

## **Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya**

- Adi Shankaracharya was an Indian philosopher who consolidated the doctrine of **Advaita Vedanta**.
- **Birth**: The Sringeri records state that Shankara was born in the 14th year of the reign of Vikramaditya (7<sup>th</sup> Century BC), but it is unclear. Shankara was born in the southern Indian state of Kerala, according to the oldest biographies, in a village named Kaladi.
- In the 8th century, Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya integrated diverse thoughts and practices through his philosophy of Advaita Vedanta. Shankaracharya's works in Sanskrit discuss the unity of the **Ātman and Nirguna Brahman** "brahman without attributes".
- He wrote many commentaries on Brahma Sutras, Principal Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita.
- He toured all the Indian Subcontinent to propagate his philosophy through discourses and debates with other thinkers.
- He established the **importance of monastic life** as sanctioned in the Upanishads and Brahma Sutra, in a time when the Mīmāṃsā school established strict ritualism and ridiculed monasticism.
- He established **four major mathas** in different regions of India - Joshimath, Dwarka, Puri, Sringeri. He established them to propagate the philosophy of advaita vedanta and to promulgate the concept of Sanatana dharma.
- Adi Sankara is believed to have **died aged 32**, at Kedarnath in the northern Indian state of Uttarakhand.

### **His works**

- His works are the foundation of Advaita Vedanta school of Hinduism, and his doctrine. Shankaracharya is most known for his systematic reviews and commentaries (Bhasyas) on ancient Indian texts. His masterpiece of commentary is the Brahma Sutra Bhasya (literally, commentary on Brahma Sutra), a fundamental text of the Vedanta school of Hinduism. His commentaries on ten Mukhya (principal) Upanishads are also considered authentic by scholars. Other authentic works of Shankara include commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita.

### **Concept of Advaita, Non-duality philosophy**

Advaita Vedānta is a school of Hindu philosophy, and is a classic system of spiritual realization in Indian tradition. **The term Advaita refers to the idea that Brahman alone is ultimately real**, the phenomenal transient world is an illusory appearance (maya) of Brahman, and the true self, atman, is not different from Brahman. Originally known as Puruṣavāda and as māyāvāda, the followers of this school are known as Advaita Vedantins.

## **BHAKTI MOVEMENT**

The Bhakti movement was a nationwide mass movement. This movement contributed to reduce the mutual bitterness and struggle of Hindu and Muslim religion. It is said that the rise of Sufism was actually a product of this religious movement of Hindus. The preachers and reformers of this movement aroused consciousness in India and created a new wave of progressive ideas. It gave a direction to Indian culture and society. This movement stirred human sentiments, while strengthening the individualist ideology, in which **direct contact with God through devotion** was considered necessary. Special emphasis was laid on **salvation in devotion** and **renunciation in enjoyment, caste-system and establishment of classless egalitarian society**.

### **Reasons for the Bhakti movement -**

The first major cause of the Bhakti movement was the predominance of bigotry, polytheism and rituals in Hinduism. The second reason for this movement was the coming of the Sufi saints and other Hindu saints and Mahatmas into contact with each other and avoiding the defects of bigotry by them. The third major reason for this movement was to show the straightforward path of devotion in place of **Vedic complex rituals of Hinduism**. The fourth reason was to create a sense of social, religious equality and tolerance in the minds of the people. God and man are one, this was its basic principle.

### **Objectives of Bhakti Movement:**

This movement was born and developed to remove the many flaws hidden under the veil of external pomp, hypocrisy and polytheism prevalent in Hinduism. Similarly, in Hinduism, there were many laws of worship, fasting, rituals in Hinduism, which were difficult. This movement worked to simplify them. Its main objective is to remove the discrimination prevalent in Hinduism, to create a sense of equality, to get rid of worldly bonds for attaining salvation.

### **Head of Devotional Movement:**

Among the leading Saints and reformers of the Bhakti movement were Swami Ramanujacharya, Swami Ramanand, Nibankacharya, Vallabhacharya, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Kabir, Guru Nanakji, Namdev, Meerabai, Raidas, Tulsidas etc.

