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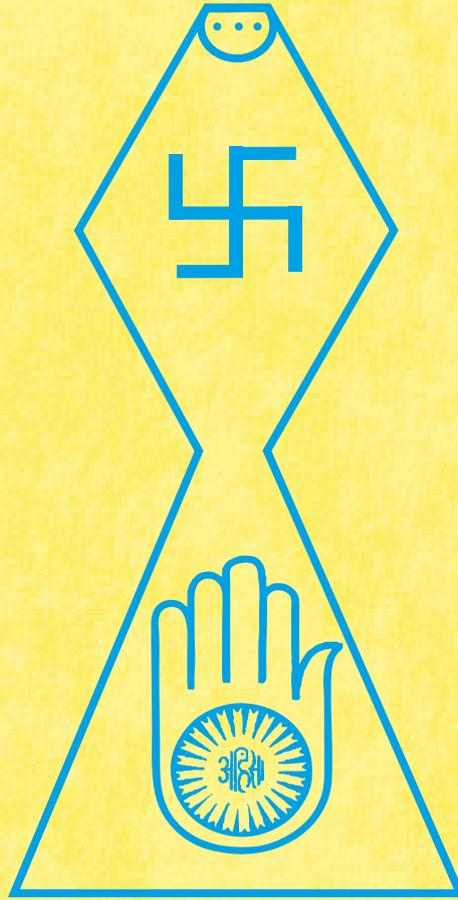
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A Quarterly Refereed Online Research Journal on Jainism

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April - June, 2020



International School for Jain Studies

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Chief Editor's Note

About three months ago when the last issue of *ISJS-Transactions* was out, Covid-19 had affected over a million people globally, and about 60,000 had succumbed to death. The corresponding figures today are about 10.1 million and 502,000 persons respectively. And these figures as well the pandemic have been continuing to rise unabatedly. All along, there has been a frantic search for vaccines and medicines for curing the Corona viral infection which is also undergoing mutations. Until then, and even otherwise, proverbial prevention should rightly be considered better than cure. And so the superficial aspects of prevention, that is, masks, personal distancing and lockdowns are in vogue, but the difficult part of it, that is, adopting the healthy and humane way of life is largely being ignored. Given the fact that Jainism is richly endowed with ancient wisdom and the requisite way of life, the Editorial Board had decided to devote the present issue and the next to the special theme of Jainism and COVID-19.

This issue consists of six articles. The first one “**The World's Religions in a Time of Pandemic**” by Prof Christopher Key Chapple rightly observes that “times of suffering generally evoke a religious response”. And then goes on to list these responses from the major world religions in the forms of *Namokāra* and *Gāyatrī mantras*, selfless *sevā*, *dāna*, generosity, patience and Sabbath. These responses are deeply rooted in respective religion's historicity and geography.

The article “**Motivation for Righteous Conduct**” by Prof Subhash C. Jain argues that righteous conduct not only helps in maintaining a strong immune system for preventing diseases like Corona virus but also generates spiritual growth and peace of mind. According to the author, the Jain Karma doctrine is the most elaborate and the best one in explaining the present life condition of human beings and their future predicament in next life.

Dr. Sulekh C. Jain and Dr. Shugan C. Jain in their article “**Coronavirus in the Global Village: A Look from Jain Teachings**” discuss some of the relevant principles and teachings of Jainism and their applications in the context of the current pandemic. These include five *aṇuvratas*, three *guṇavratas* (limiting directions of our movements/*digvrata*, avoiding wasteful activities/*anarthadaṇḍa*, and limiting possessions/*bhogopabhoga parimāṇa*) and four *śikṣāvratas* (restraining activity to close proximity/*deśāvakāśika*, periodic contemplation/*sāmāyika*; fasting and self-study/*proṣadhopavāṣa* and service to the vulnerable/*vaiyāvṛtya/atithi samvibhāga/dāna*).

Like the previous paper, Prof Rekha Jain's paper “**Pandemic and Jainism**” also deals with some of the eternal principles of Jainism which are practical and relevant to the current Pandemic situation. The principles discussed are daily regimen like obligatory duties, five vows, diet and meditation and their importance to boost our immune system to enable us combat COVID-19 and use the lockdown period properly.

Dr. Parveen Jain in his article “**Remedy for Pandemics: Non-Violence and Ecological Harmony**” pointedly suggests a two-pronged global strategy for dealing with the current pandemic situation. Explaining the nature of intricate balance between all the living entities and environment, the author suggests to adopt a lifestyle that is inspired by non-violence and is in harmony with ecology and environment. “Such a lifestyle embraces elimination of animal cruelty, and sustainable living with minimum deforestation and accompanying re-forestation, conservation of natural resources, minimum pollution, compassionate wildlife-human contacts and other similar actions by human beings.”

In the final article written in Hindi and entitled “**Coronavirus evaṁ Antarnirbharatā: Eka Jāgatika Niyama kī Smṛti**” by Samani Prof. Satyaprajna, the integrated nature of the universe, the multi-dimensional nature of inter-dependence of all beings on one-another and on the nature, the reality and possibility of the discovery of creative alternatives for healthy and happy human life, etc. have been discussed in highly philosophical and reflective manner in the context of the on-going deadly Coronavirus pandemic.

All the articles reviewed here clearly emphasize the relevance and application of Jainism in the context of the current pandemic. Right now I cannot think of a better statement on the subject than the following one recently sent to ISJS by Shri Krishan Kalra, the past presidents of All India Management Association, Delhi Management Association, ex-Secretary General of PHD Chamber and Country Director Climate Change (AL Gore, Ex Vice President of America initiative).

Notwithstanding the fact that I am not a 'Jain', I see a huge relationship between the 'Pandemic & Jainism'. I would go to the extent of saying that if there were more Jains in the world, perhaps the 'Pandemic' would've never happened! I look at the deadly pandemic as a sort of 'Nature's Revenge against Humanity' that has ravaged the planet earth far beyond it's bearing capacity. I am reminded of Gandhi Ji's saying that "Earth has enough for every one's needs but not for every one's greed.”

We have literally ravaged Mother Earth because of our greed. We want MORE of everything. Energy, Automobiles, Clothes, Air Conditioners, Airplanes, Food, FMCGs....everything -- way beyond our needs. Cupboards in our houses are always full of suits, clothes, shoes, sweaters, shawls, coats, jackets, gadgets....People have several Cars in their garages.....We have become compulsive shoppers...We waste tonnes of food/water ...all this reckless production means loss of trees, extinction of marine life, extinction of wildlife, millions of tonnes of GHGs into the atmosphere, mountains of garbage, Pollutants in the rivers and the seas.

One of the biggest disasters is the increasing consumption of non-veg food which takes a toll on water availability and adds hugely to release of GHGs into the atmosphere. Jainism teaches 'being vegetarian, ascetic, simple living, frugality...all the traits which are getting lost.

I am thankful to all the authors for contributing their scholarly papers to this issue. Our thanks are also due to Dr. Shugan C. Jain, Chairman ISJS, for his continuous support and guidance. Thanks are also due to Dr. Shrinetra Pandey for rendering his editorial skills, Ms. Jyoti Pandey for diligently computing the journal and Mr. Sushil Jana for his technical support and putting it on our website. The readers and contributors are welcome to send their valuable suggestions.

Prakash C. Jain

29th June, 2020

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The World's Religions in a Time of Pandemic

Christopher Key Chapple*

Human being prefers pleasure to pain, certainty to uncertainty, and equanimity to disequilibrium. We find ourselves living in a time of global suffering and disarray due to the outbreak of the coronavirus. At the current pace, more than a million human beings will perish of the COVID-19 virus by the end of 2020. This essay will explore some possible responses to this troubled situation offered by the world's religions, highlighting the resourcefulness of humans in times of distress.

Innovative rituals celebrate the frontline caregivers helping out in this crisis. In Europe and New York City, people each night give out shouts and make noise with pots and pans to praise and acknowledge the dangerous and selfless work performed by nurses, doctors, and hospital staff, as well the essential workers who continue to do agricultural labor and staff supermarkets and drugstores. In a spirit akin to Diwali, Indians of all faiths have gathered to light lamps, symbolically dispelling the darkness of this mysterious virus. Rather than gather face-to-face, people worldwide sit with one another via electronic media, using all manner of software and devices to check in with and support one another. These activities in many ways replicate the ritual of gathering around the campfire for warmth and wisdom. Education and community are being enabled in new ways. School children and university students are learning new computer skills. School districts are distributing computer equipment and enabling internet access for those who need assistance. Religious congregations are meeting online. Traditions are being newly invented to respond to the difficulties imposed by social isolation such as online weekly study groups and check-ins. Many families whose members no longer live close to one another have implemented twice-monthly online sessions to connect.

Times of suffering generally evoke a religious response. On the one hand, due to the global nature of the corona virus, one can hear a unified religious voice urging generosity and caution at this time of immense need. On the other hand, each religion depending on history, geography, and differing philosophical perspectives, has its own resources and tools. Hence, there will be many ways of coping, bargaining, sorting out answers, figuring out how to respond, and configuring appropriate measures. In the spirit of the Jain commitment to hear as many sides of an argument as possible (*anekānta-vāda*), various religious approaches to the pandemic will be considered in this essay.

We will begin with the **Jain** faith and its perspective on generosity (*dāna*). In the sixth century, Haribhadra Virahaṅka wrote:

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Giving is the primary practice of Dharma.

Giving destroys poverty.

Giving causes one to be beloved by people.

Giving increases one's fame.¹

During times of crisis, the Jain community consistently makes significant donations of money, skills, and expertise to help people and other living beings in need. Motivated not by fame or recognition, leaders of the Jain community are supporting one another and surrounding communities through direct service and through donations.

Jain bio-cosmology, with its vision of the universal presence of life, offers insights relevant to the pandemic. Dating back thousands of years, Jains have had a name for viruses and bacteria: *nigoda*². Cognizant of the spread of disease through these invisible living beings, Jains throughout history have strained water to protect against infection and have covered their mouths with specially crafted protective masks, the *muḥapaṭṭī*. All through the world, people of all faiths and cultures are now wearing the *muḥapaṭṭī*.

In terms of fear and anxiety about death, Jain teachings on the soul assert that the soul can never be killed. Jains posit the existence of an eternal soul, subject to change. They teach nonviolence and truthfulness on a quest eventually to see the Self in its fullness of energy, consciousness, and bliss. Hence, rather than denying or avoiding death, Jains throughout history have welcomed unavoidable death with ritual and sustained caloric reduction, a fasting practice known as *sallekhanā* or *santhārā*.³ The COVID-19 virus, however, is avoidable, and Jains are working to support and promote public health policies such as social distancing and restricting one's movement. Other experts in this special journal issue speak about these undertakings among the Jain community.

Speaking from the perspective of the **Hindu** faith and on behalf of the Gāyatṛī Parivāra, Dr. Chinmay Pandya has urged humanity worldwide to remember that we are one race, one species, one people during this uncertain time of the corona virus.⁴ The virus problem is shared by everyone on the planet. Dr. Pandya urges us to render service as best possible, in the spirit of *Sevā* as praised in the *Rāmacaritamānasa* of Tulasīdāsa. He advises us that we need to move beyond selfish fear and despair into states that honor and lift up selfless acts of compassion, recognizing our underlying equality, unity, and sacredness.

A religious resource dear to the Gāyatṛī Parivāra community is the Gāyatṛī Mantra⁵. Recitation of this mantra is the core practice of this important branch of Hinduism, which numbers more than 100 million people. This mantra is also frequently invoked across religious traditions and cultures, and often recited in Yoga classes worldwide. This mantra can give inspiration in times of trouble.

The Gāyatṛī Mantra begins with an invocation, followed with three lines that honor the light of dawn. It holds universal appeal: every human being seeks to awaken into a new day. Each line is analyzed briefly as follows:

Om, Bhūh, Bhuvah, Svah.

Om calls forth our sense of unity and connection.

Bhūh reminds us of the earth and the waters and the power of all beings, including viruses, in the realms held firm by gravity.

Bhuvah evokes heat and breath, warmth and the wind, the realm of motion and the dynamism of life itself.

Svah brings us into space and beyond, circling around and above into the realm of expanse and transcendence.

Tat Savituḥ Vareṇyam

Calls forth the light of the new day spilling across the horizon, launching birds into song and flight, prompting day-waking animals into action, sparking the human once more into the morning rhythm of life. For the past several weeks, the slumber of human activity has been profound: the planes are silent, the roads are still, the hubbub has disappeared. We yearn for the return of the heat and energy of life fully expressed.

Bhargo Devasya Dhīmahi

We see the effulgence of the light in the powers possessed by the gods and goddesses, including our senses and organs that make the world manifest. Having restrained our activity for these past many weeks, we have built up a reserve of energy. We can anticipate and imagine a return to full engagement with the universe. We remember what was, we feel stillness in the present, we anticipate a revived future.

Dhīyo Yo Naḥ Pracodayāt

We think and see, we contemplate (*dhī*). We implore that our thoughts be reasonable and well formed, that our contemplations bear fruit in a way that supports the well-being of all. The virus has cast a shadow of darkness upon the face of humanity. By thinking toward the return of the sun, by remembering that the darkness will be dispelled by the passage of time, we can live with confidence and hope, in the words of Dr. Pandya, with “no fear, no despair.”

