

## Positive Contents of Jainism

*Joharimal Parekh \**

While introducing his famous book "*Gītā-rahasya athavā Karma-yoga-śāstra*" Lokmanya Tilak has vividly described how his mind used to revolt when he started reciting *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* for his aged sick father. He could not agree with the traditional commentators of *Gītā* that its principal and only prescription is renunciation of activity. Similarly while reading Jaina scriptures some such identical becomes my mental state of affairs qua the interpretation of true nature of Jaina philosophy, because the long established view point is that Jainism mostly teaches abstainment from activity. Whether this charge of negativism is to be proved against *Gītā* or not is a separate question, but with all humility it can be said that it does not survive as far as Jainism is concerned. Therefore the theme of today's talk is to establish that even as per the strict canonical view-point, Jaina religion and its philosophy are much more positive than negative. I may be excused for doing this advocacy entirely on the basis of Jaina Āgamas because much credence can not and should not be given to the words of non-omniscients. And naturally for this purpose, I will draw attention heavily on these sacred books and the debate shall become slightly academic and I will not be sorry if at the end of this article some one says that the article is a mere compilation of *Āgamic* quotations.

The various schools of religious thought have been classified into four main groups, viz., ( i ) *Kṛyāvādī* ( activists ), ( ii ) *Akṛyāvādī* ( non-activists or passivists ), ( iii ) *Vinayavādī* ( devotionists or ritualists ) and ( iv ) *Ajñānavādī* ( nescients )<sup>1</sup>. Jains take a very definite position that a mundane self goes on acting incessantly till it attains salvation and it means that they fall in the group of *Kṛyāvādī* philosophies. This proposition should not be challenged by any one. In very unambiguous terms, it has been clearly declared just at the beginning of the first and the foremost canon '*Ācārāṅga*', "*se āyāvādī logāvādī kammāvādī kiriyāvādī*" ( the name itself suggests prime importance of action ). And with reference to the setting as well as literally, the term *Kṛyāvādī* without any doubt denotes one who knows, believes and carries out activity. The same thing is repeated subsequently in



'*Ācārāṅga*' ( 9/1/16 ), "that Omniscient Intellectual Giant ( *Mahāvīra* ) knowing fully well has made a unique proposition of activity in two varieties." And it has been prescribed for a monk to recite twice a day that, "I accept ( enter into ) activity and denounce inactivity".<sup>2</sup>

Having made the positive statement that it is a philosophy of activity the other three remaining philosophies have been specifically rejected. *Akṛyāvādī* is, one who believes in inactivity or rather who does not believe in activity. One can find severe criticism of *Kriyā* ( activity ) at more than one places. Afraid of bondage and future etc., *Akṛyāvādīs* propound inactivity.<sup>3</sup> People who believe in self-inactivity, confronted by others concede their liberation; being involved in violence etc. and deeply engrossed in worldly objects, they do not know the duties which lead to salvation.<sup>4</sup>

Being ignorant, these *Akṛyāvādīs* make all types of statements in ambiguous language and being confused and unable to reply, they keep mum. At a time they take both the sides and contradictory stands and approve of activity in disguise. Such people whirl endlessly in this world. For them in this unreal and absolutely actionless whole world there is neither sunrise or sunset, nor waxes or wanes of Moon, nor flowing of water, nor blowing of winds. Like a blind man who has lost his eye-sight, cannot see anything even through the lamp, these *Akṛyāvādīs* also due to perverse attitude cannot perceive activity, though a reality.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly people engrossed only in *Bhakti* ( quite different from full faith in true principles ) doing nothing for their salvation have also been criticised.

Many a persons who are *Vinayavādīs* think truth as untruth and bad as good or vice versa and when asked always uphold *Bhakti*. For real knowledge, they see their salvation in *Bhakti* alone.<sup>6</sup> So also *Ajñānavādī* ( nescient ) philosophy has been totally rejected and reference, can be made to *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* ( I. 1/41-46, 12/2 & 14/12,13 ). Thus it is clear beyond doubt that Jainas have opted for *Kṛyāvāda*, — '*parasamaya akiriyā*' ( theories other than Jainas are inactivists ) — *Anuyogadvāra* 525 ( 3 ), and insist on the putting of knowledge into action<sup>7</sup> "*āhasu vijjacaraṇam pamokkham*". *Bhagavati Sūtra* 25 ( 7 ) and *Aupapātika* - 20 prescribe that *Kṛyāvādīs* should be given all respects and that people born in *Karmabhūmi* ( i.e. land full of activity ) alone can attain Liberation. *Daśāśruta Skandha* also condemns *Akṛyāvāda* and highly praises *Kṛyāvāda* ( see chapter 5/3,14-16 and 6/13,15 ). One more authority may be quoted to crystalise this position :

