CHAPTER-V

The concept of Bhakti

The Bhakti or the path of devotion, the only and the easiest way to salvation, is as ancient as the scriptural literature. The Vedic literature delineated the theories of the cardinal elements of Bhakti in its textual passages. The hymn from Yajurveda, य आलोच्या बलदा यस्य विश्व उपासते प्रशिष्यं यस्य देवाः (25,13) Whom all people worship.' The word Upāsanā, which literally means ‘sitting near’ might have been primarily used to signify 'sitting down for worship. But it came later to mean worship in general. This Bhakti and Upāsanā are synonymous.

Bhakti denotes the positive aspect, an active longing, a state of love, an outpouring of devotion and admiration, a surrender of soul in melting tenderness.

The basic idea of ultimate Bhakti is consciousness or realisation of devotees' dependence on God. If man be independent in any sense no Bhakti is possible. Bhakti is germinated only if man experiences inferiority and if he comes to know that the only supreme God is superior and Independent, and all of us are His subordinates.

Besides, the Patīcarātrāgama, Ahirbudhṇyasaṁhitā and Purāṇas explain the concept of Bhakti at large. Even Pāṇini, grammarian the author of aphorisms has defined Bhakti in his Asādhyāyi. In the two great epics of India, namely, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, there are a number of references to Bhakti as a means for attainment of supreme God.

As stated in Bhāgavata purāṇa, there are three yogas in the progressive realisation of Mokṣa.
Among these three paths Bhakti is considered to be superior. Bhakti yoga has its own importance and established it’s pride place in the Bhagavadgita. There are innumerable quotations which declare Bhakti is superior to other two paths without which salvation is impossible.  

Nārada gives the reason that Karma and Jñāna yogas are accessible to such persons who are high born and have undergone various purificatory rites and also received the proper education. But, there is none who has not experienced love towards something at some time. So it is not very difficult to achieve love towards divine God.

There are exclusive references which prove that the devotion does not depend upon the caste, creed or birth, high or low. The real devotee who is even low-born is superior to high-born who is a non-devotee.

\[ (\text{Bṛhadāraṇyaka} 32,39) \]

Ahō bat śvapāśte gṛīyānu vāśāś्च बर्तते नाम तुपम् ।
তেপুস্তপ্তে জুহজুহ সন্তুরায়া ব্রাহ্মণং গৃহন্তি যে তে ।।

\[ (\text{Bṛāgavata purāṇa} III,33,7) \]

and

\[ (IX,30) \]

‘A sinner, howsoever great, if he turns to Me with undivided devotion, must indeed be counted a saint ; for he has a settled resolve’
The foremost among devotees, Prahlāda says “I consider an out-caste who has dedicated his thought, word, deed, wealth, possessions and life to God, to be far superior to a brahmin endowed with the twelve well-known traits, but has not the inclination for the lotus feet of the Lord. Because the former, by his utter self-surrender, elevates and sanctifies the whole family whereas the latter does not even purify himself, what to speak of others."

In the *Mahābhārata* Lord Kṛṣṇa also proclaims devotees of the Lord are not Śūdras. Śūdras are they who have no faith in Lord which ever be their caste. As wise man should not slight even as out-caste if he is devoted to the Lord. He who looks down upon him will fall into hell."8

Hence the path of *Bhakti* does not demand qualifications such as caste, birth, clan, sex, time, place and stage of life. Therefore in the *Bhāgavata* god of death advises people to cultivate *Bhaktiyoga*, which is according to him the *paramadharma*, the highest duty of every human being.9

The *Bhakti yoga* is regarded as the easiest means for every person in the Kaliage, who may have neither the strength and the facilities for the performance of *Karma* nor the brilliant intelligence and endurance for practising *Jñāna yoga*. It is often described that the *Bhakti yoga* is arranged in the middle of the *Bhagavadgītā* (chapter vii to xii) to lay stress upon the fact that *Bhakti* is required as an accessory both for the *Karma* described earlier and for *Jñāna* described later, based upon 'Dehalidīpa Nyāya (a lamp placed on the threshold of a door to illuminate the space on either side of it)

Moreover, the *Bhakti yoga* is more fascinating to the mind as it is enriched by the ways in the sacred literature like the *Gītā*10 and *Bhāgavata*.11 Lord Kṛṣṇa boldly states to Arjuna that 'No, by the study of Vedas nor through regular penance, nor through
generous gifts, nor by sacrifices, can I be seen as you have seen Me, and continues, that ‘God manifests Himself to those who love Him. The key means of which this universal form of the Lord can be unlocked in a loving devotion. The true, sincere devotee will find out, see and realise his God.

\begin{quote}
भक्त्या त्वनन्यःश्रद्धा अहंपूर्वविद्योऽहं ज्ञाते ।

झाृष्ट स्वदेशे च तत्त्वेण प्रवेढं च परत्प ।। (XII,54)
\end{quote}

‘By exclusive devotion to Me alone, O Arjuna can I be truly known, seen and entered into’. Hence Bhakti is the only path for the final bliss, other two Jñāna and Karma are the supporting factors to Bhakti.

The origin of Bhakti: It is here proper to take a note of the Bhāgavata Māhātmya (an extract from Padmapurāṇa) regarding the origin of Bhakti in a dialogue between Nārada and Bhakti. Being asked by Nārada, Bhakti, in living form replies; ‘I was born in the Dravida country and attained maturity in Karnataka. Then I was honoured here and there in Maharashta and Gujarat. But, mutilated by heretics due to the arrival of dreadful Kali, I grew weak and developed sluggishness along with my two sons (Jñāna and vairāgyā). Reaching Vṛndāvana however, I stand refreshed as it were and endowed with extreme comeliness. I have become quite Young acquiring a most lovable exterior.

The Nature of Bhakti: When a man performs physical activities only to please supreme God, and He and He alone is the central focus of all his mental activities, there arises in him a state of Bhakti. Thus Bhakti is nothing but centralization of all our physical and mental functions in God.

The term Bhakti is derived from the root Bhaj meaning 'to serve'. And thus Bhakti means serving the supreme Lord with intense love. The beautiful verse from
Garudapurana brings out etymological meaning of the word Bhakti,

भिजिछेच द्राहुङ्ग सेवयां परिक्रियत।
तस्मातेव बुद्धिः प्रवत्ता भक्तिः साधनपूर्णसि।। (Garudapurana, 231)

The same Bhakti according to Narada-Bhakti-Sutra is indefinable;

अतिर्वचनीयं प्रेमस्वरूपम्। मूकास्वादनम्। प्रकाशते क्रिष्णपि पात्रे। गुणाश्रितं कामाश्रितं
 प्रतिक्षणवर्धनानवविखित्रं गुह्मतरमुलप्रवृत्तम्। लतान्य तदवाकोक्ष्यति तदेव श्रुणोति तदेव
 पाषयति तदेव चिन्तयति।। (51-55)

The intrinsic nature of loving devotion to God is incapable of being described just like the dumb man’s experience of delightful taste. He does enjoy the taste but cannot express it. In the case of Bhakti or devotion or love to God, it cannot be fully explained as it is beyond all words and expressions. But Narada asserts, it does manifest itself in some deserving persons and thereby its nature can be inferred. This Bhakti does not depend upon any material qualities giving rise to temporary love. This temporary love ceases to exist when those qualities are vanished. It is without any desire for any type of fruit besides the love itself. When there arises even the least desire to get something in return, the love becomes defiled by such a desire and many result into disappointment and frustration. The devotee is always dissatisfied with the intensity of love and strives to increase it with all his energy and time. It is subtler than the subtlest and is only experienced in once heart of hearts. The devotee does not see anything but itself, hears nothing except it, speaks only of it and nothing else and thinks of it only, to attain that divine devotion.

