



# **Sacred Life of Jagatguru Ravidass Ji**



**Original Writer : Sant Surinder Dass Bawa**

**Publication : Ravidassia Dharam Parchar Asthan Kahanpur, Jalandhar**



**Satsangat mil rahiae Madhou jaise madhup makhira !!**



**Aisa chahoon raj maen jahan milae sabhan kau ann!  
Shot-barhe sabh sam basae Ravidass rahe prasann!!**

# **Sacred Life of Jagatguru Ravidass Ji**



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**Nishan Sahib**  
**Ravidassia Religion**

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**Curtsey :**  
**Ravidassia Community in U.K.**

**Publication :**  
**Ravidassia Dharam Parchar Asthan Kahanpur**  
**Distt. Jalandhar (Punjab)**

# Sacred Life of Jagatguru Ravidass Ji



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**Sant Surinder Dass Bawa**

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## Some Important facts of life Jagat Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji

- \* **Date of Birth :**  
Year 1377 AD (Bikrami Samvat-Magh Sudi 15,  
1433)
- \* **Birth Place :**  
Seer Goverdhanpur, Banaras (U.P.)
- \* **Name of Mother & Father :**  
Father, Respected Sh. Santokh Dass Ji Mother,  
Respected Smt. Kalsi Devi Ji
- \* **Name of the Grandmother and Grandfather :**  
Grandfather, Respected Sh. Kalu Ram Ji  
Grandmother, Respected Smt. Lakhpati Ji,
- \* **Name of wife & son :**  
Wife Respected Smt. Lona Ji  
Son Respected Sh. Vijay Dass Ji
- \* **Brahamlin :**  
Harh Di Sangrand 1584 Bikrami Samvat (1528) at  
Banaras



## Principles of Ravidassia Religion

- (1) Our Guru : Satguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji  
(2) Our Religion : Ravidassia  
(3) Our Religious Book : Amritbani Satguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji

- (4) Our Religious Symbol :



- (5) Our Salutation : Jai Gurdev  
(6) Our Ultimate Place of Pilgrimage : Shri Guru Ravidass Janam Asthan Mandir Seer Goverdhanpur, Varanasi (U.P.)  
(7) Our Objectives : To propagate the Bani and teachings of Satguru Ravidass Ji. Besides, the teachings and the thoughts of Maharashi Bhagwan Valmik Ji, Satguru Namdev Ji, Satguru Kabir Ji, Satguru Trilochan Ji, Satguru Sain Ji and Satguru Sadna Ji would Also be propagated.  
: To respect all religions, love the mankind and lead virtuous life.



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*Dedicated to*  
***Satguru Sarwan Dass Ji***

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## INDEX

S.No.	Title	Page No.
1.	Preface	9
2.	A Brief History	14
3.	Glory to Guru Ravidass	21
4.	Incarnation of Jagatguru Ravidass	22
5.	Guru Ravidass's Childhood	25
6.	Family Life	28
7.	Creation of 'Gurumukhi' Alphabets	31
8.	Jealousy of Piran Ditta-Ballad Singer	43
9.	When Pathri (Stone Slab) Floated on Water on Historic Festival of Vaisakhi	44
10.	When God Guised as a Saint Presented Philosopher's Stone to Jagat Guru Ravidass Ji	53
11.	God's Blessings - Gold Coins for Serving Devotees	57
12.	When a Millionaire Disrespected Amrita Nectar and Suffered from Leprosy	59
13.	Protecting a Doe	61
14.	When a Sheikh Sought Affection of Guru Ravidass	62
15.	Granting New Lease of Life to a Dead Child	64
16.	Spiritual Discourse between Guru Ravidass and Guru Kabir	66
17.	Enlightenment of Kamali	67
18.	Kamali Seeks Shelter at Lotus feet of Guru Ravidass	68
19.	Historical Grandeur of Guru Ravidass in Junagarh (Gujarat)	70
20.	Guru Ravidass's Punjab Visit and Historical Places 'Kharas' and Amrita Ganga Khuralgarh Sahib	73
21.	Blessings of Guru Ravidass to Sant Narsingh Mehta	76
22.	Preaching Parmanand Bairagi	78
23.	Legend of Roopvati	79



24.	When Guru Ravidass sent a Present for Ganga During the Kumbh Festival	83
25.	Legend of Queen Jhali	86
26.	Guru Ravidass and his Disciple Meera Bai	92
27.	Karma Bai – Ardent Disciple of Guru Ravidass	98
28.	Sacred Tank (Sarovar) –Guru Ravidass	101
29.	Reverse Flow of Ganga	102
30.	Guru Ravidass and Sikandar Lodi	102
31.	Expeditions by Guru Ravidass for Emancipation of Humanity	104
32.	Guru Ravidass's Visit to Himachal And Sirdhaar Mountain	114
33.	When King Pipa became a Disciple of Guru Ravidass	114
34.	Display of Janeou (Threads) Adorned during Four Cosmic Yugas	118
35.	When Replicas of Cow made of Gold Came Alive	120
36.	Conspiracy by Kirdar Pande & Colleagues to Eliminate Guru Ravidass	123
37.	Guru Ravidass's Discourse with King Alawadi	124
38.	Spiritual Discourses of Guru Ravidass with Guru Kabir and Guru Nanak Dev	128
39.	Guru Ravidass in Ayodhya	133
40.	King Chandar Pratap	134
41.	When Bhanmati Became Guruji's Disciple	135
42.	Lease of New Life to Dharmo's Son in Multan	137
43.	Acrobatics by Jugglers	142
44.	Spiritual Discourse between Guru Ravidass And Guru Gorakh Nath	143
45.	When Guru Ravidass met Sadhna And Sikandar Lodi imprisoned Guru Ravidass	147
46.	Influence of Teachings of Guru Ravidass on King Babar	148
47.	Departure of Guru Ravidass for 'Sachkhand'	151

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## Preface

***Prem panth ki palki Ravidass baethiyo aaye!!  
Sache saami milan koon aanand kahiyo na jaye!!***

Guru Ravidass says that “I have boarded the palanquin of devotion to God and I cannot describe the supreme pleasure and eternal ecstasy of union with Almighty God.”

Most revered Guru Ravidass, during his incarnation in this world, preached all human beings about absolute unity, universal brotherhood & love for humanity and conveyed his sacred sermon to keep company of learned saints and practice devout meditation of God. While Guru Ravidass liberated people, suffering from oppression for centuries, of all bondage on the one hand; he simultaneously enlightened the foes of humanity with his pious and truthful sermon:

***“Satsangati mil rahiae Madhou jaise madhup makhira”!***

O God! Kindly bless us also like honey bees to live ever happily together in pious company of Thy holy men.

Guru Ravidass conveyed his sacred sermon about universal brotherhood and also envisaged one common universal abode “*Begumpura*” for all human beings of the world as explained in his *Amritbani*. Such a great revolutionary, Guru Ravidass had his incarnation at Seer Govardhanpur in Varanasi during the month of Magh, 1433 *Vikram Samvat* (1377A.D.) at the blessed house of respected father Santokh Dass and esteemed mother Kalsi Devi. In order to establish an egalitarian society with equal rights for all, Guru Ravidass pierced his shoulder on the occasion of *Makar Sankranti* and showed four types of *Janeu* (the cotton thread) symbolising the four Yugas or cosmic periods and abandoned the one made of thread that adorned his body in staunch protest against the social disharmony bedeviling the society.

On the auspicious & historic occasion of *Vaisakhi*, (First day of *Vaisakh*- the second month of *Vikram Samvat* Calendar), Guru Ravidass achieved the unique feat of floating of stone on the water of river *Ganga*. He created myriad forms of himself in the *darbar* of King Sangram

Singh and Queen Jhali and launched the unique tradition of spiritual congregations and community feeding for one and all. He spent major part of his life travelling far and wide preaching all human beings to tread the path of truth and devout meditation of God. A large number of kings, emperors and people from all sections of the society bowed before him with allegiance and became his devout disciples. He worked for the emancipation of human society throughout his life and left this perishable world for his heavenly abode on the first day of the month of *Harh* 1584 *Vikram Samvat* or 1528 A.D. in Varanasi.

Guru Kabir reckoned Guru Ravidass as the ultimate epitome of *Bhakti* and recited the following hymn;

***Saadhan mein Ravidass Sant hae, supach rishi so maaniya!  
Hindu Turk dui deen bane hae, kashu nahin pahichaniya!***

Guru Kabir said that Guru Ravidass is the greatest amongst sages in the entire world and reckons him as a highly respected saint. Contemporary Hindus and Muslims bowed with reverence before Guru Ravidass and venerated him like God.

*Sant* Pipa explains the unique services of Guru Ravidass towards human society as follows in his hymns:

***Je Kali Raedas Kabir na hote,  
lok ved aru Kaliyug mili kar bhagti rasatal dete!***

*Sant* Pipa explained that “But for the timely incarnation of Guru Ravidass and Guru Kabir; contemporary upper caste society, Vedas and distorted philosophical thinking under the influence of Kaliyuga would have buried '*Bhakti*' or devout meditation of God under deep sea.”

***Ravidass chamar ustati karei, Hari keerat nimakh ik gayi!!  
Patit jati uttam bhya, chari varan paye pagi aayi!!***

Guru Ram Dass explains that Guru Ravidass practiced such devout meditation of Oankar God and eulogised glory of divinity with dedicated devotion that he himself became one with God and indistinguishable from God. Despite his birth in a so called low caste; people from

all the four classes of society bowed at his lotus feet with reverence because of his devout *Bhakti* and dignified spiritual knowledge.

Guru Arjan Dev eulogises him as follows;

***Ooch te ooch Namdeo samdarsi Ravidass thakur bani aayie!! i.e.***

Greatest of all learned sages, who treated everyone equal, has been Guru Namdev and Guru Ravidass was incarnation of God himself in this world.

Guru Ravidass states in his *Amritbani* that:

***Meri jaat kutbandhla dhor dhovanta nitahi  
Banarasi aas pasa!!***

***Ab bipar pardhan tihi karei dandout tere  
Naam sarnaei Ravidass dasa!!***

People of my caste living around Banaras are engaged in carting away and skinning of dead animals, tanning of leather and making leather goods. Guru Ravidass says that O God! As I have taken shelter under Thy sacred feet, now even the head of the Brahmins, bows before Thy devotee with reverence. This entire glory is because of Thy worship and kind blessings.

After listening to the sacred, revolutionary and redeeming spiritual sermons of Guru Ravidass; King Nagar Mall (Hardev Singh), *Rana Vir Baghel Singh*, King Sikandar Lodi, Maharana Sangram Singh (*Rana Sanga*), King Chandra Pratap, King Allavadi Bijli Khan, Rana Ratan Singh, King Kumbha, Queen Jhala Bai, King Bain Singh, King Vijaypal Singh, great saint Meera Bai, and sages Karma Bai, Bhanmati, Sant Sadhna, Sant Parmanand, as well as great sage Gorakh Nath along-with people from all sections of society became his devotees.

Messiah of humanity, Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar formulated the Constitution of India based on the human rights enshrined in sacred hymn "*Begumpura sahar ko nao*" recited by Guru Ravidass.

Guru Ravidass says that:

***Ravidass soi sadhu bhalo jou rahayi sada nirbaer!***

***Sukhdai samta gahyi sabhnah mangahi khaer!! i.e.***

Guru Ravidass articulates that “A pious sage never has any enmity with anyone. He always longs for comforts and equality for everyone and he prays to God for welfare of one and all.”

Such a great benevolent and devout saint *Brahmgyani* Guru Sarwan Dass practiced dedicated meditation of God day and night on the sacred soil of village Ballan and he enabled myriad number of people of this world to pursue devout *Bhakti* of God. He always preached his devotees to become highly educated, serve one's parents, respect the elderly, love the younger ones, keep company of learned saints and practice devout meditation of God. He got a *Dera* (Holy Place) constructed on the sacred soil of village Ballan and christened same as “*Dera Ravidassian Da*” on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 1964 to push forwards clear identity of the community. Once, devotees pleaded at the lotus feet of Guru Sarwan Dass, “*Maharaj!* When shall we become free of the shackles of centuries old slavery?” He said, “When compilation of *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass will get completed.” *Sant* Sarwan Dass located the sacred birth place of Guru Ravidass through his divine enlightenment and *Sant* Hari Dass laid the foundation stone of the temple to be built at that place in *Seer Govardhanpur*, Varanasi on 14<sup>th</sup> June, 1965 - the auspicious occasion of *Sankranti* of *Harh*, (First day of the month of *Harh*). Construction work for the temple was carried out under the able guidance of *Sant* Garib Dass. A great place of pilgrimage was thus dedicated to the society and Guru Sarwan Dass declared that people from all over the world will always congregate at this holy place of pilgrimage to pay their obeisance. *Sant* Ramanand decorated the temple with gold 'Kalshas' and launched the programme to frame the temple in gold. Enemies of humanity perpetrated a dastardly attack on Guru Ravidass Temple, Vienna on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2009. *Sant* Ramanand suffered grievous injuries and attained martyrdom for the sake of *Ravidassia* community and left for his heavenly abode in the



early hours of May 25, 2009 to become immortal. There were spontaneous and forceful but peaceful protests all over the world by *Ravidassia* community to express their pain and dismay against this barbaric act of violence.

There-after, announcement of new religion “*Ravidassia Dharma*” was made on the sacred occasion of 633<sup>rd</sup> birth anniversary of Guru Ravidass from his *Janam-Asthan Temple, Seer Govardhanpur*, Varanasi with the blessings of Guru Ravidass, Guru Sarwan Dass and the entire congregation of learned saints in the presence of thousands of devotees. More than 200 million people of *Ravidassia* community were delighted to get this novel identity. That night, Guru Ravidass could be seen as if blessing people of the world from the largest visible full moon of the century.

The sacred *Amritbani Granth* has been installed at lacs of *Ravidassia Temples* all over the world. Detailed commentary and explanations of sacred *Amritbani Granth* have been published in many languages including Punjabi, Hindi, Marathi, English, Italian, and Dutch languages for the benefit of devotees. Compact booklets titled '*Sukhsagar*' containing, selected hymns from *Amritbani*, have been distributed in lacs the world over.

Present English **translated** version of the Holy Scripture “**Sacred Life of Jagatguru Ravidass Ji**” is the humble contribution of Piare Lal, a blessed disciple of *Brahmgyani Brahmleen Shri 108 Satguru Sarwan Dass*. My special thanks to Sh. Ram Arsh, Sadhu Ram Heer, Kanshi Ram Kaler, Dr. Reena virdi, Prof. Seema Virdi, Rajni Virdi (M.Sc.) and Vipin Kumar for their important inputs to bring the Holy Scripture to its present form.

I feel extremely delighted to present English edition of the Holy Scripture “**Sacred Life of Jagatguru Ravidass Ji**” to devotees all over the world with the blessings of Guru Ravidass and Guru Sarwan Dass.

Devotee of Lotus Feet of *Guruji*,  
Sant Surinder Dass Bawa

\*\*\*

## ***'Ravidassia Dharma Prachar Asthan, Kahanpur'***

### **A Brief History**

*Ravidassia Dharma Prachar Asthan Kahanpur* is located along Jalandhar - Pathankot National Highway in Jalandhar District of Punjab State in India. A precious jewel of *Ravidassia Dharma*, *108 Sant Surinder Dass Bawa* who established this complex, heads this organization. The foundation stone of this complex was laid by revered saint *108 Sant Krishna Devi*, Spiritual Head of *Dera 108 Sant Hari Dass*, Boparai Kalan on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2014 in the august presence of a large congregation of saints and devotees. The plot of land for construction of this complex was very generously donated by the family members of Shakuntala Devi wife of Late Mohan Lal of village Kahanpur. As there was great enthusiasm amongst the local communities and devotees; the ardent followers of Guru Ravidass completed the entire construction work within a few months even though that would have normally taken years.

Learned sages, saints and scholars, members of social and religious organizations, followers of Guru Ravidass and devotees in extremely large numbers travel from faraway places to visit this complex now a days. This complex, located in a small hitherto unknown village, radiates its brilliance in all directions and is now extremely well known all over the world.

Devotees from European countries presented a sedan safari car on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2015 to Sant Surinder Dass *Bawa* in appreciation of growing spiritual and awareness campaigns amongst the devotees for facilitating further strengthening of these praiseworthy efforts. An academy dedicated to spiritual music known as *Jagatguru Ravidass Music Academy* has been established in part of the two storey building of this complex. Expert and experienced musicians impart training to nearly 50 boys and girls to be proficient in various disciplines of spiritual music with special emphasis

on Harmonium and *Tabla* musical instruments. The entire expenditure is borne by *Sant Surinder Dass Bawa* with the cooperation of the devotees. The suffering poor patients are also served at this *Ravidassia Dharma Prachar Asthan* through free *Ayurvedic* medical services and medicines. Unemployed youth are guided and helped to join various courses to receive employment oriented education and acquire professional skills. Financial assistance is also provided by this organization to poor youth for pursuing such studies and training courses.

*Baba Pipal Dass*, accompanied by young son *Shri 108 Sant Sarwan Dass*, visited village Kahanpur first of all. When digging of soil for laying foundation to build a *Kutiya* was in progress there, a double headed snake emerged from the site. *Babaji* then told the local devotees “How can we uproot someone to build a house for us?” They moved to the next village after saying that and making a promise to visit the village again sometimes in future and build a complex for stay.

Gurdas Ram and Gurbachan Kaur, respected parents of *Sant Surinder Dass Bawa*, were profound disciples of *Guru Sarwan Dass*. *Guru* stayed at their house for several nights on many occasions. *Gurbachan Kaur* fell seriously ill during 1972 and the doctors expressed their inability to save her life. However, *Guru Sarwan Dass* visited *Gurbachan Kaur* in the Civil Hospital, Jalandhar along with many devotees and gave her a new lease of life. He also blessed her with a boon then and there itself “Do not cry for the loss of this son. You will be blessed with two more sons in due course of time.” *Gurbachan Kaur* at once declared to dedicate the elder boy for serving at the lotus feet of *Guru Sarwan Dass*. The young boy inherited the spirit of selfless service and devotion from his worthy parents. His revered parents were profound devotees of *Guru Sarwan Dass*. His respected father in this human life, *Gurdas Ram* had full blessings of *Guru Sarwan Dass* and one of the proofs of *Guruji's* benevolence is described here as follows:

Guru Sarwan Dass abandoned his perishable human body on the 11<sup>th</sup> June, 1972 to be amalgamated with God. Before leaving this transient world, *Guruji* told devotees that he has to come back soon as some tasks of utmost importance for the society are still left. All preparations for cremation had been completed. Devotees from all parts of the country and abroad had assembled to have a last glimpse and pay their respects to their beloved and revered *Guruji*. Preparations had been made to light the pyre as pure ghee, sandalwood, incense, copra and other relevant items had been put in place. Final prayer had just been rendered to proceed with lighting of the fire. Just at that moment, devotees assembled for the cremation rites witnessed a burst of stream of blood from *Guruji's* mortal human body comprising of five elements and a few drops of the blood smeared the body of Gurdas Ram. It is extremely important to analyze this strange phenomenon to appreciate why did those drops of blood fall only on the body of Gurdas Ram? Later exactly after the lapse of 9 months since Guru Sarwan Dass abandoned his perishable human body; the birth of *Shri 108 Sant Surinder Dass Bawa* on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1973 certainly poses a spiritual question. It merits mention that *Shri 108 Sant Sarwan Dass* himself sent '*Bhagwa*' or sacred cloth/robe worn by saints to Saint Surinder Dass *Bawa's* parents to be worn by the new born baby (*Shri 108 Sant Surinder Dass Bawa*) well before his birth. This in itself declared the child to be born would be a saint. *Shri 108 Sant Hari Dass* blessed *Bawa* (Sant Surinder Dass) with the same sacred maroon coloured saintly robes at the young age of just 5 years as per the wishes of Sant Sarwan Dass and brought him from village Suchipind to Dera Sachkhand Ballan. *Shri 108 Sant Garib Dass* made arrangements for his education and studies.

With the blessings of Guru Ravidass and Guru Sarwan Dass and the entire community of learned saints, *Shri 108 Sant Surinder Dass Bawa* made an epoch making pronouncement on the 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2010 establishing

*Ravidassia Dharma* (as envisioned by Sant Sarwan Dass on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 1964) and also dedicated *Ravidassia's* Holy Book – *Amritbaani Satguru Ravidass Maharaj* that gave a distinct separate identity to *Ravidassia* community at the congregation.

A large library has been set up at *Ravidassia Dharma Parchar Asthan*, Kahanpur to commemorate the sacred memory of Guru Sarwan Dass. This library maintains thousands of books including texts on Dalit History and literature published by scholars specializing in issues related to Dalit communities. This library has large stock of literature related to great *Guru's*, eminent freedom fighters, brave warriors and distinguished scholars and writers. In addition to all such efforts, books are being distributed free of cost to budding writers through Dr. Ambedkar Library and other libraries. Plans for launch of a magazine in near future are in place. This organization preaches and promotes sacred mission of Guru Ravidass and Guru Sarwan Dass on continuous basis.

*Sant* Surinder Dass *Bawa* held spiritual discourses several times from the year 2010 onwards in several European countries including Austria, Greece, Italy, Germany, Holland, Spain, France, Norway, Portugal and United Kingdom as well as in America, Canada and UAE. Further he addressed religious congregations and preached about *Ravidassia Dharma* and *Amritbani* in various countries as follows :

1. 2014- Italy and Austria.
2. 2015- Greece, Portugal and Austria.
3. 2016- America, Canada, Greece, Italy, Austria and United Kingdom.
4. 2017- Austria, United Kingdom, Greece, Italy, America, Canada and UAE.
5. 2018–United Kingdom, France, Austria, Italy, Greece, Norway, America, Canada and United Arab Emirates.

*Sant* Surinder Dass *Bawa* was also honoured by many



organizations with Gold Medals from time to time at various places in the world as follows:

1. *Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha*, Bergamo, Italy during 2010.
2. *Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha*, Karopi, Athens, Greece during 2011.
3. *Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha*, Vienna Austria, *Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha*, Rome, Italy, and *Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha*, Valencia, Spain during 2012.
4. *Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha*, Rome, during 2014.
5. Village Madhar, District Jalandhar, Punjab, India during 2014.
6. *Shri Guru Ravidass Sukhsagar Durbar*, Mandy, Greece on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2015.
7. Village Alawalpur, District, Jalandhar, Punjab, India on 30<sup>th</sup> December, 2015.
8. South Hall, London, UK on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2016.
9. *Shri Guru Ravidass Bhavan*, Bari, Italy on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2017.
10. *Shri Guru Ravidass Durbar*, Carpi, Greece on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2017.
11. Toronto, Canada on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2017 and
12. *Ravidassia* Community of Village Suchipind, Jalandhar, Punjab, India on 30<sup>th</sup> December, 2017
13. Tripton, United Kingdom during 2018

*Sant* Surinder Dass Bawa was honoured with *Shri Guru Ravidass National Award* by the Indian Dalit Literature Academy, at New Delhi during 2006. Keeping in view the growing numbers of devotees and the need for publicity and communications; the devotees from U.S.A., Canada, U.K. and many other European countries made arrangements for purchase of an adjoining plot of land at Kahanpur and presented same to this organization to meet genuine requirements of the devotees. Presently this preaching centre has emerged as a leading light house. *Sant* Surinder Dass Bawa has made permanent arrangements for his stay at this place where he practices devout meditation of

God, listens to *Amritbani* and conducts spiritual discourses. Simultaneously, he preaches the devotees to follow on his footsteps in respect of meditation and spiritual pursuits. Devotees are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the teachings of *Ravidassia Dharma* at this place.

*Amritbani Bhavan* constructed at this place has been adorned with '*Amritbani Satguru Ravidass Maharaj*' that is recited every morning and evening regularly. Religious and spiritual discourses are also held regularly and special *pandal* is set up for same on specific occasions like weekend Sundays and *Sangrand* or the first day of each new month as per *Vikram Samvat* calendar. Noble wishes of devotees get fulfilled here. People have immense faith and respect for this sacred place. Lots of devotees throng this complex in the morning and evening daily to have a vision of this sacred place. Apart from motivating people for worship and meditation of God and study of scriptures, this *darbar* makes earnest efforts to address the social evils like drug addiction, dowry, wasteful expenditure on social ceremonies, abortion and unfounded criticism etc. that torment the society. Doctors, who are medical specialists and expert in treating various diseases, check patients by holding camps and prescribe suitable medicines.

This sacred place is easily accessible to all sections of society. Everyone, rich or poor gets equal treatment and this place has been built to respect everyone. There is no caste based discrimination here and no one is superior or inferior. This centre preaches and spreads the message of welfare of all human beings, *Begumpura* Concept enunciated by Guru Ravidass and clarion call of Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar for education, unity and determined struggle against discrimination. A holy statue of Guru Ravidass was installed at the *Amritbani Bhavan* of this sacred place by dignitaries including *Sant* Surinder Dass Bawa, *Sant* Satyapal - Chandigarh, *Sant* Krishna Devi - Boparai Kalan, *Sant* Harvinder Dass - Adampur and a large congregation of learned sages and revered saints on Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> July,

2016. Sadhu Ram Heer, retired Chief Engineer, Northern Zone Door Darshan, was honoured with a Gold Medal for his dedicated services to the *Ravidassia* Community. This complex has facilities for community kitchen, meals for all and night stay of devotees. The sacred vision of Guru Sarwan Dass seems to be getting fulfilled here at this holy preaching centre as *Guruji* used to think of eulogy for grandeur of Guru Ravidass in every house hold. *Sant* Surinder Dass *Bawa* has been making earnest efforts in this direction through dedicated hard work day and night with utmost devotion. May revered *Guruji's* benevolent blessings be always with him so that he continues to render devoted and fruitful services to the community.

**Kanshi Ram Kaler,**  
Jandu Singha (Jalandhar)

\*\*\*

## Glory to Guru Ravidass

Renowned Hindi poet Suryakant Tripathi has written in his well known granth '*Anima*' as follows:

### About Jagatguru Ravidass

*Gyaan ke aakar munisar the' param dharma ke dhawaj!*

*Unme aniatam, poojya agraj kaviyon ke prakhar,  
Kalpana ki kiran neeraj par sudhar parhi yon  
angrhaiyan lekar kharhi!*

*Jati ki dekha sabhi ne meechkar drig tumhe shardha  
salil se seench kar!*

*Ranian avroddh ki gheri huyie, bania yon bani jab  
cheri huyie!*

*Shua Paras bhi nahi tumne rahe karam ke abhiyas  
me avirat rahe!*

*Giyan Ganga me samujjwal charmkar, charn choo  
kar raha mae namaskar!* (1942 A.D.)

Guru Ravidass was epitome of knowledge who exemplified finest traditions of dharma. Guru Ravidass had extremely sharp intellect of exceptionally learned and venerable forward looking poets. Everyone visualized you with closed eyes drenched with the Amrita like nectar of devotion. Many queens torn apart by resistance were redeemed when they became your devout disciples. You did not bother even to make use of the '*Paras*' the philosopher's stone that turns metals into Gold. But you remained engrossed in meditation of God and normal work. You are a brilliant jewel of wisdom and knowledge and I prostrate at your lotus feet to pay my profound regards. (1942 A.D.)

While expressing his views about Guru Ravidass; *Sant* Paltu Dass said as follows: Wherever *Jagatguru Ravidass* remembered God, Almighty God had to materialize at that place in no time keeping in view the utmost love and devotion of Guru Ravidass. *Sant* Paltu Dass wrote the following verse while describing the unique character and qualities of *Jagatguru Ravidass*:

*Nahate trikal roz pundit achari barhe, Sada  
pat bastar sut ang na lagayie hae!*

*Pooja naevaed aarti karte ham bidhi  
vidhan, chandan au tulasi bhali bhanti se  
charhayie hae!!*

*Hare ham kuleen sabh koti koti kae  
oupaye, kaese tum Thakur ham sapne hoon  
na payie hae!*

*Paltu Dass dekho reejh mere Sahib ki, gaye  
hae wahan jab Ravidass bulayie hae!!*

Learned pundits follow the daily routine rigorously to make elaborate arrangements for ritual bath of deities thrice daily. Thereafter, the deities are adorned with new garments. They perform ritualistic worship of those deities daily with the offerings of incense, sandalwood paste and Occimum leaves as per recognised traditions. What sort of Almighty God are you? Despite all such offerings and your worship through millions of other ways by these noble Pandits; they have not been able to have your divine vision for a moment even in their dreams. *Sant* Paltu Dass says “Just look at the benevolence of revered God. Supreme God is so pleased with love and devotion of Ravidass that God materializes instantly whenever and where ever Ravidass remembers Him.”

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## **Incarnation of Jagatguru Ravidass**

Whenever human values are no longer respected, then God incarnates in unique ways for the emancipation of mistaken mankind and to guide human beings on the right path of truth. There is historical evidence of incarnation of God from time to time for the emancipation of humanity. During the medieval era of history of India, Guru Namdev, Guru Kabir, Guru Saen, Guru Ravidass, Guru Nanak Dev and innumerable other revered sages had their incarnation in this world and all of them made earnest efforts to emancipate human society from the curse of discrimination



and superstitions and preached human beings to be one with God through devout meditation.

Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries comprised of very turbulent time of history of India when local citizens of India were being tortured and suppressed by foreign invaders and kings. People were fed up with their tyranny. Indian society and local communities were also sadly divided based on caste considerations. There were two prominent religions Hinduism and Islam prevalent in India during those days. The original inhabitants of India were deprived of basic human rights. They did not have the basic rights including right to education, decent living or dressing well. Practice of untouchability was rampant so much so that even the shadow of individuals from depressed castes was considered evil by powerful self proclaimed upper castes. Responding to the prayers of the suffering humanity, supreme father God had His incarnation on earth as Guru Ravidass for their emancipation and to preach truth to humanity. The following couplet is well known describing incarnation of God as *Jagatguru Ravidass*:

***Chaudah sau taentis ki Magh Sudi pandras!***

***Dukhiyon ke kaliyan hit pragte Shri Ravidass!!***

(*Sant Karam Dass*)

Guru Ravidass had his incarnation on the fifteenth full moon day of *Magh* (January- February) month of 1433 *Vikram Samvat* (1377 AD) for the emancipation of suffering humanity.

Guru Ravidass had his incarnation for the emancipation of the deprived in the house of blessed parents revered Kalsi Devi and Santokh Dass residents of village Seer Goverdhanpur on the outskirts of famous city Varanasi in India. Respected Kalu Ram and Lakhpati were *Guruji's* grandparents. *Guruji's* arrival in this world was a unique supernatural event in the world history that was meant for emancipation of humanity tormented by caste based discrimination and untouchability for centuries. Simultaneously major goals of *Guruji's* mission were to

reform enemies of humanity, teach them to uphold and respect human dignity and to preach all human beings, the virtues of equality, unity, mutual cooperation and devout meditation of God. There was an unusual mystical bright illumination all over the universe at the time of incarnation of Guru Ravidass that signalled rays of hope for the freedom of persecuted, down trodden and impoverished people. Eminent *Rishies*, revered saints, learned sages and holy ascetics witnessed that brilliance and bowed their heads in reverence. All of them heaved a sigh of relief as these were the clear indications of incarnation of benevolent and merciful God.

