



GUIDELINES TO MAHAVIR-DARSHAN

PUBLISHED BY

SHREE SAT-SHRUT SEVA SADHANA KENDRA

Koba-382 009 (Gandhinagar District), Gujarat



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Published by : Shree C. C. MEHTA

**President : Shree Sat – Shrut Seva Sadhana Kendra,
Koba (Gandhinagar Dist.), Gujarat**

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Adhyatmic Sadhana Kendra,
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BEST WISHES

Indian Culture and Philosophy encompass a wide range of schools and traditions. Among them, Jain-Darshana is well-known from ancient times for its originality and strict disciplinary code. Over and above this, its unique metaphysics describes scientifically and objectively the entire universe with all its gross as well as subtle manifestations in details. This gives sufficient evidence of the omniscience of its propounders—the exalted Jinas and authenticity of their teachings.

On the eve of our spiritual visit to U. K. and Africa, Shri Panachand B. Mehta, Vice-President of our institution, has made an humble effort in the direction of compiling concisely the basic teachings of Bhagwan Mahavir.

We not only hope but do wish and trust that it will serve the purpose of introducing the subject-matter to the beginners, briefly yet systematically, and thus pave the path for further study and thereby encourage the readers to imbibe the sublime teachings of the great ancient acharyas and saints.

May the sincerity of this purpose frutify and torch the light of knowledge and eventually lead to self-realisation in several souls !

Mahavir Jayanti
13th April, 1984

(Sraddheya) Dr. M. Soneji
Adhyatmic Sadhana Kendra
Koba (Dist. Gandhinagar)



PREFACE

In 1975, a group of friends interested in spiritual development established Shri Sat Shrut Seva Sadhana Kendra at Ahmedabad under the inspiration of Dr. M. Soneji. The dedicated soul of the Kendra, Dr. Soneji, who has been a great inspiring Sadhaka himself led others on to the spiritual path through direct discourses, talks, shibirs and such other Satsang activities.

In about 8 years, over a dozen books on various facets of spiritual development were published, and equal number of Tirtha-Yatras and Shibirs were also conducted. The membership of the monthly Divya-Dhvani (Divine voice) crossed the mark of 1500 and thus more and more people have started taking interest in this pious activity.

Aspirants around Dr. Soneji are greatly impressed by the contrast of his earlier background and present position of a devoted sadhaka. Dr. Soneji is a vaishnava by birth and a physician by education holding a post-graduate degree from U.K. He has practised in medical field for about three years in India. His early Samskaras from his young age of the literature of Shri Kund-Kund Swami and Shrimad Rajchandraji (spiritual Guide of Mahatma Gandhiji) led him gradually to become a firm disciple of Bhagwan Mahavir's sublime Teachings.

A need was thereafter felt to put up an Ashram affording various facilities to the aspirants and to centralise, reorganize, co-ordinate and expand the activities. Dr. Soneji inspired us to ignore our human and financial limitations and advised us to go ahead banking on "Yog Bal" of Shrimad Rajchandraji and other great Acharyas. Once the trustees decided to go ahead in putting up an Ashram, we received to our surprise, a donation of a suitable land plot at a suitable place, numerous financial donations of small amounts and a number of

well-wishers have given us help in their respective fields. Within a short span of a year or so i.e. in 1982 we put up an Ashram at Koba (16 km from Ahmedabad and 10 km from Gandhinagar) and named it “Adhyatmic Sadhana Kendra”. Since then, Koba Kendra has been our centre of activities.

In the month of December 1983, a special shibir was arranged which was attended by some 25–30 persons, who came all along from UK and Africa. The participants at the Shibir were greatly impressed by the deep knowledge of the principles of Jainism acquired by Dr. Soneji and his lucid and effective mode of expression making the abstract subject-matter easy to understand even by the beginners. They further realised that the unique way of expression of Dr. Soneji had its origin in his vast knowledge of various Darshanas and assimilation of the same in his day-to-day life and in his continuous inner growth as a devoted and ever-growing Sadhaka.

At the end of the shibir, the participants expressed that they were much benefited by the Shibir and the tirth-yatra. Thereafter, they invited Dr. Soneji to organize a series of talks in UK and Africa. At this time the need for background papers and articles written in English, simple and easy to read, was emphasised. It was also indicated that the inquisitive persons without some background about the fundamental principles of Jainism would not be able to understand and appreciate properly the spiritual discourses to be given by Dr. Soneji.

Shri P. B. Mehta has kindly undertaken on our behalf to compile and edit the essays from eminent scholars under the guidance of Dr. Soneji. Shri P. B. Mehta B.A., LL.B., I.A.S. (Retd.), former Commissioner of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, is Vice-President of Adhyatmic Sadhana Kendra, Koba.

This publication which is a compilation envisaging different aspects of the sublime teachings of Bhagwan Mahavir will, it is hoped, serve the purpose of preparing a background for better understanding and appreciating the essentials of Mahavir–Darshan and also the spiritual discourses of Dr. Soneji during the projected tour in May/June 1984.

We owe our thanks to the scholars whose essays have been taken in this compilation. We are grateful to those scholars from

whose essays material has been liberally utilised in this compilation. We are also grateful to J.L. Jaini Trust, Indore as material from Late J. Jaini's book has been liberally drawn upon. We also owe our thanks to all the friends and well-wishers and particularly the printers who have been helpful in bringing out this publication in a very short time.

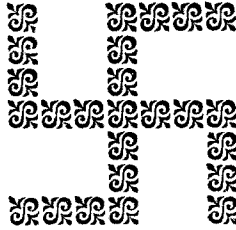
2-4-1984

Koba (Gandhinagar Dist.)

C. C. Mehta,

President,

Shree Sat Shrut Seva Sadhana Kendra,
Koba



**GUIDELINES
TO
MAHAVIR-DARSHAN**

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GUIDELINES TO MAHAVIR-DARSHAN

Let us strive to be true to ourselves
and to the divine tradition of Bhagwan
Mahavir by living a life in conformity
with His teachings of right knowledge
and right conduct.

“JAY MAHAVIR”

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TO
MAHAVIR-DARSHAN**

PART I

Lesson 1

NAMASKARA MAHAMANTRA

NAMO ARIHANTANAM

Prostrations (Namaskaras) to the Arhats (the worthy Omniscient and real Guides of the whole universe).

NAMO SIDDHANAM

Prostrations (Namaskaras) to those supreme souls who are liberated from the bondage of this perishable physical body.

NAMO AYARIYANAM

Prostrations (Namaskaras) to the Acharyas who are experts in the tenets expounded by the Arhats.

NAMO UVAJJHHAYANAM

Prostrations (Namaskaras) to the Upadhyayas who enlighten the masses about the hidden secrets (esoteric aspects) of the sacred scriptures.

NAMO LOYE SAVVA SAHUNAM

Prostrations (Namaskaras) to all the Sadhus, who have dedicated their lives to the fulfilment of the noble mission in accordance with the original instructions of the Arhats.

ESO PANCHA NAMUKKARO SAVVA PAVAPPANASANO

Prostrations (Namaskaras) to the above five is the destroyer of all sins.

**MANGALANAM CHA SAVVESIM PADDHAMAM
HAVAI MANGALAM**

And is the first ‘ Mangal ’ amongst all the ‘ Mangals ’.

Lesson II

TRADITION AND INTRODUCTION

Jainism is an original system of thought and culture quite distinct from and independent of all other Indian philosophical streams of thoughts. It has a meta-physical basis of its own which secured it a distinct position in Indian philosophy.

Ancient Tradition of Tirthankaras :—

According to Jainism, time is divided into two great cycles called **Avasarpini** and **utsarpini**, i.e. involution and evolution. The world is now moving down, i.e. in the cycle of **Avasarpini**. Now each of this period is again divided into six Eras. In every great cycle, 24 **Tirthankaras** appear in the field of action. These **Tirthankaras** are not only pure and perfect beings and attain **Nirvana** as soon as they shuffle off their mortal coil, but also, they lay down rules of conduct for the purification of our hearts and minds and establish the **Tirtha** or the Order.

According to the Jains the first **Tirthankara**, **Rishabhdev** of the present era has given the world a systematic exposition of truth in all its aspects both secular and spiritual. He also laid down rules of conduct for the proper guidance of the **sadhus** as well as of the householders. **Rishabhdev** is also mentioned in the Hindu scripture, **Shrimad Bhagwat** which also refers to **Aristnemi** who is 22nd **Tirthankara** in the tradition of **Rishabhdev**.

Parasnath the 23rd and **Mahavir** the 24th are both recognised great spiritual masters, accepted as historical figures who reformed and reorganised the order according to the changing times.

Parasnath was born at Benares in 877 B.C. and attained **Nirvana** in 777 B.C. on a hill which is still known as **Parasnath hills** in Bihar.

Mahavir or **Vardhaman**, the last **Tirthankara** of this age, improved upon the then existing doctrines and customs according to the exigencies of the time and it was He who gave Jainism its final form as we find it today; the various facets of which would be considered in the succeeding chapters.

Bhagwan Mahavir :

Bhagwan Mahavir, the great apostle of Ahimsa, was born on the 14th day of Chaitra in 599 B.C. in Kundagram, a suburb of Vaishali in Bihar. His father Siddhartha was the republican head of the Jnat-rika clan and His mother, Trishala, was the daughter of the Lichchhavi Chief, Chetak.

From His very childhood He revealed in various ways signs of true greatness. His extremely compassionate heart combined with a highly spiritual bent of mind made Him live the life of a householder with reluctance and indifference. In the midst of luxury, He lived the detached life of a yogi. At last at the age of 30, He gave up all worldly possessions and left home to lead an ascetic life in search of the truth.

For 12 years He practised severe austerities in order to purge His soul of all impurities and to make Himself a perfect man. At the end of that period due to his long process of self-purification, He became an arhat and for the remaining 30 years of His life He journeyed on foot throughout the length and breadth of the country and with untiring energy showed to the humanity the path of liberation both by example and precept. At the age of 72 on 14th day of the dark fortnight of Kartika in 529 B. C., He attained Nirvana at Pavapuri in Bihar.

After Mahavir the Jain tradition was continued by a series of eminent thinkers and monks and received patronage from kings, wealthy traders and pious families and thus contributed to the stability and continuity of the sublime tradition with the result that India can feel proud of the Jain contribution both to its civilisation and culture in matters of art, architect, literature and moral code.

The Approach :

The perplexing questions for any scholar or aspirant are :

- (1) What is the relationship that exists between MAN and the universe ? and
- (2) In the light of that relationship, what is the best mode of living for MAN ?

All religions and all systems of Metaphysics and Ethics are attempts to deal with various aspects of the above two questions. In the following pages, an attempt has been made in an introductory way to give the answer which Lord Mahavir has given.

The question “Who am I?” may be split up into two aspects: (1) theological and (2) metaphysical. Theological aspect deals with the relationship of the Ego to God while metaphysics deals with the relationship between the Soul and Non-Soul, or say between MAN and universe. The question “What is the best mode of living?” may be split up also into two aspects: (1) ethical and (2) ritual. The problem of ethics is the problem of man’s conduct in society. The Jains have a distinct ideal, an ideal of freedom from bondage, which can be achieved by voluntary efforts, both intellectual and moral. It is not an ethics of sensitivity where man sells himself to nature but flowing from their metaphysics, it is essentially an Ethics of self-realisation through self-regulation.

Let us strive to be true to ourselves and to the **divine** tradition of **Bhagwan Mahavir** by living a life in conformity with **His** teachings of right knowledge and right conduct.

“JAY MAHAVIR”

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PART II

METAPHYSICS

Jain Metaphysics divides the Universe into two everlasting, uncreated, co-existing but independent categories—the Soul and the Non-Soul. The link of union between the Soul and the Non-Soul is “Karma”. The production, fruition and destruction of Karma together with the Soul and the Non-Soul are called the principles (**tāttvas**) of Jainism. The resultant being, from the combination, is different in its characteristics from either of these two ingredients. The forces of attraction and repulsion natural to insentient matter become **attachment** and **aversion**. Aversion takes the form of anger or pride; whereas attachment becomes deceitfulness or greed. The more there is the influence of matter in compound, the more is the living being ignorant, angry and greedy.

The following lessons, therefore, deal with as under :

Lesson No. III	Karma Siddhanta
Lesson No. IV	Seven Principles
Lesson No. V	The Path of Salvation
Lesson No. VI	Ladder of Development.

