

Sikhism

Founder

Guru Nanak Dev Ji (AD 1469–1539), in what is now the Punjab in Pakistan. Nine gurus followed (AD 1504–1708). Main place of worship is the Golden Temple in Amritsar, India.

Writings

Main scripture is the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (“the master book,” also called *Adi Granth*), first compiled in AD 1604. It is worshiped by Sikhs, who consider it their final and perpetual guru. Other key works include the *Dasam Granth*, *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, and *Sikh Reht Maryada*.

God

One omnipresent god (referred to as *Waheguru*, “Wondrous 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.

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.

Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.



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Salvation

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*).

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.

Beliefs/Other

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*.

20-group Comparison chart. <http://is.gd/6kZajfj>