



THE INNER LIGHT



SPECIAL ISSUE ON NON-VIOLENCE

Newsletter of Jain Vishwa Bharati USA for Non-Violence, Preksha Meditation, and Yoga

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Ahimsa Savvabhūya Kheman Karī Non Violence is Benevolent to all Living Beings

THE RELEVANCE OF THE JAIN RELIGION TO MODERN PROBLEMS

By Acharya Tulsi & Acharya Mahapragya

Ahimsa and Freedom from Passion

Bhagavan Mahavira did not look at truth only from a single point of view. It does not mean that he did not look from one point of view, because it is necessary also to look from one particular point of view. But while doing so, it should be kept in mind that there are other points of view also. When Bhagavan Mahavira viewed the truth from the perspective of its result, he said, "The basic problem is that of violence." Looking at it from the point of view of its origin, he said, "The basic problem is that of the passions (Kasayas)." Kasaya means a tainted consciousness and a tainted mind. Mind tainted with attachment is filled with the emotion of love whereas one tainted with aversion is filled with hatred. Love, in its turn, produces avarice. Avaricious mind becomes deceitful, lustful and possessive. Mind tainted with aversion takes pride in riches, caste, power, beauty etc. Egotistic mind becomes prone to anger and hatred. It feeds the fire of quarrel.

Attachment is the mother of avarice and deceit, while aversion generates egotism and anger. Anger, egotism, deceit and avarice give birth to all kinds of problems. Bhagavan Mahavira realized this truth and practiced of freedom from passions through spiritual discipline. It is said that non-violence is the supreme dharma and that it is Bhagavan Mahavira's great contribution to humanity. This is a truth, but the truth behind this truth is that freedom from passions is the supreme dharma. This, in fact, is a more basic contribution. Passions are the seed, violence is its fruit. 'Freedom from passions' is the seed, non-violence is its fruit. Looked at from the point of view of the fruit, ahimsa may be said to be the great contribution of Bhagavan Mahavira. Looked at from point of view of the seed, 'freedom from passion' may be said to be his great contribution. Thus both the statements are expressions of relative truth. Bhagavan Mahavira did not take 'freedom from passions' and ahimsa to be totally distinct from

each other. The range and depth of ahimsa are proportionate to those of freedom from passions. The former is concomitant of the latter. The seed remains hidden, but we can see the fruit. Freedom from passions remains hidden, but we can see non-violence manifested in our conduct. Bhagavan Mahavira looked at both freedom from passions and non-violence as part of the same sequence, and therefore he propounded ahimsa in a wider perspective which is indeed his great contribution.

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He said that non-violence is conducive to the good of all living beings. All are benefited by it. It is most propitious to the homo sapiens which leads a social life. The more the man adopts violence to solve social problems, the more he deteriorates his own good.

Non-violence and Non-possessiveness

One cannot appreciate Bhagavan Mahavira's conception of non-violence until and unless he comprehends his conception of non-possessiveness. Violence and acquisitiveness go hand in hand. Gautama once asked Bhagavan Mahavira: "Lord, can man attain enlightenment?"

Gautama: "Lord, how can he do so?"

Bhagavan Mahavira: "By renouncing violence and possessiveness."

Gautama: "Can man be spiritually disciplined?"

Bhagavan Mahavira: "Yes, he can."

Gautama: "Lord, how can he do so?"

Bhagavan Mahavira: "By renouncing violence and possessiveness."

Bhagavan Mahavira said, "Yes, he can."

Possessiveness and violence, according to Bhagavan Mahavira, are inseparable. Today, when violence is used against power and wealth, we think violence is on the increase. In the language of Bhagavan Mahavira, this violence is against violence. Thinkers of today have begun to endorse Bhagavan Mahavira's view that we can put an end to violence only by putting an end to the monopoly of power and wealth. According to Bhagavan Mahavira, violence can be eradicated only through a change of heart. Modern political thinkers take a different view of things. They believe that violence can be stopped only through force. But experience so far has shown that force has failed to stop violence and people have now begun to think that it cannot succeed unless supported by a favorable public opinion.

