

Prayer and Dhyan – II

The Jains have built big and beautiful temples and are adoring, elegant and serene marble idols of Tirthankaras. Idol-worship has its own rights and Jains seem to have adopted the same at a subsequent stage because Jain scriptures have not recorded that Lord Mahavira at any time worshipped an Idol. (Some sects of Jain do not believe in Idol-worship.) In fact, the whole emphasis of Jain doctrines is on the Atman (soul) which has no form. It would, however, undoubtedly follow that adoring the idols by jewelry and other ornaments and taking out processions of idols etc. have no philosophical background or justification - except perhaps expressing devotion. Attribution of ornamental glitter to one who is a Vitaraga is a gross negation of all that for which Jainism stands and amounts to the crude perversion of basic doctrines of Jainism. Thus, prayers or bhakti are differently perceived by the Jains but they do occupy a prominent place in Jain thinking.

Dhyan (Meditation)

Dhyan occupies a very prominent place in Jain Philosophy. The Jain approach to Dhyan is purely psychological. It is understood by Jains in its very comprehensive sense, namely, the engagement of the mind in a particular thought. The human mind never remains thoughtless even for a moment. It remains constantly engaged, thinking of good or bad things whether necessary or not, and whether they are of our immediate concern or not. The Jain thinkers have taken account of this fact, and have analyzed the condition of the human mind into four categories, namely:

- Artta Dhyan
- Raudra Dhyan
- Dharma Dhyan
- Sukla Dhyan

The first two is inauspicious and the latter two are auspicious. These four categories cover all the conditions of mind. The first two, being the cause of the worldly transmigration, are evil-Dhyan while Dharma and Sukla lead to liberation and are noble-Dhyan.

1) Artta Dhyan - Artta means pain. When our painful experiences get hold of our mental condition we are undergoing the state of Artta Dhyan. There are four broad sub-classifications of this type of Dhyan as follows:

- I. Anista-samyoga Artta Dhyan. This happens when we are put in unhappy circumstances or relationship and we keep thinking about it.
- II. Ista-viyoga Artta Dhyan. This happens when there is a loss of a happy relationship or situation and we keep thinking about it.
- III. Roga-chinta Artta Dhyan. This happens when we keep thinking or worry about physical disease or pain.
- IV. Nidana Artta Dhyan, This happens when we keep thinking or worry about the objectives which are difficult to obtain.

In all these four conditions we remain worried and feel unhappy and our mind remains sad, which in turn brings more bad karmas.

2) Raudra Dhyan - Raudra means cruel, harsh. When the mind is either full of anger, hatred, and malice and violent mind is thinking of evil actions, we are passing through Raudra Dhyan. Under such thoughts, we enjoy the activities which are immoral. All mental activities to grab power and wealth, sexual enjoyment and anti-social acts fall within this classification. There are four sub-classifications of this as follows:

- I. Himsanandi Raudra Dhyan means thinking delightfully about killing, crushing or destroying the living beings either by self or through other.
- II. Mrsanandi Raudra Dhyan means thinking delightfully about lying, composing deceptive literature, and collecting wealth by deceptive means.
- III. Chauryanandi Raudra Dhyan means thinking delightfully about the act of theft and also preaching dexterity in a theft.

- IV. Visayanandi Raudra Dhyān means thinking delightfully to satisfy desires including being possessive and thinking of fighting ferociously to attain the objects of enjoyment.

Both the above-referred Dhyāns are spiritually degrading the self by attracting bad vibrations and karmas. Most of us remain permanently engaged in these two Dhyāns with the result that we are not able to make any progress spiritually.

