

ਰਾਗੁ ਬਸੰਤੁ

ਬਾਣੀ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

There is but one God. He is realized by the kindness of the True Guru.

RAAG BASANT

The word of Ravi Dass Ji

EK-Onkar Satgur Parsaad.

Prologue: This hymn by Ravi Dass Ji in Raag Bhairao is on Page 1196 in the Holy Book, Sri Guru Granth Sahib. In this hymn Ravi Dass Ji says that it is totally futile to feel proud of your beautiful body. Don't forget that, in this world, your stay is very short and one day your so-admired beautiful body will reduce to dust.

ਤੁਝਹਿ ਸੁਝੰਤਾ ਕਛੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥

ਪਹਿਰਾਵਾ ਦੇਖੇ ਉਭਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥

ਗਰਬਵਤੀ ਕਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਠਾਉ ॥

ਤੇਰੀ ਗਰਦਨਿ ਉਪਾਰਿ ਲਵੈ ਕਾਉ ॥੧॥

Tujhey Sujhantaa Kachhu Naahi.

Pehraawaa Daikhay Oobh Jaahi.

Garbwaty Ka Naahi T'haaon.

Tairy Gardan Upar Lavey Kaaon. 1.

O naïve person, why do you feel so proud of yourself when you wear fancy clothes? How come you don't understand the stark reality of the world that who-so-ever is born has to die. How can you forget that pride goes before a fall? You must realize that pride is your downfall and your days are numbered in this world because the crow is cawing over your head. ॥1॥

Background: It is commonly believed in India that when a crow caws on the roof of a house, it is a bad omen and someone in that house is going to die soon. Ravi Dass uses this belief to draw our attention toward death that always comes unannounced. It is as if the crow of death is cawing on one's head at all times.

ਤੂ ਕਾਂਇ ਗਰਬਹਿ ਬਾਵਲੀ ॥

ਜੈਸੇ ਭਾਦਉ ਖੁੰਬਰਾਜੁ,

ਤੂ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਖਰੀ ਉਤਾਵਲੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Tu Kaanye Garbeh Baawlie.

Jaisay Bhadyon Khoonbraaj,

Tu Tis Tay Kharie Utawalie. 1. Rahaao.

O my insane body, why are you so proud of yourself? Have you ever thought about the short life of mushrooms that grow and wither away during the hottest month of summer? You must realize that your life span is even shorter than that of a mushroom. ॥1॥ Pause ॥

Purport: Ravi Dass Ji says that before we know it, the death will be knocking at the door.

ਜੈਸੇ ਕੁਰੰਕ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਇਓ ਭੇਦੁ ॥

ਤਨਿ ਸੁਗੰਧ, ਫੁਫੈ ਪ੍ਰਦੇਸੁ ॥

ਅਪ ਤਨ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਕਰੇ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਤਿਸ ਨਹੀ ਜਮ ਕੰਕਰੁ ਕਰੇ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥੨॥

Jaisay Kurank Nahi Paayio Bhayd.

Tan Sugand Dhundhey Pardes.

Ap Tan Ka Jo Karay Beechaar.

Tis Nahi Jum Kankar Karay Khuaar. 2.

Ravi Dass Ji cites an irrefutable example of a deer that runs far and wide in search of the musk. It does not know the secret that the musk is within its own body. Such is the state of all of us. Just like the deer, we don't realize that the Almighty God, Provider of everlasting bliss, resides within our own hearts. We mortals keep on searching Him far and wide; i.e. in the forests and mountains. One, who understands the truth that the body has to parish one day, escapes mistreatment from the Messenger of Death. (A God-fearing person has no fear of death and when death does come he embraces it and dies peacefully). ॥2॥

ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਕਲਤ੍ਰ ਕਾ ਕਰਹਿ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ॥

ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਲੇਖਾ ਮੰਗਨਹਾਰੁ ॥

ਫੇੜੇ ਕਾ ਦੁਖੁ ਸਹੈ ਜੀਉ ॥

ਪਾਛੈ ਕਿਸਹਿ ਪੁਕਾਰਹਿ ਪੀਉ ਪੀਉ ॥੩॥

Putar Klatar Ka Kareh Ahankaar.

T'haakur Laikhaa Manganhaar.

