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Concept of Bhakti According to Nërada Bhakti Sítras

Abstract:

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The concept of Bhakti has its origin in the Îgveda, which preaches strong faith and devotion in God. N;rada Bhakti s£tra contains 84 verses is a wellknown s£tra to regard within the tradition of Hinduism, it signifies spoken by the famous sage, N;rada. The text details the process of Bhakti and is this more importance to the Bhakti movements within Hinduism. It has received particular attention among the VaiÀ,ava tradition. Within the text N;rada explains the perfectional stage of pure devotion, the process to achieve this stage. Firstly Bhakti itself is defined as being "the most elevated pure of God". The aspirant Bhakti is encouraged to renounce "social custom" and religious ritual and to focus purely on service to God with exclusive dedication.

It also includes, definition of bhakti and its forms, classification of various types of Bhakti, the stages of development and the process required to achieve the stage of pure devotion. He gives various suggestions and hints useful for practice. He warns against things to be avoided while practicing, finally explain the different forms of adoration (attachment) to the Supreme person. The nature of selfless love and the ideal state of a liberated one thing in the presence of God.

The intention in my paper contains: (1) The definition of Bhakti (2) the nature of pure Bhakti (3) Things to avoid when developing Bhakti (4)

classification of various types of Bhakti (5) View of devotee to God.

N;rada is a name that occurs very often in the ancient text. Nirada is a Rishi in the Îgveda. Nirada Bhakti s£tra is a brief work of 84 s£tras. Its language is simple, beautiful and direct. It claims to be a collection of the sayings of the sage N;rada. The main subject of the text is the practice of pure devotion. Nirada Bhakti s£tra predates áanditya's Bhakti s£tra another treatise on the subject of bhakti which appeared around the same time. While talking of Bhakti s£tra it is customary mention both the texts and compare their treatment of the subject. N;rada's is a simple and a direct presentation addressed to the practitioners; while áanditya's work is in the nature of philosophical treatise and is addressed to the scholarly. It is in verse language, containing arguments and counter arguments. áanditya's approach is intellectual. N;rada approach is through the heart and humility of a devotee. áanditya is more into philosophy and metaphysics of devotion. N;rada ignores all those philosophical arguments and plunges straight into the practical aspects. Apart from defining devotion and describing its forms, he classifies various types of Bhakti, the stages of development and the process required to achieve the state of pure devotion. He also quotes from Vedas in support. He gives various suggestions and hints useful for practice. He warns against things to be avoided while practising. Finally he explains the different forms of adoration (attachment) to the Supreme person the nature of selfless love, and the

ideal stage of liberated one living in the presence of God.

The text begins with +lÉÉCiÉÉä \ÉËHò ^aÉÉJ^aÉÉ^{oa}ÉÉ^{··}É&* Here Iswara defines (1) ^oÉÉ iÉlº ÉxÉ {É®ú É|Éä ɰü {ÉÉ (2) + ÉÞiɰ ɰü {ÉÉ SÉ* The objective of human life is God Realisaion. God exists in everyone's heart as the inner most self [1]. "<ǕɮúªÉÉ{ªÉʦɨÉÉxÉuäùʹÉi ÉÉiĒÂ (27)nèùxªÉÊ|ɪÉi É É SÉ*") He dislike egoism and hypocrisy. He appreciates love and humility when devotee's sincerely love God and adore him. He receives the adulation with grace and blesses them. He $\pm \acute{E}\acute{E}\ddot{a}E\ddot{a}\acute{O}\%\acute{E}{\acute{E}}$ full of love. (37) is ÉMÉ ÉnÂùMÉÖhÉ É ÉhÉEòÒiÉCxÉÉiÉÂ* (38)"ɽþHÞò{ɪÉè'É "ÉÖJªÉiɰiÉÖ ÉMÉ ÉiEÞò {ÉɱÉä¶ÉÉnÂù ΈÉ* (40)±É^{lª}ÉiÉÉä%Ê{É iÉiEÞò{ɪÉèÉ (80)٩É EòÒiªÉÇ^{..}ÉÉxÉ&

¶ÉÒQÉ ÉäÉÉÊÉÉÉÇÉiªÉxÉÖÉÉÉ[®]ÉÊİÉ SÉ ÉHÒÉxÉÂ*² The above verses are the true nature of pure love of God. is beyond description. But this does not restrict God from revealing it to those who are qualified. When once you realize God, it is the fulfillment of your existence and being.

