



IK ONKAAR



**The Sikh Religious Award
Study Work Book
For
Grades (6-8) Youth**

American Sikh Council

Formerly known as, World Sikh Council - America Region

***The
American Sikh Council
Sikh Religious Award Book***

***By
Kirpal Singh Nijher***

***For
Any Scout***

***Who
In his/her***

***Chardi Kalaa
(The Perpetual Spirit of Ascendancy)***

***Aspires to be
a
Citizen of the World***

Wishing

***Sarbat Daa Bhalaa
(Prosperity of All)***

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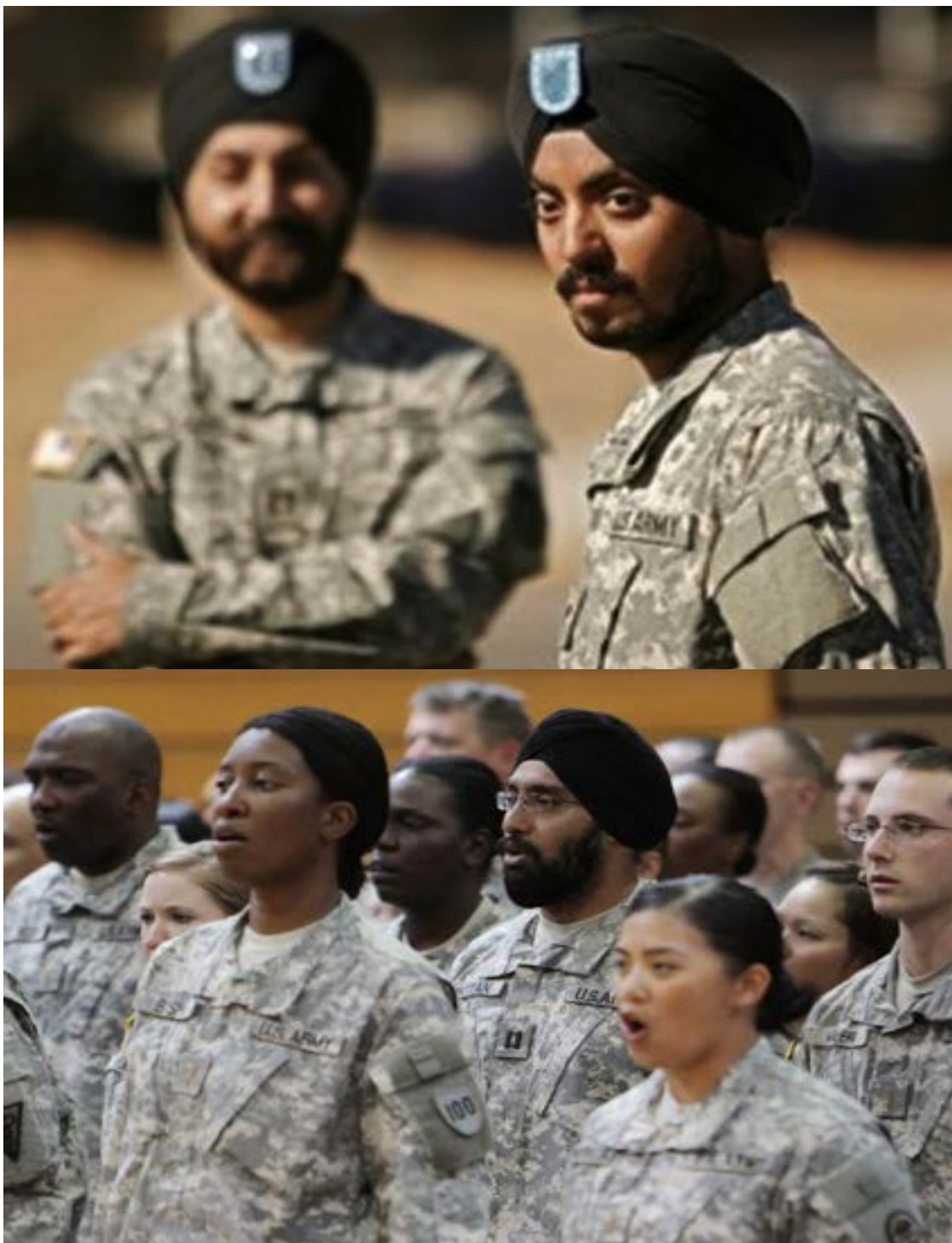
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THE SIKHS



Sikhs at The White House Egg Roll



***American Sikh Soldiers
An integral part of the US Defense Force***



Glimpses of a Baisakhi Sikh Parade



Sikh Soldiers in Service of Humanity



*A Canadian Sikh Police Officer
On
Duty*



GATKAA – The Sikh Martial Art



***Sikhs Soldiers in Mesopotamia (Egypt) during World War I
Marching with their spiritual guide
the Sacred Sikh Scripture
Sri Guru Granth Sahib
in
the lead***

Concept of God In Sikh way of life

ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ
ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

*“There is ONE God.
The Supreme Truth, the Creator, Omnipresent, without fear or enmity, A Timeless
Reality, beyond birth or death, self-existent;
(And is) Known by the Guru’s Grace.”*
 . (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 1)

It was the year 1469 CE, when with the advent of its founding spiritual master Guru Nanak Sahib the Sikh way of life got revealed in Punjab, South Asia. Wherein, as per his revelations Guru Nanak Sahib advocated **a life-style of ‘simple and honest living comprising of a strong sense of Truthfulness, Morality, Trustworthiness, Humility, Dignity, Freedom, Liberty, Equality, Oneness of the entire Human family, and Justice for all.’** Furthermore he especially stressed on the spiritual message of belief in One God only and none else.

Guru Nanak Sahib was followed by his nine successors; **Guru Gobind Singh Ji** was the Tenth Guru. The finalized form of teachings of the Sikh Gurus is compiled in the sacred **Sikh Scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS)**. In the year 1708 the Tenth Guru declared SGGS, as the **present day and eternal Enlightener (Guru)** for the Sikhs.

The Sikh religion’s beliefs are extremely modern, scientific and devoid of any dogmatic practices. Sikhism is a purely **monotheistic** faith. Thus with its belief in **ONE God** only and **NONE else**, it does not recognize any thing or anybody else as equal to God.

Furthermore, according to the (above mentioned) fundamental concept of God, any other being or power is **not God** who;

- Owes its existence to something other than its own self,
- Is subjected to birth or death,
- Has a life of a measurable time span,
- Possesses hate or sense of revenge,
- Has fear of someone else, or
- Is not omnipresent.

Questions:

1. How many Gods do the Sikhs believe in?

Ans: ...

2. What is the name of the sacred Sikh Scripture?

Ans: ...

3. According to Sikh beliefs, can any one of us be considered as God? If not, why not?

Ans: ...

4. What is the meaning of the word Guru?

Ans: ...

5. Who is the present day Guru of the Sikhs?

Ans: ...

SIKH MORALITY THE THREE GOLDEN RULES



ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ
ਆਚਾਰੁ ॥੫॥

"Below the ultimate Truth are all the endeavors to be divine; wherein, the highest amongst such endeavors is the attainment of a Truthful Character." ... (SGGS Pg 62).

In life, it is the truthful character alone that results in truthful actions emanating from one's truthful inner-self. In other words, merely talking about truth is not enough. Rather, one must develop the habit of doing truthful actions. These ideals are similar to those espoused by the Boy Scout oath; that states,

"On my honor, I will do my best; To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the

Scout law; To help other people at all times; To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight."

According to Sikh teachings, for the development of one's moral and truthful life, meaningless mechanical ritualistic practices of any kind are of no consequence. For example, people may think that they are already truthful within because they practice a bundle of rituals. Or, one may think that visiting "holy" places, bathing in "holy" water, performing some religious rituals or reciting "holy" words/prayers develops truthfulness. However, Sikh theology teaches that one must work to become truthful from within. It teaches that outward displays of ritualistic practices will not develop a truthful, ethical and moral lifestyle.

Therefore, instead of getting entangled in ritualistic practice, the Sikh way of life advocates the following Golden Rules:

- 1) **KIRAT KARO:** Earn your living through completely honest means.
- 2) **WAND CHHAKO:** Share your earnings with others by serving humanity through completely selfless service.
- 3) **NAAM JAPO:** Continuously stay focused upon Godly Virtues (like Truth, Honesty, Morality, Integrity etc.) in order to develop consciousness about their presence within oneself.

Questions:

1. What are the three Golden Rules of the Sikh Way of life?

Ans: ...

2. What is the highest triumph in becoming truthful?

Ans: ...

3. Is it good or bad to be mentally awake?

Ans:

4. Name a mechanical ritual that you know or have witnessed.

Ans: ...

5. According to Sikh Theology will practicing rituals develop truthfulness within?

Ans: ...

SIKH CONCEPT OF HEAVEN or LIBERATION

ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ ਚਲਨ ਕਹਤ ਹੈ ਉਹਾਂ ॥ ਨਾ ਜਾਨਉ, ਬੈਕੁੰਠੁ ਹੈ ਕਹਾਂ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਆਪ ਆਪ ਕਾ ਮਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਨਾਂ ॥ ਬਾਤਨ ਹੀ, ਬੈਕੁੰਠੁ ਬਖਾਨਾਂ ॥੧॥ ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਮਨ ਬੈਕੁੰਠ ਕੀ ਆਸ ॥ ਤਬ ਲਗੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਚਰਨ ਨਿਵਾਸ ॥੨॥ ਖਾਈ ਕੋਟੁ ਨ ਪਰਲ ਪਗਾਰਾ ॥ ਨਾ ਜਾਨਉ ਬੈਕੁੰਠ ਦੁਆਰਾ ॥੩॥ ਕਹਿ ਕਮੀਰ ਅਬ ਕਹੀਐ ਕਾਹਿ ॥ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਬੈਕੁੰਠੈ ਆਹਿ ॥੪॥੮॥੧੬॥

Everyone claims that he/she is going to Heaven out there, but I do not even know, where (such a) heaven is! ||1||Pause|| ... (Such claimants) not having explored even the mystery of their inner-selves, speak of being able to reach that heaven, just by merely talking. ||1|| ... (O my mind,) As long as you hope for going to (such a) heaven; you will not be able to even dwell in the Almighty's Feet. ||2|| ... (Understand) Heaven is not some sort of fort (out there) surrounded by a defensive wall, or a township with an embankment around it; I, for one, do not even know about any entrance to such a heaven. ||3|| ... Says Kabir, now what more can I say? Except, pronouncing that the real heaven is right here in the company of Saadh Sangat (the Godly-minded persons).||4||8||16|| --- (SGGS: Pg. 1161)

From the above-quoted sacred commandment from the Sikh Scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, it is very interesting to note that the Sikh view on the concept of 'Heaven, or Liberation' is at variance with the views of majority of other religions. The major contrast is that most religions consider the concepts of 'Heaven, or Liberation' to be a part of some unseen after-life realm. In contrast, Sikh theology believes Heaven or liberation to belong to this (very real) life.

