



CHAPTER-2

CHAPTER -2

FOUNDATIONS OF MEANING OF WORK: A BELIEF PERSPECTIVE

Human beings have always been curious to search the meaning of life through the work they have been pursuing both in physical and meta-physical arena of life either in exclusivity or on a continuum. No human being can escape from 'working' either in physical or mental or combined domains. Possibly on this account 'work' got exalted to the level of 'worship'.

The present chapter aims at expounding the foundations of beliefs on the concept of 'work' and its various manifestations as have evolved closely on the heels of evolution of human activities and development and seem to be soaked in cultural milieu with strong religious overtones that one gets exposed to since birth. Therefore, the chapter is divided into three parts. Part one explores perspective provided by the eternal way of living i.e. Sanatan Dharma as propounded in Vedic and post-vedic literature. As an extension of Sanatan Dharma, India has experienced the development of Buddhism and Jainism, as a subtle variant of Sanatan Dharma. These faiths are also explored in the context of 'work' along with Sanatan Dharma. Part two examines the tenets of work as alluded in Bible, the Holy book of Christian faith and related literature. Part three examines the moorings of work as propounded in Holy Quran-giving the perspective from the viewpoint of Islam.

2.2 LIFE AND ITS PURSUITS: EVOLUTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The origin and nature of man-kind has always been a field of enquiry. This holds the reason of human quest to go deeper in physical and meta-physical domains in search of meaning of life and its purpose. It has been so from times immemorial and shall continue to be so in eternity. Any effort to dig out whether any such pursuit with the intensity as it exists to-day existed on a psychological plane and operated in the minds of stone- age individuals would obviously be making it excruciatingly painful besides being fruitless in current context and envisaged domain of enquiry--- searching meaning of 'work'.

A surrogate measure, however, could be adopted by way of looking at this subject from the stand points of material, emotional and spiritual development of society. The assumption here is that before the materialism took roots in development of societies, the context in which societies initially flourished to become “a civil society” was provided by various life-philosophies across the globe. Survival to materialism to civil society, seeking just and orderly co-habitation would have led to evolution of ‘meaning of work’ in these contexts albeit with philosophical overtones.

It is also pertinent to note that from times immemorial, besides being concerned with the question of basic ‘survival’, people have also been grappling with the dimension of ‘development’ as human beings. They have been seeking answers to questions like – Who am I? Where have I come from? Where would I go? Why am I working?

Vedanta, in India, is concerned with answering some of these very fundamental questions of human life and advocates the theory of ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ – as in the physical world.

It is here that since the causative linkages of current situation of every human being are not quite often obvious that the concepts of ‘birth’ and ‘rebirth’ and a long ‘continuum’ of life have been propounded. The freedom from bondage (the effect) or the cycle of births and deaths could be achieved through the medium of ‘work’ which is also the cause of bondage.

Sages, in India, in the past have been seeking answers to some of the intricate questions of life such as under:

- Which is the body-form which is priceless?
- Which is the highest bliss of life?
- Which is the greatest pain of life?
- Who could be called a saint?
- Which is the highest virtue?
- Which is the greatest sin?
- What ails human beings in general?

And these have been answered by them as well⁴:

- ✓ There is no life comparable to the life of a human being which both the subtle and all living beings long for.
- ✓ There is no blissful existence than to meet and interact with those who have the good of humanity at their heart through their thoughts, words and deeds.
- ✓ Poverty is the biggest pain – poverty of any kind—of thought, speech or action—physical, mental or spiritual.
- ✓ A person who always craves for the good of others – on mental, physical and spiritual planes – is a saint.
- ✓ Non-violence – again in thought, speech and action -is the highest virtue.
- ✓ Negative criticism of anyone is the greatest sin.
- ✓ “Attachment” is the root of all human ailments. It leads to lust, greed, jealousy, envy, anger, servility, ego and arrogance that afflict humanity and are unworthy of pursuit for sustainability of society.

2.3 LAW OF CAUSATION AND DELIVERANCE

A study of nature manifests linkages both apparent and hidden whereby every element – animate and in-animate – is linked with each other in the cosmos. To an extent that (through scientific advancements) we have been in a position to understand these linkages, it exhibits the following:

Every ‘cosmic’ entity is following an order or discipline (for instance every planet in solar system moves with predictable regularity in defined orbit). The entire cosmos is yet to be deciphered and therefore, a great deal of knowledge through modern scientific researches is yet to unravel the nature and dimensions of the same.

Egyptians believed that the universe was above everything else an ordered and rational place. It functioned with predictability and regularity; the cycles of the universe always remained constant; in the moral sphere, purity was rewarded and sin was punished. Both morally and physically, the universe was in perfect balance.

The Egyptian word for this balance was the word for "truth," **ma'at**; The order of the universe (*ma'at*) functioned with unswerving accuracy; it was maintained by the goddess Ma'at. This meant that the concept of "truth" meant for the Egyptian **the rational and orderly working of the universe** rather than its diverse phenomena.

This idea, that the universe is rational and that the "truth" of the universe is the underlying rationality and order of the universe, and not that it was a diverse phenomena, passed from the Egyptians to the Greeks. The Greeks called the underlying order of the universe, *logos*, or "meaning," "order," "pattern."

The early Christians adopted the *logos* in order to explain the moral order of the universe; the first line of the Gospel of John is, "In the beginning was the *logos*, and the *logos* was with God, etc." But the concept for the Greeks and the Christians was more or less the same as *ma'at*. The Egyptians believed that the *ma'at* of the universe was a God that benevolently ruled all aspects—human, material, and divine—of the universe; the Christians would likewise make the underlying rationality of the universe into God: "And the *logos* was God."

Vedas – focus on this 'cosmic' existence and its 'causal' linkages. Gods (Agni, Vayu, Indra) were the first to know the *Brahman*⁵. This cosmic energy form- Brahman-is symbolized by the Sun⁶.

'By perceiving the Self in all beings and all beings in the self, one reaches the supreme *Brahman*, not by other means'⁷.

'That which is the supreme Brahman, the self in all, great support of the universe, subtler than the subtle, eternal-That alone thou art, thou alone art That'⁸.

This way of understanding life and action, places greater emphasis on selflessness in action, with a spirit of service and sacrifice. This does not stain the personality.⁹

2.4 CAUSATIVE LINKAGES

Following principles form the integral component of Vedantic philosophy of life:

- 'Jagat' (Prakriti) is a dream¹⁰.
- Laws of compensation and retribution are operative.
- Present is the resultant of past and future shall be the resultant of present actions.

Vedanta considers existence of 'intelligent' and 'conscious' self which is the doer, thinker, enjoyer or sufferer. Such intelligence or consciousness does not exist in the nature of physical or mental actions. Vedantic thinking points the fallacy that if there be no permanent soul as an entity, the doer of an action or the sower of a seed will not

be the reaper of its fruit. This obviously creates confusion in the world of actions where someone would be 'eating' the food and another person would be getting its 'effect'. It would also be against the law of causation. Therefore, Vedanta advocates the law of Karma as a chain which is 'beginning- less' and 'end- less'.

An interesting idea is manifest in the Vedantic philosophy when it considers life as a continuum and as a 'dream'. During the state of dreaming, a person may be undertaking a lot of actions and also perceiving various results of such actions which disappear on gaining the 'awakening'. The so called reality which existed during the dream stage is actually not the real state of happening. This for instance, happens for about an hour or so during sleep in daily routine of twenty-four hours. Extending the same concept across the multiple births , over a long continuum of centuries and millennia the current existence in the form of human life of say, hundred years would be an experience akin to the experience of illusion of 'dream' during the sleep at night in a day-night span of twenty four hours. The human life itself, in Vedantik philosophy, is considered to be an illusion or Maya¹¹.

