



सच्चं लोगम्भि सारभूयं

# The Path of Arhat A Religious Democracy

By  
T. U. Mehta



पार्श्वनाथ शोधपीठ , वाराणसी - ५

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# **The Path of Arhat :**

## **A Religious Democracy**

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## **Dedication**

***“Some wise-man has said that if there is any incarnation of God in human form on this earth, He will be found in the form of your parents.”***

***I accept this wise dictum and dedicate this humble work at the lotus-feet of my revered father  
Sri Umedchand Naranji Mehta,  
and  
mother,***

***Smt. Kasmubaben Umedchand Mehta  
to whom I owe everything I have in this earthly  
existence.***

**T. U. MEHTA**

**धम्मो मंगलमुक्किट्ठं, अहिंसा संजमो तवो ।  
देवा वि तं नमंसंति, जस्स धम्मो सया मणो ॥**

**दशवैकालिक, १/१**

Ahiṃsā ( non-violence ), Saṃyama ( Restrain ) and Tapa ( Austerities ) constitute the highest form of religion. Even gods bow down to him whose mind remains engaged in religion.

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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We feel immense pleasure in bringing out the present title, 'The Path of Arhat : A Religious Democracy' authored by Justice T. U. Mehta, as 63rd volume of Pūjya Sohanalāla Smāraka Pārśvanātha Śodhapīṭha.

There are a number of books in English on different branches of Jainism, as well as on specific topics of its different branches. Most of the works are either theses or scholarly works, discussing the subject with its minute details. So far as the works, meant to give a proper understanding of Jaina Philosophy and Ethics, as a whole, in the light of Jaina Spirituality and Jaina view of life are concerned, we have few. Though there have been some efforts on the part of Western Scholars, to write introductory books on Jainism, yet they could not do justice with it, due to two factors; their biased outlooks towards Jainism as well as their lack of proper understanding of Jaina tradition. Hence a need for publication of a book for common men particularly Jainas — living and brought up on foreign soils and for foreign nationals by one who is fully aware of Jaina tradition and religion, was being felt since long. Fortunately Hon'ble Justice T. U. Mehta has made a fruitful effort in this direction. He himself has remarked in his note '...my long cherished idea of writing something on Jainism for all my grand children, who are reared and brought up in America'.

We hope that his book, will fulfil the demand of the common English knowing person, who are interested in knowing Jainism comprehensively in brief time. This work attempts to explain and examine Jainism and its relevance in modern age, Justice Mehta has presented Jainism very authentically and lucidly.

We hope readers will find it interesting and will appreciate

the effort of Justice Mehta. If this work arouses the interest of readers in knowing more about Jainism, we shall consider our effort worthwhile.

We are very grateful to Justice Mehta for giving this work to us for publication and also for making generous donation to meet out major part of the expenses of its publication.

We should thank Prof. Sagarmal Jaina Director, Pūjya Sohanalāla Smāraka Pārśvanātha Śodhapīṭha and Dr. Ashok Kumar Singh, Research Officer, who edited this work and saw it through the press.

The proof-reading of this work has been done by Dr. Ashok and Mr. S. K. Upadhyaya, Naya Sansar Press, so my thanks are due to them also, again to the latter for fine printing.

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**B. N. Jain**

Secretary  
Pūjya Sohanalāla Smāraka  
Pārśvanātha Śodhapīṭha

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

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It was during the months of August to November, 1990 when my wife and myself were enjoying the company of our children and grand children in America on the completion of our 50th wedding anniversary, that my long-cherished idea of writing something on Jainism for all my grand children, who are reared and brought up in America, took a concrete shape. During our short stay in America we found some thirst for knowledge about Jainism in the Jainas who have settled there. This gave further impetus to me to explain some basic principles of Jainism in simple English.

It is rather hard to understand and still harder to practice the ethical principles based on subtle philosophy and metaphysics of Jainism by one brought up in the materialistic atmosphere of the west. Even in India where the basic doctrines of the theories of soul, Karma, Re-birth, Ahimsa and Aparigraha come naturally to one born and brought up in Indian atmosphere, Jainism is much misunderstood by some Jainas themselves. The lay-belief is that Jainism consists only in not killing insects and other living creatures, in avoiding meat-eating and in performing hard religious penances; but Jainism is much more than this.

One reason for such superficial lay-belief is that even some ardent followers of Jainism do not take the trouble of understanding some very subtle ontological and metaphysical doctrines of Jaina philosophy. From whatever little knowledge of Jaina doctrines I have, I am convinced that what is known as Jainism is nothing but an openness which leads us, step by step, with the help of logic and reasoning, towards the highest level of spiritual enlightenment where the individual soul enters into the realm of pure knowledge, and the State of complete bliss. 'Jainism' is not an 'ism', It is a systematized



line of thinking which, being perfectly rational, does not demand any allegiance to any individual or god. Nay, it puts emphasis on your own efforts and plainly tells you that even the Tīrthānkars ( the path-makers ) like Mahāvīra cannot help you beyond pointing out the 'path' to be followed, because they themselves have obtained salvation by that path. They only show the path, but efforts must be your own; there is no favour in finding the gates of Heaven. To repeat what the great saint philosopher Samantabhadra has said : "Na pūjayārthastvai vītarage, na nindayā nātha vivānta vaire"<sup>1</sup> means "Oh lord, you are the Vītarāga and vivāntavaira — one who has shed all attachments and aversion and hence your worship or your criticism is totally irrelevant because your worship does not please you, nor your criticism displeases you." This is the crux of Jaina philosophy. The laity would surely find it hard to follow because an ordinary man likes to be lead, to be rewarded for his merits and to be punished for his faults by some super power, may be of totally unknown destination. He finds himself lonely and forlone if he is left to his own efforts. He, therefore, easily takes to ceremonies and rituals which give him psychological satisfaction of having done something to please the ultimate power that be. For laity, therefore, the path of devotions ( Bhakti ) is more appropriate.

Jainism is principally the path of knowledge ( Jñāna ) reinforced by devotion ( Darśana ) and action ( Cāritra ). It is not for everyone to take up the path of knowledge because one has to cover that path alone by one's own efforts without expecting any favour from any other source. For many people, therefore, the path of devotion ( Bhakti ) is more appropriate. But devotion is fruitful only where there is complete self-surrender to the Divine. Both the paths, if properly pursued, are equally efficacious. But the trouble is that we do not pursue any of these paths fully. To pursue either of them

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1. 'न पूजयार्थस्त्वयि दीतरागे, न निन्दया नाथ विवान्त वैरे', Svayambhū stotra, Samantabhadra.

## [ IX ]

fully we have got to understand their underlying philosophy. Writing of this thesis is a humble attempt in that direction.

I do not know how far I have succeeded in explaining the profound doctrines of Jainism in English, which, in the hands of a lesser person like myself, becomes a poor medium for conveying rich ideas expressed in Prakṛta canons. I will consider my purpose well served if this thesis invokes some interest to know more about Jainism from more competent persons.

The first two chapters of the thesis contain historical background, the second chapter having special reference to the life of Lord Mahāvīra. The remaining chapters bear titles which do not immediately convey the idea of the contents. However, a detailed synopsis of the contents of every chapter is given in the beginning covering every topic which is discussed in each chapter.

The last chapter is intended to show how the doctrines of Jainism can be put to use with advantage in day to day life and how they are more relevant in modern age.

There is an appendix with a map showing political divisions of the country during the times of Mahāvīra. The appendix further contains short notes on contemporary schools of thought such as Ājīvika doctrine of Gośāla, Sāṅkhya doctrine of Kapila and the doctrines of contemporary early Buddhism. This is done to enable the reader to have some comparative data of contemporary schools of thought.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to Padma-bhūṣaṇa Pt. Dalasukhabhāi Malavania and Prof. Sagarmal Jaina, the two learned luminaries of Śramaṇa tradition, for encouraging me to publish this thesis. I feel grateful to Authorities of Pūjya Sohanalāla Smāraka Pārśvanātha Śodhapīṭha, Varanasi, specially its Secretary Shri Bhupendra Nath Jaina, Faridabad, for undertaking the publication of this thesis. Dr. Jain rendered very valuable help in editing the

same. Dr. Ashok Kumar Singh, Research Officer, has worked hard in editing the work and finding out the original sources of my quotations, so he also deserves my heartiest thanks and blessings.

I am also thankful to my friend Mr. Justice M. P. Thakkar Retd. Judge of the Supreme Court of India, as also to my wife Yaśomati in encouraging me to write this thesis. But for the active assistance rendered by my wife, I would not have been able to complete single-handed many features of this work in the midst of my busy professional schedule.

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**T. U. Mehta**

# PREFACE

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## Life's Riddles and their Solution

What is the riddle of this Universe ? What is the role which a human being, the most developed and the most intelligent manifestation of the universe is expected to play in the world. Whence has it all proceeded and whither is it tending ? What is my role, my duty, my goal in this vast bewildering and breath-taking drama, going on around me ? Or, is it all has no purpose, no aim and no scheme. Or, is this all created, guided and controlled by some super power, beyond human comprehension ? If that is so, what is the nature of this power ? Where to find it ? Does that power work with a design ? If so, what is it ? Who created that power and why ? Can we comprehend that power ? If so, how ? If not, why ? Can we ask that power the explanation, if any, of various apparent incongruities, inequities and imbalances, noticed by us in our limited understanding of the scheme of nature, as it unfolds in our daily routine ?

I am born an innocent child, fresh from the womb of my mother. I entered the world of darkness in the womb of an unknown lady, apparently without any assurance of my safety and nourishment. Why I selected a mother who was capable of taking my tender care with ability to sustain my growth, and why such selection was not made by many other less fortunate souls whose mothers were not able to get nourishment even for themselves ? Or, was there no selection at all ? Was it all a mere accident ?

I grew up healthy, strong and of a fully balanced disposition. However, my brother, brought up in the same atmosphere and circumstances displayed totally contradictory qualities of head, heart and happiness why ? Could it be without reason ? If there is a reason, what is it ?

## [ XII ]

I entered the world, married, reared up children, encountered and fought many a life's battle, suffered pain, misery and sickness, overcame many hurdles, experienced success and failures, adopted various means to push through the dark, murky, misty and materialistic atmosphere of this worldly existence. But then suddenly a time is bound to come when I will have to say good-bye to it all – and all of it will be obliterated in the hands of time. All in vain. All without purpose, If so, why? These and other questions of this type have always troubled the mind of the man.

To understand the secret which may answer these questions, to know how the whole mechanism of the Universe works, to apprehend the cosmic spell, and to break through the outward layers of the tangible and visible forces of cosmos, a pursuit of intelligent, intangible and emotional stratifications of psyche is needed. That is the final goal of human life and that is the pursuit of an Indian philosophical school called Jainism.

It is necessary to study these questions as well as answers provided to them in the context of some basic principles, ontological concepts and metaphysical deductions of Jaina philosophy, purely analytical in character and logical in its approach, though not properly understood in the West.

Most of the basic principles, on which the whole edifice of Jaina Philosophy is constructed, are now corroborated by modern science and psychological analysis. Here is an attempt to find how this is true. Modern science has revealed that every substance is made of atoms and every atom, when split and analysed, reveals the energetic interplay of electrons, protons and neutrons in its nucleus. It is this energy which can supply motion and can work wonders.

Jainism recognises this fact while analysing the Universe and maintains that the whole Universe can be broadly divided into two categories, viz., Jīva and Ajīva, meaning motivating

### [ XIII ]

consciousness and unconscious matter thus pervading everything noticed in this Universe. On the basis of this finding, about two thousand five hundred years ago, not with the help of any laboratory testings but by sheer analytical logic, the Jaina seers saw the life force not only in plants and vegetables but also in so called inanimate matters such as earth, water and air.

They went even further in their analysis and sub-categorised the above two categories, examined their characteristics and the role which they play in shaping different life currents and tried to answer almost every question posed above in a manner, not only rational but logical also.

They concluded that Jīva ( spirit ) and Ajīva ( matter ) are eternal, uncreated, unending and perpetual. There is a constant interplay between the two, resulting in bewildering cosmic manifestations in material, psychic and emotional spheres around us. This led them to the theories of transmigration and rebirth. Change, but not the total annihilation of the spirit and the matter, is the basic postulate of Jaina philosophy, and it is the same thing which science teaches us when it says that matter is indestructible.

Theory of 'Karma' came as a natural deduction from the theory of causation, just as science recognises the fact that every effect is the result of some cause.

Thus the Jainism considers the whole universe as a great cosmic mechanism with its own self-propelling force, uncreated and uncontrolled by any super-imposed outside force. Its unitary character can be properly identified only by recognising and giving proper place to each of its parts. This leads a logical mind to the theory of total Non-violence-Ahimsa. For if you believe the universe to be a unitary whole, a self-propelling mechanism, wherein every part of that smallest to the biggest, has to play its role, you cannot do anything to destroy even a nut or bolt of that machine, without damaging it, as well as your own self. To know this mechanism, to understand

and to explain its working is the task of a philosopher, but to live according to its rules, to play one's own role as a part of that mechanism so that the machine can work properly, is the task of a religious person. This is the philosophy and this is the religion. This philosophy and this religion cannot be carried out successfully without accepting the doctrine of total non-violence, i. e., non-violence in thought, speech and action. A weak person can not practice such non-violence for the simple reason that the concept of total non-violence is not a negative one. It is not just doing nothing. True non-violence is not the product of merely an intellectual understanding. It is rather, a product of head and heart both. One cannot be non-violent unless one understands the real nature of irritating causes. But to understand the real nature of causes and events, surrounding us, two things are very necessarily required, namely, ( 1 ) love and ( 2 ) capacity to appreciate the totality of comprehensive aspects of these causes and events. As a matter of fact, both these requirements are inter-dependent, because without the love, capacity to have total comprehension is not developed and without the capacity to have total comprehension, the element of love is not developed.

This has led the Jaina thinkers to put emphasis on the development of a broader outlook and open mindedness to understand the things as they are. Cultivation of mind was found to be the key to the Halls of Heaven. But they realised that mind cannot be cultivated and disciplined by force. The basic treatment of human mind should be through reason and logic, because the existence of reason and logic is the only feature which distinguishes human beings from the rest of the animal world.

To develop this reason and logic, the Jaina thinkers provided the theory of Syādvāda, the theory of relativity, the greatest contribution made by Jainism in the thinking process of mankind but unfortunately, little known to the occidentals. This theory propounds that every judgement is relatively true,

## [ XV ]

because its truth value depends in relation to other objects — known and unknown, circumstances, mode of expression and reception and many other facts. After a period of the two thousand five hundred years, this theory has been recognised and proved by another great man — Einstein alongwith other propounders of Quantum theory, on the plane of Physics.

How to comprehend the Reality ? Can any outside agency be of help to you ? No, says the Jaina tradition; your salvation is in your own hands. You are your own master, the shaper of your own destiny. If your pleasures and pains are the result of your own action — Karma — the way of salvation is also in your own hands because what you have made can be unmade only by you. This is a serious departure from the fatalistic approach of Ājīvika philosophers of 6th century B. C, led by Gośāla, who was once a disciple of Mahāvīra.

Theory of Karma teaches us how to attain freedom from the real bondage of all likes, dislikes and desires. It teaches us not to meekly surrender to human weaknesses, described as our real enemies. It says to a person, just as your saviour is not outside you, your enemies are also not outside you. You have to seek them within. Once you do this, once you identify them within you, it is not very difficult to kill them. Jaina teachers have suggested a method by which they can be killed and annihilated. One who has succeeded in such annihilation is called Arihanta. 'Ari' in Samskr̥ta means enemy and the root 'han' means 'to kill'. The expression Arihanta means one who has totally annihilated his internal enemies. Such an Arihanta is free from bondage and becomes Siddha, one who has achieved final salvation — the real freedom. Many in this universe have achieved these positions of Arihantas and Siddhas and many will achieve the same in future. Since they have achieved that really ought to be achieved, they are entitled to our respect and homage. We, therefore, bow to them. There are learned sages, the path-seekers who show us the path. They are called Ācāryas; we bow to them. There are



[ XVI ]

those who preach and interpret these gospels of Truth. They are called Upādhyāyas; we bow down to them. There are those who still are seriously striving to achieve the above goal. They are called Sādhus ( saints ) we bow down to them also. Thus the Jainas bow down to all those who have attained, to those who are on the path of attainment and to those who are path-seekers. They bow down to them irrespective of their religious levels, because whatever be their outer level, if they have achieved or are on the path to achieve total salvation, they are entitled to our respect and homage. We pay homage to them not because we want any favour to be bestowed but because they are the source of inspiration to us for our own action.

**T. U. Mehta**

# CONTENTS

<b>Publisher's Note</b>	<b>V-VI</b>
<b>Author's Note</b>	<b>VII-X</b>
<b>Preface</b>	<b>XI-XVI</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>One ; Origins in Eternity</b>	<b>1 - 17</b>
Claims of Eternity 1, Pre-Aryan roots 1, Vedic and Śramaṇa traditions 2, Process of Synthesis 5, Our Indebtedness to Śramaṇic Culture 8, Śrī Ṛṣabha Deva 9, Śrī Neminātha 12, Śrī Pārśvanātha 14.	
<b>Two : Mahāvīra ; A Non-violent Revolutionary</b>	<b>18 - 45</b>
Transfer of Embryo 8, Socio-political conditions 19, Vajji's democracy 21, Magadha and Śreṇika ( Bimbisāra ) 22, Ajātaśatru & Vajji's 23, Princely following of Mahāvīra 24, Social Conditions 25, Intellectual Fervour 26, Revolutionary push by Mahāvīra 26, Significant Events 30, Indra's Offer of Protection 32, Five Resolves at Morak Hermitage 33, Education rather than exposure 34, Poisonous fangs of Caṇḍa Kauśika 34, State of a Digambara 35, Association with Gośāla 36, Candana Bālā : First Head of Women Disciples 40, Final Act of Nirjarā 41, Attainment of Kaivalya 43, First Gaṇadharas 44, Muttāṇam Moygāṇam 45.	
<b>Three ; The Ultimate Reality</b>	<b>46 - 53</b>
<b>Four : Ontology of Ātman, the Self</b>	<b>54 - 70</b>
Categories of Jīva 57, Quality of 'Self' 59, Avatāravāda ruled out 61, Proof of Existence 62.	

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>Five : Fact of the Matter</b>	<b>71 – 75</b>
Categories of Ajīva ( Pudgala, Dharma, Adharma, Ākāśa, Kāla ) 71.	
<b>Six : Journey to Freedom</b>	<b>76 – 94</b>
Theory of Transmigration : Search for Happiness 76, Theory of Cause and Effect 78, Three Steps to freedom 80, Samyag Darśana 80, Samyag Jñāna 82, Five Categories of Jñāna ( Mati, Śruta, Avadhi, Manaḥ-paryaya, Kevala ) 83, Samyag Cāritra 88, Ladder of Spiritual Development 88.	
<b>Seven : Ethics of Responsibility</b>	<b>95 – 111</b>
Actions follow the doer 95, Search for Responsibility and Śramaṇa line 96, Mahāvīra's Synthesis 97, Theories of Yadṛcchavāda ( Free-will ) 97, Gośāla's Niyativāda ( Determinism ) 98, Other Theories ( Kālavāda : Time theory, Svabhāvavāda : Theory of Intrinsic Nature, and Īśvaravāda : Theory of Ruling Force ) 99, Mahāvīra's Approach ( Synthesis resulting from Syādvāda ) 100, Psychological approach of Mahāvīra ( Emphasis on Bhava, Intention, Dr. Jung's deeper level of sub-conscious is Mahāvīra's theory of Bhava-karma, Mahāvīra's rejection of Jāmālī's theory of 'Kaḍe-Kaḍe', Cosmic law of causation and Karmic body ) 100, Categories of Karmas ( Gautam's dilemma ) 103, Duration of Karmic Bondage 107, Nature of Bondage 107, Mitigation of Bondage 108, Fresh Karmas 108, Life's activities ( Actions without attachment ) 109, Good actions bind if motivated 110, Consequences of Karma Theory 111.	

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>Eight ; Mechanics of Change</b>	<b>112 – 123</b>
<p>Process of Change and Nine Tattvas 112, Essential Tendency of Every Jīva 113, Papa and Puṇya : Both of Binding Nature 114, Āsrava ( influx ) 115, Bandha ( bondage ) 116, Saṁvara 117, Experience based thinking process 118, Understanding of Jīva, the sine qua non of all understanding 119, Nirjarā 120, Mokṣa ( final liberation ) 123.</p>	
<b>Nine ; Pluralistic Realism</b>	<b>124 – 132</b>
<p>Paryāyārthika Naya ( Aspect of Modification or change ) and Dravyārthika Naya ( Aspect of substratum ) 127, Seven classes of Nayas 128, Utility of Naya theory 131.</p>	
<b>Ten : Theory of Relativity</b>	<b>133 – 144</b>
<p>Why relativity ? ( Kṣetra : place, Kāla : time Ākāra : shape and Bhāva : concept, Contribute to our judgement, Hence all knowledge is relative ) 133, Importance of a negative ( The word ‘Syāt’ not used to express doubt but is used to indicate many-fold aspects, Śaṅkara’s comments and reply of scholars ) 135, Is the ‘Self’ permanent or transitory ( Paryāya, the changing mode and Dravya, the unchanging substance, All things are within their own limitations, but ‘are not’ beyond their limitations ) 138, The doctrine of duality 139, Importance of Anekānta 140, How the doctrine clarifies ‘Self’ and ‘Ahiṁsa’ 141, Anekānta and Ahiṁsā ( Real revolution is enlargement of man’s power of understanding ) 141, Einstein’s Theory ( What Einstein did on the plane of physics, Mahāvīra did in the field of thou-</p>	

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Pages</b>
ghts and metaphysics ) 142, Theory of Seven predications 143.	
<b>Eleven : Pañcaśīla</b>	<b>145 – 166</b>
Neutrality without desire ( Ācārya Kunda-kunda Vitarāga, an expression peculiar to Jainism, Freedom without forsaking worldly life, Mahāvīra's example, Two broad prepositions of 'Pañcāstikāya' of Śrī Kunda-kunda 145, Self determining Jīva 147, Five principles ( Ahimsā : Non-violence, Satya : Truth, Asteya : Non-stealing, Brahmācārya : Chastity and Aparigraha : Limiting possessions continuing consciousness from one life to the other, and equality of potentiality to achieve liberation are at the root of Ahimsā ) 148, Ancient Sramaṇa traditions 151, Distinction between Vedic and Jaina approach ( Pt. Sukhalāji's analysis, Principles of 'Nivṛtti' : retirement and 'Pravṛtti' : activity ) 148, Ahimsā : the weapon of the strong 155, Role of Intention 157, Buddhist approach 158, Anekānta, the product of Ahimsā 158, Ahimsā at the root of all Śīlas 158, Mahāvīra's contribution ( Importance of Brahmācārya which is much more than mere celibacy-Aparigraha, Restrictions in possession, We live in illusions, where Marx failed, uncontrolled appetite to possess, the root cause of all trouble ) 161.	
<b>Twelve : Modus Operandi</b>	<b>167 – 196</b>
Enlightened consciousness ( Methodology to practise Pañcaśīla ) 167, 'Self', the starting point 168, Well and eagerness 168, Anuvrata-Mahāvṛata 169, Objective observation 169, Upādāna, Nimitta ( Material and Efficient cause ) 170, Twelve Bhāvanās or Anuprekṣā	

**Chapter**

**Pages**

( Anitya, Aśaraṇa, Ekatva, Anyatva, Nivṛtti : Samsāra, Aśaraṇa, Saṁvara, Nirjarā, Aśuci, Dharma, Loka, Bodhi ) 172, Twelve Vratas of House-holder ( Five minor vows, Three supplementary vows, Four educative vows ) 175, Prayer ( their place in Jainism, Navakāra Mantra ) 178, Dhyāna ( Ārtta, Raudra, Dharma and Śukla ) 183, Leśyā ( Six types — Kṛṣṇa, Nīla, Kapota, Pīta or Tejo, Padma and Śukla ) 187, Code of conduct for monks ( Control of mind and body, Guptis and Samitis ) 190, Tapaścaryā : Austerities ( Santhārā, Saṁlekhanā, All process of Nirjarā, Basic requirement of Bhāva, i. e., emotional awareness to renounce not to show physical or mental exercises, Ābhyantara Tapa and its six categories, Bāhya Tapa and its categories, Mahāvīra always insisted on inner development to bring life to hard penance ) 191, Saṁlekhanā 196.

**Thirteen : A Path-way of Life**

**197 – 203**

Jainism is a way of life 197, Root question 197, Importance of Bheda-Jñāna 198, Practical steps 199, Nivṛtti in the midst of Pravṛtti 200, All pervasive doctrine of Ahimsā 202, Importance of celibacy 202, Relevance to modern times 203.

**Appendix**

**204 – 232**

A : Political Map in times of Mahāvīra 204, B : Thinkers outside India in times of Mahāvīra 205, C : Ājīvika Philosophy 207, D : Sāṅkhya System 212, E : Buddhism 223.

**Bibliography**

**233 – 236**





# **The Path of Arhat**

**A  
Religious  
Democracy**





## Chapter One

# ORIGINS IN ETERNITY

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“There is truth in the Jaina idea that their religion goes back to a remote antiquity, the antiquity in question being that of the pre-Aryan, so called Dravidian illuminated by the discovery of a series of great late stone-age cities in Indus valley, dating from third and perhaps even fourth millenium B. C.”<sup>1</sup>

### Claims of Eternity

Naturally the followers of every religious faith proclaim their religion as having its source in antiquity and Jainas are no exception to this. The traditions and the legendary accounts prove the existence of Jainism as eternal. Jainism is revealed again and again in every cyclic period of the universe by innumerable Tīrthaṅkaras. The Jainas divide the whole span of time into two equally spanned cycles, namely, Utsarpiṇī and Avasarpiṇī. During Utsarpiṇī, there is a gradual ascendancy in moral and physical state of the universe, while during Avasarpiṇī, the case is just reverse, i. e., the gradual descent of moral and physical state of universe. Each of these two is subdivided into six āraś each extending over crores of years. This time-cycle goes on endlessly and Tīrthaṅkaras ( Seers ) are born at regular intervals. They preach, practice and expound the eternal principles of Jainism.

### Pre-Aryan Roots

But this claim of eternity would appear to be very extravagant if we consider the fact that in our planet, the earliest

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1. Prof. Zimmer : Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization.

man of Early Palaeolithic culture lived in India some 200,000 years ago, the period when man led the life of a savage. However, now, almost all the scholars agree that Jainism has pre-Aryan roots in the cultural history of India. As Dr. A. N. Upadhye remarked — “The origins of Jainism go back to pre-historic times. They are to be sought in the fertile valley of Gaṅgā, where there thrived in the past, even before the advent of Aryans with their priestly religion, a society of recluses who laid much stress on individual exertion, on practice of a code of morality and devotion to austerities, as means of attaining religious Summum Bonum.”<sup>1</sup>

In the same vein Joseph Campbell, commented “Sāṅkhya and Yoga represented a later psychological sophistication of principles preserved in Jainism. They together are theory and practice of a single philosophy.”<sup>2</sup>

Other scholars such as Prof. Buhler<sup>3</sup>, H. Jacobi<sup>4</sup>, J. G. R. Forlong, Dr. Hornell, Pt. Sukhalalji, Prof. Vidyalaṅkara, Ācārya Tulasī, Prof. G. C. Pandey and others believe that Jainism is one of the earliest known religious systems prevailing in India amongst the non-Aryan races which belonged to Indus valley civilization.

### **Vedic and Śramaṇa Traditions**

This religious system, Jainism represented the Śramaṇic tradition, one of the two currents prevalent in Indian culture, the other being Vedic tradition. Śramaṇic tradition inherited the same principles which were subsequently systematized and

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1. See ; A Cultural History of India, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 100.
  2. Prof. Zimmer : Philosophies of India, Ed. Joseph Campbell, see editorial, p. 60.
  3. Prof. Buhler ; Indian Sect of the Jainas.
  4. Jacobi, H. : Mahāvīra and his Predecessors and Introduction to Kalpa-sūtra; Pt. Saṅghavī Sukhalal : Darśana Ane Cintana ( Gujrati ).

expounded by Tīrthaṅkaras such as R̥ṣabha, Pārśva, Mahāvīra etc. These Sramaṇas believed in soul's potentiality to achieve God-hood, through its own exertions, the theory of transmigration and Karma and the existence of Jīva in all sentient things. The word 'Śrama' ( श्रम ) means labour. They were called Śramaṇas because of the labour, they were taking in observing strict austerities, by dwelling in forests and renouncing the worldly affairs. Aryans were a nomadic race and as such were not trained in the sophisticated philosophical thinking of the fully settled and prosperous people of Indus valley culture whom they invaded and conquered. As Pt. Sukhalalji<sup>1</sup> points out, the attitude towards life of the people who are settled and prosperous, and of those who are leading a nomadic existence would be basically different. The attitude of the former would be more introvert, while that of the latter would be more extrovert. This really happened in case of Aryans who came to India. They were in search of a happy and peaceful life wherein they could enjoy the materialistic objects to the full. R̥gveda reflects this attitude when its R̥ṣis pray to different Gods of Nature for fulfilment of their earthly desires and the destruction of their enemies. However, after the Aryans began to settle in the fertile lands of Indo-Gangetic plains they also began to think deeply, and gradually imbibed the philosophical ideas of the indigenous culture. This fact has been commendably presented in the following words of Pt. Sukhalal Saṅghavi<sup>2</sup> — "The Śramaṇa line of thinking, which had influenced the original residents of India, was of serious and introvert nature. In 'Keśī-sūkta' of R̥gveda ( 10. 36 ) we find a strange pen picture of Munis having locks of hair on head, dirty and ochre-robed, flying in air, drinking poison, delicious by 'Mauneya' and 'Devesita'. This sūkta thus indicates the distinct class of Munis who were practising

1. Saṅghavi, Pt. Sukhalal : Mahāvīra Kī Aitihāsika Pṛṣṭhabhūmi.
2. Mahāvīrani Aitihāsika Pṛṣṭhabhūmi ( Gujrati ).

#### 4 ] The Path of Arhat : A Religious Democracy

Yoga either alone or in groups living in the places away from populations. On account of severe penances undertaken by them they were called Śramaṇas. They had no attachment to their bodies and took utmost care to see that no life was destroyed. The lives of these Munis were in accordance with the teachings of Ṛṣabhadeva, the first Tīrthaṅkara of Jainas. The roots of Sāṅkhya philosophy of Kapil Muni is in this non-Aryan tradition.

There were two ethnic groups of 'Vrātva' and 'Vṛṣala' which were following this non-Aryan traditions. There were five sub-races of Vrātva group, one of which was known as Arhanta. Vrātvas were also the worshippers of Liṅga. Atharva-veda contains a prayer of 'Eka-vrātva' ( 15th Kāṇḍa ) who was a Vrātva-God. 'Liṅga' worship is indicative of Śaiva religion. The Aryans subsequently recognised Śiva as one of their gods, but previous to that Śiva or Rudra was not originally an Aryan god.

In both the ethnic groups of Vrātva and Vṛṣala non-violence and austerities were greatly respected. Non-violence, austerities and sacrifice are the result of a peaceful and steady social structure. The development of these virtues in the people, who have to move from place to place in struggle of life, is not possible and therefore, the cultural development of Aryans was based on active and adventurous social life. For these reasons non-Aryan culture became introvert and Aryan culture became extrovert. Both these cultures developed in their own way, but after the Aryans settled in this land, both the cultures influenced each other for thousands of years as a result of which a new synthesis grew up which we now identify as Indian culture."

Speaking of Buddha and Mahāvīra Pt. Sukhalalji remarked that both of them are likely to be the Kṣatriyas of Vṛṣala group and that Buddha was also known as 'Vṛṣalaka'. The selection of the words 'Muni' and 'Arhat' in Keśī-sūkta of Ṛgveda, is also suggestive of Śramaṇa tradition because

these words are prevalent in all the branches of Śramaṇa school namely Jainas, Buddhists, Ājivakas and Sāṅkhya of Kapil Muni.

The Śramaṇa outlook towards life, being introvert in nature was known as Nivṛtti Dharma, while that of Vedic Aryans being extrovert in nature was known as 'Pravṛtti Dharma'. This basic difference of approach marked the advent of different theories in the field of philosophy. One sought to achieve the absolute by withdrawing from the worldly affairs, undergoing the process of 'Pratikramaṇa' ( Returning back-to soul ). The other sought to achieve the same by undergoing the process of expansion which would envelope the whole universe by its theory of Advaita. Both these processes went on together for thousand of years influencing each other with the result that the absorbing power of the Aryan mind made it possible to evolve a synthesis wherein both became complementary to each other and both became two aspects of the same composite culture. Even the great Śaṅkara, endowed with penetrating insight, acknowledged and proclaimed in his introduction to Gīta-Bhāṣya that both these processes were 'Vedokta', i. e., prescribed by Vedas. He said "Dvividho hi vedokto dharmah pravṛtti lakṣaṇo Nivṛtti lakṣaṇo'ca", ( द्विविधो हि वेदोक्तो धर्मः । प्रवृत्ति लक्षणो निवृत्ति लक्षणोश्च ) meaning Vedas have prescribed two streams of religion one is action oriented and the other is retirement oriented.

### Process of Synthesis

Evidently, with the emergence of Upaniṣada era ( about 800 B. C. and after ) the process of synthesis of non-aryan Śramaṇa and Aryan Vedic cultures started. The social, economic and political interaction between Aryan settlers and their more advanced non-aryan brothers, enriched their knowledge of the former. They began to interpret their Vedas in the light of this enhanced knowledge. At this stage, a recapitulation of periodic division of early Indian history would be of some interest to understand the long

## 6 ] The Path of Arhat : A Religious Democracy

process of integration of the non-Aryan and Aryan cultures. Roughly, the period corresponding to 3500 B. C. to 1500 B. C. is considered to be the period of Indus valley civilization of non-Aryan races in India. This coincides with the Sumerian and Akkad civilizations of Middle east, prospered in about 2300 B. C. (They were also river valley civilizations) and Minoan civilization of Crete. Thus the period corresponding over two thousand years can be carved out for River valley civilization which spread over northern and western parts of India extending upto Saurāṣṭra in Gujrat. It is a story which is five to six thousand years ago.

Aryan invasions of India dated approximately before 1500 B. C., i. e., about three to four thousand years ago from today, practically coincided with the Hellenic invasions of Greece. They seem to have brought some portions of Ṛgveda and other Vedas with them. From 1500 B. C. to 800 B. C. — a period of about 700 years may be termed as Vedic and subsequent Brāhmaṇa period. Brāhmaṇas elaborate the rules and details for the employment of the Mantras or hymns at various sacrificial rituals. As a result of which the priestly class, with sole and exclusive right of performing rituals gained much social prominence and virtually dominated the society. During this period the Aryans had completely settled and had fully vanquished the non-Aryan races. These were being absorbed in their social structure principally as 'dasyus' (labour class) and were treated as second class citizens. However, the Aryans had tremendous capacity to absorb and to assimilate all new things of life. They not only adopted many cultural and philosophical thinking of their non-Aryan brothers, but also enriched the same by their own original thoughts. They realised that beyond this mundane existence as well as after life, there is something distinct. For attaining that something the propitiation of gods by sacrifices and offerings of living beings is not the way. When acquainted with the non-Aryan theories of austerities, non-violence, Karma

and soul, they realized that something, the aim of their pursuit could be apprehended by working on these theories. This becomes quite evident when in Chāndogya Upaniṣad Ṛṣi Āruṇi explains to his son the newly found secret of the real nature of the self, not taught to him during the course of the long term of his education in existing Vedas ( Ref. to the dialogue between Āruṇi and his son Śvetaketu in Chapter on "Ontology of Ātman" in this book ). Naciketā of Kaṭhopa- niṣad goes to Yama ( God to Death ) to learn the science of Ātman ( soul ) by asking the question "When a man dies, does he still exist or not ?" Thus there was a fervent intellectual agitation in the post-Brahmanic period when the Ṛṣis of Upaniṣadas began to challenge the usefulness of sacrificial rituals and began to apply their mind objectively to the teachings of Śramaṇa traditions of ancient India. This trend had started long before Upaniṣadic period but it gained momentum only during that period. Twenty-third Tīrthaṅkara of Jainas, Pārśvanātha, recognised now as a historical person, flourished during 872 to 772 B. C., the time when the Upaniṣadas were getting on full swing. Like his successor Mahāvīra, Pārśva also had a great organising capacity. He organised the Śrama- ñic order and propounded 'Caturyama' of four principles namely Non-violence ( Ahimsā ), Truth ( Satya ), Non-stealing ( Asteya ) and Restrictions on possession ( Aparigraha ). His Śramaṇa teachings had great influence on contemporary thinking. And with the advent of Mahāvīra ( 526 B. C. ) the time became ripe for the final and decisive assault on priestly Brahmanic culture of rituals and violent sacrifices. Both Mahāvīra and his contemporary Buddha ( 563 B. C. ) led a relentless crusade against the social and cultural evils prevalent at the time. This crusade went on with such a vigour till 8th century A. D. that, but for the advent of the great Śaṅkara, who assimilated Śramaṇa ideas of Buddhism with his brilliant exposition of Vedānta. Vedic culture would have been practically eclipsed throughout India. Now the Śramaṇic ideas of non-violence, karma and soul have become so much identified



with the Vedic culture that there is absolutely no difference between the attitude of a Jaina and a Hindu towards life's problems, individual or social. These attitudes are so identical that unless one tells you that he is a Jaina by religion you cannot make out from his behaviour that he is a non-Hindu by faith.

### **Our indebtedness to Śramaṇic Culture**

At this point of time, after such a huge long gap it is impossible to measure the degree of indebtedness of the composite-culture, to Śramaṇic culture of the indigenous races of India, which we inherit today and are so much proud of. The theory of Karma is basic to the theory of transmigration, Ahimsā, universal love, and the ultimate salvation of the soul. Because of this theory, we keep our personal behaviour and social conduct on the right path. Existence of soul, the theory of Karma, the soul's journey through the cycle of birth and rebirth and its salvation as its final goal are the basic fundamental postulates of all the three Indian philosophies — Hindu, Jaina and Bauddha. And if we consider that all these basic ideas have been adopted principally from those progressive and cultured people of Indus valley civilization, we conquered and captured as 'dasyus' we do become overwhelmed by a mixed sense of shame for us and gratitude for them. The following observations of Sri A. L. Basham<sup>1</sup>, in his 'Post script' attached to the article of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan on Hinduism, are the most relevant. This observation shows the intensity of the impact which Śramaṇa traditions have made to shape the composite culture of which we as Indians can be legitimately proud. The following are his words :

"The most important religious heritage of India from her ancient past is the doctrine of transmigration ( Samsāra )."  
... .."The evidence for the origin of this doctrine is very faint.

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1. Basham, A. L. : 'Post script', attached to the Article on Hinduism in Cultural History of India, Oxford, pp. 78-80.

It may have been borrowed from the non-Brahmin and originally non-Aryan elements in the Gaṅgā valley, and may have gained currency only against considerable resistance from conservative elements. The names of Yājñavalkya, Uddālaka, Āruṇi and Gautama are connected with it in the traditions. How this secret doctrine spread and became universally accepted is quite unknown. We can only suggest that it was disseminated by wandering ascetics, outside the fraternities of sacrificial priests."

"A definite doctrine of transmigration appears for the first time in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad ( vi. 2, repeated with some amplification in Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 3-10 ). The teaching here enunciated, which has certain primitive features such as do not occur in the developed doctrine of Saṃsāra, is ascribed to the Kṣatriya, Jaivali Pravahana, a chief of the tribe of Pāñcalas, who taught it to the Brāhmin Āruṇi Gautama, also known as Uddālaka Āruṇi, apparently one of the most vigorous thinkers of the period ( perhaps c. 700 B. C. ). Another passage in Bṛhadāraṇyak ( III. 2 ) tells how the great sage Yājñavalkya secretly taught to a questioner as a new and secret theory, the doctrine of karma, that the good and evil deeds of a man automatically influence his state of future lives."

"Transmigration must have encouraged the doctrine of Ahimsā, for the doctrine linked all living things together in a single complex system-as all possessing souls."

"As a source of consolation, it ( Doctrine of Karma ) has done much to mould the Indian character and to shape the Indian way of life."

These observations are sufficient to show the intensity of the impact which Śramaṇa traditions have made to shape the composite culture of which we as Indians can be legitimately proud.

### **Ṛṣabhadeva, the first Tīrthaṅkara**

Among, the twenty four Tīrthaṅkaras, the place of pride

occupied by Ṛṣabhadeva, the first tirthaṅkara, in history was unparallel. Even Lord Mahāvīra, failed to possess that. Lord Mahāvīra had inherited what Lord Ṛṣabhadeva established. Ṛṣabhadeva was, the pioneer of spirituality as well as of Śramaṇa tradition, was temporal teacher who organised the contemporary society by establishing the institution of marriage, evolving the Brāhmī script, teaching the art of agriculture, building of the mounds and the disposal of the dead bodies by cremation. He is also looked upon as a great pioneer in the history of human progress. At the time of Ṛṣabha the contemporary human society was primitive and totally disorganised. It was Ṛṣabha who taught his people to live in accordance with the modern standards of family life. It is said that the art of rearing children, establishment of social norms and group life, building of townships were among the useful social necessities which were taught by him. He built the first town, named 'vinitā', now known as 'Ayodhyā'.

He belonged to the Ikṣvāku family of Ayodhyā. His father was Nābhi Rājā and mother Marudevī. He married two wives named Sumaṅgalā and Sunandā. Among his hundred sons, the eldest was Bharata, after his name our country is known as 'Bhārata'. His another illustrious son was Bāhubali. He had two daughters Brāhmī and Sundarī.

It is believed that Brāhmī script was taught by him to his daughter Brāhmī, whose name the script is bearing. Those days real brothers and sisters were treated as 'Yugals' ( couples who can have physical relationship ). This system had much in common with ancient Egypt where kings married their own sisters. Ṛṣabha's daughter Brāhmī had renounced the world and had become a nun. Sundarī, another daughter, was very beautiful and learned. Bharata, the eldest son, wanted to marry Sundarī but Sundarī did not want to marry at all and took to severe austerities to contain her overflowing beauty. Bāhubali, another son of Ṛṣabha was a warrior of tremendous strength. Bharata, his elder brother, was entitled to the

throne. After Bharata became the ruler on retirement of R̥ṣabha, Bāhubali could not tolerate his suzerainty and so there was a duel between the two brothers. Bāhubali was stronger. As he raised his iron fist to kill Bharata, he realized what he was up to. He atonce curbed his emotions and directed his fist to himself, annihilated his own ego, renounced the world and became a recluse. Bharata established a big empire, became a Cakravartin, and once, when he was dressing in his glass room he found that one of his fingers was looking odd for want of usual rings. This small incident started in his mind a chain of introspective thinking and he also relinquished his kingly power and became a recluse. Other 98 sons of R̥ṣabha also became recluses.

R̥ṣabhadeva himself had renounced the worldly affairs after rendering yeoman service to the society, undertook severe austerities for twelve months, established 'Saṅgha' of monks, nuns and householders and taught them the first principles of Sramaṇa traditions.

Such is the story of, perhaps, the first royal family of India — a beginning, ingrained with the idea that ultimate goal of human life is not to be sought in the material gains of the world but in their renunciation and the conquest of baser instincts of human existence.

R̥ṣabha is as much venerable amongst the people wedded to Vedic traditions as amongst the people of Śramaṇic traditions. He is the only Jaina Tīrthaṅkara, included among Hindu Avatāras (Divine descent). Śrīmadbhāgavat<sup>1</sup> refers to him with great respect and reverence and mentions that our country was named 'Bhāratavarṣa' after his son Bharata, his successor, to the throne, who became a Cakravartī.

R̥gveda, Yajurveda and Viṣṇu and Bhāgavata Purāṇas refer to R̥ṣabhadeva with high esteem. They describe him as Parama Guru (Great venerated Guru-Master) 'परमगुरोर्भगवतः'

1. Śrīmadbhāgavat, Skandha (chapter) V.

‘One who has taken birth to teach the path of Kaivalya ( Pure Knowledge)’. ‘Mahā-muni’ ( a great saint ), ‘one who possessed devotion, knowledge and non-attachment’.

The above references exalting Ṛṣabhadeva in Vedas and Purāṇas of Hindus make us to believe that he belonged to the Aryan stock and adopted Śramaṇa practices for spiritual progress. However, it is an uphill task to ascertain his date. Traditional Jaina sources contend that he lived millions of years before in pre-historic times. His father Nābhi Rājā is considered, even by Hindu scriptures as the last of Manus ( ‘Manu’ was not the name of any particular person but it was the name given to a designation of one who led the society ). If this means that Ṛṣabhadeva ruled Ayodhyā ( Vinitā ) after the advent of Aryans in India, the period of his reign can hardly be fixed 5000 years ago from today. Since he belonged to Ikṣvāku dynasty of Rulers of Ayodhya to which many illustrious rulers including Daśaratha and his son Rāma, the venerated hero of Rāmāyaṇa belonged, it is reasonable to conclude that this great master, the first Tīrthaṅkara of the Jainas, must have flourished 5 to 6 thousand years ago, and became the principal exponent of Śramaṇa tradition. In addition to Ṛṣabhadeva we have historical references of 22nd Tīrthaṅkara Neminātha, a cousin of Śrīkṛṣṇa, Śrī Pārśvanātha, 23rd Tīrthaṅkara and Śrī Mahāvīra, the 24th and the last Tīrthaṅkara only.

### Śrī Neminātha

The 22nd Tīrthaṅkara was born in the illustrious ‘Yadu’ family of Śrīkṛṣṇa of Mahābhārata. His father Samudravijaya was the elder brother of Vasudeva, the father of Śrīkṛṣṇa thus being Śrīkṛṣṇa’s nearest cousin. He was also known as Ariṣṭanemi and is referred to as such in Ṛgveda ( 2. 33. 10 ) and again in its 6th Adhyāya ( Chapter ).

Yādavas were a brave, virile and prosperous race of Kṣatriyas of Northern India. Jarāsandha, the ruler of Magadha, was a very powerful monarch, feeling envious of the

progress of Yādavas. He was therefore harrassing Yādavas by various means. Śrīkrṣṇa, realizing that Jarāsandha would not allow Yādavas to live in peace, took all the Yādavas with him and migrated to modern Saurāṣṭra and established at Dvārikā on the sea-shore of Arabian ocean ( Modern Dvārikā is not the same as established by Śrīkrṣṇa. Dvārikā established by him was near the place called 'Madhupur' on the South-western coast of Saurāṣṭra near Verāval ).

Neminātha seems to have been brought up at Dvārikā. His marriage was arranged by Śrīkrṣṇa with one Rājmatī, the sister of king 'Kāṁsa' ( killed by Śrīkrṣṇa for his cruelties ) and the daughter of King 'Ugrasena' ( imprisoned by son Kāṁsa ). While going along with his marriage party for wedding Neminātha heard the cries of animals and on inquiry was deeply moved to find that hundreds of animals, were huddled and tied mercilessly in an enclosure in order to prepare his marriage feast. This saddened his heart and a serious introspection started within him, which led him to renounce the world then and there. He asked his charrioteer to turn back. He left the wedding, became a recluse and went to nearby mount 'Revata' ( modern 'Girnār', near the town of Jūnāgaḍha in South Saurāṣṭra ), to perform austerities, and finally obtained Kaivalya.

His would be bride Rājmatī, inspired by Neminātha's action also renounced the world, became a nun and went to mount 'Revata' for religious penances. Neminātha's real brother 'Rathanemi', had also renounced the world and had taken 'Sāṁnyāsa' and was living at mount 'Revata'. Once during heavy down pour, in order to get a safe place Rathanemi entered a cave in that mount. There he found Rājmatī with wet clothes stuck to her beautiful and proportionate physical frame. Attracted by the bewitching beauty of Rājmatī, he made some overtures to her. Sagatious Rājmatī responded by reminding him his role of a spiritual seeker and admonished him not to fall from the heights, he was striving to reach. She

brought him to his senses. This inspiring incident has become the subject matter of one of the finest pieces of poetry in Jaina literature.

Chāndogya Upaniṣad records that Śrīkṛṣṇa took his education of Ahimsā from a sage called 'Ghor Āṅgīrasa'. Śrī Dharmānanda Kauśāmbī<sup>1</sup>, a learned Buddhist Scholar opined that sage Ghor Āṅgīrasa, was none other than Śrī Neminātha. Other scholars refute this fact. Whatever it may be, it is true that Neminātha known as Ariṣṭanemi was highly respected not only by Śrīkṛṣṇa and his Yadu family but also by all the members of contemporary society and is the one who is bowed to, first along with other holy names before any auspicious ceremony begins. In fact, one belief is that Śrī Balarāma, the foster brother of Śrīkṛṣṇa, considered to be the most invincible warrior of his times, and, who was the teacher of Duryodhana, the Kaurava chief, and Bhīma, the powerful Pāṇḍava. Balarāma was the only warrior of note, not to join Mahābhārata war on the principle that there is no war which can be legitimately called 'Dharma-yuddha' (Holy war). The story goes that Balarāma was under the influence of the Śramaṇa tradition followed by Neminātha. Thus in short, these are a few facts known about the 22nd Tīrthāṅkara of the Jainas.

### Śrī Pārśvanātha

The historicity of the 23rd Tīrthāṅkara Pārśvanātha is now a well established fact, acceptable to almost all the scholars. The immediate predecessor of Śrī Mahāvīra, was born in 872 B. C. or according to some, in the 8th century B. C., some 350 years before Śrī Mahāvīra. Most of the stotras (prayers) of the Jainas are addressed to him. Mahāvīra's parents and the whole family belonged to Pārśva traditions. Once Mahāvīra was believed by some western thinkers as the

1. Kauśāmbī, Dharmānanda ; Bhāratīya Saṃskṛti Aur Ahimsā, p. 38.

founder of Jainism but now it is universally recognised that Śrī Mahāvīra, unlike Śrī Buddha, was not the founder of any new religion. He was only a follower, who rejuvenated the whole thinking of the contemporary society by giving enlightened interpretations to the principles, already propounded by Śrī Pārśva.

Śrī Pārśva was born to king Aśvasena of Kāśī ( modern Benaras ) and mother Vāmādevī. Like Rṣabha he also belonged to Ikṣvāku race of Kṣatriyas. He was married to Prabhavatī, the daughter of Prasenjit, the king of Kuśasthala.

