

JAINA CONCEPT OF PEACE

□ Prof. Sagarmal Jain

PEACE THE NEED OF OUR AGE

We are living in the age of science and technology. The advancement in our scientific knowledge has removed our religious superstitions and false dogmas. But unfortunately and surprisingly, side by side it has also shakened our mutual faith and faith in moral virtues as well as religio-spiritual values. The old social and spiritual values of life acting as binding on humanity and based on religious beliefs have been made irrelevant by scientific knowledge and logical thinking. Till date, we have been unable to build or evolve a new value structure, so necessary for meaningful and peaceful living in society, based on our scientific and logical outlook. We are living in a state of total chaos. In fact this present age is the age of transition, old values have become irrelevant, but no new values have been established. We have more knowledge, and faith in atomic structure and atomic power, than the values needed for meaningful and peaceful life. Today we strongly rely on the atomic power as our true rescuer and discard the religio-spiritual values as mere superstitions. Mr. D.R. Mehta rightly observes 'in the present day world with religion getting separated from daily life and spreading commercialisation killing (violence) has increased manifold and sensitivity to (other's) life whether animal or human has declined in proportion.¹ For us human being is either a complicated machine or at least a developed animal, governed by his instincts and endowed with some faculties of mechanical reasoning. Thus

we have developed a totally materialistic and selfish outlook.

The advancement in all the walks of life and knowledge has not sublimated our animal and selfish nature. The animal instinct lying within us is still forceful and is dominating our individual and social behaviour and due to this our life is full of excitements, emotional disorders and mental tensions. The more advanced a nation is, more it is in the grip of these evils of our age. The single most specific feature by which our age may be characterised is that of tension. Now-a-days not only the individuals, but total human race is living in tension.

Though outwardly we are pleading for peace and non-violence, yet by heart we still have a strong faith in the law of the jungle, i.e. the dictum-might is right. We are living for the satisfaction of our animal nature only, though we talk of higher social and spiritual values; this duality or the gulf between our thought and action is the sole factor disturbing our inner as well as outer peace. Once the faith in higher values or even in our fellow beings is shaken we start seeing each and every person, or a community or a nation with the eyes of doubt. Definitely it is the sign of a disturbed mentality.

Because of materialistic and mechanical outlook our faculty of faith has been destroyed and when the mutual faith and faith in higher values of co-operation and co-existence is destroyed, doubt takes place. The doubt causes fear, fear gives birth to violence and violence triggers violence. The present violence is the result of our materialistic attitude and doubting nature. The most valuable thing, human race has lost in the present age, is none other than peace.

Science and technology has given us all the amenities of life. Though due to the speedy advancement in science and technology nowadays life on earth is so luxurious and pleasant that it was never before, yet because of the selfish and materialistic outlook, and doubting nature of man, which we have developed in these days, no body is happy and cheerful. We are living in tension all the times and deprived of, even a pleasant sound sleep. The people, materially more affluent having all the amenities of life, are more in the grip of tensions. Medical as well as psychological reports of advanced nations confirm this fact. Tendency to consume alchohalic and sedative drugs is increasing day by day, which also supports this fact that we have lost our mental peace, at the cost of

this material advancement. Not only this, we have also been deprived of our natural way of living. S. Bothara maintains 'what unfortunately has happened is that the intoxication of ambition and success has made us forget even the natural discipline, which we, inherited from the animal kingdom.'² Because of the development of mental faculties, we have not only denied to accept social or religious checkpost but we also have denied natural checks. Now our lifecart has only accelerator, no break. Our ambitions and desires have no limits. They always remain unfulfilled and these unfulfilled desires create frustrations and frustrations or resentments are the cause of our mental tensions. Due to the light legged means of transportation, physical distances are no bars to meet the people of different nations, cultures and religions and thus, our world is shrinking. But unluckily and disdainfully because of the materialistic and selfish out-look, the distance of our hearts is increasing day by day. Instead of developing mutual love, faith and co-operation we are spreading hatred, doubt and hostility and thus, deprived of peace mental as well as environmental which is the first and foremost condition of human living. Rabindra Nath Tagore rightly observes 'For man to come near to one another and yet to continue to ignore the claims of humanity is a sure process of suicide.'³