According to Sikh beliefs, every human being is divinely blessed with five major passions in order to ensure the propagation of creation. These passions are: the attraction for the opposite gender, outrage against injustice, the desire for necessary possessions, a sense of rational attachments, and modest pride of achievements. All these passions should be exercised in moderation. If they get out of human control, they turn into the five major human afflictions or vices: Kaam (Irresponsible Lust), Karodh (uncontrollable anger), Lobh (unnecessary greed), Moh (Irrational attachments), and Hankaar (arrogant pride).

Unfortunately, most humans have a tendency to indulge and get eternally trapped in these vices. Any escape from this eternal prison of vices is recognized as the real LIBERATION (or Heaven) in the Sikh Way of thinking. In addition, Sikh theology teaches us to strive to achieve this liberation during our lives and not after death.

True liberation may seem easier to talk about than actually achieving it. It is in fact, an extremely difficult task. To achieve success, Sikh faith teaches us to strive for a disciplined life right now, since success is not a goal to be attained in some after-life.

To emphasize the urgency of achieving and enjoying our LIBERATION, the Sikh Guru Sahib has reminded us about the real objective of our Human life, revealing;

ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ ॥ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥

***“O My Mind! You have received from God your human body,
This alone is your opportunity to attain unto Him (Godliness)”***

... (SGGS: Pg. 13)

Questions:

1. Out of the five vices outlined in the Sikh theology, name the two that you think are the worst.
Ans: ...
2. According to Sikh theology, where is heaven?
Ans: ...
3. Do you think that Sikh theology teaches that heaven is some beautiful place out there with magnificent gardens?
Ans: ...
4. According to Sikh teachings, what is the best way to achieve liberation?
Ans: ...
5. According to Sikh theology, do we know how the gate to heaven looks like?
Ans: ...

WHO IS A SIKH?

The word 'SIKH' is a word from the PUNJABI language. Punjabi is the primary language of the PUNJAB region, which is located in South Asia Northwest section of modern day India and Pakistan. In Punjabi, the word 'Sikh' means 'Student'. However, in the context of the question, 'Who is a Sikh?', it means a student of GURU NANAK.

Guru Nanak Sahib, the founding Guru of the Sikhs, was born in Punjab in the year 1469 (approximately 550 years ago). Because his teachings were very modern, scientific, and straight forward, many people in the surrounding regions and the regions to which his successor Gurus travelled, were inspired to become his SIKHS (students).

Furthermore, Guru Nanak Sahib and the subsequent Sikh Gurus inscribed their teachings in writing. These writing are available in their unaltered form to every Sikh throughout the globe. Anyone who decides to lead his/her life in the Sikh Way, is a SIKH.

The key Sikh beliefs include belief in;

- **One God only and no one else.**
- **One Human Family, without any division on any basis.**
- **Equality of all (including women.)**
- **Freedom, Liberty and Justice for all.**
- **Right to Freedom of Religion for all.**
- **Right to self-defense and to possess arms.**
- **Life style of Honesty, Morality, Humility, and Dignity.**
- **Life style of a Householder, rather than that of an absconder.**

While, the key Sikh prohibitions are:

- **Following any kind of superstitions.**
- **Practicing any kind of Karam-Kand; the meaningless rituals performed in the name of religion.**
- **Practicing any kind of Idol worship.**
- **Following any kind of division in the human family based upon any superficial criteria like race, color, gender, national origin, religion, caste, or any claim of being superior to others, etc.**

Questions:

1. Do Sikhs think that they are superior to others?

Ans: ...

2. What does the word 'Sikh' mean?

Ans: ...

3. Who is a Sikh?

Ans: ...

4. How old is the Sikh Way of life?

Ans: ...

5. Do you personally know any Sikh?

Ans: ...

Sikh uniform And The Sikh Turban



To help discipline the mind get freed from any inferior form of behavior and to achieve a sense of equality of all, the Sikh Divine Masters specified a **uniform** that every Sikh needs to start wearing as a first step towards a disciplined life.

This **Sikh uniform** mandates keeping the human body intact to its maximum extent as God handed it over to us. Sikh Gurus have asked their followers to stop deforming their human bodies through the unnecessary rituals of circumcision, and/or cutting or shaving of hair.

Furthermore, to keep the hair neat, and tidy, each and every Sikh male is required to wear a **TURBAN**. Every Sikh is also advised to always be willing to help the needy. The Turban functions as a Sikh uniform (like a police officer's uniform) so that anyone who needs help may be able to approach a Sikh without hesitation. Female Sikhs can also wear **TURBANS** if they choose to do so; otherwise they have the option of wearing a SCARF (Chunee).

NOTE: In the US, Canada, and Europe, **99.9% of those who wear Turbans are Sikhs**. However, majority of the general population in these countries are unaware of this fact and occasionally get confused and misperceive the TURBAN wearing SIKHS as Taliban or Osama followers (when they are not).

The earliest record of Sikhs arriving in the US is on April 6, 1899. There are around 500,000 Sikhs living in America currently. The oldest and the first Gurdwara Sahib (A Sikh House of Prayer/Learning), which is on the US historical register was established in 1912 in Stockton, California.

In summation, a practicing Sikh, who has made up his/her mind to follow the Sikh Way of life, is mandated to maintain the **five articles of faith** in addition to the **four cardinal prohibitions**..

The **five articles of faith** according to the **Sikh Code of conduct** are;

1. Kesh - the “**Uncut Hair**” symbolize acceptance of God’s Will.
2. Kanghaa - A “**Small Comb**” symbolizes cleanliness.
3. Kachhaira - A “**Pair of Breeches**,” symbolizes Self-control.
4. Karhha - A “**Steel Bracelet**” symbolizes one’s bond with God.
5. Kirpan - A “**Sword**” symbolizes right for self-defense and a willingness to defend Freedom, Liberty and Justice for all. ...(Sikh Code of Conduct)

The **four cardinal prohibitions** according to the **Sikh Code of conduct** are;

1. Do not disrespect (cut) hair.
2. Do not eat Halaal meat (the meat ritually partaken by the Muslims.)
3. Do not commit adultery.
4. Do not use Tobacco (or any other intoxicants like Marijuana, Opium, Alcohol, Poppy, Cocaine, etc) (Sikh Code of Conduct)

Questions:

1. How do you recognize a Sikh?

Ans: ...

2. How many Articles of Faith does a Sikh maintain?

Ans: ...

3. Do the Sikhs wear their TURBANS as a fashion statement?

Ans: ...

4. Do any Sikhs live in America?

Ans: ...

5. Are the TURBAN-wearing Sikhs followers of Osama or the Taliban?

Ans: ...

SIKH ATTITUDE TOWARDS NON-SIKHS

ਕਾਨੜਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ ਬਿਸਰਿ ਗਈ ਸਭ ਤਾਤਿ ਪਰਾਈ ॥ ਜਬ ਤੇ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਮੋਹਿ ਪਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ ॥੧॥ ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੀਨੋ ਸੋ ਭਲ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਏਹ
ਸੁਮਤਿ ਸਾਧੂ ਤੇ ਪਾਈ ॥੨॥ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਏਕੈ ਪੇਖਿ ਪੇਖਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਗਸਾਈ ॥੩॥੮॥
... (SGGS: Pg.1299)

O Friend! I have totally forgotten my jealousy of others since I found the Company of the Guru, the Enlightener. ||1||Pause|| ... Now, no one seems like an enemy, and no one is a stranger to me anymore. I get along with everyone. ||1|| Now, whatever God does, I accept as good (for His creation.) This is the sublime wisdom I have obtained from the Guru. ||2|| The One God is pervading in all. Gazing upon His creation and beholding Him present in everyone, Nanak blossoms forth in happiness. ||3||8||

...
Over the generations, humans have created division amongst themselves based upon categories such as race, color, gender, nationality, religion, caste or culture, etc. According to Sikh theology, these divisions are based upon misperceptions that can be removed by coming in the company of righteous people. The Sikh Guru Sahib has highlighted this problem of division and provided a solution in the above Guru-Commandment. This order directs the students (Sikhs) to befriend everyone by feeling the presence of God in every human heart and to look upon all as friends (rather than strangers).

In practicing the Sikh way of life, the Guru's above-mentioned advice is followed, by opening the doors of all 'GURDWARAS' (Sikh Houses of Learning/Prayer) to everyone. All are welcome at the GURDWARA regardless of race, color, religion, gender, caste, etc. For example, the sacred Golden Gurdwara Sahib in Amritsar was built with doors facing in all the four directions to symbolize that 'Sikh Houses of Prayer' are open to all people, coming from all the four directions of the globe.

To further emphasize the idea of 'EQUALITY of All', everyone in a 'Sikh House of Prayer' sits on the floor to promote humility and equality. No special place, chair, or cushion (etc) is assigned for any "special person". Moreover, in the Sikh faith there are no priests or clergy since everyone is considered as an equal as a brother or sister.



***The Darbar Sahib - Golden Gurdwara Sahib
A Symbol of
Total Equality and Unity in Action***



A glimpse of ...the Guru's Free Kitchen, Langar,

Where all are equal

Most **Gurdwaras** (the Sikh Houses of prayer) also operate the Guru's Free Community Kitchen (LANGAR), which, again, mandates everyone to sit and dine together sitting on the floor. Anyone who visits a GURDWARA is free to volunteer in the preparation and distribution of the LANGAR. Through the process of preparing food for others and humbly distributing the food, the sense of service to humanity (SEWA) is instilled in all who participate and partake the langar.

In Sikh theology, the over-inflated human ego is considered a barrier to understanding Truth. By developing humility and providing selfless service, a Sikh hopes to develop a love for all and recognize the presence of God within.

Questions:

1. What is the name of a Sikh House of Prayer?

Ans: ...

2. In the Sikh Way of life, what does Langar refer to?

Ans: ...

3. Why do the Sikhs sit on the floor in their House of Prayer?

Ans: ...

4. Is every Sikh a humble person? If not, why not?

Ans: ...

5. Do the Sikhs have a clergy or priesthood?

Ans: ...

Guru Nanak Sahib The founder of the Sikh Way of Life

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਆ, ਮਿਟੀ ਧੁੰਦ ਜਗਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਆ ॥

**With the Advent of the True Divine Master Satguru Nanak;
The fog of Divine Ignorance faded away,
as the World got illuminated with his Divine Wisdom.**

(Bhai Gurdas)

Guru Nanak Sahib, the founding father of the Sikh Way of Life, was born on Baisakh 1, March **1469 CE**, at Talwandi Rai Bhoe. Talwandi is now known as **Nanakana Sahib**; and although originally located in the **Punjab region of Northwest India**, is now a part of Pakistan (when India and Pakistan gained their independence and both countries were formed out of a mishmash of over more than 550 countries/kingdoms tied together by the British.)

