

Age 5 to 10 Third Episode
Auditions for Sikh of America World Competition 2019

(Give all answers in complete sentences)

Guru Gobind Singh Ji

Q-1

Where was Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji born and when?

The tenth and the last Guru or Prophet-teacher of the Sikh faith, was born Gobind Rai Sodhi on Poh Sudi 7th, 23rd Poh 1723 Bikrami Samvat (22 December 1666) at Patna, in Bihar. His father, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the Ninth Guru, was then travelling across Bengal and Assam.

Q-2

Where did Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji direct his family once he returned to Patna in 1670?

A-2

Returning to Patna in 1670, he directed his family to return to the Punjab. On the site of the house at Patna in which Gobind Rai was born and where he spent his early childhood now stands a sacred shrine, Takht Sri Harimandar Sahib,

Q-3

Where was Gobind Rai escorted to?

A-3

one of the five most honoured seats of religious authority (takht, lit. throne) for the Sikhs. Gobind Rai was escorted to Anandpur (then known as Chakk Nanaki) at the foothills of the Sivaliks where he reached in March 1672 and there his early education included reading and writing of Punjabi, Braj, Sanskrit and Persian languages. He was barely nine years of age when a sudden turn came in his life as well as in the life of entire Sikh community,

Q-4

Who was destined to lead?

A-4

he was destined to lead. Early in 1675, a group Kashmiri Brahmans, driven to desperation by the religious fanaticism of the Mughal General Iftikar Khan, visited Anandpur to seek Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's intercession. As the Guru sat reflecting what to do, young Gobind Rai, arriving there in company with

his playmates, asked "Why he looked so preoccupied". The father, as records Koer Singh in his Gurbilas Patshahi 10, replied, "Grave are the burdens the earth bears. She will be redeemed only if a truly worthy person comes forward to lay down his head.

Q-5

When was Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur dated his death?

A-5

Distress will then be expunged and happiness ushered in." "None could be worthier than yourself to make such a sacrifice," remarked Gobind Rai in his innocent manner. Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji soon afterwards proceeded to the imperial capital, Delhi, and courted death on 11 November 1675. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji was formally installed Guru on Maghar Sudi 5th (11 Maghar), 1732 Samvat (11th Nov, 1675). In the midst of his engagement with the concerns of the community, he gave attention to the mastery of physical skills and literary accomplishment.

Q-6

What did Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji have naturally?

A-6

He had grown into a energetic youth. He had a natural genius for poetic composition and his early years were assiduously given to this pursuit. The Var Sri Bhagauti Ji Ki, popularly called Chandi di Var. written in 1684, was his first composition. The poem depicted the legendary contest between the gods and the demons as described in the Markandeya Purana . The choice of a warlike theme for this and a number of his later compositions such as the two Chandi Charitras, mostly in Braj, was made to infuse martial spirit among his followers to prepare them to stand up against injustice and tyranny.

Q-7

Where was much of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji's creative literary work done at?

A-7

Much of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji's creative literary work was done at Paonta, he had founded on the banks of the River Yamuna and to which site he had temporarily shifted in April 1685. Poetry as such was, however, not his aim. For him it was a means of revealing the divine principle and concretizing a personal vision of the Supreme Being that had been vouchsafed to him.

Q-8

What did he preach through his poetry?

A-8

His Japu and the composition known as Akal Ustati are in this tenor. Through his poetry he preached love

and equality and a strictly ethical and moral code of conduct. He preached the worship of the One Supreme Being, deprecating idolatry and superstitious beliefs and observances. The glorification of the sword itself which he eulogized as Bhagwati was to secure fulfilment of God's justice.

Q-9

What was the sword meant for and what did it symbolize?

A-9

The sword was never meant as a symbol of aggression, and it was never to be used for self-aggrandizement. It was the emblem of manliness and self-respect and was to be used only in self-defence, as a last resort. For Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji said in a Persian couplet in his Zafarnamah. When all other means have failed, it is but lawful to take to the sword

Q-10

What did Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji do during his stay at Paonta?

A-10

During his stay at Paonta, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji availed himself of his spare time to practise different forms of manly exercises, such as riding, swimming and archery. His increasing influence among the people and the martial exercises of his men excited the jealousy of the neighbouring Rajput hill rulers who led by Raja Fateh Chand of Garhwal collected a host to attack him. But they were worsted in an action at Bhangani, about 10 km northeast of Paonta, on 18 Assu 1745 sk/18 September 1688. Soon there after Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji left Paonta and returned to Anandpur which he fortified in view of the continuing hostility of the Rajput

Q-11

What did Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji do during his stay at Paonta?