[Lessons III, IV, V and VIII have been based and/or partly taken from “Outlines of Jainism” by Late Jagmenderlal Jain, M. A., Bar-at-law to whom we owe our thanks.]

[Lesson VI is based and/or partly taken in a condensed form from the paper prepared by Dr. Indra Chandra Shastri M. A., Ph. D. to whom we owe our thanks.]



LESSON III

KARMA SIDDHANTA

The two most important substances are soul and matter; as the two real categories are soul and non-soul, matter being only one of the five classes which make up non-soul. Soul is living, matter is not. The union of the two cannot conduce to freedom, perfection or peace. The mind desires to pursue a train of thought or action; the body obeys up to a certain point, then refuses to work further. The mind is impotent to goad it on and is pained at being so dependently mated to a partner of such grossness and limitations. This is a matter of everyday experience.

Matter is without consciousness; Soul is conscious. Matter has no choice but to be moulded by the soul. The connection of soul and matter is material and it is effected by the soul's activity. The **bondage** is called **Karma**, since it is the karma or deed of the soul. It is material, forming a subtle bond of extremely refined Karmic matter which keeps the soul from flying up to its natural abode of full knowledge and everlasting peace.

Kinds of Karma

In this last mentioned condition, the soul has four great attributes :

- (1) Perfect perception of and faith in the reality of things,
- (2) Perfect knowledge,
- (3) Perfect power and
- (4) Perfect happiness.

Karmic matter keeps the soul away from the realization of this fourfold greatness, obscuring its perceptions and knowledge, obstructing its progress and success, and disturbing the equanimity of its existence. It is therefore called the four **ghatiya** or destructive **KARMAS**.

Their names are :

- (1) **JNANAVARANIYA** or knowledge obscuring Karma.
- (2) **DARSHANAVARANIYA** or faith-obscuring or perception-obscuring Karma.
- (3) **ANTARAYA**, that which hinders or obstructs the progress or success of the soul.
- (4) **MOHANIYA**, that which infatuates or deludes the soul or makes it lose equilibrium of thought and feeling.

These **ghatiya** or destructive **KARMAS** retain the soul in mundane existence, the character of which is conditioned by another quartet of **KARMAS**, the latter not destructive, but determining merely the body and the environments in which the mundane soul must exist.

They are called **AGHATIYA**, or non-destructive Karmas. Their names are :

- (1) **Ayus** : the Karma which determines the duration of our lives or other conditions.
- (2) **Nama** : that which determines the character of the individuality i.e. our body, height, size, colour etc.
- (3) **Gotra** : that which determines our family, nationality etc.
- (4) **Vedaniya** : that which gives pleasure or pain in mundane life.

The next Lesson will deal with the seven principles.



LESSON IV

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES (TATTVAS)

The seven principles are

1. Jiva or Soul
2. Ajiva or non-soul
3. Asrava or Karma-influx (inflow)
4. Bandha or Karma-bondage
5. Samvara or Karma-check
6. Nirjara or Karma-falling off
7. Moksha or Karma liberation.

Sometimes, when punya (merit) and papa (demerit) are added to the list, we have a total of nine categories which are then known as nine Padarthas.

1. Jiva or Soul :

This is the only knowing substance in the universe. Its essential characteristic is consciousness.

This is our true self. Potentially it has four infinities :

- (i) Infinite knowledge (Ananta Jnana)
- (ii) Infinite intuition (Ananta Darshana)
- (iii) Infinite happiness (Ananta Sukha)
- (iv) Infinite potency (Ananta Virya)

During the state of bondage, these qualities are obscured (covered) by Karma; they become manifest only in the State of liberation.

All souls are divisible in two categories : (1) Sansari (bound) and (2) Siddha (The liberated).

(1) The Bound Souls : These are further divided as follows :

(a) **Sthavara**, literally meaning immobile which are of further five types : residing in mineral bodies, souls of water, souls living in fire, souls of air and souls of vegetable kingdom.

(b) **Trasa**, literally meaning mobile : Who may have two senses, three senses, four senses and five senses without or with the mind.

(1) Bound Soul :

In the impure state, its nine properties are as follows :

- (i) It lived, lives and shall live.
- (ii) It has perception and knowledge.
- (iii) It is non material, i. e., it has no touch, taste, smell or colour.
- (iv) It is responsible for its own actions.
- (v) It completely fills the body it occupies e. g. of an ant or elephant.
- (vi) It enjoys fruits of its Karmas.
- (vii) It wanders in Sansara.
- (viii) It has capacity to become siddha (liberated soul).
- (ix) It goes upward.

(2) The Siddha :

The liberated souls if they have body they are called **Arhats** and when they shake off the moral coil they are known as **Siddhas**, completely liberated souls, who stay at the top of the universe and have full development of all the qualities of the soul because they have got rid of all the Karmas.

2. Ajiva or Non-Soul

These are five in number and they have no property of consciousness. They are :

- (a) Matter or pudgala
- (b) Space or Akasa
- (c) Principle of motion (Dharma)
- (d) Principle of Stationariness (Adharma)
- (e) Time-Kala.

From the spiritual Sadhana point of view, only the first one is important; hence we shall consider it here in some details.

Pudgala (Matter)

Wedded to the soul is the great lifeless substance of matter. Whereas the **soul's** qualities are life, consciousness, knowledge, perception, peace, bliss and power, **matter** has for its characteristics lifelessness, touch, taste, smell and colour.

The distinction of matter into atoms and molecules (Skandha) has been known to Jainism for centuries. “ In an atom there is only one pradesa (Or unit of space) ”. But, as atoms unite, they become a molecule. The finest kind of matter is that of the Karma forming the Karmic body, which always attends the soul and is the last to be discarded before the entry into the region of liberated souls. A group of Karmic atoms is technically called a **Karma-Vargana**.

Science recognizes three conditions of matter : solid, liquid and gaseous.

Jainism recognises six conditions :

1. Gross-gross as very gross matter (Solid) e.g. a mountain, a pillar of iron, etc.
2. Gross (liquid), e.g. water, oil etc.
3. Gross-fine e.g. shade, sunshine.
4. Fine-gross, e.g. fragrance, sound, sweetness, etc.
5. Fine-matter capable of becoming Karmic matter.
6. Fine-fine still finer molecules, in the Karmic body, which is the finest. Fine-fine matter has for its atoms the combination of two or more ultimate atoms (Paramanu).

3. Asrava

The soul is affected by attachment (raga), aversion (dvesha), affection (rati) and infatuation (moha), in the form of the four passions — anger, pride, deception, and greed — helped by the activity of mind, body, and speech. Such a soul is in a state to receive Karmic matter into it. The technical name given to this activity is **Yoga** and the attraction of Karmic matter thus brought about, is called Karma-movement (**asrava**), the third tattva or principle.

The condition of soul which make asrava possible is called **bhava-asrava** (subjective asrava). It is of thirty-two kinds. The actual matter of various colours, etc. etc attracted by the soul is **dravya-asrava** (objective asrava).

The past karmas of the soul affect its present activity; its present karmas help or modify these and the joint effect determines the character and tendency of the actual surroundings, etc. of the soul. The soul must pay for what it has acquired. If it has acquired more than it can maintain, it must break under the load of matter, i.e. it must become spiritually **bankrupt**.

The karmas are themselves indifferent; they do not desire to come or to stay away. But if the soul is in a mood to receive them, they are attracted to it as readily as fine iron filings by a magnet. It is the vicious, relentless vigilance of matter to run to and embrace the soul, in its ignorance and infatuation as much as in its enlightenment and discrimination, that is in Jainism called **asrava**.

The psychical condition which makes the inflow of Karmic matter into the soul possible (**bhava-asrava**) may take the form of false or perverse belief, an indisciplined, vowless, characterless life, careless use of mind, body and speech, or yielding to the passions. The physical matter which is actually drawn to the soul (**dravya-asrava**) is invisible. It cannot be perceived by the senses as it is **sukshma** or fine, or even **sukshma-sukshma**, or very fine.

4. Bandha

The actual investing of the soul by the karmic matter which has flowed into it, is called **bondage** (**bandha**). The psychical condition which allows this, is called **bhava-bandha**. It corresponds exactly to **bhava-asrava**, and arises from false belief, want of character, etc., etc.

The actual mingling of karmic matter with the particles (**pradesas**) of the soul is **dravya-bandha**.

This bondage is of four kinds, according to (1) the nature of the karmic matter which has invested the soul; (2) the period during which it is capable of remaining attached to the soul; (3) the character, mild or strong of the actual fruition of this karmic matter and (4) the number of the karmic atoms.

5. Samvara

However, the inflow of karmic matter may be stopped for the soul is a free agent and can, if it chooses, refuse to take in any more of this mischievous substance. Restraint of body and mind, a deliberate attitude of indifference to matter's traps and temptations, induce a calm evenness of the soul, which gives no opportunity to the karmas to approach and cleave to or dig into it. The mind is freed from love, hatred, attachment, and aversion; there is no yoga or asrava vibration, and the inflow of karmas is stopped.

The psychical condition which makes this possible is **bhava-samvara**. This is reached by following the rules of conduct under vows, by religious observance, by the threefold restraint of body, mind and speech, by performance of duties, by compassion towards all living beings, by contemplating the true character of the world and our relation to its objects and persons, by concentrating the mind on our chief purpose in life and by enduring all kinds of troubles and tortures for the achievement thereof.

6. Nirjara

Nirjara means the falling away of karmic matter from the soul. The fetters may be themselves gradually wear out and leave the soul free but it is a long process. Therefore a shorter method is adopted, deliberate activity may hasten the ripening of a karma and the shedding of its matter. To illustrate : we wish evil to our neighbour. A. The thought-activity invites the karmic matter into the soul (asrava), the matter comes and binds the soul (bandha). This karma may take two months to bear its full fruits; in the meantime it is an evil load for the soul. To gain lightness and to get rid of the karma, the soul may deliberately feel an opposite kind of feeling towards other neighbours B, C, and D. A still surer way is to practise austerity, by removing the mind from the demands and impulses of the body and by mortifying the physical man through not listening to its greed and temptations, matter may be overcome and the soul freed from the bondage.

The natural maturing of a karma and its separation from the soul is called **Sa-vipaka-nirjara**. Inducing karma to leave the soul

by means of a contrary karma or by means of ascetic practices is called **a-vipaka-nirjara** (riddance without fruition).

The terminology of the distinction is derived from botany. A seed grows into a fruit, it may ripen by itself (sa-vipaka) or it may be plucked half-ripe, or even unripe and then ripened by artificial means.

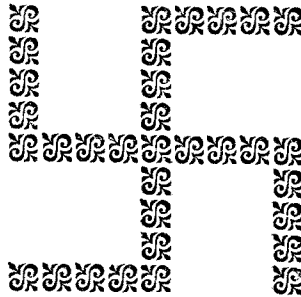
7. Moksha

The complete freedom of the soul from karmic matter is called **moksha**.

It is attained when the two mighty entities part and stand separate; the soul in the calm and bliss of perfect knowledge; and the matter inert but for its mechanical readiness to fasten itself upon some other unemancipated soul.

The separation is effected when all the **karmas**—the four destructive (ghatiya) and the four non-destructive (aghatiya) have left the soul and no more karmic matter can be attracted towards it.

The next Lesson will deal with the **Path of Salvation**.



LESSON V

THE PATH OF SALVATION

True philosophy in Jainism should result in voluntary and consistent striving, both intellectual and moral with a view to remove all the impediments in the process of purification of the soul, so as to realise the free and beautiful state of our true being. This in essence is the ultimate end and purpose of all life and activity. With a view to attain to this, we should embark upon Right conviction, Right knowledge and Right conduct, which combined together constitute the path of liberation or emancipation.

(1) RIGHT CONVICTION (Right attitude or faith) :

Right conviction counsels the conscious retention of what we have or have gained by happy intuition or by deliberate acquisition of knowledge. It thus takes a form of firm faith. We have to take hold of this path and press it deeper and deeper in the consciousness, so that it does not sway by any external factors.

Right conviction is of two kinds :

A. Right conviction from the practical point of view or **vyavahara samyag-darshana**. It consists of right and steady conviction of the true nature of the tattvas. It also includes faith in true ideal, true scriptures and true preceptor.