Guru Nanak Sahib's father, Mehta Kalyan Das (affectionately known as Mehta Kaloo) and mother, Mata Tripta Jee also had one daughter, Beebee Nanki, who was older than Guru Nanak Sahib by a few years. In **Punjabi culture**, the word 'Beebee' is used as a prefix to a name to address any respectable lady (especially a sister or a daughter of the Sikh Gurus). The words, "Jee," "Sahib," or "Sahiba," are added as suffixes to names to address anyone with respect.

After achieving **adulthood**, Guru Nanak Sahib married Mata Sulakhani Jee and had two sons, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das. Guru Nanak Sahib, in his Divine Message, advocated a life style of a householder and considered anyone following the lifestyle of a religious recluse or hermit as an irresponsible person for running away from family and worldly responsibilities.

Although it was a rare practice at the time, Guru Nanak Sahib's parents brought in two renowned scholars to tutor Guru Nanak at home in subjects such as mathematics, accounting, and business management, etc. One scholar was a Muslim, while the other was a Hindu. Although he was only a child, Guru Nanak was a very bright student. Both tutors were surprised to find their student, young Nanak, asking them profound questions about divinity and The Divine Creator. The tutors often found Guru Nanak's questions to be difficult to answer and were amazed by his focus and intelligence.

As a result of his home schooling and his predilection for understanding Divinity, Guru Nanak Sahib quickly became well versed in the teachings of religions that were popular at that time in India. He became proficient in multiple languages in order to study these faiths (including Islam, Sufism, Hinduism, and Yogism, etc). As he learned about the prevalent religious practices of the time, Guru Nanak began to question the validity and usefulness of these practices.

One example of this was Guru Nanak's reaction when he was asked to participate in the 'Janeoo' Ceremony. This ceremony occurs when a boy is entering adolescence (similar to the Jewish Bar Mitzvah). In the 'Janeoo' ceremony, a Hindu boy is made to wear a sacred thread (the Janeoo). This thread is made out of cotton, jute, or some other material depending upon the caste classification of the boy. Furthermore, the ceremony is not allowed for a girl of any caste, or for any boy who happens to belong to the untouchable Shudra (lowest) caste of the Hindu hierarchy.

Guru Nanak Sahib objected to the ceremony because he opposed the hollowness and divisiveness of its' internal message. Instead of providing moral guidance to society, the ceremony promoted division based upon one's gender or caste. Guru Nanak Sahib challenged the Pandit (Hindu priest) with the following words:

ਦਇਆ ਕਪਾਹ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਸੂਤੁ ਜਤੁ ਗੰਢੀ ਸਤੁ ਵਟੁ ॥ ਏਹੁ ਜਨੇਊ ਜੀਅ ਕਾ ਹਈ ਤ ਪਾਡੇ ਘਤੁ ॥

O Pandit, if you have a sacred thread for the soul that is made from the cotton of compassion, thread of contentment, twists of high moral character, and knots of modesty, then go ahead and put it on me. ... (SGGS: Pg. 471)

Questions:

1. When was Guru Nanak Sahib born?

Ans: ...

2. What type of life did Guru Nanak advocate to his Sikhs?

Ans: ...

3. Was Guru Nanak Sahib an educated or an uneducated person?

Ans: ...

4. What is the Janeoo?

Ans: ...

5. What was Guru Nanak's objection to wearing the 'Janeoo'?

Ans: ...

FEEDING THE HUNGRY A TRULY PROFITABLE BARGAIN

ਸਿਰੀ ਰਾਗੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥

ਬਾਬਾ, ਮਾਇਆ ਰਚਨਾ ਧੋਹੁ ॥ ਅੰਧੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿਆ, ਨਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਏਹੁ ਨ ਓਹੁ ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਆਖੈ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਘਟਿ
ਨ ਆਖੈ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਕਿਨੈ ਨ ਪਾਈਆ ਕਹਣਿ ਨ ਵਡਾ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਹਬੁ ਏਕੁ ਤੂ, ਹੋਰਿ ਜੀਆ ਕੇਤੇ ਲੋਅ ॥੩॥
ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ, ਨੀਚੀ ਹੂ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸ ॥ ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ
ਸਮਾਲੀਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ ॥੪॥੩॥ ... (SGGS: Pg. 15)

O Brother, in there, the splendor of Maya-the mammon is very deceptive and transitory. However in this very transient play of Maya, the man blinded by its deceptive splendor, having forgotten the Name (his connection with the Creator); lands nowhere; neither here nor there. ||1||Pause||

(O the Supreme Master) Everyone asks You for more and more money, and no one begs You for any less. Furthermore, no one ever cares to be thankful by appreciating the magnitude of the value of your bounties; and (struck by one's unsatiable hunger for Maya) no one has ever gotten contended, even after becoming filthy rich. ... It is You alone (O the True Master); who being Timeless are True for ever, whereas everyone, and everything else in Your creation are subject to destruction. ||3||

(O the Creator Master) Nanak requests to stick with those who are the poorest amongst the poor, and are the lowest among the lowest; for one, of what use is it to imitate the thankless filthy rich? ... May I never forget the downtrodden O Master, because it is there alone, where the lowly are cared for that the Blessings of Your Glance of Grace rains down. ||4||3||

One of the core principles of Sikh Theology is to share with others (WAND CHAKHNA). Even as a young child, Nanak felt the most happiness in his life when he helped the needy. According to his teachings, all human possessions are a gift from God, and are given to us to serve all of God's creation, with a truthful heart. He believed that **'helping other people at all times'** was a crucial part of his mission to serve God's Manifest Spirit.

Nanak's father, Mehta Kalyan Das (Mehta Kaloo), however, was not happy with the way his son gave everything away. He felt that Nanak had learned a very bad habit in his childhood, extreme generosity. He believed that if young Nanak were given a practical lesson in saving money, then he would learn to be thrifty in life.

Mehta Kaloo, having provided his son the best formal education, wished for his son to learn the profession of trade. He believed this occupation would be a potentially profitable profession for Nanak and would lead to his financial independence. Mehta Kaloo gave Nanak sizeable amount of money to begin trading within the district. He thought that if Nanak used his mind to make **profitable trade bargains**, then he would be trusted to go to more distant cities and countries for bigger ventures.

Thus, as per the plan Guru Nanak, accompanied by a couple of his advisor friends, left Talwandi (Guru Nanak Sahib's birth place) in search of a truly profitable trade bargain. As he and his companions traveled about fifteen miles from Talwandi towards a hutment named Chuharhkhana (meaning a hamlet of poor Chuharhaa-scavengers), they came across a colony on its out skirts inhabited by a group of people, who were considered as outcastes even by the scavenger residents of Chuharhkhana.

This was a colony where the very poor of the poor, unemployed, weak, hungry, and half clothed destitute people of the ghetto were struggling to survive. Having been shunned by the general public they survived on scavenging the left over food from here or there. ... They were the unfortunate people whom the caste system had chosen to brand as the untouchables outcastes of the society.

Having no jobs or any job prospects, because of the enforced class of the social structure, they were mostly forced to perform very repugnant menial work, that no one even those on the fringes of an economic survival would opt to choose.

Furthermore, to add insult to the injury these people were not allowed to come in contact with the general public. Considering them to be polluted, nobody will take any food or water from them. Also they were not allowed to even draw a bucket of water from a well by themselves. Thus stuck in such a destitute situation, they also suffered from rampant sickness. The society's solution for such a group of people was to just push them out of sight to a place far away from them, so that they were out of their minds as well.

Pushing these destitute people out of sight as well as out of mind might have been a norm for the society, but for young Nanak it definitely was not an ignorable option. Therefore, seeing it firsthand Nanak was deeply moved by the deplorable situation of these destitute people. He felt pity for their appalling conditions. He felt pain and compassion for their poverty. Thus, assessing the complete situation Nanak felt that there could be no better **profitable bargain** than to help and feed these hungry and starving people.

Thus having found the profitable bargain of his choice, Guru Nanak directed his companion advisors to immediately help him to invest his money on the profitable bargain that he had just found. He told them that without any delay they need to leave the Chuharhkhana forest along with him in order to travel to the nearest city to fetch flour, rice, pulses, ghee (clarified butter), fruit, clothing and medicines etc for the inhabitants of the hamlet.

On their way to the city, his advisor friends not being comfortable with young Nanak's choice, pleaded with him to not go for it. They reminded him to not forget the fact that he was out there to spend his money on the best available profitable bargain, and not to waste it on feeding or clothing some hungry or destitute people. Upon finding their pleadings to be completely ineffective, they tried to scare young Nanak by questioning as to; what explanation will he give to his father, when he returns home? And, what profit will he show

to his father for the money spent? ... However to their frustration nothing worked in changing Nanak's decision.

Un-deterred by the counsel and questions of his advisor friends, young Nanak assured them very firmly that, he will tell his father, that by feeding and clothing the hungry and the destitute he (Nanak) has made the most profitable and gainful bargain. In such a bargain, the ultimate gain is the Grace of God, through which one receives the divine treasure of complete internal peace, satisfaction, tranquility, and sense of direction for life. Therefore, shouldn't such a gain, qualify this bargain to be more precious than all the wealth in the world?

Not quite grasping what young Nanak had said, his friends went along with his decision, and traveled to the nearest city. From there they took food, clothing and other necessities to the naked, starving, and the sick. Reaching there, they encouraged the able bodied amongst the residents to join them in this service of cooking, providing clothing, and distributing food. Together, the group including young Nanak, his friends and the able bodied residents cooked and distributed the food, and towards the end they all sat together in the last batch, and shared the food as EQUAL brothers and sisters sitting together as members of ONE human family.

Thus having received "True bargain" Guru Nanak and his associates returned home to Talwandi. Guru Nanak knew that he would need to explain his reasoning for the "profitable trade bargain" to his father who would not be happy with his actions.

Guru Nanak sent his friends alone to the village and told them to reach their homes. Young Nanak wanted to sit alone outside the village to wait for his father there. While waiting calmly for his father, Guru Nanak contemplated the Word of God and listened to the message from The Divine Spirit.

When Mehta Kaloo Jee learned that Guru Nanak's associates had returned home, he sent for them. He learned what Nanak had done and became very angry. He went searching for Nanak and found him sitting very calmly near the pond. Mehta Kaloo asked Nanak to explain why he had wasted all the money on feeding and clothing needy people instead of making some profitable bargain. Nanak replied, "The highest level of Goodwill is to give and help others in need without any desire for financial or material reward. Because, it is that virtue alone, that is the only true profitable trade bargain a person can make in life."

Witnessing the sincerity and seriousness of Divine thought in his son's voice, eyes, face and heart, Mehta Kaloo Jee felt completely disarmed. His anger converted into love and affection. Even though he didn't quite grasp the situation, he very calmly and affectionately brought his son home.

In the following days, it was nothing but natural for the actions of young Nanak to become the talk of the town. Many laughed at this incidence, while some others were able to see the

merit of the true bargain that young Nanak had struck. Those who were able to see its merits; got deeply inspired; and started emulating the true bargain, revealed by young Nanak. Thus a small spark of selfless inspiration became a lighthouse of love, affection, and help for the needy.