A-11

chiefs as well as of the repressive policy of the imperial government at Delhi. The Guru and his Sikhs were involved in a battle with a Mughal commander, Alif Khan, at Nadaun on the left bank of the Beas, about 30 km southeast of Kangra, on 22 Chet 1747 Bk/20 March 1691. Describing the battle in stirring verse in Bachitra Natak, he said that Alif Khan fled in utter disarray "without being able to give any attention to his camp." Among several other skirmishes that occurred was the Hussain battle (20 February 1696) fought against Husain Khan,

Q-12

What resulted in a decisive victory for the sikhs?

A-12

an imperial general, which resulted in a decisive victory for the Sikhs. Following the appointment in 1694 of the liberal Prince Muazzam (later Emperor Bahadur Shah) as viceroy of northwestern region including Punjab, there was however a brief respite from pressure from the ruling authority.

Q-13

When did Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji issue directions to Sikh sangats/communities not to acknowledge masands and the local ministers?

A-13

In 1698, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji issued directions to Sikh sangats or communities in different parts of India not to acknowledge masands, the local ministers, against whom he had heard complaints. Sikhs, he instructed, should come to Anandpur straight without any intermediaries and bring their offerings personally. The Guru thus established direct relationship with his Sikhs and addressed them as his Khalsa, Persian term used for crown-lands as distinguished from feudal chiefs.

Q-14

When was the institution of the Khalsa given concrete form?

A-14

The institution of the Khalsa was given concrete form on 30 March 1699 when Sikhs had gathered at Anandpur in large numbers for the annual festival of Baisakhi. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji appeared before the assembly dramatically on that day with a naked sword in hand and, to quote Koer Singh, Gurbilas Patshahi 10, spoke: "Is there present a true Sikh who would offer his head to the Guru as a sacrifice?" The words numbed the audience who looked on in awed silence. The Guru repeated the call. At the third call Daya Ram, a Sobti Khatri of Lahore, arose and humbly walked behind the Guru to a tent near by.

Q-15

How did the Guru appear when he returned?

A-15

The Guru returned with his sword dripping blood, and asked for another head. At this Daram Das, a Jatt from Hastinapur, came forward and was taken inside the enclosure. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji made three more calls. Muhkam Chand, a washerman from Dvarka, Himmat, a water-carrier from Jagannathpur, and Sahib Chand, a barber from Bidar (Karnataka) responded one after another and advanced to offer their heads.

Q-16

Who the first five to be initiated?

A-16

All the five were led back from the tent dressed alike in saffron-coloured raiment topped over with neatly tied turbans similarly dyed, with swords dangling by their sides. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji then introduced Khande Di Pahul, i.e. initiation by sweetened water churned with a double-edged broadsword (khanda). Those five Sikhs were the first to be initiated. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji called them Panj Piare, the five devoted spirits beloved of the Guru. These five, formed the nucleus of the self-abnegating, martial and casteless fellowship of the Khalsa. All of them surnamed Singh, meaning lion, were required to wear in future the five symbols of the Khalsa,

Q-17

Who were enjoined to succor the helpless and fight the oppressor?

A17

all beginning with the letter K-the kesh or long hair and beard, Kangha, a comb in the kesh to keep it tidy as against the recluses who kept it matted in token of their having renounced the world, Kara, a steel bracelet, Kachch, short breeches, and Kirpan, a sword. They were enjoined to succour the helpless and fight the oppressor, to have faith in one God and to consider all human beings equal, irrespective of caste and creed.

Q-18

Who received initiatory rites from five disciples?

A-18

Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji then himself received initiatory rites from five disciples, now invested with authority as Khalsa, and had his name changed from Gobind Rai to Gobind Singh. "Hail," as the poet subsequently sang, "Gobind Singh who is himself Master as well as disciple." Further injunctions were laid down for the Sikhs. They must never cut or trim their hair and beards, nor smoke tobacco. A Sikh must not have sexual relationship outside the marital bond, nor eat the flesh of an animal killed slowly in the Muslim way.

Q-19

Who were alarmed due to the developments?

A-19

These developments alarmed the caste-ridden Rajput chiefs of the Sivalik hills. They rallied under the leadership of the Raja of Bilaspur, in whose territory lay Anandpur, to forcibly evict Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji from his hilly citadel. Their repeated expeditions during 1700-04 however proved abortive. They at last petitioned Emperor Aurangzeb for help. In concert with contingents sent under imperial orders by the governor of Lahore and those of the faujdar of Sirhind, they marched upon Anandpur and laid a siege to the fort in Jeth 1762 sk/May 1705. Over the months,

Q-20

Who withstood the successive assaults despite dire scarcity of food?