Despite this impossibility of defining Bhakti fully there are a number of definitions and these definitions are found to be considered by observing the visible activities of a devotee. We will see such definitions below one by one.
i) According to sage Vyāsa, Bhakti is the attachment to God’s worship and other allied rituals. This idea of Bhakti is supported by Viṣṇurahasya:

श्रीविण्णूर्वमेव दुःखुप्यं न मनस्योऽपि | 
ते यान्ति शास्त्रतं विष्णुरानवं परमपदम् | (p.54)

ii) Kṣaṇḍikā opines that Bhakti consists in the attachment to the narration of and listening to the stories glorifying the Lord. Similar is the opinion contained in a verse of the Bhāgavata purāṇa:

इदं हि पुंसस्तपम् दुःखस्य वा स्विद्वय सुक्तस्य च बुध्दितत्वयोऽ | 
अविद्युतोर्भं कविमित्रिकापिते यदुनामयोक्त्रमावनयनम् | (1.5.22)

iii) Sādhikā has defined Bhakti as deep attachment to God. Prahlāda, devotee of Viṣṇu explains this attachment means ‘It is well known that ordinary beings have intense attachment towards physical pleasures. If the same attachment is directed towards God it is Bhakti.’ In the opinion of Narada:

नारदस्यु तदर्थमेकाचारताहि तदकार्योऽपि स्वम्याकूलतेष्ठ | (Nārada Bhakti Sūtra 19)

Bhakti consists in offering all activities to God and feeling extremely restless and dejected for forgetting the Lord even for the slightest portion of a moment for whatever reason. The best examples who showed intense devotion towards Lord Kṛṣṇa are gopis as quoted by Nārada and Sāṇḍilya.

a) यथा ज्ञातास्तिकानाम् | (Nārada Bhakti Sūtra, 21)

b) अत एव पदभावन वल्लभीनाम् | (Sāṇḍilya Bhakti Sūtra 14)

e) Mahārṣi Patañjali in his yoga sutra, called Bhakti as pranidhāna, and it is one of the five practices necessary at the second stage of spiritual discipline.
v) Vyāsa, the well-known commentator on Yoga-sutra regards pranidhāna as a kind of devotion. While discussing Vyāsa’s ideas Vacaspati Miśra has added that devotion may be either mental or oral or physical. At another place, Vyāsa interprets the term as meaning ‘dedication of all actions to the Great teacher i.e. God’. But further realizing the fact that it is difficult to dedicate all actions to God, therefore Vyāsa suggested an alternative interpretation of the term as ‘dedication of the fruits of actions to God. Which is of course central idea in the view of the teachings of the Bhagavadgītā.

vi) Bādarāyana, names devotion to God sairādhana in the Brahmasūtra. Brahman is usually unmanifest, but it is visible to a devotee or a man in a state of sairādhana.

vii) According to Bhāgavata, Bhakti consists in the uninterrupted presence of the individual mind in God.

The most important aspect of the teachings of the Bhāgavata is the mode of sādhana, it prescribes for attaining perfection. Bhakti, love or devotion, has been given place of pride, though Jñāna, Yoga and Karma too find an important place in its scheme. Bhakti has been advocated as a more natural and hence an easier path to perfection.

Bhakti has two aspects. When undertaken as the preliminary discipline, it is called Sādhana-Bhakti. It is more of the nature of Karma like worship, the divine names of supreme Lord. This ripens into Aikāntiki-Bhakti, wherein love flows unobstructed towards God even as a river flows into the ocean. It is also termed as Nirguṇa-Bhakti one who has attained to this state of intense devotion is called a
Mahābhāgavata. (a great devotee of supreme)

The object of Bhakti may be the personal God or an avatāra, or the whole universe. Of these, Bhakti towards an avatāra is the easiest and sweetest. This Bhakti can take several forms depending upon the relationship that the devotee cultivates towards the deity;

a) Śānta, (peaceful contemplation.)
b) Dāśya, (servitude.)
c) Vāsālya, (parental love.)
d) Sākhyā, (friendship.)
e) Kānta or Mādhurya, (conjugal love.)

Some times, even hatred and fear of God have been included within the orbit of Bhakti by the text, since the intense concentration brought about by them, on God can purify and liberate them, that do so.

viii) The Devī-Bhāgavata says that in devotion mind remains in the deity as steady as the flow of oil.²²

ix) Śankarācārya, the founder of Advaitavedanta, in his famous work namely Vivekacūḍāmani opines Bhakti is the only best means to salvation. According to him, the state of meditation upon Brahman for securing liberation itself is Bhakti.²³ Just as soiled cloth cannot be cleaned well without soap water, so also impure intellect cannot be made pure without Bhakti.²⁴

In clear terms, Śankarācārya defines Bhakti as ‘contemplating on one’s self; The noting point to be taken into consideration that ‘the path of devotion goes well with Saguna Brahmopāsana but not Nirguna Brahmopāsana. Because the concept of Bhakti marks the relation between
devotee and devoted which are quite different entities. This difference between the entities holds good with only *Saguna Brahmapāsana*.

x) According to Bhūskara, 'attachment to Brahman regarded, as one of the essential means to liberation, is defined to be worship, *samārādhana* or devotion. This *Bhakti* is said to be an attendance on the Lord by meditation. Moreover, it is not any feeling or emotion but unstinted affection towards God. Here he has to say, ‘God’s unmanifested form should be meditated upon.’

xi) Rāmānuja defines *Bhakti* as;

> सर्वमाण विषयवात्सर्वायत्न: स्वयमविषयविषयस्य भूतित्वानमेवोपशासनायत्वाच्यमिति हि निःशैयते तदेव सेव-पूर्वनुमायां भक्तिरिलुच्यते।

(Rāmānuja commentary on *Gītā* 7.1)

‘the contemplation of supreme God, accompanied by love. Further Rāmānuja continues *Bhakti* means unbroken and continual thinking of the Lord with great love just like the stream of oil.’ For the sake of acquiring firm devotion to Lord, seeker should obtain true knowledge from the *śāstras* under the guidance of a competent teacher. After acquiring the knowledge, seeker engages himself in self control, penance, purity; refrains from prohibited actions, and afterwards surrenders himself completely to the Lord. After these stages a person comes to have *Bhakti*. Without having such *Bhakti* backed by knowledge and action, by mere knowledge the salvation cannot be attained. The special feature of *Bhakti* is this; As a result of having firm devotion a man loses all interest in every thing else than that which is done for the sake of the dearest.

Rāmānuja refers to deep meditation, a state in which the devotee sees God face to face, as it were, a state closely resembling vision of God in a literal sense. God is infinite bliss par excellence. He being the supreme Lord, the soul devoted to Him feels...
excessive joy in devotional approach to Him. *Bhakti* is thus of the nature of bliss.  

With Rāmānuja, *Bhakti* is not feeling, but a special kind of knowledge, which seeks to ignore everything that is not done for the sake of God, the very dearest to all souls. Rāmānuja in his Śribhāṣya insists upon a seven fold culture of mind and body (sādhanasaptaka); 1) *Viveka* - abseption 2) *Vimoha* - freeness of mind 3) *Abhyāsa* - repetition. 4) *Kriya* - works. 5) *Kalyāṇa* - virtuous conduct and 6) *Anavasāda* - freedom from dejection. 7) *Anuddhāraṇa* - absence of exultation, as a preparatory discipline to *Bhakti*.  

Moreover in Rāmānuja’s system, *prapatti* is the higher state than that of *Bhakti*, as a means to liberation. It is said, when a seeker is in ascending order of progressive stages leading to liberation, knowledge does assume the form of devotion and the fusion of these two finally results in *Kaṅkārya*. The whole process is consummated quickly by the way known as *prapatti* which is the way of absolute, unqualified, self surrender to God. Thus Rāmānuja synthesizes action, knowledge and devotion and their relative value is spiritual endeavour with the help of his concept of meditation which according to him is same as *Bhakti*.  

Thus Rāmānuja’s conception of *Bhakti* is named as *Aiswaryapradhānabhakti*.  

xii) According to Nimbārka a particular type of love is *Bhakti* which grows in the heart of man endowed with qualities such as modesty. Nimbārka school of thought is called *Bhedābheda* because ‘in essence the effect is the cause it self - so far it is identical with the cause yet the effect has its own peculiar form, attributes and functions - so far it is different from the cause’ (Cultural Heritage of India, vol.iii, p 340)  

Nimbārka differs from Rāmānuja when he holds the view that *Upāsana* and *Bhakti* are not one and same. *Upāsana* denotes pure meditation upon God but *Bhakti* implies a
special kind of love for God. The worshipper-worshipped relation is there between individual soul and God. This relationship is characterised by love, devotion and complete self-surrender. Nimbārka finds ‘worshipper - worshipped relation in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’, hence he propounded the cult of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The supreme Deity here is Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādha as well as the Gopis are the individuals striving for salvation.

xiii) Vijñānabhikṣu says Bhakti consists in the whole process of listening to God’s name, describing His virtues, adoration to Him and meditation ultimately leading to true knowledge. These are all to be designated as the service of the God. The process of operations constituting Bhakti are all to be performed with love. He also refers to the Bhāgavata to show that the true Bhakti is associated with emotion which brings tears to the eyes, melts the eyes and raises the hair of the body. Through the emotion of Bhakti one dissolves oneself as it were and merges into Brahman just as the river Ganga into the ocean.

