

Jain philosophy thorough simple examples of modern science

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Abstract

It may be noted that a logical mind creates contradictions and a higher level of logic resolves the contradictions. In this article my purpose is to try to describe and resolve some contradictions to explain some very important and basic concepts of Jain philosophy thorough examples of modern science. We shall take a few examples. Example 1: Let us take a test tube of distilled water and add some salt in it. Now we ask two questions: Question-1: Is this water pure? Answer: No, It is not pure water. It is salty water. Question-2: Imagine you have very powerful microscope and you can see each molecule of water (H_2O) and each molecule of salt ($NaCl$). Now with such visualization we ask: is any water molecule a salty molecule. Answer : No; each water molecule is separate from the molecules of the salt. At molecular level, a water molecule is clean and pure. A salt molecule does not 'enter' a water molecule. This answer has a great significance in explaining an important concept which says that essentially we are pure soul and all impurities and worldly things are different from us. To be liberated from sins, on one hand we should not indulge in sins, and on the other hand we should have this notion that we are always a pure and divine soul. We have a potential of having eternal bliss. Similarly, we can take up another example of burning of coal. In the reaction, carbon + oxygen = carbon dioxide, from one point of view there is destruction of coal. But from another point of view, number of protons, electron and neutrons before burning and after burning does not change. From this real point of view only the relative positions of these particles change during the burning event. In other words, in real sense nothing gets burnt. Both points of view are important. If we know only burning and destruction then it is our ignorance. This example also helps in explaining eternal soul

as well as significance of non-violence and avoidance of violence. Let us take one more example. We consider production of electricity in a nuclear power plant. The engineers, scientists, deserve credit for this production. But can they really produce electricity? The scientists would say that energy can neither be produced nor be destroyed. The energy comes from the nuclear fuel. A proper and deep understanding of this scientific example can be helpful in resolving the issue of Nimitta-Upaadaan.

I. Introduction

It is well known that a logical mind creates contradictions but a higher level of logic is required to resolve. When our logical mind realizes some contradictions in any religion then some persons just discard or ignore religion. Some persons remain skeptical. Some persons use such contradictions to argue with friends and teachers for the whole life. But some find good teachers and books that help in resolving the contradictions. In this article my purpose is to try to describe and resolve some contradictions to explain some very important and basic concepts of the Jain philosophy that incorporates such contradictions. The goal is to learn to develop a clear and complete vision and understanding that would be helpful in having sound and right beliefs.

II. Pure versus impure

Let us consider a cup of distilled water and add some salt in it. Now we ask a few questions:

Question: Is this water pure?

Answer: No, It is not a pure water. It is salty water. It can be written as

Water + Salt = salty water

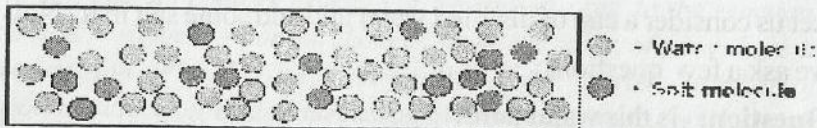
Parallel to this, in philosophy, we can write:

Soul + Body + sins = sinful person

The spiritual teachers preach that a sinful state is not good. One should try to be pure. One should try to minimize sins. Sins are not good for the spiritual health of any person. But the spiritual lesson does not end here. For spiritual advancement we need more. To gain more, we come back to salty water again and ask another question:

Question: Suppose you have a very powerful microscope and you can see each molecule of water (H_2O) and each molecule of salt ($NaCl$). Now with such a visualization we ask another question: Is any water molecule in this cup a salty molecule?

Answer : A careful consideration would lead to following answer: No; each water molecule is separate from the molecules of the salt. At molecular level, a water molecule is clean and pure. A salt molecule does not 'enter' a water molecule. This answer has great significance in explaining an important concept of philosophy. We discussed that if one can have a very-very powerful microscope, then he would find that in the salty water each water molecule is separate from all other salt as well as water molecules (See Figure)



We now apply this analogy to philosophy. If one can view by very powerful inner vision, then one would find that his/her soul is separate from sins. For such a vision, there is a technical word called *Bhed-Gyan* that literally means 'knowledge of separateness'. The ancient teachers recognized that such a vision of considering oneself

different from sins, anger, greed etc. has a great practical advantage in the process of liberation. It may be valuable to refer to a quote from Acharya Amrit Chandra [1],

*Sidhhantoayamudatta chittacharitairmoksharthibhihi
sevyatam,*

*Shuddham chinmaymekmev paramam jyotih
sadaivasmyaham.*

*Ete ye tu samullasanti vividha bhavah prathaglakshana,
Steham nasmi yatoatra te mam pardravyam samagra api.*

This verse says: Those who are interested in the liberation should always follow this principle that I am always the same pure consciousness/soul (*Shuddhatma*). All other lust and thoughts which appear are of different nature. Therefore, I am not such thoughts. These are different from me.

In simple language, the message of this verse is that one should not feel frightened by one's past sins. In the deeper sense, we are unattached with those sins. We are different from sins. If we continue to think that we are sinner then we would not get liberation.

