PART III
CHAPTER - XV

THE PHILOSOPHY OF KNOWLEDGE; JÑANA-YOGA

I In praise of Wisdom or Knowledge:

"There is nothing on earth comparable in purity to knowledge."¹

According to Jñanesvara knowledge can neither be praised in words nor it can be explained by illustrations. He says,

"Knowledge is the highest thing, for what can equal it? As spirit is one without a second, so also is knowledge. Compared with the sun is there any reflection as brilliant? Could the sky be held in anyone's grasp? If one could find a match for the earth, then might knowledge find its equal

O Son of Pāṇḍu. Therefore from whatever point of view and
however often it is considered, the sacredness of knowledge will be found only in knowledge itself. As the test of nectar can only be described as like nectar, so can knowledge be compared only with itself².

Jñānesvara has emphasised the importance of knowledge while praising the Bhagavadgītā thus,

"So not only will the Gītā, when understood, marvellously remove all delusion, but through Self-Realization, it brings about union with Me. In this Self-Realization, the obligation incurred by (the fruit of ) action is discharged and passes away for ever. O thou, who art the delight of heroes, when what has been lost is found, the path (leading to it) ends; when knowledge is attained it rises to the pinnacle of the temple of action"³.

This passage will clearly throw light on Jñānesvara’s conception regarding the relation between Karma-Yoga and Jñāna-yoga.

Kabīra has defined knowledge thus:—

"Who turns all his outward tendencies inward and thinks, is only wise Jñānī, he is the real preacher and he is the real lover of the Lord. As the fire gets brightened by the touch of wind, in the same way meditation is possible by all only by perseverence and sharp intelligence. The master blessed me with the vision of knowledge (or made me realise the Self).
After realizing Brahman I am now free from the cycle of births and deaths.⁴

In short he who thinks himself and knows himself is Jñānī, according to Kabīra.

Kabīra has described the importance of knowledge at many places. He has pointed out the obstacles like egoism and attachment towards worldly pleasures in the pathaway to Self-Realization. He says,

"I was deprived of the grace of the Lord till I was doped or intoxicated with egoism. God was absent in me, when 'I' was present. But when I searched my heart with the help of the lamp of knowledge it was illuminated with knowledge. All ignorance then disappeared."⁵

Kabīra has painted pen-pictures of men who are feminized or mad after sexual pleasures in his poems known as "Kāmī-Nara-ko-aṅga. He says,

"One who is engrossed in sexual pleasures is like a skin disease i.e. his passions will never be satisfied, knowledge will never blossom there though the Lord himself comes to guide him."⁶

"Jñāna-dīpaka" is a favourite simile of Kabīra. He says, "If one kindles the mind the lamp of knowledge in the temple of one's body by the wick of mind then the whole universe will be under his vision."⁷
Like Jñānesvara, Kabīra has explicit faith in knowledge or purposeful thinking (Viveka) which will lead to Self-Realization. As Jñānesvara has mentioned the importance of knowledge at many places, so did Kabīra. Both of them are deadly against "Blind Faith". According to them Devotion or Action must be done with full concurrence of knowledge.

II The Power of Knowledge

Why knowledge is so highly praised by the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavadgītā and by all the saints also? Jñānesvara gives convincing answer by elucidating the effects of knowledge thus:

"The acquisition of this knowledge dispels ignorance and brings about the union of the Individual-Self with the Supreme-Self. It closes the doors of the sense organs, takes away the power from the outgoing activities and removes the poverty of the mind. When this knowledge is obtained, the famine of duality passes away and the abundant life of non-duality ensues. It leaves no trace of pride, overcomes all illusion, and no place is left for the thought of Self and others. It uproots worldly existence, washes away the mire of thought, and makes it possible to grasp the unattainable goal of the highest knowledge. By its light the eyes of intelligence are opened, and the Soul is able to enjoy the highest bliss. Such is knowledge, the only treasure house of all holiness and through it even the unclean mind is made pure."
From the above passage Jñānesvara's high approbation of knowledge will be seen. It is worth noting that like the Nādiya-Bhakti-Sūtras or the Śāndilya-Bhakti Sūtras—in the praise of Bhakti, Jñānesvara has not degraded knowledge. According to him knowledge and devotion i.e. Jñāna and Bhakti are the two sides of the same coin. One cannot exist without the other.

Kabîra at one place has mentioned knowledge as a storm, to show its sweeping effect.