MEANING OF PEACE IN JAINISM

The term peace has various connotations. It can be defined in different ways from different angles. Intrinsically peace means a state of tranquility of mind. It is the state in which self rests in its own nature' undisturbed by external factors. Peace means soul emptied of passions and desires. In Acaranga it is mentioned that an aspirant who has attained peace has no desire.⁴ Peace means cessation of all desires. Sutrakrtange equates it with Niravana⁵ i.e. the emancipation from all desires. In other words it is the state of self-contentment or total subjectivity i.e. the state of pure seer. Acaranga maintains one who is aware of peace will not fall in the grip of passions. While defining peace Saint Thomas Aquinas has rightly maintained the same view. He says 'peace implies two things first our self should not be disturbed by external factors and secondly, our desires should find rest in one i.e. the self.'⁶ This inner peace can also be explained from negative and positive view-points. Negatively, it is the state of the cessation of all the passions and desires. It is the freedom from the vectors of attachment and aversion. Positively it is the state of bliss and

self- contentment. But we must remember that these positive and negative aspects of inner peace are interdependent on each other, they are like the two sides of the same coin and they can not exist without each other. We can only distinguish them but not divide them. The inner peace is not mere an abstract idea, but it is some thing, which is whole and concrete. It represents our infinite self.

Now we turn to the external peace. While the inner peace is the peace of our self, external peace is the peace of society. We can also define it as environmental peace. In Jainism the Prakrit word 'santi' Sanskrit equivalent Ksanti, also means forgiveness. In SutraKrtanga among ten virtues the first and foremost is forgiveness, which is the social need for peace. It is the state of cessation of wars and hostilities among individuals, individuals and society, different social groups and nations on the earth. So far as this outer peace or peace of the society is concerned it can also be defined in both ways negatively as well as positively. When negatively defined it is the state of cessation of wars and hostilities. But when positively defined it is the state of harmonious living of individuals as well as societies and nations. It is the state of social co-operation and co-existence. But we must be aware of the fact that the real external peace is more than non-war. It is a vital peace. It is the state, free from mutual doubts and fears. So far as the doubts and apprehensions against each other exist, inspite of the absence of actual war, really it is not the state of peace. Because where there is fear, the war exists. In modern world we term it as cold war. War is war, whether it is cold or actual, it disturbs the peace of society. Real external peace is only possible, when our hearts are free from doubts and fear and each and every individual has firm faith not only in the dictum 'Live and Let live' but 'live for others'.

According to Jaina Philosopher Umasvati, 'By nature living beings are made for each other'⁷ (Parasparopagrahojivaname). So long as our hearts are full of doubts and fear, and we do not have full control on our selfish animal instincts as well as firm belief in mutual co-operation and co-existence, real social peace on earth will not be possible.

Real peace dawns only when our hearts are full of universal love, which is something different from mere attachment, because, for Jainas attachment is always linked with aversion. But universal love is based on the concept of equality of all beings and firm faith in the doctrine that by

nature living beings are made for each other. We must also be aware of the fact that this external or environmental peace depends on the mental peace of individuals, since, our external behaviour is only an expression of our inner will and attitude towards life. Thus we can say that the various aspects of peace are not mutually exclusive but inclusive. The peace of society or in other words the environmental peace is disturbed, when the inner peace of the individual is disturbed and vice versa. In my humble opinion hostilities and wars are the expressions and out-come of sick mentality. It is the aggressive and selfish out look of an individual or a society that gives birth to confrontations among individuals, individuals and society as well as among different social or religious groups and nations. At the root of all types of confrontations and wars, which disturb our environmental peace there lies the feeling of discontentment as well as will for power, possession and hoarding. Thus social disturbances, conflict and confrontations are only symptoms of our mental tensions or sick mentality.

In fact, the peace of society depends on the psychology or mental-make-up of its members, but it is also true that our attitude towards life and behavioural patterns is shaped by our social environment and social training. The behavioural pattern and mentality of the members of non-violent society will surely be different from that of a violent society. While on the one side social norms, ideals and conditions affect the mental make- up and behavioural pattern of the individual, on the other side there are also individuals who shape the social norms, ideals and conditions.

