

A New Model of Non-Possessive and Nonviolent Lifestyle : A Jaina Perspective on the Crisis of Survival into the Third Millennium

Dr. Sohan Lal Gandhi

Hazards of Modern Lifestyle

The word 'lifestyle'¹ can be defined as the way in which a person lives. It includes the place he lives in, things he owns, the kind of job he does and the activities he enjoys. It is an individual's lifestyle that makes him popular or unpopular, fascinates others towards him, earns respect or dislike in society and contributes largely to social excellence or disharmony. A man's lifestyle is shaped by his way of thinking, by his behaviour and by the type of lifestyle he observes as he moves in society. The lifestyle of an ancient person used to be simple, free from ostentation and gaudiness. He lived in a modest house, wore simple clothes and ate simple diet. There were some persons in the ancient age as well whose lifestyles were dominated by pomp and show and affected the other people in society.

A lifestyle is an individual choice but since he lives in society, he has to choose a lifestyle which doesn't affect the people around him adversely. If he wastes food, hunts animals for fun or for the sense of his taste, uses vehicles indiscriminately, pollutes environment, picks quarrels with people on trivial issues, doesn't limit his desires and possessiveness, indulges in senseless violence, it makes it clear that his lifestyle is harmful not only to himself but also to society and the nation. It is this type of individual lifestyle that is becoming a serious cause for concern. Most of the people in the modern world are inclined towards this type of lifestyle. It is comfort-oriented and luxurious. Man is addicted to the use of machines and is being removed far away from nature. Not only this, he is destroying nature itself to look more beautiful and is vying with one another in the race for material possessions. Every one wants not only to be a billionaire but wants to be the

richest. To prove his supremacy over others he needs weapons. He has seen the devastation caused by nuclear holocaust² of Hiroshima and Nagasaki but the catastrophe, instead of causing tears in his eyes, makes him feel that it is the only powerful instrument to wipe out his enemies. We see the heads of some countries toying with this idea. They are trying to steal the formula of making nuclear bombs and are pursuing their heinous goals by stealth. The world today is facing many problems which owe their origin to bad lifestyle. They include global warming, dreadful diseases like cancer, HIV AIDS and cardiac arrest, ecological and environmental degradation, depletion of the main sources of energy i.e. petroleum and coal, lack of drinking water, food and pure air which sustain human and non-human life on this planet. Thanks to the campaigns launched by some grassroots organizations at global level that most people have now awakened to the peril of the extinction of life on earth. Every right thinking person is of the view that it is time we turned our attention to the individual lifestyle at global level if we want our survival into the third millennium.

Anuvrat Movement and Lifestyle

In India late His Holiness Acharya Tulsi, a leading Jain Acharya, launched **Anuvrat Movement**³ in 1949 to transform individual lifestyle. He laid down a code of conduct consisting of small vows (*anuvrats*). Thousands joined this network of self-transformed people which continues to increase even today.

His Holiness Acharya Mahapragya, successor to Acharya Tulsi, added two more dimensions to this Movement in the form of **Preksha Meditation**⁴ and **Jivan Vigyan**⁵. He made a Herculean effort to change people's lifestyle by exposing them to Jain values i.e. *ahimsa*⁶ (nonviolence), *anekant*⁷ (nonabsolutist outlook) and *aparigrah*⁸ (non-possessiveness). Both Acharya Tulsi and Acharya Mahapragya developed a New Model of Nonviolent Lifestyle for emulation by people so that further environmental and ecological degradation could be stopped. Before I give the salient features of

the new Model of Non-Possessive and Nonviolent Lifestyle, it will be worthwhile to elucidate how nonviolence and non-possessiveness are interconnected and why non-possessiveness should occupy the first place.

aparigraha parmodharma

Non-possession is the Greatest Dharma

Everyone of us has often heard the Jain slogan *ahimsa parmodharma* (nonviolence is the greatest religion). Ahimsa is the basic identity of Jainism and most scholars mention *ahimsa* first when they discuss Jainism but in the present context when we examine the problems like environmental and ecological degradation, climate change, poverty, shortage of drinking water and the fast depleting resources on the planet which sustain our life, we realize that though the problem of increasing violence is considered a threat to our existence, the root cause of violence is our ever-increasing propensity for possessing material objects and lust for amassing wealth. The American model of consumption as the basis of our growth is being emulated by most people of the world. As a matter of fact the world is seized by the devouring spirit of possessiveness. The more money we are getting the miser we are becoming. Our tenaciousness towards wealth is so strong that we do not want to give even a penny to the poor man. Our cruelty is increasing at a formidable rate. We have actually forgotten the basic spirit of Lord Mahavira's message.

