

Parshwanath Vidyapeeth Series No. 143

# PRISTINE JAINISM

(Beyond Rituals and Superstitions)

By  
S. M. JAIN

Parshwanath Vidyapeeth  
Varanasi

Pārśwanātha Vidyāpīṭha Series No. 143

# **PRISTINE JAINISM**

**(Beyond Rituals and Superstitions)**

*by*

**S. M. JAIN**

**PARSHWANATH VIDYAPEETH**

**I.T.I. ROAD, KARAUNDI**

**VARANASI 221005**

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General Editor  
Prof. Sagarmal Jain

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ISBN-81-86715-75-4

First Edition 2003

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Price: Rs. 150.00

*Published by :*

*Prof. Sagarmal Jain for Parshwanath Vidyapeeth,  
I.T.I. Road, Karaundi, Varanasi-221005 Phone: 0542:2575521*

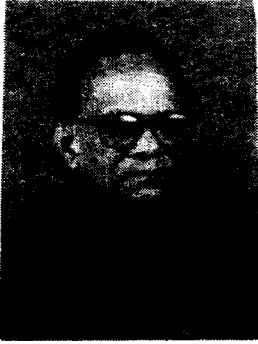
*Composed by :*

*Shri Naval Singh Kushwaha  
Laxmi Computers Talwandi, Kota*

*Printed by :*

*Vardhamana Mudranalaya  
Jawahar Nagar, Varanasi -221010*

## AUTHOR



Born on 8th September, 1928 Shri S. M. Jain had his education at the then Government Herbert College, Kota. From 1949 to 1951 he worked as teacher (Maths) in the then Govt. Girls Inter College, Kota and Govt. High School, Bhawanimandi. Selected by Rajasthan Public Service Commission he had his Forestry Training at Forest Research Institute & Colleges in 1951-53 and again in Refreshers Course in 1967.

Shri S. M. Jain, is a retired Forest Officer. He worked on responsible and challenging posts in State Forest Department, covering every sphere of forestry activity. After retirement he did his innings in a leading paper mill, Rajasthan Tribal Area Development Cooperative Corporation (RTADCC), Apex N.G.O. and Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA), New Delhi. In RTADCC he started and organised first ever from the scratch the collection, storage and marketing of over forty different minor forest products in six tribal districts. In ISMA he planned, co-ordinated and guided various widely acclaimed rural development activities of 180 member sugar factories spread all over the country. He was member of two Sub. Committees of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) on behalf of ISMA and represented the President of FICCI in the Board of Governors of Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal. His project, "Forest for Food" was sanctioned by Dept. of Science and Technology and Ms. Sneh Sharma has done Ph. D. on it. Subsequently he started his consultancy services and worked as consultant in various industrial houses and mining firms and was instrumental in raising large-scale plantations on wastelands,

mined areas and waste dumps. The Government of Rajasthan awarded him and also the Associated Stone Industries Ltd., Rajmanjmandi for the meritorious plantation work.

Since 1989 he is in the panel of Consultants in Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests (NAEB) and also the Ministry of Rural Development and Employment. On assignments from these Ministries he has so far carried out twenty nine evaluations and survival rate studies of tree planting, afforestation, soil conservation and watershed projects implemented by the District Rural Development Agencies, Divisional Forest Officers and Apex NGOs in Haryana, Punjab, Gujrat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. NAEB gives such assignments to retired forest officer not below the rank of Chief Conservator of Forests.

'*Rajasthāna Ke Vanya Paśu*', a book written jointly by him and late Shri Mahendra Prakash was first ever pictorial and descriptive documentation of wild animals of Rajasthan and was published by Public Relations Department, Government of Rajasthan. He has written over eighty technical and general articles published in prestigious dailies and journals and have presented papers in national and international seminars. At 74 he is agile and active more than those much younger in years and is continuing his writing hobby. He is associated with Digambara Jain Atishaya Kshetra, Shri Mahaveerji and other charitable and social welfare organisations.



## **PUBLISHER'S NOTE**

India has been an ancient land with its age-old culture and civilisation. Here, the human race has experimented on itself for centuries and evolved certain humanistic principles concerning the path to liberation from worldly life. The Jains, probably the oldest of the Śramaṇic traditions have left a very rich spiritual legacy to fulfill that very goal. The chief precepts of Jainism such as Non-absolutism, Non-violence, Truthfulness, Non-possessiveness and Celibacy alongwith Right knowledge, Right belief and Right conduct are key principles for emancipation.

Shri S.M. Jain, author of this title '*Pristine Jainism*' has very beautifully explained the main features of Jainism and has laid stress for rationality in belief, thought and action and rejection of rituals and superstitions in order to understand Jainism truly and implement its teachings in ones practical life. He underlines the contradiction between the Jaina concept of *Samyaktva* rooted in an objective and rational perception of reality by overcoming passions and *Mithyātva* which lead to an unreal and erroneous understanding of categories of truth.

We feel immense pleasure in bringing out this title. We are very thankful to Shri S.M. Jain for entrusting this book to our Institute for publication. We are thankful to Prof. Maheshwari Prasad, Director, Parshwanath Vidyapeeth for showing interest in its publication and providing all assistance towards its publication. We are thankful to Dr. Shriprakash Pandey, Asst. Director, at Vidyapeeth for going through the manuscript and putting all his efforts to get this book printed.

Our thanks are also due to Laxmi Computers, Talwandi, Kota and Vardhamana Mudranalaya, Varanasi for best composing and printing respectively.

**Sagaramal Jain**  
Secretary

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

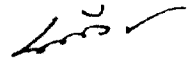
I am overwhelmed by the kind gesture of the Hon'ble President of India, Janab A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Saheb for very kindly sparing his precious time to go through the book and giving valuable comments and coveted blessings.

I do not have words to express my gratitude for Dr. L.M. Singhvi for the trouble he has taken so generously to write an excellent, comprehensive and elaborate "Foreword" for the book. I am grateful to Prof. V.K. Kanjolia, who in spite of his illness, took pains to meticulously correct the mistakes in the manuscript.

I thank Shri Budh Singh Bapna, Shri Shivanarain Upadhyaya, Dr. Dayakrishna Vijay, Pandit Shri V.K. Jain, Shri Anandraj Jain, Shri Kushalraj Jain, Dr. K.C. Rajoria, Prof. R.K. Jain for their valuable suggestions. I also thank Shri Naval Singh Kushwaha of Laxmi Computer, Kota for typing and retyping the manuscript.

I am grateful to Dr. Dharmchand Jain for going through the manuscript and recommending it for publication to Prof. Sagarmal Jain who very kindly agreed to get it published by the Parshwanath Vidyapeeth, Varanasi. I am obliged to Prof. Sagarmal Jain and Prof. Maheshwari Prasad, Director, Dr. S.P. Pandey, Asstt. Director, Parshwanath Vidyapeeth and other staff of Vidyapeeth for publishing the book.

I shall fail in my duty if I do not thank my wife Smt. Sheela Jain for her perseverance and silent but valuable contribution in helping me in all my activities with utmost sincerity and devotion. I thank her and shall continue to thank her for the steadfastness in thick and thin, ups and downs in out life.



(S. M. JAIN)



राष्ट्रपति  
भारत गणतन्त्र  
PRESIDENT  
REPUBLIC OF INDIA

16th September 02

Dear Shri Jain Ji

I am indeed delighted to receive your letter enclosing therewith the book on 'Pristine Jainism'.

I have gone through the book and liked the doctrine of *Samyaktva* particularly the essence of Jainism with the doctrine 'Rationality is key word in Jainism'.

My greetings to you,

Yours sincerely

(A. P. J. ABDUL KALAM)

**S. M. Jain**

7-B, Talwandi

KOTA- 324005





# FOREWORD

by

DR. L.M. SINGHVI, M.P.

Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India

Member, Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Hague

**President, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts Trust**

Formerly India's High Commissioner in U.K.; Chairman,  
High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora.

Shri S. M. Jain is a retired Forest Officer and has worked on many responsible and challenging posts in State Forest Department. With his vast knowledge and experience of forestry, Shri S. M. Jain analyses certain issues relating to Jainism and the Jaina way of life. His analysis leads him to research into what he calls Pristine Jainism.

According to Shri S. M. Jain, Pristine Jainism which emphasised rational activity and good conduct as preached and practised by liberated souls, the *Arhats*, is now overwhelmed by rituals and ostentatious display of wealth in the name of and on the pretext of *Bhakti*. He argues that the precepts of Jainism are simple and are based on scientific principles of cause and effect and on an understanding of the chain of action, reaction and interaction. He makes a plea for rationality in belief, thought and action and a plea for the rejection of rituals and superstitions. He underlines the contradiction between the Jaina concept of *Samyaktva* rooted in an objective and rational perception of reality, *That which Is*, and *Mithyātva* which leads to an unreal and erroneous understanding and conduct. He shows that the Jain doctrine favours *Puruṣārtha* and exhorts against inaction, which Jainism dubs as *Pramāda*. He challenges various forms of ritual worship and interprets Jain teachings in the perspective of scientific rationality at the heart of which is the principle of symbiosis or interdependence of life at all levels and in all its manifestations.

Shri Jain is in his element in his chapter on *Kalpavṛkṣas* (Forests) in Jainism. Marking his point of departure from mythological and canonical literature which attributes “miraculous benevolence” and “superstitious superlatives” to *Kalpavṛkṣas* and tends to identify them with *Adansonia digitata* (the bread trees), Shri Jain takes us to the Jaina tradition expounded by Yati Vṛṣabhācārya in *Tiloyapaṇṇatti* who refers to ten illustrative types of *Kalpavṛkṣas*. To quote from *Tiloyapaṇṇatti*:

पापंग-तूरियंगा भूषण-वत्थंग-भोयणंगा य ।  
आलय-दीविय-भायण-माला-तेजंग-आदि कल्पतरु ॥ २४२॥

[*Tiloyapaṇṇattī*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Part 4<sup>th</sup> Chapter]

Those ten types are *Pāṇāṅga* (yielding liquid products for drinking), *Tūriyāṅga* (giving wood and other material for making musical instruments), *Bhūṣaṅāṅga* (giving material flowers etc for ornamentation), *Vastrāṅga* (giving fibres, dyes, chemicals, gums etc. for clothing etc.), *Bhojanāṅga* (giving edible fruits, seeds, nuts, leaves, flowers etc for food), *Ālayāṅga* (giving timber etc for construction of houses), *Dīpāṅga* (giving material used for fire, lighting), *Bhājanāṅga* (from which material for utensils is available), *Mālāṅga* (giving decorative flowers etc.) and *Tejāṅga* (which protect from harmful radiations of sun). In another verse, Yati Vṛṣabhācārya mentions the bountiful flowering, fruiting and sprouting trees. Shri Jain then points out that in a generic sense *Kalpavṛkṣas* stands for forests and for sustainability. His conclusion is that “preservation of forests is inversely proportional to extension and development for agriculture,” and one may add, the preservation of trees and forests “is also inversely proportional to the extension of concrete jungles which threatens sustainable ecology” *Kalpavṛkṣas* culture in the Jaina tradition should thus be interpreted as sustainable and environment friendly model of forest culture and agriculture.

Shri Jain deals with cyclic changes and explains the Jaina tradition, which questions the idea of an anthropomorphic Creator-God. The question was raised in *Rgveda* also: “if the universe was created then

what for?, From where? Who saw it being created first?” The author explains that, according to Jainism, the universe is without a beginning and without an end. He also annotates the theory of cyclic changes as explained in canonical Jaina literature notably in *Tiloyapaṇṇatti* by Yati Vṛṣabhācārya and in *Ādipurāṇa*. Describing the grim situation in the present era of *Dukhamā*, he describes the agonising problems of human existence and the bewildering predicament of humanity in this period. The Jaina tradition counsels limitation of population, limitation of wants and use of natural resources in accordance with constraints of availability and renewability.

Shri Jain’s chapter on Code of Conduct has a profoundly contemporary relevance and is based on the centrality of the principles of reciprocity and interdependence of all life. He puts to the present generation the question which Gautama, the principal disciple of Lord Mahāvīra, put to the great master:

कहं चरे ? कहं चिद्धे ? कहमासे ? कहं सए ? ।  
कहं भुजंतो भासंतो पावं कम्मं न बंधई ? ॥

*Daśavaikālika-61*

Every individual and the civil society itself should ask the question, which Gautama asked, and we must remember the answer the Lord Mahāvīra gave. Lord Mahāvīra’s answer was: “When you dwell, walk, stay, eat, speak, sleep and live carefully, cautiously and with consideration, you will not be guilty of sin”. That care, caution and consideration for one and all is indeed the *Dharma* of humanity. That is the sheet anchor of Non-violence.

According to the author, “Jainism subscribes to mutualism and opposes predation, parasitism, exploitation and violence in any form. It enjoins on its laity (house holders) and ascetics (monks) strict adherence to code of conduct, revering all forms of life, big and small and prescribing careful, judicious utilisation of gifts of nature with utmost respect for all animate and inanimate constituents of environment.”

Shri Jain explains the concept of meditation in Jainism. He advocates emotional discipline above all and suggests the optimum practice of the five great vows. He explains the *Daśalakṣaṇa Dharma* (Ten Aspects of Religion) which constitute the core of the philosophy, ethics and way of life, which is the heritage of *Śramaṇa* tradition as well as the Vedic tradition. The great Veda Vyāsa, expounds the same ten facets of *Dharma* in *Mahābhārata*. Those ten aspects of *Dharma* are: (1) Forgiveness; (2) Absence of arrogance and false pride; (3) Avoidance of hypocrisy; (4) Avoidance of greed; (5) Cultivation of Truth; (6) Practice of restraint or *Samyama*; (7) Practice of tolerance; (8) Practice of Detachment; Simplicity, Sincerity and avoidance of Egoism; (9) Avoidance of Profligacy and Lust; and (10) Cultivation of Celibacy. Those are the hallmarks of the Jain tradition. It may indeed be described as universal *Dharma*.

Shri Jain also deals with other salient features of Jainism in this book, such as Non-Absolutism (*Anekānta*). Cosmology, Mythology and Parapsychological studies about the soul.

Shri Jain writes forcefully and insightfully about Pristine Jainism. His critical ideas may appear to be radical but they are rooted in his constructive concept of Pristine Jainism. His book deserves thoughtful consideration from the point of view of philosophy and ethics as well as social and doctrinal reforms.



(L.M. SINGHVI)

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## INTRODUCTION

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The scenario as manifest at present and if continues to unfold as of now, is fraught with grim consequences culminating in eventual elimination of the very identity of Jainism. The great religion of *Śramaṇas*, Jainism which emphasised rational activity and not inaction of mind, speech and body (*Pramāda*), good conduct as preached and practised by liberated souls (*Arhats*, *Tīrthaṅkaras*), is now overwhelmed by mere rituals, ostentations and vulgar display of wealth on the pretext of devotion (*Bhakti*) flouting even the basic tenets. The twenty four Tīrthaṅkaras of present *Avasarpiṇī* era starting from Ṛṣabhadeva to Mahāvīra preached the code of conduct, the model of life, the ideals encompassing universal peace and happiness, which they themselves followed, practised and lived. They did not claim to be incarnation of some almighty God, a concept not recognised in Jainism. There is no arrogation of any sort of super powers, magical, mysterious manifestations to allure obeisance of followers. Their precepts are simple and based on scientific principles of cause and effect, action, interaction and reaction. In Jainism every individual soul of all living beings, big and small, high and low, the minutest organisms and mighty ones have all been placed on the same pedestal, all possessing the inherent attributes, strengths to achieve the highest, get eternal happiness (salvation) or ethereal, mundane pleasures of short and long duration or fall to various regressive stages of existence to the lowest forms, suffering agonies of various degrees, according to one's own actions, good or bad.

*Samyaktva* i.e. Rationality in belief, thought and action, is key word in Jainism which implies most appropriate, reasonable attitude and behaviour in a given situation in space time matrix (*Dravya*, *Kṣetra*, *Kāla*, *Bhāva*), conforming to basic tenets. *Samyaktva* and superstition are diagonically opposite. There is no place for superstitious rituals,



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miracles, *mantras*, etc because the principle of *karma*, intrinsic in Jainism clearly lays down that one reaps the fruits of one's own *karma* (actions) good or bad. The bad *karmas* can be mitigated or even neutralised by one's own efforts i.e. good deeds, penance etc. None else can help in this. The role of *Arhats* and other enlightened saints is only to preach the good path they themselves tread. Begging worldly benefits from the idols of Jaina deities is *Mithyātvā* (wrong) and sinful. The liberated souls, the idols of which we worship do not do anything. The only object of worship is to remember their teachings and try to follow them.

Majority of Jains at present does not know these fundamentals and beg worldly benefits from Jaina deities. Jainism lays stress on one's own efforts (*Puruṣārtha*) and not inaction (*Pramāda*) or predetermined destiny by some one else. Our Tīrthaṅkaras opposed mere rituals, *yajñas* etc but these are now common in Jains. The wrong and superstitious practices are becoming more and more popular. Like others, Jains are also succumbing to false concepts that sins will be removed and good luck will dawn just by performing rituals. Ill-earned money is wastefully spent as if 'Dharma' is marketable commodity and can be purchased by money. It requires efforts, sacrifices, penance and good deeds which Jains have started shirking more and more and taken an easier path of rituals which only require money under the patronage of modern pseudo saints who are also now more concerned with personal fame, comforts and money for their various trusts. More and more gullible Jains are taking to rituals than practice of ideals under the illusion that good fate can be purchased by money. Good conduct and rationality have been superseded by rituals and superstitions.

It is unfortunate that Jains, who till recently, only 6-7 decades back, were known and respected for their good and exemplary character, have now almost lost their very identity. Simple practices like meals before sunset, drinking only filtered water have almost been lost. Earlier it was unthinkable that Jains would ever be non-vegetarian, wine-drug-addicts, gamblers, adulterers, tax-evaders (evading tax is theft as per

Jaina tenets) and bad characters. However, all these tendencies, transgressions are common and on the increase now. Till Jains followed the teachings and practised the prescribed code of conduct, people held them in high esteem. Even the non-Jain merry-going, sensuous, licentious Rulers, Nawabs appointed Jains as Ministers and Treasurers because of reputation for good conduct and trust-worthiness. All this is history now. The downfall is because of shift from practice of prescribed vows to mere rituals.

It is necessary to bring out the truth, the pristine form of Jainism, the real, rational and scientific, distinct from superstitions, mysteries and miracles, *mantra-tantra* and superfluous rituals. If the Jains understand the fundamentals and basic tenets of Jainism, the principle of *Karma*, the rational, right path of *Ratnatraya* (three jewels viz. Rational belief, Rational knowledge and Rational conduct) and start following the teachings and practising prescribed code of conduct, the past glory of this unique scientific religion will soon be restored. The objective of writing this brief treatise is to sift rare, valuable grains of truth from bushals of chaff of pseudo-religious beliefs and rituals, which have intruded from time to time and taken deep roots. Readers alone can judge how much successful this effort is.



## SAMYAKTVA (RATIONALITY)

---

### Foremost Prerequisite:

न सम्यक्तत्वसमं किञ्चित्तत्रैकाल्ये त्रिजगत्पि ।  
श्रेयोऽश्रेयश्च मिथ्यात्वसमं नान्यत्तनूभृताम् ॥

*Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvakācāra- 1.34*

[Rationality is most important and there is nothing more beneficial than rationality in belief and thought, knowledge and conduct. Its opposite *Mithyātva* i.e. Irrationality is most harmful]

Rationality (*Samyaktva*) is key word in Jainism, It precedes and is prerequisite in all actions and interactions, beliefs, thoughts and conduct of both laity (householders) and ascetics (Saints). It opposes all sorts of superstitious beliefs, thoughts and activity. Even worship or any other activity done without first inculcating rational attitude is considered useless in Jainism. *Samyaktva* or Rationality implies determination to follow right and rational path in all spheres of activity.

Rational person (*Samyaktvī*) pays obeisance only to enlightened and liberated ones, *arhats* and *siddhas* who are completely unattached (*Vītarāga*), who never claimed to bestow any sort of worldly favours but have only taught the rational, right path they themselves have followed. He follows teachings of true saints only who do not perform any sort of miracles but only show the right path by following it themselves. He follows scriptures based on the preaching of *Arhats* and true saints.