Eyesight of the midwife, present at the time of birth of *Guruji's* incarnation, miraculously improved very significantly because of such unique illumination. She conveyed her heartfelt congratulations to respected parents of Guru Ravidass and said "I have assisted innumerable ladies at the times of delivery; but I have never witnessed birth of such a unique child." His entire body and all of the limbs radiate brilliance known only for incarnations of God and he will surely bring good name to his worthy parents in this world." The blessed child was named Ravidass as he was born on Sunday which is "*Ravivaar*" in Hindi. His wisdom vanished darkness from all over the world and illuminated the entire universe by showing brilliance of truth to society steeped in darkness and ignorance.

At the end of nearly six centuries since then, great learned saints of *Dera Sachkhand Ballan* - Guru Sarwan Dass, Guru Hari Dass and Guru Garib Dass built an elegant *Guru Ravidass Janam Asthan Temple* through determined efforts. The exact place of incarnation of Ravidass was located by Guru Sarwan Dass with this divine vision where the sacred temple has been built. That revered temple is now world famous sacred place of pilgrimage for devotees from all over the world. The famous historical sacred Tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*) tree is also flourishing close by. Guru Ravidass used to sit here and preach people from all

communities about devout meditation of God, universal brotherhood and love for all human beings. When Guru Sarwan Dass deputed *Sant* Hari Dass to lay the foundation stone of this holy temple in 1964, the old Tamarind tree had dried up. However, when Guru Hari Dass started irrigating by putting water with his hands to the dry Tamarind tree, it slowly re-sprouted and has since continued to grow as a lush green tree. Visiting devotees prostrate with profound regards at this holy place located not far away from the temple. People from all over the world visit these two sacred palaces to pay their respectful homage and to achieve real objective of this human life.

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## Guru Ravidass's Childhood

Once, *Guruji's* father's sister came to see young Ravidass and she brought a toy rabbit made of leather as a gift for him. *Guruji* was playing with that toy while sitting on a cot. Suddenly *Guruji* started pushing the toy rabbit away with his sacred lotus feet as if signalling it to start moving forward. Family members and all visiting relatives were watching this game with great interest and feeling very thrilled. When *Guruji* pushed that lifeless toy rabbit with his sacred feet for the third time; the toy came alive and turned into a real rabbit that started running forwards. *Guruji* was extremely pleased to see that. All members of the family were greatly astonished to witness that scene. After jumping around for a little while, the rabbit sat down quietly near young Guru Ravidass. *Guruji* enjoyed watching the movements of that rabbit. After a while, *Guruji* again pushed that rabbit with his lotus feet and the rabbit started jumping around the assembled family members of *Guruji* and finally ran outdoors. Meanwhile the visiting lady's husband also arrived and he was extremely amazed to listen to such a unique development. It was very difficult for him to believe as he had personally made that toy rabbit of leather with his own hands. Thereafter all members of the

family hugged his tender feet fondly. They were convinced that the divine young child will surely brighten their lives.

Famous poet Mangu Ram Saroa, hailing from village Bahrhoval, has described this unique event in his poem as follows:

***Umar Guran di hoyi ik sal di, shakti beant jot hae Elahi!***

***Bhua aap di jomilan hae aayi, chamrhe da khalona saeha hae liayi!***

***Hath vich Guru khalona farhke, khelde hae baethe manje utte charhke!***

***Charna te fer ke si pare suttia, chamm da khalona ban saeha nathiya!! i.e.***

*Guruji* is just one year old. However this divine soul has infinite powers. *Guruji*'s father's sister has come to see him with a gift of toy rabbit made of leather. *Guruji* sat on a cot holding that toy in hands and enjoyed playing with the toy. Suddenly *Guruji* turned the toy around with his feet and threw it away. The toy got transformed into a real live rabbit that started running around. (*Janamsakhi* or Life Story, Page 16)

Time kept ticking as ordained by God and with that *Guruji* was growing up gracefully impressing everyone with his tender nature and pleasing personality.

An aged lady about 60-65 years of age named Karmavati was resident of Seer Goverdhanpur. She had vast cordial affection for *Guruji*'s grandmother Lakhpati. Lakhpati, accompanied by her grandson, used to visit Karmavati's residence very frequently to meet her. Since Karmavati had lost her eyesight 30 years back, therefore she could not visit Lakhpati's residence. Despite being visually challenged, she used to spin cotton yarn with the spinning wheel almost throughout the day. When both of the respected ladies used to recall events of their past years of life, *Guruji* used to listen to their discussions very attentively. Simultaneously he used to play fondly with Karmavati. Once when Lakhpati asked her friend about the

reason for her to spin yarn at such advanced age, Karmavati explained her compulsions because of extreme poverty of her family with elaborate details. The tender heart of young *Guruji* Ravidass used to get deeply affected on hearing such distressing narratives.

One day Karmavati was spinning yarn with the spinning wheel early in the morning. Guru Ravidass reached her house alone that day. He came close to the spot very quietly and picked up the basket along with cotton placed inside for spinning. Karmavati searched for the basket and cotton desperately by turning her hands all around but she could not find it. After a little while, *Guruji* kept that basket with cotton at its original place. Karmavati was able to find it with her hands during her next attempt. She was absolutely amazed as her hands did not touch that basket at same spot during her earlier attempts. She sensed presence of someone around there but she did not panic as some children used to tease her likewise earlier also. She then picked up some cotton to resume spinning into yarn. However *Guruji* quickly removed the yarn spun earlier away from the spindle. Karmavati could know that immediately. When *Guruji* pulled the spinning wheel a little away, Karmavati got annoyed. She spread both of her arms wide and then quickly closed holding *Guruji* tightly in her arms. Then she asked “Who are you?”

*Guruji* quickly freed his arms from her hold and placed both of his hands on her eyes. *Guruji* said “Respected grandmother! You can now see for yourself who I am.” Karmavati became absolutely calm and tranquil. When she opened her eyes she was amazed to find that her eye sight had been restored. She was extremely thrilled to have a very pleasing view of the divine and most beautiful face of *Guruji* Ravidass. Karmavati conveyed her devout salutations to *Guruji* with her folded hands and said “*Guruji*! You are indeed unique and you have done an extremely great favour to me. Blessed and truly great is that proud mother who gave birth to an extraordinary son like



you and admirable is the family in which you have been born.” Later Karmavati had a close look at everything in her house and she felt immensely delighted with this unique positive development. Meanwhile Guru Ravidass left that place and went home.

Karmavati was not yet fully satisfied with the vision of revered *Guruji* for a short while. Therefore, she quickly followed *Guruji* and reached his house. When she narrated the entire story about miraculous restoration of her eyesight, all members of the family were extremely amazed to learn about this extraordinary feat. She explained to everyone how this became possible with the benevolent blessings of their son. She said “All of you deserve hearty congratulations as God has Himself incarnated in your house. She sang paeans of grandeur of *Guruji*.

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## Family Life

As Guru Ravidass preached absolute truth and love for all, the entrenched enemies of humanity were very jealous. Some close relatives of Guru Ravidass were also extremely perturbed because of such issues but *Guruji* invariably ignored the resentful individuals. *Guruji* always relished the company of learned sages and revered saints and simultaneously helped his respected father Santokh Dass in his daily work. Santokh Dass was always extremely busy making shoes. He also kept worrying very often about the future work for *Guruji*. He was very keen that his son should also learn all the skills for making shoes and work like him. However *Guruji* kept himself busy with either singing paeans eulogising God's grandeur or holding spiritual discourses with learned sages and venerated saints. The sweet aroma of spiritual enlightenment, scholarly knowledge and accomplishments of *Guruji* enriched the environment all over Seer Goverdhanpur with very pleasant fragrance. People from all major religious groups started



visiting *Guruji* in very large numbers for seeking spiritual knowledge and divine worship.

*Guruji* pursued the family's traditional profession during adolescence to make shoes like his ancestors. While Guru Ravidass preached universal love and religious values; the enemies of humanity used to ridicule his lower caste status because of their sheer ignorance. *Guruji*'s opponents and upper caste adversaries wanted him to stop preaching and only pursue his traditional family profession of making shoes diligently. However, *Guruji* had a very firm resolve to show the right spiritual path to each and every human being irrespective of caste or creed.

Feeling threatened because of absolutely firm state of *Guruji*'s mind, arrogant upper caste enemies of humanity steeped in caste based discrimination tried to frighten *Guruji* by quoting examples from Vedas, Shastras and *Manusmriti* etc. However *Guruji* clearly told such enemies of humanity “I practice devout meditation of *Naam* of God. Hence I have nothing to fear from messengers of death.”

***Chamrata ganth na janaie!! Log gathavae panhie!!1!!Rahao!!***

***Aar nahi h topou!! Nahi rambi thaou ropou!!1!!***

***Log ganth ganth khara bigucha!!Hou bin ganthe jaie pahucha!!2!!***

***Ravidass japae Ram nama!! Mohi jam siou nahi kama!!3!!7!! i.e.***

(Guru Ravidass preaches the entire humanity that anyone, who gives up false affection for his body and devotes himself to meditation of God, surely overcomes the fear of death and attains eternal salvation.

I won't have false affection for this perishable body covered with skin. People visit me to seek fulfilment of their human desires or to acquire false worldly pleasures dear to the human beings.

I do not have instruments for piercing, skinning and stitching that I can use to secure false worldly pleasures for the sake of body, meaning that I don't have sharp wits and

deceptive wisdom to cement my attachment with false love and deep affection for this perishable world.

People continue to suffer because of their deep affection for the perishable human body and illusory universe. However, I have no love for the body or worldly pleasures. With my true affection and devotion to God, I have achieved salvation and I have become one with the Almighty God.

Guru Ravidass declares that “I have achieved true eternal friendship with God through deep devotion and meditation of God. Hence, I have nothing to be afraid of messengers of death now.”)

*Guruji* wanted that preaching and publicity related to true religion should reach vast numbers of human beings so that their living standards should rise and quality of life should improve. In reality, *Guruji* was accomplishing many virtuous tasks that no one had been capable of even attempting throughout the world history.

As the glory of *Guruji* spread far and wide, the enemies of humanity felt enraged and jealous because they could not appreciate a lower caste untouchable preaching the universal love for God and explaining all people the true path for dedicated worship of God. They started plotting sinister moves to make false allegations against *Guruji* so that he is summoned before the king's court and punished. When *Guruji*'s respected father learnt about such treacherous moves, he contemplated to make arrangements for the marriage of *Guruji* quickly. He thought that *Guruji* might abandon meditation of God and start taking interest in married family life after his marriage.

Santokh Dass decided after careful thinking to solemnize marriage of Guru Ravidass so that *Guruji*'s mind and attention get focussed on married family life. Some days later engagement ceremony of Guru Ravidass was solemnized with Lona Devi hailing from a reputed family of Mirzapur district. Preparations for the wedding ceremony also were taken up soon thereafter. Lona Devi was also an

extremely religious minded noble lady. She shouldered all important house hold responsibilities very well after her wedding and arrival in the house of her in-laws. Her face was always gracious and blooming like a flower. Having got a nice daughter-in-law like his own daughter, Santokh Dass was extremely happy and he was always full of sincere gratitude for God in his mind. He found his house to be more liveable and pleasing with the arrival of his learned daughter-in-law.

Lona Devi was very quick to realize that her husband was in reality, incarnation of God, the creator of all living beings and this universe. So she devoted herself sincerely to the service of Guru Ravidass every moment. She had learnt that her husband would assume the role of a truly perfect *Guruji* and banish ignorance of people all over the universe and emancipate not only each member of his family but also liberate all living beings of the world.

In due course of time, Lona Devi gave birth to a lovely son who was named Vijay Dass. Mr. G.W Brigs the learned author of a published book "The Chamars" has also written in his publication "His (*Jagatguru* Ravidass') wife's name was Lona and his son was named Vijay Dass."

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## Creation of '*Gurumukhi*' Alphabets

The society, in which Guru Ravidass had his incarnation, had to face innumerable restrictions. This impoverished society was also deeply steeped in poverty and ignorance. Guru Ravidass was very keen to change the lives of impoverished society significantly for the better. *Guruji* wanted major all round positive changes for betterment of society. *Guruji* motivated everyone to be knowledgeable and enlightened :-

***Madho abidiya hit keen! Bibek deep maleen!! i.e.***

O God! Human beings identify their interests with ignorance. Hence, they find it difficult to distinguish

between truth and falsehood. Because of lack of knowledge, people waste their lives steeped in ignorance.

With a view to lighting the lamp of knowledge and truth, *Guruji* created thirty four alphabets of *Gurumukhi* script. This resulted in awareness and a new bright hope for people to be knowledgeable and learned scholars. The people of the society, who were denied all opportunities for studies and learning, started flocking to *Guruji* to light their own lamp and to provide light to others. The prevailing situation was notoriously serious as any Shudras trying to study *Devnagari* script were forcibly blinded. In order to save people from such inhuman tortures Guru Ravidass crafted *Gurumukhi* script and words. As Sant Kabir aptly said:-

***Pundit mullah jo likh deeya! Shad chale ham  
kashu na leeya!!*** i.e.

All scriptures written by pundits and Brahmins regarding Hinduism or preaching by Mullahs about Islam have been left behind by me. I have not carried any such scriptures with me.

Over a period of time everything was falling in place as desired by *Jagatguru* Ravidass. The famous historian Macaulay aptly wrote “The grandeur and brilliance of *Shri Ravidass Sahib* spread all around like the bright sun.” *Guruji's* pious, progressive and well meaning philosophy defeated all designs of treacherous and greedy enemies of human society. Giani Gurcharan Singh Vaid writes in his book “*Gurumukhi Akhar Bhagat Ravidass ne Banaye*” or “*Bhagat Ravidass created the Gurumukhi script and words*” as follows:

'One can easily understand extremely well through study of *Amritbani* that *Gurumukhi* script was created by *Bhagat Ravidass* as evidenced by *Bani* written by *Bhagat*. *Bhagat Ravidass* wrote – ***Nana khiyan puran bed bidh chautis akhar mahi!!*** i.e. The entire knowledge contained in the Vedas and Puranas is scripted in 34 alphabets. That means in reality, original alphabets of *Devnagari* script are

only 34. However to make everything complicated and difficult for common man to study and acquire knowledge, the pundits increased the alphabets to 52 just as volume of milk is increased by adding water. It is therefore evident that original 34 words of *Gurumukhi* script were created by *Bhagat Ravidass* and gifted to humanity. *Gurumukhi* script was not created by Guru Nanak Dev or Guru Angad Dev.'

The untouchable communities were totally barred from studying or teaching Sanskrit language. In order to meet the legitimate requirements of the backwards, untouchable communities and women folk; *Bhagat Ravidass* created *Gurumukhi* script so that these communities also become educated and learned. Thereafter they can throw away the shackles of bondage created by Brahmins and lead dignified and prosperous lives.

Lahore High Court had declared through their judgement dated 11<sup>th</sup> March, 1932 before partition of India and creation of Pakistan that *Gurumukhi* script had been created by Guru Ravidass. Therefore, Guru Ravidass was not only a great religious and spiritual leader but he was also creator of vernacular Punjabi literature in India. Guru created 34 alphabets of *Gurumukhi* and *Guru Ravidass* wrote as follows while educating the masses about those alphabets:

***Nana khiyan puran bed bidh chautis akhar mahi!!***

i.e.

The entire knowledge contained in the Vedas and Puranas is scripted in 34 alphabets.

The 34 alphabets of *Gurumukhi* script created by *Guru Ravidass* are as follows:

“ੳ ਅ ਏ ਸ ਹ ਕ ਖ ਗ ਘ ਙ ਚ ਛ ਜ ਝ ਵ ਟ ਠ ਡ ਢ ਣ ਤ  
ਥ ਦ ਧ ਨ ਪ ਫ ਬ ਭ ਮ ਯ ਰ ਲ ਵ”

Many learned scholars recognise *Guru Ravidassas* the creator of 34 alphabets of *Gurumukhi* script. They are of the opinion that alphabet 'r' or 'rh' was added later on. However we can easily infer from *Guruji's Amritbani* hymn

**“Had mass narhi ko pinjar-----”** that Guru Ravidass actually used the alphabet 'rh' in his *Amritbani*. It is therefore quite possible that Guru Ravidass might have created the alphabet 'rh' as well later on for enrichment of *Gurumukhi* language. This was a trivial task for the creator of 34 alphabets of *Gurumukhi* but this is a unique gift to the Punjabi speaking people of this world.

Dr. Krishna Kalsia in his book “*Guru Ravidass Kavi-Kala*” or Poetic Skills of Guru Ravidass has expressed his authoritative views as follows under the title “*Guru Ravidass Bani vich Punjabi Pradhanta*” i.e. Predominance of Punjabi Language in *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass:

“The influence of Punjabi language is quite evident and clear in the *Gurbani* of Guru Ravidass incorporated in *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*. Likewise, there is ample evidence of influence of Punjabi language in sacred *Bani* of Guru Ravidass which has not been incorporated in *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*.” e.g.:

### **Raag Gaurhi**

***Pahile pehare raen de banjariya taen janam liya sansar ve!***

***Sewa chuko Ram ki banjariya teri balak budh ganwar ve!!1!!***

***Balak budh ganbar na chetiyo tu bhoola Maya jaal ve!***

***Kaha hoye pachhe pachhitai jal pehile na bandhi paal ve!!2!!***

***Bees baras ka bhaya ayana tham na saka bhav ve!***

***Jan Ravidass kahae banjariya janam liya sansar ve!!3!!***

***Dooje pehare raen de banjariya tu nirkhat chaliyo chhanh ve!***

***Har na Damodar dhiaya banjariya taen leyi na saka naav ve!!4!!***

***Naav na leeya augun keeya is joban kae taan ve!***

***Apni praaai gini na kayi mand karam kmaan ve!!5!!***



*Sahib lekha lesi tu bhar desi bheer parae tujh tanh ve!*

*Jan Ravidass kahai banjaryia tu nirkhat chala chhanh ve!!6!!*

*Teeje pehare raen de banjariya tere dhilrhe parhe pran ve!*

*Kaya rwani na karae banjairya ghat bhitar base kujan ve!!7!!*

*Ek basae kujan kayagarh bhitar pehla janam ganvayi ve!*

*Ab ki ber na sukirit keeya bahur na yeh garh payi ve!!8!!*

*Kampi deh kayagarh chheena fir laga pachhitan ve!!*

*Jan Ravidass kahai banjariya tere dhilrhe parhe pran ve!!9!!*

*Chouthe pehare raen de banjariya teri kampan lagi deh ve!!*

*Sahib lekha mangiya banjariya tu chhad purani theh ve!!10!!*

*Chhad purani jid ayana balad hank saberiya ve!!*

*Jam ke aaye bandh chalaye baari poogi teriya ve!!11!!*

*Panth chale akela hoye duhela kis ko deh sneh ve!!*

*Jan Ravidass kahai banjariya teri kampan lagi deh ve!!12!!8!!*

**i.e.**

(Guru Ravidass describes the four stages of night like human life i.e. childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age followed by death. He further advises this merchant like human being to trade in true meditation of God for attaining eternal salvation.

O dear merchant! During first part of this night like human life or childhood, you were totally engrossed in devout meditation of God while being nursed in your mother's womb till your birth. However that devout communion with God was broken on your arrival in this

perishable world. Therefore you do not practice meditation of God during your childhood because of ignorance.

O dear! You did not worship God because of your under-developed intellect during childhood. You were busy in pursuit of worldly attractions forgetting the God. Therefore, O dear! What is the use of repenting later at the last moment? O dear! You did not bother to exercise control over your ignorant mind akin to flowing water and never devoted yourself to devout meditation of God.

O brother! You remained oblivious to meditation of God even after attaining age of twenty years. You did not control your wrong pursuits and did not devote your mind to true worship of God. Guru Ravidass says that this scarce human birth is meant for worship of God and therefore you must truly engage in devout meditation of God.

O dear merchant! Even during second part of your night like life or your adolescent life, you are far removed from God and deeply swayed by the darkness of ignorance although aware of futility of pursuit of worldly pleasures. O dear trader! You have not devoted yourself to meditation of *Hari* and you could not truly worship God.

O brother! Being enamoured with arrogance of your youth and false pride, you did not devote yourself to meditation of God. You remained busy in your misdeeds without distinguishing between your wife and other ladies.

O man! When God will hold you accountable for your deeds, then you will have no choice but to accept your liability. You will have to endure miseries at that time. O merchant! You are moving towards indulgence in misdemeanour and darkness because of sheer ignorance during the second stage of your life.

O man the trader! When you have reached the third stage of your night like human life, you are losing grip over your bodily powers. O dear ! Your body is continuously becoming weak. O dear merchant! What do you intend doing now? You have not grasped the wisdom even now.

O dear! God manifests in your body that is akin to a

fort. Oblivious of God, you have wasted your life so far. O brother! Having been blessed with rare human birth, you did not do the pious duty of devout meditation of God. You will not get this fort like human body again i.e. you will not be blessed with birth as a human being again.

O trader! Your fort like body is shaking i.e. your body is trembling because it has become very weak. You are now repenting because you did not bother to worship God with devotion. *Guru Ravidass* says that with the arrival of third stage of your life, you are becoming very weak and hence it is high time that you should always remember God every moment.

O merchant! With the advent of fourth stage of this night like human life, your body keeps trembling. Now God wants to hold you accountable and He has sent you this message that your end is very near now.

O ignorant human being! You must leave this aged human body and depart with the arrival of the final moment. You must make the best of available good time. Just as a farmer herds his bullocks to the fields early in the morning, same way the messengers of death will herd you away after the end of fourth part of night like human life. Your time in this world is over.

At the end of one's life, soul has to traverse the arduous path across this universe alone. None other than God's *Naam* shall be of any help to you in this difficult journey. Which of your dear ones will you call for help then? *Guru Ravidass* says "O dear merchant! Because of arrival of fourth phase of your life or old age, your body keeps trembling. That means your end is very near and hence you must remember God each moment."

Many words listed below incorporated in the hymn cited above have very close affinity to Punjabi poetry.

***"Banjarya, Balak budh, Joban, Ganwar, Mande karam. Tham, Baras, Nirkhat, Praanand Pal, etc."***

Furthermore parts of lines from *Amritbani* recited by

Guru Ravidass are clearly linked to the prominence of Punjabi folk language:

*'Baran palat biayo----' 'Dhann so panthi-----  
'Ghat ghat biyap rahiyo-----'  
'Sant outare aarti dev siromaniye---' Dhoop  
dhoopaiye----' 'Tan mann aatam bari---'  
'Sada Hari gayie-----' Sagahn ban viku---' 'Jab  
lagi tan mann sudh na hoye---'  
'Kam kalesh---' 'Bhagati na hoye bahu gun  
kinae--' 'Nis basar duskaram kamayie---'  
'Santokul pakhi bhagati havaesi Kaliyug mae---'  
'Ram kahat Baikunthe jayie'  
'Bin viswas---' 'Meri kuchila jati kuchila me bas-  
---' 'Niranjan dhiyaoun-----'  
'Baras sahas das judh karayo jugal udharan raj -  
----'  
's ghar jaoun haun bahur na aaoun----' 'Prem ki  
pati surati lekhan----'  
'Rara mama likh ank dikhaoun---' etc.*

While pronouncing Punjabi words comprising of more than two alphabets and the first two are long notation vowels; the same automatically get changed into a short notation vowel e.g. 'Aadhar' gets changed into 'Adhar'.

**- Kal keval Naam adhar!**

**- Jivat Mukande, marat Mukande! Take sewak ko sada anande!!**

The following words have been used in *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass in accordance with pronunciation in Punjabi language:

*'Chand' in comparison to 'Chanda' or 'Chaand'*

*'Naoun' instead of 'Nam'*

*'Sael' instead of 'Saer'*

*'Iyoun' instead of 'Youn'*

Please also see underlined words in the lines from *Amritbani* hymns reproduced below:

**- Jou tum chand tou ham bhaye hae chakora!!1!!**

**- Tioun tioun sael karahi jiyon bhave!!**

- *Marham Mahal na ko atkavae!!*
- *Ghat avghat doogar ghana ik nirgun bael hamar!!*
- *Ioun Gur parsad narak nahi jata!!*
- *Begumpura sahar konaoun!*
- *Pherhe ka dukh sahe ou!*
- *Parchae Ram ravae jo koyi!*

Lots of Punjabi verbs have been used in *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass. Because of that reason, the poetic language used in composition of *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass seems to be dominated by Punjabi. Following examples will corroborate this viewpoint very clearly:

- *Tanda ladiya jaye re!*
- *Mera mann bikhiya bimohiya! (GaurhiPurbi)*
- *Nimat Namdeo doodh piyaya! (Raag Aasa)*
- *Tou jag janam sankat nahi aaiya!*
- *Nindak sodh sadh vichariya !*
- *Kahu Ravidass papi narak sidhariya! (Raaag Gond)*
- *Hoye punit Bhagwant Bhajan te!*
- *Aap tari tare kul doye! ( Raag Bilawal)*

When we use a preposition in Punjabi language the last 'a' gets changed into 'e'. e.g.

*Ramaiye siou ik benthi ---- (Raag Gaurhi) and*  
*Ramaiye rang majith ka --- (Raag Gaurhi)*

After a careful perusal of aforesaid study, we can certainly conclude with full confidence that the language used in *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass is dominated by simple folk Punjabi language.

The commentary of Dr. Kalsia on Poetic Skill of *Guru Ravidass Bani* with his shrewd wisdom is indeed extremely praiseworthy. Therefore, it is clearly confirmed through a study of poetic skill of *Guru Ravidass Bani* that Guru Ravidass was not only knowledgeable about Punjabi language but *Guruji* had great scholarly mastery over Punjabi language. Therefore it is clear beyond any doubt that Gurumukhi script and Punjabi language were created by Guru Ravidass for the benefit of humanity.

*Guruji* strived extremely hard and left no stone

untuned to light the lamp of knowledge to enlighten all human beings after the creation of *Gurumukhi* script. Guru Ravidass says:

***Sat vidiya ko parhe prapat kare sada giyan!***

***Ravidass kahe bin vidiya nar ko jan ajaan !! i.e.***

Everyone must study the true education and enrich himself with scholarly knowledge. A person is absolutely ignorant without meaningful education.

Guru Ravidass had an extremely amiable style to preach and communicate. *Guruji* used to mesmerize the audience through his brilliant face and very soothing words. *Guruji* was very keen to teach all human beings the wonderful virtues of honest livelihood and most cordial mutual love and affection. Enemies of humanity were trembling with rage on seeing the children belonging to *Chamar* community to engage so seriously into studies as such unique initiative by Guru Ravidass was a great revolutionary step in the history of India. Such enlightened step only ushered in the logical power of innovative thinking and understanding important issues amongst the downtrodden communities that suffered from exploitation and suppression for centuries.

It is also evident from the sacred *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass that *Guruji* had vast scholarly knowledge of many Indian languages. *Guruji* not only preached people to be learned, educated and scholarly through his sacred *Amritbani* but he also took pains to educate his disciples in a systematic manner. A large number of research scholars concur with the view that *Guruji* had opened a school at his residence where a very large number of people pursued studies to get educated. Extremely well known scholars recognised and respected the vast knowledge and personal enlightenment of Guru Ravidass and *Guruji* has mentioned about that many times in his sacred *Amritbani*. e.g.:

***Ab bipar pardhan tihi karahae dandout tere***

***Naam sarnai Ravidass dasa!!3!!1!! And***

***Aachar sahit bipar karahae dandout tin tanae***



***Ravidass dasaan dasa!!3!!2!!***

Guru Ravidass preaches entire humanity that any one, who worships God with deep devotion, becomes one with God and his virtues are praised all over the world. And now learned Brahmins respect me and bow before me with complete reverence.

Only forty hymns of sacred *Bani* of Guru Ravidass are incorporated in *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*. There are many such unique words used by Guru Ravidass in these forty hymns which have not been used by any other Guru in any other hymns of *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*. Following are some of such unique words used only by Shri Guru Ravidass:

***Subhayi, Sabha, Bilamba, Andoh, Tasvis, Abadan, Mamoor, Mahram, Dadira, Bimohiya, Unman, Asoch, Olhag, Olhagni, Bigucha, Patiyar, Avilokano, Madhukar, Bhakhau, Ursa, Ambhula, and Abhakhae etc.***

Such unique words confirm the presence of a vast storehouse of knowledge and vocabulary at the command of Guru Ravidass. Furthermore, it was such vast scholarly knowledge of Guru Ravidass that laid the foundations of spiritual music based *Amritbani* which was adopted on massive scale.

The well known writer Ratan Reehal writes in his book titled “*Guruan de Guru Shri Guru Ravidass*” or *Guru of Gurus Shri Guru Ravidass* as follows:

“*Guruji* recited his *Amritbani* conforming to a large number of classical Ragas which confirms that *Shri Guru Ravidass* was a great scholar of classical music. Guru Ravidass recited eternal divine *Amritbani* in many classical Ragas.”

The same writer elaborates further as follows: There used to be significant differences in respect of names of different Ragas and Ragnis and rules and forms applicable to them from place to place those days. Because of such differences, Guru Ravidass considered the then prevalent

system of Ragas and Ragnis as unscientific. Guru Ravidass set those Ragas correctly in accordance with the eight musical notes and made use of those Ragas in conformity with the name of each Raga. While the contemporary musicians keep contemplating thoughts about classification of those Ragas; Guru Ravidass had laid the foundations of those Ragas 500 years ago. Guru Ravidass recited his sacred *Amritbani* in sixteen different Ragas. Guru Nanak Dev also based his pious *Amritbani* on the lines of the sixteen Ragas used by Guru Ravidass.

Simultaneously, *Guruji* not only enlightened people about the futility of ritualistic worship and useless customs that had found entry into the prevailing religious values; but *Guruji* also showed the true and pious way of devout meditation of God.

Guru Ravidass adopted the sacred path of devout meditation and divine powers granted by God to resolve multifarious problems faced by people. *Guruji* made it amply clear to one and all that all human beings should live happily together in a most cordial environment like the hard working honey bees. That is the only way devout meditation and divine powers granted by God shall soak everyone in the permanent colour of divine bliss. This is possible through the sacred company of truth only.

***Satsangat mil rahiae Madhou jaise madhup makhira!!2!!***

Bless us to live happily together like honey bees in the company of your blessed devotees. Honey bee is loyal, sincere, hardworking and courageous and punishes the errant exploiter severely. She overcomes selfish greed and creates sweet honey. O God! Kindly bless us also to live ever happily together in pious company of Thy holy men.

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## Jealousy of Piran Ditta-Ballad Singer

Guru Ravidass was a great sage who wanted well being and happiness of all human beings. *Guruji* had immense love and affection in his heart for one and all irrespective of caste and creed of individuals. He preached the true religion to everyone. *Guruji* aimed at weaning people away from all evil deeds and persuading them to follow the truthful and righteous path. Therefore people from all castes and communities joined the spiritual congregations at Guru Ravidass's *darbar*.

