CHAPTER 7

JĪVA'S BONDAGE AND RELEASE

1. Bondage - Birth, Death, Transmigration and Kartrutva and Bhokrutva of Jīva:

In the earlier chapter we have discussed the conception of Jīva in detail. Jīva is in bondage due to avidyā. Jīva is Ātman which is non-different from Brahman, but, due to the power of the beginning less avidyā or ontological amnesia it has forgotten this, and wrongly identifies itself with body—both gross and subtle, mind, senses etcetera. Due to this it suffers from five Klōśhas and three kinds of suffering etc. In this lies its bondage which involves feelings of pleasure and pain concomitant with action and enjoyment. Due to avidyā the Self is undergoing pleasure and pain by not making clear distinction between itself and the anthahkarana. If a body (which is an upādhi) is associated with the Self we say that the Self has taken birth. When gross body

1. Avidyā, asmitha, rāga, dvēsa and abhinivēsa. See for details paramānubhava bōdhe, 1.20.
2. Ādhyatmika, adhibhoutika and ādhidaivaka. See. Ibid., 1.21.
p-ishes on death, we say that the Self decays. If the subtle body (Suśīma Sarīrerā) does not decay due to the Vāsanās it migrates with the Jīva to the next gross body. This is called transmigration. This process of migration stops when all the desires dwelling in the heart are destroyed by the knowledge of Ātman. There are two birds in this body- tree. Of them one is eating the fruits of this tree and the other is just witnessing that eating. Of these two birds the former is 'Jīva' and the latter is 'Kūṭastha-Caitanya'. Kūṭastha Caitanya is Sākṣi. It is named Kūṭastha because though it is witnessing both the Stūla and the Sukṣma bodies it remains a 'Nirvikāra-adhistāna' (a firm substratum which does not undergo any modifications). Jīva is nothing but a reflection of the Cit in the antahkaraṇa. This Jīva is really an illusion from the transcendental point of view and from that point of view both bondage and liberation do not have any significance. The Sruti has employed

1. Paramāṇubhava bōdhe, 1.6.
2. Paramartha Geete, 2.4 See also Svetāśvatara Up. 4.6.
4. Paramāṇubhava bōdhe, 1.6.4.
5. Paramāṇubhava bōdhe, 3.9.9.
the terminology of 'Jīva, Īśwara and the World' just to convey to our empirical minds the transcendental nature of the Reality which is beyond the reach of mind and words.

Due to the Super-imposition of avidyā on Ātman the Jīva thinks (due to bhrānti) that, he is 'a kartru' (a doer of deed) and 'a Bhūktru' (an enjoyer of pleasures and a sufferer of pains) etc., although he is, really speaking, a 'non-kartru', a 'non-bhūktru' a non-attached one (nīrlōpa) and a non-modifying one (nirvikāra)\(^1\). This buddhibhrānti itself is bondage\(^2\). Though Ātman is Brahman or Shambhulinga itself, due to avidya or ahādcira it appears to be a limited Jīva which suffers from birth, death etc., and which is doing this or that. In order to realize the universal, unlimited, and non-dual Ātman or Shambhulinga one has to undergo a process of casting off of all the Upādhīs which are due to Avidya.

ii. The Means to Overcome Bondage:

Nijaguṇa Shivayōgi has prescribed two courses of spiritual discipline to realize the Shambhulinga. The

1. Ibid., 1.12.
2. Saṁkara: Upadēsa Sāhasri, 3.58 (Buddhebhraṁthiri-Shyate bandhah).
earlier course is a prerequisite to the later. Through these two courses of spiritual discipline one can annihilate the avidya or ignorance and thereby realize one's own Self as non-different from Shambhulinga or Brahman.

In order to prepare the mind for the reception of the Advaitic truth Nijagūṇa, like Saṅkara, prescribes four-fold-discipline (Śādhanā Catusṭaya)¹: This four-fold-discipline is, according to Nijagūṇa, the first course of spiritual discipline which precedes the Jñānayoga which is the next course of spiritual discipline. The four Śādhanaś are these:

1. **The Stage of Nityānitya Vasthu Vivēka:** This is the first stage of the first course of Spiritual discipline where the aspirant should be able to discriminate between what is Real and eternal and what is not Real and non-eternal.