Understanding life in this perspective of longevity and existence of soul has transformational consequences while appreciating the meaning and concept of 'work' undertaken by human beings.

2.5 CONCEPT OF WORK, TIME AND SPACE

Anything which is subject to time, space and causation is changeable and anything beyond this is unchangeable. Time is an 'idea' created by thought process which means succession; space also is an 'idea' which means 'simultaneous existence'. Kant describes them as "Forms of Thought". One thought after the other creates intervals described as 'time' and when two thoughts rise simultaneously that what separates them is known as the 'space'. Thus, what exists between the idea of "me" and the idea of "stars" is 'space' which is purely a mental concept having no existence outside the mind. While ideas keep on coming in the human mind and therefore are subject to change, the "knower" is not. Thus, it is the concept of relativity that governs human existence and the perception of reality itself varies in the minds of 'knower' based on the level of knowledge and consciousness that the 'knower' has.

For instance, even though one may say that he is traveling at a speed of 10 kms. per hour from east to west, in effect, it is different if the velocity of the earth along its axis is also considered simultaneously. It is further different if the velocity of the earth along its orbit around the Sun is also considered. It is still different in case the velocity of entire Solar System – of which the earth is an integral part – around the galaxies is considered. Thus, the very obvious ‘reality’ is truly relative in nature and would warrant the ‘superior’ order of knowledge to explore the ‘reality’ of phenomena. If this is true, for the physical world, it is manifestly more relevant for the mental domain of human existence.

Understanding the meaning of ‘work’ and its causative linkages, therefore, becomes an exciting area of exploration in this context.

2.6 THE CONCEPT OF LIFE

It is an interesting pursuit to search the meaning of life. Scientific thinking describes a living system as one which can breathe, reproduce, grow and move. One distinguishing feature, however, is in the domain of ‘growth’. All living systems grow from ‘within’ rather than ‘without’. Action also signifies ‘life’. It helps achieving the objects of life. Life has been considered to be an Anubhav-dhara – stream of experiences in physical, emotional, and intellectual domains. It has always been a philosophical riddle to understand the meaning of life through experiences wherein it interacts with the world which acts as an ‘object’ and the person undergoing the experience being the ‘subject’. The world itself, in a sense, is the ‘creation’ of the same ‘subject’ which tries to understand the world. This riddle has been a matter of continuous exploration and search.

In Vedantic thought process, man is supposed to be comprising of spirit and matter. Soul (Atman) is the part of supreme consciousness (call it God or Brahman or Paramatman) and the matter is the physical body, mind and intellect.

The body has two sets of organs (Indriyas) – five of sense and five of action (Eyes, Ears, Nose, Tongue and Skin are the sense organs and Hand, Feet, Genitals, Anus and Organ of speech are the action organs). These are called Jnana Indriyas and Karma Indriyas. These are responsible for perception and action respectively.

Human mind (mana) connects thoughts with action (organs). Emotions are also there. Beyond this, lies the intellect (buddhi) which has the ability to distinguish, become deterministic or otherwise and deals with the relativistic or range of opposite constructs (sankalpa-vikalpa). This has the capacity to think (at gross level) and contemplate or reflect (at subtle level). 'Chitta'¹² (restoration of mind) is the repository of emotions and feelings (raga-dvesha, pains-pleasures)¹³. 'Ahankara' is related to ego.¹⁴

Thus, kindness, hatred, compassion, envy, jealousy, forgiveness, greed, anger and all such instincts belong to the mind.

Any signal received from external environment creates a reaction within the body systems which in turn provides a response to the stimulus received. This process of receiving a stimulus, reacting to it and then creating a response is virtually akin to a manufacturing operation where inputs and processes produce an output. Any change in inputs or processes changes the output.

Man is in constant pursuit of eternal happiness and bliss. Sensory pleasures are only transient and thus true happiness born out of inner purification of thoughts, words and deeds, negates false happiness arising from the union of senses with their objects.

Vedanta depicts purpose and journey of human life to be in pursuit of 'atma-bodh' -- knowing thyself—'ko aham' (who am I?) and 'ananda' (eternal bliss). It emphasizes that blessed is one who gains self-consciousness or consciousness of Supreme.

Thus, gaining knowledge about Self and developing an understanding by experiencing and enjoying the experience so gained constitutes the supreme purpose (destination) of human life. The physical body (with all its manifestations), and its actions (**work**) become the inevitable vehicle to reach the destination.

It makes sense to make an attempt to develop an understanding on '**work**' and its utility in the larger context of human existence and relate the same with contemporary management processes.

PART-1

‘KARMA’ (WORK) IN INDIAN SCRIPTURES¹⁵ AND LITERATURE

“It cannot be denied that the early Indians possessed knowledge of the true God; all their writings are replete with sentiments and expressions, noble, clear and severely grand as deeply conceived and reverentially expressed as in any human language in which men have spoken of their God. Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealism of reasons, as it is set forth by Greek philosophers appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigour of oriental idealism, like a feeble Promethean spark in the full flood of heavenly glory of the noon day sun – faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished”.

-Friedrich von Schlegel.

Epistemologically, the closest translation of ‘work’ is ‘Karma’ (meaning: deed) which owes its roots in ‘kr’ *dhatu* (root meaning -to act) - of Sanskrit language. Thus all actions of body, mind and senses are called ‘Karma.’- *kriyate anena iti karma*. The basic meaning of the term *karma* means ‘**action**’ or ‘**deeds**’.

Karma (Sanskrit: कर्म ; Pali: kamma), in Indian tradition (originating in ancient India and treated in Sanatan, Jain and Buddhist philosophies), is the concept of "action" or "deed", understood as that which causes the entire cycle of cause and effect (the cycle called *samsaara*).

‘Karma’ is an Indian concept of present and past life-actions in contradistinction to ‘faith’ espoused by a-Brahmanic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), which view all human *dharma* (duties) as the will of God. In theistic schools of Hinduism, humans have **free will** to choose good or evil and live the consequences, which require the will of God to implement karma's consequences, unlike Buddhism or Jainism which do not give any importance to a supreme God or Gods. The ‘doer’ (*kartaa*), intellect (*buddhi*) and action (*kriya*) are constituents of ‘karma’.



2.7 THE THEORY OF *KARMA* IN VEDAS

All beings are evolved from food; production of food is dependent on rain; rain ensues from sacrifice; sacrifice is done by doing the prescribed action (*Karma*). Prescribed action has roots in Vedas and Vedas emanate from the Absolute (who has no beginning or end); hence, all pervading 'infinite' (Absolute) is always present in sacrifice¹⁶.

We do not find clear-cut examples of the theory of *Karma* in prior to Vedic period. But this concept is fully discussed in terms of *satya* and *rita*. The prior form of *karma* may be seen in the concept of *yajnya* (sacrifice). The entire creation of the universe is due to the consequences of *Karma*.

The *Rig-Veda*, oldest literature of the world, exhibits two important words: *satya* and *rita*, signifying the spiritual law as such and the law in its working process, in the cosmos. While *satya* is the principle of integration rooted in the Absolute, *rita* is its application and function as the rule and order operating in the universe. Sometimes *rita* is interpreted as the original principle of being and *satya* its foundation.