Listening to and perhaps reciting this mantra can serve humanity by inviting a moment of pause and reflection through which one can affirm the capacity of human will to endure and flourish.

The **Bhagavad Gītā** proclaims that

When it is night for all beings, disciplined people remain wakeful.
When beings are awake, it is night for the seeing sage.⁶

This verse, beloved by Mahatma Gandhi, reminds us that we are in a period of prolonged darkness inflicted by the virus. The world has been shut down into a *pralaya*, a suspension, a

setting aside of normal everyday activities. We must be vigilant during this time. As people of discipline, people with prayerful practice, we must use this time to prepare for the eventual return to activity. There will be much to observe, much work to be done as people rebuild their livelihoods. It will be important to maintain a sense of calm when the morning comes.

The **Buddha** was no stranger to disease and illness. He taught that everyone will suffer, that life presents unrelenting change, and that all things will eventually fall apart.⁷ The Buddha taught mindful awareness of these changes through watching the rise and fall of the breath, and observing the silent forbearance of the earth, the water, fire, and air. From Buddhist practice we can learn the patience that we all need as the Covid-19 virus runs its course. The virus will eventually pass, falling away, drying up, taken into the wind as dust.

Sikhism believes that dedicating oneself to selfless service (*sewā*) of others enable the individual to attain happiness.⁸ Therefore, Sikh organizations worldwide have opened special langurs to support those in need. They have inspired others to donate food. The Sikh community gives important online advice regarding resources on the practicalities of how changes inflicted by the virus response affect education, transportation. They also offer wisdom on how keep children safe and informed as they access their computers more and more.

Jewish religion practices the traditions of Sabbath and Jubilee. Following God's commandment in the book of Genesis, observant Jews abstain from work every seventh day. On Friday evenings, at the Sabbath dinner, the family reflects on the past week. All through the day on Saturday, observant Jews abstain from normal activities: no work, no new preparation of food, no moving about, aside from a stroll in the neighborhood. Every seven years, a field is to remain fallow.⁹ For Jews worldwide, this time of social distancing has extended Sabbath from four or five days in a month into a months-long Sabbath.

Furthermore, just as the world takes a respite every seventh day, so also in Biblical times the entire society would be re-ordered every 50 years in what is known as the Jubilee year.¹⁰ All debts would be forgiven. Land would be redistributed. All people would be released from prison, given the grace to make amends and start fresh. Everyone would start anew. Similarly, many governments are now maintaining their workforce with forgivable loans and releasing people from prison, with faith that everyone in a spirit of goodness will be supportive as we move forward.

Many **Christians** observe the weekly Sunday ritual of church-going. Christians engage in repentance, taking moral inventory and making a commitment to improve themselves and the society. In this time of virus-induced need, Christian generosity can be seen in abundance as homes are made for the homeless, medical testing is provided for free, and food banks and schools distribute millions of meals to those who have lost employment because of the virus. Churches have replaced congregational gatherings with on-line services and support groups. Some churches are holding drive-in liturgies, with ministry taking place while individuals and families sit in their cars. The most sacred days of the Christian calendar, Good Friday and

Easter Sunday, took place during social distancing. The Roman Catholic Pope delivered his homily via video-cast to an empty Vatican Square.

Some persons might be tempted to see the corona virus outbreak as a form of punishment for bad behavior. Some world leaders have blamed this period of extended suffering on communities of the “other,” whether the Chinese government, or the American government, or Muslims, or even rogue Christian pastors who refuse to observe social distancing. However, **Islam** teaches that such disruptions as COVID-19 are not punishment from God nor are they self-inflicted. Islam teaches that we must not seek to point fingers or assign blame. Rather, this and any crisis must be seen as an opportunity, a challenge to bring out the best of humanity. According to Islam, we are being tested to find compassion and generosity in the face of horrific suffering.¹¹ The Ramadan fast has taken place during the outbreak and this period of social distancing. Worldwide, Muslims have been asked to refrain from gathering for the breaking of the fast. The fast itself serves as poignant reminder of the preciousness and sacredness of food, the very source of life.

The virus has interrupted normal economies and supply chains worldwide. Many people are experiencing hunger. This becomes an opportunity for religious organizations to provide relief. We draw inspiration from hearing stories of the heroic health care workers making great sacrifices and working long hours. We all feel connected in our observance of limited movement, covered mouths, and holding back from physically reaching out to touch others. We are in a time of a sacred pause, a time of sustained silence. As we cultivate and explore our capacity for patience, we build reserves of energy for our eventual return. The ebb and flow of life holds great poignancy in this moment. We live with stories of sadness and loss as well as hope and recovery. By making time for daily meditation, we enter states of repair. And, with hope, we prepare for the work that faces us in a new future.

Notes & References:

¹ “*Dharmasyādīpadam dānam, dānam dāridranāśanam/*

Janapriyakaram dānam, dānamkīrtiyādivardhanam//” Yogabindu 125.

² The term *nigoda* implies a common body shared by infinite *jīva*. There are five types of one-sensed *tīryaṅca/ sthāvāra* (stationary) *jīva* forms known as earth-bodied, fire-bodied, water-bodied, air-bodied and vegetable-bodied. The *jīva* having earth as the body is called earth-bodied. Similarly, the *jīvas* having fire, water, air and vegetable as their bodies are called fire-bodied, water-bodied, air-bodied and vegetable-bodied. All these forms are very very small and not visible but they have been seen by omniscient. The first four categories of these *jīvas* are *pratyeka* (single) i.e. the one-sensed one *jīva* as the owner of one body. However, the last category vegetable-bodied can be divided into two categories: *pratyeka* and *sādhāraṇa* (common). The *pratyeka* vegetable is occupied by a one-sensed *jīva* who is owner of that body, a typical example being gourds. However, the *sādhāraṇa* vegetable is occupied by infinite *jīva* sharing the same body. Actually, those bodies which are for sharing infinite number of *jīvas* are known as *nigoda*. Therefore, they have one-body, occupied by many souls which are born, which live and which die together.

³ “*Upasarge durbhikṣe jarasi rujāyām ca niḥpratīkāre/*

Dharmāya tanuvimocanamāhuḥ sallekhanāmāryāḥ//” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvākācāra 122.

Meaning: Giving up of the body on the arrival of unavoidable calamity, distress, senescence and disease, with a view of increase of spiritual merit, is called *sallekhanā*.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gqczns5LkTY&feature=youtu.be>
- 5 "Aum bhūrbhuvah svaḥ, tatsaviturvareṇya/
6 *Bhargo devasya dhīmahi dhīmahi, dhīyo yo naḥ pracodayāt!*" Ṛgveda 3/62/10, Bhāgavata Purāṇa 1/1/1.
7 "Yā niśā sarvabhūtānām tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī/
Indriyāṅindriyārthebhyastasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā!" Gītā 2/69.
8 "Yo ca buddhañca dhammañca, saṅghañca saraṇam gato/
Cattāri ariyasaccāni, sammappaññāya passata!
Dukkham dukkhasamuppādam, dukkhassa ca atikkamam!
Ariyam catthaṅgikam maggam, dakkhūpasamaḡaminam!" Dhammapada 190-91.
- 8 Kalra, Gurvinder, Kamaldeep Bhui and Dinesh Bhurga. "Does Guru Granth Sahib describe depression?"
Indian Journal of Psychiatry 55.2 (2013): 195-200.
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- 9 "Sabbath." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster. Web. 21 May 2020.
<<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Sabbath>> .
- 10 "Jubilee." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, op. cit.
<<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/jubilee>> .
- 11 Surah Al-Baqarah 2/153-157.

Motivation for Righteous Conduct

Subhash C. Jain*

Introduction

People experience certain phenomena so often that they do not consider it necessary to look for an explanation for their occurrence. Such phenomena appear so natural to them that they do not pay any attention to them. For example, people experience seasonal diseases and recover from them, with or without traditional treatments, but it rarely occurs to them why only a fraction of them fall sick. Nonetheless, there comes an event in every thinking person's life when it feels important to find an explanation. One such event is the coronavirus pandemic that has spread to almost every corner of the world since the beginning of the year 2020, infecting millions of people and causing several hundred thousand deaths. The coronavirus attacks with shocking inconsistency.¹ Some people are infected with it, while others are not. And most of the infected people recover, while others die. Some communities are overwhelmed by the disease, while others are spared. Why? This paper seeks the answers to these questions, as well as "How can this disease be prevented?" Understanding why and how the coronavirus attacks some but not others is vital for limiting its spread and mitigating its impact. This understanding would also be useful in alleviating the impact of other fatal diseases that occur in the future.

Disease-Free World

Do you ever think of a disease-free world? It sounds nice, but it would actually be a chaotic world. In a diseases-free world, people could live with any lifestyle, eat whatever they want and as much as they want, and they would still be healthy. No diet and eating habit would be unhealthy. As people would never die from diseases, i.e. natural causes, some of them would have to be killed by violence to feed the surviving people with limited natural resources. Therefore, it seems logical to assume that disease manifestation is nature's way of maintaining an orderly world. For example, we can observe some positive, unintended consequences of the coronavirus pandemic,² such as

- Suddenly the air is less contaminated, as air polluting behaviors are reduced.
- Water in rivers is less polluted, as industrial-waste disposal is down.
- The earth is less spoiled, as solid-waste disposal is down.
- The world seems to be much calmer, as incidents of war have gone down.
- Scientists in many countries are working together as one team more than before to develop vaccines for the virus.
- People are learning new ways to spend their time.

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Irrespective of the pros and cons of the manifestation of diseases and pandemics, they were with us in the past and will be with us in the future. The coronavirus pandemic motivated us to reexamine the mitigation process of disease.

Causes of Disease

Most experts believe that the manifestation of diseases, including something as virulent as the coronavirus, is determined by genetics plus environmental factors, including daily conduct and social determinants of health.³ Nearly every disease has a genetic component. Depending on the disease, the genetic component may be large or small. If the genetic cause of a disease is better understood, it might be prevented, better treated, and/or possibly cured. But for a disease caused by a novel virus, such as coronavirus, no genetic cure is currently known. Therefore, mitigation of such a disease must be addressed by focusing on environmental factors. Individuals with chronic diseases, such as pulmonary disease, heart diseases, and diabetes, are dying disproportionately from COVID-19. The immune systems of people with these diseases is relatively weak. By following appropriate daily conduct, the immune system could be prevented from becoming weak, but such conduct is not compatible with the lifestyle of many people who prefer the management of disease over its prevention.

Immune System

As our immune system protects our body against disease or other potentially damaging foreign bodies such as viruses, bacteria, and parasites, it seems rational to assume that people with a weaker immune system are more susceptible to the coronavirus and other diseases. Understanding why and how an immune system becomes weak is crucial for preventing and mitigating disease. There are two major subsystems of the immune system: the innate immune system and the adaptive immune system.⁴ The innate immune system provides an immediate, but non-specific response to all threats. The adaptive immune response is antigen-specific and requires the recognition of specific "non-self" antigens. The innate immune system is the dominant system of immune defense. If pathogens successfully evade the innate response, the adaptive immune system, which is a second defense mechanism, is activated by the innate response. Adaptive (or acquired) immunity creates immunological memory, after an initial response to a specific pathogen, leading to an enhanced response to subsequent encounters with that same pathogen. This process of acquired immunity is the basis of vaccination.

A person is infected with disease after his or her immune system becomes weak, which, in turn, becomes weak when the organs and body parts that play a role in the immune system become inefficient in their function. The functional efficiency of these subsystems of organs and body parts varies from person to person and from birth to death. Some people, though few, are born with robust subsystems of the immune system that remain efficient until death. Such people never fall sick. Most people are born with an efficient immune system that becomes inefficient with aging due to inappropriate daily conduct. Such people eventually get infected by diseases, including coronavirus, and some of them with severely inefficient

immune systems eventually die. In addition, some people's immune system is weak at birth, as the subsystems of their immune system at birth are not healthy. These people suffer from chronic diseases, and they are most likely to get infected by the coronavirus and eventually die from it.

There is considerable heterogeneity in immune systems between individuals, but the sources of heterogeneity are largely unknown. Several studies on identical twins have been conducted to determine the source of heterogeneity in the innate system at birth, but with limited success. Though our knowledge of immune function will improve with additional studies, the author believes that the immune system can always be kept strong by following righteous conduct. However, people are not likely to follow righteous conduct for disease prevention without a motivation that offers *something* more valuable in return. What could that *something* be? It is related to non-physical rewards, defined in elusive terms as spiritual growth. Righteous conduct not only maintains a strong immune system for preventing diseases, it also generates spiritual growth, which manifests in perennial peace.

Following righteous conduct requires learning to live out of far greater inner resources, which grow with increasing spiritual growth. Spiritual awareness and transformation require a true religious faith that blossoms from the deep center of the Self and embracing the spiritual principles associated with that religion. What we believe usually dictates our attitudes about people and events, which in turn generates our emotional responses towards them. Since we have practiced our attitudes and beliefs over a lifetime, we are very loyal to them.

