



GURU ARJAN

THE MAN WHO KNEW NO FEAR

Vol 740 |

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Amar Chitra Katha Pvt Ltd

© Amar Chitra Katha Pvt Ltd, 1983, Reprinted August 2010, ISBN 81-8482-136-0
Published & Printed by Amar Chitra Katha Pvt. Ltd., 14 Marthanda, 4th floor,
84 Dr. Annie Besant Road, Mumbai 400 018. India

GURU ARJAN



...HIS ELDER BROTHER MAHADEV WAS IN MEDITATION...



...AND HIS ELDEST BROTHER, PRITHICHAND, WAS BUSY POCKETING THE OFFERINGS MEANT FOR THE GURU.



THE GURU HIMSELF WAS TALKING TO A COUSIN FROM LAHORE.



I WOULD BE HONOURED IF YOU COULD ATTEND MY SON'S WEDDING.

I CANNOT LEAVE AMRITSAR AT THE MOMENT, BROTHER.

BUT ONE OF MY SONS WILL CERTAINLY ATTEND THE WEDDING.



THE GURU SENT FOR HIS SONS AND TOLD THEM ABOUT THE WEDDING AT LAHORE.

YOU NEED ME HERE, FATHER. WHO ELSE WILL ENSURE THAT THE OFFERINGS DO NOT FALL INTO THE WRONG HANDS?

FATHER, PLEASE DON'T ASK ME TO ATTEND THE WEDDING. YOU KNOW HOW I DISLIKE RITUALS AND CROWDS.

WHEN THE GURU LOOKED AT ARJAN—

I WOULD GO ANYWHERE YOU ASK ME TO, ON ANY MISSION, HOWEVER DIFFICULT IT MIGHT BE.

AND ALL YOU ASK OF ME IS TO ATTEND A WEDDING. OF COURSE, I'LL GO. WITH PLEASURE.

THEN GET READY TO LEAVE. I WANT YOU TO STAY IN LAHORE FOR SOME TIME AND GIVE DISCOURSES THERE.

HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY, FATHER?

TILL I SEND FOR YOU.

AS ARJAN SET OUT FOR LAHORE—

WITH HIM OUT OF THE WAY, IT WILL BE EASIER TO PERSUADE FATHER TO NOMINATE ME AS HIS SUCCESSOR.

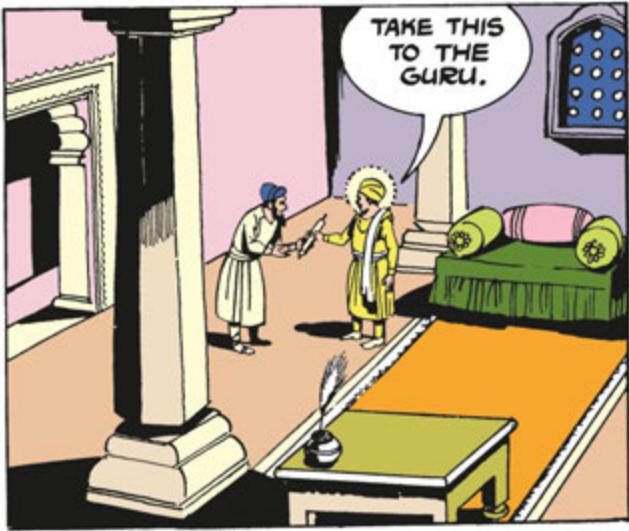


AFTER THE WEDDING, ARJAN STAYED ON AT LAHORE...



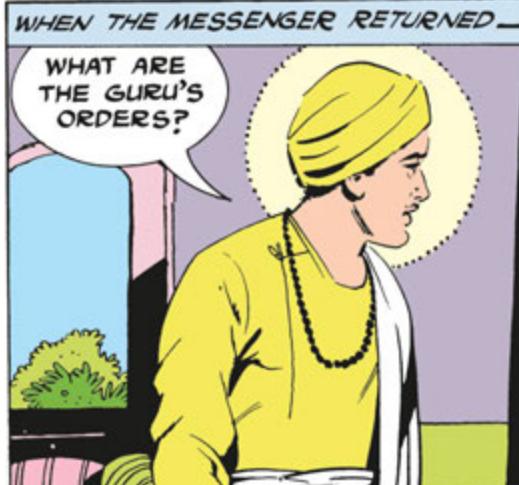
...BUT HE LONGED TO BE BACK AT AMRITSAR.

...ALL THESE DAYS I HAVE YEARNED FOR YOU. MY SOUL CRIES FOR MY GURU LIKE THE CHATAK* CRIES FOR A DROP OF RAIN...

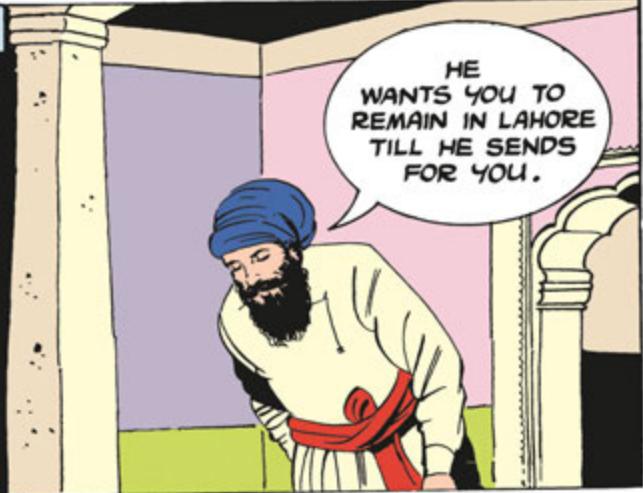


WHEN THE MESSENGER RETURNED—

WHAT ARE THE GURU'S ORDERS?



HE WANTS YOU TO REMAIN IN LAHORE TILL HE SENDS FOR YOU.



* A LEGENDARY BIRD WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO DRINK WATER STRAIGHT FROM THE CLOUDS

AFTER A WHILE, ARJAN WROTE AGAIN.

...IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I HAVE SEEN MY LORD. BLESSED IS THE LAND WHERE YOU DWELL, O MY SAINT, MY FRIEND, AND LORD...



...ARJAN WROTE YET ANOTHER.

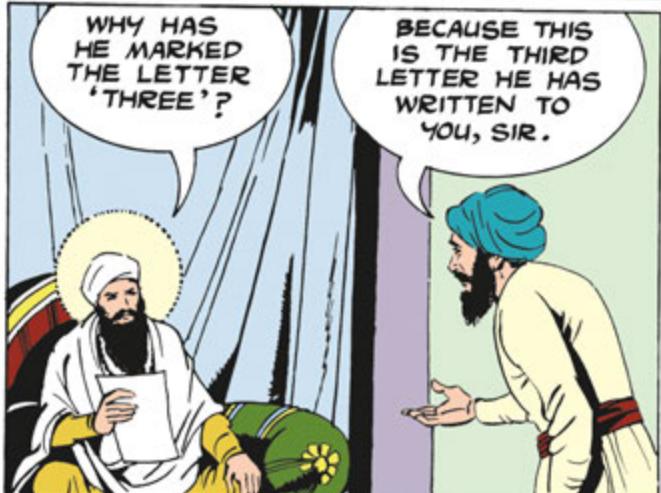
GIVE THIS TO THE GURU AND TO NO ONE ELSE.

VERY WELL, SIR.



WHEN THE GURU RECEIVED THE LETTER HE OPENED IT AT ONCE.

...I SPEND SLEEPLESS NIGHTS LONGING FOR A GLIMPSE OF MY GURU...



THE THIRD LETTER? WHERE ARE THE OTHER TWO THEN?

I DELIVERED THEM TO PRITHICHAND, SIR.



AT THAT MOMENT, PRITHICHAND WALKED IN.

PRITHI,
WHERE ARE THE
LETTERS FROM
ARJAN ?

LETTERS?
FROM
ARJAN?

JUST THEN PRITHICHAND NOTICED THE MESSENGER.

THE WRETCH !
WHO ALLOWED HIM
TO MEET THE
GURU ?