2. **The Stage of Jñāmutrārtha-bhojavirēga:** In this stage the aspirant must give up all desires for the enjoyment of objects here as well as hereafter. He should willfully and joyfully renunciate everything that stands in the way to the attainment of truth and self-knowledge.

1. Jñānapratipādana Sthala, 2. See also Vivēka Chintāmani, P. 17.
3. **The Stage of Samadāmādi Sādhana Satsampatti:**

Thereafter, in the third stage, the spiritual aspirant should acquire mental tranquillity (Sama), Self-control (dama), endurance (titikṣā), dispassion (uparati), intentness of mind (Samādhiāna₁), faith and bhakti (Śrādaśāhā-bhakti).

4. **The Stage of Mumukṣutva:** In this stage the aspirant must develop a positive longing, an ardent desire for liberation or Moksa. He should at once desire to get rid of this Samsāra, this suffering, like a man who is trying to get rid of fire when he is burning.

With this four fold preparation of the intellect, emotion and will, the Spiritual aspirant will become fit (adhikiāri) for Jñānayoga. Then he should begin to study the Brahman-knowledge with a 'Guru' who is a Śrōtriya Brahmanista² (a Brahman-devoted expert in the Śrutis).

This study consists of the three-fold stages of Jñānayoga³. The three stages of Jñānayoga are as

1. In Vivēka Chintāmani Nījugūṇa says, Samadhi for this step, See, P.17.
2. Jñānapratipādana Sthala, 1.3.
3. Ibid., 47, See also Paramānubhava bōdhe, 6.5.
The Stage of Sravana: This is the first stage in the Jñānayoga. Here the spiritual aspirant has to listen to a "Guru" and from him learn about the nature of Ātman, the nature of Brahman and about the Identity between Ātman and Brahman (i.e. the true meaning of Mahāvākhyās). This stage consists of the six lingas (elements). The Six lingas are:

1. **Upakrama- Upasamhāralinga:** This linga consists of the two instructions, Upakrama and Upasamhāra. Upakrama states the nature of Ultimate Reality before creation i.e. the nature of Irrelative, transcendental Absolute Reality. Whereas Upasamhāra comprises the instructions about the destruction of duality which is due to names and forms. It proclaims that All is verily Brahman i.e. baring names and forms. (ii) **Abhyasalinga:** This linga comprises the instructions about the conception of Jīva, the nature of Pratyagātma, the inmost truth of Jīva, who is the witness of all states of experience, and the Identity between Ātman and Brahman. (iii) **Apūrvatalinga:** This consists of the instructions about the Ātman who is non-different from Brahman, who is beyond the reach of six pramanās and who is the basis of all the pramanās and is hence Self-valid (swayamsiddha). (iv) **Phalalinga:** This comprises the instructions of the knowledge of that
Reality by knowing which all else will be known i.e. the knowledge that Brahman is the adhisthāna or the basis for the appearance of the whole universe and that by knowing Brahman (one should know Brahman by Being-It) or the adhisthāna one comes to know everything that has been super imposed on It. (v) Arthavādalinga: This consists of the instructions about the relation of Brahman to the five functions of Iswara etcetera. (vi) Upapattilinga: This is the last limb which consists of the instructions about the nature of Brahman who is both the material and the efficient cause of this world of appearance.

Thus Śravaṇa consists of the process of learning (through listening) from a competent Guru about the Ultimate Reality, about Saguna Brahman and Nirguna Brahman, about Māyā, Avidyā, Adhyāsa, Jīva, Ātman and about the Identity between Ātman and Brahman. This process helps the aspirant to destroy beginning less ignorance which is the Stumbling block to the Ontological Identity.

2. The Stage of Manana: The knowledge arrived at through Śravaṇa is in this, second, stage sustained and supported by reason which removes the doubt the identity between Ātman and Brahman. In other words,
in this stage the process of understanding the instructions, received in the preceding stage, will take place until all doubts are removed and conviction is generated.

