

While the Guru was at Panjokhara, a Sikh came and informed the Guru of a proud Brahmin who needed a lesson in humility. The Brahmin had asked the Guru to explain the meaning of some verses in the Bhagwad Gita (Hindu Holy book). However, instead of translating them himself, he made a deaf and dumb water carrier explain the meaning. Both of them later converted to Sikh dharma.

Unfortunately while the Guru was healing the people of Delhi from small pox, he himself contracted the disease and died.

### **Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji [1621 - 1675]**

The 9th Guru was the son of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. The Guru travelled extensively in the Punjab and in other parts of the country to spread the light of Guru Nanak's teachings.

During this time, the ruler of the country was Aurangzeb. He was forcing the Kashmiri Brahmins to accept Islam. Some of these Brahmins went to Anandpur to visit the Guru and ask for his help. The 9th Guru then became the 2nd Martyr in the Sikh faith. He also became the first and only prophet in the world to die for the right of people to practice whatever religion they choose.

### **Guru Gobind Singh Ji [1666 - 1708]**

Gobind Rai was the last human Guru of the Sikhs. He was born in Patna, which is now the capital of Bihar.

In 1699 he called Sikhs from far and near and asked for a head. A total of five Sikhs came forward. They came to be known as the five beloved ones (Panj Pyare). He offered Amrit (sweet nectar) to each of them and then humbly asked for Amrit from them in return and

became known as Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He completed the evolution of the Sikh faith by giving it a concrete identity of purity.

Before his physical death he asked his Sikhs to regard the Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the eternal living Guru of the Sikhs.

### **Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji [0 - ∞]**

For Sikhs, in the beginning was the Word, now is the Word, and forever shall be the Word. The teachings of all the Gurus are now forever contained within the Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The living Guru of the Sikhs continues to provide guidance and support to all those who come to its sanctuary, and brings people to the light of reality through its simplistic teachings in words which speak to the heart.

### **Summary**

Each of the Masters of Light, the Gurus, dedicated their lives to spreading the light of reality around the universe. Their positive effects on the creation have been more vast than a simple essay could ever examine, but a flavour of their works has been shown.



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# The Sikh Gurus A Basic Guide

**Sikh Dharma**

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## A Brief History

Each of the great Gurus contributed to the development of the Sikh religion and each represent a divine attribute.

1. Guru Nanak Dev Ji - Humility
2. Guru Angad Dev Ji - Obedience
3. Guru Amar Das Ji - Equality
4. Guru Ram Das Ji - Service
5. Guru Arjan Dev Ji - Self-Sacrifice
6. Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji - Justice
7. Guru Har Rai Ji - Mercy
8. Guru Harkrishan Ji - Purity
9. Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji - Tranquillity
10. Guru Gobind Singh Ji - Royal Courage
11. Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji - Infinity

## Guru Nanak Dev Ji [1469 - 1539]

Guru Nanak Dev Ji was born in a village named Talwandi, which is now called Nankana Sahib and is in Pakistan. His father's name was Mehta Kalu and his mother's name was Mata Tripta. He also had one sister called Bebe Nanki, who was 5 years older than him.

As a child, Guru Nanak spent most of his time in isolation and meditation. He slept only for a few hours, ate small quantities of food and spoke little.

One day Guru Nanak Dev Ji disappeared, while having his morning bath. He reappeared 3 days later and said, *"There is no Hindu and there is no Muslim"*.

By saying this he meant that titles were meaningless because all of humanity is one and the light of God shines within everyone.



## Guru Angad Dev Ji [1504 - 1552]

Bhai Lehna Ji, who later came to be known as Guru Angad, was born at Harike. This was a small village in the Ferozepur district. His father was named Pheru and he worked as a small businessman. Bhai Lehna Ji always did everything that Guru Nanak asked, which is why Guru Nanak called Bhai Lehna his 'Ang' or limb of his body.

Guru Angad simplified the old Punjabi characters into a new alphabet, called Gurmukhi. He thus gave the people the gift of literature. He took great interest in the education of children and opened several schools.

## Guru Amar Das Ji [1479 - 1574]

The 3rd Master was born at Basarke in Amritsar. His father, Tej Bhan and mother Bakht Kaur were orthodox Hindus. He became the oldest Guru.

The 3rd Guru put an end to sati (burning of the widow on her husband's funeral pyre) and encouraged the remarriage of widows. He opened 22 preaching centres called Manjees and founded the town of Goindwal as the headquarters for the Sikh community.

## Guru Ram Das Ji [1534 - 1581]

The 4th Guru's original name was Jetha and he was born in Lahore. Bhai Jetha married Bibi Bhani who was the daughter of the 3rd Guru. The 4th Guru founded Chak Guru Ram Das, now called Amritsar. He initiated the concept of community voluntary service known as 'Kar Seva'.



## Guru Arjan Dev Ji [1563 - 1606]

The 5th Guru was born at Goindwal. He was the youngest of the three sons of Guru Ram Das. He constructed the Harmandir Sahib with its four entrances and compiled the Adi Granth. He became the first Martyr of the Sikh religion, which formed a turning point in the development of the Sikh religion.

## Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji [1595 - 1644]

The 6th Guru was born at Wadali in Amritsar. He was only 11 years of age when he succeeded his father in 1606. Hargobind was the first Guru to wear two swords. One representing Piri (guide in spiritual matters) and one representing Miri (guide in worldly matters).

He constructed the Akal Takhat signifying temporal power. He encouraged Sikhs to learn martial arts and sword fighting. Guru Hargobind Sahib was also responsible for releasing 52 Hindu kings from Gwalior fort. This is why Sikhs celebrate Diwali.

## Guru Har Rai Ji [1630 - 1661]

The 7th Guru succeeded his grandfather in 1644. He was the son of Baba Gurditta, Guru Hargobind's elder son and was only thirteen years old when he became Guru.

He was an expert in medicine and offered many herbal remedies to the sick.

## Guru Harkrishan Ji [1656 - 1664]

The 8th Guru was appointed at the age five, making him the youngest Guru. He was the younger son of Guru Har Rai Ji.