

## JNANA DARSANA & CARITRA IN JAINISM

*By Dr. B. C. Law, M. A., LL. B., Ph. D., D. Litt*

Right belief, right knowledge and right conduct, constitute the path to liberation and they are called three gems in Jainism, as the Buddha (the Enlightened), Dharma (the Doctrine) and Sangha (the order) are recognized in Buddhism as three gems (ratnatraya). Each of them can be considered in its threefold aspect, e.g., the subject, the object and the means. The knowledge which embraces concisely or in details the predicaments as they are in themselves is called the right knowledge and without which right conduct is impossible. (Nahar and Ghosh, An epitome of Jainism, p. 35). In right knowledge there is the knower, the known, and the means of knowing. In right belief there is the believer, tat which is believed and the means of believing. In right conduct there is the pursuer of conduct, conduct itself, and the means of conducting. The right belief is the basis upon which the other two rest. It is the cause and right knowledge is the effect. Right conduct is caused by right knowledge and implies both right knowledge and right belief. Right knowledge proceeds from right vision by a coherent train of thought and reasoning and which can lead to right conduct without which the attainment of the goal in vision will be impossible. The five kinds of knowledge are the following :

1. knowledge through the instrumentality of sense,
2. knowledge derived from the study of scriptures,
3. direct knowledge of matter within the limits of time and space,
4. direct knowledge of other's thoughts and
5. perfect knowledge

The five kinds of conduct according to the Suttrakritanga (1, 1, 4, 10-13) are the following : Equanimity, recovery of equanimity after a downfall, pure and absolute non-injury, all but entire freedom from passion, and ideal and passionless state. Right belief, right knowledge, right conduct and right austerities are called the aradhanas. Right belief depends on the acquaintance with truth, on the devotion to those who know the truth, and on the avoiding of schismatical and heretical tenets. There is no right conduct without right belief. and it must be cultivated for obtaining right faith; righteousness and conduct originate together or righteousness precedes conduct.<sup>1</sup>

Samyagdarsana is of two kinds : (1) belief with attachment, having the following sings : calmness (prasama), fear of mundane existence in five cycles of wanderings (samvega), substance (dravya), place (ksetra), time (kala), thought-activity (bhava) and compassion towards all living beings (anukampa); and the second kind of samyagdarsana is belief without attachment (the purity of the soul itself).

The right belief is attained by intuition and acquisition of knowledge from external sources, it is the result of subsidence (upasama), destruction-subsidence (ksayopasama) and destruction of right belief deluding karma (darsanamohaniya karma). Right belief is not identical with faith. It is reasoned knowledge. Adhigama is knowledge which is derived from intuition, external sources, e. g., precepts and scriptures. It is attained by means of pramana and naya. Pramana is nothing but direct or indirect evidence for testing the knowledge of the self and the non-self. Naya is nothing but a standpoint which gives partial knowledge of a thing in some of its aspects.

Right knowledge is of five kinds :

knowledge through senses knowledge of the self and the non-self through the agency of the senses of mind;

1. knowledge derived from the study of the scriptures;
2. direct knowledge of matter in various degrees with reference to subject-matter, space, time, and quality of the object known;
3. direct knowledge of thoughts of others, simple or complex; and
4. perfect knowledge. Knowledge (antaraya) (2), belief, charity, gain, enjoyment, re-enjoyment power, faith and conduct are the nine kinds of energies (viryas).

The road to final deliverance depends on four causes and is characterized by right knowledge and faith. The road as taught by the Jinas consists of

1. right knowledge,
2. faith,
3. conduct and
4. austerities.

Human beings will obtain beatitude by following this road. According to the Sutrakritanga knowledge is also derived from perception (abhinibodhika). It is derived from one's own experience, thought or understanding. It is also derived from supernatural knowledge (avadhi-Kalpasutra of Bhadrabahu, 15-Ohina abhoemane). Manahparyaya or the knowledge of the thoughts of others and Kevala or the highest and unlimited knowledge are included in the category of fivefold knowledge. Knowledge of the distant non-sensible in time or space possessed by divine and internal souls is one of the five kinds of knowledge. The Buddhist antanantajnana is evidently the same term as Jaina avadhijnana. The Buddhist aparisesa\* occurring as a predicate of unlimited knowledge and vision is just the synonym of the Jain term Kevala which is nothing but the highest knowledge and intuition.

