



# JAINISM and ....

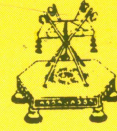
by  
Vinod Kapashi







## NAVKAAR-MANTRA



(This is the first and foremost sutra, uttered at the start of any auspicious work or religious ceremony. This is a reverence Mantra, in which we bow to or revere five types of supreme souls)

Namo Arihantanam

Namo Siddhanam

Namo Ayariyanam

Namo Uvajjayanam

Namo Loe Savva Sahunam

Eso Panch Nammukaro

Savva Pava Panasano

Mangalanch Savvesim

Padhaman Havai Mangalam

Translation—

I bow to (and revere) Arihantas (See glossary)

I bow to Siddhas

I bow to Acharyas

I bow to Upadhyayas

I bow to all the Sadhus in the world.

These five-fold obeisance

Destroy all sins

Amongst all forms of bliss

This is the first one.



# **JAINISM and. . . .**

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TO  
MY MOTHER SAMTABEN



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Dr. L.M. Singhvi INDIA HOUSE,

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## **FOREWORD**

Mr. Vinod Kapashi has encapsulated the essence of Jainism in this admirable monograph. Mr. Kapashi combines exceptional clarity of thought with a remarkable directness and lucidity of expression. He introduces Jainism with a deep understanding of its holistic and humanitarian heritage. He takes us on a fascinating panoramic tour of the horizon. Broadly and briefly, he surveys the whole range of human concerns from the mundane ground level code of conduct to the heights and depths of ethics and spirituality from the vantage viewpoint of Jain tradition. His equipment as the author of this monograph includes both the wide angle and the zoom. This combination of the wide angle and the zoom enables him to give us a bird's eye view of Jainism as well as portraits, profiles and vignettes of

specific workaday issues which concern us in our everyday lives through the kaliedoscopic lenses of the Jain tradition.

I congratulate Mr. Kapashi on the eve of the publication of this excellent monograph on the occasion of the Paryushana parva which has a special sanctity and significance in the Jain tradition, and stands for sadhana, tapasya, kshama, maitri and ahimsa. I am sure this monograph will run into many editions in different languages, and each successive edition, I hope, will benefit from the feedback inputs from the community of readers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "L.M. Singhvi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

L.M. SINGHVI  
HIGH COMMISSIONER



## **JAINISM AND.....**

### **HISTORY**

The first Tirthankara was Rushabhdev. He taught the necessary knowledge regarding farming, house building, cooking and basic education in arts, science and commerce. His symbol is the bull. Some coins of pre-Aryan civilization show the bull on one side and an ascetic on the other. According to some historians Jain philosophy existed in India before the arrival of Aryan people.

The 22nd Tirthankara Neminath, a cousin of Lord Krishna, was a kind-hearted prince.

The 23rd Tirthankara Lord Parsvanath, was born more than 250 years before Mahavir. He preached the religion of four principles - ( non-violence, truth, non-stealing and non- acquisitiveness )

Two distinct lines of thought prevailed during that time. One was the Vedic culture and the other was the Shraman culture. The first one gave Hinduism to the world and the other culture gave Jainism and Buddhism.

**JAINISM and.....**



## **LORD MAHAVIR**

**Mahavir is the twenty-fourth and the last Tirthankara of the Jains.**

**He was born more than 2,500 years ago, in a small town in North India. His father's name was Siddhartha. His mother's name was Trishla. Mahavir was a prince but he left his royal household, gave up his worldly possessions and became a monk. He spent twelve and a half years in meditation and practicing non-violence and self control. He obtained infinite knowledge when he was 42.**

**He spent thirty years in teaching the principles of ahimsa, sanyam and tap.**

**He organised the Jain community.**

**He preached the principles of Jainism. He formed the codes of conduct for monks and lay-men.**

**He died ( Nirvana or Moksha ) in 527 B.C., when he was 72 years old.**

**JAINISM and.....**

## **MONKS AND NUNS**



**Jain monks and nuns lead very strict lives.**

**They do not possess any money**

**They do not wear shoes**

**They do not use motor cars or trains for travelling purposes.**

**They observe principles of Jainism very strictly.**

**They do not eat or drink after sunset.**

**They only eat what is offered to them by other Jains.**

**They spend their time in religious activities only.**

**They frequently fast and encourage others to do so.**

**Thousands of monks and nuns still lead this type of life-style.**

## JAINSM AND...

### PROMINENT JAIN MONKS

Mahavir Swami had 11 disciples. They are called Ganadharas. Chief Ganadhara Gautam Swami and one another Ganadhara Sudharma Swami are well known. Sudharma's disciple Jambu Swami carried on the scriptural knowledge..

There are hundreds of well known names in Jain history but few notable Jain scholars and great monks are as follows

**Bhadrabahu** - ( 3rd Century BC ) A monk .Writer of Holy Scripture Kalpa-sutra

**Umaswati** - ( 1st Century AD. ) Writer of Tatvartna-Sutra, the book which is accepted by ALL Jains and the English translation will soon be released through Prince Phillip's Sacred Literature Trust and Institute of Jainology U.K.

**Haribhadrasuri** ( 8th Century AD ) A great monk who wrote 1444 lessons of various scripture and presented a very unique book on Jain-Yoga.

**Hemchandracharya** ( 1088-1172 AD ) -Wrote dozens of scholarly books on subjects such as history, grammer, poetry, yoga, mythology, philosophy etc.. His early writings include the grammer of the Prakrit language from which Gujarati is derived.

**Hirvijaysuri**-Born in 1526 AD he preached and explained the Jain philosophy to the great mogul emperor Akbar. As a result the emperor ordered the closure of slaughter houses during all the Jain holy days

**Anandghanji** ( 17th Century AD ) - A poet whose poems about Tirthankaras are full of deep meanings and are still sung at many places and during many programmes.

**Yashovijayji** ( 17th Century AD ) Writer of dozens of books on Jain philosophy, logic, and rituals which are read with great esteem.

**Shrimad Rajchandra** ( 1867-1901 ) - He was not a monk but he had renounced everything. His philosophy and writings are a source of inspiration for thousands of people in India and abroad.



**JAINISM and.....**

## **SCRIPTURES**



According to Shvetambar tradition, Mahavir's teachings are written in books called Agams.

Agams are ancient, sacred books.

