

JAINISM AND GLOBAL PEACE

(Dr. Dhaval Nemchand Ghalla)

The Seventeenth century has been called the age of Enlightenment, the eighteenth, the age of Reason, the nineteenth, the age of progress and the twentieth the age of anxiety. With the conquest of many physical ills which have afflicted him throughout his history, man has become increasingly aware of the role of psychological factors in human existence. No longer are civilized men - atleast the fortunate majority - the victims of famines and epidemics. The black plague has been replaced by a host of subtler psychological plagues - worry, value conflicts, loneliness, disillusionment and the doubt as to one can weave a successful course through the complex image of freeways and blind alleys that make up modern existence.

Modern man's path to happiness is not an easy one. It is beset by seemingly endless personal and social problems. Wars have disrupted personal life and left their mark of mutilations, grief and social unrest. Periodic breakdown and runways of the economic machinery as well as automation and other technological innovations have taken their toll in millions of victims of unemployment and dislocation. The human population explosion is creating difficult political and social problems and tensions, Racial discrimination, with its unreasoned feeling of superiority, hatred and resentment, hurts both individual and community. Homes broken by divorce, leave emotional scars upon parents and children alike. Excessive competition, conflicting pressure groups, impersonal bureaucracy, rapid social change, and the ever present threat of global atomic war further aggravate modern man's anxieties.

Cure is an age of tremendous growth of knowledge. More scientific and technological discoveries have been made in the past fifty years than in previous recorded time and Science is having an increasingly profound effect on all phases of our life. The man has set foot on the planet other than one on which he was born. Yet paradoxically his scientific advances have led to shrinking of his world so that he must daily face international problems as well as national and local ones. And as man ventures into the vast universe, he is increasingly and inescapably

confronted with the finiteness of his individual existence and with the questions as to its meaning. At the same time traditional values and beliefs no longer seem self-evident, and he lacks the comforting absolutes that gave security to his forebears. Unfortunately, advances in the understanding of man have lagged far behind those in physical sciences. We know much about the atom but not nearly enough about love or the values needed for a meaningful life. With all his uncertainties and anxieties modern man has a few moral beliefs to guide him. As a consequence, he stumbles around among a myriad of religions, philosophies and social programs, seeking answers that will satisfy him.

Most of us are grihastha's (Shravak Shravikas) in Jains, or householders, pursuing the four Purusharthas namely Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Dharmabindu describes that Dharmas (the pursuit of spiritual excellence.) Artha the endeavour to acquire wealth and Kama the endeavour to fulfil the worldly desires) these three aspects of human activity are inter-related and inseparably integrated and united. We should carry out these three endeavours in such a way that none of them is affected or neglected. If any one is affected or neglected the basic purushartha namely Moksha will be affected. As most of us in the world are householders. I would emphasise on Vrata (Vows) which would be applicable to householder as individual for each individual is architect of his own destiny it is correctly said that a mind can make heaven of hell and hell of heaven.

From Social point of view, then we may briefly, review the ethical code of Jainism. It begins with five anuvratas or little vows.

- 1) Non violence (Ahimsa)
- 2) Truthfulness (Satya)
- 3) Honesty (Asteya)
- 4) Continence (Brahamcharya)
- 5) Stoicism (Aparigraha)

The second great contribution of Jainism to human intellect is Syadvada or Anekanta. Logic of probability and Relativism.

It is the individual irrespective of sex



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when in group form families, societies, countries, continents and world. It is individual who when looks within and tries to become a better person and transforms himself than only will this world will be a better place to live in with harmony and prosperity all around. There are also other codes of conduct in Jain ethics which when put into practise by any householder will make him and transform him into better person and bring out further knowledge, increase strength of character, greater peace of mind, sympathy and kindness and lead to higher levels on the way towards on everlasting, blissful, omniscient in state of life which is natural to the real pure self and which is open to all who wish to attain it. Thus intum making universal a symbol of peace and harmony.

I would enumerate them briefly that there are thirty five discarding pride. Pride is a kind of fire. Everything gets burn and swallowed by the fire. Discarding of a place where calamities are or a place threatened by calamities. Seeking the refuge of the worthy and the capable. Accepting noble men (treating them with respect) Building and dwelling in a house and a proper place. Weaving dress and decorations according to one's wealth etc. and avoiding incongruities. Expenditure according to income, not engaging in condemnable actions. Associating with noble people, Adoring mother and father, avoiding actions that provoke or agitate others, Protecting dependents, Eating food in time, food that agrees with one's constitution. Renouncing all temptations of taste. Discarding actions in uncongenial places and uncongenial time. Carrying out the pilgrimage of life properly among the humble in accordance with their standard. Discarding excessive familiarity with others. Rendering service to those who have undertaken vows and who possess intellectual majority and purity of character and conduct. Acting after realising one's abilities and limitations. Wants should be proper to the time. Listening to scriptural discourse everyday. Discarding prejudice and evil intentions in all matters and in respect of all people. Partiality for all virtues. Avoiding undesirable habits such as meat eating and wine drinking.

It is two doctrines namely, Mahavir who has been rightly called as greatest apostle of Ahimsa with his non-

violence was the highest religion and concept of live and let live the golden rule of all human conduct. And Anekantvada strong weapon in armoury of Jainism, it can uproot our differences on matter how ever deep set they are. The view paves the way to establish the global peace and washes away waspishness of persons and nations.

Talking about Ahimsa, this doctrine has attracted the attention of entire globe due to its successful application in liberating India from foreign domination. The doctrine of non-violence, therefore, is the unique and most sublime contribution of Jainism to humanity. Unless there is first inner disturbance i.e. mental violence arising in our mind, there cannot be physical violence. So our hearts and mind must be kept pure and unsullied, so Ahimsa according to Mahavira means universal love. No violent act originates in a kind or pure heart and mind. Just as anger begets anger, violence breeds violence, passion feeds on itself. So Mahavira advised his followers first to control violent thoughts and desires before they manifest themselves into violent deeds and acts. Lord Mahavira, the greatest apostle of non-violence has founded his rule of Non-violence on basic human values such as love and kindness, and as such this rule is not only eternal and universal, but realistic, though opportunist or pleasure seeker may try to put forth some lame excuse or other for its breach. Mahavir taught to live fearlessly by waning devilish selfish instinct and to live in peace and harmony with the external world and its objects.

Mahatma Gandhi said "Non violence is not a cloistered virtue confined to sages and cave dwellers. It is law of human existence. So rule of non-violence can be properly developed and extended to the domain of ethics, economics, politics, administration, international commerce by introducing moral values as factors underlying this Rule of Non-violence, truth, honesty, charity, tolerance, forbearance and other human virtues are only the corollaries flowing naturally by extension of this fundamental rule of non-violence cum love to various walks of life." So even in this scientifically advanced age, this rule, if followed both in letter and spirit, would facilitate the establishment of peace and happiness in the globe on this planet earth as one unit.