



Philosophy of Karma in Jainism

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Nine Tattvas (Principles)

The Relationship between Soul and Karma are defined in Nine Principles known as Nine Tattvas

- Jiva Soul (Consciousness)
- Ajiva Non-living substances (Karma)
- Äsrava Causes of bondage of Karma
- Bandh Characteristics of Bondage of Karma
- Punya Virtue
- Päp Sin
- Samvara Stoppage of New Karma
- Nirjarä Exhaustion of accumulated Karma
- Moksha State of Liberation from all Karma



Asrava - Causes of Bondage of Karma

- Mithyätva
 - Wrong belief, Ignorance
- Avirati
 - Vowlessness, Lack of self restraint
- Pramäda
 - Carelessness, Unawareness or unmindfulness, forgetfulness
- Kashäya
 - Passions (anger, ego, deceit, and greed)
- Yoga
 - Activities of mind, speech, and body



Bandh - Characteristics of Bondage of Karma

Prakruti Bandh

- Nature of Karma (Eight Categories)

Sthiti Bandh

- Duration of Karma

Anubhāga Bandh or Rasa Bandh

- Intensity of Karma

Pradesha Bandh

- Quantity of Karma



Prakruti Bandh (Types of Karma)

Ghāti Karma (Four)

Obscures and defiles soul's natural quality

Aghāti Karma (Four)

Provides physical body and related circumstances
(obscures soul's nonphysical quality)



Ghāti Karma

- Jnänāvaraniya
 - Obscures soul's faculty of specific knowledge
- Darshanāvaraniya
 - Obscures soul's faculty of general knowledge or intuitive vision
- Mohaniya
 - Deceives and pollutes soul's natural quality of bliss and causes the soul to become desirous and creates ignorance / illusion of what is and is not good for soul
 - Darshan Mohaniya: deludes proper understanding of reality and its own nature and hence no Right Faith
 - Chāritra Mohaniya: deludes proper conduct and generates various passions within
- Antarāya
 - Hinders soul's infinite power or energy



Aghāti Karma

- Vedaniya
 - Obscures soul's infinite spiritual happiness not dependent on body, senses, and mind
- Nama
 - Obscures soul's nonphysical nature
- Gotra
 - Obscures soul's equanimity quality
- Äyu
 - Obscures soul's immortality



Samvara - Stoppage of New Karma

- Right Belief (Samyaktva)
- Observance of vows
- Awareness
- Passionlessness
- Peacefulness of vibrating activities



Nirjara - Exhaustion of Karma

-Exhaustion of karma already acquired

- **The karma exhaust themselves by producing the results when it is time for them to do so.**
- **However at that time, new karma begin to pour in.**
- **Hence it becomes difficult to be free of Karma.**
- **Therefore, one should destroy the Karma before they produce the result.**
- **This is called Spiritual Nirjara**

-Nirjara is done by rigorous penance.



Nirjara or Penance

External Penance:

-Relates to Physical Body

Internal Penance:

-Relates to Thought Process



External Penance (Nirjara)

Anasan

- Complete abstinence from eating and drinking

Alpähära or Unodari

- Reduce quantity of food one normally eats

Ichhänirodha or Vrittisamkhsepa

- Control of desire for food and material things

Rasatyäg

- Give up stimulating or tasty food

(honey, alcohol, butter, milk, tea, sweets, juice etc.)



External Penance (Nirjara) **[continued]**

Sanlinatä

- Stay in a lonely places free from all disturbances.
Restraining the senses from external happiness, and
divert their use for spiritual upliftment**

Käya_klesha

- Penance and Tolerating physical pain voluntarily**



Internal Penance (Nirjara)

Präyashchitta

- Repent and atone for the sinful acts

Vinaya

- Honor and Respect for teachers, elders, and others

Vaiyāvṛata

- Selfless service towards teachers, elders, sick and needy

Svadhyaaya

- Study of Religion for Spiritual development

Vyutsarga or Käyotsarga

- Abandonment of External & Internal aspects and objects
- Non-attachment to the body
- Give up all egoistic thoughts

Dhyāna

- Religious meditation



Various Classification of Karma

Jainism has divided Karma into a number of groups in order to bring out their important features to enable a clearer understanding of this difficult but important subject

- Ghāti Karma and Aghāti Karma.
- Punya (Shubha) Karma and Pāp (Ashubha) Karma
- Dravya Karma and Bhāva Karma
- Iryāpathic Karma and Sāmparāyika Karma



Punya and Pāp - Definition

All acquired karma are divided into two major groups:

- **Pāp:**
 - Evil acts with the feeling of violence and revenge
 - Produces unhappy and miserable environments like illness, poverty, selfish family, discomforts etc.
- **Punya:**
 - Meritorious deeds with feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment
 - Produces happy or comfortable environment like healthy body, spiritual family, comforts, luxury etc.
 - Provides further opportunity for emancipation of the soul from Karma through prevention (Samvar) and separation (Nirjarā)



Punya and Pāp – Definition (continued)

All Karma bondage must involve passion (Kashāya) hence, Punya (Shubha) karma also imply attachment (Rāga) which may be of noble type or praise worthy (Prashasta).

