

RE: SIKH GURUS AND THE KHALSA KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

Overview

Sikhs are the people who follow Sikhism.

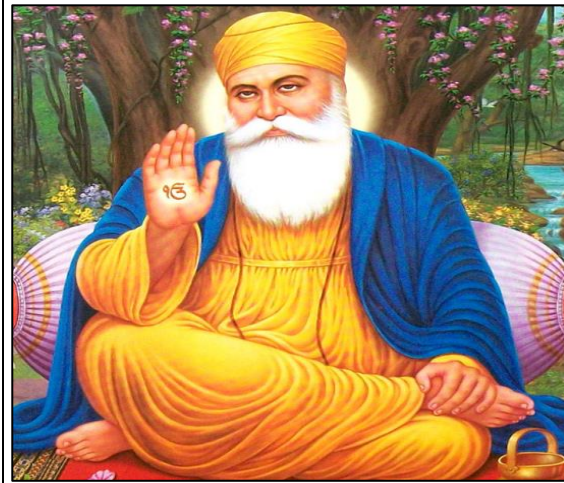
Sikhism was founded by a man called Guru Nanak. It is based on what he taught people. They believe that he received messages from God telling them how to live.

Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Sikh Guru, led the formation of the Khalsa – the ‘community of the pure.’

Leading a good life and making the right choices are important in Sikhism.

In the eyes of Sikhs, all people are equal below God. Working hard and living honestly is important.

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus.



Guru Nanak

Guru Nanak – The First Guru

-Sikhs believe that Guru Nanak was born in a small village called Punjab in India. He was born into a Hindu family, but grew up around Hindus and Muslims.



-Even as an infant, he seemed special: nature seemed to protect him (on one occasion for example, a cobra shaded him from the sun) and as a baby, he never cried, but smiled.

He was raised as a Hindu, and at the age of 16, he married. He had two sons, and worked as an accountant like his father. In the mornings and evenings, he would pray and sing hymns. He became a widely respected member of the community.

-One day, aged around 30, he went down to the river to pray and disappeared for three days. When he reappeared, he shone with a divine light. He gave away all of his possessions to the poor.

-Sikhs believe that Guru Nanak was spoken to by God, who told him to follow a simple faith, in which everybody was equal. In other religions, some people were thought of as better than others, but Guru Nanak now insisted on equality.

-His message was simple: pray to God, be honest, work hard, care for your family and your community. These ideas formed the basis of Sikhism.



Guru Gobind Singh & The Khalsa



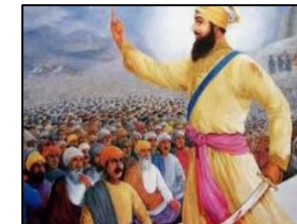
-After Guru Nanak died, he was succeeded by a new leader (Guru Angad). When Guru Angad, another new Guru was appointed, and so on.

-Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth and final Sikh Guru. He became Guru at age 9, after his father was executed in 1675CE. At this time, the Sikhs were a weak, disunited group.

-Guru Gobind Singh decided to make them united again. On Baisakhi (an ancient Sikh festival) Day on 1699CE, the Sikhs gathered together. Guru Gobind Singh asked the crowd if anyone was brave and committed enough to die for their faith. One-by-one, five men raised their hands.

-Each man was led into a tent, where a slashing noise could be heard. Each time, the Guru came back out of the tent with a bloodied sword. After the 5th man entered the tent, all five emerged with the Guru, wearing a special uniform.

-He announced that they would be known as the ‘Panj Piare’ (beloved 5), the first in an army of soldier saints known as the Khalsa (community of the pure).



-they were initiated in a ceremony called Amrit Sanskar – a tradition which continues in the present day.

Key Vocabulary

- Sikhism
- Sikhs
- Guru Nanak
- The Ten Gurus
- Equality
- Community
- Traditions
- Guru Gobind Singh
- The Khalsa
- Baisakhi
- Amrit Sanskar
- The Five Ks
- Turban

The Five Ks

- Sikhs display their commitment to their religion by adhering to the 5 Ks, which are the ‘Sikh Articles of Faith.’

1. Kesh – Uncut Hair
2. Kangha – Comb
3. Kara – Steel Bracelet
4. Kirpan – Sword
5. Kaccha – Soldier’s shorts

The Five Ks are symbols for different Sikh ideals – each item links to a different belief.



The Turban

-Although wearing a turban is not one of the Five K’s, it is still an essential symbol of the Sikh religion. Sikhs have worn turbans since the era of Guru Nanak



-Most Sikh boys wear a turban from age 8, after a ceremony in which they put on a turban for the first time.

-Longer hair is tied into a topknot. The hair is covered by a patka, a square piece of cloth which is about the size of a handkerchief.

Personal Spirituality – Key Questions

What have been the special moments in your childhood?

What experiences have you had that you would call ‘turning points?’

To what extent do you believe in equality?

How do you demonstrate this approach in your own life?

How could you treat others like brothers and sisters?

What groups do you belong to?

How does membership in these groups make you feel?

What are the expectations of your groups/ communities?

What ceremonies/traditions have you experienced?