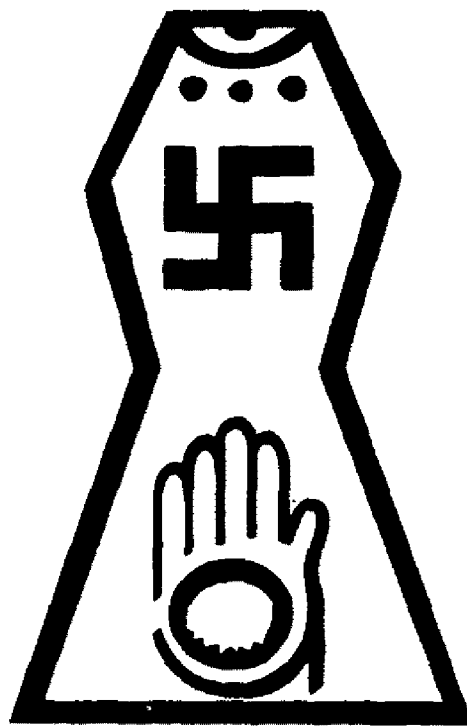


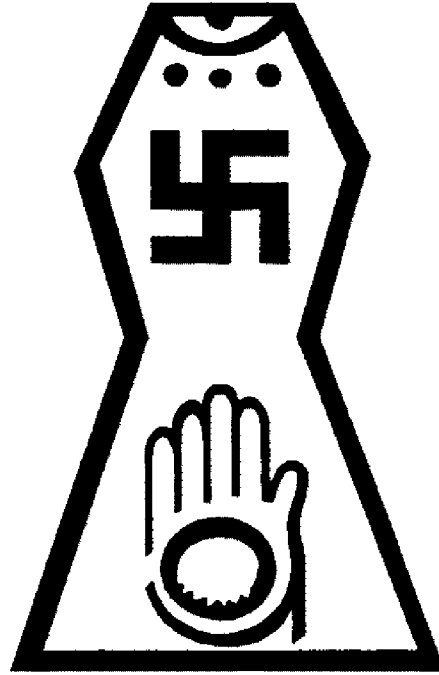
What is Jainism ?



T. U. Mehta

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*(Doctrines explained in Questions
and Answers from)*



T. U. Mehta

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*Dedicated to my
revered Parents
Umedchandbhai
&
Kasumbaben*



PREFACE

During my visit to the United States and Canada in 1993, I found intense desire in the youngsters, as well as many elders belonging to Jain brotherhood, to know more about Jain doctrines, a desire which is not so much in evidence in India. This certainly is a healthy sign for the continuation of Jainism outside of India.

I noticed that the people of Indian origin, who have made USA or Canada their permanent home, are anxious not only to retain their own culture but to enrich the American and Canadian cultures which are based on the noble traditions of liberal and scientific thinking.

This trend in the Jain brotherhood has led me to write these outlines of Jainism which, in my understanding, are based on a thinking process which is reasonable and rational. The basic trends of Jainism are founded on the logical analysis of the working of universal mechanism which, if properly exposed, would go a long way to satisfy an inquisitive mind. I do not know how far I have succeeded in achieving this but if my efforts induce people to know more about the Jain philosophy, it will surely serve my purpose.

Some friends have suggested to me that the formulations of the Jain doctrines tested in my recently published book *The Path of Arhat* may be better stated in a question and answer format and in simple terminology for those who want elementary knowledge of Jainism, may get it by easy reference. I have found good force in this suggestion and hence I have tried to answer various questions which generally arise in the minds of those who want to know the bare outlines of Jainism. In doing this, I have leaned heavily on my book and have given references to those pages of the book which discuss the relevant topics in greater details. The book is titled "Path of Arhat."

I would like to deal with more questions on the subject and would appreciate further suggestions from the readers of this booklet.

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WHAT IS JAINISM ?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q 1. What are the meanings of the words “Jain” and “Jainism”?

A 1. The Sanskrit root “Ji” or “Jay” means to win or to conquer. “Jain” therefore means one who is a conqueror, not of an empire but of passions such as anger, attachment, avarice and pride which are our real enemies. “Jainism” is a system which teaches us how to conquer these enemies and achieve real freedom of soul.

Q 2. What are the basic principles of Jainism?

A 2. The basic principles are:

1. Ahimsa: Active non-violence in mind, speech and action.
2. Satya: Truth
3. Asteya or Achaurya: Non-stealing
4. Aparigraha: Limitation of possessions
5. Brahmacharya: Chastity and Celibacy.

Q3. Is Jainism a branch of Hinduism?

A3. No. It existed even before the Aryans migrated to India with their Vedic literature which forms the basis of what is now known as Hinduism.

Q4. Is Jainism the same as Buddhism?

A4. No. Buddha was a junior contemporary of Mahavira. Buddhism was established by Buddha but Jainism was already in existence when Mahavira was born in a family of Jains following the path of the 23rd Tirthankara Parshvanath.

Both of the religions have many similarities. They both belong to the Shramana tradition which does not believe in a personal or impersonal God, but believes in Godhood which can be attained through each soul's own efforts. There are, however, fundamental differences between the two. Jainism follows the basic principle that the soul is unborn and eternal while Buddhism believes the soul is changing and transitory.

(Ref: pg 231-232 of “Path of Arhat”)

Q5. What is the Shramana Tradition? Distinguish between Shramana and Vedic Traditions.

A5. It is a tradition subscribing to total asceticism, renunciation, penances (Tapascharya) and putting a great emphasis on introspection. It

contrasts with Vedic and Aryan extrovert attitudes of enjoying life even while developing an attitude of non-attachment to materialistic activities. Jainism and Buddhism belong to the Shramana Tradition. Both the Shramana and Vedic Traditions have existed side by side in India for thousands of years and have contributed to, and seriously influenced each other. (Ref: pg 1-2 and pg 151-154)

Q6. Who established Jainism?

A6. No one. Jains believe theirs is an eternal religious tradition. This view can be justified by stating that the fundamental doctrines of Jainism are natural to the human mind, emotions and reasoning which existed ever since man began to reason out the Universal phenomenon.

Q7. What is the meaning of “Tirthankars”, and who are they?

A7. “Tirth” means a place for spiritual upliftment or a bank of a river. “Kar” means one who makes. So the word means one who finds or establishes a “Tirth”.

There are twenty-four “Tirthankars” whose names and symbols of identification are as follows:

NAMES	SYMBOLS
1. Rishabhadev or Adinath	Bull
2. Ajitnath	Elephant
3. Sambhavnath	Horse
4. Abhinandan Swami	Ape
5. Sumatinath	Heron
6. Padmaprabhu	Lotus
7. Suparshvanath	Swastika
8. Chandraprabhu	Moon
9. Pushpadantnath	Dolphin
10. Sitalnath	Tree
11. Shreyansnath	Rhino
12. Vasupujyanath	Buffalo
13. Vimalnath	Hog
14. Anantnath	Falcon
15. Dharmanath	Thunderbolt
16. Shantinath	Deer
17. Kunthunath	Goat
18. Aranath	Fish
19. Mallinath	Jar
20. Munisuvratnath	Tortoise

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| 21. Naminath | Blue Lotus |
| 22. Neminath | Conch Shell |
| 23. Parshvanath | Snake |
| 24. Mahavira | Lion |

All of these Tirthankars were Kshatriyas, a class of warriors and ruling princes. Many of them were Chakravartis, emperors. Tirthankar Mallinath was a female, a princess from a royal family. Each tirthankar is given a different symbol of identity. This is an illustrative tendency of Indian culture to give a place of pride to all animate and inanimate things of life. Except Mahavira and Parshvanath, there is no historical proof of the existence and other details of Tirthankars. There is sufficient data about the existence of Rishabhdev, Ajitnath, Munisuvrathnath and Neminath in contemporary Indian literature such as Purana, Bhagvata, Rigved and Yajurved. Their role is similar to that of prophets. They are not worshipped as Gods, though Digambars and Svetambars (the two main sects of Jainism) have built their temples in order to worship these revered souls who have achieved liberation. Sthanakwasi Svetambars (a branch of Svetambar Jains) do not believe in this type of idol worship.

Q8. Describe briefly the lives and mission of the 1st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th Tirthankars.

