

Bhagat Kabir – Sabad 20
choaa cha(n)dan maradan a(n)gaa ||
Raag Gauri, Bhagat Kabir, Guru Granth Sahib, 326

choaa cha(n)dan maradan a(n)gaa ||
so tan jalai kaaTh kai sa(n)gaa ||1||
eis tan dhan kee kavan baddaiee ||
dharan parai urvaar na jaiee ||1|| rahaau ||
raat je soveh din kareh kaam ||
eik khin leh na har ko naam ||2||
haath ta Dor mukh khaio ta(n)bor ||
martee baar kas baadhio chor ||3||
gurmat ras ras har gun gaavai ||
raamai raam ramat sukh paavai ||4||
kirpaa kar kai naam dhiraRaiee ||
har har baas suga(n)dh basaiee ||5||
kahat kabeer chet re a(n)dhaa ||
sat raam jhooThaa sabh dha(n)dhaa ||6||16||

Summary: In the pursuit of comfort, we can become so engrossed in endless work that we overlook the deeper purpose of life, which includes self-awareness and spiritual connection. We often fall into the illusion that our bodies, possessions, and outward appearances hold lasting value. In our ignorance, we may invest time and energy into enhancing these aspects; however, no matter how much we try to preserve them, physical things eventually fade away and return to ashes, much like dry wood in a fire. This truth prompts a critical question: Are we focusing on what truly matters? The answer is clear: material possessions cannot fulfil us. What we cherish in this world remains behind when we leave. We might appear successful, but without even a moment for reflection, we can remain spiritually empty. Therefore, contemplating the eternal is essential for a meaningful life.

choaa cha(n)dan maradan a(n)gaa ||

The body is anointed with fragrant aloe and sandalwood, suggesting external piety or ritual purity is not worn, it is lived.

so tan jalai kaaTh kai sa(n)gaa ||1||

Yet that very body will burn with the wood on the pyre, illustrating the futility of focusing on identifying with external appearance, rituals, or social status, which are merely illusions; you will burn with them. (1)

eis tan dhan kee kavan baddaiee ||

So what real glory lies in this body and its wealth? A thought-provoking question about reflecting on and realigning our priorities.

dharan parai urvaar na jaiee ||1|| rahaau ||

Beyond this realm, nothing can be carried forward, expressing the reality that anything tangible cannot exist after death. (1)(Pause)

raat je soveh din kareh kaam ||

Night is spent sleeping, while day is consumed by work, illustrating how we create a routine of survival devoid of meaning.

eik khin leh na har ko naam ||2||

Not even for a moment do we pause to reflect on the omnipresence of the eternal force that surrounds us. (2)

haath ta Dor mukh khaio ta(n)bor ||

Holding the string of the kite in one hand and a betel leaf in the mouth symbolizes leisure and sensual indulgence, creating the illusion of control over life.

martee baar kas baadhio chor ||3||

Upon death, the body is bound like a thief, symbolizing the body as a vessel of senses that once took away humility and peace, now lies powerless, confined by death. (3)

gurmat ras ras har gun gaavai ||

The essence of wisdom that elevates the mind from ignorance to awareness blissfully speaks of the virtues of unity.

raamai raam ramat sukh paavai ||4||

Reflecting on the eternal awareness that pervades all creation brings joy and peace. (4)

kirpaa kar kai naam dhiraRaiee ||

Embrace self-reflection with compassion and determination.

har har baas suga(n)dh basaiee ||5||

The unseen, omnipresent energy dwells in everything, like an invisible fragrance. (5)

kahat kabeer chet re a(n)dhaa ||

Kabir says, 'Be conscious, O ignorant mind,' symbolising a call to the inner self to awaken from a state of unconsciousness.

sat raam jhooThaa sabh dha(n)dhaa ||6||16||

The only truth is that energy flowing in all is the eternal, all-pervading consciousness; all else is false and fleeting. (6)(16)

Essence: Bhagat Kabir exposes the stark contrast between external appearances and internal emptiness. He urges honesty with oneself and cautions against mistaking external religiosity for inner transformation. A body adorned with finery is still destined for decay; wealth and beauty cannot evade the inevitability of death. Only true devotion and self-realization hold significance. He urges us to use our lives wisely by cultivating awareness rather than merely chasing the illusion of success. This awareness comes not from ego, but from humility and grace, which allow our consciousness to radiate the fragrance of truth.

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