श्रद्धानं परमार्थानामाप्तागमतपोभृताम् ।  
त्रिमूढापोढमष्टाङ्गं सम्यग्दर्शनमस्मयम् ॥

*Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvakācāra 1.4*

Umāsvāmi (Umāsvāti) in his treatise, “*Mokṣa Śāstra (Tattvārtha Sūtra)*” defines rational person as one who believes in the state of

affairs as they are without any bias and is objective rather than subjective. He has to be free from follies of falling prey to the worldly allurements of pseudo Gods, Goddesses, Saints and Scriptures. He practises detachment from sensuous worldly pleasures, tries to moderate, minimise his strong feelings of anger, pride (ego), hypocrisy and greed. He is kind and compassionate to all life forms, serves them with best of his ability to mitigate their sufferings. He is resolute to climb up the ladder to achieve complete salvation as early as possible by taking up vows more and more stringently as prescribed in the code of conduct at various stages of forward march.

### Rational Trinity:

The rational, right path to salvation has been very clearly codified by Umāsvāmi (Umāsvāti) in the very first stanza in his treatise "Tattvārtha Sūtra" or "Mokṣa Śāstra"

सम्यग्दर्शनज्ञानचारित्राणिमोक्षमार्गः ॥१/१॥

[Rational belief, knowledge and conduct all three called Jewels (*Ratnatraya*) combined as if one simultaneously only leads to salvation]

Here in the original Sanskrit stanza there is deliberate grammatical mistake of using मार्गः (Singular) instead of correct मार्गाः (Plural) to emphasise combined simultaneous oneness of the three. There has been tendency to detach particularly conduct (*Cāritra*) and stress only rational belief and knowledge. It is strange that *Samyagdarśana* (Rationality) has been attributed to a non-observer of basic five vows (*Avirati Samyagdr̥ṣṭi*). Ācārya Samantabhadra clearly states in *Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvakācāra* that Jaina householder must observe five vows of Non-violence, Truth, and Non-stealing. Non possession beyond necessity and marital celibacy and should not take non-vegetarian food, alcohol and other drugs and honey:

‘मद्यमांसमधुत्यागैः सहाणुव्रतपंचकम्’

*Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvakācāra* 3.66

(18) : Pristine Jainism

Other saints have even relaxed these essential attributes. This is because of laxity and falling moral standards with passage of time. Surprisingly the meaning of the stanza of Kundakunda's *Samayasāra* on 'Nirjarā (dissipation of karmic matter) has been distorted. Even the enjoyment of sensuous material pleasures by persons endowed with rational belief (*Samyagdarśana*) only and not rational trinity of belief, knowledge and conduct, have been justified as instrumental for getting rid off karmic matter (*Nirjarā*).

**Authenticity of Scriptures:**

In lifetime of Tīrthankara Mahāvīra and subsequently till his omniscient successors (*Kevalī, Śruta-kevalī*) there was no tradition of written scriptures. Knowledge was passed on orally. Scriptures were written later on. The saints who wrote scriptures were not omniscient (*Kevalī*) and therefore could not be as knowledgeable as omniscient beings (*Kevalī*). Knowledge imparted by Mahāvīra Svāmī was very elaborate running into several hundred millions of stanzas classified into twelve branches of knowledge (*Dvādaśāṅga*). Last branch i.e. twelfth one (*Aṅga*) was divided into fourteen sub-branches (*Pūrvas*). It was Dharasenācārya, who first asked his disciples to reduce in writing the little part of immense knowledge he had been able to retain in his memory. He was not omniscient. He knew only a small fraction, only a part (Fourth *Prābhṛta, Prakṛti*) of one Chapter (fifth *Vastu Adhikāra*) of one sub branch (*Agrāyaṇī Pūrva*). The elaborate treatises *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama, Dhavalā, Jaya Dhavalā, Mahā-Dhavalā, Gommaṭtasāra, Labdhisāra*, etc are expansion of small part of vast knowledge, remembered by Dharasenācārya. Likewise, Guṇadharācārya remembered only third *Prābhṛta* (part) of tenth chapter (*Vastu Adhikāra*) of one sub branch (*Jñānapravāda Pūrva*). Treatises like *Pañcāstikāya, Samayasāra, Niyamasāra, Aṣṭapāhuḍa*, etc are expansion of little knowledge retained by Guṇadharācārya. Thus the available Jaina literature is not what omniscient (*Kevalī*) knew and said but only a fraction retained in memory and expanded according to capacity of writers, saints and circumstances they lived in. Therefore, the available knowledge is

not perfect, free from flaws and contradictions as that of omniscient (*Kevalī*). There are contradictions in eminent saints also. A particular saint wrote in a particular situation and his version might be right and relevant in that particular situation. Another saint's version might be different in a different situation. It is interesting to note that readers of Quran are instructed to read different portions with reference to contexts to understand it properly. There are many things, which are relevant for a particular point of time but not for all times. In the string of time-specific pearls of knowledge, there is underlying thread of fundamental principles and tenets, which are relevant for all times and situations. It is necessary to reach this time less thread of knowledge hidden under the glare of time-specific pearls of knowledge. The search is arduous but must. Even the time and situation specific pearls of knowledge, some are genuine and many are fake and illusory. Many concepts which are quite contrary to fundamentals of Jainism have been accepted and incorporated under compulsions and force of prevailing situations because of non-Jaina rulers, Śaivaites and Brahmanical onslaughts and fierce invasions and inhuman atrocities of Śakas, Hūnas, Mohammedan and other invaders.

### **Passive Pseudo Devotion (Bhakti):**

The barbarian invaders inflicted so much atrocities and cruelties that the entire social fabric, its cohesion, social and religious values were almost completely shattered. Shambhaji son of great Maratha Chatrapati Shivaji, who rebelled against his father and joined Mughal army commander Afzal Beg has given a hoary picture of cruelties of Mughal armies. He has written that from wherever the Mughal armies passed, they destroyed, burnt villages after villages, and slaughtered cows, children, and raped women. Seeing these armies coming, people would run helter skelter, try to hide in forests, creeks or wherever possible leaving not only material assets but also their near and dear ones, sons, daughters, wives, sisters, old parents and infirm. In such situation the main concern was own survival as happens generally during fire in a house or village as a first reflex action. The civilised society of the country

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could not believe that human beings could be so cruel. The pessimistic concept that none is ours also has its genesis in these situations. It is against the principle of symbiosis enshrined in tenets of Jainism. The defence system was completely broken, as different small and big rulers were fighting amongst themselves and rather helping the invaders against each other. People at large were so aghast that they did not think of any possible remedy and became so passive and inert that they could not think of doing anything but indulged in pseudo superstitious devotion of various gods and goddesses, praying that these super human being would come and help them. Some individuals or groups of valiant young men who took courage and fought were later on deified and worshipped e.g. *kṣetrapālas* being worshipped almost in all villages must have been such brave young men who would have come out of villages to fight invaders and died at outskirts. There are several recent examples of such deification. Karnimata of Bikaner was a pious lady who helped poor and down trodden, ailing persons, succeeded in reconciliation between two warring states. After her death people started worshipping her not to emulate her good qualities but in illusive hope that she will come and help them. Rani Gangabai, Jeen Mata, Bhatiani Rani etc. are all such examples. The earlier good personalities Rāma, Hanumāna, Kṛṣṇa, Durgā, Vaiṣṇavadevī, and others were likewise really good persons who did a lot for society. To worship these personalities out of reverence is justified only if it is to remember their good deeds and ideals they practised and preached but it is gross superstition if worship is done in hope that they will come to eradicate miseries of people or help or bestow worldly favours. Any student may recite devotional songs of Hanumāna, Rāma or Kṛṣṇa all twenty-four hours but he will not succeed in examination unless he studies his textbooks. But people by and large are superstitious that they want good fortune in life with out good deed and action (*Karma*). The pseudo-devotional rituals are getting more and more popular because of inert attitude and misconception. There are vested interests of selfish pseudo saints and scholars who mislead gullible people and encourage rituals. It

requires efforts to do good deeds (*Karma*) and if people are misled that they will get their wishes fulfilled only by performing rituals and spending money they succumb to the temptation. There are people who will not even perform rituals themselves but give money to professional performers (*Purohitas*) as if religion is a marketable commodity to be purchased by money. Singing of devotional songs, reading *Ramāyana*, *Hanumāna Cālisā*, *Mokṣa Śāstra*, *Bhaktāmara* or others is of little consequence if the intent is only to read or recite as a mere ritual and not to follow the good preaching and code of conduct mentioned in them.

### **Inaction (Pramāda):**

It was because of vicissitudes and repercussions from barbarous invasions in medieval period that India's core philosophy of action (*Karma*) got subdued and pseudo-devotion (*Bhakti*) became dominant, resulting in slavery for several centuries. Ādi-Tīrthānkara Ṛṣabhadeva even before he attained omniscience guided his people by teaching various professions for livelihood viz., *Asī* (weaponry), *Masī* (writing), *Kṛṣī* (planting of trees or agricultural crops), *Vāṇijya* (business), *Vidyā* (knowledge), *Śilpa* (art). The first of these is weaponry for protection of self, family, country and culture. Without capability to protect, all other things are meaningless. History is replete with gallantry of Jaina warriors. Non-violence does not mean cowardice. We should not attack but should be able to defend if attacked. Violence in defence is permissible for laity (householders). Jains have long since forgotten this teaching of Ādi-Tīrthānkara and are not capable to protect mothers, sisters, daughters, families and their culture. Though Jainism strictly forbids such pseudo-devotion to any gods and goddesses and emphasises action (good deeds) for coveted gains, yet Jains too fell prey to it. According to Jainism the liberated souls *Arhats* and *Siddhas*, who are worshipped, are completely detached (*Vītarāga*) and do not do any good or bad for anyone and it is irrational (*Mithyātva*) and sin to attribute action to them, beg favours etc. Yet most Jains indulge in this. Many prayers and songs contain stanzas attributing action and begging material favours from idols of *Arhats* and



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*Siddhas*. It appears Jains have lost faith in teachings of Tīrthāṅkaras, the action-reaction, cause and effect principle (*Karma Siddhānta*) which clearly states that no one can do good or bad to anyone except being catalyst (*Nimitta*) when good or bad deeds fruitify. Even idols of other gods and goddesses like Kṣetrapāla, Padmāvati, Bhawānī, Kālī are worshiped by Jains with more fervour than for Jaina idols. More and more Jains are indulging in irrational and superstitious beliefs and rituals, relying more on astrologers, *mantra-tantra* than on preaching of *Arhats*. If principle of *Karma* as propounded by Tīrthāṅkaras is true then *mantra-tantra* and astrology have no relevance.

### **Occultism:**

There are several historical and practical day to day instances relating to immense harm done to the country and individuals by irrational, unscientific claims of practitioners of occultism and astrologers. Advisors of Rana Sanga of Chittorgarh, the formidable brave warrior cautioned him not to wage war against Babar without proper armoury of canons at least matching with that of the adversary. But *tāntrikas* (practitioners of occultism) misled him by assuring that they would seal, stop canons by their occult powers. It did not happen and Rana Sanga lost the battle in spite of his ten times bigger army. The history of our country was irretrievably changed for slavery over next millennium. Like wise Marathas were superstitiously misled by astrologers not to attack Ahmed Shah Abdali for two months and the result was gradual shortage of rations and defeat of famished though superior army. This also changed the fate of country. The astrological predictions distract people from rational duties and measures. One eminent astrologer calculated his death at a certain point of time after six months and he lived in fear and agony. Somehow the date and time passed. He burnt all his books. Astrology and occultism have done more harms than good. Many people die because of superstitious beliefs in occult practices without proper treatment of several otherwise curable diseases. Snake bites claimed to have been cured by *tāntrikas* are only of non-poisonous snakes. *Tāntrikas* claim that they cure eight out of

ten cases is fictitious because only two who are not cured are cases of poisonous snakes. Sacrifice of mute helpless animals, children of neighbours and even one's own are horrendous horrifying practices by gullible people under the influence of *tāntrikas*. Harassing of women even killing them because of hidden economic reasons on the pretext that these women practice witchcraft, are also examples of superstitious beliefs. The frivolous claims and tricks of these people are being exposed now by devoted rationalist scientists. It is most unfortunate that eminent Jaina saints are also now practising occultism, alluring gullible people by claiming occult powers (*Mantra-tantra*), although they are forbidden to do such things.

### **Ritual of Worship:**

In view of the fundamental principles of Jainism it is difficult to substantiate the genesis of the rituals of worship by eight substances viz. water, sandal, source of light (*Dīpa*), incense (*Dhūpa*), fruits, flowers, food (*Naivedya*) unbroken rice (*Akṣat*). So enlightened, as *Arhats* would have never said that their followers should worship them. They tread on ideal, rational path and ordained their followers to follow it to achieve salvation like them. Therefore it is obvious that prescription for worship did not originate from *Arhats* but was subsequently added by saints who were not omniscient but only mundane beings (*chadmastha*), probably under the influence of the rituals of other sects. The literary meaning of these eight substances is misleading e.g. sandal is metaphorically metonymical for soothing precepts of *Arhats* but it is given up in offering during worship whereas in principle it should be imbibed. But the stanzas in worship are different while offering flowers, which incite sexuality (*Kāma*) and should be forsaken. The literary version is correct in case of flowers but not others water etc. The *Arhats* and *Siddhas* who are worshiped are free from all wants and passions. They do not, require anything. They are neither pleased by offerings nor angry otherwise. The worship ritual is probably a copy of other sects where gods and goddesses

are supposed to be pleased. However, worship though copied has been given connotations according to Jainism for forsaking passions and following righteous path. The offerings are taken by servants (*Mālis*) in temples for their livelihood. But there is no justification for colouring rice etc because it reduces sale prices and harms the interests of servants. Gandhodaka (water from cleaning of idols) is put on head, eyes and other organs by Jains with reverence with false belief that it will cure them or bestow favours. The results may be otherwise as a person with conjunctivitis (eye infection) twice dips his hands, others following him may also get infected with the disease. Devotees even smear their bodies with washings of dirty feet of monks. This is a copy of the practice of taking foot-washings (*Caraṇāmṛta*) in Vaiṣṇavite cult. Pouring of water butter, milk etc on Jaina idols (*Abhiṣeka*) is a common ceremonial practice on various occasions. This is against Jaina principles. Bathing ceremony (*Abhiṣeka*) is done only at the time of the birth of *Tirthankaras* and not even during their ascetic life much less when they attain godhood (*Arhat*). The idols once consecrated are to be revered as *Arhats* and pouring water on these idols is lowering down the status from *Arhat* to child at birth. This is disrespect to *Arhats* and is sin. The practice is certainly imitation of Vaiṣṇavite cult. Cleaning of idols (*Prakṣāla*) as prescribed by squeezed wet cloth is different, as it is necessary to clean dust etc. from idols. The practice of putting big brass bells in Jaina temples is also imitation of other cults. In other cults the belief is that there gods sleep and have to be awakened. In Jainism the gods *Arhats* and *Siddhas* do not sleep and are immune from eighteen weaknesses viz. rebirth, ageing, thirst, hunger, wonder, anxiety, sorrows, illness, painful thoughts, pride, attachment, fear, sleep, worry and sweating. The argument given for ringing bells loudly is that heavenly beings also come in temples and may be visible to some who may get harmed. This is all wrong as even if heavenly beings come, they are Jain and will not harm Jains. Temples should be places of peace and tranquillity for meditation, people here should recite prayers only silently and not disturb others as disturbing others is sin (*Antarāya*

*Karma*). Ringing bells, singing on microphones or using other instruments loudly cause noise pollution and is harmful to users as well as others. In most of religious congregations, processions and festivals the noise levels are much above 45 decibels, mostly 90 to 120 decibels and are harmful, causing deafness, headaches etc.

### Consecration Ceremonies:

Imitative rituals are galore in Jains. The festivities for consecration of idols known as *pañcakalyāṇakas* are performed with much fun, fanfare, fervour and gaiety and is generally a vulgar display of wealth. These do not have any impact (*Prabhāvanā*) on others rather cause animosity, ill-will. There is no logic in the belief that by performing life drama of *Arhats* (Pregnancy, birth, renunciation, and attainment of omniscience and salvation) and reciting of a few hymns or so called *mantras* the stone or metal idols will get endowed with qualities of *Arhats*. It is not true because thieves easily take away these idols. Of course ordinary human beings do need some objects for meditation. The idols of *Arhats* are certainly instrumental in reminding their qualities and preachings. Any idol without superstitious consecration ceremonies will serve the purpose. In Śvetāmbara sect the idols are decorated in exquisite clothing and expensive ornaments on the plea that *Tirthaṅkaras* were from rich, royal families. Śvetāmbaras do agree that the *Tirthaṅkaras* renounced all these except simple unstitched white clothes even as an ascetic. More paradoxical is the behaviour of followers of Sthānakavāsī (*Sādhumārgī*) Śvetāmbara sect, who are against idol worship. They do not worship Jaina idols but of all other gods and goddesses viz., Durgā, Bhairava, Hanumāna, Gaṇeśa etc. It is estimated that about Rs. 100.00 crores are being spent every year by Jains on these consecrations and other festivities. Fabulous amounts of money are spent on construction of gorgeous temples, costly gold paintings and icons of gold and even precious stones worth millions and crores. Anyone living according to Jaina tenets can not be fabulously rich: शुद्धैर्धनैर्विबधन्ते सतामपि न संपदः [*Ātmānuśāsana -45*]. In past and at present only those who earned money by wrong means could

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afford these. Sins of earning ill-gotten money can not be washed off by profligacy of such donations in the name of religion, which is not a marketable commodity. This is a substantial sum of money and should be utilised in helping poor, aged, widows, students, hospitals, drinking water facilities, schools, colleges, vocational training institutes, establishing industries, job centres to create employment. Wasting of amount uselessly in name of religion is sin.

**Tendentious Justification:**

In most festivities and ceremonies not only the large sums of money are spent uselessly and harmful noise pollution is generated but also avoidable violence is inflicted on helpless living-beings ants, plants etc. During these festivities and processions, the devotees dance and walk carelessly, crushing and killing ants etc. This is against the preachings of *Arhats*. It is ordained that one should be careful in walking even lifting articles from one place and placing at other place so that no creature is harmed because of carelessness (*Iryā* and other *Samitis*). On most such occasions flowers are profusely used, showered on processions, saints and idols, painfully on the advice of saints. Plucking flowers is violence (*Himsā*) because it causes not only pain to plants but also is abortion in plants. Flowers are genetic organs responsible for production of fruits and seeds, which is ultimate for all life forms. By removing flowers greatest harm is done not only to plants but also to our agricultural crops. Honey bee, butterflies and numerous such insects and moths help in pollination and hence production of crops. During the periods when there are no agricultural crops, these useful insects live on flowers in gardens, forests and other places. If there are no flowers then the useful insects will perish and thus the production of agricultural crops will be adversely affected. Experiments have shown that production increases by over 25% where honeybee keeping is done. By plucking flowers Janis are violating the vow of non-violence (*Ahimsā*) which is the core practice as prescribed in code of conduct in Jainism. Practice of sacrificial fires (*Havans*) is

also common in Jain rituals. Fire is harmful to insects and is outright violence. Wood used is manufactured dry wood obtained by cutting green trees. Burning fire and offering butter rice etc are in no way instrumental to purify soul. It is only the rational trinity that helps. Saints, scholars and others justifying these wrong and irrational practices start quoting certain scriptures knowing fully well that many scriptures are at variance with fundamentals. Available scriptures are not canonical (*Āgama*) but post canonical (*Āgametara*) written by mundane beings (not *kevalī*), coming from different backgrounds including Brahmanical under different situations and are not correct in all respects. Truth will have to be sifted after examining relevant background and situations of writers. Writer saints had many constraints of lost knowledge after *kevalī-śruta-kevalī* and also compulsion of prevailing situations. Earlier mythological stories (*Purāṇa*) were not written, but when these were getting popular in other sects, Jains also started similar scriptures. There are several aberrations in mythological literature. There has been tendency or compulsion in writers to glorify the victorious rulers and minimise the good deeds of vanquished or even denounce him. There is much ado for Bharata Cakravartī than for Bāhubali when actually by all standards Bāhubali was far superior. Similar is the tendency in case for Rāma and Rāvaṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Jarāsandha, Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas. The compelling situations also forced the then writers to incorporate concepts of other sects also. Readers of Purāṇic literature will come across such obscene and vivid description of eyes and curves of women that there is hitch in reciting them before mothers, sisters and daughters. Such writings are from eminent saints like Jinasena and Guṇadhara, etc. who have themselves denounced and forbade even reading of these because it is transgression of the vow of celibacy. There are numerous examples of glaring contradictions. The point is that all portions of available literature are not truly according to tenets of Jainism. While Jainism lays stress on equality, many saints force devotees to abstain water from *Śūdras*, though it is punishable under law. Likewise, caste based distinction does not confirm

to principles, yet Saints forbid inter-sub-caste marriages even in Agarwal-Khandelwal Jains etc., resulting in many going out of fold.

