



JAINISM

UNIVERSAL PATH OF
SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

by

Kum. Poonam Mehta

This book has been edited by Kum. Poonam Mehta
under the guidance of
**SRAMAN, SANGHIYA, SALAHAKAR, MANTRI,
MUNI SRI SUMAN MUNIJI MAHARAJ**

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*Dedicated in the fond
memory of
Our Beloved Father*



Late Poonamchand Lunawat

Lunawat Brothers

T. G. KALGHATGI M.A. Ph.D
Professor and Head,
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FOREWORD

I am glad that Kumari Poonam Mehta has ventured to write on JAINISM - UNIVERSAL PATH OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT. She is a student of Jaina Philosophy and is well versed in Jaina way of Life. She can claim to be a devoted Jain and also to preach the Jaina tenents to younger generation. In a small book, she has covered wide field of Jaina Philosophy and ethics in simple way. Her book is instructive. It is a good addition to the library of Jainology. I wish her good luck.

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FOREWORD

It is not an exaggeration to say that Jainism has got its important place in the philosophies of the world, in respect of the deep and subtle explanation of non-violence, non-absolutism, non-possession and universal brotherhood.

It gives the right path leading to real peace to the world full of chaos, tension and restlessness.

It is quite necessary to know and grasp the essence of Jainology and interpret it in the context of the present age.

I feel very happy to write that one of my brilliant students of M.A. (Final) in the Department of Jainology, University of Madras, Miss. Poonam Mehta, has written a booklet in English throwing light briefly on the tenets of Jainism. I have gone through it and found that her attempt is praiseworthy. She has succeeded in presenting the fundamental tenets of Jainism in simple and lucid words, in a nutshell.

I hope persons desirous to know the essence of the doctrines of Jainism, will be benefited by reading this booklet.

It is my heartfelt wish that Miss. Poonam Mehta may emerge as a well-versed scholar in Jainology and utilise her life in the development of this great philosophy and culture based on the highest spiritual ideals.

(Dr.) Chhagan Lal Sastri, M.A., (Triple), Ph.D.
Prachhya Vidyacharya, Kavyatirth,
Visiting Professor, University of Madras.
Madras
7th September '87.

PREFACE

I am a humble student of Jainism, not a scholar. I am proceeding along the path of learning having the pious ambition of knowing the essence of this great philosophy.

It was the great kindness of venerable Sadhviji Sri JASUMATI BAI MAHASATIJI that she inspired me to write a few words on Jainism. I know, really I do not deserve to do such a deed successfully, but Sadhviji, Mahasatiji gave inspiration in the language of spiritual order, therefore I could not deny.

I am very much obliged to His Holiness SRI BHAD-RABAHU VIJAYJI in extending all his help and guiding me in this endeavour.

Whatever, I have learnt from the holy monks and nuns and my respectable teachers in the University, the renowned scholar of Indian Philosophy and specially Jainology Dr. T. G. Kalghatgi and Dr. Chhaganlal Sastri, M. A. (Triple) Ph.D., Vidya Mahodadhi. I tried to write down my ideas in a nutshell which are presented here before the readers.

During my visit to BOLARAM, for the auspicious darshan of Her Holiness SRI JASUBAI MAHASATIJI - disciple of Her Holiness SRI LALITHA BHAI MAHASATIJI,

SUSRAVAKA SRI ANANDRAJI BOARA suggested that I should write a short manual on Jain Religion and the Life style of Jain Monks which may satisfy the initial thirst for knowledge of the such like persons who were eager to know about the Jain Dharma. I am highly indebted to him, for inspiring me to proceed further in this writing.

It is beyond doubt that Jainism, is not a sect, but it is philosophy of the real progress, happiness and peace of humility. This is the need of the day that the tenets of Jainism must be sponsored and spread widely throughout the world. This is an age of comparative study. People like to know comparatively about different religions, they are also eager to know the usefulness of the religions of the humanity.

