

Sāhibzādē Ajīt & Jujhār Singh (ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦੇ ਅਜੀਤ ਤੇ ਜੁਝਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ)

The eldest of Gurū Gobind Singh's four sons of, Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh was born at Paurnīṭā Sāhib (ਪਉਂਟਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ) on 7 January 1687. Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh, the second son of the tenth Gurū, was born in March 1689 at Anandpur. The two were aged 18 years old and 16 years old respectively when they achieved martyrdom at Camkaur Sāhib. Because of their heroic deeds at such a young age, Sikhs lovingly call them 'Bābā,' (ਬਾਬਾ) expressive of their highest regard and respect for these brave sons of the Gurū. They underwent training in physical fitness, riding, and use of weapons apart from getting formal and religious (ਗੁਰਮਤ / Gurmat) education from competent Sikhs and their father right from their childhood.

Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh performed deeds of great courage during various battles that took place around Anandpur Sāhib between the forces of Hindu kings & Muslim rulers on one side and the Gurū's forces on the other side. Under the ablest guidance and leadership of Gurū Gobind Singh, the Sikhs started hunting tigers and other wild animals in the jungles around Anandpur Sāhib by learning the use of all sorts of weapons including the latest weapons. Casteless society, i.e., Sikhī (ਸਿਖੀ) raised hopes of equality for all and freedom from tyrant rulers of the time. Increasing numbers of Hindus and even Muslims embracing the Sikh faith alarmed both Hindu kings of Hill States adjoining Anandpur Sāhib, and the Muslim rulers who thought that if Sikhī is allowed to grow at this rate they would not be able to control the oppressed for very long, the Hindu Hill State Kings through persistent complaints alarmed Emperor Aurangzeb about the growing strength and influence of Gurū Gobind Singh which according to them could one day endanger the rulers of both Hindu and Muslim communities.

Thus the Muslims rulers in Delhi, Pañjāb and Jammū and Kashmīr joined hands with the Hindu rulers of Hill States around Anandpur Sāhib, to destroy the growing influence of Gurū Gobind Singh. Their combined fighting forces marched towards Anandpur Sāhib and encircled it completely. They cut off supplies to the besieged Sikh community in the Anandpur Sāhib Fort.

The Sikhs besieged in Anandpur Fort had to undergo extreme hardship due to a lack of rations, water and medicines. On the other hand, seven months of unsuccessful military venture had also demoralized the leaders and soldiers of tyrant rulers. As a result they started to find a face-saving device to please Emperor Aurangzeb. They swore on Gītā and Koran assuring Gurū Gobind Singh that in case he vacated Anandpur Fort along with his Sikhs, they would not attack him and his soldiers. After this evacuation, they would also go away and be in a position to show their faces to the Emperor Aurangzeb. Gurū Gobind Singh decided to evacuate Anandpur Sahib on the advice of Sikhs although he had no confidence on the promised made by the adversaries and told them about his views.

The Gurū, accompanied by Sikhs and his family members evacuated Anandpur Sāhib in December 1704. They had hardly reached the bank of rivulet Sarsā (ਸਰਸਾ), when the enemy forces attacked them from behind without caring a bit about the promises made by them earlier in the name of their Holy Books. Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh and the Sikh forces kept the

attacking enemy at bay by engaging them in a fierce battle till Gurū Gobind Singh accompanied by others crossed the rivulet, which was in spate due to heavy rains upstream. Later Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh and the remaining Sikhs too crossed the river and joined Gurū Gobind Singh. The enemy forces were deeply impressed by the fighting & leadership qualities shown by the eldest son of Gurū Gobind Singh. The flooded rivulet took a heavy toll of Sikh lives.

By evening of the following day, Gurū Gobind Singh accompanied by his only two elder sons and forty surviving Sikhs arrived at village Camkaur, thoroughly exhausted. They quickly got themselves settled in fortress-like house of Caudhrī Bidhī Cand (ਚੌਧਰੀ ਬਿਧੀ ਚੰਦ) and decided to face the approaching enemy forces there.

During the night, enemy forces encircled this fortress in large numbers. Their numbers swelled to lakhs by day break. When the enemy attacked the fortress in the morning, Gurū Gobind Singh, and his disciples kept the enemy at bay with the help of deadly arrows inflicting heavy casualties. When the stock of arrows started dwindling and the enemy forces starting coming close to the fortress, it was decided by Gurū Gobind Singh to send Sikhs outside the fortress in batches of five to engage the enemy soldiers in hand to hand fight. Imagine five Sikhs, daring to take on lakhs enemy soldiers! This amply proved to the world how fearless the Sikhs of the Gurū were and had love not for their lives, but the orders of their master.

Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh's Martyrdom

When groups of Sikhs started going out of Garhī (ਗੜੀ / fortress) and fought bravely in afflicting heavy casualties before laying down their precious lives, Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh sought permission of his father to also allow him to go out to fight side by side the brave Sikhs.

