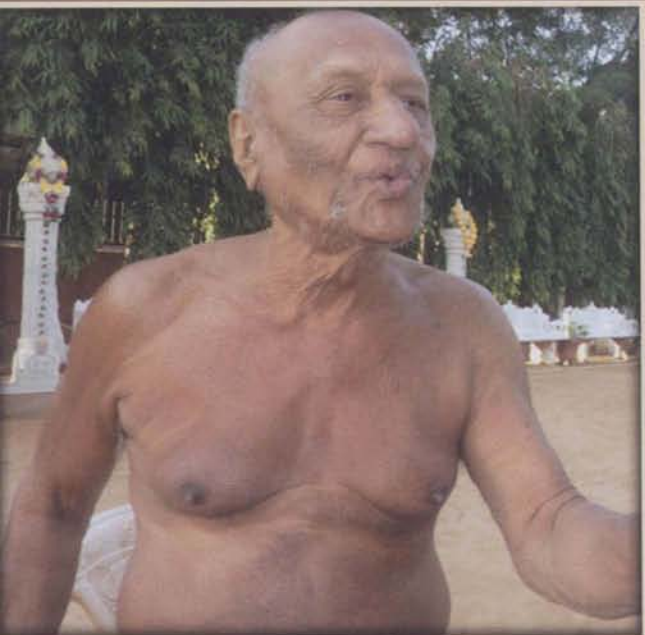


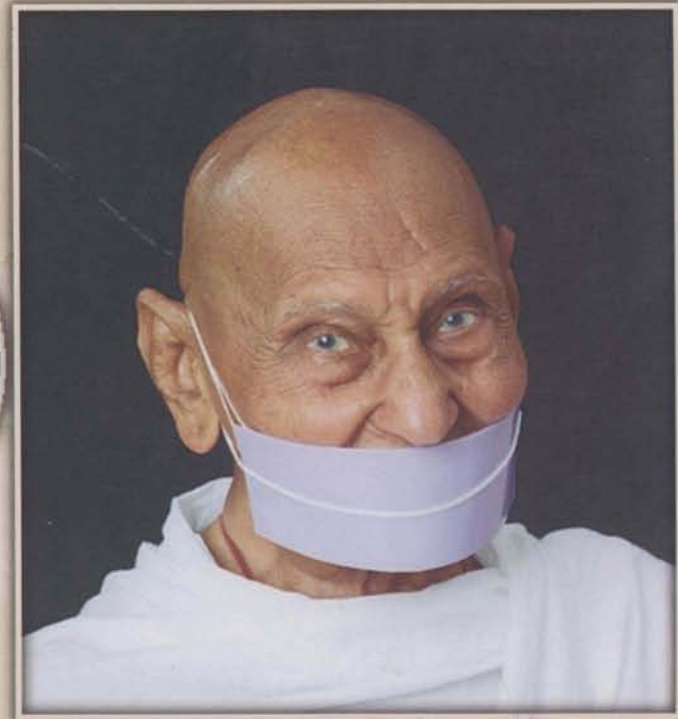
# Jain Digest

A Publication by the Federations of Jain Association in North America (JAINA)

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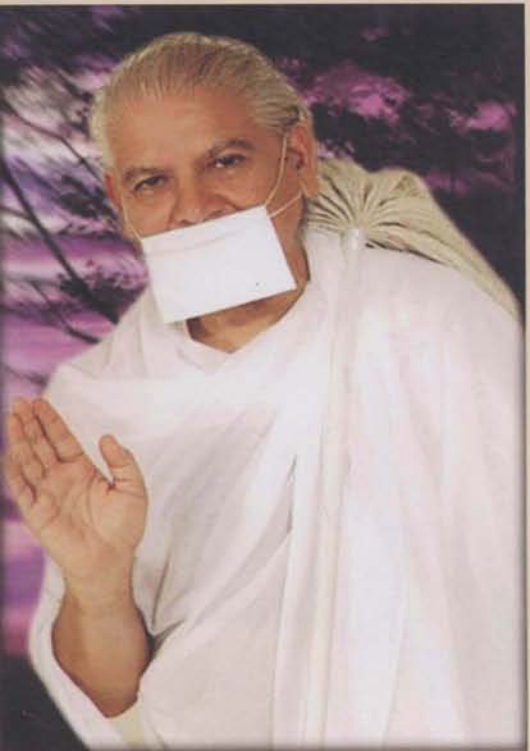


**Acharya Vidhyananda**

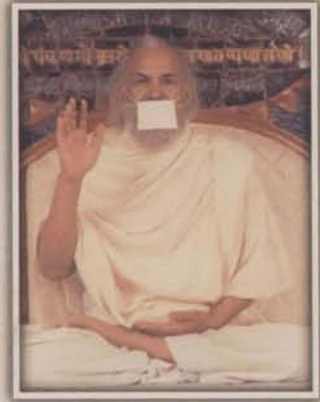


**Acharya Mahapragya**

## Namo Aayariyanam



**Acharya Shiv Muni**



**Acharya Yashovijay**



## eJAIN DIGEST

A publication of the  
Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA)

JAINA is an umbrella organization of local Jain Associations in U.S.A and Canada. The purpose of the organization is to preserve, practice, and promote Jain Dharma and Jain Way of Life.

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## From the President



### Jai Jinendra!

My term as the President of JAINA is coming to an end and, I would like to look back at the entire term with a sense of pride and satisfaction. The honor and respect I received while carrying out my responsibilities has been a humbling experience. Today, JAINA is a very well known and well-respected organization not only in North America but also around the globe.

My visit to over 25 centers took me all over the continent. I travelled over 100,000 miles in the last two years. My meetings with many Jains gave me a better insight of our community. During my visits, I was pleased to meet members of various Jain Centre office bearers, JAINA Directors, exchange views, and participated in a question-answer session about their expectations from JAINA. Their faith in JAINA has touched my heart.

My trips to India were very fruitful as I represented JAINA at the Palitana handicap camp and the Bidada Medical Camp. As a JAINA representative, I also participated in the opening of the JIWO chapters, and

the inauguration of Arhat touch. I had the opportunity to meet the Chief Minister of Gujarat - Narendra Modi, His Holiness Dalai Lama, Pujya Maharaj Naypadmasagarji, Acharya Chandnaji, Gurudev Rakeshbhai Zaveri and many other learned and dynamic individuals. I will cherish these memories for the rest of my life.

The accomplishments and activities, which made my Presidency so rewarding, are summarized below:

**Victorious Ones:** Jain Images of Perfection Art Exhibit (Rubin Museum of Art, NY) – I represented JAINA at the unveiling of the exhibition, which had over 65 displays of Jain art, including some, which have never been publicly displayed. The Exhibit was sponsored by a lead gift from Shital and Suman Jain Family and coordinated by Phyllis Granoff - Professor of Religious Studies at the Yale Graduate School.

**V.R. Gandhi stamp:** Indian Postal Department recognized the renowned Jain Scholar and writer Shri Virchand Raghavji Gandhi by releasing a multicolored stamp, first day cover and a brochure in his honor in November 2009 at Sanmukhanand hall, Mumbai. This became a reality with the tireless efforts of Pravin C Shah of New York.

**Arhat Touch Inauguration:** I had the pleasure of inaugurating Shrimad Rajchandra Arhat Touch program (SRA) in Toronto under the blessings of Gurudev Shri Rakeshbhai Zaveri. This event attracted a large participation from the community.

**Inauguration of JIWO chapter:** I attended the inauguration of JIWO (Jain International Women's Organization) chapter of Juhu, Mumbai on behalf of JAINA.

**Kanji Swami Janma jayanti in Los Angeles:** Annual Jain-Swadhyay Seminar for four days was held at Los Angeles Jain Center in May 2010. This was the 121st Janma Jayanti of Gurudev Shri Kanji Swami. I had the honor of inaugurating the seminar. These seminars are being organized for more than ten years now at different places in North America. About 300 *mumukshus* from North America, Europe and India participated in this Jayanti.

**Tribute to Acharya Mahapragya:** Jain Vishwa Bharati, New Jersey, under the guidance of Samani Sanmati Pragya and Samani Shukla Pragya, organized a memorable event "Path of Ahimsa- A tribute

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to Acharyas", in October 2010. The event has special references to Acharya Mahapragya, who interpreted Bhagwan Mahavir's message of *Ahimsa* to common masses. The event marked the release of a book entitled *Let Us Learn To Live Twelve Golden Principles of Holistic Living* written by Acharya Mahashraman and translated by Samani Sanmati Pragya. I had the pleasure of releasing the book. The program featured a plethora of guest speakers including Dr. Dipak Jain, former dean of Kellogg's School of Business, NJ Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula as the chief guest, Woodbridge Mayor John McCormac, myself, and representatives of various Jain organizations from the tri-state area. More than 500 guests attended the event.

#### **Record Turnout At Palitana Medical camp:**

JAINA participated in the Palitana Camp for the disabled. The Camp was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Narendra Modi and blessed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. JAINA raised about One Crore Rupees to cover the expenses of the Camp. Total of 28,549 physically handicapped and hearing-impaired individuals of all ages benefitted at the camp. 8341 Calipers were distributed, 664 Jaipur foot were fitted, 3200 crutches were given out to the

needy, 671 wheelchairs were given to severely handicapped individuals, 1622 tricycles were given and 11,789 hearing aids were given to hearing-impaired individuals.



and it was humid. We did not have running water that we could use freely. There were 4 cold-water showers that about 200 people shared. This was an eye opening and humbling experience. In spite of such conditions, our team worked 12 hours a day and performed many surgeries. We all could contribute towards the betterment of Haitians! It was very gratifying experience.

**Bidada Camp:** This year JAINA was one of the sponsors of 37<sup>th</sup> Bidada Medical and Surgical Camp at Kutch, Gujarat. JAINA raised US\$50,000 for this purpose. This year's camp started with Urology camp, where over 60 surgeries were successfully performed, followed by ENT camp, which performed surgeries and distributed hearing aids to children. During the general surgery camp 152 surgeries were performed. During the cardiac camp 400 patients were triaged out of which 62 patients including 20 children were sent to Mumbai for cardiac surgery. It was another busy year for eye camp, where 646 cataract surgeries were performed. For the first time during gynecologic camp state of the art cervical cancer screening on 125 women were done. They also performed 31 hysterectomies, in addition to many other procedures. The child health program had another successful year where our volunteers and doctors educated 4000 children and completed 1,200 eye exams of school-aged children. The

**Haiti Earthquake Victims:** JAINA members contributed over \$35,000 towards Haiti relief fund. In May 2010, a group of 13 professionals with various backgrounds embarked on a humanitarian medical mission to help the neediest people in western hemisphere. They were, Lata Champsee, Fery Saremi, RN, Kelly Cornilliac, Nayna Patel, Alexa Reeves, MD, Donna Reeves, MD, Ramesh Shah, Nitin Shah, MD, Sushil Jain, MD, Minaxi Patel, MD, Vasant Bhatt, MD, Tuesday Cook, MD and Prakash Mehta went to Port Au Prince, Haiti from May 6 to 13 on a Medical Mission. The trip was organized under the umbrella of JAINA. We were all housed in a big tent. About 125 people slept on small cots covered with mosquito nets. During the day, temperature reached up to 125 F



breast cancer-screening program screened and educated 437 women, of which 13 lumps were sent for further testing. The smoking cessation program ran during the entire camp, educating patients and family members of the dangers of smoking and the harm of tobacco chewing. Total of **25,554 patients** were treated and **1042 Surgeries** were performed in addition to 157 major surgeries scheduled for Mumbai.

**JAINA Website:** We revamped the JAINA website completely. It is dynamic, interactive and informative. This was the first task handled by present committee. We needed to get this done through professionals and we had to spend some money. Now you can log on to Jaina.org and see the results. Infrastructure is in place to develop it further. This was possible with the efforts of many. Yogen Jain and Chandrakant Vora provided the leadership.



**JAINA Education Committee:** A flagship committee under the leadership of Pravinbhai Shah of NC does tremendous amount of work. Over the past 9 years the committee has distributed more than 50,000 (valued at \$200,000) JAINA Education books to the *Pathshala* students of North America and other countries. There are more than 3500 students attending Jain *Pathshalas* across North America. Committee also conducts Jain Academic Bowl competition. For the past six years, Virendra Shah and Bharat Shah of Los Angeles handle the entire operation of the *Pathshala* Book distribution system.

**Jain eLibrary Project:** Over the past 16 months, more than 6100 eLibrary users from 64 countries have registered to download the literature available on the website. During this time, 44,000 books have been downloaded by the members. Meanwhile we continued to add 15,000 pages every month of the Jain literature on the website. The website now contains more than one million pages of scanned images of Jain Literature. You can order the JAINA Education materials, eLibrary DVDs, and pay for your order or donate to JAINA Education and eLibrary activities on this website.

**JAINA Calendars:** JAINA is delighted to present 2010 and 2011 calendars to Jains of North America. JAINA calendars depict rich Jain art and architecture of Jain Temples. 11,000+ JAINA Calendars are shipped free of charge. The response to our 2010 and 2011 Calendars like always was an overwhelming one. Most Jains look forward to receiving this calendar. The JAINA Calendar takes about 4 months to produce, involves over 15 people in 5 cities and over 1,500 man-hours of work.

**JAINA TV Show:** JAINA Media Production Committee produces the only JAIN TV show in North America. The aim is to present Jain religion through television medium in nonbiased non-sectarian way, with special focus on our next generation. The show "MANGALAM" the only Jain TV show in North America is on air, broadcast on weekly basis for the past four years. It has given Jains of North America an important presence in the media world. It is on SAHARA TV every Saturday morning at 9:00am

**JAINA Jivdaya Work:** To promote non-violence and the practice of *Ahimsa* - non-injury to life. This Committee has so far distributed about 1.2 Million Rupees to Various *Panjarapols* and Animal Centers in India and is run under the able leadership of Pramodaben Chitrabhanu.

**Leadership Conference at Siddhachalam in April 2010:** 5<sup>th</sup> Leadership Conference marked in history as the inflection point in accelerated growth of JAINA and its infrastructure. The theme of the conference was **How to Deliver on a National Infrastructure** for JAINS, JAINA, JAINISM, and JAIN Organizations. More than 50 participants attended the conference for two and a half days at Siddhachalam in the wonderful atmosphere of tranquility and positive energy. The conference was led by Dr. Dipak Jain, the past Dean of Kellogg's School of Management, and LRP team. After extensive discussions, the team agreed that the following critical infrastructure support is needed to service our members and meet our vision of "To Live and Share a Jain Way of Life."

1. Financial sustainability– short and long term



2. Executive office – serving Jain community, Jain Centers, and the broader society
3. Jain Membership Management
4. Jain Unity
5. Mentorship for young Jains in North America.

**YJA Convention 2010: A Grand Success:** 700 + attendees from ages 14-29, 100 volunteers and 60 guest speakers made this convention a visual and spiritual spectacle. The combination of thought-provoking daytime sessions, magical social events, sumptuous Jain food and marvelous decorations brought YJA convention to a new level. Keynote speakers were Parag Mehta, Michael Tobias, and Dr. Vinod Shah. Attendees got an opportunity to do networking with people from around the world.

**Young Jain Professionals Convention:** Three-day YJP convention was held in June 2010 on a cruise from Miami to the Bahamas. The purpose of this convention was to bring everyone together and discuss various issues that affect us as young Jain professionals, in a setting that would be enjoyable and different from the usual conventions. At the end, group parted with a strong feeling of closeness and friendship.

**Jain Milan:** This event was arranged to support and facilitate matrimonial activities in the Jain Community. It was organized in New Jersey in 2010 and in San Jose in 2011 under the leadership of Gunvantbhai Shah. Over 100 individuals participated in the event.

**Jain Digest is Going Green:** Following JAINA 2009 Convention's theme of Ecology - The Jain Way, JAINA Executive Committee decided not to distribute a hardcopy but instead offer the publication in the electronic format. eJain Digest is available on both a print-ready PDF and a web-friendly version on [www.jaina.org](http://www.jaina.org) website.

**JAINA Directors:** We have started to strengthen the engagement and support of our 104 directors through dialogue and regional teleconferences.

**Jain Diaspora:** Jain Diaspora is the JAINA initiative to connect all the Jain communities living in 36 countries outside of India and thereby drive greater unity and cohesiveness in the global Jain community. The purpose is to unite Jains around the world under one umbrella; this will empower the next generation to preserve our traditions, and become significant players in global affairs. Late Dr. L M Singhvi envisioned Diaspora Conventions and chaired the first convention that was held in 2007 in NJ, USA. The 2nd Jain Diaspora Conference is being organized on Sunday, July 3, 2011 during JAINA Convention in Houston, Texas. Invitations have been sent to engage leaders from India, UK, Belgium, Kenya, Kuwait, Singapore, Australia and other communities to present talks. The goal of this 2011 Jain Diaspora Conference is to form an intercontinental group for maintaining regular contacts across unified global Jain communities - significant size populations are resident in at least 36 countries of the world.

**Parliament of World Religions:** JAINA through its Interfaith Committee managed a strong presence at the Parliament of World Religions meeting in Australia, December, 2009.- JAINA members played a superb role in sharing the core values of Jainism with the world. Various topics like, "How a Jain Starts the Day: The Rituals" (by Kirit Daftary), "Preksha Meditation" –(by Vinay Pragyaji and Samani Akshay Prajnaji), "Basic tenets and Karma" in Jainism (by Davendra Keertiji and Dr Narayan Kachhara), "Jainism and the environment" ( Pravin K shah and Sohan Lal Gandhi) and "Ancient Jain mantra: sound and spirituality" (by Maharaj Amrender muniji) were presented and discussed.

**Multifaith Conference in Indonesia:** US National Security Council, State Dept. and White House organized a multi-faith conference in Indonesia. 20 religious leaders from USA and 20 members from Indonesia gathered in Jakarta in January 2010. It was a matter of pride for us to know that our Interfaith Chair of JAINA, Arvind Vora was selected to represent JAINISM at this prestigious world forum, thus granting a much-needed acknowledgement to Jainism in a world forum.

**Task Force for Global Initiatives :** Task Force for Global Initiatives for Faith, Health and Development had its first meeting in the White House in July 2010. Approx. 25 people attended it. It is initiated, hosted and supported by Center for Interfaith Action. The second meeting was in October 2010 at the UN . The primary purpose of such initiatives is to discuss how different faiths can work together to solve some of the most pressing human problems.

**A manual on Treating Patients of Other Religions and Ethnicities:** JAINA, under the leadership of Arvind Vora was part of a project on preparation of a manual on "Treating Patients of Other Religions and Ethnicities". The purpose of this manual is to provide a brief overview of various religions and cultures within the United States and to effectively address specific medical issues concerning patient care. This document will be available shortly as a link on the National Interfaith Alliance website and will also be linked with the American Medical Association and state medical societies. This will enable the physicians to access the information online prior to entering the patients' rooms. This information will help the medical personnel to be sensitive and understanding of the different religious and cultural health care traditions.

**Child Nutrition Act HR 5504:** In the past three decades, the problem of growing obesity among children has tripled. According to public health experts, diet-related diseases are also increasingly common, one in three American children will now eventually develop diabetes. With more access to plant based (vegetarian) meal options, students are better able to protect their health. A veggie burger, for example, is similar in protein content to a hamburger, but has one third of the fat content, does not have cholesterol, has fewer calories and more fiber. Menus in most school lunch programs are too high in saturated fat and cholesterol and too low in fiber. Nutrient-rich fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes HR 5504 would allow more children to have access to healthful plant-based options. The Healthy School Lunch Campaign encourages schools to offer healthier low fat, cholesterol-free options, including reimbursable meals and beverages, a la carte items, and vending machine items.

**JAINA to Work with Boy Scouts of America:** JAINA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with BSA (BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA). According to this, Jain religion is now recognized by BSA and JAINA is authorized to liaison with BSA. JAINA is in the process of further follow-up steps like getting the Label/Pin/Medal done by a supplier, informative brochure and criteria of awarding, etc. Also Scouts Executive, a person who can look after and liaison with others for the PRAY program is to be appointed. This was possible with the efforts of Prakash Mody of Toronto. More information can be obtained at. (<http://www.jaina.org/>)

**JAINA Goes to Washington: "Celebrating Non-Violence" on Capitol Hill:** This conference was co-sponsored by JAINA, American Jewish Congress, AAPI and NAACP, held in October 2009. Speaker at the conference included US Congress Chaplain, Rev. Daniel P. Caughlin, Congressman John Lewis, Congressman Jim McDermott, Congressman Frank Pallone, Congressman Ed Royce, NAACP Washington Bureau director Hilary O. Shelton, and White House representatives Paul Montero and Daniell Borin. This conference gave us a big opportunity to network and develop contacts with the US Government officials.

**President Obama talks about Bhagwan Mahavir:** As a direct result of Dr. Sushil Jain's networking with the White House, President Obama talked about Bhagwan Mahavir and Jainism at the White House Diwali function.

**Visits To Various Sanghs:** I had the opportunity to visit over 25 Jain centers. To list a few:

**Ashtapad Pratishtha in New York:** - I attended the Ashtapad Pratishtha in New York, a unique event that took place in June 2010 at Jain Centre of America, New York. Shri Ashtapad Mountain sculptured from 59 pieces of crystal blocks each weighing 50 to 750 lbs. along with the steel frame weighing 1 ton was imported from Jaipur, India. All of 24 idols were carved out of real gemstones.

**Pratishtha at Cleveland:** JAIN Society of Greater Cleveland had a grand Pratishtha Mahotsav of their new Temple in July 2010 in Richfield, Ohio. It was a four-day celebration and I had the opportunity to be a part of this grand celebration. Pratishtha was for Mulnayak Shri Dharmanath, the 15th Tirthankar, Shri Rushabh Nath and Shri Mahavir Swami. All the events were well organized and there was a lot of enthusiasm amongst the members. Everyone was happy to see that their long due dream came true.

**Jain Society of Greater Detroit:** Jain Society of Greater Detroit celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in June 2010. I was impressed by the cohesiveness of Detroit Jain community. An exhibit was organized which displayed unique memorabilia, literature and photographs collected over the years. I had the opportunity to address the members.



**Jain Center of Northern California:** I was present at the joyous and eventful 10th Anniversary celebration of the Jain Bhawan held in Milpitas, California in August 2010. The celebration brought together a host of Jain religious leaders, scholars, followers and dignitaries who participated in a comprehensive series of events focusing on the theme: Non-Violence, Peace & Harmony. The cumulative reach of these events was impressive, with more than twenty speakers. The event was attended by over 3000 people.

**Visit to Las Vegas:** I visited the Las Vegas Sarvadharm Temple, which had Hindu and Jain Murtis. It is a beautiful Temple located on a hill, about 15 miles from "The strip". A small group of Jains displayed lot of dedication.

**Visit to Phoenix Center:** In August 2010, I visited Jain Center of Phoenix. After their regular Puja, I gave a talk on JAINA activities and visited their *pathshala*, which was humming with activities. I also had an informal meeting with Jain Center of Greater Phoenix EC, BOD.

**Visit to Fort Myers:** 15-20 Members were gathered at Mahendrabhai's (JAINA Director) home for an informal meeting to discuss Jain activities in Fort Myers.

**Visit to Orlando:** I received a very warm welcome during my visit to Orlando Jain Temple. Most members attended the Town Hall meeting and the participation of youngsters was superb. Deepikaben and I stayed overnight at a member's home and enjoyed the hospitality of Orlando Sangh.

**Visit to Tampa Jain Sangh:** I attended a Snatra Puja at Tampa Jain Center. It was attended by more than 150 members. A town hall meeting was held after the Puja and members were interested in knowing about JAINA. Members were happy to see a JAINA President visiting their center.

**Jain Studies at FIU, Florida:** A Historic Milestone - Florida International University is establishing a perpetual professorship in Jain studies and is a first ever initiative and a historic milestone for the Jain Community.

**Visit to Miami:** I attended a Town Hall meeting at Jain Center of Southern Florida (JCSF). About 50-60 people attended the meeting and most members were interested in knowing about JAINA. JCSF is a relatively small organization, with a current membership of 80-100 Jain families. In late 2005, JCSF bought 4000 sq. feet of commercial office space in the newly built complex.

**Jain Center of Greater Boston:** Jain Center of Greater Boston has moved into their much larger temple in June 2010 in Norwood, MA. JCGB's first temple was one of the first in North America.

**Pratishtha in Richmond, VA:** A grand Pratishtha celebration was held in Richmond Temple in November 2010. Pratishtha was for Mahavir Swami, Tirthankar Adeshwar and Tirthankar Parshwanath. This was a big achievement for a small sangh.

**Visit to Montreal:** I participated in the celebrations of Mahavir Janma Kalyanak in Montreal. Program started with Snatra Puja and ended with a sumptuous dinner. Around 60 people were gathered for the event in which I gave a talk on JAINA activities to the gathering.

**Visit to Houston:** Sushil Jain, Deepika Dalal, Manish Mehta and I visited Houston for Convention planning. We had a very fruitful visit.

**Visit to Dallas:** Sushil Jain, Nitin Shah and I visited Dallas Jain Center to promote JAINA Convention 2011. Members present were very enthusiastic about the convention being held in their backyard. We were given the tour of the newly acquired building to house their temple.

**Visit to Los Angeles:** In the last 3 years, I have visited LA more than 8 times. I consider this as my *Sangh*. During my official visit as JAINA



President, I met with EC, BOD of JCSC and had a fruitful discussion on issues related with JAINA.



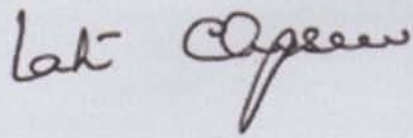
**JAINA office:** Jain Center of America (NY) has continued to offer office space for JAINA Headquarters in their center. JAINA is thankful for their generosity.

**JAINA Convention:** This is the first time a convention is held in Southern part of United States. The volunteers from Houston Jain Society are working very hard to make this convention a big success. A unique play "Gandhi vs. Gandhi" will be presented by artists coming from India. A good daytime programming, excellent entertainment is planned for the benefit of attendees. The registration trend has been very positive so please register, if you have not had a chance to do so.

Please note that many JAINA volunteers are doing an excellent work quietly and without much fanfare. The list of events mentioned above is the result of their dedication and hard work – for which, I remain very grateful. None of this would have been possible without the support of JAINA EC, Board of Directors and Jain community of North America. I hope that JAINA continues to grow and my best wishes are with next administration.

See you all at the Convention in Houston.

With warm Regards



Lata Champsee, President  
JAINA, <http://www.jaina.org>

*"Each day, well-lived, makes yesterday a dream of happiness and each tomorrow a vision of hope. Look, therefore, to this day, for it and it alone is life."* -- Ushavandanam by Kalidasa

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## Jai Jinendra from the Jain Digest Editorial Team

### Namo Aaryaniyanam!

It has been some time now since our last issue of eJain Digest, and it has been even longer since the last print version of Jain Digest was published. It is a pleasure to bring to you this issue dedicated to *Acharyas / Sadhus* or Jain Teachers who have not only devoted their lives to lead the Jain Way of Life but also to teach others about Jain philosophy and tradition. This is a humble effort to compile immense amount of information on Jain *Acharyas* and *Sadhus* for a small issue of this kind. As we embarked on this task, we realized that there was a lot to cover and an exhaustive compilation is a very tall order. Clearly, we could provide only limited information even after delaying the release of this issue by over three months.

The current issue of Jain Digest, offers information on the lives of a few *Acharyas / Sadhus* in the limited time we were able to spend on this subject. After reaching out to the community to gather information on *Acharyas / Sadhus* from all traditions (sects), we attempted to compile a list of the names of all the *Acharyas* living in the current times. There are bound to be omissions in compiling such large lists, but they would not be for lack of trying on our part. We would really like the readers to continue sending us information about the *Acharyas / Sadhus* who were missed in this list so we can continue to compile this information in one place and make it available to all our readers.

You will notice that we have detailed information on some of the *Acharyas/Sadhus* and not all of them. This is due to the wonderful opportunity that some of the members on the editorial team got to actually speak with these great *Acharyas*. This does not in any way suggest that the other *Acharyas* are of any lesser stature or importance – it is just that we did not have the opportunity to speak to them, nor anyone from the readership reached out regarding their experience with them. Again, we will be happy to include your experiences or write-ups on this in the future issue, so please send them our way.

**It was very impressive to see the range of style and the depth of knowledge, which each *Acharya/Sadhu* uses to spread the message of Jainism, and different philosophies that go with it. They are all different and unique in some respects, at the same time their message and purpose is strikingly similar.** We are left with a few concerns about the role of next-generation of Jain community living in North America. Will this generation have the opportunity to interact with and benefit from coming in contact with *Acharyas / Sadhus* ? As the new generation keeps putting down firmer roots in this land, their travel to India and thus opportunity for such interactions will continually decline. So how do we ensure that our spiritual journey continues in this land of opportunity and Jainism finds a permanent home here? We have posed some of these questions as food for thought, and we are quite certain that we will be able to find a way to face these challenges with your feedback and suggestions.

**In this issue, we have started with a note from the first female JAINA president. We have also ended this Jain Digest issue with a write-up of the only female Jain Acharya.**

Our heart-felt *Micchami Dukkadam* (apologies) if we have missed any *Acharya/Sadhu*, from any tradition (sect) or hurt your feelings in the way we have written about the ones we have covered. While, we tried our best to present the interaction with an *Acharya* to the best of our ability, it is quite likely we may have misrepresented a particular conversation. In that context, we offer our sincere apologies to these great souls.

Thank you and we look forward to engaging discussions on this and other topics with you.

With Warm Regards  
Jain Digest Editorial Team  
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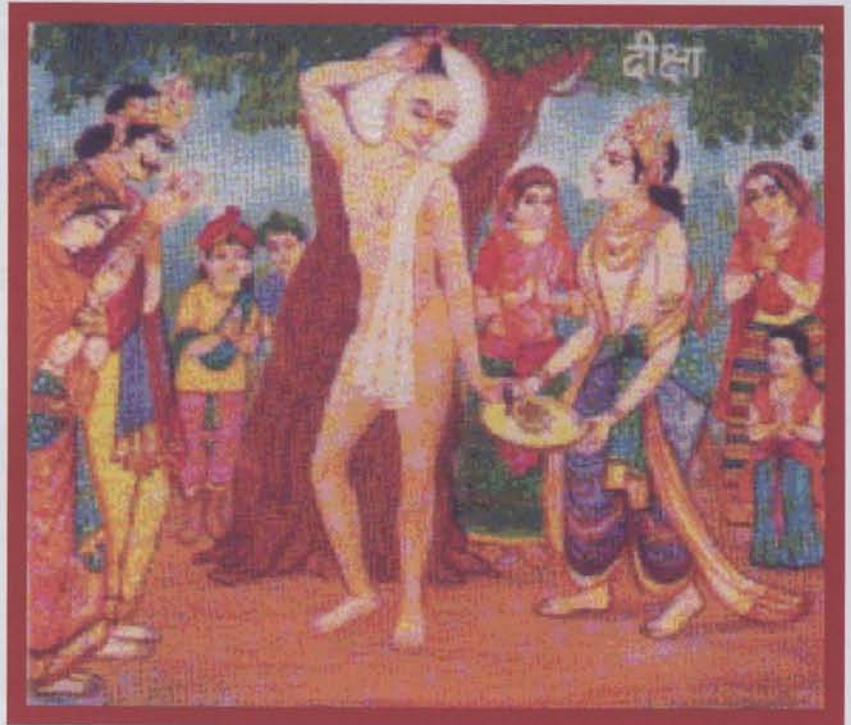
# SADHUTVA

जयं चरे जयं चिद्धे, जयमासे जयं सए ।  
जयं भुंजंतो भासंतो, पावं कम्मं न बंधई । ।

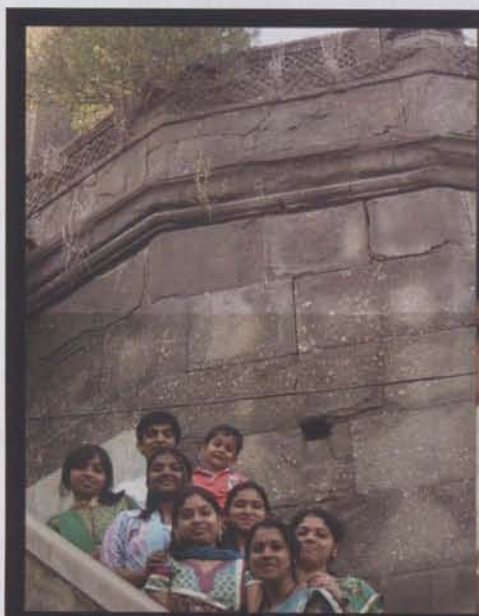
*Walk, stay, sit, and go to sleep, eat, and speak with awareness so that the bad karma is not acquired.*  
- Dasavaikalika

**V**ardhaman at the age of 30, came out of his palace, and with thousands of eyes watching him, he removed all the clothes and ornaments attached with his body, plucked out his long hair, and chanting "Namo Siddhanam", he left without even looking back at his palace. Thus began the long journey of 12 and half years for Shraman Mahavir. This twelve-year period of spiritual practice that entailed, deep and undisturbed meditation, rigorous penance, extreme tolerance of pain, and ultimate equanimity, has served as the leading example of spiritual practice for Jain sadhus for many generations and will continue to serve as an example for many generation to come.

The above was a glimpse of Veetrag Mahavir. Let us now present a short narration of how a person in modern times undergoes a complete change in one's lifestyle, due to some strong inner feeling of veetrag. Chunabhatti is a laid-back lower-middle class



locality right in the center of the growing metropolitan. It is home to the first cotton mill in Mumbai (Bombay), which was registered in 1886 by Jamshedji Tata. The history of a Jain temple in



Jan 6, 2010 - Miss Neha Godani enjoying vacation with family



Jan 20, 2010 - Miss Neha getting ready for Diksha



Jan 21, 2010 Sadhavi Nandishyra Shreeji

Chunabhatti can also be traced back to this period. Recently on Jan 20, 2010, this locality was full of activity. The streets were crowded and a huge procession was on its way. Young, Miss Neha Madanlal Godani, college-going girl, dear-pet (laadaki) of her father, was on her way to take diksha under Acharya Kirtiyash Suri. On Jan 21, 2010, she became Sadhavi Nandishyra Shriji. Father Madanlal, told us, "It is very difficult to see your young one leave you after 22 years, it specially hurts when one imagines the kind of hardships one faces in the path of Sadhavi. However, when I am calm, the thought of my determined daughter committed to the cleansing of her soul makes me immensely happy." When we asked Sadhavi Nandishyra Shriji about the motivations that led her towards the path of *sadhutva*, she told us that she had come to realize that every worldly relationship was temporary and superficial. On the other hand, she saw her elder sister and *masi* (aunt), both of them were currently *sadhavis*, who were undergoing hardships but were still very happy. So instead of building and engaging in superficial relationship, it was better to build a permanent relationship with *Parmatma*. When we inquired about the hardships she was undergoing as a newly initiated *sadhavi*, she was honest enough to admit to us that it was hard sometimes and that she would get emotional at times, but her resolve was complete and she had no *shanka* (doubt) about the correctness of her decision.

### Indian Tradition of Sainthood

*Shramana* is one of most ancient ascetic traditions of India. A *shramana* is one who renounces the worldly life and leads an ascetic life for the purpose of spiritual development and liberation. *Shramana* tradition asserts that human beings are responsible for their own deeds and reap the fruits of those deeds, for good or ill. Liberation, therefore, may be achieved by anybody irrespective of caste, creed, color or culture (in contrast to certain historical caste-based traditions) provided the necessary effort is made. The Sanskrit word *shramana* is derived from the Sanskrit verbal root *śram* "to exert effort, labor or to perform austerity". "*Shramana*" thus means "one who strives" in Sanskrit. The older *Aarhat Dharma* or *Nirgranth Dharma* (Pre-Mahavir names of Jain philosophy) would consider this word derived from the original word *Saman* that means the one who believes in *Samata*, i.e. equanimity.

*Samkhya* and *Yoga* are two early and very important philosophies that follow the *Shramana* philosophy and whose existence can be traced from archeological finding and related research of the Indus Valley period of about 3000-2000 BCE. *Yoga* is probably the most important *Shramana* practice to date, which follows the *Samkhya* philosophy of liberating oneself from the grip of *Prakriti* (nature) through individual effort. Jain literature credits the beginning of this tradition to Bhagwan Rushabdev. While the literal translation of the dates in the Jain canons do not match with the scientifically derived dates of the ancient human civilization, logical extrapolation would put this period at the end of the Stone Age and the beginning of the Agriculture Age.

### The Sangh of Mahavir

Tirthankar Mahavir swami established a Chaturvidh *sangh*-the four community pillars of Jainism. The *sangh* pillars are Male monk (*sadhu*), Female monk (*sadhavi*), Male family person (*shravak*) and Female family person (*shravika*). As per Jain tradition, *Tirthankar* leads the *sangh* while he lives, and continues to be *shashan-nayak* (head-creator of the order) until a new *Tirthankar* arrives. After the *Tirthankar* attains *Nirvana*, *Acharyas* who have at least 36 *gunas* (good qualities) lead the *sangh*.

After Mahavir swami's nirvana in 523B.C., the 5th Ganadhar Sudhamaswamy became the first Acharya. Ganadhar Jambuswamy, the second Acharya was the last follower of Mahavir Bhagwan to attain *kevalgyan* (omniscience) and ultimately became a siddha in this time cycle. The lineage of the undivided *sangh* as per the different traditional and other accounts is given in the figure on the next page.

