He met Sant Malukdas at Manikpur. He first agreed to join Ram Singh, son of Jai Singh of Jaipur to fight against Aurangzeb, but made a treaty with him at behest of King of Kamrup. Aurangzeb began converting Brahmins of Kashmir to Islam and they came to him for succour. He said this was possible only if a great personage sacrificed his life. His son, Gobind suggested that the Guru himself would be most appropriate for sacrifice. The brahmins agreed to conversion if the Guru himself converted. He was captured and accused of looking at the Begums in "Purdah". He was put in an iron cage, tortured and beheaded. Some of his followers managed to hide his body in a house, which caught fire, burning his body. His bani, incorporated in the 'Granth Sahib' is replete with the spirit of renunciation and sacrifice. He is remembered for his bravery, despite his humble nature.

He passed away at Delhi after sacrificing his head at the spot where Gurdwara Sisganj is situated.



GURU GOBIND SINGH JI MAHARAJ (1666 - 1708)

Gobind Singh was born "Gobind Rai" to Guru Tegh Bahadur at Patna. He had son, Ajit by wife Bibi Sundari. Sons, Zorawar, Jujhar and Fateh Singh were born by his second wife, Bibi Jita. From childhood, he was fond of exercising and sports. He began organizing Sikhs into an army to avenge his father's death. He constructed a fort at Ponta. He fought with both the hill kings and the Mughals. His 2 sons were killed in attack on Anandpur and 2 other interred into a wall for refusing to convert to Islam. At Kishangarh, he asked for sacrifice of 5 heads and pretended to behead those who offered them. With these initiates, he founded the institution of *Khalsa*- Pure Ones. He ordained them to wear the *Katar*- dagger, *Kangha*- comb, *Kachh*-underwear, *Kesh*- hair and *Kada*- bracelet and gave them slogans "*Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa*" and "*Waheguru Ji ki Fateh*". 'Zafarnama' in Farsi was written by him to Aurangzeb during his escape from Anandpur. Besides a collection, 'Dasam Granth', he also had several translations of Ramayan, Mahabharat etc. done to Sanskrit. Bhai Kanhaiya was his disciple, who would feed water during battles to friend and foes alike. Banda Bahadur was a Sadhu, who avenged the Guru after his death.

He went to Nanded in Maharashtra, where a Pathan attacked him with a dagger while sleeping. His wound burst one day and he is said to have disappeared after exhorting Sikhs to live by commandments of 'Holy Granth'. He left his holy Light with Sant Ratnagar Rao in the family of the *Peshwas*- rulers of Pune.



SANT TULSI SAHIB JI MAHARAJ (1763 - 1843)

Born to *Peshwa* Baji Rao-I's daughter, Amrit Rao alias Shyam Rao showed early disinterest in worldly life and was inclined to devotion. Married early to Laxmibai, he had a son. In 1804, his father by adoption Raghunath Rao, wished him coronated. But the night prior to coronation, he disappeared atop a white charger amidst thunder and lightning. In his lieu, his brother Baji Rao-II was coronated. After several years of wandering, he emerged at Hathras in U.P. to be known as *Tulsi Sahib* or "Dakkhini Baba"- Saint from South. He was initiated by Sant Ratnagar Rao Ji, in the *Peshwa* family and spent several years in meditation. His dialogues with Sheikh Taqi, Sadhu Managiri, Kabir-panthis- Phooldas and Revtidas, Nanak-panthi Palakram, Priyelal Gosain who came to his feet have been recorded. He travelled to various nearby states as well. His books include 'Shabdavali', 'Ratna-Saagar', 'Ghat (Nirgun) Ramayan' and 'Padma-Saagar'. He revealed of his previous birth as Tulsidas of Benaras, who wrote the Sagun Ramayan- 'Ramcharitamanas'.

Visiting the family of Dilwali Singh Seth at Agra, he accidentally stepped over expensive linen laid out to dry. But seeing his mother's humility, who thanked him instead, asked her for a boon. She begged him to grant it to her daughter-in-law, who wished for a son. He blessed her saying her son would be no ordinary mortal and in 1818, Swami Ji was born to her.

In his last years, his body below waist remained numb due to withdrawal of the Spirit. When Swami Ji learnt of his departing, he ran barefoot towards Hathras. Sahib Ji left his body after gazing deeply into Swami Ji's eyes.



SWAMI JI MAHARAJ SHIB DAYAL SINGH (1818 - 1878)

Swami Ji was born at Agra in August, 1818 to Lala Dilwali Singh Seth and Mahamaya, a Nanak-panthi Sehejdhari Khatri devoted to Sikh scriptures, who was a satsangi of Tulsi Sahib of Hathras, who initiated Swamiji at an early age and gave him his spiritual mantle before passing away in 1843. Began mastering Hindi, Gurmukhi, Farsi, Sanskrit and Arabic at age of 5 and served briefly as teacher at Banda and Ballabgarh and briefly practiced money-lending.