Definition of Bhakti

"+xªÉº ÉÉiÉÂ Here Bhakti defines °ÉÉè±É^{Iª}ÉÆ 'ÉHòÉè" The earliest and the best instrument of God Realization is Bhakti. (iÉjÉ ÊuùiÉÒªÉÉvªÉɪÉä {É®ú¦ÉÊHò¨É½þùi Éä- (25) °ĚÉ iÉÖ Eò ÉÇYÉÉxÉ*ÉÉäMÉä *ÉÉä% {*ÉÉÊPÉEòiÉ®úÉ (26) ¡ò±É°ü{ÉiÉÉÉ (30)°ÉªÉÆ ;ò±É°ü{ÉiÉäÊiÉ ¥ÉÀEÖò"ÉÉ®ú& (59)°ÉªÉÆ |É"ÉÉhÉÉxiÉ®úºªÉÉxÉ{ÉäIÉi ÉÉiÉÂ lÉ^{..}ÉÉhÉi ÉÉSSÉ ¶ÉÉÎxiɰü{ÉÉiÉÂ (60){É®ú^{..}ÉÉxÉxnù °ü{ÉSSÉ*

In these, Bhakti is superior to μj_1 na (knowledge), yoga (meditation), Karma (rituals) and other spiritual practices. Infact Bhakti is the summation of all such practices. Bhakti is the embodiment of peace and supreme ecstasy. Bhakti is complete in itself. It is not dependent on anyone or anything or anything for nourishment. Bhakti is independent of the paths of knowledge and other modes. Bhakti is its own fruit "°ÉªÉÆ ¡ $\partial \pm$ ɰü{ÉiÉâÊiÉ ¥ÉÀEÖð"ÉÉ®ú". Bhakti is the most precious of all possessions. Once pure love is obtained the person looks only at Lord, hears only about Him, speaks only of Him and thinks only of him.

Classification of Bhakti

Bhakti is classified into {É®úɦÉÊHò and + {É®úÉ ¦ÉÊHò. The+{É®úÉ ¦ÉÊHò is sub-classified as MÉÈèhÉÒ ¦ÉÊHò and ¨ÉÖJªÉÉ ¦ÉÊHò. These are seen as stepping stones to {É®úɦÉÊHò "=kÉ®ú°`ÉÉnÖùkÉ®ú°`ÉÉiÉÂ {ÉÚ ÉÇ{ÉÚ ÉÇ,ÉäªÉɪÉ ¦É ÉÊiÉ ". {É®úɦÉÊHò is the aim while +{É®úÉ ¦ÉÊHò is the means to it.

 $+{$ É®úÉ |ÉÊHò has two stages MÉÉèhÉÒ and "ÉÖJ^aÉÉ^{*}

MÉÉèhÉÒ ¦ÉÊHò -This is also called |Éä⁻É ¦ÉÊHò or BEòÉxiÉ ¦ÉÊHò* This is a step away from {É®úɦÉÊHò* The devotee here is experience joy but unable to express it, like a dump person eating a tasty dish[4]. "ÉÖHòɰÉÉnùxÉ ÉiÉÂ +ÊxÉ ÉÇSÉxÉ񻃮 |Éä⁻ɰɰü{É⁻ÉÂ*"

It finds expression only in advanced practitioners (53) "EEOɶÉiÉä C'ÉÉÊ {É {ÉÉjÉä ". The emotions, thoughts, words and actions of those fortunate people are beyond description in words. His experience is beyond the three Gunas. Devoid of desires love [5]. and attachments. he exudes ((54))EòÉ"ÉxÉÉ®úʽþiÉÆ, MÉÖhÉ®úʽþiÉÆ ÉÊiÉIÉhÉvÉ^{...}ÉÉÇxÉÆ +ÊÉÎSUôzÉÆ °ÉÚI^{..}ÉiÉ®Æú +xÉ֦ɴɰü{ɨÉÂ*(56)MÉÉèhÉÒ ÊjÉvÉÉ, MÉÖhɦÉänùÉiÉ +ÉiÉÉÇÊnù¦ÉänùÉnÂù 'ÉÉ*)

There are Eight various suggestions and hints. Sidhana is an important part of Nirada Bhakti S£tra. It gives various suggestions and hints useful for practice.