A8. Shri Rishabhdev:

He was the father of modern civilization and culture. He established the institution of marriage, evolved the script known as “Brahmi” a name given also to one of his daughters. It was he who first taught the art of agriculture, building of molds, township, and disposal of dead bodies by cremation. His father was king Nabhi of Ayodhya who was the last of “Manus”, law givers. His mother was Marudevi. He had a son named “Bharat” who became a Chakravarti (emperor) and named India as “Bharat Varsha”.

He was the pioneer of the Shramana Tradition. After rendering yeomen services to the society, he renounced his kingdom, became a recluse and organized a society of Shramanas based on Ahimsa, renunciation and austerities. Hindus regard him as one of their “Avatara”, (prophets of divine descent). Jains do not believe in the theory of Divine Descent since the Divinity is evolved only by spiritual efforts.

(Ref: pg 9-12)

Shri Neminath:

He was a contemporary of Lord Krishna, who was his first cousin, being the son of Samudravijay, elder brother of Shri Krishna’s father. He was engaged with Rajemati a princess sister of King Kansa who was

killed for his despotism and cruelties. He carried the message of Ahimsa when he renounced his marriage after knowing that hundreds of animals were to be butchered at his marriage festival. On his way to the marriage he left the procession and became a recluse. Rajemati, his wife to be, also followed him and became a recluse herself. This action saved Rathnemi, Neminath's brother, from falling prey to his sexual impulses after noticing the bewitching beauty of Rajemati at the mountain cave of "Revat" (modern mount Girnar at Junagadh-Saurashtra). He is known as and worshipped by Hindus as Aristhanemi.

(Ref pg 12-14)

Shri Parshvanath:

He was the immediate predecessor of the last Tirthankara Lord Mahavira, and was born in Eight Century BC to king Ashvasen of Kashi (modern Benars) and queen Vamadevi. Even while he was a prince he practiced Ahimsa and systematized the practice of austerities performed by Shramana saints and prevented the sacrifices of living creatures in the sacred fire of Yagnas. This provoked a powerful Brahman sage called "Kamath" who later took his revenge when Parshwanath was performing his austerities after renouncing the world. He prescribed a four-fold course of conduct as Ahimsa (non-violence), Asteya (non-stealing), Satya (truth) and Aparigraha (limitation of possessions). This was called "Charturyama". He organized the Jain society by establishing "Sangh" to propagate the above principles. His was the most organized following in the times of Mahavira and Buddha. (Ref: pg 14-16)

Mahavira Swami:

He is the last and most well known Tirthankar of the Jains, sometimes misunderstood by non-Jains as the "founder of Jainism". His original name was Vardhamana, a personage of tremendous will power. He was born in the sixth century B.C. in Jnatr, a clan of Jain Kshatriyas and was also known as "Nataputta". His father's name was "Siddharth" and mother's name was Trishala. Siddhartha was a chief of elected deputies of Lachchhavis, who were ruling over "Vaishali" (near Patna in modern Bihar). The Vajji confederation was non-monarchial and run by the democratic methods of election and decision. Mahavira inherited these democratic traditions. Mahavira was the younger son of Siddhartha. He wanted to renounce the world at an early age, but for want of the consent of his mother and later of his elder brother, he refrained. According to "Swetambers" he was married and had a daughter by this marriage, but Digambaras assert that he remained unmarried. He renounced worldly affairs and became a recluse at the age of 30. He practiced severe austerities for 12 long years which earned him the title

of “Mahavira”-a great warrior- a warrior who waged a relentless war against all human weaknesses and frailties of human nature. After 12 years of very sever penances and tribulations he attained”Kaivalya” (omniscience) an absolute knowledge. Only after kaivalya he undertook the path of preaching. For 12 years he moved barefoot from place to place and had a very large following from east to west.

Gosala who was the leader of “Ajivaka” philosophy (those who believe in the determinism called Niyati), initially called himself a disciple of Mahavira but subsequently became his rival and met with a tragic death 16 years before Mahavira’s Nirvana (death). Mahavira was a great spiritual revolutionary because of the following reasons:

1. He cut at the root of sacrificial violence
2. He successfully challenged Brahmanical priestly dominance.
3. He exposed the cast distinctions and established the principle of social democracy.
4. He gave the females their deserved status and freely allowed them to enter the religious order.
5. He took religion to the masses by adopting Prakrit as the medium of religious preaching and thus broke the monopoly of Sanskrit in the intellectual pursuits.
6. He encouraged the concept of freedom and democracy in thought, speech, and action through debates and conferences.
7. He explained the scheme of universal mechanism in a manner which gave importance to every nut and bolt of its working nature.
8. He established religious democracy in its true form by proving that even a “Jiva of Nigod has the potential of being a Tirthankar and its life should, therefore be equally respected and protected.
9. He pointed out some serious fallacies of Vedic thinkers and challenged the infallibility of the Vedas.
10. He revised the concept of Chaturyama of his predecessor Parshvanath and introduced a separate category of good conduct as Bhramacharya (chastity and celibacy)
11. He organized the Jain following by establishing separate orders for male and female recluses (sadhus and sadhvis) and other two orders of Shravakas and Shravikas (male and female house holders) He prescribed codes of conduct for all of them and put them under the discipline of competent heads called Gandharas.

12. He harmonized the conflicting philosophic theories by his synthesis of Syadvad and Anekantvad (theory of relativity)

This great soul was born as a human being, lived as such, and died also as such. He never claimed any Divine descent or divine favor. He always emphasized the importance of man by insisting that salvation is not the gift of any divine authority but can be obtained by every soul through its own efforts.

(Ref: chapter 2)

Q9. Who gave India the name of Bharat Varsha?

A9. It was Bharat, the eldest son of Shri Rishabhdev- the first Tirthankar.

Q10. How do Jains classify the scheme of the universe? What is the importance of the Six Dravyas?

A10. According to the Jain metaphysics, the whole universe can be broadly classified into two categories of “Jiva” and “Ajiva”, which means the sentient and not-sentient or conscious and not-conscious.

Jiva can be sub classified as:

1. Liberated called Siddhas.

2. Not liberated called Sansarins, are classified as:

A. Tras or Mobile

1. Those have two senses - touch and taste
2. Those having three senses - touch, taste, and sight
3. Those having four senses - touch taste, sight, and smell
4. Those having five senses - touch, taste, sight, smell, and hearing.

B. Sthavara or immobile. They are known as Nigoda which have a common body and are at the lowest stage of existence. Instances of Nigoda are earth, water, fire, air and vegetables.

Ajivas can be classified as:

1. Pudgala - the things that constantly change
2. Dharma - which is helpful in getting motion
3. Adharma - which is helpful in getting rest.
4. Akasha - space
5. Kala - time

This concept can be explained by diagram as follows:

UNIVERSE

Jiva		Ajiva		
Siddhas	Sansarin	Pudgal	Dharma	Adharma Akash Kala
Sthavara (Nigoda)		Trasa (Mobile)		
Earth		2 Senses- touch,taste		
Water		3 Senses- touch,taste,sight		
Fire		4 Senses- touch,taste,sight,smell		
Air		5 Senses- touch,taste,sight,smell,hearing		
Vegetables				

Professor Zimmer said that this systematization of forms of life represents a fundamental scientific concept of the world.

The six Dravyas (Jiva) and five Ajivas are important in a highly analytical approach to Jainism.

Q11. What are the qualities and functions of Jiva?

A11. Jiva is also known as Atman, soul or self. The essential quality of Jiva is conscious, which does not die even in deep sleep. The “I” consciousness which imports dynamism to the Ajiva is associated from time immemorial. It is permanent or Anadi (without a beginning) and Ananta (without an end). Since consciousness is its intrinsic characteristic, it possesses the power to know everything concerning aspect of time and space. But this power is blurred by its association with Pudgal’s Karmic forces which consist of passions such as anger, avarice, attachment, pride and such other elements of Avidya (want of knowledge). When Pudgalic coverage is removed by Jiva’s efforts, Jiva’s consciousness gets more and more luminous until it acquires omniscience - pure knowledge which is known as “Kevalyajnana”. Jiva with kevalyajnana becomes Siddha, others remain sansarins undergoing the cycle of birth and death.

(Ref: pg 59-61)

Q12. What are the characteristics and functions of Ajiva?