Though it is correct that in many cases disturbed social conditions and environmental factors may be responsible for vitiating our mental peace, yet they can not disturb the persons, strong spiritually. According to Jainism spiritually developed soul remains unaffected at his mental level by external factors. But on the other hand disturbed mental state necessarily affects our social and environmental peace. Thus for Jainas the inner peace of the soul is cause and that of the society is the effect. Modern tension theory also supports this view. A book namely 'Tensions that Cause Wars' tells us that 'economic inequalities, insecurities and frustrations create groups and national conflicts'⁸ but for Jains economic inequalities and feeling of insecurities can not disturb those persons, who are self-contained and free from doubts and fears. So far as

the frustrations are concerned they are generated by our ambitions and resentments and can be controlled only by extinction of desire. Therefore we must try first to retain inner peace or the peace of soul.

In Jaina texts we find certain references about the importance and nature of peace. In Sutakrtanga, it is said that as the earth is the abode for all living beings so the peace is the abode for all the enlightened beings of past, present and future⁹. These souls having attained the spiritual heights always rest in peace and preach for peace. For Jainas peace means the tranquility or calmness of mind and so they equate the term peace (santi) with the term equanimity or samata. For them peace rests on mental equanimity and social equality. When mental equanimity is disturbed inner peace is disturbed and when social equality is disturbed external or social peace is disturbed. Jainism as a religion is nothing but a practice for mental equanimity and social equality. For the same they use particular prakṛta word 'samaiya' (samata), which is the principal concept of the Jainism. It is the pivot around which the whole Jainism revolves. In English the term 'Samaiya' connotes various meanings such as equanimity, tranquility, equality, harmony and righteousness in different contexts. Sometimes it means a balanced state of mind undisturbed by any kind of emotional excitement, pleasure or pain, achievement and disappointment, sometimes it refers to the personality completely free from the vectors of aversion and attachment, i.e. a dispassionate personality. These are the intrinsic definitions of 'Samata or Santi'. But when this word is used extrinsically it means the feeling of equality with all the living beings and thus it conveys social equality and social harmony.

Peace as the Ultimate Goal of Life

According to the Jaina thinkers the ultimate goal of life is to attain peace or tranquility, which is our essential nature. In Acarangaśūtra, one of the earliest Jaina canonical texts, we find two definitions of religion: One, as 'tranquility' and other as non-violence. Lord Mahavira mentions 'Worthy people preached religion as tranquility or equanimity.'¹⁰ This tranquility or peace of mind is considered as the core of religious practice, because it is the real nature of living beings, including human beings. In another Jaina text known as Bhagwati Sūtra there is a conversation between Lord Mahavira and Gautama. Gautam asked Mahavira 'What is the nature of self' and Mahavira answered 'O Gautam' the nature of self is

tranquility i.e. peace.’ Gautam again asked ‘O, Lord what is the ultimate goal of self’, Mahavira answered O, Gautam! the ultimate goal of self is also to attain tranquility or peace.¹¹

In Sutrakrtanga, the term peace is equated with emanicipation. Thus for Jainas peace, being an assential nature of sve-svabhava or self, it is considered as ultimate goal of life.

In Jainism, religion is nothing but a practice for the realisation of one’s own essential nature or Sva-Svabhava which is nothing but the state of tranquility or peace of mind. This enjoying of one’s own essential nature means to remain constant in Saksibhava i.e. to remain undisturbed by external factors. It is the state of pure subjectivity which is technically known in Jainism as Samayika. In this state the mind is completely free from constant flickerings, excitements and emotional disorders. Getting freedom from mental tensions, which are the vibhavas or impure states of mind is the precondition for enjoying spiritual happiness which is also a positive aspect of inner peace. Nobody wants to live in a state of mental tensions, every one would like no tension but relaxation, not anxiety but contentment. This shows that our real nature is working in us for tranquility or mental peace. Religion is nothing but a way of achieving this inner peace. According to Jainism, the duty of a religious order is to explain the means by which man can achieve this peace inner as well as external. In Jainism the method of achieving mental peace is called as Samayika, which is the first and foremost duty among six essential duties of a monk and a house- holder. Now the question is how this tranquility (Samata) can be attained? According to Jaina view-point it can be attained through the practice of non-attachment’ for attachment is the sole cause of disturbing our inner peace or tranquility.

