Chapter VI
Moksa or Liberation

"Mokṣa" which ordianarily means liberation, is regarded in Indian philosophical tradition as the final destiny of man and as such, it has been accorded the highest importance in the scheme of values. There seems to be no doubt as to the valuational character of the state of liberation (mokṣa) and since it is the highest goal of human life, a keen study of the concept must bring to light the nature of ultimate values. It is on account of its ultimate quality that sometimes it is considered in isolation from other values of life like the economic, hedanistic and moral values. The distinction between them is maintained on the difference between empirical and transcendental values. The state of liberation (mokṣa) seems to transcend empirical categories; its transcendental nature is thoroughgoing. It is, therefore, imperative to know exactly the mode and ground on which empirical and transcendental values are related, and whether or not there can be a positive transition from the empirical to the transcendental. It is sometimes said that on the attainment of the highest, there remains nothing to be attained. This implies that in the face of the spiritual, other so called empirical values must lose their value. But this position jeopardizes the very basis of the four-fold aim of human life. Hence, a further study is needed to characterise spiritual values in relation to other values. The problems of mokṣa has been the primary theme of many philosophical systems called the science of liberation (mokṣasastras). They concern themselves with the concept of liberation and the means of its attainment (mokṣasadhana).

Considering mokṣa as an ideal for the Hindu reveals the difficulty of the ideal itself. The diffiulty of reaching the ideal in one's life does not imply that the ideal itself does not serve any useful purpose. From one point of view it might be said that the ideals, when they are easily achievable, are likely to be more useful than when they are far removed from the actualities of life. There is a lot of truth in this view. However, it will be accepted that the very idea of having certain ideals
in view is to transform the crude actualities into subtler ideals i.e., ideals by their very nature must be such that the actualities stand in striking contrast to them. Unless the ideals are distinct from the actualities (and this is possible only when the ideals are far removed from the actualities), the need for realizing the ideals may not arise at all. When the actualities are not much different from the ideals, the ideals might themselves be lost sight of and hence the scope for improvement of the actualities might become lessened. From this point of view, it is considered better to have ideals which are distinctly different from the actualities. The ideals, so difficult of achievement, always have the function of lighting up the actuals. The actuals are always in the process of being transformed, though this transformation must, in the last resort, be partial.

The Hindu concept of mokṣa is put forward as an ideal a worthwhile goal to be realised in the life of every individual. Considering it in the light of what we have said about ideals in general, it might be pointed out that though it is difficult of realisation, it is not without its use even from the viewpoint of society. The Hindu philosopher’s contention is that society is the preparing ground for the realisation of the ideal.

The concept of mokṣa, by its very nature, points to the cultivation of ascetic tendencies - marked by a sense of detachment which, when properly cultivated, results in attachment to and consideration for all. Since the concept of mokṣa, understood in this sense necessarily involves then attitude of withdrawing oneself from the objects of sense, Hindu thought is wrongly described as world-negating.

Here we might point out that the presence of an otherworldly or world-negating tendency need not necessarily be detrimental to any social philosophy. For, the world negating element provides a background of detachment from the immediate world of senses which is necessary for any philanthropic deed or social upliftment. As long as man is content with the immediate and is not
concerned with what might be beyond his immediate perceptions, he may not be motivated at all by any consideration other than his own. This may itself be responsible for purely egoistic and self-regarding tendencies and activities. To get out of oneself to become other-regarding - is at the same time, to become detached. This sense of detachment is possible when we have a metaphysical world-view.

Such metaphysical world-view is found in the world tendencies in Hindu though just as it is so in Western thought. The working negating philosophies, whether of the East or of the West. This is at once to accept that there are world negating or the metaphysical view of life is not solely unconnected with taking part in the ordinary joys and sorrows of everyday existence here, on earth.

The fact can be appreciated better by our analysis of human nature. We have stated earlier on that no human being is completely individualistic or solely social. The individual and the social elements are so inextricably woven together in the texture of human nature that the individual cannot escape from looking inward, keeping himself aloof from society, and analysing himself, his own thoughts and feelings. At the same time, he cannot be so continuously or always because of the other elements in his nature which do make him outward-looking or socially inclined.

Corresponding to these two tendencies are the individual’s detaching himself from the others and being concerned with realising his own nature and the individual’s having a concern for the others in society, mingling with them and finding pleasure in losing himself in working for their welfare. Consequently it may be asserted, there cannot be any philosophy which is individualistic to the extreme nor can there be a system which is solely social in character. Hindu social philosophy is no exception. We do find other worldly tendencies, we do find ideals put forward solely for the individuals. With all this, there is a harmonious social ethics in Hindu thought.
Since, however, the social and the subjective aspects of human nature cannot be separated completely, the more subjectivistic goals like mokṣa are not without their social implications or some influence on society. On the whole, the concept of mokṣa refers to this subjectivistic aspect of human nature. The realisation of this ideal by the individual is considered to be a consequence of his controlling the various element in him. Though, as an ideal, it is pursued by the individuals, as a personal value, once self-realisation takes place, he cannot but be useful to the others. In this sense, the concept of mokṣa cannot notes the concept of spiritual perfection. When the individual aims at perfecting himself spiritually, he has to shed off all his egoistic and selfish tendencies. When perfection is attained by the individual, he does not cease to work for the welfare of the others. In the very process of striving for perfection one has to shed his egoistic desire and anti-social tendencies by living a peaceful social life.

Such a perfectionist type of philosophy points to an intimate relationship between thought and will. Thought and will act and react upon each other and so all philosophies have both the theoretical and the practical elements. Hindu philosophy seems to take care of both the elements. It does not merely indulge in speculating over the problem of life, it also introduces us to the right type of living. It is in the concept of mokṣa in which correlation between theory and practice finds its fulfilment and it is set as the goal of all Hindu philosophy.

It might be objected here that the ideal, being eschatological rests on mere speculation or dogma; and that though it may be regarded as the goal of religion, it can hardly be represented as that of philosophy. Though on the face of it, this seems to be an unanswerable objection, on a careful analysis we find it to be a misunderstanding of Hindu thought. For thanks to the presence of positive thought in India, we find the mokṣa ideal being brought within the sphere of experience and verification as jīvan - mukti or deliverance during life. We see this as a part and parcel of a very influential doctrine in the Upaniṣadic period and, it has since been woven into the tissue of more than one classical system of thought. Even in
the case of the Nyāya - Vaiśesika and the Viśiṣṭadvaita systems which do not formally accept this ideal, there is clearly recognized a stage between enlightenment and actual liberation (videhamukti) which admits of being so described because it marks the culmination of human efforts in the direction of securing moksa on reaching which the aspirant (sādhaka) has only to bide his time for attaining it.

The aim of mokṣa understood in this sense is not merely acquisition of knowledge or mere self-discipline but a certain immediate experience resulting form both. It is this experience typified in jivan - mukti or the resulting attitude of mind towards life and the world that should be understood when we speak of mokṣa as the ideals or the ultimate goal of the Hindu.

This takes us on to a consideration of the concept from two different angles. They are the negative and the positive views concerning mokṣa. The aim of both the negative and the positive views is the cultivation of absolute and unqualified detachment from everything. The other view aims at detachment from the mere particular and, in effect, to equal attachment to all. Though thus differing essentially, the influence of both the teachings alike is ascetic, so far as their bearing upon the discipline himself is concerned. But, the manner in which that result is brought about is somewhat different as the view is monistic or dualistic.

The monist view denies the contrast between the individual and the world, and affirms that the individual merged in the whole of Reality - a truth the necessary consequence of realising which will be the complete effacement of 'particularity'. At this stage, morality is necessarily transcended, for, the very idea of obligation disappears owing to the negation of all contrasts including the between the individual and society. Such a one, the Taittiriya Upanisad says: "is not touched by thoughts like Have I done the right? Have I done the wrong?"! The cosmological thinking signifies that the individual will feel equally attached to all
that is, and that whatever he does will be inspired by love which knows neither preferences nor excusions. Such an ideal may minimize the importance of society but that is because it has not less regard for society but more for that wider entity which comprehends the whole of being. Social morality, however much it may widen the outlook of man from individual's standpoint, really keeps him isolated from rest of the creation; all isolation is bondage in this view. The egoism of the species must also be got rid off and the individual will be able to do so only when he has transcended the anthropocentric view and can look upon everything as equally holy - whether it is a cow or elephant or dog, the cultured brahmin or the outcaste that feeds on dogs.²

The monistic conception whose typical representative was Śaṅkara believes that knowledge or jñāna alone is the means of attaining mokṣa or release from the cycle of birth and death. According to this school, the universal soul or Brahma and the individual soul or Ātman are essentially one and the same. But, due to ignorance we (individual souls) consider ourselves as separate from Brahma. The knowledge of the Brahma-Ātman identity will deliver us from bondage. It is due to the metaphysical error that we see variety where there is also the unity of Brahma. It is because each one of us regards himself as distinct from the other that we strive to guard and delimit ourselves from the others. In other words, all evil is traceable to the affirmation of the finite self(ahamkara) and the consequent tendency to live not in harmony with the rest of the world but in opposition to it.

The instinct to live or strive to be which is what ahamkara signifies, is a common feature of all animate existence and it need not be wholly suppressed, since it is an indirect manifestation of the individual's desire for self-realization. It is hence to be properly channelised - channalised in such a way that the individual replaces merely the individual self the wider self. This is the significance of the Advaitic concept of Aham Brahmasmi ("I am Brahma") which represents the realisation of the universal self in one's own self as the highest ideal of life.
Moksa refers not to a new state to be attained but is the realisation of what has always been the case. It is realising what has always been one’s innate nature. It is not the academic understanding of the identity between the individual self and the universal self which is considered vital for moksa. Purification of the affections and cultivation of the will are the necessary preliminaries. But, neither moral perfection nor religious acts are required as direct aids to it. The stage of morality should be transcended. Even the most advanced stage of moral perfection signifies that the individual is striving hard to fight against his lower self. The striving is completely overcome in the case of the liberated man.

A man can attain liberation even during life and when he becomes liberated, he is known as jivan - mukta. A jivan -mukta experiences pain and pleasure but neither really matters to him. He does not necessarily give up all activity as is illustrated by the strenuous life which Sāṅkara himself led, but it does not proceed from any selfish impulsion or even a sense of obligation to others. Blind love for the narrow self which ordinarily characterises any man and the consequent clinging to the mere particular, in his case, are replaced by enlightened and therefore equal love for all. The basis for this universal love is furnished by the Upanisadic teaching: “That thou art”. We should do unto others what we do to ourselves, because they are ourselves - a view which places the golden rule of morality on the surest of foundations. The identity - feeling that the liberated man gets is described in the Gītā: “Who sees all beings in himself and himself in all beings - he will dislike none.”

The common laws of morality and ritual which are significant only for the one who is striving for perfection are meaningless for him. The jivan -mukta having transcended the stage of strife, is spontaneously virtuous. He is then not merely realising virtue but is also revealing it. In the one who has attained jñāna in this sense i.e., in the one who has been awakened to a knowledge of the self, virtues like kindness imply no conscious effort whatever. They become second nature to him. One of the aims of Hindu philosophy is to make all the
individuals attain such a state. But, difficult as the ideal is, it is realisable only by stages. The various stages in realising this ideal are considered valuable since, for most individuals, passing through them alone facilitates the attainment of the universal outlook. The very idea behind placing the samynasāsrāma at the end seems to be that man has necessarily to cultivate himself gradually and steadily. The concept of mokṣa considered in this light and characterised by these qualities cannot, therefore be considered a purely individualistic one.

