

LESSON 19

EIGHTEEN SOURCES OF SINS PART 01

In our life we see many unhappy or unpleasant incidents and when we ask why such things happen, the answer we get is, it is because of their bad sins or papas or destiny. So naturally the curiosity would occur in our mind that could I prevent those sins? If so how? In Jainism, Arihant Bhagwans have taught us sources that cause sins and if we were or are careful and if avoid doing those things then we could minimize or stop accumulating sins and in turn we minimize our sufferings.

We are always busy doing something good like helping others or being bad or mean and causing trouble to others. When we cause trouble for others, not only they suffer but it causes us to suffer because we accumulate bad sins (papa). The kinds of activities that cause others to suffer are called sinful activities or sources of sins and they can range in various levels from a simple tale telling to the killing someone. In Jainism such activities are divided into eighteen categories. These bad deeds cause trouble in our current lives as well as future lives too. Therefore, we should be careful not to carry out any of the following eighteen sinful activities.

- 1) Violence (Pranatipata)
- 2) Untruth (Mrushavada)
- 3) Theft (Adattadan)
- 4) Unchastity (Maithun)
- 5) Possessiveness (Parigraha)
- 6) Anger (Krodh)
- 7) Ego (Mana)
- 8) Deceit (Maya)
- 9) Greed (Lobh)
- 10) Attachment (Rag)
- 11) Hatred (Dwesh)
- 12) Quarreling (Kalah)
- 13) False accusation (Abhyakhyan)
- 14) Gossip (Paishunya)
- 15) Criticism (Parparivada)
- 16) Liking and disliking (Rati-arati)
- 17) Selfish lying (Maya-mrushavada)
- 18) Wrong beliefs (Mithya-darshan-shalya)

Let us discuss them one by one.

- 1) Violence (Pranatipata): This word is formed by two words. A) Pran means vitalities of living being, and B) atipata means to kill or to hurt. Therefore, PranaTipata means to cause suffering or kill any of the vitalities of living beings. This is caused by our physical activities as well as by our harsh words or even by our thoughts. Even though physical violence is easy to understand, many people do not realize that by eating eggs, chicken, poultry products, fish, seafood, or meat they are causing violence. Hunting or fishing also causes violence. Verbal violence is caused

by name calling, and offensive, hateful, bitter or harsh words or sentences. Let us explain mental violence with an example. Ramesh is a tall and heavy guy and beats up Anil every now and then. Anil is a skinny guy and can not win fight against Ramesh physically. So, Anil thinks that he will make a friendship with some bully guy and ask him for help. He also thinks on various other ways to get even with him. During all these thoughts, even though he does not undertake any physical action, his thoughts were to hurt Ramesh. Therefore, he acquires sins (pap) as if he was physically hurting Ramesh. Thus mental thoughts affect us same way as do physical actions or verbal expressions. Thinking is tremendously faster, easier, and has no inhibitive factors that usually accompany physical or verbal activity. Hence it increases the potential of accumulation of pap (or even punya due to good thoughts) much faster and more easily.

Some other forms of violence are piercing, crushing, binding, torturing, and overloading both humans and animals; starving or not feeding at proper times, and exploiting laborers. Cosmetics, ivory, silk clothes, and leather articles involve direct or indirect injury to the animals and become reasons for accumulation of sins. One should be careful even while walking, running, or sitting that one does not step on small insects like ants, etc. We should be careful not to walk on plants or grass because they have life too. Even plucking flower causes violence. Taking such care is called “Jatna”, “Jayana”, or “Upayoga” in Jainism. Therefore, we should be very cautious not to harm others and live a simple, peaceful life. This leads one to be compassionate and tolerant of others.

- 2) Untruth (Mrushavada): It is formed of two words. A) Mrusha means lie, and B) Vada means to tell or speak. So mrushavada means to tell a lie. Some other kinds of lies are spreading rumors, revealing secrets, or writing false documents. Most common causes to lie are anger, greed, fear, jealousy, and deception. By lying, we accumulate pap and we lose the respect of friends and others.
- 3) Theft (Adattadan): It is formed of two words. Adatta means without permission and B) Adan means to take. To take a thing without the permission of the owner is to steal is known as an adattadan. To acquire something which does not belong to us is also considered stealing. Do not take what's not yours. We can even steal indirectly by asking or encouraging someone else to steal. Once, we start doing such things, there will be no limit as to how far we will go. Moreover, this habit will also bring calamity to family members.
- 4) Unchastity (Maithun): Maithun means being unchaste or engaging in sensuous enjoyment. This occurs when we enter in improper sexual activities. In Jainism, there is no place for any pre or extra marital sexual relationship because excessive sensual desires bring bad karmas. Even within the bounds of marriage, it is advised to observe possible restraint. Unnatural gratification, indulging in profane speech, excessive passion even for one's own spouse is considered unchaste. A person who suffers from the high desire for lust and sensual pleasures cannot resist temptations and indulges in immoral deeds. If there is control over the urge for material gratification, the sexual

desire can be restrained.

Possessiveness (Parigraha): Attachment to worldly possessions is known as 'parigraha'. This occurs when we try to accumulate more than our needs. We should learn to live happily with minimal needs, rather than accumulating more. Unlimited possessions and hoarding things beyond a person's basic needs is considered a sin. We should avoid owning many vehicles, large houses, many vacation homes, or many things such as toys, furniture, clothes, etc. We should remember that unnecessary accumulation is the root cause of all unrest, and will keep our craving alive for more possessions. Even though this is easy to say and harder to follow but if we be content with what we have, and learn to control our desires then it can happen.