

LESSON 23

JAIN UNIVERSE

The Jain scriptures describe universe as Chaudrajloka*. Its height is 14 Rajus and is divided into three levels.

- 1) Upper level (heavenly abode - Urdhvaloka)
- 2) Middle level (human and other creatures abode - Madhyaloka) and
- 3) Lower level (hellish abode - Addho loka).

Upper level

It is also called heavenly abode, which means the home for the heavenly beings. Here live angels also called celestial beings. There are many levels of heavenly abode. These places are full of luxury and enjoyment for all the time. Angels have lots of powers. Some of the angels might help us sometimes. One gets born as heavenly being if one does good and pure things in life.

Middle level

It is our earth level. Middle level is divided into 1) Jambudweep, 2) Ghatkikhand, and 3) Puskardweep and other dweeps (Islands). We live in Jambudweep. Jambudweep is further divided into three parts, 1) Bharat Kshetra, 2) Mahavideh and 3) Airavat Kshetra. In Jambudweep, we live in Bharat Kshetra. It is full of lands, rivers, lakes and mountains, etc. Here live people, animals, birds, fish, insects, and plants, etc. Here humans and others feel temporary happiness as well as unhappiness. One gets born in here for doing good or not so good things.

Lower level

It is also called hellish abode. Here live hellish beings who suffer a lot all the time. There are also various levels in hellish abode. One gets born here for being cruel and doing violent things.