Jain philosophy, principles, codes of conduct, Jain geography, astronomy, logic, mathematics and even good stories are described in these ancient books.

Thousands of manuscripts of such books have been preserved in India.

Great Jain writers have written hundreds of books to explain the principles of Jainism.

The people of the Digambar sect do not believe that Agams are the sacred scriptures. They have their own books. Samaysar is one such book which is revered by them.

There is however one book, called Tatvartha Sutra which is recognised and revered by all Jains. This book was written in first century A.D..

Agams and other books can truly be regarded as an ocean of knowledge.

## **JAINISM and.....**

### **SCRIPTURES**

**The ancient Jain Scriptures or Agams are classified as follows:—**

- (1) 14 Purvas (now lost)**
- (2) 12 Angas (The 12th one called Drastivad is lost. The other 11 are still extant)**
- (3) 12 Upangas books**
- (4) 4 Mool Sutra books**
- (5) 6 Chheda-Sutra books**
- (6) 10 Miscellaneous books**
- (7) 2 Chulikas (review - comments) books**

**JAINISM and.....**

## **KALPA-SUTRA**

**Kalpa-Sutra is a sacred text. Devout Jains almost worship this book, which is a detailed biography of Lord Mahavir and the lives ( in short ) of other prophets or Tirtankaras. The book also contains a list of monks from 527 B.C. to approximately 500 A.D. as well as a code of conduct for Jain-monks. However, it is the life of Lord Mahavir which is a favourite to all Jains.**

**The original text was written by Bhadrabahu Swami, who died in the year 357 B.C. ( the list of monks is not his work ).**

**The Kalpa-Sutra is nowadays read by Jain monks during the holy festival of Paryushana.**

**There are hundreds of manuscripts of the Kalpa-Sutra in India. Some manuscripts contain miniature paintings and beautiful works of art. Rich people in the mediaeval period used to spend**

large sums of money to have this text prepared in elaborate handwriting with multi-coloured miniature drawings.

More than 35 manuscripts of Kalpa-Sutra have been kept in various British institutions. The oldest one was written in 1201 A.D.

The word 'Kalpa' has several meanings. One of the meanings is : 'An item which fulfills all wishes'. Some people believe that a person's wishes are fulfilled on reading this book. Some people on the other hand believe that it is far too sacred to be read by an ordinary person!



**JAINISM and.....**

## **SECTS**

No religion or faith is free from divisions within its main framework. Jains are also divided into many sects. Different viewpoints arising out of the scriptural interpretations have led to different factions.

The first rift came after the nirvana of Lord Mahavir. Monks at that time were having different opinions about wearing clothes. For some monks true renunciation means giving up ones own clothes too.

Others felt it was necessary to wear clothes to be able to live and mix with lay people.

This rift became a fully developed ideology within the main structure. Those who started wearing white clothes were called Shvetambaras and those monks who propagated total nudity were called Digambaras. There are followers of the two sects both in India and abroad.



During the course of time further divisions came in to being. Shvetambaras had started making changes in worships and rituals. Pomp and joyous ceremonies were seen to be necessary to attract the common people.

One particular gentleman Lonkashah did not like this 'loose' attitude. He started his own faction and advocated that no idol or image worship is required for moksha. These people are called Sthanakvasis ( Sthanak means place for meditation ).

The remaining Shvetambaras are called Deravasis or Moortipoojaks ( those who believe in temple and image-worship ).

There are also Terapanthis in both main sects.

Other Jains are known by their following of certain monks or by their trade. Some Jains came to be known by the name of towns. e.g. A group of kshtriya Jains who came from the town called Oshia in Rajasthan state are called Oshwals. Oshwals have their own strong organisation. Porvads and Bhinnmals are another two names which came to existence in similar way.

Most Jains are business class people. They are therefore called Vanias or Vaniks. ( The word Vania comes from Vanijya which means business ).

There are many kinds of Vaniks. In East Africa 9 different types of Vaniks gathered together and founded their own group which came to be known as Navnat ( nine subcastes ) Vanik Association. ( Some Vaniks are non-Jains )



## JAINISM and.....



### TEMPLES

There are more than 10,000 temples in India. Some of them are really magnificent and beautiful.

Temples at places like Palitana, Abu, Ranakpur Sametsikhar, Shravan Belgola, are the most famous.

There are more than 700 temples on the hills of Shatrunjaya at Palitana. Some were built more than a thousand years ago. They are all beautiful. The atmosphere on the top of this hill is very pleasant and peaceful.

The surprising thing is that more temples are being built on nearby hills and in the town of Palitana.

The Jain temples at mount Abu are also very famous. These temples are situated on a mountain 4,000 feet high. They are constructed entirely of white marble, with carvings on the ceilings, pillars,

doors, panels and niches which are all marvellous. One wonders how eight hundred years ago workmen carried all that marble to the top of the mountain! It is said that 530 million Rupees were spent for the construction of these temples.

The temples at Ranakpur are also magnificent. The architecture is so beautiful and marvellous that people come from far to study the design of this temple.

There are thousands of towns and villages in India where beautiful Jain temples attract thousands of people each day.

Jains are also building temples in East Africa, Japan, U.S.A. and Britain.

**JAINISM and.....**

## **WORSHIP**



**Worship is the expression of one's devotion. A worshiper feels happy by the sight of his beloved image and momentarily he loses himself in the complete Bhakti. He forgets his worries, his problems, even his whole existence. He starts praising and singing. He admires and does all sorts of adorations.**

**Sometimes a layman gets more peace and joy by some short of ritual worship than by reading scriptures which he may not even understand.**

**In a sense the whole idea of image worship does not fit into the Jain ideology of renunciation. Jain Gods or Tirthankaras are Vitraga Gods ( those who have no attachment or aversion ). They are liberated souls with no desire or any form and**



therefore do not grant any favours. So it may seem strange that Jains have thousands of temples and they worship God with intense devotion.

However, from a different angle, worship is also a type of meditation ( See Meditation ), a Dharma dhyana. Worship brings joy and peace, equanimity and love.

There are many worship rituals.

Snatra Pooja is one such ritual. When a Tirthankara was born, it is said, he was taken to mount Meru for a sacred bathing ceremony. The birth of a Tirthankara was most joyful occasion and it was celebrated in grand manner.

