Chapter – 3
The Significance of Ramananda in the Evolution of Bhakti Movement

Ramananda occupies a pivotal position in the Bhakti Movement of Medieval India. He was a Vaishnava saint. He was mainly instrumental in ushering in the new epoch of Medieval Mysticism. He is considered to be the reviver of Ramanandi sect. The religious reforms were brought back to North India by Ramananda. Tarachand declares that, “he was the bridge between the Bhakti Movement of South and North”.\(^1\) He would also indicate the working of Bhakti ideas in the North. He further lays stress on the concept of equality borrowed from Islam which made Ramananda embrace disciples from all walks of life. He was known for communicating in vernacular Hindi. He accepted his disciples from all castes.

Parents and Early Life

Unfortunately we don’t have any authentic evidence of his birth and death. There is great uncertainty about his life, works and thought due to the lack of authentic source material. Scholars offer different dates about his birth and we can broadly divide them into three categories: (1) First theory is Agastya Sahinta, which gives 1299 A.D., as his date of birth. The famous scholars like Bhandarkar,\(^2\) P.D. Badthwal,\(^3\) and Dr. Rama Kumar Verma\(^4\) agree with him. (2) Second theory argues Ramananda flourished in the end of the 14\(^{th}\) century.\(^5\)

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\(^1\) *Influence of Islam*, p. 143.
\(^2\) Bhandarkar quotes from the *Agastya Sahinta* that he was born in 4400 of the Kali Age equivalent to 1356 of Vikram-Samvat corresponds to 1299 or 1300 A.D., *Vaishnavism Shaivism*, p. 67.
and the first half of the 15th centuries. Farquhar, H.H. Wilson, Macauliffe, and Tarachand agree with this theory. (3) The third theory is put forward by Acharya Rama Chandra Shukla. According to him Ramananda was born in the fourth quarter of 15th and first quarter of the 16th century by his opinion Sikandar Lodi was the contemporary of Ramananda.

About his incarnation in 1400 to 1470 A.D, Farquhar states, “his royal disciple Pipa was born in 1425 A.D., while another disciple, Kabir seems to have lived from 1440 to 1518. It is clear that he was not Ramananda’s latest disciple. Hence we shall not be far wrong if we suppose that he lived approximately from 1400 to 1470 A.D. We may be ten years wrong either way but scarcely not more.”

Farquhar believes that south is the birth place of Ramananda. It seems that his idea is based on famous lines:

भक्ति द्रविड़ उपजी लाए रामानंद।
परगत कियों कबीर ने संस्तीप नवयंगण।

(Bhakti arose first in the Dravin land; Ramananda brought it to the North; and Kabir spread it to the seven continents and nine division of the world.)

But due to lack of relevant source, he was rejected his idea and again said that, “we have already seen that a sect which found release in Ram alone

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6 Wilson, Religions of the Hindus, Vol. 1, New Delhi, 1861, rpt. 1976, p. 47.
7 Macauliffe places his birth in South India at Malikot in Mysore and suppose him to have flourished in the end of 14th and the first half of 15th century., The Sikh Religion, Vol. VI, pp. 100-101.
8 Influence of Islam, p. 143.
9 Shukla, Ramchandra, Hindi Sahityka Itihas, Kamal Prakashan, Delhi, 1997, p. 89.
had been long in existence, and that the literature tends to indicate the South rather than the North as its home. If we suppose that this Ramaite community lived in the Tamil country among the Sri Vaishnavas and that Ramananda probably belonged to it, the puzzle is completely solved. Ramananda would then come to the North with his doctrine of salvation in Ram alone, and with his Ram-mantra.\footnote{Ibid, p. 324.}

*Agastya Sahinta* mentions that he was born at Prayag (Allahabad). He was the son of Kanyakubja Brahmin Punyasadan and his wife Sushila. Scholars like Grierson, Tarachand, and P.D. Badthwal agree with this view. Dr. Bhandarkar says that the actual place in Prayag where Swamiji was born cannot be said and there is no sign of his remembrance except that it is said that in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century, a prominent acharya was born at Prayag from Kanyakubja parents.\footnote{Vaishnavism Saivism, p. 67.} Mecauliffe argues that he was a Gaur Brahmin\footnote{The Sikh Religion, Vol. VI, p. 100.}, and most of the scholars agree with this statement. According to Dr. Grierson, “impossible or marvelous legends may grow up regarding the founder of a sect, but one thing about which we may expect a tradition to be accurate is the name of the Brahmanical sect to which he belonged.”\footnote{Grierson, ‘The Home Of Ramananda’, *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 1920, p. 591.} When it is clear that the Prayag was his native place the statement of Farquhar does not seem to be right that he came from South to propagate Ram Bhakti and related it with Ram Bhakti of South. But it is clear that the term Ram Bhakti was brought by Raghavananda from South to North, but not by Ramananda as Yog Pravah says:
The above couplet makes clear that Raghavananda, the successor of Ramanuja, had travelled from South to North for transmission of *Ram Bhakti*. It is famous about Raghavananda that he gave honour to the *bhakta* by leading the *Bhakti* movement, and after it he permanently settled in Kashi.\(^{17}\)