It is interesting to note that though there are differences between the monistic and the pluralistic system, both agree in holding that ultimately the individual is to get rid of his ahamkara or egoism. The necessity to get rid of egoism is indicated by the insistence, on the part of the “devotees” on voluntary self-surrender (to God), by the pluralistic systems. The scope of ‘activity’ is also greatly extended since surrendering oneself to God implies also the obligation (felt) towards all that is and not merely towards fellowmen. The dualistic and the pluralistic systems insist that this is accomplished by the bhakti-marga or the path of devotion to God.

Starting from the position that man is not non-different from God, these systems hold that by cultivation certain virtues, the individual can realize god. Rāmānuja, the typical representative of the bhakti cult, specifies certain qualities for one to deserve the name of bhakta (devotee of god): 1. Viveka (discrimination) 2. Amuka (freedom from desires) 3. Abhyasa (practice) 4. Kriya (doing good to others) 5. Kalyana (purity) consisting of satyam (truthfulness), arjaram (straightforwardness), daya (kindness), ahimsa (non-violence), dana (charity), 6. Anavasadam (cheerfulness) and 7. Anudhrarsa (absence of excessive hilarity). From this it is evident that bhakti is not sentimental attachment (merely) to God and that true bhakti transforms the entire outlook of the individual and makes him more ethical and moral.
Bhakti is of the nature of supreme love of God. Supremacy of love consists of three things. First, it should be free from egoism and must be untainted by any base ulterior motive. Secondly, it should prevent any other worldly love (understood as narrow love of things of the world) in the mind of the devotee. Thirdly, there should be complete self-forgetfulness on the part of the lover. Paradoxically, the meaning of the supreme love of God can best be understood by analysing love in the realm of inter-personal situation in our ordinary lives.

The word “love” in the purely human context, is basically suggestive of the lover, the beloved and the bond of love between them. It is a highly debated question as to whether any sense of distinction between the three can be felt in the highest spiritual experience. As can be expected, the Advaitins take the position that there can be no such distinction at all their basic position being that the highest state of ‘experience’ is that of non-duality. The theistic schools (which for our purposes here may be juxtaposed alongside the non-dualistic schools), on the other hand maintain that it is the distinction that infuses all significances into the term ‘love’. However, when the intensity of spiritual experience is visualized and analysed the non-dualistic and the theistic schools agree totally with each other in supposing that there is bound to be a ‘complete merger’ of the ‘lovers’ in ‘love’ that there is some kind of ‘non-duality’. So it is contended that even in the love of God (bhakti) and union between the lover (the devotee) and the beloved (God) can be said to be complete only when there is absolute merging of them both. This necessarily involves the effacement of the ego. This may also be referred to as the non-dual experience of saints as we find it described in the scriptures. For example Śuka says, “Those indeed love themselves in Hari,”5 Likewise, while giving a description of the divine love of a gopi the Bhagavata says: “A gopi whose mind is given to Krishna places her arm on another and says: ‘See, I am Krisna’6.
It is extremely significant here to note that in the Bhagavata itself we find a reference to the various types of bhaktas: “He is the foremost of bhaktas who finds in everything, the God, that is in his own self, and finds all these things in his own self which is God. He is a meddling devotee who cherishes affection, friendly feeling, composition and indifference towards God, to his devotees, to the ignorant, and to those who hate him. He is a beginner who worships with faith Hari in images only and not in His devotees and others.”

It is obvious from the above that the various types of bhaktas differ mainly in the varying degrees of spiritual perfection attained by them and that the basic attitude of the devotee towards life and the world is analogous to that of the jivanmukta. In its most intensive sense the term bhakti points also to human experience which is but a culmination of all spiritual practices. This transforms the attitude of the individual so much that the individual considers all as God’s creatures and hence as fellow creatures; so he begins doing selfless service, in the spirit of worship of God. Narada’s description of the true devotee (bhakta) leads support to our view here. He describes the realised man “as one who having transcended the ego, comes to have a type of non-attachment that is spontaneous, and not the result of any effort. He has no desire except for the love of God and for serving the world as his manifestation; he had no hatred except indignation against evil and unrighteousness. And he does not exert himself to promote His own self-interest but works for the good of all without any sense of ego or of any feeling of external compulsion”. He, moreover, specifically points out that there is no inherent opposition between renunciation and service, for what is renounced is not external activity but the ego. The Gītā also points out that renunciation is mental that such an ideal of mokṣa as an integral aspect of the puruṣārtha scheme accounts for the ultimate seriousness of life and endows meaningfulness and significance on all of life’s activities. From this viewpoint, therefore, we have deemed it unnecessary to go into a detailed discussion of mokṣa itself, and hence we have deliberately given it a sketchy treatment.
We have hence emphasized the point that mokṣa cannot be reached by by passing morality for ignoring it, that the good life is indispensable and absolutely necessary for attaining spiritual perfection and that here is no jumping from an unregenerate life of impulses and instincts to mokṣa. The elaborate treatment we have given to dharma in this study and the pointed discussions of the significance of artha and kāma attempted, have been necessitated thus to reiterate our position that even though the good may be visualized as a transcendent goal to be attained in the life of man, its realisation is impossible unless the various aspects of live are perfected and unless a core-value regulates all of life’s activities and makes way for the ‘final ascent’.

The problem of the destiny of man (mokṣa) is linked with the problem of self, for according to classical view it is not the attainment of something foreign to self but constitutes the realisation of its own essential nature. The nature of self is the metaphysical ground of the state of liberation (mokṣa). There are various views as to the nature of self. They can be classified into two main groups, viz, those who do not believe in the existence of a soul substance (anātmavāda) like the Buddhists, and those who believe in the existence of self (atmavāda). The latter view is further divided into those who maintain many selves (anekatmavāda) and those which believe in one supreme self (ekatmavāda). The Buddhist concept of nirvāṇa and śāṅkhya’s view of release (mokṣa) represent the first two groups. Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja the two stalwarts of the Vedanta school, have made valuable contributions towards the problem of liberation (mokṣa) and without a discussion of their system, no account of the concept of liberation is considered complete. Brahmaṇavāda is unique and yields us an exact rational of value-philosophy and it is not proper to mix it up with any other point of view on liberation (mokṣa).

No human being is satisfied with the circumstances in which he is placed in this world. He finds that life in this world is full of sorrow. He feels himself to be in some sort of bondage and limitation which he wants to transcend. He wants
to enjoy permanent happiness only to avoid misery and sorrow. As a result, it has been the endeavour of man to find out ways and means by which he could become happy or at least be free from misery and pain. This idea which has been present in the mind of man from very early days gradually develops into the conception of mokṣa. Mokṣa itself seems to be a purely negative idea, but it implies the existence of that which is in some way limited and one can be freed from these limitations. Man knows himself to be finite owing to many limitations of which he is always conscious. The search for absolute freedom therefore involves the search for the ultimate purpose of life of the individual. The positive aspect of mokṣa or liberation is that the ultimate purpose is hidden by the surging of diverse desires which dominate the dream of consciousness. A negative method which shuns life and experience will not lead the individual to realise the goal of life. If the individual accepts and welcomes experience and digests it though critical understanding he can come closer to the final fulfilment of life.

Mokṣa is considered the supreme end of man (paramapuruṣārtha) one of the four ends of man the other three being dharma, artha, kāma. The concept of puruṣārtha reflects the psychological insight into human nature of the Hindu philosopher who appreciated fully that man is neither completely different from nor identical with the animals. The concept of mokṣa by its very nature points to the culmination of ascetic tendencies marked by a sense of detachment, when properly cultivated results in attachment to and consideration for all. Mokṣa has twin aspects, the individual and social, that no human being is either completely individualistic or solely social. The individual and social aspects of human nature cannot be separated completely. The more individualistic goals like mokṣa have their social implications, the more it influences society. When the individual aims at perfecting himself, he has to shed off all his egoistic and selfish tendencies. If the power of love is freed from these encumbrances it can lead the individual to final release and fulfilment. The limitation of consciousness can be technically traced to the effect of past actions which give a specific shape and character to the temperament of the individual. Mental habits have a tendency to obstruct true
perception of values and also to hinder the release of intelligent response, because every fresh situation in the life of all individuals is unique and therefore requires critical thought and unique response. But apart from mechanisation of the mind mental habits can often limit activity from another point of view, because most mental habits are due to ignorant and misdirected actions. The problem of liberation or mokṣa is therefore the problem of freeing the mind from the limiting influence of past actions.

The most essential requirement of mokṣa is that the individual should be able to step outside his limiting presonality in the sense that his vision is no longer clouded by exclusive concentration of interest in his own self. The limitations of consciousness are ultimately rooted in some kind of deep rooted ignorance about the place and the function of the individual in the totality of life. The understanding of life is perverted by the fact that the individual has a tendency to judge everything and to react to it from the point of view of the ego. Ego creates duality and divides life into fractions and destroys its harmony and integrity. Those thinkers who look upon liberation as total extinction of life and consciousness certainly misunderstand its nature. Extinction can hardly have any fascination for the individual. The concept of mokṣa appeals to those who look upon the ultimate reality as an impersonal absolute and who want to be merged in it.

We find that mokṣa unerstood within the sphere of experience and present life Jivan -Mukti. We see this as a part ad parcel of a very influential doctrine of the Upanisadic period. Nyāya -Vaiśesika and Viśistadvaita system do not accept the ideal. The aim of mokṣa is not merely acquisition of knowledge but a certain immediate experience giving rise to proper insight. This can be illustrated in two different view -points. The aims of the one is cultivating absolute and unqualified detachment from everything. The other view aims at detachemt from the mere paricular and equal attachment to all mokṣa refers not to a new state to be attained but is the realisation of what has always been the case. It is not the
academic understanding of the identity between the individual self and the universal self that is considered vital for mokṣa. Mokṣa as the ultimate goal in life when attained, transforms the entire outlook on society. The significance of Mokṣa as an ideal for society is understood when we consider it not as an isolated value but as one of four-fold fundamental aspirations of man.

The distinctive feature of Indian philosophy is the concept of mokṣa. Mokṣa is the goal of human life. All schools of Indian philosophy, both heterodox and orthodox, prescribe to their followers some method by which they could all attain a state of spiritual transcendence. The state of spiritual trascendence is called mokṣa. The concept of mokṣa is a common feature of all systems though the systems differ in their views regarding the nature of mokṣa. Some systems hold that complete annihilation of all misery is mokṣa, is a common feature of all systems though the systems differ in their views regarding the nature of mokṣa some systems hold that complete annihilation of all misery is mokṣa, while others hold that mokṣa is the attainment of true happiness. On the basis of their views regarding the nature of liberation the systems could be grouped into two - the first group will consist of Buddhism, Nyāya - Vaisesika, Śāmkhya-Yoga and Memāmsa. This group holds mokṣa or liberation to be a state of absence of misery. In the second group will fall Jainism and Vedants. This group hold mokṣa or liberation to be a state of perfect happiness.

The Buddhist Nirvana

The Buddhist concept of highest destiny of man as nirvāṇa offers an opportunity to study mokṣa from a more positive and more intellectual point of view (unless nirvana itself is altogether different from mokṣa) as against the spiritualist and absolutist approach of the Upanaiṣads. The pessimistic strain of the Upanisadic view of human life influenced Buddhist teachings and was rather more prominently stressed. Nirvāṇa is advanced as the solution of the problem of human suffering. The whole Buddhist philosophy is based on the problem of
suffering and the solution to this problem. Buddhism centres round nirvana. The old Buddhist credo “Ye dharma hetuprabhavah” which is the briefest formula of Buddhist philosophy, sharply expresses the idea that the Great Recluse has indicated the (separate) elements of existence (dharma), their interconnection as causes and effect and the method of their final suppression.

