

Jain Tattvas and Philosophy of Karma - Part 3

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1. Prakriti Bandha (Type of karma):

When karmic matter attaches to the soul, it will obscure the soul's essential nature of; perfect knowledge, perfect vision, bliss, perfect power, eternal existence, non-corporeal, and equanimity. The different types of karma obscure different qualities or attributes of the soul. This is known as Prakriti bandha.

Prakriti bandha is classified into eight categories, according to the particular attribute of the soul that it obscures.

- **Jnana-varaniya karma** covers the soul's power of perfect knowledge.
- **Darasna-varaniya karma** covers the soul's power of perfect visions.
- **Mohniya karma** generates delusion in the soul in regard to its own true nature. The soul identifies itself with other external substances and relationships.
- **Antaraya karma** obstructs the natural quality or energy of the soul such as charity and willpower. This prevents the soul from attaining liberation. It also prevents a living being from doing something good and enjoyable.
- **Vedniya karma** obscures the blissful nature of the soul and thereby produces pleasure and pain.
- **Nama karma** obscures the non-corporeal existence of the soul and produces the body with its limitations, qualities, faculties, etc.
- **Gotra karma** obscures the soul's characteristics of equanimity and determines the caste, family, social standing, and personality.
- **Ayu karma** determines the span of life in one birth, thus obscuring the soul's nature of eternal existence.

Ghati karma and Aghati karma: The above eight karmas are also categorized into two groups, known as ghati karma which subdues the qualities of the soul, and Aghati karma which relates to the physical body of the living beings.

Ghati Karma (Dangerous karma) Jnana-varaniya, Darasna-varaniya, Mohaniya, and Antaraya karmas are called ghati karmas (dangerous karmas) because they obscure the true nature of the soul, which is, perfect knowledge, power, vision, and bliss.

Aghati Karma (Nondangerous karma) Ayu, Nama, Gotra, and Vedniya karmas are called Aghati karmas. They do not obscure the original nature of the soul. However, they associate with the physical body of the soul.

When a person destroys all of his ghati karmas, he attains keval-jnana. At that time he is known as Arihant. However, he continues to live his human life until all his Aghati karmas are destroyed. He attains liberation only after his death.

Some Arihants establish the religious four-fold order of Monks, Nuns, Sravaka, (male layperson), and Sravika (female layperson). These Arihants are called Tirthankaras. Other Arihantas who do not establish religious order but remain as a part of the existing order are known as ordinary Kevali. After nirvana (death) all Arihantas become Siddhas.

All Siddhas are unique individuals, they all possess perfect knowledge, vision, power, and bliss. Hence from the qualities and attributes point of view, all Siddhas are the same.

2. Sthiti Bandha (Duration of attachment): When karmic matter attaches to the soul it remains attached for a certain duration before it produces the result. The duration of the attachment is determined according to the intensity or dullness of the soul's passions or actions when the karma is being attached to the soul. After producing the result, karma will separate from the soul.

3. Anubhava Bandha or Rasa Bandha (Intensity of attachment): What fruits the karmic matter will produce are determined at the time of attachment by varying degrees of the soul's passions.

4. Pradesa Bandha (Quantity of karma): The intensity or dullness of the soul's action determines the quantum of karmic matter that is drawn towards the soul for attachment.

To be continued...