### **Flouting of Basic Tenets:**

It is really amusing to see devotees dancing feverishly and carelessly, singing loudly during worship and other rituals (various *vidhānas*). This activity not only inadvertently harms small creatures ants etc and causes noise pollution, disturb silent meditators but also violates the prescribed code of conduct. The conduct rules by and large ordain abstention from sensuous pleasures of five senses of touch, taste, smell, vision and hearing. The rational path of religion (*Dharma*) is a continuous war against sensuous temptations to ultimate victory over them and it is the origin of the word *Jina* or “Jaina” i.e. victorious. Dance gives sensuous pleasure to the sense of vision and music and song to the sense of hearing. It is surprising that devotees adopt the path of sensuousness even in religious activity. The argument generally advanced is that all this is legitimate in devotion (*Bhakti*). As a matter of fact *Bhakti* does not give licence to flout basic tenets. It is wrong to justify bad means even for any good or pious purpose. Through vicissitudes of history there have been compulsions for saints to copy and adopt various practices of different sects to satisfy a common lay man who is not learned and does not know higher forms of meditation. Such people who constitute majority are generally attracted by mundane rituals like worship, festivities etc. There was possibility and it has happened that many Jains got swayed away and drifted to other sects. However, the earlier saints were cautious and gave connotations to rituals of worship etc within the parameters of Jaina tenets. Whatever may be the genesis of rituals and their relevance in a particular situation at some point or period of time these should not be perpetuated because they suppress the basic tenets of Jainism which centre round good deeds and conduct. Christianity, Islam and Sikhism came much later than pre-Vedic Jainism, yet they spread far wider with several times larger following than Jainism. These religions did not succumb to tenets and rituals of others, Jainism had continuously

compromised and as of now is more Vaishnavite and Vedic than Jain. It is necessary to examine the epistemology of all rituals, abandon them or modify them according to the fundamental concepts of Jainism. It is unfortunate that the modern pseudo-saints are adopting and copying the rituals from other sects as such. These saints from Brahmanical background have introduced “*Navarātra*” of *Śakti* (Durgā) cult as such and even sweets are offered to Padmāvati idol and distributed to devotees in night. In Jainism even rational (*Samyaktvī*) householder is on a higher pedestal than these gods and goddesses, the Kṣetrapālas, Padmāvati, etc. Saints are on a much higher pedestal. Saints worshipping and decorating such inferior beings is really a travesty. The very identity of Jainism, its rationality is being obliterated systematically by these pseudo saints.

### **Abysmal Degeneration:**

There is so much degeneration because of rituals that the ritualist Jains even justify their violent actions of killing insects while dancing before idols and doing Arties, burning open lamps and incense by asserting that the insects thus killed will be benefited because of death in temples. This is the height of irrational arguments and insolence. Jains by and large are so much entangled in the whirlpool of rituals that they have almost drifted away from the fundamental vows and code of conduct and even do not know about them. Usual scenes at ‘Digambara Jaina Atiśaya Kṣetra, Śrī Mahāvīrajī’ are most revealing. It is the most frequented pilgrimage by Jains not only from all over India but from the world over. Pilgrims perform rituals only for ritual’s sake and beg material things from deity though forbidden in Jainism and without any concern or commitments to teachings of Tīrthankara Mahāvīra. Most people do not take good, hygienic breakfast and meals at restaurants run by the management though at highly subsidised rates but prefer at market places at double the rates late at night to satisfy the lust of tongue (*Rasna Indriya*). Disciplined way of life is the main sermon of Jainism but pilgrims behave in most undisciplined manner, spreading garbage not at specified places but all over, in rooms, paths, varandas, spit pan and *gutkhā* on walls,



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floors of rooms and even in temple premises. Empty wine bottles are frequently found in rooms. Many couples come just for honeymoon. Pilgrims lose temper (*Anantānubandhī Krodha*), abuse and fight with workers on the slightest pretexts. The conduct and lifestyle of pilgrims at Śri Mahāvīrajī mirrors the state of affairs in Jaina Society as a whole.

**Abstract and Practical view points.**

There are two viewpoints mentioned in Jain literature, the abstract (*Niścaya Naya*) and practical (*Vyavahāra Naya*) as complementary to each other and not contradictory. As one advances in knowledge and conduct from lower stages to the higher and higher stages he gains more and more knowledge (understanding) and firmness in character by gradual practical steps (*Vyavahāra Naya*). It is only at the highest stage of *Arhats* that perfection is attained and nothing remains to be done or practised. *Arhats* and eventually *Siddhas* are in abstract stage (*Niścaya Naya*) in the highest and the purest form of soul. The array of rational practical steps or stages (in belief, knowledge and conduct) culminate in abstract, the highest one. The nomenclature of abstract viewpoint as *Niścaya Naya* is later development, originally it was pure view point (*Śuddha Naya*).

ववहारोऽभूदत्यो भूदत्यो देसिदो दु सुद्धणओ ।

*Samayasāra* - 1.13

[ *Vyavahāra Naya* is not important; *Śuddha-naya* is relevant]

Such a statement discarding practical viewpoint by Ācārya Kundakunda is perplexing because in earlier stanza of *Samayasāra* he has himself stated the importance of practical viewpoint (*Vyavahāra Naya*). As he maintains:

तहववहारेण विणा परमत्थुवदेसणमसवकं ॥

*Samayasāra* - 1.8

It is not possible to preach path of salvation without *Vyavahāra Naya*. Just in the next stanza No. 14, he forbids preaching by abstract viewpoints to individuals advancing on rational path for salvation till they attain complete knowledge and perfect conduct.

*Arhat* stage is only such a stage and for whom only there is relevance for abstract viewpoint (*Śuddha Naya*).

सुद्धो सुद्धादेसो णादव्वो परमभावदरिसीहिं ।  
ववहारदेसिदो पुण जे दु अपरमे द्विदाभावे ॥

*Samayasāra - 1.14*

There appears to be significant impact of Brahmanical cults which was on the rise, suppressing others by various temptations and even force. *Brahma* (the pure and real) and *Māyā* (the mirage and unreal) were main facets “ब्रह्मसत्य जगन्मिथ्या”. Kundakunda tried to synthesise the pure abstract (*śuddha*) and the practical (*Vyavahāra*). He gave supremacy to *śuddha* and simultaneously cautioned the followers for it till they attain perfection denouncing *Vyavahāra* and by glorifying *śuddha*, he must have satisfied the then powerful Brahmanical cult and simultaneously emphasising the importance of *Vyavahāra* he has adhered to the principle of *Anekānta* of Jainism.

The controversy has however been started recently by Songarh School and it is raging fiercely without any hope of reconciliation. They quote and swear by Kundakunda but do not try to read his verses in correct perspective. The tragic set back and fall out of relevance of *śuddha* or *Niścaya-naya* is that from the fundamental trinity of belief, knowledge and conduct only first two are emphasised and the third conduct has been relegated and almost abandoned. It is conduct, which is manifest and gives real identity to a Jaina. It is necessary to restore the rational concept of trinity, which is indivisible and a unified whole. Unfortunately in *Samayasāra* by Kundakunda *Samyagdr̥ṣṭi* (endowed with rational belief only and not indivisible trinity of belief, knowledge and conduct) has been so much glorified that he is said to be not only immune from karmic influx but is getting rid of karmic matter even while enjoying sensuous pleasures. It is height of moral laxity and against conduct rules. It is solipsism and not Jainism.

### **Omniscience over-stretched**

*Arhat Kevali* are omniscient, knowing everything that can be known and nothing relevant is outside their purview. They are without any sort of attachment or bias (*Vitarāga*), do not have passions at all and have perfect conduct with out any flaw. Such perfect ones attain omniscience. In the course of their endeavour on path of salvation they meditate, ponder over all aspects of life, analyse, synthesise, evolve, and follow the rational path. They cover and grasp the whole spectrum and are thus omniscient. This is logical and should be accepted as such.

The problem is that omniscience has been over stretched so much so that destiny and all activities (*Paryāyas*) of all animate and inanimate objects have become as if pre ordained. They are attributed the omniscience of all-future activities good or bad. Whatever was done being done and will be done by a particular soul in entire endless span is already known to them. An *Arhat Kevali* millions of years ago had already known entire future of every body. This knowledge of *Kevali* can not be wrong, whatever they have known must happen. A particular individual got the opportunity of *Arhat*'s audience and asks his future and is told that he will commit murder at some point of time in future. He repents and wants to strive to follow good conduct but he can not because omniscience as interpreted has already pre ordained the entire future conduct of every one. This is against the basic principle of Jainism that by following rational trinity by one's own determined effort (*Puruṣārtha*) one can attain salvation. Effort and action (*Karma*) good or bad are in one's own power and non else can interfere. The one god theory attribute all actions of every one to the will of one supreme god and thus all souls are thus puppets dancing, performing on the strings being pulled by the god. Thus no body is responsible for any thing good or bad. If *kevalis* are attributed to know all future actions and whatever has been known can not be altered, then it is almost the same thing as universal control of one god. There whatever done is by his will and here whatever done is as has already been known.

### Competitive Glorification of Deity:

There appears to be a serious aberration in the interpretation of omniscience of *kevalī*. If it is over-stretched to the point of pre-ordained destiny then the whole edifice of effort (*Puruṣārtha*) crumbles down and all preaching for good rational conduct will become irrelevant. As a matter of fact *kevalī* having attained the purest and highest state are *Vītarāga* and do not predict any body's future.

जाणादि पस्सदि सव्वं ववहार णयेण केवली भगवं ।  
केवलणाणि जाणदि पस्सदि नियमेण अप्पाणं ॥

*Niyamasāra*-159

Kevalins know all substances is subject matter of mundane view point or *Vyavahāra Naya*. In fact and truly by *Niścaya Naya*, they know and enjoy only the attributes of their purified souls. They only preach path of rational trinity for salvation. The over-stretching of omniscience of *kevalī* is the result of competitive enthusiasm of the followers of different sects to adorn their deities with more and more superior powers. This may also be due to growing laxity and even apathy towards pursuing good conduct. Such over-stretched concepts provide an easy excuse to ignore good, pious conduct on the plea that one is helpless as one is doing only whatever is preordained (*Niyativāda*) as per futuristic omniscience of *kevalī*. Such over-stretching is not at all in tune with the fundamental tenets of Jainism. *Arhat Kevalins* are not soothe sayers or future tellers. They can not be pessimistic and sadistic to frighten or placate the mundane souls by telling them their bad or good future. Rationality enjoins on Jains to discard the over-stretched concept of omniscience. Acceptance of untimely death (*Akāla Mrtyu*) and *Anekānta* (non-absolutism), justifying both orderly sequence and not (*Krama - Akrama*), timely and not (*Kāla-Akāla*), pre-ordained and not (*Niyat-Aniyat*) etc in Jainism also repudiate the over-stretched concept of omniscience, particularly the pre-ordained destiny. Dr. Sandeep Jain of *Prakrit Vidyā*, New Delhi has quoted the following verse in his article

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published in *Adhyātma-Parva. Patrika*, August-October' 97 issue, mentioning that only *Siddhas* are *kevalī*. *Siddhas* do not come to preach or tell the future.

सीलेसिं संपत्तो णिरुद्ध-णिस्सेस आसवो जीवो ।  
कम्मरय-विप्पमुक्को गय जोगो केवलि होदि ॥

*Gommaṭasāra - Jīvakāṇḍa 65*

There is another inexplicable and illogical assertion in scriptures about the speech and sermons of *Arhat* Tīrthaṅkaras in the futile zeal to glorify them. It is mentioned that they are so detached and unconcerned that they do not at all intend to speak or deliver sermons. It is special sound particulate atoms (*Divya-dhvani*) which automatically start emanating and spreading and getting transformed in different languages to be understood by all present. If it is so then it can not have the erudition of omniscience. The requirement of principal special capable scholar disciples (*Gaṇadhara*s) signifies that they were interpreters of one language into different languages. Instead of logical and scientific explanations, there is more emphasis and indulgence in abstract superstitious interpretations. Such zeal for glorification should also be not over stretched in order to justify rationality of Jainism.



# SYMBIOTIC ASPECTS OF JAINISM

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## **Cardinal principle:**

Symbiosis or mutualism is the core principle of principles, basis of life, peace and harmony in all animate and inanimate constituents of nature. If a group of people or other living beings interact amongst themselves or other groups for mutual benefit in give and take, it is symbiosis or mutualism. Its opposite is predation when individuals in a group or groups and other groups harm or inflict injury to others for its selfish gain. The honeybee extracts nectar from flowers of plants for its use but simultaneously helps plants in facilitating pollination. This is symbiosis. A hunter for its selfishness kills the prey. This is predation. Imagine a group of people living by helping, co-operating each other. Their life will be peaceful and happy. In contrast if another group lives exploiting each other, then all will be unhappy, more and more miserable and eventually it will be suicidal for all. Nature is basically symbiotic and in its environmental manifestations, the multitudinous constituents both animate and inanimate are intricately interwoven and interact with delicately balanced precise and intrinsic interdependence. It is like an organism, the human body or a complex sophisticated machine. In a human body there are a few hundred trillion cells and each cell is in itself a complete living entity with respiratory, digestive and waste discharge functions, but each cell work for all the trillions of cells and all cells work for each cell. Malfunctioning of a single cell against this orderly system will result in cancerous calamity killing the cell itself and the whole organism. Likewise proper functioning of every part in a machine is necessary for all other parts and vice versa. Each for all and all for each is fundamental for stability, health and progress of one and whole. The very basis of evolution of life is symbiosis, congenial environment. Scientists are unanimous about it that even unicellular spark of life would

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have not been possible, had there been the slightest unfavourable physical or chemical behaviour of any of the constituents in ambient environment. The unicellular foetus develops into complex body only under congenial symbiotic environment in the womb.

**Mature and Stable Systems:**

All mature and stable systems are symbiotic. Predation, parasitism, amensalism, competition, neutralism, commensalism, proto-co-operation are transitory, unstable stages in the ascending and descending process of succession and retrogression. As Eco-systems evolve to maturity and stability, the negative interactions predation, parasitism etc are replaced by neutralism, commensalism and ultimately by mutualism or symbiosis. It is unfortunate that positive interactions and associations between species have been under estimated. The acceptance of Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest has directed attention to competitive aspects of nature and positive interactions have not been subjected to as much quantitative study as the negative interaction. The Darwinian concept needs scrutiny and more objective study with fair share of emphasis on positive and co-operative aspects. Eminent Scientist William Thompson Kelvin opposed the views expounded by Charles Darwin. Even at present when predatory trends are on the increase, there are numerous examples of co-operation and mutualism viz., plants and nitrogen fixing bacteria (bacteria feed on plants but make it capable of fixing nitrogen directly from air), micorrhiza (behaviour of fungus same as bacteria), plants and insects (such as honey bee and other insects helping the plants in pollination), lichens (algae and fungi live in perfect mutualism), crabs and coelenterates (harmonious relationship), ungulates and ruman bacteria (bacteria help animals in their digestive process), bacteria in human colon (digestion of food is not possible without the help of these bacteria in human colon), termites and intestinal flagellate, ants and fungi, remora fish and sharks (small remora fish enter the mouth, feed and clean teeth of ferocious sharks) , Crocodile and crocodile bird, animals and birds, plants and birds and many other associations in different Eco-systems.

Predation, parasitism is annihilating for both the predator and its prey. Man as predator hunter realised this and took up domesticating the animals instead of hunting which would have first annihilated the prey (animals) and then man also. During *Sukhmā-Sukhmā* (Happy-Happy) era of Kalpavṛkṣas (Natural and mixed Poly-culture forests) all living organisms and inanimate constituents functioned in harmony for mutual benefit. There was nothing like harmful bacteria, fungi or insects etc. It is human interference and antagonism that has made many a life form harmful in the same way as we turn our even close friends into enemies by our behaviour. Even carnivora like tigers etc. were not killers but scavengers as there were enough naturally dead bodies. With the advent of agriculture man considered trees, wild animals, birds, rodents, insects etc adverse and went on destroying them, thus turning many life-forms antagonistic. The process is continuing and rather accentuating with increasing use of poisonous pesticides which kill not so-called harmful pests but even those which are beneficial.

### **Social Problems:**

Aberrations from this fundamental principle of symbiosis which symbolises maturity, stability, peace and prosperity for one and all, is root cause of all troubles, conflicts, tensions, social, national and international. Symbiosis is a pleasant barter system in nature between one and all. Predation, parasitism, exploitation leads to more and more alienation, individualism, atomisation and ultimately suicidal. When one gets alienated from rest, he loses holistic long-term perception and then indulges in narrow minded, short-sighted individual gains at the cost of others. All types of corruption, bribery, adulteration, pollution, conflicts, wars, treason, terrorism, exploitation, crimes, thefts, robberies etc. are result of such alienation. It is because of alienation of an individual or a group from others that selfish greed supersedes all other considerations. An industrialist does not bother about pollution from his industry's effluents, produces substandard materials. Even pharmacies manufacture fake drugs and their owners are insensitive to others' loss of life. Engineers



take bribes and condone substandard materials and specifications even in construction of important dams, bridges, hospitals etc. Forest officers, who know best about importance of forests, become instrumental in their destruction for selfish gains. Teachers drawing fat salary do not teach in classes but at home tuitions to fatten their purse with black money. Inspectors do not inspect to check irregularities but go round to collect weekly or monthly gratifications. Policemen do not protect but are partners of thieves, dacoits and criminals. Judges do not impart justice and are being lured like others to monetary considerations. There is growing corruption in the purchase of army equipment and even in rations of soldiers. Traders generally indulge in adulteration. The breaking of our age-old joint family system is an agonising trend. The instability of elected Governments because of defections is because of personal ego and selfish considerations. The so-called leaders have encouraged infiltration from neighbouring countries for augmenting their vote banks, though it has created problems for the country. Even border security personal took bribes to allow infiltrators and revenue and forest officials helped in their permanent settlement. All these aberrations are because of growing individualism, alienation and insensitiveness to harm and loss to others.

### **Symbiotic concepts of Jainism**

Jainism subscribes to mutualism and opposes predation, parasitism, exploitation and violence in any form. It enjoins on its laity (house holders) and ascetics (monks) strict adherence to code of conduct, revering all forms of life, big and small and prescribing careful, judicious utilisation of gifts of nature with utmost respect for all animate and inanimate constituents of environment. According to Jainism the universe comprises six substances (*Dravyas*) viz., *Jīva* (all life forms), *Pudgala* (all inanimate matter), *Dharma* (substance instrumental in motion), *Adharma* (substance instrumental in stay), *Ākāśa* (all space) and *Kāla* (time). The following excerpts from chapter V of *Tattvārtha Sūtra (Mokṣa Śāstra)* by Ācārya Umāsvāmi, which is one of the most authentic and accepted canonical literatures emphasise the mutuality (symbiotic existence) of all six substances.

गतिस्थित्युपग्रहो धर्माधर्मयोरुपकारः ॥ ५.१७

*Dharma* and *Adharma* substances are instrumental for motion and stay of *Jīva* and *Pudgala* and it is their benevolence.

आकाशस्यावगाहः ॥ ५.१८

*Ākāśa* i.e. space gives place to all

शरीरवाङ्मनःप्राणापानाः पुद्गलानाम् ॥ ५.१९

सुखदुःखजीवितमरणोपग्रहाश्च ॥ ५.२०

*Pudgala* i.e. matter is instrumental for the formation of body, speech, mind and also for happiness misery and the life and death of *Jīva*. The doctrine of *Karma* in Jainism is based on the principle of interaction between soul, matter and environment. The manifestation of soul in passions, commissions and omissions, good or bad, interact and imbibe subtle matter which in turn then conditions the inherent cognitive and intuitional properties of soul and resultant manifestation of passions and deeds in relation to ambient environment. Thus *Jīva* (Soul) and *Pudgala* (matter) interact and influence mutually the actions and reactions

परस्परोपग्रहो जीवानाम् ॥ ५.२१

All life forms are for mutual benefit i.e. even the smallest life forms have beneficial role for the complex whole and therefore must be revered and protected

वर्तना परिणामः क्रिया परत्वापरत्वे च कालस्य ॥ ५.२२

*Kāla* i.e. time is flowing reality and is instrumental for various actions, interaction of *Jīva* (Soul) and *Pudgala* (matter)]

Even the liberated souls (*Muktātmā*) in the highest and purest state (*Siddha* State) are symbiotic and considerate towards similar other souls. According to Jainism these liberated souls live in eternal peace in a limited space at *Siddhaśilā* (abode of liberated ones) at the top of Universe. There are innumerable (*Ananta*) souls and more and more go on joining

them with the passage of time. Though space is limited but there is no problem as each one soul can give space to innumerable other souls within its own space (dimensions) because of its intrinsic infinite power of permeability (*Avagāhana Śakti*). They give space even to the lowest life forms (*Nigodiyas*). This is an extreme example of symbiosis and co-operation.