Ballad singer Piran Ditta somehow did not like this development. He became extremely jealous of Guru Ravidass. He organised a meeting one day on the outskirts of the city and a large number of dignitaries and social leaders attended that meeting. They listened to the biased views of Piran Ditta and decided to murder Guru Ravidass. When Guru Ravidass reached that venue, some people started using arrogant and harsh language against him. When *Guruji* listened to their irresponsible and nasty words, he asked them "Why do you use such derogatory and impolite language? We should use our tongue to say soothing and pious words that should be very pleasing to pacify the minds of listeners. What is the use of using harsh language? I have no enmity or any dispute with anyone of you. I do not consider anyone superior or inferior by birth and it is only one's good or evil deeds that make an individual excellent or wicked."

There were many learned and well meaning good people present in that congregation who started eulogising *Guruji* after listening to his Amrita like words of wisdom. However some unwise and conceited individuals got ready to attack *Guruji*. Instead of reacting to their dastardly act, Guru Ravidass sought shelter of God reciting following hymn:

***Ram gusaiya jee ke jeevna!! Mohi na bisarahu  
mae jan tera!!! Rahao!!***

***Meri harahu bipati janu karhu subhai!! Charan na chhadao sarir kal jai!!2!!***

***Kahu Ravidass paroo teri sabha!! Beg milhou jan kari na bilambha!!3!!1!! i.e.***

(O God the creator of all living beings! Please do not forget me ever as I am Thy profound devotee. O God! Kindly relieve me of the troublesome cycle of life and death. O God! Bless me so that I am always at Thy sacred feet till death. Guru Ravidass prays to God that “O God! I am Thy devotee. Kindly let me have the glimpse of Thy eternal view without any further delay.”)

When Guru Ravidass recited this hymn; suddenly the entire area was flooded with extremely bright light. Everyone present there could only see Guru Ravidass everywhere all around the venue. Everyone was stunned watching this unique phenomenon and meanwhile Guru Ravidass returned home and sounded the conch shell (*Shankh*). No one can succeed in any cunning adventure against an omnipotent powerful person.

When devotees go to visit *Shri Guru Ravidass Janam Asthan* Temple at Seer Govardhanpur Varanasi to pay their homage to Guru Ravidass; they mention about that place on return after the pilgrimage. That spot is quite close to Lota Pir and same is located on the road linking the temple with the bank of river Ganges.

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## **When Pathri (Stone Slab) Floated on Water on Historic Festival of *Vaisakhi***

Guru Ravidass had acquired great fame and recognition because of influence of his pious deeds. Some people felt extremely jealous of Guru Ravidass because of such wide spread recognition and utmost respect for *Guruji* in the minds of people and *Guruji's* growing influence on society. Guru Ravidass denounced ritualistic worshipping and instead preached 'Naam' in the simplest form and said

Omni present God is supreme. This was intolerable to such people as per value system prevalent those days. How could those people tolerate *Guruji* as a truly great sage and *Brahmgyani* who always preached the truth? Therefore some people started opposing Guru Ravidass after seeing his growing popularity and influence. There are many known stories about such protests and opposition and *Guruji's Amritbani* surely points towards some of those. When Guru Ravidass started conducting regular spiritual congregations at his *Durbar*, a very large number of devotees, influenced by preaching of truth, started participating in all such religious congregations. They were keen to make their human lives truly worthwhile and successful by carefully listening to Amrita nectar like preaching of *Amritbani* by Guru Ravidass. People discovered a new way of life after hearing sacred and pious words in spiritual discourses conducted by the Guru. Guru Ravidass preached;-

***Janamu jaati koon chhandi kar karni jaat pradhan!***

***Ehiyaon sachu dharm hae kahe Ravidass bakhan!!***

The practice of determination against anyone's caste based on his birth should be abandoned as noble human deeds are most important and not the caste. A human being is superior only because of his noble deeds. Guru Ravidass declares that the true dharma recognises supremacy of an individual based on noble deeds and not on birth related caste.

***Bahman khatri baes sood Ravidass janam te nanhi!***

***Jau chahayi subaran kou pavayie karman manhi!!***

Guru Ravidass declares that “No one can be treated as a *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* or *Trader* and *Shudra* or low caste based on birth. But truly dignified is one who always pursues noble deeds”.

***Ravidass janam ke karne hot na kou neech!  
Nar koon neech kari dari hae oshe karam ki  
keech!!***

Guru Ravidass articulates that “No one can be treated as a low caste based on his birth in a so called lower caste. In reality one is ignoble only because of his bad deeds. Anyone who is smeared with the mud of misdeeds is a low caste”.

*Guruji* showed the path of real truth to transform the human society. He declared that no one can be dubbed as *Shudra* or inferior just based on his birth in a particular community. We must evaluate the human qualities of an individual while passing judgement on his life.

***Ravidass brahman mat pooye jo hovae gunhin!  
Poojahi charan chandal ke jou hovae gun parvin!!***

Guru Ravidass states that “A *Brahmin* without knowledge deserves no reverence. However even a ruffian with noble qualities should be venerated. Thus anyone with pious mind and noble deeds is worthy of worship.”

A very large number of kings and queens became disciples of Guru Ravidass after being immensely impressed by his truthful views and preaching. That is also an important reason why Guru Ravidass had to face the ire of his misguided staunch opponents.

Later once, some people lodged a complaint with Vir Singh Baghel king of Kashi. They alleged “A *Shudra* Guru Ravidass has assumed the role of a religious *Guru* and he has been holding spiritual discourses to preach people about religious issues. That is absolutely wrong as only Brahmins are entitled to perform such duties.” After receiving this complaint, the king asked Guru Ravidass and the opponents to assemble in his *darbar*. Both opposing parties were given adequate opportunity to elucidate their respective view points in accordance with the scriptures. People in extremely large numbers thronged the venue to listen to this unique spiritual debate that continued for a very long time. Spiritual knowledge of Pandits was no match for the



scholarly mastery of Guru Ravidass. When the Pandits realized that they were sure to lose the spiritual debate; they made futile efforts so that no final verdict should be pronounced. However as desired by the people and as per judgement by the ruler, it was decided that both opposing parties should bring their respective *Thakur* to the *darbar*. Thereafter those *Thakur* would be placed in flowing current of *Ganga* with the condition that whosoever is able to recall his *Thakur* and ensure that the *Thakur* float on water shall be the undisputed winner. He would have all the rights to worship God and preach spiritual sermons. The winner would also be taken around the entire city in a gold palanquin in a grand ceremonial procession.

Accordingly the Pandits reached the given venue at *Raj Ghat* along with their wooden *Thakur* on the fixed day of the historical festival of *Vaisakhi*. Guru Ravidass also reached there with the heavy stone slab that he used for his routine daily work to make shoes. An extremely large number of people also reached there to witness the unique competition. All of the Brahmins were thrilled and rejoiced on seeing stone slab of Guru Ravidass as they felt sure that the heavy stone slab was bound to sink in the river water. Therefore they thought that they would surely win the competition and Guru Ravidass ji would stand defeated. Large crowds of people had gathered there and everyone was wondering about the likely winner. People were getting restless with expectations and they were wondering how soon the king would order the commencement of competition.

After getting the go ahead signal from the king; the Pandits placed their wooden deities very carefully in the flowing stream of *Ganga*. Thereafter they started chanting a series of Mantras to recall their deities. People came from far flung places and assembled at the venue. They were watching all these developments very keenly. However, despite the earnest efforts of the Pandits for a very long time to recall their deities, they did not succeed in their endeavour

as their deities did not float on water. Thereafter the king of Kashi asked Guru Ravidass to place his *Thakur* in the flowing river and recall it back floating on water. After receiving the go ahead signal from the king, Guru Ravidass prayed to God and placed his stone slab as his *Thakur* in the flowing stream of *Ganga*. While continuously remembering God, Guru Ravidass prayed in his mind with utmost devotion “O God! You are my only saviour and I am totally dependent on you. I have remembered you from the core of my heart at this difficult juncture. Kindly do materialize to let me have your vision and save my honour. Guru Ravidass was seated on the bank of river *Ganga* fully engrossed in meditation of God. Guru Ravidass made an earnest appeal to God saying that he had tremendous devotion and true love for God and recited following hymn:

***Jou tum girivar tou ham mora!!***  
***Jou tum chand tou ham bhaye hae chakora!!1!!***  
***Madhave tum na torahu tou ham nahi torahi!!***  
***Tum siou tor kavan siou jorahi!!1!!Rahao!!***  
***Jou tum divra tou ham bati!!***  
***Jou tum tirath tou ham jati!!2!!***  
***Sachi preet ham tum siou jori!!***  
***Tum siou jor avar sang tori!!3!!***  
***Jah jah jaoun taha teri seva!!***  
***Tum so thakur aur na deva!!4!!***  
***Tumre bhajan katahi jam phasa!!***  
***Bhagti het gavae Ravidassa!!5!!5!!*** i.e.

(O God! My eternal devotion to Thee is such that if Thou are mountain with dense forests, bless me to be a peacock with my abode there as such mountains are very dear to peacock. If Thou are personified as moon, then I should be a partridge (*Chakor*).

O God! I will never sever my dedication to Thee if I continue to have blessings of Thy divine benevolence. Whom shall I adore if ever I happen to lose Thy affection?

O God! If you personify in a lamp, I should be your wick. If Thou represent a place of pilgrimage, then I should be Thy blessed pilgrim.

O God! I have cultivated true devotion to Thee and abandoned the longing for futile world. Having established enduring bonds of loyalty to Thee, I have severed all links with everyone else.

O God! Wherever I happen to go, I pray and worship only Thee. There is no other deity like Thee in entire universe.

O God! Thy meditation gets one rid of noose of death. Guru Ravidass explains that he sings only God's paeans because of his extremely deep devotion to God.

O God! My love with you and devout affection for you are exactly like the love of a peacock with the hill, as a *Chakor* loves the moon and as a pilgrim loves a place of pilgrimage.)

Immediately thereafter, *Guruji* started praying to God with profound devotion to very kindly reveal Himself and he recited the following hymn:

***Koop bhario jaise dadira kashu des bides na boojh!!***

***Aise mera man bikhia bimohia kashu aarapar na soojh!!1!!***

***Sagal bhavan ke naiyka ik chhin daras dikhaye ji !!1!!Rahao!!***

***Malin bhayie mati Madhva teri gat lakhi na jai!!***

***Karahu kirpa bhram chukaie mae sumat deh samjhai!!2!!***

***Jogisar pavahi nahi tua gun kathan apar!!***

***Prem bhagti kae karnae kahu Ravidass chamar!!3!!1!!***

**i.e.**

(O God! As a frog spends his entire life in the well, he does not know anything about the world outside the well. He remains happily engrossed in pursuit of his pleasures ignorant of the outside world. Similar is the state of human being whose mind is steeped in the well of ignorance and he knows little about utmost need for earnest efforts to secure real happiness in this life and eternal peace with salvation thereafter.

O God Almighty, the lord of entire universe! Be kind to grant me a glimpse of Thy eternal self. Human being secures eternal bliss of God after getting rid of all worldly attachments. Such a living being longs every moment fondly to realize God and he prays to God to let him have a view of Almighty just for a second so that his soul attains eternal peace.

O God! Because of ignorance, mind of human being is so badly soiled that he cannot realize eternal truth or *Brahamgiyan*. Be kind O God and bless me with your divine benevolence so that I get pious eternal enlightenment and all of my illusions vanish forever.

O God even great and well known yogis can never fathom your divine super powers because your supreme powers are infinite and limitless. Guru Ravidass says “I, hailing from *Chamar* community, sing Thy paeans just because of my deep devotion to Thee.”)

*Guruji* also recited following hymn thereafter with utmost devotion:

***Aayaun ho aayaun dev tum sarna!!***

***Jani kripa kijae aapno jana!! Tek!!***

***Tribidh jon baas jam di agam tras tumhare bhajan bin bhramat phiryo!!***

***Mamita ahm bikhae mad maton ih sukh kabhoon na dootur tiraun!!1!!***

***Tumhare nanv bisas shadi hae aan ki aas sansar dharm mere man na dhijae!!***

***Ravidass dass ki seva mani ho Devadhidev patit pavan Naam pragat kijae!!2!!9!! i.e.***

(Guru Ravidass prays to God with deep humility that “O supreme God of the deities! I surrender before Thee. Take pity on Thy devotee and bless me with Thy eternal sight.”)

O God! Anyone devoid of Thy meditation wanders through endless life cycles of lowly creatures enduring intense suffering.

In the absence of devotion to God, living being

remains engrossed in lust, pride and illusory worldly pleasures. Drowned in relentless pursuit of worldly pleasures, one cannot vanquish the five foes.

O God! I have abandoned all desires barring practice of Thy devout meditation. I relish only Thy worship but have no liking for pursuit of futile worldly rituals.

Guru Ravidass prays to God with deep humility that “O revered God! Kindly accept my dedicated devotion and bless me with Thy devout meditation that purifies even the sinners.”) On completion of recital of this hymn, Guru Ravidass opened his eyes and *Guruji* was delighted to see the *Thakur* in the form of stone slab floating on the sacred water of *Ganga*. Whatever side Guru Ravidass requested the *Thakur* to reveal his sacred vision, the stone slab quietly moved that way. Everyone assembled there was amazed to witness this unique feat and all of them joined in chorus to chant 'Glory to Guru Ravidass' repeatedly. Everyone visualized Guru Ravidass in the divine form of God. All of them paid their obeisance at the lotus feet of Guru Ravidass.

King Vir Singh Baghel also paid his profound respects at the lotus feet of Guru Ravidass and requested *Guruji* to very kindly accept him as one of his disciples. The king made a public declaration before the infinite crowd of people assembled there '*My revered Guru - Guru Ravidass is indeed incarnation of God in the true sense.*' He advised the pundits “You should never be jealous of *Guruji*. It is with the benevolent blessings of Guru Ravidass that all of us had the good fortune of having a very clear and direct vision of *Thakur* or God. All of us are extremely fortunate indeed.' *Guruji* thus preached that Omniscient God is the greatest and each and every human being has right to worship Him and take his sacred '*Naam*'.

After everyone had paid respectful regards to Guru Ravidass, the king made arrangements for *Guruji* to sit in a gold palanquin. The royal canopy was placed over the head of *Guruji* with great reverence. Guru Ravidass was taken all around the city in a grand procession in that gold palanquin. Everyone in the city was rejoicing happily after having a

glimpse of Guru Ravidass in that ceremonial procession. Whichever route the palanquin was taken in that grand ceremony, the local people were showering flowers across the canopy of the palanquin with great devotion to welcome *Guruji*. Guru Ravidass then recited following hymn from his *Amritbani*:

***Aesi lal tujh bin kaun karae!!***

***Garib Nivaj Gusaiya mera mathae chhatar dharae!!1!!Rahao!!***

***Ja ki chhot jagat kau lagae ta par tuhi dharae!!***

***Nichah ooch karae mera Govind kahu te na darae!!1!***

***Namdev Kabir Tilochan Sadhna Sain tarae!!***

***Kahi Ravidass sunahu re Santahu Har u te sabhae sarae!!2!!1!!*** i.e.

(O charming God! Who else except Thee can perform such miracles? O God the saviour of the poor! Thou have bestowed me with great honour today.

I, who was considered untouchable so far, am now being showered with paeans of praise all around because of Thy benevolence. My God Govind transforms lowly into high and mighty and He is not afraid of anyone while doing so.

Guru Namdev, Guru Kabir, Guru Trilochan, Guru Sadhna and Guru Sain attained eternal salvation through deep devotion to God. They strived to create a united world with universal brotherhood and many kings and religious extremists bowed their heads with reverence before them. Following the sacred path shown by them, innumerable number of people attained salvation. Guru Ravidass in his address to the holy saints says “Listen O saints! God is omnipotent and He can accomplish whatever He envisages.”)

Later in the evening Guru Ravidass was taken back to *Guruji*'s residence along with *Thakur* in the form of the stone slab. All of the poor people were rejoicing that day. Everyone got busy in pursuing noble deeds as per guidance



of Guru Ravidass. Most of the people started attending daily spiritual discourses conducted by Guru Ravidass to make their precious human lives truly fruitful. Let us all join together and resolve today to adopt the precious teachings of Guru Ravidass in our lives. Let us study and listen very carefully to the pious and positively constructive preaching of *Guruji* and make our rare and extremely invaluable human lives truly successful.

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## **When God Guised as a Saint Presented Philosopher's Stone to *Jagat Guru Ravidass Ji***

*Baras saat ko bhaiyo jab hi, naudha bhagati  
chalaayi tab hi!!*

*Aru bhagtan ki seva karyi, satigur kaho so seekh  
na tarayi!!* i.e.

When Guru Ravidass was just seven years old, devotees in very large numbers started visiting *Guruji* to rejoice with ecstatic joy of worship of God. *Guruji* shouldered the responsibilities entrusted by God for the emancipation of society. Very large numbers of disciples used to throng *Guruji's darbar* every day with utmost devotion.

*Baras saat aoure chal gaiya, bahut preeti Keso soo  
bhaiya!!*

A period of another seven years was devoted to devout worship of God. *Guruji* had developed extremely strong and dedicated love and affection for God. *Guruji* was always ready to discharge his responsibilities towards truthful deeds. *Guruji* worked hard with his own hands and used the honest earnings to serve the visiting saints and devotees.

*Sidho cham mol lae aave, ta ki panhi adhik  
banave!!*

*Toote fate jahva jore, samkati kar kahu na nihore!!*

*Guruji* used to make extremely beautiful and most comfortable leather shoes. Very often *Guruji* used to present such nice shoes to visiting saints free. *Guruji* led people by example and demonstrated to them the virtues of earning honest living through dedicated hard work. *Guruji* also educated people to benefit themselves by rendering various services to the saints and society and make their lives truly successful through regular meditation of God.

***Baras saat aesi vidhi gaiya, Keso ke mann upji daiya!!***

***Tab Hari Bhagat roop dhar aayo, jan Ravidass bahut mann bhayo!!***

When *Guruji* attained the age of 21 years, then God visited *Guruji* in the guise of a saint. Guru Ravidass was extremely delighted to have a vision of God. He welcomed God with utmost devotion and offered him a suitable seat to be seated. He greeted God with very pleasing and respectful words. *Guruji* said “You have been extremely kind and benevolent to bless this devotee today. I have been truly very fortunate to have your divine vision.” While eulogising God with such pious words, Guru Ravidass cleaned and washed the lotus feet of God. Thereafter he served meals to God. Later they had personal discussions. *Hari* or God said “I do not find any worthwhile personal property owned by you. Then how do you manage your expenses to meet normal requirements?” *Guruji* replied “My most valuable asset is worship of God. There is no treasure in this world as precious as God's *Naam* in my view.”

***Koti lachhmi jakae charna! Dukh daridar nahi tihi sarana!!*** i.e.

Crores of goddesses *Lakshmi*, the so called goddess of wealth, reside at the lotus feet of God all the time. Then how can anyone under the kind shelter of God be impoverished? *Hari*- God was extremely delighted to get such a thoughtful answer from Guru Ravidass. God said “Ravidass! If you can accept one of my suggestions then poverty shall vanish once for all just today itself. I have been

an ascetic since my childhood. While I was on my way to your house, I found a 'Paras' or Philosopher's stone— a miraculous mythical stone during the journey. This is of no use to me. Considering you as a most deserving person, I wish to offer this philosopher's stone to you. When this stone comes in contact with iron, it turns that iron into gold instantaneously. You should make use of this unique stone to turn iron into gold and then use that gold to make excellent arrangements for the boarding and comfortable lodging of your devotees.

Guru Ravidass kept quiet for sometime after listening to such suggestions from God. He contemplated whether the visitor had come to test his wisdom or cause disruption to his profound meditation. Guru Ravidass watched quietly for a while.

***Ghari ek Ravidass na boliya! Hari ganthte paras kholiya!!***

***Touni maenae dahkae hamko, Nihchae kiya det hon tumko!!*** i.e.

Then God opened his bag and took out the Philosopher's stone. God said “Ravidass! Whatever you may think, I shall give this philosopher's stone only to you.” As God touched an iron needle with that Philosopher's stone, that turned into a gold needle. After seeing that transformation, Guru Ravidass said to God “There is no way I can accept this Philosopher's stone. On the contrary, I shall not even look at this.” Guru Ravidass said “If everything could be achieved with gold, then why many kings denounced their empires and they became ascetics. They spent their lives happily living on begged alms and engaged in meditation of God. They did not cherish gold.” God replied, “Don't blame gold for any ills. Gold is useful to build beautiful temples. Gold is useful for rendering various services to God. Gold can be useful for building a heaven like settlement and gold can help feed millions of hungry people.”

Then Guru Ravidass replied “Gold prompts people

to pursue ignoble deeds and then sinners have to suffer in hell. Gold intoxicates people and provokes owners to ruinous habits like gambling, addiction to drinking liquor, pursuit of insatiable lust and they cherish meat and other non vegetarian foods. Then you should explain to me how can gold be useful to me? If you say that gold will be helpful to serve community meals to the poor and needy, why don't you take up that noble work yourself with the help of this Philosopher's stone? Why do you wish to give this to me?" God replied "I have offered this to you because I have full faith and confidence in your integrity." However Guru Ravidass declined to accept that offer. Thereafter God kept that Philosopher's stone at *Guruji's* premises and said "Please keep this Philosopher's stone in your safe custody on my behalf. I have to visit a few places and I shall take it from you on my way back." Guru Ravidass retreated and said "You may keep this stone anywhere in my hermitage and pick it up from the same spot on your return." God was of the opinion that Guru Ravidass would make use of the Philosopher's stone after his departure. However *Guruji* did not even look at that stone for thirteen months.

***Jan Ravidass na dekhae kayi! Mass terhven bahutyo aayi!!***

When God returned after thirteen months, He asked *Guruji* "Where is my Philosopher's stone?" Guru Ravidass replied "It must be at the same place where you had kept it."

***Kahe swami kadhi na lina, kaun dosh paras ko dina!!***

***Jan Ravidass kahe kari jore, mae shadiyo pathar kae more!!***

Then God asked "Why did you not take out the Philosopher's stone to make use of same? What is evil about it?" Guru Ravidass politely replied "This stone is of no use to me."

***Paras mori hari ka Naamu! Pathar so mohi nahi kamu!!***

***Hari Paras kanchan ki rasi! Avour sakal maya ki phasi!!***

I have *Hari* - God's *Naam* with me and that is the most precious of all Philosopher's stones. *Hari* - God is my biggest asset of precious gold and all the rest is just like the noose of *Maya*.

***Angikar Ravidass na kino!! Tab Hari apno paras lino!!***

***Le paras ram chale Murari!!***

When Guru Ravidass firmly declined to retain that philosopher's stone, then *Hari*- God took that in his possession and dematerialized.

We should always remember the teachings from this story. Guru Ravidass thus enjoined upon all human beings to pursue the true religion. We must never abandon worship and meditation of God under the influence of any worldly attraction. Sacred *Naam* of God is the most precious Philosopher's stone in reality. We should seek blessings of such most valuable *Naam* from revered *Guruji* and then transform our human life successfully like gold through devout meditation of *Naam*. We should always remain busy with regular meditation of God, service to society. We must participate in spiritual congregations with full faith and confidence.

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## **God's Blessings - Gold Coins for Serving Devotees**

Dear learned readers have read in the previous story how God came disguised as a saint to test Guru Ravidass with the offer of a Philosopher's stone. God suggested to Guru Ravidass "I am offering you this '*Paras*' or philosopher's stone as I consider you as the most deserving person. You can use this to transform any ordinary metal into gold and make use of the gold for making beautiful temples and all relevant facilities for the visiting devotees." However *Guruji* declined that generous offer politely.

***Supnantar ne binti karyi! Mohar panch sampat me dharyi!!***

***Lehu kanak n karo kubhaou! Pujo Bhagat ridae dhar bhaou!!***

Later one day, God materialized again and revealed His vision to Guru Ravidass. God said “Now you must accept my suggestion. Revered saints and devotees visit you in extremely large numbers every day. You should make requisite arrangements for their boarding and lodging and other essential facilities. You will be getting five gold coins everyday from this *darbar*. You should spend those gold coins for making all appropriate arrangements for the visiting devotees and revered saints. It is well known that many kings and devotees from within the country and abroad used to visit the *darbar* of Guru Ravidass every day to participate in the spiritual congregations. *Guruji*, therefore, assigned responsibilities to some of his devotees to build extremely beautiful congregation hall, residential complex and comfortable inns for the visitors.

***Mandir Mahal kiya bahutera! Jahan tahan Bhagtan ka dera!!***

Elegant and spacious temple complex and residential areas were built quickly and revered saints, sages and devotees stayed comfortably and benefitted from participation in spiritual discourses and meditation of God.

Spiritual congregations are surely as relevant and necessary today as during the past times as per teachings of Guru Ravidass. Every human being must be devoted to spiritual discourses and take full advantage of this precious human life by listening to and abiding by the Amrita or nectar like teachings of *Amritbani* and preaching of Guru Ravidass.

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## When a Millionaire Disrespected Amrita Nectar and Suffered from Leprosy

Great sages and revered saints belong to the entire society. They are never affiliated to any one specific caste or community. They seek welfare and happiness of one and all. Impressed with the profound meditation of God and pious sacred life of Guru Ravidass, people hailing from all the four classes of society began to participate in the spiritual congregations conducted by *Guruji* for the benefit of entire humanity. Guru Ravidass used to preach the devotees about the virtues of noble pious deeds, virtuous positive thoughts and simple pure and nutritious food most often.

One day, a rich millionaire attended the spiritual congregation at the durbar of Guru Ravidass. He noticed that a very large number of devotees had joined the congregation to listen to the spiritual discourse conducted by Guru Ravidass. He also noted carefully that devotees from very rich and extremely poor sections of society hailing from all the four classes of communities were present to listen to the spiritual communication of Guru Ravidass with great devotion. That rich millionaire was highly impressed with positive influence to see such a unique congregation. He also sat down along with other devotees to listen to *Guruji's* preaching with keen interest.

*Guruji* emphasized that this human life is extremely rare and most precious.

***Dulabh janam punn phal paiyo birtha jaat abibekae!!*** i.e.

This rare precious human birth is the fruit of past good deeds. However, this scarce life is getting wasted in the absence of self introspection. Hence one should devote his scarce human life to devout worship and meditation of God and make it truly fruitful.

***Hari ke naam bin jhoothe sagal pasare!!1!! Rahao!!*** i.e.

All other rituals, except devoted worship of God, are false, futile and useless.

*Guruji* further elaborated that everyone is entitled to pursue worship of God irrespective of the caste or community from which one may hail. Any one belonging to any caste, community or creed can become superior to others through dedicated devout worship and meditation of God.

***Brahman baes sood ar khatri dom chandar maresh man soi!!***

***Hoi puneet Bhagwant bhajan te aap tari tare kul doi!!!*** i.e.

Any person, irrespective of his association with tasks assigned to a *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, Trader or any Backwards Community, would certainly become pious through deep devotion and meditation of God. He surely attains salvation and helps infinite number of persons from his maternal and paternal lineage to get over the bonds of birth and death through meditation of God. *Guruji* highlighted that devout meditation of God is absolutely essential for everyone.

At the end of the spiritual discourse, Amrita nectar was distributed as *Prasad* to all devotees from the sacred bowl of water that *Guruji* also used for dipping and softening leather. The rich millionaire took the Amrita nectar but he did not savour same. Instead he threw the Amrita nectar behind over his head and part of same fell down on his dress and stained his clothes. He considered his stained clothes to be soiled and unfit for his dressing. So he gave those clothes to a sweeper. The moment that sweeper wore those clothes his entire body started glowing brilliantly with the unique spiritual powers he got on wearing the garments stained with Amrita nectar. The unfortunate rich millionaire, who despised that Amrita nectar, got afflicted with leprosy disease. Only then he realized that he had insulted and slighted a truly perfect *Guruji* and that was the reason for his suffering from this

deadly disease. He then sought shelter at the lotus feet of Guru Ravidass. Benevolent and kind hearted *Guruji* then forgave him and he was completely cured of the dangerous disease.

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## Protecting a Doe

Guru Ravidass was a very kind hearted great sage. This story is related to Lehirtara Tank that is the place associated with the incarnation of Guru Kabir. There was a dense forest all over this area during those days. Guru Ravidass was sitting at this secluded place deeply engrossed in devout meditation of God in a stage of perfect *Samadhi*.

A terribly scared doe came running that side as a hunter was chasing it. The hunter succeeded in capturing the doe and he was just getting ready to kill the animal. The doe sensed the serious threat to her life as she thought that the hunter would kill her any moment. The doe contemplated in her mind that it would be impossible for her even to have a final glimpse of her fawns and the question of helping them to suckle milk did not arise at all. She felt deeply hurt with tormented mind as death seemed to be imminent. She was overwhelmed with emotions remembering her young fawns while tears flowed uncontrolled from her eyes.

Guru Ravidass was engrossed in deep meditation close to that place. Omniscient Guru Ravidass went to the hunter and told him, “The doe needs to feed her fawns, let her go, I stand guarantee for the doe. I shall stay with you until the doe returns back after feeding her fawns.” Thereafter the doe ran fast to reach her fawns and the fawns were thrilled to see their mother return. The fawns embraced their mother fondly. However when they wanted to suckle milk they noticed that their mother was surprisingly very sad for some unknown reason. They asked their mother about the cause of her discomfort and worries. Then the doe narrated the entire episode about her capture and subsequent conditional release. The fawns collectively told their mother “We will not have any feed of milk now. Instead, we shall

accompany you to the hunter and sacrifice our lives before he even touches you.” Thus the doe along with her fawns rushed to reach the place where Shri Guru Ravidass and the hunter were sitting and waiting for the doe. No sooner did the doe reached back, the hunter decided to kill her.

When the hunter raised his sword to kill the doe, his hand got jammed in the raised position. Soon his hand looked like a stone slab. He visualized dance of death before his eyes. He repented sincerely in his heart for his misdeeds. He prostrated again and again before Guru Ravidass and prayed for mercy and pardon. *Guruji* very kindly pardoned him with a warning never to indulge in such sinful acts again during his life. *Guruji* also preached him spiritual sermon and initiated him as one of his disciples. The name of that hunter was Heeru and he became a truly devoted follower of *Guruji*. He emerged as a good and responsible person in civil society in due course of time. The doe and her fawns conveyed their profound regards to *Guruji* placing their heads at Guru's lotus feet with sincere gratitude and then moved into the forests.

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## **When a Sheikh Sought Affection of Guru Ravidass**

Guru Ravidass held spiritual discourses everyday to preach devotees about essence of scriptures and meditation of God. *Guruji's* positive views about love for all and discrimination against none had very profound helpful impact on the devotees. People hailing both from Hindu and Muslim communities visited *Guruji* to listen to the teachings of *Guruji* in such congregations and benefit from enlightening spiritual discourses.

