

# JAINISM AS A FAITH

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## THE WORLD AND ITS SIX CONSTITUENTS

*The World a Reality*

The world we live in is not illusory. It is not a creation of imagination but a fact and it exists as a reality. The elements of which the world is composed are six in number.

*The Six Constituents*

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|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| (1) <i>Jīva</i>  | (2) <i>Dharma</i>     | (3) <i>Adharma</i> |
| (4) <i>Ākāśa</i> | (5) <i>Kāla</i> , and | (6) <i>Pudgala</i> |

*Jīva* is the animate substance having consciousness as distinguished from the other five components which are called *Ajīvas* or non-living substances. *Jīva* or *Soul* is a conscious substance and is characterised by *Jñāna* or knowledge and *Darśana* or perception. *Dharma* is the substance which helps in the movements of *Jīvas* and *Pudgala*, the unconscious matter. It does not move itself but helps the movements of moving objects much like the Railway Lines which are passive or inactive assistance to the moving Locomotive Engines. *Adharma* is just the opposite of *Dharma* and is necessary to help the stoppage of objects coming to a standstill. It is thus an indirect cause of fixation of objects. *Ākāśa* is the container of all the substances. It allows them room or space. *Kāla* is the substance which is the cause of change in things and creates the past, present or future. *Pudgala* is the substance which is called Matter by the modern science. It is perceivable by all the sense-organs as it possesses colour, taste, smell and touch as distinguished from the other four *Ajīvas* (inanimate substances) which are not at all perceivable by the senses.

*Theory of Conservation*

The modern science recognises the matter as indestructible and adopts the theory that the weight of matter in its various forms remains the same as it ever was. This theory of constant weight or indestructibility of matter is preached of old by the Jainas not only in respect of perceptible matter but also in respect of the conscious *Jīva* and other four immaterial substances (which though not conscious are, nevertheless, immaterial being unperceivable by sense-organs).

*The Trinity*

Every substance or element which constitutes the world is regarded as characterised by



*Utpāda*—birth or coming into existence, *Vyaya*—decay or going out of existence, and *Dhrauṇya*—permanence or continuous sameness of existence. When a lump of gold is converted into an ornament, the existing form of gold is destroyed in taking the new shape in which it is wrought but the gold remains the same in quality, so also the soul remains the same as the basis of all changes effected in body which leaves one stage and enters the other. This origin of the new state is called *Utpāda*, the consequent destruction of the old is *Vyaya* and the remaining of the basic elements in its original natural state is called *Dhrauṇya*.

#### *World Eternal and Everlasting*

This Trinity pervades all the substances and attributes to the world a permanent and eternal character. The varieties of death or destruction and growth or origin seen in this world are but modifications of these eternal and everlasting substances. The world, thus made of realities, is itself real and permanent. It consists of six eternal substances or elements and is eternal and everlasting.

#### *The Mundane Soul*

Out of the elementary substances mentioned above *Dharma*, *Adharma*, *Ākāśa* are each of them one in number. *Kāla* and *Pudgala* are infinite in number and so also are *Jīvas*. There are infinite varieties of *Jīvas* in this world but all may be classified under the following four categories : (1) The Hellish beings, (2) Celestial or Divine beings, (3) Human beings, and (4) Infra Human beings, i. e., beasts, birds and other beings inferior to man and possessing from one to five organs of senses. The universe is thus peopled by manifold creatures who are born in these different states for having done various actions. They undergo ever-recurring births in human or non-human existences according to their actions. The *Jīvas* found in the above four states of existence are impure or tinged with *Pudgala* or unconscious matter. They differ from the *Jīvas* in their pure or unadulterous state inasmuch as their qualities of *Jñāna* or knowledge, *Darśana* or perception, *Vīrya* or power and *Sukha* or happiness (bliss), are subdued by the *Pudgala* or material particles combined with the *Pradeśas* of the Soul. So long as Soul remains combined with the *Pudgala*, it cannot realise its own sublime nature which consists of four infinities viz., that of infinite perception, infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite happiness. It roams about in this world of four existences and takes birth and dies again and again. The aim of Jainism is to teach the process of freeing the Soul from the bondage with the matter, and get the same in its pure splendid character.