Vijñānabhikṣu no doubt urges the doctrine of Bhakti as a way to the highest realization. At the time of emancipation the individual souls do not have any personal relations with Brahman. The souls are not associated with any content of knowledge. Therefore they are devoid of any consciousness just like unconscious entities like wood or stone. They enter into the all-illuminating highest soul just as the rivers into the ocean.

xiv) Vallabha regards Lord Kṛṣṇa to be the Highest Brahman who can only be attained by Bhakti.

Vallabha’s system is called Śuddhādvaita, that is, since Brahman is never associated with māyā, He is ultimately pure; and as there is Brahman alone not coming in contact with māyā He is Advaita.
Vallabha believed in a two-fold Bhakti; the Maryādābhakti and Puṣṭibhakti. In Maryādābhakti, the devotee loves the Lord in conformity with the scriptural injunctions, whereas in the Puṣṭibhakti devotion is promoted by the grace of God Himself, which leads directly to the salvation. Here, puṣṭi means God’s grace (पुष्टि तदनुग्रहं ...... Bhāgavata II, 10) and it is altogether different from Maryādābhakti. Here, complete self-surrendering and firm love for God are the best means to salvation.

Those who follow the path of Puṣṭibhakti adore God, because they love Him most zealously. Their love is indeed of the same nature, as that which characterised the famous cow-herdesses of Vṛndāvana. Thus the gopi’s are said to be the pioneers in the field of Puṣṭimarga.

xv) Bhakti in Caitanya school is not the concentration of the mind on Absolute Reality, but loving adoration of God. According to him Bhakti is distinguished as Vaidhi and Rāgaguna. Vaidhi type of Bhakti corresponds to the Maryādābhakti of Vallabha. The Sāttvikabhakti as explained in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa is not controlled by any rule and follows natural inclination of the heart. Bhakti possessed by the gopis of Vṛndāvana is Rāgagunabhakti. Čaitanya recognises they are the ideal devotees who surrender completely themselves to Lord Kṛṣṇa and forget themselves in the adoration of Lord Kṛṣṇa through the medium of Saṅkīrtana.

Čaitanya’s mode of Bhakti is based on erotic sentiment. He says, the emotional experience allows to indulge in the inward realisation of the divine sports in all their erotic implications. He foresaw the possibility of immoral association arising from misusing his teachings based on erotic contemplation and warned his followers against the romantic association between the sexes. And he repeats that true love will dawn only when the hearts have risen above sexual cravings. In his only work, named, Siksāstaka,
he emphasizes the repeated utterance the divine name Kṛṣṇa and points to the union with
him through intense devotion.\textsuperscript{34}
xvi) Rupa Gosvāmi of the Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava school has defined Bhakti as intent thought
fixed on Lord Kṛṣṇa, devoid of any mundane desires and unmixed with knowledge,
action etc.\textsuperscript{35}

According to him, devotion has three stages;
1. Sādhana or means
2. Bhāva or sentiment
3. Prema or love

\begin{quote}
या भक्तिः साधनं भावं प्रेमं चति त्रिभोजिता । (Bhaktirasamṛta Sindhu 1,2,1)
\end{quote}

The Sādhana or the expedient reaches the Bhāva and the Bhāva terminates in
love which is supposed to be highest goal of human life. Such devotion also can be
attained through divine grace following above stated stages i.e., Sādhana, Bhāva and
finally love in god.

**BHAKTI IN MADHVA PHILOSOPHY:**

*Bhakti* occupies prominent place in Madhva system of Vedanta. Moreover
Madhva philosophy can be described as *Bhakti siddhānta*, as He is the only
philosopher who deals with the concept of *Bhakti* in *Brahmasutra Bhāṣya*.\textsuperscript{36}

Madhvacārya being both theist and realist has shown that the path of devotion is
the only perfect path to attain salvation through the supreme God’s grace. Madhvacārya
defines Bhakti as;
The firm and intense love to the supreme Lord surpassing all objects of desires, based upon an adequate knowledge and conviction of God’s glory and magnitude is called Bhakti. And the result of this Bhakti is release from this saṁsāra. Thus the supreme love following the wake of previous knowledge and lasting for ever is named as Bhakti.37

From another angle it is certainly necessary to understand whether Bhakti is blindlove or truelove arising on knowing the greatness of the Lord. And so Nārada makes it clear that the gopis should not be construed as mere blind love.38 There are many passages in the Bhāgavata purāṇa which prove that the gopis were aware of the greatness of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself declares this fact.39

The question follows here that how to secure the knowledge of God’s majesty, without which Bhakti is impossible, for this, Upaniṣads declare that there are premier instruments of securing knowledge of Brahman, viz., Śravaṇa, Manana, and Nididhyāsaṇa on supreme Brahman.
Jayatīrtha, commentator par excellence of Madhvācārya elaborates the definition with his memorable wonted lucidity.

‘Devotion to the Lord is that ceaseless flow of love of God, unimpeded by any obstacles, transcending the measure of love and attachment which he cherishes for his self and his belongings, fortified by a deep knowledge and unconquerable conviction that the Lord is the abode of infinite and illimitable auspicious attributes of a spotless nature. Thus Jayatīrtha’s statement makes Madhvācārya’s definition crystal clear that Bhakti cannot be dissociated from knowledge. Knowledge is the constituent of Bhakti.

The beautiful verse from Anuvyākhyaṇa states that Bhakti continues even after securing liberation.

The Bhakti is the basic qualification of the seeker which should continue even after securing salvation. As such, Madhvācārya distinguishes three stages of devotion.

1) Bhakti, Which precedes knowledge of Brahman.
2) Bhakti, Which follows knowledge.
3) Bhakti, that comes after direct realisation.
It is thus impressively described in the above stated verse. The seeker gets the knowledge of Brahman by devotion, the devotion increases by that knowledge and by the increase of devotion he comes to have direct vision of Brahman, by this direct vision of Brahman the devotion intensifies, and by such intensified devotion he attains liberation, and by the still more intensified devotion in the state of liberation, he experiences his absolute bliss.

So one can easily realise that even though Bhakti is easy as it easily brings God's grace and the most hankered after eternal bliss, it is not so easy to cultivate Bhakti path, which means complete surrender to the Lord with utmost love for Him.

**The means of Bhakti** : The primary requirement to have Bhakti and to increase it, is vairāgya which means renouncing all attachments to worldly objects. It is well known fact that mind is the cause of bondage and liberation.

The Bhagavadgītā declares downfall of one who becomes attached to the worldly objects.

The second means of Bhakti is ceaseless worship of the Lord. (Nārada Bhakti Sūtra, 36) This is well said by lord Kṛṣṇa in His Gītā. The third means is repeated practice of hearing and reciting God’s glory even while living in the worldly surroundings; to quote

In the Bhāgavata Lord Kṛṣṇa says;

 plaats

(Nārada Bhakti Sūtra, 37)
He who fixes his mind on Me, and hears, sings and praises the stories of My name, glory and sports develops exclusive devotion to Me; The *Bhāgavata purāṇa* declares that the utterance of the divine names of the Lord destroys the heap of sin and bestows eternal bliss.

The fourth and important means of *Bhakti* is that the grace of noble persons or the grace of the Lord Himself;

\[\text{चक्षुः कुसुमाक्षुरं गंगाद्विलालेश्वरः} \]  \(\text{(Nārada Bhakti Sūtra 38)}\)

Every-man’s nature and destiny is known by the company or the relationship he keeps, and the relationship with the great encourages devotees become great devotees who are loved by the Lord. The happiness acquired by the company of good-men is greater than that in even the heaven.\(^{43}\)

But Nārada cautions that it is not easy to have association with the great. It is quite rare unobtainable and yet it is unfailing in yeilding the desired fruit.\(^{44}\) And if one gets good men’s company it is due to Gods grace only.\(^{45}\)

**Characteristics of Bhakta:** A man who aspires to become *Bhakta* should avoid completely evil company. One must keep oneself away from six internal enemies viz., *Kāma, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada* and *Matsara.*

In *Bhagavadgītā* Kṛṣṇa has described the characteristics of *Bhakta.*

\[\text{अद्वैत सर्वपूर्वानां मैत्रेय करुण एव च} \]
\[\text{निम्नो निरंकारं गमदुःखसुखं शरी} \]
\[\text{समुद्रं सत्तं योगी वातला हंदनिश्चयं} \]
\[\text{मघ्पित्तमनोदि संत कर्म स मे प्रियं} \] \(\text{(XII 13-14)}\)

‘He who beareth no ill-will to any being and is friendly and compassionate, who is free from worldly attachment and egoism, who looks upon pleasure and pain alike and
forgiving. Who is ever content, mentally united to Me has controlled his self and is, fixed in resolve. who has dedicated his mind, and intellect to Me is dear to Me.