In Thanam Lord Mahavira says :

1. No one can know *dharma* without having deep insight into violence and possession.
2. No one can attain enlightenment without having deep insight into violence and possession.
3. No one can develop *samyam* (self-restraint) without having deep insight into violence and possession.

After having said that Lord Mahavira gives a solution in the following words :

1. Anyone can know *dharma* by having deep insight into violence and possession.
2. Any one can attain enlightenment by having deep insight into violence and possession.
3. Any one can develop self-restraint by having deep insight into violence and possession.

Acharya Mahapragya says :

‘The development of *ahimsa* is not possible without ending the dividing line between violence and possession. It is not possible for a social being to free him from possession. This means that he cannot be free from violence as well. In such a situation how can *ahimsa* be developed. The Jain *acharyas* have solved this problem on the basis of Lord Mahavira’s words.

He who develops the consciousness of *ahimsa* cannot be called ‘*parigrahi*’ (one who is attached to material objects). He limits possession. He can be described as totally nonviolent but he limits violence. He cannot be free from the violence caused by his livelihood, he cannot be free from essential ‘*parigraha*’ caused by livelihood.’

We can be free from the violence which is unnecessary and resorted to deliberately. Similarly we can be free from unnecessary possession and from the possession used for fulfilling our craving and longing. Our focus in the present context should be on non-possessiveness. Nonviolence should get a second priority.

Jain Ecologic Ethic

Jainism is now known the world over as an environment friendly religion on account of its basic principles which enjoin its followers to minimize their needs, restrain the activities of their mind, body and speech,

refrain from inessential violence and have reverence for all life forms which are independent sentient entities endowed with souls. According to Jainism each sentient entity is an independent *jiva*⁹ which may be born again even as a human being and is likely to be liberated if he or she (an embodied soul) lives a good life embedded in *ahimsa* (nonviolence) and annihilates his or her *karmic* bondage by exercising restraint on his or her activities – be they mental, verbal or physical.

Omniscient Lord Mahavira¹⁰ realized that the entire earth consists of two kinds of substances – *jiva* (those entities which are endowed with souls) and *ajiva* (the material objects without souls). Worldly life results from the interaction between the soul and matter. Whatever a soul possesses, whether speech organ, respiratory system, brain etc. is a result of its association with matter. Thus *ajiva* (matter) helps a *jiva* and the cycle of life continues on this planet. He explains that sentient entities or souls are of two kinds – those that have mind and those that are without mind. The worldly souls are further categorized as mobile and immobile beings. Immobile beings include the earth-bodied, water-bodied, fire-bodied, air-bodied and plant-bodied beings. By immobile beings Mahavira means those sentient entities which have souls and which grow, ripen and die but are not able to move voluntarily. It is they that constitute nature. They are identified as trees, plants, hills, rivers which sustain not only human life but all other forms of mobile creatures such as microbes, insects, animals and birds. Mahavira further states that all living beings want to live, no one wants to die, even an insect wants to live, so one should be careful lest any of these mobile beings be killed.

But a worldly embodied soul has to commit violence in some or the other form to survive. So Mahavira enjoins his followers to at least refrain from avoidable violence like hunting, felling green trees and using water, earth, fire wantonly. The ideal is to live and let every living being live but since a householder needs water, fire, plants for his sustenance, living beings

with one sense are inevitably killed. This is the way of the world. A householder cannot refrain from violence completely but he is expected to minimize it. The Jaina ecologic ethic makes it obligatory for the Jains to abstain from intentional killing of innocent living beings, be they small or big, use water, plants, earth and related resources of the planet sparingly and minimize their daily needs by setting strict limits on their levels of consumption. For example a Jain *shravak* (votary) takes a vow that he would eat less than the level of his hunger, use only two or three buckets of water for his bath daily, limit his area of travel and share his resources with others. This pattern of behaviour exhibited by the Jains constitutes Jain Ecologic Ethic since it defines his relationship with other *jivas* and environment.

