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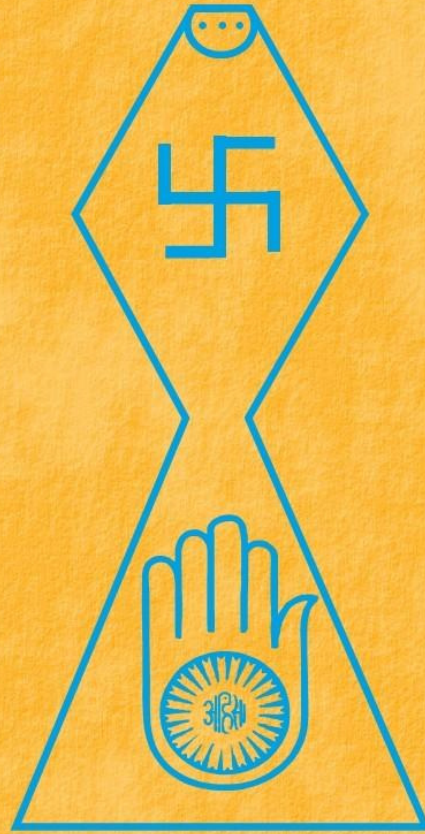
ISJS - TRANSACTIONS

A Quarterly Refereed Online Research Journal on Jainism

VOL.2

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July - September, 2018



International School for Jain Studies

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From the Desk of Chief Editor

It is my pleasure to present this third issue of the 2nd volume of “ISJS-Transactions”. There are five papers in the issue - all written by participants of 6-Week Jain studies program (ISSJS.2018-6W) organised by International School for Jain Studies, New Delhi. These papers formed a part of their study program.

The first paper by Dr. Elisa Eastwood Pulido is on *The Practice of Jain Women and Instruction of Religious Principles in Domestic Households*. The paper is based on some personal interviews of Jain laywomen conducted by her. During the interview Dr. Elisa raised number of issues to the interviewees about Jain way of life. These interviews form the basis of her research to present the current social status of female Jain householders.

The second paper by Dr. John Thomas Mobley is on *Ahimsā: A World-Wide Practice for the Modern Age*. To prove how *ahimsā* is still relevant today, the author includes an overview (theory and practice) of *ahimsic* philosophy in Jainism and the four major religious traditions of the world (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism).

The third paper by Atmarpit Devang is on *The Three Jewels*. The author highlighted the importance of *samyak-darśana* while discussing the *samyak-darśana*, *samyak-jñāna* and *samyak-cāritra* in the path of attaining Liberation. The author further discusses the role of *satsaṅga* (spiritual gathering) and the *sadguru* (awakened master) in the path.

The fourth paper by Atmarpit Shraddha is on *The Celebration of the Soul: An Analysis of Daśalakṣaṇa Dharma with special reference to Uttama Kṣamā*. The paper begins with importance of the festivals in our life followed by highlighting the importance of Supreme Forbearance in the path of spiritual purification. The author tries to emphasize to correlate appreciation -*pramoda bhāva*, acceptance- *sama bhāva*, adaption-*anekāntavāda*), alertness-*jāgrti* and adorableness- *maitrī bhāva* as the tools for practice of forbearance.

The last paper by Ms. Neha Patel is on ‘*Are Aparigraha and Meditation mutually exclusive or inclusive in the path of self-realisation?*’ This paper discusses the basic concepts of *aparigraha*, meditation and self-realization. The paper starts with an overview of *aparigraha* and meditation in different schools of philosophy followed by analysis of their relevance. She also put forth viewpoints of her Guru Shri Rakeshbhai and Shrimad Rajchandra. She lays out the model of *aparigraha* for self-realisation as a tool and how mediation can be woven into it to practice and experience it.

This issue is the outcome of the initiative of our Chairman Dr. Shugan C. Jain, Dr. Shrinetra

THIS ISSUE IS THE OUTCOME OF THE INITIATIVE OF OUR CHAIRMAN DR. SHUGAN C JAIN. DR. SHRINEETA Pandey did a superb job to ensure quality of the five papers by deep interactions with the authors. Our thanks are due to Mr. Sushil Jana and Ms. Jyoti Pandey for word processing. Because of the norm for our journal to publish five papers only, we could not include all the articles in this issue. We plan to publish remaining articles in forthcoming issues of ISJS-Transactions.

This special issue intends to encourage budding scholars of Jainism and scholar-readers to enhance their scholarship and research in Jainism.

Prof. Prakash C Jain

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The Practice of Jain Women and Instruction of Religious Principles in Domestic Households

Elisa Eastwood Pulido *

There has been a dramatic rise in the number of young Jain teens recently deciding to take ascetic vows. It would therefore appear that though numbers of Jains are not rising in the world, Jains do not lack in their ability to inspire an enthusiastic support for ascetic Jainism among many of their young sons and daughters. Jain youth who become ascetics and those who do not are generally both reared in Jain households where Jain principles are inculcated. This paper was written in response to the following questions: How are female Jain householders involved in the transmission of Jain doctrine and practice to children in their homes? What pedagogical techniques do they use as parents? What challenges do they face in transmitting Jainism to a new generation in the 21st century? While there has been some academic research/writing about the religious practices of female Jain householders, there is paucity of research about the domestic lives of Jain householders.

This brief paper will offer a modest beginning to this fascinating topic. My methodology has been ethnographic; I interviewed ten Jain female householders in my exploration. These women come from both Śvetāmbara (60%) and Digambara (40%) households and range in age from their early twenties to their late sixties. This age range has allowed a view of householder religious pedagogy from the early 1900s into the current century. These histories were recorded in the Digambara Jain Nasiya Bhattarakji in Jaipur and the Vallabh Jain Smarak Mandir in Alipur, Delhi. All my interview subjects were women. However, if other family, including husbands, wished to take part in the interview, I allowed this participation. Names of the respondent have been changed to maintain the confidentiality. This policy may have inhibited the responses of wives, but could possibly have enhanced my study, as it allowed me to hear a few responses from male householders, as well. As a matter of expediency, I limited my focus to the teaching of Jainism's three pillars - *ahimsā* (non-violence), *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness), and *anekāntavāda* (non-absolutism).

Thesis: This short treatment posits that, as in the past, spiritual pedagogy in Jain households

...most Jain householders, as in the past, spiritual pedagogy in Jain households is largely accomplished through example, story-telling, brief moments of instruction, and the help of local institutions/camps for the instruction of children; however, female Jain householders do report some difficulty transmitting Jain doctrine and praxis to Jain youth due to 1) the increasing materialism and rationalism in the surrounding society, and 2) the increasing number of inter-sect and inter-faith marriages within Jainism.

Mothers on Mothers and Mothering

The memories Jain female householders have regarding the piety of their own mothers and grandmothers echo the many stories within Jain scripture and legend recounting the virtue and selflessness of Jain female householders. For example, Ācārya Prabhachandra, in his commentary on *Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra* narrates how Abhinanditā, wife of King Śrīṣeṇa achieves a higher spiritual position due to her irreproachable conduct.¹ Marudevī, mother of Rṣabha, the first *tīrthankara*, was so pious, she achieved *mokṣa* the moment she realized her

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son had become a *tīrthankara*. She is considered by Śvetāmbara to be the first to achieve enlightenment during the time cycle in which she lived.²

Modern reports of virtuous women can also be found. Gandhi's mother for example, was a model of piety - fasting, practicing non-violence with the tiniest creatures, visiting *ācāryas* and honoring householder vows.³ The fact that she reared a son dedicated to the service and elevation of humanity at the level of Gandhi underscores her gifts as a mother.

Teaching Ahimsā by Example and by Precept

In teaching the doctrine of *ahimsā*, subjects remember their mothers' instructions, as well as the examples they set practicing domestic rituals, caring for animals, and avoiding harm to the tiniest of creatures. An interview subject named Sunita responded:

You ask how these things were imbibed in my family? Because [of] my mother. She's not a *sādhvī* (nun), but she is more than that. Supposing she'd see a wounded animal, she'd bring that animal and drop, drop water with a little spoon, feeding. Then she'll go outside, if some cart will come to fetch the stray dogs about, she'll say you don't kill them, please don't take them from my street. We'll take care of them. Please, they won't bite. Then small, small puppies. She'll take milk and *roṭī* and she'll sit with them....With every human, every creature so compassionate. That has given us love and affection and happiness in our lives.⁴

Jain women also remember the careful attention of their mothers to protect even the tiniest organisms:

In Jainism the first thing in the morning when the ladies go to the kitchen, they clean the stove—the hotplate....because even the minutest creature or microorganisms which [might] grow out of food [crumbs] should not be killed. That is the first ritual they follow. Even the water has so many micro organisms. so you put a cloth on the water

tap [to] filter those micro organisms, which might come through the water. You don't hurt them....*Ahimsā* was taught giving such small, small examples. This also was taught-that you have to be kind to animals and have compassion towards fellow creature[s].⁵

In teaching her own children the principle of *ahimsā*, Amrita of Alipur responded:

If somebody abuses you and if you do the same there is no difference between you and them....You should have your own identity. You should not abuse....We should not say anything wrong which hurts the other person. That's what I taught my kids.⁶

When asked how the practice of *ahimsā* in the home contributed to the peace between family members, respondent Arati, a recently married woman living in an extended family in Jagaduri agreed that the harmony of the home was influenced by this practice.

Yes....We have many people in our home. [30 people]

[At this point the subject's husband, Rahul, interjected]

Of course, we....become impatient with each other at times, but I can say our parents – it all belongs to our parents – They always try to keep us calm. They say—all this is

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happening because you are living in joint family. But of course, this will go away. You have to face the problems.

[Wife, continues]

I can say it all belongs to our elders, what behavior they do. They are very calm. His mother is calm especially. Father I cannot say much, but mother is really very calm, and they try keeping us calm.⁷

When asked if the responsibility for calm rests on the mother, Rahul immediately replied, "Yes, of course. Family starts from the woman only." Arati willingly echoed his sentiments: "Yes. Yes, it is."⁸

Amrita, a tutor, described her restraint in her relationship with her sister-in-law:

I try to keep the kitchen very neat and clean, but my sister-in-law....makes a lot of mess. So sometimes I get aggressive, but I don't say her anything and I keep in my mind only....I have not ever uttered a bad word to her....my whole marri[ed] life. We have cold war [when] I don't talk to her for a couple of days, as I feel like sometimes she [purposely] does the things which I don't like, so I ignore talking to her, but I never spit out any bad word....If I feel like it, I'll clean it up, but if I don't, I won't utter a single word.⁹

Prity, a professor of chemistry stated that the principle of *ahimsā* is applied by some couples to their own relationships, as evidenced by the following statements:

Ahimsā never hurts someone by words ... Sav we plan for a movie and suddenly he

...[he] never hits someone by accident, he plans for it and he suddenly he has work and doesn't go. You are ready, and you planned for that and it is not happening and so you are aggressive, and you are cranky. He handles me. Normally our fighting [is] not more than five or ten minutes. If someone is cranky....[or] someone is aggressive, then someone is cooler. We are never aggressive at the same time. If he is angry then I am cooler and if I am angry he is cooler. So, we manage our temperament.¹⁰

Like any husband and wife relationship, it can never exist without any arguments. Without differences of opinions, but there are ways of solving. And that would be again very individualistic. [For example], my husband would prefer to take 'mauna', which is silence, when he thinks there is going to be an argument. My mother-in-law says it is better to keep quiet when you have that intuitive feeling of some tension arising. So, these are some small things which people keep practicing in my house, which are all drawn from Jain tradition.¹¹

When you are committed to *ahimsā*, when tolerance and compassion are inculcated in any family it brings a lot of peace into the family, basically. Your relationship with mother, daughter, son, the other person or how you look at the other person. I'm not talking about violence, that is another part of the story, but I think it brings a breath of compassion towards each other.¹²

According to one young academic householder living in a combined household, *ahimsā* also means not interfering with the dreams and goals of other family members:

Ahimsā is also living in equanimity....We have given a lot of scope to every family member to [realize] their own path. No one stops anyone. My father in law is in his

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own business. He has never discouraged me or my husband not to....study, not to go out. He has never imposed anything. My mother-in-law is president, an executive member/treasurer, of several women's organizations....so she has all the ability to pursue what she wants. There are no hurdles for her.

It's a joint family and there is a generation gap. There are disagreements in our viewpoints, but we try to sit and sort out. It's never been that we have fought. Compared to Indian families where the tensions between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law are quite intense, I'm very fortunate to say that in twenty-two years we have never had that kind of tension. We have a lot of differences in our viewpoints. [My mother-in-law] doesn't really like me living [out of town]. She loves me so much that she wants me to come back to Jaipur to do my studies. Why stay away from your family? Why stay away from your home? But [though] that difference of opinion is there....that doesn't mean we have ever fought or that we have gone to bed without speaking to each other.¹³

Teaching Aparigraha by Example and by Precept

The Jain precept *aparigraha*, or non-possessiveness was interpreted with more liberality by several householder than was their interpretation of *ahimsā*. Some householders interpreted *aparigraha* in terms of non-acquisitiveness – the refusal to buy new objects or to accept gifts, while others allowed themselves to purchase what they want, as long as they keep gifting their excess to those in need. Those who remember their own mother's behavior surrounding

aparigraha remember simple living and self-restraint.

[My mother] is a person of simple living. She doesn't believe in stocking too much. She believes in giving it away to people. So *aparigraha* is basically not accumulating more than what you require. You may take as much as you need. So that I have taught my children, too....You don't need to waste things. Resources should be for everyone.... They wouldn't understand the concept of accumulation of wealth, but they would understand that there are limited resources and they should be made available to everyone. That kind of thing would speak to them.

Another woman expresses her different view:

Actually, I don't think too much about *aparigraha* to be honest. I'm very fond of things. I'm fond of so many clothes. I've always preferred the latest and the best thing to be used. Yes, but I always prefer this-If I buy something new for myself, two clothes for myself, then I should give two clothes from my wardrobe to the person who requires it-not in a bad condition, but in a very good condition....That kind of *aparigraha* I can do, otherwise I don't teach that-don't use this much, only take this much, because [I] myself [am] not like this, so I cannot teach [it to] my kids.¹⁴

Her son nevertheless has learned to be generous:

If he sees any rickshaw wālā. He sees that he is asking for the ten rupees, he always tries to give 20 rupees. He never bargains with the rickshaw wālā. He never bargains with the poor people.

There were other examples mentioned in the process of limiting possessions, including the number of saris owned and the number of toys allowed to children. One family required four children to share only one toy.¹⁵ There were also extraordinary instances of self-sacrifice

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related. For example, an elder sister remained single and worked diligently to pay for the weddings of five younger sisters before getting married herself.¹⁶

Aparigraha also is seen as applying to the relationship between husbands and wives, particularly in respect for each other's careers and in caring for home and family. One female householder reported that she had been invited to the United States to participate in an academic conference. As her son was still very young, she wrote a letter to the inviting university politely refusing the invitation. Her husband saw the letter on the table and asked why she would not go. When she explained she felt she needed to stay home with her child, her husband exclaimed, "What? So, I can leave my son with you, but you cannot leave your son with me!"¹⁷

Teaching Anekāntavāda—Non-absolutism—by Example and by Precept

Several householders were confused by the term '*anekāntavāda*' - a Jain philosophical term for the practice of non-absolutism or being open-minded to a multi-faceted perspective. When given the definition, the householder recognized it generally as a Jain principle and most were able to come up with several examples of how *anekāntavāda* is practiced in their homes and were quite philosophical themselves in their responses:

homes, and more quite philosophical themselves in their responses.