"On Saints! The whirlwind or storm of knowledge has come. It will wipe out all sorts of illusions—Māyā."^{9}

In one 'Dohā' Kabîra has used the simile of hunting (Śikāra). It is a "Sarvāṅga-Rūpaka" i.e. complete metaphor. He says,

"The Master is a hunter. He has kindled the fire of knowledge in the forest of Māyā—full of sensual attractions—to kill the dear i.e. egoism of the Jīva-bhāva i.e. individuality. It is wonderful to see the fire in the forest, where the Jīvātman wanted to enjoy the worldly pleasures."^{10}

At one place Kabîra says, "The lion of knowledge is destroying the leaves of illusion or ignorance."^{11}

III Salvation through knowledge

Jñānesvara has paid high tributes to knowledge in the beginning of the fifteenth chapter which is the essence of
spiritualism (Adhyātma) in the Gītā. He says, 

"The Lord of liberation has treated this subject at the end of the fourteenth chapter. Only he who has found spiritual knowledge is able to reach liberation, as a man who performs a hundred sacrifices can ascend to heaven. Only the man who throughout a hundred lives performs Brahmanic rites attains to the world of Brahma; none other can achieve this. As it is only a man with sight who can enjoy the light of the sun, so is the sweetness of liberation tasted only through this knowledge."¹²

Jñāñesvara believes that salvation is through knowledge, yet he differs from Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara gives emphasis on 'knowledge' only, while the N.B. Śūtras or the S.B. Śūtras emphasise 'Devotion' only. Vallabha, Nimbārka, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī and others did the same thing. Jñāñesvara believes in 'Samanvaya' i.e. co-ordination between all Yogās or paths to the Self-Realization. This is "Sāmaraṇyayoga" of the Nātha-cult.

Like Jñāñesvara, Kābīra has praised knowledge and condemned the state of ignorance. He says,

"Oh my son! why are you so sleeping in ignorance like this? Why don't you rise up and pray to the Lord with knowledge? You can have this rest at some other time, because one day or the other at last, one has to go in the eternal sleep."¹³
Kabíra has cautioned the ignorant people many times with great compassion and fatherly love to rise up, to leave the vices and to take the path of knowledge for their salvation. He says, "Oh dear! why have you fallen a victim to the state of ignorance? Why don't you try for your salvation? Pray to God-Govinda. Enrich yourself with knowledge and make good use of your precious life. Death is hanging on your head"\textsuperscript{14}.

All "Nirguna\textsuperscript{15}\textsuperscript{i.e.} saints belonging to the Nirguna school have accepted knowledge as the highest pathway\textsuperscript{15} to the salvation. Their pathway to Self-Realization is known as "\textit{Jñanāsrayāśākhā}" because of their emphasis on knowledge. According to the 'Nirguna\textsuperscript{15}\textsuperscript{i.e.} so long as the Individual-Self is engulfed in the darkness of ignorance, it cannot have Self-Realization. In "Gyān-biraha-ko-aṅga"\textsuperscript{15} with apt illustrations of 'Pataṅga' (insect jumping in burning flame) and "Mrīga" (deer in jungle), Kabíra has emphasised the importance of combination of knowledge and 'Viraha' i.e. separation. He says, "In the lamp of Jīvātman with the help of oil of love, the flame of knowledge was kindled. When in the Jīvātman, knowledge and love started burning together all insects of sexual attractions started falling in the flame of knowledge and thus destroying themselves"\textsuperscript{16}.

At one place Kabíra says, "If I do not concentrate or meditate and think about Self-Realization deeply, then I am sure to while away my precious life!"\textsuperscript{17}
It is said, "Ignorance is bliss," Kabīra has described the same in his sarcastic way. He says, "One, who has never tried to achieve knowledge has enjoyed his whole life in happy sleep i.e. enjoyed the worldly pleasures and I, who tried to get rid of ignorance to achieve the Self-Realization, is greeted with separation from the Lord!".

Like Jñānesvara Kabīra has regarded "Jñāni-Bhakta" as real devotee of God, and has called him "Gyān-Bhagat". He says "Gyān-Bhagat" has to face death daily in the form of 'Viraha' (Separation). The ignorant are blessed with happiness, who are not at all concerned with the devotion of Lord. They are satisfied in sexual pleasures only.

Like Jñānesvara, Kabīra has described the fire of knowledge i.e. 'Jñānāgni'. He says, "The ocean of 'Vāsanās' i.e. worldly attractions is now burnt by the fire of knowledge and in new creation the birds of Vairāgya (mental-detachment) Viveka (reasoning), Karuṇā (pity) etc. are singing merily. Now I will not allow these worldly passions to rise again, because my Satguru has kindled fire of knowledge in me".

IV The means of acquiring knowledge;

Commenting on the famous 19th verse of the seventh chapter (bahūnām janmanām ante) Jñānesvara has briefly but finely described all important steps of the ladder of Jñāna-yoga thus:
For he, avoiding the dangers of desire and anger, in the midst of the dense forest of sense-objects, reaches the ascent of desire. Then, O Chief of Warriors, in the company of the righteous, he follows the straight road of right action, avoiding the by-way of unrighteousness. Not making use of the sandals of attachment, he proceeds on his journey through countless births; can he care about the fruit of desire? Thus travelling onwards alone, through the night of union with the body, he sees the end of action and the dawn appears. Then the morning rays of the favour of the guru and the sunshine of knowledge fall on him and the glory of equanimity is revealed to his sight.