There are varying accounts about the split between *Digamber* and the *Shwetamber* sect. There is *Shwetamber* view, *Digamber* view, and an outsider's view based on certain historical evidences and archaeological findings. A summary of interesting research done by Prof. Jaini is included in this issue of Jain Digest. A terrible twelve-year famine occurred in Magadha in 293 B.C and the origins of the great schism can be traced to this event. The date of the famine also is different in different Jain traditions, however, reliable date is 293BC based on reign of Chandragupta Maurya. If one takes into account the historical evidences, and traditional data together it seems the separation occurred

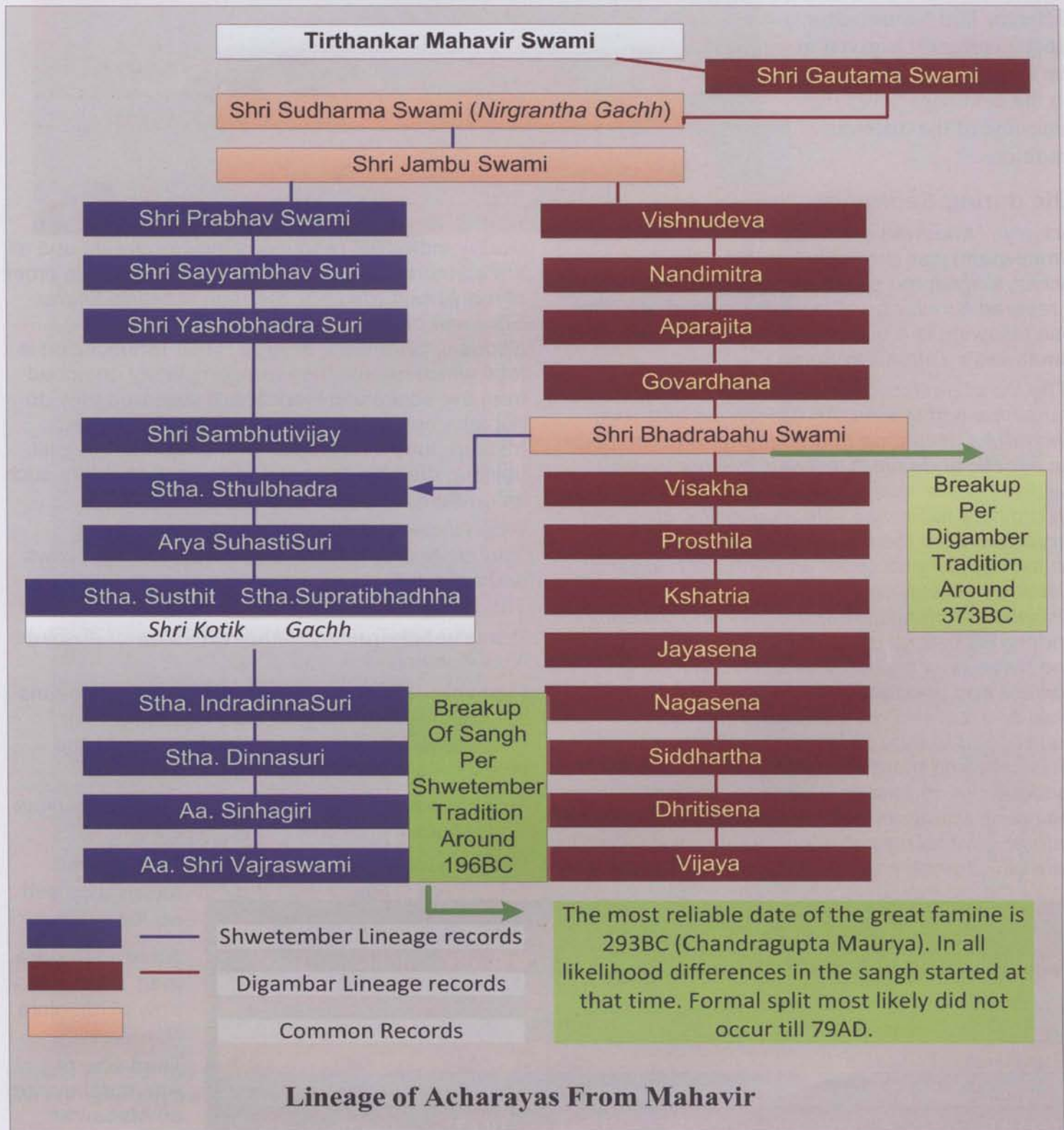


gradually. Even though different groups may have been formed earlier, there was still some interaction between the different groups (possibly more than 2), the formal split possibly occurred in 79 or 82 A.D.

### The Everlasting Tradition of Jain Sadhutva

Even after 2600 years, one of the most interesting aspects of Jain heritage is the consistency of

philosophical approach, ultimate goal, and basic observance in which *Sadhutva* is practiced across different Jain traditions or sects. There are of-course quite a few differences in the practice between the different sects and traditions, but for an outside observer, these differences seem to be more semantic, cultural or situational rather than a result of any deep philosophical divide. The sacred





*Acharanga Sutra* and the *Dasvekalik Sutra* of the Shwetamber tradition details the conduct of a Jain ascetic. The *Moolachar sutra* and the *Anagar Dharmamrita* provide particulars on *sadhutva* for the Digamber sects. Below is a picture of Jain monks, representing the different sects and gender.

The estimate of the total number of monks in the different Jain *Sampradays* (sects) currently is given in the table below. The picture on the next page gives the time-line of the different traditions.



**Life during Sadhutva**

Acharya Umaswati (or Umaswami) was probably the last popular Acharya accepted either as part of lineages or as a revered scholar by all current sects of Jainism. The following is a quotation from Acharya Umaswati's *Tattvaarth Sutra*:

*“The life of an ascetic is exacting. It imposes hardships and strains. An ascetic accepts food and drinks according to an uncompromising code. An ascetic endeavors to live in harmony with nature. He/she keeps few possessions and lives in an ordinary residence with meager facilities and protection from the elements. It is expected that an ascetic will encounter afflictions of hunger, disease, reviling, and the like. As part of ascetic discipline, a mendicant voluntarily and patiently undergoes painful experiences such as hunger and thirst, heat and cold, and, discomforting posture and uncomfortable repose. Through such trials and tribulations, the sage becomes conditioned to face unforeseen afflictions, physically and mentally. When afflictions befall at random, due to past experiences, he/she maintains equanimity and does not falter from the path of spiritual pursuit. Confronting hardships patiently strengthens the resolve of aspirants to*

*pursue asceticism. It also leads to stoppage of inflow and shedding of karmas.”*

‘*Virati*’ means giving up feelings, thoughts and conduct of sin. ‘*Sarvavirati*’ means giving up all sins for life. The individual who takes the vow to give up all sins follows the path of *sadhutva*. This

worthy individual renounces the worldly life and all the attachments, and is initiated into the Jain order of monkhood (*diksha*), the man is called *Sadhu*, *Shraman* or *Muni* and the woman is called *Sadhavi*, *Shramani*, or *Aryä*. Their renunciation is total which means they are completely detached from the social and worldly activities and they do not take any part in those activities anymore. Instead, they spend their time in spiritual pursuit, uplifting their souls and guiding householders such as ourselves how to uplift our souls.

When individuals get initiated into the life of *Sadhus* and *Sadhavis*, they take five major vows and act strictly in accordance with those vows. The five great vows are:

**Pranatipätaviraman Mahavrat** - Vow of absolute Non-violence.

First vow of *Pranatipätaviraman Mahavrat* means *sadhu* and *sadhavis* will never cause harm or violence to any living being including even the tiniest creatures.

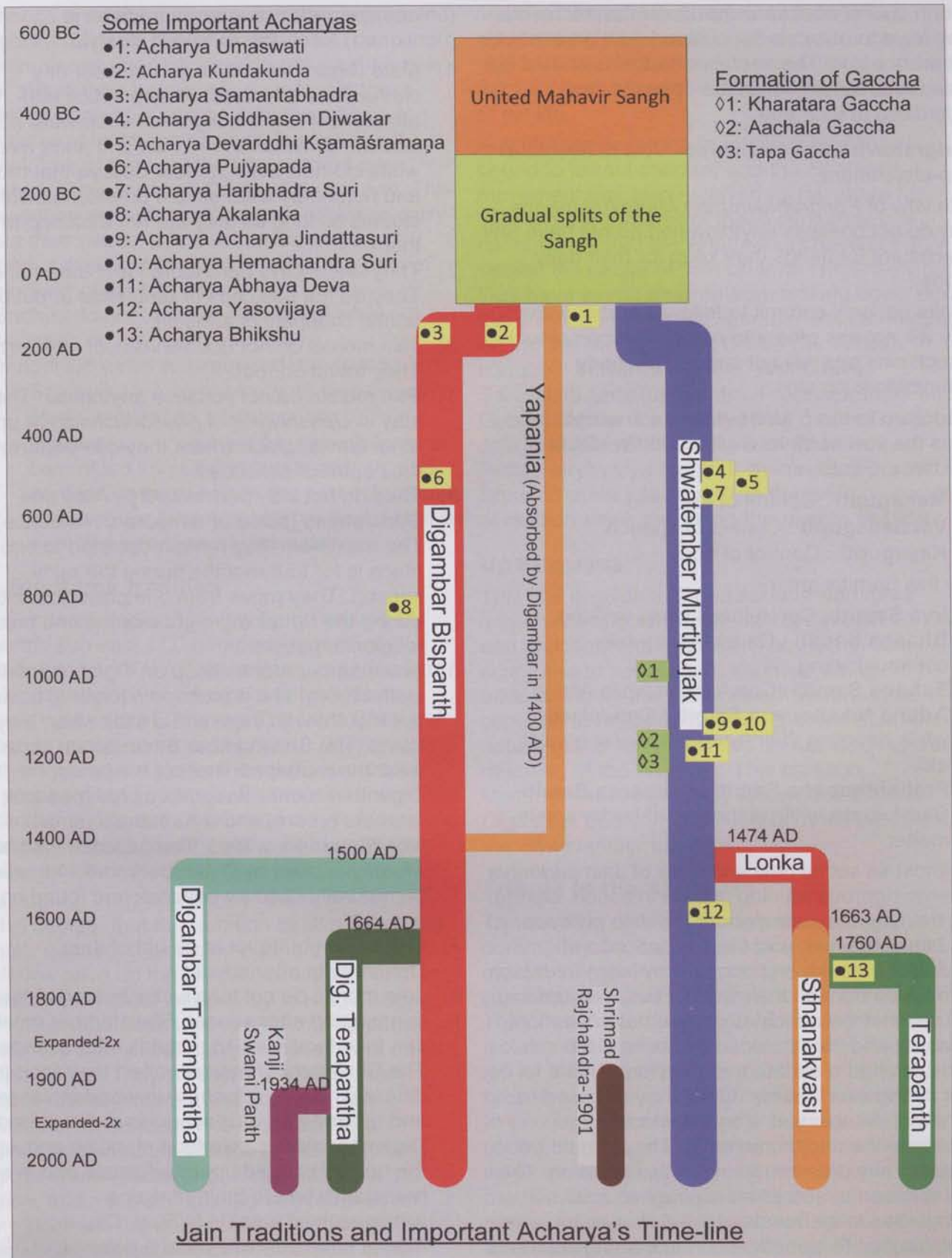
**Mrishavadaviraman Mahavrat** - Vow of absolute Truthfulness

Second vow of *Mrishavadaviraman Mahavrat* means they will not lie.

**Adattadänavira man Mahavrat** - Vow of absolute Non-stealing

Third vow of *Adattadänaviram an Mahavrat*

Sampraday (sect)	No. of Acharyas	No. of Sadhus	No. Of Sadhavis	Total Monks	% of Total
Shwetamber Murtipujak	164	1,927	6,600	8,691	61%
Shwetamber Sthanakvasi	12	599	3,012	3,623	26%
Shwetamber Terapanth	1	154	525	680	5%
Digamber	57	614	515	1,186	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>3,294</b>	<b>10,652</b>	<b>14,180</b>	<b>100%</b>



Jain Traditions and Important Acharya's Time-line

means without the permission of the owner they will not take anything from anywhere.

**Maithunaviraman Mahavrat** - Vow of absolute Celibacy



Fourth vow of *Maithunaviraman Mahavrat* means they have to observe the celibacy with an absolute adherence to it. The *sadhu* or *sadhavis* should not even touch a member of the opposite sex regardless of their age.

**Parigrahaviraman Mahavrat** - Vow of absolute Non-attachment.

Fifth vow of *Parigrahaviraman Mahavrat* means they do not possess anything and do not have any attachment for things they keep for their daily needs.

Monks not only commit to follow the above vows, they will not ask others to commit actions resulting in such sins and will not support anybody committing such sins.

In addition to the 5 *Mahavrats*, each ascetic also takes the vow of three *Guptis* and five *Samitis*. The three *Guptis* are:

- **Managupti** : Control of the mind
- **Vachanagupti** : Control of speech
- **Kayagupti** : Control of body

The five *Samitis* are:

- **Irya Samiti** : Carefulness while walking
- **Bhasha Samiti** : Carefulness while communicating
- **Eshana Samiti** : Carefulness while eating
- **Adana Nikshepana Samiti** : Carefulness while handling their flywhisks, water gourds, etc.
- **Pratishthapana Samiti or Utsarga Samiti** : Carefulness while disposing of bodily waste matter

In almost all sects, new aspirants of Jain *sadhutva* undergo rigorous training prior to initiation. During that training, they learn about the Jain philosophy, the Jain scriptures, and the special code of conduct for monks and nuns. They learn to detach themselves from all their worldly ties. The training ensures that the candidates have determination, capability and the aptitude to withstand the hardships that a *sadhu* or *sadhavi* may have to face during their lifetime. Once they get used to this life of detachment, they can decide to undertake the role of *sadhutva*. They should not be under any pressure to make this decision. The final decision to accept an aspirant as *sadhu* or *sadhavi* lies in the hands of the *Acharya*. In *Shwetamber Terapanth* sect, the training aspirants are formally called *Mumukshu*. In the *Digamber* tradition trainee ascetics are known as *Ailaka* or *Kshullaka*. The Ascetics from most traditions

(unless specifically a specific tradition is mentioned) follow the following lifestyle:

- 1) Male *Digamber* monks do not wear any clothes and are nude. They practice non-attachment to the body and hence wear no clothes. *Shwetamber* monks and nuns wear white clothes. *Shwetamber* believe that monks and nuns may wear simple un-stitched white clothes as long as they are not attached to them.
- 2) They are always bare footed and bare handed. They do not use caps or umbrellas or put on boots, chappals or sandals.
- 3) Jain monks do not use vehicles of any sort. They travel on foot.
- 4) Jain monks do not possess any house. They stay in *Upashrayas* or *pausadhshalas* or any other similar place where they can perform their spiritual practices.
- 5) They do not stay permanently in any one *Upashrayas* (place of temporary residence). The maximum they remain confined to one place is for four months during the rainy season. They move from one place to another during the remaining eight months and preach religion to people.
- 6) *Shwetamber* monks keep an *Ogho* (a small cloth broom) and a *muhapatti* (cloth to cover the mouth) with them and a stick when they travel. The *Shwetamber* *Sthanakvasi* sects wear the *muhapatti* most of the times. *Digamber* monks keep *Morpichhi* (peacock feathers broom) and a *Kamandal* (small wooden pot for water). The peacock feathers *Morpichhi* used by *Digamber* monks have to be naturally shed by peacock and found on the ground.
- 7) Monks do not travel or go out of their *Upashrayas* after sunset.
- 8) Jain monks do not take water or food before sunrise and after sunset. *Shwetamber* monks can take food, etc. 48 minutes after sunrise. The *Shwetamber* monks collect their food from different houses (*Gochari*) in wooden vessels, and return to their *Upashrayas* to have food. *Digamber* monks take food standing and with the help of knotted upturned palms and in one house only where their *sankalpa* (preconceived idea) is fulfilled. *Digamber* monks have only one meal a day.
- 9) Most *Shwetamber* monks drink only boiled water. Certain *Shwetamber* *Sthanakvasi*





monks drink ash-filtered water. Digamber monks also use filtered water.

- 10) Jain monks after initiation do not cut their hair or shave their heads; nor do they get these things done by a barber. However, twice a year or at least once a year, they pluck off their hair or they get the hair plucked by others. This is called *Keshlochan* or *Loch*. This way they are not dependent on others to carry out their needs. It is also considered as one kind of austerity where one bares the pain of plucking of the hair calmly.
- 11) Sadhus do not touch any females, while sadhavis do not touch any males.
- 12) In addition a monk is required daily practice of:
  - Samayika – a compulsory 48 minute self-study, meditation, chanting, etc.
  - Pratikraman – a prayer for atoning for sins committed knowingly or unknowingly and confessing them before the preceptors and of asking for forgiveness from them. This is normally performed twice a day.

### The Bhattarak tradition

The *Bhattarak* tradition mainly found among the *Bispanthi* sub-sect of *Digambers*, most likely started around 1100 AD. Its primary purpose was to take cognizance of *Shravaks* to lead them through right path of *Dharma*. The term *Bhattarak* is used to imply - the most honored. *Bhattarakas* are mainly responsible for the religious preaching and propagation. The early, *Bhattarak* followed the practice of nudity and possessed only a *Morpichhi* (peacock feathers broom) and a *Kamandal* (small wooden pot for water).

It was during the 14th century, the reign of Firoz Shah Tughluq, that the tradition of *Bhattarak* was formally defined. It was also during this period that *Bhattarak* gave up the practice of nudity out of the necessity to interact extensively in King's courts. The role of *Bhattarak* was to lead the life pattern of a *Rajaguru* with all the paraphernalia; royal honors and privileges. They personify sacrifice, learning capacity, literary interest and exhibit great organizational abilities. The organization of religious conferences, collecting and publishing religious works, protecting classic works of the religion, and maintaining important temples and holy places are the duties rested with them. They evince keen interest in the development of art literature, architecture and sculpture and also the performing arts such as music, dance or drama. However, the primary purpose of *Bhattarak* is the

responsibility of practicing and propagating *adhyatmic* life and uplifting society through religion and education. *Bhattarakas* are expected to follow the full *Nirgranth sadhu* stage at the terminal stage of his life.

Any change or reform in religious traditions is bound to attract criticism and the *Bhattarak* movement has also received its fair share of criticism. Regardless of these censures, one cannot deny that the *Bhattarakas* have not only served the cause of Jain *dharma* immensely but they have saved *dharma* from sinking down during the *pre-patta* period of *Digamberism*, i.e. roughly during the two centuries before the Turkish conquest of Northern India. *Bhattarakas* Sakalakirti Shubhachandra, Prabhachandra and Gyanabhushana have also been named as great Jain scholars. Sri Charukeerthi *Bhattarak* Pattacharyavarya Swamiji, the present pontiff of Shravanabelagola stands as the main propagator of religion since assuming the *peetha* in 1969.

### Upadhyayas

This title is given to those *sadhus* who have acquired a special knowledge of the Jain canons and philosophical systems. They teach Jain scriptures to *sadhus* and *sadhvis*. While understanding the scripture an *Upadhyay* needs to continue to meditate and concentrate upon the nature of the self (soul) and understand the true meaning of the *shastras*. This tradition *Upadhyayas* is rigorously followed in the *Digamber* tradition, but not that much prevalent in the *Shwetamber* tradition.

### Tribute to the Acharyas

The survival of Jains, though as a minority community, for the last so many centuries in India can be safely attributed to a great extent to the glorious and continuous tradition of Jain saints. They never attempted to lead a solitary life in isolation from others. On the contrary, these saints led by their Acharyas have always tried to preserve contacts with the general masses so as to encourage them to lead a religious life. Their contribution goes a lot beyond the day-to-day religious activities. They have contributed to logic, mathematics, language, literature, architecture, ethics, culture, metaphysics, and propounding spiritualism that extends traditional religious boundaries. At the core of all Acharya's thinking is the message of the Tirthankar and secret of their strength is their own soul taking inspiration their



guru, and the greatest of the great souls (*Paramatma – Arihants & Siddhas*). They have served as ambassadors of Ahimsa, and influenced some of the most barbaric rulers towards a path of peace and tolerance. Over the past 2600 years, the Jain community had to face many calamities testing the very existence of the faith. Starting from the severe 12-year famine, the *Shivite* backlash, and brutal Muslim invaders, the Acharyas had to come up with appropriate solutions to effectively keep the sangh united and provide the necessary encouragement to face the difficult times. On the other hand with changing times the old traditional values and thoughts had to be reevaluated and in some cases modification was required. The challenge always was how to handle change and yet at the same time ensure Bhagwan Mahavir's message was fully preserved. In many such situations, the Acharyas made appropriate changes to traditions while emphasizing certain aspects of the philosophy to ensure short-term survival and of a long-term blossoming of the Jain society. Yes, it is true that in the process different sects were formed and there were serious disagreements among sects, but it is still a tremendous testament to all the Acharyas for having preserved the core essence of Jain way of life. We humbly pay tribute to these great souls.

### Acharya

An *Acharya* heads the fourfold Jain community. He/She guides, defines rules, does administration of saint order, and directs the community (*sangh*) in the proper direction. This position shoulders great responsibility not only as the spiritual head but also ensures that the benefits and the essence of the Dharma are spread in the *sangh*. Such responsibility should under no circumstances be misconstrued towards any form of political power or political influence. In many respects, one can say they have tremendous responsibility without any real power. The only power they possess is the power of their own character and the respect they get due to the commitment to the others' well-being.

In Jain tradition *Acharyas* have 36 *gunas* (referring to both rites and qualities):

- Ten Characteristics of Religion: Supreme forbearance, supreme modesty, supreme straight-forwardness, supreme contentment, supreme truth, supreme self-restrain, supreme

austerity, supreme renunciation, supreme possessionlessness, and supreme celibacy.

- Twelve Kinds of Tapa: Fasting, taking reduced diet, putting of special restrictions or and above the usual, observations, abounding food-taste, lonely habitation, mortification of body, expiation, reverence (paying respect to holy personages), services to saints, study, renunciation and meditation.
- Five Types of Observations (Samiti): Carefulness in walking, carefulness in talking, carefulness in taking food, carefulness in giving – taking things, carefulness in removal of excreta.
- Six Essentials: Vandana, stutis (prayer to Tirthankar), samata (equanimity), pratikaman, pratyakhyan (vows), and kayotasarga.
- Three Gupti (Hidden Things), Man gupti, vachan gupti, and body gupti.

In addition an *Acharya* has eight additional special skills:

- 1) *Aachar*: - right acts according to laws of monks
- 2) *Sutra*: - knowledge of all agamas (sacred texts) and their meanings
- 3) *Sharir*: - impressive body and aura
- 4) *Vachan*: - descent and serious speech
- 5) *Vachana*: - good teacher
- 6) *Paug*: - Expert in discussions and debates
- 7) *Mati*: - sharp memory and mind
- 8) *Sangrah*: - good store keeper to keep all stocks required by monks

It is not practical to list all the thousands of Acharyas whose unique contribution has not only preserved Jin's teaching but also made it relevant despite the changing times and circumstances. We have however listed the names of few great souls; we sincerely apologize for not mentioning names of many Acharyas whose contribution to the Jain community was equally large and valuable. The work of Prof. Dr. Kamal Chand Sogani is noteworthy in listing some of the influential Jain Acharyas (see website <http://www.herenow4u.de/pages/eng/sections/issjs/StudyNotes/InfluentialJainaAcaryas.htm>).

**Acharya Umaswati or Umaswami** is the author of Tattvartha Sutra, a popular Jain text. Both the Digamber and Shwetamber sects claim him. He was a mathematician and one of the most profound thinkers and critical analyzers of the Jain philosophy. Very little is known about the exact period of his life, accounts about his life span vary but he must have lived sometime between the



200BC to 200AD, most likely in the first century AD. It is likely that at this time, no clear division of the Jain Sangh had emerged, and thus both sects may be right in claiming him. The claims of both *Digamber* and *Shwetamber* groups differ a lot, and within their own claims there are contradictions. The colophon given at the end; *Bhāshya* that he composed great work either explicitly expressed or implied in the city of *Kusumapura* (modern Patna) can give the best analytical clue that he possibly did spent lot of time in the North. This may also imply that he interacted with both Shwetamber and Digamber leaning groups.

**Acharya Samantabhadra** was possibly the first Jain saint to write not only on religion but also on general subjects, such as *ayurveda* and Sanskrit grammar. Some consider him to be in the lineage of Umaswami. Digambers place the period of his life between AD 120 and 185.

**Acharya Kundkund** (also Kundkund) is a celebrated Jain Acharya, and great Jain scholar of the 2nd century CE. He is the composer of spiritual classics such as: *Samayasara*, *Niyamasara*, *Pancastikayasara*, *Pravacanasara*, *Atthapahuda* and *Barasanuvekkha*. He occupies a very high place in the tradition of the Jain Acharyas, especially among Digambers. For many Digambers, his name has auspicious significance and occupies third place after Bhagwan Mahavir and Gautama Ganadhar. Though his real name was Padmanandi, he is popularly referred to as Kundkund because he was born in a place named Kaundakunda in South India. Acharya Kundakunda has been called "Light of this Dark Age".

**Acharya Devarddhi Kṣamāśramaṇa**. The credit of saving, and possibly re-writing the Jain canon (Agams) in a preserve-able form goes to this great Acharya (5th cent. A.D.).

**Acharya Siddhasen Diwakar** was a highly intelligent Jain Acharya of his time. He was like the illuminating lamp of the Jain order and therefore came to be known as Siddhasen Diwakar. He is credited with the authorship of many books but sadly most of them are not available. *Sanmatitarka* is his best book on logic and is widely read even at present. The well-known Kalyanmandir *Stotra*, a monumental work in Sanskrit poetry was also composed by him.

**Acharya Pūjyapāda**, who lived in the 5th century CE was a renowned grammarian and saint belonging to the Digamber tradition of Jains.

Before initiation as a Jain ascetic, he was known as Devanandi. He was heavily influenced by the writings of his predecessors Acharya Kundkund and Samantabhadra.

**Acharya Haribhadra Suri** lived around 650-700AD but is traditionally believed to have lived from 459-529AD. He was a Shwetamber mendicant Jain leader and author. Haribhadra identifies himself as a student of Jinabhadra and Jinadatta of the Vidyadhara Kula. There are several, somewhat contradictory, accounts of his life. Tradition ascribes some 1400 different works to him. A more creditable number is in the vicinity of 100, some of which are among the most highly regarded works in Jainism.

**Acharya Akalaṅka** (8th cent. A.D.): Many consider him to be the father of Jain Logic. His works are: *Nyāya Viniścaya* (Perception, Inference and Authority), *Siddhi Viniścaya* - (Pramāṇa, Naya & Nikṣepa), *Tattvārthavārttika* - (Commentary on *Tattvārthasūtra* of Umāsvāti), and *Aṣṭaśatī* - (Commentary on *Āpta Mīmāṃsā* of Samantabhadra).

**Acharya Jindattasuri** (1075-1154 ) was renowned Acharya having a huge impact on Jain religion and society. He formulated new rules and regulations. He revived the Khartargachchha sect. He abolished many malpractices prevailing all around and he inspired 500 *shravaks* and 700 *shravikas* for initiation. In Rajasthan Atmaya Jindattasuri was known as *kalpavriksha*, a wish-yielding tree.

**Acharya Hemachandra Suri** (1089–1172) was a great Jain scholar, poet, and polymath who wrote on grammar, philosophy, prosody, and contemporary history. Noted as a prodigy by his contemporaries, he gained the title *Kalikāl Sarvagya*, (all knowing of the Kali age). A prodigious writer, Hemchandra wrote grammar of Sanskrit and *Prakrit*, texts on science and logic and practically all branches of Indian philosophy. His best known work, the epic poem *Tri-shashthi-shalaka-purusha-charitra* (Lives of Sixty-Three Great Men), is a hagiographical treatment of the sequence of teachers and their pupils who were instrumental in defining the Jain philosophical position, their asceticism and eventual liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth, as well as the legendary spread of the Jain influence.

**Acharya Abhaya Deva** a 12th CE, Agamic scholar, author of various *Tikas* that expounded



the various aspects and meaning of many obscure Agamic texts.

**Acharya Yaśovijaya** a seventeenth century (1624–1688) Jain philosopher-monk was one of India's greatest philosopher and logician. He was a thinker, prolific writer and commentator who had a strong and lasting influence on Jainism. He was a disciple of Muni Nayavijaya in the lineage of famous Jain monk Hiravijaya (belonging to the Tapa Gachchha tradition of Shwetamber Jains) who influenced Emperor Akbar to give up meat eating.

**Acharya Bhikshu** (1726–1803) was one of the great revolutionary saints and reformers of Jainism. He was the founder and first spiritual head of Jain Shwetamber Terapanth sect. He was Agamic scholar and a prolific writer who initiated a reform movement that has had a significant impact on the spread of the Jain philosophy both within and outside the Jain community. His successors have built on this movement to expand the influence across, caste, religion, and national boundaries.

### New Groups / Sects

**Shrimad Rajchandra** (1867 – 1901) was a prominent Jain philosopher. Raychandbhai Ravajibhai Mehta (popularly known as Shrimad Rajchandra) was not a typical Jain sadhu. In fact, he was never initiated and he reportedly was at the threshold of complete renunciation when he contracted an illness from which he never recovered. Though young in age, he was spiritually matured, and remained in a state of heightened awareness. He wrote some of the most intriguing spiritual poems at the tender age of nine. Despite a powerful intrinsic attitude of detachment and a burning desire for total renunciation, at the age of 20, he had to tie the knot of marriage and engage in business. He was also a prolific writer and is famous for his work, *Atma Siddhi Shastra*. He was the spiritual guru of

Mahatma Gandhi. Shrimadji was not an *Acharya* or a *Sadhu* in a traditional Jain way, but he was respected by many Jain *Acharyas* due his level of knowledge and spirituality being in complete conformance with the Jain Philosophy. It is for this reason Jains across all traditions respect Shrimadji teachings.

**Kanji Swami** (1889-1980) was a Jain scholar, philosopher and spiritual leader. He was the founder of the *Kanjipanth* within the *Digamber* Jain tradition. He was originally initiated as a Sthanakvasi Jain monk at age 24, however subsequent influence by the writing of Acharya Kundkunda made him follow the *Digamber* tradition. There are however few difference in the interpretation of Acharya Kundkunda's writing between the traditional *Digamber* groups and *Kanjipanth*.

**Dada Bhagwan:** Ambalal Muljibhai Patel, also known as Dadashri (1908-1988) was the founder of a now fairly popular religious movement. For most part, the group accepts most of the tenets of Jainism, but does have some fundamental differences. Paying lot on emphasis to self-realization, the group considers Simandhar Swami (living Tirthankar by Jain Tradition) as their highest source of inspiration. Their fundamental premise is that self-realization can be achieved by direct contacts with a another Akram Vigyani (a self-realized person), and need not go through the elaborate process of Karma Nirjara, in other words, a short-cut path to Self Realization. Further, such window of self-realization is open for a very short period of time. According to the group, though ultimate liberation is not possible in the current time cycle, with Akram science, it possible for one to attain a level of spirituality whereby a person has only one more life before final salvation. Interestingly, the group considers Hindu Lord Shiva and Lord Krishna were Akram Vignani. In a short period of time, this group has gained a large following, primarily in Gujarat.

*Only Guru can show path of Moksha*

*Only Guru can provide Enlightened Knowledge*

*Only Guru can remove one out of Delusion (Misery)*

*Only Guru can lead one to permanent happiness (Bliss)*

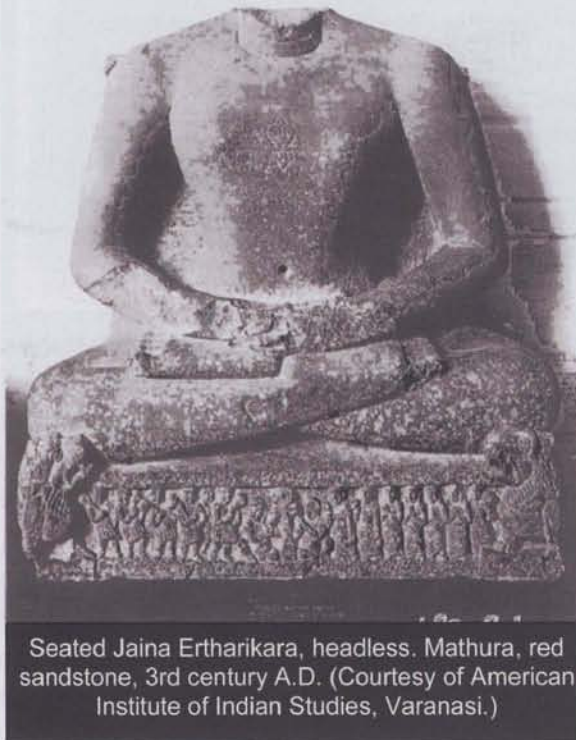
Pragna Prakash Sutra



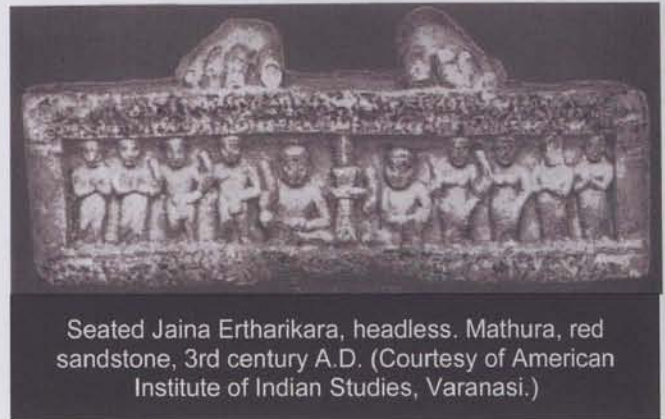
Abstract of the Paper

## Jaina Monks From Mathura: Literary Evidence For Their Identification On Kusana Sculptures

By Padmanabh S. Jaini,  
University of California at Berkeley



Seated Jaina Ertharikara, headless. Mathura, red sandstone, 3rd century A.D. (Courtesy of American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)



Seated Jaina Ertharikara, headless. Mathura, red sandstone, 3rd century A.D. (Courtesy of American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Among the thousands of Jaina images found throughout India, those from Mathura produced during the Kusana period are unique, for they alone contain representations of unclothed Jaina ascetics holding a single small piece of cloth in such a way as to cover their nudity. These curious figures cannot be identified with monks of the present-day Jaina sects of the Digambers, who practice total nudity, or of the Shwetamber, who wear two long pieces of unstitched white cloth wrapped around their bodies and occasionally a white blanket over their left shoulders.

These figures are referred by some scholars as *Ardhaphdlakas* (monks with partial covering) and some speculate that these figures might be those *Yāpanīya* monks, another Jain sect that is now extinct. Certain text would indicate that they were the forerunners of the current Shwetamber order

following Mahavir's example where he kept a cloth during his initial period of renunciation. Other texts would indicate that certain monks started this practice at the time of the terrible 12-year drought that eventually lead to the Shwetamber tradition.

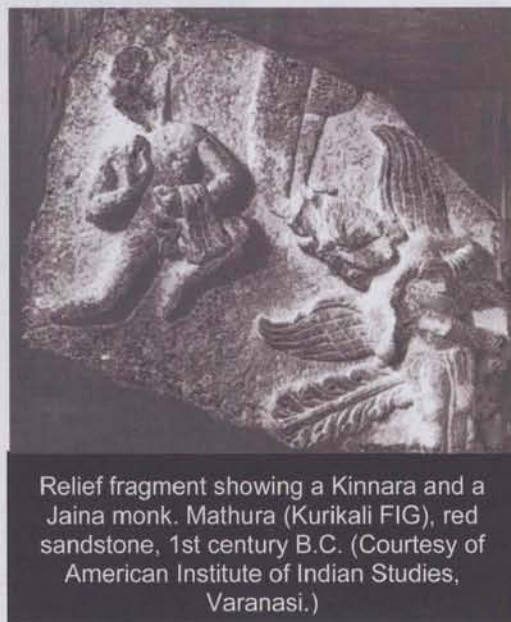
The style of research and investigation performed by Prof Jaini is fairly well demonstrated in this paper. Using literary evidences form various Digamber, Shwetamber, Buddhist, and other texts, Jaini has tried to trace the history and practices of Jain monks and tried to correlate the relationship

between the Kusana sculptures and clothing of Jain monks as described in scriptures and text of different traditions.

This paper demonstrates Jaini's in-depth knowledge in Digamber, Shwetamber and Buddhist literature and Practices. The paper shows the systematic, rigorous and unbiased approach followed by Jaini to analyze the problem. We hope this will inspire you to read the entire paper. Please send us an email to

[jaindigest.info@gmail.com](mailto:jaindigest.info@gmail.com)

with your request and we will send you a PDF copy of the entire paper.



Relief fragment showing a Kinnara and a Jaina monk. Mathura (Kurikali FIG), red sandstone, 1st century B.C. (Courtesy of American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)



# Jain Traditions and Spirituality in North America

## Historical Perspective



Sri Sammata Sikhariji - A symbol of Jain Tradition, where Jains believe the twenty Tirthankars have attained Nirvana.