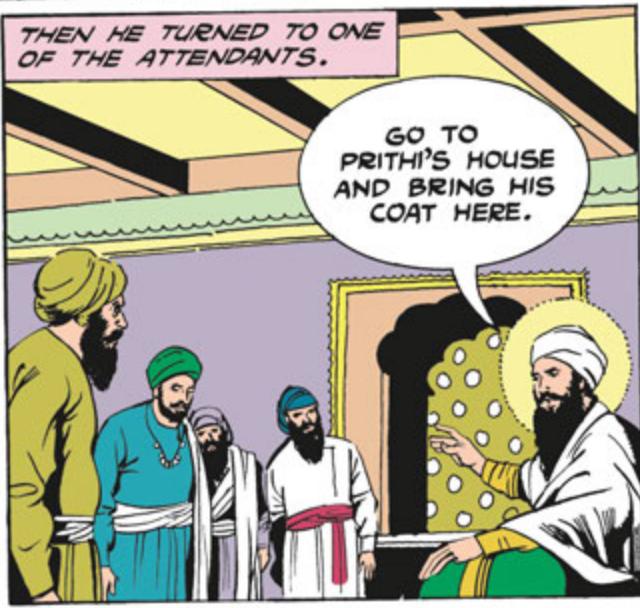
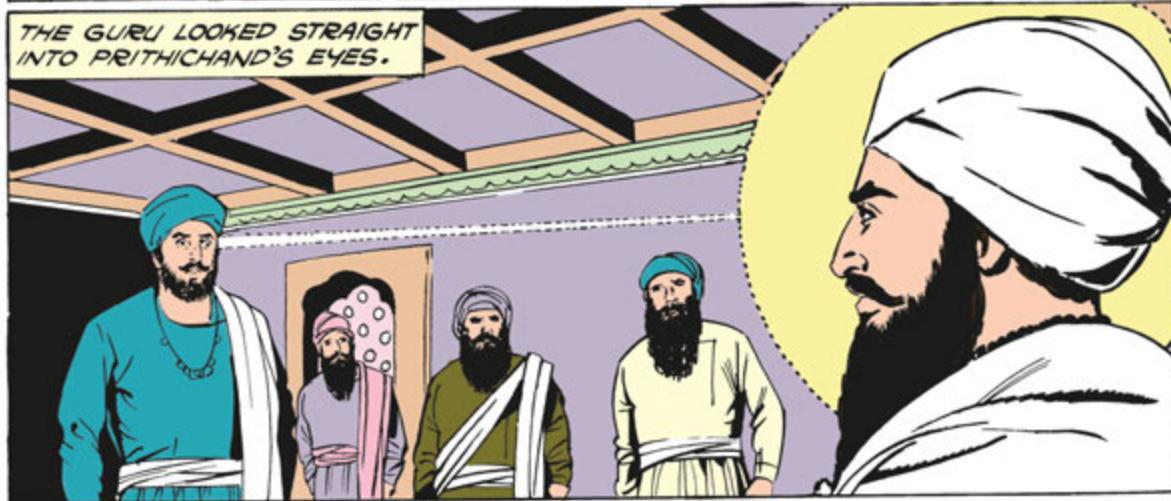
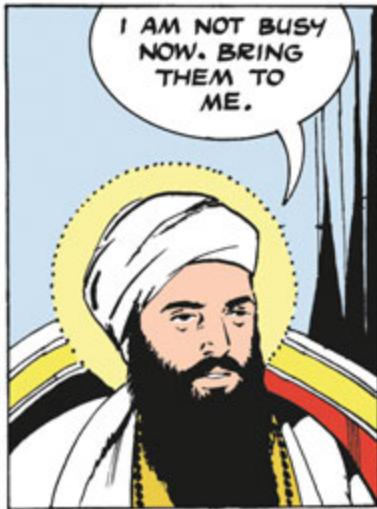
PRITHI, I AM
WAITING FOR
AN ANSWER.

I'M SORRY, FATHER.
I AM TRYING TO
REMEMBER... LETTER
FROM ARJAN...
UM-M-M...

YES, FATHER. I VAGUELY
REMEMBER. YES, YES.
ARJAN DID SEND
LETTERS... TWO
OF THEM...

WHY
DIDN'T YOU
BRING THEM
TO ME ?

YOU
WERE BUSY,
FATHER...



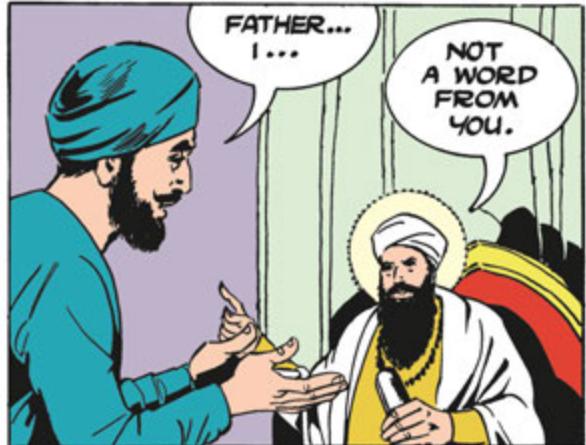
THE SERVANT SOON RETURNED WITH THE COAT.

LOOK INTO THE POCKET.
YOU WILL FIND ARJAN'S LETTERS THERE.

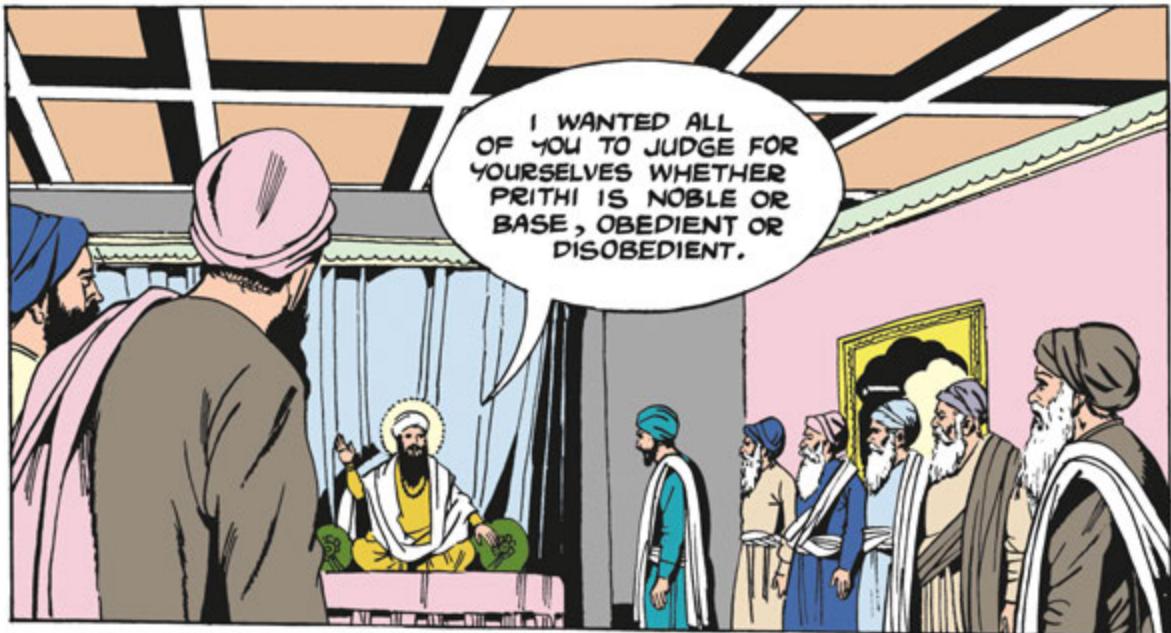
THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY HELD ITS BREATH AS THE ATTENDANT SEARCHED THE POCKET.



THE NEXT MINUTE—



I WANTED ALL OF YOU TO JUDGE FOR YOURSELVES WHETHER PRITHI IS NOBLE OR BASE, OBEDIENT OR DISOBEDIENT.



PRITHICAND WALKED AWAY WITH HIS HEAD HUNG LOW.



ARJAN WAS RECALLED.



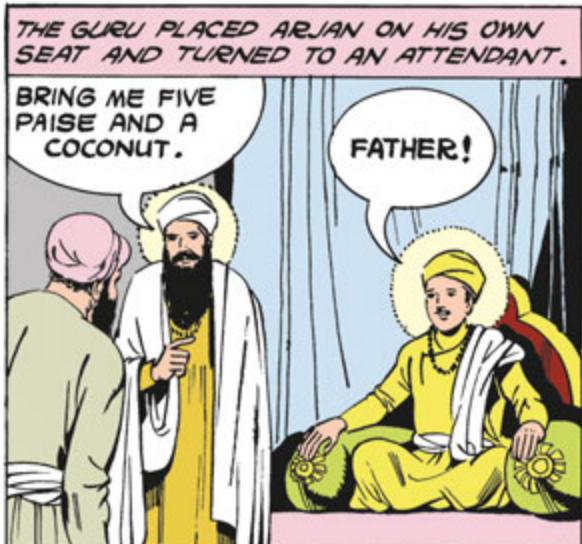
MAY
I SERVE YOU
AND NEVER AGAIN
BE SEPARATED
FROM YOU FOR
AN INSTANT!



THE GURU PLACED ARJAN ON HIS OWN SEAT AND TURNED TO AN ATTENDANT.

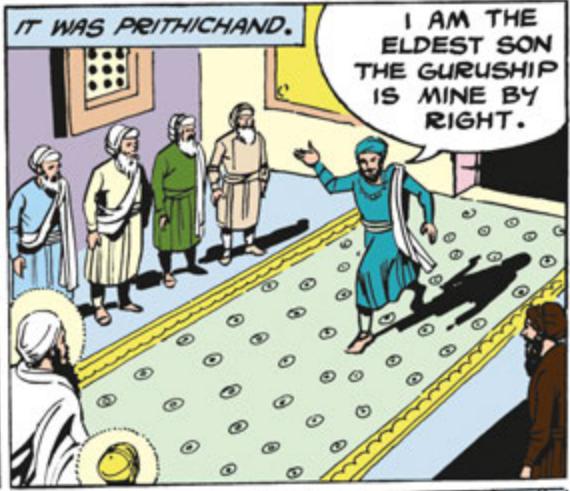
BRING ME FIVE PAISE AND A COCONUT.

FATHER!



YES, ARJAN. THE SIKHS HAVE FOUND THEIR FUTURE GURU IN YOU.





NOT LONG AFTERWARDS GURU RAMDAS BREATHED HIS LAST.
THE EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD ARJAN BECAME THE GURU. ONE DAY—

PRITHICHAND COMPLAINS
THAT HE HAS BEEN LEFT WITH
NOTHING FOR HIS
MAINTENANCE.

LET
HIM BE
GIVEN ALL MY
PROPERTY.