These features of a Bhakta will suffice to convince that even though Bhakti is the easiest way, it is difficult to become a Bhakta.

**Importance of Bhakti Yoga**; The *Bhagavadgītā* consisting of eighteen chapters is broadly divided into three sections.

1) The *Karma yoga*.

2) The *Bhakti yoga*.

3) The *Jñāna yoga*.

Among these three yogas, *Bhakti yoga* is regarded as the easiest means for an ordinary person in the present age, who may have neither the strength and the facilities for the performance of *Karma* nor the brilliant intelligence and endurance for practicing *jñāna yoga*. It is often described that the *Bhakti yoga* is arranged in the middle of the *Bhagavadgītā* to lay stress upon the fact that *Bhakti* is required as an accessory both for the *Karma* and for *jñāna*. *Karma* and *jñāna* are the two auxiliaries to devotion. Disinterested action purifies mind and helps the development of devotion. Although both knowledge and devotion are necessary for man’s emancipation, yet the path of devotion is very attractive. The devotees, therefore, resort to this path and regard both action and knowledge as auxiliary to devotion.46

Worship can bear fruit, if it is performed with the knowledge of the nature of the worshipper and the worshipped. That God is the worshipped and the soul the worshipper is a truth which every devotee must know. *Bhāradvaja samhita* teaches, God, the supreme soul, is my master. I am His servant. All that I do is His service, and it is an epitome of all knowledge.47 Similarly a verse from *Brahmatantra* Says;
‘O lord, there is no other means than your self for my welfare, not only in this life but also in lives to come. I have acquired this knowledge and I wish it might not perish in my future births.’

_Bhakti_ has to be connected between _Karma_ on one side and _Jñāna_ on the other side. Madhvācārya does not countenance the philosophy of _Do-Nothingism_ at any stage. _Karma_ purifies and it has to be practised at all stages even by a _Jñāni_. Madhvācārya does not distinguish _Jñāna_ from _Bhakti_. Jayatīrtha explains the point, _jñāna_ is a part of _Bhakti_.

Among the commentators of _Brahmasutras_, Madhva alone deals with _bhakti_ in the entire second pada of the third chapter.

_Madhva bhāṣya:_

Jayatīrtha in his _Tatvaprakāśika_, interalia, states, ‘we cannot expect such _bhakti_ to be produced in the human breast without deep knowledge of the Divine majesty. The Glory of God is brought out here with a view to inducing spiritual love illumined by knowledge of God.

ॐ अनुज्ञुद्वाहणातु न तथात्वं ॐ ॥ (B.S.III, 2-19)

The affinity of the nature of soul with God remains latent until it is grasped with an understanding brimming with love.)

_अनुज्ञुद्वाहणातु ग्रहण-ज्ञान_
_अस्मिनु शास्त्रे यत्र यत्र ज्ञानस्य पोषकाध्यायस्य उच्यते तत्र तत्र ज्ञानगच्छिन्देन भक्तिरीत्यले_
_लक्ष्यते कुचल सम्बंधातु ज्ञानस्य भक्तिभागवतात्, महाभागस्य सेव नियमे हि भक्तिरीति_
_उज्ञातु, ततो ज्ञानम् भक्तेऽभाग एवंकेर्वशे।_
Madhvācārya looks upon Bhakti as the chief instrument which awakens the grace of the Lord, and also an end in itself.

In the Dvaita vedanta, this Bhakti is regarded as consisting of nine types: hearing Lords greatness, eulogizing Him, recollecting, Serving His feet, worshipping, paying homage, attending on, loving, self-Surrendering. For the perusal of Bhakti literature, it can be said that the gopis of Vṛndāvana are the best examples who possessed and cultivated real and pure devotion to the Lord. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself praises them as follows:

\[ \text{विष्णुस्य विनिवधायुष्यविवहं।} \\
\text{यो मामभजतुन दुर्भिगोहिष्ठा बलं।} \\
\text{संस्कृत तद्वष्ट्र प्रतियात ताधुनः।} \ (Bhāgavatapurāṇa X,27,22) \\
\text{‘O gopis, you have shattered the hard fetters of household bonds and surrendered unto Me alone with pure love. This act of yours is altogether blameless. I cannot repay this debt of yours by serving you even for the life time of a celestial being. You will please discharge Me from this liability out of your own generosity.’} \]

God-love can never be obtained through hatred. Love and hate are contradictory qualities. Madhvācārya lays stress on another aspect of devotion i.e Virodha-Bhakti. On the one hand, the wording Virodhabhakti itself is self-contradictory. Because it generally is an admitted fact that any kind of love disagrees with hatred. Madhvācārya does not deny this fact. Yet on the other hand, while speaking of Śiśupāla in his Gitābhāṣya, 

\[ \text{विद्वैश्येष्या युम्भः} \text{ असमसमच्छिर्मर्यां} \text{ निश्चित्राय स्वभवाय वह कवविद्या} \text{ शापवलात्} \text{ क्वलिति प्रभुं भक्तिरंमेव भगवानु वदाति।} \text{ भक्ति एव हि ते पूर्व} \text{ शिशुपालादयः शापवलात्} \text{ क्वलिति।} \ (Gitābhāṣya IX,12) \]
Madhvacārya takes care to point out that Śiśupala was not an ordinary sinner. In Śiśupala's case the hatred was specially chosen because of intense love; hence it is only a form of love. What brought liberation to him was the submerged love, and not the hatred which only helped him in securing the necessary concentration. Such passages should be treated as Arthavāda. But the acceptance of Dveśa-bhakti as a possible means of salvation will be quite inconsistent. Madhvacārya strongly disapproves of Dveṣabhakti.

Bhakti to the supreme Lord is not the same for all. Every individual is to worship the Lord according to his capacities. Ordinary human beings can worship the Lord with four qualities. Jayatīrtha says;

दर्शनं साधनं चानुग्रहं स्वयंग्रह गुणोपेतस्य निर्विभवस्य भगवद्व विश्वविश्वस्य
आदर्शसत्तार्थाया विस्मयार्याय तदुपभवित सहितमे बहुकारोपिकितिनिविध्यासनार्यानालकि
विचित्रितार्थे न लभ्यते

Thus we see that Bhakti is to be practised intensely and steadily according to the capacities of our svarūpa to awaken the grace of the Lord.

It is worthy to note that the theory and practice of Bhakti, as taught by Madhvacārya and his followers, are free from all traces of erotic manifestations, which dominate or at least color the conception of Bhakti in certain forms of North-Indian Vaisnavism, like those of Jayadeva, Čaitanya and Vallabha. But Madhvacārya's conception of Bhakti avoids these emotional excesses and identifications and remains at its exalted intellectual and spiritual level of firm philosophic devotion to the supreme Lord of the universe who is to be worshipped with loving attachment as the Biṣṇura of all Pratibīṣṇu. Hence Madhvacārya has recognised in the clearest terms that Bhakti in essence is an ineffable blending of the emotion and the intellect.
Madhvācārya persistently lays an emphasis on moral conduct in the seeker, which however is quite essential in the cultivation of Bhakti. He makes an assertive statement that the moral purity of the aspirant is a pre-requisite means to acquire the knowledge of Brahman, without which, there cannot arise firm devotion. He specifically mentions requisite aspects of morality, such as; 1) speaking truth 2) worshipping always the elderly ones 3) not disclosing the secret of others 4) being impartial to both friend and an enemy.

He has to cultivate the sense of detachment from the worldly pleasures. He should be contended with what has been given by God. He should keep himself away from evil habits. Thus, he should bring vairāgya in practice; then only such devotion is pure devotion otherwise that devotion would become mere deceit and hypocrisy. Hence it is clear that, in Madhvācārya’s broader sense, a real devotee is an ideal human being fit to be followed by others.

Though the action of a virtuous person appears to be unworthy, it is worthy in its true sense. The criterion of righteous (dharma) and unrighteous (adharmam) depends on the person, performing that particular action. That is, if a person not possessing the qualities of a devotee above said, performs even good actions, his actions become Adharma or harmful, as such fit to be condemned. The society would not regard him to be a virtuous person as he does not basically possess the moral fitness.

