

The Ocean of Love



The *Anurāg Sāgar*
of Kabir

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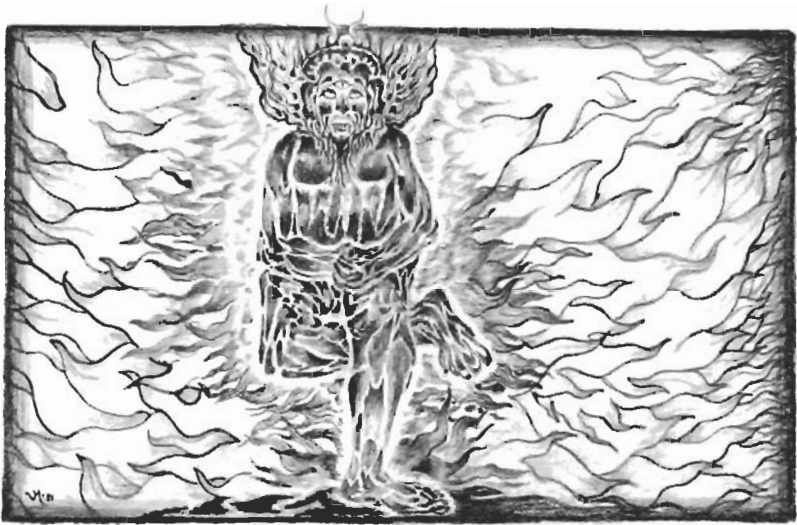
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Kal did the devotion on one foot (see page 23)



Kabir and Dharam Das

by Sant Ajaib Singh Ji

EVER SINCE the Almighty Lord started coming into this world in the form of the Saints, it has always happened that during a Saint's lifetime only a few people care to know about his life: where the Saint was born, how he used to live, what qualities he had, and why he came into this world. They don't care about all these things while the Saint is alive; but when the Saints leave this world, their incredible power and their teachings which change the lives of many people impress the people of the world, and only then—when the Saint is gone—do the people of the world start thinking about them and devoting themselves to them. So that is why, according to the understanding of the people, stories are told about the Saints. It is very difficult to find out much about the Mahatmas of the past—their birth, their place of birth, their parents, their early life, etc. Whatever people have written about the Great Masters has been written many years after their departure from this world. That is why Kabir's life sketch has different versions. According to most of the traditions, Kabir Sahib was born in 1398 in Benares and he died in 1518, living for 120 years.

There are many different stories of Kabir and of his effect on others, some of which are told in the Introduction to this book. Dharam Das was Kabir's *gurumukh* disciple and successor, who was a very wealthy person and an idol-worshiper. It is said that once when he was doing his worship, Kabir appeared to him and asked, "What are these little idols? If this big idol is God, what are these small ones?" and then disappeared, leaving Dharam Das to think about what had happened. At that time, of course,

he didn't know that it was Kabir Sahib who had appeared to him.

Second time Kabir appeared to Dharam Das was in the form of a sadhu. Dharam Das and his wife were sitting by the fire, and Kabir Sahib said to Dharam Das, "You are a sinner." Dharam Das's wife could not bear this criticism so she said, "How can you say that he is a sinner? You are a sinner!" Then Kabir Sahib replied, "Dharam Das, look in the wood that you are burning—and you will see what you are really doing." When they looked, they saw many insects in the wood, and Kabir said, "You are burning so many insects alive! What is this? Are you not sinning?" After saying this he again disappeared, and Dharam Das realized the truth of it: "I am a great sinner."

Because he was a good soul devoted to God and he wanted the knowledge of God, he remembered that he had met someone before who had asked him about idols, and he realized both of them were the same person. Now Dharam Das repented very much, and he thought that if his wife had not got upset at Kabir Sahib, he might have been able to get the knowledge of God. When he told that to his wife, she said, "Well, flies come to the sugar. You have so much money; if you perform some kind of *yajna* and announce that you are going to donate things to the sadhus, many sadhus will come. It is possible that this sadhu will also come, and you can talk to him and get some knowledge of God from him." So Dharam Das performed many *yajnas* in the town of Benares, but Kabir Sahib never came there. Then Dharam Das went to other places and there also he performed many *yajnas*, but Kabir Sahib never came. In that way he just went on spending his money, and even after he performed his last *yajna* after selling every single thing, Kabir Sahib still didn't come.

So when Dharam Das had lost all his money and still didn't get to see the Sadhu, he thought, "Why should I go back home when I have lost everything? It is better to commit suicide." So he went to the bank of the river and was about to jump in when Kabir appeared there. And then Dharam Das touched Kabir Sahib's feet and said, "O Lord, If I had met You before, I would have given You all the wealth which I had, instead of wasting it performing the *yajnas*." Kabir Sahib replied, "This was the right time for you to come to me. If you had come to me earlier, when you had all that wealth, it is possible that you would not become what you will become now."

So Kabir Sahib gave him initiation and, after Kabir Sahib left the body, Dharam Das continued the work of giving initiation into Shabd Naam. And the book *Anurag Sagar* is in the form of questions from Dharam Das and Kabir Sahib's replies to those questions.

Table of Contents

Introduction / *i*

I. The Life of Kabir	<i>i</i>
II. <i>Anurag Sagar</i>	<i>xv</i>

I. Prologue / 3

Invocation	3
Manglacharan: Hymn of God's Grace	3
The Signs of a Lover	4
Who is Mritak?	8

II. The Story of Creation / 18

1. IN THE BEGINNING	
Question About the Creation	18
What Was in the Beginning	19
2. THE FALL OF KAL	
The Devotion of Niranjana and His Acquisition of Mansarovar and the Void	23
How Niranjana Got What He Needed to Create His Universe	25
In Mansarovar: The Swallowing of Adhya by Niranjana After Being Attracted to Her: The Curse of Sat Purush ..	32
3. THE CREATION OF THE LOWER WORLDS	36
The Churning of the Ocean: The Creation of Fourteen Jewels	40
Adhya Orders Her Three Sons to Create The Universe ...	44

The Four Kinds of Created Beings	44
Special Account of the World's Creation	62
4. THE FOUR KINDS OF LIFE	62
How the Eighty-four Lakhs Are Distributed	63
Recognition of the Souls from Four Kinds of Creation ...	66
5. KAL TRAPS THE JIVAS	
Kal Creates a Snare	74

III. The Coming of Kabir / 85

1. BEFORE THE INCARNATIONS	85
By the Orders of Sat Purush Kabir Sahib Comes to Awaken the Souls; on the Way He Meets Niranjan	85
2. IN THE SAT YUGA: <i>The Incarnation as Sat Sukrit</i>	95
The Story of King Dhondal	96
The Story of Khemsari	96
3. IN THE TRETA YUGA: <i>The Incarnation as Maninder</i> ..	101
The Story of Vichitra Bhat in Lanka	102
The Story of Mandodari	103
The Story of Madhukar	107
4. IN THE DWAPAR YUGA: <i>The Incarnation as Karunamai</i>	109
The Coming of Karunamai in the Third Age	109
The Story of Queen Indra Mati	112
Indra Mati's Amazement, After Reaching Sat Lok, to Find Karunamai and Sat Purush as the Same Form	124
Indra Mati's Request to Bring Her Husband, King Chandra Vijay, to Sat Lok	126
The Story of Supach Sudarshan	129
5. IN THE KALI YUGA: <i>The Incarnation as Kabir</i>	133
The Story of the Establishment of Jagannath Temple	137
The Story of Establishing Four Gurus	140

The Story of Dharam Das's Previous Births	141
The Description of Performing Arti	150
Description of the Twelve Paths	159
Dharam Das Sahib Has the Darshan of the <i>NOTM</i> Essence	165
The Manifestation of Chudamani	167
The Establishment of the Kingdom of Forty-two Incarnations	168

IV. The Story of the Future / 172

The Beginning of the Story of the Future	172
Niranjan's Orders to His Four Messengers	173
Description of Four Messengers	176
The Ways of Remaining Safe from These Messengers	184
Speech About the Future—Different Subjects	184
The Praise of the Incarnation of Nad	188
The Importance of the Guru	189
The Ways of Living of the Guru and the Disciple	197

V. Epilogue / 201

The Knowledge of the Lotus Body	202
Sins and Virtues of the Mind	206
The Character of Niranjan	207
The Signs of the Path Which Gives Liberation	208
The Ways of the Path	209
The Qualities of the Detached Renunciates	209
The Qualities of the Householders	211
The Importance of Arti	212
The Consequences of Carelessness	213
Precaution	214
Description of Parmarth	216

List of Illustrations

<i>Kal Did the Devotion on One Foot</i>	v
<i>Kabir and Dharam Das</i>	vi
<i>Sat Purush Creating Kurma</i>	2
<i>Yogjit Expels Kal from Mansarovar</i>	38
<i>Kal Falls Through the Void</i>	39
<i>Adhya's Sons Churn the Ocean</i>	42
<i>Kal Torments the Souls; Kabir Approaches</i>	76
<i>Kal Meets Kabir Coming to Rescue the Souls</i>	84
<i>Ravana Attacks Kabir</i>	104
<i>Indra Mati Meets Sat Purush</i>	122
<i>Dharam Das Pulls Narayan to Meet Kabir</i>	154
<i>Kal and the Four Doots</i>	180
<i>The Disciple as Moonbird</i>	200

Introduction

I. The Life of Kabir

As Sant Ajaib Singh points out in his Foreword, the life of Kabir is lost in the mists of legend and it is very difficult, from this point so far removed in time from Kabir's life, to know many hard facts about it. Still, there are certain elements of that life about which the traditions seem to agree and about those we can be reasonably sure.