### WHY THE SOUL ROAMS ABOUT

#### *Two Causes : Āsrava & Bandha*

The *Jīvas* roam about in this world on account of their conjunction with *Pudgala* or matter-particles. As water gathers in a pond through its inlets, so also the material particles gather and assimilate in the Soul *Pradeśas* on account of certain inlets called *Āsravas*. There are five main inlets for the flow of material particles in the soul.

#### *Five Types of Āsrava*

(1) *Mithyātva*—It means non-belief or perverted belief in the realities. Jainism enjoins on one to have strict faith in the following principles : (1) That there are *Jīvas* or Souls having consciousness, (2) That there are *Ajīvas* or lifeless objects, (3) That the *Jīva* combines with the *Ajīva*—*Pudgala* and roams about so long as it is in the combined state, (4) That the bondage of

*Jīva* and *Ajīva* is due to certain causes, (5) That the bondage results either in a happy or in a painful worldly state, (6) That this bondage is temporary and does not change the nature of the Soul in its essence, (7) That there is way for stopping fresh combination, (8) That the existing combination may be severed; and (9) That the Soul resumes its natural pure state after liberation from the *Pudgala*—matter and attains salvation. These are called Nine *Tattvas* or Principles by the Jainas. To be more precise, these nine *Tattvas* are : *Jīva*—Soul, *Ajīva*—Non-soul, *Punya*—Auspicious *Karmas*, *Pāpa*—Inauspicious *Karmas*, *Āsrava*—Inflow of *Karmas*, *Saṁvara*—Stoppage of the inflow of *Karmas*, *Bandha*—Bondage of *Karmas*, *Nirjarā*—partial shaking off of *Karmas* and *Mokṣa*—Complete annihilation of *Karmas*. One who does not believe in these principles or *Tattvas*, or has wrong belief therein is *Mithyātī*. Due to this delusion or want of faith the *Jīvas* go on acquiring fresh matter (*Karmas*.)

(2) *Avirati*—Vowlessness or non-abstinence in respect of—

- ( i ) Sins, and
- ( ii ) Pleasures of sense-organs.

(i) There are five main kinds of sins in this world : (1) To hurt or kill beings, (2) To tell a lie, (3) To steal others' property, (4) Sexual indulgence or intercourse, and (5) Attachment for or possession of property.

A man who does not abstain from these sins by taking a vow, keeps his inclinations open and as such his Soul remains constantly polluted by the advent of fresh matter which clings to the soul in which it enters. As a military watchman makes himself liable to be punished if he does not keep proper vigilance even though nothing wrong has happened; similarly, the Soul which does not guard and protect itself by solemn promise or vow, suffers even though there may not be actual commission of the vice. The want of proper care is greater *mens rea* in the domain of spirituality than in the field of civic life.

(ii) There are five Sense-organs : (1) Ears, (2) Eyes, (3) Nose, (4) Tongue, and (5) Body. Sound is the object of ears, colour that of eyes, smell that of nose, taste that of tongue and touch that of the body. The free indulgence of the different organs in these sense-pleasures and the enjoyment of worldly objects is another cause of the inflow of the matter. One who does not restrict one's desires but allows them full play suffers innumerable births and deaths in the world by acquiring new particles of matter.

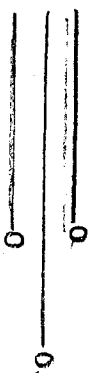
(3) *Pramāda* or lethargy is want of zeal in the observance of religious activities. This is the third cause of inflow.

(4) *Kaṣāya*—Anger, Pride, Deceit and Greed are the four *Kaṣāyas* which form the fourth *Āsrava* or inlet.

(5) *Yoga* or activities of mind, body and speech. The sinful indulgence of these three instruments of action is the fifth *Āsrava* or inlet.

*Punya or Pāpa and Bondage*

In this world *Jīva* and matter exist side by side or it may be said that *Jīva* is surrounded by matter on all the ten sides. Under the influence of the above *Āsravas* the *Jīva* draws in the particles of the neighbouring matter from all directions which move in through the medium of *Dharma* and retains the same in the space of its *Pradeśas* by the help of *Adharma*.



