



## BHAKTI MOVEMENT



## BHAKTI MOVEMENT

Dr. Benudhar Patra



## MEANING OF BHAKTI

- usually it is accepted that the most characteristic feature of the religious development during the medieval period was the movement which emphasized single-minded intense devotion to God. It was a complete surrender of oneself to God. The movement which emphasized primarily these ideas was the Bhakti movement—devotion to God. Bhakti to God was accepted as salvation

## Bhakti Movement

- “Bhakti” means devotion to God
- Inspired by the Upanishads and the Gita
- Began in South India- 7th Century
- Monotheism, equality and ritual free worship
- Promoted peaceful co-existence

# ORIGINS

- Bhakti Movement was essentially founded in South India and later spread to the North during the late medieval period.
- Clearer expression of Bhakti began to be formed during the so-called Epic Period and the Puranic periods of Hindu history.
- Texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata Purana clearly explore Bhakti Yoga or the Path of Devotion as a means to salvation.
- Bhakti movement in South India was spearheaded by the 63 Nayanars (Shaivite devotees) and the 12 Alvars (Vaishnavaites devotees).

## **Bhakti Movement- Causes of Origin:**

- **Defects in Hinduism**
- **The danger of Islam to Hinduism**
- **Birth of great social reformers**
- **Permanent settlement of Muslims in India**
- **Birth of Sufi Saints**
- **Inter- mingling of Hindus and Muslims**

## MAIN FEATURES OF BHAKTI

- 1. Unity of God or one God though known by different names.
- 2. Bhakti, intense love and devotion, the only way to salvation.
- 3. Repetition of the True Name.
- 4. Self-Surrender
- 5. Condemnation of rituals, ceremonies and blind faith.

- 6. Rejection of idol worship by many saints
- 7. Open-mindedness about deciding religious matters.
- 8. No distinction of different castes, higher or low
- 9. Need of a guru for guidance advocated by some.
- 10. Preaching's through local or regional languages and travelling from place to place for spreading the religious message.

# Principles of bhakti movement

- ✓ God is one
- ✓ Promote brotherhood
- ✓ Follow path of true devotion
- ✓ Emphasis on right actions



## Bhakti Movement



- Devotional form of Hinduism
- Goal = to achieve union with one of the Hindu deities through songs, prayers, dances, poetry, and rituals
- Practitioners = often set aside caste distinctions and disregarded rituals of the Brahmin priests
- Wanted direct contact with the divine
- Had much in common with the mystical Sufi form of Islam



## Teachings of Bhakti Saints

- Monotheism, equal before God
- Reach god through love and devotion
- Lead a pure life

Ramananda, Kabir, Guru nanak, Chaitanya  
Mahaprabhu and Meera Bai.

**RAMANANDA:-**

Opposed caste system

12 close followers-leather  
worker, barber,  
muslim weaver

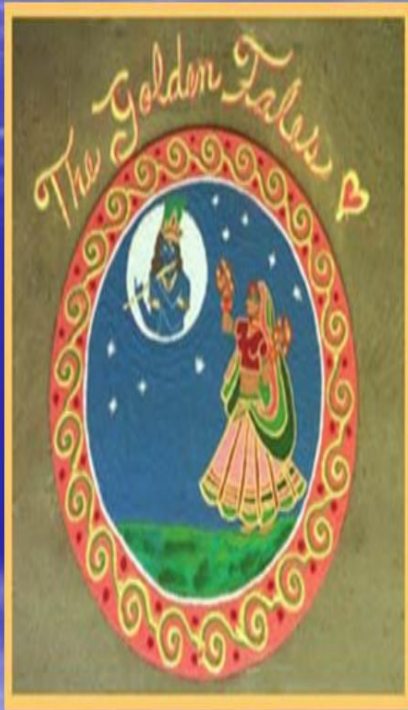




# TWO FORMS

- *SAGUNA BHAKTI* – God with attributes
- *NIRGUNA BHAKTI* – God without attributes

## Saguna Bhakta - MIRABAI



[http://www.syda.org/community/families/tales\\_2000/mirabai/1.html](http://www.syda.org/community/families/tales_2000/mirabai/1.html)

## Caturvedi, no. 27, Mirabai

“Sister, I had a dream that I wed  
the Lord of those who live in need:  
Five hundred sixty thousand people came  
and the Lord of Braj [Krishna] was the groom.  
In dream they set up a wedding arch;  
in dream he grasped my hand;  
in dream he led me around the wedding fire  
and I became unshakably his bride.  
Mira’s been granted her mountain-lifting Lord;  
from living past lives, a prize.”