Interconnectedness of *jivas* – the core of Jaina ecology

The Jaina ecology is based on the natural phenomenon of interdependence. The basis of the modern science of ecology is symbiosis. It deals with the relationships of organisms to their surroundings and to other organisms. There is a thread of interconnectedness that binds all life forms together whether they are humans or non-humans. Mahavira reveals a profound truth when he says, “*One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation disregards his own existence which is entwined with them*¹¹”. It is this relationship of a *jiva* with other *jivas* that matters. He asserts that all life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence (*parasparopagraho jivanama*¹²). Life is a gift of togetherness, accommodation and assistance in a universe teeming with independent entities. Mahavira gives an important *sutra*, “*Taking life away out of passion is violence*¹³” but if a person happens to kill living organisms unintentionally as he walks, it is not violence in its strict sense. Passion includes powerful emotions of anger, pride, deceit and greed. It is the passion (*kasaya*) which is responsible for all forms of violence towards fellow beings, towards nature. It is a person’s deliberate, wanton and passionate act that destroys both humans and non-humans. Ecological

harmony and environmental protection result from our controlled behaviour free from impulsive impetuosity and passionateness.

Deep Ecology and Jaina Principles

Jainism, as a matter of fact, is ‘deep ecology¹⁴’ propounded by the modern eco-philosopher Arne Naess who lays down eight points to highlight its salient features. They are (i) the flourishing of human and non-human life on earth is inherently valuable; (ii) richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the flourishing of both human and non-human life on earth; (iii) humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs; (iv) substantial decrease of the human population will help flourishing of non-human life; (v) present human interference with non-human world is excessive; (vi) changes in policies are necessary in basic economic, technological and ideological structures. If it is done, it will result in a more joyful experience of the connectedness of all things; (vii) ideological change means appreciating life quality rather than an increase in higher standard of living. It means awareness of the difference between big and great; (viii) those who believe in the above points must participate in an attempt to implement the necessary changes.

When I analyze Naess's ecological wisdom embedded in his eight points, I am astonished by its striking similarities with what Mahavira had said 2600 years ago. The flourishing of both human and non-human life depends on a human being's compassion towards other living beings on this planet. Mahavira's emphasis on the minimization of violence matches Naess's first point when he pleads for the flourishing of both human and non-human life. When he says that humans have no right to reduce bio-diversity except to fulfill his vital needs, he only echoes Mahavira's advice to refrain from unnecessary violence.

Another modern philosopher Henry David Thoreau also endorses Jain ecology "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately", he wrote, “to front only the essential facts of life and see if I couldn’t learn what

it (woods) had to teach, and not, when, I came to die, discover that I had not lived.” Both these philosophers spent some time in the lap of nature and experienced the truth themselves. It is their communion with nature that elicited the truth that man should take from nature only that which is essential.

A New Model of Non-Possessive and Nonviolent Lifestyle

The new Model of Non-Possessive and Nonviolent Lifestyle that I am going to present today is based on the above values. The modern lifestyle is characterized by rivalry, envy, intolerance and lack of self-restraint. Late His Holiness Acharya Tulsi once gave a slogan – “*nij par shashan, fir anushashan*¹⁵ – first control the self and then talk of discipline.” This statement is an epitome of the model of non-possessive and nonviolent lifestyle. Discipline stems from self-restraint. Without restraining the self if a person expects discipline in social life, it will only disappoint him.

One of the most celebrated philosophers and a leading Jaina spiritual leader His Holiness Acharya Mahapragya has made the education and orientation of people in *ahimsa* as the main mission of his life. At the age of 89 years he is moving from village to village and city to city spreading ecological ethic and creating *ahimsa* awareness among the people. He says, “*Emotional impetuosity gives rise not only to himsa (violence) but it also weakens the body. Both bhava (emotion) and roga (disease) are intimately connected. Many experiments have been made in this area. If a person has a feeling of jealousy towards another person, he runs the risk of being gripped by peptic ulcer. He will think that he has been careful enough in eating, then, how is it that he is a victim of peptic ulcer? It is beyond his comprehension that it is his jealous nature that has caused it. It has now been proved beyond doubt that man’s diseases have much to do with his powerful emotional drives and unhealthy lifestyle.*¹⁶”

The Jaina Way of Non-Possessive and Nonviolent Living

After a careful study of the Jaina values, their impact on life and man's relationship with his environment, a Jaina model of non-possessive and nonviolent living has been developed by His Holiness Acharya Mahapragya. It consists of the following eight components.