Attachment, the cause of mental tensions

As I have already mentioned that most burning problem of our age is the problem of mental tensions. The nations, which claim to be more civilised and economically more advanced are much more in the grip of mental tension. The main objective of Jainism is to emanicipate man from his sufferings and mental tensions. First of all, we must know the cause of these mental tensions. For Jainism the basic human sufferings are not physical, but mental. These mental sufferings or tensions are due to our attachment towards worldly objects. It is the attachment, which is fully

responsible for them. The famous Jaina text Uttaradhyayanasutra mentions 'The root of all sufferings physical as well as mental of every body including gods, is attachment towards the objects of worldly enjoyment'.¹³ It is the attachment, which is the root cause of mental tension. Only a detached attitude towards the objects of worldly enjoyment can free mankind from mental tension. According to Lord Mahavira to remain attached to sensuous objects is to remain in the whirl. He says 'misery is gone in the case of a man who has no delusion, while delusion is gone in the case of a man who has no desire; desire is gone in the case of a man who has no attachment'.¹⁴ The efforts made to satisfy the human desires through material objects can be likened to the chopping off of the branches while watering the roots. Thus we can conclude that the lust for and the attachment towards the objects of worldly pleasure is the sole cause of human sufferings and conflicts.

If mankind is to be freed from mental tensions it is necessary to grow a detached outlook in life. Jainism believes that the lesser the attachment, the greater will be the mental peace. It is only when attachment is vanished, the human mind will be free from mental tensions and emotional disorders.

Non-Possession to resolve economic inequality

The attachment gives birth to desire for possession, occupation and hoarding, which is nothing but an expression of one's greedy attitude. It is told in Jaina scriptures that greediness is the root of all sins. It is the destroyer of all the good qualities.¹⁵ Anger, pride, deceit etc. all are the off shoots of attachment or mineness or greed. Violence, which disturbs our social and environmental peace, is due to the will for possession. In Sutakrtange, it is mentioned that those having possession of whatever sort, great or small, living or non-living can not get rid of sufferings and conflicts (1/1/2). Possession and hoarding lead to economic inequality, which causes wars. Thus to achieve peace and the norm of nonviolence in social life, the prime need is to restrict the will for possession as well as physical possessions also, that is why Mahavira propounded the vow of complete non-possession for the monks and nuns while for laity, he propounded the vow of limitation of possession (Parigraha Parimana) and vow of control over consumption (Bhogopabhoga Parimana). Jainism holds that if we want to establish peace on the earth then economic

inequality and vast differences in the mode of consumptions should atleast be minimised. Among the causes of wars and conflicts, which disturb our social peace will for possession is prime, because it causes economic im-balance. Due to economic im-balance or inequality classes of poor and rich come into existence and which results in class conflicts. According to Jainas it is only through the self imposed limitation of possession and simple living, we can restore peace and prosperity on the earth.

Non-Violence as means to establish Peace

Tranquility is a personal or inner experience of peace. When it is applied in the social life or is practiced outwardly, it becomes non-violence. Non-violence is a social or outer expression of this inner peace. In Acaranga, Lord Mahavira remarks : —

“The worthy men of the past, present and the future all say thus, speak thus, declare thus, explain thus; all breathing, existing, living and sentient creatures should not be slain, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented. This is the pure, eternal and unchangeable law or the tenet of religion.”¹⁶

In other words, non-violence is the eternal and pure form of religion. In Jainism non-violence is the pivot around which its whole ethics revolves. For Jainas violence represents all the vices and non-violence represents all the virtues. Non-violence is not a single virtue but it is a group of virtues. In Prasnavyakarana-sutra the term non-violence is equated with sixty virtuous qualities, just as peace, harmony, welfare, trust, fearlessness, etc.¹⁷ Thus non-violence is a wider term, which comprehends all the good qualities and virtues.