### **Misconceptions:**

It is unfortunate that recent interpretation of principle of Jainism by some, particularly the Songarh school of thought does not accept this fundamental principle of symbiosis enshrined in authentic texts. They go to so funny and illogical extent saying such things that potter does not make pots and soil takes shape only because of its own intrinsic property. They assert that no substance can influence other. They do not accept even killings as violence and quote:

जो मण्णदि हिंसामि य हिंसिज्जामि य परेहिं सत्तेहिं ।  
सो मूढो अण्णणी, णणी एत्तो दु विवरीदो ॥

*Samayasāra - 262*

The person who subscribes to the belief that he can kill others and that others can kill him is wrong.

Such quotes will be misleading and give a wrong message to people in general and at large. Apparently this is against the very principle of non-violence, which is one of the five vows mandatory for householders as well as saints.

However, they do not take poison, as they know its effect and they do take medicines for cure of diseases, thus contradicting their own interpretations. The enlightened ones the Tīrthaṅkaras were great thinkers and analytical. Whatever they have stated is perfectly logical and rational. The principle of *Anekānta* (non-absolutism) is unique and synthesises logically different views. According to Jainism the actions and interactions are because of inherent properties or qualities defined as *upādāna* which

manifests with the help of *nimitta* i.e. ambient environmental factors. Pots can not be made of pure sand and soil with required property is necessary. This property is *upādāna* but help of the potter is necessary which is *nimitta*. Things move because of their capability but do so by the assistance of *Dharma Dravya*.

Another misconception about Jainism is that it is individualistic or introvert. No doubt Jainism lays stress on purification and upliftment of self or individual because unless the individual himself follows principles of Jainism, he is not competent to help others. This is not introversion but a prerequisite to attain competence. One who can not help himself can not help others. The enlightened ones, *Arhats*, attain the highest degree of purification and do not need any more effort for further individual gains. But they preach to help mundane souls. Had they been introverts, they would not be preaching at all. The *Arhat* idols are always in posture of eyes half-closed and half-open, indicative of unique synthesis of self and universe. *Arhats* do not shut their eyes from the world but keep eyes half open for consideration of well being of other souls also. The basic tenets, principles and prescribed code of conduct in Jainism centres round the fundamental principle of symbiosis and neither introversion nor extroversion.



# KALPAVRKṢAS (FORESTS) IN JAINISM

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## Myth or real:

In the next chapter while discussing cyclic changes it would be observed that the role of Kalpavrṛkṣas, their protection and destruction by people is central in ascending and descending, progressive or regressive (retrogratory) processes. It is therefore, important to know more about these Kalpavrṛkṣas (Forests) as mentioned in Jaina literature. Both mythological and canonical literature of almost all ancient religions of India are replete with miraculous benevolence of Kalpavrṛkṣas. Generally with the exception of Jaina literature, the term 'Kalpavrṛkṣa' is for a particular tree namely *Adansonia digitata* (the bread tree). What actually was nomenclature for good poly-culture forests comprising variety of trees, yielding various products catering, satisfying needs of people, became, through passage of time, with superstitious superlatives, attribute for this particular tree species, being worshipped as supernatural one, believed superstitiously as bestowing favours, fulfilling requested wants of worshippers. This is fallacious and a travesty of human mind. It so happens that some one starts worshipping any object on heresy or under influence of vested interest, pseudo saint or else and gets benefited because of fructification of past or present good deeds (Karmas), he starts propagating, advocating which spreads and gradually gets acceptance from larger numbers. The fact is that all worshippers or devotees do not get their wishes fulfilled. Only whose *Karmas* fructify, get benefited. But even if ten percent benefit the multiplier effect is overwhelming. Every body knows that all devotees going to Vaishnodevi, Tirupati or elsewhere are not benefited but instead many suffer losses and even meet death in accidents. Jainism in principle does not subscribe to any sort of superstition but unfortunately more and more gullible Jains are succumbing to false temptations. This is because of ignorance of even the principal tenets of

Jainism. Ignorant people are generally lazy (*Pramādi*) and want easy gains without efforts and are therefore misled by mischievous manipulators, cheats and even pseudo saints. It needs arduous efforts to do good deeds, reduce wants and follow righteous path to earn good luck (*Karma*). People shirk it, fall prey, and suffer.

In Jaina literature Kalpavṛkṣa is not one particular tree but all tree species grouped in ten broad categories. In *Tilloyapaṇṇatti* by Yati Vṛṣabhācārya there is mention of ten types of Kalpavṛkṣas (trees) ;

पाणंगतूरियंगा भूसणवत्थंगभोयणंगा य ।  
आलयदीवियभायणमालातेजंगआदिकप्पतरू ॥

*Tilloyapaṇṇatti*, 2nd Part 4th Chapter, verse 242

The ten types are *pānāṅga* (yielding liquid products for drinking), *Tūryāṅga* (giving wood and other material for making musical instruments), *Bhūṣaṅāṅga* (giving material flowers etc for ornamentation), *Vastrāṅga* (giving fibres, flosses, dyes, chemicals, gums etc. for clothing), *Bhojanāṅga* (giving edible fruits, seeds, nuts, leaves, flowers etc for food), *Ālayāṅga* (giving timber etc for construction of houses), *Dīpāṅga* (giving material used for fire, lighting), *Bhājanāṅga* (from which material for utensils is available), *Mālāṅga* (giving decorative flowers etc), *Tejāṅga* (which protect from harmful radiations of sun).

It is significant to note the word 'etc' 'आदि' i.e. there are other types also. Though forests (trees) have been destroyed over vast areas and many species are even extinct, yet the remnant existing forests have types of trees mentioned above which if preserved, developed and propagated, the era of Kalpavṛkṣa, the *Sukhamā* (Happy), and even *Sukhamā*-*Sukhamā* (Happy -Happy) State can be achieved, the descending cycle can be stopped and reversed to ascending (progressive) order. Time can be arrested and sustainable stable conditions established as cited in the case of some areas mentioned in next chapter.

**Kalpavṛkṣas are Vegetation and not Earth-form:**

Though the description of Kalpavṛkṣas in Jaina literature is almost same as in modern Botany (Science of plants, trees), yet there are some aberrations. According to various descriptions Kalpavṛkṣas are vegetation form (*Vanaspati-kāya*) but have been put under earth form (*Prthvī-kāya*).

तब्बाहिरे असोयं सत्तच्छदचंपचूदवण पुण्णा ।

णियणाणातरुजुत्ता चेड्ढंति चेततरुसहिदा ॥

*Tiloyapaṇṇatti*, Ist Part, 3rd Chapter, verse - 31

विविहंकुरुचेंचइया विविहफला विविहरयण परिणामा ।

छत्रादि छत्रजुत्ता घंटाजालादि रमणिज्जा ॥

*Tiloyapaṇṇatti*, Ist Part, 3rd Chapter, verse - 36

तीए गुंछा गुम्मा, कुसुमंकुर फल पवाल परिपुण्णा ।

बहओ विचित्त वण्णा रुक्ख-समूहा समुत्तुंगा ॥

*Tiloyapaṇṇatti*, Ist Part, 4rd Chapter, verse - 323

In the above stanzas there is mention of fruiting, leaves, sprouting and even names of trees, found even today. This categorically proves that Kalpavṛkṣas were factually trees (*Vanaspati-kāya*), but have been erroneously or superstitiously or metaphorically put under earth form (*Prthvī-kāya*) in metonymical style so typical of literature of that period or it may be an indication of the stone-age (*Pāṣāṇa-kāla*) tradition. It may be more because of competitive superstitions, which was prevailing, dominating in other religions and sects and more and more people, were drifting away from rational and scientific Jainism. To overcome this the Jain writers also added superstitions, miracles in their writings. The Kalpavṛkṣas were put under earth-form and miraculous properties of giving whatever was desired was attributed to them. This may be compulsion of those times, but was wrong as factually the Kalpavṛkṣas were trees (vegetation) and not stony (*Prthvī-kāya*). Such reconciliations and yielding to pressures and circumstances have done more harms than good for Jainism because this has diluted and distorted its scientific and rational virtues.

**Birth of agriculture:**

Preservation of Kalpaṛkṣas (Forests) is inversely proportional to extension and development of agriculture. There are different theories about the beginning of agricultural practices. One is that destruction or depleting number of Kalpaṛkṣas by greedy people and increasing imbalance in demand of increasing population and decreasing supply of required products from shrinking forests (Kalpaṛkṣas) necessitated search of an alternate source of supplies. People in different periods sought advice of wiser people to find solution of their problems from time to time. There is mention of such wiser people called *Manus*. There were fourteen *Manus* before Ādi Tīrthaṅkara Ṛṣabhadeva. His father Nabhi Rāja was the last *Manu*. By the time of Ṛṣabhadeva forests (Kalpaṛkṣas) had extensively been destroyed and the supply (yield) of food and other products have dwindled. In Jaina literature credit for discovery of agriculture, the alternate source of supplies is attributed to Ṛṣabhadeva.

The other theory is that during the period when people depended solely on forests (Kalpaṛkṣas) for their supplies of all necessary requirements, they would be going round the forests near their habitations, generally near rivers or other water source, and collecting products. It is presumed in scientific parleys that seeds of some grasses wheat, rice or else collected by some ancestor of ours might have fallen on ground near his house. He must have observed the sprouting of these few seeds and subsequent flowering, fruiting and seeding. He would have then reflected that it is easier and less cumbersome to grow edible seeds at one place than take the trouble of going round the dwindling forests to increasing distances.

**Animal Husbandry:**

Scientific evidences indicate that history of agriculture is only eight to ten thousand years old. In the beginning the first Palaeolithic mankind was solely dependent on forests. It was only subsequently because of



depletion of forests that the Neolithic man became partially hunter. In this era also wise men cautioned against hunting which if continued would eliminate the prey and eventually the hunter also because he was dependent on the prey. Therefore, Neolithic man who took to hunting subsequently evolved wiser and adopted domestication of animals or animal husbandry which was symbiotic i.e. mutually beneficial for both man and animals. Animals were reared, cared and fed properly and in return provided milk, butter wool and other useful products. It saved the prey, the animals from decimation by hunting and man then dependent on hunting.

### **Mythological Wars (Deva-Asura Saṅgrāma):**

In his research thesis, “*Harappa Culture and Vedic Literature*” Bhagwan Singh has elaborately discussed the conflicts between the then agriculturist and non-agriculturist societies, known as *Sura* and *Asura* or *Deva* and *Rākṣasa* respectively. *Sura* is from ‘*Su*’ which denotes activity to produce. *Asura* is opposite of *Sura*. *Sura* and *Asura* later on became synonym of *Deva* & *Rākṣasa* respectively. *Sura* or *Deva* adopted agriculture for livelihood while *Asura* or *Rākṣasa* were dependent on remaining natural forests. *Rākṣasa* is from the word “*Rakṣa*”. *Asura* and *Rākṣasa* were for protection of natural forests while *Suras* or *Devas* were cutting, clearing and burning more and more forest areas for extending their agriculture. The practice of sacrificial fires (*Havana*) is reminiscent of this. The infinite number of battles mentioned in mythological literature is between these two groups. The *Asuras* or *Rākṣasas* were not defeated by superior valour, power or armoury of *Suras* or *Devas* but because *Devas* cleared and burnt the natural forests which was the source of food and other supplies for *Rākṣasa*.

### **Reconciliatory advice:**

It was intervention by the genius and towering personality like Ṛṣabhadeva that reconciliation in two ferociously warring groups was worked out. Agro-forestry was devised and extensive belts of trees were planted along with agriculture in such a manner and direction that the

shade of tree belts did not effect the agricultural crops. The recent detailed research and study of Harappa and Sindhu culture have also proved the existence of practice of agro-forestry by Harappans. Agro-forestry was adopted during Second World War also for raising compensatory plantations free of cost. Forestland was given to landless people to plant tree species and grow agricultural crops also in the rows of trees till such time about 5-6 years trees start shading the crops. It was known as *Taungya* System and is taught in forest colleges.

Rḷḷabhadeva was apostle of *Ahimsā* (Non-violence) and could not have advised cultivation of cereals and other crops which require tilling, sowing, weeding, watering repeatedly for every crop of 3 to 4 months duration. Agriculture practices entail lot of *Himsā* (violence) in tilling, sowing etc. Even Daulat Ram, the Jaina poet of previous century only has also described not only practising but advising agriculture as sin in his famous treatise *Chahḷdhālā*.

देय न सो उपदेश, होय अघ बनज कृषि तै ।

Stanza II, Ḍhāla. IV

Do not advise agriculture, as it is sin.

कर प्रमाद जल, भूमि, वृक्ष पावक न विराधे ।

असि, धनु, हल हिंसोपकरणं नहिं दे यश लाधे ॥

Stanza 12, Ḍhāla. VI

Do not damage water, soil, trees, and fire and do not give arms, bows and arrows, plough etc., which are instruments of violence

Agriculture is generally interpreted as planting of short-term crops but it is temporary agriculture. Planting of trees is also agriculture and is termed permanent agriculture or permaculture. Panicked by dwindling supply of food and other products from diminishing forests (Kalparḷḷas) people then must have sought advice of Rḷḷabhadeva and he might have suggested agro forestry as both short and long-term solution. People needed food and growing short-term crop i.e. temporary agriculture was

the only solution. Simultaneously planting of trees must have also been advised. Once the mixed poly-culture forests yielding variety of food and other products started flowering and fruiting, temporary agriculture could be stopped. Prompted by the concept of Kalpavṛkṣas author prepared a project, “Human Nutrition from Forest Seeds” which was sanctioned by the Department of Science and Technology and Sneh Sharma has evaluated the nutritional status of forest seeds in her Ph.D. thesis. It was found that edible forest seeds are more nutritious than the cereals. Because of uncertainties in agriculture due to climatic and other natural vagaries, numerous superstitions flourished with it and then in other spheres.

### **Harmful Impact of Agriculture:**

The known history of humankind and even mythology and prehistoric records are replete with stories of conflicts, wars and misery to one and all. Saner persons Jains and others all through ages have been striving for mitigating the sufferings. These great thinkers evolved life styles and code of conduct, practised, lived themselves, and advised people to follow it. But for the sobering impact of good saints and sages the picture would have been much more cruel and sombre. They have all stressed symbiotic relationships, mutualism not only among human beings but all living beings and even physical resources i.e. principle of give and take in such a way that it benefits both the giver and taker, limiting, minimising sensuous pleasures, wants, greed and suicidal consumerism. The cyclic changes, descending and ascending are in direct proportion to man’s greed and vice-versa. It was the greed of man that destroyed the forests (Kalpavṛkṣas) and necessitated development and extension of agriculture. This changed the living pattern from commonality to individualism. With agriculture came the concept of individual property and ownership and the resultant feuds. *Rākṣasas* the sections of people who protected forests and lived on naturally available resources were gradually defeated and annihilated. The practice of agriculture gained primacy, more and more extensive areas of forests were cleared and converted into agricultural fields. We read of *Khāṇḍavadāha* (burning and clearing of forests) in *Mahābhārata*. The process continued till recently

in India, U.S.A. and all over the world and people were given liberal incentives to clear and convert forestlands into agriculture fields. Even now there are large-scale encroachments on remnant forests because of pressure of population, vested interests of miners, industrialists and conniving politicians and bureaucrats.

In a situation when there is little or no food supply available from depleted or destroyed forestland, agriculture was necessary as a short-term solution. But continuing dependence on agriculture, its extension has proved disastrous. There is yet no agricultural technology evolved so far which does not damage land. Tilling of land loosens soil and makes it prone to wind and water erosion. The irrigation system dams etc big and small change the chemistry of soil, which inflict people with various diseases. In mad race for agriculture it was extended and is continuing on steep slopes without terracing in tribal areas. The tribal could not eke out their existence on diminishing yields from agriculture on slopes and have been resorting to cutting trees. Most of landscape, the hills all over the country are naked and at many places bare rocks after erosion of entire soil cover. The modern high-tech agriculture has proved much more harmful. The indiscriminate use of chemical fertilisers and poisonous pesticides have polluted air, soil and water systems both surface and underground. The fertility of soil is constantly decreasing because micro fauna of the soil, which maintains fertility, has been almost decimated. Soils now require more and more doses of chemical fertilisers crop after crop. The residual pesticides in cereals, fruits and vegetables are slowly poisoning human system, blood, tissues and has reached even in chromosomes and genes, threatening with dire consequences. The harmful effect of high-tech agriculture, started with many fanfares, has manifested within 3-4 decades. The western countries, which started it, are now going back to organic agriculture and have banned several chemicals. However, developing countries and more so India is continuing the use of disastrous chemicals like DDT, BHC, Aldrin etc. Many beneficial species of birds and insects are getting extinct. Modern agriculture require profuse irrigation which has depleted water resources and over a major

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part of the country water table has receded alarmingly up to 1500' in Gujrat etc. There is water famine and even drinking water is scarce. At places like Chakrota and Manali etc. in Himalayas clean water would gush out just by inserting a small pipe anywhere on slopes but now there is problem of drinking water at these places and even at Cherapoonji the highest rainfall place. Such are the consequences of modern technology. Yet new dangerous technologies as genetic engineering are being promoted recklessly without proper evaluation and testing. Growing Consumerism is unfortunately the index of development these days. High-tech inorganic agriculture and industrialisation has polluted soil, water and air beyond tolerance limits. green house effect is raising the temperature. Protective ozone layer is rapidly decreasing. At this pace the planet earth may soon become uninhabitable.

### **Forest (Kalpavṛkṣas) Based Model of life:**

The forest (Kalpavṛkṣas) based model as in vogue in *Sukhamā-Sukhamā*, *Sukhamā* and *Sukhamā-Dukhamā* before the advent of agriculture, ensured sustainability of all natural resources and their productivity. People were happy, free from any anxiety and conflicts. All life forms lived symbiotically, mutually helping each other. The descending decline was because of human greed resulting in increasing biotic pressure detrimental to natural resources. Agriculture accentuated the process. The descending trend can be reversed to ascending progress and sustained at desired stage as has been possible in some areas. What is required is containment of human needs within carrying capacity of natural resources. The types of Kalpavṛkṣas (trees) which provided for all the needs of people during *Sukhamā-Sukhamā* and *Sukhamā* period, are still left in forests, though in dwindling numbers. These can be protected, planted and multiplied. Forest based model can be established again by adopting Agro-forestry as advised by Ādi Tirthāṅkara Rṣabhadeva (in modern forestry term the *Taungya* system). Trees giving edible seeds, fruits and also giving fibres, flosses, medicines, chemicals etc. can be planted in all agriculture fields at 5 to 6 metre spacing. Agricultural crops can be raised

till trees are tall and big when agriculture will not be possible but by this time trees will start yielding various products. The forests once created are everlasting if properly managed by limiting the harvesting of their products within productivity limits. There is no recurring expenditure as in agriculture on tilling, sowing, watering, and manuring etc crop after crop. In modern high-tech agriculture the input costs are rising every year and it is not profitable at all and is being sustained on enormous subsidies all over the world. The average yield of edible seeds only (excluding fruits, flowers etc) from poly-culture forest will be 10 tonnes per hectare per year without any recurring cost.

In forest there is no need of tilling as the various burrowers and rats etc which are considered harmful in agriculture are useful as they do the work of tilling by turning the soil. Birds, animals including humans, insects etc are useful in dispersal of seeds which are also carried far and wide by water and wind also. Forests are self-fertilising, self-watering and do not need any poisonous pesticides as there is natural control of pests and predators in mixed poly-culture forests. There is no need of polluting dams, canals etc. Every tree is a little dam itself. It has been experimentally proved that in well-forested land mass there is more than 90% infiltration and only 10% run off of rainwater. There will be no floods during rains and rivers and wells etc will have perennial water supply from underground water reservoirs. Soil erosion will be stopped. There will be no pollution of any sort and there will be no famines as yield of edible seeds, fruits etc will not be much affected by drought, excess rains and other vagaries of nature. Climate will be ameliorated. Rainfall will be regular. The fury of Cyclones etc will also be subdued. There will be no problem of waste disposal, which is becoming insurmountable in the present, consumerist predatory agriculture, industry based model. There is no dirt and squalor in good forests as the various creatures and micro-organisms quickly convert all types of biological waste into useful products. In a study of wolves it was found that up and down swings in their population was directly proportionate to the

availability of food supply from forests. Thus population of humans will also be in check if wants are met from forest products within their productivity limits.

