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with the combined commentaries of  
Umāsvāti/Umāsvāmī, Pūyapāda and Siddhasenagaṇi

Translated with an introduction by Nathmal Tatia

*With a foreword by L. M. Singhvi and  
an introduction to the Jaina faith by Padmanabh S. Jaini*

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*parasparopagraho jivānām*

**Souls render service to one another**  
*(Tattvārtha Sūtra 5.21)*

CHAPTER TWO

*The Nature of  
the Soul*



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The first chapter explained the categories of truth that constitute reality. Now the author turns his attention to the first category, the soul.

*aupaśamīkar-kṣāyikau bhāvau miśraś ca jīvasya svatattvam audayika-pāriṇāmīkau ca*

2.1 The states that distinguish the soul from other substances are those that:

- (1) are due to the suppression of the deluding karma
- (2) are due to the elimination of the eight types of karma
- (3) are mixed because of the partial elimination and partial suppression of the four destructive karmas
- (4) are due to the rising of the eight types of karma
- (5) constitute the innate nature of the soul

Now the nature of the soul, the first among the seven categories of truth (see 1.4), is explained in terms of the states that distinguish it from other substances. This sutra groups these states into five classes according to karmic processes. The states in the first four classes are produced as a result of the soul's interaction with karma. Directed by the various processes of karma, the soul passes through these different states which generate changes in its nature and which constitute its worldly career.

There are eight types of karma:

1. knowledge-covering
2. intuition-covering
3. sensation-producing
4. deluding
5. lifespan-determining
6. body-making
7. status-determining
8. obstructive

Of these eight karmas, (1), (2), (4) and (8) are called destructive because they cover or distort the intrinsic qualities of the soul. The remaining four are non-destructive.

The mixing of karma with the soul is due to karmic inflow (see 6.1–6.2). The binding of the particles of karma to the soul is called bondage (8.1). However, this binding is not permanent. The soul has an inherent capacity which can affect how the bondage is ended, thereby affecting its own fate. It can exert power to suppress the karmas so that they remain as inactive “sediment” in the soul. This suppression causes the first distinguishing class of states. But if the soul goes further and actually succeeds in eliminating the karma, this brings about the second class of states. It is also possible for the soul to partially eliminate and partially suppress its karma so that the soul becomes like clean water mixed with mud. This generates the third class of states. However, karmic particles that have not been eliminated cannot be suppressed forever; they must eventually mature and rise up like disturbed sediment to produce their effect. This active arising of karma generates the fourth class of states.

The states of the fifth class are integral to the soul and, therefore, distinct from its karmic alliance. These innate states will be explained in 2.7.

The SBT draws attention to a sixth, “combined” state, a mixture of two or more of the above states, which it says is also mentioned in the scriptures.

Although it has size and shape, determined by karma, the soul does not possess the material qualities of touch, taste, smell and colour.

*dvi-navā-ṣṭādaśai-kaviṃśati-tribhedā yathākramam*

**2.2** The five classes of states cause two, nine, eighteen, twenty-one and three states, respectively.

*samyaktva-cāritre*

**2.3** The enlightened world-view and enlightened conduct.

The description of the five classes of states of the soul begins with the first class, those caused by suppressing the deluding karmas. Of the eight types of karma, only deluding karma can be suppressed.

This karma has two varieties, view-deluding and conduct-deluding.

The enlightened world-view referred to in this sutra is due to the suppression of conduct-deluding karma in the form of the four tenacious passions of anger, pride, deceit and greed, and of the three sub-types of view-deluding karma which cause, respectively, deluded world-view, near-perfect enlightened world-view and a mixture of enlightened and deluded world-view (see 8.10). Enlightened conduct is due to the suppression of conduct-deluding karma, specifically the four passions. However, both the enlightened world-view and enlightened conduct are very short-lived in this case because they are achieved by temporary suppression and not the elimination of karma.

Furthermore, the enlightened world-view will not come to all. There is no beginning to the transmigration of souls from birth to birth and for some there is no end. Not all will attain liberation. Those who are destined to attain liberation are capable of achieving the prerequisite enlightened world-view through suppressing, eliminating or partially suppressing and partially eliminating the view-deluding karma. Once they do this, they have a set period of time left before attaining liberation. The maximum span of this period is equal to half the time it takes for a soul to bind and release all the karmic particles scattered in the cosmos (something it has done an infinite number of times in its beginningless career).

There is a second essential condition for the initial attainment of the enlightened world-view – that the karmas being bound by the soul are of intermediate duration, that is, the time it takes for them to bind and be released by the soul is between one intra-hour (just less than forty-eight minutes) and  $10^{14}$  ocean-measured periods (o.m.p.) minus one time unit. Furthermore, these intermediate karmas must be stabilized by the spiritual purity of the soul at a duration of  $10^{14}$  o.m.p. minus numerable thousands of o.m.p. (See appendices 1 and 2 for information about Jaina measurement of numbers and time.)

The third condition, given in the SS, for attaining the enlightened world-view is that the soul must be inherently worthy of liberation (2.7). It should, moreover, have five fully developed senses (2.15), a mind (2.11), all the maturation (8.12) and complete purity. Humans, gods, infernal beings or subhumans (animals and plants) that fulfil these conditions are capable of attaining the enlightened world-view. There are many other

factors, including memory of past lives, which are instrumental in achieving the enlightened world-view.

*jñana-darśana-dāna-lābha-bhogô-pabhoga-vīryāṇi ca*

**2.4** The enlightened world-view and enlightened conduct, together with knowledge, intuition, beneficence, gain, satisfaction, comfort and power.

Now the states in the second of the five distinguishing classes of states are described. In this class, there are nine states which are generated by the total elimination of the four types of destructive karma. The four destructive karmas generate nine states because of their sub-types, that is the two varieties of deluding karma, (1) view-deluding and (2) conduct-deluding karma; as well as (3) knowledge-covering and (4) intuition-covering karma, and the five sub-types of obstructing karma, (5) beneficence-obstructing, (6) gain-obstructing, (7) satisfaction-obstructing, (8) comfort-obstructing and (9) power-obstructing karma.

When these nine varieties of karma are eliminated, the positive states underlying these karmas become attainable. These are respectively: (1) the enlightened world-view, (2) enlightened conduct, (3) omniscience, (4) pure and perfect intuition, and the abilities to (5) inspire fearlessness, (6) meet one's nutritional needs, (7) create divine surroundings (call up the gods, generate celestial light, create beautiful gardens, etc.), (8) produce divine paraphernalia (canopies, thrones, etc.) and (9) achieve omnipotence.