GURU ARJAN CONTINUED THE GOOD
WORK OF GURU RAMDAS. SOON THE
AMRITSAR TANK WAS READY—

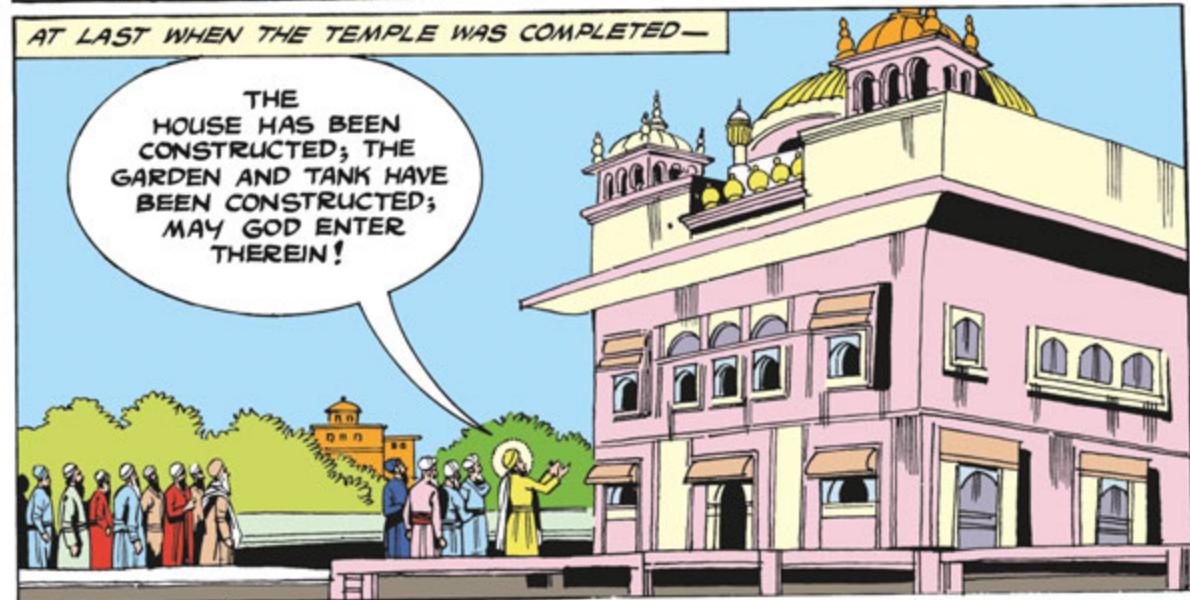
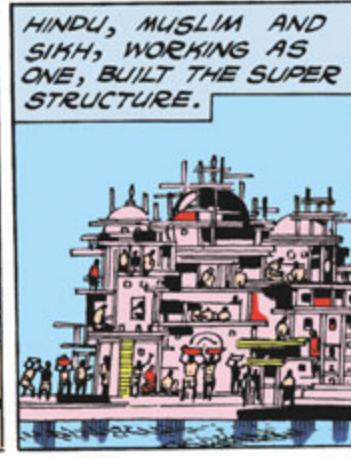
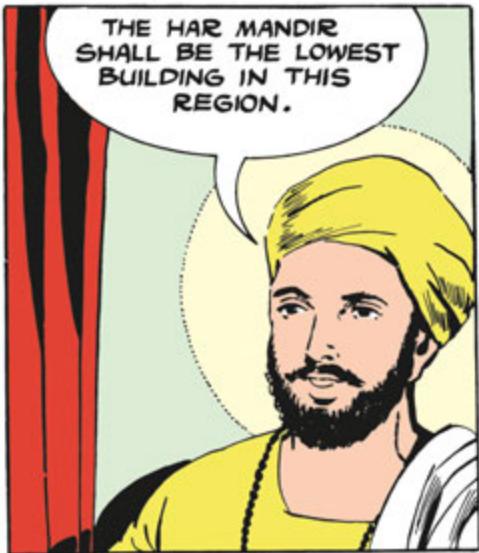
LET'S BUILD
A TEMPLE IN THE
MIDDLE OF THE
TANK.

YES,
SIR. LET'S BUILD
A LOFTY TEMPLE—
THE TALLEST IN
THE LAND.

WHY DO YOU
WANT A TALL
TEMPLE?

THE TALLER IT
IS, THE GREATER
WILL BE THE
RESPECT IT
COMMANDS.

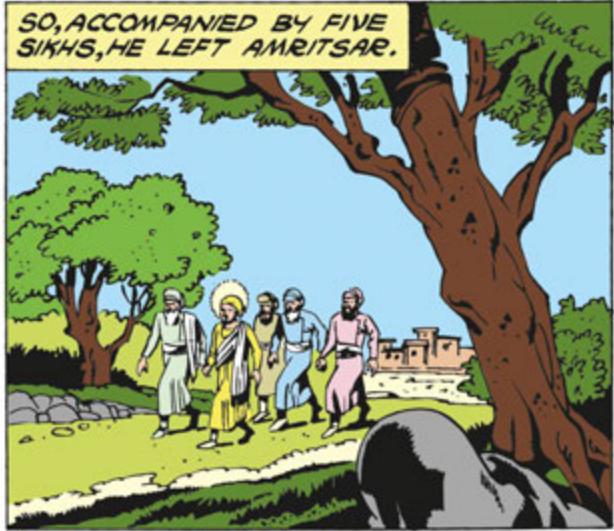
NO, THE
MORE LADEN
A TREE IS WITH
FRUIT THE LOWER
ITS BRANCHES
BEND.



BUT PRITHICHAND'S CONTINUED HOSTILITY DISTURBED THE GURU.



SO, ACCOMPANIED BY FIVE SIKHS, HE LEFT AMRITSAR.



THEY VISITED SEVERAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES. ONCE WHEN THEY WERE PASSING THROUGH THE VILLAGE KHANPUR*—

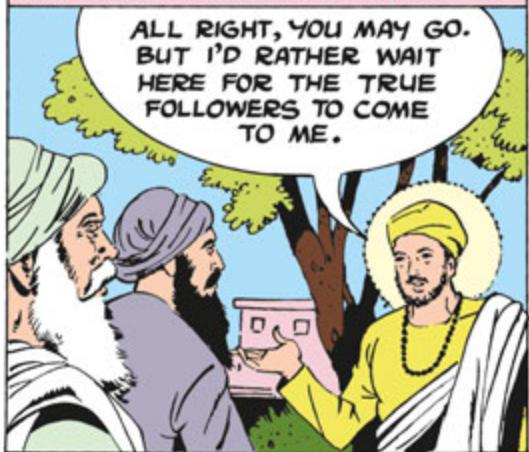
LOOK AT THAT MANSION, GURU. I'M SURE THE OWNERS WOULD LOVE TO HAVE US STAY WITH THEM.

WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE, BIDHICHAND? OFTEN THE AFFLUENT ARE NOT AS HOSPITALITE AS THE POOR.



BUT WHEN BIDHICHAND INSISTED THAT THERE WAS NO HARM IN TRYING—

ALL RIGHT, YOU MAY GO. BUT I'D RATHER WAIT HERE FOR THE TRUE FOLLOWERS TO COME TO ME.



A SHORT WHILE LATER BIDHICHAND RETURNED.

YOU WERE RIGHT! THOSE PEOPLE WERE VERY RUDE.



DON'T TAKE IT TO HEART. LET'S REST HERE FOR A WHILE.

SO THEY CHOSE A SHADY TREE AND SETTLED UNDER IT. JUST THEN HEMA, A POOR CORN-GRINDER, CAME THERE.

GURU, IT'S MY GOOD FORTUNE THAT YOU'RE HERE! PLEASE GRACE MY HUMBLE HUT.



THE GURU WENT TO HEMA'S HUT AND STAYED THERE WITH HIS FOLLOWERS.

ROTIS AND ONIONS, THAT'S ALL I HAVE TO OFFER YOU!

TO ME THEY ARE SWEETER THAN ALL THE DELICACIES OF THE WORLD.



AFTER THE MEAL —

PLEASE SLEEP ON THIS BLANKET.

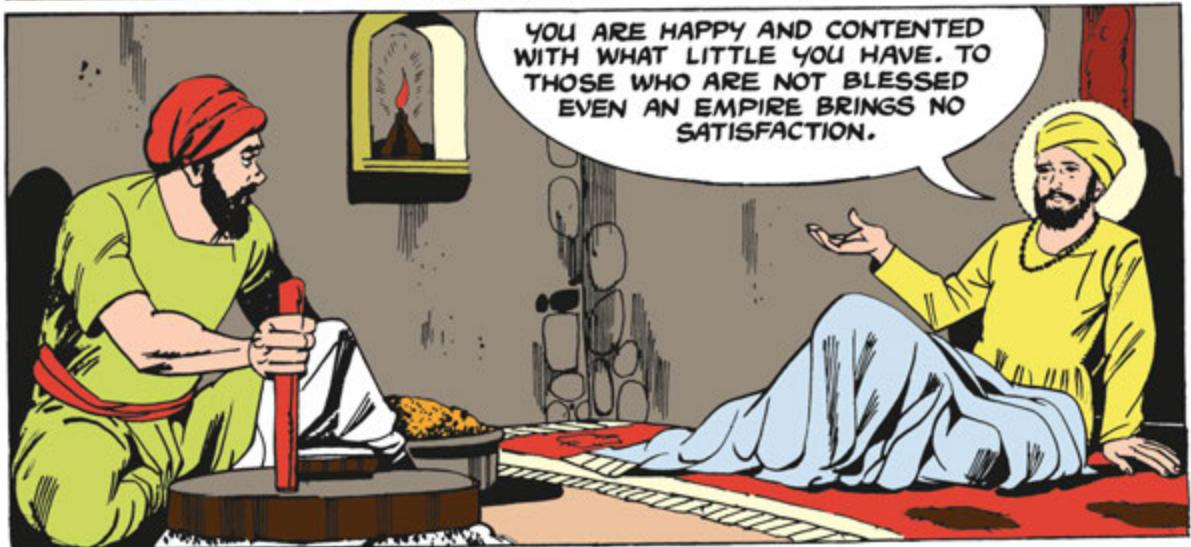


THE GURU RESTED AS HEMA GROUND THE CORN.

YOU ARE A BLESSED SOUL, HEMA.



YOU ARE HAPPY AND CONTENTED WITH WHAT LITTLE YOU HAVE. TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT BLESSED EVEN AN EMPIRE BRINGS NO SATISFACTION.