The whole philosophy of elements (dharma), which according to stcherbatsky forms and central concept of Buddhism, is subordinated to the practical and (which is so pronounced in the Buddha’s teaching) of preparing for an understanding (prajñā) of the separate elements, which results finally in the state of rest (nirvāṇa). The Buddha laid greater stress on rousing humanity to attend to moral life rather than merely philosophizing about the abstract goal. This provided scope for varied interpretations at the hands of later Buddhist thinkers, regarding the exact nature of nirvāṇa. The historic silence of the Buddha over the final of human life on account of metaphysical difficulties in its positivist description cannot be ultimately maintained and its nature must be discussed. The word “nirvāṇa” is derived from the verbal root “virvah” which means to blow out or to cool down. Nirvāṇa amounts to blowing out the flame of life. In this sense, it means extinctions or death. But this cannot be the correct interpretation of nirvāṇa, for death is considered to be a link in the chain of suffering. Nirvāṇa must be a solution to death. Extinction may mean nothingness or blankness equivalent to Non-being. But that also seems to be an incorrect interpretation, for the law of universal causation of the Buddhists is ultimate and being cannot result in non-being. Therefore, nirvana must be only another type of Being or life—a life which has ceased to draw from the fuel of desire. The second sense of the verbal root ‘nirvah’ as to ‘cool down’ perhaps comes nearer to the point arrived at here.

What is to be cooled down in nirvāṇa? The passions (klesha) which lead life towards duhkha (sorrow) through their influence (sasrava), are to be cooled down or appeased. Cooling of passions as understood in the ordinary sense, must
mean a psychological discipline of self-control or control over passions and attachment or disires. If this is the case nirvakara must mean a life of harmony and mental paise and thus it must be an empirical concept and such a life must be of an intrinsic as well as moral value. But the word passion (klesha) used in the Buddhist terminology can only be understood in the proper perspective of Buddhist metaphysics. According to it only seperate elements of existence (dharmas) are ultimately real. They are found in two conditions (i) life influenced elements (sasrava dharmas) and (ii) elements not influenced by life (anasasrava dharmas). The former are in a state of ceaseless commotion (duhkha) and the latter, in a state of calm (santa). The former is the notion of existence and the latter, that of value.

If it is in the nature of elements (dharmas) to be always in commotion (duhkha), it is impossible for them to be in rest (santa). The Buddhists characterize element (dharmas) as suppressible. Hence, value is the condition of reality; nirvana is, therefore, the ultimate goal of the world process in which the elements in connection come to final rest. The ordinary course of life (santana) is constituted by sasrava-dharma influenced by passions (klesha). Pure life (arya) is constituted by anasasrava dharma free from passion (klesha). Klesha here menas a tendency towards life or a will to live or ‘elan vital’ of Bergson. It is by suppression or elimination of passion (klesha) that the final rest of elements is achieved. Nirvana is a process of converting all uttpati dharmas (elements producing life) into anuttpati dharmas (elements not producing life).

The way to achieve this nirvana or the final rest of all elements in life is knowledge - a discrimination of elements (parjana) which ordinarily means appreciative understanding. It is capable of development and cultivation and becomes immaculate wisdom (praajana amala) which is at the same time anasasrava praaja nā (understanding not influenced by passion for life). This anasasrsva praaja nā joins the life process as a force thereby disquieting or suppressing every element one by one, and increasing the area of blankness. This
is cessation through wisdom (pratisankhya nirodha) and is called drṣṭi-marga, which can result in suppression of some of the movements of elements. This stage is lower than the final nirvāṇa which means extinction of all elements. After drṣṭi-marga has done its works, the remaining elements are suppressed by mystical concentration (bhāvanā-haya). This concentration comes nearer to Hindu Yoga (anirbijasa)- madhi). By the drṣṭi-marga realisation of the two-fold truth of elements dharma and not-self (anātma), some mental elements like feeling, ideas volitions are stopped and by bhāvanā - haya, all the remaining impure and material elements as well as sensuous consciousness is finally suppressed.

This suppression is not illogical in view of the basic notion of elements, which are subtle entities not exactly material or mental. This is still not the final nirvāṇa. Mystical concentration (bhāvanā-heya) can lead to a spiritual or transcendent existance or being in which consciousness and mental phenomena are brought to a complete standstill (corresponding to nirvikalpasamādhi). This spiritual being has the purest elements (dharma) which come to an absolute and eternal extinction in the state on nirvāṇa when on eternal blank is substituted for them all. Nirvāṇa means the eternal blankness or absolute annihilation. This does not mean that nirvana amounts to achievement of nothingness of extinction. Nirvāṇa only implies that elements (sanskṛta-dharmas) are extinct but the presence of asaṁskṛta-dharma (which has been sometimes understood as pure essence) cannot be ruled out on account of the Buddhist stand on universal causation. What is the nature of this essence if it ever exists in nirvāṇa? Prof. Stecherbatsky in his discussion arrives at negative results. It is extinction of consciousness; it is inanimation. It is neither birth nor death and also it is not fit to say that it is neither birth or death.

Nirvāṇa cannot be regarded as a state of bliss since all feelings or consciousness states are absent. It is just cessation of manifestation. It is a negative concept. Prof. Stecherbatsky believes that nirvāṇa is not a state of
consciousness, hence it is not spiritual. Others collaborate this view. But Max Muller and Childers repudiate this stand. They observe that ‘there is not one passage which would require that its meaning should be annihilation. This pertains to the essential difference between the Hinayana and Mahayana formulations of the nature of nirvana. A.K. Lad writes that Hinayana maintains a negative attitude in so far it makes nirvana an egoistic ideal (arhathood), annihislistic with a negative means to its attainment; and Mahayana is positive in approach and views. Nirvana as altruistic, Bodhisattva, and spiritual with a positive means of its realization. Thus he observes that Mahayana nirvana is far superior to Hinayana nirvana. The Hinayana nirvana is only a step towards the goals, a halting place on the way to the goal and not the goal itself. Radhakrishnan is constrained to observe that ‘Dvidently, two different views were developed very early on the basis of Buddha’s utterances. Budha’ s real attitude is probably that nirvana is a state of perfection inconceivable by us’ and we are obliged to give negative descriptions of it. T.R.V Murti holds that ‘The Vaibhavikas or any school of Buddhism never took nirvana as nothing but as some sort of noumenal unconditioned reality behind the play of phenomena .... . Only it is inexpressible .... . It is not being nor Non-being’

Nirvana and Moksha

In view of the discussion on the nature of nirvana, it is abundantly clear that the concept of nirvana does not strike a discordant note in Indian philosophy which centres round moksa or mukti as the highest goal of life. Both the concepts are based on the premises that i) there is suffering in life and ii) nirvana or moksa is the state of liberation from suffering. The fact of human suffering has been more emphasized in Buddhism. But this fact and the rejection of Vedic authority have hardly made any difference in this regard. The state of nirvana is believed to be achieved through three stages, i) stoppase of the movement of elements (niruddha) through vision (destimarga) ii) complete appeasement of passion and desire (niruddha - samapatti) when a spiritual being emerges (this is
the ideal of bodhisattva) and iii) nirvāna at this stage is an absolute and unconditioned reality which is considered to be an essence beyond any characterisation and on account of its indescribability some say that it is pure extinction, non-being which cannot be described as spiritual or blissful but others regard it as a state of perfection. Mahayana differ essentially in their characterisation of the third stage.

Nirodha is definitely an empirical state which can correspond to liberation in this life (sadhehamukti); the second state is transcendental in so far as the spiritual being is asserted at this stage. This therefore, corresponds to the meta-empirical concept of liberation (mokṣa). The third stage of unconditioned reality comes closer to the view of the Absolute (Brahman) in so far as both are beyond description, absolute and transcendental (neither being nor non-being). Thus concept of nirvāna and mokṣa have deep affinity. If mokṣa, as the release from psycho-physical existence and the realisation of some spiritual essence, is capable of varied characterisation, nirvāna can be one of such formulations. It presupposes the same metaphysical grounds which are the Law of Karma, the cycle of birth, suffering and moral discipines as means of mokṣa. It is, therefore, not an alien doctrine. In its negative interpretation, akin to Vaiśeṣika’s nirvāna, it is comparable to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika conception of mokṣa as cessation of suffering in an inanimate existence without any spiritual essence. And if nirvāna means unconditioned absolute reality behind the phenomena as according to Mahāyāna, it comes closer to brahmayāda of Śaṅkara. T.R.V. Murti, however, brings out an essential point of difference between the Madhyamika and Advaita’s notions of release. Nirvāna is not identified with consciousness and bliss, but for the Vedānta release is identified with absolute existence, consciousness and bliss (sadcidānandam). ‘ The Madhyamika seems to stop short at that or the bare assertion of the Absolute as the implicate of the phenomena, the Vedānta proceeds further to define what is the nature of the Brahman’.
The Buddhists believe in rebirth and say that it is due to chain of passions and desire in the mind of man. Ignorance is the root cause of the individual’s existence in this world. The Buddhists believe that if ignorance is destroyed by true knowledge the links of the chain will break off one by one. They do not regard the self as a permanent entity. According to their opinion self is a continuous stream of momentary congnitions. They say a continuous stream of momentary cognitions. They say there is the need of cessation of the stream of cognition for release from bondage. Buddhists suggest the astāṅgika-marga (the eight fold noble path) is the way which Buddha and others followed for the attainment of liberation. This astāṅgika-marga is the recommended path of the fourth noble truth of Budha. Again this fourth noble truth is derived from the knowledge of the chief conditions that causes misery i.e, second noble truth. This astāṅgika marga gives a nutsell of the essentials of Baudha ethics and this path is open to all individuals - monks as well as laymen. The eight fold noble path consist of i) Right views, ii) Right resolve, iii) Right speech, iv) Right conduct, v) Right livelihood, vi) Right effort, vii) Right mind-fulness and viii) Right concentration.

(i) Right views (sammadhiṭṭhi or samyagdṛṣṭi) - As ignorance, with its consequences, namely wrong views (mithyādṛṣṭi) about the self and the world, is the root cause of our sufferings, it is natural that the first step to moral reformation should be the acquisition of right as views or the knowledge of truth. Right view is defined the correct knowledge about the four noble truth. It is the knowledge of these truths alone and not any theoretical speculation regarding nature and self which, according to Buddha helps moral reformation and leads us towards the goal - virvāna.

(ii) Right resolve (sammāsankappa or samyaksankalpa) - As mere knowledge of the truths would be useless unless one resolves to reform life in their light. The moral aspirant is asked therefore, to renounce worldliness (all attachment to the world) to give up ill feeling towards others and desist from
doing any harm to them. These three constitute the contents of right
determination.

(iii) Right speech (sammaavaca or samyaagyaka) - Right determination
should not remain a mere ‘pious wish’ but must issue forth into action. Right
determination should be able to guide and control our speech, to begin with. The
result would be right speech consisting in abstention from lying, slander, unkind
words and frivolous talk.

(iv) Right conduct (samvakammanta or samvak-karmanta) - Righty
determination should end in right action or good conduct and not stop merely with
good speech. Right conduct includes the Pnaca-Sila, the five vows for disisting
from killing, stealing, sensuality, lying and intoxication.

(v) Right livelihood (samma-ajiva or samya-jiva) - Renouncings bad
speech and bad actions, one should earn his livelihood by honest means. The
necessity of this rule lies in showing that even for the sake of maintaining one’s
life, one should not take to forbidden menas but work in consisting with good
determination.