Phairhay Ka Dukh Sahey Jio.

Pachhey Kiseh Pukaareh Pio Pio. 3.

O my mind, you have forgotten the Lord's Name and are trapped in the pride of your wife and sons. You are busy in performing acts for the sheer pleasures of your family. You must remember that you have to account for all your deeds in His Court. As a result of these deeds, one day, you alone will suffer in pain and grief. After your death, there is none except your soul to bear the brunt of pain and suffering inflicted upon you by the Messenger of Death. At that time, whom shall you call, "Dear, Dear"? O naive person, by then everyone, including your dear ones, has already disowned you. ॥3॥

ਸਾਧੁ ਕੀ ਜਉ ਲੇਹਿ ਓਟ ॥

ਤੇਰੇ ਮਿਟਹਿ ਪਾਪ ਸਭ ਕੋਟਿ ਕੋਟਿ ॥

ਕਹਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸੁ ਜੋ ਜਪੈ ਨਾਮੁ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਜਨਮੁ ਨ ਜੋਨਿ ਕਾਮੁ ॥੪॥ ੧॥

Saadhu Ki Jo Leh Oat.

Tairay Mitteh Paap Sabh Coat Coat.

Keh Ravi Dass Jo Japey Naam.

Tis Jaati Na Janam Na Joni Kaam. 4. 1.

O my capricious mind, if you seek spiritual help and support from the holy persons (saints), you shall be able to entirely expunge your innumerable sins. One, who chants the Lord's Name and obtains everlasting bliss from it, is neither concerned with his social status nor reincarnation. So says Ravi Dass. ॥4॥ 1॥

ਰਾਗ ਮਲਾਰ

ਬਾਣੀ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

RAAG MALAAR

The word of Ravi Dass Ji

Ek-Onkar Satgur Parsaad.

There is but one God. He is realized by the kindness of the True Guru.

Prologue: There are three hymns by Ravi Dass Ji in Raag Malaar on Page 1293 in the Holy Book of the Sikhs, Sri Guru Granth Sahib. In the first hymn Ravi Dass Ji says that Lord exalts one who worships Him even though his social status in the world may be the lowest of the low. It is all within His Domain to exalt one person and abase the other.

ਨਾਗਰ ਜਨਾਂ, ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਬਿਖਿਆਤ ਚੰਮਾਰੰ ॥ **Naagar Janaan Mairy Jati Bikhiyaat Chamaaran.**

ਰਿਦੈ ਰਾਮ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਨ ਸਾਰੰ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ **Ridhey Raam Gobind Gun Saaran. 1. Rahaao.**

O residents of the village, you always ridicule me by saying that I belong to Chamar (untouchable) class. However, your taunting does not disturb me at all because I cherish the glories of the Lord, the master of the Universe. ॥1॥ Pause ॥

Purport: Ravi Dass says, "I may have been born in the family of the untouchables, but owing to my love for Him, I have become an integral part of Him. If you think Him as the Highest of the High, then how can I be the lowest of the low"?

ਸੁਰਸਰੀ ਸਲਲ ਕਿਰਤ ਬਾਰੁਨੀ ਰੇ,
ਸੰਤ ਜਨ ਕਰਤ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਨੰ ॥

ਸੁਰਾ ਅਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਤ ਅਵਰ ਜਲ ਰੇ,
ਸੁਰਸਰੀ ਮਿਲਤ ਨਹਿ ਹੋਇ ਆਨੰ ॥੧॥

Sursary Salal Kirat Baaruny Ray,

Sant Jan Kart Nahi Paanan.

Sura Apvitar Nat Our Jal Ray,

Sursary Milat Nahi Hoye Aanan. 1.

Even if the wine is made from the water of Ganges, the holy people do not drink it because it is still impure owing to its mind-altering effects. However, when an impure wine and polluted water are mixed with the water in the Ganges, they blend so well that they cannot be separated. ॥1॥

Purport: Ravi Dass Ji says that when a lowly person chants the Name of the Lord, he becomes a part of Him in such a way that the differentiation between the Lord and His devotees disappears.