AFTER HIS LONG TOUR, GURU ARJAN RETURNED TO AMRITSAR MUCH TO THE ANNOYANCE OF PRITHICHAND



A FAITHFUL SIKH INFORMED THE GURU OF PRITHI'S EVIL PLAN.

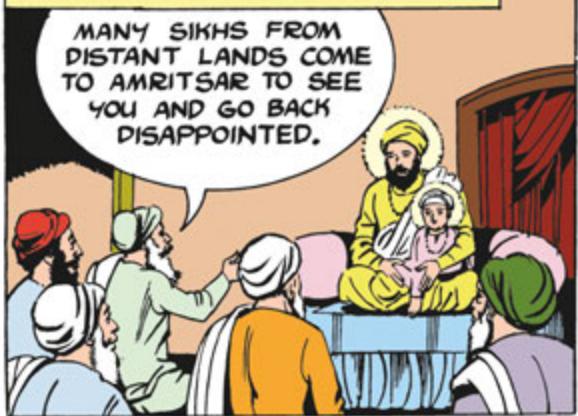
O GURU, I BEG YOU TO LEAVE AMRITSAR.



THUS GURU ARJAN LEFT AMRITSAR FOR THE SECOND TIME. HE TOOK SHELTER IN THE VILLAGE, WADALI, WHERE HIS WIFE WAS DELIVERED OF A SON WHO WOULD LATER SUCCEED HIM AS GURU HARGOBIND.

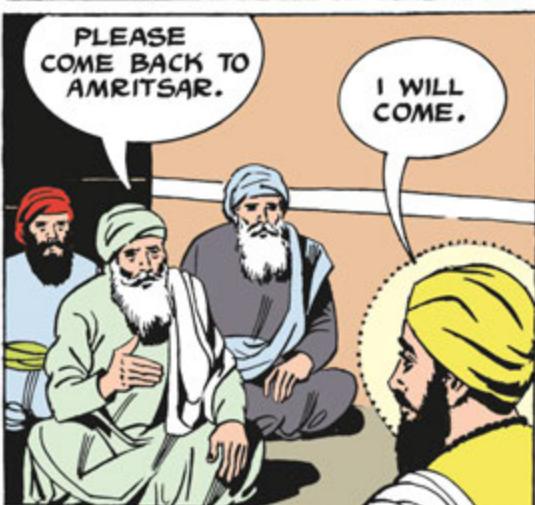


WHEN HARGOBIND WAS TWO YEARS OLD A DEPUTATION OF THE SIKHS OF AMRITSAR VISITED WADALI.



PLEASE
COME BACK TO
AMRITSAR.

I WILL
COME.



ON HIS RETURN TO AMRITSAR THE GURU WENT STRAIGHT TO THE HAR MANDIR.



ALL THE SIKHS OF AMRITSAR, EXCEPT PRITHICHAND, WERE HAPPY TO SEE THEIR GURU BACK.



MEANWHILE GURU ARJAN DECIDED TO COMPILE THE HYMNS OF ALL THE GURUS.

BHAI GURDAS,
I NEED THE ORIGINAL HYMNS OF GURU NANAK. MOHAN, MY MATERNAL UNCLE, HAS THEM WITH HIM.



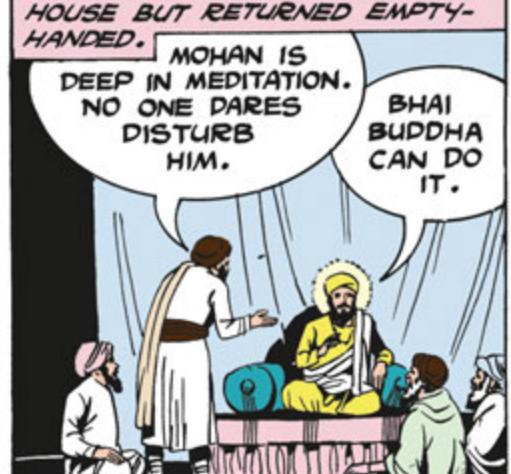
I'LL VISIT MOHAN AND GET THE HYMNS FOR YOU.



BHAI GURDAS WENT TO MOHAN'S HOUSE BUT RETURNED EMPTY-HANDED.

MOHAN IS DEEP IN MEDITATION.
NO ONE DARES DISTURB HIM.

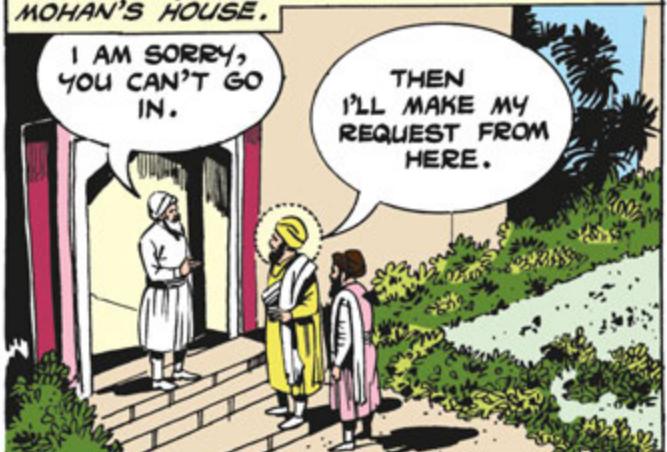
BHAI BUDDHA CAN DO IT.



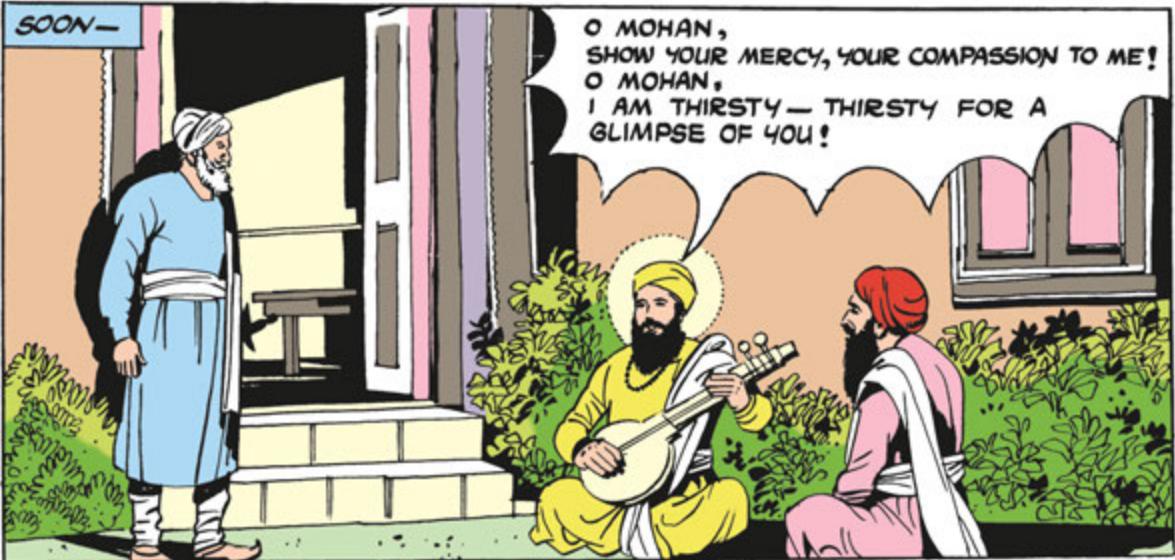
WHEN BHAI BUDDHA TOO RETURNED WITHOUT THE HYMNS, GURU ARJAN HIMSELF WENT TO MOHAN'S HOUSE.

I AM SORRY,
YOU CAN'T GO IN.

THEN
I'LL MAKE MY REQUEST FROM HERE.



SOON—



AFTER A WHILE MOHAN
CAME TO THE WINDOW.



BUT GURU ARJAN WAS NOT PUT
OFF. HE CONTINUED HIS EFFORT.



AT LAST MOHAN RELENTED AND CALLED THE
GURU IN.

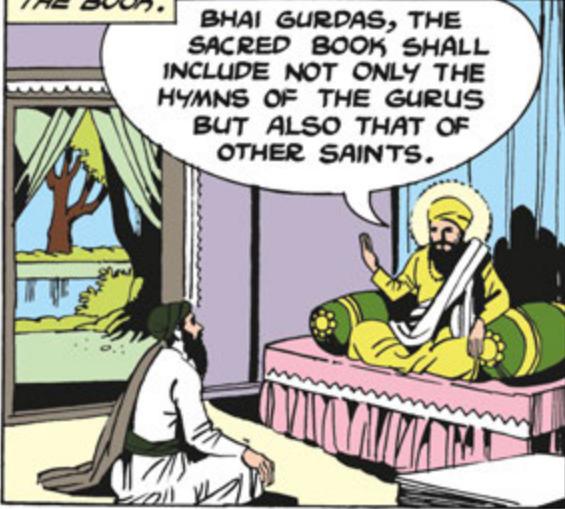


YOU SHALL HAVE THEM.
FOR NOW I'M SURE
THEY WILL BE IN THE
RIGHT HANDS. MAY
GOD BLESS
YOU.



THE GURU HAD A TANK BUILT AT A SECLUDED SPOT CLOSE TO WHICH HE CAMPED AND BEGAN WORK ON THE BOOK.

