

### Wealth Creation

Although the goal of both Hindu and Sikh dharmas is identical i.e. to obtain liberation from the reincarnation cycle. The approach to obtain liberation is different. Sikh dharma teaches people to live a full and wholesome life within society and to earn an honest living, give to charity and meditate on God. Part of living a life of action is to be able to create wealth without hindrance to spiritual progress and Sikh dharma teaches that we can do this and still remain unattached.

### Combining of Caste Skills

Each of the Hindu caste groups contains useful skill sets and qualities which the Sikh Gurus rolled up into one person. These included the:

- **Brahmins:** God knowledge and scholarly attributes of the priestly caste
- **Kshatrias:** Martial knowledge and spirit of the warrior class
- **Vaish:** Requirement to earn an honest living and have a trade from the working class and
- **Shudra:** Recommendation to perform selfless service such as voluntary work providing the humility of the low castes

### World Involvement

Sikh dharma is unique to the Indian spiritual traditions in that it blends the temporal aspects of life with the spiritual aspects. The 6th Guru, Guru Har-gobind Sahib Ji built the Akal Thakat (temporal seat) opposite to the Golden Temple (spiritual seat) to highlight the importance of spiritual principles in political, military, social and economic spheres. In addition, the asceticism, celibacy and withdrawal from worldly life is not the recommended approach in Sikh dharma.

### Method of Worship

Although Hindu dharma is at its essence a monotheistic tradition with the belief in a supreme God, it is practised in a polytheistic fashion with different people choosing a different aspect of the creator and focusing on that deity. The method of worship also varies, with some using idols as a focusing tool and others using yogic breath control techniques.

Sikh dharma does not recommend the use of idols and instead encourages inward meditation using Gurbani (Word) which is a Divine sound vibration to connect the soul with the primal cosmic source. However, like Hindu dharma, Sikh dharma does offer a number of tools for experiencing oneness including the following:

- **Raaj Yoga:** meditation on Gurbani at the 3rd eye
- **Naad Yoga:** Listening and singing to Gurbani in specific melodies or moods (Raags)
- **Bhakti Yoga:** Signing the praises of God and not necessarily restricted to Gurbani or Indian classical music
- **Kaam Yoga:** Experience of oneness through divine union of the Shiva and Shakti energies
- **Karma Yoga:** Selfless service to humanity
- **Jnana Yoga:** Using rational understanding of Gurbani and other spiritual knowledge

### Interfaith Scripture

Sikh dharma is the world's only spiritual tradition to have a multi-faith scripture using wisdom from spiritual masters from Sikh, Hindu, Muslim and Sufi mystic traditions. This was done to highlight the idea that liberation is available to all people following any religion or dharma as long as they understand certain universal spiritual keys.

### Interfaith Institutions

Sikh dharma is the world's first spiritual tradition which welcomed people from diverse spiritualities including Islam, Hindu dharma and Buddha dharma. The Golden Temple and many other Sikh temples attract people from all spiritual traditions of the world.



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# Sikh Dharma and Hindu Dharma A Comparative Study

Sikh Dharma

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## Introduction

There are common principles and ideas in all religions of the world and this is also true for Sikh dharma and Hindu dharma.

Max Arthur Macauliffe who was a scholar of Indian spiritual traditions wrote, *"Sikhs and Hindus have defended each other since the beginning of time, and boast the strongest relationship of any two major religions in world history"*

Hindu dharma is the world's oldest organised spiritual tradition consisting of a conglomerate of diverse beliefs and traditions. Hindu dharma has no single founder and contains a vast body of scriptures divided into revealed and explanatory scripture which cover mythology, theology and philosophy.

In contrast to this, Sikh dharma is one of the youngest organised spiritual movements and has had a lineage of 10 spiritual masters and one revealed scripture together with a number of explanatory scriptures and texts.

## Similarities

### Belief in God

Both Sikh and Hindu dharmas believe in one supreme God, through whose Divine Will the creation has come into existence. God is known as Om to the Hindus and Ek Ong Kar to the Sikhs.

### Reincarnation

This is a common belief for the afterlife and is the process responsible for evolution of the soul. This is the common spiritual heritage of all world religion and is true for both Hindu and Sikh dharma too.

### 5 Thieves

The 5 thieves include lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride. These thieves are the things which hold people in the reincarnation cycle and firmly on the earthly plane.

### Concept of Maya

Maya is the illusion and attachment in the world

which also prevents us from realising oneness with the Creator

## Tolerance of Other Religions

All the Indian spiritual traditions including Buddha dharma, Sikh dharma, Hindu dharma and Jain dharma have historically shown a high degree of tolerance to other philosophies and approaches to spiritual enlightenment.

## Meditation

Both Sikh and Hindu dharma teach the importance of repeating the Name of God. In Sikh dharma, this meditation involves repeating a chant (Mantra) with love such as called 'Vaheguru' which means 'Wonderful God'. In Hindu dharma, the chant is usually 'Om', meaning 'Creator'.

## Culture

Sikh dharma is something which is independent of Indian culture. However, both Sikhs and Hindus of Indian origin share a number of common festivals (albeit celebrated for different reasons) including Diwali, Lohri and Holi. They also share the same foods, clothing and music.

## Goal of Life

The purpose of life in all Indian spiritual traditions is to obtain union with God (Samaadi), who is the source of all light, life and love. God is the giver of liberation from the reincarnation cycle (Mukti) and the giver of a state of supreme everlasting bliss (Anand).

## Naam

Naam is the vibrational power of the universe which has created everything. It is when we resonate with this vibrational power that we ourselves become one with the universal spirit. This technology of Naam is mentioned in Hindu dharma (Raam Naam) and is central to spiritual evolution in the Sikh lifestyle.

## Progressive Revelation

Both Hindu and Sikh dharma support the idea that God will send spiritual guides for humanity throughout the ages and that this is a continual process

whenever humanity needs a reminder about spiritual values.

Guru Nanak is the universal spiritual teacher for the present age of Kaliyug and is followed by a diverse group of people including Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs and Yogis.

## Differences

### Unity of Humanity

Hindu dharma teaches that humans were created from the belly of Brahma into 4 different groupings including the priestly class (Brahmans), warrior class (Kshatrias), traders and skilled class (Vaish) and labourers (shudra). This is in contrast to Sikh dharma which teaches to 'recognise the human race as one family' and to not judge people for their ancestral background because there are no such divisions in the afterlife.

Sikh dharma has a number of tools to assist with teachings this philosophy practically. One is that the central Sikh shrine has four entrances to show that people from all directions are welcome. Sikhs also have the institution of the free kitchen for everyone in which all people cook and share the same food (Pangat). This to highlight that we are all of equal status.

### Unity of God

This is the teaching that God is known by many names including Jehovah, Raam, Allah, Vaheguru etc. Hindu dharma has also used many different names for the creator but Sikh dharma is unique in combining names from both the Indian and Abrahamic spiritual traditions to help bring interfaith understanding to everyone.

### Gender Equality

The teachings of Sikh dharma as enshrined in the Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji completely support gender equality which is not the case with Hindu religious scripture such as the Vedas and the Puranas. There is no specific ceremony or privilege which a Sikh man has that a Sikh woman does not.