Now similarly lay people celebrate the event by way of bathing and anointing the image of Tirthankara. During such rituals people sing and dance joyfully and spread divine vibrations all round.

During evenings and after some rituals Aarati and Mangaldivo are done. This is a simple ceremony of waving a lamp or lamps in front of the idol of Lord. People bid large amounts of money to have the privilege of doing such rituals.

Those who do not believe in temple worship do other forms of worship by way of prayers and meditations.

**JAINISM and.....**



## **FESTIVALS**

The birthday of Lord Mahavir is celebrated with great interest and devotion. It generally falls in late March or early April. ( 13th day of the month of Chaitra in Indian calender )

The holy book Kalpa Sutra is read during Paryushan festivals. On the 5th day of the festival a part about the birth of Lord Mahavir is read and that too is celebrated with joy and devotion. 14 dream objects ( see symbols ) are ceremoniously brought to the main platform and are worshipped and a small silver cradle with child Mahavir in it is swung by few lucky ones who bid higher price for the privilege. All money, of course, goes to the maintenance or construction of a temple or towards such noble cause.

Jains celebrate the festival of Diwali, too. This is the festival of lighting lamps. Lord Mahavir had died - attained moksha - on that day, and the lamps or diwas represent true knowledge dispersing the darkness of ignorance.

## **JAINISM and.....**

### **PENANCE**

**Penance or Tap is necessary to shed the karmas. Penance is compared to fire. As fire purifies the gold, so penance purifies the soul. There is no salvation without penance.**

**Thus Jainism puts great importance on penance but this does not mean just fasting. There are twelve types of penance- six of which are termed external types-**

**They are-**

- 1 fasting;**
- 2 eating in moderation;**
- 3 abandoning feelings of acquiring more and more goods, wealth etc.**

4 eating without feelings of attachment with the food.

5 self-imposed hardships to train one's mind.

6 control of the body and body-related feelings.

Now six internal types

1 repenting for any misdeeds;

2 showing modesty and respect for spiritual leaders

3 serving the spiritual teachers

4 studying good books

5 meditating

6 observing mental Kausagga



**JAINISM and.....**

## **EATING AT NIGHT**

Eating after sunset is not allowed because many minute living beings can get killed while eating. When darkness spreads after sunset the number of insects in the air increases. Most of these are invisible to naked eye. These are consumed accidentally when we eat at night. Some of the insects could even be harmful. It is also said that our digestive system slows down at night and has a lesser capacity to digest the food.

Therefore not only for the sake of religion but for the sake of one's own health, eating at night is not advisable.



## **JAINISM and.....**

### **FASTING unto death - SALLEKHANA**

This is often misunderstood. Some Jain monks do stop eating and invite death. People say that Jainism has advocated this strict method of penance. This is not quite true. Rigorous fasting is allowed in Jainism but it has a purpose.

Fasting is not intended to be troublesome. It is meant so a person can spend time in meditation and through fasting can cleanse his body, mind and soul.

The miraculous effects which fasting can bring about were accepted by Mahatma Gandhi. He advised people to fast for their health and spiritual upliftment.

The initial stage in fasting is never pleasant, but once the first hardships are overcome, people find mental and spiritual strength. It is often the case that people can fast for a month and yet do a

normal day's work.

Sallekhna is also fasting. A monk can fast unto death, but this is only allowed in certain circumstances.

Jainism has given us four circumstances:-

1) When a monk is very old and not in good health and if he determines that he wants to leave the world in meditation and prayer, the Guru gives him permission to fast unto death. In this example, a person who dies, dies happily and in a blissful state.

2) When a person is suffering from terminal illness and there is no hope of living, he or she can again ask for the permission for sallekhana.

3) When there is severe cruelty from ruling leaders in matters of religion.

4) When there is famine and it is impossible to survive.

It would be wrong for us to judge or give a quick opinion about this because those who carry out Sallekhna are on much higher spiritual plane. They invite death without suffering or repenting their decision.

JAINISM and.....

## MEDITATION

The word dhyana means both concentration and meditation.

Jainism has an unique way of showing what dhyana is.

There are four types of dhyana.

**a) Arta dhyana-** Concentration on sorrowful things, lamentation, being sorry, worrying, and pessimist state is arta dhyana.

**b) Raudra dhyana-** Having thoughts of hatred, greed, jealousy, revenge etc.

**c) Dharma dhyana-** concentration on virtues, duty and faith

**d) Shukla dhyana** - pure and highest state of concentration. This is a state of perfect equanimity. A person in shukla dhyana is normally on a higher spiritual level.

**This is a very simplified approach. One does not have to DO Dhyana, it just happens. The practice is to abandon the first and second type of negative dhyanas.**

**The fourth dhyana ( Shukla dhyana ) happens very rarely. To achieve it, one must adopt a pure religious life style and observe vows and have one's mind fixed in worship of the divine.**

**This worship of the divine can be achieved through Dharma dhyana which has been further classified in four ways.**

- Concentration on object, or certain diagramatic mantras**
- Concentration by way of letters like divine letter aum.**
- Concentration on image of God and obtaining state of nearness and inner happiness**
- Absolute, shapeless, sizeless, pure concentration of divine.**

-----

**The most popular type of meditation is by chanting and achieving concentration using a mala ( rosary)**

A mala has 108 beads. One chants the Navkar Mantra or simply utters the name of any one Tirthankara with each bead. One can chant one mantra with the movement of each bead.

-----

A system has been developed by Acharya Tulsi's followers in Rajasthan state of India, which is called Preksha Meditation, involving relaxation techniques, breathing practices, perception of the body, psychic centres, colours, aura, and obtaining a state of 'relinquishing the body' by the help of auto-suggestion.

See also Kausagga ( One of the six essentials )



## JAINISM and.....

### PARYUSHANA

Paryushana are days of religious activities. They are also the days of the Jain festival. The festival lasts for eight days. (Ten days for the people of Digambar sect )

During these days Jains observe fasts or take some vows. They voluntarily impose some regulations and hardships on themselves to keep their minds firmly fixed on religion.

People go to temples, worship Tirthankaras, hear the religious discourses and do Samayika or Pratikraman.



## **JAINISM and.....**

### **PRATIKRAMAN**

Pratikraman means going back to a noble and a religious form.