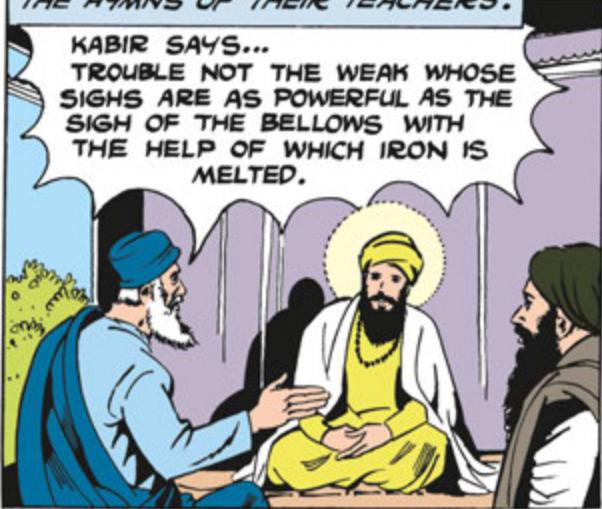
BHAI GURDAS, THE SACRED BOOK SHALL INCLUDE NOT ONLY THE HYMNS OF THE GURUS BUT ALSO THAT OF OTHER SAINTS.



AT THE INVITATION OF THE GURU, FOLLOWERS OF DIFFERENT SECTS, BOTH HINDU AND MUSLIM, CAME TO RAMSAR AND RECITED THE HYMNS OF THEIR TEACHERS.

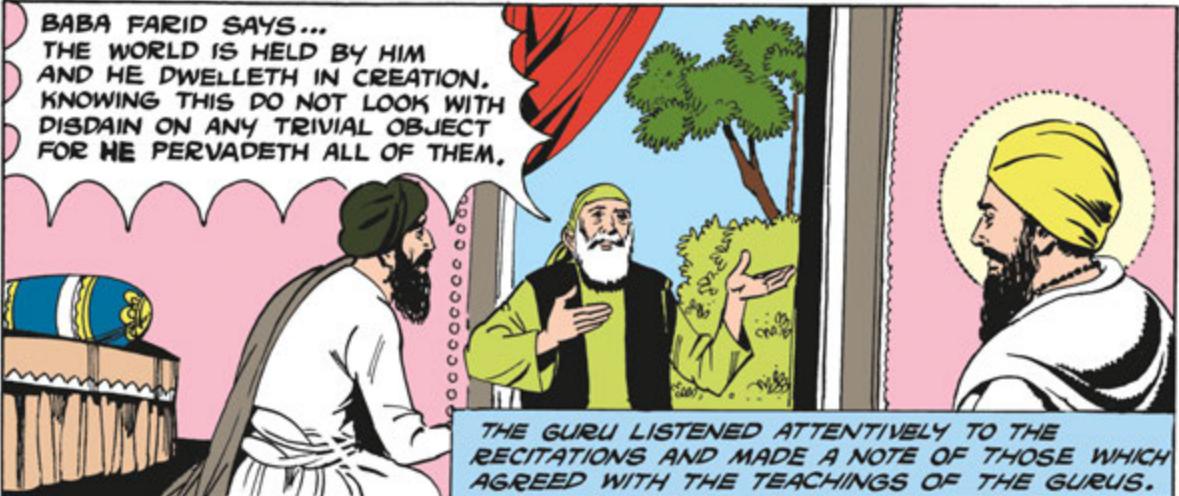
KABIR SAYS...

TRouble NOT THE WEAK WHOSE SIGHs ARE AS POWERFUL AS THE SIGH OF THE BELLOWS WITH THE HELP OF WHICH IRON IS MELTED.



BABA FARID SAYS...

THE WORLD IS HELD BY HIM AND HE DWELLETH IN CREATION. KNOWING THIS DO NOT LOOK WITH DISDAIN ON ANY TRIVIAL OBJECT FOR HE PERVERADETH ALL OF THEM.



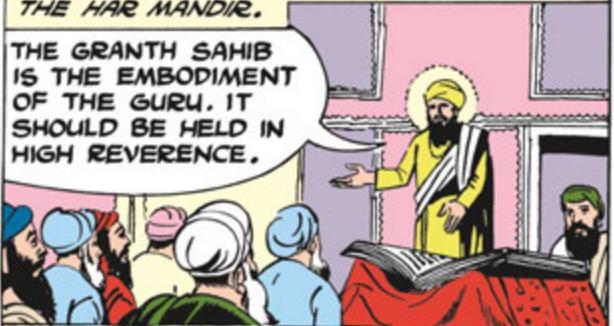
THE GURU LISTENED ATTENTIVELY TO THE RECITATIONS AND MADE A NOTE OF THOSE WHICH AGREED WITH THE TEACHINGS OF THE GURUS.

AFTER THE SELECTIONS WERE MADE THE GURU DICTATED THE HYMNS TO BHAI GURDAS.



THE GURU CALLED THE COMPILATION GRANTH SAHIB AND INSTALLED IT AT THE HAR MANDIR.

THE GRANTH SAHIB IS THE EMBODIMENT OF THE GURU. IT SHOULD BE HELD IN HIGH REVERENCE.



THE GURU NOMINATED BHAI BUDDHA, THE VENERABLE SIKH, AS THE CUSTODIAN OF THE GRANTH SAHIB.

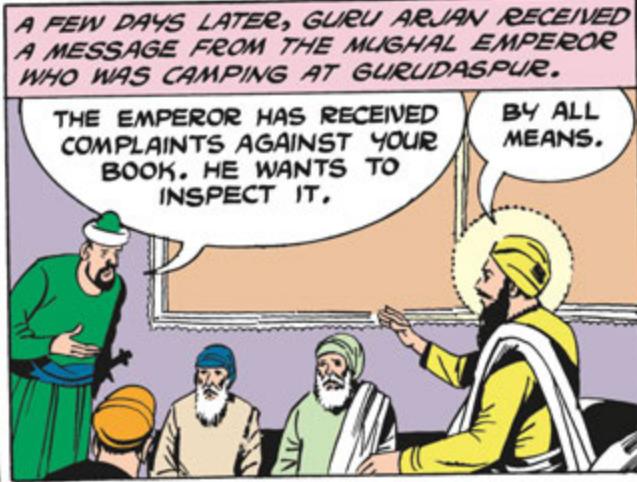
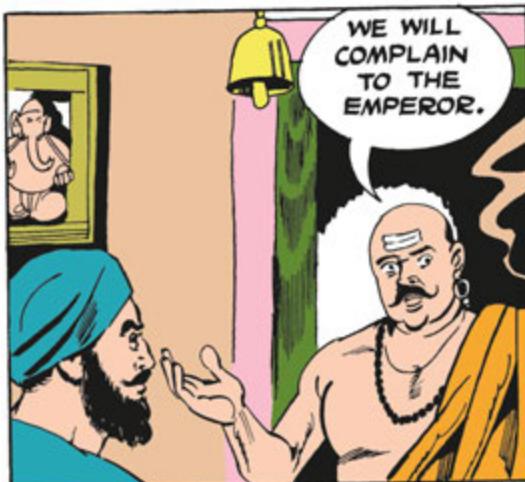
THE GRANTH SAHIB GAVE PRITHICHAND THE OPPORTUNITY HE WAS WAITING FOR.

MAULVI SAHIB, THAT WRETCH WHOM I'M ASHAMED TO OWN AS A BROTHER HAS MADE FUN OF MUSLIM SAINTS IN HIS GRANTH SAHIB.

HE WILL PAY FOR THIS.

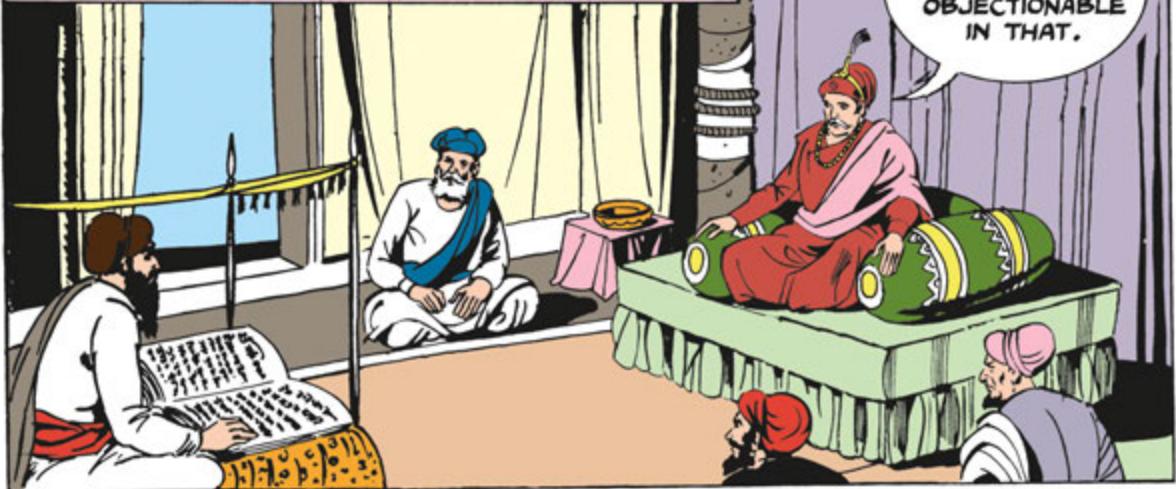
PANDITJI,
HAVE YOU SEEN ARJAN'S HOLY BOOK ? I WISH HE HAD TREATED THE HINDU SAINTS WITH THE RESPECT THEY DESERVE.

WHAT ! HAS HE SPOKEN ILL OF OUR SAINTS ?



AT AKBAR'S CAMP WHEN BHAI GURDAS READ OUT THE FIRST VERSE FROM THE SACRED BOOK—

I DON'T SEE ANYTHING OBJECTIONABLE IN THAT.



THEN CHANDU SHAH, A MINISTER IN AKBAR'S COURT WHO HARBOURED A PERSONAL GRUDGE AGAINST THE GURU, STOOD UP.

JAHANPNAH, ARJAN'S MEN ARE CUNNING AND NOT TO BE TRUSTED. THEY HAVE READ OUT A VERSE WHICH SUITS THEM.

...TILL I ASK YOU TO STOP.

PLEASE TURN THE PAGES...



BHAI GURDAS READ OUT THE VERSE.

