

Thanks to Life

Kabir in the Light of Kriya

by

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Introduction

Kabir was an Indian mystic who lived around 15th century in the north Indian city of Banaras (now Varanasi). He contributed significantly to Indian spirituality through his poems/songs that are popular even today. Kabir wrote around 700 verses. They were simple in the way that they touched the very essence of the spiritual search. He described where to find Truth and how to realize it.

It is said that Lahiri Mahasaya, the founder of kriya yoga was asked by his disciples about his connection to Kabir, and on their request he confirmed that his knowledge and experience was similar to that of Kabir. He was interested in Kabir's verses and he had interpreted them too.

From the beginning of my search in 1975, I have felt as Kabir, but it took me many years to settle this understanding inside, so that I felt comfortable to inspire Kriya students to go directly to the Source, to the Self, to the true Guru.

Kabir's verses are from various sources and the translation given herein may not be accurate from academic point of view. My intention with these comments on Kabir's verses is that they would support seeker's desire to find his own Guru, the Self, through his own efforts and Love for Truth. We all are in the same boat to cover the gap between the

individual soul and the One, the Spirit. It is good to know that in Life, no one is above and no one is below – that is the Truth.

The essence is to realize that we are one with Life as our own inner experience. The breath takes prana (life force) to the body all the time. Every in-breath comes directly from Life, the Self. We are the Infinite Spirit constantly, even if we are not aware of it. When this is our own experience then we know our true nature.

From outside there are different elements that are helpful. However, we end up with our own thirst for Truth, understanding and practice. We can say that one's desire for truth, one's earnestness is the strongest technique.



***kabir guru batayen sadhuko, sadhu
kahe guru bujh; arash parash ke
madhi me, bhai agam ke sujh***

Kabir says that the Guru teaches the sadhu (sage/seeker). The Sadhu / Seeker says, - after understanding what Guru has taught, that which was inaccessible has been revealed.

Per: Kabir says that the Guru teaches sadhus. Sadhu means one with a sincere desire for the truth, who wants to know the connection of inner peace and outer practical life, who is desperate for the Truth. The word Sadhu is not about titles, color of the clothes or leading a lonely life. One meets the Guru inside in meditation. In inner Silence one is touched by the Infinity and Truth reveals itself spontaneously.

***kabir aham agni hriday dahe,
gurute chahe maan; tinh ko jam
naota diya, tom ho humere
mejmaan***

Kabir says that one whose heart is burning with the fire of Ego, and expecting attention from Guru, such a person invites destruction into his own house.

Per: What is ego? It is inner conflict. It is there and when one does not accept what is inside then guru cannot help. In manipulation energy is wasted in inner fight. In observation, hindrances and duality is dissolved.

***kabir gyan kathe baki baki mare,
kaahe kare upadhi; satguru hamse
eo kaha, sumiran kar samadhi***

Kabir says that people are wasting their lives babbling about spiritual knowledge for nothing but honor and title. But Satguru has told me to do the samadhi (state of silence) of remembrance.

Per: Only talking about spirituality takes one nowhere. It may bring titles, honor and attention from others, but it has no value in building awareness - it often creates false pride. Instead of talking about spirituality, one should try to know the truth from inside; that is true Kriya. Kriya is not about any special teaching, philosophy or belief. It is about the breath, about the life itself, about awareness, about discovering from inside.

Why is Kriya necessary? The words of others cannot help. That might inspire up to a certain point. Hearing about water, or reading any descriptions of it, cannot quench the thirst.

***kabir sumiran saar hay, aur sakal
janjal; adi ant sabh sodhiya, duja dekha kal***

Kabir says that remembrance is the essence and everything else is entangling. While searching from the beginning to the end, he has understood that all other methods lead to trouble.

Per: What is to be remembered? When we remember the breath, then we are silent because the breath is coming directly from the life; no confusion. Yet it is not easy to remember, that is why Kriya is needed. Kabir now understand this is due to the play of the mind. Duality makes us forget our true nature. He tried all other possibilities to reach to the truth but they all end up with rigidity. Let it be Kriya, let it be meditation, let it be love, let it be cry for truth.