A12. The five categories of Ajiva were previously described. The most important is the category of Pudgala. This word consists of two roots. “Pud” meaning “to combine” and “gala” meaning to “dissociate”. The

word Pudgala refers to things which constantly undergo change and hence, causes pleasure and pain. These pleasures and pains result in anger, attachment, avarice and pride which ultimately bind the Jiva.

Dharma is Ajiva. Dharma does not mean "religion" as commonly understood. The Jain concept of Dharma is that the intrinsic nature of everything is its own Dharma. For example, Dharma of sugar is its sweetness. If it loses its sweetness, it ceases to be sugar. Similarly, if the intrinsic nature of Jiva is pure consciousness or pure knowledge, the Dharma of each Jiva is to remain in pure consciousness without being coloured by attachment (Raga) or aversion (Dwesa). Jiva can progress only if it remains in its own Dharma. The Function of Dharma is to help a thing in its movement just as water helps a fish to have movement. Here the utility of water is merely useful in the movements of a fish but an effort must be made by the fish, water is only a medium. Similarly, Jiva itself has to make an effort in order to move but the movement can only be progressive if it is made with the help of its own Dharma.

Adharma is when movement is at rest. Just as a branch of a tree serves the place of rest for a flying bird, Adharma is a place of rest for Jiva. Rest represents the want of movement which in turn means want of progress. Thus, in Jainism, the words Dharma and Adharma have very peculiar meanings which are quite unconventional.

The term Akasha means space and the term Kala means time. All progress, or want of it, requires space and time. Both of which have no life and hence are Ajiva. An important thing to be noted according to Jainism is, the things which are immobile are not necessarily Ajivas simply because they are immobile. A lump of earth has lives of Nigoda, having only one sense. It is for this reason that most of the Ajivas are merely conceptual - the things which can be conceived only in mind.

The finding of one sense Jivas in the things like earth, air, water etc. was a great discovery in the field of religion, which is now proved through physical science in its theory of atomic composition of electrons, protons and neutrons which generate energy. Energy is dynamism which is another name of Jiva.

(Ref: pg 71-75)

Q13. When did Jiva and Ajiva come into existence?

A13. Jains answer this by saying that they are eternal - with no beginning or end. Science also holds that matter is indestructible. Jains further believe that Jiva and Ajiva are associated together. When Jiva, by its own efforts separates itself from Ajiva, it obtains salvation called "Moksha".

Q14. How do Jiva and Ajiva function?

A14. Jiva's effort is to get away from the association of Ajivas. Jiva is clouded by Pudgalas and Karmic veils. Therefore its luminosity is blurred. Its natural tendency is to go up. Even when it appears to be going down, it gets the experience of the undesirable things of life, and after knowing that these things do not bring happiness it leaves them and tries to progress on right lines.

(Ref: pg 71-72)

Q15. Do Jains believe in a "personal God" or an "impersonal divine authority which shapes and guides the Universal scheme?"

A15. No. Jainism does not believe in any authority outside the authority of Atman as shaping our own or universal destiny.

(Ref: pg 47-48)

Q16. Is Jainism an atheistic religion? If yes, how? If no why?

A16. It is not atheistic though it does not believe in personal or impersonal God, it does believe in Godhood of Atman (soul) which has attained full liberation. This godhood has all the attributes of what others know as God. For this reason as well as for the reason that Jainism believes in Ahimsa, Truth, Non stealing, restriction of possessions and chastity, it can not be called atheistic.

Q17. If Jainism does not believe in God, how does it explain the functioning of the universal scheme?

A17. Refer to answers to questions 10 through 14

Q18. What is the cause of human happiness and misery according to Jainism ?

A18. The cause of our happiness and misery is in our passions such as anger, avarice, attachment, pride and prejudices. They are not outside but within ourselves. All the ups and downs in life are to be sought in ourselves. Mahavira has observed that Atman is its own friend and foe, and enjoys the fruits of its own actions. Every effect has its own cause which is to be found within ourselves.

Q19. What is the difference between the "Jiva" in a blade of grass and the "Jiva" of a Tirthankar" ?

A19. The only difference is that the former is in the process of evolution at the lowest rung of the ladder, while the later is at the highest rung.

But on the point of potentiality both are on equal footing. This ensures complete spiritual democracy leading to the doctrine of Ahimsa (non violence).

Q20. What is Ratna Trayi? Show how one leads to the other.

A20. “Ratna” means jewel and “Trayi” means three. Ratna Trayi means three jewels. Three jewels in human life are:

1. Correct perception (Samyag darshan)
2. Correct knowledge (Samyag jnana)
3. Correct conduct (Samyag charitra)

This Ratna Trayi is the psycho-spiritual exposition of human conduct having three steps to freedom.

The first step of correct perception is when the mind becomes unconditional and free from all prejudices and predilections. It is then ready to understand the universal scheme by proper analysis. For this purpose it begins to see that the permanent happiness, which is the goal of every living being, cannot be obtained by the enjoyment of impermanent objects. At this stage he begins to see the distinctions between “Jiva” and “Ajiva”. This is the stage of Samyag Darshan - correct perspective.

The perspective must be “correct” for further progress to be possible. No perspective can be correct unless one is able to catch the ‘essence’ of life. This ‘essence’ is called “Tatwa”. Knowledge of this ‘essence’ involves the logical analysis of the actual mechanism by which one can achieve final freedom. This mechanism is found in the Jain theory of ‘Nine Tatwas’ which explain the whole process of achieving freedom. The nine tatwas are: 1. Jiva, 2. Ajiva, 3. Papa, 4. Punya, 5. Ashrava, 6. Bandha, 7. Samvara, 8. Nirjara, and 9. Mokasha, the detailed explanation of which is given in answers to question 22.

The stage of Samyag Darshana is unclear, however, the Jiva which has correct perspective (Samyag Darshan) desires to probe further and tries to acquire better understanding of the universal scheme. It thus enters the field of Jnana (knowledge). According to Jainism there are five categories of knowledge which are described in answer to question 32. Jainism says that real knowledge is direct. Knowledge which is acquired by a Jiva through the medium of physical senses is not ‘direct’. The ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’ knowledge is explained in answer to question 36. At this stage it would be sufficient to note that the true knowledge of the ‘self’ (atman) is needed to acquire the knowledge of everything, as Acharang Sutra puts it “Je egam janai se savvam janai” - “one who knows atman knows everything”.

This process of Darshana and Jnana is mostly over-lapping and one cannot say which follows the other. Other such over-lapping stage is that of Samyag Charitra -correct character. Darshan and Jnana are of no use if they do not fructify in correct conduct. It is through conduct only that the soul gets experience. Without experience, every knowledge is nothing more than a mere bookish information. This correct conduct is expressed by every soul practicing Panchsheel i.e. 1. Ahimsa, 2. Satya, 3. Asteya, 4. Aparigraha, and 5. Brahmacharya.(see answer to question 36)
(Ref: pg 80-83)

Q21. What are the “Tatwas”? How many Tatwas are there?

A21. See the answer to question 20.

Q22. Describe the importance of the theory of the Nine Tatwas and how they function.

A22. The importance of the theory of the Nine Tatwas is such that they logically explain how the mechanism for obtaining final freedom called salvation (Moksha) works in practice. The first two Tatwas, Jiva and Ajiva are already explained. Jiva's association with Ajiva is the cause of “Sansara” i.e. birth, death, pleasure, pain, disease, destitution, mirth and misery. This association is caused by Papa (bad actions) and Punya (good actions). Bad actions with motive, result in pain, disease and misery. Good actions with motive result in pleasure and mirth.

Both good and bad actions, if done with a motive, would bind the soul to the inflow of “Karmas”. This inflow is called “Ashrava” and its binding nature is called “Bandhana”. By Bandhana the soul loses its freedom as it is bound by the chains of Karma and has to suffer the consequences of good and bad actions. Good actions bind soul with chains of gold while bad actions with chains of iron. However, chains are chains and result in bondage.

This is the process to show how a soul gets into bondage. The process explains the Tatwas of Papa, Punya, Ashrava, and Bandhan, and shows how the soul wanders in this worldly existence.

What is the mechanism to free the soul from bondage and achieve salvation ?

This is explained by next two Tatwas of “Samvara and Nirjara”. “Samvara” means the stoppage of the inflow of Karmas. If a soul conducts itself in a manner which does not earn any additional Karma of Papa and Punya, it enters into the process of ‘Samvara’. This can be done by strictly practicing panchsheela. Life is like a pond of water

where sub-terrainian inflow of Karmic water is constantly accumulating. To keep pond dry, first you stop the inflow of Karmic water, then only drain out the Karmic water which has already accumulated. This draining process is known as “Nirjara”. Thus Nirjara is the destruction of accumulated Karmas.

