

## (1) Keywords

<b>Waheguru</b>	'Wonderful teacher' (God)
<b>Gurdwara</b>	Sikh place of worship
<b>Gurmukh</b>	God-centred life ('manmukh' is self-centred)
<b>Guru</b>	One of 10 human founders of Sikhism (Guru Granth Sahib is book serving as final Guru)
<b>Mool Mantra</b>	Song of praise to Waheguru opening with 'Ik Onkar' which means there is only one God
<b>Sewa</b>	Selfless-service
<b>Langar</b>	Name for free vegetarian food made in a communal kitchen, and the kitchen itself

## (2) What is Sikhism?

1. Guru Nanak was born into a Hindu community which was under the rule of the Muslim Mughal empire in the Indian Subcontinent.
2. One day he was bathing in the river when he was struck by the realisation that all are equal in the eyes of Waheguru (God) and famously declared 'There is no Hindu, there is no Muslim!'.
3. A line of 10 Gurus (meaning 'teacher') followed until the final Guru declared that the Guru Granth Sahib (holy book) would be eternal.
4. An important Guru was Guru Gobind Singh who called five volunteers into a tent, each time showing the crowd of onlookers blood on his sword suggesting he had beheaded the men.
5. Each brave man came forth despite their fears and formed the Khalsa.

## (3) What do Sikhs Believe?

1. Sikhism is **monotheist**—believing in only one God, Waheguru, who takes only one form.
2. **Reincarnation or rebirth**—when a person dies they are reborn again and again.
3. **Goal**—Breaking the cycle of reincarnation or rebirth is the goal of Sikhism which leads one to unite eternally with God: 'Mukti'.
4. **Karma**—good actions create good karma and better rebirths. Bad actions have the opposite effect. **Very good karma leads to mukti.**
5. **Equality**—Sikhism rejects the caste system. All men and women are equal.

## (4) The Khalsa

1. **Guru Gobind Singh** started the Khalsa to protect the Sikh community with 5 volunteers
2. **Kaur and Singh**, meaning 'princess' and 'lion' are the last names given to Sikh women and men who join the Khalsa.
3. **Five Ks** must be worn by all men in the Khalsa at all possible times.
4. **Gender equality** is at the heart of the Khalsa with men and women committing to fight together to protect the weak.



## (5) The Mool Mantra

The opening section of the Guru Granth Sahib is called the Mool Mantra.

This means 'essential teaching'.

The fact it is at the start shows that it is very important for Sikhs.

<b>Ik Onkaar</b>	• There is only one God
<b>Saf Naam</b>	• His Name is Truth
<b>Karta Purkh</b>	• He is the Creator
<b>Nir Bhau</b>	• He is without fear
<b>Nir Vair</b>	• He is without hate
<b>Akaal Moorat</b>	• He is beyond time (Immortal)
<b>Ajooni</b>	• He is beyond birth and death
<b>Saibhang</b>	• He is self-existent
<b>Gur Parsaad</b>	• He is realised by the Guru's grace

The Mool Mantra gives the qualities of Waheguru or God, appearing 100 times in the Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh Holy book and final Guru).

## (6) Sewa

The langar (or free kitchen) was introduced by Guru Nanak who argued that as everyone was equal in the eyes of Waheguru (God), people should serve others selflessly. So sewa, or selfless service, became a core Sikh belief.

Guru Nanak and all subsequent gurus taught that Gurmukh, a God-focused action, was essential for mukti, or reunion with God, whereas Manmukh, a self-centred action, was likely to lead to a future human rebirth/reincarnation which is less desirable.

Langar, or communal kitchens, became a specific part of gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship). There are places where everyone gathers and eats together. The langar is also the free food that is served.

Many Sikhs today serve langar to people outside the gurdwara such as the homeless on stalls in cities or by dropping off meals to the elderly.