Pratikraman is like removing all the rubbish out of the house. We have to remove all of the bad thoughts out of our minds. We have to review our past deeds and ask for forgiveness for anything harmful we might have done. Pratikraman is a sitting of a longer period consisting of reviewing, confessions and repentance of past and present actions and thoughts.

### **SAMAYIKA**

There are many types of Samayika but the one which is most commonly observed consists of sitting for 48 minutes in a quiet place, meditating, chanting a few verses and obtaining a state of equanimity.

In Samayika one gains a feeling of equanimity towards everybody. Attachmant, anger, worry and all fear are driven out. The mind is purified and the one who performs Samayika becomes more humble and friendly.

**JAINISM and.....**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Dharma means life as prescribed by the Jain scriptures. The word dharma means the nature of substance or the natural course which involves one's duties. The dharma of pure soul is infinite bliss. The main points of codes of conduct are three jewels:**

**Right faith ( or vision or view )**

**Right knowledge**

**Right conduct.**

**Right conduct means freeing oneself from attachment and aversion ( raga or moha and dvesha ). Before embarking on the path of right conduct one must be equipped with right faith. (Samyaktva. ) It not only means putting one's faith in the words of the Tirthankaras; in addition, it means being in a state of calm. Right knowledge means knowing and understanding the scriptures**



and their wise words.

There are twelve vows a Jain should take:-

**(1) Ahimsa-** as stated before. Ahimsa has to be practiced in mind, in words and in deed. Do not harm, do not ask others to cause harm and do not approve of harmful acts. This is true ahimsa.

**(2) Truth-** Do not utter harsh, abusive, cruel and false words. Speak the truth.

**(3) Non-stealing.** The meaning is clear but Jains use the original word *adattadan* which means anything which is not given to you is not yours and you should not take it. Therefore, Jains say that not stealing is not enough. If you find something valuable by the roadside you should not take it because it is not given to you by someone else. It is most probably lost.

**(4) Brahmacharya.** Refraining from wrongful sexual activities. This has been described under a separate heading.

**(5) Aparigraha -** Non-possesiveness. Fewer possessions mean less to worry about. Jainism says that there is no end to man's greed. Man will

never be satisfied with his own possessions and they will certainly never bring him lasting and permanent happiness. The only answer is renunciation.

**(6) Digvrata** - Restricting one's activities to certain areas and certain fields.

**(7) Bhogopbhogavrata** - Limiting objects of enjoyment or activities of enjoyment.

**(8) Anarthadandvirman** - Refraining from activities like gambling.

**(9) Samayika vrata** - This involves contemplating oneself and obtaining a state of calm. Some time should be devoted everyday for this purpose (see samayika).

**(10) Desavkasika vrata** - Keeping a limit on consumable or non-consumable goods.

**(11) Posadha** - Fasting and praying in a solitary place. ( At least 24 hours )

**(12) Danavrata** - Offering food and shelter to monks and nuns.

**JAINISM and.....**

**SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR \ BRAHMACHARYA  
\ CELIBACY**

Though householders can marry and have children, monks have to practice total brahmacharya. This word in Hindu, Buddhist and Jain scriptures has a very deep meaning. Brahmacharya means divine and natural conduct, that fit for Lord Brahma of the Hindu religion. It means refraining from illicit sexual behaviour.

Any activity which may lead to illicit behaviour should be avoided. Monks are not allowed to sit alone with women. For laymen it is advised that they should not watch or read anything which might arouse passions or tempt them to do wrong. Books describing sexual indulgence should be avoided.

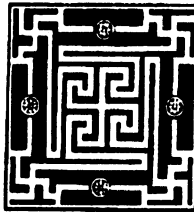
Laymen marry and have children but they too have to practice brahmacharya. This means that they

should not get involved with any woman other than their wife.

For the layman sex is seen as something which continues the cycle of life, and which is not intended merely for sensual pleasure. Excessive sexual activity is a breach of sanyam ( self control) and also involves himsa (violence).

Homosexual behaviour is also forbidden because it is considered an 'unnatural act.'

Jainism says that there is a natural pattern of life and that all species on earth should continue. Sexual activity in relation to this is natural. Therefore contact between man and woman for this purpose is natural. Jainism says that homosexuality is an unnatural lustful act which leads to moral and physical weakness. It certainly isn't considered Brahmacharya.



## **JAINISM and.....**

### **ATMA-SOUL**

**Man has always asked the question : "Who am I ? Where have I come from ? What is Atma?" The Atma or soul cannot be described very easily. Atma has no shape or size, it cannot be seen. It is consciousness and yet it is more than that. It is in the body and atma leaves the body when it dies. It is separate from the body yet it is within.**

**Jains say that atma by its nature is pure, has infinite knowledge and perception and has infinite bliss. Our atma or soul gets affected or polluted by our own deeds and thoughts. The bondage of Karma-particles leaves the soul in a state of imprisonment.**

**The body is said to be the abode of soul. When the body dies the soul leaves the body and is re-born. ( It occupies another body)**

**According to Jain philosophy the atma or jiva or soul or spirit is made up of sentiency and is a manifestation of consciousness ( UPYOG ). Atma is a permanant individuality. Atma never dies, it is only the body which dies. The atma experiences pleasure or pain in relation to its Karma bondage.**

## **JAINISM and.....**

### **KARMA**

**This is a scientific theory about the soul and our behaviour. The soul is an independent entity which attracts pudgala-parmanu related with our thoughts, speech or action. These parmanus join or are attracted to the soul where they become Karma. The soul is affected (polluted) according to the quantity and quality of the Karma and our well-being is governed by the resultant force. This is known as Karma theory.**

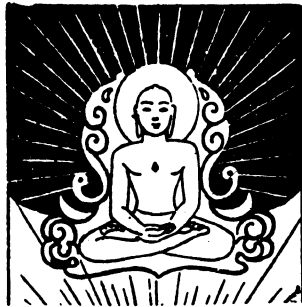
**Jainism has explained with the help of mathematics how these Karma particles affect us. We enter in to the cycle of birth and death because of our Karma which also decides higher or lower form of existence.**

**Total destruction of all the Karma is possible.**

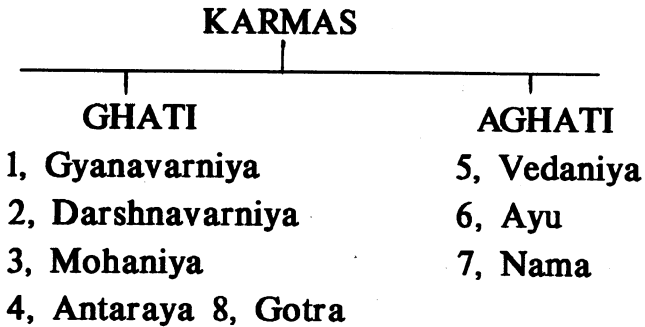
When the soul is clear of all the Karma it becomes a 'liberated soul', in other words it attains Moksha or Nirvana.