When I was growing up I came to university I had never heard of *anekāntavāda*. But living in a Jain family, [though] they never talked about it,...they practiced certain things. My father would go to Hindu shrines and Muslims shrines. He was so open about going anywhere. Anything spiritual. He would go to a Jain temple if it came in his way. He never said, oh I'm a Jain I can't do that. There was a lot of respect for different religions and religious traditions. And we had friends from different backgrounds. Jains do this today. Jains also go to Hindu temples, because Jains have lived together culturally for centuries. In one building there might be one Jain and a hundred Hindu families. So, mixing with Hindu families is a very natural thing. Mixing with your neighbors, attending common festivals.¹⁸

There are cases where *anekāntavāda* is more difficult to practice. One interviewee discussed the difficulties of living with a sister-in-law, who is not Jain and who does not follow Jain rules in the home. Nevertheless, she allowed her sister-in-law to have her own perspective: "I cannot force her to follow it because she's from other family and two sisters are not same from one mother, so how can we, two sisters-in-law, be the same from other mothers."¹⁹

Not all the householders interviewed are able to apply the principle of *anekāntavāda* at home as well as they are with the rest of the world. One, pursuing a degree in Jain Studies said that *anekāntavāda* was a philosophical principle her family does not understand. "They don't use [this principle] to solve difficulties. They shout, I shout, everyone shouts. [My] grandmother [keeps] quiet. She just didn't get involved. I practice *anekāntavāda*, but when I'm with my family I forget *anekāntavāda*."²⁰

On occasion, a young householder needs to yield to the opinion of an older householder. For example, a new bride may need to acquiesce to the desires of her family about working after childbirth or after marriage. One such interview subject is taking care of her children and her sister-in-law's children, though she has an advanced degree in Chemistry. Her father-in-law is disabled and unable to work, so, for the time being, she has yielded to her mother-in-law's desire that she not work.²¹ Yielding to the opinions of senior house members is a practice taught to young Jain women.

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Once I was arguing with my grandmother. And my mom was cooking in the kitchen, and she heard me arguing with my grandmother which is impolite, which is disrespectful to argue with your grandmother. So, she came out of the kitchen and she told me, next time I don't want to hear you arguing with your grandmother. It's her point of view, just accept what she says. You have to be respectful to her. I was becoming aggressive. So, she stopped me.²²

Another interview subject has a degree in computer science and would like to work; however, her husband has taken over the family business-manufacturing silverware-which necessitated a move to a rural area. Though she would like a job in her field of study, none is available in the vicinity. Out of respect for her father-in-law's desire that her husband run the family business, she is looking for a job in computing she can do from home.²³

Story Telling as a Pedagogical Tool

Story telling is a time-honored tradition in Jainism; *ācārya* and *gurus* have used the same didactic tales to teach Jain principles for millennia. My interview subjects remember being told Jain tales by grandmothers and reading Jain comic books as children. A 1975 imprint of AKC, relates the life of Mahāvīra, another recounts the tale of “*Sahastramalla*”, a trickster and thief who steals from everyone, even the king, but is eventually brought to repentance through the teachings of a monk. The virtues extolled in this tale include: honesty, repentance, and forgiveness. Another, titled “The Magic Grove” tells about a young *gopī*, who protects a snake from snake charmers. The snake is a *devī* in disguise, who grants Vidyutaprabha a boon, which changes her life forever. The morals of this tale include protecting animals from *himsā* and avoiding jealousy.²⁴ In recent years, cartoon videos for Jain children have appeared on the Internet, though this fact was not mentioned by any of the Jain householders I interviewed. Further research would need to be done to determine how often Jain children are exposed to this programming.

Extended Family Members as Preceptors

While I have been using the term “mothers” for most householders, some of the householders I interviewed are not mothers, though they do live in extended families where children are present. These householders are often involved in the teaching of children. Additionally, they report that on occasion extended family members and not their mothers were their main spiritual teachers during childhood.

My grandmother and aunts,...would visit every year. Whenever they would come they talk[ed] about Jain religion. Once a year we would visit Jain monks and nuns. I didn't have very strong Jain training as a child. I was mostly surrounded by Hindu communities, though my family members were Jains....I grew up in Calcutta – nuns would come for *cāturmāsa* – for four months – rainy seasons – July through November. [I] went with grandmother or mother to visit these nuns. As children we hardly [ever did] any practices.

Oftentimes husbands, too, will share in the spiritual guidance of children, and several interview subjects reported that they were taught Jainism by their fathers and grandfathers.²⁵ In one home, a homeless Hindu boy came to live with a Jain family in his youth. He was cared for and educated by the Jain family. He still lives with this family, cooking for and taking care of their needs. He is married, and his wife has also joined the extended family

along with their two children. Though neither the man nor his wife have become Jains, they live Jain principles in this home and they attend a Jain temple and listen to the monks there with the rest of the family. The children are lovingly regarded by all members of the family, who demonstrate to them how to live Jain practices.²⁶

Community supports

Female householders did mention attending *pāṭhaśālā* schools during summer vacation as children. There they learned about Jain principles. Jain householders participate in the running of some of these schools. Shivani Bothra is currently completing her dissertation on the participation of Jain female householders in religious schools and camps for children - a valuable study, which will shed more light on the pedagogical roles of female householders.

Shrimad Rajchandra Mission runs schools teaching Jainism to Jain children ages four to sixteen in a program called “Divine Touch”. Though none of my interview subjects mentioned sending their children to these schools, according to his website there are 230 centers worldwide.²⁷ According to Neha Patel, a member of the Shrimad Rajchandra Mission, householders can apply to be trained as teachers for this program, known as Divine Touch.²⁸

Jains seem to prefer to fall back on the strength and wisdom learned in their own childhood homes or the wisdom of matriarchs within the families into which they are married. No interview subject mentioned receiving parenting advice from a *guru*. It is possible that, like some Catholic critics, many Jains would be unwilling to take parenting advice from a spiritual guide, who has never had children him or herself. However, more research would need to be done before such a determination could be made.

Challenges

According to the interview subjects, teaching compassion and non-violence seem to be the easiest of the Jain principles to inculcate into the next generation. Children do not seem to question the necessity of incorporating these virtues into their lives. However, contemporary parents still find teaching children to follow the Jain principles they themselves were raised with challenging. Amisha, an architect with her own architectural firm, states: “We could not inculcate our practice as much as they did (her parents and her husband’s parents).²⁹ When asked which principles were the most difficult to teach, the householders gave a variety of responses generally fell into three categories: the influences of the surrounding society, 21st century rationalism, and gender issues within Jainism.

Societal Influences

Teen-aged Jains are particularly influenced by the global night culture adopted by many youth and young adults. This comes into conflict with the Jain rule that one must eat before sunset. This rule is also difficult for young persons attending university and working at the same time. Parents would rather see their children eat than not. One university student reported that she has made a year-round eight o’clock eating vow for herself. In the winter the sun has set by the time she eats, but in the summer it has not. This vow has allowed her to find a peaceful solution to navigating her work/study/eating schedule.³⁰

Young people also have difficulty finding Jain food to eat when out with their friends. One householder reported that her children find it impossible to find food without onions and garlic.³¹ Another householder has decided that this rule is antiquated and should no longer

apply to Jains. She chooses to ignore its application.³² A third householder said that not eating root vegetables can cause problems for Hindu children eating alongside her own and that, in her opinion, it does violence to the self-esteem of the Hindu child to imply that she or he is killers over their lunch food.³³

Professor Prakash C Jain, Emeritus fellow in Sociology at Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi claims that media watching has influenced Jain women in particular in their expectations for a future life.³⁴ One householder confirmed this view by stating that her daughter has much larger wardrobes than she was allowed as a child.³⁵ Another householder

confirmed that when she visits Jain homes, there is usually one child in a bedroom and that this bedroom is stuffed with possessions.³⁶

One mother opined: “The hardest is teaching to go barefoot to the temple. When it’s very hot, they can’t. When it’s very cold, they can’t. That is the hardest thing.”³⁷ This mother feels that flexibility should be allowed in the teaching of Jainism to children. “They should love and enjoy it.” And despite her misgivings about having children attend the temple barefoot in inclement weather, she successfully persisted in teaching her son to go to the temple. “He goes twice to the temple (daily). Then we do *pūjā* with clean clothes.”³⁸

Rationalism

Another mother found rote learning of rituals difficult for her children:

The hardest Jain principle today is to follow rituals. Like to read the *śloka*? that would be one basic thing which my children won’t know....Children today, don’t want to learn things unless you give them a scientific....reasoning....If you tell them something humanitarian they will understand. They will help with a sick animal or a sick person. They want to give something back to the society, but if you tell them to go to the temple and do ritual or do idol worship or something like that, or you read the *śloka* of the Jains [they won’t do it].³⁹

Well-educated children of equally well-educated householders tend to demand rational, scientific explanations for religious practices. While scientific explanations for *bhakti* worship may be more difficult to provide than faith-based practices, the Jain pillars themselves and many daily living practices can be shown to have logical, fact-based benefits:

With my parents it was like at six you stop eating. After sunset you can’t eat, but we were not told the logic behind it as much. But today, science says that you need to rest the digestive system. So, when you eat earlier, and you don’t eat later, you become healthier. So even the smaller things of Jainism, if they are actually taught with reasoning to the children today, then they will accept the principles more easily. So, I think that Jainism that is taught today needs to be taught with reasoning.⁴⁰

Gender Issues

Sociologist Prakash Jain reports that the results of a recent survey on gender issues finds a significant gap in the male to female ratio for Jains in India. This gap reflects biases favoring the birth of a male child in all religions throughout India, except Christianity. Dr. Jain attributes this imbalance to female feticide among Jains, which is surprising, as Jains protect even the life of one-sensed organisms. Obviously, not all Jains are practicing female feticide, but the practice continues among enough Jains to cause risk to Jainism as a whole. Reasons

for this practice among Jains are similar to those used by other Indians, and include: the avoidance of dowry (though Jains are not said to support this practice), a rising number of female renunciants (3:1 ratio, women to men), and, prestige associated with the birth of a male child.⁴¹

How does this impact householder teaching of religious values? As we have seen women—play a significant role in the religious instruction of children. Jain men, unable to find a Jain wife may resort to inter-sect, inter-religious marriages. Dr. Prakash Jain says this situation has a deleterious effect on marriages. Within this small study of ten householder women, qualitative, if not quantitative evidence has corroborated this fact, at least in terms of the transmission of Jainism to future generations. A Jain householder reported that her Digambara mother, who married a Śvetāmbara, gave up on much of the Jainism learned from her parents. As a result, many rituals and household practices were lost to the next generation. And, as previously noted, in a household with two wives, one Jain and one Hindu, no instruction in Jainism was given to the daughter of the Hindu wife and the Jain child was deprived of the spiritual guidance of an aunt. Although, according to Dr. Jain, some men are paying for Hindu wives to be trained in Jainism, it would be difficult to imagine that such training can replace generations of accumulated Jain householder practices learned over time at home.

There may be reason to hope, however. Despite the fact that the Jain Digambara gave up on much of her Digambara practice, her daughter reported that she still practiced much of a general Jain lifestyle, such as not eating potatoes and eggs and keeping the home clean and dry to discourage the breeding of insects:

[In my house] we took care of water, turned off [the] fan, tried to save electricity. My mother used minimum water and didn't use [the] shower. She didn't even wash in the wash basin....The fifth, eighth and fourteenth day [of the month we eat] no vegetables....[My mother] never bought a sari, she just wore gifts.⁴²

Additionally, throughout history, other religions have survived despite having to replace female believers with non-practicing women, such as the Jewish slaves, who were sent to the German Rhineland by Roman officials, where they married German women, thus giving rise to two millennia of Ashkenazi Judaism. One has more sympathy with the Jewish slaves, as the loss of Jewish women was not due to female feticide.

There are prejudices against women throughout Indian society, and though Jains generally rejoice in the birth of a daughter and educate her well, there is still prestige associated with the birth of a son, who is seen as more able of supporting his parents than a daughter. One interview subject, the eldest of five sisters, felt this prejudice acutely.

I'm the eldest, but because we were six sisters and my father was an upper division clerk..., so many times, I used to listen to "if a boy would have been born, he would have done like this and he would have done like this," I thought, Okay, I'm not a boy, it doesn't matter. But I can do what a boy would have done. So, I used to do the outer activity also. Supposing my younger sister was to be admitted in any school, so I took her to the school. Supposing somebody [was] ill, I'd take him or her, or even my grandfather to the hospital. And I stayed there with my grandfather.

In a lecture at the International Summer School for Jain Studies, sociologist Prakash Jain reported that a mere 12% of Jain women have entered the workforce. In my narrow pool of

subjects, 80% of the women were working. Nevertheless, Jain women often exhaust themselves with the responsibilities of work and home and family. Sneha, a translator of

Prakrit and Apabhramśa in Jaipur reported that, at sixty years of age, she still rises at five each day to make breakfast for her disabled husband, her sons and their families before she goes to work. At five she returns home to begin making dinner and do household chores, finally having a few moments to herself at eight o'clock in the evening, before going to bed. The next morning she begins it all again. Her two sons pay expenses of the family, but Sneha continues to work very hard to provide for her retirement and the retirement of her husband.

One wonders at the continued prejudice against women in Indian society, when they have contributed so much to so many. At a lecture at the International School for Jain Studies at the Jain temple in Jaipur, Professor Kusum Jain gave a lecture on *anekāntavāda*. “The biggest complaint in life that all of us have, the biggest source of suffering is – “nobody understands me”If I give the feeling that I understand you, this is the biggest gift you can give to anyone. Indian women will cook, take care of home and children and they are tired and the husband comes and if he simply says you must be tired, 90% will forget their tiredness. All they need is this....*Anekāntavāda* teaches this. This is the biggest non-violence.”⁴³ It could well be asked if the current influx of female renunciants is inspired by female householders who hope for their daughters to transcend to a better life than they themselves have led.

Conclusion

In this brief treatment, I have attempted to look at domestic pedagogies used by Jains in the transmission of Jain teachings to children. I have stated that Jain female householders rely on child training methods learned from the examples of mothers, grandmothers, and aunts, but they may also use storybooks, community courses for children and practical instructional moments to teach the Jain way of life. I have also stated that the transmission of Jainism to the next generation is challenged by materialism in the surrounding culture, global media, a desire on the part of younger Jains for rational, critical thought to be applied to the principles of Jainism, and a gender imbalance.

The educational level of the Jain women I communicated with is highly impressive. There can be no doubt of their ability to find rational, scientific reasons for the practice of Jainism in their homes, nor should observers despair that such a task must be undertaken, as all religions must reinterpret themselves each generation in order to remain relevant in a changing world. Given the Jain notion that only that which is real changes and given Jainism's history of survival for several thousand years, both as a religion and a people, Jains are clearly up to the task.

Of more concern is how Jains might elevate the status of females and also the status of householder women. (In this I do not mean to negate or disparage the contributions of female ascetics, this paper nonetheless, has focused on the role of female householders.) It is evident that individual Jains honor their own mothers, but what about the status of female householders in general? Many Jain women have proven their academic prowess and their business acumen as well. In addition to their intellectual and occupational abilities, these women need to be collectively valued for their roles as householders. The future of Jainism may depend upon it.

Rabindranath Tagore's take on the renunciation of the Buddha provides an interesting metaphor for the plight of all female householders in India, whether Jain or not.

