

Jain Concept of Living

Dr. J. D. Bhomaj

तस्मादर्हति पूजामर्हन्नेवोत्तमोत्तमो लोके ।
देवर्षिनरेन्द्रेभ्यः पूज्येभ्योऽप्यन्यसत्त्वानाम् ॥

Prelude

Whenever something is claimed to be super-excellent and different, its supernal quality must be proved and distinguished from the rest the different and sole expects to be experienced. The separate ingredients must be fully convinced by realistic science. Mere belief or the superstitious creed is of no avail. Even holding the commonly accepted or established faith in the religious system or confirmed as represented in the acumenical creed, having so-called world-wide scope, cannot be justified, realised and convinced by all. Even the theological discourse, culminating in a synthesis or philosophy of worship may not by existing in real sense. Also the share Testimony brought fourth from whatever high source, is not accepted or embrased as such, when it remains outside the measuring and knowing power of the human knower.

Formal or so-called pure logic does not withstand actually. There cannot be any formal system to know the phenomena. Whatever remains beyond the scope of knowledge ultimate, is null and void. Pure knowledge does encompass everything, visible or invisible, inward or outward, finite or infinite, organic or inorganic, physical or mental, space or time, perpetual or perishable, transient or permanent, static or kinetic, stagnant or dynamic, atom or mass, virus or giant, might or meek, pervading or shrinking, grasped by senses or not, having from or not, tangent or intangent, having taste, smell, colour or not. As the knowledge knows everything in existance, every existant must be known by the knower. Under ontology and epistemology whatever is not knowable, is not the existing reality at all. So all the existing things are necessarily knowable and known by the knower.

Jain Schooling

Accordingly, all the *REALITY* is knowable under the Jain concept. Jains, the followers of the Omniscient-Jinas, do not rely upon anything like the so-called Creator or The Father-God of the heavens, or The Supreme Soul, nor wait for the favour of the Angels or Apostles, nor they consider themselves, alongwith the rest of things and beings, as the part and parcel of the supposed God-Supreme. Inspite of this, they are not heterodox nor atheist. On the other hand, they do have their own ontology of Religion and Theism, Doctrine of purity of souls, concept of mundane creatures and the school to cognize other phenomena in the universe.

Thus, it is clear that they know all the Realities in their own way. They do not rely upon anything supposed or sponsored by others. They themselves perceive, understand, think, consider, experience and know everything in the universe. They have established their own way of scrupulous scrutiny. It is their firm conviction that the Soul is the Supreme knower and knowable too. Knowledge is the fundamental virtue, attributed to soul. Anything cannot be known unless the knower knows himself first. Any

thing could be known only when the Self is known. There is nothing that knows others but does not know itself. The faculty of knowledge works like the light, which illuminates itself at the first event and in accordance with the span and scope of vigour, it illuminates the rest of things in its realm. Light never requires another lamp to shine upon it. The sun is the best example, He is illuminated by his own virtue and in course of it, He illuminates the universe.

So the Jain exerts to know the Self that knows everything. Knowing the Self becomes the sole motto of his life. For a real devotee of the Jina, to know his own Self directly and realisingly is have it experienced continuously, outside and the Godhood, including the God, if there be any, is the secondary thing for him. Primarily he believes in the realization of the Self. Which is the only source of universal knowledge.

The Special Seed of Life

On the fundamental principle of the Self-realization the real Jain happens to be different in the worldly walks of life. There by he seems clearly distinct, quite apparently, from the other sects in the varied world outside. Even though all the herbs are conceived collectively alike for the botanical sense, they individually do differ, depending on the class and power of the seeds. It is the seed that prevails ! In the same way the Jain seed of life is quite unique and distinguished from those of others. In principle, the conception of the element called *SAUL* and the direct experience of the independent illumination of the Self, are of multifarious nature. It is the distinct vim of the seed that thrives in its own way unlike others. Its blossoms are found quite different. Eventually the harvest also is distinguished from others. It comes out of individuality, forming its own class. It displays the distinct quality and efficacy owing to the vim of the seed.

