

# God, Moksha and the Universe

The biological conatus finds conscious expression in man in his striving for eternal blissful life. The search for 'Aab-e Hayat', 'the spring of eternal life' or 'the elixir of life' is as old as man's civilization. The concept of heaven in religions gives conviction to man's hope for a life eternal and happy. We human mortals desire for an unending life of happiness on earth. So the great among us continue to study the causes of human suffering and death and how to remove them, that is, how to attain moksha from suffering or/and death.<sup>1</sup>

It is well-known how Buddha, as a young prince, was touched to see a sick man, an old man and a dead man. It is less well-known that he was no less struck by the mental suffering in his courtiers and nobles through their jealousies and intrigues for power. His compassionate heart had a total vision of the universal fact of suffering both at physical and moral levels and he gave up his life of power and luxury to find the diagnosis and treatment of it..

Suffering, in general, is symptomatic of disorder. When there is suffering in an entity or an organisation, it means that either some one of its parts is diseased or the parts are not functioning in harmony. When we feel pain in any part of our body, we go to a doctor. The doctor knows that either some one of our bodily organs is diseased or some organ is not permitting the proper functioning of other organs. The pain is an indication of diseased or disorderly functions of the organism, i.e. the evil condition of the organism. What the doctor does is to cure the diseased organ or to regulate the function of the organs and thus remove pain. To remove pain or suffering

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<sup>1</sup> In Indian classical philosophies human soul is held to be eternal and thus runs no risk of death or extinction. The problem of moksha is limited to release from suffering. In the Western philosophies of religion soul is held as created and dependent on God for its continued existence. The problem of salvation extends to safe-guarding soul from extinction also.

is to remove diseased or disorderly working of organism, to remove evil in the system. When there is suffering in a family, it is diagnosed as either due to evil disposition of self-love or selfishness of some member in the family or the members of the family are somehow getting into each other's way. To remove suffering in a family is to treat the selfish member to a more socially responsible attitude or educate members of the family to more harmonious functioning. When there is suffering in a society, it is either because some group is denying the basic rights to life, thought and expression to other groups or is tyrannical to them or there is clash of vested interests of different groups. Social reformers and social revolutionaries either try to restore the basic rights to the deprived groups or get the vested interests adjusted and thus restore the health and happiness of a society. Thus evil behaviour patterns and their consequent suffering constitute human bondage. Moksha from suffering is release from bondage of the evil behaviour patterns that cause it. No wonder every doctrine of moksha, by and large, prescribes a very high moral discipline for a 'sadhak' aspiring for moksha.

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Man happens to be so situated that his life is another name for suffering. He needs and desires things. He cannot satisfy them by himself. An infant needs milk to satisfy his hunger. He cannot satisfy it himself. He is to go out of himself. He must seek his mother. We adults need eatables for survival and health. We cannot satisfy our hunger by ourselves. We depend on the natural world which is not hospitable enough to offer eatables to all of us. The two-thirds of the earth is covered with sea. Again, a large section of the earth is lost to us through deserts and snow. Further, the fertile land is not equally distributed in different countries. So we Aryans came from mid-Asia to India in search of green pastures and claimed India as our country. Muslims followed us. Hindus and Muslims came to India because India had more fertile land. The English and Europeans went and occupied America, Canada and Australia and some African countries mainly in pursuit of pastures new..

Even when the land is fertile, one is not sure that efforts to grow food will be successful. A ready harvest may be ruined by a sudden heavy rain or a sudden invasion of locust. The droughts and floods render millions homeless every year. There is always the element of contingency in satisfaction of man's biological needs inspite of his best efforts. A man may have, after years of killing labour, built his business and social position and when it was time to enjoy success, the cancerous cells turn the success into bitter memory for him. Our needs and desires get bruised through the blind forces of the natural world which is our only home. There are always conditions in the physical environments to conspire against our enjoyment of our efforts to satisfy our needs and desires. The physical conditions are indifferent, callous and sometime destructive of our achievements. They can bury with complete unconcern, nay, complete contempt, a whole civilization built by generations of men through blood and tears. Whatever be man's success in the control of Nature, Nature gets the better of him and it may even put him out of existence. If we were to believe the predictions of the astronome rs, one day our planet might collide with another planet and be shattered to pieces. Nature is too immense a power against man's finitude.

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We human beings depend on one another also. I want a job. I cannot give a job to myself. I depend on others. In every country there are growing millions of unemployed. They are not unemployed because they lack qualifications or will to work. But the present economic structure is such that unemployment is built into it. Even if one gets a job, it may not be according to one's aptitude. So work in one's job is like carrying a load on one's back. It does not satisfy the worker in us. One remains alienated from his work. Even if one gets a job to one's aptitude, one may not get a job to one's qualifications. I know a first-class M.A. teacher, teaching primary classes. There are millions who are under-employed. Further, even if one gets a job to one's aptitude and qualification, one may not get the work atmosphere. One wants to find his destiny in dedicated work in his

profession. But he finds adverse conditions in his work place. His colleagues tease him, ridicule him for his zeal for work, non-co-operate with him in accomplishing his tasks. He feels himself unable to concentrate on his work and give his best. Thus man feels alienated from his work and remains frustrated. He feels himself as a clog in a soul-less machine where satisfaction of creative work is reduced to dull mechanical routine which he carries out with distaste and boredom.

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In fact the bare fact of being in a society requires us to suffer the denial of our natural instincts. We all know that we cannot act out what passes in our mind. In anger we wish to kill the man who provokes us. But we withhold our hand. In a state of lust, we wish to spoil the honour of the other. But we stay away in spite of ourselves. Our greed for possessions is held back due to civic laws of our country. In Greek literature there is a story of a man who was given a ring which made him invisible. As soon as he got this power to escape all consequences of his actions, he killed the king, lusted with the queen and led a life of sensuous orgy. We all know what happened during the Partition. This is what man is when he is free to indulge in his unbridled passions and aggression. His satisfaction consists in uninhibited indulgence in his passions of possessiveness, violence and lust, whereas group life requires respect for property, life, and honour of others. The penalty to stay in a society is frustration of natural passions and hence suffering. The observance of civil law is not natural to man. Man is broken like a wild horse to be put to the cart of society. As soon as a child starts group life, he is asked 'not to take away the toys or play material of his sister'. When children of other families visit his home, he is asked to 'share his toys with them', 'to share his eatables with them. At home, at school and in society, he is all the time asked to deny his aggressiveness, his possessiveness, his impulsiveness. The external 'do nots' in course of time become internalized. So morality is not natural but conventional. It is product of training, not natural to man. He is taught to bear a life of denials, frustrations and suffering. Suffering is the unwritten

law of social life. This suffering is so colossal that religions offer heavy temptations or attractions for bearing it. "If you observe the Ten Commandments, (which are laws of civil life)" says one religion, "God will give you heaven of unending satisfactions." "If you observe social sex ethics," soothes another religion, "God will give you hundreds of most beautiful women in heaven for enjoyment." "If you live an innocent non-violent life," says a third religion, "You will be relieved of re-birth or at least be born in a prosperous family." These are the opiates of hope which religion offers to man's forbidden desires. But these opiates do not prove efficacious. According to Freud, human civilization is built on the volcano of starved and suppressed desires, which sometimes burst in the form of wars which give free play to aggressions and passions to satisfy themselves.

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One may like to check me for this gloomy and pessimistic picture of human situation sketched above. The situation is not so bad as is being presented. I forget that though there is immense denial of desires, there is ample satisfaction of them, too.

