

4.13 The main Principles of Lord Mahavir

There are many aspects of *Lord Mahavir's* teachings, but there are three noteworthy features that characterize the principles profunder by *Lord Mahavir*.

- (1) Non one sided stand point- *Anekantwad* - (અનેકાંતવાદ)
- (2) Non-Violence – *Ahimsa* (અહિંસા)
- (3) Non-possession *Aparigrahā* (અપરિગ્રહ)

The no-one sided standpoint springs from the concept of non-violence. The principle makes it easy for us to achieve mutual love and friendliness in the human society.

Non-violence is a very subtle principle. Any kind of violence to any kind of living being is great sin. According to *Mahavir* violence is not merely killing. It also include hurting of feelings, use of unboiled water, cutting / destroying of vegetables, hunting, fishing etc.

Passion or craving for possession given rise to evils like violence, untruth fullness, theft etc. Its cravings create disparity among peoples and can also lead to class war therefore control over one's desire to possess is good for both an individual and society. Therefore control over one's desire to possess is good for both an individual and society. Therefore *Lord Mahavir* has put great emphasis on limiting one's possession.

Lord Mahavir was a great Sage. He had undergone tremendous amount of austerity (Penance) during the years of his monkhood. He also faught principle of equality to people. He also strived against inhuman practice of human slavery. Besides, he emancipated human mind from old beliefs and wrong notions. He purified man's faculty of reason (Logic) and presented rational philosophy to people. He helped people to come out of wrong religious beliefs, misunderstanding and false rituals to please God.

Lord Mahavir preached principle of non-violence. He was an embodiment of compassion. He opposed killing of animals in sacrifices. He gave semon of universal love and friendliness. He also taught people that they can become great or small not by one's actions. In *Uttaādhyanā Sutrā* it is said "One becomes *Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Sudra*, by one's actions." This was a great principle preached by *Mahavir* leading to harmonious social order. Here is a quote:

"That person is really high who is high in quality and action. And hat person is really low, who is low in quality and action. Even a *Sudra* is high if his conduct is good and virtuous; while even a Brahmin is low if his conduct is evil and vicious."

Thus, he taught that highness or superiority of a man is based on and determined by the good and cultural thought and conduct. He there open the door of his religious order to the low-caste, doam-trodden and untouchable.

He also declared equal to man in status; and elevated them to the same position as men held. The women were accepted in his monastic order. There were 36,000 nuns in his religions monastic order, and *Chandanbala* was declared head of that order.

He taught us *Samatā*. (equanimity) *Samata* means to living beings as equal, and also to look upon them as upon oneself. It also means to keep one's mind unagitated and calm on occasions of misery and happiness, gain and loss; victory and defeat etc. without losing its balance or everness.

Jainism proclaim that there is no harm in following any system of philosophy and practice, if it helps man to cultivate righteous conduct and to progress in the direction of final goal of non-attachment. The guiding principle of one's life should be "*Mitti me sāvva bhuveshu*". (Universal friendliness) and love.

In *Uttaradhyayan Sutra*, *Lord Mahavir* said :

"Those who are well protected by the five vows and are not attached to the life of sensual pleasure; who dedicate their body to the performance of good actions, who are pure hatched and righteous are indeed continuously engaged in the performance of supreme sacrifice which bring them victory in the field of good conduct."

"A man who conquers no body but himself is the greater victory than one who conqness thousands and thousands of valiant enemies."

In *Acharang Sutra* it is said:

"O men, understand Truth rightly. The intelligent person who obeys the commands of Truth, crosses death."

“One who is unmindful and negligent has fear from every quarter; while one who is mindful and vigilant has fear from nowhere.”