

## Text & Translation of Nārada's Bhakti Sūtra

The following text and translation of Nārada's Bhakti Sūtra is by William K. Mahony and available in his book, *Exquisite Love*.

### Sutra 1

अथातो भक्तिं व्याख्यास्यामः ॥

athāto bhaktim vyākhyāsyāmaḥ

Now, therefore, we will speak of bhakti.

### Sutra 2

सा त्वस्मिन् परमप्रेमरूपा ॥

sā tvasmin paramapremarūpā

It, truly, is of the nature of the highest form of love in this.

### Sutra 3

अमृतस्वरूपा च ॥

amṛtasvarūpā ca

And it is of the nature of ambrosia.

### Sutra 4

यल्लब्ध्वा पुमान् सिद्धो भवत्यमृतो भवति तृप्तो भवति ॥

yal-labhvā pumān siddho bhavatyamṛto bhavati tṛpto bhavati

Attaining it, a person becomes perfected, becomes immortal, becomes content.

### Sutra 5

यत् प्राप्य न किञ्चिद् वाञ्छति न शोचति

न द्वेष्टि न रमते नोत्साही भवति ॥

yat prāpya na kiñcid vāñchati na śocati na dveṣṭi na ramate notsāhī bhavati

Having reached it, a person neither desires anything [else], nor grieves, nor hates, nor enjoys [anything else], nor is active [in pursuit of selfish ends].

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### Sutra 6

यज्ज्ञात्वा मत्तो भवति स्तब्धो भवत्यात्मारामो भवति ॥

yaj-jñātvā matto bhavati stabdho bhavati ātmārāmo bhavati

Having known which, one becomes ecstatic, one becomes stilled, one comes to delight in the Self.

### Sutra 7

सा न कामयमाना निरोधरूपत्वात् ॥

sā na kāmayaṁānā nirodharūpatvāt

It does not arise from desire because it is of the nature of calming control.

### Sutra 8

निरोधस्तु लोकवेदव्यापारन्यासः ॥

nirodhastu lokavedavyāpāranyāsaḥ

This control is the consecration of worldly and sacred activity.

### Sutra 9

तस्मिन्ननन्यता तद्विरोधिषूदासिनता च ॥

tasminnananyatā tadvirodhiṣūdāsinatā ca

And, in this, there is non-otherness and disinterest in that which goes against it.

### Sutra 10

अन्याश्रयाणां त्यागोऽनन्यता ॥

anyāśrayāṇāṁ tyāgo'nanyatā

In this non-otherness there is relinquishment of [all other] refuges.

### Sutra 11

लोकवेदेषु तदनुकूलाचरणं ताद्विरोधिषूदासीनता ॥

lokavedeṣu tadanukūlācaraṇaṁ tadvirodhiṣūdāsīnatā

Disinterest in that which goes against it [refers] to the performance of worldly and sacred activities that are favorable to that [love].

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### Sutra 12

भवतु निश्चयदाढ्यादूर्ध्वं शास्त्ररक्षणम् ॥

bhavatu niścayadārḍhyādūrdhvaṁ śāstrarakṣaṇam

Even after [spiritual love arises in the heart], let there be a firm commitment to heeding the teachings.

### Sutra 13

अन्यथा पातित्यशङ्कया ॥

anyathā pātityaśaṅkayā

Otherwise, there is danger of a fall.

### Sutra 14

लोकोऽपि तावदेव भोजनादिव्यापारस्त्वाशरीरधारणावधि ॥

loko'pi tāvadeva bhojanādivyāpārastvāśarīradhāraṇāvadhi

Certainly, also, let there be the performance of worldly activities such as eating that are essential to supporting the life of the body until its end.

### Sutra 15

तल्लक्षणानि वाच्यन्ते नानामतभेदात् ॥

tal-lakṣaṇāni vācyante nānāmatābhedaṭ

There are different descriptions of the characteristics of that [love] because there are various ways of understanding it.

### Sutra 16

पूजादिष्वनुराग इति पाराशर्यः ॥

pūjādiṣvanurāga iti pārāśaryaḥ

According to the son of Parāśarya (that is to say, according to the sage Vyāsa) [bhakti] is an affectionate feeling in worship and other [practices].

### Sutra 17

कथादिष्विति गर्गः ॥

kathādiṣviti gargaḥ

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According to Garga, [bhakti] is [expressed through the telling of sacred] stories and so forth.

### Sutra 18

आत्मरत्यविरोधेनेति शाण्डिल्यः ॥

ātmaratyavirodheneti śāṇḍilyaḥ

According to Śāṇḍilya, [bhakti] is consonant with delight in the Self.

### Sutra 19

नारदस्तु तदर्पिताखिलाचारता तद्विस्मरणे परमव्याकुलतेति ॥

nārastu tadarpitākṣhilācārātā tadvismaraṇe paramavyākulateti

According to Nārada, however, it is when all of one's manner of action is of a consecrated nature and when there is supreme sense of being lost upon forgetting.

### Sutra 20

अस्त्येवमेवम् ॥

astyevamevam

It is in these various ways [that bhakti is understood].