Non-violence is nothing but to treat all living beings as equal. The concept of equality is the core of the theory of Non-violence. The observance of non-violence is to honour each and every form of life. Jainism does not discriminate the human beings on the basis of their caste, creed and colour. According to Jain point of view, all the barriers of caste, creed and colour are artificial. All the human beings have equal right to lead a peaceful life. Though violence is unavoidable, yet it can not be the directive principle of our living, because it goes against the judgements of our faculty of reasoning and the concept of natural law. If I think that nobody has any right to take my life then on the same ground of reasoning I have also no right to take another's life. The principle, 'live on

others' or 'living by killing' is self contradictory. The principle of equality propounds that every one has the right to live. The directive principle of living is not 'Living on other' or 'Living by killing' but 'Living with other' or 'Live for other (Parasparopagrahojivanam)'. Though in our worldly life, complete non-violence is not possible, yet our motto should be 'Lesser killing is better Living'. Not the struggle but co-operation is the law of life. I need other's co-operation for my very existence and so I should also co-operate in other's living.

Further, we must be aware of the fact that in Jainism non-violence is not merely a negative concept i.e. not to kill; but it has positive side also as service to mankind. Once a question was raised to Mahavira O Lord, one person is rendering his services to the needy persons while other is offering Puja to you, among these two, who is the real follower of yours, Mahavira answered 'first one is the real follower of mine, because he is following my teachings'¹⁹.

The concept of non-violence and the regard for life is accepted by almost all the religions of the world. But Jainism observes it minutely. Jainism prohibits not only killing of human beings and animals but the vegetable kingdom also. Hurting the plants, polluting water and air are also the act of violence or himsa because they disturb ecological balance or peace. Its basic principle is that the life, in whatever form it may be, should be respected, we have no right to take another's life, Schweitzer remarks "To maintain, assist or enhance life is good. To destroy, harm or hinder is evil." He further says "a day may come when reverence for all life will win universal recognition".²⁰ The Dasavaikalika mentions that "every one wants to live and not to die, as we do, for this simple reason, Nigganthas prohibit violence".²¹ It can be said that the Jaina concept of non-violence is extremist and not practical, but we cannot challenge its relevance for human society. Though Jainism sets its goal as the ideal of total non-violence, external as well as internal, yet the realisation of this ideal in the practical life is by no means easy. Non-violence is a spiritual ideal, which is fully realisable only in the spiritual plane. The real life of an individual is a physio-spiritual complex; at this level complete non-violence is not possible. According to Jaina thinkers the violence is of four kinds (i) Deliberate (Samkalpi) or aggressive violence i.e. intentional killing (ii) Protective violence i.e. the violence which takes place in saving the life of

one's own or his fellow being or in order to make peace and insure justice in the society (iii) Occupational i.e. violence which takes place in doing agriculture or in running the factories and industries (iv) violence, which is involved in performing the daily routine work of a house holder such as bathing, cooking walking etc. A person can proceed towards the fulness of non-violent life to the extent as he rises above the physical level. The first form of violence, which is deliberate, is to be shunned by all, because it relates to our mental proclivity. So far as the thoughts are concerned, a man is his own master, so it is obligatory for all to be non-violent in this sphere. External arcum stances can influence our mind at this level, but they cannot govern us. From the behavioural point of view, deliberate violence is aggressive. It is neither necessary for self-defence nor for the living. So all can avoid it. The other forms of violence i.e. protective and occupational are inevitable so far as man is living on a physical level. But this does not mean that the ideal of non-violence is not practicable and so it is not necessary for human race.

The second form of violence is defensive which takes place in the activity of defence. It becomes necessary for the security of one's own life and the life of his fellow beings and the protection of property. External circumstances may compel a person to resort to be violent or to counter attack in defence of his own life or that of his companions or for the protection of his belongings. All those, who are attached to the physical world and have a social obligation to protect other's life and property are unable to dispense with this defensive violence. A person living in family is unable to keep away completely from this type of violence, because he is committed to the security of family members and their belongings. In the same way the persons, who are in government can not get rid of it for they are the custodians of human rights and national property. Prof. Murty also maintains "Aggressive and unjust wars have been condemned by Hindu, Buddhist, and Jaina scripturers and moralists, but they had to admit that defensive and just wars may have to be undertaken without giving up maitri (friendliness) and karuna (compassion) for people of both the sides".²²

It is true that in our times Gandhi planned a non-violent method of opposition and applied it successfully. But it is not possible for all to oppose non-violently with success. Only a man, who is unattached to his

body and material objects and has heart free from malice can protect his rights non-violently. In addition to this, such efforts can bear fruits only in a civilized and cultured human society. A non-violent opposition only may be fruitful when ranged against an enemy who has a human heart. Its success becomes dubitable when it has to deal with an enemy who has no faith in human values and wants to serve his selfish motive through violent means.

