Chapter X

ĀTMAN and MOKṢA in the Systems of
Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva and Vallabha

The Bhagavadgītā

The Bhagavadgītā is a very valuable philosophical work, as it contains important philosophical elements. It seems to have more leanings towards Advaitism as it believes in the Brahman as the only ultimate Reality. It also shows its affinity with the Sāṁkhya system as it recognises the duality of Prakṛti and Puruṣa. It also includes much from the Yoga philosophy. It speaks of the Brahman as the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the world. It preaches a kind of pantheism by saying that everything is pervaded by Brahman (God) and that everything is generated by it. Similarly, it holds that the world is a modification (parināma) of God or the Brahman itself. Sometimes it also states as if from the Prakṛti the whole world is created with the help of the power of Māyā and the Ātman is different from and unaffected by all the changes in the Prakṛti. It contains many hybrid elements like the Jñānayoga, Karmayoga,
and Bhaktiyoga and gives equal importance to each of them for the achievement of Mokṣa or liberation. Karma or action cannot be given up, because it is natural with each person as it is determined by the Prakṛti, but the Karma has to be performed with a sense of complete detachment and disinterestedness and by dedicating it and its results to God by completely overcoming the sense of egoism (ahāmkarā). It gives equal stress on jñāna and holds that the knowledge that removes the nescience (ajñāna) and, its effects is absolutely necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. It also gives supreme importance to Bhakti (devotion) and, regards that attainment of Mokṣa is dependent on a faithful surrender to and, worship of God (Brahman) and that God loves most His devotees who love Him exclusively and wholeheartedly, more than the jñānin and the karmayogin. The bhakti can be done by any means; by any kind of action, in the form of one's own duty; the only condition is that every action must be done without pride and egoism. One must feel that he is God Himself and that the doer of actions and the experiencer of their fruits is God. He has got to negate his separate egoistic existence. By dedicating all actions and their results to God, one can experience the real detachment. When he cultivates detachment, no cause is then left for him to experience grief. He has to realise that the
individual soul is in reality the eternal, pure, immutable, all-pervading perfect Self. It remains always what it is and that the bondage is caused by ignorance, which consists in not perceiving the final all-embracing unity and, the infinitude of the Self. When the infinite, immortal and pure nature of the Self is realised, the soul no more entertains any kind of grief and sorrow that arise from the finitude and, the sense of egoism of the soul. After becoming free from the bondage of the ahamkāra, the soul realises its own real infinite and blissful nature. It enjoys its eternal freedom. It is its Mokṣa.

The Bhagavadgītā is, thus, eclectic in nature. Its eclecticity is a result of its attempt to synthesise the various philosophical trends and the various means of attaining liberation (Mokṣa). Taking the benefit of its eclectic nature, various interpretations of its contents have been given and different philosophers have found support from the Gītā in their favour. Śaṁkara emphasises its aspect of jñāna; Rāmanuja, bhakti (devotion). Jñānesvara combines the two elements and propounds the importance of the Advaita-bhakti. B.G.Tilak holds that the essence of the Gītā is the enlightened Karmayoga which means the disinterested performance of the moral duties with a firm faith in and
complete spiritual surrender to God. Aurobindo combines all the three elements (jñāna, karma and bhakti) together and holds that the Gītā propounds the Pūrṇa Yoga (Integral Yoga) in which all the three have equal importance and Mokṣa can be attained not by an onesided emphasis on any one of them but by synthesising them in a vital unity and by having an integral experience of the Brahman (God) which has got to be translated into our day-to-day activities. The perfect peace and bliss of the Brahman has to be experienced in all our actions, small or great. One has to live permanently in God and has to do socially useful actions by completely becoming free from ahaṃkāra and nescience and thus, expressing the Divine peace, beauty and joy in our day-to-day activities. Bhagavadgītā is thus, a peculiar mixture of the various trends and therefore, it is very difficult and unjustifiable to attribute any particular system to it. However, it possesses tremendous spiritual influence and thus proves a source of great inspiration to the religiously minded persons. I cannot therefore, emphatically attribute any definite view to the Gītā.

Nevertheless Gītā holds a definite view about the nature of Ātman (self). Ātman is the principle of pure consciousness and infinite power and bliss. It is in its
real nature infinite, all-pervading, and perfect. It assumes the form of the world by means of its unique power of creation (Māyā) and it remains concealed from the finite souls by means of nescience. The finite souls (jīvas) are its manifestations; they are limited in knowledge, and bliss; they suffer in the world being governed by nescience and they transmigrate as they are governed by the adṛṣṭa. The jīvas are in their essence immortal and eternal but their finitude and suffering is caused by their association with body and the adṛṣṭa. They can become free from their finitude and sufferings when they realise their original, infinite and blissful nature, by the knowledge of the Ātman, by means of overcoming nescience by means of bhakti -- complete dedication to and faith in God and testing their detachment by doing the works disinterestedly and not being affected by their good and bad results. The souls thus enjoy supreme bliss and unending peace, by realising their real nature.
Visiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja

In the post-Śaṁkarite period and among the successors of Śaṁkara Rāmānujaścārya stands as the most prominent and powerful personality. Rāmānuja was a profound scholar and a keen Vaiṣṇava devotee. Rāmānuja criticized Śaṁkara's philosophy of illusoriness of the world with a great vehemence and established his own philosophy and religion. He was a great follower of Vaiṣṇavism in the Southern India. His creed was widely accepted and he had at his credit the honour of being a powerful leader of a great religious sect. He lived in the eleventh century and was initiated in philosophy by Yādavaprakāśa and Yāmunācārya. Rāmānuja was an original thinker and therefore, he has made his own outstanding contribution to the philosophic thought. He had his own differences with his predecessors and he maintained them with great courage and confidence.

Rāmānuja has written his commentary on the Brahma Sūtra just like Śaṁkara and he has interpreted the original Brahma Sūtras in his own way by presenting supporting evidences from the Śruti. Rāmānuja interpreted the same Sūtras that Śaṁkara had previously interpreted, in his own new way. He is equally logical and consistent in his treatment. After Rāmānuja there lived other Āchāryas, i.e.
Nimbārka, Madhva and Vallabha who also were equally powerful and independent thinkers. They too were profound scholars and were the pioneers of great religious movements in the south and in the north. They too have written their own fresh commentaries on the Brahma Sūtras quite independently and stuck to their own views. All these Āchāryas, nevertheless, have not neglected the Śruti. They have interpreted the Śruti in their own favour. The same Brahma Sūtras have been differently interpreted in the hands of these Āchāryas, and therefore, it is natural to entertain doubt about the real meaning of the Sūtras. They have been presented and twisted in different ways. Similarly the Upaniṣads also contain a large number of statements which are mutually incompatible and contradictory. Ghate after carefully examining the original Brahma Sūtras and their different interpretations passes following significant remarks about them: "All these instances of the employment by the Sūtrakāra of vague and general words, not capable of being explicitly defined, leave us to believe that the Sūtras, though they were in the first instance intended to formulate a system from the Upaniṣads, reconcile the contradictions which meet us at every step, represent a stage of transition
from the freedom and absolute want of system of the Upaniṣads to the cut and dry systematisation of the commentaries."¹ Further he says -- "It needs hardly to be remarked that the more advanced a system is in the degree of systematisation and the elimination of contradiction the farther removed it is from the system of the Sūtras whatever that be. In any case the Sūtras are absolutely unaware of the particular dogmas enunciated by each of the different Vedānta schools of the later times."²

Rāmānuja criticises very acutely and adversely Śāmkara's doctrine of illusoriness (Māyāvāda) of the world and tries to restore the lost reality of the world and the individual souls on rational grounds. He finds numerous faults (dūṣaṇāḥ) with the Māyāvāda of Śāmkara and tries to give an important place to the world in the life of the Brahman.

Rāmānuja refuses first, to admit the qualityless Brahman (Nirguṇa Brahman) of Śāmkara; he identifies it with Puruṣottama, the highest spirit who is by nature free from all kinds of faults and possesses in the highest number

¹. Ghate V.S. -- The Vedānta. p.183.
². Ibid. p.184.
the congeries of auspicious (Kalyāṇa) qualities.¹ He gives a clear and lengthy description of the Brahman from his point of view as "the highest Brahman is essentially free from all imperfections whatsoever, comprises within itself all auspicious qualities, and finds its pastime in origination, preserving, reabsorbing, pervading, and ruling the universe; that the entire complex of intelligent and non-intelligent beings (souls and matters in all their different estates is real, and constitutes the form, i.e. the body of the highest Brahman..."² Thus, the Brahman is not devoid of any quality but it possesses innumerable auspicious qualities and possesses its own personality. Rāmānuja usually describes the Brahman as the Puruṣottama, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu etc... and indicates that the Brahman, though the Absolute, is not devoid of personalistic elements. His Brahman is the highest God living in the Vaikunṭha. The Brahman is not qualityless blank Absolute, but it is a Saviṣeṣa Brahman, Qualified Brahman, having internal distinctions as its manifestations. The Brahman

¹. Rāmānuja -- Śrībhāṣya. (Catuḥsūtrī). Brahma sabdena svabhavato nirastanikhiladoṣo anavadhikātiśayāsāmkhyeya kalyāṇaguṇagaṇaḥ Puruṣottamo abhidhiyatē.

is continuous, unborn and endless and it acts as the source (sarga), subtainer (sthiti) and absorber (laya) of all its manifestations which are finite. The Brahman is the infinite substratum in which all changes incessantly take place. Rāmānuja is a bhedabhedavādin and he admits the pariñāmavāda theory of causation according to which the effect is a transformation of the cause and both the cause and effect are real. The effect i.e. the world is not entirely different from the cause but it is the Brahman that differentiates itself into the two main modes (prakāra) as the cit (soul) and the acit (matter). It carries duality of these two chief modes which express themselves in an infinite number of particular objects. The Brahman being all-pervading (vibhu) is equally present in all the objects animate and inanimate, the Self or Brahman acting as its innermost reality. Rāmānuja holds that the individual souls and the inanimate objects exist as the body of the Brahman just as we have our bodies related to the soul. The highest Self, the Brahman or the Paramātmā enters every mode of it, and acts as its (antaryāmī) inner controller. Ontologically the Brahman is the substratum or the sustainer of the effects and, morally, it is the inner controller of the souls and the world. In fact, the whole world and the individual souls (jīvas) are already
present in the womb of the Brahman as potential (Kārāṇāvasthā) and, they express themselves in the actual form (Kāryāvasthā) by means of the wonderful power (Māyā) of Īśvara. Īśvara or Brahman or the Supreme Self being one and entering as the inner Self (antarātmatayā) in the various animate and inanimate (cidacit) objects assumes the various wonderful (vicitra) forms and does various duties through them in their various forms and thus, appears as multifarious (nānārūpa). Thus, the whole world (acit) and the individual souls already exist in the Brahman, and are never without it. The Brahman pervades and envelops its whole creation. In pralaya, the world and the souls dwindle into their potential and unmanifest form -- Brahman remains uncontaminated by the imperfections of the world and by the sufferings of the jīvas, which are only its modes. It is free from all imperfections and consists of pure knowledge and bliss; and that the sentient and the non-sentient things whether in the non-evolved or evolved state are merely the play things of the Brahman and their creation and reabsorption take place only for the sport of

The Isvara creates everything out of Himself and, acts as the material cause (upādānakaraṇa) and also as the efficient cause (nimitta kāraṇa) of the world. He creates the world out of His own stuff as His own body with His wonderful power and though He is one, He assumes the infinite number of particular objects. Thus, the world is a concretisation of the potentialities existing in the Brahman. The Brahman is savīṣeṣa or qualified by the two distinctions (bheda) cit (sentient) and acit (insentient) in it. Rāmānuja is a bhedābhedavādin believing that the Brahman is identical with the world and still it possesses its own nature independently. Rāmānuja describes the Brahman in the following way — "The highest Brahman, whose nature is fundamentally antagonistic to all evil and essentially composed of infinite knowledge and bliss — whereby it differs from all other souls — possesses an infinite number of qualities of unimaginable excellence, and, analogously, a divine form suitable to its nature, and intentions, i.e. adorned with infinite, supremely excellent and wonderful qualities — splendour, beauty, fragrance, tenderness, loveliness, youthfulness and so on. And in order to gratify his devotees he individualises that

form so as to render it suitable to their apprehension, he who is a boundless ocean as it were of compassion, kindness and lordly power, whom no shadow of evil may touch -- he who is the highest Self, the highest Brahman, the Supreme Soul, Nārāyaṇa. ¹

The same Brahman thus transforms itself into the sentient centres, the individual souls (jīvas) and the matter. The individual souls are centres of consciousness and both the individual souls and the inanimate objects (prakṛti) form the body of the Īsvara. They are therefore, the emanations of the Supreme Self. In the inert material things the consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda) are absent, and in the jīva (sat) existence and (cit) consciousness are present but the bliss (ānanda) of the Brahman is absent. The jīvas and the inanimate objects are in essence the Brahman though they differ in their external forms. Therefore, the Brahman is called the Īsvara qualified by cit and acit (Cidacitvisiṣṭēśvaraḥ). The individual soul (jīva) is separate for each body and is of the atomic nature, self-luminous and eternal. The soul is the doer but its agentship is controlled by Īsvara. There are three kinds of jīvas -- (1) the bound (baddha) -- all the

phenomenal (samsārin) souls including gods like Brahmadeva, (ii) the freed - mukta are those who have abandoned even their subtle bodies by means of the devotion to the Ḫśvara and stay in the Vaikuṇṭha; they have an infinite experience of the Brahman. In the state of liberation their eight qualities (guṇāṣṭaka) like sound, touch, brilliance, taste, odour, power, knowledge and bliss (ānanda) which were obscured (tirobhūta) while bondage, become manifest, (iii) the nitya - eternal- jīvas are the Ananta (the cobra), the Garuḍa eagle etc. God is the abode of experience of the freed and eternal souls.

The jīvas, individual souls are thus, the parts (aṁśa) of the Brahman and they are atomic in size. Though they are parts of the Brahman they are not separate from the cause since they rest upon the cause (ādhāra) and the Brahman is present in each of them as their internal reality that controls them from within (antaryamī). The souls (jīvas) also form a body of the Brahman. They are like the attributes (viṣeṣaṇas) of the Supreme indwelling Self, the Ḫśvara. Just as an adjective (viṣeṣaṇa) cannot exist without a substantive (viṣeṣya), similarly the jīva cannot exist apart from its cause the Brahman. Rāmānuja says -- "The individual soul is a part of the highest Self; as the light issuing from a luminous thing such as fire or the sun is a part of the body; or as the generic characteristic
of a cow or horse, and the white or black colour of things so coloured, are attributes and hence, parts the things in which those attributes inhere; or as the body is a part of an embodied being. Hence there is no contradiction between the individual and the highest Self -- the former which is a Viṣeṣaṇa of the latter -- standing to each other in the relation of part and whole, and their being at the same time of essentially different nature."¹ The jīvas or souls are only attributes of the Self and hence, the changes taking place in the attributes remain true and confined to themselves and they do not in any way affect the Supreme Self just as changes in the sun-rays do not affect the sun itself. Rāmānuja further says that though the Brahman is equally present in all the sentient and insentient things, it does not participate in their changes, imperfections and experiences of pain and pleasure; it remains untouched or uncontaminated by them. He maintains just as ether, although connecting itself separately with jars, pots and so on, which undergo increase and decrease, is not itself touched by the imperfections; and just as the sun, although seen in sheets of water of unequal extent, is not touched by their increase and decrease; thus the highest Self, although abiding within variously

¹ Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. (Tr.Thibaut) 2.3.45. p.563.
shaped beings, whether non-sentient like earth or sentient, remains untouched by their various imperfections -- increase, decrease and so on --, remains one although in abiding in all of them and ever keeps the treasure of its blessed qualities unsullied by an atom even of impurity. ¹ Thus, the Brahman is ever free and unaffected by all the shadows of imperfections as it is full of exalted qualities. All changes, imperfections and sufferings thus belong to the modes (prakāra) or (vikāra) of the Brahman.