TIME AND PLACE

As Sant Ji said, it has been generally agreed for centuries that Kabir lived from 1398 to 1518. There are variations on those dates: one alternative that is proposed is 1380 to 1440, and another from 1440 to 1518. Neither alternative is based on tradition, however; they are speculative reconstructions by modern scholars who apparently have difficulty with the abnormally long life span. But while the span is long, even for spiritual Masters, it is not unprecedented: a minority of Indian holy men have always been long-lived. The celebrated Trailanga Swami, who apparently lived for three hundred years in Benares in relatively modern times in the full glare of the British *Raj*, is a case in point; one of his disciples, a woman, Shankari Mai Jiew, born in 1826, was still alive in 1946—precisely Kabir's life span.¹

It was my own good fortune to meet the Maharishi Raghuvacharya, a well-known yogi of Rishikesh who became, in his nineties, a disciple of Sant Kirpal Singh Ji. I met Raghuvacharya on two occasions—in 1965 and 1969—when he was well over 100 years old. He died in 1970, aged 115, in full control of his powers; when I had met him the year

1. See Paramhansa Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, pp. 291-295, for an interesting account of Trailanga Swami; but his remarkable age is attested to by many witnesses. As this book was going to press, the Boston Globe (February 9, 1982) carried the obituary of Ike Ward, born into slavery in 1862, dead from old age (without having been through a period of ill health) at 120.

before he had given every impression of being a vigorous 65. Yet his long life and birth date was known to hundreds of people, as he had lived in Rishikesh all of his life.

So while it is unusual for Kabir to have lived such a long life, it is by no means impossible; and since tradition has fixed on those dates from early times, and nothing else about Kabir's life is any less unusual, it seems reasonable to accept them.

It is also reasonably certain that he was born in Benares (then called Kashi) and lived there most of his life, dying in the nearby town of Magahar.²

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

It is as certain as anything can be about Kabir that he was a Muslim by birth and belonged to the *julaha* caste. Strictly speaking, Muslims are not supposed to have any caste; but in India this idea has tended to erode under the pressure of mass conversions of lower-caste Hindus, who, in attempting to escape the difficulties of inferior caste, only succeeded in bringing them with them into Islam. This would appear to be the case with the *julahas*, apparently a Sudra caste that converted *en masse* between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The word *julaha* means "weaver" in Persian, and the members of the caste are usually either weavers or farmers. Their social status was and is very low, and their conversion did not raise it, either in the eyes of Hindus or of Muslims.

From the very beginning, Kabir has been identified as a *julaha*. Indeed, he identifies himself that way. Although his songs and poetry are not rich in autobiographical information (*Anurag Sagar* is particularly disappointing in this respect) what information they do contain is especially valuable; and the fact is that Kabir happily, perhaps gleefully, lets the world know that he is a *julaha*:

*I am of low community, my caste is julaha;
I have only one advantage and that is of Naam.*³

Since the *julahas* were by definition Muslims, and since *Kabir* is an Islamic name (it is actually Arabic and is found in the Koran), his Islamic faith would appear to be beyond dispute. It has been disputed, though, on the grounds that his teaching appears to be given entirely within a Hindu frame of reference. *Anurag Sagar* is a case in point: while much of the poem is dedicated to exploding Hindu theology, it is done from within: the ideas are stood on their head, as it were, by someone who knows them inside out and who refutes them by showing the truth that

2. See note on page 15 below ["Kashi"].

3. *Songs of the Masters*, p. 16. This song is from the Granth Sahib, Gujari 2.

they are supposed to reflect. There is very little Islam in *Anurag Sagar*, or in Kabir's poetry in general (although many of the songs contain brief references to Islamic ideas).

There are various explanations for this, one of them being the obvious one that Kabir was concerned with the here and now: most of the people in the area of his mission were Hindus, and he wanted to reach them via their own religious language. Another is that the concerns of the *Anurag Sagar* are in areas where Hindu mythology is very rich, and the characters and events of that mythology lent itself to Kabir's poetic genius in ways that the comparatively barren Islamic tradition could not. And then there is the fact that the amount of Islamic education *julahas* received was very small: the caste as a whole was and is illiterate, and does not rank high on the priority list of Muslim educators. Kabir's guru, as we will see, was a Hindu, and Kabir is generally considered a Hindu saint by modern Hindus: in fact, he has become a Hindu god, and idols of him are found in Hindu temples—ironic fate for a Saint who denounced idolatry as strongly as any Hebrew prophet. His Hindu admirers do not deny his Muslim origins, but they either ignore or explain them away. Nevertheless, that a Saint who was not only a Muslim but an illiterate, low-caste Muslim should so win the hearts of Hindus and rise to such a position of eminence among them is totally without parallel in all history and testifies eloquently to the “incredible power” Sant Ji mentions in his Foreword.

His parents, who figure in the *Anurag Sagar*, were Nima (his mother) and Niru (his father). They were not, according to Kabir himself, his actual physical parents, as his birth was miraculous; but he chose them, for reasons explained in the poem, was brought up by them as their son, accepted the limitations of their low caste, and learned the weaver's trade from his father. There is evidence in his writings that his mother had a very difficult time dealing with his Sainthood and all that it implied, and also with his use of Hindu concepts in his teaching:

Kabir's mother weeps bitterly, worrying:
 “How is this child going to live, O God?” . . .
Kabir says, “Listen, mother,
*God is the only giver for all of us.”*⁴

[Kabir's mother asks:]
 “Who in our family has ever invoked Ram?”⁵

When he grew up, he married Loi, who was also his disciple, had two children—a son Kamal and a daughter Kamali—and earned his living as

4. *Ibid.*

5. Granth Sahib, Bilaval 4.

a weaver. Loi and Kamali are not mentioned in *Anurag Sagar*, but Kamal is, in a context that makes it clear that he was Kabir's physical son. Thus it is very unlikely that he was not married, as some of his Hindu followers (who find the concept of a married holy man difficult to accept) maintain. In the *Sant Mat* tradition it is not unusual for a Master to be married, and as Kabir was the founder of that tradition there is no reason why he should not have been. Those who object to this maintain that Loi and the children were all disciples only; but as the traditions clearly depict all three in an intimate relationship with Kabir on a daily domestic basis, it is extremely unlikely that they were not his physical family.

KABIR AND RAMANANDA

The *Anurag Sagar* maintains, and *Sant Mat* tradition affirms, that Kabir is the proto-Master or original Saint, who has descended directly from God four different times, once in each *yuga* or time-cycle, founding a line of Masters each time, and that his incarnation in the present time-cycle or *Kali Yuga*—that is, the life of the historical Kabir—is thus only a fraction of his totality. In the *Anurag Sagar* Kabir goes into greater or lesser detail on each of these four incarnations, as well as his pre-incarnate activity, and his account is accepted by the Masters of Sant Mat as a straightforward accurate approximation of actions and events which are ultimately too tremendous to fit easily into our verbal and conceptual framework. His description of his various incarnations, like many other parts of the poem, is as true as it can be, given the limits of the medium it is conveyed in, and forms a basic and important part of the body of ideas and stories that constitute the verbal tradition of Sant Mat; and the Masters who have come after him have accepted Kabir as the founder of the various lines of Masters.

Nevertheless, tradition affirms, and Kabir's writings bear it out, that Kabir took initiation from a Guru, and the Guru was Ramananda. This may seem contradictory; but it is a basic pillar of Sant Mat that everyone needs to sit at the feet of a Master. As Jesus said to John the Baptist, when the latter in amazement asked him why he had come to him, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."⁶ The situation is exactly analogous; and just as John's question implies that he should be coming to Jesus, rather than the other way around, so the tradition affirms that ultimately Kabir liberated Ramananda. But still Kabir outwardly sat at Ramananda's feet and humbled himself before him in the eyes of the world. Sant Kirpal Singh Ji has written:

All born Saints, though very few, come into the world with esoteric

6. Matthew 3:15.

knowledge right from their birth but have for form's sake to adopt a Master. ["Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."]