ਤਰ ਤਾਰਿ ਅਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਨੀਐ ਰੇ,
ਜੈਸੇ ਕਾਗਰਾ ਕਰਤ ਬੀਚਾਰੰ ॥

ਭਗਤਿ ਭਗਉਤੁ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਤਿਹ ਉਪਰੇ,
ਪੂਜੀਐ ਕਰਿ ਨਮਸਕਾਰੰ ॥੨॥

Tar Taari Apvitar Kar Maaniye Ray,

Jaisay Kaagraa Kart Beechaaran.

Bhagati Bhagaout Likhiye Teh Uparay

Poojeeye Kar Namskaaran. 2.

The holy persons consider the palmyra palm tree as impure because its sap is used in making wine. However, when paper is made from its leaves and devotional prayers are written on them, then the same people bow their heads before these papers in reverence and worship. ॥2॥

Background: The ancient scholars used strips from the leaves of the palmyra and other palm trees for writing purposes. But the sap of the palmyra (palm) tree is also used to ferment wine. Ravi Dass Ji uses the palmyra tree as an example to stress his point that he may be born impure (owing to low class) but his impurities have vanished because the Lord dwells in his heart.

ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਕੁਟ ਬਾਢਲਾ ਢੋਰ ਢੋਵੰਤਾ,

ਨਿਤਹਿ ਬਾਨਾਰਸੀ ਆਸ ਪਾਸਾ ॥

ਅਬ ਬਿਪ੍ ਪਰਧਾਨ ਤਿਹਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਡੰਡਉਤਿ,

ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਮ ਸਰਣਾਇ ਰਵਿਦਾਸੁ ਦਾਸਾ ॥੨॥੧॥

Mairy Jaati Kutt Baandhlaa Dhor Dhovantaa

Niteh Baanaarasi Aas Paasaa.

Ab Bipar Pardhaan Tihe Kareh Dandaayout

Tairey Naam Sarnaaye Ravi Dass Dassaa. 3. 1.

It is my occupation to transport the dead animals out of the area around the city of Benaras on a daily basis. I skin these dead animals for their hides, tan the hides and use them as leather to make shoes. From this point of view, I may be considered as the lowest of the low person due to my mortifying occupation. However, this is not really so. Since I have sought Lord's protection, I can openly say that I am free from the morass of spiritual and moral degradation. The Lord has exalted my status to the extent that even the Brahmins who considered themselves as the highest of the high now bow their heads before His slave, Ravi Dass. ॥3॥ 1॥

ਰਾਗੁ ਮਲਾਰ ॥

RAAG MALAAR

Prologue: In the second hymn Ravi Dass Ji says that he who chants the Name of the Lord becomes one with Him regardless of his social status. He exalts those who believe in Him, perform righteous deeds, ponder over His numerous Attributes, and praise His Excellence. In this world, there is truly none equal to them.

ਹਰਿ ਜਪਤ ਤੇਉ ਜਨਾ ਪਦਮ ਕਵਲਾਸਪਤਿ,

ਤਾਸ ਸਮ ਤੁਲਿ ਨਹੀ ਆਨ ਕੋਉ ॥

ਏਕ ਹੀ ਏਕ ਅਨੇਕ ਹੋਇ ਬਿਸਥਰਿਓ,

ਆਨ ਰੇ ਆਨ ਭਰਪੂਰਿ ਸੋਉ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Har Japat Taiyoo Janaan Padam Kawlaaspati,

Tass Sam Tul Naahi Aan Koyoo.

Ek He Ek Anaik Hoye Bisthariyo,

Aan Ray Aan Bharpoor Soyoo. 1. Rahaao.

Neither Shiva, nor Vishnu, nor anyone, for that matter, is equal to those humble beings who meditate upon the Name of the Lord. There is but One God. He is Omnipresent and Formless even though He is perceived to pervade in the universe in various forms. Concentrate upon Him on a regular basis and believe in Him as the Creator. ॥1॥ Pause ॥

ਜਾ ਕੈ ਭਾਗਵਤੁ ਲੇਖੀਐ, ਅਵਰ ਨਹੀ ਪੇਖੀਐ,
ਤਾਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਆਛੋਪ ਛੀਪਾ ॥
ਬਿਆਸ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਖੀਐ, ਸਨਕ ਮਹਿ ਪੇਖੀਐ,
ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਨਾਮਨਾ ਸਪਤ ਦੀਪਾ ॥੧॥

Ja Kai Bhaagwat Laikhiye Our Nahi Paikhiye,
Tass Ki Jaati Aachhop Chhipaa.
Biaas Meh Laikhiye Sanak Meh Paikhiye,
Naam Ki Naamnaa Sapat Deepaa. 1.