I have not forgotten the other side of the coin. I wanted to acclimatize the reader to see the more tragic aspect of human situation.

There is no denying that there is satisfaction of many of our desires, partial or total. But the satisfaction of a desire brings pleasure as its bloom. This pleasure intensifies the desire as petrol intensifies flames of fire. There is the Indian saying, "Not by enjoyment of desires do they subside, they flare up increasingly even as the fire fed by oblations of butter." Every satisfied desire clamours for more satisfaction and still more satisfaction, so that the clamour becomes insatiable. When the satisfaction of a desire becomes insatiable, it ourstrips our capacity to satisfy it and we suffer from irremovable frustrations which engender anger, bitterness and conflict. A man takes to earning. His success brings him pleasure. This pleasure intensifies his desire to earn more. The more success he meets in

the satisfactions of his desire, the more insatiable it becomes. He becomes greedy. He wants the whole wealth of the world for himself and thus strikes his head against the impenetrable wall and bleeds to death. He starts to exploit the labour, and the customer. He plays with the life of his fellow human beings through adulteration and false advertisements. He becomes enemy of his fellow human beings, He is alienated from them. He is uprooted from the soil which nurtures him. This alienation and uprootedness gnaws his self into loneliness which is the highest suffering. He craves for more and more pleasures which pale as he gets more of them. The life grows hallow and his desires are sickened with tasteless satisfaction. His greeds and lusts are burial ground for his happiness. They breed frustration, disillusion and suffering.

But this is not all, they de-humanize him. He is jealous of business men who have a bigger pile of wealth than his. His jealousy makes him wish ill to them. He is happy at their losses and miserable at their success. This jealousy infects relation between a brother and a brother, too. A brother is jealous of the greater success and respect of his own brother. How far de-humanisation can go! There are no limits to man's wickedness even in relation to his kith and kin, through his insatiable desires. Let us close this discussion with a quotation from Prof. T.R.V. Murti's work, Studies in Indian Thought which so beautifully summarises what has gone before.

"All Indian religions and philosophical systems take mukti or freedom from suffering and worldly life (samsara) as the goal of spiritual endeavour."

"If all our desires were satisfied as they arose in our mind or in the alternative, if our nature were completely in accord with the environment, no frustration would arise and no suffering would result.

"But the very nature of the individual or the ego engenders suffering. As an ego, its essence consists in self-centredness and its pursuits and impulses are selfish. And yet, the ego has to depend on other selves and on the entire creation. A kind of implicit and inherent disharmony is built in the very essence of the individual self." 2

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We have been studying the human situation of bondage to suffering and evil. Our life as ordinarily lived is interpenetrated with pain and suffering. But our short-sightedness and urgencies of immediate demands of life prevent us from reflection on our own existence in all its comprehensiveness and depth. We go through our life, making effort to reduce our suffering by some changes here and there in our environments and through regulating some of our desires. We seek piece-meal solution for specific problems of suffering at the bodily level as well as at social level. We seek the illusions of religion to bear the present suffering and hope for an end to suffering in the life to come.

The philosopher attempts to study the problem of moksha from bondage of suffering as a whole, in one's entire existence and in its totality. He looks for the possibility of the complete new way of life.

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If we accept the biological fact that pain indicates disorder of an organism, the pain and suffering of man at psychological level or behavioural level indicates that something is wrong in the total way of his life and this constitutes his problem of moksha from suffering.

The problem of moksha is to discover a way out of the bondage to wrong behaviour pattern of life. It is to discover deliverance from the unsatisfactory life. Thus the concept of moksha appears to be only negative in its meaning. But like several words in English language, such as 'independence', 'infinite', 'immortality', it far exceeds in inspiring emphasis in its positive form. Moksha does not consist in being delivered from evils of unsatisfactory life, but it is also to be ushered into supreme form of life. It is both negative and positive in its connotation. It is to remove hindrances that stand in the way of superior life. In the state of moksha, the person enjoys the highest ideal life. It is in this wider positive sense that Indian philosophy mainly uses the word Moksha.

Further, moksha does not by definition mean a state of disembodied existence in life hereafter. As Dr. Radhakrishnan puts it: "Release relates to the frame of mind. It does not depend on embodiment or non-embodiment." This view accords with Jainism, Buddhism, Sankhya-vada, and Shankara's Advaita Vedanta for they all hold that moksha is possible in this life on earth. We are concerned and justified to deal with the life of a Jivan-Mukta' on earth. The views about "Videha Mukti' are too speculative to admit of fruitful discussion.

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The problem of moksha is, as said earlier, the problem of new basis for life, a total change of life. philosop is faced with this problem of man in the total context of the universe. Says Dr. Radhakrishnan: "Any ethical theory must be grounded in metaphysics, in philosophical assumption of the relation between human conduct and ultimate reality. As we think ultimate realities to be, so we behave. Vision and action go together"

As philosophy and religion have viewed the universe and man under different perspectives or world outlooks, their interpretation of moksha or deliverance from bondage is varied. Let us study the various world philosophies to reach some understanding of moksha for our life on this earth.

We first start with what all philosophies and religions agree. They all hold that deliverance or moksha is possible. They accept the four Aryan truths ("Catvari arya-satyani") of Buddha. The fact of the bondage of man to suffering is true beyond all possibility of doubt. This suffering is caused. If suffering were uncaused, a brute fact of Nature, inevitable and inexorable, there could be no deliverance or moksha from it. Further, this cause can be discovered. If the cause of suffering were beyond human understanding, there would be insoluble mystery and philosophy would be useless in dealing with the problem of moksha or ideal life. It is not only that there is cause of suffering and the cause is knowable, but also the cause of suffering is removable. All philosophies of moksha rest on these four truths



there is suffering, suffering has a cause, the cause can be discovered and the cause can be removed. Here, the agreement ends. Different philosophies give different causes of the human suffering and different solution for it and hold different views about the life of 'Mukta'.

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There are five philosophies which represent five different perspectives or outlooks for moksha.

1. God-centred or theistic doctrines of moksha.
2. Soul-centred doctrine of moksha.

There are three philosophies that are Nature-based doctrines of moksha.

3. The materialistic doctrine of moksha.
4. The Buddhist doctrine of moksha or nirvana.
5. The Dev Darsana doctrine of moksha.

The God-centred or Theistic Doctrine of Moksha-The theistic doctrine holds that man and the universe are created by God. It is not that once God created man and the universe like construction of a building. The universe and man are in every moment of their existence dependent on God. The world and man depend on God in the same way as the sound of a flute depends on the flute player. As soon as the flute player stops blowing, the sound of the flute ceases. The world and man are dependent for their existence on God's mercy. If God withdraws his co-operation, the world and man will disappear into nothingness. This view is presented in a concrete form in the book of Genesis.

At first God made earth and heaven and was pleased with His work. He created sun and moon and stars and was pleased with the creation of day and night. Later on, he populated the earth with plants and animals. Having set the world. He made a man from some clay of the earth and infused it with the breath of life. He thus made man in his own image, and called him

Adam. To avoid loneliness for Adam, He created a woman out of his rib and called her Eve. God placed this couple, Adam and Eve, in a garden called Eden, which provided for all their satisfactions without any need of labour. He instructed them that he had provided for all their pleasure. But there is a tree of the fruit of knowledge of good and evil. They must not take its fruit and if they tasted it, they would die. For sometime Adam and Eve had good time. But a serpent in the Garden of Eden beguiled Eve with taking the forbidden fruit. Eve persuaded Adam also to take the fruit. God lost his temper with the couple and cursed them with toil and suffering. Man's suffering is caused by man's disobedience of the will of God. His suffering is caused by his rebellious will. The wages of the disobedience of the will of God is suffering and death.