Kabir Sahib, for instance, had to accept Shri Ramananda as his Master.⁷

Sant Ajaib Singh Ji has commented on the relationship of Kabir and Ramananda in detail as follows:

Kabir Sahib was all-powerful and even if he had not taken anyone as Guru, still it would not matter much. But still he didn't break the limits and traditions and that's why he took Ramananda as his Master. But the fact was that Ramananda was liberated by Kabir Sahib. Ramananda was an idol worshiper and didn't have any knowledge of spirituality. But the Hindu people were taking him as a very great holy man, and they were also criticizing Kabir Sahib because he didn't have any Master or guru, saying that to take initiation or to take a mantra from him is a sin. Kabir Sahib was a very clever Mahatma, and he thought that if he took any small Mahatma as his Master, then these people would not believe. So he should take somebody who is well-known among all these people as his Master. But since Ramananda was not happy in even seeing any Muslim, and because Kabir was born in a Muslim family, there was no question of taking initiation from Ramananda. It was impossible for him.

Ramananda used to go, every morning, to the River Ganges. So, because Kabir Sahib wanted to take him as his Master, Kabir changed his form into a small child. He lay down on the steps on which Ramananda was coming back. It was very dark, and accidentally Ramananda stepped on that child. And Kabir, who was that child, started weeping. Who knows whether Ramananda really stepped on Kabir Sahib or not? But still Kabir wanted some excuse to weep, so he started weeping. Ramananda was very much afraid and he said, "O man of God, repeat 'God.' O man of God, repeat 'God' "—like that. But Kabir Sahib went on weeping. And he again said this thing, "O man of God, repeat 'God.' " And Ramananda came back home and Kabir disappeared from that place.

After that Kabir Sahib started saying to people, "Ramananda is my Master. I have got initiation from Him." So the Hindu people were very upset with Ramananda, and they came to him, saying, "You have got thousands of Hindu disciples but you are still hungry for more. Why did you make this Muslim your disciple?" In those days, people were believing very much in caste. So Rama-

7. Kirpal Singh, *Godman*, p. 62.

nanda said, "Who said he is my disciple? I do not know any Kabir and I have not given initiation to any Kabir." So all the Hindu people came to Kabir Sahib and told him, "You come with us to Ramananda. You are saying that he is your Master but he doesn't believe that. You come with us." So Kabir went to Ramananda's home. And at that time Ramananda was worshiping an idol of Lord Vishnu. Because he was never happy to see the faces of Muslim people, he had a curtain and Kabir Sahib was sitting on the other side of the curtain. Ramananda was playing with the idol and at the end he put the crown on the head of the idol, but he forgot to put the chain on the neck. So he was very confused at what to do then, because if he removed the crown from the head that meant disrespect and there was no other way to put the chain on the neck. So Kabir Sahib, who was all-conscious, said, "Master, Guru Ji, why are you so confused? Just unhook the chain and then again hook it and then you will be able to put the chain around the neck." When he saw Kabir Sahib was sitting there on the other side of the curtain and couldn't even see him, he thought, "How did he know I had this problem? And he has solved my problem!" He was very surprised. So he talked with him and said, "When did I initiate you?" Kabir Sahib reminded him of the incident and he told him, "You stepped on me and you told me to repeat this thing, so I am repeating that, and you are my Master."

So Ramananda said, "That was a child; but you are Kabir." He said, "If you want me to become a child, I can show you. Now also I can change myself into a child and I can show you that I am the same thing." So when Ramananda came to know all this he said, "If you are all-conscious, then why is there this curtain between you and me? Remove that curtain." So after that Kabir Sahib liberated Ramananda.

Even though Ramananda had received a lot from Kabir, still he was involved in all the practices he was doing, rites and rituals and idol-worshiping. Once Ramananda was performing the ceremony in which they make many good foods and they give it to the people, saying, "This is going to our fathers and forefathers, those who have died and who are residing in the heavens." For that ceremony Ramananda sent all his disciples including Kabir Sahib into the village to get some milk to make rice pudding and other things. So Kabir also went and there he saw that there was one dead cow, and by force he started putting some food in the mouth of that dead cow. Because she was dead, she couldn't eat by herself. But by using a stick, he was forcing the food in her mouth. He started milking her. But she was dead; how could she give milk? So the

other disciples, when they saw Kabir doing this thing, they came to Ramananda and reported it. Ramananda called Kabir and rebuked him and said, "Oh man, the dead cow cannot eat food and she cannot give milk." So Kabir Sahib said, "Guru Ji, are you sure that the dead cow cannot eat anything or give any fruit?" So he said, "Yes, that is definitely true." So he said, "Well, how are you sure that the food that you are giving to other people, saying, 'This is going to go to your fathers, those who are residing in the heavens?' will really give you fruit?" Ramananda didn't have any reply to that. And Kabir Sahib only did this to teach him a lesson because Kabir Sahib had made up his mind to liberate Ramananda.⁸

KABIR AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Kabir's impact on his contemporaries was profound. Many stories are told which illustrate his power, insight, and various aspects of his extraordinary personality—including his honesty, unforced humility, total dependence on God, compassion and bluntness. Baba Sawan Singh, after being praised by many for having performed a miracle, told this story which emphasizes the human-ness of this most transcendent of Saints without diminishing his glory:

The people attribute this incident to my miraculous powers. It is just as it once happened with Kabir Sahib. The pundits, the pseudo-Saints and the well-read people were jealous of Kabir Sahib. Accordingly they proclaimed throughout the town that on a certain day there would be a *Bhandara* (a religious gathering and feast) at Kabir Sahib's place. Kabir Sahib came to know about this trick the evening before. How could He feed thousands of men? [He was of course very poor.] He left the place in the evening and hid Himself in the jungle, remaining there until the next day. From His place of hiding He could see the people returning from His home the next day, and all of them were remarking, "Well done, Kabir! What delicious food you provided for the Sadhus!"

Kabir Sahib did not know what this meant. . . . He returned home and His family told Him, "Well, you were here all the time and you yourself fed all the people." Kabir Sahib at once understood that it was all the mercy and blessing of the Supreme Father. [He is reported to have exclaimed: "Kabir did not do it, could not do it, would not do it; it is God Who has done it, and the credit has gone to Kabir!"] The same is the case in this incident. The Saints always remain within the Will of God.⁹

8. Ajaib Singh, *Streams in the Desert*, p. 381.

9. Quoted by Rai Sahib Munshi Ram, *With the Three Masters*, Vol. 2, pp. 184-85.

Sant Kirpal Singh used to tell a marvelous story which demonstrates Kabir's power as well as his humor and wisdom:

At the time of Kabir Sahib there was a certain *pundit* or religious teacher. His story is written in the scriptures, and it tells of how he studied the holy and other books extensively and became the most learned man for many miles around, so he called himself *Sarbajeet*, meaning one who has won above all others. On completion of his studies, he returned to his mother's house. She was a follower of Kabir Sahib, and he said to her, "Mother, I have become Sarbarjeet; you should call me that from now on." She replied, "I will, if you can beat Kabir Sahib in knowledge." Worldly knowledge often encourages pride, and carelessly picking up his books he said, "Oh, that is nothing," and went off to Kabir Sahib's humble dwelling.

Kabir Sahib said to the young man, "Well, Punditji, what has brought you here?" The proud pundit replied, "I am Sarbajeet, and I have come to beat you in knowledge." Kabir Sahib smiled at him and said, "I do not want to argue over this, so you just write down that Sarbajeet has won and Kabir has lost; and I will sign it." The pundit was very pleased that Kabir had given in so easily; he quickly wrote the words and got Kabir to sign it. He went home, and flourishing the paper at his mother, he said, "Now you will have to call me Sarbajeet, for Kabir Sahib has acknowledged it." She took the paper and read aloud, "Sarbajeet has lost and Kabir has won." Unbelieving, he read it for himself, and said, "How is this possible? There must be some mistake—I will go back to Kabir Sahib." On arriving at the Saint's house, he blurted out, "Maharaj, I made a slight mistake, so I want to rewrite the paper." Kabir Sahib amiably agreed, and signed the new declaration. When the pundit reached home, his mother read the paper and said, "But it is still written, 'Sarbajeet has lost and Kabir has won.'" In frustration he shouted, "I will go again to Kabir!" and hurried off. It is a rule with all great Masters that they never belittle a person, but with love they make the people understand. If one does not listen even then, they will go to the extent of operating, like a doctor who will do his very best to cure a tumor, even if it means resorting to surgery. So, with great kindness, Kabir Sahib pointed out to the pundit, "How can your mind and mine become one? I say what I have seen, and you say what you have read from printed matter."¹⁰

Sant Ajaib Singh tells a brief story which is very revealing:

10. Kirpal Singh, "The Jewel of Infinite Value," *Sat Sandesh*, Vol. 3, No. 10, pp. 4-5.

In the time of Kabir Sahib, once on the banks of the River Ganga a person of low caste was bathing and a pundit was passing by. And it happened that one drop of water from the body of that low-caste man touched the body of the pundit, and he became very upset because he considered himself polluted; but Kabir Sahib told him very lovingly, "Oh Brahmin, you were also born of a woman; how can you be called *brahmin* when we *shudras* came into the world from the same place and we were born in the same manner? How can you say that we and you are different? You have blood and we also have the same blood!" So Kabir Sahib lovingly explained to him that all men are the same.¹¹

Revolutionary sentiments like this have endeared Kabir to such modern Indian visionaries as Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore, but had the opposite effect in his own time. A caste-conscious Hindu society and an orthodox Muslim establishment both viewed the presumptuous *julaha* with horror, and he was persecuted a number of times, primarily by the Emperor Sikander Lodi. He was drowned in the Ganges chained in a boat full of stones, but either was miraculously saved at the last minute or resurrected from the dead; he was buried alive, but survived that also; he was bound and thrown in front of an elephant, but the elephant refused to touch him. These stories are part of the tradition, but of course are not verifiable; nevertheless, that Kabir's teaching and actions brought him into conflict with authority and eventually persecution is overwhelmingly probable; to survive such persecution either through divine intervention or resurrection is not without precedent; and in any case, Kabir's survival is well attested, as is his death in Magahar at an advanced age.