 The S£tra suggests that practitioners must pay greater attention to devotional scriptures, study them and reflect on them. One should not needlessly set into argument with others over devotional texts [6].
((76) \!ÉÊHo]\"ÉÉêjÉÉÊhÉ \"ÉxÉxÉOªÉÉÊxÉ iÉnÖùnÂù¤ÉEävÉEòEò"ÉÉÇÊhÉ Eò®úhÉOªÉÉ£xÉ*

- (10) +xªÉÉ,ɪÉÉhÉÉÆ iªÉÉMÉÉä%xÉxªÉiÉÉ
- (11) 񐐄Eò´Éänäù¹ÉÖ

iÉnùxÉÖEÚò±ÉÉSÉ®úhÉÆ

iÉÊuù®úÉäÊvɹÉÚnùɰÉÒxÉiÉÉ*)

Give up activities that come in the way of Sidhana and perform the rest as a service to the Lord[7].
(8) ÊxÉ®úÉävɰiÉÖ ±ÉÉäEò´Éänù^{¬a}ÉÉ

(8) EXEQUEAVE IEO \pm EEaEo Ealiu EE {ÉÉ®úx^aÉùɰÉ&*

(9) iÉΰ ÉzÉxÉxªÉiÉÉ iÉÊuù¶ÉÉäÊvɹÉÚnùɰÉÒxÉiÉÉ SÉ*)

Give up social customs and religious rituals that come in the way of °ÉÉvÉxÉÉ and focus pure on service to God with excursive dedication.⁸

(9) "iÉl° ÉzÉxÉ *ÉiÉÉ iÉÉÊuù®úÉäÊvɹÉÚnùɰÉÒxÉiÉÉ SÉ ") In such renunciation by concentration, there is complete unification and indifference towards everything opposed to it.

4. Body is the instrument of Sidhana, protect it, and take good care of it without undue attachment [9].

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⁽⁷⁴⁾ ÉÉnùÉä xÉÉ É±É^{...}¤ªÉ&*

(14) 񐐄EòÉä%Ê{É iÉÉÉnäùÉ ÉÉäVÉxÉÉÊnù ^aÉÉ{ÉÉ®ú°i ÉɶÉ®úÒ®úvÉÉ®úhÉÉ ÉÊvÉ*

Social customs and practiced also may be followed in like manner to that extent only, but activities, like taking food may be continued to the measure necessary for the preservation of the health of the body until it falls off in its natural course.

5. Cultivate company of good persons; strive only for the association of pure devotees. Be regular in your prayers and remembrance of God [10].

> ((35)iÉiÉÂiÉÖÊ ÉⁱÉ^aÉùi^aÉÉMÉÉiÉÂ[°]ÉRÂó MÉi^aÉÉMÉiÉÂSÉ^{*} (36)+ ^aÉÉ ÉÞkɦÉVÉxÉÉiÉÂ(37)±ÉÉäEäð% Ê{É ¦ÉMÉ ÉnÂùMÉÖhÉ É ÉhÉEdÒiÉÇxÉiÉÂ(38))[°]ÉÖJ^aÉiÉ[°]iÉÖ[°]ɽþiEÞd{É^aÉè É ¦ÉMÉ ÉiEÞd{ÉɱÉä¶ÉÉnÂù ÉÉ(39)[°]ɽ</sup>þi°É RÂóMɰiÉÖ