B. Right conviction from the real point of view or **nischaya-samyag-darshana**. It means realisation of one-self as a pure soul.

(2) RIGHT KNOWLEDGE :

Right conviction makes us perceive the reality of life and the seriousness of our object in life. It saves us from the soul-emptying, puzzling void of scepticism. It brings us nearer to the feeling and touch by the solid substantial reality of our own and other souls, as also of the matter in union, with which the soul gives rise to the phenomena of life.

Right knowledge makes us examine in detail the matter brought into the mind by right conviction. Of course, both are mental processes,

the difference is in degree. I see a nurse talking to a boy on the pavement outside. This is perception. I have a right conviction that there are a woman and a boy out there. I also perceive that the woman is a nurse. But I do not know the details who they are, where they live, why they are in their particular locality and so forth. If I saw or heard or read about them, I should gain right knowledge.

This knowledge must be free from the following three shortcomings : (1) doubt (2) delusion (3) non-decision.

(3) RIGHT CONDUCT :

This consists in living a life in accordance with the light gained by right conviction and right knowledge. Right conduct must be such as to keep the body down and elevate the soul. It means not doing bad actions and doing good ones. In practice, it resolves itself into taking the five vows of ascetic or householder. As for example, non-killing, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-attachment to worldly objects. Greater details regarding this subject have been dealt with in the chapter in 'Jain Ethics'.

The next Lesson will deal with the **Ladder of Development**.



LESSON VI
GUNASTHANAKAS
(Ladder of Development)

Introduction :

To anyone who knows the nature of **moksha** and the means prescribed for it in the Jain scriptures, there will be no difficulty in apprehending that the realisation of the self is preceded invariably by a series of conditions which must be fulfilled one after another before attaining to perfection. This can be stimulated to a ladder of fourteen steps known as gunasthana.

These fourteen stages can be squeezed into four only as follows :

The first stage, we may roughly speak of as the stage of impulsive life, of lust and enjoyment when the soul is quite in the dark as to its true destiny and goal and is least removed from the animal existence.

The second is the life of conscious selection of pursuit where the goal of true methods of realisation are still misapprehended.

The third is the life of conscience and faith where the ends are taken not as we like, but as we ought to. In the fourth stage all such conflicts disappear altogether and the soul shines forth in all its naturalness and omniscience.

The **first** Gunasthana is known as Mithyadrashti. It represents the state of wrong attitude. The soul has been rotting in it from time immemorial without finding the real path.

It is not a step towards realisation, as might be assumed from its inclusion in the first steps but the lowest state, where the spiritual journey is not even begun. There are some stages even before the beginning of that journey, and they are included in the first gunasthana.

We have already stated that karmic effect is the main cause of the soul's wanderings in this world. This effect is sometimes thick and sometimes thin. When it is thick, the soul is led astray. When it is thin, the soul takes a turn towards the real path, but without making a definite start. We can compare these occasional inclinations with the wandering of a traveller who has lost his way in a jungle. He is sometimes far from the real path and sometimes very

near it. But in no case does he find it. This coming near the path is merely an accident. It is useful only if he proceeds further in the same direction and happens to perceive the path. If, on the contrary, in his bewilderment he turns his face again in the wrong direction, his coming near the path has been futile.

The state when accidentally the burden of karmas is somewhat lightened and the soul feels an urge for inner realisation is known as **Yathapravrttikarana**. It is not reached through deliberate and systematic pursuit but comes as an accident. The Jain scriptures compare it with a stone rolling in a mountain stream. The stone rolling unconsciously in the stream gets a round shape. It had not desired or striven to obtain that shape but the turn of events gave it that form. Similarly, the soul with a perverted attitude is unable to discriminate between right and wrong, nor does it make any deliberate attempt to realize the truth. Still, accidentally it reaches a stage when the major part of the accumulated karmas is removed through experience of its fruit and the new accumulation is not so heavy that the entire stack will last beyond a certain limit.

As a result of this the soul feels an urge for inner purification but this urge is not so strong as to force the aspirant to make a definite start: It rises and subsides like a bubble. Only in a few cases it is so strong as to bring about a decisive turn. In the first case, the urge can occur innumerable times without having a permanent effect. The death of a beloved person, the destruction of a thing greatly desired or another such occurrence generally produces this type of attitude temporarily.

If the urge to self-purification is sufficiently strong, the soul advances to the stage of **Apurva Karana**. The Karmic stack is further reduced in this stage and the soul takes a decisive step, the most important, in an aspirant's career. It is known as **Apurva** as it was never achieved before. The aspirant in this stage reaches the point of breaking the tie of perversion.

The third step **Anivrttikarana**, is reached on breaking this tie. The aspirant attains it after subduing the five types of Mohaniya, i. e. Mithyatva Mohaniya and the Anantanubandhi degree of four passions and thus reaches the fourth Gunasthana. It is known as

Anivrtti because the aspirant, having once attained it, is never lost. By taking this step, the soul limits its wanderings. It comes to the path of light from that of darkness.

The **second** Gunasthana is known as **sasvadana**. It is not attained in the ascending order but only when the soul falls from a higher stage and has not yet touched the ground.

The **third** Gunasthana is known as **Misra**. It represents the stage of mixed attitude. It is caused by the rise of Misra Mohaniya. The aspirant in this stage is not firm in his convictions and wavers between right and wrong. This state lasts for a short while only. After that, the aspirant either goes down by adopting a wrong attitude (Mithyadrashti) or advances by taking a right one.

The **fourth** gunasthana is **Samyagdrashti**, attained by the aspirant with the right attitude and a firm faith in truth. His passions (**Kasayas**) become weak in intensity and last for a short period only. In general the person whose enmity or other passionate feelings last for more than half year is considered to be under the effect of Anantanubandhi and therefore not a samyagdrashti. It is necessary for a Jain to purify his heart of all passions at least once a year. This is why the Jains are so particular about observing the festival of paryushana, which is an annual festival of self-purification and introspection.

A samyagdrashti is expected to possess the following **five** virtues. **Sama**—natural tranquility of soul caused by the subsidence of passions. **Samvega**—discrimination between right and wrong, **Nirveda**—aversion to sensual pleasures. **Anukampa**—Kind-heartedness and generosity—a natural desire to see everybody happy, **Astikaya**—firm faith in truth. His heart is full of love for others. He tries to help miserable persons. Amitagati has beautifully depicted the samyagdrashti's behaviour in the following lines :

“O Lord, may my soul cultivate the habit of friendship with all beings, of pleasure in seeing the virtuous, of kindness towards the afflicted and of indifference to opposition.”

The **fifth** Gunasthana is **desavirati**. The aspirant in the fourth stage was expected to have a right attitude but little to do “anything” on the practical side. He was not expected to observe any vows or to practise the restraints necessary for self-purification. This start is

made in the fifth Gunasthana. It is attained after subduing Apratyakhyanavaraniya, i. e. the second category of passions. Here the aspirant is expected to purify his heart every four months. He takes the vows of a householder and leaves off acts of gross violence, falsehood, theft, etc. In short, he is expected to refrain from all criminal acts and to obey the laws of the state.

In addition, he should fix limits for his possessions. He should prepare a list of everything he wants to own even for his personal use and should not go beyond that limit. It is also expected that he should daily scrutinize that list and go on curtailing it. He should also fix limits in all directions for his economic or political expectations. Further a **shravaka**, as the householder is called in this stage, observes some vows or penances for self-purification as daily or periodical duties. He is generous to a guest of good conduct and serves him with and other necessities with a heart full of devotion.

The **sixth** Gunasthana is **pramattasanyata**. The aspirant, through the fifth stage, is a member of society and carries out his duties and obligations to himself as well as to Society. He enjoys family life and worldly pleasure in a moderately controlled form not forgetting his duties and the supreme object. His character is well balanced, without his resorting to either extreme – of laxity or complete renunciation.

In the **sixth** Gunasthana he leaves family life and joins the order of mendicants. He devotes his entire life thenceforth to the attainment of spiritual realisation. He refrains not only from gross sins but from minor sins also. He may not kill any animal harmful or not harmful. Similarly, he must speak no lie and not take even a trivial thing without asking permission of the owner nor may he hold any property. The vows of a monk are called **Mahavratas** (Complete Vows) in contrast to the **Anuvratas** (partial vows) of a householder.

This stage is reached after subduing pratyakhyanavaraniya the third category of passions. A monk is expected to purify his heart every fortnight. He has to observe Pratikrmana (repentance for sins committed knowingly or unknowingly) and other purifications daily. This stage is known as **Pramatta – Sanyata** because the aspirant, though observing complete restraint is open to negligence or slips.

The **seventh** Gunasthana is known as Apramattasanyata. It should be remembered here that the third category of passions was subdued in the sixth stage. After that there remains the fourth category of Sanjvalana only. This is the mildest form of passions. It is compared with a line drawn in water. No sooner it is drawn, it vanishes. The passions of the Sanjvalana degree have no duration. Nevertheless their arising is not stopped completely. The aspirant in the seventh stage tries to control that also. This stage is called Apramatta because the aspirant is always sufficiently alert not to allow any slipping. Here the aspirant wins also three stronger types of sleep.

8th Apurva Karana Gunasthana

9th Anivrittikarana Gunasthana

10th Shukshma Sanparaya Gunasthana

11th Upashanata – Mohaniya Gunasthana

12th Kshinamohaniya Gunasthana

13th Sayogi – Kevalin Gunasthana

14th Ayogi – Kevalin Gunasthana.

As these Gunasthanas are not attainable by us at present time from the present world, only their names are mentioned.

The Jains hold an ideal of freedom from bondage. This can only be achieved by voluntary effort, both intellectual and moral. There is no escape from the cycle of birth and re-birth till he is able to shake off, by his own moral endeavour, the **pudgal** particles clinging round his soul on every occasion he acts. This bondage is alien to the soul. He can regain his original state of liberation, by developing in full, the capabilities which are now lying veiled or dormant in him. The sacrifice of the present to the future, the sacrifice of flesh to enter into a life of spirit, the annihilation of passion to enjoy a state of serene bliss :- That forms the *key-note* of Jainism.

The yearning for a state of Freedom from bondage, achievable after much moral endeavour, from a pious home-sickness in the state of bondage in this earthly life is at the heart of Jainism. Consequently Jain ethics is essentially an ethics of self-realisation in and through self-rule and self-regulation. We propose to deal with this subject of Jain ethics in Part IV, after dealing with the subject of Jain Philosophy in Part III.

GUIDELINES TO MAHAVIR – DARSHAN

PART III

PHILOSOPHY

LESSON VII

ANEKANTA-VADA

The Anekanta-Vada is the distinctive feature of the Jain philosophy. It is a unique doctrine of the Jain philosophy. It is its original contribution to the course of the world-thought.

The distinguishing characteristics of a substance are its origination, destruction and permanence. These three characteristics are different from one another and cannot be understood apart from the substance itself. By permanence, it is meant that the essential nature of the substance is indestructible, though it may undergo certain modifications with reference to its form, space and time. It follows, therefore, that indestructibility of permanence is only one characteristic or the characteristic from one point of view and not from all points of view; for if it were the latter, there cannot be any change at all.

Each substance has general as well as special characteristics. A thing or an object may change its qualities. For example, a human being grows up from childhood into a youth, thereafter to manhood, thereafter to old age. Throughout these changes, he maintains his essential characteristic of a human being. It is the acceptance of this change with different phases that forms the basis of the Jain doctrine of manifold points of view or relative pluralism or Anekanta-vada.

Reality is never absolute, self-centred or abstract but is always many-sided in accordance with the plurality of its relationships to the manifold other reals. It is one and many, eternal and evanescent, general and particular, immutable and changing, real and phenomenal and so on—always the abode of apparently opposite features, all harmonized into a concrete whole. This is the essence of the Syad-vada and this Syad-vada or Anekanta-vada is the soul of the Jain philosophy.

The Jains have evolved a unique method of understanding and explaining the nature of things. All things have multiple facets of their being. If a thing is described from one facet only, the knowledge is partial and therefore, it cannot be relied upon as the whole truth.

Naya is a particular approach, and gives information about the thing from that particular point of view. When all the nayas are taken together, they give a comprehensive idea about the thing while each retaining its individuality in its relative position. An example may be cited :

Rama was king of Ayodhya.

Rama was father of Lava-Kusha.

