

Review – Relevance of Kabir:

I have not read any of Saint Kabir's literature before, but am aware of that he is a Great Spiritual Saint of India and have great respect and reverence for him. In fact, reading this book has created a new interest in me to read Saint Kabir's poems in entirety. On many occasions while reading this book, I felt that as if Saint Kabir himself was talking to the reader. Some of the poems were even difficult to understand directly without the interpretation of the author.

The book "Relevance of Kabir" has overall been a very enlightening read and highly thought provoking for understanding various aspects of mind for a person who is a serious spiritual seeker bent on knowing the truth. The author's analysis and interpretation of Kabir in today's context has been very revealing, unorthodox in style, and the author does not shy away even from using profane language to drive his point home. The examples used to demonstrate are straight on the face. Nothing confronts a person more than facts. What we think of ourselves is not what we are. The central theme that the author imposes on the reader is that the Self is an illusion or fiction and that if it is not cognized as such, it severely limits or mars our judgement. Mind is a means and if not used in the correct way for one's course correction it can surely cause problems.

I cannot agree more with the author when he emphasizes the need for self-enquiry or introspection to know the truth through one's own experience. The needless misery and suffering that humanity undergoes mostly are born in the mind, and nurtured according to one's whims and fancies to suit their temporary need for justification of their actions. These are avoidable and this has been beautifully clarified to the reader on many occasions through the elucidation of the poems of Saint Kabir.

As per the teachings the spiritual path of Pranahti Aided Meditation that I follow, Mind is made of four components namely, Mental Screen, Deeper cognition, Intellect, and Self or Ego, an illusion created by the intellect. The Self or Ego is a fallacy that our mind wants us to believe as truth. If we do not understand this, then we fall prey to our mind's inputs, mind starts asserting our significance, the game of pretense starts and the defects start becoming a part of our Being

unconsciously. A significant point that Saint Kabir asserts is the need of a Guru or Spiritual Guide of Calibre whose support for removing our illusions and defects and understand our true nature and reach our goal cannot be understated. The world today is full of impostors who happily quote the scriptures and deceive the innocent masses for material benefit in the name of god. The author does not mince his words when he criticizes these kinds of impostors and their so called spiritual or religious customs just like Saint Kabir.

Many beliefs are shattered on the way when one is pursuing truth. We are not what we think about ourselves. The author's highlight of the need to encourage scrutiny and reasoning of our beliefs as truth is commendable. In fact, the author clarifies that an un-provable belief strikes at the root of honesty itself.

The author has successfully portrayed that the ideal life is different from the real life. Perhaps, Ideal is what keeps us going, and real is what keeps us grounded. The author has successfully deciphered Saint Kabir's poems and demystified the fact that we can lead a free life when we are not bound to our beliefs. When the author explains Kabir, he quotes a Conscious life as one which is not automated with habits of mind. Only when we understand the nature of mind and are able to purify it significantly, we can live with a sense of heightened awareness of Divine and be freed from our false beliefs, sense of Self or 'I' Consciousness and feel truly liberated.

The pragmatic and honest explanations of the author in explaining Kabir will perhaps be appealing to both believers and skeptics equally. Saint Kabir was a person who was beyond dogmas and beliefs. He cognizes thoughts as mere mental activity which we need not believe or take it for granted.

The author nails it when he says that experiences, beliefs and habits do not form the identity. Further, he says the one delusion leads to another as it helps in protecting the ego or self from being exposed. To live in higher levels of consciousness requires a need to give up all beliefs, a sense of nakedness. The book is significant effort to understand that our identity is not based on our thoughts. Perhaps, it based on our true nature as a Divine Expression.