

Jain Tattvas and Philosophy of Karma

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Asrava (Cause of the influx of karma)

Asrava is the cause, which leads to the influx of good and evil karma which leads to the bondage of the soul. Asrava may be described as an attraction in the soul toward sense objects. The following are causes of Asrava or influx of good and evil karma:

Mithyatva - Ignorance

Avirati - Lack of self-restraint

Pramada* - Unawareness or unmindfulness

Kasaya - Passions like anger, conceit, deceit, and lust

Yoga - Activities of mind, speech, and body

*Some Jain literature mention only four causes of Asrava. They include Pramad in the category of Kasaya.

Bandha (Bondage of karma)

Bandha is the attachment of karmic matter (karma pudgala) to the soul. The soul has had this karmic matter bondage from eternity because of its own ignorance. This karmic body is known as the karmana body or causal body or karma.

The karmic matter is a particular type of matter which is attracted to the soul because of soul's ignorance, lack of self-restraint, passions, unmindfulness, activities of body, mind, and speech.

The soul, which is covered by karmic matter, continues acquiring new karma from the universe and exhausting old karma into the universe through the above-mentioned actions at every moment.

Because of this continual process of acquiring and exhausting karma particles, the soul has to pass through the cycles of births and deaths and experiencing pleasure and pain.

So under normal circumstances, the soul can not attain freedom from karma and hence liberation. 21 When karma attaches to the soul, its bondage to the soul is explained in the following four forms:

Prakriti bandha - Type of karma

Sthiti bandha - Duration of attachment of karma

Anubhava bandha - Intensity of attachment of karma

Pradesa bandha - Quantity of karma

To be continued...