

Sadhu Sunder Singh

(3 September 1889--1929)

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On 3 September 1889, Sunder Singh was born in a rich Sikh family in Rampur village, in the state of Patiala otherwise known today as the state of Punjab. By the age of seven, he had already memorized the Bhagavad-Gita, at sixteen, not only had he mastered the Vedas, the ancient sacred books of Hinduism, but he had also read the Holy Koran, the sacred book of Islam. He then got acquainted with some Sadhus who taught him Yoga.

Owing to his mother's connection with some women from a British Mission in Rajpur, Sunder was able to enter the school run by the missionaries. It was there, that Sunder was first exposed to the Bible. His mother died when he was 14 years old. Convinced that what Jesus had taught was completely wrong, he tore the Bible apart and burned it. He even threw stones at preachers and encouraged others to do likewise. However hard he tried, he couldn't find the peace he kept seeking for in his own religion.

He reached a point in his life where committing suicide crossed his mind. Three days after he burned the Bible in front of his father, he woke up at 3 a.m. and said to himself, "**Oh God, if you do exist, show me the right way, or I will kill myself.**" He was thinking of throwing himself in front of the Punjab Mail that usually passed at 5 a.m. every morning behind their house, in the hope that he would find peace in his future reincarnation. He repeated his prayer once again in his room. All of a sudden, he saw a brilliant light. At first he feared that the room was on fire. But nothing happened. He then thought that it might be an answer to his prayer. While watching the light, he suddenly saw Jesus' figure in the radiance. He then heard a voice in Hindi saying, "How much longer are you going to search for me? I have come to save you. You prayed for the right path. Why have you not followed it?" At that time, Sunder realized that Jesus had not died and that He was alive. Sunder fell on his knees before Him and experienced an astonishing peace in his heart which he had never felt before. The vision disappeared, but peace and joy lingered within him.

On his sixteenth birthday he was publicly baptised as a Christian in the parish church in Simla. Following the advice of his friends, Sadhu enrolled himself in St. Johns School of Theology in Lahore. Sadhu Sunder Singh journeyed much. He travelled all over India and visited Ceylon, Malaysia, Japan, China, Western Europe and Australia. Sunder visited Tibet every summer.

In 1929, on a journey in Tibet he vanished and was never seen since. Sunder manifested into his life the verse written in Mark 8:35 which says, "For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for me and for the Gospel will save it."

Sadhu Sunder Singh was one of the speakers of the Maramon Convention in 1917. He spoke in Hindi and the translation was done by Mr. M. O. Oommen, Chief Conservator of Travancore. Sadhu Sunder Singh drew crowds greater than previous conventions and in the final meeting a record 32,000 people gathered to hear his message. His life is been an inspiration and example for many others who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour.