Just think about Nam Dev. He was also born in a low class, an untouchable family of fabric-dyers. All throughout his house, the praises of the Lord were composed and sung. He saw nothing but His Image in everyone. Nam Dev may be a low-class person belonging to an untouchable family in the eyes of the world, but the Lord exalted him for his ceaseless devotion to Him. It is well documented in the writings of Vyasaa (A sage) and Sanak (son of lord Brahma) that Nam Dev is famous all across the seven continents. ॥1॥

ਜਾ ਕੈ ਈਦਿ ਬਕਰੀਦਿ ਕੁਲ
ਗਉ ਰੇ ਬਧੁ ਕਰਹਿ,
ਮਾਨੀਅਹਿ ਸੇਖ ਸਹੀਦ ਪੀਰਾ ॥
ਜਾ ਕੈ ਬਾਪ ਵੈਸੀ ਕਰੀ,
ਪੁਤ ਐਸੀ ਸਰੀ,
ਤਿਹੁ ਰੇ ਲੋਕ ਪਰਸਿਧ ਕਬੀਰਾ ॥੨॥

Ja kai Eed Bakreed Kul
Gauoo Ray Badhu Kareh,
Maaniyeh Shaikh Saheed Peeraa.
Ja Kai Baap Vaisee Karee,
Poot Aisee Sarae,
Tih Ray Lok Parsidh Kabeeraa. 2.

Ravi Dass Ji says that those Hindus who used to belong to Kabeer's caste (Shudra) and have become Muslims now slaughter cows at such festivals of Eed and Bakreed whereas they revered the cow when they were Hindus. In addition, these converted Muslims now worship Muslim sheiks, martyrs, and spiritual teachers of Qur'an instead of following the Hindu scriptures. The sons are busy repeating the acts performed by their fathers. Though the converted Muslims do such things that are against the grain of Hindu philosophy, Kabeer simply worships the Lord and is now famous throughout the Three Worlds. ॥2॥

Background: Owing to the cruel treatment of Hindus toward the lowest caste (the untouchables), numerous families belonging to the lowest caste willingly became Muslims because Muslim religion bestowed equality upon them. At the time of Kabeer, India was under the rule of a Muslim king. There may also be some Hindus, especially from the lower castes, who accepted Muslim religion owing to the privileges decreed to them by the king. In this couplet, Ravi Dass Ji gives an example of Bhagat (saint) Kabeer who was also born in a family of untouchables but remained Hindu as is evident from his hymns. Kabeer was neither allured by special privileges enjoyed by Muslims nor did he buckle under pressure of inequality meted out to him by Brahmins. He simply spent his life worshipping the Lord while fulfilling his family obligations. The most difficult path of devotional service to the Lord is to obey His will in a family environment. Anyone can seek Him in the mountains or in the forests. Doing so will be against His Will. He created humanity and He certainly wants it to continue. Humanity will end if all human beings become reclusive and give up their family lives just to seek union with Him. The Lord will never pardon them because of their defiance of His Will.

ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕੁਟੰਬ ਕੇ ਢੇਢ ਸਭ

ਢੇਰ ਢੇਵੰਤ ਫਿਰਹਿ,

ਅਜਹੁ ਬੰਨਾਰਸੀ ਆਸ ਪਾਸਾ ॥

ਆਚਾਰ ਸਹਿਤ ਬਿਪੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਡੰਡਉਤਿ,

ਤਿਨ ਤਨੈ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਦਾਸਾਨ ਦਾਸਾ ॥੩॥੨॥

Ja kay Kuttunb Kay

Dhedh Sabh Dhor Dhowant Fireh,

Aajhoo Banaarasi Aas Paasaa.

