

Name: _____ Date: _____

Devotional Paths to the Divine

Q1. Why Mughal emperor Jahangir looked upon Sikh community as a potential threat?

Ans. _____

Q2. What were the major ideas expressed by Kabir? How did he express these?

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Q3. Who were the Nayanars and Alvars?

Ans. _____

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Q1. Why Mughal emperor Jahangir looked upon Sikh community as a potential threat?

Ans. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the town of Ramdaspur (Amritsar) had developed around the central Gurdwara called Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple). It was virtually self-governing and modern historians refer to the early seventeenth century Sikh community as 'a state within the state'. The Mughal emperor Jahangir looked upon them as a potential threat.

Q2. What were the major ideas expressed by Kabir? How did he express these?

Ans. Kabir's teachings were based on a complete, indeed vehement, rejection of the major religious traditions. His teachings openly ridiculed all forms of external worship of both Brahmanical Hinduism and Islam, the pre-eminence of the priestly classes and the caste system. Kabir believed in a formless Supreme God and preached that the only path to salvation was through bhakti or devotion. He expressed these in verses called sakhis and pads.

Q3. Who were the Nayanars and Alvars?

Ans. There were 63 Nayanars, who belonged to different caste backgrounds such as potters, "untouchable" workers, peasants, hunters, soldiers, Brahmanas, and chiefs. The best known among them were Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Manikkavasagar. There are two sets of compilations of their songs – Tevaram and Tiruvacakam.

There were 12 Alvars, who came from equally divergent backgrounds, the best known being Periyalvar, his daughter Andal, Tondaradippodi Alvar and Nammalvar. Their songs were compiled in the Divya Prabandham.