(vi) Right effort (sammaavayama or samyaavya-yama) - while a person
tries to live a reformed life through right views, resolution, speech, action and
livelihood, he is constantlty knocked off the right path by old evil ideas which
were deep - rooted in the mind as also by fresh ones which constantlty arise. If one
maintains a constant effort to root out old evil thoughtes prevent evil thoughts from
arising a new, the mind be kept empty and constant endeavour to fill the mind
with good ideas, he can progress his life steadily. This fourfold constant
endeavour of right effort leads one to the path liberation.

(vii) Right mindfulness (sammasati or samyaaksmrti ) - one should
constantly remember and contemplate the body as body, sensation as sensation,
mind as mind, mental states as mental states and one should remember about the
perishable nature of thing. This is necessary for keeping attachment to things
grief over their loss. The practice of such thought is recommended by Buddha in
minute details in Dighanikaya. One should gives up all false emotions and
affection for the body, his own and others. The result of this right mindfulness
about the detachment of all worldly objects leads a man to the path of liberation.

(viii) Right concentration (sammasamadhi or samyaksamadhi) - Right
concentration, thought four stages is the last step of the eightfold noble path. The
first stage of concentration is an reasoning and investigation regarding the truths.
There is then a joy of pure thinking. The second stage of concentration is
unruffled meditation, free from reasoning etc. There is then a joy of tranquility.
The third stage of concentration is detachment from even the joy of tranquility.
There is then difference even to such joy but a feeling of bodily ease still
persists. The fourth and the last stage of concentration is detachment from this
bodily ease too. There are then perfect equanimity and indifference. This is the
state of nirvana or perfect wisdom.

To sum up the essential points of the eightfold path, it may be noted first
that the path consists of three main things - conduct (sila) concentration
(samadhi) and knowledge (prajna) harmoniously cultivated. In Indian philosophy
knowledge and morality are thought inseperable perfect knowledge is imposible
without morality. Buddha explicitly state that virtue and wisdom purify each other
and the two are inseperable. Reformation of life -ideas, will and emotion -in the
light of truth forms a major part of the eightfold path. Concentration possible
only such reform . The result of concentraion on truth finds perfect wisdom and
clearly reavealed the riddle of existence . Therefore, perfect knowledge, perfect
conduct and perfect equanimity can give complete relief from suffering and
attained nirvana.

According to Nyaya-Vaisesika, liberation is absolute cessation of pain and
rebirth. The Nyaya view of liberation is the same as the Vaisesika view. According
to the Vaisesika liberation is complete extinction of the special qualities of the
soul, such as cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, volition, merit, demerit, and impression. The soul is free from cognition in the state of liberation. Cognition is produced by the intercourse of a sense organ with an object and the conjunction of a sense organ with manas. In liberation the soul is free of merits and demerits and free from pleasure and pain. There is no eternal happiness beyond pleasure and pain due to the sense object intercourse. Bhasarvajna, a saiva Naiyayika maintains that liberation consists in the experience of eternal happiness; the relation of this happiness and knowledge; though caused is not destroyed owing the absence of its cause. This happiness is always experienced in liberation. Liberation is absolute cessation of pain attended with eternal happiness. Udayana criticizes that doctrine; he says a person never desires what he always possesses. Eternal happiness cannot be accomplished, because it is eternal. It cannot be attained because the soul has eternal relation to it. It is not to be known, because its knowledge is eternal. If happiness and its knowledge both are eternal the relation between them cannot be said to be produced. Hence, there is no proof for the existence of eternal happiness and eternal knowledge. The cannot be said to be attained by the destruction of ignorance. the Nyaya admits liberation to be absolute destruction of pain including ignorance. It does not admit liberation to be eternal experience of eternal happiness.

The end of almost all the system of Indian philosophy is the attainment of mukti or liberation for the individual self. This is specially true of the Nyaya which purposes, at the very outset, to give us a knowledge of reality or realities for the realisation of the highest good or the sumnum bonum of our life. The different systems, however give us different descriptions of this consumate state of the soul's existence. For the Naiyayikas it is a state of negation complete and absolute of all pain and suffering. Liberation is absolute freedom from pain. This implies that it is a state in which the soul is released from all the bonds of its connection with the body and the senses. so long as the soul is conjoined with a body, it is impossible for it to attain the state of utter freedom from pain. The body with the sense organs being there we cannot possibly present their contact.
with undesirable and unpleasant objects and so must submit to the inevitable experience of painful feelings. Hence in liberation, the soul must be free from the shackles of the body and the senses. But when thus severed from the body the soul ceases to have not only painful but also pleasurable experience, may more, it ceases to have any experience or consciousness. So in liberation the self exists as a pure substance free from all connection with the body, neither suffering pain, nor-enjoying pleasure, nor having consciousness even. Liberation is the negation of pain not in the sense of a suspension of it for a longer or shorter period of time as in a good sleep or a state of recovery from some disease or that of relief from some bodily or mental affliction. It is absolute freedom from pain for all time to come. It is just that supreme condition of the soul which has been variously described in the scriptures as 'freedom from fear' (abhayam) 'freedom from decay and change' (ajaram)', freedom from death (amrtvpadam) and so forth. Some later Naiyayikas, however hold that liberation is the soul's final deliverance from pain and at the sametime the attainment of eternal bliss.

To attain liberation one must acquire a true knowledge of the self and all other objects of experience (tattva-jnana). He must known the self as distinct from the body, the mind the senses etc. For this he should first listen to the scriptural instruction about the self (sravana). Then he should firmly establish the knowledge of the self by means of reasoning (manana). Finally, he must meditate on the self in conformity with the principles of yoga (nidadhyasana). These help him to realise the true nature of the self as distinct from the body and all other objects. With this realisation the wrong knowledge (mithya-jnana) that 'I am the body and the mind, is destroyed, and one ceases to be moved to action (pravritti) by passions and impulses (dosas). When a man becomes thus free from desires and impulses, he ceases to be affected by the effects of his present actions, done with no desire for fruits. His past karmas or deeds being exhausted by producing their effects, the individual has to undergo no more birth in this world (janma). The cessation of birth means the end of his connection with the body and consequently, of all pain and suffering (duhkha); and that is liberation.
In the Vaiśeṣika theory of liberation, the Vaisesikasutra present the following picture which is to be followed in seeking freedom: one should behave according to Vedic precepts; this produces merit (dharma) and eventually exaltation (abhyudaya), whereas impure behaviour produces demerit (adharma). Bondage (samsara), however, is caused by both merit and demerit (adrsta = karma). It is because of our attitudes of desire and aversion that we act in ways which produce mere karma and these attitudes have as a necessary condition the contact between the eternal organ (manas) and the self of the individual person. It becomes clear that of method of liberation involves gaining central over one’s eternal organ. Yoga is the control of that organ so that it does not come into contact with the external sense organs (indriya); when such contact ceases, there are no more feelings of pleasure and pain for the individual, and this is turn stifles any desires or aversions. Eventually the trancelike state, which as we have seen Gautama likens to deep sleep, set in, and when this separation of self from internal organ is achieved and the old karma lived and, the self is completely liberated from bondage, since there is no way for karma to come again to operate on him.

The most important modification of the traditional view of the path to liberation in Vaisesika is the introduction of the notion that God must at least permit, it not be operative in the process. The first of our writers clearly to include God in the description of the path is Prasastapada, whose introduction specifies merit together with God’s injunctions produce the knowledge about reality which is necessary for liberation. However in latter reviews of the same topic this reference is absent: one may safely say that God is not much on Prasatsapda’s Uddyotakara brings in God as the creation of merit and demerit but nothing he says implies any interruption of the machinery by which the self earns good or bad karma by his actions.

The Vaisesikasutras present liberation as a state where the two necessary conditions for the arising of another body are absent. These two conditions are
said to be the conjunction of the internal organ with the self, and a certain "unseen force" \((adrsta)\) which is instrumental in producing transmigration. It is probable that Kanada equates this unseen force with the accumulation of \(karma\) which he mentions in a later sutra. If so, a person may be held to be liberated either when his \(karma\) becomes in operativbe or when his internal organ is disjoined from his self. The latter condition is achieved in \(samadhi\).

In Nsaya-Vaiseyrika two terms appear for the liberation; "\(nihsreyasa\)", literally "having no better," and "\(apavarga\)", meaning an end or completion. Sivaditya's differentiation stands with the account of liberation usually credited negative; it does not attribute any consciousness or feelings whatsoever to the liberated self. The negative conception has called forth the guide that freedom for the Vaisesikas is being like a stone.

The Sankhya and Yoga systems also recognise a state of \(moksa\). Their conception of \(moksa\) is in keeping with the pessimistic attitude of the system. Sankhya holds that liberation is the absolute negation of three-fold suffering or pain. The supreme release is total annihilation of three fold pain without vealing any trace of it. It is brought about by discrimination only and not by any other means. Release partly resembles deep sleep and ecstasy which are lacking in consciousness of external objects and feeling of pain. In deep sleep and ecstasy there is temporary arrest of mental functions. In the state of release there is complete isolation of the self from \(Prakrti\) and its evolutes, the mind body complex. Release is either embodied or disembodied isolation of the self. In the former, traces of disposition persist, which preserve bodily life. In the latter, these traces are completely destroyed and the body is dissolved. The self is neither bound nor released, nor does it transmigrate from one body to another. \(prakrti\) binds itself with its seven - fold forms, virtue dispositions lordliness, ignorance, attachment and powerlessness. Self liberates itself by knowledge \(9\). When the self apprehends the distinction of the self from \(prakrti\) it becomes completely liberated. When it withdraws it acts the self remains in its intrinsic
nature as its spectator. It realises its innate purity. Thus liberation is the indifference of *prakrti* and *purusa* to each other.

According to the Sankhya, human beings have faced three kinds of pains, viz, the *adhyatmika*, *adhibhattika* and *adhidaivika*. The first is due to intra-organic causes like bodily disorders and mental affections. It includes both bodily and mental sufferings, such as fever and headache, the pangs of fear, anger, greed etc. The second is produced by extra-organic natural causes like men, beasts, thorns, etc. Instances of this kind are found in cases of murder, snakebite, prick of thorns and so forth. The third kind of suffering is caused by extraorganic supernatural causes, e.g. the pains inflicted by ghosts, demons, etc.

Now all men earnestly desire to avoid all kinds of pain and what enjoyment at all times. The attainment of this is very difficult though not impossible. The rational end of freedom from pain cannot be found by the hedonistic ideal of pleasure. In this system all pleasures are bound to be mixed up with pain or at least, be temporary. But in the Sankhya theory of liberation we will find the absolute and complete cessation of all pain without a possibility of return. It is the ultimate and or the *sumnum bonum* of our life.

And then how we escape from suffering and how to attain perfect or unalloyed happiness is the main issue before us. In this regard the Sankhya’s first step is the eradication of ignorance from our mind and try to find out the right knowledge of reality (tattavajñāna). It is a general rule that our suffering are due to our ignorance. For example an uneducated man does not know the laws of nature so, grief on many occassions because of his ignorance. Like this, ignorance about reality and non-discrimination between self and not self is a great disturbance in the path of liberation.