***Kabir guruko lal gadavon kare,
matina pakdai het; ek khont laga
rahe, vao lagi lahe na bhed***

Kabir says that if there was no reason for him to continue maintaining his body, the guru would have made a gem out of this. One should keep holding until the oneness has been realized.

Per: This earth-body makes it possible to ask and to search for the Self. The soul descended onto the earth to be more conscious about one-self. It is like a diamond from a mine – it needs to be polished. It is the same for the soul, - the connection to the physical element. What is “polished” is the soul- body relationship and the desires of the body - its attachment to the physical element.

1.The Spirit without any consciousness of oneself (individual Self).

2.One (soul) leaves the Spirit for the purpose of Existence (if not, it all would have only been Emptiness).

3.One starts the physical life and realizes that the purpose of the soul (what seems to be individual life) is to be more conscious about oneself.

4.Consciousness develops up to that point where one realizes that one is an integral part of life (one with Life, one with Spirit).

5.One rests in the ocean (the Spirit), leads active existence to utilize one's knowledge according to the needs of Existence.

Anyway, the words are not capable of describing the inner understanding and experience.

***kabir bandhe ko bandha mila, chute
koni upaay; karu seoa nirbandha
ki, palme lei chodaay***

Kabir says that the one who himself living in duality cannot grant liberation (non-duality) to others. Then how else one can escape duality? You should serve the One who is free as only He can grant liberation immediately.

Per: Words of others can inspire us but nothing can substitute our own experience. One need to live in tune with inner Silence (Guru) -who is free from attachment, pain and suffering, only then it is possible to live daily life in a good way.

***kabir sukhme sumiran na kiya,
dukhme kiya jo yaad; kahe kabir
ta das ki, keon lage phiriyad***

Kabir says; if one does not practice remembrance during the times of pleasure but only during the difficult times, then how can the prayers of such a person be answered?

Per: During times of pleasure, one is often lost. Pain, sorrow and different kinds of resistance help us to discover that inner peace is needed in the midst of the struggles. The pain and suffering inside are due to the thinking process (duality in the mind). Desires remember pleasure and fear remembers pain.

***kabir sangshay khaya sakal jag,
sangshay koi na khaay; jo bedha
guru acchar, so sangshay chuni khaay***

Kabir says that the whole world is full of doubts and uncertainties and none is able to go beyond these. It is only when Guru is found, that the doubts and uncertainties are removed.

Per: Duality, doubts and uncertainties influence everyone's life. When one practice awareness (Silence) then one discovers that Silence eats duality and restlessness - doubts and uncertainties are gone.

***kabir mai mudo, us guru ki jaten
bharm na jay; apne buda dharme,
chela diya bahaay***

Kabir says that the one is a fool, while finding a guru, who himself is not free of maya (illusion). Such a guru drowns into the current and drags his disciple along with him.

Per: When one is more dependent on outer elements; other people and circumstances, then the solutions are temporary. There is nothing wrong in what is coming from outside, it is quite necessary, because through repetitive experiences of the lack of lasting happiness, one realizes that only the inner Guru, Silence can satisfy the soul.

***kabir raam rijhnaile, jihbaso karu
mat; hari saagar nahi visarei, nar
dekhi anant***

Kabir says that one should not try to appease Rama through talking only. When the mind is constantly merged in the ocean of God, i.e. the consciousness, the infinity is then revealed to the man.

Per: To appease God (the Self) with words is not possible. Chanting God's name is a sweet activity, as one's intention is to realize the Self, to meet God, but still it is only on the surface. When one's focus is on inner Silence, then life starts changing.

***kabir jana nahi bujha nahi, puchna
kiya gaon; andheke andha mila,
path bataoe kaun***

Kabir says that in the absence of knowledge and understanding, there is no one to ask. One blind person meets another blind, who can then show them the path?

