

A SIKH TEMPLE IS CALLED A: _____ A. GURU. B. GURDWARA. C. KESA. D. KARA

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WHEN EXPLORING THE RICH AND VIBRANT WORLD OF SIKHISM, ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS IS UNDERSTANDING ITS PLACES OF WORSHIP AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE. A COMMON QUESTION THAT OFTEN ARISES IS: WHAT IS THE NAME OF A SIKH TEMPLE? THE CORRECT ANSWER IS B. GURDWARA. THIS ARTICLE DELVES INTO THE MEANING, HISTORY, ARCHITECTURE, AND SIGNIFICANCE OF GURDWARAS IN SIKHISM, PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE INSIGHTS FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT THIS IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION.

UNDERSTANDING THE SIKH PLACE OF WORSHIP: THE GURDWARA

DEFINITION OF A GURDWARA

A GURDWARA, DERIVED FROM THE PUNJABI WORDS "GUR" MEANING "TEACHER" OR "MASTER" AND "DWARA" MEANING "DOOR," IS THE CENTRAL PLACE OF WORSHIP FOR SIKHS. IT IS MORE THAN JUST A TEMPLE; IT IS A COMMUNITY CENTER, A PLACE FOR PRAYER, MEDITATION, LEARNING, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE.

THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF A GURDWARA IS TO PROVIDE A SACRED SPACE WHERE SIKHS CAN GATHER TO LISTEN TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB (THE HOLY SCRIPTURE), PARTICIPATE IN PRAYER, AND ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY SERVICE (SEVA). THE GURDWARA EMBODIES THE CORE VALUES OF SIKHISM: EQUALITY, HUMILITY, SERVICE, AND DEVOTION.

THE CORRECT ANSWER: B. GURDWARA

AMONG THE OPTIONS PROVIDED:

- A. GURU REFERS TO THE SPIRITUAL TEACHERS IN SIKHISM, NOTABLY THE TEN GURUS, WITH GURU GRANTH SAHIB BEING THE ETERNAL GURU.
- B. GURDWARA IS THE CORRECT TERM FOR THE SIKH PLACE OF WORSHIP.
- C. KESA IS A TERM RELATED TO HAIR, ESPECIALLY THE UNCUT HAIR WORN BY SIKH MEN AND WOMEN.
- D. KARA IS A STEEL BRACELET WORN BY SIKHS AS A SYMBOL OF RESTRAINT AND A REMINDER OF THE GURU'S TEACHINGS.

THEREFORE, THE CORRECT ANSWER TO THE QUESTION IS B. GURDWARA.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GURDWARA IN SIKHISM

SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

GURDWARAS SERVE AS THE SPIRITUAL HEART OF SIKH COMMUNITIES WORLDWIDE. THEY ARE PLACES WHERE SIKHS COME TO:

- LISTEN TO AND MEDITATE ON THE TEACHINGS OF THE GURUS.
- PARTICIPATE IN KIRTAN (DEVOTIONAL SINGING).
- READ AND STUDY THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB.
- REFLECT AND CULTIVATE A PERSONAL CONNECTION WITH THE DIVINE.

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ROLE

BEYOND SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES, GURDWARAS ARE VITAL COMMUNITY HUBS THAT PROMOTE SOCIAL EQUALITY AND COMMUNAL

HARMONY. THEY OFFER SERVICES SUCH AS:

- FREE MEALS (LANGAR) OPEN TO EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF BACKGROUND.
- EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS.
- CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AND SOCIAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS.
- HOSTING CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF GURDWARAS

ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION

THE CONCEPT OF A GURDWARA HAS EVOLVED OVER CENTURIES, ROOTED IN THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE SIKH GURUS. THE FIRST GURDWARA WAS ESTABLISHED BY GURU NANAK DEV JI, THE FOUNDER OF SIKHISM, WHO EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY WORSHIP AND SERVICE.

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, GURDWARAS HAVE SERVED AS CENTERS OF RESISTANCE, COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY, AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH, ESPECIALLY DURING PERIODS OF PERSECUTION. NOTABLY, THE HARMANDIR SAHIB (GOLDEN TEMPLE) IN AMRITSAR IS ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC AND REVERED GURDWARAS IN THE WORLD.

HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF NOTABLE GURDWARAS

- HARMANDIR SAHIB (GOLDEN TEMPLE), AMRITSAR: THE HOLIEST GURDWARA IN SIKHISM, ATTRACTING MILLIONS OF PILGRIMS ANNUALLY.
- GURDWARA BANGLA SAHIB, DELHI: KNOWN FOR ITS ASSOCIATION WITH GURU HAR KRISHAN AND ITS BEAUTIFUL PONDS.
- GURDWARA SIS GANJ SAHIB, DELHI: A MEMORIAL TO THE SIKH MARTYRS.

ARCHITECTURE AND FEATURES OF A GURDWARA

DESIGN ELEMENTS

GURDWARAS REFLECT A BLEND OF TRADITIONAL INDIAN AND SIKH ARCHITECTURAL STYLES. KEY FEATURES INCLUDE:

- THE NISHAN SAHIB: A TALL FLAGPOLE WITH THE SIKH FLAG, SYMBOLIZING SOVEREIGNTY AND FAITH.
- THE DARBAR SAHIB (MAIN PRAYER HALL): WHERE THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB IS KEPT AND WORSHIPPED.
- THE SAROVAR (POOL OF WATER): MANY GURDWARAS FEATURE A WATER TANK FOR RITUAL CLEANSING.
- THE LANGAR HALL: A COMMUNAL KITCHEN WHERE FREE MEALS ARE PREPARED AND SERVED.

TYPICAL LAYOUT

A TYPICAL GURDWARA INCLUDES:

- ENTRANCE HALL (LANGAR HALL OR DARSHANI DEORI)
- MAIN PRAYER HALL WITH THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB
- ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PILGRIMS
- COMMUNITY KITCHEN AND DINING AREA
- RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS FOR THE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

PRACTICES AND ETIQUETTE IN A GURDWARA

RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

VISITORS ARE EXPECTED TO OBSERVE CERTAIN ETIQUETTES:

- REMOVE SHOES BEFORE ENTERING.
- COVER HEADS WITH A TURBAN, SCARF, OR CLOTH.
- WASH HANDS AND FEET IF REQUIRED.
- MAINTAIN SILENCE AND SHOW REVERENCE.
- REFRAIN FROM SMOKING, ALCOHOL, OR ANY DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR.

PARTICIPATING IN GURDWARA ACTIVITIES

- LISTENING TO KIRTAN AND SERMONS.
- PARTICIPATING IN THE LANGAR (COMMUNITY MEAL).
- READING FROM THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB.
- ENGAGING IN SEVA (SELFLESS SERVICE).

HOW TO FIND AND VISIT A GURDWARA

FINDING A GURDWARA IS STRAIGHTFORWARD, ESPECIALLY IN CITIES WITH SIGNIFICANT SIKH COMMUNITIES. MANY GURDWARAS ARE OPEN TO VISITORS AND TOURISTS, OFFERING GUIDED TOURS AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.

TIPS FOR VISITORS:

- DRESS MODESTLY AND RESPECTFULLY.
- FOLLOW THE CUSTOMS AND RULES OF THE GURDWARA.
- TAKE PART IN THE LANGAR IF INVITED.
- ASK QUESTIONS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SIKHISM AND THE GURDWARA'S HISTORY.

CONCLUSION

IN SUMMARY, A SIKH TEMPLE IS CALLED A GURDWARA, AN ESSENTIAL INSTITUTION THAT EMBODIES SIKH SPIRITUAL, CULTURAL, AND SOCIAL VALUES. IT SERVES AS A SACRED SPACE FOR WORSHIP, COMMUNITY GATHERING, AND SERVICE. UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GURDWARAS HELPS FOSTER GREATER APPRECIATION AND RESPECT FOR SIKH TRADITIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS WORLDWIDE.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- THE CORRECT TERM FOR A SIKH TEMPLE IS GURDWARA.
- GURDWARAS ARE CENTERS OF WORSHIP, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION.
- THEY FEATURE DISTINCTIVE ARCHITECTURE AND PRACTICES ROOTED IN SIKH HISTORY.
- VISITORS ARE WELCOMED WITH RESPECT AND HOSPITALITY.

