

I AM MAHĀVĪRA



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Pārśwanātha Vidyāpīṭha, Varanasi-5 (India)

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I AM MAHĀVĪRA

(Autobiography of Bhagavāna Mahāvīra)

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`I AM MAHĀVĪRA'

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Dedicated to

Late Padmabhushan Pt. Dalsukh D. Malvania

a

Celebrated Jain scholar

Publisher's Note

We feel immense pleasure in bringing out the booklet named “ I am Mahāvīra” on the occasion of 2600th Birth Anniversary of Bhagavāna Mahāvīra. This booklet contains the life and teachings of Mahāvīra in nutshell and in parablar form adopting autobiographical literary style. It covers the entire gamut of principles enunciated by Mahāvīra with illustrative diagrams to make it more attractive and interesting. It is the book of its own kind.

We are very thankful to Dr. N. L. Jain and Jain Center, Rewa for allowing us to publish this booklet. It is hoped that it will find wider readership among all categories of people.

Sagarmal Jain

Secretary

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PROLOGUE

There have been many books and booklets on Bhagavāna Mahāvīra. They have described his life and teachings either in brief or in detail. Despite this, the object of one more new booklet is to present the life of Mahāvīra and his universal teachings to be easily comprehended by the young children and adults with some more interest. The pictorial representation of the material will not only gives external attraction of the booklet, but it will also lead to better magnificence and readability. The autobiographic form of the book creates an internally impressive disposition to lead the self towards better understanding of the processes of life. It will also be realized that even the negative principles result in encouraging positive qualities to improve the self and the society- as the psychologists say.

The source of this write-up has been the book, '*Mahāvīra Kā Antastala* (The Mind of Mahāvīra) by Swāmī Satyabhakta (1901-1999) which is based on *Kalpasūtra* in a literary style and the pictorial "*Story of Jesus*" by E. Graham. The life-story depicts Mahāvīra moving from a normal worldly being to a highly

accomplished and, therefore, super worldly being through his mental and conscientious faculty. He faced all oddities of life. His teachings of minimization of violence, limitation of possessions and vocal faculty are the need of even today. These teachings are presented through simple stories or parables from traditional sources, which make them practical, and worth following. I hope that this presentation of the life and teachings of Mahāvīra will prove to be more impressive and interesting to the readers.

I requested many persons and institutions to publish this booklet. However, the credit for the publication of its original version in Hindi goes to the newly established Institution 'Comrade Memorial Club, Jabalpur, M. P. on the pious occasion of 2500th Salvation Anniversary year of Mahāvīra. I am obliged to the Club for its generosity in encouraging me for literary activities of this type. Many other individuals like Shri Babulal Badkula, Balchandra Jain (now late), Gulabchandra Darshanacharya (Publisher and author of many books), Shri Shrenik Jain and others read the book and suggested improvement and diagrammatization. It will be my great pleasure to receive comments and further suggestions from readers for its further improvement.

The Hindi edition of the booklet was very small and popular. There have been suggestions from many corners to publish it in English. Because of many prior engagements, this

could not be done. It had to await the 2600th Birth Anniversary of Mahāvīra. I hope that this somewhat enlarged English version will also attain popularity. My family members have encouraged its publication. I am highly pleased for their enthusiasm for Jinistic promotion in the wider world. I hope that the life and teachings of Mahāvīra will have a global readership.

I am confident that this short autobiography of Mahāvīra will be helpful in learning the techniques for alleviating the sufferings of the people.

It is my duty to thank Dr. Sagarmalji Jain, Secretary, Parshwanath Vidyapeeth, Varanasi for encouraging me through the publication of this booklet from his prestigious institute. My thanks are also due to Dr. Shriprakash Pandey, Harish Karchuli and Vinay Pillai for their assistance and cooperation at every level to materialize publication of this book.

N. L. Jain

FROM THE DREAMS INTO THE WORLD .

It is about 2600 years. The Bharata country had sixteen large republics. The people were happy with the bounties of nature. However, their religious and social condition was not satisfactory. The saints like Maṅkhali Gośāla, Sañjaya, Keśī and Kātyāyana postulated different doctrines. The society was luxurious, traditional and conservative. The people thought the status of some as low and the others as high. They did not behave properly with each other. The women were taken as a property like houses and lands. Their condition was pitiable. The men were also sold as slaves. This was the period of crisis for the whole society.

During this period, there was a village republic named as Kṣatriya Kuṇḍagrāma near Vaiśālī in Magadha area of Bhārata. The King Siddhāratha ruled this republic. He belonged to the lineage of Jñātrka Kṣatriyas. He was like Kubera- the god of wealth. There was the confluence of all the four exertions of life - religion, riches, fulfilment of worldly desires and liberation, in his Kingdom. The people there were happy- internally and externally. The king had Triśalā as his chief queen. She was the princess of the king Ceṭaka - the ruler of the country of Videha (in current state of

Bihar). She was noted all around for her beauty and praiseworthy qualities. The king Siddhārtha was very popular among the public of his republic through his varied kinds of public services. I was born in this popular royalty. The king Siddhārtha and the queen Triśalā were my parents.

When I grew gradually, my mother, one day, told me that when I was conceived, she saw many auspicious dreams in the night before. It is said, "Whenever there occurs any important incident, the great people get pre-inklings about it." These dreams were indicative of my birth and activities.

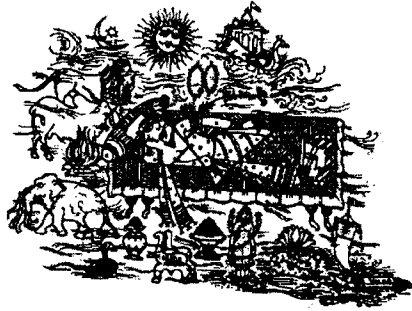


Fig. 1. Dreams of Triśalā

My Mother told me that she saw a white elephant in her dreams; she saw a white bull as big as the great Himālaya. She saw that white lion jumped and entered into her mouth. She saw Laxmi (goddess of wealth and prosperity) residing in a lotus. She saw two garlands of flowers. She saw two sporting fish. She saw a sun, a moon, a flag and a royal throne. She saw a silver pitcher embedded

with gems. She saw a water pond. She saw the ocean of milk. She saw the empyrean plane and palaces of empyrean gods. She saw a heap of gems. She also saw a fire flame without smoke.

When my mother told her dreams to my father, he was highly pleased. He smiled and predicted my birth to her. He also asked the royal astrologers to interpret these dreams. They told him, "My mother will beget a son. He will be the best among all. He will be the teacher of the world. He will have unprecedented power and energy. The gods will honour him. He will establish the ford of religion. His ford will be the ford of peace. His influence will be very high and widespread. He will unfurl the flag of poly-viewism. He will acquire liberation-goddess of infinite spiritual prosperity. He will be amiable and omniscient. He will be enriched with all the good qualities. He will enforce the path of liberation by purifying his life through the fire of meditation.

My mother was also highly pleased to listen to these interpretations of her dreams. My father, later, told me, "Since I was conceived, the wealth and prestige of his kingdom increased infinite-fold. The agricultural crop was also highly sumptuous that year."



Fig. 2. Royal Astrologer's interpret dreams

I was born on the bright Thirteenth day of Chaitra month (March-April) in 599 B.C. in the royal place of the republic of Kṣatriyakunḍa village. When I was born, all the six sisters of my mother came there. They came from Magadha, Kauśāmbi (near Allahabad), Daśārṇa (Vidisha M.P.), Sindhu -Sauvira and Avanti (Ujjain, Malva) countries. My aunt-Celanā was the best among all.

The people told me that even the sky was also pleased with my birth. It was brightened with sounds of electric lightning. There were showers of rain also that day. There were sounds of bells and conches all around.

These incidents led people to assume my day of birth as supernatural.

On this occasion, my father released many prisoners from the jail. He also donated grains and riches to thousands of poor

men. The village was adored adorned with many arched gates and there was procession of festivity to celebrate my birth. The people told me, later, that they had never seen such festivities before my birth.

I was royally bathed after my birth. Afterwards, I was dressed with sixteen kinds of clothes and ornaments.

●●●

MY CHILDHOOD

When the festivities of my birth were over, my father called the astrologer pundits. He got my horoscope (Kuṇḍalī) prepared by them. They told my father that I would be a highly proficient boy. Besides the horoscopic details, I also had the distinctive marks on my body parts and my foot prints were also specific. On this basis, the prognosticians also predicted that I will be a brave and patient man. I will be either a Cakravarti or a religious teacher of the world.