The jīva is of atomic size and it dwells in the heart. It is not all-pervasive, otherwise it would experience simultaneously the various pains and pleasures of all persons. It is one and single for each single person and, is extremely minute, like a monad, or atom, in size and it dwells in the heart of each person.² An objection can be raised that if it is atomic and occupies an extremely minute portion of the body how can it remain in touch with all the parts of the body and can simultaneously experience so many sensations? The difficulty is real, but Rāmānuja overcomes it by taking the help of a simile of a sandal paste and says -- "As a drop of

2. Ibid. 2.3.25. p.548.
sandal-ointment, although applied to one spot of the body only, yet produces, a refreshing sensation extending over the whole body; thus the Self also, although dwelling in one part of the body only, is conscious of sensations taking place in any part of the body."¹ Though the soul thus spreads all over the body not actually, but by means of its quality (guṇa). Knowledge is the attribute (guṇa) of the soul that is the possessor of the guṇa (guṇīn). The Self extends through the whole body by means of its quality, viz. knowledge or consciousness. As the light of things abiding in one place—such as gems, the sun, and so on—is seen to extend to many places, so the consciousness of the Self dwelling the heart pervades the entire body.² Thus Rāmānuja does not identify the soul with knowledge like Śaṅkara, who had made soul and knowledge identical. Rāmānuja, on the contrary, makes a distinction and maintains that the soul is different from knowledge and that the knowledge is a quality (guṇa) that belongs to the (guṇīn) the subject. The soul is frequently designated as knowledge simply for the reason that knowledge is its essential quality and it cannot appear without knowledge.³ The jīva is

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1. Rāmānuja -- Sṛibhaṣya Catuḥsūtrī and Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 2.3.24.
2. Ibid. 2.3.26. p.549. Catuḥsūtrī.
3. Ibid. 2.3.29. p.550.
thus, not consciousness itself but the knower (jñātā),
the knowing subject. Its consciousness is not lost even
during deep sleep. As Ghate says -- "The individual soul
is the subject of consciousness or knower and not mere
consciousness itself. It is, however, often called con-
sciousness, simply because consciousness is its essential
attribute. Even in the dreamless sleep though there is no
consciousness of objects, still the sense of "I" (ahamartha)
persists."

Rāmānuja holds that the consciousness is always
there, but it is felt only in the waking state when it
relates to objects. Rāmānuja further concludes that 'to
be a knowing subject is the essential character of the
Self and that Self is of atomic size.'

Rāmānuja distinguishes the knower from the knowledge
and regards knowledge as an attribute of the former. He
points out the proposition 'I am conscious', in which I,
the subject is different from the term 'conscious'; con-
sciousness belongs to it just as a stick belongs to
Devadatta.

The higher Self which is self-luminous (svayamprakāśa)

2. Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 2.3.31.
p.551.
assumes the form of the individual soul. The higher Self
is purely intelligence in its own nature and it does not
possess any other material impurity. Rāmānuja describes
the Supreme Self as intelligence pure, free from stain,
free from grief, free from all contact with desire and
other affections, everlastingly one ... the highest Lord
Vāsudeva apart from whom nothing exists.¹ This Supreme
Self itself is consciousness. In its case there is no
distinction between the substrate of consciousness and
the consciousness itself. They are identical in its
case. It is Self-luminous consciousness itself which
constitutes the knowing soul (jīvātmā). Rāmānuja further
identifies them and maintains that in the absence of
intelligence the Self would cease to exist as Self.²
This Self is omniscient and the eternal revealer of all
objects. The quality of being the 'knower' belongs only
to the finite individual souls and not to the Supreme
Self. Knowership cannot be attributed to it since it
belongs to ahamkāra which itself is non-intelligent,
being an effect of Prakṛti, and itself an object of know-
ledge.³ The ahamkāra or the principle of egoity is a
separative principle of the many individual souls and

¹. Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr.Thibaut.1.1.1.
p.23.
². Ibid. 1.1.1. p.37.
³. Ibid. 1.1.1. p.63.
with the help of it they distinguish themselves from each other. It is due to their finitude and particular nature. The knowledge of the jīvas is limited when they are in saṃsāra under bondage. The idea of 'I' also is present only when the jīva is the awake-state (jāgṛtavasthā); it is not present during deep sleep and swoon; therefore, it cannot be attributed to the Supreme Self or Īśvara; for, Īśvara persists in the form of His consciousness in all the times and for eternity remains immutable. The Supreme Self reveals the objects by its luminosity; that element of luminosity which is present in the form of the soul reveals the things in knowledge to it; the jīva appropriates the experiences and objects as its own with its association with the ahaṁkāra, which is a mode of Prakṛti. The egoity, the distinguishing feature of the jīva is its essential characteristic and it is never lost; it persists in it even during the state of liberation (mukti). The individual soul is not lost or absorbed in the Supreme Self but it maintains its sense of 'I' who achieves liberation. Bheda, (distinction) being eternal cannot be lost and therefore, the individual soul maintains the sense of its own egoity even in mukti. Rāmānuja says that were it a settled matter that release consists in the annihilation of the I, the same man would move away as
soon as release were only hinted at. "When I myself have perished, there still persists some consciousness different from me" to bring this about nobody truly will exert himself.¹ Thus, in liberation body disappears but egoity persists.

Rāmānuja does not accept Śāṅkara's interpretation that the differences of the jīvas are caused by the differences of upādhis like the internal organs which are variously associated with the same Supreme Self nor are they caused by the Adṛśṭa. The differences of upādhis which cause differences of individual souls are explained as caused by the principle of Adṛśṭa and Adṛśṭa itself is proved by the various activities caused by the individual souls out of upādhis; it is a circular argument and does not properly explain the priority of either of them. He argues -- "As the adṛśṭas also which are the causes of the series of upādhis have for their substrate Brahman itself, there is no reason for their definite allotment (to definite individual souls), and, hence, again there is no definite separation of the spheres of experience. For, the limiting adjuncts as well as the adṛśṭas cannot by their connexion with Brahman split up Brahman itself

¹. Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedanta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 1.1.1. p.58.
which is essentially one.\(^1\) Rāmānuja regards that the differences are real but they last only as long as their inner unity is not realised. The exclusive differences as long as the souls are under the spell of Nescience (Avidyā); the different souls experience their inner substantial unity when the avidyā is overcome. Then the soul realises its bhedābheda (differences in unity) relation with the Īśvara. Rāmānuja further says "The difference of the soul -- presenting itself as the soul of a god, a man etc. from the highest Self is not due to its essential nature, but rests on the basis of Nescience in the form of work; when through meditation on Brahman this basis is destroyed, the difference due to it comes to an end, and the soul no longer differs from the highest Self."\(^2\)


Every jīva is an agent (kartā) of actions and reaps the rewards of them in its next life. Every jīva is a separate being and, therefore, experiences its pains and pleasures separately. Unlike Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja holds that the individual soul is the doer of actions (kartā) and the enjoyer (bhoktā) of their consequences. Rāmānuja

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1. Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 2.3.50. p.566.

2. Ibid. 1.1.1. p.101.
argues that if the Self were not an agent but all activity belonged to Prakṛti in a common possession of all souls, or else on the part of none; for as such Self is held to be omnipresent, they are all of them in equal proximity to all parts of the Pradhāna. For the same reason it could not be maintained that the distribution of results between the different souls depends on different internal organs which are joined to the souls; for if the souls are omnipresent no soul will be exclusively connected with any particular internal organ.1 Thus, he confutes the possibility of only one Self for all and maintains that each individual soul acts as the doer of actions and also he enjoys separately the fruits thereof only for itself. If the same soul that acts in various ways does not persist as the same to reap the consequences of those actions, then the moral principle of adṛṣṭa will prove invalid. The consequences will not be perpetrated on the same person who had done the corresponding good or bad deeds of which they are corresponding consequences. The principle of morality comes to be endangered and moral anarchy may arise. Rāmānuja upholds the efficacy and validity of the adṛṣṭa or moral doctrine and maintains that in the case of a soul subject to karman and not

1. Rāmānuja -- Uom. on Vedānta Śūtras. Tr. Thibaut.
2.3.36. p.555.
knowing its essential nature, such connexion with a body necessarily takes place in order that the soul may enjoy the fruit of its actions quite apart from the soul's desire.¹

Thus, the soul's birth and earthly existence is governed by the rigid moral doctrine; the soul does not acquire its existence in accordance with its desire. The moral doctrine maintains the moral order of the world. Rāmānuja further maintains that though the jīvas essentially are constituted of uncontracted, undivided and pure intelligence, being enveloped by the Nescience (avidyā) in the form of the Karmas, they possess their knowledge contracted in accordance with their deeds and, as they have entered in all the various bodies from the grass to the Brahman and, have their knowledge spread in accordance of the magnitudes of the those bodies respectively. They possess the pride of those bodies occupied, perform their concerned duties and enjoy their corresponding pleasures and pains issuing from them which constitute the current of the samsāra.² Thus, according

¹ Rāmānuja -- Com.on Vedānta Sūtras.Tr.Thibaut. p.240.
² Rāmānuja -- Vedārtha Samgraha. p.123. Ḫīvātmanah swayam asaṅkucita aparichinna nirmala jñāna swarūpaḥ santan karmmarūpa avidyā vēṣṭitaḥ tat tat karmānurūpa- jñānasāṅkocam āpannaḥ tat anuguṇasukhaduḥkhopabhoga rūpa saṁsārapraṇavāhām pratipadyante.
to Rāmānuja the intelligence of the individual souls
is subject to contraction (saṅkoca) and expansion
(prasaraṇa) in accordance with the Karma and body with
which it comes to be associated due to its Karma. The
original infinite intelligence of the soul is obscured,
obliterated and delimited when it revolves in the state
of samsāra as long as it is governed by Karma. Therefore,
it loses its omniscience and omnipotence while in samsāra.

While contrasting the powers of the bound souls with the
released or mukta souls, Rāmānuja says "The non-released
soul has its intellectual power contracted by the influ­
ence of Karman, and hence, is incapable of that expansive
pervasion without which it cannot identify itself with
other bodies. The released soul, on the other hand,
whose intellectual power is non-contracted is capable
of extending as far as it likes, and thus to make many
bodies its own. The non-released soul is ruled by Karman,
the released one only by its will -- this is the differ­
ence.¹ Thus, the souls under bondage possess limited
knowledge, limited power and imperfect happiness while
the released souls possess the qualities of the Self
in their unhindered perfection.

¹ Rāmānuja. Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 4.4.15.
p.765.
The essential nature of the individual souls (cit) is one of intelligence (jñānātmakam) and in this respect they are similar toĪśvara, butĪśvara is all-pervasive (vibhu) and the souls are atomic (aṇu). They have sajātiya difference between them but the soul is different by kind (vijātiya) from the acit (matter) which can never be conscious. Śāyāna Mādhava says no contraction of knowledge can take place in the intelligence that is constitutive of its essential nature (svarūpabhūtajñānasya); the contraction takes place because of the Karma which is made identical with Nescience (avidyā) by Rāmānuja, of the attributive knowledge (guṇabhūtajñānasya). The attributive knowledge of the souls is also known as the Dharmabhūtajñāna. Rāmānuja holds that it is the nature of the individual souls to undergo contraction and modifications of its attributive knowledge (guṇabhūtajñāna); similarly, it is in its nature to experience pleasure and pain by its connection (saṃsarga) with the objects of the world (acit) which are its objects of experience (bhogyabhūta) and its nature is to have the knowledge of the essential knowledge of the (Bhagavat)Īśvara and the attainment of the feet of theĪśvara (Bhagavatpada).¹

¹ Sarvadarśanasamgraha. pp.110,111.
Mahendranath Sircar says — "Jñāna or dharmabhūtajñāna is an eternal self-illuminating existence. It is an attribute (dharma). It admits of expansion and contraction, it reveals or expresses objects, other than itself to atman. In Iśvara it is always expansive and all-embracing, in others it is limited, in others, again, sometimes expansive, sometimes limited. It is a continuous existence."¹ The souls are bound (baddha) due to their karma which arises out of their mistaken identity with Prakṛti and their intelligence thereby undergoes the infinite variations of contraction (saṅkōca) and expansion (vikāsa). The quality (dharmabhūtajñāna) undergoes expansion and contraction but the subject itself remains immutable and eternal. The soul has in addition to intelligence (jñatṛtva), the attributes of responsibility (kartṛtva) and appetite (bhokṛtva). By these characteristics the soul is a distinct entity and it is different from body, senses, mind and vital airs; it being permanent does not depend on other things.² It remains in the world and moves from birth to birth as long as it acts and is not free from Karma which arises out of the Nescience or ignorance about its own real nature.

² Rāmaṇuja — Com. on Vedānta Śūtras. Tr.Thibaut.1.1.1. p.72.
It is a fact that the jīvas are modes or modifications of the Supreme Self and the Supreme Self resides in the souls as their indwelling reality that holds them (ādhāra) and controls and guides them from within. However, Rāmānuja does not deny freedom to these finite souls. The souls do enjoy freedom in the moral sphere and they are the determiners of their own pleasures and pains which arise in conformity of the goodness and badness of their deeds. The individual souls have the freedom to choose their actions and also the freedom to attain mukti or liberation. Though they are dependent upon Īśvara they are not dummies or impotent entities; but they enjoy full freedom in the moral sphere. The individual souls transmigrate so long as their Karma is not exhausted. They pass from one birth to another with the help of the subtle body which contains in it the desert or the accumulated sāmkāras of the past birth. If the soul chooses to be free from the sāṁśāra there is every opportunity to attain eternal redemption and to be ever free from the sāṁśāra. As Radhakrishnan says -- "The questions of human freedom and divine sovereignty assume great importance in Rāmānuja's philosophy, since he is anxious to emphasise both. Individual souls depend entirely on God for their activity. God declares what is good and what is bad, supplies souls with bodies,
gives them power to employ them, and is also the cause in a\textsuperscript{2} ultimate sense of the freedom and bondage of the souls .... God does not make the soul do good or evil acts according to his caprice, but shows his contancy of nature by acting according to the law of Karma .... The law of Karma expresses the will of God. The order of karma is set up by God, who is the ruler of Karma (Karmādhyakṣaḥ). Since the law is dependent on God's nature, God himself may be regarded as rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked.\textsuperscript{1} Thus, though God is the sovereign power and possesses the power to suspend the law of Karma and give mukti directly to the souls, he does not want to use his powers in the ordinary course. His powers are reserved for emergency cases and He uses His veto when it becomes absolutely necessary; and, that too only in exceptional cases. He does not want to disturb His machinery already set up; and hence the souls have to gradually evolve their nature by means of knowledge and moral actions to purify their nature and make themselves worthy of liberation by their own strong moral will and efforts. He encourages them in such efforts.

Rāmānuja holds like all other systems of philosophy...