The earliest written reference to Kabir outside of the Sant Mat tradition is in the *Bhakta Mala*, a poem on the lives of various Saints, written by Nabha Das about 1600 (eighty years after Kabir's death). It is a very interesting and accurate brief summing-up of his career as seen from outside:

Kabir refused to acknowledge caste distinctions, or to recognize the authority of the six Hindu schools of philosophy; . . . He held that religion without *bhakti* [loving devotion for God] was no religion at all, and that asceticism, fasting and almsgiving had no value if unaccompanied by *bhajan* [meditation]. By means of *ramainis*, *shabd*s and *sakhis* [different types of songs] he imparted religious instruction to Hindus and Mohammedans alike. He had no preference for either religion, but gave teaching that was appreciated by

11. Ajaib Singh, *Streams in the Desert*, p. 174.

the followers of both. He spoke out his mind fearlessly, and never made it his object merely to please his hearers.

KABIR'S SUCCESSORS

As the seminal figure in the modern history of Sant Mat, Kabir had a number of disciples who became Masters and gave initiation after his passing: some of them are known only from his writings, but many are famous in their own right. Ravidas and Dadu Sahib are two well-known Saints who derived directly or indirectly from Kabir, and there are many others. The two that are of concern to us here are Dharam Das, who was his *gurumukh* successor and who is honored today especially by the members of the *Kabir-panth*, a religious sect in northern India (it has Hindu and Muslim sections) which claims to have been founded by Kabir, and Baba Nanak, the first guru of the Sikhs, who is honored today especially by the followers of the Sikh religion.

It is one of the ironies of history that the line continuing through Dharam Das, whose special relationship with Kabir is vividly described by Sant Ji in his Foreword, should have decayed and become eventually one of ceremonial religious leadership, while the line continuing through Nanak, who only met Kabir twice and who was himself a *swateh sant*, "born free,"¹² should be the line through which Kabir's power and impulse continue in their fulness in the modern world.¹³ But it is true: the Kabir-panth today has no knowledge of the inner teachings, and has reduced its initiation to one of ritual only. While the same is true of the Sikh religion, that line went underground after the death of the tenth Sikh Guru and has continued unabated down to the present.

KABIR'S PASSING

When Kabir was ready to leave, it is said that his Hindu and Muslim disciples were prepared to fight over whether his body should be cremated or buried. After rebuking them sternly for forgetting his teachings so soon, he lay down, covered himself with sheets, and told everyone to leave. When they came back into the room, his body was gone; where it had been was a heap of flowers. His Muslim followers took half of the flowers and buried them, and his Hindu disciples took the other half and burned them. Thus in death as in life, Kabir demonstrated the universality of the Masters.

It is also said that Kabir made a number of resurrection appearances after his death, including at least one to Dharam Das in which he gave him further instruction along the lines of the *Anurag Sagar*.

12. Kirpal Singh, *Godman*, p. 20.

13. See *Streams in the Desert*, p. 11, for a complete list of the Masters descending from Kabir through Nanak down to the present.

II. ANURĀG SĀGAR

THEME

The poem centers around the impact of Time on Eternity, and Eternity's response. It is Eternity which is the *anurag sagar* or "ocean of love," and it is Time's perversion of that part of Eternity which it touches which produces the *bhav sagar*, "ocean of the world"—the only reality most of us know, the mock world we are trapped in. The creator of the *bhav sagar*, "the butcher Kal" (*Kal* means, literally, Time) is mad: one of the sons of Eternity (*Sat Purush*, True or Original Person), Kal or Time was unable to handle the separation from his Father that the creation process demanded, and went mad. Ignoring the wishes of Eternity, he misused the tools of creation entrusted to him and, through his impatience and megalomania, created a sewer where a garden was intended. Convinced that he is God, demanding to be worshiped as God, and setting up a Law so stringent that no one can keep it, he presides to this day over a closed-circuit universe that would be utterly without hope if it were not for the fact that, as the poet Blake puts it, "Eternity is ever in love with the products of Time." Because Eternity does love those of us caught in the trap of Time, It has set up *a series of invasions* in which the true Reality enters into the mock universe and illumines it, awakening those who are ready to grasp the truth and showing them the way out. These invasions, initially in the person of the successive incarnations—Sat Sukrat, Maninder, Karunamai, and Kabir—of the Son of Eternity who is both the hero and author of the epic, and then in the person of his successors whom he raises to the same stature as himself, are the subject of the poem; and its core is the painstaking, infinitely patient search for Dharam Das, the "slave of Law," the freed soul who has blown it, the ignorant disciple who becomes the Master and who is, in fact, all of us. It is in the search for Dharam Das that the true nature of the ultimate universe—the Ocean of Love—is most fully revealed, and the form of that Ocean's action—the principle of Grace—is demonstrated most completely. No matter how obtuse Dharam Das reveals himself to be, no matter how thoroughly he has forgotten his true nature and how sound his sleep is, the Master never lets up: relentlessly pursuing him through incarnation after incarnation, He shows him—and all of us—how much He cares about him—and all of us—*just because he is*. We are children of the Father by virtue of our existence; trapped in Time we may be, but our Father loves us *and He will find us*.

This is an old old story, the original story; in one form or another it has been told many times, although seldom so explicitly or with such authority as here. The Western world is most familiar with it through the Gospels although the Gospels as we have them are incomplete; scholars

are daily, it seems, discovering ancient manuscripts and fragments that shed new light on how the teachings of Jesus were understood by his contemporaries, particularly those much-maligned early Christians called *Gnostics* or Knowers who understood this story very well and who commented on it over and over again.¹⁴ It did not begin with the Gospels nor did it end with the suppression of the Gnostics; like the Master Himself as He searches for us, it surfaces again and again, confronting us when we least expect it. In the dialogues of Plato, the poetry of Blake, the operas of Mozart, and the latest science-fiction paperback the story is told, and in a hundred other places besides.¹⁵ It is truly the main stream of human culture, East or West, although it is thoroughly repressed in most of us.

TIME AND SPACE

Anurag Sagar postulates two basic premises, which form the background against which the story takes place:

1) The physical universe we know is only a tiny part of the universe as a whole, which rises in a mighty series of levels until Eternity is reached. The original creation of Sat Purush is sharply differentiated from the "three worlds" created by Kal: In the regions above Kal, creation proceeds as originally planned, whereas the three worlds are fallen. The three worlds are: the physical plane, the universe known to us through our senses and their extensions; the astral plane, another universe surrounding and enveloping the physical, existing on a subtler frequency, and containing a number of heavens and hells as well as regions in between; and the causal plane, subtler than the other two, surrounding and enveloping them, which is the current home of Kal or Time and the source or cause of the energy activating the lower planes. Reincarnation takes place within the framework of Kal's Law, the Law of Karma, in one or another of these worlds; it is also possible to experience the two higher worlds through various techniques of meditation or yoga. But it is impossible to leave the three worlds and enter the real universe—i.e., attain liberation or salvation—without the grace of someone who has come from there.

2) The three worlds are at their highest and optimum state at the moment of creation; their whole subsequent history is one of progressive degeneration, "winding down," or entropy. This takes place over millions of years, which are divided into four divisions or ages (*yugas*) according to the changing conditions of life. One of the ways in which

14. Some of the more spectacular finds in recent years are discussed in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, James Robinson, editor; *The Secret Gospel*, Morton Smith; *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, A. Powell Davies.

