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SPIRITUALISM AND MYSTICISM IN SAINT KABIR'S POETRY

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Abstract

Saint Kabir is a Bhakti saint poet. His poetry offers wisdom to the people. His poetry comprises his conversations with the God, People and with himself. He was a mystic and visionary poet. His poetry is spiritual in nature. He has had a great influence on Indian society. He was a devout spiritual man. He used concepts from Hinduism and Islam both to preach the people the value of simplicity. It appeals to the people all over India and throughout the world. European scholars also have researched his poetry for the vision of life.

Key words: spiritualism, mysticism, wisdom, simplicity, vision

Saint Kabir was the disciple of Hindu ascetic, Ramananda. He was never formally educated. He was illiterate. He learnt from experiences and the observation the meaning of human life. He avoided the complexity of the philosophy of Hindu and Islam both religions. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs revered him. He taught the value of simplicity to the people. In the poem, "Having Crossed the River" he has presented the importance of self realization.

Having Crossed The River
Having crossed the River
Where will you go, O friend
There's no road to tread
No traveler ahead
Neither a beginning, nor an end
There's no water, no boat, no boatman, no cord;
No earth is there, no sky, no time, no bank, no ford.

You have forgotten the self within,
Your search in the void will be in vain;
In a moment the life will ebb
And in this body you won't remain
Be ever conscious of this, O friend,
You've to immerse within your Self;
Kabir says, salvation you won't then need,
For what you are, you would be indeed

In this poem, saint Kabir has explained the importance of understanding the self. He said that people should understand the human has a limited time. People should do the valuable and important work during their life. In the pursuit of material progress, people forget the divine self within. There is no competition with the others. One has to tread the path of life one self. Self realization leads to the comprehension of the life around, mystery of the nature. In a moment, one's existence may come to an end. Sometimes in a moment one find oneself in the ebb of human life. If one has understood the divinity within the self, there is no need of salvation. Kabir has told that one should live truthful, honest and humble life.

Songs of Kabir comprises a translation of one hundred poems of Saint Kabir, the 15th century Indian mystic poet, by Rabindranath Tagore. Saint Kabir has combined the philosophy of Hinduism and Sufism in his poetry. Saint Kabir was born near Banaras. He revealed reality through his preaching. He preached the simple union with the divinity. He has presented the synthetic vision of God. According to him, Brahma is never found in abstractions. He is the love which pervaded the world. He is understood only by those people who have developed compassion and empathy for the fellow human beings and other creatures in the world. He

constantly insisted on simplicity and directness. God has manifested himself through all material and spiritual things alike.

Mo Ko Kahan Dhunro Bande

O SERVANT, where dost thou seek Me?

Lo! I am beside thee.

I am neither in temple nor in mosque: I am neither in Kaaba nor in Kailash:

Neither I am in rites and ceremonies, nor in Yoga and renunciation.

If thou art a true seeker, thou shalt at once see Me : thou shalt meet Me in a moment of time.

Kabir says, "O Sadhu! God is the breath of all breath."

Kabir has asked the devotees where they have been seeking God. He is beside them. They are trying to find him through rites and rituals. One may not see God through Yoga and renunciation. If one is the true devotee of the God, one will comprehend the presence of God in the existence of all living and non-living beings. He is the creator of the universe. He has immersed in his own creation. According to saint Kabir, God is the breath of all breath. He is present within the animate and nonanimate creations alike.

Saint Kabir has taught people the spiritualism. He has appealed to the people that they should find God within this life itself, they should not think that they will be united with the God after death. According to him, if God is not found while we live, what is the certainty that people will be united with him after death. If people found him in this life, they will find him hereafter also. To comprehend God, one should live an honest and truthful life. If people have faith in true teacher, they will be united with the God when they are alive. They will see the existence of God in the existence of all creations.

Saint Kabir has revealed to the people the importance of unity of the people irrespective of caste, creed, and religion. People should not ask a saint the caste to which he belongs. The priests, the warrior, the trader all seek God. It is the folly of the people if they ask a saint caste. The barber, the washerwoman, and the carpenter, seek God. What matters the most for the realization of the God is the knowledge of the truth and the devotion to the God. It doesn't matter whether people belong to which caste. Hindus and Muslims alike have comprehended the God through their wisdom and devotion. Therefore he appeals to the people that they should rise above the artificial distinctions and understand the real meaning and purpose of human life.

Saint Kabir has educated people the importance of wisdom and knowledge of truth. He appeals to the people through his poetry to rise above illusions and delusions. People should cultivate the right passions but they should be free from negative passions. The positive passions make the life meaningful but the passions ruin it. He observes that people find it difficult to be free from the evil passions like, anger, greed, pride, vanity. People should overcome these evil passions to achieve the true path of human life. He also noticed that people rarely find true path. Kabir suggested that truth is with the person who follows the path of righteousness, considers everything living and nonliving divine, and who is passively detached from the exchanges of the world. He has explained through his poems that God is present everywhere. Kabir avoided the formality of the organized religions. He seeks to find God in his own personal truth. He has above all emphasized the value of honesty in human life. We tell ourselves that we are good, we are devout. Our wisdom tells us that whether we are what we claim to be. Saint Kabir has revealed to the people the value of wisdom and honesty which show people the true path of life. Though he calls God by different names, Ram, Rahim, Hari, Allah and so on. For him God was one, it was supreme reality. According to him, God is present everywhere, and his sphere is unlimited. He denounced all abstractions and philosophizing. Human beings will get true joy when they realize that God is present everywhere in the world.

Saint Kabir has emphasized that wisdom helps people to be free from doubts, sorrow and suffering. People should live the life of virtues, love, compassion, and empathy. If people have become united with God through wisdom and devotion, they will not be afraid of death. According to Saint Kabir, through radiance of love, people will find God. Mere intellectualism without love is responsible for the disputes among the Yogi, the Sanyasi, the ascetics, about the

existence of God.

Saint Kabir has explained the importance of spiritualism in human life. When people achieve unity of the divinity within the self and others, all evil things will fly from the heart. The people who have destroyed the evil passions within their personalities, they do not think or act in the evil manner. Evil thoughts beget evil actions, whereas good thoughts beget good actions. According to him God is the source of all music. A wise man listens the music in the world. If people loose themselves in abstractions, they will never find God. Kabir says as a one never finds forest if one neglects trees. One does not become wise by merely learning the Sanskrit language. According to him application of knowledge is important. People should use knowledge to make their life meaningful and happy. If people are full of pride and vanity, they will not understand the reality. According to Saint Kabir if people live life with simplicity, directness, and humbleness, they will live a happy and divine life.

According to Saint Kabir truth is the most important thing in human life. Nothing is essential except truth. Only the truth shines in the court of God. Love for the creation makes us realize the presence of God in every creation. The heart of the honest person is united with the heart of the God. When the true feelings of love awaken in the heart for the self and others of a person, the person will get united with the divinity. God is present in every human being. Wisdom and love are helpful to comprehend the divinity within present within one's personality and the divinity present in other human beings and all creations. One's goodness lies in introspection. All doctrines and teachings spring from God. He is the source of all philosophy and wisdom. Through this realization, people should conquer fear. People sing the name of God. They mediate upon him. The divinity resides at the heart of all things.

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