Samyakdarsana or right faith consists in an insight in an insight into the meaning of truths as proclaimed and taught, a mental perception of the excellence of the system as propounded, a personal conviction as to the greatness and goodness of the teacher, and ready acceptance of certain articles of faith for one's own guidance. It is intended to remove all doubts and skepticism from one's mind and to establish or re-establish faith. It is such a form of faith as is likely to inspire action by opening a new vista of life and its perfection. Right faith on the one hand and inaction, vacillation, on the other, are mutually incompatible. The Buddhist idea of right view (sammaditthi) conveys the sense of faith or belief rather than that of any metaphysical view or theory. It is in some such sense that the Jains use the term sammadansana. The Buddhist sammaditthi suggests an article of faith which consists in the acceptance of the belief that there is such a thing as gift, that there is such a thing as sacrifice etc<sup>1</sup>. There cannot be right faith unless there is a clear pre-perception of the moral, intellectual or spiritual situation which is to arise. Right faith is that form of faith which is only a stepping stone to knowledge (panna or prajna).

Jnana, darsana and charitra (knowledge, faith and virtue) are the three terms that signify the comprehensiveness of Jainism as taught by Mahavira. One should learn the true road leading to final deliverance which the Jinas have taught. It depends on four causes and is characterized by right knowledge and faith. Right knowledge, faith, conduct, and austerities; this is the road taught by the Jinas who possess the best knowledge. Beings who follow this road will obtain beatitude.<sup>1</sup> The Uttaradhyayansutra (XXVIII, 2-3) (2) adds austerities as the fourth to the usual earlier list of three terms, namely, right knowledge, faith and conduct. The first kind of knowledge in Jainism corresponds to what the Buddhists call sutamapanna; the second kind, to what they call chstama panna; the third kind, to what they call vilokana; the fourth kind, to what they call aetopariyayanana; and the fifth kind, to what they call subbannuta or omniscience consisting in three faculties; of perceiving the destiny of other beings according to their deeds, and of being conscious of the final destruction of sins.

Avadhijnana is rather knowledge which is co extensive with the object other than knowledge which is supernatural. Avadhi here means that which is just sufficient to survey the field of observation (3). The manahparyayajnana is defined in the Acharanga sutra (II, 15. 23) as a knowledge of the thoughts of all sentient beings. Kevalajnana is defined therein as omniscience enabling a person to comprehend all objects, and to know all conditions of the world of gods, men and demons.<sup>4</sup> Knowledge as represented in the Jaina Angas is rather religious vision intention or wisdom than knowledge in a metaphysical sense.

A man of knowledge is a man of faith and a man of faith is a man of action. Virtue consists in right conduct. There is no right conduct without right belief and no right belief without the right perception of truth (1). The Sutakritanga (1, 1, 2. 27) points out that the threefold restraint namely, the restraint as regards body, speech, and mind, can enable a person to achieve the purity of morals, which is the quite essence of right conduct. The first step to virtue lies in the avoidance of sins. There are three ways of committing sins :

1. by one's own activity;
2. by commission; and
3. by approval of the deed (2).

The cardinal principles of charitra as taught by Mahavira may be thus summed up: not to kill anything, to take care of the highest good, to control oneself always in walking, sitting and lying down and in the matter of food and drink, to get rid of pride, wrath, deceit and greed, to possess the samitis (3), to be protected by the five samvaras,<sup>4</sup> and to reach perfection by remaining unfettered among the fettered (5).

Right knowledge, faith and conduct, which are the three essential points in the teachings of Mahavira, constitute the path of Jainism leading to the destruction of Karma and to perfection (siddhi).<sup>1</sup> Here destruction means the exhaustion of accumulated effects of action in the past and the stoppage of the future rise of such effects.

By the teaching of right knowledge, by the avoidance of ignorance and delusion and by the destruction of love and hatred, one arrives at deliverance which is nothing but bliss. Obstruction to knowledge is fivefold :

1. obstruction to knowledge derived from sacred books (sutra);
2. obstruction to perception (abhinibodhika);
3. obstruction to supernatural knowledge (avadhijnana);
4. obstruction to knowledge of the thoughts of others (manahparyaya) and
5. obstruction to the highest, unlimited knowledge (kevala).

The following are the different kinds of obstruction to right faith; sleep (nidra), sleep in activity (prachala), very deep sleep (nidranidra), a high degree of sleep in activity (prachalaprachala), and a state of deep-rooted greed (thinaddhi). Mohaniya is twofold as referring to faith are right faith (sammattam), wrong faith (micchattam) and faith, partly right and partly wrong (sammamicchattam). The two kinds of mohaniya referring to conduct are :

1. what is experienced in the form of the four cardinal passions and
2. what is experienced in the form of feelings different from them. (2)