We need to find, each of us in our own way, a path leading to spiritual transformation and inner resource expansion. One such path is based on the doctrine of actions. According to this doctrine we must bear the consequences of our actions. This doctrine has been expressed in different ways in different faiths, such as “you reap what you sow”, “every action has a reaction”, “what goes around, comes around”, “you bear the fruits of your karma”, and so on. All religions, including the western religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and the eastern religions of Jainism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, preach this doctrine. This tenet in the eastern religions is known as the karma doctrine.

Jain Karma Doctrine

The model of the karma doctrine of the Jain philosophical school is chosen for this paper, as Jain thinkers—in contrast to their Hindu, Buddhist, and Sikh counterparts—have developed a more comprehensive karmic model. The karma doctrine in Jainism is based on the following two presuppositions:⁵

- Substances that constitute the universe are uncreated and eternal.
- Living beings are made up of two independent substances, namely, soul and matter.

There is no need for a God as the creator of the universe and the administrator of the karma doctrine, because in Jainism the universe is regarded as uncreated and eternal, and the karma

doctrine is considered self-regulating. Moreover, the karmic model in Jainism must be exhaustive because there is no scope of any inexplicable factor that is regulated by an enigmatic superpower, such as God.

The karma doctrine deals with intentional, voluntary actions carried out by physical actions of mind, speech, and body, termed *yoga*,⁶ and spiritual actions that include misperception, attachment/aversion, motivations, and desires, etc., termed *moha*.⁷ In short, an action is an activity performed by *yoga-plus-moha*. Living beings attach karma to their karmic body by the actions they perform all the time. Karma carries the directives of the karmic consequences of their actions and the detachment of karma from the karmic body manifests in the form of karmic consequences to be borne by the doer (*kartā*) of the action.⁸ As the doer is made up of a soul and a physical body, the karmic consequences affect the doer by affecting its soul and body, which in turn are affected by changing the modes of their properties. Three processes, namely, the performance of an action, the attachment of the new karma to the karmic body, and the detachment of the old karma from the karmic body are going on simultaneously and incessantly in every living being.

One type of karma that is relevant to the current study is the embodiment-determining (*nāma*) karma.⁹ The karmic consequences of this karma cause the original state of bodies, organs and body parts, senses, mind, respiration, etc. and determine health conditions. One of the subtypes of the physique-determining karma is the immunity-determining (ID) (*parāghāta*) karma that determines the potency of immunity.¹⁰ Understanding the causes of karmic consequences is necessary to comprehend the karmic process that control the potency of immunity. There are two causes of all karmic consequences, including the karmic consequences of the ID karma. One cause, namely, the ID karma detaching from the karmic body is obvious, as there cannot be karmic consequences without fruition of karma. The intensity of fruition of the ID karma that determines the potency of immunity depends on the intensity of *moha* of the action that binds karma to the karmic body. The potency of immunity decreases with an increase in the intensity of *moha*.

The second cause of karmic consequences is not so obvious. The rise of karma occurs, not by itself, but with the assistance of *dravya* (substance), *kṣetra* (region), *kāla* (time), and *bhāva* (mode).¹¹ The four factors—*dravya*, *kṣetra*, *kāla*, *bhāva*—include abiotic and/or biotic factors, termed environmental factors, that influence living organisms. Some diseases depend on abiotic factors, such as air temperature and amount of sunlight, which in turn depend on geographical location. Other diseases depend on biotic factors, such as diet, lifestyle choices, mental stress, etc. The karmic consequence of the ID karma due to a medical intervention is not identical in every person, because the ID karma of one person is different from another. While one has no direct control over the first cause, i.e., rise of karma, which is governed by the universal karma doctrine, one has free will to choose the second cause, i.e., environmental factors. It should be noted that new karma interacts with old karma, and the intensity of *moha* of the old karma can be decreased by performing future actions with mild *moha*.

People born with a robust immune system, which stays strong till death, have performed their actions in previous lives with mild *moha* and will perform their future actions also with mild *moha*. Such people live a tension-free life and stay healthy throughout their lives. People who are born with a weak immune system can improve their immune system by performing future actions with mild *moha*.

Righteous Conduct

Karmic matter attached to the karmic body as karma is understood as debt to be liquidated in the future and is termed karmic debt. The karmic body can be thought of as an individual bank account where the ledger of the karmic debt of the individual is kept. As *moha* is the cause of bondage of karma to the karmic body, the karmic debt incurred during an action depends on the intensity of the *moha* associated with the action. The larger the intensity of *moha* with which the action is carried out, the larger is the karmic debt acquired during that action. As we constantly acquire and liquidate karmic debt, the total karmic debt in an individual bank account constantly keeps changing. According to the Jain karma doctrine, most issues in the daily lives of humans, including issues related to health, can be addressed by righteous conduct, which is conduct that reduces the karmic debt.

Righteous conduct includes sense restraint, power restraint, and self-disciplinary methods.¹² Sense-restraint means control over the sense organs to decrease attachment to our body.¹³ It has been elegantly said that the canals of the senses, overflowing with the water of desire, nurture the poisonous tree of desires which heavily deludes the soul. It is up to us how we use our senses. We can use them to either increase or decrease our *moha*. The purpose of the sense organs is the survival of the body, but we misuse our senses, as can be shown by a cursory scrutiny of our conduct in daily life. The use of the tactile-sensory system to protect our body from getting injured is one thing, but its use to please and comfort our body is an entirely different matter. The use of expensive designer clothes and items such as ornaments, jewelry, and cosmetics that we use to beautify our body show our attachment to our body due to ego, which increases our *moha*. If we have no control over our taste buds, we develop cravings for food, which in turn increases our *moha* towards food. If we do not have control over our olfactory sense, we develop attachment to certain smells, which in turn increases our *moha* for things like cosmetics and perfumes. We need to have control over the vision-sensory system. Otherwise we misuse it for things like reading unworthy books and watching demeaning entertainment programs. With our hearing sense we might listen to spiritual sermons that help to diminish our *moha* or debasing music that increases our *moha*. We should have control over our five senses so that we do not use them in activities that enhance our *moha*.

Power restraint requires control over physical actions of the body, vocal organs, and mind.¹⁴ As we use our sense restraints to control our *moha*, similarly we should use our power restraints to control our *moha* by performing actions following twelve partial restraints (*vratas*) that include five *aṇuvratas*, three *guṇavartas*, and four *śikṣāvratas*.

The powerful forces of sensual attractions, desires, and delusions constantly drag the soul toward objects of sensual pleasure and lead to attachment towards worldly objects. Hence, one should concentrate primarily on reducing and eventually destroying *moha*, as it is the root cause of all evils. This, in turn, requires repeated practice of self-disciplinary methods,¹⁵ such as repentance of past transgressions and negative thoughts; renouncement of attachment to the body and worldly possessions; self-correction through introspection, self-analysis, contemplation, meditation, and the constant practice of wholesome moral conduct; and attainment of equanimity and fusion with the true self. Since it is difficult to change one's way of life, exercise in self-discipline needs to be constantly practiced with perseverance.

There is an added motivation to follow righteous conduct. As the phenomenon of rebirth is a necessary corollary of the karma doctrine, the person who dies with less karmic debt will be born with a better life-form in the next life.

It should be mentioned that the two *vratas*, namely, *digvrata*¹⁶ and *deśāvakaśikavrata*¹⁷ are pertinent to the coronavirus pandemic. In the former, one aims to limit the area of one's activities, and in the latter, one elects to remain within an area narrower than stipulated in the former. The precautions of social distancing and quarantine during the coronavirus pandemic belong to these two *vratas*.

Conclusion

Prevention of disease is a better strategy than cure. Disease can be prevented by maintaining a strong immune system. Righteous conduct not only helps to maintain a strong immune system, thus preventing diseases, it reduces karmic debt leading to a peaceful life and a better life-form in the next life. The precautions of social distancing and quarantine belong to *digvrata* and *deśāvakaśikavrata*.

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Iti saṅkalpo digvratamāmṛtyaṇupavinivṛtṭyai//” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra 68.
- 17 “*Deśāvakaśīkam syātkālaparicchedanena deśasya/*
Pratyahamaṇuvratānām pratisaṃhāro viśālasya//” Ibid 92.

Coronavirus in the Global Village: A look from Jain Teachings

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Introduction

During the last 200 years, due to the advances in technology, travel, internet and instant communication, the world has already become flat and truly a Global village. In a Global village, people care and share with each other and live happily. The recent Coronavirus has brought us even closer.

Covid-19 crisis is by far the biggest challenge ever faced by the world and particularly the elderly and the aging people. There is public health, health care and financial crises. This Pandemic does not see race, religion, color, caste, creed, language, national or geographical borders before striking and everyone is affected equally. No one is immune and it spares no one. It is a great equalizer amongst the rich and the poor, weak or mighty and ordinary or VVIPs. This virus has shown its ugly and dangerous face in more than 182 countries of the world. PM of U.K, Prince Charles, Hollywood Stars (Tom Hanks and his wife), famous Sports players, TV newscasters (to name just a few) and so many known and unknown people have been affected. It exacts a very heavy death toll too.

This Coronavirus outbreak continues to sow tragedy on countless scale. Many lives have been lost, the economies world over have been turned upside down and life as we have known has been dramatically altered. This is a crisis unlike any other in our life time. Its dangerous spread and its lethal consequences are never far from our minds. Our daily routines have been replaced for many of us by a rough equivalent of house arrest. To contain the spread of this virus, many Governmental authorities in many countries have imposed strict and complete lockdown of the activities, trade, business, services and movement of people. No one knows what is there tomorrow and when will it end.

As a result, there is an atmosphere of fear, worries, stress, tension and severe hardship all around. This includes;

1. Fear of catching virus, falling sick and death.
2. Fear of losing job- a source of income and thus danger and worries about, food, shelter and clothing. Many millions of people have been affected by this.
3. Fear of loss of one's investments such as in stock market and real estate etc.

This pandemic is also a wakeup call for the whole humanity. How do we stay positive, stress free from anxiety and happy during these stressful times? In this environment of seemingly

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calamitous times, how do we maintain our optimistic attitude, how do we connect and reflect with the inner sources of happiness and wellbeing and how do we retain our spiritual, ethical and emotional equanimity in times of great disruption and uncertainty?

Ancient wisdom to guide us through this unique situation

Jainism is an ancient Indian philosophy cum way of life which encourages us to continuously enhance our health (UNO definition includes physical, mental and spiritual) to not only face such situations bravely but to even get release/liberation from the almost never-ending painful cycle of birth and death. It encourages us to practice nonviolence (*ahimsā*) in all walks of life for personal wellness as well as to contribute to the wellness of our community and society at large. Fear is the biggest cause of violence for self and to inflict the same on others. For this, Jainism has prescribed an institution of vows/rules to follow and to continue to enhance their effectiveness for making us stronger to achieve our ultimate objective. The vows are called minor vows (*aṇuvratas*) for lay people like us and the same when practiced 100% become major vows (*mahāvratas*) to be practiced by monks and nuns who live a life of detachment and renunciation.¹

The basis of the vows for lay person is to observe an attitude of carefulness and restraint (being alert) in all of their activities to minimize violence and be as much possible as Self-reliant. The lay person does this by first adopting a nonviolent food practice followed by some daily obligatory duties and abstaining from morally/socially wrong practices. This is followed by accepting the five minor vows by putting limits on committing the five sins² and gradually tightening these limits to approach major vows by practicing seven secondary vows (called *śīlavratas*). To face the current situation of a pandemic, we will refer to these seven *śīlavratas* that are divided in two categories namely three *guṇavratas* (enhancing vows) and four *śikṣāvratas* (training vows) to become stronger and face the current pandemic effectively.

Here is a brief look at the relevance and application of several of Jain Teachings

1. Parasparopagraho Jīvānām or Living beings help each other, a unique Jain concept

For the first time, due to the threat from this common enemy, there is a realization that we all are inter-dependent, interconnected, in fact entangled with each and have co-existence with each other, Truly we are inseparable and that we are support to each other. Our very survival is dependent on each other and on the rest of the world.

Dr. Ela R. Bhatt, Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapeeth recently said:³ “let us remind ourselves of the lessons the pandemic is teaching us. When one member of the family falls sick and the entire family is affected and soon the nation is affected and then other communities in other nations. The wellbeing of one individual has an impact on people on the other side of the globe. This is true of every action of ours. What we eat, what we buy, what we think and what we do have reverberations and repercussions on all life on earth. It is this *anubandha*,

this interconnectedness that sustains all life on earth. We are all in this together whether we choose to see it or not". In Jainism this is called *Paraspropagraho-Jīvānām*.⁴

2. Śīlavratas and current lockdown during the pandemic

GUṆAVRATAS

- G.1 Limiting directions of our movements and associated activities/*Digvrata*.⁵ This vow encourages us to set limit of movements in all directions (up, down and horizontally). Doing so, you withdraw performing useless activities outside these spatial limits. For example: No travel by any means outside the limits set, say 500KMs or so in horizontal directions and say no travel by air or sea. These requirements suggest no movement by the self or ask others to cross these limits or even support such movement by others. Further it discourages one to use goods and services from outside these limits offered legally or otherwise. It can be compared to present lockdown.
- G.2 Avoid wasteful activities/*anarthadaṇḍavrata*: This vow requires us to avoid useless activities⁶ even within the areas set under G.1 above. This is what social distancing is all about.
- G.3 Limiting possession of consumable and durable articles/*Bhogopabhoga parimāṇa*: This vow encourages us to reduce our consumption (of food, many household items and clothing) as well as setting limits on their possession⁷, i.e. avoid hoarding as well as not rushing to get more of the same due to their likely scarcity.