1. *samyak darshan* (right faith or true spiritual insight).
2. *anekant* (the doctrine of non-absolutism)
3. *ahimsa* (nonviolence)
4. *saman sanskriti* – *sam*, *sham*, *shram* (the mendicant or ascetic culture – equanimity, continence and laboriousness)
5. *ichchha pariman* (limiting desire)
6. *samyak ajivika* (right means of livelihood)
7. *samyak samskar* (right formative influence)
8. *aharshuddhi aur vyasan mukti* (purity of food and freedom from addictions)

1. **Right Faith (*samyak darshan*)**

It is man's deluded belief that is responsible for all the evil deeds he indulges in. He fails to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. His deluded belief gives rise to his feelings of *raaga* (attachment) and *dvesa* (hatred). It is these two human propensities that wreak havoc on other living beings that live around him. So the first component of a Jaina model of nonviolent lifestyle is *samyak darshan*¹⁷ (enlightened worldview or right belief). A person endowed with *samyak darshan* considers, *arhat* (an ascetic who has destroyed four destructive *karmas*¹⁸ and is free from attachment) his deity, adores ascetics who try to rid themselves of passions and believes in the truth propounded by omniscient beings i.e. a path that leads to freedom from passions. The true spiritual insight consists in one's belief in *arhat*, the path of righteousness shown by them and a true guru. Its results are

- (a) the development of right faith (*samyak darshan*);
- (b) the development of a creative outlook;
- (c) the subduing of anger, pride, deceit and greed.

False perception of reality hinders the growth of peaceful coexistence, humility, fraternity, friendship, straightforward dealing and business integrity. All obstacles disappear and life becomes enlightened once one follows a lifestyle dictated by right faith (*samyak darshan*).

2. **Non-absolutist Attitude (*anekanta*)**

Social harmony depends largely on our ability to look at divergent views from a non-absolutist angle. Life is relative, therefore without treating our own view as unimportant, we should try to understand the viewpoints of others as well. He alone can lead a healthy social life who follows non-absolutism and open-mindedness in his day today social interaction. One should think, "*If I ascribe some element of truth to my thoughts, how can I deny the same to someone else's thoughts?*" He alone can have harmonious relationships who can reconcile the opposite views and develop a non-absolutist attitude. Biased attitude towards others and dogmatic insistence on a viewpoint make our life dry, bitter and sad. One who follows nonviolent lifestyle must inculcate a non-absolutist attitude towards others. It is an important component of a nonviolent lifestyle. The outlook of a follower of *anekant* lifestyle is characterized by humility. It automatically resolves disputes and strife. One's domestic life becomes pleasant, happy and sweet. In the absence of a universal feeling of non-absolutism, it is vain to hope for any improvement in human relations. We must realize that the truth is many-sided. The whole truth is known only to omniscient beings but at the same time it is also true that every standpoint or viewpoint or religious belief has an element of truth, hence it should be respected. This reconciliatory attitude paves the way for peaceful co-existence.

The results of living according to the *anekanta* lifestyle are

- (a) development of a non-absolutist outlook;
- (b) development of an attitude of harmony;
- (c) development of an attitude capable of harmonizing the opposites and controversial views.

3. **Nonviolence (*ahimsa*)**

Lord Mahavira said, '*savve pana na hantava, esa dhamme dhuve nije sasae* – no living being of the world is violable – deserves to be killed. Only *ahimsa dharma* (*dharma* rooted in *ahimsa*) is steadfast, everlasting and eternal.' *Ahimsa* is the greatest *dharma*. Just as *ahimsa* is an eternal truth so is *himsa* (violence) a stark reality. It has become a part of social life. Its predominance will endanger our survival. So Mahavira exhorts his followers to at least refrain from avoidable violence. Both mental and verbal violence are more harmful than physical violence. So the ideal is to abstain from violence in thought, word and deed. Not only Lord Mahavira but Lord Buddha, Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi, Tolstoy and Martin Luther King uphold *ahimsa* as the greatest virtue.