Jains believe that Jainism has existed ever since there have been rational, logical, thinking individuals, and from time immemorial Tirthankars have been guiding and reviving religion. Even historians agree that the basic concept of Jainism existed in all likelihood even during the period prior to that of the 23rd Tirthankar Parshwanath Bhagwan (800 BCE). Tirthankar Mahavir Bhagwan presented *Dharma*, the ultimate path to salvation, in a multifaceted way that could withstand the onslaught of changing times. Various torchbearers from Mahavir's *Ganadhars* to *Acharyas*, *Upadhyays* and *Sadhus*, throughout history, played a vital role in passing the message of Bhagwan Mahavir, down the generations. Nevertheless, the task of maintaining, spreading and propagating the *Dharma* without diluting the core message has never been an easy task.

Since the earliest of human civilization, communities have formed traditions, which are passed from one generation to other. Almost all religions have formed traditions that are passed down to generations. Imbued in these traditions is typically the message of faith. Traditions, by their very nature, are dependent on the social norms and accepted culture at a specific time, location, and situation of the society. In a broader sense, according to Jain philosophy, we can say,

traditions are dependent on *dravya* (substance), *kshetra* (space), *kaal* (time), and *bhaav* (form). Faced with changing time, social, and climatic conditions, the great Jain *Acharyas*, throughout history, provided leadership to the community to adapt the traditions in such a manner that the core message of Jainism was preserved over generations. We have many examples of such situations in the history. The survival of the stringent ascetic tradition among Jain monks was under huge strain during the 12-year drought around 300 BCE. While the great *Advaita* philosopher Adi Shankara revived the Brahmanic faith (*Sanatana Dharma*) by his propagation of logic through debate, the subsequent followers of that faith put the *Digamber* tradition under severe attack in southern India. Similar was the situation when outside invaders and Muslim rulers started attacking Jain temples and establishments. In all such situations, the *Acharyas* made appropriate changes to traditions while emphasizing certain aspects of the philosophy to ensure the survival of a longer term blossoming of the Jain society. Yes, in the process, there were many disagreements resulting in the formation of different groups or sects, but in all cases, the core essence of Jain way of life was preserved.

## Jainism In Northern America (Past)

If Swami Vivekananda introduced the eternal spiritual values of India to the western audience by his famous "Sisters and Brothers of America" speech, Virachand Raghavji Gandhi presented a



strong case to follow the timeless religion of non-violence. In the first World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, Virachandji presented that even after countless invasions and foreign occupations the soul of Indian Heritage was untarnished. This unique national strength comes from a culture of tolerance that shuns dogmatism, developed over many centuries through a process of non-violence. Virachand Raghavji Gandhi



Swami Vivekananda (Center) and Shri Virachand Raghavji Gandhi (Far Right) part of Indian spiritual delegation to World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893.

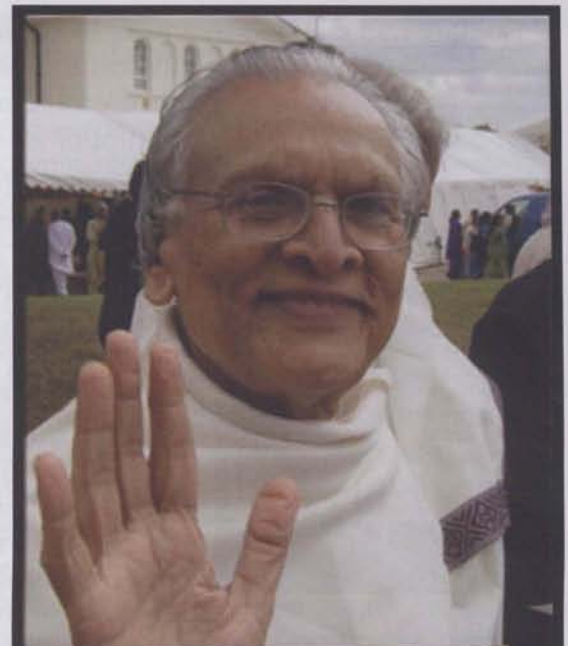
brought the flag of Jainism and eastern human values to North America (NA).

A replica of a Jain temple was constructed at the St. Louis World Fair in 1904-5 and the remains of that structure are currently located in Jain Society of Southern California. Though the fascination for eastern spirituality in USA began in the early part of the twentieth century, immigration to NA from India prior to 1965 was minuscule and isolated, with some traces of NA Jain families going back to 1944. (The exception was the large contingent of Sikh farmers and laborers who migrated to western USA during the period 1899-1914). With



Recent Ashtapadji Pratishthha at New York at the center that was established in USA in 1966.

the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Services (INS) Act of 1965 large number of Indian professional, businesspersons and family



Chatrabhanuji's Lectures in 1970 -helped create a distinct identity of North American Jains.

members started migrating to USA, and with that also started the significant migration of Jains in NA. The early Jain communities mostly celebrated the religious festivals jointly with their Hindu counterparts, a tradition that is followed even today in many smaller metropolitan cities of NA. The formation of Jain Center of America in New York in 1966 and the visit backed by a series of lectures of Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanuji in 1970 saw the beginnings of a distinct identity of the Jain community shaping up in NA. This landmark event was followed by the visit of Acharya Sushil Kumarji in 1973, which in many respects contributed to the building of the spiritual foundation of Jainism in NA.

Soon after 1970, various local Jain societies were formed in different cities. The NA Jain community had its first convention in Los Angeles in 1981 and JAINA was established in 1983. Since its formative years, the Jain Society of North America has taken several steps over the past few decades in bringing the Jain community together, centered on the preaching of Bhagwan Mahavir:

- It has taken advantage of the rich traditions of building dedicated places of worship.
- Preaching of the Jain philosophy has been supported actively by the visits of various Jain monks and scholars from India.
- Jain society has taken various steps to promote the education of Jain philosophy targeted to different age and social groups.



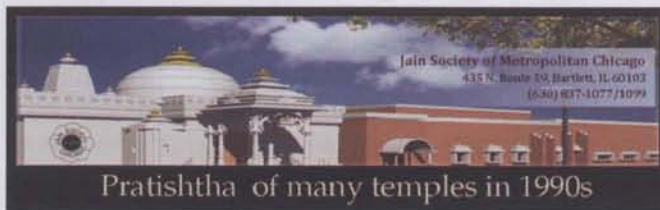
- Society has created avenues of communication among the Jain Northern American community.



Acharya Sushil Kumarji

The Jain community has clearly established its presence by building some of the most unique and exquisite Jain temples in many NA metropolitans. In some of the smaller cities, the Jain community has joined hands with the larger Hindu community to build a common place

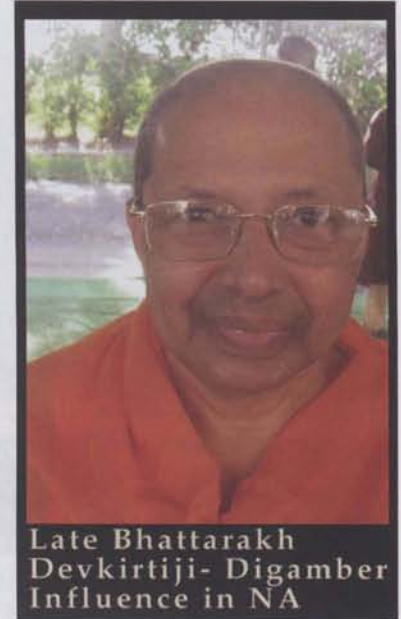
of worship. The unique *Shikharji* replica at the *Siddhachalam* inspired by the late Acharya Sushil Kumarji has become a Tirth in NA. The three JVB centers where *Samanijis* are present throughout the year, the meditation center of Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, and certain other Jain or Jain philosophy based meditation centers, established a firm footing for Jainism in NA. The full list of temples and place of Jain worship in NA is included in this edition.



Pratishtha of many temples in 1990s

Jain tradition for centuries has been kept alive by succession of *Acharyas* and their monk followers. They have not only followed the rigorous physical and mental discipline to purify their own soul but have also tirelessly preached the path of righteousness among the Jain *sanghs*. However, the tradition of Jain *sadhus* prescribed in the ancient Jain canons to avoid the use of vehicular travel, limits travel of such great saints to NA. However, most Jain sects have come up with their own solutions to spread the message of Bhagwan Mahavir in NA. To begin with, certain groups have accepted that modern time, requires changes to certain traditions and have effectively accepted limited vehicular means of travel. Frequent travel and eloquent lectures by monks like Acharya Sushil Kumarji, Acharya Chandanaji, Roop Chand Maharaj, Munishri Munichandraji Maharaj (and his younger brothers - Triputi) and Muni Amrendra

have benefitted the Jain community of North America. Other Jain sects that refuse to accept vehicular travel for *sadhus* have instead preferred to send their blessing or message to the NA Jain community via scholars or pundits. The late *Acharya* Tulsi of the *Terapanth* sect came up with a unique solution by starting a new order of *Samans* and *Samanis*, who were



Late Bhattarakh Devkirtiji- Digamber Influence in NA

given limited freedom of vehicular travel, till their Guru allowed them to take the full *diksha*. From the Digamber Jain tradition, NA had visits from *Bhattarak*, scholars and in some cases *Ailaka* (trainee ascetics) who have been granted limited permission by their guru to travel. The eloquent Sri Rakeshbhai Zaveri, who is a follower of Shrimad Rajchandra, not only travels frequently to NA, but also uses long distance learning techniques to conduct *shibirs*. The influence of these scholars and monks, especially those who are mostly resident in NA, have inspired many members outside the Jain community to believe in certain tenets of the Jain philosophy. For example, Gurudev Chitrabhanuji has influenced Non-Jains to adopt vegetarianism. Similarly, *samanijis* at the JVB centers have a large Non-Jain following.

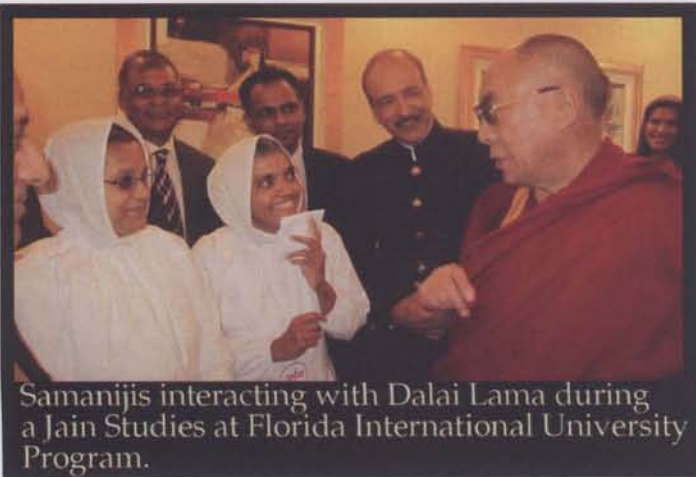
### Jainism In Northern America (Present)

The Jain Centers and JAINA are very actively



Pathshala students performing at Jain Center of Southern California





Samanijis interacting with Dalai Lama during a Jain Studies at Florida International University Program.

involved in promoting Jain education. Dedicated community volunteers over a period of time have published a series of Jain *pathshala* curriculum books in English. Taking advantage of these books, many Jain centers run a successful *pathshala* program, which is especially popular among the younger children below age 14. The educational initiative as the first of its kind, Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship of Jain Studies at Florida International University, inspired by Acharya Mahapragya is showing a profound impact on many university students. The JAINA e-library containing over 4000 books and 3000 articles, is widely used by the community members. In addition the, ISJS education initiatives, and other lectures at the Jain centers are noteworthy. All these activities have not only helped the migrant Jain families to maintain its rich tradition, but have become instrumental in spreading the teaching of Jainism and the philosophy of non-violence to a wider USA population. In addition, the technological advances are enabling Jain aspirants of North America to be in better touch with religious scholars and sadhus from India through long distance learning opportunities made available by almost all Jain sects; recorded lectures from renowned Jain sadhus and scholars, and the remote degree program at Jain Vishwa Bharati University.

JAINA and the Jain society in general have created various avenues for both religious and cultural communication among the community members. The extremely popular JAINA convention held every alternate year brings the North American Jain community together. In addition to the above large convention, there are smaller Young JAINA and Young JAINA Professional conventions, targeted specifically towards the youth of the community. JAINA

members are also very active in the Parliament of World religions and other interfaith dialogs. This Jain Digest magazine, JAINA calendar, and the [www.jaina.org](http://www.jaina.org) website, are all geared towards increasing community communications. There are various other initiatives taken by JAINA and the respective centers to improve the overall well-being of the society. The community has been involved in various philanthropic and *Jiv Daya* activities across the globe. On May 22, 2010 for the first time, a Jain prayer was recited at both the US congress and US senate. Also for the first time a US President (Barak Obama) mentioned Bhagwan Mahavir's *Nirvana* in his Diwali greeting meant for general Indian community.

Finally, there is recognition among the community both at JAINA and the individual center level that the community needs to build and groom next-generation Jain community leaders. Initiatives towards these objectives have been undertaken at both JAINA and the center's level.

### Current Model of Jain Practice in NA

To understand the model of Jain practice in NA is important to cognize the community's background. Most Jain migrants came to this country with a motive to grow financially or professionally. No wonder the Jain community is one of the most professionally and financially advanced community in USA (considering the size of 100,000 individuals in NA). The need for religion

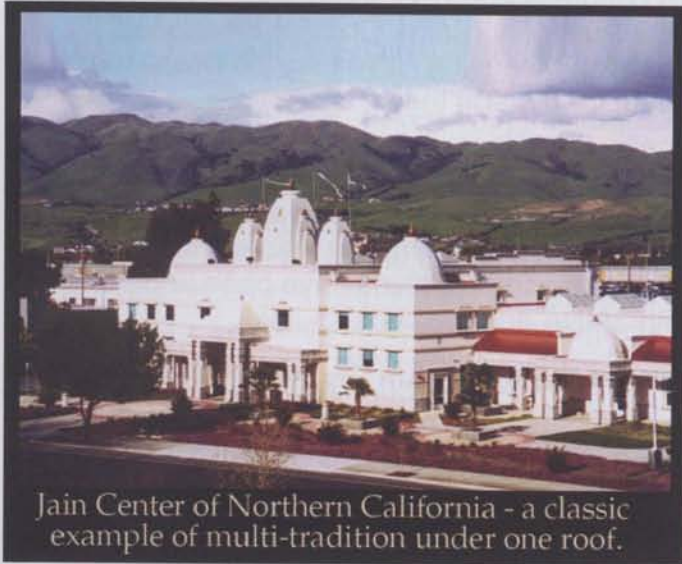


2009-JAINA Convention at Los Angeles. Over 2000 participants attended.

in many cases arises when people realize that their children may lose touch of the culture with which the immigrants grew up in India. The second need of the community is the strong desire for social interactions as most Jain migrants come from highly social families (as opposed to small



families living an individualistic lifestyle). The third need is truly traditional, a subset of migrants in any given metropolitan have grown-up with strong traditional roots and would like to continue their personal life in the same traditional way. These fundamental needs coupled with the professional outlook (some may say American outlook) which the migrant Jains have picked up from the American society in many respects influence the nature, operation and the model of the Jain centers of NA.



Jain Center of Northern California - a classic example of multi-tradition under one roof.

The exact operating model differs from center to center, some centers are more sect or tradition based while others try to be more tradition and language-agnostic, by encompassing all traditions under one roof. No matter which model has been selected, it has enabled the teaching of Jainism to young and old, as well as provided an opportunity for the community to come together as a *sangh* and participate in social and cultural activities. The approach of a unified model of practicing all traditions under one roof has seen good amount of success, especially among the centers where no single group or sect dominates the events of the center. These centers normally also play the larger role of a Jain Community center. The strength in numbers derived from this unity can be crucial for the long-term survival of Jainism in North America. However, this brings to mind a few questions: Do temples following multiple traditions (within Jainism) or centers dilute the message of spirituality and focus more on the "samsaric" community needs? Jains believe (almost all traditions) that the path to *Moksha* is through a compassionate guidance of a guru. How will Jains of NA find their spiritual guru?

## Challenges

Jain Community of North America has successfully established the symbol of the essence of Jainism in building Jain Centers across the continent. In spite of all various activities and utilizing modern methods of bringing people together, the community mostly follows the traditional modes of imparting and acquiring knowledge. But looking at future, there are challenges that it will have to address. A substantial challenge that all Jain temples of North America will face is the same challenge that Jainism as a whole has faced over the last 2600 years, and successfully tackled. When challenged by other faiths, by environmental conditions etc., how will Jains of NA adapt while staying true to the essence? In the past, diverse opinions resulted in the breakup of the community in multiple groups or traditions, but each of these groups maintained and passed down the core essence of Jainism imbibed in their traditions and at the same time it offered spiritual aspirant the complete guidance and opportunity for self-purification. Will Jains of NA as a community become leaders for Green change, like the Jain Acharyas in the past brought about positive social changes (the changes that the society of the time was in dire need of)? How well will the NA Jain community preserve the core Jain message over generations? How will individuals take their first baby-steps towards their ultimate salvation? The social environment of North America, the globalization effect due to rapidly changing technology, and the mostly materialistic Jain community of NA presents a challenge to staying true to the essence of Jain spirituality.

## New generation's challenge

The challenge lies ahead, when the new generation takes over the leadership of the community. Will this leadership predominantly be of the traditionally conscious new migrants from India (as has been the case so far, and more will continue to come), or traditional liberal youths brought up in a different social environment?

Over the past few decades, people who came from India and grew up in different, albeit, structured, and traditional environment have run Jain Centers of North America. They may have more modern outlook, but their roots are still traditional. When the new generation takes over the leadership of the community, will this leadership predominantly be of those traditionally



conscious new migrants from India (as has been the case so far, and more will continue to come), or traditionally liberal youth brought up in a different social environment? Over the next few decades we will see a mix of immigrant Jains with traditional outlook, while on the other hand there will be the second generation of Jains growing up in US with their fairly agnostic outlook towards both traditions and languages. Can Jain Centers of NA centers that have largely tried to unify under the banner of Jain heritage, but have still been based on a traditional outlook attract the next generation to practice and understand the essence of Jain heritage? The factor of common cultural roots that has helped the Jain community of NA to cement may lose its effectiveness in the next few decades. This is not a criticism, but a fact of life. We bring with us our experiences based on our environment and learning, and incorporate the same in our personal, professional as well as other aspects of our lives.

Let us understand the environment and make-up of the second-generation Jains.

- i. Based in socioeconomic survey of South Asian Indian (specific survey of Jain was not available), and the general business aptitude of the Jain community, we can safely say that over 75% of the Jain youth will attain a bachelor's or a higher degree and many of them will be involved in high income, generating jobs or enterprise. This will put the next generation in the elite USA category in terms of education and prosperity.
- ii. Next, let us examine cultural heritage, just as children today are growing up color-blind to various skin colors in the melting pot of US, most youth of coming generation will grow up tradition-blind. Most of these children may not have the opportunity to absorb traditions from grandparents and other family members as their counterparts in India. (Studies have shown that the most meaningful gift grandparents give are memories and traditions) It is important to realize the difference between value systems and traditions. Traditions are procedural, while value systems are set of principles that a person believes in. While, parents play a huge role in the child's value-system, grandparents invariably play a huge role of passing the traditions.
- iii. Many of the second-generation Jains may marry a non-Jain spouse, and thus their children will grow up in an inter-faith

environment. Therefore, practice of the religion is bound to change.

The young NA born affluent and educated Jains from various backgrounds will bring a set of diverging approaches and they will defiantly question the tradition base. On the other hand, we will have young immigrants who will be more inclined to retain the Indian traditional base. Further, considering the trend in many Jain centers of a majority of the dedicated young volunteers are actually new immigrants and not natural born NA USA citizens, there is a serious danger of losing the NA born Jains from participating in the Jain Centers.

The responsibility of setting up a framework that will facilitate maintenance of all the key elements of the Jain faith while ensuring the participation of next-generation Jains by adapting to the different thinking and multi-faith, multi-cultural lifestyles still lies on the shoulders of this generation.



The affluent and educated young NA born Jains

### Future

#### Attracting and grooming Future Leaders

The difference in approach of different generations is already evident in some of the challenges we are seeing today. In spite of very successful *Pathshala* programs at all the Centers, where the number of students in lower grades is increasing year after year, these programs in general seem to have failed to maintain the same level of interest amongst children in higher grades – the defining years in a young person's life.

We have to be able to sustain the momentum seen in younger grades by being able to retain the students as they go further up in grades. The



message from the youngsters is clear – they want to learn in various ways they are used to learning in this society. They want to debate and learn how to apply the teachings of Jainism in their lives. This could mean reevaluating the teaching methods and combining the best of traditional eastern and successful open methods of the west; training the teachers and providing them with resources to educate, and inspire and empower the future leaders of the Jain community.

Looking at the young professional NA born Jains, we can take immense pride in their incredible success in all walks of their lives. Given a forum to participate in, an opportunity to innovate and a cause to lead, they have done a fabulous job in organizing the YJA Convention over the years. Does that enthusiasm disappear or get deflated over the years? We have to figure out how to attract and mold our next generation – the young adults and young professionals. Recently an interesting observation was made at most major universities and companies like Google, Microsoft, and Cisco where there are decent numbers of immigrant Indians working with NAs of Indian origin: The NAs of Indian origin joined their immigrant cousin to enjoy watching world cup cricket; likewise, the immigrant Indians joined the NAs of Indian origin in watching the games of March madness. Learning from the observation, we can clearly say, the roots are common, we just have to find avenues and means for collaboration.

Many of these young NA born professionals are expressing their Jain values in many non-traditional ways, such as leading the green cause (vegan life style), making a commitment to live a life of honesty and integrity, helping the underprivileged of the society and some even believe in meditation and self-introspection. If we ask our youth to take over and run the Jain organizations, they will not be successful if we limit them within the strict bounds of an established tradition, they will have to be given freedom to make changes to our traditions. This is bound to generate conflict. However, if we understand Jainism, it never condemns conflicts, as a matter of fact, in many respects it encourages discussing conflicts. Conflicts are a natural outcome of our *karmic* state, what Jainism teaches is a method to resolve such conflicts or find amicable way to work around conflicts and in the process ensuring core message of Jainism is not lost. Acharya Umaswati (or Umaswami) revered by both *Shwetamber* and *Digamber*

fractions could not resolve the conflicts between the two groups, but his classic *Tattvartha Sutra* ensured continuation of Jain values for many generations to come.

Looking at the broader aspect of the *sangh* – Jain community of NA, let us not forget that religion is only one aspect of Jains of North America, just as it is of a person's life. Let us not forget the social and cultural aspects – it is the whole package that will be needed to attract and bring back the young professionals - a platform for the new generation to come together to bond, network and relate to each other – spiritually, culturally and professionally.

### Spirituality among Jain families



During our interview with various *Acharyas* in India, we were amazed to find similarity in their answers related to spirituality in USA. In one of the earlier visits *Acharya Mahapragya*

once explained to us the importance and difference of *Upasana* (tradition) and *Adahyama* (spirituality). There is no difference in spirituality among all the Jain traditions, in fact concept or spirituality extends the boundaries of a specific religion. The difference is in the traditions, traditions are required to maintain a *sangh*, help in propagating the religion, and set a stage for inspiring spirituality. Thus, a tradition by its very nature has cultural influence, its spirituality that helps in the ultimate self-realization. In a classic Jain sense one can view spirituality as the practice of *Veetrag*. *Veetrag* or the practice of *Veetrag* is development of the internal state that is free from attachment and aversion.

Let us do a small probabilistic evaluation of spirituality from a *sadhutva* perspective. One can assume some amount of spiritual feeling is innate among certain individuals. Taking the population of Jains in NA to be around hundred thousand compared to ten million in India, about hundred sadhus should be living among us (compared to about 10000 sadhus in India). This, not being the case, it would imply that either the environment is not conducive for people in NA to leave *sansaric* life, or the population distribution is such that they are not prepared to take up the path of *Sadhutva*. In all likelihood it is some combination of the above two situations. Yet among the next-



generation Jains, many of them being agnostic to traditions we will find some individuals who if inspired would decide to give up material world and prefer to live a life of sainthood. The abstract of Vinit Talsania (included in this magazine) is a living example.

When we asked Acharya Yashovijay Maharaj, about ways to inspire spirituality among the NA population, he responded saying the most important thing was *sanskar*. The surrounding, the day-to-day interaction with parents, interactions with other family members and family associates, friends, and the overall social environment influences the value systems of a child. *Sanskar* is somewhat deeper. Some portions of *Sanskar* are innate, while some portions of it are a result of the parents and the elders influence. ***Sanskar starts by setting an example, the child is constantly noticing his/her elders.*** The second part of *sanskar* is encouraging the goodness of a child, something that is inborn in all humans, but not allowed to bloom. The third part is discussing the family values and let the child absorb them as he or she grows. If somebody does things out of fear of parents, elders, or society it is not *sanskar*. If a child grows with proper *sanskar*, spiritual feeling is bound to arise during the course of his life.

Studies done on close-knit Jewish families show that children of these families invariably return back to their family roots. It is not a surprise then that Jainism pays tremendous weightage to their traditional *sanskar* when bringing up a child.

*Guru* in Jain *dharma* occupies the highest position. It is the *guru* that nurtures the practice of *veetrag* in an individual. Jain scriptures clearly state that the path of a soul to *moksha* is only through the guiding hand of a *guru*. Will the next-generation youth have to rely on finding their *guru*, who predominantly resides in India, or the Jains of North America will produce their own spiritual practitioners of the religion who will help adapt the message to the local area's *dravya*, *kshetra*, *bhaav* and *kaal* while maintaining the core message of Bhagwan Mahavir? Other religions like Buddhism have succeeded in adapting and prospering in their new environments even after moving away from their native regions. Can Jains of North America rise to that challenge?

***If we rise to the challenges in front of us, the Jain community of North America will not only be unique but will start a trend that can bring about a fundamental change in our larger society.***

## In Search for Happiness

Vinit Talsania

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**F**rom as early as I can remember, I have always wanted happiness.

I spent most of my youth like most normal American kids do in search for happiness - chasing the opposite sex, money, material things, popularity, etc. I never thought of myself as religious since I only went to the *deraser* on the "big" days like Mahavir Jayanti and during *Paryushan*, and even then the main reason for going was to socialize. Having been born in a Jain family, I was naturally raised as a vegetarian. And I knew I was a vegetarian because of the key principle in Jainism called *Ahimsa*. I knew the *Navkar Mantra*. I did *Athai* (8 days of only water) during *Paryushan* when I was a sophomore in high school, mainly since my Dad kept telling me I wouldn't be able to do it. And after I successfully completed the 8 day fast, loads of family and

friends came to see me and gave me cash and gifts amounting to over \$2000. I was pretty skied to say the least!

Happiness was always directed outward. Even while I was at Rutgers University and was more interested in studying personal development, the focus was to improve myself so that I could create the best possible outcome in my relationships, business, social circle, etc. I wanted to eat healthy and have a nice body so I could impress people (mainly girls). I wanted to do something great for the world so that I could, as a by-product, become super wealthy, be somewhat of a celebrity, and known for how I was such a "good" person. I was persistent in this belief because I really did want this amazing happiness that I did not have and could only dream of.

Possibly because of my strong commitment to search for true happiness, I was fortunate enough



that before I wasted an entire lifetime trying to find happiness in the materialistic world, that I started looking somewhere else; I started looking within. This Master whom I have known for five years and who I now refer to as my *Sadguru* (True Guru), is whom I owe all the credit for this simple, yet significant, change in my life's direction. His name is, respectfully, Pujyashri Rakeshbhai Jhaveri.

Rakeshbhai Jhaveri (whom I now refer to as Gurudev) is a disciple of the Jain Saint, Shrimad Rajchandra. He has many qualifications that could impress anybody like a PhD, thousands of disciples across the globe, lots of knowledge, well spoken, and of course an all-white attire, but those are not the things that attracted me to Him. What attracted me to Him was his non-insistence (being an American youth this was very important!) and modern, and yet spiritual, approach to living a happy life.

In these past 5 years, I've only met Him personally a handful of times. They were mainly when He had visited the US to give lectures. Each time our conversations were very friendly and informal. I wasn't much interested in His lectures at the time since they were mainly in Gujarati. Once or twice when He visited our house and mainly because my parents insisted, I would pose some questions to Him that were of concern to me. I asked Him once, "How can I be as happy as I am when I drink (alcohol), and maintain that same state all the time?". Each time I would ask Him, He would listen and then logically give some points for me to ponder. At the end of it though, the choice was always left in my hands, which was very relieving. Little did I realize at the time that he was always hinting me to search within. I wasn't ready to give up my search for happiness in worldly matters, and am still not sure in many ways, but I now know that I have a Self Realized Guru guiding me each step of the way, and I feel very much at ease.

Because of the mystical nature of my Guru's relationship with me, I find it difficult if someone asks me to describe my relationship now. If a relationship is all about how you "relate" to another person, then just as quickly as I change, grow, and purify myself, so does my relationship with him changes, grows, and purifies as well.

The biggest leap that our relationship took was approximately 1½ years ago. Gurudev had come to New Jersey in December 2008 and had

casually mentioned that they were going to Rajasthan in January for the annual youth retreat. I was working, but I managed to take off one week to attend the retreat in India with Gurudev and approximately 700 youth who were part of the organization He has established - Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram - Dharampur.

During that retreat, I was so uplifted by the sessions and by the energetic atmosphere that I decided I could no longer work for the company I was working for, since it conflicted with my moral values now. Despite being a vegetarian, I had allowed myself to eat eggs when in baked goods, but after giving up eggs, I could not justify selling the same product in large quantity any longer. I immediately went to the business center of the resort where we were staying and wrote an email explaining the situation to my boss.

Little did I know, that one small decision of attending one *shibir* would change my life forever.

I extended my stay in India since I no longer needed to rush back to work. My cousin, her husband, and their two kids had recently moved to Ahmedabad and insisted I stay with them. During the weekdays I would go to their office (a software company) and on the weekends I would get away to either the Ashram in Dharampur (Gujarat) or Mumbai by train. During the weekends that I would be at the ashram, I would be in a serene atmosphere attending Gurudev's *satsangs*. When in Mumbai, I would be in the noisy and hectic metropolitan city. In both environments, Gurudev would teach us to remain detached. I was getting trained and was starting to realize that I didn't want this trip to end.

Nine months went by like this and finally I decided it was time to return "home" to the US. But this was not my final return, but just a visit. For my real home now was India. All my dreams to live in California were thrown out of the window and I decided to live in Mumbai, a city, where I could never think of living.

I've been in India for over 18 months now and Mumbai for the last 9 months and am really happy with my new life. I do miss my old friends and familiar environment, but I'm learning more and more to enjoy change, since that is the only thing constant in this world. In many ways, I'm still the same person I was before, but the difference is that my values and my goals have changed. Instead of hanging out in my spare time, I choose



to spend my time around Gurudev and other followers like myself.

I'm not yet married, and am not sure if I really want to. No offense to my ex-girlfriends, but along with the joy, comes some amount of sadness and separation. There is another option that a handful of people are choosing every year in Gurudev's group. This option is something that I am seriously considering and striving to prepare myself for. I want to be an *Atmarpit*. The *Atmarpit* group is for individuals who want to live a highly dedicated and spiritually focused life. They have a certain amount of *sadhana* (spiritual practices) and *seva* (service) that they are required to complete daily, along with a vow of *brahamacharya* (celibacy). Depending on their family's financial situation some of the *Atmarpits* are still working to support themselves and their family. This is a diksha

although they are not full-fledged monks yet, but you can say they are like monks in training.

Getting married or not getting married is never an easy decision. – the two sides of the argument do not always agree. However, with my goal of Self Realization, I no longer see so much value in marriage. I have still not decided one way or another. The attraction towards the opposite sex is strong, but I do find myself getting less and less pulled in that direction each day. As more happiness is manufactured inside, less dependency is left on the outside.

This may just be a first small step towards Moksha, but I would not have it any other way. Whether or not one believes in rebirth, I feel I've been reborn this year and am starting my life from scratch. With an out-of-this-world Guide and with such a simple, yet high goal, I can only imagine what is yet to come.

## Jain Centers & Temples in North America

### Centers with Jain Temple or Dedicated Place of Worship

Jain Center of Greater Phoenix, Scottsdale, AZ  
 Jain Center of S. California-Los Angeles, CA  
 Jain Center of Northern California, San Jose, CA  
 Jain Sangh of N.J.- (Cherry Hill)  
 Jain Society of Central Florida, Inc., Indianatic, FL  
 Jain Center of South Florida, Miami, FL  
 Jain Vishwa Bharati, Orlando, FL  
 Jain Society Inc. of Tampa Bay, Palm Harbor, FL  
 Jain Society of Greater Atlanta, Atlanta, GA  
 Jain Society of Metro Chicago, Chicago, IL  
 Jain Sangh of New England, Burlington, MA  
 Jain Center of Greater Boston, Norwood, MA

Jain Soc. of Metro Washington, SilverSpring, MD  
 Jain Center of Greater Charlotte, Charlotte, NC  
 JVB New Jersey Center, Iselin, NJ  
 Jain Center of N.J. - Essex Fells, Jersey City, NJ  
 Jain Center of America - Bellerose, NY  
 Jain Center of Cincinnati/Dayton, Fairfield, OH  
 Jain Center of Central Ohio, Columbus, OH  
 Jain Society of Greater Cleveland, Richfield, OH  
 Jain Society of Toronto Inc., , ONT  
 Jain Vishwa Bharati, Houston, TX  
 Jain Society of N. Texas/Dallas, Plano, TX  
 Jain Society of Houston, Sugar Land, TX  
 Jain Society of Greater Detroit, Inc., MI  
 Jain Society of Seattle, Bothell, WA

### Centers with Shared Place of Worship (Joint Hindu-Jain Temple)

Jain Society of Alberta, Edmonton, AB  
 Jain Society of Greater Sacramento, Macero, CA  
 Jain Society of San Diego, San Diego, CA  
 Jain Center of Colorado, Highlands Ranch, CO  
 Jain Center of G. Hartford, S. Glastonbury, CT  
 Jain Association of Northeast Florida, FL  
 Augusta Jain Community, Martinez, GA  
 Jain Association of KC., Overland Park, KS

Jain Society of Southern Louisiana, Gretna, LA  
 Jain Society of Greater Lansing, Okemos, MI  
 Jain Center of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN  
 Jain Center of Greater St. Louis, Ballwin, MO  
 Jain Study Center of N. Carolina, Raleigh, NC  
 Atlantic Jain Sangh, Galloway, NJ  
 Jain Society of Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV  
 Jain Community of Buffalo, Lockport, NY  
 Jain Society of Capitol District-Albany, NY  
 Jain Sangh of Hudson Valley, Poyghkeepsie, NY



Jain Center of Syracuse, Baldwinsville, NY  
 Jain Society of Rochester, Pittsford, NY  
 Jain Center of Toledo, Sylvania, OH  
 Tulsa Jain Sangh, Bixby, OK  
 Jain Samaj of Niagra Falls, Toronto, ONT  
 Jain Society of Pittsburgh, Monroeville, PA  
 Jain Sangh of Samarpan Temple, Hamilton, NJ  
 Jain Center of Allentown, Bethlehem, PA  
 Jain Center of South Central PA, PA  
 Richmond Jain Society of Virginia, VA  
 Jain Religion Center of Wisconsin, Mequon, WI  
 Jain Center of Greater Charlotte, Charlotte, NC  
 Jain Society of Toronto Inc., Toronto, ONT  
 Jain Center of Cincinnati/Dayton, Fairfield, OH  
 Fayetteville, NC.  
 Harrisburg, PA  
 Lynchburg, VA

Pakifssy, NY

### Other Jain Centers

Jain Center of British Columbia - B.C., Jain Center of Connecticut – CT, Delaware Jain Sangh – PA, Jain Assoc. of Palm Beach & Treasure Cst – FL, Jain Center of Ft. Myers – FL, Shri Dharmvihar Upashrya – FL, International Jain Sangh – NJ, Greater Binghamton Jain Sangh – NY, Jain Association of Elmira – NY, Jain Association of Ottawa-Carleton – ONT, Jain Society of Oregon, OR, Samarpan Jain Sangh – PA, Jain Sangh of North East PA, Montreal Jain Association – QC, Jain Society of Greater Memphis – TN, Jain Society of Middle Tennessee – TN.

## Jain Monks and Scholars Visiting or Stationed in North America

### List of Monks

Shri Amrendra Muniji Maharaj  
 Shri Atmanandji Maharaj  
 Shri Ashwini Prajnaji  
 Shri Bhuvnesh Muniji Maharaj  
 Acharya Chandanaji  
 Gurudev Chitrabhanuji  
 Bhattarak Charukeertiji  
 Shri Jinchandsuriji Maharaj  
 Shri Jinchandraji Maharaj  
 Shri Keertichandraji Maharaj  
 Shri Manak Muniji Maharaj  
 Shri Roop Chandraji Maharaj  
 Mataji Subhmati

Sadhvi Subhamji  
 Sadhvi Shilapaji  
 Saman Shrut Pragya Swamiji  
 Samani Sanmati Pragyaaji  
 (Stationed in NJ)  
 Samani Jayant Pragyaaji  
 (Stationed in NJ)  
 Samani Akshay Pragyaaji  
 (Stationed in Houston)  
 Samani Parimal Pragyaaji  
 (Stationed in Houston)  
 Samani Bhavit Pragyaaji  
 (Stationed in Orlando)

Samani Vishad Pragyaaji  
 (Stationed in Orlando)  
 Samani Chaitania Pragyaaji  
 (Stationed in FIU)  
 Samani Unnate Pragyaaji  
 (Stationed in FIU)  
 Samanijis: Other Samanajis  
 from India travel as needed.