The only graceful way to escape reactive violence is to willingly put a limit on possessiveness. The natural consequence of this discipline will be an equitable distribution of possessions.

Non-violence and Equality

As soon as man begins to look at the world through the perspective of *Ahimsa*, equality of all souls which is generally veiled is perceived.

Gautama asked Bhagavan Mahavira, "Lord! Are the souls of an elephant and a tiny insect equal?"

Bhagavan Mahavira replied, "Yes, Gautama! The souls of an elephant and a tiny insect are equal. The body of an elephant is huge and that of an

insect tiny. The difference in the size of their bodies does not affect the equality of souls. One who confuses the innate equalities of the souls

with their external differences such as bodies, sense-organs, color, and form, caste etc. cannot be a votary of non-violence. A non-violent man is he who finds all souls to be equal in spite of external differences.

One who does not conceive the innate equality of all the souls presumes oneself to be superior to others and others as inferior to oneself or vice versa. He either hates others or thinks himself to be hated by others. He either intimidates others or feels himself being intimidated by others. These complexities of inferiority

INVITATIONS TO SAMANIS

If you would like to extend an invitation to the Jain Samanis to appear at your school, college, university, church, organization or Jain Centers, please feel free to contact the Jain Vishwa Bharati USA at 407-852-8694. Invitations from all regions of the United States and all over the world will be considered.

and superiority create inequality. Where there is inequality, people resort to violence. The principal of equality does not disturb social behavior. On the contrary, it makes social life smooth and correct. In day to day life the more the behavior is permeated with equality, the more the love is engendered. Love, in its turn, makes social organization run smoothly and reduces violence. We lose sight of the equality of all souls under the pressure of passing situations and the confusion created by externalities. Lack of self control creates an inegalitarian mentality. Bhagavan Mahavira said, "O man, you have been passing through the cycle of births from eternity in the course of which you have had relations of mother, father, son or brother etc. with each living being. Then, whom will you treat as a friend or foe, higher or lower, beloved or despicable? You have not been born only now, hence do not adopt a shortsighted view of things from a timeless perspective. Your soul is eternal and therefore you should try to experience the relationship between all souls. Try to control your mind by practicing concentration. By doing so, you will attain equality at all levels-of principle, nature, and mind. Once you attain equality, you will master *ahimsa*. Where there is equality, there is non-violence. Both are proportionate to each other."

Equality means equanimity which excludes love and hatred, attachment and aversion, inclination and disinclination. The behavior of an individual, whose conscience is entrenched in equality or equanimity does not smack of preferential treatment. So also the set-up of a society based on egalitarianism is free from all sorts of discriminations.

Bhagavan Mahavira said, "Nobody likes suffering. Therefore don't inflict suffering to anybody. This is non-violence, this is equality. It is enough for you to understand this.. To understand non-violence in order to understand equality and vice versa is the *summum bonum* of all knowledge."

HOW TO LIVE NON-VIOLENTLY

By Yuvacarya Mahashramana

It is impossible to live in a way that is completely nonviolent. Any living being cannot go far without action. Wherever there is a body form, some violence will occur. There are three types of violence:

1. *Aarambhja*
2. *Virodhja*
3. *Sankalpja*

Aarambhja: Some violence is unavoidable to support life. However, we should choose a life support system that involves minimum violence. Farming is an example of this type of violence.

Virodhja: This kind of violence is related to self-defense. When a person is threatened by another being, such as a snake, or an enemy, such as during an attack on a country, retaliation becomes necessary.

Sankalpja: This is violence with malice and commonly occurs when we act to fulfill unnecessary desires. When we become susceptible to greed, jealousy, and negative competition, we try to get things by unfair means that result in hurting others. This kind of violence is most unnecessary.

Aarambhja and *Virodhja* violence are not condemned for house-holders. But *Sankalpja* violence is strongly condemned for everyone. So we should try to totally abstain from *Sankalpja* violence. It is easy to shout slogans for peace. It is even easier to say victory to peace. But rarely do we practice it. Most of the time these slogans remain merely slogans. We need to practice nonviolence. Talking about nonviolence and actually practicing it are two different things. The important basic need is for mankind to observe nonviolence in day-to-day life.

