

SIKH GURUS

The era of the ten gurus of Sikhism spans from the birth of Nanak Dev in 1469, through the life of Guru Gobind Singh.

At the time of Guru Gobind Singh's death in 1708, he passed the title of Guru to the Sikh scripture, Guru Granth.

1. Guru Nanak Dev - Guru from 1469 to 1539

- Guru Nanak Dev, first of the 10 gurus, founded the Sikh faith, introducing the concept of one God.
- He started the institution of **Guru Ka Langar**. Langar is the term in the Sikh religion refers to the common kitchen where food is served to everyone without any discrimination.
- He emphasized the equality of women and rejected the path of renunciation and he rejected the authority of the Vedas.
- He was the contemporary of Mughal emperor - **Babur**.

2. Guru Angad Dev - Guru from 1539 to 1552

- Guru Angad Dev, second of the 10 gurus, invented and introduced the Gurmukhi (written form of Punjabi) script.
- He compiled the writings of Nanak Dev in Guru Granth Sahib in **Gurmukhi Script**.
- Popularized and expanded the institution of Guru ka Langar which was started by Guru Nanak Dev.

3. Guru Amardas Sahib - Guru from 1552 to 1574

- Guru Amardas introduced the **Anand Karaj** marriage ceremony for the Sikhs, replacing the Hindu form.
- He established Manji & Piri system of religious missions for men and women respectively.
- He strengthened the tradition of Guru Ka Langar.
- He also completely abolished amongst the Sikhs, the custom of Sati and purdah system.
- He was the contemporary of Mughal emperor - Akbar.

4. Guru Ram Das - Guru from 1574 to 1581

- Guru Ram Das, fourth of the 10 gurus, founded the **city of Amritsar**.
- He started the construction of the famous Golden Temple at Amritsar, the holy city of the Sikhs.
- He requested the Muslim Sufi, Mian Mir to lay the cornerstone of the Harmandir Sahib.

5. Guru Arjan Dev - Guru from 1581 to 1606

- He compiled the **Adi Granth**, the scriptures of the Sikhs.
- He completed construction of Sri Darbar Sahib also known as Golden Temple in Amritsar.

- He founded the town of Tarn Taran Sahib near Goindwal Sahib.
- He became the **first great martyr in Sikh history** when Emperor **Jahangir ordered his execution**. Thus, he was hailed as Shaheedan-de-Sartaj (The crown of martyrs).

6. Guru Har Gobind Sahib - Guru from 1606 to 1644

- He was the son of Guru Arjan Dev and was known as a "soldier saint".
- He organised a small army and became the **first Guru to take up arms** to defend the faith.
- He waged wars against Mughal rulers Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

7. Guru Har Rai Sahib - Guru from 1644 to 1661

- Though he was a man of peace, he never disbanded the armed sikh warriors who were earlier maintained by Guru Har Gobind.
- He gave shelter to Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Mughal Ruler Shah Jahan, who was later persecuted by Aurangzeb.
- He cautiously avoided conflict with Emperor Aurangzeb and devoted his efforts to missionary work.

8. Guru Har Krishan Sahib - Guru from 1661 to 1664

- Guru Har Krishan was the youngest of the Gurus. He was installed as Guru at the age of five.
- He was contemporary of Aurangzeb and summoned to Delhi by him under framed charges of anti-Islamic blasphemy.

9. Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib - Guru from 1665 to 1675

- He established the town of Anandpur.
- He opposed the forced conversion of the Hindu Kashmiri Pandits by Mughal ruler Aurangzeb and he was consequently persecuted for this.

10. Guru Gobind Singh Sahib - Guru from 1675 to 1708

- He became Guru after the martyrdom of his father Guru Tegh Bahadur.
- He created the **Khalsa** in 1699, changing the Sikhs into a saint-soldier order for protecting themselves.
- **Last Sikh Guru in human form** and he passed the Guruship of the Sikhs to the Guru Granth Sahib.

11. Guru Granth Sahib

- Guru Granth Sahib (also known as the Adi Granth) is the **scripture of the Sikhs**.
- The Granth was written in Gurmukhi script and it contains the actual words and verses as uttered by the Sikh Gurus.
- It is considered the Supreme Spiritual Authority and **Head of the Sikh religion, rather than any living person**.