Where do these steps of the ladder of knowledge will lead? Jñānesvara points out the destiny.

"Thereupon, wherever he turns his gaze I am there before him; even when he is alone I am present there. In short, there is none but Me everywhere, as a pot immersed in deep water has water both inside and outside."

Kabīra has expressed this conception in the same words:

"A pot is in water and water is in the pot. There is water all around it when the pot breaks, water inside merges in the water outside. The wise have said so.

According to Jñānesvara "Sadvāsanā" i.e. right desires is the first step, which is also very high and difficult to climb. In the Yogavāsiṣṭha they are named as "Subheckhā"
(good wishes). In the Jñānesvarī original words in Marāṭhī are thus "Ālā padī sadvāsanecyā". It shows that the aspirant has climbed the mountain which is surrounded by the thick jungle replete with the cruel animals like Kāma, Krodha, etc.

In short, righteous desires, company of saints, the sincere following of the prescribed duties without any attachment, without expectation of fruits, giving up egoistic tendencies; the unism of actions with equality, the grace of spiritual teacher, the hearing and understanding of 'Maha-vaśkyas' and at last the Self-Realization, are the steps in the Jñāna-mārga.

There are two important categories of the aspirants, one is 'Manda' i.e. slowgoing and the other is 'Tīvra' i.e. highly spirited. Both of them require elementary preparations of mind and body. By the grace of the precious births, the 'Tīvra sādhaka' gets the advantage of 'Pūrva-sāṅkāra' and gets richness in Saṅvaguna, which helps him in this pathway of knowledge. Jñānesvara appreciates his fortune thus,

This realization is reached in time by one who is endowed with good fortune, through the grace of his guru. When the sun rises darkness is lost in the light, when camphor is put into a flame it too is transformed into light; when grains of salt are put into water, they melt immediately and seem to have become water. When a man wakes, his sleep vanishes together with all his dreams and he returns to his conscious self.
Kabira, like Jñānesvara, was very much influenced by the Natha-Sampradāya. In this cult highest tributes are paid to the spiritual master i.e. Sadguru first and God afterwards. They are the firm belief that knowledge can never be acquired without the grace of Sadguru. Like Jñānesvara, Kabira says,

"After meeting the Master, the heart was illuminated with knowledge. Satguru is knowledge himself. One should never leave him. It is the fruit of the grace of the Lord, that I met my Master." 25.

Kabira has likened his Satguru like Jñānesvara to Sun of knowledge i.e. 'Jñāna-Sūrya'. He says,

"When the master awakened the knowledge in me by his blessings, the lotus blossomed in my heart fully, which disillusioned the world attractions. Innumerable flames were illuminated. When I came to this stage of awakening of the spirit-Atman, the Sun of knowledge rose and the dark night of ignorance vanished. In this awakened state I experienced the inexplicable, eternal and unparalleled vision of the Lord. That joy of seeing experiencing knows no bounds. It is simply inexplicable." 26.

But all are not so fortunate like this aspirant, hence Jñānesvara has kindly shown the means of first preparation for the pathway of knowledge.
It might be that (1) he has burnt the Āajas and Tamas (in himself), in the fire in the form of performance of prescribed duties-actions, kindled with the help of fire-wood in the form of fruit-motivated and prohibited actions; or (2) he has kept under complete control, like a servant, his craving for his sons, wealth, as also the attachment for heaven or (3) he has washed clean and pure, in the holy waters of the restraint of organs (Pratyāhāra), the wayward organs defiled by the enjoyment of sense objects; or (4) has secured the firm seat of asceticism, after invigorating spiritual power as a result of dedicating to God Almighty, the fruit of actions forming his duty.

Jñāneśvara concludes this list thus,

"In short, he might have collected all the material necessary for promotion of knowledge at the time of the desired realization of the Self. He might have even met the worthy preceptor at this juncture, and the latter too might have, ungrudgingly and with open mind, preached the advice leading to the Realization of the Self".

Kabīra has described "Sapta-Bhūmikā" i.e. Seven stages of knowledge at different places. They are thus—(1) Subha-Ichhā; Strong desire to acquire knowledge, (2) Śavichāra and Sat-Saṅgati i.e. thought of the Self and company of saints (3) Smānata; denunciation of desires i.e. Vairagya-bhāvanā (4) "Shishiranti": distrust for worldly or heavenly
pleasures (5) "Ashanshati": Explicit faith in God
(6) "Padārthabhāvīnā": In this stage of knowledge the
aspirant is completely engrossed in meditation, in Bhajan
and contemplation of God (7) "Turiya": This is "Umamānashta"
i.e. Highest stage of knowledge where mind disappears
completely. Kabīra has named "Sāta-Sūrati" to the seven
stages of ignorance and knowledge. He says, "These "Sāta
Sūrati" are the real cause of originations of everything.
All creation and destruction starts and merges in them only."