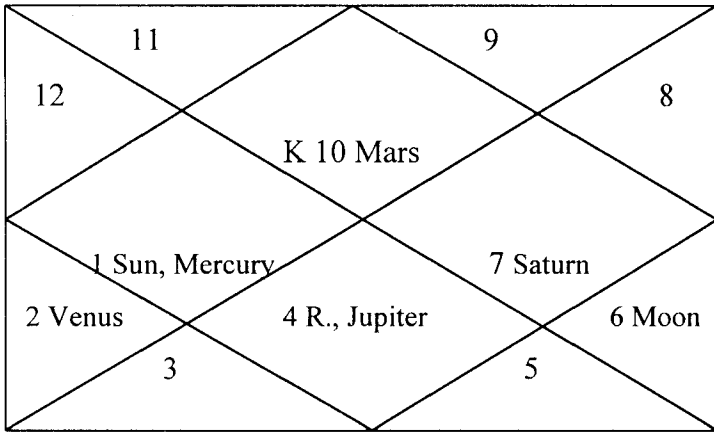


Fig. 3- Horoscope of Mahāvīra

Born on Monday, the bright thirteenth day of Caitra, 599 BC, Uttarāphālgunī constellation, astrological house of Virgo; end of night, Nātha lineage, Licchivī family, Ikṣvāku Vanśa, Kaśyapa gotra,

Place of birth - Kṣtriya Kuṇḍagrāma. (Vaiśālī)

I was named as Vardhamāna (Growing) at the first instance. However, now a days, the people call me as Sanmati (good intellect), Vīra (Hero), Ativīra (Excessively Hero), and Mahāvīra (Great Hero) also. The people have given me these names at different times on the basis of my qualities and deeds. Out of these names, the name Mahavira has become very famous.

The people, later, told me that I was very beautiful and healthy. However, my nature was somewhat serious. I was very fast in studies. I had been the leader of my group. On account of this, my teachers were also highly pleased with me. They taught me with great encouragement. They were called Professors of Arts and Crafts. (Kalācāryas & Śilpācāryas)

Once, an aged pundit came to my teacher. He asked him about me. Later, he asked me some difficult questions. I gave answers to all of them properly. The questions were related with mathematics, astrology, archery and spiritualism. He was pleased with my replies. He was also wonder-struck as to how I could answer such difficult questions at such a small age. They told my teacher that I was an extraordinary and brilliant disciple. That is why; I could completely study Vedas, Sub-Vedas and archery at a small age of sixteen years. I became proficient in worldly and super worldly learnings.

The people told me that in the childhood, I was quite fearless. Once, I was playing the game of "Hide & Seek" with my group of boys in my garden. While playing, my colleagues saw that large, black and poisonous serpent was wrapping itself on the stem of the tree under which we were playing. Looking at his colour and fierce hissing, all my companions began running away. However, I did not run away. I also asked them not to do so, but why they should listen to me? I thought, "Why should not I control the serpent?"



Fig. 4. Control over fierce serpent

I could subjugate it with great skill and effort. I placed my leg on its head. This impressed persons about me.

I was still younger that time. Some people told me that an elephant became mad on the road and is creating panic among the public. I saw the activities of the elephant for some time. I crossed him loudly. I then, skillfully subjugated him. This act led to high pleasure among the public of the kingdom of my father.

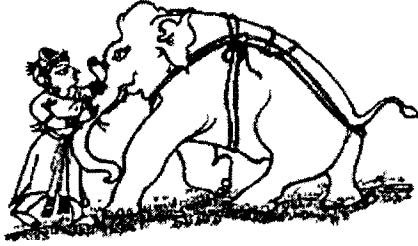


Fig.5. Subjugation of mad elephant.

Similarly, once, a juggler began playing "Touch me not" with me. He was confident that he would get me defeated. However, I won the game. As per the rule of the game, I began moving by riding over him. When I was moving, I felt I was rising higher and higher above. The juggler is lengthening himself. Immediately, I peeled him through my knowledge of incantationology. He began crying due to this and began begging pardon for his evil act. He, then, got me seated on his shoulder and danced with high gaiety.



Fig.6. Peeling of the Juggler.

There have been many such incidents in my days of childhood. All these caused self-confidence in me. I have been often thinking as to "why my companions are not like me? Why they are so fearful and weak ? One cannot run the ways of the world without being fearless, skilful and brave."

...

*According to Kanu Pallai and quoted by Rev.108 Acharya Vidyanandji, the Five important dates of the life of Mahavira are as given below:

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-------------------------------|
| (1) | Date of Conception | : | Friday, June 17, 599 BC. |
| (2) | Date of Birth | : | Monday, March 30, 599 BC. |
| (3) | Date of Initiation | : | Monday, December 10, 569 BC. |
| (4) | Date of Enlightenment:
(Omniscience) | | Sunday, April 23, 557, BC. |
| (5) | Date of Liberation | : | Tuesday, October, 15, 527 BC. |

3

MY JOURNEYS

My studies were completed when I got young. I now needed mental thinking. This requires experiences of life also. I, therefore, thought, "I should travel through my village republic."

One day, I went towards Gobara-gaon. I saw heaps of bones all around the village and asked a villager about it. He told me, "Sometimes ago, there was a sacrificial oblation (*Yajña*) here. Many animals were sacrificed in it."

I had read earlier that the *Yajñas* are performed to please gods. They award bounties of nature - air, water and light. Now, there is plenty of crops and wealth. This indicates that the gods were pleased. Why this animal sacrifices, then?

I asked the villager again about it. He told me that the animals are upgraded through the *Yajñas*. I felt sad by this statement. I told him, "The animals have also vitalities and livingness like us". However, how the villager could agree to this point?

I went to the village once again. I saw a large crowd on the main road. The people told me, "Two *Pundits* (scholars) are debating with each other. One scholar hit the head of the other scholar. He said, "The body and soul are separate. There is no harm to the soul on hitting the head."

I felt, "This type of activity is the result of reading the scriptures by rote. If the people take the practical point of view regarding scriptural statements, it would have been better."

I am habituated to wander in the forests. I feel highly pacified and happy there. One day, I was returning from my forest trip with pleasure. I found a wounded man on the road. His head was oozing with blood. It seemed that he must have been cruelly beaten. I felt pity on him. It was learnt later that his name was Śivakeśī. He belonged to the fourth caste of manual workers under the caste system.

The *Vedas* were being recited at some place in the village. The poor Śivakeśī happened to pass through that point of the road. He thought, "Let me listen to the *Vedas* for some moments." He stood there. The people saw him standing there. They got angry and beat him cruelly. "Oh, a menial listening to the *Vedas*? How could it be?"

While being beaten, he told the people, "Please take me as an animal and not as a man. The animals can listen to the *Vedas* as per scriptures." Despite this, the people continued beating him. I felt, "Is it the real characteristic of the religion?"

I felt sorry for him. However, I was wonder-struck later when I saw that the physician (*Vaidya*) gave him medication without seeing him despite my request. Even my elder brother also

could not get him any help. The poor Śivakeśī died after fifteen days of this incident. It was a matter of shame for me that even I myself could not visit him during the days of his wounded state.

I made many trips of the village from time to time. Every time, I got new experiences. I felt that the world is pervaded by oddity and suffering. The man is a slave of desires and lust. He is always under these intoxications. He does not care for the welfare of others. He cares only for himself. The people have forgotten their social duties under the intoxications of selfishness and sensual enjoyment.

I thought whether I could make the people realize their social obligations. My inner spirit called me, "I will have to undertake renunciation and spiritual practices for finding the way out."

Every time, my mind began thinking about the observance of renunciation and spiritual practices.

•••

4

LEAVING THE HOME

My mind, now, became full of undertaking spiritual practices. I studied all the scriptures, once again. I read '*Muṇḍakopaniṣad*' (Discourses on Mendicancy) and '*Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*' again and again (These texts deal with the path of renunciation). I repetitively studied '*Praśnopaniṣad*' (Discourses on Spiritual Questions) and *Kāthopaniṣada* (Discourses of the Sage Kāṭha). I saw the theme of non-violence (Ahimsā) and yoga of knowledge (Jñānayoga) in them. I also studied the heretic or non-Vedic literature. There also, I found non-violence postulated.

I felt, "It is only non-violence that can bring love and peace in the world. It is only non-violence, which can establish equanimous mentality and action. But, how it could be put into practice?"

I thought to myself, "Let me first practice it on myself, and experience its effect".

"This will require that I should first become a common man in place of a prince. I will have to alleviate the difference between the prince and the common man."

Accordingly, I decided to be a common man. I will undertake spiritual practices. It is only then, that I will find the way out to universal love and peace.

I sought permission for initiation to go to spiritual practices from my relatives and elder brother. They felt sad even on listening to my request. However, I thought, "I will try to experiment upon non-violence in my home first".



Fig. 7. The royal priests, Mahāvīra and his brother.

I remained at home for quite some time with my pensive and thoughtful mood. My mother tried many times for not moving me towards the spiritual path. However, she could not overdo over my experiences and intelligence.

While I was in the process of creating favorable atmosphere for my new way of life, my father died meanwhile and

my mother died a fortnight later. I felt very sad on their death. This led my mind to be more intense towards the spiritual path. Some days later, I, again, sought permission for initiation to the spiritual path from my elder brother. He advised me to stay home for two more years (because of the death of my parents). I agreed to his advice.