Jainism is very rich in literature, these few lines written by me are like the small drops of water in the ocean of knowledge propounded in Jainism.

Once again, I express my boundless gratefulness to Sri Jasumati Bai Mahasatiji who is an incarnation of purity, humility, fraternity and simplicity whose unlimited kindness and spiritual affection has been fortunately found by me.

May I hope that the people will be benefited of this small booklet.

- POONAM MEHTA

NAV KAR MAHAMANTRA

(THE SUPREME JAIN MANTRA)

NAMO ARIHANTANAM

NAMO SIDDHANAM

NAMO AYARIYANAM

NAMO UVAJZAYANAM

NAMO LOESAVVASAHUNAM

ESO PANCHANAMUKKARO

SAVVA PAVAPPANASANO

MANGALANAM CHA SAVVESSIM

PADHHAMAN HAVAL MANGALAM

Humbly we kneel in worship to Arhatas/Arihantas, the most Venerable ones who have vanquished all inner enemies and thus won the adoration of the whole creation.

2. In reverence, we bow to Siddhas, the liberated ones, who have attained the ultimate reality transcending time and the causality Karma. (The souls that are perfect through the destruction of Karmas).
3. We offer obeisance to Acharyas the masters who inspire and lead the aspirants to liberation.
4. Our respectful salutations to Upadhyayas, the preceptors who help us imbibe scriptural knowledge in its proper perspective.

5. Our greetings with folded hands we offer to the universal fraternity of Sadhus, the spiritually awakened souls who having dedicated their life solely to spiritual sadhana, tread the path of liberation.

This homage to the above five destroys all sins thoroughly and is the most benign amongst all that is regarded auspicious in this universe.

Thus, this Mahamantra is a blessing and is helpful to all. Chanting this Mahamantra, morning, evening and night regularly removes every obstacle, sorrow and misery. Hence the kingdom of happiness and peace is experienced everywhere in the house, in the family, in the city, in the nation and in the whole world.

This Mahamantra is not for any particular caste, creed, tribe or religion but for the benefit (welfare) of whole Humanity. It is universal, in content and in application.

The first curiosity of man is life and the last is death. The remaining curiosities are between this pair of opposites.

What is life? What was before this life? What is death? What will be after it? These are the main points in the line of the search for TRUTH.

“Religion means the search for truth, the knowledge

of the soul and the realization of the Self". The gates of religions are open to all.

Life and death are the clear angles of our vision. The common notion is that life is covetable not death. Lord Mahavira said, "*All creatures want to live and none wants to die*".

India has always been a country of "religious practices". But the present condition has proved that religion has only remained an ideal without having its application and practice in the day-to-day life. The first aspect is even today in its full swing. The temples, churches, mosques and other religious places are found full during the religious festivals and occasions. But the day-to-day life is becoming more and more devoid of morality. A man acts wrongly. His mind is consequently restless. In order to allay his unrest he takes refuge in religion. He supplicates before the Deity. As a result he gains some mental relief. A man in question seeks religion not to mend his ways but to secure for himself immunity from the consequences of his wrong doings both here and hereafter. In other words he wears religion as protective coat of armour so that he may continue to indulge in his wrong ways.

It is said by a great poet: "Religion without morality is a tree without a root. Morality without religion is a tree

without a fruit”.

In the universe, all objects - living and non-living have their own characteristics, innate nature (Dharma). Just as the nature of the wind is to blow, of water is to give coolness, in the same way a man's nature is to think and to be human.

Dharma is the root of a man's life that is humanity. Just as a tree has many branches, so too, the branches of religion are but branches of the single tree of fundamental TRUTH. Some branches may be big or small, but the fruit that it bears is of one taste only. Dharma too, bears the same principle of Universal Truth & also experiences the very same truth, when it is attained.