Jñānesvara has elaborately written commentary on the
verses 50 to 52 of the eighteenth chapter expounding the
various steps leading to the Self-Realization or salvation.

The important steps are "Sad-Guru-prāpti" (meeting
with the spiritual teacher) Vairāgya-Prāpti (the spirit of
detachment) and Nityānitya-Viveka. While commenting on the
52nd verse of this eighteenth Chapter Jñānesvara has
expounded the secret of combining the Kuṇḍalinī-yoga,
Dhyāna-yoga, Rāja-yoga and Jñāna-yoga together for the
attainment of the salvation. He says,

"Thus the favoured man who has dispassion and the
acquisition and practice of knowledge has become worthy of
union with the Self. Therefore if a man wears the armour
of renunciation, and mounts the steed of the highest Yoga,
if he holds in the hand of discrimination the sword of
meditation and strikes down all obstacles great or small,
he enters the battlefield of worldly lives like the rising sun to win as a bridge the glorious victory of liberation.29

Jñānesvara, like Kabīra is very much fond of using language concerning battlefields or full of valour. There is a reason behind it. According to all saints specially Jñānesvara, Kabīra, Rāmadāsa & Tukārāma, life is itself a battlefield. Tukārāma says, "We have to fight everyday". They treat the aspirants as brave soldiers on the battlefield of "Moksa-mārga", the pathway to salvation.

V The use of the sword of knowledge: Jñāna-Khadga

Commenting on verse forty-one of the fourth chapter Jñānesvara says,

"Though this ignorance may increase in strength, there is one way of overcoming it, if the sword of knowledge is held in the hand. It is completely destroyed by this sharp weapon of knowledge and then all impurity vanishes from the mind. 30

Jñānesvara has elaborately expounded Jñāna-yoga, commenting on the third verse of the fifteenth chapter in which he has used "Jñāna-Khadga" thus,

"In that way, Oh Dhanañjaya, knowledge is the only sword to cut down the root viz. the Nescience." 31
"In this way, Oh Master warrior, should be cloven clean, with the weapon of the knowledge of Supreme Self, the world tree Asvattha, having roots at its top."32.

In this 'ovi' he has used the original word 'weapon' in the Gita. At many places Jñāneśvara has addressed Arjuna as a warrior. 'Sūra' Warrior is also highest symbol for aspirant in Kabīra's expositions. Kabīra says,

"Oh Sādhaka! you ride carefully on the horse of love. Be aware that death is circling on your head. Take sword of knowledge in your hand and fight with the worldly desires and temptations."33.

Jñāneśvara has not only used the word "Ātmajñāna Khāṇḍaṃ" in ovi 262; verse 3; chapter XV, but constructed the whole 'Sāṅga-rūpaka' i.e. complete metaphor of the means of the pathway of knowledge.

In the 'Sāṅga-rūpaka' of a sword of Ātma-jñāna, 'Dehāhaṅkāra (the conceit for the body) is a cover of a sword 'Antaramukha Buddhi' (Inward perception) is its handle, Viveka is the stone for grinding it, realization is the stroke (Prahāra) on Asvattha i.e. Samsāra-Vṛkṣa (world tree).34

VI Knowledge cannot stand without Vairāgya-Asceticism: ✓

Jñāneśvara has paid high tributes to asceticism Vairāgya as a means of acquiring knowledge.
When we consider who is worthy to attain this knowledge we see that there is only one such man. In order to discover treasures hidden in the earth, a special pigment must be applied (to the eyes), but even then the eyes must be those of a "Pāyālū" i.e. man born with his feet first. It is similarly true that knowledge will enable a man to gain liberation, but nevertheless his mind must be pure so that it will remain with him. Without dispassion knowledge cannot endure; this truth has been established by the Lord after much thought.

Kabīra has emphatically propagated the importance of asceticism (Vairāgya) in this perishable world in the 'Sākhis of "Citāvasārī kāśaṇa".'

VII Knowledge is the eye of Actions:

Jñānesvara has given great emphasis on having clear perception of knowledge in everything. The devotion or any action must be done knowingly. With apt examples he explains the importance of knowledge thus:

"Though the ten sense organs belong to the same body, the sense objects experienced through them are enjoyed by only one person. Should one put well prepared food in the ear? Should one bring flowers and attach them to the eyes? Food must be tasted by the tongue, fragrance must be smelt by the nose; so, I must be worshipped in My true nature, as Myself, Worship performed without knowing Me is worthless
and irrelevant; so knowledge, which is as the eye of these acts, must be free from blamish.\(^37\).

Kabira has emphasised the importance of the cognitive insight i.e. "Jñāna-drsti" for all actions thus,

"If one's vision is lacking in knowledge he will be wandering aimlessly in the worldly affairs.\(^38\).

Kabira at one place has mentioned knowledge as a ripple. He says,

"Oh Avadhūta ! After rising the ripples of knowledge (jñāna-lahar) the aspirant was merged into the meditation-Samādhi.\(^39\).