Next two Dhyāns are of the superior variety and help us to progress further in our journey to freedom

3) Dharma Dhyān - The Word Dharma is used in Jain terminology in a sense wider than religion. What is Dharma? The answer is 'Vatthu Sahavo Dhammo', i.e., the intrinsic nature of a thing is its Dharma. So long as a thing remains within the limits of its intrinsic nature, and does not transgress these limits, it remains within its own Dharma. Life's problems arise when we transgress these limits and encroach upon the foreign fields. Therefore, when the self-forgets its own intrinsic nature and tries to encroach upon the field of Ajiva, it invites trouble. But if it concentrates its attention on its own self, tries to analyze its nature and focuses its activities on its upliftment, it enters into the field of Dharma Dhyān. There are four sub-classifications of this, as follows:

- I. Ajna (Agnā)-vichaya Dharma Dhyān: Meditating about the flawless and reliable nature of the views expressed by enlightened souls.
- II. Apaya-vichaya Dharma Dhyān: Meditating about the how the true character of the self is clouded by its contact with kasayas such as anger, pride etc.
- III. Vipaka-vichaya Dharma Dhyān: Meditating on the nature of the results of various karmas.
- IV. Loka-samsthana-vicaya Dharma Dhyān: Meditating on the nature of the universe (Loka).

- V. Dharma Dhyān takes our mind away from Artta and Raudra Dhyān, which cause the accumulation of the karmas, which are the degrading forces to the self. Dharma-Dhyān not only takes us to the field of metaphysics and logic but also constitutes the best type of Satsanga, which leads us to the right path to realize the Truth.

4) Sukla Dhyān - 'Sukla' means 'white or pure'. In Dharma-Dhyān, the mind concentrates upon the general features of worldly resistance while in Shukla-Dhyān; the mind gradually shortens the field of concentration. The mind now concentrates on upon atom and becomes steady and motionless. And on the attainment of omniscience, the functions of the mind are completely annihilated. The Shukla-dhyān has four types. The function of the first two types is to collect and concentrate the mind on the minutest possible entity. When one has achieved perfection in this and has lost all attraction for the worldly things, one attains pure and perfect enlightenment. The functions of the mind are now no more there. There is now no more conceptual thinking. The function of dhyān at this time is not the concentration of thought because there is now no thought. The soul is now omniscient. The dhyān is now utilized for the purpose of stopping the activities of sense organ of speech and body. Last two types of Sukla-Dhyān do this. The last type of Sukla-Dhyān is immediately followed by emancipation.

This is the highest type of meditation where the karmic bondages get destroyed and the soul remains totally engrossed in self-realization. The Seers say that it is not possible to give the complete picture of this type of meditation because the bliss which one experiences during this meditation is beyond the description. However, they have classified this type of meditation into four progressive categories:

- Prthakatva-vitarka-savichara sukla Dhyān
- Ekatva-vitarka-vichara sukla Dhyān
- Suksma-kriya-pratipatti sukla Dhyān
- Samucchinna-kriya-nivṛtti or Vyuparata-kriya-nivṛtti sukla Dhyān

In Prthakatva-vitarka-savichara the mind contemplates the different modes of the self and the forces of Pudgala. Since the mind is moving from one idea to the other, it is called Prthakatva-vitarka. During this process, one finds out the true character of the self and therefore the whole process tends to make the mind steady. This stage of

meditation is observed when the soul is in gunasthanak 8 to 11. After it becomes steady it concentrates only on one object namely the self. This is the second stage of Ekatva-vitarka. In this stage the mind becomes steady, and complete peace and bliss prevail because all the bondage of kasayas gets destroyed. The soul, remaining peaceful and steady in this manner, reaches the stage of Kevala-jnana, pure knowledge. The soul in this stage reaches to 12th gunasthanak and by the end of it reaches 13th gunasthanak. In the third stage, the soul has the only subtle connection with the body. This stage is the beginning of the 14th Gunasthanak. In the final stage, even the soul's subtle connection with the body is broken. By the end of this stage, the soul gets liberated and becomes 'Siddha'. The duration of the stages three and four is a very short period just enough to say short a, e, I, ru, lu. The Siddha is a bodiless existence of the soul possessing all knowledge and all bliss.

This is how the great masters have described the process of meditation leading to the liberation. An ordinary human being is roaming between the first three categories of meditation. The last category of meditation is very difficult to achieve which involves the process of spiritual progress. But if successful the liberation is in the hand.