Jainism is a religion preached by a Jina. The meaning of the word Jina is “Victor” “Conquer”. The ultimate and absolute aim of life is salvation - Mukti! Deliverance! Two powerful impediments to the attainment of salvation are attachment and hatred. These two have been considered the inner enemies. They are the two enemies that entangle the Soul (Atma) in the cycle of birth and rebirth. Such passions as desire, anger, greed, arrogance and envy are but the offspring or the manifestations of the two passions namely attachment and hatred. One who attains an absolute victory over these enemies is known as a Jina.

These Jinas have in their lives personally lived the dharma and shown the world the path of attainment and that has become the *Dharma* for *Sadhakas*. The Jins give form to it, and hence it is named *Jin Dharma*.

The devotee of Vishnu is called a Vaishnav; the devotee of Shiva is called a Shiva; the follower of the Buddha is called a Buddhist; the follower of Christ is called a Christian. In the same manner, the follower of Jineshwar is known as a Jaina. Hence, this dharma has become current and established and known under the name of the *Jaina Dharma*.

Such a man is a Jaina to whatever nation he may belong, to whatever sect or creed he may belong; in whatever philosophical context he might have been born or brought up. The Jaina Dharma is not a religious sect or creed. Anyone can adore and follow this dharma irrespective of his caste and creed. This living dharma is meant for all.

The Jaina Dharma has been in existence from time immemorial. In relation to time, that which undergoes changes according to the passage of time, naturally passes through the phases of gradual evolution and gradual decline. This process of development and decline continues in the endless and boundless flow of time.

In this era, till the completion of three aeons people's wants were satisfied by "Kalpa Vriksha" (an heavenly tree which gave everything that was desired by a person). Gradually with the passage of time, the tree began to cease to give the desired things and the supply of the wants of the people ceased, resulting in a clash between themselves. To put an end to this clash and to create an atmosphere of harmony great men took birth to teach the suffering mankind. Rishabhadeva, the first Tirthankara (One who reveals Dharma) took birth on this soil. Since he was born great, he could put an end to all difficulties and had the ability to bring back harmony and peace, he was crowned a King by the people. So, Rishaba Deva was the first Tirthankar who established Dharma and taught the art of living. After him, there were twenty three Tirthankaras of whom Mahavira was the last and twenty fourth Tirthankara.



परस्परौपग्रहो जीवानाम्

According to the belief of Jain Agamas there are two elements, living and non-living. It is only due to the influence of the living-beings that many non-living things take form and shape. There are innumerable atomic particles in this universe, invisible to the naked eye. Through the activities of mind, speech and body, the karmic particles in the atmosphere get attracted and are bound to the soul. It is due to this bondage that the Jiva roams about in the cycle of birth and death. When these activities (i.e., of mind, speech and body) are completely stopped, all the karmas are destroyed by the person's immense ability and that Atma achieves the perfect state of purity and is freed from all the worldly bondages. According to Jain Agamas that Jiva become Shiva, Atma becomes paramatma and the human form attains the supreme state of soul.

Wherever there is Karma, there the worldly life exists, that is why this world existed in the past and will always be there forever.

Jiva is said to be Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. When all the three activities take place namely of mind, body and speech the Jiva is in its Brahma form and when it continues to prolong in this state for a long time, then it is in its Vishnu form and when it stops all the activities and destroys it, it is the Shiva and is released from the

disease of birth and death and thus freed from the bondage of samsara - attains total liberation - salvation - Brahma creates the world, Vishnu preserves & Shiva destroys and brings eternal peace.



परस्परप्रेमो जीवानाम्

The doctrine of Jaina Philosophy is based on the foremost necessity of conquering the grosser self for the realisation of Truth. The Jainas believe that only the Omniscient can give a code of conduct for life. They are pure who have attained perfection. Jainism is not a theistic system. It does not believe in the theory God as the creator and ruler of the world.

