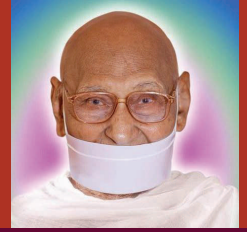




Ahimsa is Protector

Timeless Wisdom...

JVB Preksha Meditation Center Houston



Search Truth Yourself

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5

MAY 2008



Akshay Pragyaaji



Vinay Pragyaaji

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AHIMSA VICHAAR MANCH

A new multidimensional Program / Forum at JVB Houston

JVB is starting a bi-monthly program at the Houston center. Ahimsa Vichaar Manch will be held on 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month between 10.00 AM– 12.00 PM. There is no charge or fee. All are encouraged to come. The first session will start on Sunday, June 15, 2008 @ 10.00 am sharp.

There will not be any lecture, preaching, or sermons in these sessions. The aim is to look at Ahimsa and its multi-dimensions. The main outcome of this program will be to inspire everyone to march towards leading a non-violent way of life (Ahimsatmak Jeevan).

AHIMSA is the Center Pole of Jainism. It is its very foundation. Unconditional Ahimsa to all creatures in the universe is what makes Jainism different from other religions.

We all say, Ahimsa Parmodharama. (Ahimsa is the greatest and supreme religion). If it is so, then how come we know so little about it? Dhammo Mangal Mukithham, Ahimsa Sanjmo Tavo, Deva Vitam Naman Santi, Jassa Dhamme Saya Mano is the only supreme religion.

In these dialogues we will look at what Ahimsa is? It's very basis, why and how it is different from others? etc. We will look at Ahimsa in other religious traditions.

What are the practical situations in life where we face Hinsa, and what steps can we take to avoid or minimize it? We will explore the applications of Ahimsa beyond Thali (food plate) and food, and from micro (Sookshum) to macro (sathool) Hinsa.

We will look at and discuss many stories from Jain scriptures, from the lives of great persons, and from our own life experiences. We will also do Preksha Meditation, and contemplation on Hinsa in our daily lives and all the life span.
By: Sulekh Jain

Thoughts: by Acharya Mahapragya

Every Thorn is a Flower, Every Flower a thorn
That which Pricks the heart is a flower, That which pricks the feet, a thorn

That which is collected drop by drop is the ocean, that which is made for the Ocean is the drop
To differentiate between the drop and the ocean is delusion, to see the ocean in a drop is revolution

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Role of Religion and Spirituality in Stopping Smoking

(A multi-faith program hosted by MD Anderson Cancer Center Houston)

Samani Akshay Pragya Ji, Vinay Pragya Ji, and Mr. Alok Jain (Director, JVB) were invited to attend a meeting with MD Anderson Cancer Center, Interfaith Ministries, and around 15 other faith leaders of Houston on April 28th. The meeting discussed the role of religion and spirituality in stopping smoking.



M. D. Anderson Division of Cancer Prevention is committed to developing, implementing, and disseminating programs that contribute to preventing and reducing cancer incidence. Smoking is the single most preventable cause of cancer and many other chronic diseases.

Medical research has proven that smoking is a serious threat to human health. How to quit smoking has been a serious challenge to the society due to the addictive nature of nicotine found in cigarette smoke. **Research done on students has shown that people with good spiritual foundation are less likely to become smokers.** Given these findings, the purpose of the meeting was to start a dialogue with the leaders of different faiths - a) to see their interest in stopping smoking, b) specific percentages of smokers within their congregations, and c) if they could share any specific programs or techniques that they may have found to be useful in stopping smoking.

Attendees were unanimous in their response towards offering help. However, considering it was a kick-off meeting, none of them had specifics to share. Samani Vinay Pragya Ji explained that to change the habit we have to change the bio-chemistry through specific exercises. Samani ji informed the attendees that JVB has been successfully trying program of Yoga, Pranayam, and Preksha Meditation propounded by Acharya Mahapragya to assist the smokers in India, and is currently assisting a member here in Houston. Interfaith ministry showed there deep interest in Preksha Meditation program. One of its members visited the JVB Houston and invited Samaniji for the next meeting.

The organizers believe that religious communities have a significant role to play in health and education as they give structure to community life and are important sources of encouragement, motivation and support for behavior change. Additional meetings will be arranged in the future to continue the dialogue and discuss ways in which religion and spirituality can lead to health behavior change.

- By Alok Jain

Samanijis Visit To Chicago

Samani Akshay Pragya ji and Vinay Pragya ji visited Chicago at the request of Smruti Shah in the 1st weekend of May for spiritual discourses. At Chicago Jain center and other places they spoke of Positive Thinking; What is Samyaktva? What is misery? How to deal with ego? Living with Jain values? and so on.



Samaniji explained - what we emanate, we get. If we want happiness, then we should always give happiness to others. One should send positive vibrations to realize good dreams. Explaining about ego Samaniji said - ego is the leader of all negative emotions. It comes on so smoothly in our life and takes over it, that we do not even realize. By self introspection and meditation we can defeat ego.





