



**SIKH COUNCIL OF WALES**

**BRINGING SIKHS TOGETHER**



# Sikhism- community, religion and scripture



## Overview of Presentation

1. The Sikh Community
2. Sikh Spiritual Masters
3. What is Sikh religion?
4. Basics about the Sikh lifestyle
5. The Sikh Holy Scripture
6. Sikh Council of Wales- brief intro
7. Further reading sources
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# The Sikh Community

## World Sikh Geography

- Sikhs are the 5<sup>th</sup> largest religious group in the World (30 million followers)
- Sikhs can be found in most countries of the World. However majority of Sikh community live in Punjab (northern India)
- UK, Canada and America have the largest Sikh populations outside India



# The Sikh Community

## Basic Facts about Sikhs in UK

- 1<sup>st</sup> Sikh in UK was Maharaja Dalip Singh (the last Sikh King) who came in 1900's.
- Most Sikhs (of Indian origin) came to UK in 30's and 60's
- Sikhs are 3<sup>rd</sup> largest faith group in UK after Christians and Muslims, numbering approx. 423,000. Jedi's don't count!
- There are approx. 150 Sikh Gurdwaras in UK
- 30,000 Sikh students at Universities in UK
- Punjabi is 3<sup>rd</sup> most spoken language in UK



## The Sikh Community

### Sikhs in Wales

- Sikhs are 5<sup>th</sup> largest faith group in Wales after Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists numbering approx. 3000\*
- There are only 4 Sikh Gurdwaras in Wales: 3 in Cardiff and one in Swansea

\*Census 2011



# The Sikh Community

## British Laws regarding Sikhs

British law has been modified in the following ways to cater for Sikhs:

- Sikhs can wear a Kirpan (sword)
- Sikhs are exempt from wearing Crash Helmets when riding Motor Cycles
- Sikhs are exempt from wearing Hard hats at Construction Sites
- Sikhs can wear their Kirpans in most Law Courts (up to 4" in length)



# Sikh Spiritual Masters

## The 10 Gurus

- Started by Guru Nanak (born in 1469) and Succeeded by another 9 Gurus.
- They each represent a divine quality:
  - Guru Nanak Dev Ji – Humility
  - Guru Angad Dev Ji – Obedience
  - Guru Amar Das Ji – Equality
  - Guru Ram Das Ji – Service
  - Guru Arjan Dev Ji – Self Sacrifice
  - Guru Har Gobind Sahib Ji – Justice
  - Guru Har Rai Ji – Mercy
  - Guru Har Krishan Ji – Purity
  - Guru Teg Bahadur Ji – Tranquillity
  - Guru Gobind Singh Ji – Royal Courage



# Sikh Spiritual Masters

## The 10 Gurus

- Guru Nanak is the only Prophet in the World who has such a diverse following including:
  - Buddhists (who call him Nanak Lama)
  - Muslims (who call him Hadhrat Baba Nanak)
  - Hindus, Yogis and Sikhs
- The 9<sup>th</sup> Guru is the only Prophet in the World to die for the right of *'Freedom of Religion'*
- The 10<sup>th</sup> Guru gave the final shape to the Sikhs faith on the day of Vaisakhi.



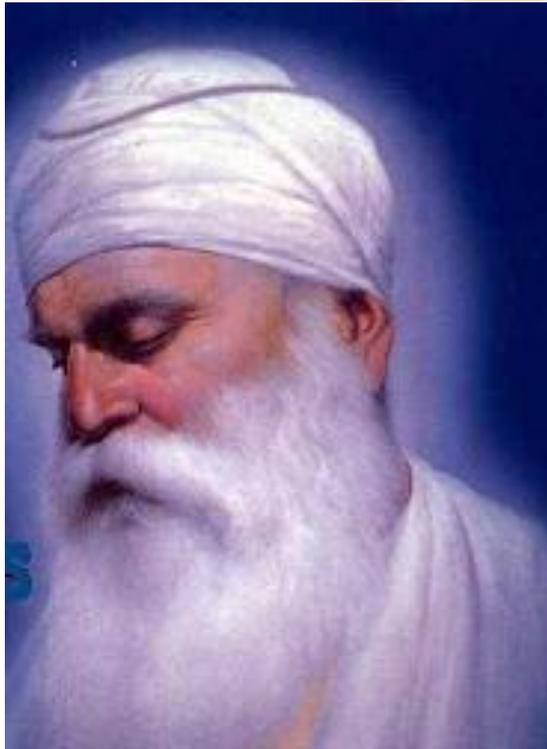
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# Sikh Spiritual Masters