At the dead of night, the aspirant resolved “I must leave my home and seek my God. Who has beguiled me and kept me here?” God whispered, “I.” But the would-be ascetic heard it not. Seeing his wife fast asleep, her babe clasped to her breast, he muttered, “What are you if not a snare?” God whispered, “Naught else but I,” but none was there to heed. Leaving his bed, he cried, “Where art thou, O Lord?” “Here,” came the reply. He heeded not. The child wailed in [her] dreams pulling at [her] mother. God commanded, “Turn back”. The ascetic ignored the behest. God sighed and said, “Alas where is my devotee straying, deserting me.”⁴⁴

For a moment, can imagine of the wife of Siddhārtha Gautama as representative of all Indian female householders, and her child as India’s infant daughters, and, we can also imagine the Buddha as the rest of society, undervaluing the role of India’s females. With this understanding, Tagore’s imagined voice of God makes utter sense; God is present in the form of the female householder and her daughter. Those who understand, elevate, and appreciate, this kind of householder “holiness” achieve a kind of “feminist” realization that ensures the future of their families and their faiths.

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Ahimsā: A World-Wide Practice for the Modern Age

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Introduction

When we look around the world, we can see that all is not well: inequality, social issues, terrorism, and moral depravity. These problems were also there in the past, yet they have become intensified in modern times. The current global strategy is obviously not working; there must be an alternative paradigm, an alternative scheme. Many great spiritual traditions, spiritual masters, and progressive leaders have proposed an alternative way of living: through *ahimsā* in Action.

In Jainism, the understanding (principle) and implementation (practice) of *ahimsā* is more comprehensive than in any other religion. The entire essence of the Jain teachings can be condensed into three cardinal principles (*ahimsā*, *anekānta* and *aparigraha*), and at an even more fundamental level, all three can be understood through *ahimsā* in itself. It is both the central tenant of the philosophical aspects of Jainism, as well as the core practice. Although non-Jains often correlate *ahimsā* with avoiding only the grossest forms of physical harm such as murder or physical violence, the scope of *ahimsā* is actually so much more.

In the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*, the oldest Jain scripture, the 24th and last *tīrthaṅkara* Mahāvīra, asserted that:

The *arhats* and *bhagavatas* [Omniscients] of the past, present, and future, all say thus, speak thus, declare thus, and explain thus: all breathing, existing living, sentient creatures should not be slain, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away.¹

That which you consider worth destroying is (like) yourself.
That which you consider worth disciplining is (like) yourself.
That which you consider worth subjugating is (like) yourself.
That which you consider worth killing is (like) yourself.
The result of actions by you has to be borne by you, so do not destroy anything.²

These lines by the great *tīrthaṅkaras* convey the quintessence of the practice of non-violence. To fully understand *ahimsā*, it is helpful to view the principle from the perspectives of both ourselves and others. What we value as good and important for ourselves should be extended to others. I value myself; likewise, all other beings value themselves. I don't want violence upon myself; likewise, others do not want violence upon themselves. I have a right to live, and others have a right to live. I have a right to evolve, and thus others have a right to evolve. This broad perspectival view is the foundation for the broader *ahimsic* principle and sets the tone for the religion preached by the Jain *tīrthaṅkaras*.

Ahimsā in the Major Religious Traditions

In addition to Jainism, most religious traditions around the world have recommended a non-violent approach towards life and living, albeit at varying degrees. To fully understand the relevance of *ahimsā* in the modern world, it is helpful to understand how and to what extent

ahimsā fits into the belief systems of the four major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.³

Christianity and Non-violence

As the Israelites approached the Promised Land after 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, hundreds of years before Jesus, their leaders advocated a law of retribution as a way to punish evil-doers. 'Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, and foot for foot' became the law of the land.⁴ The ancient leaders of the Israeli nation did not advise these measures to advocate violence per se, but instead, these laws were provided as a reduction mechanism, a way to control the violence of the mobs.⁵

Centuries later, Jesus ushered in a new paradigm of non-violence. His new interpretations of the ancient laws were not to oppose the Laws of the Old Testament, but rather to present the path to Salvation. One important focus of his teachings was on reducing inter-human violence. A telling example of this is given in his 'Sermon on the Mount':

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles."⁶

This depth of non-violence showed his immense compassion for all mankind. Even after his ascension into Heaven, Jesus' moral precepts of non-violence and compassion were extended through the Missionary work of his Disciples. Some examples include:

- Excerpts from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans, guiding the gentiles to Salvation: "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."⁷
- A letter from Paul to the Thessalonians was written to encourage and reassure the Christians there: "Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else."⁸
- And a letter from the Apostle Peter, by then a Bishop, was written to various churches in Asia Minor which were suffering religious persecution at the time: "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it."⁹

These scriptural references exhibit the substantial emphasis that Jesus and his disciples laid on inter-human non-violence, which has continued into modern times. In modern history, there are pacifistic movements in Christianity who refuse to go to war, such as the Quakers, Amish, Mennonites, and the Church of the Brethren. In the Catholic tradition, the Popes have traditionally upheld peace and non-violence, as evidenced throughout history.¹⁰ The present Pope Francis recently made the appeal to all Christians for peace:

"Our world is being torn apart by wars and violence...In various countries, conflicts and

old divisions from the past are re-emerging. I especially ask Christians in communities throughout the world to offer a radiant and attractive witness of fraternal communion. Let everyone admire how you care for one another, and how you encourage and accompany one another.”¹¹

However, from a purely scriptural perspective, the practice of non-violence is limited to only human interactions. Killing an animal or other living being for consumption is not viewed as a sin in itself. In ‘Genesis,’ God grants humanity ‘dominion’ over the Earth: ‘God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground”.’¹² This verse comprises what is called the ‘Cultural Mandate,’ the divine injunction in which God - after having created the world and all beings within it - bestows upon mankind the task of filling, subduing, and ruling over the earth. In this conventional interpretation, non-violence does not extend to animals or other living beings. Alternatively, though rarely discussed, the Cultural Mandate could be interpreted as ‘to protect’ or ‘a responsibility to preserve’ these beings, rather than ‘to use and consume’ them. This is a question worth pursuing further.

It can also be noted that in addition to *ahimsā*, Christ also speaks to the other jewels of Jainism. About *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness), he said: “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”¹³ Through this verse, Jesus addresses the inverse relationship between possessiveness and spiritual potential, implying that those who live simply and eschew money and possessions beyond their basic requirements will be much more in tune with spirituality and its Heavenly rewards.

Anekāntavāda (the multi-faceted reality, or the concept of relativity) can also be found in Jesus’ key teachings, such as in the verse which has become the modern ‘Golden Rule’: “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”¹⁴ In essence, this verse guides the seeker to themselves determine what is morally right by sympathizing with others. The seeker understands what is right by opening their heart to the other being, not by consulting religious scripture or some expert. Thus, this teaching is relativist rather than objectivist, and places the seeker himself at the center of his own reality and understanding.

Islam and Non-violence

Like Christianity, Islam is another of the Abrahamic religions originating in the Middle East. Both trace their descent from the practices of the ancient Israelites and worship of the God of Abraham. Through its core teachings, the Islamic tradition also respects the sanctity of life. In the *Quran*, it is stated: “We decreed...that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind. And whoever saves one, it is as if he had saved mankind entirely.”¹⁵ The Prophet Muhammad discouraged violence whenever was possible and often suffered personal physical harm rather than retaliating against his oppressors.¹⁶

An interesting example of the legacy of non-violence in Islam is that of Abdul Ghaffar Khan (nicknamed Bacha Khan), a dear friend of Gandhi and a Pashtun Muslim. Inspired by ahimsic principles, Khan founded a nonviolent resistance organization for Muslims called the *Khudāi Khidmatagāra* ('Servants of God'). He told his more than 100,000 followers, "I am going to give you such a weapon that the police and the army will not be able to stand against it. It is the weapon of the Prophet, but you are not aware of it. That weapon is patience and righteousness. No power on earth can stand against it."¹⁷ Inspired by the Indian National

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Congress and the charismatic spiritual-political leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, The Servants of God organization blossomed during the non-violent civil disobedience movement and were essential to the Mahatma's early efforts to oppose the British Raj in India with a non-violent, multi-faith, unified front.¹⁸

In contemporary culture, the Arabic word "Jihad" is often understood as 'holy war,' but in a purely linguistic sense, the word translates as 'struggle.' Amongst many Islamic scholars and practitioners, it is often divided into the lesser Jihad and the greater Jihad. The lesser Jihad reflects the context of physical fighting, yet is seen as inferior to the greater Jihad, which has been defined by the Prophet Muhammad as 'jihad an-nafs' (the war against the soul): the inner struggle or unremitting combat against inner voices and the devil within.¹⁹ Unfortunately, the superiority of greater Jihad over lesser Jihad seems to have been forgotten or discarded by the fanatical terrorist cells who have twisted the message of Islam for their own agendas.

Like Christianity, non-violence in Islam is mostly limited to inter-human relationships. However, some consideration has been provided to the animal kingdom. One verse in the Quran tells the story of the Prophet Solomon marching with his army: in devotion, he thanked God for the faculty to appreciate nature and ordered his soldiers to avoid harming any of the small ant upon the ground.²⁰

With regards to animal cruelty in eating habits, one purpose of slaughtering meat in the Islamic 'dhabiha' manner is to minimize the animal's suffering as much as possible.²¹ According to his studies at the University of Veterinary Medicine Hanover, Professor Wilhelm Schulze concluded that the Islamic way of slaughtering is the most humane method of slaughter.²² However, in recent studies, brain signals have shown that calves do appear to feel significant pain when slaughtered according to Muslim religious law.²³

Vedic Traditions and Non-violence

In the ancient philosophical traditions of the Indian subcontinent, there are two main groupings: those who uphold the authority of the ancient wisdom teachings called the Vedas (the Vedic traditions) and those who do not uphold the authority of the Vedas (the Śramaṇic traditions). The Vedic traditions, often called the Orthodox schools of Hinduism, consist of six major schools of thought: namely *Sāṃkhya*, *Yoga*, *Nyāya*, *Vaiśeṣika*, *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* and *Vedānta*. These six schools all uphold that the Vedas are a valid source of knowledge, that *atmā/brhma* (the single spiritual reality) exist, and that life after death does exist. In spite of their differences, the Vedic and Śramaṇic traditions share many of the same concepts, such as *dharma*, *karma* and reincarnation, *saṃsāra* and *duḥkha* (suffering), renunciation and Liberation, and importantly, a set of basic moral pre-requisites for practicing religion.

Ahiṃsā is understood as the foundational moral practice in the Vedic tradition, just as in Jainism. In the “Mahābhārata,” the great Vedic epic, *ahiṃsā* is called the highest ethical virtue:

*Ahiṃsā paramo dharmas tathāhiṃsā paro damaḥ/
Ahiṃsā paramaṃ dānam ahiṃsā paramas tapaḥ//
Ahiṃsā paramo yajñas tathāhiṃsā paramaṃ balam/
Ahiṃsā paramaṃ mitram ahiṃsā paramaṃ sukham/
Ahiṃsā paramaṃ satyam ahiṃsā paramaṃ śarutam//*²⁴

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The above passage emphasizes the cardinal importance of *ahiṃsā* in Hinduism, and literally means: “Ahimsa is the highest virtue, Ahimsa is the highest self-control, Ahimsa is the greatest gift, Ahimsa is the best suffering, Ahimsa is the highest sacrifice, Ahimsa is the finest strength, Ahimsa is the greatest friend, Ahimsa is the greatest happiness, Ahimsa is the highest truth, and Ahimsa is the greatest teaching.”²⁵

The Vedic tradition is replete with other praises of *ahiṃsā*. Approximately 500-300 BC, the great *yogī* (contemplative saint) Patañjali de-emphasized the importance of *yajñas* (sacrificial fires) and instead named *ahiṃsā* as the supreme virtue in his *Yoga Sūtra*,²⁶ and hundreds of years later (~450 CE), Sage Vyāsa explained that all of the other *yamas* (moral precepts) and *niyamas* (social contracts) in the *Yoga Sūtra* are rooted in *ahiṃsā*, and that they are expounded upon only for the purpose of promoting *ahiṃsā*.²⁷ Two thousand years ago, the ‘weaver saint’ of South India, Tiruvalluvar, discouraged the use of violence by the logic of karmic retribution: “Sorrow will come upon those who cause pain to others; therefore those, who desire to be free from sorrow, give no pain to others.”²⁸ Modern leaders of Hinduism have also upheld the significance of *ahiṃsā*.²⁹ Swami Vivekananda (Ramakrishna Mission) has declared that ‘Oneness’ includes all animals, and AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (ISKON) has extended the biblical ideal of ‘Thou Shalt Not Kill’ to all animals.³⁰

At a practical level, the application of *ahiṃsā* by followers of the Vedic traditions vary from tradition to tradition. However, most devout followers of the Vedas (called Hindus) practice a vegetarian lifestyle and avoid killing. The understanding of karmic retribution and recompense is a driving force in their practice, and learned Hindus know that those of the lower nature will slowly, eventually, over an experiential period of time, come into the higher nature, and that those of the higher nature, who have worked so hard to get there, should avoid the lower nature and not allow themselves to be caught up in it again.³¹ Thus, as much as possible, Hindus believe that it is unadvisable to harm beings at any stage of their journey.

Buddhism and Non-violence

Also a product of the Indian subcontinent, Buddhism is the most philosophically similar to Jainism out of the major world religions. Buddhism and Jainism both belong to the Śramaṇic traditions, which are also called the heterodox schools. Both uphold the beliefs of karma, *saṃsāra*, free will, *māyā*, and practices of asceticism.³² There is also similarity in the view that there is no Creator God or Godhead, but rather seekers follow the teachings of enlightened Spiritual Masters to reach the final goal of Liberation, called *mokṣa* in Jainism and *nirvāṇa* in Buddhism. It should be noted, though, that the belief in *Īśvara* (God) is

and *nirvāṇa* in Buddhism. It should be noted, though, that the belief in *ātman* (Soul) is different amongst the two, with Jainism affirming *ātman*, and Buddhism denying it.

Both Jainism and Buddhism also share similar ethical and moral precepts, called *sīla* in Buddhism. The basic training rules observed by practicing lay Buddhists are called the *pañcasīla* (Five Precepts), which can be found in all Buddhist schools. In Buddhism, the first and primary precept states, 'I undertake to observe the rule to abstain from taking life.' The fifth century Indian Theravāda Buddhist commentator and scholar, Buddhaghosa, defines 'taking life' as the will to kill anything that one perceives as having life, to act so as to terminate the life-force in it, in so far as the will finds expression in bodily action or in speech.³³ Therefore, at a philosophical level, the importance of Ahimsa in body, speech, and mind is the same in both the Buddhist and Jain traditions.