One day, I was trying to initiate this matter while discussing things with my elder brother. Meanwhile, I was told that some royal priests had come to see me. I went to them. I offered proper regards to them and asked them the purpose of their visit to me. My brother also came behind me.

The royal priests told me, "The peasants are, now, not getting the bulls for agriculture at any cost. They have silver coins only. However, the people having gold coins buy them at exorbitant costs. They offer them for sacrificial *Yajñas*. The *Yajñas* have obscured the intelligence of the people. Moreover, even the horses have become rare to be used as carriers. The humanity is under heavy pains and strains due to the system of slavery. Nobody cares for the poor people and manually working people. We are very much pained by this state of affairs. We request you, "Please make efforts to improve this situation. You enforce the path of non-violence and have a safeguard for humanity."

My brother asked them, "Why do you want that only my brother should enforce this path. The religion of non-violence is an ancient religion."

The royal priests replied, "O Lord, all the people have forgotten this religion. They are putting the public in troubles due to the puff of their caste and selfishness. We have to explain this religion to them in a new form. The prince Mahāvīra is the best person to do this job. We can imagine your mental agony, but this is nothing in comparison to the troubles of the people. We, therefore, request you to permit him to follow the path of spiritual practices to improve the happiness content of the world."

My brother was highly impressed by the expressions of the royal priests. He permitted me to get initiated. I was given a royal farewell for adopting this path in the month of Māgha (January-Feb.). I was taken in a royal palanquin to the Jñātri forest. There I took off my clothes and ornaments and donated them to all. I kept only a divine piece of cloth. I broke my relations off from my kiths and kins and moved on to the road of having relationship with the people of the world.

I had just walked about a *Kosa* (2 miles) that I heard the sound of uncle Somu. I stopped for a while. He came to me and said, " You have donated many things to many people. But you have not given any thing to me."

"Oh! What was left with me now? I gave half of the piece of cloth to him and bade him away."

Now, I was in the forest. I was not a prince now. I was just a common man at this time. My mind was getting full of many kinds of thought. This was creating a plan of my ongoing path of spiritual practice. Whatever experience I will gain in this path, it will give me a true path for improving the lot of the people.

I was moving fast in the forest with great hopes. But where to?

...

5

IN THE PATH OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OR SĀDHANĀ

I undertook spiritual practices for twelve years. I traveled many parts of the country. This led me to learn the current shape of the society. During my wanderings -on - foot, I did not stay more than three days in a place except in the rainy season. I held my rainy residences (about four months rainy season) in Asthika (Bengal), Nālandā, Campāpura, Pr̥stha-Campā, Rājgr̥ha, Bhaddilpura, (All in Bihar), Alabhika, Śrāvastī, Viśālā (all in Uttarpradesh) and Lāḍha (Orissa) countries.

I had varied kinds of experience during the days of spiritual practice and wanderings. On the very first day, I was undertaking an austerity in a standing posture at a place. The bulls of a farmer came to that place. When the farmer saw them near me, he thought that I have brought them there. He ran for beating me. But I was saved by the CID's of my brother. However, it came to my mind that no spiritual practice could be successful in this way. I am an ascetic and not a prince. I have left my home not only to safeguard myself, but to all others. After this thought, I made the CID's to go away.

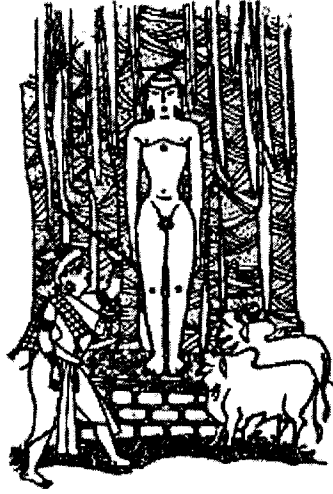


Fig.8. The farmer and his bulls

Similarly, once again, a farmer called me guilty on another occasion. He nailed my ears. It was kindness of a businessman named Khāraka, who called a physician and got me treated properly.

One day, I was going towards the Asthika village. Some village ladies taunted against me over my hairs in the way. Immediately I got my hairs plucked by myself. I felt that the moral character of this country has gone down. It might be possible that the system of marriage might have gone loosened. I had these kinds of experiences during my wanderings through the cities of Campā and Pṛstha-Campā etc. also. I determined to stop such kinds of incidents.

I thought to continue to move on my spiritual path. I began taking meals in my own hand-bowl. I tried my best not to be exposed to the familiar persons. I felt that they would not be helpful in my path of spiritual practices.

While meditating in a heretic hermitage, a cow grazed the grass of my hut. It created mental distress to me. However, it gave me a number of points of practical importance. I thought of keeping silence for the maximum time and to avoid the places where there is disturbance of mind.

While wandering-on-foot, I learnt that people did believe in demons and devils. There are many temples on their names at different places. The people tried to get me fearful to stay in these temples. Nevertheless, I always stayed in them. Later, my stay there impressed the villagers.

One more incident has become noteworthy for me. There was a temple of the demigod (Yakṣa) in Asthikagrāma. He was highly cruel in nature. The people told me not to stay in that temple lest there may be danger to my life. However, I stayed there. In the night, while I was under meditation, the demigod appeared in different shapes and sounds. He began inflicting various types of injuries involving severe pains to me. However, I remained steady. The demonical force was defeated by my spiritual force. Later, the demigod begged pardon.

On one earlier occasion, I had to subjugate the demigod Bibhalaka. The peripatetic goddess Kataputanā also tried to deviate me from my spiritual path without any success. In the dead end of the night in the temple of demi-god, I saw ten dreams. Utpala - a noted prognostician of the village Asthikgrāma, interpreted them. He conveyed to me that these dreams indicated that I would become a ford-builder or *Tirthankara* later and attain salvation.

Once, I was going towards Śvetāmbī. Some one informed me that there lives a fierce serpent named Caṇḍakauśika in the southern way. However, I decided to go that way only, I thought, "Let my principle of non-violence be on test to day". I saw that the serpent saw me in seated posture and hissed this way and that way towards me. However, I remained steady only. Sometimes later, the serpent left the place. I realized that the serpents etc. create troubles only to the violent people. They are worshippers of the non-violent ones.



Fig.9- Mahāvīra and the fierce serpent- Caṇḍakauśika.

Similarly, once, I was crossing a river on a boat. There was a heavy storm. The boat began moving up and down. However, I remained calm and quite. The other people on boat began talking about the origin of the storm. From their expressions, I learnt how much blind belief people did have in Yakṣas and gods. It was fortunate that the storm cooled down after some time. Otherwise, my calm and pacified posture would have been charged as guilt.

On many occasions, while meditating and under silence, I was taken as a spy by the border police of the small republics. They caught me and tortured me. It was fortunate that every time, some people recognised me and I was saved.

One night, I was meditating in a corner of a Yakṣa temple. Many young men, women and families came there to celebrate religious night awakening. However, they were drinking and dancing in a highly erotic and voluptuous way. When my accomplice Goṣāla objected so it, they beat him. I thought such activities must be stopped.

In the suburb of Campā, I found women are treated as slaves. Any one can enjoy them. The adultery looked general. The code of marriage seems to have gone derailed. I thought this trend must be rectified for the betterment of the society and the coming generation.

Once, while I was in Śrāvastī, I found that the women, in general, also believed in witchcraft. On listening to their talks, I felt that the pundits are very careful even in sinful acts, how best it could have been if they were as careful towards truth and proper duties as in sin.

During my wanderings-on-foot, I had to experience the largest amount of inflictions in the Lāḍha country (Orissa). The inhabitants of that country hated the nude ascetics and were spitted against them. They threw stones at me. They encouraged the hounds at me. I tolerated all these inflictions as I was in search of the true path. How could it be possible without seeing and experiencing all kinds of states. Under these conditions, I classified the physical inflictions. I thought of twenty-two kinds of infliction. My rainy residence also did not make any impression upon the public there.

I saw that the people do not have much regard for the persons proficient in learnings. The wealth, office and external states are comparatively highly regarded. That is why I, realized that the boatmen that day were honouring the army commander and they were asking fares from me for crossing the river.

I also could see the recurrence of the system of slavery. I hate this system. I wish this system to be abolished. It is why; I began accepting foods from the hands of man and women slaves.

The people kept these slaves in the hind-parts of their houses. I, therefore, began to move through the backyard of the houses for seeking alms.

It is in this way that one day; the slave woman named Vakula offered me alms. When her landlord new about it, he came to me and sought pardon. I advised him to relieve that slave woman. "In Kauśāmbī also, a maidservant invoked me for offering alms. I accepted her offer and took meals offered by her.