The world is sustained by a just and inexorable law for the well-being of all. Conformity with this law tends to help material and spiritual progress and advancement, leading to higher forms of integration in life, while its violation results in a series of trans-migratory lives in different planes of manifestation.

In the *Purusa-Sukta* we observe the concept of sacrifice carried to the degree of perfection where **the whole universe is regarded as an act of sacrifice on the part of God**. God becomes, in the form of creation, the field and opportunity for individual sacrifice.

The universe is a sacrifice (*yajna*), and all actions, properly performed, in so far as they involve an element of self-abnegation for self-transcendence, are forms of sacrifice of one's individuality or whatever belongs to it as its appendage. The Supreme Being Himself is a transcendent sacrifice when viewed in the form of this manifestation. The essence of sacrifice is existence for others' sake, not necessarily in

the form of social activity, but in a wider perspective of consciousness, which gets engulfed gradually in a series of its higher reaches, pointing to a final absoluteness of being. This is the concept of supreme sacrifice in the Purusa-Sukta.

To the seers of the Vedas, life is a joy of sacrifice, and a daily visualization of Divinity in all Nature. Humans are inspired to translate good thoughts into actions. This is at the root of blissful human existence.

Yajurveda inspires humans to walk on the path of *Karma* (deeds). That is why it is also referred to as Karma-Veda.

The essence of the *Yajurveda* lies in those mantras (incantations) that inspire people to initiate action. The first incantation of *Yajurveda* commands us to perform action:

Devo vaha savita praprayatu shreshtamaya karmane.¹⁷ (O Creator of the universe! Inspire us to perform great deeds). (Desire to live for a hundred years performing one's deeds).¹⁸ This concept of *Yajurveda* is the base of nishkama karma (work with no attachment) of Gita in later period.

2.8 CONCEPT OF KARMA IN GITA

In Gita, it is clearly asserted that no one can stay even for a moment without an action (karma): Everyone is helplessly driven to action according to the nature-born qualities¹⁹.

The concept of *Karma* in the *vedanta* philosophy specially that which is propounded in the *Bhagvadgita* shows us the path of how to lead this life happily while remaining in the material world. It is also one of the most profound and succinct definitions of Karma available in literature.

According to *Gita*, *Brahman* or the Supreme Soul is both the efficient and material cause of the world; the *Atman* or individual human soul, as well as the phenomena of nature, being really identical with the *ParamAtman*.

The imperishable and absolute (transcendental living entity) is called *Brahman*. The material nature of Brahman is called *adhyatma*. When the living entity is in material

consciousness, it has to take on various forms in the material world. Action in sacrifice which causes the creation of beings is known as *Karma*.²⁰

According to *Gita*, action relating to the development of the material bodies of the living entities is called *karma*, or fruitive activities. Everyone must engage in some sort of activity in this material world for actions (*karma*) can either bind one to this world or liberate one from it.

*In a modern managerial context, it could mean that only when with our efforts (sacrifice) we are able to bring forth the qualities (latent or manifest) of men, money, machine or material that we work with, then only we have 'worked' in true sense. This concept also holds immense value for leadership development*²¹.

2.9 KARMA AND REINCARNATION²²

The principles of *rita* and *satya* imply strict adherence to laws and rules in conformity with the aim and purpose of the processes of the universe. The world is sustained by a just and inexorable law which is the decree of God for the well-being of all. Conformity with this law leads to material and spiritual progress and advancement, leading to higher forms of integration in life, while its violation is punished with a series of trans-migratory lives in the different planes of manifestation²³.

Any action which originates in a sense of personal individuality set in opposition to or incongruous with the universal order of *rita* and *satya* should obviously mean the work of a nemesis, as a natural reaction to such action, endeavouring to set right the balance of cosmic equilibrium which gets disturbed by it (such action). In Hinduism, the karmic effects of all deeds are viewed as actively shaping past, present, and future experiences. The results or 'fruits' of actions are called *karma-phala*.

In material nature he is manifested sometimes as a human, demigod, animal, beast, bird, etc., according to his *karma*. To attain material heavenly planets and enjoy their facilities, he sometimes performs sacrifices (*yajna*), but when his merit is exhausted he returns to earth again in the form of a living being. The word *karma* connects transmigration of the *jiva*, the creation of bodies (*bhava*) through the material elements (*bhuta*).

Accordingly, the *Atman* passes through a cycle of successive lives and its next incarnation is always dependent on how the previous life was lived^{24/25}. This principle

of rebounding of the effect of action upon the doer of it is the metaphysical, ethical and psychological regulative force called *karma*, which requires the doer of such action to pass through a series of experiential processes called metempsychosis or rebirth in other conditions and environments than that in which the action has been done²⁶.

“As a result of the perception of subliminal impressions one gains the knowledge of former lives²⁷.”

Though not normal but in some cases, persons do recollect their past birth(s). Buddha is known to have remembered all his past lives²⁸. Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna: “O Arjuna, You and I have passed through many lives; but I know them all and you don’t.”²⁹ The Vedas accept the operation of this principle and recognize the fact that one’s future life depends on the way one lives the present one. (In the same way it also shows existence of past life).

Thus, it would be clear that the law of karma and reincarnation is a scientific law of the integrality of the cosmos. Transmigration of soul thus becomes inevitable and is integrally linked to karma³⁰. Shankara had to respond to the critic of the Loka Yatika – materialistic doctrines, which argued that there is no soul, only body³¹.

The extrinsic and intrinsic motivators for work which are used for the purposes of enhancing organizational performance are in a position to address the issues from a very basic stand point of aligning (read-manipulating) human response rather than addressing these issues from a fundamental stand point of human existence, nature and sustainability.

Everybody is engaged in work, but, when the question is raised, as to what is the real meaning of ‘work’, what we are able to get at is a few dimensions that characterize the work that do not holistically reveal its meaning.

2.10 TYPES OF GUNA & KARMA

The Gunas interact with the Karma to create newer chemistry and give rise to the karma-phala. Hereunder it is proposed to discuss the nature and types of Gunas and their interactions with actions.

2.10.1 CONCEPT OF GUNA

Gita defines³² that entire material creation is an amplification of three Gunas (modes of material nature)-Satva, Rajas, Tamas- which condition the living entity (binds the soul) when it comes in contact with nature. These are defined as under:

- The Satva, the mode of goodness and being immaculate, is pure, illuminating, enlightening and without sorrow that binds the soul through identification with joy and wisdom.
- The quality of Rajas is of the nature of passion leading to unlimited yearnings, cupidity and attachment. It binds the soul through attachment to actions and their fruits and because of this one gets attached to material actions.
- The Tamas is the mode of ignorance that deludes all embodied beings. It leads to misapprehension and results in sloth and laziness.

Satva – the mode of goodness- binds one to happiness and joy, Rajas- the mode of passion to fruitive action and Tamas- the mode of ignorance- clouds wisdom, incites one to error as well as sleep and sloth.

The instincts-Gunas (pravritti) are the drivers of attitude to work.

Actually Gyaan (knowledge), Karma(action) and Karta (doer)—all the three—could be reflective of the above three types of Gunas depending upon their propensities latent or manifested. It is possible to classify every human action in a combination of all these three and explain inter-personal distinction in thought, words and deeds of individuals that is observed in daily life.

A person with Satva dominant pre-disposition believes in working, detached of the result or consequences. A Rajasik mind-set says: I will work but I will not leave its fruits. A Tamasik mind-set says: I will not work until I get the fruits.