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Practically, however, the extent of *ahimsic* practice does vary between the two schools. The Buddhists take a more moderate approach in the treatment of the principle of *ahimsā* in actual performance. The killing or murder of humans is unacceptable in all schools of Buddhism, but the practice of killing animals for food varies amongst the different Buddhist communities and practitioners. The contemporary Buddhist doctrine limits the practice of non-violence to the actions of the practitioner himself. It does not admonish 'killing by proxy.'³⁴ For instance, a Buddhist practitioner might not directly kill an animal for food, but if an animal had died by natural or accidental death, then it seems that it would be acceptable to eat its flesh.³⁵ In many ways, vegetarianism has been deemed as a personal choice, based on the practitioner's development of compassion and concern for others.³⁶

Ahimsā broadened

The Jains take a much stronger stance towards non-violence than the major world religions as discussed. Jainism not only considers the principle of *ahimsā* in all its aspects, but also makes it obligatory on its followers to abstain from committing violence in nine possible ways: specifically, it is expected that a devout Jain should not commit violence through *manas* (mind), *vacana* (speech) and *kāya* (body) and each through the manner of *kṛta* (personally enacted), *kārita* (commissioned through others) and *anumodita* (giving consent for enactment by others).³⁷

Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Indian Nation and leader of non-violent civil disobedience, explored *ahimsā* within the full range of religious doctrines and practices, and was quoted as saying: "Nonviolence is common to all religions, but it has found the highest expression and application in Hinduism (I do not regard Jainism or Buddhism as separate from Hinduism)."³⁸

Later, he went on to praise Jainism in particular as the pinnacle of *ahimsic* philosophy and practice, saying: "No religion of the world has explained the principles of Ahimsa so deeply and systematically as discussed with the applicability in life as Jainism. As and when this benevolent principle of Ahimsa will be sought for practice by the people of the world to achieve their ends of life in this world and beyond, Jainism is sure to have the uppermost status and Bhagwan Mahavir is sure to be respected as the greatest authority on Ahimsa."³⁹

Ahimsā is often used synonymously with ‘non-violence’ in the physical sense, and although this is correct, *ahimsā* has an even broader connotation from the Jain perspective. The Jain concept of *ahimsā* suggests that every being in the cosmos has its own intrinsic nature and a specific function with regard to it. If we restrict its function, we are committing violence and hurting its unique nature as well. Therefore, every being’s unique nature and function should be respected and preserved.

All living beings have a physical dimension, intellectual dimension, emotional dimension, and spiritual dimension. It is the responsibility of conscious beings (e.g., humans) to develop each of these dimensions fully: at the scales of family, community, nation, world, and universe. This forms the inter-dependent nature of life. If we do not protect this inter-dependence, this is also violence. If we don’t care for family identity, social harmony, and national peace, then we are practicing violence. Therefore, *ahimsā* is a broad and most important concept, and it must be understood in this vast perspective.

Ahimsā: A World-Wide Practice | 19

Ahimsā for the Future

In contemporary society, we find that we are living in an imperfect world, with lots of limitations. Thus, we have to strive hard, and this requires constant human enterprise. Thus, to be educated is a primary requirement in the pursuit of *ahimsā*. If we are not educated and educating others, then we are also doing violence. This includes culturing ourselves, and creating a virtuous person within ourselves. To a practitioner of *ahimsā*, the outward manifestation of education and culture is virtue.

Furthermore, the right to live is a basic requirement of *ahimsā*, and we should extend the right to live to nature. Nature nurtures us and nourishes us. Every object of nature is valuable, serviceable, and usable. Only when nature is self-guarded, then it too can be helpful to us. And when we help nature, it helps us as well. The opposite is to destroy and exploit nature, and unfortunately, we as a society have this perverted view: dominance over nature. Out of ignorance, we try to exploit nature rather than helping it. If we destroy it, all life becomes a disaster. Therefore, not matter the cultural and religious background, citizens of modern society should make best use of nature’s resources without straining nature.

Ahimsā is an idealistic idea, to be implemented globally. The practitioner of *ahimsā* will not interfere in the freedom of any living beings who are searching for happiness, in whatever form happiness takes for that individual. When practiced with great awareness and intention, *ahimsā* then manifests itself internally as bliss and externally as love, which can be seen as personal upliftment, a feeling of protecting all life, and friendship and compassion without condition. This is *ahimsā* in action, non-violence in living, a way of life.

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.....

tumam si ṇaṇaṃ tam ceva jam ajjavetavvam ti maṇṇasi,
tumam si ṇaṇaṃ tam ceva jam paritāvetavvaṃ ti maṇṇasi,
tumam si ṇaṇaṃ tam ceva jam parighetavvaṃ ti maṇṇasi,
evaṃ tam ceva jam uddavetavvaṃ ti maṇṇasi/
Añjī ceyam paḍibuddhajīvī/ tamhā ṇa hanta, ṇa vighātae/ aṇusamveyaṇamappāṇeṇaṃ, je hantavvaṃ
ṇābhīpatthae / Ācārāṅga Sūtra: 5/5/5.

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The Three Jewels

Atmarpit Devang*

Introduction

There are three jewels in Jainism: *samyak-darśana* (Right Belief), *samyak-jñāna* (Right Knowledge) and *samyak-cāritra* (Right Conduct), and the main obstructions to the manifestation of the above three jewels are *mithyātva* (a deluded world view), *avirati* (a vowless life), *pramāda* (laxity of conduct), *kaṣāya* (passions) and *yoga* (activities of mind, speech and body). *Mithyātva* obstructs right belief and right knowledge, and the other four are reasons for the obstruction of right conduct.

In modern times, we see that there is confusion regarding the order of the three jewels; it is because of the wrong interpretation of scriptures or preachings of the false spiritual masters. Jainism preaches that without right belief and right knowledge, right conduct cannot be possible. "The journey to mokṣa [liberation] begins with attainment of right faith. Understanding this is very important because it is regarded as a first step to the path of Dharma and mokṣa....This is also a concept which is most commonly misunderstood by many Jains....Some think that to be a Jain or follow basic Jain conduct is having samyak darśana, while some others believe that to follow a particular Guru, sect, certain religious practices or read certain scriptures automatically mean samyak darśana. In brief, every follower of Jain Religion has one's own view about right belief. It is a can which everyone

follower of Jain religion has one's own view about right belief. It is a cap which everyone wants to wear without knowing what it really means."¹ *Tīrthaṅkaras* (absolute knowledgeable and virtuous beings) preached that liberation belongs to the *ātma* (soul) and not the body, so there is no place for acrimonious debates regarding particular sect, caste, or religious practices. The essence of Jain path is to know yourself and continue to abide in self alone (*samyak-darśana*, *samyak-jñāna* and *samyak-cāritra*). That's why Ācārya Umāsvāti says that *samyak-darśana*, *samyak-jñāna* and *samyak-cāritra* together consist the path of liberation.²

In Jain tradition, *samyak-darśana* is being placed before *samyak-cāritra*. However, in the soul these three jewels are together, we cannot separate one virtue from another. But in practice, to achieve the state of *samyak-cāritra*, one needs to have the *samyak-darśana* first. *Samyak-darśana* is a first awakening. It is very important to know about these three jewels, described as follows. Having complete faith in substances ascertained as they are, is *samyak-darśana*;³ knowing all entities (like *jīva*, matter etc.) exactly as they are, free from doubt or contradiction is *samyak-jñāna*; and practicing fundamental truths which are helpful for salvation (*upādeya*) is called *samyak-cāritra*. *Samyak-darśana*, *samyak-jñāna* and *samyak-cāritra* cannot exist exclusively of each other in pure form of the soul. *Samyak-darśana*, is to perceive the true nature of substance, and to do that, one must have faith in the words of a *tīrthaṅkara*. Only with this right faith, one can understand the true nature of *tattvas* (substances) and accept that is right and reject that is wrong to get rid of their *karmas* and aim for *mokṣa*.

“Interest in the soul, distinctly different from interest in substances including other living beings is known as right perspective. As the bondage of water and milk, gold and stones containing gold or husk and seed is found, so is the bondage of the soul with karmic matter.

* Shrimad Rajchandra Mission, Dharampur

But the soul and matter, even besides their being in an intermingled state, both the substances are separate because of different attributes.”⁴ Mistakenly the people in this universe continue to believe the intermingled state of self and body as to be one's own. *Samyak-dṛṣṭi* in the midst of worldly responsibilities, never ever considers soul and body as one element. When time comes to leave the body, he/she can peacefully let it go. *Samyak-dṛṣṭi* never considers the body as integral part of existence so they remain in equanimity (*samādhi*) at the time of death also. It is a great fruit of self-realization, that while living they stay in *samādhi* and at the time of death also they remain in *samādhi* because of their right belief that body is not part of the existence. They remain totally unaffected with any changes at the body level.

In this paper I am trying to highlight the importance of *samyak-darśana* but it does not mean that right conduct is not necessary, it is necessary to attain *mokṣa* but its fruitfulness is after having the right perception. Jainism realises the direct comprehension of truth as a landmark in the life of an aspirant. But it is only the beginning of the journey, not the end. Our conviction must compel us to act accordingly. Hence right faith, from which the ethics begins, can lead to perfection only when followed by right conduct. At the same time one should understand that mere conduct is impotent without right faith. It means that all moral virtues should be deeply rooted in the spiritual realisation.

Definition of Samyak-darśana in Jain Canons

One of the great scriptures in Jain tradition, *uttarādhyayana sūtra* defines *samyaktva* as belief in nine fundamental truths.⁵ Ācārya Kundakunda in his *darśana-pāhuḍa*, defines *samyak-darśana* as a firm belief in the six substances and nine fundamental truths.⁶ He expresses the same principle in different words (ways) in *mokṣa pāhuḍa* by defining *samyak-darśana* as belief in the *dharma* devoid of violence, in pure deity devoid of 18 faults and in the way of life, preached by the omniscient.⁷ In *Niyamasāra*, *samyak-darśana* is explained as a belief in liberated souls, Jain scriptures and principles.⁸ In *Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra*, Ācārya Samantabhadra defines *samyak-darśana* as a belief in true deities, true scriptures and true teachers (*deva*, *śāstra* and *guru*).⁹ He also preaches the eight essentials of right faith and the necessity of freedom from eight types of pride for a right believer.¹⁰ Upādhyāya Yaśovijaya says that he, who is attached with the body, is not *samyak-dṛṣṭi*, and who firmly believes that I am a soul, devoid of body, modifications and *karma* is *samyak-dṛṣṭi*.¹¹ The *Bhagavad Gītā* says that a person having a right faith in *mokṣa mārga* (path of liberation) attains knowledge.¹²

Process and importance of Samyak-darśana

Tīrthaṅkaras have given great explanations on the ladder of spiritual progress. This ladder is mainly divided into fourteen stages (called *guṇasthānas*). The stage of deluded believer (*mithyā-dṛṣṭi*) is at the first *guṇasthāna*. At this stage, if the seeker has unswerving faith on the preaching of the *guru* (Enlightened Master), *deva* (the lord) and the *śāstra* (scriptures), and if one continues to follow preaching of the Enlightened Master, one can get glimpses of true nature of the soul. Though the faith in *deva*, *Guru* and *Śāstra* is not absolute *samyak-darśana* (*nīścayasamyak-darśana*), but it makes the base for *nīścayasamyak-darśana* to manifest; that's why it's also called a relative *samyak-darśana* (*vyavahārasamyak-darśana*).¹³ Such a soul will set aside all his religious and other prejudices and will follow sincerely and completely his *Guru*'s preachings and teachings. As a result he himself realizes the nature of pure self. This is called *nīścayasamyak-darśana* or correct world view and after this experience one moves to fourth *guṇasthāna*.

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Ācārya Bhadrabāhu reveals the fact that the amount of karma destroyed by a *mithyā-dṛṣṭi muni* in 1 crore lives are less than amount of karma sheds by *samyak-dṛṣṭi* soul in one breath.¹⁴ Pandit Daulatram explains the same philosophy and further adds that we all have been ascetics (*munis*) in our previous lives and also went to the 9th heaven (*grāivaka*) and lived for a period of many *sāgaropams* (very long time as per Jain tradition). But we couldn't experience the true happiness as we weren't *samyak-dṛṣṭi*.¹⁵

When a light of right belief and right knowledge (*samyak-darśana* and *samyak-jñāna*) dawns in the soul, that soul becomes *samyak-dṛṣṭi*. One who has experienced the soul, has tremendous value of inner world, so at the same time, the valuation of outer world diminishes. For a *samyak-dṛṣṭi*, outer world is an illusion or like a dream.¹⁶

Ācārya Haribhadra Sūri explains this exalted state by defining that *samyak-dṛṣṭi* finds this world as an imaginary¹⁷ or fake city created by *Indra* (King of all deities)¹⁸. *Samyak-dṛṣṭi* keeps only one direction open; inward, and with great efforts (*puruṣārtha*) of inward journey,

eventually abides in the self for longer period of time, that is called *samyak-cāritra*. Without knowing the self (*samyak-darśana*), one cannot free from attachments of worldly things/beings hence cannot proceed for *samyak-cāritra*. Mere information does not lead to liberation (*mokṣa*) and thus, it can be said that his knowledge is of no use.¹⁹ He may be well-versed in scriptural knowledge, but his cycle of births and deaths will continue.²⁰

Ācārya Kundakunda compares *samyak-darśana* with pure water. He preaches that like a stream of water washes away all dirt, *samyak-darśana* also purifies soul from bad karmas. *Samyak-dṛṣṭi* may be involved in worldly activities and responsibilities but influx of karmas are very limited because of *samyak-darśana*.²¹ Furthermore, Kundakunda says that it is *samyak-darśana* by which knowledge becomes pure (*samyak-jñāna*), and with right knowledge one can discriminate good and bad for the soul and it helps to remain steadfast in *mokṣa mārga*.²² Ācārya Pūjyapāda says that it is true that right conduct is the direct means of liberation,²³ but right conduct with right faith and right knowledge only can lead to liberation.²⁴

Samyak-darśana: First step towards Liberation

Faith (*samyak-darśana*) marks the start of the journey towards the ultimate goal. Right faith acts like a pilot in *mokṣa mārga*,²⁵ it indicates that the right conduct will follow soon. This text says that a householder with right faith is better than a monk without it.²⁶ Faith has been praised as a great moral virtue for all spiritual progress by all sects of Indian culture. In Jain scriptures, it says that *virati* means conduct is fruit of knowledge. Without right knowledge, it is impossible to have right conduct; and for right knowledge, right perception is required. Jain saint Paṇḍita Daulatram says that *samyak-darśana* is the first step towards liberation (*mokṣa*) and without it, knowledge and conduct are wrong (*mithyā*) and will not lead to liberation (*nirvāṇa*).²⁷ Right faith precedes right conduct.²⁸ Without right faith (*samyak-darśana*) no religious conduct or scriptures' knowledge would be right.²⁹ Ācārya Kundakunda preaches the same thing elaborately that it is possible to stay on *mokṣa mārga* if one slips from right conduct, but it is not possible to stay on *mokṣa mārga* if one slips from right faith/knowledge. In short, He conveys that without *samyak-darśana*, *samyak-cāritra* is not at all possible.³⁰ After gaining right faith, one needs to aspire for right knowledge, though right faith and right knowledge emerge simultaneously on the removal of *mithyātva*. Without knowledge, there is no virtuous conduct.³¹

Samyak-cāritra is not only following certain rules or changing clothes, but it mainly focuses on how long one can stay absorbed/ tuned to one's own self. *Samyak-darśana* clears the belief about bliss and happiness. *Mithyā-dṛṣṭi*, because of wrong/deluded view, believes that happiness lies outside, so for him/her there is no strong purpose to turn within. Thus, first belief changing is utmost necessary for spiritual advancement on the path of liberation called *mokṣa mārga*. If one is able to change his/her belief, then *cāritra* or right conduct becomes very easy.