The saints are generally accused of following the pathway of devotion blindly. Jñānesvāra has convincingly refuted their charge of blind faith as shown above. His clear cut instructions (knowledge which is the eye of the acts, must be free from blamish) will throw light on his conception of the relations between Jñānayoga and Karma-yoga. Actions without knowledge are blind. Knowledge without actions is lame. Devotion without knowledge is sentimentalism or only emotions. Knowledge without devotion is dry. All these paths integrated together make a real pathway to Self-Realization.

There is one misconception regarding 'Sat-Karma' that it does not require the help of knowledge. Jñānesvāra has removed this misconception as follows,
"As a blind man, O Kiriti, running in search of a morsel of food, stumbles and kicks aside (a desire-stone) in his blindness. So when true knowledge forsakes a man, he is in a similar state. All action, therefore performed without knowledge is worthless, of what use would the wings of Garuḍa be to a blind man? So without knowledge every right action is wasted."\(^{40}\)

VIII How the seeds of Knowledge are spread?

Jñānesvara has expounded beautifully the spreading of the seeds of knowledge gradually. In the following verses he has shown the psychological and spiritual development of the aspirant.

"He who, for the sake of the bliss of the Self, feels aversion to all objects of sense, in whom there is no thought for the senses, to whose mind desires make no appeal, who has no interest in the material world and who takes pleasure in the enjoyment of faith, is surely sought out by knowledge, in which perfect peace is found. When that knowledge is established in the heart and the tender shoots of peace break through, then at once the light of the Self shines forth. Then wherever he looks, he will see only peace of which no limit is conceivable. In short it would be impossible to describe how the seeds of knowledge are spread far and wide."\(^{41}\)
Kapitora has also explained the spreading of the seeds of knowledge gradually through Hari-Bhakti or Rama-nama in Pada 250 in which he has revealed the chapter of his biography and has given the guidance to the aspirants. The Padas 267, 269, 270 and 271 are worth noting in which he has revealed his own 'Sadhana-Krama' i.e. the pathway to Self-Realization.

IX Sadhana-Krama in Jhana-Yajna:

Jhanesvara while commenting on the fifteenth verse of the ninth chapter of the Gita has elaborately expounded "Sarvanga-rupaka" on Jhana-Yajna, which reminds one of masterly expositions of Goswami Tulsidas in the 'Rama-carita-manaasa'. It extends from 239th ovi to 248th ovi. The speciality of Jhanesvara is seen here of propounding 'Sadhana-Krama' for the aspirants. He has pointed out the secret in the words (Worship Me) by describing the components required for Jhana-Yajna.

Jhana-Yajna:

1) The primal thought is the sacrificial post, 2) the five elements are the canopy, 3) and the sense of separateness is the sacrificial beast (4) The special qualities of the five elements, the senses and the vital airs are the material used in the sacrifice (5) and ignorance is like the clarified butter poured over them (6) Mind and reason are on par with the vessel in which the fire of knowledge
burns (7) and the even-balanced mind is to be understood as the altar of sacrifice (8) Keenness of intellect combined with discrimination form the proper incantations (9) the spoon (for pouring ghee) is restraint (10) The Individual-Self is the sacrificer (11) That sacrificer, with the vessel of Self-Realization (12) by means of the powerful mantra of discrimination (13) and knowledge as guardian of the fire, destroys the sense of separateness (14) At that moment ignorance is removed and when the sacrificer has performed the purifying ablutions of the water of union with the self, even the sacrificer and the sacrifice cease to exist. No longer does he think of the five elements or the senses or sense objects as separate, for through Self-Realization, he knows all to be one.

Concluding this description of sacrifice of knowledge, Jñānesvara gradually comes to Bhakti-yoga. He says "So do they, realizing unity, worship Me with the sacrifice of knowledge".

In the above description of Jñāna-Yajña, Jñānesvara has given complete guidance of acquiring wisdom-Jñāna.

The secrets in attaining Self-Realization:

How the one who has attained Self-Realization behaves in the world; how all his shortcomings disappear, how he gets the broad vision etc. is described by Jñānesvara with a view to give clear-cut guidance to the aspirants in
attaining Self-Realization. Jñānesvara says,

"Is it strange to say that they regard not only themselves, but the whole universe as Brahma? As good fortune never even out of interest looks on misery, as true discrimination does not know delusion, or as the sun sees no trace of darkness even in a dream, as nectar hears no tale of death, but let this be! - as the moon gives no memory of heat, so such wise man can perceive no difference between creatures.

Kabīra has expounded his top-secret in attaining the Self-Realization or Nirguṇa Rāma in 'Padās' 338, 211, 198 203, 206, 275, 293 etc.

XI The nature of knowledge i.e. "Ātmajñāna"

"Knowledge as a Sacrifice is greater than any material sacrifice, for all works without any exception culminate in knowledge" says the blessed Lord.