There are seven ways to observe nonviolence in day-to-day life.

1. *Nirapraadh*. One should not deliberately blame or hurt a person who is not at fault.
2. *Bhroon-hatya*. One should never attempt or encourage killing of unborn babies or abortion.
3. *Aatam-hatya*. One should never commit suicide.
4. *Shoshan*. One should not exploit anyone, especially a handicap or an underprivileged person.
5. *Madhuratapoorn Vyavahar*. One should always observe a polite and kind behavior.
6. *Imaandaari*. Honesty is the best practice. One should always live honestly.

Nashamukt jivan. One should abstain from materials, such as alcohol or drugs, that make them loose control of their senses.

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Story Column

The Value of Non-Violence

By Sadhvi Vishrutvibha

After the demise of notorious butcher Kaalasaukarik of Rajgriha, there was to be a celebration of his son Sulas's ascension to the post of "the head of the family". The family wished to conduct it in the traditional manner, with great pomp and show. Therefore, a buffalo was ordered and Sulas was handed a shining sword and asked to slay it with one stroke.

Sulas was terrified. He had never imagined that such an abominable task would be allotted to him to perform. Yet, he was a butcher by family tradition—his father could kill five hundred buffaloes a day. Under no condition or temptation would his father give up his daily routine. Even a royal punishment could not alter his tendency for killing.

Once, Shrenik, the King of Magadha, forbade the killing of buffaloes for one day. Kaalasaukarik's disobedience of the order enraged the king, who then forced him to descend into a deep pit (a dry well). Kaalasaukarik, who regarded the killing of buffaloes as a duty in conformity with this family tradition, was perplexed at this attempt to annihilate it.

After a deep reflection over the problem, Kaalasaukarik at last found an outlet for the raging fire of violence that was burning in him. He collected the mud in the well and shaped it into buffaloes and thus fulfilled his duty by killing those buffaloes.

Sulas was disheartened at this violent tendency of his father, but any attempt to change his father's behavioral pattern was futile. Yet, even with such violence around him, Sulas retained a calm, peaceful, non-violent attitude. Although sad about his father's death, Sulas was internally delighted that henceforth his house would be completely free from cruelty.

When the sword was given to him to perform the rites, he began to tremble. The buffalo standing before him looked as if praying to Sulas to spare its life. Sulas deciphered the silent language of the helpless animal and felt its pain within himself. With a deep groan, the boy expressed his unwillingness and helplessness to kill it.

This was a great shock to the family brought up in superstitions and strict conventions. His family was unhappy at this intransigence of Sulas. They didn't know what to do. On one hand there was the firm, noble, non-violent

extermination of Sulas, and on the other hand there was the brutal family tradition.

Some time passed whilst Sulas was as adamant as ever. The family searched their petty brains for an answer. At last it was decided that Sulas should inflict the first blow on the buffalo simply to observe the tradition and the remaining formalities would be taken up by other people.

Sulas now stiffened his trembling hands. He tightened his grip upon the sword, mustered all the strength he could, and swung the weapon without further deliberations. The blow was not on the buffalo, but on his own legs. As the blood gushed forth like an angry stream, the members of his family were filled with great surprise, fear and perplexity.

Getting his chance to speak on the matter at last, Sulas exclaimed, "Fellow creatures of the earth! I have a word for you! Please listen to me! Even as we like to protect our lives, this buffalo seeks to save his. We care about ourselves but not about those other creatures who have as much right to live as we ourselves have! This I cannot understand. Why do we not treat them with the respect they deserve? If our positions were reversed, we would not stand to be treated thus!"

For our own spiritual good, we must realize the relative equality among all living beings and must not treat any as inferior, because they do, after all, love as we do, suffer as we do, and have likes and dislikes as we do. Our actions must be the product of knowledge, not ignorance! We must exercise self-control and, in the true Jain way, not kill or hurt any creature through our action, speech, or thought.