### List of Participating Jain Scholars in NA

Pdt. Abhay Kumar Jain  
 Mr. Anand Kumar Jain  
 Mr. Anop Vora  
 Shri. Anupam Shah  
 Mr. Bhadrabahuviyaji Jain  
 Prof. Bhagchandra Jain  
 Mr. Bharat S. Shah  
 Mr. Chandrakant Mehta  
 Pdt. Dharma Chandra (Shastri)  
 Pdt. Dheeraj Lal Mehta  
 Dr. Dipak Jain

Mrs. Dipti Shah  
 Ms. Falguni Zaveri  
 Mr. Girish Shah  
 Mr. Harendra Shah  
 Mr. Hemant Gandhi  
 Mr. Hermann Kuhn  
 Mr. Hitesh Shah  
 Dr. Hukamchand Bharill  
 Mr. Jagdeeshchandra Doshi  
 Dr. Jagdish Jain  
 Pdt. Jay Kumar Upadhyaya

Dr. Jitendra Shah  
 Mr. Jyotindra Doshi  
 Dr. Keertibhai Shah  
 Pdt. Khemchandra Jain  
 Mr. Kirit Gosalia  
 Ms. Kokilaben Doshi  
 Dr. Kumarpal Desai  
 Mr. Lalit Dhama Veer Senik  
 Mr. Yogesh Shah Veer Senik  
 Vidhikar Manoj Kumar Haran  
 Mr. Manubhai Doshi





Dr. N.P. Jain  
 Vidhikar Narendrabhai Nandu  
 Mr. Naresh Shah  
 Pdt. Nareshbhai Doshi  
 Mr. Nautam bhai Vakil  
 Mr. Niraj Jain  
 Mr. Nirmal Dosi  
 Shri. Nirmal Sagarji  
 Dr. Padmanath Jaini  
 Mr. Pavan Kumar Jain  
 Ms. Pramodaben Chitrabhanu  
 Prof. Pratap Kumar Toliya  
 Dr. Pravin Doshi  
 Mr. Pravin Shah  
 Mr. Pravin C Shah  
 Dr. Pravin L Shah  
 Dr. Premchand Gada

Mr. Pulkit Shah  
 Mr. Rajendra Dalal  
 Mr. Rajendra Kamdar  
 Mr. Rajendra Shah  
 Mr. Rajnibhai Shah  
 Dr. Rakeshbhai Jhaveri  
 Mrs. Raksha Shah  
 Mr. Ram Gada  
 Mr. Ramesh Mehta  
 Dr Rameshbhai Parekh  
 Dr. Sagarmalji Jain  
 Dr. Shekharchandra Jain  
 Dr. Snehrani Jain  
 Mr. Subhash J. Sheth  
 Ms. Tarla Doshi  
 Prof. Vastupal Parekh

Mr. Vijay Doshi  
 Prof. Vimal Prakash Jain  
 Dr. Yashwant Malaiya

**Other JAINA Convention or YJAYJP scholars**

Dr. Bruce ( Balbhadra) Costain  
 Mr. Arvind Bhandari  
 Mr. Gabriel Figueroa  
 Prof. Gary Francione  
 Mr. Yogendra Jain  
 Mr. Rajiv Jain  
 Mr. Amar Salgia  
 Ms. Rae Sikora  
 Dr. Michael Tobias  
 Prof. Anne Vallely

**Muni Shri Santbalji - A Great Social Worker (1904-1982)**

Muni Shri Santbalji was born in 1904 in the village Tol of Morbi Taluka where Shrimad Rajchandra and Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati were also born. Shivilal took *Diksha* in 1929 in the presence of thousands of Jains and non-Jains. He became an ardent disciple of Shri Nanchandraji Maharaj and later became famous as Santbal.

He came to be known as Shata Vadhani (one who remembers one hundred verses at a time). His scholarly attributes earned him the title of Bharat Ratna. He converted the four scriptures-Uttaradhyayan, Dashvaishalik, Acharang and Avashyak into simple Gujarati language with effective narrations. He also translated Tattvarth Sootra in Gujarati poetic form.

Breaking the traditional boundaries, he expressed revolutionary ideas to create society based on the principles of core Jain beliefs. As a result, the Sangh that granted him *Diksha*,

disapproved of him as a mendicant and boycotted him.

He was fully determined to be amongst people and he moved to the backward villages of Bhal-Nalkantha region of Gujarat. He started co-operatives, encouraged Khadi and cottage industries, adopted improved agriculture methods, activated village panchayats, started the system of arbitration for village disputes, clinics, experimental unions and several other institutions. He wanted to build the society based on single religion of equality, sympathy and honor for all. He opposed injustice by non-violent methods and made all out efforts to ensure truth & justice.

He breathed his last on Friday, March 26, 1982. He was an activist and said, "Service to society is service to Self" and advised everyone to remember this principle.

*Information provided by Mr. Pravin K. Shah*

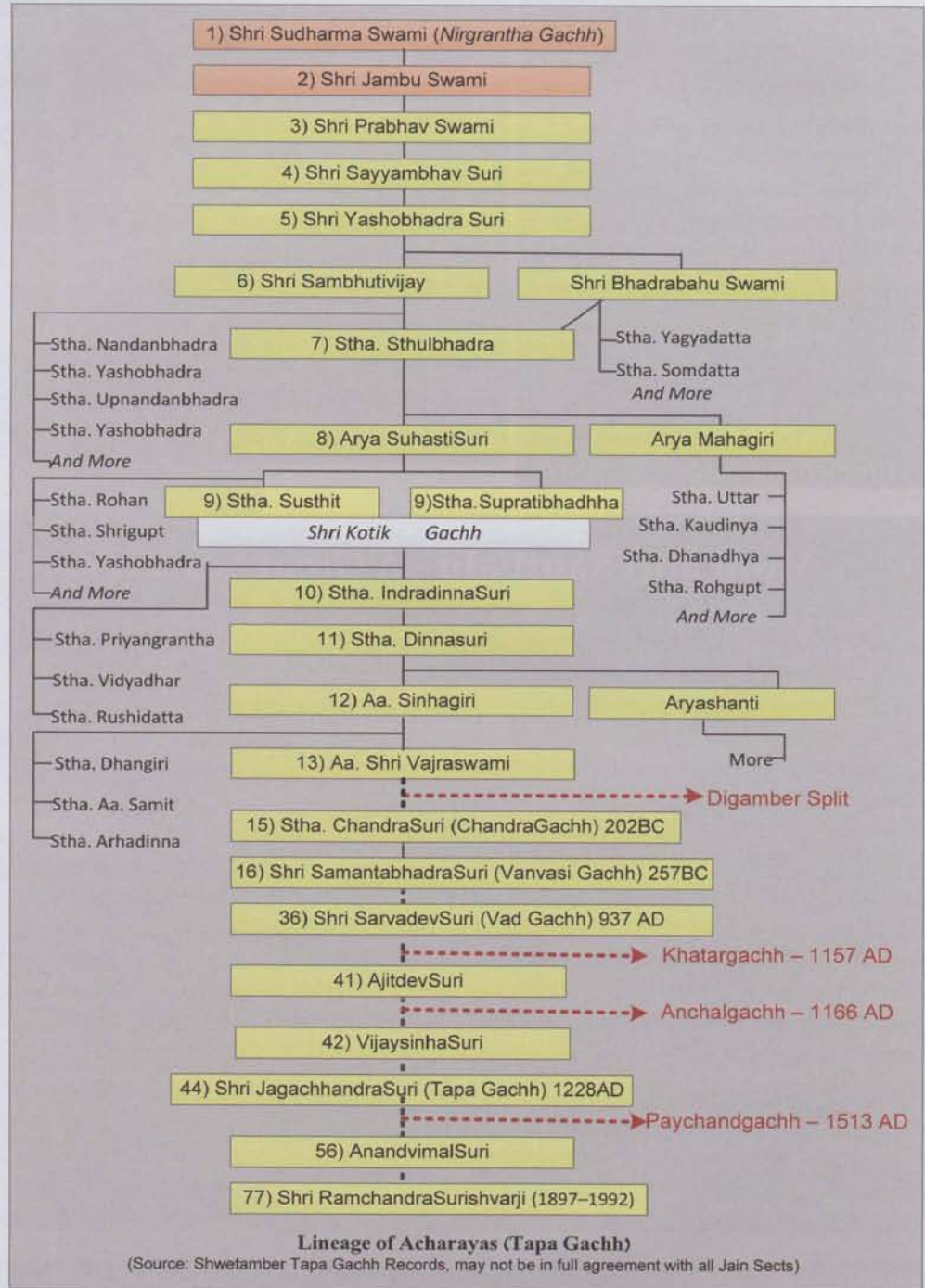
Jain Munishri Maitriprabh Sagarji has been arrested by UP police for his non-violent protest of fast unto death at Baraut, Baagpat ( U.P). He started his fast on April 26, 2011 in protest of issuing 10 new licenses for new slaughter-houses. All the proposed ultra-modern slaughter-houses will have a capacity to butcher 10,000-20,000 animals per day and the meat will be exported out of India.

You can send post card/Fax/email to different authorities. Please see more details on the JAINA web site.



# Murtipujak Jain Sampraday

The Murtipujak Jain Sampraday traces its origin directly from Bhagwan Mahavir. The *sampraday's* records give a very detailed lineage of *Acharyas*, with the current *Acharyas* falling between the 75<sup>th</sup> to 80<sup>th</sup> in the line after Shri Sudharma Swami (the fifth *Ganadhar* of Bhagwan Mahavir). The adjacent figure shows the level of detail maintained by Tapa Gachh Jain Sampraday. The *Murtipujak Sampraday* is split into Achalgachh, Khatargachh, Paychandgachh, Tapagachh and *Tristutik* sects. The *Tapagachh* is by far the largest of these sects. In fact the number of monks in *Tapagachh* are more than all other sect's Jain monks (including *Digamber* and *Sthanakvasi*), and accordingly the following is comparatively large. The compiled list of all *Murtipujak Acharyas* is given at the end of this section. We have included the profiles of very few *Acharyas* whom we had a chance to meet, or if any of the community member provided such information.



Murtipujak Sect	Tristutik	Achal-gachh	Tapa-gachh	Paychand-gachh	Khatar-gachh	Total
Number of Monks	246	312	7785	68	280	8691
% Split	2.83%	3.59%	89.58%	0.78%	3.22%	100%
% In Entire Jain Sangh	1.73%	2.20%	54.90%	0.48%	1.97%	61%



## Acharya Kirtiyash Suri

A seven-year-old Kantilal was having his favorite meal, when a beggar came at his doorstep. The child looked at the beggar then looked at his tasty meal and finally decided to give the whole meal away to this beggar. Confused about the whole situation the child hid in a corner crying for more than an hour. He finally approached his father and asked him the reason why some people had to suffer so much. His father explained to him, *jive hinsa* results in unhappiness, while *jive ahimsa* is the source of real happiness. As he started to imbibe the message of *Ahimsa*, he was attracted towards a lifestyle in which he could live without hurting others. He would learn later that *Sadhutava* was that lifestyle where one could live without hurting others. At a tender age of thirteen, Kantilal joined his father towards the path of *Sadhutava*. This caring and compassionate child grew up to be Acharya Kirtiyash Suri.

Acharya Kirtiyash Suri was born to Jiviben and Gagalbhai in Bhorol, a pilgrim town near Palanpur, Gujarat. Acharyaji took *Diksha* along with his father at a tender age of thirteen. Acharya Kirtiyash Suri's father Shri Gagalbhai later known as Acharya Gunayash Suri became the disciple of great Acharya Ramchandra Surishwarji. Acharya Gunayash Suri became Acharya Kirtiyash Suri's Guru; immediate predecessor in the line of succession in Jain *Shwetamber Murtipujak Tapagatch* tradition. Trained under

Acharya Shri Ramchandra Surishwarji, Acharya Kirtiyash Suri has wide knowledge on Jain architecture, literature, *Agam* and rites and rituals of Jainism.

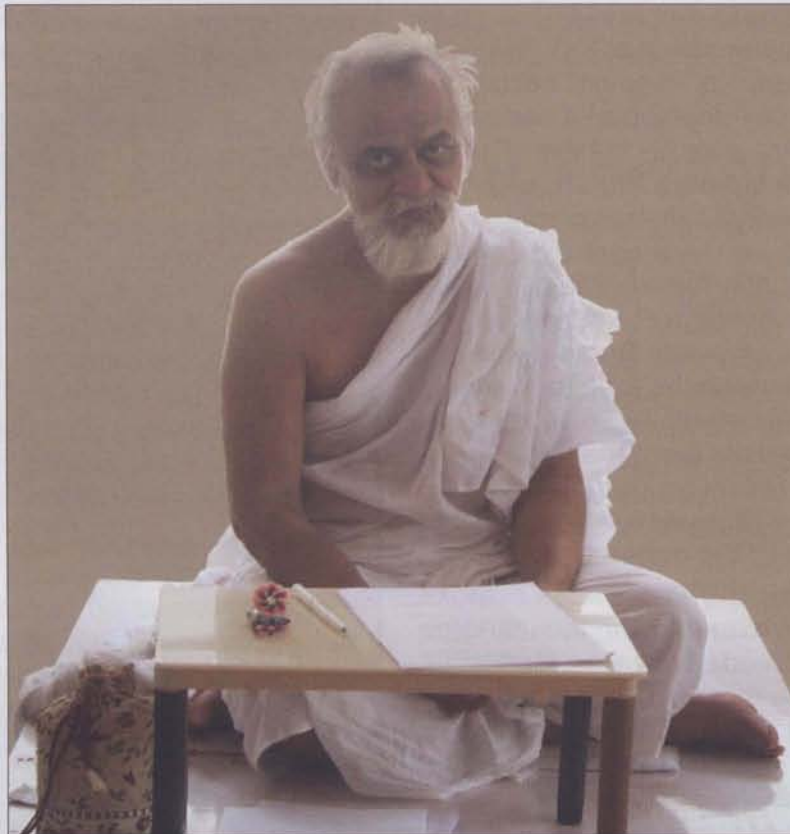
During our meeting with Acharyaji we asked how one could justify the Jain tradition of Child *Diksha*. He replied giving his own example. He had fond

memories of his parents, specially his mother who was very loving and like every mother would fulfill every desire of the child. His father on the other hand was a disciplinarian. For a child, his mother is his world and if a child is willing to give up mother's tender love, he can give up everything else in the world. It is true that a child may not have the capacity to express all his feelings and some inner thoughts, but a child still has the capacity to understand and perceive the truth. It is the feeling that one senses but cannot express.

That *bhav* (feeling)

is identical in a child and an adult. Giving another example, Acharyaji further added that the *bhav* resulting from deep *sadhana* is difficult to be expressed in words. In this case both a child and an adult could have similar experiences and neither of them would be capable of fully expressing their experiences. The *bhav* that drives one towards *sadhutva* is internal, and is very independent of what the world understands as adult maturity.

In our next question, we tried to understand the level of detachment in the life of a great *sadhu*.



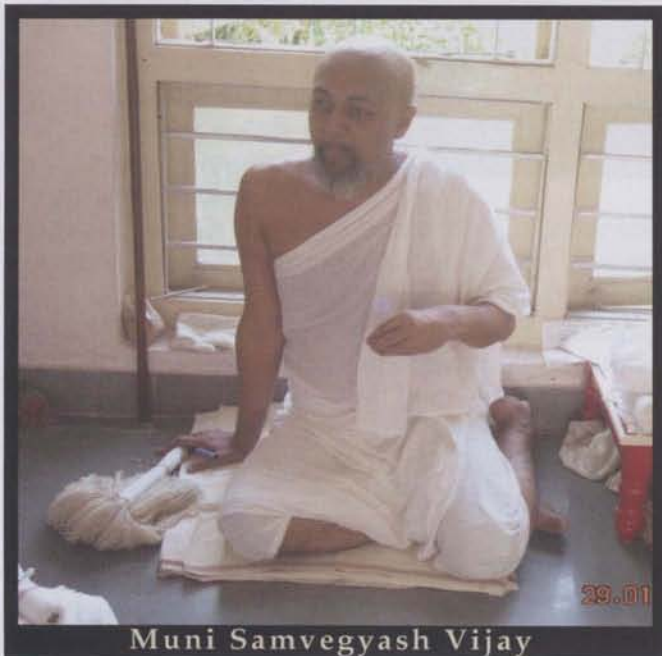
**Acharya Kirtiyash Suri Maharaj**

(Acharyaji did not give specific permission to photograph him neither did he instruct us to not do so. We had to wait for a while to capture an appropriate pose. Photograph was edited to present a proper portrait.)



Taking his own life as an example we asked him about the possible attachment that a father and son could share as Acharya Gunayash Suri was both his *Guru* and father. Acharya Kirtiyash Suri while explaining the personality of his father recalled that regardless of the fact that he was the only son of his parents, his father (a true disciplinarian) never passed any undue favors but ensured his proper development and upbringing. Gagalbhai (*sansaric* name of Acharya Gunayash Suri) had a great sense of duty towards his family but not attachment (*mooha*). Acharyaji went on to describe various other instances that demonstrated this relationship. Another such instance is when; Acharyaji developed a serious leg infection, couple years after his *diksha*. During this period, Acharya Ramchandra Surishwarji wanted his disciple Muni Gunayash Suri to undertake a long journey, while concerned about health of the teenage Muni Kirtiyash Vijay. Expressing his concern, Acharya Ramchandra Surishwarji asked Muni Gunayash Suri if it was advisable for him to undertake the long journey leaving the teenage Muni behind. Muni Gunayash Suri did not hesitate to tell his Guru that as a *sadhu* it was his duty to follow his guru and that the well-being of teenage Muni Kirtiyash would be looked after by the head of the congregation, Acharya Ramchandra Surishwarji.

Giving a second incident exemplifying the relationship, Acharyaji talked about a serious roadside accident that he met three to four years ago. Lying in the hospital in a very critical condition, his Guru Acharya Gunayash Suri came



Muni Samvegyash Vijay

### CHILD DIKSHA ACCEPTED BY GOVT. TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH JAIN SCRIPTURES -

*Bal Diksha* has been opposed for many years and these protests have increased over the last 100 years. The opposition to this, many centuries old religious practice from some social activist was mainly due to lack of understanding of the whole purpose of *Diksha*. It was important to educate the masses the deeper and real meaning of *Diksha* and how *Bal Diksha* was a part and parcel of this concept. Acharya Ramchandra Surishwarji Maharaj and Sagarsuri Maharaj had taken up the challenge of proving that *Bal Diksha* was not only an age old religious practice but also an appropriate path of spiritual progress for certain select individuals. Though Ramchandra Surishwarji Maharaj passed away 20 years ago, he started a great movement to educate the people the purpose of *Bal Diksha*. Acharya Kirtiyash Suri Maharaj, Acharya Ramchandra Surishwarji's grand disciple, took over the mantle and continued the campaign.

In a memorandum issued in Government of India Gazette dated April 27, 2009, it has been announced that '*diksha*' of Jain children not below the age of 8 years is permissible and is quite in accordance with the Jain scriptures. High Courts of Rajasthan and Mumbai had earlier accepted child *diksha* as a religious activity and was permissible if the parents gave their consent. This ruling that *Bal Diksha* is beyond the scope of Juvenile Justice Amendment Act and therefore it is not an unlawful act, has now been cleared both by the Apex courts and the Government of India.

to visit him. The Guru's message was very simple, "You realize that suffering is a result of past *karmas*, handle them with *samata* (Equanimity)". Ten days later when Acharyaji's health had somewhat improved his Guru again visited him, and offered a different message "You cannot afford to sleep anymore; we have a lot of responsibility towards *Dharma* and the *Sangh*." Acharyaji depicted the life of a *sadhu* through this simple narration. He highlighted the deeper



meaning of equanimity (*samata*), compassion, and commitment towards duty.

Acharya Shri Kirtiyash Suri is a very inspirational and popular speaker (*Pravachan Prabhaavak*) and hundreds of people come to listen to his daily discourses. His speeches leave a deep impression on the listener's mind. Some individuals have changed their entire path of life after simply listening to his discourses. Prior to joining the path of monkhood, Muni Samvegyash Vijay was an executive involved in marketing computing systems. He had a degree from Mumbai University and was least interested in Jain tradition or philosophy. It was a sheer

chance that he heard the discourses of Acharya Ramchandra Surishwarji and Acharya Kirtiyash Suri (then Muni Shri Kirtiyash Vijayji) which transformed his life. He then went on to become a disciple of Acharya Kirtiyash Suri.

Bowing and touching the feet of Acharya Kirtiyash Suri was a unique experience. It is difficult to describe in words the blissful feeling that this interviewer experienced when Acharyaji touched the back of his head. We encourage our readers to visit such great Acharyas and experience firsthand, the energy of care and compassion.

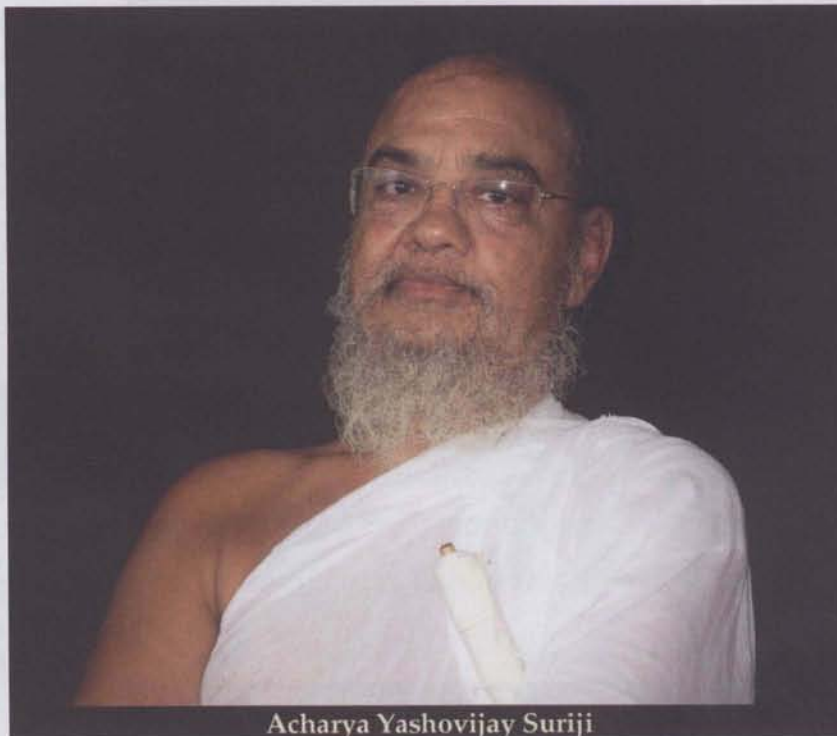
## Unleashing The Power of The Ego-less Self

**A** young sadhu barely eleven years old, learns the basic principles of Jainism from his esteemed Guru but still struggles to find his real self--**Who am I?** The Guru says, "I can guide but only **self** can realize the true nature of **self**". At the age of thirteen *sadhu* embraces *maun* (a state where he does not speak) and stays in that state for over 30 years. This sadhu is popularly known as **Acharya Maharaj Yashovijay Suri**.

At the age of eight, Acharyaji fell seriously ill, and most people including doctors were not sure if the child would survive. At that point, his mother made a vow that she would allow him to take *diksha* if he survived. Later his mother would tell him, "Child you have come to this world to live a life of *Sadhu*". The child never looked back, an inner power took over him and the only thing he thought was *diksha*. At a tender age of eleven, Acharya Maharaj Yashovijay Suri took *diksha* under his *guru Ohmkar Suri*.

We asked Acharyaji about the reason for staying in *maun*. Acharyaji explained by giving the example of writing a book. He asked a few simple questions, "How could one write a book unless it was blank to start-with? What was the use of any knowledge if our preconceived notions or delusionary concept corrupted it?" Giving credit again to his guru, he told us that his guru first helped him to erase his book and subsequently helped him to write the book with real knowledge, of which some portion of it he could not even express in day-to-day language. Laying a lot of emphasis on introspection, he told us a few things:

"knowledge remains superficial unless one absorbs its deeper meaning through introspection. Our likes and dislikes keep us in the external world. These likes and dislikes evaporate once we realize that all these are a result of our own fault or our delusion. Words are only required to stay in the outer world, no words are required to stay close to the soul. Unless one stays within we cannot



Acharya Yashovijay Suri



understand the reality of self." Acharyaji stayed in *maun* until he was able to realize his self – *Who I am?-That name-less self.*

As the discussion progressed from *maun* to to his decision to come out of the *maun* state, Acharyaji said:

निश्चयदृष्टि इहये धरीजी  
जे पाणे व्यवहार.

*Only after one realizes the power of ego-less self, one can give the message of truth to the outside world.*

"My *Parmatama's* message was to first realize the power of the ego-less self. With that realization came a unique joy (*anand*). The second part of the message was to guide others to realize the same *anand*. A book of knowledge only provides the outline, but the joy of one's soul can inspire another soul to the same joyful state." – Acharyaji.

Coming to the topic of *Sadhutva*, Acharyaji explained how to look within and realize the immense *anand* of the soul to be able to motivate others to feel the same *anand* was the essence of *Sadhutva*, everything else was just a procedure or tradition. *Dharma* was nothing but learning and practicing the true art of living. Deep introspection brought one to reality of self (soul) and the art of

living was to stay within the bounds of reality and not delusion.

For people living in foreign countries, he laid emphasis on the importance of imparting right *sanskar*, to the younger generation. A simple ten-minute prayer prior to the meal could go a long way. A lively discussion of human value systems could also have a profound impact on the young minds. However, his most pertinent observation was that children always observed their parents and unless they lived a life of *Dharma* (not just in the traditional sense but in sense of basic integrity and human values), all later efforts could go waste.

At the end of the interview, Acharya Maharaj Yashovijay Suri explained the Jain teaching in few words: "Mere observation does not result in karmas; being in a state of equanimity is meditation (which is elimination of karmas); a desire to do something results in karmas. To understand the finer implications of the *shastras* one has to look within to understand the true nature of self.

## Acharya Vijay Nandighosha Suri

**A**charya Nandighoshavijayji is a revered monk who is exploring science and studying its compatibility to the Jain scriptures. He is very certain that it is essential to represent the scientific principles that lay hidden in our Jain scriptures. He received his vows of monkhood almost 37 years ago under Gacchadhipati Acharya Shri Suryodayasuriji. He was born as Nirmal Kumar Nagindas Shah and was a keen student of math and science. After almost 8 years of monkhood and having mastered Sanskrit and Prakrit, he was able to study



Acharya Vijay Nandighosha Suri

the Jain scriptures in depth. This study along with his keen interest in science enabled him to relate to the scientific thoughts in the Jain scriptures with modern day science. In addition to the routine chores of a Jain Monk his celestial mind is also occupied with pure physics, Einstein's theories, quantum leap etc. He has made a deep study of various profound topics in mathematics and physics along with the Jain *Agams* vis-à-vis modern theories. He got the book "**Jainism through Science**" published in English and Gujarati.



<http://convention.jaina.org>

Phone:(832) 447-8495

**JAINA CONVENTION 2011**  
July 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> | Houston | TX

**Hosted by the Jain Society of Houston**

Dear Friends:

Jai Jinendra!

JAINA cordially invites you and your family to its 16<sup>th</sup> biennial convention to be held at George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas from Friday, July 1<sup>st</sup> to Monday, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The theme for the 2011 JAINA convention is "Live and Help Live".

We have planned a wide variety of discussions, lectures, and panel discussions with dignitaries and scholars from all over the world to convey the message of Jainism and non-violence. We will learn, inspire, vocalize and understand the key Jainism messages through meetings, discourses, debates and discussions during the convention.

Visit [www.Jaina.org](http://www.Jaina.org) web-site for more details on the upcoming convention, including registration information. We look forward to welcoming you to Houston.

Best Regards

Sushil Jain

Udai Jain

Himanshu Ajmera

**Blessings from:**



Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji ●

Acharya Shree Chandanaji ●

Gurudev Shree Rakeshbhai Zaveri ●

● Shree Jinchandraji Maharaj

● Bhattarak Shree Charukeerti Swamiji

● Samani Shree Charitra Prajnaji

**Chalo Houston**

With over 2,500 attendees already registered, we expect registration to sell out quickly. So, take action today without delay. Join your friends and family this July 4th for an amazing experience and memories of a lifetime. Register online at <http://convention.jaina.org> or complete and mail a paper registration form. We are waiting for you!!!

**Friday-Monday July 1-4, 2011 16th Biennial JAINA Convention**

# Convention Highlights



JAINA CONVENTION 2011  
July 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> | Houston | TX

# Chalo Houston!

Convention Hotel!  
Hilton Americas Houston



Convention Center  
George R. Brown Convention Center



- ◆ NASA - An Out of This World Experience
- ◆ Discovery Green Eco Park
- ◆ Children's Museum, Waterworld
- ◆ Gateway to Cruises
- ◆ Moody Gardens and IMAX at Galveston Island
- ◆ Recognized Theaters, Museums and Temples

## Sessions

- ◆ Religious & Spiritual Discourses
- ◆ Entrepreneurship & Development Workshops
  - ◆ Jain Unity & Interfaith
  - ◆ Science & Jainism
- ◆ Jain Tirth, Jain Art, Jain History
  - ◆ Jain Way of Life
- ◆ Healthy Lifestyles for Seniors
  - ◆ Seniors Sessions



## Events

- ◆ Keynote Speeches on "Live and Help Live"
- ◆ Sessions on Science and Jainism, Panel Discussions
- ◆ Exhibits, Vendor booths, and Poster sessions
- ◆ International Jain Leaders Forum - "Diaspora"
- ◆ Cultural Programs by Jain Centers
- ◆ "Jains got Talent" competition
- ◆ Garba-Raas-Bhangra
- ◆ Professional entertainment



## On Site Kids Club

- ◆ From 3 to 13 yrs of Age Group
- ◆ Participate in Convention worry free
- ◆ Supervised fun activities for kids
- ◆ Fun, educational, and spiritual activities



## Networking Opportunities

- ◆ JAIN 21, JNF, Youth Forum
- ◆ Show your Culinary skills - Jain Way
- ◆ Networking with Professionals
- ◆ Reconnect and make new friends
- ◆ Family, Group, and Community Reunions



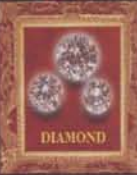
## Transportation

- ◆ Airline booking discounts available
- ◆ Houston Airport Shuttle (IAH and HOU)
- ◆ Private buses from your Center to Convention can be arranged
- ◆ Optional local area and excursion tours
- ◆ Valet Parking will be available



## Available Sponsorships

- ◆ Sanghpati (\$31,000)
- ◆ Corporate (\$25,000)
- ◆ Platinum (\$15,000)
- ◆ Diamond (\$11,000)
- ◆ & more... (Less than \$11,000)



**Over 2500 people have registered!**

### Registration Fees:

- ◆ May 16 - Jun 24 = \$169/Adult and \$129/Child
- ◆ Jun 25 - on-site = \$175/Adult and \$135/Child



## Jain & Vegan Food

- ◆ 15 meals planned
- ◆ Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- ◆ Tea Time and Snacks
- ◆ Healthy Jain & Vegan diet choices



**Friday-Monday July 1-4, 2011 16th Biennial JAINA Convention**



# Tracks and Topics



## Professional Tracks (Tentative)

Track	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4
Jainism in West	Academic Studies: Strategies for Growth	Perceptions of western visitors of Jain Temples in India		
Live Help Live	Community Service & Share your experience (Panel)	Agams and Help Live	Sahyog ka Vyahavar	Community Outreach (Panel)
Entrepreneurship	Workshop-ABCD of Entrepreneurs (Panel)	Jain way of running business	Trends in Entrepreneurship - Health, IT, Green Energy	
Seniors	Social Challenges for Seniors	Prep for retirement	Yoga/ Diet for Seniors	Social Challenges
Health	Medical Treatment overseas	Preventing Heart Disease	Overview of Diabetes	Protecting from medical mistakes
Interfaith	Principles of various religions	Karma Theory of various religions		

## Religious Tracks (Tentative)

Track	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5
Jain Dharm for Layman (basic)	Doctrine of Karma in Jain Philosophy	Jainism IQ— Jeopardy on Jainism for adults	Basic principles of Jain Dharma	Four Dhyam & Five Aachaar	
Jain Tenets (intermediate)	Ahimsa	Aparigrah	Anekantwad	Understanding and Control of Kashayas	
Advanced Jain dharma	Agams & Siddhant	Sthanak to Gunsthanak	Darshan to Samyak Darshan	Nav Tatva	Karmic Theory
Way of worships (Rites & Rituals)	Speech on Pooja - Swetambar tradition	Speech on Pooja - Digambar tradition	Samyak Darshan	Mukti through Bhakti	
Science & Jain dharma		Practicing ecology in daily life	Jainism and Sustainability	Anekantvad & Science Study of Religion	
Jain History	Jiv Daya (Help Live) practiced by Tirthankars	Sadgati ka Marg	Importance of "Tirth"		
Jain food	Pros and Cons of Veganism	Non-violence, Peace & Harmony	Jain Food as Medicine - Panel		



# Evening Entertainment



**Virchand Gandhi**

Great Hero who represented Jain community in  
1st Parliament of World Religions held in CHICAGO, 1893.  
Great Patriot who defended Indian Religions, Culture and Civilization.

**Gandhi before Gandhi**

## JAINS *got* TALENT

**FIRST EVER 'Jains Got Talent'**  
Competition in Houston, JAINA Convention 2011

- If you have talent, come join us!
  - Singing
  - Dancing
  - Unique Talents
- Two Categories: 18 & Under, Above 18

**Prizes! Awards! Publicity!**

**\*\* Separate event on its own\*\***

Please visit <http://convention.jaina.org>  
Click on 'Program Information' for more information

For more information,  
[JGT2011@jaina.org](mailto:JGT2011@jaina.org)

Indian Idols coming to JAINA, 2011  
Jam the evening away to these entertainers...



Melodious Bhoomi Trivedi



Rocking Rakesh Maini



Soul stirring Sreeram



**His Work:**

Acharya Nandighoshvijayji has set out various themes that indicate Jain concepts of science in accordance with modern science. The Jain concept is qualitative but the modern concept of science is quantitative. His articles in the book "Jainism through Science" discuss intricate topics like the concept of time, origin and development of universe, Darwin's theory of evolution, Wave theory of light and many more such topics. The basic scientific introduction has been followed up with a detailed discussion according to Jain Philosophy. He uses strong logical arguments to put forward his view. He uses strong logical arguments to put forward his view. For instance, an article in the book, on the shortcomings of the

theory of special relativity according to *jainology*, the Muni (currently Acharya) has made an attempt to point up drawbacks in Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity (STR) by putting forth arguments derived from the interpretation of Jain philosophy, with support from the hypothesis on the existence of "techyon", which are currently postulated to have a velocity higher than light.

**Dr Vaidya, a renowned mathematician observed, "The results of these comparisons may not be acceptable to all, but that does not diminish the importance of these writings"**.

Einstein once wrote, "Science without religion is lame and religion without science is blind". Acharyaji in his book has challenged certain shortcomings of Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity (STR), by putting forth arguments derived from interpretation of Jain scriptures.

**Gacchadhipati Acharya Suryodaya Suri attained Kaldharma**

Jaina Education Committee deeply mourns the sad demise of Gacchadhipati Acharya Shri Suryodayasuriji and conveys their deep sense of sorrow.

Acharya Shri has attained Kaldharma on May 4, 2011 3:10 AM India time. He was 78 years old. He was the Guru Bhagvant of Acharya Shri Shilchandra suri and Acharya Shri Nandighosh suri.

He was very supportive of JAINA education activities. He supported the activities of JAINA Education Books and eLibrary through his disciples Acharya Shilchandra Suri and Acharya Nandighosh Suri.

Acharya Shilchandra suri has provided about 150 high quality Jain literature books including entire publication of Kalikal Sarvagya Shri. Hemchandracharya Navam Janmshatabdi Smruti Sanskar Shikshannidhi to JAINA eLibrary. Acharya Nandighosh Suri edited most of our Pathshala education books.

**Research Institute**

A Research Institute to explore the ancient Indian religious and philosophical traditions and to re-establish the religious culture amongst the youth, has been recently established at Ahmedabad by the inspiration and guidance of Acharya Nandi Ghosh Vijayji Maharaj. Dr. P.C. Vaidya inaugurated the Institute.

**Contribution to JAINA**

Acharya Nandighosh Suri has assisted JAINA by editing and correcting most of the Pathshala education books.

**His Ideas & Thoughts:**

Acharyaji says that being a Jain Monk has limitations regarding practical work in the field of science. He says he has not tested the scientific principles laid down in Jain scriptures practically. Acharyaji however, seems to be set on a lifetime course of comparative study of scriptures and science. What he inscribed on a copy of his book is his motto: "Knowing is not enough. We must apply. Willing is not enough. We must do."

## Darshan of An Ever Smiling, Ever Blessing Acharya Jaishekhsuri

Jayant had made the impossible possible, his leadership skills coupled with an excellent batting performance had enabled the seventh graders beat the 11th graders team. The cricket coach of Kabubhai High School was already seeing a "Pataudi" in making (Tendulkar was probably not even born). The coach was probably thinking of Bombay's upcoming prestigious Harris Shield tournament. However, Jayant was not destined to be a "Tendulkar", his Guru had other more important plans.