One who chooses a nonviolent lifestyle has to take a vow that he will at least refrain from killing innocent beings. Ordinary men cannot avoid violence altogether in their daily life. Even those endowed with right faith undertake discussions with a view to finding ways to minimize violence. Dialogues become important starting points on the road to the development of nonviolence. The first principle underlying the above process of minimization requires the abandonment of inessential violence. Due to negligence, attachment and strong desires people indulge in a lot of violence. Therefore those who want to adopt a nonviolent lifestyle should always remember the precept: 'Minimize violence. Avoid inessential violence.'

Cruelty causes unnecessary violence. Murders and feticide are clear illustrations of violence. Suicide is an example of a flurry of excitement. The

apparent motive behind cosmetic goods is the desire for make-up and beautiful looks, but at the back of it lies cruelty.

One who avoids inessential violence does not overuse soil, water and vegetation. In using them he practises restraint and discrimination.

The results of a nonviolent lifestyle are

- (a) the development of sensitivity;
- (b) ecological and environmental harmony;
- (c) steady growth of friendship with other living beings.

4. **The Ascetic Culture (*shramaan sanskriti*)**

The most vital force of the Jain lifestyle is *shramanic* culture. '*shramana*' is a Prakrit word which in Sanskrit is variably called as *saman*, *shaman* and *shramana*. A *saman* is he whose heart is pure and who treats all sentient beings like himself. A *shaman* is he who knows how to subdue his passions and excitement. A *shramana* is a *tapasvi* who undergoes religious austerities like fasting and mortification of the self and is given to doing hard work and self-reliance.

Would you like to be treated as inferior or subjected to wild anger and ill-treatment or to be exploited by others? If not, you would have to change your lifestyle. You would have to treat all others as equal and consider no one inferior. You must learn to curb your excitement and impulses. You must not create obstructions in the way of someone's earning his living.

The results of the lifestyle based on ascetic culture are

- (a) human unity;
- (b) putting an end to racial and caste hatred as well as untouchability;
- (c) peaceful coexistence;
- (d) balanced behavior;

(e) development of self-reliance.

5. **Limiting or Restraining Desires (*ichha pariman*)**

Material objects and services on this planet are limited, but consumers are too many. The desires too keep growing. As a solution to this problem Lord Mahavira propounded the principle of limiting or restraining one's desires. Individual ownership is necessary for the worldly progress of a householder but unlimited ownership runs counter to the creation of a harmonious socio-political world order. So there is a middle way - limit your desires; limit individual ownership and acquisition; limit individual consumption.

The experiment in limiting desires is a challenge to the present economic competitiveness and a rat race for development. The experiment is difficult but in it alone lies the solution to the problem. A follower of nonviolent lifestyle must limit his desires.

The results of the lifestyle based on limited desires are that

- (a) its practitioner shares, parts with a part of the resources he acquires;
- (b) he contributes to building a healthy society.

6. **The Right Means of Livelihood (*samyak ajivika*)**

In order to sustain his life man has to earn a living so that he may buy his bread and satisfy his hunger. He must work to enable him to fulfill his basic needs i.e. bread, a house and clothes. As he makes progress in his work, his wealth increases gradually and with it his desires and greed also swell. His right faith or *samyak darshan* restrains his greed. His consciousness of the purity of means awakens in him faith in nonviolence. He begins to realize that he is not alone on this planet. There are innumerable living beings who also need the earth's resources for their survival. This realization leads him to limit his needs. He refrains from employing dishonest means to earn money. He becomes morally conscious

and guards against tarnishing his image and character. He always remains vigilant and uses only right means to earn wealth.

The results of the right means of livelihood are

- (a) clean business and integrity;
- (b) abstinence from trade and business involving intoxicants, meat, fish, eggs and similar items which are undesirable for eating;
- (c) abstinence from activities that involve smuggling;
- (d) abstinence from adulteration of food stuffs;
- (e) abstinence from trading in arms;
- (f) abstinence from felling trees and destroying forests.

7. **Exposing Children to Right Formative Influences (*samyak samskara*)**

An individual dedicated to *samyak samskara* promotes it in his daily life. Life without direction leads nowhere. The right direction is one that leads to one's destination or goal. And our destination is the realm where there is equity, balance and self-conquest. It is therefore essential that from the very beginning such education is imparted to children as may lead to that destination. Birth, christening, marriage, festivals and death are special occasions which lend an identity to the individual and this identity is made possible by some rituals and sacraments. The Jain rituals should be such as are not contrary to the spirit of *ahimsa*. It must be borne in mind that ugly exhibitionism, wastefulness displayed on such occasions only sow the seeds of agitation and violence in society. They also create a negative impact on the tiny minds of children. Only such rituals should be performed as have right formative influences on children.

