



1196, Sadashiv Peth, Limayewadi Road, pune - 411030.  
contact- 020-29526979/ 9699644930 E-Mail- [ssf@ssfoffice.co.in](mailto:ssf@ssfoffice.co.in)

## Sant Ravidas

A significant achievement in the cultural history of medieval India was the silent revolution in society, which was brought by a galaxy of socio-religious reformers and the Indian Sants, a revolution known as the Bhakti Movement. Sant Ravidas was one such personality who belonged to the bhakti tradition of Medieval India. Shri Sant Ravidas was a great Sant, philosopher, poet, and social reformer in India during the 15th century.



Sant Ravidas was born in the holy city of Varanasi. His date of birth is a matter of debate. Some scholars believe he was born in 1377 and died in 1528. His father's name was Santokh Dass ji, and his mother's name was Kalsa. He belonged to the cobbler caste, mainly involved in the leather work. Cobblers among those castes were considered as so-called untouchables.

Sant Ravidas completed his early education under the guidance of Pt. Sharada Nand. Some higher caste people restricted Pt Sharada Nand from teaching in Pathshalas, but Pandit ji knew that Ravidas was a divine personality. Pt. Sharda Nand admitted Ravidas to his own Pathshala and started teaching him. He was brilliant and a promising student.

Sant Ravidas aroused the social horizons of India when India was going through repeated invasions by Islamic rulers. They constantly targeted the Hindu religion. During his time, lower caste people were neglected and were not allowed to do some common jobs in the society of higher caste people, such as being inhibited from going to the temples for prayer, interfered with going to schools for study and being restricted to visit the village during the daytime, they were allowed to live in huts instead of a proper house in the village and many more. After seeing such a social scenario, Sant Ravidas started giving spiritual messages to everybody to tackle the dire situations of low-caste people.

He spread the message that "God created man and not man created God," which means God created everyone and has equal rights on this earth. He wanted to bring reform to the hearts of the people. Sant Ravidas realized that it was a much-needed task to unite the followers of this religion under one umbrella. To take the first step, he opposed the restrictions put on so-called Dalits by the upper caste. His determination was a matter of excellence, but his journey was challenging. He was a faithful messenger of God, and he came on earth when it was necessary to save the real Dharma, at that time when social and religious patterns were distressing because of the many artificial discriminations over social beliefs, caste, color, etc. He bravely faced all the discrimination and answered people about the actual definition and beliefs of castes. He taught people that one is known by his actions(karma), not by his caste, creed, or religion.

He also worked against the system of untouchability in society; he supported the entry of so-called untouchables into the temples. The upper castes were against him; they opposed his social reform work, but Sant Ravidas didn't stop. He continued to do his godly work of transforming society. During the early days of his teachings, his popularity was prohibited by the conservative Brahmins living in Kashi, as he was also an untouchable guru. People complained about him in front of the king as a defamer of the social order. He was prohibited from talking about God and advising or teaching people.

Sant Guru Ravidas was a spiritual Guru of Meera Bai who was the queen of Chittoor and the daughter of one of the famous kings in Rajasthan named Rao Dadaji. She was very impressed by the teachings of Sant Ravidas and became a great follower of him. Meera Bai has written some lines in respect to his Guru.

**गुरु मिलीया रविदास जी दीनी ज्ञान की गुटकी।**

**चोट लगी निजनाम हरी की महारे हिवरे खटकी।।**

Meerabai says, "I am (Meerabai) blessed to find a guru like Ravidas ji who is showering his wisdom. The Doha is the profound impact of spiritual guidance from guru Ravidas, leading to a deep connection with the divine.

The wound here symbolizes the transformative experience of spiritual awakening and the imprint of Hari, i.e., lord Krishna, on Meera Bai's heart.

Sant Ravidas writes:

**जन्म-जात मत पूछिए, का जात अरु पात ?**

**रविदास पूत सभ प्रभु के, कोऊ जात नहीं कुजात।**

"Do not ask about my birth, caste, or social status."

"Ravidas says, I am a child of God; I do not belong to any particular caste."

In this Doha, Sant Ravidas expresses that one's spiritual identity is paramount and should not be defined by societal categories such as birth or caste. He identifies himself as a child of God, highlighting the universality and equality of all individuals in the eyes of the divine, irrespective of their social background. The Doha encourages a focus on spiritual values and

unity beyond superficial distinctions. Through this Doha, Sant Ravidas emphasizes transcending social distinctions and recognizing the universality of spiritual identity.

Prachi Bandaram ([prachibandaram@gmail.com](mailto:prachibandaram@gmail.com))

#### Reference:

- <https://www.varanasi.org.in/ravidas>
- <https://www.aajtak.in/religion/spirituality/story/sant-ravidas-jayanti-2022-know-his-quotes-and-teachings-tli> <https://www.tv9hindi.com/photo-gallery/knowledge-photos/sant-ravidas-fd-1412455-2022-02-16>
- [used-to-make-leather-shoes-know-how-guru-ravidas-became-saint-shiromani-1064348.htm](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1064348)  
Jstor Article Journal : From Bhakti to Buddhism: Ravidas and Ambedkar

Sant Rohidas: Charitra ani Vangmay.