Like any typical Jain Gujarati woman, Jayant's mother was concerned about her son's future. She would see him spending every spare moment with cricket bat and ball. She finally managed to convince him to at least attend *pathshala*.

Jayant started attending the *pathshala* simply to please his mother. However, he soon realized that reciting and memorizing Jain *stotras* came naturally to him. Jayant himself never cared much about his newly gained skill but his *pathshala* teachers were clearly impressed.

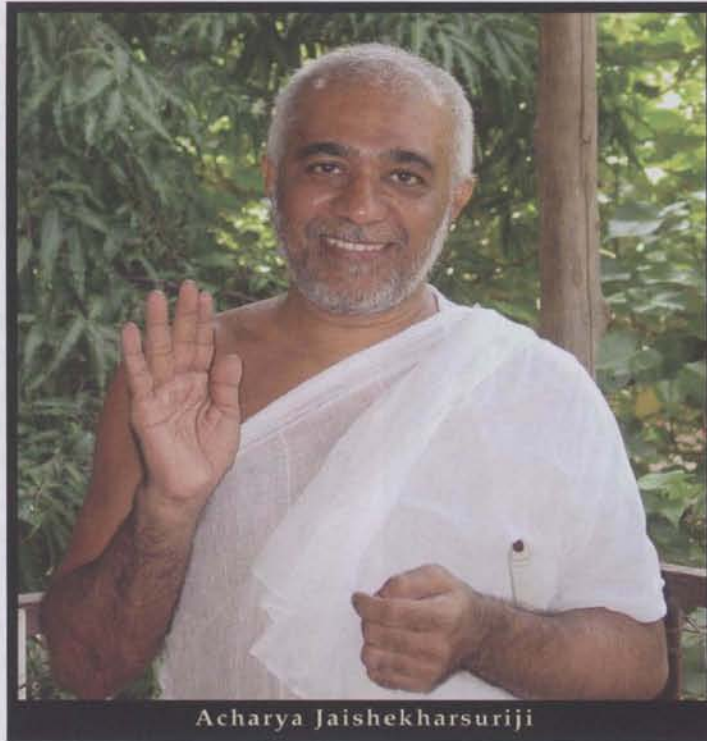
*Pathshala* influenced Jayant to attend some Acharya Jayanandsuri's lectures. One day Jayant casually asked Jayanandsuriji that while he visited various families in the neighborhood for *gochari*, will he also visit his home. Maharaj replied with smile "your home" and then proceeded to say "yes". Few days later Jayant's mother asked him to go and request Acharya Jayanandsuri to come for *gochari* as they had cooked a special meal. Jayanandsuriji accepted the invitation and went along with Jayant to his home. The mother was very pleased on seeing Swamiji at her doorstep. She immediately asked Jayant to *voharav* (give food to) Swamiji. Instead, Maharaj turned around

to the mother and asked her "can you *voharav* something very nice that nobody would". Puzzled the mother had no answer. After some time Jayanandsuri Maharaj asked her "Can you *voharav* your eldest son?" The puzzled mother asked the Maharaj if he was talking about this kid

(Jayant) who has nothing but cricket in his mind. Maharaj replied, "you will see after 11 months".

Acharya Jaishekhsuri Maharaj, to this day, remembers the exact time on the clock at that moment - exactly 11.00 am – the point when Jayant's life changed drastically – new boundary lines were drawn. He would constantly think about his Guru and the religious teachings.

After about eleven months, **Acharya Pratapsuri** gave *diksha* to Jaishekhar Maharaj. Under the supervision of



Acharya Jaishekhsuriji

Acharya Pratapsuri, **Acharya Dharmasuri**, **Acharya Jayanandsuri** and various other pundits, Jaishekharji underwent rigorous education for 7 years. He studied Jain *Agams*, various *stotras*, *Ardha-Magadhi* and various other Jain literature and commentaries. When things would become tough, Acharya Pratapsuri's simple incentives and gentle approach would encourage him to work hard. Jaishekharji had found his comfortable new unconventional home (or no-home as some would say). He realized that life as such was very simple and natural. The inner *anand* (joy) increased day by day.

The joy of the soul is beyond description of our human language. However, seeing Acharyaji's constantly smiling face one can only sense something extra-ordinary. It reminded this interviewer of a description of Bhagwan Mahavir in Mahasena gardens, the day after he attained *Keval Gyan* on the banks of river Rijuvaluka. One



passerby told Indrabhuti that the place was packed to brim with thousands of visitors but not one came out disappointed. This interviewer had a similar observation for Acharya Jaishekharsuriji; Hundreds would visit Acharyaji daily, but none would return disappointed. Acharyaji's ever smiling face and ever blessing behavior reflects the four *bhavanas* of Jainism; *Maitri* (being a Friend), *Pramod* (appreciation), *Karuna* (Compassion) and *Madhyastha Bhavana* (neutral or unattached). He is friend to everyone and has amazing capacity of remembering everyone's names. He owes all his positive qualities to his Guru. Acharyaji also does not fail to appreciate the positive qualities of people meeting him, encouraging them to grow further. What stands out the most is his caring nature and a deep desire for the welfare of everyone who comes to meet him. Acharyaji would always make himself available to people seeking his advice to resolving issues troubling them. He would then regularly follow-up to check on their well-being. At all times he would maintain his neutrality and remain unattached to people seeking his help.

On further inquiring what the source of this energy as, Acharyaji told that it all started with his guru asking him to recite one *Nokarvadi* with full concentration prior to going to sleep. It turned out to be one of the most pleasant experiences of his life. One *Nokarvadi* increased to three and with it started meditation, *ohm* and other *Japs* both early in the morning and late in the evening. The *Japs* and meditation were the source of his energy. When asked how he found time for these prolonged *Japs* in his busy schedule, his answer was simple, "sleep two hours less".

We also asked him, if these interactions with all kinds of people cost him emotionally? Initially, he just smiled, but when we pressed further, he replied, "we a committed to our soul, but we also have the responsibility of the *sangh*. Some of these interactions do take a toll on our emotional well-being or the state of equanimity. We just have to be aware of these changes, go back to our meditation (*jap*) and retain our balanced state."

Acharyaji is an excellent orator. He is specially known for his extempore examples that relate directly to audience's concerns and questions. He credits his guru Jayanandsuri Maharaj and Pratapsuri Maharaj for this skill. One day when a large attendance was expected, both Pratapsuri Maharaj and Jayanandsuri Maharaj excused themselves, leaving the then young sadhu Jaishakhaerji alone in front of the audience. The young nervous Jaishakhar Maharaj had no option but to give his first extempore *vyakhayan*; a lecture that was highly appreciated. Three days later he was addressing a huge gathering with his guru sitting beside him!

Acharyaji raised concern about the Jain Society in India. He feels that beyond the practice of vegetarianism and certain Jain traditions, many in society are morally bankrupt. He has noticed a fundamental change in the social structure, due to small independent families. The elderly have nowhere to go. They are not welcomed at their children houses and at the same time they are neither financially nor physically capable of living independently. After a small experiment at Palitana he is convinced of a need for elderly homes. Family members can visit them or they can visit their family but they would have an independent home of their own. Acharyaji also sees a need to improve education among Jain youths. He realizes the value of English as a medium of education in the modern world. He wants Jain philanthropists to come forward and build quality schools that would provide education with Jain Heritage in mind.

The following beautiful Sanskrit *subhashit* (saying) best describes Acharya Shri Jaishakharsuri.

***Prabodhaya Hitaya Cha, Prashamaya Vivekaya Cha.***

***Samyak Tatvopadeshena, Santasukti Pravartate.***

A life of a Saint (Sadhu) is to awaken the others, ensure welfare of others, assist other in emotional purification, guide other to discriminate and learn what is correct and share the knowledge of Truth.

## List of Acharyas of Murtipujak Samudays (Sub-groups)

**Acharya Shri Vijay Ramachandrasuriji Samuday**

1. Gachchha Sthavir Acharya Lalitshekhhar Suri

1.	Ji
2.	Acharya Rajshekhhar Suri ji
3.	Acharya Prabhakar Suri ji
4.	Acharya Veer Shekhar Suriji



5.	Acharya Jaykunjar Suri ji
6.	Acharya Purnachandra Suri ji
7.	Acharya Mahabal Suri ji
8.	Acharya Punyapal Suri ji
9.	Acharya Muktiprabh Suri ji
10.	Acharya Kanak shekhar Suri ji
11.	Acharya Narchadra Suri ji
12.	Acharya Chandragupta Suri ji
13.	Acharya Narvahan Suri ji
14.	Acharya Gunsheel Suri Ji
15.	Acharya Ajitsen Suri ji
16.	Acharya Kirtiyash Suriji
17.	Acharya Shreyansprabh Suri ji
18.	Acharya Kamalratna Suri Ji
19.	Acharya Darshanratna Suri ji
20.	Acharya Ratna bhushan Suri ji
21.	Acharya Ajitratna Suri ji
22.	Acharya Nayvardhan Suri j

#### Acharya Shri Vijaya Prema Bhuavanbhanu Suri Samuday

1.	Gachchhadhipati Acharya Shri Jayaghoshha Suriji
2.	Acharya Shri Harikant Suriji
3.	Acharya Shri Rajendra Suriji
4.	Acharya Shri Hemachandra Suriji
5.	Acharya Shri Kalyan bodhi Suriji
6.	Acharya Shri Abhayashekhar Suriji
7.	Acharya Shri Jagachandra Suriji
8.	Acharya Shri abhayachandra Suriji
9.	Acharya Shri Gunaratna Suriji
10.	Acharya Shri Rashmiratna Suriji
11.	Acharya Shri Jagavallabha Suriji
12.	Acharya Shri Ratnasundar Suriji
13.	Acharya Shri Kulachandra Suriji
14.	Acharya Shri Jayachandra Suriji
15.	Acharya Shri Varabodhi Suriji
16.	Acharya Shri Punyaratna Suriji
17.	Acharya Shri Yashoratna Suriji
18.	Acharya Shri Raviratna Suriji
19.	Acharya Shri Ajitashekhhar Suriji

#### Acharya Shri Sagarand Samuday

1.	Gachchhadhipati Acharya Shri Suryodaysagar Suriji
2.	Acharya Shri Ashoksagar Suriji
3.	Acharya Shri Dolat sagar Suriji
4.	Acharya Shri Nandivardhan sagar Suriji
5.	Acharya Shri Harsh sagar Suriji
6.	Acharya Shri Jitendra sagar Suriji
7.	Acharya Shri Pramoda sagar Suriji
8.	Acharya Navaratna sagar Suriji

9.	Acharya Shri Naradevsagar Suriji
10.	Acharya Shri Nityodaya sagar Suriji
11.	Acharya Shri Kayan sagar Suriji
12.	Acharya Shri Rajatilak sagar Suriji
13.	Acharya Shri Jinachandrasagar Suriji
14.	Acharya Shri Hemachandrasagar Suriji
15.	Acharya Shri Niranjansagar Suriji
16.	Acharya Chandrashekhar sagar Suriji
17.	Acharya Shri Chandranan sagar Suriji
18.	Acharya Shri Ratnashekhar sagar Suriji
19.	Acharya Shri Devachandra sagar Suriji
20.	Acharya Shri Apurva ratna mangal Suriji
21.	Acharya Shri Jinratna sagar Suriji
22.	Acharya Shri Chandraratna sagar Suriji
23.	Acharya Shri Jayaratnasagar Suriji
24.	Acharya Shri Muktisagar Suriji
25.	Acharya Shri Chandrakirtisagar Suriji

#### Acharya Shri Vijayanemi Suri Samuday

1-	Gachchhadhipati Acharya Shri Suryodaya Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri HemachandraSuriji
3-	Acharya Shri Prabodhachandra Suriji
4-	Acharya Shri Shreyans Chandra Suriji
5-	Acharya Shri Kundkund Suriji
6-	Acharya Shri Prdumna Suriji
7-	Acharya Shri Shilachandra Suriji
8-	Acharya Shri Indrasen Suriji
9-	Acharya Shri Somachandra Suriji
10-	Acharya Shri Simhasen Suriji
11-	Acharya Shri Dharmadhvaj Suriji
12-	Acharya Shri Mahayash Suriji
13-	Acharya Shri Jinottam Suriji
14-	Acharya Shri Ratnaprabha Suriji
15-	Acharya Shri Nandighosh Suriji
16-	Acharya Shri Harshasen Suriji
17-	Acharya Shri Hitavardhan Suriji
18-	Acharya Shri Rajahansa Suriji

#### DadaShri JinaVijayaji Samuday

1-	Gachcha Sthavir Acharya Shri Lalaprabha Suriji
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#### Panyas Shri Dharmavijayaji (Dahelavala)

1-	Gachchhadhipati Acharya Shri Abhayadev Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Yashobhadra Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Vimal bhadra Suriji
4-	Acharya Shri Ratnachandra Suriji
5-	Acharya Shri Jagatachandra Suriji
6-	Acharya Shri Jayanand Suriji

#### Acharya LabdhiSuri Samuday



1-	Gachchadhipati Acharya Shri Ashok ratnaSuriji
2-	Acharya Shri Amarsen Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Punyanand Suriji
4-	Acharya Shri Mahasen Suriji
5-	Acharya Shri Hiranyaprabha Suriji
6-	Acharya Shri Rajayash Suriji
7-	Acharya Shri Ratnayash Suriji
8-	Acharya Shri Varishen Suriji
9-	Acharya Shri Vinayasen Suriji
10-	Acharya Shri Kalpayash Suriji
11-	Acharya Shri Amity ash Suriji
12-	Acharya Shri Chandra yash Suriji

#### Acharya Buddhisagar Samuday

1-	Acharya Shri Manohar kirtisagar Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Udayakirti sagar Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Kalyan sagar Suriji
4-	Acharya Shri Padmasagar Suriji
5-	Acharya Shri Vardhaman saga Suriji
6-	Acharya Shri Amrutsagar Suriji
7-	Acharya Shri Arunodayasagar Suriji
8-	Acharya Shri Vinaya sagar Suriji

#### Acharya Siddhi Suriji (Bapaji Samuday)

1-	Acharya Shri Aravind Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Yashovijaya Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Rajapunya Suriji
4-	Acharya Shri Bhagyesh Suriji
5-	Acharya Shri Munichandra Suriji
6-	Acharya Shri Nararatna Suriji

#### Acharya Dharma Suri Samuday

1-	1- Gachchadhipati Acharya Shri Kanakratna Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Mahanand Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Chandrasen Suriji
4-	Acharya Shri Mahapadma Suriji
5-	Acharya Shri Suryoday Suriji
6-	Acharya Shri Rajratna Suriji
7-	Acharya Shri Purnand Suriji
8-	Acharya Shri Kalapurna Suriji
9-	Acharya Shri Padmanand Suriji
10-	Acharya Shri Jayashekhar Suriji
11-	Acharya Shri Lalit sen Suriji

#### Acharya Himachal Suriji Samuday

No current Acharya.

#### Acharya Shantivimal Suri Samuday

1-	Gachchadhipati Acharya Shri Prdhyumna vimal Suriji
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#### Acharya Shri Vijayakesari Samuday

1-	Gachchadhipati Acharya Shri Hemaprabha Suriji
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#### Acharya Shri Bhakti Suri Samuday

1-	Tapagachchadhipati Acharya Shri Prema Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Kalpavijaya Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Shantichandra Suriji
4-	Acharya Shri Ranashekhar Suriji

#### Shri Mohan Lalji Maharaj Samuday

1-	1- Gachchadhipati Acharya Kirtisen Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Mukitiprabha Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Suyash Suriji

#### Acharya Shri VallabhaSuriji Samuday

1-	1-Gachchadhipati Acharya Shri Ratnakar Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Jagatchandra Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Dharmadhurandhar Suriji

#### Acharya Niti Suriji Samuday

4-	Acharya Shriv padmaSuriji
5-	2- Gachchadhipati Acharya Shri Hemaprabh Suriji

#### Acharya Amrut Suri Samuday

No current Acharya.

#### Shri Trishtic Gachchha

Group 1	Gachchadhipati Acharya Shri Jayantsen Suriji
Group 2	Gachchadhipati Acharya Hemandra Suriji

#### Shri Achala Gachcha Sampraday

1-	Gachchadhipati Acharya Shri Gunodaya Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Kalaprabha Suriji

#### Shri Prashva gachcha Sampraday

1-	Gachchadhipat Shre Vijayachandra Suriji
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#### Others

1-	Acharya Shri Yug bhushan Suriji
2-	Acharya Shri Kirtiprabh Suriji
3-	Acharya Shri Kirtisen Suriji
4-	Acharya Shri Nayaprabh Suriji
5-	Acharya Shri Yashodev Suriji
6-	Acharya Shri Labdhiprabh Suriji
7-	Acharya Shri Anand ghan Suriji
8-	Acharya Shri Pradipchandra Suriji
9-	Acharya Shri Premprabh Suriji
10-	Acharya Shri Rajachandra Suriji



# The Jain Digamber Sampraday

The history of *Digamber* sect for the first six centuries is very hazy. The *Digambers* unlike *Shwetambers* did not write detailed historical accounts of their sect, and what has been written seems to have been created around the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD (based on the inscription found in Shravana Belgola). According to *Digamber* tradition, the breakup of joint *sangh* began with Vishakha, who was a disciple of Bhadrabahu. Many believe that it was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD that Acharya Kundakunda set the *Digamber* tradition on a firm footing. Today most *Digamber* traditions revere Acharya Kundakunda more than Vishaka and Bhadrabahu, who are otherwise above in the lineage of saints.

Digamber Sampraday, in recent centuries, has been divided into the following sub-sects:

Major sub-sects:

1. *Bispanth*
2. *Digamber Terapanth*
3. *Taranapanth* or *Samaiyapanth*

Other sub-sects:

- a. *Gumanapanth*
- b. *Totapanth*
- c. *Kanji-Panth*

***Bispanth***, according to some, is the original group of Digamber sect and has the highest following among all Digamber Jains. *Bispanth* has a large following in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Gujarat. The followers of *Bispanth* support the *Dharma-gurus*,



Shravanbelagola, located 51 km south-east of Hassan in Karnataka is one of the most important Jain pilgrim centers of India. It is especially sacred for the Digamber community. The Statue of the Jain saint Gommateshwara (AD 981) carved out of a mountain, said to be one of the tallest and most graceful statues in the world, is situated in this small town atop the Indragiri hills. The colossal monolithic statue is 58 ft high, with 26 ft wide shoulders, 10-ft of its feet. Strikingly simple and beautifully chiseled features of this statue have embodied serenity for over 1030 years. For an historical and archeological standpoint, this location stands out due to the many ancient inscriptions found at this location.

that is, religious authorities known as *Bhattarak* who are also the heads of Jain *Maths* (monasteries). The *Bisapanth*, in their temples, worship the idols of *Tirthankars*. They also worship the idols of *Ksetrapala*, *Padmavati* and other deities.

***Digamber Terapanth*** arose in North India in the year around 1664 AD as a revolt against the domination and conduct of the *Bhattarakas*. As a result, in this sub-sect, the institution of *Bhattarakas* lost respect in North India. In their temples, the *Terapanthis* install the idols of *Tirthankars* and not of other deities. The *Terapanthis* are more in number in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh.

***Taranapanth*** is known after its founder *Tarana-Swami* or *Tarana-tarana-Swami* (1448-1515 A.D.). This sub-sect is also called *Samaiyapantha* because its followers worship *Sarnaya*, i.e., sacred books and not the idols. *Taranapanthis* strongly refute idolatry but they have their own temples in which they keep their sacred books

for worship. *Taranapanthis* give more importance to spiritual values and the study of sacred literature instead of any ceremonial pujas. The *Taranapanthis* are few in number and are mostly confined to Bundelkhand and Malwa area of





Madhya Pradesh, and Khandesh area of Maharashtra.

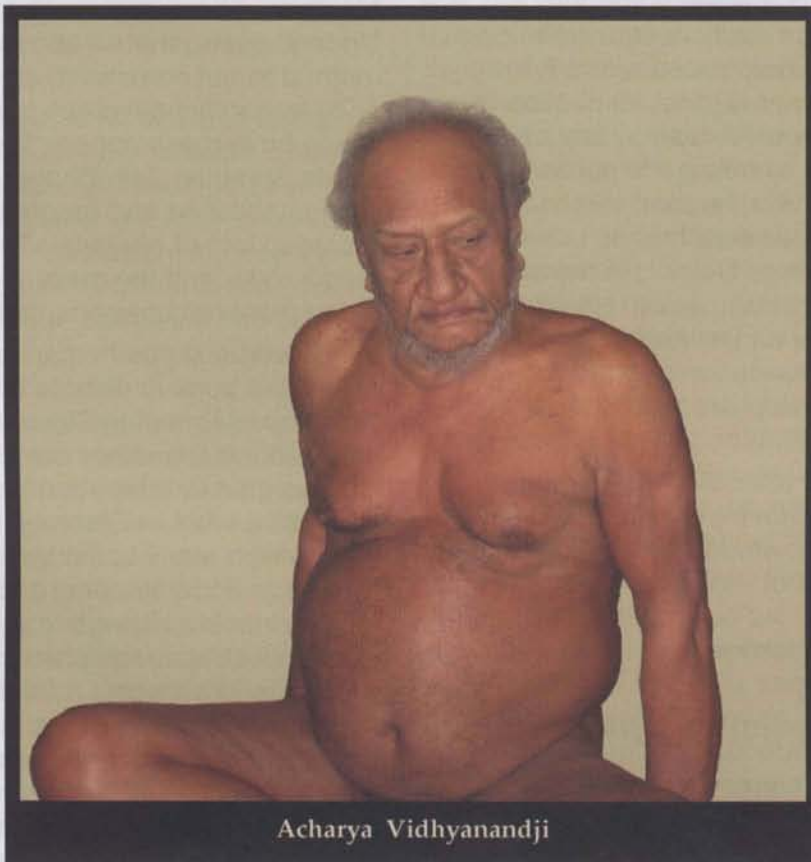
**Gumanapanth** is a very small sect. This sub-sect was started by Pandit Gumani Rama or Gumani Rai, a son of Pandit Todaramal, a resident of Jaipur in Rajasthan. *Gumanapanth* originated in the 18th. Century A.D. and flourished mainly during that century. It is found now in some areas of Rajasthan around Jaipur.

**Totapanth** came into existence as a result of differences between the *Bispantha* and *Terapanth* sub-sects. Many sincere efforts were made to strike a compromise between the *Bis* (i.e. twenty) *Panth* and the *Tera* (i.e. thirteen) *panth* and the outcome was *sadhesolaha* (i.e., sixteen and a half)-*Panth* or '*Totapanth*'. That is why the followers of *Totapanth* believe to some extent in the doctrines of *Bispanth* and to some extent in those of *Terapanth*. The *Totapanthis* are very few in number and are found in some pockets of Madhya Pradesh.

**Kanji-panth** or followers of Kanji Swami are a part of this new sect. Saint Kanji Swami largely succeeded in popularizing the old sacred texts of the great *Digamber* saint Acharya Kundakunda of South India. The influence of Kanjipanth is steadily increasing around the Sonagarh in Gujarat and Jaipur in Rajasthan. The complied list of all *Digamber* Acharyas is given in the end of this section. We have included the profiles of very few Acharyas whom we had a chance to meet, or if any of the community member provided such information.

## Acharya Vidhyanandji

To give up the attachment towards *Jeen* and to embrace *Jin*; was the expression Acharya Vidyanandji used to explain the goal of *Sadhutva*. (*Jeen* is the term used for leather saddle, here referring to the physical body.). The main purpose of *Sadhu* is to lead a life that maintains the awareness and focus towards the permanence of the soul and the transitional nature of the physical body. The attachment towards the transitional body is the key



Acharya Vidhyanandji

hindrance for the soul's complete independence.

Born in a small village called Shedwal in Karnataka, Surendra (later known as Acharya Vidyanandji), was a very determined child right from his childhood and had tremendous amount of perseverance to pursue his goals. His oratorical skills coupled with his leadership skills saw the birth of a scholarly and renowned personality. The influence of

*sadhus* and *sadhvis* on him due to the proximity of



temple to his house played an important role in his life. As a child, he was very different from other kids and would always do selfless things to help others. While growing up, he realized the futility of material comforts and education about physical things (*bhautik gyaan*). Nothing interested him or could even hold his interest, as he wanted to do something for the betterment of his soul and not his body. Acharya Mahavirkirtiji's chaturmaas in Shedwal, changed Surendra's life forever. Surendra grew closer to the Acharya and realized that renouncing the world would bring him closer to his goal in life. He finally decided to take *diksha*. When we (JD team) specifically asked him about this same question: "what inspired him towards *diksha*?" Acharyaji smiled and simply gave us a photograph showing the great Acharya Bhadrabahu inspiring and guiding young disciples towards quest for larger truth. By giving an indirect answer, Acharya Vidyanandji paid homage to his guru, the senior Acharya who first inspired him and the tradition of Jain *shashan* that change his life for better. In the process, he also instilled some amount of spirituality in our wandering souls.

His unwavering decision and determination to take *Diksha* was obvious when someone questioned him if it was really necessary to give up everything, and he responded with a firm conviction, "Gentleman, my inner inspiration to take *diksha* is very powerful, so you are adding to your negative karmas by telling me not to take *diksha*." On July 25, 1963, he took *diksha* after the Shobha Yatra, a grandeur that no one had witnessed in the history of Delhi. He became the disciple of Acharya Deshbhushanji. He attained the *padvi* of *Upadhyay* on December 8, 1974, the same day when the foundation of Mahavir Smarak was laid. He received the *Padvi* of Acharya on June 28, 1987.

In the formative years after *diksha*, Acharyaji stayed in a state of *moun* for most of the time. He focused on gaining knowledge by reading and grasping a wide range of Jain scriptures and related religious texts. As he would explain to us the importance of knowledge by quoting the following *sloka*:

गाणेण ज्ञानसिद्धि, ज्ञानादो सब्बकम्मणिज्जाणं ।

णिज्जरणफलं मोक्खं, गाणभासं तदा कुज्जा ।

ज्ञान से ध्यान सिद्ध होता है, ध्यान से सब कर्मों की निर्जरा होती है, निर्जरा का फल मोक्ष है, इसलिए ज्ञान का अभ्यास करें।

*Enlightened knowledge leads to a meditative state; Meditation results in Nirjara (reduction of Karmic bonds); the benefit of Nirjara is Moksha; thus gaining enlightened knowledge is important.*

Acharyaji who had delved deep to understand the message of Jin, gave his first lecture on the auspicious Sudpanchami day in the city of Jaipur. Thus, from Jaipur the great oratory journey of this scholarly monk began. His popularity and audience grew in leaps and bounds. His depth in understanding the scriptures, overall knowledge, and ability to present the essence of religious message appropriately to the target audience won people's hearts and many of them became his devotees. He did not limit himself his discussion to Jainism but extended it to Vedic culture and other traditional Indian philosophies. He went out of his way to prisons to convince the prisoners of hope if one makes an effort to change one's lifestyle.

He is one of those saints who is renowned not just as a Jain saint but is famous as national saint who promoted nonviolence to the vast Indian community. His vast knowledge and studies have given him recognition worldwide. His lectures attracted Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and Muslims. Muslims at times felt as if he was their Sufi *sant*. Understanding that *bhajans* were a very good method to get community participation, he encouraged his devotees to prepare *bhajans* that would have mass appeal. From his inspiring words Shraman Jain Bhajan Pracharak Sangh was established and gradually they collected and recorded lots of *bhajans*. This became an initial media to spread the message of Ahimsa to some of the most remote parts of the country.

His powerful words had an impact to bring some amount of truce in dispute of control of Sammed Shikharji (Sammet in Shwetamber tradition) between the Digamber and Shwetamber sects. He was able to arbitrate the dispute and help start renovation work at Sammed Shikharji. For a person who many consider to be one the foremost experts in understanding and practice of *Ahimsa*, he was humble enough to give credit to Gandhiji for demonstrating the practical and political use of Ahimsa to bring about a fundamental change in the society. Explaining the nuances of Ahimsa he would ask his secular audience to follow Gandhiji's philosophy of truth, love and nonviolence. He believed that society could be transformed by following these principles. Leading by example he would ask his audience to stay



away from artificial or superficial flamboyant behavior. Just as a monk he did not waste any food and took only that was absolutely required, he campaigned against national waste. While personally following a strict Digamber Jain tradition, he neither imposed nor emphasized any specific ritual or tradition.

He travelled across the breadth and length of the country to make people realize the good in every individual. He firmly believed that everyone could be happy if they always saw goodness in people and didn't indulge in finding faults in anyone. Our thoughts should be good and we should use positive words which express affection because these words have immense power. He believed that *Sadhu* is like a mirror, through whom a society can look at their weaknesses and shortcoming. A sadhu and society are interrelated, one wouldn't exist without each other.

On the way to Badrinath, in Haridwaar, he gave a very impressive *pravachan* to the Digamber *samaj* that people recall even today. He was the first saint in the present century to go to Badrinath. Travelling through difficult and cold paths Acharyaji went from Badrinath to Srinagar and did his *chaaturmaas* there. He inspired a lot of people to write and publish articles/poems on Jainism. He inspired one person to write an anthology of poems on Lord Mahavir.

Acharya Vidyanandji's powerful address to the society and politicians in Delhi in a *Sarva Dharma* meet, was a big eye opener and served as a guide for them to understand and appreciate the role of Jains in the past and current society. He pointed out the contribution of Jains to the society at large by telling everyone that Jains had opened *aushadhalaya/hospitals*, provided scholars, philanthropists, schools, and publishing houses funds and had helped large number of people in the community. To commemorate the 2500 nirvana anniversary of Bhagwan Mahavir, he urged people to do things that would be in the welfare of the society and country. He would not teach people but would urge them to become an example of what they would want to teach to people, that way people would watch/observe and follow them. He urged Jains and members of other communities to work towards the betterment of society and learn to respect the good in others. With this lecture, he not only inspired Jains to contribute more towards the wellbeing of the society, but also brought in forefront the ills spread within the government structure and

society at large. He accosted the audience to stop focusing only on individual gains but to do things for the betterment of our country. To commemorate Bhagwan Mahavir's 2500 years of nirvana, he motivated people to donate for building an establishment, which would work towards developing and maintain all ancient Jain Canons and literature. Mahavir *Sthali* in Delhi was established at the initiative of Acharya Vidyanandji on the land granted by the late Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi.

His largest contribution to the Jain community was to bring together the different sects to speak in a common voice. He was very instrumental in resolving various conflicts between Shwetamber and Digamber Jain sects by making them realize that they would do better if they complemented each other in whatever they undertook instead of fighting with each other. As a renowned scholar of not only of Jain Digamber scripture but also Jain Agams (as accepted by Shwetamber tradition to be original Jain text), he was in a unique position to expose the futility of the sometimes exaggerated conflicts between the two sects. He was the inventor of the five color Jain flag, now commonly used by all Jain sects. He was the initial proponent of a common Jain symbol, where he worked and conferred with different *Acharyas* to come up with a Jain symbol acceptable to all Jain sects. In the process of such discussion, he developed a unique respect and friendship with different Jain *Acharyas* with whom he had an opportunity to exchange ideas and views. He developed a very special relationship with the Terapanth Acharya Mahapragya. The two great scholars spend many hours together discussions all aspects philosophy, relevant methods and messages for the current time, and spreading the message of Ahimsa to bring peace in the society. When we specifically asked him to tell us about his interactions with Acharya Mahapragya, he responded by telling I have already written about him, but if my health and time permits, I would like to write a lot more about that great soul.

Acharya Vidyanandji, is one of the most senior Jain monks of Digamber sect. For more than five decades, he walked the land, in good weather and bad, through forests and mountains, preaching and practicing the creed of the *Jinas*, the gentle spiritual conquerors till the elements no longer bothered him, nor did afflictive emotions.



The author of this write-up still reminisces the sensation of the vital energy flowing through him when he touched Acharyaji's feet and Acharyaji gave his blessings by putting his pious hand on the author's forehead. That pure aura does bring out the spirituality within us.

The above write-up was produced based on one interview with Acharya Vidhyanandji and further augmented by information from Satish Jain's book "Vande Tadgunalabdhye".

## Acharya Vidya Sagar Maharaj

**A**charya Vidyasagarji is one of the most widely known Digamber Jain Acharya of modern times.. He is recognized for his scholarship, *tapasya*, inspirational speeches and dialogs, large number of disciples, and a very large following.

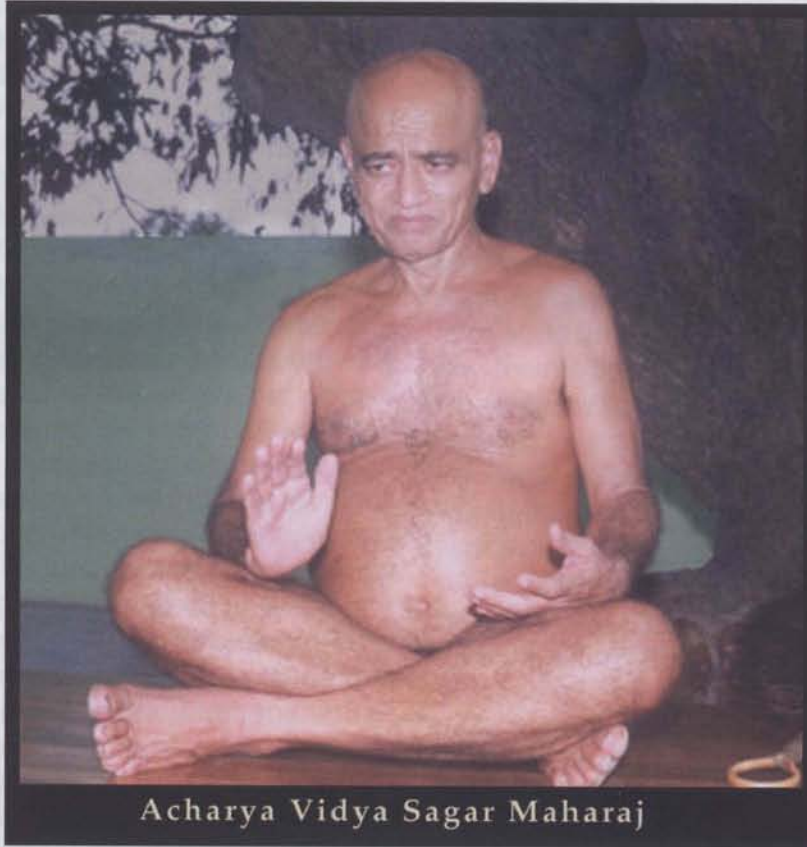
### Introduction:

Vidya Sagarji Maharaj was born in a Digamber Jain family as Vidyadhar on October 10, 1946 in Sadalga district in Belgaum, Karnataka. His father Shri Mallappa later became Muni Mallisagar and eventually attained *samadhi*. His mother Shrimati later became *Aryika Samayamati* also attained *samādhi*. Acharyaji adopted the *Brahmacharya Vrat* at a very early age. He was initiated as a monk in Ajmer on June 30, 1968 by Acharya Gyansagarji, who belonged to the lineage of Acharya Shantisagar. He was elevated to the Acharya status on November 22, 1972.

### His Work:

Acharya Vidyasagarji is an expert in classical languages like Sanskrit and Prakrit and several other languages like Hindi, Marathi and Kannada. Several researchers have studied his works for Masters and Doctorate degrees. His works include:

- **Sanskrit texts:** *Niranjana Shataka, Bhavana Shataka, Parishah Jaya Shataka, Suniti Shataka* and *Shramana Shataka*.
- **Hindi epic:** *Muka Maati*, published by Bharatiya Jnanpith.



Acharya Vidya Sagar Maharaj

- Verse translations of classics: *Yogasara, Ishtopadesha, Samayasar (Kundakunda ka Kundan), Gomatesh thudi* etc.

- Verse translation of *Samana Suttam*  
He has initiated more than 125 monks, a number unmatched in the past 9 centuries for the Digamber tradition. Acharya Vidyasagarji also initiated two of his brothers Muni Yogasagarji and Muni Samaysagarji as Monks. Several *Panch kalyanak* and

*Gajrath Mahotsavas* have been organized in the holy presence of Acharya Shri Vidyasagar and his Sangh in various places like Drongiri, Chattarpur (M.P.), Bina Baraha Sagar (M.P.), Morena (M.P.), Madanganj Kishanghar AjmerRaj, Khajuralro Kundalgri, Koniji, Jabalpur etc.

Acharya Vidya Sagarji has inspired people to initiate many welfare institutions. Some of these institutions are as follows:

1. Brahmi Vidya Ashram, Sagar.
2. Acharya Vidya Sagar Sodh Sansthan Pisanhari Madhia, Jabalpur.



3. Sri Varni Digamber Jain Gurukul , Pisanhari Madhia Jabalpur.
4. Bharat varsiya ,Dig
5. Acharya Vidyasagar management Science Institution, Bhopal.
6. Gyanoday Vidyapeeth.
7. Gyanoday Viklang Punarvas Prashikhan and Sodh Sansthan.
8. Gyanoday Limbs.
9. Bhagyoday Tirth, Saga.
10. Acharya Vidyasagar Scholarship Trust, Atishay Chhetra Mahuwa.
11. *Goshalas* - More than 60.

Acharya Sri Vidya Sagarji is also responsible for the construction, development and renovation of Jain temples all over India. Acharya Sri has worked relentlessly to invite eminent scholars to give discourses on different subjects. Acharya Sri has also initiated classes to teach different *Granthas* to his disciples. More than hundred

books articles have been written on Acharya Sri 108 Vidya Sagarji by eminent scholars and dedicated devotees.