**Education**

Ramananda got his early education at Prayag. At the age of twelve he was sent to Banaras for philosophical study, where, first of all he attached to “Dvaita” School of Shankara but soon became disciple of the “Qualified Advaita” under the instruction of Raghavananda and he was initiated into the companionship of *Sri Vaishnavas*. *Yoga Pravah* says that Raghavananda, was his teacher:

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\text{श्री अव्यक्त वेष को पारे, राज्यानन्द सोहा।}
\text{तिनके राज्यानन्द जग जाने, कलि कल्यानमई।}\]

\(^{18}\)

The *Yoga Pravah* seems to clarify that Ramananda belonged to the *Vaishnava Sampradayā*. But the scholars of *Ramanandi Sampradayā* had denied it. They say that the *Ramanandi Sampradayā* is an independent and has no link with *Vaishnava Sampradayā*, because they have their own way of worship (*jap* and *mantra*) and symbols on their forehead (*chhapa* and *tilak*).\(^{19}\) And now they

\(^{16}\text{Badhawal, Yoga Pravah, ed. Sampurnanand, Sri Kashi Vidhyapith, 2003, p. 2.}\\
^{18}\text{Badhawal, Yoga Pravah, op. cit., pp. 2-3.}\\
^{19}\text{All Ramanandis are said to place on their foreheads the distinguishing Vishnu-Mark, three upright lines, the centre one red, the other two white.}
have their own scripture after the getting *Anandya Bhashya.* Interestingly enough Farquhar is also doubtful about the relation of *Ramanandi Sampraday* to the *Vishistha-dvaita* System of Ramanuja. He says, "It has been frequently assumed that Ramananda taught the *Vishistha-dvaita* System of Ramanuja. This is one of the points with regard to the leader on which no direct evidence is available. One of the characteristics of the whole movement that springs from him is a constant use of *Advaita* phrases, a clinging to *Advaita* concept, while holding hard by the personality of *Ram.*

**Emergence of Sect**

Ramananda undertook the pilgrimage to the Badrikashrama in Himalayas and other places including Banaras. Here, he is said to have stayed for few years at the *ghat* called *Panch Ganga Ghat.* When he returned to South, at the residence of Raghvananda, he was interrogated by his brethren. He had relaxed the critical culinary rules of Ramanuja, which was the vital observance of Ramanuja Sect. Consequent to this, he was expelled from the sect. His *Guru* authorized him to establish a new Sect of his own which he accordingly did.

He established his sect at Banaras. He found a new school of *Vaishnavism* based on the gospel of love and devotion. He introduced the cult of *Ram* and *Sita* in the place of *Narayana* and *Lakshmi* as the special object of

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22 *The Sikh Religion,* Vol. VI, p. 102.
23 For the detailed history of the doctrinal differences between the system of Ramanuja and Ramananda, see Farquhar, *An outline of the Religious Literature of India,* op. cit, pp. 323-25; *Vaishnavism Saivism,* p. 67; *The Sikh Religion,* Vol. VI, pp. 100-105.
worship that was a concession to regional sentiment. Ram and Sita were far
more familiar to the people of the upper Gangetic valley than Narayana and
Lakshmi who commanded greater emotional allegiance in the South. The
spread of Ram worship received impetus by Ramananda.24

The Vaishnavaite saints and reformers in all parts of India have
enshrined their fervent faith in poetry and song. These poems are full of
experience and emotions. For the consideration of the philosophy of
Ramananda we have to go back to Ramanuja, in Ramanuja sect Narayana is
Supreme Brahman but in Ramanandi Sampraday, Ram is ascribed the place of
Supreme Brahman.25 In the same manner like Sri Sampradaya, Ramananda
Sampradaya and its philosophical thought are called “Vaisithadvaita
Philosophy” difference between both of them is only that one worships
Narayana and Lakshmi and gives emphasis on the orthodoxy of rituals while
other worships Ram and Sita and gave little importance to the rituals.