He married Narain Devi (Radha Ji), daughter of Lala Izzat Rai of Faridabad. She served him and the visitors with great devotion and love until her death in 1894. At the age of six, he began spiritual practices in a small closet that lasted 15 years and giving discourses to visiting sadhus and faqirs, initially at the Gurudwara at Mai Than and then at his residence. Despite his frugal diet, he would meditate for days on and give Satsang for 8-10 hrs. In 1861, the Satsang was thrown open to public at large, reviving traditions of Kabir and Nanak. After 17.1/2 years, his Satsang shifted to Soami Bagh outside the city and was attended by thousands of householders and sadhus, men and women, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains and Christians. Of them, Baba Jaimal Singh, Rai Shaligram, Pratap Singh, Shibbo Ji and Bukki Ji were prominent.

Before passing away on 15th June, 1878 he explained that his faith was that of *Anami*. He had also foretold of a phenomenal growth of the faith and a great awakening for human-kind in the years to come. The advent of Swami Ji marked a major milestone of revitalization in the history of *Sant-Mat*.

BABA JAIMAL SINGH JI MAHARAJ (1838 - 1903)

Born in 1838 in village Ghuman of Gurdaspur, Punjab, where Sant Namdev had died, to Bhai Jodh Singh, a Sikh cultivator and Bibi Daya Kaur, whose prayer for a godly son was answered by Namdev Ji in her dream. Began mastering Sikh scriptures from age of 5 under Bhai Khem Das, who gave him *Sohang Japa*. He learnt *Pranayam* and Ghor Anhad from *Yogis* and *Sadhus* and mastered Hindu texts. But yearning for secret of '*Naam*' and '*Panch Shabd*', he visited numerous Sikh holy places. A Sikh initiated him into the first two *Shabd*s. At Peshawar, a mastana Sikh suggested his going eastwards. Returned home, only to leave again at 16. He met Baba Kahan of Vairach, who said he was collecting bricks for his future dwelling. He also met a *Sadhu* doing penance in thick jungle near Haridwar who told him of his Guru at Agra. Reaching Agra, he overheard someone discussing a 'Swami Ji'. Reaching the feet of Swami Ji, his doubts were set to rest when put to meditation, though initially uneasy at his Guru not being a Sikh. In 1856, joined a regiment of sepoy's passing thru Agra, later 24th Sikh regiment and travelled with it. During Anglo-Afghan war of 1879, he would meditate in a pit, but enemy soldiers seeing his radiance, would not harm him.

Returning to Agra, Swami Ji gave him authority to initiate and to take, what was originally the wealth of Sikh Gurus of Punjab, back to it. He retired in 1889 and returned to Agra in 1890, after Swami Ji's death. Later, he settled at Beas. Many, including Muslims, flocked to him. He passed away on 29th December, 1903.



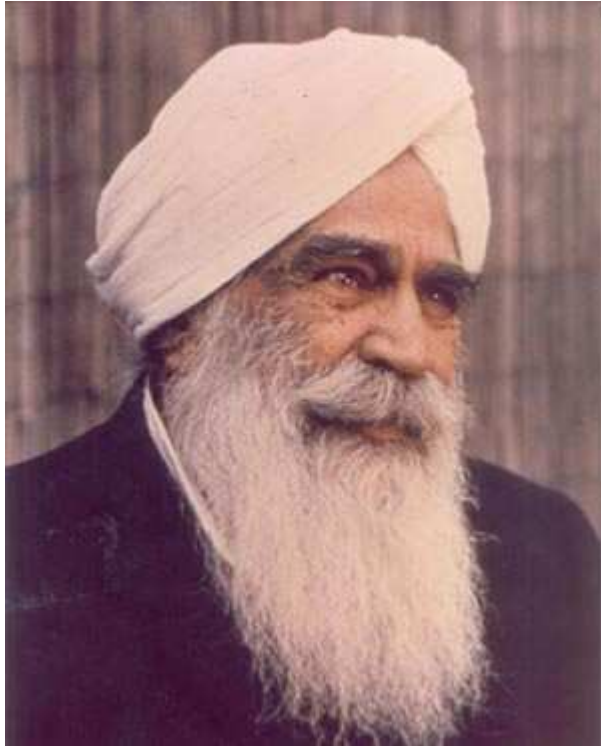
HAZUR BABA SAWAN SINGH JI MAHARAJ (1858 - 1948)

Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji was born 27th July, 1858 in village Jatala, Dist. Ludhiana to Sub. Maj. Kabul Singh and Mata Jiwani. Had 3 children by Mata Kishan Kaur Ji. He passed Engineering from Thompson College, Roorkee and joined the Military Engineering Service. His bearing was majestic and attractive. He studied scriptures of various religions. He visited Baba Kahan of Peshawar, who told him his Master will seek him on his own. Stationed at Murree, he met Baba Jaimal Singh, who had came for him and was initiated by him.