Thus Madhvācārya has shown the importance of moral purity which potentializes the knowledge and Bhakti leading to salvation. By and large the concept of Bhakti in the Dvaita system of vedanta embraces all necessary aspects which are beneficial to both the aspirant and to society. Therefore Madhvācārya befits the place of social reformer besides his being a philosopher-saint.
Bhakti, the only pilgrim’s way to God’s feet:

Generally, the three yogas, of Karma, Bhakti and Jñāna are known as pathways to God. One finds their appropriate use in succession, one after another in the journey of the jīva through its cyclic life. Karma, the restless bodily movement of the early years, the young live in action, in play. Then comes Bhakti, restraint and selection of activity and definite direction of it by predominant desire, the middle age live in ambitions, and finally Jñāna, we have decrease of physical movement and increase of thought, the old live in memory.

Everybody in the universe is eagerly waiting for the divine’s grace i.e. mokṣa. Mokṣa is a state of existence where in the soul is free not only from all sorrows but is full of bliss, and there is no return to samsāra, and where all doubts are dispelled and we live in joy with heavenly bodies in the house of the Lord i.e. Vaikunṭha. The attainment of liberation is the aim set before all men in the different schools of vedanta.

The grace of the Lord is instrumental in liberating the soul from the bondage of samsāra. One has to live a life of devotion to obtain His grace. Śādhanā is necessary to achieve it. The foremost śādhanā for obtaining the grace of the Lord is devotion. Devotion plays a pervasive role in the philosophy of Madhvacārya in all the stages. It is necessary to practice Bhakti all along even after Mukti to obtain the increase in the bliss. When Madhvacārya admits that ‘divine grace is the cause of liberation’ he does not exonerate man from his responsibility. He regards that at no stage except in asamprajñatāsamādhi, one can give up, the daily duties enjoined by the scriptures. Thus duty and devotion are the two wings with which man must fly to the feet of the Lord.
One of Madhvācārya’s acts which stands even to this day as a monument of his devotion to the Supreme Being is the installation of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s image in Udupi and construction of a temple for the purpose. Udupi has by this act of Madhvācārya become a famous place of pilgrimage in south India that too for the devotional cult. Stotra and Bhakti are the two elements which are immensely depended on one another. Stotra and Bhakti are the two elements which are immensely depended on one another. Bhakti is quite necessary for every stotram, without which stotra is not fruitful one should utter stotra with deep sincere devotion which is more fruitful.

Madhvācārya, by installation of the image of Lord Kṛṣṇa at Udupi and ordaining eight monks to worship Him clearly signifies Image-worship, Men of devotion who yearned for the holy vision of the adorable deity naturally wanted to keep His memory ever fresh in their minds. Accordingly, they made images or idols of Him.

The importance of idol-worship is usually emphasized from two points of view viz., that the yoga of Patañjali and that of Bhakti. The followers of the eightfold path of yoga require, at the sixth and seventh stages viz., Dharana and Dhyāna, some devices to concentrate their mind and for this purpose idols are very useful. An idol is kept just in front of the eyes and gazed at for some time after which the eyes are closed but the mind goes on visualizing it. In the beginning, the mind is able to have only vague glimpses, but the view becomes clearer and clearer after prolonged practice. The Bhāgavata purāṇa insists on the importance of idols for the concentration of mind.

The devotee invokes God to come down from His supernatural abode and dwell in the image temporarily or permanently, in order that he can offer oblations to Him. The fervent prayer of the devotee is granted by God and He manifests Himself in His celestial form within the image. The idol, therefore, comes to be regarded as holy on account of its being the dwelling place of the deity. Although everything in the world is
God's body, because it is pervaded with and animated by God, yet the idol is treated as His special manifestation and in consequence, comes to be adored.

Reference to reverence for an image presided over by the deity is very old and is to be found in a verse of the *Atharva-veda*. There seems to be hardly any doubt about the fact that image worship was in vogue even in the Vedic period.

In both ancient and modern devotional literature mention is made of the idols smiling or speaking. In any case the devotee believes that such images are material bodies of gods and that he can realise his highest good through their worship. It may be pointed out that image-worship in some form is prevalent all over the world. Hinduism including the Vaisnava cult, which attaches importance to idol-worship in the sense of adoration of the divine spirit dwelling in the idol and not of the idol as such, is, therefore, no exception to the rule.

The basic idea of *Bhakti* is consciousness, realisation of the devotee's inferiority to, and dependence on God. If a man or a devotee and God be identical in any sense no *Bhakti* is possible. A feeling that God is infinitely greater than all other *jivas* that His infinity is unbridgeable, that He is just, merciful and gracious, and that, if He chooses, He will lift up the tiny *jiva* to beatitude is a condition preceding the germination of *Bhakti*.

*Bhakti* cannot be just an emotional, sentimental or blind faith. It has to be ज्ञानाधारानुगुणीतम् and निर्मलाप्रेमनवाहःः(श्रीकारायण) purity of life is an essential step for pure *Bhakti*.

The classification of *Bhakti*: For the spiritual upliftment of human beings the Supreme Lord has narrated about three different ways according to their merits. They are *Karma*, *Jñāna* and *Bhakti*. Among these three methods, *Bhakti* is the highest and the surest way
to realise the supreme Lord.

The people who follow the Karmayoga are destined to travel the fourteen worlds of the Māyika Brahmiśa and after the enjoying of Karmaphala, they have to once again return to the earth. Jhānins are inclined to discard all the material objects of the phenomenal world and they aspire after a position quite contrary to that of this world. Karma is a function of a physical body. Jhāna is a function of the speculative mind whereas Bhakti is the eternal function of the soul, Bhakti is the rope by which a Bhakta ties the supreme Lord in his heart and worships Him.

The Karma and Jhāna are to be practised under the guidance of Bhakti, then only they can be conducive to the spiritual well being of a soul, Karma and Jhāna need not be discarded, but they should be observed in their proper perspective. The division of Bhakti can be made in two ways.

I) a) Alloyed devotion
   b) Unalloyed devotion.
II) a) Sādhyā Bhakti
   b) Sādhana Bhakti.

I) a) Alloyed devotion; Alloyed devotion is Miśra-Bhakti, by which the Divine love cannot be obtained. When Bhakti is alloyed with Karma and Jhāna, and it is called as Karma-miśra-Bhakti, and Jhāna-miśra Bhakti.

b) Unalloyed devotion; The unalloyed devotion or Šuddha Bhakti alone is capable of delivering the highest Divine Love. The Šuddha Bhakti is never dependent on Karma or Jhāna. They may rather prevent its progress. The unalloyed devotion can be had only through grace of an unalloyed devotee. Until the devil of selfish enjoyment and abnegation remain in the heart, the pure Bhakti cannot be understood. The unalloyed
devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa only desires for the loving service and satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. Since the supreme Lord is the very Fountain-head of Absolute Bliss, in serving Him, the devotee will get the positive bliss by His grace.

_Bhāgavata purāṇa_ is the post graduate treatise on unalloyed devotion. An aspirant after Śuddha bhakti should study it in the company and guidance of rasika devotees, who are more advanced in devotional life, than himself.

> सजातीयांशेव लिग्धे साधो संगम खलो वरे 
> श्रीमद्भागवताय नामाभावो रसिके शह ।

(∗Bhaktirasāmṛta Sindhu, Pūrva Vībhāga 2-40∗)

II a) _Sādhyā Bhakti:_ There are nine steps of Bhakti in attaining the final Divine Love. They are Śraddha, Sadhusanga, Bhajankriya, Anarthnīvṛtī, Niṣṭha, Ruci, Āsakti, Bhāva and prema. Upto Bhāva it is called as _Sādhana Bhakti_ and after that it is known as _Sādhyā Bhakti._ The _Sādhyā Bhakti_ is characterised by

1) The very condensation of spiritual Bliss.
2) It attracts the very supreme Lord śri Kṛṣṇa.⁶⁰

_Sādhyā Bhakti_ is an eternally existant principle in the heart of a jīva soul. It cannot be generated by any external means. When the mind is entirely engaged in the transcendental service of the supreme lord, the _Sādhyā Bhakti_ gradually manifests in the heart of that devotee.⁶¹

b) _Sādhana Bhakti:_ The four distinctive features of _Sādhana Bhakti_ are:-

1) Destruction of misery- _avidya,_ tendency to commit sins and sins, and _avidya_ of the seed of limited piety tendency towards piety and piety itself. These sin and piety both are miserable for the eternal well being of a jīva soul. They bind him to the world.
2) It is capable of delivering universal auspiciousness and unalloyed happiness.
3) It makes insignificant the tendency to Mokṣa.