**Swami Ramanujacharya:** Born in 1016 in the area called Tirukudur in the south, Keshav Bhatt Brahmin's house, Swami Raganujacharya gained knowledge of the Veda-Vedangs by staying with the abbot of Kanchi after his father's death. He rendered the specifics.

Describing the soul and the divine as slightly different, he considered Lord Vishnu as Sarveshwar and Sarvatma, those who are born in human incarnations to have mercy on man. Also stressed the

worship of Lakshmi with Vishnu. Man should only do karma; one should not expect fruit. God and salvation are possible by devotion.

Ramanamnvadya: Swami Ramanand was also born in a Brahmin family in the south. Lord considered Vishnu his favourite. He was a staunch opponent of caste practice. He described devotion as the only means of salvation. Kabir among his major disciples, Raidas, Narhari, Keg, Sukhanand.

Madhavacharya: He had passed through the world since childhood. He was a worshiper of Vishnu. According to his theory, devotion arises only from knowledge. The ultimate goal of man is to "darshan".

Nibankacharya: was born in Nibampur, located in the Bellary district of Madras. He has specialized dualism, coordinating dualism and monotheism adopted the middle path. He considered Krishna to be the incarnation of God. Following the teachings of Srimad Bhagwat and Bhagavad Gita, he considered the attainment of salvation. He made Leela Tattva the major part of the Vaishnava sect

Ballabhacharya: Vallabhacharya Krishna was the nobleman of the Bhakti Branch. He travelled throughout the country and strongly preached his teachings and ideas. He insisted on adopting the path of God-devotion by abandoning the worldly fascination. He adopted the Siddhiramarg's Siddhanta and in Lord Krishna Educated to be isolated

Shaivacharya: Like the lonely sons of Vaishnava devotees, the Nayanar devotees were uninterrupted among the Shaiva devotees. Just like, Lavar. Devotees have considered Lord Vishnu to be omnidirectional, in the same way Nayanar Santhas considered Lord Shiva, in his vision Shiva is prevalent in the whole creation, in consciousness, in the universe, he is the eternal and true form. The Shaivas have told the five processes of creation: 1. Creation of creation, 2. observance of creation, 3. Destruction of creation, 4. Attachment to the creature and, 5. Liberation of Jeeva by Shiva's grace

Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: Born in Bengal, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu took control of physical life by doing grihatyagya at the age of 25. He spent his entire life in Hari-bhakti. Walking in India for 6 years, he preached Krishna devotion. One of his disciples was untouchable. Embracing this untouchable disciple, he said: "Haridas, this body of yours is my own, your body is like a temple with the feeling of love and surrender. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu put more force on purification by opposing external odors and false rituals. He said: "By sacrificing his personal pleasures to every person, your

life, The body and soul should be dedicated to God. Day by night, one should be immersed in the beauty of God. "

Sant Kabir: Kabirdas Nirvadriya was the Gyanamargi Sana and Sas-Reforming poet of Kavidhara. Niru and Neema were Ramanandji, the Guru of the Palit-nurtured Kabirdasji, here in Julhe Dampati. Kabirdasji was illiterate, However, life-darshan and their religion could not be stayed in front of the whole knowledge. Kabirdasji did the religious official rituals prevailing in the then times, strongly opposed the laws of worship

There were also satirists on religious stereotypes prevalent in Muslim religion, keeping fasting and abetting. Kabirdasji fiercely reprimanded the contractors of Hindu and Muslim religion. He told the public the simple path of godly devotion and religion

Kabirdasji called God omnipresent, told the soul and the divine the same. Accepting God as demerit, he also opposed idolatry, garland, pilgrimage and mustache shaving etc

Kabir in his bold and clear voice gave importance to religious co-ordination, indigestion, good faith, purity of conduct, renunciation of Maya-moh, Gura glory, name remembrance, uniformity of soul and divine and non-violence. All his words are stored by his disciples in "Bijak"