Some technical words: Let us refer to the salty water view. Such a view is called *Vyavahar naya* or *Vyavahar drashti*. It literally means 'gross view' or 'relative point of view'. Refer to the view that sees each water molecule as clean. Such a view is called *Nischaya naya* or *Nischaya drashti*. It literally means 'real point of view'.

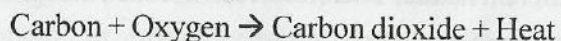
Philosophical significance: The two kinds of views of water mentioned above are important and useful to the scientists. Similarly, both views of ourselves are important to us. The former view leads us

to follow the ethical path, and the later view makes us feel not overwhelmed by our shortcomings which are temporary. To be liberated from sins, on the one hand we should not indulge in sins, and on the other hand we should have this notion clear that we are always a divine pure soul. We have a potential of having eternal bliss. Such concept of identifying oneself with the pure soul (*Shuddhatma*) can make us burden-less.

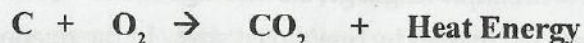
Practical significance in day-to-day life: We should not be overwhelmed by our problems. We should not be overwhelmed by our past mistakes. We should meditate for some time on the notion that we are a pure divine being.

III. Eternal versus non-eternal

Let us imagine the burning of coal: In chemistry we describe this process by the following equation:



Or



Question: Is anything vanished? What has burned?

View-1: Coal or carbon has burned and vanished and we got heat energy and ash out of it.

View-2: Carbon has not vanished. It is present in carbon dioxide. There has been burning but nothing has vanished in true sense.

The basis of view-2 is as follows:

	C	+	O ₂	→	CO ₂	+	Heat
Protons	6	+	16	→	22		
Neutrons	6	+	16	→	22		
Electrons	6	+	16	→	22		

Thus, before burning there were 22 protons and after burning also we have 22 protons. Before burning there were 22 neutrons and after burning also we have 22 neutrons. Before burning there were 22 electrons and after burning also we have 22 electrons. This analysis shows that nothing has vanished. At micro level, no any new particle has been created or destroyed. These particles have changed only neighborhood. This change in the neighborhood is responsible for the energy, just as we get energy when a compressed spring is released.

Question: Do we see any contradiction in view-1 that coal has burned and view-2 that nothing has vanished?

Answer: A scientist knows that carbon has not vanished but its form has only changed. Thus, a scientist knows and accepts both views, but according to the context, he/she may speak only view-1 or view-2. Thus the scientist does not experience contradiction. If one does not know view-2 and speaks view-1 then to such a person there is a contradiction between view-1 and view-2. Here again we say that View-1 is not wrong if view-2 is also understood. In other words, view-1 is incomplete if view-2 is not understood.

Philosophical significance: The Jain philosophy accepts following views regarding soul and non-soul (six kinds of *Dravya*)

View-1: In the universe, there is a continuous destruction and creation in every entity.

View-2: Matter or soul can neither be created or destroyed in true sense, only forms change. This point is very nicely described by *Acharya Umaswamy* [2]:

Sat dravya lakshanam. Utpadyaya dhrauvya yuktam

sat.

Meaning: The existence is the property of a substance or *Dravya* (substance includes soul); and an existence is associated with the creation, destruction, and eternity. Such concept of 'sat' or eternal nature of soul makes us fearless, if we identify ourselves with the soul.

Practical significance

1. One should realize very well that though every soul is eternal, one gets sin if one desires to hurt or kill another being. One should know very well that an attempt to kill or even a thought of killing another being or self is almost equally sinful.
2. Sometimes, our loved one may not be saved despite our best efforts. This concept may be very much helpful in the consoling process. The truth alone can console us. Just accept the following facts: (a) The soul is eternal, (b) The person died according to his/her *Aayu Karma*, (c) Our attempts to save and serve him/her have earned us *Punya* (Positive Karma), (d) Any desire to hasten the death of any person including ourselves is sinful.
3. One should take advantage of the following words of modern psychologists to deal with any kind of loss: (A) *When one door closes, another door opens.* (B) *Within every adversity there is a seed of an equivalent or greater benefit.*

IV. Doer versus non-doer

Let us take an example of the production of electricity in the nuclear power plant from uranium.

Question: Who produces the electrical energy?

View-1: The scientists and engineers produce electrical energy. An alternative view may be as follows:

View-2: The energy of uranium atoms in the form of nuclear mass gets converted into electricity. The bottom line is: energy comes from Uranium atoms. The engineers or scientists can not produce energy.

Question: View-1 gives credit to scientists and engineers, and view-2 gives credit to uranium. Which view is more correct?

Answer: A careful consideration shows that view-2 is very accurate. It is one of a few fundamental laws of Physics that energy can neither be produced nor be destroyed. The energy comes from uranium atoms.

Question: Does it mean that view-1 is wrong?

Answer: Its answer may be yes as well as no. How? If we really do not recognize that the source of energy is uranium then we are wrong. But if we know that the real source is uranium, and the engineers and scientists are instrumental in bringing the electricity then we are right. With this understanding, if we say that engineers and scientists produce electricity then we are not wrong. View-1 and view-2 together make a complete picture. It is true that nobody can produce energy but it is also true that without scientists and engineers the transformation of nuclear energy into electrical energy is not possible.