Gurū Gobind Singh was immensely pleased at this and embraced his son. He himself armed his son and sent him out with the next group of five Sikhs whom he considered no less dear than his own sons, to prove Gurū's saying that he would be worthy of being Gobind Singh when he would make a Sikh so brave and fearless that he would fight with one lakh and quarter enemies alone.

Coming out of the fortress, Sāhibzādā Ajīt, the brave son of the Tenth Master, attacked the enemy soldiers like a lion leaping on a flock of sheep to be cut to pieces. Many enemy soldiers were both astonished and terrified on seeing the fighting caliber and methods of attack of this young boy. The accompanying Sikhs prevented enemy soldiers from other sides from encircling the brave Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh. After the brave son of the Master exhausted his arrows, he attacked to enemy with his spear. However, the blade of spear which had penetrated into the chest of one of the adversaries piercing his steel dress broke inside the body of the enemy soldier, when Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh pulled his spear back. Taking advantage of this delay caused by stuck up spear of Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh, the enemy soldiers were successful in injuring his horse, which fell dead. Sāhibzādā Ajīt swiftly dismounted the horse and pulling out his sword from its sheath, engaged the enemy soldiers. While he was

cutting the adversaries to pieces by lightening attacks with his sword, an enemy soldier successfully attacked the brave son of Gurū Gobind Singh with a sharp spear. This spear pierced deeply into the body of Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh. The brave son of Gurū Gobind Singh was fatally injured and his youthful body fell on ground. He attained martyrdom under the watchful and appreciative eyes of his great father. Scores of enemy soldiers' bodies were lying in heaps around the fallen body of brave Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh.

Gurū Gobind Singh was watching the brave acts of his son in the battle field from the fortress. He had been keeping the enemy at bay by his arrows thus providing his son a chance for prolonged fight with the enemy soldiers.

The Gurū was immensely pleased at the courage shown by his son and the tactics employed by him for inflicting heavy casualties on the adversaries. Gurū Gobind Singh thanked Vāhgurū for helping Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh to live up to his father's expectations. The Gurū thus proved that for the cause he was fighting, he would not hesitate to offer his own sons for sacrifice, while demanding supreme sacrifice from his Sikhs. The Sikhs were as dear to him as his own sons.

Thus fell the brave son of the Great Gurū providing inspiration to the Sikhs for generation to come. The Sikh community will keep remembering this young martyr son of the tenth master for all times to come.

Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh's Martyrdom

Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh, the second son of Gurū Gobind Singh had been keenly observing from the fortress Camkaur the heroic fight put up by his elder brother, Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh against overwhelming number and better equipped enemy soldiers. The brave fight put up by his elder brother filled Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh with happiness and courage.

No sooner did Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh fall martyr, Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh requested his dear father Gurū Gobind Singh to grant him permission to accompany the next batch of Sikhs to repeat the heroic acts of his elder brother. He assured his father that he will not let him down and that he would attack the enemy soldiers and drive them away as a shepherd drives his flock of sheep.

The Gurū-Father was filled with immense pleasure at the determination of his 16 year old second son. He armed his son with weapons and allowed him to go out with next batch of five Sikhs. Once outside the fortress, the young Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh fearlessly attacked the enemy soldiers like a lion, while accompanying Sikhs formed a protective ring around him. Gurū Gobind Singh was watching his brave son's deeds of valor and appreciated his courage and swordsmanship from top of the fortress. Even the enemy soldiers could not help appreciating the ferocity and smartness of the young boy. They had never seen such bravery performed by anyone at such a young age against mighty enemy forces.

Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh, using arrows spear and finally his sword felled numerous enemy soldiers. Headless bodies of enemy soldiers were piling up around him. The accompanying

Sikhs were likewise putting to death many more enemy soldiers while keeping a protective ring around Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh.

After a longdrawn battle, the enemy soldiers attacked the young Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh from all sides in large numbers, breaking the protective ring around him. Under the appreciative gaze of his father and the accompanying Sikhs, Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh put up a brave fight but was ultimately fatally injured and fell martyr on the ground encircled by heaps of dead bodies of the enemy forces.

The way both the elder sons of Gurū Gobind Singh achieved martyrdom upholding the principles for which their father had been actively mobilizing his disciples, the Gurū was able to show to all the Sikhs and enemy that he did not value his own sons more than his Sikhs and that he would not hesitate even to sacrifice his own sons for the Sikh cause.

On seeing his second son falling martyr like his first son, Gurū thanked God for enabling his sons to live up to his expectations. There is no parallel in the world when a father had thanked Vāhgurū, instead of weeping, on the death of his sons in front of his eyes. The heroic deeds of these two elder sons of Gurū Gobind Singh will keep inspiring the young Sikh generations to rise to the occasion when ever called upon to fight for justice and rights against injustice and cruelty for all times to come.

Thus, Gurū Gobind Singh sacrificed his dear and brave sons, only to prove that when it comes to making sacrifices for Sikh cause, he would not hesitate to offer his own sons to show the world that the Sikh ideals were most dear to him.