Mr. Shrish Jain (most likely a US resident) in his blog wrote about his inspirational visit to Acharyaji on Dec 14 2008. Here is a quote from his blog, *"I left the place in the afternoon. And I was more than satisfied to visit him. I was personally thinking when I would be fortunate to become a saint, but seemed my time is too far- may be in next births. I could very well extrapolate- how Moksha state would be infinitely full of bliss, when the saints are so blissful."*

## Param Puja Pragyashraman Rashtra Santa Saraswatacharya 108 Shri Devnandiji Maharaj

**H**e was born in 1965 at Shangrah in Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh. His parents were Shri Prem Chandra and Shreemati Sheela Devi Jain and his birth name was Mulayam Chandra. He left home at the age of 16 and became a *Kshullak* on Feb 5, 1981 under the guidance of Acharya KunthuSagar ji. He took Muni Diksha on March 31, 1982 and Acharya Diksha on April 5, 1998 at Aurangabad under the guidance of Ganadharyachrya Shri 108 Kunthu Sagar Ji. He travelled far and wide within India (from Maharashtra to



Acharya Shri Devnandiji Maharaj

Karnataka to Bihar and Tamil Nadu). His knowledge extends to *Vastushashtra*, Spiritual Philosophy and the history of Jainism.

On a recent visit to South India, some of us were fortunate to meet Acharya Shri Devnandiji at the Jin Kanchi temple. He explained at length the history of the temple, how it was built about 2000 years ago, why the idols were situated in a particular direction and how the pillars of the temples had stories inscribed on them (similar to the pillars in Khajuraho temple).

Acharya Shri Devnandiji has written number of books: *Vastu Chitamani*,

*Devnandji Upavach, Rakhe Dridhan Sidhan,*



*Dharma Sakal Sukh Den, Dev Shilp, Sagar Pravah, Ahankar Se Kaise Bachen, Prakriti Ka Santulan, Sansar Kisi ka Ghar Nahin, Samyag Darshan Ki Mahima, kaid Mein Bhi Aatma Mukht Hai, Dharma Bina Koi Nahin Apna, Ahar Vidhi Vigyan, Maitri Bhav Jagat Mein Mera, and Dhyan jagran.*

Under Acharyashri's leadership, about 20-25 *Adhiveshans* and conferences were organized in Jaingiri, Drongiri and Khajuraho. He also conducted a *Yuva Mahila Adhiveshan Mahasabha* for women and started the *Mahavir Yuva Sangathan* for young adults. He has participated in 21 *Muni Dikshas*, 3 *Eilliaks*, 9 *Kshullaks*, 12 *Aryikas*, 9 *Kshullikas*, 34 *Panch Kalyanak Pujas*, 10 *Vedi Pratishthas* and 20 *Samadhis*. He has

mastered languages like Sanskrit, Prakrit, Kannada, Hindi, Marathi and English.

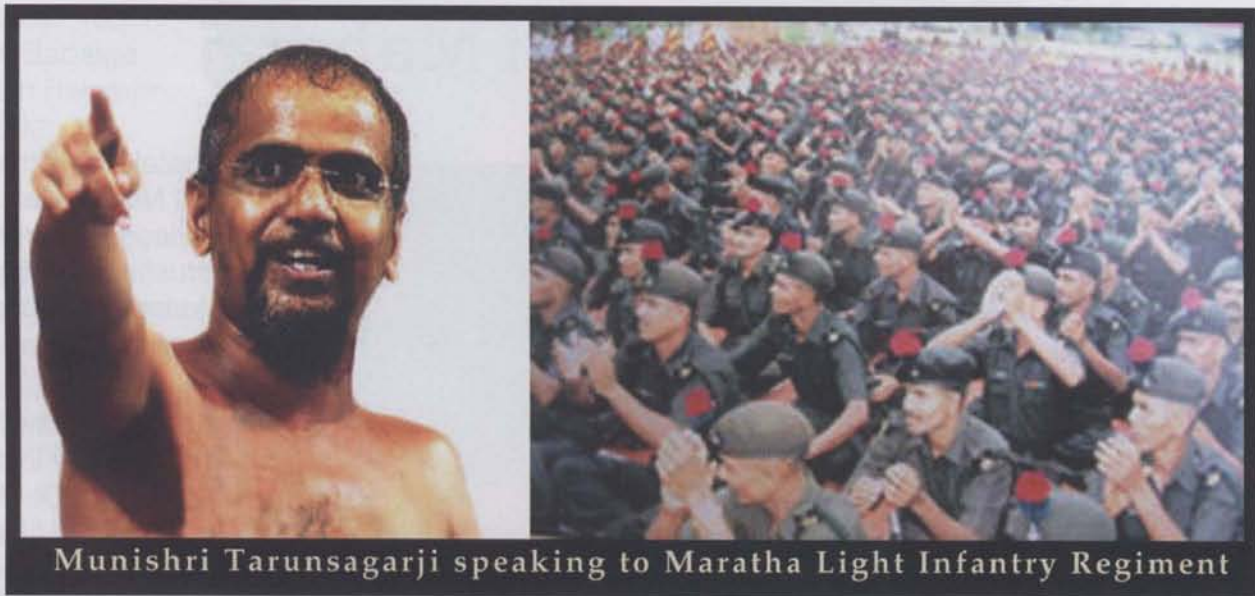
An Excerpt from his lecture on KARMA:

"Mind, Speech and Action are the doors to invite the Karma. Avoid Anger by observing tolerance and supreme forgiveness, Avoid ego by humility, deception by honesty, greed by purity, *Sanyam* and *Parigrah Trishna* by charity. Abstain from all pleasures of *raag* by Self-restrain (*Sanyam*). Speak the truth which helps others but does not hurt them."

"*Dharma, Seva, Kshanti, Mridutvmrijuta, ch Shotmath, Satyam Akinchanyam, Brahm, Tyagshch, Tapashch, Sanyamshcheti.*"

## Munishri Tarunsagarji

### The Revolutionary Rastra Sant Jain Monk of 21st Century



Munishri Tarunsagarji speaking to Maratha Light Infantry Regiment

The Digamber saint Muni Shri Tarun Sagarji is considered a Revolutionary Saint in the Jain community. "Remember I have come with the sword of revolution and not with a message for peace, because under the present circumstances in the country and society, peace is not possible without a revolution". These words of Muni Shri Tarun Sagarji Maharaj during his address in Meerut stimulated the people to come in large numbers to listen to his speeches.

#### History & Background:

Munishri Tarun Sagarji Maharaj was born on June 26, 1967 in Guhanchi district in Madhya Pradesh as Pawan Kumar Jain. His parents were Shri Pratap Chandra and Smt. Shantibai Jain. He took *Diksha* in 1982, at the young age of 14, under his guru Acharya Shri 108 Pushpadant Sagarji Maharaj. He soon got the degree of *Jaineshwari*. Acharya Pushpadant Sagar understood the capability of this young saint and knew that one day he would be addressing a very large audience. No, wonder this Revolutionary Saint addressed an audience of around 5 lakh people from the rampart of Red Fort, Delhi. He has a

natural gift of both humor and oratory. His contention is that Lord Mahavir is not the asset of only Jains but that of all humanity. He discourses are not limited to topics on Jainism and Mahavir, but mixes the speech with subject matters from Ramayana, Sant Kabir's poems, Patanjali, words of Gurunanak, Buddha, Vivekananda and Osho. Muni Shri Tarun Sagarji is a Digamber Jain Saint who attracts not only Jains but also members of all communities to his speech. Wide range of audience attends Munishri Tarunsagarji's discourses because he speaks the truth for the welfare of society. Munishri Tarunsagarji addressed the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment on September 21, 2005. Tarunsagarji is the first saint to have received the Guard of Honor from the Indian Army.

#### His Work & Literature:

Muni Shri Tarun Sagarji is the director of "Anand Yatra". "Anand Yatra" arranged by Munishri is pleasant in real sense of the word *anand*. Anand Yatra (journey) is a miraculous and unique experiment, where Munishri makes the listeners laugh on one hand and hands over valuable asset of knowledge with a humorous touch on the other. When Munishri stops, the *yatra* of *anand* continues and when the journey proceeds, there is *anand* of *yatra* again. He says, "I eat pleasure, I drink pleasure, I wear pleasure, I distribute pleasure and live in pleasure." Anand Yatra is a journey without journey.

## Shri Deevendrakirthiji

### A Global Torchbearer of Jain Traditions

**S**hri Deevendrakeerthi Bhattarak Swamiji was consecrated to the Bhattarak seat at Humcha, Karnataka at a young age of 22 years in 1969. He had an erudite knowledge on Jain philosophy and was known for his scholarly discourses on Jainism across the world. He is one among the few Jain pontiffs who had taken keen interest for the propagation of Jainism globally. Popularly called as Deevendrakirthiji, he had a huge followership in India and overseas cutting across religions boundaries.

Many Jain temples have been constructed under his guidance and leadership in India and across the globe. He was also instrumental in the renovation of numerous ancient Jain temples in Karnataka. He represented Jainism and

Muni Shri Tarun Sagarji has authored many religious books. His literature is read with great interest and various editions of each book are published. The literature of Munishri is a mirror of his own emotions and experiences in which the art of amending the direction and condition of life is discussed. The literature of Munishri is the outcome of his devotion to his soul, his personal experience, and his inner most imagery. His books are targeted to alleviate people from mental worry. It is a raga or composition vibrating from the notes of life where Veetrag is merged. His book "Mrityu Bodh" (Perception of death, a formula of revolution in life) presents the foot print of the holy journey of Munishri and the holy water pot of the importance of life for the people. His speeches come straight from the heart. They capture the listeners to the extent that they eventually become unaware of the outer world.

He says, "I want to escape from the temples. That is why I have stopped giving *pravachans* in temples. I give *pravachans* in the squares of roads, because I want to see Bhagwan Mahavir out of temples. I want to spread Mahavir's thoughts among the masses". He adds, "Mahavir's message, his conduct; and his ideal life should be visible to the entire world." His aim is to spread the philosophy of Bhagwan Mahavir – "Live and Let Live"



Shri Deevendrakeerthi  
Bhattarak Swamiji



delivered discourses at World Parliament of Religions held at Chicago (1993), Cape Town (1999), Barcelona (2004), Monterrey (2007) and Melbourne (2009). Devendrakirthiji has made a huge contribution in the development of Jain heritage and culture in North America. He had made regular visits, given numerous lectures and sermons, and participated in various temple *pratishtas*. Many in the Digamber Jains of North America consider him as a torchbearer who ensured the continuation of the rich

Digamber Jain tradition in North America. He won the hearts of the Jain community by his non-sectarian approach, his deep knowledge in *Jainology*, and his commitment to support all Jain traditions in North America.

On **14 July 2010**, his Holiness Bharata Gaurava Swasti Sri Deevendrakeerthi Bhattarak Swamiji passed away due to cardiac arrest. His demise was grieved all across the globe. His contribution to the Jain community and Jain Heritage was enormous, and he will always be remembered

## Lead me closer to the Moksha Marg.

-Ashok Sethi

Resident of Silicon Valley - Bay Area; Member JCNC.

About twenty years ago, when I was visiting India, I happened to meet two great Sadhus Yuva Muni 1008 Shri Suvhidhisagarji and Muni 1008 Shri Kshamasagarji.

They both inspired me a lot and changed my life. I got inspired to learn about our religion and to start working towards the path of *Moksha*. Muni 1008 Shri Suvhidhi Sagarji gave me personal lessons on the six elements (*Six Dravyas*). He also gave me personal copy of the Kalyanmandir *Stotra* and taught me how to recite them. Muni 1008 Shri Kshamasagarji motivated me to learn about the Karma theory, and start the process of shedding my *karmas*. I invariably listen to his pravachans on the Karma theory. He was also the source of my inspiration to learn the recitation of the Mahaveerashthak *stotra*, based on his cassette.

The meeting with these two saints has made me realize the impact these great souls can have on our life. Every time now when I visit India (almost once every two years), I make it a point to do *darshan* of as many Muni as possible and every time I learn something new. I wish we could have Sadhus in the US who would continuously give us the inspiration to work towards getting rid of our *karmas* and ultimately get out of the cycle of birth and death. Until then, we should always try to meet and get inspiration from our Sadhus when we visit India. Reading the biographies of the great saints will also inspire us towards *vairagya* and lead us closer to the *Moksha marg*.

## List of Digamber Acharyas

1.	Acharya Abhinandan Sagarji
2.	Acharya Amritsenji
3.	Acharya Anand Sagarji
4.	Acharya Atamnandi
5.	Acharya Bharat Sagarji
6.	Acharya Chaityasagarji
7.	Acharya Chandra Sagarji (disciple of Acharya Sanmati Sagarji)
8.	Acharya Chandra Sagarji (disciple of Acharya Shree RayanSagarji)

9.	Acharya Darshan Sagarji
10.	Acharya Daya Sagarji
11.	Acharya Dev Nandiji
12.	Acharya Devsenji
13.	Acharya Dharambhusanji
14.	Acharya Dhyan Sagarji
15.	Acharya Gandharachrya Shree Kunthusagarji
16.	Acharya Gundhar Nandiji
17.	Acharya Gun Nandiji





18.	Acharya Gupti Nandiji
19.	Acharya Gyan Bhushanji
20.	Acharya Hem Sagarji
21.	Acharya Jai Sagarji
22.	Acharya Kalapvarksh Nandiji
23.	Acharya Kalpshic Nandiji
24.	Acharya Kalyansagarji
25.	Acharya Kanak Nandiji
26.	Acharya Kanak Sagarji
27.	Acharya Kumud Nandiji
28.	Acharya Kushagra Nandiji
29.	Acharya Merubhushanji
30.	Acharya Namit Sagarji
31.	Acharya Nemi Sagarji
32.	Acharya Nirbhay Sagarji
33.	Acharya Nirmal Sagarji (disciple Acharya Shree VimalSagarji
34.	Acharya Nirmal Sagarji (disciple of Acharya Shri Vimalsagarji
35.	Acharya Nishant Sagarji
36.	Acharya Nishaya Sagarji
37.	Acharya Padam Nandiji
38.	Acharya Pushpadant Sagarji
39.	Acharya Rayan Sagarji (disciple of Acharya Shree Dayasagarji
40.	Acharya Rayan Sagarji (disciple of Acharya Shree SanmatiSagarji
41.	Acharya Sambhav Sagarji
42.	Acharya Sanman Sagarji
43.	Acharya Sanmati Sagarji (Hupari)
44.	Acharya Sanmati Sagar (Tapasvi samrat)"
45.	Acharya Sanmati Sagar (Vudhyabhushan)
46.	Acharya Saubhagya Sagarji
47.	Acharya Seemandhar sagarji
48.	Acharya Shanti Sagarji 'Namokar Wale'
49.	Acharya Shanti Sagar ji 'Porsa Wale'
50.	Acharya Shanti Sagarji 'Podanpur

	Wale'
51.	Acharya Shrut Sagarji
52.	Acharya Shiv Sagarji
53.	Acharya Siddhant Sagarji
54.	Acharya Subahu Sagarji
55.	Acharya Sudarshan Sagarji
56.	Acharya Sudhramsagarji
57.	Acharya Sukumal Nandiji
58.	Acharya Sunil Sagarji
59.	Acharya Suriya Sagarji
60.	Acharya Surratan Sagarji
61.	Acharya Suvidhi Sagarji
62.	Acharya Syadwad Sagarji
63.	Acharya Vairagya Nandiji
64.	Acharya Vardhman Sagarji
65.	Acharya Vasupujya Sagarji
66.	Acharya Veer Sagarji
67.	Acharya Vidyanandji
68.	Acharya Vidya Sagarji Mahraj
69.	Acharya Vimal Sagarji
70.	Acharya Vipul Sagarji
71.	Acharya Virag Sagarji
72.	Acharya Vishad Sagarji
73.	Acharya Vishuddha Sagarji
74.	Acharya Vivek Sagarji
75.	Acharya Yogindra Sagarji

**The following Acharyas have attained Samandhi in the last few years**

Acharya Bahubali Sagarji (Samadhi: 11 May 2010 Chulgiri , Rajasthan)

Acharya Bharat Sagarji (Samadhi: 21 October 2006 at Aninda Parasvanath , Rajasthan)

Acharya Varduttsagarji (Samadhi: 22 June 2006 at Kothli, Karnataka )



# Jain Sthanakvasi Sampraday

The current Sthanakvasi sect has its origin from an older reforming sect, the Lonka sect of Jainism. Lonkashaha, a rich and well-read merchant of Ahmedabad, founded the Lonka sect around 1474 A.D.

Apparently Lonkashaha's job involved coping books with included the ancient scriptures. While writing these books, he was struck by the fact that idol worship was not mentioned in any of the ancient scriptures. When he brought this to the notice of the monks, a huge debate took place on the desirability of idolatry. He opposed the rites where any form of violence or injury was involved. He finally started his own sect that got named after him. Lonka sect was able to become popular due to certain amount of slackness and internal squabbles prevailing within the then Shwetamber sect. In addition, the destruction of the temples

and idols by the Muslim invaders may have also helped Lonkashaha to spread his doctrine. At a later state in or about 1476 Lonkashaha took *sanyas* without actually being initiated by any Acharya. He in effect became the Acharya of his disciples.

A another set of reform took place when a merchant named Lavaji (Varaji by some accounts) from Surat took initiation as a sadhu and followed a very strict form of sadhutva as per the doctrine of the scriptures. Impressed by his commitment to sainthood, most members of the Lonka sect joined him and the Sthanakvasi sect was formed in 1663 AD. Since then the Sthanakvasi sect has undergone some more splits, the most notable being the Terapanth.

## The Sthanakvasi Divisions (2009)

Name of Sangh	Name of Acharya or Head
<b>Shraman sangh</b>	Acharya-1; Sâdhu-243; Sadhvi-839; Total-1082 Acharya Shri Dr. Shiv Muni
<b>Swatantra Sampraday</b>	11 sub sect -8 Acharya, 219 Sadhu; 997 Sadhvi – Total 1216
Ratna Vansh	Acharya Hirachandraji
Gyan Gachchha	Gachchadhipati Prakashmuniji
Sadhumargi	Acharya Shri Ramalalji
Jayamal	Acharya Shri Shubhchandraji
Sadhu Sant Kranti	Acharya Shri Vijayyarajaji
Nanak	Acharya Shri Sudarshanlalji
Madan Sudarshan	P. Ratna Shri Padamchandaji Shashtry
Hagamilalji	Acharya Shri Abhaykumarji
Arihant Margi	Acharya Shri Gyanchandraji
Maya Ramaji	Acharya Shri Subhadramuniji
Madan guru sangh	Shri Prakash chandraji

(This section of Sthanakvasi Divisions is continued on Page 62)



# Acharya Shree Shiv Muniji

*“Dhammo Mangal Mukkitham, Ahimsa Sanjamo Tavo,*

*Deva Vi Tan Namasanti, Jass Dhamme Saya Mano.”*

*The Enlightened Dharma(Religion) is Non-Violence, Self-Control, and Penance . Even heavenly gods worship the one, whose mind is always engaged in Enlightened Dharma.*

**F**ollowing the tradition of *Varsitap sadhana*

initiated by Bhagwan Rishabhdev, the fourth Acharya Samrat Dr. Shiv Muniji (who heads and leads the Shwetamber Sthanakvasi Shraman Sangh with more than 1300 Sadhus and Sadhvis under his guidance), is currently doing his 25th *varsitap* (penance). The Shraman Sangh was formed 60

years ago by uniting 22 Sampradays. It began with Jain Acharya Samrat Atmaramji, Anand Rishiji, Devendra Muniji and now Acharya Dr. Shiv Muniji. Acharya Dr. Shiv Muniji is currently the spiritual head of the sangh. He is an extremely pious soul whose inner piety and goodness is revealed in divine splendor on his face.

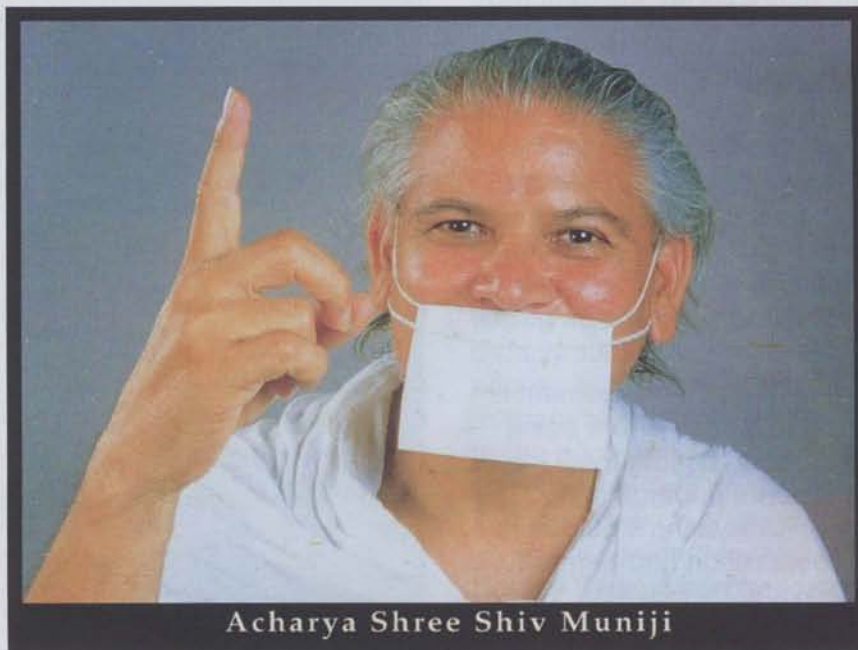
### History & Background:

Shiv Muniji was born in a very affluent and respectable Oswal family in a small town called Malaout in the Malwa region of Punjab on September 18, 1942. He was known for his sharp intellect and power of comprehension. He had nurtured an intense desire to know and realize spiritual truth ever since his childhood. His acquisition of higher academic knowledge further intensified his desire for higher spiritual knowledge. During his student life he traveled far

and wide throughout America, Canada, England and several other countries. The wealth and material comforts of worldly life failed to tempt and bind him. He thoroughly studied the life and teachings of Lord Mahavir, Jain philosophy and theology. This stirred his inner being and he made a firm resolve to renounce this worldly life and take to the life of an ascetic. He got his doctorate from the Punjabi University, Patiala, on the topic of **“Doctrine of Liberation in Indian Religions,**

**with special reference to Jainism”.**

On May 17, 1972 he was initiated in the *Shraman Sangh* as a disciple of Gian Muniji. Gian Muniji was a well-known Jain scholar and a disciple of Acharya Atma Ramji. After his initiation into the *Shraman Sangh*, on his Guru's directives, Shiv Muni travelled throughout India preaching Jain



Acharya Shree Shiv Muniji

tenets. Shiv Muni sojourned through the interiors of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and other states. It was during this sojourn that the *Shraman Sangh* selected him as its first *Yuva Acharya* on May 13, 1987 at Pune and on June 9, 1999 he was declared the *Acharya* or the spiritual head of the *Shraman Sangh*.

### Spiritual Journey & Meditation:

Through meditation, he has constantly been on the upward move of his spiritual journey. During the course of this inward sojourn, he has had wonderful experiences with truth called **Atma Dhyam or Self Meditation**. For more than two decades, he researched various methods of



mediation and developed his own result-oriented technique called *Atmadhyan*. It is based on the *Acharang Sutra*. Millions of people have benefited from his method of meditation. He trained several meditation instructors who travel across the country and around the globe to organize camps to give practical training of meditation to interested people and enable them to bring about a positive change in their lives. In the meditation camps, Acharyashri inspires people to clean the five sheaths of bodies of our being: physical body, aural body, mind body, intellectual body and bliss body. His meditation study is divided into four parts:

- **Basic Shibir I:** 3 hours for 3 days with prayer, faith, help, *yogasana*, some methods of *dhyana* where one learns to get a glimpse of self.
- **Advance II:** 4 days with complete silence. Special *pratikraman*, *kayotsarg* and *Mangal Maitry* is used for the experiment.
- **Advance III:** This is a 7 day practice, where one learns to go from *Bhed* to *Abhed*.
- **Self meditation teaching workshop:** Where one learns how to teach others.

Acharyashri is of the opinion that management is about shifting the goal of an industry from being profit oriented to service oriented industry. Companies and entrepreneurs undergoing mediation training under Acharyashri's guidance have found increased cooperation and harmony

among their employees. His books like *Dhyan Ek Divya Sadhana*, *Nadi Nav Sanjog*, *The Jain Tradition*, and *The Jain Pathway to Liberation* have benefitted thousands of people.

### Simple Messages from Acharyaji:

Detachment, Austerity, Enlightenment and Meditation have been the four pillars of his pious life. His message to all of us is as follows:

**Sadhana– Atmadhyan** -Self meditate

**Seva**- Help Others

**Shiksha**-Get Knowledge

**Who am I? = KOHAM and I am that Soul = SOHAM. This is the Truth.**

**Sthanak Vasi = People Living in their Soul**  
-Thanag Sutra

Acharya Shiv Muniji asks us to, "Use body as a vehicle to go towards the soul. Meditation is carried by the body. Soul only experiences it as knowledge" - Gnata Drashta Bhav  
*Namaskar* brings humility (*Vinaya*) and reduces ego

In the words of Suvrat Muniji: "The holy vibrations that surround Shiv Muni and his meditation powers come directly from the blessings of Tirthankar Simandhar Swami".

Web site: [www.jainacharya.com](http://www.jainacharya.com)

E-mail: [shivachryaji@jainacharya.com](mailto:shivachryaji@jainacharya.com)

## Acharya Raghavji Swami

The time is 11.30 am in a small town of Kutch. An elderly Jain monk is spotted walking alone on the streets with *gochari* (food collected by *sadhu*) vessels in his hand, head bent little downwards though focused on the streets - sometimes stopping to bless people who are bowing to him, sometimes smiling at kids playing on the street, unperturbed by dogs barking, the saint finally reaches his *sthanak*. , The *sthanak* is fully packed with devotees now at 1.55pm. Two saints are sitting on top of a small pedestal. A small group of visitors visiting from Mumbai moves to the front and are taking with the saints holding a handkerchief in front of their mouth. It is now exactly 2.00pm, the elderly *sadhu* after reciting the *Navakar* mantra starts his *vyakhyan* talking about the soul. His clarity of thought and superb

delivery captures the audience's heart and mind. The lecture is highly interactive, where the monk fields questions to his audience, or answers questions raised from the audience. The monk even had a simple question for a small child sitting close to him. As the end of the *vyakhyan* (lecture), the great soul has touched every soul in the audience.

In the above 3-hour snapshot here, we have tried to visualize a picture of Pujya Acharya Raghavji Swami. Pujya-saheb (as his devotees called him) who humbly requested others not to take his photographs. While, we do not have a portrait of Pujya-saheb's physical body, we do have some glimpses from a life-long portrait of a great soul. In the above paragraph, we have attempted to present some of his unique attributes. We began



## મારા ધર્મગુરુ, આચાર્ય ભગવંત પૂજ્ય સાહેબ શ્રી રાઘવજી સ્વામી કેવા હતા?

શ્રી આઠ કોટી નાની પક્ષ સ્થાનકવાસી જૈન સંઘ (કચ્છ) સંપ્રદાયના સાતમાં પાઠે આચાર્ય ભગવંત પૂજ્ય સાહેબ શ્રી રાઘવજી સ્વામી, ભગવાન મહાવીર સ્વામી એ ચિંધેલા માર્ગ પર ચાલ્યા હતા.

પ્રાણના ભોગે પણ સિદ્ધાંતોનું પાલન કરતા. અહિંસા, સત્ય, અચૌર્ય, બ્રમ્હચર્ય અને અપરિગ્રહ એ પાંચો મહાવ્રતોનું યુક્ત પાલન કરતા. રાત્રી ભોજન કે દવા ઉપચારના સંપૂર્ણ ત્યાગી હતા. પાંચ ઇન્દ્રિયોને સંપૂર્ણ કાબુમાં રાખતા. ક્રોધ, માન, માયા, લોભ પર સંપૂર્ણ વિજય મેળવેલ આમ આ ચાર ચાંડાલ ચોકડી ને તેમને જીતી લીધેલ.

ક્ષમાના ભંડાર હતા. વાત્સલ્ય મૂર્તિ, પ્રેમભ, કુશળ અને સમયના જાણ હતા. દુરંદેશી થી ભવિષ્યનું આયોજન કરતા. મન, વચન અને કાયાથી દરેક વખતે શ્રાવકો પર ધર્મ દલાલી કરતા. જ્ઞાન, દર્શન, ચરિત્ર, તપ ની ભાવ પૂર્વક આરાધના કરતા અને બીજાને પણ કરાવતા.

અશાતા વેદનીય કર્મના ઉદય વખતે પણ હમેશા સમતા ભાવ સાથે આત્મ કલ્યાણના ભાવોમાજ વિચરતા. તેઓ નીડર હતા. મરણનો ભય ક્યારે પણ અનુભવ્યો ન હતો. દરેક ધાર્મિક ક્રિયામાં ભાવપૂર્વક ઓતપ્રોત રહેતા.

પાંચ સમિતિ, ત્રણ ગુપ્તીમાં પોતાના મન, વચન, કાયાને સ્થિર રાખતા. છ કાય જીવોના રક્ષણ કરનારા હતા. શ્રાવકોને પણ આલોજ ઉપદેશ આપતા. કોઈ પણ પ્રકારના અભિમાન થી સંપૂર્ણ દુર રહેતા. આચાર્ય પદને શોભાવનાર એવા છત્રીસ ગુણોથી સંપન્ન હતા. સુત્રોનું ઘણું સારું જ્ઞાન હતું. ચર્ચા, વિચારણા કે ઉપદેશ પણ તીર્થંકર ભગવંતોએ પરુપેલ સુત્ર સિદ્ધાંત ના આધારે દાખલા દ્રષ્ટાંતો થી સમજાવતા.

એક વખત આવા ધર્મગુરુ શ્રી રાઘવજી સ્વામીના પરિચય માં આવનાર વ્યક્તિ એમના સદગુણોને જીવનભર યાદ કરતા. આચાર્ય પદે બિરાજમાન છતાં પણ એમનાથી દીક્ષામાં નાના સાધી-સાધ્વી પ્રત્યે સંપૂર્ણ આદરભાવથી જ જોતા. દરેક નાના-મોટા શ્રાવકો પ્રત્યે સમાન ભાવે જોતા.

" હે જીવ ! તું શાંત પળોમાં વિચાર કર " આવી હિત ઉપદેશ, શિખામણ વાત્સલ્ય ભરી, પ્રેમ ભરી ભાવના થી આપતા. "ધર સભા" અને "ધર્મ સભા" ના મુલ્યો સમજાવી મતભેદોને દુર કરાવતા. ધર્મમાં જાગૃતિ લાવવા માટે જ્ઞાન સત્ર, બાળ સત્ર, સામુહિક ધર્મ આરાધના વગેરે નો પ્રચાર કરતા.

અનંત પુણ્યોદયે મને આવા ધર્મગુરુ, આચાર્ય ભગવંત પ્રાપ્ત થયેલ. એમને ચિંધેલા માર્ગ પર ભાવ પૂર્વક શુદ્ધ સમકિત સહીત જ્ઞાન, દર્શન, ચરિત્ર તપની આરાધના કરશું તો પંચમ કાળમાં આપણે પણ આત્મા કલ્યાણ કરી શકશું.

-ક્ષમીકાંત શિવલાલ શાહ

the hierarchy, of the *Nani Paksh* order, he would himself go to collect *gochari*, when it would be his turn. Next was his compassionate nature; always willing to help every soul that would come in touch with him. His walk reflected his state of constant awareness. His smile reflected his simplicity and friendliness. Being unperturbed in somewhat adverse conditions reflected his state of equanimity. Guiding his *chelas* (monks under his guidance) at every stage showed his commitment towards their growth and well-being. Finally, it depicts his unique ability to inspire everyone; ranging from new visitors to diehard followers, from the most humble to the most affluent, and from the very young to the very old.

Pujya Raghavaji Swami had been one of the most inspiring and impressive personalities of our times. Born on February 5, 1931 at Bhujpur-Kutch, he was influenced by the Jain religious teachings from his childhood. His parents Tejbai and Nenshi Shah also motivated him to follow the religious path. The turning path in Raghavaji Swami's life came when his cousin died at a very young age. This generated a feeling of detachment in his mind. He wanted to enter ascetic path. However, his mother was reluctant to grant him permission for asceticism. It was due to the persuasion of Pujya Shamji Swami, Gorani Devkuvarbai Swami and Meghbai Swami that Tejbai allowed his son to take *Diksha*. He was given *Diksha* on November 24, 1949 by Pujya Shamji Swami, and he joined the monk order of *Aath Koti Nani Paksha Sthanakvasi* Jain sect. The monks of this Jain sect do not travel outside boundaries of Kutch-Gujarat. They are known to follow an extremely rigid *sadhutava* doctrine, and are very selective about letting anyone join the monk order. Only individuals who are mentally prepared to handle the hardships that come in a typical sadhu's life are allowed to join the sect. Even today, they avoid the use of any form of technology, such as mike, photographs, metal parts, or other electrical or electronic gadgets.

In a relatively short period, the young sadhu had studied 32 Āgams. His first *chaturmas* was at Bhujpur. His simple and very friendly nature allowed others to freely communicate with him. He brought about subtle changes in the outlook of the others with his sheer simplicity. Raghavaji Swami would invariably use some of these simple examples from life while interacting with different people. This would encourage a two-way dialog

with his humility, regardless of being topmost in



among his audience during his *vyakhayan*, increasing the possibility of positive influence. His modest and affectionate speech would win over many hearts. Through his *vyakhayans* during the *chaturmas* of Mundra, he inspired Tulsidas (traditionally non-Jain), the collector of Mundra to start following the Jain Way of Life.

Once one rich householder asked Pujya-saheb if he could spend a large sum of money in the activities deemed fit by Sahebji. Pujya-saheb replied that they did not accept money and that money was of no use if there was no need for it. In his simplistic style, Sahebji had imparted the message of futility in materialism. The *shravak* was very much impressed, changed his outlook towards life and became a staunch follower of Pujya-saheb. This modest outlook is noticed in all *sthanaks* of the *Aath Koti Nani Paksha*, which are all very simple structures, with no fanfare.

On June 6, 1993 Raghavji Swami became *Acharya* (head of the sect). He was the seventh *Acharya* of *Aath Koti Nani Paksha* in the lineage of Pujya Hansrajji Swami. His first male and female disciples were Jayeshji Swami (Bagda) and Manjaribai Swami (Karagoga). Under his leadership, 8 men and 12 women took *Diksha*. He possessed all the 36 qualities of *Acharya*. He started the concept of *Gharsabha* and *Dharmasabha*. Through *Gharsabha* he was able to resolve many of the household disputes. *Dnansatra*, *Balsatra* and *Samuhik Dharma Aradhana* were also initiated by him.

During the *chaturmas* of Kandagara, an individual threatened to kill Pujya-saheb if he would continue to travel on his regular route. His followers advised him to avoid the route. Not only did Pujya-saheb stick to his schedule and route, but also requested that his schedule be made

known to the potential killer. Pujya-saheb was more concerned about this aggressor's *karmas* than his own life, he wanted the aggressor to realize his mistake. Within no time, the individual realized his mistake and apologized to Pujya saheb. While doing so, Pujya-saheb explained the real meaning of *Ahimsa* to him. In another instance when a medical practicing doctor was arguing that the real religion was serving other people, Pujya-saheb agreed with the ideal of service, but at the same time pointed out that service should be for all living beings in the universe. According to him, serving one set of beings and hurting other set of beings could not possibly be religion. Giving such simple but pointed arguments, he had convinced the doctor about the value of vegetarianism. Similar interactions had impressed Maneka Gandhi about the purpose of following an eco-friendly life-style.

During his life-time he did 61 *chaturmas*. In spite of being *Acharya*, he would take his turn to bring *gochari* for the younger ascetics. He would visit the households of Jain as well as non-Jains to inspire them on the noble path. He always remained active throughout his life. If any of the ascetics were not in good health, he would immediately visit them, even if it meant walking many miles. His memory was so sharp that he would remember the name and family details of any *shravak* even after a gap of few years.

*Acharyaji* knew it was time to move on. He took the vow of fasting unto death. He died on February 27, 2011. His *palkhi* was carried on February 28, 2011. As the *Maha-atma* continuing the journey towards *Moksha*, it inspires many thousands of other wandering souls in the same direction of *Moksha*.

## Acharyashri Virendra Muniji (M. A.)

***Shashtry Achar (Action, Behavior) is Religion***

“વિનય એટલે ભક્તિયોગ, વિદ્યા એટલે જ્ઞાનયોગ, અને વિવેક એટલે ચારિત્રયોગ, આ ત્રણમા થી એકની પણ ઊપેક્ષા એટલે મોક્ષમાર્ગની ઊપેક્ષા”

– Acharya Virendra Muni

These simple yet profound words speak about the simplicity of Acharya Shri Virendramuniji. A *sadhu* with few words, but an intent listener,

reminds one of psychiatrist like qualities in him. His guidance and counseling to his *sangh* makes him a true guru.