The Jainas believe that the world is formed of everlasting atoms and will exist eternally. The world has developed and will continue to develop by the inter-play of substances. There can be no destruction of things that do not exist nor can there be creations of things out of nothing. Things come into existence and cease exist because of modes and attributes. The Jains repudiate the theory of the creation of the world out of nothing or by accident. There are six substances which constitute the world. These are soul, matter, fulcrum of movement, fulcrum of rest, time and space. The diversities of the world are traced to Co-operative conditions of time (Kala), nature (Swabhava), fate (Bhavitavyata), action (Karma), and efforts (Purushartha). A seed may have a potentiality & grow into a tree, but it must have the help of time, natural environments the act of being placed in soil.

Jaina Karma Philosophy

Jainas attach enormous importance to Karma. Karma is the key, according to Jaina Philosophy to the riddle of life, so long as the soul is fettered by the bonds of Karma, it must undergo rebirth. Karma is bound up with the soul and when the soul departs, it carries with it the accumulated force of Karma and is drawn to such state as is suitable to it. There are four sources of Karma, the first of which is attachment to the mundane things of life. An indiscriminate use of any of these things give rise to Karma. The Jainas divide Karma according to its essence, nature, duration and content. The Jainas classify Karma into 8 classes which are:

1. That which veils the knowledge
2. That which veils the perception of true faith
3. That which excites the feelings of pleasure and displeasure, happiness and misery
4. That which arises from mundane attachment, an indulgence in passions.
5. The length of time which fettered soul must suffer the consequences of the Karma.
6. The Karma which determines one's particular state (gati)

7. The gotra karma determines his caste and his social status that is to say of being high born or low born
8. The Karma which obstructs the desired activities.

It is clear that Karmas play an important role in shaping the personality of an individual. Karmas, which entangle the soul have two functions - bad Karmas bind the soul and give bad fruits whereas the good Karmas free the soul and put forth before it the precious opportunities for material prosperity and spiritual progress.

When the soul is freed from bondage of these Karmas and has transcended the possibility of rebirth, it attains deliverance. A person who has attained deliverance is called a Siddha, a perfect soul.

Jaina defines a Siddha as being- "without caste, unaffected by smell, without sense of taste, without feeling, without form, without hunger, without pain, without sorrow, without joy, without birth, without old age, without death, without body, without Karma enjoying an endless and unbroken calm". - Infinite Bliss.

Jaina do believe in God, but not as a creator of the world. The nature of God, according to Jainism is that soul which is perfect and free. He is "perfect" in the sense of knowledge and free in the sense of being free from all

material bondages, all worldly affairs and worldly pains and pleasures. Every soul has the liberty to achieve it and can do so only by its own accord. The scriptures or a teacher can only act as "inspiring factor".

"Men thou art thine own friend, why wisest thou a friend beyond thyself". The only enemy of the soul is the vital force yet our present life has power and force to evade the effects of past Karmas. Hence expert yourself in right direction you will reach the goal.

The Nine Doctrines

We find that the whole universe is made up of two entities. The whole universe is but a manifestation or expansion of these two principles. Those two entities are *Jiva* that which has life; and *Ajiva* that which has no life; or that which is conscious and that which is inert. All agitations and restlessness result from these two only. The *Jiva* is also called *Atma* soul or *Chetana* the conscious entity. That which has no consciousness and that which has no life is called *Ajiva*. All the things in this universe both visible and invisible can be classified into these two kinds.

Lord Jineshwar has divided all things in this universe into nine entities which have been considered as

the foundation of true philosophy. These nine principles are 1. *Jiva* (living things), 2. *Ajiva* (non-living things), 3. *Punya* (merit), 4. *Papa* (sins), 5. *Ashrav* (the cause of merit or demerit), 6. *Samvar* (which stops the inflow of foreign energies), 7. *Bandh* (bondage of soul with actions), 8. *Niraja* (destruction of Karmas), 9. *Moksha* (salvation or freedom of the soul from all actions).

The first of these nine principles is *Jiva* (soul). The characteristics of a soul are described thus. "It performs different kinds of actions, it reaps the fruits of those actions, it is the *Jiva*, that is responsible to understand the doctrines and through extraordinary ability (power) cuts off the shackles of all bondages and attains liberation.