Those were the days when severe religious penances were undertaken by monks. Many of these penances were of acrobatic type and could hardly be endured by laity. Moreover, though Śramaṇa tradition of Ahimsā persisted among the monks who were practising austerities in forests the ordinary man of the world was not effectively touched by these principles. Pārśva systematized these principles, gave them practical shape and put before the public for their practice in day to day life. In other words, he established a code of conduct to be followed by those having renounced the world and also by the house-holders. He emphasised that the penances, aimed at tormenting physical senses without any inner development, carried no meaning. Therefore, he prescribed four ways of conduct known as Cāturyāma, comprising Ahimsā ( non-violence ), Satya ( truth ), Asteya ( non-stealing ) and Aparigraha ( restriction of possessions ). These four principles together with the additional fifth Brahmacharya, the innovation of Mahāvīra, have formed the five basic principles of Jainism. Though these four principles were well known to Śramaṇa line of thinking, it was Pārśva who put them systematically before the public to be taken as a routine code of conduct. From his very youth Pārśva was a fervent advocate of these principles, even before he renounced the world and took to religious penances. While in princehood he came across a powerful Brāhmin Tāpas called Kāmaṭha



who performed religious penances by lightening fire all round him. For this purpose many trees were cut and logs of wood were burnt. Pārśva realised that this practice killed living creatures taking shelter in the trees and logs of wood. Once on seeing a big serpent being burnt alive, he saved it and incurred the wrath of Kāmaṭha. For this he had to pay heavily because, as the story goes, Kāmaṭha, the ascetic, subsequently tormented Pārśva, when the later was performing austerities after renouncing the world. After living in splendour and happiness as a house-holder for thirty years, Pārśva became an ascetic, took to meditation and at the end of 84 days of intense austerities, he attained perfect knowledge of a 'Kevali'. He lived for about one hundred years during which he formed Jaina Saṅgh ( organization ) consisting of four components, i. e., Monks, nuns, male and female house-holders. Saṅgha was again divided into 'Gaṇas' groups and Gaṇadharas where the group-heads. The whole Jaina organization functioned in a systematic framework. As Śrī Dharmānanda Kauśāmbī, records<sup>1</sup> — "Janmejaya succeeded Parikṣita. He performed a Mahāyajña in 'Kuru Deśa, and unfurled the flag of Vedic religion. At that time Pārśva was laying the foundation of a new culture at Kāśī."

"Pārśvanātha's philosophy was practical. He preached that violence, untruth, theft and greed should be abandoned. This four-fold rule of conduct was his religion which he propagated throughout India. To give an organised shape to the doctrine of Ahimsā in such ancient times was a mile-stone in the history of India.

"Pārśva co-ordinated the doctrine of Ahimsā with the doctrines of Truth, non-stealing and non-possession. Till then the doctrine of non-violence was confined to the conduct of ascetics, living in forests. Pārśva brought that doctrine to

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1. Kauśāmbī, Dharmānanda : Bhāratiya Saṁskṛti aur Ahimsā quoted by Amar Muni in Jainatva ki Jhānki, Hindu, p. 34,

practical life and by a proper co-ordination of the Ahimsā doctrine with other three doctrines, he gave it a social norm to be practised in life.”

Pārśva organized a ‘Saṅgh’ for the propagation of his principles. It is found from Bauddha literature that out of all religious organizations the organization of Jaina monks and nuns was the biggest.

These observations of a renowned Buddhist fully reveal the character and importance of this great man. Elsewhere in this thesis we have noted how Mahāvīra reconsidered the efficacy of Pārśva’s Cāturyāma doctrine and found it necessary to add one more rule of conduct namely, Brahmacharya ( Chapter of ‘Pañcaśeel’ ) and hence it is not necessary to repeat the same at this stage. Uttarādhyayana sūtra<sup>1</sup>, one of the principal scriptures of Jainas, refers to a dialogue between Śrī Keśī Muni, one of the principal saints, following Pārśva tradition, and Gautama, the principal disciple of Mahāvīra, about the necessity of incorporating the fifth principle of Brahmacharya to the Cāturyāma doctrine. Keśī Muni was convinced by Gautama of Mahāvīra’s stand.

It is thus clear that after Rṣabha, the first Tīrthaṅkara, the historical figure of Pārśva, the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara, provides us the first systematic attempt to organize the Jaina Śaṅgha and to prescribe a code of conduct for ascetics as well as for householders based on the fundamentals of Śramaṇa traditions.

More than 250 years thereafter, it was for another great personality, Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, to give a reorientation to these concepts with a revolutionary zeal.




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1. Uttarādhyayana-sūtra, 23rd chapter ( Adhyayana ).

## Chapter Two

# MAHĀVĪRA : A NON-VIOLENT REVOLUTIONARY

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Prof. K. C. Jaina observed, "For Mahāvīra distinctions of caste, creed or sex did not matter. According to him, salvation is the birth-right of everyone, and it is assured if one follows the prescribed rule of conduct. His doctrine of Karma made the individual conscious of his responsibility for all actions. It also awakened the consciousness that salvation was not a gift or favour but an attainment within the reach of human beings."<sup>1</sup>

The world has witnessed many revolutions – political, social and economic but rarely there was a revolution, utterly silent and totally non-violent. The great revolutionaries like Mahāvīra, Buddha, Jesus Christ, Zarathustra and Lao-tse, heralded silent, peaceful and non-violent revolutions in their contemporary societies.

In the long history of mankind, the period, corresponding to 6th – 7th century B. C. is marked by great intellectual cum spiritual fervour throughout the world. It was during this period that the world witnessed the emergence of early Greek philosophers such as Thales, Anaximander, Pythagoras, Empidocles and Heraclitus in the West and thinkers like Zarathrustra, Lao-tse, Mahāvīra and Gautama Buddha in the East.

### **Transfer of Embryo**

This great soul of Mahāvīra was born in sixth century B. C. Some scholars accept 526 B. C. as the year of his birth while to some it was 599 B. C. Born in Kaśyapa Gotra of Jñāṭṛ clan of Kṣatriyas, he was also known as 'Nātaputta'.

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1. Prof. Jaina, K. C. : Mahāvīra and His Times, p. 89.

His father was Siddhārtha and mother was Triśalā, the sister of Vaiśālī king Ceṭaka. His parents were the followers of 23rd Tīrthaṅkara Pārśva. 'Śvetāmbaras' (one of the dominant Jaina sects) believed that Mahāvīra was first conceived in the womb of one Devanandā, a Brahmin lady. The embryo was later transferred to the womb of 'Triśalā' as the gods thought that Tīrthaṅkaras were not born in Brahmin families. 'Digambaras' (another dominant Jaina sect) do not subscribe to this story of transfer of embryo. The story as to what the 'gods' thought about the eligibility of a Brahmin family to give birth to a Tīrthaṅkara is undoubtedly jingoistic and not warranted by the basic principles of Jainism, and mission of equality which the lord himself carried during his life time. But the possibility of the transfer of foetus by some surgical operation cannot be ruled out. It may be noted in this connection that Bhagavatī-sūtra, the 5th aṅga of Jaina scripture containing a vivid picture of the life and work of Mahāvīra contains a story that after Mahāvīra became famous as an impressive preacher and masses were flocking to have his 'Darśana', a Brahmin couple named Devanandā and Rṣabhadatta came to see him. On seeing Mahāvīra, Devanandā was overwhelmed by motherly emotions for him and milk began to flow from her breasts. When Gautama, the chief disciple, saw this and asked the master the reason for this state of Devanandā, the Master replied that this was because Devanandā was his real mother. However, 'Bhagavatī-sūtra' does not contain the story about the change of embryo. It is therefore reasonable to infer that Mahāvīra might have been adopted by the Kṣatriya family of Siddhārtha and Triśalā. This controversy about the birth is not of any importance. What is of real importance, is the life and work of this great soul.

### **Socio-political Conditions**

Before narrating some significant incidents of his life, it would be proper to make a brief reference to the social, economic and political conditions prevailing in India at the time

of his birth because in the ultimate analysis, it is these socio-economic forces which give birth to the revolutions of the type which leaders like Mahāvīra and Buddha sponsored.

The most significant aspect of the political history of India, right from the times of Mahāvīra ( 6 century B. C. ) upto the present day, is that India has rarely been politically united. The periods witnessing political unity have been extremely short in the face of prolonged history of thousands of years. The second remarkable aspect of political history of India is that when politically united under one rule, our country prospered and earned a respectable place in world community. The third and the most important aspect of our history is that even though our political leaders failed us, mostly in achieving political unity, we retained our national unity mainly because of our cultural unity which our people have developed through ages by their inherent sagacity and wisdom. This cultural unity is expressed through our way of life, our spirit of tolerance and accommodation and our capacity of endurance and patience which we have been able to exhibit commonly irrespective of our castes, creed or religion. The main contributing factor to these virtues is the power of assimilation possessed by the Aryan race, settled in the country. Aryans learnt in plenty from the more civilized, original settlers of this land but they also made their own original contribution to enhance the ideas which they learnt. When Mohammedans came to India, they, unlike the previous invaders, came with their own religion and culture, with the result that they could not be assimilated in the existing Indian culture. On the contrary, they tried to impose their own by forcible conversions and political, social and economic repression. But by the passage of time even Islam was influenced by Upaniṣadic thoughts giving birth to Indian Sufism which attracted both Hindu and Muslim masses. Today an average Muslim's social and ethical attitude is not fundamentally different from that of an average Hindu or Jaina or Christian. One can find a difference only in degrees. But an Indian Mus-

lim or an Indian Christian is more an Indian than his co-religionist elsewhere. Thus our culture, developed by the people of our nation through ages, has saved our national unity, inspite of our political leaders' failure and inspite of the partition of our country on the eve of our political independence.

The roots of above analysis are found in the socio-political environment, prevailing during the time of Mahāvīra. Those were the times when there was no paramount power to control the whole or even a great bulk of the country. There were small states and republics having monarchical as well as non-monarchical forms of government each trying to dominate the other. Political leadership in both the forms of government had failed to unite the country as a one whole. Even in the regions not having monarchy, the political structure was mainly oligarchical in character, power vested in the hands of the elite. Socially, on account of the belief that gods can be pleased to make our life comfortable only by sacrifices, a priestly class with great vested interests grew up and the growth of Brahmanical scriptures, prescribing intricate and highly specialized rules for sacrifices, made the services of the priestly class inevitable even for the ruling princes and political leaders. However, the thinkers like Pārśva, Kapila, Uddālaka Āruṇi, Yājñavalkya and many other Ṛṣis of later Upaniṣadas had started making dents on stronghold of sacrificial priests and princes. These great thinkers had already started a thinking process which was given a revolutionary push by Mahāvīra and Buddha and which eventually proved to be a cementing force of cultural unity inspite of the internecine quarrels between the political leaders of the day. A cursory look at the political situation in the time of Mahāvīra will show this.

### **Vajji's Democracy**

Vedic, Jaina and Buddhist texts reveal that there were mainly sixteen political entities called 'Mahājanapadas' in

India. Most of these sixteen entities are shown in the political map given in ( Appendix A ). As already noted above, these entities were either monarchical or non-monarchical. The latter had evolved a system of representation by election but the lay people were not associated with that process. Election was mostly of the representatives of aristocratic Kṣatriya clans. However, more systematic and more or less modern methods were adopted by Vajjis, who were composed by powerful Licchavis, Videhas and Mallas. Their territory extended from South of Nepal to the North of Ganges. They had adopted a voting system, an organised Federal council, took all decisions by debates, set up a strong administrative system, evolved a judicial administration, safe-guarding efficiently liberty of citizens and proved a great bulwark against the neighbouring powerful monarchies of Magadha and Kośala. King Ceṭaka, the head of Licchavi republic, was a powerful and influential head of the Vajji confederation. Mahāvīra's mother Triśalā was his sister. His daughter Cellanā was the wife of Magadha King Bimbisāra known in Jaina literature as 'Śreṇika'. Vaiśālī was the capital of Vajji Confederation. Mahāvīra's blood relationship with the Licchavis was of great help to him in influencing other powerful rulers of neighbouring states of Magadha, Kośala and Aṅga. His upbringing in the greatly democratic atmosphere of the Vajjis must have been helpful in inculcating in him the ideas of equality and fraternity, which made him popular with the masses. Mahāvīra's birth place was 'Kuṇḍagrama' a suburb of Vaiśālī, the Vajji capital.

### **Magadha and Śreṇika**

Other kingdoms of prominence were those of Magadha and Kośala. King Bimbisāra ( Śreṇika ) of Magadha and his wife Cellanā were very ardent devotees of Mahāvīra. Bimbisāra had built a very powerful empire and developed friendly relationship with almost every powerful king of India of his time. His first wife was the sister of Prasenajit, a

powerful king of Kośala. Aṅga Deśa was conquered by him. King Caṇḍa Pradyota of Avanti was very ambitious. He attacked Rājagṛha, the then capital of Magadha, but the attack was foiled by Bimbisāra's very clever son Abhayakumār, also an ardent devotee of Śrī Mahāvīra. Thereafter, the Avanti king and the king of Gāndhāra became very good friends of Bimbisāra. Bimbisāra is so much respected by the Jainas that he is given the status of a Tīrthankara in the next time-cycle.

### **Ajātaśatru Vajjis**

However, Bimbisāra was imprisoned by his ambitious son Kuṇika Ajātaśatru and is said to have committed suicide by taking poison. Ajātaśatru ascended to the throne of Magadha and expanded his territory by conquests. He was a very staunch follower of Mahāvīra though even Buddhists claim his devotion to Buddha. Ajātaśatru schemed a plan to break the unity and strength of Vajjis and became successful after the long efforts of sixteen years. Ajātaśatru waged war with King Prasenajit of Kośala but was defeated. He quarrelled with the strong confederacy of Vajjis led by Ceṭaka for reasons which are differently given by Buddhists and Jainas. However it was not easy to break the solidarity of the Licchavis and other members of confederacy. Ajātaśatru, therefore resorted to dubious method of first sowing the seeds of discord among different classes of the confederacy through one of his ministers who settled amongst the Vajjis and became successful in destroying the social unity of the people. In this connection, the Buddhist scripture Mahāparinibbāna-sutta records a very interesting dialogue between Lord Buddha and his principal pupil Ānanda—a dialogue which is very instructive and relevant to the present conditions of our country. It is said that Ajātaśatru wanted to know the opinion of Lord Buddha through his pupil Ānanda as to the advisability of invading the Vajjis. The Master is said to have replied that it was not possible to vanquish the Vajjis so long as they stuck to the following seven principles, viz. :

- ( 1 ) They continued to hold public assemblies frequently.



## 24 ] The Path of Arhat : A Religious Democracy

( 2 ) They continued to discuss their affairs freely and tried to arrive at unanimity in their resolutions and execution of their affairs.

( 3 ) They continue to act in accordance with their time-tested ancient institutions and enact nothing which is not yet established.

( 4 ) They continue to honour the advice of their elders.

( 5 ) They honour their womanhood.

( 6 ) They continue the traditional worship of their shrines.

( 7 ) They protect and defend the respectful persons who came to reside with them.

Obviously, this was the prescription for unity because unity of a nation is its real strength. Ajātaśatru seems to have taken a clue from this and prepared for a preliminary grounding by a carefully planned espionage, which sowed seeds of disunity amongst the Vajjis, who were finally defeated and destroyed by Magadha. Lord Mahāvīra never approved of this aggressive attitude of Ajātaśatru and remonstrated him by telling him that he earned his place in Hell by invading the Vajjis.

### **Princely following of Mahāvīra**

Apart from Magadha, King Prasenajit of Kośala, King Udayana of Sindhu Sauvīra ( Lower Indus valley ), Princes of Yadu family of Śūrasena ( region round Mathurā ), Pāñcala King Sañjaya of Kāmpilya and many other small princes of different regions of India became Mahāvīra's disciples and entered his order. Discipleship of many of these princes is claimed even by the Buddhists. It appears that in those days the impact of Jainism and Buddhism was so great and personalities of the great men of both the orders—Mahāvīra and Buddha were so imposing that both were respected and honoured by most of the ruling princes of India. The fact that both Jainism and Buddhism led the revolt against sacrificial

rituals and priestly hegemony must have also blurred the philosophical distinction between their thinking in the eyes of the laity.

All available materials show that most of the non-monarchical states of that period, except the Vajjis, were not properly managed by their oligarchical systems. The terms 'Gaṇa' and 'Saṅgha' were used for these states and their leaders were known as 'Rajās'. They kept on fighting amongst themselves and rendered the administration insecure for people. People therefore wanted stability under the suzerainty of a strong ruler. Therefore, non-monarchical states were eventually destroyed.

### **Social Conditions**

Social conditions in the time of Mahāvira were more ripe for the change. India has always been a stinking caste-ridden society, which, in those days was dominated by a priestly order, which was socially and economically interested in tightening its hold on the social and political structure through the monopoly of its knowledge of sacrificial rituals. Birth, and not the profession or merits, was the criterion to decide the caste complexion. Knowledge of scriptures was not open to Śūdras, the lower castes. Untouchables were social outcasts and their condition was full of miseries. Even their sight was considered inauspicious. Inequality was the rule of the day. Women, who had equal status with men in earlier centuries, were treated more or less as personal property of their husbands. To have more than one wife was considered prestigious by the rich. There were special and more favourable laws for Brahmins. The system of slavery had taken roots. Human slaves were sold, purchased and gifted. Defeated king's family and subjects were taken in booty as slaves. Princes were fighting amongst themselves for trivial causes and mostly for expansion of their territories even though some of them were related to each other by blood. Human happiness in this and the other world was dependent on the favours of gods who could be pleased only by sacrificial rituals. Various types of

animals and sometimes even humanbeings were sacrificed to please gods. These sacrificial rituals were to be performed only in the prescribed manner and through particular class of Brahmins who had specialized in the subject. These Brahmins were gifted with land and cows for the sacrificial services rendered by them. This class was thus interested in perpetuating these rituals. Saṁskṛta was the language of the elite. Scriptures were written and preached in Saṁskṛta, which was not spoken or understood by common man. Śūdras were not allowed to learn or speak Saṁskṛta.

### **Intellectual Ferver**

This is indeed a gloomy pen-picture of the society. There was, however, a silver lining because the intellectual revolt had already started by the Upaniṣadic Ṛṣis, who had begun to interpret Vedas with a philosophical gloss. People had started challenging the corrupte modes. There were intellectual debates and the thinkers had started evolving different theories to explain the universal scheme. Forests were full of recluses, who remaining detached from society, performed severe religious penances which many a times verged on acrobatics. Schools of Cārvākas and Ājīvakas were challenging the very idea of Godhood and after-life. Thinkers like Pārśva, Āruṇi, Yājñavalkya, Kapila, Janaka, Bādarāyaṇa and many others of Upaniṣadic school, who had preceeded Mahāvīra and Buddha had already initiated a new type of thinking amongst the intellectuals and what was needed was to carry this process to the masses by those who could work for the masses, could speak their language, could bring them to the status of equality and could make them free from the social and economical grip of the aristocracy and priestly order.

### **Revolutionary push by Mahāvīra**

This need was supplied by Mahāvīra and subsequently by Buddha. Mahāvīra did not establish any new order. He merely carried out the work of previous Tīrthaṅkaras, the last of whom was Pārśva. The Śramaṇa tradition, not subscribing

to the Vedic words as last words, was itself divided into many schools of thought as we have already noted. Mahāvīra's task was to evolve a complete synthesis of those different schools and to put the whole line of thinking into a sound and organised basis. This he did by the theory of Nayavāda and Syādvāda, which gave its due place to every line of thinking. When a proper time came, and after he himself got the realization of the truth, he moved from place to place and like a whirlwind, took every body who counted in the society under his powerful influence, which was solidified by organising the Jaina Saṅgha into four sections of monks, nuns, male and female householders, by appointing different heads of each and sending emissaries of faith to different parts of the country. He himself was a powerful speaker. He spoke to people in parables and in their own language breaking the monopoly of the knowledge of Saṃskṛta. People appreciated this very much. They were made to participate in religious discourses. In his age, Mahāvīra was the first to give a fatal blow to the notions of Brahmanical superiority and caste distinctions based on birth as he declared :

कम्मुणा बंभणो होइ, कम्मुणा होइ खत्तिओ ।

वइस्से कम्मुणा होइ, सुददो हवइ कम्मुणा ॥

Uttarādhyaṇa-sūtra, 25/33.

“One is a Brahmin by action, a Kṣatriya by action, a Vaiśya by action and a Sūdra also by action.”

He interpreted Vedas and showed that real sacrifice is the sacrifice of one's baser instincts and not the sacrifice of innocent creatures. He declared that each soul is its own master, and it is not in hands of any god to make you really happy in this life or in the next. Your real enemy, he said, is not outside you and you are the author of your own happiness and misery.

अप्पा कत्ता विकत्ता य, दुहाण य सुहाण य ।

अप्पा मित्तममित्तं च, दुपट्ठिय सुपट्ठिओ ॥

Ibid, 20/37.

“Soul is the author of its own miseries and happiness; Soul is its own friend and foe as the maker of good and bad deeds.”

This infused self confidence and the spirit of liberty as well as equality in the common man, taught by Brahmanical clergy to rely only on the favours of an unpredictable divinity.

To the powerful kings, out to conquer their political enemies, he admonished :

अप्पाणमेव जुञ्जाहि, किं ते जुञ्जेण वज्जओ ।  
 अप्पाणमेव अप्पाणं, जइत्ता सुहमेहए ॥  
 जो सहस्सय सहस्साणं, संगामे दुज्जअं जिए ।  
 एणं जिणेज्ज अप्पाणं, अस से परमो जओ ॥

Uttarādhyayana-sūtra, 9/35, 34.

“Oh man, ( if you have to fight ) fight with your own self; what is the use of fighting with an outside foe ? Conquer yourself by your own self. That is the supreme victory more difficult than thousand and thousands of victories in the battle fields.”

Emphasising the real nature of religion, he said that real religion is not to try to please gods by sacrificial rituals and violence. Real religion is :

धम्मो मंगलमुक्किट्ठं, अहिंसा संजमो तवो ।  
 देवावि तं नमंसति, जस्स धम्मो सयामणो ॥

Daśavaikalika-sūtra, 1/1.

“Ahiṃsā ( non-violence ), Restraint ( of mind, speech and action ) and Austerities ( religious penances ) constitute real religion which brings benedictions and freedom. Even Gods bow down to them who practise this religion.”

He did not preach any sectarian doctrines and did not insist on following only a particular path. Nor did he claim to be the sole messenger of the Divine because his theory was that Divinity is inherent in every soul. To a questioner, who wanted to know how one should behave so as not to commit any sin

his answer was totally direct and of universal utility. He was asked :

कहं चरे कहं चिट्ठे कहमासे कहं सजे ।  
कहं भुंजंतो भासंतो पाव कम्मं न बंधइ ॥

Daśvaikālika-sūtra, 4/7.

“How shall we move, stand, sit, sleep, speak and eat so that we may not be bound by sinful actions.” He replied :

जयं चरे जयं चिट्ठे, जयमासे जयं सजे ।  
जयं भुंजंतो भासन्तो पावकम्मं न बंधइ ॥

Ibid, 4/8.

“Move, stand, sit, sleep, speak and eat with all discrimination, You shall not be bound by sinful actions.” Discrimination means awareness in whatever we do is the corner-stone of an intelligent existence.

And he came out with the message of friendship as well as fraternity for all and enmity for none when he exhorted his disciples to repeat these words constantly in their minds :

खामेमि सव्वे जीवे, सव्वे जीवा खमन्तु मे ।  
मित्ति मे सव्वभूएसु, वरे मज्झं न केणइ ॥

Āvaśyaka-sūtra.

“I offer my apologies to all the sentient beings of the universe and shed all ill feelings for them. I declare my friendship for them all. I have enmity towards none.”

He gave equal status to women and established the order of nuns under the leadership of Candanā, a princess of the king of Campā, on whose defeat in a battle, she was taken as a slave and sold to a wealthy man named Dhannā. In the four-point discipline of Pārśva, celibacy had not a separate place as it was treated as included in ‘Aparigraha’, restraint in possession of number of wives. A woman was impliedly treated as an object of possession. Mahāvīra, added the concept of Brahmacharya for all men, women, monks and nuns, thus giving a dignified place and equality of treatment to both the sexes.

It is believed that the emphasis of Mahāvīra and Buddha on 'Sainnyāsa' was responsible for the addition of fourth Āśrama, namely 'Sainnyāsāśrama' as the last stage in a man's life. Whatever it may be, the fact remains that the impact of the rational and logical thinking of Mahāvīra and then of Buddha was so great that the Indian culture took altogether a new turn from 6th century B. C. onwards. It is not that the principles of Ahimsā, Truth, Asteya, Aparigraha and Brahmacharya were unknown to the Aryan society. As already noted above, Śramaṇa line of thinking existed side by side with Vedic line from time immemorial and the great Ṛṣis of Upaniṣadas had already initiated philosophical interpretation of Vedas much before Mahāvīra. However, on account of priestly stronghold and language monopoly of scriptures the ideas of Ahimsā etc. had not reached the masses. This was achieved by Mahāvīra and Buddha, both of whom condemned cast superiority and inequality. The great Jaina saint of Mahāvīra's time Śrī Harikeśī was a Cāṇḍāla (untouchable of untouchables). He was very highly respected by the whole society. He furnishes a shining example of the way in which the down-trodden section of the contemporary society was elevated to its rightful position as a result of Mahāvīra's preaching.

### **Significant Events**

At this distance of time, having been brought up in the society where the principles of Ahimsā, Truth and Brahmacharya are taken for granted as the necessary constituents of a cultured life in India, we would not be in a position to appreciate the tremendous task which lay ahead of Mahāvīra in the orthodox rigidity of his times. We have no historical record of the working of his mind when he must have faced with different and difficult problems of the society, he lived in. Whatever fragments of his life and work are available, are from different sūtras-Kalpasūtra being prominent. However, as is usual with ardent devotees, much of it seems to have been glossed with mysteries and exaggerations.

It is nonetheless possible to know how this great soul was able to revolutionise the current thinking and had his impact not only on human beings but also on other creatures, whom he considered equal partners in the Universal scheme. We shall therefore consider some important events of his life as mentioned in scriptures. It is interesting to note that though contemporary Buddhist scriptures make good deal of reference to Mahāvīra and his philosophy, the Hindu scriptures are totally silent about him or his work to the extent that but for the existence of the Jainas and Jaina as well as Buddhist literature, the world would have no record to show that such a great soul ever existed and moved in human form in India whose culture owes so much to him. This was the reason why initially some western scholars, genuinely though wrongly believed that Jainism is a branch of Buddhism which is better known internationally. It was H. Jacobi, a German scholar-philosopher who initiated research in Jainism and knew more about the historicity of Jainism than the Jainas themselves.

We have already noted some facts relating to the birth of Mahāvīra. His Birth place was 'Kuṇḍapura' a suburb of Vaiśālī situated at the modern village 'Besāḍha Paṭṭī', 27 miles from Patna in Mujaffarpur District of Bihar. His real name was 'Vardhamāna' meaning 'growing'. He was given this name because his birth heralded the prosperity and peace in his family and the country began to grow. The epithet 'Mahāvīra' was given by people to him after seeing the severest austerities practiced by him for long twelve years. He was very handsome, tall and strong and had begun to show his talents and strength from his boyhood. We shall not detain ourselves in the narration of the events of his boyhood. According to Śvetāmbara school he was married to Yaśodā, the daughter of king Samaravīra of Sāketa and had a daughter by this marriage named Priyadarśanā, married to Jāmālī. Both of them entered the Jaina monastic order but Jāmālī having some theoretical differences (noted elsewhere in this



book ) established his own order separately along with his wife who subsequently returned back to the fold of Mahāvīrā.

We have elsewhere in this book noted how Mahāvīra renounced the world and became a recluse.

### **Indra's Offer of Protection**

As a wandering recluse, he arrived at 'Kumāra Grama' and in its outskirts he was sitting in silent meditation, one shepherd asked him to look after his cattle as he wanted to go elsewhere for a while. Mahāvīra being in meditation did not respond, but the sheperd went away taking his silence as his consent. When he returned, he did not find his cattle there and on enquiry, could not get any response from the meditating saint. The shepherd then roamed about in search of his cattle but in vain. On returning he found his cattle, near the place where Mahāvīra was meditating. He thought that the man in meditation must be pretending to be a saint and must have stolen his cattle. His suspicion grew stronger as he did not get any response from Mahāvīra. The shepherd, therefore, was angry and began to beat Mahāvīra mercilessly with a rope. Mahāvīra, however, did not utter a word. This infuriated the simple shepherd more. Finally, someone (according to scriptures it was Indra, the King of gods) who could identify Mahāvīra, intervened and revealed to the shepherd the real identity of his victim. Shepherd realized his mistake and made amends. But the story goes on to say that at this stage 'Indra' told Mahāvīra that he was ready to arrange for his protection in future from such events so that he could carry out his austerities peacefully. Whether Indra made this proposal or someone else made it, is not material. What matters is Mahāvīra's reply. He politely rejected Indra's offer and told him that Salvation can be obtained by ones own efforts and not through the help of others ( उध्वरेत् आत्मना आत्मानम्, i. e. 'lift your soul by your own self' as Gitā puts it ) and that every one, however, exalted he may be, has to suffer the results of his past Karmas. It is only through such sufferance

that one can shed his accumulated karmas. This process is known as Nirjarā.

Thereafter, Mahāvīra had to undergo troubles and tortures of various types at various places from various sources, but had silently suffered the same without seeking any help from others. The incident illustrates a genuine Jaina approach towards the problems of life.

### Five Resolves at Morak Hermitage

From the above place, Mahāvīra went to 'Morāk Sanni-veśa' where there was a hermitage conducted by one who knew him. He was invited to pass four months ( Cāturmāsa ) of rainy season at the hermitage. He agreed and used to live at a thatched hut of grass where he was meditating. Once, some cows came and began to eat away the grass of all such hutments of the hermitage. All the inmates of the hermitage, except Mahāvīra, ran to drive away the cows and saved the hermitage from further damage. Mahāvīra, however, remained engrossed in his meditation. Such incidents were repeated two or three times more when Mahāvīra adopted the same attitude. Others resented this as a callous and careless attitude and complained to the head of the hermitage who called Mahāvīra and tauntingly asked him what kind of Kṣatriya ( Ruling class ) he was that he could not protect his own hut being damaged. Mahāvīra did not utter anything but immediately left the hermitage making the following five resolves for future :

नाप्रीतिमद् गृहे वासः, स्थेयं प्रतिमया सदा ।<sup>1</sup>

न गेहि विनयः कार्यो, मौनं पाणौ च भोजनम् ॥

“Henceforth, I will not stay at any place so as to cause discomfort to others, will pass as much time as possible in meditation, will observe silence, will receive food in palms to eat it, and will not do any service to householders.” This was his first major lesson of life of a wandering recluse.

1. See : Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣa, Parva 10, Canto 3, Verse 67.

**Education Rather than Exposure**

When he again visited 'Morāk Sanniveśa' he found there one astrologer named 'Acchandaka'. He was earning his livelihood by cheating ignorant masses by performing some magical feats. Mahāvīra knew his tricks and decided to expose him. Mahāvīra did possess better power to impress people with the result that people began to desert the magician, who then went to Mahāvīra and told him that his presence in the village would destroy his bread and he would be rendered homeless and his family would starve. While on the other hand, a recluse like Mahāvīra, could go anywhere He prayed to have pity on him and his family and shift to some other place. Mahāvīra realised his mistake of showing unnecessary public spirit ( which today is exhibited by many busybodies ) and decided not to exhibit his spiritual power in such a manner in future. Education rather than exposure is the foundation of Mahāvīra's teaching, and it is here that our Marxist friends would perhaps differ.

**Poisonous Fangs of Caṇḍa Kauśika**

A hermitage at Kanakkhal near the township of Vācāla was managed by a Ṛṣi called Kauśika. Some boys repeatedly damaged the fruit trees and flowers of the garden of this hermitage which angered the Ṛṣi very much. Once when the boys were seen damaging the fruit trees, Ṛṣi Kauśika chased them to punish, but stumbled over something, fell in a nearby well and died on the spot. Story says that as he died when he was full of anger he was born at that very place as a deadly poisonous serpent whose breath as well as sight emitted poison which would kill all living things on which they were thrown. The result was that people ceased to frequent that place and the hermitage was converted into a deserted mess of wild shrubs and trees.

Once Mahāvīra during his wanderings, was going towards 'Vācāla' and was found passing by the way which was going to the abode of the above referred poisonous serpent who was

known by the name of 'Caṇḍa Kauśika' ( angry Kauśika ). People warned Mahāvira not go by that way and to take another alternative way to avoid an encounter with the serpent. After hearing the story about the serpent, Mahāvira decided to pass by the same way to the astonishment and dismay of others who persuaded him to take the other way.

On seeing a daring human being coming towards him, Caṇḍa Kauśika became furious at his audacity and emitted deadly poison from his breath and sight. When this had no effect on the peace and equanimity of Mahāvira, the serpent became more furious and rushed to him to inject him venom through his poisonous fangs on one of the toes of his bare legs. When the serpent tasted the blood, coming out of the injured toe, he found its taste somewhat different than usual ( mythology says that it was sweet milk and not human blood which flowed from the toe ). Mahāvira was all compassion and love for the violent creature and hence it was but natural that his compassion which ran through his blood had a different effect on the violence of the unfortunate creature. Mahāvira had developed a short of communion with all objects of the universe and it was for this reason that he could see life even in the earthly objects such as earth, air and water. He, therefore, could easily communicate with the disturbed soul of Caṇḍa Kauśika—“Be aware, Caṇḍa Kauśika, be aware of what you were and what you are” ( बुज्जह, बुज्जह ), he said. Under the influence of graceful divinity and compassion of the Yogī like Mahāvira, Caṇḍa Kauśika was reminded of his past life and realized to what depth he had fallen. He repented and adopted a non-violent peaceful attitude which resulted in people taking revenge to kill him. His spirit was however purified and he is said to have trans-migrated to much higher level of life.

### **State of a Digambara**

During all his wanderings, Mahāvira was moving nude ( Digambara – clothes beings the four directions ). The story

how he remained nude is interesting. After he became a recluse and went to forest, one poor Brahmin approached him, and as Mahāvīra had given away all his wealth to the poor before renouncing the world, the Brahmin begged of him something as he could not receive any donation from him previously. Mahāvīra told him that he possessed nothing except a garment which he had put on, and that he could give a portion of it if he so wanted. The Brahmin knew that it was a valuable piece of cloth and willingly accepted half of it and went away satisfied. His tailor, however, told him that the cloth was so valuable that if he could get the other half, he would stitch both the pieces into a whole which would fetch a price which was likely to remove his poverty. The Brahmin thereupon again went to the forest in the chase of the Lord. While Mahāvīra was proceeding further, at one place his half garment got entangled in a thorny shrub making Mahāvīra's body totally nude. Mahāvīra looked back at the entangled cloth but did not turn back to take it and silently passed on further in his meditative mood. Brahmin who was following him took away the entangled cloth but thence forward Mahāvīra did not cover his body and moved on everywhere in his Digambara state. His absolute detachment did not admit of any of the earthly considerations to which ordinary humans like us are adapt.

### **Association with Gośāla**

Mahāvīra's association with Gośāla is of historical significance as Gośāla was the acknowledged leader of Ājīvika philosophy and had a great following both during and after the life of Mahāvīra. He started as a pupil and ended as a frustrated rival of Mahāvīra. We have already referred to him elsewhere in this book and will shortly refer to some incidents, which lead him to a firm belief of his 'Niyativāda', the theory of pre-destination. He came in contact of Mahāvīra at Nālandā and was attracted by the latter's immense capacity to perform severe penances. He offered his pupilship repeatedly to Mahāvīra but the latter did not respond. He,

however, voluntarily began to move with Mahāvīra and introduced himself as his pupil to everyone. Mahāvīra did not object to it also. It is said that he was very impetuous, rash and indiscreet, and many a times put himself and Mahāvīra in awkward situations. Once at Nālandā he inquired from Mahāvīra what type of alms he would get on that day. Mahāvīra said he would get some rotten food to eat. He tried his best to get good food by moving from place to place but got what was exactly predicted. At some other time while moving from one place to another he saw some persons in the forest cooking 'Khīra' (sweet made of milk and rice) in an earthen pot. On inquiry Mahāvīra told him that 'Khīra' would not be available for eating. And it exactly happened like that as the pot in which it was being cooked broke down though many efforts were made to save it. Third incident was when a plant of sesamum was noticed and Gośāla inquired from Mahāvīra whether that plant would survive the next weather. When Mahāvīra replied in the affirmative, Gośāla uprooted it and threw it away aside. Next weather, on their return journey, Gośāla saw that the uprooted plant had grown at the place where it was thrown away. All these incidents, and especially the last one, confirmed Gośāla's belief in Niyati, i. e., pre-destination. These incidents lead him to believe that human efforts are of no avail and we cannot change our destiny. Mahāvīra was a firm believer in the theory of Karma. According to him if pursuant to the theory of cause and effect one has to bear the fruits of his karma, one can also have an impact of his present karmas on the fruits of past karmas, the results of which can be mitigated, if not totally obliterated. Moreover, present karmas are in one's own hands and so future which is the fruit of present karmas can surely be moulded by us by proper efforts. Mahāvīra was, therefore, opposed to Gośāla's ideas of Niyati which took away soul's volition to choose its own path of salvation. After the incident of sesamum plant, Gośāla parted the company of Mahāvīra, established his own school of Niyati, declared himself a Tīrtha-

ñkara. He had a large following which lasted till number of years even after his death. But at present we have not got any literature to reveal the principles of his philosophy except the tendentious references in Jaina and Bauddha scriptures. Mahāvīra himself considered him as the last authority on Ājīvika philosophy by which his Niyativāda was known. According to Mahāvīra, Gośāla's soul has attained higher level of life because at the end he repented for his behaviour.

Mahāvīra's association with Gośāla is an unhappy episode in his life. It was an association of long six years when Gośāla also had undergone many austerities, trials and tribulations along with Mahāvīra. Once when Gośāla saw an ascetic performing severe penances and putting lice on his body to feed them, Gośāla repeatedly mocked and cut jokes at him which infuriated the ascetic who cursed and threw his 'Tejoleśya' ( magic fire ) at him. This would have reduced Gośāla to ashes but for the counter action of Mahāvīra, who threw his cooling power to extinguish the said fire. This intervention of Mahāvīra saved the life of Gośāla, but the latter himself mastered the power of throwing 'Tejoleśya' on his adversary.

There is no historical record to show what was the root cause of the final quarrel between these two great men. However, the available material shows that many of the prominent followers of Gośāla were influenced by Mahāvīra's philosophy and were deserting the Ājīvika faith of Gośāla. 'Saddālaputta' was a very rich and influential disciple of Gośāla. He came in contact with Mahāvīra and was convinced that the theory of determinism does not explain fully the events of the phenomenal world and that man's own efforts do play a great part in the moulding of life events. He was converted to Mahāvīra's line of thinking. When Gośāla knew this, he tried to reconvert 'Saddālaputta' but in vain. Gośāla also tried to convert Ānanda, a well known disciple of Mahāvīra but failed. These incidents show that Gośāla was not happy with the increasing popularity of Mahāvīra's doctrines. As a matter of fact, he was proclaiming himself to be the last of

the Tirthāṅkaras. When Mahāvīra came to know this, he revealed the past life of Gośāla and his associations with him, and when Gośāla found that he would stand completely exposed, he went to Mahāvīra and picked up an unprovoked quarrel with the latter. Mahāvīra knew what was going to happen. He had, therefore, warned his disciple to keep perfect silence even if they felt offended by Gośāla. However, two of them could not restrain at the violent behaviour of Gośāla and met with death as Gośāla threw his 'Tejoleśya' at them. When Gośāla noticed that Mahāvīra was not provoked nor was he found threatened he threw his 'Tejoleśya' at Mahāvīra with a view to kill him. But the fire power released by him could not kill Mahāvīra and returned back to him, penetrated his own body and brought Gośāla into a state of delirium. He began to drink spirit and danced, and cooled the intense heat generated in his body by applying potters mud all over his body, and eventually died. But before his death, he is said to have repented for his action and proclaimed to his disciples that he was wrong and was not fit to be called a Tirthāṅkara.

This incident took place after Mahāvīra had attained 'Kaivalya' ( perfect and pure knowledge ). This, therefore, explains why he did not release his own cooling power to save his two disciples and himself from the efforts of Gośāla's 'Tejoleśya' as he died previously to save Gośāla himself from the wrash of an ascetic. A 'Kevalin', i. e., the soul who has attained 'Kaivalya' is never overtaken by emotions as he has attained the steadfastness of an objective 'seer' and 'observer' ( Jñāta and Draṣṭa ).

Though Mahāvīra was not killed by Gośāla's Tejoleśya he was indeed affected in his health for a out six months and was ultimately cured by some medicine prepared by a devotee. He lived for more than sixteen years after the death of Gośāla. Ājīvika faith lasted for number of years even after the death of Gośāla. Jainism is greatly influenced by Ājīvika thinking. In



fact the theory of determinism has its own place in Nayavāda, but it is not taken as the final word in shaping the destiny of every Jiva. It is only a factor which contributes to that destiny.

### **Candanabālā : First Head of Women Disciples**

In the eleventh year of his austerities an incident occurred in the life of Mahāvīra which has become the subject matter of great pathos and poetry in Jaina literature. As already noticed, the incident is connected with the life of Candanabālā who was the princess of a king of Campā. After defeat of King of Campā in a battle, the princess was taken as a slave and finally purchased by a wealthy merchant called Dhannā, who mercifully treated her as his daughter. The merchant's wife, however, suspected the intentions of her husband. So when the merchant had gone to Kauśāmbī, Candanabālā was put in fetters, her head was shaved, and was starved for three days, at the end of which she was given roasted black grams to eat. In the meantime Mahāvīra, who was undergoing very difficult penances, was moving from house to house to accept some alms to eat to break his fasts of more than five months, but was returning back from all houses without accepting anything. People were anxious to offer anything, he wanted to break his fasts but he did not utter a single word and returned back after seeing the situation and the food offered to him. This attitude of the saint was very perplexing to the citizens of Kauśāmbī because, by that time his reputation as a great ascetic had spread far and wide and it was considered a great honour for one whose offer of food was accepted by him.

Mahāvīra's method of performing penances was very peculiar. He often used to resolve to take only a particular type of food if offered to him under particular circumstances by a particular person. Others were knowing nothing about such resolves with the result that the conditions under which the offer was to be accepted were not satisfied and his fasts remained unbroken for a number of days. In fact, during the

course of 12 years of his penances he is said to have taken food only on 349 days. Idea was that if nature wanted him to remain alive, it was bound to satisfy his resolutions.

Now when Mahāvira was in Kauśāmbī in the eleventh year of his penances, he had resolved to accept the offer of roasted black grams from an unmarried princess in captivity with the shaven head and locked in fetters and also with tears in her eyes. It was obviously difficult to satisfy all these conditions at a time. For five months and twenty-five days, the master wandered from one house to the other in Kauśāmbī and silently returned and went without food, his conditions unfulfilled.

Candanabāla knew this story of master's wandering and after her own fasts for three days when she got roasted black grams to eat, her first thought was to offer these grams to the master if he was kind enough to accept the same. When she saw the master approaching her on his usual visit to take alms, her joy knew no bounds as she offered the rare morsels of food which she got after three days. When the master approached her, he found that all the conditions of his resolve, but one, were fulfilled. The one condition which remained unfulfilled was the absence of tears in the eyes of his donor. When he noticed this, he began to retreat without uttering a word. This shocked the enthusiastic devotee whose enthusiasm and joy evaporated. Deeply dejected, she began to cry and tears rolled her cheek. A back glance at her, convinced the master that all his resolves were fully satisfied. He returned back and accepted the alms of roasted grams from her and broke his famous fast. This Candanabāla then renounced the world. She was freed by her master and she was made the first head of the order of Jaina nuns.

This story of untained devotion has inspired the imagination of many poets who have vividly described the masters fortitude and a selfless surrender of a devotee.

### **Final Act of Nirjara**

Twelfth year of the master's penances records an incident

which shows that even a great soul like that of Mahāvīra had to bear the fruits of his past Karmas ( actions ). While depicting the life of Mahāvīra the Jaina scriptures do not begin with the birth of last life as Vardhamāna. They begin with several lives which his soul had to live before the last birth. This stands to reason because Jaina philosophers, like all Indian philosophers, do not subscribe to the view that the history of soul's journey begins with the present life only. According to them, present life is but a step in the long journey which extends from one life to the other till one gets salvation.

In one of his past lives as a king fond of music, he had ordered one of his attendants to stop the music after he went to sleep. The attendant however, liked to hear the music and so did not stop the same as directed. When the king knew that his order was flouted, he ordered to punish the attendant by pouring boiling lead in his ears. Mahāvīra's soul had to pay for this cruelty in the twelfth year of his ascetic life when he visited 'Chammānigāma'. There it happened that while he was in meditation, a cowherd inquired from him the whereabouts of his bullocks, grazing in the vicinity. He, however, did not get any reply from the meditating Yogī. Anraged by this act Yogī of the cowherd punished the master by inserting pointed nails in his ears. The pain of this punishment was so severe that a doctor, at the town Apāpā where the master had gone on a visit, believed from his face to be suffering from some painful disease. Later on the doctor knowing the real cause of the pain, took out the nails when, as the story runs, even Mahāvīra gave a shriek of pain. By observing voluntarily, very severe penances for a long period of twelve years, Mahāvīra had practically completed the process of Nirjarā ( shedding of accumulated karmas ). However, the karma of putting boiling lead in the ears of a helpless attendant for a minor breach was of the type, which could not be shed by voluntary penances ( known as Sakāma Nirjarā ). Fruits of that karma were bound to be enjoyed and Mahāvīra's soul was no exception to this rule. The theory of karma as understood by

Jaina thinkers classify the Karmas of different categories. One category is of the karmas, the result of which can not be avoided by Sakāma Nirjarā even by practising penances. Such results have to be suffered with equanimity, patience and fortitude so that while suffering the same new karmas are not earned.

Mahāvira's soul had now become free from the burden of past karmas. He had already ceased to earn fresh karmas as the process of 'Sāṁvara' was already over when he took to the life of an ascetic at the age of 30 years.

### **Attainment of Kaivalya**

His soul took the final jump in the thirteenth year of his life as an ascetic when he was 42 years of age. It was on the 10th day of the brighter half of the month of Vaiśākha during Uttarāphalgunī Nakṣatra when he was in deep meditation on the bank of river Rjubālika outside the town of Jṛmbhika (believed to be near Pavāpurī in Bihar). He now attained complete enlightenment and became an 'Arhat', a Kevalin who can objectively comprehend all objects and events of the universe, one who is himself pure knowledge, having no desire, one who is all compassion for everything, and one who holds his body, mind and name only to serve the universe selflessly by teaching the path of salvation to others.

From this point onwards, he preached his gospel of Ahimsā for thirty years by moving on foot from East to West of India, by organising the Saṅgha and sending his missonaries to various places.

His style of preaching was unique. He never insisted that his disciples and those who came to him to seek solace to behave only in a particular manner. After giving his own explanation he used to say "Oh dear one of Gods (Devānupriya) now act according to your pleasure (Jahāsukham)."

He was outspoken, but did not utter anything unless it was absolutely necessary. So long as he was alive he saw to it that

a strict discipline was maintained in his order of monks and nuns. Meghakumāra was one of the sons of king Bimbisāra ( Śreṇika ). He entered the order of Monks taking Saṁnyāsa from Mahāvīra. Being the junior most in the order of monks he had to sleep at a place, very uncomfortable and all passersby were occasionally stumbling against him. Being a prince reared up in royal comforts, he felt humiliated and made a grievance. But the master, who was a strict disciplinarian, admonished him and made him conscious of his duties.

### **First Gaṇadharas**

The first religious conference called 'Samavaśaraṇa' at which the master gave his first sermon was held on the bank of river Ujjuvaliya ( Rjubālīkā ). This discourse remained unfruitful in the sense that nobody came forth to take Saṁnyāsa. However, the second discourse at Pāvā was most successful. As we shall notice hereafter Indrabhūti Gautam had a debate with the master on the existence of 'self'. As he was satisfied he became the first disciple of note. His hundred of pupils also became Mahāvīra's disciples. Story of Indrabhūti's conversion went round with the result that ten other Brahmins learned in Vedas came to the master and had discourses with him on various subjects, now forming core of Jainism. They all became his disciples. These eleven are called Gaṇadharas as they were appointed as the first heads of different groups of monks. Mahāvīra survived all of them except the first Gaṇadhara Indrabhūti Gautam and the fifth one Sudharmā. It is significant that all these first principal disciples were Brahmins of great repute and learning which shows that the silent ideological revolution had already started in the intelligentsia of the time.

### **Muttaṇam-Moyagāṇam**

Muttaṇam-moyagāṇam means 'One who becomes free and makes others free'—such is the description of the souls like the great Mahāvīra. After thirty long years of wanderings for the spread of the gospel of non-violence and peace, the master spent his last 'Caturmāsa' ( four months of stay for rainy

season ) at Pāvāpurī. It is in this way that his initial second discourse was fruitful and he started his march of victory. Three months of his four monthly stay were over and the end of the dark half of the month of kṛtika was coming near. The master saw that it was the time for his soul to leave the last of its earthly connections. At that time ( according to kalpa-sūtra ) eighteen confederate kings of Kāśī and Kośāla, nine Licchavis, and nine Mallas and many others had gathered for his Darśana. Before his ( Nirvāṇa ) the master gave his last discourse showing how sinful life ends in a series of painful events, and how the life devoted to virtues like non-violence and truth ends in peace, tranquility and happiness. Gaṇadhara Sudharmā who survived the master has recorded this discourse in the scripture called ‘Uttarādhyayana-sūtra’.

The master was conscious of the attachment which Indra-bhūti Gautam, his principle disciple, had for him. He wanted Gautam to shed away this attachment, an obstacle to his attainment of Kaivalya. He therefore, sent Gautam away on a mission so that he may not witness his end.

After finishing his last discourse the master went into final meditation called ‘Śukla Dhyāna’ and gave up his mortal frame after midnight of the last day of the dark half of the month of kṛtika. The assemblage of kings and others, gathered there declared : “Since the light of intelligence is gone, let there be an illumination of the material matter.” Thence forwards it became the day of illumination—the day called Dīpāvalī—to commemorate the illumination of knowledge made in the psyche of contemporary Indian society. The grateful nation still commemorates this day as the day of illumination, the Dīpāvalī day when every hut and palace in every corner of India is illuminated with lights. It is this light of non-violence and truth which inspired, the father of our nation Mahātmā Gandhi who carried the torch of illumination ever to the murky field of politics.