ŚIKṢĀVRATAS

- S.1 Restraining activities to close proximity/ *Deśāvakāśika vrata*⁸ i.e. further make the movement limits set in G.1 tighter, say 200 meters from one's place of stay. It is comparable to Quarantine or home stay.
- S.2 Periodic Contemplations/ *Sāmāyika*: To perform introspection of self, three times a day for realization of the true nature of the Self.⁹ In the present context, it can imply using our time effectively at home during lock down to enhance our professional and social skills.
- S.3 Fasting and self-study in holy place/*Proṣadhovavāsa*: Spending time twice a fortnight for 1.5 days each time, at a holy place like a temple/place of worship to do fasting and to learn and experience one's soul-force.¹⁰ In the present context, it can imply our isolation completely with calmness and equanimity at home or a designated place during lock down to rid ourselves of any likely symptoms of the disease /problem.
- S.4 *Vaiyāvṛtya* / *Atithisāmvibhāga* / *dāna* or service to the vulnerable, including feeding others before self.¹¹ Normally, it means to offer food to others before consuming yourself. In the present scenario, it implies giving food and other means to others to

enable them cope with the problem before using them yourself, like offering food to homeless and shelter to homeless etc.

Restrictions imposed for observance during pandemic and their comparison with the vows

Unlike previous moments in history, when countries or societies faced off against each other, today we are together facing common invisible enemy/challenge. Hopefully, the future will be about togetherness and resilience. A New Normal and new Paradigm of living together in this Global village is emerging which requires us to bring a total change in our thinking and lifestyle to become self-reliant first and say interconnected with others to make them so. In spite of the many untold and unimaginable tragedies and sufferings (which still continue), there are some silver lining; some temporary and many permanent. Generally, all news stories are about the hardships, sufferings and tragedies but there are a few upcoming positive changes too. It seems the ancient wisdom is reminding us to return back to the old paradigm of lifestyle, albeit upgrading them keeping in mind the latest developments of Science, technology, Social practices so that we come out happier, and stronger than ever before. To start with, the restrictions are imposed by others and may cause mental disturbances as well while the vows discussed above are self-imposed willingly causing least mental disturbances. So the first thing to do is to change our attitude i.e. be practice to practice self-restraint (sanyam). We now analyze the impact of restrictions like Lockdown, Quarantine, closure of all international and interstate travel etc.

- In these times of stay-at –home orders and social distancing, politicians are using digital and social media for campaigning to get their message out to the voters. Right now, big rallies, barbecues, shaking hands and holding –let alone kissing –babies around are out. (G.1, S.1)
- Drug trafficking has fallen significantly amid virus disruption. Along the 2000 –mile U.S –Mexico border through which the majority of illegal drugs cross, the normally bustling vehicle traffic that smugglers use for cover has slowed down to a trickle. Bars, nightclubs and motels across the country that are the ordinarily fertile marketplace for drug dealers have shuttered. There are no takers for the drugs. (G.1, S.1, G.2).
- There is a significant decrease in money laundering and online drug sales. The godfathers of the cartels are panicked. ((G.1, S.1, G.2).
- Once illegal, telemedicine has taken off during this crisis. The shift is advantageous in many ways. Telemedicine in many cases offers a viable and sometimes cheaper alternative. It can also help control potential shortages of hospital resources by giving patients options beyond the hospital and the emergency room, while also providing more choices for residents of rural and sparsely populated areas where access to doctors can be problematic. The virus crisis is rapidly accelerating the transition to telemedicine. Alternative is to practice greater self-restraint and stay healthy.(S.2, S.3)
- As educational campuses closed, many also moved Online. Online learning can also breakdown barriers for many who want to go to college but cannot afford it or live in

remote locations. It can also level the playing field for students from all backgrounds and for those with disabilities. If I become healthy by practicing greater self-restraint, I set an example for others to stay so and learn quickly as well.(S.2, S.3)

- In India, many sweet (*mīṭhāī*) shops are closed and huge and mega wedding celebrations are out or down. Artificially adulterated milk market has come down significantly and so is the market for many other adulterated food items too. (G.2)
- There is a sea change how people are spending their time and coping with this pandemic. In spite of the fear of the epidemic and economic hardships, tension, stress and worries, people are spending more quality time together with families, doing more creative cooking, eating at home (instead of going out which they cannot), doing more yoga, exercised, meditation, prayers, *pūjās*, *svādhyāyas*, study, contemplation, watching several old TV Serial of Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, and calling near and dear one on phone, social media such as WhatsApp face time etc. (S.2, S.3, G.2)
- Thousands of people have taken to webinars and conferences on ZOOM etc. and discussing myriads of topics of life and other subjects.
- Many domesticated animals are also enjoying a more peaceful life as meat and milk consumption have significantly come down. (G.3)
- Since this pandemic is a worldwide disaster, millions of people world over are engaged in “*People Helping People*”. Many, truly feel *karuṇā*, compassion, *dayā* empathy to their fellow human beings. They are providing hot meals, medical help, clothing, transportation, care and love to those in need. Many corporations are doing their best too in taking care of their employees and communities in which they live. (S.4)
- The world right now seems to be a much calmer and quieter place. The number and intensity of wars, terrorism and strikes have come down significantly. Enemies are cooperating with each other.
- The incidents of arson, theft, shooting, car accidents etc. are down significantly.
- Since people are not shopping 24x7, they are realizing that life can be enjoyed nicely with fewer wants.
- Suddenly air, water and earth are cleaner. In India, Ganges and Yamuna look much cleaner.
- The sounds of birds chirping and singing are much more audible.
- According to some scientific measurement, there are less vibrations in the planet earth too.
- People appear to be much friendlier as everyone recognizes that we all are in this together and not alone.
- The Covid-19 crisis will change us. Many will work *Online* from home more often, will travel less and probably ZOOM more.
- The scientist’s world over are working together as one team than before to find cure/cures for this virus and that too ASAP. Tsai Ing- Wen, the President of Taiwan said¹² “now more than ever, every link in this global network must be accounted for. We must set aside our differences and work together for the benefit of humankind.

The fight against Covid -19 will require the collective efforts of people around the world.”

Ahimsā/nonviolence aṇuvaratas in action now

Have we not known that our working poor have hardly any effective and adequate safety net? We must organize to support now by providing them food, water, shelter and other basic necessities for survival. *Aṇuvaratas* i.e. vows of *ahimsā*, *aprigraha* and *acaurya/asteya* remind us to practice now what we preach so often:

- a) *Sevā*/Service, *karuṇā*/compassion, and *dayā*/empathy. Now is the time to be active and proactive. Our medical doctors should be in the front line to volunteer to serve and provide the best care particularly in villages where there is hardly any access to good medical care.
- b) Also call and connect with your domestic help, factory and office workers and ask what you can do to help them (Vow of Active *ahimsā* i.e. live and help others to live).
- c) Jains are dominant players in trading and retailing of many essential items of daily use such as food grocery items and medicines. One must avoid the temptation to hoard, price gouging, excessive profits and adulteration during this pandemic (vow of *aprigraha* and *acaurya/asteya*).
- d) Remember that this virus now and many others before came from humans eating meat of animals and insects. The ever-increasing population of humans on this planet cannot survive on meat-based diet. To save humanity from the scourges of such viruses, therefore practice and promote vegetarian and vegan based diet (vow of *ahimsā*).
- e) Be patient and kind. There is no better time to strengthen our bonds, to stand together, to help one another through this storm, and to come out together on the other side, stronger and peaceful.

These are unprecedented times for all of us. We must act now to support each other. Ask yourself, if not when and if not me who?

Conclusion

Like the philosophy of *śīlavratas* is based on the premise that the practitioner wants to enhance the health (purity and associated four infinites infinite perception-knowledge-energy and bliss) of his/her soul further to stay stronger and achieve even higher levels of spiritual purification, so does their application in practical life enhances our health and capabilities to cope with pandemic like Corona with ease and contribute to the enhanced wellness of the community we live in. As Ācārya Samantabhadra said, 'Lord, your path is for the enlightenment of all 'Sarvodya tīrtha'¹³ and other Indian sages preached *Vasudhaiva Kuṭumbakam*,¹⁴ meaning: “the distinction that this person is mine, and this one is not, is made only by the narrow-minded i.e. the ignorant. For those noble conduct, i.e. who knows the Supreme Truth, the whole world is one family.” It is hoped that a brighter and happier future awaits us.

Notes & References:

- 1 “deśasarvato ’numahatī”, Tattvārtha Sūtra 7/2.
- 2 These five sins are: violence (*himsā*), falsehood (*asatya*), stealing (*steya*), unchastity (*abrahma*), and attachment (*mūrcchā*). Observance of limiting these five sins is called minor vow.
“Prāṇātipātavitathavyāhārasteyakāmamūrcchābhyah/
Sihūlebhyah pāpebhyo vyuparamaṇamaṇuvrataṁ bhavati//” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvākācāra 52.
- 3 Bhatt, Ela R. “How do we build a society less susceptible to debt, disease, devastation?” *The Indian Express*. Indianexpress.com. 6 May 2020. Web. 14 May 2020.
<<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-covid-19-pandemic-healthcare-banki-essential-supply-system-ela-r-bhatt-6395643/>>
- 4 Tattvārtha Sūtra 5/21.
- 5 “digvalayaṁ pariṅṅitaṁ kṛtvāto ’haṁ bahirna yāsyāmi/
Iti saṅkalpo digvratamāmṛtyaṇupāpavinivṛtyai//” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvākācāra 68.
- 6 Preaching of sin (*pāpopadeśa*), giving of things that cause injury (*himsādāna*), evil thoughts (*apadhyāna*), listening to undesirable story (*durśruti*), and negligent activity (*pramādacaryā*); are useless activities.
“Pāpopadeśa himsādānāpadhyāna duḥśrutiḥ pañca/
Prāhuḥ pramādacaryyāmanarhadāṇḍānadaṇḍadharāḥ//” Ibid 75.
- 7 “bhogopabhogamūlā viratāviratasya nānyato himsā/
Adhigamya vastutattvaṁ svaśaktimapi tāvapi tyājyau//” Puruṣārthasiddhyupāya 161.
- 8 “Tatrāpi ca parimāṇaṁ grāmāpaṇabhavanapātakādīnām/
Pravidhāya niyatakālaṁ karaṇīyaṁ viramaṇaṁ deśāt//” Ibid 139.
- 9 “Rāgadveṣatyāgānnikhiladravyeṣu sāmyamavalambya/
Tattvopalabdhimūlaṁ bahuśaḥ sāmāyikaṁ kāryam//” Ibid 148.
- 10 “...jñānadhyanaparo vā bhavayūpavasannatandrāluḥ” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvākācāra 108.
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Sarvāpadāmantakaraṁ nirantam, Sarvodayaṁ fīrthamidaṁ tavaiva//” Yuktyānuśāsana 61.
- 14 “Ayaṁ bandhurayaṁ neti gaṇanā laghucetasām/
Udāracaritānām tu vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam//” Mahopaniṣd 6/71.

The Remedy for Deadly Pandemics: Nonviolence and Ecological Harmony

Parveen Jain *

The last few months have galvanized the all of humanity to fight against a common invisible enemy – the COVID-19 virus – which is ravaging every corner of the earth. We are inundated with news about the pandemic and endless discussions on related subjects such as the origin, biochemical structure and other scientific details of the virus, along with the changing infection status at local and global levels. One thing is clear from both expert and commonsense perspectives: this pandemic will undoubtedly leave tremendous footprints on global economic¹, social and cultural² conditions with serious ramifications to deal with for many years to come.

There are several ongoing discussions on the origin of COVID-19 virus and the consensus opinion seems to place its origination at the “wet markets” of Wuhan, China where animals are sold for human consumption. A variety of species of animals including snakes, bats, dogs, cats, fox, and wild and exotic animals like the anaconda, pangolin and alligator are sold live or dead at these markets³. It is a wild west out there where seemingly no animal species – domestic, tamed, wild or exotic – is spared.

Often in these markets in China and some other parts of the world, the animals are slaughtered at the time of purchase resulting in free flow of blood, urine and feces from the animals. There are options provided to the buyers to torture an animal, like boiling it alive, before its purchase because some people believe that more an animal suffers at the time of death, the better it tastes. Suffice it to say, animals are treated like inanimate resources for human consumption at best, and at worst as outlets for some of the worst sadistic tendencies of the human psyche. In those places, there is no compassion towards these living and breathing beings, and cruelty towards animals is given free expression.

This type of treatment of animals is not limited to these markets. In fact, since any killing or hurting of an animal is antithetical to compassion, all of the animal meat and dairy products sold around the world involve varying degrees of animal cruelty⁴. Meat and dairy industries’ practices include unnaturally accelerating animal growth using chemicals, tightly encaging the animals, keeping female animals lactating all the times and depriving the newborns of mother’s care or killing them for sale – and these are just a few of the inhumane means deployed in the livestock industry. Humans, it seems, have voracious desire to consume meat. This desire existed forever⁵, but expert views vary on whether or not it is increasing.