His Followers

The followers of Ramananda used the term of bairagi.26 They were also
called Avadhuta (‘Emancipated’ i.e. a person who had liberated himself from
old prejudice) because they had shaken off the bounds of narrow-mindedness.

26 It is only to the follower of Ramananda and his contemporaries that the title Bairagi is applied. His
teaching marked a progressive popularization of Hinduism; and in particular the ascetic orders, which
had been previously monopolized by Brahmans and Kshatriyas were now opened to the men of lower
But *Ramanandis* were never restricted like this; his disciples were free from observing any particular rules and regulations.

**Ramananda’s Disciples**

His twelve disciples, belonging to every strata of society, were the founder of different sects. *Acharya* Ramachandra Shukla says that *Bhakta-Mala* of Nabhadas ji gives the list of twelve disciple of Ramananda and recounts some interesting legends about each of them. They are (1) Anantanand, (2) Sukhananda, (3) Sursurananda, (4) Narahariyanand, (5) Bhawanand, (6) Pipa, (7) Kabir, (8) Sain, (9) Dhanna, (10) Raidas, (11) Padamawati and (12) Surasari.

Of these nos.11 and 12 were women. Regarding **Padmawati** nothing is known. Surasari was the wife of Sursurananda.

**Anantanand** was Ramananda’s first disciple. He is most famous as the apostle of Jodhpur country, the king of which he is converted by a miracle at Sambhar.

**Sukhananda** was a poet. His hymns are famous, and have been collected in a volume entitled the *Sukhasagar*.

**Sursurananda**, the husband of Surasri, was famous for his faith. According to legend a wicked Musalaman gave him and his disciples cakes

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27 *R.S.H.S.P.*, p. 94.
28 According to legend, Kabir originally hesitated to ask Ramanand to adopt him as his disciple due to the rigid caste system of the Hindus. Ramananda stayed in his cottage all day and only left it about 3 o’clock in the morning to go down to the Ganga River to have a bath and perform his rites. Kabir had knowledge of Ramananda’s daily habits and so he waited one night for Ramananda by lying on the steps of Panchganga Ghat. When Ramananda accidently stepped on Kabir on his way to bath, he uttered “Utho! Ram ko Ram bolo!” (Rise up! Say Ram to Ram!). This becomes, for Kabir, the sacred mantra. Ramananda later gave him formal *diksha*.
secretly with flesh. He accepted them as food offered in the name of the deity, and they all ate it. Then he told the disciples of the presence of meat in the cakes. They came to their master in alarm at the defilement that they had incurred. But he replied that they had not eaten the food in faith, and bade them vomit. They did so, and meat issued from their mouths. Then he vomited, and showed them that by his faith the impure meat had been transubstantiated into leaves of the holy Tulasi-plant.\(^{30}\)

Nabhadas gives an interesting legend about Narhariyananda in his Bhakta-Mala. One day, due to the heavy rain he has no fuel for food at his house due to which he could not cook food for the holy men. He took an axe, and went to the temple of Devi Durga, to cut down sufficient wood from the temple. Devi promised that if he would desist from spoiling her temple, to give him a daily supply of fuel. Hearing of this his neighbour, decided to follow this example, but as soon as he applied his axe, Devi attacked him. Devi spared him only on condition that for the rest of his life he would supply fuel to Narhariyanda.\(^{31}\)

*Bhakta-Mala* gives no particular anecdote concerning Bhavanand, beyond mentioning his name, nor can the present writer find anything about him elsewhere except an anonymous couplet praising his devotion to Ram and his wisdom.\(^{32}\)

Pipa was king of Gagaruangarh, who possessed every spiritual excellence and became the disciple of Ramananda. It is said that Goddess

\(^{30}\) *R.S.H.S.P.*, p. 173.