The above interpretation is only in the SS. However, there is no controversy among the commentators about the soul attaining the first four states after it has eliminated the destructive karmas. The other five states can be identified with the unimpeded bliss of omniscience. The physical pain and pleasure caused by the arising of sensation-producing karma have no effect on the spiritual bliss of the omniscient soul.

#### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

In 2.1, the states of the second class are described as those which arise due to the total elimination of the eight types of karma, yet here the elimination of only the four destructive karmas is mentioned. The reason for this apparent inconsistency is that the state of worldly souls is being considered, for whom only the elimination

of the four destructive karmas is possible. The elimination of all eight types of karmas occurs only on liberation from worldly life.

*jñānā-jñāna-darśana-dānādilabdḥayaś catus-tri-tri-pañcabhedā  
yathākramam samyaktva-cāritra-samyamāsamyamāś ca*

**2.5** Four kinds of knowledge, three kinds of deluded knowledge [knowledge held by a deluded person], three kinds of intuition, five kinds of potential, the enlightened world-view, enlightened conduct, "partial restraint and partial non-restraint".

These are the states in the third distinguishing class, those due to partial elimination and partial suppression of the destructive karma. The four kinds of knowledge are: empirical, articulate, clairvoyant and mind-reading (see 1.9). The three kinds of deluded knowledge are: deluded empirical, deluded articulate and deluded clairvoyant (1.32). The three kinds of intuition are: visual, non-visual and clairvoyant. The five kinds of potential are for beneficence, gain, satisfaction, comfort and power. The enlightened world-view and enlightened conduct have been explained in 1.1. "Partial restraint and partial non-restraint" is limited self-restraint according to one's capacity.

The karmic particles that are eliminated and suppressed are those which are capable of covering totally the properties of the soul such as knowledge, intuition, the enlightened world-view, enlightened conduct, and the potentials (beneficence, etc.). In the partially eliminated and partially suppressed state, the actively arising karmic particles are only able to cover partially the properties of the soul and must leave a part of them exposed. They are the common property of all souls, even the most undeveloped ones.

Non-destructive karma (sensation-producing, body-making, status-determining, lifespan-determining) is not subject to partial elimination or partial suppression.

*gati-kaṣāya-liṅga-mithyādarśanā-jñānā-samyatā-siddhatva-leśyāś catus-  
catus-trye-kai-ke-kai-ka-ṣaḍbhedāḥ*

**2.6** Transmigration in the four realms, four passions, three genders, the deluded world-view, ignorance, non-restraint, the unliberated state and the six colourings.

Here, the fourth class of the states of the soul, those that are due to the

rising of the eight types of karma, is described. The four transmigration realms are the respective habitats of infernal beings, subhumans (plants and animals), men and gods. The four passions are anger, pride, deceit and greed. The three genders are female, male and hermaphrodite. The deluded world-view is a perverted understanding of the categories of truth. Ignorance is the state following the active arising of the most intense karma that covers knowledge, intuition and the enlightened world-view. Non-restraint is total absence of self-control. The unliberated state is caused by the active arising of the four non-destructive karmas. The six colourings are black, blue, grey, red, yellow and white. There are many other states and sub-types of these states, but these twenty-one are representative of all the others.

The following table indicates the types of karma which cause the different states:

STATES	KARMA
Transmigration in the four realms	body-making (see 8.12)
Four passions	conduct-deluding (8.10)
Three genders	conduct-deluding (sexual disposition) (8.10)
	body-making (sexual organs) (8.12)
Deluded world-view	view-deluding (8.10)
Ignorance	knowledge-covering (8.7)
	intuition-covering (8.8)
	view-deluding (8.10)
Non-restraint	conduct-deluding (8.10)
Unliberated state	four non-destructive (8.9, 8.11–8.13)
	(sensation-producing, body-making, lifespan-determining, status-determining)
Six colourings	conduct-deluding (passions) (8.10)
	body-making (8.12)

*jīva-bhavyā-bhavyatvādīni ca*

**2.7 Being a soul, being worthy of liberation, being unworthy of liberation and so on constitute the innate nature of the soul.**

Here, the fifth and final class of the states of the soul is described. These states are innate and do not result from karmic processes. They may be with or without a beginning (see 5.42, 5.44). This sutra lists those that are beginningless.

According to the SB, the phrase “and so on” in the sutra refers to attributes such as existence, otherness from the body, capacity to act, capacity to enjoy, the possession of qualities, non-ubiquity, non-materiality, etc. Of these properties, some are common to all substances and some are exclusive to either sentient substances (souls) or non-sentient ones (media of motion and rest, space and matter). The three attributes explicitly mentioned are exclusive to the soul.

*upayogo lakṣaṇam*

**2.8 Sentience is the defining characteristic of the soul.**

Having described the various states of the soul generated by karma, the author now defines soul with regard to its essential quality.

Sentience is awareness or consciousness. It is twofold: knowledge and intuition. The soul is never bereft of sentience, however feeble and indistinct this may be in undeveloped organisms.

*sa divividho’ṣṭa-caturbhedah*

**2.9 Sentience is of two kinds: the first has eight varieties and the second has four.**

The two kinds of sentience are determined and undetermined. Determined sentience is knowledge and undetermined sentience is intuition.

Sentience as knowledge has eight varieties: empirical, articulate, clairvoyant, mind-reading, omniscient, deluded empirical, deluded articulate and deluded clairvoyant (see 1.9, 1.32).

Sentience as intuition has four varieties: visual, non-visual, clairvoyant and omniscient. Non-visual intuition uses senses other than sight. According to some thinkers, however, it occurs independently of the senses.

The SS mentions the fact (as does the SB in 1.31) that, although knowledge and intuition cannot occur simultaneously in souls that are not omniscient, they can in those that are.

TRANSLATOR’S NOTE

Jaina thinkers accept unanimously that knowledge and intuition cannot occur simultaneously in souls that are not omniscient. However, there is a divergence of



view as to whether or not they occur simultaneously in omniscient souls.

*samsāriṇo muktās ca*

### 2.10 Souls are divided into two broad classes: worldly beings and liberated souls.

This sutra begins the classification of souls. Worldly beings transmigrate from one birth to another. The transmigration has no beginning but it ends if the soul is liberated.

The transmigration of worldly beings is explained in the SS with respect to five types of change, namely, changes in the clusters of matter, space units, time units, realms of birth, and states.

The change of the clusters of matter is the soul's absorption and subsequent release of all material particles in cosmic space an infinite number of times.

The change of the space units refers to the soul's occupation of each space unit in cosmic space at some time in its various lives. A soul's occupation sometimes spreads over a limited number of space units and sometimes over the entire cosmic space as in the case of an omniscient soul enjoying the effect of sensation-producing karma in the short time before liberation (see 5.16).

The change of the time units refers to the soul's succession of births and deaths in each time unit in each ascending and descending aeon in the recurring cycles of time (3.27).

