

Bhagat Kabir - Sabad 48
bipal basatr kete hai pahire kiaa ban madhe baasaa ||
Raag Gauri Poorbi, Bhagat Kabir, Guru Granth Sahib, 338

bipal basatr kete hai pahire kiaa ban madhe baasaa ||
kahaa bhiaa nar dhevaa dhokhe kiaa jal borio giaataa ||1||
jeeare jaahigaa mai jaanaa(n) ||
abigat samajh iaanaa ||
jat jat dhekhau batur na pekhau sa(n)g maiaa lapaTaanaa ||1|| rahaau ||
giaanee dhiaanee bahu upadhesee ih jag sagalo dha(n)dhaa ||
keh kabeer ik raam naam bin iaa jag maiaa a(n)dhaa ||2||1||16||67||

Summary: Outer appearances and withdrawal from society offer little transformation when inner awareness remains unchanged. Garbs, surroundings, or lifestyles may display a way of life, yet the same desires, pride, fears, and illusions can continue to shape perception from within. Solitude can create the space for reflection, but only self-examination brings transformation. Simplicity becomes meaningful when it reflects a mind freed from possessiveness, comparison, and inner conflict rather than a merely austere way of living. As rigidity and deception dissolve, outer life naturally begins to express authenticity, integrity, and peace that arises from within rather than merely appearing on the surface.

bipal basatr kete hai pahire kiaa ban madhe baasaa ||
What is gained by wearing many kinds of robes, or by dwelling in the forest? This challenges the pretence of holiness, suggesting that simply changing one's appearance or surroundings does not transform one's conscience.

kahaa bhiaa nar dhevaa dhokhe kiaa jal borio giaataa ||1||
What occurs when people burn incense before idol deities, and what insights do they gain from dipping into water? This questions the effectiveness of rituals for reverence and purification when ignorance and awareness remain trapped in illusion.
(1)

jeeare jaahigaa mai jaanaa(n) ||
Life is fleeting; I understand this. This reminds us of impermanence, for this physical state is temporary.

abigat samajh iaanaa ||

Recognize the unseen truth, oh immature mind. This reveals that the essential reality remains misunderstood by the naive mind, which persistently chases only what can be touched and seen.

.jat jat dhekhau bahur na pekhau sa(n)g maiaa lapaTaanaa ||1|| rahaau ||

Where and when I look, I do not see beyond the surface, trapped in a web of illusions. This reflects the unfortunate fate of a mind so focused on life's superficial aspects that it fails to recognize the underlying unity in everything. (1) (Pause)

giaanee dhiaanee bahu upadhesee ih jag sagalo dha(n)dhaa ||

The learned meditators preach extensively yet can remain caught in this worldly entanglement. This reveals that without humility and inner clarity, even knowledge and devotion can become mere transactions.

keh kabeer ik raam naam bin iaa jag maiaa a(n)dhaa ||2||1||16||67||

Kabir says that without contemplation on the singular, all-pervading awareness, the world remains blinded by illusion. This emphasizes the role of self-reflection in gaining clarity, serving as the vision that guides us through the fog of duality. (2)(1)(16)(67)

Essence: Bhagat Kabir emphasises that without humility and inner clarity, even knowledge and devotion can become transactions. The mind begins to accumulate learning for status, practise devotion for reward, and perform virtue for recognition, turning what should liberate into an extension of the ego. Self-reflection restores perceptions from the perils of duality, and knowledge matures into understanding and devotion flowers as the natural expression of an awakened conscience.

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