*Kṛyāvādī* alone can attain the high stages of pure uncoloured soul ( *Aśīva* ), right faith ( *samyagdr̥ṣṭi* ), five types of knowledge ( *mati-śruta-avadhi-manah-*



*paryaya-kevalajñāna* ), urgelessness ( *saṃjñārahita* ), beyond biological feelings ( *avedanā* ), passionless ( *akaṣāyī* ) and freezing of mind, body & speech ( *ayogī* ) and not the *Akṛyāvādīs*, *Vinayavādīs* and *Ajñānavādīs*. *Kṛyāvādīs* world roaming is not limitless but just nearing the end ( *śuklapakṣī* ). He does not have wrong or perverse faith, nescience or wrong knowledge does not take birth in one sense to four sense beings, animal species, hell, lower categories of heavens like *Bhavanvāsī* ( *Asuras* ), *Vāṇmantara* ( Bad spirits ) and *Jyotiṣī* ( Astronomical stellers ), instead he is born as human being or in high-class planed paradises ( *Vaimānika deva* ) and one day or the other will be emancipated; the case of others three is otherwise.<sup>8</sup>

We have established that Jainas fall in the group of *Kṛyāvādī* philosophies but that does not amount to the full endorsement of all other schools of *Kṛyāvādī* thought falling in this group. Amongst *Kṛyāvādīs* also there are various perverted sects but they have not been approved by Jainas. For example some say that activity does not result in bondage ( *Sutra-kṛtāṅga* I. 1/51 ), while others maintain that activity alone without knowledge is sufficient for salvation ( *Sutra-kṛtāṅga* I.10/17 ), still some insist that all the five ingredients, viz., a being, his knowledge, killer's mentality, deliberate effort and resultant death are simultaneously necessary for bondage but all these view-points have been commented upon and discarded.

*Proposition* : The sin of those who simply intent but do not kill or who committ violence unknowingly is negligible just a touch of bondage.

*Reply* : These are three distinct modes of committing sins, viz., by doing, getting it done or approving of it.

*Proposition* : Though these three modes of committing sins are there yet due to purity of emotions one bypasses the bondage. A father, devoid of obstinence ( *saṁhyama* ), but in wise state, kills his son and eats the flesh, even then he is not bound by *Karma*.

*Reply* : This is a false proposition. If one has an idea of malice, his mind can not be said to have emotional purity and therefore insets of sins have not been closed by him.<sup>9</sup>

Jaina *Kṛyāvāda* has been refined thoroughly well and is a very fine complicated and sophisticated doctrine. It requires very high mental and spiritual calibre to practise it. Even to understand and preach it correctly, is not an easy job. As noted in the outset, exposition of *Kṛyāvāda* ( i.e., *karma-yoga* ) in *Gītā* has not



been quite clear and meant differently to different people right from Arjuna to Śaṅkarācārya. Therefore the following note of caution has been added for those who want to explain this highly intricate doctrine of Jaina *Kṛyāvāda* :

One who knows self and this world, roamings and cessation, permanent and transitory, birth, death and life circle, tortures of hell below, influx and stop-page of *Kārmic* matter, bondage and its annihilation, alone is capable and fit enough to expound *Kṛyāvāda*.<sup>10</sup>

This preliminery survey clearly reveals that foundations of Jainism have been deeply laid on the strong base of *Kṛyāvāda*. Let us now study the strong edifice of activity built upon that active spiritual base.

The debate of '*Pravṛti*', i.e., to act and '*Nivṛti*', i.e., to abstain from action is as old as anything ( *Śaṅkara Bhāṣya* on *Gītā*, p.1 ). The discussion on this problem has been exhaustively raised at the outset of the 8th chapter of 1st part of *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*. The questions posed are whether religion consists in activity or it amounts to non-activity — whether one should exert in actions or his efforts should be diverted to renounce them. Characteristic of Bhagavāna Mahāvīra's *anekānta* and *syādvāda* style, replies that choice is not between activity and non-activity but one has to choose between the various courses of activity open to him. A *saṁnyāsin* who has renounced actions physically may still be '*Pramādī*' ( meaning of the term will be explained herein after ) and thereby incurring bondage, and a person who is active but '*Apramādī*' may not become bound by his actions. By stopping the inflow of *Kārmic* matter one can be liberated.<sup>11</sup> Therefore a wise man should adopt that course of activity which finally results in reduction of bondage; only fools exert in activities, the net result of which is increase in bondage. As the proposition is very important let us read the text :