Fig. 10 Offer of alms by the slave woman-Candanā

When the people learnt about it, they came to me. The landlord also came to me. He released the slave woman from his slavery. Fortunately, I learnt that this slave woman was the

daughter of the king Ceṭaka named Candanā. Her sister was the chief queen of the king of Kauśāmbī. When the king learnt about this incident, he came to me. He ordered all the slave women to be released from slavery. It was a great pleasure for me.

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6

REALIZATION OF TRUE PATH

Twelve years passed by while wandering-on-foot in search of the true path. I was now getting forty-two years old. My knowledge grew with travels through many parts of the country. I thought over what I gained and experienced. I concentrated my mind through meditation. I critically analyzed my thoughts.

During this 12- year wandering-on-foot, I could receive foods-in-alms only for 365 times which sustained my physical energy for so long. However, I acquired an unlimited amount of internal energy through my austerities and meditation.

One day, I was undertaking the austerity of two day fasting (Belā) along with meditation under the Sal tree on the bank of the river R̥jukūlā in the J̥mbhika village (Current Jharia, Jharkhand). This was the bright tenth day of Vaiśākha (April -May). I felt, "I am receiving divine light". I realized a great splendour in this divine light. It solved all my internal and external problems. All my doubts and problems were solved through the entry of this divine light. I began thinking, "This is the true inner light. I was searching for this light only. " I found the path to make the world internally and externally happy. I saw before my eyes that the lion and she-

goat are drinking water together on the same bridge of the river.
The human beings are feeling pleasure with united hearts.

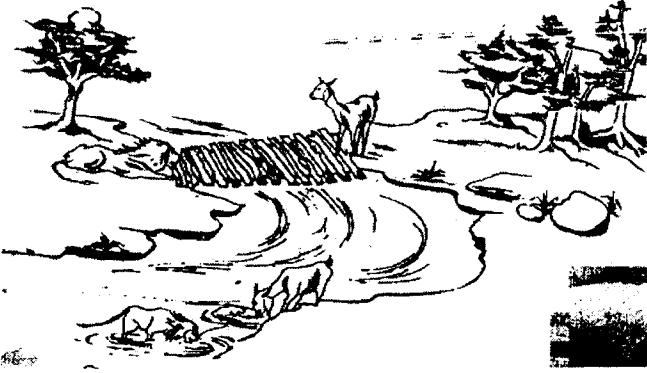


Fig. 11- Lion and she-goat drinking water on the same bridge

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7

WANDERINGS AND SERMONS

After realizing the true spiritual light and path, I gave my first sermon in Jṛmbhika-village only. Many people came to listen to me. I, thus, made many sermons at different places. However, I realized that people are not understanding my sermons properly. I thought, "Let me have some scholarly disciples who could make things easier for me and the public."

It was fortunate that I got eleven scholars as my disciples. They were noted in those times. Out of them, Indrabhooti Gautama became my chief disciple. Now, I made my sermons through their assistance. They made people to understand my sermons in the popular language of Ardhamagadhi. That is why; the public could now understand what I said in my sermons. Candanā also helped me in this process.

I made my sermons at many different places. I traveled many parts of Bhārata country involving Kashi, Kośāla (in Uttara Pradesh), Śūrasena (Mathura, U.P.), Magadha, Vaiśālī (Bihar), Kuru-Pāñcāla, Kāliṅga (Orisa), Kamboje, Valhika, Sindhu-Sauvīra, Gāndhāra and others. I wandered heavily for thirty years. I made the maximum number of sermons on the mountain of Vipulācala

near the city of Rājagṛha in Bihar. I also went to Kṣatriya Kuṇḍagrāma.

All kinds of people came to listen to me. Bimbasāra Śreṇika-the king of Magadha, Ceṭaka-the king of Vaiśālī, Jitaśatru- the king of Kaliṅga and the son of Ceṭaka, Udayana-the king of Kauśāmbī (near Allahabad), Jivandhara-the king of Hemaṅga (Mysore), Vijayasena-the king of Mithilā (Bihar), Caṇḍapradhyota-the king of Campā (Bihar) and others listened to my sermons. They also helped me in promoting these sermons. Many kings were initiated to monkhood and began wandering and sermonizing.

The prince Ardraḱa of Persia also listened to my sermons. He was highly impressed by me. Five hundred people from Greece also, once, came to listen to my sermons. The businessmen of Phanika country (Andhra) were highly impressed by my sermons and teachings.

Like the royalties, my sermons also impressed upon the householders and common men. Many people were initiated under me and they accepted the vows. Because of the growing number of my followers, my colleagues and disciples established an order. It consisted of 14,000 monks, 36000 nuns and 1,59,000 male and 3,18,000 female householders. These were the four kinds of my followers. Among them, the number of householders was the maximum. All kinds of people joined my order. Many slave

women were upgraded by me. Noted among them are Jyeṣṭha, Bindra and others. I want to detest the sins rather than the sinners. They can improve and move on the right path when they are explained about the effects of sins. Thus, my teachings led to form a new kind of society, which began believing in the welfare of all through the spiritual path.

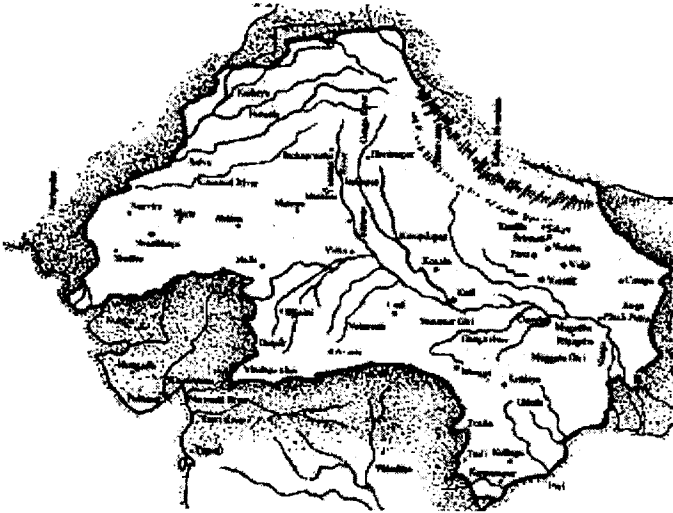


Fig. 12. Mahāvīra's Wanderings.

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8

THE MANGO TREE

The king Śreṇika was the ruler of Magadha (Bihar in India). He lived in the city of Rājagṛha. Celanā was his chief queen. He was exiled by his father in his early age. He went to the southern part. It is later that he became the king of Magadha. He had indifference towards the monks. Once, he teased a monk. When his chief queen Celanā learnt about it, she ran to serve the monk. However, she realized that Śreṇika was highly impressed by the patience and tolerance of the monk.

While wandering during these days, I reached the mountain of Vipulācala (near Rājagṛha). The king Śreṇika came to pay his visit to me along with his paraphernalia. Later, he came to me every time I came here. He asked so many questions that nobody has asked me. I tried well to answer them. He was highly impressed by these answers. A good number of his sons also got initiated under me.

One day, Śreṇika asked me, "O Lord, why have you become a monk in the golden period of your life-youth?"

I told him. "The root of all evils in the world is the lust and desires. The women and wealth often lead to wars. The attachment to them is stronger than the iron chain. They beget selfishness and

inequality. This point pinched my mind every time. I want that the desires should be limited. The limit should be such that there may not be any difference between selfishness and non-selfishness. It is only under this state that love and peace will be promoted. The enmity and quarrels will be over."

I thought, "The hot iron can be molded as desired. The youth-hood is like hot iron in one's life. It is this period which needs spiritual practices."

"I have very well examined the different kinds of mentality of the people. You can understand it through an illustration."

"There is a mango tree. It is loaded with many ripe and sweet mangoes. Their smell is spread over a large distance. Some six people happen to pass through that way. They want to enjoy these mangoes."

"Oh, these are very sweet mangoes. Let us cut the tree by roots and take it home. We will enjoy all these mangoes also." One of them said.

"Oh, who will eat so many mangoes? Let us take only few branches of the tree, which are full of mangoes " Said the second man.

The third man said, "O my brother, there are no mangoes in the branches, they are there in the short branches. Hence, we should cut these short branches only and take them home."

"Oh, we should not injure the tree in any way. It gives mangoes every year to enjoy us. We should, therefore, shake some of the branches only and get the needed mangoes fall on the ground."

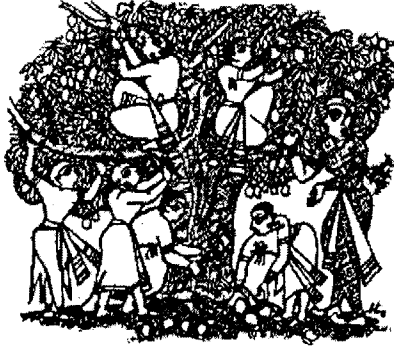


Fig. 13- The Mango Tree.

"Oh, do you want to eat raw mangoes or ripe mangoes? If we shake branches, both types of mango will fall down. This is not proper. We should climb over the tree and pluck the needed ripe mangoes." said the fifth man.