Per: Blind in the sense of not being aware of oneself. If one observes, then one realizes that mostly all actions are out of habits and patterns. One has to meet the one who is not blind, the guru inside.

***kabir satguru mahal banaiya, gyan
gilaoa dinha; duri dekhan ke
kaarane, shabd jharoka kinha***

Kabir says that Satguru has created a mansion and filled it with knowledge. To look far away, he has created a window of Sound.

Per: Guru has all the knowledge, - “a penetrating Silence”. The Infinite Chamber of Emptiness is eternal. There exists an universal (mathematical) formula of this window of Sound 😊 Awareness increases and one hears and sees the world from a distance.

***kabir gurunahu bhed hay, gurunahu
me bhao; so guru nishdin badiye,
jo shabd bataoe daon***

Kabir says that gurus are of different nature and in different states. One should serve that Guru everyday who reveals the sound.

Per: Find your Guru who can teach Omkar Sound, not the Guru of others. How to interpret this? What is the true meaning in this verse? Your Guru is not my Guru, even if it is the same Self, and my Guru is not your Guru, even if it is still the same Self. In life, one learns many things from happy and sad experiences. Then who is the Guru? An experience may be ordinary for many but can change the life of another one depending on inner condition and understanding at that moment.

***kabir shikligar kijiye, shabda
maskala dei; manka mayil
chodayike, chit darpan kari lei***

Kabir is urging us to do Shikligar – the process of cleaning and sharpening of weapons (like the sword). Similarly one should remove the impurities of the mind and make his consciousness like a mirror.

Per: “Kabir is urging one to do Shikligar – the process of cleaning and sharpening of weapons (just like a sword)” by rubbing it on a stone. The similar process is there in Kriya practice; one touches the infinite level of Silence repetitively and gradually one earns more stability and peace inside. The process can be painful because one might encounter all aspects of the present nature. Later one realizes that the cleaning is meaningful and it is happening anyway, whether one likes it or not. With the grace of Guru one becomes more aware and overcomes obstructions in the best possible way.

***kabir guru ko lal shikh ku bhanyi,
gadi gadi kade khot; antar hate
sahar dei, baher baher chot***

Kabir says that Guru is like a gem, but the disciple keeps on making mistakes time after time. Though there are blows from outside, inside there is support.

Per: It is hard to live with inner conflicts - to escape, we look for support in the outside world. The same problems keep occurring to bring our attention inside. We learn the hard way that the balance is needed inside.

***kabir guruson bhed jo lijiye, shish
dijiye daan; bahutak abadhu vahi
gaye, rakhe jiu abhiman***

Kabir says that when one receives the knowledge from Guru, one must humbly offer his head in return. Those who continued to cling to pride, have been swept in this world ocean.

Per: Offering is not a thinking process like “I offer myself”. Humbleness, surrender and balance, are not terms or concepts. They are a part of an inner condition – existing and spontaneously flowing in Silence.

***kabir guru parash me bhed hay,
bado antaro jaan; johan loha
kanchan kare, ye e karilei apu saman***

Kabir says that there is a difference between the Guru and the touch stone, a big difference indeed. A touchstone turns iron into gold but Guru makes his disciple just like Him.

Per: God, the Self, is always in everyone; through Kriya, inner silence one realizes this.

***kabir te nar adha hay, guru kon
kahte aur hari ruthe guru smaran
hay, guru ruthe nahi thaor***

Kabir says that one who doesn't recognize his Guru is blind. For if God gets angry, one may seek solace at Guru's feet but when Guru gets angry, there is no place to go.

Per: The Guru, the Self is never angry – anger is duality, the frustration of the soul of not being at home. If the outside world becomes angry, then one can take refuge in Guru; in silence. The Guru tells us the reason behind each resistance. If Guru becomes angry, means living continuously in inner conflict, no peace inside, then there is no place for deliverance.

***kabir guruya mila, baliyaya
dhelauyna jati panti kul metigai,
nam dharaoye kaun***

Kabir says that as a rock loses its outer form under an application of a strong force (it is crushed and reveals the fine particles that it is made of), the seeker loses his bodily identities of race, sect, caste - when the Guru is found, then who can put name on it?