"Two types of exertions have been propounded. What is the exertion of bold and why is it so called ? Some say that one should exert in activity while others say that one should try hard to renounce all actions. People are seen divided into these two classes. But Bhagavāna has said that ( an actionless ) *Pramatta* ( *Pramādī* ) incurs bondage whereas the position of an active *Apramatta* may be otherwise. Therefore the exertion which leads to bondage is wrong and one which annihilates or does not lead to it is desirable."<sup>12</sup>

Exertion of ignorants which results in bondage has thus been described, now hear the exertion of wise which does not result in bondage rather annihilates it.<sup>13</sup>



With all humility we bow to the above solution of the problem which has engaged the Pundits all over and all along. It is pity that an intelligent man Śāṅkarācārya missed this analysis and took the extreme position of renunciation from all activity.

Again we owe to Jainism that '*Pramāda*' has been put on a doctrinal plane.<sup>14</sup> According to them *Pramāda* is an independent cause of bondage and even if present singularly all alone is sufficient enough to attract the *Kārmic* matter in the soul region — the remaining four agents of bondage, viz., *Mithyātva*, *Avirati*, *Kaṣāya* and *Yoga* need not to be present. *Pramāda* is a special term of Jaina vocabulary and has been defined ( rather illustrated or classified ) by *Ṭhāṇāṅga* : "*Chavvihepamāye paṇṇatte-majja, ṇida, vipaṇa kaṣāya juta padilehaṇā.*" ( 502 )

but that seems to be an inclusive and not an exclusive definition of the term. Though the full and comprehensive meaning of this word can be a subject matter of research but to say suffice is for our purpose to say that it clearly includes the following — carelessness, lethargy, inactivity, laziness, unalertness, non-vigilance, in-attentiveness, sleeping, slowness, non-utilisation of spiritual faculties and bodily talents, mental passiveness, wastage or killing of time, notion of carefree enjoyment of worldly pleasures (*Mauja* ) etc. etc. and we should be away from all these.

The above stand vis-a-vis activity finds full support in the following :

"It is better that people, who are irreligious propagate irreligion, not followers of religion, dislike it, interested and engrossed in non-religion, acting irrelegiously and earning their livelihood by such acts, remain asleep, weak and lazy, whereas, for those persons who are religious; follower of it, aspirer of it, propounder of it, interested and engrossed in it, actively religious and earn their livelihood by religious means, it is better that they remain awake strong and active. Because by remaining so they contribute towards the removal of pains, sorrows, sadness ( distress ), tears, troubles, unhappiness and suffering, etc. of many a beings, engage themselves or others or both in various religious plans and programmes, by remaining religiously awoke, they keep their selves always alert and by remaining active they employ themselves in serving preceptors, teachers, old and seniors and learned austeres, sick, teachers, families, groups, society and co-religious beings."<sup>15</sup>

"Perseverant person, should prefer activity and not remain inactive, with true perception, the wise should persue the difficult path of religion."<sup>16</sup>

"By self sublimation one removes himself away from bad occupations and



activities and engages himself in good ones and thereby the monk annihilates boundless fierce bondage."<sup>17</sup>

"Gautama do not be *Pramatta* even for a moment."<sup>18</sup>

The *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* insists times out of number on intense efforts on the part of aspirants of liberation ( see 78, 97, 111, 157, 173, 195, 155, 129 ) and so also the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I. [ sec. 2 (11,68); 6 (9); 8 (11); 11 (35); 15 (22) ]. In *Ācārāṅga* the hammer has fallen heavily — 17 times directly, plus many a times indirectly on *Pramāda* ( see 33, 65, 85, 106, 107, 108, 109, 123, 133, 152, 156, 158, 197, 230-232, 321 ).

Inspite of all that some people take a purely technical position and say that every activity means bondage and hence should be avoided. But surely it is a suicidal view, totally disregards the bright avenues open in this human life and closes all doors of spiritual progress entirely on theoretical grounds. These impractical people forget the more important principle that unless one makes efforts with full vigours, he can not free himself from bondage — motion is *dharma* and station is *adharma*. More so, all throughout his life one can not remain even for a moment without *Yoga*, i.e., activities of body, mind and speech except for a negligible period of few seconds just before the event of final emancipation. *Gītā* also supports this view point in 3 (૬) and 18 (11) and says : "*Na hi dehabhṛtā śakyam tyaktum karmāṇi aśeṣataḥ*".