Spiritually speaking, this merciless behavior towards non-human living beings is contrary to our innate human conditioning – that is what Jains have believed for millennia, and it is a thought which is being embraced by more and more people around the world. The underlying premise in Jain tradition is the belief in the separation between the soul (also called *jīva* by

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Jains) and the body of living beings, and that all souls – humans and non-humans – are alike.⁶ In this context, the “real me” is my soul which has taken a temporary refuge in a body for the duration of the current life. And for Jains, the same is true for all other living beings.

With a firm belief in this fundamental concept, all living entities are predisposed to cherish and love their life, want to be happy and be loved, despise misery and anguish, and do not want to get hurt or be pained by any means. Therefore, if all *jīva*-s are alike, no one has the right to hurt others by any means. Mahāvīra defined nonviolence as follows:⁷

‘I so pronounce that all omniscient lords of all times state, speak, propagate, and elaborate that nothing which breathes, which exists, which lives, and which has any essence or potential of life, should be destroyed, or ruled, or subjugated, or harmed, or denied of its essence or potential.’

‘That which you consider destroying or disciplining or harming or subjugating or killing is (like) yourself. The results of your actions have to be borne by you, so do not destroy anything.’

‘Like earth is the base on which all living beings exist; similarly, the essence of experience of all wise men of the past, present and future, is that *ahiṃsā* is the essence of life.’

‘After understanding the importance of kindness to beings, the enlightened person should preach, disseminate and applaud it at all places in East-West and North-South directions.’

This is the crux of the principle of nonviolence or *ahiṃsā* (i.e. compassion, empathy, co-existence, tolerance, etc.) – the foundation of the Jain doctrine.

Furthermore, Jain thinkers believe that since humans are supposedly endowed with the highest level of intellect, they have a corresponding level of responsibility and obligation to treat all living species with compassion. Clearly, we continue to shirk this responsibility and obligation. Our actions, under the pretext of being the “smartest,” are hurting and destroying the Earth’s ecology in multiple ways – killing animals, causing extinction of uncountable number of species, destroying forests, and rampant polluting of the environment, are just a few of the human misdeeds. In this regard, humans do not seem to endear any sense of accountability.

Our actions continue to challenge the natural equilibrium and ecological harmony. At some point, when these disruptive actions collectively reach a breaking point, they culminate into an explosive perturbation of nature that causes the kind of calamity we are witnessing presently. Ācārya Sushil Kumar used to illustrate this point through a story about a village that had a pond with a multitude of frogs. At some point, the villagers came to know about the demand for cooked frog legs, and decided to farm all the frogs to sell them. Later, after the rainy season, the village had a serious outbreak of malaria which shocked them because until now they never had it. After some deliberations, the villagers were able to pinpoint the cause of the outbreak to the absence of frogs from the pond. Before they were rounded up,

the frogs used to feed on the mosquitos, but now the mosquitos were thriving causing the malaria outbreak.

The imbalance (removal of frogs) caused by humans in this case and the resulting perturbation (malaria outbreak) may be fictional, but it can easily happen somewhere in the world. This story is about a tiny village and pertains only to one species. When we extrapolate this phenomenon to the entire world involving the killing of billions of animals and extinction of thousands of species who contribute to maintaining ecological balance on the Earth, one can easily imagine the potential scale of the resulting catastrophe.

To illustrate the same point using an industrial system, consider a complex system like a power plant which operates safely and steadily because a balance is maintained between a multitude of concurrent process involving hundreds of thousands of components. Such complex systems are engineered with intricate control systems which continuously maneuver pre-defined parameters to safely operate the systems. Once in a while, when they encounter a somewhat large disturbance, the control systems – automatically or with human intervention – shut down the system to keep it safe. But when the disturbance is exceptionally large or of a type that is not programmed in the system design, a serious accident could occur. Take the examples of nuclear power industry: the accidents at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, Chernobyl in Ukraine and Fukushima in Japan, for instance, were all because the nuclear core in each of those plants lost its cooling – due to human actions in the cases of Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, and equipment failure caused by tsunami in Fukushima’s case. In all three cases, the disturbances resulted in horrible accidents. The point in all of these examples is that when the balance between multiple concurrent processes is perturbed beyond manageability, the resulting consequences could be catastrophic.

The ecology works the same way. It is a gigantic system with intricately interdependent animate and inanimate entities. As horrific as the abovementioned accidents were, they were nowhere near those which can result from our continued misadventures with the living systems involved in maintaining ecological balance. Humans continue to engage in indiscriminate acts such as killing of the animals and causing immense damage on the environment, and when ensuing imbalance goes beyond nature’s “ability to control,” it results in calamities such as pandemics. The ongoing COVID-19 and Spanish flu pandemics of 1918, and most of the others in-between and prior to that, have been caused by human conduct of cruelty towards the animals by killing and consuming them, or by scores of other irresponsible actions causing extinction of species. Many scholars, scientists, spiritualists and other thinkers have spoken eloquently on this subject and their views, such as those by Nathan Wolfe⁸, are freely available in public domain.

The irony in all this is that we do not learn from our mistakes or choose to ignore them, and we continue to repeat them⁹. Humans are perhaps the only living species that causes unnecessary harm to other species – and many times for recreations like hunting. And, instead of owning up to these dangerously harmful acts, many of us tend to associate a pandemic to retaliation by nature or to punishment by God, depending on the faith or belief one follows. However, for a Jain practitioner, it is neither a retaliation by nature nor a form of

punishment by any higher force. For Jains, all God-like higher forces and their teachings are nurturing and compassionate, and they do not retaliate or take any revenge. The causes behind these calamities, according to the Jain doctrine of karma¹⁰, are our own doing, and to remedy those, we (humans) must first take the responsibility, and then correct our own conduct.

The Jain doctrine of Karma constitutes a self-orchestrated process that determines the variations in the states of different living entities—their form of embodiment (human, animal, etc.), appearance, health, fortune, lifespan and numerous other attributes of life. These variations, which occur despite the fact that each living being's soul is endowed with innate characteristics of unbounded consciousness (*chetnā*), bliss (*sukhā*), and vigor or willpower (*vīrya*), result from the actions in mind (thought), speech (language), and body (physical acts) they have been taking from time unknown while cycling repeatedly through life and death. Each of the actions has a corresponding repercussion which defines the state of the living being, and the quality of repercussion depends on the nature of the action—pleasurable ones like good health, intellect, persona, fame, etc. reciprocate auspicious deeds, and distressing ones like lower form of life, miserable living, etc. reciprocate inauspicious deeds. The timing of repercussions – for instance, within this life or in a future one – along with their quality and other factors like intensity, duration, etc. are all determined by a judicious but hitherto unknown formula. The important point to note is that this cause-to-effect relationship is not dependent on destiny or luck, and it is not orchestrated by any external force like God – the living beings are themselves solely responsible of their actions, and therefore, the ensuing *kārmic* repercussions they experience.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is projected to be one of the worst of the kind linked to animal killings. The entire world is engulfed in this pandemic and all nations are fighting this common enemy with whatever resources they have. It is like a war.

Humans, throughout the history, have been constantly waging wars against each other, but in those wars the perpetrators are known to each other, and they are driven by mutual hatred and animosity. Those wars cost trillions of dollars globally, but their root causes – mistrust, hatred, etc. are never eradicated. These wars start with misery and end the same way, or worse, for all participating parties.

The COVID-19 pandemic war is different. In this case, the entire humanity has a single invisible enemy that is causing devastation without discrimination. The COVID-19 pandemic has kindled exceptional cooperation and has united the entire humanity, albeit by fear, to fight this global war. Like any war, this too has frontline warriors and they are the healthcare workers around the world. These warriors are starkly different from those engaged in conventional wars – the COVID-19 warriors are equipped with life-saving equipment and medications, and they are motivated by respect, compassion and love for the life. The COVID-19 pandemic is inflicting terrible pain and misery to all, but when it ends, there will be universal feelings of relief, happiness and calm.

In the end, collectively, we can alleviate or eliminate sufferings associated with pandemics like the COVID-19 by adopting a lifestyle that is inspired by nonviolence and is in harmony with ecology and environment¹¹. Such a lifestyle embraces elimination of animal cruelty, and sustainable living with minimum deforestation and accompanying re-forestation, conservation of natural resources, minimum pollution, compassionate wildlife-human contacts and other similar actions by human beings¹².

Thus, the Jain way of life, based on their principles of Ahimsa and Karma can help us to conquer pandemics like the COVID-19 and save the entire humanity from its onslaught. Thus, we need to understand and follow the fundamental universal principle taught for millennia by the Jain thinkers that all living entities – human and non-human – and environment are interdependent and we all must live in harmony with each other. Humans must stop violating this principle and eliminate cruelty towards all other living species and end misadventures against the environment¹³. This would ensure not only a healthy human survival, but also will create pervasive universal peace and love – the inherent desire of all living beings. Humanity can and will win, just need to reconsider how we approach life.

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Pandemic and Jainism

Rekha Jain*

1. Introduction:

The recent COVID-19 pandemic will leave a deep impact on how we lead our lives. We live in a wasteful world fraught with excesses. With technology comes ease of living and with ease of living come exploitation of our surroundings. The more we exploit our surroundings the more we come in contact with animals. Most viral diseases have their origins in animals and birds. Unfortunately, in spite of suffering from this since time immemorial, man refuses to learn from his past experiences. It is clear that the key to avoiding, controlling and defeating such pandemics lies in simple living, avoiding excesses, building immunity and mental strength. The seeds of which can be found in important Philosophies like Jainism.

2. Pandemic:

Pandemics are defined as the worldwide spread of a new disease. The word Pandemic comes from the Greek word Pandemos, which means everybody. Demos means population and Pan means everyone. Pandemos is a concept where there is a belief that the whole world will likely be exposed to this infection. An 'Outbreak' is the occurrence of disease in excess to what is normally expected. It spreads over whole countries or continents. According to WHO the last Pandemic reported in the world was H1N1 in 2009, which killed hundreds of thousands globally.

Pandemics have been a part of the human history for centuries. The earliest recorded pandemic dates back to 1580. There are various reports of many Pandemics even before that. Since then atleast 4 pandemics of Influenza occurred in the 19th Century and 3 in the 20th Century. The most severe pandemic in recent history was in 1818, which was Influenza pandemic, sometimes referred to as the Spanish Flu. This pandemic is estimated to have infected atleast 500 million people or 1/3rd of the world population and killed some 50 million people worldwide. There was debate about where H1N1 virus originated. Scientists have found that it was of Avian (birds) origin. In 1957 a novel Influenza AH2N2 virus emerged in East Asia triggering a Pandemic which has estimated to killed 1.1million worldwide. Again, this virus was linked to Avian origins. In 1968 a pandemic caused by an Influenza AH3N2 virus that originated in China again from birds. The H3N2 virus continues to circulate globally as the seasonal flu virus. In the spring of 2009 Novel influenza AH1N1 virus emerged. It was detected first in the US and then spread quickly across the world. It was found to be of Swine origin. During the H1N1 pandemic three CDC estimated 575400 people died worldwide during the 1st year alone. Though the pandemic is over the virus continues to circulate as a seasonal flu virus every year. In Jan 2020 the WHO¹ declared the Novel corona virus outbreak – a public health emergency of international concern. Since then we have seen

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cases clusters and outbreaks reported in multiple countries. We are at a critical juncture in the outbreak. According to WHO's² global assessment we must continue efforts to contain COVID-19 focusing on strengthening surveillance conducted through outbreak investigations for identifying contacts and applying adequate measures to prevent further spread. As community spread is detected in more and more countries the world moves closer to meeting the third stage criterion. At the 4th and 5th stage there will be sustained human to human transmission in at least 200 countries after which the levels may stabilise to ordinary seasonal levels. COVID-19 is a RNA based virus. There are frantic efforts across countries to come up with a vaccine, but most experts believe that it may be at least 12 months before a vaccine could get into commercial production. Similarly, there is no single drug which can be used to treat the infection. Doctors across the world are treating secondary infections caused by the virus – which mostly tend to be infections of the respiratory tract typically manifesting in Pneumonia. Persons with pre-existing medical conditions have a higher chance of getting infected and succumbing to the disease.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is not just limited to infections and physical health of the populace. Countries have taken harsh measures like forced close downs for more than a month, social distancing etc. to limit / slow the spread of the disease. This has had other unwanted consequences. The world economy has taken a serious beating. The travel and tourism industry has come to a grinding halt. Consumption of non-essentials has all but stopped. Un-employment across the world has gone up and there is a fear that large number of business across the world will shut. This is causing great anxiety and related mental problems in people. Insecurity about the future is causing panic. Cases of domestic violence are going up.

Like any other past Corona related pandemic, COVID-19 too is here to stay. We will have to learn to live with its effects without affecting our well-being. At this critical juncture philosophical thinking and a religion like Jainism can provide great solace and peace of mind.