\textsuperscript{1} Radhakrishnan S. -- Indian Philosophy. Vol.II.p.694.
that the aim of philosophical knowledge is attainment of release or liberation (Mokṣa). Like Śaṅkara he too holds that liberation consists in the realisation of the goal as depicted in the famous text of the Śruti, 'I am the Brahman' (ahāṁ Brahmasmi) or 'Thou art That' (Tattvamasi). Liberation for him means entering into identity with the Brahman. Thus, it is an intuitive experience in which the individual realises the presence of the Brahman within himself and everywhere without him. It (soul) realises that it is inseparable from the Brahman and that its essential reality or the innermost reality is the Brahman that is present everywhere in all animate and inanimate things as even in the gods like Brahmādeva. The released soul realises its true nature of prakāratva or non-differentiation from Brahman as being its body. In the state of liberation unlike Śaṅkara's idea, the soul does not lose itself but it enters into the experience of inseparability with the Brahman. It persists in Brahman as its body but without the actual distinctions of name and form caused by Karma. The soul maintains its individuality but only as an attribute of the Brahman. It becomes divested from the Prakṛti and its influences. It becomes free from all Karmas and enjoys in the company of Īśvara, all His qualities in their perfection except
the qualities of creation (sarjana) of the world and controlling it (niyaṅṭṛtva). The souls enjoy fragmentary and sensuous pleasure in the world; while they enjoy the perfect bliss and perfect intelligence in the state of liberation. Their intelligence becomes omniscient and they become omnipotent. They become all-pervasive by being an inseparable part of the Brahman. They are not lost in the Brahman as Śaṅkara says; but they retain also the consciousness of 'I' and live there for eternity as distinct enjoying subjects. They enjoy there the highest bliss of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa and become free for ever from the physical body, subtle body and the fragmentary experiences of pleasures and afflictions. This state is acquired by overcoming the false sense of separation from the Brahman, which is caused by avidyā. The souls can rise to liberation, by knowledge and by exclusive devotion (Bhakti) to the Supreme Self, the Paramātman. The soul can attain eternal liberation by intellectual love (bhakti) and by (prapatti) total submission to the Divine Person. The Paramātman or God in His turn helps the devotee to reach Him by removing from his path the obstructions and impediments. He is extremely kind and merciful to his devotees. God is a treasure of an infinite number of auspicious qualities which he bestows
upon the released souls and they enjoy them to their perfection. God gives eternal security, bliss and infinite knowledge to such souls. They no more return to the world which is full of afflictions.

Rāmānuja agrees with Śaṅkara and others in holding that bondage (bandha) is due to (avidyā) Nescience which consists in the identification of the soul with body, senses and the Prakṛti (acit). The two are exclusive and opposed to each other. Bondage exists so long as the individual soul identifies itself with the bodily experiences and its limitations; it suffers pains and afflictions due to its false estimation, so long as it does not experience unity with the Brahman and regards the plurality real by losing the sight of the underlying unity of the Brahman and its pure, eternal, perfect and blissful nature. Rāmānuja says -- "Release, which consists in the cessation of all Plurality, cannot take place as long as a man lives. And we therefore, adhere to our view that bondage is to be terminated only by means of injunctions of meditation, the result of which is direct knowledge of Brahman. Nor must this be objected to on the ground that Release, if brought about by injunctions, must therefore be something non-eternal; for what is effected is not Release itself, but only the
cessation of what impedes it. Moreover, the injunction does not directly produce the cessation of Bondage, but only through the meditation of direct cognition of Brahman as consisting of pure knowledge, and not connected with a world. It is this knowledge which the injunction produces. Therefore, bondage is only imaginary and it has no permanent existence. Release or liberation is eternal because it is nothing but the free nature of the Self and it is co-existent with the Self or Brahman. The sense of the unhindered freedom of the Supreme Self is lost or obscured by ignorance due to false identification of the soul with the modes of the body including ahamkāra. When that sense of separateness is successfully overcome by meditating upon the real nature of the Brahman or Isvara, the soul loses all its worldly pains and sufferings. It realises its real nature as pure and perfectly blissful. This experience constitutes the state of liberation.

Rāmānuja further makes it clear that release is
eternal hence, it cannot be produced and it cannot be effected by meritorious acts. Bondage is essentially an illusory phenomenon; nescience (avidyā) cannot exist anywhere but in the thinking mind and hence it has to be

1. Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr.Thibaut.1.1.4.p.188.
2. Ibid.1.1.4. p.181.
uprooted by the right knowledge of the Brahman. It can be attained by properly realising the real nature of the soul which is in essence nothing else but the Supreme Self. A proper realisation of the proposition 'That are Thou' leads to the final liberation. Rāmānuja does not mean by the complete annihilation of the individual soul (jīva) by the absorption of it in the Brahman but he means by it the generation of the consciousness of its unity and inseparability with the Brahman. It consists in the realisation on the part of the soul in itself that it is only a mode of the Brahman which is its innermost Self or reality; that it cannot exist apart from its cause, the Brahman and that it is only an extension of the Brahman. Rāmānuja explains the meaning of the text 'that are thou' as 'in that all this has its Self'.

He maintains that not only is the soul not annulled in liberation but it maintains in it even its sense of egoity. Rāmānuja is not able to imagine a state of release in which that which attains release is not conscious of the attainment of the release. He says -- "The 'I' is not a mere attribute of the Self so that even after its destruction the essential nature of the Self might persist

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-- as it persists on the cessation of ignorance -- but it constitutes the very nature of the Self."¹ That which undertakes severe penance for the attainment of release does not desire the final state of liberation such in which it itself would to be extinct. According to Rāmānuja, every self-conscious entity essentially possesses the sense of 'I'. Rāmānuja further makes his position clear in the following passage. "This 'inward' Self shines forth in the state of final release also as an 'I'; for it appears to itself; the general principle is that whatever being appears to itself appears as an 'I' ... on the contrary, whatever does not appear as an 'I', does not appear to itself; as jars and the like. Now the emanipated Self does thus appear to itself, and therefore, it appears as an 'I'. Nor does this appearance as an 'I' imply in any way that the released Self is subject to Nescience and implicated in the samsāra; for this would contradict the nature of the final release, and moreover the consciousness of the 'I' cannot be the cause of Nescience and so on."² Though the soul coalesces with the Self as its integral factor it still retains its own self-consciousness and on the ground

¹ Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 1.1.1. p. 70.
² Ibid. 1.1.1. pp. 70, 71.
of such consciousness it enjoys all the divine perfect qualities with the Supreme Self.

The liberated soul becomes completely free from all the Karmas and also from its physical surroundings and worldly limitations. In Mokṣa the soul becomes free from Prakṛti and the physical body; therefore, it ceases to experience the physical pleasures and pains and it also becomes free from the imperfections of such experiences.¹ As the liberated soul becomes eternally free from the accumulated stock of Karma (Karma saṅcaya) it is no more required to come back to the saṁsāra and to lead its transmigratory existence. As the released soul has freed itself from the bondage of Karman, has its powers of knowledge fully developed, and has all its being in the supremely blissful intuition of the highest Brahman, it evidently cannot desire anything else nor enter on any other form of activity, and the idea of its returning into the saṁsāra therefore, is altogether excluded. Nor indeed need we fear that the Supreme Lord when once having taken to himself the devotee whom he greatly loves will turn him back into the saṁsāra.²

The released soul is naturally free for ever from the

¹ Rāmanuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 1.1.4. p. 181.
² Ibid. 4.4.22. p. 771.
subtle body exists as long as the desert does not come to end; but as there is no desert to be experienced and the soul is no more required to the worldly life, the subtle body also disappears from it for ever.

According to Rāmānuja the jīva or the individual soul becomes not only free from the sufferings and imperfections of the worldly life in Mokṣa but it enjoys the highest bliss and all the infinite auspicious qualities of the Divine. The individual enjoys the company and grace of the Paramātman or Nārāyaṇa, who is described as the most magnanimous personality possessing eminence, highest beauty, perfect brilliance, immense mercy and love, profound blessedness, infinite knowledge and unsurpassable power. Such a highest Self is the object of enjoyment of the liberated souls. Nārāyaṇa, that is the highest Brahman according to Rāmānuja, is described as that who resides in the Vaikunṭha, who lies on the beautiful coach of the immortal cobra forming His throne in the ever-illuminated hall in the superb palace of Him, possessing body with divine lustre, divine freshness, tenderness, delicacy, beauty and who has four arms with which he holds the divine weapons like the disc (cakra), conch, etc. and who is always worshipped
and accompanied by the eagle (garuḍa) etc.\(^1\) Rāmānuja gives an exquistic description of this Divine Person that possesses not only grandeur and divine lustre and divine beauty but all auspicious qualities in their perfection and immense love and compassion (Karūṇa) for His creation. He showers love and compassion on his devotees and is ever eager to receive his devotees who worship Him as their sole end of life and their sole object of devotion. He is always anxious to help His devotees (bhaktas) to reach him and he removes from their path all impediments.\(^2\) He is not the blank and qualityless Absolute of Śaṅkara, but, is the most beautiful and grand Person (Īśvara) who possesses omni-science, omnipotence, omnipresence, all faultless auspicious qualities and profound love and compassion for His devotees.

Thus the ultimate Reality, the Brahman appears in a personal form but without limitations. The impersonal Brahman of Śaṅkara is transformed by Rāmānuja into a personal God possessing all the perfections of the Brahman. Śaṅkara's qualityless Brahman is too abstract and dry

\(^1\) Sarvadarśanasamgraha. p.116.
for an average individual who always seeks his end within the reach of his intellectual and emotional capacities. The Brahman of Śaṅkara can be understood only by the few most intelligent persons possessing a high power of abstraction. It is too dry and cold and fails to appeal to the heart of an average individual who also moves in search of something that would help him to rise above the worldly sufferings and imperfections and would give him consolation and solace in the times of his trials and tribulations. He seeks some power that is close and affectionate to him and cares to stand by him in the moments of his sufferings and gives him with love and compassion, strength and patience, inspiration, faith, enthusiasm and hope. Man, as he is weak and finite often demands such a support on which he can rely with absolute faith and confidence. He requires some power that he believes to be all-good and which assures him all cooperation and courage in the moments of his trials. Śaṅkara's philosophy of Brahman is excessively intellectualistic and it neglects the heart of man that seeks also emotional satisfaction from the object of his devotion. Śaṅkara's Brahman is blank and colourless and hence, it is incapable of satisfying the demands and cravings of the human heart. It evokes little
inspiration in the finite beings and fails to arouse faith, patience and courage, hope and enthusiasm in the finite beings. In Rāmānuja's theism, his Nārāyaṇa comes ahead with confidence, power and promise and seeks to give consolation, solace and promise of deliverance to the afflicted and troubled souls. Rāmānuja's Personal God, the Īśvara or Nārāyaṇa stands like a magnanimous support to all the weak groaning souls and assures them eternal bliss, perfect satisfaction, everlasting freedom and promise of no-more-return to the samsāra. He is standing for ever as a resort for all those that seek Him. He is ever ready to embrace whosoever runs to Him for protection and security. He assures all the men everlasting freedom from pain for which they are ever anxious. Such a God appealed more to the people and hence Rāmānuja's philosophy came to be more appreciated and was popularly accepted. It turned into a powerful religious cult and Rāmānuja proved to be a great religious leader who stood to embalm the troubled souls irrespective of their castes, creeds and social positions. Such a God is no doubt, infinitely superior to the individual souls in knowledge, power and glory but, He does not evoke terror and fright in the finite individuals but He invokes in them reverence as he enters into personal
relationships with them and remains ever prepared to shower
on them his immense affection, profound love and immeasurable
graces. As He becomes personally accessible to the finite
souls, His greatness and glory increase infinitely. He
commands from the finite souls reverence and devotion
voluntarily. Robert Flint passes very significant remarks
about the necessity of God as against the excessive
intellectualism of the atheists. He says -- "To the
atheist nature may be beautiful and sublime, but it must
be, above all terrible. Nature stands to him in place
of Deity, but is the mere embodiment of force, the god of
the iron foot, without ear for prayer, or heart for
sympathy, or arm for help. It is immense, it is sublime,
it sparkles with beauties, but it is senseless, aimless,
pitiless. It is an interminable succession of causes and
effects, with no reason or love as either their beginning
or end; it is an unlimited ocean of restlessness and change,
the waves of which heave and moan, under the influence of
necessity, in darkness for ever more; it is an enormous
mechanism, driving and grinding on of itself from age to age,
but towards no goal and for no good. We can only be
rationally free to enjoy nature when we have confidence that
one hand of an almighty Father is working the mechanism
of the universe and another guiding His children in the
midst of it so that neither wheel nor hammer shall injure one hair of their heads."\(^1\) Thus the necessity of God is supreme for the satisfaction of the human heart. God must not be only kind and affectionate but He must possess absolute power to control the nature and its working so that He can combat any evil arising out of it successfully and can extend protection and security to His children unfailingly. God must, therefore, be omnipotent and the final authority, the sovereign invincible power that can threaten, frighten and destroy evils of any magnitude that harass His children on the earth and against which they seek to shield themselves under the kind hand of God. Rāmānuja's God thus seeks to satisfy the metaphysical, affectional, religious, intellectual and moral demands of man.

Such a Supreme God appears in five different modes for the purposes of the devotion of God by the devotees and the creation of the world etc. Bhandarkar describes into details these following forms -- (I) The Para or the highest, in which mode Nārāyaṇa, called also Parabrahman and Paravāsudeva, lives in a city called Vaikunṭha, which is guarded by certain persons and which has doorkeepers;

\(^1\) Flint Robert -- Anti-Theistic Theories. p.31.
seated in a pavilion of gems on a couch in the form of the serpent śeṣa, placed on a throne having the eight legs, Dharma and others; attended by Śree, Bhū, Līlā; holding the celestial weapons conch-shell, discus; and others; adorned with celestial ornaments, such as tiara and others, possessed of numberless auspicious attributes, knowledge, power and others; and His presence being enjoyed by the eternal spirits such as Ananta, Garuḍa, Viṣvavksena and others, and by delivered souls. (II) Vyūha, in which the Para himself has assumed four forms, Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumma and Aniruddha for convenience of worship and for purposes such as creation etc. Of these, Vāsudeva is possessed of the six qualities (jñāna, bala, aisyāvarya, vīrya, śakti and tejas), Saṁkarṣaṇa has two, viz. Omniscience and sustaining power; Pradyumna, two, viz. controlling power and unchangeableness, and Aniruddha creative power and all-overcoming prowess. (III) Vibhava -- which mode consists of ten Avatāras, fish, tortoise etc. (IV) Antaryāmin -- in which mode He dwells in the heart and is to be seen by Yogins and accompanies the individual souls even when they go to heaven or hell. (V) Idols or images made of materials chosen by the worshippers.¹ In fact

these six attributes exist in all the four Vyūhas but only two of them manifest in accordance with their functions apportioned to them and, the other four remain unmanifest or dormant in them.¹

Rāmānuja holds that in Mokṣa the individual soul overcomes its false sense of complete separability from the Brahman being caused by its false identity with Prakṛti and the soul then, remains fused with the Brahman or the Supreme Self without losing the awareness of its own existence. Mahendranath Sircar gives a vivid and eloquent description of the state of liberation of the soul. He says -- "And in so far liberation implies this breaking of nature's bond, we can speak of the emancipated soul as getting into the infinite expanse and the transcendental realm. But it is in no sense the parting with a finite personality. In the finitude of the soul it feels and enjoys the infinite pulse. And this becomes possible through Šakti, the divine influence. Liberation in theistic sense is not the denial of the relativity of consciousness for in it is fully realized the import of the metaphysical relativity, which does not exclude difference, but includes and absorbs it in the transcendental

¹. Sarvadarśanasamgraha -- p.115.
apperception of unity. .... It is a freedom and necessity and both, freedom in the sense of a release from the divided vision and obstruction, necessity in the sense of utter dependence upon the infinite."¹ He further makes the relation between the two clearer and says that the infinite expresses its power and blessedness in and through the finite; the infinite Divine pours its blessedness and fullness into the finite and the finite receives it to its fullest capacities and is overfilled with the exuberance of the divine joy and bliss.