The journey of human civilisation from forest model to more and more agriculture, hunting, domestication of animals was all because of changes in human behaviour. The ascending and descending trends are directly proportionate to decreasing and increasing human consumerism. The cyclic changes and human behaviour have direct relationship and are interdependent. The deteriorating human behaviour induces degradation of environment and this in turn affect human behaviour and the vicious circle continues. If the human behaviour is stabilised by following basic tenets of Jainism, physical environment and natural resources will automatically get stabilised and descending or ascending cyclic changes will be arrested as is the case in some areas *Hemavat* etc. Proper understanding of relationship between cyclic changes and human behaviour is important. Even a good genetically perfect seed will not germinate in bad soil and climate where as even genetically weak seed may sprout and weak plants get better by proper nurturing in good environment. The conclusion from careful analysis of cyclic changes is that Jaina tenets can best be followed under forest (*Kalpavṛkṣas*) based model of perfect harmony between living beings and physical environment free from any sort of violence, conflict or misery. This will in turn ensure preservation of forests and their productive stability arresting time and cyclic changes to the stage of *Sukhamā-Sukhamā, Sukhamā* or *Sukhamā-Dukhamā* whatever we humans want. Such a sustainable stable state as mentioned in *Tiloyapaṇṇatti* is not a mere piece of imagination but a scientific reality.



# CYCLIC CHANGES NOT CREATION

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## Concept of Creator, Controller and Almighty God:

Jainism does not subscribe to the theory of creation by some super power almighty creator, controller and destroyer God. Those who adorn this concept attribute to such God the best and noblest qualities of utmost kindness, benevolence, and perfection without any faults. It is believed that nothing happens, moves, even a leaf does not flicker without his express will. There is obvious flaw and contradiction in this theory. If such almighty God is kind and benevolent, flawless and perfect, then how and why did he create such an imperfect, unkind world full of wars, pestilences, famines, droughts, floods, hunger, and untold miseries. If all that happens is by his express will, then no one does any wrong even a murderer, as he is ordained to do so. The scriptures of all sects and religions exhort the respective followers against bad deeds and extol good deeds. These preachings will be irrelevant if all manifestations, actions, good and bad are by the express wish of one almighty God. Also no good person will destroy his own good creation and God being good and perfect should not have created anything bad. It is ignorance about causes of various phenomena and events that conceptualised imaginary power God, controlling all events also solving all problems. It proved dangerous by killing the initiative, confidence and action by individuals, groups and societies

The creation theory has been questioned in Vedas, which are generally cited in its support. *Upaniṣads*, *Gītā* and *Mahābhārata* have also not supported it.

त्रिनाभि चक्रमजरमनर्वं यत्रेमा विश्वा भुवनाधि तस्थुः ।

*Rgveda* 1-164-2

i.e. Sun is eternal and is never destroyed



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यत् ऊनं तत् आपूरयाति प्रजापतिः ।

*Atharva Veda- 12-26-62*

i.e. The sun is throwing out several trillions tons of energy but it is being replenished naturally.

कतरा पूर्वा कतरापरायोः कथा जाते कवयः को वि वेद ॥

*Rgveda 1-185-1*

i.e. *Rgveda* questions : If the universe was created then what for ? From where? Who saw it being created?

न वि जानामि यतरा परस्तात् ।

*Atharva Veda-10-7-43*

i.e. Brahma says, “ I do not know who was created first.”

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa the famous Vedic scholar also opposed creation theory in his treatise *Ślokavārtika*:

प्रवृत्ति कथमाद्या च जगतः स्मप्रतीयते ।

शरीरादेर्विना चास्य कथमिच्छापि सर्जने ॥

*Ślokavārtika, Sambandhākṣepaparihāra-Prakarāṇa 4-47*

i.e. What was the reason for creation of universe ? If it is because of wishes of God, then how God who is without body, can have wishes.

न च तद्वचनेनैषां प्रतिपत्तिः सुनिश्चिता ।

असृष्ट्वापि ह्यसौ ब्रूयादात्मैश्वर्यं प्रकाशनात् ॥ ६० ॥

यदि प्रागप्यसौ तस्मादर्थादा सीत्रतेन सः ।

सम्बद्ध इति तस्यान्यस्तदर्थोऽन्यप्ररोचना ॥ ६२ ॥

i.e. *Veda* can not be trusted because they are work of God who may have mentioned creation to glorify himself. The stanzas, which have mentioned creation, are mere poetry by poets in praise of their own Gods.

*Kāthopaniṣad* (2-3-1) mentions:

ऊर्ध्वमूलोऽवाक्शाख एषोऽश्वत्थः सनातनः ।

i.e. The universe is eternal.

*Gītā* also states similarly:

ऊर्द्धमूलमधः शाखं अश्वत्थं प्राहुर्ख्ययम् । *Gītā*-15.1

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजाति प्रभुः :

न कमेफल संयोगं, स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ *Gītā*-5.14

God is not creator of universe nor he designs actions of substances. These happen because of their inherent properties.

### Concept of Godhood in Jainism:

Such illogical concept of one creator, controller, destroyer almighty God is not accepted in Jainism. According to Jainism all liberated souls, *Arhats* and *Siddhas* on attaining salvation are adorned as Gods and worshipped only because they have shown the world ideal path, prescribed a code of conduct they themselves practised and lived and attained the ultimate goal, the salvation and inherent eternal happiness. *Arhats* clearly and unequivocally said that neither they nor anyone else could give anything to anyone. It is one's own *karmas* (actions) good and bad alone that bring pleasures or miseries. One can mitigate the past bad *karma* by one's own efforts, penance and good deeds, none else can help in this. The idols of *Arhats*, *Tirthankaras* are worshipped only as an instrument and object for concentration to reflect, recall and remember their preachings to be followed and practised. We are grateful to them for their benevolence to have shown us the ideal path for salvation. In Jainism it is sinful (*Mithyātva*) to beg worldly things, wealth, health, successes etc.

### Aberrations Galore:

It is unfortunate that most Jains even ninety nine percent do not know these fundamental tenets of Jainism. Obeisance in temples, pilgrimages are generally to beg worldly things and not to reflect and follow the teachings of *Arhats*. Most unfortunate is that many Jains also subscribe to this creator one God theory and even some saints also speak in this tone. Rejection of one God theory is distinctive mark of Jainism but most of its followers do not know it. *Arhats* preach till they attain salvation and become *Siddhas* who live in eternal peace and do not do

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anything for anyone. The twenty-four *Tīrthaṅkaras* whose idols we worship are *Siddhas* now. Even *Arhat* are completely unattached (*Vītarāga*). They do not bestow favours. It is sinful to attribute such epithets to them. However many hymns, poems and songs are full of these attributes.

‘द्रौपदी को चीर बढ़ायो, सीता प्रति कमल रचायो’

(आलोचना पाठ)

Lord you increased the length of Draupadi’s garment to protect her from Duḥśāsana who was removing her clothing. You helped Sītā when she sat on pyre by turning fire into water pool and creating a lotus for her to sit on.

There are numerous such stanzas in various prayers, *āratīs* etc. The argument given for these is that it is just a manifestation of *Bhakti* (devotion). Jainism does not subscribe to reincarnation (*Avatāravāda*) but in many prayers and *āratīs* there is mentioned of *Tīrthaṅkaras* as *avatāras*. *Bhakti* (devotion) does not give licence to flout basic tenets. Jaina pilgrims generally tell they have come to pilgrimage centre on the call of deity. An eminent saint has put a written hoarding stating that he says what deity guides and people are benefited. Fact is that the deity does not do anything. These are only a few examples of contradictions, which have distorted the very identity of Jainism. In no other religion such blatant violation of fundamental principles is permitted and tolerated. There is dilution and distortion of Jaina tenets because of incursions of Brahmanical cult. Many Jaina saints were also from Brahmanical background and incorporated distortions. In addition, fewer and fewer Jains read even the few common treatises. Many saints yearn for recognition and obeisance from non-Jains and support non-Jaina tenets. Many Jaina saints also speak of one almighty, which is against Jaina tenets.

केवलि श्रुतसंघ धर्मदेवा वर्णवादो दर्शन मोहस्य ।

*Tattvārtha Sūtra* VI Chapter-13

It means that subscribing wrong attributes to *Kevalins*, *Śruta Kevalins*, *Saiṅha* and religion is causative factor for most harmful *Darśana Mohanīya Karma*. *Kevalins* are detached *Vitarāga* and attributing actions like giving material things etc to them is therefore most sinful. It should be noted that Jaina idols are not in blessing posture like that of Buddha and others.

### Cyclic Retrogression and Progression:

According to Jainism the universe is without beginning and without end. The six substance of the universe *Jīva* (Soul), *Pudgala* (Matter), *Ākāśa* (space), *Dharma* (substance helping motion), *Adharma* (substance helping in stay) and *Kāla* (Time) act, interact, react, change in various forms (as water in solid, liquid and gas) and this brings about retrogressive and progressive manifestations in space-time-continuum. Modern astrophysics also supports evolution. In astrophysics also there are two schools of thought, one subscribing to big-bang theory and other to the stable state with cyclic change theory. Renowned astronomer Fred Hoyle who coined the term “Big Bang” never accepted the theory for the origin of universe and stuck to his belief in steady state universe. Even the big bang theory envisages contraction to utmost density resulting in explosion (big bang) and subsequent expansion. This explains exploding of extremely condensed matter (black holes) rebirth of stars, planets, expansion, eventual extinction, then condensation again explosion, rebirth and so on. Jainism explains it vividly and logically:

उत्पादव्ययध्रौव्ययुक्तं सत् ।

*Tattvārtha Sūtra*, Chapter V.29

Substances are indestructible (ध्रौव्य) but change giving birth to new and new forms (उत्पाद), extinguishing older forms (व्यय).

### Time Cycle and Eras:

The cyclic changes have been dealt with elaborately in canonical Jaina literature notably in *Tiloyapaṇṇattī* by Yati Vṛṣabhācārya and in

*Ādipurāṇa* by Jinasena. One complete time cycle which continues over and over again has been divided in two equal halves one अवसर्पिणी (*Avasarpiṇī*) descending (retrogressive) and other ascending उत्सर्पिणी (*Utsarpiṇī*) progressive. There are six eras of different duration in *Avasarpiṇī* and so in *Utsarpiṇī*. In *Avasarpiṇī* (descending, retrogressive) these are *Sukhamā-Sukhamā* (Happy-Happy), *Sukhamā* (Happy), *Sukhamā-Dukhamā* (Happy-Unhappy), *Dukhamā-Sukhamā* (Unhappy-Happy), *Dukhamā* (unhappy), *Dukhamā-Dukhamā* (Unhappy-Unhappy). In *Utsarpiṇī*, (ascending, progressive) it is in reverse order starting from *Dukhamā-Dukhamā* to *Sukhamā-Sukhamā*. This completes one time-cycle and repeats in sequence of *Avasarpiṇī-Utsarpiṇī* and then *Utsarpiṇī-Avasarpiṇī* and so on.

The description of all these eras are described in great detail in *Tiloyapaṇṇatti* by Yati Vṛṣabhācārya. The following description of *Sukhamā-Sukhamā* (Happy Happy) is very interesting:

सुसुम सुसम्मि कालेभूमीरज-धूमजलण-हिम-रहिदा ।  
 कंटिय अब्भसिलई विच्छयादि कीडोवसग्गपरिचता ॥३२०॥  
 णिम्मल दप्पण सरिसा, णिदिददव्वेहिं विरहिदा तीए ।  
 सिकदा हवेदि दिव्वा, तणु-मण-णयणाण सुहजणणी ॥३२१॥  
 तीए गुंछा गुम्मा, हुसुमंकुर फल-पवाल-परिपुण्णा ।  
 वहऔ विचित्त-वण्णा, रुक्ख समूहा समुत्तंगा ॥३२७॥  
 वग्घादी भूमिचरा, वायस-पहुदी य खेयरा तिरिया ।  
 मंसाहरेण विणा भंजंते सुरतरुण मुहर फलं ॥३९२॥

*Tiloyapaṇṇatti*, 1st Part, 4th Chapter

During this period there is no soil erosion as earth surface is covered with dense forests or variety of Kalpavṛkṣas, the benevolent trees. The water, glaciers are free from any dirt. The water in rivers is sparkling clean like mirror. The Kalpavṛkṣas (trees) provide fruits and other edibles, flowers, flosses, medicines, timber for house construction, chemicals and all that is necessary for happy living. All life forms are symbiotic

i.e. mutually helping. Organism bacteria and insects are friendly and harmless. Even lions, tigers and other carnivora are harmless and not killers. People are contended with limited wants proportionate to availability from Kalpavr̥kṣas (trees) without in anyway harming them. There are no crimes, wars, famines, droughts, floods etc. There is perfect symbiosis in living beings and other constituents of nature.

णत्थि असण्णी जीवा, णत्थि तहा सामिभिच्च भेदो य ।  
विकलपहा जुद्धादीरुद्धणभावा दु ण हु होंति ॥

*Tiloyapaṇṇattī*, 1st Part, 4th Chapter -332

(In *Sukhamā-Sukhamā* era there is no division of society in masters and servants, nor are there conflicts, wars, jealousy and diseases).

### Degradation:

In subsequent period of *Sukhamā* there was some decline in forest cover (*Kalpavr̥kṣas*) because of increasing population and wants of people. By and large the conditions were peaceful and there was no significant degradation in natural environment. With increasing population and rising demands, slowly shrinking resources with resultant competitive greed in next, *Sukhamā-Dukhamā* period the effects were visible with soil erosion, declining productivity of forests (*Kalpavr̥kṣas*) and consequent competitiveness. The perfect peaceful environment was getting stressed. The pressure on natural resources increased beyond the carrying capacity, rejuvenatability and sustainability during *Dukhamā-Sukhamā* period. Forests were destroyed and productivity of food, fibres etc from *Kalpavr̥kṣas* declined considerably. The magnificent trees of numerous varieties fulfilling all the needs of people, were replaced by grasses and other inferior plant species. It was during this period that agriculture had its birth. More and more forests were cleared, cut and burnt to prepare vast areas for agriculture. The result was increasing erosion and consequent floods, droughts, famines, pestilences and wars. It was with the birth of agriculture that the concept of individual property developed. Earlier all natural resources were common property. Although before the onset of

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agriculture also when forests started shrinking the people in succeeding periods turned to wiser people known as *Manus* for advice and demarcation of areas for groups of people or villages was done to avoid and mitigate feuds. Increasing emphasis on agriculture gave a serious set back to maintenance of natural resources as common property. People were more concerned with their individual fields with resultant feuds, wars for extending, protecting the properties and territories.

The present era is *Dukhamā* with grim scenario. The increasing population and rising consumerism with more and more pressure on natural resources is depleting them fast to the extent of eventual annihilation. The increasing frequency of droughts, famines, floods, climatic vagaries, diseases, feuds, crimes, miseries are direct consequences of human greed and erroneous concept of development, which is based on rising index of consumerism. The exploitation of natural resources is so high and rapid that most of forests, minerals, oil etc. will soon be exhausted and with it will crumble down the whole edifice of so-called civilisation. To meet the increasing consumerist needs, there is more and more industrialisation, throwing out poisonous gases in air, chemicals on land and water, polluting irretrievably these basic life support systems. Water is already scarce. The modern high-tech agriculture with increasing dose of chemical fertilisers and poisonous pesticides is accelerating the serious problem of environmental pollution of land, water and air, endangering even the fertility of land. Our edibles have residual poisonous pesticides and are slowly poisoning the entire biome including man, fish, birds, cattle and other animals. History will judge the present generation as most cruel and criminal, as it will exhaust most of natural resources leaving nothing or very little for future generations. Morality demands that the present generation should limit its size and requirements to the carrying capacity and rejuvenatability of natural resources. There is much talk of sustainability but there is no concrete effort. The prescribed code of conduct in Jainism stressing frugality of wants etc can only ensure it as will be illustrated in later chapters.

The next *Dukhamā-Dukhamā* period will be much worse because of more and more pressure on natural resources and their depletion. The end of this period will be the end of *Avasarpiṇī* (descending Cycle). It will be followed by *Utsarpiṇī* (ascending Cycle), starting first with repeat of *Dukhamā-Dukhamā* followed by *Dukhamā, Dukhamā-Sukhamā, Sukhamā-Dukhamā, Sukhamā* and ending with *Sukhamā-Sukhamā*, completing the whole cycle of *Avasarpiṇī-Utsarpiṇī*. The new cycle will start in descending order with repeat of *Sukhamā-Sukhamā* and in the order mentioned above and it will continue repeating over and over again.

### **Succession-Retrogression Concepts in Forestry:**

It is interesting to note that the above cyclic ascending and descending changes conform to cyclic retrogression and progression well established, studied and documented in modern forestry. If a good dense forest with higher varieties of trees is subjected to biotic pressures of increasing human and animal population, resulting in over exploitation, grazing, burning, then the forest degrades to lower and lower quality and density and to grasslands and ultimately barren eroded lands. It is well established that there were good forests initially. These were what are now technically described as climax forests. Such forests have the highest evolved variety of trees, which perpetuates through symbiotic interactions of all life forms. Even carnivora like tigers, wolves etc were not killers but nature's scavengers for naturally dead bodies which were aplenty. The conditions in these climax or pristine forests conform to conditions mentioned under *Sukhamā-Sukhamā* period. The degradation of climax forest started with increasing biotic pressure and very rapidly after birth of agriculture and more so with rapid industrialisation. This is retrogression in modern ecological and forestry terms. This corresponds to descending order mentioned in Jaina literature. If the process is reversed and biotic pressure is withdrawn then even a highly degraded bare land starts improving with first grasses, then higher and higher forms of species and eventually climax forest. There are several stages both in succession (progression) and also in retrogression. The succession or retrogression



can be stopped and sustained at any stage as is done in forest management practices, e.g. teak forests which are in serial (succession) stage and if allowed to progress the new succeeding species that will come up though higher in succession are not economically as valuable as teak. So progression is stopped at teak by manipulating biotic factors. This is progression or succession in modern scientific terms and it corresponds to ascending order mentioned in Jaina literature. Such ecological perceptions in ancient Jaina literature, now recognised in modern science, are really astounding.

### Arresting Time Cycle:

In *Tiloyapaṇṇattī*, the ancient Jaina treatise on cosmology, it is interesting to note that certain areas or planets viz., Harivarsa, Hemavata, Hairaṇyavata, Kaccha Videha etc. have been described as immune from retrogression. This means that people there have controlled their numbers and wants (which is possible by following Jainism, its prescribed code of conduct) to the carrying capacity of land and natural resources and thus arrested and stopped degradation by judicious management. This is what is advocated in modern forestry and the recent doctrine of sustainability. The conditions described in some such cases and areas are briefly given below:

अवसेसवण्णणाओ सुसमस्स व होंति तस्स खेतस्स ।  
णवरि य संठिदरूवं परिहीणं हाणिवड्डीहिं ॥

*Tiloyapaṇṇattī* 1st Part, 4th Chapter - 1744

i.e. In Harivarsa area the conditions always remain as in *Sukhamā* period.

अवसेस वण्णणाओ सरिसाओ सुसमदुस्समेणं पि ।  
णवरि यवड्ठिद रूवं परिहीणं हाणिवड्डीहिं ॥

*Tiloyapaṇṇattī* 1st Part, 4th Chapter - 1703

i.e. In Hemavata area the conditions remain same as in *Sukhamā*-

*Dukhamā* period.

परचक्क भीदिरहिदो, अण्णाय पयट्टणेहिं परिहीणो ।

अइवट्ठि-अणावट्ठी परिचत्तो सव्वकालेसु ॥

*Tiloyapannatti* Ist Part, 4th Chapter -2251

(i.e. in Kahcha Videha area there is never lawlessness, use of unfair means and never shortage or excess of rainfall and the area is immune from retrogression).

The above suggests prescription for the present generation. If we can control our numbers and wants to carrying capacity and renewability of natural resources then the retrogression and degradation will stop and process of progression will start to the stage of *Sukhamā* and even *Sukhamā-Sukhamā*. Time will stop. Human efforts in right direction as ordained in Jainism can achieve this.