This Christian interpretation of human suffering, apart from its particular dramatic presentation, is in general accepted by all theists. According to the theistic school of thought man's suffering is due to his neglect and indifference to God. Man is self-centered and given to worldly pleasures. He seeks his good in the transitory material things. He seeks his love relationship with other members of the family and society. He does not realize that the world is false or 'Maya', and the human relationships are 'jhootha' (unauthentic). God is the only reality and relationship with Him is the only true or authentic relationship. If man desires deliverance from his unauthentic life of attachment to things and persons of the world which breed frustration and suffering, he must turn to God as his only refuge. To love God only and to live according to His 'adesh' opens and ensures man's moksha. Man's moksha requires of him to turn away from the world as 'jhoota' (unauthentic) and turn to life of Bhakti of God as 'sat. The life of moksha is non-attachment with the world and exclusive dedication and devotion to God.

In this God-centred theory of moksha, there are certain difficulties, perceived even by the theists. God is conceived as a person, as a 'father in heaven', a being outside the created world of earth and sky. Now, the concepts of infinity and personality are logically incompatible, for,

personality implies an exclusive centre for bearing experiences, and cannot be infinite. If God cannot be personal, what kind of love, and dedication can be cultivated for it, which is to constitute life of Moksha?

So some theists hold that God is not a being outside the world, but God, soul and world are one. This is the pantheist view in which God, soul and universe are reduced to one total existence. If God is not a being distinct from man, there can be no relation of love or Bhakti between man and God. So theistic-centered doctrine of 'moksha sadhana' built on this view is rendered useless.

Again, if God is denied personlity and is identified with the totality of existence, he ceases to be God. He is, as Teilhard, a Christian mystic, tells us, reduced to matter. Consciousness is known to be bound with individuality. As individuality grows, consciousness grows. Man is the most individual entity and the most conscious. If God is a name for totality of existence, God is not an individual entity but another name for the natural world, an aggregate of inanimate and animate existences. If God is another name for the aggregate of natural objects, he cannot be object of love and dedication to constitute life of Moksha?

Thus whether God is conceived as personal or universal, he is an impossible being and thus cannot be object of love and service to constitute life of Moksha.

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The Indian classical philosophy, by and large, rejects the concept of God, both transeendent and immanent. It holds that the universe is eternal and self-sufficient. It has no creator, no sustainer. It is self-existent and self-sustained. It functions by the law of Karma. The idea of God is redundant and stands abandoned in most of their systems.

According to the classical Indian philosophy, matter called 'prakriti' and 'atma' called 'purusha', are uncreated and eternal. Again, the relation between soul and body, 'purusha' and 'prakriti' is beginningless. There was

never a time when 'atma' was disembodied. 'Atma' is eternal and changeless, and free from suffering. It is perfect in its being. It has nothing to gain, nothing to become. However, man as embodied 'atma' gets into the 'avidya' that he is a body and other manifestations of prakriti like 'buddhi', 'ahankar', 'mana', 'jnan-endriyan', 'karmen driyan'. The soul in us is not our empirical ego-consciousness, reason or mana and sense experiences or motor action. It is distinct from them. The body and its evolutes of 'ahankar' buddhi', 'mana', and 'jnan-endriyan' are subject to change and becoming, like objects of the world. In identifying his soul with his empirical equipment, reason and mind and bodily urges, man experiences pleasure in relation to some objects of their satisfaction and so feels attached to them. He experiences pain in relation to some other objects and feels aversion towards them. Desire ('Ichha') and aversion (Dvesa) are the guiding principles of empirical life and action of man. He gets tied both to the objects of desire and aversion. He is lost in this 'sansara' or transitory world to be tossed about by pleasure and pain. There is no peace, no serenity, no rest, but feverish life of desires and aversions. Moksha is possible if a man rises above this 'avidya' that he is body and its urges and that his highest life is in the satisfaction of these empirical urges through objects of the world.

This 'avidya', this positive wrong belief that I am a body and empirical consciousness is the cause of human suffering. Moksha consists in developing 'viveka' or discrimination that "I am not a body nor 'ahanakar', 'buddhi', 'mana' and 'jnan endriyan'. Once this metaphysical knowledge dawns on an individual, he is able to disaffiliate and divest himself from the empirical life. He no more feels attachment to desires and aversions, is no more enamoured of worldly pleasures and pains. He becomes a bad conductor to them even on this earth. He becomes Jivan-mukta'. His life is one of 'sthitaprajna', a life of non-attachment to things of 'kama' and 'ahankara' and their pleasures and pains. His reason is ever steady, untouched by pleasure and pain, praise and blame, honour and dishonour, success and failure, since all empirical events and experiences are

perceived as value-void. This concept has some similarity with the concept of Stoics in Greek philosophy.

This Atma-centred world-view is like the theistic world-view intellectually unsatisfactory. The idea of Atma characterized as uncreated, eternal, unchanging and perfect entity, is no less unacceptable than the idea of God. There is no experience of an unchanging entity with us. No identical and unchanging soul or Atma is given in any experience. Further, how could Atma which is out of time, be related as spectator to ever-changing empirical experiences. This relationship is logically unintelligible and hence the eternal atma stands rejected for empirical self consciousness cannot be denied.

Sankhya and Yoga think of soul in its disembodied state as pure consciousness. Consciousness is essentially bipolar, other wise it is blank. But it is not stated as to what it is conscious of

The supernatural philosophies of Atmavada are riddled with too many intellectual puzzles and contradictions to claim acceptance. They stand demonetized today and have ceased to be legal tender in recent western philosophy.

Further, the supernatural doctrines of Atma or Purusha ask us to withdraw or alienate ourselves from the natural and social worlds, and be God-centred, or Atma-centred. It is true they call on us to renounce egoism and sensuality and cultivate virtues of humility, purity, non-violence. But these virtues are recommended not for the sake of improving and refining human relationships, but for producing vairagya from society and the world in order that we may better concentrate on the ultimate reality of Atma.

A true view of man situates him in the world and involves him in its evolutionary history and hence it is best to divest man from transcendental origin or bearing. He is not divine descendant of God, not an eternal unchanging perfect entity. He has his origin in the soil of the earth, and takes his character from the natural world. A true doctrine of moksha can

be based on philosophies which instal man in the natural world. Modern biology tells us that man-his body and soul-has neither its origin in God, nor is it an uncreated entity, but it is a product of the evolutionary process of the natural world. Human soul has a date of birth on this earth and his ancestry is from the stock of mammals. Man in his body and soul, entirely belongs to this natural order.

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It is Charvaka philosophy in India. which like the early Greek Nature philosophy culminating in atomism, instals man in the natural world. If soul means uncreated entity in man, man has no soul. Man in its entirety is product of natural conditions. time product. He is a result of the particular combination of four 'bhutas' or elements in Nature : air ('vayu'), fire ('agni'), water ('ap') and earth ('ksiti').

Besides the body, man has consciousness. How to account for emergence of consciousness from inanimate elements? The Charvaka holds that as betal, lime, nut do not have redish tinge till they are chewed, so the four elements under certain physical processes give rise to consciousness. Man's consciousness, like his body, is result of natural conditions. Charvaka holds that consciousness is a quality of body, i.e. characterizes body and dies with the body. Just as plants and animals are 'jiva deha', man is 'chaitanya deha'.

