

4.9 Eight Types of *Karmas*

Their cause and effect, relationship and Life-style

Through the principles of *Karmas*, the Jain philosophy has explained how the entire universe operates.

Jainism recognises the plurality of souls pure and simple. It also believes that there are infinite individual souls. Soul exist in every living being. Jainism also believes that souls can remove its impurity, can become perfectly pure and can achieve freedom from birth and re-birth. Tirthankaras are believed to have achieved their own freedom (*Moksha*) and they have shown us the path.

There are an infinite number of polluted souls in the universe. Likewise, an infinite number of tiny, sub-atomic, *karmic* particles of matters are also floating around throughout the universe. How then, some of the material particles are attracted towards some souls and pollute them? Jainism has a very rational explanations for this. The attraction and inflow of the particles is the result of individual's activities or his deeds-good or bad. Any such activity-intentional or unintentional, mental or verbal or physical generates vibrations and thereby the *Karmic* particles is directed to the soul. The stronger the passion in activity, the greater the number of particles bonded and the stronger will be the bond.

While the inflow and the bondage of the *Karmic* principles can be slowed down through self-disciplines what about those *Karmic* particles already bonded to the soul ? Jainism has a positive reply to this situation also such *karmic* particles also can be pledged. When a soul enjoy or suffer the consequence of his earlier good or evil *karmas*, the responsible particles have no reason to be bonded to that soul. They fall of in natural course (otherwise the soul will never be free from its grip)

Again, apart from this natural course, the *karmic* particles can be disassociated from soul by human efforts tool. Daily activities like meditation, penance, renunciation, renouncement of possession etc help in this direction. The human efforts can be brought in the direction of

1. Dissociation from previous *karmic* particles
2. Reduction of new inflow

Both these together go a long way in achieving liberation in long term by intensive conscious efforts.

The term '*KARMA*' means mental, vocal or bodily act, as also an impression that the act leaves behind the soul. The theory of birth and re-birth is a natural corollary of Karma. Every act must necessarily be followed by its consequence. If consequence of the acts-good or bad are not

experienced in the present life the necessarily demand a future life for fruition.

Jain philosophers have divided *Bhav karma* into 8 primary classes (and 93 sub classes). Since *Karma* created from an activity, this division is based on the activity involved.

The eight types of primary karmas are further grouped into 2 groups. The first four (4) types listed below i.e. 1,2,3 & 4 are considered to be harmful to the souls and they are known as “*GHATIYA*” or destructive type of karmas. They obstruct the soul from achieving its full potential. They are responsible for keeping soul entrapped in the ‘*Sansara*’. If one can annihilate these destructive or *Ghatiya Karmas* by his best efforts, the soul can achieve its full potential of infinite knowledge etc. The next 4 *Karmas* is the list below, i.e. No. 5,6,7 & 8 are non-destructive or ‘*Aghatiya*’, and they are of no consequence to the process of liberation of Soul. This is not to believe, that these (No. 5,6,7 & 8) *Karmas* are good. No, they also can create a number of obstacles, in one's life, but they do not affect a soul's private qualities.

Let us now have a list of these 8 types of *Karmas*

Destructive (*Ghatiya*) *Karmas*

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| 1. Knowledge obstructing <i>Karma</i> | <i>Gyanavarniya Karma</i> |
| 2. Intuition (vision) obstructing <i>Karma</i> | <i>Darshanavarniya Karma</i> |
| 3. Energy obstructing <i>Karma</i> | <i>Antaray Karma</i> |
| 4. Deluding <i>Karma</i> | <i>Mohniya Karma</i> |

Non Destructive (*Ashatiya*) *Karmas*

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|--|----------------------|
| 5. Pleasure and Pain (feelings) producing <i>Karma</i> | <i>Vedniya Karma</i> |
| 6. Life-span determining (longitivity) <i>Karma</i> | <i>Ayushya Karma</i> |
| 7. Physique (Body) determining <i>Karma</i> | <i>Naya Karma</i> |
| 8. Status determining <i>Karma</i> | <i>Gotra Karma</i> |

Let us have some detailed information about each type of *Karma* and the role they play in one's life.

1. Knowledge obstructing (*Gyanavarniya*) *Karma*

The soul acquires this *karma* by

- neglecting or ridiculing learning or knowledge,
- insulting, disrespecting, harassing or hating the learned,
- remaining idle, obstructing others in their learning/teaching activities, and
- spreading incorrect information

The Karmas impair or obscure the soul's capacity for cognition, comprehension and knowing. There are 5 sub-divisions of this *karma*.

2. Intuition (vision) obstructing (*Darshanavarniya*) Karma

The activities mentioned in CD above, if they are directed towards a visionary or his vision, the soul is bonded with vision obstructing (*Darshanavarniya*) *karma*. Soul lacks vision/intuition. There are nine sub-divisions of this *karma*.

3. Energy Obstructing (*Antaray*) Karma

By these Karma, the infinite energy, of the soul is obstructed and that puts hurdles in ones enjoying wealth, power or spiritual activities. These Karmas are produced by obstructing such persons as social and spiritual activity from conducting charitable activities, providing services to the ready as providing happiness to others. The soul bonded by these Karmas lacks the ability to enjoy life/resources/facilities. He also lacks recognition in the society or status and position.

4. Deluding (*Mohniya*) Karma :

There are two main division of these *Karmas* world-vision deluding (*Darshana Mohaniya*) *Karmas* and character deluding (*Charitraya Mohaniya*) *Karma*.

A person whose soul is bonded with this *Karma* lives a confused life, he lacks true insight, one soul acquires these Karmas by propagating false ideas about absolute truly advocating false values and by neglecting the spiritual welfare of the soul. The person with the soul bonded by such *Karma* is an extremist, he is unable to consider other person's point of views, he is skeptic, unwilling to learn new concepts etc.

Charita Mohniya Karma generate dangerous passions like greed, anger, deceit, pride & lust.

5. Pleasure and pain (feeling) causing (*Vandaniya*) Karma

If a person shows love, affection, compassion, forgiveness, service to others and such other positive feelings to others, he acquires pleasure providing *Karma*. On the contrary, if one indulges into killing, giving pains, hunting, making somebody sorrowful directly or indirectly, mentally, verbally or physically will generate pain producing (*Ashata Vedniya*) *Karma*.

6. Life Span Determining (*Ayushya*) Karma

These *Karmas* determine the form of next life whether the soul will be getting human life, animal life, plant life or hell-beings, life, as also the span, duration in that life. Since the fruits of these *Karma* are to be acquired on next life, we have opportunity to mould our life-style, to be kind and generous to mankind, animal, plants even small subtle insects, germs etc. For this, we have to simple life under the influence of three 'A's - *Ahinsa* (Non-violence), *Apangeha* (Non-possession) and *Anekantwad* an outlook of many dimensions.

7. Physique (Body) determining (*Nama*) Karma

These *Karma* also account for various forms of embodiment such as existence in hell,

plant-life, animal world etc.

Nama Karma also determines birth in the various classes of living organisms i.e. actual species in which birth will take place.

8. Status (*Gorta*) determination *Karma*.

These *Karma* determine higher or lower status of an individual.

The bound *Karma* acquire capacity on account of their association with the sentient soul, as a result they manifest their. Fruits on the soul at due time. Auspicious and inauspicious activities of mind, speech and body leave on the soul good or evil traces called *Karma*. The cause and effect principle applies here “**As you sow, so shall you reap.**” It is up to the individual to understand the true source of happiness and to actively go after. Jainism has left it to its followers the observance of code of conduct, by understanding and analyzing what is good for him.