Any movement or transformation of energy is 'work'. Such transformation undertaken by human beings is known as 'Karma' and is accomplished by following³³: the place (body), the performer (doer)—soul*, the sense organs (instruments), the effort (endeavours), the soul.

Whatever action a man performs is caused by these five factors. It is not possible for any human being to abandon action. Even body can't survive³⁴. 'Karma' thus is inevitable part of human existence.

'Kartritva' (consciousness of 'I' as the agent—to avoid a sense of meaninglessness in life) and 'Bhoktritva' (intent of experiencing result—the force of desires) are two important compelling emotive components of work. Mind is the seat of these two manifestations.

2.11 LAW OF CAUSATION

Careful study of nature reveals that phenomena of universe—even say cosmos—are integrally linked with each other and are bound with a cosmic or universal chain of cause and effect. There is unanimity among world philosophies and science on this aspect of human existence³⁵.

The simple definition of 'work' in science is: force multiplied by distance. Physically, therefore, work is not supposed to have been done until force is greater than zero and the distance traveled is also greater than zero. This has led to a situation where in physical world scientists are accepting the linkages between "cause" and "effect". If there is a cause, there shall be an effect in equal and opposite measure. If there is an effect, there has to be a cause behind it.

It is in this background that the theory of Karma has got deeply rooted in the psyche of Indians. The historical and cultural onslaught propagating expediency and immediate gratification of all senses and their dictates is having its own impact on the social and organizational behavior in the current Indian context. It is not that this has emerged as something new. Materialistic style of living has been propagated by one of the ancient Indian thinkers namely Chaarvak³⁶ – who told that it was better to eat butter even with the help of borrowed funds as 'this' body once got consigned to flames (the last rites of Hindus) was not going to come back again. In spite of this,

the predominant thought process in social and family conduct and behavior of Indians still emphasises the pervasive impact of theory of Karma.

It is, therefore, clear that while western thinkers have taken off from the current level of existence and tried to correlate the meaning of work in its “existential” context, the Indian sages and saints have looked at the same from the perspective of Cause and Effect. There does not appear to be any other theory in vogue today which is capable of answering the intricate questions of existence, growth and development of society.

The law of nature and Karma also indicates that cause lies in effect and effect is also contained in cause like seed and tree. All inequalities and diversities that are seen around us are explainable based on universal law of karma and does not leave any room for hypothesizing the view of pre-destination and grace. Denial of pre-existence and reincarnation of soul also ends up denying existence of karmic cycle and law of causation in human affairs.

Another important aspect in this regard is that cause and effect forces tend to remain in balance and equilibrium—like in physical nature---- giving rises to laws of **compensation** and **retribution** in psychological, emotional and spiritual arena³⁷.

‘Karma-phala’ (fruits of karma) thus reflects the effect of Karma.

2.12 CLASSIFICATION OF KARMA

Physical actions are of two types – voluntary and in-voluntary. Breathing is the cause of functioning of body sub-systems and several other body systems are examples of in-voluntary acts. Similarly, rising of hands, lifting of feet, undertaking physical exercises- they are all voluntary acts. As these types of acts are performed without a feeling of Raga or Dwesha, they are **not** considered as Karma. Only when a purpose or ego gets attached to the thoughts then it takes the shape of karma.

According to nature (Guna), outcome (phala), time and sanction, Karma may be classified as follows to understand their remit in different context.

- Senses/means used---mental (thought), physical (deed), oral (words)
- Guna (instincts) manifested-

- Satvik Karma (action with enlightened knowledge),
- Rajasik Karma (action performed with motive to achieve),
- Tamasik Karma (action taken with crooked motives tempered with ignorance).

Vedanta(time-based)--prarabdha(past),sanchit(future),kriyamana(present)

- Scientific (logical) class--karma, vikarma, akarma³⁸
- Hetu (object) --
 - Nitya karma- obligatory actions according to scriptures.
 - Nishiddha Karma – actions prohibited by scriptures.
 - Kamya karma - actions with specific desires.
 - Naimittik karma— actions on special events
- Outcome defined--good, bad, impure, shubh (auspicious), ashubh(in-
auspicious).

It is interesting to observe an extremely potent message in this classification. In case a person who is otherwise duty bound to perform and act but abandons the same either out of selfishness or to abdicate one's responsibility or even abandons the action with intent of cheating others leading to an apparent "inaction" his 'akarma' becomes 'vikarma'. It is necessary to understand in detail Karma from the perspective of cause and effect and associated concepts.

2.12.1 Kriyamana Karma :

All actions performed in the present are called 'Kriyamaan' Karma. Such Karmas get fulfillment once they have delivered results. For instance, someone felt thirsty and drank water. The thirst is quenched. Someone felt hungry and ate. The hunger (pursuant to the result of the karma of eating) is satiated. Thus, kriyamana karma becomes quiet only after the effect (karma phala) is experienced.

A man is free to undertake Kriyamana Karmas. God has given the ability only to human beings to undertake Kriyamana Karmas of their choice – both good and bad. **Free will of action** is one of the greatest endowments available only to human beings. Law of causation also operates in meta- physics like law of motion and gravitation operates in physics. No action goes without result. A man is free to exercise his choice of actions but not free from bearing its consequences. There could be a case

where a person may desire not to undertake any work or action. This is not permitted by scriptures³⁹.

2.12.2 Sanchita Karma :

There are large number of Kriyamana Karmas which may or may not give immediate results. Their fruition takes longer time. The fruits also take time to ripen and until they remain in this state, Karma remains in a kind of deposit waiting for fruition. This is known as Sanchita Karma⁴⁰.

For instance, someone wrote an examination today, but his/her result is likely to come after about two months. Someone who when young, did not take care of his parents may suffer during his old age at the hands of his son. Thus, there are several Kriyamana Karmas which do not bear fruits instantaneously but remain in a state of deposit and wait for maturity with time for giving appropriate fruits (results). Drawing an analogy from nature, there are some crops which mature within three months, there are some plants which start offering fruits after five years. Thus depending on the seeds present in kriyamaana karma, its resultant may take considerable amount of time before surfacing.

The thoughts combined with physical action, if performed with a purpose to meet selfish motives or are endowed with raga-dwesha or carried with them the ego of “doer”, become part of Sanchit Karma, the results (phala) of which have to be endured.

Action like knowledge is neutral. It is neither good nor bad by itself. It is the intent with which it is performed that determines its quality. For instance, if there is someone who is skilful in using knife and is driven by a killer’s instinct, he could use this knowledge and skill to kill someone. Driven by a surgeon’s instinct and skill, the same knowledge could be used for saving some life. Both these add to sanchit in accordance with the cause and effect relationship.

Thus, if a person does a thousand of kriyamana karma, it could happen that nine hundred of them have given immediate results and as such are extinguished but there could be hundred others which may take time before they begin to mature. This process, when viewed in the context of continuous birth and rebirth, shows that there may be millions of such accumulated karmas awaiting fruition.

Scriptures in India are replete with instances of happenings where people (even Gods) had to take birth as humans, live and reap the fruits of their deeds and there was no

way that any one could escape it. Ramayana and Mahabharat are two such epics containing several instances in this regard⁴¹.

To sum up, until an appropriate environment or situation develops wherein a sanchit karma could come to fruition, it remains sanchit (deposit). Such accumulated karma that had not fructified in previous life-span would cause re-birth.