Man as an embodied conscious being desires pleasure and avoids pain. So human ideal of moksha if interpreted in naturalistic terms, means that we should conduct ourselves to avoid pain and to gain maximum of pleasure. Just as Charvaka discarded the word 'soul' in relation to human consciousness, so it discarded the word 'moksha' in relation to human ideal.

In fact, there was no qualitative difference in the pleasure ideals of Charvaka and the orthodox Indian Philosophy. The Charvakas advocate the ideal of empirical pleasures whereas the classical schools advocate transcendental pleasures. But what is held to differentiate transcendental

pleasures from the empirical pleasures is that the empirical pleasures are short-lived and are mixed with pain, while the transcendental pleasures are eternal and free from pain. Both these differences in duration and purity are quantitative. No qualitative distinction is made. It could be made in terms of the objects whose pleasure is sought. If I seek pleasure in food. I seek bodily pleasure. If I seek pleasure in scientific research, I seek intellectual pleasure which is higher than the bodily pleasures. If the object of my scientific research is human personality, it is higher research than if my object of study is insects. In Indian philosophy there is no object for transcendental consciousness. A delivered soul is either without consciousness (Nayaya-Visesika and Mimamsa) or with consciousness with no object of which it is conscious (Sankhya and Vedanta).

In Charvaka there are two schools. One is called 'Dhurta' school which advocates enjoyment of the gross sensuous pleasures. But there is 'Susiksita' school which advocates refined pleasures of arts and civic life.

When pleasure is advocated as the human ideal, it is wrong to identify pleasure with bodily pleasures. In England John Stuart Mill also put pleasure as the ideal of life. He was accused of turning human beings into pigs. He put up the defence that there is not only pleasure in food and sex satisfaction, but there is a pleasure experienced by a scientist in the discovery of some truth or by a student in understanding that truth. There is pleasure experienced by an artist in creating a work of art and by a student in appreciating that work of art. There is pleasure experienced by an altruist when the patients he serves get well. Man experiences pleasure in the biological activity of food and sex, as he experiences pleasure in scientific pursuits, artistic creation and social welfare activities. There are pleasures of the body, intellect, aesthetic sensibilities and altruistic feelings. Once it is accepted that human reach is not beyond the sphere of pleasure and pain, the human ideal can lie in the choice of highest quality of pleasure. Susiksita Charvaka's ideal of life is cultural pleasures and civic virtues. That would be 'moksha' for Charvaka of the Susiksita school.

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Buddhism is held by some to be influenced by Charvakas for Buddha set aside supernatural metaphysics of God, and uncreated souls. He concerned himself to study man in his phenomenological and existential situation and tried to discover causes of human suffering. His analysis is that human person is composed of 'panca-skandhas or five constituents namely: (1) form ('rupa') consisting of the different factors which we perceive in this body having form; (2) feelings ('vedana') of pleasure, pain and indifference; (3) perception including understanding and naming ('sanjna'); (4) predispositions or tendencies generated by the impressions of past experiences ('sanskara'); and (5) consciousness itself ('vijana'). Man is the name for this collection of five constituents. He is an aggregate of them. Man in his 'avidya' falls into the untruth that he is a unitary being, one persisting, unchanging entity called soul. Buddha rejects with all vehemence an eternal unchanging soul substance.

Buddha is the first philosopher of change in the world, whose younger contemporary in the West was Heraclitus. All is in ceaseless change and nothing abides. In a world of universal change there is no place for eternal God or eternal soul. Our soul is a stream of mental events, as our body is a stream of physical events. What exists are not things but events. We fall into the error to think that a series of mental events is a soul substance and a series of physical events is a physical object.

There are two doctrines which are the philosophic basis of Buddha's philosophy of liberation from suffering: the doctrine of causation and the doctrine of universal change. The doctrine of causation is that there is a spontaneous and universal law of causation, which conditions the appearance of all events, mental and physical. "On getting the cause, the effect arises." The existence of everything is conditional or has dependent origination or 'Pratityasamuvada' in Sanskrit and 'Paticcasmuppada' in Pali. On this theory, everything depends on something other than itself for existence. Hence it is false to believe that some reality like God or soul



exists independent of any conditions.

The law of change is consequent on this doctrine of dependent origination. All things, Buddha repeatedly teaches, are subject to change and decay. "Know that whatever exists arises from cause and condition and is in every respect impermanent."

The combination of the five constituents is temporary and is irreparably shattered by death, leaving no elements that can be identified as soul or 'atma'.

How does suffering or misery arise? It is due to 'avidya' that we think we are unitary or 'I' consciousness. Due to 'trishna' (desire) for permanent life, we falsely believe ourselves to be permanent self. We fall in love with what has no existence. Buddha points out that people who suffer from the illusion of self do not know its nature clearly, still they strongly assert that they love the soul. They want to make it happy by obtaining moksha. This, he wittingly remarks, is like falling in love with the most beautiful maiden in the land though she has never been seen nor known. "Belief in the soul or the substance is a basic wrong notion ('Avidya') which is the root of all the suffering. Salvation would result if the belief in atma is abandoned. For only as we take anything abiding and identical, do we become attached to it, cling to it, we are also averse to things opposed to it. The result is tension and conflict".<sup>5</sup>

This myth of soul as an enduring entity breeds ego-love which breeds evils of selfishness, self-willedness and vanity and it vitiates all our desires. It reduces all virtues to self-gain. To put it in the words of Chesterton, Pride is a poison so very poisonous that it not only poisons the virtues; it even poisons the other vices. Egoism is not reduced by identifying oneself with one's caste, community, nation or a cause, for they further inflate it. One feels more justified to do evil for the sake of one's society, country or cause, than in relation to personal advantage. A man of high personal morality, does not hesitate as a diplomat, to indulge in things untrue and evil towards other countries for the sake of his nation. The wider the

identification of ego, greater is its liability to indulge in falsehood and evil.'

Moksha is in the direction of reducing or removing altogether the illusion of unitary self and its consequent ego loves and to extinguish the fires of 'trishna'. When ego-love is reduced or removed, the feelings of compassion and 'mudita' sprout and grow in a 'sadhak'. His moksha assumes a social dimension. According to Buddhism, man attains nirvana (moksha) when he has extinguished the attraction of or attachment to passions, that is, when he attains to purity from 'trishna'. A man of nirvana has nothing to gain in life after this achievement. He can if he so desires, enter into final state of nirvana. But how can a man of compassion even when he attains nirvana, think of going in for final nirvana, when he sees around him fellow human beings, nay the sentient beings like plants and animals, still in suffering? "He shuns retiring into the final state of nirvana, though fully entitled to it, preferring by his own free choice to toil for even the lowest of beings for ages. He is actuated by this motiveless altruism from the very start of his career." "The ideal of Bodddhi-sattvahood is: I will be protector of the unprotected, a guide to the way-farer, a ship or a dyka, a bridge for them who seek further shore, a lamp for them who need a lamp."

(14)

Dev Darsana is an evolutionary philosophy and religion. The process of evolution is found to collect in a higher whole the earlier elements of evolution. The evolutionary process assimilated physio-chemical elements into living cells and in course of time organised them into living organisms. It further gathered physio-chemical elements and life characteristics in the conscious higher animals. It gathered physio-chemical elements, life and conscious characteristics of animals with self-conscious rationality in human beings as a new quality.

And each higher stage gives a new destiny to earlier elements through participation in the function of later development. The physio-chemical elements get participation in life functions, life activities get participation in conscious activities, consciousness gets participation in rational thinking

and altruistic life of man.