The 1<sup>st</sup> Guru and the 10<sup>th</sup> Guru



Guru Nanak Dev Ji



Guru Gobind Singh Ji



# What is Sikh religion?

## Concept of God and Oneness

- Sikh Faith emphasises the importance of experiencing Truth and oneness with:
  - Our Soul
  - Fellow human beings
  - Mother Earth
  - God
- These experiences have led to a set of beliefs which include a belief in one God who is known by many names including **Jehovah, Ram, Allah, Waheguru** etc.
- The Sikh Holy Scripture starts with the MOOL MANTRA, which describes the main attributes of God (next slide).



## What is Sikh religion?

### Basic Attributes of God and Soul (Mool Mantra)

- **Ik Ouṅkār** - There is only One God, who creates, sustains and destroys, and exists without change
- **Sat Nām** - God's name is Truth
- **Kartā Purakh** - God is the Creator, and resides within the Creation
- **Nirbhau** - God is Fearless

Continues on next slide



## What is Sikh religion?

### Basic Attributes of God and Soul (Mool Mantra)

- **Nirvair** - God is without Enmity
- **Akāl Mūrat** - God is beyond time
- **Ajūnī** - God is unborn
- **Saibhañ** - God is self-existent
- **Gur Prasād** - God is realised by the Grace of the Guru



# What is Sikh religion?

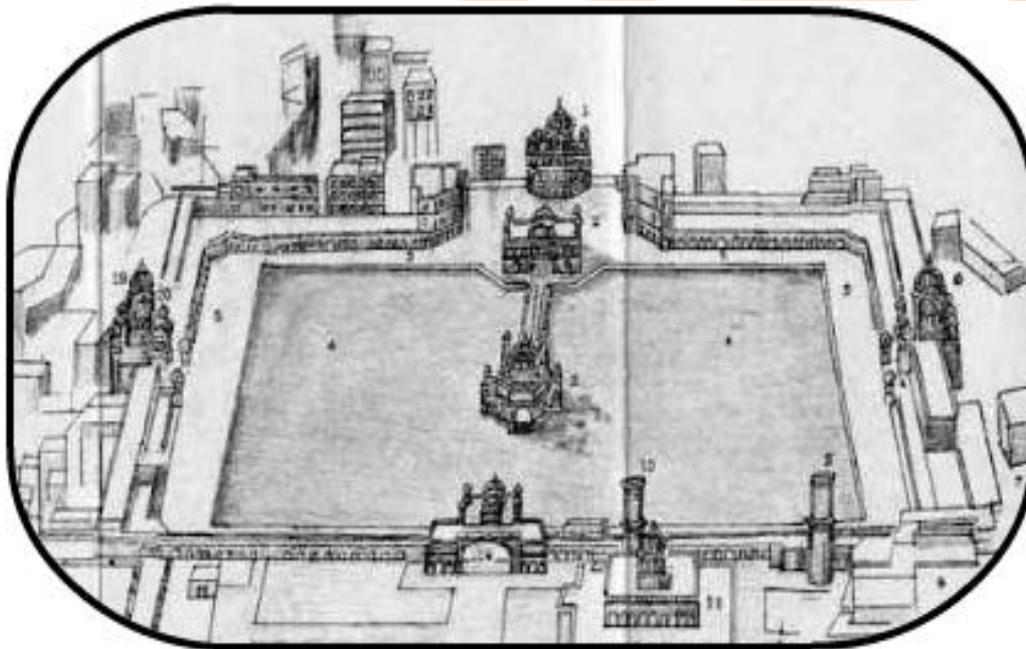
Equality for all

- Sikh religion teaches people to accept every human being as an equal regardless of:
  - Race, Nationality, Religion, Gender, Culture, Social Status, Sexual Orientation, Caste etc.
- Sikh religion is unique in giving **equal rights to Women** 500 years ago:
  - There were 4 Sikh women bishops in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Women can and have become Priests and lead congregations into Prayer
  - Sikh women have lead armies and have held top positions in all aspects of Life.