The first step to remove the Karma is *Samvara*. *Samvara* is the stoppage of the influx of Karma. Just as the inlets of water to a pond have to be stopped, so that the fresh water should not be let in, so also we should stop the inflow of fresh Karma into the soul. This is possible by moral and spiritual discipline. We can describe it as "*Jaina Yoga*".

In *Nirjara*, the Karma that has already been accumulated has been removed so as to make the soul pure. It is like cleaning the tank of the muddy water by removing the water out of the tank.

Next, after these stages of *Samvara* and *Nirajara*, the soul reaches the perfect state of *Moksha*. It is self-realisation. In this stage, the soul is pure and perfect without Karma. In this stage, the Soul being released from the Karmic bondage and having the capacity of upward motion it reaches the abode of *Siddhashila*, at the top of the *Loka Akasha*. The soul once in the *Moksha* stage, never returns and is permanently free from empirical adjuncts.

Bhagvan Mahavir explained that to achieve *Mukti* or Eternal Bliss one has to dissociate oneself from the luxuries of life and from the material objects that distract man, from the path of virtue. One should lead a spotless life of discipline to gain the divine experience and ultimately reach the status of perfect Atma, a state of "*Sat, Chit and Ananda*".

Lord Mahavira's teachings are based on three main principles of *Ahimsa*, *Anekantavada* and *Aparigraha*. *Ahimsa* (Non-violence) is the foremost of all the virtues in man, Jainism teaches universal brotherhood and equality of all being "*Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah*". All rules of conduct are based on mercy which has four forms,

1. To perform a kind act without expectation of a reward
2. To rejoice at the well-being of others

3. To sympathise with the distressed people and to relieve their sufferings and
4. To pity the criminals.

Hence, the concept of Ahimsa has a deep significance. It is applied not only to physical hurt, but also to mental pain.

Anekantavada

It is the principle of viewing an object from different perspectives or points of view. This doctrine tells that truth is multidimensional.

The story of the six blind men and the elephant would be a good example to illustrate this point. The six blind men began to explore with their hands the huge body of the elephant and each one gave his own description of the elephant. He who felt the leg asserted that the elephant was like a pillar, while he who felt the tail shouted that the elephant was like huge brush and so on. each struck to his own experience and claimed that he alone was right and they began to quarrel over it. Then someone came sympathised with them and settled their dispute. He said that each of them was right in what he said and was wrong in denying what another said. The aggressive assertion that he alone was right was the cause of the quarrel.

It is this principle of accepting and accommodating another's perspective that is the most valuable contribution of Jainism to Indian Philosophy. It is the golden principle of tolerance that was taught by this doctrine which is also known as "*Syadvada*". It is not the principle of uncertainty or doubt but it is the adoption of the attitude of Comprehensive outlook and tolerant towards others' view. It is the theory to help one to a complete knowledge of anything instead of asserting that one's partial view alone is right. Certainly it is the absence for this spirit of tolerance that is responsible for the fanaticism, aggression, clashes and conflicts in society that prevail all over the world today. Absolute truth is known only to the universal, Observer or a pure Atma.

Aparigraha (Non-possession of Wealth)

This principle is intended to help one to live a life of simplicity and satisfaction with the bare necessities of life. It is blind attachment to worldly things and a desire to possess them that force a man to hard money, wealth and assets. This mad pursuit of wealth is dangerous and unhelpful to spiritual life. It is the root cause for jealousy, envy, competition to degrading activities.

Aparigraha not only restrains one's greed and love of wealth but it also insists that superfluous wealth, money and assets should be utilised to help the less fortunate or

the poor and the needy. This fosters a charitable disposition necessary for the progress of spiritual life.

In this context, it is useful to reflect upon the present day conditions of society. All over the globe the people are living in a mortal dread of a nuclear war that might break out any time. The danger is growing every-day and with it the threat to the safety of the people all over. It is due to fanaticism, mad and aggressive assertion that he alone is right and others are wrong whether it is politics or religion or languages or creed or community, we find the lack of mutual trust. This unthinking and wrong attitude is playing havoc everywhere. No country is free from trouble of violence. Nobody feels relaxed and easy. In the name of religion, which is intended to enable and sublimate our lives, sections of humanity are involved in shedding blood and killing one another.