Per: The experience of Silence dissolves limitations, lineages, classes, races and castes. One realizes that pure consciousness is behind everything. Like ice, steam and water are different forms made up of the same substance.

***Kabir sumiran ki sudhi eyo karo,
jaise kaami kaam kahe kabir
pukari kay, khusi hohi tab raam***

Kabir says that one must take care of remembrance (practice) just as a lustful person feels towards his object of lust. Kabir further says that when one's heart is burning with such intensity, only then is Ram pleased.

Per: Kabir says that intensity is necessary in the search for truth. Sometimes happenings in life pushes so hard that there is no option left than to go inside. Also with regular kriya practice one develops more intensity naturally for the desire of truth – fire arises.

***Kabir sumiran maahi ram ke, dhil
na kijiye man kahe kabir chan ek
mo, binashi jaayega tan***

Kabir says that one must not forsake his mind from remembrance of Ram's name, as this body can get destroyed any moment.

Per: Many times the intensity and practice is dropped due to different circumstances. Then one should simply go back to kriya practice, to Silence, like a bird rebuilding a nest without any complaint. Even up to the last breath one has the opportunity to learn, to be aware.

***kabir guru parash guru parash hay,
guru chandan subas satguru parash
jjuke, jinho din ho mukti neoas***

Kabir says that Guru is a touchstone, a touchstone indeed; he is like the fragrant sandalwood. One is liberated by the mere touch of the Guru.

Per: When one is practicing sincerely then every fall turns into more awareness and strength. This is the power of Silence (Kriya).

***kabir guru saman daata nahin,
jachak shikh saman tin lokki
samprada, so guru dinho daan***

Kabir says that the Guru is the most generous of all and the disciple is just like a beggar. The Guru verily gives all the fortune of the three worlds to the disciple.

Per: A disciple is like a beggar - the true nature is unrealized. If a disciple makes the best of his efforts and practice with sincerity, then the Guru gives it all, and even that, which is beyond our expectations.

***kabir satguru sat kabir hay, sankat
pare huzur chuka seova bandegi,
kiya chaakree dur***

Kabir says that Satguru is actually his own true self and Satguru has saved him from various troubles. But if he fails to serve Satguru, Satguru removes him from His service.

Per: When one practice Kriya, Satguru (Silence) automatically takes the driver's place, but when one is out of practices, the inner weaknesses get free access because the guardian (the awareness) is sleeping on duty - the weaknesses enjoy and take the leading position. One should be systematic in practice - a particular time and a place, a mat or a chair. These practical settings can be a great help.

***kabir satguru mara baan bhari, tuti
gayi sab jeb kahi asha kahi apada,
kahi tasbi kahi kiteb***

Kabir says that Satguru struck a powerful arrow, and now everything has been crushed. He is not concerned anymore about such things like hopes and troubles, rosaries and books.

Per: All hopes from outer physical elements as rituals and scriptures are gone. It was all good and helpful up to a certain point, but now what one truly needs is the first-hand experience through the practice of Silence (meditation). The desire for Truth is strong now.

***kabir chit chokkhe man ujle,
dayavanta gambhir sei dhoke
bichale naahi, jehi satguru mile Kabir***

Kabir says that his mind has become pure and illumined, and he has become compassionate and equanimous himself. One is not troubled by the ways of the world when one finds the Satguru.

Per: One starts living daily life in its true nature, which reflects ones internal state. One is calm – even in difficult situations. It is like marks on sand, does not stay for long. One does not have to put any efforts to stay calm, silence is already “there”, it is our property, in alliance with Life - awareness is flowing freely in an Infinite Space. Nothing is holding it back.

***kabir ghar baithe guru paya,
bade hamare bhag soi ko tarsat hate,
aab amrat anchaon lag***

Kabir says that he is very fortunate to find his Guru while sitting at home. Earlier, obtaining even the smallest thing required considerable effort but now even the nectar flows spontaneously (without effort).