The realisation of the essential identity of the soul with the Brahman is the aim of a mumukṣu -- seeker of liberation. Rāmānuja recognises the need of all the three yogas or paths, (jñānayoga, karmayoga and bhaktiyoga) for the attainment of the state of final release. He does not at all dispute the necessity of knowledge for liberation. Knowledge is the first necessity; for, bondage arises out of nescience or avidyā which can be destroyed only by knowledge; but it is not any kind of knowledge such as knowledge by sense-perception or by inference or knowledge by word, by simply reading the texts. But the Brahman can be known properly and the individual's unity

¹. Sircar Mahendranath -- Comparative Studies in Vedāntism. pp.265,266.
with it can be realised only through meditation on it. The final state of liberation can be experienced only by means of intuitive experience of it. Rāmānuja therefore proposes devotion (bhakti) and total surrender to the Divine (Prapatti) for the attainment of liberation. His Bhakti or devotion is predominantly loveful reverence for theĪśvaras and this love for the Divine is completely fused with knowledge of the Brahman. Bhakti means for Rāmānuja a kind of intellectual love for Īśvara. It is not a blind and superstitious worship of God but it consists in thoroughly understanding the nature of the Īśvara or the Supreme Self and its relation with the individual souls and the objects of the world; it also consists in understanding that every soul is only a mode of the Supreme Self and the Self is its own innermost reality and that, in essence the two, the soul and the Supreme Self are of the same stuff. Therefore, the penance for Mokṣa presupposes the necessity of knowledge as the most fundamental prerequisite. Karma which consists in the discharge of the religious rites and moral duties and performances of religious worship of deities, austerity, pilgrimage, giving charity, praying God, offering salutations, singing songs about the glory of

God etc. are equally necessary. But they are subordinate. Bhandarkar says -- "Karmayoga and jñānayoga are necessary for the efficacy of the method of Bhakti. Karmayoga is the performance of all acts, rites and ceremonies without regard for their fruit. The Karmayoga purifies the soul and leads to jñānayoga or acquisition of knowledge. This knowledge consists in seeing oneself different from Prakṛti or matter, and an attribute of God himself (Śeṣa). This jñānayoga leads to Bhakti. Bhaktiyoga, or the method of Bhakti consists in continuous meditation accompanied by the practice of Yoga process." Bhakti is defined as 'the form of intense love towards Him (God)'. Nārada thinks that devotion is indicated by the condition of having dedicated all observances whatsoever to Him, and by the feeling of extreme uneasiness in losing Him from memory. Śāṅkilya defines it 'as the absolute attachment to God'. Rāmānuja says -- ".... he who possesses remembrance, marked by the character of immediate presentation (sākṣātkāra), and which itself is dear above all things since the object

remembered is such; he, we say, in chosen by the highest
Self, and by him the highest Self is gained. Steady
remembrance of this kind is designated by the word 'devo-
tion' (bhakti); for this term has the same meaning as
Upāsanā -- (meditation)." Rāmānuja employs the term
Bhakti in the sense of 'steady remembrance'. Rāmānuja
holds that mere hearing (śravaṇa) of the holy Scriptures,
reflection and meditation by remembrance are not sufficient
to realise the Self; but something more than that is
necessary and, that is the immediate presentation (pratyakṣatā). Such
a steady remembrance in the form of immediate presenta-
tion of the object of devotion is a kind of knowledge.
Rāmānuja says -- "... it is only knowledge in the form
of meditation which - being daily practised, constantly
improved by repetition, and continued up to death - is
the means of reaching Brahman, and hence all the works
connected with the different conditions of life are to be
performed throughout life only for the purpose of originating
such knowledge." Thus all the deeds possess only an
instrumental value in so far as they help this kind of
knowledge by constant remembrance of Īśvara. Thus,

1. Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr.Thibaut. 1.1.1.
p.16.
2. Ibid. 1.1.1. p.15.
3. Ibid. 1.1.1. p.16.
meditation or bhakti means concentrated and continuous thinking of the object of devotion by inhibiting other thoughts.\textsuperscript{1} The mind has the tendency to assume the form and nature of that object on which it dwells always. Therefore, real devotee has to cultivate indifference and passivity towards other objects of experience except the Brahman or the Supreme Self. Rāmānuja quotes the Vākyakāra and says that the development of such Bhakti depends upon the observance of the following discipline.

-- (i) \textit{viveka}, abstention from impure food from the point of view of the varṇāśramadharma. (ii) \textit{Vimoka} -- freeness of mind, abandonment of desires which bind the mind, (iii) \textit{abhyāsa} -- repetition (iv) \textit{kriyā} -- works, performance of sacrifice according to one's capacity, (v) \textit{kalyāṇa} -- virtuous conduct, truth-speaking, kindness to all, right disposition, charity and non-injury (vi) \textit{anavaśāda} -- freedom from dejection, abandoning cowardliness, and, (vii) \textit{anuddharṣa} -- absence of exultation, absence of too much satisfaction.\textsuperscript{2} The observances of these disciplines enable an individual to detach himself from the attachment to the external world and make progress in the concentration on his object of meditation. It is necessary to free the

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\textbf{References:}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Sinha Nandlal (Tr.) -- The Bhakti Sūtras of Narada. Sūtra 11. p.5.
\item Rāmānuja -- Com. on \textit{Vedānta Sūtras}. Tr. Thibaut. 1.1.1. p.17.
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\end{flushleft}
mind from alien influences and to fix it constantly on the one single object which is God. Rāmānuja advocates also the practice of the Yoga of the eight limbs (aṣṭaṅgas) for such a steady remembrance of God. He stresses the need of observing strictly all the eight parts of Yoga which are the yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna and samādhi in order to actually reach the final experience of Īśvara. When all these conditions which form the physical and mental discipline and go to prepare the mental background of the devotee for the final realisation of God (antimapratyaya) are fulfilled the bhakti becomes strengthened, the individual devotee becomes extremely keen and ardourous for God. He then becomes forgetful of his physical and mental separativeness. He becomes completely free from his selfishness, pride, vanity, narrowness of mind, passions and desires and remains always in the contemplation of Īśvara. When he has the depth and profundity of devotion in his heart he becomes qualified for the final stage of Prapatti, which consists in the complete self-surrender (śaraṇāgati) of the jīva to Īśvara. In this stage the devotee negates his private life and surrenders himself totally to Īśvara. It happens only once, at the death of the individual when even the prārabdha karma has come to an end. Prapatti consists in the total surrender of the individual soul to God with a
sense of absolute faith in Him and in His goodness and power to lift it up and make it free from the three kinds of pains. Rāmānuja recognises six factors that go to form prapattī; (i) acquisition of qualities which would make one fit for offering to God (ii) avoidance of conduct not acceptable to God (iii) faith that God would protect him (iv) appeal for protection (v) a feeling of one's own littleness and (vi) absolute surrender. The last is one with Prapatti and others are means to it.\(^1\) Prapatti is open to the people of all classes and castes while the jñāna and karma yogas are confined only to the upper three classes. When an individual has already been qualified (adhikārin) by means of jñāna and karma prapatti helps him certainly to reach the final stage. Āḻvārs of the southern school hold that prapatti is the only way to liberation. No other efforts are necessary for reaching the final state of liberation. While the northern school (Vaḍagalaś) holds that prapatti is one and not the only way to liberation. The former believes in the mārjāranāyaṇyāya the cat-theory according to which, the kitten is taken up by the cat with its mouth, the individual soul has only to surrender to God and has nothing else to do; God would release them by his grace; while the latter

\(^1\) Radhakrishnan S. — Indian Philosophy. Vol.II.p.705 (note).
school believes in the markaṭa-nyāya, the monkey-theory according to which, the young monkey is required to exert to stick to the mother; the individual soul has to keep vigilant to be always with God. Rāmānuja further holds that the individual soul assumes complete humility before God and likes to serve Him as its master (swāmin). It takes delight in giving itself up to the Supreme Self, it obtains His grace and enjoys the pleasure of His service (kainkarya) or (Dāsatva). It takes positive happiness in serving such an omniscient and merciful God. Rāmānuja further believes that only those who are qualified by their single devotion to God are shown grace by God and, they finally reach the state of liberation. One who has superabundance of love for God he alone becomes dearest (priyatamaḥ) to God.¹ The Supreme Self can be reached only by those who develop excessive and exclusive love and devotion for Him (ananya bhakti) by disregarding others and by showing indifference and disinterest in others.² But the individuals' efforts and austerious penance are not necessarily sufficient to lift them up to Him(God).

2. Ibid. p.146.
Rāmānuja says -- "And with equal certainty we know from Scripture that this Supreme Lord, when pleased by the faithful worship of his Devotees - which worship consists in daily repeated meditation on Him, assisted by the performance of all the practices prescribed for each caste and āśrama - frees them from the influence of Nescience which consists of Karman accumulated in the infinite progress of time and hence hard to overcome; allows them to attain to that supreme bliss which consists in the direct intuition of His own true nature; and after that does not turn them back into the miseries of saṁsāra."¹ Thus, God, when pleased, shows His grace to the prapanna or surrendered devotees, picks them up and, keeps them in his own company for ever. The powers of such released soul then remain no more eclipsed and diminished as when in saṁsāra but they fully develop and it has all its being in the supremely blissful intuition of the highest Brahman. As the soul enjoys all the infinite glories and auspicious qualities of Īśvara and are ever-contented there remains no need and possibility of entertaining any desire to come back to the earth to enjoy the earthly pleasures which are too inadequate and worthless for it. Moreover, God who so much loves such a soul would not send it back to suffer on earth.²

¹ Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 4.4.22. p. 770.
² Ibid. 4.4.22. p. 771.
The released souls cease to be governed by karma in the kingdom of God but they are then governed by their will as they are eternally free. They possess the power to enjoy whatever they desire only by their will and do not necessarily require physical body. As their intellectual power is non-contracted, they can extend as far as they like and can experience different experiences through different bodies without hindrance.¹ They can freely move about anywhere. They live in a bodiless state. They enjoy equality with the Brahman by casting off their physical bodies.² The released souls enjoy all powers, knowledge and good qualities of Īśvara excepting a few like creating the world and ruling and guiding the different forms of motion and rest belonging to animate and inanimate nature.³ Thus the released soul does not lose itself but maintains its distinctive consciousness and attains supreme equality (Paramām Śāmyām) with the highest Brahman.

Rāmānuja denies the possibility of Jīvanmukta, who overcomes Nescience but still continues to be in the physical body due to the Prārabdha Karma, the karma whose fruition has already begun. Rāmānuja disputes such a possibility.

1. Rāmānuja -- Com. on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut. 4.4.15. p.765.
2. Ibid. 4.4.5. p.759.
3. Ibid. 4.4.17. p.766.
and negates it on the ground that in the final state of liberation no defect (even the body) can survive when the knowledge of the Brahman dawns. He says therefore -- "... that Release, which consists in the cessation of Plurality, cannot take place as long as a man lives."\(^1\) Liberation to him is the final attainment of an unbreaking-fellowship with the Infinite and a likeness with Brahman in Being and knowledge.\(^2\) As Mahendranath Sircar says that the individual soul can draw the constituent matter of the form that it may assume at its will after becoming free from śuddha sattva and visualise itself. It is visualization but not materialization. If it is a form it is immaterial, but none the less real. It is also an expression of spiritual being and consciousness. Rāmānuja does not put a limit to spontaneous expression in spiritual life. It is a life of free expansion and free expression, beyond the calculation of human reason and intellect.\(^3\)

This is the idea of Mokṣa in the Viśiṣṭādvaita of

2. Ibid.4.4.4. Saṁya sādharmya vyapadēśo brahma-prakāra bhūtasya eva pratyagātmanah swarūpaṁ tatsamatā iti.
Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja seems to depart from the earlier systems like Buddhism, Čārvākism, Śāmkhya, Purva Mīmāṁsā in holding that the state of Mokṣa is not only a negative one consisting in the absence of pain, suffering and other conscious experiences; it is not also like the Mokṣa of Śāmkara according to whom the individual soul gets ultimately lost and dissolved into the Supreme Self, the Brahman; but it is a positive state in which the individual soul, though loses its physical and subtle body, maintains its separate consciousness and enjoys all the powers of the Brahman (God) except that of creation and regulation of the world. It also enjoys overwhelmingly the perfect intelligence, perfect bliss and all the innumerable auspicious qualities of the Supreme Self. It is a state of positive unending enjoyment of happiness in which the soul and the Self are equal and remain inseparable forever.

Nimbārka

Nimbārkācārya, another powerful leader of Vaiṣṇavism was a successor of Rāmānuja and was a predecessor of the dvaitādvin Madhāvācārya. He lived in the 11th century A.D. His philosophy resembles to a very great extent the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja. He was a Bhedābhedavādīn in as much as he believed that the individual
soul (jīva) and the world are identical in essence with the Brahman or Kṛṣṇa and still they are different from the Brahman as they possess their own distinct natures which are peculiar only in them. Nimbārka agrees with Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in holding that the Brahman is the unitary and ultimate Reality which stands as the source (sarga), sustenance (sthitī) and reabsorption (laya) of the whole world and the souls. But he rejects the Vivartavāda or (illusoriness of the world and the souls) of Śaṅkara and he agrees with Rāmānuja in holding that the Brahman as well as the individual soul (jīva) and the world (Prakṛti) are equally real. He also agrees with Rāmānuja in holding that the souls and the Prakṛti are the modes (prakāra or vikāra), the modifications of the Brahman.¹ The Brahman is related with the world by the relation of Bhinnābhinnā - difference and non-difference.² The Brahman is at the centre of Reality and, the individual souls and the matter are its own transformations. It is both the material cause (upādana kāraṇa) and the efficient cause (nimitta kāraṇa) of the world. It possesses unique and wonderful power (śakti) by means of which it transforms itself into the souls and the world and it assumes the sentient (cit)  

². Ibid. 4. Sarvābhinnābhinnno Bhagavān Vāsudevo viśvātmāiva.
and insentient (acit) forms.\textsuperscript{1} Though the Brahman is omniscient and omnipotent, it assumes all the finite forms possessing defects (doṣa) but still it maintains its absolute purity. It is not contaminated by its defects. It always remains pure and unchangeable. All changes belong to its effects in so far as it appears in the phenomenal realm being immanent in all its particular creations. In its transcendental aspect it remains for ever pure; it is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and possesses immense bliss, self-glory, immortality and pervasiveness.\textsuperscript{2} It is full of bliss (ānanda) and is independent (svatantra). The world is an effect in the sense that it is absolutely dependent (paratantra or asvatantra) on the Brahman for its origin and existence. The Brahman alone is ssvatantra, self-dependent or independent in so far as it is self-subsistent. It does not require any other source and support for itself, its origin and existence. It is self-originated and the support of itself. It is the ultimate eternal Being beyond which nothing exists. All the

\textsuperscript{1} Nimbārka -- Brahma Mīmāṁsā Bhāṣya. 1.4.26. Brahma eva nimitta upādānāṁca, Pariṇāmat. Sarvajñāṁ sarvasakti-brahma svaśaktiviśeṣeṇa jagadākāram svātmānaṁ Pariṇamayaṁ aṅkṛtena swarūpeṇa śaktimātā pariṇatameva bhavati.

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid. 1.3.9.
particular finite things are but its creations or effects in so far as it is their underlying substantial nature and, they are dependent for their origin and subsistence upon it; they also return to it at their end. They are therefore, dependent paratantra as they are governed (niyāmyatva) by the Supreme Self or the Brahman. They cannot exist apart from the Brahman. In pralaya or in the pre-creation state they potentially exist in the Brahman and become actualised in the visible concrete form due to the wonderful creative power (asādhāraṇa śakti) of the Brahman just as a piece of cloth becomes visible with its expanse (prasārita) when it is unrolled.¹ In all the forms the universe exists in the Brahman and the Brahman exists in it as its innermost reality (antaryāmin) by remaining immanent in it. Thus, the cosmic order is not an illusory projection of māyā but it is the self-actualisation of the creative potencies (śakti) of the Brahman. The Brahman is the śakta and it is the very stuff and substance of the universe of mind and matter.