# *NIRGUNA BHAKTI - KABIR*

“Does Khuda live in the mosque?  
The One who lives everywhere?  
Is Ram in idols and holy ground?  
Have you looked and found him there?  
Hari in the East, Allah in the West –  
So you like to dream.  
Search in the heart, in the heart alone:  
There live Ram and Karim.”

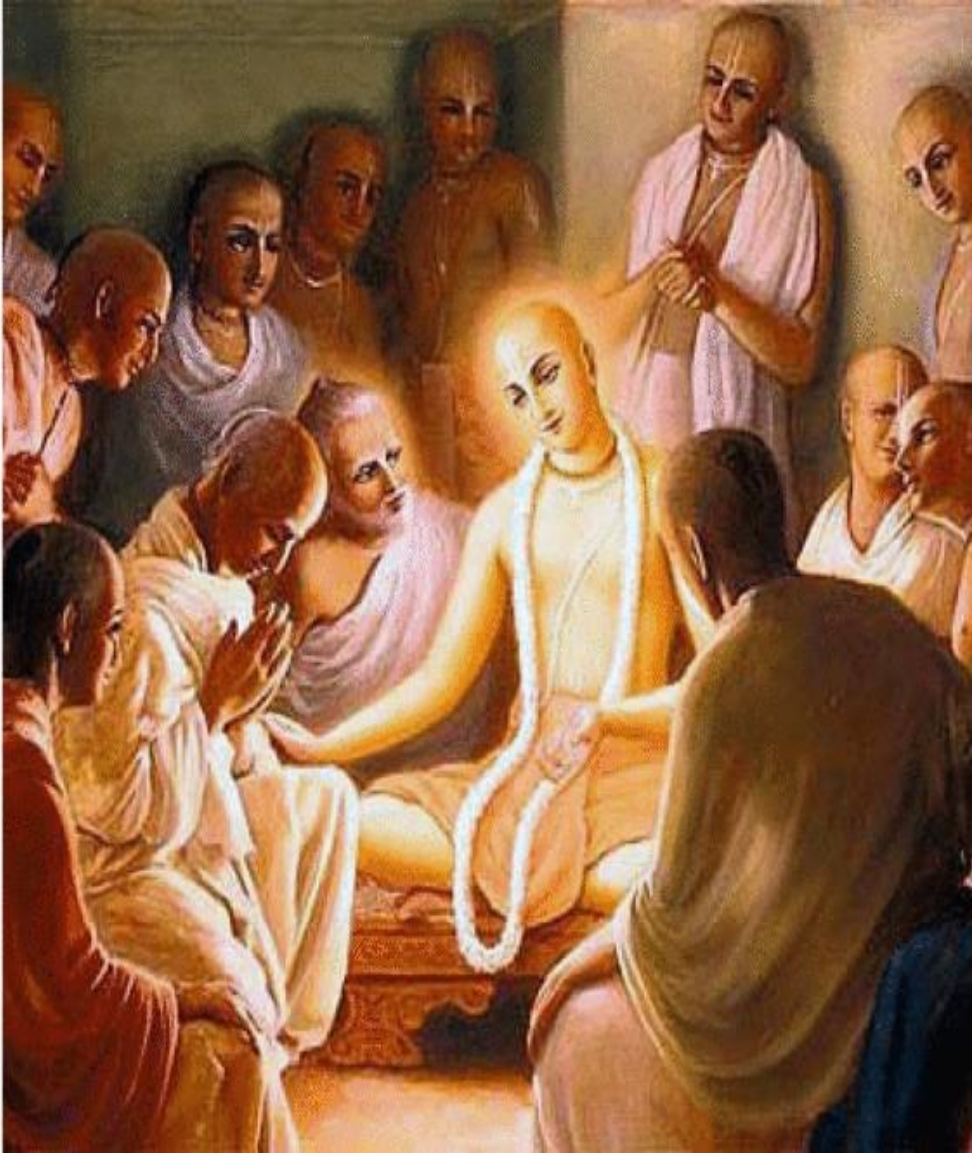
# Nirguna Bhaktas: 'The Path'