- * All Ghāti Karma are Pāp karma
- * Only Aghāti Karma are classified as either Punya or Pāp karma



Punya and Pāp – Understanding

From spiritual point of view

- All Karma Bondage hinder or defile the natural qualities of the soul
- One cannot attain liberation when karma are attached
- However, in the initial stages of spiritual progress, one needs conducive environment which is provided by Punya karma
- Hence on the path of spiritual progress
 - First migrate our actions from sinful activities to meritorious activities with the feeling of satisfaction, accomplishment, reward and fame.
 - Then continue to do meritorious activities without any expectation of accomplishment, fame, or reward (actionless action).
 - This way no Punya karma will attach to the soul but one will continue to remove old accumulated Karma.



Causes of Punya

- Anna-Punya:** Offering of innocent, non-sentient, pure and vegetarian food
- Pän-Punya:** Offering of non-sentient and pure water
- Layan-Punya:** Offering shelter
- Shayan-Punya:** Offering bed
- Vastra-Punya:** Offering clothes
- Man-Punya:** Good thinking
- Vachan-Punya:** Good and kind words
- Käya-Punya:** Virtuous, helpful activities
- Namaskär-Punya:** Paying homage to Pancha-Paramesthi



Causes of Pāp

01 Prānātipāt

Violence

02 Mrushāvāda

Untruth

03 Adattādāna

Theft

04 Maithuna

Unchaste

05 Parigraha

Possessiveness

06 Krodha

Anger

07 Māna

Arrogance

08 Māyā

Deceit

09 Lobha

Greed



Causes of Pāp (continued)

10 Rāga

Attachment

11 Dvesha

Hatred

12 Kalah

Quarrel

13 Abhyākhyāna

Accusation

14 Paishunya

Gossip

15 Par_parivāda

Criticism

16 Rati-Arati

Like and dislike

17 Māyā Mrushāvāda

Malice

18 Mithyā-Darshan-Shalya

Wrong beliefs



Our Actions of Punya and Päp

Four Fold actions due to Punya & Päp Karma

- **Punyänubandhi Punya**
 - The fruits of past Punya karma (healthy body, wealth, social status..) are used in such a way to acquire new Punya karma
- **Päpänubandhi Punya**
 - The fruits of past Punya karma (healthy body, wealth, social status..) are used in such a way to acquire new Päp karma
- **Punyänubandhi Päp**
 - The fruits of past Päp karma (unhealthy body, poverty, no social status..) are used in such a way to acquire new Punya karma
- **Päpänubandhi Päp**
 - The fruits of past Päp karma (unhealthy body, poverty, no social status..) are used in such a way to acquire new Päp karma



Dravya Karma and Bhäva Karma

**The Karma Pudgal attached to the soul are the Dravya Karma
The soul in the form of passions (Kashäya) and Yoga are the
Bhäva Karma. It leads to bondage of further Dravya karma.**

**Dravya Karma being part of matter, are material in character.
The Bhäva Karma being Kashäya and activities (attributes) of
the soul are spiritual in character.**

The Dravya karma are the cover (Ävaran) of the soul.

**The Bhäva Karma is the defect or impure (ashuddha) state of
the soul.**



Dravya Karma and Bhäva Karma

- **The Dravya Karma is an apparent cause (Nimitta) in causing vibration (Kashäya and yoga) in the soul which leads to further bondage of Dravya karma.**
- **The Bhäva Karma (soul with passions and yoga) is a Nimitta in attracting Dravya Karma (Karma Pudgal) and bind them to the soul.**
- **The Dravya and Bhäva Karma are apparently related as each other's counterpart's of cause and effect. The relationship is classified as Nimitta-naimitik relationship.**
- **This chain reaction continues as a vicious circle until it is broken by positive and deliberate efforts called Samvar (Stoppage of New Karma) and Nirjarä (Separation).**



Effort (Purushārtha) over Destiny (Karma)

- **Between the two stages of Bondage (Bandha) and Separation (Nirjarā) of Karma**
 - **One can change the bondage of Karma by proper efforts**
 - **By such efforts the destined results of Karma is altered, modified, or eliminated.**
- ***Indicates the Supremacy of Soul over the Karma**



Effort (Purushārtha) over Destiny (Karma) [continued]

Various ways the Karma can be modified:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1. Udaya | Currently Karma produces result - Operation |
| 2. Sattā | Karma which will produce the result in Future |
| 3. Udiranā | Karma Prematurely produces result (before time) |
| 4. Udvardanā | Karma Intensifies its own result |
| 5. Apavartanā | Dilution |
| 6. Sankraman | Interchange |
| 7. Upasham | Dormancy |
| 8. Nidhatta | Flexibility |
| 9. Nikāchanā | Inflexibility |



Effort (Purushārtha) over Destiny (Karma)

1. Udaya (Operation)

- In this state karma produce their good or bad effects on the soul and then get separated from the soul.
- One should observe complete equanimity (Samatā) during Udaya state. This will make the existing Karma shed their attachment with the soul without further acquisition of new Karma.