The reason for this, we must have the perfect knowledge about reality. Reality is according to Sankhya, a plurality of selves and the world of objects presented to them.
The self is an intelligent principle which does not possess any quality or activity but is a pure consciousness free from the limitations of space, time and causality. It is the pure subject which transcends the whole world of objects including physical things and organic bodies, the mind and the senses, the ego and the intellect. The self is quite distinct from the mind body complex and is therefore, beyond all the affections and afflictions of the psychological life. Pleasure and pain are mental facts which do not really colour the pure self. Virtue and vice, merit and demerit and all moral properties belong to the ego (ahankara) not to the self. Thus the self is different from the mind and the ego but it is the transcendent subject whose very essence is pure consciousness, freedom, eternity and immortality. But the self is the subject or witness of mental and physical changes. It is eternal and immortal, because it is not produced by any cause and cannot be destroyed in any way.

_Vivekajñana_ or discrimination between the self and not self leads to freedom from suffering. But this knowledge is not merely an intellectual understanding of the truth. It must be a direct knowledge or clear realisation of the fact that the self is not the body and the senses, the mind and the intellect. Once we realise or see that our self is the unborn and undying spirit in us, the eternal and immortal subject of experience, we become free from all misery and suffering. A direct knowledge of the truth is necessary to remove the illusion of the body or the mind as myself. To realise the self we require a long course of spiritual training with devotion to and constant contemplation of, the truth that the spirit is not the body, the senses, the mind or the intellect.

The nature of liberation is just the clear recognition of the self as a reality which is beyond time and space and above the mind and the body, and therefore essentially free, eternal and immortal. When there is such realization, the self ceases to be affected by the vicissitudes of the body and the mind and rests in itself as the disinterested witness of physical and psychical changes. It is possible for every self to realise itself in this way and thereby attain liberation in life in
this world. This kind of liberation is known as jivanmukti or emancipation of the soul while living in this body. After the death of its body, the liberated self attains what is called videhmukti or emancipation of the spirit from all bodies, gross and subtle. Vijnanabhisu, however, thinks that the latter is the real kind of liberation, since the self cannot be completely free from the influence of bodily and mental changes so long as it is embodied. But all Sankhyas agree that liberation is only the complete destruction of the threefold misery (dukhatraya-bhīghata).

The Yoga system holds that liberation is to be attained by means of spiritual insight (prajna) into the reality of the self as the pure immortal spirit which is quite distinct from the body and the mind. But spiritual insight can be had only when the mind is purged of all impurities and rendered perfectly calm and serene. For the purification and enlightenment of citta or the mind, the Yoga gives us the eightfold means which consists of the discipline of (1) Yama or restraint, (2) niyama or culture, (3) asana or posture, (4) pranayama or breath-control, (5) prayāhāra or withdrawal of the senses, (6) dharana or attention, (7) dhyana or meditation and (8) samadhi or concentration. These are known as aid to Yoga (yoganga).

The first discipline of yama or restraint consist of (a) ahims or abstention from all kinds of injury to any life, (b) satya or truthfulness in thought and speech, (c) asteya or non stealing, (d) brahmacharya or control of the carnal desires and passions, and (e) aparigraha or non-acceptance of unnecessary gifts from other people. This explains the necessity of complete abstention from all the evil courses and tendencies of life in the path of samadhi of one who is eager to realise the self.

The second discipline is niyama or culture. It consists in the cultivation of the following good habits: (a) sauca or purification of the body by washing and taking pure food (which is bahya or external purification), and purification of the
mind by cultivating good emotions and sentiments such as friendliness, kindness, cheerfulness for the virtues and indifference to the vices of others (which is called abhyantara or internal purification, (b) santosa or the habit of being content with what comes of itself without undue exertion, (c) tapas or panance which consists in the habit of enduring cold and heat, etc., and observing austere vows, (d) svadhyaya or the regular habit of study of religious books, and (e) Isvarapranidhana or meditation of and resignation to God.

The third discipline is asana or posture. The Yoga lays down various kinds of asana, such as padmasana, virasana, bhadasana etc. for maintaining the health of the body and making it a vehicle for concentrated thought. It prescribes many rules for preserving the vital energy, strengthening and purifying the body and the mind. It can be properly learnt only under the guidance of experts.

The fourth discipline is pranayana or the regulation of breath. It consists in suspension of the breathing process either after exhalation (recaka), or inhalation (puraka), or simply by retention of the vital breath (kumbhaka). The details of the process should be learnt from experts. The Yoga goes further and prescribes breath control for concentration of the mind, because it conduces to steadiness of the body and the mind. This regulated suspension of the breathing processes keep the mind in a state of undisturbed concentration.

The fifth discipline is pratyahara or withdrawal of the senses. It withdraws the senses from their respective external objects and keeping them under the control of the mind. This state is very difficult, although not impossible of attainment. It requires a resolute will and long practice to gain mastery over one’s senses. These five disciplines of yama, niyama, asana, pranayama and pratyahara are regarded as the external aids to Yoga (bahiranga-sadhana). As compared with these the last three disciplines- dharana, dhyana and samadhi are said to be internal to Yoga (antaranga-sadhna), because they are directly related to some kind of samadhi or Yoga. These are dharana, dhyana and samadhi.
Dharana or attention is a mental discipline which consists in holding (dharana) or fixing the mind (citta) on the desired object. The object thus attended to may be a part of one's body, like one's navel, the midpoint of the eyebrows, etc. or it may be external to the body, like the moon, the images of gods, etc. The ability to keep one's attention steadily fixed on some objects is the test of fitness for entering on the next higher stage of yoga.

Dhyana or meditation is the next step. It means the even flow of thought about, or rather, round about, the object of attention. It is the steadfast contemplation of the object without any break or disturbance. This has the effect of giving us a clear and distinct representation of the object first by parts and aspects. But by long-continued meditation the mind can develop the partial representation of the object into a full and live presentation of it. Thus dhyana reveals the reality of the contemplated objects to the yogin's mind.

Samadhi or concentration is the final step in the practice of yoga. Samadhi is the mind's absorption in the object of contemplation and the mind loses itself in the object and has no awareness of itself. In this stage, only the object of thought remains shining in the mind and we do not even know that there is a process of thought in the mind. It should be observed here that this samadhi as a discipline is different from the samadhi or "the yoga previously defined as "the restraint of the mind" (cittavrittintrodha). The former is but the means for the attainment of the latter which is its end. A long continued practice of the one leads to the other. These last three steps (antaranga-sadhana) have the same object, i.e. the same object should be first attended to, then meditated and lastly concentrated upon. When thus combined they are said to constitute samyama which is very necessary for the attainment of samadhiyoga.

The extra-ordinary power can be acquired by the practice of Yoga in its different stages. But the Yoga system warns that all aspirants of moksa not to practice yoga with these ends in view. Yoga for the attainment of liberation. The aspirant must overcome the lure of yogic powers and move onward till he comes to the end of the journey, viz., liberation.
Kaivalya is attended by the practice of these eight-fold path of self-discipline. By summing up the eighth-fold path, the first step on self-discipline is the practice of *yama* which consists of *ahisa*, *satya*, *astemya*, *brahmaacarya* and *aparigraha*. The next step is the practice of *niyama* which consists of acquiring certain positive virtue like *sauch*, *santosa*, *tapas*, *svadhyaya*, and *isvarapranidhana*. These two steps are only preliminary. The next step of yogic training consists of *asana* (posture), *pranayama* (control of breath) and *pratyahara*. These means aim at restraining the mind from the physical side. The next stage consists of different forms of concentration; *dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi*. The last one (samadhi) directly leads to Kaivalya. *Samadhi* has two kinds: one is Samprajnana Samadhi and other is Asamprajnata Samadhi. In Samprajnata Samadhi the buddhi is active and continues to function. In Asamprajnata Samadhi the buddhi ceases to function and finally vanishes. A person who has reach this stage attains Kaivalya.

The Mimamsa holds that liberation is a result of action. The Mimamsaka further says that liberation as a kind of heavenly state that one reaches by performance of pure actions. This view is evidently compatible with viewing the liberated state as a different state from one’s self-nature. The relevant mimamśa tenets for the attainment of liberation as follows:-

(1) The Vedas enjoin everything of human value, including liberation; (2) that it is only actions leading to future results that can be enjoined; (3) that knowing is an act; (4) that false knowing-ignorance or *avidya* is a result of faults (*dosa*) in the knower or in his organs; (5) that these faults arise from moral impurity; (6) that the scriptural injunctions enjoin actions upon us that will purity present faults and preclude future one’s; (7) therefore, that by performing actions as enjoined in scripture, we may remove ignorance and achieve the self knowledge upon which we are enjoined to meditate, which high meditative state constitutes liberation.
It will be evident that the Mimamsaka try to find a place for action in the path to liberation, is largely motivated by sentiments of Brahmanical orthodoxy. The Mimamsaka assumes that the Vedic passages that apparently enjoins performance of ritual actions (the *nityakarmans*) are to be respected and applied in all stages of life, specifically including the stage of *samyasa*. By regular performance of prescribed acts and avoidance of prohibited one, can a person maintain whatever merit be may have earned, without such ritual action he will surely quickly gather demerit and subside once gain into the lower section of the great chain of Being. The orthodox believes accepts the Mimamsa’s distinction between *nitya, naimittika and kamyakarmans* and takes it very seriously.

We have seen already that, according to the Mimamsa, consciousness and other mental states are not interent in the soul. They arise only when the soul is related to objects through the body and the organs. The liberated soul, being dissociated from the body and, therefore from all the organs including *manas*, cannot have any consciousness: nor can it, therefore, enjoy bliss. Liberation is then desirable not as a state of bliss, but as the total cessation of painful experience, It is a state where the soul remains in its own intrinsic nature, beyond pleasure and pain. The soul in its intrinsic state (*svastha*) can be defined only as substance having existence and a potency for consciousness-though no actual consciousness. Some later Bhattas hold, however, like the Advaitins that liberation is an experience of joy.

According to early Mimamsakas the attainment of heaven through the performance of sacrifices like the jyotistoma was *moksa*. They stress on the Vedic injunctions and they considered that their duty was to carry out the injunctions of the Vedas. So the *svarga*, the seat of all happiness is attained by the performance of Yogas and was held to be *moksa*. The view is certainly defective because it *moksa* is the attainment of heaven it cannot be permanent since the fruit of our actions will came to an end when the merit of the actions gets exhausted. When
the merit is exhausted, we have to return to this world again. The later
Mimamsakas like Parthasarathi Misra rectify the defect. To them mokṣa is not the
attainment of Svarga. It is the attainment of a state where man enjoys neither
pleasure nor pain. If we lead a life without performing any karmay karma, all the
sins will be washed off gradually and we shall become free from pain and
pleasures and the self will attainment of this state by the self is called Mokṣa

Liberation in the Vedanta system there are two opinions, one is
Śāṅkaracarya who advocated Advaita Vedanta and another is Ramanujacarya who
advocated Visistadvaita Vedanta.

According to Śāṅkaracarya, liberation means removed of ignorance by
knowledge. True knowledge is the knowledge of identify of Brahman or Jivan.
Knowledge of Brahman leads to eternal bliss. Brahman can be realised through
knowledge, not through karma or action. The blessed person who has realized
Brahman is liberated in this world itself during his own life-time. This state of
liberation is known as Jivanmukti. But final release is obtained after the death of
the physical body. Liberation after death is called Videhmukti.