Sanchit karma is cause of re-birth. The law of karma operates and bondage is created over which there is no human control. Freedom from birth and re-birth is liberation (salvation, Mukti, Moksha). This is possible only by ensuring non-accumulation of karma-phala which in turn is dependent on quality of karma (action or deeds)⁴².

2.12.3 Prarabdha Karma :

After re-birth, all the sanchit karmas which have ripened and are ready to fruition, are known as Prarabdha Karma (fructification—vipaaka—of sanchit karma). This out of ignorance is termed as 'destiny'⁴³.

Sanchit karma not enjoyed in previous time because of non-maturation or non-fruition is postponed till maturity. 'Sanchit' when reaches fruition (readiness of karma-phala) becomes 'Prarabdha'. Until one has consumed all the ripened fruit of sanchit karma—known as prarabdha—a man would not even get death. Thus, births after births, the sanchit karmas keep on maturing as prarabdha and in order to undergo the effects of such matured karma phala (fruition of action), person has to take birth again and again till eternity⁴⁴. A man gets birth in a manner and fashion—namely body, mind, health, wife, children, happiness, unhappiness etc.—in conformity with the fruits of Prarabdha.

This highlights the importance of good quality of action (karma) that needs to be performed.

2.13 KARM-PHALA: BIRTH AND RE-BIRTH

Karma produces:

- ✓ karma-phala (results)
- ✓ residue (known as sanchit); and
- ✓ samskaras in mind.

Action is the seed of 'karma-phala' (results of karma)---the two are inseparable in the same way as heat cannot be separated from fire. Indian philosophy believes that stored

residual effects (Karmaasaya—in Patanjali yoga system) have the capacity to produce merit (punya) or demerit (paapa) depending upon whether they were products of good or bad deeds (karma).

Thus cause—antecedents—explains effect. Through our thoughts and deeds we create our own compensation and retribution.

‘The result of an action which men get depends on action, and the inducement to action is in consonance with it; still a wise man should undertake a thing only after mature consideration’⁴⁵.

Understanding and appreciation of this apparently simple law holds the potential of providing peace and happiness to all who would have no one else to blame for their miseries or credit for bliss be they physical, mental or psychological or corporal, natural or divine⁴⁶.

2.13.1 PRARABDHA AND PURUSHAARTHA:

There are four broad sub-divisions in which purushaarth (effort) is classified: Dharma: "(duty) righteousness, both spiritual and ritual". Artha: "(material and/or financial) prosperity as well as pursuit of meaning in life". Kāma: "(desire) pleasure". Moksha: "(spiritual) liberation, salvation; or renunciation as well as detachment."⁴⁷

Maharishi Vyas found it intriguing that while a person should put in efforts for Dharma and Moksha and leave Artha and Kama for prarabdh, he ends up doing exactly the opposite⁴⁸. He mentioned that he was not against pursuit of Artha and Kama. All that he recommends is that pursuit of Artha and Kama should be on the foundations of Dharma for getting Moksha. Some people believe that any effort in life in this context, therefore, is meaningless as one has to get the fruits only if it is ordained i.e. only if it is part of prarabdh. This is a gross mis-interpretation.⁴⁹

Even a *Karmayogi* may be a *samnyasi* and *yogi*, if he performs his duty, without attachment to the fruits of action, only for the sake of the purification of inner self. It means even in being active in worldly affairs one can become *samnyasi* and *yogi* if he performs his work without any lust or greed. He is no Samnyasi (renouncer) who has merely renounced the sacred fire; even so he is no Yogi who has merely given up all activity⁵⁰.

It is necessary to understand, the distinction between prarabdh and purushaartha – action, deed, work or effort. Getting a job may be a prarabdh, but, maintaining the job requires purushaartha (effort). Getting wealth could be prarabdh, but, effective use of wealth is dependent on purushaartha. Getting children may be prarabdh, but, giving them good education is purushaartha. Malefic effects of Prarabdha can only be extinguished by purushaartha (work or effort) and it is only effort which propels an action that does not allow Kriyamaan Karma to accumulate as sanchit and paves the way to salvation (moksha) or freedom from cycle of birth and death. The work creates Karmic bondage and it is through work only that this bond could be broken. Therefore perceiving ‘Prarabdha’ as ‘destiny’ and an alibi for in-action is entirely misplaced.

Thus enjoined prarabdha and purushaartha (positive ones) makes human living blissful.

2.14 SAMSKARAS:

It is also necessary to understand another effect of karma—known as samskara—the ‘impression’ left on the mind. This is also known as ‘Karmik residue’ which is carried forward from past birth(s) and guides intellect and action.⁵¹

This is manifested as instincts, drives, urges, feelings, desires (collectively known as ‘vaasana’)⁵² and words and mental images (smriti—in the nature of naam and rupa—memory in the form of ideas and mental pictures)⁵³.

Desires will exist. They only need to be tempered lest they should become counterproductive by driving action creating harmful samskaras. Unmindful of reality that human beings have a ‘right’ only to act (karma) — in accordance with the unique gift of ‘free will’ that they have-- but no right on fruits thereof, they lead a life of frustration in case of failure to get desired fruits and either turn fatalist or go in a state of despair and resignation or inaction-thus losing opportunity to get freedom from the cycle of birth and death⁵⁴. Purity of thought, speech and action⁵⁵ therefore is crucial to achieving bliss and salvation. Modern times perhaps also exemplify significance and need of this approach to release mankind from stress of living⁵⁶. ‘Work’ thus holds potential of helping salvation and relieving from pains of cycle of birth.

2.14.1 NISHKAAM (DETACHED) AND SAKAAM (ATTACHED) KARMA:

Intellect guides action and tempers desires. Purity of intellect leads to purity of action. One must seek refuge under enlightened intellect to perform action for the reason that 'karma' is pravritti and 'gyaana' is nivritti. It is the tempering of Gyaan (nivritti) that makes an action selfless and endowed with the property of detachment⁵⁷. Those who pursue (or worship) that which is not worthy of knowing, enter into darkness. Those who do not learn, enter darkness. If one is only engrossed (rataH) in knowledge without **Nishkaam karma (in the service of humanity without attachment to results)** or **bhakti**, then one enters an even deeper area of darkness⁵⁸.

The focus is therefore on two critical conditions: one, performance for 'satisfaction of sense objects' and the other is the feeling of ego or "doer". Only when a person develops a detachment of the kind which negates these two thoughts then he has attained the true understanding of Karma⁵⁹.

The work done with a sense of spontaneity and considering one's duty and in conformity with the teachings of Vedas or Scriptures, inspired by purity of intellect is the truly 'nishkaam karma'. "Through purity of food, comes purity of mind. From purity of mind, comes a steady memory of truth and when one gets this memory one becomes free from all knots of the heart"⁶⁰. The attachments give rise to – Raga-Dwesha – that is possessiveness and hatred, making a person slave.

The difference between Nishkama karma (action without desire) and Sakaama karma (action with desire) in which former acts as positive potential and latter as negative problem⁶¹:

<i>Nishkam Karma</i>	<i>Sakaam Karma</i>
Psychological energy conservation	Psychological burn-out (stress)
Perfection is the aim	Success is the aim
Socio-economically appropriate	Socio-economically questionable
Work-commitment	Reward-commitment
Enhanced ethicality	Reduced ethicality
Mind enrichment	Job enrichment
Ego-less dignity	Ego-full pettiness

2.15 BREAKING THE CYCLE OF BIRTH AND DEATH:

KARMA, BHAKTI AND GYAAN YOGA

‘Yuj’ dhatu in Sanskrit holds the root of this word-YOGA. It literally means ‘getting united’. Unification of self (atman) with Brahman (Paramaatman) or supreme consciousness is called Yoga. Jeevatman has forgotten its original form of being part of Brahman which is ‘satchidaananda’ (pure consciousness which is blissful)⁶².

