

The Missing Bowl



A Story from the Life of Guru Nanak



Travels of Guru Nanak

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.



A City by the Sea

On his first journey, Guru Nanak came to the famous city of Jagannath Puri. There, he heard about a man called Kaljug Pandit.

This pandit was no true teacher. He tricked people and took their money. Guru Nanak decided it was time to show him the right path.



The Pandit's Tricks

The next day, Guru Nanak and Bhai Mardana went to watch the pandit. He sat cross-legged with his eyes shut, pretending to be very holy. People placed coins in a big bowl in front of him.

Sometimes he opened one eye, then closed the other. "I see this god! I see that god!" he cried. The people gasped in wonder. Then he said, "Close your eyes! I will show you the gods too." Everyone shut their eyes at once.



The Vanishing Bowl

Guru Nanak looked at Bhai Mardana and gave him a small smile. Quietly, Bhai Mardana picked up the money bowl and hid it in the bushes nearby.

When the pandit opened his eyes, the bowl was gone. He turned red with anger “*Who stole my bowl?*” he shouted. “*Do not play tricks with a holy man!*” The crowd grew restless.



Guru Nanak Speaks

Guru Nanak stepped forward and said,
*“Pandit ji, you say you can see gods and
their worlds. Then why can you not see
your own money bowl?”*

The people burst out laughing. *“Pandit ji,
where is your bowl? Why can’t you find it?”*
they asked.

Everyone now understood that the pandit
had been fooling them.



The Lesson

Guru Nanak spoke gently:

“Do not be fooled by people who pretend to be holy. You cannot become good by closing your eyes or making faces. You become good only by doing good deeds.”

The pandit hung his head in shame. He realized his mistakes.



A New Beginning

Kaljug Pandit asked Guru Nanak to guide him. He promised never to cheat people again.

From that day, he became a true student of Guru Nanak, dedicating himself to living with honesty, kindness, and sewa, which is selfless service to others.

By serving his community and living with integrity, he finally found true happiness.

Discussion Points

- How do you think Guru Nanak felt when he saw people being tricked? What would you do if you saw someone being unfair?
- How did Guru Nanak teach the lesson without being mean to the pandit?
- Have you ever seen someone pretend to be something they're not? How did it make you feel?

Discussion Points

- How is doing kind actions different from just pretending to be good?
- What are some good deeds (sewa) we can do every day?

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 meeting with Kaljug Pandit happened in the year 1510. Guru Nanak wrote about this encounter in one of his beautiful hymns found in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the central holy religious scripture of Sikhism, regarded by Sikhs as the final, sovereign and eternal Guru.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

Ang 662

One Universal Creator God. By The Grace
Of The True Guru: No, no, this is not the
time, when people know the way to Yoga
and Truth. The holy places of worship in the
world are polluted, and so the world is
drowning. ||1||

In this Dark Age of Kali Yuga, the Lord's
Name is the most sublime. Some people try
to deceive the world by closing their eyes
and holding their nostrils closed. ||1||Pause||

They close off their nostrils with their fingers, and claim to see the three worlds. But they cannot even see what is behind them. What a strange lotus pose this is! ||2||

The K'shatriyas have abandoned their religion, and have adopted a foreign language. The whole world has been reduced to the same social status; the state of righteousness and Dharma has been lost. ||3||

They analyze eight chapters of (Panini's
grammar and the Puraanas. They study the
Vedas, But without the Lord's Name, no one
is liberated; so says Nanak, the Lord's slave.

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Thank You

To Our Reviewers

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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.

About the Author

Gursharn Singh is the founder of **maastarji.com**, a platform dedicated to providing Sikh educational resources for families in the diaspora. As a Software Engineer and a volunteer Punjabi teacher in Toronto, Gursharn bridges the gap between modern technology and ancient tradition.

His journey as an author began with a simple question: How do we make our faith accessible to our children without losing its essence? Through his books, Gursharn creates the resources he wished he had as a parent—authentic, engaging, and English-language stories that bring Sikh stories and history to life for families everywhere.