JVB ORLANDO NEWS

The Jain Vishwa Bharati Center in Orlando has had many successful programs under the guidance of Samani Mudit Pragma and Samani Sangh Pragma. On every 2nd and 4th Sunday Swadhaya are held. Some of the topics covered were *Sthirikarn*, *Sukh Dukh Ki Mimansa*, and *Atma- kartritva vad*. They also lectured on Ramayan and Bhaktamer. The childrens classes are going on at the same time. Samaniji held a Ladies Health Camp on the 9th of March in the Orlando center. Topics included Stress management through relaxation, keys to better health, and yoga, meditation. Attendees included woman from Tampa, Ocala, Orlando, Vero Beach, West Palm Beam, and Miami. The camp was very well received.

Samaniji have arranged a Bhavana program every other Friday on the request of the Jain Community. The Jain communities outside of Orlando such as West Palm Beach, Vero Beach, and Miami have taken advantage of JVB Center and are having Swadhayas for adults and children every month.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mahavir Jayanti celebrations will be held in Pittsburgh under the guidance of Samani Mudit Pragma and Samani Sangh Pragma. On this occasion, Samanijis will give discourses on the religion, philosophy and principles of Lord Mahavir. While in Pittsburgh, Samanijis will also conduct a camp on Preksha meditation. This will involve discussions on various topics of interest to everyone including practice of techniques for yoga, meditation, and relaxation.

Mark your calendars for May 4th Akshaya Tritheeya. This day marks the 2nd anniversary of the opening of the *Upashraya* at the Jain Vishwa Bharati Center in Orlando. Lectures by Samanijis, Bhajans and a children's program are planned. We will also be blessed by the presence of Samani Charitra Pragma and Sharda Pragma. They will be visiting Orlando from Los Angeles.

June 7th through 9th Pranayam, Samanijis will visit Los Angeles to attend the Spiritual Rejuvenation camp. The camp will be held under the guidance of Samani Mudit Pragma, Charitra Pragma, Samani Sangh Pragma and Sharda Pragma. Main topics of discussion will be *Syadwad*, *Karmvad* and *Samyak Darshan*. Also included will be lectures on Chanting of Mantra for Healing, and Meditation for Spirituality, as well as demonstrations on yoga, meditation, and Pranayam.

JVB HOUSTON NEWS

A paper presentation at the International conference at Houston University entitled "Yoga for Positive Health" was presented by Samani Pratibha Pragma. Also presented was a paper on "Effect of Preksha Meditation On Menopause" Samani Jagat Pragma helped in Yoga demonstrations.

Four Camps on "Preksha Meditation For Gynecological Health and Well-being " were completed with over 125 ladies participating.

Swadhaya On Tatvarth Sutra. Over 40 persons participate every thursday.

A Youth Camp was presented March 16th "How to manage your Stress in the Work place"

On the 22nd of March a senior citizen program at the "Indo American Center" was presented. There were 300 people in attendance.

Health Column

ACIDITY

Problem: Many people suffer with many diseases, Acidity is one of them. People think it can not be cured by medicine. There is no permanent cure but with the practice of Preksha Meditation we can overcome this disease.

1. Definition: Acidic taste of tongue, heart burning.
2. Causes: Sweet, spicy foods, meat, sugar.
3. Effects: Uneasiness

Spiritual Treatment Through Yoga, Meditation

1. Asanas: Uttanpadasan, vajrasan, Pavanmukatasan (5 Min.)
2. Pranayam & Pressure: Shitali Pranayam, Humming Sound, Bharamari P.
Press the points on both sides of the navel, near the heart, on the end of the knees, between the big toe & second toe (10 min.)
3. Preksha (Perception): Visualization of white color throughout the body. (10 Min.)
4. Anupreksha (reflection): "My acidity is being regulated" (10 Min.)
5. Jap (chanting): Wang (5 Min.)
6. Tap (moderation): Avoid tea, coffee, sweet, red pepper.