Once a rich Sheikh visited *Guruji* and prayed “Kindly bless me too with the permanent dye of devotion, affection and love.” Guru Ravidass offered water from the bowl used to soak leather. The Sheikh had disrespect and hatred for that water and he threw that water away cleverly.

However his shirt got a few stains with that Amrita nectar. After reaching home he gave his shirt to the servant with the instructions to clean the stains thoroughly and bring back the washed shirt.

However when the maid servant washed the shirt she found it hard to remove the stains. She used all known ways to remove the stains but it was all in vain. Finally, she tried to suck the dye out of the stained spot by making use of her mouth. When the maid servant held the stained spots of shirt in her mouth and sucked, she was at once endowed with amazing spiritual powers. She started strolling in the air without touching the ground. After watching the maid servant in that unique position; the Sheikh asked her “How and from where did you secure this unique faculty?” Then the maid servant explained “I got this amazing power as soon as I tried to suck and remove the stain from your shirt.” The Sheikh was completely taken aback after listening to her and he repented seriously over his grave mistake.

Thereafter that Sheikh visited *Guruji's darbar* once again and prayed to *Guruji* with great humility to grant the Amrita nectar once again. *Guruji* told him “That was the right time which is over now.” When that Sheikh made repeated requests to Guru Ravidass, the kind hearted merciful *Guruji* accepted him as a disciple. *Guruji* preached him to make his life truly successful through devout and dedicated meditation of God.

***Kar bandigi chhad mae mera!!***

***Hirdae naam samhar savera!!2!!***

***Janam sirano panth na savara!!***

***Sanjh pari dah dis andhiara!!***

***Kahi Ravidass nidan divane!!***

***Chetas nahi dunia phan khane!!3!!2!!***

O dear! Leave aside false prejudices and pride and become devotee of God. Get up early in the morning and meditate in deep devotion.

O dear! Your scarce human life is getting wasted for

nothing. You have not enlightened yourself through deep devotion and meditation of God. As darkness descends all over after sunset, same way when death comes knocking, all the five functional and five sense organs of body suddenly stop functioning. You will not be in a position to worship God at that time.

Guru Ravidass says that “O mad man! Your end is nearing and even then you never realize that this world is perishable. Therefore O brother! You must worship God with deep devotion that will be helpful to you now during this life and life thereafter.”

Even these days, if anyone is keen to make his life truly fruitful and he wants to soak himself in the eternal dye of God's *Naam*; then he must ensure to adopt the preaching of Guru Ravidass in his mind with dedicated devotion.

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## **Granting New Lease of Life to a Dead Child**

A rich millionaire widow lived in Kashi. She had an extended large family. Once, she went on pilgrimage to some sacred religious place along with all members of her family. Unfortunately a grim tragedy resulted in unfortunate death of all members of the family except one lady when their boat capsized and sank in the river. Only one daughter-in-law of that lady survived that catastrophic tragedy. She was pregnant at the time of that disaster. Grief stricken weeping and wailing because of loss of all dear ones, she somehow managed to return home facing grave hardships. She gave birth to a handsome boy in due course of time. She was extremely thrilled to see the lovely face of her son as he was her only hope and support for future. As the child grew up playfully, unfortunately he fell sick. His mother got him the very best possible treatment and arranged for ritualistic worships and spiritual discourses with the hope that the boy



would get cured. However he did not get any relief from his ailment. Over a period of time his illness assumed very serious proportion and his health started to deteriorate day by day.

She met several people and begged each one of them for help with tears in her eyes. One day, someone told her about the unique glory of Guru Ravidass. She took her child along with her and reached the *darbar* of Guru Ravidass. Unfortunately her son breathed his last as soon as she reached the *darbar*. When she noticed that her son was dead, she wept and cried bitterly. When Guru Ravidass heard her pathetic and painful cries, he started praying to God for His blessings for the child. Lona, a very kind hearted disciple of *Guruji*, held the child in her lap and sat down calmly. She started caressing the head of the deceased child. Guru Ravidass poured some water in the child's mouth. As soon as the child had that Amrita nectar like water, he started breathing and very soon thereafter he also opened his eyes. That mother was ecstatic with joy and devout respect for *Guruji* and she returned to her house very delightfully. The child started recovering fast from his illness since that day and he was absolutely fit and healthy after a few days. That wealthy lady became a very dedicated and devout disciple of Guru Ravidass. She wanted to donate a very large amount of money to her revered *Guruji* but Guru Ravidass declined to accept that money. *Guruji* advised that lady to spend that money to look after the poor, deprived and needy persons. Thereafter that wealthy lady prayed to *Guruji* to permit her to get a community kitchen and hall constructed near *Guruji's* *darbar* for serving food to the visiting devotees. Accordingly, the community hall was constructed and arrangements for serving food to the visiting saints and devotees were made after getting permission of *Guruji*.

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## **Spiritual Discourse between Guru Ravidass and Guru Kabir**

Guru Kabir had heard a lot about the grandeur of Guru Ravidass and he came to meet Guru Ravidass one day. He was extended a very cordial welcome with utmost regards by Guru Ravidass who offered him an elegant seat to sit down comfortably. Distinguished guest was rendered courteous services and delicious refreshments were served. Thereafter, Guru Ravidass asked Guru Kabir about the specific purpose of his visit.

Guru Ravidass said “Please let me know the purpose of your visit and in what way can I be of some service to you?” Guru Kabir said “I came to see you after hearing a lot about your glory. I have been very keen to listen to a spiritual discourse of enlightenment in your own soothing words based on your vast knowledge.” Then Guru Kabir asked “Please enlighten me how many times a person breathes during a day and night?” Guru Ravidass said “A human being has twenty-one thousand and six hundred breaths during day and night.” Guru Kabir was extremely pleased to listen to this reply and he again asked “How many pores does this human body have?” Guru Ravidass replied “Human skin has 35 million pores.” Guru Kabir further enquired “Kindly enlighten me from where did the human being materialize and where will he ultimately go?” Guru Ravidass explained “All human beings originate from one supreme God and ultimately amalgamate with the same God after completing their respective journey in this world.” Guru Kabir was fully satisfied with these prudent answers. Then both learned sages continued the discourse exchanging views on spiritual issues.

After a while Guru Kabir requested for yet another clarification “Omniscient! Please let me know how best to exercise complete control over the five vicious human desires and control the same?” Guru Ravidass replied “When a human being gets engrossed in devout meditation

of God, he experiences ecstatic delight and all of these vices remain serene and under his absolute control.” After hearing this reply Guru Kabir asked yet another question “Please enlighten me about what is eternal salvation?” Guru Ravidass then explained “Complete renunciation of desires and every wish list is itself emancipation. When anyone abandons pursuit of worldly pleasures and shuns all human desires then he attains the state of eternal salvation. It is because of desires that one has to endure the bonds of rebirth. A living being attains freedom from the bonds of repeated cycle of birth and death after realizing God and eternal salvation.” Thereafter Guru Kabir requested for yet another clarification “Where the abode of the soul is in human body and what is its form? Please let me know.” Guru Ravidass said “The soul rests in the centre of naval region in human body and it is in the form of eternal light. Human being gets ecstatic eternal joy on realization of self with the blessings of his *Guruji*.” Guru Kabir was extremely happy to have such wonderful spiritual discourse with Guru Ravidass and he said “You are indeed a *Brahmgiyani* with infinite knowledge. You are obviously God. May your glory spread all over all the time!” Guru Kabir wanted to take leave after saying thanks. Guru Ravidass gave Guru Kabir a gourd-shell filled with Amrita nectar from the earthen pot and said “Please accept this *Prasad*.” Thereafter Guru Kabir conveyed his regards and left with the gourd-shell containing *Prasad*.

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## Enlightenment of Kamali

Guru Kabir had two children when Guru Ravidass gave Amrita nectar to Guru Kabir. One of them was his daughter Kamali and the other was son Kamala. Kamali was a profound devotee of God and she had heard a lot about the glory of Guru Ravidass. Kamali noticed that her respected father had returned after meeting her revered Guru Ravidass with Amrita nectar in the gourd-shell. She got hold of the

gourd-shell and savoured all the balance Amrita nectar. The moment Kamali had that Amrita nectar; she was instantaneously enlightened with the knowledge of all the three worlds. Kamali was able to visualize everything all over the universe with that self enlightenment.

Severe fire was raging in Multan city. Kamali started to draw out water from a well at Varanasi and she continued to throw out that water to control the fire in Multan. All onlookers were greatly surprised why Kamali was throwing buckets full of water on the ground. When the fire was fully extinguished, Kamali stopped throwing the water. Then people asked Kamali “Why were you throwing water away? Where did the water thrown by you go?” Then Kamali explained to them that a fire was raging in Multan city and the water has extinguished that fire. Some people verified about the veracity of her claim and to their utter surprise it was found to be true. Everyone was extremely surprised. People asked her “What sort of meditation you had performed that enabled you to get self enlightenment? How could you know about the fire raging Multan city that is far away?” Then Kamali said “I have been emancipated after I had the Amrita nectar from Guru Ravidass that my father had brought in a gourd-shell. Guru Kabir was extremely pleased to learn about this pleasant development. The glory of devout meditation of God by Guru Ravidass and the miracle of Amrita nectar spread all over in all directions.

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### **Kamali Seeks Shelter at Lotus feet of Guru Ravidass**

When Kamali experienced self enlightenment after savouring the Amrita nectar, she decided to visit Guru Ravidass personally and seek to be initiated as a disciple and blessed with Guru Mantra or *Naam*. Kamali reached Guru Ravidass's *darbar* contemplating that. She paid her profound obeisance at the lotus feet of Guru Ravidass and worshipped him after presenting a lovely flower garland.

Guru Ravidass knew very well that Kamali had already got self enlightenment and that was why she came to meet him personally. Even though Guru Ravidass knew everything but he asked “Dear daughter Kamali! What brings you here? Let me know the exact purpose of your visit.” Kamali Devi said “O Lord! You are omniscient and you already know everything very well. I have come here to seek shelter at your lotus feet. Kindly be merciful and emancipate me. *Guruji* ! Please preach me in such a way that the true purpose of my human life is fulfilled.” Guru Ravidass then said “My dear child! All of the supernatural powers are like shackles of bondage for the human soul. No one can attain eternal salvation without a divine vision. The real purpose of human life is to get rid of the pernicious cycle of rebirth and death. My dear daughter! Human soul has got entangled in the bondage of death since many birth cycles and it continues to suffer the pains of rebirth and death. My dear child! If the human soul does not realize itself in pure form; even self enlightenment cannot ensure accomplishment of eternal peace and tranquillity.”

“My dear daughter Kamali! The soul inside the human body suffers far more pain and agony because of separation from God than the human body. Until the soul realizes her true husband the almighty God, this soul cannot experience the true bliss. Kamali Devi! Having got this human life, you must focus on meditation of the real eternal husband the almighty God while serving your husband during the human life. Only then you can attain eternal salvation once you get free of this human body.”

“Dear daughter! A lady who treats her husband like God and never contemplates about any other man, but always focuses her attention only on God, is worshipped in all the three worlds.”

Guru Ravidass addressed Kamali's ignorance this way and equipped her with truly divine enlightenment. Thereafter she was blessed with *Hari-Hari* supreme Mantra. Kamali Devi was truly blessed to hear such

soothing Amrita like words of wisdom and she got the most precious treasure of Guru Mantra from her revered Guru Ravidass. This enabled her to lead an extremely pleasant life and then realize God and eternal salvation.

***Sant Ravidass mile guru poore, mann ki ghundi khole!***

***Kahi Kamali sunn re Meera, Guru Amritbani bole!!*** i.e.

Kamali says “Dear Meera! Just listen. I have been able to find a truly perfect Guru - Guru Ravidass, who has vanquished all doubts of my mind. Guru Ravidass recites Amrita like *Amritbani*.”

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## **Historical Grandeur of Guru Ravidass in Junagarh (Gujarat)**

A village Sarsayi located in Vishadpur Tehsil of Junagarh District in Gujarat state is indeed blessed as Guru Ravidass left the footprints of his lotus feet here during his visit to the village. Guru Ravidass spent nearly 4-5 years on the sacred soil here and preached the message of real truth to the devotees. This hallowed place is well known as *Shri Guru Ravidass Ashram, Ganga Kund*. Many scholars have written about the visit of *Guruji* to Sarsayi in their books.

Sage Bhan Dass mentioned that *Shri Guru Ravidass Ashram Ganga Kund* is located in village Sarsayi of Vishadpur Tehsil in Junagarh District. This Kund or sacred reservoir is about 5 kilometres away from the boundary of nearly 2500 square miles of dense forest. Guru Ravidass spent nearly 4-5 years in this village at the forest fringe and established this Amrita Kund. There is a 600 years old sacred tree here that was planted at this sacred place by Guru Ravidass with his own pious hands. The local king Bhagwat of Gaurla had got this reservoir built as he was extremely impressed by Guru Ravidass. However narrow minded people with biased thinking of *Brahmins* tried to decimate



this sacred place. They even got a temple dedicated to Bhairon built very close to the reservoir. Caste based discrimination is rampant in this locality even these days. Sage Bhan Dass explained that he had been serving the local communities and pilgrims at this sacred place for the last forty years. His revered Guru *Sant Naja Ram* got the present ashram building constructed. He was married and after completion of the ashram building, he went back to his ancestral Village Keswali, Tehsil Gandhal in District Rajkot, Gujarat. He abandoned his perishable human body there while completing a pious life's journey. He practiced profound meditation of God and he was a true missionary.

There are two major annual events that are celebrated here with lot of enthusiasm and a very large number of devotees participate in the religious congregations. First carnival is dedicated to celebrations on the auspicious occasion of incarnation of Guru Ravidass on the full moon day of the month of *Magh* (January-February). Religious procession is organized. Devotees offer prayers in front of the religious scripture '*Amritbani Satguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji*' and *Guruji*'s idol. They march holding symbols of '*Hari*' in their hands. The holy procession traverses about five kilometres in which devotees participate in large numbers from all over Gujarat state including Ahmadabad, Vadodra, Surat, Mehsana, Gandhinagar, Bhavnagar, Amreli, Junagarh, Girsomnath, Rajkot, Gurindernagar, Jamnagar, Kutch, Bhuj and other areas. Devotees from many other parts of India also join the procession with their respective groups of hymn singers using a variety of means of transport. This religious procession starts early in the morning and concludes by about 5 p.m. in the evening. Various groups sing hymns from '*Amritbani Satguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji*' during the procession.

The second congregation is held on 24<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Bhadon* (August-September). Sacred *Ganga* appears here one day before the end of the month of *Sawan* (July-

August). A large number of devotees from this region, saints, scholars and *Amritbani* singers assemble here every year for the celebrations.

Spread over about two acres area, this *Ashram* has a large hall with 12 rooms complete with bathrooms and toilet facilities for the benefit of the visiting devotees.

Two Mullahs from Sikandar Lodi's kingdom had also visited this place to have a vision of Guru Ravidass. They were Hazrat Navrang Shah and Hazrat Avrang Shah. Their graves are also located very close to the Ashram. Muslims worship this place even these days. They take water from the *Ganga Kund* and prepare *Prasad* for offerings. It is worthwhile mentioning here that king Sikandar Lodi himself visited Guru Ravidass on the 9<sup>th</sup> April, 1509 as recorded in his autobiography.

A village Ajotha is about 10 kilometres from Sarsayi where the Idol is Madhav Rao. The Brahmins of Ajotha prevented the untouchable communities from worshipping God. Even their entry inside the temples was prohibited. When Brahmins prevented the residents of Prachi village from entering the temple at Ajotha, they approached Guru Ravidass for help. Guru Ravidass executed such a miracle that all Idol installed in the temple at Ajotha, walked away and stood before Guru Ravidass at Prachi. The Idol of Madhav Rao is still present at village Prachi, even to these days. There is a *Jamun* (*Syzigium cumini*) tree near the temple along the river bank, planted by Guru Ravidass.

A Nagar saint Narsi Mehta Pundit hailed from Junagarh district. He was physically challenged in respect of speech and hearing from the very birth. His parents consulted several medical practitioners but he could not be cured. Finally with the persuasion of some well wishers, his grandmother approached Guru Ravidass and prayed for kind help. As soon as Guru Ravidass placed his benevolent hand at the head of Pundit Narsi Mehta; he was able to listen and speak normally.

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## **Guru Ravidass's Punjab Visit and Historical Places '*Kharas*' and *Amrita* *Ganga Khuralgarh Sahib***

Guru Ravidass reached the sacred soil of Punjab at an advanced age during a prolonged journey for the emancipation of mankind of this world during 1515 A.D. more than four centuries prior to partition of Punjab and India. Traversing Ludhiana and Phagwara, *Guruji* reached a small village Kharali in the hilly region of Garhshankar Tehsil of Hoshiarpur District, Punjab. *Guruji* had stayed for some time at a place near Phagwara where an elegant Shri Guru Ravidass Temple, which is worth seeing, is presently located near Chak Hakim along G.T. Road. A very large religious congregation is held here every year on the first day of the month of *Asarh* (June- July).

Village Kharali is now known as Khuralgarh Sahib. This village was part of the kingdom ruled by King Bain Singh. King Bain Singh was a close relative of *Sant* Meera Bai as he was husband of her mother's sister. The King was ill tempered and very cruel and he enforced his caste based religious dictates forcefully. Devotees and local people belonging to downtrodden communities were fed up with his unwarranted discriminatory acts. No religious leader or learned saint visited his kingdom as he victimized them. Guru Ravidass learnt about his undesirable behaviour and visited village Kharali. *Guruji* began to preach the truth to the people through spiritual congregations. People started participating in such congregations in large numbers over a period of time. *Guruji* visited aged contemporary *Baba Dhanna* and *Baba Deviya* and sanctified their residential houses with his lotus feet. According to the local managers of this *darbar*, *Guruji* stayed there for more than four years.

People influenced by beliefs of Brahmins did not like the growing influence of Guru Ravidass and his teachings about meditation and philosophy of saints. Therefore they complained to King Bain Singh against Guru

Ravidass. King Bain Singh got very annoyed and immediately passed a royal order to take Guru Ravidass in custody and send him to jail. King's soldiers arrested *Guruji* from the mud house of *Baba Deviya* who was on duty as watchman at that time. The entire village was populated by 'Shudras' or untouchables community who lived in mud houses. The soldiers did not listen to the pleas of local devotees and they returned to the king only after taking Guru Ravidass along with them. Later they presented *Guruji* before the king. The king was very angry and he asked "Is this the saint who is preaching Shudras to worship God? How did he dare so? How did he dare to set foot in King Bain Singh's kingdom and preach religious sermons? He has insulted our religious scriptures.

***Dhor gavaar shudar pashu naari,  
Yeh sab tadhan ke adhikari***

The uncivilized, Shudras, cattle and ladies all deserve to be admonished and chastised all the time. He deserves to be awarded very harsh punishment in accordance with aforesaid principle."

King ordered that Guru Ravidass should be sent to jail and made to operate a heavy duty flour mill manually. The soldiers obeyed king's orders and imprisoned *Guruji* and he was asked to operate a very heavy duty flour mill manually. Very soon, the jail officials were amazed to witness two strange phenomena. The flour mill started running automatically without any power and they could see *Guruji* walking out of the jail and again walking in despite the main gate being locked. Jail officials informed King Bain Singh about these strange miracles. King Bain Singh came to verify personally and he was indeed taken aback. His pride and arrogance were shattered and he sought shelter at the lotus feet of *Guruji*. He said "*Guruji* ! You are supreme. Kindly forgive me. I have committed a grave error. Kindly be benevolent and condone my sins. I will never torture any sage or saint in future. I shall not be cruel to any citizen ever." King became a disciple of Guru Ravidass who blessed him with the unique gift of *Naam*.

Later, the King and his subjects prayed “*Guruji* ! We face acute shortage of drinking water in this hilly tract. We are unable to raise good agricultural crops because of lack of irrigation facilities and a famine is scaring all of us. Kindly be merciful and help us out of these serious problems.” *Guruji* said “A lady by the name of Gurdasi stays in the locality of Shudras. Go to her house and fetch some grains of wheat cereal. The soldiers went to the house of Gurdasi and requested for some grains of wheat. She said there is an earthen silo for grain storage inside but that is empty. You can go inside and check up. When the soldiers went inside and checked, they were surprised to find the silo full of wheat grains. Gurdasi was also taken aback as the empty silo got filled with grain with the blessings of *Guruji*. Soldiers got some wheat and returned back to *Guruji*. Gurdasi also followed them eulogizing *Guruji* as a great saint and genius. *Guruji* conveyed his blessings to Gurdasi and asked for all the wheat grains to be placed inside the flour mill for grinding. According to the local managers of the *ashram* the flour mill continued running and grinding the grains for one year and three months continuously producing wheat flour. There was no trace of famine as everyone got enough wheat flour and other food grains with the blessings of *Guruji*.

Thereafter Guru Ravidass walked about one kilometre to the north and pushed a stone aside with his sacred foot and water started flowing in the form of a spring from that spot. The most amazing feature of that spring was that water was flowing in an uphill direction defying the force of gravity. *Guruji* spread the message of truth amongst masses and later left this place in Punjab and proceeded to Rajasthan.

Devotees from faraway places visit this holy place of pilgrimage with utmost reverence. People from all over the country and abroad congregate here on the auspicious occasion of *Vaisakhi* - the first day of the month of *Vaisakh* (April- May). Historical places Kharas and Khuralgarh Sahib are revered places of pilgrimage. *Sant Baba Ramta*



has rendered most valuable services at these sacred places. This humble writer (Kanshi Ram Kaler) personally interacted with *Sant Baba Ramta* at village Jandu Singha during February, 1993. (Reference: Shri Guru Ravidass-*Jeevan and Kirtan*; Written by Dr. Lekh Raj Parwana, S.E; Ph.D; LLB: Page-5).

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## **Blessings of Guru Ravidass to *Sant Narsingh Mehta***

*Sant Narsingh Mehta* is well known in simple language as Narsi Mehta. *Sant Narsingh Mehta* was born around the year 1479 A.D. in village Talaza of Junagarh district, Gujarat. His blessed parents were Krishna Damodar Dass and Lakshmi Gauri who hailed from *Brahmin* community. Some details about this are available from certain published books. He also had an elder brother named Bansidhar who was a senior police officer those days. His grandfather had already expired. His parents also left for their heavenly abode when Narsingh was just 5 years old and his elder brother was about 22 years of age. Thus Narsingh was looked after and brought up by his grandmother Jaykumbri and elder brother Bansidhar. Narsingh Mehta was physically challenged in respect of speech and hearing faculties since his birth. Family members were therefore very worried about Narsingh's future. They consulted several medical specialists for his treatment but all in vain.

Finally they reached the Amrita Kund at Sarsayi in Junagarh district as suggested by some well wishers. Narsi was about eight years old. When his grandmother Jaykumbri reached the Kund along with Narsingh and another lady from neighbourhood; they were delighted to see a devout and divine accomplished saint deeply engrossed in profound meditation of God. They were not able to withstand his God like divine brilliance. Jaykumbri paid her obeisance and placed her grandson's head at the



lotus feet of Guru Ravidass. Guru Ravidass suddenly came out of the state of perfect *Samadhi*. Jaykumbri then prayed “*Gurudev!* My grandson has been physically challenged both in respect of speech and hearing since childhood. We have consulted many learned sages and scholars but he could not be cured. I have come here with utmost confidence and hope after learning about your glory. Kindly be benevolent and help this boy.”

***Guru ki lakho dayalta, Satguru kiyo pasar!***

i.e. *Guruji* is always very kind and merciful and everything can be accomplished with his benevolence and blessings.

As described in *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass, Guru is always extremely kind, benevolent and very helpful. *Guruji* glanced at the child with benevolent eyes and asked him to sit close by. Omniscient *Guruji* looked at his forehead and predicted that the boy would grow up as a great sage, *Brahmgiyani* and a truly perfect saint which proved to be an eternal truth in due course. Guru Ravidass remembered God, placed his sacred hand at the head of young Narsi and said “Dear child! Chant *Satnam*.” Narsi was able to hear and speak instantly and he chanted *Satnam*. Everyone present on the occasion felt extremely surprised and very happy. People paid their profound regards and reverence at the lotus feet of *Guruji*. Headvised Narsi's relatives never to behave arrogantly with him as he was a pearl in the rosary of saints. All elders and relatives of Narsi became disciples of Guru Ravidass and held *Guruji* in very high esteem.

One can imagine how delighted and overjoyed aged grandmother Jaykumbri must have been when her grandson revived. Her ecstatic joy was beyond description in words. Thus words of the astrologers, who were saying that Narsingh can never get cured, were proven absolutely wrong as their predictions failed miserably.

Jaykumbri conveyed her sincere gratitude and said “*Guruji!* My other grandson is a very high ranking police officer and many other young men from our Nagar

community are holding exalted positions. Kindly give us an opportunity to render some service to you and also let me know what I can offer you.” *Guruji* smiled and said “*Bibi!* As I roam everywhere, any worldly riches are of no use to me. I need nothing.” *Guruji* never bothered even about the '*Paras*' or the philosopher's stone that turns metals into gold. So why would *Guruji* ask for anything else? Everyone in the family and people in the entire city were thrilled to learn about the miraculous cure of Narsingh.

Narsingh's story is quite remarkable and lengthy. He was sent for studies. However, a renouncing mind is unable to focus on studies. So he was soon married and was blessed with a son and a daughter. Narsingh's elder brother's wife did not appreciate his devotion to meditation and saintly pursuits. She instigated her husband against Narsingh who got fed up soon and renounced the worldly pursuits to devote his life to the meditation of God. As predicted by Guru Ravidass, Narsingh acquired the stature of a perfect saint through dedicated pursuit of devout meditation and became well known as *Sant Narsi Mehta*, leading a noble and pious life of saints. This is the significance of benevolence of a perfect *Guru*.

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## **Preaching Parmanand *Bairagi***

A '*Bairagi*' or ascetic named Parmanand, who claimed to practice renunciation, was resident of Kashi. He was very proud of his ritualistic worship. Steeped in ignorance, blind faith and rituals, he was extremely jealous of Guru Ravidass. He was always very keen to humiliate *Guruji*. He proclaimed himself to be a great genius. One day he reached Guru Ravidass's *darbar* along with some of his disciples and a plate full of pearls. He offered those pearls to Guru Ravidass. However, *Guruji* declined to accept his offering and said “Parmanand! You have been performing lot of ritualistic worship. How is it that you still have so much attachment with material wealth? As you cherish

riches, please keep these pearls with you or alternatively distribute same amongst some needy poor persons. I do not need this wealth as it is of no use to me. Such wealth is the real mine of immense sufferings.” Thereafter Guru Ravidass recited following stanza for his benefit:

***Dhan sanchay dukh det hae, dhan tiyage sukh hoye!***

***Ravidass seekh Gurdev ki dhan matt jorhe koye!!***  
i.e.

Running after accumulation of wealth causes immense worry and problems whereas renunciation of riches ensures great comfort and peace. Therefore, Guru Ravidass preached that no one should indulge in relentless pursuit of getting rich and accumulation of wealth.

Noticing that Parmanand was listening attentively, he further said as follows;

***Sacha sukh sat dharam mahi, dhan sanchay sukh nahin!***

***Dhan sanchay dukh khan hae Ravidass samajh mann mahin!!*** i.e.

The true joy and satisfaction is in devout pursuit of Dharma and not in hoarding wealth. Guru Ravidass says that accumulation of wealth is like a mine of grave suffering and every human being must bear that in mind.

The false pride and arrogance of Parmanand *Bairagi* vanished after hearing these 'Shlokas' from Guru Ravidass. Repentance and sorrow were apparently visible on his face. Parmanand *Bairagi* and his devotees paid their obeisance to Guru Ravidass and thereafter returned to their own ashram. Thereafter, Parmanand *Bairagi* got rid of his jealous nature, arrogance and futile rituals and became a true saint devoted to profound meditation of God.

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## **Legend of Roopvati**

A blessed family devoted to profound worship of God stayed in the city of Multan. All members of this pious

family pursued dedicated meditation of God all the time and they led very happy lives together in the family. A lady named Roopvati was also a member of this family and she was an ardent devotee of God. She always used to ponder over how she would be able to have a vision of God. She was destined to find her way because of her devout meditation, truthful dedication and utmost devotion to God. One day, she heard a divine voice and she visualized the presence of Guru Ravidass. She was also guided with respect to complete details of Seer Govardhanpur, Kashi in Varanasi with a clear indication that her perfect *Guruji* stayed there in Kashi. She was further advised to meet him and seek to be blessed with sacred *Naam* and experience supreme bliss and ecstatic joy in her mind.

However, being a young lady, she could not undertake such a long and arduous journey from Multan to Varanasi alone. Therefore, she persuaded her father to accompany her to Varanasi. Both of them travelled for several days and finally reached Seer Govardhanpur in Varanasi. When they reached the *darbar*, Guru Ravidass was sitting deeply engrossed in meditation in the perfect stage of *Samadhi*. They waited for some time and then *Guruji* regained normal stage and glanced with merciful eyes at the devotees waiting to meet their revered *Guruji*. As Roopvati and her father had travelled an extremely long distance to reach the *darbar* and were completely tired, *Guruji* first of all enquired about their well being. Roopvati noticed the divine brilliance on the glowing face of *Guruji*. She got up at once and paid her profound regards at the lotus feet of Guru Ravidass. Thereafter she prayed “My revered true *Guruji* ! You had very kindly revealed yourself to me at my residence. After that, I had an ardent desire to meet you, have your vision in person and pay my respectful salutations at your *darbar*. I feel extremely blessed and lucky to sit in your *darbar* along with my respected father and have your vision.”

Guru Ravidass was omniscient and he already knew

all of these details as that blessed lady fully deserved to be emancipated and blessed with the grant of the treasure of precious *Naam*. *Guruji* very kindly blessed her with Amrita from his *Amrita-Kund* or reservoir of Amrita and she was instantly enlightened on savouring that Amrita. She was ecstatic with joy and her delight had no limits. She was also blessed with the treasure of sacred *Naam*. She rendered dedicated services in the *darbar* of her revered *Guruji* for some days and then returned to her house in Multan along with her father absolutely happy and satisfied. She explained the grandeur and glory of her revered Guru Ravidass to all members of her family at length after reaching home. Roopvati also recited the spiritual hymns related to realm of God that she had listened delightfully from her revered *Guruji* during the course of congregations throughout her stay at *Guruji's darbar*. She also explained the exact meaning and significance of those hymns with scholarly explanations to her family members. Thus family members of Roopvati started singing those hymns along with paeans in praise of Guru Ravidass regularly at their house.