As far as occupational violence and violence taking place in routine-walks of the life, is concerned everyone cannot shake it off. For so long as a person has to earn his livelihood and to seek fulfilment of his physical needs, deliberate violence of vegetable kingdom is unavoidable. In Jainism intentional violence to mobile animals by a householder has been forbidden even when it becomes necessary for the maintenance of life and occupation. So far as the violence takes place in defensive activities and wars, Jainas hold. "That it should be minimised as it is possible and unrelated ignorant persons should not be killed at any cost. Jaina thinkers suggested various methods for non-violent wars and to minimise the violence in even just wars. The war which was fought between Bharata and Bahubali is an example of non-violent war.

Though some or other form of violence is inevitable in our life, yet on this basis we should not conclude that the observance of non-violence is of no use in the present. Just as violence is inevitable for living, non-violence is also inevitable for the very existence of human race. So far as the existence of human society is concerned it depends on mutual co-operation, sacrifice of one's interest in the interest of his fellow-beings and regard for other's life. If above mentioned elements are essential for our social life, how can we say that non-violence is not necessary for human life. Society does not stand on violence but non-violence, not on accepting our own rights but accepting the rights of others as our duty. Thus, we can say that the non-violence is an inevitable principle of the existence for human society. At present we are living in an age of nuclear weapons and due to this the existence of human race is in danger. Lord Mahavira had said in Acaranga that there are weapons superior to each other, but nothing is superior to non-violence.²³ It is only the observance of non-violence, which can save the human race. It is mutual credibility and the belief in the equality of all beings which can restore

peace and harmony in human society. Peace can be established and prosperity can be secured on the earth through non-violence and mutual faith.

Regard for others ideologies and faith

Fanaticism or intolerance is another curse of our age. Jainism, since its inception, believes in and preaches for peace, harmony, and tolerance. It has been tolerant and respectful toward other faiths and religious ideologies throughout its history of existence. In Jainism one hardly comes across with instances of religious conflicts involving, violence and bloodshed. Often one meets with instances of disputations and strongly worded debates concerning ideological disagreements. The Jaina men of learning, while opposing the different ideologies and religious standpoints paid full regard to them and accepted that the opponents' convictions may also be valid from a certain standpoint.

Among the causes that generate fanaticism and intolerance the blind faith is the principal; it results from passionate attachment and hence uncritical or 'unexamining' outlook. It causes perverse attitude. In Jainism various types of attachment are enumerated: among them darsana-moha/drstiraga (blind faith), due to its very disposition, has been reckoned "paramount". In point of fact, it is considered central in religious intolerance. It leads one's attitude towards a strong bias for one's own, and against other's religion. Non-attachment is therefore considered as a pre-condition for the right attitude or perception. A perverse, and hence defiled attitude renders it impossible to view the things rightly, just as a person wearing coloured glasses or suffering from jaundice is unable to see the true colour of objects as they are. "Attachment and hatred are the two great enemies of philosophical thinking. Truth can reveal itself to an impartial thinker".²⁴ One who is unbiased and impartial can perceive the truth in his opponents's ideologies and faiths and thus can possess deference to them. Intense attachment unfailingly generates blind faith in religious leaders, dogmas, doctrines and rituals and consequently religious intolerance and fanaticism come into existence.

Jainism holds that the slightest even pious attachment, towards the prophet, the path, and the scripture is also a hindrance to a seeker of truth and an aspirant of perfection. Attachment, be it pious or impious, cannot go without aversion or repulsion. Attachment results in blind faith and

superstition and repulsion consequences into intolerant conduct. The Jainas therefore lay stress on the elimination of attachment, the root cause of bias and intolerance.