The change of the realms of birth refers to the soul's frequent transmigration from one realm of birth to another, from the lowest hell up to the "neck-dwelling" heavens (mid-heavens), due to its deluded world-view (4.20).

The change of the states of the soul is defined by the type, duration, intensity and quality of effect and material mass of the soul's karma due to its deluded world-view (8.4).

*samanaskā-manaskāḥ*

### 2.11 The worldly souls fall into two groups, souls that possess a mind and souls that do not.

Only souls that possess a mind have the power of thought. Souls which are said to have a mind are those with both a psychic and physical mind. Those with a psychic mind but no physical mind are said to be without a mind.

In the SBT, the psychic mind is attributed to the partial elimination and partial suppression of the karma which obscures articulate knowledge. According to the SS, it is the result of the partial elimination and partial suppression of both the mind-covering (knowledge-covering) karma and energy-obstructing karma. The psychic mind finds expression as consciousness, awareness, sensation, attention and so on.

The SS explains the physical mind as the result of actively arising karma. The physical mind is made of material particles and has a size and location. The physical mind is the essential aid to the psychic mind's potential for thought. Memory is only possible for souls with a physical mind. (For a further description of the mind, see 5.19.)

#### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

In modern parlance, the physical mind is the brain and the psychic mind is the capacity and activity of the brain. However, in the Jaina view it is the psychic mind that creates the physical mind, not vice versa. Furthermore, the physical mind is made of very subtle matter. According to the SBT, it pervades the whole body of a being. In another view (TV, V.19), the location of the mind changes with the location of attention. In yet another view (JSK, III. 270), the heart is the seat of the mind which has the shape of a tiny eight-petalled lotus. *DOC*

*samsāriṇas trasa-sthāvarāḥ*

### 2.12 The worldly souls are further classified as mobile and immobile beings.

Mobile beings can move from one place to another. Immobile beings cannot move themselves from one place to another and are all one-sensed organisms (see 2.23).

*pṛthivy-ambu-vanaspatayaḥ sthāvarāḥ*

### 2.13 (not SS) The earth-bodied, water-bodied and plant-bodied souls are immobile beings.

*pṛthivy-ap-tejo-vāyu-vanaspatayaḥ sthāvarāḥ*

### (SS variant 2.13) The earth-bodied, water-bodied, fire-bodied, air-bodied and plant-bodied souls are immobile beings.

There are many varieties of earth-bodied, water-bodied and plant-bodied souls. For instance, raw soil or a clod of earth, particles of dust, sand, raw minerals are earth-bodied beings. Snow, ice, rain and so on are water-bodied beings. (For further details on the immobile bodies, see 2.14.)

The classification of beings as mobile and immobile is only formal and in reference to body-making karma. The automatic movement for the maintenance of life does not qualify a being as “mobile”. This term refers to those that are capable of voluntary movement. For this reason, the SS variant of this sutra includes the fire-bodied and air-bodied as immobile beings.

## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

When souls are born with bodies made of material clusters of earth (soil, stone, copper, salt, etc), they are called “earth-bodied”, when their bodies are made of water clusters, they are called “water-bodied” and so on. When these elements are abandoned by their resident souls and assume an inanimate state they are called “earth-bodies” etc. Another variety, called “earth-soul” etc., is defined as a soul that is destined to occupy a body made of earth, etc.

*tejo-vāyū dvīndriyādayas ca trasāḥ*

**2.14 (not SS)** Fire and air, as well as those with two or more senses, are mobile beings.

*dvīndriyādayas trasāḥ*

**(SS variant 2.14)** Those with two or more senses are mobile beings.

Only beings with at least two senses are genuinely mobile creatures. The SBT explains that the fire-bodied and air-bodied do not move of their own accord and as such, truly speaking, do not belong to the class of mobile creatures.

In the SS, the element of vitality is added to explain the nature of all beings, however many senses they have. There are ten vitalities in all:

1. sense of touch
2. body
3. respiration
4. lifespan
5. sense of taste
6. faculty of speech
7. sense of smell
8. sense of sight
9. sense of hearing
10. rationality

The table below gives the number of vitalities for life-forms classed

according to the number of senses they possess.

BEINGS	VITALITIES
One-sensed	(1) – (4)
Two-sensed	(1) – (6)
Three-sensed	(1) – (7)
Four-sensed	(1) – (8)
Five-sensed non-rational	(1) – (9)
Five-sensed rational	(1) – (10)

*pancendriyāṇi*

**2.15** There are five senses.

This sutra begins the description of the senses and their sphere of operation. The five senses are: touch (skin), taste (tongue), smell (nose), seeing (eye) and hearing (ear).

*dvividhāni*

**2.16** There are two kinds of senses.

The senses can be viewed in two ways, senses as clusters of matter and senses as modes of the soul.

*nirvṛtty-upakaraṇe dravyendriyam*

**2.17** The senses as clusters of matter have a dual nature: as the physical organs themselves and as the capacity of those organs to perceive.

*labdhy-upayogau bhāvendriyam*

**2.18** The senses as modes of the soul are also dual in nature: sentient potential and sentient application.

Sentient potential is the capacity of the soul to apply the physical senses. The SB explains that sentient potential is released by the active arising of the body-making karma and also the partial elimination and partial suppression of the knowledge-covering karma. The SS affirms this latter cause but does not mention the former. It identifies sentient application with the striving of the soul to produce the physical senses.

*upayogaḥ sparsādiṣu*

**2.19 (not in SS)** Touch and the like are the objects of sentient application.

Sentient application relates to empirical knowledge (cognition), that is, the perception of touch, taste, smell, colour, and sound by the senses. It does not relate to articulate knowledge because this is not possible by the senses alone. Nor does it relate to clairvoyance, mind-reading or omniscience because they do not use the senses at all. The SB describes sentient application as attention, specific mental activity, the continuing identity and transformation of the soul. The SBT describes it as both the perception of external objects and the experience of one's own pleasures and pains.

The SB explains that a sense, as (1), a physical organ, is the necessary condition of a sense as (2), the capacity to perceive, and as (3), sentient application. However, a sense as (4), sentient potential, lies at the root of the other three varieties of sense. All four varieties of sense, the first two related to substance and the latter two related to modes, are necessary for perception to occur.

The senses as (3) sentient application are not senses in the true meaning of the word. The term is used figuratively. There is no substantial difference between sentient application and perception, which is the result of the four varieties of the senses.

