

## World population

Sikhism has about 20 million followers throughout the world, mainly in the Punjab province of India.

## Key beliefs

Sikhism is a **monotheistic** religion. Sikhism stresses the importance of doing good actions rather than merely carrying out rituals.

Sikhs believe that the way to lead a good life is to:

- keep God in heart and mind at all times
- live honestly and work hard
- treat everyone equally
- be generous to the less fortunate
- serve others (**Sewa**)

## Sources of authority

The Sikh scripture is the **Guru Granth Sahib**, a book that Sikhs consider a **living Guru**



## Year 8 Term 4: Justice: what is so special about being a Sikh?

**Theology** = this is about 'believing'. It looks at where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how they are applied in different contexts and how they relate to each other.



**Varanasi** (in India) is a holy city for Sikhs

**The Khanda** (symbol of Sikhism)



## The 5 Ks

The 5 Ks date from the creation of the Khalsa by **Guru Gobind Singh** in 1699.

The Guru introduced them for several reasons:

- Adopting these common symbols would identify members of the Khalsa
- Because all members of the Khalsa wear the 5 Ks the members of the community are more strongly bound together
- Each K has a particular significance



**Kara** (bangle)



**Kesh** (uncut hair)



**Kirpan** (dagger)



**Kanga** (comb)



**Kachera** (baggy shorts)

1. Guru Nanak Dev ji
2. Guru Angad Dev ji
3. Guru Amardas ji
4. Guru Ramdas ji
5. Guru Arjan Dev ji
6. Guru Hargobind ji
7. Guru Har Rai ji
8. Guru Harkrishan ji
9. Guru Tegh Bahadur ji
10. Guru Gobind Singh ji

Sikhs believe that there is one God. All people are considered equal and have the opportunity to become one with God. But first they must overcome self-centeredness by honoring God, working hard, and sharing with others.

The term guru comes from the Sanskrit gurū, which means **teacher, guide, or mentor**. The traditions and philosophy of Sikhism were made by ten gurus from 1469 to 1708. Each guru added to and reinforced the message taught by the previous one. This resulted in the creation of the Sikh religion.

And the eternal Guru is the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, which is a not just a book but contains the writings of each Guru.

## Key historical figure

Sikhism was founded in the 16th century in the Punjab district of what is now India and Pakistan. It was founded by **Guru Nanak** and is based on his teachings, and those of the **9 Sikh gurus** who followed him.



## The Khalsa

The community of men and women who have been initiated into the Sikh faith is the **Khalsa**. The Khalsa celebrated its 300th anniversary in 1999.

A Sikh can go through this **initiation** as soon as they are old enough to understand the full **commitment** that they are making.



During the ceremony, **hymns** are recited from the Sikh scripture, prayers are said, and the principles of Sikhism are affirmed.

Then **amrit** is prepared. Amrit is a mixture of sugar and water that has been stirred with a double-edged sword.

The candidates for **initiation** drink some of the amrit from the same bowl, and have it sprinkled on their eyes and hair.

Each then recites the **Mool Mantra** (the fundamentals of Sikhism). There are readings from the Guru Granth Sahib and an explanation of rules of Sikhism.

## Worship



Sikhs worship in a **gurdwara**