

OVERVIEW OF SIKHISM



KEY PERSON, DATE, LOCATION

GURU NANAK DEV JI (1469-1539), IN WHAT IS NOW THE PUNJAB IN PAKISTAN
NINE GURUS FOLLOWED (1504-1708)

MAIN PLACE OF WORSHIP IS THE GOLDEN TEMPLE IN AMRITSAR, INDIA

KEY WRITINGS

MAIN SCRIPTURE IS THE SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB (“THE MASTER BOOK,” ALSO CALLED ADI GRANTH), FIRST COMPILED IN AD 1604

IT IS WORSHIPPED BY SIKHS, WHO CONSIDER IT THEIR FINAL AND PERPETUAL GURU

OTHER KEY WORKS INCLUDE THE DASAM GRANTH, VARAN BHAI GURDAS, AND SIKH REHT MARYADA

WHO IS GOD?

ONE OMNIPRESENT GOD (REFERRED TO AS WAHEGURU, “WONDEROUS TEACHER”), WHO IS KNOWN TO THE SPIRITUALLY “AWAKENED” ONLY THROUGH MEDITATION
SIKHISM IS ALSO PANTHEISTIC, CONSIDERING THE UNIVERSE ITSELF PART OF GOD | LEAVING NO CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CREATOR AND CREATION

REPRESENTING GOD BY PICTURES OR IDOLS IS FORBIDDEN

WHO IS JESUS?

JESUS IS NOT SPECIFICALLY PART OF THIS BELIEF, ALTHOUGH THE ADI GRANTH SPECIFICALLY DENIES THE TRINITY AND DESCRIBES GOD AS “BEYOND BIRTH” AND INCARNATION

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT PART OF THIS BELIEF

HOW TO BE SAVED

BONDAGE TO THE MATERIAL REALM AND THE “FIVE EVILS” (EGO, ANGER, GREED, ATTACHMENT, AND LUST) CONDEMN THE SOUL TO 8.4 MILLION REINCARNATIONS
THOSE WHO SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOME THESE EVILS THROUGH PROPER BEHAVIOR AND DEVOTION WILL BE RELEASED FROM KARMA AND THE CYCLE OF REBIRTH (SAMSARA)

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH?

UPON DEATH, THOSE WHO ESCAPE SAMSARA WILL BE ABSORBED INTO GOD AND LOSE THEIR INDIVIDUALITY, LIKE A RAINDROP FALLING INTO THE OCEAN
THE ADI GRANTH BOTH AFFIRMS AND DENIES EXISTENCE OF A LITERAL HEAVEN AND HELL

OTHER FACTS, BELIEFS, OR PRACTICES

BAPTIZED (KHALSA) SIKHS ARE KNOWN BY THEIR USE OF THE “FIVE K’S”: THE KIRPAN (A SMALL CEREMONIAL SWORD), KES (UNCUT HAIR), KANGA (A SMALL WOODEN COMB), KACHERA (KNEE-LENGTH SHORTS), AND KARA (STEEL BRACELET)
ADULT MALES WEAR A TURBAN AND INCLUDE “SINGH” IN THEIR NAMES
EMPHASIS ON FULL EQUALITY OF MEN AND WOMEN
MEETING PLACES CALLED GURDWARAS