Though in Jainism, right faith plays an important role - it is one of its three "jewels" - it is the blind faith, which causes intolerance. Jainism therefore does not support blind faith. Jaina thinkers maintain that the right faith should be followed by right knowledge. The faith seconded by right knowledge or truthful reasoning cannot be blind one. According to Jaina thinkers, reason and faith are complementary and actually there is no contention between the two. Faith without reason, as the Jaina thinkers aver, is blind and reason without faith is unsteady or vacillating. They hold that the religious codes and rituals should be critically analysed. In the Uttaradhyayanasutra, Gautama, the chief disciple of Mahavira strongly supports this view before Kesi, the pontiff of the church of Jina Parsva. Said he : "the differences in the Law must be critically evaluated through the faculty of reasoning. It is the reason which can ascertain the truth of Law"²⁵.

If one maintains that religion has to be solely based on faith and there is no place for reason in it, then he will unfailingly develop an outlook that only his prophet is the only saviour of mankind; his mode of worship is the only way of experiencing the bliss and the Laws or Commands of his scripture are only the right one and thus he remains unable to make a critical estimate of his religious prescriptions. While one who maintains that the reason also plays an important role in the religious life, will critically evaluate the pros and cons of religious prescriptions, rituals and dogmas. An "attached" or biased person believes in the dictum 'Mine is true'. While the detached or unbiased person believes in the dictum 'Truth is mine'. Acarya Haribhadra says: "I possess no bias for Lord Mahavira and no prejudice against Kapila and other saints and thinkers; whosoever is rational and logical ought to be accepted."²⁶ Thus, when religion tends to be rational, there will hardly be any room for intolerance. One who is thoroughly rational in religious matters, certainly would not be rigid and intolerant.

Dogmatism and fanaticism are the born children of absolutism. An extremist or absolutist holds that whatsoever he propounds is correct and what others say is false, while a relativist is of the view that he and his

opponent both may be correct, if viewed from two different angles and thus a relativist adopts a tolerant outlook towards other faiths and ideologies. It is the doctrine of anekantavada or non-absolutism of the Jainas on which the concept of religious tolerance is based. For the Jainas non-violence is the essence of religion from which the concept of non-absolutism emanates. Absolutism represents "violence of thought". for, it negates the truth-value of its opponent's view and thus hurts the feeling of others. A non-violent search for truth finds non-absolutism.

Non-absolutism of the Jainas forbids the individual to be dogmatic and one sided in approach. It pleads for a broader outlook and an open mindedness, which alone can resolve the conflicts that emerge from differences in ideologies and faiths. For non-absolutism the views of the opponent are also true. Remarks Siddhasena Divakara (5th Cent. A.D.) "All schools of thought are valid when they are understood from their own standpoint and insofar as they do not discard the truth-value of others, the knower of non-absolutism does not divide them into the category of true and false. They become false only when they reject the truth-value of other".²⁷ It was this broader outlook of non-absolutism which made Jainas tolerant.

While expounding this tolerant outlook of the Jainas, Upadhyaya Yasovijaya (17th Cent. A.D.) mentioned "A true non- absolutist does not disdain any faith and he treats all the faiths equally like a father to his sons. For, a non-absolutist does not have any prejudiced and biased outlook in his mind. A true believer of syadvada (non-absolutism) is that who pays equal regards to all the faiths. To remain impartial to the various faiths is the essence of being religious. A little knowledge which induces a person to be impartial is more worthwhile than the unilateral vast knowledge of scriptures."²⁸

Jainas believe in the unity of world religions, but unity, according to them, does not imply omnivorous unity in which all lose their entity and identity. They believe in that unity in which all the alien faiths will conjoin each other to form an organic whole, without losing their own independent existence. In other words it believes in a harmonious co-existence or a liberal synthesis in which all the organs have their individual existence, but work for a common goal i.e. the peace of mankind. To eradicate the religious conflicts and violence from the world, some may give a slogan of

"one world religion" but it is neither possible nor practicable so far as the diversities in human thoughts are in existence. In the Niyamasara it is said that there are different persons, with their different activities or karmas and different levels or capacities, so one should not engage oneself in hot discussions neither with other sects or one's own sect.²⁹

Haribhadra remarks that the diversity in the teaching of the sages is due to the diversity in the levels of their disciples or the diversity in standpoints adopted by the sages or the diversity in the period of time when they preached, or it is only an apparent diversity.³⁰ Just as a physician prescribes medicine according to the nature of patients, its illness and the climate so is the case of diversity of religious teachings. So far as diversity in time, place, levels and understanding of disciples is inevitable, variety in religious ideologies and practices is essential. The only way to remove the religious conflicts is to establish harmony among them.