# CODE OF CONDUCT

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## **Symbiotic and Rational:**

Jainism prescribes the code of conduct, which is beneficial for one who practises and also for other living organisms. It is so rationality designed that even the inanimate constituents of nature are so cautiously utilised that their conservation is not adversely affected as the quantity used is proportional to their natural regeneration. If human beings who are in highest commanding position at the top of pyramid in hierarchy of living beings, follow the Jaina Code of conduct, there will be perfect peace and harmony and even cyclic changes of retrogression or progression would stop. In the canonical treatise “*Tiloyapaṇṇatti*”, by Yati Vṛṣabhācārya it is illustrated that there are areas Harivarsa, Hemvata etc where time stands still and there are no retrogradatory changes because people there follow rational and symbiotic Jaina code of conduct.

There are elaborate conduct rules both for saints and laity (householders) so meticulously framed that no laxity or transgressions are permissible. There are basic fundamental rules, which every Jain must follow. Then more and more rigorous practices are to be followed as one treads on the path of salvation. There are eleven stages for householders to climb the ladder step by step according to one’s capabilities. However, fundamental rules and vows are common at all stages and there is difference of degree and not of kind. Jainism stands unique amongst all religions that the conduct rules are clearly well defined covering every aspect in life. There is no such meticulously well-defined elaborate code of conduct in any other religion. Till recently Jains were known for their adherence to prescribed conduct taking meals before sunset and using water only after proper filtering, strict vegetarianism and not taking even honey, abstention from wine, any sort of violence,

gambling, adultery, falsehood, theft, consumerism were the very identity of Jains. Putting ideals into actual practice in thought, speech and action is hallmark of Jainism.

Gautama, principal disciple of Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra asked the following question:

कहं चरे ? कहं चिट्ठे ? कहमासे ? कहं सए ?।  
कहं भुजंतो भासंतो पावं कम्मं न बंधई ?।

*Daśavaikālika-61*

How to walk, stay, eat, speak, sleep so that soul is not guilty of sin.

Mahāvīra Svāmī replied,

जयं चरे, जयं चिट्ठे, जयमासे, जयं सए ।  
जय भुजंतो भासंतो पावं कम्मं न बंधई ?।

*Daśavaikālika-62*

Walk, stay, eat, speak, sleep carefully and cautiously and soul will not be guilty of sin. “जयं stands for जयणां i.e.; यत्नपूर्वक meaning care and caution. भजयणेह धम्मं जणणी i.e. care and caution is mother of religion. “प्रमाद” i.e. carelessness and laziness are opposite of this. In case one walks or removes things carelessly and even if no creature is harmed, he is guilty of violence. On the contrary if one acts carefully and if creatures are harmed his guilt is minimised.

प्रमत्तयोगात् प्राणव्यपरोपणं हिंसा ।

*Tattvārtha Sūtra 7-8*

Carelessness in thought, speech and action is responsible for violence. Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra cautioned, “Do not be careless and lazy even for a moment.” This is the core of entire code of conduct which if followed and practised in letter and spirit will safeguard from most adverse consequences. Let us look at a simple example of anyone slipping on wet, oily or any slippery surface and fracturing one’s bones. This

would not happen if one is careful in examining the surface and then avoiding it or waking with adequate caution. Sometimes one carelessly utters words, which annoy the listeners, and consequences may be bad resulting in enmity and even fatal feuds. Likewise careless and evil thoughts will result in bad action and even without action, will pollute mind, manifesting in depressive, aggressive, sadistic, schizophrenic attitudes and mental illness.

In Jainism there is so much emphasis on practice that most rituals, devotional formalities are redundant and irrelevant. The only objective of worship etc is that it helps to recollect the teachings of enlightened ones (*Arhats*), take inspiration, concentrate, reflect and vow to practice. If this objective is not kept in mind then these lose all their importance. If rituals are for ritual's sake, then they are of no use. If one thinks that just by performing rituals or worship without putting into practice the ideals and teachings therein, one will be able to remove or reduce his sins, then he is utterly wrong. However, as a result of the impact of Brahmanical and other cults and because of laxity to follow ideals, the tendency towards rituals without the least commitments for teachings is growing and has engulfed the very conscience of the majority of Jains. Most Jains these days confine to performing rituals only and think that it is enough to ameliorate their sins. Pseudo saints are also encouraging this. The obvious result is falling moral standards in Jains who now do not enjoy the respect and esteem they had earlier when stress was more on practice than rituals.

### **Meditation:**

The concept and practice of meditation in Jainism are different from other schools of meditation. The main difference is that bad thoughts should be avoided and good thoughts should be assimilated and effort should be to control mind for every second, minute, hour, day and night through out life and not for only a specified period of time as prescribed in other systems. There are following four types of thought processes of mind and these are termed *Dhyāna* i.e. meditation processes in Jainism.

1. **Ārta dhyāna** i.e. ruminating, recollecting, pondering over the past pleasant and unpleasant experiences and having wishful thinking for future.
2. **Raudra dhyāna** i.e. having violent, falsehood, stealing, consumeristic and indulgence thoughts and emotions.
3. **Dharma dhyāna** i.e. good, religious, pious and compassionate thoughts.
4. **Śhukla dhyāna** i.e. perfectly pure thoughts about soul and matter without any attachment and also repulsion to anything.

There are sub classifications of all above four meditational processes to clarify and explain the details for the practitioners and followers. The emphasis is to control anything bad or evil at the level of its first origin in mind so that these do not get translated in speech and actions for every moment in life and not for only a specified time frame. One should concentrate on the work or activity of mind, speech and body one is engaged in so that it is done carefully and properly at every point of time. What generally happens is that mind is wandering somewhere else even more than 40 to 60% and the result is that the particular work is not done carefully and therefore is performed badly. This is what happens in road accidents. Concentration at every moment of time during every activity as ordained in Jainism is the only solution to avoid wrong. Likewise happiness, pain or sorrow are mere states of mind than real. Many people make wry faces while shaving, bathing, eating and other activities. Since one has to carry out his various activities he should do so with pleasure, rational attitude of mind. If prescriptions of Jainism about meditation are observed one will not be unhappy and most accidents and wrongs can be avoided. To progress from first, second to third and fourth stages it requires arduous effort and practice and during the process intensive efforts to recollect teachings for disciplining the thoughts are made at least twice, thrice, four, five or more times every day for specified period of an hour or so. This effort

or practice is known as *Samyak* i.e. complete undisturbed control on thoughts, speech and posture for the specified period. This does not mean that there will not be any control or discipline during rest of time. Rigorous effort or practice for specified periods (*Samyak*) is to strengthen the resolve for disciplined life style all the time.

### **Emotional Discipline:**

The entire gamut of emotions has been grouped under two main categories i.e. attachment or infatuation (*Rāga*) and aversion or envy (*Dveṣa*). The emotions have been further subdivided into four main types i.e. anger (*Krodha*), vanity (*Māna*), hypocrisy (*Māyā*) and greed (*Lobha*). Each of these four types of emotions have been further classified according to their intensity and degree into four classes (degrees) i.e. (1) Extremely severe (*Anantānubandhī*) which is like a line carved on stone and is very difficult to eradicate, (2) severe (*Apratyākhyāna*) like a line of chalk on slate which can be controlled with adequate effort, (3) Mild (*Pratyākhyāna*) which is like a line drawn on sandy surface and is of transient nature of low intensity and not lasting long; (4) Very mild (*Sañjvalana*) which is like a line drawn on water surface and is therefore momentary and of very low intensity lasting for a very short time. A follower of Jainism should not succumb to very severe (*Anantānubandhī*) intensity of emotions and should constantly try to ameliorate and control the intensity of emotions to lower and lower degree with the ultimate objective of reaching *Arhat* stage which is immune from all sorts of emotions and is perfectly serene state. There are nine other forms of emotions viz., joking or ridiculing (*Parihāsa*), too much sensitivity (*Rati*), too much insensitivity (*Arati*), sorrow (*Śoka*), fear (*Bhaya*), hate (*Glāni*) and indulgence in three sexes (male, female and eunuch). Thus there are  $4 \times 4 = 16 + 9 = 25$  types of emotions which should be controlled and ultimately got rid off to achieve perfect state.

It is common experience that uncontrolled wild emotions are cause of various problems and conflicts and corresponding grief to self and others according to degree and intensity of emotions. Anger leads to

loss of rationality and indulgence in violence of even extreme nature culminating in killing also. There are cases on record when mothers in anger lose control on senses and beat children so severely that they are harmed badly and even killed. Mother an epitome of love for her child can kill even its very object of affection under the impact of anger. Vanity generates hate. One may be proud of his wealth, knowledge, strength, beauty etc. It results in superiority or inferiority complexes and is the cause of tensions and conflicts in society. It harms the proud man and others also. Hypocrisy is dangerous for the hypocrite and others also. A hypocrite is not trusted and loses respect. He can indulge in the worst forms of crimes, cheating, adulteration and turn out even a fifth columnist for the country. Greed is the main cause of economic disparities, tension in society and environmental pollution. Mahatma Gandhi rightly said that there is enough in the world for every one's needs but not for even one man's greed. In modern psychiatry and personality evaluation in addition to earlier measure of IQ (intelligence quotient) the measure of EQ (emotion quotient) is also being adopted. A successful manager and executive must have good IQ and EQ. If one is unable to control severity of emotions and does not rationally react to emotions of others, he can not be successful. The emotional control as prescribed in the code of conduct for Jains is the key to success, peace and happiness to one and all.

### **Five Vows:**

For every Jain whether laity (householder) or recluse (saint), observance of five basic vows is a must and a prerequisite. Five vows are (1) Non violence (2) Truth (3) Non-stealing (4) Non- hoarding and non-consumerism (5) Celibacy. These vows are antidote to five main sins viz. (1) Violence (2) Falsehood (3) Theft (4) Hoarding and consumerism (5) sexual indulgence.

हिंसा नृत्स्ते या ब्रह्म परिग्रहेभ्योविरतिव्रतम् ॥

Umāsvāmi's *Tattvārtha Sūtra*, 7.1



There is difference of degree and not of kind in the practice by householders and saints. There are some relaxations for householders whereas for saints the practice of vows is rigorous without any relaxation. Accordingly these are defined as *Aṇuvratas* (Milder form) for householders and *Mahāvratas* (Rigorous form) for saints. Ācārya Samantabhadra has defined *Aṇuvratas* in treatise *Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvakācāra* in the following stanza;

प्राणातिपातवितथ व्याहारस्तेयकाम मूर्च्छेभ्यः ।  
स्थूलेभ्यः पापेभ्यो, व्युपरमणुव्रतं भवति ॥

*Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvakācāra- 52*

It means that a house-holder observing five vows should not commit five sins namely violence, falsehood, theft, hoarding, reckless consumption of material things and indulgence in sex as much as possible and intentionally. For example a person is walking, lifting and placing things and doing any activity viz. business, cultivation etc carefully with all possible caution and still some harm is done to any life form because a householder can not abnegate these totally. If some rogue or barbarian attacks him, his family property or religious places he has to fight and in the process if attacker is killed, such violence can not be avoided by householder. Rṣabhadeva taught six professions to house holders for livelihood and these are warfare (*Asi*), writing skills (*Masi*), agriculture (*Kṛṣi*), knowledge (*Vidyā*), business (*Vāṇijya*), and art (*Śilpa*). It is important to note that warfare is first in priority. History is replete with glories of innumerable Jaina warriors. It is most unfortunate that in course of time Jains have forgotten the very necessity of defence and are at the mercy of others for protection. Jains more often than not remain mute spectators of theft of idols from temples, encroachments and destruction of religious complexes, atrocities on self, family and community. Numerous Jaina temples have been converted into places of worship of other sects. It is high time Jains recollect the preachings of first enlightened

one (*Tirthankara*) Rṣabhadeva who gave first priority to warfare expertise (*Asi*). Pardoning is quality for brave and strong and not for cowards and weaklings.

क्षमा वीरस्य भूषणम् ॥

However, it is important to understand that non-violence is the basic creed in Jainism. A true Jain will not kill may cause slightest harm to any life form intentionally or negligently. There is a famous anecdote that a king asked a Jain to just kill an ant and gradually increased the reward for obeying him from few thousands to lakhs and crores and offered even half of his kingdom but the true Jain did not budge from his vow of non-violence.

The observance of five vows for saints is of more rigorous nature. They practise the vows with utmost care and caution. They will not react even in self-defence and patiently bear with atrocities of all forms. They will not even displace or disturb any life form from their abode. They will leave the place even though they are occupying it earlier if some one else wants it. Their observance of vows is therefore termed '*Mahāvratas*'. Samantabhadra-carya in *Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvaka-cāra* describes *mahāvratas* in the following stanza :

पञ्चानां पापानां, हिंसादीनां मनोवचः कायै : ।

कृत कारितानुमोदैस्त्यागस्तु महाव्रतं महताम् ॥

*Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvaka-cāra-71*

Total abnegation from five sins in thought, speech, acts by self or through others and even acquiescence.

### **Vow of Non-Violence :**

There is so much emphasis on non-violence in Jainism that it has become its distinguishing mark and its synonym. Every true Jain should not commit violence in any form to any living being. Life forms have been classified according to the number of senses present in a particular

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life form. Those with only one sense of touch (*Sparṣa*) are Earth (including all types of minerals in undetached-form), Air, Water, Fire and Plants (vegetation). Next category is of those with two senses of touch (*Sparṣa*) and taste (*Rasana*) such as larvae. The third category has three senses of touch, taste and smell (*Ghrāṇa*) such as ants. The fourth category has four senses of touch, taste, smell and sight or vision (*Cakṣu*) as bees. The fifth category has all the five senses of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing (*Karṇa*) such as animals, human beings etc. According to prevailing interpretation the more the number of senses, greater is the pain, callousness and hardening of heart in killing or harming. Monks or saints are required to abnegate violence to any life form. The house holders in agriculture based model (which replaced original forest based model) can not do without some injury (violence) to life forms with one sense viz earth, air, water, fire and plants. However, there are well-defined rules so that harm (violence) is minimum. Use of water, minerals, fire, plants should be as frugal as possible. Violence with intention (*Saṅkalpihimsā*) and through carelessness (*Pramāda*) is strictly prohibited. Carelessness and laziness which includes laissez faire attitude (*Pramāda*) which also means lack of systematic, disciplined, simple, frugal and regular life style is considered the greatest sin as it is the root cause of avoidable violence, many wrong doings, consumerism, waste, pollution etc.

Jaina house holders are forbidden consumption of five types of ficus fruits e.g. of pipala, bara etc. and also meat, wine and honey. Ficus fruits are widely eaten by variety of birds and insects, which are vital agents for pollination in plant kingdom. Likewise, honeybees are most active agents for pollination. Without these agents there will be no fruiting, seeding in plants and would adversely affect the production of food essential for survival of animals and humans both herbivorous and carnivorous. The carnivora though prey and feed on animals but such prey is herbivorous and survive on plants. This prescription thus not only minimises violence but also promotes and preserves symbiotic model.

Taking meals before sunset and after sunrise has been a identification mark of Jains traditionally. This is not only to avoid violence to insects and other small organisms, which are not clearly visible in night but also for better health. Medical science endorses this traditional practice on scientific basis that there should be at least four hours gap between meals and sleep for better digestion. By restricting intake of food before sunset this gap is automatically maintained. People taking meals after sunset in night generally go to sleep soon after and suffer from digestive problems. In houses where dinner time is in night, food is also generally cooked in night and there are numerous cases on record of poisoning of cooked food by falling and mixing of harmful creatures in it and causing serious ailments and even deaths. The entire Jaina community of all sects and subsects was till recently only 5-6 decades back was so strict about meals before sunset that even marriage ceremonies were postponed midway and not carried to final end if this practice was not adhered to by any of the parties. It is a sad travesty that same Jains now a days feel proud by arranging late night dinners. Jains still adhering to the tradition of meals before sunset are fast dwindling in numbers and it is almost missing in younger generation. For centuries and millennia the practice of meals before sunset was prevalent in all communities particularly in rural India. The concepts of late lunch and dinner developed and took roots during British rule. The Britishers were rulers and were here to enjoy. In their own country and in Europe and America most of working populace take super, their evening meals before sunset. The general practice there is to take good breakfast and take very light snacks and beverage at lunch time because heavy lunch was conducive to more accidents in factories. After return from work in the evening, the worker feels hungry and therefore the principal evening meal is super before sunset. We have copied their wrong practices and not good ones. It is not only regrettable but also shameful for at least Jaina community to have gone astray in abandoning the scientifically sound tradition of meals during daytime only.

The other well-known identification of Jains was to take water only after proper filtering in a clean double folded cloth. In one of the

reports of World Health Organisation it is mentioned that in areas where guinea worm disease is prevalent it does not affect the Jains because they take water after proper filtering. Even such a scientifically authenticated practice is vanishing fast particularly in younger generation. There is important rule in scriptures about filtering. The cloth used for filter should be dipped back in the water source so that the tiny organisms are back in their congenial environment. Such an ecological concern now well-recognised in modern environmental science is unique in Jainism. Another example is that the Jain monks while moving from shade to sunlight and vice-versa clean their body by softest broom of peacock feathers so that micro-organisms of shade or sun light sticking to their bodies are not harmed. The credit goes to enlightened ones who prescribed such scientific doctrines thousands of years ago back, dwarfing the modern science.

The relaxation for Jain laity (householders), condoning violence towards one-sense life forms appears to be a discrepancy in view of the basic concepts. For saints violence even to one-sense life forms is not permitted but they do take meals prepared by house holders and also vegetables and fruits and are thus part of violence by house holders because in Jainism responsibility vests either one does an activity himself (*Kṛta*) or gets it done by others (*Kārita*) and even acquiesces (*Anumodita*). In Jainism all life forms have been put on the same pedestal without any inferiority or superiority as regards innate capabilities of every soul. It has also been mentioned clearly even in the available canonical scriptures that life forms with one or more less number of senses compensate the missing sense by higher and higher more pronounced capability of endowed sense organs. It is mentioned that ants have many more times stronger sense of smell than humans. In humans also blind persons have very strong sense of touch. Plants have been put in category of one-sense life form with only one sense of touch, but it is now well established that plants are sensitive to sense of hearing by reacting to songs, sense of

smell by searching nutrients, feeling agony and pleasure in response to feelings of others including humans. The fact is that in biological evolutionary process there is more and more division of labour in different organs with evolution of more and more complex life-forms. Even unicellular life forms perform many complex functions with its rudimentary sense capabilities viz. bacteria etc. Even most evolved complex humans can not perform several functions which bacteria, virus can do. Therefore, it is wrong to assume that one-sense life-forms viz. minerals, plants and others feel less pain from violence against them. Latest genetic research has estimated that human beings have approximately 30000 genes whereas microscopic round worm has 19000 genes and the mustard cress plant has 25000 genes. The difference is insignificant looking to complex functions in humans. The injunctions that unripe fruits and attached to plant body (*Sacitta*) should not be consumed recognises this aspect though it is generally not followed. The plants deserve maximum concern and attention as plants are the only primary producers of food etc and all others including humans are consumers and dependent on products of plants. This erroneous concept is concept product of change from forest (Kalpavṛkṣa) based model to agriculture based model. As discussed in detail in earlier chapter, perfect symbiosis without any harm to any life form is possible only in forest (Kalpavṛkṣa) based model and it is possible to revive it. The lofty symbiotic principles of Jainism can be practised in letter and spirit only in congenial ambient environment of forest based model of society. The discrepancies, aberrations, relaxations were introduced by learned saints though with stringent riders only to cope with the evolving, retrogratory situations. However, the aberrations are aberrations and should not be mistaken with fundamental timeless principles. There are meticulous detailed rules for observance of vow of non-violence leaving no lacunae or pretext. Transgressions like overloading, nailing, making holes in parts of animals, under feeding, tying them painfully etc are not permitted. There are examples and factual anecdotes that saints practising perfect

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and flawless non-violence have an amazing influence and even savages, butchers, wild animals turn non-violent in their presence. It will also be interesting to note that Jaina saints do not brush their teeth, yet keep healthy teeth because the micro-organism considered harmful also turn friendly. The fact is that all life forms are symbiotic and it is behavioural pattern that makes them otherwise. Plague bacteria *Yersinia pestis* earlier known as Pseudo-tuberculosis was found in intestines and was symbiotic few thousand years back but by environmental factors mutated to deadly vector. Same is the case of bacteria causing appendicitis.