Nimbārka is a bhedābhedavadādin and he brings out the underlying identity of the plurality of souls and matter by presenting the similes of the ocean and its waves and

¹ Nimbārka — Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhaṣya. 2.1.18. Yathā ca pūrvasamveṣṭitaḥ paścātprasāritapāṭaḥ tadvat viśvam.
the sun and its rays which are inseparable from each other; though the waves are non-different from the ocean and the rays of the sun are non-different from the sun, their differences are not unreal. Similarly, though the souls and the inanimate objects are made of the stuff of the Brahman and so they are non-different from the Brahman, they bear their own individual differences.1 Nimbārka says that the effects are non-different (ananya) from the cause in the sense that they are not absolutely different (atyanta bhinnatvam) from them.2 He maintains that the Brahman, or the Supreme Self (Paramātman) is the ruler (adhipati) of all, the controller or the regulator of all;3 these words being used in the possessive case indicate that though the souls are His effects and modes He is different from them in virtue of His independent and extraordinary nature. Thus, bheda or difference means the possibility of existence which is separate, at the same time dependent (paratantra sattā bhāvaḥ) while a-bheda or non-difference means the impossibility of an independent existence --

3. Ibid. 1.3.44.
(svatantra sattā abhavaḥ). Thus in the text 'Tattvamasi' the word 'tat' signifies the Brahman which is omniscient, omnipotent, independent and the Self of all; the word 'tvam' signifies the individual soul which depends for its existence upon the Brahman; and the word 'asi' is the copula signifying the relation of the two which is difference, not inconsistent with non-difference and, which can be illustrated by the relation between the fire and its sparks or by that between the sun and its lustre. Thus, the Brahman or Paramātman is bhinnabhinna different and non-different at the same time with the souls and the world. Nimbārka gives equal reality and importance to the difference while Rāmānuja gives primary importance to the unity of the Brahman by reducing the differences to its adjectives (viṣeṣaṇa). Rāmānuja gives more emphasis on the unitary aspect of the Brahman which is only qualified by the parts or the souls and the world; while Nimbārka puts both on equal par and calls both real in the same sense.

Nimbārka discards the illusoriness of the world being caused by superimposition (adhyāsa) as Śaṅkara says. He argues that the world which is superimposed out of ignorance upon the Brahman must exist somewhere as a real

object; it cannot be entirely imaginary and illusory. He regards the world also real. Nimbārka divides the whole reality into three parts which are equally real; (i) the bhokțr -- the individual, sentient soul with the capacity of sentience and experience, (ii) the bhogya -- the material world which forms the object of experience of the soul and, (iii) the niyanțr who controls and regulates their functions from within and on which the bhokțr (cit) and the bhogya (acit) are absolutely dependent. Nimbārka designates the Brahman as Kṛṣṇa and describes it as the Paramātman who is naturally free from all faults like ignorance, passion, hatred and attachment. He is the storehouse of all beneficent attributes, is adorable by all, has four forms of Vyūhas (i.e. Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣāna, Pradyumna and Aniruddha) and appears under various incarnations like Matsya, Kūrma etc. He is the material (upādāna) and the efficient (nimitta) cause of the universe.¹ Kṛṣṇa is (vareṇya) adored by all because he has a holy celestial body and celestial qualities such as beauty, tenderness, sweetness and charm. All these are non-material (aprākṛta) though inanimate.

Thus, Nimbārka indicates the essential identity

¹. Ghate V.S. -- Vedānta. p.31.
of the individual souls (jīvas) with Kṛṣṇa, the Paramātman or the Brahman and still he maintains that all the jīvas are different in nature from the Brahman or Paramātma and also from the prakṛti or acīt. The Jīva is atomic in size and becomes pervading by means of its attribute of knowledge. The jīva is the knower (jñātṛ), the agent (kartṛ) and the experiencer (bhokṛ); it is limited in its knowledge and bliss while in saṃsāra as it is enveloped by karma which is caused by avidyā which is beginningless but terminable. The jīva is limited in its knowledge and powers and it suffers in the world. There are innumerable souls, one for each body, and each soul is the knower as well as knowledge at the same time, knowledge being its property (dharma). The soul suffers as long as it is in bondage, which is a result of ignorance (avidyā). The soul becomes free from the worldly afflictions (kleśa) by dissociating itself from the prakṛti and karma. It attains liberation (Mokṣa) when it becomes one with the Brahman finding its shelter in it. But it does not lose its individuality in Paramātman even in Mokṣa. It enjoys then the perfect knowledge and bliss of Paramātman. It enjoys the divine bliss, omniscience and divine glory in Mokṣa. Mokṣa can be attained by prapatti, total and unconditional surrender to the Paramātma who by His grace liberates the finite souls and gives them eternal rest and delight.
The soul (jīva) is atomic in size;\(^1\) it is extremely minute and is as minute as the hundredth part of the extremity of a hair when divided into hundred parts.\(^2\) It occupies some one portion in the body and still it can experience all the sensations occurring in other parts of the body. It can experience any experience occurring all over the body without any difficulty for, it occupies the whole body by means of its knowledge or consciousness, which is its attribute just as a sandalpaste gives delight to the whole body though placed on some one part of it.\(^3\)

Nimbārka holds like Rāmānuja that the jīva or individual soul is a possessor of knowledge and it spreads all over the body just as the light of a lamp placed in the interior of a room spreads in all the corners of the room.\(^4\) The soul is no doubt, constituted of intelligence (jñānasvarūpaḥ) but it is not intelligence itself as Śāmkara holds. On the contrary, Nimbārka maintains a difference between the two, by regarding knowledge as an attribute (guṇabhūta) of

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2. Ibid. 2.3.12. Eṣo anuh ātma bālāgra śatabhāgasya śatadhākālpitasya ca bhago jīva...
3. Ibid. 2.3.23. Dehaikadeśastho api kṛtsnaṁ dehaṁ candana-binduḥ yathā lādayati tathā jīvo api prakāsyaṛati.
4. Ibid. 2.3.25. Dehe prakāśo jīvagunāt eva kośṭhe dīpālokoḍivat.
the soul; the soul that has knowledge as its attribute as
the fragrance is to the sandalwood, is different from
knowledge or intelligence; it is the abode or substratum
of such an attribute.\textsuperscript{1} Thus, he does not identify know­
ledge with the soul like Śaṅkara; he does not make the
knower and the knowledge the same. On the contrary, he
maintains that knowledge is its attribute (dharma) and it
is its possessor (dharmin).\textsuperscript{2} The soul is the knower, the
knowing subject that is conscious by means of knowledge
which acts to it as its attribute which spreads everywhere.
The soul is a part of the all-pervading (vibhu) Brahman
but it being not-pervading, it does not come into conflict
with other souls in its experiences and acts. Every
soul being atomic, is confined to itself and to its own
body, and so, it is not able to experience the pleasures
and pains of other souls.\textsuperscript{3} Every soul is conscious of its
own existence which is different from its knowledge. The
jīva presents to itself as the knowing subject in the form
of 'I'. It is also the Ego (ahamartaḥ) and it continues

1. Nimbārka -- Brahma Mīmāṁsā Bhāṣya. 2.3.36. Guṇabhūtaśya
jñānasya vyatirekastu gandhavat upapadyate, etādṛṣa-
guṇāśrayam jīvaṁ.

2. Ibid. 2.3.27.

3. Ibid. 2.3.48. Vibhoḥ amśatvē api guṇena vibhutvē api
cia atmanāṁ svarūpato aṅutvena sarvagatavābhāvāt
karmādi vyatireko nāsti.
own nature. He is not inferior (gauṇa) to any other
Superior Being, He does not derive his powers from any
other source but Himself.\(^1\) He derives His independence
from His own eternal nature. He is the doer (karta) of
all actions directly or indirectly. All actions are caused
by God in the sense that they are caused at the will of
God.\(^2\) No action in the world can take place without the
will or consent of God for, He alone is the prompter or
impeller (prēraka) of the actions in all the states. His
independence (svātantrya) is based upon his omnipotence
(sarvaśaktimātva). He is present in all the things, not
in the gross from but in an extremely subtle form
(paramaśūkṣma). He is present everywhere inside and
outside. Whatever is seen and heard is pervaded by Nārāyaṇa.\(^3\)
Madhva further holds that the same Brahman or the Ātman
possesses all the infinite qualities since, it is the
innermost Reality or the cause of all.\(^4\) He possesses
wonderful powers and with the help of these powers He produces
the multifarious things of the world, from the prakṛti.\(^5\)

1. Jayatīrtha - Tattva prakāśikā. 3. p.42. Īśvarasya
pūrṇaśaktitvātswātantryam jīvasya tadviparyayāda-
swātantryam.
2. Ibid. 3. p.43. Swātantryeṇa kartṛtvam api to Īśvare-
cchayā eva.
4. Ibid. p.36.
5. Ibid. p.26. Paramātmano vicīrāḥ ca śaktayaḥ santi na
anyeṣam.
He acts as the inner controller (antarātmā) of all the things of the universe and still, He has His own different nature which is not possessed by any other thing produced by Him. Madhva further states that God, the Puruṣottama who is devoid of qualities (nirguṇaḥ) becomes many and still remains one (ekibhūya) and without any defect or contamination.¹

The jīva is a finite being limited in its knowledge and bliss. Its capacities are limited due to its physical and psychical limitations which are caused by nescience or avidyā. Similarly, the jīva is of atomic size, it is neither of the size of the body which it occupies nor is it all-pervasive; since it does not evolve that which is possible for an all-pervading principle.² The jīva or soul possesses two aspects (upādhi) -- one is its own essential and unchanging nature (svarūpa), and the other is its changing external nature (bāhya). The external aspect consists of the physical body, senses, mind, the subtle body and the saṃskāras which are perishable while, its real essential nature remains constant; the soul

remains in its own true nature (śthiti) in liberation (mukti).\textsuperscript{1} Thus, in the state of liberation the jīva enjoys its native qualities constituting its own nature (svarūpa). In spite of the changes in its external nature the jīva does not lose its own inherent nature which is in essence, the same as that of God, being constituted of knowledge (jñāna) and bliss (ānanda) which are only imperfectly manifested in the jīva while living in the worldly life. The infinite knowledge and infinite bliss remain latent or potential in the jīva so long as it does not recover its own real nature by discarding ignorance (avidyā).

As the soul becomes gradually free from its ignorance and realises its true nature its lost qualities like perfect jñāna and perfect ānanda and other Divine powers begin to become manifest just as with the advancing age and full development of men and women begin to manifest their procreating capacity in their mature age. In a similar way, as Jayātīrtha says even though the soul possesses intrinsically in its real nature the qualities of knowledge, bliss etc. the soul becomes happy when they begin to get actualised by manifesting themselves by the grace of God. They are not newly created but they simply

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\textsuperscript{1} Jayātīrtha -- Tattvaprakāṣikā. 2.3. p.119. Jīvopādhiḥ dvidhā proktaḥ swarūpaṁ bahya eva ca. Bahyopādhirlayāṁ yāti muktāvanyasya tu sthitiḥ.
\end{quote}
become explicit for which the seekers of liberation have to undertake special exertion.1

Thus, the soul is different from the Supreme Self (Paramātman) in so far as its powers are limited (alpaśakti) and its knowledge and bliss are fragmentary. The soul is different from the Supreme Self as they are related to each other as the servant (sevaka) or the worshipper, the devotee, and that who is worshipped and served (sevya); just as a king (rājā) is served by his servants. That which serves is definitely different from that which is served,2 and, this relation continues even in Mokṣa. Though the jīva is different from the Ātman or the Supreme Self both are equally real; no one is real at the cost of the other. Every soul is different from another soul (jīva) in virtue of the differences of its experiences of pleasure and pain, knowledge, love, hatred. A jīva is not, therefore, an ephemeral entity, but it is eternal; it persists inspite of its external changes; it is that which transmigrates from one birth to another birth to experience the rewards of its past karmas. It recollects its past experiences. The jīva is, therefore, the knower, the sentient subject of the cognitions and other experiences

that it obtains by coming into contact with the external world by means of its sense organs and motor organs. A knower has his experience through his sākṣī. It is evident to oneself as his ego. Every jīva is different from other jīvas in so far as it has its own unique experience in virtue of its unique inborn dispositions which are never common or the same for two souls.

The jīva possesses the freedom of choice and the freedom of action but that freedom of action (kartṛṭva) also is not enjoyed by the jīva unqualifiedly, unconditionally and absolutely. Though the jīva is possessed of the power to act (kartṛṭvāsakti) it is not its entire possession (jīvādhīna) but, that is at the same time dependent upon the Divine Will (Īśvarādhīna).¹ The doing or not-doing of an action is solely determined by God and not by the finite soul. It is true that as the jīva is solely dependent on the God for all its powers and experiences God Himself must be the doer of actions and the maker of choices thereof. But it seems that God must not be partaking every act of choice of the soul for, had it been so, the soul would never have mistaken in its choice and suffered for it as God knows what the evil is and what its consequences are.

¹. Jayatīrthā -- Tattvaprakāśikā. 2.3. p.121.
In actuality, we find that men very frequently stumble in the selection of the good and suffer for the same. But God is all-wise and, he being a possessor of perfect knowledge understands in anticipation the results of all acts. He cannot be mistaken in his choice and similarly, He would not choose a bad or an evil act, since, He possesses only the best things. For Him no evil exists at all, because, the very existence of an evil which is against His essentially good and auspicious nature challenges his omnipotence and delimits it. Nothing against God can ever exist because He is the final Reality and a storehouse of all powers which are invincible and hence, it cannot be challenged by any evil. However, if God assumes the doership (kartṛtva) of actions of every soul God Himself would be involved in the fallacy of choosing the evil either out of ignorance of it or out of falling prey to its temptation; in both cases His omniscience and omnipotence and inherent auspiciousness are challenged. Therefore, God is responsible for the actions of the jīvas only indirectly in so far as He supplies them the necessary energy for choice and action. God adopts also the doctrine of Karma or the law of moral retribution by which every doer has to reap the consequences of his actions, good or bad, as the case may be. God can forgive any soul at any time if he is exclusively devoted to Him and thus, He
releases him for ever; but God does not disturb the general law of karma, according to which, the souls which are the doers of actions have to reap the fruits of their past deeds. God is, no doubt, responsible for the actions of individual souls but it is true only so far as He is the final prompter or propeller (kārayitā) of actions; He has also adopted the law of karma strictly in prompting the jīvas in accordance with their past deeds, and, He gives them works and enjoyments only as they deserve. God adopts the law of karma in actuality to prove His impartiality and to make Himself free from the charge of being unfair or unkind (nirghṛṇa) to some and partial (viṣama) to some others by showing His favour in the form of His grace.¹ He does not misuse His powers to pardon and forgive and to give direct release. He allows the souls to attain mokṣa in the natural course in accordance with their qualifications, purity, efforts and worth. Only in exceptional cases, He uses power to give redemption directly to exhibit His omnipotence and supremacy over the doctrine of karma.