*sparsāna-rasana-ghrāṇa-cakṣuḥ-śrotrāṇi*

**2.20 (SS 2.19)** The five senses are skin, tongue, nose, eye and ear.

*sparsā-rasa-gandha-varṇa-śabdās teṣām arthāḥ*

**2.21 (SS 2.20)** The objects of the five senses are, respectively, touch, taste, smell, colour and sound.

*śrutam anindriyasya*

**2.22 (SS 2.21)** Articulate knowledge [the scriptural lore] is the domain of the internal organ.

Having defined the domain of the senses, the domain of mind is now defined. Articulate knowledge, here understood as the Inner and Outer Corpus of the scriptures (see 1.20), is the subject matter of the internal organ, that is, the mind.

The SBT gives an alternative explanation in which articulate knowledge is said to be empirical knowledge (cognition) beginning with the stage of specific inquiry (1.15). This empirical knowledge is by the mind and not by any sense organ such as the ear or eye. It is a mental perception that understands the scripture.

*vāyvantānām ekam*

**2.23 (not SS)** The classes of beings, up to the air-bodied ones, have only the sense of touch.

*vanaspatyantānām ekam*

**(SS variant 2.22)** The classes of beings, up to the plant-bodied ones, have only the sense of touch.

Now having described the nine classes of beings, earth, water, fire, air, plant, two-sensed, three-sensed, four-sensed, and five-sensed, and also having mentioned the five kinds of senses (see 2.12–2.15), the author distributes the senses according to the classes of beings.

There are variants in the wording of this sutra, because of the variations in sutras 2.13–2.14 in the listed order of the first five classes of beings. However, all the commentators are saying the same thing, that these five classes – earth-, water-, plant-, fire- and air-bodied beings – have only the sense of touch.

*kṛmi-pipīlikā-bhramara-manuṣyādīnām ekaikavṛddhāni*

**2.24 (SS 2.23)** Worms and the like, ants and the like, bees and the like and humans and the like, have an additional sense progressively [they have two, three, four and five senses, respectively].

The following table shows the varieties of elemental bodies, plants, animals, humans, infernals and gods, and the number of senses they possess.

NUMBER OF SENSES	BEINGS
One sense (touch)	earth-, water-, fire-, air- and plant-bodied
Two senses (touch and taste)	worms, leeches, <i>mollusca</i> (oysters, mussels, snails etc.), <i>curculionidae</i> , <i>vermes</i>

Three senses (touch, taste, smell)	some minibeasts such as ants, fleas, plant-lice, cotton-seed insects, termites, centipedes
Four senses (touch, taste, smell and sight)	some minibeasts such as wasps, flies, gnats, mosquitoes, butterflies, moths, scorpions, etc.
Five senses, (touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing)	larger animals such as fish, birds, and quadrupeds, humans, infernals and gods

In 2.11, souls were classified as those that have a (physical) mind and those that do not. All beings with less than five senses are born through agglutination (material particles joining together) and as such are devoid of a (physical) mind. Among those possessed of five senses, again, there are two categories, those that are born through agglutination, and as such are devoid of a mind, and those that are born of the womb and have a mind.

#### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

As noted in 2.11, beings without a physical mind are said to be without a mind although all beings have a psychic mind, that is, an awareness, an experience of sensation. This differs from the pure consciousness of the soul because the physical mind has an element of matter in it.

#### *saṃjñīnaḥ samanaskāḥ*

**2.25 (SS 2.24) Those that have a mind are intelligent beings.**

This sutra explains the unique quality of those who have a physical mind. Intelligence or rationality means the capacity to remember the past and ponder the future. Only the five-sensed beings who have a mind have this capacity. So, human beings and animals born of the womb, the gods and the infernals, are rational beings. This excludes humans and five-sensed animals born by agglutination (asexual reproduction through material particles coalescing).

The SB differentiates between intelligence as thoughtful knowledge and intelligence as subconsciously motivated behaviour. Intelligence as thoughtful knowledge is engaged in judging objects and situations that arise in the wake of specific enquiry. Intelligence as subconsciously motivated behaviour is the survival instinct concerned with acquiring

food, resorting to fight or flight, sexual activity and provision for the future (possessiveness).

#### *vigrahagatau karmayogaḥ*

**2.26 (SS 2.25) If the soul makes one or more turns when it is in transit after death, the only activity is that of its karmic body.**

Having dealt with the senses and mind of the soul, we now turn to its worldly career transmigrating from one life to the next. The SBT distinguishes two varieties of transit: transit from one place to another and transit which is transformation in one place. The second variety takes place when the soul is reborn in the same body after death. (Death is defined as the exhaustion of the lifespan karma and active arising of new lifespan karma. Rebirth in the same body may occur in single-celled organisms co-habited by many souls.) Both varieties of transit entail effort on the part of the soul. Here our main concern is transit from one place to another.

According to the SB, when the soul is in transit from one birth to another, it has neither a gross body (physical mass), speech organs or a mind and so, naturally, the activities of the body, speech and mind are absent. The motion of the soul in transit, however, may be straight or with one or more turns. When the soul goes in a straight line to the place of rebirth, the impetus is provided by the previous body at the time of death. But if the soul has to make a turn during its transit, to maintain momentum, it needs a fresh impetus from the subtle karmic body that always accompanies it. On reaching the place of birth the soul creates a new gross body through the power of its past karma.

The SS interprets the sutra in a different way. During a transit to another body, the karmic body of the soul absorbs clusters of karmic matter but cannot absorb those clusters needed for speech, mind, gross bodies etc.

#### *anuśreṇir gatiḥ*

**2.27 (SS 2.26) Motion is in a straight line along the rows of the space units.**

This sutra describes the motion of the soul in transit after death and of material particles and clusters. The rows of space units run in straight lines from east to west, north to south and also up and down.

The SS says that the transit of the worldly souls is always in a straight line, upwards or downwards to a different realm or horizontally to another place in the same realm. The transit of the liberated souls is always in a straight line. The motion of the material particles and clusters towards the border of the cosmos is also in a straight line. Any deviations from this law are due to the influence of external factors; never the "traveller's" own effort.

The rotation of the luminous bodies such as the sun and moon is not governed by this law.

*avigrahā jīvasya*

2.28 (SS 2.27) The liberated soul always moves in a straight line without any turn.

This describes the motion of the disembodied liberated soul from the place of liberation to the horizontal plane at the top of cosmic space where liberated souls dwell. This plane is parallel to the horizontal plane in the middle of the cosmos where humans dwell. As only humans can be liberated, the human soul goes up from the human plane to the plane of liberation, without any turn, to arrive and occupy space units that exactly parallel the space units of the soul's place of departure. (The journey is illustrated in figure 2 on p. 49.)

*vigrahavatī ca saṃsāriṇaḥ prāk caturbhyah*

2.29 (SS 2.28) In transit, the worldly soul may make up to three turns.