Durga (Bhawani), whom he worshiped in every prescribed way. One day the Goddess advised him to go to Banaras and meet Ramananda and consider him as his spiritual guide.\(^{33}\)

Kabir was a Muslim weaver. According to Mohsin Fani, "at the time when he was in search of a spiritual guide he visited the best of the Musalman and Hindus, but did not find what he sought. At last somebody advised him to meet an old man but a bright genius, the Brahmin Ramananda. He lived life of a simple householder and earned livelihood by following his father's profession of weaving. The mission of Kabir was to preach a religion of love which would unite all castes and creeds. He rejected those features of Hinduism and Islam which were against this spirit, and were of no importance for the real spiritual welfare of the individuals.\(^{34}\)

Sena according to Nabhadas, was a barber at the court of the king of Bandhavgarh\(^{35}\) and lived towards the end of the 14\(^{th}\) and the beginning of the 15\(^{th}\) century. He was the great devotee of his time. According to Nabhadas he was the disciple of Ramananda. Parshuram Chaturvedi said that he was the contemporary of Ramananda and the previous part of his life was spent with the Barkari Sampraday of South and when he later came to North he came the close contact of Ramananda.\(^{36}\)

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\(^{33}\)Callewaert, Winand M., *The Hagiographies of Anantadas (The Bhakti Poets of North India)* Curzon, Surrey, 2000, pp. 8-9, (hereafter as *The Hagiographies of Anantadas*).

\(^{34}\) *Influence of Islam*, p. 150.


Dhanna one of the most prominent saints of medieval India was a Jat by birth. Both Nabhadas and Anantdadas accepted that he was the disciple of Ramananda. From his couplet found in A.G it seems that he was highly influenced by the bhakta like Namdev, Kabir, Raidas and Sena.

Raidas belonged to the profession of a cobbler (chamar) of the society. He was a worker in leather, as he himself says, “my caste is low, my action are very low, and even my profession is low, says Ravidas yet the Lord has raised me high.”

Remove Rigidity of Caste system

It is said that he converted many people who unwillingly embraced Islam into their previous religion (Hindu Dharma) by his ‘Ram-Tarak-Mantra.’

According to Bhavishya Purana:

According to Ramanandadigvijaya:

37 Cited from, R.H.R., p. 49.
38 Cited from, Jivan Charit Sahit, Sri Bhagvadacharya Maharaj, Alavar (Rajputana), 1947.
Sri Vaishnavas admitted only Brahmins as teachers and only people of high caste as lay members. But Ramananda never stood for castes. Ramananda says that one who has practiced the doctrine of human equality and brotherhood is admitable to God:

जाति-परित्याग पूर्व नरिहां कोई, हरि को भजेसो हरि का होई।

(Let no one ask a man’s caste or sect, whosoever worships God is God’s own.)

The substance of his teaching is that: (1) perfect Bhakti and pure love is dear to God and (2) all devotees of God are brothers. As he admitted pupils of every caste, it is in fact, asserted in the Bhakt-Mala that the distinction of caste is immaterial. There is no difference between Bhagwan and bhakta. Bhagwan takes incarnation in inferior form such as a Fish (Matsya), a Boar (Varah), a Tortoise (Kachchhap) etc; so therefore the bhakta may be born as a chamar, a chhipi, a koli, or any other low caste. Ramanuja says that eternal joy is reserved only for the three upper class people and did not give the right to the Sudra to study of Vedas which is the important source to gain knowledge. Ramananda on the contrary removed this prohibition and opened the gate of heaven for everyone without any objection of caste, creed and colour. There was hardly pronounced difference between Ramanuja and Ramananda regarding purely theological tents. The other essential difference between both the two is on the question of caste rules. As in the early period the former

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40 For this reason Goswami Tulsi Das also told by Lord Rama:

भगवतान्तरं विश्वनामानजीत।
मोहि प्रत्य तथा कद बम करि॥

(The bhakta, who adore to me either he belong to the lowest strata of society is as dearest to Me as My own life.)


scholar despite his good intention to enlarge the religion as far as possible, followed the caste rules strictly, and as a result they did not give permission to the lower caste people to enter in his circle, but later on, when Ramananda perceived that there is only One God who is the origin of all, all the distinctions of caste and creed vanished for him, and he saw humanity as one large family, and all men as brothers. One man is higher than another, not through birth, but only through his love and sympathy. So he started preaching to all without any reserve, and his fundamental teaching was the gospel of love and devotion.\textsuperscript{43}

Tarachand says that he neglected all the rules of Ramanuja about castes as well as dietary and bathing rules. He admitted in his new sect disciples from all castes, from both sex and even from among the Musalmans.\textsuperscript{44}

In the words of Macauliffe “He laid down a rule that all person of any caste who accepted the tenets and principle of his sect, might eat and drink together irrespective of birth.”\textsuperscript{45}

**Lingua Franca**

Ramananda’s teachings were similar to those of Ramanuja except that the former dropped the interdiction on interacts dining and the strict rule that all teaching and texts used had to be in the Sanskrit Language.\textsuperscript{46} At his centers Ramananda taught in Hindi because Sanskrit was known only to the upper castes. He was the first to employ the vernacular language for propagation of


\textsuperscript{44}Influence of Islam, pp. 144-45.