He retired in 1911 and set up Dera Baba Jaimal Singh at Beas whose foundations had been laid by his Master in 1891, and built houses, bungalows and a Satsang Hall. He sheltered victims of the communal partition holocaust. His following included Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and for the first time, thousands from abroad in USA, UK, Switzerland and Germany as well.

Dr. Brock, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Schmidt, Mr. Myers and Col. Saunders were some of the notables who flocked to him. True to his name, *Sawan*- The Season of Rain, he showered his Master's wealth freely.

He had 'Gurmat-Siddhant' written under his specific instructions by Sant Kirpal Singh Ji to distil knowledge of God. He entrusted task of 'Naam' initiation to Sant Kirpal Singh Ji in late 1947 and approved his proposal for setting up 'Ruhani Satsang' for spiritual uplift of mankind. He transferred his spiritual wealth to Sant Kirpal Singh Ji, telling him that people would flock to him and passed away on 2nd April, 1948 after initiating 1,25,375 souls.



SANT KIRPAL SINGH JI MAHARAJ (1894 - 1974)

Sant Kirpal Singh Ji was born on 6th February, 1894 in Sayyad Kasran, district Rawalpindi of Punjab. He studied at Peshawar and joined Military Engineering Service and then Military Accounts. He married Bibi Krishna Wanti in 1910. Darshan Singh was born to them in 1921 and Jaswant Singh in 1927.

He decided 'God first and the world next'. He began seeing his future Master, Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji of Beas, before even meeting him in 1924 and being initiated. He published 'Gurmat Siddhant' in his Master's name and initiated over 200 people in presence of his Master. He received his Master's spiritual wealth, and upon his demise, left the Dera. he meditated and met holy men at Rishikesh for 5 months and on 2nd December, 1948, started his mission and began giving initiations. He set up 'Ruhani Satsang' in 1949 at Delhi. 'Sawan Ashram' at Gurmandi was dedicated in 1950. He made World tours in 1955, 1963 and 1972 and was elected President of the 'World Fellowship of Religions' and organised its Conferences in 1957, 1960, 1965 and the 'Unity of Man Conference' in 1974.

He wrote 12 books and many booklets on comparative religion and spirituality. He was honoured by Pope with the 'Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights of Malta'. He visited Ardha-kumbha mela at Haridwar and gave Satsangs. He set up 'Manav Kendras' at Dehradun and Kandhari.

He addressed Indian Parliament and announced dawn of 'Sat yuga' in 1974. He passed away on 21st August, 1974 after handing over his spiritual mantle to Sant Darshan Singh Ji two days earlier.



SANT DARSHAN SINGH JI MAHARAJ (1921 - 1989)

Sant Darshan Singh Ji was born 14th September, 1921 in Kountrilla, Rawalpindi to Kirpal Singh Ji and Krishna-wanti Ji. Initiated by Baba Sawan Singh Ji in 1926. Graduated from Govt. College, Lahore. Joined Indian Government service in 1942, to retire 37 yrs. later as Deputy Secretary. Married Harbahajan Kaur; sons Rajinder Singh and Manmohan Singh born in 1946 and

1960.

He helped Sant Kirpal Singh Ji in his mission as member of the Managing Committee. He served in Executive Committee of the 'World Fellowship of Religions' and as Secretary, 'First Unity of Man Conference'. He began his spiritual ministry in 1974 on Sant Kirpal Singh Ji's demise and established 'Sawan Kirpal Ruhani Mission' in 1976. 'Kirpal Ashram' was founded by him in 1977. He was elected President, '6th Conference of World Religions' and presided over sessions of '15th Human Unity Conference'.

He broadcast poetry on radio in 1938 and published Sufi Urdu mystic poetry, 'Talash-e-Noor', 'Manzil-e-Noor', 'Mataa-e-Noor' and 'Jadaa-e-Noor', for which he was proclaimed the greatest Mystic poet of our times; English poetry, 'Cry of the Soul', 'A Tear and A Star'; prose, 'Secret of Secrets', 'Spiritual Awakening', 'The Challenge of Inner Space', 'Soulery', 'Ambassadors of Peace' etc. He received literary awards of Urdu Academies of Delhi, UP and Punjab states. He undertook World Tours in 1978, 1983, 1986 and 1988 and prayed at the UN for World Peace. He received Medals of UNO and of Congress of Colombia, Tributes of US House of Representatives and Michigan Legislature, Honours/Keys to Cities of Detroit, St. Petersburg and Cali. He served the victims of Mexico City earthquake, Colombia volcanic eruption and Ethiopia famine.