Tidbits

The Problem Solving Mantra

“Namo Abhayadayanam”

- Chant with focus on the Center of Bliss (Ananda Kendra), i.e. heart, and the color pink.
- Benefit: Achieve Fearlessness

Test your knowledge about Jain religion

The answers of last month's questions are as follows:

Q1. Does liberated soul come back in this world?

Answer: No, liberated soul never comes back in this world because they do not have any Karma, which is the cause of worldly life.

Q2. Can a hellish being practice spirituality?

Answer: No, the hellish being cannot practice spirituality because they don't have knowledge of spirituality there. They can do some penance like repentance, reciting, meditation and so on. They can only have equanimity (*Samta*) in their pains.

Q3. Can a person with *Samyaktva* go to hell?

Answer: Normally a person with *Samyaktva* does not go to hell except if his future birth place (*Aayushya Karma*) is decided during the state of wrong faith (*Mithyatva*).

Questions for this month are:

1. How many birth places (*gati*) are open for a hellish being for his next life?
2. Does an animal has right to attain *Samyaktva*?
3. Why the human beings are considered best of all?

Congratulations!!! Shrenik Jain for answering last month's questions correctly!!

Voice of the Omniscient

**jagaramtam munim viram, dosa vajjemti durao
jalamtam jataveyam va cakkhusa dahabhiruno**

Just as everybody keeps away from a burning fire, so do the evils remain away from an enlightened person
(*Abstract From Jain Agamas*)

Calendar of Events:

- ◆ Tuesday 07:00 to 08:00 PM : Yoga & Pranayam to Relieve Stress
 - ◆ Wednesday 07:15 to 08:00 PM.: Pranayam & Meditation for Healthy Life & Positive Thinking
08:00 to 09:00 PM : Swadhyaya (on meaning of Pratikraman and Uttradhya Sutra)
 - ◆ Thursday 09:30 to 11.00 AM.: Yoga and meditation for General Health & Mental Peace.
 - ◆ Saturday 09:00 to 10.30 AM.: Yoga and meditation for General Health & Mental Peace.
- ** There will be no yoga session on Saturday July 05, 2008 ****
- ◆ Sunday
 - 1. (1st and 3rd) 10:00 to 12:00 AM : Ahimsa Vichaar Manch (Starting 06/15th)
 - 2. (2nd and 4th) 10:30 to 12:00 AM.: Meditation, Pravachan & Bhajan

Upcoming Events:

- Samanijis in New Orleans from June 20 to 23, 2008
- Samanijis in Chicago from June 25 to July 06, 2008
- Pragya Diwas: July 13, 2008
- Gyanshala will resume starting September 14, 2008





New JVB Center—Project Status



" Our building project is progressing well. The water and sewer lines have already been laid. The good news is that as a result of extraordinary efforts on the part of Hasmukh Bhai Doshi, our building permit has been approved by the Harris County.

We have received three construction bids and are currently analyzing the details.

The building committee is making the best efforts to bring this project to reality before the end of the year and requests everyone to donate generously to help meet the funding shortfall. Some companies offer matching contributions when one donates to a charitable organization. JVB is recognized by the IRS as a Charitable organization so please do take advantage of the matching contribution opportunity provided by your Company"

By: Alok Jain

The Role of Jainism in Evolving a New Paradigm of Philosophy

With the blessings and inspiration of His Holiness Acharya **Shree Mahaprajna** and under the guidance of the Honorable Vice Chancellor of JVBU, Jain Vishva Bharati is going to organize an international round-table on the theme "**The Role of Jainism in Evolving a New Paradigm of Philosophy**" in the World Congress of Philosophy to be held on the subject of "**Rethinking Philosophy Today**", in Seoul, **South Korea** from **July 30 to August 5, 2008**.

H.H. Acharya **Shri Mahaprajna**, a living legend of Jain philosophy, whose spiritual influence is felt around the globe, will bless the round table indirectly. His Holiness has not only presented a new paradigm of Jain philosophy in its true sense but also is working hard for the welfare of humanity.

The aim and objective with detailed brochure of the round-table can be requested by sending an e-mail to the JVB Houston center at info@jvbhouston.org, or c.pragya@rediffmail.com

By: Samani Chaitanya Pragya

Summer Camps

JVB Houston is bringing a special summer program for kids where learning and fun will meet together. Kids will learn Yoga, Pranayam, Family Values, Arts, Craft, Games and more... in the auspicious guidance of Samani Akshay Pragyaaji and Vinay Pragyaaji. The dates for the three camps for children aged 5 to 12 years are follows,

Yoga & Pranayam:	Monday-Thursday, 9am -4pm, June 9-12, 2008
Family Values & Healthy Living:	Monday-Thursday, 9am -4pm, July 14-17, 2008
Manage Your Life:	Monday-Thursday, 9am -4pm, July 28-31, 2008

These camps are open to everyone. For registration, please contact info@jvbhouston.org