\textsuperscript{45}The Sikh Religion, Vol.VI, p. 103.

his doctrines. This revolutionized the literature of North Indian people. Before him scholars of Bhakti mostly wrote their preaching in Sanskrit which was the language of Elite and was understood by a few learned men. But the disciples of Ramananda were not learned men, he and his disciples therefore used vernacular language and composed hymns in various dialects of Hindi.

He himself wrote little but his disciples like Kabir and Tulsidas composed hymns in Hindi language. Their work is the masterpiece of the religious poetry and would never be fading. In the words of Dr. Bhandarkar, “the use of Vernaculars for the propagation of the new creed is the important reform of Ramananda.”

Hajari Prasad says, “Ramananda was the great scholar of Sanskrit but he wrote poems in vernaculars, and taught Brahmin to uphold the value of Ram Bhakti in common men’s language. At the time of Ramananda it was very difficult because of such prohibition but by the hard effort of him and his disciples this became possible. He taught everybody and everywhere before him but the Brahmins taught the people of their own caste in their own mutts.

In the word of Dr. Ahmad, “Ramananada was the first Vaishnava saint, who preached his views to the public through the medium of Hindi language.” Natesan gives the great thanks to these saints (Ramananda, Kabir and Tulasi) and says, “The labor of these saints led to the development of vernacular literature. As in Europe, the Bible was made accessible to all by the

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47 Vaishnavism Saivism, p. 66.
48 Diwedi, Hajari Prasad, Hindi Sahitya ki Bhumika, pp. 56-57; also see Prema Shankar, Bhakti Kavya ki Bhumika, Radha Krishan Prakashan, Delhi, 1977, p. 124.
49 Srivastava, M.P. Society and Culture in Medieval India (1206-1707 A.D.), op. cit, p. 44.
reformers, so here by in India. The sacred literature, the knowledge of Vedas which was sole monopoly of the Brahmins now found its expression in the vernacular."

His Works

A large number of works are attributed to him, such as: (1) Shri Vaishnava Mathajya Bhaskar, (2) Shri Ramarchan Paddhiti, (3) Gita Bhashya, (4) Upanishad Bhashya, (5) Anand Bhashya, (6) Siddhanta Patal, (7) RamRaksha-Stotra, (8) Yogchintamani, (9) Sri Guru Ramanand-Kabir ji ka gyan tilak, (10) Ramardhanam (11) Vedant Vichar, (12) Ramanandadesh, (13) Ramamantra Jog Granth, (14) Ramasthak, (15) Gyanlila, (16) Adhyatma Ramayana, and (17) Number of miscellaneous couplets.\(^{51}\)

Ramananda does not seem to have been a distinguished writer. It is unfortunate that we do not possess any collection of Ramananda’s songs. We come across only one song (poem) of Ramananda corporated in the Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs. It is written in Hindi. This single poem is sufficient indication of his philosophy:

\[
\text{कल जाईऐ रे घट लागो रंगू। मेरा चित्तु न चलै मनु भइओ घंगू।}
\text{एक दिवस मन भइ उमंग। चिन्ता घंटन चोअ वडू सुगंग।।}
\text{पूजन चाली भ्रम सांग। सो ब्रह्मु बनाओ गुर मन ही माही।}
\text{जहाजाईऐ तह जल पाण। तू पूरी रहिहै हे राम समान।।}
\text{वेद पुरान सम देखे जोह। जहां तउ जाईऐ जउ ईहो न होहै।}
\text{सपिसिर मैं वरिहरी होरजिनि सकल विकल भम काटे मोर।।}
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\(^{50}\) Natesan, G.A., (publisher), Saints of Northern India: from Ramananda to Ramtirtha, one of the Series of the World Teachers, Madras, 1947, p. 6. (hereafter as Saints of Northern India)

\(^{51}\) R.S.H.S.P. p. 100, The first two published by Pandit Ram Tahaldas and the fifth by Raghuvaradas, Ahmadabad, 1929. Hindi hymns have been edited and published by Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha, 1952.
This poem expresses Ramananda's belief that Ram is a sturdy foundation in whom one should place faith, instead of the caste system. By comparing the "Brahman in the temple" with the Brahman that "dwelt in (his) own heart," Ramananda compares the highest caste to the highest spiritual figure, Lord Ram. In this poem, water is used as a metaphor to describe each human being on earth as a small drop of water within the ocean of Ram.