The path leading to Moksha is through right knowledge, right vision (faith) and right conduct.

Non-violence, self control and penance are necessary to shed Karma particles (This is right conduct )



**There are 8 types of Karmas**



- 1, Gyanavarniya - This Karma obscures knowledge.
- 2, Darshnavarniya - This Karma obscures vision and cognition.
- 3, Mohaniya - obstructs conduct and faith
- 4, Antaraya - Antaraya prevents good action.
- 5, Vedaniya - produces feelings and emotions.
- 6, Ayu - determines the life-span of the individual



**7, Nama - This Karma gives factors of individuality.**

**8, Gotra - This Karma destines family surroundings.**

**JAINISM and.....**

## **NIRVANA ( MOKSHA )**

**Nirvana or Moksha is the 'Final Emancipation' after which there are no more births and deaths.**

**Once the person is free from the cycle of birth and death he attains Moksha. This can only be achieved by shedding all Karma particles; because the bondage of Karma with the soul is the cause of birth and rebirth.**

**A dead person is born again if his 'Karma account' is not settled. Whatever that 'account' is - good or bad, he or she will be re-born, because of the scientific effect of Karma-bondage. When a person dies his remaining karmas ( their quality and quantity ) determine his destiny. The movement of the soul is controlled by mathematics.**

**Karma-particles can be shed by following the path of Right faith, Right knowledge and Right conduct.**

**A person who sheds all ghati Karmas becomes Keval Gnani. ( One with omniscience ). This is called Arihant-pada ( attaining the status of Arihant). A person who sheds all ghati and aghati Karmas i.e. all eight types of Karmas becomes liberated from the cycle of birth and death and obtains Siddha-pada ( i.e. attains the status of a liberated soul - Moksha).**

## **JAINISM and.....**

### **CREATION**

**Most of the religions in the world believe in creation i.e. that there is a divine force which is responsible for the creation of the world or universe. This divine force is God.**

**Jains have a different idea about the creation. This idea almost fits the modern scientific concept. According to Jainism this universe is always in existence and will exist forever. There is no divine force behind this. Every matter has it's own quality and this 'quality' will undergo innumerable changes. A solid object can be transformed into liquid or into gases. An atom can be transformed into energy.**

**Jainism says that we are surrounded by manifestations of matter or energy in the universe. Matter can be transformed into energy and energy can be transformed into matter. The universe is**

nothing but the process of everlasting transformation.

Our earth, our universe is going through this process. The birth and death of stars and planets continues and will continue forever.

Jain books often explain these concepts in layman's terms and ask questions:-

If there is a God, why would He create this world ?

If God created the world, who created God ?

- And then who created the creator of God ? and so on.....

Jainism says that everything that happens is governed by 'physics and mathematics'. Things take place because every matter, atom or minute particle ( be it a million times smaller than the atom ) has the quality of transformation. Man's own thoughts are also made up of Karma particles which change man's destiny.

There is no body which governs this phenomenon. However, good Karma particles lead to a better life and freedom from Karma leads to Moksha.

**JAINISM and.....**

## **MARRIAGE**

Jains do not believe in pompous rituals and they have no ritual involving all sorts of arambha-samarambha ( activities which lead to bondage of Karmas ) Today, they usually follow the Hindu wedding ceremony, performed by a Brahmin-priest.

'Achar Dinkar,' a Jain book written in the 15th Century describes the Jain wedding ritual. This is a short and dignified ceremony.

The ceremony actually describes the wedding of the first Tirthankara - Rushabhdev. Hence the main mantras or shlokas either describe the actual wedding or praise him. Marriage is a bondage and the bride and the groom are united in holy matrimony according to their Karma. They will

spend their life together which will attract new karmas. The whole ceremony acknowledges this fact and gives proper blessing.

The hom or houn ( offerings made to sacred fire ) and feras ( circling round the sacred fire ) is almost the same as in a Hindu wedding ceremony. Fire is the main witness. Other semi gods are 'invited' by chanting mantras. They too become witnesses and bless the young married couple.

The priest is also supposed to recite Manglashtak . (Eight Auspicious Mantras ).

The main steps of the Jain Wedding Ceremony are as follows:-

- 1) Matruka Sthapan. This is usually performed at the brides' home. It is a symbolical invitation where goddesses are 'installed.'
- 2) Kulkar Sthapan. This is performed at the groom's home. Forefathers and gods are installed.
- 3) Mandap Pratishtha - Gods from different directions are invited to the ceremony.
- 4) The procession. The groom comes in a ceremonious fashion to marry his bride.

- 5) **Mangalashtak** - After the groom is seated in chori ( a bounded square allocated for the ritual ) the priest chants eight auspicious mantras.
- 6) **Hasta Melap** - Joining the bride and groom's hands.
- 7) **Toran Pratishtha** -The invocation of Goddess Laxmi, **Vedi Pratishtha** - ( Earth Gods ) and **Agni Pratishthaa** (Fire).
- 8) **Hom or Houm** - A sacred offering to fire.
- 9) **First Abhisheka** - Holy water is sprinkled.
- 10) **Gotrachar**. The family line is read out.
- 11) **Four rounds** - Circling the holy fire
- 12) **Kanyadan** - Giving the bride away.
- 13) **Vaskshepa**- Sprinkling sacred powder on bride's and groom's head.
- 14) **Second Abhisheka**- Repeating number nine above but with a different Mantra.
- 15) **Kar-Mochan**. Releasing hands
- 16) **Blessings** by the priest and elders.

**JAINISM and.....**

## **THE ENVIRONMENT**

Nowadays everyone is talking about the environment. A True path can never be far off from basic environmental ideas.