Rama was son of Dashratha.

Rama was husband of Sita.

Rama was brother of Laxman.

Each of the above statements is correct from its own point of view, but when all are combined, they give a comprehensive knowledge about Rama.

This method of expression and understanding helps in resolving dogmatic approach of absolute view-points. It supplies the philosopher with catholicity of thought, convincing him that truth is not anybody's monopoly. It also furnishes the spiritual aspirant with the virtue of intellectual toleration, which is a part of Ahimsa, one of the basic tenets of Jainism.

Jainism has a systematic classification of knowledge. It divides the philosophical stand-point into two main heads—The **Nischaya** and **Vyavahara**. Of these two, the former deals with the essential nature of things which remain unchanged while the latter takes into account only the popular point of utility and conditions or forms. The statement “This is a jar of clay” is an illustration of the Nischaya Naya while “This is a jar of butter” is true only from the Vyavahara Naya or the practical point of view.

Syadvada, when applied in Jain-logic to interpret the nature of things is known as sapta-bhangi as follows :

1. Syat Asti
2. Syat Nasti
3. Syat Asti-Nasti
4. Syat Avaktavyam
5. Syat Asti Avaktavyam
6. Syat Nasti Avaktavyam
7. Syat Asti Nasti-Avaktavyam.

In order to reach the essence of Anekanta-vada, the aspirant will have to accept for its true interpretation, the help of a great spiritual master—the true preceptor who has attained its essence by genuine righteousness in thought, word and deed.

May Anekanta-Vada enlighten our march to divinity !

**GUIDELINES
TO
MAHAVIR – DARSHAN
PART IV
ETHICS**

The goal of a society is maintenance of moral values of universal brotherhood, justice and peace. The highest good of the society is the highest good of an individual. Devotion to ethical ideals is the hall-mark of all modern civilisations.

Ancient thinkers, however, considered ethics as part of metaphysical and theological speculations and made moral principles as part of their religion. MAN's conduct in society is the normal field of ethics. However Jain thinkers have linked ethics with metaphysical ideas and ideals. Jain ethics has for its end, the realization of Nirvana or Moksa. To effect this end, the rules of conduct must be observed and corresponding virtues must be acquired.

Jainism has prescribed rules of conduct separately for : (1) the householder and (2) the Muni. A layman who is desirous of attaining great heights in ethical and spiritual progress can do so by regulating his way of life. The word "Pratima" is used to designate the stages of ethical progress in a layman's life. They are like rungs of a ladder. A layman desirous of progress must mount the ladder step by step, until he reaches the top i.e. the highest stage of spirituality as a layman. The next lesson—Lesson No. VIII—will, therefore, deal, with 'PRATIMAS'. As regards supreme virtues, we are dealing with only five virtues in lessons to follow.

Lesson IX	Forgiveness
Lesson X	Charity
Lesson XI	Humility
Lesson XII	Sat-Samagama
Lesson XIII	Self-study (Swadhyaya)

(These five lessons have been taken from the English version of "Sadhak-Sathi", written in Gujarati by Dr. M Soneji, to be published shortly by us.)

LESSON VIII

PRATIMAS

The aim of Jain ethics is so to organize the combined activity of a society that its individuals may have the greatest possible number of facilities for attaining moksha or nirvana i. e. perfect peace and bliss of the soul. Thus, obviously, the rules of conduct, both for laymen and ascetics, must directly or indirectly be conducive to this central aim. Naturally, the rules for ascetics are stricter than those for laymen and provide, as it were a shorter, albeit harder, route to nirvana which is the goal for the layman also, but one which he reaches by a longer and slower process.

Here we do not propose to go into the rules of conduct for ascetics. Those who are interested in the subject will find the details in the Acharanga sutra and in Bhagavati-Aradhana.

The rigour of the ascetic life may be estimated to a certain extent by considering the more or less severe conditions which the Jain householder must adopt, if he rightly follows the Jain principles. The best way of exhibiting the rules of conduct for the Jain layman is to make clear the eleven stages in his life, i. e. the eleven pratimas. They are given below :-

But before a Jain can go on to the pratimas, he must pass through two preliminary stages :

1. He must have faith in Jainism. He must study the doctrine and believe in it thoroughly and sincerely.

2. Then he must become, what is called a pakshika shravaka, a layman intent on following the path of salvation. His duties, as laid down in the Sagaradharmamrita by Pandit Asadhara are :

- (1) To have faith in Jainism
- (2) To abstain from intoxicants
- (3) To abstain from flesh food
- (4) To abstain from fruits which contain or are likely to contain insects, also from honey.

- (5) To abstain from taking four kinds of food at night. The four kinds are : eatable, tastable, lickable, drinkable. Eatables, at least, he must give up at night.
- (6) To take clean i. e. filtered water
- (7) To abstain from gambling
- (8) To follow in the main the five small vows. The vows relate to non-killing etc.
- (9) To abstain from hunting
- (10) To abstain from adultery or lasciviousness
- (11) To perform some religious exercises daily.
- (12) To abstain from making his living by any but the following means (a) agriculture (b) learning (c) trade (d) army (e) crafts (f) singing (g) music.

The eleven **Pratimas** are :-

1. **Darsana (faith)** : A true Jain must have perfect and intelligent, well-reasoned faith in Jainism, i. e. he must have a sound knowledge of its doctrines and their applications in life.

2. **Vrata (vow)** : He must observe the five minor vows (anu-vratas), the three guna-vratas, and four siksha-vratas. To give details :- he must not wilfully destroy any kind of life, must not tell a lie, must not use another person's property without the owner's consent, must be chaste, must limit his necessities of life and avoid the use of food which involves unnecessary killing of living beings. The three guna-vratas are special vows relating to the limitation and determination of his daily work, food and enjoyment. The remaining four vows relate to his worship in the morning, noon and evening, keeping fast on certain days, limiting enjoyables day to day and daily giving charity in the form of knowledge, medicine, comfort and food.

3. **Samayika (worship)** : He must worship regularly in general for forty-eight minutes, three times daily. Worship means self-contemplation and purifying one's ideas and emotions.

4. **Poshadhopavasa (weekly fast)** : He fasts regularly, as a rule, twice a fortnight each lunar month.

5. Sa-chitta-tyaga (abstinence from consumption of sentient things) : He refrains from taking fresh vegetables, because they are living; and to hurt any living thing is in Jainism a deadly sin.

6. Ratri-bhukta-tyaga (abstinence from eating at night) : He must not take food at night. There are minute living beings which no amount of artificial light can reveal or disperse, and which are consumed with meals, if taken after sunset.

7. Brahma-charya : Celibacy.

8. Arambha-tyaga : Abandonment of merely worldly engagements and occupations.

9-11. The remaining three stages are preparatory to the monk's life. Their names are parigraha-tyaga, anumati-tyaga and uddistha-tyaga and they enjoin a gradual giving up of the world and retiring into some very quiet place to acquire the knowledge of truth and ultimately to become fit to be a teacher of the path to salvation.

However underlying every rule of conduct in Jainism is the one important principle of ahimsa (non-killing, non-hurting). It will be useful here to consider the effect of this principle of non-injury on (1) food, (2) drink, (3) trades and industries, (4) social behaviour (5) civil and criminal wrongs.

It may be noted that injury by thought or deed to other living beings is the chief, if not the sole, cause of misery, ignorance, weakness, pain, and disease to oneself. It is something like the necessity of "Purging the defendant's conscience" in Courts of Equity in England. By doing wrong to the plaintiff, e. g. by not doing something promised to be done, the defendant is soiling his conscience, and equity forces him to clean it. Constituted as human nature is, Jainism facilitates our right living by showing that the luxury of injuring our neighbour is really an injury to ourselves, and an injury, too, from the evil effects of which the neighbour may possibly escape, but we cannot ! Altruism may have its basis upon a deeper and more refined kind of self-saving and self-serving

As to the effect of the principle of non-injury on :-

Food :

Food which involves the slaughter of living beings, animals, fish, birds, or anything that has five or less sense-organs, must not be taken.

One thing must here be made clear. Life thrives on life. The ideal practice of non-injury is possible only to the soul in its perfect condition, i. e. when it has freed itself from the last particle of Karmic matter (Karma vargas). On this side of that happy state, do whatever we will, some life must be transformed into our life in order to sustain it. Therefore what is meant and enjoined is simply this : Do not destroy life, unless it is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of a higher kind of life. The purer souls will, of course, not like to sanction even this. But, as formulated above, the rule does not sanction hurting or injury, it limits it to the lowest possible minimum. As a supplementary rule we have : “ And then begin with the least evolved kind of life, e. g. with the sthavaras. ”

Drink :

All kinds of intoxicants, or even stimulants, are prohibited, They are not necessary for the life and well-being of the body. They feed the passions, and passions are the bitterest foes of the soul. There is also wholesale destruction of small life in the fermentation of brewing and distilling.

Tades and Industries :

Certain trades are prohibited to Jainas as Jainas—brewing, fishing, butchering, and anything that involves wholesale slaughter of living beings for purposes of trade and commerce. But even a brewer or a butcher may be a Jain : then he will be in the vowless stage of soul's evolution (avirata-gunasthana).

Social Behaviour :

A true Jain will do nothing to hurt the feelings of another person, man, woman or child, nor will he violate the principles of Jainism.

Jaina ethics are meant for men of all positions—for kings, warriors, traders, artisans, agriculturists and indeed for men and women in every walk of life. The highest will find in the Jain rules of conduct satisfactory guidance for their affairs : and the meanest can follow them. “Do your duty. Do it as humanely as you can.” This, in brief, is the primary precept of Jainism. Non-killing cannot interfere with one's duties. The king, or the judge, has to hang a murderer. The murderer's act is the negation of a right of the

murdered. The king's, or the judge's order is the negation of this negation, and is enjoined by Jainism as a duty. Similarly the soldier's killing on the battlefield. It is only prejudiced and garbled accounts of Jainism that have led to it being misunderstood.

Civil and Criminal Wrongs :

The Indian Penal Code, originally drafted by Lord Macaulay, takes account of almost all offences known to and suppressed by our modern civilization. The five minor rules of conduct (The five anuvratas of Jainism) cover the same ground as that of the said Code.

Thus, the eleven stages are scientifically conceived. The graded steps have to be climbed one after the other. The climbing commences with the Right Faith and progress is achieved only when he is prepared to observe the more difficult vows and rules of conduct.

[From " Outlines of Jainism "]



LESSON IX

FORGIVENESS (KSHAMA)

Forgiveness is that unique part of Dharma, which does not permit the emergence or rise of anger in one's self, in spite of the association of external causes that can create normally violent reviling. Forgiveness is an embellishment of heroes. Real forgiveness is that in which man ponders – " Even though I have the capacity to hit and throw back the opposing individual or object, how can I discard this virtue of forgiveness and resort to anger ? Anger demolishes the very foundation of forgiveness which is precisely my inborn nature, my true being ? " Great saints, who uphold forgiveness with such true philosophical thinking are real heroes in this universe.

The General Nature of Anger :

Passion, anger and greed—these three basic vices are described in Indian culture as gateway of hell. A Sadhaka, therefore, who fears sin, should positively overcome these three vices in the right

spirit and sense. When anger overpowers man, he forgets the discrimination between good and bad and behaves indiscriminately in any improper way as if he were blind. With the upsurge of anger, several reactions develop in the body. Heart throbs at a higher rate, eyebrows become stiff, face becomes flushed and perspiration starts. Many different types of abusive words come out of mouth; hands and feet tremble and the angry person attacks the object of his anger with slaps, fists, kicks, etc., or starts to hit him with weapons like a stick, dagger, sword or gun. One who is not inclined to obey such a terrific dance of destruction (Tandava-nritya), should recognise anger in its very initial stage and try not to be dominated by it.

Ways to conquer Anger :

One has to pass through two stages of training to conquer anger :

- (1) Knowledge of the subtle nature of anger.
- (2) Experimenting with forgiveness in daily life.