After the passage of some time, Roopvati shared her keen desire to arrange for community feast for the congregation of saints and devotees at their house. She was very keen to invite Saint Gorakh Nath and his disciples and serve delicious food to all of them. As agreed by all members of the family, elaborate arrangements were made for the preparation of various dishes with the permission of her respected father. Meanwhile Roopvati remembered her revered *Guruji* for the forthcoming event and had his vision in a tranquil *Samadhi*. After securing permission of her respected Guru, formal invitations were sent to various dignified sages and revered saints for community meals. As Saint Gorakh Nath had an extremely large number of disciples, he was wondering how this humble disciple of Guru Ravidass would be in a position to arrange large quantities of provisions and serve food to so many



devotees? He somehow concluded that whatever she will be able to cook will get absorbed in his '*Chippi*'— a small boat shaped pot with handle normally used by sages for carrying water. Roopvati came to know about this unpleasant development. But she sent formal invitations to Saint Gorakh Nath and all of his disciples to kindly grace the occasion and have community meals at her house along with all of his devotees.

Everyone from the city voluntarily contributed as per their liking and capacity through supplies of flour, pulses and other provisions. Local residents also offered their services as volunteers on this auspicious occasion. A local lady, who was extremely poor but a very close friend of Roopvati, chipped in with a pot full of fresh cow's milk from her house for the community feast being arranged by Roopvati. Saint Gorakh Nath arrived at the venue along with all of his followers to have food. Roopvati had got a very large variety of dishes prepared for the community feast. She, along with her family members, offered devout prayer remembering their revered Guru and sought *Guruji's* permission to serve food to the congregation of sages. Saint Gorakh Nath and all of his disciples were served delicious meals and thereafter local people and volunteers also relished food to their entire satisfaction. Surprisingly even then plenty of cooked food was still left like inexhaustible stock. However, arrogant Saint Gorakh Nath wanted to test Roopvati further and he said “Roopvati! I shall acknowledge that you are a disciple of a truly perfect Guru only if you can fill my '*Chippi*' with milk. If this pot does not get filled completely, then you must agree to become my disciple and acknowledge me as your Guru today itself.” Roopvati, completely enlightened and knowledgeable with the blessings of Guru Ravidass, accepted that challenge gracefully. She picked up the pot full of cow's milk and started pouring milk in his '*Chippi*'. As the milk flow was like the powerful current of river *Ganga*, Saint Gorakh Nath's *Chippi* was full to the brim instantly and milk started



overflowing. The false pride of Sage Gorakhnath was thus vanquished and he saluted the divine powers of Guru Ravidass with profound reverence.

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## **When Guru Ravidass sent a Present for Ganga During the *Kumbh* Festival**

*Avur kaho itihās ko, Bhagwan jas sukh dani!!  
Haridwar yatri mil aaye, tin darsan jan kere paye!  
Tin ko poosha lakh Ravidassa, jaho kahan tumhi  
sukh rasa!*

*Brahmkund Ganga isnana, nhavan chal tahan  
ham jana!*

*Tab Ravidass bachan us bhakhae, kijae kaj hathi  
mann rakhae!*

*Ek shiksham hamara lijae, bheta Ganga ki vah  
dijae!*

*Hamre nam na lehi pasari, nahi dijae tum aese  
dari!*

Guru Ravidass's name and fame were extremely well known in Varanasi city and all surrounding areas. Once, a few pilgrims under the leadership of *Pandit Ganga Ram* were proceeding to Haridwar to have a holy bath at *Brahmkund* during the auspicious festival of *Kumbh*. When they reached Varanasi, their minds yearned for having vision of Guru Ravidass. They decided to first visit Guru Ravidass to pay their obeisance and then proceed on their further journey. They made enquiries about the residential address of Guru Ravidass and then reached Seer Govardhanpur. Guru Ravidass was sitting there in front of them. All of those pilgrims were extremely delighted to have a vision of Guru Ravidass. Guru Ravidass enquired from *Pandit Ganga Ram*, "*Panditji! Where are all of you going?*" Then *Ganga Ram* explained that all of them planned to visit Haridwar for a holy bath.

Guru Ravidass gave a bracelet to *Ganga Ram* for presenting same to *Ganga* at Haridwar. Simultaneously

*Guruji* told him, “Please present this bracelet to *Ganga* when *Ganga* accepts it with her own hand.” He took possession of that present from Guru Ravidass and proceeded to Haridwar along with his colleagues.

Those pilgrims reached Haridwar after a few days of journey. On their arrival at Haridwar, they noticed that pilgrims from all over the country had thronged the banks of river *Ganga* in extremely large numbers. Every place was over crowded. The pilgrims led by *Ganga Ram* also started taking holy bath in the sacred river *Ganga*. After completion of his bath, *Ganga Ram* prayed to *Ganga* “O Sacred *Ganga*! Guru Ravidass has sent a bracelet as an offering for you. Kindly raise your hand out of water and accept this blessing gift.” *Ganga* materialized at once after listening to this prayer and *Ganga Ram* had the amazing vision of venerated *Ganga*. *Ganga* then opened her palm and *Ganga Ram* placed the gift sent by Guru Ravidass on her sacred hand. Everyone present nearby was absolutely amazed to witness this rare phenomenon and all of them considered themselves to be indeed extremely fortunate as they had a perfect personal vision of *Ganga*. All of them started saying glory to Guru Ravidass in their minds as it was because of kind benevolence of Guru Ravidass that they could have a glorious vision of revered *Ganga*.

*Ganga* removed an ornate bangle studded with very precious diamonds and jewels from her wrist and gave it to *Ganga Ram*. *Ganga* asked him to present the bangle to Guru Ravidass as a personal affectionate gift from her. *Ganga* also told *Ganga Ram* “I am indeed blessed that Guru Ravidass has remembered me and I am extremely grateful to *Guruji* for sending me such a wonderful gift.” *Ganga* asked *Ganga Ram* to convey this message to Guru Ravidass on her behalf.

***Lae kangan ati hars yut dekhat sabh vismad!!***

***Aeso na kabhun bhayo Ganga ka Prasad!!***

*Pandit Ganga Ram* held that unique bangle in his hand with great delight. He was greatly astonished as no one

had ever received such personal blessings of *Ganga* earlier. Ganga Ram was also very delighted to have unique vision of Ganga and a memorable holy bath in sacred *Ganga*. He reached his home within a few days thrilled with utmost joy of such fruitful pilgrimage. On reaching home, Ganga Ram narrated his unique experience to his wife regarding *Ganga* revealing her personal vision to him and receiving that precious bangle. He handed over the unique bangle to his wife whereas it was given to him by *Ganga* as a personal gift to be presented to Guru Ravidass.

After a few days, Ganga Ram's wife suggested to him that the bangle should be sold in the market. She said, "This bangle seems to be very precious. It will fetch us lot of money if we sell it and then we can lead a prosperous and comfortable life. We will have no shortage of anything after that. When Ganga Ram went to the market to sell that bangle, no buyer had the amount of money to pay full value of that unique bangle. Every goldsmith that Ganga Ram approached was astonished to see such a beautiful bangle. They told Ganga Ram that they had never seen such a unique and precious bangle studded with such large numbers of exquisite jewels and diamonds.

***Tab kutware sudh dayi vake haat vikayi!!***

***Bhukhan kanagan hath ko bechat jan ik aaye!!***

Very soon the news about the efforts being made by someone to sell an extremely precious bangle studded with diamonds and jewels reached the local police. The police officials took *Pandit* Ganga Ram in custody and presented him before the king. When questioned by the king about the source of that bangle; Ganga Ram narrated the entire story and he explained "This bangle in fact adorned the hand of venerated *Ganga*. *Ganga* gave this bangle to me to present it to Guru Ravidass as a personal fond gift from her." The king was extremely surprised to listen to the entire story narrated by Ganga Ram. The king decided to request Guru Ravidass to visit his palace so that he could discuss complete details personally with *Guruji* and verify the real truth.

Accordingly Guru Ravidass was invited to the king's *darbar* and the king enquired from *Guruji* about the entire event.

Guru Ravidass said, "It is not such a difficult and intricate issue. Just now get a vessel and pour '*Gangajal*' or sacred water of *Ganga* into that vessel. Place this unique bangle also inside that pot and cover the vessel with a cloth. *Mann changa ta kathoti me Ganga* i.e. if one's mind is clean and pious, he can visualize *Ganga* in this vessel. *Ganga* herself will give clear verdict about this whole issue." The king got everything arranged quickly as desired by Guru Ravidass. Thereafter Guru Ravidass asked *Ganga* to declare the verdict. When the cloth cover was removed from the vessel everyone saw two similar bangles in that vessel. The king and everyone else present in the *darbar* were extremely delighted and taken aback to witness this miraculous development. Then Guru Ravidass handed over both of those precious bangles to *Ganga Ram*. The king, the queen and all those people, who used to oppose Guru Ravidass earlier, became devout disciples of *Guruji*. The grandeur and glory of Guru Ravidass spread far and wide after this event. People all over the country started singing paeans of glory of Guru Ravidass.

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## Legend of Queen Jhali

Impressed by the pious life and widespread glory of Guru Ravidass, large numbers of kings and queens became *Guruji*'s disciples. Once queen Jhala Bai travelled from Chittor to Kashi to have a holy dip in the sacred *Ganga*. When she heard about the grandeur of Guru Ravidass, she went to meet *Guruji* at his residence. She was ecstatic with joy on listening to the pious spiritual discourse conducted by *Guruji*. She developed a very strong desire in her mind to become a disciple of Guru Ravidass.

Queen Jhali then prayed to Guru Ravidass to accept her as a disciple. Guru Ravidass explained to her "I hail from *Chamar* community whereas you are a *Kshatriya* queen.

Hence you should seek some learned *Brahmin* to be your Guru.” Queen Jhala Bai anyway insisted to be initiated as a disciple of Guru Ravidass. She was so determined that she vowed not to eat or drink anything until Guru Ravidass blessed her as a disciple. Guru Ravidass asked her once again not to insist and seek some competent person from a higher caste as Guru. Queen Jhali prayed once again and she said “There is no such rule that a Guru should hail from a particular caste. However a Guru should be a perfect *Brahmgiyani* and truly accomplished saint. Sukdev *muni* was a *Brahmin Sanyasi* and yet he became a disciple of King Janak who was a married *Kshatriya*. One should never have any iota of hatred for a *Brahmgiyani* irrespective of his caste. One should seek precious knowledge and enlightenment through teachings of a *Brahmgiyani*.

Just as small sized Sandalwood tree imparts its pleasant aroma to all surrounding vegetation likewise devout worshippers of God and revered saints help everyone in their sacred company to attain eternal salvation through their virtuous preaching. On the contrary a bamboo culm remains proud of its tall stature and it is deprived of the pleasant aroma of Sandalwood. A bamboo cannot get transformed into Sandalwood. Hence no one should take pride in his perceived high caste or harbour any hatred for a *Brahmgiyani* even if he hails from a comparatively lower caste. Queen Jhala Bai expressed these views before *Guruji* with great humility which pleased *Guruji* immensely. Thereafter Guru Ravidass accepted Queen Jhala Bai as one of his disciples considering her to be a really deserving candidate.

A few days later queen Jhali returned to Chittor after seeking prior permission of her revered *Guruji*. She narrated complete details about her meeting with Guru Ravidass and how she became his devout disciple. She also successfully inculcated tremendous respect for Guru Ravidass in her husband's mind. She then requested her husband, the king, to cordially invite *Guruji* to visit Chittor and conduct



spiritual discourses for some days at Chittor. The queen's husband king *Rana Sangram Singh* welcomed her suggestion and sent some of his ministers to Varanasi to meet and invite *Guru Ravidass* to visit Chittor. *Guru Ravidass* visited Chittor and held spiritual discourses of highest calibre. People were extremely delighted to listen to such enlightening spiritual discourses conducted so well by *Guruji*.

Thereafter the queen organized a grand congregation for community meals- *Raj Bhoj* in honour of *Guru Ravidass*. She invited a very large number of learned sages, revered saints and Brahmins for the congregation. It was also decided to offer one gold coin to each of the learned invitees. A very large number of Brahmins reached Chittor for the grand function. When the food was ready to be served all invitees sat down in lines to enjoy the meals. However when the pundits learnt that the king and queen were disciples of *Guru Ravidass* a lower caste *Chamar* and that the community meals had been organised in his honour; the arrogant Brahmins with false pride of their superior caste refused to have food. All of them joined together and said "We will not sit with a *Chamar* and have community meals prepared by the king." *Rana Sangram Singh* then tried to convince them and recited the following stanza:

***Rana kahe suno re bhai, more to mann ihi suhayi!!  
Karni hin su madhim soyi, karni kare so uttam  
hoi!!***

***Uttam madhim karni mahi, manas deh kaho uttam  
nahi!!***

***Kam krodh lalch nau dwara, ethi tan mae sabhae  
Chamara!!***

***Uttam vahi jinu jo jita, Brahman kinae Valmik  
kita!!***

***Jat pat ka nahi adhikara, Ram bhajae so uttre  
para!!***

***Nahi kashu tumhare sare uthi, vipar jahoo apne  
dwarae!!***



***Vipar bahur mann mahi dukh pavae, krodh karae  
Rani dar pavae!!*** i.e.

King Rana Sangram Singh pleaded with the Brahmins "Dear brothers! Please listen to me. I firmly believe that one who pursues noble deeds is superior and those who indulge in pursuit of ignoble deeds are inferior. Higher or lower status depends on one's deeds and just taking human birth in a so called higher caste does not make anyone automatically superior. If everyone is under the evil influence of lust, anger and greed and everyone has same nine apertures in human body; then all are equal and everyone is a *Chamar*.

Superior is one who conquers evils of worldly pleasures. Which *Brahmin* is as scholarly and learned as *Maharishi Valmik*? There is no discrimination or recognition of caste based rights in the realm of God. Only one who worships Ram or God with utmost devotion attains eternal salvation.

Then the Brahmins insisted that food should be served to them first, separately. Thereafter the king may do what he likes and serve meals to all other invites. Then *Rana* said as follows:

***Rani kahiyo nahi mann dhijae, Guru pahil tum ko  
kiyun dijae!!*** i.e.

The queen rightly believes that *Guruji* should have precedence. She is certain in her mind that anyone else cannot have precedence over revered *Guruji*. Thus there were arguments and counter arguments from both sides and then Guru Ravidass sent one of his disciples to convey the following message to the king and queen:

***Hamre nahi haar aur jeet, inki tum rakho rasreet!!***  
i.e.

I am not concerned about victory or defeat. Please go ahead and serve the meals to Brahmins as they wish. Accordingly food was served to Brahmins first separately after securing *Guruji*'s permission. As soon as the meals were served to Brahmins and they started eating; Guru

Ravidass assumed infinite personifications and sat down with each and every *Brahmin* to savour meals together.

***Sabhi ke sang jiman baetha, in vapae un vapae ditha!!***

***Sabh ko achraj bhaiyo tamasa, jete vipar tete Ravidassa!!*** *i.e.*

Every *Brahmin* was stunned to see Guru Ravidass sitting with each one of them and savouring food. Guru Ravidass was sitting there in as many numbers as the total number of Brahmins. On witnessing this unique phenomenon the arrogant Brahmins were extremely astonished as they were proud of their perceived upper caste affiliation. They came to the conclusion that this exceptional occurrence was because of the divine powers of Guru Ravidass and that *Guruji* is God incarnate himself.

***Sabhin ke mann upji laja, sadh satayo kiya akaja!!***

***Je voh krodh karae ham uppar, to ab hi jahi sakal jar bar!!***

***Ham apradhi vo jan poora unke sahib rahit hazoora!!***

***Ihae Sant ham aesa papi, bhagtan so lari aesi thapi!!***

***Sache Hari sache Hari jana, yon pashchatap kiyo Brahmma!!***

All of the Brahmins felt ashamed of their undesirable hatred and jealousy against a noble saint without any rhyme or reason. They were terribly worried and they concluded "If *Guruji* becomes angry and revengeful then all of us may get reduced to ashes. We are guilty of this serious crime. Guru Ravidass is a truly perfect saint. God is always close by his side. He is truly an accomplished perfect saint and we have made a grave mistake by picking up a quarrel with a devout *Bhagat* or dedicated worshipper of God. God is the truth and likewise profound devotees of God are also true." The Brahmins repented and expressed their regret like this.

Brahmins confessed that they had committed such a grave crime because of their sheer ignorance and arrogance.

It seems that there is no difference whatsoever between God and Guru Ravidass. All of the Brahmins present there unanimously became disciples of Guru Ravidass. They accepted their mistake and tendered apologies to *Guruji*. He advised all of them to worship God and practice meditation regularly with dedicated devotion.

After listening to Amrita like words of wisdom from Guru Ravidass; Brahmins started chanting as follows:

***Vipar kahe tu guru hamara, apni tor janeou dara!!  
Mathe hath dehu ab swami, ham sewak tum  
antarjami!!*** i.e.

The Brahmins then started singing in chorus and praying to Guru Ravidass “You are our revered *Guruji* and you are omniscient. Kindly place your holy hand on our foreheads with blessings.” They sang paeans in glory of Guru Ravidass and adopted the right path of devout meditation of God.

***Jaat paat poocho mat koi, Hari ko bhaje so Har ka  
hoi!!*** i.e.

No one asks anyone about his caste in the realm of God. Only the one who worships God with dedicated devotion belongs to God.

'Langar Pratha' is the healthy tradition of serving community meals for all at one place. *Bhai* Jodh Singh has mentioned about this healthy tradition in his book titled “*Bhagat Ravidass-Jeevan te Rachna*” i.e. “*Bhagat Ravidass - Life and Composition*” fourth edition published by Publications Bureau, Punjabi University Patiala during 2000 A.D. He has written on page 5 as follows: Meclauf and many other scholars have written in their publications “Plenty of offerings started pouring in for the preparation of community meals to serve to visiting devotees. *Guruji* also built a neat residential house and an inn for comfortable stay of the visiting devotees. Now everyone sits in the same row to have meals in the community kitchen.”

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## Guru Ravidass and his Disciple Meera Bai

Accordance to historical records, Meera's birth place is Merhta. The ledger files maintained by *Bhatts* of Rathore mention the date of birth of Meera Bai as Friday, *Ekam Sudi* of the month of *Sawan*, is 1498 AD. Her mother left for her heavenly abode when Meera was still very young. She was the only child of her parents. Meera did not have the benefit of love and affection of her parents or siblings since her childhood. Meera's father Ratan Singh remained entangled in fighting with Rana Sanga and the political upheavals of that era. Therefore Meera was brought up under the affectionate care and guidance of her grandfather Duda. He was a staunch believer in God and he practiced regular worship of God. Therefore, the positive effect of his spiritual inclination and meditation of God on Meera was quite natural. Rana Sanga ascended the throne of Chittor during *Samvat* 1566. His wife queen Jhali Bai was daughter of the king of Jhalawar and she was a profound devotee of God. They visited Kashi, Varanasi around 1567-68 *Vikram Samvat* and built a *darbar* there for Guru Ravidass. Duda, an ardent devotee of God, often used to travel from Merhta to Chittor to listen to the truthful preaching of Guru Ravidass during the spiritual congregations conducted by *Guruji* at his Chittor *darbar*. It is quite possible that young Meera might also have accompanied her grandfather to Chittor to listen to the spiritual discourses of Guru Ravidass. That is how the path of devout worship of God was clear for Meera since her childhood.

Prince Bhojraj, son of Queen Jhali had also a very amiable and dignified personality like his mother. Prince Bhojraj was about 18 years old at the time when Queen Jhali Bai submitted a proposal to Duda for the marriage of Bhojraj with Meera. This proposal had the blessings of Guru Ravidass and prior permission of queen's husband Rana Sangram Singh. Duda concurred with this wonderful

proposal and both of the families decided to get united through this royal wedding. On the auspicious occasion of *Vaisakhi* festival the marriage ceremony of Prince Bhojraj and Meera Bai was solemnized in the august presence and blessings of Guru Ravidass. Meera Bai was just 18 years old at that time. After her marriage, Meera Bai became a disciple of Guru Ravidass with the permission of her husband and her mother-in-law Queen Jhali.

Like the famous historical Vijay Stambha, Kumbh Shyam Temple built by Rana Kumbha is located on a double storey complex constructed on top of 1800 feet high hillock in Chittorgarh. Guru Ravidass used to hold spiritual congregations in the open courtyard of Kumbh Shyam Temple. It was the same court yard at Chittorgarh where Meera Bai used to sing and dance with utmost Devotion to God and ecstatic joy various hymns eulogising glory of God including the famous hymn “*Pag ghunghru bandh Meera nachi re*” i.e. Meera adorned her ankles with *ghunghru* or jingle bells and danced in ecstatic joy singing devotional hymns in glory of God.

Meera listened about the spiritual grandeur of Guru Ravidass from Saint Kamali:

***Sant Ravidass mile Guru poore mann ki ghundi khole!***

***Kahi Kamali sun re Meera Guru Amritbani bole!!***

(Saint Kamali)

Saint Kamali said “Meera Bai! Just listen. I am indeed blessed to have a truly perfect and accomplished Guru like Guru Ravidass. Revered *Guruji* preaches Amrita nectar like sermons and opens up all the knots of a disciple's mind.”

Revered Saint Meera Bai praised Guru Ravidass for his unique grandeur and said:

***Guru Ravidass mile mohe poore dhur se kalam bhirhi!!***

i.e.

Meera said “I am indeed blessed that I found a truly perfect Guru like Guru Ravidass as ordained by God.”

Time is ever changing. God had not ordained a

pleasant and long married life for Meera. That was virtually impossible as Meera was destined to ascend lofty heights of grandeur in the field of dedicated devout meditation of God. One can hear the pleasant sounds of *ghungaroo* of Meera even these days in the empty sky around Rajasthan. Melodious hymns of Meera replete with pangs of separation from God can be heard even today in the hillocks and vast expanse of desert of Rajasthan. Prince Bhojraj breathed his last suddenly during 1521 AD. King Kumbha also died fighting valiantly against Babur during a war at Kanwa in 1585 *Vikram Samvat* (January, 1528). Thus Queen Jhali and Meera Bai became widows. A war of succession broke out between Ratan Singh and Vikramjit, both sons of King Kumbha, for ascending the throne of the kingdom.

History is virtually silent about how Queen Jhala Bai spent her balance life after the demise of her husband. However, Meera continued with a fond and close association with her revered Guru Ravidass. A beautiful canopy to commemorate Guru Ravidass, in close vicinity of Meera Temple and Kumbh Shyam Temple, most likely came into existence with the untiring efforts of Queen Jhali Bai and Meera Bai during the period of these troublesome developments. The sacred lotus feet of Guru Ravidass have been depicted at the base below this Canopy. The replica of the well known famous five evils described by Guru Ravidass in his sacred *Amritbani* has been depicted on the under side surface of ceiling of this Canopy.

Meera had to endure endless troubles because of injustice and torture perpetrated by her relatives. It is also said that Vikramjit had arranged to throw Meera in Gambhiri River flowing besides Chittor during midnight. However because of benevolent blessings of Guru Ravidass, Vikramjit did not succeed in harming her. Meera came out of the river stream just as gold flows easily after getting purified by fire.

Meera then devoted herself fearlessly to devout worship of God and relentless services for the visiting



saints. However, king Vikramjit did not like to see Meera surrounded by a large congregation of saints most of the time. He deputed two of his trusted female employees Champa and Chameli for regular surveillance of Meera's activities and to prevent her from being in the company of learned sages. However because of the saintly pious company of Meera Bai, lives of both of them were also transformed with the advent of keen interest in worship of God in their minds. Both of them became ardent supporters of Meera Bai in due course of time. Similar was the outcome in respect of other female servants deputed by king Vikramjit to monitor Meera's activities closely. Finally *Rana Vikramjit* entrusted this important task to his sister Udha Bai. She discharged her responsibilities diligently for quite some time keeping a close watch. She used to visit Meera's palace frequently everyday and she tried hard to counsel Meera and prevent her from pursuing spiritual activities.

Thereafter Vikramjit hatched a conspiracy in consultation with his ministers to administer a dose of poison to Meera to kill her. Meera was given a drink laced with strong poison to drink while she was wrongly told that Guru Ravidass had sent that Amrita nectar for her. Udha Bai came to know about this plot and she secretly informed Meera about the same well in time. She later tried to prevent Meera from drinking that poison. However Meera said "As I have been told that the bowl is full of Amrita nectar sent by Guru Ravidass, I must savour it gladly. If I discard the same; that will be absolutely against the spirit of devout worship of my revered *Guruji*." She then touched that bowl with her forehead with great esteem and consumed the liquid joyfully. Meera did not suffer any harm because of that poison and instead her faith and confidence in worship of God redoubled. When Udha Bai witnessed this miraculous phenomenon and unprecedented impact of devout meditation, she became an extremely close friend of Meera Bai.

Later one day Vikramjit sent a poisonous snake

covered in a small jewellery box and told Meera that Guru Ravidass had sent a diamond laced necklace for her. Meera Bai remembered Guru Ravidass with sincere gratitude and opened that box and found the diamond necklace. The snake had been miraculously transformed into a diamond necklace with the blessings of her revered Guru Ravidass.

***Garl pathaiyo so to sis lae charhaiyo,  
Sang tiyag vish bhari taki ghar na sambhari hae!!  
Rana ne lagaiyo char baethe Sadhu dhang thar,  
Tab hi khabar kar maro yahae dhari hae!!  
Raje Girdhari Lal tini so rang jati,  
Bolat hastu khiyal kanpari piari hae!!  
Jayi ke sunayi bhayi ati chaplayi,  
Ayon liye talwar de kibar khol niyari hae!!***

***Jake sang rang bhij karat prasang nana,  
Kahan vah nar gaiyo veg dae batayiae!!  
Age hi birajae kashu to so nahi lajo,  
Abhae dekhi sukh sajae aankhe khol darsaiyae!!***

***Bhaiyoi khisano Rana likhiyo chitarbhit mano,  
Ulati piyano kiyo nek mann aayiae!!  
Dekhoun hun prabhav epae bhav mae na bhidiyo  
jayi,  
Bina Hari kripa kaho kaese kar payiae!!***

Thereafter *Rana* deputed his secret agents for strict surveillance with the instructions to inform *Rana* at once whenever Meera may be sitting alone with an ascetic saint. *Rana* had been looking for such an opportunity to malign Meera Bai and kill her. One day Guru Ravidass suddenly materialized and Meera was laughing and talking to *Guru*. Staff deputed for espionage informed *Rana* that Meera was alone with a saint laughing and talking loudly. Then *Rana* rushed to Meera's palace with a sword and demanded that she must open the door at once. Meera opened the door immediately but *Rana* could not see anyone else there in her

palace. Then *Rana* asked Meera “You had been laughing and talking loudly to someone short while ago. Where is that person you had been entertaining?” Meera said that the concerned person was sitting in front of him. As the door opened and *Rana* looked inside, he could not withstand the intense brilliant light that illuminated the surroundings and he fainted and fell down unconscious. When he regained consciousness, he apologised and requested Meera Bai to pardon him for his grave mistake.

***Vishayi kutil ek bhes dhari Sadhu liou,***

***Kiyoo yo prasang mo so ang sang kijiye!!***

***Agya mou ki dayi aap Lal Girdhari,***

***Ahon sis dhar layi kari bhojan hoon lijiye!!***

***Santan Samaj me vishayi sej bol liou,***

***Sank ab kaun ki nisank ras bhiyae!!***

***Set mukh bhaiyo vishaybhav sabh gaiyo,***

***Niyoo piyan pae aap moko bhagti daan dijiye!! i.e.***

One day a cunning criminal & habitual physical abuser disguised himself as a saint and came to Meera Bai. He told her a fabricated lie that God had personally directed him to meet Meera and satisfy her physical needs. Meera replied “Please have your meals first. I shall abide by your orders. I am at your service.” Meera then served him food and later prepared a bed amidst the congregation of other saints and told that cunning saint “All right! Please be comfortable on this bed and permit me also to join you. If God has really directed you so then what is the hesitation now? Come over without any vacillation and indulge in worldly pleasures.” The face of that person turned yellow on listening to these words from Meera Bai and he felt terribly ashamed and absolutely lifeless. He prostrated at the lotus feet of Meera Bai and begged for her pardon and sought to be blessed with devout worship of God.

Finally it was at Ranchhod Temple at Dwarika where Meera Bai fell down unconscious while dancing and singing spiritual hymns eulogising God during Samvat 1603 and she never got up again. She abandoned her

perishable human body for amalgamation with her beloved God to be one with Him.

It is mentioned on page 26 of the treatise “*Meera-Prem Diwani*” published by *Radha Soami Satsang Beas* during 1999 that the gracious personality of Sant Meera Bai had a very pronounced influence on Mughal King Akbar which inculcated fine values of tolerance in his mind. It was because of this transformation and awakening for progressive thinking and tolerance that Akbar sincerely tried to propagate a common universal religion *Din-E-Ilahi* throughout his kingdom in India during his rule.

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### **Karma Bai – Ardent Disciple of Guru Ravidass**

The glory of Karma Bai's extraordinary powers had spread far and wide. Revered saints of all sects of community of learned sages used to congregate at her place for spiritual discussions. One day a learned saint came to meet Karma Bai during his routine trip in that region. He said “Karma Bai! God visits your place every day to savour food. Who is that God for whom you prepare meals every day?” Karma Bai replied in a very simple and innocent manner “I pray to God and then prepare '*Khichrhi*' – rice and lentils cooked together. Then I serve the meals on a platter to God every day. God materializes when the food is ready and leaves after savouring the served meals.” The sage advised her “Karma Bai! You should do that in a refined way. You should ensure that all the firewood is first cleaned, washed and dried and the kitchen sanctified with mud plaster. Then have a bath before settling down to prepare meals for God.” Karma Bai was quite upset and repentant after listening to the sage wondering why she not did think of these things earlier.

The next day she put sage's advice into practice. She washed the firewood, plastered the kitchen premises and had a bath. Thereafter she started preparing the meals. God

reached her place well in time as per normal daily routine. However when God noticed that Karma Bai had delayed cooking that day and the food was not ready, God walked away. God visited the place once again after a while and the food was not ready even by that time. Karma Bai completed the cooking after some more time and God then came for the third time and savoured the served food. Thereafter God was just getting ready to wash His hands and face to cleanse some '*khichrhi*' sticking to the mouth and hands. However exactly at that very moment *Swami* Ramanand invoked God to visit his place and savour the meals kept ready for Him. Food had been kept ready for God in a platter behind a curtain just before invocation of God by Ramanand. God had therefore to rush from Karma Bai's place to Ramanand's temple without washing '*khichrhi*' off His hands and mouth.

When God reached Ramanand's place hurriedly with His hands and mouth laced with '*khichrhi*', Ramanand was amused even though he could have only partial vision of God. He asked God "How is it that God had to come here in this condition? Where did you have '*khichrhi*' before reaching here?" God replied "I visit Karma Bai's house everyday to savour '*khichrhi*'. A saint confused her today and that is why she served '*khichrhi*' for me quite late. I was about to wash my hands and face when you remembered me. Hence I did not get time to wash my hands and rushed here in same condition." Sage Ramanand was amazed to hear that God savours '*khichrhi*' every day at Karma Bai's house. Then Ramanand headed for Karma Bai's house and asked her "Karma Bai! I understand that you cook food for God every day and God visits your house daily to relish '*khichrhi*'. You are indeed blessed. However please tell me what kind of worship and meditation have you practiced because of which God is so benevolent and kind to you?"