Many Jain saints have told that *samyak-darśana* is before *samyak-cāritra*, and for *samyak-darśana*, contemplation of fundamental truths are necessary.³² With the right contemplation on the nature of the Self comes the knowledge of one's Self and by such knowledge the soul's deep-rooted infatuation and ignorance are removed and the soul attains Salvation.³³

Same sequence for attaining liberation is preached by Ācārya Kundakunda.³⁴ Same chronological order is described in *samaṇa-suttaṃ*, it says that without *samyak-darśana*, *samyak-jñāna* is not possible. Without *samyak-jñāna*, *samyak-cāritra* is not possible. Without *samyak-cāritra*, zeroing of Karmas (*mokṣa*) is not possible. Without *mokṣa*, Bliss (*nirvāṇa*) is not possible.³⁵ Ācārya Amṛtacandra writes that by any means you must listen to fundamental truths. As a result, firm determination of soul's nature that is different than body will be perceived by you (*samyak-darśana*).³⁶ Once *samyak-darśana* is there then *samyak-cāritra* will easily follow.

Approach to shed Karmas

According to Jain philosophy, the causes of *bandha* or the karmic bondage—in the order they are required to be eliminated by a soul for spiritual progress are:

1. **Mithyātva** (a deluded world view): The deluded worldview is the misunderstanding as to how this world really functions or deluded thinking.
2. **Avirati** (a vowless life): *Avirati* is the inability to refrain voluntarily from the evil actions that harms oneself and others. The state of *avirati* can only be overcome by observing the minor vows of a layman.
3. **Pramāda** (laxity of conduct): This third cause of bondage consists of absent mindedness, lack of enthusiasm towards acquiring merit and spiritual growth, and improper actions of mind, body and speech without any regard to oneself or others.
4. **Kaṣāya** (passions): The four passions - anger, pride, deceit and greed - are the primary reason for the attachment of the karmas to the soul. They keep the soul immersed in the darkness of delusion leading to deluded conduct and unending cycles of reincarnations.
5. **Yoga**: Activities of mind, speech and body.

This is the order in which we need to remove karmas. First our main focus should be to eradicate deluded view and achieve *samyak-darśana* (Right perception). Ācārya Amṛtacandra says that “Out of three constituents of the path to liberation (*samyak-darśana*, *samyak-jñāna* and *samyak-cāritra*), sincere efforts should be made to first acquire right faith (*samyak-darśana*). Only on the acquisition of right faith can knowledge and conduct become right knowledge (*samyak-jñāna*) and right conduct (*samyak-cāritra*).”³⁷ Once deluded view is replaced with right perception, then remaining four becomes powerless, and it becomes so easy to remove them also.³⁸ This philosophy also expounded by Ācārya Umāsvāti.³⁹ It can be well understood by following example. Gurudevshri Rakeshbhai (a renowned Jain preacher

and follower of Shrimad Rajchandra) used to give this example to explain the order of shedding *karmas*.

Suppose person ‘A’ owes person ‘B’ \$99999 and ‘A’ wants to pay back. ‘A’ has decided to pay the exact amount by removing one by one 9 so first ‘A’ has to pay a big chunk of 90,000 to remove first 9. Now it remained 9999. To remove second 9, ‘A’ has to pay 9000. Now remained 999. To remove third 9, ‘A’ has to pay 900. Now remained 99. To remove fourth 9, A has to pay 90 and at last ‘A’ has to pay 9 to complete the payment.

As explained in the above example, paying 90,000 off makes one so much debt free, similarly

As explained in the above example, paying 20,000 still makes one so much deluded, similarly removal of *mithyātva* makes one worthy to trade the path of liberation. Now after removal of delusion, second is *avirati*. It takes 9000 (much lesser than *mithyātva*), then *pramāda* takes 900, *Kaṣāya* takes 90 and *yoga* takes only 9.

Importance of Satsaṅga (Spiritual Gathering)

Up till now, we have discussed that first we strive for *samyak-darśana*. But how to correct our beliefs? Means how to get rid of our *mithyātva*. Enlightened being says that spiritual gathering (*satsaṅga*) is the mean to eradicate our false beliefs. In every religion, religious gathering (*satsaṅga*) by an enlightened being has been applauded. *Satsaṅga* works on our belief system, as it nourishes our divine instinct and helps us eradicate our old bad habits. Therefore, it is called divine instinct building process. Discourses given by an Enlightened Master has the power to remove our deluded state. Shrimad Rajchandra expounds in his magnum opus called *Ātmasiddhi Śāstra* that there are two types of deluding karmas 1. *Darśana Mohanīya*: the action which clouds soul's faith in its nature and 2. *Cāritra Mohanīya*: which hinder the Soul from renouncing the world and which disturb and obstruct the Soul's abidance in its true nature. For a right knowledge of the nature of the self, results from following the experienced advises of a true and enlightened teacher. When the disciple after a clear conviction of the true nature of the Self acts on the advice of his Master, his attachments to the world gets removed and he strongly makes efforts for abiding in his true nature.⁴⁰ Once the first type of delusion (*darśana-mohanīya*) is removed, the seeker is assured to get rid of the second type (*cāritra-mohanīya*). In every walk of faith, *satsaṅga* is highly applauded. Ācārya Śaṅkara writes that 'It is the *satsaṅga* by which we attain detachment from worldly things, freedom from deluded mind state, and ultimately "jīvanmukti" means liberation.'⁴¹ Tulasī Dāsa also says that half a moment spent with Enlightened being has the power to shed your sins of one crore births.⁴² Kabīraji⁴³ also says the same thing.

Importance of Sadguru (the enlightened master):

Shrimad Rajchandra, preaches that follow the religion propounded by self-realized beings (*ātmajñānī or satpuruṣa*) to attain *samyak-darśana* or salvation. Just to elaborate that while religion is eternal, what is most helpful for the seekers upliftment is the primary aim of an Enlightened Being. The Enlightened Master might modify the seekers rites and rituals of the religion depending on the seekers inclination/situation at the time. In short, the Enlightened Master may give the seeker personalized *dharma* for the seekers spiritual advancement. Additionally, Rajchandra says that the seekers should not be foolish and compare with any scriptures as the master's word is essence of the scriptures. Ācārya Haribhadra Sūri says the same thing.⁴⁴ *Sadguru* throws light on light means He shows right way to understand scriptures.⁴⁵ He can give religion less religion, which is above cast and creed but have

potential to uplift seeker and guides towards liberation. Ācārya Haribhadra Sūri preaches the same thing.⁴⁶

One also tends to advocate absolutism saying that one not require *guru* as truth is pathless land, and also potentially everyone is like liberated one. Their belief is, instead of taking refuge under a *guru*, good thing is to make efforts by one own self as all the scriptures are

easily accessible for me. More detailed information regarding *guru* is required for such type of misunderstandings. A *guru* is not a mere or just substitute for scriptural knowledge or books, just as having little knowledge of few diseases does not exclude the need for a doctor. Doctor is must for your chronic illness, treating with your over-wisdom may worsen the disease. A *guru* is an experienced and learned, who imparts skillful knowledge, which is very much different and unique from the books. Externally, both may appear to be the same, but the knowledge which arises from the *guru's* mind or say from his valuable wisdom, is pervaded with the light of his own experience or a whole lineage of his prior masters. It has the power to cleanse and transform you.

Misinterpretation of Scriptures and Misleading Guru

Sometimes one interprets scriptures as per our whims and reaches to a wrong conclusion or sometimes you meet to a false spiritual master and follow his guidance. So ultimately one may mislead. Ācārya Amṛtacandra writes: “Those teachers who understands both the empirical point of view (*vyavahāranaya*) as well as transcendental point of view (*nīścayanaya*), and remove the misapprehensions of the disciples by espousing the absolute as well as the relative standpoints, promulgate the teachings of the Omniscient Lord in this world.”⁴⁷ *Guru* is such an important existence, who explains the characteristics of right deity (right *deva*) and right scripture (*śāstra*). If one comes across false *guru*, whose faith is not in right *deva* and *śāstra*, he will surely mislead. Faith in right *guru*, *dharma* and *śāstra* is called *samyak-darśana*.

It is very important that one finds right *guru*, but how to find the true *guru*. To which Shrimad Rajchandra gives these five qualities a *sadguru* must possess.⁴⁸

1. **Ātmajñāna** (Enlightenment): He firmly possesses the knowledge of his self.
2. **Samadarśitā**: He is indifferent to worldly opposites like friend and foe, pleasure and suffering, respect and humiliation.
3. **Vicāra Udayaprayoga**: He simply continues to live only to enjoy or suffer the fruits of the actions of his past births, means his every actions is according to script of *karma* and not by his wish.
4. **Apūrva Vāṇī**: His speech is unique and enlightened by the knowledge of the Self.
5. **Paramaśruta**: He is well-versed in six fundamental truths and philosophy.

At the same time, if one interprets scriptures by his/her limited understanding; one may reach to different conclusion. Rajchandra says that, sometimes *mithyātva* becomes double if you want to do by your whims.⁴⁹ It is very easy to remove delusion under proper guidance of *sadguru*.⁵⁰

Conclusion

Samyak-darśana paves the path for liberation. Though *samyak-cāritra* is the immediate

reason for *mokṣa*, but without right understanding, it is not possible to walk on a path of right conduct. We need to adhere the sequence for attaining liberation (*samyak-darśana*, *samyak-jñāna* and *samyak-cāritra*) as conduct is of no use without right faith and right knowledge. *Samyak-darśana* and *samyak-jñāna* makes the *cāritra* as *samyak* (true or balanced). It is well understood that Persons who lack right belief bog down with considerations of purity and impurity while the person of right belief is convinced about the purity of both the cause and the effect. The contemplation of the eternal nature of the soul is the cause and realization of the pure soul (*samyak-darśana*) is the effect. The sickness of mundane existence can be cured only if one takes the medicine of right faith prescribed by *arihanta*. This is the first step towards *dharma* and will certainly lead to last stage of *mokṣa* sooner or later. To conclude, we have observed that according to Jainism the main cause of bondage is perversity of attitude. The right faith, therefore, occupies the most important position.

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Samvaronijjarāmokkhasantaetahiyānava//
Tahiyāṇṣamṭubhāvāṇṣasabbhāveuvaesaṇaṇ/
Bhāveṇṣamṣaddahaṇṣasammattamṣamviyāhiyaṇ// Uttarādhyayana Sūtra 28/14-15.
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Vavagaraasesadosaṇṣalagūṇṇappā have atto// Niyamasāra 1/5.
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kiṇṣṣiṣṭam/
śuddhajīvāstikāyarucirūpasyaṇṣcayasamyaktvasyachadmasthāvasthāyāmātmaviṣayasvasaṇṣvedanaññāṇasy
aparaṇṣparayābhiṇṣam// Tātparyavṛtti (commentary by Ācārya Jayasena on Pañcāstikāya) 107.
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Tāṇṇāṇṣitihimṣgutto, khavēiṇṣāsameteṇa// Brhat Kalpasūtra 1/1170.
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Jñāṇikēṇ china meṇ, triguptiteṇṣsahajaṇṣaraṇṣme//
Munivratadhārianantabāragraivakaupajāyau/
Painijaātamaññāṇabinā, sukhaleṣaṇapāyau// Chaha Dhālā 4/5.
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Tekahiyejñāṇidaṣābāktivācāññāna// Ātmasiddhi Śāstra 140.
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Jo aṇu-mettu vi rūmaṇijāmaṇamillaieṭthu/
So ṇavimuccaitāmajiyajāntu v i paramatthu// Paramātmaprakāśa 2/81.
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The Celebration of the Soul: An Analysis of Daśalakṣaṇa Dharma with Special Reference to Supreme Forbearance

Atmarpit Shraddhaben*

Introduction

‘Celebrations’ or ‘festivals’ are the most enjoyable and awaited moments in one’s life! Indeed, they provide a sense of freedom, happiness and harmony. Celebrations include activities like: spending hours trying to find the perfect hall, collecting funds to have delicious meals, making a guest list to ensure that no one is missed out along with the actual celebration itself. These are all part and parcel of a successful celebration. However, most ‘festivals’ lead us to momentary impact, whether it is through indulgence in music, food or people. So, our entire energy is spent to perform and enjoy external activities. Can we consider these ‘real’ or ‘true’ celebrations? No.

A true celebration is that which will lead one inwards and enables him to celebrate the same for the rest of his life. So, let us make our existence a celebration, not just merely for a few hours. For this ‘inner festival’, one does not need external trappings like a ‘grand hall’, collect funds for food, etc. Rather, one needs to understand one’s true self and its supreme virtues that are everlasting and in order to immerse in them. Ultimately, the practitioner experiences everlasting happiness or inner bliss. Everyone is invited to join this Grand Inner Festival called ‘The Celebration of the Soul’, known as *Paryuṣaṇa Parva* in Jainism. *Paryuṣaṇa Parva* is celebrated throughout the world every year in the auspicious month ‘*Bhādrapada*’. In this festival, Jains observe the ten universal supreme virtues, the practice of which leads them to enhance their self-purification that ultimately leads to the attainment of liberation. It is an inward journey transforming from a ‘human-being’ to a ‘Divine-being’. *Paryuṣaṇa Parva* or the ‘*Daśa Lakṣaṇa Parva*’ is thus: ‘the celebration through which the karmic matter attached to the soul is totally burnt through practice of penance/austerities.’¹

Since time immemorial, our soul has been embodied with layers of karmic impurities. Hence, it has forgotten its true nature (*svabhāva*) as it is deluded by ignorance; it is unable to realize its own pure nature and is constantly running after sensual pleasures derived from worldly objects. However, *Jinas*, the Enlightened Ones have pronounced ten supreme spiritual virtues (*daśalakṣaṇa dharma*) of the pure soul to learn, contemplate upon, practice in order to experience them. Doing so, the embodied soul reduces its delusion and moves to higher levels of spiritual purification and happiness. *Paryuṣaṇa Parva* reminds us of this fact to realize lasting happiness. This is why we call it celebration of the soul and is very different from any ordinary worldly celebrations.

These 10 virtues are called the cardinal virtues. They are the inherent qualities of the soul. According to Jain scriptures, these 10 cardinal virtues are as follows: (1) *Uttama Kṣamā* (Supreme Forgiveness/Forbearance), (2) *Uttama Mārdava* (Supreme Modesty/Humility), (3) *Uttama Ārjava* (Supreme Straight Forwardness), (4) *Uttama Śauca* (Supreme Purity/Contentment), (5) *Uttama Satya* (Supreme Truthfulness), (6) *Uttama Saṁyama* (Supreme Self-restraint), (7) *Uttama Tapa* (Supreme Austerity), (8) *Uttama Tyāga* (Supreme Renunciation), (9) *Uttama Ākiñcanya* (Supreme Detachment) and (10) *Uttama Brahmacharya* (Supreme Celibacy/Chastity).² Ācārya Pūjyapāda said that these ten virtues have been stated

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for several reasons. “The first ‘control’ is intended to curb activity. The second ‘regulation’ is intended to indicate regulation of activity, in the case of those who cannot curb it altogether, by giving proper directions. And the object of the tenfold virtues or duty is to avoid spiritual inertia or negligence, while engaged in activities such as movement.”³

Besides Jain scriptures, some non-Jain scriptures also speak of these eternal virtues, which are very similar to the Jain ones. *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa* mentions ‘truth, purity, compassion, forgiveness, renunciation, contentment, simplicity, mental control, sensory control, austerity, equality, tolerance, worldly disinterest, scriptural obeisance, experiential knowledge, detachment, power, courage, illustrious personality, vigour, remembrance, endurance, radiance, strength, lordship, profundity, mental stability, faith in God, worthy of reverence, and humility as eternal virtues.’⁴ Ācārya Śaṅkara also mentions these virtues for getting liberation (*mokṣa*). He says, “If indeed, thou hast a craving for liberation, shun sense-objects from a good distance as thou wouldst do poison, and always cultivate carefully the nectar-like virtues of contentment, compassion, forgiveness, straightforwardness, calmness and self-control.”⁵

Classification of the ten virtues:

The first four virtues are ‘*bhāvas*’ or dispositions that are to be ‘cultivated’ (*uttama-kṣamā*, *uttama-mārdava*, *uttama-ārjava* and *uttama-śauca*). The next four (*uttama-satya*, *uttama-saṁyama*, *uttama-tapa* and *uttama-tyāga*) are the practices for adoption (to put into practice) and the last two (*uttama-ākiñcanya* and *uttama-brahmacarya*) are the essences to experience the true nature of the pure soul - the ultimate goal of Jain Philosophy.