3. The Stage of Nididhyāsana: Nididhyāsana is the constant meditation. It is an unbroken meditation on the identity of one's Self with Reality i.e. of the Ātman with the Shambhulinga. Here Sādhaka has to destroy all the five kinds of his Vrittis\(^1\). When the Sādhaka destroys all his Vrittis, he gets 'Nirōdha Samādhi'. In the Nirōdha Samādhi the seer (Puruṣa) rests in his own State\(^2\). In this state there is the realization of the term 'Tvam', but here it still fails to acquire the knowledge of the Identity between Ātman and Brahman. Thus after 'Nirōdha Samādhi' i.e. after attaining the Yōgic Samādhi one has to climb still further to get what Nījagūṇa terms the "Brahmākāravritti". In otherwords, according to Nījagūṇa, Yōga is necessary for 'Cittavrittinirōdha' but not sufficient for the Transcendental-self Realization which amounts to the total absorption of the Ātman with the Brahman. Sādhaka after this stage

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1. As in the Pātanjala Yōga Sūtras, I.5.
2. As in Ibid., I.3.
has to develop only the 'Brahmākāravṛtti'. Nījagunā has prescribed five ṣāgas in the Nididhyāsana as the five important elements to acquire the Brahmadākāravṛtti. The five ṣāgas are: (i) Śūksma-vaṣa, (ii) Vinutayoga, (iii) Adhikāyoga, (iv) Amalyoga and (v) Nijayoga.

(i) ŚūksmA-vaṣa: The spiritual aspirant, in this first step of Nididhyāsana, has to meditate upon Atman who is 'Anøraniyān' and 'Mahatāmahiyañ' i.e. who is smaller than the smallest and bigger than the biggest. If Sadhaka’s mind gets absorbed in this very Suksma or subtle tatva i.e. the Ātman (which is very Śūksma) it is called 'Suksma-vaṣa'.

(ii) Vinutayoga: In this ṣāga the aspirant has to meditate upon the implied meaning of the Mahāvākya (Great Saying) - 'Tat tvam asi'. By such a meditation there evolves a unique wisdom of the identity of Ātman and Brahman. And when this wisdom dashes on Māyā, Māya will immediately disappear like a Sand-bridge. Thereby the duality between Iswara and Jiva, which is due to Māyā, disappears and the two thereafter become "Ekarūpa" i.e. identical just as the water of the ocean which is divided through an artificial barrier, becomes

one when that barrier is removed. After this what remains is only the one ocean of knowledge which Nijaguna describes as the "Cit-Sāgara" or the ocean of pure Cit and "Bōdhāmbunidhi" or the ocean of knowledge.

(iii) Adhikayoga: At this stage the aspirant has to meditate upon the implied meaning of 'Tat' (of the Mahāvākya 'Tattvamasi'), which is the all pervading principle. It is, says Nijaguna, like a boundless and boundariness ocean of nectar ("Amruta Saradhi"). which is above and beyond the 'Saptavaraṇas'\(^1\). This state, says Nijaguna, is the state of "Adhika-yōga".

(iv) Amalāyoga: In this yōga the aspirant has to meditate upon the implied meaning of the term "Tvam" (of the Mahāvākya). His contemplation gets perfection from which emerge the mere 'Pratyagatma Vrittis'.

(v) Nijāyoga: In this yoga the aspirant has to meditate upon the implied meaning of the term 'asi' (of the Mahāvākya). This meditation establishes the total and unqualified Identity between the Ātman and the Brahman by eliminating the contrary associations of 'immediacy' and 'remotness' etc., which are due to

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1. Body, the Five great elements and Maya are the Seven āvaraṇās.
Upādhis. After this meditation the Atman totally gets himself absorbed in Shambhulinga or Brahman, where he sees only Atman or Brahman every where. This State of "sva-svarūpa-vritti-pravāha" (the stream of the vrittis of one's own true nature), says Nijagūṇa, is "Nijayoga".