15. Philip K. Dick, *Valis*; Harlan Ellison, "Deathbird"; C.S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength*, and David Lindsay, *A Voyage to Arcturus*, are all variations on this theme.

the theme of *Anurag Sagar* works out is in the story of the incarnations of the author-hero in each yuga. At the end of the cycle of four yugas, the lower universe dissolves (*pralaya*) and is withdrawn into the higher; all souls stuck in the three worlds experience a comatose state for as long as the three worlds remain latent—a period exactly equivalent to the period of manifestation, four yugas. At the end of that period Kal creates the lower universe again (or it recreates itself according to the pattern he originally laid down) and the cycle starts again, to be continued until all souls—i.e., all life or *jivas*—are liberated from the lower worlds and are once again in Eternity or *Sat Lok*.

This scheme of the cosmos, both temporal and spatial, is accepted by the Masters and in fact ultimately derives from them; nevertheless a word of caution is in order. In the notes to this poem, the yugas are described in terms of orthodox Hindu theology, for informational purposes and to show the relative conditions of each yuga; but the Masters do not necessarily endorse the specifics—the number of years, life-spans, etc.—as given by the Hindu priests. It is in precisely this context that Sant Kirpal Singh, in his commentary on Guru Nanak's *Jap Ji*, wrote:

Nanak here is referring to the ancient Indian doctrine of the four Yugas or cycles of time, which somewhat parallels the Western belief in the Golden Age, the Silver Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. Nanak makes frequent use of such concepts and doctrines from ancient Hindu lore; but He refers to them not in a spirit of scientific truth, but often as a Divine poet, who employs allusion and mythology to drive home His point.¹⁶

Therefore while accepting the basic idea of the universe running down (involution rather than evolution)—an idea not at all philosophically incompatible with the current “Big Bang” theory of cosmic origins—a much longer human history than current thought allows, and its division into four ages, we need not worry about the particulars of those ages and how they fit in with modern scientific theories of human evolution. Truth is truth, and when—if ever—the scientific discoveries are complete, they will demonstrate the truth behind the yuga mythos. As it is, new discoveries are constantly changing our understanding both of the date of human origin and also the nature of our prehistoric past. It appears now, for example, that Neanderthal man was a member of the human species after all, and very likely a gentle vegetarian in some respects more advanced than we are.¹⁷ And evidence is mounting that our pre-historic ancestors were in possession of a highly technological

16. Kirpal Singh, *The Jap Ji: The Message of Guru Nanak*, p. 94.

17. See Boyce Rensberger, “Facing the Past,” *Science 81*, Vol. 2, No. 8.

culture which ultimately destroyed them and caused humanity to start from scratch at the beginning of the Kali Yuga (about 3000 B.C.).¹⁸ Sant Kirpal Singh was very specific about that part of the Yuga theory, and affirmed many times that the Mahabharata War, the traditional end of the Third Age, was not the simple struggle depicted in the epic of that name, but a nuclear war involving the whole world, with devastating consequences. The fact that it is not traditionally represented that way (although there are references to airplanes, television, etc., half-understood by the author and presented as magic) simply reflects the condition of the time in which the Mahabharata was written—after the holocaust. The author explained the story that had come down to him as best he could in the light of what he himself knew.

ANURAG SAGAR AND SANT MAT

Anurag Sagar occupies a very unusual place in the literature of the Masters; it is at once one of the most venerated and least known of all esoteric books. It is the Masters themselves who venerate it, and they have often made use of it in one way or another; they themselves are able to read it, but most of their disciples know it only by hearsay, mostly because it is written in the pre-Hindi dialect called Braj which, according to the leading modern scholar on Kabir, had “already by Kabir’s time . . . become the lyrical language *par excellence*”¹⁹ but which is extremely difficult for modern Indians to read; it relates to Hindi as spoken today somewhat as Chaucerian or Middle English relates to our language. There are also problems of interpretation: as with other mythopoeic treatments of these themes (particularly those of Blake, who of all Western writers is closest to Kabir both in spirit and in poetic genius²⁰) the poem is dense, at times enigmatic, and always demanding; so that to understand it fully without an authoritative commentary is not easy. Thanks to the grace of the living Son of Eternity, Sant Ajaib Singh Ji, eighteenth in the line of direct spiritual descent from Kabir, such a commentary has been provided.

Sant Ji’s interest in, appreciation of, and respect for *Anurag Sagar* has been shared by all of the Masters in the line, who have drawn upon it fully in their own books, discourses and songs. The alert reader of Swami Ji’s *Sar Bachan* or the books of Sant Kirpal Singh will notice many points of contact. Tulsi Sahib devoted a major portion of one of his

18. See Ivan T. Sanderson, *Investigating the Unexplained*, pp. 129-210. The late Dr. Sanderson was one of the world’s leading zoologists, and his research into this subject was lifelong and fruitful. Also of interest is Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier, *The Morning of the Magicians*.

19. Charlotte Vaudeville, *Kabir* (Vol. I), p. 65.

20. See “William Blake and *Sant Mat*” by the present writer, *Sant Bani*, Vol. 4, No. 7 (January 1980) p. 12.

principal books to a detailed commentary on certain aspects of the poem.²¹ Baba Jaimal Singh considered it to be the most authoritative book on the teachings of the Masters as the following account by his disciple and successor Sawan Singh shows:

On the fourth day I went to attend Satsang. Baba Ji [Baba Jaimal Singh] was at that time explaining the meaning of Jap Ji Sahib. Well, I started my volley of questions—so much so that the audience got tired and began to feel restless at the large number of questions I had put . . . Now he wanted to point out the way, but I had read Vedanta. When I read Gurbani, my opinion was different; when I read Gita my opinion was again different, and I was unable to come to a decision. At last I applied for eight days leave to enable me to study the teachings of Baba Ji. He advised me to read Kabir Sahib's *Anurag Sagar*. I immediately ordered eight copies of this book from Bombay so that I could also give some to my friends . . .

After several conferences with Baba Ji, I was thoroughly convinced and received initiation from him on the 15th day of October in 1894.²²

That Baba Sawan Singh continued to hold *Anurag Sagar* in high regard after he became Master is shown by the following account, written by one of his secretaries:

Hazur [Baba Sawan Singh] one day told Seth Vasdev, whose car is always at Hazur's disposal, that he should read Kabir Sahib's *Anurag Sagar* (The Ocean of Intense Love). Hazur said that without studying it, one cannot fully understand the difference between Kal (the negative power) and Dayal Mat (the Path of the true and Merciful God), nor can one fully grasp the teachings of Sant Mat.²³

Among the members of the Kabir-panth, the religion basing itself on Kabir's teachings, the book has spawned a mass of imitations, many of them written much later and emphasizing characteristic Kabir-panth concerns (such as the hereditary Guruship) which *Anurag Sagar* is at pains to condemn. It is a pity that modern scholars, who have otherwise done excellent work in regard to Kabir, do not recognize the difference between the original and its imitators both on linguistic and doctrinal grounds.²⁴ The poem is written in the Braj dialect, as we have seen; one

21. Translated into English by S.D. Maheshwari as *Param Sant Tulsi Saheb*.

22. Quoted by Kirpal Singh, *Baba Jaimal Singh*, p. 76.

23. Rai Sahib Munshi Ram, *With the Three Masters*, Vol. II, p. 187.

24. F.E. Keay, *Kabir and His Followers* (1931) does not mention *Anurag Sagar* at all, either in his list of Kabir's genuine works or in the Kabir-panth writings. Vaudeville, *op. cit.*, (1974) lists it in passing (with its title misspelled) among the Kabir-panth imitations.

leading Indian scholar, according to Vaudeville, “draws the conclusion that the basic language of Kabir’s verses is Braj.”²⁵ Since the derivative Kabir-panth literature is all in relatively modern Hindi, and since those who are in a position to judge the doctrinal content best—Kabir’s competent spiritual descendants—are in unanimous agreement that the book is genuine, it seems that modern scholarship should seriously consider its claims to authenticity.

THE TEXT

Kabir, as we have seen, was almost certainly illiterate; there is no question of his having “written” anything in the modern sense. Yet as a poet he is widely considered the father of Hindi poetry. His composition was entirely oral, and his songs and longer works were either written down at the time by a disciple who had some education (such as Dharam Das) or committed to memory by his followers and written down later. It is impossible to say with certainty exactly how *Anurag Sagar* was written, but there is an excellent chance that it was dictated to Dharam Das.

Our text is from the edition published in Bombay in 1914 by Swami Yugalananda, who says in his Hindi preface that he used forty-six different versions of *Anurag Sagar*, thirteen of them hand-written, in preparing his edition, and that he carefully and painstakingly collated all the versions and compared all variant readings in order to arrive at the present book. This edition was specially recommended by Sant Ajaib Singh as the basis for the English translation, as it is the only text available based on this kind of careful scholarship.