NÄOME IEO nÖù±ÉÇIÉÉä%MÉ^{••}aÉÉä%[•]ÉÉävɶSÉ*(40)±É I^aÉiÉä%Ê{É iÉIEÞð{ɪÉèä É (41) iÉÉI^{••}ɰiÉVVÉxÉä ¦ÉänùÉ ¦ÉÉ ÉÉiÉ (42) iÉnäù É °ÉÉv^aÉiÉÉ iÉnäù É °ÉÉv^aÉiÉÉ[•]ÉÂ*)

- 6. Inculates habits of praying in solitude detachment; surrendering the fruits of action to God etc.. [11] ((46) Eò°iÉ®úÊiÉ Eò°iÉ®úÊiÉ "ÉɪÉÉ ÉÂ? ªÉ& ºÉRÂóMÉÆ iªÉVÉÊiÉ, "ɽbÉxÉÖ¦ÉÉ′ÉÆ °Éä ÉiÉä, ªÉÉä ÊxÉ"ÉCiÉÉä ¦É ÉÊiÉ* ªÉÉä (47)ÊÉÊÉHò°lÉÉxÉÆ °Éä´ÉiÉä. ªÉÉä 񐐄Eò¤ÉxvɨÉÖx¨ÉڱɪÉÊiÉ, ªÉÉä ÊxɰjÉèMÉÖhªÉÉä ¦É ÉÊiÉ, *ÉÉä ^aÉÉäMÉIÉä^{..}ÉÆ iªÉVÉÊiÉ* ªÉ& (47)iªÉVÉÊiÉ. Eò ÉÉCÊhÉ Eò"ÉC;ò±ÉÆ °ÉzªÉºªÉÊiÉ, iÉiÉÉä ÊxÉuCùxuùÉä ¦ÉÉÊiÉ* *ÉÉä (49) ′ÉänùÉxÉÊ{É °ÉzªÉ°ªÉÊiÉ. Eäò ɱÉ ÉÊ ÉÎSUôzÉÉxÉÖ®úÉMÉÆ ±É¦ÉiÉä* (50) °É iÉ®úÊiÉ °É iÉ®úÊiÉ, °É 񐐄EòÉÆ°iÉÉ®úªÉÊiÉ*
- 7. Keep away from wickedness and vulgar [12]. ((43) nÖù[∞]ÉÆMÉ& °É ÉÇIÉè É i^aÉÉV^aÉ&* (44) EòÉ[¨]ÉGòÉävÉ[¨]ÉÉä¹/2b[°]ÉÞÊiɧÉÆ¶É¤ÉÖÊrùx ÉɶÉEòÉ®úhÉi ÉÉiÉÂ* (45) iÉ®úRÂóMÉÊ^aÉiÉÉ +{ÉÒ[¨]Éä °ÉRÂóMÉÉiÉÂ °É[¨]ÉÖpùÉ^aÉxiÉä* (63) °jÉÒvÉxÉxÉÉÎ[°]iÉEòSÉÊ®úiÉÆ xÉ É´ÉhÉÒ^aÉ[¨]ÉÂ*)

8. Practice truth, non-violence and such other virtues [13].

((77) xÉ ⁰ÉÖJÉnÖù&JÉäSUôɱÉɦÉÉÊnùiªÉHäò EòɱÉä |ÉiÉÒIªÉ"ÉÉhÉä IÉhÉÉvÉÇ"ÉÊ{É [™]ÉIÉÈ xÉ xÉäªÉ"ÉÂ* (79) °É ÉÇnùÉ °É ÉÇ'ÉÉ ÉäxÉ ÊxÉζSÉzÉè& ¦ÉÉMɦÉÉxÉä É ¦ÉVÉxÉÒªÉ&*

Bhakti manifests eleven different forms. Bhakti consists in offering ones every act to God and feeling extreme distress in forgetting him. Cultival attachment in relation to God. (1) Love of the glorification of the Lord's blessed qualities (2) Love of his enchanting beauty (3) Love of worship (4) Love of constant remembrance (5) Love of service (6) Love of him as a friend (7) Love of him as a son (8) Love for him as that of a wife for her husband, (9) Love of selfsurrender to him (10) Love of complete absorption in him (11) Love of the pain of separation from him. Live for him.

