

**Karmāśaya Or Moral Merit And Demerit Which
Are Based On Afflictions, Become Active In
This Life Or In A Life To Come (I). 12.**

Merit and demerit arise from desire, greed, delusion or anger. They become operative in the present life or in an unseen life. Out of these the impressions of pious actions gathered from Mantras repeated, austerities observed, or Samadhi attained with deep detachment or through Worship of God, the Devas, Maharṣis or saints, fructify quickly. Similarly the impressions of vicious actions, performed with excessive Avidyā Kleśas in regard to creatures who are frightened, diseased or pitiable or to those who have come for refuge, or are noble-minded or engaged in austerities, bear fruit immediately. For example, young Nandīśvara passed out of the human form and was transformed into a Deva ; while Nahuṣa, a ruler in heaven, passed out of his own form and was transformed into a reptile. Amongst these, those who are in purgatory do not gather any such merit or demerit to be experienced in that life, while those who have thinned their afflictions (*e.g.* Jīvan Muktas *i.e.* freed while alive) do not carry with them any such latent impressions which might fructify in a future life (2).

(1) Karmāśaya = latent impressions of actions. The latent impressions of virtuous and vicious actions are Karmāśayas. Any manifest state of the mind leaves a like imprint on it and this is its latent impression. Saṁskāra or latent impression may be either Savīja or potent or Nirvīja *i.e.* impotent. Potent Saṁskāras are of two kinds—those which are born of afflictions and those which are their opposites ; in other words Saṁskāras based on ignorance, and those based on knowledge. The potent Saṁskāras based on Kleśas are called Karmāśayas. They are classed as white, black and black and white, or divided into two classes virtuous and vicious or white and black only.