Jainism believes in ahimsa. The Jain idea of ahimsa is the sanctity of all life. This includes minute creatures with only one-sense and microbes. Jainism says plants and vegetation have life and feel pain when they are cut. There is life in wind ( Vayu-Kay ). There is life in fire ( Agni-kay ). There is life in water ( Apa-kay ) One-sensed beings are classified as air-bodies, water-bodies, earth-bodies, fire-bodies and vegetation-bodies. Higher up the scale come two-sensed, three-sensed, four-sensed and finally five-sensed bodies. Humans, animals, demi-gods and hellish beings are five-sensed bodies .

If ahimsa is to be practiced in full, any injury, physical or mental, to any being is not permitted. Ahimsa categorically advocates respect towards



life. In fact, Jainism goes further than this by saying 'Parasparopgraho Jivanam' , that is, all life is interdependent and therefore every life form has a duty (or obligation) to the others' welfare.

Humans have a duty to look after the environment not for the sake of pity or mercy, nor for the sake of protecting others but for the sake of their own welfare and survival.

Jain scriptures use certain animals and trees as identifying symbols for Tirthankars, demonstrating how Jains sanctify living beings which are at a 'lower level' than humans.

The vegetarian lifestyle is naturally adopted by Jains due to the principle of ahimsa. Jainism recognises the fact that it also has some aspect of himsa (violence) involved in it.

However, without it survival would be difficult and by eating vegetarian food Jains have drawn the line at a much lower level of himsa. Even vegetarians are warned not to waste food and natural resources. True sanyam can only

be practiced by using less in the first instance. When it becomes necessary to use more natural resources, Jains are advised to be thoughtful and sparing. Jains are told not to waste anything.

Jains are lacto-vegetarians i.e, they do not eat meat, fish and eggs but they are allowed to consume milk and milk products. ( The scriptures state that Jains should only take milk from cows if calf does not need it, and it is surplus produce. )



## SCIENCE

**1) Pudgala parmanu.** The smallest, indestructible particle is called parmanu.

This parmanu is many millions of times smaller than an electron, proton or neutron. Modern science talks about neutrinos which can go through a solid wall of lead. Parmanus too have this capacity. Jain theory states that everything is made from parmanu and from groups of parmanu ( pudgala ). A group of pudgala having all particles of similar characteristics is called Vargana.

Breathing, speaking, thinking, everything has its own particular Vargana ( that means our thoughts are made of the parmanus too ! )

**2) Definition of Time - See 'TIME'**

**3) Can one travel at the speed of light ? ( Light travels at the speed of 186,000 miles per second )**  
In Kalpa-Sutra there is an incident where a God converts himself into electro-pudgalas and comes down on the earth at the speed of light. After doing his duty he went back at the same speed and converted himself back to the 'human' form.

**4) When a small bullet is fired from a gun, it harms or kills the victim because of its speed. In one war incident, as described in Jain scriptures, feathers were fired at tremendous speed and the result was deadly !**

**5) This is the age of the laser. In the story of the life of Lord Mahavir, one angry monk, Gosalak, releases tejo-lesya ( heat laser ) on the Lord. This did not however kill Lord Mahavir because of his divine powers but He certainly fell ill due to the**

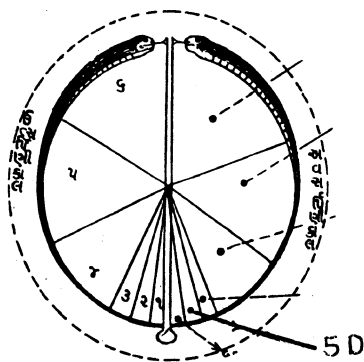
immense heat. Lord Mahavir reflected the rays of the lesya to strike the striker ( angry monk Gosalak ). Goosalak thus died from the effect of his own laser.

6) Both Physicists and Jains say that matter or energy cannot be created or destroyed. Matter can be transformed into energy and vice-versa.

Jainism states that our universe has always existed and it will always exist in one form or another.

JAINISM and.....

TIME



**Definition of Time:** Ideas about time in Jainism are revolutionary. Time too is said to be made up of time-particles which exist in the 'time-space'. Changes in the order of succession or movements of these particles are what is known as time, so time is a fourth dimension. The wheel of time is eternal and forever in motion. It is divided into two cycles - the ascending cycle and the descending cycle. Happiness gradually diminishes and bad practices, corruption and misery ensue. This procedure is reversed in the ascending cycle. At present we are living in 5D ( i.e. 5th phase of descending cycle ) which is 21,000 years long. Approximately 2500 years of this cycle have already passed.

According to the scriptures, the entire 6D period will be a time of severe hardship and pain which appears to match a description of nuclear holocaust.

**JAINISM and.....**

## **POLITICS**

Jains believe in practicing ahimsa in its purest form. Being involved in politics leads to violent acts or decisions. Violent acts do not just mean killing; it could be that politicians sometimes get rid of people they don't like, in an underhand way. Politics is seen as a 'dirty game'. and politicians involve themselves in all sorts of unholy activities to maintain their standing. Politics often breaches the simple principles of ahimsa and truth. Politicians often turn a blind eye or reject the ideas of opposition parties even though they know they're right. It is in this way that they forget the principle of anekantvada.

However, Jains have fought wars and achieved victories in battlefields. Some historic figures were chief ministers in various kingdoms. Some Jain monks have contributed a great deal by moving closer to the rulers of states.

Hemchandracharya and Hirvijaya Suri are just two examples of many. Hemchandracharya succeeded in spreading Jain ideals and vegetarianism in Gujarat, and Hirvijaya Suri was instrumental in teaching Jainism to the mogul emperor Akbar.