O SERVANT OF GOD
THE INSCRUTABLE...
MAKE TRUTH YOUR
PRAYER...

EXCELLENT!

CHANDU SHAH DID NOT GIVE UP.

JAHANPANAH, HOW
CAN WE BE CERTAIN
THAT THE CUNNING SIKH
IS READING THE VERSE
POINTED OUT BY
YOU?

HE COULD
BE RECITING
A SUITABLE
VERSE FROM
MEMORY.

ALL RIGHT, CHANDU
SHAH. YOU TAKE
THE BOOK AND
READ OUT
A VERSE.

UNFORTUNATELY
I CANNOT READ THE
SCRIPT, JAHANPANAH.
IT IS WRITTEN IN
GURUMUKHI.

GET
SOMEONE WHO
CAN READ
GURUMUKHI
THEN.

CHANDU SHAH FOUND A MAN WHO COULD READ
GURUMUKHI AND WHOM HE COULD TRUST.

SAHIB PIYAL
WILL READ THE
BOOK, JAHANPANAH.
NOW YOU WILL
KNOW ITS TRUE
COLOUR.

YOU
SELECT THE
VERSE, CHANDU
SHAH.

SAHIB DIYAL READ OUT THE VERSE CHOSEN BY CHANDU SHAH.

YOU FASTEN A STONE TO YOUR NECK AND SEE NOT GOD WHO DWELLS IN THE HEART...

TRUE, VERY TRUE.

AKBAR LISTENED TO SEVERAL VERSES AND THEN GAVE HIS VERDICT.

I FIND NEITHER PRAISE NOR BLAME OF ANY ONE IN THIS BOOK. IT ONLY SPEAKS OF LOVE AND DEVOTION TO GOD.

IT IS A VOLUME WORTHY OF REVERENCE.

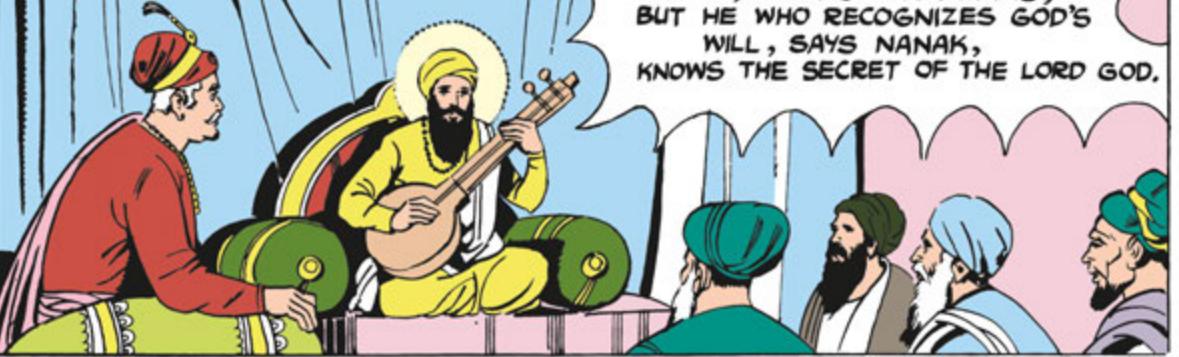
BHAI GURDAS WAS INVESTED WITH ROBES OF HONOUR.

PLEASE CONVEY MY RESPECTFUL SALUTATIONS TO THE GURU. I WILL PERSONALLY CALL ON HIM ON MY RETURN FROM LAHORE.

TRUE TO HIS WORD AKBAR LATER CALLED ON THE GURU AT AMRITSAR.

O GURU, SING ME A HYMN WHICH WILL BRING PEACE TO MY SOUL.

ONE MAN INVOVES RAM,
ANOTHER KHUDA;
SOME BATHE IN THE GANGA
OTHERS VISIT MECCA;
SOME CALL THEMSELVES
HINDUS, OTHERS MUSALMANS;
BUT HE WHO RECOGNIZES GOD'S
WILL, SAYS NANAK,
KNOWS THE SECRET OF THE LORD GOD.



AS A RESULT OF AKBAR'S VISIT, THE GURU'S FAME ONLY INCREASED.

OUR BRICKBATS TURN INTO BOUQUETS WHEN THEY REACH ARJAN. WHAT SHOULD WE DO NEXT, PRITHICHAND?

JUST LIE LOW FOR A WHILE.

A FEW MONTHS LATER, EMPEROR AKBAR DIED. AND WHEN HIS SON JAHANGIR SUCCEEDED HIM, PRITHICHAND AND CHANDU SHAH FOUND THEIR OPPORTUNITY.

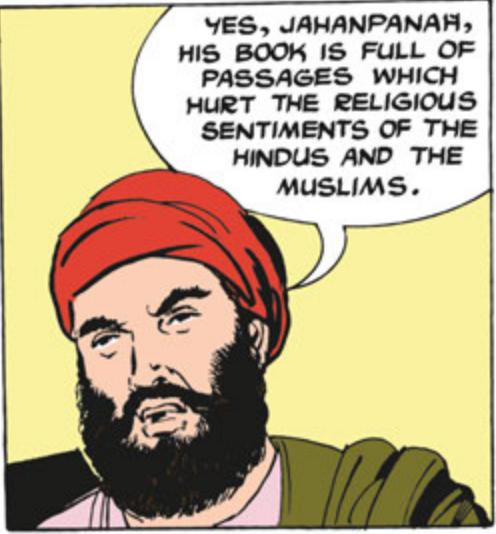
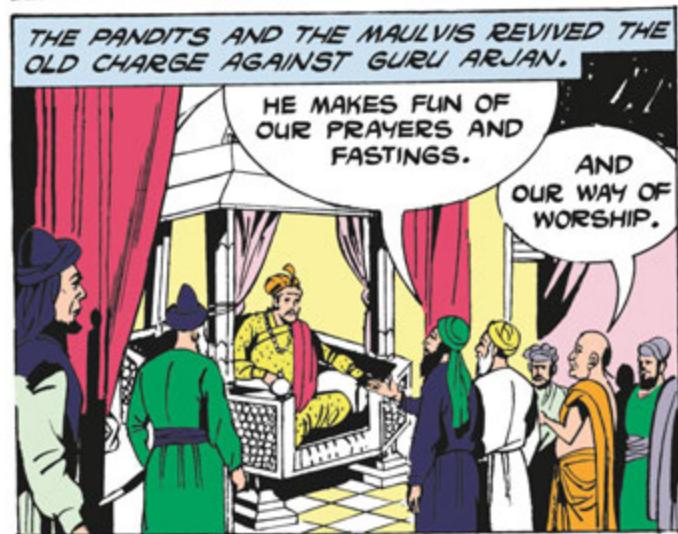
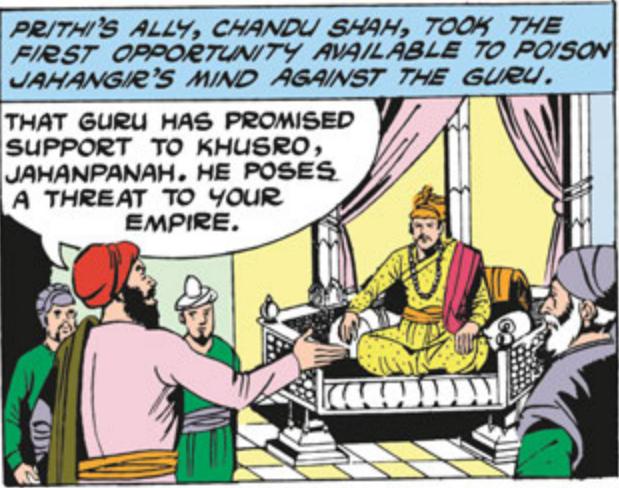
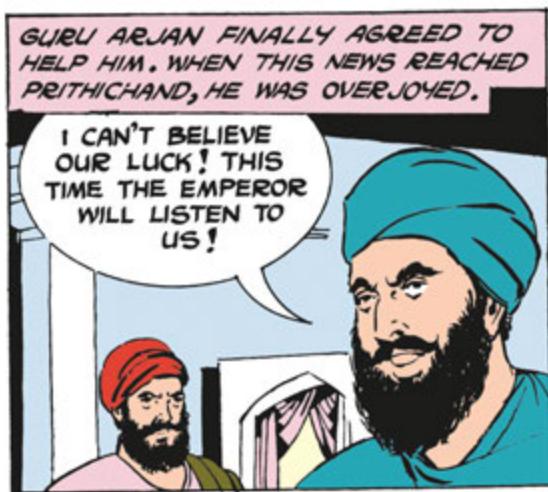
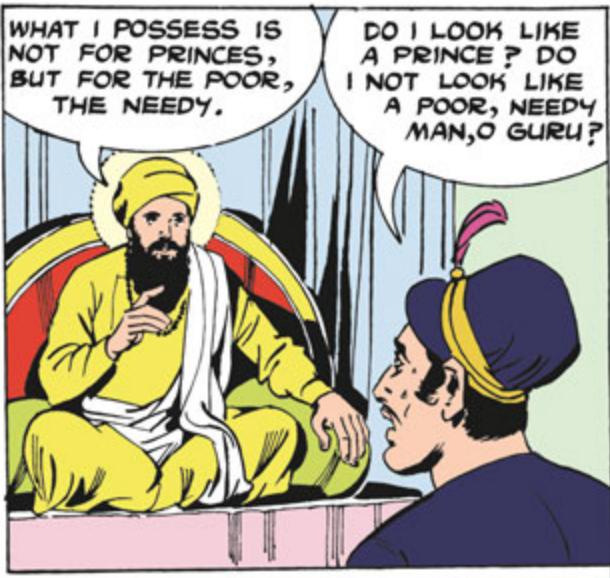
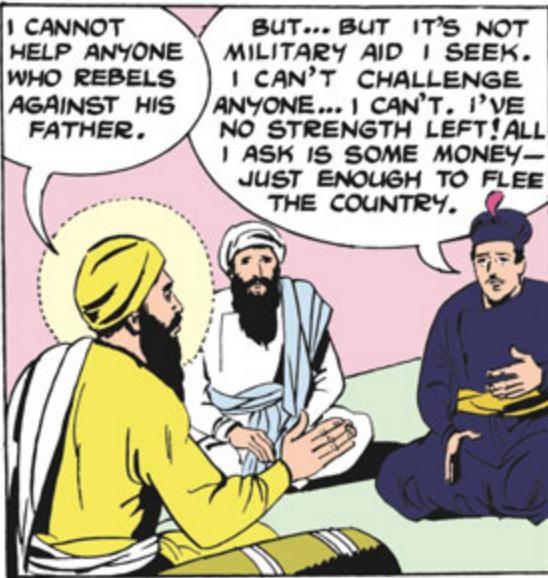
WE CAN WORK ON JAHANGIR. I HEARD HE'LL SOON BE ARRIVING HERE IN PURSUIT OF HIS REBELLIOUS SON, KHUSRO.