Philosophical significance: The Jain philosophy on the one hand says that the liberation of a soul is not due to the mercy or will of any supreme soul, but at the same time the same philosophy also accepts the importance of temples, teachers and prayer of God. This requires a balanced understanding of worship and own efforts.

In Jain philosophy, there are two important technical words. (1) *Upaadaan* (2) *Nimitta*. In the example of nuclear power plant the uranium is *Upaadaan*. The scientists, engineers, power plant etc. are called *Nimitta*. One who gets transformed is known as *Upaadaan*

and one who is instrumental is called *Nimitta*. In the example of liberation of a soul, the soul is *Upaadaan*, and prayer, temple etc. are *Nimitta*. We should always keep in mind that as far as our development is concerned we are *Upaadaan* and all others are *Nimitta*. Some times, others did not help us the way we wanted. Some times, some persons became obstacle to us. But if, we remember that an *Upaadaan* gets the same kind of *Nimitta* which *Upaadaan* deserves in the framework of Karmic Laws then we would not have any complaints towards others. This realization itself would be a big leap towards our spiritual and worldly progress.

Spiritual teachers have also cared to teach truth by explaining Karmic laws. We refer to a Sanskrit verse written by Acharya Amrit Chandra [3]

*Sarvam sadaiv niyatam bhavati swakiya,
Karmodayanmaranjevitdukhasaukhyam,
Agyanmetadiha yattu parah parasya,
Kuryatpumanmaranjevitdukhasaukhyam.*

Meaning: Always all happenings in one's life take place according to the definite Karmic laws. All- life, death, pain, and pleasure - happen according to one's own Karma. An ignorant person does not know this truth, and thinks that others are responsible for some one else's life, death, pain, and pleasure.

Practical significance: As a parent, we should nurture our child, but we should always keep in mind that for our child we are *Nimitta* only. Having done our duties, we should neither take credit for the success of the child, nor should have guilt over his/her failure. For the future of

the child, the child is *Upaadaan*.

V. Orderliness (*Vastu vyavastha/Vyavasthith Shakti*)

Let us imagine an example of a falling of a glass cup on the floor from our hand. As a result, we may see hundreds of pieces of glass of different sizes in different directions at different distances. It appears a very random and chaotic event to a common person. A common person sees a dis-orderliness in this breaking of the glass. But a physicist would say following: The breaking of the glass into pieces took place according to the laws of physics. The right kind of pieces dictated by the laws of physics and the structure of the cup and strength and direction of impact have been formed. Every piece went in the direction decided by the laws of physics. Every piece went to a distance according to the laws of physics. The event happened fully according to the laws of science. There is no randomness.

From the USA, when we dial a phone number 91-123-456-7890, then out of millions and millions of phones in this world only a particular phone in India rings. Do we need more proof for the orderliness? Acharaya Amritchandra [4] says:

*Swabhav niyatam yatah sakalmeva vistvishyate,
Swabhav chalanakulah kimih mohitah klishyate.*

Meaning: All *Dravyas* follow definite laws based on their own attributes. Then why does a living being forget his true nature and experiences illusion and suffering?

VII. Invisible soul

We know that one can assemble all components of a radio

transistor and can hear the music of a singer which is being transmitted by a distant transmitter. On this basis, one can say, "Look, when I remove any component of the radio then the music would stop. Therefore, the source of music is this radio, not any external transmitter." What would you say? We would say that you are missing the existence of the source (transmitter) which is invisible to you.

Similar to the ignorance about the transmitter, many persons argue that human body is alive due to chemicals only. A person thinks, feels, talks, eats due to chemicals only. Such persons argue that there is nothing like soul. It is very likely that this argument is similar to the denial of the transmitter, and acceptance of the radio only. There are many scientific evidences in favor of the existence of soul. For example, one can refer to one of the articles of the author (Ref. 5).

VIII. Concluding remarks

The physical sciences without the inclusion of the existence of the source of the life (soul) are incomplete. The spiritual knowledge without the realization of the orderliness based on the laws of nature including spiritual laws (*Karmic laws*) is incomplete. The holistic science includes the concepts such as described in the foregoing sections. The acceptance of soul, karmic laws, and orderliness provides fearlessness and makes us empowered. It is very important that we understand the truth and have right beliefs. Our behavior and future depend very much on our beliefs. The ability to appreciate the power of mind, the art of adjusting everywhere, the skill of avoiding clashes, the kindness of heart, good health, respect for laws, moral and ethical life, etc. grow as one understands and appreciates the holistic science. The popularity of a large number of books related with holistic science, in modern

times even in the west, written by western authors [6-16] such as Wayne Dyer, Louise Hay, Deepak Chopra, Caroline Myss, Eckhart Tolle, Richard Bartlett, Frank Kinslow, Bruce Lipton, Norman Vincent Peale, Fritzof Capra, Gary Zukav, etc. support this view that the western world not only adopts the technology provided by modern science, but is also thirsty to embrace the ancient wisdom based on the holistic science to achieve peace and happiness.

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