Aachaar Sahit Bipar Kareh Dandaayout,

Tin Taney Ravi Dass Dasaan Dassaa. 3. 2

In the last couplet of this hymn, Ravi Dass cites an example of families belonging to his own caste, the lowest of the low among the class system. These people still go around Benaras to transport the dead animals to the outskirts of the city and to skin these animals for hide. Since he has begun to adore and worship the Almighty God, the Most Compassionate Lord has been very kind and generous to him. As a result, the very traditional and ritualistic Brahmins now bow their heads in reverence before Ravi Dass, who is a slave of the Lord's slaves. ॥3॥ 2॥

ਮਲਾਰ ॥

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

There is but one God. He is realized by the kindness of the True Guru.

RAAG MALAAR

Ek-Onkar Satgur Parsaad.

Prologue: This is the last hymn of Ravi Dass Ji in the Holy Book of the Sikhs, Sri Guru Granth Sahib. It appears on page 1293 and is separate from the other two hymns in Raag Malaar. In this hymn Ravi Dass Ji says that the man is known by the company he keeps. Only in the company of noble persons, one learns not only to guard oneself from all sins, evils, lies, deceit, treachery, etc. but also to reveal one's unconditional devotion to the Lord and to perform noble deeds. One should always ponder over the attributes of God and create within oneself as many good qualities as humanly possible.

ਮਿਲਤ ਪਿਆਰੋ ਪ੍ਰਾਨਨਾਥੁ, ਕਵਨ ਭਗਤਿ ਤੇ ॥ Milat Piaaro Praan-naath, Kawan Bhagati Tay.

ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ਪਰਮ ਗਤੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ Saadh Sangat Paayee Param Gatay. 1. Rahaao.

First Ravi Dass Ji asks a question: What sort of a devotional service will lead me to meet my Beloved, the Lord of my breath of life? The answer: The company of His saints! As a result of my companionship with the holy people, I have been able to attain a supreme and stable state of mind. (Otherwise, there was no way I could have enjoyed such a peaceful bliss). ॥1॥ Pause ॥

ਮੈਲੇ ਕਪਰੇ ਕਹਾ ਲਉ ਧੋਵਉ ॥

ਆਵੈਗੀ ਨੀਦ ਕਹਾ ਲਗੁ ਸੋਵਉ ॥੧॥

Mailay Kapray Kahaa Lao Dhowyo.

Aawaigee Neend Kahaa Lag Sowyo. 1

First word for word translation of this couplet: How long shall I wash the soiled clothes? How long shall I remain asleep? ॥1॥

Purport: Ravi Dass Ji says that it does not really matter how long one can keep cleansing one's body, the spiritual ignorance cannot be washed off without the company of the holy saints. One cannot remain ignorant forever. Sooner or later, a mortal has to realize that the only way to find everlasting bliss is by remembering Him day and night while performing all other daily activities. To do so, one must find a True Guru and seek the company of the holy.

ਜੋਈ ਜੋਈ ਜੋਰਿਓ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਫਾਟਿਓ ॥
ਝੁਠੇ ਬਨਜਿ ਉਠਿ ਹੀ ਗਈ ਹਾਟਿਓ ॥੨॥

*Joyee Joyee Joriyo Soyee Soyee Faatiyo.
Jhut'hay Banaj Ut'h He Gayee Hattiyo. 2.*

Prior to becoming a member of the holy congregation, I made my living by hook and crook. Since I have become a part of the spiritually oriented group, I have literally cut off myself from the misdeeds of my past life. I have even closed that retail store which I used to run with false merchandise. ॥2॥

ਕਹੁ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਭਇਓ ਜਬ ਲੇਖੋ ॥
ਜੋਈ ਜੋਈ ਕੀਨੋ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਖਿਓ ॥੩॥ ੩॥

*Kaho Ravi Dass Bhaiyo Jab Laikho.
Joyee Joyee Keenho Soyee Soyee Daikhiyo. 3. 3.*

What is the reason of such a transformation? Says Ravi Dass, when I analyzed my actions after joining the holy group, the outcome was exactly what I expected. I saw the fruit of my actions (deeds and misdeeds). I felt ashamed of my misdeeds and since then I have distanced myself from them. ॥3॥ 3॥

Note: There is a Shalok (a couplet) in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib that is uttered by Kabeer using the name of Ravi Dass. It is for this reason, that Shalok is not included in this book. I beg your forgiveness if you think that it should have also been included.