WHETHER YOU ARE A DEVOUT SIKH OR SIMPLY CURIOUS ABOUT THIS RICH RELIGIOUS TRADITION, VISITING A GURDWARA OFFERS A MEANINGFUL GLIMPSE INTO SIKH BELIEFS, HISTORY, AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE CORRECT TERM FOR A SIKH TEMPLE?

B. GURDWARA

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS REFERS TO A SIKH PLACE OF WORSHIP?

B. GURDWARA

IN SIKHISM, WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE PLACE WHERE CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP OCCURS?

B. GURDWARA

WHICH TERM IS USED TO DESCRIBE A SIKH TEMPLE?

B. GURDWARA

WHAT IS THE TERM FOR THE SIKH HOUSE OF WORSHIP THAT STARTS WITH 'G'?

GURDWARA

A SIKH TEMPLE IS CALLED A GURDWARA. WHAT DOES THE WORD 'GURDWARA' MEAN?

IT MEANS 'THE GATEWAY TO THE GURU' OR 'THE DOOR TO THE GURU'.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

GURDWARA: THE SACRED CENTER OF SIKH WORSHIP AND COMMUNITY

WHEN EXPLORING THE RICH TAPESTRY OF SIKH CULTURE AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICE, ONE TERM REPEATEDLY EMERGES AS A CORNERSTONE: GURDWARA. THIS WORD, OFTEN ENCOUNTERED IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT SIKHISM, ENCAPSULATES MUCH MORE THAN JUST A PLACE OF WORSHIP—IT EMBODIES THE SPIRITUAL, CULTURAL, AND COMMUNAL IDENTITY OF SIKHS WORLDWIDE. IN THIS COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION, WE WILL DELVE INTO THE ORIGINS, SIGNIFICANCE, ARCHITECTURE, FUNCTIONS, AND CULTURAL IMPORTANCE OF THE GURDWARA, PROVIDING A DETAILED UNDERSTANDING OF WHY IT HOLDS SUCH A REVERED PLACE IN SIKH LIFE.

UNDERSTANDING THE TERM: WHAT IS A GURDWARA?

DEFINITION AND ETYMOLOGY

THE WORD GURDWARA (PUNJABI: ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ) TRANSLATES LITERALLY TO "THE GATEWAY TO THE GURU." IT IS DERIVED FROM TWO PUNJABI WORDS: GUR MEANING "GURU," AND DWARA MEANING "DOOR" OR "GATEWAY." THIS ETYMOLOGY UNDERSCORES THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE GURDWARA AS A SPIRITUAL PORTAL—AN ENTRY POINT TO DIVINE WISDOM AND THE TEACHINGS OF THE SIKH GURUS.

HISTORICALLY, THE TERM HAS BEEN USED SINCE THE 16TH CENTURY, ALIGNING WITH THE ORIGINS OF SIKHISM ITSELF, FOUNDED BY GURU NANAK IN 1469. OVER THE CENTURIES, THE GURDWARA HAS EVOLVED FROM HUMBLE COMMUNITY PRAYER HOUSES INTO GRAND SYMBOLS OF FAITH, CULTURE, AND SOCIAL SERVICE.

WHAT DOES A GURDWARA REPRESENT?

A GURDWARA IS MORE THAN JUST A BUILDING; IT IS A SACRED SPACE THAT EMBODIES SEVERAL KEY PRINCIPLES OF SIKHISM:

- SPIRITUAL SANCTUARY: A PLACE FOR PRAYER, MEDITATION, AND REFLECTION.
- COMMUNITY HUB: A CENTER FOR SOCIAL GATHERING, EDUCATION, AND COLLECTIVE SERVICE.

