



The Secret of True Cleanliness

A Story from the Travels of Guru Nanak

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Edition: First edition 2025.09.30

Guru Nanak's Travels



Long, long ago, there lived **Guru Nanak**.
He was always smiling and kind.

He wanted people to know how to live truthfully and be good human beings. So, with his friend **Bhai Mardana**, he began traveling to many places.

Everywhere he went, people loved his words and became his students, called **Sikhs**.

The Holy City of Haridwar



On his first journey, **Guru Nanak** came to the famous city of **Haridwar**. People called it the “**Gate of God**”.

He and **Bhai Mardana** camped by the river Ganges for the night. It was the festival of **Vaisakhi**, and many people had come to celebrate.

The Fake Holy Man



Near their camp, a man called **Vaishnu Sadh** was staying. He pretended to be very holy and wise. From far and wide, people came to meet him. They thought he was a true teacher.

But **Guru Nanak** could see that this man was only pretending. He decided to camp close by to show everyone the truth.

The Morning Ritual



The next morning, **Vaishnu Sadh** took a bath in the river. Then he got ready to cook his breakfast. He wanted to show everyone how pure and holy he was.

First, he cleaned his cooking area with cow dung. Then he washed his wood sticks in water. He drew special lines around his cooking place to keep it "**pure.**" Finally, he started a fire with the wood.

Guru Nanak watched quietly. He could see that the man was only worried about outside cleanliness. But what about the inside of his heart?

The Test



Guru Nanak sent his friend **Bhai Mardana** to ask for some fire. *"Please go and get some fire from the sadhu,"* said **Guru Nanak**.

When **Bhai Mardana** walked toward the cooking area, something terrible happened. **Vaishnu Sadh** saw him coming and became very angry. He started shouting loudly. *"You have made my cooking place dirty!"* he yelled. *"Your shadow fell on my pure area!"* He picked up a burning stick and chased after **Bhai Mardana**.

Bhai Mardana ran back to **Guru Nanak**, and the angry sadhu followed.

The Angry Words



*"Why are you so angry?" asked **Guru Nanak** calmly. "I only asked for some fire."*

The sadhu was still very mad.

"This man is from a lower caste!" he shouted.

"He is untouchable! His shadow made everything dirty. Now my whole life is ruined!"

Guru Nanak asked, *"How can this happen? Bhai Mardana is also a human being, just like you."*

"No!" said the sadhu. "He is not human. He is untouchable!"

Guru Nanak's Teaching



Guru Nanak shook his head sadly. *"You are wrong,"* he said gently.

"God cannot be fooled by what we see on the outside. God lives in every human heart."

"If your heart is filled with hate, anger, and cruelty, then God will not want to live there. See God in all people. Do not hate someone because of their caste. Hate only bad actions, not people."

The Crowd Gathers



By now, many people had heard the shouting. They came running to see what was happening. The sadhu kept yelling about how his pure life was ruined.

But **Guru Nanak** had something important to say. He sang a beautiful hymn in a clear, strong voice:



"If your heart has lies, meanness, bad talk about others, and angry tricks, then what good are the special lines you draw around your cooking place?

These four bad things are sitting right there with you! Instead, make truth your way of life. Make good actions, your special lines. Make saying God's name, your way of getting clean.

Those who stay away from doing wrong things are loved by God."



The Real Lesson



After **Guru Nanak** finished singing, everyone gathered around to listen. His words were like magic. They made people think about what was really important.

"Stay away from lies, cruelty, saying bad things about others, and anger," taught **Guru Nanak**.

"Instead, live a truthful life. Do good deeds. See God in all people."

A New Beginning



Vaishnu Sadh listened carefully to every word. For the first time, he looked inside his own heart. He saw that it was filled with hate and anger. How could he call himself pure when his heart was so dirty? He felt very sorry for his actions. He realized that **Guru Nanak** was right. What mattered was not the outside, but the inside.

Vaishnu Sadh stepped forward and asked **Guru Nanak** to guide him. He promised never to treat people badly because of their caste again. From that day, he became a true student of **Guru Nanak**, dedicating himself to living with honesty, kindness and helping others.

By serving his community and treating everyone equally, he finally found true happiness.

The Secret of True Cleanliness

Discussion Points

- Why do you think the sadhu was so angry about Bhai Mardana's shadow?
- What do you think Guru Nanak meant when he said "*God lives in every human heart*"?
- Have you ever judged someone by how they looked instead of how they acted?
- What are some good deeds we can do to keep our hearts clean and pure?
- How can we treat everyone fairly, no matter what they look like or where they come from?

About This Story

This story comes from Guru Nanak's amazing travels. For more than 20 years, he went on four long journeys to spread his message of truth and kindness. This event happened in Haridwar during the festival of Vaisakhi.

Guru Nanak's message was simple but powerful: All people are equal in God's eyes. We should judge people by their actions, not by their caste, color, or social status. True purity comes from having a kind and honest heart, not from following outside rituals.

The hymn that Guru Nanak sang that day is still remembered and sung by Sikhs all over the world. It reminds us that what really matters is how we treat others and the goodness in our hearts.

Thank You

This book would not have been possible without the love, support, and encouragement of many wonderful people.

To My Family

Thank you to my family for your constant love, support, and encouragement. Special thanks to my daughter Japji Kaur, who reviewed multiple drafts and illustrations and provided valuable insights from a young reader's perspective.

To Our Reviewers

Special thanks to [Harmanjeet Singh](#). Your thoughtful feedback helped make this story much better and ensured Guru Nanak's message reaches young readers clearly.

To Our Readers

Finally, thank you to the parents, teachers, librarians, and children who will share this story. May it spark meaningful conversations about kindness, truth, and the importance of good deeds in our daily lives.

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