Varily the psychic seed of a Jain is quite different in principle. It is the psychological and scientific truth that the inward power of man controls his behaviourism and characteristic development. The inward vim and the inclinations of a Jain are different, so his way of life does become different. The nature and virtue of his self governs his inclinations and behaviours. He is quite alike in the event of the birth system. His physical, organic and metabolic conditions do resemble alike others. The awakenings for food, sleep, protection, sex appeal and so also the sense of health, ease of mind, greed, will, pride, revange etc., may be present in his physical and mental systems. But sincerely clinging to the real sense of the epithet of the Jina, a Jain strives for the victory over the mundane elements of life. He never likes to be carried away by the force of secular currents. Normally all other persons are living the mundane life as it comes to them, whereas the Jain selects the kind of it, to his own choice. He endeavours more for the spiritual life. Thus his spirit involves in the Self-realization. And this is the main focus that takes altogether different direction to develop his individuality into a distinct cult. If at all the others make their life course like a water current that always runs down the level, the Jain makes his life like vapour that flees upward, becoming more and more light, by way of ousterity, instead of addiction.

The Import of Life

Any person as an individual must exist as a single and free unit. He ought to live on, as a separate entity and distinguish his element from others even of the same class. He must differentiate himself by his special virtues and characteristics. His personality be kept on ever developing in independence, in the realm of action, thought and self-respect. His individuality must clearly become a social theory that emphasises on the importance of his distinctive character, quality and personal achievements. This kind of success and accomplishment sprout from the seed of self-realisation put to the course of sublimation.

But whenever and wherever the sense of self is neglected or misunderstood or misled, the ingradient vim moves the faculty to reveal the hidden image towards the reaction of light, to advance maturity to

the higher stage, to expand the potentiality, to evince the quality and to educe piety, purity and holiness in him. Any human not enhancing his own faculty of virtue like these, may become demon-like. If this kind of growth of personality is not maintained, the human cannot continue to remain even as a real human-being. The mind if not put in good duty, it necessarily indulges into evilness, as it cannot remain inactive. The cycle-rider must advance on, and on lest the fall is certain. It holds good in the principle of human advancement. So to avoid the evil, the mind must embrace piety.

The human mind and the individual faculty are powerful enough to undertake the evergrowing recourse of life to sustain and maintain the progress of evolution. In this course, the Self very naturally develops its vigour is accomplish the goal of its purification to the infinity. This course of life knows no stop, and responds no break, alike the wheel of chronology. If it does not shoot up by way of sublimation, varily it agitates the hidden passions. To the effect the person falls victim to vices like addiction, regimentation, mechanization etc., like the beasts in the world of creatures. The recourse resorted by a Jain adverbs to embrace the line of vigorous virtues.

By birth man may resemble the base metal. If it is not made stainless it gets spoiled and rusted. It remains blunt it not sharpened and put to continuous use. The human faculties also do not remain sober and balanced it not put its austereness and auspicious work. The motion always runs on obverse or reverse. There is no third course. So to avoid reverse position, one must keep on moving up and on. Only hard working does not solve the problem. One has to strain while digging or climbing. But the former confines entrenchment and the latter elevates to the summit. Knowing the significance of the rising life full well, a Jain prefers to sublimation, purification and perfection of virtues of his soul, even by austerity.

Base of Distinction

Biological life alone is not covetable for a Jain, even though he has to look after physical needs. The bio-physic forces must be adhered to for sustaining and improving the healthy disposition of life. The Metabolism should be maintained. One cannot live on without one's body. But for this kind of biological welfare, one is not required to be beastly. While working, fuel is consumed by an engine. But it does not mean that an engine is to be kept running for consumption only. The bio-physical working also needs consumption beyond doubt. Even than a wise person should not live like an engine. On the other hand he has to be very expert-engineer to achieve his personal welfare by operating the machanical forces, so as to get his purpose served. Just as engine is not devised for the sake of engine, the biological system should not be cared for its own sake only. It ought to serve or be made to serve the human cause of the Master.

