



Inner Reflections

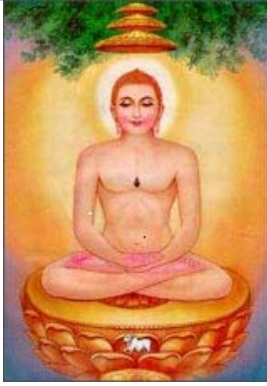
Jain Vishwa Bharati of North America

Volume III

Issue 3

July 2005

THUS SPOKE MAHAVIR

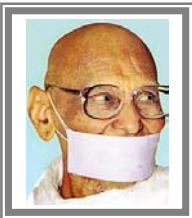


*Jagaraha nara niccham
Jagaramanassa vaddhate buddhi
Jo suvae na so dhanno
Jo jaggae so saya dhanno*

Always keep yourself awake. He, who keeps awake [internal awareness], augments his wisdom. He, who falls asleep, is not great. Blessed is he, who is awake.

MESSAGE FROM ACHARYA MAHAPRAJNA

[Adapted from Acharya Mahaprajnaji's speech "*Peaceful Coexistence: The Ultimate Outcome of Non Violence*," delivered at the 5th ICPNA]



It is surprising that although discussions about peace and non-violence continue in every region of the world, there is a general drift towards violence. Violence does have some sort of attraction and hence a large number of people are disposed towards it. It is also beyond doubt that even those who are at the helm of the forces of violence, for some reason, talk of non-violence at public meetings or media-sponsored dialogues. A shopkeeper who resorts to adulteration puts a signboard at his shop claiming that the sweets

are made of pure ghee. Thus, vice thrives under the guise of virtue. Similarly, violence thrives only under the guise of non-violence.

We agree that the Law of the Jungle seems to prevail everywhere. But we also notice that a member of a family does not treat the other members violently and even in exceptional circumstances when he does, the degree of violence is minimal. We also find that as a rule a man does not indulge in violence against his neighbors. The reality is that non-violence is more dominant and widespread than violence. It is evidenced by the fact that despite the alleged escalation in worldwide violence, people still live together. As a result there are villages, towns and countries. Had there been only violence there would have been nothing but jungle and no signs of civility would have existed. Man would not have been any different from an animal; he would not have made any progress. The entire development that has taken place in history owes its success to non-violence.

One aspect of non-violence is **fearlessness - fear none**. The basic component of Mahavir's preaching of non-violence is fearlessness. This is the most celebrated of all the messages that we possess today though it has not reached the masses. When Mahavir says, '**fear none**', he means that a person should not fear himself, old age, diseases or death. This comprehensive and all-pervasive message is the foundation of non-violence. Some journalists, the other day, raised a question linking cowardice and non-violence. I tried to liberate their minds of the wrong impression that non-violence was an act of cowardice. I told them that that was the most erroneous interpretation of *Ahimsa*. How can we talk of cowardice when fearlessness is one of the foundation pillars of *Ahimsa*?

The second pillar of non-violence is **restraint** - the restraint of senses, mind and consumption. If

Ahimsa is not premised on self-restraint, it cannot develop. The third pillar of *Ahimsa* is **equanimity** - a feeling of calm – a state of mind when one is not overly elated when something good happens and is not overly depressed when something unpleasant occurs.

The fourth pillar of *Ahimsa* is **peace**. Peace entails deliverance from tension. If tension exists, peace becomes elusive. A man went to his Guru and requested him to explain as to what peace and the lack thereof meant. The Guru thought that it would be better to elucidate it through a practical lesson instead of mere words. The Guru directed him to walk straight towards the wall in front of him. The path was strewn with thorns. A thorn pricked him. He at once sat down and began to scream, "Please come and take my thorn out. It is causing unbearable pain." The Guru himself went and extracted the thorn. As soon as the thorn was removed, the man said, "Oh! What a great relief, how peaceful it is!" The Guru told him that it was the prick of a thorn that caused restlessness or lack of peace and its removal brought back the peace that was already there before the thorn pricked him. Peace is an inherent human nature. A man always longs for and loves to live in peace. But it happens that his peace is disturbed by the prick of a thorn. He suddenly finds himself in the grip of tension. He feels restless. Though peace is natural, tension disrupts it. When the mind becomes free from tension, only peace prevails

The fifth pillar of non-violence is **compassion**. Compassion undoubtedly eliminates any lack of peace. Cruelty gives rise to a state of conflict and unrest in human mind. The moment compassion touches the inner core of man; his mind is filled with peace and tranquility. Non-violence has many facets but these five attributes are central as they directly relate to our behavior.

