



International School for Jain Studies

(A Division of Amar Prerana Trust), Pune

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Invites Scholarly Papers for Two-days National Seminar

Sponsored by

Indian Council of Philosophical Research

(Ministry of Education, Govt. of India), New Delhi

On

ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF JAINISM TO ESTABLISH SOCIAL HARMONY AND PEACE

October 23rd - 24th, 2021^{*}

(Saturday & Sunday)

Venue

Navalveerayatan

Tiwai Hill, Chaskaman, Wada Road, Khed,
Pune, Maharashtra - 410513, India

^{*}If the COVID situation allows

PREAMBLE

Today we have conflicts in our life regarding mutual relations and behavior, besides eternally created problems due to pollution, inequalities due to race, gender and economic levels. Conflicts arise due to our wrong beliefs and misunderstandings due to wrong preaching by religious leaders and fanatics. It is well known from the history that countless wars have been fought in the name of the religions. This tendency transcends from national to regional and even to community and family levels.

Jain religion and philosophy propagates non-absolutism, non-violence, tolerance, forgiveness, non-possession and theory of karma etc. which provide vision and can change the mentality of a person to manage the conflict amicably. These can also help in bringing peace, harmony and solutions to many man-made problems. We talk of these briefly to set the stage for discussions during this seminar.

ANEKĀNTAVĀDA AND NAYAVĀDA (NON-ABSOLUTISM AND THEORY OF VIEW POINTS)

Jain philosophy has given us a thought of non-absolutism i.e., *anekāntavāda* which establishes unity in diversity and harmony among the people of different ideologies. In the world, reality is one and the same, but the philosophies view it from different visions and mention the truth in different ways. We cannot say that views of one philosopher are right while others are wrong. They may be true from their angle, hence the harmony towards the persons of different ideas should be maintained. We know apart of truth according to our objective and capabilities. Jain philosophers have assimilated *anekāntavāda* in their thinking, hence they regard other ideologies and faiths with equal respect. *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (1/1/2/23) mentions that those who praise their own faith and view and discard those of their opponents, possess malice against them and hence remain confined to cycle of birth and death. The three pillars of *anekāntavāda*, namely: tolerance, existence of opposites, reconciliation show the way for conflict resolution.

Jainism has developed frameworks of *nayas* to observe the standpoint to know the object. This *naya* theory weaves together the two opposite philosophical tenets and accepts that every substance of the world can be thought to have two opposite characters. From the viewpoint of substance, everything is permanent, but from the viewpoint of modes everything is changing every moment. In Jain view, every entity of the world has multiple characters and we do not perceive all the characters at the moment. Hence, logically it will be wrong to deny the existence of characteristics that we do not perceive. The real entity is the same for all the viewers but there is a difference due to their own perspective.

AHIṂSĀ (NON-VIOLENCE)

Ahiṁsā is the foundational tenant of Jainism which bears universal value and has a capacity to resolve conflicts. It is based on equality of all living beings and not just human beings. Harming the plants, polluting water and air are also the acts of violence. *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* (1/2/3) mentions: “All worldly souls love their life, they wish to relish pleasure, loathe misery, hurt or injury is not desired by anybody, life is dear to all, and they all want to live.” This statement gives a message to understand and protect others life and their right to live. We should honour their right to live and we should adopt our lifestyle without killing or lesser killing. In the view of Jainism, violence is not just killing a living being but any form of torture, exploitation, mental or physical harm is also violence. Violence may occur through our mind, speech and actions. Not only this, but to motivate or support others for violence is also considered as violence.

In this way by developing empathy for other living beings, *ahimsā* can play a big role removal of conflict and in establishment of peace and harmony.

APARIGRAHA (NON-POSSESSION/LIMITING POSSESSIONS)

The attachment gives birth to desire for possession, occupation and hoarding, which is nothing but an expression of one's greedy attitude. It is told in Jain scriptures that greediness is the root of all sins. It is the destroyer of all the good qualities. Anger, pride, deceit etc. all are the offshoots of attachment or mineness or greed. Violence, which disturbs our social and environmental peace, is due to the will for possession. In *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (1/1/2), it is mentioned that those having possession of whatever sort, great or small, living or non-living, cannot get rid of sufferings and conflicts. Possession and hoarding lead to economic inequality, which cause wars. Thus, to establish harmony and peace in society, even in individual's life, the prime need is to restrict the will for possession mental as well as physical also.