He left for his Eternal Abode on 30th May, 1989.

LIVING MASTER SANT RAJINDER SINGH JI MAHARAJ (b: 1946)

Sants (Perfect Masters), the embodiment of Lord, are known to speak the 'Language of the Day'. It is no surprise hence that He should come in times when Science and Spirituality are to meet, in the guise of a Technologist. A Communications expert, he draws neat parallels of Spirituality with it- both aim at conquest of Space and Time and to bring humanity together. An embodiment of 'Positive Mysticism', he echoes modern concerns in the 'Ecology of the Soul'.



Sant Rajinder Singh Ji was born 1946 to Sant Darshan Singh Ji and Mata Harbhajan Kaur, named by Baba Sawan Singh Ji, initiated at the age of 16 by Sant Kirpal Singh Ji who cast him in his own mould. After doing B.Tech. Electrical Engineering from IIT Madras, he did M.S. from Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, USA receiving high honours. He joined prestigious ATT-Bell Labs doing R&D in the frontier Voice-Data area, receiving national recognition in US.

Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj helped in spreading *Sant-Mat* in USA and playing a stellar role in mission's

activities in the West. He was also involved in the Unity of Man (1974) and 15th Human Unity (1988) Conferences. He is currently the head of 'Science of Spirituality'/'Sawan Kirpal Ruhani Mission'. Inheriting the mantle of spirituality from Sant Darshan Singh Ji in 1989, he has been organising Global Conferences on 'Mysticism' and on 'Human Integration' at Delhi since 1990.

He has been touring countries in North and South Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, Australia and Oceania, and all over India.

He has been internationally recognized for his work toward inner and outer peace through spirituality. His training in both mysticism and science has helped him express the age-old mystical teachings in clear, logical language. His message of unity, peace, and love for all humanity has been acclaimed by enlightened leaders everywhere. Recognizing the transcendent oneness at the heart of all religions, he emphasizes prayer and meditation as the true building blocks for achieving peace.

Sant Rajinder Singh Ji's talks have been broadcast internationally on radio and television. His publications include books in English and Hindi and hundreds of articles on spiritual topics. Among his books in English are: 'Ecology of the Soul and Positive Mysticism', 'Education for a Peaceful World', 'Empowering Your Soul Through Meditation', 'Inner and Outer Peace Through Meditation' and 'Vision of the New Millennium'.

Some of the awards and honours received by him are: - 'Banner of Peace', Mexico City, Mexico on 14th July, 1990- an honour given earlier to Presidents Gorbachev of USSR and Oscar Arias of Costa Rica and the Dalai Lama. - 'Medal and Plaque of Cali', bestowed by the President of the City council of Cali, Colombia on 21st June, 1990. - 'Medal of Cultural Merit' from National Minister of Education, in Bogota, Colombia on 28th June, 1990. - 'Special Tribute' from Michigan State Legislature - Spark M. Matsunaga Peace Foundation on 5th April, 1992. - 'Golden Cross of the Order of Santiago de Cali' on 21 May, 1992. - Plaque from Fe-Code (National Federation of Educators of Colombia) presented in Bogota, Colombia on 17 December, 1992. - 'Peace Award': Interfaith Center of New York and the Temple of Understanding- a United Nations NGO on 5th June, 1997. - 'Simon Bolivar Award' for his service in the field of Science, Education and Culture presented by Ministry of Education of Colombia, in Bogota on 18 December, 1992. - 'Key to the City of Medellin' (Colombia) on 21 December, 1992. - 'Golden Key of the City of Palmira' presented by the Mayor on 23 December, 1992. - 'Guest of Honor of City Council of Popayan' - 25 December, 1992. - 'Sabastian de Belalenzar Award' presented by Mayor of Cali on 26 December, 1992. - 'International Distinguished Leadership Award' from the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, on 7th November, 1998. - 'Guest of Honor' of the City by the Mayor-in-charge, Dr. Oscar Guzman of Palmir, Cali, Colombia on 27th November, 1998. - "Doctor Honoris Causa" from Universidad Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Peru for his efforts in the field of education and peace and honorary doctorate from Universidad Federico Villarreal, Peru for his efforts in bridging science and spirituality and facilitating human unity through communication. - Declared Honorary Citizen by the government of Loreto, Peru and awarded with the "Key to the City of Iquitos, Peru" in 2004.

Note: for an alternative view of Radhasoami History, see [Some Futher Details on Sant Mat, and Surat Shabd Yoga](#)



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text content by a student of Sant Mat (Sawan-Kirpal tradition - see also [Science of Spirituality](#) website).
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