1. Jayatīrtha -- Tattvaprakāśikā. 2.3. p.121. Svasya vaishamyayairghṛṇya pariharāya ca jīvasyaanādikarmapravatnayogyatāpekaṣa eva jīvam prārayati.
All the jīvas are the various manifestations of Īśvara in the form of reflections (pratibimba) of the one Īśvara who serves as the object reflected (bimba) and therefore, that Īśvara who has been reflected in all the souls is the object of intuition for them. The infinite names and forms of Hari are manifested by means of gradations (vyūhas). Even though all the souls are the reflections of the one Supreme Self because of their differences (vaicitrya) in their cognition (vidyā) and in their karma (adṛṣṭa) there occur differences in existence of the gods, demons (dānava) and human beings (mānava) etc.¹ Madhva further maintains that Īśvara who is the impeller (préraka) of the actions of the jīvas is also the awarde of the fruits of actions (phaladātā) corresponding to them; but this is done too indirectly. Īśvara does not directly participate and intervene in any action and its fruits; even the orderliness of the unseen principle (adṛṣṭa) of karma which distributes proper rewards for certain actions and not for other actions, depends upon Īśvara for its operations for, He is the ultimate source of all energy which is required for all kinds of activities. Not only the particular activity of giving reward (phaladānakriyā) but even the existence of the unseen depends upon God.²

¹ Jayatīrtha -- Tattvaprakāśikā. 2.3. p.124.
² Ibid. 3.2. p.162.
The adṛṣṭa depends on Ṣvara for the energy (cetanā) which is necessary for connecting deeds with their results, and the adṛṣṭa being itself dependent on God has to derive the necessary energy from God to carry on its operations. Thus, ultimately the process of awarding rewards to the souls (phaladānakriya) is carried on by God only remotely as He is the only source of energy which He supplies to all His dependents (āśrita).  

Madhva recognises three kinds of jīvas or souls like Nimbārka and Rāmānuja. (i) Those fit for the attainment of the final bliss, (ii) those always going through the circyle of existences (samsārin), (iii) those fit for the condition of darkness. The Rśis and the best of men belong to the first class; ordinary men to the second class; and demons, ghosts and violent of men belong to the third class. All these souls are different from each other and from the Supreme Self. Radhakrishnan mentions the traditional three forms of the conscious souls as recognised by Madhva. According to him they are (i) those eternally free (nitya) like Lakṣmī; (ii) those who have freed themselves from samsāra (mukta) -- devas and men, Rśis and fathers and

1. Jayatīrtha -- Tattvaprakaśika. 3.2. p.161. Ṣvara eva phaladātā na karma; tasya cetanatvena phaladanopapattēḥ.  
(iii) the bound (baddha), including the (muktiyogya) eligible for liberation; it also includes those who are intent for hell or the blinding darkness (tamoyogya) or those who are bound to the circuit of saṁsāra for all time (nityasaṁsāriṇāḥ). This classification is based upon the three guṇas or attributes. The sāttvika soul goes to heaven, the rājasa revolves in saṁsāra, while the tamasa falls into hell.¹

_Mokṣa_

Madhva holds that Mokṣa can be attained by the right knowledge of the Brahman, of one's own nature and of the world and their differences; but according to Him knowledge is equivalent to upāsanā or worship of the Brahman which becomes possible only by a faithful total surrender to the Divine. According to Madhva, Mokṣa is dependent on God (Īśvarādhīna). If God is pleased with His devotee He shows His grace to him and gives him Mokṣa. In Mokṣa the soul becomes bodiless, formless and completely free from the karmas and the subtle body. The soul enjoys the company of Īśvara and lies at rest in its own nature, which is one of perfect knowledge and perfect bliss. It enjoys all the Divine powers except that of creation and governance of the world. The soul retains its distinction even in Mokṣa. Difference or distinction (bheda) is eternal.

¹ Radhakrishnan S. -- Indian Philosophy. Vol.II. p.744.
In Mokṣa too the jīva maintains its independent existence and enjoys the full dependence of itself upon Isvāra and maintains the sense of itself being a servant of Isvāra. Mokṣa is attained by the direct knowledge of Isvāra and by the cultivation of ethical qualities like renunciation (vairāgya) etc. Yogic practices act as auxiliary to it.

The knowledge of the Isvāra or Brahman also is dependent on Isvāra Himself. Knowledge has two forms, the one is that of the world which leads to further attachment and the bondage of the world, becomes firmer thereby; the second is that of Isvāra which leads to the attainment of Mokṣa.

According to Jayatīrtha the curiosity of the Brahman is equivalent to upāsanā which means worship.1 Upāsanā according to him, consists in the contemplation of Isvāra after fully studying the scriptures and removing all kinds of ignorance and doubt from the mind about the nature of Isvāra. The contemplation also is the contemplation of the pure and blissful nature of the Paramātma, who is free from all sinful qualities by means of observing all the rules of worship like sandhyāvandana etc.2 Mokṣa is attained by the contemplation of Paramātma (dhyānenaiva)

2. Ibid. 3.3. p.164.
and of His extraordinary (aloukika) attributes.¹ Madhva
gives supreme importance to bhakti as the most indispensable
means for the attainment of Mokṣa. He states that merely
attending to the scripture and the grace of the guru is
not sufficient but the bhakti also must be practised along
with them.² It is necessary for a seeker of Mokṣa to
concentrate his full attention on the Self and he must
worship the Self (Viṣṇu). Everywhere he must realise the
presence of the Ātma (Īśvara, Brahman).³ According to
Madhva the following qualities are necessary for the
attainment of liberation -- (i) Renunciation (vairāgya)
(ii) Equanimity (śama) and self-control (dama), (iii)
Acquaintance with love, (iv) Self-surrender (śaraṇāgati),
(v) Attendance on Guru, (vi) Acquisition of knowledge from
Guru, (vii) Reflection, (viii) Devotion (bhakti), (ix)
Love of God (Paramātmabhakti), (x) Sympathy and love for
others, (xi) Performance of rites without desires, (xii)
The Avoidance of prohibited deeds, (xiii) Resigning every
act to Hari, (xiv) Knowledge of Viṣṇu, (xv) Knowledge of
the five distinctions, (xvi) Distinguishing Prakṛti from
Puruṣa and all beings issuing from Nārāyaṇa, (xvii) Reprobation
of false doctrines and (xviii) Upāsanā - learning Śāstras.⁴

¹: Jayatīrtha -- Tattvaprakāśikā. 3.3. p.169.
²: Madhva -- Madhvabhāṣya. p.57.
³: Ibid. p.66.
Thus, Madhva stresses the need of cultivating all the important ethical virtues and an attitude of renunciation and also the Yogic practices like yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhyāna, dhāraṇa and samādhi as the expediting agencies for the attainment of Mokṣa.

As Īśvara is the final prompter of all actions, Mokṣa also is under the control of Īśvara and hence, the grace of God is absolutely necessary for it. The seeker of liberation (mumukṣu) must always think of Īśvara and Īśvara only and of nothing other than Īśvara.¹ The liberated souls (muktāḥ) enjoy perfect happiness and no pains; they cross over all the griefs of life and become free from all sins and merits; they become free from all defects and faults (nivṛttadōṣāḥ). There cannot be any other desire in the muktas for, any other object except Īśvara is not worthy of their desire.² The worship (upāsanā) of Hari is extremely pleasing to the devotee; when he enters the blissful (ānandamaya) Hari he ceases to be reborn, ceases to die, to diminish or to increase. He enjoys as he likes, he drinks as much as he desires, he plays as much as he likes.

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For the mukta nothing painful (apriyam) exists; whence can there be pain when happiness is present always?\(^1\) Jayatīrtha says that pain (duḥkha) arises in the samsāra or worldly life from dependence (asvātantrya) and the muktas or liberated souls are eternally liberated and hence, they resemble God.\(^2\) The muktas do not entertain their own desires but their desires are in tune with those of Īśvara. The muktas are dependent on and therefore, governed by Paramātman; they are not independent. They pursue the desires of Paramātman and therefore, all their desires are fulfilled and hence, they are ever-satisfied. They would entertain pain and suffering when they desire that which is not in tune with the wish of Īśvara. But the muktas desire exactly in tune with the Bhagavān (God) and therefore, for them remains no cause to come to grief.\(^3\) The liberated souls attain the Paramātman in the sense that they attain penetration in the being of Paramātman (sāyujyatā) and thus, having reached (prāpya) Him the jīvas enjoy various pleasures (bhogān) there. Whatever happiness the Supreme Self or Paramātman has, the muktas enjoy there. They participate in the enjoyment of the

\(^1\) Madhva -- Madhva Bhāṣya. p.75. Ḥarārupāsanā cātra sadaiva sukharūpiṇī na aprīyam kincidapi tu muktānām vidyate. Sukhameva tu sadoditam.
\(^2\) Jayatīrtha -- Tattvaprakāśikā. 4.2. p.209.
\(^3\) Ibid. 4.2. p.210.
perfect bliss (pūrṇānanda) of the Paramātman and, though they are devoid of body of their own they enjoy by entering into the body of the Paramātman.\(^1\) Thus, the muktas enjoy fully along with the Paramātman all His good qualities to their perfection. Madhva agrees with his predecessors like Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Yāmuna etc. in holding that the soul remains distinct even in Mokṣa and it is not lost in it. It enjoys positive ānanda in Mokṣa even though in it there is the absence of body and its pride (dehābhimāna). The soul enjoys in the state of Mokṣa inspite of the absence of the body just as though one does not have the pride of the external body when one enjoys in the state of dream.\(^2\) The souls in the state of liberation enjoy happiness which is entirely devoid of any element of sorrow (nirduḥkhaḥ), for, otherwise the Bhagavān or Paramātman will face the absurdity of not possessing the excellence (sarvottamattva). The souls being in God who is the abode of all kinds of perfections cannot lack there any satisfaction.\(^3\) They are

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2. Ibid. 4.4. p.221. Yathā khalu svapnāvasthāyām bahyadehābhimānābhavē api bhogāḥ tathā muktaiḥ dehābhavē api bhogopapatteḥ.
3. Ibid. 4.4. p.221.
all-satisfied (sarvatṛpta). Discontent and imperfection in bliss and knowledge would be incompatible with the Divine rule in Mokṣa. The mukta breaks all kinds of its bonds with the world. The mukta does not have any relation with the world; still inspite of them, it has desires and they are duly satisfied. The liberated souls are not able to conduct the affairs of the world.\(^1\) As they lose all their connections with the world no reason is left for them to return to the world. They attain the final liberation (mokṣa) not to return to the world again.\(^2\)

Madhva's special contribution lies in making everything dependent on God and in making God responsible for every experience and event of the world. According to him, God is responsible for knowledge as well as for ignorance, for bondage as well as for Mokṣa. Whatever happens, happens at the will of God and God is the ultimate agent of all events of human experience. Madhva consistently maintains that the final emancipation or Mokṣa occurs only with the grace of God who is to be sought by the most ardent faith and devotion for Him and also by the knowledge of scriptures and of Him and of the five distinctions;

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2. Ibid. 4.4. p.223. Tataśca na tasya punarāvṛttīḥ.
the karma or moral duties and religious rites help as subservient to it. Knowledge gets transformed into bhakti which ends into a total self-surrender of the jīva to the Paramātman who is the final authority, as He alone wields the Supreme power necessary to overcome the evils of the world and save from them the souls. The devotee has to undertake serious efforts to attain the grace of God by qualifying himself (adhikārin) by practising the various ethical virtues and yogic practices and other prescribed means. An all-absorbing love for God with aversion for all things other than God is absolutely necessary. He has to strive from below to rise above by becoming more and more worthy of the Divine grace and the Paramātman has to lift him up to His bosom by removing all the impediments from his path. Thus, theism cannot effect emancipation of the individual soul without the Divine grace. The purely human efforts always prove to be insufficient for the deliverance of the souls. Nicol Macnicol says -- "For theism to be possible man must be recognized as a self-determining agent, whose character is not externally fixed but, for whom the future may be a land of hope and promise. He must be one, God helping him, burst the bonds of habit, and enter into the experience of a moral victory that is really his, and the God whom he knows must be one who can
bring him into such an experience. There must be windows in his sky through which the light of divine forgiveness can stream into his penitent heart. The black clouds that legalism breeds - the clouds of sin and retribution must not be doomed to hang for ever as an unbroken pall over his life." It is true of every theistic system that the human efforts prove to be insufficient and hence, futile to acquire the final state of Mokṣa; the help of God becomes absolutely necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. Madhva's emphasis on the need of the Divine grace for Mokṣa is not thus unjustified. Though he starts with the five fundamental real distinctions (bhēdas) ultimately he ends as an Absolutist by making God or Paramātman all-in-all, responsible for every event of the life of man and of the earth. As he remarks in the Māṇḍukya Bhaṣya the duality or differentiation is only caused by Māyā which is the wonderful power of the Īśvara and non-difference (advaita) is transcendentally real. Thus the differences not possessing their own independent power and worth to maintain themselves are deprived of their true reality by making them absolutely dependent on the Paramātman. The differences lose their reality by being made entirely dependent on the Paramātman.

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Madhva interprets the famous text 'That art thou' as 'thou art His' - 'Tvāṁ tadīyaḥ asī' or 'Tvāṁ tasya asī', which means that the individual soul belongs to God, that it is His as it cannot exist apart from Him. According to Madhva, therefore, the individual soul realises intuitively that it belongs to the Paramātman; and that is its real nature.

Śuddhādvaita of Vallabha

Vallabhācārya, who lived in the fifteenth century was a very prominent Vaiṣṇava Ācārya. He was an extreme devotee of Kṛṣṇa who was his Parabrahman. He was preeminently a saint and a God-intoxicated man. He preached the gospel of Divine-love (bhakti) as a means of attaining salvation. He was not given mainly to scholastic and analytical studies of the scriptures, but he preferred to remain a devout worshipper of Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa. He had created such an enchanting atmosphere that the men and women around him were filled through and through with the most ardent love for Kṛṣṇa in various forms. He preached the doctrine of love and devotion (bhakti) as the necessary means of salvation.

Vallabha was a complete antagonist of Śaṅkara
in as much as he denounced Śaṅkara's doctrine of the illusoriness of the world (Māyāvāda). Vallabha was also a thoroughgoing Advaitin (Śuddhādvaitin) who believed that the ultimate Reality is only one, the Brahman, which is the same as Kṛṣṇa and is all-pervading; and it itself is present everywhere as it is all-pervading and every thing that exists in the world is nothing but the Brahman itself or the Kṛṣṇa Himself in different forms. The whole universe is nothing but purely Brahman without a second (Śuddhādvaita) manifesting itself in different forms. He believed that every thing that exists is nothing but Brahman and Brahman itself. The Brahman is characterised as the sat (existence), cit (intelligence) and ānanda (joy or bliss), which is with form (sākāra), one (ekam), omnipotent (sarvaśakti), the doer of all acts (sarvakartṛ) and from it is created this world. The Brahman itself is the world, the effect (kārya), and, it itself is the cause (kāraṇa) of this effect. The Brahman gets itself transformed into the world. The same and perfect Brahman possessed of saccidānanda by suppressing some of its attributes (tirobhāva) assumes the form of the imperfect objects of the world. When it manifests or evolves (āvirbhāva) its hidden or obscured attributes it becomes

1. Giridhara Maharāja -- Śuddhādvaitamārtanda. Śloka 8.
2. Ibid. Śloka 6. Kāryasya brahmarūpasya brahmaiva syāt tu kāraṇam.
the same perfect and pure Brahman. The world therefore, appears due to the suppression (tirobhāva) of some attributes of the Brahman; when those qualities are manifested clearly the same thing begins to appear as the pure Brahman.¹ The Brahman has become all this (existence) voluntarily (svecchayā) just for sporting, just as a serpent out of sport forms coils.² The universe is an effect of the Brahman (Brahmakāryam) only voluntarily on the part of the Brahman. Thus, the Brahman is the whole cause of the world. The Brahman itself undergoes transformation by its unique powers (sāmarthya) and assumes the various forms of the objects of the world and the jīvas by suppressing some of its attributes. The multifarious differences in the world exist due to Brahman in its state of effect (Kāryataya) assumed by Hari voluntarily just sportively. The bheda (difference) exists only in the form of the effect (kāryarūpatayā) and, in its causal state there is no difference at all.³ The world is one with the Brahman (tādātmya) as it is nothing but the Brahman itself that has assumed its form by suppressing two of its attributes joy (ānanda) and intelligence (cit). Thus, it is the pure Brahman

¹ Giridhara Mahārāja -- Šuddhadvaitamārtanda. Šloka 11.
³ Ibid. Šloka 32.
(Śuddha Brahman) in its states of cause and effect and, it is not qualified by any other thing like Māyā.¹ Vallabha was a thorough monist and therefore, he was unwilling to admit the existence of any other thing like Māyā responsible for the creation of the world. Vallabha says that the world (prapāṇca) is the effect of the Bhagavān and is therefore of His stuff (tadrūpaḥ); and the world has come into existence by means of the Māyā.² But Māyā is not the cause of illusion according to Vallabha, as Śaṅkara held it to be. The word Māyā changes its connotation in the hands of Vallabha and, he describes it as the power to become all things and it resides in God.³ With this power (Māyā) God has transformed Himself and formed this world out of Himself. Thus, the Brahman or God acts as the material cause (upādāna kāraṇa) and the efficient cause (nimitta kāraṇa) of the world. The world is already present in a potential form in the Brahman and its creation lies in its manifestation by suppressing the intelligence (cit) and joy (ānanda) of itself. Vallabha further maintains that the world (prapāṇca) is not a creation of the prakṛti, nor is it produced from the atoms of the fundamental

to persist not only in the waking state but also in the states of dream and deep sleep; it becomes visible from one's expressions after getting up from sleep as 'I slept happily'. It continues to persist even in the state of liberation. It means the ego-sense or the sense of 'I-hood' that belongs to the Parabrahman also, for it is frequently found that Kṛṣṇa refers to himself in the first person. The soul or jīva does not lose its distinctive self-consciousness even in Mokṣa; it persists there as an independent entity to enjoy the divine bliss though it does not maintain any separation from the Brahman; in this respect he agrees with Rāmānuja.