Whether to become a slave or to earn the mastery over the forces of the body, is the factor that distinguishes the route of life. A Jain does master his life and gets his religious and spiritual purpose served, instead of being a victim to it. He governs and regulates his life towards the fulfilment of his spiritual aim. He established deliberate discipline of his activities in the life. The purpose of life may be wholesome or otherwise, just as the case of machine or instrument. Exactly at this juncture, there crops up the so-called Guardian Knot which should be considered very difficult to solve or ever remaining unsolved or solved to the otherwise effect or worked out purposelessly or reacted upon, to bring to desired efficacy. They happen to advert to variety of ways, producing diversity in the walks of life.

Just as there happen to be cross roads, side roads, diversions or footprints, scattered away or along the highway, there are differant traits and tenets come across the life-route. They bring forth the diversity in the coures of life and in the life-philosophy. The wanton life cares no discipline leading towards some decided goal. Some ignorants follow any path they came across around. They have no power of faculty discriminate wrong from right. Some lacking self-awareness embrace superstitious passively. Some

lacking self-awareness embrace superstitious passively. Some practise hypocrisy to hide the inward feelings and to make a good show. Some shoot astray by the force of egoism, distortion and misunderstanding. Some are aware of the right path but are feeble to traverse. Some are striving hard but not achieving success to the expected degree. And there are a very few who can conduct the right course, evincing the self and the powers of virtues on and on.

Out of these seven classes a Jain decidedly disapproves and rejects the first four types totally. On the merit of his faculty of knowledge, he is well qualified to do so, on the vigour of self-awareness and realization of the virtues and properties of his own soul, distinguished from any other substance that are bereft of consciousness. It is this awareness and realization of the self that paves the foundation of difference in the course of life. So all the Jains, even unto this era, are found embracing only the last three stages aforesaid.

The Analysis of Living

Even though one likes his own self very much, the carnal and emotional side of life cannot be neglected. At the most, one can give more preference to his option and undertake spiritual affairs. No soul or self could be evinced without body in this world of creatures. Thus one has to attend, even though a strict—Jain, all the sides of life. Consequently life becomes multifarious. So the proper balance retains it over all importance. As the world is absolutely unable to experience the self outside the corporeal life, the maintenance of a physique is a must. And the realm of bio-physical affairs is far and wide. The body cannot be singled out. It has to be accepted as a whole, with all its internals and externals. There are many branches and sub-branches belonging to the trunk. As such we can consider only a few, that represent the rest.

(A) The Bio-Physical Life

Having the body accepted, the normal strength and vigour is usually maintained. The sense organs require sensuality and it is kept up for the good state of body, speech and mind. The span of life period is cared to enjoy the long life. The respiratory system is protected to provide oxygen for the purification of blood and combustion to produce energy. The physical functions like these, has to be kept intact and orderly. If harm is levied unto these functions, the life undergoes danger. So also the inborn drives like hunger, slumber, protection, sexappeal etc., become active and forceful. If these drives are not quenched to a certain degree, they bring about very urgent pressure on the various capacities and activities of the self. Mental powers and spiritual urges are disturbed. Sometimes the life itself comes to an end. Thus the corporeal life has got its own importance in its realm.

(B) The Psycho-Mental Life

It covers the entire field of feeling affairs. The lively impulses like emotional, intellectual and mindful activities are brought under this designation. Passions like revenge, pride, strangeness, timidity, greed, lust etc. and emotions, like affection, pety, joy, jest, amuse, play etc., emerge to expose and reaction. These inward forces tend to produce motion, inter-action, kidnap, rape, etc. These are the uncultured and unreasoned forceful inclinations attend to induce action unto others. They are actuated by an impulse rather than reflection. They have the forceful influence to incite the life to action. So they are not negligible. They are to be controlled and diverted for wholesome living. They turn the life to make one human or demon.

There are the basic sensations that make one feel alive and be aware of self. They create a strong surge of feeling to outward expression. They often accompany the complex reactions. They re-inforce the faculty of feeling and sensibility. They arouse the tendencies towards transactions. They over indulged the emotions and make them much affected. The extereme, intense or overwhelming impulsions and

notions are known as passions. They take the form of ardent affection or love, of intense impulse for sex and lust. Overpowering anger, enragement, cruelty etc., set forth. An out-burst of violence against some object or event, inclines towards strong excitement. They make the person rash-tempered and display the vehement action of revenge. Persons under such emotional impulse become harmful. But if they are put to cultural and disciplined vent, the expression being mild and tender, they could be turned innocent. this kind of cultural life results in social morality and personal morale. The healthy and wholesome control over these impulses, lays the foundation for spiritual and religious way of life.