The final result of that small flame of 'the true profitable bargain of feeding, clothing, and helping the poor' that young Nanak Sahib lit in the outskirts of Choharhkhana, got multiplied many folds, and ended up spreading all around the globe.

Today, this principle of 'Guru's True Bargain' has become an integral part of the modern day Sikh Psyche. In the 'Sikh Way of Life' this belief is expressed in the form of the Sikh Institution of 'LANGAR – The Guru's Free Community Kitchen'. At present it is a part of every Sikh House of Prayer (Gurdwara Sahib), and provides millions of people (needy or not), from every walk of life, with free food every day. In the Langar, everyone sits to dine together as brothers and sisters, belonging to ONE big Human family, united through a sense of equality, and free from any type of division based upon class, caste, color, gender, or religious affiliation etc.

Questions;

1. What did Guru Nanak do when he saw the colony of hungry people?

Ans: ...

2. Was Guru Nanak's action of spending his money to feed the hungry a good idea, or a bad idea?

Ans: ...

3. How did Mehta Kaloo react when he learned what his son had done with the money?

Ans: ...

4. What lesson did Guru Nanak teach through his actions?

Ans: ...

5. How is Guru Nanak's idea of a 'Truthful Trade Bargain' practiced by his Sikhs?

Ans: ...

Honest Living Versus Tyrannical Corruption

Guru Nanak was an intelligent and divinely oriented child and an independent-minded teenager. As an adult, Guru Nanak was married, had children and lived as an honest workingman and responsible married householder. While living this practical life, Guru Nanak demonstrated that one could be completely connected with the One True Creator Master of us all while upholding one's responsibilities. After many years, Guru Nanak received the Divine Call from within to start spreading his message for the benefit of humanity.

After making the necessary arrangements for his family, Guru Nanak Sahib initially began his travels, in the westward direction towards present day Pakistan. He was accompanied by his childhood friend Bhai Mardana(a Muslim by birth). They both travelled to spread the message of the Love of God for all humanity.

Throughout their travels, Guru Nanak Sahib and Bhai Mardana visited numerous cities and towns to spread his moral message of the One Divine Spirit (The Light of Wisdom and The Peace of God's Soul-consciousness).

One town that they visited was Saidpur (currently in Pakistan). The city was under the command of a military governor named Zalam Khan, whose chief administrator was a very corrupt Hindu named Malik Bhago.

Near the city lived a very hardworking and honest carpenter named Bhai Lallo. In the Hindu social caste system, there are four strictly divisive castes; Brahmin (the high-status Priests), Kashatriya (the second-status people with a right to keep weapons), Vaishya (the traders and ordinary workers) and Shudar (the lowest untouchables). Bhai Lallo was from the lowest caste and was very poor. He lived as an outcast of society. However, Bhai Lallo had a very devout and spiritual soul-consciousness and lived a contented honest life.

When Guru Nanak decided to go to Saidpur, he chose to visit Bhai Lallo. When Guru Nanak arrived at his home, Lallo did not ask Guru Nanak his name. He believed the man standing in his presence was a great saint who deserved to be given hospitality.

After Guru Nanak told Bhai Lallo who he was, the humble carpenter felt honored and blessed. However, although honored for being in the presence of such a respected man, Lallo also believed that he could not entertain a man from a high caste, such as Guru Nanak. The Hindu social caste system promoted the idea that 'HUMAN BEINGS ARE BORN UNEQUAL' and strictly prohibited any social relations between the castes. Being fearful of social laws and their strict and quite often a rigid enforcement, Lallo offered Guru Nanak food and a more sacred, separate kitchen space where Mardana could cook for the Guru.

In response, Guru Nanak smiled and conveyed his message to Bhai Lallo:

“Bhai Lallo, the whole earth is sacred. For me, every inch of this earth of God is pure for cooking. Why under the confusion of inequality created by the caste division you felt like creating a separate cooking place for me, or Bhai Mardana? Bhai Lallo, in God’s creation nobody is high, and nobody is low. You are inferior to none. I will take food prepared by your hands; because your hands are holier and purer than any of those arrogant Brahmins in Saidpur or anywhere else; who, stung by their so-called caste prides, think that somehow they are superior to others.

The hands of such Brahmins are the hands of vain idlers, cheaters, pretenders and sinful people who commit unthinkable crimes in the name of religion and hide behind the disguise and masks of their high caste.

Your hands, Lallo, are the hands of a man of deep virtue and honesty. You are a God-fearing laborer who earns his living by the sweat of his brow.

Your hands are pure and sacred in my eyes. Whatever your hands prepare, will be full of the milk of humanity and goodness.

Thus, your deeds, Lallo, and your honest life of labor and love have made you higher and nobler than any arrogant Brahmin on the earth.”

Guru Nanak and Mardana stayed with Bhai Lallo for three days. On the day when they were to leave, Lallo requested that they stay for a month. Guru Nanak accepted Lallo’s offer of hospitality.

Every day during Guru Nanak’s stay, he held spiritual discussions and lectures. Both Hindu and Muslim believers came to the home of Lallo, the humble carpenter, early in the morning and late in the evening to discuss religious beliefs, gain a deeper spiritual insight about the One True God, and listen to the teachings of Guru Nanak.

However, feeling threatened, the Brahmin priests of the town were becoming very angry and jealous of Guru Nanak’s growing popularity. They feared losing their control over society and publicly condemned Guru Nanak. They condemned Guru Nanak for living with a low-caste carpenter (while being born into a high-caste family) and for having a Muslim bard as his companion.

Guru Nanak, however, did not fear this public condemnation and continued to lead religious discussions on the Oneness of God and humanity.

During this time, Malik Bhago, the Chief Town administrator, was preparing for his son’s marriage. A large feast was being planned for the Brahmins and high-caste Hindus who

would attend the ceremony. Therefore, in order to avoid even a sight of the so-called lower caste people during the celebrations, Malik Bhago was also forcing all the sadhus and fakirs (religious ascetic beggars) who belonged to the low-castes of society to move away from the feast.

Guru Nanak learned of these actions; and when he was invited to the feast, he politely refused saying, “Why should I be invited to the feast of -Malik Bhago? That is for high-caste people. I am just an ordinary person and my place is with the lowly.”

Malik Bhago felt very insulted by Guru Nanak’s refusal to come to his feast. He sent policemen to force Guru Nanak to attend his “feast of gods”. Guru Nanak agreed to go with the police and meet with Malik Bhago.

On Guru Sahib’s arrival at his place, Malik Bhago asked “Why do you, a Kashatriya from such a high family, eat from the hands of a low-caste carpenter and refuse to take food from my ‘feast of gods’?”

Guru Nanak replied, “Because your feast is given from ill-gotten wealth; in which I see the blood of the poor whom you cheated, exploited and looted to acquire your large fortunes. This “feast of gods” is poison to any man of God. The food of Bhai Lallo has the milk of Humanity in it. It is as pure as his mind and soul. It is the bread earned by this noble soul through the sweat of his brow. It is the bread that gives peace to the mind and strength to the soul. What good is your high caste and that of these Brahmins, when all the evils which lower a man’s character always live within you, and your cohorts?”

“Wealth accumulated by cruelty toward other people is like sucking blood from their bodies. Therefore, your invitation to me was nothing but an offer to join in sharing your food prepared by the blood of the poor, compared to Bhai Lallo’s food that is as pure as milk. How could I accept your invitation?”

Hearing Guru Sahib’s fearless words, Malik Bhago became speechless and finally understood the following message of Guru Nanak:

ਸਲੋਕੁ ਮ: ੧ ॥ ਜੇ ਰਤੁ ਲਗੈ ਕਪੜੈ ਜਾਮਾ ਹੋਇ ਪਲੀਤੁ ॥ ਜੇ ਰਤੁ ਪੀਵਹਿ ਮਾਣਸਾ ਤਿਨ ਕਿਉ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਚੀਤੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਉ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਕਾ, ਦਿਲਿ ਹਛੈ ਮੁਖਿ ਲੇਹੁ ॥ ਅਵਰਿ ਦਿਵਾਜੇ ਦੁਨੀ ਕੇ, ਝੁਠੇ ਅਮਲ ਕਰੇਹੁ ॥੧॥

If, one’s clothes get smeared with blood, then that garment is considered contaminated (and hence, not fit for saying a truthful prayer). Therefore those who suck blood of other humans (through cheating, robbing, and inflicting injustice etc), -how can their consciousness stay pure enough (for doing anything pure or truthful)?

Therefore, O Nanak, recapitulate God's Name (Virtues) with pure heart-felt devotion; because, besides this, everything else is just pompous worldly show and the practice of false deeds. ||1|| ... (SGGS: Pg 140)

Questions:

1. What do you understand about honest earning and hard work?

Ans: ...

2. Did Guru Nanak support the caste system of the Hindus?

Ans: ...

3. What was Bhai Lalo's fear in entertaining Guru Nanak as his guest?

Ans: ...

4. Why did Guru Nanak stay with Bhai Lallo instead of Malik Bhago?

Ans: ...

5. Why was Malik Bhago upset with Guru Nanak?

Ans: ...

THE FUTILITY OF MEANINGLESS RITUALS

To carry his universal message of ONE God and the Oneness of the entire Humanity, Guru Nanak Sahib traveled to different parts of the world on foot. Some of the well-known places that the Guru Sahib travelled to, were the major Hindu Centers of Hardwar, Banaras, Mathura, Puri, and Kurukushetar, etc. in India, the Islamic Centers of Mecca and Bagdad, in the Middle East and the Yogic centers, of Sumer Hills, Gorakh-matta (or Nanak Matta), towards Tibet and China. During majority of his journeys, his childhood friend, Bhai Mardana, accompanied Guru Nanak Sahib.

RITUAL OF ANCESTRAL WORSHIP AT HARDWAR;

One famous Hindu center that Guru Nanak visited was the city of Hardwar. According to the teachings of the Hindu Brahmins, one's ancestors must be worshipped and honored. It is customary for every Hindu devotee to visit the Holy city of Hardwar to 'offer water from the river Ganges to the Sun'. This is believed to cool down the perceived heat surrounding the souls of one's past ancestors. The Hindus believe that many souls live in very close proximity to the sun and therefore, need the cooling water from the Ganges river.

The Brahmins teach their devotees to carry out this responsibility to one's ancestors by completing a long list of rituals. Each devotee must, (a) take a bath before the ritual, (b) abstain from eating anything on the morning of the ritual, (c) face East towards the Sun while offering it water from the river Ganges (d) recite 'Gaitri and other Vedic Mantras' of the sacred Hindu scriptures during the ritual, and (e) offer 'Argha' (the sacred foods for gods).

When Guru Nanak Sahib paid a visit to Hardwar, this celebratory ritual was taking place. He decided to join the Hindu devotees in the river.