The accumulated Karma can be destroyed by two methods:

1. by suffering or enjoying their fruits with equanimity - without being attached by pleasure or disturbed by pain
2. by undergoing austerities - Tapasya. This Tapasya should not be a mere exercise to penalize the body, nor should it be done to earn fame or merit. It should come naturally without any inner hankering for food or material comforts. The first method is called Akama Nirjara because it is undertaken without the specific object of destroying accumulated Karmas. Karmas in this process, are destroyed by suffering or enjoying the fruits with equanimity. If the equanimity is lost, we earn fresh Karmas even while suffering or enjoying the fruits of bad or good Karmas of the past.

The second method of Nirjara is called “Sakama Nirjara” because that process is undertaken only with the object of destroying the past accumulated Karmas. If this process is resorted with a view to earn material benefits such as name or reputation or publicity, it results in earning fresh Karmas.

The process of Nirjara is very difficult, if it is not done properly, it would result in the bondage of fresh Karmas instead of destroying the old ones.

If Samvar and Nirjara are properly observed the Soul becomes free from the bondage of all the Karmas and steps into the last stage of Moksha.

The working process of Nine Tatwas is perfectly logical and rational, though difficult to practice. To reach the top is always difficult and demands untiring efforts and constant vigilance. The importance of the principle lies in its emphasis on the Soul’s individual efforts and self reliance.

(ref: pg 112-113)

Q23. Explain the theory of Karma.

A23. The theory of Karma is the theory of cause and effect. Every effect is the result of a cause. There is nothing in this universe which happens without a cause. Take any phenomenon or event of nature, you will find that it has a cause. This whole universe is a huge machine which works strictly according to its rules. We, human beings, are an integral part of

this machine and are therefore governed by the same universal law of cause and effect.

Our Jiva which is our Atman or soul is conscious. Everything which is conscious has a dynamic potential. When Jiva is in association with Ajiva this dynamism is activated. Hence, our Karmas are the result of this dynamism of our Jiva. The actions are the causes and reactions are their effects. Good actions are known as Punya and bad actions are known as Papa. These Punya and Papa are to be enjoyed by their doer which is our own Jiva. Therefore, the Jiva remains bound by the results till they are enjoyed.

The ideal state for jiva is where there is no good or bad karma. The Karma comes not only from positive actions but according to Jain theory, comes into existence the moment an idea to do enters the mind. This is called "Bhava Karma". This theory of Bhava Karma is based on the concept of a sub-conscious mind, the force and the existence of which is recognized by the modern psychologists like Karl Jung.

The Jain concept of Karma is perfectly scientific and psychological.
(Ref: pg 94-102)

Q24. Is the Karma theory fatalistic?

A24. No. On the contrary it emphasizes the idea of self help and self exertion. It teaches that what you can do, you can undo also. Self reliance is its motto. It develops self confidence. It assures us that our destiny is in our own hands and superpower can only help us by pointing out the path. But the path is to be traversed by us through our own efforts.

Q25. What is the Ajivika theory of Goshala ?

A25. Goshala who proclaimed himself a disciple of Mahavira moved with him for six years, but parted his company because he was convinced that every thing in life is predetermined and you cannot change that course by your action or exertion. Mahavira believed in the potency of human efforts and said that every Jiva can obtain salvation by his own efforts. Goshala's theory of predetermination was fatalistic in essence and was known as the Ajivika or Niyativad theory. The word Ajivika means as long as Jiva lasts. Since they believed that Jiva lasts only in accordance with its predetermined course, Goshala and his followers were known as Ajivikas. Niyiti means predetermination.

(Ref: pg 98-99 and App c. pg 207 - 211)

Q26. Why do Karmas bind the soul ? Do even good Karmas bind the soul ? If so, why ?

A26. The answer to this question is contained in the answer to question

no. 23. The Karmas bind the Jiva because they are made by the Jiva itself. Even good Karmas bind the Jiva if they are motivated. They bind because motive supplies the cause and its effect. Motiveless action does not bind Jiva.

Q27. Can one avoid Karma? If so, how?

A27. The common belief is, as long as the body is there, action and activity are bound to be there and therefore we can never avoid Karmas. However this belief is not correct, because the Karmas bind only if they are motivated. If an action is done in natural course of things without being guided by a motive, it does not bind. For instance a surgeon operates and cuts a part of human body. He has no motive to cause injury. So, he cannot be said to have earned Karma of injuring the person he operates upon. It is the intention and the motive which supply the binding force to every Karma. One can wage a war if it is thrust upon and made inevitable. But in waging such a war there is no animosity or feeling of revenge against those with whom you are fighting. This does appear difficult, but it is not impossible. It must be remembered that all the Tithankars were Kshatriyas, belonging to a class of warriors, and many of them were Chakrawartis (emperors) who had to fight wars. They had not suddenly become non-violent. It is reasonable to believe that if they had to fight wars, they did so only in the manner stated above.

Karmas can be avoided by developing non-attachment to the action done. This is what "Geeta" also taught us.

Q28. How many types of Karmas are there?

A28. There are 148 varieties of Karmas, but the main are only eight. They are: 1. Darshanavaraniya 2. Jnanavaraniya 3. Vedaniya 4. Mohaniya 5. Ayushya 6. Nama 7. Gotra and 8. Antaraya.

We have seen that Jnana, Darshana and Charitra are the three jewels of life which lead us to the path of salvation. The first four Karmas are those which obstruct the development of these three jewels.

(see question no. 20)

Darshanavaraniya means those which cover and obstruct apprehension of reality. These Karmas prevent you from obtaining a proper perspective on life. There are some who dismiss any talk of morality and spiritual advancement as a mere taboo. Vision (Darshana) of these people is blind, making progress impossible. Jnanavaraniya means those which cover and obstruct the acquisition of the knowledge of reality. These Karmas do not allow the subject to study.

Vedaniya and Mohaniya are the Karmas which obstruct the development

of character - charitra which is the third jewel. Vedana means feeling. Vedaniya Karma generates the feelings of pleasures and pain. Moha means attachment. This is the worst type of Karma because it is the root cause of almost all other Karmas. Attachment for persons, properties, position, power, even ideologies and ideas is bad in life. It generates anger, frustration, avarice and violence. It is neither love nor appreciation, because the root of the word "Moha" is "Muh" (to swoon - to faint). In a state of swoon, intellect does not work and the whole thinking process is blurred and objectivity is destroyed. Ganadhara Gautam's "moha" even for the great soul like Mahavira worked as an obstruction in achieving Keval-Jnana (pure knowledge).

The first four Karmas are called "Ghati" and they cause obstruction to the real knowledge. The remaining four are 'Aghati'. They exist as long as the body exists. Their names define their functions.

(Ref: pg no 104-107)

Q29. What is the theory of transmigration of the soul? Explain how the theory is connected with the theory of Karma?

A29. Transmigration means the soul taking birth and rebirth in different types of lives. It is based on the theory of Karma and supplies the only rational explanation of many incongruities, inequalities and imbalances found around us.

The mechanism of Karma cannot be fulfilled in one lifetime. Each lifetime one atma attains and exhausts a certain amount of Karmas. Whatever Karmas remain at the end of one life can only be exhausted in the next life. Hence, the concept of reincarnation is conceived. When one has fully exhausted all of their own Karmas by the end of their lifetime, he attains moksha.

Q30. How long do the effects of Karma last?

A30. It lasts until a particular Karma is exhausted either by Samvara or Nirjara.(see answer to question 24) There are Karmas which are very sticky and heavy in character. They last long and it may not be possible to shed them even by Sakam Nirjara. Those karmas should be shed by Akam Nirjara. The incident of cow-herd in Lord Mahavira's life teaches us the power of Karma and Nirjara.

However certain other Karmas such as the Karmas of Nama, Gotra etc. can be easily shed. Intensity of a Karma depends upon the rigor and intention during performance.

Q31. Explain the relationship of Karma with the Nine Tatwas.

A31. We learnt how Papa and Punya cause a 'Bandhan' (bondage) of Karmas to Jiva and the Tatwas of Papa, Punya, Ashrava and Bandha are

closely connected with the theory of Karma.

