

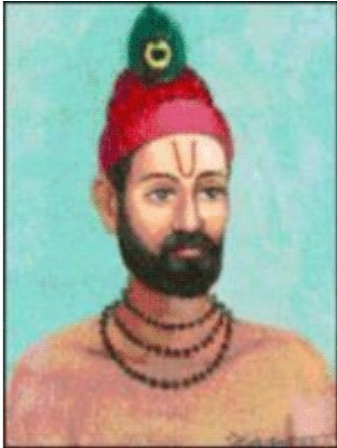


## Glory of Bharath » Santh Darsan

### Sant Kabir

"Jaise Til Mein Tel Hai, Jyon Chakmak Mein Aag  
Tera Sayeen Tujh Mein Hai, Tu Jaag Sake To Jaag"  
----Kabir

"Like seed contains the oil, fire in flint stone  
Your temple seats the Divine, realize if you can"



Kabir is not easily categorized as a Sufi or a Yogi -- he is all of these. He is revered by Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs. He stands as a unique, saintly, yet very human, bridge between the great traditions that live in India. Kabir says of himself that he is, "at once the child of Allah and Ram."

He was born in Varanasi (Benares), India, probably around the year 1440 (though other accounts place his birth as early as 1398), to Muslim parents. But early in his life Kabir became a disciple of the Hindu bhakti saint Ramananda. It was unusual for a Hindu teacher to accept a Muslim student, but tradition says the young Kabir found a creative way to overcome all objections. It is said that what really made this meeting the most special is that in this case it, was only after Kabir's enlightenment that Ramananda, his teacher, became enlightened.

Not much is known about what sort of spiritual training Kabir may have received. Kabir never abandoned worldly life, choosing instead to live the balanced life of a householder and mystic, tradesman and contemplative. Kabir was married, had children, and lived the simple life of a weaver.

Although Kabir labored to bring the often clashing religious cultures of Islam and Hinduism together, he was equally disdainful of professional piety in any form. This earned him the hatred and persecution of the religious authorities in Varanasi. Nearing age 60, he was denounced before the king but, because of his Muslim birth, he was spared execution and, instead, banished from the region. He subsequently lived a life of exile, traveling through northern India with a group of disciples. In 1518, he died at Maghar near Gorakhpur.

One of the most loved legends associated with Kabir is told of his funeral. Kabir's disciples disputed over his body, the Muslims wanting to claim the body for burial, the Hindus wanting to cremate the body. Kabir appeared to the arguing disciples and told them to lift the burial shroud. When they did so, they found fragrant flowers where the body had rested. The flowers were divided, and the Muslims buried the flowers while the Hindus reverently committed them to fire.

Kabir ranks among the world's greatest poets. Back home in India, he is perhaps the most quoted author. The Holy Guru Granth Sahib contains over 500 verses by Kabir. The Sikh community in particular and others who follow the Holy Granth, hold Kabir in the same reverence as the other ten Gurus. Kabir openly criticized all sects and gave a new direction to the Indian philosophy. This is due to his straight forward approach that has a universal appeal. It is for this reason that Kabir is held in high esteem all over the world.

The hall mark of Kabir's poetry is that he conveys in his two line poems (Doha), what others may not be able to do in many pages. Another beauty of Kabir's poetry is that he picks up situations that surround our daily lives. Thus, even today, Kabir's poetry is relevant and helpful in guiding and regulating our lives, in both social and spiritual context.

"Kaal Kare So Aaj Kar, Aaj Kare So Ub  
Pal Mein Pralaya Hoyegi, Bahuri Karoge Kub"



"Tomorrows work do today, today's work now  
if the moment is lost, the work be done how"

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