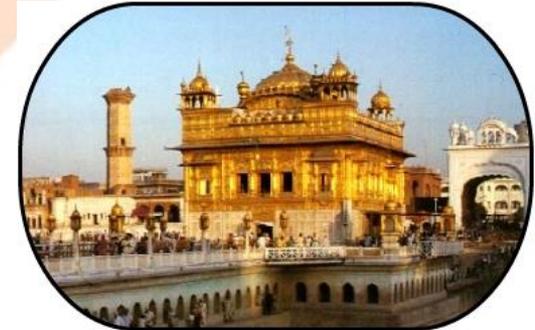


# What is Sikh religion?

Equality embedded within Sikh architecture



4 doors symbolising OPENNESS & EQUALITY



Harmander Sahib



## Basics about the Sikh Lifestyle

### 3 Core Principles

3 core principles at an individual level:

- Meditation - On God's Virtues
- Honesty - Living and earning truthfully
- Serving - Take part in selfless community service & give to charity



## Basics about the Sikh Lifestyle

### 4 Lifestyle Choices

A Practicing Sikh will adhere to the following 4 noble blessings:

- Keep long uncut hair
- Not commit adultery or live promiscuously
- Follow a lacto-vegetarian diet (should not partake meat, fish and eggs)
- Not use drugs, alcohol and tobacco



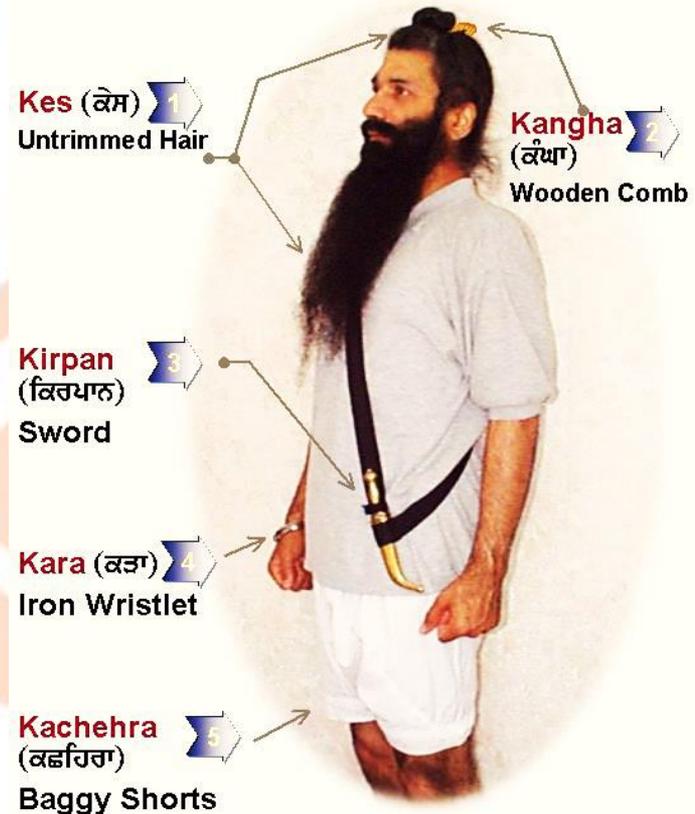
# Basics about the Sikh Lifestyle

## 5 Kakars

Practicing Sikh men and women wear 5 Items called kakars which all have various functions:

- **Kes** (uncut hair coiled on the head)
- **Kangha** (wooden comb)
- **Kara** (steel bangle)
- **Kirpan** (sword) – *for defence*
- **Kachehra** (boxer shorts) – *for modesty*

### Five Essentials of The Sikh Uniform





# Basics about the Sikh Lifestyle

## Daily Sikh Prayers

A practicing Sikh will generally do the following basic set of prayers:

### **Between 4am – 6am**

- Jap Jee Sahib – strengthens the radiance of the soul
- Jaap Sahib - the naad of Jaap Sahib brings grace and greatness
- Swayaia – provides satisfaction
- Chopai - helps you when you are physically weak
- Anand Sahib – The song of bliss provides joy. Mind and body are explained in relation to cosmic divinity

### **In the evening after work**

- Rehras Sahib - helps you when you are physically weak, or weak in money, property and earthly goods