Karma Bai said modestly "I do not practice any special kind of worship. I only practice meditation in accordance with the guidance of my revered *Guruji* and chant sacred *Naam* granted by my *Gurudev*. Then I prepare



meals for God with devout love and serve food to God with utmost devotion. It is all because of benevolent blessings of my revered Guru Ravidass that I got such opportunity to serve God.” Then Ramanand humbly prayed to Karma Bai “Karma Bai! As God manifests personally in your house every day to sit before you and savour meals; please pray to God to be likewise kind and benevolent to me by revealing His direct personal view before my eyes as well because I have been unable to have a complete vision of God.”

As usual, God materialized at Karma Bai's residence the next day again. While God was savouring *khichrhi*; Karma Bai communicated the request made to her by Ramanand the previous day. God replied “Karma Bai! He harbours some prejudice in his mind. On the contrary you are extremely simple with a pious heart and devout nature. You have no discrimination in your mind for anyone and you have enmity for none. You have a serene and calm mind and you treat everyone equally well. That is why you are able to have my personal complete view.” Karma Bai prayed once again “O Almighty God! It is my humble request at your lotus feet to kindly reveal Thy personal vision to the holy sage once.” Finally God accepted Karma Bai's earnest prayer and Ramanand had a personal vision of God. This fact has been stated by Guru Govind Singh.

God was extremely pleased with Karma Bai because of her dedicated devotion and devout worship and one day God asked Karma Bai “You may ask for any boon and that shall be granted.” Karma Bai said “O God My True Lord! I have no desire for any worldly riches as everything is perishable. Just bless me with your devout worship.” Karma Bai prayed further “O Revered God! You are eternal and shall always be so in perpetuity. However my human body is mortal and it will not last forever. Hence, please accept my humble prayer that as you savour *Khichrhi* prepared by me every day; Thou must continue to savour *Khichrhi* eternally everyday on behalf of this humble devotee. This is my only humble prayer to my revered God.”

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## Sacred Tank (*Sarovar*) – Guru Ravidass

Guru Ravidass once organized preparation of community meals for learned sages, revered saints and devotees at Mandav Garh. *Ganga* also graced this auspicious occasion in the guise of a young lady. Local king Vijaypal was enchanted to see the exceptionally beautiful divine personality of that girl. He sent a message to Guru Ravidass suggesting that suitable arrangements should be made for her marriage with the king failing which he threatened to blow *Guruji* with a gun. Guru Ravidass mentioned about this strange demand and threatening tone of Vijaypal to *Ganga*. When *Ganga* learnt about the issue from Guru Ravidass, she said “King Vijaypal is very arrogant and he will not listen to logic and he cannot be convinced through a straight-forward method and wise counsel. He will continue to harass you unnecessarily. Let him come as a bridegroom along with complete marriage party.”

King Vijaypal was extremely delighted and he reached Guru Ravidass's place with full marriage party. *Ganga* materialized there dressed as a beautiful bride bedecked with finest jewellery and extraordinary ornaments. She glanced at Vijaypal and then suddenly jumped into the small pot of water from which Guru Ravidass had earlier taken out the unique diamond studded wrist bracelets. *Ganga* merged into that water and dematerialized in full view of bewildered king Vijaypal. Immediately thereafter an extremely strong torrent emerged with infinite forceful flow that drowned all members of the marriage party including king Vijaypal. Entire public then realized that it was indeed *Ganga* herself who had come there in the guise of a youthful girl to have a personal vision of Guru Ravidass. *Guru Ravidass Charan Kund* is revered by all people even these days as *Ganga* at Mandav Garh in Madhya Pradesh.

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## Reverse Flow of *Ganga*

In due course of time, Guru Ravidass's respected father completed his life's journey and realized eternal peace and tranquillity in the realm of God. Guru Ravidass arrived at the banks of river *Ganga* with the mortal remains of his revered father in a palanquin for last rites and cremation. However while Guru Ravidass was making final arrangements for the cremation of his father, a group of Pundits started raising objections for cremation at that site along the river bank. They insisted that fresh arrangements should be made for the cremation at another site half a mile away down stream. A funeral pyre was then prepared at the new site downstream and the body was consigned to the flames. Meanwhile an extremely strong current of *Ganga* started flowing in the reverse direction and engulfed the entire funeral pyre in the holy water of *Ganga*. *Ganga* flows in reverse direction at that spot even these days and the site is known as '*Ulti Ganga*' or Reverse *Ganga*. The position of the river at that site can be seen same way even these days.

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## Guru Ravidass and Sikandar Lodi

Writer M.R. Bahrwal has mentioned in his publication "*Sakhi Shri Guru Ravidass Mission*" about the incidences related to life stories of Guru Ravidass and Guru Kabir linked to their contemporary king Sikandar Lodi. Lots of efforts were made to stop Guru Kabir to recitate name of devotion of God. However these efforts did not have any effect on Guru Kabir. Guru Kabir was thrown before an intoxicated elephant so that he gets trampled. However the elephant saluted Guru Kabir with reverence and walked away. Thereafter Guru Kabir was tied with chains and thrown into river *Ganga* to get drowned. However those chains were shattered away by strong current of *Ganga* and Guru Kabir came out of the river safely.

Guru Ravidass was also imprisoned in a dark cell. However all of the security personel visualized Guru

Ravidass to be sitting majestically on a throne. Then the officials of that prison informed Sikandar Lodi that Guru Ravidass was a very enlightened and pious saint. Then King Sikandar Lodi realized that he had committed a serious mistake by imprisoning *Guruji*. The king then apologised from Guru Ravidass to pardon him for his grave error and he also reprimanded Mullahs and Islamic scholars and warned them not to level any charges against the great noble saint in future.

However Sikandar Lodi arrested Guru Ravidass once again at the behest of some prominent Muslims and Pundits. When it was night time the divine powers of Guru Ravidass revealed a strange phenomenon to Sikandar Lodi. Sikandar Lodi visualized Guru Ravidass helping the king and saving him from a grave situation. This had a profound impact on the mind of Sikandar Lodi. He at once realized that he had made yet another grave mistake by sending *Guruji* behind the bars. When the king convened his *darbar* the next morning, Guru Ravidass was also invited. King Sikandar Lodi tendered his apologies to Guru Ravidass once again for his serious blunder. Later the king got a mosque constructed at the same spot inside that jail where Guru Ravidass had been imprisoned. That mosque is still present there in Varanasi. Poet Harbhajan Ratan has also expressed similar views in his collection of poems titled 'Guru Ravidass Mahan' or the Great Guru Ravidass, which highlights the regret and repentance of Sikandar Lodi. Thus even King Sikandar Lodi had to bow before the exalted divine stature of Guru Ravidass.

Dr. Dharampal Singal has written about *Guruji* as follows: 'When Sikandar Lodi visited Varanasi, he heard a lot about the unique grandeur of Guru Ravidass. After learning about the glory of Guru Ravidass, King Sikandar Lodi invited *Guruji* to his *darbar*. Sikandar Lodi was amazed to see for himself the grandeur of scholarly enlightenment, devout meditation of God and unique aura of Guru Ravidass.'

Many of the contemporary Brahmins were extremely jealous of Guru Ravidass because of his devout meditation and vast knowledge. Some of those Brahmins complained to King Sikandar Lodi once again against Guru Ravidass. Guru Ravidass was asked to face an intoxicated rogue elephant to settle this complaint. However, instead of causing any harm to *Guruji*, the elephant gracefully saluted Guru Ravidass and walked away majestically. King Sikandar Lodi and everyone present at the venue were really amazed to witness this strange phenomenon. King Sikandar Lodi apologised from Guru Ravidass once again.

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## **Expeditions by Guru Ravidass for Emancipation of Humanity**

Guru Ravidass undertook several expeditions for emancipation and enlightenment of human beings all over India. However as the pernicious practice of untouchability was rampant those days; majority of the evidence related to such visits by *Guru* was deliberately destroyed by vested interests. How could an impoverished community, forced to live on the mercy of upper caste people, preserve such precious treasure of rich heritage? Guru Ravidass undertook extensive journeys to various parts of the country with a view to reforming the civil society, emancipation of the impoverished and spreading his spiritual philosophy and noble virtuous ideals of human life amongst one and all. Guru Ravidass embarked upon several expeditions listed below with a view to getting the Indian society rid of all serious evils like caste based discrimination, prejudice, intolerance, ignorance, illiteracy, arrogance, treachery, cruelty and trampling of human rights of ladies etc:

### **Expedition -1**

Ranipur, Malpi, Madhopur, Bhagalpur,  
Narayangarh, Kalpi and Nagpur.  
Burhanpur, Bijapur and Bhopal.

Chandehi, Jhansi, Tod, Bundi and Udaypur.  
Jodhpur, Ajmer and Mumbai.  
Amarkot, Hyderabad, Kathiawar and again  
Mumbai.  
Mumbai, Karachi, Bahawalpur, Jaisalmer and  
Jodhpur.  
Kalabag Kohat, Khyber Pass and Jalalabad.  
Jalalbad, Kafirstan and Srinagar.  
Dalhousie, Gorakhpur (Discourse with Naths), and  
Kashipur.

### **Expedition -2**

Kashipur to Gorakhpur, Pratapgarh and  
Shahjahanpur.  
Sojourn in the Himalaya Hills.

Guru Ravidass asked all of his followers to stay back  
while leaving for a long sojourn in the Himalayas. *Guruji*  
also directed all concerned that his son would be the  
spiritual guide of the devotees and he would also bless  
people with grant of sacred *Naam* for new disciples as it  
would take a long time for *Guruji* to return from the hills.

Guru Ravidass ushered in many revolutionary  
reforms during these expeditions. Very large numbers of  
sinners realized their mistakes and undertook penance for  
forgiveness. Most stubborn, fundamentalist and self styled  
religious leaders reformed themselves and made their  
human lives truly fruitful by following the spiritual path of  
devout meditation shown by *Guruji*. *Guruji* also blessed  
many people suffering from incurable diseases and cured  
them during this period. *Guruji* very kindly restored  
eyesight of many visually challenged individuals.  
Whosoever sought shelter at the lotus feet of *Guruji*, he was  
blessed with benevolent eyes by *Guruji* irrespective of his  
religion like Hindu or Muslim and community like  
*Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* or *Shudra*.

### **Expedition -3**

Guru Ravidass travelled to various Arab countries  
during the third expedition.

Guru Ravidass engaged in constructive spiritual dialogue with spiritual leaders of every important religion and enlightened infinite numbers of people of different backgrounds with sermons of truth and devout worship of God. A close study of *Amritbani* recited by Guru Ravidass establishes very clearly that *Guruji* had travelled to faraway places during his life time. This is apparent based on the extensive use of vast variety of words from different languages and names of important places in *Amritbani* recited by Guru Ravidass. Hymn '*Begumpura sahar ko naou*' recited by *Guruji* has a word 'Aabadan' that gives a clear indication of *Guruji's* visit to Iran and Arab countries.

While I was seriously contemplating about the context and exact meaning of many words used in *Amritbani* recited by Guru Ravidass for writing a detailed commentary; I was really surprised to see the meaning of the word 'Aabadan' in '*Mahan Kosh*' dictionary published by Kahn Singh Nabha. Whereas many scholars and commentators describe the meaning of word 'Aabadan' as '*Aabad*' or inhabited by people; '*Mahan Kosh*' mentions 'Aabadan' as a famous city of Iraq. However further research has revealed that Aabadan is a large city in Iran.

There is conclusive proof in *Amritbani* of Guru Ravidass that *Guruji* recited this sacred *Amritbani* based on his own enlightened experience. *Guruji* has nicely synthesized external worldly knowledge with unique personal experiences of the inner realm to recite *Amritbani* in simple, logical and interesting manner for the benefit of listeners and emancipation of devotees.

***Ghat avghat doogar ghana ik nirgun bael hamar!!  
Ramaiye siou ik benati meri poonji rakh  
Murar!!1!!***

***Ko banjaro Ram ko mera tanda ladia jayi re!!1!!  
Rahao!! i.e.***

(As it is difficult for an ox devoid of virtues to reach his destination passing through an arduous hilly track, likewise for any one even in rare human life, the path of



eternal salvation and oneness with God is extremely difficult like forested hilly track because of ignorance and attachment with worldly pleasures. Ox like mind of any one treading such difficult path is extremely weak. O God! Be kind to preserve my precious and scarce human life. If there is any one desirous of trading in devotion to God, he is welcome to come to me for that trade as I have *Prabhu Bhakti* or devotion to God in abundance with me. My cart is laden with true *Naam* of God.)

***Koop bhario jaise dadira kashu des bides na boojh!!***

***Aise mera man bikhia bimohia kashu aarapar na soojh!!1!! i.e.***

(O God! As a frog spends his entire life in the well, he does not know anything about the real world outside the well. He remains happily engrossed in pursuit of his pleasures ignorant of the outside world. Similar is the state of human being whose mind is steeped in the well of ignorance and he knows little about utmost need for earnest efforts to secure real happiness in this life and eternal peace with salvation thereafter.)

***Ravi pargas rajani jatha gat jaanat sabh sansaar!!***

***Paras mano tabo chhuae kanak hot nahi baar!!5!!***

***Param paras Guru bhetiae poorab likhat lilat!!***

***Unman man man hi mile chhutkat bajar kapaat!!6!! i.e.***

(It is the universal truth that darkness of night will surely disappear when the sun rises. Everyone in the world knows about this truth extremely well. Similarly one can get rid of the ignorance of his mind when enlightened by preaching of a perfect Guru.

It takes no time for copper to turn into gold when in touch with *Paras* or philosopher's stone. Human beings blessed with good past deeds only secure the blessings of a perfect Guru. Any person with good past deeds to his credit, realizes protection of saints very quickly. All stiff doors of ignorance in a living being get opened with the

enlightenment through the blessings of a perfect *Guruji* and such an individual attains a stage of eternal tranquillity.)

***Tum chandan ham irand bapure sang tumare baasa!!***

***Neech rookh te ooch bhai hae gandh sugandh nivaasa!!1!! i.e.***

(O God! You are unique in this universe like sandalwood tree. We human beings are worthless like castor because of our grave weaknesses. O God! Just as a worthless castor plant also gets the fragrance of sandal and becomes precious because of its close proximity to sandalwood tree, same way I am extremely close to Thee. Likewise, O God! I have become one with Thee in Thy pious company.)

***Tar tar apvitar kar maniae re jaise kagra karat bicharam!!***

***Bhagt bhagaout likhiaie tih oopare pooae kar namaskaram!!2!! i.e.***

(As the Palmyra palm tree is considered not virtuous because it contains intoxicating juice in it and many thinkers treat even paper made of leaves of this palm as irreverent. However, when the same leaves have Holy Scriptures and God's paeans written on them, people hold them in very high esteem and worship same. Likewise even those, who are treated by ignorant people of the world as untouchables, command every one's salutations and are highly revered when they achieve oneness with God through deep devotion and meditation.)

***Tu kaye garbahi bavali!!Jaise bhadou khumbraj tu tis te khari utavali!!1!!Rahao!!***

***Jaise kurank nahi payio bhed!! Tan sugandh dhundhaeprades!! i.e.***

(O dear! Why do you indulge in false pride? Just as mushrooms grow naturally for a short period during the month of *Bhadon* (August-September), your life is more uncertain and short lived even compared to the little life of mushroom. Just as the musk deer has musk in its stomach and he keeps roaming in forests and hills in search of that

perfume, similarly God is present within every living being. However because of sheer ignorance, we keep searching for God all over beyond our inner selves.)

***Maile kapre kaha lou dhovou!! Aavaegi neend kaha lag sovou!!1!! i.e.***

(In the absence of pious company of saints, where will anyone cleanse his sinful heart akin to washing of dirty clothes? And how long will one keep suffering from slumber of ignorance?)

Gurujī recited following hymn that is completely linked to the daily chores of people of his community:

***Chamrata ganth na janaie!! Log gathavae panhie!!1!!Rahao!!***

***Aar nahi h topou!! Nahi rambi thaou ropou!!1!!***

***Log ganth ganth khara bigucha!!Hou bin ganthe jaie pahucha!!2!!***

***Ravidass japae Ram nama!! Mohi jam siou nahi kama!!3!!7!! i.e.***

(Guru Ravidass preaches the entire humanity that anyone, who gives up false affection for his body and devotes himself to meditation of God, surely overcomes the fear of death and attains eternal salvation.

I won't have false affection for this perishable body covered with skin. People visit me to seek fulfilment of desires of the human body or to acquire false worldly pleasures dear to the human beings.

I do not have instruments for piercing, skinning and stitching that I can use to secure false worldly pleasures for the sake of body meaning that I don't have sharp wits and deceptive wisdom to cement my attachment with false love and deep affection for this perishable world.

People continue to suffer because of their deep affection for the perishable human body and illusory universe. However, I have no love for the body or worldly pleasures. With my true affection and devotion to God, I have achieved salvation and I have become one with the Almighty.

Guru Ravidass declares that “I have achieved true eternal friendship with God through deep devotion and meditation of God. Hence, I have nothing to be afraid of messengers of death now.”)

Guru Ravidass also mentioned the names of all truly perfect contemporary saints of that era in his *Amritbani*.

***Namdev Kabir Tilochan Sadhna Sain tarae!!***

***Kahi Ravidass sunahu re Santahu Har u te sabhae sarae!!2!!1!!***

**i.e.**

(Guru Namdev, Guru Kabir, Guru Trilochan, Guru Sadhna and Guru Sain attained eternal salvation through deep devotion to God. Guru Ravidass in his address to the holy saints says “Listen! God is omnipotent and He can accomplish whatever He envisages.”)

***Phal karan phooli banrai!! Phal laga tab phool bilai!!***

**i.e.**

(Just as various species of plants bear flowers for the production of fruit and the flowers wither away after formation of fruits.)

***Ghrit karan dadhi mathae saiyan!! Jiwat mukat sada nirban!!***

**i.e.**

(As a wise lady churns curd for getting butter and she stops churning after taking out the butter. Similarly, seeker of divine knowledge performs good deeds for seeking divine enlightenment. When he attains self enlightenment, he achieves eternal tranquillity during his life time and attains a permanent eternal status of oneness with God.)

A careful study and due consideration leads us to the conclusion that *Guruji* presented most relevant examples from real human life in an extremely beautiful manner in his *Amritbani*. It is quite possible that some of *Guruji*'s disciples might have set their sacred feet in this famous city of Aabadan for spiritual communications and preaching of *Guruji*'s *Amritbani* at the request of Muslim rulers of that period. Guru Ravidass presented a complete scenario of that city in his scholarly *Amritbani* reckoned as conforming to the highest standards. When any poet composes a poem, he

presents relevant examples from the surrounding environment and his own life. However the tenacity of *Amritbani* recited by Guru Ravidass is based on divine vision and most appropriate paradigms. It is because of extraordinary poetic insight commanded by *Guruji* that no other learned sage has recited a Gurbani hymn similar to the one '*Begumpura sahar ko naou*' recited by Guru Ravidass.

Guru Ravidass visited the city of Aabadan during his sojourn in the Arabian and Gulf countries and later recited this hymn giving the unique concept of *Begumpura* City for the benefit of all human beings. *Guruji* recited this hymn in a beautiful style as follows:

***Begumpura sahar ko naao!! Dukh andohu nahi tihi thaao!!***

***Nan tasvis khiraj na mal!! Khauf na khata na taras jawal!!1!!***

***Ab mohi khub vatan gah paie!! Uhan khair sada mere bhai!!1!! Rahao!!***

***Kayam dayam sada patisahi!! Dom na sem ek so ahi!!***

***Aabadan sada masahur!! Uhan gani baseh mamur!!2!!***

***Teo teo sail karahi jeo bhavai!! Mahram mahal na ko atkavai!!***

***Kahi Ravidass khalas chamara !! Jo ham sahri so meet hamara!!3!!2!! i.e.***

(Guru Ravidass says that he is a citizen of the world known as "*Begumpura*" that is devoid of any grief. There is no room for any pain and worry in that world.

There is neither any worry nor tension of any kind in "*Begumpura*" city. No one has to pay any taxes for trading in God's *Naam*. All citizens of that "*Begumpura*" are free of any fear, discord, felony, desire, pity and scarcity and they are all one with God.

Dear brother! I have now attained an eternal and blessed place in '*Begumpura*'. This place has permanent

eternal peace. Every living being enjoys lifelong absolute happiness and peace in the “*Begumpura*” world order.

There is eternal kingdom of God in that world “*Begumpura*”. No one is second or third in command there but there is only one kingdom of eternal God the Almighty.

God's “*Begumpura*” is extremely well known and always populated with blessed noble souls. Fully satisfied blessed noble souls, free of any longings and always engrossed in deep meditation of God, reside there.

Residents of “*Begumpura*” stroll freely as per their will. Well versed with the palaces of *Begumpura*; the resident souls stroll freely anywhere without any hindrances.

Guru Ravidass explains that “I have got rid of all worldly attachments through deep meditation of God. Any living being that gets free of such bonds is indeed pious. He is my friend and my fellow citizen.”)

We can decisively conclude after reading or listening and careful consideration of this hymn that Guru Ravidass indeed travelled to far flung destinations. Meanwhile we can have a fairly clear picture of elegance and splendour of this city only by careful study of *Amritbani* hymn '*Begumpura sahar ko naou*' recited by Guru Ravidass.

Sheikh Sadi, the famous Persian scholar, has also mentioned about this city of Aabadan in his writings. This city is located in Iran which is a well known country situated west of Afghanistan. Persian is the local language of people of this country. Persian or Farsi is the official language of Iran which was earlier known as Persia. The Arians from this region had entered India via Georgia.

Guru Ravidass along with some of his disciples reached Iran travelling through various parts of northern India spreading his message of universal love and devout meditation of God throughout his travels. Later *Guruji* visited Kuwait and the holy cities of Medina and Mecca in Saudi Arabia. It is not likely that having travelled huge distance from Varanasi to Aabadan in Iran, *Guruji* would not



have visited Mecca along with his Muslim devotees. *Guruji*'s Muslim devotees must have pleaded with *Guruji* to visit Mecca as well during that trip. Aabadan was also a famous centre for Persian literature close to the Persian Gulf Sea shores.

The world famous traveller Ibn Batuta travelled all over Asia. He traversed 1, 17,000 kilometres distance to visit 40 countries. He also halted at Aabadan during his travels. He was highly impressed with the prosperity of the citizens and grandeur of this city. This city of Iran is situated very close to the country's border with Iraq. Aabadan was an extremely important centre of trade and commerce during those days. Travellers from India, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia used the route passing through Aabadan for their travels. Beyond Aabadan, the famous city of Basra is located in Iraq where soldiers from Punjab fought bravely on behalf of the British forces during the Second World War (1938-45).

Guru Ravidass held spiritual discourses with Muslim saints and fakirs of these regions of Arabia. After listening to the pious and eloquent preaching of *Guruji* a very large number of local people of this region became disciples of Shri Guru Ravidass.

Guru Ravidass also travelled to various places in Afghanistan during the same period. Aabadan was a prosperous royal city. Guru Ravidass was extremely impressed with the grandeur of this city and it was included in *Amritbani* hymn by *Guruji*. It is quite possible that local followers of *Guruji* might have built suitable edifice to commemorate the sacred memory of *Guruji* in this region. However *Ravidassia* community was unable to preserve the same because of the location being far away beyond their reach.

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## **Guru Ravidass's Visit to Himachal And Sirdhaar Mountain**

This narrative is based on written accounts on pages 182-186 of Janamsakhi *Guru Nanak Dev*. When Guru Nanak Dev reached the snow-clad peaks of Himalayas, then Mardana asked “*Guruji*! What is this place known as?” Then *Guruji* said “This is the region of flowing ice and it is known as Himachal. If anyone steps onto this ice his body starts decaying. There is no way for a human being to reach this place.” Then Mardana asked “Then why did we come here?” Guru Nanak Dev replied “We are here in accordance with the wishes of almighty God.” Mardana asked “Is there any specific place beyond this?” Guru Nanak Dev said “*Hem Parbat* or *Hem Mountain* is located beyond this point.” Thereafter *Guruji* moved ahead and reached *Hem Mountain*. When *Guruji* reached *Sirdhaar Mountain*, Mardana asked “*Guruji* ! Why is this *Hem Mountain* known as *Sirdhar Mountain*?” Then Shri Guru Nanak Dev explained “This Mountain is the abode of *Sirdhaar* and *Sirtalwaya*. There is no way for a human being to reach this place. Only a rare individual, has who the benevolent blessings and full support of God, can reach here. Only Guru Kabir and Guru Ravidass could reach this place prior to this day.”

It is quite evident from this narrative that Guru Ravidass travelled to even extremely remote areas all over India. Guru Ravidass had also reached such a lofty snow-covered mountain because of his unique divine powers.

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## **When King Pipa became a Disciple of Guru Ravidass**

King Pipa was a very powerful *Kshatriya* ruler. He developed fond devotion and intense love and affection for God and lived a reclusive life. During his relentless search for a perfect Master, he learnt that Guru Ravidass was a truly perfect and accomplished saint. However King Pipa was

very proud of his *Kshatriya* caste. Hence he was feeling shy of visiting a holy saint hailing from *Chamar* community. Finally King Pipa reached the *darbar* or hermitage of Guru Ravidass one day at an opportune time and made a request to be initiated as a disciple. He requested *Guruji* to bless him with the treasure of sacred *Naam*.

Guru Ravidass easily understood that a king proud of his *Kshatriya* caste had come to seek his blessings. Guru was removing water, used for soaking leather, from the earthen bowl at that time. A small pot full of water was in *Guruji's* hand at that moment. *Guruji* contemplated in his mind that the king who came to visit this *darbar* should be gifted some unique item that he may remember throughout his life time. Therefore *Guruji* handed over that pot of water to the king and said “Dear King! Have this Amrita nectar and savour this.” However the king had disdain in his mind about that holy water as he thought how a *Kshatriya* king could drink water from the pitcher of a low caste *Chamar*. However it was also extremely difficult for him to refuse *Guruji's* offer openly. Therefore he moved both of his hands forwards and received Amrita on the palms of his hands. However he did not savour that Amrita nectar. Instead he poured the Amrita nectar down through the arms of his *kurta* in a clever way so that *Guruji* could not see that. Omniscient *Guruji* knew everything very well but he did not say anything.

Thereafter the king returned home quickly. He was thinking in his mind that Guru Ravidass was intent on converting him into a low caste *Chamar*. It is with great difficulty that he did not drink that water and escaped safely. On reaching home the king called the washerman and ordered him to take his *kurta* for washing and removing the stains very carefully. The washerman told his daughter “I shall prepare warm water with some lime and you should carefully remove the stains from this *kurta*.” However as it was difficult to get rid of the stains with normal washing, she started sucking the stained parts of the *kurta* with her mouth to remove the stains. During that process of such sucking,

she swallowed some water containing the Amrita released from the stains. That resulted in her instant enlightenment as soon as she swallowed the Amrita nectar given by Guru Ravidass to the king that he had wasted. With that she started talking about spiritual enlightenment in a scholarly manner.

Over a period of time the news about spiritual enlightenment of the washerman's daughter Karmabai and her devout meditation of God spread all over the city. When the king Pipa learnt about this development, he quietly reached the washerman's house one day. He already had deep interest in seeking spiritual enlightenment and knowledge. The washerman's daughter stood up respectfully on seeing the king at her house. King Pipa said "Dear daughter! I have not come here as a king but I am here as a seeker of knowledge and enlightenment." She replied "I am aware that you are the king. However I am standing respectfully before you because I got everything because of your benevolence. I experienced instant enlightenment as soon as I sucked the stains from your *kurta* that was soaked with Amrita nectar. That is how I got spiritual enlightenment." The king realized the real truth after listening to her. He cursed himself severely for his major mistakes like being a proud *Kshatriya* king, caste based discrimination, futile arrogance and false public image. He was extremely repentant because he squandered away a golden opportunity to secure spiritual enlightenment.

The king then set aside all such considerations and headed straight for the ashram of Guru Ravidass. He prayed with great humility "Kindly bless me with Amrita again." Guru Ravidass said "That Amrita has reached the washerman's daughter." I savour that Amrita every day. I thought of offering that Amrita to you that day as I wanted to bless a king who visited my *darbar* despite hailing from *Kshatriya* community. However you threw down that Amrita because you still harboured caste based discrimination. When Karma Bai sucked the Amrita nectar soaked stains from your *kurta*, she became an enlightened

Mahatma instantly. Hence you cannot benefit as long as you harbour caste based discrimination between self styled higher castes and alleged lower castes. Saints and *Bhakats* of *Bhagwan* or devout worshippers of God do not belong to any caste. Even if there is one true *Bhakat* of God in any so-called extremely low caste, that family, village, state and that caste become pious as his grandeur spreads all over the world.” Guru Ravidass preached king Pipa like this and then recited following *Amritbani* hymn :

***Jih kul sadh baisno hoi!!***

***Baran abaran rank nahi isur bimal baas janiae jag soi!!1!!Rahao!!***

***Brahman baes sood ar khatri dom chandar maresh man soi!!***

***Hoi puneet Bhagwant bhajan te aap tari tare kul doi!!1!!***

***Dhan so gaon dhan so thaon dhan puneet kutamb sabh loi!!***

***Jin piya sar ras taje aan ras hoi ras magan dare bikh khei!!2!!***

***Pundit soor chhatrapati raja bhagti brabar aur na koi!!***

***Jaise puraen paat rahae jal sameep bhan Ravidass janame jag oei!!3!!2!! i.e.***

(A clan, that has saints devoted to God, is considered as a superior one irrespective of the ancestry. No one including an extremely learned person, a world conqueror or king ruling over the whole world, can ever be equal to a true devotee of God.

Any one from a race having a saint devoted to worship of God, can never be poor irrespective of whether he hails from within a *Brahmin* or learned, *Kshatriya* or warrior, trader and backwards community or otherwise. He is indeed blessed by God and his pious aroma is felt all over the world.

Any person, irrespective of his association with tasks assigned to a *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, trader or any

backwards community, would certainly become pious through deep devotion and meditation of God. He surely attains salvation and helps infinite number of persons from his maternal and paternal lineage to get over the bonds of birth and death through meditation of God.

Blessed are the village, the place and the family where saints are born. Those who savour the nectar of worship of God abandon pursuit of other worldly pleasures. They for sake poison like worldly pleasures and always remain busy savouring Amrita like nectar of God's worship.

None in this world including most learned person, greatest warrior or sovereign king and anyone else can ever be equal to a true devotee of God. Guru Ravidass says that just like the hydrophyte plant "*Puraen*" or water lily thrives in water without being adversely affected by it, same way even though saints live in this mortal world, they have no attachment to any worldly pleasures.)

Guru Ravidass told king Pipa "You will not get the Amrita nectar now for which you have come here again. Now you should devote your life to service of society and meditation of God to attain eternal salvation. You lost the earlier golden opportunity because of your false pride of hailing from a so called upper caste. I shall bless you with grant of sacred *Naam* but you will have to secure Amrita nectar yourself through devout meditation of God. You should shun false pride and caste based discrimination. You must devote yourself to worship of God with dedicated devotion. Your human life will certainly be fruitful that way."