There is a beautiful analogy given in Ramcharit Maanas.

Drops of pure water falling from the clouds become contaminated with mud and dirt as soon as they touch the ground. Similarly the soul (jeevatman) gets enveloped by Maya (delusion) as soon as it takes birth. The same rain water flowing through the crests and troughs of the earth gets eventually collected in the sea. Once evaporated from the sea or earth’s surface, it becomes part of its original source once again. A similar process of reform through the help of a Guru (sun in the case of water) is able to get the jeevatman re-unified with its origin -which is Brahman.

Doing one’s duty with deftness is Yoga⁶³. Chastening the flow of thoughts is ‘Yoga’⁶⁴.

The three paths of salvation enunciated namely Karma, Bhakti and Gyaan can lead to unification of soul (jeevaatman) with superconsciousness (Brahman or Paramatman).

Karma Marga – “I am of God” (Dvait-Duality)--Action

Bhakti Marga – “God is mine” (Dvait-Duality)--Devotion

Gyana Marga – “I and God are one” (Advait-Non-Duality)—Knowledge

It is recognized that karma phala (fruits of action) has to be lived through. Purity of thinking and action (karma yoga) could result into kriyamana not turning out as deposit i.e. sanchita.

What is *karman* (action)? What is *akarma* (inaction)? Even the wise are confused in deciding thus in knowing (what is *karma* and what is *akarma*).⁶⁵ He who perceives inaction in action, and action in inaction, is the enlightened among men; he is a yogi with tranquility of mind, and is the perfect doer of all karma (action). The person who has gained knowledge (Gyaan) and realizes that the Soul (Atman) does not perform any action but only body performs; he sees *akarma* (inaction) in *karma* (action). Performance of all actions-karma- with an absolute control on the mind and intellect and with utmost interest and skill as ordained in selflessness conveys the true meaning of Yoga which alone results in “Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram” – pursuit of perfection⁶⁶.

Similarly, in order to facilitate and endure the consequences of Prarabdha it is Bhakti Yoga which helps. Prarabdh has to be lived through and therefore, through **devotion** to Brahman (bhakti), it is possible to reduce the adverse impacts and develop capacity to bear the adverse consequences of Prarabdh or not get deviated from path of righteousness while enjoying positive consequences of Prarabdha.

Thus, the ultimate truth – Brahman – is to be realized and for this soul consciousness is the path for awakening. Like the pains and pleasures during the dreams appear to be true but are recognized as illusion once a person awakens, in the same manner, the pains and pleasures which appear to be true in an awakened stage appear illusory once person attains Gyana⁶⁷.

Until Prarabdh has been lived through and sanchit is extinguished the cycle of birth and rebirth cannot be broken. There is only one option left for extinguishing sanchit Karma. Burn it. This is possible only with the help of fire of knowledge (Gyaan) and God -consciousness⁶⁸. Recognition of this original form of Jeevatman is known as enlightened knowledge (Gyaan). **As soon as a person gains knowledge, all his Sanchit Karmas are extinguished.**

All action domains of human beings – study, play, cooking, teaching, etc. – require combination of Karma, Bhakti and Gyaan for becoming effective.

For instance, food being cooked in the kitchen needs the person involved in cooking to have to undertake effort (karma) with the ability and knowledge of the correct recipe coupled with devotion that this food shall provide nourishment to those who eat and that the God has blessed the same. This would be in a position to provide the outcome – meal- with excellence embedded.

Similarly, a student writing an examination needs to write (karma), create appropriate spaces and good hand-writing (devotion or bhakti) and the content of the answers (knowledge or gyaan).

This concept, therefore, can be applied to all walks of life and has the capability to provide a universal answer to the ‘meaning of work’ across time and space dimensions providing unique organizational context and perspective for its human resources.

2.16 THE ANSWER TO A PARADOX:

On this basis, it is possible to appreciate someone whose Kriyamana (present) Karma is not virtuous, but, because of his Prarabdh (Sanchit which has reached fruition), he is seen to be enjoying the so-called perishable comforts and luxuries. Once the fruits of action- the karma-phala is consumed, the situation changes.

The ‘meaning of work’ undergoes significant transformation in human mind if it is appreciated in the above context. The perspective on work-place discipline, productivity, quality of out-put, inter-personal relations, organizational values, ethics and issues of leadership gets significantly altered. The thoughts and actions of individuals would be purer and work-place strife reduced. Motivation will carry different meaning-from being driven by motive of ‘taking’ to one of ‘giving’. The locus of control of human action will become internal to individuals rather than externalization of opportunities, action and result.

2.17 LIFE and WORK: THROUGH THE EYES OF BUDDHISM

We have looked at ‘work’ and its relationship with life and its purpose as are enjoined by Sanatan Dharma. We would also explore thoughts available to us from several other streams of knowledge.

2.17.1 *Happiness and suffering in life:*

Dhamma pada says “there is happiness in life, happiness in friendship, happiness of the family, happiness in a healthy body and mind But when one loses them, there is suffering”. When we are born, we cry; when we are sick, we suffer; when we are aged, we have pains and none of us wants to die and we feel the sense of sorrow when someone else dies.

2.17.2 *The cause of suffering:*

According to Buddha, people live in suffering because of **ignorance** and **greed**. They are ignorant of the **law of Karma**, and are greedy for wrong kinds of pleasures. They end up doing things which are harmful to their bodies and peace of mind. So, they could not be satisfied or enjoy life. The things people want most cause the most suffering.

Buddha, however, recognized the importance of basic necessities like adequate food, shelter and clothing besides a good home, loving parents and good friends. He advocated enjoying life and cherishing the possessions **without becoming greedy**.

2.17.3 *The end of suffering:*

Buddha preached extinguishment of greed and ignorance and said “the extinction of desire is Nirvana”. It can be experienced in this very life.

Lord Buddha propagated three universal truths:

1. Nothing is lost in the Universe: matter turns into energy, human beings are born out of parents and they are parents of their children.
2. Everything changes: Change is the only constant which is visible all around. Ideas change. Life changes. Belief changes. Perception changes. Everything else changes.
3. Law of cause and effect: We receive exactly what we earn whether good or bad. Our beliefs, thoughts and actions determine the fruits⁶⁹. This law is known as Law of Karma. Modern science and Buddhism are strikingly alike.

Buddhism also highlights the four noble truths as under:

- There is suffering and suffering is common to all.
- There is a cause of suffering and we are the cause of our suffering.
- There is end of suffering if we stop doing what causes suffering.
- There is a path to end suffering and everyone can be enlightened.

The five precepts of Buddhism guiding ‘action’ (work) are as follows (nishiddha karma according to Vedanta):

- No killing: respect for life.
- No stealing: respect for other’s properties.
- No sexual misconduct: respect for our pure nature.
- No lying: respect for honesty.
- No intoxicants: respect for clear mind.