After passing through all these five yōgas, which are the important elements in Nididhyasana, there dawns, says Nijagūṇa, a unique mystical experience of the Real knowledge (Jñāna) or wisdom which he says is 'Aparokṣānubhava'. It is the Direct-Immediate-Intuitive Realization of the Non-dual Atman. This is the actual experiential attainment of Mokṣa or Self-knowledge or wisdom to be attained by Nididhyasāna.

Nijagūṇa Shivayōgi is never tired of saying that Jñāna and Jñāna alone is the means to Mokṣa. According to him, neither 'Karma' nor 'Jñāna-Karma-Samucchaya' is the means to Mokṣa¹. To make this point still more clear Nijagūṇa gives several examples. Nijagūṇa says: If one has mistaken a tree-trunk for a thief and is hence terribly afraid or worried, one's fear or worry cannot be removed by taking drugs. That fear or worry can be removed only by knowing the tree-trunk as a tree-trunk and not as a thief. Further, he says:

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The darkness can be removed only by light and not by anything else (or by any action). Similarly, he says, in order to destroy ignorance or avidya, which has caused samsāra, knowledge or Vidya alone is capable and neither the 'Karma' nor 'the jñānakarma samucchaya'. Once this true knowledge or wisdom dawns, he says, it dawns for ever and it at once removes all ignorance and consequently all bondage. Liberation, therefore he says, means removal of ignorance by knowledge. Hence Nījāgūṇa says that Jñāna and Mōkṣa take place Simultaneously.

### iii. The State of Release—Jīvanmukti:

Release or Mukti has several synonyms such as Kaivalya, Nirvāṇa, Śrēyas, Niśreyas, Amruta, Mōkṣa etcetera. The State of release is the Atma Sthiti, which is the unconditional state of Self-Being. This state is neither bestowed on Ātman by an external agent or principle nor is it earned by Ātman as a result of Self-effort. Release, thus, is the existential truth, the Ātman or Shanbhulinga or Brahman. The Shanbhulinga is not the product or achievement, for any product is

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1. Paramānubhava bōdhe, 4.16.6–8.
2. Jñānapratipādana Sthala, 3.
3. Anubhava Sāra, 1.2.4.
4. Amarakōsa, 1.5.145.
non-eternal. Nījaguṇa defines Release as "that which absolutely real, immutable, eternal, all-penetrating like ākāśa, exempt from all change, ever-satisfied, impartite, Self-luminous, in which neither good nor evil nor effect, nor past nor present nor future has any place". Thus, Release according to Nījaguṇa, as according to Sāmkara, is not something to be gained afresh and anew, it is ever-existent, ever accomplished fact which is nothing but Shambhulinga itself.

Due to beginningless ignorance, Ātman appears as Jīva which suffers in Sāṁsāra. If this ignorance or Avidyā is removed by Vidya, the Sāṁsāra vanishes. Release or Mukti is the negation of such Avidyā (Avidya-nivṛtti). Just as the knowledge of the rope removes the snake in the rope-snake-illusion so also the True knowledge of Ātman or Shambhulinga or Adhistāna removes this world-illusion. This itself is Mukti. Since Jñāna removes ignorance it is figuratively said that Jñāna is the cause for Mukti. In fact Mōkṣa is not the effect of any thing, for it is Nitya says Nījaguṇa. Release thus is not something fresh to be gained as it is

1. Anubhava Sāra, 6.4.18.
2. Jñānapratipādana Sthala, 58.5.
3. Jñānapratipādana Sthala, 28.3.
ever-existent and is eternally attained.

According to Nijaguṇa the Jīva in the State of release or Mukti throws away its Jivahood and shines as Shambhulinga in its pristine purity. It is then said to be identical with Shambhulinga. This state of experience is described by Nijaguṇa as "Ekarasa"¹ or the experience of Oneness. This experience of oneness or of Shambhulingatva, which is Ānanda-Swarūpa, cannot be adequately expressed, for it transcends all relational thoughts. This is the Direct-Immediate-Intuitive realization of the Non-dual Ātman or Shambhulinga and this realization leads to Jīvanmukti.