Guru Nanak, however, instead of facing Eastward, faced West instead, and started throwing water in the Westward direction. Obviously, this action attracted everyone's attention and a conversation that occurred, went somewhat as follows:

People: "Young man, throw your water towards the East."

Guru Ji: "Why are you throwing water towards the East?"

People: "We are quenching the thirst of our ancestors by offering water to the Sun."

Guru Ji: "How far are your ancestors? How far is the Sun?"

People: "Millions of miles away is the Sun, as well as the abode of our late ancestors."

Guru Ji: "That's good."

Guru Ji then, again, began throwing water towards the West.

A Pandit from the crowd (trying to correct the Guru): “O friend, you have gotten busy in your task again. We have told you why we are throwing water to the East. Can you explain why are you throwing water to the West?”

Guru Ji: “Dear friends, my village, my home, and my fields in Punjab are in this direction. It hasn’t rained over there for quite a while. Watching you, I decided to try to irrigate my fields with water from here and save my crops from drying up.”

Hearing this, everyone in the crowd laughed and they began commenting on the absurdity of Guru Nanak’s actions.

Another learned man: “O dear friend, (with your, this futile effort) why are you getting your hands tired? This water is not going to reach your fields. Your fields are far away towards the West and, the river is flowing towards the East.”

Guru Ji: “Do you mean that the water that I am sending to my fields located on this very Earth will not reach there? Then how can your water be sent to Sun and the abode of your late-ancestors when that is located millions of miles away?”

Hearing this, the crowd became speechless and was forced to rethink about their ritualistic act.

Questions:

1. Why did the Hindu devotees throw water towards the East?

Ans: ...

2. Why did Guru Nanak throw water towards the West at Hardwar?

Ans: ...

3. Is it possible for us to cool down areas surrounding the Sun?

Ans: ...

4. What is the name of the river that Hindus believe is holy?

Ans: ...

5. Who travelled with Guru Nanak?

Ans: ...

GOD IS EVERYWHERE And FOR EVERYONE

Guru Nanak's mission of spreading his message of Brotherhood/Sisterhood of all mankind led him to visit many different centers of religious study including the most famous Islamic city, Mecca. Guru Nanak's main message was that all of us are children of the same ONE Creator. Therefore, he taught that God is equally accessible to everyone, regardless of religion, gender, color, or nationality, etc.

A famous Sikh Scholar, Bhai Gurdas Ji, has described Guru Nanak's visit to Mecca in the following writings:

“ਬਾਬਾ ਫਿਰ ਮੱਕੇ ਗਯਾ ਨੀਲ ਬਸਤ੍ਰ ਧਾਰੇ ਬਨਵਾਰੀ॥ ਆਸਾ ਹੱਥ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਕੱਛ ਕੂਜਾ ਬਾਂਗ ਮੁਸੱਲਾ ਧਾਰੀ॥ ਬੈਠਾ ਜਾਇ ਮਸੀਤ ਵਿਚ ਜਿਥੇ ਹਾਜੀ ਹੱਜ ਗੁਜਾਰੀ॥ ਜਾਂ ਬਾਬਾ ਸੁੱਤਾ ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਵੱਲ ਮਹਿਰਾਬੇ ਪਾਂਇ ਪਸਾਰੀ॥ ਜੀਵਨ ਮਾਰੀ ਲਤ ਦੀ ਕੇੜਾ ਸੁਤਾ ਕੁਓਨਦਰ ਕੁਓਨਦਾਰੀ॥ ਲਤਾਂ ਵਲ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਦੇ ਕਿਉਂਕਰ ਪਇਆ ਹੋਇ ਬਜਗਾਰੀ॥ ਟੰਗੋਂ ਪਕੜ ਘਸੀਟਿਆ ਫਿਰਿਆ ਮੱਕਾ ਕਲਾ ਦਿਖਾਰੀ॥ ਹੋਇ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਕਰੇਨ ਜੁਹਾਰੀ ॥੧-੩੨॥

ਪੁਛਨ ਗਲ ਈਮਾਨ ਦੀ ਕਾਜੀ ਮੁਲਾਂ ਇਕਠੇ ਹੋਈ॥ ਵਡਾ ਸਾਂਗ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ ਲਖ ਨ ਸਕੇ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੋਈ॥ ਪੁਛਣ ਖੋਲ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਵਡਾ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕੀ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨੋਈ॥ ਬਾਬਾ ਆਖੇ ਹਾਜੀਆਂ ਸੁਭ ਅਮਲਾਂ ਬਾਝੋ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਰੋਈ॥ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਦੋਇ ਦਰਗਹਿ ਅੰਦਰ ਲੈਣ ਨ ਦੇਈ॥ ਕਚਾ ਰੰਗ ਕੁਸੁੰਭ ਕਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਧੋਤੈ ਥਿਰ ਨ ਰਹੋਈ॥ ਕਰਨ ਬਖੀਲੀ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਰਾਮ ਰਹੀਮ ਕੁਥਾਇ ਖਲੋਈ॥ ਰਾਹ ਸੈਤਾਨੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਗੋਈ ॥੧-੩੩॥ ... (Vaar Bhai Gurdas); meaning:

Then Baba (Guru Nanak) went to Mecca (the Islamic place of Reverence) dressed in blue (like other Muslim pilgrims), with a staff in hand, a book hanging under his armpit, a small water-filled pot (meant for cleansing before making a call for prayer) and a prayer mat in hand. Reaching there, he went and stayed in the Masjid (Mosque), where the pilgrims of Haj (the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca) go and rest.

At night when Baba (Guru Nanak Sahib) went to sleep, he stretched his legs towards Mehrab (the architectural hump in one particular wall of mosque that traditionally points towards the Kaabaa, the Central Mosque in Mecca (believed by Muslims to be the House of God)).

Therein a Muslim guard or a zealous priest by the name Jeevan found the sleeping Baba's legs pointed towards the Mehrab and deemed this a serious offence. He kicked the Baba shouting, "who is this infidel committing the sin of pointing his legs in the wrong direction towards Mehrab?"

Being enraged, Jeevan then dragged the Baba by his leg in order to point his legs away from the Mehrab. However, while dragging the Baba, Jeevan witnessed the biggest surprise of his

life. He, vividly experienced a vision in which it appeared as though Mecca was rotating in the same direction as the Baba's legs.

Thus, hearing about such a miraculous incidence, and being unable to explain it away, the Kazis and the Mullas (the temporal and religious leaders of Islam) along with other people flocked around the Baba to question him about his spiritual being and the deeper secrets of people's religious commitments. Realizing he was from India, they asked the Baba to open his book and answer the question, "Who is better?, a Hindu, or a Muslim?" The Baba replied,

*"O my friends, devoid of virtuous character, both will end up wailing and crying; and both, such characterless Hindus or Muslims, will not get any honor in the Court of Divine Justice. Their flimsy claims that they are better than the others are nothing but very short-lived boasting, like the very temporary color of a safflower that does not remain intact when washed with plain water. ... Thus both (Hindus as well as Muslims), with these claims, are doing nothing but slandering one another, disputing **who is higher? Ram, the Hindu God, or Rahim, the Muslim God?** Thus, this is how (forgetting the basic fact that both names refer to the same God) the world is lost in the ways of Satan."*

Through his experiences at Mecca, Guru Nanak debunked two prevalent beliefs of the time:

1. Somehow God's existence is confined exclusively to a particular religious place and nowhere else.
2. Someone's particular God is better than everyone else's

Guru Nanak taught that there is ONE God and He is present everywhere.

Questions;

1. What famous Islamic city did Guru Nanak visit?

Ans: ...

2. According to Guru Nanak Sahib's Teachings, how many Gods are there?

Ans: ...

3. According to Guru Nanak, who is better; a Hindu or a Muslim?

Ans: ...

4. According to Guru Nanak, is God contained to one location?

Ans: ...

5. What is Mehrab?

Ans: ...

EQUALITY OF WOMEN



(Sikh Women ... on the move)

During the times of the Sikh Gurus, vast majority of the prevalent religious beliefs promoted the subjugation of women. For example, some faiths declared that 'a woman does not have a right to speak in any religious gathering'. Others mandated that the word of TWO women in a court of law to be the equivalent of ONE man's testimony.

Furthermore, some faiths declared women 'to be nothing more than a man's property' and hence, declared that 'it is acceptable for a man to possess as many women as he wishes as long as he captures them by force (as a war-booty)'. Such cultural and religious thoughts also gave men the 'permission to beat up their women in case of any defiance or disagreements.'

In some religious traditions a woman is declared to be crooked, arguing that 'she has been **created from the most crooked portion of a man's rib**'; and hence, if you try to straighten it, it will break, and if you leave it, it will remain crooked, so you take care of her'. Moreover, they say that she has been 'enticing and misleading men from the day of her existence' and hence, 'should be considered untrustworthy, and nothing more than a man's shoe'.

Women have been portrayed as ‘temptresses, an enticers, and seducers’. They are viewed as ‘being untrustworthy’ and thus, ‘advised to be kept veiled at all times and prohibited from venturing alone outside their homes’.

These attitudes towards women led to the custom of female infanticide and the abortion of female fetuses. Mistreatment of women was acceptable and, in fact, promoted before and during the time of the Sikh Gurus. The Hindu custom (in the Indian sub-continent) of ‘Satee’ was prevalent. During this time, Hindu priests, as well as her relatives and friends encouraged a Hindu widow, to commit the very public act of ‘Satee’ (self-immolation by throwing oneself on the funeral pyre of one’s deceased husband). This act was promoted amongst the general masses as the most sacred and glorified act to be performed by a widow. Widowed women were considered to be ill omens for the family and were blamed as being responsible for the deaths of their husbands. They were not allowed to get remarried or to go back to their parental homes. Thus, a widow was doomed to a life of complete destitution, slavery, social rejection, and loneliness. The Hindu priests promoted Satee as a better alternative than the life of a widow.

The Sikh Guru Sahibs worked very hard to get the ‘Satee’ custom completely abolished. They emphatically spoke against this custom and banned it from the practice of the Sikh religion. Today, the custom of ‘Satee’ rarely occurs, and its’ prevalence has greatly diminished.

Guru Nanak Sahib’s teachings regarding women strongly questioned the prevalent societal and religious norms of the era. Guru Nanak Sahib questioned, **‘WHY SHOULD A WOMAN BE CALLED INFERIOR?’** In his writings he states the following:

ਮਃ ੧ ॥ ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥ ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥ ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਜਿਤੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਸਦਾ ਸਾਲਾਹੀਐ ਭਾਗਾ ਰਤੀ ਚਾਰਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਤਿਤੁ ਸਚੈ ਦਰਬਾਰਿ ॥੨॥

From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; and to woman he is engaged and married. It is through woman that one’s relational friendships get established; and through woman, future generations come into existence. If one’s woman dies, he seeks another woman; for it is through woman alone that one’s new relationships get established. Therefore, WHY SHOULD SHE BE CALLED INFERIOR? She, who gives birth even to the kings.