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### **Display of *Janeou* (Threads) Adorned during Four Cosmic Yugas**

This is a well known significant event. Guru Ravidass clearly understood the age old evil practice of caste based discrimination in the society that prevented Shudras or Scheduled Caste communities from



worshipping God. *Guruji* challenged these evil practices and monopoly of self styled upper castes over religious customs. *Guruji* started dressing like *Brahmins* including wearing *dhoti* and *kurta*, adorning the forehead with sandal paste and supporting a *Janeou* or cotton threads. *Guruji* also started performing various rituals as hitherto practiced only by *Brahmins*. This was a revolutionary step by a saint hailing from so called lower caste reckoned as a *Shudra*. The arrogant people from upper castes particularly *Brahmins* were enraged to see such challenge to their monopoly. They submitted a detailed complaint against *Guruji* to the king Nagar Mall alleging that a *Shudra* was copying their exclusive religious practices.

King Nagar Mall summoned Guru Ravidass to his durbar and said “Brahmins have complained against you. Despite being a *Shudra*, you are usurping the religious practices exclusively reserved for them.” *Guruji* replied “All human beings of this world are equal in all respects. No one can be superior or inferior just based on his birth in a particular community. Whether one is so called *Brahmin* or a *Shudra*, all human bodies are comprised of five basic elements - water, air, fire, soil and space. Brilliance of God in the form of the sacred immortal soul inhabits and adorns every living being. Therefore all human beings have equal rights to worship God and practice meditation.” The king was highly impressed with *Guruji's* realistic views. However the *Brahmin* Pundits insisted that Guru Ravidass can not support *Janeou* being a *Shudra* and asked for removal of same. Guru Ravidass then said “I have not worn a *Janeou* for the first time. I have been supporting *Janeou* throughout all the four Yugas or Cosmic Periods.”

*Brahmins* objected again at that moment and said “Respected King! Look here how this person is telling sheer lies. How can any person wear *Janeou* during all the four Yugas? If he has been really wearing *Janeou* throughout the four Yugas, then he must show us the same in your presence.” Then Guru Ravidass slit open his shoulder with a

sharp tool and revealed four different types of *Janeou* to the utter surprise of everyone present in the King's *darbar* on the sacred occasion of *Sankranti* or the first day of *Magh* (December- January) month as per *Vikram Samvat* calendar. These *Janeou* worn by Guru Ravidass comprised of Gold during Satyuga, Silver during *Treta*, Bronze during Dwapara and Cotton Thread during Kaliyuga. King Nagar Mall and all of the Brahmins then prostrated at the lotus feet of *Guruji* with utmost devotion and prayed to be forgiven for their serious mistakes. *Guruji* then removed the *Janeou* made of cotton thread worn by Him earlier. Guru Ravidass advised everyone including the king to rise above the caste based discriminations and preached the sermon of equality, universal love and brotherhood and dedicated devout meditation of God.

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## **When Replicas of Cow made of Gold Came Alive**

When the glory and grandeur of spiritual accomplishments of Guru Ravidass spread all over the world; devotees from far flung areas started visiting *Guruji* in very large numbers. Rulers and kings also often visited *Guruji's darbar* to have a personal vision of Guru Ravidass. One day *Guruji* visited the palace of king Nagar Mall also known as king Hardev Singh. Some pundits and priests were chanting mantras and performing certain rituals there at that time. A large number of people were also present to witness those ceremonies. Guru Ravidass also sat down comfortably on the seat specially reserved for *Guruji*. The king also reached the venue and he requested *Guruji* “Kindly have a look at the various items arranged for giving away in alms in accordance with the prevailing traditions.” Then Guru Ravidass replied “Dear king! You are fully aware that I worship only one supreme God. Hence the priests and pundits who are performing these rituals should supervise the successful execution and completion of all ceremonies.”

The king was quite surprised and he thought that something novel might happen as normally *Guruji* would not have declined his specific request. He pondered over the matter for some time and then requested *Guruji* again “Kindly accept my humble request and accompany me. That will be in the best interest of my family members.”

While Guru Ravidass was just getting up from his seat to accompany the king, *Guruji* instantaneously said “All right if that is your cherished wish. Let us see what God's will is.” Having said that, *Guruji* reached the venue where ritualistic worship was in progress. The king wanted to give them gold replicas cast in the shape of a cow to each pundit on completion of the ceremonial worship. *Guruji* intervened at that moment and asked the king “Just hold on. Please let me know your cherished wish that you want to get fulfilled with these precious gifts of golden replicas of cows for the pundits?” The king said “I am told that presentation of golden replicas of cows to the priests and pundits will ensure a granted place for me in heaven.” Then Guru Ravidass posed a question to the pundits and asked “Please let me know whether live cows or the dead cows should be donated as per tradition prescribed by scriptures?” The priests and pundits replied in one voice “Truly speaking only live cows should be donated as mentioned in all scriptures.” Then Guru Ravidass said “If that is the real truth, then why are you cheating your respected king by accepting donation of gold replicas of cows that are not alive?” The king and the priests were stunned and bewildered after listening to this logical view of *Guruji*.

Guru Ravidass further said “Dear Pundits! Why do you believe in caste based discrimination and perpetuate division of human society knowing extremely well that your own religious scriptures like Vedas and Shastras recognise that God inhabits each and every living being. Hence everyone is absolutely equal. However all of you ignore this fundamental truth of universal equality and God's creation and treat me as a low caste *Chamar* or untouchable *Shudra*

based on customs created by yourselves to promote your own interests. You claim right over every living entity as belonging to you and assign the responsibility for dead ones to us. That is why people of my caste are compelled to handle and dispose of all dead animals all over the city. According to my viewpoint, there is no difference between golden idols of cows and dead cows. You have no claim or right over any non living items that may be made of gold or leather. As these gold replicas of cows are non-living and hence same rightfully belong to me. That is my birth right.”

Quite naturally these logical arguments raised a storm leading to a bitter dispute. The king was already highly impressed with the honesty, truthful conduct and devout worship of one supreme God, exalted status, self enlightenment and divine knowledge of Guru Ravidass. Therefore the king said “Dear Pundits! I would not like to intervene in this dispute. However it is your responsibility to provide a satisfactory answer to *Guruji's* logical comments.” After lot of discussions it was decided that the pundits can take those gold replicas of cows home if they can make them alive with their mantras. However if they do not succeed, then *Guruji* will take golden idols of a cow. The greedy priests and pundits did not wish to forego such large quantity of gold easily. Therefore they started chanting Veda mantras as per their belief with a view to turning those gold idols into living entities. However they failed miserably and then thought of a cunning ploy. They told the king “Please ask your *Guruji* to perform such a miracle that these golden replicas of cows walk over on their own to reach *Guruji*.” It is a recorded historical fact that *Guruji* accepted their challenge and sat down for devout worship of God in the perfect state of *Samadhi*. Then a little while later everyone present there at the venue was stunned to witness the unique phenomenon as the golden replicas of cow walked over to *Guruji* and sat down in front of Guru Ravidass. *Guruji's* glory spread far and wide in all the four directions after people learnt about this amazing miracle.

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## Conspiracy by Kirdar Pande & Colleagues to Eliminate Guru Ravidass

When the arrogant and crooked people suffered humiliation in the *darbar* of king Nagar Mall; they reluctantly accepted their defeat before Guru Ravidass. However they nursed a strong desire to avenge their defeat. They started hatching conspiracies to take the revenge and harm *Guruji*. Kirdar Pande was their group leader who could not reconcile himself with a humiliating defeat. He hatched a conspiracy to invite Guru Ravidass and then treacherously eliminate him. He told his colleagues “Ravidass is a serious hurdle and a major challenge to our authority. The only way to end this perennial problem is his elimination.” He volunteered to shoulder the responsibility to execute the plan. He went to meet Guru Ravidass and said “We are stuck and unable to take an appropriate decision in respect of some intricate issue. You are an extremely noble and learned person who can help us to resolve that issue as you will give logical and unbiased views. May I request you to accompany me and help us out?” Omniscient *Guruji* was able to know about his treacherous plan and yet he agreed to accompany Kirdar Pande with the firm belief in justice of God. *Guru* had full faith and confidence in God and His benevolent just help.

Kirdar Pande then escorted Guru Ravidass to a secluded place in the forest known as '*Lota Vir*.' On reaching there Kirdar Pande asked a pointed question to *Guruji* “Are you willing to stop meditation and worship of God or not?” *Guruji's* obvious reply was “I cannot abandon meditation and worship of God even if I may lose my life.” Other colleagues of Kirdar Pande were also waiting there. They launched violent attack to kill *Guruji* but suddenly it became pitch dark and they could not see properly. Therefore they attacked their ring leader Kirdar Pande inadvertently and murdered him. The conspiring Brahmins mistook the dead body to be the mortal remains of Guru Ravidass and then carried the corpse to king's *darbar*. They informed the king



“Someone has murdered Guru Ravidass and we have brought the mortal remains from '*Lota Vir*' forest. The king did not believe what Brahmins just told him. Hence he went forwards to have a look at the dead body personally. The king removed the cover from the mortal remains and asked them to have a close look to identify the victim. Then all the *Brahmins* were shocked to see the dead body of their colleague Kirdar Pande. Finally they had to confess the serious blunder and heinous crime committed by them.

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## **Guru Ravidass's Discourse with King Alawadi**

Complete details of this discourse are available in a hand-written manuscript of *Vikram Samvat* 1786 preserved at Sikh Reference Library, Amritsar. Relevant account is recorded on pages 463, 466 and 487 of that granth. Please refer page 71 '*Bhagat Ravidass*' by Jasvir Singh Sabar, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

The Qazis told king Alawadi of Kashi that *Guru Ravidass* hails from *Chamar* community and most of the people treat him as a highly venerated saint. He claims himself to be a *Pir* or spiritual leader and many individuals have become his disciples. Please summon him to your court and ask him to explain about such dubious conduct. The king then summoned *Guru Ravidass* to his court at the behest of the Qazis. Some of the close relatives of *Shri Guru Ravidass* also reached king's *darbar* carrying leather on their heads. They went there in support of *Guruji*. When *Guru Ravidass* reached the king's *darbar*, the king welcomed him and made him sit comfortably by his side. The king was distracted by the smell of leather that *Guruji's* relatives had carried on their heads. The annoyed king ordered his staff to thrash them and turn all of them out. Accordingly they were beaten up and sent away. Thereafter the king asked *Guru Ravidass* “You have been initiating



many people as your disciples. Just show me some miracle if you really can do that.” Then *Guruji* replied “I have already shown you a miraculous feat. However you did not understand that.” The king asked “What was that miracle? Please elaborate.” Then *Guruji* recited following hymn from his *Amritbani* :

***Nagarjanan meri jaat bikhiyat chammaram!!***

***Ridae Ram Gobind gun saram!!1!!Rahao!!***

The king requested *Guruji* to explain the exact meaning of this worse. Then *Guru Ravidass* explained as follows;

Any one, who worships God with deep devotion, becomes one with God and his virtues are praised all over the world. O King, learned citizens of this city and people of this kingdom! My caste obviously is extremely well known as *Chamar*. I have absorbed all virtues of God in my heart.

*Guruji* further said “You have got my close relatives thrashed and thrown out as you were annoyed with irritating smell of leather. However my heart is the abode of *Ram Naam* and virtues of God. Hence, you have offered me a seat by your side respectfully. Otherwise how could I being a *Chamar* sit so close to you sans these virtuous qualities?” Then *Guruji* narrated *Amritbani* further as follows:

***Sursari salal krit baruni re Santjan karat nahi panam!!***

***Sura apvitar nat avar jal re Sursari milat nahi hoi aanam!!1!!***

The King again asked *Guruji* to elaborate. *Guru Ravidass* explained as follows:

If wine is brewed with water from the sacred *Ganga*, sages won't savour that wine because no one consider even such wine as pious. Contrary to this, when wine is poured into *Ganga* or water from any other streams joins river *Ganga*, then such wine and water get amalgamated with pure and sacred water of *Ganga* and become inseparable part of same. Likewise even those, who are treated as untouchables because of birth in low castes by ignorant

people of the world, become one with God through deep devotion and meditation of God.

***Tar tar apvitar kar maniae re jaise kagra karat bicharam!!***

***Bhagti bhagaout likhiaie tih oopare poojiye kar namaskaram!!2!!***

The King again asked for clarification and *Guruji* elaborated as follows. As the Palmyra palm tree is considered not virtuous because it contains intoxicating juice in it and many thinkers treat even paper made of leaves of this palm as irreverent. However, when the same leaves have Holy Scriptures and God's paeans written on them, people hold them in very high esteem and worship same. Likewise even ignorant people of the world treat my low caste as untouchable. However I have achieved oneness with God through deep devotion and devout meditation and even most learned people worship me now.

Thereafter *Guruji* recited balance part of the hymn and explained the meaning of same in detail as follows:

***Meri jaat kutbandhla dhore dhovanta nitahi Banarasi aas pasa!!***

***Ab bipar pardhan tihi karahi dandout tere Naam sarnai Ravidass dasa!!3!!1!! i.e.***

People of my caste living around Banaras are engaged in carting away and skinning of dead animals, tanning of leather and making leather goods. Guru Ravidass said "O God! As I have taken shelter under Thy sacred lotus feet, now even the head of the Brahmins bows before Thy devotee with reverence. This entire glory is because of Thy worship and kind blessings."

The king was highly impressed after listening to such scholarly spiritual discourses. He presented a very large quantity of valuable gifts including a bed-spread laced with gold to Guru Ravidass with utmost reverence. *Guruji* distributed all of those valuable items amongst the poor people and presented the gold laced bed-spread to *Ganga*. Then the Qazis went to see the king with yet another

complaint. They told the king “Ravidass has wasted all the precious gifts given by you and distributed same amongst the poor. He has thrown the gold laced bed-spread in river *Ganga*. Some insignificant fisherman may get hold of that and sit and sleep over that beautiful bed-sheet. Ravidass has thus acted very indiscreetly.” Sultan summoned Guru Ravidass again after listening to the latest complaint and asked him to return the gold laced bed-sheet and promised to give an alternate one to *Guruji*. Then Guru Ravidass asked the king “Do you want to have exactly the same bed-sheet that you presented to me?” The king replied “Yes! I want the same bed-sheet.” Then *Guruji* asked the king to accompany him to the specific spot where he had kept that precious bed-sheet safely. *Guruji* promised to return the same to the king at that spot.

Then the king accompanied Guru Ravidass and both of them soon reached the bank of river *Ganga*. *Guruji* then asked *Ganga* “Please return the valued item that I had left under your kind care.” Then *Ganga* arranged to throw seven similar gold laced bed-sheets with a splash of river current over the river bank. Then *Guruji* asked the king “Please pick up these bed-sheets and confirm whether these are exactly like the one you had gifted to me.” Bemused king said “I gave you only one gold laced bed-sheet. How is it that there are seven exactly similar gold laced bed-spreads here?” Then Guru Ravidass said “One gold laced bed-sheet got multiplied into seven within one day. Had these gold laced bed-sheets remained in *Ganga* for longer period the same would have multiplied further into infinite numbers. Then you could have received all of them for use in your palace. Now these seven bed-sheets belong to you and you may arrange to carry same.” The king then requested Guru Ravidass “Please place these seven bed-sheets in *Ganga* again so that the same can get multiplied in large numbers.” Then *Guru* told the king “No! That is no longer possible now. Their number will not increase now as the very seed had been uprooted. Therefore, just take these seven with

you.” The king was extremely surprised to see such a unique feat of Guru Ravidass and he realized his serious blunder. The king then got up and paid his obeisance at the lotus feet of Guru Ravidass.

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## **Spiritual Discourses of Guru Ravidass with Guru Kabir and Guru Nanak Dev**

There is evidence to prove that Guru Ravidass used to stay at '*Mandoor Nagar*' presently known as '*Seer Govardhanpur*' and conduct spiritual discourses there. *Guruji* was aged about 73 years at that time. Guru Kabir lived and conducted spiritual discourses in Varanasi at a place currently known as *Kabir Chaura*. Both of these great saints often used to exchange views on various spiritual issues together.

Dr. Lekh Raj Parwana has written detailed accounts of discourses between Guru Ravidass and Guru Nanak Dev in his book titled "*Shri Guru Ravidass jiwan Ate Kirta*" as follows;

This fact has been historically proven that Guru Ravidass's dignified lifespan covered 151 years from *Vikram Samvat* 1433 to 1584 and Guru Nanak Dev lived a venerable life covering 70 years five months and three days 1526 to 1596 BC serving and guiding the human society on truthful path. Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Ravidass met on three different occasions during this period for exchanging views on spiritual issues. The first such discourse was held at Churhkana near *Nankana Sahib* while Guru Nanak Dev was still in his youthful stage. Five distinguished saints- Guru Kabir, Guru Ravidass, Guru Saen, Guru Pipa and Guru Dhanna were together on a visit to Punjab for the spread of true religion and to preach devout meditation of God. Guru Nanak Dev spent the sum of twenty rupees received from his respected father Kalu Mehta for truth based trading to

procure rations and arrange meals for those revered saints. Thus Guru Nanak Dev completed the truthful trade and received blessings of all of these venerated saints.

Guru Nanak Dev was omniscient. Therefore he must have discerned sterling desirable qualities and divine spiritual accomplishments of these revered saints which influenced his thinking positively to serve them meals and look after their comforts. When his father Kalu Mehta learnt that his son had squandered away all the money in serving meals to a group of saints that included low caste individuals; Kalu Mehta slapped Nanak twice and chastised him. He said “Ravidass and Kabir hail from lower caste communities. Why did you shower such courtesy on them?” Then Baba Nanak condemned the practice of caste based discrimination very strongly and told his father very eloquently without any hesitation as follows:

***Nicha andar nich jati nichi hun ati nich!!***

***Nanak tin ke sang sath wadian so kiya ris!! i.e***

(Even if truly perfect saints hail from an alleged lowest of the lower castes, Nanak will cherish their pious company rather than going after arrogant eminent persons proud of their superior castes. I do not have to copy such self styled great men.)

Baba Nanak and Guru Ravidass met for the second time when Guru Ravidass visited north India again after 12 years. Guru Ravidass met a large number of his friends, well wishers, devotees and revered saints during his travels and then reached Sultanpur. Congregation of saints was scheduled to be held at the spot where *Santghat Gurudwara* is presently located. Guru Nanak Dev's dear sister Nanaki and her husband Jairam used to take exceptionally good care of Nanak Dev. They were concerned that Nanak Dev should not abandon normal house hold responsibilities and become an ascetic. *Gurudwara Ber Sahib* was not yet in existence at Sultanpur those days but the stream named Beien flowed along the outskirts. When Guru Nanak Dev dived into this stream, the river was sanctified and became very pious.



*Babajii* was generally not permitted to go out alone and *Bhai Bhagirath* invariably accompanied *Babaji* on almost all occasions. On the day fixed for '*Sant Samagam*' or the congregation of saints, both of them came out for a walk and while talking to one another they reached the spot where Gurudwara Ber Sahib is presently located. *Babaji* removed his clothes and handed over same to *Bhai Bhagirath*. *Babaji* entered the stream wearing just a loin cloth to have a bath. Then suddenly *Babaji* dived into the stream and disappeared in the darkness away from the sight of Bhagirath. *Babaji* reached the venue of the '*Sant Sammelan*' 3 kilometres away at the present site of *Gurudwara Santgh* at to participate in the congregation of saints. The congregation of saints also included all the five venerated saints mentioned earlier who had met *Babaji* at Churhkana. They had visited Punjab again on a mission to spread their spiritual philosophy. Guru Ravidass was also amongst those five saints. It appears that the concept of One Supreme God, who is formless but manifests everywhere, might have been finalized during this congregation. The sacred words '*Ik Oankar Gurudwara Santghat Sahib*' are inscribed on the front wall of this Gurudwara. Guru Nanak Dev had materialized here near *Santghat* three days after diving into the stream '*Beien*' near the place where *Gurudwara Ber Sahib* is presently located. The sacred '*Mool Mantra*'— the opening hymn of Guru Granth was also recited at this holy place. Gurbani "*Patti*" eulogising grandeur of *Nirankar* or formless God, was also recited by Guru Nanak Dev on this occasion and the absolute essence was presented as '*Mool Mantra*'. The following hymn recited by *Guruji* and the sacred '*Mool Mantra*' point towards eternal salvation and emancipation of human beings:

***Jharh mitti Atam darsana!! Pragate gian jot tab bhana!!***

***Liv lin bhahae Madho Atam aese!! Jal tarang bhed ku kaese!!***

***Nanak Oang Sohng Atma souo!!***

i.e.



(Revered *Guruji* has vanquished all of my ignorance and he has also revealed my inner-self or *Atma* to me. Thereafter brilliant light of self enlightenment and true knowledge shines bright like a sun. *Atma* or the soul has become one with the Supreme God and amalgamated with Him. There is no distinction between the two just as the wave cannot be separated from water. Guru Nanak says that *Oang, Sohang* and *Atma* are one and the same.)

It is said that Guru Nanak Dev made preparations for his well known travels for emancipation of humanity based on spiritual deliberations spread over a period of three days here at the site of present *Santghat Gurudwara*. *Sant Kartar Singh* is an extremely well known scholar of Gurbani and Sikh History and he is a leading personality responsible for construction, renovation and maintenance of historical Gurudwaras. He had confirmed the likelihood of this *Sant Sammelan* or spiritual congregation described earlier during his personal discussions with me (the writer), at *Gurudwara Ber Sahib*, Sultanpur on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1983. This was the second occasion when Guru Nanak Dev interacted with venerated saints. It is said that the concept of *Sachkhand* was elaborated on this occasion and the sacred '*Mool Mantra*' was also enunciated by Guru Nanak Dev at this spot. Guru Nanak Dev was fully conversant with the rampant ignorance, hatred and sheer bad luck of Indian society. Guru Nanak was also well aware of the caste based discrimination and division of society and the acute problems created by same and their bitter results. Dominance by Brahmins and suppression and exploitation of weaker sections were also well known to *Guruji*. Guru Nanak Dev was also aware of crimes and excesses against women and exploitation of public perpetrated by the rulers and their unwarranted nefarious activities. Therefore, Guru Nanak Dev, along with his two close companions *Bhai Bala* and *Bhai Mardana*, launched a major campaign against these evils in north India. Venerated Guru Sahibs had similar expectations as the prospects envisaged by the revered saints in Gujarat,

Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and south India. Guru Nanak Dev took up cudgels against unjust and discriminatory religious and social excesses perpetrated by Brahmins.

All the four sections of society including *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya*, *Shudra* and the ladies were being tormented from both sides. The local rulers of that time were exerting unwarranted pressure on them. On the other hand Brahmins were dividing the Indian society based on evils like caste based divisions, discriminatory social order and inequality to perpetuate their own dominance and perceived superiority. Guru Nanak Dev found such wicked environment to be intolerable. *Guruji* evaluated the principles and philosophy enunciated by learned saints and decided to raise a strong voice forcefully for eradicating these evils. He was convinced that such a campaign must be pursued all over India. Therefore struggle for extermination of these evils was the principal goal of Guru Nanak Dev.

Guru Nanak Dev had third round of spiritual discussions with venerated sages Guru Kabir and Guru Ravidass at the garden of Gopal Dass at Kashi where *Guru Ka Bagh Gurudwara* is currently located in Varanasi. A road map was finalized to strengthen *Bhakti* Movement and propagate it on sound basis in the best interests of all humanity. Guru Nanak Sahib also interacted with *Swami Ramanand* and *Shankracharya* during the same sojourn and held discourses covering intricate issues like inner self enlightenment, existence of one supreme formless God and His infinite divine powers and universal presence and related subjects. A grand spiritual congregation was also organised during that period under the guidance of Guru Ravidass. Holistic discussions and exchange of views were undertaken during this congregation in great detail covering all important topics related to religious and spiritual matters. A comprehensive future plan for implementation of social and spiritual renaissance was finalized during the proceedings of this congregation of learned saints. Thus a campaign was launched to emancipate millions of people

tormented by ignorance and superstitions and enlighten them with true knowledge about one supreme almighty amorphous God. The objective was to give a practical shape to the principles of universal equality, eradication of social inequality and confirmation of absolute truth of following cardinal doctrines:

Successful execution of this plan was expected to open the closed boundaries for the universal spread and adoption of cherished noble human values. Thus these deliberations were indeed positively revolutionary. The cherished noble goal of Guru Ravidass was showing the righteous path of divine enlightenment to scholars steeped in shrewd duplicity, sages, saints, adepts and Brahmins. Guru Nanak Dev discarded the contemporary social sanctions and met all learned saints who participated in the congregation and exchanged views about all important common issues with Guru Ravidass and other venerated sages. All major religious, spiritual, social and political issues were discussed during this congregation. It was unanimously decided in this congregation to launch determined campaigns against following major evils;

- Injustice and excesses committed by contemporary political rulers
- Discrimination against Shudras and women
- Social inequality and injustice etc.

The objectives were to ensure universal equality and justice for one and all, end of discrimination against alleged lower castes and ladies, stopping their exploitation and ensuring human dignity and their emancipation.

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## **Guru Ravidass in Ayodhya**

Once, a religious congregation of revered saints was organized at Ayodhya. Learned sages, scholars and revered saints from all over India participated in this spiritual congregation. Guru Ravidass's glory was well known far and wide by that time. However, many of the Brahmins in

Ayodhya too were very jealous of Guru Ravidass just like their counterparts in Varanasi. In accordance with the prior decision of the organizers, Guru Ravidass was scheduled to distribute *Prasad* at the function. However, the resentful Brahmins managed to mix stones and pebbles in the *Prasad* kept for distribution by Guru Ravidass.

Just like other assembled saints; Guru Ravidass enlightened the devotees present in the congregation with his spiritual discourse that was followed by *Aarti* or worship prayer eulogizing God. Thereafter, Guru Ravidass distributed the *Prasad* to everyone present in the congregation. All of the jealous Brahmins were extremely surprised to receive gold coins as part of the *Prasad* because all the stones and pebbles they had mixed with *Prasad* got miraculously turned into gold coins. They felt miserably ashamed while other devotees were singing paeans in glory of Guru Ravidass on receiving gold coins as part of *Prasad*. The guilty Brahmins were scared of being cursed for their deliberate mischief and they thronged at the lotus feet of Guru Ravidass praying for pardon. They repented for their silly mistake and became devotees of Guru Ravidass with a pledge to serve the society sincerely thereafter.

There is mention of a meeting between Guru Ravidass and Guru Nanak Dev also at Ayodhya. Sodhi Meharban, who was a nephew of Guru Arjan Dev, wrote a book during seventeenth century titled "*Pothi sach Khand*" i.e. Chronicles related to Guru Nanak. It is written in this book in a story titled "*Discourse between Guru Baba and Bhakats*" that while travelling through Ayodhya for emancipation of masses, Guru Nanak Dev met many sages including Guru Ravidass, Guru Kabir, Guru Dhanna and Guru Sain at Ayodhya.

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## King Chandar Pratap

King Chandar Pratap of Gazipur was also present in the grand public feast organised by *Maharana Sanga* at

Udaipur. Pooran Chand Jakhu has written in his publication “*Jiwan Sakhi*” as follows:

“King Chandar Pratap of Gazipur came to meet *Guruji* after learning about his unique glory. King Chandar Pratap paid his obeisance at the lotus feet of *Guruji* with folded hands and utmost devotion and then requested *Guruji* to kindly grace the event of a public feast at Gazipur.”

Guru Ravidass accepted this request of King Chandar Pratap. *Maharana Sanga* secured *Guruji's* concurrence for making suitable arrangements for comfortable travel of *Guruji* and accompanying devotees up to Gazipur. Meera Bai and Karma Bai also accompanied *Guruji* to Gazipur. Pooran Chandar Jakhu has presented a beautiful scenario of *Guruji's* welcome arrival at Gazipur as follows:

“Rampant sins that plagued Gazipur came to an end the moment Guru Ravidass set his pious lotus feet in Gazipur. *Guruji's* truly authentic brilliance illuminated the surroundings all over. King Chandar Pratap and his queen along with her female attendants and *Meera Bai* offered their respectful regards and honoured *Guruji* with lovely flower garlands. They offered a grand royal welcome for *Guruji* and made elaborate arrangements for comfortable stay of *Guruji* at the royal fort. A grand public feast was organized in honour of *Guruji* and very large numbers of rulers, kings and relatives were also invited.”

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## **When Bhanmati Became *Guruji's* Disciple**

Bhanmati was a very brave lady hailing from a well known Hindu family of Multan. She used to remain busy with ritualistic worship of idols of Hindu gods. Her mind was not at peace despite such regular worship. One day some admirer of Guru Ravidass suggested to her that she should meet Guru Ravidass at Kashi if she really wished to have spiritual peace and seek eternal salvation. Bhanmati



reached Kashi along with her husband and both of them had a vision of Guru Ravidass.

Bhanmati explained about her spiritual and mental conditions to Guru Ravidass. *Guruji* then counselled her and recited following hymn to enlighten her about the authentic truth that human beings cannot escape the pernicious cycle of rebirth and death without genuinely seeking company of God through devout meditation:

***Har Har Har Har Har Har Harei!!***

***Har simrat jan gaye nistar tarey!!1!!Rahao!!***

***Har ke Naam Kabir uजार!! Janam janam ke kaate kagar!!1!!***

***Nimat Namdeo doodh piaya!! Tou jag janam sankat nahi aaya!!2!!***

***Jan Ravidass Ram rang rata!! Eyon Gur parsad narak nahi jata!!3!!5!!***

**i.e.**

(Guru Ravidass preached her to always have profound devotion to God and that only someone soaked in the permanent dye of devout meditation of God's *Naam* achieves eternal tranquillity and salvation during his life time.

Living beings have attained salvation through devout meditation of *Hari* or God. They are attaining salvation even now through prayers to *Hari* and people will achieve salvation by praying to *Hari* or God in future as well. God's *Hari Naam* kindles the human minds. By praying to God with each breath, human beings are able to cross over the *Bhav sagar* or the most hazardous ocean like universe.

Kabir became famous and well known in this world because of worship of *Hari* or God and he not only erased the accounts of deeds of several births but also helped human beings to unite in cooperation, equality and brotherhood as well as cross over the limitless ocean of rebirths through deep meditation of God.

When Namdev persuaded God with extreme humility, to drink milk, he got over the troublesome cycle of birth and death and attained eternal salvation. Guru



Ravidass explains that anyone soaked in the dye of dedicated devotion to Hari God's *Naam* will never have to go to hell because of blessings of his Guru.)

Bhanmati was highly impressed after listening to this hymn with elaborate meaning and significance of same. She then became a disciple of Guru Ravidass.