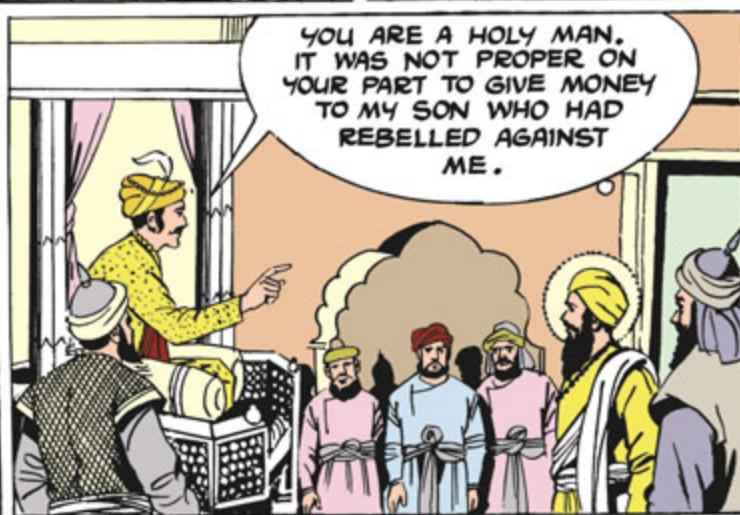
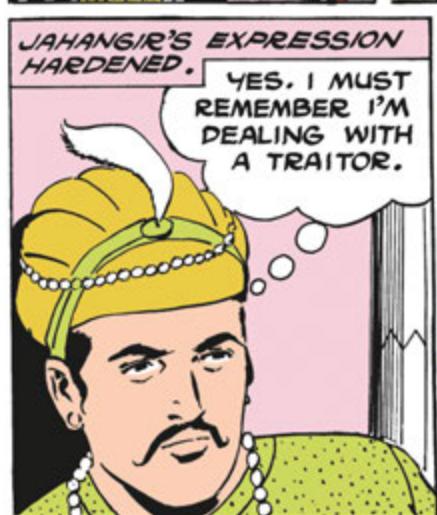


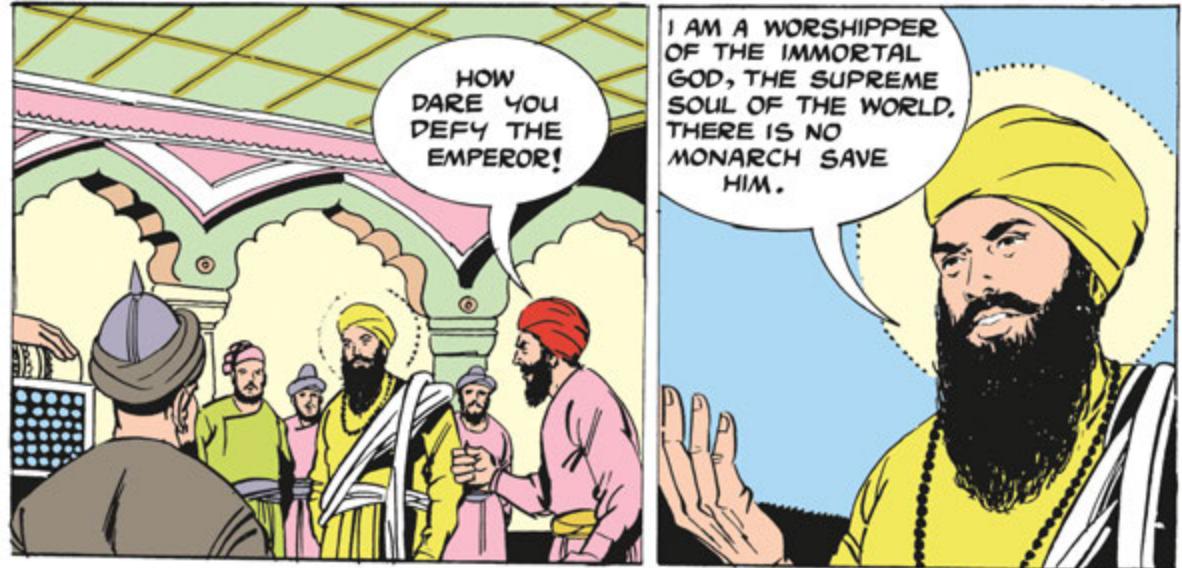
SOMETIME LATER, WHEN THE UNFORTUNATE PRINCE KHUSRO ARRIVED IN THE PUNJAB, HE SOUGHT HELP FROM THE ONLY PERSON WHO, HE KNEW, WOULD HELP HIM.

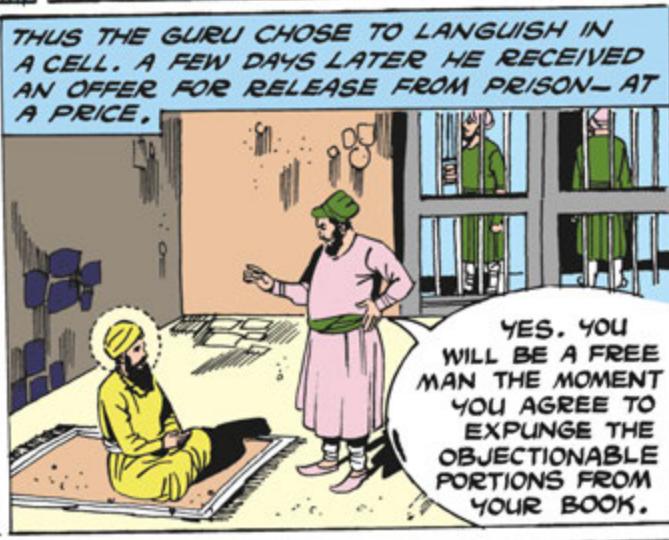
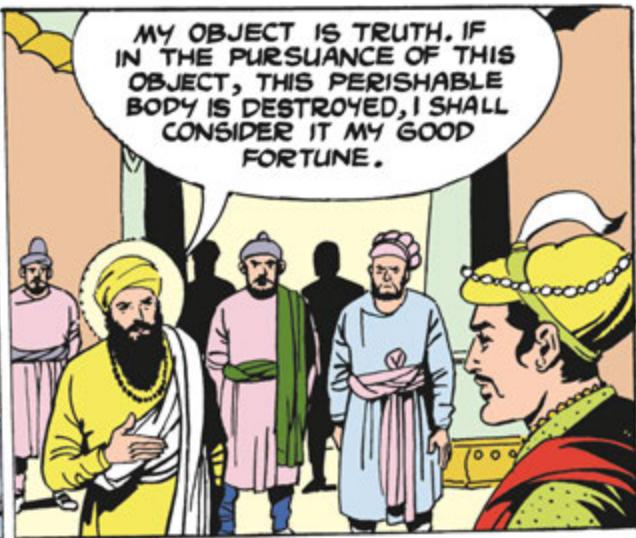
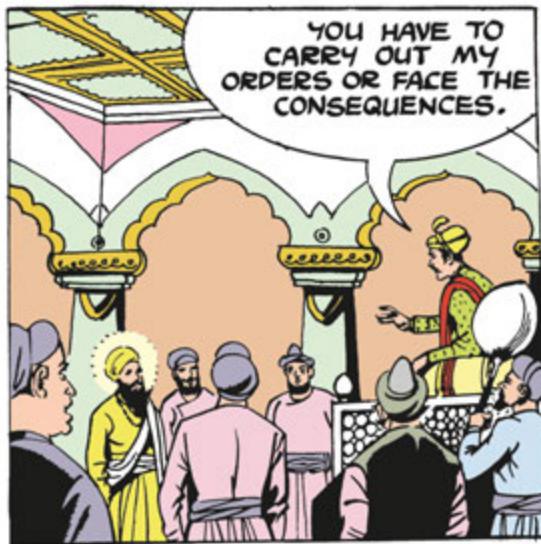
GURU, PLEASE HELP ME! I HAVE NO ONE TO TURN TO!







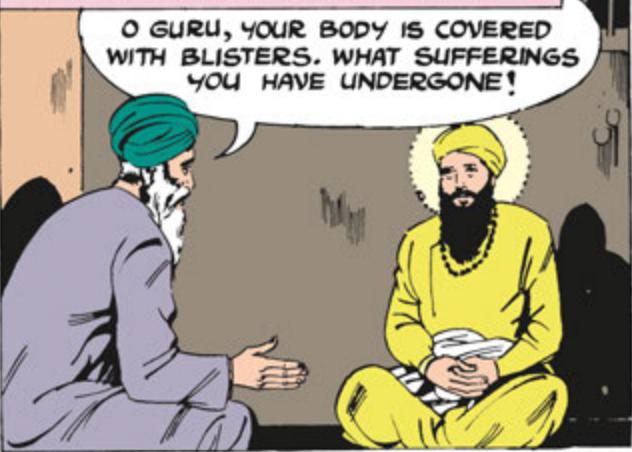




IT WAS NO EMPTY THREAT. THE GURU WAS SUBJECTED TO SEVERE TORTURE. YET HE DID NOT GROAN IN PAIN NOR DID HE CURSE HIS TORMENTORS IN ANGUISH. HE BORE IT ALL WITH EQUANIMITY.