Dev Darsana as an evolutionary philosophy claims higher achievement in the process of understanding man and his problem of moksha. It finds place for all elements of truth which have appeared earlier. It rejects, like Charvaka, the interpretation of human consciousness in terms of divine or uncreated eternal soul, and accepts that the origin, nature and destiny of man is in the natural world. Man-his body and soul-is as much product of natural conditions as are the plants and animals.

However, Dev Darsana is informed with the latest knowledge of the origin of man. Man is not product of four constituents of earth, fire, water and air. The natural world is not made of the constituents of material units only. It is characterised by forces also. It consists of matter-force units. In the course of evolution of matter-force units, there have evolved living beings like plants, animals and man with different characteristics of life and the life-force in man is named soul. So man is psycho physical organism, soul-body organism. Soul is not a quality of body. This is where Charvaka went wrong. Soul and body are distinct but inseparable aspects of a human being.

Dev Darsana agrees with Buddhism that there are universal laws of causation, of dependent origination and change. There are no eternal entities of either God or soul. The human soul, like human body, is in ceaseless change and becoming. The law of change is universal and inevitable. There are no such things as fortuitous occurrences. All is law-bound under the process of change.

Dev Darsana goes deep into the process of change. It discovers in it a new dimension. Change has a value dimension. A change is for the better or for the worse. An entity changes for the better if it works for improving the quality and character of its own being and the beings of others. An entity goes in for change for the worse if it spoils its own qualities and character and that of others. A healthy functioning of a body is an example of change for the better. A diseased functioning of a body is an example of change for

the worse. By altruistic functioning a soul strengthens itself; by selfish functioning a soul degrades or ruins itself. The change for the better is called evolutionary change. A change for the worse is called devolutionary change.

According to Dev Darsana, universe is characterised by the titanic struggle between the processes of evolution and the processes of devolution.

It is unique contribution of Dev Darsana to see and understand man and his problem of moksha in the light of evolution and devolution. We will see later on how the concepts of evolution and devolution make new history for the doctrine of moksha.

(15)

Moksha so far understood, is possible through freedom from compulsive bondage to appetites and passions, to sattvicta, from 'Basanic Jiwan' to 'Pavitra Jiwan'; from selfish life to life of service. How is it attainable?

The classical Indian philosophic view as well as the Buddhist view is that each one of us is to get moksha by his self-effort and no one else can get moksha or salvation for us. No one else can die for us. No one can intercede for us. Grace of God is accepted for revelation of the real and not for forgiveness of sins. The law of karma works uninterfered. Each one is to work out his own moksha. The doctrine of grace as Christianity understands it is in a minor key in Indian thought. It, is only some theistic schools that make use of the doctrine of grace.

This view that an individual is to work out his moksha by himself is partially true. The human nature is complex. It is not limited in its contents to passions and ego loves. It has besides these, a social, an ethical, and an ideal part in it. My passion tells me 'Do this'. The other part in me says 'It is wrong. Don't do it! The part which tells me not to do a certain action is as much part of my soul as that which tells me to do it. It is true that the part that tells me not to do is weak and so inspite of its opposition, I do it. But it does not prove that it does not exist. And its existence is further shown by

the fact that it sometimes does succeed in stopping me in doing the wrong action. Sometimes when I have done wrong, I feel regret. The part in me that feels regret is as much part of me as the passion that made me do the wrong action. The fact of moral conflict indicates in me both a superior social and ethical part and an inferior part of passions and aggressions.

Some persons are gifted with extraordinary social, ethical and ideal nature, that is altruistic nature, which slumbers in them till some event awakens it and then it completely transforms their life. We have heard of Rishi Devendranath Tagore. He rose to be a great leader of Brahmo Samaj, a man of extraordinary purity. His father Shri Dwarkanath Tagore was a big zamindar, a man of culture and of charities. He lived in a lavish way and like big landlords went in for big loans. When he passed away, the debtors felt that the loans far exceeded the property of Shri Dwarka Nath. So they filed a suit in a Calcutta court that the properties of Shri Dwarka Nath be attached and they be paid their debts by auction of them. Rishi Devendra Nathji was then a youngman' whose social status and livelihood depended on his inherited property. He took legal steps to protect his inherited property. Once while he was taking a walk, a torn piece of paper flew in his direction and touched his feet. He picked it up. It was a 'shloka' purporting to say that 'covet not what belongeth to another'. His feelings of justice and 'vairagya' were aroused. He decided there and then that he should not defend his titles to the inherited property. Next day, he placed all the papers concerning his properties before the magistrate. This occurrence was a spiritual miracle for no one could believe, neither his own lawyer nor the magistrate and least of all, the creditors, that a person could voluntarily surrender all his properties. Tears rolled down the eyes of every one of those present there for who could expect such a miracle of goodness.

Another instance may be given to illustrate this points. Albert Schweitzer was a man of genius who was interested in a career in Church. Christian church is an organisation where persons join service and are paid just as a person who joins service in education. There is no question of compassionate service. One day, while he went out for a walk in Paris,

where he was getting his training for a career in priesthood, he came to a crossing where there was a statue of an African in pensive mood. His compassion was touched to depth. He became a changed man for he decided to live in the service of the exploited Africans. He thought that what Africans needed was not sermons but medical care. He left his theological studies and joined a medical college. He lived till his last breath for the service of the sick among Africans.

All such instances illustrate the capacity in man to a changed life of superior values, through their own gifted nature. Such small objects like a Shloka, a statue, a poem, a musical composition, cannot be called the cause of transformation in their lives. They are at best stimuli. One may as well give credit for the colourful light of 'anaar' (a fire work) to a burning match stick which ignites the material. The burning match stick plays an insignificant small part in the explanation of delightful lights of the 'anaar'. In mechanical things, ordinarily a stimulus from outside is generally needed. But a time-bomb blasts, without any external stimulus.

We know that men have undergone sea change from their early life of self-centered sensuality to 'sattvic' life of service in different religions like Christianity and Buddhism though both religions hold absolutely opposite religious beliefs. How to explain these facts? These facts show that in the case of exceptionally gifted altruists, it is an exaggeration of these gifted men to attribute their change of life to their religions, it is as well for a time-bomb to attribute its explosion to the place it happens to be placed at. Ludwig Feuerbach holds that when man prays to God he is praying to his social ideal self in him. According to him, man has not given any attribute to God which is not present in him in some degree, i.e. knowledge, goodness, power. Man projects his ideal self outside of him and worships it as God. So the changes which man attributed to God should in fact be attributed to one's better self. When the better self comes to dominate a person, he attributes its blessings to God or guide or guru. Erich Fromm, a contemporary psychoanalyst, argues that "God is the image of man's higher self, a symbol of what man's potentiality is, or ought to become".

The theories of Feuerbach and Erich Fromm offer explanation of transformation of persons engaged in a life of sensuality and power, who have left one fine morning for a life of a saint in Hardwar. Psychology tells us that these people have been entertaining consciously and more so unconsciously, the ideal life free from sensuality and power. One day, the day they abjured both sensuality and power, is the day on which the submerged ideal self got powerful enough to displace the normal self of sensuality and power.

(16)

However, this point of view that man can generate changes for the better in himself is partially true. An average man is poorly gifted with dispositions for higher values of life. He needs a saviour to awaken him, and to give him strength, to develop disciplined moral life, and be protected from unnecessary suffering and death through bondage to attachments and aversions. There are millions who are beyond any redemption even by a saviour. It is false to believe that all souls will be saved. This belief ignores the principle of individual differences which shows that there are some souls beyond redemption and apart from the exceptionally gifted, all need help to develop vision and strength to attain some degree of moksha from evil life to the limit of their capacity. Moksha is not practical for all human beings. Millions cannot insure themselves against suffering and death even with all possible help and others too can attain moksha to the degree of their capacity and the quality of the life of their saviour.

