

## THE KEY TO MOKSHA

- Dr. Jayanti Lal Jain

The path to moksha lies in change of perception about our own self. The moment one perceives oneself as the pure soul, understands its nature and functioning, the journey to moksha begins. When the same perception is pursued relentlessly, one achieves moksha. The changed perception of the self encompasses in itself the knowledge and realization of operations of infinite properties of the soul. A divine view of soul is realized which is beyond words.

### Benefits

There are immense and invaluable benefits of knowing about the properties of soul and a few of them are mentioned here: (i) promotes belief in existence of soul as its image emerges through knowing the functioning of properties; (ii) strengthens belief in it where already exists; (iii) brings about a change in perception of the self and the world around us; (iv) the changed perception leads to experience/realization of soul; (v) with realization of the self, the goal of life (achievement of eternal happiness) becomes clear; (vi) as one focuses on the self, one becomes less and less interested in material happiness; (vii) one develops better understanding of *vratas*, *upvaas*, *tap*, *diksha*, the object of meditation/*dhyan* etc.; (viii) such an understanding helps in prevention of karmic bondage; (ix) continuous pursuit of the goal of realization of pure soul results in shedding of karmas; (x) complete and constant realization of the same ultimately culminates into attainment of supreme happiness/moksha and complete destruction of all karmas for ever.

### Properties

A brief description of 47 such properties is given below to have a glance of the soul and to show how it functions.

1. Live (*Jivatva*): The soul is always live and hence called as a living thing. It has lived in past and will live in future and always assume the properties of living substances.
2. Consciousness (*Chiti*): A living substance is characterized by consciousness. It never gives up this and never assumes the nature of non-living substances.
3. Vision (*Dasi*): It sees/reflects in general all substances with all of their properties and forms. It recognizes their existence as a whole with out discrimination.
4. Knowledge (*Jnan*): The soul can know the entire universe and individual entities of its past, present and future in a single unit of time.
5. Bliss (*Sukh*): The pure soul is replete with bliss, perfect and infinite happiness, with no sensuous pleasures, anxieties or sufferings.
6. Potency (*Virya*): The architect of pure soul is the soul itself. It has the ability to build, procreate or re-engineer itself through operation of its properties.
7. Supreme Sovereignty (*Prabhutava*): The self is its own king and sovereign. It is independent, unconquerable and invincible. It elevates itself to Godhood.
8. All Pervasiveness (*Vibhutava*): The sovereignty of soul extends to all its forms and properties and reigns supreme, but has no sovereignty over body, senses, and karmas.
9. Omni-vision (*Sarvadarshi*): The pure soul is like a mirror of the universe. The entire universe is reflected in the soul without any discrimination in entirety.

10. Omniscient (*Sarvajnatva*): Along with omni-vision property, the pure soul knows the entire universe simultaneously and the same time knowing them separately also.
11. Transparency (*Swachhatva*): The nature of soul is transparent, i.e., it is the cleanest possible substance so that the entire universe is seen and known without any blemish, just as a clean mirror facilitates Seeing and knowing things as they are without any distortions.
12. Self - illumination (*Prakash*): The soul is a self-illuminating substance and does not depend on anything. At the same time, it is self-realizable object and is distinctly seen and known during its own self-experience. This is just like a lamp self-illuminating; it does not need the help of other lamps to know the already illuminating lamp.
13. Unlimited - Potential (*Asankuchit-vikastva*): When the properties of a soul blossom, there are no inhibiting or limiting factors in its complete revelation. It is not bound by space and time. It assumes a perfect form in no time, with its own ability and without any support from other objects.
14. Non - Causative Nature (*Akarya-karan*): The soul does not cause any change in other objects nor do other objects cause changes in the soul. It does not influence nor gets influenced by other substances. This applies to all properties of the soul and its forms.
15. Knower and Knowable (*Parinamva-Parinam*): The pure soul by its very nature has knowledge of surrounding objects and at the same time it is knowable by other souls in the same manner.
16. Non - Desertion and Non-Acquisition (*Tyag-uppadanshunyatva*): The soul does not give up certain properties or accepts/assumes any additional properties. It always remains in the same perfect state of existence.
17. Self - Perpetuation (*Aguru-Lagutava*): The pure soul sustains itself. The soul does not assume the nature of other substances. It never breaks up. It does not become heavy or light as it has no weight. It does not become big or small. It remains as it is forever.
18. Appearance - Disappearance-Eternality (*Utpad-vyay-dhruvatva*): All the forms of a soul take place in a predetermined sequential manner, while its properties exist simultaneously without any sequence and are permanent in nature. New form appears and the previous form disappears but the substance remains the same.
19. Changeability (*Parinam*): Changeability is the nature of soul. The whole of soul undergoes changes when its form changes. The change in form encompasses change in properties also.
20. Abstract (*Amurt*): The soul is without the qualities of touch, taste, smell and color. In the absence of karma particles, the abstract form of soul manifests itself. This abstract quality is beyond the understanding of senses.
21. Inactivity (*Akartava*): The soul is absolutely inactive as far as other substances are concerned. The presence of karmas does not move the soul. It gets rid of them and remains neutral observer even during the path to Moksha.
22. Power of Non-indulgence (*Abhokaratva*): The nature of soul is to know (*gyata*) and see (*drastha*) and this leads to self-indulgence. The soul does not rejoice karmas or pleasures of senses. It rejoices its own pure self'.
23. Without Vibration (*Nishkriyatva*): In the absence of karma particles, the soul does not tremble or remains without vibrations. Quivering is not the nature of self'.
24. Invariable Territory (*Niyatpradeshatva*): Although the soul contracts or expands according to the size of a body in different births, it has only definite dimension. In Moksha, the dimension is a little less than the last body. It occupies innumerable but definite number of units of the space.