Gurunanak Devji: Born in a Khatri family in 1469 in Talwandi village of Lahore, Gurunanak Devji is considered the founder of Six Sampradaya. He was a philanthropist and Dani temperament since childhood. They were absorbed in devotion by renouncing worldly life and false stories. He emphasized Hindu-Muslim unity. The coordinated ideal of Hindu and Six religions is found in the Nanak cult

Like Mahatma Kabir, he emphasized purification by treating everyone as equal. He said: "To remain holy in the midst of the desecration of the world, everyone has the same religion. He preached to the Muslims that: Build a mosque of kindness, Read the prayers of honesty, consider humility as circumcision as a beauty, believe virtue, Only then will you become a true Muslim. "

Namdev: Born in Maharashtra in the 13th century, this saint condemned ethnic discrimination by emphasizing religious unity. Adopting the Nath Panth, the ubiquitous Nirguna emphasized the worship of Brahma.

He also made such an impact of his devotion on Muslims that many Muslims became his disciples. He said that: 'There is neither a temple nor a mosque for devotion.'

Gyanadeva: Born in Panderpur, Maharashtra in the late 13th century, Namdevji was a worshiper of Vishnu. He worshiped Krishna Vittal Swami. He used to be engaged in Sankirtana. He was a monotheist. He wrote Danyaswari in the public language Marathi. Of knowledge devotion While coordinating handsomely, he said that through enlightenment, the true nature of God should be devoutly contemplated and observed. Saguna Bhakti is the only way to attain God

Sant Raidas: Sant Raidas was a disciple of Swami Ramanand. He was a Vaishnava pantheon. Born in the lower total, Sant Raidas suffered a severe insult to caste discrimination and neglect. His homogeneous followers converted into a separate cult. He also purified, Human equality, Emphasized religious ordination

Surdas, Tulsidas v Meerabai: Surdas and Meerabai expressed their exclusive devotion and dedication to Krishna, then Tulsidas expressed his uninteresting attitude towards Rama and delivered his ideal character saga to the public through Ramacharitmanas.

Impact of Bhakti movement:

The Bhakti movement had the most impact in the social sphere, which emphasized the equality of human beings while removing caste discrimination. Formulated Hindu-Muslim unity. Increased respect for lower class.

Wanted to remove social evils. Karmakand spread by Brahmins in the religious sphere, Reduced external believers and beliefs. Enhanced the importance of Guru. Nationality from a political point of view: got strength. Unique coordination and awe-inspired sentiment developed between Hindus and Muslims, Due to which they started being natamastak in each other's worships, religious and social parochialism took away a bit

Epilogue:

In this way, it is clear that the Bhakti movement was the revolutionary movement of the then time. The Santa and Mahatmas of that era gave their religious views, Principles, and sermons not only taught the general public the lesson of social and religious unity, but He also showed the true path of God attainment and religion

From the time to the present day, the ideology and ideal of those saints has demonstrated the path of the people. The true followers of those saints and Mahatmas are still following their path and making their lives meaningful and fulfilling, and human religion are promoting .

## **SUFI MOVEMENT**

Just as the Bhakti-movement started among the Hindus in medieval India, in the same way Sufism emerged on the basis of **love-devotion** among Muslims. There are various opinions among scholars on the subject from where the word Sufi originated. Some scholars think that the word originated from the **word Safa. Safa means sacred**. Among the Muslims, **the saints who lived a life of purity and sacrifice were called Sufis**. There is also an idea that the **word Sufi originated from Sufa, which means wool**. After Muhammad Sahib, saints who used to preach their views by wearing woolen clothes, they were called Sufis. Some scholars believe that the **word Sufi originated from the Greek word Sophia, which means knowledge**.

Sufis are those who are concerned with the simplicity, purity, equality and generosity of Islam. Sufis have two main streams related to Allah and the world.

1. **Vajudia** (non-existent stream) - Those who existed in the Indian context were **more liberal**, had a greater inclination towards mysticism, and kept a distance towards radical Islam, so they did not promote Islam, most of the Sufis of the Sultanate period were of this ideology.
2. **Saudia** - On the contrary, the Saudia stream was much closer to orthodox Islam, in which there was not so much emphasis on mysticism but on the propagation of Islam.