**Vow of Truthfulness (Satya):**

This vow is to safeguard against the sin of falsehood (*Asatya*). Mere statement of facts is not truth unless it is beneficial, moderate as opposed to exaggeration, cultured and not vulgar, full of esteem rather than denigration. Such transgressions as false preachings, divulging confided secrets, breach of trust, forgery etc are not permitted in this vow of truthfulness. Even truth, if harmful to others should be avoided. There is an example that when a butcher asked a Jain about the way and direction an animal has gone, the true Jain told the opposite direction to save the helpless mute animal. This is rational truth modified in a given situation.

The vow of truth is closely related to the vow of non-violence. If truth is spoken harshly, in anger or in ridicule, it hurts the feelings and is violence and is therefore transgression of vow of non-violence. Falsehood generates hate and disrespect. A person practising vow of truthfulness enjoys respect and high esteem in society. There is recent example of late Mahatma Gandhi whose adherence to vow of truth generated so much trust that millions of countrymen followed and obeyed him blind folded. His followers included intellectuals of highest order like Jawaharlal Nehru etc. The vow of truth if observed in letter and spirit, will ensure mutual trust and harmony and eventually ensure peaceful and stable social and physical environment.

### **Vow of Non-Stealing (Acaurya):**

This vow enjoins abstention from taking anything, which is not given willingly. It also forbids picking up of things dropped or forgotten and also things from excavations by anyone. Undervaluing of other's goods and overvaluing of one's goods is also a category of theft and is violation of the vow. Ignorant and illiterates, if coerced to give their goods cheaper, is also transgression of this vow. Under weighing or over weighing, keeping false weights and measures are also considered theft. Any sort of cheating, non-compliance of government regulations, tax evasion gambling etc are also sinful transgressions and not permitted under this vow.

The injunctions and transgressions referred in the scriptures are in respect of transactions between humans. However, there are transactions between human beings and other living beings. Humans take fruits, seeds, flowers, leaves, wood, gums, resins, oils, medicines etc from trees and several minerals from earth which are one-sense life forms. There is lot of give and take from several animals viz. milk from cattle, transport, tilling and other works from horses, camel etc., wool from sheep and goat. As a matter of principle the vow of non-stealing should also cover the transactions with other life forms. If things and products are taken from other life forms forcibly against their will, it is also theft and therefore violation of the vow. It is not that these life forms do not give their products willingly. Trees willingly drop their fruits, flowers, leaves, dry wood etc which can be utilised symbiotically. By picking dropped fruits, eating them and dispersing the seeds humans and animals also help the trees in dispersal of their seeds which is essential for their regeneration. Likewise several minerals are thrown out by volcanic activity and can be utilised by humans. Peacocks regularly shed their feathers willingly and naturally and these are utilised even by saints for their brooms (*Picchīs*) and there is no violation of the vow.

There is very interesting reference in scriptures in respect of transactions with trees though somewhat indirect. The dark (bad) and



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bright (good) aspects of human activities has been illustrated by example of process of collection of fruits of trees. The intensity of good and bad activities have been given the term '*Leśyās*' which are metaphorically described by different colours. If a person collects fruits from the ground only he is categorised as having *Śukla* (pure white) *leśyā* and is most pious. Another person plucking fruits one by one gently from the branches of tree is with *Padma* (slightly tinged pink) *leśyā* and is not bad but not as pious as the first one. Third person cuts small, tiny branches for bunch of fruits has *Pīta* (yellow coloured) *leśyā* and is committing more violence to the tree than the second one. The fourth person cuts bigger branches for more bunches of ripe or raw fruits has *Kāpota* (light blue coloured) *leśyā* and is guilty of much more violence than the third. The fifth cuts down thick, long main branches are having *Nīla* (deep blue coloured) *leśyā* is causing great harm to the tree and is highly violent. The sixth person cuts down the whole tree, killing it, committing the worst form of violence, is having *Kṛṣṇa* (darkest coloured) *leśyā* and is worst. This description of *leśyā* does point out concern for transactions and observance of vow with respect to other life forms but it is not at all considered in practice of the vow because of compulsions of agriculture based model of society. Saints, scholars and other householders read and preach about the *leśyas* and co-relation with vow of non-stealing but it remains only an academic exercise and is by and large ignored in practice.

**Vow of Non-possession, Non-acquisition (Aparigraha):**

This vow enjoins that all types of material possessions by an individual should be reduced to bare minimum. The material possessions include land, gold, silver, jewels, food-grains, clothes, buildings, live stock, servants and other necessary items. Jaina monks both Digambara and Śvetāmbara continue to demonstrate the principle of least worldly possessions and non-consumerism. This vow is the most effective antidote against growing consumerism. These days the very definition of economic growth, quality of life and standard of living is more and more consumerism. Such an index of growth and development based

on unbridled and indiscriminate consumption will eventually be an end of life itself. With uncontrolled population growth rise in per capita consumption, more and more industries to meet the demands, the material resources both renewable and non-renewable are being exhausted at such a rapid pace that nothing will be left in near future. Forests the most vibrant renewable resource are being exploited many times more than their rejuvenating capacity and are dwindling fast. Most minerals, coal, iron, copper, zinc, aluminium and others, stones etc are being mined in more and more quantities that these may not last for more than 100-200 years, Crude oil, the source of petroleum products on which majority of industries and transport is based will also not last long. Most of these essential non-renewable materials will be things of museums in near future. Once this very foundation and building blocks of industrial development is exhausted, the whole edifice of the civilisation will crumble down. There is much talk about sustainable development but sustainability and consumerism are two opposite poles and can not co-exist. Unless the modern index of development proportionate directly to scale of consumerism is changed the talk of sustainability will remain a mere slogan.

Soil which produces food for the growing population is also being over exploited and is being depleted and denuded irreparably. In forest based model there is no depletion and denudation of soil as there is no over exploitation of nutrients which are continuously replenished at the same rate they are absorbed. Protective cover of trees also protects soil from wind or water erosion. Till few decades back even in agriculture which was organic, cautious, poly-cropping and not so intensive, soil was allowed its rejuvenation as the practice was to keep it fallow for a year or at least a crop alternately. Organic manure provided all the required nutrients, and did not harm the soil micro-organisms, which are essential for maintaining the natural fertility of soil. In the modern high-tech agriculture intensive use of chemical fertilisers have killed most of the beneficial micro-organisms. Intensive irrigation has also damaged soil.

The indiscriminate use of poisonous pesticides have played havoc on useful insects and birds and residual pesticides in grains, fruits, a vegetables etc. are entering the human system also as slow poison, causing number of diseases including fatal cancer. The residual pesticides found in mothers' milk are many ( 10 to 20) times more than safe limits. Recent studies indicate that pesticide damage has gone to chromosome level and this should be a matter of serious concern because damage to chromosomes may vitiate genetic code with alarming consequences.

Exhaustive uses of water much more than replenishing rate in high-tech agriculture and mushrooming industries have greatly depleted the underground water sources. The water tables are receding, going down fast in most areas and many areas it is dangerously low to 500-600 metres. During drought these sources almost run dry and there is an acute shortage of even drinking water, necessitating its transport from far off places by trains and truck-tankers. Not only that the shortage of water is increasing, it is getting more and more polluted by agricultural chemical fertilisers, pesticides, industrial effluents and human wastes. Most of the important even the big rivers on Gaṅgā, Yamunā etc. are so polluted at many places that the water is not fit even for bathing and not at all for drinking. A huge amount of money is being spent on purifying the polluted water to make it potable.

Likewise air pollution has already reached intolerant limits and is increasing alarmingly from industrial and vehicular exhausts. In many cities people have to use masks while moving in cities and in highly populated cities have to inhale oxygen at regular intervals. Another insurmountable problem is disposal as waste being generated day in and day out by consumerist society. Many industrial and mining wastes are piling up and space for dumping is getting scarce. The fly ash from thermal power plants is enormous and in spite of its new-found use for bricks etc, there are few takers and it is piling up. There is no safe disposal technique for waste from atomic power plants evolved so far,

yet more and more such power plants are coming up to meet the unending demand for electricity. Because of consumerist life style even the household garbage generated in cities and towns is so enormous that its disposal is getting more and more difficult. The hazards of consumerism are far too much than can be tackled by known technologies. The increasing pollution of air, water and soil which are basic resources for life, have already reached to intolerant limits and if not checked will be suicidal. Rational thinkers have postulated that technological consumerist societies have an inbuilt mechanism for self-destruction. The only solution is vow of non-possession and non-acquisition i.e. limiting the wants to minimum and checking wasteful consumerism. It is however paradoxical that the *Arhat Tirthankaras* though regarded apostle of non-possession are attributed with having ostentatious displays at the sites of their stay and same display of goldsilver is in temples of there idols which are even decorated with ornaments in Śvetāmbara Sect.

#### **Vow of celibacy (Brahmacarya):**

For saints who observe it as *Mahāvratā* it is complete abstinence, abjuration from sexual desires and activity. Householders observe it as *Aṇuvratā* and therefore do not abstain totally but are ordained to curb sexual desires and activity as much as possible, restricting to minimum for the purpose of limited procreation. The various concomitants of sexual desire viz. wine, meat, gambling, titillating songs, dance, persuasive body decoration, libertines, aimless wanderings, unnatural sex, promiscuity, etc. are transgressions of the vow and are not permitted. Sexual indulgence, licentious immoral conduct are causes of many conflicts and violence and since recently of a new incurable deadly disease AIDS. However, severe admonitions and injunctions advising hatred even for normal, scientific and safe sex with one's own spouse as contained in some religious texts is against the very definition of *Aṇuvratas*. A householder can move up the ladder of spiritual advancement. Till salvation is attained, association with body and requirements are unavoidable. Even saints do

eat food and take water and even medicines to maintain the body in good health. It is only with gradual practice that the impact of surging sex hormones can be controlled. Undue suppression of legitimate sex results in several mental diseases. Jainism preaches equanimity and not hatred for anything lest for one's body which is medium of all religious activity till salvation. Body care is a must. It should not be despised as preached in some texts. The idols of our *Tirthankaras* manifest good healthy bodies and not emaciated.

If people adopt this vow of celibacy even with lesser rigour (*Añuvrata*) as prescribed for the householders, sexual violence, diseases and conflicts will not be there. The effort is voluntary and of one's own express will without coercion, force or enticement. It will be an effective instrument to control, limit and reduce to sustainable levels the unbridled population explosion, which is a major cause for most of the social and environmental problems. There are twin main causes of conflicts, tensions, violence, pollution and environmental degradation, one is reckless consumerism discussed earlier and the other is the alarming rate of population growth. By adherence to two vows of *Aparigraha* (non-possessiveness) and *Brahmacarya* (Celibacy) most of the problems will be solved. It must be remembered that in Jainism the observance of vows is nine fold i.e. in thoughts, words and actions and whether done by self, got done by others and even if acquiesced. The rules for observance of vows are so comprehensive and elaborate that there are no lacunae or pretexts to circumvent the objectives and fundamental principles.

Thus rationality (*Samyaktva*), control of emotions and observance of five vows constitute the main steel frame in the code of conduct prescribed in Jainism. There are elaborate treatises by different scholarly saints with different synonyms, classifications, sub-classifications, rules and sub rules, all centring around rationality, emotional control and adherence to five vows. Jainism is being perceived more and more as

difficult, arduous and intricate religion. But it is not so as it is simple, straight forward, striking at the very root, causative factors and effects, assuring peace and happiness for one and all by extricating all life forms from agonies, miseries, conflicts and violence and therefore should be taken as easier because conflicts, tensions and violence are more difficult and harsher to tolerate than rigours of practising rationality, emotional control and observing five vows.

The householders and even saints are not compelled to follow the code of conduct in its rigorous form right from the start. There are various stages to gradually go up the ladder from milder to more and more rigorous practice. There are eleven stages (*Pratimās*) for householders:

1. **Darśana Pratimā:** It is the first step and rationality (*Samyaktva*) is prerequisite. One who takes it practises five *Aṇuvratas* (vows) though with transgression and also abjures consumption of meat, wine and honey.
2. **Vrata Pratimā :** Vows ( *Aṇuvratas*) are observed without transgressions.
3. **Sāmāyika Pratimā:** In addition to preceding practices meditates at least thrice a day to strengthen his resolve.
4. **Proṣadha Pratimā:** In addition to above does fasting at least for four days a month to practice tolerance of hunger and utilises more time in religious activity.
5. **Sacitta-tyāga Pratimā:** The person in this stage abstains from taking unripe fruits, roots, and flowers because it is violence against plants. Drinking water is also first heated.
6. **Rātribhukti-tyāga Pratimā:** Enjoins abstinence from intake of any kind of food and drinks (Milk etc.) even water during night. Sexual activity during day is also prohibited.
7. **Brahmacarya Pratimā:** In this the person abstains from sexual activity completely. He also keeps away from enticements like

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titillating songs, reading pornographic literature, seeing provoking photographs naked or revealing of the opposite sex, and seeing gleefully the naked or otherwise persons of the opposite sex.

8. **Ārambha-tyāga Pratimā:** A householder has to carry out various activities such as service, agriculture, business, preparing meals etc. On reaching and willingly embracing this stage, the person abandons all worldly activities and lives almost as a recluse.
9. **Parigraha-tyāga Pratimā:** In this stage the person practices detachment, infatuation from worldly possessions viz. clothes, houses, servants, money etc. and reduces such possession to a bare minimum.
10. **Anumati-tyāga Pratimā:** The person adopting it not only abstains himself but also does not even consent the activities mentioned under eighth stage.
11. **Uddiṣṭa-tyāga Pratimā :** The person in this stage lives in the company of saints, and takes meals from other house holders. His clothing is also minimum either a loin cloth only or one more to cover upper body.

**Likewise there are following stages and categories of Saints:**

The saints, as soon as they are initiated practice twenty-eight essential activities prescribed. As mentioned these centre around rationality, emotional control and five vows. However, the capabilities of newly initiated saints differ, some adopt with prescribed rigour immediately and others progress gradually by practice and are classified under following categories:

(A) **Pulāka:** They follow the main rules but are lax in sub-rules.

(B) **Vakuṣa:** They follow the main as wells as sub-rules properly but have some attachment (*Parigraha*) for their body and bare possessions of broom (*Picchi*), water pot (*Kamaṇḍala*).

- (C) **Kuśīla:** They are of two types:
- (i) **Pratisevnā Kuśīla:** They are sometimes lax in following sub rules.
  - (ii) **Kaṣāya Kuśīla:** They are sometimes lax in their emotional control (*Kaṣāyas*).
- (D) **Nirgrantha:** They follow all rules and sub-rules perfectly without any flaw.
- (E) **Snātaka:** It is the highest enlightened stage and is described as 'Arhat' stage. They are free from all attachments (*Rāga*) or aversion. They are *kevalī* or omniscient. Their knowledge is perfect without any bias, most rational, scientific and complete.

These stages are gradual advances in the path of the ultimate objective. Some rise faster and some slowly according to capabilities. Slow or fast the objective is the same. The general impression that the code of conduct in Jainism is difficult is erroneous. For example any person who wants to compete in a marathon race for the first time will not immediately be able to run the distance but if he practices daily his speed and stamina will gradually improve. Another example is about fasting which is difficult for the first time but by practice desirous persons improve the capabilities and can fast several days with pleasure and without any inconvenience. The entire system is so elaborately built up that there will be no problem for any one and the only necessity is the will of the person. The system is so perfect that it starts disciplining the mind, speech and body gradually more and more to ultimate complete control. One commits right or wrong starting from thoughts, speech and body activity. The experience of pain or pleasure is through five sensory organs. By sense of touch (*sparsana indriya*) pleasure or pain are felt in soft and hard, hot and cold, sexual activity etc. Various tastes of eatables, drinks, good or bad are felt through sense of taste (*Rasana indriya*). Sense of smell (*ghrāṇa indriya*) is



responsible for sensuous feelings of good or bad smells e.g. of good smell from aromatic oils, essences, flowers etc and similarly of foul, repulsive smell from filth, squalor, excreta, dead bodies etc. The fourth is sense of hearing (*karāṇa indriya*) through which a person is enticed to hear sweet, melodious songs and is distracted from harsh, bad sounds. Lastly through the sense of sight one feels pleasure or pain in good or bad sights e.g. indulgence in watching dances is for sensuous pleasure and repulsion from bad scenes. Most wrongs are committed because of indulgence in various sensuous pleasures. For example indulgence in excessive, unsafe sex under temptation of *sparsāna indriya* is the cause of several troubles and diseases. Intake of sumptuous harmful food under impulse of *rasana indriya* is the cause of digestive diseases. A deer is enticed by melodious songs and is caught and killed. There are numerous examples of trouble and pain because of temptations of the above sensory organs. The various practices and vows enable the person to gradually overcome sensuous indulgence to rational use of these five sense organs (*indriyas*).

### Daśalakṣaṇa Dharma (Ten facets of Religion):

‘आचारः प्रथमो धर्मः’ i.e. practising or adopting good conduct is the foremost religious activity. A religious person manifests following ten attributes or facets:

उत्तमः क्षमामार्दवार्जवशौचसत्यसंयमतपस्तागाकिञ्चन्यबह्वचर्याणि धर्मः ॥

*Tattvārtha Sūtra IX. 6*

1. **Kṣamā** (Forgiveness): The more the person is capable of forgiving wrongs of others the more is his control over emotions of anger (*Krodha Kaṣāya*).
2. **Mārdava** (Without Pride): It indicates control on emotions of pride (*Māna Kaṣāya*).
3. **Ārdava** (Without Hypocrisy): The more a person manifests ‘Ārdava’ attribute the more is his control on emotion of hypocrisy (*Māyā Kaṣāya*).

4. **Śauca** (Without Greed) : It is an index of control over emotions of greed (*Lobha Kaṣāya*).
5. **Satya** (Truth fullness): It indicates the commitment to the vow of truth (*Satya Vrata*)
6. **Saṁyama** (Sensuous Control): It is an attribute indicating austerity and control over indulgence of five sense organs).
7. **Tapa** (Austerities): It is indicative of the degree of hardships a person can undergo and tolerate by adopting hard, painful postures and forsaking of bodily comforts, observing fasts and other practices and vows with more and more rigour.
8. **Tyāga** (Detachment): This attribute is judged by the extent a person is able to give up his worldly possessions for others as alms or help for the needy. There are four types of alms: (a) Food (*Āhāra*), (b) Medicine (*Auśadha*), (c) Knowledge (*Jñāna*) by giving good literature preaching, education. Scholarship (d) Shelter (*Abhaya*) by protecting the victims of violence or injustice and giving them shelter. It is a serious transgression of this attribute if one hides refuses his capabilities to help others. There are examples of fabulously rich persons, refusing alms, food, capable persons refusing shelter and even scholars not taking interest in educating the ignorant which is their duty.
9. **Ākiñcanya** (Without ego): It indicates the degree of simplicity and forsaken ego.
10. **Brahmacarya** (Celibacy): It is indicative of total abjurement of sexual pleasures and degree of spiritual uplift.

The enlightened ones *Arhats*, *Tirthankaras*, were great doctors who practised and prescribed such a meticulous code of conduct which is a wonder medicine (panacea) for all ills, ailments of mind and body of an individual and all human being and life-forms. The person or society will be immune from problems, tensions, conflicts, miseries and diseases

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of all kinds to the extent the prescribed code of conduct is followed. Where most psychiatrists will fail, the prescription of conduct rules will cure most mental ailments. Rational prescribed conduct for food intake will keep persons from all ailments due to excess feeding, malnutrition or harmful food items. Celibacy will solve the problem of population explosion and keep away the sexual diseases including fatal AIDS. Practice of reducing wants and possessions will mitigate ills of consumerism. Prescription of non-violence, truth and *anekānta* will solve most of the problems with which the individual society, and the world is ridden.



## OTHER SALIENT FEATURES OF JAINISM

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### Principle of Non-absolutism (Anekānta and Syādvāda):

There is no exact English equivalent of the word *Anekānta* (*Syādvāda*). It is terminus technicus generally defined as non-absolutism. The word 'Syād' means 'Kathancit' i.e in certain situation, context or particular reference. It is generally translated as 'May be' which is not true equivalent. *Syādvāda* envisages sevenfold dialectic (*Saptabhaṅgas*).