3. Jainism:

Jainism is an important fully developed well established ancient and universal religious and cultural system. It originated in India for the welfare of humanity and for individual achievement of the ultimate that is *mokṣa*. It propounds a way of life which helps external and internal purification of human life. It offers today a time-tested anchor of moral imperatives (*sapta vyanas*³ / bad habituations) and a viable route plan for humanities common pilgrimage for peace harmony environmental protection etc. In the present critical situation, the daily regimen described by Jainism needs to be remembered and needs to be practiced properly. Thereafter observance of Jain rules of conduct (minor vows) afford stability to the will and guards one from the evil of temptations or unregulated life. It gives purpose to life and healthy direction to our thoughts and actions. It helps the growth of self-control and protects against the pitfalls of free life. Simultaneously, it gives a great message of *Live and Let Live*.⁴

We now discuss briefly the daily regimen and the five minor vows.

3.1. Ṣaḍāvaśyaka (Six obligatory daily duties):

In Jainism six obligatory duties have been prescribed for all house holders (*ṣaḍāvaśyakas*), which are:⁵

- (i) *Deva Pūjā* (Prayers) – This is described by two methods: *bhāva pūjā* and *dravya pūjā*. *Bhāva pūjā* is chanting of Mantras or *stuti* with deep concentration. *Dravya pūjā* is done by using articles such as rice, water, flowers, sweet, sandalwood sticks, fruits etc. are used as a symbol of characters of pure soul *deva pūjā* is not for expecting any divine gifts, but it is done for removing ill thoughts, reducing desires and making our mind fresh, peaceful and pure.
- (ii) *Guru Pāsti* (company of Ācārya/teachers) – It is required for direction for studying scriptures and guidance. Association of Guru gives a good surrounding.
- (iii) *Svādhyāya* (study of scriptures) – It is a sanskrit word. *Sva* means self, and *adhyāya* means study. It is important for understanding religious principles and for self-spiritual improvement and introspection. Period of lockdown can be utilised in the study of our scriptures.
- (iv) *Sam̐yama* (control over mind) – This helps in controlling your desires and passions, because desires lead passions and passions lead to violence and destruction. This lockdown is the best time to practice to control over our minds and desires.
- (v) *Tapa* (austerity) – Practice of penance to destroy accumulated Karmas due to desires and passions. This is of two types: External and internal. According to Umāsvāmī,⁶ the external Tapas are fasting, reduction of food, reducing variety and the manner of seeking food, giving up delicacies, lonely habitation and mortification of the body. Internal Tapas are, penance, reverence, service, study, renunciation and meditation. Tapa is the stepping stone to attainment of spiritual strength. If we perform the external and internal austerities our health become sound. Lonely habitation is necessary to perform these austerities; thus, we reduce the chance to be infected by coronavirus.
- (vi) *Dāna* (charity) – It involves generosity, Charity of giving alms. It is an act of compassion in Jainism. It must be done with no desire for material gain. There are four types of *dāna*:⁷ *Āhāra dāna* (giving food), *Auśadha dāna* (giving medicine), *Abhaya dāna* (giving protection), *Jñāna dāna* (giving knowledge). Jain institution and individuals are always willing to serve and donate food, medicines, shelter whenever disaster happens. Jains are also in the forefront of opening educational institutions. In this recent pandemic because of this principle, Jain institutions across the county, like Bhartiya Jain Sanghatana, Dayodaya Sanstha, Jain Milan, Jain Temple Trust, JITO, AYSG, Jain Mahila Mandal etc. are constantly donating, food, water, medicine, masks, sanitizer, mobile vans for patients as well as cash money running is crores of Rupees to the CM funds and PM care funds. The donations are done to all needy people, irrespective of status, religion, caste, or domicile.

3.2. Vows

Jain Ācāryas mention five minor vows (*aṇuvrata*), three enhancing vows (*guṇa vratas*) and four training vows (*śikṣā vratas*) as householder's conduct. The five vows are prescribed both for the householders as well as ascetics. Observance of these vows in a limited way is called *aṇuvrata* (minor vows). While complete observance of the vows is called as *mahāvratas* (great vows). The practice of these vows with vigilance reduces suffering. Each of these vows as two fold purpose – the first is spiritual - observance of which prevents the generation of new Karma and the second is social- which prevents one from committing violence, theft etc. This ensures mental peace and well-being of the society at large. Of them, this paper intends to discuss five minor vows only.

3.2.1. Aṇuvrata (minor vows)

According to Jain philosophy, the minor vows are five. They are⁸ –

- (i) *Ahiṃsā / prāṇātīpāta viramaṇa* (limiting violence)
- (ii) *Satya* (truthfulness)
- (iii) *Acaurya* (non-stealing)
- (iv) *Brahmacarya / svadāra santōṣa* (celibacy)
- (v) *Aparigraha / parigraha parimāṇa* (limiting possession/attachment)

- (i) **Ahiṃsā / prāṇātīpāta viramaṇa (limiting violence):** The Sanskrit word *hiṃsā* means violence and *ahiṃsā* is its opposite. *Hiṃsā* is a negative force while *ahiṃsā* a positive one. *Ahiṃsā* is an attitude of mind and is a supreme virtue of life (*ahiṃsā paramo dharmah*). “**Live and Let Live**” is the golden rule of life. We live in an era in which amazing discoveries are being made regarding truth and applicability of non-violence. From a practical point of view any kind of injury to any living being by action, speech or thoughts is violence.⁹ Violence thus includes not only killing or physical injury but also curtailing the freedom of thought or speech of others. In Jainism nonviolence is defined very minutely. They classify various types of violence as –

- Committed by the person himself (*karṭa*),
- Got committed by others (*kārita*),
- Got committed by others by giving consent (*anumodana*)

In the present scenario, I would like to describe the practical aspect of non-violent conduct. Violence committed of one's own free will is called intentional violence. Often such violence is accompanied by intense passion and it causes greater harm of the soul of the person than to the victim. Eg. Animal sacrifice. Some people maintain mistaken beliefs that the consumption of animal flesh is required for maintaining of good health and strength. In India some people eat non vegetarian food because it is considered fashionable. Jainism prescribes a vegetarian diet and prevents consumption of meats, eggs, butter, roots, alcohol etc. This is very important in the present situation considering that most corona viruses have origins in animals or

birds. Jains also give importance to drinking only warm, filtered water. Violence and non-vegetarian food are harmful to mental health as well, and hinders spiritual progress and hence should be avoided.

- (ii) **Satya (truthfulness):**¹⁰ Any speech which is activated by passion is falsehood. Back biting, harsh, unbecoming, non-sensical or unethical speech is condemnable. All disagreeable speech (*apriya*) causes uneasiness, pain, grief, anguish to others. Divulging of secrets, slander, back biting, forgery and perjury are obstacles to truth. He causes against exaggeration, fault finding and indecent speech and advices that one should always speech what is noble, beneficial and concise. One must avoid boasting and jealousy that may lead to falsehood. Jainism regards *asteya* as a form of *himsa*. Falsehood brings endless miseries here and in the next birth. Truth always triumphs and everyone should adhere to it. In the current situation, spreading false rumours about COVID-19 infection, breaking the rules laid by the government to protect from corona infection, creating fear by spreading false information regarding deaths due to the disease, false description of symptoms to doctors, running away from the hospital without medical advice, undisciplined behaviour regarding social hygiene and giving wrong information about medicines to people may all be considered as Asatya (untruthfulness) and will cause spread and panic in the society.
- (iii) **Acaurya (non-stealing):** Umāsvāmī¹¹ defines stealing as taking what is not given. Theft also involves *himsā*. It injures not only the purity of thoughts but also pains the person who is deprived of his property or belongings. It is a spiritual denigration of the self. The one who, unless given, neither takes for himself nor gives to anyone else, the property of another whether placed, dropped, forgotten or deposited, is said to be observing the minor vow of non-stealing.¹² This vow is comprehensive covering the avoidance of dishonesty in all parts of life. This includes taking anything of others without permission, to receive stolen property, evading laws, selling goods at inflated prices, adulteration of food medicine etc.¹³ All are considered forms of theft and one should guard oneself against it. It increases the purity of mind and leads to *punya*. Due to the current situation the government has called for an extended lockdown which has had an adverse impact on the economic situation. Small businesses have shut down and a lot of people are losing jobs. Daily workers and migrants are living a hand to mouth existence. Out of desperation this can lead them to resort to *caurya*. This should be avoided at all costs. In this situation spirituality can be the only support.
- (iv) **Brahmacarya / svadāra santoṣa (celibacy):** It is taken to mean abstinence from sexual activities. But for householders, the vow prohibits sexual relations other than one's spouse.¹⁴ This vow includes avoiding un-natural sex, excessive sexual passion (even for one's own spouse), and intercourse with an unchaste person, etc.¹⁵ It maintains the purity of mind. It is a known fact that pandemics like AIDS in the past have been propagated because of un-natural sex as well as having sex with multiple partners. Maintaining *bramhacarya* as described in Jainism would have avoided the

spread of such pandemics. Breaking this vow is a sin against society as it disturbs the code of common ethics essential for peace and mutual trust. With abnormal sexual desire the mind gets disturbed and practices of virtues, and meditation etc. are impossible.

- (v) **Aparigraha / parigraha parimāṇa (limiting possession/attachment):** The vow of *parigraha parimāṇa* means limiting one's holdings and attachments to material possessions of various kinds.¹⁶ Attachments create a craving for more. Material desires are never ending. So, happiness is not achieved by the pursuit of passion. The lesser your attachments, the lesser your possessions are and hence lesser exploitation of our environment. This greatly reduces our chances of contracting animal borne diseases. Also in a time of hardship reducing your possessions means that people can use their money to buy essential items for a longer period of time. People who have adequate can, instead of spending of material possessions, spend the money on *dāna*.

Observation of these small vows are important for increasing the mental and physical strength and boost your immune system.

3.2.2. Objective of the *śrāvakācāra* (householder's conduct):¹⁷

On the basis of the rules of right conduct laid down by Jain scriptures the prominent Jain seers have determined a number of general principles of Right Conduct. These rules guide householders in their responsibilities both for leading a proper religious life and being a useful member of the society. These ideals are taken from a list of qualities described in Jain literature. They are as follows-

- Aim for High Moral standards,
- Be appreciative of virtues,
- Avoid places where disaster or troubles occurs frequently,
- Live within ones means,
- Be particular about your food (eat pure vegetarian food),
- Eat at the right time, don't eat on a full stomach,
- Observe Jain dietary regulations,
- Listen to sacred doctrines,
- Be grateful, when gratitude is called for,
- Be devoid of lust, envy, deception, anger, back biting and pride,
- Be contented,
- Be compassionate,
- Be respectful to ascetics, teachers,
- Fulfil the threefold aims of life (*samyak darśana, samyak jñāna, samyak cāritra*),¹⁸
- *Daśadharmā -uttama kṣamā, mārḍava, ārjava, satya, śauca, saṁyam, tapa, tyāga, ākiñcanya, brahmacarya*)¹⁹ should be followed in daily life.

4. Use of time during pandemic:

To inculcate the following practices (observed as a routine by senior members of the community regularly) by all to maintain and enhance good health:

- ✓ While entering their homes, they remove all footwear and keep it outside the house.
- ✓ If coming from outside, they never enter the kitchen area without washing their hands and feet.
- ✓ In many Jain sects the *muhapaṭṭī* (mask) is used while entering temples or meeting religious leaders.
- ✓ Jains generally try to avoid outside food.
- ✓ Most Jain senior citizens eat before sunset.
- ✓ Jains use warm and filtered water.
- ✓ Most Jains do *pratikramaṇa*²⁰ and *sāmāyika*²¹ (meditation) every day.
- ✓ They are kind, generous and donate liberally for human causes. It is seen that whenever there has been a natural disaster Jains have donated liberally for rehabilitation efforts.

5. Conclusion:

Pandemic is a worldwide spread of a disease. Uptill now there is no specific medicine or a preventive vaccine. In this situation, we should try to boost our immune system so that we can escape ourselves from the infection of Corona virus. Jainism with its Philosophy and principles helps us to boost immune system in the body. It also increases mental strength and confidence to fight with the pandemic, especially in the current scenario of COVID-19. *Sāmāyika* (meditation) for mental peace should be practiced every day. Jainism helps to balance the constituents of body, mind and soul.

This outbreak is not only severe but it may last over several years. This too shall pass. Rather than be anxious and panicing about tomorrow we should try and use this period of crisis and isolation for personal growth as stated above.

