

## Sikhism Knowledge Organiser

1. Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak (1469-1539).
2. Sikhism began in the Punjab, a country that was inhabited mainly by Hindus but where Muslims had the most power and wealth.
3. Guru Nanak believed all humans are equal.

### Nature of God – Key information

Sikhs believe that God is beyond human description. They believe that God has no gender and so is not male or female. Sikhs do use the 'he' and 'him' but only able to talk and write easily about God. They believe that any words used to describe God are inadequate because they are human words and so cannot describe fully the greatness that is God. Sikhs believe that God can be experienced because he reveals himself to individuals. Therefore, some of the words often used by Sikhs about God show him as someone who communicates with humans, for example Satnam (which means true name, personality); Shabad (word); and Guru (one who teaches or enlightens).

Sikhs believe that God has no limits. God is immanent and so is everything. At the same time is transcendent, above and beyond creation. Sikhs have many names for God but none can describe properly the nature of God. Wareguru (Wonderful Lord or Teacher) is the name Sikhs use in worship.

### Guru Granth Sahib – Key information

- The Guru Granth Sahib is the Sikh holy book.
- After the death of Guru Gobind Singh there were no more Gurus, so Sikhs were guided by their holy book.
- The GGS is a collection of the first five Gurus' writings in the form of a book.
- It also contains Hindu and Muslim poems, teaching Sikhs that there is always something that can be learned from others
- It is treated like a living person and is given a special place to live/sit in the Gurdwara.

### Key information: Festivals in Sikhism

Most of the festivals in Sikhism celebrate either the birth or death of one of the Gurus- because of this they are known as **gurpurbs** ("guru's holiday"). There are 20 gurpurbs a year. Other festivals are usually associated with Hindu festivals and are known as **melas** ("fair").

### The Mool Mantra – Key information

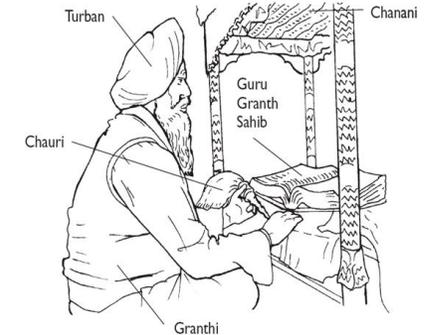
The Guru Granth Sahib opens with the words of the Mool Mantra, meaning main chant. Sikhs believe that this was the first teaching of Guru Nanak, after he had become enlightened. It is the most important part of the Guru Granth Sahib and summarises Sikh beliefs about the nature of God.

Vaisakhi is a **spring** festival which happens on the **13 or 14 April** every year.

In 2021 Vaisakhi takes place on **Tuesday 13 April**.

It was originally a harvest festival in the Punjab until it became Sikhism's most important festival. On Vaisakhi, Sikhs go to the Gurdwara in the morning for a service. Afterwards, they have a procession through the streets with lots of singing, chanting and colourful clothes. The procession is called the Nagar Kirtan. In the evening, Sikhs have a special meal with family and friends.

After Guru Nanak there were 10 Guru's. **Guru**- religious teacher- broken down 'gu' means darkness and 'ru' means light so it makes to take someone from light to darkness. Gurus are not worshipped because they are not God.



### How the Guru Granth Sahib is treated – Key information

- It is so important that it is placed on a **manji**, which is like a throne, so that everyone can see it in the gurdwara.
- Someone stands behind it holding a special fan, called a **chauri**.
- The chauri is a mark of respect.
- There is a canopy or roof over the throne to give extra protection to the Guru Granth Sahib and this is called a **chanani**.
- Sikhs show their respect to the Guru Granth Sahib by taking off their shoes when they are in the gurdwara and by keeping their heads covered.
- Sikhs also bow before the manji and make offerings of money, sweets or milk.
- Sikhs believe that the Guru Granth Sahib is the word of God and that it is more than just a book.