Jñānesvara explains the nature of this knowledge i.e. Ātmajñāna and the effects of it thus:

"See here the treasure of supreme joy, to attain to which Yogis do not hesitate to apply to their eyes the pigment of understanding, which is the goal of all action for all seekers, the mine of understanding for those who have reached) detachment, the means of satisfaction for the hungry. (Having obtained this), mental activity is impaired,
the power of reason loses its insight, and the senses forget the contact with the objects of sense. The mind can no longer function, words lose their power of expression and, when a man reaches this state, he finds that which he desires to know. In this, the longings of dispassion are fulfilled, the quest for discrimination is satisfied and without further striving Self-Realisation is attained".

Kabira has expounded his conception of knowledge in many poems; in following 'Padas', his views are elaborately expressed. He says,

"Oh Pandit! Do not forget the Lord! He is everywhere. There is nothing on the earth, which is without Him. He Himself is world and the world is Lord! From the Lord only the whole universe has been created. Nothing can be abused as everything is He. As the whole universe is illuminated by that Sacred flame, how can there be a differentiation of good and bad or high and low? Only by the grace of my Master, by his sermons of knowledge, I am blessed by Lord. His ways are unknowable. I have now complete realization of the Ultimate truth or Supreme-Self, i.e., Brahman. I see Him only in everybody."

In another 'Pada' Kabira says,

"The Brahman, Supreme-Reality and the Atman are just the same. There is no distinction at all. Because of
illusion (Māyā) the attributes of a man are different. There is only one earth throughout the universe. The creator-potter has created different pots-persons out of the earth. Drive aside all illusion and pray to God because only He is all pervading. 45.

According to Kā Shape, knowledge of Advaita is only valid knowledge. One who sees or realizes himself in everything and everywhere, is jñāṇī.

Kā Shape says, "The world is full of Tribhuvana-nātha" (pada 53) "I see Rāma everywhere" (pada 52) "There is only one air, only one water and only one sacred flame in the World (Pada 55) "You pray to Rāma only. There is no Hindu or Turka" (pada 57) "I consider the Lord Rāma, Rāhīma, Karīma, Kesava, Allā are one only" (pada 58).

XII The signs of the Self-realized person: Jñāṇī:

Jñānesvara elaborately describes the mental state of the aspirant, who has realized his oneness with Brahman with apt illustrations.

O son of Pāṇḍu, the man who has reached this state of worthiness attains the blessed condition of Self-Realization. When the heat by which food is cooked is removed, one can enjoy it. The turbulent floods of the Ganges subside after the rainy season; at the end of a song the accompanying drum dies down. In the same way the stress and strain of
striving after Self-Realization passes away (when finally it dawns). This condition is known as the glory of realization of the Self. O great souled Arjuna, the man who is worthy of it enters into this experience.  

From the above passage, it will be seen how cleverly Jnanesvara has pointed out the "Sādhanā-Krama". In the following 'ovīs' the pathway to Self-Realization is skillfully expounded by Jnanesvara while describing the perfect one.

Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa said to Pārtha, I will now explain to thee clearly and fully the characteristics of one who is perfect. The Eternal Peace takes home to herself in this world to him who has through Yoga attained union with the Self, and who has become detached from the fruit of action. O Kiriti, others are fastened to the stake of the enjoyment of fruit with the knot of desire, because of the bondage of action. He performs all actions, as would a man desirous of the fruit of it, and then renounces the same as though he had not performed them. In whatever direction he looks, he will see a world of joy, and whatever he says (it shall be), he finds the great illumination. He seems to dwell in the body with nine-gates (of the sense organs) and yet he is not there. Renouncing all fruit, he engages in action, yet he does not act.
Attention is drawn to two main points by Jñānesvara to attain Self-Realization. One is eternal peace and another is renunciation of all fruits. Jñānesvara's very peculiar style may be seen. Instead of giving sermons or lessons directly on the pathway (Sādhanā) of Self-Realization to the aspirants, he exhibits ideal models of the Self realized persons. This psychological approach is worth noting.

Kabīra has described the highest state of blissfulness. He says,

"All searched God in jungles for nothing but I was lucky enough to find Him very near i.e. in my heart only. I have found the Gaṅgā of knowledge in my heart with which I have directed my mind straight to God. Now all my sexual desires have vanished. All passions of mine are merged in God alone. I have now realized that "Paramapada" i.e. Supreme-Abode is in my meditation (Śamādhi). All my sorrows-worries of the world are over. I am now weaving the cloth of devotion with great satisfaction and happiness."48.

The signs of knowledge are visibly noticed in the common life. With apt examples Jñānesvara describes them to enable the aspirants to know clearly. Jñānesvara's practical view point mixed up with poetic vision is visible as under:
When this knowledge appears in the body, it can be perceived by the eyes, expressing itself through the activities of the sense organs. Its presence may be realized in the same way that the advent of spring is recognized by the freshness of the trees. When water is poured on the roots of a tree, its effect is shown in the sprouting of leaves on the branches. The softness of the earth is proved by the tenderness of the shoots of plants; noble behaviour in a man is evidence of good breeding. A man's friendly nature is expressed in his acts of hospitality and when the very sight of a man brings comfort, we know him to be good.