*Syādvāda* is a logical system of Jaina philosophy. It reconciles analytical (*Paryāyārthika*) and synthetic (*Dravyārthika*) viewpoints. Jaina logic is essentially realistic. A real is only a part of system with an intrinsic network of relations in varying situations according to substance (*Dravya*), space (*Kṣetra*), time (*Kāla*) and attitudes or modes (*Bhāva*). A real not only originates (*utpāda*) but is also liable to cease (*Vyaya*) and at the same time capable of persisting (*Dhrauvya*). Things possess an infinite number of attributes, characteristics and present, past, future modes. The world of reals is not only plurality but also unity. There is not only diversity of reals but each real is equally diversified. *Anekānta* is philosophy of relatedness, integration, many-foldness, togetherness and harmony. According to P.C. Mahalanobis, it has certain interesting resemblances to the probabilistic and statistical view of reality of modern times.

The principle of non-absolutism is unique in Jainism. It implies regard, respect for the views of others and is opposed to any kind of dogmatism or fundamentalism. It reconciles even divergent views. It can be explained by a simple example of an individual's multiple relationships. Person 'A' is son for his parents, brother for sister, husband for his spouse, father for his offsprings etc. etc. If parents claim that he is their son only and similarly wife claim that he is her husband only then conflicts start. Mother should consider daughter-in-laws claim or views and vice-

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versa, and thus if each other reconciles to other's views even if these may be divergent. Every person till he attains enlightenment has a bias for his own views because of ingrained selfish gains and would, therefore, be dogmatic and insist on his own views. One may be right but this does not mean others are wrong and they may also be right with their own viewpoint. There is another interesting example of four or six blind persons. One of them touches the feet of an elephant and describes it as a pillar, second touching its tail says it is a broom, the third touches ears and says that the elephant is a big fan for stirring air in summer. The fourth that touches the trunk says that it is a thick rope. Now each if dogmatic will say that he is right and others are wrong whereas the fact is that all are right and simultaneously all are wrong. Reconciling with divergent views for mutual benefit will avoid religious conflicts in communities, social tensions and unpleasantness in families. The methodology of "*Anekānta*" prescribed in Jainism is also an important instrument to promote rationality. According to the theory of relativity in modern science two observers at different distances and time will observe a thing differently. However, *Anekānta* does not imply ambiguity or uncertainty but is a rational method of knowing complete, real truth after analysis or synthesis of all viewpoints.

### **Principle of cause and effect (Karma Siddhānta):**

The principle of influx of Karmic matter with soul is based on scientific principle of interactions, their causes and effects. The time-lag between a cause and its effect is immediate or from a few moments to several years or even after new births and life cycles. This can be understood by simple observations viz. different seeds sown take time for fruiting from a few months to a few years. Many historical events manifest after several years, centuries and millennia. Conditioning of child, his education gives benefits after several years. Green house effect of CO<sub>2</sub> from carboniferous fuels being burnt for the past decades is showing adverse effects now. Some effects are instant such as of deadly poison, of fire, atomic holocaust etc.

*Karma Siddhānta* postulates that when the soul generates *Kaṣāyas* i.e. attachment or aversion (*Rāga* and *Dveṣa*) towards mundane affairs and materials, the subtle karmic matter (particular invisible minuscule sub-atomic particles) get attached to soul to give effects immediately or later, good or bad, mild or severe according to the intensity and the type of interaction. With the influx of karmic matter and its manifestation in effect the soul also reacts rationally or irrationally and in the process old karmic matter is shed off and new one comes. It is a vicious cycle of chain reaction, which continues till salvation is attained by the soul. That subtle atoms have innate property of manifestations of various types, degrees to the extent of atom bombs is scientifically proved.

सकषायत्वाज्जीवः कर्मणो योग्यान् पुद्गलानादत्ते ॥  
स बन्धः ॥

(*Tattvārtha Sūtra*, VIII.2,3)

It means that a *Jīva* (any life form) is tied with Karmic matter from timeless beginning because of *Kaṣāyas*. The karmic matter gets transformed into eight different forms and suppresses innate cognitive and other properties of soul, bring pain or pleasure, poverty or wealth, provides good or bad body and physique.

1. **Jñānāvaraṇīya Karma:** It suppresses the cognitive quality of soul, manifest in knowledge. The lesser the intensity of these karmic matter, the more manifest is cognitive knowledge of the soul and when the soul is completely free from it by pursuing rational trinity (*Samyak Darśana, Jñāna, Cāritra*) soul attains stage of *kevalī* i.e. omniscience.
2. **Darśanāvaraṇīya Karma:** It suppresses the perceptive quality of soul, which is preceding stage of cognition (knowledge).
3. **Vedaniya Karma:** It is responsible for pain or pleasure, poverty or wealth etc.
4. **Mohanīya Karma:** It inhibits the progress of the soul in the path of *Samyaktva* and also rational character. It is most difficult to get rid off and is responsible for influx of new stream of karmic matter.

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5. **Āyusya Karma:** It is responsible for length of life of all life forms.
6. **Nāma Karma:** Good or bad body and physique is dependent on it.
7. **Gotra Karma:** It provides good high or low status in social hierarchy.
8. **Antarāya Karma:** It inhibits the various endowments, availability of articles or means of pleasures etc.

*Karma Siddhānta* is very important postulate in Jainism. There are voluminous treatises by eminent saints explaining every detail and intricacy, prescribing conduct and deeds good or bad responsible for the influx of a particular *karma* and its intensity and means of getting rid of all karmic burden to achieve salvation, the ultimate. Jainism clearly postulates that none else except one's own self is responsible for karmic influx, its intensity. None other however high and powerful even *Arhats* and *Tīrthaṅkaras*, the saints or gods and goddesses can remove, lessen or increase the impact of any one's *karmas*. But any person himself by prescribed conduct and effort can reduce or enhance the intensity of *karma*. Thus begging material gains, pleasure or other benefits from any is forbidden in Jainism. The object of worship of *Arhats* is only to recollect their preachings, which show the true path of getting rid off *karmas* and attaining salvation.

The postulates of *karma-siddhānta* are very deep. It needs research for its validity on scientific scrutiny. Modern science has instruments to study the shape, size and activity even at sub-atomic level. If it is possible to study the sub-atomic karmic matter scientifically, it will bring a revolution and put Jainism on sound scientific foundation. Instead of sundry research, Jaina scholars of science discipline should exert for scientific scrutiny of Jaina postulates. In the background of cross breeding, genetic engineering and cloning there is of course a question mark on postulates regarding *Nāma-karma*, responsible for good or bad body and

physique. Likewise recent advances in medical sciences have challenged the postulates about *Āyusya Karma* which is responsible for the duration of life-span. Earlier a person with kidney failure or heart problems died but surgical corrections and replacements have prolonged the life-span. The coming up of gene therapy may in future correct and cure malfunctioning and abnormal behaviour of mind and even emotions like anger, anxiety, excessive sex desires etc may be controlled. The advent of anaesthesia has made most painful surgery, completely painless, thus questioning the validity of *Vedanīya Karma*. So karmic matter, if any, must be studied. May be it has properties to change under such interventions as mentioned above. There is need to put certain postulates under scientific scrutiny to satisfy the young generations that are getting more and more inquisitive. However, what can be cured by complicated scientific medical intervention can be cured and prevented by following Jaina code of conduct. The medical and scientific developments support the concept of Jainism that things can be changed by individual and collective effort and not that some super power and gods or goddesses have to be propitiated to come, help and do things for us as subscribed by other cults.

### **Jaina Cosmology:**

There is voluminous literature on Jaina cosmology. Broadly the universe is in two parts, one is *Lokākāśa* and rest is *Alokākāśa*. *Lokākāśa* is finite, of measured size and shape and contains all animate and inanimate objects within its boundaries being surrounded by impervious layers to check things going out. *Alokākāśa* is infinite empty space same as in modern astronomy. In Jaina Cosmology there is mention of innumerable islands and surrounding oceans, Suns and Moons, which tally with planets and stars in modern astronomy. The description of a big mountain in the centre of earth (Compact Gondwana continent before drifting away of Africa, America, Australia) resembles that of Himālayas and of rivers in Jaina literature is almost same as seen now, though some have become extinct. *Arhat-keṅṅlī*, the omniscients must have described



the universe correctly but most of the knowledge imparted by them was forgotten by later saints and scholars who started writing much later from very little that was left in their memory. It may be because of this fact that earth as flat and sequences and position of stars have been mentioned under the influence of prevailing concepts before the advent of modern astronomy, its powerful tools, the telescopes, satellites and rocketry etc. Saints and scholars who authored the scriptures were not *kevalī* and they may have wronged. Jains should admit it and should not insist upon all that is written in the scriptures is correct and can not be modified. These will strengthen the validity of the concept of *kevalī* in Jainism. There is an urgent need to organise broad-based conferences of saints and scholars and revise or delete those contents of scriptures, which are obviously not correct in the light of glaring scientific facts.

### **Jaina Mythology:**

During the medieval period people liked stories and biographies rather than direct teachings of religious principles and conduct rules. It was also easy to educate masses about good and bad deeds and their consequences by the examples of kings, traders, and criminals through stories and biographies. Saints and scholars wrote several biographies known as *Purāṇas*. This branch of Jaina literature was classified as *Prathamānuyoga*. Simultaneously scriptures on serious topics *Dravyānuyoga* (mainly about soul, its attributes and properties); *Karaṇānuyoga* (Interactions of soul and matter, *Karma siddhānta*, cosmology etc.) and *Caraṇānuyoga* (Conduct rules) were also being written. However all serious topics could be more easily explained through stories. *Prathamānuyoga* was thus a medium of teaching of all other subjects.

What is disturbing is that there are different versions of the same characters by different Jaina saints e.g. different version of *Jaina Rāmāyaṇa* (biography of Rāma). It is necessary to sort out and remove these contradictions and bring out only one version of different biographies

so that readers are not confused. It is also difficult to understand the objective of learned saints who though forbade the reading of pornographic literature being a serious transgression of the vow of celibacy, yet incorporated highly provocative passages in their writings. These should be deleted sooner the better. The exaggerated mention of ostentatious events on the occasions of conceiving, birth, renouncement, enlightenment and salvation of life-cycles of *Tirthankaras* is also not convincing. There is a tendency in the followers to glorify their deities. The mention of continuous showers of precious stones for six months since conceiving of the *Tirthankaras* can not be a fact. Such descriptions should be omitted lest it would reflect adversely on the validity and scientific character of Jaina philosophy. In view of contradictions and objectionable passages, there is an urgent need for thorough epistemological scrutiny and necessary corrections and deletions. Another problem with mythological literature is that it is considered as real history and there is ingrained fear in the minds of devotees that expressing doubt on scriptures is sinful, which is unduly stressed by saints and scholars. The fact is that most of Purāṇic literature is just stories and myths woven around some famous characters to explain principles, practices and tenets of Jainism.

### **Upādāna-Nimitta (Innate Strength and External Factors):**

According to Jainism every soul in whatever life form or body structure, micro-organisms, plants, animals or humans, has inherent capabilities to achieve the highest enlightened status of Godhood by its innate efforts (*upādāna*), availing the opportunities and congenial external environment and assistance. If a particular person intends to progress spiritually, he avails advice of saints, reads such literature, which assists him in his endeavour. These external factors of help are *Nimitta*. For example a seed of a tree will germinate and develop only if it has the capability (good quality) and also if the environment viz. soil, temperature, moisture are suitable. So both the innate capability (*Upādāna*) and external factors (*Nimitta*) are important. In modern genetics equal weightage (fifty-fifty) is given to innate genetic capability and environment. The innate

capabilities differ from person to person and accordingly the opportunities can be availed or ignored. Some are so determined that they even modify and subvert adverse social and physical environment, strive hard and achieve the desired success, Such personalities are very few like *Tirthankaras*. Generally innate capabilities manifest, get modified according to ambient environment. There are examples of human children, somehow strayed in the company of wild animals adopting the habits and manners of animals in whose company they are brought up. Very recently a child rescued from the company of monkeys was found to behave walk, eat like monkeys and with difficulty he is being gradually trained into human behaviour.

Paradoxical though it is, the Indian scientists, engineers, doctors etc work excellently in foreign countries U.S.A., U.K., Canada, Australia but not here in the country because of the system, environment and opportunities. As a general rule for average innate capabilities, congenial environment is necessary. There are exceptions but they are rare. There are numerous examples of youth, though brought up in ideal Jaina environment and cultural conditioning, going astray and succumbing to vices of wine, drugs, meat, gambling, prostitution under the changed environment in academic and more so in professional colleges. What could not be imagined just 6-7 decades back that a person born and brought up in a Jaina family would ever be prey to vices, is now common and it is now difficult to find a bride groom professional engineer or doctor or senior executive who is free from vices. The reason is simple. The environment particularly in professional educational institutions and then professions also is so ostentatious and consumerist that even good youngsters fall prey or forced to be by fellow students and colleagues. The trend is growing alarmingly and if not checked by proper corrective measures, there will hardly be any left who will follow even basic minimum fundamental Jaina tenets.

Jains are trying for minority status and some states have already recognised it. If it is accorded all over India, then Jains will be able to

have their own educational institutions for preserving religious and cultural identity like Muslims and Christians. The clubbing of Jains with Hindu religionists is not correct as Jainism is much different from Vedic, Śaivaite and Vaishnavaite cults even more than even Islama and Christianity because it does not subscribe to the concept of one Almighty Super Power God, creating, controlling, maintaining and destroying the universe at his own express will. Actually there is no Hindu religion as such. Hindu is word derived from Indu, the term given by Greeks for all those who reside on the side of Indus River. Accordingly all Indians whether Muslims, Christians or Jains are all Hindus. The word Hindu was initially a geographical identity and not a religion. But through the passage of time it is now being used in a restricted sense with religious connotation for people except Muslims, Christians. In initial geographical context Jains like all inhabitants of India are Hindus but not in religious sense because Muslims and Christians have been excluded. In the existing circumstances Jains have a strong constitutional claim for minority status.

In order to preserve religious and cultural identity it is necessary to have exclusive Jaina educational institutions including vocational and professional (Medical, Engineering, Management and others) where religious education is also imparted and overall environment is maintained according to Jaina tenets. It is also necessary to develop industrial, agricultural, trading and other vocational and professional complexes according to Jaina traditions so that the Jaina students after coming out of Jaina educational institutions have not to search out livelihood opportunities elsewhere and remain throughout their life in Jaina environment. This alone is the only way in the present milieu to preserve Jaina identity. Otherwise the youngsters will continue to drift away more and more from Jaina tradition. On an experimental basis a few such centres may be developed initially at Shri Mahaveerji, Sammed Shikharji, Palitana etc.

In view of the importance of the role of external factors, situations and environment, catalytic or real in helping or inhibiting the manifestation

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of innate strength, capabilities and efforts, it is necessary to understand this aspect in wider and overall perspective. For a Jaina who sincerely wants to pursue principles, vows, tenets, injunctions of Jainism, congenial environment is necessary. For example the practice of agriculture involves considerable violence and more so in the modern high-tech agriculture. The use of pesticides is deliberate with the intention of killing the insect pests. It is outright intentional (*Saṅkalpi*). Even if one is not doing cultivation he is using the produce from such intentionally violent practices and is therefore guilty of the violence involved. In Jainism the guilt is three-fold whether one does it, asks or encourages others to do it or even only approves or acquiesces it. It is not like Buddhism where the saints take meat on the pretext that they do not kill and someone else kills. Jainism does not permit such pretexts. However, the majority of Jainas including saints are at least acquiescing the violence in agriculture. Like Buddhists, Jaina householders and saints have been inventing pretexts such that they are not doing or that they are helpless. Saints adopt the pretext that they take the meals on the explicit declaration by householders that preparations are pure without any violent means. Saints very well know that the constituents of their meals are produced by violent processes and practices. Such false pleas are not acceptable in Jainism yet they are being blatantly approved and adopted.

It is only in forest (*Kalpavṛkṣa*) based model that Jainism can be practised in letter and spirit. It is not difficult to revive the *kalpavṛkṣas*. It is possible with effort and determination. If Jains are sincere about pursuing the tenets of Jainism, they should take the lead and others will follow the perfectly symbiotic model, which is free from all sorts of violence, exploitation and harm to any one. If Jains do not adopt it they are hypocrites like others regarding non-violence and other precepts of the great *Tīrthanīkaras*, renowned saints and scholars.

**Parapsychological Studies about Soul:**

There have been numerous attempts and Parapsychological studies on rebirth etc from time to time and about the existence of soul in India,

U.S.A., U.K. etc. Every now and then rumours and stories circulate about evil and benevolent spirits (Souls). Hallucinations or inexplicable events, generally taken as actions of spirits have never been substantiated by scientific scrutiny. Almost all manifestations, perceptions and attributes of soul can be explained by understanding the functions of brain and sensory nerves in highly evolved life-forms as humans and of sensory mechanisms in lower life forms such as plants. A very simple example is that of a person whose some part say a leg is paralysed i.e. his sensory system, controlling part of brain and nerves are damaged. He will not feel any sensation etc in that part though soul is spread all over the today including paralysed part. Effect of anaesthesia also puts question mark on cognitive attributes of soul. The recent development of computer science and studies of brain functions like that of computers and development of metallic, electronic sensors have put a question mark on existence of soul. In sixties a full-fledged department of parapsychology was started with much fanfare in the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. Inquisitive students from India and abroad wasted their valuable years in the quest of proofs of rebirth and soul. All the cases from India and outside including Arab Countries, documented, studied and propagated with much ado by Benarjee (I/C of the Department) came out to be concocted and false and he was thrown out of the University most disgracefully with string of shoes on his neck.

Except a few counted atheists, rationalists and scientists most people of almost all religions, faiths subscribe to the existence of unique substance with unique potentials, termed 'soul' some believing and some not believing in its corollary of rebirth. So far, none of the postulates, anecdotes, attributes or manifestations about soul could stand the scientific scrutiny. Of course there are indirect proofs for the existence of soul. Everyone sometimes or other gets benefits, gains, achievements, pleasures which he does not deserve or expect on account of any effort and also suffers losses, pains for no apparent fault on his part or any other reason. This is obviously because of past deeds (*Karmas*) in previous lives and

manifesting in present life, an event in the chain of births and rebirths from time without beginning and shall continue till salvation is achieved by personal endeavour and effort. However, efforts should continue to establish entity of soul on scientific basis.

The concept of soul, heaven and hell, graded rebirth in inferior and superior life forms according to bad and good deeds (*Karmas*), miracles at places of worship and idols have been instrumental to motivate people to follow the prescribed code of conduct which is for the benefit of one and all. Vedic philosophers have argued that even if there is no god, it should be created to discipline people in general. In all religions and faith, the followers are attracted more because of allurements of material gains, heavenly pleasures and miracles than the pure logic of symbiotic good deeds. Fear of hell, doom, incompetence to progress is also inculcated to attract rather enslave devotees. Even most of the educated scientists succumb to the temptations of miracles and fear of bad fate. Instead of one god concept, Jainism subscribes to more logical concept of soul, rebirth and principle of cause and effect (*Karma-Sidhānta*) as a logical terminus. Human nature as it is, truth in pure form is not generally accepted and digested without palliatives of rituals, temptations and false promises of miracles. Jaina saints and scholars have tried to enact anecdote, stories and rituals to reconcile with powerful external impacts and in the process have thus obliterated the very identity of Jainism. This has done more harms than good. It has only kept to a very little extent the followers in number (quantity) only and not in quality.

However there may be soul or not, heaven or hell are real or imaginary yet by all logical, rational and scientific considerations, there is no doubt that the world can have everlasting peace with sustained happiness for all life forms if forest (*Kalpavṛkṣa*) based symbiotic, rational, disciplined, simple, non-violent, non consumerist, not promiscuous life style as ordained in Jainism is followed instead of predatory, individualistic and selfish irrational, undisciplined, hypocritic, violent, exploitative,

consumerist and promiscuous life styles as in vogue increasingly with every passing hour, day and year, which is the cause of the miseries, wars, epidemics and all other calamities. It is the immoral degraded human behaviour that triggers change of happy-happy (*Sukhamā-Sukhamā*) era, to less and less happy eras ending in most miserable unhappy un-happy (*Dukhamā-Dukhamā*) era. If people unanimously, unequivocally and individually and collectively resolve to follow tenets of Jainism, the retrogratory process can certainly be reversed back to *Sukhamā* and even *Sukhamā-Sukhamā* happiness. If the prescribed practices and vows are not relaxed, slackened and abandoned, the time will stand still with no retrogratory change as is the case in some planets Videha Kṣetras mentioned in *Tilloyapaṇṇatti* by Yati Vṛṣabhācārya. Let wisdom dawn on people and all problems and miseries will vanish.





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