Whereas, the Tatwas of 'Samvara, Nirjara and Moksha' are closely connected with the theory of shedding of Karmas.

Q32. What is the Jain theory of Knowledge? What are the categories of knowledge?

A32. During the discussion of Ratna-Trya (Q.21 and 22) we have noted the importance of Jnana (knowledge). The jiva gets knowledge either directly or indirectly through senses including mind (mind is also a subtler sense object). Knowledge is an essential attribute of consciousness. It is for this reason that Jiva is capable to obtain a direct knowledge without the help of intermediary, physical organs or senses (sight, hearing, touch or smell). The direct and indirect knowledge which Jiva obtains is based on the theories of psychology and para-psychology. The Jain thinkers have categorized knowledge into five: 1. Mati-Jnana 2. Shruta-Jnana 3. Avadhi-Jnana

4. Manah-paryaya Jnana and 5. Kevalya Jnana.

The first two are the indirect knowledge, the other three are direct knowledge. The five Jnanas are explained as follow:

1. Mati Jnana: The knowledge obtained through physical senses and mind. 'Mati' means mind. Our physical sensations convey their message to the mind, mind records them and also reasons them out and stores the experience in its sub-conscious or conscious layers. Jiva acts in accordance with this experience.

2. Shruta Jnana: The knowledge derived from what is heard or read. 'Shruta' means to hear. In ancient times, scriptural knowledge was conveyed orally for want of the art of writing.

3. Avadhi Jnana: This is the "direct" knowledge. "Avadhi" means limit. When the self gets knowledge of everything which happens within the limited compass of space without the help of outside agency, media or physical senses.

4. Manah Paryaya Jnana - This knowledge enables the self to read the mind of others directly. "Manah" means mind. The power to read and to know the changing currents of the minds of others belongs to this category.

5. Kevalya Jnana - Here the direct knowledge which the self gets is boundless. It knows everything simultaneously which happens or has happened in the past or will happen in the future to anybody or in anyplace in the whole universe of which our earth and even our solar system are merely a fractional part. To the spiritual pygmies like us this may appear to be a tall claim. But even reason and logic say that this

is not so. Jiva gets this knowledge only when it gets free from the bondage of all the four Ghati Karmas such as Darshanavaraniya, Jnanavaraniya, Vedaniya, and Mohaniya. When the obstructions caused by these Karmas are removed, the consciousness of the self becomes transparent and the knowledge it gets is pure (i.e. Kevalya). When the knowledge is pure, it is without any prejudices or predilections and the mind which is at rest does not get agitated. So the mind which plays very important part in indirect knowledge, has no part to play in this direct knowledge. Such a knowledge is infinite and boundless - it cannot be otherwise.

Pandit Sukhlalji, a great Jain scholar, is of the view that the unbounded knowledge which the Self gets in Keval Jnana is not with reference to the knowledge of material happenings of past, present or future, but is with reference to the philosophical insight because the Self which gets this knowledge is capable of seeing every aspect of philosophical proposition quite objectively and without any prejudices or predilections.

Thus, the five categories of knowledge as seen by Jainism are based on a deep psychological and para-psychological analysis of human mind and soul. (Ref: pg 83-87)

Q33. What is the theory of Lesya? How many Lesyas are there?

A33. "Lesya" is the reflection of mental disposition and spiritual advancement of an individual around his personality and especially around his face. This is known as an aura in English.

Jain thinkers have analyzed human personality through the study of Lesya. According to them the Lesyas are of six types and each one is known by its color. These six types are 1. Krishna (black) 2. Neela (blue), 3. Kapota (ash), 4. Pita or Tejo (orange), 5. Padma (golden) and 6. Shukla (white). The first three suggest bad disposition and the degree of badness is the highest in Krishna (black) Lesya, and lowest in Kapota (ash) Lesya. Thereafter, they go on becoming good by the ascending order. The last one Shukla is the best. The study of Lesyas in human beings is an example of the Jain approach based on the psychology. (Ref: pg 187 - 190)

Q34. What are the Guna Sthanakas? Describe the different stages of the development of the soul.

A34. "Guna" means merits and "Sthanaka" means stage or placement. The doctrine of Guna Sthanaka is evolved to consider the manner in which the soul obtains spiritual evolution and finally reaches total salvation. Jiva is struggling life after life to be free from the bondage of Karma. In this struggle it ascends the ladder and also falls back to the lower level and again ascends till it finally gets liberation. The inherent tendency of every Jiva is to ascend. Even during fall jiva gets experience

and proceeds further. Even the souls of Tirthankaras like Mahavira have to pass through this struggle. It is a democratic process where no one gets a preference and everyone has to make progress by his own individual efforts. In this struggle every Jiva has to pass through fourteen stages. Each stage has a different level of development.

1. Mithya Drashti - which means unreal vision. This is a stage of spiritual blindness. This results from Darshanavarniya Karma.
2. Sasadana Samyag Drashti - some souls fall to this stage after attaining higher stage of vision.
3. Mishra - which is the stage of mixed feelings of real and unreal attitude towards life.
4. Avirati Samyag Drashti - though the soul gets proper vision, but that vision does not remain constant. (Most of the thinkers are at this stage)
5. Desha Nirati - There is partial stoppage of material enjoyments
6. Pramati Samyag - there is further progress which is hindered by inertia. Many saints are at this stage.
7. Apramatta Samyag - When inertia goes away and the soul becomes ready for Nirjara.
8. Apurvakaran - the soul enters the stage where it experiences spiritual development which is unique and not experienced ever before. The Soul is now able to shed the Karmic veil by its pacification and destruction called "Upashama and Kshaya". If however, only the course of pacification is taken, there are chances of fall which takes it to the lower stage.
9. & 10. Anivruti and Sukshama Samparaya - Anivruti means not totally annihilated and Samparaya means passions. At this stage the passions are still not totally annihilated.
11. Upashanta Moha - As the passions are not totally annihilated, Moha i.e. attachment at times asserts and causes a fall to the second stage. The Soul then gets experience and again ascends up, and enters the next stage.
12. Kshaya Moha - Moha is totally destroyed.
13. Sayoga Kevali - all Karmic bondages are destroyed and the soul attains Kevalya Jnana. Only body remains attached to the Soul, and so there remains the yoga (joinder) of the body. This is the condition of Vitaraga or Arihanta.
14. Ayogi Kevali - the body connection goes away and the soul exists in purest form. It reaches Siddhahood which is pure Godhood. Now the cycle of birth and death ends.

The above stages are the soul's journey to the final freedom and absolute bliss.
(Ref: pg 88-92)

Q35. What is Nayavad, Syadvad, Anekantvad, and Saptabhangi? Discuss their importance.

A35. Syadvad and Anekantvad are the greatest contributions which the Jain thinkers have made to the world of thought. This contribution is analytical as well as synthetic.

Its method of analysis is supplied by Nayavad, “Naya” means aspect. Nayavad says that Truth or Reality is very complex and has many aspects all of which cannot be seen or judged by us. Moreover, we, who see it and try to judge it, have limited knowledge, have our own individual prejudices and predilections. Thus on one hand the object to be judged has various aspects, on the other hand the person who tries to judge that object has limited knowledge and understanding which may also be influenced by prejudices. If this is so, how can we expect a correct and comprehensive view or judgement of the object? The judgement which we can get under such circumstances would always be partial and one sided, says Nayavad.

Then what is the remedy for judging a thing? The answer is provided by the theory of Syadvad. Syadvad tries to harmonize all the different aspects from which reality or the truth can be seen, and gives right place to each aspect for getting the total view of the object. If a particular aspect is put, Syadvad says yes, it may be true from one point of view just as some other aspect would also be true from other point of view. The word “Syat” in Sanskrit means perhaps or possible. The Jains have used this word not to express any doubt but to emphasize a possibility. Here it should be noted that every proposition has three possibilities, namely, 1. It is true, 2. It is not true, and 3. It is such that we cannot assert whether it is true or it is not true. So, when a proposition is made, Syadvad would say, “Syad Asti”, “Syad Nasti” or “Syad Avktavyam” which means that the proposition ‘may be true’, may not be true’, or ‘may be such that nothing positive can be asserted’. Thus for every proposition these three notions are required to be considered. Syadvad asks us to consider not only these three basic aspects but also four other aspects which are mere permutations and combinations of the above three aspects. These four are : 1. Syad Asti-Nasti, 2. Syad Asti-Avktavyam, 3. Syad Nasti-Avktavyam, 4. Syad Asti-Nasti-Avktavyam. The total of seven are known as Saptabhangi (seven aspects). If a thing is looked from these seven aspects you are likely to go near the truth.