A-20

the Guru and his Sikhs firmly withstood their successive assaults despite dire scarcity of food resulting from the prolonged blockade. While the besieged were reduced to desperate straits, the besiegers too were chagrined at the tenacity with which the Sikhs held out. At this stage the besiegers offered, on solemn oaths of Quran, safe exit to the Sikhs if they quit Anandpur.

Q-21

When was the town evacuated?

A-21

At last, the town was evacuated during the night of Pous 1, 1762 sk/5-6 December 1705. But soon, as the Guru and his Sikhs came out, the hill monarchs and their Mughal allies set upon them in full fury. In the ensuing confusion many Sikhs were killed and all of the Guru's baggage, including most of the precious manuscripts, was lost. The Guru himself was able to make his way to Chamkaur, 40 km southwest of Anandpur,

Q-22

What took place on December 7th 1705?

A-22

with barely 40 Sikhs and his two elder sons. There the imperial army, following closely on his heels, caught up with him. His two sons, Ajit Singh (b. 1687) and Jujhar Singh (b. 1691) and all but five of the Sikhs fell in the action that took place on 7 December 1705. The five surviving Sikhs bade the Guru to save himself in order to reconsolidate the Khalsa. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji with three of his Sikhs escaped into the wilderness of the Malva, two of his Muslim devotees, Gani Khan and Nabi Khan, helping him at great personal risk.

Q-23

Who were Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji's two younger sons?

A-23

Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji's two younger sons, Zorawar Singh (b. 1696) and Fateh Singh (b.1699), and his mother, Mata Gujari, were after the evacuation of Anandpur betrayed by their old servant and escort, Gangu, to the faujdar of Sirhind, who had the young children executed on 13 December 1705. Their grandmother died the same day. Befriended by another Muslim admirer, Rai Kalha of Raikot, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji reached Dina in the heart of the Malva.

Q-24

How many did warriors of the Brar clan were enlisted?

A-24

There he enlisted a few hundred warriors of the Brar clan, and also composed his famous letter, Zafarnamah or the Epistle of Victory, in Persian verse, addressed to Emperor Aurangzeb. The letter was a severe indictment of the Emperor and his commanders who had perjured their oath and treacherously attacked him once he was outside the safety of his fortification at Anandpur. It emphatically reiterated the sovereignty of morality in the affairs of State as much as in the conduct of human beings and held the means as important as the end. Two of the Sikhs, Daya Singh and Daram Singh, were despatched with the Zafarnamah to Ahmadnagar in the South to deliver it to Aurangzeb, then in camp in that town.

Q-25

From where did Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji continue his westward march?

A-25

From Dina, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji continued his westward march until, finding the host close upon his heels, he took position astride the water pool of Khidrana to make a last-ditch stand. The fighting on 29 December 1705 was hard and desperate. In spite of their overwhelming numbers, the Mughal troops failed to capture the Guru and had to retire in defeat.

Q-26

Who played the most valorous part in this battle?

A-26

The most valorous part in this battle was played by a group of 40 Sikhs who had deserted the Guru at Anandpur during the long siege, but who, chided by their womenfolk at home, had come back under the leadership of a brave and devoted woman, Mai Bhago, to redeem themselves. They had fallen fighting desperately to check the enemy's advance towards the Guru's position. The Guru blessed the 40 dead as 40 mukte, i.e. the 40 Saved Ones. The site is now marked by a sacred shrine and tank and the town which has grown around them is called Muktsar, the Pool of liberations.

Q-27

Where did Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji arrive to after spending some time in the Lakkhi Jungle country?

A-27

After spending some time in the Lakkhi Jungle country, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji arrived at Talvandi Sabo, now called Damdama Sahib, on 20 January 1706. During his stay there of over nine months, a number of Sikhs rejoined him. He prepared a fresh recension of Sikh Scripture, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, with the celebrated scholar, Bhai Mani Singh, as his amanuensis. From the number of scholars who had rallied

round Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji and from the literary activity initiated, the place came to be known as the Guru's Kashi or seat of learning like Varanasi.

Q-28

How did the epistle Zafarnamah effect Emperor Aurungzeb?

A-28

The epistle Zafarnamah sent by Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji from Dina seems to have touched the heart of Emperor Aurungzeb. He forthwith invited him for a meeting. According to Ahkam-i-Alamgiri, the Emperor had a letter written to the deputy governor of Lahore, Mun'im Khan, to conciliate the Guru and make the required arrangements for his journey to the Deccan. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji had, however, already left for the South on 30 October 1706.

Q-29

What neighbourhood was he in?

A-29

He was in the neighbourhood of Baghor, in Rajasthan, when the news arrived of the death of the Emperor at Ahmadnagar on 20 February 1707. The Guru there upon decided to return to the Punjab, via Shahjahanabad (Delhi).