Right knowledge is, in fact, knowledge of the Jain creed. When right knowledge is possessed, one can know what virtue is and what vows he ought to keep. To hold the truth as truth and the untruth as untruth, this is true faith. To a monk, right conduct means the absolute keeping of the five great vows (3). His conduct should be perfect for he must follow the conduct laid down for him in every particular. A lay man is only expected to possess partial conduct, for, so long as he is not a professed monk, he cannot be absolutely perfect in conduct. Right conduct can be ruined by three evil darts (shalya), the first of these is intrigue of

fraud (mayashalya) for no one can gain a good character whose life is governed by deceit. Even in holy matters, e. g., fasting, intrigue can make itself felt. The next poisonous dart is false belief (mithyavashalya) which consists in holding a false god to be a true one, a false guru to be a true guru, and a false religion to be a true religion; by so doing one absolutely injures right knowledge and right faith which lead to right conduct. Covetous right knowledge and right faith which lead to right conduct. Covetousness (nidanashalya) is the third poisonous dart which destroys right conduct. When a man is performing austerities, if he admits some such worldly thought into his mind as 'after this austerity I may have gained sufficient merit to become a king or a rich merchant', that very reflection being stained with covetousness, has destroyed, like a poisonous dart, all the merit that he might have gained through the act; in the same way if a man indulges vindictive thoughts when he is performing austerities, the fruit of his action is lost, no merit is acquired and no karma destroyed (1). The Jains believe in right knowledge, right faith and right conduct referring to an impersonal system, each of the Christian jewels, Faith, Hope and Love, refers to a personal Redeemer. It is interesting to note that the Jain religion enshrines no faith in a supreme deity; but for the Christian the dark problems of sin and suffering are lit up by his faith in the character and power of God which ensure the ultimate triumph of righteousness. In Jainism Hope is almost a meaningless word, but in Christianity the present circumstances of a human being and his future are alike bathed in the golden sunshine of Hope, so that hopefulness may be said to be the very centre of the Christian creed and the foundation of its joy. In Jainism love to a personal god would be an attachment that could only bind him faster to the cycle of re-birth, but in Christianity Love is the fulfilling of the law and it is in its light that the Christians treat the upward path (2).

In Jainism faith is produced by Nature (nisarga), instruction (upadesa), command (ajna), study of the sutras, suggestion (bija), comprehension of the meaning of the sacred lore (abhigama), complete course of study (Vistara), religious exercise (kriya), brief exposition (samksepa) and reality (dharma) (1).

According to the Buddhists faith is the basic principle of all virtuous deeds. It is the germinating principle of human culture (1). It is characterized by two marks :

1. tranquillising in the sense of making all obstacles to disappear and rendering consciousness clear. and
2. leaping high to achieve that what has not been achieved, to master that what has not been mastered, and to realize that what has not been realized.

Faith is nothing but trust in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha (Buddha, Doctrine and order). According to the celebrated Pali Buddhist commentator Buddhaghosa, it is an act of believing in the sense of plunging, breaking, entering into qualities of Buddha and the rest and rejoicing over them (3). It is the guiding factor of charity, morality and religion in the sense that it precedes all charitable, moral and spiritual instinct and dispositions (Saddha pubbangama purcharika hoti)<sup>4</sup>. It is transforming itself into bhakti or devotion. It is associated with love or prema: The noble eightfold path is the development of the five controlling faculties and powers, one of which is Sraddha or faith. The other element that accompanies faith is prasada, a sense of assurance, attended by a serene delight out of satisfaction of a man's spiritual need (Punappunam bhajanavasena saddha va bhakti. Pemam saddhapemam gehasitapemam pi vattati. Pasado saddhapasado va-Puggalapannatti-Commentary, 248). The Buddha in agreement with Mahavira held that doubt and faith are two opposite states of mind so that the affirmation of one implies the negation of the other (5). According to the Buddhists there are three species of doubt and three species of faith. The Buddha himself said that he had not found out any other element than earnestness which was conducive to the greatest good and to the stability of the faith. He further pointed out that earnestness was the only thing which preserved faith from getting perverted and from disappearing (1).

Asvaghosa's sraddha or faith is the first of five indriyas and balas of Buddhism. The representation of sraddha as the seed of higher life is thoroughly Buddhistic (2). With the canonical dictum saddha bijam, it was easy for Asvaghosa to elaborate the idea as contained in his Saundarananda-avya (Canto XII, vs. 39-413 ; (cf. Saddha bijam tapo vutthi panna me yuganangalam).<sup>4</sup> It has been pointed out by Asvaghosa that of the eight

factors that constitute the noble Eightfold path right speech, right action and right livelihood are to be practiced for the mastery of the actions Silasrayam karmaparigrahaya); right view, right resolve, and right effort are to be practiced in the sphere of knowledge for the destruction of passions causing afflictions (Prajnasrayam klesapariksaya); and right mindfulness and right concentration are to be practiced in the sphere of tranquillity for the control of mind (samasrayam chittaparigrahaya). Broadly speaking, the noble Eightfold path is the development of the five controlling faculties and powers called sraddha (faith), virya (energy), smriti (mindfulness), samadhi (concentration) and prajna (knowledge or wisdom).