It is through woman that another woman is born; and without woman none comes into existence. O Nanak, it is the Timeless Supreme Master alone, who (being beyond birth or death) is outside the pale of a woman. ... That (man or woman’s) voice, which praises the Supreme Master continually, is blessed and beautiful. O Nanak, such are the faces that radiate in the Court of the True Master. ||2|| ... (SGGS; Page 473)

The Sikh Guru Sahibs worked to change the religious and societal customs of the time. They empowered women by giving them a wider variety of social responsibilities. They invited women to join in the Sikh Congregations as equal partners, to actively participate in all religious, cultural, and social activities of the Gurdwaras (Sikh Houses of Prayer). Within the Gurdwaras, they made women in charge of the Langar (Guru's Free Kitchen).



(A Sikh Woman in Prayer)

To give women a sense of EQUALITY, and to free them from the handicaps of veils, the Guru Sahibs asked women to NOT cover their faces (with veils). All Sikhs were also educated about the evils of female infanticide and the custom of 'SATEE'. They advised widows to get remarried instead of spending the rest of their lives in misery, destitution, and loneliness. In addition, they opposed female infanticide so strongly that they advised all Sikhs to avoid social relationships with those who have committed female infanticide.

Moreover, the Sikh Gurus educated and trained many women to become full-fledged preachers, and encouraged them to teach the Sikh Way of life to the masses. The 3rd Guru, Guru Amardas Jee, established 22 religious centers and appointed women as the leaders of 8 of these centers. They encouraged the education of women as the norm, rather than as an exception. In addition, women were also trained in martial arts and were advised to carry weapons on their person.

Finally, with the creation of the Sikh brotherhood (the Khalsa) by the 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Jee, the last barriers of caste and gender oppression were removed. During the 'Khanday Dee Pahul' ceremony (Sikh initiation ceremony), women participated alongside their Sikh brothers. The same rules that applied to men, applied to women also. They were instructed to follow the Khalsa way of life and were granted the same 5 K's (Kesh, Kangha, Kirpan, Karha, and Kachhera).

Guru Gobind Singh's encouragement to women to carry and wield weapons symbolized his belief that women should be fearlessly involved in society as leaders, warriors, and equals of men.

QUESTIONS;

1. What is the Hindu practice of widows burning on their husband's funeral pyre called?
Ans: ...
2. Did the Sikh Gurus support female infanticide?
Ans: ...
3. Did the Sikh Gurus believe that women were equal to men?
Ans: ...
4. Did the Sikh Gurus give women leadership roles?
Ans: ...
5. Can Sikh women carry weapons? Do Sikh women wear veils?
Ans: ...

SIKHISM

SOME INTERESTING FACTS:

Who are the Sikhs?

SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS:

MISCONCEPTION 1: --- SIKHS are Muslims because they wear a Turban, and grow a Beard.

FACT: --- Turbans are worn in many countries as a part of cultural attire. However, a TURBAN is required to be worn by a SIKH and it is a religious article of faith.

MISCONCEPTION 2: --- Sikhism is a blend of Hinduism and Islam.

FACT: --- Sikhism is **not a blend** of Hinduism and Islam. It has its own Scriptures, Gurus (The Divine Masters), and Houses of Prayer called Gurdwaras. Sikhism is a separate faith with a unique ideology, and is not a branch of any other religion.

SIKHS IN AMERICA:

Sikhs came to America more than 100 years ago,

- Sikhs first arrived at the West Coast, and later to East Coast.
- The first Sikh landed in San Francisco, California on **April 6, 1899**.
- The first Gurdwara Sahib (House of Prayer) was built in Stockton, California in 1912. This is also documented on the US Historical Register.
- The first Sikh soldier to serve in the US Army was Bhagat Singh Thind - who joined the US armed forces in the year 1918. He was also the pioneer for citizenship and property rights for all Asians in America
- The early Sikh settlers worked in farming and lumber industries.
- Sikhs also provided representation in the Federal Government.
- The first Sikh US Congressman was Dalip Singh Saund. Starting in 1957, he served three terms in the House of Representatives.
- The father of Fiber optics, the backbone of the modern day Internet is a Sikh by the name of Narinder Singh Kapany, who lives in San Francisco, California.

SIKHISM IS THE FIFTH LARGEST RELIGION IN THE WORLD.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Christianity: | 2.2 Billion. |
| 2. Islam | 1.4 Billion. |
| 3. Hinduism: | 900 Million |
| 4. Buddhism | 396 Million |
| 5. Sikhism | 25 Million |
| 6. Judaism | 15 Million. |

CORE SIKH BELIEFS;

- **ONE GOD:**
 - Loves and sustains all Humanity.
- **ALL ARE EQUAL IN THE EYES OF GOD:**
 - Respect for all genders, religions, races.
- **EARN AN HONEST LIVING:**
 - Sikhs are supposed to work and live honestly.
- **SHARE WITH OTHERS:**
 - Share your time, money, etc. with others.
- **REMEMBER GOD:**
 - Sikhs should remember Divine virtues of God throughout the Day.
- **DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE FOLLOWING:**
 - Fasting, superstitions, ritualism, caste system.
- **SIKHISM PROHIBITS:**
 - Smoking, drinking alcohol, or taking any intoxicants.

THE FIVE K's:

- **UNCUT HAIR** (Kesh) ---Spirituality.
- **THE SWORD** (Kirpan) --- For Protection of self and others.
- **IRON BRACELET** (Karhaa) --- Good deeds.
- **LONG BREECHES** (Kachhera) --- self-discipline.
- **COMB** (Kangha) --- Cleanliness.

THE SIKH TURBAN:

- 99% of the people wearing TURBANS in the USA are SIKHS.
- It is a religious obligation for the SIKHS.
- Sikhs can always be recognized and are duty bound to offer help.
- Under no circumstances can the TURBAN be forcibly removed.

GURUS, THE SIKH SPIRITUAL GUIDES:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| • Historic - 10 Sikh Gurus. | Guruship Period. |
| ○ Guru Nanak Sahib. | 1469 - 1539 |
| ○ Guru Angad Sahib. | 1539 - 1552 |
| ○ Guru Amardas Sahib. | 1552 - 1574 |
| ○ Guru Ramdas Sahib. | 1574 - 1581 |
| ○ Guru Arjan Sahib. | 1581 - 1606 |
| ○ Guru Hargobind Sahib. | 1606 - 1644 |
| ○ Guru Har Rai Sahib. | 1644 - 1661 |
| ○ Guru Harkrishan Sahib. | 1661 - 1664 |
| ○ Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. | 1664 - 1675 |
| ○ Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. | 1675 - 1708 |

- Mission.
 - Love for God.
 - Social justice for humanity.
 - Freedom from superstition and rituals.
- Their IDEALS and TEACHINGS were preserved through writing and actions.

GURU, THE PRESENT DAY SPIRITUAL GUIDE:

- Guru Granth Sahib (The Divine Sikh Scripture).
- And
- Guru Panth (The Community of Initiated Sikhs.)

GURU GRANTH SAHIB:

- A compilation of 1430 pages written in poetry.
- Considered the Living Guru of the Sikhs.
- Teaches you how to be kind, tell the truth, and love and respect everyone.
- Sikh services consist of reading and singing from the scripture.

GURDWARA: --- THE SIKH HOUSE OF PRAYER.

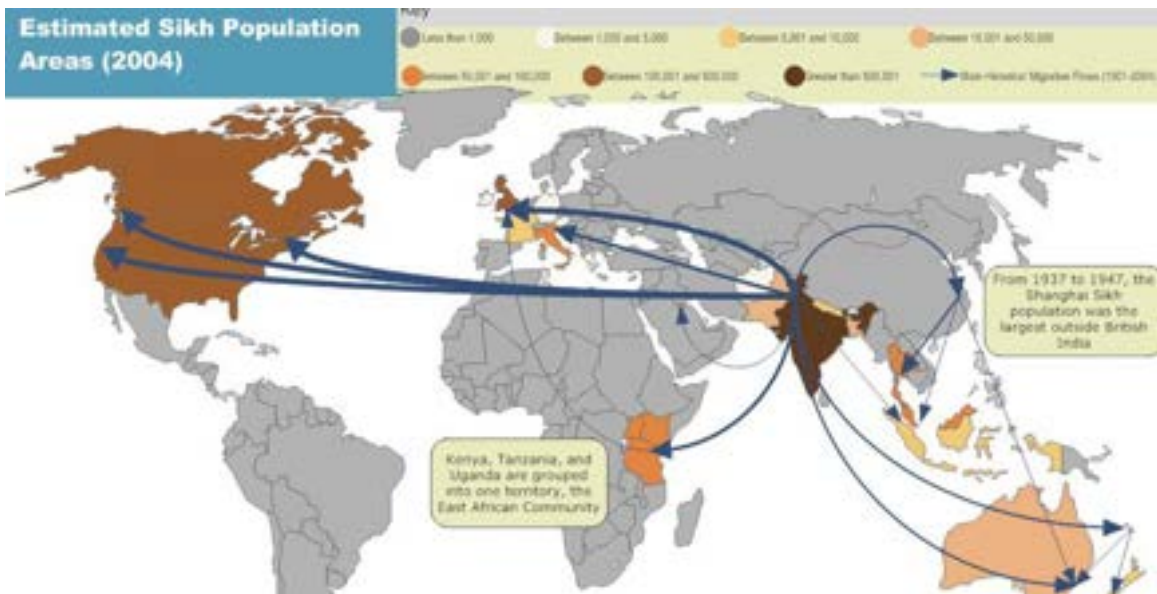
- For Learning the Sikh Way of Life.
- Everyone Welcome.
- Service typically held on weekends.
- Community Kitchen for all (Langar).

MOST SIKHS SPEAK PUNJABI:

- Over 80 Million people speak Punjabi.
- Punjabi is written from Left to Right.
- Punjabi alphabet contains 35 letters + 12 vowel sound symbols.

SIKHS CAN BE FOUND IN ALMOST EVERY PROFESSION,

- Arts: Artists, Actors, and Filmmakers.
- Industry: Farmers, Businessmen, and Industrialists.
- Professionals: Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Scientists, and Administrators.
- Players: Basketball, Soccer, Cricket, Football, Baseball
- Politicians: Local, National, And International.
- Military: Army, Navy, and Air force etc.