Q-30

What took place on the 23rd of July, 1707?

A-30

That was the time when the sons of the deceased Emperor were preparing to contest succession. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji despatched for the help of the eldest claimant, the liberal Prince Muazzam, a token contingent of Sikhs which took part in the battle of Jajau (8 June 1707), decisively won by the Prince who ascended the throne with the title of Bahadur Shah. The new Emperor invited Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji for a meeting which took place at Agra on 23 July 1707.

Q-31

Where did the Emperor Shah's younger brother raise the standard of revolt?

A-31

Emperor Bahadur Shah had at this time to move against the Kachhvaha Rajputs of Amber (Jaipur) and then to the Deccan where his youngest brother, Kam Baksh, had raised the standard of revolt. The Guru accompanied him and, as says Tarkh-i-Bahadur Shahi, he addressed assemblies of people on the way preaching the word of Guru Nanak. The two camps crossed the River Tapti between 11 and 14 June 1708 and the Ban-Ganga on 14 August,

Q-32

When did they arrive at Nanded?

A-32

arriving at Nanded, on the Godavari, towards the end of August. While Bahadur Shah proceeded further South, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji decided to stay awhile at Nanded. Here he met a Bairagi recluse, Madho Das, whom he converted a Sikh administering to him Khande Di Pahul, renaming him Gurbakhsh Singh (popular name Banda Singh). Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji gave Banda Singh five arrows from his own quiver and an escort, including five of his chosen Sikhs, and directed him to go to the Punjab and carry on the campaign against the tyranny of the provincial overlords.

Q-33

Who felt concerned at the Emperor's treatment of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji?

A-33

Nawab Wazir Khan of Sirhind had felt concerned at the Emperor's conciliatory treatment of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Their marching together to the South made him jealous, and he charged two of his trusted men with murdering the Guru before his increasing friendship with the Emperor resulted in any harm to him. These two pathans Jamshed Khan and Wasil Beg are the names given in the Guru Kian Sakhian— pursued the Guru secretly and overtook

Q-34

Who stabbed the Guru?

A-34

him at Nanded, where, according to Sri Gur Sobha by Senapati, a contemporary writer, one of them stabbed the Guru in the left side below the heart as he lay one evening in his chamber resting after the Rahras prayer.

Q-35

What did Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji use to strike his attacker down with?

A-35

Before he could deal another blow, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji struck him down with his sword, while his fleeing companion fell under the swords of Sikhs who had rushed in on hearing the noise. As the news reached Bahadur Shah's camp, he sent expert surgeons, including an Englishman, Cole by name, to attend on the Guru. The wound was stitched and appeared to have healed quickly but, as the Guru one day applied strength to pull a stiff bow,

Q-36

When did the Guru pass away?

A-36

it broke out again and bled profusely. This weakened the Guru beyond cure and he passed away on Kattak sudi 5, 1765 Bk/7 OC tober 1708. Before the end came, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji had asked for the Sacred Volume to be brought forth. To quote Bhatt Vahi Talauda Parganah Jind: "Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Master, son of Guru Teg Bahadur,

Q-37

What was asked on the 6th of October 1708?

A-37

grandson of Guru Hargobind, great-grandson of Guru Arjan, of the family of Guru Ram Das Surajbansi, Gosal clan, Sodhi Khatri, resident of Anandpur, parganah Kahlur, now at Nanded, in the Godavari country in the Deccan, asked Bhai Daya Singh, on Wednesday, 6 October 1708, to fetch Sri Guru Granth Sahib. In obedience to his orders, Daya Singh brought Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru placed before it five pice and a coconut and bowed his head before it. He said to the sangat, "It is my commandment: Own Sri Granth ji in my place. He who so acknowledges it will obtain his reward. The Guru will rescue him. Know this as the truth".

Q-38

What did Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji pass on the succession?

A-38

Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji thus passed on the succession with due ceremony to the Holy Book, the Guru Granth Sahib, ending the line of personal Gurus. "The Guru's spirit," he said, "will henceforth be in the Granth and the Khalsa. Where the Granth is with any five Sikhs representing the Khalsa, there will the Guru be." The Word enshrined in the Holy Book was always revered by the Gurus as well as by their disciples as of Divine origin.

Q-39

What was the Guru?

A-39

The Guru was the revealer of the Word. One day the Word was to take the place of the Guru. The inevitable came to pass when Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji declared the Guru Granth Sahib as his successor. It was only through the Word that the Guruship could be made everlasting. The Word as contained in the Guru Granth Sahib was henceforth, and for all time to come to be the Guru for the Sikhs.