- *Satsang* – company of other *bhaktas*
- *Kirtan* – singing hymns of praise
- Rejecting rituals
- Rejecting traditional scripture
- Rejecting 'sacred' language, i.e., Sanskrit – instead focused on the vernaculars
- Rejecting notion of 'duty-bound' yoga (karma yoga)
- The 'Name' of God - repeated

# IMPACT OF BHAKTI



- With a view to understand the impact of the Bhakti movement, we have to consider the background under which the movement gained momentum.
- Under the impact of the Muslim rule, the Hindus had suffered a lot materially, morally and spiritually. The Muslim rulers in general wanted to enforce the Islamic laws on the Hindus.



**Chaitanya's teachings** centred round 'love' – from intense human love to divine love. He opened the doors of divine love to all by chanting and singing the glories of Krishna in the form of Kirtans.

# SAINT KABIR

Kabir also called kabira lived from 1440 to 1518 was a mystic poet and saint of India, whose writings have greatly influenced the bhakti movement. The name Kabir comes from Arabic *al-Kabir* which means "The Great" – the 37<sup>th</sup> name of god in Islam.



VoLTE

LTE



86%



12:10

PM

## Teachings of Kabir:

Kabir spent much of his time in the company of Hindu ascetics, saints and Muslim sufis. So he imbibed the tenets of both the religions and realized the best of both. Allah and Ram were but names of the same God. He was to be found neither in temples nor in mosques, neither in Benares nor in Mecca but only in the heart of a true devotee.

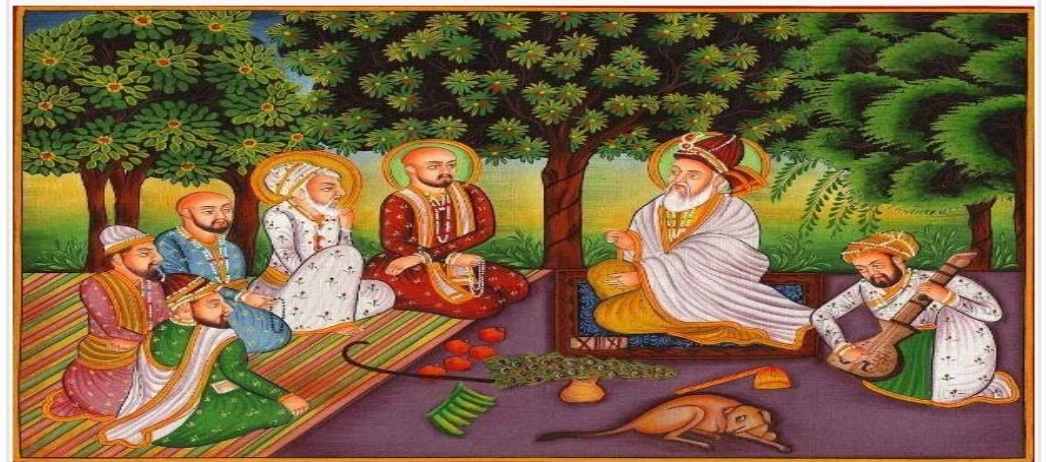


image source: [lh4.googleusercontent.com/-b2q7BdTHKg8/VBScwUNk\\_DI/AAAAAAAAARWE/feDuBFqQaMI/h786-no/KABIR\\_SATSANG.jpg](https://lh4.googleusercontent.com/-b2q7BdTHKg8/VBScwUNk_DI/AAAAAAAAARWE/feDuBFqQaMI/h786-no/KABIR_SATSANG.jpg)

## ADVERTISEMENTS:



The central teachings of Kabir are very simple. (1) He laid stress '**Bhakti**'. (2) He said that through **Bhakti** or devotion one would come nearer to God; one could be released from the cycle of birth and death only by sincere love and devotion to God, which he called **Bhakti**.





The most famous teachings attributed to Guru Nanak are that there is only **one God**, and that all **human beings** can have direct access to **God** with no need of **rituals** or priests. His most radical social teachings denounced the caste system and taught that everyone is equal, regardless of caste or gender