(1) Knowledge of the Subtle Nature of Anger :

The pathway to get rid of anger cannot be traced till we know rightly, what anger is. Anger is a perverse state of the soul. There are three causes for the rise of this perversity :

- (a) The external object or person that has done some wrong to us, abused us or obstructed what we desired to achieve.
- (b) Rise of internal illusory Karma. Actually the soul is pure by nature having the characteristic of forgiveness. But it gets turbid when it subjects itself to the rise of Karma resulting in anger, a perversity of forgiveness.
- (c) The main reason of the rise of anger is the forgetfulness of one's own nature i.e. forgiveness. This means loss of the feeling of faith and one's remembrance, "I am of the nature of forgiveness." The result is an outburst of anger on part of the soul. Thus, lack of alertness about the basic nature of our true self is the main reason for the rise of anger.

(2) Experimenting with Forgiveness in Daily Life :

One who has firmly resolved that his soul is of the nature of forgiveness, has to remain awake and alert when anger overtakes him. He should then ponder in this way. “ This anger is not found in my original nature, it results only from the rise of Karma. Why should I, then, give place to this extraneous emotion in my soul ? ” “ This anger is unholy, an enemy to my nature and ever leads to sorrow in this world. Moreover, the Karma that will shape itself due to anger will again come to rise and lead me to sorrow in future. I, having power to recognise the anger as soon as it results or is likely to result, throw it off and reverts to my basic nature of forgiveness and equanimity and remain stayed in the state of awareness.” By constantly practising in this way the vigility of wisdom, a great soul-force gets created in one’s self, which separates perversion of anger from one’s true self. With this soul-force, one gets firmly established in samadhi, a form of unique forgiveness. Such a person is not enveloped by the bondage of Karma, but experiences unique peace and unparalleled coolness. Resolve, therefore, O Great Souls ! that constant and patient experimental training through a state of awakening of the Soul, is precisely the right way to cultivate the virtue of forgiveness and to conquer anger.

Just as a man resolves to abstain from food at the time of fast or takes a vow, similarly, one who wants to root out anger, should take a vow of training everyday—“ I shall not subject myself to anger today.” He should also fix up a small penance so that mistakes committed everyday can be counted. If a man trains himself for some time in this way with alertness, his nature gets revolutionised. Such is the great power of this small vow, and hence, its great utility to the sadhaka.

Obstacles in the Sadhana of Forgiveness :

It is possible that a sadhaka will come across certain obstacles in the present age in which most of the people are averse to Dharma. But a Sadhaka should know that such insults, obstacles etc., coming from these people averse to religion, form a good opportunity for him to minimise his earlier Karma. From some view point, it is

therefore, proper for him to be thankful to them for the same rather than get angry. When various sorrows of mind, speech and body befall man, it is proper for him to ponder thus “ My previous Karmas have come to bear fruits. These men or animals who inflict sorrows on me are only instrumental. I therefore keep up my forgiveness and do not get angry with anybody. ”

Again, when somebody charges us as low, ignorant or pretentious, we do not become that, but we become what we think and feel. Having known this doctrine of truth, it is beneficent to all of us to keep up our nature of forgiveness, even if we have to make great efforts for the same.

Conclusions :

Enlightened meditation is quickly attained to on our path of liberation by resorting to this virtue of forgiveness. Evidently we experience inner bliss. An all-round atmosphere of peace is created because internal mental sorrows as well as external conflicts, quarrels, abuses etc. no longer exist now.

Thus, with the subsidence of anger and jealousy, an atmosphere of friendship and unity is created everywhere in the society. As new bondage of Karma does not arise in case of the individual sadhaka and as former Karmas fall off, the soul becomes increasingly purified and a great state of sadhana emerges.

May this Dharma of forgiveness that leads to the bliss of our self and of others, reign ever victorious in our life.

Greatness or Glory of Forgiveness :

- (1) Forgiveness is the sublime opening to liberation.
- (2) Where there is compassion, there is Dharma; where there is greed, there is sin; where there is anger, there is death; where there is forgiveness, there is right spiritualism.
- (3) The Sadhaka should give up anger on realising that it is unholy, perverse of the real nature of the Soul, and it leads to sorrow.
- (4) Uphold for ever in your heart, forgiveness that leads to peace in this life as well as instrumental in bringing highest and best state in the life hereafter,

- (5) Just as a lamp burns itself and shows the path to others by light, similarly saintly souls do bear numerous calamities and yield calmness to others.
- (6) Just as the earth tolerates digging, pressing and striking, just as trees tolerate cutting, similarly only the enlightened souls can tolerate insults and bad words. How could others have that capacity?
- (7) The tree of Dharma that grows through right conduct and right knowledge and is watered by self-study, austerities and faith, will be consumed to ashes by the fire of anger. Let us, therefore, keep anger away at a distance.
- (8) Compassion, peace, equanimity, forgiveness, truth, renunciation and non-attachment are found in the personality of a man aspiring after liberation. He is ever alert.
- (9) When causes leading to sorrow arise, great sadhakas again and again resort to forgiveness, on the lines of thinking such as these— “ This is the occasion of the test of my life-time sadhana; why should I not be on the alert? “ or ” Despite being an aspirant for liberation, if I were to retort by harsh words etc., like the ordinary people in the world, I would be just one of them. What would be the peculiarity or significance of my claim of being one aspiring after liberation? ”

Pondering again and again this way, the tenacious “ Sadhakas ” revert and thereafter maintain “ Forgiveness ”.



LESSON X

CHARITY (DANA)

In the normal course charity lies in giving away one's wealth etc., with the idea of co-operating with and consenting to any noble activity. In this activity, the giving up of one's ownership together with the absence of desire of reward when joins hands, the state and greatness of charity scales higher heights. The liberal donor then really attains the status of a supreme donor.

There are several types of charity, but here we will consider just four of these which are useful in the spiritual sadhana. They are:

- (i) Charity accompanied by utter devotion and humbleness,
- (ii) Compassionate charity,
- (iii) Charity of fearlessness, and
- (iv) Charity of knowledge.

Now let us precisely understand these four types.

(i) Charity accompanied by Utter Devotion and Humbleness

In this charity, one who accepts donation is far more virtuous than the donor. Only persons endowed with understanding and discrimination can possibly undertake this. The donor who resorts to this charity intends to reduce the greed in his life, and thereby become a better Sadhaka, so that slowly and steadily the unique virtues of the person accepting charity, dawn in his own life. Again, in this case, the person who accepts charity is a person endowed with self-knowledge or is a high-grade Sadhaka and the concerned activity is so auspicious that it will nourish for long periods, the sublime traditions of right knowledge and self-control. When this happens, naturally the traits of purity are nurtured at the individual level, development of good virtues and higher cultural values get popularised and propagated at the community level. Acceptors of such charity are selfless and benevolent individuals. It is logical, therefore, that donations to such virtuous individuals be accompanied by proper respect and due honour. It is easily understandable, that, no matter what the form of this charity may be, whether giving of food, clothes,

medicines, scriptures or place to stay—it should always be systematic, and associated with due respect. This type of donation is predominant in the life of a discriminative Sadhaka, because on such occasions, he is lucky to come in contact with several virtuous ascetic, learned and saintly personalities. Under such eventualities, if the Sadhaka is alert and awake, he will commence to follow the discriminating and scientific process of delighting in the virtuous and the resultant process of virtue imbibation. This delight in virtues will inspire him to serve the saints in so many different ways. These include—standing upright on seeing them, salutation to them with folded hands, proceeding to receive them, following them in all humility during walking, offering higher seats to them, behaving in a manner befitting their temperament, going up to the door or the outskirts of the village to bid good-bye to them, and to obey their directives and so on. Thus there will be various types of his devotion towards the saints.

When this is followed honestly and sincerely, the Sadhaka will himself attain sainthood.

This is because—

“There is a lot of difference between a Parasa gem (Philosopher’s stone) and a Saint. The former converts iron to gold, while the saint makes a Saint out of man.”

Surely we all approve of making a saint out of man. Without approval and conviction of this, our spiritual aspiration is not fully justified. Let us ponder over this with proper discrimination.

(ii) Compassionate Charity :

In this type of charity, the main purpose is to remove the sufferings of the tormented. In the present case, the person benefitting from charity is not more virtuous than the liberal donor. The feeling of compassion in the heart of the donor is therefore dominant in the present case; the donor being inspired by this feeling, helps the afflicted with sympathy and serves them by body, mind or wealth.

Compassionate charity consists of liberal donation by one who is moved by the pangs of the tormented. He tries all his best to remove their sufferings in a variety of ways. It may consist of help and donation to the poor and beggars: those who have suffered by famine or heavy rains or the hungry and the orphans. Similar are liberal

donations to widows, needy students, the blind and the deaf as also the lame, the mad, the mentally retarded and so on. No distinction whatsoever shall be made in this charity. Compassionate charity is bestowed irrespective of caste and creed, native or foreign land, the virtuous or one bereft of virtue, one belonging to one's own creed or another. The dominant purpose here is the removal of affliction of all men and all living beings. There is no question of predominance of the feeling of respect or honour or of reverence towards the acceptor. What is predominant is sympathy and compassion through love and friendship.

Generally, social charity is included in this type. Social charity starts with family charity in which brothers, sisters, cousins and others are beneficiaries. But the charity of the really righteous one does not stop here, it constantly expands far and wide.

Donations such as for construction and running of a hospital, construction of an inn, for digging wells and tanks of gardens, for a community hall, a townhall or for a school or a college or a hostel are donations for social welfare. They are therefore included in compassionate charity. Here, in these donations the dominant feeling is social uplift, community welfare and the progress of social and institutional activities.

(iii) Charity of Fearlessness :

This is the best of all charities. Charity for safety means shaping one's routine of life in such a manner that all living beings feel safe and secure from you. No external resource is necessary in this charity. All men can therefore resort to it. But one important trait of this liberality is the need of constant awakening of the soul. The Sadhaka who takes recourse to this charity will not cause loss of any kind to any one by his body. He will not use speech painful to others and not even think ill of others. Only if there is a constant awakening of one's soul, can one accomplish an effort at not causing ill to anybody mentally, physically or by vocally. Thinking deeply, we will realise that mostly great men, who have renounced all attachment alone have the full capacity to practise this charity. But it is proper that we ordinary people also practise it as far as possible and thereby attain the betterment of our own selves.

(iv) Charity of Knowledge :

Charity of knowledge is that type by which there is a permanent annihilation of the birth and death cycle of the worldly souls and acquiring thereby eternal bliss. Even though this type of charity is possible to some extent by the noble and the learned ones, however, the main donors of this type are the great Acharyas and Munis who are the very embodiment of divine knowledge with super-intellect and great scriptural-knowledge.

In this charity the noble donors donate knowledge of truth that is all-sided; all-pervasive and subtle. This leads the living beings to their ultimate well-being. This Charity is resorted to through the media of lectures and preaching religious discourses etc.

In this, both the donor and the beneficiary thereof, reap a distinct gain for their souls, and eventually, it leads both to the highest benefit and the supreme state.

Glory of Charity

(i) Persons of three categories stand the highest in Indian society. They are the devotee, the donor and the hero. In Gujarati there is a very famous stanza that pays tribute to the mothers of these three.

“O Mother! if at all you give birth to a child, let him be a devotee, or a donor or a hero. Otherwise, may you prefer to remain barren. Do not lose your vitality in bearing others.”

Emperors Shreyansa and Karna, Kings Shibi, Harshavardhana, and Bhoja as also Bhamasha, Jagdusha and a host of other liberal donors resorted to various activities of righteous charity. They have inspired us also to resort to righteous charity.

(ii) Three are the destinies of wealth—just use, liberal donation and destruction on getting lost. Discriminating persons know this and resort to charity.

(iii) Charity is the very basis of the duties of householders. A householder's life bereft of charity is not the right type of life.

(iv) Righteous charity enhances peace and contentment in life, it conduces to spread of fame in the world, it yields happiness and

facility to other living beings, it leads one to the highest state in the higher worlds. Charity finally yields the eternal status of liberation. Discriminating persons, therefore, accept it in normal course with all sincerity.

(v) This is how the householders are expected to use their earnings in charity—the best ones 25 per cent, the middle ones 10 per cent and the average ones 6 per cent of their income. Ancient Acharyas accepted such high standards of charity.

(vi) Be it known that the success of a healthy body lies in austerities and devotion, of wealth in charity and of power and intellect in doing all-round good to others.

(vii) Best is the donor who resorts to charity without being asked.

(viii) No treasure equals charity, no enemy equals greed, no ornament equals character and no wealth equals contentment.

(ix) The main purpose of the wealth of best of men is to bring an end to the calamities of all other living beings. It is known as “Lakshmi” (The Goodness of Wealth) precisely because of this.