(C) Religio-Spiritual Life

Having the personal control and mental discipline established one is free to advanced towards virtuous and pious living. The rational power to think and the deliberation could be improved so as to master the force and source of passion. The bio-physical needs are cultured, moderated and minimised. The emotions and passions are well governed and brought under good control. All the forces are yoked to cultivate the field of right knowledge, philosophy, faith and spiritual conduct. Further on abstinence and austerity is practised to win over the self. This victory sheds more light and delight. The inward peace springs up. The stains of carnal pleasures are removed and purity of self enjoyed. The pious vision enlightens the living, where pure knowledge is manifested and the soul attributes are revealed.

Discernment

When the sensuality is replaced by sensefulness, indulgence by indifference, addiction by aversion, illusion by vision, eye-sight by insight, delight by enlight, will by wisdom the course of living ascends more and more spiritual stages. Otherwise it descends. The life of a Jain is always improving and ascending by, the power of knowledge, belief and conduct of the soul itself. The range of his learning, is not confined to the lessons in texts. He knows all the basic substances with their ingredients. He realises his own soul endowed with eternal awareness and knowledge insight and conscience, bliss and vim and all that comes under spirituelle vitals. It is realization of the self that tosses up the Soul to the fourth stage of spiritual life. And lo, the living status changes at this juncture, just like the litmus turns its blue-colour to redness, being treated with acidity. This self-realization and insight make oneself a Jain in real sense. Otherwise nobody is a Jain by mere birth or any other creed.

The new achievement, acquired at this stage, incites discernment. It re-acts upon everything with insight and rationality. It recognises all the aspects of the things outside and of the mental affairs inside. It is confirmed on this merit, that the bio-physical drives are separate and different from the spirituelle vitals of the self. The expression of volition is completely changed. He is empowered with a keen discernment. Even though not disembodied as yet, and still carried with the body, his spirituality remains aloof from the domain of bio-physical affairs. He refrains himself doing harm to his own soul. He abstains from sinful activities. Meditates and recollects the attributes of his pure self.

In the field of mundane activities, he grasps everything reacted by his insight and discernment. He recognises them as quite separate from his soul and different in attributes. He seeks the life way that suits his choice. He chooses everything healthy and wholesome, atleast harmless, to experience the holy spirit, of his self. He becomes expert in discriminating the mundane livings from religious life. He keeps up his judging power very sharp, keen and accurate.

On the power of his discernment he gets his life activities newly classified, to suit and promote the degree of self-realization. Because he is more and more inclined ascend higher and higher stages of the spiritual life. The output of the power of discernment is heightened ability to realise, good and bad in reality, and to avoid bad actually to embrace good in the practical life. The only scale of measurement utilised, is the purification of soul. The passions are harmful to the real and eternal spirit of soul. So the promoters of the virtues of soul, are upheld. Taking right decision over the worthful and worthless for the spiritual

life becomes the core of his mental affairs. Practically he avoids the pervert and tries to embrace the right. He goes on achieving success more and more, as he knows the real attributes of his soul, full well. On the merit of a discarment he discards and rejects the devious states of his mind, which indulges and yields to the surge of passions.

This way of life becomes a warfare as it were. So a Jain remains very alert and cautious for his protection from sinful and passionate side. He earns more power to keep on progressing towards the meritorious spiritual life. While living on such a pious life, he becomes very vigilant in the way of appeasement of the senses. He avoids the corrupt usury that looses the virility of his self. He sees that no merit of the soul is spoiled by the over pleasures or addictions. While giving way to mundane affairs also, he becomes vigilant to maintain the weal and welfare of the self. He scrupulously scrutinizes the fitness of the things accepted.