RIGHT BELIEF, RIGHT KNOWLEDGE AND RIGHT CONDUCT

Jainism is a religion and philosophy of salvation from sorrows. Fallacious view, wrong knowledge and misconduct are the cause of suffering. Fallacious view is the cause of wrong knowledge and wrong knowledge is the cause of misconduct which includes passions (emotions) of anger, pride, deceit, and greed. All these passions put a person into sorrows. Such a person remains tensed and creates tension for others. It generates confrontation with other people. This confrontation may be avoided by developing right view, which is helpful in understanding the nature of the world and reality. Jainism underscores the value of right belief (*samyagdarśana*), right knowledge (*samyak jñāna*) and right conduct (*samyak cāritra*) for the attainment of salvation and removal of the conflict forever. This path is quite individualistic because it requires detachment from all worldly affairs.

INSTITUTION OF VOWS

To practice the above tenets, vows (*vratas*) are prescribed for practiced by both householders and ascetics. Vows for practice by householders are called minor vows or *aṇuvratas*. The *aṇuvratas* are also helpful in removal of social and religious conflicts and preparing good citizens. Five *aṇuvratas* are mentioned as abstinence from killing a life (*prāṇātīpātā-viramāṇa*), abstinence from falsehood (*mṛṣāvāda-viramāṇa*), abstinence from stealing (*adattādāna-viramāṇa*), satisfaction with own spouse only (*svadāra* or *svapati-santoṣa-parimāṇa*) and limiting the possession/desires (*parigraha/icchā parimāṇa*). These *aṇuvratas* have social, moral and spiritual values. A person pursuing these *aṇuvratas* cannot be harmful to the society. He may be beneficial in some respect. He bears humanity in him and behaves with compassion and restraint.

Thus, Jainism has propounded non-absolution (*anekāntavāda*), non-violence (*ahimsā*), conduct of *aṇuvratas* including the tenet of limiting the possession, concepts of triratna, theory of karma etc. to remove conflicts of our minds which are by product of our misunderstanding or ignorance. Right faith and right knowledge are the guiding factors of our right attitude and conduct; we have to understand the limits of knowledge which occurs through sense organs, mind and intellect. A real knowledge comes out directly from the soul; after a radical change in our internal views. We have to make our mind pure with positive change in thought process, we should develop a vast understanding of the reality and evolve the education system incorporating the spiritual and moral values through learning the *anekāntavāda*, *nayavāda*, non-violence, theory of karma etc. in resolving the conflicts and live a peaceful and progressive life with co-existence of all the diversities of all beings in the world.

OBJECTIVE OF THE SEMINAR

The seminar intends to evolve solutions to social and religious conflict for the establishment of social and religious harmony with *ahimsā*, *anekānta*, *aparigraha*, *naya*, *syādvāda* and karma theory as guiding principles.

SUB-THEMES OF THE SEMINAR

- Ahimsā: Basis of Social Harmony and Peace
- Aṇuvrata, as an instrument of Social Harmony and Peace
- Non-absolutism/Anekāntavāda: The Philosophical Basis of tolerance and reconciliation
- Role of Aparigraha to establish Social Harmony and Peace
- Nayavāda: A philosophical discourse to establish Social Harmony and Peace
- Problem of Conflicts in Ideologies and Faiths and their reconciliation: A Jain Perspective
- Forgiveness: A Jain Concept for Social Harmony and Peace
- Samyak-darśana: An instrument to establish social harmony through right world view
- Social Harmony and Peace in Jain Art.
- Other topics related to the theme.

PAPER DETAILS

Language: English is the preferred language for presenting the paper. However, papers in Hindi are welcome as well.

Presentation: For English papers, soft copy using MS word, A4 size using Times New Roman, font size 12. For Hindi papers, please use Krutidev010, font size 14.

Submission of abstracts and papers:

Please send your abstract and paper to us at seminar.isjs@gmail.com

Facilities to be provided to the first author: Travel, board and lodge facilities to those scholars (first authors) whose papers are accepted for presentation at the seminar.

Last date for abstract submission: September 5th, 2021

Last date for paper submission: September 30th, 2021

Convener

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