The soul (jīva) is also the agent (kartṛ) of actions. It possesses a separate body and sense organs for itself and it does various acts while in the samsāra; the actions produce certain impressions (samskāras) which bind the soul and thus the soul has to move on the wheel of birth and death to experience the consequences of its acts. The same soul which is the agent of actions (kartṛ) remains the same and has to reap the consequences of its actions by experiencing them in an orderly manner. It has the sense of being the master (swāmibhāvaḥ) of its senses and

2. Nimbārka -- Brahma Mīmāṁsā Bhāṣya. 2.3.33.
body and so, it acts also as the enjoyer (bhoktr) of the results of its actions. It continues to revolve on the wheel of birth and death so long as it acts and it acts so long, as it is under spell of avidyā. Its form is distorted and obscured owing to its contact with karma which is produced by its ignorance about its real nature that it is not the body or senses or the manas but is different from and above them and that it is the Supreme Self, Paramātman Himself. Nimbārka further divides the jīvas or souls in two kinds -- (i) those that are delivered (muktās) and live in a supremely blissful condition, and (ii) those that are tied down to the circle of existences (samsāra). He again subdivides the former ones - muktās into those who are eternally in a supremely blissful condition such as Garuḍa, Viśvākāśena and the crown, ear-ornaments, the flute considered as living beings; and those that are freed from the trammels of life. Of these latter kind, some attain to the likeness of God and others are content with the perception of the nature of their own soul. Corresponding to these two last are two kinds of Mumukṣu, those who seek deliverance of either kind.

The jīva suffers from its bondage so long as it

1. Nimbārka -- Brahma Mīmāṃsa Bhaṣya. 2.4.15.
regards itself independent and identifies itself with the Prakṛti. The soul attains liberation when it realises its dependence (pāratantrya) on the Paramātman and also realises that it is in reality one with Him as it is only a mode of the Paramātman. It attains liberation when it realises that the sense of its complete independence and difference from the Paramātman are false and it is caused by avidyā. It overcomes its bondage and avidyā by the grace of God. The devotee of the Paramātman who seeks liberation must know the following five things. (i) The nature of the Being to be worshipped -- the nature of God being constituted of existence (sat), intelligence (cit) and joy (ānanda), and possessing a celestial body which is immaterial and who is omnipotent, tender, merciful and gracious towards His devotees. (ii) The nature of the worshipper - as an atom, possessing limited knowledge and joy and as the servant of Kṛṣṇa, (iii) The fruit of God's grace - the self-surrender and the giving up of all actions except the service of God. (iv) The feeling of enjoyment consequent on Bhakti or love. It arises from serenity, servitude, friendliness, affection and enthusiasm. (v) Obstructions to the attainment of God -- such as regarding the body the soul, dependence on others than God and one's preceptor, indifference to the commands of God,
ingratitude and spending life in an aimless and worthless manner. After knowing all these things and developing single and undivided loyalty and craving for the realisation of God the devotee has to offer himself totally to the Divine by means of Prapatti, which means total self-sufferender; believing that after making complete self-surrender God would liberate him from the trammels of samsāra and, would end his phenomenal life and bondage as He has profound love and compassion for His devotees.

Rāmānuja gives more emphasis on upāsanā (worship) while Nimbārka gives more stress on prapatti (self-surrender). Nimbārka relies more upon the efficacy of self-surrender to the Divine for the attainment of Mokṣa.

Nimbārka states that the seeker of the knowledge of Brahmān should necessarily cultivate the virtues of calmness and tranquillity (śānta) by means of indifference towards all objects of enjoyment of the world (uparati) by practising complete self-control over his desires and sense organs (dama) and, he should intensify his capacity to tolerate all kinds of extremes (titikṣā) with the help of the knowledge of the Scripture as prescribed in accordance

with the various periods (āśrama) of life. Thus he should concentrate his whole being in the Self and realise it for himself.¹ The liberated soul (mukta) experiences non-difference (avibhāga) with that which is opposed to its finite nature and is different from it.² The liberated soul does not lose its sense of egoity or (ahamarthah) even in Mokṣa; it retains it in Mokṣa and manifests itself there in all its perfect powers of intelligence, bliss and other powers which appear only in limited magnitudes in its phenomenal existence. The jīvas attain omniscience in the state of Mokṣa.³

Nimbārka maintains further that the liberated soul (mukta) experiences the very Brahman which is free from the modifications like origin etc. and naturally it is an ocean of infinite qualities which are unimaginable and, it is possessed of glory and brilliance. The liberated individual soul establishes itself in such an invisible Brahman and enjoys the very essence of it and becomes happy for ever.⁴ The soul becomes more powerful but is free from the affairs of the world (jagadvyapāravarjam). It enjoys all the joys

¹. Nimbārka -- Brahma Mīmāṃśa Bhāṣya. 3.4.27.
². Ibid. 4.4.4. Muktaḥ parasmāt ātmānaṁ vibhāgavirodhena avibhāgena anubhavati.
³. Ibid. 4.4.16. Mukti avasthāyāṁ ca sarvajñatvām.
⁴. Ibid. 4.4.19.
and the perfect bliss along with Kṛṣṇa; it becomes competent to enjoy all the joys of the Brahman and when it enjoys such a principle of intelligence and illumination (jyotirūpam) it is not required to return again to the worldly life.1 The bodiless emancipation (videhamukti) is attained when all the accumulated karmas are fructified by experiencing them and thus, the process of attaining such a final state requires a very long period even more than one life-span. But the attainment of such a state can be expedited by devotional faith and prapatti to the Supreme Self, the Paramātman. Dasgupta describes the final state of Mokṣa by quoting from Vedānta Kaustubha Prabhā in the following passage -- "A saint, after the exhaustion of his fructifying deeds, leaves his gross body through the susumna nerve in his subtle body, and going beyond the material regions (prākṛta maṇḍala) reaches the border region -- the river Vijarā -- between the material regions and the universe of Viṣṇu. Here he leaves aside his subtle body in the Supreme being and enters into the transcendent essence of God. The emancipated beings thus exist in God as His distinct energies and may again be employed by Him for his own purposes. Such emancipated beings, however, are never sent down by God for carrying on an earthly existence. Though

1. Nimbārka -- Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya. 4.4.22.
the emancipated beings become one with God, they have no control over the affairs of the world, which are managed entirely by God Himself."¹ Nimbārka advocates the necessity of the performance of the Vedic duties of caste and stages of life (Varṇāśrama) so long as they help the attainment of wisdom and they become afterwards unnecessary. He believes there are some who can attain wisdom without performing the prescribed customary duties of caste and stages of life.² He threw open the doors of mokṣa to the persons of all castes and simplified the way of attainment of mokṣa by means of bhakti to God that culminated into total surrender (prapatti) to God. The released soul enjoys its inseparability with the Brahman even by maintaining its separate self-consciousness (ahamartha) in a mystical way. He, being a Vaiṣṇava saint, agreed in the efficacy and necessity of all the modes of religious worship. He emphasised the importance of knowledge along with karma, the religious duties to be performed with a feeling of complete faith, love and reverance. for Paramātman by means of a loveful self-surrender (saraṇāgati) to God.

2. Ibid. p.416.
Madhva

Madhvacārya, a Vaiśṇava saint of the south was also known as Ānandatīrtha and Pūrṇaprajña belonged to the Vedānta school but proved to be a complete deviationist. He did not admit the monistic interpretation of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja nor the semi-monistic interpretation of Bhāskara, Yādava, Nimbārka etc. He was a dvaitin or a pure bhedavādin, who admitted the reality of differences and refused to reduce them to illusoriness. Madhva is faithful to the Advaitic tradition as he admits that the ultimate Reality is the Brahman which he names Hari, that is the same as Puruṣottama or Nārāyaṇa of Rāmānuja and Kṛṣṇa of Nimbārka. The ultimate Reality according to Madhva, is one single all-pervading Brahman that is Hari, the Supreme Lord. Madhva believes that there are five final differences (bhedeḥ) which are mutually irreducible to each other. The five differences are (i) that between God and the jīvas (ii) that between one jīva and another jīva (iii) that between God and the matter (iv) that between jīva and matter and, (v) that between one material thing and another. He believes that the Brahman, or Ātman or God is the cause of the world. God is not the material cause (upādānakāraṇa) but is the efficient cause (nimittakāraṇa) of the world. The world and the individual souls
(jīvas) are His effects not because they are constituted of the stuff of God for, God is formless and He does not possess material body. The jīvas and the world are effects of the Lord, Viśṇu or Hari in the sense that they are Paratantra or dependent for their existence on God, the Brahman, that is Svatantra, a self-subsistent and self-existent Reality. The individual souls and the matter cannot exist apart from the Brahman or the Lord and hence, they are called a-svatantra or paratantra. The Brahman or Viśṇu is self-caused and self-governed; while the jīvas or individual souls and matter are solely governed (niyamitā) by the Lord. According to Madhva, God is all-penetrating and the cause of all the eight aspects of the world (i) srṣṭi - creation (ii) sthiti - protection (iii) saṁhāra - dissolution (iv) niyamana - controlling all things or governance (v) jñāna - giving knowledge, (vi) ajñāna - ignorance (vii) bandha - bondage and worldly fetters and (viii) mokṣa - deliverance or liberation. Thus the Brahman is the all-pervading Reality and governs the whole of the prakṛti and the jīvas by making them entirely dependent on itself. It controls from within (antaryāmin) as well as from without. He maintains the distinctions of the jīva, prakṛti and God as fundamental and eternal. The distinctions are never lost. The souls and the world or
prakṛti remain existent as distinct entities even in pralaya, but only in a subtle (sūkṣma) form. The differences or distinctions cannot be entirely abrogated or annihilated. The souls retain their distinctions from each other and from God even in the state of liberation. Madhva is thus, apparently a dualist (dvaitin) or bhedavādin but at the same time he maintains his Advaitism or monism by making all the pluralities dependent on the final Reality, God. He strictly adhered to the Śruti and the Vedas. The eight-fold functions which he has attributed to the Brahman or God simply bring out the all-pervasive and sovereign nature of God.

The jīva is totally dependent (paratantra) and is possessed of limited knowledge (jñāna) and limited joy (bliss). There are infinite jīvas and each jīva is atomic in size but still it can experience the sensations taking place in the whole body by intelligence which is its attribute. The knowledge and bliss which are possessed by jīva are fragmentary as contrasted with those of God, who possesses them to their perfection. The individual souls are the knowers (cit), the doers of actions (kartā) and also the experiencers (bhoktā) of the fruits of actions. God enjoys the sovereign power because He is independent or svatantra who does not derive his power from any other
source. The individual soul's powers, knowledge and bliss are limited as they are obscured by karma which is caused by ignorance or avidyā. The souls acquire karma due to their worldly activities which they carry on under ignorance or avidyā. The jīvas being dependent do not cause their activities but their activities are propelled (kāryitā) by God. For every state of the lives of the jīvas God is responsible for, He is the impeller (kārayitā) of all their actions. The knowledge, ignorance, bondage, deliverance, birth and death of the individuals are caused and governed by God Himself. His powers are totalitarian. Whatever the souls enjoy or suffer is ultimately caused by God for them in accordance with their karmas. The existence and happiness of the souls is wholly a matter of the grace of God; God is the prompter from within of the whole life of the souls and He alone can effect their liberation or Mokṣa. Complete self-surrender (saraṇāgati) is absolutely necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. Madhva advocates Bhakti (devotion) and grace of God as the only fruitful means for the attainment of liberation. The knowledge of the five distinctions and other austerities and worship of God are subservient to Bhakti.

God is omnipotent (sarvasaktitva) for He is independent (svatantra). His powers and perfection follow from His
substances, nor is it an illusion (vivarta) of the Self, nor is it produced even by means of the unseen principle (adṛṣṭa), nor is it produced out of nothing (asatāḥ), but it is an effect of the God (Bhagavatkāryaḥ) and is one with God (Bhagavadrūpāḥ). Had it not been so, existence or being would be produced from nothing (asat). 1 He, therefore, maintains that the Brahman is the material and the efficient cause of the jīvas and the world, but it is also the inherence-cause (samavāyatāntāna) of the world and the jīvas. 2 The inherence-cause means that the Brahman itself is actually present in the jīvas and in the world and that it is inseparable from them. It forms the jīvas and the world out of its own stuff and substance. It is actually present in all its effects. The Brahman is one with (tadātmya) with the jīvas and the world. He defines the term samavāya as identity or tadātmya and not a different object. Samavāya or inherence is that kind of relation by which the thread and the cloth are bound to each other by interpenetration; thus it becomes both the material cause and the creator of it and they are non-different (svābhinnā). 3 Thus the world is a real creation

2. Vallabha - Añubhāṣya. Tadbrahmaiva samavāyatāntānaṃ.
of the Brahman out of itself produced to amuse itself (ramaṇārtha). Vallabha, thus, believes that the whole universe including the individual souls is through and through the pure Brahman unconditioned and unqualified by any other thing and that it is the only and ultimate Reality without a second. His system is therefore, known as the suddhadvaita as contradistinguished from that of Śaṅkara which is described as the Kevalādvaita according to which the Brahman alone (Kevala) is real and every other thing besides it is unreal or false. Vallabha depicts the Brahman as the Paramātman or the God Kṛṣṇa who does not possess a physical body but He can produce the whole world merely by the force of His will. He is the repository of all qualities which are opposite to one other and He appears in multiple forms (bahurūpataḥ) by means of manifestation (āvirbhāva) and concealment (tirobhāva).