Many conferences are organized for peace and non-violence in the world. A lot of discussion takes place. I do agree that the meeting of a large number of people and discussions about peace are very important. They help create an environment conducive to peace but they are not sufficient and our work does not come to an end

there. If we confine our work to mere conferences, deliberations and seminars, we are not likely to gain concrete results. Instead, I ascribe greater significance to collective thinking. In order to fulfill our objectives, it is needed that a small number of people with the right mind set - they may even be five in number - come together and share their views for at least a period of four or five months. If necessary, this intensive thinking may even be prolonged over a period of five years. What is vitally important is that small groups sit and think together – that they take one specific problem and think it over profoundly for a long period of time. I am sure the outcome of this intensive thinking will be more useful than a gathering of five thousand people and we may even be able to find a definite solution to a given problem.

We are sometimes disappointed and disheartened at the slow pace of our progress. We give up and stop thinking because we are unable to reach any conclusion despite having worked on a problem for a long period of time. In such a situation our line of thinking and style of functioning should be to pursue our objective doggedly.

Those who want to labor in the field of peace and non-violence must not discuss just individual problems but also consider familial, institutional, social, provincial, linguistic, national and international problems. We cannot focus solely on one and disregard the others. All these problems are intertwined and interrelated and they cannot be studied in isolation from one another. A person's life is woven in multitudes of threads and we can never succeed by considering just one aspect. A holistic approach is essential, always keeping the *Anekant* way of thinking or the non-absolutist approach to solving problems in mind. There is no better approach to solving the problem of violence or any other problem than that of *Anekant*.

It is most unfortunate that the confines of religion, beliefs and nationality keep people apart. Conflict or violence or even war ensues because one man deems the other as his enemy. One nation regards the other with suspicion and apprehension. Humanity is experiencing a

severe crisis of faith and trust. The world lies deeply mired in suspicion and abhorrence and in a state of perpetual panic and terror. Such an environment is instigating immense harm upon humanity and must come to an end. The world cannot be rid of violence and war unless the cloud of distrust and suspicion is dissipated. If we can erase the black ink of suspicion, the barriers that divide humanity can be removed and man can come closer to man. If we can meet and talk, at least half of the problem will certainly be solved. For the other half, we can undertake a constructive approach in the form of a worldwide campaign for non-violence training that would help fashion a non-violent future generation. *Thus, there are only two solutions to the problem of violence: dialogues and training in non-violence.* These two approaches collectively will make our work complete. The foremost need is to break the wall of suspicion and create a situation such that two opposing groups can sit together and talk. Training in non-violence comes later. *Anuvrat* has in itself a potential to promote dialogues and meetings and to afford divergent groups with opportunities to participate in lessons of non-violence training.

Many international conferences were organized under the auspices of late Acharya Tulsi. I consider them landmarks since they brought hundreds of workers from all across the globe together and generated a tremendous wave of *Ahimsa* awareness in the world. We need to take his mission further. Acharya Tulsi's work will not progress unless we set up a global plan for educating the youth in the power of non-violence and inducing attitudinal transformation in them. So far intensive efforts have not been made in this area. On the contrary, thousands of terror camps in various parts of the world are training the youth in violence. These schools of hatred employ systematized and organized methods to indoctrinate the youth in the cult of violence and in the use of weapons of mass destruction. They have a powerful network and are spread in every nook and corner of the world.

In comparison to the organized forces of hatred, the forces of peace and non-violence are in a state of disarray. They neither have a strategy

nor a concrete plan. They do not have an organized network of individuals committed to non-violence. We have to seriously ponder as to how a worldwide network of the forces of peace and non-violence can be created. If this happens, I am confident that the horror of war that looms large on our heads can be minimized and the ultimate outcome will be peaceful coexistence and a new world order rooted in peace and harmony. If we can find a way to ensure peaceful coexistence, I will consider the journey of non-violence complete and successful.