"I feel that many raw and ripe mangoes are already lying over the ground. Let us pick-up the ripe mangoes out of them. They are sufficient for us. We can be satisfied by enjoying them. There is, thus, no need either to cut or climb the tree." said the sixth man with an attitude of contentment.

All the men liked this idea and picked-up the ripe mangoes on the ground and took them and enjoyed them.

"O king, we can learn from this parable as to what forms of mentality are exhibited by the people. The first three people represent violent or selfish mentality. The second group of three represents the non-violent mentality, which leads to the welfare of others along with that of the self. Now tell me, which of the mentality is better?"

"Further, we can have another indication from the expressions of these people. The mentality of each individual goes on getting better and finer. It turns out the best in the end."

The man is recognised only by his propensity. His deeds tell his mind. The above mentalities of these men are termed as 'aureoles' or 'colourations'. (Leśyās). There are six kinds of aureole (or mental volitions) - black, blue, gray, yellow, red and white. Out of them, the first three are inauspicious. They should be controlled and abandoned for the welfare of the self and the society. One should cultivate the last three kinds of volition and act accordingly."

I have learnt this concept of colouration as a first lesson through my spiritual practices.

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9

WHO IS ENEMY?

Once, I went to Vaishali while on my wanderings-on-foot. The king Ceṭaka came to listen to my sermons there.

He asked me, "O Lord, you have attained an equanimous state. Nevertheless, you teach us to win over enemies. I have won many wars. Still I feel my mind does not seem to be purified. Does this mean that I have not won over my enemies?"

In response, I told a story to the king Ceṭaka .

"A king had two sons. One was proficient in scriptural learning. The other was proficient in armoury. However, he was quite indifferent to it. Once, the enemies invaded the kingdom. The king sent his son to fight against them. He defeated them. On this occasion, there were festivities throughout the kingdom.

"One day, the bravery and heroism of this son was narrated in the court of the king. On listening to all this, his younger brother told the king." Oh, is it something to be called as bravery? Any body could defeat the external enemies. However, the true hero is he who could win over the internal enemies."

The king told his son, "O my son, there is peace all-around my kingdom."

The son made a rejoinder, "O king, your kingdom may have external peace. But the kingdom of mind is always full of troubles. The kingdom of mind is the internal kingdom. There are innumerable enemies there. It is due to these enemies that the condition of our society has gone rot. There are differences everywhere. There are prejudices of latent dispositions, blind faith, anger, pride, deceit, greed etc. in the minds of the people. These are our biggest enemies. To win over them is more difficult than to win over the external kingdoms. We can win over them through restraint and undertaking spiritual practices. If we could do this, nobody will have the courage to invade our kingdom."

" O king, you have won over the external enemies. Your internal enemies are still there in you even to day. When you win over these enemies, it will lead to your welfare and the welfare of your kingdom. "

The king Ceṭaka realized the sense of this story. He accepted vows from me.

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10

THE ELEPHANT AND THE BLIND MEN

Once, I reached the city of Campā (Bihar) while wandering-on-foot. This city was ruled by Kuṇika Ajātaśatru. He came to listen to my sermons.

He asked me. "There have been many great men in the world. They have postulated their own, but different doctrines. However, the truth is one. I am unable to understand these different doctrines to illustrate the singleness of truth. Please explain this point to me."

In response, I told a parable to him. "Once, there were six blind men on a trip. They found an elephant in the way. One of them caught him by his feet. He said, "Oh, the elephant is like a pillar."

The man, who caught the elephant by his ears, said, "The elephant is just like a winnower fan." Later each one of them described the elephant according to the body parts he touched. Everybody became insistent on his statement and they began quarreling with each other."

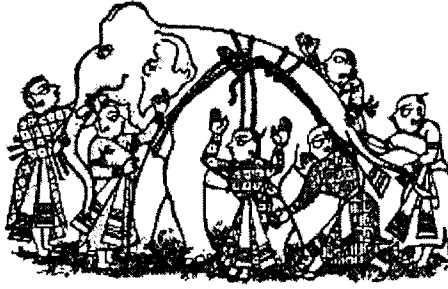


Fig. 14. The Elephant and the Blind Men

"Meanwhile, an intelligent man happened to pass by that way. He saw the blind men quarrelling with each other. For a while, he could not understand what was the matter. When he asked them, each of them told his own statement. All of them requested him, "You, please, solve our different point of views."

The intelligent man said, "O brothers, all of you are speaking a truth. Every one of you is stating the elephant as each of you has felt by touching it. None of you has seen or felt about the elephant in Toto. The elephant is also like a winnower fan. It is also like a pillar, it is also like a rope (tail), it is also like a drum (stomach) and it is like the stem of the tree. All these forms united make the whole elephant. Only single form can not lead to the cognition of the whole elephant."

" O king, the common man has a limited knowledge like the blind men. The latent dispositions, conventions, environment and other condition make up what he is. He likes only that point which is advantageous to him. This is the reason; he is unable to

realize a point in a holistic way. He becomes mono-sided. This one-sidedness was making the blind men quarrelling."

"Every entity has many kinds of attribute. We should know not only one, but all of these attributes. The dispute arises only when one of the attributes is insisted upon."

"There is a man. His son calls him as 'father.' His cousin calls him as 'uncle'. His maternal cousin calls him as 'maternal uncle'. His brother calls him as 'brother.' Somebody calls him by 'father-in-law. Whosoever is there, he calls him by different relationship."

"He is a single man. But he holds the relationships as seen by different people. Nevertheless, his single form of relationship is not the whole of him. He has infinite forms. Every form is found in him. All the forms make him up."

"Similarly, every sentient and non-sentient entity has varied forms. The world itself has varied forms. The form of variedness is called 'poly-viewism' or *Anekāntavāda*. Our looking-at things should be poly-viewistic."

"Of course, the truth is one. It will appear in the way we look at it. We know the whole truth when we look at it from all corners. All the doctrines or disputes of the world express one or other form of truth with absolutism. Add all these forms and they will make up the whole truth. All the people holding their view postulate it as the 'only' true view. However, the fact is that their

view is 'also' true. All other views are, thus, 'also' true. Thus, if we understand this point, that if the term 'only' is substituted by the term 'also', all disputes and quarrels may subside."

"All the disputes arise due to the absolutistic view in terms of the 'only' view. We should adopt poly-viewistic standpoint. This leads to widen our minds and hearts. When our intellect is liberal, our knowledge will be going towards totality of truth. The knower-in-full only can lead the society to be happy and prosperous.

A similar point was also raised by the king Śreṇika of Rājagṛha. He narrated an academic dispute between an eternalist and a non-eternalist pundit. He also told me another dispute between a dualist and non-dualist. Each group committed serious offences like hitting one's head and adultery as per their theory. Each of them was proving 'not-guilty' before the court on logical basis.

The king was disturbed. He came to seek my advice. I advised him to award the death sentence to both the offenders with a grace period of seven days. During this period, the offenders also came to me. They told their story and asked me." Is it that our logic is deceiving us?"

I told them, "It is not the logic which deceives. It is one's own self, which deceives. It creates egotism. When the logic is not utilized in full, it gets practically off the road, we see opposite

attributes in each entity like life and death. We must be consistent with this fact.

The pundits became non-absolutists and became my disciples.

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11

THE FARMER AND THE FISHERMAN

Once, Sinha-the army commander came to listen to my sermons. He asked me about violence and non-violence.

I asked him, "O Sinha, what prompted you to come to me"?

Sinha answered, " Who would not like to pay a sacred visit to you"?

I also thought, " Let me clear his mind about the violence and non- violence through my sermons. "

I, then, replied, " It is clear from what you have said, that first you had a desire to see me and, then, you came to see me. Similarly, every activity has two forms; first, there are thoughts in mind. Second, the action follows thoughts. It means that every activity is done as per the thoughts. The thoughts for any activity are known as" volitions " (or mental dispositions or psyche). In contrast, the actual activity is called" Physical action". Similarly, the violence has also two forms: (1) thought about it (psychical violence) and (2) action according to thoughts (physical violence).

" O Lord, please explain this point to me in detail." Sinha said.

I told him a story in rejoinder. "There was a killer. A compassionate man insisted upon him to leave this profession. He did not agree to him. He was sentenced to jail and was kept in a dark dungeon. There was nothing for him to kill. He, therefore, made buffaloes of clay and killed them."

"O Sinha, he has not killed any living being in the jail. Despite this, should he be called as non-violent?"

"How could it be so, O Lord?"

"It is this point that I postulate that the violence is judged on the basis of thoughts. It is judged on the basis of 'What you think' and mental dispositions. We think about violence, but, sometimes, we are unable to act accordingly. Still, we are psychically violent. This mental violence is, in fact, the cause of unhealthiness of the society and religion. The act of direct violence does not cause so much trouble as the psychical violence. This leads to rotten our mind and intellect.

"O Lord, please explain this issue in some more detail
"Sinha said.

