

WaheGuru Ji Ka Khalsa, WaheGuru Ji Ki Fateh.



Sikhism is only 500 years old but with over 20 million Sikhs around the world, is the fifth largest world religion. Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak Dev Ji (left), the first Guru in the 15th century in the Punjab (the land of 5 rivers). Following partition in 1947, Punjab is now divided between Pakistan and the northern Indian state of Punjab.

The word Guru is composed of Gu meaning darkness and Ru meaning Light. In Sikhism therefore 'Guru' is the "Light that dispels all darkness" and Guru Nanak Dev Ji was the Embodiment of Divine Light.

Sikhism is based on compassion; service; equality between males, females and all religions and encourages an honest, truthful living with a rejection of idol worship, the caste system, ritualism and superstitions. In Sikhism, heaven and hell are states of mind represented by joy and sorrow, bliss and agony or light and darkness.

Sikhism is a distinct religion and shouldn't be viewed as linked to either Islam or Hinduism. Guru Nanak Dev Ji said "I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim, I am a human being".

Guru Nanak Dev Ji spread a simple message of Ek Onkar, we are all one, created by the one Creator of all Creation. He said that there is one God and the name of God is Sat Nam (truth). To show its importance, Ek Onkar is the first line at the head of all gurbani and forms the first line of the Mool Mantar which begins the

Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji's followers were the Sikhs (the seekers of truth) and came from different communities and castes. Guru Nanak Dev Ji taught the Sikhs to bow only before God and that in order to experience God within themselves they should:

Naam Japna

To get up each day before sunrise, bathe to clean the body before meditating on God's name and

"By repeating God's Name I have made God's temple;  
O saints and followers,  
Sing God's praises day and night." (Guru Arjan Dev Ji)

Vand Chhakna

To share with others and support the entire community.

"Love of worldly things, like a snake  
Has entangled the whole world in it's coils  
Whoever holds it lovingly, gets bitten by it." (Guru Amar Das Ji)

Kirt Kani

To work and earn a honest living. To practice truthfulness and honesty in all dealings.

"Truth is the highest virtue,  
higher still is truthful living" (Guru Nanak Dev Ji).

By following this path, a Sikh can achieve liberation by becoming gur-mukh (God centred) instead of being mun-mukh (self centred).



There have been 10 human Gurus in the Sikh religion, each making a distinguished contribution to the development of the religion. Whilst Sikhs hold the Gurus in high regard they are not worshipped; Sikhs only worship one God "Ek Onkar".

The 10th and last human Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji (left) transformed the Sikhs into the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh Ji baptised five brave men, the "Panj Pyarey" (five beloved ones) who heeded his call for sacrifice. Guru Gobind Singh Ji gave the name "Singh" for men and "Kaur" for women and ordered everyone in the Khalsa to observe the five "Ks".

Kesh

Uncut hair and beard. Symbolises acceptance of God's will.



gah wooden comb to groom the hair.

riha or steel bracelet to be worn on the right hand.

ah sword 9 inches long, symbolises courage, strength and kindness.

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