**Acharyashri to be honored with
Communal Harmony Award 2004 by
Government of India**

H.H.Acharya Mahaprajna has been selected for the National Communal Harmony Award 2004 by the Government of India for his contribution towards unity and communal harmony in the country. Acharyashri is also the recipient of Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration for the year 2002.

JVBNA EVENTS IN THE RECENT PAST

STRESS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

JVBNA conducted a three-hour stress management workshop led by *Samanjis* Charitrapragyaji and Shuklapragyaji on April 9 at the Cherry Hill Jain Temple. About fifty enthusiastic participants attended the workshop.

**SAMANIJIS BLESS ATTENDEES OF VARIOUS
MAHAVIR JAYANTI FUNCTIONS**

Samanjis graced the Mahavir Jayanti celebration at Albany Hindu Jain Temple on April 16 & 17. They blessed the attendees with a *pravachan* on the importance of Bhagwan Mahavir's principles in the modern context and led them through a yoga and *preksha* meditation session. They also attended the Mahavir Jayanti celebration function of International Jain Sangh at South River on April 23, where they regaled

the attendees with a *pravachan* on Mahavir's principles of *Ahimsa*, *Anekant* and *Aparigraha*.

SAMANIJIS PRAY AT PROPHET MOHAMMED'S COMMEMORATION

On invitation from Imam Ismaili Community, *samanijis* recited the *Namaskar Mantra* at Prophet Mohammed's commemoration held at Columbia University on April 30. This Jain prayer was well appreciated by the attendees and promoted inter-community goodwill and acceptance of divergent perspectives and faiths.

SAMANIJIS PARTICIPATE IN ITHACA STREET TEMPLE INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

Samanijis Charitrapragyaji and Shuklapragyaji attended the numerous ceremonies to mark the grand renovation and inauguration of Jain Center of America, NY's Ithaca Street temple in Elmhurst, NY. Established in the 80s, the temple is one of the first Jain temples of North

America. At the *Dwar* Opening ceremony of the temple on May 1, *samanijis* delivered a *pravachan* on non-violence and the importance of temples. They graced the *Nagar Pravesh* of the various idols on May 15. *Samanijis* also attended many programs of the *Pratishtha Mahotsav* celebration of the temple from Jun 10-19 that comprised rituals & *poojans*, lectures & *bhavanas*, religious programs & *swamivatsalya*. On the occasion of opening of the *Upashrya*, *samanijis* delivered a *pravachan* on *Samayik*.

JVBNA CELEBRATES MAHAVIR JAYANTI AND AKSHAY TRITIYA

Jain's observe Mahavir *Jayanti* to celebrate the birth anniversary of *Bhagwan* Mahavir, the 24th Jain *Tirthankar* and *Akshay Tritiya* to honor that fateful day when the 1st Jain *Tirthankar* *Bhagwan* Rishabhdev accepted *parna* after a year of penance and fasting. JVBNA commemorated Mahavir *Jayanti* and *Akshay*

Tritiya on May 8 with a special celebration at Amreican Legion Hall in Iselin, NJ. At the very outset *Samanijis* Charitrapragyaji and Shuklapragyaji regaled the audience with their recital of the *Namaskar Mantra*. Master of Ceremony, Supriya Bothra and cultural program compere Kavita Kothari, very ably led the audience through the rest of the program. The very enthusiastic children of JVB *Gyanshala* presented a colorful cultural program that comprised of a poem on *Bhagwan* Mahavir recited by the very young, and a skit depicting the relationship between Mahavir Swami and Rishabhdev by the older children. Members of the Bhakti Bhavana Group sang *bhajans* extolling the virtues of Mahavir and Rishabhdev.



Following the cultural program, Process Development & Audit Secretary Sanjay Jain presented the State of JVBNA including its past and present activities and future direction. 16-year-old legend Mayur Mehta was lauded on his ongoing *varshitap*. Special Guest Mr. H.R.Shah, owner of TV Asia addressed the audience and recognized the young participants of the cultural program for their wonderful performance by distributing prizes among them. He also announced his intention of providing airtime to Jainism related programs on TV Asia. Special Guest Mr. Bacchubhai Mehta, a pioneer of Jain Center of America, NY also spoke and Mr. Ashok Shah, a prominent icon of Jain Center of NJ was honored along with other special guests.