I narrated the story of the farmer and the fisherman. The farmer tills the land with his bulls all-through the day. Many living beings present in the soil are killed through this activity.



Fig. 15 A Farmer tilling the land with bulls

"A fisherman also sits all the day with his fishing hook in the water in the river. He is always in the look when a fish is trapped at any point.

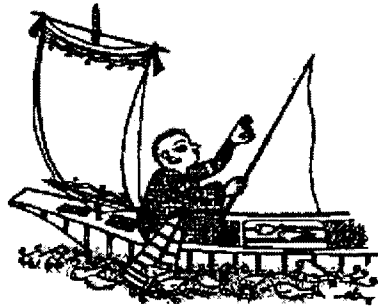


Fig. 16. A Fisherman with his fishing hook in water

"Now tell me, O Sinha, who will be called more violent out of these two?"

I continued, "The farmer performs physical violence. But his mental dispositions are good. He thinks of a good crop so that his family and society may be well off. In contrast, the fisherman

does not perform any physical violence. Still his mind is always busy towards the trap of the fish. He is thoroughly pervaded with psychical violence. He is, hence, a highly violent person."

I told Sinha further, "The physician treats the patient. Unfortunately, the patient dies. Does it mean that the physician be charged as criminal?"

"No, O Lord".

"O Sinha, this is why I say that the question of violence and non-violence is judged by the fine mental volitions and thoughts." I said.

"Some form of violence becomes necessary in human life. One cannot run the ways of the life and world. How, then, could we observe the vow of non-violence?" Sinha asked.

"There are many forms of violence. All of them are individualized except the psychical violence. The individualized violence has negligible effect on the society. There is domestic violence in normal household activities. There is occupational violence in agriculture and other professions for earning the livelihood. There is opposition or defensive violence in fighting against the enemies of the self and the nation. The earning of bad *karmas* in these types of violence is quite less. However, there is one more- the fourth type of violence, which is called "determinate, pre-meditated or intentional violence." It is the psychical violence. In this case, not only one's mind is denatured at

first, but it denatures the atmosphere in the society also. We should abandon the determinate violence and try to make an effort for a healthy society. "I said.

"O Lord, please tell me some thing more about non-violence". Sinha said.

"The non-violence is a boon in the current environment. It has been promoted and praised by the Lord Pārśwanātha- my predecessor and the Upaniṣadic texts. This is the mother of love. It is the symbol of brotherhood. This is the force for the happiness and health of the individual and the society. Imagine the relationship between a father and his son. The father always thinks about the prosperity and well being of his son. He beats him but his mind is always full of his welfare. This natural thought and activity of affection is what is called the real non-violence. We should behave the same way with our neighbors and the society in general as we behave with our parents and relatives. The non-violence is a mentality and an activity."

"There is need for the alleviation of the system of slavery. The society will be highly benefited if we improve the current status of women. That is why; I have also admitted celibacy as a form of non-violence. A truly non-violent person will practice celibacy. Without it, there is currently no way to improve the welfare of the society. This is why; I also admit and postulate five forms of practical and positive religion non-violence (love), truth,

non-stealing (honesty), celibacy and non-attachment towards possessions (limitation of possessions). These forms are called vows to be practiced by every laity. They have some negative names but their meanings and senses are highly positive and beneficial to the society. For example, "non-violence" means cultivation of the qualities of love, affection and brotherhood. It involves respect for all kinds of life and the concept of "Live and help others to live."

All the scriptures sermonize the importance and practice of non-violence. However, the society will never be happy merely by sermons. It becomes happy by actually practicing the sermons. Mere thought of non-violence will not make the society happy. It will be so on its practice in life. That is why, the ancient sages have said. "The non-violence is the best religion".

...

THE QUEEN MRGĀVATĪ AND THE GOLDSMITH

I had my nineteenth rainy residence in Kauśāmbī (near current Allahabad). I was informed that the king Śātānīka has died and his queen Mrgāvatī was ruling there on behalf of her young son. The king of Ujjain was Caṇḍapradhyota. He wanted to marry her. She eluded it on the ground of her young child and recent widowhood. This made him angry. Sometimes later, he besieged Kauśāmbī.

As I was there, Caṇḍapradhyota used to come to listen to my sermons. Mrgāvatī also came to visit me. As I knew their story, I made up my mind to turn the enmity into friendliness. Accordingly, in one of my lectures, I narrated a story of a goldsmith.

"The goldsmith was very fond of women. He had 500 wives. However, he was doubtful about their nature. Once, when he came out of a tour, he saw freedom of his wives in his harem. He got angry. He caught one of them; beat her so much that she died. On seeing this, all the wives got angry and they not only killed the goldsmith-their husband, but they also burnt themselves out of frustration. The goldsmith was re-born as a female, who became an adulteress later. All his wives were re-born as males.

They turned dacoits. Once, the dacoits attacked the village and collectively raped the adulteress. She died and was re-born again and again as an evil female and suffered heavy sufferings."

I continued, "There is the process of rebirth and also the fruits of actions or *Karmas* earned by the people. Bad acts lead to bad fruits. Good deeds lead to good effects. This is the Law of Causation or *Karma*. It is natural and eternal. It is dynamic also. One can improve his state by good deeds. The males should think about this point and also the result of tormenting and molestation of women. The men, therefore, should behave respectfully with them. They have as much potency as the men".

On listening to my sermon, the queen Mrigavati was encouraged to get initiated. She handed over her child to the king Caṇḍapradhyota and asked him to safeguard her kingdom.

I was very much pleased with the effect of my sermons on the effects of good and bad *Karmas* to them.

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13

FATE OR EXERTION?

Once, I reached the city of Palāśapur while wandering-on-foot. A rich potter named Sabdālaputra lived there. He was a fatalist. I found during my wanderings that the majority of people of our country admit, "What lay in fate, will occur." It is the reason; there is a large amount of indolence in the people. There is little tendency to work. This fatalism has helped in sowing the seeds of heterogeneity in the society. It has desisted the prosperity and progress of others. I wish people should abandon the tendency of fatalism.

It was fortunate that Sabdālaputra came to listen to my sermons. He asked questions regarding fatalism.

I asked him, " Tell me whether you make the clay pots or they get made automatically?

"They get made on the basis of their fate. What could be the effect of my effort in making them?" He said.

"What will you do when somebody breaks your pots by stones or sticks?". I asked him.

"I will penalize him badly. I will also realize the cost of the broken pots from him". He said.

I asked him, "Why will you penalize him? They got broken due to their own fates. What have the stones or sticks have done to the pots?"

"Does it mean that fatalism is not correct?" He enquired.

"Tell me, you admitted fate when you required. You are negating it when it comes to others. The fatalism, this way, seems to be a fraud." I told him.

"How, then, the world runs, O Lord?" he asked.

I told him, "The clay pot is made by the exertions of man and clay. The efforts are successful when there are thoughts and means. Thus, there can be no shaking of even grass without effort and exertion. All the activities of human and other living beings are affected through the exertions only. They get the result according to the way they exert. A thief is penalized and a truthful person gets award. In fact, our exertion leads to our fate. The fate is the actual form of our past actions. This is the form of the earned *karmas* only. The maturation of the earned *karmas* is called as fate. Thus, we are ourselves responsible for our fate. Nobody else can affect our fate. If we act well, our life would be good. If we act bad, there will be misery in life."

"The human being is a social animal. The exertions of every individual affect the society. We should act well and make our society prosperous. It is our effort, which makes us what we

are. We should be exertionist. The present actions are our exertions."

"The character of a person is judged through his activities. Every individual has the capacity to do all kinds of activity. Based on this capacity, not only all human beings but also all other living beings are equal. There is no difference among them. However, one should keep the concept of physical actions and psychological actions."

"Any action is neither good nor bad. We impose goodness or badness upon it. I wish that the people should know the importance of *Karma* and act well. The individual will, then, be happy and the society will earn prosperity".

Sabadālaputra got convinced of my logic and he became my disciple.

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14

CONFLUENCE

Once, my disciples asked me, "What is the object of our life? How can we achieve it?"

I told them, "So long as the human being is alive in this physical world, it is his current life. The object of this life is to earn health, wealth and happiness. However, the individual is never happy with the external prosperity only. He should also have the flow of the nectar of harmony and contentment internally."

"We never feel fully happy with our personal happiness alone. We see a poor, oppressed or ailing person before us. If we do not feel compassionate towards him and if we are unable to alleviate his poverty and disease, how can we be happy in life?"

"The society as a whole is happy when all its members are equalized, all have friendship and compassion. When all are happy, our life will also be happy. Thus, the object of life is to be happy internally and externally as well."

"The prosperity of any individual is judged by the prosperity of the community and the nation. The prosperity of any individual is radiated through his liberal mind, beneficial speech and philanthropic activities. The individual has a sensitivity regarding the pains and pleasures of the community and the nation.

This is the stage of his full development. This requires the practice of winning over the "internal enemies."