The particles of matter so moving in are either *Śubha*—Auspicious or *Aśubha*—Inauspicious. The lucky particles are called *Puṇya* and unlucky ones are called *Pāpa*. *Puṇya* results in good fruits and *Pāpa* in bad fruits. The former leads to happiness in worldly life and the latter to miseries in worldly existence. These particles of matter after moving in unite to the Soul on account of emotions of attachment or hatred. This is called *Bandha* or Bondage.

#### *Nature of Bondage*

The union, so formed, is a sort of chemical combination of the Soul with the non-Soul. In Jaina Terminology the nature of this combination is described as that of sesame and oil, or milk-water and butter, or milk and water which is penetrating at every point and is called *Ek-kṣetra-avagāhī*. Even inspite of this bondage the Soul retains its essential nature of consciousness and never becomes extinct or a non-entity. The effect of this bondage is that it makes the Soul heavy which in essence has got no weight and keeps the same bound in the fetters of the body with consequential birth and re-birth. It restricts or obstructs the inherent qualities of the Soul. It is this bondage which obstructs the Soul from the realization of its four-fold greatness, as mentioned above. It is this which obscures its infinite perception, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss and infinite power. Again, it is this which retards its progress onward and stands in its way to attain salvation and everlasting and infinite bliss.

#### *Different Kinds of Karmas*

The particles of matter which enter the soul and get intermingled with it, are called *Karmas* in Jaina Terminology. The bondage (*Bandha*) is of the following eight kinds of *Karmas* :—

(1) *Jñānāvarṇīya Karmas*—which obstructs the knowledge of the soul. (2) *Darśanāvarṇīya Karma*—which obstructs the perception quality of the soul. (3) *Vedanīya Karma*—which is the cause of sensations or feelings of pain and pleasure. (4) *Mohanīya Karma*—which causes infatuation and affects right belief and right conduct. (5) *Nāma Karma*—which determines the personality of a being viz., his body, structure, height, size, colour etc., in one word, its is the cause of formation of the body to the soul. (6) *Gotra Karma*—which determines the *Gotra*—Family or descent, (7) *Āyu Karma*—which determines the duration of life; and (8) *Antarāya Karma*—which obstructs or hinders charity, prosperity, pleasure and the prowess of the soul.

Out of these eight kinds of *Karmas* *Jñānāvarṇīya*, *Darśanāvarṇīya*, *Mohanīya* and *Antarāya Karmas* are called *Ghanaghātī Karmas* as they attack the qualities of the soul and make them obscure like the thick clouds which obstruct the rays of the sun. The rest are called *Aghanaghāt Karmas* as distinguished from the above, they do not attack the soul nature but determine the feelings of pleasure and pain, personality, family and duration of life. Thus looking from the viewpoint of class of Bondage, it is of the above 8 varieties.

#### *Duration, Character and Extent of Karmas*

The bondage of *Karmas* may be of a long or short duration. It may be of a mild or strong character resulting in mild or severe fruits, and it may be dense or thick requiring much efforts to remove it, or it may be light or thin requiring little efforts to remove. Whatever may be the nature of Bondage, a man has to bear the consequences of his own actions and the consequent *Karmas*.

## PROCESS OF LIBERATION

The soul cannot be freed from worldly miseries so long as these *Karmas* are not got rid of. It is only by annihilation or separation of the *Karmas* that the soul can realise its own nature and obtain that parmanent bliss which is the monopoly only of the liberated soul. The process of the Bondage of soul has already been described above and now we shall deal with the process of its liberation.

### *Saṁvara and Nirjarā*

When a pond full of water has got to be emptied, the inlets of water closed upto stop further inflow. The gathered water is partly taken out by hands or pumps and then it is left exposed to the bright sun to be dried. The method of liberating the soul is also of the same kind. First of all, the inflow of *Karmas* has got to be stopped. Then the existing *Karmas* have got to be destroyed. The first process is technically called *Saṁvara* and the second process is called *Nirjarā*. We shall describe the same in brief.

### *Saṁvara*

*Saṁvara* is just the opposite of *Āsrava*. *Āsrava* is the inlet or gate-way for the entrance of *Kārmic* matter. *Saṁvara* is the lock-out or keeping out of the *Kārmic* matter. The different kinds of *Saṁvara* are as follows.