Buddhists do not believe that death is the end of life. In fact, they believe that upon death, one’s consciousness leaves the body and enters one of the paths of re-birth as heavenly beings, humans, astral bodies, hungry ghosts or hell beings.⁷⁰

2.17.4 The path to end the suffering:

Buddha advocated noble eight- fold path of action as follows:

- Right view: looking at life with wisdom and compassion.
- Right thought: strong character with kindness – we are what we think.
- Right speech: kind and helpful words bring respect.
- Right conduct: looking at ourselves first before looking at others.
- Right livelihood: earning one's living without harming others. Not to seek happiness by making others unhappy.
- Right effort: goodwill towards others, without wasting efforts that harm ourselves and others.
- Right mindfulness: awareness about our thoughts, words and deeds.
- Right concentration: remaining focused and quiet.

We observe a great deal of convergence in the Vedantic perspective on 'work' and that of Buddhism⁷¹.

2.18 LIFE AND WORK THROUGH THE EYES OF JAINISM:

Jainism, too, as a way of life, preached by Tirthankaras, addresses achievement of peace, happiness, harmony and well being in the society. It is clear that on a philosophical plane efforts were always focused at promoting happiness as one of the main objectives of all human endeavors.

'Work' denoting activity, action, growth, development, progress and life, therefore, have to be studied in a larger context of the meaning of life per-se. It is this aspect which has been the concern of sages, thinkers, philosophers and practitioners to explore the nature of self and look for a meaning of life.

'Meaning of work' therefore can be better understood in the context of purpose of life. Like in other life philosophies, in Jainism too the 'work' gets addressed in the same context.

While, understanding the perspective of physical reality and its measurement is relatively easier by men with ordinary level of understanding, the question in philosophical domain appears more abstract and comprehension of the related issues poses greater difficulty. It is this aspect of understanding which has been the source

of conflict between materialism – backed up by modern day scientific and technological advances – and the spirituality which largely is believed to fall in the realm of abstraction and profoundness for most of us.

Thankfully, there are enough guide posts made available through the medium of philosophy which clarify the concept of ‘self’ and ‘life’ in Indian systems of living.

Atman is the word used for ‘self’. Jeeva (living principle) and Purush (same as Paramaatman) signify a cosmic linkage and context.

Self (Atman):

Descartes in his famous dictum – cogito ergo sum (I think, therefore I am) – tried to establish a relation between a substance and its qualities. Considerations like I am happy, I am unhappy, I am feeling pains, have been used in Jainism to establish the nature of self based on observational and experiential learning. Dualism is what separates mind from body. The question however remains as to how can an abstract, internal thought and intention about action result in physical motion of the bodies.

In order to explain the relationship between body and mind Jainism also links self (Jeeva) and non-self (ajeeva or matter) through **Karma** – the emotional baggage of past life. It also proposes the existence of ‘soul’ and considers that impurities in the soul cannot be caused by its own inherent nature unless it is associated with Karma. The ‘soul’ attracts and gets clouded by the effect of Karmik account typically, as attraction is manifest in magnetic or gravitational forces. Jainism also talks of the ‘karmic bondage’ wherein soul remains under the influence of karmic past.

Karma is divided into two parts – dravya karma (physical) and bhava karma (psychic). They create the bondage for the soul⁷².

As life pursuit, Jainism advocates the following four objectives for attainment through deliberate and sustained efforts – (work):

- Manushyatva – human existence focused on **action**.
- Shruti– **knowledge** of truth.
- Shraddha –**devotion** ⁷³
- Samyam – **self- control**.

It also highlights four primary human instincts as under:

- Bhaya (fear).
- Aahaar (Food).

- Maithun (copulation- reproduction).
- Parigraha (acquisition).

Dealing with the aspect of consciousness, the following three aspects are considered important and relevant:

- Karma Chetana– action consciousness.
- Karma Phala Chetana – result consciousness.
- Jnana Chetana – knowledge consciousness.

Sense organs have been considered to be the sensors of the outside world. This is influenced by our instincts and emotions – likes and dislikes which affect the ‘karma’.

Tempering of our knowledge and conduct with the root of dharma – samyak darshan – holds the key to choosing the goals and actions. *Purity of thinking and action* gets emphasized here also as in other life philosophies discussed.

Jainism too considers attachment and aversion – *raga and dwesha* – in the changing world as critical bottlenecks in achieving happiness. Control of passions therefore, is a quality advocated towards achieving the objective of becoming happy. This is called Prasham. (Ancient Greek philosophers also have advocated balance while conducting one’s life). While Prasham advocates stillness of mind, another quality – samvega – instills dynamism and enthusiasm. It denotes purity of mind and inhibits lethargy and carelessness. Nirveda, a spirit of detachment and ability to take a dispassionate view of situations is an integral part of Samyak Darshan⁷⁴. Anukampa indicates kindness and compassion or feelings and emotions comprising of maitri (fellow feeling), mudita (appreciation of others), karuna (kindness to those in distress) and madhyastha (forgiving perverted minds). Aastikya denotes acknowledging divinity in animate or inanimate. Jainism lays great emphasis on ahimsa, anekant and aparigraha.

Jain thinkers have advocated that contamination of the self by material karma is **without beginning and end**. (It is this aspect of the assumption —though accepted by various philosophies of world --- that eludes firm belief and creates skepticism in modern minds).

Every Jeev is in a state of constant ‘action’ which produces visible or invisible effects and gets rooted in a subtle form on the ‘subconscious’ creating karma-bandhan –

karmic bondage namely Moha (infatuation), Ahankar (ego) and Mamakar (attachment).

2.18.1 CLASSIFICATION OF KARMA

Jainism recognizes different kinds of 'karma' as follows:

- Darshanavarniya Karma – obscuring right intuition.
- Jnanavaraniya Karma – obscuring right knowledge.
- Mohaniya Karma—darshan mohaniya and charitra mohaniya -deluding view and conduct respectively.
- Antaraya Karma – obstructing energy.
- Vedaniya Karma – producing pleasure and pain.
- Ayush Karma – dealing with life span.
- Nama Karma – dealing with physique.
- Gotra Karma – determining social status.

Jainism talks of four passions which are further having four sub-divisions according to the intensity of their manifestations.

The passions are:

- Krodh – anger
- Maya – illusion
- Mana – pride
- Lobh – greed

The sub-divisions for each passion are:

- Anant Anubandhin - of life long duration. It completely hinders belief and conduct.
- Apratyaksha Anaavaran—hindering non-renunciation. It makes renunciation but allows existence of true belief.
- Anaavaran – hindering renunciation. It hinders beginning of complete self-discipline but does not prevent the existence of true belief and partial self discipline.
- Samajvalana – flaming up. It allows complete self-discipline but works against the attainment of complete right conduct.

Jainism too believes that difference between two human beings has its roots in the causal linkages as propounded in the Doctrine of Karma in Vedanta.

PART-2

LIFE and WORK—THROUGH THE EYES OF CHRISTIANITY

Belief in the true Incarnation of the son of God is the distinctive sign of Christian faith: "By this you know the spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God".⁷⁵

Theology of work has evolved and continues to do so—evolving from agrarian-artisan activity to fulfill basic needs using bodily energy to variations like intellectual and spiritual pursuits.

'The Bible has no one view of 'work'. Work includes God's activity in creation and slave's labour in the fields'. The same word is used for effort, toil, service and worship. Work is acknowledged and affirmed in both Testaments but also criticized.⁷⁶

Hebrew evaluation of work portrays that 'image of God' has dominion over creation⁷⁷. Like a manual labourer, God 'makes', 'forms', 'builds' and 'plants' and God has to rest from this work.⁷⁸

The NEW TESTAMENT (NT) portrays Jesus as preacher. John stresses Jesus' work but that work is the gospel:

"My father works even until now and I work"⁷⁹. NT found no special religious significance in mundane tasks of life. Later Paul exemplified motivations to work---no work, no eat; avoid trouble and keep a quiet spirit; independence and alms giving. Early teachers of church focused on virtues that accompany work rather than self-realisation through work or the good produced.