2. Sattā (Stay)

- This is the idle state of Karma. In future these Karma will produce their effect on the soul. One can change the Duration, Intensity, Nature (Prakriti), and quantity of the Karma during their Sattā state.

3. Udiranā (Premature operation)

- During this process the Sattā karma are brought into operation or fruition (Udaya) by deliberate efforts like penance. In this process, the Karma that could have borne fruits later can be ripened earlier to give results in advance like ripening of fruits by artificial means. It may not apply to all cases and types of Karma bondage.



Effort (Purushārtha) over Destiny (Karma) [continued]

- Udvartanā (Intensification)
 - In this state the Sattā Karma will further increase in the Duration (Sthiti), Intensity (Anubhāga), etc. of their bondage due to one's own action
- Apavartanā (Dilution)
 - In this state the Sattā karma will reduce their duration or intensity of bondage due to one's action as opposed to Udvartanā
- *Under Udvartanā and Apavartanā the duration (Sthiti) and intensity (Anubhāga) of Karma bondage can be increased or decreased



Effort (Purushārtha) over Destiny (Karma) [continued]

Sankraman (Interchange)

- Ordinarily, the Karma bondage adheres to its own Nature, Duration, Intensity, etc. and gives results according to its category
 - e.g. Knowledge Obscuring Karma will obscure knowledge only (as per its nature, duration and intensity).
- However, during the Sankraman process it is possible to change one sub-category of Karma into another by proper efforts.
 - e.g. Sensory Knowledge-Obscuring Karma (Mati Jnänāvaraniya) may be changed into Study Knowledge Obscuring Karma (Shruta Jnänāvaraniya).
- There are some exceptions
 - Faith Deluding (Darshan Mohaniya) Karma cannot be interchanged with Conduct Deluding (Chāritra Mohaniya) Karma
 - Life Span (Äyu) Karma cannot be interchanged, etc.



Effort (Purushārtha) over Destiny (Karma) [continued]

■ Upasham (Dormancy)

- When the Karma is made not to give results but remain dormant, it is considered a state of Upasham of that Karma.
 - e.g. Fire covered by ashes. As soon as ashes are removed, fire starts same way when Upasham is over, the Karma will start producing results.

■ Nidhatta (Flexibility)

- In this state the power (intensity) of karma can be partially altered by efforts like penance.

■ Nikāchanā (Inflexibility)

- The result of the Karma in this state is inescapable and effects of this cannot be altered by the best of efforts like penance. Such Karma will be separated from the soul only after giving results upon their Udaya.



Comments and Criticism

After endless argument about God, it has been concluded,

- For those who do not believe in God, no arguments are possible.
- For those who believe in God, no argument is necessary

Same thing may be said about the Jain Karma theory

- No proof is possible for the theory of Karma. Nor can it be proved in a laboratory.
- It is the word revealed from the teachings of the enlightened ones with all the authority of their perfect knowledge, insight and experience.
- It provides a rational explanation for otherwise inexplicable divergence in existence.



Comments and Criticism

Jain Karma theory and the materialistic nature of Karma has faced its share of Criticism:

- It is considered fatalistic, individualistic, mechanical and too emphatic on punishment and retribution.

Answer to the above criticism:

- A deeper understanding of the subject will reveal that belief in Karma leads to
 - The acceptance of the inevitable and inescapable results of Karma avoids unnecessary discontentment within.
 - There is a deep social commitment in Punya or auspicious Karma.
 - There is scope for alteration or transformation in the results of Karma. Hence it is not mechanical.
 - Belief in Karma lays emphasis, **not so much on punishment or retribution** but on the continuous efforts for moral regeneration and upliftment of the beings and this will result in a better social order.



Conclusion

- Karma and its results are strictly personal to the soul.
- The Soul is responsible for its own karma and their bondage and hence it makes a person self-reliant and responsible for his/her deeds
- Karma bondage and Karma results are not transferable.
- No other soul can bail out the responsible soul by agreeing to bear or share the fruits of its Karma as they travel with the particular soul from (birth to birth) one life to another.
- Jain karma philosophy shows the importance of human efforts (Purushārtha) against its destiny. By adequate efforts, the soul can be supreme and can alter and dilute the effects of Karma or even completely get rid of them.
- Karma philosophy helps to enforce an ethical behavior and highly moral conduct, which ultimately makes the world a better place to live in.
- It provides a rational explanation to the existence of a living being