

LESSON 24

SALVATION/MOKSHA

When the Atma is freed from bondages of all karmas it does not have to go through rebirth, it is said to have attained liberation, or Moksha. According to Jainism the pure souls abode in Siddha-Shila which in upper most area of Lokakash. All Siddhas maintain their independent existence and do not merge in each other or anything else.

A liberated soul is called a Siddha or perfected one, and only as a human being one can achieve this Siddha state. It is said that when soul is in fourteenth gunasthanak he shrinks his Atman Pradesh to one-third state of a person and it occupies that much place in Siddha-Shila. Liberated souls remain in this state forever after that. There is no returning again to a worldly state by them, and there is no interruption to their ultimate bliss.

The Jaina definition of a Siddha is a being without caste, without gender. It is neither “He nor She”. It is unaffected by external surroundings so he is neither happy nor sad. They live in their natural state which has no passions that mean no feeling of pain or happiness. There is no status amongst Siddhas. There is no more aging because they do not have a body. Because they are passionless they do not accumulate any karma and therefore, no more cycles of being born or to die. They have infinite knowledge and perception and energy. They live as just viewer without any interaction to what they see.

Every worldly soul has potential to be Siddha but it is not an automatic event or grace of someone else. Every soul will have to put his/her efforts for it. Digambara tradition believes that woman can not attain mokhas without being reborn as a man. In Svetambara tradition woman can attain Moksha. Malinath (woman) attained Moksha as nineteenth Tirthankara.

In current time there will be no one who can attain Moksha from our part of land (Bharata kshetra, which includes India) because people can not keep strong faith in the teachings of Jina and do not totally live as per teachings of Tirthankaras. In land of Mahavideha (which we are not able to identify at this time) there are at present one hundred and sixty Tirthankara as well as many Kevali and so many people under their guidance will ultimately attain Moksha.

It must be realized here that all human beings can attain the Moksha but to attain that they will have to renounce worldly life and take a monkhood or nun hood. It is a rare event that someone in householder position can attain Moksha.