For all practical purposes one can not save himself even for a moment from bondage if such a microscopic strict view is taken ( *Ācārāṅga* 174, 203; *Ṭhāṇāṅga* 704; *Bhagavatī* 5/7 (30-36). Even for sustenance of this life and even for attaining salvation activities are necessary<sup>19</sup> and therefore '*Parijñā*' alone has been recommended ( *Tattha khalu bhagavatā pariññā paveditā* ). *Parijñā* does not mean whole-sole rejection of activity or objects. The word has a heavy knowledge content and the compound should be analysed as renunciation based on knowledge. Something discriminative, as we have seen that nothing is free from bondage altogether, hence like a shrewd businessman we should reconcile the situation — be rational and practical and weigh the consequences of the proposed activities of body, mind and speech in terms of the net resultant loss of bondage. An activity with less accumulation and more annihilation of *Kārmic* matter is to be preferred to the one with more accumulation and less annihilation. This business like approach has been approved in discussion with Gośālaka :

Without incurring new bondage and while annihilating the old ones and by



casting aside wrong mentality (*kubuddhi*). Bhagavāna Mahāvīra has become saviour of all. This is called *Mokṣa* schedule and its resultant acquisition *Mokṣa* (*Nirjarā*) is considered as a gain by him. In words of *Gītā* (2/50), the dexterity lies in so carrying out an activity that old bondage is discarded with no new or little fresh bondage (*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*) the same as "*kusale puṇṇa ṇobaddhe ṇo mukke*" (*Acārāṅga* 104), i.e., dexterous neither incurs bondage nor is devoid of activity.

This path of *Kṛyāvāda* as we have noted earlier is a difficult and complex one and at each and every step requires the application of decisive faculty of brain and the spirit. There can not be any fixed set of universal rules in general for all eventualities because at times a course may given adverse result as compared to an earlier occasion.

*Je āsavā te parisavā, je parisavā te āsavā,  
Je aṇāsavā te aparissavā, je aparissava te aṇāssavā.*<sup>20</sup>

But this way is not impracticable or utopian because brave ones have treaded it and it has been so propounded by the enlightened.<sup>21</sup> And that is why it is said that every act of a self supporting man is towards self emancipation.<sup>22</sup> Like *Gītā's sthitaprajñā* who does no wrong, Jainas also have a subjective approach than mere objective alone and much depend upon the spiritual stage of the doer.

Great men are bold enough but unenlightened and of perverted faith exert wrongly and hence their all activities and efforts result in bondage. Whereas great bold persons who are enlightened and of right faith exert properly and none of their efforts and activities result in bondage.<sup>23</sup>

An inexperienced in the discriminative knowledge (*Viveka*) of speech being ignorant of numerous types thereof does not attain '*Vacanagupti*' (talking contraction) even though observes complete silence whereas an expert in the discriminative knowledge of speech being well conversant with various types thereof remains in '*Vacanagupti*' although speaks throughout the day.<sup>24</sup>

Thus it can safely be concluded that Jainism nowhere prohibits indulgement in those activities which directly or indirectly result in net annihilation of *Kārmic* bondage, on the contrary strongly advises to go for them briskly. Those activities which result in bondage only have to be abstained from and this abstinence of sins is advocated by practically all the religious philosophies.

Having examined in detail the theology, philosophy and metaphysics of



Jainism, we will now proceed to see what activities have been prescribed by Jaina religion. The Jaina religious code of conduct can be grouped under three broad heads, viz., *Ahimsā*, *Samyama* and *Tapa*.<sup>25</sup>

*Ahimsā* group includes in its fold, partness and fellow travellers like truth, nonusurpance etc. The *Ahimsā* is the most important aspect of Jaina religion and unfortunately in the absence of its proper understanding, the charge of negativism is levelled against Jainism by modern thinkers. In fact *Ahimsā* is purely an active phenomena. It should be very clearly understood that question of violence or non-violence arises only when one is indulged in activity and otherwise. *Ahimsā* is a rule of *Dharmaśāstra* and "*Ahimsā paramo dharmah*" obviously stipulates a rule of action. If you are not doing anything and standing still qua all the three agents body, mind and speech, then you are neither violent nor non-violent; but when you walk, you shall walk in such a manner that ants and other insects on the way are not hurt and that is *Ahimsā* in practice. If you do not fight, no question of violence crops up, but when you do so, the question does arise and we all know that Mahatma Gandhi fought for Indian freedom in a non-violent manner. So also is the crews of *Gītā* asking Arjuna in its own way to fight in such a manner that no new bondage is caused.

