
DAI DAULTAN: MUSLIM MIDWIFE OF GURU NANAK DEV

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Abstract: *Dai Daultan, also known as Daultan was a Muslim midwife. She is believed to have assisted in the birth of Guru Nanak Dev in 1469 CE, in Talwandi (now in Pakistan). According to Sikh tradition, she was the first to recognise the divine light of child Nanak (Guru Nanak Dev) after his birth. In history, she is the first woman who had the 'darshan' (vision) of Guru Nanak Dev. At the time of Guru Nanak Dev's birth, when the moon was at its zenith, there were some supernatural signs visible. It can be assumed that Dai Daultan must have witnessed these supernatural signs.*

Keywords: Dai Daultan, Guru Nanak Dev, Guru period, Sikh History.

Introduction: *Bhai Bala Janamsakhi* (the first account of the Guru's life) is the only one who provides the name of the nurse, *Dai Daultan* and writes that she was a Muslim lady. Daultan, a midwife (*dai*), assisted Mata Tripta in the delivery process during the birth of (Guru) Nanak Dev. In history, she is the first woman who had the 'darshan' (vision) of Guru Nanak Dev.[1] Macauliffe mentions the name of *Dai Daultan* and writes that she was a midwife who assisted during the birth of Guru Nanak Dev.[2] According to Harbans Singh's '*Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*', *Dai Daultan* was a Muslim midwife of the village of Talwandi Rai Bhoi who attended the birth of Mehta Kalu Ram and Mata Tripta's son, who became renowned as Guru Nanak Dev.[3] The *Puratan Janam Sakhi* depicts that at the time of Guru Nanak Dev's birth, when the moon was at its zenith, there were some supernatural signs visible.[4] It can be assumed that *Dai Daultan* must have witnessed these supernatural signs.

According to Santokh Singh, during the birth of Guru Nanak Dev, *Dai Daultan* perceived light in the room. The nurse was surprised to see the glowing face of the new-born baby, and the surrounding area was filled with majestic glory.[5] The new-born baby (Guru Nanak Dev) itself looked quite different from everything she had seen before. Instead of crying, he was noticed at the time of birth with "the laughing voice of a wise man." [6] Sarjit Singh Bal states in '*Life of Guru Nanak*' that Guru Nanak Dev was born at midnight. Although it was midnight at that time, *Dai Daultan* nevertheless announced the birth of the future founder of Sikhism.

Mehta Kalu Ram, the father of a newborn child, was told about this by her. Mehta Kalu Ram's happiness had no place.[7] When *Dai Daultan* was offered money by Mehta Kalu Ram for her midwifery services, she refused to take it. She also refused to accept any material gifts or money, saying that no financial compensation could match the joy she felt at the time of the birth of the little child (Guru Nanak Dev). She said that the sight of this child has given her all the precious gifts of life. Thus, she was the first woman to receive the vision of Guru Nanak Dev.[8]

Like all Hindus, the happy father sent for the family astrologer, *Pandit Hardial*, to draw up the baby's horoscope.[9] As *Pandit Hardial* was working on the horoscope, he wanted to know if the midwife had not seen any signs during the birth of the baby (Guru Nanak Dev). Mehta Kalu Ram called *Dai Daultan*, who was the midwife of Guru Nanak Dev.[10] When *Pandit Hardial* asked *Dai Daultan* about the time of birth and traits of a new-born child, she said that there were many children born under her care, but none as extraordinary as Mehta Kalu Ram's son.[11] She described that his first sound was like that of a grown-up person who appeared to be half-speaking and half-laughing. She also expressed her amazement that this child, with all his bright traits, is not like other children.[12]

Kartar Singh claims that after listening to *Dai Daultan's* thoughts, *Pandit Hardial* experienced a mystical devotion to the newborn child. Before consulting his books related to astrology and determining the stars under which the baby had been born, he wanted to have a look at him.[13] *Pandit Hardial's* request was accepted. Mehta Kalu Ram told the midwife, *Dai Daultan*, to bring the baby to *Pandit Hardial*. Then *Dai Daultan* went into the room to take the baby outside.[14] Santokh Singh very well mentioned the incident when *Dai* demanded the baby from his mother, Mata Tripta, but she refused to give it to her because of the cold weather. But when *Pandit* requested to see the baby again and again, Mata Tripta handed over her dear son to *Dai Daultan*. [15]

Dai Daultan came out with the baby. At that time, the grace of the baby's face shone like a lotus flower.[16] The astrologer *Pandit Hardial*, who had seen hundreds of babies in his life, recognised that this baby is the light of the Supreme Lord.[17] Sant Das Chibber mentions in '*Janam Sakhi Sri Guru Nanak Sah Ki*' that the midwife said to the *prohit* (priest) that this child seems to be a sublime god.[18] But he doesn't write down the name of this *dai* (midwife). *Giani Gian Singh* in '*Twarikh Guru Khalsa*' which is published by Kexton Press Anarkali, Lahore, mentions the midwife, *Daultan* and writes that when Kalu Chand (Mehta Kalu Ram) called *Pandit Hardyal* to prepare the horoscope of the new born child, the *Pandit* asked the midwife about the traits of the new born. She said that many children have been born in her hands, but

no one has seen a baby like this. With its birth, there was as much light in the house as there is at sunrise. This child appeared like the moon, hidden in the clouds.[19] Kesar Singh Chibbar's 'Bansavalinama,' Saroop Das Bhalla in 'Guru Nanak (Mehma)' do not mention anything about Dai Daultan. She was just a midwife in the area of Rai Bhoi di Talwandi; there was no possibility of finding any account of any part of her life in any source. In history, she was known as Guru Nanak Dev's midwife. Thus, she was the first to recognise the divine light of child Nanak (Guru Nanak Dev) after his birth. This miracle was only observed by Dai Daultan, a Muslim lady. Apart from the above information about Dai Daultan, no other information or detail is available about her birth year, parents, background, family, death, etc.

References:

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 “ਸੰਮਤ ੧੫੨੬ ਬਾਬਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਨਮਿਆ, ਵੈਸਾਖ ਮਾਹਿ ਤਿਤੀਆ, ਚਾਨਣੀ ਰਾਤਿ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲਾ, ਪਹਰ ਰਾਤ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਕੁ ਜਨਮਿਆ। ਅਨਹਦ ਸਬਦ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕੇ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਵਾਜੇ। ਤੇਤੀਸ ਕਰੋੜੀ ਦੇਵਤਿਆਂ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕੀਆ ਚਉਸਠ ਜੋਗਣੀ ਬਵਜਾਹ ਬੀਰ, ਛਿਆਂ ਜਾਤੀਆਂ, ਚੌਰਾਸੀਆਂ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਨਵਾਂ ਨਾਥਾਂ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕੀਆ, ਜੋ ਵਡਾ ਭਗਤ ਜਗਤ ਨਿਸਤਾਰਣ ਕਉ ਆਇਆ: ਇਸ ਕਉ ਕੀਜੀਐ ਜੀ”।
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