## **JAINISM AND.....**

### **ART**

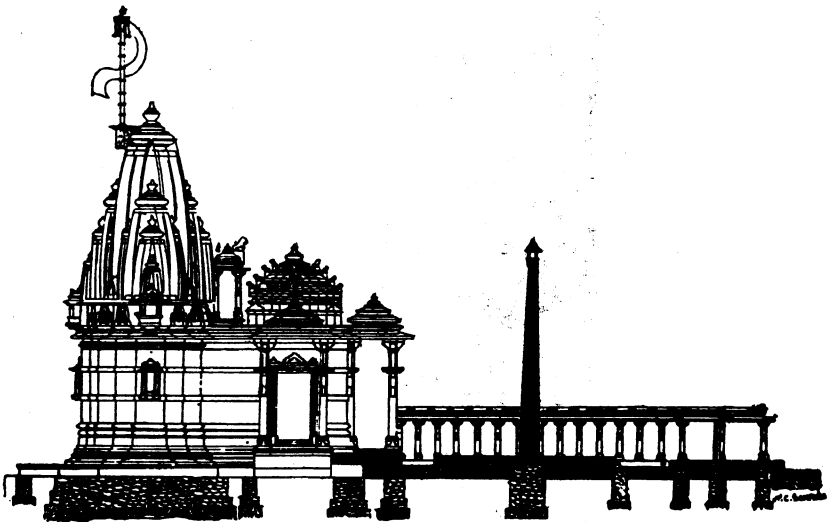
Ancient manuscripts are the best source for studying Jain art. As well as manuscripts, there used to be invitation scrolls which were sent to monks to invite them to a certain place for the monsoon period. These scrolls were very very long and had beautiful paintings on them. Other paintings found in caves in South India and some wall paintings in Karnataka are also worth studying.



## JAINISM AND.....

### ARCHITECTURE

There are more than 10,000 Jain temples in India. These masterpieces of architecture represent the devotion of Jain lay-people. The design of Jain temples is governed by written rules which involve both art and scientific values. Study of this covers mathematics, geography and a complete knowledge of architectural practices.



**JAINISM and.....**

## **MANIBHADRA and OTHER YAKSHA-GODS**

**Jains worship supreme beings and liberated souls. They also worship Yaksha ( gods ) such as Manibhadra. He is the protector of Jain Shasana ( the order of Jains ). His sthanak ( places ) are at Magarvada and Aaglod in India. Another deity worshipped highly is Ghantakarna Mahavir, who is believed to be a God who fulfills one's wishes. His temple is at Mahudi in Gujarat State. Many people also worship Goddess Padmavati and Chakreshwari. Many temples in India have the images of these Gods and Goddesses.**



## **JAINISM and.....**

### **THE NINE REALS ( NINE ELEMENTS )**

Jain study is incomplete without knowledge of the nine basic Reals or elements.

These are-

**JIVA** or atma or soul

**AJIVA** or Pudgala. All materials, non-life forms

**PAP** or sin

**PUNYA** or merit, virtuous conduct

**ASHRAVA:** influx of karmic particles towards the soul

**SAMVAR:** prevention of the above influx.

**BANDH:** Actual bondage of karmic particles with soul as a result of influx.

**NIRJARA:** The process of removing or shedding these karma-particles

**MOKSHA:** The final stage of soul after removal of all karma

Some of these elements are described under separate headings.

## JAINISM and.....

### SIX DAILY DUTIES OF THE LAYMAN

(1) **SAMAYIKA**: Dealt with separately.

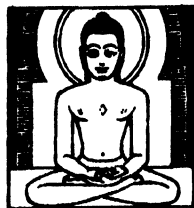
(2) **STUTI**: prayer and praise.

(3) **VANDAN**: Salutation with hands folded and head bowed. This is obeisance to the lords, teachers and to monks.

(4) **PRATIKRAMAN**: This is a sitting of a longer period. It consists of revision, confession and repenting one's past and present thoughts and deeds. (See Pratikraman )

(5) **PRATYAKHYAN or PACHCHAKHAN**: Observing one's convictions and taking new vows. These are small vows observed for a given amount of time. ( eg: I will wait an hour after sunrise before I eat or drink)

(6) **KAYOTSARGA or KAUSAGGA**: A layman or a monk relinquishes feelings of attachment and meditates.



**JAINISM and.....**

## **ANEKANTVADA**

**Very simple yet complex theory put forward by Jains. It simply means the theory of many sided approach.**

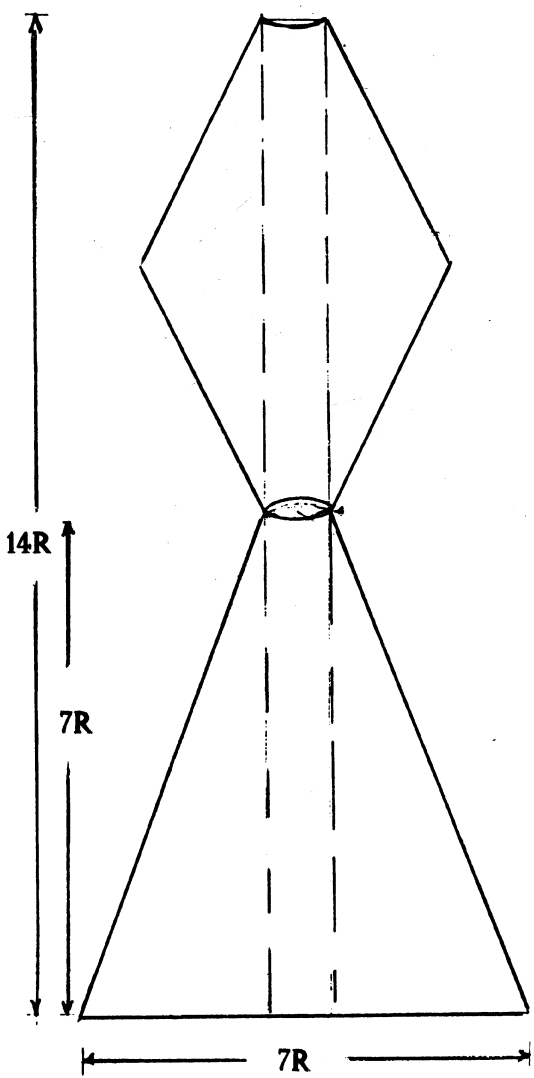
**A thing from one point of view appears to be different from another point of view. To understand the whole thing one has to take into account several points of view. What we say is truth may not be the same for another person. The other person may have his own way of perceiving things and deriving his own conclusions.**

**Whenever there are arguments, both sides usually think that their point is correct. but we know that both can not be right, otherwise there would not have been any argument in the first place. The truth may lie somewhere in between, or it may be quite different. To derive this truth an arbitrator must consider views from both sides, and perhaps elsewhere. This in simple terms is Anekantvada.**

**Jainism has included this as basic religious virtue. It teaches us to be tolerant towards other people and never to insist that our viewpoint is The Truth. It helps us in understanding other peoples' behaviour, and encourages full tolerance towards other faiths.**

JAINISM and.....