Another classification needed to be kept in mind is the adjective *uttama* or supreme affixed on each. Adjective *uttama* implies the individual virtue of supreme soul that is free from any form of delusion (*mohanīya karma*) and hence is the ideal to be attained. The embodied soul tries to practice these virtues with utmost care and as per their own spiritual purification level with an intention to move up the ladder. In this paper, we will only talk of the first and most important virtue i.e. Supreme Forbearance without the suffix *uttama* i.e. from practical viewpoint (*vyavahāra naya*) for practice by us, the mundane souls. We shall also discuss from absolute viewpoint (*nīścaya naya*) briefly.

Uttama Kṣamā (Supreme Forgiveness/ forbearance)

Kṣa means ‘to destroy’ and *mā* means ‘to protect’. Or to destroy anger (opposite of forgiveness) and protect the spiritual virtue of soul - ‘Supreme forgiveness’ or ‘forbearance’. Forgiveness is a natural attribute (*svabhāva*) of the soul. Just as water is cool by nature, the soul is forgiving by nature. Like water becomes hot due to heat, but gradually becomes cool again, similarly, due to external provocation, the soul develops dispositions (*vibhāva*) of anger, etc., but comes back to its peaceful state with time. *Kṣamā* is the foremost spiritual virtue.

Kṣamā implies *saṁatā*, or equanimity. To be in a state of equanimity, one has to be free from tainted emotions (*kaṣāyas*) like anger (*krodha*) as it destroys the soul’s nature of forbearance. It is easy for us to slip from one ‘K’ to another i.e. from *krodha* to *kṣamā*, without taking a

moment to think about their consequences or repercussions. It is therefore important to remember that *kṣamā* is our inherent nature (*svabhāva*), while *krodha* is external to us (*vibhāva*) and accrues more karmic bondage. *Where there is anger, there is no forgiveness.*

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*Where there is forgiveness, there is no anger.
Anger and forgiveness do not go hand-in-hand.
Love is the heart of Forgiveness,
while Hate is the address of Anger.
Freedom from passions is an invitation to purity.⁶*

To expect and to practice mono-ism are identified as the important causes for being angry. When our expectations are unfulfilled, we become frustrated, irritated, and then angry. Indeed, anger is not a sudden reaction, but it is a bi-product of negative emotions that have been stored and accumulated and ready to ‘burst’. Similarly, we keep perceiving things from our own lenses, not respecting others perspectives. This results in developing an attitude of rigidity. To overcome this, we have to develop an attitude of WE instead of I or change ONLY to ALSO in our thoughts and expressions. This includes the practice *anekānta* without sacrificing the absolute truth.

It is important to note that to understand this dharma/spiritual value better, we must analyze the same from at least two viewpoints. From practical viewpoint, we seek forgiveness or forgive the non-self or other living beings for causing hurt by us to others or by others to us. This helps us in reducing our anger and its ill effects like stress, animosity, feeling of revenge and isolation in the society. From absolute viewpoint, we seek forgiveness from our own soul to have caused its bondage with impurities that result in pain due to our negligence etc. This way we try to introspect our activities and try to modify them as per the doctrine and our true nature and help ourselves to improve our worldly life and advancing towards higher level of spiritual purification or happiness.

Lord Mahāvīra and almost all luminary Jain ascetics have impressed upon us the greatest importance of forgiveness in their sermons and writings. Lord Mahāvīra says that one ought to put an end to anger through calmness.⁷ Again He says that the stainless/untainted (*nirmala*) forgiveness is the characteristic feature of those, who are not provoked/enraged/heated (by anger) in spite of extremely dreadful (*upasargas*) inflicted upon them by celestial beings, and by human beings.⁸ Describing the true nature of forgiveness, in his commentary on *Tattvārthasūtra*, Ācārya Pūjyapāda Svāmī has stated that “even when ill-natured persons heap abuses, ridicules, disgrace and beatings on the monks, who enter other regions to discover the cause of the real state of the body and indulge in twisting and torturing their body, the non-appearance of ill-will in these monks minds is *kṣamā*.⁹ Similarly, Pt. Āśādhara says that ‘The persons who observe *uttama-kṣamā* towards those, who commit crimes against them, even on being capable of quick retaliation, are regarded by saints drinking the nectar of forbearance (*kṣamā-amṛta*) to be the destroyers of sins.’¹⁰ Also, Shrimad Rajchandra mentions that ‘forgiveness is a sword with which one can overcome the internal enemies; it is an armor to protect the pure character. One, who observes equanimity even in unbearable distress with a pure mode, crosses over the worldly sea.’¹¹ In this way, Shrimad Rajchandra considers forgiveness as one’s innate pure nature. He has also written that ‘Forgiveness is the most auspicious door to liberation.’¹²

Like Jain scriptures, non-Jain scriptures also discuss forbearance as supreme virtue. In *Bhagavad Gītā* Kṛṣṇā says, “If you want to see the brave, look at those who can forgive. If you want to see the heroic, look at those who can love in return for hatred.”¹³ The nature and description of forgiveness is also found in the *Bhīṣma Parva* of *Mahābhārata*: “Forgiveness is virtue; forgiveness is sacrifice, forgiveness is the Vedas, forgiveness is the *Śruti*. Forgiveness is *Brahma*; forgiveness is truth; forgiveness is stored ascetic merit; forgiveness

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protecteth the ascetic merit of the future; forgiveness is asceticism; forgiveness is holiness; and by forgiveness is it that the universe is held together. Persons that are forgiving attain to the regions obtainable by those that have performed meritorious sacrifices, or those that are well-conversant with the Vedas, or those that have high ascetic merit. Those that perform Vedic sacrifices as also those that perform the meritorious rites of religion obtain other regions. Men of forgiveness, however, obtain those much-adored regions that are in the world of Brahma. Forgiveness is the might of the mighty; forgiveness is sacrifice; forgiveness is quiet of mind.¹⁴

We can also find an important quote of forgiveness in Bible: “Peter came up and said to him, ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you seven times, but seventy seven times.’”¹⁵ Hasan Al-Basri, a Muslim preacher, ascetic, theologian and scholar, said, “The best attribute a believers can have is forgiveness.”¹⁶

Lord Buddha Says, ‘Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else. You are the one who gets burned.’¹⁷ In Buddhism,¹⁸ forgiveness forms part of the Buddhist virtue of forbearance. Forbearance consists mainly in absence of anger, hate and malice, and the forgiving of offences by others. All this is included in what is normally called forgiveness. But, secondarily, forbearance also includes the patient endurance of adversity, hardship, pain and suffering, etc. Ideally, forgiveness is absolute, complete and universal. One must forgive all types of offences (injury, insult, abuse, criticism), everywhere (in private and in public), at all times (past, present and future), in all circumstances (in sickness or health), in thought (not entertaining angry thoughts), word (not speaking harshly) and deed (not harming physically), without any exception (whether friend, enemy or indifferent person), and however wicked the offending person or however terrible the injury may be. Even if people criticize the Buddha or his Religion (*dhamma*) or the Order (*saṅgha*), one should not be angry or bear ill will towards them, but merely point out what is wrong. Whoever bears enmity even to thieves who sever one’s limbs, one by one, with a saw, does not carry out the teaching of the Buddha. Even in such a circumstance, one should not be harsh to the thieves or hate them, but rather one should be kind and compassionate and cultivate friendliness or loving kindness (*metta*) towards them as well as towards the whole world.

Forbearance and Karma Doctrine of Jainism

There are two main suppositions:

- a. One enjoys the fruits of karmas only.
- b. The fruits of karma that we haven’t done, we can never get.

We are a product of our past impressions, and our future is a consequence of our present ones. If we understand this, anger is annihilated. Indeed, instead of playing the ‘blame-game’.

...at the moment, anger is a mindless force, instead of playing the blame game, we take control of our lives, taking responsibility for what is happening to us. In this way, anger will not have any scope to survive. Instead of complaining or criticizing, we learn to appreciate and gladly accept. Our equation changes from 'Why me?' to 'Try me!' or 'Why not me?'.

Example: when you have a cup of coffee in your hand, and by mistake it spills on someone. What will come out of the cup?

Ice tea? No.

Coke? No.

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Hot chocolate? No.

Coffee? Yes. Only coffee can spill from a coffee cup.

Similarly, what is within you is what will 'spill' on others. Beware, check yourself before blaming others. Indeed, if anger is within us, we 'spill' it on others. But if our hearts are filled with love, we 'spill' love on others in the form of forgiveness. Just as the karma theory beautifully explains that we all have to bear the fruits of our actions, external situations are only triggers, but the way we respond is in our hands. Instead of binding more karmic particles, why can't we simply learn to let go and close the debts that we need to pay anyways? If we choose to forgive, we happily close karmic accounts and take a step closer to liberation. But if we choose anger, we create new ones, which keep us running in the unending cycle of rebirth. Choice is ours.

Let us now see as to who bears the pain of Anger?

Here is a quote from which we can easily understand it:

*I am my own torturer as well as my own liberator.
Hell is not a geographical place.
When I am in kaṣāya (of anger), I am in Hell.
I can either create Heaven or Hell, here & now.
So choose wisely.¹⁹*

Meaning of the quote is: The one who loses the most when in anger is the person who is angry. Indeed, despite hurting the other person, the true and most important loss is of the person who allowed anger to take the front seat. By getting upset, we are dirtying ourselves and we are taking millions of steps away from our True Selves. We aren't giving ourselves a chance to liberate. Therefore, there is no benefit or gain anger. There lies only peace and bliss in the seat of forgiveness. Let us make use of this birth by cultivating and blooming the virtue of forgiveness within us, and not putting ourselves in an unending vicious cycle of life and deaths.

Tools to practice Forgiveness in Modern Day World through 5 As

1. Appreciate (Pramoda Bhāva)

It is interesting to point out that even in the most important *Navakāra Mantra* in Jainism, it is only *guna*-focused, not name-focused. Indeed, let us learn the power of appreciation by

seeing even the smallest quality in others. Let us not be like crabs who try to pull each other back, when the other is going ahead. But rather, be happy for them. The sweetest sound in this world is a praise.

Experiment: when insulting someone, immediately say 10 good qualities about the person. You'll realize that making fun of him or her was absolutely unnecessary, because there is so much to appreciate than to criticize.

2. Accept (Samabhāva)

To forgive is to accept the person without making any changes. Forgiveness is acceptance; forgiveness is respect to the other.

Experiment: remember the Karma Philosophy which is; 'I eat what I cook'.

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3. Adapt (Anekāntavāda)

Differentiate between my side, your side and the right side (in all arguments). See all sides of the story, not just your own.

Experiment: take 5 minutes before speaking. The anger will subside and forgiveness will prevail.

4. Awareness (Jāgrti)

Become aware of the anger at the birth stage, when it is in form of 'irritation'; so that it does not escalate into a volcano of anger.

Experiment:

1. put a 'no anger zones' in your room.
2. See the 'core' of the person (soul), not the impure layer; or see the person as though it was the first time. (Revisiting incident again and again creates anger).

5. Adore (Maitrī Bhāva)

The most important point in *kṣamā* (forgiveness) that we must take into consideration is that the Heart of Forgiveness is Love. Without having the feeling of Pure Love from within, how will forgiveness ever arise? It is important to have *maitrī* (universal brotherhood) for all.

Experiment: give free smiles, not stones when walking on the street.

Kathā (factual story) to illustrate Supreme Forgiveness and its greatness

1. Gajasukumāra, younger brother of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva, very beautiful in body, renounced the worldly life taking initiation from Bhagavāna Neminātha at young age of only twelve and was engrossed in deep meditation sitting in a crematorium; thereby his character full of wonderful forgiveness, attained very high spiritual state of the self. I'll tell you that story. Gajasukumāra was betrothed to a very beautiful daughter of a Brahmin named Somala but before marriage Gajasukumāra renounced the worldly life. So Somala got fiercely angry and wild as his daughter missed a beautiful boy who would be her husband and he went in search of Gajasukumāra and searched out from where that great monk Gajasukumāra was sitting in performance of *kāyotsarga*, with pure heart and steadfast

mind in a crematorium; prepared a furnace of wet sticky earth on the head of Gajasukumāra and putting burning charcoal in it and added other firewood and so there was great heat. Gajasukumāra's young tender body began to burn and seeing this, Somala went away from there. You can imagine what a terrible pain Gajasukumāra might have been suffering by burns. But he kept equanimity of mind and did not allow any anger to disturb his mental peace. On the contrary making his soul elastic he said to himself that had he accepted Somala's daughter as his wife in marriage, Somala might have given him a rich turban which would have been tattered by long use and resulted in worldly miseries but instead he gave him a turban of burning fire by which he could be released from his soul's attachment to his body and so helped him to obtain quick liberation. As a result of this unshakable extreme forgiveness, Gajasukumāra, bearing killing pain of burns with peaceful mind, became all seeing and all knowing, got infinite happiness of life. What an incomparable forgiveness and how excellent its result! Philosophers have rightly said that if one's soul proceeds completely in its own nature of eternal peace and bliss, it realizes liberation there and then. The famous forgiveness of Gajasukumāra gives us an absolutely correct advice to follow it and realize our self quickly.'

2. Once, Saint Ekanātha went to Banaras on a pilgrimage. The morning after having taken a bath in the river Gaṅgā, he began climbing some steps. There was a Paṭhāna sitting beside the bank who spat on him. The saint went down the steps and took another bath. Again, the man spat on him. The Saint ignored the man and quietly back into the river to take a bath. After hundred and one times of this happening over again, the Paṭhāna finally repented for his action and begged for forgiveness. The Saint replied 'I am grateful to you for your good deed, because daily I used to bath in the Gaṅgā only once, but today I am lucky to bathe a hundred and one times due to you.'. Great men have great thoughts, and more importantly, immense purity of heart.

Conclusion

Since time immemorial, we've been wandering endlessly taking different forms, roles, set-ups and most importantly, accumulating karmic particles throughout the journey. It is time to put an end to this vicious circle, for it is not enabling us to be freed. Do we really want to leave this body without having met our true selves? No.

We have become so accustomed to anger and its family that we must take this birth as an opportunity to break our habits and live differently. Coal, diamond and granite are all carbon but their values are different. Indeed, we may all be humans but the way we live our lives and the values we choose to practise will determine the quality of our life. Anger is an easy-way out, but one that doesn't give a way out from the cycle of rebirth. Its opposite, forgiveness (with love at the center of our hearts) allows us to break our karmic bondage and ultimately, attain inner bliss.

Let us not live another life like all the ones we already have. Just as Pujya Gurudevashri Rakeshbhai says: 'God's favourites are those who have power to take revenge but choose to Forgive.'