### **Life and principles of Sufi saints-**

The residence of Sufis is called **'Khankah'**. **The spiritual area free from state control is called 'Vilayat' in Sufi terminology**. The successor of a **Sufi saint was called Vali**.

Sufi saints lived a life of simplicity and purity. They voluntarily accepted poverty. They considered personal property as a hindrance to spiritual growth. Their habitats were usually made of mud. Although many of these saints had married, they had not left a life of simplicity. On the sultan's behalf, these saints were proposed to be given both rank and wealth. These Sufies did not accept any title for themselves, nor did they take any stipend. The public voluntarily donated them, they used to live in them. **These saints used to fast for suppression of physical desires**. Their clothes were simple. Generally, they preferred to live in poverty by wearing torn and old clothes. Sufi saints believed in purity of mind. He believed that to achieve liberation (Nizad), the mind of man should be very pure, because God resides in the pure mind. They considered that it is necessary **to eradicate ego** for the attainment of the God because a person living in ego is not worthy of seeing God. The Chishti saints were of liberal views. Many of their customs were similar to those of Hindus. His main principles were love for God and service to man. He believed in the principle of Adaitvaad (monotheism). Due to this many Hindus became his devotees. The simplicity and simple manner of living of these saints influences the Hindus greatly. These saints considered the service of man is higher than all devotion. They considered that ultimate duty of human being is to serve the sad and the poor people. These

saints did not believe in personal property and considered keeping property as a hindrance to the attainment of God.

## **Sufism in India**

The advent of Sufism in India is said to be in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. One of the early Sufis of eminence, who settled in India, was AI-Hujwari who died in 1089, popularly known as Data Ganj Baksh. The Sufis came to India via Afghanistan on their own free will. Their emphasis upon a pure life, devotional love and service to humanity made them popular and earned them a place of honour in Indian society.

## **Different schools of Sufism**

Sufism later got divided into different Silsilahas (sects). There are differences regarding the definite number of these sects. Their number is believed to be up to 175. Abul Fazl mentions 14 silsilahas in Ain. Four major sects in India became more famous. They are Chishti, Suhrawardi, Qadri and Naqshbandi.

## **Main Silsilahas & Introduction**

Sufi is an Arabic language word which means matif (Chatai). Those who worshiped God by sitting in a row on a mat were called Sufi saints. In a broad sense, Sufi was a class of Muslim thinkers who lived a simple life and gave prominence to self-sacrifice, philanthropy and penance.

1. **The Chishti Silsilah** - The Chishti Silsilah was founded in a village called Khawaja Chishti. In India, the Chishti Silsilah was founded by Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti who came to India around 1192. He made Ajmer the main centre for his teaching. He believed that serving mankind was the best form of devotion and therefore he worked amongst the downtrodden. He died in Ajmer in 1236.
2. **The Suhrawardi Silsilah** - This Silsilah was founded by Sheikh Shahabuddin Suhrawardi. It was established in India by Sheikh Bahauddin Zakariya. He set up a leading khanqah in Multan, which was visited by rulers, high government officials and rich merchants. The Suhrawardi Silsilah was firmly established in Punjab and Sind.
3. **Qadiri Silsilah** - The originator of the Qadiri sect was Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (1077–1166 AD) of Baghdad. In India, this community was propagated by Makhdoom Muhammad Jilani and Shah Niamatullah. In 1482 AD, Syed Bandgi Muhammad made Sindh the center of propaganda for this sect. Later, this community spread to Kashmir, Punjab, Bengal and Bihar. The followers of this sect were opposed to music.



4. **Naqshbandi Silsilah** - Khwaja Wahaldin Naqshband of Turkistan was the originator of this sect. This community came to India in the 16th century by Khwaja Muhammad Shaki Gillah Vairang. The saints of this sect opposed the bigotry of Islam. The saints opposed religious fervor and preached to live a simple truthful life.