2.19 SIGNIFICANCE OF WORK

Through 'work' persons:

- Become self sufficient and do not remain burden on others.
- Avoid idleness-(devil's workshop).
- Imitate Christ and Paul.
- Chastise the flesh.

- Gain humility and simplicity.
- Practice obedience and submission.
- Earn enough to help the needy.
- Exercise self discipline.
- Do penance.
- Experience a leveling equality.

The middle ages saw the rise of trade and guilds and nature of work began to change. Difficult living conditions and theological refrain of trust in providence and Christian resignation were making concept of 'work' ambiguous. Calvinism inspired inner worldly asceticism which developed into Protestant work ethic. Wesley preached, **"Gain all you can; save all you can; give all you can"**. This new ethos emphasized thrift and the rewards of hard work as a sign of divine favour.

As times passed by, machines arrived. Adam Smith and Karl Marx made social encyclicals to be written. RERUM NOVARUM (Leo XIII: 1891) proposed common good and required partnership between workers and management. In one's exile on earth, work has value both for securing basic needs and as a 'compulsory and painful expiation of his sin'⁸⁰.

Biblical notion that God works and notes that through their work Christians are unfolding Creator's own work, are revived. Failures and disappointments only indicate towards looking at transcendent dimensions of our graced life. A Christian should 'know the place that his work has not only in earthly progress but also in the development of kingdom of God'⁸¹

Development cannot be limited to economic growth and every life is a vocation of self-fulfillment. Because of selfishness in work and a lack of solidarity 'the world is sick'. Still work is 'willed and blessed by God'⁸². Serving poorest of the poor is service to God. Not doing so is met with retribution—eternal punishment—and the righteous get eternal life⁸³.

2.20 IMPORTANCE OF ALTRUISM

Religiously viewed physical work serves outwardly to maintain the world, in the sense of renewing its structure (maintaining the order of cosmos) or in the simple sense of paying creation back for the life than one has received as a gift.

Altruism thus remains an exalted purpose of life and work in Christianity as well. The work is classified into three categories- physical, mental and spiritual. Jesus' invitation, 'Come unto me, ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'⁸⁴-symbolizes that work literally constitutes rest and 'work' becomes what it has always been in reality: God's work, the play of His creation. It is therefore clear that Christian view on work, at fundamental level, reflects similar thoughts as are contained in other schools of philosophy of life.

We hear frequent mention of the Protestant work ethic. Generally it refers to some of the following attitudes and behavior:

- believing that work gives meaning to life;
- having a strong sense of duty to one's work;
- believing in the necessity of hard work and of giving work (even before the family) the best of one's time;
- believing that work contributes to the moral worth of the individual and to the health of the social order;
- viewing wealth as a major goal in life;
- viewing leisure as earned by work and as preparation for work;
- viewing success in work as resulting primarily from the amount of personal effort; and
- viewing wealth that accrues from work as a sign of God's favor.

In pre-Reformation days many people had sought to justify themselves and gain acceptance with God and others through religious works. This road was largely closed to Protestants, but their ordinary work was still available to them as a substitute. As this happened, work moved into a more central place, being viewed less as a context for serving others than as a context for human achievement and less as a divine calling than as a personal career. Work increasingly became the place where most of one's

time and energy was invested, throwing out of balance the relationship between work, family and leisure. The degree of success in one's work, rather than a person's full acceptance by God, increasingly determined a person's status in the eyes of others.

The meaning of work therefore remains contextual and existential on mundane level of thoughts and action and becomes vehicle of achieving higher and exalted purpose of life by making it a means of serving larger social good.

The fundamental values of life remain constant irrespective of whether we view it from the stand point of one philosophy or the other. Work values also therefore show similar signs of contextual adjustment and are both realization of human capacity and also basis of reproducing that capacity.

PART-3

LIFE AND WORK THROUGH THE EYES OF ISLAM

Islam is the message of Qur-aan. It is based on knowledge and action to know the Supreme Being and His laws.

Knowledge is graded (from highest to lowest) as under:

--*Wahy* (Revelation)

And it is not for any man that Allah should speak to him, except by revelation or from behind a veil or by sending a messenger ,revealing by His permission what He pleases; surely, He is high, wise⁸⁵.

--*Fikr* (self-thinking)

Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and day there are signs for men of understanding-those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and think about the creations of heaven and earth (till they admit)-Our Lord! Thou hast not created all this in vain. Glory to Thee! Preserve us from doom of Fire⁸⁶.

--*Khwad* (vain discourse)

When thought sets out to explore remote regions of revelation, it loses its moorings and wanders off to Khwaz or vain discourse which is merely a play⁸⁷.

--*Zann* (Conjecture)

And most of the (non-believers) do not follow (any truth) but conjecture; conjecture will not avail them aught against the truth; surely Allah knoweth what they do⁸⁸.

Knowledge is light and life; ignorance is darkness and death⁸⁹. Right knowledge should be translated into **right action** to produce right result⁹⁰. Every action, howsoever insignificant produces lasting effect which is recorded somewhere⁹¹.

“He-Allah- may reward those who do evil with that which they have done and reward those who do well, with goodness”⁹².

“Work (righteousness): soon will Allah **observe your work**, and his messenger and the believers: soon will you be brought back to the knower of what is hidden and what is open: then will HE show you the truth of all that you did”⁹³

- “Oh messengers! Enjoy (all) things good and pure, and **work with righteousness**: for I am well acquainted with (all) that you do. And verily this community of yours is a single community. And I am your Lord and cherisher: therefore be conscious of me”.⁹⁴

- “Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds that HE will, of surety, make them succeed in the end, as HE caused those who were before them to succeed others. HE will establish for them, their religion, and the one that HE has chosen for them. HE will change (their state), after the **fear** in which they (lived), to one of security and peace: they will worship **ME (alone)**⁹⁵ and not associate naught with ME. If any do reject faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked”.⁹⁶

The above highlight the following:

- Islam emphasizes hard, continuous and pure action (work).
- It lays the affirmation of ‘cause and effect’ relationship of action.
- It considers death as an event of separation of soul from body⁹⁷.
- Man is admitted to be a weak creature, liable to sink to the level of animals but having capability of rising to highest in creation according to righteousness, a combination of knowledge and action⁹⁸.
- Eternal goodness is emphasized. (Help one another in virtue and piety and do not help one another in sin and transgression)⁹⁹.
- Work not only to see the results here in this world, but, achieve success and **salvation** hereafter.
- Righteous actions are those that remove evil, injustice and operate in accordance with the teachings of Quran and Sunnah and are done with sincerity (Ikhlas) and in an excellent manner (Ithqan).

It is interesting to observe that the modern management concept of pursuit of excellence has already been incorporated in the religious teachings of Islam which like Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism emphasizes unequivocally on the **purity of action**.

Focus on '**work**' with the spirit of enhancing spiritual quotient and through appropriate teachings of all life precepts and concepts holds immense potential of maximizing human happiness and organizational emancipation- on the path of growth and well-being of all-the individual, organization and society.

The significance of 'work' is captured in a couplet of famous Urdu poet Iqbal, where he emphasizes that it is 'work' alone which makes life heaven or hell¹⁰⁰.