Do we want the remote control of our lives to be in other's hands or our own? Let us take a

Do we have the remote control of our lives to be in control of our own life? Let us take a moment to think about the purpose of this birth in order to cultivate virtues within us in its truest sense. Does a woman look beautiful by simply keeping the make up in her toiletry kit? No, she must apply it. In the same way, this paper is only beneficial if after reading it, we apply the teachings of the Enlightened Ones and follow their footsteps.

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- Śamo damas tapaḥ sāmyam, titikṣoparatih śrutam//
Jñānam viraktiraiśvaryam, śauryam tejo balaṁ smṛtaḥ/
Svāntaryam kauśalam kāntirdhairyam mārdaṁ eva ca//
Prāgalbhyam praśrayaḥ śīlam, saha ojo balaṁ bhagaḥ/
Gāmbhīryam sthairyam āstikyam kirtirmano ’nahanḥkṛtiḥ//
Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa 1/16/26-28.*
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Yastāmevaṁ vijñāti sa sarva kṣattumarhatih//
Kṣamā brahma kṣamā satyam kṣamā bhūtaṁ ca bhāvi ca/
Kṣamā tapaḥ kṣamā śaucam Kṣama yācoddhṛtaṁ jagat//
Ati brahmavidām lokānāti cāpi tapasvinām/
Ati yajñavidām caiva kṣamaṇiḥ prāpnivanti tām//
Kṣamā tejasvinām tejaḥ kṣamā brahma tapasvinām/
Kṣamā satyam satyavatām kṣamā dānam kṣamā yāśaḥ//
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Are Aparigraha (Non-possessiveness) and Meditation Mutually Exclusive or Inclusive in the Path of Self-realization?

Neha Patel*

Introduction

21st century is the era of science and technology. Science and technology have done a great service to mankind by providing amenities for pleasant living. The limitless desire for power and wealth has caused man to lose his sense of respect for others. The craze for newness is the order of the day. Advertising stimulates the craze for consumption. Materialism does not have an effective means to quench the thirst of a man for possession of worldly objects. Humanity only attempts at temporary appeasement of this kind of craving, which has the opposite effect, causing desire to flare up like fire by an ablation of ghee. Mahatma Gandhi states, "The world has enough to satisfy everyone's need but the world does not have enough to satisfy one man's greed."¹

Day by day the physical and mental health of human beings deteriorates with the advancement of technology. Man is still not happy even though he has all the comforts and luxuries of life. Even in developed countries, where kinds of facilities are easily available, the quantity of life continues to improve, while the quality of life diminishes. There is an inner void/emptiness experience by many humans, and individuals possess more and more material goods, thinking the void will be filled and satisfied one day. One feels unhappy; therefore to be happy he buys objects or possesses objects or people. However, he experiences only

momentary happiness, and, after a short while, starts feeling unhappy again. This is circular route/pattern. Where science and technology have failed to fulfill that emptiness; that's where spirituality begins. Spirituality helps to break the circular route/pattern and shows the linear pattern by digging deep into finding the root cause of the unhappiness and emptiness and providing a solution to overcome it. As Shrimad Rajchandra says: "In absence of understating the true nature of soul, I experienced endless suffering. I bow to the graceful *Guru*, who explained the true nature of soul."²

2600 years ago, Lord Mahāvīra has rightly observed "the more you get, the more you want; your greed increases."³ According to Jainism, the root of all mental and physical suffering is the desire for worldly enjoyment. Therefore, only detachment from worldly enjoyment can put an end to suffering. All the spiritual traditions e.g. Buddhism, Islam and Christianity are agreed on this point.

In order to attain detachment, one has to take a different root. This root is known as the self-realisation rout. There are multiple ways suggested by the different faiths to attain self-realisation. However, this paper will particularly discuss the core principle of *aparigraha* within Jainism and meditation as penance; will help to find everlasting happiness by realizing one's true "self."

In order to attain self-realisation; this paper will discuss the basic concept of *aparigraha*, yoga (meditation) and self-realization. It will also methodically examine the path of *aparigraha* and meditation for self-realization. Finally, the paper will determine whether or

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not *aparigraha* and meditation are mutually exclusive or inclusive, through an examination of examples from canonical text or from historical data and present social example.

Self-realisation

Merriam Webster's dictionary defines self-realization as 'fulfillment by oneself of the possibilities of one's character or personality'. In one overview, Mortimer Adler defines self-realization as 'freedom from external coercion, including cultural expectations, political and economic freedom, and the freedom from worldly attachments and desires etc.' In the Indian understanding, Self-realization is liberating knowledge of the true Self, as the permanent, undying *ātman*. It is knowledge of the true self beyond both delusion and identification with material phenomena. It refers to self-identification and not mere ego identification.⁴ In order to be happy and blissful and overcome emptiness, self-realisation is a must. Self-realization is considered the gateway to *mokṣa*, i.e. liberation/freedom from rebirths.⁵

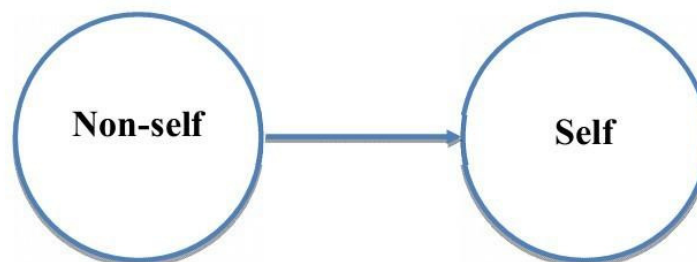
In Jainism self-realization is one of the major pre-requisites to attain ultimate enlightenment and liberation (*mokṣa*). Self-realisation means peeling away fabricated layer of own personality to understand the true self and hence the true nature of reality. In Jainism karma is portrayed as invisible particles of subtle matter that adhere to a living organism or *jīva*. These particles come together to form a film of negativity and darkness around the soul that obscures the true consciousness and evil karmic matter into the soul (*āsrava*) leading the

obscured the true consciousness and even harming matter and the soul (*jīva*), leading the organism to fall into the bondage of lust, worldly pleasure, ego, hatred, jealousy, anger, etc. Thus self-realisation paves the way to simply reverse this process and help the seeker to decipher the absolute truth on its own. Jainism firmly rejects the belief of a creator, and one being is solely responsible for his thoughts, actions and their consequences.⁶

Now, the questions which come to mind are, how do we achieve self-realisation; what is the process or method to attain self-realisation; and why is it needed in present times.

In order to progress on the path of self-realisation one first needs to be very clear in terms of what is “Self” and what is “not Self.” The word *jīva* is used for self or soul in Jainism. Jainism recognizes *jīva* as an eternal entity. The defining characteristic of self is sentiency, and hence it is different from material objects. Self is regarded as beginningless and as having unending, continuous existence. It is an entity which lived in the past and which continues to live in the present, and which will certainly live in the future, too. Though it cannot be perceived, yet it has some manifest features in this mundane existence. The manifest and essential features are its life essentials (such as senses, the channels of activities, life duration and respiration) which are the signs of its presence in an embodied condition.⁷

To understand the concept of Self, it is necessary to know first what is not Self, because the ontological analysis of reality, according to Jain philosophy, takes both self (*jīva*) and not self (*ajīva*) into consideration, which fills the entire psychical and physical phenomena of the universe. *Ajīva* (non Self) has been explained by Jain scholars as a non-psychical entity, as well as non-sentient. It does not mean that it stands only for matter or physical body having some form, because its classification includes those substances also which have no forms; e.g. *pudgala*, *dharma*, *adharma*, *ākāśa* and *kāla*.⁸



The journey from non self to self is known as self-realization. This paper will look into the process from *bahirātmā* to *antarātmā* via method of *aparigraha* and meditation.

Aparigraha

The term “*aparigraha*” non-possession, non-grasping - has its root in the term “*parigraha*” which means to amass, to grasp, to accumulate, to compile, to seize, to hold, to fence in and to receive or accept possessions or property. It is also defined as that which entangles one

from all sides. The term *aparigraha* has both external implications of limiting possessions, and internal implications, i.e. non attachment, detachment, *anāsakti* or *amūrchā*.⁹

Parigraha, thus means the worldly objects around us and our attachment to them. Thus to understand *parigraha* only in the sense of accepting worldly objects would be incomplete; likewise to understand it only in the sense of attachment or *āsakti* would also be incomplete. But a comprehensive view of the two implications of *parigraha* would show that the two are intertwined and have a kind of circular relation. As the abundance of material objects arouses attachments or *āsakti*, (*mūrccchā*) which in turn disturbs mental peace, likewise inner craving, attachment or *mūrccchā* makes one desire and acquire more and more material possessions.¹⁰

Parigraha is not just possessions but it is possessiveness. The term *icchā* is also closely associated with *parigraha* which means the desire to possess. This is perhaps a stage even prior to *mūrccchā*. *Ichchā* materializes in possessions and possessions then propel or drive the individual to attachment or *mūrccchā*.¹¹

The importance of *aparigraha* and its universal acceptance lies in its social basis. It is a principle which not only has a place in Jain ethics or Indian ethics but it occupies a place in Christianity and Islam also.

Aparigraha in Hinduism

Aparigraha as a precept or vow finds occurrence in Brahminical texts. In *Baudhhāyana Dharma Sūtras*, it means abstention from taking possessions or refusal to master or overpower. The sutras speak of the five vows of *sanyāsī* and *aparigraha* is one of them.¹² It occurs in *Manusmṛti*, where Manu says that a *sanyāsī* should establish himself in non-possession, live in a secluded place, and observe the vow of silence.¹³

Aprarigraha is given a very special place in Brahminical literature. In this regard Mahatma Gandhi Said that the whole of Hinduism could be summed up in one single verse of *Īsopaniṣad*: The reward of renunciation is *bhūñjīthā* i.e. enjoyment of all that you need. But there is a meaning in the world translated as enjoy. Which may as well be translated as use and eat etc. it signifies, therefore, that you may not take more than necessary for your growth.

Hence, the enjoyment or use is limited by two conditions: One is the act of renunciation.Therefore, take it as you take, either in the same that enjoyment or use is the reward of renunciation or that renunciation is the condition of enjoyment. Renunciation is essential for our very existence for the soul.¹⁴

In *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad*, there is a conversation between Yājñavalkya and his wife Maitreyī. This conversation shows that possessions and wealth do not help in attaining immortality. When Yājñavalkya wanted to distribute his estate between his two wives, Maitreyī choose the spiritual portion of his estate. She said, “Supposing I obtain possession of the whole earth full of wealth, by that I shall not attain immortality.” Certainly not, Yājñavalkya replied. Such a life will not only like the life of those who have all kinds of conveniences; there is no hope for immortality my mere possessions of wealth. It is not for its own sake that everything is held dear but for the sake of atman that everything is precious. Thus conversation shows that possessions may become hindrances to the attainment of the

goal.¹⁵ Similar examples of renunciation of desire and wealth can be quoted from other *Upaniṣads*.

Chronologically, the *sūtra* period follows the upaniṣadic period. The *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali enunciates the eight fold path of *yoga-aṣṭāṅgikayoga*, as the spiritual exercise for the cessation of mental modifications. The first step of the yogic path is the adopting of the five moral principles known as *yamas*. *Aparigraha* is clearly mentioned as one of the five *yamas* after with *ahiṃsā* (non-violence), *satya* (truthfulness), *steṇa* (non-stealing), *brahmacharya* (celibacy/chastity).¹⁶ *Aparigraha* is usually translated as non-possession, especially in Jain and Buddhist systems. But, in the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali, James Woods states, *aparigraha* is the virtue of abstaining from appropriating objects because one understands the disadvantage in “acquiring them, keeping them, losing them, being attached to them or in harming them. Patañjali suggests that greed and coveting material wealth increases possessiveness, a cycle that distracts from good reasons for activity that should motivate a person, and ultimately to state where a person seeks material wealth without effort and by harming, hurting or impoverishing someone else, or some living creature.”¹⁷

In this way we can say that, through *aparigraha*, Hinduism teaches that one should take only what one needs and let go of the unnecessary.

Aparigraha in Jainism¹⁸

Aparigraha is the fifth vow of the monks and nuns in the Jain code of ethics (*mahāvratā*); likewise it occupies the fifth place in the code of ethics for householders or the laity (*aṇuvratā*). Its importance can be noticed by very fact that it occupies a place in the fourfold scheme of pre Mahāvīra ethics, i.e. in the ethics of Pārśvanātha (the twenty third *tīrthaṅkara* of the Jains). Where it is called *cāturyāma dharma*. The vow of celibacy was introduced by Mahāvīra in his five-fold scheme. In the Jain Scriptures (*āgamas*) it is technically called ‘*bahiddhādāṇaveramaṇam*’. *Bahiddha* in Prakṛita means external, ‘*ādāna*’ means acceptance, and *veramaṇam*’ means abstinence. Sheer non-acceptance of something external is meaningless unless non-acceptance is accompanied by detachment, control of desire or cleaving-*mūrcchā* (infatuation) or *mamatva*. In *Daśavaikālika Sūtra*, *parigraha* is identified with *mūrcchā* or attachment.¹⁹ In *Tattvārthasūtra*, Umāsvāti also says that *parigraha* is nothing but *mūrcchā*.²⁰ Mahāvīra tells that desires are as endless as sky. He says, “If there were numberless mountains of gold and silver, as big as Kailāsa, they would not satisfy a greedy man; for his avidity is boundless like space.”²¹

Ācārya Amṛtacandra points out that it is only *mūrcchā* which is the true essence of *parigraha*. He says, “Infatuation, certainly, must be known as attachment to possessions. And the passion of attachment, which comes into existence due to the rise of delusion, is infatuation.”²² Thus anything may become *parigraha* if one has attachment to it, be it living or non-living (*jaḍa* or *cetana*), visible or invisible (*rūpī* or *arūpī*), big or small (*sthūla* or *sūkṣma*).

Jain scriptures emphasise two aspects of *parigraha*: *bāhya* (external) and *ābhyantara* (internal). The broad classes of *bāhya* and *ābhyantara parigraha* have been further sub-classified. *Bāhya* objects of *parigraha* are divided into two: *cetana* (living) and *jaḍa* (non-

...*parigraha* means attachment to all living beings such as wife, children, servants etc., *jaḍa praigraha* means attachment to all lifeless objects such as clothes, house, money, jewellery etc. *Ābhyantara parigraha* is sub-divided into 14 types which are wrong notions, attachment for sex, laughter, affliction, fear disgust etc.

In this way we can say that in Jainism, *parigraha*, having such wide ranging implications, needs to be curbed and controlled. Without such control social and individual progress is impossible.

Aparigraha in Buddhism

Buddhism is a significant part of Śramaṇic tradition and without a culture of renunciation; Buddhism cannot be placed in Śramaṇic tradition. Although, *aparigraha* is not included in the *pañcasīla* (fivefold scheme of principles of morality, but it occupies a significant role in the code of conduct of the Buddhist monks and nuns. In *Khuddakapāṭha*, there are 10 training rules (*dasa sīlas*) are described for the monks and nuns. In which rule number 2, 8, 9 and 10 are just like the Jain concept of *aparigraha*. Here in rule number 2, a monk/nun undertakes the percept to refrain from taking that which is not given.²³ In rule number 8, he/she undertakes the percept to refrain from wearing garlands, using perfumes, and beautifying the body with cosmetics, in rule number 9, he/she undertakes the percept to refrain from living on a high or luxurious sleeping place and in rule number 10, he/she undertakes the percepts to refrain from accepting gold and silver (money).²⁴

Buddha declares *parigraha* (possession) as an obstacle for the path of *dharma*. He says, “One, who has destroyed every resting-place of the mind, for whom there is no grasping, who covets nothing either in this world or in the other, Tathāgata deserves the oblation.”²⁵ The Buddha again says that he would not call a person *Brahmaṇa* merely because he was born out of *Brahmaṇa* mother’s womb....One, who is free from all kind of possessions, he would call him a *Brahmaṇa*.²⁶

In this way we can say that there is an important place of *aparigraha* in Buddhism also.