25. Self - Pervading (*Swadharm-Vyapak*): Notwithstanding many incarnations, the soul has never permeated to bodies or body characteristics; it permeates its own properties and forms.
26. Common, Uncommon and Common-Uncommon (*Sadharan, Asadharan and Sadharan-Asadharan*): While there are certain properties of soul which are common to other substances, there are also certain unique properties of soul. Further, there are certain properties which are common to some substances and uncommon to other substances.
27. Infinite Nature (*Anantadharm*): There are infinite properties of the soul. They have different characteristics but nevertheless constitute only one indivisible whole. The pure soul is adorned by such type of nature.
28. Conflicting Characteristics (*Viruddhadharma*): Not only that the soul has infinite characteristics, it has qualities which may look hostile in nature though there are no real conflicts. Properties from 29 to 38 fall under such a category.
29. Power of Elemental Transformation (*Tatva*): When soul transforms, it assumes its own real nature. This is its fundamental nature.
30. Absence of Transmutability (*Atatva*): The soul does not assume any property or form which is unreal, i.e., does not belong to it or does not exist in its nature.
31. Oneness (*Ekatva*): The soul has many forms and properties but oneness of the soul permeates in all its forms and properties.
32. Manifoldness (*Anekatava*): All the forms of soul are permeated by the same one soul. While the substance is one, many forms are caused by own self. It does not permeate only one exclusive form or state.
33. Existence of Current State (*Bhava*): In the pure self, there always exists a current form which will also be pure. It is not caused by any external substance.
34. Non-existence other States (*Abhava*): In the current form of the pure self, past forms are absent and so also the forms or properties of other substances..
35. Disappearance of Current State (*Bhava-Abhava*): Whatever be the current form of the self, it disappears or becomes extinct by rule in the next form or moment.
36. Emergence of New State (*Abhav-bhava*): The new (future) form that emerges never existed before. Although there is absence of state of Moksha today, it can emerge tomorrow.
37. Existence of Pure-Pure Nature (*Bhava-Bhava*): Whatever be the current form of the pure soul, it will always be continuously present in future. Although the same form (state of the soul) will not be there in future, it will be a different one but will be of the same type.
38. Absence of Impure-Impure Nature (*Abhav-abhava*): Impure *bhavas* or perversions are absent in the current form of the pure-self. These will be absent in future as well.
39. Self - induced Causation (*Bhav*): The soul induces its own causation and changes/transforms/performs according to its own nature.

Properties given below (40 to 47) rule out any influence of external factors and state the self is completely independent and master of its own.

40. Infinite Power of Re-engineering (*Kriya*): The pure-self has its own causal mechanism to ensure achievement of Moksha by re-engineering oneself to the true and eternal nature and without the help of other substances.

41. Infinite Power of Karma (*Karma*) : The perfect manifestation of infinite power of soul is an unique function of soul itself and not caused by other substances
42. Infinite Power of Performer (*Karta*): The pure-self acts of its own and accomplishes the task of attaining Moksha and does not depend on external factors.
43. Instrument (*Karan*): The realization of pure self itself is used as an instrument to become Siddha oneself. The pure-self regards oneself as Siddha and uses this vision as an instrument to achieve Moksha.
44. Obligation to Self (*Sampradan*): The pure-self bestows itself the form of pure manifestations through absorption in itself. Self obliges only itself, becomes worthy and receives them.
45. Inexhaustible Treasure (*Apadan*): Appearance and disappearance of different forms do not result in destruction of the self and retains its true and permanent character of inexhaustible treasure.
46. Self - Refuge (*Adhikaran*): The self changes of its own and takes refuge in itself. The moment the pure-self looks at itself, this becomes the basis for future pure forms of the soul.
47. Self - owned Relationship (*Swaswami-sambandh*): The pure-self possesses itself; it owns itself; it owns its own nature, properties and forms

It may be observed from the above that the pure soul is devoid of karmas, body or bodies, mind, and even feelings/*bhavas* of attachments or detachment to all external objects. It is devoid of even past and future forms of soul but is fully manifested in its present form only.

It is ordinarily difficult to comprehend the depth, vastness and subtleness of operation of these properties. Such properties are infinite in number but 47 have been picked up for the purpose of analysis and understanding. It is through constant practice that the true nature of these properties can be realized. This is an outstanding contribution of Acharya Kundakund's Samayasaar to have mentioned the same and narrated by Acharya Amritchand. In fact, several other properties can also be inferred.

To sum up, any one who will focus and comprehend the operations of the above characteristics of soul is bound to embark upon the path of moksha and attain the same through the process of changed perception/ purification initiated by its knowledge and consequent destruction of karmas. It is the key to moksha as the understanding of these properties opens up the infinite treasure of pure soul.

**About Dr. Jayanti Lal Jain:** Dr. Jain currently serves as Director, Center of Philosophical Sciences, Mangalayatan University at Aligarh, India. He is a very learned Jain scholar giving daily Pravachans, covering multiple aspects of Jain studies, delivering key note speeches for many Jain programs or special auspicious events for the last 25 years. Dr. Jain holds Ph. D in Economics from Oklahoma State University, USA and Ph. D in Jainology from University of Madras, Chennai. He was Professor Emeritus at Department of Jainology, University of Madras. He worked at Indian Bank, Chennai as Chief Economic Advisor/ General Manager. Dr Jain has published many articles on Jain Philosophy and on Economics, Banking and Finance. His books on 'Pure Soul and its Infinite Treasure', 'Acharya Kundakund and Jain Philosophy' have been published by University of Madras. He has delivered many special lectures in India and abroad and has considerable teaching experience.