THE UNIVERSE



The shape of the universe according to Jain scripture is shown here. The middle vertical tube is the abode for main life-forms.

The bottom part consists of seven hells. The middle world has all the planets, including the earth. The top part is the abode of all Dev-loka ( place for semi-Gods )

In the centre of the middle world there is a big mountain called Mount Meru surrounded by Jambudwip. Our earth is one of the planets in this Jambudwip and is called Bharat Kshetra.

There are 8 black holes in the universe which are capable of swallowing everything.

Another interesting point is that Jain books state there are different time scales on other planets.

**JAINISM and.....**

## **BUDDHISM AND HINDUISM**

**The founder of Buddhism is Gautam Buddha, while the main propagator and last Tirthankara of Jainism is Lord Mahavir.**

**Both were born in Bihar state, India in 6th century BC. Both were the followers of Shraman tradition, a tradition based on ahimsa( non violence ) and renunciation. Both were born in princely households and they had left their palaces in search of eternal happiness. Mahavir and Buddha both spent their days in meditation.**

**While Mahavir adopted rigorous fasting practices and total renunciation, Buddha adopted the 'Middle Path'.**

**Jainism has many similarities with Buddhism. Basic vows and language are the same using the same**



terminology. Whilst Hindu scriptures were written in the Sanskrit language, Jain and Buddhist scriptures were written in the vernacular. ( Ardhmagadhi ).

The concept of God and atma ( soul ) is slightly different but neither Jains nor Buddhists believe in 'creation'.

Both religions believe in Karma with a similar theory. Hindu Karma theory is quite different from these two traditions. Words like Arihant, Tirthankara, Jina, Nirvana, Pratikraman, Uposatha, Posadha, Asrava, Samvar, Nirjara, etc. are common to both Jain and Buddhist faiths but have different meaning and concept in Hinduism.

Whilst Hinduism had a strong caste system, the other two religions discarded this.

Hindus believed in Yagnas ( sacrificial fire ) while Jains and Buddhists strongly opposed this.

Many learned writers like to believe that Jainism and Buddhism are part of Hinduism. However, though Hindu culture has influenced Jainism to such an extent that Jain rituals and ceremonies

have gone through radical changes, yet the root of Jainism and Buddhism does not lie in Vedic tradition. The basic ideas of creation, God and Nirvana have different meanings. The Hindu trinity of

Gods ( creator - Brahma, one who is responsible for continuation - Vishnu and the one who destroys in order to regenerate- Shiva) have no place in the other two religions, which have no entity responsible for creation.

Buddhists believe in propagating and spreading the religion 'in the interest of mankind' while Jains put great stress on inward search and meditation ignoring the evangelical aspect. Thus Buddhism spread outside India and Jainism mainly remained there.

Mahavir and Buddha were both human beings who had become Arhats or 'Gods'. Any human being after following the right-path can become Arhat.

Krishna and Rama in Hindu religion are the divine

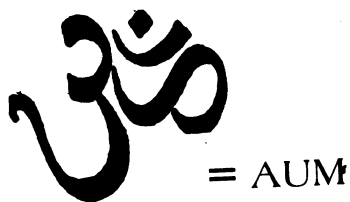
incarnations of God Vishnu.

The Hindu scriptures are the Vedas (Wisdom books ), Upanishads ( Books of codes of conduct and philosophy ) and epics like Ramayan and Mahabharat. Bhagvad Gita, the holy book is a part of great epic Mahabharat.

Buddhist scriptures are Tripitakas. Dhamma-Pada is the Buddhist holy book.

Jains believe in the Agams and other Digambar scriptures. Kalpa-Sutra is regarded as a holy book, though it has no philosophy or codes of conduct in it. It consists of the life story of Lord Mahavir.

Despite the philosophical differences, most Jains celebrate Hindu festivals and rituals, and happily identify with the Hindu faith.



## **What is Jainism ?**

Jainism is one of the oldest religions of the world. Followers of 'Jina' are called Jains and hence the religion practiced by Jains is called Jainism.

## **What is Jina ?**

Jinas are the 'conquerers'. They have conquered all the desires and have obtained infinite knowledge and wisdom. They have laid down the path for the spiritual uplift of humanity and hence are known as TIRTHANKARAS ( Prophets )

There are twenty four Tirthankaras; Rushabhdev is the first Tirthankara. Mahavir swami is the last, 24th Tirthankara.



**Jainism was founded on three basic principles:—**

**1. AHIMSA**

**= NON-VIOLENCE**

The first and highest principle of Jainism is 'non-violence'.

Non-violence or harmlessness should be practiced both in thought and action. Life is dear to all living beings, therefore no one should kill or harm any form of life. No one should talk about killing any living beings.

**Second Principle-**

**2. SANYAM**

**= SELF CONTROL**

Sanyam means the proper control of action, speech and thoughts. - acting with due consideration for other people's feelings, - acting with a balanced mind.

**Third Principle:—**

**3. TAP**

**= PENANCE**

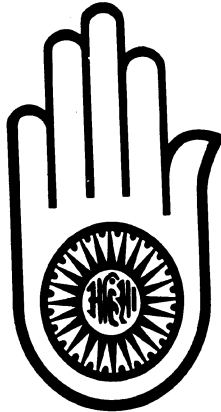
Penence is austerity. This is a self control by way of fasting, meditation, study, etc. This control is aimed to lift the soul above the pleasures and pains of our life.

Jains fast for days and days. They are only allowed to drink boiled water while fasting.

## **JAINISM and.....**

### **5 VOWS**

- 1. AHIMSA** Not to cause injury to any one.
- 2. SATYA** Speaking the truth
- 3. ASTEYA** Refraining from theft
- 4. BRAHMACHARYA** Refraining from wrongful sexual activities.
- 5. APARIGRAHA** Limiting one's possessions



## JAIN POPULATION WORLD-WIDE

There are now 7.5 million Jains in the world.

There are 70,000 Jains living outside India.

In India most of the Jains live in Gujarat and Rajasthan states.

Jains in Britain and America regularly organise religious functions, they celebrate Jain festivals and spread the ideals of non-violence and self-control.



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