

Jainism and buddhism



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

1) On Karma:

Buddhism : Buddhism believes in the universality of Karma, which is a result of one's action. Karma is a process, a consequence of one's desire ridden actions that cling to the personality of a being as an impression of its past and determines its future.

Good actions lead to good karma and bad actions to bad karma. One can address the problem of karma by following the teachings of the Buddha, the truths enshrined in the Dhamma and the code of conduct prescribed for the Sangha. The eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths are the best means to minimize the negative effects of karma and work for salvation.

Jainism : Jainism also believes in the universality of karma and its effect on human beings. But, unlike Buddhism, karma, according to Jainism, is not a mere effect of one's actions, but a real substance that flows into each individual body or jiva. This karmic substance remains with a being until good conduct and self purification eliminates them.

This karmic substance which is a kind of subtle matter or energy field, remains attached to the being until it is fully cleansed through the observation of vows, pure conduct and severe austerities.

2) On Soul:

Buddhism : According to Buddhism, soul is an individuality that does exist in plants and animals, but not in non-living or inanimate things.

Jainism : According to Jainism, soul is present in every animate and inanimate object of the universe including its elements - earth, water, wind, fire and air.

3) On The Status And Evolution of Individual Beings:

Buddhism : After Nirvana, there is no soul, but the individuality of an individual that passes into nothingness, which is beyond any description and speculation.

Buddhism does not believe in the existence of eternal souls. So it approaches the subject of liberation purely from a physical and mental perspective. What becomes liberated during nirvana is the individual personality that comes into existence on account of the aggregations of elements and consciousness. This individual personality is neither eternal nor divine. It is an impermanent and unstable entity, which is subject to karma and the cycle of births and deaths. Nirvana is an indescribable state in which the individual personality becomes free once and for all from the process of becoming and changing and achieves some kind of stillness that is difficult to explain.

Jainism : After Nirvana, the soul continues to remain as an individual soul, but in the highest state of purity and enlightenment.

According to Jainism souls are eternal entities which get entangled in the causative phenomena and become subject to the law of karma. In their liberated state the souls are conscious, eternal, pure and divine. But in their bound state they become subject to the cycle of births and death. Death is a mere separation of the soul from the body and birth is its entry into a new physical body as determined by its previous actions. A soul can free itself from the suffering and limitations of physical life by leading a pure and austere life according to the precepts taught by the thirthankaras.

In some extreme cases it can also be achieved by destroying the body itself through austerities and self-mortification. After liberation, the Jiva or soul continues to remain as an individual soul, but in the highest state of purity and enlightenment. As far as the soul is concerned, the Jain concept of Nirvana has some similarities with both the Samkhya and Vaisheshika schools as well as some dualistic schools of Hinduism.

4) Survival And Disappearance : Over a period of time, while Buddhism disappeared from the Indian soil, Jainism survived in India, with its teachings intact, mostly untouched by the overwhelming philosophy and practices of Hinduism, at the same time imparting to the later some of its noblest ideas.

5) Besides, a major difference lies in the dominions of both the religions. Though both, Buddhism and Jainism, originated and developed individually in the same geographical area of India, but difference lies in their spread. While Buddhism crossed the frontiers of its motherland and went to other parts of the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, far eastern countries, and parts of North America and Europe as well, whereas Jainism, on the other hand, remained confined to India, the land of its origin.