Virendra Muni is the 28<sup>th</sup> *Acharya* of the Dariyapuri *Sthanakvasi Sampraday*. He has about 120 followers (*sadhus* and *sadhvis*). Acharyashri Virendra Muniji was born on April 26 1944 as Vinodbhai. His parents were Ramanlal and

Kantaben Mehta. He lost his father at a very early age and thus became very close to his grandfather who taught him *Samayik* and also inculcated the sound values of humanity and humility at a very early age. Due to his liking for religion from a very tender age, his grandfather would lovingly call him "*Bhagat*". At the age of 12 he could recite *Pratikraman* in the *Upashray* during *Paryushan*. Right after high school, he was inclined to take *Diksha*. However, his family wanted him to be more matured and asked him to wait until he finished college. As his quest for spiritual knowledge increased, he began to spend more and more time at the *Upashray*. After acquiring his bachelor's degree in Philosophy with a subject like *Ardh Magdhi*, he once again sought permission from his family for taking *Diksha*. The family kept delaying his decision by convincing him this time to finish his Master's Degree. Nothing could stop this determined young man from taking *diksha* and he finally gave up all worldly possessions and became a Sadhu named Virendra Muni on May 4, 1968. In his 38 years of monk-hood, he has grown immensely in terms of knowledge, faith, and conduct. His guru Acharya Shri Sahantilalji would fondly say "My Viru is unbreakable like a copper pot and he shines even more with every new challenge.". On February 19, 2000, he received the *Acharya Pad* in Mumbai and was inducted as an *Acharya* in the *Dariyapuri Sthanakvasi Sangh*.

His knowledge of *Sadhak Sahachari* (Spiritual Guide) is very deep. *Sadhak Sahachari* are important verses compiled as a poem in Gujarati by Munishree Santabalaji from *Uttardhyan Sutra* and *DasaVaikalika Sutra*. His humility, respect for all life forms and simplicity is quite extraordinary. He explains the rules of *Jinshashan* to all like a parent would teach to a loving child. His peaceful personality and detachment from the worldly

expectations attracts *shravaks* who want to meet him over and over again. Monk and Acharyas of other sects have also appreciated his deep sense of spirituality. He is extremely vigilant towards his duties. His quest for knowledge (*Gyanpipasa*) makes him a true learner. He is a source of motivation and inspiration to his Sangh. His contribution to the society by way of arranging *Dhyan Shibirs* (meditation camps), working towards preparing directory of the *Sangh* or counseling people makes him a true *Karm Yogi* and *Dharma Yogi*. He truly fulfills the *Acharyapad*: '**Acharam Acharati Param, Param Acharvanti eti Acharya.**'

#### Question Answer session with Guruji:

Did you have any difficulty in the beginning when you started giving lectures?

*Yes, In the beginning, a lecture that would take an hour to prepare and would conclude in 15 minutes. However, working with Gurudev and learning from him it became easier.*

How do you like to teach?

*"Padhamam Nanam tao daya, Avam Chitthai savva sanjayeAnnani kim kahi, kim va nahi say pavagga"—Das Vaikalika Sutra. Most important thing is Knowledge followed by action (Daya), which leads to Nirvana.*

What is more important - Humanity or Jain Religion?

*Humanity is a part of Jainism. But we cannot neglect introspection for humanity.*

Can you tell us what is good or bad about life?

*Don't live with memories of yesterday or think about what the future will bring. **Khashanam Jana hi Pandit**- The one who knows this moment and lives in the present is a real knowledgeable person.*

## Yuva Hridaya Samrat Gurudev Pujya Namra Muni

**P**ujya Shri Namra Muni Maharaj Saheb, a Jain Muni of Gondal Sampraday was born on September 26, 1969 in Nagpur. After he lost his father at the age of three, he moved to his native place Lathi, in Saurashtra and from there to his maternal uncle's place in Delhi. At the tender age of six years, he had farsighted vision. One night in his dreams, he heard a divine voice saying, "**Your life is very short do whatever you want to do.**"

He narrated this dream to his mother who instead of ignoring his dream encouraged him to take *Diksha* and make his life worthy. He then left for Jodhpur to study religion and learnt the 32 *Agams* and their meaning. He took *Diksha* at the age of 21 and came to be known as the Jain Saint Namramuni Maharaj. When he was 22 years of age, he fell critically sick. He started chanting "*Shri Uvvasagarah Stotra*" which he had never heard nor learnt before. As the doctors continued



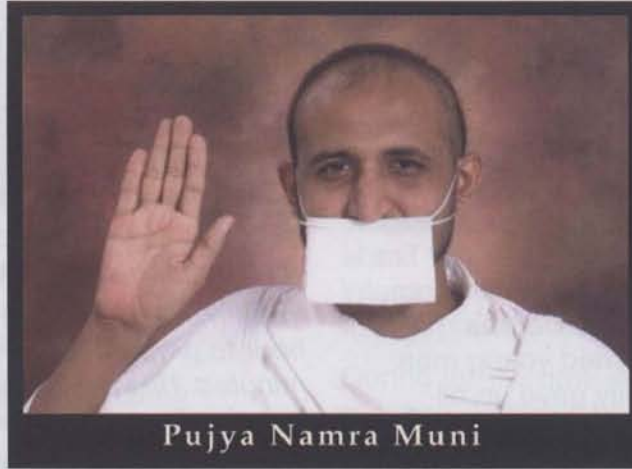
with their treatment, he went on reciting the *stotra* and was saved miraculously. He spent one *chaturmaas* with *tap Samrat Pujya Gurudev Shri Ratilalji Maharaj* and became his disciple. After his Guru's death, he propagated his teachings and preachings. Gurudev Namra Muni has put in tremendous effort to spread Jain religion and hence the title of "*Shashan Prabhavak*" was conferred upon him.

Namra Muni's teachings target the youth and children of today. Gurudev started the *Arham Yuva Group* in November 2005 in Mulund, Mumbai to channelize the youthful energy and thoughts in the right direction. "*The meaning of the word Arham*" is to overcome anger and ego to become a self-composed human being. *Gurudev* wishes to

bring youngsters together and help them get rid of their ego, pride, anger, and guide them to walk on the religious path. The group that began with only 50 members grew fast with over 2000 members now. *Look and Learn* group was targeted towards children. Pujya Gurudev felt that if the children were taught the principles of religion with modern technological aids, more kids would attend *Pathshala* willingly and regularly. *He* worked relentlessly for two years to publish a fascinating book on *Samayik* and *Pratikraman* with colorful illustrations. It is an extremely detailed book and has chapters written in three languages (Ardh Magdhi, Gujarati & English). Approximately 40 *Pathshalas* and 400 teachers worked on this project. The goal for *Look and Learn* was to create a loving and playful environment, which fostered the moral and spiritual development of children. According to Guru Namra Muni, "Religion is about, bringing a positive change in one's day to day life and a lasting change in one's attitude and behavior." The *Kolkata Parasdham* and lately *Pavandham* have also been started by Namra Muniji.

#### Meeting with Pujya Namramuni Maharaj:

One of our editors was fortunate to meet and seek his blessing in July 2010. Here is a brief excerpt from the question and answer session that took place in this meeting:



Pujya Namra Muni

What is the difference between *Dharma* (Religion) and *Sampraday*? Is *Sampraday* important for the future generation?

*Religion is a quality of the soul. Sampraday is one of the roads to reach the final destination. Religion is the same for everyone, but the journey from Jeev to Shiv Atma to Siddhatma there are multiple paths (Sampraday). There need not be any claims*

*from any Sampraday about their path being the only correct one.*

*Reaching the higher destination is a more important goal than the kind of path taken to achieve it. By respecting others and accepting good from everyone helps us improve our knowledge. True Dharma or religion is a feeling that comes when one experiences the nature of one's own soul.*

*It comes with Deed (Action) not by Words.*

Is *Puja* (Worship) necessary?

*There are two kinds of Puja: Sakar (keeping the figure as a medium) and Nirakar (keeping Soul as a medium). Each Puja has its own position in each one's life. It is improper to feel that one might be better than the other.*

Could you comment on the debate of 40 *Loguss* vs. 20 *Loguss* for each *Kaussag*?

*The most important thing is to detach the body from physical activities and concentrate or meditate towards the self. Previously it was meant to go for 100 respirations, which was difficult to practice, therefore Acharyas taught us to use *Loguss* which became a tradition. We should focus on remaining detached from outside activities to focus within and not on the number of *Loguss* we can say.*

Is *Punya* good or bad? Can doing a good deed be bad?

*Punya is a byproduct of good religious behavior. Punya is not a Hay or Upaday, but it is a Gnay. Without Punya receiving healthy human life, meeting proper person (Sadguru), developing faith, learning and practicing right way of living is not possible. Punya is the vehicle to help us towards our goal of Moksh.*

Message to the people:





*People today forget that Bhagwan Mahavir lived in the jungle for 12.5 years and went through severe penance to become Arihant. Currently many Jains are preoccupied only with rituals. It is like a turtle living in a lake. We should aim to be a turtle living in the ocean. Bhagwan Mahavir does not belong to Jains only. We need to cultivate*

*awareness, look at the present, learn from the past and revise our plan for the future to spread Bhagwan Mahavir's message of Ahimsa, Anekantvad, Aparigrah and equanimity to the world.*

**"We have a very short stroke of time to do things fast and with perfection."-- Namra Muni**

## आचार्य भगवन्त श्री हस्तीमल जी

जिनके विमल प्रताप से, हुआ हिताहित ज्ञान।

भक्तियुक्त गुरुदेव का, धरुँ हृदय में ध्यान।।

मेरे आराध्यदेव मेरी असीम श्रद्धा के केन्द्र पूज्य गुरुदेव आचार्य भगवन्त श्री हस्तीमल जी म.सा. का जब भी स्मरण करती हूँ, मन प्रमोद एवं उत्साह से भर जाता है। मैंने उनके दर्शन सर्वप्रथम आज से 38 साल पहले सन् 1972 में पाली, राजस्थान में किये थे। उस समय हम सपरिवार उदयपुर, केसिरिया नाथ जी गये थे। लौटते समय रास्ते में गुरुदेव के दर्शनार्थ हम पाली रुके। शाम का समय था, हमें जयपुर पहुँचने की जल्दी थी, इसलिए हम उनके सांनिध्य में ज्यादा नहीं रुक पाए। उस समय मेरी उनसे कोई बातचीत नहीं हुई थी। हमने वापस लौटते समय उनसे मांगलिक फरमाने के लिए कहा, तो उन्होंने कहा कि अभी जयपुर जा रहे हो क्या? हमने जब हाँ कहा तब उन्होंने अगले दिन जाने को कहा। लेकिन हम लोगों ने उनकी इस बात पर गौर नहीं किया तब उन्होंने मांगलिक फरमा दी। उसके पश्चात हम पाली से जयपुर के लिए रवाना हो गये। हमारे परिवार के सदस्य दो गाड़ियों में थे करीब 8-10 कि.मी. ही चले होंगे कि हमारी एक गाड़ी बीच जंगल में खराब हो गई। गाड़ी का कोई पुर्जा टूट गया था, उसके लिए हमें वापस पाली ही जाना पड़ा। गाड़ी ठीक होते-होते काफी रात बीच चुकी थी, अतः हमने सुबह होने पर ही रवाना होना उचित समझा। गुरुदेव की बात याद आई, उन्होंने कहा था कि सुबह चले जाना, पर हमने उस समय उनकी बात नहीं मानी थी। शायद उन्हें तो इस घटना का पहले ही आभास हो गया था। सुबह रवाना होने से पहले हम गुरुदेव के दर्शन करने पहुँचे, और रात बीती सारी बात कही, लेकिन गुरुदेव मौन रहे, और मांगलिक फरमा दी।

उसके पश्चात् मैंने 1976 में बालोतरा, राजस्थान में गुरुदेव के दर्शन किये, और उसके बाद मैं लगभग हर वर्ष उनके दर्शन करने जाती थी। वे हमेशा सामायिक करने की प्रेरणा देते थे। जब भी जाती थी तो यही पूछते थे कि सामायिक बराबर चल रही है ना। न तो कभी परिवार सम्बन्धित कोई बात पूछते और न कभी अन्य किसी सांसारिक बात की चर्चा करते। वे कम ही बात

करते थे और जब कभी बात करते थे तो केवल धर्मध्यान, आत्मोत्थान एवं कर्मों से मुक्ति सम्बन्धित ही बात करते थे। वे अधिकांश समय लेखन अथवा ध्यान आदि साधना में लीन रहते थे। गुरुदेव के मौन दिवस के दिन भी उनके सांनिध्य में बैठने से आनन्द का अनुभव होता था। उनके दर्शन मात्र से ही मन में एक अनोखी संतुष्टि सी मिलती थी। जब भी मौका मिलता मेरी भावना उनके दर्शनों के लिए जाने की रहती थी। समय के साथ साथ मेरी श्रद्धा बढ़ती गई, और साथ साथ धार्मिक भावना भी दृढ़ होती गई।

उनके प्रवचन भी बहुत प्रभावी रंग प्रेरणास्पद होते थे। जब भी मैं गुरुदेव के प्रवचन सुनती ऐसा लगता था कि, जैसे उनके प्रत्येक वाक्य मेरे लिए ही है, प्रत्येक शब्द जिनवाणी का सार, प्रत्येक वाक्य जीवन का उद्धार करने वाला और आत्मा को अन्दर तक स्पर्श कर देने वाला होता था।

सन् 1990 में मेरे पति के स्वर्गवास के बाद मेरे जीवन में काफी समस्याएँ आई, पर आपकी कृपा से सभी का समाधान हो गया। मैंने कभी भी गुरुदेव से अपनी समस्या नहीं कही, और कभी कुछ नहीं मांगा। उसके बाद गुरुदेव का देवलोक 1991 में हो गया था। उनके प्रति जो श्रद्धा थी, उसी से हमारी समस्याओं का समाधान हो जाता था।

आज मैं सब जिम्मेदारियों से निवृत्त हो गई हूँ। अब मेरे जीवन का लक्ष्य सिर्फ धार्मिक स्वाध्याय ही है। गुरुदेव का बोधा हुआ बीज मेरे अन्तर में पनपता रहा, और आज वह आध्यात्मिक भावना से लहलहा रहा है, यह सब उनकी ही कृपा से है। आज वे शारीरिक रूप से हमारे बीच नहीं हैं, पर उनका स्मरण हमेशा रहता है।

ऐसे श्रद्धास्पद गुरुदेव को कोटिशः वन्दन नमन।

-रतन करनावट

## Agamoddharak Shri Ghasilalji Maharaj

Jain Acharya and a literary giant, Ghasilalji Maharaj was a great intellectual in the Sthanakvasi Jain community. Shri Ghasilalji was born in 1885 at Banol village, which is known for

its great warriors near Jashwantgadh in Mewar region. Shri Ghasilalji's personal appearance was very impressive. Anybody who saw him predicted that the boy would be a great man in the future.



He was a disciple of the great Acharya Shri Jawaharlalji Maharaj. His sound knowledge of Jain literature established him as a profound thinker and his literary creations reflect his holy, restrained and vow-full life.

Ghasilalji did not attend any school but learnt everything from nature. He learnt the virtues of tolerance, renunciation, satisfaction, appreciation of other's virtues, fearlessness, simplicity, equal feelings for all, and self-support from nature itself. He would go away to the nearby forests to think about life & nature. Ghasilalji was deeply influenced by Acharya Shri Jawaharlalji Maharaj's preaching. Ghasiramji expressed his desire to take Diksha. Acharya Shri told him, "It is very difficult & painful to follow vows but it is the only way to be free from the bondage of deeds". Ghasilalji at once replied, "I shall suffer all pains with total determination to follow the restrained life because restraint always brings happiness in this life as also in future lives." Noticing Ghasiramji's firm commitment over a period of time Acharya Jawaharlalji granted him Diksha in 1952 at Jashwantgadh.

He mastered 16 languages. He also had deep knowledge of grammar, logic (Nyaya), darshan & literature. He spent his monsoons in many regions of India spreading the Jain scripture knowledge to the wider Indian community. Accepting requests from several devotees from all

over India, he started the work of translating 32 Agamic scriptures. For this task, he worked continuously at Ahmedabad for 16 years. Finally, people had access to these scriptures in a language they could understand. He translated the original scriptures first in the form of prose & poetry and then later with detailed comments and meanings. The Jain community will always be grateful to Acharya Ghasilalji for his contribution of translating the Jain scriptures in Gujarati & Hindi.

His greatness and vast learning is evident from his works. He was endowed with the virtues of simplicity, nobility, sweetness of speech, large-heartedness, tolerance, self-supporting nature etc. It was for this reason people of all communities respected him. He always advocated love for all, friendship and spiritual tolerance.

Shri Ghasilalji was awarded the titles of Kolhapur Raj Purush and Shasanacharya because of his great knowledge and literary work. The Karachi Jain Sangh conferred on him the titles of Jain Diwakar and Jain Acharya because of his total renunciation, penance and restraint.

Finally, as his health started failing him, he embraced Sallekhana vow (fast unto death) and on February 2, 1973 at the age of 88 Acharya Shri Ghasilalji passed away.

(Continued from page 54)

<b>Bruhad Gujarat Samuday</b> 3 Acharya; 139 Sadhu; 1091 Sadhvi Total 1,230	
Cha(6) Koti Limdi	Gadipati Shri Labhchandrajii
Gondal	Gachchashiro.Jayantilalji
Limadi Ajaramar	Shri Dhiryra Muniji
Dariyapuri	Acharyashri Virendra Muniji
Katch Mota Paksh	Gadipati Pranalji
Katch Nani Paksh	Acharya Shri Raghavaji Swami (Recently after taking a vow of fasting upto death, he passed away on February 27, 2011)
Botad	Shri Amichandaji
Khambhat	Acharya Shri Aravind muniji
Gondal Sanghani	P.Ratnashri Narendra muniji
Barawala	Gachchadhipati Shri Saradarmuniji
Halari	P.Ratnashri Keshav muniji



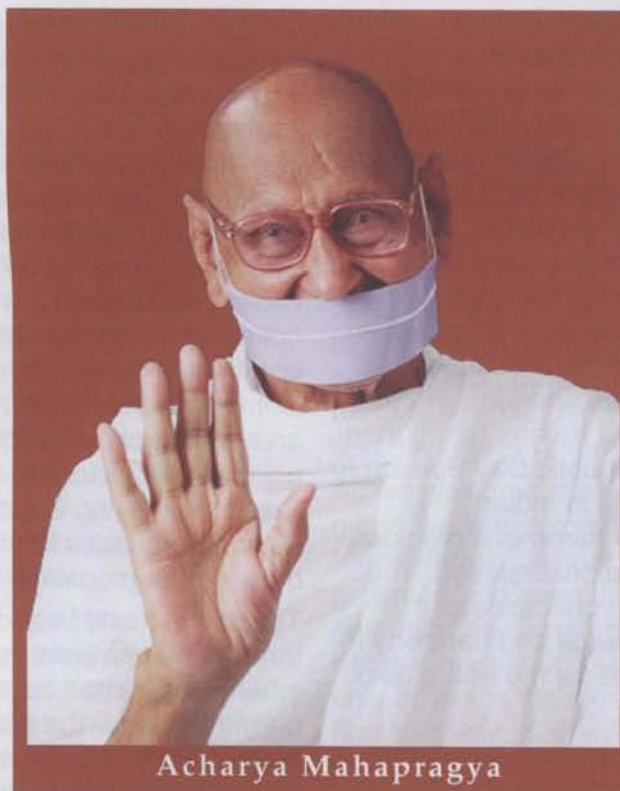
# The Legend and the Legacy

## A Tribute to Acharya Mahapragya

**M**uni Nathmal was in a profound meditative state pondering over the embedded meaning of an Agam verse". This sentence depicts the complete devotion of a prodigy sage, Muni Nathmal, to comprehend the truth passed on by Bhagwan Mahavir. Right from the beginning, at the tender age of ten, he devoted himself to the study, research, and correlation of the rich treasures of the Jain Agams and related Jain canons for over thirty years. Continuously guided, encouraged, and sometimes even prodded by Guru Acharya Tulsi,

Muni Nathmal would dwell deep into a particular subject matter, analyzing it from multiple angles and ultimately realizing the very essence of the message as if it was delivered directly by Kevali Mahavir. He was able to master the *Nirgranth* faith (the original name of Mahavir's philosophy) in its original form and find applicability for it in modern times by filtering off the possible distortions of language, time, social changes, and traditionalism. Appreciating the great knowledge, discipline, and the wisdom of his disciple, Acharya Tulsi brought this great personage out of seclusion and presented him to the world by endowing additional honors and responsibilities. Acharya Tulsi honored him with the qualitative epithet of *Mahapragya* (highly knowledgeable) on 12 November 1978. The Legend, whom we know as Acharya Mahapragya, became known to public.

Nathmal (Acharyashri's childhood name) was born to Tola Ram Choraria and Baluji in the small village of Tamkor in the Jhunjhunu district in Rajasthan. He lost his father when he was just two and half months old. Growing up in an extended family, he gained support from all the family members. Nathmal's mother was very fond and



Acharya Mahapragya

affectionate towards him. There was no formal school in Tamkor village in those days and Acharyashri did not receive a formal education. He nonetheless had lessons on letters and mathematics tables from local teacher(s). He was inspired towards spirituality by his mother's religious devotion and by the lessons learnt from sadhus who visited the village from time to time. Eventually he conveyed to his mother his wish to become a monk. On January 29, 1931, at the age of 10 Acharya Kalugani initiated him into the Jain Shwetamber

Terapanth order. Assigned under the mentorship of Muni Tulsi; a *guru-chela* relationship that grew exponentially as time passed. The combination and somewhat complementary skills of these two masters not only grew the Terapanth sangh far beyond the confines of Rajasthan's few northern districts, but also made its deep impact on the Indian nation and its influence spread throughout the globe.

Thoughts churned out from the depths of his meditation are lasting and effective. In his single famous quote - "*Soul is my god. Renunciation is my prayer. Amity is my devotion. Self-restraint is my strength. Non-violence is my religion.*" - Acharya Mahapragya defined the essence of Dharma, sainthood, and his own path to salvation. At the same time, he inspired mankind to follow the path founded on fundamental human strengths and values.

The word *Mahaprajna* (spoken as Mahapragya) means "Highly knowledgeable". Acharya Mahapragya's disciples refer to him as Gurudev and saw him as a *Karunadhari* (companionate – kind, gentle and generous) guru with a treasure of



infinite knowledge, always providing blessing and guidance for their upliftment and empowerment. Besides being a philosopher-thinker lost in philosophy, he was also an extempore and inspirational poet. His verses in both Hindi and Sanskrit reveal his subtle delicate feelings and the depth of his philosophical understanding. Sambodhi, Ashruvina, Mukulam (in Sanskrit) and Rishabhayana, Shraman Mahavir (in Hindi) are some of the jewels contributed by him to the world of literature. Acharyashri's early scholarly works were read and personally recognized by Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the second President of India, and India's most influential scholars of comparative religion and philosophy. *Rashtrakavi* (National poet) Ram Dhari Singh Dinkar said, "Mahapragya is a Modern Vivekananda". In 2004 Indian President A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, mentioned Acharyashri's name in his Republic Day Speech to the nation. This is the first time in Indian Parliamentary history that the name of a religious leader was mentioned in a national speech. The recognition that the basic Jain principles can become the cornerstone of peace and harmony in the country is a matter of pride for the entire Jain community.

When one of the authors of the Jain Digest met him in Ladnun, Rajasthan, it was that time of the year when over 5000 devotees had gathered to celebrate the annual *Maryada Mahotsava*. Acharyashri still managed to find time for people who wanted to meet him. When asked about religious sects he said, "If you are not a religious fanatic, everybody is yours and if you are a religious fanatic, whatever is yours also doesn't remain with you any more". He further went on to emphasize the importance of spirituality over theology and tradition, but at the same time, he did not discount the need for tradition. In that short time span, he showed certain meditation techniques, and emphasized its importance. In the end we ran out of questions, Acharyashri did not run out of time. In the end, he gave an advice to start taking simple steps to remain inside while living in the outside world.

Acharyashri spent years studying and experimenting on various meditation techniques described in various ancient Jain scriptures. Correlating the results of his experimentation with Yoga science (as described by various eastern scholars), Biology, Physics, Naturopathy and Ayurveda, Acharyashri realized the wonderful benefits of meditation. He formalized his discovery

in the form of *Preksha Dhyam* (Perceptive Meditation), a new meditation technique relevant for the modern times. The simple steps of *Preksha Dhyam* calm the most fickle and wandering mind, rejuvenate the physical body, and ultimately sow the seed of spirituality.

Modern educational systems have been standardized towards intellectual development and imparting knowledge. Acharyashri realized that the ills of the society cannot be resolved unless the basic moral value system is instilled in the youth right from the formative years of their education. Acharyashri introduced *Jeevan Vigyan* (Science of Living) system with the intent of holistic development of students that includes their emotional, intellectual and physical development. Combining Pranayam, Yoga postures, Meditation, and contemplation techniques with other scientifically validated affirmation techniques, Science of Living Education inculcates positive attitude and helps in the development of a balanced personality.

Transformations in social outlook can occur through movements that touch the goodness inherent in human psyche that invariably remains dormant. Under the guidance of Acharya Tulsi, Mahapragyaji played an instrumental role in the *Anuvrat* movement. The ultimate aim of the movement is to create a nonviolent socio-political world order with the help of a worldwide network of self-transformed people. This grassroots movement is making slow but effective progress across the globe.

The economic growth, steered by phenomenal globalization and advances in technology, has also become the amplifier of human greed and the thirst for power. Such strong unrestrained emotions result in terrorist attacks, communal and ethnic clashes, and increased disparity between the rich and the poor. Acharya Mahapragya started a mass movement – a long journey christened *Ahimsa Yatra*, to act as an antidote to the spread of human negativism. *Ahimsa Yatra* would influence people from all walks of life with the power of Ahimsa. Covering nine states and thousands of villages, towns and cities by foot, Acharyashri would first bring the problems of all forms of violence into sharp focus, then find common ground in differing ideas and views, and finally, by persuasion, convert negative thoughts and emotions into positive and constructive views. *Ahimsa Yatra* inspired over 40,000 volunteers, who would work at local levels, resolving conflicts



and bringing peace and harmony to the community.

Those who have extensively practiced nonviolence have not only made profound positive impact on society but have also given us hope for a harmonious future. Acharyashri realized that he and his dedicated disciples, alone, could only do so much. He needed to team up with other like-minded individuals to spread the power of Ahimsa. Mahapragyaji went out of his way to meet and collaborate with other Jain Acharyas and leaders to spread Jain philosophy and the essence of our ancient heritage. He also interacted with leaders of other faiths finding common ground and advancing the cause of Ahimsa. Acharyashri successfully convinced and motivated various renowned academicians, sociopolitical personalities, professional and business leaders towards projects leading to social upliftment constructed on the principles of Ahimsa. The collaborative work with Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam is a classic example of such endeavor.

In the book, The Family and The Nation, written jointly by Acharya Mahapragya and Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam. They put forwards compelling argument of needing both *adhyatma* (spirituality), and *vigyan* (science - but broadly defined as economic growth) for the country to progress. They prescribe a process to build ethics at all levels in the country:

- A nation has to have ethics in all its tasks for sustained economic prosperity and peace.

- If a nation is to have ethics, society has to promote ethics and value systems.
- If society is to have ethics and value systems, families should adhere to ethics and value systems.
- If families have to evolve with ethics and value systems, parenthood should have inbuilt ethics.
- Parental ethics come from great learning, value-based education and creation of clean environment that leads to righteousness in the heart.

How do we define a great master? Is it by the legendary qualities or by the legacy? The question was answered by Jain Sashan - we bow to *Arihants* before we bow to *Siddhas*. While the enlightened soul departed from the physical body on May 9, 2010, Gurudev Mahapragyaji lives on and his legacy remains alive.

As we welcome the new Acharya Mahashraman, a gift to the world from his Guru, Acharya Mahapragya; , someone educated, nurtured, groomed and eventually empowered under his guidance, to carry forward the message of Bhagwan Mahavir. Acharya Mahashraman will not only advance the legacy of Acharya Mahapragya, his Guru, but in time, will establish his own legacy.

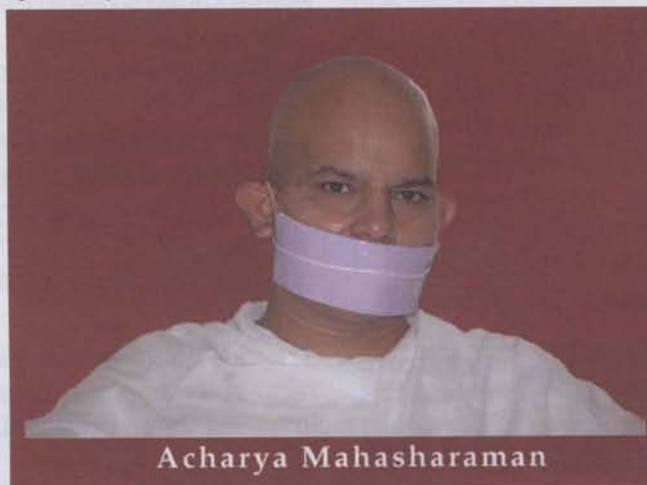
# Acharya Mahashraman

## A Glimpse of a Great Soul

Jain Dharma has given immense importance to the role of a guru in a soul's journey towards enlightenment. Blessed are those who have received the kind and insightful guidance from the great spiritual leaders; especially if these spiritual gurus include the visionary Gurudev Acharya Tulsi and the legendary scholar Gurudev Acharya Mahapragya. It seems both Acharya

Tulsi and Mahapragya had reserved some of the choicest words for their most worthy disciple Mahashraman. An English translation of these

words would not do justice as it would fail to define the unique nature of an enlightened soul. It is only through *Anupreksha* (deep meditation on selected words or phrases) that we begin to understand the deeper meaning of these seemingly simple words that define the unique nature,



Acharya Mahashraman



capabilities and *charitra* of Acharya Mahashraman.

*"Mahashraman Aachaar Nishth Hai, Adhyaatma Nishth Hai, Vinmra Hai Aou Sub Prakar Se Saksham Hai. Main Bhavishya Ke Lie Nishchint Hun."*  
-Acharya Tulsi

*"Mahashraman is a legend in leading a pure life, firm conduct observance, and highly enlightened Saint. He is enormously capable. The future is in good hands."* (the translation is intended to give the overall meaning instead of it being a paraphrase.)

*"Mahatapasvi Veh Hota Hai Jisme Indriya Sanyam Hota Hai. Mahashraman Ka Indriya Sanyam Anuttar Hai."* – Acharya Mahapragya

*"A high profiled ascetic is the personality who has disciplined his mind, body and instincts blissfully. Mahashraman is an extra ordinary example of it. Therefore I recognize him an exemplary ascetic."*

Acharya Shri Mahashraman was born as Mohan Dugar on May 13, 1962 in Sardarshahar, Rajasthan in western India. His profound religious pursuits became manifest in his early formative years, along with an intense quest for in-depth knowledge and truth. A few days shy of his twelfth birthday, this child prodigy convinced the, then Acharya Tulsi to initiate him as a monk and thus began the meticulous nurturing and training that turned him into an outstanding saint and eminent Jain scholar. At the same time, he was also transformed into an extraordinary leader under the astute guidance and prudent prodding not only of his late grand guru but also of the late Acharya Mahapragya, for whom he has had the utmost devotion and reverence. Being a *Yuvacharya*, he was involved inseparably in all of Acharya Mahapragya's work. Acharya Mahapragya used to experience 'oneness' with Acharya Mahashraman.

One witnesses rare coincidences in Acharya Mahashraman's life every 12 years. Every 12th year brought a new direction and responsibility in his life. He took *diksha* at the age of 12, he became Acharya Mahapragya's close subordinate at the age of 24, he became a *Yuvacharya* (designated Acharya) at the age of 36 and finally became the *Acharya* at the age of 48. Similarly, the month of May has been special in Acharya

### Terapanth Lineage

Acharya Bhikshu (1760-1803)  
Acharya Bharmal (1803-1821)  
Acharya Raichand (1821-1851)  
Acharya Jeetmal (1851-1881)  
Acharya Maghraj (1881-1892)  
Acharya Manaklal (1892-1897)  
Acharya Dalchand (1897-1909)  
Acharya Kaluram (1909-1936)  
Acharya Tulsi (1936-1996)  
Acharya Mahaprajna (1996-9th May 2010)  
Acharya Mahashraman (From May)

Mahashraman's life; he was born on May 13, took his *diksha* on May 13, became Acharya Tulsi's disciple on May 13, and became the group leader on May 14. With his recent induction as the 11th Acharya of Terapanth, on May 23, 2010, in his hometown of Sardarshahar, the coincidences of 12 years and the month of May continues.

Tirthankar Mahavir showed the path of liberation from karmic bondage through enlightened faith or perception (*samyak darshana*), enlightened knowledge (*samyak jnana*), and enlightened conduct (*samyak charitra*) 2600 years ago. Now it seems that three great Terapanth Jain saints of the modern era have become symbols of this three pronged concept. Acharya Tulsi laid the foundation by creating an institution that puts emphasis on the basic tenets of the Dharma while deemphasizing (not rejecting) certain age old traditions. It is an institution that encourages belief in reality that leads to rational perception. Belief in the core Jain philosophical concepts resulting from rational perception rather than blind faith is much stronger and clearer.

Acharya Mahapragya built further on the foundation laid by Tulsiji. Many of Acharya Mahapragya's disciples describe him as an "Ocean of Knowledge". An ardent researcher and investigator, Mahapragya gained deep knowledge of the Jain Agams, other Jain canons, and various other eastern and western philosophical works. He subsequently showed the relevance of his mastery of this ancient treasure in every walk of life, including its positive impact on each and every aspect of our diverse modern society.

The great efforts of these two masters would remain incomplete unless we in the society start imbibing these core values within us. This

### Total Monk in Terapanth Sangh

Acharya-1, Sadhu-153, Sadhvi-518, Saman-1, Samani-98, Mumukshu(Trainee Monks)-43

mountainous task of convincing and motivating the society to start living the value system so lucidly described by his gurus is now in the hands of Acharya Mahashraman. The distinct qualities of Acharya Mahashraman allows him to lead us with his own example. What stands out is Mahashraman's unparalleled amount of humility and equanimity. It seems his keen sense of awareness is active all the time, the same quality he subtly induces in people who come in contact with him. Under his otherwise quiet persona there is a deep sense of purpose and remarkable ability to bring about a change in the society.

Practicing meditation in the peaceful ambience at the dawn of the day is an important part of his daily life. Even as the day progresses and he engages in various activities and programs, he continues to present the same peaceful and equanimous nature. He is a living example of the concept of the *Sthitapragya* as described in *Shrimad Bhagwat Gita*. This is the reason why every person entering his aura feels purity, peace and solace. The very presence of this saintly aura coupled with his great oratory skills, not only

leaves a lasting impression, but also influences a shuttle change towards spirituality in his audience. While, Jain Agams have always been the basis of his speeches, he would, on many occasions dwell deep into teachings of *Shrimad Bhagwat Gita* and Buddhist scripture *Dhammapad*. With his clear beliefs that texts, sacred notes, religious orders or saints can be different but their learning experiences and facts are the same, his talks would have lasting impact on various non-Jain members of our society. This unique strength was aptly demonstrated during his tour of the remote tribal areas, where Acharyashri explained the significance of the principle of *Ahimsa*. Many tribal people not only listened and understood Ahimsa but also accepted it practically by renouncing hunting, addictive substances, non-vegetarian food and innocent killing.

Glorious in peace, sharp in silence, humble in learning and specialty in simplicity this young Acharya is beacon of hope and a solace in this era of dwindling morality, intolerance and unrest. Humankind can look to this brightly shining star for a path to salvation.

## જ્ઞાનીની દશા

દેહ છતાં જેની દશા વર્તે દેહાતીત  
તે જ્ઞાનીના શરણમાં હો વંદન અગણીત

(This Article in Gujarati is based on the writing of Pujya Shri Rakeshbhai Zaveri, who has been inspired by the teaching of Shrimad Rajchandra.)

દેહધારી હોવા છતાં જે વિદેહી દશામાં સતત વર્તે છે, રાગ-દ્વેષ અને અજ્ઞાન જેમના ટળી ગયા છે, જેમને અનંત ઐશ્વર્ય યુક્ત સ્વસ્વરૂપ પ્રગટ કર્યું છે, જેઓ શાંત રસમાં ઝૂલી અમૃતસાગર થયા છે, જેઓ કૃતકૃત્ય થઈ સહજાત્મ પદ પામ્યા છે, તે ભગવાન સ્વરૂપ જ્ઞાની પુરુષોને અત્યંત ભક્તિભાવ થી કોટી કોટી વંદન હો.

જ્ઞાનીની આવી મહત્તા, જૈન અને જૈનેતર, બધાજ સાહિત્ય માં કરેલી છે. આવા જ્ઞાની તે કોણ? આવી અદ્ભુત દશા કેવી રીતે પ્રાપ્ત થાય? એ જ્ઞાનીને કેવી રીતે ઓળખવા? પ્રસ્તુત લેખમાં આપણે પૂજ્યશ્રી રાકેશભાઈ ઝવેરી આ બાબતમાં શું સમજાવે છે એ ટૂંક માં જોઈશું.