Never was there a time in the history or the world when the need for understanding and cordial relationship between the various nations was more urgent than today.

At this juncture the only means to save mankind would be to recall, remember and follow with faith the teachings of Bhagavan Mahavir. His teachings of non-violence, non-killing, respect for life, compassion and tender care for every living creature, tolerance and above

all the principles of Anekantavada and Aparigraha are the most appropriate for every individual, society, state and nation to follow to save the situation we are in. We should learn to accommodate the views of another. We must practise self-control and discipline our emotions and feelings.

Unique Personality

The modern world is engulfed in dangerous trend of violence and the absence of self-control. To save the world, from the path of destruction, a sadhak having control over self is necessary like a lighthouse. The voice of a sadhu comes from his inner self and that on the outside world his instructions and actions will have tremendous influence. They practise what they preach and that is the cause of their influence.

The most striking characteristic is that it has no connection with wealth, power and land. It is a unique life style in the world. The monks and nuns of Jains do not possess a single paise or an inch of land. Also there is not competitions for any kind of power.

Monkhood in Jainism is the path of self emancipation by means of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy and non-possession. These are called *Mahavratas*. The 'Vrat' denotes the meaning of vow, which means a

firm determination of self-conviction, which beautifies and purifies the life. It is a symbol of self-restraint and an indication of self-development.

Along with the efforts of self-development they also endeavour to preach the people and raise the spiritual standards of their lives. Although the people, who live householder's life, cannot give up the worldly activities wholly, they are inspired by the monks to practise self-control and guide them to the extent possible in their life.

He is a saint, who transforms himself from the impurity to purity. Every aspirant has got "Yama-Niyama" (rules and restrictions) which is the first step of Sadhaka. The Jaina saints have to follow the underlined principles of Niyama and to maintain this, they have to follow various rules; they are :-

Every Jaina monk has to follow five Mahavratas, great vows.

1. **Non-violence:** Complete avoidance of physical, mental and vocal violence and to have equanimity of mind.
2. **Truthfulness** that is to speak the truth always and never to speak any harsh language that will hurt others.
3. **Non-stealing:** not to take anything without the permission of its owner.

- 4. Celibacy:** to practice purity of body, mind and speech in all matters including sin.
- 5. Non-possession:** to practise freedom of attachment to worldly possessions.

The vows observed by monks are without any exception i.e., to say a monk has to follow the principles of five Mahavratas in mind, body and speech in all respects. It is to be understood that a monk does not commit violence, does not make others commit violence and does not support them, who commit violence. The same thing is with the other vows. Because, the vows are without any exception, therefore, it is called great vratas or Mahavratas.

Along with these, a monk has:

- 1. To observe caution and care in movements,
- 2. Not to use any means of transport but to walk barefoot throughout their life.
- 3. They carry on their back their own things like clothes, wooden utensils and never take anybody's help to carry the same for them,
- 4. Not to be negligent in the utilisation of his few articles of daily use,

5. Not to indulge in political and social affairs,
6. To meet all the meagre necessities of life through the people,
7. They do not cook their food nor do they get it prepared by others for them. But they go from house to house and they receive Bhiksha (food) from householders. This system or practise is called Gochari. Just as cows eat grass moving from place to place taking a little at one place, and a little at another, the Jain Munis do not take all the food from one house. This is compared to a bee also. Just a bee sucks a little nectar from flower to flower without hurting them, so too, the Jain Munis are not a burden to any family, because they can understand the situation fully, for they go directly where the food is prepared. To obtain food from house to house without any distinction of rich or poor, high or low, acquainted or unacquainted Jain or Non-Jain who is strict vegetarian, not to accept or take any kind of food and even water after sun-set. Potatoes, onions and such 'Tamasic' and 'Rajasic' food stuff must be eliminated, the pots and utensils used by them for food and drink are always all made of wood. As they do not keep over anything for the night or for the next day with them, they bring only as much food as will be sufficient to feed them for the time. They do not even

take medicines during the night how so ever fatal their disease may be.