**Chapter Three**  
**THE ULTIMATE REALITY**

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“It is only when we transcend the limits of ordinary biological man that we can come in contact with pure personality which Upaniṣadas call Ātman or the self. This pure self is one in all and is identical with the highest reality of the Universe. It is pure spirituality and pure experience ( Jñāna ) and as such, the absolute concrete Truth. Self is the ultimate reality and experiences are extraneous to it.”<sup>1</sup>

Jainism sees the whole universe as a great cosmic mechanism ‘with its own self propelling force’, and we being a part of that mechanism, our ‘religion’ consists of conducting ourselves in harmony with that mechanism. If this is so, we have got to understand what this mechanism is and how it works.

This brings to us many questions of metaphysical importance, viz., who created this universe and who sustains it? Are our destinies governed by some outside force or is there any other set of rules which govern our fate ?

The man, in his pursuit to seek answers to these questions seems to have evolved the concept of God. Some believe that ‘God’ has created this universe and sustains it. It is further believed that the man is punished for his sins—the original of which commenced with Adam and Eve tasting the forbidden fruit. They do not believe in the theory of trans-migration of soul but contend that a day of reckoning will come when everyone will be alive from his grave to receive God’s judgement for his good and bad deeds in this life. This is the occidental idea of an everlasting individual personality as conceived by Greeks and passed on to Christianity. The redemption

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1. Dasgupta, S. N. ; History of Indian Philosophy.

of every individual according to this view lies in offering sincere repentance and prayers to be relieved of sins.

Some philosophers are more sophisticated in their explanation about the existence of the Divine. There are two principal schools of thought—One is ontological and the other is cosmological. As will be seen hereafter, both these schools come to the conclusion that the scheme of the universe is finally sustained and controlled by some outside divine force, the ultimate cause and hence the ultimate truth.

The Jaina approach is totally different. It has no place for God as the creator or sustainer of this universe. In Jainism there is no outside force, regulating prizes and punishment. A soul, liberated completely from the bondage of karmas, is all-knowing, all-powerful, omniscient and possesses all the attributes of what we understand by the expression 'God'. Pleasures and pains of life are the result of one's own actions called 'Karmas' and as a result of these Karmas every soul takes rebirth and proceeds further in its journey towards liberation. In Jainism, as in other Indian religious systems, individual personality has always been regarded as a transitory mask as the whole Jaina philosophy is based on the existence of the duality of Jīva and Ajīva, Spirit and Matter. The spirit survives even after the matter appears to decay and dies. This leads Jainas to the theory of re-incarnation and rebirth in accordance with the Karmas ( actions ) of the past births. Even your good actions bind you if they are done with a motive to gain rewards. Law of Karma is inexorable but one can destroy his Karmas to be free from their bondage by one's own efforts. There is no outside element, to drag you out of this bondage. The great seers and prophets can guide you and point out to you the path of redemption but ultimately it is for you to find out the path suitable to you and to start walking on that path by conviction, courage and fortitude.

This approach of Jainism has earned for itself a comment that is atheistic.



Is Jainism atheistic? Before answering this question, it would be necessary to know what is 'atheistic'. If theism consists only in the belief in a personal or impersonal God as creator and sustainer of this universe, then certainly Jainism is atheistic as it does not believe that this universe is created and shaped by some personal or impersonal entity called God. Nor do the Jainas believe that rendition of justice for the good or bad deeds of human beings is at the mercy of some capricious will or whim of the Divine.

Approach of Jaina philosophers to this question is purely rational. While they flatly reject the notion of a supremely authoritative God, it does not reject God-head itself. It studies the component elements of the whole Universe, scrutinises the true nature and character of each, analyses their effect on the evolution of life, tries to find out the ultimate goal of the progression, and by a very subtle and logical process of metaphysics, shows the way to achieve God-hood. It has innate faith in the capacity of the spirit, the creative force called 'Ātman' to achieve God-hood and makes no distinction between the potentiality of the creative force inherent in a blade of grass and the one inherent in humanly frame of Mahāvira, the last and the most distinguished Tirthankara ( Prophet ) of our times, to achieve the final God hood. It emphasises that the achievement of God-hood does not depend upon the favours of any agency outside your own self, and each soul ( Ātman ) can achieve the same by his own understanding and efforts. What is required is the will to exert.

'Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics'<sup>1</sup> makes distinction between naive atheism and philosophical atheism. If this distinction is accepted, one can say that Jainism believes in philosophical atheism. This is obviously different from gross materialism. The difference consists in the Jaina conviction, an outcome of a serious philosophical speculation, and not a

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1. Garbe, R. ( Ed. ) : Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. II, p. 185.

naive refusal to believe what cannot be visualized. Heinrich Zimmer rightly observes that Jainism is not atheistic but is trans-theistic.

Indian tradition uses the word 'Nāstika', i. e., non-believer or atheistic in three senses, viz. ( 1 ) Disbelief in the theory of karma and the life beyond, ( 2 ) Disbelief in God and ( 3 ) Disbelief in the ultimate authority of Vedas. It is the second and third sense in which some Hindu thinkers have labelled Jainism as atheistic. Strictly speaking, it would be only in the third sense that Jainas may be called atheistic because Jainas do not believe in the finality of Vedas. Mahāvīra's dialogue with his first disciples called 'Gaṇadhara's' shows that the teacher has not totally disclaimed the Vedas, but has tried to explain some of their aspects by putting his own interpretation. So far as the second sense is concerned, it is the Cārvāka school which would fall within its category because the Cārvākas do not believe either in the theory of karma or rebirth. Their is the total denial of all that cannot be apprehended by senses.

It is pertinent to note that in the Indian system of philosophical thoughts, Jaina thinkers were not the only ones who denied the existence of a supreme God. Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems were originally atheistic and became theistic only after their fusion. Sāṅkhya also denied the existence of God and hence it is referred to as 'Nirīśvara', i. e., Godless. Thus the rejection of the idea of a supreme authority outside ones own-self as shaping the destiny of the whole universe is rejected by some of the most important schools of philosophers in the process of evolution of Indian metaphysics.

Then the question which naturally arises is how do the Jainas explain the origin and governance of Universe ? What is the 'Raison detre' of this existence ? Jaina system maintains that the universe is without beginning or an end.<sup>1</sup> It broadly

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1. Vyākhyā-prajñapti-sūtra, 9/32.

classifies the universe into two categories, viz. ( 1 ) Jīva ( soul ) and ( 2 ) Ajīva ( non-soul ). Jīva is the creative spirit, the motivating force, the consciousness which pervades even in the things which are apparently immobile and inanimate. Ajīva is the matter non-sentient, non-motivating and non-conscious. This element of Ajīva is the world which is in existence outside the 'I' element. Every living being has the consciousness of 'I'. This 'I' exists inspite of the fundamental changes in the shape and character of its body. This body undergoes many changes from birth to childhood, then to youth and to old age and finally to death but 'I' consciousness remains the same. That consciousness is that of 'Jīva'. The rest is 'Ajīva'. If we analyse all the objects of this universe, we shall come across these two broad classifications of 'Jīva' and 'Ajīva'.

According to Jaina philosophers both these elements of the universe are eternal and ever existent. They are not created by any one and they operate by their own force, action and interaction. This interaction between these two every existing and eternal elements of universe supplies motivating force, consciousness and push of Jīva to Ajīva. The result is the large and amazing varieties and activities of objects in the universe.

Obviously, this line of reasoning rules out the necessity of a creator or a sustainer of the universe, because according to it the universe is an incomprehensible automation and the work of a philosopher is only to find out and understand the secrets of this automation. Religion, according to Jainism does not consist of any ritual but is only an attempt to adjust yourself properly in the mechanism of this automation. As S. Radhakrishnan<sup>1</sup> puts it, "the Jaina view is that the whole universe of being, of mental and material factors has existed from all eternity, undergoing an infinite number of revolutions produced by the powers of nature without the intervention of any external deity."

1. Radhakrishnan, S. : Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 314.

The concept of the absolute matter, creator and sustainer of the Universe is born out of human experience that everything tangible and intangible is the result of causation and creativity and therefore there must be some ultimate cause or a creator from whom everything else has resulted. This line of reasoning has led the human mind to various types of philosophical speculations and approaches. It may not be illogical or irrational to think that there must be some co-ordinating force which is transcending the material world and human understanding. But Belief in this transcendental co-ordinating energy has led metaphysics to the discovery of an all powerful and all embracing Divine soul. All the objects of universe are subject to its ordinance and will. It is ultimate and real cause of all things tangible and intangible experienced in life. Thinkers have adopted two well-known approaches—ontological and cosmological. Ontology is metaphysics concerned with essence of things or being in the abstract. Cosmological approach accepts the law of causality or the principle of 'Sufficient reason'. To ontological approach God is real as there is some force beyond our minds and ideas. He is "That than which nothing greater can be conceived" ( St. Anselm ). The starting point for cosmological approach is not God but are worldly objects, it states that every existing thing or feature, we encounter in the universe must have a cause or reason. There must be something else which has brought it into existence. This 'something else' is itself an effect or result of some prior cause. If, say the cosmologists, you go on tracing this link of effect and its cause, you must ultimately conclude that there is one final reality, the root cause of all effects, and it has sufficient reason within itself. This approach historically goes back to Aristotle's argument that there must be an 'unmoved cause' of motion.

Jaina thinkers hold both these views to be true only partially. To Jainas, the conclusions drawn by these two views leave much to be desired from logical point of view. Having once accepted the existence of some force beyond our mind

and ideas, it is of no use to claim further that this force can be realised through the cultivation and development of spiritual potentiality inherent in ourself.

'Thou art that' ( Tattvamasi ) is as much the call of the Jainas as that of the Upaniṣadas. Western ontologists have failed to recognise this. With regard to cosmological approach, the Jainas fully adhere the theory of causation, being most vocal advocates of the theory of Karma. They would, however, disagree with the cosmologists that root cause of all effects is external to our own self. Jainism maintains you are your own cause and your own effect and it is by your own effort and exertion that you can reap results, good or bad. If there is an ultimate cause, it is within you and not outside you. You are, therefore, your own master, your own God. You are not servile or subservient to any outside agency. Finality is your own potential. As Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad puts it :

"Whoever worships God as other than the self, thinking He is one and I am another, knows not." Bhagavadgītā also recognises this truth wherein Lord says — "Īśvaraḥ sarva bhūtanāṃ hṛddeśe'ṛjuna tiṣṭhati." Oh Arjuna, God dwells in the heart of every being.<sup>1</sup> Aristotle uttered a great truth, 'To be happy means to be self sufficient'. Salvation, according to Jaina seers, is not a gift of capricious gods, but is to be won by earnest seeking and self discipline. Man, according to them is the sole and absolute master of his fate; but so long as his vision is clouded by ignorance, resulting in attachments, envy and arrogance, he is not able to see the path of freedom. If he is found fettered by chains, these chains are of his own forging, and by proper efforts, only he can rend them asunder.

The Indian philosophical system of 'Nyāya' is very much akin to the thinking of Western ontological philosophers on this point. Jaina reply to Nyāya philosophers is that if God,

1. 'ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति', Bhagavadgītā 18/61.

as an outside and over powering force, is taken as the creator and sustainer of the universe on the analogy of the effects having intelligent human causes, then even God, like human beings must be presumed to be imperfect having all human desires of creation, fun and frolic. Moreover, many questions such as the creator of God and reason for the creation of universe by God and why God should take trouble of dispensing justice etc. remained unanswered.

Albert Einstein, the greatest physicist of our age rightly observes with reference to the idea of existence of an omnipotent, just and omnibeneficent personal God as under :

“ ... .. if this being is omnipotent, then every occurrence, including every human action, every human thought and every human feeling and aspiration is also His work; how is it possible to think of holding men responsible for their deeds and thoughts before such an almighty being ? In giving out punishment and rewards He would to a certain extent be passing judgement on Himself. How can this be continued with the goodness and righteousness ascribed to Him ?”<sup>1</sup>

Jainas have, attempted to examine the root of the whole universal existence and have concluded that each individual soul is responsible for his own fate and that everything in the universe is eternal. Science also tells us that the matter is indestructible. It may change form but essence remains the same. That is exactly what Jainas say—

Soul, according to Jainas, is clouded by karmic action of matter on account of its association with the matter from time immemorial. But by proper efforts it can become free from the bondage of karma and achieve its pristine purity by becoming itself all knowing and all powerful, sans aspirations and sans desire. It is then all bliss, peace and joy ( Sat Cit Ānanda ). It is its own creation and it is the ultimate Reality.

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1. Einstein, Albert : Ideas and Opinions, Bonanza Books, No. 9, pp. 46-47.

## Chapter Four

# ONTOLOGY OF ĀTMAN, THE SELF

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“Access to truth demands the passage beyond the compass of ordered thought, and by the same token, the teaching of transcendent Truth can not be by logic, for what ‘transcendent’ means is the transcending ( among other things ) of the bounding and basic logical laws of human mind.” H. Zimmer.

Truely, the ultimate reality, the final Truth is always beyond the reach of logic and reasoning. Reason and logic are the products of mind and the human mind, however advanced it may be, has its own limitations—Yard-stick which is limited, cannot measure up the unlimited. This has been repeatedly emphasised by Indian thinkers and it is only for that reason that they have always emphasised that to have the taste of the transcendental Truth ‘Life’ and not the ‘logic’ is the means of achievement. The great masters of the history of Indian philosophical thought, though have widely divergent views in their formulations of the essence of the ultimate Truth, but none-the-less, they are unanimous in proclaiming that the ultimate Truth is beyond description ( Nama ) and beyond any form ( Rūpa ). That is why, they preferred a negative course of describing it as ‘Not this, Not this’ ( Neti-Neti ).

Therefore, our attempt to show the existence of the self, the Ātman, by a metaphysical process, is bound to remain imperfect. This metaphysical process would, however, serve its purpose if it is able to kindle a desire to know further, to think further and then to perceive further. Comprehension, rather than conclusion, should be our aim.

The Ātman, known in Jaina terminology as ‘Jīva’, is the corner-stone of Jaina philosophy. If self is excluded

from the philosophical structure erected by the Jainas, the whole edifice of that structure will collapse. It is, therefore, essential to consider first what is this 'Self' and by what process of reasoning we can comprehend its existence.

The Jainas broadly divide the whole universe, including all its animate and inanimate objects, into two categories, viz. Jīva and Ajīva, i. e., Soul and matter. This Soul or 'spirit' is variously known as Soul, 'Ātman', 'Puruṣa' or 'Jīva'. The connotation of the word is the same, namely the element (Dravya) known as 'Jīva', in its pure form, is all consciousness and knowledge, sentient and possessing limitless motivating force. This force is apparent in all living beings including the plant life, but it is dormant even in inanimate thing such as earth, water, air and fire.

All the elements, not covered by this category of 'Jīva', are 'Ajīva'. For the present, we shall neither discuss the sub-categories of Jīva and Ajīva; nor the qualities and attributes of Ajīva, rather we shall concentrate on the metaphysics of Jīva.

Physical science has by now disclosed that every matter in this universe is composed of atoms. Democritus, an early Greek philosopher (460 to 370 B. C.) was a brilliant mechanic and inventor and also had profound knowledge of mathematics and astronomy. He taught that world consisted of innumerable and infinitesimal atoms. He used the term atom or 'atoms' (the Greek word meaning indivisible) and held that these atoms moved in the universe in a whirlwind fashion and formed composite substances like fire, water, air and earth.

Several centuries before Democritus, Indian philosophers, and especially the Jaina and the Sāṅkhya philosophers, not only came to the same conclusion but went further by stating that all things of the universe including the atoms can be divided into two categories, namely, spirit and matter. Physics now tells us that all objects are made up of atoms and, if each of these atoms is split, it will be found composed of electrons, protons and neutrons, which can supply such a



forceful energy that all-destructive and forceful bombs can be constructed therefrom. It is this energy, this power which is identified by Jainas as real spirit. Hindus identify it as 'Śakti'. This spirit, this motivating force, is known in Jaina terminology as 'Jīva'. Terminologies may differ but the essence is the same. In terms of Psychology this motivating force is pure consciousness, pure knowledge ( Kevala Jñāna ) unhindered and unobstructed by any 'kaṣāya', i. e., passions such as pride, prejudices, predictions, anger, avarice and malice. It is true to emphasise that it is this energy, this spirit, this motivating force, which enables humans to perform all their small and big adventures in life and animal as well as plant life to grow into this bewildering multiplicity of existence. Even otherwise, various mental experiences of man point to something which is experiential, some constant entity which gives meaning and significance for changing modes. This is the soul or the self. From whence this energy came? Jaina answer is that it is eternal and is also indestructible. It has no beginning and will have no end. Mokṣa—Salvation, according to Indian thinking in general and that of Jaina in particular is not an end of the spirit. It is the state of total liberation from the bondage of matter—Ajīva. Science also believes that matter is indestructible. It may change forms, but the essence, the substratum, is not destroyed. This change of form or circumstances is known in Jainism as 'Paryāya'. The principle is illustrated by taking the case of an earthen pot. Earth can be shaped in form of a pot or of any other vessel, just as gold can be shaped in any ornamental form. However, whatever, be the form or shape, the substratum, namely the earth and the gold, remains the same. Similarly Jīva may assume the form of a plant or an animal or a human being, it remains the Jīva of equal potentiality, though at a different stage of development. Thus, the Jaina philosophers do admit that the Jīvas like Ajīvas are characterized by appearance. When a Jīva is born, it 'appears' that he is born for the first time. Similarly when one dies it 'appears'

that the Jīva has come to an end. Both these attributes of birth and death are known as Utpāda and Vyaya. But so far as the soul is concerned they are mere appearances, mere modifications known as Paryāya because the real characteristics of soul are beginninglessness, that is, Anādi and endlessness, that is, Ananta. Its permanence - Dhrauvya is experienced even when it undergoes modifications - Paryāyas. For instance, every human being undergoes the states of childhood, youth and old age involving serious modifications of body, mind and intellect. However, it is the experience of everyone that pure ego 'I' remains the same. It was this 'I' which was made the subject-matter of inquisition by the greatest saint of our modern times Śrī Raman Maharṣi, who admonished us to go on constantly asking ourselves the question—'Who am I'. This 'I' is the Soul, the Spirit, the Jīva.

Such souls are infinite in number and retain their individuality. Each one has to chalk out its own path of liberation and utilise its inherent potentiality to be fully liberated.

The above approach is obviously different from the one adopted by Advaita Vedāntists led by the great Saṅkara, according to whom there is only one Supreme Reality, the Brahman and the entire visible cosmos is Māyā, i. e., an illusion, super-imposed on unilluminated human mind by Avidyā, i. e., ignorance. In other words, Śaṅkara does not recognise the duality of Jīva and Ajīva, and according to him, whatever is Ajīva, the matter is unreal. To a Jaina Philosopher Ajīva is as much real as Jīva. Jīva ( the soul ) has come into contact with Ajīva from time immemorial, and it is only the reality of Ajīva that results in soul's journey from one birth to the other and its struggle for the ultimate freedom from the bondage of Ajīva.

### **Categories of Jīva**

Consistent with the above approach, the Jainas have seen two main categories of Jīva, namely ( 1 ) 'Siddhas', liberated

soul and ( 2 ) 'Saṃsārins', worldly, not liberated. The latter are further classified as 'Tras' ( mobile ), 'Sthāvāra' ( immobile ) and 'Nigoda', i. e., dormant and lost souls with a common body and respiration, representing the lowest stage of existence. 'Tras' ( mobile ) are at a higher level and are classified in accordance with the sense-organs possessed by them, viz. — ( 1 ) Those with two senses of touch and taste.

( 2 ) Those having three senses of touch, taste and sight.

( 3 ) Those having four senses of touch, taste, sight and smell.

( 4 ) Those having five senses of touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing. The 'Sthāvāra' ( Immobile ) have only tactual sensation. They are in the bodies of earth, water, fire, air and vegetables. Jaina seers have gone much deeper into this question and have given detailed enumeration of the number of Jīvas in different categories of immobile life.

Such a minute and detailed study of living beings has a great significance as it reveals not only a metaphysical insight but also a highly ethical object of putting emphasis on the inherent potentiality of every type of life to achieve the highest. It thereby shows that every type of life is entitled to protection. One cannot do better than quoting Prof. Zimmer who has lauded this aspect in the following words :

“The systematization of the forms of life in Jainism is anything but primitive. It is quaint and archaic indeed, yet pedantic and extremely subtle and represents a fundamentally scientific conception of the world. In fact one is owed by the glimpse that it gives of the long history of human thought — a view much longer and more imposing than one that is cherished by our western humanists and academic historians with their little story about Greeks and Renaissance.

Twenty-fourth Tīrthāṅkara Mahāvīra was roughly a contemporary of Thales and Anaxagoras, the earliest of the standard line of Greek philosophers; and yet the subtle, complex-thorough-going analysis and the classification of the features of

nature which Mahāvīra's teaching took for granted and upon which it played, was already centuries ( perhaps even millennium ) old ( Prof. Zimmer is of the view that the Śramaṇa School, to which Mahāvīra belonged, existed in India much prior to the advent of Aryans ). It was a systematization that had long done away with the hosts of powerful gods and the wizard-magic of the still earlier priestly tradition—which itself had been as far above the really primitive level of human culture as are the arts of agriculture, herding and dairying above those of hunting and fishing, root and berry gathering. *The world was already old, very wise, and very learned, when the speculations of the Greeks produced the texts that are studied in our universities as the first chapter of philosophy.*"<sup>1</sup>

Speaking of the all-comprehensive universality of the idea of a cosmic man in Jainism, Prof. Zimmer says : "In Jainism, the whole Universe, including its infra-human stratifications, is comprised in the Divine anthropomorphic organism-beasts and plants, devoid of man's higher faculties of love, wisdom and spirituality, and also inorganic matter and the mute elements. This accords with the universal scope of India, doctrines of perfection, transformation and redemption. Not only human beings but all existences are included. *Though steeped in darkness, the beasts and even atoms are looking for salvation, for they are the members of all-comprehending brotherhood of life-monads.* Their destiny is to ascend, at last, beyond the bondages of Karmas."<sup>2</sup>

### Quality of Self

According to the Jaina seers the essential quality of Jīva ( Soul ) is pure consciousness—consciousness which does not die even in deep sleep in which the soul does not participate in any of the worldly affairs and remains unaffected by all

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1. Campbell, J. : *Philosophies of India*, Meridian Books, p. 278.
  2. *Ibid*, pp. 245-246.

the pleasures and pains of the world going around him. What is it which remembers the pleasant and unpleasant experiences undergone during sleep ? It is the self, the soul, the 'I' consciousness. This 'I' consciousness remains steady throughout life. 'I', the knower, is pure ego as distinguished from empirical ego, being clouded by Kārmic forces, begins to think that worldly actions are done by 'me'. According to William James, the American Psychologist, the empirical self consists of "entire collection of consciousness, the psychic faculties and dispositions taken concretely." Distinguishing pure self from the empirical one, he says, "It is the thinker which thinks. This is permanent, what the philosophers call soul or the transcendental ego."<sup>1</sup> Thus, when it is said that the soul is pure consciousness, what is revealed is the untainted principal characteristic of soul which, in Jaina terminology, is known as 'Niścaya Naya'. However, when it is said that the soul is enjoying its Karmas, and therefore, subjected to mundane existence, what is revealed is its empirical character known as 'Vyavahāra Naya' in Jaina terminology. 'Naya' means viewpoint, 'Niścaya' means ideological and 'Vyavahāra' means practice. In Jainism the qualities of the self, are expressed in terms of 'Niścaya'.

Ācārya Kunda-kunda, a leading Jaina saint and scholar, has described the qualities of soul in his famous work 'Samaya-sāra' — "The soul is the Lord ( Prabhu ), the 'doer' ( Kartta ), the Enjoyer ( Bhoktā ) and limited to 'a body' ( Dehamātra ) still incorporeal, and ordinarily with Karma. As the potter considers "himself the maker and enjoyer of the clay-pot, so from the practical point of view ( Vyavahāra-naya ) the mundane soul is said to be the doer of things and enjoyer of sense-objects."

Umāsvāti, another great saint-scholar, in his well known work 'Tattvārtha-sūtra' says that, "consciousness manifests fully in perfect comprehension and apprehension ( Jñāna and

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1. Principles of Psychology, Vol. 1.

Darśana ) but the potentiality of every Jīva is not confined to these alone, because it extends also to perfect bliss and infinite power.”

Thus the state of pure consciousness in which the soul remains totally untouched and unaffected by the events of the universe is the state of final liberation called ‘Mokṣa’. Such a soul is known as ‘Siddha’. He is unaffected by good or bad events because he is all knowing. His knowledge comprehends all possible events and happenings — past, present and future. In our little human experience we find that we are not gravely affected emotionally or otherwise, by any event or circumstance, if we already know that the said event is going to take place. Moreover, we also experience that the events for which we have no attachment or desire, do not affect us. The soul having attained the state of ‘Siddhahood’, becomes ‘all-knowing’ and ‘desireless’ and would, therefore, obviously remain unaffected by good or bad happenings of the universe. Thus, the pure consciousness of a liberated soul must be the consciousness of a ‘Knower’ ( Jñātā ) and a ‘Seer’ ( Draṣṭā ).

### Avatāravāda Ruled out

“Dagdhe bīje yathā’tyantam, prādurbhavati nāṅkuraḥ. ‘Karmabīje tathā dagdhe na rohati bhavāṅkuraḥ”<sup>1</sup>, meaning “Just as a burnt seed cannot sprout, the soul whose seeds of Karmas are totally burnt, cannot reborn again.”

Such a soul, bereft of desire, would not think of again taking birth on earth to relieve its pains as thought by some Hindu thinkers. The theory of ‘Avatāra’, that is, the descent of the Divine on earth in human form has no place in Jainism. To the Jaina, their Tīrthaṅkaras ( Path-makers, known otherwise as Prophets ) including Mahāvīra, were not Avatāras or Divine. They were, indeed, great souls having success-

1. दग्धे बीजे यथाऽत्यन्तं प्रादुर्भवति नाङ्कुरः ।  
कर्मबीजे तथा दग्धे न रोहति भवाङ्कुरः ॥

Umāsvatī, Tattvartha-sūtra.

fully liberated themselves by their own efforts. They have shared their knowledge with the humanity out of sheer love for it. After attainment of the salvation, they have no emotional attachment to the world, the real cause of the 'Rebirth'. As Chāndogya Upaniṣad<sup>1</sup> puts it : 'Na sa punarāvartate, Na sa punarāvartate' that 'He does not return back, he does not return back'. A grain, that has already sprouted does not sprout again. Perfect non-activity, in thought, speech and deed, is possible only when one has become 'dead' to every concern of life; dead to pleasures and pains, dead to the power and pelf, dead to all so-called intellectual pursuits including social and political reforms. Lao-tse, the great Chinese saint and philosopher, asked us to remain 'dead' to all events of life, to adopt an attitude of objective observance and to allow the nature to take its own course, for, according to him, even those trying to meddle with social and political affairs with perfectly altruistic motives of correcting the world, are unnecessarily poking their nose in the unfolding of the universal course. Thus the real 'Siddha' is one who has literally died to time. Such a 'Siddha' has no reason to take 'Avatara' to ameliorate the worldly woes.

### **Proof of Existence**

If these are the attributes and characteristics of a soul, it is indeed very pertinent to ask what are the proofs of its existence. Bhagavatī-sūtra refers to Mahāvīra as prescribing four means of true knowledge, namely—'Pratyakṣa' ( Direct perception ), 'Anumāna' ( Inference ), 'Upamāna' ( Analogy ) and 'Āgama' ( Scriptures ). All these four means are utilised, hereafter in proof of soul's existence.

According to the modern science, every atom of every object possesses electrons, protons and neutrons, which constitute the source of energy. We have seen that this energy is the spirit because it is the motivating force. In a living object this

1. 'न स पुनरावर्तते, न स पुनरावर्तते', Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 8/15/1.

very energy constitutes its 'Soul'. Thus no further proof about soul's existence is needed. But this discovery of science was not available to early seers like Mahāvīra, who therefore came to the conclusion about soul's existence by a process of meta-physical reasoning.

Ācārya Jinabhadra, a very learned and respected scholar-saint, flourished in 5th century A. D., has written the classic named Viśeṣāvaśyaka-bhāṣya. It contains the dialogue, between Lord Mahāvīra and eleven leading Vedic Scholars on different aspects of self and other philosophical theories, which are basic to Jainism. Indrabhūti Gautam, who subsequently became the chief disciple of Lord Mahāvīra, was a great Vedic Scholar, seeing many persons flocking to listen the first sermon of the Lord, he went to see him along with his own disciples. There the Lord himself disclosed to Indrabhūti, the nature of philosophical doubts regarding the existence or otherwise of 'soul' which afflicted him. 'Oh, Indrabhūti' ! Mahāvīra said, "I know that you have doubts about the existence of Jīva ( soul ). You believe that the existence of Jīva ( soul ) cannot be proved by any method, as it cannot be directly perceived by any sense-organs. You further argue within yourself that even atoms cannot be seen by naked eyes, but they could be perceived as collectivities. But this cannot be said about the soul. You contend that if one wants to prove the existence of the soul by the process of inference, even that cannot solve the problem because every inference is based on some tangible experience. You say that even scriptural authority is of no use as even they are not uniform in accepting the existence of soul, and even otherwise, scriptural knowledge is nothing but inferential knowledge. According to you even the process of analogy is useless because there is no tangible thing, analogous to soul. Thus it is not possible to prove soul's existence through any of the means of Valid knowledge. So the only conclusion is that the soul does not exist."

Having thus formulated the opposite point of view, the Lord proceeded to resolve the doubts as under :



“Oh Gautam, your doubts about the soul’s existence are out of place, and your contention that soul cannot be perceived by senses is also not correct because it can be perceived very directly.”

‘Sir, how that is so ?’ asked Gautam.

“Gautam, just consider what is ‘Soul’. It is nothing but pure consciousness or knowledge ‘Vijñānarūpa’. If this consciousness exists, soul exists. This consciousness exists in you because, otherwise, there can not be any doubt in your mind about the existence of soul. Hence the very fact of the existence of doubt is the proof of consciousness. Unconscious has no doubts. Thus, there is direct proof of consciousness and hence of soul. If it can thus be directly perceived, it does not require any further proof.”

Gautam, however, required further proof. He therefore asked : “May be that the ‘Soul’ can be directly perceived as you say, but still further proof is required, because there are some philosophers known as Śūnyvādī, not recognising the real existence of even the things which could be perceived by senses and insist upon their proof by other logical methods.”

Lord Mahāvīra said : “We often say ‘I did’ or ‘I am doing’ or ‘I shall do’. In all these statements of past, present and future, the subject is ‘I’ even though the action was over, or is being done in the present or is yet to be done in future. This suggests the continuity of ‘I’ consciousness throughout past, present and future. The ‘ego consciousness’ ( Ahaṁrūpa Jñāna ), thus expressed by reference to a constant ‘I’ is a further proof of the existence of soul because that ‘I’ is the ‘soul’ or the ‘self’, is not destroyed by the past, exists in the present and projects existence in future also. This ego consciousness is not the subject matter of any inference, nor does it require any scriptural authority. Even those, ignorant of scriptures, experience this ego consciousness. So this is direct perception and hence direct proof of soul’s existence.”

“Moreover, Oh Gautam ! there cannot be any ‘knowledge’ of the object having no existence at all. So if the ‘soul’ does not exist, who has the consciousness or knowledge of ‘I’, when one says ‘I did’ etc. If you say ‘I doubt’ who is it who doubts ? Every doubt presupposes a doubter. That doubter, that ‘I’, is your ownself, your soul. ‘Ego consciousness’ has soul as its object because the question is whose ‘consciousness’ ? Answer is consciousness of ‘I’ which is the object of this consciousness.”

*Gautam* : “Sir, this ‘ego consciousness’ would not be rendered objectless if instead of believing that ‘soul’ or ‘self’ is its object, we take our body as its object. When I say ‘I am black’ or ‘I am thin’, the ego consciousness ‘I’ is used with reference to our body. So, what is objectionable if we take ‘I’ as referring to our body and not to our ‘self’.”

*Mahāvīra* : “If ego consciousness expressed by the use of ‘I’ has a reference to our body as its object, then even our dead body could be having that ego consciousness and could be referred to as ‘I’. But that is not so. It follows, therefore, that the object of ego consciousness is not the body. It cannot be said that the ‘doubtor’ of your doubts is your body.

Moreover, consider what is a ‘doubt’. Every ‘doubt’ is an attribute ( *Guṇa* ) of some object which is its substratum. Every substratum is known by its attributes because attributes and their substratum are mutually reciprocal so that the existence of one can be known by the existence of the other. Therefore, even though the substratum cannot be perceived by our senses its existence can be mentally perceived through our knowledge of its attributes. A doubt can never be an attribute of your body because doubt is always an attribute of consciousness and the body has no consciousness of its own.”

“Further, just consider who possesses the power of memory, who remembers the past and the present and who has a comprehension about future. This attribute of memory is not the attribute of body. It is the attribute of ‘I’ consciousness. So when you are doubting the very existence of ‘I’ you are

doubting your ownself, because, the moment you doubt your ownself, you donot exist. But you do exist because you are doubting. So, the doubter of your doubt is your 'self', your 'soul'. Soul exists because 'I' exists and 'I' exists because 'doubt' exists."

"Again, it is many a times seen that the attributes such as memory, perception, sensation etc. are absent even when body is present and in a living condition. This proves that these attributes are not of body."

"It is found that body gets consciousness only in association with soul and without soul, it is dead as wood. Hence consciousness is 'soul'."

The dialogue which proceeded further left Indrabhūti Gautam fully convinced about the existence of soul and he became the principal disciple of Mahāvīra.

Chāndogya Upaniṣad contains another famous dialogue on the subject between father Āruṇi and his son Śvetaketu. 'Āruṇi' a Brahmin Ṛṣi, learned in Vedas, sent his son Śvetaketu at the age of twelve years to learn Vedas. The son returned back to father after the completion of his course at the age of 24 years, conceited and thinking himself very learned. So the learned father inquired of the son —

"Śvetaketu, my dear, since now you think yourself very learned and proud, did you also ask for that teaching whereby what has not been heard of, becomes thought of, what has not been understood, becomes understood ?"

'How pray Sir, is that teaching' ? asked the son.

'Just as my dear', the father explained, "by one piece of clay everything made of clay may be known ( the modification is merely a verbal distinction, a name, the reality is just 'clay' ).<sup>1</sup> Just as, my dear, by one copper ornament everything made of copper may be known ( modification is merely a verbal distinction, a name, the reality is just 'copper' ). Just as, my

1. वाचारं मनं विकार नामधेयम्, मृत्तिकेति एवं सत्यम् ।

dear, by one nail-scissors, everything made of iron may be known ( the modification is merely a verbal distinction, a name; the reality is just 'iron' ). So, my dear, is that teaching."

'Verily', said the son, "those honoured men did not know this, for, if they had known it, why would they have not told me ? But do you, Sir, tell me."

'So be it, my dear,—bring hither a fig from there'.

'Here it is, Sir'.

'Divide it'.

'It is divided, Sir'.

'What do you see there' ?

'These rather fine seeds, Sir'.

'Of these, please divide one'.

'It is divided, Sir'.

'What do you see there' ?

'Nothing at all, Sir'.

Then he ( father ) said to him ( son ) : "Verily, my dear, that finest essence which you do not perceive — verily, my dear; from that finest essence, this great fig tree arises. Believe me, my dear, that which is the finest essence — this whole world has that as its self. That is Reality. That is Ātman. That art thou ( Tattvamasi ) Śvetaketu."

'Do you, Sir, cause me to understand even more'.

'So be it, my dear', said he, "Place this salt in water. In the morning come to me." Then he did so. Then he said unto him : "That salt you placed in the water last evening, please bring it hither." Then he grasped, but did not find it, as it was completely dissolved.

'Please, take a sip from this end', said he, 'How is it' ?

'Salt', said the son.

'Take a sip from that end', said he, 'How is it' ?

'Salt', said the son.

'Take a sip from middle, How is it' ?

'Salt'.

'Take a sip from that end', said he, 'How is it' ?

‘Salt’.

‘Set it aside and then come to me’.

He did so, saying, ‘It is always the same’.

Then he ( father ) said to him : “Verily, indeed, my dear, you do not perceive Being here. Verily, indeed it is here. That which is the finest essence — this whole world has that as its self. That is Reality; That is Ātman, That art thou ( Tattvamasi ), Śvetaketu.”<sup>1</sup>

Truly, the essence of life is spirit, the soul. Body, mind and soul are the three components of human beings. Body works through senses. The impulses which are created in physical senses when they come in touch with external objects are carried to mind. The mind reasons out and stores the feelings created by these impulses and conveys to the soul. The soul thus gets experience of pleasures, pain and utility of the material objects of the external world through physical senses and mind. Function of the physical senses is confined to each individual sense so that one physical sense cannot discharge or remember the function of any other physical sense. Function of mind is, to a great extent supervisory. It is the internal function which works in the most subtle manner. It reasons and compares and stores, but its motivating force is the self. Mind can work only through senses. But self can work directly. So long as self and its functions are clouded by Karmas, it functions only through mind and senses and is not capable of having direct perception.

The Jaina philosophers have distinguished mind from the self by emphasising that mind is the internal instrument that helps the self in cognizing internal states like pleasure, pain etc. Śrī Hemcandra Ācārya, a renowned<sup>2</sup> Jaina scholar of

1. Hume, Robert Earnest : Thirteen Principal Upaniṣadas ( Trans. ), Oxford, 1921, pp. 240-241, pp. 247-248.
2. Ācārya Hemacandra : Pramāṇa Mīmāṃsā ( I/24 ), Ed. Pt. Sukhalal Sanghavi, Sarasvati Pustaka Bhandar, Ahmedabad, Reprint Edition II, 1989.

12th century, defines mind as the organ of cognition of *all objects of all the senses* ( Sarvārtha grahaṇam manaḥ ). It is the cognition of all the objects of senses, only and not of all the objects, that is, the Mind excludes the cognition of these objects which are not the objects of senses. There lies the distinction between the mind and the self because self, in its pure existence, is free from the bondage of Karmas, and can cognize all objects irrespective of the medium of senses. That is direct, i. e., Pratyakṣa, cognizance. But cognizance, obtained through senses and mind is indirect, i. e., Parokṣa.

The philosophical paradox is that self experiences through mind and body ( physical senses ), but in the ultimate analysis, the effort of self is to get free from the obstacles created by the mind and body. So, the obstacles are sought to be removed through obstacles themselves. The paradox is solved if we bear in mind that according to Jaina philosophy, self, i. e., the Jīva is associated with Ajīva since time immemorial and the real nature of every Jīva is to ascend and to become free from the bondage of Ajīva, resulting in self's struggle through experience, gained only through the mind and body. Thus, in this chapter we have seen that,

( 1 ) Existence of soul can be proved by direct perception as well as by metaphysical reasoning.

( 2 ) Soul is distinct from matter, but is in close association with the matter from time immemorial.

( 3 ) Soul is eternal and indestructible.

( 4 ) Association of soul with karmic matter is the cause of birth and rebirth.

( 5 ) Process of birth and rebirth is nothing but the soul's struggle to become free from the bondage of Karma.

( 6 ) Once the soul completely frees, itself from the bondage, it becomes all powerful and omniscient, Siddha, i. e., attains God-hood.

( 7 ) Having attained God-hood it does not take rebirth.

## 70 ] The Path of Arhat : A Religious Democracy

( 8 ) Such a soul is in existence even in an atom and every such soul-even of an atom, has the potentiality of achieving God-hood and this belief is at the root of the theory of Ahimsā.

Having thus seen the proof of existence and the main characteristics of one of the components of this Universe, we may now proceed to consider the characteristics of the other component, namely, Ajīva.

## Chapter Five

# FACT OF THE MATTER

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“Jīva and Ajīva together constitute universe. If they are separate, nothing more is needed. If united, as usually is the case, the stoppage, the gradual and then ultimate destruction of the union is the only possible course of considering them.”<sup>1</sup>

Really the bondage is nothing but the union of Jīva and Ajīva. This union is from the time immemorial, hence there is endless effort on the part of every Jīva to break this union to achieve real freedom. That is why, the study of the nature and character of Ajīva is essential.

Lay meaning of Ajīva is the thing not moving. But in Jaina metaphysics this term does not connote that sense because, here, some specific Jīvas also are immobile—those found in earth and other immoveable matters.

### Categories of Ajīva

In short, Ajīvas are those who are not Jīvas. The categorization of Ajīvas would give us proper understanding of the expression. There are five categories of Ajīva, namely—1. Pudgala, 2. Dharma, 3. Adharma, 4. Ākāśa and 5. Kāla. The Jainas have bestowed upon these terms the special meanings, distinct from those ordinarily attached to them in day to day language. These five taken together with Jīva constitute the whole universe. They are called *Ṣaḍ-dravyas*. Their interplay with Jīva constitutes and explains all the movements of the universe. A brief description of the five types of Ajīvas are as follows—

( 1 ) *Pudgala* — The most important of all the five Ajīvas is Pudgala. Etymology of this expression clarifies its meaning

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#### 1. Tattvārthādhigama-sūtra.



The term 'Pud' connotes the process of combination and the term 'gal' signifies dissociation. So the expression 'Pudgala' means one in the constant process of combination and dissociation. In other words, Pudgala is that which undergoes constant outward change in form.

The Pudgalas are substances both tangible as well as intangible. They can, however, be perceived by senses. The Jaina philosophers have divided that the 'Pudgala' dravyas upto the stage where further division is not possible. This is called 'Anu', meaning atom. Pudgalas are of variegated types with innumerable atoms. Different atoms of different types of Pudgalas combine, dissolve and again combine in different and variegated forms. This process of combination gives rise to different and variegated molecules, referred to as 'Skandha'. Thus, innumerable varieties of 'Skandhas' with different varying qualities are found in the universe. Śrī Pūjyapāda Devanandi's<sup>1</sup> classic 'Sarvārtha-siddhi' says that, some 'Skandhas' are visible and some invisible. There are six forms of recognised 'Skandhas'. Of these extremely subtle and beyond sense-perception are the 'Skandhas' formed by particles of Karma. When the self ( Jīva ) enjoys sensual objects, it gets smeared with these Karma particles and this results in further journey of birth and rebirth of the self.

In short 'Pudgala' may be defined as 'that which can be experinced by sense-organs'.

According to Jaina view, the existence of Pudgala is real. It is distinct and separate from self. It has no beginning and no end. It is indestructible, though it is constantly changing in form. From time immemorial it is associated with self and gives its own colour to the self. Self works through it so long as it enjoys the sensations conveyed by it. But the effort of the

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1. Pūjyapāda Devanandi : Sarvārtha Siddhi, Editor Pt. Phūla Canda Siddhānta Śāstrī, Bharatiya Jñānapitha, Kashi, 1955, p. 299.

aspiring self is to dissociate itself from the company of Pudgala and thus to gain its real luster and form.

This Jaina realism is quite distinct from the Śāṅkara Vedānta considering Pudgala as 'Māyā', an illusion. The root 'Mā' in Saṁskṛta means 'to form' and it is believed that the word 'Magic' is derived from this root. So 'Māyā' means a formation which is not real. Sāṅkhya philosophers think greatly in lines with Jainas. According to them, the universe is made of two elements—'Puruṣa', the Ātman and 'Prakṛti', the matter. According to Sāṅkhyas, however, Puruṣa, the Ātman, remains 'Kūṭastha', i. e., at the summit, isolated, and does not participate in any way in human pains, passions and feelings, though it 'appears' to be involved in life because of apparent association with conditioning attributes of 'Prakṛti' (matter) which manifests itself in three aspects (Gunas), namely Satva, Rajas and Tamas (good, active and dark).

(2) *Dharma* — Here the word Dharma is not used in its popular sense that is religion. Dharma here means the principle of motion. It is a necessary condition and medium of motion. Conscious objects and other matters have their own motion but the medium through which they gain their motion is called Dharma. For example fish has its own motion but that motion is possible only through the medium of water. This medium which makes the motion possible, is Dharma. It is said that the nature of every object is its Dharma—'Dhammo Vatthu Sahāvo'<sup>1</sup>. Word 'Sahāvo' means 'Sva-bhava', i. e., one's own nature. Every object expresses itself and moves in the universe and progresses through the medium of its own nature. This medium itself is unconscious and is therefore Ajiva. In application of this theory to Ātman (soul), it is important to note that so long as the soul moves through the medium of its 'own nature' (Sva-bhava) it is moving in Dharma. 'Sva-bhava' of soul is its own consciousness. But when the soul is smeared by Kaṣāyas, i. e., passions

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1. 'धम्मो वत्थु सहावो', Svamikumāra ; Kārtikeyānuprekṣā, V. 478.

such as attachment, hatred, greed etc. It moves in Para-bhava, i. e., in the field which is alien to it and hence, it is not moving in Dharma.

( 3 ) *Adharma* : If Dharma signifies the principle of motion, Adharma in Jainism signifies the principle of non-motion, i. e., rest. It is also unconscious and so does not interfere with the motion of an object. It is just like earth which enables the moving object to take rest and stop the motion.

These concepts of Dharma and Adharma constitute the systematic dynamism of Universe, as, without them, there would be chaos. If things of the Universe are moving according to their nature smoothly, the universe would function smoothly but not otherwise.

( 4 ) *Ākāśa* ( Space ) — It is eternal and uncreated. Without space Dharma and Adharma cannot exist and pudgalas as well as Jīvas cannot move. Space is also unconscious and is inseparable constituent of universe.

It is divided into two parts — Lokākāśa and Alokākāśa. 'Lokākāśa' means space for the functioning of six Dravyas and 'Alokākāśa' means space beyond Lokākāśa, where nothing exists.

All these Dravyas except Kāla namely Pudgala, Dharma, Adharma and Ākāśa move and form their own collections, called 'Astikāya' meaning collectives in space.

( 5 ) *Kāla* ( Time ) — It does not require any space and has, therefore, no Asti-kāya. It is beginning-less, unconscious and helpful in measuring the changes in Pudgalas. Just as space is infinite, time is eternal and an unavoidable component of universe. It is in co-ordination of time, space and motion that Jīva ( self ) functions in the universe in union with Pudgalas. It is Jīvas's motivation which make Pudgalas active and the activity created thereby is manifested through space and time. This is how the universe functions.

This analytical concept of universe is peculiar only to the

Jainas. It gives us a comprehensive idea of the whole mechanism of the functioning of universe and helps us in further understanding the life and its riddles.

Here, it would not be out of place if we revert back to some of the queries, posed in the beginning of the first chapter. "Whence has it all proceeded and whether is it tending?" "Is it all without purpose, without aim and without a scheme? Or, is all this created, guided and controlled by some super power, beyond human comprehension?" These are the consequential questions, which may be replied, on the basis of discussion contained in the foregoing chapters, in the following manner :

( 1 ) This Universe, is uncreated, is existant from eternity and will exist till eternity, having no beginning, no end.

( 2 ) It is controlled and guided by its own force and not by any outside super power. Its motivating force is generated by one of its own principal elements, namely, spirit or soul.

( 3 ) It is tending nowhere, but it supplies proper medium for its elements to function.

( 4 ) The real 'purpose', of all the strains and struggles and all the phenomenal happenings in the universe is to enable different Jivas ( souls ) to achieve final liberation through their own endeavour and obtain Godhood ( State of Siddha ).

( 5 ) There is a recognizable and systematized scheme under which this universe is functioning, the main key being the theory of Karma and transmigration. It is not a super imposed scheme of any outside force. We may now proceed to consider how the main 'purpose', that is, emancipation referred to in item no. 4 above, is fulfilled and what is the modus operandi thereof.

## Chapter Six

# JOURNEY TO FREEDOM

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“Samyag-darśana-jñāna-cāritrāṇi-mokṣa-mārgaḥ”<sup>1</sup>, means Right perspective, Right knowledge and Right character constitute the Path of Salvation.

Spiritual evolution is a conscious process. If the purity of consciousness is impaired or destroyed, and if self is immortal, what is the process by which the self can attain its true state ? As seen above, from time immemorial, the self is in association with matter and it is this association which makes its inherent capacity to be omnipotent and omniscient. No soul can afford to remain immortally immoral. One of the main attributes of soul is to progress. This tendency to progress is evident even in the stages of regression because each regression imparts experience and education to the soul in its journey of progress.

### **Theory of Transmigration : Search for Happiness**

The question is how this is possible ? The answer lies in the theory of Metempsychosis, the theory of transmigration, the cycle of births and rebirths. The basis of this theory is the eternity and immortality of soul. As already observed, Jainas firmly believe that the two main components of the Universe—soul ( Jīva ) and non-soul ( Ajīva ) are eternal. They change forms but never die. Water changes form and becomes ice or vapour but the basic elements remain the same. This belief is now confirmed, science proving that matter is never destroyed. So when the body dies, the soul remains. But rema-

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1. “सम्यग्दर्शनज्ञानचारित्राणिमोक्षमार्गः”, Tattvārtha-sūtra ( I/1 ) by Umāsvāti, P. V. Research Institute, Varanasi ( Reprint IInd Edition ).

ains where ? Does it remain in suspense ? It cannot remain in mere suspension. Its association with Karmic particles—Pudgala ( Ajīva ) would not allow it to remain ‘suspended’ in eternity. Desires and intensity to fulfil them, are the unavoidable attributes of the soul, in union with Pudgalas. Look at our human existence and observe the attitude of our soul and the methods adopted by it as well as the objective sought by it. There is no soul in this universe which does not seek happiness as its main objective. Examine the nature of struggle for life in which all the souls, right from immobile having only one sense ( Ekendriya ) upto the human beings, the final expression of life’s evolution, are involved, and you will find that happiness, by whatever means, is the only goal in life. It is to achieve this happiness that the man, sometimes runs after wealth or power, after literature or culture, after social service or politics and sometimes after philosophy or religion. All desires and all activities—good and bad, derive their inspiration from the instinctive impulse to be happy. Man marries, remarries or remains a bachelor, begets children or adopts them, rears them up and invests lifetime toil to make them happy, strives, sacrifices his own pleasures and also does not mind making others unhappy and all this with a final goal to be happy himself. But he often, almost invariably finds that the real happiness is always eluding him. Finding an activity unable to give him the happiness he wanted, or that it gave only momentary happiness and began subsequently to bore him, man resorts to another activity. However the same experience is repeated and the process goes on. His whole life is exhausted and he is confronted by the inevitable Death. He realises in retrospect that most of his desires remain unfulfilled and his search for happiness was really a search in wilderness, as illusive as the appearance of water in a hot desert.