Dev Darsana holds that progressive moksha is not possible for human beings, ordinary or exceptional, without a saviour. It holds with Christianity that man is ever dependent on a saviour for his salvation or deliverance. But what kind of a saviour is required even by the best gifted sattvic souls? We will discuss this later.

(17)

We have studied the doctrine of moksha in its historical perspective. It is in the interest of truthful understanding of it. To ignore history of a concept or to consider the concept exclusively in its adverse aspect is to surrender to prejudice and partiality. The truthful attitude is to consider a concept in its history and to highlight its positive aspect and propose a reconstruction which covers all the elements of truths and transform them through new insights. We believe we have done so within the limitations of our prejudices. It is for each reader to decide for himself whether we have put forward the best aspect of the concept of moksha in religious philosophies.

However, there comes a time in the history of thought when need is felt for re-casting of concepts, a melting down, so that a new concept be cast and a new coinage minted. It is this need of the present time that Dev Darsana satisfies in its re-casting of the concept of moksha. It covers all the elements of truths stated earlier and transforms them through its new insights. We present at the risk of some repetition, empiricist and evolutionary interpretation of moksha by Dev Darsana.

Dev Darsana does not state its problem of moksha as liberation from suffering. It is true suffering is taken as symptomatic of disorder of behaviour pattern of our life. However, what is symptomatic of disorder or disease is preliminary to what is the primary thing to be removed. What needs concentration is the cure of the disease of the organism or to reset proper coordination of its parts. Some classical thinkers have concentrated on suffering as such and misplaced the emphasis and thus deviated from truth. For them suffering is intrinsically and absolutely evil and it must be got rid of at all costs. Nyaya-Vaisesika schools hold that since suffering is inseparable from consciousness, so moksha state is possible when soul is disembodied and thus gets rid of consciousness, for mental life cannot avoid suffering. It therefore denies that a person can be Jivan-Mukta. The critics point out against Nyaya-Vaisesika view that a soul without consciousness or mental life is no better than a stone. Sankhya holds that moksha is not a state of bliss or happiness, for pleasure is inseparable from pain. Since pain is the greatest evil, moksha state is without pleasure



too. Again, what is held to be evil about empirical pleasures is that they are short-lived, mixed with pain. The untruthful thoughts and evil conduct engendered by some pleasure are neither perceived nor emphasised.

The Christian religion puts the problem of moksha in clear and unequivocal form when it poses it as the problem of freedom from sin. However, it takes a wrong view of sin as disobedience of the will of God. The moral principles are not matter of some one willing. Will can be vicious and its disobedience good. A good will is not good because it is willed because bad will is also willed. A good will is good if it observes moral laws and this means that moral laws are independent of any will, human or divine. Moral laws are impersonal and autonomous. Again, Christian religion leaves unexplained why human will is rebellious against moral laws.

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Dev Darsana lifts the discussion of the problem of moksha to new level altogether. It studies man and his problem of moksha under the light of the process of evolution and the process of devolution. There is the process of evolution and also the process of devolution in Nature. The process of evolution is the process of generating, vitality, construction and progress, and the process of devolution is the process of damage, destruction and death. The history of evolution is the history of bringing into being entities of plants and animals leading to man. Now, the nature of man reveals the nature of the direction of evolution. Man shows capacity to discover some truths about the laws of Nature. He shows capacity to make laws for society with some elements of moral values of respect for life, property and sex. He shows capacity for appreciation and creation of beauty. The process of devolution, however, also operates in man. Man has in him devolutionary forces, too. He has also the weakness to indulge in untruth and evil thoughts and actions. The evolutionary process has gone further and evolved an entity gifted with complete love of truth and goodness, with no trace of devolutionary forces of untruth and evil in him. His soul is called Devatma. His life voices that the direction of evolution is to bring in the

reign of truth and goodness and beauty in Nature.

Man as the product of the process of evolution has his problem of how to get moksha from devolutionary dispositions in him, i.e. from untruthfulness and evil in thought and conduct. When our disposition sides with devolutionary processes, i.e. when we side with what is evil and untruthful, we are in bondage. Our bondage is our attachment to evil and untruthfulness. Take smoking. If I do not give up smoking, in spite of myself, I surrender to evil. I am in bondage to untruth and evil, to devolutionary processes. But if I know what is nutritive food and take it, I live what is true knowledge and right habit. I am in tune with the evolutionary process. When I know that it is wrong to seduce a young innocent girl and yet I do it, I am in bondage to lustful disposition in me. When I know that it is wrong to seduce a young innocent girl and avoid even a thought of it, I live what is true and pure in thought and conduct in matter of social sex ethics. I am in moksha in the state of temperance and I am in bondage in the state of intemperance. If I know that it is wrong to break a right contract and yet I justify myself in breaking it, I am in bondage to devolutionary process, i.e. to untruthful and evil disposition in me. But if I know the contract to be right and keep it, I live in truth and goodness in relation to contracts. If I know that I should discharge duties of my office, but in spite of myself do not discharge them out of laziness and indolence, I am in bondage to evil disposition of laziness in me. When I know the duties of my office and discharge them with pleasure, I live what is true and good in thought and conduct in relation to my duties of office. If I know that I should share in the work of social welfare, and in spite of myself, contribute nothing to it due to selfishness and greed in me, I have disposition, of evil in me. If as a teacher of biology, I still believe that a human child is a gift from God, I am in bondage to superstitious disposition in me. A professor used to say that as a teacher in philosophy, he did not believe in God, but when he visited his religious place, he believed in God. He sided with untruth in him. When I know how the idea of God has no meaning and how autonomous the working of Nature is, I live with truth in thought about Nature.

When I am truthful in thought and right in conduct, my life is in tune with the process of evolution, I am a 'mukta'. When I am untruthful in thought and wrong in my conduct, I violate the evolutionary process and live devolutionary life, I am in bondage or bandh-avastha'.

(19)

How is it that we entertain untruthfulness in thought and indulge in evil conduct? According to Dev Darsana, it is exclusive craving for some pleasure of, say, smoking, that causes the smoker to belittle in his thought the harm done by smoking and compels him, nay drags him, to continue smoking inspite of himself. The pleasure of lust in a person blinds him to the wrong he is doing in seducing an innocent girl. The attachment to pleasure of idleness makes a man to ignore the duties of his office and his domestic duties. The pleasure of the greed of money leads one to cheat others of their rightful dues. The exclusive attachment to pleasures of bodily urges and ego-loves leads us to live untruthful and evil life. Dev Darsana calls exclusive attachment to pleasure of desire for eating, drinking, sex satisfaction and laziness and aggressiveness, no less ego loves taking the form of seeking praise, honour, name and fame. and selfishness, and desires for children, property, association. falseshood as low-loves. The exclusive attachment to pleasure makes a man to deviate from the rightful satisfaction of the biological urges and ego loves in life and leads him to harm himself and others.

When any one of these low-loves is not satisfied, it generates low hatred for the object of obstruction. Low-hate makes us to believe what is untrue of others and to wish and/or try to inflict harm on them. It darkens our vision and pushes us into evil conduct. Low-loves and low-hatreds constitute human bondage.

