

GANDHI & JAINISM

Shugan C Jain

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Gandhi is considered to be an apostle of Ahimsa. He was unique in the sense that he understood the doctrine of Ahimsa in minute details as described in Indic religions primarily for spiritual purification but applied the same for personal, social uplift as well as to liberate India from mighty British.

He claimed himself to be Vaishnava Hindu and later an untouchable. He studied all major religions of the world to appreciate their major ethical postulates. He also read and talked of Tolstoy, Ruskin and their influence on him. He talked of *The Gita* as his solace in times of difficulty. He read, taught and wrote an excellent translation on the same known as Anasakti Yoga or the Gospel of Selfless Action. He also talked of Rajchandra and his profound influence on his spirituality and religious inclinations. He placed him at the highest pedestal of persons from whom he was influenced.

The book explores Gandhi's life from birth in 1869 till his death in 1948, his interactions with Jains and their way of life to establish the influences Jainism had on his value system and way of life. The research is based on well documented and authentic records about Gandhi as well as writings of eminent scholars globally. His secretary, Pyarelal, aptly summarised Jain influence on Gandhi as follows:

“Three things in the Jaina system of thought influenced Gandhiji's outlook most. They were: Ahimsa on the religious side, *anekantavada* or *syadvada* on the philosophical side, and the institutions of vows on the ethical side.”

Some scholars inferred that he was a Jain, especially based on his interpretations of The Gita and way of life. The book concludes by saying that Gandhi may not be a born Jain, but he understood Jain doctrine and practiced the same all through his life to make him an exemplary Jain.

Please order, the book can be purchased from:

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