

## LESSON 20

## GUNASTHANAKS

Each Bhavi (suitable to attain Moksha) soul has a potential for the spiritual elevation and ultimate liberation, if humans can take the best advantage of the suitable situation. As the human life has its advantages, there is disadvantage too. If as a human, we do not pay attention and do not be discriminatory towards the attachment (raag) and the hatred (dwesh), then these two can put us further away from the liberation. The attachment and hatred are like the road mines. If we are not careful and step on them, then they explode and derail our physical, verbal or mental attitude from the righteous path and pollute our souls with karmas. Therefore we should learn not only to detect them and ignore them, but we must learn how to diffuse them forever. It is a hard task and while doing so some may get exploded away to the bottom of the spirituality but those who succeed can rise to the peak, the salvation. We have to develop the spiritual zeal and control and overcome our desires and whims so that we can learn, think, and behave right. At the base level of the spirituality, raag and dwesh will be more severe, while at the highest level they would be completely eradicated. These different levels are called the "Gunasthanaks".

A gunasthanak means the stage of the spiritual development of the soul in connection with the controlling Mohaniya and other karmas. There are fourteen different gunasthanak levels. The Jain philosophy has explained fourteen stages of the soul, by different levels of spiritual development of jivas. From the time immortal the soul is entangled with ajiva called the pudgals (particles) of the karma. Because of that it wanders in the entire universe in the form of a nigod, bird, animal, narki, human being or dev, etc. When the impurities of karma, which leads to the raag (attachment) and the dwesh (hatred), are minimized or discarded, the spiritual development of the soul commences. The raag and the dwesh are considered vices or defects while the things which help to overcome them are considered virtues or merits. The progress of the soul takes place in accordance to the virtues and vices present in it. Until the soul becomes Arihant, it fluctuates through these various stages of ups and downs depending upon the bondage of new karmas, maturing, and the shedding of the old karmas. To make our task easier, Jinas have given us the keys of three jewels: 1) Samyaktarshan (Right belief), 2) Samyaktjan (Right knowledge), and 3) Samyaktcharitra (Right conduct). If the soul does not believe in right faith, right knowledge and follow right conduct, the soul is said to be in the first gunasthanak, called Mithyatva gunasthanak.

The fourteen gunasthanaks are:

- 1) Mithyatva Gunasthanak (the stage of false beliefs with intense raag and dwesh)
- 2) Sasvadan (the stage of having tasted the righteousness)
- 3) Samyak-Mithyadrashti (Mishra) (the stage of fluctuation between the false and right belief)
- 4) Avirati-samyakdrashti (the stage of the right belief but no renunciation)
- 5) Deshvirti (the stage of the right belief with the partial renunciation)
- 6) Sarvavirti or Pramatta samyati (the stage of the total renunciation)
- 7) Apramatta samyati (the stage of the total renunciation and no carelessness)
- 8) Nivritti-Badar (the stage of an extraordinary efforts)
- 9) Anivritti-Badar (the stage of almost passionless state)

- 10) Suksham samparay (the stage of the subtle greed)
- 11) Upshant Kashaya (the stage of the passionless state by the suppression)
- 12) Kshina Kashaya (the passionless stage)
- 13) Sayogi Kevali (the stage of the omniscient with activities)
- 14) Ayogi Kevali (the stage of the omniscient without activities)

- 1) Mithyatva (the stage of the false beliefs or intense raag and dwesh) Gunasthanak  
A person is called to be in the Mithyatva gunasthanak stage when he believes the wrong as the right and stays involved in carrying out the wrong things and does not have any regret for that. He does not have a faith in the teachings of the Jina and his passions are intense and care only for the physical comforts and the body, not the soul. It is called the first, rather than the zero stage because his perception and knowledge are not totally blocked out at this stage.

To achieve liberation the soul has to progress from first to the fourteenth stage which is difficult but not impossible. Whenever such person comes in contact with a virtuous person, teachings of spiritual teachers he realizes his mistakes. Now, he wants to do good things. This realization is the beginning. That is known as "Yathapravrutikaran". The soul gets the urge for inner purification but for some this urge is not very strong as to force him to make a definite start in the positive direction. This urge rises and pops out like a balloon. Only a few people make a strong turn for self-purification. The strong commitment to change and follow-up on these actions reduce the karmic stock in quantity, duration, and intensity. Since he has not done these kinds of activities before, this is called "Apurva Karan". At this stage the soul has reached to the stage of breaking the knot by suppresses, eliminates or combines both suppression and elimination of Mithyatva Mohniya and Anantanubandhi Kashaya Karma and achieve samyaktva. This is called Anivrutikaran (quieting) activities. Spiritually, such person moves to the fourth Gunasthanak (Samyakdrashti) from here. After attaining samyaktva, his liberation at some point of time is guaranteed.

- 2) Sasvadan (the stage of having tasted the righteousness) Gunasthanak  
The soul does not go to second stage (Sasvadan) while rising but it gets there only while falling from the fourth stage to the first stage. This is a passing by stage. Those who have attained fourth or higher stage, for some reason, fall and they pass through this stage before falling to first stage. In this stage they still have some memory of samyaktva but it lasts for a very short period.
- 3) Samyak-Mithyadrashti (Mishra) (the stage of fluctuation between false and right belief) Gunasthanak:  
The condition of the soul that lives in this state is strange. The soul rises to third stage from stage one when Mishra Mohniya karma rises. During this time he keeps swinging like a pendulum between the right and the wrong views. Therefore in this stage he develops neither liking nor disliking in the teachings of Jina. Usually within one antarmuhurt (forty-eight minutes) soul either falls back to first stage or if his conviction gets firm, he goes to the fourth gunasthanak.