Advaitic conception of mokṣa stands unique in its nature. According to
Sankaracarya and his followers mokṣa is not attained fresh. It is already there is
man. It is very nature of the self; but man does not realise it on account of his
ignorances. In the mokṣa of the Advoitin all that is needed is a removal of the
obstacle that keeps the truth concealed. So it is only a negative or indirect sense
that we can speak of attaining mokṣa in Advaita. According to Advaita, mokṣa is
the realisation of the identity of the Jiva and Brahman. It is the forgetting of this
identity that constitutes the Samsara. At the down of true knowledge Ājnana is
destroyed, the truth is revealed and the self becomes aware of identity with
Brahman and this is mokṣa. According to Advaita, mokṣa is not freedoms from
pain and misery but the enjoyment of perfect and eternal bliss because mokṣa is
the realization of Brahman. Brahman is ananda, the Jiva realising that it is
Brahman also becomes Anandamaya. This is the highest goal of human life. He
who knows Brahman attains the highest goal of life. The knower of Brahman exists in Brahman. He lives, moves, and has his being in Brahman. He realises eternal bliss, which is the essence of the Atman. When it realizes its identity with Brahman, desires due to avidya are extirpated. Desires are the cause of pain. Finite objects produce desires. They cannot yield permanent satisfaction. But Brahman is free from desires. It is eternal bliss.

The concept of a pool of pure consciousness as the ultimate essence of the self seems to be the logical consequence of the Indian way of thinking about the highest goal of human life. This has found its fullest expression in the advaitavada of Śaṅkara. The highest expression of his philosophical idealism is the Absolute (Brahman) which is eternal all knowing, absolutely self-sufficient, ever pure, intelligent, free, pure knowledge and absolute bliss. Its essence is pure consciousness. The Absolute (Brahman) is one without a second and is the only reality. The purest and highest self (atman) is also universal, pure and blissful and therefore, the same as the Absolute (Brahman); Śaṅkara maintains as absolute identity (without qualifications) between the highest self (atman) and the Absolute (Brahman). The world, which consists of things differentiated by names and forms, and the individual self (jivatman) which is embodied under the limiting conditions of body, senses and mind, are the products of ignorance (avidya) which is of the nature of non-discriminative knowledge. The individual self (jivatman) enjoys pleasure and pain and lives in the transmigratory existence (samsara) because it does not understand its true essence as the blissful, highest self. So long as the individual self does not free itself from ignorance in the form of duality and does not rise to the knowledge of the self, whose nature is unchangeable, eternal cognition which expresses itself in the form “I am Brahman” so long it remains the individual self. But when, dicarding the aggregate of body, sense organs and mind, it arrives by means of scripture at the knowledge that it is not that aggregate, that it does not form part of the transmigratory existence, but is the True, the Real, the Self whose nature is pure intelligence; then knowing, itself to be of the nature of unchangeable, eternal
cognition, it lifts itself above the vain conceit of being one with the body and itself becomes the self.....

*Mokṣa* is release of the individual self from the limiting bodily adjuncts and a dispelling of the thick powerful veil of ignorance and realisation of the truth that everything is the self and the self is Brahman. *Mokṣa* means the realisation of the unity of the self with the highest self or Brahman which is already there, but was blocked by ignorance and its products—the limiting conditions. This realisation is affected only through knowledge; the merits of one's deeds only prepare the ground for it. But all the same, he who is desirous of knowledge must be possessed of calmness, subjection of the senses, etc., since these are auxiliaries to the attainment of knowledge, hence they are necessary. Effects of good and bad deeds will have to be destroyed ultimately by fruition and with the knowledge of the Brahman, the self becomes one with the Brahman.

*Mokṣa*, according to Advaita-Vedanta, is the final aim of the whole logical procedure of working out and idealistic account of the highest destiny of man. *Mokṣa*, according to Advaita philosophy of Śaṅkara, is the realisation of the absolute identity or oneness of self with the highest reality (Brahman) whose essence is not the only existence (*sat*) and self-revealing consciousness (*citat*), but also bliss (*anand*). But since consciousness and bliss are already accomplished facts of the highest reality, how can they be accomplished by human effort? Śaṅkara has already answered this by holding that the fulfilment of the individual self (*jivatman*) does not mean that of the highest self (*atman*), just as its limitations (ignorance) do not affect the latter. Bondage and release do not apply to the highest self or the Absolute. The accomplishment of the self through *mokṣa* is comparable to the sense of gain of the person who discovers the lost necklace round his own neck or the state of the man who realises his mistake having taken a rope to be a snake. It lies in the realisation (*praptaprapti*) of that which is already realised or rejection of that which is already rejected. The Absolute (Brahman) is accomplished in its essence from eternity to eternity.
Man's desire to realise this essence is born of illusion, which is dispelled on attaining *mokṣa*. *Mokṣa*, being absolute reality, is eternal, ever accomplished, without change. The upshot of the whole argument is that Śaṅkara identities existence with value and value with reality, which is both self and the Absolute. Does the release of a person (*mokṣa*) results in any improvement in the totality of reality? Śaṅkara would rule it out, since absolute reality transcends all change, be it progressive or retrogressive. For him, the starting point is the same as the destination from the absolute point of view. On this ground, Dr. R.P. Singh argues that *mokṣa* is the definition of absolute values which are not something to be died 'nor is it within the power and scope of human agency to create them; values are not “Karmasadhyā”, says Sankara, they are intrinsic and Absolute. Atman being the same as *mokṣa* or Brahman, is spoken of by him as “*akarmasesa*”.

Śaṅkara’s followers may assert that the ideal of man cannot be other than the self which is ever realised by him in whatever he does. Self-realisation is the meaning of *mokṣa*, and on Śaṅkara’s own ground, self-realisation is a realisation of the self’s identify with the existent, the real and the eternal, which is not only the highest self but also the Absolute (Brahman). Self realisation is, therefore, mere affirmation of the eternal identity or non-duality of the self and the Absolute. It is sometimes believed that the self ceases to be before it becomes the absolute so that self realisation means self-destruction which is undesirable. *Mokṣa* means self-annihilation, according to Śaṅkara, if self means the narrow self or the false self. The destruction of the false self and the realisation of the true self must be a value. The self is the highest self as well as the universal self. Hence, Śaṅkara’s argument that *mokṣa* is the identity between self and Absolute leads us to the identity between value in the absolute sense and existence. Dr. R.P. Singh also reaches a similar conclusion when he writes, 'the way in which Sankara characterizes atman, Brahman and *mokṣa* leave no room for doubt about their identity and their nature as values and not mere existents? *Mokṣa* is an absolute value, it is transcendental self-existence and an ideal ought to be implied in human life and the world. Thus, Sankara’s account of *mokṣa* is the highest stage of the
Indian concept of the final goal of man, and marks an improvement upon those of the Buddhists and the Samkhya.

According to Sankara, who advocates Advaita Vedanta, liberation means removal of ignorance by knowledge. True knowledge is the knowledge of identity of Brahman or Jivan. Knowledge of Brahman leads to eternal bliss Brahman can be realised through knowledge, not through karma or action. The blessed person who has realised Brahman is liberated in this world itself during his own lifetime. This state of liberation is known as Jivanmukti. But final release is obtained after the death of the physical body. Liberation after death is called Videhamukti.

Again, liberation consists only in breaking the illusory barriers, and what was limited by them, namely existence, is then left unaffected. This alternative explanation is known as the theory of limitation (avacchedaka-vada). The attempt of Sankara is to show how the intrinsic, pure condition of the self can be regained. The study of the Vedanta helps man conquer these deep rooted effects of long-standing ignorance. But the four fold culture of the mind makes one a fit student of Vedanta. The necessary preparation are- (i) one should be able to discriminate between what is eternal and what is not eternal (nityanityavastu-viveka), (ii) one should be able to give up all desires for enjoyment of objects here and hereafter (hamutrarthabhogaviraga), (iii) one should control his mind and his senses and develop qualities like detachment, patience, power of concentration (samadamadi-sadhanasampat), (iv) one should have an ardent desire for liberation (mumuksutva).

Liberation is not the production of anything new, nor is it the purification of any old state, it is the realisation of what is always there, even in the stage of bondage, though not known than. For, liberation is nothing but the identity of the self and Brahman, which is always real, though not always recognized. The attainment of liberation is therefore, compared by the Advaitins to the finding of the necklace on the neck by one who forgot its existence there and searched for it.
hither and thither. As bondage is due to an illusion, liberation is only the removal of this illusion.

Liberation is not merely the absence of all misery that arises from the illusory sense of distinction between the self and God. It is conceived by the Advaitin, after Upanisands, as a state of positive bliss (ananda), because Brahman is bliss and liberation is identity with Brahman.

The liberated man is the ideal of society and his life should be worthy of imitation by the people at large. Inactivity or activity that would mislead them should therefore, be avoided by the perfect. Social service is not, therefore, thought by Sankara to be incompatible with the perfect life, but rather desirable. In his own life of intense social service Sankara follows this ideal.

Ramanuja’s View of Moksa

Ramanuja regards Sankara’s Brahman as the void in which discernible values do not asserted. Mokṣa will mean being lost in the void. He, therefore, tried to proceed from value-premises, from which he discovered reality. The Bhagavad-Gītā precedes him when it declares that the highest dharma is performing actions befitting one’s caste, stage in life and qualities with a spirit of disinterestedness (niskanmaka-mayoga). It is at the same time the highest state, goal and happiness of man (parama-gati); it heralded a more empirical, activistic and concrete goal for man. The idea of personal God was conceived. “Vasudeva sarvam” refers to God in everything. The Pururimansa, the doctrine of makṣa as the realisation of eternal happiness with active participation (pravel) in the discharge of unconditional duties on the realisation of the moral imperative as duty (niyogasidhi), disposes for consideration a purely positive as duty (niyogasidhi), disposes for consideration a purely positive and activistic view of mokṣa. The Bhagavad-Gītā is inclined to accept the unity of the self with the highest reality only to steer clear of the absolutism of the Vedanta, a consequence
more favourable for a tangible and acitivistic view of the goal of man; but the
Parumimansa has conciously argued against the phenomenality of the world and
the individual selves, which are ultimately sublated like products of illusion, and
maintains that worldly pleasures and pain are transformations of the non-spiritual
part of the self and moksa lies in freedom from the world and thereby from such
transformations. The self enjoys the eternal happiness of the effect of
meritorious actions in this state. The view that moral activity and self, as the
centre of such activity, is ultimate and indestructible matured itself in the thought
of Rāmānuja, though within the folds of absolutistic idealism.

Ramanuja criticises absolute non-dualism on the ground of the
epistemological difficulty of the proof of such identity; knowledge presupposes
the thinking subject and the distinct object. The self is of the essence of a subject
and things in the world as objects. God is the highest subject and the world and
selves are distinct from them. All of them, of course, constitute the Absolute
(Brahman) which is undifferentiated essence, and consciousness or intelligence
and blessedness are its attributes and not essence. Similarly, the self which is of
the essence of a thinking subject is ultimate and eternal and consciousness is only
an attribute of it; the latter cannot exist if the former were not to be. Hence, the
conscious self persists in the state of release. Ramanuja's great achievement lies
in formulating the indestructibility of selves. The selves can have intuition of the
supreme self (God). Ramanuja's Brahman is subtle conscious, unconscious and
qualified (suksmacidacid-visista). The individual selves are mere modes or
aspects of the Brahman (saririn) as they constitute its body (sarira). The true
nature of these selves is , however, obscured by ignorance, which means not
illusion (maya), but the influence of a chain of works without beginning and
moksa or release which follows on the destruction of such ignorance, means
understanding the highest self by intuition which is the natural state of the
individual selves. Hence the goal of a man is to restore himself to his natural
position as one of the factors of the highest reality which is again a society of
many distinct selves. *Mokṣa*is merely the affirmation of our harmony with the Absolute (Brahman) and thus gaining the eternal life of felicity or blessedness (*ananda*) arising out of the consciousness of favourable object presented in their true essence as having their being and harmony in God.