Aparigraha in Christianity

From Christian perspective- Coveting our neighbour’s goods or our neighbour’s spouse is a form of *parigraha*. Throughout Jesus ‘ministry he warned his followers to be content with what they had, to give to all who ask, and not to lay up treasure on earth but rather to lay up treasure in heaven. His parable of the rich fool highlights the danger of prioritizing possessions over God.²⁷

Parigraha is an important virtue for a man in Christianity. The parable that most directly commends this virtue is: “Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.’ But he said to him, ‘Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?’ And he said to them, ‘Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’”²⁸ Jesus remarked to his disciples, “Believe me, a rich man will find it very difficult to enter the kingdom of

Heaven...a camel could more easily squeeze through the eye of a needle than a rich man get into the kingdom of God.”²⁹ Jesus Christ again says, “Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have.”³⁰

One of the disciples of Jesus says, “People who want to get rich keep toppling into temptation and are trapped by many stupid and harmful desires that plunge them into destruction and. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, in their eagerness to get rich, have wandered away from the faith and caused themselves a lot of pain.”³¹

In this way we can say that there is an important place of *aparigraha* in Christianity too. There is a clear message of Christianity that without virtue of non-possessiveness, God’s reward cannot be obtained.

Aparigraha in Islam

There are five pillars in Islam, which are acts of worship that are woven into every Muslim’s daily life. These are: *Tauhīda* (believe in GOD), *Namāza* (prayers), *Rozā* (fasting), *Zakāta* (voluntary donation) & *Haza* (Pilgrimage). Just as prayers and fasting, *Zakāta* is one of the major religious duties in Islam. *Zakāta* is essentially an Arabic term which literally means spiritual growth and purification. It refers to the purification of wealth and soul. Wealth purification denotes the mobilization of assets for the purpose of financial growth and justified distribution. Purification of the soul implies freedom from hatred, jealousy, selfishness, uneasiness and greed.³²

Zakāta is paid on the net balance after a Muslim has spent on basic necessities, family expenses, due credits, donations and taxes. As per Islamic belief every Muslim must pay his/her *Zakāta* at the minimum rate of 2.5% of his/her total possessions. *Quran* declares that a true Muslim must establish regular prayers and give regular charity.³³ In another verse, *Quran* says to the followers of Islam, “If a person establishes prayer and gives *Zakāta*, then he is your brother in religion.”³⁴ It means those who do not pay *Zakāta*, are not included within the Muslim society. According to *Quran*, not to give *Zakāta* is a punishable offence. God says in *Quran*, “Those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah - give them tidings of a painful punishment.”³⁵

In summary; we can say that Jainism is not alone in believing that the root cause of suffering is attachment towards worldly objects and lust for their enjoyment as we have seen above all the spiritual traditions are agreed on this.

Jainism clearly declares that it is necessary to root out our lust for enjoyment and attachment to our belongings to be established in the vow of non-possessions. All the great miseries suffered by the self and born of “my-ness”, that is attachment towards these alien associations and so it is imperative to abandon completely this notion of external objects as being mine. Abandonment of “my-ness” or attachment is the only means to self-realisation, because as

long as man is attached, his attention is fixed not on the Self- that is, the self in its idealized perfection- but on the non-Self - that is, material objects. Materialism thrives on this object-oriented attitude or indulgence in the “non-Self”. The right standpoint regards the self as of supreme value and aims at the realization of its quiddity – that is, ideal, unconditional state as

the pure knower free from attachment and passion.³⁶ In this way we can say that the identification with the not Self and regarding worldly objects as a source of happiness are the hallmark of materialism.

Aparigraha in Mind/Meditation

Happiness, joy and peace are important emotions to feel, yes, but so too is sadness, anger and loss. To experience only the good stuff is to experience only half of what life has to offer. The school of life exists to allow us to experience and learn from every aspect of our being, the light and the dark, and to truly live we must not push away the things we don't want to feel, but allow them to happen, and know that this too shall pass. When we let the moment be what it is without either trying to cling to it, or to push it away, we can really say we're living in that moment, allowing things to come and go, without the need to possess any of it. *Aparigraha* offers us so much freedom - the freedom to work and do what we love without worrying about the outcome, the freedom to rely less on external and material possessions to bring us happiness, and the freedom to experience everything life has to offer, whatever that may be.³⁷

For happy and peaceful life, it is necessary to practice the art of letting go. It is not the same as dropping or forgetting; it is a mindful practice where we place things aside with purpose. It is also a kind of *aparigraha*. At this stage of *aparigraha*; the process of Meditation begins. Meditation is helpful in preventing the fluctuations of the mind. Patañjali has defined yoga in the same way. His famous definition of yoga is “*yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*”³⁸ means yoga is the removal of the fluctuations of the mind, where *citta* is mind, *vṛttis* are thought impulses, *nirodha* is removal.

Patañjali³⁹ describes the things that spoil one's meditation. In other words, they are distractions: Ignorance, I-ness, desire, aversion and attachment.⁴⁰ It is obvious that the first distraction is ignorance, but interesting that the second distraction is I-ness (*asmitā*, the sense of being someone, ego). Patañjali later defines I-ness like this: I-ness is the merging, as it were, of the power of knowing with the instruments thereof.⁴¹

The instruments of knowing are not only the senses, but also the mind and the cognitive faculties. “Merging” of the two is a metaphor, Patañjali writes “as it were”. What happens is that the identification mechanism becomes active and parts of the psyche/mind-complex identify with the parts that are perceiving or cognizing. This gives rise to the sense of being an individual, in other words, I-ness.



“I Am” and “attention” are a pair; actually there are three that arise: I Am (or Me), attention

and other. You can't have one without the other two. But all three are saturated with pure.

unmanifest awareness which is the Self. Once in the Self, “I Am”, “attention” and “other” remain, but the awareness that permeates them has become Self-aware. Later “I am, attention and other” become seen as *spanda*, which is the technical term for vibrating, manifesting *śakti*. Then one abides in the Self.⁴²

The meaning is that when you are no longer in pure awareness, simultaneously your attention is occupied with fluctuations and you become identified with this and “I am” sets in. The fluctuations are of course “other”, but as soon as you have “attention” and “other”, “I am” pops up and you identify either with the fluctuations of the mind or with the attention beholding the fluctuations. Otherwise one merges with the fluctuations.⁴³

When one meditates and his mind is full of thoughts, gradually his involvement with the thoughts subsides and suddenly he is in pure awareness. Once he is in pure awareness it does not matter if there are thoughts in the mind or not, because he is entirely out of them. Some *samādhis* have thoughts, some don't, but in both you are not involved with either of the three: “I am”, “attention” or “other”. If one stay in that state of *samādhi* one of two things may happen: 1) Fluctuations of the mind go away, 2) Fluctuations of the mind go berserk. In either case it is his job to remain uninvolved with the fluctuations. One should stay in pure awareness and remain self-aware pure awareness. If we can remain there, everything is fine, if we cannot, however, then the fourth verse of the first chapter of *Pātañjala Yogasūtra* becomes true and we get so caught up in the fluctuations that we lose the sense of pure self-aware awareness. Once awareness is no longer aware of itself, attention sets in relation to fluctuations of the mind (other), and you get either caught up in the fluctuations as an observing ego (I am), or one get identified with the fluctuations and actually believe he is in that moment are some thought or feeling (also I am).

So, we can say that ignorance is misery and that it can be warded off by ceasing to identify with impulses and actions as well as with fluctuations in the mind. That's why Patañjali first explains that ‘to the wise man life is misery’,⁴⁴ then he states that the misery which is not yet come is to be avoided.⁴⁵ What is interesting here is that the cause of misery and the means to ward off misery are the same as the cause of ignorance and the means to ward off ignorance. The cause of that which is to be warded off is the identification of the seer and the seen.⁴⁶

Shrimad Rajchandra says same thing in his famous work *Ātmasiddhi*. He says, “That which causes bondage is the path to bondage and that which causes liberation is the path to liberation. The soul's state in which the causes of bondage are destroyed is the path of liberation and so it leads to the end of the soul's cycle of birth and death.”⁴⁷ Jainism clearly declares that the chief cause of soul's bondage is the soul's feeling of oneness with its actions. Actions of the past life may fructify in the present life but if the soul develops attachment to them it gets further involved in the cycle of birth and death. If the soul develops non-attachment and equanimity or indifferent to them the knots of actions get gradually loose and it is freed from them. It is also freed from fresh actions as it is non-attached to all that is the not-self. Shrimad Rajchandra mentions same thing in the next verse of *Ātmasiddhi*: “The fundamental knots of bondage and action are three- attachment, aversion and ignorance. That by which these knots can be loosened and destroyed is the path of liberation.”⁴⁸

Describing the *kaivalya*, Patañjali says that there being absence of ignorance there is absence of junction, which is the thing to be avoided; that is the *kaivalya* of the seer.⁴⁹ *Kaivalya*

literally means “aloneness” i.e. detachment from all other connections. It is a metaphor for pure being, for residing in the Self. It also refers to the Self as pure awareness and the Self ability to be aware of fluctuations of the mind without becoming identified with them. This is what is called witnessing. Shrimad Rajchandra describes it in very simple terms. He says, “When there prevails uninterrupted experience of one’s nature exclusively, it is termed as omniscience, which is liberation despite embodiment.”⁵⁰ In such a state the aspirant has the absolute and incessant knowledge of the nature of the Self. It is free from all illusions and limitations. It is ever irreducible and indestructible and so it is called absolute knowledge. The soul with the absolute knowledge experiences highest liberation though it is embodied. In brief, non-attachment brings liberation or salvation. Even when the destructive actions (*ghātīkarma*) of a released living soul are destroyed his non-destructive actions (*aghātīkarma*) still remain and so he continues to live. In spite of his bodily life he is just like a totally liberated master self. Such living souls are Gods in living bodies.⁵¹

We can thus understand that the removal of the fluctuations of the mind is not accomplished by will and subtle force. It is ultimately accomplished by removing identifications and by dissolving the mind into the self, but in order to accomplish this dissolution, the mind must first be *sāttvika*. What, then, is a *sāttvika* mind? It is a mind longing for wisdom, and is happy, lucid and healthy. But also it is a mind without fluctuations; thus we come full circle back to Patañjali’s initial definition of yoga as removal of the fluctuations of the mind. In this way we can say that *yoga* is merging in the self, removal of identifications and removal of fluctuations of the mind.

For e.g. Mercury is a slippery, silvery liquid. If you control it, you can make many uses of it; but if you do not know how to control it, it will slip through your fingers. The mind is like mercury-it is beautiful and luminescent, and it is very useful. It can bring the best result if you control it, but one must learn to bring the mind to calmness and one pointedness.

Conclusion

The process or path of self-realization is a stepwise process. By following the process, one can move forward from a circular route to an inner route. That’s where one starts self-observation. He is ready for the journey from non-self to self. Those steps are: 1. Preparatory stage, 2. Witnessing state, 3. Self-realization- pure being.

Preparatory stage: In self-observation the subject objectifies itself (looks at itself) and this is something everybody can do. Practicing “being in the now” is an attempt to reach this temporary witnessing.

The witnessing state: It is possible to reach a state of freedom from identification with the “I”, where the identification-mechanism is crushed, yet you are not self-realized. This is the witnessing-state. It is the ‘I AM-ness’ state, where one knows oneself to be nobody, but the most subtle I-ness has not been dissolved. It is easy to believe this state is self-realization, since there are no identifications, one witnesses everything, and one has realized oneself as nothing (nobody). But this state is characterized by a duality between self-as-nobody and everything else. This I-ness is the root of ignorance.

Self-realization (Pure Being): Self-realization is a state of total freedom from the small I where even the primal I-ness has gone (and the witness in witnessing is gone). We call this stage self-realization because here the I-ness (and the identification mechanism which

depends upon I-ness) is gone and you have attained oneness with the Self as pure being. Here there is no longer a sense of being nobody or being nothing. There simply is pure being, the state of complete letting go of the ego and identification. That small 'I' has dissolved in pure being.

On the path of self-realization, *aparigraha* is only possible without meditation and vice versa e.g. Jain *śrāvaka* (male householder) and *śrāvikā* (female householder) with *aṇuvratas* of *aparigraha* and to the extent that even *sādhu* and *sādhvī* who can be *aparigrahī* with no passions but still attached to mind and thought and not self. However, there were examples where external possessions were still there and no internal possessions i.e. no *mūrcchā* or attachment with one self and they attained highest and pure state of meditation i.e. omniscience.

Aparigraha does not mean renunciation from the world for the achievement of a purely spiritual goal; it is a social goal with a social mission. *Aparigraha* is the concept in which possessions should include only what is necessary at a particular stage in one's life. It is a form of self-restraint that avoids the type of coveting and greed by which material gain destroys or hurts people, other living things or nature in general. *Aparigraha* is the opposite of *parigraha*, which means "the focus on material gain."⁵² Jains believe that the more a person possesses in worldly wealth the more he may be unhappy and the more likely he is to commit sin, both physically and mentally. Currently in society there are 20 million people who live a life on the principle of *aparigraha* just for social benefits and to live a happy life without any spiritual goals.⁵³

Given all this, perhaps *aparigraha* refers less to the enjoyment of an experience, thing, state or relationship, and more to our sense of holding it to be 'mine'. Path to liberation or self-realization can be many but it can be attained with practice of detachment.

This I-ness and mine-ness is the main possessions and it is the root of attachment. Meditation is the technique for practicing the detachment. *Aparigraha* and meditation are thus both mutually exclusive and inclusive. At the early stage of an aspirant's life, *aparigraha* starts with external detachment, moves on to possessiveness, and then slowly as he comes near truth i.e. the self all his identity with I-ness and mine-ness is also classified as non-self and all the non-self is classified as possessions.

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- ⁴⁷ *Je jekāraṇabandhanāṃ, tehabandhanopantha/*
Tekāraṇachedakadaśā, mokṣapanthabhava anta// Ātmasiddhi 99.
- ⁴⁸ *Rāga, dveṣa, aijñāna e, mukhyakarmanāgrantha/*

- ⁴⁹ *Thāyanivṛttijēhathī, tejamokṣanopantha*// Ibid 100.
“*Tadabhāvātsaṃyogābhāvohānaṃtaddṛśekaivalyam*” Yogasūtra 2/25.

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- ⁵⁰ *Kevalanijasvabhāvanuṃ, akhaṇḍavartejñāna/*
Kahiekevalajñānate, dehachatāmnirvāṇa// Ātmasiddhi 113.
⁵¹ Patel, Dinubhai Muljibhai. Trans. *The Self Realization (Being the translation of Atma-Siddhi of Srimad Rajchandra)*. Agas: Srimad Rajchandra Ashram, 2003: 84. Print.
⁵² Sogani, Kamal Chand. *Ethical Doctrine of Jainism*. Sholapur: Jain Smarakshaka Sangh, 1967. Print.
⁵³ “What is Minimalism?” *Themminimalists*. Web. 16 July 2018.
<<https://www.themminimalists.com/minimalism/>>.

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