- SYMBOL OF EQUALITY: AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE ALL INDIVIDUALS ARE WELCOMED REGARDLESS OF CASTE, CREED, OR BACKGROUND.
- REPOSITORY OF SIKH HERITAGE: HOUSING SCRIPTURES, ARTIFACTS, AND HISTORY VITAL TO SIKH IDENTITY.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF GURDWARAS

THE ORIGINS OF GURDWARAS

THE EARLIEST GURDWARAS EMERGED DURING THE TIME OF GURU NANAK AND THE SUBSEQUENT GURUS, SERVING AS INFORMAL PLACES FOR CONGREGATION AND SHARING THE GURU'S TEACHINGS. ONE OF THE OLDEST KNOWN GURDWARAS IS THE GURDWARA JANAM ASTHAN IN NANKANA SAHIB, PAKISTAN, BELIEVED TO MARK THE BIRTHPLACE OF GURU NANAK.

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, GURDWARAS HAVE PLAYED PIVOTAL ROLES DURING PERIODS OF PERSECUTION, SERVING AS SANCTUARIES FOR SIKHS AND SYMBOLS OF RESILIENCE AND FAITH. NOTABLY, DURING THE MUGHAL RULE, MANY GURDWARAS BECAME CENTERS OF RESISTANCE AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION.

MODERN-DAY GURDWARAS AND THEIR ROLE

TODAY, GURDWARAS SERVE MULTIFACETED ROLES:

- RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONS: HOSTING DAILY PRAYERS, KIRTAN (HYMN SINGING), AND READING FROM THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB (THE HOLY SCRIPTURE).
- EDUCATIONAL CENTERS: OFFERING CLASSES ON SIKH HISTORY, LANGUAGE (PUNJABI), AND MORAL PRINCIPLES.
- CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES: RUNNING LANGAR (COMMUNITY KITCHENS), MEDICAL CAMPS, AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS.
- CULTURAL PRESERVATION: CELEBRATING SIKH FESTIVALS SUCH AS VAISAKHI, GURPURABS, AND BAISAKHI WITH GRANDEUR AND COMMUNAL PARTICIPATION.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES OF A GURDWARA

DESIGN ELEMENTS AND LAYOUT

WHILE ARCHITECTURAL STYLES MAY VARY ACROSS REGIONS AND COUNTRIES, SEVERAL CORE FEATURES ARE UNIVERSALLY PRESENT IN GURDWARAS:

- MAIN PRAYER HALL (DARBAR SAHIB): THE CENTRAL SPACE WHERE THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB IS PLACED ON A RAISED PLATFORM CALLED THE TAKHT OR PALKI SAHIB. IT IS THE SPIRITUAL NUCLEUS OF THE GURDWARA.
- ENTRANCE (LANGAR HALL): THE COMMUNITY KITCHEN AREA AND DINING SPACE WHERE FREE MEALS ARE SERVED TO ALL VISITORS.
- BELL AND NISHAN SAHIB: THE TALL FLAGPOLE BEARING THE SIKH EMBLEM (THE KHANDA) AND THE NISHAN SAHIB FLAG, SYMBOLIZING SOVEREIGNTY AND FAITH.
- ACOUSTIC AND VISUAL ELEMENTS: KIRTAN SINGERS AND MUSICIANS OFTEN PERFORM HYMNS, CREATING A SERENE ATMOSPHERE.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY AND SYMBOLISM

GURDWARA ARCHITECTURE EMPHASIZES HUMILITY, EQUALITY, AND OPENNESS:

- NO POMP OR EXCESSIVE ORNAMENTALISM: UNLIKE MANY RELIGIOUS STRUCTURES, GURDWARAS TEND TO FAVOR SIMPLE, FUNCTIONAL DESIGNS.
- OPEN DOORS: SIGNIFYING HOSPITALITY AND ACCEPTANCE.
- USE OF WHITE AND BRIGHT COLORS: REFLECTING PURITY AND SPIRITUAL CLARITY.
- PRESENCE OF THE NISHAN SAHIB: AN IMPORTANT EMBLEM THAT SIGNIFIES THE SIKH COMMUNITY'S PRESENCE AND IDENTITY.