The path of a transmigrating worldly soul may be a straight line without any turn or a path with one, two or three turns. These four alternatives are illustrated by figures 3–6 on p. 49. The polygonal outline of these figures represents the shape of cosmic space, beyond which lies transc cosmic space. This cosmic shape often necessitates turns as the soul cannot travel through transc cosmic space which has no medium of motion, the substance necessary for all movement (see 5.17).

Transit without turning: When the space units of departure after death and the space units of arrival for new birth are situated in the same vertical row, the path of transit is a straight line without turn (figure 3).

Transit with one turn: when the space units of departure are situated on the vertical border of the lower region of the cosmos and the soul has to reach a point in the middle or upper region, it has first to travel horizon-

### Transits of Souls

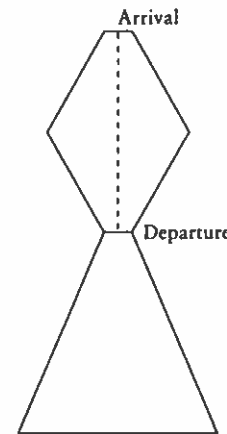


Figure 2

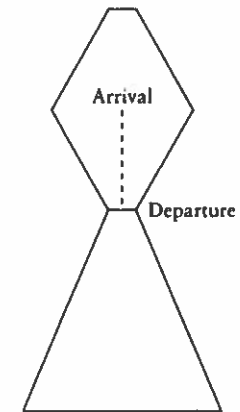


Figure 3

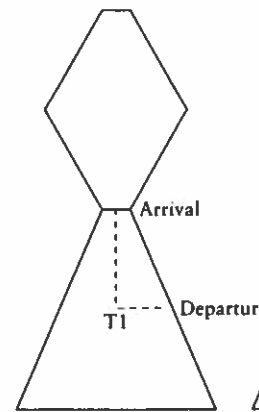


Figure 4

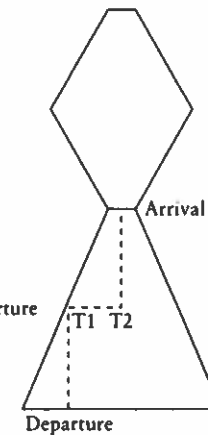


Figure 5

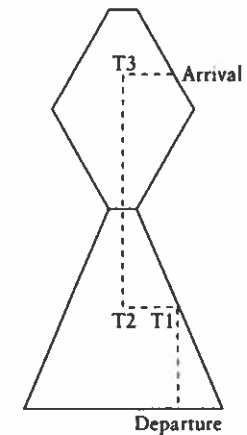


Figure 6

vertical  
horizontal  
transc cosmic  
space  
no medium of motion  
substance necessary for all movement

tally to reach the place directly below the new space units and then make one turn before travelling straight up to its destination (figure 4).

Transit with two turns: when the space units of departure are off-centre in the lower region of the cosmos and the soul is travelling to a destination near the centre of the middle region, the shape of the cosmos dictates that it must travel vertically till it touches the vertical border of the lower region, turn and travel horizontally till it is directly below the space units of its destination, turn and travel straight up to its destination (figure 5).

Transit with three turns: when the space units of departure are off-centre in the lower region of the cosmos and the destination is in the higher heavens, the soul travels up till it meets the vertical border of the cosmos, turns and travels horizontally until it is able to turn and continue its journey upwards, then turns again when it is on the plane of the higher region and travels horizontally to the space units directly above its space units of departure (figure 6).

*ekasamayo 'vigrāhaḥ*

2.30 (SS 2.29) The duration of a transit without any turns is one time unit.

One time unit is the smallest indivisible unit of time (see 5.39). A transit without turns, even to the edge of cosmic space, is possible in a single time unit. Transits with one turn take two time units, with two turns take three time units and with three turns take four time units.

*ekaṃ dvau vā-nāhārahāḥ*

2.31 The soul in transit remains without nourishment for one or two time units.

*ekaṃ dvau trīn vā-nāhārahāḥ*

(SS variant 2.30) The soul in transit remains without nourishment for up to and including three time units.

The soul in transit for one time unit receives nourishment before it leaves and so there is no time unit when it is not nourished. Similarly, when the soul transits for two time units, it receives nourishment in the first time unit before it leaves and in the second time unit when it arrives. However, when the soul transits for three time units (taking two turns), it receives

nourishment in the first and third time units in the manner explained above, but there is no nourishment in the second time unit. Similarly, when the soul is in transit for four time units, the second and third time units pass without nourishment.

In the tradition of SS, the maximum number of time units without nourishment is three, because the last time unit in the journey is also without nourishment.

As regards the types of nourishment, according to one tradition, there are three varieties: (1) sap of the parents drawn by the karmic body of the soul while in the womb,<sup>1</sup> (2) nutrients, such as air and water, absorbed through the pores of the skin of the gross (physical) body, and (3) alimantal food taken through the mouth of the gross body as solid food and drink.

In the other tradition, six varieties of nourishment are identified as: (1) nourishment from the karmic body, (2) nourishment from material bodies other than the karmic, (3) alimantal food, (4) nourishment through pores of the skin, (5) sap drawn in the womb from the parents, (6) nourishment from the mind (JSK, I. 285).

In the SS, nourishment is defined as the absorption of clusters of matter suitable for making the gross, protean and conveyance bodies (see 2.37) and the six maturations (the development of the capacity to ingest nourishment, the body, senses, respiration, speech and mind; see SS 8.11).

*sammūrchana-garbhô-papātā janma*

2.32 (SS 2.31) There are three types of birth: by agglutination of material particles, by the womb and by descent.

Now that the transit from the place of death to the place of the next birth has been explained, this sutra explains the types of birth.

1. The agglutination of material particles is how all beings with one, two, three or four senses are born. Some five-sensed animals and humans are also born this way (see 2.36). As well as this form of asexual reproduction, there is also reproduction in which the sperm and ovum meet outside the parent bodies. Beings born of this method are invertebrate (without a backbone), hermaphrodite (they have both female and male sexual organs) and without a physical mind (without the power of thought). All

<sup>1</sup> This only applies to mammals. In the case of others, the equivalent nourishment is drawn from the material clusters that serve as the birthplace (see 2.33).

insects, worms and animals not born of the womb belong to this class. In this first type of birth, the soul absorbs the material particles that lie at the spot of its birth and uses the power of its karma to convert them into an agglutinated body.

2. Birth in the womb is dependent on a sexual relationship. The soul absorbs the zygote formed by the semen and blood (or ovum) in the womb of the mother and builds it into a gross (physical) body – the foetus.

3. Birth by descent is without parents and with a fully developed body. Infernal beings and gods are born this way, building their bodies out of protean material particles which can change form. The soul of the would-be god goes to a site in heaven covered with a celestial robe which is, in turn, covered with a celestial wrapper. It builds its protean body with the material particles available there. The soul of the would-be infernal being goes to a vessel-like place with a narrow opening in the infernal lands and builds its protean body with the material particles lying there.