8. **Purity of Food and Freedom from Addiction** (*aharshuddhi aur vyasan mukti*)

Purity of food is a requirement not merely of religious texts but also of health science and practical psychology. There is an ancient saying which states that '*as you eat so you think.*' Science has further enlarged this concept by stating that there is a causal chain of food, neurotransmitters and behavior. Eating meat and animal fats in general may result in the constriction of the blood vessels which in turn enhance the chances of coronary and heart diseases.

Use of alcoholic drinks affects the liver and other organs. Likewise nicotine contained in tobacco poisons the system of smokers and chewers of areca nuts mixed with tobacco. This again leads to the constriction of blood vessels and enhances the chances of contracting cardiac ailments, cancer and other deadly diseases. The most obvious result of tobacco tar is cancer.

Gambling and similar addictions also cause mental afflictions and thus prove a curse for those seeking mental peace and happiness. It is vitally important to keep away from them.

The results of using pure foods and freedom from addiction are

- (a) healthy and balanced life;
- (b) improvement in physical, mental and emotional health;
- (c) protection from criminal instincts.

I am of the view that the Jaina Model of Non-Possessive and Nonviolent Lifestyle can become a universal model for emulation by all those who believe in ecological ethic. It does not have any sectarian component in it and can become a useful instrument to save the planet from destruction and ensure survival into the third millennium.

Dr. Sohan Lal Gandhi

Notes

1. The term 'lifestyle' is being increasingly used to describe a person's way of wearing dresses, eating, speaking and interacting with other people. It has now been medically concluded that man's diseases have much to do with his lifestyle.
2. The term 'holocaust' usually refers to the mass murder of the Jews under the German Nazi regime in World War II. The destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by atomic bombs is also described as the nuclear holocaust of the 20th Century.
3. Anuvrat Movement : This movement was launched by the late Acharya Tulsi, the then Head of Jain Svetamber Terapanth Sect, in 1949 in the wake of the wide spread communal riots that followed the partition of India and the rampant corruption in social life. 'Anu' means small and *vrata* means a vow. It aims at purifying the individual character and this riding society of moral filth. The word 'anuvrat' was used by Lord Mahavira 2600 years ago in the form of twelve small vows for his lay persons.
4. Preksha Meditation : The word 'Preksha' means perception. Preksha Meditation means perceptive meditation. Unlike other meditation systems it lays emphasis on the perception of the soul by the soul. One begins with the perception of all the parts of the body leading to Kayotsarga – casting off the body ; it is a state achieved by perception when a *sadhak* feels that the body and the soul are different. It was invented by Acharya Mahapragya, a leading Jain Acharya, who revived this system of the Jain meditation which was lost with the passage of time.
5. Jivan Vigyan : It means Science of Living. It was developed by Acharya Mahapragya to enable students and teachers to enhance their emotional competence through some tested techniques of controlling

their emotions which are at the root of social conflicts. Its objective is the balanced development of one's personality. Emotional development sans intellectual development and intellectual development sans emotional development would be considered incomplete. Jivan Vigyan teaches a person the art of peaceful living.

6. Ahimsa : The word 'ahimsa' is used by the Jains in lieu of nonviolence. Though the word 'nonviolence' is the nearest substitute of *ahimsa* in English, it falls short of its real meaning. By *ahimsa* the Jains mean nonviolence in thought, word and deed. Lord Mahavira said, "*ahimsa* is the supreme *dharma*."
7. Anekant : The word 'anekant' means many-sided. The Jains believe that the whole truth is known only to the omniscient beings or *arhats* who have conquered the self. The others are able to see the truth but they do so partially only. The truth is many-sided so if one insists that the partial truth one has experienced is the whole truth, it gives rise to conflicts. So Mahavira said, 'Everyone may be right in relation to his experience so it is sinful and wrong to disparage or contradict anyone's viewpoint. This approach to truth is called *anekant* i.e. non-absolutist attitude as regards one's standpoint. *Anekant* promotes reconciliation and harmony.'
8. Aparigrah : The word 'aparigrah' is one of the five cardinal principles of Jainism i.e. nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, carnality and non-possessiveness but when we analyze them, we come to know that possessiveness is the main cause of violence. Man's feeling of attachment gives rise to man's propensity to own wealth and other material possessions. Non-restraint of the possessive mentality drives a man to commit violence and grab resources. Mahavira said, 'Restrain your propensity to possess things. Non-possession is *dharma*.'