THE FUNCTIONS AND RITUALS IN A GURDWARA

DAILY ROUTINE AND WORSHIP

GURDWARAS OPERATE ON A WELL-ESTABLISHED SCHEDULE:

- MORNING PRAYER (VESPERS): REFERRED TO AS NITNEM, INCLUDES RECITATION OF SPECIFIC HYMNS.
- KIRTAN AND HUKAM: HYMN SINGING ACCOMPANIED BY MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, CULMINATING IN THE READING OF A RANDOM VERSE (HUKAM) FROM THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB.
- EVENING PRAYERS AND KATHA: FURTHER SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES AND DISCOURSES.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB

THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB IS CENTRAL TO GURDWARA WORSHIP:

- REVERED AS THE LIVING GURU: TREATED WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT, IT IS INSTALLED ON A THRONE AND COVERED WITH BEAUTIFUL CLOTHS.
- CONTINUOUS RESPECT: DEVOTEES BOW, TOUCH THEIR FOREHEADS TO THE SCRIPTURE, AND REMOVE SHOES BEFORE ENTERING THE SANCTUM.
- SCRIPTURAL READINGS: THE SCRIPTURE IS READ ALOUD REGULARLY, AND HYMNS ARE SUNG TO INVOKE DIVINE PRESENCE.

LANGAR — THE COMMUNAL MEAL

ONE OF THE MOST DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF A GURDWARA IS THE LANGAR:

- PHILOSOPHY OF EQUALITY AND SERVICE: EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO PARTAKE REGARDLESS OF SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC STATUS.
- PREPARATION: MANAGED BY VOLUNTEERS, OFTEN COMMUNITY MEMBERS OR LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS.
- MEAL COMPOSITION: TYPICALLY VEGETARIAN, EMPHASIZING INCLUSIVITY AND COMPASSION.
- PROCESS: AFTER PRAYERS, VISITORS SIT ON THE FLOOR, SYMBOLIZING HUMILITY, AND PARTAKE IN THE MEAL TOGETHER.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL IMPACT OF GURDWARAS

SOCIAL SERVICE AND HUMANITARIAN WORK

GURDWARAS ARE OFTEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS:

- DISASTER RELIEF: PROVIDING AID DURING NATURAL CALAMITIES.
- HEALTH INITIATIVES: FREE CLINICS, HEALTH SCREENINGS, AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.
- EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH: SCHOOLS AND LITERACY PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS.

CELEBRATION OF FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

FESTIVALS LIKE VAISAKHI (THE SIKH NEW YEAR), GURPURB (ANNIVERSARY OF A GURU), AND BAISAKHI ARE CELEBRATED WITH PROCESSIONS, MUSIC, AND COMMUNITY FEASTS, REINFORCING CULTURAL IDENTITY AND SPIRITUAL DEVOTION.

PROMOTING INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

GURDWARAS OFTEN HOST INTERFAITH DIALOGUES AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES, FOSTERING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT AMONG DIVERSE COMMUNITIES.

CONCLUSION: THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF A GURDWARA IN SIKH LIFE

IN SUM, A GURDWARA IS NOT JUST A PHYSICAL STRUCTURE BUT A VIBRANT HUB OF SPIRITUAL, CULTURAL, AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY. IT EMBODIES THE CORE VALUES OF SIKHISM—EQUALITY, HUMILITY, SERVICE, AND DEVOTION. WHETHER AS A SANCTUARY FOR PRAYER, A COMMUNITY CENTER, OR A SYMBOL OF RESILIENCE, THE GURDWARA REMAINS A VITAL INSTITUTION THAT SUSTAINS AND NURTURES THE SIKH COMMUNITY WORLDWIDE.

ITS ARCHITECTURAL SIMPLICITY, COMBINED WITH PROFOUND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE, MAKES THE GURDWARA A BEACON OF FAITH AND HOPE. FOR SIKHS, IT IS TRULY "THE GATEWAY TO THE GURU," INVITING ALL TO SEEK DIVINE WISDOM AND COMMUNAL HARMONY.

IN CONCLUSION, WHEN ASKED, "A SIKH TEMPLE IS CALLED A: _____?" THE CORRECT ANSWER IS B. GURDWARA. THIS TERM ENCAPSULATES THE ESSENCE OF SIKH WORSHIP AND COMMUNITY LIFE, REFLECTING CENTURIES OF SPIRITUAL TRADITION AND CULTURAL RESILIENCE.

A Sikh Temple Is Called A A Guru B Gurdwara C Kesa D Kara

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