This is the case with every human being. The question here arises whether the soul which longed for one or the other thing throughout its life and failed to achieve its final objective of a lasting happiness, would remain in suspended anima-

tion for eternity ? If consciousness is the principal attribute of soul, would the consciousness of unfulfilled desires, not impell it to seek further activity to get the said fulfilment ?

### **Theory of Cause and Effect**

Moreover, what about the theory of cause and effect ? In the scheme of universe what ever happens, yields to the law of cause and effect. Every event, every happening is the result of some cause. There is nothing accidental. If we fail to comprehend the cause of a particular event, that is, only due to limitation of our knowledge. If this is the case, they must be consequences or effect of the various actions taken by us in our lifetime. Some results ( effects ) we see in our lifetime, but not all. Our good and bad deeds and even our good and bad thoughts, are bound to have their good and bad effects. Whatever we have sown, we have to reap. This is known as the theory of Karma ( action ). By the law of nature, every action has reaction. How this law applies to our life ? We see numerous instances wherein a wrong doer does not get any bad result during his life time while an honest man, leading throughout the life of uprightness, benevolence and love, gets nothing in reward in his life time. Results of the respective deeds in both the cases are not obtained in this life. But nature's law of cause and effect never remains suspended. If so there would have been a chaos. As Jaina seers do not believe in some Supreme Being, known as God, who kept detailed accounts of each individual life, regarding his good and bad deeds and then settling the score at some unknown date by resurrecting them from their death abodes. Theory of punishment and reward from some outside agency being thus ruled out, we have to get some satisfactory explanation elsewhere. This explanation comes from the theory of transmigration.

Again, we find a number of discrepancies between the temperament, character, physical fitness, financial and social progress among the members of the same family, brought up by the same parents in the same social and fiscal environments,

Many a times these discrepancies are congenital. What is the explanation except that of the theory of Karma and consequent rebirth.

Thus the theory of transmigration is the only rational explanation of almost all apparent mysteries of this universe. Progress and dynamism are significant characteristics of nature. Worldly existence is known in Saṁskṛta as Saṁsāra. The root of this word 'Saṁsāra' is 'Sru' meaning 'to move'. A thing, constantly moving is Saṁsāra. One of the chief characteristics of self ( Ātman ) is its upward movement. Self constantly gets experience through its association with matter. The course of this experience expands one life to the other. As it progresses through one experience after the other, it comes to know the futility of desiring happiness from worldly objects. This course of birth and rebirth is nothing but a quest for happiness. A stage comes when the self feels, after sufficient experience, that he is running after will-o'-the-wisp and that the real happiness lies elsewhere. Perhaps such a realization becomes a turning point in his journey. He then searches for the Reality and realizes that all his efforts of seeking happiness through worldly objects were senseless and born out of sheer ignorance. And thus convinced his efforts are directed towards spiritual upliftment. His tastes and outlook towards the life are totally changed. First he has some faint idea about the reality. This increases his interest to know more about it. He goes on gathering knowledge. With his knowledge his conviction also grows, and as conviction grows, action gradually follows. He then begins to ascend the ladder. The upward march on the steps of ladder is tenacious and hard. There are ups and downs in march but all the downfalls bring more experience, more knowledge and lead to more effort. And finally the stage comes when the self is able to make himself totally free from the shackles of karmic bondage and attains full freedom and consequential Bliss. Jaina seers have explained this whole process in a very beautiful and analytical manner with reference to the psychic mechanism of human mind.



### Three Steps to Freedom

This journey to freedom has three stages of Darśana, Jñāna and Cāritra, i. e., Perception, knowledge and action. If all the three are right or correct, i. e., Samyak, the self is surely on the path to freedom ( Tattvārtha-sūtra by Umāsvāti ). These three—Right perception, Right knowledge and Right action are known as three jewels ( Ratna-trayee ) in the Jaina scriptures. Without these three, there is no way to salvation. Let us therefore shortly consider the working of these three 'jewels'.

The word 'samyag' means 'Right, proper or correct'. While discussing the necessity and importance of these three jewels, the Jaina seers have exhibited a very rare insight of human psychology and its working. However, it would be beyond the scope of our thesis to make a detailed reference to this discussion because main purpose of our thesis is to have some workable knowledge of some basic principles

( 1 ) *Samyag Darśana* — Two psychological stages of the evolution of knowledge are apprehension and perception. Before knowing a particular thing including a doctrine, one first gets its apprehension. After apprehension gets mental or physical sensation and then comprehends the thing in further details. Thereafter a final stage comes when that particular thing is fully perceived. Thus the stages of gathering knowledge may be categorised like this — 1. Apprehension, 2. Sensation, 3. Comprehension and 4. Perception. As Shri S. Gopalan<sup>1</sup> puts it :

“These philosophers thus maintain that the first stage in the complex process of preception is apprehension in which there is mere awareness which is the immediate result of the sense-object contact. In the second stage of sensation there is some cognition of specific characteristics of the object. In the third stage, the perception stage ( comprehension stage ) there is also the 'identification' of the object, for example, as belonging to a particular class.”

1. Gopalan, A. S. ; Outlines of Jainism, p. 95.

This psychological analysis is as much true in the case of a metaphysical doctrine as about a physical phenomenon. The process of apprehension is called 'Darśana' and the culmination of the process into comprehensive perception is called 'Jñāna', though the term Samyag-darśana in Jainism, stands for Right faith also but I think that Right perception is more appropriate.

Thus a soul tired of enjoying material objects of life and capable to see the futility of pursuing them, turns introvert and looks elsewhere to seek real and permanent happiness-happiness, enduring. At that stage either by his own introspection or by coming into some saintly company he gets a glimpse of Truth. He begins to realize that there is some path worth exploring. His inclination to find out the path is the beginning of the 'Darśana' stage. He begins to 'see'. In Samskṛta the root 'Dṛś' ( Paśya ) means 'to see'. He now begins to apprehend Reality.

This apprehension, this Darśana, should however be 'Samyag', i. e., proper. Nothing which is prejudicial or inhibited can be 'Samyag'. One cannot proceed further from the stage of apprehension if one proceeds with a vacillating mind. The stage of apprehension can carry us further only if we have confidence that the usual worldly path, we followed for ages, has proved futile and therefore we have to find out a new path with open mind and firm determination. This is called 'Śraddhā'. It is the determination to find out 'Tattvārtha'. The word 'Tattva' means essence. 'Artha' means 'meaning'. So 'Tattvārtha' means meaning of the Real Essence, the Truth. So 'Samyag Darśana', i. e., proper perception is defined as determination to find out real Truth. Ācārya Umāsvāti, the venerated writer of the classic 'Tattvārtha-sūtra' defines<sup>1</sup> 'Samyag Darśana' as "Tattvārthaśraddhānam Samyag-darśanam", i. e., Determination to find out the Truth ( meaning of the Essence ) is 'Samyag Darśana'.

1. 'तत्त्वार्थश्रद्धानं सम्यग्दर्शनम्', Tattvārtha-sūtra, I. 2.

*Nine Tattvas* — What is this 'Tattva', the essence? The essence of the whole existence is the pursuit of steps to freedom. But what are these steps? To understand these steps is to understand the meaning of essence. Therefore, the Jaina seers have termed these steps as Tattvas. According to them there are Nine Tattvas, namely — Jīva, Ajīva, Pāpa, Puṇya, Āsrava, Bandha, Saṁvara, Nirjarā and Mokṣa. We have already discussed about 'Jīva' and 'Ajīva'. The word 'Āsrava' means influx. It suggests influx of Karmas -- good as well as bad. 'Bandha' means 'bondage' suggesting the bondage of soul by karmas. 'Saṁvara' means stoppage, it suggests the stoppage of influx of karmas, 'Nirjarā' means shedding, that of accumulated karmas; Mokṣa means final freedom, salvation.

The significance of these nine tattvas, which comprehend the whole process of bondage and freedom of the soul and hence these also constitute the foundation and metaphysical structure of Jaina Philosophy, will be dealt in later chapters. Thus, if one proceeds with the belief in these Tattvas, his Darśana is Samyag or Right.

( 2 ) *Samyag Jñāna* — With this 'Samyag Darśana' one proceeds further, through scriptures tries to know more about these Tattvas, their role in life and way to proceed onwards on the path to salvation. This is the stage of acquiring proper knowledge.

There has been a good deal of debate on the question whether 'Darśana' precedes knowledge or vice a versa. In my humble view, this debate is fruitless and merely academic because both are interdependent. Without Darśana there would be no Jñāna, the greater the acquisition of Jñāna, the greater is the Darśana. An analogy of a blind and a lame-man, caught in a forest-fire, and who wanted to get at a safe place is quite apt. If both cooperated and the blind agreed to carry the lame and the lame agreed to show the path, both of them could carry themselves safely out of fire. Want of proper Darśana amounts to blindness and want of proper Jñāna amounts to lameness. Darśana desires to get out of the fire of this

worldly existence but cannot do so, so long as Jñāna, lame, without proper Darśana, does not co-operate and is ready to show the details of the path. It is thus clear that proper Darśana and proper Jñāna are supplementary to each other.

Regarding Jñāna the Jaina philosophers have their own peculiar approach. To them, since the knower ( Jñātā ) is the 'self', the true Jñāna acquired by self is always 'direct'. The word used is 'Pratyakṣa' ( direct ), i. e., without any medium. In ordinary sense, by 'direct', knowledge we mean, the knowledge acquired directly through senses or through our mind and reasoning. But to Jaina philosophers, this knowledge, acquired through our senses and mind is indirect. Because the main characteristic of Ātman ( soul ) being pure and illuminating consciousness, its direct knowledge means 'knowing' the things without any medium whatever. This 'illuminating consciousness' of the soul is called 'Sva-para-prakāśa', i. e., illuminating itself ( Sva ) as well as all other objects ( Para ). This is why senses and mind are treated, in the ultimate analysis, as obstacles to the realization of 'Kevala-jñāna'. Omniscience is the purest form of knowledge. Therefore, the goal of every process of Yoga is to transcend the limitations of mind and body both. The basic difference between oriental and occidental thinkers is that while the orientals have gone deeper than the mind in the process of exploring the self ( soul ), the occidentals have mostly stopped at the mind process.

### Five Categories of Jñāna

Jainas have categorised Jñāna ( knowledge ) into five categories — Matiśrutavadhi-mañḥ-paryaya-kevalāni Jñānam<sup>1</sup>, i. e., Mati ( Sensory ), Śruta ( Scriptural ), Avadhī ( Clairvoyance ), Mañḥ-paryaya ( Telepathy ) and Kevala ( Omniscience ). We shall now discuss each of them in short and show how the soul proceeds to attain the last and the highest category of knowledge, i. e., Kevala-jñāna ( Omniscience ).

Jaina scholars have treated this subject very minutely but

1. 'मतिश्रुतावधिमनःपर्ययकेवलानि ज्ञानम्'; Tattvartha-sūtra, I. 9.

here I have given only broad aspects of the basic principles of the Jaina Epistemology. First, Jains have classified knowledge into two categories, i. e., Indirect and Direct. Of the above five varieties, first two ( Mati and Śruta ) are Indirect ( Parokṣa ) kind of knowledge as these are attained through the activity of Senses and Mind ( Manas ). The remaining three ( Avadhi, Manaḥ-paryaya and Kevala ) varieties of knowledge are instances of direct knowledge. These three are considered direct perception because they are acquired by the self independently of the Senses and Mind, as Umāsvāti has put it — Ādye-parokṣam<sup>1</sup> Pratyakṣamanyat<sup>2</sup>.

( a ) *Mati-jñāna* ( Sensory knowledge ) — It is the knowledge obtained through senses and mind ( Tadindriyānindriya Nimittam<sup>3</sup> ). Thus what we see by eyes, hear by ears, taste by tongue as also what we remember, infer and all knowledge acquire through logic and reasoning fall within the classification of Mati. Jaina scholars have gone much deeper in discussing psychological analysis to show the process of acquiring Mati-jñāna. There are four stages of Mati-jñāna — Avagrahehavāyadhāraṇā<sup>4</sup>, i. e., Avagraha ( Sensation ), Iha ( Speculation ), Avāya ( Judgement ) and Dhāraṇā ( Retention ). Avagraha means contact-awareness, e. g., if we touch something in darkness, we become aware of the fact that we have touched something, though we do not know what that thing is. However that touch sets us thinking as to what it is. We try to know whether we have touched a rope or a serpent, and we reason out that it cannot be serpent. This stage is called Īhā ( Speculation ). Then we proceed further, make further inquiry and finally conclude that it is nothing else but a rope. This is called Avāya ( Judgement ). The

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1. 'आद्ये परोक्षम्', Tattvartha-sūtra, I. 11.
  2. 'प्रत्यक्षमन्यत्', Ibid, I. 12.
  3. 'तदिन्द्रियानिन्द्रिय निमित्तम्', Ibid, I. 14,
  4. 'अवग्रहेहावाय धारणा', Ibid, I. 13.

conclusion, thus arrived at, is retained rather permanently in memory. This is Dhāraṇā (retention). All these stages of perception apply as much to the knowledge of a metaphysical doctrine as to a physical object such as a rope.

Prof. Gopalan opines that Jainas conception of four stages of sensory perception bears similarity with the analysis given by modern psychologists in this regard. To quote his words— “It may be pointed out that the four stages of perception analysed by the Jaina philosophers are comparable to the analysis given by modern psychologists. The psychological insight of the Jaina-philosophers is extremely significant of their carefully and deeply analysing concepts relating to human mind.”<sup>1</sup>

(b) *Śruta-jñāna* (Scriptural Knowledge) — This knowledge is derived from the scriptures and the persons learned in scriptures. Saṁskṛta word ‘Śru’ means ‘to hear’. Śruta means ‘heard’. Earlier Indian tradition was to hear and remember the scriptural doctrines, recorded at a subsequent stage. The preachings and sermons of Tirthaṅkaras (Jaina Prophets) were subsequently recorded by their direct and immediate disciples who came in their personal contact. These writings are called ‘Aṅgas’. So the knowledge contained in these ‘Aṅgas’ is called Aṅga-praviṣṭa-śruta meaning recorded in Aṅgas. But the subsequent writings by those who followed, are known as Aṅga-bāhya-śruta meaning recorded outside the Aṅgas. These are the two main classifications of Śruta. There are many sub-classifications, which we shall not touch.

Śruta is essentially the product of Mati, for the obvious reason that application of mind, logic and reasoning are essential for acquiring Śruta. As Umāsvatī<sup>2</sup> puts it, “Śrutam Matipūrvam” means Śruta is the product of Mati. Since Mati is the product of sense awareness, it mostly relates to present objects but Śruta can comprehend past, present and future,

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1. Prof. Gopalan, S. : Outlines of Jainism, p. 64.
  2. ‘श्रुतं मतिपूर्वम्’, Tattvārtha-sūtra, I. 20.

and is mainly the product of mind “Śrutamanindriyasya”<sup>1</sup>. Śruta is obviously more mature and determinative. Mati is subjective to the person who acquires it while Śruta has many cognizers. These are the main distinctive features of both these categories of ‘indirect knowledge’.

The other three categories of knowledge are direct. Soul can perceive them without the help of mind or sense-organs. The soul acquires these knowledge on the Karmic coverings, clouding its faculty of knowledge, being removed. These coverings are called Jñānavaraṇīya Karmas, i. e., the karmas clouding the faculty of knowledge. We shall discuss it in the chapter on karmas. Here the point to be noted is that when karmas, which cloud soul’s faculty of knowledge, are removed it begins to exhibit gradually the rest of the three categories of direct knowledge.

( c ) *Avadhi-jñāna* — It enables the ‘self’ to know all tangible objects within a limited compass of space even though these objects are concealed from eye sight. Avadhi means limit. This knowledge does not go beyond a limited space.

( d ) *Manah-paryaya Jñāna* is the knowledge by which the ‘self’ can read the mind of others.

( e ) *Kevala Jñāna* is boundless and unlimited. It is perfect in all respects ( Paripūrṇa ), complete ( Samagra ), unique ( Asādhāraṇa ), absolute ( Nirapekṣa ), pure ( Viśuddha ), all comprehensive ( Sarva-bhāva-jñāpaka ). Its object is this and the other world ( Lokaloka Viśaya ) and with cognizance of infinite variations and modes of objects ( Ananta Paryaya ) — ( Sarvadravya Paryāyeṣu Kevalasya<sup>2</sup> ). Thus this is the stage of omniscience having no limitations of time and space. Such a soul is generally identified as ‘Sarvajña’ but the Jainas have preferred the terminology of ‘Kevala-jñāni’ to convey the same meaning namely, knower of everything. The question

1. ‘श्रुतमनिन्द्रियस्य’, Tattvartha-sūtra by Umāsvati, II, 22.

2. ‘सर्वद्रव्य पययिषु केवलस्य’, Ibid, I, 30.

is whether the expression 'Kevala-jñānī' is used to suggest the knowledge of past, present and future, irrespective of spatial and temporal distance or to suggest a philosophical insight, capable of seeing through not only the ideological and theoretical position but also all the different variations and modes which an object or a proposition is expected to undergo under different situations and circumstances. Pt. Sukhalalji, a great modern Jaina Scholar is of the opinion that the expression 'Kevala-jñāna' is used in the later sense and not in the former sense. According to him the expression conveys philosophical insight which misses no aspect while assessing a thing or a thought. He emphasises that the famous proposition of Ācārāṅga-sūtra, "Je Egaṁ Jāṇai Se Savvaṁ Jāṇai"<sup>1</sup>, meaning "one who knows one (Ātman), knows everything" goes to show that one who properly knows the real nature of the soul, automatically knows all its different manifestations, variations and modes and it is in this sense that the quality of omniscience is attributed to a 'Kevala-jñānī'. This modern interpretation may not be acceptable to old thinkers. However, the fact remains that the insistence that Darśana and Jñāna both must be 'Samyag', i. e., proper, points to the perfection which is not hindered by any prejudice or predilection. This seems to be more in line with the thinking of Sukhalalji.

It is emphasised that this categorization of knowledge is not imaginary. We do come across the people who possess Avadhī and Manaḥ-paryaya-jñāna. It shows that every soul has the potentiality of achieving the highest omniscience provided it is able to totally annihilate its Karmas. It prompts and encourages every soul to undergo ethical discipline if it wants to achieve the highest type of knowledge.

We have seen how during the journey to freedom the soul passes through the cycle of births and rebirths and is thus getting experience of worldly objects and enriches itself with the knowledge of Reality.

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1. 'जे एगं जाणइ से सर्वं जाणइ', Ācārāṅga-sūtra, 1/3/4.



( 3 ) *Samyag Cāritra* — However, this knowledge cannot reach its perfection unless it is followed by action, because thought without action is disease. Knowledge can become real and Samyag only when it is 'experienced'. A bare academic knowledge is, according to the thinking of all shades of Indian philosophers, mere information. One 'knows' fully only when one experiences the thing which is to be known. Mere academic knowledge is philosophy, but when that knowledge is converted into actual action it becomes religion in practice. Western philosophers like Nietzsche and Schopenhauer were mere philosophers. They did not and could not live what they preached. General tendency of the Western philosophers is to divorce philosophy from religion. In India such an approach is absolutely rejected. To an Indian mind no philosophy is worth anything unless it is lived in actual life. Here lies the importance of the distinction between Pratyakṣa ( direct ) and Parokṣa ( indirect ) knowledge discussed above. Philosophy which is not practiced in life, is not directly perceived and experienced by the self and hence it remains confined to mind. It belongs to the category of Mati or Śruta and has no status better than a mere 'information'.

It is for this reason that the third jewel Cāritra assumes importance. If this Cāritra, i. e., the action in life, building of ones character as per Darśana and Jñāna, is Samyag, i. e., proper, one is surely on the path of Mokṣa — liberation. To achieve this, Mahāvīra has prescribed five ethical principles, namely — Ahimsā ( Non-violence ), Satya ( Truth ), Asteya ( Non-stealing ), Brahmācārya ( Celibacy ) and Aparigraha ( Non-possession ). What is the comprehensiveness of these principles and what is the technique to observe them would be the subject matter of a different discussion. It would, however, be sufficient to note here that unless the first two jewels are followed by the third, our journey to freedom would always remain incomplete.

### **Ladder of Spiritual Development**

As seen above, spiritual perfection comes after great effort,

and this effort is not of a life-span. It is an effort of birth and re-birth also, during which the self tries to climb the ladder of spirituality. Jaina thinkers have analysed the different stages through which the self passes in its climb on this ladder during different lives. There are in all fourteen stages through which the self passes before achieving the highest goal. These stages are mere indications to show how the self progresses. They enable us to know at what spiritual stage we are standing in this life. We shall shortly consider these fourteen stages which are known as Guṇa-sthāna. 'Guṇa' means meritorious order and 'Sthāna' means stage.

*Stage 1* is known as Mithyā-Dṛṣṭi. 'Mithyā' means unreal, false, and 'Dṛṣṭi' means vision. This is a stage of spiritual blindness. The whole outlook of life is false and unreal. The 'Darśana, i. e., the perspective of the soul at this stage suffers from great ignorance on account of the Karmic veil known as 'Darśanāvaraṇīya'.

*Stage 2* is known as Sasādana Samyag Dṛṣṭi. While ascending the ladder of life, the soul sometimes reaches great heights, but on account of some weakness asserting, it slips down on the ladder, and the fall brings it to this stage. It has tasted the fruits of higher stages once, and so does not remain more at this stage and again begins to ascend.

*Stage 3 : Miśra* — It means mixture. It is the stage where the self experiences a mixed feeling of proper and unreal ( Samyag and Mithyā ) attitude towards life. The self at this stage is oscillating between the two extremes. It remains agitated and is unable to settle down.

*Stage 4 : Avirati Samyag Dṛṣṭi* — 'Virati' means cessation ( rest ). It suggests rest from the enjoyment of material things of life. The prefix 'A' suggests the negative and hence 'Avirati' means want of the stoppage of the material enjoyment. However, at this stage the oscillating mind becomes steady and begins to entertain right thoughts. It gets correct or proper 'Darśana' and hence it is called 'Samyag Dṛṣṭi'. But on

account of 'Avirati', enjoyment of sensual objects goes on, even though the self knows what is the correct path.

*Stage 5 : Deśavirati Samyag Dṛṣṭi* — 'Deśa' means partial. When the soul progresses from the 4th stage it begins to conquer sensual desires. But this conquest is partial.

*Stage 6 : Pramatta-Samīyat* — At this stage there is still further progress in as much as 'Deśa Virati', i. e., partial cessation from sensuality, becomes complete cessation. There is, however, some spiritual inertia ( Pramatta ). Eternal vigilance is the price for liberty is as much true for spiritual freedom as for political one. Mahāvira emphatically admonished his chief disciple : "Gautam, do not remain inert even for a moment." At this stage even though the self is living the life of a recluse his vigilance is not running from moment to moment and hence this spiritual inertia on his part remains an obstruction.

*Stage 7 : Apramatta-Samīyat* — Now the inertia has gone. The self is now ready for a jump and prepares to enter further stages of 'Kṣapaka-śreṇī' which means the series ( Śreṇī ) of the stages wherein karmic influence is being shedded partially and then wholly.

*Stage 8 : Apūrvakarāṇa* — Apūrvā means the thing which was not before ( Pūrvā means 'past' ). At this stage the soul experiences a potency which was never experienced before. It acquires a psychical force which would now enable it to shed its karmic veil. This shedding of karmic veil assumes two courses. One course is known as 'Upaśama' and other course is known as 'Kṣaya'. Upaśama means pacification and Kṣaya means annihilation. When the Karmic bodies such as anger, attachment, avarice, hatred and violence are made to lie dormant, what happens is 'Upaśama'. But when they are totally destroyed, it is called 'Kṣaya'. If the self takes the course of pacification ( Upaśama ) there is always a lurking danger of the karmic bodies coming to the surface and asserting themselves. If this happens, the self which has

achieved sufficient heights again slips down the ladder and goes to the lower stages from where it begins the journey afresh. It is just like suspended impurities in water settling down at the bottom of the vessel. Water does appear clear so long as impurities remain settled. But the moment some disturbance is caused these impurities come up to the surface and the clarity of water is destroyed. Exactly this happens to the soul when it takes the course of pacification ( *Upaśama* ). But if a great and determined soul like that of Mahāvīra takes up the course of total annihilation of karmic bondage, it jumps to the last two steps and obtains complete freedom of Siddhahood.

*Stage 9* : Anivṛtti Sāmparāya and *Stage 10* : Sūkṣama Sāmparāya — Sāmparāya means ‘Kaṣāya’ ( passions ). ‘Anivṛtti’ means not totally annihilated, ‘Sūkṣma’ means subtle. During these stages the soul adopts either the course of ‘Upaśama’ ( passification ) or of ‘Kaṣāya’ ( annihilation ). If the former course is adopted it comes to the next stage No. 11 and if the later course is adopted it comes to the stage No. 12.

*Stage 11* : Upaśānta Moha — This stage is the final one where the self adopts the course of passification. However, ‘Moha’ ( attachment ) which is considered as the most dangerous of all the karmic bondages remains ‘Upaśānta’, i. e., passified. Being Upaśānta, it is not totally destroyed. So it may come up to the surface and cause a slip. Then there is a fall to the lower rungs of the ladder. Many a times, it is the second stage of Sāsādana.

*Stage 12* : Kṣīṇa Moha, means total destruction of all attachment. This, now, is practically the end of the journey. All the Karmas are destroyed. Next two stages come as a matter of course.

*Stage 13* : Sayogī Kevalī — After being free from karmic bondage the soul attains Kevala-jñāna. It sees everything and knows everything. ‘Kevala’ means pure, unalloyed. ‘Sayogī’ means having connection ( ‘Yuj’ means ‘to join’ ).

The soul has connection with the body as it is still in human form, but all other connection, all other attachment has gone away. This is the condition of a real 'Vītarāga', one whose all sorts of attachments (Rāgas) have disappeared (Vīta means disappearance).

*Stage 14 : Ayogī Kevalī* — Now the body connection is also gone. This happens when the Sayogī Kevalī of the previous stage 'dies'. The last formal tie was of body. That tie is dissolved by 'death'. The soul now gets the stage of final consummation — a bodyless, existence of pure consciousness and bliss—the stage of Siddhahood, the stage from where one never returns to earthly existence when all the problems of birth, death and rebirth come to an end.

This is a short story of journey to freedom. The journey is not only long and arduous but is also full of pains, pleasures, hopes, dispairs and conflicts. Broadly speaking, in the first four stages the soul is struggling against wrong belief which is overcome in the fifth stage where righteous conduct begins. In the sixth stage he is still liable to lapses and negligence, as the required vigilance is not from moment to moment. When the self enters the seventh stage, it is ready to shed its accumulated karmas. From 8th stage onwards he proceeds with powerful force but so long as the Mohaniya Karma (i. e., Karma arising from attachments) is not totally destroyed there is likely-hood of a fall. But the fall is only temporary and practically the whole journey is over when the soul reaches 12th and 13th stages. Thus the entire spiritual career comes to an end, and it is the end of all pains and pleasures of life. Buddha based his whole philosophical structure on the premise that life is painful. Mahāvira also believed that life is painful and the effort of every soul is to be finally free from this pain and to obtain permanent bliss.

A question arises in the mind of every thoughtful person, when he nears the end of this physical existence, whether the life which he lived was worth living, what was the purpose of

life, what has he achieved in life and whether, taken as a whole, it was satisfying, pleasurable or painful. Answers may be of varying types but nobody will be able to say that he has been able to get permanent joy and happiness from the things of the world. On the final analysis, it would appear that so long as we are not able to approach the problems of life in a detached and objective manner we are not able to get joy and happiness from any activity however, altruistic, benevolent or high-minded it may be. Attachment, whether it is for physical objects, individuals or even ideas or ideals, always results in dejection. If this be the final lesson of life, the only solution which can be offered to life's problems is to try to achieve a condition of detachment, a condition of a *Vītarāga*, one whose all attachments are gone. *Vītarāga* is an expression of great significance. It is peculiar to Jaina epistemology as in other philosophical thinking, they have used the word *Vairāgya* or *Virāga*. *Virāga* is the opposite of *Rāga* (attachment) and being an opposite, it carries an idea of aversion. So the expression *Virāga* is, many a times, understood as 'dislike', which is nothing but a negative form of attachment. But the expression *Vītarāga* merely refers to a condition where all attachments are gone. There is no 'like' and no 'dislike'.

If the life is painful, it is no use cultivating dislike for it. The correct attitude is the attitude of *Vītarāga*. Mahāvīra showed the way of achieving the state of a *Vītarāga*.

Greeks perhaps knew the stings of life as intimately. When the Greek Midas asked Silenus, 'what fate is best for man'. Silenus answered : "Pitiful race of a day, children of accidents and sorrow, why do you force me to say what were better left unheard ? The 'best' of it all is unobtainable—not to be born, to be nothing. The second best is to die early."

Silenus's attitude was rather cynical. Mahāvīra would not agree, however, with his statement that we are all children of 'accidents' and 'sorrow'. Mahāvīra never believed in accidents as according to him everything which happens in this

universe has a cause and the results which we are reaping are generated by the causes supplied by us. If we are children of 'sorrow', the sorrow is also of our making. Mahāvīra would also not agree with Silenus that the 'best' is 'unobtainable' though he may agree that the 'best' is 'not to be born' or 'to be nothing'. Journey to freedom is a journey 'to be nothing' which means 'to be everything', though desiring nothing and doing nothing. It is therefore a journey to achieve the stage of a Vītarāga, who does not require 'to be born' again.

## Chapter Seven

# ETHICS OF RESPONSIBILITY

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“If the world is will, it must be a world of suffering. And first, because, Will itself indicates want, and its grasp is always greater than its reach, for every wish that is satisfied, there remain ten that are denied. Desire is infinite, fulfilment is limited. It is like the alms thrown to a beggar, that keeps him alive today in order that his misery may be prolonged tomorrow ... As long as our consciousness is filled by our will, so long as we are given upto the throngs of desires, with their constant hopes and fears, so long as we are subject to willing, we can never have lasting happiness or peace. The realised desire develops a new desire, and so on, endlessly.”

—Schopenhauer.

### **Actions follow the Doer**

Great minds think alike, and the depth of thought almost always digs out the same truth. The conclusions to which the great German philosopher Schopenhauer came to, were reached thousands of years ago by Indian philosophers too. ‘Desires’, according to them was the root cause of every karmic activity of a human being. They went deeper into the question and found out the root cause of all human problems which have afflicted the man-kind ever since its birth. Consciousness being the intrinsic attribute of the self, and the self being in association with Karmic matter called ‘Puḍgala’ since time immemorial, the dynamism of the self, the spirit, is always guided and prompted by desires. The more the self desires, the more it remains busy with the activities which bind it more and more, and the cycle of birth, death and rebirth goes on endlessly till the self realises the futility of remaining permanently involved in the bondage of karmic fetters. It is this realisation which brings the turning point in the self’s career in spiritual journey. It is at this point of time that the self is



beginning to realize its ethical responsibility to itself. 'Kattārameva Anujāi Kamma'<sup>1</sup>, meaning 'actions ( Karmas ) follow the doer', said the Jaina philosophers. This developes and fixes the ethics of responsibility for the self to strive by its own efforts to get itself free from the karmic bondage.

### **Search for Responsibility and Śramaṇa Line**

Man's search for fixing the responsibility for experiences like pleasures, pains, enjoyment, suffering, incongruences and incompatibilities, inequities and injustices suffered by human beings and other species of existence in this universe has never reached such sophisticated depths as found in Jaina philosophy. Easiest explanation available to man was God-either personal or impersonal. Early Aryans was a race possessing great intellectual potentiality and dynamism. Even they in their Vedas could not go beyond propitiating different Gods supposed to master different forces of nature to win their favour and to protect them against violence of nature and enemies. This propitiation naturally invited plenty of rituals in form of animal and sometimes even human sacrifices. All rituals give birth to a priestly class and theoretic specialisation. A priestly class of Brahmin's sprang up, and as has happened elsewhere in the world, this class acquired a good hold and influence even on the political forces with the result that the whole social and economic structure of the country came to be under the sway of politico-religious domination. Priestly class gradually began to lose faith, and there was a sort of intellectual revolt. 'Brāhmaṇas'—a literature prescribing in great details the ceremonies for different types of 'Yajñas' to propitiate gods, came to be replaced by 'Upaniṣadas' giving rational interpretations to Vedas and the science of sacrifices ( Yajñas ). Śramaṇa line of thoughts, which was pre-Aryan and pre-Vedic, must have had a great deal of influence on the thinking of the great Ṛṣis of the time and they seem to have borrowed new ideas of the 'Real Essence' and called it a

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1. 'कत्तारमेव अनुजाई कम्म', Uttarādhyayana-sūtra, 13/23.

'secret knowledge', as already seen in the famous dialogue between Śvetaketu and his father Ṛṣi Āruṇi in Chāndogya Upaniṣad. However, as will be presently seen, even amongst Śramaṇa thinkers who did not believe in God as the creator and sustainer of the universe, and who did not subscribe to the finality of Vedas, different and divergent theories explaining the universal order persisted, even at the time of Mahāvīra. Hence, some more rational and more convincing explanation about the universal scheme was required. Mahāvīra was not the founder of what is now known as 'Jainism'. He was a follower of a great Śramaṇic tradition which is said to have been handed over to him by his twenty-three predecessors called 'Tīrthaṅkaras' ( makers of Tīrtha –place of pilgrimage ). Greatness of Mahāvīra, however, lies in bringing about a beautiful synthesis and giving a rational and logical orientation to the prevailing Śramaṇic thoughts.

It was Rousseau who said that the man is born free, but is everywhere bound in chains. Mahāvīra, however, says that the man is born in chains but he can be free, if he so wishes. Freedom is his birthright. When Mahāvīra says this, he talks of real freedom, not a mere political one. But achievement of freedom is a conscious attempt, and no attempt is conscious unless one has the liberty to choose between good and bad, liberty to exert, liberty to destroy the obstacles, found in the path to reach the goal.

### **Mahāvīra's Synthesis**

In Mahāvīra's time there were philosophers who denied man's liberty to shape his destiny and believed in absolute determinism under different theories. It was Mahāvīra's task to achieve a proper synthesis of all these theories, and, at the same time, to emphasise the soul's capacity to change its future. Mahāvīra's emphasis on soul's capacity to change its future was a natural consequence of his belief that pure consciousness is the integral attribute of the soul, because a thing which is conscious can never remain dormant — Dynamism

and consciousness always go together. Mahāvīra's theory of karma is the theory of dynamism. To understand how he secured the dynamism during the process of synthesis of different prevailing theories, it would first be necessary to have a bird's eye view of these theories.

Those philosophers, who believed that a human being is totally free to select his own path of good or evil, are known as 'Yadṛchāvādī'. In the west they are known as the exponents of 'free-will'. But those who held a contrary belief and asserted that man is not free to choose his path because everything is pre-destined, were known as 'Niyativādī', i. e., determinists. Both the philosophers were found to be taking extreme stands. In real life, we often find that some persons who have chosen their own path toil for the whole life, but are faced with unexpected obstacles and never succeed, while others with very little effort achieve success which they otherwise do not deserve on merits. When we see such instances, we feel that the theory of free-will lacks something which remains unexplained. However, the theory of 'Niyativāda' which means the theory of determinism totally rules out man's own efforts as according to this theory the man is made absolutely a victim of some unknown reason which seals his fate.

*Gośāla's Niyativāda* — In Mahāvīra's early years of penances Gośāla who was subsequently known as a great and authoritative exponent of 'Niyativāda' (determinism) moved as a self-proclaimed disciple of Mahāvīra as he was greatly attracted by Mahāvīra's penances. Though Mahāvīra never accepted him as his disciple, he moved with Mahāvīra wherever he went and also practiced severe penances. During this period, he remained a great admirer of Mahāvīra, but created sometimes very awkward situations. During his period of penances the attitude of Mahāvīra was merely to suffer in silence without any protest and to move and do, whatever he thought would be proper for him. So when Gośāla constantly followed him everywhere, he did not object. This was

his attitude not only with Gośāla but with everyone with whom he had an opportunity to meet. He never preached during this period because he believed that one should not preach before one actualizes in his own life the principles which he exhorts others to follow. Gośāla kept company of Mahāvīra for about six years. During the last period of his stay with Mahāvīra he seems to have developed some thinking about his later theory of 'Niyativāda'. He began to doubt Mahāvīra's theory of Karma and finally came to the conclusion that man's efforts to change his destiny are futile as everything is predestined. According to him soul's journey to salvation would take its own course and time, just as a ball of string would take its own course and time to unroll upto its end. So far as man's exertions are concerned he believed that even they are predestined. He believed in the cycle of births and rebirths and contended that this cycle is bound to go on to its destined course which cannot be changed by human efforts. As a result, all the penances were found by him useless. He therefore parted company with Mahāvīra, proclaimed himself a Tīrthankara ( prophet ) and could gather a large following. It seems that thenceforth, he took to the life of pleasure and ease. His followers were known as Ājīvikas whose influence sustained for many years even after his death.

*Other Theories* — But Gośāla was not the only person who rejected the theory of karma. There were some philosophers who believed in 'Kālavāda'. 'Kāla' means time. They believed that every event fructifies only when its time comes and so human endeavour is fruitless. They gave many examples one of which was that of a fruit-bearing tree which can give fruit only when its time comes. There were others who believed in 'Svabhāvavāda' who contended that everything progresses and develops according to its own nature ( 'Sva' means own and 'Bhāva' means nature ) and that this explains all variations round in this universe. No one, according to them, can change this basic nature of the objects of this universe. There

were still others who believed in 'Īśvaravāda', i. e., belief in some outside force called God who is the final arbitrator of soul's destiny. All these theories, more or less, ruled out the belief that man's destiny is largely in his own hands.

*Mahāvīra's approach* — Mahāvīra's attitude towards all problems — physical or metaphysical — has remained that of 'Syādvāda' which exhorts us to look at a question from every angle, and not to reject any proposition summarily and wholly because every truth is relative and every proposition is likely to be true from a particular angle and in particular circumstances. He, therefore, tried to synthesise all prevailing thoughts and advanced his own theory of cause and effect by assimilating the partial truth contained in each theory. Broadly stating, he said that though it is true that each event occurs at its own time and according to its own nature, it would be a mistake to rule out a change which can be brought about by one's own will and exertions. While doing so, he did not accept the contention of 'Yadṛcchāvādins' that one can act of his own free-will and chalk out his path. His theory of karma (cause and effect) recognised that some of the karmas, which you have earned in your past lives, do bring their fruits in this life which cannot be avoided and which you have got to suffer, but even here, you can mitigate the rigour of the result by your own efforts. However, according to him once you recognise that you are reaping the fruits of your own actions, your future is always in your own hands. If your present is partly or wholly the result of your past, there should be no difficulty in believing that your future is also partly or wholly the result of your present. Thus Mahāvīra evolved a systematized syntesis of the theories of 'free-will', 'determinism', 'Kālavāda' and 'Svabhāvavāda', and rationalised the theory of Karma.

### **Psychological Approach of Mahāvīra**

By 'action' Mahāvīra did not mean only those things which are physically and ostensibly done, but included even

secret thoughts and tendencies entertained by you, for it is your secret thoughts and tendencies which make up your sub-conscious and which are mainly responsible for the actual actions which you ultimately take. Like modern psychologists, Mahāvira believed that our sub-conscious is not something separate and apart from us. He, therefore, called it Bhava-karma and emphasised that outer manifestations of human actions are only the gross results of these Bhava-karmas which are lying in our sub-conscious—deep below the level of our thinking mind. Dr. Karl Jung, the great Swiss pioneer of the age of psychology, has called this the “personal unconscious where the individual stores rejected memories and emotional material.” According to this great psychologist, this murky region stands between us and the deeper level of sub-conscious acting as a sort of dictator in both directions. It contains, according to Dr. Jung, not only our heritage of instincts and patterns from entire race but the ability to act on suggestions made to it. In the words of the great Dr. Jung “man has only to realize that he is shut up inside his mind, and cannot step beyond it, even in insanity, and that the appearance of his world or his gods very much depends upon his own mental condition.”

Dr. Jung's observations very much sound like the theory of Karma propounded by Mahāvira two thousand and five hundred years ago, because like Dr. Jung, Lord Mahāvira also thought that self is ‘shut up inside his mind and cannot step beyond it’, if it does not make positive efforts to break open the closed doors behind which it is ‘shut up’. What Dr. Jung calls ‘deeper level of sub-conscious acting as a sort of dictator’, Mahāvira calls more simply, the Bhāva-karmas, i e., the thoughts and tendencies, entertained and encouraged by you before or without giving them shape by outer actions. The recognition of this great stream of sub-conscious which is an essential part of our personality, but of which we are mostly unaware, has given Jaina thinking about the theory of Karma, a psychological and scientific gloss which is almost

modern.

Here, it would be interesting to note the great theoretical controversy which took place between Mahāvīra and one of his principal disciples Jāmāli, who was his son-in-law in his worldly relationship. Since Mahāvīra always emphasised Bhāva, i. e., intention or motive as the prime mover of an ostensible action, he evolved the principle known as 'Kaḍe-Māṇe Kaḍe'<sup>1</sup> which is a Prakṛt expression meaning that an action which is started, but which is yet not finished, is as good as already done. This principle does not recognize any distinction between the action which, though started, has not yet fructified, and the action which is completed and which has borne fruits. The basis of this principle is the above referred theory of Bhāva-karma.

Jāmāli, a very learned disciple of Mahāvīra could not agree to this principle, and pleaded the counter principle of 'Kaḍe Kaḍe' meaning an action can be termed as action only when it is complete. In other words, according to Jāmāli an incomplete action is no action at all.

A modern psychologist would obviously disagree with Jāmāli. The venerable author of Śrīmadbhagavadgītā seems to be in agreement with Mahāvīra when he pronounces :

'Nehabhikramana'śosti pratyavāyo na vidyate'<sup>2</sup> meaning 'The action just started ( in Karma-yoga ) is never destroyed, nor is it obstructed'. Then in the next line he says : 'Svapamapyasya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayat'<sup>3</sup> meaning 'Even a little performance of Dharma — duty ( Karma-yoga ) saves one from great calamity'.

Thus Mahāvīra's all inclusive definition of Karma ( action ) which emphasised the inner working of mind as the prime mover of all outward human manifestations, was of great

1. 'कडेमाणे कडे', Bhagavati-sūtra, 9/33.

2. "नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवयो न विद्यते", Bhagavadgīta, 2/40.

3. "स्वलक्ष्मण्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात्", Ibid.

importance in those days of ceremonial sacrifices which gave importance to only the outward rituals at the cost of moral and mental deterioration caused by violence on mute animals.

This theory of Karma brings in a causal law to explain various phenomena not only in human life but also in all lives found in the whole universe. All lives in the universe, mobile ( *Tras* ) as well as immobile ( *Sthāvara* ), form as one well-knit family governed by the same cosmic law of causation.

Mahāvīra went further and propounded that since all Jīvas ( living things ) are the parts of the same cosmic machine called universe, no one can isolate himself from the rest of life and violence by mind, speech or body ( *Manasā, Vācā or Karmaṇā* ) is violence to one's own self, and every good or bad action done to others gathers Karmic forces which bind yourself and pollutes the purity of your own soul.

According to the teachings of Mahāvīra, therefore, the activities of mind, speech and body, lead to constant influx of karmic matter which forms a sort of karma-śarīra ( a karmic body ) for the soul which moves through 'Saṁsāra' to experience the fruits of these karmas. It is said that the Karmic matter percolates and clings to the soul as does the heat to a red hot iron ball. Thus every soul is responsible for its own karma. It has either to suffer and enjoy these fruits or to shed these karmas by positive efforts, if it wants to avoid their fruits. How to do this, is the subject matter of a different discussion. However, the Jaina belief that this can be done, has led them to categorise and analyse the nature of different types of karmas, the nature of the intensity with which they bind the soul, the time when they fructify, the manner in which they fructify and the method by which these karmas may be destroyed or their effects modified.

### **Categories of Karmas**

Jaina thinkers have one hundred and forty-eight sub-varieties of karmas, but main categories are only eight. They are —  
1. Jñānavarāṇa, 2. Darśanāvarāṇa, 3. Vedanīya, 4. Mohanīya,



5. Āyus, 6. Nāma, 7. Gotra and 8. Antarāya. The word 'āvaraṇa' means a 'screen'. We have already discussed what is 'Jñāna' and what is 'Darśana'. So first two karmas are of the type which respectively screen from us true knowledge and true perception.

( 1 ) *Jñānāvaraṇa* : We have seen that knowledge is of five types, namely, Mati, Śruta, Avadhi, Manaḥ-paryaya and Kevala. Hence the Karmas which screen knowledge are also of five varieties, depending upon which type of knowledge is screened. When we see different varieties of intellectual developments in human beings and other creations, the difference can be explained by the type of knowledge—Screening karmas. When these karmas are fully destroyed the soul achieves 'Kevala-jñāna'.

( 2 ) *Darśanāvaraṇa* : These are the karmas which screen the physical as well as mental perceptions, and do not allow the self to have right perspectives of things and thoughts. They are of nine varieties. They obscure visual and non-visual apprehensions and induce five kinds of sleep.

( 3 ) *Vedanīya* : The word 'Vedana' means feeling. This Karma therefore generates the feelings of pleasure and pain which are called Sātā-vedanīya and Asātā-vedanīya Karmas.

( 4 ) *Mohanīya* : 'Moha' means attachment. This is the most dangerous, out of all the eight karmas because 'Moha' (attachment) is the root cause of all Kaṣāyas (passions) which are, in the main, four in number. They are as follows—1. Krodha, 2. Māna, 3. Māyā and 4. Lobha, meaning thus : 1. Anger, 2. Pride. 3. Deceit and 4. Greed. Mohanīya Karmas are of twenty-eight kinds, but they are broadly classified into two, namely 'Darśana mohanīya', i. e., those that obscure right vision, and 'Cāritra-mohanīya', i. e., those which obscure right conduct. The former is further sub-divided into three and the later into twenty-five.

If Mohanīya karmas are destroyed fully, the self becomes free from all 'Kaṣāyas', i. e., passions and hence it is said

‘Kaṣāya-mukti kila muktireva’<sup>1</sup> means ‘Verily, freedom from passions is the real freedom’.

There is a very beautiful and instructive story in the life of Gautam, the principal disciple of Mahāvira, to show how this Mohanīya Karma obstructs the final enlightenment. We have noticed how Śrī Indrabhūti Gautam came in contact with Mahāvira and how he eventually became his principal disciple. According to scriptures, all principal sermons of the master were addressed to Gautam and there was a sort of great teacher-disciple ( Guru-śiṣya ) bond between the two. After a number of years when the master got Nirvāṇa ( died ), Gautama was not physically present by his side. So when he heard the news about the death of the master, he felt greatly bereaved and greatly lamented the personal loss caused to him. He found that many of the house-holders who were the lay followers of the master could achieve ‘Kevala-jñāna’ ( final knowledge ) but he could not achieve it even though he was the principal disciple to whom the lord preferred to disclose every truth. Now that the master had passed away, how would he be able to achieve that which he could not achieve when he was alive, thought Gautam. This grief set him to thinking, and while this process of grief-stricken thinking was going on, he suddenly realized that the master was so often emphasising that attachment ( moha ) was the root cause of all other Kaṣāyas ( passions ), and the attachment even for the soul like Mahāvira was no better than the attachment for any other worldly object so far as its binding character is concerned. As the story has it, the moment Gautam realized that attachment to the physical existence and form of the master was working as a screen to the final knowledge ( Kavala-jñāna ), he could remove that screen and saw the enlightenment, the final knowledge. The story illustrates the brilliant exposition of the working of ‘Darśanāvaraṇīya’ karma resulting from attachment ( Moha ).

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1. ‘कषाय मुक्ति किल मुक्तिरेव’ ।

It is proper to bear in mind that attachment is not 'love'. Pure love has no attachments. The root verb of the word 'Moha' is 'Muh' ( to fascinate ). So the noun 'Moha' means 'fascination' while the Saṁskṛta equivalent of the word love is ( Prema ). Thus the connotations of the words 'Moha' and 'Prema' are entirely different. 'Prema' ( love ) has no strings and no infatuation. 'Moha' has both. If infatuation or attachment for a master like Mahāvīra prevents the progress of soul, what to talk of our infatuations for our worldly relations and material possessions.

*Ayus* — The word 'Āyusya' means duration of life. This Karma determines the period of longevity of every life. One has to live till the duration of that period is over. They are divided into four.

*Nāma* — The word 'Nāma' means name or designation. This Karma determines the type of body and physical qualities which a Jīva possesses in a particular life. Physical personality and qualities are determined by these karmas. They are of one hundred and three types.

*Gotra* — This Karma determines the type of the family in which the self is born. One's birth in a particular family of humans or other creations is determined by the Gotra-karmas which he has acquired. These Gotra-karmas are of two types, namely, favourable and unfavourable surroundings.

*Antarāya* — The word means obstructions. In life we find some persons getting unexpected obstructions of various types which cannot have any rational explanations from the known facts and circumstances. A layman would call them accidental. They are, however, not decidental, but are the result of past karmas wherein the self has been responsible for causing similar obstructions. This Karma is of five types.

This, in short, is the description of eight main karmas. Out of them first four are of striking or obstructive nature and are termed 'Ghati' ( means striking ) because they come

in the way of soul's progress in the spiritual journey. So long as they exist, salvation is away. The rest are not so dangerous and if the first four are destroyed, the rest cling to the self only till life time.

This detailed classification of different types of Karmas explains the diversities and complexities, incongruities and inequities of life in general. It conveys a lesson of responsibility that each one of us is put in a particular situation — good or bad—as a result of our own past or present action — both mental and physical, that the things done by us can also be undone by us and that our future is in our own hands. It is said 'Kaḍāya Kammaṇa Na Mokka Atthi' means 'There is no salvation without enjoying the fruits of action'. It is therefore futile to blame others for our ills. If one realizes this apparently simple fact, how peaceful the life on our earth would be.

### **Duration of Karmic Bondage**

For what length of time the self is fettered by this Karmic bondage? It is believed that the time duration of a karmic bondage is automatically determined at the time when that bondage is 'earned' and its length entirely depends upon the nature and character of the karma done by us. However, the fruits of our karmas would not necessarily come out for enjoyment soon or during this very life. One may have to be confronted with these fruits even in next life or lives. If the fruits of good karmas predominate during a particular life the fruits of bad ones may not come to surface soon, and vice versa.