It resembles a tug of war between the forces of the sense organs and the spirit of Soul or his mundane affairs on one side and religious duties on the other. A real Jain at least stands still and not moved by the worldly forces, when he is unable to proceed on and on, gaining the spiritual heights. He goes on keeping the quiescence of his mind and Faith only on the strength of his discernment. Lacking it, the non-Jains are just blasted away by the gale of pleasures and addictions very easily. So this is the central line for the tug of war, that makes the difference of life—course of a Jain and a non-Jain. Jains mean the follower of the path of the Jainas, the victors.

Self-vigilance

It is the power of insight and discernment that makes the analysis of life and classifies the modes and elements to suit his own conscious that brings forth weal, tranquility, trance and peace for himself. Slowly he becomes so vigilant in keeping up the spirit of his soul, that the forces and drives of his body, sense organs and mentality, are duly subdued and controlled. Notwithstanding they are used for the purpose of religious progress. The spirit earned by discernment and self vigilance becomes such a vigorous soldier to fight like a commando, silently enlarging the stronghold of the enemy and destroying it completely.

To the effect, the philosophical vision, scope of insight, light and delight of the self, go on increasing. His mind attains contentment, senses are appeased, body seeks its own way of maintenance by itself and even by the environment. In such a suitable condition, he uses his inward virility to purify the virtue of knowledge to the higher degree. He earns bliss and peace in the domain of the purified soul and in the virtual spring of happiness. To become on with knowledge is the real life of the Self. So the invincible Jain lives on, or seeks for this kind of life, where he is engrossed in knowledge and the other attributes of soul.

Generally to live on like this, is not easily possible. But it is made possible on the merit of pure self-realization. To the non-Jains, this is not convincing, because they do not believe in the independent power and virtue of the 'Self'! It is the distinct kind of faith that is based on different elements and concepts of Theism. It is the wrong concept of God that leads the devotees to the multifarious way of worship, practice of religion and diversity of living.

No belief, wrong belief and right belief are the chief elements that govern the life and living principles. So the nature of belief must be correctly scrutinised and reacted by rationality. Discernment is the prime power to get oneself distinguished from the nonself. The Self is the master of all rest. It is the Self who is endowed with happiness, who actually lives on seeking the sense of safeness and avoidance of dangers. Thus self is the central principle of life belief and behaviour. Those who do not believe in Self, do not consider any thing good or bad. They are simply led away by any current of force or drive in the outside world. But those who find out the SELF and believe in virtuous life, try to discriminate virtue from vice. While doing so, some do not seek for the real master of their own virtue or vice, producing happiness and

misery unto them. They happen to seek and search for the source of virtue and happiness or some idea of power to unto their misery, somewhere outside themselves. And this outside view leads to illusion and diversity is the concept of *Theism*. There illusionary mistakes are not apprehended by a Jain in its true sense.

On the contrary the Jain belief is well centred on the Self. Their Theism is established in knowing and realizing the Self, with-in only, and not anywhere else. On the merit of the Self-based religion they pave the way leading to Self-Theism and as such they are well distinguished. Their rites, rituals, church (Chaitya) cults, worshipping modes etc., stand in different position, in the practice of religion. So also the look-out for daily life takes its own focus. Accordingly, the picture of life is displayed in a different perspective. The different angles of the spectators also tell upon the sight pose of Jain. This is the basic reason, why the Jain religion and philosophy are misunderstood at times. Eventhough they seem strange to strangers they are quite homely to the Faith of Self-Theism.

Lenity

The confused diversity never sets forth in the life affairs of a Jain. The realization of the Self has no foundation for confusion, illusion and mirage. The mathematical functions could be either wrong or right. There cannot be any diversity in the correct decipher. If the the existence of knower is not firmly and finally decided the existance of any other element could be questioned very easily. The knower himself is the sound realization of the knowledge. But if the existance of the knower himself is in question, any knowledge, philosophy, gospel, discourse, Testimony etc., are eventually elapsed by danger. The Self-Theism is out of the realm of such danger. In knowing the self, any other outward proof is superfluous.