The SS explains that the nature of a worldly soul's birth is determined by the fruition of the karma bound to that soul because of its good and bad propensities.

*sacitta-śīta-samvṛtāḥ setarā miśrās caikaśas tadyonayah*

2.33 (SS 2.32) The nine main varieties of birth places are: occupied by living things only, cold, covered, occupied by non-living things only, hot, uncovered, occupied by living and non-living things, both hot and cold in part, and both covered and uncovered in part.

The place of birth is the site the soul reaches after its transit to a new birth. The varieties of birth places listed above describe the three aspects of any birth place: the nature of the substances that occupy it, its temperature, and whether or not it is covered (e.g. in a womb, dwelling or open air). For each aspect there is a choice of opposites or a combination of the two.

According to the SB tradition, the birth places of gods are: occupied by non-living things, both hot and cold in part, covered. The SS differs on the second aspect, saying that the temperature of the gods' birth places is either cold or hot.

The SB tradition describes the birth places of infernal beings as occupied by non-living things, cold or hot or both, covered. Again the SS differs regarding temperatures, saying it is either cold or hot.

The SB tradition describes the birth places of beings born in the womb as occupied by living and non-living things, hot and cold in part, covered and

uncovered in part. The SS explains that the birth place is occupied by living and non-living things because the semen and ovum are inanimate while the mother is a living thing.

The birth places of beings with two, three, and four senses and of five-sensed humans and animals not born of the womb are occupied by living things or by non-living things or by both, cold or hot or both in part, uncovered.

The birth places of the fire-bodied variety of immobile beings are occupied by living things or by non-living things or by both, hot, covered.

The birth places of the other four varieties of one-sensed immobile beings, that is the earth-, water-, air- and plant-bodied beings, are occupied by living things or by non-living things or by both, cold or hot or both in part, covered.

The different places of birth described in this sutra are distinguished from the different types of birth. A place of birth is the base, whereas the birth is the act of the soul entering the base. The varieties of places of birth are said to be 8,400,000, distributed, according to the varieties of living things, as follows:

VARIETIES OF LIVING THINGS

NUMBER OF VARIETIES OF PLACES OF BIRTH

1. Beings destined to be sub-microscopic vegetation eternally	700,000
2. Beings destined to be sub-microscopic vegetation temporarily	700,000
3. Earth-bodied beings	700,000
4. Water-bodied beings	700,000
5. Fire-bodied beings	700,000
6. Air-bodied beings	700,000
7. Vegetation	1,000,000
8. Beings with two senses	200,000
Beings with three senses	200,000
Beings with four senses	200,000
9. Celestial beings	400,000
10. Infernal beings	400,000
11. Animals with five senses	400,000
12. Humans	1,400,000
<i>Total</i>	<b>8,400,000</b>

However, the basic varieties in (1)–(6) are 350, in (7) they are 500, in (8) they are 300, in (9)–(11) they are 200, and in (12) they are 700. The varieties of 700,000 etc. are arrived at by multiplying the basic varieties in each case by 2000. This figure is the total number of permutations of five colours, two smells, five tastes, eight touches and five shapes, i.e.  $5 \times 2 \times 5 \times 8 \times 5 = 2000$ . (For the types of colours, etc., see 5.23–5.24.)

*jarāyu-aṅḍa-potajānām garbhah*

2.34 (SS 2.33) Viviparous and oviparous animals and vertebrates without placenta are born in the womb.

*nāraka-devānām upapātaḥ*

2.35 (SS 2.34) Infernal beings and gods are born by descent.

The three types of birth mentioned in 2.32 are now related to the species which they govern. These two sutras describe the second and third types.

Viviparous animals, that is vertebrates born with placenta, include humans, cows, buffaloes, goats, etc. The oviparous, or hatched, beings include snakes, lizards, chameleons, tortoises, birds, etc. The vertebrates without placenta include porcupines, elephants, hares, ichneumon, etc.

*śeṣāṅām sammūchanam*

2.36 (SS 2.35) All other beings are born by agglutination.

This first type of birth includes the immobile, one-sensed beings (earth-, fire-, water-, air- and plant-bodied), beings with two, three and four senses and the humans and five-sensed animals not born of the womb. The humans born of agglutination originate in human excreta such as faeces, urine, sputum, mucus, vomit, bile, pus, blood, semen, etc. Their lifespan is very short (the tiniest lifespan is  $2^8$  āvalikās, see appendix 2). The animals of this category are born outside the cosmic region inhabited by humans.

*audārika-vaikriyā-hāraka-taijasa-kārmanāni śarīrāni*

2.37 (SS 2.36) The five types of bodies are gross, protean, conveyance, fiery and karmic.

The description of the soul's birth complete, we now begin the description of the bodies which the soul makes for its life. The five bodies given above

are made for different purposes.

1. The gross body is described by the SBT as the visible bulky body made from the suitable class of material clusters (for the eight classes of material clusters, see appendix 5).

2. The protean body is made of clusters of matter with various supernatural powers. The SS describes the supernatural forms the protean body can assume as subtle, huge, light, heavy, able to reach any distance, walk at will, exert lordship, subdue, etc.

3. The conveyance body is made from clusters of matter that are auspicious, white and pure. The SS gives the two purposes of this body as seeking knowledge on subtle problems from the distant omniscient one and avoiding injury, while in transit, to subtle living beings. Such a body is used by an ascetic who is endowed with self-restraint but is not yet free from laxity. To actually acquire such a body, the ascetic must have reached the spiritual stage which is free of laxity.

4. The fiery body is made of fiery particles.<sup>2</sup> It is a permanent possession of the worldly soul. The ordinary function of the fiery body is to digest food for the nourishment of the gross body. But, through certain austerities, it can become capable of transmitting hot rays to burn or cold rays to cool an object at a distance.

5. The karmic body is made from suitable clusters of matter (see appendix 5). It is a sub-type of the body-making karma but at the same time it is the "basket" that holds all the karmic particles of the soul. It is the seed from which all bodies are grown by the soul.

(For further information about the five bodies, see 2.38–2.49.)

*paraṃ paraṃ sūkṣmam*

2.38 (SS 2.37) The five bodies are progressively finer.

The gross body is composed of thinly assembled clusters of matter (see appendix 5). The protean body contains denser and more numerous clusters of matter. This increase in number and density continues progressively with the conveyance, fiery and karmic bodies. However, the volume of these bodies does not increase.

<sup>2</sup> "Fiery" is the literal rendering of the Sanskrit *taijasa*. The more appropriate rendering, however, would be "electrical" because it can emit cold rays as well as hot.