According to Dev Darsana, bondage of low-loves and low hatreds has the following consequences They produce inca pacity in an individual to see truths about the principles of health and strength of his personality. They pervert his vision. He sees his well-wishers as his enemies and considers

those who side with his untruthful and evil dispositions as his friends. They produce avoidable but intense suffering. They age and destroy the constructive power of the soul and thus bring death to the total personality, both body and soul. The wages of low loves and low-hatreds is life of soul-darkness, soul perversion, suffering and death. They constitute human bondage for they bind us to life of untruth and evil dispositions in us. Moksha is freedom from this bondage to untruth and evil.

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Dev Darsana holds that there are altruistic desires, too, in man. He has, though much more severely limited in number and capacity, desires to engage himself in scientific research, to help the less-placed in life-the sick, the poor, the mentally retarded, the abandoned-and to work for a more just social order for all sections of society--women, labour, children. Such desires in man are 'sattvic' desires. When they are satisfied. they give pleasure and this pleasure turns these urges into loves.

There are persons with love for scientific research, compassion. justice. They remove evils of ignorance, illness and suppression. They work for the evolutionary process through their discoveries of truth and reduction to some extent of the evils of suffering due to poverty, vices, deprivation and injustice. Their life and action are in tune with the evolutionary process.

However, they enjoy life of mukta to a limited extent because their altruistic loves are still governed by the pleasure principle. An altruist is sometimes deviated into the path of untruth and evil. An average man has the low-love for his children. He is attached to them. He is partial to them. He does not hesitate to defend their wrong and be indulgent to them. An altruist no less gets attached to the section of the less placed, say, Harijans, women, labour, children. He becomes partial to them. He exaggerates the wrong from which they suffer. He does not hesitate sometimes to defend what is untruthful in them. He is indulgent to them. Again, just as a man who has greed for money, values money as the highest good; a man who loves compassion, prizes compassion as the highest good. As the valuation of

man of greed is untruthful in its priorities, so also is the valuation of the man of compassion untruthful in its As a man of low-love for intoxication, does not hesitate to beat his wife who stands in his way of drink, the communists and Naxalities, inspired to get justice for the labour, go to the extent of murdering the capitalists or land-lords who stand in their way for justice for the labour. Again, as I feel alienated from him who does not give me a loan some other help, a man of compassion feels alienated from those who show indifference to his work or do not help him, or stand in his way. An altruist is not free from low-hate. Thus an altruist of compassion is not free from the disposition of untruth and evil and stands denied a higher level of moksha.

It is true that some men of exceptional 'sattvic' disposition do transform themselves into sattvic life from a life of bondage to sensuous pleasure and ego-love. But their exceptional life of altruism is under principle of pleasure and therefore they have dispositions of untruth and evil. Take the life of St. Francis.

It is good to be above bondage to bodily pleasures. But one may deviate from right limits of control and fall into extremes of asceticism. This is what happened in the life of St. Francis His biographer says: "He (St. Francis) restrained his sensuous appetite with such strict discipline as that he would barely take what was necessary to support life. Wherefore he would hardly. and but seldom. allow himself cooked food when in health and when he did allow it, he would either sprinkle it with ashes, or by pouring water thereupon would as far as possible, destroy its savour and taste, Of his drinking of wine, what shall I say, when even of water he would scarce drink what he needed, while parched with burning thirst! The bare ground for the most part served as a couch unto his wearied body and he would often sleep sitting with a log or stone placed under his head and clad in one poor tunic he served the Lord in cold and nakedness." Most of the saints of the world who hold to a dualistic world-view and hostility between soul and body, are led to such extremes of asceticism. There are saints of the world. in India who sleep on bed of iron spikes, sit near a burning log of

wood in the open ground under a pitiless heat of the sun in hottest summer, get their sex organs amputated. A false dualistic view of human personality combined with the blind principle of pleasure which does not know how to discriminate between the right and the wrong limits of actions, lands saints into untruth and undesirable practices. Take the life of Bodhisattva. In his book entitled The Doctrine of Bodhisattva, Har Dyal states how compassion of Bodhisattva went to the extreme of giving away wife and children in charity or indulging in extreme of adultery in dire need of a woman seeking motherhood. The principle of pleasure misleads compassion to extremes of wrong behaviour.

These aspects of deviation into untruth and evil are inevitable even at 'sattvic' level of self-control of bodily pleasure or/and love for compassion at different levels of life. There is need for deliverance from these untruthful and evil tendencies in the 'sattvic' life of the best of men.

The deliverer needed to meet the situation is a soul who is, negatively speaking, free from attachment to the principle of pleasure and positively embodies love for truth and goodness, a soul who has no tendency in him to slip into untruth and evil and who is all set to follow unconditionally the path of truth and goodness. Such a soul can emit light which can show untruthfulness and evil in life in all its ugliness and truth and goodness in all its beauty and who can inspire strength in an altruistic 'sadhak' to check or remove what is untruthful and evil in his concrete choices of beliefs and action. Such a soul is, as said earlier, termed Devatma in Dev Darsana. In order to perceive the ugliness of untruthfulness and evil both in our life of sensuality and ego-love and voluntary rejection of these elements of untruth and evil, yoga or commune with the sublime life and light and power of Devatma is unavoidable imperative. When a 'sadhak' is all suffused with the light of truth and goodness of Devatma, his thoughts and his decisions are checked from the operation of untruthful and evil disposition in it and he touches the highest level of moksha from evil and untruth.. The more a 'sadhak' stays suffused in this light and power the greater is his check over operation of untruth and evil in his life. A true lover

of the light and power of Devatma who could say, like St. Paul, ('I do not live, Christ lives in me.') 'I do not live, Devatma lives in me.' assures the highest deliverance from untruth and evil in his day-to-day thoughts and actions. There is a world of difference between an altruistic 'sadhak' who stays by himself and an altruistic 'sadhak' who stays in the light and power of the sublime life of Devatma. It is like the difference between a rose grafted with a higher rose cutting and a rose without grafting. There is qualitative difference in their perceptions about soul, about awareness of untruthful and evil tendencies in them, in the degree of checks provided against operation of evil tendencies and blossoming of altruistic feelings in them.

(21)

True Moksha, to put it in the words of Devatma, "consists in deliverance from the pleasure-based various low-loves and their consequent low-hates; from all evil thoughts and actions caused by them; and from all impurities or distortions of the soul caused by them.

"When a person develops various most essential higher or altruistic feelings, then to the extent he establishes spiritual relation with Devatma through them and becomes capable to obtain his Dev Prabhavas by spiritual worship of him with the help of these higher feelings, and to the extent he dedicates his physical and mental energies, his education and money in the service of his supreme ideal and makes all the necessary and desirable sacrifices to stay loyal to him, to that extent he obtains true moksha and evolves true religious life and the path of progress is opened for his further progress." We can analyse these statements thus :

The concept of Moksha is used in Indian philosophy to stand for ideal life of soul. Devatma bifurcates ideal life into 'Moksha and 'Vikas', i.e. (a) life free from low-loves and low-hates and (b) life endowed with higher-loves and higher-hate.

This ideal life of Moksha and Vikas can be systematically developed if one

develops live contact with the light and power of Devatma which can check on the one hand the operation of untruthful and evil tendencies in his total soul-life.

The highest moksha will be non-bondage to the pleasure principle in our thoughts and actions and unconditional love for truth and goodness and complete hatred for untruth and evil. This is possible for Devatma alone. He represents the ideal Mukta. Those altruists who have constant live rapport with His soul come as near as possible to the ideal of moksha. The ideal of moksha is not merely a matter of getting freedom from one or another low-love or low-hatred. Moksha, as we said earlier, is a matter of total transformation of total life and this is achieved to the extent an individual lives, breathes and has his being under the influences of Dev Prabhavas of Devatma.