* * *

It has been three years since work on this project began, and all of us who were privileged to have been associated with this blessed work are extremely grateful to the living Master, Sant Ajaib Singh Ji Maharaj of Rajasthan, for his determination to make this edition happen, his inspiration and encouragement extended to us all along the way, his never-failing patience in answering question after question about the work (even as Kabir answered Dharam Das), and the constantly extended grace which made it possible for us all to work way beyond our own limited capacity. Truly it is his book in every particular.

RUSSELL PERKINS

February 6, 1982

25. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

I. Prologue

INVOCATION

SATYA SUKRIT, ADI ADLI, AJAR: ACHINT PURUSH, MANINDER, KARUNAMAI, KABIR, SURTI YOG SANTAYAN, DHANI DHARAM DAS, CHUDAMANI NAAM, SUDARSHAN NAAM, KULPATI NAAM, PRAMODH GURU BALA PIR, KEWAL NAAM, AMOL NAAM, SURAT SUNCHI NAAM, HAKK NAAM, PAK NAAM, PRAGAT NAAM, DHIRAJ NAAM, UGRA NAAM, GRACE OF GOD, THE GRACE OF THE LINEAGE OF FORTY-TWO INCARNATIONS.

MANGLACHARAN: HYMN OF GOD'S GRACE

First of all I salute the Satguru, Who showed me the Inconceivable God—

Who, lighting the lamp of the Master's Knowledge and opening the veil, made me have His darshan.

With Master's grace I have achieved Him, to achieve Whom, scholars worked very hard.

His form cannot be described; His soul is the nectar in which I have absorbed myself.

INVOCATION The names listed here after Dharam Das and Chudamani are the names of their successors in the Kabir-panth line; the invocation in its present form was inserted after the time of Ugra Naam, and is not an integral part of the poem.

SATGURU Master of Truth or True Master. Exoterically, it refers to any Master, such as Kabir, who has descended from the fifth plane or Sat Lok, or who has merged with the Positive Power or Sat Purush. In this sense it is used throughout the *Anurag Sagar* as a synonym for Kabir. Esoterically, it refers to the Master Power manifesting on the level of Sat Purush, as distinguished from the same Power manifesting on the lower inner planes as the Radiant Form or *Gurudev*, and on the physical plane as the *Guru*. This trinity of *Satguru/Gurudev/Guru* is roughly analogous to the Buddhist *Dharma Kaya/Sambhoga Kaya/Nirmana Kaya*, or three "bodies" (forms or manifestations) of the Buddha.

INCONCEIVABLE GOD *Agam Purush*. Refers specifically to the seventh inner plane, the first (partial) expression of the Absolute God or *Anami*.

DARSHAN To have a look at, or to get a glimpse of, someone—usually someone holy. The darshan of a genuine Master is in itself a valuable spiritual practice.

Gurudev is perfect

The Master is an Ocean of Grace, He showers grace on the miserable ones.

Rare are those who know His secret: He manifests Himself in those who recognize Him.

Who deserves it?

HYMN

Only the connoisseur, who will test the Shabda
And listen to the teachings with full attention
And within whom these teachings will dwell, only he will understand this.

He within whom the Sun of Knowledge will manifest and remove the darkness of attachment—only he will understand this.

I am telling you this Anurāg Sāgar (Ocean of Love)—only rare saints will understand.

Without love one cannot achieve it

COUPLET

Any learned saint who thinks over my words and has love in his heart will achieve Nirvana.

THE SIGNS OF A LOVER

Dharam Das said:

O Satguru, folding my hands I beg You, please clear up this doubt of mine:

How do I recognize the one within whom love manifests?

What does a lover look like? Without love the jiva cannot be liberated—

O my God, tell me about that love, and give examples to explain it to me.

Examples of a lover's qualities

The Satguru said:

O Dharam Das, I will explain to you the qualities of the lover; listen attentively so that you may recognize him.

Example of the deer

Intoxicated by the music, the deer runs and comes to the hunter. He doesn't have any fear, not even when he sacrifices his head.

Hearing the music he sacrifices his life—a lover should do the same.

Example of the moth

A lover should be like a moth when it goes near light.

Example of Sati

O Dharam Das, listen to more examples and manifest the Satguru's Shabda.

Be like the woman who burns herself with her dead husband, and while burning doesn't move her body;

One who leaves her house, wealth and friends, and in the pain of separation, goes alone;

She doesn't stop even when people bring her son before her, and try to catch her in attachment—

When people say, "Your son is weak and will die, and without you your home will be lonely"—

When people say, "You have plenty of wealth, come back home"—

She is in the pain of separation from her husband and nothing attracts her.

TEST THE SHABDA That is, to take the teachings so seriously that one puts them into practice and sees for oneself.

SHABDA The Sound Current; also called *Naam* or Word. The projected Creative Force of the Positive Power or Sat Purush, ultimately responsible for the entire creation and present in each individual in the form of Light and Sound, which can be seen and heard, and which are the agency that pulls the individual back to his/her essence, Sat Purush.

JIVA The soul when bound and forgetful. The liberated fully-conscious soul is called *atman*, but the two terms are often used interchangeably.

SATI It is a curious paradox that Kabir, who uses *sati* as an image of absolute faithfulness and love here and elsewhere in his poetry, should have resolutely opposed it in practice; but it is the difference between the ideal and the reality. These lines explicitly portray a wife so identified with her husband that she has no ability to live on a plane where he is not, and so follows him in death, voluntarily, joyfully, and despite the conventional wisdom of friends and relations—exactly as a true devotee feels about God. But the ugly reality of the custom as it became a Hindu law was something else: a terrified widow, forced by public opinion to burn herself and going along with it because she literally *had no future*—when her husband died, she lost her identity and became a non-person. Far from urging her to live, her neighbors and friends forced her to die; and if she somehow evaded her fate, she became an untouchable. All Masters, including Kabir, opposed this vicious custom; but they also continued to use the ideal as a poetic image of the love of the true devotee for God.

HYMN

People try to persuade her in many ways but the determined woman
 doesn't listen.
 She says, "My condition is such that I have nothing to do with
 wealth and property.
 In this world, one lives for a few days, and in the end none is our
 companion—
 So, dear friends, understanding this I have caught hold of my hus-
 band's hand."

COUPLET

Thus with determination she climbs the funeral pyre, and taking her
 husband in her lap,
 She becomes Sati, repeating the name of the Lord.

Qualities of the real lover

O Dharam Das, understanding the reality, I am telling you about
 love.
 Those who meditate on Naam in such a way that they forget their
 family,
 Who do not have the attachment of son and wife, and who under-
 stand this life as a dream, are real lovers.
 Brother, in this world life is very short, and the world doesn't help
 at its end.
 In this world woman is loved the most; not even parents are loved so
 much.
 But the woman for whom one lays down his life doesn't help at the
 time of death.
 She weeps for her own self and at once goes to her parents' home.
 Son, kinsfolk and wealth are dreams, so my advice to you is to
 achieve Sat Naam.
 Nothing goes with us in the end—not even the body which we love
 so well.

Who can release us from Kal?

Brother, I don't see anyone who can release us at the end time,
 Except One—Whom I will describe—loving Whom your purpose
 will be served.
 The Satguru is the only one Who can get us released; believe this as
 true.

What does the Satguru do?

Defeating Kal, He takes the soul to the Motionless Plane, where Sat Purush is.

Reaching there, one finds infinite happiness and is freed from coming back to this world.

HER PARENTS' HOME Note the difference between the attitude of the woman pictured here and that of the *sati* described above. This is a far more realistic description, obviously of a society where *sati* was not forced.

SAT NAAM The Expression of Existence; The True Name given to the Primal Sound Current as it comes into Being at the stage of Sach Khand as Sat Purush or the Positive Power. Sometimes used in this book as a synonym for *Naam* or *Shabda*, the Sound Current as a whole.

KAL Literally, "Time" or "Darkness"; the name of the Negative Power, or that aspect of the One God that flows downward and is responsible for the creation and maintenance of the causal, astral and physical planes. A very large part of *Anurag Sagar* is concerned with Kal, who, as explained below, is one of the sixteen sons of the Sat Purush or Positive Power, and who fell from grace and favor through demanding the sovereignty of the three worlds. He is the "father" of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and sends his incarnations into the world from time to time both to maintain justice and redress wrongs, and also to mislead seeking souls and prevent them from leaving the confines of the three worlds. Kal is not necessarily evil—a careful reading of *Anurag Sagar* will show that, given the fact of the lower creation, his work is necessary—yet neither is he good: he is most certainly not God, yet he demands to be worshiped as though he were. Because he does his best to keep individual souls from leaving the lower creation, he is the ancient foe of the Saints, or incarnations of Sat Purush, Whose work is precisely to help souls leave the lower creation. In the Jewish-Christian tradition, he is in some ways analogous to Satan, in others to the "priestly" conception of Yahweh in the Old Testament (not, however, to the prophetic use of that name which refers to a God of mercy and love). The Gnostics called him the Demiurge, and understood him very well. Perhaps the closest analogue in Western literature is William Blake's "Urizen" who like Kal, functions as the great law-giver (compare Kal's other name, "Dharam Rai") using his laws to trap humanity, and who demands to be worshiped as God. Although Kal is often referred to in *Anurag Sagar* as "unjust," that is from the perspective of Sat Purush and Kabir: within the context of the worlds that he has made, he is absolutely fair and just, demanding "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," and getting it. Since within the framework of the Rule of Law and the condition of the lower worlds, we cannot avoid sin, it is true that we get exactly what we deserve according to the Law of Karma; but since the ultimate Reality of the human condition is that we are children of Sat Purush, "drops of His essence," Kal, seen from that perspective, prevents us from realizing our full personhood and thus is monstrously unjust. Our mind is related to Kal in the same way as our soul is related to Sat Purush.