4) It is the rare of the rarest (sudurlabha)., it is not easily acquired by the jivas.

*Sādhana Bhakti* is of two types, viz Vaidhi and Rāgānuga. In the absence of the natural love for Kṛṣṇa, a devotee takes recourse to the injunctions of scriptures for his devotional guidance is called as Vaidhi Bhakti.

To quote *Nārada pañcarātra*:

गुरुप्रथिता शायं वहिनुमित्य य या किष्याः
शैवभक्तिति प्रोक्तता तथा भक्तिः परा भवेत्

'O the divine sage, whatever code of observations prescribed in the scriptures for the service of śri Hari, all those are termed as Sādhana Bhakti or Upāya Bhakti. By the observation of which, one attains Parā Bhakti or Sādhya Bhakti or Upeya Bhakti.

**Consideration of Bhakti as one of the rasa:**

The *guna* theory occupies the place of pride among the schools of Indian poetics. Bharata is said to be the first exponent of this theory in his work *Nātyaśāstra*. The *guna* is the soul of poetry. The poetry without *guna* can not be complete poetry, it lacks something.

Bharata defines *guna* as विभावनानुभवभिविधानिर्मिति सन्धिमिति. (*Nātyaśāstra* VI)

'The *guna* is uplifted by the combination of Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyabhicāri. The word *guna* means ṣānanda. The happiness is always in our heart but it does not come itself, it wants something. The ṣānanda or happiness hidden in the heart is expressed by external things and is called Rasānubhūti.

There are two emotions responsible for *guna*, viz., Sthāyi and Asthāyi. The former one is emotion for long time and later one for short time. The adoption of the *guna* concept as aesthetic element in poetry is first seen in *Dhvanyāloka* of Anandavardhana.
of ninth century A.D. In his work rasa is subordinate to Dhvani theory.

The rasa theory was an attempt to indicate the character of emotional effect in poetry, i.e., the nature of enjoyment experienced by the reader. The nature of rasa is thus the Sthāyibhāva develops into rasa, but in process it undergoes a transformation and takes a totally different form. Rasa is in all instances pleasurable. If rasa were painful no body would be inclined to experience it.

**Number of rasas**: Bharata has recognized only eight rasas linked up with eight sthāyis.

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<tr>
<th>Rasas</th>
<th>Sthāyibhāvas</th>
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<td>Śringāra</td>
<td>Rati</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hāsyā</td>
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<td>Karuṇa</td>
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<td>Raudra</td>
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<td>Vīra</td>
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<td>Bhayānaka</td>
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<td>Bībhatsa</td>
<td>Jugupsa</td>
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<td>Abdhuta</td>
<td>Vismaya.</td>
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Other than the above, Bhakti is also considered as one of the rasas, which is deep love unto Lord Nārāyaṇa, Daṇḍin after Bharata has also accepted eighth rasa. It is Udbhata, who alludes to the ninth rasa called Śānta and has been followed by Abhinavagupta who has cited sama as its sthāyi.
Śama denotes mental tranquillity, born of detachment from mundane pursuits and pleasures. Subsequent theorists have further recognized the twin of rasas called Bhakti and Vālsalya. The sthāyi of the former is Bhagavadrati and Apatyarati for the latter. Regarding this Bhakti rasa Dr, M. V. Krishnarao opines ‘This rasa or passion is the blossoming of the heart in the search for Ultimate Reality. This passion is more intense than earthly or physical passion. This transcends the sensuous love, that forms its immediate fuel and tends to pass over into the spiritual passion of an infinite love. Freedom from the idolatry of its finite object, from the bondage of sensuous conditions, is a difficult process as bondage is not so much due to external circumstances as to the conditions inherent in its very nature. The saints did not fly from passion and accidents of life, which had separated them from God;62

The instance is the manifestation of a king’s devotion to Śiva, uttered in the form of a stotra on seeing Him;

शामानुते देवे राज्यो यदराजस्वर्गः
प्रीतिप्रकाशं तद्भ्रेष्ठ इत्यवगम्यताम् । ॥ (II-279)

It is quite natural that, in our literature Bhakti should have come in as a dominant motif and that scholars should have accepted it has a distinct rasa.

Though Rudrata mentions, only the preyas of sneha, we find Abhinavabharāti saying that other purpose, not only Bhakti but Śraddha, faith also as a new rasa Abhinava, however does not consider them as distinct rasas but includes them in Śānta of which the two are important accessories.

अत एवं ईश्वरप्रणिधानविषये भक्तिहरूंस्मृतिमितिघंसुसाहानुप्रविष्ठे अन्यः श्रध्द (शान्तः)
इति न तथोऽपि प्रयत्नसङ्गो गणनम् । ॥ ॥

63
So by the above discussion, it is natural that, this sentiment of devotion should have been soon accepted as a rasa. But Abhinava and others proposed to bring it under śānta. Śānta is the rasa relating to final puruṣārtha, mokṣa. The three paths Bhakti, Karma and Jñāna are well known. It may be that Bhakti is in some cases an ānga of the śānta developed on lines of Jñāna but the advocates of Bhakti held it to be supreme by itself. They made Jñāna and Karma its aids.

Madhusūdhanasaraswati, Advaitic scholar wrote Bhagavad bhaktirasāyana in which he expounds Bhakti rasa. He tells us that since devotion to God, Bhagavadbhakti, is one of the ways of attaining such unmixed bliss, Bhakti also is a puruṣārtha. He also differentiates Bhakti from śānta rasa. At the outset, Dr. V. Raghavan concludes ‘Bhakti rasa, is the real rasa since here it is that one has the ineffable bliss that is not tainted by even a grain of sorrow. Śṛṅgāra and other rasas can not mean this bliss and are inferior. They are like glow-worms Bhakti is the very Sun.\(^{64}\)

In the very first chapter of the Dvādaśa stotra, praise of Lord Nārāyaṇa’s auspicious and efficacious organs narrates deep devotion. Bhakti rasa is experienced here. In the Bhakti cult chanting the name of the Lord is a form of propitiating Lord. If done at the time of death, the individual soul is graced with liberation.

In the concluding verses of the Dvādaśa stotra from three to twelve chapters Madhvacārya proclaims, to perform stotra with deep devotion.

a. आनन्दलीलासन्न्यासनामपूर्णांक्रियामिच्छनि ।
कृत्ये विभूषणा भक्तया पद्मः प्रेयते हरिः । (D.S. III)

b. इति देववर्षा हरे श्रवणे कृत्यं वन्मनुष्ठितमाध्यं (D.S. IV)
c. आनन्दीधर्मीन्द्रकृतां हरिगीतितिरियं परमादरता।
परलोकविलोकनमूर्धिनिभा हरिमभिक्षिविवर्तनशोणितमा ॥ (D.S.V)
d. भक्त्या पठवित्तमालनि संस्कृत्य यं स्तोत्रस्यतदभिवतियोगिर्भिष्मू ॥ (D.S.VII)

Madhvācārya advises devotees to perform the stotras with deep and sincere devotion. The *stotra* without devotion is lacking something, such *stotra* will be less fruitful. So *stotra* and *Bhakti* are the two faces of the same coin.

Madhvācārya looks upon *Bhakti* as the chief instrument which awakens the grace of the Lord and also an end in itself. It is a light which illumines all along the spiritual path. In the words of Dr. B. N. K. Sharma, ‘A very striking and almost unique feature of Madhva’s philosophy of *Bhakti* is that it is viewed, not as a means to an end, but as an end in itself. The light of *Bhakti* shines brightly not only on this side of release, but on the other side of it as well.65

The importance of *Bhakti* can be rightly understand by the stories of *Bhāgavata purāṇa* which declares, among the three paths, *Bhakti* is fascinating because of its generosity. There are so many instances showing that many ardent devotees have got relieved from worldly entanglements and attained liberation by their deep devotion unto the supreme God. To mention some of them, Dhruva son of the king Uttānapada, attained the foremost position in the form of north-star i.e *Dhrūva-Nakṣatra* by his deep and sincere penance to the Lord Viṣṇu.

Gajendra, the king of elephants and Draupadi, wife of the Pāṇḍavas etc, passed through great ordeals by praying to the Supreme God. It is said that Mayūrabhaṭṭa a famous poet, got his leprosy disease cured by praying the Sun God with hundred verses
which then was entitled as *Suryaśataka*.\(^{66}\)

Such instances show that each and every man can overcome all obstacles and obtain salvation by deep devotion unto supreme, which in fact is a key-element in *stotra*.