LESSON XI HUMILITY (VINAYA)

Introduction :

Humility is internal and devotional respect towards the personalities and objects deserving respect.

Really speaking, humility is just a natural inherent virtue of the Atman. It is inherent in the soul with other virtues like knowledge, faith, contentment, forgiveness, etc. If it is so, question may arise, why is it not experienced in daily life? The reply is that the common men of the world are not aware of their own inherent virtue. Again, men do not pay attention to this inner and natural virtue but go on constantly nourishing their infatuation in the form of arrogance. Thus, ignorance and reverse practice are the causes of non-attainment of the virtue of humility.

Cultivation and Propitiation of Humility :

Pride that annihilates humility, is said to be eight-fold by Acharyas. The propitiation of humility becomes simplified and quick success is achieved if one knows these eight arrogant forms of pride which are as follows :

(1) Pride of Knowledge :

One may acquire multi-faceted and vast knowledge as a result of constant Satsanga and arduous practice of concentration in the presence of an enlightened preceptor as well as by devout scriptural studies. At this stage, if he prides on this learning and looks upon others as low and insignificant, this is the pride of knowledge.

(2) Pride of Worship :

When several types of human and super-human virtues become manifest, when riches abound at great heights, when fame spreads all over the world and when one wins regards, honour and worship from kings, emperors, merchants, sheriffs, great scholars and ascetics, if one looks upon himself as high and great in vanity, it is the pride of worship.

(3 and 4) Pride of Family and Race :

When one's ancestors are of high and noble family such as Nagar Brahmins or Sisodia Rajputs or persons coming from some other respectable family or when one's maternal relations had been honoured with ministership and the like or were traditional high office bearers, if one boasts of his greatness due to this, then it is adjudged as the pride of family and race.

(5) Pride of Power :

One might be in full bloom of youth and endowed with unique physical power, one might have cultivated grand eloquence that pleases and makes thousands stunned, one might have a sweet resounding voice, and might be blessed with the will power by which he can stick to his activity till he is victorious and if one becomes arrogant due to one or more of these, this is pride of power.

(6) Pride of Excellent Attainment :

When propitiation of dharma by unique renunciation and self-control yields certain special super-human attainments (like far-seeing,

far-hearing, flying in the sky, etc.) and if one becomes proud of these, then it is the pride of excellent attainments.

(7) Pride of Austerity :

While practising various types of penances such as fasting, muttering prayers, meditation and abandonment of taste of Rasa, if one starts feeling that he is an unequalled tapasvi and experiences a sense of loftiness in his heart, it is the pride of austerity.

(8) Pride of Body :

When various organs of the body such as eyes, ears, chin, chest, etc. are quite handsome and proportionate, and the elegance of the body is eye-catching, if with all this typical suppleness of the body one becomes proud, then this is the pride of body.

This eight-fold pride disturbs the Sadhana of the aspirant. One should therefore know fully well this eight-fold pride, abandon it in daily routines of life and resort to humility. If this is done, humility as a virtue will reveal itself in a short time.

Reward of the Propitiation of Humility :

All great men have propitiated this virtue of humility and have sung its glory. Unity, peace and prosperity grow when we show, by our behaviour, humility towards our parents and elders, pious persons, teachers and professors, learned men and scholars, munis and Acharyas, and others. Humble people win fame in the society.

Many popular sayings such as “Arrogance is the source of sin”, “One who bows is liked by all”, “The pride of even Ravana went to dust”—prove that Indian culture has looked down upon pride as a vice while humility is accepted everywhere as a great virtue. As the Sadhaka progresses in his Sadhana, his vision widens, he looks upon all souls similar to his own and he loses his interest in establishing a high social status or position of power and the like. With the rise of this rational and discriminating view, he accedes to the words of saints.

“It is difficult to be known as a servant, but I am a servant of the servant ! I now cherish the desire to be like the grass which gets tramped beneath the feet !”

Let us now see the ultimate spiritual reward of the propitiation of humility. Only the humble can honour and worship the saints now and again methodically. If one is lucky enough to have association with a genuine saint, and if the latter is convinced that his devotee deserves, he will be lucky enough to be bestowed with self-knowledge. When one ponders over this divine knowledge now and again, he is able to cultivate the power to climb up the ladder leading to genuine philosophical thinking. As a result of this, the Sadhaka attains to self-realisation and becomes a saint. This proves that the highest philosophical and spiritual reward can be attained by the propitiation of the virtue that is humility.

Let us grasp with the study of authentic Shastras, and through guidance of the preceptor these numerous types of humility—humility of true knowledge (Jnana Vinaya), humility of true vision (Darshan Vinaya), humility of true conduct (Charitra Vinaya), and humility pertaining to the greatness of Acharyas and other great men not comprehensible directly at present (Upachara Vinaya). Let us propitiate this great virtue.

Glory of Humility :

- (1) The first test of man's real greatness is the humility present in him.
- (2) As we further our advancement in humility, the nearer we move towards the peak of greatness.
- (3) By humility we can win many things, yet it costs us nothing.
- (4) Through humility, loving conduct and a spirit of tolerance all men can be won over and made our close friends.
- (5) Real greatness dawns only when boasting ends
- (6) Humility is the root of loftiness, it is the source of all prosperity, it spreads our glory far and wide and is like the moon that brings a tide in the ocean of Dharma.
- (7) It is our duty to be humble towards the highly virtuous, it is our gentlemanliness to be humble to equals and our nobility to be humble with our inferiors. Humility towards one and all indicates a state of equanimity (Samadshti).

- (8) Just as trees rich in fruits bow low, monsoon clouds full with water come down (towards earth), similarly noble persons develop a natural tendency for benevolence on attaining prosperity.
- (9) However great an achievement is, if any ego arises therefrom, all done becomes undone and fruitless. Ego nullifies all good done.
- (10) Like fragrance mixing with gold, if humility mixes with knowledge, one attains to real greatness.
- (11) Let us neither look upon any one as low nor hate him. Let us give up the habit of comparing ourselves with others and possessing a sense of superiority complex !



LESSON XII

ASSOCIATION WITH THE WISE

(Satsamagama)

Introduction :

In general, Satsamagama means association with best of men and best of things. The purpose of such association is to improve ourselves, to make good our present life and at the end to attain endless happiness through self-realisation. Association of persons of like temperaments and aims with pious intention or even contact with and hearing of the sermons of saints who inspire righteousness and liberation, is also Satsamagama. Satsamagama at its best is living constantly at the feet of the enlightened saints and to endeavour for spiritual advancement.

In the first stage, the Sadhaka shall spare an hour or two, say for two days in a week for Satsamagama. However, daily association

of the saints is necessary for those who have more leisure or greater ardency for propitiation. Following this method of Satsamagama, a common sadhaka, too, can achieve immense benefit in daily routine of his life.

At well planned periodical intervals, intensive Satsamagama should be resorted to. For this purpose, one should retire to some secluded hermitage or gurukula and remain in obedience of an enlightened noble preceptor. Various schedules of Sadhana which lead to God-head are available in such places from early morning to late night. One has to take part in these various sadhana-schedules as per his capacity and aptitude. With a concentrated mind, one should actively participate in reflection about the nature of substances; practice of silence; devotion to the Lord; sessions of meditation, question-answers and similar dialogues; praising and reciting the glory of the Lord; reading, writing, remembering and hearing of the scriptures; etc. By these various means one makes head-way on the path of Sadhana.

Process of Satsamagama :

- (1) One should firmly decide “ I desire to progress on the path of bliss of the soul.”
- (2) One should proceed for Satsamagama, leaving behind himself the pride of knowledge, wealth, power, austerities, renunciation etc.
- (3) Taking simple and wholesome food, observing the rule of not telling lies and remaining contented in whatever facilities are available – all these should be practised.
- (4) A really friendly and compromising attitude towards one and all, exceedingly noble and devotional behaviour towards the saints and the virtuous, along with abandonment of futile criticism, jealousy and controversial debates – all these practices are beneficial in Satsamagama.
- (5) Limited sleep as well as limited and purposeful conversation with others; regular presence in religious discourses and study sessions; making notes during self-study and giving these to the more learned for correction; joining in mass prayers and

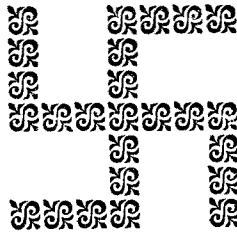
devotional songs – all these types of disciplines are absolutely necessary.

- (6) Passing fixed time in individual worship, silent scriptural study, muttering and memorising the songs of detachment by one's self, study of reality in a secluded and peaceful place – all these are essential and advantageous to advanced Sadhakas.

Glory of Satsamagama :

Satsamagama reigns supreme among all the means of spiritual disciplines. Undoubtedly it has got the capacity to bestow not only the ordinary happiness but even the highest spiritual state. No one has words enough to extol its full glory. Still, we humbly follow the highly enlightened ones in describing briefly its immense glory in a few words.

- (1) Obedient association with noble souls even for a short while is like crossing over the ocean of mundane existence.
- (2) It is the root of all happiness. The resulting benefit of satsanga can certainly lead to the desired attainment. It is the best means leading to piousness.
- (3) Let our souls know all other means as subordinate and adopt Satsamagama as the means par excellence for attaining liberation. If one propitiates it with unflinching care and devotion, in no time, false attachments are destroyed and the soul gets free from all blemishes.
- (4) Satsamagama quenches the thirst of the mind, it brings an end to pride, it takes away all sorrows, enhances spiritual wealth and yields pure fruits of dissipation of all sorrows.



LESSON XIII

SELF-STUDY

(Svadhyayashilata)

Background :

Self-study is a basic necessity in various stages of spiritual sadhana. It is incomparable and indispensable. It yields immediate reward and is considered to be the very guide of all the other means. All the preceptors of various schools of philosophy in the world have accepted its unique importance. Each one of them has given it its due place in the methods of Sadhana propounded by them.

Looking from the absolute point of view, the fruit of indulgence in self-study is self-realisation. For really acquiring such a state of self-study, association of a self-realised soul or following his spiritual instructions is necessary. Three stages can be considered in the development of the sadhana of self-study.

- (1) Obtaining leisure through retirement,
- (2) Acquisition of a state of scriptural study,
- (3) Attainment of the supreme state of self-study,
by continuously practising the contemplation of the acquired knowledge.

In the first stage, the Sadhaka requires contact of the noble and learned. If his mind gets firm in the conviction that he wants to indulge in self-study, he will, on his own, spare an hour or two from his busy worldly life from business or service or domestic work. He should then put his efforts in the acquirement of knowledge in his spare time, and gradually go on getting more and more leisure by taking resort to secluded life and create more and more interest in advancing his scriptural studies.

In the second stage, the emphasis is on the study of good 'shastras', i. e. those that lead to higher spiritual knowledge. If one studies the 'shastras' in proper order stage by stage, as laid down by the experienced and the learned, greater benefit will be obtained. During the course of this study, one can constantly or occasionally stay in a **Gurukula** (An abode of Guru). He can also strengthen his

knowledge by reading, writing, thinking, memorising, pondering and discussing with others, like a student. These different methods of studies, when combined harmoniously with success and joy leads to great advancement of knowledge in a short time. As the knowledge acquired in this way is methodical, purposeful, useful, and blissful and again, because it has been acquired in the presence of and under the guidance of some enlightened saint, it leads the Sadhaka to a great height of spiritual progress in a very short time.

In the third and the last stage, further progress is required to be made by practising firmly in life the principles which have been learnt so far. This leads to the experience and conviction that soul is pure consciousness; it is of the nature of truth, knowledge and bliss (Sacchidananda). Once this happens, all thoughts, impure and sorrowful, are discarded. Once it has been realised that passion (Karma), anger (Krodha) and infatuation (Moha) are doors to hell, the Sadhaka propitiates the virtues of non-attachment, forgiveness and contentment.

Whether in the worldly pursuits such as bathing, taking food, business and other exchanges, family relations and their problems etc. or in spiritual obligations such as devotion, association with the saints, self-study, worship, daily propitiation, dhyana, etc., the routine of the continued divine awareness should be cultivated. The feeling that I am ‘Sadhaka Atma’ should be persevered with such intensity, that life becomes remoulded and the fragrance of virtues spreads in each activity of our life; our entire life becomes propitious to ourselves as also to others. If we could accomplish this successfully, self-knowledge (Atmajnana); self-meditation (Atma-Samadhi) and self-delight (Atmananda) will surely manifest themselves in our life because of the principle that “ appropriate causes having been provided the invariable result must manifest.”