### **Nature of Bondage**

Similarly the intensity of a karmic bondage also depends upon the nature and character of the Karmas. If a karma is done with great intensity, in other words if Bhava-karma prompting an action is strong, the bondage, good or bad,

1. "कडाण कम्माण न मोक्ख अत्थि", Uttaradhyayana-sūtra, 13/9.

would be equally intense and strong. A man can use his knife to commit murder as also to perform a surgical operation to cure a living creature, and accidentally causes death. Both may be responsible to cause death but while one wanted to kill, the other wanted to save. Thus the 'Bhāva' or intention of both was entirely different and hence the bondage would also be different.

### **Mitigation of Bondage**

When the intensity of a bondage is extremely strong, it has to be suffered as it cannot be mitigated. Such karmas are called 'Nikācit'. However, other karmas and their effect can be mitigated by countering them by penances, equanimity and good conduct. This aspect will be discussed in further details when we consider the 'Tattva' called 'Nirjara' (shedding) process of being free from karmic bondage.

### **Fresh Karmas**

Self, in its dynamic march through worldly lives is constantly earning and shedding karmas. It earns further karmic bondages even while suffering the fruits of the past karmas, if it does not suffer the said fruits with equanimity and objectivity. A person who passes through some calamity—mental or physical grumbles against his fate or loses temper and commits acts of indiscretion and violence with a view to avoid the uncomfortable circumstances in which he is placed. Another man who is passing through a period of prosperity or is invested with some power over his fellow men or lower creatures, and while enjoying this prosperity and power, he commits acts of indiscretion and violence. Both these persons are reaping the fruits of their past or present karmas, but while doing so, they are creating fresh and further bondages by their acts of indiscretion and violence. Even acceptance of fruits of good and bad karmas with over joy or sadness disturbs the mental equilibrium and results in fresh bondage of karmas.

Therefore, the ideal way to face the fruits of ones karmas is to face them calmly, objectively and peacefully with full equanimity of mind. If you are oppressed with pains, treat the occasion with equanimity and understanding, thinking within yourself that it is a good opportunity to shed your karmas which have been of your own creation out of some ignorance. If you are passing through a period of pleasure, thank the scheme of Universe which has not failed to reward your good actions of the past, and be prepared to do further good without any strings of desires attached to it. One should constantly remember that pleasure and pain are the inseparable constituents of life and the true art of living consists in learning to bear both with equanimity and understanding. If this is done, no fresh karmic bondages are evolved while reaping the fruits of our past karmas.

### **Life's activities**

If self, in its journies through different lives, cannot remain without some activity, and if our activities are prone to generate various types of karmas, what should one be advised to do : can he stop his activities ? If he cannot, how can he escape the earning of fresh karmas, because every activity in this Samsāra would bring in fresh karmic bondages, and one can hardly expect to be totally free from the cycle of births and deaths.

The legitimacy of these questions is beyond doubt. Key to the solution is, however, found in the enquiry as to what is that which attracts the karmic Pudgals ? We have already noticed that our deeds are prompted by our intentions known

action is unavoidable so long as life persists. But action without attachment is as good as 'no-action' — a situation which is known as 'Akarma' in Gītā. 'Sthitaprajña' of Gītā is the ideal of human beings in action. None of the Indian systems of philosophical thoughts has shunned the duties which one owes to his family, his society or his nation or to the humanity at large. What is shunned is doing the same with expectations. Almost all the Tīrthānkaras ( Prophets ) of Jainas hailed from the warrior class called Kṣatriyas. Many of them were Cakravartins ( emperors ) who had fought bitter wars. But when they retired they could achieve their goal of total liberation. They could not have achieved this had they not remained detached while ruling as Cakravartins, as also while fighting wars. King Janaka, the father of Sitā supplies the brilliant example of how one can even rule a kingdom without attachment. Action without attachment is, therefore, not unknown to Indian culture. Hence the Jainism, like other Indian philosophical systems, does not insist that renunciation of the worldly affairs is a sine qua non of liberation from Karmic bondage.

#### **Even good actions bind, if motivated**

While talking of karmic bondages, it must be noted that Jainism does not approve of even so called good actions resulting in 'Puṇya' meaning righteousness or virtues, if they are done with a motive to earn something in return either in this life or in the next, because the good actions taken with such motives result in the bondages of 'Puṇya'. Law of causation would surely give you proper reward for your good actions, but this will not result in total liberation which is the final goal of spiritual ascendancy. Such actions therefore result in the bondage of golden chains and, it matters not if the chains which bind you are made of gold or of iron. Such actions are therefore described as Puṇyānubandhi Pāpa meaning sin having a gloss of righteousness. There are certain undesirable actions which a man is compelled to take to protect some virtues. For example, a molester of a helpless

victim is required to be killed to save the victim. Such an action results in Pāpānubandhi Puṇya meaning, virtue having the gloss of sin. These are different types of bondages which follow their own course of duration and intensity depending upon various factors including the factor of attachment or detachment.

### **Consequences of Karma Theory**

This, in short, is the bare outline of Jaina theory of Karmas. Following are the direct logical consequences which flow from this theory :

( 1 ) Once you believe that universal phenomenon are governed by the law of causation, you rule out the existence of any outside agency to govern our fate.

( 2 ) The theory is based on the premise that Karmic forces which set the law of causation into motion are eternal and their motivating force called Jīva is also eternal, and there is no need to import the idea of a creator, sustainer and a destroyer.

( 3 ) Theory of Karma rules out the propitiation of gods for seeking their favour to save yourselves from calamities.

( 4 ) On the contrary, the theory insists on self reliance and asks us to develop our own moral character and increase our spiritual power to save ourselves from evil effects of our own past Karmas.

( 5 ) You have to own your ethical responsibility for the good and bad things of life and it is possible to discharge this responsibility with equanimity and understanding.





## Chapter Eight

# MECHANICS OF CHANGE

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Life, even as the ordinary humdrum series of daily events, is something essentially ungraspable and indefinable; never for a moment does it remain the same. We can never make it stand-still for analysis and definition.

The harder, we try to catch hold of the moment, to seize a pleasant sensation, or to define something in a way which will be satisfactory for all time, the more illusive it becomes. It has been said that to define is to kill, and if the wind were to stop for a second for us to catch hold of it, it would cease to be wind. The same is true of life.

— Zen, Liu-Chi

### **Process of Change and Nine Tattvas**

This is the Zen-Buddhist approach, appropriately emphasising the flittering nature of the things of this universe. The Jaina thinkers may have no objection to this proposition. But they go further and maintain that a man has the potential to understand the nature of the change in life as well as capable of bringing some order in the change. This understanding of the change led them to evolve nine fundamental elements, explaining the whole process of bondage and liberation of the soul. These Nine principles are fundamental to the understanding of Jaina philosophy, hence called Nine 'tattvas' meaning 'Essence'. The word 'tattva' is explained in Saṁskṛta as ( *Tasya bhāvaḥ tattvam* ) meaning 'the essence of a thing is Tattva'. What is the essence of all this change, represented by the process of Karmic bondage and freedom of the self? What is the mechanism by which this process works, why it works and how it can be regulated to take the self to the desired end, i. e., the final liberation? These are the questions, the Jaina seers have tried to answer by pointing out the mechanism of these nine tattvas.

They have pointed out that every soul, in its journey to freedom has to reckon with seven elements, namely, Pāpa – vicious deeds known as sins, Puṇya – virtuous deeds, Āsrava – influx of karmic particles caused by vicious or virtuous deeds, Bandha – bondage due to the said influx, Sa ṅvara – prevention of influx of karmas, Nirjarā – annihilation of accumulated karmas and Mokṣa – final liberation. Jīva, the self, tied with Ajīva from time immemorial, struggles to liberate itself from the union with Ajīva, and in that process, it has to encounter with the above seven elements. These seven elements, along with the two elements of Jīva and Ajīva constitute nine elements in all, the understanding of which gives us the total picture of the whole process of change. All these nine elements are called ( Nava-tattva ), and the understanding of these Nine-tattvas, covers the whole field of Jaina metaphysics and the ethics.

It is pertinent to note that, unlike most of the Western thinkers, the Indian philosophers have never tried to dissociate metaphysics from ethics. as according to them real knowledge is personal experience which does not come without living your philosophy in actual life. It is for this reason that the Jaina philosophers have joined the metaphysical concepts of Jīva and Ajīva with the rest of the seven concepts which are ethical in their contents.

### **Essential Tendency of Jīva**

We have already noticed that Jīva and Ajīva constitute the whole universe; we have also taken note of five categories of Ajīva, namely, Pudgala, Dharma, Adharma, Ākāśa and Kāla. It is the union of Jīva with karmic forces of Pudgala which causes the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. It is the cardinal belief of Jainism that the essential tendency of every Jīva is to go up and progress. It is like a hollowed gourd which when put under deep water has a tendency to go up and float over the water surface if it is not smeared by weighty earth. When the self is heavily smeared by various karmic

matters it is not able to go up and remains sub-merged in the waters of Samsāra ( worldly life ); but as and when it gets lighter by the discharge of karmic bondages which surround it, it gradually goes up and when totally free from these bondages, it floats over the surface waters of this universe. The nature of the soul is of darting upwards.

**‘Pāpa’ and ‘Puṇya’ : Both of Binding Nature**

Let us discuss how ‘the self’ progresses in its upward journey towards ultimate end. What is to be achieved is the divorce of the self from non-self called Pudgala which means to create the detached outlook towards worldly objects. In our worldly existence we engage our self in various types of activities and it necessarily comes in contact with more and more karmic forces, which are essentially of two types, namely those which are of vicious character and those which are of virtuous character called Pāpa and Puṇya respectively. Pāpa – vicious acts, resulting in sins, are caused mainly by mohaniya karmas, that is, by aversion, delusion and passions. Due to these self remains indulged in the activities which are purely selfish and materialistic. Anger, avarice, violence, indulgence in sex and apathy towards trials and tribulations of others generate the karmic forces of Pāpa and put the ‘self’ in further bondages.

On the contrary, good and virtuous acts such as sympathy for others, willingness to help the poor and weak, right conduct, social awareness generated by pious attachment result in the karmic forces called Puṇya. These virtuous deeds bring in their train the feeling of pleasure, good and comfortable life and other favourable circumstances.

Both these types of karmic forces bind the self and work as shackles on the real freedom. The simple reason being that bad as well as good deeds necessarily imply a pre-disposition to do them and are prompted by motives, i. e., aversion or attachment ( Dveṣa or Rāga ). The ultimate aim of the self, that is, to get liberated from all kinds of shackles – good or bad – and to ultimately this vicious cycle of birth or death is

hindered even by good deeds, binding the soul in golden chains of pleasure and comforts.

However, it must not be mistaken that Jainism equates good deeds with bad ones. It does recognise that good deeds are conducive to social order and these deeds also enable the self, put in pleasant and comfortable situation, to progress further. Hence, good deeds resulting in 'Punya' are always more desirable than bad deeds resulting in Pāpa. But when Jainas point out that even good deeds result in bondage, their emphasis is on the metaphysical aspect of the good deeds. Therefore it is necessary to know the real character of the karmic forces generated by good deeds purely from philosophical point of views keeping aside social point of view. Punya karmas result in giving the self many worldly pleasures and comforts but not the bliss of salvation. The salvation is not possible if element of attachment ( Moha ) is left in them. And it is remarkable that most of the so called good deeds, performed for 'social good', are the outcome of some or other type of attachment. Therefore, every aspirant for spiritual perfection is expected to do all his deeds—apparently good or bad—without attachment and should behave like a 'Sthitaprajña' of Gītā. 'Sthita' means 'Steady' and 'Prajña' means understanding. Thus, 'Sthitaprajña', a person with steady mind and understanding, acts without motives, in a natural way, just as the sun shines and gives light. To shine and to give light is natural and motiveless for the sun. The sun-light is helpful for good as well as bad actions, but the sun is not, in the least, concerned with that. Such unconcerned, motiveless and natural actions in life do not bind the self even if they result in good or bad ends.

### Āsrava ( Influx )

It means influx of karmic matter into the self, resulting from good or bad actions. The root of the word Āsrava is 'Sru' meaning 'to ooze, or to tricle'. When karmic forces flow to the self, it is called the process of Āsrava – influx. When the self activates in Saṁsāra and indulges in deeds, good or bad,

there is an inflow of karmic matters towards the self and these are received by it.

How this happens ? Soul is dynamic in character and always conscious enough to receive the impulses or sensations, caused by worldly objects when it is still in union with Ajīva. This results in vibratory activity of the soul which generates a sort of magnetic force. This magnetic force attracts the karmic matter through the agency of body, mind and speech. This is how the flow starts. This flow is Āsrava.

Āsrava is of two types, namely, Bhāva-āsrava ( psychical ) and Dravya-āsrava ( physical ). Bhāva is internal impulse resulting from psychic disposition. In other words, modification of consciousness by which karma gets into the soul is known as psychical influx. This leads to actual action which results in Dravya Āsrava. We can say that karmic matter itself which enters the soul is called physical influx. In the words of Dr. Mohan Lal Mehta<sup>1</sup> 'psychical influx is nothing but the mental, bodily or vocal activity, whereas physical influx is a peculiar type of matter. Bhāva is always more important as without it Dravya cannot come into existence, and the influx of persons with passions extends transmigration and that of persons free from passions prevents or shortens it.

### **Bandha ( Bondage )**

This is next stage, when the inflowing karmas actually stick to and permeate the self, just as water permeates milk. When this happens the self gets perfectly polluted and is bound to reap the fruits of the karmas which pollute it. These karmas are of eight types which we have already discussed in the foregoing chapter.

Since the karmic flow which results in Bandha—Bondage has to be suffered, it is necessary to consider the time duration and intensity of the bondage. While considering this aspect, the Jainas have classified these Bandhas into four types, namely, 1. Prakṛti-bandha ( Nature of the Bondage ), 2. Sthiti-bandha ( Duration of the bondage ), 3. Anubhāga-bandha

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1. Outlines of Jaina Philosophy, p. 37.

( Intensity of the bondage ), 4. Pradeśa-bandha ( Space-dimensions of the bondage ). The first suggests the quality or nature such as Jñānāvaraṇīya or Darśanāvaraṇīya etc. The second one determines the time-duration for which the fruits of karmas are to be enjoyed. The third, showing the intensity of the result, depends upon the intensity of the passions with which the karma is performed. In other words intensity of the result is reflected by the intensity of the cause. The fourth occupies different space dimensions of the self in accordance with the temperamental disposition of each individual and binds each individual soul in different manners. All these four types of bondages are determined at the very time when the deeds are done or intention to do them is entertained.

What are the causes of Bandha ? According to Umāsvāti they are five in number, i. e., wrong belief, non-restraint, passions, unawareness and activity. Among these five passions ( kaṣāyas ) and activity ( yoga ) are more important. Kaṣāyas are, as already noticed, anger, pride, deceit and greed. Yoga, in Jainism means the activity of body, speech and mind. Among the remaining causes Mithyātva means false attitude. Avirati means non-cessation from enjoyment of sensual objects and Pramāda means want of constant awareness. If these are the causes of Bandha, their opposite elements would be the causes of its absence.

Thus the four Tattvas namely Pāpa, Puṇya, Āsrava and Bandha show how the self gets bound and polluted by karmic forces. Since life is constantly going on with good or bad activities, the karmic bondage is also a continuous process. The self also earns further karmas even while experiencing the fruits of previous karmas. If this is so, it appears that the self would never be free from karmic bondages and all efforts to achieve freedom would be invain. Then what is the wayout ?

### **Samvara**

The answer is provided by the next two 'Tattvas' namely, 'Samvara' and 'Nirjara'. 'Samvara' means prevention of 'Āsrava', that is, stoppage of inflow of karmas and 'Nirjara'

means destruction of accumulated karmas. Thus, while 'Saṁvara' prevents fresh inflow of karmas, 'Nirjarā' destroys the accumulated karmas. When both the processes are complete what follows is Mokṣa, i. e., liberation. Let us see how this process happens.

*Experience-based thinking process* — Saṁvara is the beginning of the process of change in reverse direction of bondage. As the ultimate tendency of every 'Jīva', whether of a human being or that of 'Nigoda', i. e., the lowest level of living beings such as fungus, bacterias and virus is to ascend. In the course of his seemingly endless struggle, during endless cycle of births and deaths, the self sometimes progresses and sometimes falls back spiritually. By each step forward or backward it experiences, tastes the good and bad fruits of life and ultimately, may be after millions of years, a time comes when it realizes the futility of worldly existence, becomes awakened and tries to find out why and how all previous existences have not been able to bring out permanent peace and solace, always sought for. Initially it all appears to be a vain search—a search for nothing. At this stage one may be induced to adopt the attitude of Cārvākas and may begin to think that the talk of permanent happiness is a mere hallucination. There is nothing beyond this human existence which must be exploited and enjoyed to the full. It may also be induced to take up the line of 'Niyativādi' thinkers (determinists) like Gośāla, that it is all destined and no human effort can save us from this destiny, hence take it easy and enjoy all the material pleasures which are offered by life. However, the process does not stop there. The intrinsic character of every 'Jīva' being consciousness, it is endowed with constant thinking process and experiences of pleasure and pain. These experiences, gained from the enjoyment of the material objects and the attitude of limiting the soul's journey only to the present existence, are bound to lead to many imponderables, incongruencies and inequities. When this is properly realized, the consciousness does not remain stagnant and its thinking process begins to reconsider the stand hitherto adopted. A stage comes

when the self feels, that all this humdrum of life, all this bewildering complexity of existence, all this up and down, stress and strain, pleasure and pain, cannot be without purpose. If that is so, what is the purpose, it asks itself. Some intellectually and spiritually advanced souls tried to understand the universe, its components and its scheme as well as its mechanism in, seeking the answer to this question. They concluded that there are only two main components of the whole of this universe, namely Jīva (living) and Ajīva (non-living) and also that the both have distinct characteristics, though both appear to be untied, that the intrinsic characteristic of Jīva is consciousness and that whatever blurs this characteristic is foreign to it.

*Understanding of Jīva, sine qua non of all understanding —*  
 All Jaina philosophers have repeatedly emphasised that proper understanding of the quality of Jīva and Ajīva is the sine qua non of all understanding. Once this understanding starts, the process of Sainvara starts because once the real character of Jīva reveals that whatever is Ajīva is foreign to Jīva and definitely obscures the characteristics of Jīva, efforts to prevent the karmic flow also start. If Pudgala is foreign to Jīva, Jīva must try to dissociate itself from Paudgalic influence if it desires to gain its own virtues. This process of thinking also leads the self to the realization of unity of the universe, understanding of the working and mechanism of universal scheme and inherent potentiality of every Jīva to achieve the highest. From this springs the idea of equality of all souls and the doctrine of Ahimsā in deed as well as in thought. This also leads to the doctrine of karma, birth, death and rebirth, shedding of karmas, methodology by which they can be shed away and the final liberation, i. e., end of birth and rebirth. Thus the entire structures of doctrines of Jaina philosophy is brought to light if once the dichotomy of Jīva and Ajīva is understood in proper light. This is called Samyag Darśana (proper perspective) which is followed by Samyag-Jñāna (proper knowledge) — both of which are bound to be



followed by *Samyag-caritra* (proper conduct). Once the self adopts proper conduct fresh inflow of karmas begin to decrease and the process of 'Samvara' becomes activated. The self begins to realize that Paudgalic forces generated by *kaṣāyas* like anger, pride, deceit and greed as well as avarice and attachment must be contained. This realization is called 'Bhava-samvara' and when this 'Bhava-samvara' is actualized and put into action, the relevant inflow of karma stops. This is called 'Dravya-samvara'.

The seers have preached the method by which 'Dravya-samvara' can be actualized. These are : 1. *Vrata* – penances, 2. *Samiti* – carefulness, 3. *Gupti* – restraint, 4. *Dharma* – observance, 5. *Anuprekṣā* – reflection, 6. *Paṛiṣahajaya* – victory over difficulties and 7. *Caritra* – conduct. Each one of this is further explained in details. We shall revert to that discussion later on.

Aim of 'Samvara' is to block all the outlets of *Āsrava*. This is illustrated by allegory of a pond of water getting water inflow from different drains. To make the pond completely dry, only throwing out the collected water is not sufficient, blocking all the outlets through which water flows in, is essential. Similarly the self can purify itself by shedding all accumulated karmas and by blocking all the outlets through which fresh karmas are flowing. This latter process is the process of 'Samvara'. 'Sam' means proper and 'Vr' means to prevent, to surround. When this process is over, the fresh karmas are not generated and even if generated they are of very weak character. At this stage the question arises as to what should be done to the already accumulated karmas. This leads us to the next process called 'Nirjarā'.

**Nirjarā (Shedding of Accumulated Karmas)**

Function of *Samvara* is to stop the fresh inflow of karma but the function of *Nirjarā* is to dry up the reservoir of the past karmas. This process can be achieved in two ways, namely — ( 1 ) by allowing the past karmas to fructify in due course of time and tasting their fruits — good or bad — with equanimity and ( 2 ) by shedding past karmas through obser-

ving suitable penances before their actual fructification. The first method is known as 'Akāma-nirjarā' while the second as 'Sakāma-nirjarā'. In the first method the karmas are exhausted themselves on their fructification. There are two main drawbacks of this method, namely — ( a ) we do not know when the past karmas would fructify and it may also be possible that they may not fructify during the present life, ( b ) If the fruits of the past karmas are not received with equanimity and objectivity and if the self is affected and agitated by good or bad fruits respectively, it earns further karmas. Thus while exhausting past karmas the self earns some fresh karmas. It is for these inherent defects of 'Akāma-nirjarā' method, i. e., the passive method of shedding the karmas that the seers have recommended the second method of 'Sakāma-nirjarā', i. e., active method of shedding the karmas. This is the method of shedding of karmas by positive efforts. It is like ripening a fruit by artificial means, instead of allowing it to ripe in natural course. The positive efforts are through penances, called 'Tapas'. These penances are of two types, namely — ( a ) Ābhyantara Tapa meaning Internal or 'Inward penances', ( b ) Bāhya Tapa meaning External or 'Outward penances'. 'Inward penances'<sup>1</sup> are classified as — 1. Prāyaścitta ( atonement of sinful acts ), 2. Vinaya ( reverence or politeness ), 3. Vaiyāvṛtya ( service to saints and elders ), 4. Svādhyāya ( scriptural study ), 5. Vyut-sarga ( abandonment of passions etc. ), 6. Dhyāna ( meditation ). The whole range of 'internal penances' is mental and psychological, which leads to the transformation of mental attitude towards life and its problems. This transformation is styled as 'Penance' which shows that in Jaina terminology the expression 'penance' is not confined to physical and sensual restrains only. At every stage of philosophical reasoning the Jainism has emphasised the prime importance of 'Bhāva',

1. "प्रायश्चित्तविनयवैद्यावृत्त्यस्वाध्यायव्युत्सर्गध्यानान्बुत्तरम्",

Tattvartha-sūtra, IX. 20.

i. e., inner working of mind, for the simple reason that the gross always follows the subtle and no action is actualized without it being previously entertained in the inner mental plane. Therefore the significance of Jaina emphasis on "inward penances lies in the fact that it clearly proves that Jainism does not advocate only sensual repression and physical tormentation as is generally misconceived by these, ignorant of the basic approach of the Jaina seers. These 'inward penances' are known as 'Bhāva-nirjarā'.

External penances known as Bāhya-tapa are meant to restrain and discipline the sensual cravings. These are of six sub-types<sup>1</sup>, namely ( 1 ) Anaśana – fasting, ( 2 ) Avamaudarya – reduced diet, ( 3 ) Vṛttiparisankhyāna – delimiting the varieties of food, ( 4 ) Rasa-parityāga – giving up stimulating diet, ( 5 ) Vivikṭaśayyāsana – lonely habitation, ( 6 ) Kāyagleśa – Mortification of the body. However, these outward restraints are of no use if they are not accompanied by inner restraints and understanding. Unless these outer restraints and penances are able to maintain equanimity of mind and spirit, they would result in mere tormentation of one's body which is strictly prohibited. A fast with mind lingering in kitchen, is not Nirjarā. Contrarily it results in accumulation of fresh karmas. Similarly fasts and other such penances undertaken with a view to gain material benefits or worldly pleasures and to earn name and prestige in the contemporary society would result in 'Āsrava'. It is thus evident that those who celebrate their penances by advertisements, processions and feasts are merely making a mockery of this subtle principle of Nirjarā.

The processes of Samvara and Nirjarā are not exclusive and hence both can be and should be taken up simultaneously. They are mostly overlapping because both postulate a prior change in mental attitude and approach towards life and its problems. Therefore, the classifications described

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1. "अनश्ननावमौदर्यवृत्तिपरिसंख्यानरसपरित्यागविकृतशम्यासनकायक्लेशा  
बाह्यं तपः", Tattvartha-sūtra, IX. 19.

above are only for the purpose of understanding the details of their working.

As regards 'Gūṇasthānas' the ascendancy of the soul by different steps (already discussed in Chapter Sixth) Saṁvara and Nirjarā cover all the fourteen steps of Gūṇasthānas, before achieving the absolute Bliss, i. e., Siddhahood.

### **Mokṣa ( Final Liberation )**

It is the state of total liberation, from the shackles of karma, as well as from the cycle of births and deaths. It is the state of 'Nirvāṇa' or deliverance. It is the state of perfection, omniscience and pure knowledge, known as 'Siddhahood'. It is difficult to describe it even by analogy as there is nothing in this universe which is similar to it.

To use the words of the great philosopher Dr. S. Radhakrishnan<sup>1</sup> : "The state of perfection is passively described as freedom from action and desire, a state of utter and absolute quiescence, a rest that knows no change or ending, a passionless and ineffable peace. The energy of past karma is extinguished and the spirit, though still existent, has no chance of re-embodiment."

This state is said to be the state of complete, absolute and unconditioned Bliss — a real state of Sat-Cit-Ānanda.

When the soul reaches this stage it becomes Īśvara ( God ), who was always potentially present within you. According to Jaina philosophy, 'Parikṣiṇa sakala karmāḥ Īśvaraḥ'<sup>2</sup> meaning 'God is he whose all karmas have been annihilated'. Thus each one of us can attain God-hood if we are able to shed our karmas. Jainism says that God-hood is not to be searched in distant heavens. It is within your own self. In one of the Upaniṣadas<sup>3</sup> it is said, 'Tad dūre, tad antike', means 'It appears to be far, but it is the nearest'.

1. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan : Indian Philosophy, Vol. I.

2. 'परिक्षीण सकल कर्माः ईश्वरः' ।

3. 'तद् दूरे तद् अन्तिके' ।

## Chapter Nine

# PLURALISTIC REALISM

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“The distinctive feature of an unintelligent man is the hastiness and absoluteness of his opinions. The scientist is slow to believe and never speaks without modification—always ready to concede that it may be wrong.”  
Bertrand Russel

The greatest contribution which the Jainas have made to the world of thought is by their theories of Nayavāda and Syādvāda. The word ‘Syād’ in Saṁskṛta means ‘perhaps’ but in Jainism it is used to show the relativity of a judgement and the word ‘Naya’ means ‘Standpoint’. Truth or reality is always complex and has many aspects. If one is impressed by one of the aspects of a complex reality and begins to identify the reality only by that aspect he is bound to make a wrong judgement about the reality. Therefore, the Jaina seers exhort us to look at the complexities of life and knowledge, from every standpoint and from positive as well as negative aspects. They recognise that the apprehension of an ordinary human being is partial and hence valid only from a particular point of view which cannot give a correct or even a nearly correct comprehension of the whole. The complex reality has not only infinite number of qualities but also infinite number of relations. Again, it may be looked at differently by different persons and under their different circumstances. It assumes different forms and appearances for which due allowance ought to be made. All this makes it difficult to form a correct judgement about it unless a systematic and logical method is found to identify it. This method is called Nayavāda. As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan<sup>1</sup> observes —

“The doctrine of Nayas or Standpoints is a peculiar feature of Jaina logic. A Naya is a standpoint from which we make

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1. Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, pp. 298-299.

a statement about a thing—What is true from one standpoint may not be true from another. Particular aspects are never adequate to the whole reality. The relative solutions are abstractions under which reality may be regarded, but do not give us a full and sufficient account of it. Jainism makes basic and fundamental principle that truth is relative to our standpoints.”

Thus ‘Naya’ can be defined as a particular view point—a view point which gives only a partial idea about an object or a view which cannot over rule the existence of another or even a contrary view about the same object. If an object or theory is judged only from one standpoint, the judgement is one sided and it is termed as ‘Ekānta’. ‘Eka’ means ‘one’ and ‘Anta’ means ‘end’, thus Ekānta means one-sidedness. The Jainas therefore ask us to judge from all aspects which is called ‘Anekānta’. This is the basic principle of Jaina philosophy. Every fundamental principle of Jaina philosophy is based on Anekānta. Throughout, its approach Anekānta has been to accept the different aspects or even contradictory aspects of the reality and to evolve a synthesis between the contradictory philosophical theories. For instance, some of the Vedāntic teachers have said that every visible form has an unchangeable substance. From a lump of clay many forms can be made but clay-substance remains the same. So, only that substance which remains unchanged and permanent is real, the forms are unreal as they are ever changing. From this point of view, only ‘Brahma’, which pervades the universe, is true and the rest which is tangible is unreal and untrue called ‘Maya’. On the contrary, the Buddhists contend that everything in the universe is constantly changing and the change is so rapid that the apparent continuity gives the appearance of some unchanging entity, which is not there. It is, according to Buddhist belief, just like a flowing river which gives the appearance of continuity but every drop of water which flows is different. What we perceive in clay is only a

particular quality but even qualities are changing and hence there is nothing permanent which can be perceived besides changing qualities of an object. Thus according to Buddhists even Ātman ( soul ) is not permanent.

A Jaina seer would say, both are correct from the standpoint from which they look at the problem, but both make their statements which do not conform to the principle of Anekānta and hence do not give a correct judgement of the reality. Jainas say that changes are as real as the original substance. A jug made of a clay substance cannot be used as anything except as a jug and since the use is real, the form of a jug which clay has assumed, cannot be unreal. If the clay substance assumes some other form of an earthen vessel meant for cooking, that vessel cannot be used as a jug even though clay substance remains the same. If this is so, how can we say that the form which the substance assumes at a particular time is unreal and only the substance is real. The substance of clay appears to be the only real thing to those who concentrate on substance and ignores the form. It is not correct to say that because there is a change in the form, the changing form is unreal. If it is real even for a moment, its reality must be accepted and recognised, if a comprehensive view of the whole reality is to be taken. If one wants a jug he would not ask you to bring a lump of clay because what he wants is a jug and not clay. Thus according to Jainism the Vedāntist view is Ekānta and does not give a complete idea of the reality.

Similarly even the Buddhist view does not give the comprehensive idea because it concentrates its attention only on change and ignores the fact, that behind every change there is a constant substance, which remains the same. Analogy of river is fallacious because though it may be true that the apparent flow is made of different drops of water, we cannot escape from the fact that even in different drops, water substance remains the same. Moreover, it would not be correct to say that the intrinsic quality of substances are changing

though their outward form may not be changing. For instance water may change the form and become ice or vapour but its intrinsic elements namely  $H_2O$  remain the same. Thus the Jainas would contend that the Buddhists ignore to take into account that substance which is permanent.

### **Paryāyārthika and Dravyārthika Naya**

According to the Jainas, in order to have a complete and comprehensive judgement of reality one has to take into account the main substance which has the element of permanence and goes under the changes in various forms. In this process of change the previous form dies away and new form comes into existence. The birth of the new form is called Utpāda, the death of the old form is called Vyaya and the substance which remains constant during this process of birth and death is called Dhrauvya. When one is able to comprehend all these three, one can arrive at a proper judgement about the thing in question. When the self takes the form of a human being you can know it as a 'man' or a 'woman'. When it takes the form of animal you can identify it as a 'dog'. When it takes a form of the vegetable, you can describe it as 'grass'. All these descriptions are true from the standpoint of the forms which the self has assumed. So, when we recognise a thing from the point of view of the modification or change, it is called 'Paryāyārthika Naya'. Paryāya means modification, change. But when we recognise that thing from the point of view of substance, it is called 'Dravyārthika Naya'. Dravya means substance. The former considers changing aspect of reality while the later considers its permanent aspect. A correct and comprehensive perception of a thing is possible when its permanent substance (Dravya) is taken into account along with its existing mode (Paryāya). As Ācārya Siddhasena<sup>1</sup> puts it : "Anekāntātmakam Vastu Gocarah", i. e., we can understand a thing properly by perceiving its various aspects.

1. 'अनेकान्तात्मकं वस्तु गोचरः', Nyāyavatāra, p. 29.



### Seven Classes of Nayas

Jaina philosophers have given broad classifications of different aspects (Nayas) through which we can perceive a thing. They are : 1. Naigama Naya ( Generic and Specific view or teleological view ), 2. Saṅgraha Naya ( class-view ), 3. Vyavahāra Naya ( Empirical view ), 4. R̥jusūtra Naya ( Momentary view ), 5. Śabda Naya ( Verbalistic view ), 6. Samabhirūḍha Naya ( Etymological view ) and 7. Evambhūta Naya ( Specialised view ). There are hundreds of sub-classifications of these seven Nayas but without touching them we shall presently discuss the bare outlines of these seven Nayas. But before doing so, it may be noted that first three Nayas are with reference to the identification of the main substance called 'Dravya' and hence are known as 'Dravyārthika Nayas' while the rest four refer to the standpoints which identify the modes of the main substance and hence are known as 'Paryāyārthika Nayas'. We take up first 'Dravyārthika Nayas'.

( i ) *Naigama Naya* : Etymological meaning of the word 'Naigam' is the 'end product' or 'result'. 'Tattvārtha-sāra' gives an illustration of a person who carries water, rice and fuel and who, when asked what he was doing, says he is cooking. This reply is given in view of the result which he intends to achieve though at the exact time when the question is put to him he is not actually cooking. His reply is not incorrect from the point of view of Naigama Naya, though technically it is not exactly correct, because he is not actually cooking at the time when he replies. The general purpose, for which we work controls the total series of our activities. If some one passes his judgement on basis of that general purpose, he asserts Naigama Naya, i. e., the teleological view-point.

Another sense in which this Naya is used is generic-cum-specific. A thing has both generic and specific qualities but when we comprehend that thing without making distinction between these two is called as Naigama view point. Shri S. N. Dasgupta explains this as under :

“This looking at things from loose commonsense view in which we do not consider them from the point of view of their most general characteristic as ‘being’ or as any of their specific characteristics, but simply as they appear at the first sight, is technically called Naigama standpoint. This empirical view probably proceeds on the assumption that a thing possesses the most general as well as the most special qualities, and hence we may lay stress on any one of these at any time and ignore the other ones. This is the point of view from which, according to the Jainas, the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika schools interpret experience.”<sup>1</sup>

According to Jaina view the approach of emphasizing only general or special qualities of reality and not both is fallacious as it fails to give a comprehensive idea of a thing. The fallacy is called as ‘Naigamābhāsa’.

( 2 ) *Saṅgraha Naya* : We get this Naya ( view point ) when we put main emphasis on some general class characteristics of a particular thing ignoring altogether the specific characteristics of that class. Such a view is only partially correct but does not give the idea of the whole, for it ignores the specific characteristics of that thing. Jainas cite Vedānta as suffering from this fallacy, when it extracts only one class characteristic saying that every thing is ‘Sat’ or existence and whatsoever is ‘Sat’ is Brahman and rest is Māyā, i. e., ‘Asat’. Particulars of Reality, according to Jainas are as real as its main substance and sole emphasis on any one of them leads to a fallacious approach which is called Saṅgrahābhāsa.

( 3 ) *Vyavahāra Naya* ; If we look a thing from this standpoint, we try to judge it from its specific properties ignoring the generic qualities which are mainly responsible for giving birth to the specific qualities. This amounts to the assertion of empirical at the cost of universal and gives importance to practical experience in life. It is the materialistic view as entertained by Carvākas. The fallacy is called Vyavahārabhāsa.

1. Dasgupta, S. N. : History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 177.

( 4 ) *Rjusātra Naya* : It is still narrower than Vyavahāra in its outlook, because it not only emphasizes all the specific qualities but only those specific qualities which appear in a thing at a particular moment, ignoring their existent specific qualities of the past and future. The approach of the Buddhists is of this type. To ignore the specific qualities of past and future and to emphasize on only continuing characteristics of Reality is the fallacy involved here.

( 5 ) *Śabda Naya* : The Verbalistic approach is called as Śabda naya. It accepts that all synonyms connote the same object. Their meaning is changed only when we use them in different gender, case or context. All languages have synonyms suggesting the same thing. For instance the same person is indicated by the synonyms 'Indra', 'Purandara' and 'Śakra'. Though they are synonyms, yet they do indicate different qualities of the same person, because the word 'Indra' connotes the 'prosperity of the person, the word 'Śakra' connotes the powerful personality and the word 'Purandara' connotes the destroyer of fortresses. But if these words are used to establish complete identity between them, the distinct qualities which are indicated by them are obliterated and this results in the fallacy called 'Śabdanayābhāsa'.

( 6 ) *Samabhirūḍha Naya* : It is different from Śabda Naya, because it concentrates on the etymological distinction between the synonyms. If carried to the fallacious extent this standpoint may destroy the original identity pointed by synonyms.

( 7 ) *Evambhūta Naya* : This Naya recognises only that word which indicates the actual action presently attributed to the individual. For instance Indra can be described as 'Purandara' only when he is acting as the destroyer of fortresses. In other words, among synonym words only that word should be selected which has a co-relation with the action referred to.

*Partial truth of Individual Naya* : As already noted the purpose of pointing out to this detailed classification of nayas

is to show how differently the same object can be viewed by different individuals. However, these different aspects are only partially true and since they are only partially true, they are not capable of being wholly true. They, however, cannot be rejected as wholly untrue also. These different aspects can be illustrated by the reactions of some blind persons who were asked to go to an elephant and give its description after touching and feeling it. One who touched its legs described it as like a pillar, one who touched its ears described it like a winnowing fan, one who touched the tail, described it like a rope and so on. Each one was right from his own standpoint because he could experience only a particular limb of the elephant and not the whole elephant. Each one of them was however, wrong because his description did not conform to the reality which the elephant possessed. This reality could be comprehended only by one who could see the whole.

The Jainas, therefore, hold that the Cārvākas, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, Vedāntins, Sāṅkhyas and Buddhists apprehend reality partially neglecting other aspects of its and consider their own view-points as absolutely true and thus commit different types of fallacies pointed above.

### Utility of Naya Theory

The utility of the theory of Nayas lies in its analytical approach and the consequential approach of a rational unification of the manifold revealed by this analysis. The task of this rational unification is done by the theory of Syadvāda. As Pt. Dalasukha Malavania<sup>1</sup>, an esteemed Jaina Scholar puts it, "Ācārya Siddhasena has said that there are as many view points ( Nayas ) as there are statements and there are as many philosophies as there are statements. Enlarging this pronouncement of the Ācārya, Jinabhadra makes it clear that all philosophies taken collectively constitute Jainism. Contradiction seems to be existing in the mutually exclusive statements so long as they are not harmonized and integrated with each

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1. Jainism ( Some Essays ), pp. 134-135.

other.”

The analysis of Naya shows that every judgement is relative to that particular aspect from which it is seen or known. This is also called Sāpekṣavāda which means relativity of our particular knoweldge or judgement to a particular standpoint. Since human judgements are always from particular standpoints, they are all relative and hence not absolutely true or absolutely false. Their outright acceptance as a sole truth or rejection as totally false would not be correct. This led the Jaina seers to their famous doctrine of ‘Syādvāda’, which means the doctrine of relativity.



## Chapter Ten

# THEORY OF RELATIVITY

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“Of ten things that annoy us, nine would not be able to do so, if we understood them thoroughly in their own causes, and therefore know their necessity and true nature.”

“... .. to see things purely as objects of understanding is to rise to freedom.” — Schopenhauer.

Indeed, proper understanding of conflicting factors in individual or social life is more than a mere oiling of universal mechanism. How to get such an understanding? Naya-vāda reveals a technique to arrive at such an understanding. It teaches us that truth reveals to us only partially if viewed from a particular aspect. Even if one finds that a proposition is quite contrary to the conviction he had for whole life, hence the cause of great irritation to him, once he applies the principles of Nayavāda his irritation begins to subside. The simple reason being that he begins to realize the real cause for that contrary proposition.

### Why Relativity

When we judge an object, we take into account not only its intrinsic-substance, i. e., Dravya, but also the place ( Kṣetra ) where it is found, the time ( Kāla ) when it is found, and the shape ( Ākara ) as well as the concept ( Bhāva ) in which it is found.

Moreover, subjective attitude and past recollections towards the same or similar objects play a decisive role in judgement. At the same time prejudices and predilections, social upbringing, environmental necessities and politico-social taboos also play a very decisive role, in a judgement about an idea.

Infact every object and every idea has infinite characteristics and is required to be judged from varieties of stand-points. What should be our reaction towards a thing if we are convinced that everything in this universe has infinite characteristics and that limited knowledge of a human being is not capable of apprehending all these characteristics. Certainly, if our approach is objective and unbiased, we would not rush to take an absolute view of that thing or thought, keeping in mind the limitations of our knowledge. Our judgement based on limited data is likely to be wrong. We would, however, not be able to reject our earlier impressions outright, based on actual perception. So in our prudence, we would say that the judgement, formed about actually perceived things is 'likely' to be true. While saying so we would not rule out the possibility that it may turn out to be untrue if looked at from any other perspective. This is the approach of Syādvāda which implies that each and every knowledge is relative. What we know by the analytical process of Naya-vāda, we express by the synthesis of Syādvāda. As already noticed, the etymological meaning of the word 'Syād' is 'Perhaps'. But it is used to suggest a relative truth. The theory of Syādvāda is based on the premise that every proposition is only relatively true. It all depends upon the particular aspect from which we appreciate that proposition. Since all propositions are related to many circumstances, our assertions about them depend entirely upon the particular circumstances through which we are viewing them. Since our view has a limited aperture, we cannot see everything, and hence it is appropriate to avoid our absolute assertion.

For instance, when we say that a particular thing weighs 5 lbs, our statement about the weight is related to the magnetic force exerted on that thing by our planet, the earth. The same thing may not weigh anything if removed out of this magnetic field or may weigh differently in a different planet. The same can be said about our statements relating to time and space and about every human experience. It is the matter

of our daily experience that the same object which gives pleasure to us under certain circumstances, becomes boring under different circumstances. Scientific truths, are, therefore, relative in the sense that they do not give complete and exhaustive knowledge of the objects under study and contain elements that may be changed with further advance in knowledge. Nonetheless, relative truth is undoubtedly useful as it is a stepping stone to the ultimate truth.

### Importance of a Negative

Again, it is important to bear in mind that when we make a positive assertion about a thing, there is an implied negative which, if not taken properly into account, may create confusion in understanding that thing. For instance, a man is a father to his sons but not to his own father, or to many other persons. He has different relations with different persons in the society. So when his parenthood is referred to, it is true only in relation to his children but untrue in his relations with his wife or friends. Both these positive and negative aspects are necessary for the correct identification of the relationship with other persons. Syādvāda states the positive aspect by saying 'Syād Asti', i. e., 'it is true from a particular aspect'; it states the negative aspect by saying 'Syād Nāsti', i. e., 'it is not true, if viewed from some other aspect'. In order to identify an object correctly both positive and negative aspects are necessary to show what that object is and what it is not. The Jaina logic also admits a third kind of judgement, that of indescribability called 'Avaktavya'. It is at this stage important to note that the word 'Syād' is not used to express 'doubt' but is used to avoid a absolute assertion in view of the fact that our knowledge about the manifold aspects of a thing is limited. Ācārya Hemacandra<sup>1</sup> equates Syādvāda with Anekantavāda (non-absolutism). "The word 'Syāt' is an adverb, it conveys the relativity of a statement, which is based

1. 'स्यात् इत्यव्ययमनेकान्तद्योतकम्', Siddhahema.



on the manyfold nature of reality, i. e., Anekānta.” The expression ‘Anekānta’ is made of two words, ‘Aneka’ means manyfold and ‘Anta’ means Aspect. For everything has many aspects, so any absolute judgement about it is not the correct approach. Syadvāda is nothing but the relative linguistic expression. As Dāsgupta<sup>1</sup> explains :

“This ( Syād asti ) will indicate that the affirmation is only relative, made somehow, from some point of view and under some reservations and not in any sense absolute. There is no judgement which is absolutely true, and no judgement which is absolutely false. All judgements are true in some sense and false in another.”

We observe that the process of creation, maintenance and destruction is constantly going on around us in this universe. On the study of this process the Jainas seem concluded by applying the doctrine of Syadvāda that every object is permanent as well as transitory. To a layman, such a statement would at once appear to be contradictory as a thing cannot be permanent and at the same time transitory. In fact such a criticism is levelled against Jainism by great Vedāntists like Śāṅkara and Rāmaṅja. The criticism is, however, based on the incorrect presumption that these apparently contradictory statements are made with reference to the same aspect and in the same sense and time. Since reality is one and permanent as well as multi-fold and ever changing, when the Jainas refer to the attribute of permanence, they are aspecting the substratum which remains constant, and when they refer to the attribute of transitoriness, they are aspecting the changing modes of the substratum. They contend that if you want to have a proper judgement about a thing, you have to bear in mind the nature of substratum as well as of its changing modes. In other words you have to bear in mind that the object which you perceive has the quality of permanence so far as its substratum is concerned and that of transitoriness so far as its chan-

1. Dasgupta, S. N. : History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 179.

ging modes are concerned. If one understands in this sense there is no contradiction. As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan<sup>1</sup> puts it :

“Attributes which are contradictory, in the abstract co-exist in life and experience. The tree is moving in ( the sense ) that its branches are moving, and it is not moving since it is fixed to a place in the ground. It is necessary for us to know a thing clearly and distinctly, in its self-existence as well as in its relations to other objects.”

Prof. Ānanda Śāṅkara Dhruva, a venerated Gujarātī Scholar and a top literary critic has also criticised Śāṅkara’s comments on Syādvāda as under :

“The doctrine of Syādvāda seeks to achieve the synthesis of different theories ( of philosophy ). Śāṅkarācārya’s criticism of Syādvāda has no relevance to its central theme. It is certain that a thing cannot be properly understood so long as it is not examined from various aspects. The doctrine of Syādvāda is useful for this reason. Some people call this doctrine of Mahāvīra as the doctrine of ‘doubt’. But I do not agree with them. Syādvāda is not a doctrine of doubt because it teaches us the comprehensive art to judge a thing properly.”<sup>2</sup>

Prof. A. N. Upadhye<sup>3</sup> says : “This doctrine of seven-fold predication is often misunderstood and misrepresented by idealists who have not been able to appreciate the metaphysical basis and intellectual approach. It reminds one, of the realist — relativists of the west, such as Whitehead and others. The Jaina logician is neither a sceptic nor a agnostic; but he is a realist working with sound common sense. He does not want to ignore the relative or conditional character of

1. Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 304.

2. English translation from Gujrati book, ‘Jaina as viewed by a Non-jaina’.

3. Article on Jainism published in ‘Cultural History of India’, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

the judgement arising out of the very nature of the object of knowledge.”

### **Is Self Permanent or Transitory ?**

In the field of metaphysics, there has been serious controversy about the real nature of 'Self'. While Vedāntists believe that everything which is found in this universe is 'Brahma', the super self, which is permanent, and the material things which are found have no reality as they are transitory in nature, the Buddhists would say that everything in this universe including the super-self is transitory and constantly changing. These are the two extreme views as they concentrate only on particular aspects to the exclusion of other aspects. The Jainas say that both are relatively correct from the view point through which they see the thing, but both are incorrect in as much as they fail to take the comprehensive view of all the aspects involved. The Jainas would call to aid their doctrine of Syādvāda, i. e., Anekāntavāda and would say that from the point of view of substance, self is permanent, but from the point of view of modifications, it is transitory. Since substance and its modes should be taken as an integrated whole in order to comprehend it properly, both the attributes of permanence and transitoriness should be taken into account. Both to the Vedantists as well as to the Buddhists the Jaina seer would say 'Syād asti', i. e., "From one aspect you are right" and applying his 'Anekānta-naya', i. e., looking at the problem from different angles, would come to the above conclusion. Thus the doctrine of relativity, which is the practical application of the theory of multifold aspects ( Naya-vāda ), is nothing but the doctrine of metaphysical synthesis. This doctrine has a great value in our day to day individual and social life. But before we touch that aspect, let us take an usual illustration which clarifies the doctrine fully.

Suppose there is a pot made of earth. The earth by which it is made, could be used even for making other types of earthen vessels. Now if the pot which is before us is broken

and some other vessel is made out of the earth of the broken pot, the new vessel so made would not be known as a pot because for all practical purposes the pot is destroyed and no more exists. This proves that the pot was merely a shape given to earth and, independently of earth, it had no existence. This also proves that pot's existence consisted of earth coupled with a particular shape. Now let us consider which of the two — earth and shape — can claim to have an attribute of permanence? The obvious answer is 'earth' because shape is transitory and 'earth' was there before the pot came into existence and continues to be there even after the pot is destroyed. In fact what was destroyed was the shape. The Jaina philosophers call the changing modes as 'Paryāya' and the unchanging substance as 'Dravya'. Therefore, it can be said that from the 'Dravya' aspect, i. e., from the aspect of 'earth' the pot is permanent but from the aspect of shape, it is transitory. So long as it continues in the shape of a pot both the aspects have to be kept in mind, if its proper cognizance is to be taken.

Whatever is said above about a pot applies on all the fours, i. e., time, space, etc. to living being.

### **Doctrine of Duality**

The Jaina doctrine of duality of self and matter ( Pudgala ) also arises out of the application of 'Anekānta' and 'Syādvāda' because the self which is unchanging and permanent cannot be the same as Pudgala which is ever changing and transitory. Advaita Vedāntists such as the great Śaṅkara look only from one aspect of permanence and ignore the aspect of change by dubbing it as Māyā, i. e., illusion. It should not be forgotten that every object in this universe has its own limitations as to form, size, shape, taste, smell and other qualities. These limitations determine their identities. These objects 'are' there in the limitations which they possess but 'are not' there beyond limitations. Thus they both 'are' and 'are not'. They are thus both 'Sat' and 'Asat' and not merely 'Sat' as claimed by the Vedāntists nor they are merely 'Asat' as claimed by Buddhists and 'Śūnyavadīns'.

**Importance of Anekānta**

The importance of this comprehensive synthesis of 'Syādvāda' and 'Anekānta-naya' in day to day life is immense in as much as these doctrines supply a rational unification and synthesis of the manifold and rejects the assertions of bare absolutes.