Thus Jaina theory of Anekantavada forbids us to be dogmatic and one-sided in our approach. It preaches us a broader outlook and open mindedness, which is more essential in solving the conflicts due to the differences in ideologies and faiths. Prof. T.G. Kalghatgi rightly observes "The spirit of Anekanta is very much necessary in society, specially in the present day, when conflicting ideologies are trying to assert supermacy aggressively. Anekanta brings the spirit of intellectual and social tolerance."³¹

For present day society what is awfully needed is the virtue of tolerance. This virtue of tolerance i.e. regard for other's ideologies and faiths is maintained in Jainism from its earlier time till these days. Mahavira mentions in Sutrakrtanga 'those, who praise their own faiths and ideologies and blame that of their opponents and thus distort the truth, will remain confined to the cycle of birth and death.'³² Jaina philosophers all the time maintain that all the view-points are true in respect of what they have themselves to say, but they are false in so far as they refute totally other's view points.

Jaina saints also tried to maintain the harmony in different religious-faiths and to avoid religious conflicts. That is why Jainism has been able to survive through the ages.

The basic problems of present society are mental tensions, poverty, violence, fundamentalism and the conflicts of ideologies and faiths.

Jainism tries to solve these problems of mankind through the three basic tenets of non-attachment, (Aparigraha), non-violence (Ahimsa) and non-absolutism, (Anekanta). If mankind collectively observes these three principles peace and harmony can certainly be established in the world.

REFERENCES

1. Bothara, Surendra, Animsa, The Science of Peace, Fore word, D.R. Mehata page XVII.
2. Ibid, page 46.
3. David C.W., The voice of Humanity, page 1
4. Acaranga (Ayaro) - Jain Visva Bharati Ladnun, 1/7/148.
5. Ibid, 2/4/96.
6. Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics Vol. IX page 700.
7. Umaswati, Tattvarthasutra 5/21
8. See, K.S. Murty, The Quest for Peace, page 157.
9. Sutakrtanga (Suyagado), Jain Visva Bharati Ladnun 1/11/36
10. Acaranga (Ayaro), Jain Visva Bharati Ladnun, 1/8/3
11. Bhagavatisutra (Bhagavai) Jain Visva Bharati Ladnun, 1/9
12. SutraKrtanga (Suyagado) Jain Visva Bharati Ladnun, 1/11/11
13. Uttaradhyayana sutra, Edited by sadhvi Chandarra, 32/19
14. Ibid, 32/7-8
15. Dasvaikalikasutra (Dasavealiyam) Jain Visva Bharati Ladnun, 5/37
16. Acaranga (Ayaro), Jain Visva Bharati Ladnun, 1/4/1
17. Prasnavyakaranasutra, Agama Prakashana Samiti Byavara, 2/1/21
18. Umaswati, Tattvarthasutra, 5/21
19. Avasyaka Vrtti, Ratlam pp. 661-662
20. See-Schweitzer, An anthology, edited C.R. Joy pp 248-83 Quoted by K.S. Murty, The Quest for peace, p.42
21. Dasvaikalike sutra (Ladnun), 6/10
22. K.S. Murty-The Quest for peace; Prologue, p.XXI
23. Acaranga (Ayaro) Jain Visva Bharati Landun, 1/3/4
24. Tatia N.M. Studies in Jaina Philosophy, P.V. Research Institute Varanasi, p. 22
25. Uttradhyayana sutra, Sanmati Jnanapitha Agara, 23/25
26. Haribhadra, Lokatattva nirnaya, Jain Granth Prakasaka Sabha Ahmedabad, Verse 38.
27. Siddhasena, Sanmatiprakarna (Jnanodaya Trust. Ahmedabad), 1/28
28. Yasovijaya, Adhyatmopanishat (Jainadharma prasaraka Sabha Bhavanager)
29. Kundkund - Niyamasara 155 (The central Jaina Publishing House, Lucknow)
30. Haribhadra, Yogadrsti Samuccaya, 133 (L.D. Institute Ahmedabad).
31. Vaisali Institute Research Bulletin, No. 4, p. 31.
32. Sutakrtanga, (Suyagado) Jain Visva Bharati, 1/1/2/25.