Glory of Indulgence in Self-study :

- (1) We cannot make headway on the path of salvation without knowing what the path is. We must therefore know the path through the sermons of a learned preceptor or through the study of the sublime scriptures.

- (2) True renunciation (tyaga) is not possible without a proper understanding of what is to be given up and what is to be accepted.
- (3) Real compassion cannot be actually practised without knowledge. Knowledge is therefore a forerunner of the practice of real compassion.
- (4) In this world of ours nothing is more sacred than knowledge.
- (5) Acquirement of the best of things is not possible without best efforts. Hence with a firm determination, man must constantly propitiate the vow of self-study (Svadhyaya). He should not give up svadhyaya because of various obstacles. Only such a noble, great Sadhaka attains to an established state of self-study (Svadhyaya).
- (6) By following this methodology and also by constancy in study, one attains to concentration in Svadhyaya. Self-realisation and equanimity of the soul dawns on their own in this very life as the reward par excellence of Svadhyaya.
- (7) Indulgence in self-study reveals countless virtues. One becomes conscious about truth and untruth; intellect flowers; doubts are set at rest; the grasp of Reality dawns; the habit to resort to illogical attitudes leaves the mind. The fame of such a Sadhaka spreads far and wide.
- (8) Pride, anger, negligence, disease, and laziness are the five obstacles in the acquirement of knowledge (Vidya). With due diligence and care, the Sadhaka should avoid these and exert constant efforts to acquire knowledge.
- (9) Just as humility is needed for acquiring knowledge, similarly even after knowledge is acquired, it shines forth only through humility. A really learned man is always humble and ever continues to be so.





DASA-DHARMA

Acharya Shree Umaswami in his Tattwarth Sutra has enumerated the ten supreme virtues known as Dasa-Dharma. They are :

Supreme (1) Forgiveness (2) Humility (3) Straightforwardness (4) Truthfulness (5) Purity (6) Self-control (7) Austerity (8) Renunciation (9) Non-attachment and (10) Celibacy. They constitute the essence of religion.

These ten virtues are intended to regulate the activities of mind, thought and action. Their practice or observance enables the Sadhaka to eliminate all evil thoughts and prevents him from various types of harmful action.

The Acharya has taken care to see that religion becomes a way of life with a clear theology and metaphysics at the back of it, so that the scientific foundation based on Atma Tattava and consequent spiritual outlook is not lost sight of.

May the Sadhaka evolve himself as a great spiritual personality through moral and virtuous practices without any desire for worldly gains, so that by this process of self-legislation and self-conquest, he may eventually attain complete emancipation !

JAY MAHAVIR

GUIDELINES TO MAHAVIR-DARSHAN

PART V

Socio-Cultural

LESSON XIV

JAIN CULTURE

If we visualize the essential features of India's ancient civilization before and during the period of the advent of Tirthankara Mahavira and Buddha, it will be found that a persistent search for higher values was in the atmosphere. Dissatisfaction with the social conditions and the religious ideals that prevailed was deepening. Philosophical doubts stirred the minds of the people who gathered round enterprising thinkers, or heretic teachers, as they were usually called. Tirthankara Parsva, who preceded Mahavira by about two centuries and a half, had already given an impetus to the movement which ascribed supreme importance to the sacredness and inviolability of life—a movement which had been recognized by Tirthankara Nemi who was, if we are to believe the Jaina tradition, a contemporary of Lord Krishna, the chief personality of the Mahabharata age. It was left to Mahavira and his disciples and followers to revitalize and propagate this movement on a more intensive and wider scale, and to give a new orientation to the social outlook and the philosophical quest of the age.

In the course of this movement, a huge literature, mainly religious and philosophical—composed in the prevalent literary languages as well as in classical Sanskrit—grew up in conformity with the spirit of Nirgranthism, for this was earlier designation of the movement known as Jainism. Scientific subjects like astronomy and mathematics also received elaborate treatment in those compositions, as these were regarded as indispensable for a sound understanding of the ultimate purpose of life. Gradually the need of symbolizing the spiritual values was felt and it found expression in Jaina sculpture and painting, which have an aesthetic peculiarity of their own. Thus the Jainas made their contributions to almost all spheres of Indian life. A comparative estimate of these contributions will be helpful for appreciating the value of Jaina culture.

Religion in Jainism is not blind faith. Nor is it emotional worship inspired by fear or wonder. It is the intuition of the inherent purity of consciousness, will and bliss of the self. The approximate Jaina equivalents of religion, all have as their common connotation: "intuitive love of truth". This love of truth, inherent in each self, requires spiritual exertion for its manifestation. Once manifested, it will lead the self to liberation sooner or later. The dawn of this intuition is accompanied by a radical change of outlook, enabling one to realize the utter unimportance of the world. This intuition is mystical in the sense that it comes as a momentary flash and demolishes, as if by magic, perverted assessment of worldly values and attachment to them.

Another feature of this religious experience is the intuition of the inviolability of the individual self. What the Upanishads have achieved by recognizing the identity of the individual with the universe and Buddhism has accomplished by non-recognition of the individuality itself, Jainism has sought to achieve by stressing this inviolability. This is the fundamental basis of disagreement between these three systems of thought.

The moral principles of Jainism are evolved in the light of the religious experience. The inviolable autonomy of the individual rules out subordination to another individual and, moreover, implies the principle of non-violence as the natural determinant of social relationship. Thus society, according to Jainism, is a co-ordinated aggregate of autonomous units and depends for its own well-being upon that of every individual. No individual being subordinate to any other, and each being entitled to independent self-expression, Jainism rejects the patronizing of one individual or class by another. The gradation of society into classes, therefore, is not in keeping with the spirit of Jainism. It is even regarded theoretically as impossible for one individual to torture another, though this undeniably sometimes happens. It is, on the contrary, recognized that encroachment upon the autonomy of another individual means ultimately an encroachment upon one's own. The scripture thus declares : "Thou art he whom thou intendest to kill ! Thou art he whom thou intendest to tyrannize over." An individual accordingly is required for his own sake to refrain from violence.

This moral principle of non-violence presupposes several others for its realization. Of these, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy and non-possession of property are the main ones. Thus, necessity of these principles for the enthroning of the self in all its glory is too apparent to need elaboration.

Freedom of the self can be achieved only by recognizing the freedom of others. Falsehood and stealing both imply concealment and self-deception and so stand in the way of self-expression. These must therefore be abandoned and replaced by their opposites, which require spiritual exertion. Thus one must be prepared to undergo extreme hardship in order to remain true to one's convictions and to earn one's own conscience and non-stealing means non-acceptance of what is not earned or obtained by honest means. In its positive aspect, non-stealing implies creative labour for one's livelihood.

Celibacy has been assigned a place of supreme importance in almost all the systems of Indian thought. It is not merely a formal negation of sensuality, but a strenuous effort to gain self-sufficiency and self-satisfaction.

The principle of non-possession means non-attachment to worldly ambition, and the mutual co-ordination of needs are needed for the cultivation of this principle. Rightly understood and practised, it promotes the growth of an equitable social order which in its turn provides scope for the moral virtues.

Not only Jain ethics but also Jain philosophy is based on recognition of the individual as an autonomous rational being. Jaina philosophy, therefore, rejects all absolute claims, conceding to them only a partial validity. The maker of such claims rejects other approaches as aberrations, failing to recognize the autonomous rationality of his fellow thinkers. The Jaina philosopher finds in such intolerance the seed of the mutually hostile systems of philosophy. He attempts to synthesize these conflicting systems into one philosophy which recognized their findings as so many aspects of the self-same reality. This is "Anekantavada" or non-absolutism.

The Jains have, moreover, attempted to classify the different philosophical views into a number of types which are known as

Nayas. Thus the Nyaya-Vaisesika system, which regards the diverse traits of a thing as numerically and qualitatively different from one another and also from the substratum on which they rest, belongs to the type known as Naigama Naya or the pantoscopic approach to reality. Similarly the Vedantist, who accepts existence as applying only to the One Reality and dismisses the diverse characters as unreal appearances, affiliates himself to the type called Sangraha Naya or the way of synthetic approach. In the same way that system which approaches reality from the analytic point of view may be called Vyavahara Naya. Jainism classifies similarly the other types of thought, whose advocates all expose themselves to the charge of extremism and fanaticism, in so far as they assert their several findings to be exclusive or mutually incompatible. The Jaina philosopher regards them all as only partially true and attempts to synthesize all these glimpses into one comprehensive vision of the whole reality.

A common thread thus runs through the Jaina religion, moral code and philosophy. And this continuous development of the religious experience contributed much to the spiritual, moral and intellectual culture of our country.

The Jains played a very important part first in the development of the ancient Prakrit languages, as also of the Dravidian languages of the South : Tamil and Kannad. Somewhat later they adopted Sanskrit to elucidate the contents of the original Prakrit canon and gradually produced a vast Sanskrit literature comprising valuable works on almost all subjects of the day : philosophy, logic, grammar, lexicography, poetics, politics, folk stories, mathematics, astronomy and astrology. Indian literature in all its branches is thus indebted to the achievements of Jaina authors.

As regards the Prakrit canon, it can be compared to the Pali Pitika of the Buddhists in respect of subject matter, method of exposition of cardinal tenets, compilation of religious and philosophical doctrines and evidence which it affords as to the social, political and economic conditions of ancient India.

The Sanskrit literature of the Jainas contains a number of the leading philosophical and literary classics of India's ancient heritage.

Umasvati, Siddhasena Divakara, Samantabhadra, Akalanka, Vidyananda, Haribhadra and Hemachandra made contributions which are enduring landmarks in the development of Indian thought and culture.

As regards the Jaina influence in the South, the laborious researches of Burness, Buhler, Burges, Hoernle, Jacobi and Lewis Rice have almost conclusively proved that the Jainas profoundly influenced the political, religious and literary institutions of that part of India. The Kural, an ethical poem of considerable importance in ancient Tamil literature, was composed about the 1st century A.D., by Saint Tiruvalluvar, who was definitely a sympathizer with Jainism. It is also now almost certain that the Tolkappiyam, an authoritative work on Tamil grammar which is perhaps the earliest among the Tamil texts extant was composed by a Jaina author. Among the other important Tamil works of Jaina authorship may be mentioned the Naladiyar and the like, composed during the early centuries of the Christian Era.

The austere life of the Jaina saints greatly appealed to the Dravidians, as did their love for the languages of the South. In the words of Frazer : “It was through the fostering care of the Jainas that the South seems to have been inspired with new ideals and literature, enriched with new forms and expressions.” The period immediately following the age of the Kural was characterised by the growth of literature, mainly under Jaina auspices. The “Augustan Age” of Tamil literature was the period of predominance of the Jainas in intellect and learning, though not in political power. Jainism became the religion of some of the Pandyan Kings. In the 7th century A.D., on account of their persecution in the territory under the Pallava and Pandya Kings, the Jainas migrated to Sravana Belgola in Mysore. There they sought refuge under the Ganga Rulers who extended to them their patronage.

The few who remained in the Tamil land led an obscure life devoid of all political influence in the country. Nevertheless they retained in full their intellectual vitality which had in earlier times produced such classical works as the ‘Kural’. Thus, during this period of Jaina obscurity, Valaiyapati, Silappadikaram and Jivaka Shintamani—three of the five Tamil Mahakavyas, were composed by Jain authors.

Among the minor kavyas composed by Jainas, Yashodhara Kavya, Chudamani and Nilakeshi are important. Moreover, the Jainas continued to enrich the vocabulary of Tamil by introducing large numbers of Sanskrit derivatives and bringing them into conformity with Tamil Phonetics.

The Jainas rendered valuable and extensive services to Kannada literature also. In the words of the Rev. F., Kittel, they wrote “not only from sectarian motive but also from a love for science, and reproduced several scientific works in Kanarese.”