The audience gathered some pearls of wisdom from *samanijis*. *Samani* Shuklapragyaji spoke about the importance of the three C's of Jainism, namely, Control of Desires, Control of Emotions and Control of Tongue. *Samani* Charitrapragyaji

discussed the importance of fasting. She held that fasting should not be considered as a method of torturing the body but as a process of cleansing the mind, body and soul. She also spoke about the importance of *Akshay Tritiya* and *Mahavir Jayanti* in the modern world.

This was followed by the much-awaited 'Who Wants To Be A Jain Scholar?' quiz contest ably conducted by Sudhir and Anita Jain of Connecticut. The quiz featured five competitive teams namely *Rishabh*, *Sambhav*, *Shanti*, *Parshva* and *Mahavir* and was immensely enjoyed by all present.

JVBNA president Pratap Jain addressed the audience and spoke about the lessons learnt from his meeting with H.H. Acharya Mahaprajna and about the future course of JVBNA. Vice-President Surendra Kankariya explained *Tithi Yojna* and about ways one could contribute towards the cause of JVBNA. JVBNA secretary Ramesh Parmar delivered Vote of Thanks. *Mangal Path* by *Samanijis* and *Sadharmik Vatsalya* followed. The event was attended by over 250 members and guests and was deemed a grand success. TV Asia covered the event. JVBNA would like to thank all the participants, members, guests and volunteers, any and all who helped make this event a great success.

YOGA & MEDITATION AT KENNEDY PARK

JVBNA conducted yoga and meditation sessions led by *samanijis* for the benefit of fourth and fifth grade students at Kennedy Park School on May 4, 18 and 25. The sessions were well attended and appreciated by the participants.

SAMANIJIS BLESS MAYUR MEHTA

Sixteen-year-old Mayur Mehta, son of Chhaya and Vijay Mehta of New York, has become a legend in himself and an inspiration for young and old alike. He has successfully completed his *Varshitap* – a year long fast with complete *upavas* on alternate days. *Samanijis* blessed Mayur's *parna* on May 11 and the *Sanjhi* function on May 14 that featured *samanijis'* *pravachan* and *gitika*. Way to go, Mayur!

SAMANIJIS GRACE PRATISHTHA ANNIVERSARY & PATHSHALA GRADUATION AT CHERRY HILL TEMPLE

Samanijis graced the *Pratishtha* anniversary function of Cherry Hill temple on May 21-22 and their *Pathshala* graduation ceremony on June 4 and blessed the graduates and attendees.

JAIN SCHOLARS ADDRESS JVBNA MEMBERS

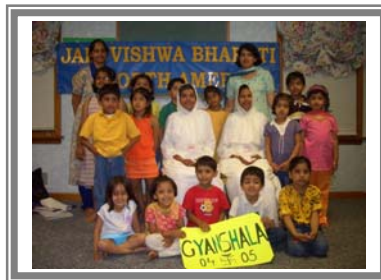
Members benefited from spiritual discourses by two Jain scholars Mr. Jayantilal Jain and Mr. Hukamchand Jain at the JVBNA center in May and June. The former spoke about the 'Concept of *Atma*' and the latter on the 'Antiquity of Jain Temple Art.' Lively discussions followed.

JVBNA CELEBRATES PRAJNA DIWAS

H.H.Acharya Mahaprajna is one of the most prominent spiritual leaders in the world. He is not only a seer but also a great scholar and philosopher. He has authored more than 250 books and is in the process of researching and translating Jain *Agams*. Currently he is leading a *Ahimsa Yatra* across India that is striving to unite all the religions under one platform. He has even been invited by the Pakistani government to take his *yatra* through Pakistan. JVBNA celebrated *Prajna Diwas* (Wisdom Day) on June 25 on the occasion of the 86th birthday of H.H. Acharya Mahaprajna at Siddhachalam Jain Tirth in Blairstown, NJ. The program comprised presentations and discussions on Acharyashri's life & teachings. *Sadharmik Vatsalya* followed.