Proper synthesis of all different aspects is made by Anekantvad. “Aneka” means many fold and “anta” means end. Anekant gives practical shape to Syadvad and says that different views are possible, do

not reject any possibility as untrue or do not accept only one possibility because every possibility may be partially true if not wholly true. A partial truth should have its own place, at least in establishing one or a partial aspect of a thing. It is 'Ekanta' (having only one end). Therefore it is desirable to collect all available partial truths and try to harmonize them. By this process you may get a correct or a nearly correct view of the thing in question.

Thus the theory of Syadvad and Anekantvad tries to systemize our thinking, increases tolerance and understanding of even the opposite point of view, cultivates democratic behavior and introduces the doctrine of Ahimsa even in the thinking process. It is based on the theory of relativity which is propounded by esteemed physicists like Einstein and other Quantum Mechanics. (Ref: pg 124-144)

Q36. What is Panchsheel? Discuss the meaning and the importance of all the five principles of Panchsheel.

A36. Panchsheel means five fundamental principles of Jainism. These five principles are already mentioned in answer to question 2. Of these five principles, four were already expounded by the 23rd Tirthankara Shri Parshvanatha. They were, Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya and Aparigraha. Looking to the prevailing condition of the society, Mahavira added the fifth principle of Brahmacharya. Let us now examine the meaning and importance of these five principles.

Ahimsa : The English translation of this word is "non-violence" However, this does not convey the full meaning of Ahimsa. The concept of Ahimsa as used in the Jain philosophy is much positive and deep. Its impact starts right from the thought process and covers the whole universe. We have seen how theory of Syadvad and Anekantvad try to harmonize the conflicting views about every problem -philosophical, ethical or otherwise. Anekantvad, if properly understood and followed, is likely to rule out all acrimony even during the thinking process.

For a true Jain all life is sacred because all life has the potentiality to attain omniscience. On the question of potentiality a true Jain sees no distinction between the Jiva of a blade of grass and the soul of the person born as Mahavira. This is the reason why we should treat all life sacred and treat every life as having the natural right to continue its existence till its natural death. Because man is a superior animal he has no right to destroy the inferior lives at the lower level. As Iwar Lissner puts it, "we should always remember that man is far from being a necessity, Earth would still go on rotating about the sun even if he ceased to exist."

Moreover, we are all the members of one organism, working as

parts of the same universal scheme. Each part of this organism has its own importance and own function to discharge. Any interference with that organism would disturb the whole system and that is why Mahavira said " it is you whom you want to kill when you kill others".

It is sheer ignorance to say that the doctrine of Ahimsa breeds weakness. On the contrary, as Gandhiji puts it, Ahimsa is the doctrine of the strong. Psychologically speaking, it is the fear complex which generates violence. Violent people are not necessarily brave.

However, the doctrine of Ahimsa is not to be construed as a total prohibition to injure or even kill when circumstances so demand, because cowardice and meek submission to gross injustice is another form of violence.

Remaining four principles of Truth, Non stealing, celibacy and restraint in possession are nothing but the extension of the doctrine of Ahimsa in as much as they basically involve Bhava Himsa i.e. violence in motive or intention. This is because whatever has the effect of destroying the purity and sublimity of one's own spirit results in the beginning of violence of the self. These then is in short, the width and amplitude of the Ahimsa doctrine.

Truth and non stealing - These principles do not require any elaboration as every religious philosophy and social norm in every country has accepted truth and non stealing as the basic principles of life.

Brahmacharya - The word celibacy does not convey the exact meaning of Brahmacharya. Brahma means divinity and charya means movement. So, the expression Brahmacharya is not confined merely to the abstention from sexual activity. It has a very wide connotation. It means complete chastity of mind, speech and action. For one who has entered the saintly order, complete Brahmacharya is prescribed, but for a householder, the prescription is confined to his or her spouse only.

Aparigraha - This principle is based on the doctrine that those who try to possess are in fact themselves possessed. So called 'masters' become slaves. It is not difficult for an intelligent man to see that constant change is the rule of the universe. But when our possessions change hands and give a slip to us we try to hold them fast. The principle of Aparigraha teaches us to develop the mental capacity to accept the reality of change and to curtail our desires. Consumerism of the western civilization teaches us to expand our desires. But Mahavira says curtail your desires restrict your possessions.

Q37. What is the theory of Bhavana? Discuss the meaning and the importance of each Bhavana.

A37. "Bhavana" means conception: Jainism teaches certain basic conceptions of life, and asks us to keep them constantly in mind in our day to day affairs so that it would be easy for us to lead the daily routine of life without tension and in accordance with the fundamental principles of Jainism. These Bhavanas are twelve in number, namely, 1. Anitya (transitory), 2. Asharana (want of refuge), 3. Ekatva (aloneness), 4. Anyatva (otherness), 5. Sansar, 6. Asrav, 7. Samvar, 8. Nirjara, 9. Ashuchi, 10. Dharma, 11. Loka, 12. Bodhi.

Anitya - Always and at every moment remember that this is a changing world where everything is transitory. We come to grief when we resent the change. Only thing which does not change is our consciousness (Chetna), which is the attribute of our soul. So, we may better concentrate on our self.

Asharan - This Bhavana wants us not to depend upon any outside agency for our upliftment - not even upon the Tirthankars. We have to make our own efforts on the path pointed out by them.

Ekatva and Anyatva - Constantly remember that we have come in this world alone. We have to chart our course of spiritual progress also alone and to bear the brunt of life also alone. Our friends and relatives can be of no help. This Bhavana brings confidence in our own self.

Sansar - Repeated birth and death is sansar. When we keep this Bhavana in mind a question is bound to arise in the mind of every intelligent being whether this constant coming in and going out of life has any purpose to serve or not. What is this drama about? Such questions may lead one to apprehend and to know the reality.

Asrav, Samvara, Nirjara - These are already explained in answer to question 24. Constant remembrance of these Bhavana helps us in keeping a right path.

Ashuchi - We are all attached primarily to our body and try to satisfy all its undisciplined cravings. This Bhavana therefore teaches to be realistic and points out that most important in this body is the Jiva because without it the body is nothing but dirt, decess and impurities. This Bhavana does not prescribe hatred for bodily wants but teaches us to discipline them so that it could be properly used for spiritual progress.

Dharma, Loka, Bodhi - These three Bhavanas remind us of ten virtues and the nature universe and the inter play of Jiva and Ajiva. These Bhavanas supply a practical course of life and if properly followed our living is bound to become more rational and fruitful.

Q38. What are the twelve vratas (vows of a house holder)?

A38. The vratas consists of five anuvratas, three gun vratas and four vows. Five anuvratas are the principles of Panchsheel, already discussed before. For a house holder they are to be practiced with rigidity as practically consistent and as possible with their life activities.

Three Guna Vratas - 1. Digvrata, 2. Bhog-upabhog-parimana, 3. Anarthadanda-viraman. All of these vratas put limitations to movements, enjoyments and violence which may have to be undertaken in active life.

Four vows of Spiritual education - 1. Samayika 2. Pratikramana 3. Desavakasika, 4. Poshadha. The first two are for meditation, review of daily activities and prayers. The third is for limiting material activities and the fourth is for the retirement as a monk. The first two may be taken as one in which case the fourth would be Atithisamvibhaga which is for donations.

Samayika is the most important out of these. It is principally a process of meditation which calms all nerves and prepares one for spiritual progress.

Q39. What is the place of prayer in Jainism? What is the Navakar, its importance, and the most striking feature?

A39. When it is pointed out that the Jainism does not believe in any outside agency such as personal or impersonal God which decides the Soul's destiny, and that everything happens by the automatic operation of Karma mechanism, a question which naturally arises, "is there a scope for a prayer in Jainism?"

The answer to this question is, there is full scope for prayers but these prayers are of different types and qualities. These should not be the prayers which ask for any favor for material or spiritual gains in return for worship.