In the 10th century A. D., the Golden Age of Kannada literature, the greatest Jaina poets were writing. Thus Ponna, a Jaina Saint upon whom the Rashtrakuta King Kannara conferred the title Kavichakravarti, composed Shantipurana and Bhuvanaika Ramabhyudaya during the period. Next we come to the great poet Pampa, regarded as the father of Kannada literature. Pampa was followed by Ranna, Court poet of the Karnataka Emperor Thaliapa and his son Satyashraya who succeeded him. He composed many works, of which only two have survived, Gadayuddha and Ajita Tirthankara Purana.

Another great Jaina writer of Kannada prose and poetry in that century was Chamundaraya, who, besides being an able administrator and warrior, was a patron of Ranna, among others. It was he who had the colossal image of Gomateshvara carved at Sravana Belgola.

Among the later-Jaina authors we may mention Nayachandra, the author of Mallinatha Purana and Rama Chandra Charita Purana : Brahmashiva, the author of Samayapariksha and Nayasena, the author of Dharmamrta.

The Jaina influence on Telugu deserves careful investigation. Practically no research has been done on the subject and we look to competent scholars for enlightenment in this unexplored region.

Very little research, moreover, has been done on the Jaina contributions to science. But from even the little that has been done it is apparent that they achieved memorable success in this field also. Referring to the Jaina classification of animals, Dr. Brajendranath Seal remarks :

..... Umasvati's classification of animals...is a good instance of classification by series, the number of senses possessed by the animal taken to determine its place in the series.

And as regards the Jaina contribution to the atomic theory, the same authority writes : "The most remarkable contribution of the Jainas to the atomic theory relates to their analysis of atomic linking, or the mutual attraction (or repulsion) of atoms, in the formation of molecules."

For an assessment of Jaina contribution to mathematics, we may refer to the valuable paper of Dr. Bibhutibhuysan Datta, published in the Bulletin of the Calcutta Mathematical Society. A correct appreciation of the Jaina achievements in science requires patient research by scholars trained in different sciences.

The Jainas were also great patrons of art. Indian art, both Northern and Southern, owes to them a number of remarkable monuments. And in architecture their achievements are greater still. Elliot in his *Hinduism and Buddhism* gives a comprehensive idea of the Jaina art and architecture of Northern India when, referring to the Satrunjaya Hill, he says :—

On every side sculptured chapels gorgeous in gold and colour stand silent and open; within are saints grave and passionless behind the lights that burn on their altars. The multitude of calm stone faces, the strange silence and emptiness, unaccompanied by any sign of neglect or decay, the bewildering repetition of shrines and deities in this aerial castle suggest nothing built with human purpose but some petrified spirit world.

As single edifices illustrating the beauty of Jaina art, both in design and patient elaboration of workmanship, the temples of Mount Abu may be mentioned.

In South India, too, idol worship and temple building on a grand scale have to be attributed to Jaina influence. There the vast Jaina remains of mutilated statues, deserted caves and ruined temples at once recall to our mind the greatness of the religion in the days gone by. Moreover the colossal monolithic Jaina Statues of the South, such as that of Gomateshvara at Sravana Belgola, are among the wonders of the world.

The Jaina contribution to painting also is not negligible. There are remains of beautiful paintings in some of the Jaina caves at Udayagiri and Khandagiri. It is, however, in illuminated manuscripts that this Jaina art finds its fullest expression. Referring to such paintings of the 15th century A. D., the late great art critic, A. K. Coomaraswamy, remarked :—

The Jaina art of painting is one of pure draughtsmanship; the pictures are brilliant statements of the facts of the epic, where every event is seen in the light of eternity... There is no preoccupation with pattern, colour or texture for their own sake, but these are achieved with inevitable assurance in a way that could not have been the case had they been directly sought. The drawing has in fact the perfect equilibrium of a mathematical equation, or a page of composer's score. Theme and formula compose an inseparable unity, text and pictures form a continuous relation of the same dogma in the same key.

The light and casual handling manifest in these paintings does not imply a poverty of craftsmanship, but perfect adequacy and is “the direct expression of a flashing religious conviction and of freedom from any material interest.”

It was, however, at the hands of Shalivahana – the great artist who flourished in the reign of that great connoisseur, the Mogul Emperor Jehangir – that Jaina painting attained their consummation. In the private collection of Shri Narendra Singh Singhi of Calcutta, there is a manuscript of Shalibhadracharita illuminated by this artist with more than 20 paintings, some of which are of superb execution.

Jainism has thus significantly enriched Indian culture in the fields of ethics, philosophy, literature, science and aesthetics.

[From : Lecture by Dr. Nathmal Tatia M. A., D. Litt.]

LESSON XV

WHAT JAINISM OFFERS TO THE WORLD

We live in a world of social inequalities, economic difficulties, multifarious diseases, over-population and atomic bombs. Can Jainism offer any solution for the above problems? Yes. It can and it does offer. But one has to follow and apply its teaching in actual practice as an earnest patient would follow the prescriptions of his doctor.

Social inequalities : It is really regrettable that even in the civilised countries of Europe, prejudice due to colour, race, or nationality still continues to exist and keeps the people divided amongst themselves. Experience teaches that colour or racial arrogance cannot continue to exist long. Humanity has to be told again and again that the entire human race is but one family irrespective of differences due to colour, race or nationality, “All humanity is one,” is one of the fundamental teachings that Jainism offers.

Economic difficulties : Whatever might be the economic conditions obtaining in other countries, the economic position in India is still far from satisfactory. Some people in India are still starving. Thousands of men, women and children are found suffering from heat and cold, completely exposed to changing conditions of weather without proper shelter and sufficient clothing. The Haves must come to the rescue and protection of the Havenots. Jainism enjoins that every man must put a limit to the acquisition of property and then entirely devote his time for public good. People engaged in independent professions such as lawyers, doctors, merchants, engineers, etc. must retire when they reach the limits fixed for them and thus give room for others to earn. Dig-vrata and Desha-Vrata, limiting one's activities, within certain prescribed directions and within certain boundaries in a country and abstaining from the use of things got from beyond the limits or sending to such places, also contribute in a way to mitigate economic difficulties. It is expected of every well-to-do person to give ABHAYADANA, the gift of fearlessness to all those who are afflicted with fear as to, “What shall we eat, where shall we stay, and with what shall we cover ourselves?”

The sacred books say that on the day when the Blessed Lord Bhagvan Mahavira renounced the world. He distributed His great wealth among the needy and the indigent. The Bhudana and the Sampattidana movements launched and conducted by Acharya Vinoba Bhave go a long way to solve the economic difficulties. “Live and let live,” is the formula offered by Jainism. Ksheman sarvaprajanam, “May all people be happy,” is the daily prayer of the Jainas.

Diseases : It is the opinion of the common people that in proportion to advancement of civilization and the new methods of living, the number of diseases also has increased. No doubt scientific research has eliminated the threat of death from infectious diseases. But still there are instances of cases which baffle even expert medical men. And the treatment of some of the diseases is so costly that it is beyond the reach of the common man. Aushadha-dana, gift of medicine, is one of the charities, which a Jaina householder is asked to give in order to provide relief to the sick.

Over-population : The rapid growth of population is a great problem for the leaders of all nations. In India, too, the population has considerably increased during the last decade. Several devices are suggested and advices given to check the growth. Birth-control clinics have been started in many places and the people are advised to use appliances. But any attempt to go against Nature is not only injurious to health but also sinful. Therefore, Jainism advises the practice of celibacy (Brahmacharya) as the only non-injurious method to control birth. It helps men and women to keep their bodies healthy and strong and makes them pure and edifying.

Atom Bombs : With the advancement of scientific research, many marvellous things have been invented for the convenience, comfort and enjoyment of man. The use of steam and electricity, telegraph and telephone and improved methods of printing have revolutionised modern life. Through radio and television, man sitting at his desk can hear the voices of people at distant places and see visions of events happening far away from him. Science has contributed to the development of industry and agriculture on a very large scale. Automobiles, steamships and aeroplanes enable the speedy movement of men and goods. Time and distances have been conquered. But side by side with

the application of his scientific knowledge for beneficial purposes, man has discovered horrible weapons of destruction also.

Prof. M. Oliphant, Director of Physical Laboratories, Australian National University, in his lecture on "Science and Mankind", delivered at the University of Madras, said: "At the present time we face a crisis in the use of Science which is of far greater immediate importance and which must be surmounted if our present civilization is to endure. This is the threat of war which has been for mankind a sort of undulant fever of increasing malevolence which now threatens his very existence. Man stands on the brink of a precipice of his own devising."

"If world war should come again it is certain that most that we value will be destroyed, hundreds of millions will die and the surface of the earth be so despoiled that a recovery may take a million years."

"The banning of weapons of mass destructions offers no solution, for any nation facing defeat abandons all scruples and uses every weapon which could decimate the enemy. Excuses can always be found for the use of any diabolical weapon in retaliation."

The world itself looks as though it is on the verge of complete destruction. Man with the help of his scientific knowledge has rolled the globe and placed it on the jaws of death. In the light of this situation, what is the solution that Jainism can offer to avoid war and establish permanent peace? Jainism has been teaching that soul or 'atman' is the only precious thing in the whole world. Nothing is comparable to it. The scientist himself who has discovered so many wonderful things was able to do so only because of his own soul which is, in other words, his knowledge.

The Jaina conception of soul and knowledge being identical, is analogous to Einstein's theory of matter and energy being equivalent, which is again the teaching of Jaina metaphysics. Where there is knowledge there is soul; and where there is soul, there is knowledge. The unique nature of soul and all its wonderful qualities have been taught to the world by the great teachers. Lord Mahavira emphasized the supreme value of soul as a thing which must be protected and

developed at any cost. Man should not only care for the welfare and advancement of his soul but also help the soul of all sentient beings by giving them protection and by helping them to march on the path of salvation. He who loses his soul, loses everything. Jesus Christ who came five centuries later than Mahavira also drew the attention of mankind to the value and importance of atman or soul. "What shall it profit a man," He asks, "If he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" The pious Christians who live in America, Russia and other countries where the deadly weapons are being manufactured may as well ask their own countrymen, "What shall we gain if we get supremacy of the earth and lose our own soul?" Unfortunately there will be no getting the supremacy of the earth also, since the atom bombs will destroy everything.

In order to establish peace in the world, the importance of soul and the necessity for the practice of Ahimsa should be taught throughout the world in every village and town. Man must be made to become conscious of the supreme value of his soul and the utter uselessness of the result of inventing of the atom bombs.

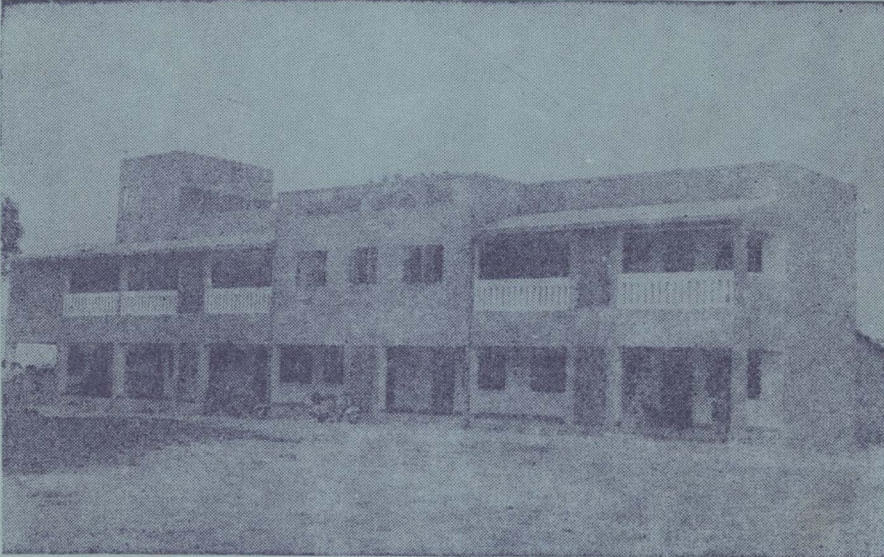
Nowadays people seem to think that religion is of no use in modern life, and that it cannot play any part in shaping the character of the people. In reply we can only say in the words of Joseph Gear, "Those who have lived among the Jainas find them a very kindly people, and better men because of their religion".

[By Shri C. S. Mallinath]

OUR OTHER PUBLICATIONS

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- 1 Bhaktamar – Stotra
- 2 Sadhana – Sopan
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- 6 Sadhaka Sathi Part II
- 7 Adhyatma Gnana Pravesika
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