Mr. Stephen Hay, an American Scholar—historian, in his article, "Jaina influences on Gandhi's Early Thought" refers to Mahatma Gandhi's views about the Jaina theory of Anekānta as under :

It has been my experience, wrote Gandhi in 1926, "that I am always true ( correct ) from my point of view, and often wrong from the point of view of my critics. I know that we are both ( myself and my critics ) right from our respective points of view."

He further quotes Gandhiji's saying as under :

"I very much like this doctrine of the manyness of reality. It is this doctrine that has taught me to judge a Mussulman from his standpoint and a Christian from his .... From the platform of the Jainas, I prove the non-creative aspect of God, and from that of Rāmanuja the creative aspect. As a matter of fact we are all thinking of the unthinkable describing the Indescribable, seeking to know the unknown, and that is why our speech falters, is inadequate and been often contradictory."

History of all conflicts and confrontations in the world is the history of intolerance born out of ignorance. Difficulty with the man is his egocentric existence. If only the man becomes conscious of his own limitations, Anekānta or Syādvāda tries to make the man conscious of his limitation by pointing to his narrow vision and limited knowledge of the manifold aspects of things, and asks him not to be hasty in forming absolute judgements before examining various other aspects—both positive and negative. Obviously, much of the bloodshed, and much of tribulations of mankind would have

been saved if the man had shown the wisdom of understanding the contrary view points.

### **How the Doctrine Clarifies 'Self'**

The doctrine of Syādvāda also clarifies the metaphysical doctrine of 'Self' and the ethical doctrine of 'Ahimsā' ( non-violence ) as envisaged by the Jainas. The proposition 'Syād asti' is positive in character and points out to the positive attributes of the thing in question. These are individual attributes which belong to and inhere in the thing in question. Therefore, when the proposition 'Syād asti' is applied to 'Self', it conveys that 'Self' is justified in its existence only from the point of view of its own individual attributes, modes, space and time. But when the other proposition of the doctrine namely 'Syād-nāsti' is applied to it, it means that 'Self' does not possess the attributes, modes etc. which do not belong to it. It is just like a pot which can be identified as a 'pot' only if it carries the attributes of a 'pot' but it cannot be identified as a pot if it carries the attributes which are foreign to it. So the negative identification of 'Syād nāsti' when applied to 'Self' would mean that if the self tries to adopt the attributes of Pudgala which are foreign to it, it is not the 'self'. In other words, Syādvāda teaches us that 'Self' can be identified positively as 'Syād asti' only if it is viewed from its own attributes, and negatively as 'Syād nāsti' to show that it is not Pudgala etc. if it is viewed from the attributes, foreign to it.

Thus the doctrine of Syādvāda gives clarity to the real character of the 'Self' and by the same process of reasoning, the real character of 'Pudgala', i. e., non-sentient things.

### **Anekānta and Ahimsā**

More important aspect of Syādvāda is, however, the subtlety with which it introduces the practice of Ahimsā ( non-violence ) even in the realm of thought. The moment one begins to consider the angle from which a contrary view-point is put forward, one begins to develop tolerance, which is the

basic requirement of the practice of 'Ahimsā'. Origin of all bloody war fought on the surface of this earth can be traced to the war of ideas and beliefs. Syādvāda puts a healing touch at the root of human psyche and tries to stop the war of beliefs which lead to the war of nerves and then to the war of bloodshed. It makes all absolutes in the field of thought quite irrelevant and naive, imparts maturity to the thought process and supplies flexibility and originality to human mind. If the man-kind will properly understand and adopt this doctrine of Syādvāda it will realize that real revolution was not the French or the Russian; the real revolution was the one which taught the man to develop his power of understanding from all possible aspects.

### **Einstein's Theory**

What Mahāvīra found by the process of intuition and reasoning, Einstein proved in his physical theory of Space and Time in the year 1905 A. D. Development of Optics and Electrodynamics led to the rejection of the concept of absolute time, absolute simultaneity and absolute space. If time and space are relative to other factors, everything that happens in time and space would naturally be relative to other factors. Therefore Einstein was convinced that there is causal interdependence of all processes in nature. As a result, the revelations made by him and other theories of Quantum Mechanics, the field of relativity was enlarged so as to take into consideration the fact that Reality is much dependent upon the subjective reaction of the individual who observes the event.

Jaina theory of relativity in the field of thoughts and metaphysics thus gets sufficient support from these scientific revelations in the field of physics. Theocrates world over have tried to emphasize that the truth revealed to them is absolute, eternal and immutable. Theory of relativity as embodied in Syādvāda or Anekāntvāda is happily an exception to this. Lenin<sup>1</sup> unknowingly endorsed this theory when he said : "Human

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1. Collected Works of Lenin, Vol. 14, p. 135.

thought by its nature is capable of giving, and does give, absolute truth, which is compounded of sum total of relative truths. Each step in the development of science adds new grains of absolute truth, but the limits of the truth of each scientific proposition are relative, now expanding, now shrinking with the growth of knowledge." If only Lenin knew how to apply this principle in the evolution of social and economic theories propounded by Marx, the fate of socialism would have been quite different today.

### **Theory of Seven Predications ( Saptabhaṅgī )**

To clarify the above approach of ascertaining the truth by the process of Syādvāda ( Anekānta ) the Jaina philosophers have evolved a formula of seven predications which are known as Saptabhaṅgī. 'Sapta' means 'seven' and 'Bhaṅga' means 'mode'. These seven modes of ascertaining the truth are able to be exact in exploring all possibilities and aspects. For any proposition, there are three main modes of assessment, namely, ( 1 ) A positive assertion, ( 2 ) A negative assertion, ( 3 ) Not describable. The first is called 'Asti', the second is called 'Nāsti' while the third is called 'Avaktavya'. However, for greater clarity four more permutations of these three are added as under : 'Asti-nāsti', 'Asti-avaktavya', 'Nāsti-avaktavya' and 'Asti-nāsti-avaktavya'. The word 'Syāt' is prefixed to each of these seven predications to prevent the proposition from being absolute.

All these seven predications are explained with reference to an earthen pot; But we may try to understand with reference to an ethical proposition that 'It is sin to commit violence'. With regard to this proposition, the seven predications noted above can be made as under :

( i ) It is sin to commit violence with an intention to commit the same ( Asti ).

( ii ) It is not a sin to commit violence on an aggressor who molests an innocent and helpless woman ( Nāsti ).

( iii ) It is sin to commit violence in breach of moral and



social laws, but it is not sin if violence is required to be committed in performance of moral or social duties ( Asti-nāsti ).

( iv ) It is not possible to say whether violence is sin or virtue without knowing the circumstances under which it is required to be committed ( Avaktavya ).

( v ) Violence is indeed sinful but no such statement can be made for all time and under all circumstances ( Asti-avaktavya ).

( vi ) Violence is not sinful under certain circumstances, but no positive statement of this type can be made for all times and under all circumstances ( Nāsti-avaktavya ).

( vii ) Violence is sinful, but there are circumstances where it is not so. Infact no statement in affirmation or negation can be made for all time and all circumstances ( Asti-nāsti-avaktavya ).

All these seven modes can be expressed with regard to every proposition. The Jaina philosophers have applied them with reference to self, its eternality, non-eternality, identity and character. In fact this approach of Anekānta permeates almost every doctrine which is basic to Jaina philosophy. S. Gopalan<sup>1</sup> quotes Eliot in this connection, as saying :

“The essence of the doctrine ( of Syādvāda ), so far as one can disentangle it from scholastic terminology, seems just, for it amounts to this, that as to matters of experience it is impossible to formulate the whole and the complete truth, and as to matters which transcend experience, language is inadequate.”

At no time in the history of mankind, this principle of Syādvāda ( Anekānta ) was more necessary than in the present.




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1. Outlines of Jainism, p. 156.

## PAÑCAŚĪLA

“Belief in real existence of Tattvas is right *Faith*; Knowledge of real nature without doubt or error is right *Knowledge*; An attitude of neutrality without desire or aversion towards the objects of the external world is right *conduct*.”

Ācārya Kunda-kunda

We have seen in Chapter Six that journey to freedom is constituted of three steps known as Ratna-trayī, i. e., right faith ( darśana ), right knowledge ( jñāna ) and right conduct ( cāritra ). Right faith comes from the full conviction in the existence and function of Nine Tattvas, already discussed in Chapter Eight. Right knowledge has been discussed in Chapter Six. In the present chapter we shall discuss the Jaina concept of Right conduct and how to practise the same.

### Neutrality without desire

Ācārya Kunda-kunda maintains that right conduct is attained by cultivating an attitude of ‘neutrality without desire or aversion’ towards the objects of the world. The term ‘without desire or aversion’ is significant as both completely and truly represent the Jaina concept of the State of Vītarāga. As we have already noticed, the expression Vītarāga is peculiarly a Jaina terminology. ‘Vīta’ means ‘gone away’ and ‘Rāga’ means attachment. Aversion is contrary to the ‘attachment’ and the same can be expressed by the word ‘Vairāgya or Virāga.’ But since ‘Rāga’ and ‘Virāga’ are the two sides of the same coin—both representing positive feelings of love and hatred, the Jainas have wisely coined the word ‘Vītarāga’ conveying an attitude of neutrality or objectivity towards the worldly objects. It is neither attachment nor hatred for the objects of the world. The seers preach that there is nothing vicious in the objects themselves which can be used for good as well as for

bad purposes. For instance, wealth or power both can be used for good as well as for bad purposes. If the enjoyment of these things generate the evils of pride and avarice in us the fault lies not in them but in our attitude towards them. If our attitude is changed for the better the same things which were used for bad purposes could be used for better purposes. So, the fault does not lie in the weapon but in the person who uses it. If this is so, it is no use hating the objects of the external world. One must only remove one's attachment. Let one's 'Rāga' be contained, be 'neutral' to and 'without desire' for the objects of the world, and you will have Right conduct.

Thus we can sum up that it is not always necessary to run away from the world and to take Saṁnyāsa to gain freedom. The attitude of detachment can be cultivated even while taking part in the worldly affairs. It may be said that the cultivation of detachment in the worldly life is more difficult than in the life of a monk who has entered a monastic order. But Jainism does not consider the monkhood as a starting point for our journey to freedom. There are a number of examples of house-holders, both male and female, of obtaining 'Mukti', i. e., liberation without renouncing the worldly life. There is an interesting and instructive episode in the life of Mahāvira himself. Mahāvira wanted to renounce the world even while his mother was alive. There is a tradition among the Jainas, as among other faiths in India, that one should not enter the monastic order and renounce the world without the permission of the elders of the family. So Mahāvira asked for the permission of his mother Triśalā for renouncing the world. The mother, like all other mothers, was greatly pained at the idea. She asked him not to repeat such request till she was alive. Mahāvira silently obeyed. After sometime, the mother died. Thereafter Mahāvira sought the permission of his elder brother Nandivardhana, as father had died long before mother's demise. Nandivardhana also resented the idea and asked him not to cause him more pain by his loss, as the loss of mother was already unbearable. Again Mahāvira obeyed

silently. However, he had already developed an attitude of 'desireless neutrality' towards all objects of the world because for developing such an attitude he did not think it necessary to wait for the renunciation of the world. He wanted to renounce the world for practicing austerities and thereby for obtaining the pure knowledge in search of Truth. He must not have thought this possible in the worldly life of a prince. He, however, considered it his duty to obey his elder brother. He did not repeat his request for renunciation again; but his total indifference to the worldly affairs was so striking, and his 'desireless neutrality' was so impressive that Nandivardhana, his elder brother, and other members of the family felt that they should not be obstacles in the path of this great soul. So they themselves took initiative and permitted Mahāvīra to go his own way as desired by him. It was thereafter that Mahāvīra renounced all worldly possessions including the clothes put on by him. Obviously, all that revolution did not come to him only after Nandivardhana permitted him to renounce. In fact, the process of Bhāva-saṁvara and Bhāva-nirjarā must have already started much before he requested the mother to permit him to go.

Most of the Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras ( Prophets ) were ruling princes and many were emperors, considered 'Cakravartins'. They had to wage wars and administer their empires. But they were able to renounce all power and pelf with ease and could attain the highest position of Tīrthaṅkaras. Such a turn in their lives would not have come all of a sudden. Certainly, they must have developed 'neutrality without desire' even while they took full interest in their worldly lives.

### **Self determining Jīva**

But the moot question is how to develop this 'neutrality without desire' ? Jaina philosophers have prescribed an elaborate code of conduct for house-holders as well as for the monks for this purpose. Before we illustrate this code of conduct, it would be proper to take into account two broad

principles suggested by Ācārya Kuna-kunda in his 'Pañcāstikāya'. They are :

( 1 ) "That jīva, which through desire for outer things, experiences pleasurable or painful states, loses its hold on self and gets bewildered and led by outer things. He becomes determined by the other."<sup>1</sup>

( 2 ) "That Jīva, which being free from relations to others and from alien thoughts, through its own intrinsic nature of perception and understanding perceives and knows its own eternal nature to be such, is said to have a conduct that is absolutely self-determined."<sup>2</sup>

The first proposition contains a negative aspect and points out the root cause of 'being determined by the other', i. e., in other words, losing freedom and getting dominated by outside forces. The second proposition contains a positive aspect by showing the basic process of achieving self-determination. The first teaches us non-attachment to worldly objects while the second exhorts us to be introspective to know who we are, what is our true nature and what is alien to our own self.

Any code of conduct would be superfluous for one who can properly understand and follow these two broad principles, because the five principles of right conduct known as 'Pañcaśīla' come easily and naturally to such persons.

### **The Five Principles**

These five principles are : 1. Ahimsā ( Non-violence ), 2. Satya ( Truth ), 3. Asteya ( Non-stealing ), 4. Brahmacharya ( Chastity ) and 5. Aparigraha ( Limiting or restricting one's possession ).

If a person faithfully and honestly follows these five by mind, speech and action, he completely closes all the outlets

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1. Pañcāstikāya, Gāthā 163; See Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, Dr. S. Radhakrishnana, p. 326.
  2. Pañcāstikāya, Gāthā 165; Ibid.

for the inflow of the Karmas ( the process of Saṁvara ) and also simultaneously begins to shed his accumulated karmas ( the process of Nirjarā ).

Before discussing the working method of observing these five principles, few words on the exact connotation of each of these five principles is necessary.

( 1 ) *Ahiṁsā* — All life is sacred. It is the doctrine of non-violence, i. e., abstention from injury to any living being by mind, speech or action. As observed by Prof. A. N. Upadhye, “Jainism is perhaps the only religion which has explained the doctrine of *Ahiṁsā* in a systematic manner, because all other values were elaborated on this basis.” Jainas do not limit the operation of this doctrine to human beings only, the doctrine applies with equal force even to the smallest living beings, so far as it is possible. Their assumption obviously flows from the Jaina metaphysical theory that all *Jīvas*, irrespective of their status are potentially equal. So far as the potentiality is concerned, the Jainas would not make any distinction between the *Jīva* of Mahāvīra and the *Jīva* contained in a blade of grass. If the former has attained an advanced stage in the evolution of spiritual growth, the latter has also a similar potentiality and may, in future, be able to achieve the heights of Mahāvīra. Even the *Jīva* of Mahāvīra had to pass through many ups and downs in spiritual journey of births and rebirths before achieving the status of a Tīrthaṅkara. Thus the doctrine of *Ahiṁsā* is nothing but the doctrine of equality and fraternity amongst all the *Jīvas* ( sentient beings ) of the universe. In other words, it is the positive doctrine of love and friendship for all. All the Jainas would say :

“Mitti Me Savva Bhuyeṣu, Vera Majjham Na Kenat”<sup>1</sup> means I have friendship for all, enmity for none. Even if we look at the problem purely from logical angle, the question is what right we have to cause injury, for our pleasure, even to the most insignificant *Jīva*. The moment we are convinced that

1. ‘‘मि॒त्ति मे॒ सव्व॑ भु॒येषु॑, वे॒र गज्जं॑ न के॒नई’ ।

each Jīva has a continuing consciousness through all the different lives and that each of these Jīvas is entitled to progress in its own way. It is no logic to say that we have no obligation to safe-guard the life and identity of all the Jīvas of the universe, because if any such reasoning prevails, none of us would have any justification to complain against the domination of the strong over the weak. In other words, ours would be the universe where only the fittest and the strongest would have the right to survive. It would be, what we call a law of jungle, where our own existence would be precarious. Any such social order as amongst the human beings would not be tolerated by us. If that is so, all the living beings of the universe should be governed by the same rule by which human beings would like to be governed.

Prof. S. Gopalan<sup>1</sup> cites Eliot on this subject as under :

“Eliot exhibits a clear understanding of Jaina view of non-violence when he writes : .....‘the beautiful precept of Ahimsā or not injuring living things is not, as Europeans imagine, founded on the fear of eating ones grand parents but rather on the humane and enlightening feeling that all life is one and that men who devour beasts are not much above the level of beasts who devour one another.’”

Dr. Radhakrishnan<sup>2</sup> writing on Hinduism rightly observes :

“All life is sacred, whether of animals or of fellow men. We shudder at cannibalism and condemn the savage who wishes to indulge in this habit of our ancestors, though the slaughtering of animals and birds for human consumption continues to be regarded as right.... The true man is he in whom the mere pleasure of killing is killed. So long as it is there, man has no claim to call himself civilized.”

The German philosopher Schopenhauer has put it more emphatically in the coming words.

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1. S. Gopalan : *Outlines of Jainism*, p. 161.

2. Dr. Radhakrishnana, S. : *Cultural History of India* (Oxford ), p. 75.

“Whoever is able to say this to himself, with regard to everything with whom he comes in contact — whoever is clear-eyed and clear-souled enough to see — that we are all the members of one organism, all of us are little currents in an ocean of will — he is certain of all virtues and blessedness, and in on direct road to salvation” ( emphasis supplied ).

The Jaina doctrine of mechanism of the universal scheme clearly shows that according to it we are all — all including every type of sentient being — are the members of one organisation. Therefore, Mahāvīra said : “It is you whom you want to kill. Therefore, do not injure any one, do not destroy any one.”

However, the doctrine of Ahimsā is not construed as total prohibition to injure or kill even when circumstances demand such injury or killing because Jainism was preached to the persons who had to live in the society and to counter various types of conflicts. As already noticed the Tīrthaṅkaras themselves were hailing from the warrior class of Kṣatriyas.

### **Ancient Śramaṇa Tradition**

Emphasis on the doctrine of Ahimsā is mainly on violence which is not called for. During the life of Mahāvīra and Buddha the doctrine had a special significance on account of rampant practice of animal sacrifice for Yajñas arranged for propitiating gods. Animals were killed not merely for sacrifices but also for feasts on social occasions. The protest against animal killing was not new at the time of Mahāvīra. The story about Neminātha, the 22nd Tīrthaṅkara, known in Vedic literature as Ariṣṭanemi, and a cousin of Lord Kṛṣṇa belonging to Yadu family, says that on his way to bride’s place he saw hundreds of animals tied for marriage feast. He abandoned the marriage ceremony and became a recluse. Mahāvīra was 24th Tīrthaṅkara born hundreds of years thereafter. Ariṣṭanemi ( Neminātha ) belonged to Śramaṇa tradition which is believed to be pre-Aryan.



Padmabhūṣaṇa Pt. Dalasukhabhai Malavania has speculated, in his articles about the origin of the Doctrine of Non-violence as follows :

“In his ‘Man and the Universe’, Prof W. Norman Brown rightly concludes that “The ideas ‘Ahimsā’ and ‘Unity of all life’ did not have their origin in Vedic Aryan thought, but entered it from outside. The environment in which those ideas were at home was that of Jainism and Buddhism. In them Ahimsā was a dominant and original, not supplemental feature.”

These observations may not be taken to mean that idea of Ahimsā originated with Jainas and Buddhists. Both Jainas and Buddhists belong to old Śramaṇa tradition and they are likely to have inherited the idea from that tradition. Thus, though the doctrine of Ahimsā was not newly founded by Mahāvīra, it was highly systematized and put on a very high pedestal by Mahāvīra in his rigorous campaign against wanton killing of animals in sacrifices arranged to propitiate gods. Mahāvīra gave this doctrine a very subtle interpretation and made it a way of life for the whole Indian society. The impact was so great that the average Hindu considers the abstinence from meat-eating as more virtuous and even those Hindus who are not strictly vegetarian avoid meat-eating on the days of religious functions. Today Ahimsā is as much the doctrine of faith for Hindus as for Jainas.

### **Distinction between Vedic and Jaina Approach**

Pt. Sukhalāji<sup>1</sup>, a noted and respected Jaina scholar, draws the distinction between Vedic ( Hindu ) tradition and Jaina tradition with reference to the doctrine of Ahimsā in the following words :

“Ahimsā is the basic doctrine of Jainism. In the Jaina

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1. Saṅghavi, Pt. Sukhalā : Jainadharmāno Prāna ( Guj. ), Gujrat Grantharatna Karyalaya, Gandhi Marga, Ahmedabad, 1st edition, 1962, pp. 113-115.

tradition, only that person who has practiced Ahimsā fully and has taken that doctrine to its highest pinnacle is worshipped, while in Vedic tradition that is not so. In that tradition, the person who completely responds to public interest, who follows the accepted social code for the purpose of enforcing the same and who protects the good and destroys an evil at any cost, is worshipped as 'Avatara' (divine in human form). This distinction between the basic approach of both the traditions is very significant. While the former tolerates and faces the worst evil and injustice with generosity but with full spiritual penances, the later resorts to an altogether different method thinking that, however, desirable the method of the former may be in individual cases, the same cannot be successful when applied to the questions involving public interest at large."

"Fact of the matter is that both these traditions are the two facets of an integrated old Aryan culture."

"The doctrine of Ahimsā has the same place in Vedic traditions as in Jaina tradition. However, the difference between the two is that the Vedic tradition treats this doctrine as a means of perfect spiritual upliftment of an individual and hence limits its use for the purpose of individuals only. But so far as its utility for public or social purposes is concerned, it considers violence as necessary in times of peril faced by the society. It is for this reason that we find even in the Vedic literature of Upaniṣada and Yoga-Darśana which are otherwise great supporters of the Doctrine of Ahimsā, the exhortations like 'Śaṭhe Śaṭhyam Samācaret' (Tit for Tat) and other instructions as to how social life should be conducted."

"On the other hand in any society — big or small complete observation of the doctrine of non-violence is not possible and, therefore, even in the Jaina literature we come across violent battles, having been fought even by monks, who have renounced the world, under special circumstances."

"In spite of all this, the basic difference between the Jaina approach and Vedic approach on this question has always

persisted. And it is this, that the Jaina tradition believes that every type of violence whether at individual level or at social level, is the sign of spiritual weakness and hence whenever violence is required to be used, it is a matter of atonement. On the other hand, though the Vedic tradition is in agreement with the Jaina tradition so far as the observation of Ahimsā at individual level concerned, it is clear in proclaiming that whenever social or public issues are concerned, it is wrong to believe violence is always a sign of spiritual weakness. On the contrary, in special circumstances in public life violence is not only necessary but is also a sign of strength and hence no question of atonement arises.”

Though, as will be presently seen, Jainism is not against the use of violence if it becomes inevitable, the analysis of Pt. Sukhalālaḥji is logically perfect because, as we shall have an occasion to discuss elsewhere, the Jaina philosophy, being on the line of ‘Śramaṇa’ traditions, is based on the principle of ‘Nivṛtti’, i. e., ‘retirement’, while the Vedic philosophy is based on the principle of ‘Pravṛtti’, i. e., ‘activity’. One aiming at total retirement from worldly affairs would necessarily have an individual approach while the one who aims at activity would necessarily have a social approach. Both the approaches are necessary in life so long as one lives in the society, but a stage comes in the life of everyone when he has to retire fully from all worldly activities social as well as individual, in which event, his approach would be only individual. That individual approach being purely spiritual, does not conflict with social or public interests — contrarily it supplements social interests. Even Vedic tradition is conscious about this as is clear from its conceptions of ‘Gṛhasthāśrama’ (Stage of a house-holder) and final ‘Saṁnyāsthāśrama’ (Stage of total renunciation) in the life of a man. Thus basically, the apparent distinction which is pointed out by Pt. Sukhalālaḥji<sup>1</sup>, fades into insignificance.

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1. Pt. Sukhalālaḥji is of the opinion that Saṁnyāsthāśrama

### Weapon of the Strong

Mahātma Gāndhī carried out the unique experiment with this doctrine of Ahimsā when he exhorted the Indian nation to resist the British imperialism by a non-violent struggle. It is true that his experiment of applying Ahimsā to the field of politics and mass movement was not carried further by his political successors; but for that the efficacy of the doctrine was not so responsible as the weakness and lack of will in his successors. As Gāndhījī often repeated, Ahimsā is the weapon of the strong and not that of the weak. Psychologically speaking, violence and anger are merely different forms of cowardice. A brave person is rarely angry and is never resorting to violence unless it, is unavoidable. Even Jainism allows violence in inevitable cases and condemns weakness and submission to injustice, which to it, is another form of 'Himsā' ( violence ). As a matter of fact the Anekāntic approach of Jainism would prevent a true Jaina from being dogmatic about absoluteness of any of the Jaina doctrines, including the doctrine of Ahimsā.

All sorts of wars are abhorred by Jainas because to them all conflicts in individual and social life are the result of mental aberrations. They emphasize, therefore, on conquering these aberrations, caused by Kaṣāyas such as attachment, anger, avarice, envy, hatred etc. In other words, our enemies are within us, and it is no use seeking them outside us. One who conquers real enemies, within him is the real conqueror. The word 'Jaina' is derived from the root 'Ji-Jay' to conquer.

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( last stage of total renunciation of the world in human life ) was subsequently added in the Aryan scheme of four 'Āśramas' on account of the impact of Śramaṇa tradition which put great emphasis on renunciation.

If we can use the Jaina terminology, the Jaina view is correct from 'Niścaya Naya' ( Doctrinaire aspect ) while Vedic view is correct from 'Vyavahāra Naya' ( Practical aspect ).

Jaina prophets and those having attained the last stage of perfection are called 'Jina' and 'Arihanta'. The word 'Jina' means the conqueror and the word 'Arihanta' means one who has killed enemies ( 'Ari' means 'enemy' and the root 'Han' means 'to kill' ). The 'enemies' referred to here are not those outside us, as is generally misunderstood by us. They are our internal enemies mentioned above, i. e., passions. The conquest, suggested by the word 'Jina' is the conquest of these internal enemies ( The expression 'Arihanta' is also pronounced differently as 'Arhat' which means 'Respectable' ). According to the Jaina seers, once you conquer these internal enemies you will find no enemy outside and there would be no sense in shedding blood and committing violence. It should be noted that during the time of Mahāvīra, and subsequent to it, Jainism got good deal of patronage from great kings such as king of Bimbisara and his son Ajātaśatru of Magadha ( present Bihar ). After his death, Candragupta Maurya, the founder of the big Maurya empire, Emperor Samprati, the grandson of Emperor Aśoka, Emperor Kharvela of Kalinga ( present Orissa ) and then in 12th century King Kumārapāla of Gujarat are some of the big empire builders who were staunch followers of Jainism. In discharge of their duties as kings, they had to maintain efficient armies and weaponry. They themselves were fierce warriors and yet they have been recognised as good Jainas because Jainism does not debar persons from resorting to violence if the same becomes inevitable and is done in discharge of duties.

In this connection it is interesting to take note of a story about king Ajātaśatru, a very powerful emperor of Magadha of his time. Ajātaśatru attacked the neighbouring kingdom of 'Vaiśālī'. It was an unprovoked attack, Ajātaśatru was such an ardent follower of Mahāvīra that, as the story runs, he used to take food only after obtaining the news of the well-being of the Master. The Master, however, did not approve of his unprovoked attack on 'Vaiśālī'. When Ajātaśatru inquired from the master as to what would be the fruit of his

action ( of waging war against Vaiśālī ), Mahāvīra told him that he would be born in Hell in the next birth for his cruelty ( vide Aupapātika Sūtra ). Two Jaina scriptures ‘Praśnavyākaraṇa’ and ‘Bhagavati-sūtra’ contain many sermons against wars, and it is claimed that the kings who had accepted Jaina faith were ordained to limit their war preparation only to the extent to which it was necessary for defence.

Even for laities, i. e., ‘Śrāvakas’ there are relaxed rules for the observance of Ahimsā, keeping in view the fact that one who has to move and work in the worldly affairs cannot adhere to the principles strictly and with absolute rigidity; but the exceptions are evolved only under the impelling circumstances.

### Role of Intention

The underlying principle for every action is the intention called ‘Bhāva’. Real involvement in any action comes from within. If we become subjectively involved and perform an act with intense attachment, the karmic bondage resulting from such action would be very strong. But if we perform an action simply because we have to do it, and we do it with absolute non-attachment and objectivity, the karmic bondage, if any, is indeed very weak. In other words, the karmic bondage solely depends on our ‘Bhāva Karma’. Padmabhūṣana Pt. D. Malvania<sup>1</sup> quotes ‘Viśeṣāvaśyaka Bhaṣya’ of Jinabhadra as under :

“One should not fear that because earth etc. are crowded with souls, there would be ‘himsā ( injury ) at every step whether one wills it or not.... It is the intention that ultimately matters. From the real point of view, a man does not become a killer only because he has killed, or because the world is crowded with souls, or remain innocent only because he has not killed physically or because souls are sparse. Even if a person does not actually kill, he becomes a killer if he has the intention to kill.....It is the intention

1. Jainism ( some Essays ) pp. 39-40.

which is the deciding factor, not the external act which is inconclusive.”

This is the basic principle which runs throughout the Jaina prescription of ethics.

### **Buddhist Approach**

Buddha also preached the doctrine of Ahimsā on the same line. However, some Buddhists — especially exponents of Hīnayāna school maintain that even though one is eating meat he observes Ahimsā if he buys meat from others and not kill creatures himself. This is nothing but the perversity of the Ahimsā principle because if you do not purchase meat of killed creatures, who will be interested to kill for sale? Buddha himself would never have approved of this type of hypocrisy.

### **Anekānta-product of Ahimsā**

By his theory of Anekānta and Syādvāda Mahāvīra carried the doctrine of Ahimsā even in the realm of thought. As we have already noticed, the theory of Anekānta is based on the search of truth from different points of view. This search leads to understanding and toleration of different conflicting views. When this happens prejudices subside and tendency to accommodate increases. The theory of Anekānta is, therefore, unique experiment of Ahimsā at the root. Among all philosophies and religions Jainism has unique distinction of touching the very roots and fundamentals of the problems of ‘Himsā’ ( Violence ) of thought.

### **Ahimsā at the root of all Śīlas**

The remaining four principles of Truth, non-stealing, chastity ( celibacy ) and restraint in possession are nothing but the extension of the first principle of Ahimsā, because breach of each of them basically involves ‘Bhāva Himsā’ — violence in motive or intention.

Basic principle of Jaina ethics is that a man is bound to feel himself entangled and unhappy so long as he seeks happi-

ness outside himself. When he thinks that outside objects such as wealth, material possessions and power can make him happy, he hankers after them and in the process of obtaining them at any cost he becomes a victim of various passions such as anger, pride, deceit and greed. When he becomes a victim of these passions, he is tempted to resort to lies, theft and many other consequential vices. The psychological process, which goes on in his mind and which ultimately enters his sub-conscious, has the effect of killing the purity and sublimity of his own spirit. His 'self', his Ātman, gets polluted by the entry ( Āsrava ) of different karmas. This 'Killing' of the purity and the sublimity of his own spirit is, what is known as 'Bhāva-himsā'. Thus at the root of the other four principles of right conduct namely truth, non-stealing, chastity ( celibacy ) and restraint in possession of material things, is the all pervading principle of Ahimsā.

The shortest way to acquire these virtues as shown by Mahāvira's exhortation<sup>1</sup> :

“Purisā ! tumameva tumam mittam kiṃ bahiyā mittamicchasi ?” means ‘Oh man, thou art thy own friend, why are you seeking outward friendship’.

If this admonition is properly understood and followed, the impact of all the Kaṣāyas ( passions ) begins to decrease and one automatically begins to live in accordance with the five principles of Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, chastity ( celibacy ) and restraint in the possession of material things. The different kaṣāyas ( passions ) torment us because we identify ourselves with the situations created by the outside agencies. It is this identification which impells us to submit to the situation created by outside agencies. But once we realize that the outside agency is not myself and that I am not going to submit to the situations created by these agencies, nearly fifty per cent of our agonies subside. Remaining fifty per cent

1. “पुरिसा ! तुममेव तुमं मित्तं किम् बहिया मित्तमिच्छसि ?”

Ācārāṅga-sūtra, 1/1/3.



can be eliminated by cultivating the positive virtues embodied in these five principles.

We have already dealt with the first principle of Ahimsa. We may now take up for our consideration the rest.

( 2 ) *Satya* ( Truth )— Just as non-violence requires courage, truth also equally requires courage. Violence and lie are the consequences of cowardice. They create disorder not only in the make up of an individual but also in constitution of the society.

However, the Anekantic approach of Jainism has carved out some exceptions. They are :

( i ) If truth-speaking leads to evil consequences one may better remain silent or may say that he knows nothing ( *Tusiṅṅo uvehejjā jāṇaṁ vā ṇo Jāṇaṁ ti vaejjā* ).<sup>1</sup>

( ii ) There are circumstances when revelation of certain facts would not be in the interest of public or of some individuals. At that time either one should keep mum or should say in such a way that the interests of other should not be hurt.

( iii ) There is no harm in breaking a vow of speaking truth which leads to violence or other undesirable evils.

( 3 ) *Asteya* ( Non-stealing ) — Taking something which belongs to others is theft. Thus all types of evil practices in trade, commerce and professions are covered by theft. Ill-gotten wealth is the wealth obtained by theft. One should remain satisfied by whatever he earns by his own honest labour. An attempt to squeeze others and exploit the weak is an attempt to commit theft.

( 4 ) *Brahmacarya* ( Chastity, Celibacy ) — It is not limited to mere abstention from sex. The word *Carya* means day to day conduct. The word *Brahma* means self. Hence the word *Brahmacarya* suggests the state of self indulgence or

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1. 'तुसिणीओ उवेहेज्जा, जाणं वा णो जाणं ति वएज्जा'; *Aṅga-sūtraṁ*, 1/3/3/54, *Jaina Viśvabhāratī*, Ladanun, 1974 A.D.

pure-knowership. The English word 'celibacy' is therefore, not competent in comprehending the real meaning of Brahmacharya. However, if the word celibacy is understood in a wider-sense, the concept of Brahmacharya can be substantially brought out. Jainism, as well as all Indian religions, emphasize that some ethical principle must be followed not merely in action, but also in mind and speech, that is, Manasā, Vācā, Karmanā. To observe celibacy in word and spirit one should have control over his mind and in his food, clothing and the whole life-style, because, a life of luxury is totally unsuited for celibacy. A wavering mind and a mind which falls prey to worldly temptations is never capable of remaining firm in sex life. Out of all material enjoyments, sex enjoyment is most vitally connected with psychology and emotions. Sex discipline is therefore vitally connected with psychic and emotional disciplines. Therefore, if we are successful in disciplining our psychic and emotional currents in day to day life, we would actually be moving towards our own self and that would be the real Brahmacharya.

To a western mind the concept of Brahmacharya is limited only to the abstention from actual sex. By and large, the western philosophers have not appreciated the Indian concept of Brahmacharya. Though some western religions do give importance to celibacy, they have not gone deep into the question why celibacy is important for spiritual development and what are its parameters. Indian seers have gone very deep into these questions and have come to the conclusion that for achieving spiritual heights a complete observance of the code of Brahmacharya is quite essential.

### **Mahāvīra's Contribution**

Unlike Buddha, Mahāvīra was not the founder of Jainism but only an ardent follower of pre-vedic Śramaṇa tradition. Its penultimate prophet was Pārśvanātha, the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara of Jainas. Pārśvanātha's tradition was known as Cāturyāma, i. e., a tradition of four-fold vows. These four-fold

vows were Non-violence ( Ahimsā ), Truth ( Satya ), Non-stealing ( Asteya ) and Non-possession ( Aparigraha ). Thus the Pārśva tradition did not give a separate and distinct place to Brahmacharya ( Celibacy ) in his scheme of four-fold vows. Because it was thought that one can not enjoy sex-life without having possession of one's spouse and so if one observes non possession he observes celibacy. Secondly at that time women was considered as a property and so the vow of non-possession includes the vow of celibacy. The etymological meaning of the word 'Parigraha' is 'acceptance' and there are instances in the Saṃskṛta literature to show that the word 'Parigraha' is used for a wife, e. g., the great poet Kālidāsa<sup>1</sup> has used this word in his famous epic Raghuvamśa as under :

“Kā tvaṃ Śubhe ! Kasya parigraho vā” ? means ‘Oh good lady, who are you ? Whose wife are you’ ?

So in Pārśva tradition, the principle of 'Aparigraha' or non-possession also includes celibacy and hence Brahmacharya was not given a separate and distinct place in the code of conduct. But laxity in sex life and extra-marital relationship could not be controlled by this bare principle of 'Aparigraha'.

Obviously this would not have also worked with saintly order of monks. Hence, Mahāvīra had to introduce the concept of Brahmacharya, as a distinct code of conduct to be followed by monks as well as the house-holders called 'Śrāvakas'. For house-holders, however, this concept of strict celibacy was modified and what was prescribed was not only a strict monogamy, but also a restrained sexual life.

It appears that after 23rd Tīrthaṅkara Pārśva, Mahāvīra systematically organised the Jaina society into four distinct classes of Śramaṇas ( male monks ), Śramaṇis ( female monks or nuns ), Śrāvakas ( male house-holders ) and Śrāvikas ( female house-holders ). Unlike Buddha, he did not hesitate to give a distinct place to females in the saintly order. He,

1. “का त्वम् शुभे ! कस्य परिग्रहो वा ?”

however, laid down a very strict code of conduct for male and female monks and Brahmacharya occupied a prominent place in his scheme of code. It is considered a must for spiritual practices as well as for physical fitness. Relaxations are contemplated in favour of house-holders for obvious reasons.

( 5 ) *Aparigraha* ( Restrictions in possession ) — Those who try to possess, are, in fact, themselves possessed. We do become slaves of our possessions. But we like that slavery because we are accustomed to it. However, we forget that all objects of the world are constantly changing. They are changing in form and in qualities and they are also changing hands, their possessors. This is the reality of life. So the idea of possession is in fact illusory. But we like to remain in illusion and that is why when our possessions change hands, we become sad. We desire not only to regain the lost possessions, but also to gain control over alternative things of the world. This process, i. e., the process of living in illusions goes on constantly and causes grief and tormentations. The most noticeable fact about those ignorant people, obsessed with greed for possession, whether of material things or of some cherished ideas and ideologies, is their desire that the things and ideas which they possess shall remain as they are. This is the most unreal delusion — the root cause of all unhappiness. If one hankers after worldly things, it is a sure succession of uncontrolled desires. Uncontrolled desires result in uncontrolled activities in the material plane. But desires have no end. German philosopher Schopenhauer has rightly pointed out that for every wish that is satisfied there remain ten that are denied, that desire is infinite and the fulfilment is limited and that so long as we are given to the throngs of desires with their constant hopes and fears we can never have true and lasting happiness and peace. Lord Buddha, therefore, rightly emphasized the necessity to curtail our desires. The principle of *Aparigraha* teaches us to restrict our possessions to the minimum. This can be done only if we discipline our wants. Even earning more than what is necessary offends

## 164 ]     **The Path of Arhat : A Religious Democracy**

the principle of Aparigraha. Good Jainas take a vow to fix their possession of material things including wealth.

Economy of Indian society was, till recently, dominated by this principle of Aparigraha. However, the more we have come under the influence of Western materialism, more superficial our attitude towards the life has become. Past history of India is replete with examples to show that a multi-millionaire would himself lead the life of a poor man and would be prepared to donate the whole of his wealth for a public cause. There was no marked difference between the life style and standard of the persons belonging to different financial stratas of the society. A rich man did not desire more luxury simply because he could afford to spend. Now the standards have changed, outlook towards life and life-style is also changed. Earn more and spend more; increase your standard of living, simple thinking and higher living — a contrast to what English poet Wordsworth said — are the mottoes of modern life. The result is licentiousness, absence of moral discipline, unnecessary and unfruitful spending, want of equilibrium in the prices of consumer goods, diversion of essential raw materials for the production of luxury goods, exploitation of labour and consumers, unequal distribution of wealth produced by the society and the resultant unrest and class war.

The principle of 'Aparigraha' was never more relevant than today. It is highly unfortunate that even the socialist ideology led by thinkers like Marx and others, who revolted against social injustices, resulting from economic imbalances, failed to go to the root of the problem, and could not go beyond the materialistic conceptions of history and economics. They forgot to take into account that a human being is the unit of the society and hence no social structure can be effectively improved without improving its units.

Indian seers have always kept this aspect in mind. They have always emphasized the advancement of the individual character of each man because they knew that a society can

progress only to the extent to which its individual components improve. What they taught by 'Aparigraha' was not a mere religion; it was sociology in its truest sense. To create class conflict and then to fight the said class conflict was, to them, an absurd process. They devised a method which would prevent the generation of any conflict in the society.

Today the world economy is in shamble. So called communist economy, as practiced in Soviet Russia and other East-european countries, has proved to be a disaster. Economy of developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America is on the brink of disaster. North America which feels proud of its Capitalist System is under a great strain and its people are not capable of tolerating even the slightest jolt to their comforts. Citizens there begin their careers as householders by incurring debts which in many cases do not end till life time, and this is because they find it impossible to live without modern gadgets and cannot control their increasing desires. One catastrophe like a world war is sufficient to shatter their proud citadel of capitalist concomitance.

The root cause of all this, as pointed out by Indian seers, is uncontrolled appetite to possess and to enjoy more and more material objects of life. Want of inherent restraint from within, want of realization of life's realities, want of the knowledge that real enjoyment of life is not in material pursuits, are responsible for our present unrest and sense of insecurity. The problem can never be solved by mere economic reforms. All economic theories have to be worked out amongst the human beings, who are in need of psychological, emotional and sentimental treatment. Economists and political theorists are great ignoramuses in such treatment.

The solution of 'Aparigraha' was perhaps not known to Marx and even if it was known to him he would have, in all probability, laughed and scoffed at it. One should, however, not be surprised if Marx would change his ideas and agree with the Indian seers if he is given a chance to get up from

his grave today — much before the day of Kayāmata — and see the results of his pure dialectical materialism.

Among the modern political leaders of the world, Mahatma Gandhi may be credited to have practiced whatever he preached to others.

He himself had no ‘Parigraha’ and taught the Indians as well as the whole world that limitation of desires and restraint of possessions, simple living and high thinking, are the only realistic way to live a happy, contented and peaceful life — a life without conflicts and constraints. But ironically and unfortunately his teachings were not given even a polite and courteous nod of affirmation by his own followers during his own life time and the economy of India — the land where the lessons of ‘Aparigraha’ have been taught through thousands of years — has willingly slid and slipped to western economy and materialistic pursuits.

‘Aparigraha’ is more relevant today than it was in the times of Mahāvīra two thousand and five hundred years ago.

We shall next consider the modus operandi to implement this Pañcaśīla.



**Chapter Twelve**  
**MODUS OPERANDI**

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“Insight into Reality is earned by intellectual and moral discipline for which there are three stages : 1. A tradition which we have to learn ( Śravaṇa ), 2. An intellectual training through which we have to pass ( Manana ) and 3. An ethical discipline which we have to undergo ( Nididhyāsana )”.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

**Enlightened Consciousness**

Religion for an Indian, is experience or attitude of mind-principles tested in life. It is not an idea, a bare intellectual exercise or a mere logical conviction. It is rather an enlightened consciousness, a power, a spiritual force which can be felt not only by the person who possesses the same but also by all those who come in his contact. It is, as Dr. S. Radhakrishnan puts it : — “Intuition of Reality ( Brhmanubhava ), Insight into Truth ( Brahma Darśana ), Contact with the Supreme ( Brahma Saṃsparśa ) and Direct apprehension of Reality ( Brahma Sakṣatkāra ).

All religious systems of India have emphasized that language and logic are incapable to reveal to us the real dimensions of the Reality, apprehended only by experiencing it. For this reason all the Indian systems have considered philosophy and the actual lining of their philosophical principles as the integral and inseparable parts of the ultimate knowledge. They have, therefore, provided humanity not only with metaphysical theories but also with a mechanism to operate them and have exhorted people to test these theories in practical life.

Jaina seers, in conformity with their Indian tradition, have pointed out the methodology by resorting to which the five principles discussed in the foregoing chapter can be put into practice.



**Self, the starting point**

They point out that the essential and basic requirement of spiritual development is the full conviction about the nature of the 'self' and the efficacy of the role of Nine Tattvas in the spiritual journey. This conviction is the starting point in the journey. This spiritual journey is possible only after one is convinced that material objects of the world are alien to the 'self', that the real nature of the 'self' is all Bliss and all joy, also that this bliss and joy are not available to him because the luminosity of the 'self' is clouded by the material karmas due to the attachment towards worldly objects, foreign to it, it would naturally set on finding out the means for dispelling clouds of these material karmas. In fact, every one of us inherits the capacity to dispel the clouds, i. e., alien materials covering the soul. What is required is the will and the eagerness to realise the real nature of self.

**Will and Eagerness**

The basic question is that the basic postulates of every spiritual development, i. e., will and eagerness to realise the real nature of self cannot be developed through any mechanical formula. They emanate from within only by experience which in turn is gained mainly by thinking process. Capacity to think and to distinguish, is the only feature which distinguishes a human being from the rest of the animal world. It follows, therefore, that the more we develop our thinking process the more we are utilising our existence as a human being. If an intelligent survey of human behaviour is carried out it will be noticed that most of us do not bestow proper thought and study our day to day experiences in life. We take many things for granted and do not bother to analyse the factors leading to a particular happening in our life or in the lives of those around us. So, to develop the habit of objective observation of everything that happens to us as well as around us is the first essential. This habit of objective observation will naturally introduce in our thinking process the principle of Nayavāda (doctrine of multiple aspects)

and our power of tolerance and understanding will go on increasing.

Thinking process has its own dynamism. By its very nature it can never remain stagnant. Therefore if a human being, allows the thinking process to go on, is bound to reach a stage of approaching reality. At that stage he realizes the real cause of his pains and pleasures, and once he realizes he tries to adjust himself to the situation. He is now ready and willing to experiment. Every experiment in the spiritual field brings unique and interesting results, giving further impetus to make progress. This surely results in 'will and eagerness', referred to above as 'basic postulates of spiritual progress'.

*Aṇuvrata-Mahāvratā* — To those who are able to develop will and eagerness to go further in the spiritual journey, the Jaina seers have provided a sort of modus by the operation of which a positive achievement can be made. This modus covers the whole range of actual living. Distinction is, however, made between the life of a monk who has renounced the world, and the life of a house-holder who has to discharge all worldly duties and at the same time, wants to be free from the shackles of karmas. However, since the destination of both the monk as well as the house-holder is the same, the basic practice, they are prescribed to follow is the same. The difference is only in the degree, considering that one has renounced the worldly affairs while the other has to encounter all sorts of worldly conflicts. The milder form of practice prescribed for a house-holder is called 'Aṇuvrata' and highest and strictest standard is prescribed for the monks having renounced the world and aspiring to attain emancipation. This is called 'Mahāvratā'. Before discussing the details of these practices, it would be quite necessary to understand the process by which a proper mental and emotional attitude can be prepared for performing these practices in true spirit.

*Objective observation* — It is easier to observe objectively the phenomena which are impersonal to us than to bring

objectivity to the personal phenomena which come only by cultivating a habit. The cultivation of this habit remains not so difficult if on every occasion of pleasure and pain we seek within ourselves their causes and try to go deeper in our enquiry as to their propriety and their impact on our character building. We are bound to experience that once this process of objective observation becomes habitual, the impact of emotional upsurges of pleasures and pains on our psyche becomes blunted. So the first requirement is the habit of objective observation of all the personal and impersonal occurrences in life.

#### **Upādāna-Nimitta ( Material and Efficient Cause )**

The next requirement is the understanding that every phenomenon in life is governed by the doctrine of cause and effect and nothing which happens in this universe is accidental or miraculous. Once this understanding is ingrained, our attention would naturally be focussed on finding out the cause. Care should be taken to see that we go to the root cause instead of an immediate cause, which superficially strikes us, is mostly the effect of some other cause. For instance if some one has disturbed us by inflicting an insult, we at once conclude that the cause of our disturbance was that someone else. But if we think deeper and go to the root of the real cause of our disturbance, we will find that we are hypersensitive or that we were some how responsible for inciting the other one to insult us or that the other one who insulted us did not mean to insult us.

The Jaina philosophers have emphasized that whatever is the immediate cause, disturbing our soul, is foreign to us and merely provides an occasion or a situation. In Jaina philosophy it is a 'Nimitta', a pretext, with the help of which the 'self', which is the real cause, called 'Upādāna' moves, and experiences the results. If the 'self' tries to remain unmoved, i. e., tries to remain unaffected by the situation, the object which is foreign to it and which is a 'Nimitta' cannot produce any result,

To illustrate how our life actions in our spiritual journey take final shape, our attention is drawn to the process by which a potter gives a final shape to an earthen pot. In an earthen pot, the lump of clay is 'Upādāna', the potter is the doer (Kartā) and the instruments are 'Nimitta'. The lump of clay has to pass through different shapes before it assumes the final shape of a pot. Applying this analogy to the shaping of spiritual life, our 'self' or 'Ātman' is both the Kartā and Upādāna because it combines in itself the qualities of a motivating force and the substratum which undergoes changes and the external objects are 'Nimittas'. If the 'Self', while coming into contact with worldly objects, allows itself to be influenced by them, it assumes the character of these objects and shapes itself accordingly. If it allows itself to be influenced by anger, it looks angry; if by greed, it looks greedy; if by proud, it looks proudly. But if it allows itself to be influenced by the thoughts and writings of spiritual leaders, it looks spiritualised, noble and benedictory. Thus the upward progress of the soul depends much upon the quality of the 'Nimitta' which is permitted to influence it. Just as a lump of clay takes different shapes before attaining the final shape of a pot, the self also takes different shapes before attaining the ultimate stage of 'Nirvāṇa'. It is a common place truth that one is always influenced by the company he keeps. "Ilikā bhramarī jāta dhyāyanti bhramarī yathā", means 'just as a new born insect becomes a bee by contemplating on the bee itself'. That is why all the saints of different schools in India have put special emphasis on Satsaṅga, i. e., the company of saintly persons; studying and contemplating on the path shown by the great seers, constantly repeating the names and attributes of the great souls who have moved on earth, contemplating the virtues which have made them great, discussing and analysing the great doctrines handed over to us by them through selfless love for humanity. These are the surest ways to be

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1. "इलिका भ्रमरी जाता ध्यायन्ति भ्रमरी यथा" ।

influenced by good and beneficial 'Nimittas'. Thus we should prefer the 'Nimittas' which permanently remind us of the divine power of our spirit, which fill our daily life routine with the idea of total liberation and which make us repentant of all our moral lapses. It follows that we should avoid those 'Nimittas' which become responsible for contrary effect. This process obviously requires a lively awareness from moment to moment. Any lapse in such an awareness is known in Jaina technicality as 'Pramāda', the literary meaning of which is negligence.