Tirthankaras are worshipped in the same manner as all Siddhas are worshipped. This is not because they are expected to bestow favors, but because they are the liberated souls who have developed the pure quality of their souls and who, as such are entitled to the respect of all those who are at a lower level of spiritual development. They are worshipped because they are the path makers and path finders. They are worshipped because their blessings; like the blessings of all liberated souls belonging to any order or belief, would enable us to develop our own power to struggle and thereby to shed our Karmic bondage. Blessings will be theirs but efforts will be ours. If they are expected to show any favor, it is only the favor of pointing out the path which they have found to obtain salvation. In short, a Jain prayer which is consistent with Jain philosophy is not a prayer to get any favor in return nor is a prayer which

seeks to get anything without self effort.

Navakar Mantra is the prayer where it merely says: I bow down to those “Arihants” who have destroyed all of their passions such as anger, arrogance, avarice and attachment; I bow down to all Siddhas who have attained Nirvana and are free from the cycle of births and deaths; I bow down to those Acharyas, the leaders of the path, and to those Upadhyayas, the preachers of the path. Finally, I bow down to all the Saints who follow the Path.

These five salutations are purely impersonal, and non sectarian. They do not ask anything in return and convey nothing more than deep sense of respect not only to those souls who are actually liberated but also to those who are on the path of liberation. This is the unique and the striking feature of Navakar. (Ref: pg 178-183)

Q40. Explain the concept of Dhyān (Meditation) in Jainism.

A40. The Jain approach to Dhyān is purely psychological. It takes a very comprehensive view of the working of human mind and takes into account every type of mood through which human mind passes. The four types of Dhyāna which always engage our mind are:

1. Arta Dhyān - “Arta” means pain. When our mind is overwhelmed by the feeling of pain and remains engaged in thinking about painful event of the past or present or future, we are said to be in “Arta” Dhyāna.
2. Rudra Dhyān - “Rudra” means cruel or harsh. When our mind is, for some reason, full of anger, hatred, malice or violence, we are passing through Rudra Dhyān.
3. Dharma Dhyān - In ordinary parlance, Dharma means religion. But the Jains have a special meaning (see answer to question 12). “Dharma” means an object’s own intrinsic nature. When the mind remains concentrated in the Soul’s own intrinsic nature and constantly thinks of it without allowing it to divert its attention to worldly things which are foreign to it, is said to be in Dharma Dhyān.
4. Shukla Dhyān - “Shukla” means pure white. This is the highest type of meditation where ‘Mind’ loses its very existence in the ultimate ‘Samadhi’ and the Self or the Soul enters into a state of pure consciousness, and gets the omniscience or Kevala Jnana.

The first two Dhyāns generate Karmas and bind the Self. The third one is the process of progress. The last one is the ultimate stage in progress. If we constantly remember this analysis and judge within ourselves what type of Dhyāna we are in, we gain a type of awareness which reminds us where we are and where we should go.

(Ref: pg 183 - 187)

Q41. What is the place and importance of Tapascharya in Jainism? When Tapascharya becomes merely a mental or physical exercise?

A41. Jains are famous for the austerities they perform through out the year. Mahavira performed the most severe types of austerities for long twelve years and earned the popular title of 'Mahavira' - a great warrior.

We have noticed that every austerity is the process of 'Sakama Nirjara' a purposeful attempt to shed away the accumulated Karmas. We have already noticed in the answer to question 22 that if this process is adopted to punish the body or with a motive to earn fame and position it results in more Karma and is no better than a mere mental and physical exercise. So, the Jain seers have put great emphasis on 'abhyantara' Tapa i.e. the austerity which is 'internal'. 'Abhyantara' means a thing which springs from within. In other words it is "Bhava" - internal development - a renunciation from within, which counts. A fast undertaken with a longing for food does not earn any merit. So while undertaking austerities we should try to develop an attitude of complete non-attachment to all worldly enjoyments. In Jain terminology a fast is called upavas. 'Upa' connotes nearness; "vas" means residence. In upavas one is near to his own Atman and to no one else. Thus Upavas is much more than non eating.

Another variety of Tapa is "Bahya Tapa" - outward austerity. We need not consider all the different sub varieties of Abhyantara and Bhaya Tapa. It would, however, be very interesting to know that respect for virtues (Vinaya), rendering services to those who deserve (Vaiyavrata), to acquire true knowledge (Swadhyaya) and Dhyana (meditation), have been given the status of Abhyantara Tapa. The things like taking less food rather than filling your belly to the full (Unodari), limiting your desire for different types of food and drinks (Vruti-Samkshepa) and Rasa-Parityaga, and seeking a place of solitude for meditation are also given the status of Bahya Tapa. Such wide amplitude of the concept of Tapa shows the catholicity of the Jain doctrines.

(Ref: pg 191-196)

Q42. What is "Samlekhana"? Is it an attempt to commit suicide?

A42. When this physical existence is not of any use either materially or spiritually to the person concerned or to others, a Jain thinks of the final act of Nirjara by undertaking complete abstinence from all physical activities, and entering into Dharma Dhyana or Shukla Dhyana. This is the highest type of sublimation of physical sensed and desires. The state of Dhyana continues till this mortal frame comes to an end. This is not suicide.

The suicide is the result of mental frustration of a person who wants to live and enjoy all worldly pleasures but is not able to get them.

Putting an end to life by the process of Samlakhana is something subtle, noble and divine. To call it a suicide is to exhibit ignorance of basic principles. (Ref: pg 196)

Q43. What is the proof of the existence of Atman?

A43. No religion on earth has denied the existence of Atman or Soul, except perhaps the following of the Charwakas. Jains call it Jiva when it is found in body. Jiva becomes Siddha (parmatman) when it permanently leaves body and attains a state where no further birth and death is necessary. The belief of the Hindus and the Buddhists is the same. Even Christians, Jews and Muslims believe in soul's existence and according to them every dead person will rise from his grave to answer for his good and bad deeds. Proof of the existence of the Jiva is the proof of the death itself. When a person dies, the only difference is the want of Jiva in the body.

It was Gandhara Gautam who wanted to know from the Lord Mahavira the proof of Atman's existence. The Master solved his anxiety by posing various questions. Who is it, the master asked, "who raises doubts about Soul's existence"? "Who is it who retains consciousness even during the sleep"? "Who retains 'I' consciousness in the past, present, and future events" Such and other questions led to the answers which convinced Gautam about the existence of the Soul.

(Ref: pg 62 - 70)

Q 44. Describe incidents in Mahavira's life with reference to Jain doctrines.

A44. 1. Mahavira did not take sanyas till he was permitted by elders. Mother resented the idea. After her death even elder brother adopted the same attitude. So, he continued, but lived in 'Sansar' with the detachment of a yogi. Relatives saw that it was of no use preventing him further and permitted sanyas when he was 30 years old.

This shows his real love and respect for the feelings of elders and near relatives without the tie of 'attachment' because even while living with them as a house holder he could live as an unattached Yogi which convinced his relatives that it would serve no purpose to detain him because even while residing in the palace he lived as a Sanyasi. Jain doctrines recognize that even a house-holder can discharge his functions without attachment.

2. After he took Sanyas a poor Brahmin begged from him a portion of his only valuable garment which he had wrapped around his body. When the remaining portion got entangled in a thorny bush, he did not turn back to recover it. That Brahmin took away even the remaining entangled portion. Mahavira who was rendered "Digambara" had shed all attachments including the attachment for his body - the most difficult thing to achieve.

3. While Mahavira was in meditation he could not take care of the cattle of a shepherd who, finding his cattle missing, thought that Mahavira had committed theft. On being asked Mahavira, who was in meditation, did not reply. This angered the shepherd who began to beat him. Indra the king of gods, is said to have seen this. He revealed the identity of the meditating saint to the ignorant shepherd who repented for his mistake.

Then Indra is said to have offered permanent protection to the master for future. Mahavira politely declined to accept the offer saying that spiritual heights can be achieved only on ones own strength, thus propounding the 'Asharana Bhavana' of Jainism.

4. Mahavira's first Chaturmas (monsoon stay of four months at one place) was fixed at the Ashrama of one of his acquaintances in a forest at a place called "Morak Sannivesh". He put up at a hut where he used to meditate. Once some cows came there and began to eat grass of all such huts of the Ashram and damaged them seriously. All the inmates of the hermitage except Mahavira rushed to drive away the animals. Such incidents repeatedly occurred but Mahavira did not take any notice thereof, and did not allow his meditation to be disturbed. He therefore earned displeasure of all. On being taunted about the type of a kshatriya member of a warrior class- he left the hermitage and resolved not to stay at any place so as to cause inconvenience to others, not to allow his meditation to be disturbed, to receive food only in his palms to eat and not to serve any householder. All these resolutions have now become part of the conduct of a Jain monk.