Like his birth there is great controversy about his death. Agastya Sahinta edited by Ramnarayan Das says that he died in 1410 A.D. Dr. Grierson, P.D. Badthwal are agree with this date, according to given date he live the life of 111 years. James Hastings says, "While we may be fairly certain that Ramananda was born in 1299 A.D., the date of his death is involved in some obscurity. The popular tradition is that he died in V.S.1467 (is equal to 1410 A.D.). This would give him a life of 111 years which is improbable.
Philosophy of Ramananda

Concept of Brahman (Supreme)

Ramananda believed that Ram is the Supreme Brahman; He is omnipresent, preserver of the universe.

He is worshiped by Lord Shiva. Yogis get surrender in His lotus feet and worshiped Him.

Ramananda says that Ram is Almighty, sinless, eternal (Sanatan). Only Sitapati Ram (husband of Sita) is full of attributes and the only savior of the world. Vishnu Himself takes the incarnation of Ram. He is the son of king Dashratha and married with Janki (Sita), He spent 14 years of his life in the forest for the fulfillment the will of his father, where He make His bhakta fearless, Sugriva again made the king of Kishkindha-Mount and he also defeated and kill the Ravana in war and make everyone happy.

55 Jñagurum swami Sri Ramandacharya, Sri Vaishnava-Matabajbhashkar, Sl. 8, Publisher. Mahant Sri Krishna Das, Alvar. (Rajputana) 2nd edition 1945; also see, R.S.H.S.P. p. 24. (hereafter as Sri Vaishnava-Matabajbhashkar)
56 Sri Vaishnava-Matabajbhashkar, Sl. 9; also see, R.S.H.S.P., p. 241.
Ramananda’s *Ram* has extreme beauty His eyes are like the blooming lotus which attracts the *Brahma* and *Shiva* also. *Ram* has supernatural power. He destroys the bow of the *Siva* and defeat Parshuram. Ramananda’s *Ram* is the cause of world (*Sansar*). Yet He is the Lord of the Universe but he is very kind by nature. There is different relation between *Ram* and the world such as father-son, husband-wife, lord-servant, body-soul etc.

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Concept of Jiva (Soul)

Ramananda’s view is similar to that of Ramanuja on the existence of jiva as it is dependent on *Brahman*. He is guided and enlightened by Him. The dependence of jiva is the bliss of Supreme power as reflected in jiva under the virtual shadow of His mastership.

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*Ram* is the only means to achieve salvation. His eternalness and omnipresence help jiva to move forward towards the salvation. It can be attained by the spiritual concentration through the only bliss of *Ram*.

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58 *Sri Vaishnava-Matabajhbasiker. Sl. 14-17.*
So, one should follow the *Prapatti-Marga*. Ramananda divided *jiva* into two categories. One is *baddhaya jiva* (bounded soul) and the other is *mukta jiva* (free soul).

**Concept of Maya (Illusion)**

In *Sankhya* it is believed that *maya* is the cause of *prakarti* (world). *Prakarti* is the combination of three *gunas* i.e. *sat*, *raj* and *tamas*, and by this it creates the world. It is also known as the illusion. But Ramananda never called *prakarti* as Maya. Nevertheless in *Sankhaya Prakarti* and *Purusha* are the two separate entities and are independent from each other, but Ramananda says that they are subject to *Brahman*. In this way he follows the doctrine of Ramanuja.\(^61\)

**Concept of Moksha (Salvation)**

Ramananda says that the abode (*divya-loka*) of Lord *Ram* as known *Saket-dham*, which is descent in this world decorated with lots of jewels. There is a throne from which thousands of sun rays have emerged and Lord *Ram* is seated on that throne.

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\(^{60}\) Ibid, p. 256.

\(^{61}\) *Sri Vaishnava-Matabajbhashkar*, *Sl.* 28.

\(^{62}\) *R.S.H.S.P.*., p. 270.
when a devotee gets this stage he never came back into this world, the cycle of birth and death were removed forever.

In short, Ramananda founded a school which renounced the rigidity of Hindu ritual. Though he was in the favour of devotional knowledge to all but he did not completely neglect the past traditions. Like the other acharyas of South he enjoined strict segregation and perfect privacy in matter of food. His views and concept of Bhakti were the essentially part of the Vaishnava Bhakti. His teachings and disciples created two distinct school of Bhakti among the Hindus i.e. Nirguna Bhakti School (represented by Kabirdas) and Saguna Bhakti School (especially represented by Tulasidas).