Rāmānuja’s concept of liberation implies neither the accentuation of the singleness of self nor annihilation into the Brahman, but preservation of the self’s distinctive essence as the unique centre or conscious subject in the society of selves in the state of natural intuition of the Brahman. But what is the relation of the self after release to the Brahman? The view of an organic unity between the parts of the Brahman (*saririnsarira*) is the answer. If there is a society of selves, the relation of one individual and the whole may further affect the status of the seler in the Brahman. In the total picture, the Lord (*Isvara*) or God, in Ramanuja’s philosophy assumes to Itsel the role of the Governor, and the whole society of selves might be subordinated to the Supreme Will of the Lord. Ramanujites admit that *mokṣa* means the restoration of harmony by subordinating the individual will to the Divine Will or self surrender so that His Will may prevail. This consequences spells disastrous results regarding the highest goal of man. Man will always be subordinate to God and will not be able to reach the highest status of Godhood. Rāmānuja’s concept of the highest goal for man is not the highest, for there is still a scope for him to travel and reach his final destiny. Rāmānuja, like other thinkers of the Saguna-Brahmavada, believes in four types of liberation, (i) salaukya in which a liberated self resides in the same abode with God, (ii) samipya, humble living in the nearness of God, (iii) samipya which implies assuming the same form as that of God and (iv) sayugya union with God. They mark the four stages of the soul according to the increasing depth of relationship and unity with God. The whole matter is considered valuationally. Ramanuja does not conceive of the absolute merger of self with God as Sankara does. The distinction between the self and God remains and man is not allowed to achieve the status of God. This condition of maintaining some distance between God and the free soul is itself, according to the religious point of view,
valuational, because it intensifies the longing for God eternally. This may be true from the religious point of view, but in the presence of a something higher, greater and nobler, man cannot be made to stop short at something lower. The tendency to achieve the highest condition conceivable by man must constitute the content of an ultimate value like mokṣa. True autonomy must be the goal. Ramanuja succeeds in demonstrating the distinct reality of selves in the body of the Absolute, but has failed to restore to them the highest glory of being ultimately autonomous. The condition of subordination of man to God is itself not the highest value and is morally degrading.

It is clear, therefore, that Rāmānuja’s theory of the Absolute is a religious account of the highest goal of man, while Śaṅkara’s concept of the mokṣa is metaphysical. Mokṣa according to Ramanuja, is the highest religious value; it constitutes the realisation of the absolute values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. His concept of the highest condition does not go beyond the moral domain, for he thinks that there is no supra-moral plane of being, wherein there is a complete cessation of a life of duty (Karmasamnyasa). Even in the state of mokṣa a person is supposed to discharge unconditional duties with a spirit of disinterestedness, for they are believed to be conducive to the power of enlightenment (sattvavivaruddhijanaka). In this way, he has made the highest state (mokṣa) to be morally activistic. The state of mokṣa, therefore, cannot be conceived as a condition of complete disembodiment, for moral activity presupposes empirical life, unless mokṣa means an internal transformation and realization which is possible in this very life. Śaṅkara’s concept of Jivanmukti implies this. But the view that a life of selfless duty conduces to enlightenment, disposes us to look towards a state of complete enlightenment farther from the moral life which is higher than it. Metaphysically, this condition of highest enlightenment must be the goal. Hence, Ramanuja’s concept of the highest state of man is the highest from the religious point of view; it is undoubtedly, not the highest from the metaphysical angle. This is exactly the point of difference between the approaches of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.
Rāmānuja, who advocates Visistadvaita or Qualified Monism, mainfirms that the individual souls are in bondage because of their ignorance and evil karmas. Liberation for him is not the merging of the individual soul (Jīvatma) to the Absolute Soul (Paramatma) on the other hand, it is only the direct intuitive realisation of the individual soul of its own essential nature as a mode of God. For Ramanuja there is no liberation without the grace of God. Hence, Bhakti or devotion to God is necessary for attaining liberation. Self-surrender with detachment for the fruits of actions is the only means for liberation. According to Ramanuja there is no jīvanmukti because so long as the soul is in a physical body, there is no liberation in the true sense. He also says that the liberated soul dwells in direct communion with God, enjoying like God, infinite consciousness and bless.

Further, Rāmānuja stated that the attainment of liberation must be sought through work and knowledge, because they pave the way for devotion. By work, (karma) Ramanuja, means here the different obligatory rituals enjoined by the Vedas on persons according to their respective castes and stations in life (varnas rama). These should be performed life long as bounden duties without any desire for reward like heaven. Disinterested performance of such duties destroys the accumulated effects of the past deeds which stand in the way of knowledge. For the correct performance of these ritual it is necessary to study the Mimamsa philosophy. Ramanuja regards, therefore, the study of the Mimamsa as a necessary pre-requisite to the study of the Vedanta. By the study of the Mimamsa and performance of the duties in its light, one comes to realise also that the sacrifice rites cannot lead to any permanent good and cannot help man to attain salvation. This persuades him to study the Vedanta. The Vedanta reveals to him the real nature of the Universe. He comes to know that God is the creator, sustainer and controller of all beings, and that his soul is not identical with the body, but is really a part of God who controls it from within. He further learns that liberation can be attained not by ‘study and reasoning’, but only if God is pleased to choose him for liberation.
Liberation is not the soul’s becoming identical with God. The liberated soul having pure consciousness, untainted by any imperfection, becomes, in this respect, similar to God (brahmaprakara). This similarity of nature is what is meant by the Upanisads which say that the liberated soul attains with God.

We saw previously that according to the unqualified monism of Śaṅkara, the highest good lies in a complete denial of the separate self and realization of its unity with God. The religious sentiment of the monist attains full satisfaction by total self-effacement which leaves nothing but God, the sole, self-shining Reality. But for the theist, like Ramanuja, this is a dismal prospect. The highest satisfaction of the religious emotion demands no doubt self-purification and self-surrender, but not complete self-effacement. The highest good for the devotee is the pure and constant contemplation of the infinite glory of God, and the liberated one needs his self if only for the enjoyment of this highest bliss. Free from ignorance and bondage of every kind, the liberated soul enjoys, in perfect love and wisdom, infinite joy born of complete communion with God.

Finally, according to the Jainas view of mokṣa, the self is stable consciousness and of the size of one’s own body. Bondage of self is due to karma. Karma gets associated with the self and brings the self down to the mundane level. “As heat unites with iron and water with milk so does karma unite with the self.” The self united with Karma is called bondage. If through a proper course of self-discipline all karma is worked out and the self is freed, it reaches higher and higher and reaches its permanent abode at the summit, what is called lokakasa. The fetters of karma have to be destroyed into two stages. First, through right knowledge and self-restraint the influse of fresh Karma could be stopped. This is called sanivara. The effect of the karma which is already in existence has to be checked. This is called Nirjara. When the self dissolves its association with karma, it is restored to its true and real nature. Therefore after this the self remains in perfect bliss. Mokṣa is of two kind-bhavamokṣa and dravyamokṣa. The modification of the soul which is the cause of destruction of all karmas, is
called bhavamoksa. It is subjective liberation. The actual seoration of all karmas from the soul is called dravyamoksa. It is objective liberation. Kundakundacarya considers the destruction of the four destructive karmas knowledge abscuring, perception obascuring deluding and obstructive karmas to be bhavamoksa and the destruction of four non-destructive karmas-bliss obsuring, age determining, character determining and the family determining - to be dravpamoksa. According to Umaswati the destruction of the four destructive karmas leads to perfect knowledge and the destruction of all kinds of Karmas and the soul’s complete separation from them leads to liberation 17. In the state of liberation the soul realises infinite knowledge, infinite perception, infinite bliss and infinite power. Jains believes in the innate divinity of each soul. They do not recognize the reality of God as the creator of the world. Infinite knowledge and infinite perception are innate in the soul. The liberated soul is absolutely determined; it is firmly established in its intrinsic nature and is free from relations to other souls and objects. When the soul is liberated it goes straight up to the Siddhase or the Region of the Free and the liberated at the summit of Lokakasa. Speaking from the standpoint of noumenal maya, a Siddha has no form where he is imperceptible by the senses, but from vyavahara standpoint, he has a shadowy form of human figure which is but an embodiment of Right vision, Right knowledge and Right conduct in and through which a Jiva attains to a state of perfection. Our ignorance about the real nature of soul and other things leads to anger, vanity, infatuation and greed. Knowledge alone can remove ignorance. The Jainas stress the necessity of right knowledge (Samyag - Jnana). Right knowledge can be obtained only by studing carefully the teachings of the omniscient tirthankaras who have already attained liberation and therefore are fit to lead others out of bondage. Before we feel inclined to study their teachings, we must have a general acquaintance with the essentials of the teaching and consequent faith in the competence of these teachers. This right sort of faith based on general preliminary acquaintance is called samyaga-dersana. But more knowledge is useless unless it is put to practice. Right conduct is regarded by
Jainas as the third indispensable condition of liberation. In right conduct a man has to control his passions, his senses, his thought, speech and action, in the light of right knowledge. This enables him to stop the influx of new karma and eradicate old karmas, securing gradually the elimination of matter which tries the soul into bondage. The part of liberation lies through right faith, right knowledge and right conduct. Liberation is the joint effect of these three.

If bondage of the soul is its association with matter, liberation must mean the complete dissociation of the soul from matter. This can be attained by stopping the influx of new matter into the soul as well as by complete elimination of the matter with which the soul has become already mingled. The first process is called samvara (i.e. the stoppage of influx) and the second nirjara (i.e. exhaustion or wearing out of karma in the soul).

In Jaina ethics right faith, right knowledge and right conduct are known as the three gems (trirtna) that shine in a good life. Liberation is the joint effect of these three gems (trirtna). In the very first sutra of Tattvarthadhigama sutra Umasvami states this cardinal teaching of Jainism: “The path to liberation lies through right faith, right knowledge and right conduct”. The following are the explanations of trirtna.

Right faith (samyag darsana) is respect for truth. Umasvami defines right faith as the attitude of respect (Sraddha) towards truth. This faith may be inborn and spontaneous in some; by others it may be acquired by learning or culture. In any case faith can arise only when the karmas that stand in its way (i.e. the tendencies that cause disbelief) are allayed or worm out. As Manibhdra, a Jain writer, states, the attitude of the Jaina is rationalistic rather than dogmatic. It is not a blind faith that was taught by the Tirthankaras. It is the minimum will to believe, without which no study can rationally begin. Perfect faith can result only from perfect knowledge.
Right knowledge (samyagjnana) - while faith is initially based on knowledge of only the essentials of the Jaina teachings, right knowledge is, as Dravya-sangraha states, the “detailed cognition of real nature of the ego and non-ego, and is free from doubt, error and uncertainty” (verse 42). We have already seen in connection with Jaina epistemology the different ways in which correct cognition can be obtained. As in the case of faith, so in the case of knowledge the existence of certain innate tendencies (karmas) stands in the way of correct knowledge. For the attainment of perfect knowledge the removal of these karmas should be attempted. Perfection of this process ends in the attainment of Absolute omniscience (Kevalajñana).