*pradeśato 'samkhyeyagunaṃ prāk taijasāt*

2.39 (SS 2.38) The protean body contains innumerable times the clusters of matter in the gross body and the conveyance body contains innumerable times those in the protean body.

*anantaḡuṇe pare*

2.40 (SS 2.39) The karmic body contains infinite times the infinite number of material clusters in the fiery body.

These two sutras explain the increasing density of the five bodies. The number of material clusters in the fiery body is infinite times the number in the conveyance body.

The SS likens the dense and less dense bodies to the difference between a ball of iron and bundle of cotton.

*apratighāte*

2.41 (SS 2.40) The last two types of body travel unobstructed.

This sutra begins the explanation of the distinguishing characteristics of the fiery and karmic bodies. When two gross bodies meet there is collision but when two subtle bodies meet or when a subtle body meets a gross body, it is like fire meeting an iron ball; there is no collision. Since both the fiery and the karmic bodies are subtle, there is nothing to prevent them co-existing in the same soul. The movement of subtle bodies is obstructed only when they reach the border of the cosmos because beyond the border there is neither the medium of motion nor the medium of rest (see 5.1, 5.17).

*anādisambandhe ca*

2.42 (SS 2.41) And they have been associated with the soul since beginningless time.

The association of the fiery and karmic bodies with the soul has no beginning in the sense that they are never absent from the soul during its worldly existence. However, the fiery and karmic bodies are changing from moment to moment and so do have a beginning in the sense that they are constantly becoming something new. Each continues to exist in a sequence of mutual cause and effect, just as tree follows seed and seed follows tree in an ongoing cycle.

Unlike fiery and karmic bodies, the gross, protean and conveyance bodies are only occasional and not continual properties of the soul.

*sarvasya*

2.43 (SS 2.42) All worldly souls have these two types of body.

There is some controversy about the beginningless association of these two bodies with the soul. It is noted in the SB that some teachers held that only the karmic body is associated with the soul since beginningless time. According to them, the acquisition of the fiery body depended on the practice of specific austerities. Successful practitioners acquired the power to emit cooling and burning rays as a form, respectively, of favour and curse. However, later authors were generally agreed about the beginningless co-existence of karmic and fiery bodies.

The double role of the fiery body to digest food and, following the practice of appropriate austerities, to emit burning and cooling rays across a distance, has led scholars to interpret the fiery body and the fiery power as two independent entities, though, in fact, the latter is only an attribute of the former.

*tadādīni bhājyāni yugapad ekasyācaturbhyaḥ*

2.44 (SS 2.43) Including the fiery and karmic bodies, which are necessarily co-existent with the soul, up to four bodies can be simultaneously available to a worldly soul.

According to those who affirm the necessary co-existence of the karmic and fiery bodies, five combinations can be present simultaneously in the worldly soul:

1. fiery and karmic
2. fiery, karmic and gross
3. fiery, karmic and protean
4. fiery, karmic, gross and protean
5. fiery, karmic, gross and conveyance

According to those who accept that only the karmic body is associated with the soul from beginningless time, the possible combinations are eight:

1. karmic body alone
2. karmic and fiery (this is rejected by SBT)
3. karmic and gross
4. karmic and protean

5. karmic, gross and protean  
 6. karmic, gross and conveyance  
 7. karmic, fiery, gross and protean  
 8. karmic, fiery and gross (variant reading adds conveyance)

The combination of all the five bodies is not possible because the protean and the conveyance cannot co-exist; these two bodies are acquired through the practice of two different kinds of austerities by ascetics possessing specific qualifications. The bodies can be acquired in succession, but they cannot be activated at the same time.

*nirupabhogam antyam*

2.45 (SS 2.44) The last type of body, the karmic, cannot serve the purpose of pleasure or pain.

The purposes served by each body, touched upon in 2.37, are now explained further.

The karmic body cannot produce pleasure or pain on its own. These must be experienced through the operation of the senses and/or the mind. Moreover, the karmic body cannot bind fresh karma or eliminate or suppress past karma. These services are provided by all the other bodies with the exception of the fiery body. Although the karmic body cannot serve any of these purposes or those listed below, it is the underlying cause for all the instruments of suffering and enjoyment.

The fiery body is, like the karmic body, unable to bind, suppress or eliminate karma but, unlike the karmic body, it is unable to set up any activity in the soul. (It provides "the fire", that is, the energy for the activity of the other bodies.)

The gross body of a human or subhuman (animals and plants, etc.) experiences pleasure and pain through the physical mind and/or senses. (For gods and infernals, who do not have a gross body, the protean body serves this purpose.)

The conveyance body helps the soul reach the Jina (omniscient religious founder) when it is seeking information.

The protean body enables gods, infernals, some animals and also ascetics, to assume different shapes. For the gods and infernals, it is also the medium through which they experience pleasure and pain.

*garbha-sammūrchanaḥ ādyam*

2.46 (SS 2.45) The first body, the gross body, is formed in the womb or by agglutination.

*vaikriyam aupapātikam*

2.47 (SS 2.46) The protean body is formed at birth by descent.

*labdhipratyayaḥ ca*

2.48 (SS 2.47) The protean body can also be created by the power potential acquired through practising special austerities.

These sutras begin the explanation of the origins and nature of the five types of body.

The protean body, produced through the power potential of humans and animals born of the womb who have undergone the necessary austerities, is superior to the protean body of the infernals and gods produced as their body of birth. Air-bodied beings also have the power potential needed for a protean body but this is not acquired by austerities; their gross body has this power potential in-born.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Power potential is the capacity for action, from the mundane doings of daily life to supernatural acts such as hurling fire, emanating rays and creating protean bodies.

*taijasam api*

(SS only 2.48) The fiery body is also produced by the power potential.

The commentators all agree that the karmic body is a permanent possession of the soul until its liberation whereas the gross, protean and conveyance bodies are generated by the power potential of the soul. However, there is uncertainty over whether or not the fiery body is permanent (see 2.44). The SS says that there are two permanent bodies, the karmic and the fiery, but there is a second fiery body that can be produced by power potential. The SBT says that both karmic and fiery bodies are permanent but the power of the latter is activated by power potential. The SB does not consider the fiery body permanent in the way the karmic body is. It explains that the fiery body in all living things results from specific austerities. In 2.49, it affirms this sutra to the extent that the fiery body may be due to the power potential.

*śubham viśuddham avyāghāti cāhāraṁ caturdaśa-pūrvadhara eva*

2.49 (not SS) The conveyance body is made of auspicious, pure, non-obstructive and non-obstructed matter. It can be created only by a learned ascetic conversant with the fourteen books of the early literature.

