

## Javana and Kamma

Javana means swift running. It is so called because in the course of a thought-process it runs consecutively for seven thought-moments hanging on to an identical object. The mental states occurring in all these thought-moments are similar, but the potential force differs. In the case of death or when the Buddha performs the Twin-Miracle (Yamaka Patihariya) only five thought-moments arise. In the Supramundane Javana process the Path-Consciousness arises only for one moment.

This Javana stage is the most important from an ethical standpoint. It is at this stage that an action is judged whether moral or immoral. Kamma is performed at this stage; if viewed rightly (yoniso manasikara), the Javana becomes moral; if viewed wrongly (ayoniso manasikara), it becomes immoral. It is at this psychological stage that good or evil is actually done. Irrespective of the desirability or the undesirability of the object presented to the mind, one can make the Javana process good or bad. If, for instance, one meets an enemy, a thought of hatred will arise almost automatically. A wise and forbearing person might, on the contrary, harbour a thought of love towards him.

This is the reason why the Buddha has stated in the Dhammapada (V.165) -

"By self is evil done,  
By self is one defiled,  
By self is no evil done,  
By self is one purified."

In the case of an Arahant this Javana is neither moral nor immoral. But merely functional (kiriya), because an Arahant had completely eradicated all the defilements.

True indeed that circumstances, habitual tendencies, environment, etc., condition our thoughts. Then the freewill is subordinated to the mechanistic course of events. There is also the possibility to overcome those external forces and, exercising one's own freewill, generate either good or bad thoughts. A foreign element may be instrumental, but we ourselves are directly responsible for our own actions.

Of the normal seven Javana thought-moments, the first is the weakest: potentially as it lacks any previous sustaining force. The kammic effect of this thought-moment may operate in this present life itself. It is called the Ditthadhammavedaniya kamma. If it does not operate, it becomes ineffective (ahosi). The last is the second weakest, because the sustaining power is being spent. Its kammic effect may operate in the immediately subsequent life (Upapajjavedaniya). If it does not, it also becomes ineffective.

The effects of the remaining five may operate at any time till one attains Parinibbana (Aparapariya-vedaniya).

(see the diagram on the next page)

It should be understood that moral and immoral Javana refer to the active side of life (kammabhava). They condition the future existence (upapattibhava). Apart from them there are the Phala and Kiriya Javanas. In the kiriya Javanas, which are experienced only by Buddha and Arahants, the respective Cetanas lack kamma creative power.

According to the Vibhavini Tika Javana occurs between-

- (i) votthapana (determining) and tadarammana (registration)
- (ii) votthapana and bhavanga (life-continuum)
- (iii) votthapana and cuti (death)
- (iv) manodvaravajjana (mind-door adverting) and bhavanga
- (v) manodvaravajjana and cuti

The Seven Javana thought-moments and it kammic effect.

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|-----------|---|---|
| 1. Javana | → | The first is the weakest, lack the previous sustaining forces. The kammic effect may operate in this present life, if not it become ineffective kamma.              |
| 2. Javana | } | The effect of the remaining five may operate at any time till one attains parinibbana   |
| 3. Javana |   |   |
| 4. Javana |   |   |
| 5. Javana |   |   |
| 6. Javana |   |   |
| 7. Javana | → | The second weakest, because the sustaining power being spent. The kammic effect may operate in the immediately subsequent life, if not it become ineffective kamma. |

Thus with the respect to the time of taking effect, there are four kinds of kamma, namely :-

- (1) Immediately Effective Kamma (Ditthadhamavedaniya Kamma)
- (2) Subsequently Effective Kamma (Upapajjavedaniya Kamma)
- (3) Indefinitely Effective Kamma (Aparapariyavedaniya Kamma)
- (4) Ineffective or Defunct Kamma (Ahoasi Kamma)