Neither in summer season and very hot weather they fan themselves nor in winter season how so ever cool it may be, they warm themselves before fire what to say of warming themselves before fire, they do not even burn fire at all. Jain Sadhus do not own any land or household property or keep with them any sort of cash or deposit wherever they go they are put up in any house provided by the public after taking the owners permission.

They do not smell scents, similarly they do not wear flower garlands or even touch the flowers.

They keep with them a sort of wooden sweeping stick called Ogha or a mop (a protector of insects). In day light when everything is visible to a naked eye while walking they take special care, to see that no ant, insects etc are crushed under their feet while in the darkness of the night specially, when they cannot use any sort of lamp or torch to light the way for them and when these insects are not visible, they first clean the path with their Ogha before moving further each step to avoid crushing the insects etc., under their feet. This Ogha is an emblem or sign of a Jain Sadhu. They are clad in white clothes which is their unique dress and is the sign of truth and humbleness.

Jain saints uproot the hair on their heads, faces and chins by plucking them out with their hands - rather a painful process that is known as 'KESHALUNCHAN'.

A Jain Monk or (Sadhu and Sadhavi) is easily recognised by his or her unique white dress covering the body. Rajoharan (hand mop) and a muhaphathi (a piece of white cloth on their mouth).

They live at one place for the four months of *Sravan* to *Kartik* (Hindi Months) and deliver lectures daily. They tour from place to place during the remaining eight months of summer and winter. During this period of eight months they cannot stay at one place for more than a month. They daily deliver lectures to the public. They point out the path of salvation and purity.

Great dacoits give up robbing by hearing their lectures, thousands of people give up their bad habits by hearing their teachings. They tour even in rural and hilly tracts, for the upliftment of the common people by teaching and preaching.

A Jaina Monk keeps himself constantly engaged in religious discussions, discourses and studies. Also practise concentration, contemplation, meditation and penance according to his physical strength and mental ability, they do their own work.

Thus the entire life is directed towards the welfare of their souls and also of others. All the activities of their life have only one aim, namely self-purification and self-realization.

The Jain House -Holders : The Shravaka and Shravika -

The Shravaka or Shravika dharma is prescribed for the Jain householder for whom a life of total renunciation is not possible, this consists of rules and regulations to be followed by them. It is the imperative duty of the householder to observe important rules of conduct, in order that he might lead a life of least blame or sin and if possible to lead a life of virtue free from sin, meat eating, drinking and the life should not be indulged in taking eggs, onions and other food is prohibited.

The daily life of a Shravaka must be filled with noble pursuits like praying and chanting mantras doing japa and meditation of navkar mantra (the supreme and sacred mantra of the Jains) listening to discourses, taking part in 'sat sangh darshan' of guru, religious teacher service to guruji and rendering acts of help and mercy to the poor and suffering to the best of one's ability. Last, but not the least in the firm and unshakable faith in perfected souls called Arihantas and Siddhas and

Guru Maharaj. These few do's and don'ts are intended for the welfare of the Shravaka to help him to a better and noble life. To conclude, the whole human race today is divided into numbers. There are so many crores of Christians, so many of Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Jains etc. Geographical boundaries and castes are not to blame if they divided mankind, since their basis was physical. But that religious sects themselves should divide mankind is inexcusable, since their very basis is equality or unity and solidarity. Its only remedy is religion where sects are of secondary significance and righteousness primary.

Religion can be more important than sects if greater emphasis is put on forgiveness, gentleness, simplicity, purity, truth, self-control, penance, renunciation, non-possession and celibacy than on worship.