On account of ego if you think 'I will not fight' vain is your this resolve, your (*Karma*) *Prakṛti* will compell you to fight. On account of delusion what you are unwilling to do will be done by you due to the nature of your *Karma* bondage.<sup>26</sup> Similarly if you do not speak and keep mum, the question to truth or falsehood does not come in the picture. It is only when you speak, you shall speak the truth is the commandment. So also if one is doing no business or dealings, question of corruption, dishonesty etc. remain absent, but when you happen to hold an active public post then an occasion arises to show that you are honest and have neither exploited the situation nor committed theft nor taken a bribe. Thus examples can be multiplied to prove that *Ahimsā* is not a religion of negation. In *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (I. 2/14) and in *Praśnavyākaraṇa* also *Ahimsā* as a positive proposition has been prescribed. Avoiding activity lest there may be killing, may fall in *Samyama* but that is not *Ahimsā*. On the other hand when you act either by body, mind or speech with *Samiti* and in such a manner that no or little bondage is caused, then only you are said to have followed the rule of *Ahimsā*.

In Jainism five *Samitis* and three '*guptis*' have been prescribed for promotion of religious activities and complete renouncement of bad activities.<sup>27</sup> A recent



precedent may be narrated by way of illustration. At the time of formation of *Svatantra* party, there was a proposal to name it as 'Freedom Party'. But Rajgopalachari opposed it on the ground that the word 'freedom' has a negative content whereas '*svatantra*' is a positive word. So let us be bold enough to declare that when in our daily life we observe the rule of *Ahimsā*, truth, nonstealing, etc., we are following pure religion. For example out of 10 sentences spoken one or two may contain falsehood and in this manner major portion of world activity is carried out in religious manner. I may be excused for quoting the following to show that active public workers are highly rewarded in the next birth.

The king who has discarded sense pleasures, the commander of forces and the administrator all the three if have good conduct, five views, praiseworthy virtues, disciplined life, better resolutions and *Poṣadhōpavāsa* shall be borne after death as gods in the highest heaven, namely *Sarvārthasiddha*.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, it should be appreciated that *Ahimsā* and *Yoga* are intimately related and as we have seen, *Yoga* is necessary even for *Sādhū Saṁnyāsis* also. An important sentence to show the importance of non-violent *Yoga* will be apposite here :

A monk having ( i ) no preconditioned schedule and fixed target, ( ii ) right perception (or faith) and ( iii ) right activity of mind, body and speech will cross this infinite beginningless and boundless four destiny world-forest.<sup>29</sup>

Coming to the second group, viz., *Saṁnyama* ( abstinence ) it should be conceded that it is purely a passive item. It clearly postulates the process of limitation of worldly pursuits to the minimum possible. It is an easy prescription for abstaining from activities as far as feasible so that no new bondage is caused. In technical language we can say that *Gupti* is *Saṁnyama* and *Samiti* is *Ahimsā*. The main aim of *Saṁnyama* is to refrain from sins and in order to be purposeful, it should be a willing deliberation as against an abstinence forced by circumstances or unwarily, otherwise bondage due to *Avirati* ( want of vow ) is not avoided.

One who does not enjoy sensual pleasures by force of circumstances is not called a *Saṁnyāsī*. But one who turns his back even from the available choicest and agreeable pleasures willingly abstains from enjoyment, is called a *Saṁnyāsī*.<sup>30</sup>

The case of third group of religion, viz., *Tapa* is still stronger qua activity. According to Jaina metaphysics *Kārmic* matter already bound with the self but not yet ripe for annihilation can by special effort known as '*tapa*' be shed away from the soul region before maturity. Thus *tapa* is not only an exercise but also a



positive one in the sense that it is carried out in such a manner that no new bondage is caused and at the same time old bondage is destroyed.<sup>31</sup> This special characteristic of *tapa* should be appreciated vis-a-vis *Ahimsā* and *Samyama*, both of which are not capable of destroying old bondage.