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## Lease of New Life to Dharmo's Son in Multan

Dharmo had an opportunity to listen to the glory of 'Satsang' or spiritual discourses and grandeur of Guru Ravidass at the residence of Bhoj and Bhanmati. Thereafter she also started participating in such spiritual congregations and listen to spiritual preaching and eulogy of *Guruji*. After listening to the *Amritbani* discourse with rapt attention, *Dharmo* was deeply engrossed in profound devotion and affection for venerated *Guruji*. She then requested Bhanmati "If your revered *Guruji* is indeed omniscient then may I request that *Guruji* should very kindly materialize very early in the morning so that I can serve delicious meals to *Guruji* with fond affection?"

Bhoj and Bhanmati said "Dharmo! It is in your hands if your profound devotion and love can attract the kind attention of *Guruji*." Dharmo said "I have never seen any such compassionate and generous person like Guru Ravidass who will usher in a new bright phase in my life. I shall get initiated as his disciple and pay my profound regards at the lotus feet of venerated *Guruji* with utmost devotion. Then I shall fondly serve delicious meals to *Guruji*." Thereafter, Dharmo returned home with a firm resolve in her mind to devote her entire life to serve *Guruji* with profound devotion. She fell asleep with such fond memories in her mind about *Guruji* and Guru Ravidass appeared in her dream chanting God's pious *Naam*. She woke up suddenly perturbed and called her husband's name

and said in incoherent voice “Gopal! Come home quickly as the food is ready. Why don't you come fast and have your meals?” Her husband Gopal was still awake. He said “Dharmo! You just had a dream.”

Next morning, Gopal asked her “Dharmo! You were calling me and asking me to come quickly and have food while you were asleep last night. Just tell me what exactly did you experience during that dream last night?” Dharmo said “I was not calling you. I listened to a spiritual discourse at Bhanmati's residence yesterday and I learnt about a really perfect true Guru. I was remembering that accomplished Guru in my dream and inviting him to have meals at my house. If you wish to know more about the venerated *Guruji*, then you should also accompany me today to participate in the spiritual congregation.”

She further told her husband “My revered *Guruji* is sitting in perfect *Samadhi* deeply engrossed in devout meditation of God in the city of Kashi. He is my *Guruji* and supreme God. I have promised to serve *Guruji* delicious meals. I am absolutely confident that *Guruji* shall certainly bless us with his visit and sanctify our house with his lotus feet. All learned saints and sages are completely focused on profound meditation of God there.” Gopal said “It is not easy and there is little possibility that such an accomplished *Guruji* with vast powers and divine competence may visit our house and have meals here.”

Meanwhile Guru Ravidass also reached Multan City and camped at a *Kutiya* (mud and wood house) built for the stay of learned sages and revered saints. A gigantic *Banyan* (*Ficus bengalensis*) tree and a water reservoir were present at that site that provided dense shade and good quality water for the visitors. All necessary arrangements had already been made for very comfortable stay of saints. Local residents of the city looked after genuine needs and comfortable stay of dignified saints and also made various offerings depending upon their individual resources. All essential goods required by the saints were quickly

arranged. The glory of those venerated saints spread quickly to all parts of the city.

Dharmo had been already waiting for the arrival of *Guruji* with great expectations. She also learnt that a revered saint with divine qualities had blessed the town with his visit and that he was still camping at the hermitage near the water reservoir. Dharmo rushed to Bhanmati's house and told her "Let us go and have a vision of the venerated saints." Then Dharmo went to meet *Guruji* along with Gopal, Bhanmati, Bhoj and many of their neighbours.

Dharmo said "We are indeed blessed with the visit of our venerated *Guruji*. Infinite numbers of devotees have assembled in this congregation and *Amritbani Kirtan* and spiritual discourses are in progress." Later Guru Ravidass very kindly visited Dharmo's residence. Elated with immense joy, Dharmo spread a beautiful bed with exquisite linen and requested *Guruji* with utmost devotion to be seated comfortably. Meanwhile Dharmo's obedient son Munna had very quickly cleaned and decorated the entire house. Unfortunately Munna was suddenly bitten by a snake and he started crying and writhing in pain. Gopal rushed to check what had happened. Both Gopal and his wife Dharmo were shocked to see their son in such serious condition and they could not control weeping as they were worried about the worst apprehension of unbearable loss of their beloved son. Once someone departs from this world, he cannot be recalled again. Despite such serious shock they decided to have patience and serve the visiting *Guruji* with total commitment. They resolved to withstand the terrible shock of separation from their son and to face that calamity with great courage and perseverance.

Lot of visitors from the neighbourhood started assembling at Dharmo's residence to have a vision of *Guruji*. They also started looking for Munna but they were surprised not to find him anywhere around. Some of them went around inside the house calling for Munna but there was no response. They were wondering about what

happened to Munna so suddenly and how he abruptly departed from this world. Gopal was weeping bitterly while glancing at his son and cursing Dharmo. He blamed her for the loss of their son and said “We have been left with no descendent in this world today. You had invited a low caste *Chamar* to the house and sought his protection and blessings. Instead of deriving any benefits, we even lost our only son forever. If your Guru, who is sitting in our house, is indeed a perfect genius; then he should revive our son and relieve our unbearable pain and agony.”

Dharmo told Gopal “We should have absolutely true love for God and we should be hopeful of God's benevolence. Our *Guruji* is indeed perfect and accomplished. Revered true saints never harbour enmity or jealousy against anyone. Therefore, we must have full faith and confidence in our venerated *Guruji* who will certainly be our saviour. We should not worry on this account and we should be optimistic of his benevolence. We should devote ourselves for rendering whole hearted services to revered *Guruji*.”

A huge congregation for spiritual discourses was in progress at Dharmo's house and devotees were chanting paeans eulogising grandeur of Guru Ravidass. While the spiritual congregation was in progress in front of her house, her dead son was lying inside the house. *Amritbani Kirtan* in glory of God was being recited in the congregation and devotees were making offerings as per their resources. Meanwhile Dharmo was extremely busy looking after her revered *Guruji* who had very kindly visited her house. Food for public feast was being cooked on one side of her house. Looking amazed at the huge number of devotees in the congregation, Dharmo went to *Guruji* and said “My son Munna is annoyed with me. You are omniscient. Kindly do me a favour and call him to report here.”

Guru Ravidass then said in loud voice “Munna! Come here quickly.” Munna had a new lease of life suddenly and he came out running fast. He paid his respectful regards

at the lotus feet of *Guruji* and then picked up the vessel and started distributing *Prasad*. He served *Prasad* first of all to *Guru* and then continued to distribute *Prasad* amongst all members of the congregation. Everyone was delighted to see Munna and all devotees chanted together “Glory to *Guruji*.” They realised that all of them were seekers of favours at *Guruji's* *darbar* and that the benevolent supreme God provides succour and comforts to one and all.

As directed by *Guruji*, Munna was busy distributing *Prasad* to devotees sitting in rows. His parents paid their obeisance at the lotus feet of *Guruji* with profound gratitude and utmost devotion. All devotees present in the congregation conveyed their hearty congratulations to them. Everyone was indeed stunned to witness this unique phenomenon of resurrection of their son. Devotees sitting in the congregation were chanting *Satnam*, *Sohang* and 'Those who chant *Satnam- Sohang* shall attain eternal salvation.' *Guruji* preached virtuous living to all human beings in this world and advised people to shun evils of witchcraft mantras, illusions, futile rituals and intoxicants. *Guruji* advocated everyone to have really true love and utmost devotion to God and to exercise complete control over mind.

Guru Ravidass told Gopal “Your mind was bedeviled by *Maya* and illusion as this entire world is a delusion. One can get rid of the shackles of attachment, ignorance and illusion only with realization of God through devout meditation. Seemingly close blood relationships like father and son are nothing but a delusion in this world. Every living being comes to this world alone and ultimately departs from this perishable world all alone. This is the ultimate truth.”

Dharmo said “*Guruji* ! You are indeed divine personification of God. You are truly the messiah for emancipation of backward, impoverished and exploited humanity. You are the only one who can salvage our sinking ship. You rightly preach people to perform true worship of God through devout meditation.” She declared “Ignorant



people may keep saying that this low caste *Chamar* cannot achieve anything but the truth is that Guru Ravidass is really our true and accomplished *Guruji*. He is our real saviour. *Guruji* recited *Amritbani* for the benefit of entire mankind and everyone experienced ecstatic joy after listening to the same.”

Dharmo and Gopal were overwhelmed with extreme joy after having such wonderful vision of *Guruji*. They dedicated their entire lives to *Guruji's darbar* leaving aside all human desires and futile worldly pleasures. They had been desperately searching for true *Naam* in this world and they were lucky to be blessed with sacred *Naam* by *Guruji*. They practiced devout meditation and with the blessings of their venerated *Guruji*, achieved self realization and crossed over the unfathomable ocean like universe.

Bhanmati respected Dharmo to be indeed great and she paid her tributes saying “Dharmo's dedicated devotion and devout love enabled her to meet her venerated *Guruji*. We are also lucky to be emancipated along with her. *Guruji* visited her house for resurrection of her son and her residence was also sanctified with the sacred lotus feet of Guru Ravidass. We too have been extremely blessed to get such a wonderful opportunity to listen to enlightening spiritual discourse.” Guru Ravidass emancipated infinite numbers of human beings likewise.

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### **Acrobatics by Jugglers**

When Guru Ravidass prompted idols to shift from the temple to the royal *darbar*; logically the pundits should have respected and recognised *Guruji* for such a unique feat. Instead of showering respect for *Guruji*, the hatred harboured by the complaining pundits further intensified. However king Nagar Mall was highly impressed with the unique powers of Guru Ravidass. He became a disciple of Guru Ravidass. King Nagar Mall arranged a grand public



feast in honour of Guru Ravidass. He invited Guru Ravidass to grace the occasion along with all family members. The king also invited a large number of scholars and respected citizens for the grand feast.

Then the cunning pundits hatched a conspiracy. They invited a group of Jugglers – tribal gymnasts to show their acrobatics during the event of grand feast. They thought that *Guruji* would not be in a position to offer adequate cash reward to the Jugglers in appreciation of their acrobatics. They offered to pay a huge amount to the gymnasts and tutored them to ridicule *Guruji* in his presence for meager offering by *Guruji*. The grand public feast was concluded successfully. Guru Ravidass then placed ten gold coins in a large plate first of all with his blessings in appreciation of the acrobatics. Thereafter *Guruji's* disciples and admirers quickly filled that plate with coins as their additional contributions. Thus the Jugglers received huge amounts of money from *Guruji* and his devotees. That amount was many times higher compared to the offer made by the pundits. Therefore the Jugglers refrained from criticizing *Guruji* and instead they started singing paeans eulogising the infinite grandeur of Guru Ravidass.

Since that fateful day, the Jugglers made it a point to eulogise Guru Ravidass at the time of their future acrobatic shows and they got enriched with liberal contributions by *Guruji's* devotees. Thus while the Jugglers spread the glory of *Guruji* far and wide, they got highly enriched with the blessings of revered *Guruji*.

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## **Spiritual Discourse between Guru Ravidass And Guru Gorakh Nath**

When Gorakh Nath learnt about the glory, devout meditation and extraordinary powers of Guru Ravidass despite being a low caste *Chamar*, he became very curious. He then contemplated in his mind to meet Guru Ravidass

and learn more about the character, conduct and views of such a distinguished genius hailing from *Chamar* community. Thus Gorakh Nath travelled to Varanasi and started making enquiries about Guru Ravidass and the place of his stay. Local people guided him to a thatched hut where Guru Ravidass lived. Gorakh Nath reached that place and chanted '*Alakh Niranjan!*' or Immaculate God. Guru Ravidass welcomed Guru Gorakh Nath inside his hermitage and offered him a comfortable seat. Guru Ravidass said "It is indeed very kind of you to visit this place. Kindly be seated and let me know if I can render you any service." Gorakh Nath said "I had heard a lot about your glory and devout worship of God. Therefore I was very keen to meet you and I came here. Moreover my shoes also require some repairs." Guru Ravidass said "Vision of pious saints like you is like having a glimpse of supreme God for me. Just as the realization and vision of God end the pernicious cycle of rebirth in the form of 8.4 million different species and death; the positive impact of meeting venerated saints is exactly similar. The benefits of meeting perfect saints are far more fruitful than gains from pilgrimage to sixty-eight '*Tirathas*' or sacred places of pilgrimage. All sins are vanquished by paying obeisance at the lotus feet of venerated saints. Sacred soothing words of saints relieve all types of illness. Spiritual preaching of saints banishes ignorance, ensures inner self enlightenment and enables human beings to secure all the four cherished items like riches, *dharma*, eternal salvation and fulfilment of worldly pleasures." Guru Ravidass described glory of accomplished saints this way.

Gorakh Nath then said "While people of *Chamar* caste suffer humiliation with dirty jobs; you are a great accomplished saint practicing devout meditation of God who is extremely kind to you. However I am quite surprised with your profession of repairing shoes. You should consider leaving this irreverent profession for earning livelihood. I shall provide you an attractive alternative for your livelihood." Gorakh Nath then took out a rod and told

Guru Ravidass “This is extremely valuable. Just understand its secret property clearly. If you heat this rod and touch same with any metal, that entire piece of metal will get transformed into gold. However, you should not show this to anyone. You can turn any amount of metal into gold and then make use of that gold for building beautiful mansion to replace this hut. You can have new garments to replace old ones and procure all other required items. As I would like to leave this place now, please arrange to repair my shoes quickly.”

Guru Ravidass replied “*Nathji!* The very purpose of my life is to reunite people with God. I help human beings separated from God to become one with Him through cleansing of their minds. Ruthless, arrogant and greedy persons need to be reformed through the virtues like tolerance, contentment and devout meditation of God. I have to ensure spread of such virtues and adoption of these values so that human beings can get rid of the pernicious cycle of rebirth and death and cross over '*Bhavsagar*' to attain eternal salvation and be united with God.” Guru Ravidass further said “*Nathji!* Stitching shoes and uniting people with God are similar tasks. Therefore my philosophy is similar to your thoughts.” While interacting with Gorakh Nath, Guru Ravidass meanwhile cut a piece of leather to repair the shoes. Holding the stitching needle in one hand, Guru Ravidass passed the thread through his mouth and the thread turned into gold. Then *Guruji* stitched the shoes with that golden thread to complete the repairs. Gorakh Nath was greatly astonished to witness this strange phenomenon. He realized that Guru Ravidass was a divine powerful entity but people treated him as a *Chamar* because of their sheer ignorance. He then contemplated that Ravidass would become his disciple after witnessing some of his supernatural powers. Gorakh Nath was holding a small *Kamandulu* containing water in his hand. He asked Guru

Ravidass “Please have a look inside this pot and let me know the extent of water it contains. However please do tell me honestly what all you see inside.” Guru Ravidass looked into the pot carefully and visualised presence of large amounts of diamonds, gems, extremely precious stones and heaps of gold like Sumer hill inside the *Kamandulu*.

Guru Ravidass then told Gorakh Nath “You are indeed a great genius and a grand adept with vast supernatural powers. I am greatly impressed with your wonderful achievements.” Then Guru Ravidass requested Gorakh Nath “Kindly have a good look at the water in this shallow pan which I use for soaking leather.” When Gorakh Nath looked carefully, he was stunned to see the entire universe with all varieties of living and non living entities, the five primary elements –air, fire, water, earth and space, the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets and infinite worlds in that shallow pot of water. Gorakh Nath was bewildered to witness the entire universe in gigantic cosmic form in that small pot and his pride was totally shattered. He paid his profound respects to Guru Ravidass after witnessing this unique phenomenon and said “You are truly an extraordinary great saint and your grandeur is beyond description that no one can fathom.” Then Guru Ravidass said “*Nathji!* All of the supernatural powers are nothing compared to precious *Naam* of God. Devout meditation and *Naam* of God represent infinite grand treasure including the divine tree *Kalpavriksha*, *Chintamani*, *Kamdhenu*- sacred cow, all the four items most cherished by people, eighteen '*Sidhies*' or supernatural powers, nine '*Nidhies*' or prized treasures etc. Anyone who realizes God and becomes one with Him through devout meditation commands complete control over all of these.” Guru Ravidass communicated such sacred sermon to Gorakh Nath.

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## When Guru Ravidass met Sadhna And Sikandar Lodi imprisoned Guru Ravidass

Sadhna was a respected Muslim cleric. He pursued the profession of a butcher and sold meat for livelihood. Guru Ravidass always preached his devotees to shun killing of any animal. Sadhna did not like such preaching by Guru Ravidass. Therefore he went to meet Guru Ravidass one day. He said “All of the religions of the world are creation of same God. However Islam does not believe in caste based discrimination. Hence you should adopt Islam and become a Muslim. You will benefit in many ways by conversion to Islam.”

Guru Ravidass said “Sadhna! You should leave aside your false pride and concentrate on devout worship of God to make this scarce human life really fruitful. One should shun the arrogance of me and mine and must have selfless devotion to God. Sadhna became a great admirer and disciple of Guru Ravidass after listening to his sacred preaching. Later when Sadhna went to Sikandar Lodi's durbar, he eulogised virtues of Guru Ravidass and he told the king that he had become a disciple of Guru Ravidass. Sikandar Lodi was extremely shocked and angry after listening to that. The king then gave a letter to Sadhna asking for *Guruji* to be present in king's *darbar*. Sadhna met *Guruji* with that letter and conveyed king's message. Sikandar Lodi was a ruthless ruler. When Guru Ravidass reached king's *darbar*, Sikandar Lodi asked him to adopt Islam religion but *Guruji* declined to do so. Sikandar Lodi immediately ordered for *Guruji*'s imprisonment.

Guru Ravidass started devout meditation of God inside the prison. Supreme God was very pleased and God materialized before *Guruji*. Later when Sikandar Lodi came to inspect the prison, he was amazed to see divine light emanating from Guru Ravidass that illuminated the surroundings. The king was extremely shocked and

surprised to witness that unique phenomenon. *Guruji* was deeply engrossed in profound meditation of God at that moment. The king then tendered a sincere apology and he begged Guru Ravidass to pardon him. He also promised never to torment anyone in future. It is worth mentioning here that king Sikandar Lodi had met *Guruji* on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1509 as described in his auto-biography.

Extremely precious diamond Kohinoor was in the possession of Sikandar Lodi those days. He offered to present the Kohinoor diamond to *Guruji*. He was under the impression that Guru Ravidass would surely accept that souvenir. However *Guruji* politely declined to accept the diamond and said “I only cherish and worship God better than a diamond.” Guru Ravidass recited the following *Amritbani* stanza:

***Hari so hira chhad kei karhei aan ki aas!!***

***Te nar dojak jahenge satt bhakhae Ravidass!! i.e.***

(Anyone, who hopes to attain eternal salvation through any means other than diamond like *Naam* or total devotion and devout meditation of God, will surely go to hell. Guru Ravidass declares this fact as an absolute & eternal truth.)

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## **Influence of Teachings of Guru Ravidass on King Babar**

Babar was a rigid Sunni Muslim. He firmly believed that it was his religious duty to finish those who did not adhere to Islam, end the practice of idol worship and propagate and promote Islam with the force of sword. He wanted to be recognised and well known all over the Islamic countries of the world. He invaded India twice during 1519 and for the third time during 1520 A.D. He invaded India again during 1524 for the fourth time. He defeated Nawab Daulat Khan Lodi of Punjab comprehensively during his fifth invasion at the end of 1525. Thus he secured complete control to rule all over Punjab. Guru Nanak Dev has given



an explicit account of the barbarous public massacre committed by Babar in Punjab in Gurbani recited by *Guruji* known as '*Babar Bani*.' While ruling over Punjab, Babar decided to attack Delhi and planned to take on Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. That led to the famous and decisive Battle of Panipat which is an extremely important historical landmark not only in History of India but also the World History. This battle is compared to the lightening. As the lightening shows very sudden and short-lived brilliance, this battle also ended abruptly within a few hours. However this was an extremely important and decisive battle that finished Sultan Ibrahim Lodi and Sultanate of Delhi. Babar then became King of Delhi.

Ibrahim Lodi suffered humiliating defeat in this Battle of Panipat. Babar has himself written in his autobiography as follows about this decisive victory “With the kind blessings of supreme God, mighty army of Delhi was reduced to dust within half a day.” Thus Babar became ruler of Delhi and Punjab. However he had not yet subjugated the rest of India. Rana Sanga of Mewar was the biggest hurdle on his way preventing him from annexation of rest of India. He was a valiant successor from Rana Kumbha's family. Rana Sanga was a world renowned king respected for his valour and bravery. He had scars of eighty wounds because of injuries sustained during various previous battles. He had also lost one eye and one of his legs in the battles. He had defeated Ibrahim Lodi also twice. It was thus very well known to everyone that if anyone endeavours to win over rest of India, he would surely have to take on the mighty warrior ruler of Mewar first.

Rajput and Mughal armies clashed on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1527 around 9 a.m. Babar was sure to win this war as his army had the support of heavy guns under the charge of Ustad Ali Khan. Accomplished commanders like Humayun and Mehndi Khwaja were charging from the right flank. Left flank had very strong and large army formations. Rajputs attacked first from the right flank. It looked for

some time that Rana Sanga may be victorious. However the heavy rain of shells fired by guns under the control of Ustad Ali Khan created panic in Rajput forces. Rajput soldiers started running in all directions to escape heavy gun fire. Rana Sanga was injured in the battle field but he managed to escape. Babar thus emerged victorious.

During the course of these battles, Babar learnt about the weather conditions, rich fertile soil and vast treasures of wealth of India. Simultaneously he also learnt about learned sages, holy men and accomplished saints. Thus he could not remain ignorant about the divine incarnation and unique personality of Guru Ravidass. Guru Ravidass was in the last lap of his lifetime during that period. Even though Babar had subjugated powerful rulers of Punjab, Delhi and Mewar; yet he did not claim any credit for himself for these victories. He acknowledged these victories as grace of God. Babar said “Nothing happens without God's will. We should march forwards seeking protection by God.” Babar was keen to meet divine saint Guru Ravidass. When he learnt about the advanced age of *Guruji*, he went along with Humayun to meet Shri Guru Ravidass. *Guruji* was seated at his place resting comfortably. *Guruji* reminded Babar about unholy massacre of so many innocent people by his forces and chastised him. *Guruji* also advised him not to perpetrate similar sins again. *Guruji* recited following stanza:

***Kion Babar hua babra, mann me adhik guman!***

***Kroron prani mar kar, tooney kiya paap mahaan!!***

**i.e.**

(*Guruji* said “Babar! Why have you become so arrogant and insane? You have massacred millions of innocent people and committed a very grave sin.”)

As Babar learnt more and more about the teachings of Guru Ravidass and his major acts of beneficence on all human beings over a period of time; he stopped unnecessary bloodshed. Public was amazed to see such a positive sea change in Babar's behaviour and actions. He became so

generous that he distributed large parts of his treasures at Delhi and Agra amongst needy people. Because of such magnanimity, people started calling Babar as a '*Kalandar*' or care free fakir affectionately. It is quite likely that someone, out of *Guruji's* devoted disciples, might have been acquainting Babar about *Guruji's* teachings. It is worth mentioning here that Akbar was influenced by the teachings of *Guruji* through Meera Bai.

It is a historical fact that Babar's kingdom covered very large expanse of land from Kabul to Bihar in east and Himalayas to Gwalior and Chanderi in south.

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## **Departure of Guru Ravidass for '*Sachkhand*'**

*Parbraham Akal Purakh*- Eternal God asked Guru Kabir, Guru Namdev, Guru Trilochan and Guru Dhanna to meet Guru Ravidass and convey the following message "Devout worship of God has been successfully completed by you and duly recognised. Your presence is now required in '*Sachkhand*' or Realm of God. You have 21 days more time to accomplish whatever more you wish to do and thereafter you should leave for your heavenly abode." God further asked them to escort Guru Ravidass to *Sachkhand* at the end of specified days. All of them reached the *darbar* of Guru Ravidass to convey the message as desired by supreme God.

Guru Ravidass already knew that Guru Kabir, Guru Namdev, Guru Trilochan and Guru Dhanna were on their way to meet him. Guru Ravidass was ecstatic with joy and he got ready with clean body and pious mind to welcome them. Entire premises were got cleaned and sanitized perfectly and comfortable beds with new linen were spread for them to rest. *Guruji* stood attentively and welcomed the distinguished guests very affectionately on their arrival. Guru Ravidass greeted them with ecstatic joy as if he was

welcoming God and he said “I am your humble servant. You have very kindly blessed me with your visit to my house. I feel extremely happy and blessed to have a vision of all of you.” Guru Ravidass paid his respectful regards at the lotus feet of venerated saints and said “I seek your shelter. I sacrifice everything for your gracious visit. I shall have eternal salvation with your sacred vision.”

Saints met each other with great reverence and humility as if they had known each other since ages. One treats the other as God and he in turn respects the other saint as an idol of God. Supreme God feels extremely pleased to witness such humility of revered saints. If anyone wishes to display his own superiority harbouring arrogance in his mind; then his cherished qualities and past selfless service suffer erosion. True devotees are those who have a clean mind with positive thinking. However on the other hand if anyone thinks erroneously that there is no saint comparable to him; then he surely loses the accumulated wealth of his past devout worship. Just as even the most precious silk turns into simple ash after burning; likewise a human being burdened with misdeeds and sins suffer immensely bereft of worship of God. Cordial meeting of saints, without any false pride and arrogance, is a wonderful opportunity to serve venerated sages. Truly accomplished saints meet one another with utmost pleasure as people meet their very close and beloved relatives. Their simplicity and humility are like the abode of a poor humble person. It is easy to be a devout devotee of God but it is extremely difficult to become a true saint. Saintry qualities can be acquired by only those who keep company of the poor and impoverished gladly.

The venerated saints came to Guru Ravidass contemplating in their minds that they would describe all details about '*Thakurji*' or God and *Guruji* would be very pleased after listening to them. They first described unique features of *Thakurji*'s abode and *Guruji* was very pleased to listen to those details. However when they had a closer look, they visualized *Thakur* in same form to be present already

with Guru Ravidass. They were then wondering how same *Thakur* was present both in *Sachkhand* and here in *Guruji's darbar*. They thought that it might be possible that *Guruji* brought *Thakur* from *Sachkhand*. Guru Ravidass requested everyone to be comfortable on beds already arranged for all of them. The revered saints thought that Guru Ravidass is himself God who stays in *Sachkhand*. Thereafter they conveyed the message of God and the directive of God to Guru Ravidass to reach *Sachkhand* after 21 days. They also conveyed to *Guru* that they would escort *Guru* to *Sachkhand* after 21 days.

All the four venerated saints Guru Kabir, Guru Namdev, Guru Trilochan and Guru Dhanna took leave of Guru Ravidass after conveying God's message to *Guruji*. Thereafter *Guruji* informed his disciples and close relatives suitably about his impending departure for *Sachkhand* and advised all of them to practice devout meditation of God always. *Guruji* continued preaching sacred sermons to his devotees as earlier. Devotees paid their obeisance at the lotus feet of *Guruji* and after the end of the spiritual discourses every day and then returned to their respective homes.

Guru Ravidass got ready early in the morning on the 21<sup>st</sup> day and sat down for meditation of God. Chanting sacred words of *Naam* and listening to *Anahad Naad*, Guru Ravidass got amalgamated into God. The Supreme God materialized sitting on His Divine Throne and escorted Guru Ravidass to *Sachkhand* - the Realm of God. Guru Ravidass thus became one with immaculate invisible *Braham* and indistinguishable from God on the occasion of *Sangrand* or 1<sup>st</sup> day of *Harh* month as per *Vikram Samvat* calendar corresponding to 1528 A.D. at Varanasi. Infinite numbers of devotees assembled on the occasion paid their sincere tributes to Guru Ravidass with profound devotion and affectionate love chanting in chorus 'Glory to Guru Ravidass'.

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Different books in different languages  
written by Shri 108 Sant Surinder Dass Bawa Ji,  
published by different religious societies

**Books published in Hindi Language**

- \* Jagatguru Ravidass Amritbani (Steek and brief Life in Hindi & Marathi)
- \* Nitnem Amritbani Jagatguru Ravidass Ji (Steek)
- \* Brief Life of Jagatguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji
- \* Brief Life of Jagatguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji
- \* Jagatguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji ki Kathaen (Hindi and Marathi)
- \* Amritbani Jagatguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji (Steek)

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**Books Published in English**

- \* Amritbani Jagatguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji (Steek)
- \* Amritbani Jagatguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji 40 Pade (Steek)

**Books Published in Dutch**

- \* Amritbani Jagatguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji (Steek)

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### **Books Published in Punjabi Language**

- \* Amritbani Satguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji (40 Shabad Steek) Part-I
- \* Amritbani Satguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji (Sampuran Steek) Part-II
- \* Sri Guru Ravidass Amritbani (Steek & Brief Life)
- \* Nitnem Amritbani Jagatguru Ravidass Ji (Steek)
- \* Sukhsagar Steek
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- \* Chamar Jaati Itihas Dharam Te Sabhyachar - Rajesh Kainth Bhakhiyanvi

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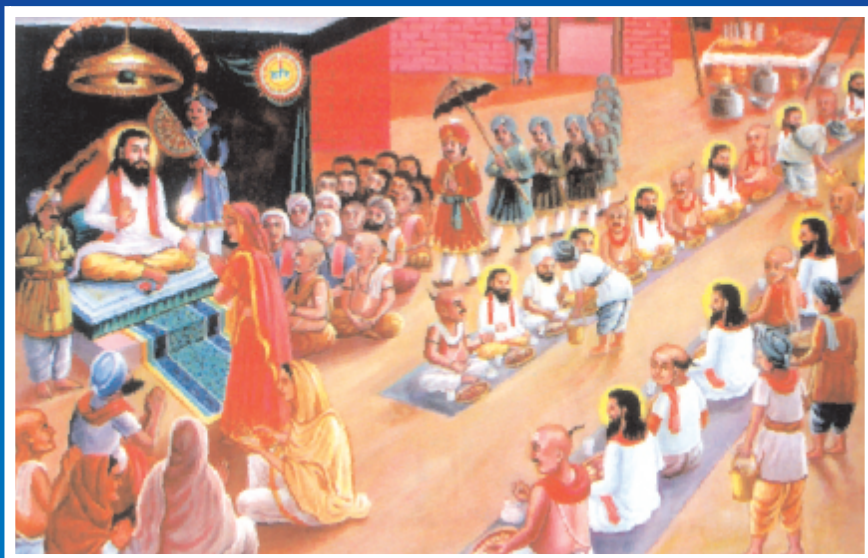
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**Sabke Ascharaj Bhaiya Tamasa||  
Jite Vipar Tite Ravidassa||**



**Jagatguru Ravidass Ji Maharaj on the Historical Day  
of Vaisakhi Swam the Pathri on Ganga Ghat.**



With the blessings of Jagatguru Ravidass Maharaj Ji, Satguru Sarwan Dass Maharaj Ji and respected Sant Smaj, Shri 108 Sant Surinder Dass Bawa Ji declares 'Ravidassia Religion' on the historic day of 10th January 2010 at Shri Guru Ravidass Janam Asthan Mandir, Seer Goverdhanpur, Varanasi, U.P.



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