*śubham viśuddham avyāghāti cāhāraṁ pramattasamyatasyaiva*

(SS variant 2.49) The conveyance body is made of auspicious, pure, non-obstructive and non-obstructed matter. Only an ascetic who is self-restrained but prone to laxity uses this body.

The conveyance body is used by a learned ascetic to enable him to approach the Jina to shed light on difficult scriptural questions. However, the description of the ascetic in the SS variant as “prone to laxity” suggests that the desire to use the conveyance body is a sort of greed which is detrimental to spirituality. An ascetic enjoying freedom from such greed would not use this body.

Unlike other bodies, the conveyance body is very short-lived. When the ascetic has any doubt in his mind about the meaning of a very difficult and obscure issue of the doctrine, he uses the conveyance body, expands his soul into this subtle body, reaches the distant Jina instantly and withdraws to the gross body within an intra-hour (less than forty-eight minutes). The conveyance body is abandoned as soon as the mission is completed.

The expression “auspicious matter” in the sutra means that the clusters of matter that constitute the conveyance body are pleasant in colour, odour, touch and taste and that they produce merit. “Pure matter” implies that the clusters are transparent, shiny and conducive to harmless conduct. “Unobstructive and unobstructed matter” signifies that these clusters have free unimpeded movement to the destination.

The SB also introduces a discussion of the origin of various bodies. The fiery body, like the conveyance body, can also be created as a power potential. The karmic body is its own cause and also the cause of all other bodies in the same way that the sun illuminates both itself and also all other objects.

The SB details the ability of the protean body to take different shapes. It can become one and many; it can be as small as the innumerablth<sup>3</sup> part of a

<sup>3</sup> For a brief explanation of the Jaina numerical system, see 1.8, and for further details, see appendix 1.

finger and as big as a mountain; it can be visible and invisible; it can be terrestrial and aerial; it can be resistant and non-resistant; it can create all forms and shapes simultaneously.

Regarding size, the gross body can somewhat exceed 1000 yojanas in length, the protean body can somewhat exceed 100,000 yojanas, the conveyance is one cubit, the fiery and karmic can be as big as cosmic space.

Regarding duration, the gross body lasts at least one intra-hour, and up to three pit-measured units of time (see appendix 2). The conveyance body lasts an intra-hour. The fiery and karmic bodies are eternal possessions of the worldly soul.

*nāraka-sammūrcchīno napuṁsakāni*

2.50 The infernals and beings born by agglutination are necessarily hermaphroditic.

*na devāḥ*

2.51 The gods are never hermaphroditic.

*śeṣās trivedāḥ*

(SS only 2.52) The other varieties of living beings have one of the three genders.

Having described the five possible types of body of worldly beings, the author now begins the description of the possible genders.

Two aspects of gender need to be distinguished: physical sex and sexual disposition. Whereas the physical sex refers to the sexual organ, the sexual disposition refers to an emotional attitude irrespective of the anatomy. There are three kinds of physical sex and of sexual disposition: female, male and hermaphroditic (see 2.6, 8.10). The physical sex and sexual disposition may not be correlate.

According to the doctrine of karma, the body-making karma determines the physical sex, while the rise of the quasi-passions of the conduct-deluding karma determines the sexual disposition. The hermaphroditic sexual organ is caused by the inauspicious body-making karma and the male and female sexual organs by the auspicious body-making karma.

The infernal beings and all those born by agglutination, that is, the one-sensed beings (earth-, fire-, water-, air- and plant-bodied), those with two, three and four senses, and “humans and animals not born of the

womb”, are all hermaphroditic. All worldly souls up to the ninth stage of spiritual development are of male, female or hermaphroditic sexual disposition. In the tenth to fourteenth stages of spiritual development, there is no disposition (for the fourteen stages of spiritual development, see appendix 4).

The vertebrates born with placenta (viviparous) or without placenta and the beings which hatch from an egg (oviparous) may be female, male or hermaphroditic.

Each of the four classes of gods are either female or male. According to the SBT, the mansion, sylvan and luminous gods and the empyrean gods dwelling in Saudharma and Aisāna, the first and second heavens (see 4.1, 4.20), are of either female or male disposition. Higher gods than these are always of male disposition. As the levels of celestial life become higher because of greater spiritual attainment in previous lives, there is a gradual sublimation of sexual disposition.

*aupapātika-caramadehō-ttamapurūṣā-saṁkhyeyavarṣāyūṣo  
'napavartyāyūṣaḥ*

**2.52 (not SS)** The lifespans of beings who are born by descent, destined to attain liberation in their current life, very noble, or destined to live for innumerable years, cannot be ended prematurely.

*aupapādika-caramottamadehā-saṁkhyeyavarṣāyūṣo 'napavartyāyūṣaḥ*

**(SS variant 2.53)** The lifespans of beings who are born by descent, destined to attain liberation in their current noble life, or destined to live for innumerable years, cannot be ended prematurely.<sup>4</sup>

Now the lifespan of worldly beings is addressed, with specific reference to those whose allotted lifespan cannot be prematurely curtailed. The beings born by descent are the infernals and gods. There are sixty-three very noble beings: twenty-four spiritual ford-makers, twelve supreme lords, nine lords, nine brothers of the lords and nine rivals of the lords. Beings destined to live for innumerable years are found among the human and animal populations.

<sup>4</sup> The SS gives this reading that integrates the second and third clauses of the sutra but it also recognizes the SB reading as an ancient variant

The lifespan of other beings can be ended prematurely by poison or contact with poisonous objects, weapons, emotional impulses, distress, accident, and suffocation. The SB explains that the fulfilment of the lifespan-determining karma is merely hastened in the cases of premature death by poison, weapons, etc. Although made to produce its effect early, the power of the karma remains intact.

The SB introduces the idea that the lifespan karma for a soul's current life is bound to the soul at particular moments in its previous life. Karma that was loosely bound is vulnerable to premature termination; karma that was closely bound is invulnerable to premature termination. The SB compares the closely bound karma of an invulnerable lifespan to the closely pressed bale of dry hay that, when ignited, burns slowly and gradually part by part. The loosely bound karma of the vulnerable lifespan is like a loosely bound bundle that burns quickly, fanned by the wind.

A soul involuntarily reduces its lifespan through agony and fear of death. The soul's angst instigates a process in which it expands its own space units beyond the gross body, thereby reducing the length of the lifespan-determining karma. This accelerates its experience of the full fruits of its past good and bad karma. The illustration given is of the soul being like a wet cloth which, when fully spread out and exposed to the elements of sun and wind, dries more quickly than a tightly folded cloth kept in a shaded place.

Even lifespans that are not vulnerable to premature termination may be vulnerable to trouble and pain, though not fatally so. Others are invulnerable to such things.