Per: Sitting at home means one is not struggling inside. There was a time when one had to make much effort to experience silence because of inner conflict- the life energy was lost. Now the same energy goes to “Be”. One should remember, one has made great efforts to make it effortless.

***kabir kudrat payi khabar so,
sadguru dayi batay bhaur
bilmava kaulme, ab kayse udi jay***

Kabir says that Satguru told him about Prakriti, the Mother Nature (the Self). After knowing he became settled. His condition is like a bee that is trapped inside, motionless, while it is drinking nectar out of a lotus flower.

Per: After long time of sincere practice of kriya, one is settled inside and knows the truth that desires make us forgetful and we are lost in it, yet there is a great purpose behind it. Now one enjoys the daily life and its activity without being totally carried away.

***kabir satguru parash ko shila,
dekha tattva bichari ahi paroshini
le chali, diya diya so bari***

Kabir says that Satguru is definitely a touchstone, and this can be easily explored. He goes on illuminating everyone just as a lamp lights another lamp.

Per: The work of the Guru never stops. With more silence one gets more capacities and abilities together with responsibilities. Kriya channelizes the energy. It enables us to hold more Silence and to use it for a divine purpose. As electricity can light a house, a town and a whole city - it all depends on delivering capacity.

***kabir jo dishe soi binushe, nam
dhara so jay kahe kabir soi tattva
gaho, jo sadguru dei batay***

Kabir says that all what is seen with the physical eyes will perish, whatever is known by name will be lost. Only that, which Satguru has revealed is worthy of being known.

Per: Now one knows that names, forms and all kinds of support systems on which one is dependent are perishable. There is nothing outside to be worshiped. A small plant needs a fence for protection. When it turns into a strong tree, it naturally breaks the boundaries around it. I only trust Him (my Self, my inner voice). I am the cause of what is happening in my life; there is no one to blame - to grow up means being responsible for one self.

***Kabir jjoban to thor hi bhala, hari
ka sumiran hoye lak baris ki
jeuna, lekha dhare na koye***

Kabir says that life, even though it may be brief, is worthy only if it is spent in remembrance of the Lord. Living for even hundred thousand of years is worthless without it.

Per: A long life without awareness does not bring any good. It is like spending money from father's credit card without much concern. The moments spend in awareness are true investment in one self.

***Kabir sahakamee sumiran kare,
phiri aoe phiri jaay niha kamee
sumiran kare aoa gaman nashaay***

Kabir says that the one, who does remembrance with intention of fulfilling some desire, keeps coming and going. But the one who does remembrance without any desire, his coming and going ceases.

Per: The one who works for the joy of the work and no other motive, is the greatest.

***Kabir sumiran sama kuch hay nahi,
yog yagya brat daan sumiran sam
teerath nahi, sumiran sama nahi gyan***

Kabir says that nothing can compare to remembrance – not even yoga, rituals, vows or charity. There is no pilgrimage comparable to remembrance and no knowledge like it.

Per: All kinds of efforts; yoga, charity, vows, pilgrimages, knowledge are all good if performed with awareness. Sometimes one is eager to help others, social work etc., but soon one realizes that this does not satisfy the soul either. Until one realizes unity with the self, the loss is inevitable. Before one truly can help others, one has to help oneself, which is the greatest task in itself.

***Kabir meri sumiraneer raamki,
rasana upar raam aadi yugadhi bakthi je,
sabko nij bishram***

Kabir says that his remembrance of the Lord is greater than all the sensible pleasures. It is He (Lord) who is the beginning of the yugas and the source of devotion; and it is in Him everybody finally rests.

Per: Nothing is compared to the experience of the infinite, which is beyond names and forms. The absolute truth is beyond everything. The only resting place for the soul is inside. One realizes how trinity comes into existence and diversity takes place.

***kabir satguru mara gyan kari,
shabda surange baan mera maya phiri jive,
to haath na gahi Kaman***

Kabir says that with his perfect knowledge, Satguru has been engraved, established so strongly inside now, that if the illusion is born again, then one knows how to deal with it and to control it.

