SIKHISM AT A GLANCE

This rendition is a humble attempt of presenting the history/beliefs of Sikhism (the 5th largest religion in the world) for the benefit of Sikh kids and non-Sikh audience, any enhancement to make it more factual and empowering will be highly appreciated.

Founder Guru **Nanak Dev Ji**
1469-1539

Years of Guruship

Enlightened in 1496

Gurbani Input

Jap Ji, Sidh Goshat, Sodar, Sohala, Arti Onkar, Asa Di Var, Malar & Madge Di Var, Patti Baramaha. Total 947 Shabads in 19 Rags

Guruship Highlights

- No idol worship
- There is one Creator
- Equality of all castes, classes and sexes
- Moral life enhances spiritual progress
- Introduced Guru ka Langar
- Introduced the practice of Seva for needy
- Introduced democracy (Sangat/pangat)
- Encouraged honest living and hard work
- Focus on inner-self
- Share your good fortune by donating 10% of your income.
- Trust that God is within human beings, hence by serving humanity we serve God
- Travelled throughout India, Ladakh, Sri Lanka, Mecca/ Madina to share his message
- Each Sikh must accept social responsibility

Truth is High, higher still is truthful living!

Second Guru **Angad Dev Ji**
1504-1552

Years of Guruship

12 years 9 months

Gurbani Input

63 Salok in Waaraa(n)

Guruship Highlights

- Perfected the Gurumukhi script (word from Guru)
- Solidified the idea that Sikhism is a distinct religion

MUGHAL DYNASTY
1526-1858
Parallels the growth of Sikhism. The Sikh Gurus had to face the rule of Babar, Humayun, Akbar, Jehangir, Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb who died in 1707. The 19th Mughal ruler Bahadur Shah II was deposed by the British in 1858.

Third Guru **Amar Das Ji**
1479-1574

Years of Guruship

22 years 6 months

Gurbani Input

Anand Sahib, 869 Shabads/ Saloks/Chhands in 17 Ragas

Guruship Highlights

- Strengthened Guru-ka-Langar by requiring all visitors must have langar before getting audience with the Guru
- Reinforced the teachings of the previous Gurus by organizing 22 centers to preach Sikhism, appointed women preachers
- Abolished sati, allowed widows to remarry

Fourth Guru **Ram Das Ji**
1534-1581

Years of Guruship

7 years

Gurbani Input

638 Shabads/Saloks / Chhands

Guruship Highlights

- Founded the city of Amritsar
- Established the site for the Golden Temple
- Made Amritsar a religious center for the Sikhs
- Encouraged commercial and trade ventures to build the economy of Amritsar

Fifth Guru **Arjan Dev Ji**
1563-1606

Years of Guruship

25 years

Gurbani Input

Sukhmani Sahib, Barah-Maha, Bava Akhri & 2312 Shabads in 30 Rags

Guruship Highlights

- Started compilation of Adi Granth
- Laid the foundation of Harmandir Sahib (The Golden Temple) in Amritsar to be situated in the tank
- Emphasized universality of Sikhism by asking Mian Mir (a Muslim) to lay the foundation stone of Harmandir Sahib. Added writings from 22 Hindu/Muslims saints into the Adi Granth
- Attracted a substantial following of Sikhs
- First Sikh Martyr because he refused to embrace Islam.

Sixth Guru **Hargobind Ji**
1595-1644

Years of Guruship

38 years

Gurbani Input

None

Guruship Highlights

- Established inseparability of spiritual/temporal matters (Miri/Piri)
- Established Akal Takht (Eternal Throne), center for temporal affairs for the Sikhs
- Ensured the Sikh community as a full-fledged social, religious and political entity
- Maintained an army to protect the poor
- Introduced the sant/ sipahi (Saint/soldier) concept

Seventh Guru **Har Rai Ji**
1630-1661

Years of Guruship

17 years 6 months

Gurbani Input

None

Guruship Highlights

- Continued organizing and strengthening the Sikh army spiritually and physically to fight the repressive Mughal empire

Eighth Guru **Harkrishan Ji**
1656-1664

Years of Guruship

2 years 6 months

Gurbani Input

None

Guruship Highlights

- Youngest Guru
- Worked to alleviate the suffering of the common man during a small pox epidemic in Delhi, but succumbed to the disease at the age of 8

Ninth Guru **Teg Bahadur Ji**
1621-1675

Years of Guruship

10 years 6 months

Gurbani Input

115 Shabads & Shaloks

Guruship Highlights

- Fought the tyranny of Aurangzeb who wanted to eliminate Hindus from India. He challenged Aurangzeb and was beheaded
- He sacrificed his life for freedom of religion, which served to awaken the collective Conscience of the Sikhs