"A son of a householder was thrown by an elephant on the road after catching him by his trunk. He became unconscious. The father thought, 'Oh, my son is dead'. He began weeping. However, the unconscious boy was treated and he became normal. The householder was pleased to see him alive and healthy. This type of experience is always there in normal human life. The ignorance causes pains and sorrow. The knowledge bestows pleasure. The way to be happy is to acquire knowledge."

" But only the knowledge can not lead to happiness. It gives only an imaginary joy. The happiness accrues by actions and behaviours as per right knowledge."

"There was a blind man in a forest. He lost his way. There was a lame man also wandering in the same forest. Unfortunately, the forest caught fire. The blind man moved hither and thither. But where to go? The poor man was burnt in the forest. The same fate caught the lame man also. He could go to all sides, but how could he move? The blind has only action but no knowledge. In contrast, the lame man had only knowledge but no action. Thus, neither of them could save themselves Had there been action along with the knowledge and the blind man could move with the support of the lame man, both of them could have been saved."



Fig. 17. The blind man and the lame man.

"A patient went to a doctor. He prescribed him a medicine. The patient went home. He thought to himself, "Oh, what kind of medicine has been prescribed for me by the doctor? Will it cure me?" He took the medicine with this type of doubtful mind. Unfortunately, the patient vomited immediately."

"What does it mean? The mind or thinking is the source of the power of the activity of the human being. The patient is treated psychologically. The medicine can be effective only when it is taken with a faithful thinking. The people of the world also require psychological treatment. The faith and belief have a dominant place in the process. It is also known as devotion. This should be preceded by the knowledge. The ignorance - based faith is a blind faith. It is very bad. One should keep away from it. The patient will be cured of his ailment if he takes the medicine as per diagnosis

and with proper faith. Similarly, when the human being will take a bath in the confluence of faith, knowledge and conduct or activity, he will have self-realization. This is the ultimate objective of his life. This is his liberation."

"All the activities or propensities of human beings occur due to mind, speech and action. We should not make these components to work freely. Their freedom has resulted in many obstructions in the progress of the society. The casteism, untouchability, superstitions and latencies are all the result of ignorance and prejudices. We should control these components through proper yogic exercises. The exercises lead the body to develop properly. The mind is also enriched thereby. The speech also gets serene. The exercises for the inner development of men are called vows (vratas). Some vows cleanse the mind, some purify the body and serenize the speech. These faith, knowledge and conduct form the basis of all kinds of human faculties."

"There are five vows- (1) Non-violence (Ahimsā), (2) Not to speak false (Satya), (3) Not to take not-given (Acaurya),(4) Celibacy (Brahmacarya) and (5) Not to possess more than what is needed (Aprigraha). Almost all the great saintly men of different countries have taught these vows in some form or other. The laity has to observe them grossly. The monks have to observe them finely. They are called Minor Vows (Aṇuvratas) for the laity and Major Vows (Mahāvratas) for the monks. The Vows are the same,

but there is difference in their degree. The eleven vows of *Gītā* are just the expanded form of these five vows."

"The non-violence leads us to have a liberal mind and lets one fly in the dense clouds of love and affection. This causes the shower of truth with poly-viewistic judgment through the speech. These two vows lead to flowering and crops of the propensities of non-stealing, celibacy and non-possession. The observance of these five vows can keep the gatekeepers of mind, speech and body under control. We should take bath in the confluence of the control of these three weapons of violence. This is the chief exertion of life. This is the welfare of all. This is the heaven on the earth."

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15

THE QUERIES OF GAUTAMA

Indrabhūti Gautama has been my chief disciple. He has high regards for me. He offers appropriate reverence to all. He is proficient in scriptures and practices. He realizes his mistakes and ignorance. It is on this count that he begged pardon from the clairvoyant votary Ananda. He has been asking many questions in my assembly of listeners.

Once, while I was in rainy residence in Rājgrha, he asked, "O venerable, please tell me about the universe we live in. How does it work?"

I told him, "I have realized that the universe is eternal. It is beginningless and infinite. It is not created by any body. It has two sections; (1) occupied and (2) unoccupied surrounding it. We live in the occupied portion- Lokākāśa. There is no creator, preserver or destroyer of this universe. The concept of creator cannot stand logical scrutiny as neither an embodied nor a disembodied (or without bodies) creator can affect such a miserable world. It runs on natural laws. That is why; it has seasons, rains, crops, sunrise and sunset etc. in a regular way. It is inhabited by many kinds of living being-small or large, human and sub-humans. There are

infernal, empyrean and astral beings also. There are continuous processes of birth and death.

"The occupied universe has a three-tier structure. It consists of lower (hells), middle (humans and sub-humans) and upper (astral and empyreans) world. It has a shape of a human being with its stretched feet and hand palms on the waist. We live in the middle world. It consists of innumerable island-continents (Dvīpas) and oceans (Sāgaras) surrounding each other. Jambūdīvā (Island or Rose apple tree) is one of them. It is in the centre where we live in its Aryan Section.

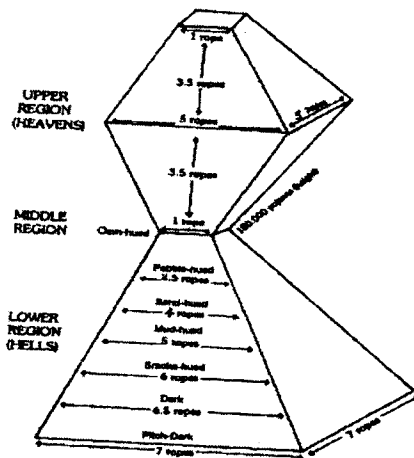


Fig. 18. Jain Universe.

"There are two kinds of basic entities in the universe; (1)

The living ones and (2) the non-living ones. It is the combination of

these two, which leads one to move in the universe. There are five kinds of non-living entities like (1-2) medium of motion and rest, (3) space, (4) time and (5) mattergy (Pudgala). The first four cause the universe to function as it does. The mattergy has many small (atoms, *karmas* etc.) and large forms useful for the living beings.

"My intuitional observations lead me to tell you that there are five kinds of living beings which inhabit the world. Their classes are based on the development of their cognitive senses and consciousness. The human beings, infernal, astrals and empyreans have all the five senses and a large degree of consciousness in comparison to many kinds of sub-humans. However, it is the human beings, which have supreme capacity of highest spiritual development.

"The living beings in the world are associated with body. They have many kinds of propensities and activities. These earn good or bad *Karmas* for them. They should learn about the nature of activities and, therefore, *Karmas*. They should try to earn good *Karmas* and check the influx of bad *Karmas* and shed the earned *Karmas* off through purification of body and soul by observing vows and practicing internal and external austerities and meditation.

"All the worldly living beings are dependent on and in-cooperation with each other for their survival and progress. They are mutually beneficial to each other. The nature maintains

equilibrium in the services of all the living beings. This leads the environment to be pure and safe. All people should respect the life in general. They should not disturb this equilibrium. It may, otherwise lead to catastrophe.

"My experiences indicate that the occupied universe is full of many kinds of worries and sufferings. The major sufferings are birth, disease old age and death. They lead to unhappiness. Every body wants ultimate happiness. My all round teachings are meant first to increase the happiness content gradually leading to this ultimate goal."

Gautama listened to my sermon carefully and said, "It is so, and it is so, O Venerable."

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16

MY CONTEMPORARIES

The world is the birthplace of many great saints and people in different places and times. They help people to move on the path of righteousness. They also teach people that they should not follow the path of sin and wrongful acts. My monk disciples have informed me that currently there are three hundred sixty three doctrines. These have been propounded by many great men of the past and present. I have tried to study them. I found that they could be classified under some groups.

I have taught people to follow the path of relativism rather than absolutism. On this ground, almost all the current doctrines are mostly absolutistic and, therefore, not worth following in Toto. I have tried my best that the people should know the defects of absolutism and move towards relativistic attitudes in their lives.

Among others, there were some eight great men in my period who have taught different types of doctrines on religion and the phenomena of the world. They had good influence on the public. They were also highly respected for their ascetic life and principles they propounded. I will try to narrate their lives in brief.

1. Maṅkhali Gośāla : The Ājīvika : Determinist

Gośāla was the son of a bard-cum-painter. He learnt his paternal profession and followed it. Later, he developed repugnance for worldly life. While in Nālandā, I accepted him to accompany me on his second request when I was running my second year of initiation. (i.e. when I was 32 years old). He wandered with me for about six years. In due course of time, he became determinist and we had doctrinal differences. He left me when I was 38, and declared himself as *Jina* in Śrāvastī. This city remained the major area of his influence. He taught determinism to the people. Earlier, he learnt the process of acquiring the supernatural power from me. Once, he got angry on one of my disciples and utilized his power of anger on him. I also became a victim of his spiritual power in a debate to which I retaliated. He got seriously ill and died in Śrāvastī sixteen years before me (i.e. about 543 B.C.)