### **Bhāvanā or Anuprekṣā ( Reflection )**

To achieve this end the seers have prescribed some formula, the most important of which is the prescription of constantly keeping in view twelve Bhavanās as under :

( 1 ) *Anitya Bhāvanā* — 'Bhāvanā means 'conception', 'Anitya' means 'transitory'. All material things of the universe are transitory in nature. It is an ever changing world. Nothing is still and permanent here. What gives us pain is not the changing modes but our insistence to see that the things of our liking remain permanent. Unthinking man never reconciles himself to the fact of change and this is the root of human misery because no one who belongs to this universe, and is a part of it, can free himself from the laws by which the universe is governed. It is really tragic to stay behind. We experience every moment that all objects of pleasure, wealth, the power and everything around us undergoes changes. The moment we are born, we begin to die. Change is the rule. The only exception is our spirit ( *Cetanā* ). But we tend to forget the spirit which is permanent and cling to the thing which is transitory, and if in the process we become unhappy we blame others. Obviously the pangs of our pain would be greatly relieved if we constantly remember, that change is the rule and clinging to changing modes is pure ignorance.

( 2 ) *Aśaraṇa Bhāvanā* — 'Śaraṇa' means refuse. *Aśaraṇa* means want of refuse or helplessness. It should be constantly

borne in mind that we have to find out our own course in life. Pure religion ought to be alone accepted as a help in life. Seers and scriptures can only guide us. We have to tread on the path by our own efforts, discrimination and wisdom. When we are overtaken by pain, physical or mental, no one can save us from its pangs. We are the makers of our own future and our pleasures and pains are of our own making. We have to learn to bear them with equanimity and without depending on others.

( 3, 4 ) *Ekatva-Anyatva Bhāvanā* — Ekatva means aloneness or Soleness and Anyatva means separateness. We enter the world alone and we leave it also alone. Each one of us has to suffer the fruits of our individual karmas. Our cooperation in worldly affairs, love and affection for others should not be allowed to be degenerated into attachment because no amount of attachment either for our family or friends can save us from pangs of life. Consciousness that I am alone, and alone have I to chart my course of life. As also that my family, my friends and my belongings are not mine, does not breed selfishness, but bugging, to all these things, does bring selfishness because such bugging is the result of gross attachment which is the worst vice in human nature. In fact both these Bhāvanās of Ekatva and Anyatva are not only complimentary to each other but are also the logical consequence of the Aśaraṇa Bhāvanā referred to above. What these two Bhāvanās prescribe, is to suggest that you have to bear the fruits of your own karmas – others cannot relieve you of them. Similarly you cannot relieve others of the fruits of their karmas. If we cultivate such an objectivity of outlook we would be better equipped to serve ourselves and others around us.

( 5 ) *Nivṛtti Bodha or Saṃsāra Bhāvanā* — Nivṛtti means retirement. This Bhāvanā asks us to remember that this self is wandering in this Saṃsāra from one life to another, time immemorial. In words of the Great Śaṅkara<sup>1</sup> “Punarapi mara-

1. पुनरपि मरणं पुनरपि जननम्, पुनरपि जननी जठरे शयनम् ।

nañ punarapi jananañ, Punarapi janant jathare Śayanañ. This endless wandering from one life to the other must have some purpose. Can there be an end to it ? Surely it cannot be the scheme of Nature that this Ātman should go on endlessly to experience pleasures and pains, hopes and despairs during life after life without any purpose. And if there is any purpose I must find it out. It is found that I have not gained anything by repeating this endless cycle of birth and rebirth, life and death and all the ups and downs, tensions and turmoils of aimlessly moving in this saṃsāra. What can I do to avoid it ? A mind of a Sādhaka constantly occupied with this type of perception finally leads him to a state of Nirgrantha ( Granthī ) where every knot of bondage is dissolved.

( 6, 7, 8 ) *Āsrava-Saṃvara-Nirjarā Bhāvanā* — The concepts of Āsrava, Saṃvara and Nirjarā have been discussed in earlier chapters. These Bhāvanās are to remind us how the inflow of karmas — good as well as bad — result in bondage and how by the process of Saṃvara and Nirjarā the inflow of new karmas can be stopped and the accumulated karmas can be destroyed.

( 9 ) *Aśuci Bhāvanā* — Every man is most deeply attached to his body. In fact all pleasures and pains are of our body. Our attachment to our family and our worldly possessions is in the ultimate analysis the attachment to our body. But what is this body ? When the self withdraws from the body what is its condition ? Even when the self does not withdraw what this body consists of ? How various diseases arise in our body ? Why it gradually decays ? If we give deeper thought to all these questions we find two important aspects of our body :

( a ) Without the existence of the spirit ( soul ) within it, it is nothing but a conglomeration of dirt and diseases.

( b ) Even with the existence of spirit within, it is constantly under the process of decay and deterioration.

To keep these aspects of the body constantly in mind is called *Aśuci Bhāvanā*. The constant reminder of these aspects blunt our attachment to our body and keep us alive to the fact that self is something distinct and different from body, and the body can be best utilised not for enjoying the transitory objects of the world but for liberating the self from the shackles of karmas. This *Bhāvanā* is called 'Aśuci' as it points out to the impure aspects of the body. This is required to be done to mitigate our attachment to the body and not for cultivating hatred towards it, as misunderstood by some. All the roads of *Sādhana* – roads of self-realization – are required to be traversed through body and it is this body which is the best vehicle to take us to the final destination. It is therefore, quite necessary to take its proper care and to keep it properly nourished, healthy and efficient. What is discounted here is indulgence in material objects of life to satisfy the indisciplined cravings of the body, so that it remains a fit and efficient vehicle to carry us safely in our spiritual journey.

( 10 ) *Dharma Bhāvanā* — A constant reminder that ten virtues, viz., *Sāmyama* ( Self-control ), *Sunṛta* ( Truthfulness ), *Śauca* ( Purity ), *Brahma* ( Chastity ), *Akiñcanatā* ( Absence of greed ), *Tapas* ( Penances ), *Kṣānti* ( Forbearance ), *Mārdava* ( softness ), *Rjūtā* ( sincerity ) and *Mukti* ( Emancipation ) are quite necessary to uphold the world order ( *Dharma* ).

( 11, 12 ) *Loka-bhāvanā* and *Bodhi-bhāvanā* — Both these *Bhāvanās* are meant to remind us the nature of this universe and its functioning through the interplay of *Jīva* and *Ajīva*.

A constant reminder of these twelve *Bhāvanās* mitigates our pangs of pains and expands our understanding of the life's problems, and even in uncomfortable situations of life does not appear burdensome.

### **Twelve Vratas of House-holder**

( A ) *Five minor vows* — We have noticed above that for a



house-holder a liberalised code of conduct called 'Aṇuvrata' is prescribed. Aṇuvratas ( Minor vows ) are five in number —

( i ) Minor vow of non-violence, i. e., abstinence from the killing and misbehaving of mobile living beings.

( ii ) Minor vow of truthfulness, i. e., abstinence from saying a lie to fulfil one's vested interest.

( iii ) Non-stealing.

( iv ) Limiting one's sexual activities to one's own wife or to remain satisfied by one's own wife.

( v ) Limiting one's own possessions.

( B ) *Three supplementary vows* — However in order to keep a house-holder constantly on the track some supplementary vows are also prescribed. These are known as 'Guṇavratas', which are three in number —

( i ) Digvrata — 'Dig' means direction and 'Vrata' means a vow. Thus Digvrata is a vow to carry out one's activity only within a restricted area.

( ii ) Bhogopabhogaparimāṇa — 'Bhoga-Upabhoga' means sensual enjoyment of material things. This vow prescribed limitations regarding the enjoyment of material objects and these restrictions may also be with regard to the time and place when and where they may be enjoyed.

Both the above vows are intended to limit the worldly activities and the extent of the worldly enjoyments, if the total and absolute restriction is not possible.

( iii ) Anarthadaṇḍa-viramāṇa — This vow is meant to prevent one from indulgence in such acts which are not necessary. A house-holder has to undertake various types of activities. He cannot afford to put a stop to all activities, but using proper direction he can desist from certain acts such as :

( a ) Inflicting bodily injuries or killing others ( Apadhyaṇa ).

( b ) Advising others to act in such a manner which results in sinful acts ( Pāpopadeśa ).

( c ) Giving weapons which would result in violence ( *Himsopakāri Dāna* ).

( d ) Engaging oneself in useless and morally degrading activities such as gambling, reading sex-literature, seeing low-taste dramas and indulging in talks which are morally degrading.

( C ) *Four educative vows* — These are four in number. These vows are meant to give periodic education in right conduct and to keep perpetual vigilance over one's activities. They are of four types :

( i ) *Sāmāyika* — This is the most important daily activity to discipline mind and body, to review and reassess day's activity and to offer prayerful respect to the souls who have achieved liberation as well as to those who are on the path to liberation. Both in the morning, before daily activities are undertaken, and in the evening, before going to bed, one has to sit in meditation with the spirit of forbearance, friendliness and fraternity for all, irrespective of their cast, creed or complexion. One practices equanimity of mind and tries to shed all different types of *Kaṣāyas* such as anger, pride, deceit and greed. Virtues of great masters who have achieved liberation are extolled and prayers are offered for developing one's capacity to absorb these virtues in actual life.

This vow of *Sāmāyika* is so important that *Bimbisāra*, the king of *Magadha*, who was an ardent follower of lord *Mahāvīra*, was told by the Lord that if a particular house-holder could give to him only a fraction of the fruit of his daily practice of equanimity ( *Sāmāyika* ), his path of liberation would become easiest. The King, like most of the persons possessed of power and riches, thought that it would be easy for him to manage that particular house-holder who was an ordinary lay man, living in poverty. The king offered money and other things to purchase a small fraction of the merits achieved by him from *Sāmāyika*. The house-holder simply smiled at the ignorance of king's arrogance and would have appropriately

## 178 ] The Path of Arhat : A Religious Democracy

replied in Biblical terms, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." ( Mathew )

( ii ) Deśāvakaśīka — This vow is to be taken for further lessening the sphere of Digvrata and Bhogopabhoga-parimāṇa-vrata for a day.

( iii ) Proṣadha — During this vrata the Sādhaka accepts all restrictions of a Monk by retiring for a day or two or for more time in the common prayer hall and passes most of his time in meditation and religious study.

( iv ) Atithi-Saṁvibhāga — Giving gifts and donations to needy persons including Sādhus ( saints ).

### Prayer

Since Jainism firmly believes in the doctrine of karma and puts sole reliance on the development of spiritual force by one's own personal efforts, and further exhorts its followers to develop Aśaraṇa-bhāvanā ( none can refuge or save us ), the question, which naturally arises, is, what is the place of prayers in Jainism? Prayers are offered to God or to the Divine force which is supposed to control the whole universe. But if the Jainas do not believe in God or in the existence of any outside Divinity controlling our fate, any idea of prayer would be irrelevant to them.

The question is very legitimate. It is true that strictly according to the Jaina doctrines the prayer in the sense of asking favour of Divine dispensation has no place in Jaina doctrines for two main reasons, namely, ( 1 ) The soul which has been emancipated and which then becomes Omniscient has no desire left and has no motivation for the good or the bad of the universe. Its character is purely that of a knower and a seer. If it could be pleased by prayers, it could also be displeased by something else; If it could bestow favours, it could also bestow frowns. To attribute such human frailties to a liberated soul is to deny its liberation.

( 2 ) Secondly, once we accept the doctrine of karma, all results must be sought in that doctrine and therefore unless the prayers are adjusted in the karma doctrine, they remain totally non-productive.

However, it would be totally wrong to say that prayers, if understood properly, have no place in Jaina philosophy. Jainas do not understand prayers as a means of seeking favours from a superior force. True Jaina prayers are nothing but the appreciation and adoration of the virtues possessed by the liberated souls and the expression of ardent desire to achieve these virtues in one's own actual life. It is for this reason that Jaina scriptures have actually enumerated the virtues of different categories of souls such as Arihanta, Siddha, Ācārya and Śādhu.

It is basic to the Jaina belief that the Tīrthaṅkaras ( prophets ) and their teachings are only to point out to us the way to get liberation. But how to get liberation and how to put these teachings into practice is entirely left to us. We achieve only to the extent to which we exert. However, the path shown by those who have achieved must be studied with utmost respect and sincerity, because it is the path which the seers have actually taken in their lives and have obtained the results. We should therefore be entirely thankful to these great seers for providing to us such guidance. One expresses such thankfulness out of sheer gratitude, extolls and enumerates their virtues and wishes that such virtues may also develop in one's own life. Jainas further believe that by constantly being reminded of the virtues which made them great, our mind gets oriented to these virtues and being constantly in mental company with the great, we too tend to be influenced by their greatness by developing the virtues which they possessed. This, in Jaina philosophy, is the true process of prayers and it is in this manner that one also gets the fruits of his prayers.

It is a psychological truth that human mind gets oriented to the thoughts which it entertains constantly. Oriented and

conditioned mind always impells the physical senses of the body to follow the pursuits of its liking. Therefore, being convinced of the teachings of the great seers, if we totally surrender ourselves to these teachings and constantly bear in mind the efficacy of these teachings and try to put them in practice, it is the best prayer we can offer and if such type of prayer yields some results, we would surely be justified in saying that the results which were so yielded were due to the 'favour' of the great masters who showed the path to us. For indeed the masters have shown favour to us, as to the whole humanity, in pointing out to the right way to obtain salvation.

Illustrative of this line of thinking is the prayer offered by the great Ācārya Samantabhadra<sup>1</sup> in the following words :

Na pūjayarthastvayi vītarāge,  
Na nindaya nātha vivānta vaire.  
Tathāpi te puṇya guṇasmṛtirnaḥ,  
Punātu ceto duritāṃ janebhyaḥ.

meaning, 'Oh lord, you are really a Vītarāga ( one who has shedded all passions ) and so you are not pleased by prayers nor you displeased by adverse criticism, because you have destroyed all types of adversory feelings. All the same, the remembrance of your merits purifies one's mind from all the sins'.

A prayer of this type is the best karma ( action ) one can resort to, and according to the doctrine of Karma we must get the fruits of our actions.<sup>2</sup>

1. न पूजयार्थस्त्वयि वीतरागे;  
न निन्दया नाथ विवान्त वैरे ।  
तथापि ते पुण्य गुणस्मृतिर्नः,  
पुनातु चेतो दुरितां जनेभ्यः ॥ Svayambhu-stotra, 57.
2. It is found that though most of the Jaina prayers are on the lines stated above, there are some prayers which are offered to prevent a public calamity. Strictly speaking

It is interesting to note that the most outstanding of the Jaina prayers is contained in what is known as 'Navakāra Mantra' which contains nothing sectarian or personal to any individual and asks for nothing in return. It does nothing more than offering sincere veneration to those souls which are already liberated and which are on the path of liberation. These souls may belong to any sect or religious belief but so long as they are on the path of liberation or, are, in fact, liberated, one who is a true Jaina bows down to them. This enchantation<sup>1</sup> is as under :

Namo Arihantāṇaṃ — I bow down to all 'Arihantas'.

Namo Siddhāṇaṃ — I bow down to all 'Siddhas'.

Namo Āyariyāṇaṃ — I bow down to all 'Ācāryas'.

Namo Uvajjhayaṇaṃ — I bow down to 'Upādhyāyas'.

Namo Loe Savvasāhūṇaṃ — I bow down to all the  
'Sādhus'.

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such prayers cannot be considered as of the type discussed above. But even such prayers are not directly addressed to the liberated soul who is the Tīrthankara. They are rather addressed to the God or Goddesses who are supposed to be in attendance of the liberated souls because these Gods and Goddesses are not liberated souls and are supposed to help others. This seems to be a subsequent innovation which has, strictly speaking, no sanction from Jaina philosophical doctrines.

There is a class of thinkers, both Jaina and non-Jaina, believing in the sincere prayers offered to a higher soul resulting in moral as well as material advantages.

They believe that ardent and sincere prayers offered with total self surrender, do produce vibrations which eventually become helpful to one who prays. Such a line of thinking may not be outrightly rejected as incorrect, but that discussion would take us to a different subject of Tantra. For the present we are not concerned with it.

1. नमो अरिहंताणम्, नमो सिद्धाणम्, नमो आयरियाणम्, नमो उवज्जायाणम्, नमो लोए सब्बसाहूणम् । Bhagavati-sūtra, I/1.

'Arihantas' are those blessed souls who have successfully shed away in this life all the karmas which blur the potency of the soul; 'Siddhas' are those souls who have achieved the final emancipation and have attained a bodyless state of pure bliss; 'Ācāryas' are those kind hearted souls who expound and interpret the teachings handed over to us by the liberated souls; 'Upādhyāyas', are those merciful souls who teach us the path of salvation and 'Sādhus' are those saints who are themselves on the path of salvation and are striving for liberation.

These five are called 'Pañca-parameṣṭhi' — five types of great souls — those who have been liberated and those who are on the path of liberation. A Jaina bows down to them all, not necessarily because they have followed or are following a particular type of religion but because they have already attained what was worth attaining or because they are striving to attain what is worth attaining. As Ācārya Hemcandra<sup>2</sup> puts it :

“Bhava bijānkura-jaṇanā raḡādyāḡ kṣayamupāgata yasya, Brahmā vā Viṣṇurva Haro Jino vā namastasmāi.” meaning, “I bow down to him whose all passions such as attachment and malice, which sow the seeds of birth and rebirth, have been destroyed. It matters not whether he is Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Saṅkara or Jina.”

The Jainas have built big and beautiful temples and are adoring, imposing and serene marble idols of Tīrthaṅkaras. Idol-worship has its own rights and Jainas seem to have adopted the same at a subsequent stage because Jaina scriptures have not recorded that Lord Mahāvira at any time worshipped an Idol. In fact the whole emphasis of Jaina doctrines is on the Ātman which has no form. However, if the majority<sup>2</sup>

1. भव बीजाङ्कुरजनना रागाद्याः क्षयमुपगता यस्य ।

ब्रह्मा वा विष्णुर्वा हरो जिनो वा नमस्तस्मै ॥

Mahādeva-stotra, 44.

2. All Jainas are not idol-worshippers because the sect of Sthānakavasī Jainas does not believe in idol-worship.

of Jainas have resorted to the worship of the idols of Tīrthañkaras, it would not go against the basic principles of Jainism if the said worship is carried out on the lines discussed above.

It would, however, undoubtedly follow that adoring the idols by jewelry and other ornaments and taking out processions of idols etc. have no philosophical background or justification – except perhaps expressing devotion. Attribution of ornamental glitter to one who is a Vītarāga is a gross negation of all that for which Jainism stands, and amounts to crude perversion of basic doctrines of Jainism.

Thus, prayers and Bhakti are differently understood by the Jainas but they do occupy a prominent place in Jaina thinking.

### **Dhyāna ( Meditation )**

Dhyāna and Leśyā occupy very prominent place in Jaina thinking. The Jaina approach to Dhyāna is purely psychological. It is understood by Jainas in its very comprehensive sense, namely, the engagement of the mind in a particular thought. Human mind never remains empty even for a moment. It remains constantly engaged, thinking of good or bad things whether necessary or not, and whether they are of our immediate concern or not. The Jaina thinkers have taken account of this fact, and have analysed the condition of human mind into four categories, namely — 1. Ārtta Dhyāna, 2. Raudra Dhyāna, 3. Dharma Dhyāna and 4. Śukla Dhyāna. The first two are inauspicious and the latter two are auspicious. These four categories cover all the conditions of mind. The first two, being the cause of the worldly transmigration, are evil-dhyāna while Dharma and Śukla lead to liberation and are noble-dhyāna.

( 1 ) *Ārtta Dhyāna* — ‘Ārtta’ means pain. When our painful experiences catch hold of our mental condition we are undergoing the state of Ārtta Dhyāna. There are four broad classifications of this type of Dhyāna as follows —



( i ) Anigṣṭa-saṁyoga, i. e., when we are put in the circumstances which we do not consider good for us.

( ii ) Iṣṭa-viyoga, i. e., when we are deprived of good and congenial circumstances.

( iii ) Roga-cintā, i. e., when we are worried of physical disease or pain.

( iv ) Nidāna, i. e., when we worry to attain an objective which is difficult to obtain.

In all these four conditions we remain worried and feel unhappy and our mind remains engaged with the painful ideas about the prevailing circumstances.

( 2 ) *Raudra Dhyāna* — ‘Raudra’ means cruel, harsh. When the mind is either full of anger, hatred, malice and violence or is scheming evil designs, we are passing through Raudra Dhyāna. When we are in this condition we enjoy the activities which are immoral. All mental activities to grab power and wealth, sexual enjoyment and anti-social acts fall within this classification.

( i ) The first type of Raudra dhyāna called ‘himsānandī’, means taking delight in killing, crushing or destroying the living beings either by self or through other. It includes skill in violent actions.

( ii ) Mrṣānandī Raudra dhyāna includes falsehood, composing deceptive literature for one’s own pleasure, collecting wealth by deceit and deceiving the simple-minded.

( iii ) Cauryānandī Raudra dhyāna includes not only the act of theft but also preaching dexterity in theft.

( iv ) Viṣāyanandī Raudra dhyāna includes desire to take possession of all good things of the world and thinking of fighting ferociously for attainment of the objects of enjoyment.

Both the above referred dhyānas are spiritually degrading the self. Most of us remain permanently engaged in these two Dhyānas with the result that we are not able to make any progress spiritually. Next two Dhyānas are of the superior

variety and help us to progress further in our journey to freedom.

( 3 ) *Dharma Dhyāna* — The word ‘Dharma’ is used in Jaina terminology in a sense wider than ‘religion’. What is ‘Dharma’ ? Answer is ‘Vatthu Sahāvo Dhammo’, i. e., the intrinsic nature of a thing is its ‘Dharma’. So long as a thing remains within the limits of its intrinsic nature, and does not transgress these limits, it remains within its own ‘Dharma’. Life’s problems arise when we transgress these limits and encroach upon the foreign fields. Working on these principles, if the ‘Jiva’, i. e., the self, forgetting its own intrinsic nature, tries to encroach upon the field of ‘Ajīva’, it invites trouble. But if it concentrates its attention on its own self, tries to analyse its nature and focusses its activities on its upliftment, it enters into the field of ‘Dharma Dhyāna’. Thus if we fix our attention and activities in studying the views expressed by enlightened souls, and try to find out how far we can put these views in actual practice, it would be a type of Dharma Dhyāna which is called ‘Ājñāna-vicaya’. When we contemplate how the true character of the self is clouded by its contact with kaṣāyas such as anger, pride etc. and how the self can be made free from this contact, we are in ‘Apāya-vicaya’ Dharma dhyana. When we think how the accumulated karmas can be shed, we are in the Dharma-dhyāna which is called, ‘Vipaka-vicaya’. When we contemplate about the nature of this universe ( Loka ) and its functioning, it is called ‘Loka-saṁsthāna-vicaya’ Dharma Dhyāna.

Dharma Dhyāna takes our mind away from Ārtta and Raudra which are degrading the spirit and which result only in earning further karmas which bind the spirit. Dharma-dhyāna not only takes us to the field of metaphysics and logic, but also constitutes the best type of Satsaṅga as it engages our mind in closest company with the great seers who have realized the Truth.

( 4 ) *Śukla Dhyāna* — ‘Śukla’ means ‘white or pure’. This

is the highest type of meditation where in the karmic bondages are made free and the soul remains totally engrossed in itself only. Seers say that it is not possible to give complete idea of this type of meditation as the bliss which one experiences by it is beyond description. However they have classified this type of meditation into four categories — ( i ) Pṛthakvatva-vitarka-savicāra, ( ii ) Ekatva-vitarka-vicāra, ( iii ) Sūkṣma-kriyā-pratipatti, ( iv ) Samucchinna-kriyā-nivṛtti or Vyuparata-kriyā-nivṛtti. These are different stages of advancement in meditation. In the first one the mind contemplates the different modes of the self and the forces of Pudgala and analyses them. Since the mind is moving from one idea to the other, it is called ‘Pṛthakvatva’ and ‘Vitarka’. This process goes on but during the process of this movement in the thinking the concentration is only on finding out the true character of the self, and therefore the whole process tends to make the mind steady.

After it becomes steady it concentrates only on one object namely the self. This is the second stage of ‘Ekatva-vitarka’. When the mind becomes thus steady, complete peace and bliss prevails because at that stage all the bondages of kaṣāyas get destroyed and there is nothing which would disturb its steadiness and peace. The mind, remaining peaceful and steady in this manner, reaches the stage of ‘Kevala-jñāna’—pure knowledge.

In the third stage there is only a nominal though subtle connection with body and when even that is broken the final stage of the state of a ‘Siddha’ comes which is a bodyless existence of the soul possessing all knowledge and all bliss.

This is how the great masters have described the process of meditation. An ordinary human being is roaming between first three categories of meditation. It is considered that the last one is very difficult of being achieved and it involves the entire process of spiritual progress which we have already described while discussing various ‘Guṇa-sthānas’.

What is the type of bliss which one achieves in Śukla-dhyāna ? We cannot describe the same, but Ācārya Hemacandra<sup>1</sup>, a great master in Yoga, says as under in his famous work 'Yoga-śāstra'—

Mokṣostu māstu yadi vā paramānandastu vedyate sa khalu.  
Yasminnikhila sukhāni pratibhāsante na kiñcidiva.

“Whether salvation is there or not, the absolute Bliss which is experienced ( in Śukla-dhyāna ) cannot be surpassed in the least by all pleasurable things of the universe.”

Leśyā ( Disposition )

The word 'Leśyā' can be explained as an *aurā* around a human personality reflecting the innermost disposition which one undergoes at a relevant time as well as disposition itself. It is the mental disposition or feeling which influences the soul and gives facial and physical expressions. The whole human personality is shaped by the type of mental dispositions and inclinations which one undergoes and which are reflected principally on the face. This reflection of different types of dispositions or emotional states is a matter of common knowledge of almost everyone of us. When one gets very angry, or when one is engrossed in mournful state or when one gets emotionally thrilled by joy, the aura and the very look of his face changes and we can read his current mental state only from the features of his face. The predominance of a particular feeling or disposition — good or bad — shapes the whole human personality as well as his surrounding atmosphere and that is why we get a sense of peace and joy when we are in company of a good saint. So, in order to know the spiritual advancement of a particular person, the knowledge of the Leśyā or dispositions emanating from his personality is a good guide. Almost all Yoga-systems including Patañjala and Bauddha systems have recognised this theory of Leśyās. Leśyās are of six types according to their colour. They are —

1. मोक्षोस्तु मास्तु यदि वा परमानन्दस्तु वेद्यते स खलु ।

यस्मिन्नखिल सुखानि प्रतिभासन्ते न किञ्चिद्भिव ॥ 12/51.

**Kṛṣṇa ( Black ), Necla ( Blue ), Kapota ( Ash ), 'Pīta' or 'Tejoleśyā ( Orange-colour or like the colour of a rising sun ), Padma ( Golden-yellow ) and Śukla ( White or pure ).** First three are called bad disposition as they result from the bad intension or inclination and last three are called as good dispositions ( Leśyās ) as they result from good intension or inclination. The worst Leśyā is the black one and is suggestive of intensive emotions of different Kaṣāyas. The second is of a lesser degree and the third is of still lesser degree. These degrees are of ascending order in last three Leśyās. The highest and the best type is Śukla which is achieved by those who are in the state of Śukla Dhyāna ( last stage of meditation ).

The scriptures have explained the working of Leśyās in human life by giving the following illustration :

There were six friends who wanted to eat the fruits of a fruit tree. They went to the tree and saw that many unripe and ripe fruits were available – among ripe fruits many were hanging on the tree while many had fallen on the ground. All the six friends possessed six different types of the dispositions. The person who was possessed of Kṛṣṇa Leśyā ( black-disposition ) proposed that the best way to enjoy the fruits was to pull down the whole tree and pluck all the ripe fruits. The other one who possessed 'Necla Leśyā ( Blue disposition ) said that instead of destroying the whole tree, it would be better to cut off the main branches which possessed the fruits. The third one who possessed 'Kapota Leśyā' ( Ash disposition ) said it would be a waste to cut off the main branches and it would be better to cut off the smaller branches which held the fruits. The fourth who possessed 'Tejoleśyā' said even that would result in waste and so the better way was to cut off only the bunches of hanging fruits and to take away ripe ones from these bunches. The fifth one who had 'Padma Leśyā' said, "brother, even by that method you would be wasting away the unripe fruits and hence the best way was to pluck only the ripe fruits from the tree. It, he said, would not

matter if thereby they would be getting lesser number of ripe fruits. The last one who possessed 'Śukla Leśyā' said, "brothers, I do not agree with any of you, because I find that there are enough ripe fruits already fallen on the ground why not collect them and satisfy your hunger. Thereby we save ourselves from causing any unnecessary harm to this useful tree.

All the six friends wanted to eat the fruits but the approach of each in achieving the object was different. We notice such different approaches in life to different problems and cause many avoidable social disturbances in achieving our objects. It is obvious from the above illustration that the person who is possessed of a good Leśyā has greater patience, higher reasoning faculty and due regard to the necessity of avoiding unnecessary injury to others. The most evident illustration of the working of these Leśyās is the 'Gulf war'. It is obvious that this war is being fought for getting control over the oil bearing area of Kuwait. Iraqi rulers became impatient and become ready to 'pull down' the fruit tree and captured the whole of Kuwait by an over night armed action. Those who were interested in Kuwaiti oil moved with a little moderation in the beginning by moving the UNO and imposing sanctions. They however lost patience and began to threaten war. Others who had higher type of Leśyā advised still more moderation by considering alternatives to war. Ultimately the main contending parties could not restrain themselves and plunged the whole world into a nasty war and untold miseries to many innocent persons. These mad men of war are now in 'Raudra-dhyāna' and exhibiting 'Kṛṣṇa-leśyā'. If we keep a constant watch over the Dhyānas and the Leśyās through which we are passing in our day to day life, we acquire a type of objectivity and consciousness which would save not only ourselves but the whole society from many problems. Thus the philosophical doctrines of Jainism, as of other religious systems, have a great social content and provide an effective answer to those socially oriented thinkers

who believe that all attempts at spiritual upliftment are individualised and hence bereft of a social outlook. The basic drawback of this type of thinking is that it forgets to take into account the fundamental fact that each individual is the unit of the society and any attempt at social improvement without improving the component units, is a labour which is bound to fail. History possesses much evidence to prove this. The failures of the French and Russian revolutions, which were the creations of social thinking, are the best illustrations which prove this point.

### **Code of Conduct for Monks**

The whole moral code for a Jaina monk should be viewed from a particular angle. As monk has decided to devote himself absolutely spiritualism. The house-holders are allowed to observe the five cardinal principles of Ahimsā, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha with concessions but the monks expected to observe them very strictly.

They are also expected to have complete control over their mind and body. This is done by cultivating control over mind, called 'Manogupti' speech, called 'Vāggupti' and action called 'Kāyagupti'. The guptis protect the monk from Sin. The Ātman receives a shelter in these guptis against the mundane circle of birth and death. As Pūjyapāda<sup>1</sup> has put it "Yataḥ samsārakāraṇādātmano gopanaṁ bhavati". Manogupti means freedom from thought of passions, delusions, attachment, aversion and such other impure thoughts. Vāggupti means avoidance of talk's about women politics, theft, food, etc. and refraining from telling a lie. Kāyagupti means renunciation of such violent actions as piercing, beating, contracting, expanding etc. They are also expected to accept five types of 'Samitis' (limitations). The word Samiti coming from the root (to go) with Saṁ prefix, means vigilance in behaviour, namely, Īryā, to take care in walking so as not to hurt any-

1. "यतः संसारकारणादात्मनो गोपनं भवति", Pūjyapāda, Comments on Tattvārtha-sūtra, IX, 2.

body; Bhāṣā, to take care in speaking so as not hurt anyone; 'Eṣaṇa', to take care in accepting alms so as to receive the same in accordance with the rules prescribed for monastic order; 'Ādāna-nikṣepaṇa' and 'Utsarga' or Pratiṣṭhāpanā, both require care in taking and giving as well as in throwing away bodily refuse. The central idea of all these different types of limitations and restrictions is Ahimsā. One should not think, speak or do anything which even most remotely would involve the element of violence. The standards prescribed for monks are so much strict and rigid that to suit the modern age many adjustments are required to be made. For instance, as a rule, the Monks have to go on foot wherever they want to go. They therefore cannot use a vehicle. They also cannot use a microphone. If these limitations are rigidly followed, bulk of the society would be deprived of their contact and preaching. However, it should be remembered that these limitations are prescribed keeping in mind only one principle namely, each one of us is expected to concentrate upon his own individual emancipation and if we can successfully do it social emancipation is bound to follow.

#### **Austerities ( Tapaścarya )**

Jainas are famous for their austerities. Every year during the holy-days of 'Paryuṣaṇa' the monks and nuns as well as the house-holders perform very hard and strict austerities of various types. Many persons go on fast for months. Some take the vow of alternate fasts throughout a year. Even children and teenagers perform fasts, ranging from a day to a week, and in some cases, which are rare now a days, some persons end their life by voluntarily renouncing every thing including food and water and going into deep spiritual contemplation called 'Santhāra' or 'Samllekhanā'. Lord Mahāvīra himself carried out severest austerities of various types for long twelve years and earned the title of Mahāvīra meaning, a great warrior. His long period of severe austerities also earned him the title of a 'Dīrgha Tapasvī' ( one who has carried out hard austerities ). At the successful end of an



austerity which is undertaken, some Jainas are found to celebrate it with pomp. They give publicity to the austerities undertaken during Paryuṣaṇa holy-days and publicly honour the persons undertaking these austerities. When the Jainas give so much importance to these austerities, it is necessary to treat this subject in proper perspective.

We have already noted that the performance of penances is the process of Nirjāra when accumulated karmas are shed away by conscious efforts. One thing which is very important to note, and which is not properly understood by lay persons, is that neither Lord Mahāvīra nor any of the seers who followed him and interpreted his doctrines, has taken the doctrine of Tapaścaryā as a bare physical exercise and a matter of demonstration and publicity to the outside world. It is therefore a gross insult of Jainism to give publicity and celebrate the occasions of such penances.

The fundamental principle behind the idea of penances and austerities is the 'Bhāva', the emotional awareness, to renounce. Unless such a 'Bhāva' is there all penances and austerities are mere physical exercises having no more value than the crude exhibition of bodily power to withstand the pangs of hunger or thirst. Even though the inner aspect of penances is duly emphasized in Jainism, yet the importance of external penances is also not underrated. External austerity involves physical endurance and renunciation of something perceptible, whereas the internal austerity involves control of mind.

The penances are classified under two heads : external and internal. To put more emphasis on Bhāva, the Tīrthaṅkaras have repeatedly said that Ābhyantara Tapa is better than Bāhya. The external austerity being something physical can be pursued even by a man who is not possessed of right attitude.

Ābhyantara means the thing which emanates from within. Bāhya means 'outward'. Ācārya Hemacandra<sup>1</sup> says in his

1. निर्जराकरणे बाह्याद् श्रेष्ठं प्राभ्यन्तरं तपः ।

'Yoga-śāstra' — "Nirjarā-karaṇe bāhyāt śreṣṭham Abhyantaram tapaḥ", meaning, "for the purpose of Nirjarā Abhyantara Tapa is better than Bāhya. The great Ācārya said this because one should first improve the inner tendencies of mind and practice those austerities which grow from within one's self. Outward manifestations, unaccompanied by mental and emotional growth, amount to mere hypocrisy and cheating.

*Abhyantara Tapa* — The width and ambit of the meanings of Abhyantara and Bāhya Tapa would be clear from their categories which are described as under —

There are six categories of Abhyantara Tapa, namely, ( i ) Prāyaścitta — Atonement for the breach of a vow resulting from carelessness or negligence, ( ii ) Vinaya — Respect for the virtues such as Jñāna, Darśana and Cāritra, ( iii ) Vaiyāvṛtya — Rendering of personal and impersonal service to those who deserve, ( iv ) Svādhyāya — Study to acquire true knowledge ( v ) Vyutsarga — Discarding ego and the sense of possession and ( vi ) Dhyāna — Meditation to increase the power of concentration by making the mind, steady.

The above six categories of Abhyantara Tapa are cultivated by the mind which is inclined to learn, and to practice, the mind which has respect for the virtues and the mind which is ego-free. This condition of mind comes from the inner development only. The widest ramification of the meaning attributed to the austerities contemplated by Jainism becomes evident from the fact that even study of literature to get real knowledge and rendering of personal and material service to the deserving are treated as 'Tapa'.

*Bāhya Tapa* — Categories of Bāhya Tapa also show its wide meaning. They are six, namely :

( i ) '*Anaśana or Upavāsa*', i. e., fasting. 'Aśana' means taking food. Prefix 'An' suggests a negative. The word 'Upavāsa' has a wider meaning than a mere fasting. The prefix 'Upa' means near and 'Vāsa' means residence. Nearness suggested by the prefix 'Upa' is nearness to the self. So the wider meaning of the word 'Upavāsa' is to remain near to your

own self, to be within your own self. Not only food but all objects which are foreign to the self are to be discarded when one is performing 'Upavāsa'.

( ii ) *Īnodarī*, i. e., Eating less than one's fill. Here prefix 'Īna' is suggestive of a 'want'. The word 'Udara' means stomach. 'Īnodara' means a stomach which is not full. Normally the full quantity of food for ascetic is thirty-two morsels in the case of a monk and twenty-eight in the case of a nun. Any reduction in this quantity constitutes *Īnodarī tapa*. So even the one who remains a little hungry is supposed to perform an austerity.

( iii ) *Vṛtti-saṅkṣepa* or *Vṛtti-parisaṅkhyāna* — This type of penance is perceived for the limitations of our desire for enjoyment of different objects. Technically it means to limit the quantity of food and drink. A monk takes the vow that he will remain satisfied with the quantity of food or drink which he receives once or twice and will not try to get more. Psychologically there is no end to human desires. The ancient Greeks had a saying : "When Gods want to punish us, they grant us our desires." Lord Buddha, however, put it more pointedly, "We punish ourselves, just as we reward ourselves, by fruits of our desires." The more we desire the more we try to collect. Even if we can do comfortably well by having four suits we demp our wardrobe with twenty and the same is true about all our possessions and enjoyment of different types. This surely results in waste which, apart from being harmful to our morals, is harmful to the society also. Hence putting some sort of limitation to our desire for food and drink is necessary even if we can financially afford to do so.

( iv ) *Rasa-parityāga*, i. e., Restrictions on taste for drinks and food. *Rasa-parityāga* is connected with food. The Monk should renounce one or more of the six objects of taste, viz., milk, curd, ghee, oil, sugar and salt and also one or more of the following types of tastes : acrid, bitter, astringent, sour and sweet. The purpose of this *tapa* is emasculation of the senses subduing sleep and unobstructed pursuance of study.

( v ) *Vivikta-śayyāsana – Saṁlīnatā* — Staying at a place of solitude which would be congenial to meditation. It should not be frequented by women, eunuch, she-animals and depraved house-holders. It helps in celibacy, self-study and meditation.

( vi ) *Kāya-kleśa* — Training the body to tolerate with patience and equanimity, difficult and hard situations in life. In fact it means inflicting some pain on the body by adopting certain postures or by exposing it to the vagaries of weather just like remaining in hot sun in summer season .

To practice properly all the categories of Abhyantara and Bahya Tapa essentially requires an attitude of mind. The rigorous and hard practices of tormenting the body and physical senses is not so necessary. Even the easiest practice of not filling the stomach fully at the time of eating is a category of Bahya Tapa, if it is done to discipline the mental cravings. Lord Mahāvīra himself practiced such hard penances as a modern man would think it impossible to practice. Even so, he did not approve of the hard penances practiced by Tamali Tāpas and Purāṇa Tāpas. It was not because he thought that he was only person entitled to undergo such hard penances. The reason for his disapproval was that he firmly believed that no penance, however hard, has any value unless it is accompanied by the evolution from within. Practice of hard penances amounting to the crushing the body and physical senses was prevalent in the days of Mahāvīra. Even Lord Buddha started his spiritual journey by resorting to hard penances which reduced his body to a mere skeleton. Buddha, however, left them finding that they were not conducive to peace of mind. Buddha probably did not know the trick which his senior contemporary Mahāvīra did. It was Mahāvīra who brought real life to hard penances by insisting on the inner development. He looked at the penances as merely instruments to enable one to introspect on the self. One should get so much engrossed in the self that he forgets all that is non-self including the body and its wants. It was for this reason that hard penances came naturally to Mahāvīra.

His physical frame never decayed as a result of his penances. It is said that his physical prowess and personality were outstanding throughout his life. This could be possible because he was living only in the spirit, and could train his body to yield to his spirit. Every breath of his existence was in rhythm with the whole universe and undergoing hard penances he had a blind faith that if his physical existence was needed in the universe it would be sustained inspite of these penances.

As Pt. Sukhalāji puts it : “Bhagavāna ( Mahāvīra ) was known as a ‘Dīrgha Tapasvī’ not only because of his ‘Bāhya Tapa’ but also because he utilised his penances to develop his inner spiritual evolution.”

Thus without Abhyantara Tapa, Bāhya Tapa has no value and the Bāhya Tapa is valuable only in so far as it is helpful in developing the spiritual evolution of the inner self.

### **Sanllekhana**

This means a planned scheme of fasting and mortification. This is the process of austerity and penance undertaken to complete the process of Nirjara ( drying up of accumulated karmas ). A time comes in the life of everyone when the physical organs fail to perform their functions and the body becomes incapable of rendering any service either to the self or to the society. The physical existence itself becomes burdensome to all. This is the time to take leave of this world. A true Jaina realizes this and determines to put an end to such kind of purposeless existence. He, therefore, enters into a deep meditation at a suitable place, renounces all food and drink and puts an end to life. Some ignoramus confuse this with suicide. But suicide is the cry of frustration and despair, while this process of Sanllekhanā is the highest form of austerity which can be undertaken only by the great souls like Vinobāji.

Thus Jainism recognises mildest to the hardest forms of religious austerities as Tapa, provided they are inspired from within and are in turn helpful to develop the spiritual advancement from within.



## Chapter Thirteen

# A PATH-WAY OF LIFE

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The principles stated in the foregoing chapters are the bare outlines of The Path-way of Life which was preached by Arhats and now known as Jainism. It is wrong to call Jainism a religion. It is rather a way of thinking which shows a path of life, a life without tension, a life of positive thinking and attitude, a life of understanding, a life which is not a living death.

### Root Question

The question at the root of all questions is : whether we are living a life of realities, a life full of consciousness and intelligent awareness, or, we are aimlessly dragged on in this existence, always open to the push and pull of the outside forces having no will of our own and hankering after one object to another in search of ever-eluding happiness ? Whether we are the persons without personality, men without manliness, knowing nothing about our ownself, though pretending to know much about all that is not our own self ? In our conceit, and in our ignorance, we may put aside these pertinent questions as mere philosophical flourishes, but if we have patience to delve deep into our day to day problems, and if we genuinely try to understand their root causes, we are bound to notice that inspite of our worldly success in gathering power and pelf, we seriously lack something which leaves in the deeper recesses of our sub-conscience, a streak of unhappiness and dissatisfaction—What is the cause of all these sufferings and discontentments. We have always tried to find out their cause from outside us. We are always ready to blame others – some outside forces to explain our pleasures and pains – Jainism says this is our ignorance. It goes to the root of the problem and points out to us that we are our own friend and foe, and all

the things, good as well as bad, which we get in life, are of our own making. It admonishes us :

Appā kattā vikattā ya, duhāṇṇa ya suhāṇa ya.  
Appā mittamamittam ca, dupaṭṭhiya supaṭṭhio.<sup>1</sup>

“It is your own self which is the doer as well as enjoyer of your pleasures and pains. Your friend and foe is also your own self, engaged in good and bad activities respectively.”

### Importance of Bheda-jñāna

The concept of Bheda-jñāna involves the firm belief in the existence of soul and non-soul as the constituents of the world. A little analysis and logical approach to the constitution of the Universe can easily convince us about the existence and efficacy of the both. The Jaina approach towards the constitution of world is altogether scientific and logical. There is nothing religious or sectarian in the proposition that there are two basic constituents of this phenomenal world — Jīva and Ajīva, that is, the things which are sentient and non-sentient. If this conviction is heeded by discerning human mind, there would be little difficulty in concluding that our true self is purely a knower, the permanent conscious element which knows and motivates all our activities in life, and that the rest is only an object of our knowledge and thus foreign to us. If this is so, should I not concentrate on that which is permanent, that which is my own self? For, to devote our attention to the things which are foreign to ‘Self’ is to seek satisfaction from the objects which do not belong to us. This is bound to result in despair, dejection and tension. Jaina seers, therefore, emphasize that the realisation of the distinction between self and non-self is the first essential condition for a blissful life. This however does not mean that as house-holders we should shun all the activities of material life. In fact, all the Tīrthaṅkaras and leading Jaina-śrāvakas ( house-holders ) were success-

1. अप्पा कत्ता विकत्ता य, दुहाण य सुहाण य ।

अपपा मित्तममित्ता च, दुपट्ठिय सुपट्ठियो ॥ Samāṇa-suttam, 123.

fully engrossed in activities of life, but the key of their attainment of spiritual bliss was their awareness that real happiness resides in own self and can never be obtained through the enjoyment of worldly objects. Once such a firm conviction is developed, worldly activities and their results do not 'touch' us, and if they do not touch us, all our doubts, dejections and despairs vanish and one begins to get the taste of real happiness and bliss. Without such an awareness or conviction one easily identifies himself with worldly objects of enjoyment which are foreign to the self and transitory in their nature. The fickle character of these objects when identified with our self does bring in its train all the tensions and turmoils which affect us in our day to day existence.

So the first and foremost postulate of a happy and blissful life is the discrimination of self and non-self, and the conviction that the self's indulgence in non-self is bound to result in suffering due to the transitoriness of worldly objects as well as pleasures and pains created by them. Such a realisation and conviction would greatly reduce our usual tensions and would enable us to face the realities of life with calm and fortitude, never experienced before. We would then be no more pulled and pushed by outside factors, because the exigencies generated by these forces are not able to touch our 'self'. We, and not the outside forces, become masters of our own 'self'.

### **Practical Steps**

To give a practical shape to the above realised discrimination and conviction, the Jaina masters have prescribed some practical and workable methods to train our psyche. They have asked us to bear constantly in our mind the twelve Bhāvanās, i. e., reflection of Anityatva, Aśaraṇatva etc. as described in the chapter on 'Modus Operandi'. All these twelve Bhāvanās, i. e., reflections are the logical conclusions derived from the behavioural pattern of the human mind in its interaction with material objects of the universe. Just try any of these reflections or Bhāvanās consciously, constantly and



honestly for one month and you will find a world of difference in your attitude towards life and its problems.

Jaina insistence on austerities, daily repentance and meditations ( discussed in the chapter on Modus Operandi ) greatly helps in shaping our personality, leading to a life of peace, tranquility and contentment which are in so much demand in modern life.

### **Nivṛtti in the midst of Pravṛtti**

As we have already noted, the fundamental and basic postulate of the Sramana tradition, to which Jainism belongs, is 'Nivṛtti' ( retirement ). What is this 'Nivṛtti' ? Does it mean cessation of all activities ? Certainly not. Jainism recognises that so long as the soul is attached to Karmic forces such as body, mind and various types of passions ( Kaṣāyas ) physical activities are bound to remain. If, however, we go to the root of all these worldly activities, we find that at the root, is the psychic element of 'attachment'. Our attachment to our family, to our society, our nation, our mental pre-possessions, that is, ideologies, our attachment to worldly objects such as wealth, power, position, urge for the domination over others — all this is at the root of our activities and lend colour as well as dynamism to them. In other words, motivation is 'attachment', known as 'Bhāva Karma' in Jaina terminology ( vide chapter on 'Ethics of Responsibility' ). It is this attachment, the cause of Karmic forces which binds the soul. It follows that if this attachment is destroyed or, at least, mitigated while doing a particular worldly activity, the binding force of the Karmic bondage is either nullified or lessened. How this is achieved is shown while discussing the process of fourteen 'Gṇasthānas' and the theory of 'Kṣapaka Śreṇi' in Chapter on 'Journey to Freedom'. This is the path of 'Nivṛtti', not meaning cessation of human activities, but destruction or taming of the element of 'attachment'. This is the key of the spiritual success of all Tīrthaṅkaras and Śrāvakas who either ruled the earth or indulged in various types of household and worldly activities and this was also the key to the spiritual heights reached by

great souls like Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and King Janaka who were engaged in worldly activities all through their lives. Thus 'Nivṛtti' in the midst of 'Pravṛtti' is found to be the key to the spiritual progress.

Then the question is how this is possible ? The argument would be that Tīrthaṅkaras and the personalities like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa or Janaka were divine, and, as some say, they were 'Avatāras' and hence could adopt the attitude of 'Nivṛtti' in the midst of 'Pravṛtti'. It would, however, be difficult, one would argue, for lay persons like us to develop such an attitude of non-attachment while performing our worldly activities.