Tenth Guru **Gobind Singh Ji**
1666-1708

Years of Guruship

33 years

Gurbani Input

Jap Sahib, Akal Ustat, Chopai, War Shri Bhagoti, Vachitar Natak, Chobis Avtar Chandi, Charitar, Shastar Nam Mala

Guruship Highlights

- Creation of Khalsa (pure) Panth
- Baptized the Khalsa and named them

Singhs
(lion in Sanskrit)

- Defend human rights
- Introduced the power of declaration
- Formalized the saint/ soldier concept.
- A Khalsa should keep the 5-Ks (Kesh, Kanga, Kara, Kachha and Kirpan)
- Proclaimed Guru Granth Sahib as the eternal Guru for all Sikhs
- Added ninth Guru's writings in the Adi Granth
- Sacrificed his sons and family for human rights

The actions taken by the Sikhs for the Hindus motivated many Hindu families from Punjab, to have their first born become a Sikh.

Eternal Guru **Granth Sahib**
1708-Present

Years of Guruship

Eternity

Gurbani Input

Verses from 22-36 Hindus and Muslim visionaries.

Guruship Highlights

- Love of God, love of man and godly living
- Honor Human Rights
- Do not judge people or make them wrong
- Written in Gurumukhi
- No priesthood

- Live life of honesty
- Live life of truth
- Live life of restraint
- Live life of family
- Live life of piety
- Live life of a householder

- Control passion (kam)
- Control anger (krodh)
- Control greed (lobh)
- Control attachment (moh)
- Control pride (Hankaar)
- Control ego (Homae)

- **Kirit Karni**—To earn one's livelihood through creative, productive and honest work
- **Nam Japna**—To be in tune with the infinite through HIS NAME
- **Wand Chhakna**—To share the fruits of earnings with the needy

A SALUTE TO OUR SIKH CHILDREN

For their courage and belief in Sikhism

The following is an excerpt from the commentary made by Bruce La Brack in the Journal of American Ethnic History, Summer 1991, on Margaret Gibson's study "Accommodation Without Assimilation: Sikh Immigrants in an American High School", Cornell University Press, 1988.

"This study reveals the unfortunate but not surprising fact that the school system itself presents many barriers, often unconsciously, to minority achievement. Its major contribution is to show how Sikhs, although perceived as radically exotic by many of the surrounding majority, share many important values and attitudes that parallel so-called American ideals, specifically the value of hard work, commitment to family, independence, religious devotion, and economic and academic success. That Sikh children are succeeding at a time when many other Americans are asking what is wrong with the educational system and reexamining assumptions about curriculum and pedagogy makes this book a major contribution to the current debates which, eventually, are likely to fundamentally alter the philosophy of American education."

SEVA
(serving the needy)
is
SIKHISM

SAVA-LAKH SIKH
Can make a difference!

MOOL MANTAR

A Prayer for Sikhs, recite it for empowerment!

Crux of the Sikh Belief

IK ONKAAR
There is only one god

SAT NAAM
Truth is his name

KARTA PURKH
He is the creator

NIRBHAU
He is without fear

NIRVAIR
He is without hate

AKAAL MOORAT
He is timeless and without form

AJOONI SAIBHANG
He is beyond birth and death, Self-created

GUR PARSAAD
He can be known by the guru's grace

All SIKH men are surnamed SINGH and women KAUR.

Guru Granth Sahib proclaimed as eternal Guru for the Sikhs

Guru Gobind Singh's last sermon
(now recited by Sikhs, after Ardaas).

aagya bhai Akal ki Tabhi chalayo Panth,
Sab Sikhan ko hukum hai Guru Manyo Granth.
Guru Granth ji manyo pargat Guran ki deh.
jo, shardha kar semday, khoj shabad men le.

Under orders of the Immortal being the Panth was started. All the Sikhs are enjoined to accept the Granth as their Guru. Consider Guru Granth as representing Guru's body. Those who wish to meet God can find the way in its hymns.

Facts about Guru Granth Sahib

Guru Granth (Adi Granth) has 1430 pages of text in poetry form. The Guru Granth is full of devotion, meditation, grace of Guru and God. It includes hymns of more than 22 Hindu and Muslim saints of India. It is the only holy book in world which was written by its founder of religion. Bible was not written by Christ, neither was Quran but Granth was written by all Gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind. Guru Granth Sahib also contains the hymns of famous saints of their time (irrespective of caste, creed & religion).
Guru Granth Sahib was installed in the Golden Temple in 1604.

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS and thank WAHEGURU!

Sikhism believes in:

One God
Equality of mankind
Human Rights
Democracy
Hard work
Respect all faiths

Conceived & Designed by Paramjit Singh, Cleveland, Ohio, April 2005, using the primary source "The encyclopedia of Sikhism" by Harbans Singh and interested friends.