The vows observed by the householders are called Anuvratas. Here the meaning of 'Anu' is small. The vratas being followed by the Shravakas are smaller than those of the monks because a Shravaka accepts a vrata with some exceptions. Exceptions may be of many kinds they depend on the degrees of a spiritual strength of a person.

The process of adoption of Anuvratas is very psychological. Persons endowed with various kinds of spiritual heredity are allowed to enter the path of spiritual practise

prescribed for the layman. As soon as he, attains, more spiritual strength, he lessens the limits of the exceptions. He continues to progress in this way and a day comes when he gives up all the exceptions. Anuvratas then take the form of Mahavratas. Probably, the word 'vrata' has been derived from the word 'virati'; the meaning of Virati is detachment. In simple words to be aloof from demerits and vices and adopt the path of auspiciousness and purity. The vratas prescribed in Jainism are totally universal.

The chaos and the terrible problems of the present world may be solved only if the people accept the holy path of vratas. In this sense, it can be doubtlessly considered that, Jainism, is the creative answer to the challenge of the age of the day. Today, it is very essential that, the ideals and doctrines of Jain Philosophy must be studied and taught comparatively. It is to be widely disclosed that how the principles of Jain Philosophy are applicable in social, political and civil life. This is the duty of the persons who believe in the high ideals of Jain Philosophy that they should try their best to make the world acquainted with the essence of Jainism. It is a matter of great regret that people know little about the high ideals and Jainism which are naturally inspires of fraternity, brotherhood and world peace.

Let us observe the following in our daily life.

1. **D**o not behave with others as you would not wish others to behave with you;
2. **W**hen you do not like to suffer injury from others, do not injure others;
3. **B**e kind and gentle towards living creatures;
4. **D**o not look into the faults and failings of others. Look for their virtues only;
5. **D**o not indulge in anything that might hurt or injure the feelings of another;
6. **D**o not steal or abet stealing and do not deal in stolen goods;
7. **H**ave control over your sense organs;
8. **D**o not multiply your necessities. Restrict your desire;
9. **B**e contented with what you get;
10. **I**f you have more than what is necessary, think of the needy and do charity;
11. **B**e moderate in your passions and emotions;
12. **A**void anger atleast when you get up from sleep, or go to sleep or when you take food;

13. **D**o not indulge in cheating others. Do not be greedy or miserly.
14. **F**or the welfare of the family, one must not indulge in gambling smoking and also should avoid taking intoxicating drinks;
15. **H**ave strong faith in ahimsa and compassion;
16. **S**how reverence to the Guru Maharaj, parents and elders;
17. **D**o not criticise others. Others also will stop criticising you; if not to-day, they will do so tomorrow;
18. **D**harma is for living. Every breath of your life must carry with it the sacred fragrance of Dharma in it.
19. **T** rue knowledge is that which makes us forget our pride. The principle of benevolence is that it should inspire and encourage man to do good deeds.
20. **A**ll Jivas are under the sway of Karmas. The Jiva experiences happiness or sorrow in accordance with its own Karmas. Why should we blame others saying "You have caused sorrow to me?"
21. **S**orrow will remain as long as we have to remain in Samsara. Now we should make such endeavours as will free us from the necessity of a rebirth in Samsara. That endeavour lies in right vision, right

knowledge and right conduct.

Lastly, the enlightened people say that first, people should make their hearts pure. Cruelty, enmity, jealousy, anger, contempt and abhorrence etc., are the stale and putrefied food in your heart. Cast them off. A pure heart is said to be Dharma; and the implication in this. Adharma or ignobility cannot exist in a heart just as in a room which is brightened by light, there can be no darkness.

DAILY PRAYER

*SIVAMASTU SARVAJAGATAH PARAHITANIRATA
BHAVANTU BHUTAGANAH*

*DOSAH PRAYANTU NASAM SARVATRA, SUKHI
BAVATU LOKAH*

“May all the Jivas in the Universal attain supreme bliss. May all Jivas be engaged in helping others. May all the faults and sins in the Jivas be destroyed. May all Jivas at all places attain supreme bliss”.



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