Jaina thinkers say that any such argument suffers from two basic misconceptions about the theory of Divine descent and the ultimate power and capacity of each soul to achieve the highest. We have seen in the foregoing chapters how and why the Jaina doctrine summarily and positively rejects the theory of Divine descent. According to it all Tīrthaṅkaras and other great souls like Śrī Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Janaka were human beings and achieved god-hood by their own exertions spread through many lives. The concept of attributing god-hood through Divine descent is greatly harmful to spiritual development of every soul because that does not inspire a layman to develop his own latent capacity to achieve god-hood. From this misconception of 'Divine Descent', the second misconception about the capacity of every soul to achieve the highest is generated and prevents the soul from making further progress. The Jaina thinkers, therefore, repeatedly emphasize, the idea that each soul has the potentiality to develop god-hood which Mahāvīra and others obtained. What is necessary is to realize that God-hood is not the monopoly of a few chosen individuals and it can be achieved by proper faith, knowledge and action called 'Samyag Darśana, Samyag Jñāna and Samyag Cāritra' ( vide Chapter 'Journey to Freedom' ). Once a soul realizes and is convinced that out of the duality of Jīva and Ajīva, it is Jīva which is eternal, permanent and worth pursuing, it starts treading the path of 'Sam-

yag Darśana' ( Right perspective ). This, if sincerely followed, generates in it a desire to go deep into all the live problems of life, and it enters into the field of 'Samyag Jñāna' ( Right knowledge ), and the development of this second stage, if properly directed, is bound to take him to the third stage of 'Samyag Cāritra' ( Right conduct ). This 'Ratna-trayi' ( three jewels ) of Darśana, Jñāna and Cāritra, is the starting point of spiritual journey which, with proper efforts leads the soul to ascend the ladder of 'Guṇa-sthānas'.

#### **All-pervasive doctrine of Ahimsā**

The doctrine of Ahimsā to be practised in mind, speech and action is yet another factor of practical utility in soothing, softening and harmonising the international, national and individual relationship. The Jaina thinkers have touched the new heights of philosophical refinement by introducing the doctrine of Ahimsā even in the process of thinking. Their evolution of the theories of Naya and Syādvāda, is an attempt to recognise even the partial truth, wherever evident, so that reality can be comprehended in its fullest possible extent. Adoption of this method of establishing truth positively leads to the development of toleration of every view-point however contrary it may be to the current and traditional view. If the theories of Naya and Syādvāda are extended to every sphere of human activity, individual and social life on this planet would be revolutionised completely. Softness and love are the qualities of heart which are developed by the practice of Ahimsā ( non-violence ). All hatred and cruelty automatically stop once these qualities are developed and applied.

The doctrine of Ahimsā is the natural corollary of the Jaina view which regards universe as one integrated cosmic mechanism wherein the continuing consciousness of even a microscopic atom has a recognised role to play. Vegetarianism of Jains is thus a rational recognition of the universal scheme of life and its development.

#### **Importance of Celibacy**

It seems that it was Mahāvīra who first developed the

concept of celibacy in the ethical life of spiritual seekers in India. Caturyāma of Pārśva, the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara, was found by him quite deficient, which included celibacy within the concept of Aparigraha ( limitation of possession ), and the Vedic Ṛṣis had not extended their concept of Brahmacharya ( movement in Brahma, the cosmic soul ) to comprehend even celibacy, as all of them were married persons and even their concept of Viṣṇu, the universal Lord, was not devoid of a consort. It is of course true that celibacy was not unknown to the spiritual seekers in India before the advent of Mahāvīra, but its place in spiritual development of the soul was systematically recognised for the first time by Mahāvīra. Ethical justification of celibacy does not lie only in saving millions of Spermatozoa, as some Jainas, in their simplicity, believe, but it lies in restraining excessive emotional outburst, having a violent passion to possess which results invariably in attachments and aversions of various types, as also in total waste of energy which can be utilised for achieving great spiritual heights. The Jaina insistence on celibacy, therefore, helps one to develop his personality and manliness.

### **Relevance to Modern Times**

Thus the Jaina doctrines are the doctrines, helpful to any one in living a vibrant and purposeful life, conducive to the development of social, ethical and national as well international harmony. As they are based on scientific analysis of universal components and human psychology, their appeal is universal and confined only to logic and reasoning, containing nothing sectarian. It is a process of thinking and a way of life which are as much relevant today as they were two thousand five hundred years ago in times of Mahāvīra.



# APPENDIX – A

## Political Map in Times of Mahavira



## APPENDIX - B

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### Thinkers Outside India in Times of Mahavira<sup>1</sup>

Jaina ideas are confined, in modern times, to India. But that does not seem to be the position in the past. As we have already noted, 6th Century B. C. was the period of great intellectual fervor in Greece and countries of Middle East, China and India. These countries did not remain entirely isolated. Even before the dawn of history the Indus valley culture of India was closely connected with the contemporary cultures in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor. The commercial links between the mouth of Indus and Persian Gulf was continuing even in times of Mahavira. As early as 975 B. C. Phoenicians provided link between Mediterranean and Indian cultures.

In about 510 B. C. Darius is said to have sent a Greek mercenary named Seylax to the mouth of Indus.

Herodotus ( 484 B. C. ) who flourished round about the time of Mahāvīra gives some details about the two races of India — one dark aboriginals and the other fair looking Aryans. He also makes a reference to a religious sect in India which ate nothing which had life and lived on grains. This is a likely reference to Jainas.

In 580 B. C. Pythagoras was born. He seems to have been deeply influenced by Jaina doctrines of Lord Pārśva. H. G. Rawlinson notes in his Essay on Early contacts between India and Europe as under :

“The most startling of the theories of Pythagoras was that of the transmigration of the soul from body to body.... Almost all the theories religious, philosophical and mathe-

1. These facts are noted to show how in Mahāvīra times the ideas of Jainism and Buddhism were shared by other world thinkers.

matical, thought by the Pythagoreans, were known in India in 6th cent. B. C. and the Pythagoreans, like Jainas and Buddhists, refrained from the destruction of life and eating meat, and regarded, certain vegetables, such as beans, as baboo."

He further records in the same essay :

"The theory of metempsychosis plays almost as great a part in Greek as in Indian religious thought. Both Pythagoras and Empedocles claimed to possess power of recollecting their past births. Metempsychosis is referred to in the many passages in Pindar and with the contemporary doctrine of Karma, it is the key-stone of the philosophy of Plato. The soul is ever travelling through a 'Cycle of necessity'.

About the Greek philosopher Empedocles, he records :

"Empedocles, besides believing in transmigration, held a number of tenets which are curiously like those of Kapila, the author of Sāṅkhya-system. Empedocles looks on matter as consisting of four elements, earth, water, air and fire acted upon by the motive forces of love and hate."<sup>1</sup>

During this time China witnessed the ideological impact of two great personalities of the world, namely Lao-tse and Confucius ( born 551 B. C. ).

Lao-tse's teaching was very much similar to that of Mahāvīra 'The wisest thing in life', he says, "...is never to get one self involved in anything."

His philosophy was, "All things in nature do their work quietly. They become nothing and they possess nothing. They fulfil their purpose and they crave nothing. All things accomplish their ends; then we see them recede again. When they have reached their prime they return to their source. This withdrawal is peace and fulfilment of destiny. This ebb and flow is an eternal law. To know that law is wisdom."

This, indeed, sounds very much like the sayings of Buddha.



1. Cultural History of India, Clarendon Press ( Oxford ).

## APPENDIX – C

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### Ājivika Philosophy

The Ājivika cult was established by Gośāla — Mahāvīra's once pupil but subsequent rival. Gośāla had many followers in the times of Mahāvīra and Buddha and even subsequently for hundreds of years. It vanished in the north but sustained for many more years in the south.

It has however totally vanished from the surface of the earth as a distinct cult though its principles do survive in modified form. We have not got any direct evidence about its principles and whatever material we get, is obtained from what the rival religious systems of Jainism and Buddhism have said about it. Though these materials, being the materials supplied by rivals, may be taken to be tendentious and prejudicial, there cannot be any doubt about the fundamental and basic concepts of the Ājivika cult.

Mr. A. L. Basham has rendered a very great service in compiling all available materials regarding this cult in his book "History and Doctrines of Ājivikas" ( a vanished Indian religion ). This book was published by Motilal Benarasidas, Varanasi.

Dr. Zimmer, the well known Indologist, explains the etymological meaning of the word 'Ājivika' as meaning "As long as the life monad has not completed the normal course of evolution."<sup>1</sup> The word 'Jīva' means life monad. The prefix 'A' signifies 'as long as'. Reading the whole, 'Ājīva' means 'so long as the life monad lasts'. This interpretation of Dr. Zimmer fits in with Gośāla's doctrine of absolute determinism called 'Niyati', because according to him, every life has to go through a fixed number of inevitable births before getting final realiza-

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1. Philosophies of India, p. 264.



tion. This natural biological advance is predetermined and cannot be accelerated by means of efforts like practising virtues and asceticism or undertaking penances, nor can this be retarded by developing vices. Thus, according to this theory, there is no place in our lives for human efforts. The theory of Karma is thus rendered irrelevant. According to this theory, after the series of 84 thousand existences every 'Jīva' gets release which comes by itself just as everything else happens by itself.

In his above referred book Mr. Basham, the learned author, treats the Buddhist scripture 'Sāmañña-phala-sutta' as the basic source which throws light on the Ājīvika doctrine of 'Niyati' as preached by Gośāla, as under :

“There is neither cause nor basis for sins of living beings; they become sinful without cause or basis. Neither is there cause or basis for the purity of living beings. They become pure without cause or basis. ...no human action, no strength, no courage, no human endurance or human power ( which can affect one's destiny in this life ). All beings, all that have breath, all that are born, all that have life, are without power, strength or virtue, but are developed by destiny, chance and nature, and experience joy and sorrow in six classes ( of existence ).<sup>1</sup>

There is no question of bringing unripe karma to fruition, nor of exhausting karma already ripened, by virtuous conduct, by vows, by penance or by chastity..... Just as a ball of thread will, when thrown, unwind to its full length, so “fool and wise alike will take their course and make an end of sorrow.”<sup>2</sup>

The above is an acknowledged summary of the Ājīvika doctrine. This doctrine makes serious departure from the Jaina doctrines on the following points :

( 1 ) There is no place of human efforts in shaping ones

1. History and Doctrines of Ājīvikas, pp. 13-14.
2. Ibid, p. 14.

destiny because everything is pre-determined.

( 2 ) As a corollary, the theory of karma on which the whole structure of Jainism is based becomes irrelevant.

( 3 ) Each Jīva is an involuntary victim of his own destiny and hence should not care for developing virtues or avoiding vices. If there is social disorder resulting from this attitude, it should be taken as predetermined and even if there is human effort to develop virtues and avoid vices, that also should be taken as pre-determined.

( 4 ) Principles of Saṁvara ( stopping the inflow of karmas ) and Nirjarā ( shedding of accumulated karmas ) are useless as both the processes are pre-determined.

( 5 ) Fundamental human feelings and emotions are useless as every Jīva has to suffer its own course and nobody can be helpful in changing that course.

( 6 ) All knowledge and inquisitiveness are useless as the whole universe is bound to progress or regress in accordance with its predestined course.

( 7 ) Best way to get happiness is to enjoy, to eat, to drink, to dance and to make yourself merry without taking any problem of life seriously.

Any such doctrine was bound to fail, as it has, in fact, failed very miserably. Lord Buddha compared this doctrine to a hempen garment ( Aṅguttara Nikāya ). Both the Jainas and the Buddhists have vehemently protested against the mechanistic inflexibility of this doctrine. Obviously the doctrine demands human resignation to a previously determined course without any compensation and affords no answer as to who determined the course and why ? The answer that the whole scheme is self evolving is no answer or solace to a seeking soul who is in search of peace. The doctrine of Karma has destroyed the concept of an omniscient and all determining God, but has given a substitute for God by evolving the theory of cause and effect coupled with the authorship of the self for all karmas. The Ājīvika doctrine also destroys the concept of

God without giving any rational substitute.

Moreover, it is an acknowledged position that Ājīvikas were believing in severe penances. But no explanation is found to explain for what purpose they were undertaking penances if human efforts and karmas were irrelevant. In fact, Mahāvīra himself posed such questions to Saddālaputta, a very prominent potter and a rich disciple of Gośāla. Mr. Basham<sup>1</sup> records this incident as under :

“Mahāvīra asks ( Saddālaputta ) whether the pots were made by dint of exertion or not, to which the Ājīvika replies that it is made without exertion. Mahāvīra then asks what Saddālaputta would do, if one of his workmen stole or broke his pots, or made overtures to his wife. To this the potter indignantly replies that he would beat and strike the culprit or even kill him. But such actions, Mahāvīra retorts, would be quite inconsistent with the doctrine of Niyati and of no exertion. If all the things are unalterably fixed and there is no exertion, no man can steal or break the pots and the potter cannot revile or strike or kill the culprit. Yet such things do happen in every day life, and so the claim that there is no exertion and that all things are determined is false.”

The only reply which Saddālaputta could have given was that even his reaction of reviling the culprit was governed by Niyati. If this was the reply ( which is practically the same as suggested by Shri Basham ) it would follow that if every little things in life is governed by Niyati and if you do not know what is in store of Niyati why should you bother about Niyati at all? You may better go on exerting in the best possible manner or reap the real results. This would be the reality and if one has to choose between the reality of life and an abstract doctrine of Niyati the contents of which are unknown, one should better choose the former.

However, the Jaiuas, who are ready to take into account all the different aspects of a theory by application of their

**1. History and Doctrines of Ājīvikas, p. 229.**

doctrine of Nayavāda, have given a partial recognition to the idea of Niyati in their theory of karma and also by recognising the fact that certain natural phenomena do occur only at a determined time. So far as our past karmas are concerned the fruits thereof have to be borne by us. But here also the Jaina thinkers have devised a way out by their doctrine of Nirjarā. It says that you can shed your accumulated past karmas by voluntarily undertaking penances, which is known as 'Sakāma Nirjarā'. This, the Master did by undertaking severe austerities for twelve years. However, the theory does recognize the existence of some karmas the effect of which cannot be wiped out even by severe penances. The fruits of such karmas have to be borne. This is a partial recognition of Niyati. But once we recognise the potency of human exertions, it inevitably follows that so far as our future is concerned it is entirely in our own hands. We can always resort to the process of 'Sañvara' and prevent the new flow of karmas, and improve our future. In other words our future 'Niyati' is in our own hands.

There are of course certain natural phenomena which occur only when their time is ripe but here also science has proved that there is some scope of changing their pattern as well as the time of happening.

In short, the Niyati principle as propounded by the Ājivikas could not have proved socially or individually useful and carried to its logical conclusions, it was nothing but a new version of the theory propounded by Carvaka.

## APPENDIX - D

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### Sāṅkhya System

Sāṅkhya is considered to be the earliest Indian attempt at systematic philosophy. It does not believe in the existence of any entity, such as God, as the creator of universe as also its sustainer. Since its metaphysics has many points in common with the Śramaṇa-tradition it is generally recognised as advocating the Śramaṇa-tradition of Indian philosophy.

It has two principal schools — One atheistic and the other theistic. The Atheistic school is associated with the name of its supposed founder 'Kapila' (over 6th century B. C.) while the Theistic school which has brought the concept of God, is associated with the name of great Patañjali (middle of 2nd century B. C.). The latter accepts the metaphysical analysis of the former but introduces the doctrine of Godhood and the practice of Yoga as a process to realize 'Kaivalya' and final liberation. Both the systems are now clubbed together and known as Sāṅkhya-Yoga. While the philosophical framework of Sāṅkhya is greatly similar to Jaina metaphysics, the discipline of Yoga is largely accepted by all philosophical schools in India including Jainism.

#### Sage Kapila

Richard Garbe, the foreign scholar who has specialised in the Sāṅkhya system, observes that Sāṅkhya is the most significant system of philosophy that India has produced (vide his 'Sāṅkhya-pravacana-bhāṣya', p. XIV). Sage Kapila who is the original thinker of this system flourished much before Mahāvīra or Buddha. His reference is found in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad. Even Gītā<sup>1</sup> lauds Kapila as the foremost among the 'Siddhas', i. e., those who are totally liberated by referring to him as, 'Siddhānām Kapilo Muñiḥ'.

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1. सिद्धानाम् कपिलो मुनिः ।

That he belonged to Sramaṇa-tradition is also clear by a reference to him in 'Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra' which says that Kapila was an Asura, Prahlāda's son, who instituted the life of renunciation or Saṁnyāsa. He is said to have converted a Brahmin named Āsurī to renounce the traditional cult of sacrifices to become an ascetic. It is believed that Āsurī was his first disciple. Jaina tradition says, without any support of historical data, that Kapila was one of the pupils of the grandson of the first Tirthaṅkara Ṛṣabha.

Prof. Zimmer<sup>1</sup>, the well known German Indologist notes about Sāṅkhya-Yoga as under :

“The two ideologies are of different origins. Sāṅkhya and Yoga being related to the mechanical system of Jainas which can be traced back in a partly historical and partly legendary way, through long series of Tirthaṅkaras, to a remote, aboriginal non-Vedic antiquity. The fundamental ideas of Sāṅkhya and Yoga must be therefore immensely old and yet they do not appear in any orthodox Indian texts until comparatively late – specifically in the younger stratifications of Upaniṣadas, and Bhagavad-gītā where they are already blended and harmonized with the fundamental ideas of Vedic philosophy.”

Thus, it can be safely concluded that Kapila the founder of Sāṅkhya stands beyond the traditional assembly of Vedic saints and belonged to Sramaṇa-tradition of Indian thought. It is believed that the village 'Kapilavastu', where the Lord Buddha was born, bears its name due to its association with this sage of Sāṅkhya.

### **Basic Conceptions**

The main and basic conceptions of Sāṅkhya-Yoga system can be stated as under :

( 1 ) This universe is founded on the dichotomy of 'Puruṣa', a purely conscious and sentient principle, and 'Prakṛti' a lifeless matter possessing an inherent power of evolution.

1. Philosophies of India, p. 281.

( 2 ) The extra-ordinary physical and psychical phenomenal varieties found in the universe is the result of vibratory motion and interplay of the three 'Guṇas', i. e., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, which are the three constituents of 'Prakṛti', though the fundamental and original nature of this 'Prakṛti' is to establish complete equilibrium of these three 'Guṇas'.

( 3 ) 'Puruṣa' and 'Prakṛti' are both without beginning or end and both are ever lasting.

( 4 ) 'Puruṣa' is all pervading, infinite, without activity and changeless. All the phenomenal changes are due to the interplay of the three Guṇas of 'Prakṛti'. Though Prakṛti, undergoes changes for the enjoyment of 'Puruṣa', the 'Puruṣa' remains uninvolved. It is 'Kūṭastha' which literally means 'at the top or summit'.

( 5 ) By association with the changing aspects of 'Prakṛti', the 'Puruṣa', which is immanent in every individual, thinks that he is involved in the changes. This thinking is its bondage. This is the result of 'Avidyā', i. e., ignorance, which results in endless round of transmigration.

( 6 ) This 'Avidyā' is due to the turbulent and distracted condition of mind. But when this ignorance is removed by the training of mind by the process of Yoga, the 'Puruṣa' becomes absolutely isolated and attains 'Kaivalya'.

( 7 ) Spontaneous activity of the mind can be stilled and put to rest by :

( a ) Right notions derived from accurate valid knowledge ( Pramāṇa ).

( b ) Elimination of erroneous notions derived from misapprehensions ( Viparyaya ).

( c ) Elimination of Fantasies ( Vikalpa ).

( d ) Suppression of Sleep ( Nidrā ).

( e ) Suppression of Memory ( Smṛti ).

If these five things are achieved, mental activities of emotional character disappear and mind becomes still.

( 8 ) When mind becomes still and gains equilibrium, 'Puruṣa' realizes its real nature and status just like a king's son who being unknown about the origin of his birth was believing himself to be a poor beggar, immediately gained self confidence the moment it was revealed that he was the son of a king and entitled to rule.

### Ontology of Sāṅkhya

We may shortly consider how Sāṅkhya metaphysics works. *Prakṛti, the basis of unified universe* — The first postulate of Sāṅkhya philosophy is that all objects and experiences of the phenomenal world possess an element of continuity. No part of universe can exist independently of the other with the result that there is unbroken continuity from the lowest inorganic form to the highest organic form. This element of continuity can be inferred from certain common characteristics such as capacity to cause pleasure and pain, hopes and dispairs and such other effects from the enjoyment of the material objects of this universe. If all worldly objects are capable of producing these common effects, it would be easy to trace a common cause because every effect is the result of a prior cause. Cause is an unspecialized state of a specialized effect and inheres in every effect. The 'causal reality' which we can trace from various specialized effects having common characteristics as stated above, is nothing but 'Prakṛti', which is the common cause of all effects. It is this 'Prakṛti' which eventually manifests in the phenomenal world. The reality of 'Prakṛti' can thus be established only by 'Anumāna', i. e., inference and that is why it is considered invisible and inexpressible, i. e., 'Avyaktam'.

*Two States of Prakṛti* — The Prakṛti which is thus the original cause of all the activities of this universe has two states, namely — 1. Quiescent, i. e., dormant state which is the state of equilibrium called 'Sāmya' and 2. Emergent state which is the state of instability, called 'Vaiṣāmya'. This is the state of clash as well as co-operation.



### **Cause of these States**

**Prakṛti** is constituted of three **Guṇas** namely, 'Sattva, Rajas and Tamas'. These are the three inherent constituents which make up 'Prakṛti'. 'Prakṛti' is described as 'a string of three strands'. These three strands are these three 'Guṇas'. These 'Guṇas' are continually changing but so long as there is equilibrium, this change does not produce any objective result. The state of this equilibrium is the first and original state of 'Prakṛti'.

However, if there is a disturbance in the equilibrium which is known as '**Guṇakṣobha**', the objective results are obtained as per preponderance of a particular **Guṇa**. None of the 'Guṇas' loses its power when one of them is predominant. As put by **Tattva-kaumudi** (13-16) — "All change relates to the position, order, grouping, mixing, separation of the eternally existing essentials which are always integrating and disintegrating."

Like '**Prakṛti**' even its constituents, i. e., the **Guṇas** can be inferred from their effects. They work like power which helps in the development of '**Prakṛti**'.

### **Meaning of 'Guṇas'**

**Sattva Guṇa** — The word 'Sattva' has its etymological root in the word 'Sat' which means 'to be'. So 'Sattva' means that which exists. In the secondary sense it means perfection which produces happiness. In the state of equilibrium 'Sat' predominates.

**Rajas Guṇa** — This **Guṇa** is the source of activity, feverish enjoyment and restless effort which eventually produces pain. When it predominates, equilibrium is disturbed and activity starts.

**Tamas Guṇa** — This **Guṇa** brings in the state of darkness caused by ignorance and sloth which produces apathy and unawareness.

**Prakṛti** in every individual expresses physical and mental changes in accordance with the preponderance of one of the

three Guṇas. But since other Guṇas are never obliterated, they can be activated to achieve the desired change in the prevalent situation.

### Evolution

We have seen that 'Prakṛti' is the common and root cause of every evolution. In its pure form it is general, but by the process of evolution it becomes individualized. What is this process ?

*Buddhi* — We have seen that the interplay of Guṇas is the starting point of evolution. The first and also the fundamental product of this evolution is the formation of 'Mahat' or 'Buddhi' (intellect). It is called 'Mahat' (meaning great) because it is the mother of further evolution of 'Ahaṅkāra', i. e., egoity or self-sense which becomes the basis of individualization.

Like all products of 'Prakṛti' even the 'Ahaṅkāra' has the same three Guṇas. Its Sāttvika aspect, in its 'Vaikārika' state evolves mind or 'Manas', five organs of perception and five of action. From its Tamasika aspect it evolves five 'Tanmātrās' such as sound, touch, colour, taste and smell which in their turn evolve into Ākaśa ( ether ), Vāyu ( wind ), Tejas ( fire ), Āpa ( water ) and Pṛthvī ( earth ), which are known as 'Pañca-mahābhūta'.

This process of evolution shows that the first evolute Buddhi is of the most generalized character and it has everything as its possible object. But when other Guṇas show more prominence, the second evolute of egoity is generated. Thus Prakṛti descends from general to individual having its individual mind and sense-organs. Further development of every individual thereafter depends upon the development of a particular Guṇa. Pleasures and pains which ego experiences thus depend upon the development of Guṇas.

### 'Puruṣa' and proof of its existence

But the question is, where is the place of 'Puruṣa' in all

this evolution of 'Prakṛti' and what role it plays. Other question is what is the proof of its existence.

All organic things have life in them, which is known as 'soul'. It is pure consciousness. According to Sāṅkhya, the evolution of Prakṛti is the self evolution caused by the interplay of its three Guṇas, though Prakṛti has no consciousness of its own. But onething must be noted that this evolution can not take place without the presence of Puruṣa.

Sāṅkhya philosophers attribute this consciousness to 'Puruṣa' which is known as 'Ātman' or 'Jiva' in other systems. According to Sāṅkhya, the existence of this 'Puruṣa' can be established as under :

( 1 ) This aggregate of physical objects evolved by Prakṛti must exist for the sake of something else just as a bed which is the assemblage of different parts is meant for the use of some one else to sleep.

( 2 ) If three Guṇas exist in all the objects of Prakṛti, there must be an observer who can evaluate the Guṇas.

( 3 ) If Guṇas have their interplay there must be some co-ordinator of this play.

( 4 ) Human life has a longing for liberation from pains of existence and so there must be some conscious principle which longs for liberation.

It is apparent that these arguments are teleological in as much as they seek to establish the doctrine of final cause by trying to show that developments are due to the purpose or design that is sought to be fulfilled by them.

### **Bondage and Liberation**

'Puruṣa' as the 'self' is a pure soul quite different from body which is an evolute of 'Prakṛti'. As the real character of 'Puruṣa' is consciousness, it helps to bring the products of evolutionary chain into self-consciousness. It illuminates the whole sphere of thought and feeling. 'Puruṣa' is self-luminous by nature. It is therefore called 'Sadāprakāśa Svarūpa'.

Prakṛti and its products are not self-manifested but depend for their manifestation on the light of Puruṣa. Pleasure and pain which we experience really belong to Buddhi. ‘Puruṣa’ is unrelated to Prakṛti. It is a mere witness, a passive spectator. All this is consistent with the Sāṅkhya view that ‘Puruṣa’ is ‘Kūṣastha’.

Then the problem is how this mere witness and a passive spectator which the Puruṣa is, comes to be bounded by karmas. This is a paradoxical situation the solution of which, as offered by Sāṅkhya, has not satisfied many philosophers.

Shri S. Radhakrishnan<sup>1</sup> explains this problem as under :

“Vijñānabhikṣu says that ‘Puruṣa’ with Ahaṅkāra is the ‘Jīva’, and not ‘Puruṣa’ in itself. While the pure self remains beyond Buddhi, the reflection of Puruṣa in Buddhi appears as the ego, the cogniser of all our states, pleasures and pains included. We have the notion of self in Buddhi when we do not know that the self is beyond Buddhi and different from it in character and knowledge.” The learned author<sup>2</sup> further writes :

“Activity belongs to the Buddhi, one of the products of Prakṛti, nevertheless, on account of its union with Puruṣa, the indifferent Puruṣa appears as an actor. Actual agency belongs to ‘Antaḥ-karaṇa’ or the inner organ, which is lighted up by Puruṣa. The unconscious ‘Antaḥ-karaṇa’ cannot by itself be an agent, but is invested with consciousness..... Prakṛti acts and Puruṣa enjoys the fruit of action. Happiness and misery belong to the modes of Prakṛti and Puruṣa is said to be experiencing them through its ignorance.....Puruṣa passively observing the working of Prakṛti, forgets its true nature, and is deluded into belief that it thinks, feels and acts. It identifies itself with a particular finite form of existence, animal body, and is thus shut out from the true life.....When Prakṛti acts, the Puruṣa experiences the fruits, since the acti-

1. Radhakrishnan, S. : Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 283.

2. Ibid, pp. 285-286.

vity of Prakṛti is intended for the experience of Puruṣa. Strictly speaking, even this experiencing is due to 'Abhimāna' ( sense of self-hood ), born of 'Aviveka' ( non-discrimination ). When the truth is known, there is neither pleasure nor pain neither agency nor enjoyment."

It is clear from these observations which are based on different texts on Sāṅkhya, that the 'Kūṣastha' Puruṣa which is all knowledge and consciousness, forgets its own nature and is deluded into the belief that it is he who thinks, feels and acts. Puruṣa thus becomes bound due to its ignorance and once it is removed it attains its true and original character. However it is not clear why a 'Kūṣastha' Puruṣa who is all knowledge and consciousness becomes deluded and ignorant and thus becomes bound by karmas.

Prof. Satkari Mookerjee of Calcutta University makes a more pertinent point in his article on 'Sāṅkhya-Yoga', when he observes as under on the question of bondage and emancipation :

"The bondage of the self is reflected by its identification with the Buddhi and the egoity. And this identification is due to the reflection of the pure spirit in the Buddhi and the consequent failure on the part of the spirit to distinguish itself from the former. This non-discrimination results in the identification of the two which further and further leads to the identification of the pure self with the successive series of evolutes... .. The emancipation is achieved by the discriminative knowledge that the self is entirely different from and unaffected by the not-self..... For this, a long course of ethical discipline is necessary. The first essential condition is the abandonment of attachment to the attractive things of the world — honour, wealth, position and power. The practice of Yogic discipline is recommended for this purpose. It enables the spirit to recover its sense of freedom."<sup>1</sup>

1. History of Philosophy : Eastern and Western, Published by Government of India, p. 251.

These observations come very much near the Jaina belief that though the real nature of 'Jīva' ( Ātman ) is pure knowledge and indifference it does not remain 'Kūṭastha' ( indifferent ) and is found to be in association with 'Ajīva' ( 'Prakṛti' in terms of Sāṅkhya ). is bound by karmic Pudgalas from time immemorial, and attains its own 'Svarūpa' by the process of 'Saṁvara' and 'Nirjarā'.

It should be noted here that even according to Sāṅkhya-Yoga there are five types of impairments or hindrances called 'Kleśa' which restrict the manifestation of one's true nature. Patañjali's Yoga shows a technique to get rid of these impairments, which are as under —

Avidyā – Nescience or ignorance.

Asmitā – Ego-centric attitude.

Rāga – Attachment.

Dveṣa – Hatred.

Abhiniveśa – Clinging to life.

The only thing which is required to be done, according to Sāṅkhya-Yoga, is the removal of these impairments.

This comes very near to the Jaina belief that Jīva is clouded by different karmas and if we are able to remove them by the process of 'Saṁvara' and 'Nirjarā', Jīva gets its original pristine purity which is 'Kaivalya'.

The above summary of the Sāṅkhya philosophy reveals fundamental points in common with the Jaina philosophic thinking. These common points can be shortly stated as under :

( 1 ) The whole universe can be mainly classified into self ( Jīva : Puruṣa ) and non-self ( Ajīva : Prakṛti ).

( 2 ) Characteristics of 'Jīva' of Jainism and the 'Puruṣa' of Sāṅkhya are exactly the same and most of the characteristics of 'Ajīva' and 'Prakṛti' are also the same. Sāṅkhya's 'Guṇas' which result in Prakṛti's evolution are the 'Karmas' of Jainism.

( 3 ) The theory of cause and effect is practically the same in the thinking of both.

( 4 ) Belief in the plurality of Souls is also the same in both.

( 5 ) Both reject the idea of some supreme power outside one self as creative, regulatory and deciding our destiny.

( 6 ) Unlike the 'Advaitins' both treat Prakṛti or Ajīva as real and not a mere production of Māyā.

( 7 ) We have already noted how the Yoga-system comes very near to Jaina system when it talks about the removal of impairments which do not allow the Puruṣa to gain its original self.

The only difference between Sāṅkhya and the Jaina thinking is about the part played by Ātman in his play with Prakṛti ( Ajīva of the Jainas ). While the Jainas believe that Jīva and Ajīva are combined from time immemorial and the Jīva is 'Kartā' ( Doer ) as well as 'Bhoktā' ( Enjoyer ) of the karmas and their fruits, the Sāṅkhya believes that Puruṣa is 'Kūṣastha' and remains totally unaffected by the play of Prakṛti. However, being in company of the various evolutes of Prakṛti, it begins to identify itself with them out of sheer ignorance. If this is so, one would find little or no difference between the two systems even on the question of the part played by Jīva of Jainas and Puruṣa of Sāṅkhya in their relationship with Ajīva or Prakṛti.

Jainas almost recognise the 'Kūṣastha' nature of Jīva when they say that the intrinsic nature of Jīva is pure consciousness ( Jñātā : knowership ) and ( Dṛaṣṭā : seership ) and applying their system of Nayavāda, they say that from the view point of 'Niścaya' ( Real point of view ) the Jīvas character remains untouched by the karmas which cloud Jīva's luminosity just as the clouds in the sky conceal the luminosity of the sun. However from the practical stand point 'Vyavahāra', the Jīva is 'Kartā' ( Doer ) as well as 'Bhoktā' ( Enjoyer ).

It seems that both the systems want to convey the same principle by different methods.



## APPENDIX - E

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### Buddhism

Buddhism belongs to the Śramaṇa-tradition of Indian thought as distinguished from Vedic tradition. Like Jainism it has taken birth at that time which was surcharged with the fever of spiritual renaissance. When Buddha was born, the foundations of Vedic rituals were already shaken by some of the great Ṛṣis of Upaniṣadas, and of late, by his contemporary Mahāvīra. Emphasis was given on self exertion by undergoing strict spiritual discipline and rigorous austerities. During the early days of his spiritual experimentation, Buddha also took to severe austerities and determined to seek truth through austerities when he said to himself, “Ihāṣane śuṣyatu me śarīraṃ”<sup>1</sup> ( Let my body be dried up in this seat but I will not get up till I get enlightenment ).

However, unlike Mahāvīra, severe austerities did not help Buddha. He relented and adopted a middle course and found solace. He tried almost every path, which was prevalent in his times, in search of truth, but failed. Finally he chalked out his own path which was absolutely rational and logical. He refused to go into the fogs of misty metaphysics and directly touched ethics and psychology of human affairs. Like Mahāvīra he also propounded a religion which was independent of dogmas and priesthood, sacrifices and sacraments and insisted on an inward change of heart. His persistent refusal to delve into the mysteries of life, made his approach more direct and explicit both to the common men and the intellectuals of his times and earned him greater following in India and abroad. However, this very factor proved responsible for introducing varied and very often contradictory interpretations of what he said and preached, with the result that the

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1. इहासने शुष्यतु मे शरीरम् ।



Buddhism, which we see today, seems to have practically nothing in common with what the Master is supposed to have originally taught. In the second century after Buddha not less than eighteen schools of Buddhistic doctrines can be traced. We shall therefore confine our attention only to leading basic principles of early Buddhism.

### **Sufferings of Life**

The starting point of Buddhist philosophy is the suffering in life. In fact Buddha's spiritual journey started, when he saw that human life is full of suffering at every stage. He, as a prince, was rolling in luxury and was guardedly kept away from experiencing the miseries of human sufferings. But when once he was out on the roads of his town 'Kapilavastu' he saw an old man bowed down by age, a sick man scorched by fever, and a corpse carried and followed by mourning relatives, a serious conflict started in his mind which awakened his consciousness. As he found that there was suffering at every stage of life and if that was so, there must be some way out of it. Then he also saw an ascetic, a medicant, who had renounced the world, and who appeared to have attained an equanimity which was rarely to be found amongst those, who engrossed in the sensual objects of life. There he found a possible answer to the inner turmoil which was going within. Realizing the emptiness of things of senses, he renounced the world, stealthily leaving his sleeping wife and little child in bed. Thus the sight of human suffering was the starting point of his spiritual explorations and the same became the starting point of his philosophical expositions.

### **Four Arya-Satyas**

He came to the conclusion that there are four basic truths of life. They are —

- ( 1 ) There is suffering — 'Duḥkha'.
- ( 2 ) Every suffering has a cause — 'Duḥkha-Samudaya'.
- ( 3 ) It is possible to overcome this suffering — 'Duḥkha-Nirodha'.

( 4 ) There is a way to overcome sufferings — Duḥkha-Nirodha-Mārga.

He said, unless we fully comprehend these four basic realities which he called 'Ārya-satya', there is no way to achieve peace or happiness in life.

He, thus, directly touched the pulse of this sick universe. Unlike Mahāvīra, he did not attempt to explain the mysteries of universal phenomena, namely, who created the universe, what are the basic elements constituting the universe, is there any divine force which controls our lives and all happenings around us, what happens when we die etc. He flatly refused to answer these questions saying that they are 'Avyākṛta', that is, those which serve no purpose in asking or answering. To a questioner of such questions his reply was straight. He asked his questioner that if somebody thrust a poisoned arrow in his chest, would he wait first to ascertain who smeared the arrow with poison and what kind of poison it was, or would he like at once to be treated by some effective medicine by a good doctor ? The answer provided by the Master by such a direct counter question was indeed very effective. First concern of every sick man is to get relieved of his sickness. If we find that the life is full of sufferings, our first concern should be to acknowledge that fact and to try to find out proper means to remove these sufferings. Buddha believed that salvation of soul which results in the end of all sufferings does not depend upon the minute distinctions of metaphysics and refinement of reason.

Even Mahāvīra proclaimed that this Samsāra is full of sufferings ( Aho dukkho hu samsāro<sup>1</sup> ). But he preferred to go deep into the matter and explained the cause of sufferings in context of the universal scheme. He, therefore, analysed the constituents of the universe, ascertained their character as well as functioning and tried to reveal the whole process

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1. अहो दुक्खो हु संसारो ।

which shapes the universal phenomena. This necessarily takes one to the field of metaphysics, where mere reason and logic may not prove sufficient to explain all the happenings. Buddha knew this, and he also knew that it was not of much practical use to involve one's energies in such trans-logical discussion. He therefore simply brushed aside all such questions by resorting to the formula of 'Anyakṛta' which did not either affirm or contradict various metaphysical theories prevalent in his times.

*First Arya-satya* — With reference to the first fundamental truth that there is constantly some sort of suffering in life, he pointed out that birth is painful, decay is painful, disease is painful and death is also painful. Union with unpleasant is painful and equally painful is the separation from the pleasant. Any craving that is not satisfied, that too is painful. Thus, he pointed out, the very existence is painful because cravings, desires, disease, decay and death are the inevitable constituents of life.

Some thinkers have charged this attitude as unduly pessimistic by saying that it has a tendency to blacken what is dark and to darken what is grey. This, however, is not the proper appreciation of what the Master has meant. If a doctor points out to our disease and suggests a remedy we do not dub him as pessimistic. Disease can be removed and life can be made enjoyable, if you have a proper diagnosis and right remedies. Mahāvīra also put equal emphasis on the sufferings of existence. But both Mahāvīra and Buddha showed the way to avoid sufferings and to obtain absolute bliss which brings undiluted happiness and joy. As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan<sup>1</sup> puts it : "Buddha does not preach the mere worthlessness of life or resignation to an inevitable doom. His, is not the doctrine of despair ? He asks us to revolt against evil and attain a life of a finer quality, an 'Arhat' state.

*Second Arya-satya* — The second fundamental truth is that

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### 1. Indian Philosophy, Vol. I.

our sufferings are not without reason; there is a cause which generates our suffering. Our intellectual awareness demands that we should try to find out these causes. The problem cannot be over simplified by saying that our sufferings are the punishments inflicted on us by some superior power which rules the destiny of the whole universe. Like Mahāvīra Buddha also did not believe in a super power ruling the destiny of the universe and Mahāvīra and Buddha both believed in the theory of Karma as shaped by ethical earnestness and personal efforts. In answer to a question seeking reason for the inequalities found in life everywhere, the master replied —

“Every living being has Karma as its master, its inheritance, its congenial cause, its kinsman, its refuge. It is karma that differentiates all beings into low and high states.”

( Milinda, 65 )

Like Mahāvīra, Buddha also believed that it is the annihilation of all karmas—good as well as bad—which leads one to the state of Arhatship and Nirvāṇa, and that after attaining Nirvāṇa, which literally means extinction, one is not born again.

What is the main cause of suffering? ‘Desires’ is the answer of the Master. Our desires — desires for the things which are constantly vanishing, desires which are born out of our ignorance about the transient character of the things desired, constitute the root cause of all our sufferings.

To understand the process by which the causes of our sufferings operate, Buddhism has propounded the theory of ‘conditioned origination or dependent origination’ which is known as the doctrine of ‘Pratītya-samutpāda’ according to which each preceding link (Nidāna) is responsible for ushering in the next one. These links (Nidānas) are twelve. The first link is Avidyā, i. e., ignorance. Conditioned by this ignorance, arise karma formations ( Saṃskāra ). They in turn give rise to consciousness ( Vijñāna ); Vijñāna gives rise to name and form ( Nāma-Rūpa ) which in turn gives rise to six sense-organs ( Ṣaḍāyatana ). Then arises contact ( Sparśa ),

then feeling ( Vedanā ), then thirst ( Tṛṣṇā ), then attachment ( Upādāna ), then becoming ( Bhava ), then birth ( Jāti ) and then decay and death ( Jarā-Maraṇa ). This way the whole process of Samsāra goes on.

Thus the root cause is Avidyā — ignorance out of which false desire springs.

According to Buddhism everything in this universe is impermanent and transitory. Buddhism believes in the existence of soul and also in rebirth. But according to it even the soul is not permanent. Here it differs from Jainism. It explains the theory of rebirth and transmigration by asserting that the process of cause and effect is so constant that it only 'appears' that there is continuity. Fact of the matter, the Buddhists assert, is that the life is nothing but a series of manifestations of becomings and extinctions. It is a stream running from moment to moment just like a flow of a river, the water of which is never the same or like a burning flame which appears to be the same and unchanged but which is another every moment.

*Third Ārya-satya* — The third Ārya-satya is that it is possible to overcome the suffering ( Nirodha ). Here also the process of 'conditioned origination or dependent origination' is invoked. The process is that conditioned by the suffering of decay and death ( Jarā-Maraṇa ), there arises Faith ( Śraddhā ) then Delight ( Pramoda ), then Joy ( Prīti ), then Serenity ( Praśrabdhi ), then Bliss ( Sukha ), then State of trans ( Samādhi ), then Vision to see things as they are ( Yathābhūti-jñāna-darśana ), then Non-attachment ( Nirveda ), then Detachment ( Virāga ), then knowledge of destruction of inflow of karmas ( Āsrava-Kaṣāya-Jñāna ). This is the process of Nirodha.

*Fourth Ārya-satya : Aṣṭāṅga-mārga* — The fourth Ārya-satya is that there is a way to liberation from sufferings. This way is eight-fold, namely —

( 1 ) Right view which is similar to Samyag-darśana of Jainas, ( 2 ) Right resolve, ( 3 ) Right speech, ( 4 ) Right

action, ( 5 ) Right livelihood, ( 6 ) Right effort, ( 7 ) Right mindfulness and ( 8 ) Right state of trans.

This is called Noble Eight-fold Path known as 'Aṣṭāṅga-mārga'.

### **Doctrine of Conditional Origination**

Some Buddhist scholars claim that the doctrine of conditional origination is not the doctrine of causation which implies an element of continuity. The doctrine simply means that 'B' in its origination conditioned by 'or' dependent on 'A'. In other words, 'B' is originated rather on the extinction of 'A' but being conditioned by the existence of 'A'. The Buddhist logic is that if 'A' and 'B' are taken as identical, that leads us to eternalism ( Śāśvatavāda ). But Buddhism is based on the theory of transitoriness and so would not admit of any principle of eternalism. On the other hand, if 'A' and 'B' are taken as totally different identities, that takes us to nihilism ( Ucchedavāda ) which is also an extreme view. So Buddhism discards both the extremes and accepts the middle course by evolving the doctrine of 'conditioned origination or dependent origination'. Thus denying the eternity of soul ( Jiva ), the Buddhists justify the theory of karma and rebirth explaining that when the soul is reborn it attains the status of 'B' but is conditioned by the karmas earned by the previous link 'A'.

In my humble view this whole exercise of 'conditioned origination' involves a strained logic to save the theory of transitoriness of the soul. Element of permanence, which is attributed to the soul by all systems of metaphysical thoughts in India, is capable of explaining various universal phenomena exhibiting a sort of continuity amidst the complexity of enormous changes. Buddhism indirectly accepts this position when it asserts that 'B' is originated being 'conditioned' by 'A'. Why 'B' should be 'conditioned' by 'A' if there is nothing common between the two ? Things having nothing in common which would either attract or repel the other, can never get 'conditioned' by each other. And if there is some 'common'

element in two things which has the conditioning influence over to each other, that conditioning influence supplies the element of permanence. Such an element of permanence is called 'Jīva' by the Jainas and 'Brahma' by the Vedāntins.

Jaina philosophers, have solved the problem by their theory of Nayavāda. They say that purely from theoretical standpoint the 'Jīva' is permanent. It was never born and shall never die. This is called 'Niścaya naya' ( Real view-point ). However, from the practical point of view when 'Jīva' in association with 'Karmas' takes 'birth' and then 'appears' to die with the body of its 'birth', it 'appears' to be transitory. So when we say that soul is transitory, what we assert is a practical or empirical standpoint which is known as 'Vyavahāra naya'.

Buddhist theory of transitoriness of soul has led it to the doctrine of 'Nirvāṇa' which literally means 'extinction'. The root 'Va' means to blow; prefix 'Nir' means 'out' or 'off'. So, literally 'Nirvāṇa' means 'blowing out'. Logically, therefore, Nirvāṇa means end of worldly existence.

Jainas do not believe that Jīva ceases to exist on attainment of Siddhahood. Since karmas are destroyed, Siddhahood, according to Jainas, is the bodyless existence of soul. This is the state of formless Brahma ( Nirākāra-Brahma ) of the Vedāntist.

It, therefore, appears that in their search of Madhyama-Mārga ( Middle course ) the Buddhists have carried their doctrine of transitoriness ( Kṣaṇikavāda ) to the extreme by applying it even to the existence of soul. This gives an impression of Anātmavāda ( denial of the existence of soul ).

Jaina approach on this aspect appears to be more logical and scientific. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan<sup>1</sup> interestingly observes, in this connection, as under :

"It is impossible to think that Buddha recognised nothing permanent in this rush of the world, no resting place in the

1. See Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, pp. 379-380.

universal turmoil where man's troubled heart can find peace. However, much Buddha tried to refuse to reply the question of ultimate reality which lay beyond the categories of the phenomenal world, he did not seem to have any doubt about it. There is an unborn, unoriginated, an unmade, an uncompounded; were there not. Oh medicants, there would be no escape from the world of the born, the originated, the made and the compounded." ( Udana, VIII. 3 )

### **Hīnayāna**

Buddhism passed through three great phases of its developments, known as Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna.

The word 'Yāna' means vehicle, 'Hīnayāna' means 'Little vehicle'. It was so called by the 'Mahāyānists' because it preaches salvation of oneself, the individual soul only. It insists upon the necessity of monastic life. According to it ones personality is illusory. It emphasizes non-selfhood ( Nairātmyatā ) of existence.

### **Mahāyāna**

Literally it means 'great vehicle' which is so called because it teaches the salvation of all. Thus, it is more social in outlook. It is predominantly devotional and metaphysical in its character.

### **Vajrayāna**

It means 'diamond vehicle' or the 'adamantine way' so called because like the irresistible vajra it annihilates all obstacles to the Nirvāṇa by highly esoteric Yogic exercises and development of spiritual power.

### **Some common characteristics of Jaina and Buddhist ideology**

We have already pointed out the agreement and disagreements between these two Śramaṇic ideologies. Following are the main common characteristics between the two —

( 1 ) Both are ascetic in nature. Both believe in 'Nivṛtti-dharma' as distinguished from 'Pravṛtti-dharma' of the Vedas. Hence both believe in asceticism or Path of renunciation.



## 232 ] The Path of Arhat : A Religious Democracy

( 2 ) Self reliance — Both believe that liberation of self from bondage is in its own hands.

( 3 ) Denial of any super-power as the final arbitrator of our destiny.

( 4 ) There are infinite souls each striving for its own liberation.

( 5 ) Non-souls cannot be called *Mayā*. They are as real as souls.

( 6 ) Both believe that Vedas are not of divine origin and cannot be taken as final and absolute authority.

( 7 ) Outright rejection of caste distinction by both. It is Karma and not birth which can decide a social class to which one belongs. All souls have equal potentiality to be liberated.

( 8 ) Non-recognition of four *Āśramas* in life by Buddhists and partly even by Jainas who put great emphasis on total renunciation and austerities.

( 9 ) Rejection of *Avatārvāda* by both.

( 10 ) *Tīrthaṅkaras* and *Buddhas* were born as humans and attained total liberation by their own efforts.

( 11 ) The words of *Tīrthaṅkaras* and *Buddhas* provide proper guidance but to gain liberation one has to exert himself, without any favours from above.

( 12 ) Shedding of karmas by avoiding desires and attachment is the only path of salvation.

( 13 ) Rituals and ceremonies are of no help in case the inner development is wanting.

( 14 ) Non-violence ( *Ahiṃsā* ) in every field of life is the guiding principle.



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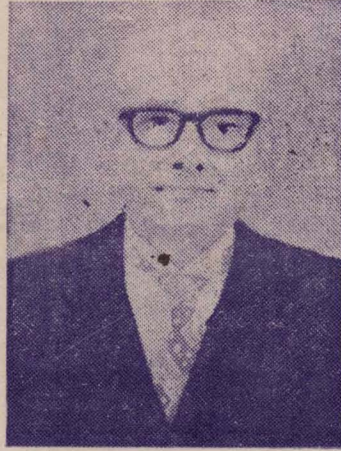
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Born at Wankaner, a town in the Saurashtra region of the Gujarat State, in a Jaina family on Dec. 12, 1917. He took graduation in Economics and Law from the University of Bombay in the years 1939 and 1941, and started legal practice in Western India States Agency and State Courts. Established a sound practice on the constitutional and Civil sides in the High Court of Saurashtra.



Took active part in labour movements, and was one of the founder members of the Indian Socialist Party in Saurashtra led by the leaders like Shri Jayprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan, Ram Manohar Lohiya and others with whom he had personal contacts.

Joined Judicial service during the course of which he served in various capacities as Dist. & Sess. Judge, Judicial Member of All India Income Tax Appellate Tribunal and as a Judge of the Gujrat High-Court in the year 1969. In 1976 he was transferred as a Judge to the High Court of H. P. at Simla where in the year 1978 he became the Chief Justice of that High-Court from which post, he retired on 12-12-79, and started legal practice in the Supreme Court at Delhi as a Senior Advocate which is continued till this date. He lead the official and non-official judicial inquiry commissions in Gujrat, Assam and Bihar.

Though law is the subject of his professional interest, his real interest lies in the study of philosophy, metaphysics and comparative religion. Having been greatly impressed by Marxian Dialectics during his academic career, his thinking was shaped and oriented by the writings of Swami Vivekanandji and Mahatma Gandhiji. His interest in Jaina philosophy deepened by the writings of Shrimad Rajchandraji, and Shri Rajneeshji. Seeing the perfectly logical and rational approach of Jaina philosophy he was induced to express some fundamental principles of Jainism in this book