9. Jiva : The word *jiva* instead of the soul is used in the Jain scriptures. While the soul is an independent eternal entity, a *jiva* is an embodied soul. The Jains believe that a soul has to pass through a cycle of death and birth so long as the karmic bondage remains sticking to it. The *karmas* are generated by an embodied soul's activities of mind, body and speech.
10. Lord Mahavira : Lord Mahavira, known as the 23rd Tirthankara of the Jaina tradition, was born in 599 BCE. A Tirthankar is considered to be the supreme sanctified teacher of the Jains who conquers his self and becomes omniscient or God. The first Tirthankara was Lord Rishabh. Lord Mahavira was a contemporary of Lord Buddha.
11. According to Jaina philosophy there are two kinds of living beings – those which can move (*trasa*) and those which can't move (*sthavara*). *Trasa jivas* are earth, air, fire, water and vegetation – they are all sentient entities and have only one sense i.e. touch. But they feel immense pain when they are hurt. So a Jain who wants to follow the path of *ahimsa* cannot neglect them.
12. It is considered Lord Mahavira's oft-quoted ecological statement. The modern science also recognizes that all life forms that exist on this planet are bound together. Each sentient entity has a role to maintain ecological balance.
13. This sutra also makes it clear that a householder can't abstain from violence in its entirety. He has to fulfil his basic needs which depends on use of water, air, fire and vegetation. But if a householder doesn't indulge in deliberate or intentional violence, it is not considered violence. Mahavira advises his followers to refrain at least from deliberate violence.
14. The term 'Deep ecology' was first used by the modern Eco-philosopher Arne Naess, the author of the 'Wisdom of Deep Ecology'.

15. This slogan was given by Acharya Tulsi to Anuvrat workers which became an important aphorism for the individual commitment to basic vows.
16. Acharya Mahapragya is of the view that just as training in violence is imparted to those who are motivated by hatred, in the same way it is imperative that the people are trained in nonviolence. It is their orientation and education of *ahimsa* that will bring about attitudinal changes in them. A complete course of nonviolence training has been developed and many nonviolence training centers across the country have sprung up.
17. Samyak Darshan : It is a philosophical Jaina term which emphasizes that the first pre-requisite for an individual's spiritual progress is the correctness of his belief. If it is not right, his knowledge will be deluded and so will be his character. This term is known as one of the three jewels of Jaina faith i.e. right faith, right knowledge and right conduct.
18. Karma : In the Jain terminology a karma is considered a substance but it is visible only to omniscient beings. It is believed that human activities of mind, body and speech generate karmic particles which flow to the soul and stick to it. If the human actions are bad, bad *karmas* are caused which bring suffering to the doer. Good actions cause good *karmas* which bring comforts in worldly life. A soul can be liberated only when the soul is free from all sorts of karmas.

REFERENCES

1. Jain Darshan Manan aur Mimansa by Acharya Mahapragya
2. Jainism : An Indian Religion of Salvation by Helmuth Von
3. Jivan Vigyan Glasenapp for Class IX and X by Muni Kishan Lal Shubhkaran Surana

4. Samasya Ka Sagar Ahimsa Ka Nauka *by* Acharya Tulsi
5. Ahimsa Tattva Darshan *by* Acharya Maharagya
6. Nonviolent Communication : A Language of Life *by* Marshal B. Rosenberg
7. Tulsi Vichar Darshan *by* Acharya Mahapragya
8. Nonviolent Global Political Science *by* Prof. Glenn D. Paige
9. The Jain Declaration on Nature *by* Dr. L.M. Singhvi
10. Training in Nonviolence *by* Acharya Mahapragya Translated and Edited by Dr. S.L. Gandhi
11. Uprooting Violence Building Nonviolent *by* Pat Patfoort
12. Anekant Views and Issues *by* Acharya Mahapragya
13. Caring for the Future – A Report of the Independent Commission on Population and Quality of Life.