THE SIKH PRAYER

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਗਉੜੀ ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫॥
ਤੂ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਪਹਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਾਸਿ ॥
ਤੁਮ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੇਰੇ ॥ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਮਹਿ ਸੂਖ ਘਨੇਰੇ ॥
ਕੋਇ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਅੰਤੁ ॥ ਉਚੇ ਤੇ ਉਚਾ ਭਗਵੰਤੁ ॥
ਸਗਲ ਸਮਗ੍ਰੀ ਤੁਮਰੈ ਸੂਤ੍ਰਿ ਧਾਰੀ ॥ ਤੁਮ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਆਗਿਆਕਾਰੀ ॥
ਤੁਮਰੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤੁਮ ਹੀ ਜਾਨੀ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਸਦਾ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀ ॥੮॥੪॥ {ਪੰਨਾ ੨੬੮}

***O! The ONE Creator
(Of us all)***

***You are our Master, and our prayer is unto You.
Our bodies and Souls are Your Gifts, Your Bounties.***

***You are our Mother, as well as our Father, and we are your children.
In Your Grace lies whole of our Joy.***

***(You being infinite in every aspect)
No one can know Your limits, O Master,
Because You, the Maker of our Destiny, are the Highest of the high.***

***Everything in Your Creation is strung on the Thread of Your Grace.
Thus, all that You created is moving along under Your Command.***

***How high? Or how big You are! You alone know Your state and extent.
Nanak, Your slave, is forever a sacrifice unto You. ||8||4||***

(SGGS: Page 268.)

THE SIKH EMBLEM



KHANDA

KHANDA: is one of the most important symbols of Sikhism that appears on most of the Sikh flags. This Insignia is a combination of four hand-to-hand combat weapons that were commonly used by the Sikhs in their earlier struggles against the tyrannical rulers. Symbolically, they represent the following principles of human inter-reactions.

- The central **double-edged sword** symbolizes the Marvel of UNITY of God's CREATION and DESTRUCTION acting in unison.
- The endless CIRCULAR CHAKAR symbolizes the eternity of God's Creation.
- The outside **pair of TWO SWORDS** represents the Divine Gift of PIRI-MIRI; The Concept of SPIRITUAL and TEMPORAL Sovereignty of thought of the **Sant-Sipahi** --- the Saint-Soldier as the ultimate perfect human being.

FUN TRIVIA

While reading this, did you wonder, - about the script that you were not able to read? Did it look confusing and impossible to read? - And, if so, then are you the Scout who wants to take the challenge to learn to read and write it? --- If Yes, then let us have fun with your new Venture.

Quick INTRODUCTION: --- A while ago, the script that you thought impossible to read, is called '**Gurmukhi**' or '**Punjabi**' script. --- Believe it or not, it is a VERY SIMPLE AND EASY script to read and write . The reason?

1. In this script all the words are spelt exactly the way they are spoken, and are spoken exactly the way they are spelt; **no ifs, no buts.**
2. Unlike English, in the Punjabi Script there are:
 - NO silent letters. -- (Like the silent H in the word Honest).
 - NO lower case, or upper case, or capital letters.
 - NO complex letter combinations.
 - NO complex rules, wherein same letter or vowel could give a different sound depending upon the word or local traditions. For example two different sounds from the same letter combination "Ch" in the words **Church** and **Chicago** (shouldn't it be spelt Shicago?), and two different sound from the same letter and vowel combination "oo" in words like "cool" and "cook" (shouldn't they be spelt as Kool and Kuk?).
3. In Punjabi script all the letters and vowel symbols, without exception, always carry their consistent sounds. .. Therefore once you learn the sounds that the letters and the vowel symbols make, you are all set for ever. There is no more dispute as to how a word should be spelt or spoken.

Thus having all this knowledge in our bag, let us move to the next step of having fun learning Punjabi.

Learning of the Punjabi Script:

1. Compared to 26 letters (19 Consonant letters + 5 vowels) in the English Script; the Gurmukhi or Punjabi script has 40 Consonant letters + 11 vowel symbols. That is what makes the Punjabi script capable of inscribing nearly 500 distinct sounds, compared to the very restricted ability of the English script.
2. To inscribe any particular word in the Punjabi Script; the process is very simple. It consists of the following simple steps.
 - a. First, split the word into its distinct consonant sounds.
 - b. Then keeping in mind that;
Each distinct sound = Consonant + a vowel symbol
 - c. Select the desired Consonant and vowel symbol for each of the desired consonant sound.
 - d. Write the selected letters and vowel symbols in succession. And you will have the WORD written in the Punjabi script. That's it!

Therefore before we attempt to write any word in the Punjabi Script, let us get a bit familiar with its ALPHABET and VOWEL SYMBOLS.

ਪੈਂਤੀ ... (The Punjabi Alphabet)

Please Note that written below each letter is the name of each letter; wherein the BOLD CAPITAL letters represent the English equivalent consonant sound. -- For example; the first letter in the second row is the equivalent of the letter K of the English script. However to understand, as to which letter of the Punjabi script this letter is? ... It is called Kaka, and so on.

ੳ	ਅ	ੲ	ਸ	ਹ	
O-rhaa	Ai-rhaa	Ee-rhee	S-ussaa	Haa-Haa.	
ਕ	ਖ	ਗ	ਘ	ਙ	
Ka-kaa	KHa-khaa	Ga-gaa	GHa-ghaa	ANUN-gaa	
ਚ	ਛ	ਜ	ਝ	ਞ	
CH-cha	CHH-chhaa	Ja-jaa	Jha-jhaa	AJUN-jaan	
	ਟ	ਠ	ਡ	ਢ	ਣ
Tai-nkaa	THhaa	Da-daa	DHa-dhaa	ANaa-ANaa	
	ਤ	ਥ	ਦ	ਧ	ਨ
Ta-taa	THa-thaa	Da-daa	DHa-dhaa	Nu-naa	
ਪ	ਫ	ਬ	ਭ	ਮ	
Pa-paa	PHa-phaa	Ba-baa	BHa-bhaa	Ma-maa	
ਯ	ਰ	ਲ	ਵ	ੜ	
Yaa-ee-aa	Raa-raa	La-laa	Waa-waa	RHa-rhaa	
ਸ਼	ਖ਼	ਗ਼	ਜ਼	ਫ਼	
SHa-shaa	KHa-khaa	Ga-gaa	Za-zaa	PHa-phaa	

It is interesting to note that ; the 40 letters of the Punjabi alphabet are arranged in 8 different rows with 5 letters in each row. The scientific beauty of this arrangement is that as we read and speak these letters, we find that each of the letters in a particular row are spoken in the same part of the mouth, while each of the different rows are spoken in different parts of the mouth. Thus in a very nice progressive way, the letters in each of those rows are spoken in the following manner:

- 1st Row: -- (ੳ ਅ ਏ ਸ ਹ) in the front part of the mouth.
- 2nd Row: -- (ਕ ਖ ਗ ਘ ਙ) above the throat in the back of the mouth with open lips.
- 3rd Row; -- (ਚ ਛ ਜ ਝ ਵ) in the middle part of the mouth with open lips.
- 4th Row; -- (ਟ ਠ ਡ ਢ ਣ) more towards front, tongue touching pallet behind the front teeth.
- 5th Row; -- (ਤ ਥ ਦ ਧ ਨ) Tongue inbetween the teeth while the lips are open.
- 6th Row; -- (ਪ ਫ ਬ ਭ ਮ) Complete front; Lips closing for each letter.
- 7th Row; -- (ਯ ਰ ਲ ਵ ਝ) Front half of the mouth.
- 8th Row; -- (ਸ ਖ ਗ ਜ ਓਨਦ) Different parts depending upon the letter's original row.

For exact pronunciation of the letters please CLICK on the link below.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zhjm5Wikhgo>

<http://www.learnpunjabi.org/intro1.asp>

INSTRUCTION# 1:

DO NOT RUSH. Memorize the script and the vowel symbols given below by heart. Because once you are able to memorize just this ONE and A Half page, containing the Punjabi Alphabet and Vowel symbols, you will be able to read and write the Punjabi Script. -- It is that simple.

However if you choose to rush and do not memorise, then you will always struggle with it.

INSTRUCTION# 2:

Do not, please do not try to write any word into Punjabi Script from its English Spellings. While writing or reading in Punjabi Script, simply write the way you speak, and speak the way you read.

Now let us get into action.

ਮਾਤਰਾ

The Punjabi Vowel Symbols

The 11 Vowel Symbols used to modify the sounds of each consonant are;

ੜ ਫ ਿ ਼ ਽ ਿ ਿ ਿ ਿ ਿ ਿ

Don't get scared or confused by just looking at the Vowel symbols. Rest assured that they are very scientific and easy to understand. To start become familiar with their shapes.

Furthermore, suffice it to know that each of these symbols have different names; and each one of them have ONE particular place (on left, right, bottom or top of a letter) as listed below:

- “Kanna- (ੜ)” always goes on the **right** side of the letter,
- “Siharee- (ਫ)” always on the **left** side of the letter,
- “Biharee- (ਿ)” always on the **right**,
- “Onkurh- (਼)” and “Du-lankarh- (਽)” always on the **bottom**, and
- (Lavan- (ਿ), Du-Lavan- (ਿ), Horha- (ਿ), Kanorha- (ਿ), Tipee- (ਿ), and Bindee- (ਿ) always on the **top**.

As explained earlier; each distinct sound = a Consonant + a vowel symbol. Which means that in Punjabi script, the sound of each letter is changed by attaching a –‘Vowel symbol’ - to the letter.

Therefore, in the example below, the consonant letter “ਕ” (Ka-kaa) has been picked to explain the concept. ... In the chart below, the **1st column** lists the “Sounds” that can be made with just one consonant (k, in this chart). The **2nd column** shows the letter with the Vowel symbol and its location (left, right, bottom or top of the letter), the **3rd column** shows the Vowel symbol by itself and its name. The **4th column** displays the use of those sounds in some English words.

You will notice that in the example below, the first row starts with the letter “ਕ” (Ka-kaa) by itself, free of any vowel symbol. Such a letter, called “**Muktaa**” provides an additional sound option from each consonant. Thus with such an arrangement each consonant is capable of inscribing 12 different sounds, as listed below:

1	2	3	4
Sound	Letter+Symbol	Vowel Symbol and its Name	Vowel Symbol sound

as in actual word

K	ਕ	-Muktaa	Cup, Cut, Cub
Kaa	ਕਾ	ੜ -Kannaa	Car, Barber, Star
Ki	ਕਿ	ਫ -Siharee	Kiss, Kid, Criss
Kee	ਕੀ	ਭਿ -Biharee	Keep, Creed, Greedy
Ku	ਕੁ	ੁ -Onkurh	Cook, Crook, Ukraine
Koo	ਕੂ	ੂ -Du_lankrhay	Coup, Cool, Skoopy
Kay	ਕੇ	ਯ -Lavan	Kate, Crate,
Kaiy	ਕੈ	ਯ -Du_lavaan	Cat, Chemical, Step
Ko	ਕੋ	ੜ -Horhaa	Coke, Coach
Kaa	ਕੋ	ੜ -Ka_norhaa	Cotton, Comical
Kang	ਕੰ	ੌ -Tipee	Skunk, Second
Kaan	ਕਾਂ	ਃ -Bindee	Crank, Center

The Chart below explains the application of each of the vowel symbols in each word. Moreover it also demonstrates the desired steps that one needs to be take for transforming any of the ENGLISH word from its English origin to a PUNJABI equivalent. As explained earlier; to find a Punjabi equivalent the starting step always is to split the word into its sound bites based upon its pronunciation, and not neccessarity its spellings.

