

## LESSON14

## TEN DIFFICULT THINGS TO ACHIEVE

This world is full of people and all kinds of living beings. It is also full of comfort and luxury. There are extreme comforts in places like western world while there is a lot of suffering in under developed world and more so in Africa. Most everybody equates their life with worldly materialistic comfort or hardship. Then there are places like India where materialistic values have their own place but spiritual values also play role in the life of people. When we discuss about ten difficult things to achieve let us see what those difficulties are and see if there is any way out of them. These ten difficult things to achieve are:

### 1) **To be born as human beings**

As a student of Jainism, we do not consider only human life as life but we recognize all other forms of lives. When we look at total numbers of human beings compared to rest of total lives in all categories, numbers of humans are very small. When one life ends and other life begin, what are the chances of being reborn as human beings? Very little! This means to be born as human is very difficult and we all should feel fortunate that we are born as human beings. From whatever little we know we understand that we must have accumulated good karmas then only we were born as human beings or otherwise we might have ended up being plant, insects, birds, fish, animals, hellish beings or heavenly beings. Why are we giving importance to human life? What is so good about it? Let us think for a while and see what the most significant aspects of human life are and what makes human life unique from others. Well, all living beings live, breath, reproduce have also different level of knowledge. But, human mental power is so much different than that of other creatures that human beings have logical, rationalizing and restraining power much better than in other forms of life. Even though animals, heavenly beings or hellish beings have mind they do not come anywhere close in above capacities of ours, humans. As a human we definitely have an edge over everybody else and we can do so much more both in materialistic or spiritual life. Therefore, Jainism teaches us that since possibility being born as a human life is such an odd, take an opportunity and advantage of this life and accumulate more good karmas to be reborn as human or get rid off karmas and move towards liberation or salvation.

### 2) **To be born in the land of religious practice (Arya Pradesh)**

We know human beings are spread all over the world but look how many of them are born in the land where there are religious practices going on? Again a few! Most of people are born where there is violence, crime and sensual pleasures, etc., but very little religion. Some may argue that they also have some kind of religion but we should not forget that unless the principle of Ahimsa, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy and non-possessiveness are followed properly their progress for ultimate bliss is far away. That is why it is said that to be born in the land of religious practice is not easy. That is why Jainism is warning us that since you are born in the land of religious practice you have got an opportunity practice religion so take advantage of it and do not waste your time in doing anything and everything else because you would not know where you will be born next.

3) **To be born in good family**

Many people are born being born as human, in the land of religious practice but their family may not be stable and in a condition to provide what is needed. They may believe in violence, may eat meat or they are poor and has so many problems. While good family do the right things. You are fortunate that you are born in good family and therefore take an advantage of the situation and be a good member of the family because if not then who knows when you may be reborn in good family again.

4) **To live long life**

Many people are born as human, in the land of spirituality and also in good family but they do not live long enough to do religious practice. There are a few percentages of people who live a long life. If you live short life and die early then you can not take that much advantage of human life for spiritual progress. Long life does not come easy. One has to do so much good karmas that he/she would get a long life. Take advantage of long life and do good things to meet your ultimate goal of permanent bliss.

5) **To have a healthy life**

Even after having a human life, being born in the land of religious practice, good family and having a long life but many stay sick and can not do religious practice. So even though they had all these things they were not very useful. Having a healthy life is difficult for many. Since you have a healthy life take advantage of it comfort others and do not harm them in anyway and carry on your spiritual pursuit.

6) **To have fully developed all five senses**

After having a human life, being born in the land of religious practice, even born in good family and have a long and healthy life, there are many unfortunate ones whose sense faculties are not fully developed. Some may be blind, deaf, or mute or deformed, etc., and if so they can do less for their spiritual progress. So once again take advantage of being fully developed.

7) **To come in contact with Sadhus and sadhvis**

Let us say you are born as a human being, in the land of religious practice, in good family and have a long and healthy life and fully developed sense faculties but even then many of them are not serious to take advantage of sadhus and sadhvis around who can help spiritual uplift of soul. They stay engrossed in materialistic life and deprive themselves the darshan and contact of sadhus and sadhus to uplift the soul. But you should find some time to go to their darshan and make a contact with sadhus or sadhvis to open up the window for uplift of your soul.

8) **To get a chance to listen to the preaching of Jina Bhagwans**

Even after having a human life, being born in the land of religious practice, in good family and having a long, healthy and fully developed life and came in contact with sadhus and sadhvis but would not find a time to listen to them because you do not realize the benefit of spirituality. How can you be helped if you do not listen and

learn what Jina has taught? Therefore, make efforts to listen to them so you can learn what is needed for spirituality.

**9) To develop a faith in the words of Jina**

Let us say you had overcome difficulties like having a human life, being born in the land of religious practice, in good family and having a long, healthy and fully developed life and came in contact with and went to listen to sadhus and sadhvis but find difficult to develop faith in their teachings. We must remember that having knowledge is one thing but developing faith in the teaching of Jina is different thing because then they will have to readjust the life as per the teaching of Jina and they are not ready for it. Developing faith becomes also difficult because materialistic life looks very attractive to them. They look at science for every answer they are looking for when science itself is not the perfect thing. Therefore, wake up and do not throw away the opportunity to develop faith in what you learned from the teachings of Jina for spiritual pursuit.

**10) To follow the path shown by Jina**

Let us say you overcame all of the following difficulties, namely:

- I. To be born as human beings
- II. To be born in the land of religious practice (Arya Pradesh)
- III. To be born in good family
- IV. To live long life
- V. To have a healthy life
- VI. To have fully developed all five senses
- VII. To come in contact with Sadhus and sadhvis
- VIII. To get a chance to listen to the preaching of Jina Bhagwans
- IX. To develop a faith in the words of Jina

But, he finds so difficult to follow path shown by Jina because he may have to give up his wants in life and readjust it to live within the spiritual rules. We must remember that having a faith is one thing and putting faith in practice is different thing and unless we make combine efforts to put faith, knowledge and actions together we would not get the best results needed for spiritual uplift. What is hard here is to give up violent life, hurting others, falsehood, stealing, sensuality, possessions, desires, ego, anger, deceit and greed, etc. It takes courage and commitment to change and adopt the life as per the teaching of Jina. But this difficulty can be overcome if we make an effort, even though it may be very small beginning but small beginning can grow and before we know our life will change.

The reason we discussed these ten difficult things to achieve is that we should feel fortunate that we have achieved many of them and we should work to what we do not have. As a Jain, somewhere in our mind, we must remember that ultimately we will have to be free of worldly bonds and unless we do that we will go through the sufferings and unhappiness again and again with very transient happiness. The ultimate bliss can only be attained when we achieve all those difficult things and live life accordingly then we will soon see the results.