MOTIONLESS PLANE *Avichal*, all the spiritual creation from Sat Lok upward.

SAT PURUSH The True Being; the first full expression of the Absolute God.

Who can reach the Motionless Plane?

HYMN

One who will climb the Path of Truth believing my words,
 Like the warrior who marches ahead in battle and doesn't worry
 about what is behind—
 So become like the warrior and the Sati, and take the Knowledge of
 the Path from the Saint.
 Take refuge in the Satguru and, developing *Mritak*, rid yourself of
 Kal's pain.

Rare are those who deserve it

COUPLET

Kabir says this, after reflection: Only the brave one who does this
 can achieve the Beloved.

WHO IS A MRITAK?

Dharam Das said:

O my God, tell me the qualities of *mritak*, so that the fire which is
 burning in my mind may be extinguished.
 O cloud of nectar, explain to me—how can this life die?

Examples of Mritak

Kabir said:

Dharam Das, this is a complicated thing.
 Only a few can learn this from a perfect Master.

Example of bhringi

Those who serve the Saints as Mritak, ultimately—grasping Shabda
 —achieve the Path to God.

Just as the insect who, coming in contact with *bhringi*, develops its
 body.

Bhringi attacks the insect with its sound, and one who catches that
 sound

Is taken by the bhringi to his home, where he turns it into his own
 form.

The insect who catches the sound of bhringi, itself becomes bhringi.
 Rare are the insects who catch the sound of bhringi at the first
 attempt.

Some catch it at a second attempt, some at a third, and sacrificing
 their body and mind they become the form of bhringi.

The insect who doesn't catch the sound of bhringi remains as an ordinary insect forever.

O Dharam Das, the disciple should receive the knowledge from the Master as the insect receives the sound from bhringi.

How does one achieve the quality of bhringi?

One who is determined to accept the teachings, I make him My own form:

The jiva who has no duality realizes Me.

One who believes the words of the Masters, only he becomes the bhringi.

When the crow merges itself into Shabda and leaves all her desires, she becomes a *hansa*.

What is a hansa?

COUPLET

He who leaves the path of the crow and dwells on the true Shabda within, eating pearls—

Who gives his life to Sat Purush by following the Path shown by the Masters—is a hansa.

More examples of Mritak

Hear O Saints, the nature of Mritak; rare are those who practice the Path of God.

Called also the Supreme Father or the Positive Power. He is the Lord of Sach Khand and is the highest form of God that can be called personal. Also called Sat Naam.

MRITAK Literally, "dead while alive"; refers to being totally detached from the world and aware of God, as a dead person would be.

BHRINGI This curious phenomenon, which is apparently natural history and not mythology, is commented on by Sant Kirpal Singh Ji as follows: "Bhringi (an insect) after almost killing a keet (another insect) revives the latter to life by bestowing its powerful attention on it. The keet when charmed back to life is no longer a keet but becomes a bhringi-being saturated with the life impulse of the latter. In just the same way Kabir says that one who does Simran and gets firmly engrafted therein will have new birth and new life quite distinct from the old sensual life he has been living hitherto." (*The Way of the Saints*, pp. 121-22)

HANSA A mythological swan which lives on pearls and is used by Masters as a symbol of the liberated human soul (as, for example, in the term *paramhansa*, which means literally "great swan").

Hear more attributes of Mritak: Mritak serves the Satguru.
Mritak manifests love within him, and receiving that love the jiva gets liberation.

Example of the earth

The earth hurts no one—you be like that.
Some put sandalwood on her, some throw dirt on her—still she hates no one.
Mritak also hates no one—He is very happy even when opposed.

Example of the sugar cane

Listen to more attributes of Mritak, and step on the Path shown by the Master only after testing and understanding it:
When the farmer makes *jaggery* out of sugar, he cuts the sugar cane into pieces;
Then it is crushed in the press and the juice is heated in the cauldron.
After boiling the juice jaggery is made, and boiling the jaggery, raw sugar is obtained.
Heating the raw sugar, refined sugar is obtained.
When sugar again burns herself, rock candy is obtained.
Kabir says: From rock candy, sugar candy—which is liked by everyone—is made.
In the same way, if the disciple bears all his sufferings, with Master's grace, he can easily cross the Ocean of Life.

Who can develop the qualities of Mritak?

HYMN

Dharam Das, to develop the qualities of a Mritak is hard; only a brave soul can do it.
The coward cannot bear to hear it. He runs away and feels as if his body and mind are burning.
Only those disciples who are looked after by the Master can board the boat of Master's Knowledge.
And this is true: that one who gets that knowledge, definitely goes to his eternal home.

Only Mritak is a Sadhu

COUPLET

Only he who becomes Mritak is a Sadhu and only he realizes the Satguru.

He removes all illusions and even the gods depend on him.

Who is a Sadhu?

O Dharam Das, the path of the Sadhu is very difficult. He who lives as Mritak is a perfect Sadhu.

He who has controlled the five organs of senses and drinks the nectar of Naam day and night is a Sadhu.

Controlling the organ of seeing

First of all control the eyes, and meditate on the Naam received from the Master.

Seeing the Beautiful Form of God is the only worship for these eyes; he should not desire any other.

One who understands “beautiful” and “ugly” as the same, and doesn’t look at the body, enjoys happiness forever.

Controlling the organ of hearing

His ear should be fond of hearing good words, and should not like to hear bad words;

But he who bears both—good and bad words—likes the Knowledge of the Master to remain in his heart.

Controlling the organ of smell

The nose is controlled by pleasant smells, but the clever saints keep it in their control.

Controlling the organ of taste

The tongue wants pleasant tastes: sour, sweet and delicious tastes. But the Mritak does not know any difference between tasty and tasteless things.

He does not get excited even if he is brought the Five Nectars.

He does not refuse food without salt, and lovingly accepts whatever is served him.

SADHU One who has reached Daswan Dwar or the third plane; a very high soul. In popular usage, a wandering monk, usually wearing saffron or yellow robes; but that is not usually its meaning in *Anurag Sagar* or in other writings of the Masters.

“GOOD” AND “BAD” The paradox here is that “good” and “bad” as we normally understand them, are dualistic and have meaning only in reference to Kal’s worlds; but in Sant Mat, “good” means “that which leads us towards God” and “bad,” “that which keeps us away from God.” In this couplet, the first line refers to “good” and “bad” in the second, esoteric sense; the second line to their outer, dualistic sense.

Controlling the male genital organ

This organ is wicked and very sinful. Lust is conquered by only a few ones.

A lustful woman is the mine of Kal. Leave her company and become the Knower of the Guru.

Controlling lust

Whenever the wave of lust comes one should wake himself up. He should put his attention into Shabda and, keeping quiet, should drink the Nectar of Naam.

When he merges into the Elementless, lust will be finished.

The god of lust is a robber

HYMN

Lust is a mighty, dangerous and pain-giving negative power, Which made the gods, munis, yakshas, ghandharvas, indulge in sex.

All of them were plundered—only a few who remained determined with the quality of their knowledge were saved.

Those who have the Light of the Satguru's Knowledge and are with Him, have the secret of the Path.

The ways of escaping from lust, the robber

COUPLET

Enlighten your inner Self with the Lamp of Knowledge. Meditate on the Satguru Shabda and the thief of darkness will run away.

Example of the anul bird

With the grace of the Master the jiva is called "Sadhu," and, becoming the anul bird, goes back to his eternal home.

Dharam Das, understand these words: I am telling you about the anul bird,

Who lives in the sky and is supported by the air day and night.

She performs the sexual act through the eyes and in that way becomes pregnant.

She lays her eggs in the sky, where there is no support:

The egg is nourished while falling; in the sky it is hatched and the young bird takes birth;

It is on the way that it opens its eyes, and on the way that it gets its wings.

When it finally reaches the earth it realizes that this is not its home—
Realizing that, it flies back to where its parents live.

The anul bird doesn't come down to bring the baby back—it itself
goes home, treading the path.

Many birds live in this world, but very few of them are anul birds.
Birds like that are rare, and rare are the jivas who merge themselves
in Naam.