Jīvanmukti is liberation in this life. It is the liberation of mind from the bondage that involves feeling feelings of pleasure and pain which are concomitant with action and enjoyment². The state of Sva-Svarupa-Vritti-Pravāha or the Stream of one's own True Nature is the State of Jīvanmukti³. Nijaguṇa quotes the following Śruti statements in support of his contention of Jīvanmukti: "When all the knots of the heart are

1. Ibid., 38.
2. Paramānubhava bōdhe, 4-8, See also Jīvanmukti vivēka of Śrīvidyāradhya, P. 10).
3. Jñānapratipādana Sthala, 28.3.
destroyed, even while a man is alive, then a mortal becomes immortal" 1. "One becomes Brahman when one knows Brahman" 2. "When all the desires that dwell in his heart are gone, then he, having been mortal, becomes immortal and attains Brahman in this very body" 3. The body, Nījagūṇa says, will remain like a cloth to ashes but retaining its original shape 4. All his karmas i.e. Sanchita, Āgama and Prārabdha are burnt here. As soon as the Intuition of Brahman knowledge dawns the Sanchita karma is burnt, as soon as he realises that he is akārtrū the Āgāmi karma is burnt and as soon as he realises that this whole vyāvahāra is like a dream the prārabdha karma is burnt 5.

Although the Jīvanmukta is in the Samsāra, the Samsāra is not in him. He is untouched by any type of Mala like the Sun or fire or a lotus leaf 6. For him there is neither vidhi nor nisēdha 7 nor any action

1. Kaṭa Up. 2.3.15, Vide, Paramanubhava bōdhe, 6.12.
2. Mandaka Up. 3.2.9, Ibid.,
3. Brhadāranyaka Up. 4.4.7, Ibid.,
4. Anubhava Sāra, 7.2.7.
5. Jñānapratipādana Sthala, 34, see also Anubhava Sāra, 7.2.9.
6. Ibid., 37.
to be performed, for he has realized that the totality of act, agent and means etc., is not real since in the non-duality there is neither any relationship of object and subject, nor any agency. Hence in this state there is nothing to be done.¹

Although Nijagunā says that the Prārabdha karma also is burnt along with the Sanchita and the Agāmi karmas, he nevertheless says that the 'Vāsanārūpa Samskāra' of the prarabdha karma remains just as the smell of kastūri remains for a while in the pot containing it even after that Kastūri is removed from that pot.

There are according to Nijaguna, four kinds of Vāsanārūpa Samskāras of the Prārabdhakarma. They are:

(i) 'Teevra' (Acute), (ii) 'Madhya' (Moderate), (iii) 'Manda' (Weak) and (iv) 'Supta' (Latent).

He says:

The Jīvanmukta who is having an Acute Prarabdha would be performing śoudika vyavahāra like Janaka but he would not be deceived or influenced by the world of appearance. The Jīvanmukta who is having moderate Prarabdha would be performing Sāsthriya Vyavahāra like sage Vashīṣṭha but he would always be playing in Atman. The Jīvanmukta who is having Weak prarabdha would not be involved in any of the above vyavahāras but would be one who has fixed his mind on Shambhulinga

¹. Ibid., 4.17.18.
only and has assumed the Anandaswarūpa. The Jīvanmukta who is having Latent Prarabdha remains in his Real-State which is Nirupama, Adwaya and Sukhabodhe.

In this way due to the different Vāsanārūpa-Samskāras of the Prarabdha Karma the Jīvanmuktas appear as different from one another, but Mukti itself is equal or Samāna in all of them. The Jīvanmukta considers these different forms of Prarabdha Karma Vāsanārūpa Samskāras as mere illusions. Hence they cannot bind him. When the Vāsanārūpa Samskāra of the Prarabdha Karma exhausts the body automatically falls and the Jīvanmukta acquires Videhamukti. He never comes again to this Samsāra.

1. Jñānapratipādana Sthala, 58.
2. Anubhava Śāra, 7.2.11. (Intu Sāviravirdawe Jīvanmuktiyamtili Videha Kaivalyavitanuvinantyadolgappudele Sūnu)