The *Bhakti* movement in India is predominant and took many roots by the *Dāsa-sāhitya* which constitutes a rich and spiritual heritage to Madhvas. Right from the beginning Naraharitīrtha, Sripādarāja, Vyāsatīrtha, Purandaradāsa, Kanakadāsa, Vijayadāsa, Gopāladāsa, and Jagannāthadāsa have done yeomen service in invoking *Bhakti* among masses through Kannada songs.

Devotee's love of God leads him to accept joyfully, trials and tribulations; he stands and waits on the side for the Grace of God with hope and joy and is sure of His Grace.

The galaxy of devotees, the gīgāvatas, who bear testimony to attainment of *mokṣa* through *Bhakti* can now be proclaimed as a fitting finale:

\[ \text{Pralhād nārādh pārāśar puṇḍrīk, vyaṣamābhīṣaṇ,} \]
\[ \text{śukrāṇiḥ kṣīṇa dālmaṇau} \]
\[ \text{vishottvaḥ vāsudevaṁ dhyāṇaniṁ phalabhaḥ} \]

\[ \text{śrī rāma} \]
References

1. a. तपस्य तोतरां शूर्यम यथा विद्व अवत्मत गर्भ जनुस विन्ध्य।
   आय जानान्तो नाम विद्व विवक्तन महते विन्यो मुख्यति भजामहे।
   (Rgveda 1-156-3)
   b. देव संस्कार सहह्स्राभ्यैश्च।
   लश यो राश्य तस्य नै श्रेष्ठ तस्य ते भवितार्काय श्याम।
   (Atharvaveda VI-89-3)
   c. नामाला प्रवचनेन तथोऽन मेधया न ज्ञाता ध्रुवन।
   वर्णावलिः वृजुंगुणेत तेन लघुस्वतीय आत्मा विबृजुंगुणेत तु मर्म्यान।
   (Kathopanishad I-2-23)
   d. यो ग्रहान विद्धाण तूर्य यो वै वेदां ध्रुवंति तस्य।
   तन्त्र देवालोकस्वर्गार्वं मुखुस्वर्गमालाम प्रकाशे।
   (Svetāsvatara Upaniṣad VI-21)
   e. यथा देवें परापरास्यग्नि देवे तथा गुरी।
   तस्यते कथितस्तति भविः ग्राहेण्यं भवितानं।
   (Svetāsvatara Upaniṣad VI-23)

2. The Siddhānta Kaumudi S.C. Vasu, IV-3-95, p.1477

3. a. अलो भक्तिरुपमत्त्वा भान्व विन्यानंदनं च। (Arauyā kāya IV-51)
   b. हारस नरा भजियो अस्तितुस्तरां तरस्ति ते। (Ibid., II-36)
   c. भक्तिइ संजातामधृत्यां गत्यवन्धुभवद्वा। (Ibid., X-25).
   d. विहरिण्यं भविः सुविशेषत्वं धिपिस्ति।

4. a. तभवेप चार्म्यप्रियम भक्तयं पुरुषवच्यमु। (Anuśāsanika parva 149-5)
   b. भजियो अस्तित्वां न ते यथाण्डि पारमवन। (Ibid., 149-142).

5. a. सा सु कर्माहिन्योभिप्रियम विद्वेक्ता। (Nārada Bhakti Sūtra, 25)
   b. भक्तिरहस्याध्यायं भक्तिरेव गविः। (Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, 15)
   c. मृक्तश्च विषुप्रसंबै विना न लम्बते। (Viśuṭtatvavāniṇgha p.25)

6. अन्यस्मातं सीलवत्मं भक्तः। (Nārada Bhakti Sūtra, 58)
7. विप्रादेह द्वियुष्पुष्यादिविवर्तनामप्पाध्यायानिधिविमुखजात पश्चात वरिष्ठ ।
मन्ये तद्विद्याध्यायानि हितार्थप्राण्य पुनात्ति मुक्तं न तु मूर्छिमान ॥

(Bhāgavatapurāṇa VII-9-10; III-33-6-7; XI-14-21)

8. न शूरा भागवतेऽकाः विप्रा भागवतेऽपुत्राः ।
सर्ववर्णं ते शूराः ये भाषक्ता जनार्दने ॥
चाष्टां मय भक्तं वा नायसनेत बुद्धिमान । ॥
योविन्यमनेतु मुद्रला रूरं संक्रमः ब्रह्मेत ॥
(Mahābhārata XIII)

9. एवावनेव लोकेदमिनुः पुण्यं धर्मं परं मृतः ।
भक्तियोगों महावित्त ततानुमुहण्यायामिदं ॥

(Bhāgavatapurāṇa VI 3-22)

10. मनना भव मद्दतो मन्याती मां मयकुक ।
मामेवेष्यमुकुलेष्यामानि भवेणाय ॥

(Bhāgavadgītā XIII, 65)

11. अक्षमः सर्वकामो वा मोहकम उदारधीः ।
तिरिक्ष भक्तियोगो यते पुरुषं परस् ॥

(Bhāgavatapurāṇa II-3-10)


13. उत्तमा प्रविडे याहूं बुद्धि कर्नकें गता ।
क्षिपर्विचित्तिलाहारणे गुणीं जीवनं गता ॥
तत्र धारकनेश्वातु वाणिज्ये खण्डितात्मक ।
दुर्भाषां विचारं यातुं पुरुषां सह मन्ताम ॥
वृद्धायं पुरं प्राय नवविनेद नवसिनी ।
नायां युवती समकाल भ्रक्तव तु सामात्म ॥

(Bhāgavatamahātmyam 1-48,50)

14. पूजादिव्यपुरुषो इत्यात्मारथिः ।

(Nārada Bhakti Sūtra, 16)

15. Nārada Bhakti Sūtra 17.

16. सा पर्यार्हिततिष्ठते ।

(Sāndilya Bhakti sūtra 2)

17. या प्रीतिविवेकानां विषयोपचबनारिः ।

(Vyāsopāraḥ सा ने हृदयंभावपूज ।
(Vyāsopāraḥ 1, 20,20)

18. प्रथितधातु महत्विशेषारथ ।

(योंगपुरुषे व्यासभाष्य 1,29)

19. प्रथिधातु महत्विशेषाम्यायनसहाय चिन्तामित्याविषय ।

(Tippani of Vacaspatimisra on Vāsa commentary)

20. ईवर प्रथिधातु मविक्रियां परम्परावर्षणां ।

(Yogasutra Vāsa Bhāṣya 2,1)

21. a. मथि सर्वां रयां सन्यासाध्यामवेतसा ।

(Bhāgavadgītā III,30)
b. कर्मचेतवाधिकारे गा फलेषु कदाचन । (Ibid., II,47)

22. कल्याण गुणार्तानामकरायो मध्य स्थिरं ।
चेतसो वर्तनं चैव तैलाधारसमं सदा ॥ (VII Skanda Devi Gītā)

23. महते फलाय ब्रह्मसत्तां समि मित्रे । (Brahmasutraśankarabhāṣya 1.1,10)

24. शुचिं द्विनातनाम कृष्णदासभोजनास्तिकमुत्ते ।
वसन्निमित्र श्रीरूपदेवक्मत्र प्रकाशो चेतं ॥ (प्रभोध गुप्तार्क p 28)

25. Brahmasutrabhāṣya III,2,24

26. a. मध्य तैलाधारविवेकन निविद्युनमन भव । (Bhagavadgītā, Rāmānuja's Commentary, IX. 34)

b. cf. देश्युपमचायां भक्तिरसस्य नूत्ते ।

27. The Philosophy of Rāmānuja, Source; Dr.K.D.Bharadwaj.
The cult of Bhakti, Shankaral Charitable trust, Delhi, p.170

28. Vedārtha Sangraha p.17

29. श्रिहास्तपूर्वक शास्त्राध्यायितव्याख्यानपूर्वक स्वकर्मनुग्रहीत
भक्तिनिःशास्त्राध्यायिकातिश्यामचित्रविख्याति विशेषन प्रत्यक्षताप्रानुक्रमानुसरिततः क्षणीयदय इत्युत्कर्ष ।
( Vedārtha Sangraha, p.184)

30. कृष्णाय देश्यदिकार्य प्रजायते
मया महेन्द्रम प्रेमस्य लक्षण ।
भक्तिइन्द्रज्ञायिन्यानन्दन
सा योगिता साधन विकासपर ॥ (शशशलकिर्ति I 29)