In order to evaluate the activity aspect of *Tapa*, it is necessary to know what it does mean and contain. Broadly speaking it consists of 12 items described below :

1. *Anaśana*, i.e., fasting with various stipulations etc. as to time, number and others. It is tuff and in general parlance *tapa* has become synonymous with it.
2. *Avamodirika*, i.e., austerity and reduction in the level of consumption and forbearance thereof and limitation of wants in all manners.
3. *Vṛttisaṅkṣepa*, i.e., avoidance of possession ( *Parigraha* ) and accumulations putting various ceilings on properties holding, earning etc.
4. *Rasatyāga*, i.e., avoiding interest in pleasures of all the five sense objects, viz., sound, sight, taste, smell and touch.
5. *Kāyākṣēṣa*, i.e., penance and endurance of bodily pains, troubles, exposures, postures, sickness, vagaries of climate, insects etc. *Śrama* ( physical exertion ) is also contemplated.
6. *Sanlīnatā*, i.e., simple life with disciplined strict schedule and various vows like *Brahmacarya*, awakening and other biological control, *vivikta śayanāsana* etc.
7. *Prāyaścita*, i.e., repentance for all wrongs done in the past, disassociation of self from them and resolution to not to repeat them in future.
8. *Vinaya*, i.e., *bhakti* ( *Vandanā*, *Namaskāra*, Respect, *Pūjā*, Prayer etc. ) of *Pañcaparamēṣṭhī* ( *Tīrthaṅkaras*, Liberated, Preceptors, Teachers and Monks ) *Śaṅgha* ( Religious order — Church ) and its members.
9. *Svādhyāya*, i.e., exercise in the field of knowledge like reading, hearing, learning, discussing, removing doubts, understanding, remembering, contemplating on it, teaching and preaching.
10. ( *Prasāsta* ) *Dhyāna*, i.e., concentration on commendable objectives, i.e., *Dharma* and *Śukladhyāna*.
11. *Kāyotsarga*, i.e., practice in '*Bhedajñāna*' as if taking self away from this body even no mineness or attachment towards it.



## 12. *Vaiyāvṛtya*, i.e., service.

The very perusal of the above noted exertions will show that it is a heterogeneous mass covering a very wide field of activity. All the items are equally important and keep one engaged all throughout his life. However, it should be pointed out that *Tapa* is not a compulsory subject in the syllabus of religion and the option should always be commensurate to one's capacity so that self-bliss is maintained. Some items above mentioned can be interpreted with negative approach, but due to this difficult and tedious nature always partake the form of an activity. More so, slowly and slowly by practice one becomes accustomed and used to those hardships. The most tuff amongst them is *Brahmacarya*.<sup>32</sup> *Brahmacarya* is the foremost *Tapa*.

Before closing, I shall like to give some detailed treatment to the last item *Vaiyāvṛtya* because of the present day social need and having regard to the host instruction and its platform.

While dealing with *Sūtra* 511, Shri Abhayadevasūri in his exegesis of *Ṭhaṇāṅga* says : "*Vyāvṛta bhāvo vaiyāvṛtyaṁ — dharmasāadhanārtha annādidānaṁ ( Sampādanaṁ )*", spirit of service, e.g., making food and other aids available for the practice of religion. The spirit of service is the sine-qua-non of this exercise, because it falls in inner ( *Abhyantara tapa* ) group. The service may be rendered to those who deserve it and the criterion is that it will help the recipient to strive for spiritual upliftment in any manner whatsoever directly or indirectly. Thus terms is wide enough to cover the whole extent of aims, charity, benevolence, philanthropy, help and altruism in all their facets. Though the conservative schools takes a narrow view of the matter and says that service should be rendered by the monks as well as house-holders to the monks only — service to the house-holders is not covered. But this interpretation is not warranted by the language of the canons, because there is no specific ban as such. A house-holder is entitled for *Tapa* ( there is no doubt or dispute about that ) and thus for *vaiyāvṛtya*, then naturally while interpreting the words *Tapasvī* ( austeric ) sick, fellow religious colleague and family group and *saṅgha* should reasonably cover householders varieties of these classes and not only the monks, especially when the server is a laity. The very nature of this job and justice can not accomodate any favouratism or discrimination. Not only that but *yetis* also generally acknowledged as *Sādhus* then, even prior to Haribhadra period used to render medical and other services both to householders and non-house-holders. With the almost abolition of that institution, may



be, good points in it have also gone. The subject needs research. Let us take one couplet from *Ācārāṅga* :