{É®úɦÉÊHò*

{É®úɦÉÊHò ignites desire to listen to and praise the Lords name and his glory; to surrender the fruits of all work at the feet of the Lord; to experience a longing to be near him[14]. (16) {ÉÚVÉÉÊnù¹ÉxÉÖ®úÉMÉ <ÊiÉ {ÉÉ®úɶɪÉÇ&*

((19) xÉÉ®únù⁰iÉÖ iÉnùÌ{ÉiÉÉÊJɱÉÉSÉÉ®úiÉÉ iÉÊuù⁰∵É®úhÉä {É®ú∵É ªÉÉEÖò±ÉiÉäÊiÉ SÉ*)

Mercy of great souls or a small drop of the Lord's mercy is important for progressing in this devotion. ((38) "ÉÖJªÉiɰiÉÖ "ɽþiEÞò{ɪÉèÉ ¦ÉMÉ′ÉiÉÂ EÞò{ÉɱÉä¶ÉÉiÉÂ 'ÉÉ*)[15]

In these suggestions we assume that Bhakti is intense love for God, when a devotee gets it he hates move, loves all. It is the manifestation the great bliss and joy that result from God realization. It is full of grace joy and fulfillment. It is the sweetest and the noblest experience. Those who obtain it attain immortality and liberation. It is the end of all desires. It is to be noted here- °ÉÉ i´Éΰ'ÉxÉ {É®ú|Éä"ɰü{ÉÉ +"ÉÞiɰɰü{ÉÉ SÉ*.

He who allows {É®úɦÉÊHò, the liberated person is ever in the presence of God and blissful. He is free from cravings and attachments. He is not affected dualities of loss or gain. He is contact for ever. He is full of love and free from hated.

When he is awake he loves to listens to the words about God, he thinks of god and meets others devoted to God, shedding tears of Joy. (Su 68) When he is engaged in worldly or religion activities to help, guide others, he does it, with detachment as a service to God and is never away from presence of God. He is beyond the pale of the society and its restrictions. He does not differentiate his fellow beings on the basis of caste or wealth or high and low. He sees the presence of God is all beings [16] (72). The place he resides is holy. Gods dance with joy when he is happy [17]. (69-71)

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The last verse (°É <næù xÉÉ®únùlÉÉäHæò ʶÉ ÉÉxÉÖ¶ÉɰÉxÉ É Ê É ÉɰÉÊiÉ ÉrùiÉä, °É 'ÉÊHò ÉxÉ 'É ÉÊiÉ, °É& |Éâ¹]Æõ ±É'ÉiÉä, °É& |Éâ¹ Æö ±É'ÉiÉä* >Äð iÉiÉ °ÉiÉÂ*) of the text gives the message that "Anyone who trusts these instructions spoken by N_irada and is convinced by them will be blessed with devotion and attain the dearest Lord Sure, he will attain the dearest Lord".

So I conclude that the easiest and the best instrument for God Realization is Bhakti. Bhakti is superior to μ jana, yoga, karma and other natural practices. Bhakti is the embodiment of peace and Supreme ecstasy. Spiritual Bhakti is complete it itself.

FOOT NOTES

- 1. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 27.
- 2. Njradabhaktisutra- Sutra 37, 38, 40,80.
- N¡radabhaktisutra- <nÆù ÊuùiÉÒªÉÉvªÉɪÉä {É®ú!ÉÊHò É!⁄2þi Éä- Sutra 25,26,30,59, 60.
- 4. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 51, 52.

- 5. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 54, 56.
- 6. Njradabhaktisutra- Sutra 74, 76, 10, 11.
- 7. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 8, 9.
- 8. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 9.
- 9. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 14.
- 10. N_iradabhaktisutra- Sutra 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41,42.
- 11. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 46, 47, 48.
- 12. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 43, 44, 45, 63.
- 13. Niradabhaktisutra- Sutra 77, 79.
- 14. N¡radabhaktisutra- Sutra 16, 19.
- 15. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 38.
- 16. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 72.
- 17. N;radabhaktisutra- Sutra 69, 70, 71.

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