31. तस्मात प्रलयोमावति विषयवस्थापणायात नक्षत्रधिवितव गो संतो जीवा 
मध्यविस्माता यदा सत्यविस्थाने परस्पराणि विलैयने समुद्र नदन इव ॥ (विज्ञानमूलभाष्य III,2,24)

32. गयासंवर्धितं शुद्धिमुच्यते बुध्ये ।
कार्यसंवर्धितं हि शुचिः ब्रह्मानात्वमित ॥ (विज्ञानमूलभाष्य III,2,24)

33. पुष्टिमार्गे अंगीकृतत्व जानादिन नागेषु ।
मयाद्यांगारं कुमारस्य तु दत्ताशयति च शूक्तमेव ॥ (Vallabha's Aṣṭādhyāya III,3,29)

34. वेदार्थपर्व प्रावृत्तिः भममहादावाविनािविवण ।
श्रेयं कृत्वा विद्वान्विकार्यस्य विश्ववृहः जीवनम् ॥
आन्तरवृन्दविवधे प्रत्यक्षौ वृत्तियामुच्यते ॥
सत्यसत्यं प्रेमविनिर्विवण ॥ (शिक्षांति p.29)
35. अन्यायमिलिता शून्यं ज्ञानकर्मर्थमान्यते ॥
आतुर्कृत्यां कृष्णानुशासिनं् महिषत्रुतं ॥
(भक्तिसङ्गारं मिठुः 1,1,11)
36. पवित्रमिनु पाद उच्यते भक्त्यतं भगवन्तु मन्ये किरिषतः ॥
३५ पंबंदुपदः ग्रहणाय न तात्त्वम् ओ ॥ (B.S., III,2,19)
37. तेषां ज्ञानि नित्ययुक्तं एकभक्तितिविशिष्यते ॥
प्रयो हि ज्ञानिनीतियमां स च च म प्रियः ॥ (compare Bhagavadgīṇa, VII-17)
38. a. त्रापि न महात्मानं विश्वस्तत्ववाद ॥ (Nārada Bhakti Sūtra, 22)
b. सर्वेष्वाभेव भक्तनामितः प्रियतमो मम ॥
पोहि ज्ञानम् मां नित्यमार्धत्ति नावत्या ॥ (Kūrma Purāṇa, Uttarārdha, IV,25)
39. मनोहल्यं भत्सपर्यं वन्धुः भवनोर्तमां ॥
ज्ञानिन्थो गोपिकाः पार्थ नाये ज्ञानिन्थते तच्चतः ॥ (Bhagavatapurāṇa, IX, 4)
40. a. तत्र विषयविनियमस्तव्यायाद ॥ (Nārada Bhakti sūtra, 35)
b. तत्त्वविधा मुनयो ज्ञानविरामित्ववतः ॥
पश्चात्तमनि चालान्त भववा श्रुताख्तः ॥ (Bhagavatapurāṇa 1,2,12)
41. व्यायामो विषयविनुष्ठाः .........बुद्धिनाशायपर्याधिनति ॥ (Bhagavadgīṇa II 60-63)
42. a. अन्यन्येताः सततं यो मा सरति नित्ययशः ॥
तत्त्वाः सूक्तको पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्याधिनतः ॥ (Ibid., VIII, 14)
b. अन्यस्यविश्वस्तत्वसि तां ये जनाः पर्ययुक्तसि ॥
तेषां नित्यमार्ध्यात्ताना योगस्नेम सहाय्यहम् ॥ (Ibid., IX, 22)
43. तुल्याम पलोयापि न स्वतः नानापर्याधितः ॥
मनवस्स्थितस्य मर्यादा किरिष्यातिपितः ॥ (Bhagavatapurāṇa 1,18,13)
44. महासमुतं दुर्गमं सर्वं होऽमः ॥ (Nārada Bhakti sūtra, 39)
45. लभ्यते तक्ष्यप्यतें ॥ (Ibid., 40)
46. In the words of Bhagavan Das ‘So Bhakti yoga in the narrower sense, begins with the fixing of faith in, and worship, in the hope of some reward, of all sorts of natural and artificial objects, ranging from the pettiest stocks, stones, idols, amulets, and fetishes to the grandest Suns, and Stars. The faith of the worshipper, which is a form of the will force of the great self present in him also, though he be unconscious of the great fact makes such worship too effective, even in those cases where the object of the worship is not a real living entity, capable of direct response’.

A study in the theory of Avataras Bhagavan Das
Bharatiya Vidyabhavana, Bombay, 1962, pp.148-149
47. ध्वनि त्वसंख्योऽवस्थे पर्यस्य तत् किंकरः ।
कैंकर्यभिचित्रितिरिव ज्ञान संग्रहः । (Bhūradwaja Saṃhita p.122)

48. द्रष्टान्तोऽविविधोऽसर्वसंबंधः प्राधेषवनम् ।
ार्थनं बंदं दास्य सुखामालनिवेदनम् । (Bhāgavatapurāṇa VII,5,23)

49. Philosophy of Madhvacārya
Dr.B.N.K.Sharma
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavana, Bombay,1962, p.290

50. वेदस्य सारं भम लोकानां ततो नानातुक्तपूर्वं पूज्यं गूढ्यं सत्तं करोमि परस्य गुरुं न च भिववृवः
गुनानि चावरि यथागमः मे श्रीं च मित्रे च समांसिस्दिन्यं ।।..आचार्यां ज्ञानसाधनलोकतेष्व ज्ञानपावे
सप्तुः भक्त्यापावत् ।। (Gitābhāṣya of Madhvacārya IX,31)

51. न भवस्ये प्रायः तद्यश्च युगुरुचारः ।..............
अतोऽसां कोषिक-स्वर्णं वेदं बाध्यकियोऽति अपृथ्वः ।। (Ibid., IX 30-31)

52. a. धर्मं भवस्यापि क्रृतो भक्तेतवचन् ।
पपियं भवति धर्मापि चो न भक्तैः क्रृतो हरेऽ ।। (Sadācārasmṛti,29)

b. स्वविहितवृत्तं भक्तं महावदराधनमेव परस्य धर्मं
तद्विरूढः साहीपरम् ।। (Gitāśāparyya, Introduction)

53. आत्मातनात्मानि त्रिलोकोऽदर्शकमः
एतत्स्बपि न आचारः श्रीतमस्त्त विद्यांनेत् ।। (Harivarṇa)

54. देशबन्धस्वरूपं धारणम् । (Yogasūtra 3,1)

55. तत्र प्रस्तुतक्तान्तं ध्यानम् । (Ibid., 3,2)

56. प्रस्तुवनामन्नोऽन परमभिवेदेश्चारम् ।
नीलोत्पलद्वय्यं शंकाचाचारदायम् ।।
कृत्यात्यात्यात्यात्यातं पुष्पाशोक विश्वामरं
ध्यात्मर्यं सम्पार्थ यवतःस्वतःवतेतं ।। (Bhāgavatapurāṇa 3,28, 13-18)

57. ऋषीण प्रस्तरोऽसि । नोपदातु देवयात् प्रस्तरय ।। (Atharvaveda 16,2,6)

58. अन्यनिलापिताश्रुं ज्ञासनर्मानान्तुः
अनुश्रव्यं मुक्तं प्राचुर्यं भक्तिविभाषा ।। (Bhakti Rasāmānita Sindhu, Pūrva Vībhāga 1-9)

59. भुक्ति पुक्ति मृहा यात्रि विशार्दो हृदि वस्ते ।
तावद् भक्ति मुख्याय तत्तमयुवयं प्रभवेऽ ।। (Ibid., 2-16)

60. बलेश्वरी शुभदा मोक्ष लघुत्तकृत मुदुविषमा ।
साधनानि विशेषणामा श्रीकृश्याकर्षणि च सा ।। (Ibid., 1-12)
61. कृतिसाध्य भवेत साध्यभाव सा साधनाभिष्टा ।
   नित्य सिद्धभावव्य प्राकृत्य हि साध्यता ।। (Ibid., 2-2)

62. Purandara and the Haridasa Movement
    Dr. M. V. Krishna Rao M.A. D. Litt.,
    Karnataka University, Dharwad, 1966, p. 163.

63. Abhinavabharati Ch. VI p. 340

64. The number of Rasas Dr. V. Raghavan p. 137

65. Madhva's teachings in His own words
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66. मूर्त्मांकनकिं शतस्लोकेन आदित्यं सुप्रचं कुष्टाभु निष्ठोष्यं ।।