Sikhism

World Faiths

Monthly Taleem Focus Slides
November 2018
Baba Nanak

- Considered by Sikhs to be the first Guru, a status originally similar to prophethood, and founder of Sikhism.
- Born in Talwandi in 1469 (in the Punjab region of India)
- Born a Hindu, but spent time with Sufis and other Muslims while traveling extensively and visiting Mecca and Medina.
- Taught that salvation could be gained through a life of meditation and eventually man could be joined in a type of union with God.
- Died in 1539

1. Source: Our God (by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad, M.A.)
The Formation of Sikhism After Baba Nanak’s Death

• Disciples from Hindu background took the mantle of Guru after him.
  • Introduced new practices and formed the Sikh religious philosophy.
• 10 human Gurus followed Baba Nanak, slowly militarizing the religion
  • The last was Guru Gobind Singh who completed the militarization of Sikhism.
• The Adi Granth, also known as Guru Granth, is the main Sikh scripture
  • Contains the hymns of Baba Nanak, sayings from various Muslim saints, as well as the sayings of the gurus.
  • After the 10\textsuperscript{th} Guru, Sikhs believe that the scripture itself is now the Guru.
    • They treat the book as if it is a real person, clothing it, and adjusting the temperature for it.
Core Beliefs

• The Unity of God

• Man can become one with God only by walking on the path of the Gurus.

• The sacred book, Guru Granth, can lead followers to find God and salvation. No more religious leaders are necessary because the Granth (their holy book) is their Guru now.

• Salvation results with a love union with God. Until this union takes place, individuals may go through many reincarnations.
Khalsa

• In the 15th century, Sikhism grew to become a threat to the state and the fifth Guru, Arjan, was executed.

• Subsequent Gurus began to militarize the Sikhs to resist oppression. The community came to amass a large amount of land in the Punjab region until they were defeated by the British.

• Khalsa was established by the 10th Guru as a group of pure individuals that would fight for their faith. They are recognized by the 5 K’s
  • Kesh (uncut hair)
  • Kara (a steel bracelet)
  • Kanga (a wooden comb)
  • Kachcha (cotton underwear, a symbol of chastity and purity)
  • Kirpan (a steel sword)
The Golden Temple

- A sacred place of pilgrimage for Sikhs in Amritsar, India.
- Land was chosen by the Third Guru of Sikhism in the 16th century.
- Destroyed several times and in 1980s was the site of a massacre
  - A movement to create an independent state called Khalistan had formed and the Indian Government tried to stop it.
Conflicts between Islam and Sikhism

• We believe that Baba Nanak was never forming a new religion, instead, he was reforming his community with Islam.
  • Baba Nanak was heavily influenced by Sufism, he traveled throughout the Muslim world, and prayed as Muslims do.
    • Hence the emphasis on the Oneness of God and the idea of becoming One with Him.
  • The Promised Messiah (as) wrote a book, Sat Bachan, to explain his research on this matter. After obtaining pictures of the cloak of Baba Nanak, he found that verses of the Holy Quran were written on it.

• The differences and innovations that have arisen in Sikhism are due to the influences of Baba Nanak’s Hindu followers after him.
Cloak of Baba Nanak

• Verses from the Quran are written all over the cloak.