(22)

How can an individual live in active and constant communion with light and power of Devatma? One must have rich inheritance of altruistic feelings but this is not enough. A man may have the feeling of gratitude in him. He may feel gratitude for his parents, he may not feel gratitude for Devatma. He may have reverence for a man of learning but feel no reverence for Devatma. A live relationship with Devatma is possible for altruist if he feels concerned for the good of his soul and realizes that this consists in true knowledge of soul life, moksha an from evil and untruthful thoughts and actions and vikas of higher loves and higher hates and he further comes to know that Devatma has in him both the knowledge and the power to give him such knowledge and deliver him from untruth and evil in him and to engage him in a life of innocent service to the limit of his capacity. It is rare altruistic souls with faith, reverence, gratitude and love for light and power of Devatma that can aspire for moksha of this higher order.

(23)

Indian philosophy and religion recommend three ways of moksha:



Knowledge; Devotion; and 'Niskam Karma'. Christianity affirms that 'moksha' is possible through altruistic love. These positive ways to get rid of sensuality and ego-love, have their place in 'moksha sadhana'. Right knowledge, selfless devotion to the deity, and disinterested discharge of duties, reduce the influence of passions in us. But they do not deliver us of our passions completely. A man of Nishkam Karma may yet show weakness for food and sex. A Brahman-jnani may go wrong in different interpersonal relationships. A man of devotion may be too prejudiced to see what is exaggeration in his beliefs about his deity. Our passions and prejudices need to be tackled directly also. Dev Dharma directly deals with the problem of 'moksha' from passions and prejudices. Dev Darsana holds that moksha consists in getting rid of the untruthful and evil dispositions in us and to remove the spiritual impurities accumulated by the past activities of untruthful thoughts and evil actions.

The moksha sadhana for a 'sadhak' is to see in its true ugliness the evil disposition in him, and to get strength to reduce or remove it. An altruist may find that in the service of the women folk, he due to his sex attraction, tends to give more help to better looking women than the less good looking ones and this tendency in him is evil in him for it violates the principle of justice. To get moksha from his sex attraction, he must see it in all its ugliness. He must get strength to reduce or remove this ugly weakness and thus become pure in thought and just in action. But this is not enough. To purify his soul of the past impurities of discriminatory conduct he must make amends. He must see his past unjust actions in relation to less good looking women in their ugliness, feel pain for the injustice done and feel an urge to make amends through offering additional help to the women discriminated against to soothe their injured feelings. If a person has been a bribe-taker, it is not enough for his 'moksha' from this evil disposition to stop taking bribes. He must also review his past acts of bribe-taking in all their ugliness, feel pain for the wrongs done, return the bribes taken with a penitent heart and ask for forgiveness for the wrong done.

Our discussion of Dev Darsana view of moksha will not be complete without referring to its position concerning (a) pain (b) relation between man and the natural world; (c) body and soul; (d) individual moksha and universal moksha.

(a) Dev Darsana holds that pain is not unmitigated evil. Pain is necessary to purge the soul of the 'Jivan-mukta' of its accumulated impurities as said earlier. Again, it is inseparable part of the altruistic of compassion and cannot think of a mukta without compassion. Finally, it serves as a bell to tell us that something is wrong with our organism and social relations.

The ideal with regard to suffering is that the mukta should work to remove in others, suffering of ignorance, disease, poverty, loneliness, natural calamities, and old age, no less suffering due to the low-loves and low-hates. This is possible if the Mukta has compassion which consists in feeling pained at the pain of others. Again, a Jivan-mukta may undertake suffering on himself to resist oppression and injustice in society in non-violent way to change the heart of the oppressor. He may even accept crucifixion to change the heart of hardened souls.

The soul-centred theories condemn body and empirical experiences because they involve pain. This obsession with pain makes some of them (Nyaya-Vaisesika schools) go to the extent of depriving soul of all experiences in Videha-mukta state and therefore they deny moksha state on earth. All richness and diversity of scientific knowledge, altruistic feelings and aesthetic creation are sacrificed for riddance from pain. Dev Darsana accepts pain and suffering as acceptable if it is imperative in the pursuit of knowledge, goodness and beauty.

(b) Dev Darsana holds that there is no duality or hostility or alienation between man and his natural environment as envisaged in theistic and soul-centered theories of moksha. In theism it is held that God is the creator and provider of man and therefore his relation is with God and God alone. God is pure being without body. We must avoid all involvement in the world for its satisfactions are bodily and make us indifferent to God as pure spirit.

The attraction and concern for the world are distraction in our love for God. We must alienate ourselves from it. Dev Darsana holds that a man's entire entity is product of the natural world and so the natural world is his mother, his cradle, his toddling ground, his first and last home. The process of evolution binds Nature and man in indissoluble unity. Moksha does not consist in building detachment or alienation from Nature. It consists in engagement with the natural world on the basis of sattvicta.

Again, the theistic theory of moksha holds that human relations are 'jhootha' or unauthentic. What it means is that human relations are characterised by selfishness, hypocrisy and disloyalty. This is true to a large extent. But what is required of a 'mukta' is not to throw the baby with the bath but develop in himself altruistic relation with fellow human beings and change the sorry state of things. Human relationships can be and in some cases are of love, loyalty and service, say, the relation of mother to her permanently invalid child or devotion of a wife to her ailing husband. We have beautiful sparks of altruistic human relationship in every home where there is a mother or a devoted spouse. One of the essentials for a 'mukta' is to help his fellow human beings to develop sattvic or authentic altruistic interpersonal human relations, so that relations cease to be 'jhootha' (unauthentic). What makes a relation 'jhootha' or 'sachcha' (authentic or unauthentic) is the nature of our motive. If our relation with God is selfish, it is a 'jhootha' or unauthentic relation but God is not 'jhootha' object. If our relationship with God is unselfish or of unconditional love, it is 'sachcha' (authentic). The same is true of relation with fellow human beings.

For Dev Darsana moksha is concern with the good of the four orders of Nature. A 'mukta' should build positive relationship with inanimate things, plants, animals based on altruistic feelings illumined with light and power of truth and goodness. It is to build relation of harmonious adjustments with them.

(c) Dev Darsana does not hold to duality or hostility of soul and body. Both are required for the highest good of the total personality. The 'mukta' needs

the 'viveka' that soul has no life without body and there is no 'videha moksha'. The harmony of the good of the two is the ideal state of moksha.

(d) Finally, Dev Darsana does not distinguish as separate the good of the individual's soul and the good of souls of fellow beings or sentient beings or the cosmos. It holds to the view of common good of the individual and other beings. In the service of others an individual soul gets his deliverance and salvation of his own soul and not otherwise.

Moksha as ideal state of man (i.e. life of moksha and vikas) is life of unity and harmonious relation between man and the natural world, his soul and his body, his good and the good of the cosmos through truthful thought and serviceable conduct. It is to participate in the creative process of evolution for ever-progressive reign of truth, goodness and beauty in the universe.

#### **Notes:**

1. Murti, T.R.V., Studies in Indian Thought, p.316.
2. Ibid, p.319
3. Radhakrishnan, S., Brahma Sutra, p 216
4. Radhakrishnan, S., Eastern Religion & Western Thought, p.80
5. Murti, T.R.V., Studies in Indian Thought?
6. Murti, T.R.V., The Central Philosophy of Buddhism, pp. 263 64
7. Chatterjee, M., The Religious Spectrum p.99
8. Devatma, Fundamentals of Dev Dharma (Eng.Tr), p11