### *Different Kinds of Saṁvara*

(1) *Samyaktva*—It means true faith or right belief. It is both negative and positive at the same time. It is staunch faith and belief in the realities of the world and avoidance of all perverted beliefs or notions. The negative and the positive sides of the *Samyaktva* have been very properly put in the following quotations from *Sūtrakṛtāṅga Sūtra*, one of the holy scriptures of the Jainas.

- (a) Do not maintain that world (*Loka*) does not exist, but maintain that it exists.
- (b) Do not maintain that *Jīva* and *Ajīva* do not exist, but that they exist.
- (c) Do not maintain that virtue and vice do not exist, but that they exist.
- (d) Do not maintain that *Āsrava* and stoppage of *Āsrava* (*Saṁvara*) do not exist, but that they exist.
- (e) Do not maintain that Bondage and Liberation do not exist, but that they exist.
- (f) Do not maintain that the experiencing of the effects and the annihilation of *Karmas* do not exist, but that they exist.
- (g) Do not maintain that *Dharma* and *Adharma* do not exist, but that they exist.
- (h) Do not maintain that activity and non-activity do not exist, but that they exist.
- (i) Do not maintain that Anger and Pride do not exist, but that they exist.
- (j) Do not maintain that Deceit and Greed do not exist, but that they exist.
- (k) Do not maintain that Love and Hatred do not exist, but that they exist.
- (l) Do not maintain that the Circle of Births does not exist, but that it exists.
- (m) Do not maintain that there is no such thing as perfection and non-perfection, but there is such a thing.
- (n) Do not maintain that there is no place exclusively reserved for those who attain perfection, but that there is such a place.

One who believes as enjoined above and does not believe otherwise is called *Samyaktwī*. By becoming a *Samyaktwī* one removes *Mithyātva* and stops the further ingress of *Karmas*.



(2) *Virati*—To stop the ingress through *Avirati* one has to take recourse to religious vows. The avowed determination to keep away from sins is what is called *Virati*. It is the second *Samvara* and it stops second *Āsrava*.

(3) *A-Pramāda*—Religious fervour or zeal is the third *Samvara* and it stops the third *Āsrava*.

(4) *A-Kaṣāya*—It means the subsidence of Anger, Pride, Deceit and Greed by the opposite virtues of calmness, modesty, simplicity and contentment. This is a stoppage to the fourth *Āsrava*.

(5) *A-Yoga* or non-activity of mind, body and speech. This is a stoppage to the fifth *Āsrava*.

Thus (1) by avoiding delusion (2) by abstaining from sins and subduing the senses, (3) by avoiding carelessness by watchful observance of all activities and mental dispositions, (4) by freedom from passions and vanquishing anger etc., and (5) by avoiding sinful activities or complete cessation of the same, the soul becomes free from *Āśravas*.

*Nirjarā*

The prevention of *Āśravas* by *Samvara* is the first step towards the liberation of the Soul. As to free oneself from debt, man has to stop new borrowing and pay the old debt; so to free the soul from *Kārmic* matter, the first step is to guard it from further pollution and then to remove the pollution already existing. *Samvara* is the first half of the process and the second half is *Nirjarā* or shaking off the particles of *Kārmic* matter from the soul.

### MOKṢA OR SALVATION

After the last particles of matter are got rid of or shaken off, the soul appears in all its grandeur. It leaves its *Kārmic* body and becomes void of all weight which was consequent upon the *Kārmic* bondage. Thus, being free from all foreign influence, it ascends up and goes to the abode of the *siddhas* or liberated souls called *Siddhaśīla*, which is at the top of the universe and it resides there in excellent blessedness. It cannot go up beyond that as *Dharma*, the substance helping movement, it not found thenceforward. The soul once liberated does not come in contact with the matter again and births and rebirth are ended once for all. This deliverance of the soul is called *Mokṣa* or salvation. This is complete annihilation of the *Kārmic* Bondage. The soul so liberated is pure, it, being all-knowledge, all-perception, all-power and all-happiness. It has no visible form and it consists of life throughout.

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