*Esa vīre pasansite je baddhe padimoya e uddha ahaṁ tiriyaṁ disāsu se savvatosavva pariṇṇacārī ṇa lippati chaṇapadeṇa vīre. ( Ācārāṅga - 91,103 )*

"That brave one is to be appreciated who works for the release of other bonds; and that talented person having meaningful renunciation, perfect from all the angles and directions incurs no bondage in doing that work."<sup>33</sup>

Some one may work for his own upliftment but the main operative part of this clause gives distinction to those who work for the emancipation of others. Directly or indirectly helping others in attaining salvation ( i.e. permanent removal of miseries ) is the best social service which can be thought of. To illustrate, *Tīrthaṅkaras* are distinguished from other omniscient *Kevalins* in this respect. The former after enlightenment work hard for spreading and distributing the gains of their knowledge amongst others so that they may also tread the path of liberation. The value of these services can not be calculated in terms of money or any other worldly measurement. How can it be argued that house-holders and masses in general are not entitled to reap benefit of these preachings and messages ? More than 2,500 years have passed but the light given by Bhagavāna Mahāvīra still enlightens us with the same wattage. These leaders of the humanity make it a routine to uplift the beings without any distinction or discrimination whatsoever.<sup>34</sup> In exegesis of this *sūtra* Ācārya Śīlāṅka makes a point that even the past efforts of Bhagavāna Mahāvīra for his own upliftment before enlightenment are also a part and parcel of subsequent social service because, unless one practises and becomes perfect, his preachings fail to have any impact — rather he is unqualified to preach !! As per the latter part of the above couplet, a monk in all respects, engaged in this type of social service is immune from incurring bondage. It should not be argued that this type of social work on the part of a monk would mean dereliction from his chosen path. On the other hand, *Ācārāṅga* 196 prescribes a monk to do this work out of compassion. As far as disciples and wards are concerned, a preceptor should apply his full energy — day and night — to train them up. *Ācārāṅga* 134, especially Nāgārjuniya rendering, makes it crystal clear that even house-holders engrossed in fierce worldly activity can reap religious benefit out of these services rendered by the monk community.

The above authorities of *Ācārāṅga* are further reinforced by *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I as follows :



2/69 : *Savvam ṇaccā ahidvae, dhammaṭṭhī uvahāṇavīrie, guttejuttesadājae Āyapare paramāyathahiye.*

11/23 : *Bujjhamāṇāṇa pāṇāṇaṃ, kaccantāṇa sakammunā; ādhāti sāhutaṃ dīvaṃ, patihesa pavuccatī.*

12/12 : *Te cakkhu logam sihaṇāyagātu, moggā'ṇu bhāsanti hitaṃ payāṇaṃ.*

13/19 : *Sayaṃ sa meccā aduvā vi soccā, bhāsejjaṃ dhammaṃ hitadaṃ payaṇaṃ.*

14/5 : *Samitīsu guttīsu ya āyapaṇṇe viyagaren te ya puḍhovadejjā.*

Thus, the above one couplet no. 91/103 is more than sufficient to wide open the gates of social service for monks as well as householders. *Bhagavati* 5/6 (19) says that these monks generally attain salvation within 2 or 3 lives. *Gītā* also follows this pattern and its *Karmayogī* works for *loka-saṅgraha*, i.e., special service.

The other varieties of social services can be treated as covered by the above thesis because preaching is as good as performing ( doing by speech or approval ). However special mention has been made of the following varieties in *Āgama* texts.

( i ) Enjoining a monk to serve the sick, "*Imaṃ ca dhammamādāya kāsaveṇa paveiyaṃ kujjābhikkhū gīṇassa agīṇāye samāhiye*".<sup>35</sup>

*Daśāśruta* ( 28-29 ) goes a step further and says that one who does not serve the sick incurs the bondage of intense *Mohanīya karma*.

( ii ) Supporting each other in remaining steadfast to the religious path.<sup>36</sup>

( iii ) Mutual help and service in needy moments amongst monks.<sup>37</sup>

( iv ) *Samavāyāṅga* 91, says that there are 91 types of services but unfortunately except this total, the details have been lost to us, list must have been quite exhaustive.

( v ) Cremation and rites are permissible of fellow religious beings.<sup>38</sup>

( vi ) *Thāṇāṅga* 500, allows consumption of extra food so as to remain fit for service.