### **Before you go to sleep**

- Keertan Sohila – this helps to remove negativity from your surroundings

### **Ardaas**

After every set of prayer a Sikh performs Ardaas (in which a Sikh remembers all the Gurus, martyrs and thanks Waheguru for blessings) and prays for wellbeing of humankind



# Basics about the Sikh Lifestyle

At a Global / Cosmic Level

- **Unconditional Love** - Heart centered individuals building a democratic society based on unconditional love. Sikhs are not dogmatic and do not claim superiority over other religious beliefs/cultures.
- **Scientific Advancement** - A harmonisation between Science and Religion
- **Environmental Consciousness** - Love, respect and responsibility towards mother Earth and its resources



## The Sikh Holy Scripture

### Background on Gurbani

- **The Sikh scripture is the focal point of the Sikh Community:**
  - Called the **Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji** (translates as “The Master compilation which gives Light”)
  - Regarded as the **Living Word** of God and treated like a living King
  - World’s only **Inter-faith Scripture**
  - Written in over **15 languages** and encoded in a special script called ‘Gurmukhi’ which preserves the original sounds.
  - It is only Holy Book compiled during the **lifetime** of the Prophet/s.



## The Sikh Holy Scripture

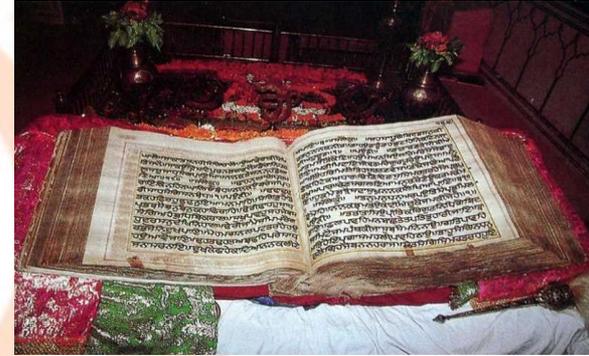
### Functions of Gurbani

- **Healing** – The Word of the Guru (Gurbani) is used in Naam Therapy in India to heal incurable diseases.
- **Spiritual Awakening** - Gurbani tunes our mind and opens our hearts to the infinity of our soul. This is assisted by the 31 “feelings” (Raags) which the shabads (hymns) have been written in.



# The Sikh Holy Scripture

## Pictures





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# Sikh Council of Wales

## Vision & Values

Sikh Council of Wales is an organisation independent of any political or cultural influence or bias but dedicated solely to promote the universal message of 'One God' and 'Equality' among all people through the teachings of 'Guru Nanak to Guru Granth' and...



## Sikh Council of Wales

### Vision & Values

to communicate with Sangat and Sikh Gurdwaras in Wales and to advise on Sikh Code of Conduct, and to provide education about faith to practicing and non practicing Sikhs and others and to represent Sikhs living in Wales abroad at events designed to promote faith and Community cohesion.



# Sikh Council of Wales Governance structure

Chairman & Director of Legal Affairs  
& Policy  
Gurmit Singh Randhawa MBE  
Gurmit@sikhcouncilofwales.com

Secretary & Director of  
Education & Literature  
Gurwinder Singh  
Gurwinder  
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Treasurer & Director of  
Finance & HR  
Balbir Singh Johal  
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Director of Strategy &  
Communications  
Joga Singh  
Joga  
@  
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Director of Ethics &  
Religious Studies  
Sangat Singh Garib  
Sangat  
@  
sikhcouncilofwales.com

Director of Programmes  
& Events  
Kuldip Singh Padda  
Kuldip  
@  
sikhcouncilofwales.com



## Further Reading Sources

- <http://sikhcouncilofwales.com/index.php> (Sikh Council of Wales)
- [www.sikhnet.com](http://www.sikhnet.com) (World Sikh Portal)
- <http://www.sikhgurdwaracardiff.com/> (Sikh Gurdwara Cardiff)
- <http://www.sikh-history.com/> (Sikh history)
- <https://www.sikhithemax.org/> (Sikhi to the Max)



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## Questions

Please direct any queries or questions about  
Sikhism or Sikh Council Wales to

[info@sikhcouncilwales.com](mailto:info@sikhcouncilwales.com)