Notes & References:

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- ¹ World Health Organization. “WHO Emergencies Coronavirus Emergency Committee Second Meeting.” *who.int*. 30 January 2020. Web. 25 May 2020.
<https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/transcripts/ihr-emergency-committee-for-pneumonia-due-to-the-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-press-briefing-transcript-30012020.pdf?sfvrsn=c9463ac1_2>.
 - ² World Health Organization. “UN released US\$15 million to help vulnerable countries battle the spread of the coronavirus.” *who.int*. 1 March 2020. Web. 25 May 2020.
<<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/01-03-2020-un-releases-us-15-million-to-help-vulnerable-countries-battle-the-spread-of-the-coronavirus>>.
 - ³ According to Jainism, these seven bad habituations (*sapta vyanas*) are as follows:
 - (i) *Dyūtakrīḍā* (gambling).
 - (ii) *Māmsabhakṣaṇa* (consuming meat).
 - (iii) *Madyapāna* (consuming wine)

- (iv) *Veśyāgamana* (visiting prostitutes).
 (v) *Śikāra* (hunting animals)
 (vi) *Steya* (taking anything without the permission of its owner)
 (vii) *Para-strīgamana* (visiting another man's wife)

(Pañcaviṃśati 1/16)

- 4 “*Parasparopagraho jīvānām*”, Tattvārtha Sūtra 5/21.
 5 *Devapūjā Gurupāstih svādhyāyaḥ saṅyamstapaḥ/*
Dānaṃ ceti grhasthānām śaṭkarmāni dine dine// Padmanandi Pañcaviṃśatikā 6/7
 6 Tattvārtha Sūtra 9/19-2
 7 “*Āhārauśadhayorapyukaraṇāvāsayośca dānena/*
Vaiyāvṛtyaṃ bruvate caturātmatvena caturastrāḥ//” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra 117.
 8 “*Prāṇātipātavitathavyāhāresteyakāmamūreccābhyaḥ/*
Sthūlebhyaḥ pāpebhyo vyuparamaṇamaṇuvrataṃ bhavati//” Ibid 52.
 9 “*Saṅkalpātkṛtakāritamanādyogatrāyasya carasatvān/*
Na hinasti yattadāhuḥ sthūlavadhādviramaṇam nipuṇāḥ//” Ibid 53.
 10 *Puruśārthasiddhyupāya* 91-96.
 11 “*Adattādānaṃ steyam*”, Tattvārtha Sūtra 7/15.
 12 “*Nihitam vā patitam vā suviśṛtam vā parasvamaviśṛtam/*
Na harati yanna ca date tadakṛśacauryyādūpāramaṇam//” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra 57.
 13 “*Stenaprayogataḍāhrtādāna viruddharājyātikrama hīnādhikamānonmāna pratirūpaka vyavahārāḥ*”,
 14 Tattvārtha Sūtra 7/27.
 15 “*Na tu paradārān gacchati na parān gamayati ca pāpabhūteriyat/*
Sā paradāranivṛttih svadārasantoṣanāmāpi//” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra 59.
 16 “*Paravivāhakarānetvakārikā parigrhitā aparigrhitāgamana anaṅgagrīḍā kāmātivṛbbhiniveśāḥ*”,
 17 Tattvārtha Sūtra 7/28.
 18 “*Dhanadhānyādigranthaṃ parimāya tato dhikeṣu niḥsprhatā/*
Parimitaparigrahaḥ syādicchāparimāṇanāmāpi//” Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra 61.
 19 For detail about householder's conduct, visit *Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra* of Ācārya Samantabhadra.
 “*Samyag-darśana-jñāna-cāritrāṇi mokṣamārgaḥ*”, Tattvārtha Sūtra 1/1.
 “*kṣamāmārdavārjava śauca satya saṅyama tapasyāgākiñcanya brahmācāryāṇi dharmāḥ*”, Ibid, 9/6.

Daśadharmā (10 Supreme Virtues): The Jain thinkers have seen to it that religion becomes a way of life with a clear stream of reason to sustain it. In order to do that one should observe, 10 supreme virtues in daily life. Jain tradition observes the Daśa Lakṣaṇa Parva, a festival for 10 days, devoting one day for the contemplation of one virtue. The purpose is to purify the mind and reduction of Karma. These virtues are as follows. This is a separate subject for detailed discussion. However, I am describing each Dharma in short.

- *Uttama kṣamā* (Supreme Forgiveness): It is a divine virtue. In our daily lives, there are several occasions that we are directly or indirectly provoked which results in anger and hate, on such occasions we must bear everything calmly, introspect and forgive. By forgiveness the mind gets peace and kindness towards all living creatures. Our mind becomes fearless and pure.
- *Uttama mārdava* (Supreme Humility): *Mārdava* means humility, softness and modesty in words and deeds. It is the true education and culture. Humility is the source of compassion. One has generally pride of, caste, family, beauty, education, wealth, strength, knowledge etc. This brings about rudeness and temper and hence intolerance. Hence one has to make an effort to be free of these and acquire humility and humbleness, which results in reduction of accumulated Karma.
- *Uttama ārjava* (Supreme Straight forwardness): It is an uprightness in the daily conduct of a person. One should be straightforward and honest with himself and others. One should be free from cunningness, duplicity, ambiguity and should be non-evasive in thoughts, words and deeds.
- *Uttama Satya* (Supreme Truthfulness): This is described under *aṇuvrata*.
- *Uttama śauca* (Supreme Purity): Purity or *śauca* is of two types. External Purity and Internal Purity. External purity is physical cleanliness of the body. However, without the Internal purity this is of no

value. Internal purity cleanses the mind from craving, greed and brings containment and equanimity. Internal purity is often obscured by anger greed pride and infatuation. Real purity of the soul consists in getting rid of all these weaknesses which are the sources of all misery in the world. This can be brought about by self-control and conquest of desires and cravings. The body is just a instrument for the purification of the soul.

- *Uttama saṁyam* (Supreme Self Restraint): This is described under *Ṣaḍāvaśyaka*.
- *Uttama tapa* (Supreme Austerity): This is described under *Ṣaḍāvaśyaka*.
- *Uttama tyāga* (Supreme Renunciation): This requires one to renounce all possessions and attachments. It is very difficult to practice. It requires strong determination against possessions and desires. To ensure that there is no accumulation and attachments one should constantly practice *dana* or charity. This too should be performed without any vanity and pride. This helps lead to *tyāga* then complete renunciation.
- *Uttama ākiñcana* (Supreme non-attachment): This is described in *aṇuvrata*.
- *Uttama brahmacarya* (Supreme Celibacy): This is described in *aṇuvrata*.

²⁰ *Pratikramaṇa* is repentance, self-analysis or introspection. It is essential for equanimity of mind and for right conduct. This helps us to avoid repletion of impure thoughts, activities and transgressions of rules of conduct.

²¹ *Sāmāyika* is one of the disciplinary vows and is a essential daily practice. It requires one to devote a fixed time of the day for contemplation. It has to be done at least once a day for householders. This helps one attain equanimity of mind.

कोरोना वायरस एवं अन्तर्निर्भरता : एक जागतिक नियम की स्मृति

समणी सत्यप्रज्ञा*

सभी को अपने प्राण प्रिय हैं।¹ जीवन सभी को प्रिय है।² हर प्राणी जीना चाहता है, मरना कोई नहीं चाहता। लेकिन इस चाह की राह में कोरोना वायरस (Covid-19) ने महासंकट खड़ा कर दिया है। मृत्यु के लिए कोई भी क्षण अनवसर नहीं है।³ मृत्यु के विविध रूप हैं।⁴ इसकी किसी के साथ मैत्री नहीं है।⁵ इस सच्चाई के साक्षात् नृत्य ने किसी एक क्षेत्र, एक धर्म, एक देश, अमीर या गरीब को नहीं, अपितु संपूर्ण विश्व को हिला कर रख दिया है। बेहिसाब बंद हो रही सांसों का ग्राफ किसी महाआतंक से कम नहीं है।⁶ इसकी रफ्तार से दुनिया स्तब्ध है, मानवता अप्रत्याशित युद्ध स्तरीय परीक्षा के समय से गुजर रही है। अपना या पराया, शत्रु या मित्र के भेद को चित्रित कर पाना वश से बाहर की बात होता जा रहा है।

Covid-19 के संदर्भ में समाधान सबको चाहिए। किसी भी रोगशमन के प्रचलित अभिमत इसमें लागू नहीं हो रहे। वैद्य वात-पित्त-कफ के संतुलन का रास्ता बता सकता है। ज्योतिर्विद् ग्रह-नक्षत्र के परिवर्तन व परिष्कार की विधि बता सकता है। आस्तिक ईश्वर की इच्छा व शरणागति का मार्ग तथा कर्मशास्त्री प्राचीन कर्म को निर्मूल करने का उपाय सुझा सकता है। अध्यात्मविद् आत्मशक्ति, योग व ध्यान-धर्म के संदेश दे सकता है। किसी एक दिव्य-वीतरागी आत्मा के आभामण्डल से तीनों लोकों में शांति फैल जाए, देव और मनुष्य लोक तक ही नहीं, नरक तक में रहने वाले प्राणी भी कुछ क्षणों के लिए शांति को प्राप्त हो जाए, ऐसा कुछ सामने नजर आ नहीं रहा। अस्तु, जो हानि, दुःख, और मौत का साया चारों ओर फैल रहा है, अकेले झेल पाना किसी के लिए भी आसान नहीं। एक-दूसरे के लिए सान्त्वना बंधाने, साहस बढ़ाने, और संवेदना बंटाने में सभी को साथ चाहिए। जिस तेजी से यह वायरस फैला है, और फैल रहा है, 'मिल कर हाथ बंटाने' की बात, अन्तर्निर्भरता की समझ की रफ्तार भी कम नहीं है।

अन्तर्निर्भरता की अपरिहार्यता सर्वत्र सिद्ध हो चुकी है। अप्रत्याशित रूप से कोई और खतरे की लहर नयी दहशत लेकर न आने पाए—इसके लिए सभी चिंतित हैं। जहाँ से समस्या आती है, समाधान भी वहीं से आता है। Covid-19 आज दुनिया के सामने नया रोग है, नया आतंक है। ये धरती पहले भी ऐसे मौत के तांडव को देख चुकी है लेकिन दुनिया के सामने महाविनाशकारी महामारी का ये रूप नया है। महासंकट की इस घड़ी में क्या किया जाए, किसी आशा व समाधान का प्रकाश कहाँ से प्राप्त किया जाए—बड़ा जटिल प्रश्न है। समाधान के लिए किसी नए रास्ते की तलाश जारी है। विश्व स्तर पर निर्दिष्ट सामाजिक दूरी, स्वतः संगरोध आदि के सूत्र बताते हैं—औपचारिकताओं का परिहार कर देना ही बेहतर उपचार है, समाधान है। प्रकृति के स्वास्थ्य और हमारे स्वास्थ्य में अभेद की समझ के लिए कुछ अपेक्षा के क्षेत्र सामने हैं—

1. समग्रता की समझ

देखना एक कार्य है। सामान्यतः आंख इस कार्य के केन्द्र में हैं। आंख से देखना, आंख को देखना, देखने के साथ जुड़ी विशद प्रक्रिया को देखना और देखने वाले को देखना...देखने से जुड़े इन आयामों का आकाश व्यापक है। इस व्यापकता की समझ समग्रता की समझ है। एक आयाम से जो देखा जा रहा है, वह यथार्थ से भिन्न नहीं, यथार्थ का अंश है। अंश को पूर्ण मान लेना माया या भ्रम है। अंश और अंश के नए-नए आयामों को जानते हुए समग्रता तक जाने की राह पूर्ण यथार्थ को जानने या पाने की राह है। जीवन को जानने व

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समझने के संदर्भ में भी यही नियम काम करता है। जो एक जो जानता है, वह सबको जानता है। जो सबको जानता है, वह एक को जानता है। एक को सब दृष्टियों से जानना या संपूर्ण को सर्वात्मना जानना तात्पर्यार्थ में एक ही हो जाता है।⁷ इसका हेतु भी है। आदि-अन्त से रहित इस सृष्टि में कोई भी पूर्णतः असंबद्ध नहीं है। एक सबसे और सब एक से जुड़े हुए हैं। विश्व व्यवस्था ही ऐसी है। जो इस विश्व-व्यवस्था का अस्वीकार करता है, वह अपने ही अस्तित्व को अस्वीकार करता है। जो इस विश्व-व्यवस्था को ससम्मान स्वीकार करता है, वही अपनी सत्ता को स्वीकार करता है।⁸ पर्यावरण सुरक्षा का मंत्र यहाँ स्वतः सिद्ध हो जाता है। जीवन के अस्तित्व के संदर्भ में एकेन्द्रिय से पंचेन्द्रिय तक के प्राणों की सत्ता जैन दर्शन स्वीकार करता है। एक से पांच इन्द्रिय के आधार पर वर्गीकृत जीवों का स्वीकार किसी 'ऊँच-नीच या वर्ग भेद' को स्थापित करने के लिए नहीं, अपितु जीव-जगत का समग्र चित्र अंकित करने के लिए है।

वर्तमान हालातों में इंसान अपने आस-पास के प्रति अधिक संवेदनशील बना है। खतरे व नुकसान से बचाव, प्रकृति व जीवन के प्रति सुरक्षा व संरक्षण का भाव सामूहिक सकारात्मक ऊर्जा के उदाहरण हैं। इसका कारण भी स्पष्ट है—स्वयं की सुरक्षा व समग्रता की सुरक्षा एक ही सिक्के के दो पहलू हैं। यद्यपि वायरस की भयावहता के साथ विकराल रूप से उभरती भूख, बेरोजगार आदि समस्याएं भी चिंतनीय हैं। किसी की भी उपेक्षा प्रकृति को मान्य नहीं। प्रकृति के विविध बिंदुओं को सही ढंग से मिलाने से ही समग्रता का चित्र सामने आ सकता है।