Progression from English >>> Punjabi Spelling:

English Spelling	Pronunciation Sound bites	Punjabi Sound bites	Punjabi Spelling
-------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------	-------------------------

Application: No Vowel Symbol

Cup	= K + P	= ਕ + ਪ	= ਕਪ
Cut	= K + T	= ਕ + ਟ	= ਕਟ
Kurd	= K+ r + d	= ਕ+ ਰ+ ਡ	= ਕਰਡ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘ੜ’

Car	= K aa + r	= ਕ ੜ + ਰ	= ਕਾਰ
Barber	= B aa + r +b +r	= ਬ ੜ + ਰ+ ਬ+ ਰ	= ਬਾਰਬਰ
Star	= S +t aa +r	= ਸ + ਟ ੜ + ਰ	= ਸਟਾਰ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘i’

Kiss	= Ki + ss	= ਕਿ + ਸ	= ਕਿਸ
Kid	= Ki + d	= ਕਿ + ਡ	= ਕਿਡ
Chris	= K+r i + ss	= ਕ + ਰਿ + ਸ	= ਕਰਿਸ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘ee’

Keep	= K ee + p	= ਕੀ + ਪ	= ਕੀਪ
Creed	= K + r ee + d	= ਕ + ਰੀ + ਡ	= ਕਰੀਡ
Greedy	= G + r ee + d ee	= ਗ + ਰੀ + ਡੀ	= ਗਰੀਡੀ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘u’

Cook	= K u + k	= ਕੁ + ਕ	= ਕੁਕ
Crook	= K+r u + k	= ਕ + ਰੁ + ਕ	= ਕਰੁਕ
Ukraine	= U u+k+r a.e + n	= ਯੁ + ਕ + ਰੇ + ਨ	= ਯੁਕਰੇਨ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘oo’

Coup	= K oo + p	= ਕੂ + ਪ	= ਕੂਪ
Cool	= K oo + l	= ਕੂ + ਲ	= ਕੂਲ
Spooky	= S+p oo+k ee	= ਸ + ਪੂ + ਕੀ	= ਸਪੂਕੀ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘a.e’

Kate	= K a.e + t	= ਕੇ + ਟ	= ਕੇਟ
Crate	= K + r a.e + t	= ਕ + ਰੇ + ਟ	= ਕਰੇਟ
Cable	= K a.e + b + l	= ਕੇ + ਬ + ਲ	= ਕੇਬਲ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘ai’

Cat	= K ai + t	= ਕੈ + ਟ	= ਕੈਟ
Chemical	= K ai + m ee + k+l	= ਕੈ + ਮੀ + ਕ + ਲ	= ਕੈਮੀਕਲ
Stephanie	= S + t ai + ph +n ee	= ਸ + ਟੈ + ਫ + ਨੀ	= ਸਟੈਫਨੀ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘o.e’

Coke	= K o.e + k	= ਕੋ + ਕ	= ਕੋਕ
Coach	= K o.e + ch	= ਕੋ + ਚ	= ਕੋਚ
Smoke	= S +m o.e + k	= ਸ + ਮੋ + ਕ	= ਸਮੋਕ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘ ੌ ’

Cotton	= K au + t + n	= ਕੌ + ਟ + ਨ	= ਕੌਟਨ
Comical	= K au + m ee + k + l	= ਕੌ + ਮੀ + ਕ + ਲ	= ਕੌਮੀਕਲ
Brought	= B + r au + t	= ਬ + ਰੌ + ਟ	= ਬਰੌਟ

(Pronunciations with nasal sounds)

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘ ੰ ’

Skunk	= S + k un + k	= ਸ + ਕੰ + ਕ	= ਸਕੰਕ
Second	= S ai + k un + d	= ਸੈ + ਕੰ + ਡ	= ਸੈਕੰਡ

Appl: Vowel Symbol ‘ ੱ ’

Crank	= K + r ai n + k	= ਕ + ਰੈਂ + ਕ	= ਕਰੈਂਕ
Center	= S ai n + t + r	= ਸੈਂ + ਟ + ਰ	= ਸੈਂਟਰ

Appl: ‘ ੳ ੴ ੵ ’

Onasis	= O u + n ai + s i + z	= ਓ + ਨੈ + ਸਿ + ਜ਼	= ਓਨੈਸਿਜ਼
Oozing	= O o + z i n + g	= ਓ + ਜ਼ਿੰ + ਗ	= ਓਜ਼ਿੰਗ
Opaque	= O + p a.e + k	= ਓ + ਪੇ + ਕ	= ਓਪੇਕ

Appl: ‘ ੶ ’

Apple	= A ai + p + l	= A Y + p + l	= AYp1
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Appl: ‘ ੷ ’

Oxford	= A au + k + s + f o + r + d	= ਅੌ + ਕ + ਸ + ਫੋ + ਰ + ਡ	= ਅੌਕਸਫੋਰਡ
Auditor	= A au + d ee + t + r	= ਅੌ + ਡੀ + ਟ + ਰ	= ਅੌਡੀਟਰ

Appl: ‘ ੸ ’

Instead	= I + n + s + t ai + d	= ਇ + ਨ + ਸ + ਟੈ + ਡ	= ਇਨਸਟੈਡ
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Appl: ‘ ੹ ’

Eardrop	= Ee + a + r + d + r au + p	= ਈ + ਅ + ਰ + ਡ + ਰੌ + ਪ	= ਈਅਰਡਰੌਪ
United	= U u + n aa + e ee + t + d	= ਯੁ + ਨਾ + ਈ + ਟ + ਡ	= ਯੁਨਾਈਟਡ
Cycle	= S aa + ee + k + l	= ਸਾ + ਈ + ਕ + ਲ	= ਸਾਈਕਲ

Appl: ‘ਏ’

Aprons	= A a.e+ p +r+n+z	= ਏ +ਪ+ਰ+ਨ+ਜ਼	= ਏਪਰਨਜ਼
Apex	= A a.e +p ai + k + s	= ਏ +ਪੈ +ਕ+ਸ	= ਏਪੈਕਸ

English Alphabet in Punjabi Script:

ਏ ਬੀ ਸੀ ਡੀ ਈ ਐਫ ਜੀ ਐਚ ਆਈ ਜੇ ਕੇ ਐਲ ਐਮ ਐਨ ਓ ਪੀ
ਕਿਊ ਆਰ ਐਸ ਟੀ ਯੂ ਵੀ ਡਬਲਯੂ ਐਕਸ ਵਾਈ ਜ਼ੀ

Exercise:

Write the following words in the Punjabi Script.

Cub =

Bridge =

Farm =

Sikh =

Turban =

Done =

Church =

Button =

Trunk =

Hung =

Taunt =

Land =

Junk =

Punk =

Rug =

Gum =

Dummy =

None =
Kamal =
Ramdas =

Chris =
Kiran =
Meet =
Harjeet =
Sarabjeet =

Bob =
Hot =
Kaur =
Tom =
John =

Spot =
King =
Stump =
Kirpaan =
Guru =

CONGRATULATIONS
Now
you are ready
to tackle any Punjabi/Gurmukhi word.
Now, go and surprise someone.

Instructions:
How to use
The Workbook for the Scout

1. The Scout is expected to read a chapter a week and then answer the questions at the end of the chapter.
2. The time frame to comfortably finish the book is about 12 weeks. There is no specific time of completion.
3. The Scout can confer with his/her parent and/or counselor to ask questions or advice.
4. Once all the activities are complete the Scout must have a Board of Review. This requires the Counselor, along with one or two other adults from the Gurdwara to ask questions of the relevance of what he/she has learnt and how it applies to their daily lives as a Scout.
5. Once the Board of Review is complete, the parent and then the counselor sign off in the 'workbook'.
6. The parent or counselor can get in contact with American Sikh Council (ASC) sikhscoutsusa@gmail.com contact@americansikhcouncil.org and send in a copy of the certification and application pages so that ASC can mail in the 'Sikh Award Medallion' with a 'Certificate'.
7. The Scout will be presented the 'Sikh Award Medallion' and the 'Certificate' at the Gurdwara by getting the Scouts and Adult Leaders from his Troop to join the sangat (congregation) and be honored in everyone's presence.
8. The Scout will be presented the Scouts Religious Square Knot at the Troop Court of Honor.

Instructions: Counselor's requirements and responsibilities

- The Counselor **must** have Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Youth Protection Training certification (a simple 30 minutes online test) and follow the same guidelines.
<https://myscouting.scouting.org/layouts/MyScouting/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2flayouts%2fAuthenticate.aspx%3fSource%3d%252f&Source=%2f>
- The Counselor **must** be a Saabat Surat (with uncut hair) Sikh and must believe and abide by the Sikh Rehait Maryada (Sikh Rules of Moral Conduct -
<http://sgpc.net/Sikh%20Reht%20Maryada%28Eng%291.pdf>)
- The Counselor must have the maturity to understand the level of the child (Scout) and be able to relate appropriately.
- The Counselor should have enough knowledge that he/she is able to communicate, either speak or listen patiently to the child (Scout) while guiding him/her through the 'workbook'.
- The Counselor should be sensitive to the child (Scout) because each one comes from a different background with varying levels of observance to Sikh Rehait Maryada.
- The Counselor must not be disparaging towards the Scout and be respectful even if the Scout's views may differ.
- Once all the activities are complete the Scout must have a Board of Review which requires the Counselor along with one or two other adults from the Gurdwara to ask what the Scout has learnt (15-30 minutes) from the workbook and how it applies to his/her daily life as a Scout.
- The parent or counselor can get in contact with American Sikh Council (ASC) sikhscoutsusa@gmail.com
contact@americansikhcouncil.org and send in a copy of the

‘certification and Sikh Religious Award application pages’ so that ASC can mail in the ‘Sikh Award Medallion’ with a ‘Certificate’ which should be presented in the presence of the Scouts from the Troop and the sangat (congregation) at the Gurdwara by any of the responsible Gurdwara Trustee or Committee members.

- **If a counselor is not available please get in touch with American Sikh Council (ASC) and we will arrange for one.**

Sikh Religious Award Workbook Grades 6 - 8

Certification

Scout Name: _____

Troop: _____

Council: _____

Date Applied: _____

Scout's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Counselor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Counselor's Name: _____

Counselor's Address _____

Counselor's Tel: _____

Counselor's Email: _____

Sikh Award Application Form

Submit one application per order

Shipping Address: Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Day Contact_____ Email_____

Candidate Information:

Name_____ Grade_____

Home Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Gurdwara Associated_____

Gurdwara Information:

Name of Gurdwara_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Counselor's Name:_____ Tel_____

Counselor's Email:_____

Certificate of Eligibility by Counselor:

I certify that the candidate has successfully completed the requirements of the program and presented his/her work for final approval.

Signature_____ Date_____