5. There is another incident of the same place, Morak-Sannivesha; on his second visit to that place, he found one astrologer named Achhchhandaka earning his livelihood by cheating people. Mahavira knew his tricks and began to expose him. Achhchhanadaka requested him not to destroy his livelyhood and assured him not to cheat people. Mahavira realized his mistake and left the place as he was of the opinion that education rather than exposure is better.

6. Once the master was passing by the place called Kanakhal where in the past there was a beautiful hermitage of a Rishi named Kaushik. As children of that place were often damaging the hermitage the said Rishi once got very angry and in the process of chasing the children to beat them he stumbled over a stone, fell in the nearby deep well and died there. Since he died in anger, he was reborn there as a deadly poisonous serpent whose very breath and sight emitted poison. People were so much afraid that they never passes by that place, which became desolate and deserted. The serpent saw a daring human with bare feet coming near him, he became furious, but his angry sight and poisonous breath

had no effect on the approaching visitor. As the master came near, the serpent rushed at him and injected his poisonous fangs in one of his toes. The blood which came out of the injured toe of the master tasted differently. It tasted like milk which confounded the reptile. Mahavira had all compassion for the poor creature. In fact, he had, by this time, developed love and compassion for all lives in the universe and the blood which ran in his veins was likely to be of a differently character than that of ordinary mortals who are suffering from different types of passions such as anger, hatred, fear and violence.

Persons of the spiritual height achieved by Mahavira are always in a sort of communion with the whole universe. He, therefore, admonished the serpent, reminded him of his previous birth and asked him to be aware of his present plight. Chandkaushik realized his position, repented and adopted a non-violent and peaceful attitude which enabled the people to take revenge and kill him. He transmigrated to a higher level of life.

This story cannot be dismissed as a pure mythology. A woman full of anger found her child dead when she breast fed the child while she was still angry. It is biological truth that the character of our blood changes for the worst with the nervous impact of high emotions and tensions. If so, it could change for the better in case of a Yogi who has established such a communion with the universe that he could see life even in the things like earth, water and air without any help of a laboratory experiments. Such a Yogi could also communicate with all sentient things of the universe.

The story of Mahavira's encounter with Chandkaushik, even if it is taken as purely a mythological one, carries most of the lessons of the Jain doctrines such as the doctrine of Karma, transmigration, non-violence, fearlessness and the possibility of self's communion with the whole universe.

(Vide Pg 17-18 of "Wisdom, Bliss and Common Sense" by Darshani Deane - Quest Books Publications)

7. Goshalak's association with Mahavira for six long six years, and subsequent encounter between the two when he unsuccessfully threw his 'Agnilesya' at Mahavira with a view to kill him, are the events which cannot be missed in any narration of the significant events of Mahavira's life.

Goshalak was the leader of what is known as the sect of "Ajivikas" who believed that every event in life is predetermined that there is no scope for self determination as also for good or bad Karma and that the life goes on from one birth to the other up to its previously determined course. Goshalaka happened to meet Mahavira at Nalanda when he was

greatly impressed by the later's capacity to undertake severe austerities and joined him in his movements from place to place. He then began to proclaim him as a pupil of Mahavira though the later never initiated him as such nor claimed that he was his pupil, Goshalaka himself seems to have undertaken many severe austerities with Mahavira. He had, however, a bad temperament and a habit of acting and speaking

indiscriminately. Once he saw an ascetic performing penances and putting lice on his own body to feed them. Seeing this, Goshalaka mocked and joked at him which infuriated the ascetic who threw his Tejoleshya (magic fire) at Goshalaka. This would have killed Goshalaka but he was saved for Mahavira's intervention by throwing some cooling power to counter Tejoleshya. Goshalaka, impressed by this incident, himself acquired power to throw Tejoleshya on his adversary.

Subsequently Goshalaka left the company of Mahavira after moving with him for six years. He had three main incidents in his life with Mahavira which convince that "Niyati" which is the doctrine of determinism is the only correct principle which explains the scheme of the universe.

The last incident which finally convinced him about his theory was when a sesame plant came to life in the next weather even though he had uprooted it in the previous season after knowing it from Mahavira that it was going to survive. This convinced him that his Karma of uprooting it was of no avail if it was destined to survive. After this he had no faith in the theory of Karma. He parted company with Mahavira and proclaimed himself a Tirthankara and gathered his own following.

One rich influential person called "Sadaputta" was Goshalaka's follower. He had a debate with Mahavira about the validity of the theory of Niyati and was convinced by later that the theory of Karma cannot be ruled out as incorrect. He became the follower of Mahavira. Goshalaka tried to bring him back to his fold in vain. By this time Goshalaka's following had begun to thin. Goshalaka had also tried to win over Mahavira's followers but failed. One such failure was in case of one Ananda, another influential gentleman, who was Mahavira's follower. These failures and rivalry with Mahavira seems to have made Goshalaka very unhappy. Once when both of them were at the same place Goshalaka decided to have a direct confrontation with Mahavira and went to him. Mahavira knew what was going to happen. So he warned his disciples not to invite any confrontation with him. In the incident which followed, two of Mahavira's disciples who resisted the wrath of Goshalaka were burnt to death by the Tejoleshya of Goshalaka. He, however, wanted to have direct confrontation with Mahavira himself.

He therefore threw his Tejoleshya at Mahavira with a view to kill him. But the fire power released by him could not kill Mahavira and returned back to him, penetrated in his own body which made him delirious and eventually he died.

The question which arises from this incident is why the master did not release his cooling power this time as he did previously when Goshalaka himself was the victim of a Rishi wrath? The explanation is that by this time Mahavira had attained 'Kaivalya' (perfect and pure knowledge). According to Jain doctrine, a Kevali is a soul who, having attained steadfastness of an objective seer and knower (Drasta and Jnata) is never overtaken by emotions like ordinary mortals having limited knowledge, and hence does not interfere in the course of events by using his personal powers. (Ref: pg 36-40 and 207-211)

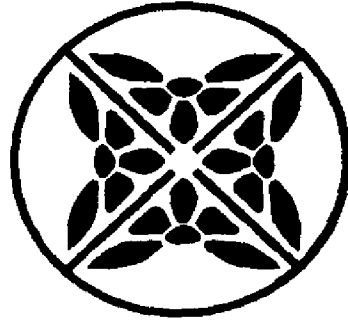
8. An incident worthy of note occurred in the master's life in the twelfth year of his penances a short while before he attained Kaivalya.

Jainism does not believe that the Soul's journey to reach the spiritual heights begins and ends on one life. In fact, it is a journey from life to life during which the soul is educated by experiences gained from different types of life's struggle. Mahavira's ascendancy was no exception to this rule. In one of his past birth as a king he had committed a very cruel act of pouring boiling lead in the ears of a servant who failed to carry out his order of stopping music after he went to sleep. Mahavira had to pay for this cruelty and torture when that servant, now a coward, pricked nails in Mahavira's ears as he did not attend to his cattle while he was in meditation. Pain caused to Mahavira was unbearable but he suffered the same in silence. When, with this pain, he visited a town named Apapa, one doctor noticed from his face that he was suffering from some physical trouble. When the doctor knew the real cause of the pain, he took out the nails from his ears. As the story goes, when this operation was made by the doctor. The pain was so unbearable that even the iron willed person like him gave a shriek of pain.

This story is illustrative of the Jain doctrine of Karma. It says that certain Karmas (actions) are such that they cannot be wiped out even by the process of Sakama Nirjar (austerities undertaken with a view to shed the accumulated Karmas). Action of pouring boiling lead in the ears of hapless attendant for a minor lapse was a very cruel act which could not be mitigated by austerities and so the fruits of it had got to be suffered. The story also conveys the message that the law of Karma rules evenly and equitably over all.

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The author is a graduate of Arts and Law and is practicing as a senior advocate of the Supreme Court of India. He has retired as Chief Justice of the High Court of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla, in the year 1979. He is taking active interest in the public affairs of Gujarat and is student of comparative study of World religious and philosophy.



❖ OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR ❖

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