2. संवाद व संबंधों की व्यापकता

संवाद व संबंधों के ताने-बाने में मानव-मस्तिष्क की अहं भूमिका है। मस्तिष्क लगभग सौ बिलियन कोशिकाओं (न्युरोन्स) से बना है। इन कोशिकाओं का कार्य सूचना का आदान-प्रदान और विश्लेषण करना है। ये विशिष्ट संगम से एक-दूसरे से संवाद-संचार करती हैं। हर न्युरोन्स दूसरे लगभग दस हजार न्युरोन्स तक से व इनसे जुड़े दूसरे संवादी न्युरोन्स से संबंध स्थापित करता है। ये सब मिलकर लगभग एक क्वाड्रिलियन अर्थात् एक के आगे चौबीस शून्य लगे, ऐसा विशाल संवाद व संबंधों का जटिलतम जाल मानव को उपलब्ध है।⁹ हर एक चित्र, शब्द, संवेदन, स्मृति, कल्पना, समझ आदि में अलग-अलग न्युरोन्स की भूमिका है। ज्ञान व ज्ञान-विकास का स्तर इनके संबंध विकास के साथ जुड़ा हुआ है। न्युरोन्स का पूर्णतया जागृत हो जाना ही मानवीय चेतना-विकास की सर्वोच्च भूमिका है। बोधिसत्व, ब्रह्म या केवलज्ञान की भूमिका इसी का संकेत है। सबके दुःख-मुक्ति की कामना, पिण्ड में ब्रह्माण्ड का दर्शन या एक को जान लेने से सबको जान लेना—इसी का फलित है।

सर्वोच्च-विकास का दूरगामी महान लक्ष्य सबके सामने समान रूप से नहीं होता लेकिन शांति सबका आधार है। इस की चाह तो प्राणी मात्र से जुड़ी हुई है। जीवन में संतुलन, सफलता व आनन्द का लक्ष्य तो हर एक के समाने होता ही है। अपनी क्षमता, व्यवस्था व अवसर के अनुरूप इनकी संपूर्ति का प्रयास भी किया जाता है। इस प्रयास की पूर्णता व सफलता के लिए भिन्न व विरोधी धाराओं के लिए भी खुलापन, समझ और स्वीकार अपेक्षित है। कोरोना वायरस के भयावह, नतीजों ने इसके महत्त्व को ओर अधिक उजागर किया है। इस वायरस की भयावहता का संवाद यदि तत्काल सभी देशों के पास पहुंच जाता तो संभव है सजगता के साथ समाधान बहुत शीघ्र कर लिया जाता, विश्व को महाविनाश का दृश्य न देखना पड़ता। लेकिन इसकी नवीनता ने इससे होने वाली हानि को पहचानने में समय लिया।¹⁰ वर्तमान में संवाद व संबंधों की व्यापकता का ही परिणाम है कि अमेरिका हो या ईरान, भारत हो या पाकिस्तान, सबकी लड़ाई मात्र और मात्र कोविड-19 से हैं। इस लड़ाई में समाधान से जुड़े सभी के शोध व संसाधनों का उपयोग संपूर्ण मानवता के हित में हो—इसमें संवाद व संबंधों की व्यापकता ही कारगर हो सकती है।

3. भिन्न व विरोधी-धाराओं का सह-अस्तित्व

सृष्टि के बहुआयामी सच्चाई के विविध आयाम हैं। इसमें जीवन की विविध अपेक्षाएं हैं। इन अपेक्षाओं की पूर्ति के लिए विविध कार्यक्षेत्र एवं उनसे जुड़ी धाराएं हैं। विविध या विरोधी दिखाई देने वाले आयाम वस्तुतः जीवन और जगत के अस्तित्व के संपोष के लिए ही हैं और यही विविधता का सौंदर्य है।

गांव की संस्कृति या शहर ही संस्कृति, विज्ञान की शाखा या मनोविज्ञान की शाखा, प्रजातंत्र या एकतंत्र, उपभोक्तावाद (कन्ज्युमरिज्म) या स्वेच्छा से संयम व सादगी का सिद्धान्त (मिनिमलिज्म), उदारवादी या आज्ञानिष्ठ मनोवृत्ति – ये सब द्वन्द्व परस्पर विरोधी के रूप में प्रयुक्त होते हैं। समग्रता के संपोषण में इन सभी पक्षों की अपनी-अपनी भूमिका है। एक पक्ष को महत्त्व देकर प्रतिपक्ष का बहिष्कार समग्रता की शृंखला का बहिष्कार या अस्वीकार है। पक्ष और प्रतिपक्ष भिन्न शैली से विकास के लक्ष्य को पोषित करते हैं।¹¹ इन दोनों के उचित समन्वय एवं सह-अस्तित्व से समाधान को आकार दिया जा सकता है।

सेना के नौजवान और सफाई कर्मचारी, दर्जी और सुरक्षा उपकरण निर्माता, चिकित्सा विज्ञान और होटल व्यवसायी और इसी तरह की अन्य अन्य धाराएं भिन्नता दर्शाने वाली हैं लेकिन इस वायरस के समरांगण में सभी एक लक्ष्य से प्रतिबद्ध हैं। मानव को सुरक्षा, संपोषण और सुविधा उपलब्ध कराने में सबका पुरुषार्थ नियोजित है। इनमें से किसी एक का भी निषेध जीवन की चल रही गाड़ी को लड़खड़ा देने के लिए काफी है। क्षेत्र, समय, पदार्थ और प्रस्तुति में भिन्न विधाओं के सह-अस्तित्व का प्रयोग होने से सफलता निकट हो जाती है।

4. रचनात्मक विकल्पों की खोज

वर्तमान स्थिति में जीवन को बचाए रखने से बढ़कर कोई अभिप्राय किसी के सामने नहीं है। वातावरण पूरी तरह बदल गया है और हमारी ओर से पर्याप्त बदलाव की मांग कर रहा है। दो विकल्प सामने हैं—या तो निष्क्रिय उदासीनता अपनायी जाए या सक्रियता से समाधान खोजा जाए। सोच का एक तरीका ये हो सकता है कि सघन बदलाव असंभव है। लेकिन काल्पनिक आदर्शवाद या महाविनाश जैसे किसी रास्ते को स्वीकार नहीं किया जा सकता। नकारात्मक सोच या उदासीनता से बाहर आने में अतीत को देखना भी उपयोगी होगा।

विज्ञान के अनुसार लगभग साढ़े चार बिलियन वर्ष पहले धूलि कणों में लिपटी धरती अस्तित्व में आयी। विविधताओं व जटिलताओं के बीच जीवन आगे बढ़ा। भविष्य उन्हीं प्रजातियों का रहा जो लगातार बदलती रहीं, पर्यावरण को स्वीकार कर स्वयं को उसी के अनुरूप ढालती रहीं। चार्ल्स डार्विन ने कहा कि सबसे ताकतवर नस्ल नहीं बचती, सबसे समझदार नस्ल भी नहीं बचती, बचती वही नस्ल है जो बदली हुई परिस्थितियों में समायोजन कर लेती है।¹² आज लगभग 1.4 करोड़ प्रजातियां इस धरती पर हैं। विविध प्रजातियों में व विशेष रूप से मानव-मानव के बीच संघर्ष व युद्ध के रूप बदलते रहे हैं। अणुबम के आविष्कार व प्रयोग के बाद युद्ध, सुरक्षा, शक्ति, सत्ता व जीवन आदि के संदर्भ में अप्रत्याशित बदलाव आ गया। पर हमारे युद्ध के संस्कार, सोच व भाषा आज भी बदलाव की प्रतिक्षा में हैं। यदि सेकेण्ड के लाखवें हिस्से में लाखों लोगों का जीवन जिससे विनष्ट किया जा सकता है, क्या वो मात्र एक 'शस्त्र' ही होगा? न्युक्लियर शक्ति के तनिक से प्रयोग से पूरी पृथ्वी से 'जीवन सहायक स्थिति' (life support system) को ही समाप्त कर दिया जाए तो क्या उसे मात्र एक 'युद्ध' कहा जाएगा? महाविनाश के इन बीजों का हमेशा-हमेशा के लिए, हर तरह से बहिष्कार ही जीवन के लिए वास्तविक पथ सामने रह गया है।

एक-दूसरे के संपर्क मात्र से संक्रमित होते कोराना वायरस से सावचेत रहने के लिए 'संगच्छध्वम—' साथ-साथ चलने, पुरुषार्थ करने के अर्थ को संगरोध का संदर्भ देना ही उचित होगा। संगरोध में सबका पुरुषार्थ जीवन के अभिप्राय को पुष्ट करने के लिए है। जो कुछ हो रहा है, हम जान सकते हैं, सोच सकते हैं, नयी संभावनाओं की ओर ध्यान दे सकते हैं। एक के संयम का संकल्प छह जीव निकाय को त्राण देने वाला, शांति देने वाला होता है। उसका हार्द यही है कि वो महान संकल्प प्राणी मात्र को अभय देने वाला है। संयमी की ओर से किसी भी प्राणी को प्राणों का खतरा नहीं है। सभी जीवों को परस्पर उपकारी कहा गया है।¹³ सभी जीव अपने-अपने जीवन को किसी के लिए शस्त्र न होने दे, यह परस्पर उपकार का एक रचनात्मक विकल्प है।

ब्राह्मण, क्षत्रिय, वैश्य, शूद्र के रूप में परिभाषित होती समाज-व्यवस्था वर्गभेद के लिए नहीं, पूरक के रूप में अस्तित्व में आई। समय के साथ ऊँच-नीच के पाटों में पिसते हुए आज वह नाम शेष रह गयी है। वर्तमान व्यवस्था में ऑफिसर और वर्कर, नियोक्ता और कर्मचारी, मालिक और मजदूर, दुकानदार और रेड़ीवाला आदि के बीच की भेदरेखाएं गहरी हो चुकी हैं। एक ओर पूंजीपति, अमीरघराने, हीरो, नेता, मंत्री आदि अट्टालिकाओं में बसे साहब लोग हैं, दूसरी ओर नौकर, सफाईकर्मी, मजदूरों आदि की फुटपाथ या झुग्गी-झोंपड़ी में जैसे-तैसे बसर होती जिंदगी है। परन्तुशान्ति, न्याय और उचित कल्याण का पथ तो सभी को चाहिए। नये और बदले माहौल में समाज-व्यवस्था का वो रचनात्मक विकल्प चाहिए जिसमें इंसान का इंसान होना ही गरिमापूर्ण समझा जाए। हर एक की अनुभूति इस गरिमा-बोध से समृद्ध हो। किसी इंसान को किसी भी व्यक्ति या व्यवस्था द्वारा मशीनी पुर्जे या साधन के रूप में प्रयुक्त न किया जा सके। अस्तित्व की गरिमा के साथ भूख को भोजन, अशिक्षित को शिक्षा और रोग को चिकित्सा की उचित सुविधा मिल सके।

5. अन्तर्निभरता: तथ्य एवं सत्य

अपने आस-पास की घटनाओं को ही आंख खोलकर कुछ गहराई, कुछ नजदीकी से देखें तो अहंकार का कोई क्षेत्र टिक नहीं पाएगा। छोटे से छोटे कार्य के लिए व्यक्ति कितनी निर्भरताओं से बंधा है। सुख-सुविधा या कम्फर्ट जोन जैसे शब्द 'सबके साथ' जुड़ कर ही टिके रह सकते हैं। एक से सब, एक सब से' — यह पूर्णतया अन्तर्निभरता की समझ है। आज यह अनिवार्य हो गया है कि अपनी स्थिति की परीक्षा एवं समीक्षा करते हुए अधिकतम संभव विकल्पों की खोज होती रहे, जो जीवन के लिए हो, जीवन को बनाए रखने के लिए हो। 'हम और वे' जैसी सोच से पार जीवन का विस्तृत जीवन के साथ सुरक्षित सह-अस्तित्व ही रोशनी की किरण है।

संसाधन व सूचनाओं का उदारता के साथ संविभाग, प्रेम व सहयोग पर आधारित संरचनात्मक अहिंसा का वातावरण, प्रकृति व जीवन के प्रति सम्मान तथा कृतज्ञता का भाव, कला व सृजनशीलता का विकास, विश्वास व मैत्री के साथ जीवन-मूल्यों की सघन प्रतिष्ठा—यह सब अन्तर्निभरता का समझ से ही संभव है; जहाँ मानव-मानव के बीच किसी का कोई एकाधिकार नहीं, कोई हीन या अतिरिक्त नहीं, किसी की उपेक्षा नहीं, किसी की उच्छृंखलता नहीं, किसी की स्वार्थ लिप्सा या सुविधावादी मनोवृत्ति नहीं, कोई अभाव या अतिभाव से ग्रसित नहीं हो। शरीर के विविध अंगों से संपादित होते सभी कार्यों की तरह सृष्टि में संतुलन व समता की पौध को द्रष्टव्य बनाने का विकल्प अन्तर्निभरता का स्वीकार व प्रयोग ही है।

अस्तु, अल्बर्ट स्वाइत्जर के शब्दों में, वह जीवन, जिसे प्राणी जीना चाहता है अन्य सब प्राणियों के बीच, जो जीना चाहते हैं।¹⁴ अन्तर्निभरता के समझ की इस किरण के सहारे जीवन और जगत के अस्तित्व को मौत के अंधेरे गर्त से बचाया जा सकता है।

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