( vii ) *Thāṇāṅga* 649, clause VIII prescribes that if conflicts have arisen between fellow religious followers, then one should make efforts, attempts and exertions for putting an end to fights disputes and arguments and for establishing amity in an impartial neutral and judicious manner without taking sides. In doing this a monk incurs no wrong rather abides by his duty. Charity to the deserving has been recommended and Jaina canons are full of precedents when gods in



heaven have celebrated such befitting occasions. *Uttarādhyayana* ( 29/43 ) says that by the best *vaiyāvṛtya* one becomes *Tīrthaṅkara* in future lives – the highest reward.

So it can safely be concluded that monks as well as house-holder both can render service and though the service of fellow religious house-holders by the former is a controversial topic yet by the latter quite permissible. Therefore, a Jaina should never shirk from this *vaiyāvṛtya* – a pious action.

Thus for every one dose of inactivity ( *saṁyama* ) two doses of activity ( *Ahimsā* and *Tapa* ) have been prescribed by Jaina religion ? And in this way, seen from whatever angle whether theological, philosophical, metaphysical or religious, Jainism is much more positive than negative.

Besides, to any serious student of Jaina Āgamas, it would be quite obvious that Bhagavāna Mahāvīra was a hard task master and meant business. He did not spare even the women, untouchables, youngsters, house-holders, etc. from religious exercise, only the under age and the old can take excuses of non-eligibility and disabilities. Consequently this is the most practical approach for him. *Vyavahāra-naya* ( practical view point ) is as much truth as *Niścaya-naya* ( theoretical view point ) is and at times according to him ends justify means. For example a person chased by his would be murderer, hides to my knowledge, even then on being asked the whereabouts of the hidden, I should plead ignorance before the follower because "*sadabhyohitam satyam*" is the amended version of truth for Jainas. Clearly this liberal, flexible and tolerant attitude would be redundant had the Jaina philosophy not believed in *Pravṛiti*, action and positivity. And inspite of this *anekānta*, if the charge of escapism, negativism and inactivity is labelled against Jainism, it will remain unproved like an earlier charge of hereticity ( *Nāstikatā* ). To mention in the end as in the beginning, Tilak, after perusing the manuscript of the book '*Jaina Karma Yoga*' written by late Ācārya Budhisāgara, opined as under, "Had I known that you are writing your *Karma-yoga*, I might not have written my *karma-yoga*". I think no better certificate or any other authority is needed to establish our case.

## Reference

1. *Thāṇāṅga* 345, *Bhagavati* 30-1-1, *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I.12/1.
2. *Paggāma Sajjhāya*.
3. *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I. 12/4.
4. *Ibid*, I. 10/16.



5. *Ibid*, I.12/5-8.
6. *Ibid*, I. 12/3, 4.
7. *Ibid*, I. 12/11.
8. *Bhagavati-sūtra* 30-1 summarised.
9. *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I. 1/52-56.
10. *Ibid*, I. 12/20-21.
11. *Ibid*, I. 12/15.
12. *Ibid*, I. 8/1-3.
13. *Ibid*, I. 8/9.
14. *Ṭhāṇāṅga* 418, *Samavāyāṅga* 5.
15. *Bhagavati* 12/2 ( 7-9 ).
16. *Uttarādhyayana* 18/33.
17. *Ibid*, 29/8.
18. *Ibid*, 10.
19. *Ācārāṅga* 7, 13 etc.
20. *Ibid*, 134.
21. *Ibid*, 21, *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I. 2 ( 21 ), *Ācārāṅga* 74, 79.
22. *Uttarādhyayana* 29/33.
23. *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I. 8 ( 22-23 ).
24. *Daśavaikālika Niryukti*, 7th chapter Puṇyavijaya edition.
25. *Daśavaikālika Niryukti*, 1/1.
26. *Gitā* 18/59-60.
27. *Uttarādhyayana* 24/26.
28. *Ṭhāṇāṅga* 150.
29. *Ibid*, 136.
30. *Daśavaikālika* 2/2-3.
31. *Ṭhāṇāṅga* 190 and *Bhagavati* 2. 5. 16/26.
32. *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I. 6/23.
33. *Ācārāṅga* 91/103.
34. *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* 6/28.
35. *Ibid*, 3/59, 3/81; see also *Ṭhāṇāṅga* 649/vii, 208.
36. *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* 2 ( 48 ).
37. *Ācārāṅga* 219, 227.
38. *Ṭhāṇāṅga* 477.

\* Veer Seva Mandir  
Ravati, Jodhpur, Rajasthan.