Jñānēśvara has written the longest and elaborate commentary on the eighth verse of this thirteenth chapter from ovi 184 to ovi 510. In these 'oviś' he has described all the virtues of knowledge or qualifications of an aspirant on the pathway of Self-Realization.

Kabira has repeatedly drawn attention of the aspirants in his 'Sākhīś' and 'Pādāś' towards these virtues. In Pada 363 Kabira has expounded all the virtues required to attain knowledge and at the end he says, "I love such devotee, who has reached the height of 'Sama-ārati'-i.e. equanimity and is free from worldly illusion and duality".
Jñāneśvara describes those fortunate ones, who are filled with all-embracing knowledge thus:

When ignorance is destroyed utterly, and the darkness of ignorance is dispelled, it can be realized that the Lord does not perform actions. Thus when a man understands that the Lord is not an agent and that from the beginning he is one with the Supreme in his nature, when through discrimination this idea arises in his mind, how can any sense of duality remain in him in all the three worlds? From his own experience he recognizes that the whole world is in a state of liberation, in the same way as when the sun rises radiant in its mansion in the eastern quarter, darkness vanishes at the same time from all known quarters of the earth.

At last Jñāneśvara very humbly confesses his inability to adequately describe such blessed persons. He says,

"How can I fully describe that feeling of equilibrium in the hearts of those who are filled with this all-embracing knowledge."

At many places Kabīra has clearly described supreme state of Self-Realization through the path of knowledge. He says with deep satisfaction,
"The sleep of ignorance is now over. The Jīvātman has wake up. Mind is altered and I am blessed with the Lord like Cintāmaṇī. For a pretty long time I slept in ignorance, but after waking up, I have gained knowledge and all vices like anger, sexual attraction, ego, temptation etc. have now deserted me. After getting the eyes of knowledge, now I realise that the knowledge in all the Vedās and Purāṇas is worthless, of no use to me nay I feel them poisonous! (Viṣeṣa-se-lāgāi). Now I shall never be a victim of ignorance as I shall never sleep in ignorance because I have realized Self, Rāma-ratan, Brahman in my heart only!"52.

Kabīra has described both the states, the State of Self-realization; (Jñānāvasthā) & the State of Ignorance; (Ajñānāvasthā) in one place only. He says,

"The Jīvātman (Individual-Self) is quite engrossed in the 'Suṣupti-avasthā' i.e. the state of being fast asleep, which is the night of ignorance. Due to this state of ignorance the Individual-Self, which is a part and parcel of the Supreme Self i.e. Brahman or Ultimate-Reality, separated himself so much from it, that it looks like separate entity apart from Brahman. If I remain fast asleep in the state of gross ignorance, it will create dualism in me and if I wake up with full knowledge of the Reality, I shall realize that the Supreme-Self i.e. Brahman and Individual Self are one only. There is complete unity"53.
Kabira has nicely expounded his concepts of Paramātman and Jīvātman; Monism & Dualism, knowledge and ignorance by the use of apt similes. The influence of Śaṅkara is here quite explicit.

XIV Jñānī- Bhakta: The very idol of knowledge;

Jñānesvara takes great delight in describing "Jñānī- Bhakta". He has shown the highest reverence for them throughout the Jñānesvarī.

How an aspirant becomes an incarnation of knowledge by following the prescribed pathway to Self-Realization, is explained in the Jñānesvarī.

His commentary on the third verse of the tenth chapter from ovi's 71 to 78 is worth noting in this respect. 54

Jñānesvara has drawn pen-pictures of one who has attained 'Sama-citta' i.e. balanced mind in ovi's 594 to 603; verse nine, chapter thirteen. At the end of the Blessed Lord says, There dwells incarnate, sterling knowledge. One in whom evenness of disposition like the sky is never found wanting knowest thou. 55

Commenting on the tenth verse of the thirteenth chapter, Jñānesvara describes the idol of knowledge from ovi's 604 to 611. At the end the Blessed Lord says, "In that way, one who has thus set his heart wholly on me and worships me even after dissolving his personality into mine,
is the very idol of knowledge".

According to Kabīra,

"One who is above self praise, slander, lust towards worldly pleasures, magnitude or decorum and who treats gold and iron, pleasures and sorrows alike is nothing but the image of the Lord himself."

"One who has abandoned egoism is like the Lord himself."

XV The miserable life of the ignorant

With compassion for the ones, who do not care to search the pathway of knowledge, Jñānesvara has described their worthless life. In this connection his commentary on the verse forty of the fourth chapter may be seen.

Kabīra has painted realistic pen-pictures of the miserable life of the ignorant in his 'Sākhīs'-'Kāla-Kauṣ- āŋga' with great compassion and warned them against the terrible agonies of death. He cautions them thus:-

"We all beings are just like water bubbles which are momentary. One day we are going to vanish like stars in the sky after sunrise."