JVB GYANSHALA GRADUATION & NEWS

JVB Gyanshala continues to be well attended with over forty children enrolled at three different levels based on age groups and with continuous influx of dedicated teachers. The untiring efforts of *Samanijis* and



Gyanshala co-ordinator Nina Jain are taking the Gyanshala to newer heights. The children continue to learn about Jain teachings and their significance in everyday life. A Hindi language



class is also offered. A new addition is a class in Prakrit taught by Samani Shuklapragyaji. Gyanshala also

houses a library of religious stories in comic book format that is extremely popular. Gyanshala children also did a recycling project whereby they made useful things out of waste.



June 10 marked the last day of classes for the current academic year and was followed by final exams on June 17. End of the

year party was held on June 24. Gyanshala graduation was held on June 25 along with *Prajna Diwas* celebration at Siddhachalam Jain Tirth. On this occasion, the new graduates were



awarded with certificates. The children were recognized for their good behavior, high attendance and high grades. The

volunteer teachers were recognized for their dedication and hard work. The children and the teachers were presented with custom embroidered Gyanshala shirts. Class pictures were at display on the day.

The new session of Gyanshala is slated to resume in September. Due to popular demand Gyanshala will hold a summer program for kids that will feature yoga and art & craft projects.

GOCHARI LABH

To arrange for Gochari Labh, please contact
Mrs. Vijaya Daga at (732) 326-9018

JVBNA UPCOMING EVENTS

Family Preksha Meditation & Yoga Camp - August 19-21, '05

From Friday, August 19 at 7pm to Sunday, August 21 at 4pm, *Samanijis* will conduct a Family *Preksha* Meditation & Yoga Camp at a location to be announced shortly. The camp will cover various topics including *yoga*, *pranayam*, relaxation, breathing meditation, color meditation, psychic center meditation, contemplation, and ways of controlling emotions. If you would like to participate, please register by July 20 by contacting JVBNA.

Paryushan & Daslakshan- September 1 - 18, '05

JVBNA will celebrate *Paryushan* and *Daslakshan Parva* from September 1-18 under the auspices of *Samanjis* Charitrapragyaji and Shuklapragyaji. The program will consist of daily *pratikraman*, *pravachan* and children's sessions. All are invited to attend. The details are as follows:

Sep 1, 5-8, 12-15 - 7:30pm to 9:30pm
Sheraton Edison Hotel Raritan Center
125 Raritan Center Parkway, Edison, NJ

Sep 2-4, 9-11, 16-18 - 7:30pm to 9:30pm
Medical Technology Institute (MTI)
300 McGaw Drive, Raritan Center, Edison, NJ

Kshamapana Diwas - September 25, '05

JVBNA will celebrate *Kshamapana Diwas* 2005 on Sunday, September 25 from 3pm to 6pm at St. Andrews Catholic Church, 244 Avenel Street, Avenel, NJ. The program will feature group *kshamayachana*, discourses by *samanijis*, children's cultural program and guest speakers.

Fourth International Preksha Meditation Camp - New Delhi - November 11-18, '05

Preksha International will conduct its Fourth International *Preksha* Meditation Camp from November 11-18 under the auspices of

H.H.Acharya Mahaprajna. The camp will be held in New Delhi at the Adhyatma Sadhana Kendra, Mehrauli. This is a wonderful and rare opportunity. Seats are limited and applicants will be screened for participation in the camp. Please contact the JVBNA center for application and registration information at the earliest.

**CHANDANBALA - A Play by JVBNA -
November, '05**

CHANDANBALA - is the story of a princess turned abused slave who fulfilled all the thirteen *Abhigrahas* of *Bhagwan Mahavir* leading to his *parna* after nearly six months of *tap* and thus helped him in his quest for *Kevalgyan*. She herself later took *deeksha* and attained *moksha*. On the occasion of Deepawali, marking the anniversary of *Bhagwan Mahavir's Nirvana*, JVBNA will proudly tell the story of Chandanbala in the form of a play to be tentatively staged in November. JVBNA members are working very hard under the able direction of *samanijis* to bring this play to you. Further details will follow in the future.

JVBNA - Coming To A Television Near You

JVBNA, under the creative leadership of *Samanijis Charitrapragyaji & Shuklapragyaji*, is in the process of shooting a pilot episode for a weekly series on Jain philosophy, *yoga* and *preksha* meditation, on commission from a major television channel in the US. Further details will follow but do get ready to welcome *samanijis* to your living rooms.

