

LESSON 04

STOPPAGE OF KARMA PART 03

We have discussed Carefulness (Samiti), Restraint (Gupti), Dharma of a sadhu (Yati-dharma) and now we will discuss mental reflections.

Mental reflections (Bhavana) mean contemplating, reflecting or thinking the purpose of life. Mental reflections are considered as part of samvar process. One should entertain and expand auspicious and useful thoughts. One should be careful to focus that even though we are born in materialistic life our behavior or thoughts should be such that we do not get deeper in this kind of life but come out of the worldly life. In Jainism 16 kinds of bhavanas are mentioned and they enable people to attain mental peace and tranquility. When we lose our tranquility and equanimity on account of some events around us then unhappy feelings will take place in our mind. On the other side if we can allow our minds to travel on the sublime waves of noble thoughts then the mind will remain calm and stable. These bhavanas are also called anupreksha.

Anitya Bhavana: Thinking of the transitory nature of things

When someone dear to us dies or when we lose something even though we might have a control on it we should think that in this world the body, wealth, family, relatives, status, etc., are transitory. All things of the worldly life, all substances are perishable; and we should think that none of the external substances are permanent; and it is futile to lament over the loss of those and to lose our mental peace and emotional poise. We must not be dependent on them.

Asharan Bhavana: Thinking of a refuge

We have realized that no one else can make us rich or live for ever but we live in a false feeling that I can depend on my relatives or doctors who will take care of me. In reality we are experiencing continuous helplessness. No worldly things can provide safe heaven to us so why should we depend upon them. The things will provide safe heaven will be out spiritual attitude and path shown by Jina so we must not depend on or give so much importance to worldly surrounding.

Samsar Bhavana: Thinking of worldly life

In the cycle of worldly life (samsar) of births and deaths, mother can become wife; wife can become mother; and an enemy can become a friend etc., in one life or other. So where is a question of lasting relationship? How futile is worldly life? Therefore, we should not develop attachment for worldly life, our relatives and friends, and material objects around us.

Ekatva Bhavana: Thinking of being alone

"I am alone, I was born alone, I came alone and did not bring anything with me and I will die alone. I am sick alone, I have to suffer alone, and I have to experience myself the karmas which I have earned, alone." Therefore, one should be cautious about oneself that

in the life only I will have to do things for me and no one else can help me even though it may look as if someone is helping me.

Anyatva Bhavana: Thinking of the soul as separate from the body.

"This body is transitory and it is different from me. I am the soul, which is not perishable while body is perishable. Even wealth, family etc., are not mine. They are different from me; therefore, I must discard attachment for all these things."

Asuchi Bhavana: Thinking that the body is formed of flash and bones.

When the beauty of anyone's body stimulates the passions and burns us with temptations, we should think, "What is this body after all? Would the beauty stay there forever? How clean it is inside? Outside the body looks fascinating with its white and bright complexion but inside it is flash, and bones and excreta. How attractive are they? Then why should we have so much attachment for it?"

Asrava Bhavana: Thinking or knowing inauspicious inclinations and actions.

In this bhavana we must think on how the inflows of karmas happen. All causes that create the inflow of karmas should be discarded.

Samvar Bhavana: Renouncing inauspicious fondness and actions.

After knowing what are the inauspicious fondness and actions of the mind, the voice and the body we need to renounce them. This is Samvar and that helps us to block the new inflow of new karmas. One must contemplate on Samiti, Gupti, Yati-dharma, etc. One must carry out these activities and try to reduce or stop the new bondage of karma.

Nirjara Bhavana: Thinking of performing austerity.

Nirjara means to shed off whatever karmas we have. These karmas are shed off with the help of austerities. One must think of the benefits that accrue from each of the 12 kinds of austerities. One must contemplate on how soon one can start these austerities in order to remove the sins.

Lokasvabhava Bhavana: Thinking of the lokas.

Lokasvabhava means one must contemplate on how is this universe is formed. One must think that the whole universe filled with souls and pudgals. One must think on what are different lives in 1) the upper world, 2) the middle world, and 3) the lower world. One should contemplate to live life in such a way that how soon one can reach to Siddhashila.

Bodhi Durlabh Bhavana: Thinking of developing faith in the Dharmik principles.

One must contemplate on how difficult it is for the souls that are wandering aimlessly in four stages of existence in the Samsar to attain human life. Even after that how difficult it is to obtain the Jin dharma. Therefore one should contemplate to develop faith and observing the religion propagated by the Jina.

Dharma Bhavana: Thinking of the influence of Dharma.

"Oh! Arihant Bhagwan, the omniscient, has expounded an excellent Shruta Dharma and Charitra Dharma. I will engage myself in this Dharma." One should carry out this contemplation again and again and put that in practice.

Maitri Bhavana: Thinking of amity.

One must contemplate on having a feeling of amity for all beings in this universe. One should think of having no ill will or enmity against anyone. How brief this life is? Then, what is the use of enmity? Why should we not live with a feeling of amity for all? So, one should think of friendship with all.

Pramod Bhavana: Thinking of honoring superiors.

One must have heartfelt affection, regard and esteem for people who are superior to us in virtues, knowledge and ability. One must not entertain the feelings such as jealousy and envy; and not looking at anyone maliciously and with a sinister eye. One must think of being cheerful and happy at the sight of virtuous people; and expressing cordial happiness on seeing such people.

Karuna Bhavana: Thinking of compassion.

One must think of showing compassion to those who are in distress, want; and to those who are weak and helpless. One must think of helping them; giving support to them; desiring to remove their sorrows and agonies. One must contemplate on efforts to resolve these and work towards it.

Madhyastha Bhavana: Taking a neutral stand.

One must contemplate that even after making repeatedly efforts for others to realize what is right but they do not want to change. Then I must accept that their time has not come yet to differentiate between right and wrong. So rather than reacting with them with anger or contempt, contemplate or getting myself in mental unrest leave them alone. Hope that one of these days they will get on right path.