1. He is the doer of actions (kartā) as well as the enjoyer (bhoktā) of their results. Even though He has all the qualities, He does not possess any particular qualities which are possessed by His parts (āmsa); He cannot be said to be possessing qualities (saguṇa), although He is the creator (kartā) of the world. 2. He assumes several forms as are needed by His devotees to please them. 3

1. Vallabha - Tattvārthadīpaḥ. Śloka 73. p.115.
2. Ibid. p.132.
The jīva is atomic, extremely minute in size, according to Vallabha and, it becomes pervasive so that it may experience the sensations all over the body even though it occupies one portion of it. It becomes pervasive by means of its intelligence which is its property; just as the fragrance (gandha) spreads even to a great distance from the flower. The souls are many and eternal. In soul the same Brahman is present but its one quality - bliss (ānanda) is concealed and thus, the jīva possesses sat (existence) and cit (consciousness). It is a part of the Brahman which is God. The Brahman when obscured by ignorance loses its bliss and assumes the form of the jīva. In fact, it is God. Vallabha distinguishes jīvas into three kinds -- (i) those pure (suddha) jīvas whose lordly qualities (aisvarya) are not obscured by the force of ignorance (avidyā); (ii) the mundane (samsārin) jīvas who are under the spell of ignorance and experience birth and death and other finite experiences; (iii) the liberated (mukta) jīvas who are free from the bonds of the samsāra as they have acquired knowledge of the Self. The soul when liberated regains its concealed bliss (ānanda) and becomes one with God and thus, experiences the whole nature, i.e. saccidānanda of God. The same Self, God or the Brahman descends down even in the inanimate objects by obscuring its consciousness or intelligence along with
the bliss or ānanda. Everything is spiritual in essence; there are the differences of degree and there is a continuity from the matter to the jīva and from the jīva to Īśvara. The creation and destruction of the objects of the world and birth and death of the individual souls are nothing but the manifestation or non-manifestation of the Supreme Self or God.

The jīvas and the inanimate objects (jada) come into existence (udgamaḥ) just as sparks (vishphulīṅga) come out of the blazing fire. The consciousness and bliss (cit and ānanda) of the Divine are suppressed in the material objects and bliss (ānanda) is suppressed in the souls or jīvas.¹ The jīva is as minute as the extremity or tip of the extremity of a grain of rice and its consciousness spreads at long distances just like the fragrance of flower, which keeps itself stationary at a particular spot.² Thus, according to Vallabha, the soul is atomic (anu) in size and it can become pervasive like the Brahman (Brahmavyāpaka) by means of intelligence.

Vallabha says that just as Kṛṣṇa though sitting in the lap of Yaśodā becomes the support (ādhara) of the whole world similarly, the soul though atomic in size becomes as expansive as the Brahman.  

The jīva is similar to God in so far as it shares with Him the two qualities, existence (sat) and intelligence (cit) and they differ because of the absence of bliss (ānanda) in the jīva. When the bliss or ānandāmśa becomes manifest in the soul it assumes the status of the Supreme Self. The Brahman is on the contrary, constituted of existence (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda), is all-pervasive (vyāpaka), unchangeable (avyayam), all-powerful (sarvaśakti), independent (svatantra) and omniscient (sarvajña) and still devoid of other properties (guṇa) and, it is free from similar (sajātīya), dissimilar (vijātīya) and internal (svagata) differences (dvaitam). The jīva is supposed to be governed by ignorance (avidyā) when it fails to understand its real nature characterised as saccidānanda and, when it falsely identifies itself with the material objects like the body, senses, mind etc.

Vallabha advocates the realisation of the truth of the text

2. Ibid. p.83.
3. Ibid. Śloka 67. p.106.
'That thou art' for the attainment of liberation. As Ghate says Vallabha means in the real sense the identity of the two while it is only metaphorical in the case of others.¹ The soul (jīva) is other than and beyond the body, the senses, the manas and the intellect. It is that which wills, acts (kartṛ) and enjoys the pleasurable and the painful experiences. For such jīvas bound to the mundane life and its pleasurable and painful experiences, the omniscience and the bliss of the Divine are unknown. They have a very narrow vision of the world and therefore, they develop attachments to the objects of the world. They are deceived by the paraphernalia of the mundane objects. As Ghate says the infatuating ignorance affects the jīva and for him, endows the real and actually existing world with illusory or unreal forms. While the world is real it is only its experience (pratīti) which is erroneous. The world which has objectivity for us, but which is essentially of the nature of Bhagavan and so is purely subjective; but it is only the objectivity with which the jīva endows the world that is unreal and projected by ignorance.² Thus, the experience of the world is mistaken and the mistaken view of the soul about itself and about the world constitutes

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¹ Ghate V.S. -- Vedānta. p.38.
² Ibid. p.36.
ignorance or avidyā. The world is real but its understanding is wrong and distorted. Thus, avidyā has only subjective existence for the knower and his acts remain faulty and defective as long as his view remains mistaken. The same world therefore, appears differently to different persons. Ghate therefore says -- "Thus, this prapañca, which is real, appears to be in three different forms to three different kinds of persons; (i) to those who have become Brahman, it appears as pure Brahman, (ii) to those who have got the right knowledge by means of the śāstras; it appears as endowed with both subjectivity (Brahmadharman) and objectivity (Māyādharman), at the same time with a clear discrimination between the real character of the former and the unreal character of the latter; (iii) finally, to those without knowledge, the prapañca appears as endowed with both these forms but without any discrimination. Thus, all the difference or plurality is in the matter of perception (pratīti) of the prapañca, but none at all in the matter of its form (svarūpa). To say that the prapañca itself is unreal and at the same time to say that it is identical with Brahman, is against all reason, since relation of identity cannot possibly exist between a real thing and an unreal thing (cf.Śūtra II,1.14)\(^1\)

\(^1\) Ghate V.S. -- Vedānta. p.37.
soul transmigrates as long as it is under the spell of ignorance. It acquires karma so long as it is attached to the objects of experience of the world and its bondage becomes more and more firm as it acts with attachment and passion for the worldly objects. It possesses subtle body which stores in it the saṃskāras or the impressions of the past birth and conveys them to the subsequent birth for fruition. The jīva goes on revolving on the wheel of sāṃśāra as long as its karma is not exhausted by fruition.

According to Vallabha the Brahman has three forms (i) the highest divine form (ādhidaivika) as Kṛṣṇa or Puruṣottam, possessing an infinite number of auspicious attributes which can be attained by a sincere devotee, (ii) the akṣara form - (ādhyātmika), in which all the attributes have become non-manifest and which alone is attainable by a sage jñānin and (iii) the (antaryāmin) form as seen in the different incarnations or avatarās of Viṣṇu.¹

The jīvas are broadly divided into two kinds (i) the sāṃśārinīs and (ii) the muktas. The sāṃśārinī jīvas move through the circle of existences and are subject to misery which is caused by the false knowledge that the body and

the senses are the soul. This state of misery continues till it acquires knowledge of the Brahman and is convinced of the futility of the mundane life and till it devotes itself to meditation and love of God. Such souls remain miserable so long as they are under bondage which is caused by the five kinds of avidyā or ignorance.1 The Pure souls are free from ignorance. The souls attain liberation (mukti) by knowledge (jñāna) or by devotion (bhakti).

Vallabha defines Mukti as a perfect union of the soul with Kṛṣṇa. Vallabha regards that liberation can be attained by acquiring sāyujaẏatā or penetration into the being of the Lord Kṛṣṇa by means of singular and intense devotion. Those worldly souls in whom there is no divine nature and evil qualities predominate, are known as the āsura jīvas and they always move in the circle of existences. They lack the divine qualities, labour under ignorance, have their objects of desire of lower kind (nīcabhāva) and indulge in those evil desires which act as prohibitory (pratibandhaka) to liberation. Due to such evil desires they obtain suitable gross bodies and engage themselves in condemnable activities (nīdita karma) and thus, go to the lower species (nīcayoni). They ever remain worldly miserable souls. They always move in the

sub-human, devilish (āsūrī) species and always suffer degeneration (adhamāmgatini). They acquire purity and attain the status of pure souls (suddha jīvas) when God himself pleases to sport with them, He shows compassion to them and relieves them from the ignorance (avidyā). Thus, their defects are removed and they become the pure souls (suddha jīvāḥ). In them intelligence and bliss (cit and ānanda) manifest fully.¹

The jīvas that possess the divine nature are again of two kinds -- (i) the maryādāmārgīyah or maryādājīvāḥ and (ii) the puṣṭimārgīyah or puṣṭijīvāḥ. Those who subject themselves to certain moral discipline are known as the maryādājīvāḥ; and those who depend entirely on God's grace are the puṣṭijīvāḥ. Both the kinds of the souls attain the final deliverance but by two different paths. The maryādāmārgīya jīvas are distinguished by their following the path of knowledge (jñāna), karma, religious and moral duties, bhakti-concentrated devotion and, the Yogic practices as prescribed by the scriptures. The puṣṭimārgīya jīvas solely depend upon God for His grace and favour (viśeṣānugraha) and by that to achieve the final

¹ Bhaṭṭa Balkrishna -- Pramēya Ratnārṇava. pp.8,9.
The puṣṭibhaktas sustain on the grace (anugraha) of Kṛṣṇa and therefore, puṣṭibhakti is known as that which issues from the special favour or grace of God. It is characterised by the complete absence of desire for any object other than the essential nature (svarūpa) of God (Bhagavān). The puṣṭibhakti leads to the attainment of the earthly (laukika) and heavenly (alaukika) things. The puṣṭibhakta, therefore, totally surrenders himself to the Divine and relies solely upon the grace of God to achieve his final end. The Maryādā mārgīya devotees, on the contrary, exert much to qualify themselves for the final attainment by acquiring scientific knowledge of the Śrūtis and by vigilantly practising ethical virtues and Yogic practices to purify themselves. They believe that when they are thus qualified they become worthy of the Divine grace and God gives to them deliverance most lovingly.

Vallabha further recognises four forms of puṣṭibhakti -- (1) Pravāha puṣṭibhakti - it is the path of those


2. Ibid. p.17. Viṣeṣānugrahajñyā yābhaktiḥ sā puṣṭibhaktiḥ.
who while engaged in a worldly life with their me and mine, which is compared to a stream (pravāha) do acts calculated to bring about the attainment of God, (ii) Maryāda puṣṭibhakti -- of those who, withdrawing their minds from worldly enjoyments, devote themselves to God by hearing discourses about Him, singing His name, and such other processes; (iii) Puṣṭipuṣṭibhakti -- of those who already enjoying God's grace are made by another grace competent to acquire knowledge useful for adoration and thus, they come to know all about the ways of God. They have to depend on their own efforts for the acquisition of knowledge; (iv) Śuddhapuṣṭibhakti -- is of those who through mere love devote themselves to the singing and praising of God as if it were a haunting passion. This bhakti depends on God's grace and not upon the human will.¹ The puṣṭimārga puts emphasis on the grace (anugraha) of God and cares little to take into consideration the qualification and preparedness (yogyatā) of the devotee, but requires complete surrender (samarpaṇa) of the whole being of the devotee to the Divine by renouncing all desires for the objects of enjoyment and, it requires complete reliance and faith in God. The only requirement is that the bhakta or devotee has to concentrate his mind on Hari by doing

¹ Bhaṭṭa Balkrishna -- Prameya Ratnārṇava. pp.17,18.
all kinds of worship and services to Him.¹

The puṣṭimārgīyas develop ardent love for God whom they look upon as their lover (preman). The devotion of this kind is known as the Pramabhakti and its pitch grows when it assumes higher intensity and ardour because of excessive attachment and addictiveness (āsakti) for the Lord, their lover. The love when deepens still more, becomes a vyasana or haunting passion for him. When the intensity of the devotee reaches such a high pitch it leads to the final perfect bliss (ānanda) of the Divine. When this pitch is attained the devotee enters into the final realm of the Divine and takes supreme joy in the service of Hari. When his devotion assumes the highest pitch and it becomes a haunting passion for him he begins to see everywhere Hari and hence, everything becomes an object of love and adoration for him. He goes further even to identify himself with everything that assumes the nature of Hari. He then identifies himself with all the things and the separativeness of the inner and the outer, the egoism of the individual is liquidated and he attains complete unity with the Divine. The puṣṭimargīya thus takes supreme joy and satisfaction in getting an access into the eternal Līlā of the Divine Kṛṣṇa. The liberated

soul then participates in the eternal sport (nityalīlā) and feels the supreme satisfaction in enjoying the happiness of the company of the Lord by assuming the forms of even cows, beasts, birds, trees, rivers etc.\(^1\) They derive boundless joy from the company of the Supreme Lord (Puruṣottama) and enjoy the Divine joy by assuming even the celestial body. The liberated devotees derive superb joy in the service of the Puruṣottama (sevāyām) with whom he has sought identity (sarvātmabhāva), by singing songs of praise for Him (bhajana). He drops his physical (gross) and the subtle body and assumes a body which is suitable for the use of the eternal Līlā (nitya līlā) of the Divine.\(^2\) Thus, the Mokṣa according to the puṣṭī-mārga consists in the attainment of the abode of the Divine enjoyments that are identical with the nature of the Puruṣottama in the company of the Puruṣottama Himself.\(^3\) It is the everlasting experience of the unfading eternal joy of the Divine which the liberated soul (mukta) enjoys in company with the Lord Puruṣottama.

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1. Bhaṭṭa Balkrishna -- Prameya Ratnārṇava. p.27.
2. Ibid. p.44. Sarvātmabhāvatopattau sadaiva Puruṣottama-virbhāvat sevāyām bhajanānandānubhavah phalati. Sthūlaliṅgaśarīrayoḥ nāśe bhagavallīlopayogi deham prāpya nityalīlāyāṁ praviṣati.
3. Ibid. p.44.
The Maryādābhaktas attain the Sāyujya-mukti which means the actual penetration of the liberated soul (mukta) into the being of Puruṣottama by means of knowledge, religious duties, bhakti and the other yogic practices and the moral virtues while the Puṣṭībhaktas reject this kind of mukti with scorn and they seek in mukti the actual participation in the eternal līlā of Hari. The Maryādābhaktas lay more stress on a highly evolved moral life by means of aversion towards the worldly objects (vairāgya) and rigid self-control and indifference towards the earthly desires. The Puṣṭībhaktas on the contrary, try to sublimate all the natural propensities and passions by redirecting them towards Puruṣottama as their object of attainment. Vallabha remarks about the Maryādabhākti that the highest aim to be attained for the Maryādāmārgīyas is to attain sāyujyatā or identity with the self-illumined God who has revealed or manifested Himself to him who has purified his mind from within by means of attending to the Śruti (śravaṇa), repetition of it (manana), contemplation of it and by means of external practices like self-control and cultivation of the calm and tranquil state of mind etc.¹

¹ Vallabha -- Brahmāsūtra Bhaṣya -- Taśya śravaṇamanana-nididhyāsanairātarangaiḥ śāmadādibhiṣca bahi-raṅgairṣuddhe citte swayamevāvirbhūtasya svaprakāśasya sāyujyaṁ paramapurūṣārthaḥ.
Like his predecessors he does believe that ultimately such liberation consists in the removal of ignorance (avidyā), and that knowledge is the most important means of attaining Mokṣa. On the contrary the Puṣṭimārgīyas seek an everlasting accompaniment of the God by intensifying their loveful devotion (Premabhakti) for Him. Ghate regarding Puṣṭimārgīya bhakti says -- "... and this is the highest kind of bhakti -- the devotee, without having recourse to any sādhanas, depends upon nothing but pure and simple love of Him; his goal is only the service of Hari; his highest pleasure is to become one of the associates of Hari and to sport with him in the Vṛndāvana. This puṣṭibhakti is the privilege of only him whom Bhagavat is pleased to favour; it begins with preman which removes a liking for any thing but Hari, and passing through āsakti which produces a positive aversion to objects not connected with Hari, culminates in vyasana or entire devotion to Hari."

Thus Vallabha depicts a most sportive and romantic picture of mokṣa which creates charm, thrill and an extraordinary and uncontrollable temptation in the mind of the individual souls suffering on the earth. It is filled with a positive enjoyment of the Divine happiness.

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1. Vallabha -- Brahmaśūtra Bhāṣya. Mokṣaśca avidyā- nivṛttirūpa...