JVBNA Mission Statement

- To spread the universal message of Jain philosophy and Jain wisdom to the world
- To cultivate an atmosphere that nurtures nonviolence, restraint and divergent perspectives, whereby leading to spiritual enlightenment for man
- To create an environment of unity and social harmony for all mankind

JVBNA FAMILY NEWS

JVBNA would like to congratulate,

Sandeep Jain & Shashi Jain, sons of Sampath & Dolores Jain on their graduation from Carnegie Mellon University

Sandeep Jain, son of Sampath & Dolores Jain on making the Dean's List at Carnegie Mellon
Akshay Bothra, son of Niraj & Reena Bothra for winning the Indian Spelling Bee for the North East US

JVBNA sends its condolences to,

Suryakant Doshi & his family on the sad demise of his wife **Mita Doshi**

Rakesh & Ritika Barmecha & family on the sad demise of their uncle **Suresh Barmecha**

BECOME A JVBNA MEMBER

Jain Vishwa Bharati of North Amreica, by virtue of its permanent center in Iselin, New Jersey is able to host *samanijis* year round, who provide you with spiritual guidance and promote the Jain way of life. Such a center dedicated to your well-being has to be funded to carry out different activities. Please show us your support by becoming a member and donating generously. Your donations are tax deductible.

☐	Life Member	\$2,101
☐	Founder Member	\$11,001
☐	Patron	\$25,101
☐	Chief Patron	\$51,001
☐	Special Donor	Any Amount

PARTICIPATE IN TITHI YOJNA

Help maintain the New Jersey Center of JVBNA. Sponsor a day (\$101) to celebrate that special someone, sponsor a week (\$501) or sponsor a month (\$1101). Visit the center on the said *Tithi* for *Jaap*, *Swadhyay* and *Gochari Labh* under the auspices of *Samaniji*. Your contribution is tax deductible.

Jain Vishwa Bharati of North America
 151 Middlesex Avenue, Iselin, NJ 08830
 Phone: (732) 404-1430 Fax: (732) 404-1440
 Email: jvbnj@yahoo.com Web: www.jvbna.org

TO

Directions to JVBNA Center

* Take GSP exit 131 towards Iselin, turn left onto NJ-27/Lincoln Highway, turn left onto Middlesex Avenue, and pass Oak Tree Road. JVBNA Center will be on your left a little after Subzi Mandi.

* From US-1 (South), turn left onto Plainfield Avenue, turn right onto NJ-27/Lincoln Highway, turn left onto Middlesex Avenue, and pass Oak Tree Road. JVBNA Center will be on your left a little after Subzi Mandi.

JVBNA REGULAR SESSIONS - JULY & AUGUST 2005

The following sessions will be conducted by Samani Charitrapragya and Samani Shuklapragya. For updated information call (732) 404-1430, email jvbnapr@yahoo.com or visit the JVBNA site at www.jvbna.org

MONDAYS 9:30AM - 10:30AM	Yoga for Obesity Management	JVBNA Center 151 Middlesex Avenue, Iselin, NJ
TUESDAYS 6:30PM - 7:30PM & 7:30PM - 8:30PM	Yoga for General Fitness	North Edison Public Library 777 Grove Avenue, Edison, NJ
WEDNESDAYS 6:30PM - 7:30PM	Yoga For Stress Management	First Presbyterian Church 1295 Oak Tree Road, Iselin, NJ
THURSDAYS 7:30PM - 8:30PM	Bhaktamar Jeev/Ajeev Swadhyay	JVBNA Center 151 Middlesex Avenue, Iselin, NJ
FRIDAYS 8PM - 10PM	JVB Gyanshala for Children Pravachan for Adults	First Presbyterian Church 1295 Oak Tree Road, Iselin, NJ
SATURDAYS/SUNDAYS Various Times (Call for details)	Pravachan	Various Locations (Call for details)

JVBNA WISHES H.H. ACHARYA MAHAPRAJNA A VERY LONG LIFE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 86TH BIRTHDAY. WE ARE TRULY BLESSED TO HAVE HIM AS OUR GURU