

Eight Vargnas and Bodies

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A liberated soul does not have a physical body, mind, speech, and does not breathe. The soul is totally free from all karmas. It lives in Moksha in the permanent blissful state.

However a worldly soul possesses a material body along with invisible karman, and tejas bodies. These bodies are made up from different types of vargnas (matters). Jainism explains that eight types of vargana exist in the universe which provide physical body, mind, speech, digestion power, pleasure and pain, and some special power to every living being. Every space in the universe is filled with these vargana. The five of the eight vargnas when attach to the soul, create five different bodies. The remaining three vargnas provide three different functions to the physical body.

The eight Vargnas (matters) are:

1. Audaric vargana - creates the physical body of the living being
2. Vaikriya vargana -creates Vaikriya body, which can be converted into very small or large in size.
3. Aharac vargana -creates Aharac body, which is very small in size. This body provides special power to an individual.
4. Tejas vargana - creates the Tejas body which provides heat and digestion power to the audaric body.
5. Karman vargana - creates Karmic or Causal body which produces pleasure and pain based on the past action of a soul.
6. Breathing vargana - provides breathing
7. Mind vargana - provides mind for thinking
8. Speech vargana - provides speech

The five bodies are:

Audaric body

The body that we see from the outside (Bahya Sthula Sharira) is called Audaric body. It is made up of Audaric vargana. A person can not be liberated without the help of this body. Hence it is the most important body of the human being. At the time of death, the soul leaves this body behind.

Vaikriya body

This body can be obtained by human being by practicing yoga, meditation, etc. With this body one can transform his body into a very small or a large size. The heavenly beings and hellish beings possess this body by birth.

Aharac body

This body is possessed by some special souls. Aharac body is very small in size. These souls put on this body

to travel far distant places. Sometimes monks who possess this body can travel to the other part of the universe (ex. Mahavideha Kshetra) to visit a Tirthankara to remove their doubts about soul, karma etc. It is said that Acharya Shri Kunda Kunda possessed Aharac body. With this body he visited Shri Srimandhar Swami, the present Tirthankara of the Mahavideha Kshetra. He removed his doubt about soul and matter substances.

Tejas body

This body is made up of Tejas vargna. This body is responsible for digestion, heat, etc. in the Audaric body. At the time of death, it accompanies the soul and helps to create a new Audaric body for the soul.

Karmic/Causal body (Karmana Sharira)

The karmic matter that covers the soul is called karmic body. It changes every moment because new karma is continuously attached to the soul due to activities of body, mind, and speech. At the time of death, the soul is accompanied by this body for the next birth. It leaves the present physical (Audaric) body behind. The karmic body along with tejas body forms the basis of the other newly produced audaric body. It also provides the fruits of living being's past action when due.

All worldly souls possess three bodies (Audaric, Tejas, and Karmic) and some unique soul may possess additional one or two bodies.