Right conduct (samyak caritra)- good conduct is briefly described in Dravya-sangraha (verse 45) as re-fraining from what is harmful and doing what is beneficial. In a word, it is what helps the self to get rid of the karmas that lead him to bondage and suffering. For the stoppase of the influx of new karmas, and eradication of the old, one must (i) take the five great vows (Panca-mahavrata), (2) practise extreme carefulness (samiti) in walking, speaking, receiving alms and other things, and answering calls of nature, so as to avoid doing any harm to any life, (3) practice restraint (gupti) of thought, speech and bodily movements, (4) practice dharma of ten different kinds, namely, forgiveness, humility, straightforwardness, truthfulness, cleanliness, self-restraint, austerity (internal and external), sacrifice, non-attachment and celibacy, (5) meditate on the cardinal truths taught regarding the self and the world, (6) conquer, though fortitude, all pains and discomforts that arise from hunger, thirst, heat, cold, etc. and (7) attain equanimity, purity, absolute greedlessness and perfect conduct.

Some of them the five great vows are sufficient for the perfection of right conduct. Many of other steps recommended are found to repeat in different ways the basis principles of these five. So, the Jainas give emphasis to the five great vows. The five great vows are as follows:
Ahimsa (non-injury to life) - The Jaina attitude of ahimsa is the logical outcome of their metaphysical theory of the potential equality of all souls and recognition of the principle of reciprocity, i.e., we should do to others as we would be done by. The Jainas follow this vow very strictly that even in breathing a peace of cloth tied over their noses lest they inhale and destroy the life of any organism floating in the air. And then one should recognize the value and the claims of every life, as his own. ‘Respect for life wherever found’ becomes then an irresistible duty. Ahimsa must be practised in thought, speech and action.

Satyam (abstinence from falsehood) - This vow also is taken very rigorously. Truthfulness is not speaking what is only true, but speaking what is true as well as good and pleasant. Without these qualifications the practice of truthfulness would be of little use as an aid to moral progress. Because, merely speaking what is true may sometimes descend into garrulity, vulgarity, frivolity, vilification, etc. Truth set as the ideal of this vow is sometimes called, therefore, sunrta, to suggest, the fuller meaning of truth which is also wholesome and pleasant. It is also pointed out that for the perfect maintenance of this vow one must conquer greed, fear and anger and even restrain the habit of jesting.

Asteyam (abstinence from stealing) - This vow is based on the idea of the sanctity of property. The Jainas stated that to rob wealth is to rob life because human life is impossible without wealth in some form or other and further they thought that depriving a man’s wealth is virtually to deprive him of an essential condition on which his life depends. Therefore, the sanctity of property being a logical sequence of the sanctity of life. And the vow of asteyam is logically inseparable from the vow.

Brahmacaryam (abstinence from self-indulgence) - This vow of brahmacarya consists in abstaining from all forms of self-indulgence. But the Jaina attacks to this also a deeper meaning that raises the standard of this vow far above mere sexual self-continence. For the complete maintenance of this vow
one must, therefore, desist from all forms of self-indulgence external and internal, subtle and gross, mundane and extramundane, direct and indirect.

*Aparigraha* (abstinence from all attachment) - This is explained as the vow to give up all attachment for the objects of the five senses—pleasant sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. As attachment to the world's objects means bandage to the world, and the force of this causes rebirth, liberation is impossible without the withdrawal of attachment.

Though the Jaina thinkers give emphasis to the right conduct for the attainment of liberation, it is not questionable to say that perfection of conduct goes hand in hand with the perfection of knowledge and faith. So, right faith, right knowledge and right conduct constitute the three gems of a good life.

Lastly, the *Ananta Catustaya* (fourfold perfection) can be attained by the joint effect of *trirtna*. When a person, through the harmonious development of right knowledge, right faith and right conduct succeed in overcoming the forces of all passions and *karmas*, old and new the soul becomes free form its bondage to matter and attains liberation. Being free from the obstacle of matter, the soul realises its interest potentially. It attains *Anata Catustaya*, the fourfold perfection, namely—infinitesimal knowledge, infinite faith, infinite power and infinite bliss.

**Comparisons**

The concept of liberation (*moksa*) as found in India thought is unique, an exact parallel to which in Western philosophy is hard to find out except a similar view in Spinoza. A.K. Had writes 'If any single conception can be taken to distinguish Indian philosophy from the Western, it is the conception of *moksa* which is usually translated into English as liberation, salvation or release, though none of these words reveal the full meaning of the original. The conception of salvation or release in Western theology implies that the soul has fallen in the death of the world at some particular time due to certain sin and we have to
release it from it. But (the) Indian conception of mokṣa implies that the soul is 
eternally free, but it has wrongly identified itself with certain extraneous 
elements and we have to realise its true nature. Apart from the religious 
significance of the concept of mokṣa it has been subjected to much of 
philosophization at the hands of India thinkers, who may seem to differ widely 
from full non-spiritualist to spiritualist views about the final destiny. The problem 
of liberation (mokṣa) finds its crux in the notion of the self even though the 
Buddhists may not believe in a permanent self.

Spinoza worked out his if any views of the final destiny of man as a strict 
deduction from his general metaphysical standpoint. He believes in only one 
substance which can be truely independent and that is God. Everything else is 
dependent on God. Thus, all individual things are partial, limited and determined; 
and this is true of man who is a part of God Man’s imperfection is mainly due to 
an imperfect knowledge he has of God. Nature and himself. His salvation lies in 
the attainment of true knowledge which Spinoza terms as intellectual love of God 
(AMor dei), but on true realisation, man does not become God, as Śāṅkara holds, 
for the knowledge only reveals man’s essential dependence on God as as part of 
God. This again is not the state which Rāmānuja thinks is the final destiny of the 
liberated soul, for Spinoza’s liberated man keeps on loving God without being 
loved by. God in return.

From the highest knowledge arises the highest possible peace of mind and 
finally the intellectual love of God which is an eternal state. Spinoza believes that 
solong as the body remains, the mind, which is otherwise eternal is subject to the 
effect of passions; but when the body ceases to be, the mind (soul) stays eternally 
as a part of God. This state, according to him, is blessedness and this is what is 
known as intellectual love of God, for it is eternal. Thus, Spinoza’s view of 
salvation can be compared to the Buddhist concept of the attainment of 
enlightenment (bodhi), because both imply a cancellation of the effects of 
passions (affects or klesa), but there will always be some metaphysical 
differences which distinguish their standpoints.
Self-realisation as the supreme goal of life can be used as a starting point in the comparism of Eastern and Western thought, as it is acknowledge by most of the idealists both in the East and the West. Self-realisation, if it means anything must mean realisation of the self which is considered to be higher or more true than the actual personality. It may mean self-development, and in this sense, it implies the realisation of certain potentialities of human nature which are at present undevelopment, Aristotle's conception of Eudaemonism will be closer to this. He maintains that to energize the soul (which should be taken to mean the rational part of human nature) according to the point virtue which provides the form off moral life, gives joy (Eudaemonia) which is the aim of life. Self-realisation, therefore, will not mean the development of all the capacities of human nature, for that is not only well nigh impossible. A choice of capacities is, therefore, necessary for a theory of self-realisation which would mean the realisation of those capacities which are better or higher than others, for the self to be realised must be full of value.

F. H. Bradley suggests that both the spheres of knowledge and conduct be developed, but that comprises almost the whole of moral life. A choice will have to be made between higher and lower, true and false, in order to make self-realisation a practical ideal. Hegel maintains that reason evolves in the form of an idea both as the self as well as the world through the dialectical process culminating in the all comprehensive intelligence which is God or the Absolute. T. H. Green is more explicit and in the restatement of the Hegelian thesis. He accepts the idea of self-realisation as the final goal of human life, and goes on to define the nature of the true self which is to be realised. The true essence of self is its rationality or self-consciousness, which is the differentia of man. Apart from it, man resembles animal, for both of them have sensations appetites, etc., but it is an account of the presence of the spiritual essence in human nature which disposes it to have perceptions instead of sensations and in him appetites become desires. He elaborates this idea of the spiritual element by the process of human volition in which man dreams of an imaginary goal and then sets about realising it.
He, on account of this spiritual capacity transforms his ideals into reality. He is a little creator and resembles Providence in this respect. After having confirmed the spiritually of self, he proceeds to demonstrate that reason or spirit is all-pervading it is unmanifest in certain things and manifest in others. As we go from stones to trees and from them to animals, we see that the reason in stones is so latent and implicit that it is as good as absent, it becomes slightly explicit in vegetable organisms while in the case of animals, it is revealed in consciousness. But in human nature it is quite explicit in the form of self-consciousness and reason. Even man is not completely spiritual or rational. It is God or the Absolute which is all reason pure intelligence. There is much gap between man and god. The ideal of man is to realise his true essence which is self-consciousness or reason. Self-realisation, therefore, means realisation of the spiritual self. Self realization is at the same time god-realisation, for God is the truest essence of man and is complete Reason. T. H. Green answers the most important question with respect to the problem of self realisation, that it is the spiritual capacities which are higher and more worthy of realisation than others.

In order to face the charge of selfishness on self realisation, the nature of self will have to be further explored, for a self in order to be itself will have to exclude other selves from itself and is bound to be selfish. T. H. Green will argue that true self is not selfish or parachial, it is true simply because it is social; the social self alone is higher and it is this socially which is an essential characteristic of spirituality. Bradley contends that we are to aim at a society of selves of which our self is a part. How one person can involve others in his own essence, does not present any formidable difficulty to idealists who believes in the theory of internal relations. The social relations of a person are internal and constitute his essence which is spiritual and which is to be realised.

Let us see how we can answer some of the fundamental questions raised by Western thinkers in their discussion on the subject of self-realisation from the Indian point of view of liberation (mokṣa). The Indian concept of liberation
implies two states of man, viz, bondage and freedom. We do not find the exact equivalent of this in the philosophy of self-realisation, except that a distinction is made between the false self and the true self. The former is the actual or empirical (jiva) and the latter is the real or transcendental, (atman, purusa). The false self is false because it is changeable, limited and miserable according to the Indian point of view, and the cause of this bondage is inevitably ignorance of the true nature of self. Self-realisation lies in the removal of such ignorance and thus breaking through the limitations on the free life of the spirit, the liberated soul realises its truest essence as consciousness and bliss. Self-realisation cannot be selfish ideal, because according to India philosophy, selfishness is a characteristic of the false self, and self-realisation means rising above narrowness and selfishness. The true self must be the same in every body, because distinctions of body, mind etc., are external to the spirit. The highest state of self-realisation is the realisation of absolute identity with the Absolute (Brahman) according to Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja comes closer to Bradley in his concept of a system or organism of selves. But the Absolute is an undifferentiated whole of spiritual essence, according to Śaṅkara.

Distinct metaphysical standpoints mark the difference between the Western concept of self-realisation and the Indian view of liberation (mokṣa). The distinction between true and false selves has been metaphysically validated by Indian thinkers, so that false self is designated or empirical and the true as transcendental. The former is the state of bondage and the latter the state of liberation. We do not find any attempt made by Western thinkers to investigate the cause of such bondage. For Indian thinkers, ignorance of the true nature of the self is the cause of bondage. self-realisation for the Indian mind is spiritual awakening or wisdom, which dispels this ignorance and helps break through the bonds of the false self, and ushers in the free life of the spirit. Indians have been so fascinated by the ideal of liberation that ever since they have been thinking of it as the most practical ideal. The basic difference between the Indian and Western approaches lies in the difference in original motivation. Indian philosophy takes
its origin from the problem of suffering and the natural tendency to remove it. It shows a more humanistic approach than Western thought for which philosophy is more or less an intellectual activity.

1. 11.9.
2. Bhāgadgīta, v.18
3. VI : 29.
6. X. 30. 19.
7. XI. 2. pp.45-47.
11. Śāṅkara Bhāṣya - VII. 24. 1.
15. Dravyasaṅgraha - 37.
17. Tattvārthadhiḥgamsūtra - 1.2.