XVI The "Sādhu-kathā" of the Jñāṇī-Bhakta

Jñānesvara has described the Self-Realized ones very affectionately. His heart flows with love and reverence
whenever he happens to describe them. In this connection his expositions may be seen while commenting on the thirteenth verse in the ninth chapter.

In the same way Kabīra has very affectionately described the Supreme state of the devotees (Jñānī-Bhakta) or self realized ones in many Padas specially Nos. 300, 302, 304, 326, 349 & 359 which are worth noting.

CONCLUSION:

Jñānesvara and Kabīra being themselves great Bhakta and Jñānī believe in the "Jñānottara-Bhakti" i.e. devotion emerging from knowledge. Both of them have given highest importance to Viveka i.e. purposeful reasoning. They do not believe in blind-faith either in religion or God. They have paid great tributes to 'Jñānī-Bhaktā' and regarded him as the incarnation of God. According to them salvation (Mokṣa or Mukti) is possible through 'Jñānottara-Bhakti' only.

Both of them while praising the Self-realized ones, have shown the means of acquiring knowledge. While describing "Jñāna-Yajña", Jñānesvara has elaborately pointed out all the steps of the ladder to the Supreme-Abode i.e. 'paramā-dhāma'. Both of them have clearly shown real nature of knowledge and the visible signs of those who have attained the Self-Realization. Being great saints with great compassion, both of them have warned the ignorant people engrossed in the worldly pleasures, against miserable life
of theirs if they do not wake up and follow the path of knowledge. They have described 'Sādhu-kathā' i.e. the Self-Realized ones with great reverence and love as light houses to guide the ignorant people or the aspirants on their pathway of Self-Realization.

In short, while describing the philosophy of knowledge theoretically both of them have elucidated the means of acquiring knowledge and given correct guidance to the aspirants on the pathway of Self-Realization. This singles out the philosopher saints like Jñānesvāra and Kabīra from philosophers in general.
NOTES

PART III

CHAPTER XV

THE PHILOSOPHY OF KNOWLEDGE: JÑANA- YOGA

1 B.G. IV: 38
2 Ibid. IV: 38; Jñān: 177-181
3 Ibid. XV: 20; Jñān: 551-553
4 K.G. Pg. 30; Padas: 42
5 Ibid. Pg. 12; Sākhī: 35
6 Ibid. Pg. 32; Sākhī: 20
7 Ibid. Pg. 128; Padas: 240
8 B.G. XII: 7; Jñān: 168-174
9 K.G. Pg. 73; Padas: 16
10 Ibid. Pg. 2; Sākhī: 8
11 Ibid. Pg. 72; Padas: 12
12 B.G. XV: Jñān: 29-32
13 K.G. Pg. 4; Sākhī: 12
14 Ibid. Pg. 5; Sākhī: 14
15 Ibid. Pg. 9; Sākhī: 1
16 Ibid. Pg. 9; Sākhī: 1
17 Ibid. Pg. 125; Padas: 235
18 Ibid. Pg. 40; Sākhī: 6
19 Ibid. Pg. 40; Sākhī: 7
20 Ibid. Pg. 9; Sākhī: 6
21 B.G. VII: 19; Jñān: 124-128
22 Ibid. VII: 19; Jñān: 129-130

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<td>23</td>
<td>B.G. VII: 50; Jīm: 978-981</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>K.G. pg. 2; Sākhi: 13</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>B.G. XVIII: 50; Jīm: 992-997</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>B.G. VIII: 52; Jīm: 1040-1043</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Ibid. IV: 41; Jīm: 205-206</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Ibid. XV: 3; Jīm: 254 (Bh. Ed.)</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>K.G. pg. 55; Sākhi: 27</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>B.G. XV: 3; Jīm: 258-263 (Bh. Ed.)</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Ibid. XV: 3; Jīm: 33-36</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>K.G. pg. 16-21</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>B.G. IX: 23; Jīm: 343-346</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<td>38</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>B.G. IX: 19; Jīm: 301-303</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>Ibid. IV: 39; Jīm: 185-190</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Ibid. IX: 15; Jīm: 239-248</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>Ibid. IV: 33; Jīm: 188-162</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>K.G. pg. 51; Pada: 51</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>Ibid. pg. 82; Pada: 53</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>B.G. XVIII: 54; Jīm: 1085-1089</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>Ibid. V: 12 and 13; Jīm: 70-75</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>K.G. pg. 139; Pada: 288</td>
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<td>B.G. XII: 6; Jñā: 177-181</td>
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<td>B.G. X: 3; Jñā: 71-78</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>Ibid. XIII: 9; Jñā: 603</td>
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<td>Ibid. XIII: 10; Jñā: 611</td>
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<td>K.G. Pg. 112; Pada: 184</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<td>B.G. IV: 40; Jñā: 191-197</td>
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