Per: After practicing Kriya sincerely for long time, silence is strongly settled inside. Awareness becomes an inner condition, one is aware without thinking to be aware. As a result, one experiences that “duality works in favor rather in opposition. One lives in harmony with duality.

*kabir bahar knaha dekh laaiye,
antar kahiye raam kaho mahaula
khalak so, para dhaneese kaam*

Kabir says that where you can look outside for Ram, look within yourself. Why to announce the town? Here we are talking about contemplation of supreme.

Per: There is no need to show off the love and devotion for God to the outer world. That is a kind of play for “the public”. Happiness takes birth and grows within, and reflected in our daily life.

*Kabir pura sahaje gun kare,
gune naoyaye cheha sayer pokhe sarobare,
dan na mage meha*

Kabir says that practicing the whole is infinite and beneficial, just like clouds take water from the ocean, and they do not beg it from lakes and ponds.

Per: Meditate on the Supreme, who is inside everyone. Just like clouds take water directly from one ultimate source-the ocean.

***kabir raam naam nahi chorie,
yeh parteeta dir bandhi kaal kalp vyape nahi,
bhorī naam ki sadhi***

Kabir says not to let go of the name ever, otherwise there is no escape from the clutches of “time/death”. Holding on to the rope of the name, one can easily pass over.

Per: The daily life can be lived peacefully if one holds the inner silence. In such a state nothing can disturb him for long.

***kabir satguru mara baan, nirakhi nirakhi
nij thaor ram akhilme
rama raha, chet nahi aowe aur***

Kabir says that Satguru is aiming the arrows continuously on him. When he sees that the Self is delighting in the Self, he is immersed in it and his mind becomes empty.

Per: The intensity is now growing. One tastes the highest and yearns for even more. It is like being in love with another person with every fiber of the soul. One’s interests and thoughts are about the Beloved one. One embraces God, and out of nothing the concept of duality is gone.

***kabir ek namke pattare, devekon
kuch nahi kyale guruhi
sambodhiye, havas rahe man mahi***

Kabir says that beyond the true name, there is nothing to attain. Then, even the wish to address the Guru remains in the mind only.

Per: When settled in an inner state of non-duality, then even the Silence seems to be gone, not even the beauty of Unity seems to be left. There is neither Guru nor mind, therefore “even the wish to address the Guru is in the mind only”. In other words, I would say, that only a natural life is left, a sweet and peaceful feeling that everything is fine.

***kabir satguru shabda jahaj hay,
koi koi paoe bhed samudra bund ekai
bhaya, kako karo niched***

Kabir says that Satguru is the ship of Sound and it is very difficult to get hold to the truth. When the drop and the ocean have merged with each other, then who can stop him?

Per: Beautiful! Satguru is the ship of the Omkar Sound - shipped in the breath, taking prana to the body in a love for Truth conveyor. The reality is realized, the ocean and the drop are one. One is Life and no one can restrict life. Everybody is destined to realize Unity.

***kabir satguru bade sarak hay,
parakhe kharao khot bhao
sagarte kadike, rakhe aapne ot***

Kabir says that Satguru is a great examiner, for He tests everyone to know their vices and virtues. He picks the true seeker up from this worldly ocean and keeps him close to Himself.

Per: One cannot swim the whole ocean. Everyone might work hard yet he decides whom to pick up from the middle of the ocean. Guru sees everything, the choices we make and our intentions behind.

***kabir raam hamare ashram,
raam hamare varan raam hamare jaati
hay, rahihi raam ke sharan***

Kabir says that Ram is his shelter and Ram is his caste. Ram is his race and he is surrendered to Ram forever.

Per: I cannot complete the journey, but He who is inside me, can. He guides and leads me. I trust Him.



Glossary-

Satguru (inner master)

Sumiran(remembrance)

Raam/Govinda (God's name)

Shabd (word)

Baan (arrow)