2. Jāmālī: 'Principle of being done' is 'Not Done'

Jāmālī was my relative and belonged to a noted Kṣtriya clan. He was initiated under me. He studied canons and undertook harsh austerities. He asked me to wander solitarily. During his wanderings in Śrāvastī, he got seriously ill. He thought of a different doctrine in terms of 'Being Done' is not 'Done' It is called 'done' only at the last stage. He debated on this doctrine with me in

Campā, but, despite being defeated, he did not agree with me. He propounded his doctrine until his death.

3. **Buddha: The Momentarist**

Buddha was my senior contemporary. He has taught the principle of momentariness of the world and non-soulism (anātmavāda). He was born in Kapilavastu. His parents were the king Shuddhodana and queen Mahāmāya. He was married to Yaśodharā and had a son named Rāhula.

While royal wanderings through the city, he saw

- (a) A ploughing farmer
- (b) A diseased person
- (c) An old person
- (d) A dead person and finally
- (e) A saint

On seeing these scenes, his heart was heavily moved towards finding the cure for all the ills of the world through sainthood. Determined in his objective, he renounced his home in the dead of one night after leaving his wife and child. He undertook wanderings and harsh austerities as per his new teachers. He was not satisfied with them. He adopted a middle path of austerities. In the end, after six years of austerities, he attained enlightenment under Bodhi Tree of Gaya (Bihar) and has been teaching the eight - fold middle path and four noble truths for roughly 42 years. He is still alive. He has been wandering in the same area I have been

trodding. However, we have never met each other. He has impressed many royalties and he has the following of nearly 500 mendicants.

4. **Ajita Keśakambali: Materialist**

Ajita Keśakambali is one more noted contemporary of mine. He wore a blanket of human hairs-hence called Keśakambali. He was a materialist like Cārvāka and believed neither in soul nor in rebirth. He also did not believe in *Karmas*, sacred and sins. He had very little following. The pure materialistic approach does not tally with my teachings and it is not liked by the people.

5. **Sañjaya Belatṭhiputta: Agnostic**

The biography of this contemporary of mine is not well known to me. However, his teachings have come to me. Accordingly, if you ask some question-say regarding the other world, he will reply in a way. 'I do neither say that it is there, nor do I say that it is not there.'

This is purely agnosticism. His teachings could not become popular.

6. **Pūraṇa Kassapa: Theory of Non-Action**

The biography of Pūraṇa Kassapa is also not well known to me. However, he is said to be a son of a renowned householder. He became a monk out of frustration. He lived naked as a monk. He was also propounder of the theory of non-action like Mañkhali Gośāla. Accordingly, there is neither sacred nor sin in any action.

Things happen fortuitously without any cause or condition. He did not believe in the law of causation.

7. Pakuddha Kaccāyana

No biographical sketch is available for him. However, he believed in seven permanent elements- earth, water, fire, air, joy, sorrow and life (livingness). Nobody could destroy them by any means. Even if a man cleaves another's head with sword, he does not take life as the sword passes through the seven elements.

8. Tishya Gupta: Theory of Jiva as the Terminal Point:

Tiṣya Gupta was the disciple of Ācārya Basu. He was studying the pre-canon on the Discourses on the Soul. (Ātma-pravāda). It was stated there that the soul (*Jīva*) consists of innumerable points. However, it cannot be called as *Jīva* even when there is one point less than the total. He concluded, "It is the last point of the total which makes the *Jīva* as *Jīva*. The last point is the only real."

He propounded this 'Last point theory' when I was running sixteenth year of my enlightenment (i.e. at the age of 58 years). My votaries tried to rectify his opinion. He came to me and again became a member of my group.

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17

LET ALL ENJOY WELFARE

It is about thirty years of my wanderings-on-foot after acquirement of perfect knowledge. During this period, I have taught, with my utmost capacity, the path of non-violence to the people for making their lives happy. It is the dark fourteenth day of the month of Kārtika (Oct-Nov) I am staying in the beautiful garden of the city of Pāvā. I got ill sometimes ago. Some incidents have also made me painful. All this made me think. "I am at the dead end of my life". However, I wished to meet my disciples. Fortunately, they came to see me.

I told them, 'O my dear disciples, the field of religion and spiritualism is like a school or hospital. The teacher or the doctor is the authority there. If they are disregarded, the people cannot improve their lot. Regard your teachers as your benefactor. There are many teachings of mine which are all time true. The concept of non-violence, poly-viewistic attitude and keen insight and the like belong to this category. They should be utilized as per the times, region and country. The behaviors and practices also change as the thoughts undergo changes. The practices also get changed with the time. All of you should have this point in mind. You should rectify

them as per the times by adopting a practical approach. You should not be superstitious. My teachings of today might have to be modified tomorrow. However, the fundamental concepts may remain the same, but their practical form may be changing".

"The people, in general, have a confusion that the man can attain perfect knowledge only when he adopts the path of renunciation and lives in the forest. However, I wish to emphasize that we have persons like Ānanda-the rich man who have acquired the knowledge comparable to us by residing in the home itself. I also told you that day that Kurmapriya had also become perfect knower in home itself. Thus, the supreme knowledge could be acquired anywhere subject to the internal purity and energy.

The knowledge is called blind if the knower does not observe his duties and practices. I wish that you promote the concept of confluence of knowledge and conduct everywhere. I emphasize that religious precepts must be intellectually examined and then followed. The state of affairs at this juncture is very odd. The knower does not practice and the practitioner is not the knower. The monks have the responsibility to improve this state of affairs. All should have the right knowledge and become dutiful."

"You know many people associate me with many titles. They say, "I am a dictator. I am the revolutionary of the age. I am very strict but an excellent organizer. "I think all these titles are

good qualities of a good teacher. All spiritual great heroes of the world should have these qualities”.

“Many people state that religion is normally immune to the adoption of innovation, modernism and intellectual freedom. This is not correct. I have myself modified and added many new points to my predecessors like Bhagavāna Pārśwanātha. I have added the fifth vow of celibacy to his four-fold vow. I have developed the theory of poly-viewistic consideration. I have added the practice of daily *Pratikramaṇa* (Penitential retreat) and a - clothedness or nudity for self-realization. I have established the coordinated four-fold order of monks, nuns, votaries and votaresses to run the religious and social life. Many more modifications have also been done. The religion cannot remain an ever-living and ever-growing one if it does not adopt the needs of the age.

“I have indicated some basic points to adopt the path of non-violence. I wish to repeat them, once again. The human beings form a single unit. There is no difference between them. Every human being has the capacity to exert. Every body can completely develop himself. All are equal in potency. It is violence if we differentiate between them on the basis of birth or livelihood. It is, therefore, the duty of all of you, monks, to awaken the concept of self-sufficiency and equality among the living beings and give it a practical shape. I have initiated even the Cāṇḍālas and other people

of lower casts. I have redeemed the down-trodden women. They are also leading the path of the ascetics."

"I have experienced that the people show a peculiar attitude even by listening about the spiritual path. They have assumed that dwelling in forest alone is the spiritual path. They have presumed the austerities as the form of physical mortification. Both these points are taken as paths of running away from the world. But this is not correct. The spiritualistic path is the path of the heroes. Only internally brave men could adopt it. The individual man becomes universal through this path of optimism. He sets an example for the betterment of all. I have trodden such a path of universal goodness. That is why; I am called "Great Hero" (Mahāvīra). Of course, not all people are brave to tread on this path. However, whosoever moves on to this path, he becomes savior of the worries of the weary world. They are called "Great Heroes". I wish all should become such 'Great Heroes.'

"I have taught you about good and heroic conduct. How your neighbour, village and you yourself can be happy? I have told you those practices and propensities, which lead to happiness. These practices are the true austerity and spiritual path. It is your activities, which reflect your person. The affection, sympathy and conscientious conduct are the enrichment of a person. Hence, the spiritual practices, austerities and incantational repetitions are the ways through which the world may become happy. They are the

materialized forms of the propensity of "Let all be happy" The concept of practices preceded by knowledge is our guide. All people are makers of their own destiny and progress.

“The religious principles propounded by me are not purely individual. They are individual-based social once. It is why, I do not pray for my own welfare, but I pray for the welfare of all the people to promote universal brotherhood among them.

“Let all the public enjoy spiritual (and physical) welfare.

Let the king of the land be religious and powerful.

Let there always be rains in time.

Let there never be any diseases in all the land.

Let there never be any famine, terrorism and thefts.

Let there the glorification of the religion offering peace and prosperity to all.

Let there be peace to the religious followers, all kinds of monks and monk-heads, countries, towns, the king and the public.”

Who may have this kind of prayer for the universe at-large except the 'Great Hero'?

My disciples bowed me respectfully. They assured me to promote the path propounded by me.

I was happy. This was my last meeting with the chief disciples. I bade adieu to all of them.....

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Prof. Sagarmal Jain

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