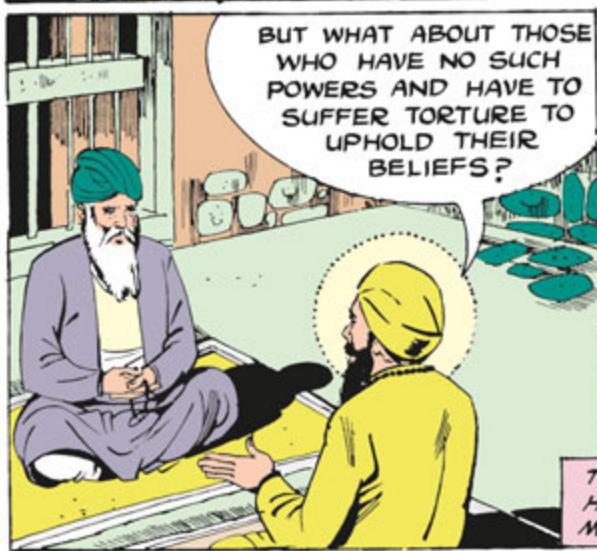
MIAN MIR, THE MUSLIM SAINT, AN OLD FRIEND AND ADMIRER, BURST INTO TEARS WHEN HE VISITED THE GURU.



WHY DO YOU ENDURE SUCH SUFFERINGS WHEN YOU POSSESS SUPERNATURAL POWERS WITH WHICH YOU CAN DESTROY YOUR TORMENTORS?

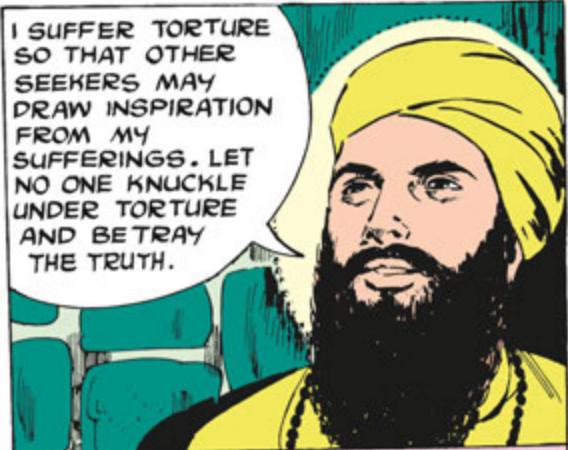


BUT WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE NO SUCH POWERS AND HAVE TO SUFFER TORTURE TO UPHOLD THEIR BELIEFS?



I SUFFER TORTURE SO THAT OTHER SEEKERS MAY DRAW INSPIRATION FROM MY SUFFERINGS. LET NO ONE KNUCKLE UNDER TORTURE AND BETRAY THE TRUTH.

THUS GURU ARJAN WILLINGLY SUBMITTED HIMSELF TO TORTURE AND GAVE UP HIS MORTAL BODY TO UPHOLD THE IMMORTAL TRUTH.





Guru Ramdas, the fourth Guru, initiated the construction of the pool he called Amritsar – the pool of nectar.

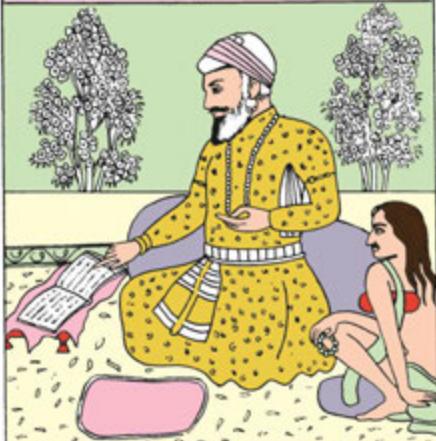
However, the temple he built was destroyed several times by Afghan invaders.



The temple as it stands today came into being in 1764. Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims contributed money for the renovation of the temple.



His son, Guru Arjan, completed it, and also had a temple, the Har Mandir, built in the middle of the pool.

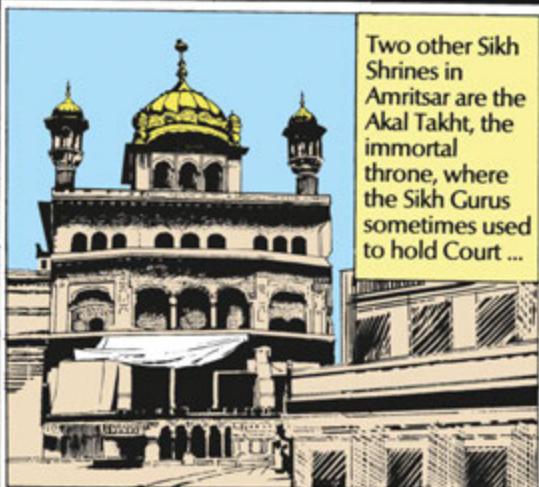


Then in 1803, Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave a donation of five lakhs ...



... to rebuild the temple in marble and copper, overlaid with gold foil.



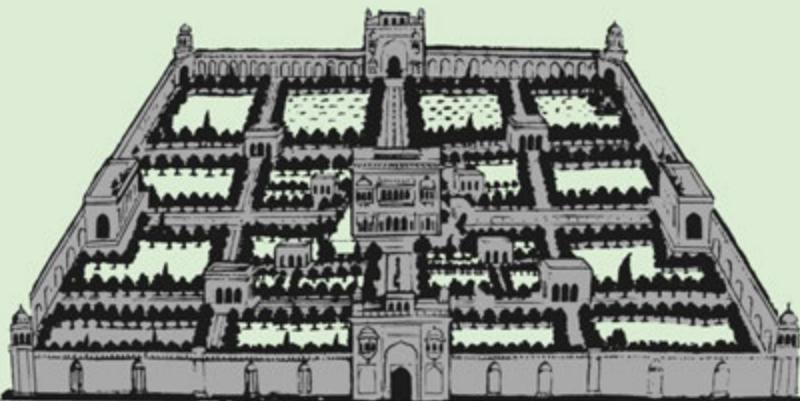


Two other Sikh Shrines in Amritsar are the Akal Takht, the immortal throne, where the Sikh Gurus sometimes used to hold Court ...

... and the famous tower of Baba Atal which was erected in memory of Atal Rai, son of Har Gobind, the Sixth Guru.



Maharaja Ranjit Singh used to visit Amritsar at regular intervals. For his stay there, he built a small palace in the Rambagh gardens.



He also built a fort, Govindgarh, outside Amritsar.



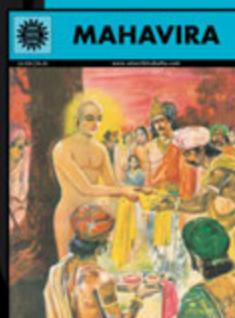
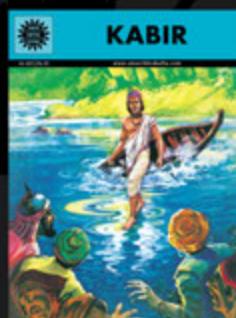
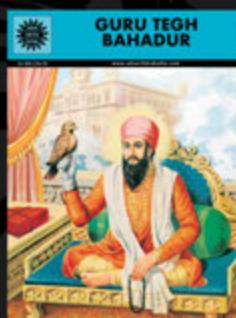
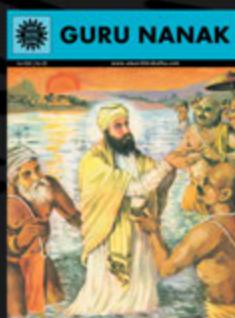
At Jallianwala Bagh, not far from Har Mandir, is the memorial to the martyrs of the massacre of April 13, 1919.



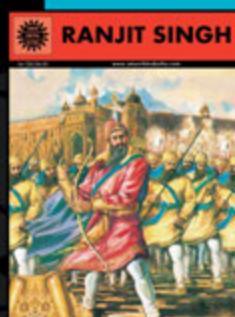
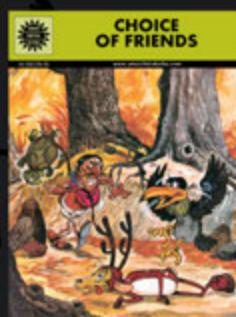
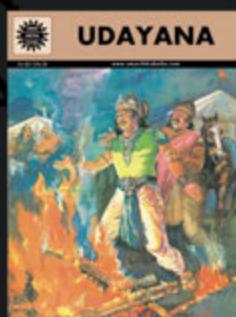
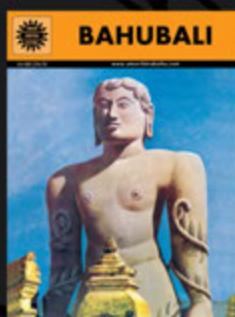
GURU ARJAN

When Guru Ramdas chose his youngest son, Arjanmal, to succeed him as the fifth guru of the Sikhs, it created a lot of ill-will in his eldest son, Prithichand. But the choice was not wrong. Guru Arjan was the very embodiment of love, humility and courage. His greatest contribution to Sikhism was the compilation of the Guru Granth Sahib and the construction of the Har Mandir Sahib in Amritsar.. He was the first Sikh martyr and by his death inspired his followers to uphold the truth under any pressure.

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- NARAYAN MURTHY, CHIEF MENTOR, INFOSYS