The mundane existance of a Jain may remain similar to others. His apparent consumption, worldly activities, some playful pleasures, the way of satiating his bio-physical needs etc., may seem all alike. The inwardness achieved by a Jain on the merit of Self-vigilance and Self-awareness etc., creat content, satisfaction and satiability. So his peace of mind is not disturbed. He is never given to addiction. He lives sober. He masters his sense organs other passions and inborn drives. Instead of being moved by them, he directs them to his own notions and proves himself the Indra in real sense to govern the Indriyas. In the daily life, he prefers inward peace and contentment to the external pleasures in secularity. He becomes a Bhoga-Yogi.

Not only his secular course of life is transformed but also his lookout in the wide zone of sociality becomes an optimism. He cultures his mind to look at the better side of things and events around. He cultivates a view of equanimity on the merit of Self-like out-look. He becomes more and more lenient to consider the liberty of others in the range of pursuit of pleasure, peace and happiness in the living. His own way of treating the sense organs, results, so unto himself that he becomes more and more lenitive. His lenity softens his mind so much, that he grows quite fit to educe social qualities like equality, faternity leading toward the Universal Liberty to live on. The equity he breeds in his mentality and disposition endows repose for himself. It arouses a sense of life leading to "Live, let live and help to live-on" policy. Whatever he takes, he allows others to like it freely. Whatever his soul tries to avoid, he helps others to avoid. In this kind of life discipline, the harmfulness, falsehood, theft, sexuality, hoarding and the other antilife elements never crop up. The otherwise pleasures are when strictly avoided, what of sinfulness and criminality? He remains far away from the worthless and wickedness. His Lenity is the gentil seed sowed in the living realm to reap the repose and mercy for all. Thus the Jain way of life is covated by all alike.

The Blossoms

Jainism, more rightly Jinology, is not the empty drum that sounds aloud to summon up others only. Jain way of life in the prima facie, is devised for self-living in its wide sense. The principle of living,

cannot be modified for any individuality. It is always practised first and then discoursed. Even though the purest of all, its gospel comes not from heavens. Neither it is an order or command issued to others, by any power or by Heavenly. Being it is the universal truth that applies alike to all. It never favours nor disfavours any one, Jain or non Jain.

Eventhough the least spread in the world, Jainism (Jinology) is ever universal by its virtue. It is based on pure knowledge of intrinsic properties of the universal substances and realities. The Jina is ever invincible as he evinees victory over his Self. He considers no friend or foe. He cannot be a devotee, servant, obedient or ward of anybody in any sense. He embraces Self-Theism and becomes God himself. Likewise he considers other beings also are able and free to advance on the way to Master themselves. If at all the full mastery over Self-Knowledge is established, the Godhood is automatically achieved.

A true Jain sets forth an example in the practical life, for every expression of his philosophy and belief. There is no high-sounding word that does not yield to the practical living range. His lenity and modesty blossom into fruits like universal friendship, mindful appreciation of any virtue in anybody, sincere pity for the suffering ones and retard at opposition. This tendency brings out peace and co-operation in the social living in the world. He also found an example for living, sans conflict. Actually he practises the policy of living with malice towards none and with generosity towards all. His living is, sans sort and sans criminality. His life goes on lovely and lively.

Alike knowledge, bliss, virility etc. the other spiritualities are manifested in the pure soul to the infinity. Every virtue is eventually experienced and practically evinced. All the disturbing and harmful elements are removed from the Self. Thus every woe is undone and weal is enjoyed, to its infinity. Facing no harm as break, and manifesting eternal bliss is the virtual life. Being faultless in it self and harmless to others, it is considered as the achievement par excellent. Thus the Jain concept of living leads to the real life that suffers no death or any other loss. Eventually it blossoms into the pure, virtuous and eternal status for the ever living soul.

It is useful like a tree in its full bloom. It is the full life to the tree itself, so also it helps others to live on. They can use its shade, leaves, flowers, fruition to their choice. It upholds the real spirit of life as such, without making any discrimination in any sense. Thus it is the Best concept of life in the universal sense, as everything expounded by Jains is true to the universality.

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः
सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु
न कश्चिद्दुःखभागभवेत् ॥