If the jiva can practice this path, he can go back to Sat Lok, tri-
umphing over Kal.

When does a Sadhu become like an anul bird?

HYMN

When he goes only in the refuge of the Satguru and keeps only one
desire—of Naam;

When he keeps himself in the service of the Satguru day and night,
and has no desire for wealth and property;

MALE GENITAL ORGAN Kabir's wording here is characteristically blunt and does not take into consideration twentieth-century sensibilities. Compare Matthew 19. But what does the word "sinful" mean when the Masters use it? According to Kirpal Singh, "The Masters give a very simple definition of sin as 'forgetting of origin' (Godhead)." [*The Wheel of Life*, p. 37] Once this is understood, the point is obvious: nothing makes a male forget his higher self any more quickly or deeply than his aroused genital organ.

"LUSTFUL WOMAN" As the context implies, woman when acting as sex object or when seen as sex object by man under the control of his genital organ.

NAAM Name; here used as a synonym for *Shabda* or Sound Current, the primordial creative Power of God which is also the essence of each individual. In this sense, it is the exact equivalent of the Greek term *Logos* (English "Word") as used in the New Testament, particularly in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, where the concept is described in great detail. *Naam* can also mean "name" in the usual sense, just as "Word" can mean "word" in the usual sense: the Saints use the terms *Dhunatmak* and *Varnatmak* to distinguish between the two, the former term referring to the Sound Current or creative force, the latter to names that can be spoken in human speech. The opening passage of Tao Te Ching makes the same distinction.

ANUL BIRD Mythological bird. All Indian scriptures are full of references to creatures like these, and *Anurag Sagar* is no exception. These examples and stories are told to illustrate a human psychological point, and should be understood as parables, not lectures in biology. Sant Kirpal Singh has written that the Master "makes frequent use of such concepts and doctrines from ancient Hindu lore; but He refers to them not in a spirit of scientific truth, but often as a Divine poet, who employs allusion and mythology to drive his point home." [*Jap Ji*, p. 94]

When he forgets son, wife, and all the enjoyments and keeps himself attached to Satguru's feet.

[Then he becomes like an anul bird.]

What does the Master give to such a Sadhu?

With the grace of the Satguru he gets relief from the unbearable pain and achieves Sat Lok.

How does one get to the Motionless Plane?

COUPLET

By remaining in the Master's remembrance, in thought, word, and deed, and by obeying the orders of the Master—
Master gives one who does this the gift of liberation and merges him in Naam.

The greatness of merging in Naam

As long as the jiva doesn't merge himself in Naam, he wanders in this world.

When he contemplates on the Formless and merges into Naam, all his doubts go away.

If he merges into Naam even for a moment, Its greatness cannot be described.

Everybody talks about Naam but rare ones achieve the formless Naam.

Even if one lives in Kashi for ages, without the Essential Shabda he will go to hell.

Nimkhar, Badri Dham, Gaya or Prayag—even if he bathes in these holy places,

And goes to all the sixty-eight places of pilgrimage, yet without the Essential Shabda illusion cannot go away.

What can I say further about that Naam, repeating which the fear of Yama goes away?

What does one get who receives Naam?:

One who gets Sat Naam from the Satguru goes to Sat Lok climbing the rope of Naam.

Dharam Rai bows his head to him whose soul merges into the elementless.

What is the Essential Shabda?

The Essential Shabda is a bodiless form. The Essential Shabda is beautiful, wordless.

The body has elements and nature: The Essential Shabda is elementless and bodiless.

In all four directions Shabda is talked about—only the Essential Shabda can liberate the souls.

The Naam of Sat Purush Itself is the Essential Shabda and the Simran of Sat Purush is the Essential Shabda's recognition.

One who merges into It without doing the Simran by tongue—even Kal is afraid of him.

The path of the Essential Shabda is subtle, easy and perfect; but only the brave can follow it.

SAT LOK The Region of Truth: the fifth inner plane, first completely spiritual plane, and seat of Sat Purush. This is the stage to which perfect Masters or *Sants* take their disciples; Sat Purush Himself takes them further into the Absolute. Guru Nanak referred to this plane as *Sach Khand*; the Sufi Masters as *Mukam-i-Haq*. It is the Court of the Saints.

KASHI Also called Benares; the holiest of all Hindu cities, and the lifelong home of Kabir. It was widely believed that anyone who died in Kashi would be liberated; consequently, devout Hindus from all over India tried to reach Kashi during their last illnesses. It is said that Kabir, to expose the hollowness of such beliefs, deliberately left Kashi just before He died, and went to Magahar, about which it was widely believed that anyone who died there went to hell.

HELL In the terminology of the Masters, "hell" can refer either to a particularly difficult incarnation on earth, to the cycle of births and deaths in general, or to certain stages of the astral plane where particularly heavy karma is worked out. In no case is it eternal or everlasting; and when the karma is worked through, the individual is free to try again. See Kirpal Singh, *The Wheel of Life*, pp. 42-44.

YAMA The death-god; another name for Kal.

DHARAM RAI The Lord of Judgment or Law; another name for Kal, often used in *Anurag Sagar*.

SIMRAN Remembrance; in the writings of the Masters, refers to Remembrance of God through the repetition of His Five Basic Names, as given in the form of a mantra by the Master at the time of initiation. This repetition is done "without tongue" (see next line)—that is, mentally—and is one of the three basic meditation practices of Shabda Yoga. It is also a means of keeping in a state of remembrance at all times even when not sitting in meditation, and a protection against Kal.

RECOGNITION This is a very interesting line. The first half is an explicit declaration of the esoteric identification of the *Naam* (i.e. Name) of God with Shabda: the second half says that the ability to "recognize"—i.e., hear *and be pulled up by*—the Sound Current is dependent on the completion of Simran. This refers to the way in which the spiritual practices of Shabda Yoga lead to one another.

It is neither a word, nor a simran, nor a japa. It is a perfect thing, achieving which one can conquer Kal.

The support of the soul is in the head, and now I will tell you of the recognition of Shabda.

One who gets connected with the Unrepeated Repetition gets to see the infinite-petaled lotus.

When he reaches the astral door, he [ultimately] goes to Agam and Agochar [by way of] the True Path.

His inner Self—where Adi Purush resides—gets enlightened.

Recognizing Him, the soul goes to Him—and He takes the soul to its origin.

The soul is of the same essence as Sat Purush and is also called *Jiva-Sohang*.

Dharam Das, you are a wise saint. Recognize that Shabda which gives liberation.

**The method of meditating on the Essential Shabda (Naam)—
The way of practicing Master's Path**

HYMN

Repeat the Unrepeated and with the grace of the perfect Master, test it.

Keeping the wing of mind at rest, see the Shabda; and, climbing the mind, finish your Karma.

Reach the place where the Sound is produced without tongue and the rosary beads are moved without hands:

Merging into the Essential Shabda, go to the world of immortality.

COUPLET

The glory of the Inconceivable is limitless—millions of suns and moons cannot vie with one hair.

The radiance of one soul is equal to the light of sixteen suns.

The jubilation of Dharam Das:

O God, I sacrifice myself at Your Feet. Removing my pain, You have made me happy.

Hearing Your words I am as happy as a blind man given eyes.

Kabir said:

Dharam Das, you are a pure soul, who, meeting with me, have removed your pain.

Just as you have loved me, leaving your wealth, home and sons,
In the same way, the disciples who will do this and, with determination will attach their mind to Master's Feet,

And will manifest love within themselves for Master's Feet, sacrificing their body, mind and wealth on the Satguru—

They will be most dear to me, and no one can ever stop them.

The disciples who won't sacrifice everything, and keep fraud in their hearts while showing love on their faces,

How can they go to Sat Lok? Without manifesting Master within they cannot achieve Me.

Dharam Das' confession of gratefulness:

All this you have done, my God; I was very dirty.

Showering grace on me You Yourself came to me and, holding my hand, have saved me from Kal.

JAPA Repetition of a mantra, usually orally, which distinguishes it from Simran—although the two words are sometimes, as here, used as synonyms. This line means that the ultimate Path of the Sound Current is above all Simran or Japa, because only those who have completed and gone beyond that practice can walk it.

UNREPEATED REPETITION *Ajapa jap*; often used in Sant Mat to refer to the Sound Current or *Shabda*.

ADI PURUSH Original Person; another name for Sat Purush.

SOHANG "I am you." Its use here as a name for the soul emphasizes the identity of the soul and God referred to in the first part of the line; its coupling with *jiva* underlines the irony of the soul's bound and forgetful condition when seen in the light of its true nature.

KARMA The law of action and reaction, based on desire and I-hood, which causes continual wandering in the cycle of birth and death (transmigration) throughout the three worlds (physical, astral, causal) ruled by Kal, and which governs the fate or destiny of each life. Actions done in one life (whether in thought, word, or deed) form the basis of the karma of subsequent lives.