જ્ઞાની કોને કહેવાય? જેણે આત્માનું જ્ઞાન મેળવ્યું છે, જેણે આત્માનો અનુભવ કરેલો છે તે જ્ઞાની. જે સાધક, શ્રી ગુરુ પાસેથી શુદ્ધાત્મસ્વરૂપનું જ્ઞાન મેળવી, તેની પ્રાપ્તિ માટે પ્રયોગાત્મક અભ્યાસમાં નિષ્ઠા અને સાતત્ય પૂર્વક રત રહે છે, તે ભવ્ય આત્માને કોઈ પણ ધન્ય પળે શુદ્ધાત્માની પ્રાપ્તિ

થાય છે. એજ છે સમ્યકદર્શન, આત્માની અનુભૂતિ. આ કાળે આત્મા અતિન્દ્રિય આનંદપણે વેદનમાં આવે છે. અખંડ પ્રયાસથી મેળવેલી આ જ્ઞાની દશા અત્યંત અદ્ભુત અને આનંદમય હોય છે. કલ્પનાથી સમજાય કે વાણીથી વર્ણવા જેવી નથી. જેમ ગોળના ગળપણની કે ઘીના સ્વાદની કશા સાથે તુલના કરી શકાય નહિ, તેમ આ સહજાનંદને કોઈ બીજી ઉપમા આપી શકાય નહિ. અનાદિકાળથી દૃષ્ટિ પર ઉપર હતી, વિપરીત હતી; તેથી એ દશામાં દુખ હતું. હવે દિશા અંતરની તરફ છે. દિશા સવળી થતા દશા આનંદમય બને છે.

આવા જ્ઞાનીના લક્ષણો શું કે જેથી આપણે જ્ઞાની અને અજ્ઞાનીમાં નો ફેર સમઝે?

૧) સ્વરૂપ રમણતા

જ્ઞાની સ્વાનુભૂતિના કાળે પોતાના આનંદ, શાંતિ, જ્ઞાન આદિ અનંત ગુણોની અદ્ભુત પર્યાયોમાં રમતા હોય છે. દ્રવ્યદ્રષ્ટિ થઈ હોવાને લીધે ગમે તે સ્થળે, ગમે તે સંજોગોમાં પોતાના



સુખનીધાન પોતાની સાથે જ રહે છે. જ્ઞાનીએ પોતાનો સ્વભાવ જાણ્યો છે. આત્માનો સ્વભાવ સંપૂર્ણ સ્વતંત્ર, પોતાથી જ પોતામાં પરિપૂર્ણ, સુખરૂપ છે. તેથી જ્ઞાનીને કદી પણ પોતાના સુખ માટે પરાશ્રયની જરૂર લાગતી નથી. આવી દશા પ્રાપ્ત કરવા, તેને સહજ બનાવવા માટે બેહદ પુરુષાર્થ આવશ્યક છે. કલાકાર કુશળતાથી ચિત્ર દોરી શકે છે કે અદાકારી કરી શકે છે કારણકે એની પાછળ વરસોની તપસ્યા છે; એમજ જ્ઞાનીની આ સહજતા નિરંતર અભ્યાસથી આવે છે.

અજ્ઞાની પોતે પોતાના સ્વભાવને ભૂલીને, ઉંધી માન્યતાથી પરની ગુલામી સ્વીકારે છે; પરંતુ જ્ઞાની સ્વભાવના જોરે પરાશ્રયરૂપ ગુલામીના બંધનને સર્વથા છેદીને, સંપૂર્ણ સ્વતંત્ર દશામાં બિરાજે છે. સંસારની સર્વ પ્રવૃત્તિઓમાં તેઓ ઉદાસીન થઈને નિશ્ચલ વૃત્તિને ધારણ કરે છે. નીજાનંદનો અનુભવ થયો હોવાથી તેમને વિષયો પ્રત્યે વૈરાગ્ય હોય છે. "સકલ જગત છે એઠવત, અથવા સ્વપ્ન સમાન" પ્રતીત થાય છે, તેથી તેમને વિષયસુખ ભોગવવાના પરિણામ થતા નથી.

### ૨) અપૂર્વ જાગૃતિ

જ્ઞાની પૂર્વ કર્મોદયના કારણે સંસારની પ્રવૃત્તિમાં પ્રવર્તે છે ત્યારે પણ એમની વૃત્તિ નિજભાવમા જ રહે છે. સંસારના કાર્યોમાં પણ તેમને પોતાના શુદ્ધસ્વરૂપની પ્રતીતિ તેમજ જ્ઞાન વર્તે છે. તેઓ ગમે તેવા ઉપાધી પ્રસંગમાં પ્રવર્તતા હોય તોપણ તેમના શ્રદ્ધા-જ્ઞાન ઘેરાઈ જતા નથી, વિપરીત થતા નથી. જેમ એક નાવને કિનારે બાંધેલી હોય તો પાણી અને પવનના કારણે તે હાલકડોલક થાય પણ છૂટી ન જાય; તેમ જ્ઞાની પૂર્વબદ્ધ કર્મના ઉદયરૂપ મોજાંથી અઘાપાછા થતા જણાય, પણ પોતાના લંગર નાખેલા સ્થાનથી તેઓ જરા પણ હટતા નથી, સ્વરૂપલક્ષ ચુકતા નથી.

આવા ઉદય પ્રસંગોમાં તેમને ક્યાંય ગમતું નથી, ઉત્સાહ આવતો નથી, હોંશ કે ઉમંગ ઉછળતો નથી. તેમની પ્રવૃત્તિ તપેલા લોઢા ઉપર પગ મુકવા જેવી હોય છે. જેમ તપેલા લોઢા ઉપર પગ મુકતા તરતજ આંચકો અનુભવાય છે, પગ ત્યાં ઝાઝો વખત ટકી શકતો નથી, તરતજ આપોઆપ ખેંચી લેવાય છે; તેમ સંસાર પ્રવૃત્તિમાં જ્ઞાનીઓ એકદમ આંચકો અનુભવે છે, એમાં ઝાઝો વખત સ્થિતિ કરતા નથી, ત્યાંથી તરત પાછા વળી જાય છે. જે પ્રવૃત્તિ કરવી પડે તે અત્યંત નીરસપણે, અંતરંગ ખેદ સહીત કરે છે.

સંસાર પ્રવૃત્તિ કરતી વખતે જ્ઞાની પોતાના સ્વરૂપ પ્રત્યે જાગૃત રહી, ઉદયથી ઉપયોગને છૂટો પાડે છે. તેમનો ઉપયોગ આત્મામય રહે છે. કોઈ પણ પ્રસંગમાં સ્વરૂપ જાગૃતિ ચુકતા નથી. તેઓ ખાતા, પીતા, બેસતા, ઉઠતા "હું માત્ર દ્રષ્ટા છું" એવી જાગૃતિ રાખે છે. પોતાને જે સંગપ્રસંગ

પ્રાપ્ત થાય એની સાથે તેઓ એકત્વ કરતા નથી. એમાં ખોવાઈ જતા નથી. કર્મના ઉદયે જે ફરઝ આવી પડે તેને તેઓ સારીરીતે, સાક્ષીભાવ નિભાવે છે. તેઓ બધી ફરજોનું પાલન કરવા છતાં એમાં લેપાતા નથી. વિષય કષાયની પ્રવૃત્તિમાં હોવા છતાં તેઓ જળકમળવત રહે છે.

### ૩) અપરિગ્રહ

જેમણે સમ્યક દર્શન પામ્યું છે, તેઓ આ રીતે સંસારિક પ્રવૃત્તિમાં અનાસક્ત રહે છે. તેમની દૃષ્ટિ તો આત્મા પર જ રહે છે. પરમાં સુખ બુદ્ધિની કલ્પના છોડી, નિજ શુદ્ધ ચિદાનંદ પૂર્ણ સ્વભાવમાં સ્થિરતા કરતા અનુપમ અતીન્દ્રિય સુખ પ્રગટે છે. તેના આસ્વાદથી અદભુત તૃપ્તિ થાય છે. આવી સ્થિતિમાં સંસારિક પદાર્થોમાં રસ રહેતો નથી. પોતાના પાસે કેટલું છે એ માપ ન રહેતા પોતાને શેના વગર ચાલે છે એ સમૃદ્ધિનું માપ થાય છે. આવા જ્ઞાની કહે છે કે કિંચિત માત્ર ગ્રાહવું એ સુખનો નાશ છે. એ કહે છે કે બહારથી જેટલો તું ભરેલો છે તેટલો તું અંદરથી ખાલી છે. અજ્ઞાની જીવો સુખની ભ્રાંતિ માટે પ્રથમ પદાર્થો ભેગા કરે છે અને પછી તેને રક્ષવાની, વધારવાની અને ભોગવાની ચિંતામાં દુખી રહે છે. પણ જેમને વિતરાગ માર્ગની યથાર્થ સમજણ થઈ છે તેઓ આત્મ મહિમાને લીધે પરિગ્રહથી દૂર રહે છે.

### ૪) નિર્લેપતા

જ્ઞાની બાહ્યથી સંસારને ભજતા દેખાય તોપણ તે ભજનમાં આત્મભાવ, આદર, આસક્તિનો અભાવ હોય છે. તેમની દ્રષ્ટિ તો નીજાત્માં પર જ હોય છે. મત્સ્યવેધ વેળા અર્જુનની આંખ નીચે પાણીમાં સ્થિર થઈ હતી. માત્ર વિચક્ષણ જન જ પકડી શકે કે અર્જુનની આંખ નીચે મંડાઈ હોવા છતાં એની દ્રષ્ટિ તો માથા પર ફરી રહેલ માછલી ઉપર જ ચોટેલી હતી. તેવી જ રીતે જ્ઞાની સાંસારિક ક્રિયાઓ કરતા દેખાય, પરંતુ તેમની દ્રષ્ટિ તો શુદ્ધાત્માંરૂપી માછલી પર જ સ્થિર હોય છે. સંસારમાં રહ્યા છતા તેમની દ્રષ્ટિ શુદ્ધાત્માંમાં જ સ્થિર હોય છે.

જીવમાંથી અજ્ઞાન ટળી જતા જીવનમાં આવું પરિવર્તન આવે છે. ઉપરથી જોતા જીવનમાં કદાચ કોઈ ફરક ન લાગે, તો પણ અંદરથી તે સમગ્રપણે બદલાઈ જાય છે. એક રીતે જોઈએ તો બધું તે જ હોય છે કે જે પહેલા હતું, પરંતુ બીજા અર્થમાં પૂર્વ અવસ્થા પૈકીનું કશું જ રહેતું નથી. દોરીને જમીન ઉપર ગોઠવીને બાળવામાં આવતાં દોરી તો બળી જાય છે. પણ તેની આકૃતિ તો પહેલાં જેવી જ રહે છે. આકૃતિની દૃષ્ટિએ કોઈ પરિવર્તન આવ્યું ન હોવા છતાં દોરીપણું તો સમૂળગું નાશ પામ્યું હોય છે. દોરી બાંધવાના કામમાં આવે છે, પણ દોરીની આકૃતિએ રહેલી રાખ કોઈ કામમાં આવતી નથી. જ્ઞાનીપુરુષનું જીવન આવું હોય છે, જ્ઞાનાઝ્મીમાં જ્યારે અજ્ઞાન બળી જાય છે ત્યારે માત્ર





આકૃતિ જ બાકી રહે છે. તેમન જીવનમાં રાખની આકૃતિ સિવાય બીજું કંઈ રહેતું નથી. અર્થાત જે રહે છે તે સાંસારિક અપેક્ષાએ કોઈ કામનું રહેતું નથી. બાહ્યમાં તેમની પ્રવૃત્તિ ઉદાયાધીન હોય છે, પણ દર્શનમોહરૂપી દોરી બળી ગઈ હોવાથી ભાવની અપેક્ષાએ સઘળું બદલાઈ ચુક્યું છે. તેઓ ખાય છે, પીએ છે, હસે છે, ચાલે છે, પણ ખરેખર તો ખાતા નથી, પીતા નથી, હસતા નથી, ચાલતા નથી. આ કશામાં તેઓ જાણે છે જ નહીં ! તેઓ જ્યાં દેખાય છે ત્યાં હોતા જ નથી. તેમની વૃત્તિ નીજભાવમાં જ વહે છે. ગમે તે અવસ્થામાં તેમનું સમ્યકદર્શન અખંડ રહે છે.

#### ૫) સહજ વિરક્તિ

"આત્મામાં અનંતો આનંદ છે" એવી શ્રદ્ધા થઈ હોવાથી જ્ઞાનીઓને વિષયમાં સુખબુદ્ધિ રહેતી નથી. આત્મા સિવાય ક્યાંય સુખ લાગતું ન હોવાથી પાંચ ઇન્દ્રિયોના વિષયોથી તેઓ ઉદાસ થઈ જાય છે. પાંચ ઇન્દ્રિયોના વિષયોની પ્રવૃત્તિ તેમને ઝેર જેવી ભાસે છે, તેથી તેઓ એમાં અટકતા નથી. આત્માનંદમાં તેઓ એવા લીન થઈ જાય છે કે તેઓ બીજો કોઈ વિકલ્પ કરતા નથી. જ્ઞાનીનું બાહ્ય જીવન કર્મના ઉદય અનુસાર - પૂર્વપ્રારબ્ધ અનુસાર હોય છે અને તેમનું આંતરિક જીવન ગુરુની આજ્ઞા અનુસાર હોય છે. અનેક પ્રકારના ચિત્રવિચિત્ર ઉદય પ્રસંગોમાં તેમને સહજ વિરક્તિ રહે છે. એમની દ્રષ્ટિ ધ્રુવ આત્મસ્વભાવ ઉપરજ રહે છે. પોતાની પર્યાય ઉપર પણ દ્રષ્ટિ જતી નથી તો શરીર આદી બાહ્ય પદાર્થો ઉપર દ્રષ્ટિ ક્યાંથી જાય?

#### ૬) સમતા

આત્મતૃપ્ત જ્ઞાની ગમે તે પ્રસંગમાં, અનુકુળતા કે પ્રતિકુળતામાં, અનિષ્ટબુદ્ધિ કરતા નથી. સમદશાએ વર્તે છે. અજ્ઞાનીને સ્વ-સ્વરૂપની જાગૃતિ નથી. એટલે ઇન્દ્રિય વિષયોના ગ્રહણકાળે તે શોક કે હર્ષ કરે છે. જગતના પદાર્થોની મુખ્યતાના લીધે "આ સારું, આ ખરાબ" એવું માને છે. જ્યાં સુધી સંસારી સુખ, સંસારી પ્રસંગોમાં વ્હાલપ વર્તે છે, ત્યાં સુધી પોતાનું સ્વરૂપ ભાસવું અસંભવ છે. સંયોગ વિયોગ એ આ દેહના ધર્મો છે. ધ્રુવ ચૈતન્ય સ્વભાવમાં પરના સંયોગ વિયોગ છે નહિ એનું ભાન ન હોવાને લીધે અજ્ઞાની રાગ દ્વેષ કરે છે. જેમ વાદળા ભેગા થાય છે અને વિખરી જાય છે તેમ જગતમાં સ્ત્રી પુત્ર વગેરેના સંયોગ

આવે છે અને ક્ષણમાં ચાલ્યા જાય છે. એક એક સમયમાં સ્ત્રી પુત્રાદીની પર્યાયો પલટાઈ જાય છે. જ્ઞાની એ પલટાટી પર્યાયને જાણે છે તેથી તેમાં સુખબુદ્ધિ કરતા નથી. ધ્રુવ આત્માનો આશ્રય કરતા અસ્થિર સંયોગમાં હર્ષ શોકનો અભાવ થઈ જાય છે.

#### ૭) સતત ભેદવિજ્ઞાન

જ્ઞાનીને ક્રોધાદી વિકારનો ઉદય હોય ત્યારે પણ અક્રોધી સ્વભાવની જાગૃતિ વર્તે છે. આ સમયવર્તી ક્રોધવિકારયુક્ત પર્યાયની નીચે અત્યારે પણ દ્રવ્ય તો હમેશની જેમ શુદ્ધ, પરિપૂર્ણ શુદ્ધ જ રહ્યું છે. આ ભેદવિજ્ઞાનમાં જ તેમની સફળતાની - નીજરાની ચાવી છે. મિથ્યાત્વનો અભાવ થયો હોવાથી સંવર પ્રગટે છે અને સ્વાનુભુતિના કારણે સ્વરૂપની જે ખુમારી વર્તે છે, તેનાથી નિર્જરા પરિણામે છે. પૂર્વ કર્મના ઉદય અનુસાર જ્ઞાનીને રાગ થાય તો પણ તે રાગ વખતે તેનો નિષેધ કરનાર સમ્યક શ્રદ્ધા-જ્ઞાન વર્તે છે. એ રાગ શ્રદ્ધા-જ્ઞાનને મિથ્યા કરતો નથી. રાગ વખતે રાગને રાગ તરીકે જાણી લીધો ત્યાં તે જાણનારૂ જ્ઞાન રાગથી જુદું રહ્યું છે. જો જ્ઞાન અને રાગ એકમેક થઈ જાય તો રાગને રાગ તરીકે જાણી શકાય નહિ. રાગને જાણનારૂ જ્ઞાન આત્મા સાથે એકતા કરે છે અને રાગ સાથે ભિન્નતા કરે છે. જ્ઞાની જ્ઞાનને પોતાપણે અંગીકાર કરે છે અને રાગને બંધન તરીકે જાણી તેને છોડી દે છે. રાગ વખતે "આ રાગ જણાય છે તે મારા જ્ઞાનનું સામર્થ્ય છે, પણ રાગનું સામર્થ્ય નથી" આમ જેને રાગથી ભિન્નપણે જ્ઞાનસામર્થ્યની પ્રતીતિ કરી, તેને એકલું જ્ઞાતાપણું રહી ગયું. અને એના જોરે બધાય વિકારોનો કર્તાભાવ ઉડાડી દીધો. એટલે કહ્યું છે કે જ્ઞાનીના ભોગ પણ નિર્જરાનું કારણ છે.

આમાં "ભોગ સારા છે" એવું બતાવવું નથી પણ દ્રષ્ટીનું મહાત્મ્ય બતાવ્યું છે; તેનો મહિમા કર્યો છે. ભોગની લાગણી વખતે પણ શ્રદ્ધામાં બંધન નથી. સદાય પોતાના મુક્ત સ્વરૂપનો આશ્રય હોવાથી સમ્યકદ્રષ્ટિને સદાય મુક્ત કહ્યા છે. તેમના અંતરમાં પ્રજ્ઞાનો પ્રકાશ પ્રગટ્યો છે, જગતના સમસ્ત પદાર્થો અને ભાવો પ્રત્યે ઉદાસીનતા પ્રગટી છે. આ ઉદાસીનતા જ ક્રમશઃ વિકાસ પામતી પામતી નિર્વાણપદની પ્રાપ્તિમાં સહાયકારી બને છે.

## Spreading Jainism Globally.

Jain tradition for centuries has been kept alive by succession of *Acharyas* and their monk followers. We now cover those specific *Acharyas* and *Monks* who have taken the bold step to travel beyond the shores of India to spread the

message of Mahavir. They have made a significant impact on the North American Jain Community.



# Acharya Sushil Kumarji Maharaj (1926 - 1994)

*Just as cakes become sweet when they are coated with sugar frosting, so do places in this world become holy and pure when a saint abides in them."*

- Nirvanbhakti verse 31, Vidhyadhara Joharapurakar, 1965.

Acharya Sushil Kumarji Maharaj was not only a visionary Jain Monk but was also a Poet, Writer, Historian and Speaker. He was the first Jain monk to leave India and to use transportation while continuing to remain a Jain monk. Jain monks are permitted to travel by foot only, yet Acharya Sushilji broke the ancient restraint order for the monks to share the Bhagwan Mahavir's message of nonviolence and peace with the whole world. He was born on 15th June 1926 at Shikhopur (Shusilgarh) in the State of Haryana, India.

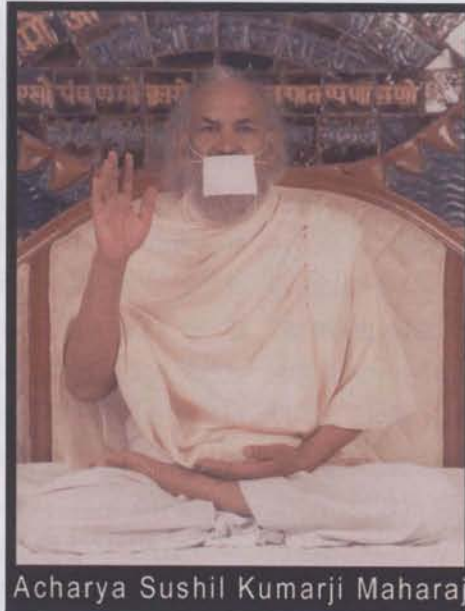
At the age of seven Acharya left his family to live with a Jain monk Shri Chotelaliji Maharaj. It is said that while he was a little boy, he was inspired by Shri Roop Chandji Maharaj, who appeared to him in spirit and told him to become a monk. Shri Roop Chandji

Maharaj was an enlightened Jain monk who lived during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On April 20th, 1942 at the age of fifteen Acharya Sushilji became a Jain monk and was initiated into the Jain Sthanakvasi sect at Jagranwa in the Punjab, India. He pursued an academic career and obtained a degree of Shastri, Acharya, Vidya-Ratna, and Sahitya-Ratna.

Acharya was a master of meditation and in the science of sound. His teaching is called "**Arhum Yoga**". Arhum Yoga encompasses all aspects of philosophy and yogic practice in the Arihant Spiritual Tradition. Arhum Yoga logo highlights the significance of three sounds -

Om, Hreem and Arhum. They symbolize knowledge of the external, the internal and the Supreme. They are Right Knowledge (Arhum), Right Faith (Om) and Right Conduct (Hreem). First on the outside is Hreem; this is the universe,

nature and the five elements. Embedded in this lies Om whose positive energy moves in one direction to the Supreme, completely and wholeheartedly. In the center there is an unmoving flame of fire burning brightly. This is Arhum, the power of the soul. It is the Arihant, the soul in its perfected state. The meaning is that you are the universe or Hreem. Your entire energy is Om, and your soul realizes its highest state of perfection, Arhum. By this system you can know the world, you can see how energy moves and you can see your self, how all powers awaken. Sound is the base of this knowledge.



Acharya Sushil Kumarji Maharaj

## Insitutions

Acharya Sushilji founded many organizations which include in 1950, World Fellowship of Religions; in 1957, Vishwa Ahimsa Sangh, the Kundalini Science Center; 1978, the

International Mahavir Jain Mission; 1979, Arhat Sangh; 1981, World Jain Congress and the World Center of Nonviolence, 1985, Ahimsa Women's Polytechnic.

**Acharya Sushil Ashram**, Ahimsa Bhawan, Shanker Road, New Delhi was Guruji's first ashram and the Karmabhoomi of Guruji. Foundation stone of this ashram was laid by 1st Prime Minister of India Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1963 for building an Ahimsa Library.

**Overseas Travel:** In 1975, Acharya Sushilji undertook his first international tour and visited Boston. The local Jain Community not only welcomed him but also started a public relation campaign with media. As a result, Acharya Sushilji and members of the Jain community were invited to participate in a local television show. Professors from Harvard and Boston universities interviewed Acharya Sushilji. The interview was aired on television on November 18, 1975, in a Sunday morning show called the "Show of Faith."



1 The Arhum Yoga Logo



Acharya Sushilji has help found many ashrams and centers in the East and West under the International Mahavir Jain Mission. His main ashram is Siddhachalam, located in Blairstown, New Jersey. Siddhachalam. The temple on this 108 acre premise houses both Digamber and Shwetamber tradition Pratimas (Idols). It is the



first Jain pilgrimage place (Tirth) outside of India which was established in 1983.

The layout of Siddhachalam mirrors the layout of Tirthraj Shri Sammed Shikharji's 30 tonks and Jal Mandir of India.

Acharya was great **proponent of Non-Violence** and firmly believed that peace and harmony were essential for the survival of mankind. He defined non-violence as the absence of hatred, tension, anger and discontentment. He worked to establish a sense of universal brotherhood amongst the

conflicting religious traditions of India. Throughout the years he had organized and presided over a significant number of World Religious Conferences. He was the honorary president of the World Conference of Religions for Peace, director of the Temple of Understanding, a founding member of the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival, president of the Punjab Peace and Unity

#### Acharya Sushilji's Message to The World.

*"If we desire to establish peace and to conquer the haunting nightmare of war and discord, we must be free from three evils - Atheism, Materialism and Violence."*

Committee and a founder of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad

Besides his involvement in inter-faith and global peace movements, he has made contribution to the literature by writing following books and tracts:-

History of Jain Religion, Commentary on Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta, Roses & Thorns, Goswami Tulsi Das, Bhagwan Mahavir, Words of Mahavir, Ahimsa Diary, Prakrit Grammar, Kundalini Yoga in Jain Religion, Jain Yoga, Healing & Meditation through Jain Religion, Science of Namokar & Matrika Vidya, Science of halo(Abha), Science of colour & sound, Different books on different Religions, Muni Roop Chand Ji Personality & performance, Numerous independent writings and Song of the Soul.

He started a slew of journals & magazines viz:- Naya Sahitya, Pariksha, Dharam Bhaskar, Bhaskar Vani, Vishwa Dharam, Non-Violence, Ahimsa, Arham News Letter, Cosmic Science, Sidhachalam, Arhat Jain Times etc.

For over five decades Acharya Sushil Kumarji dedicated his life to asceticism and self less

service in the name of peace, unity and universal brotherhood.. He did much to uplift all living beings.

Acharya passed away at the age of 68 years, in his Ashram on April 22, 1994. His message to the world "Love, Live and Let all Live,

do not take the life of living beings and enlightenment is the ultimate goal", will be a source of inspiration for all time to come.

## Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji

### *Opening the Doors of Jain Dharma to the West*

Chitrabhanuji was born as Raju Rajendra in Tumkur near Bangalore on July 26, 1922. His father's name was Chogulal, mother's Chuniben and his sister was Megi. He lost three important people, very early in his life; his mom when he was only a child, sister when he was a teenager and his best friend when he was around 19 years of age. These life-shattering incidents drove him towards the spiritual path and he finally took *Diksha* on February 6, 1942. One of his well-

known contributions to the Jain community has been this immortal song, "*Maitri Bhavnu Pavitra Jharnu Mujh Haiya Maa Vahya Kare*". He wrote the lyrics of this beautiful song when he was in Mount Abu. Another major contribution that Gurudev Chitrabhanuji has made is to reveal Jainism and its principles to the Western World. It was his teachings that motivated many westerners to embrace vegetarianism. His western followers can easily recite the *Navkar*



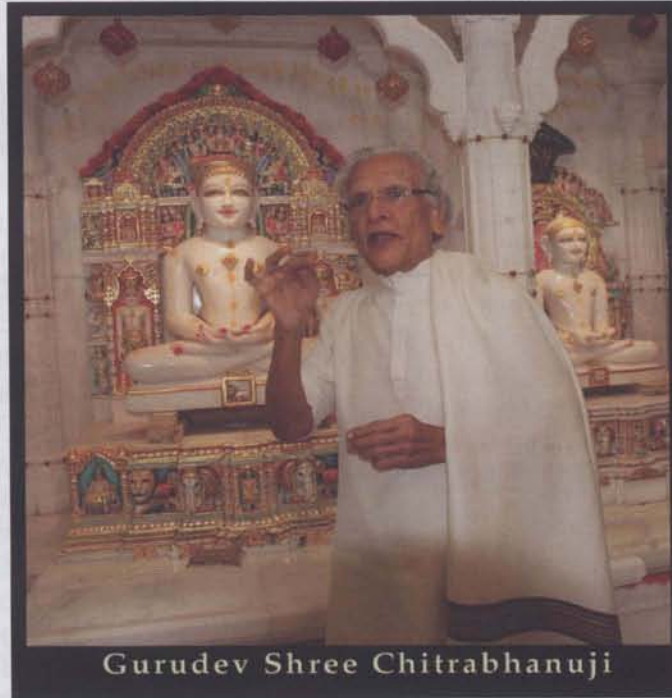
*Mahamantra* and the *Mangalik*. "The Wave of Bliss- Impact Of Chitrabhanu on the Western World" by Dr N.P.Jain (Indian Ambassador to The United Nations) chronicles Gurudev's work and massive following in the West.

### Jainism in the West

As the first Jain Master in more than 2600 years, in the year 1970, *Gurudev* Shree Chitrabhanuji brought to the Western world, Ahimsa and Reverence for Life, the essence of Jain Dharma. His life story is an inspiring account of how he touched millions of lives in a new land. He established the sound principles of Lord Mahavir's teachings in the West.

### Early Years:

The first five years of his of his monastic life, were spent in silence (*maun*). During this period of *maun* he also traveled by foot in the mountains, woods and villages and experienced the silence that stills the logic of the mind and awakens from within the deepest intuition of the spirit. It was in 1969 that he was invited to speak at the Second Spiritual Summit Conference in Geneva, Switzerland for the Temple of Understanding. It was not a simple decision for him to take, but in his mind he knew it was time for the world to learn of Lord Mahavir's teachings of non-violence, multiplicity of viewpoints and the law of *karma*. *The law of karma is the consequence of one's actions and all are inherent potential souls to be free from demanding desires of mind and its sensuality*. He flew to Geneva in 1970 and inaugurated the conference there. His presentation was received with a standing ovation. He also received an invitation to the Third Conference in 1971 from the Dean of Harvard Divinity School, Boston, Massachusetts in the US. The Secretary of the Vatican also extended an invitation to him to have an audience with Pope Paul VI in Rome. His arrival to the United States of America and these events were clearly, what opened the door of Jain *Dharma* to the West.



Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji

Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji was also the first Jain to celebrate Mahavir Jayanti at the U. N. Chapel. He was the first Jain Master to be an inspiring messenger of *Ahimsa* and a founding father of a Jain Center in the West. This is similar to building an airport where the plane of *Dharma* can land. For this cause, he traveled thousands of miles from the East to the West.

In 1973 he founded the Jain Meditation International Center - JMIC - in Manhattan, New York City near the United Nations. This Center became the mother of all Jain centers conducting various activities and events. To arouse people's awareness of the beauty of *Ahimsa*, *Anekantavada* and *Aparigraha* (the simplicity of life) - the nectar for mankind's survival - he spoke at various academic and learning institutions such as Harvard, Princeton, Cornell, New York College at Purchase, and United Nations. Today he guides people by sowing in them the seeds of *Dharma* and then nurtures them like a gardener.

In 1975 he sponsored a dynamic personality from India, *Acharya* Sushil Kumarji to come to the West. With the tireless efforts of Pujya Gurudev Chitrabhanuji and *Acharya* Sushil Kumarji, Jains today are a vibrant, throbbing community in North America under the umbrella organization of JAINA: Federation of Jain Associations in North America - which now has more than 100,000 members, 67 centers and 12 affiliated associations.

For the last 37 years Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji has been helping transplant and expound the age-old essence of the Jain teachings on Western soil and because of his vision, thousands of Westerners have become vegetarians and have started practicing the essence of Reverence for Life and Jain *Dharma* in their daily life.

### Further Spiritual Growth



Practicing never stops for a true aspirant. In 1981, driven by inner quest Gurudev Chitabhanuji and Pramodaben left New York and went to San Diego, near the ocean to spend some time in a peaceful atmosphere for silence and deep meditation. There Gurudev attained the enlightened state of self-awareness on a higher level of initiation through further purification of his consciousness. This resulted in renewed vows and in extending Reverence for All Life to a global mission. Pramodaben also experienced light and started sharing the deep insight of peace with aspirants.

#### Unique Honor:

In 2001, for the first time in the history of the United States of America, Jain Dharma and JAINA received the unprecedented recognition and honor of having a prayer in the U.S. House of Representatives. On May 22, 2001, in celebration of the 2600<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of BhagwanMahavira, Shree Chitrabhanuji delivered the opening prayer in the U.S. House Of Representatives. In July of 2005 in California, at the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention, JAINA honored and recognized Pujyashri Chitrabhanuji and the late Acharya Sushil Kumar Muniji for their spiritual

leadership, guidance and unwavering dedication to the "propagation of Jain Dharma in North America."

#### Gurudev--- "Vishva Manvi":

Pujyashri Chitrabhanuji is known to the Western world as a man of vision and a pioneer. He is the first Jain Master in more than 2600 years who after following 30 years of monastic life in India - brought to the West the essence of Ahimsa Dharma which is the heart of Mahavira's teachings. The new generation of Jains find Gurudev's teachings very inspiring and continuously seek guidance from him in their search for spiritual growth and development. The roaring success of YJA - Young Jains of America - an arm of JAINA, gives hope that the seeds have taken roots and are blossoming with fragrant flowers. Today, many scholars are following Gurudev's footsteps. Gurudev belongs to the entire world and not just to the Jain community. He does not discriminate anyone based on caste, color, creed or country. He is a 'Vishva Manvi' - a global citizen and rightfully so. His actions speak louder than his words and we can learn a lot from his teachings.

## An Extraordinary Life of Acharya Chandanaji

*"Instead of creating temples in a village, Let us make an effort to make the entire village a temple" – Acharya Chandanaji*

Veerayatan began as a dream of the great Indian scholar, Upadhyaya Shri Amar Muniji Maharaj. Determined to transform Pujya Upadhyaya Shri Amar Muniji Maharaj's vision into reality, Acharya Shri Chandanaji ventured into extremely hostile conditions in Bihar, India to establish the first Veerayatan site in 1973. Veerayatan, built near the birth and Nirvana place of Tirthankar Mahavir, is the result of tireless effort of Acharya Chandanaji. She showed to the world that the concept of service was an integral part of Mahavir's Dharma.

Acharya Chandanaji was born on January 26, 1937, as Shankutala, in a Jain Katariya family in Maharashtra. Her spiritual journey began at the age 14, when she took *Diksha*. She took a 12 year vow of *maun* (silence) to study Jain Scriptures, ponder on the meaning and purpose of life, explore the beauty of different religions, and discover a way to connect religion with the life of the common man. Inspired by the vision of her

Guru Amar Muniji to uplift the poverty-stricken state of Bihar in India, keeping in mind the qualities portrayed through the life and teachings of Bhagwan Mahavir, Chandanaji took on this challenge with efforts to extend compassion, friendship and love to all humanity. "Veerayatan", a non-profit, non-governmental registered organization was established in 1972



Acharya Chandanaji



to uplift and empower humanity through humanitarianism, education and spiritual development.

Veerayatan has centers in Bihar, Gujarat (Kutch), Maharashtra and many other places in India. There are also centers in USA, UK, East Africa, Singapore, UAE, Australia and other countries. These centers provide health care services, education and social services to those who would otherwise not have access to such services. *Veerayatan* is run by a dedicated team of *sadhvis*, trustees, committee members, professional staff and volunteers.

The humanitarian work at *Veerayatan* in Bihar includes a 200 bed medical center (offering eye, orthopedic, dental care and general surgery), several schools providing education for 1500 village children, a college with 200 students studying for a B.Ed. degree. At the Rajgiri center, polio corrective surgeries are performed on a regular basis. Over one million eye patients have been treated free of charge and since 1973, over 150,000 successful eye surgeries have been performed in ultra modern facilities. Projects such as KIDS and *Shrutam*, provide literacy and hygiene education to hundreds of slum and working children.

The Navalveerayatan, established near Pune in the state of Maharashtra in 2000 is devoted to inner development. This holds training courses on yoga, meditation, stress management and new age health therapies. The center at Kutch, Gujarat, provides free education to over 1000 children. Children are also provided free uniforms and food. In fact, the center in Kutch is the offspring of the work done by Chandanaji in the immediate aftermath of the devastating earthquake in 2001. Chandanaji believes "Education is the future of humanity. It is not merely achieving degrees and qualifications but the refinement of the inner world which will bring everyone together."

Some of Chandanaji's other accomplishments include the task of translating the "*Uttaradhyayana Sutra*" (a major Jain Scripture) in 33 days. She also hand crafted the panels honoring the themes of non-violence, love and the oneness of humanity which can now be found in *Veerayatan* Shri Brahmi Kala Mandiram in Rajgiri.

It has been visited by over 4.5 million people to date.

Chandanaji believes that creativity is the best way to fulfill oneself spiritually and therefore she is constantly evolving and re-examining all aspects of her work. She is of the opinion that, "Learning brings out the spirit of creativity and creativity brings knowledge. Knowledge is indeed an asset for the nation. *Veerayatan* intends to create outstanding individuals with exceptional creative abilities". A post graduate in philosophy, Chandanaji has a profound understanding of Jain Scriptures and other faiths. Her message of inner development, social responsibility and compassion are espoused as values supplemental to, but not in place of religion. Chandanaji is keenly aware of the untapped potential of the youth of today and is intent on ensuring that programs and lectures are tailored to ensure the inclusion of young people, who she feels have a profound lack of spirituality in their lives.

Chandanaji is the first Jain *Sadhvi* to be raised to the position of *Acharya*, but this has, in no way, caused her to confine herself to one religion. Man's relationship with his fellow man is religion, she says, and to respect other people's feelings and emotions is a way of worship. "There are no rules that say that taking *sanyas* means that you only have to meditate and search for God. Service and prayer go together. When I understood this, I felt I'd finally found what I had been seeking as a child", says Chandanaji. "Everything we do affects us here and now: even the future is too far away, let alone the next life. Every good deed is divine." She exhorts us to love what we do, do it with happiness, and to take pride in our happiness.

Many awards have been bestowed upon Chandanaji; the Shri Devi Ahilya National Award for her humanitarian service and animal welfare activities; the Mahavir Foundation award; the Sant Balaji Award; Woman of the Year award and many other national and international awards. These awards and her fame have not deflected her from her life of asceticism. She is first and foremost a spiritual leader, whose service to others is part of that spirituality.



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(Federation of Jain Associations in North America)

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