

**Challenges facing Jain Society in modern times
and
their solutions**

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11 Challenges facing Jain society

1.Jain Darshan is very vast and touches all aspects of life but it has been, in practice, confined to dietary habits, jivdaya and temple construction. Effects of **Jain practices on physical and mental health** largely remains to be documented.

2.**Jain darshan is very simple** but it is not available in understandable form and is difficult to connect with school or college education. The idea that religion is different from science is incorrect because both are engaged in search of truth, albeit with different methodologies. Generally, rituals govern our life style and day to day requirements are determined by traditions whereas there is logic behind them and they have been developed for our benefit, based on laws of nature.

3.Jain darshan has all the **elements of a modern civil society** but it is not being propagated globally and is confined within the narrow boundaries of our sects.

4. Practical aspects of Jain practices in enhancing and **sharpening memory (avadhan, for example), developing psychological powers (premonition, intuition)** etc. which can bring success in life have not been documented or developed for training or teaching in a proper course.

5. **Jain life style** is projected as difficult to follow, whereas it is simple, and has to be provided logical foundation, research and documentation.

6. **Jain followers are shrinking rapidly** and it is projected that their number will reduce to 100,000 only in the next 40 years. If this happens, the Jain concepts and philosophy, which took thousands of years to develop, will also be lost. Compare with Buddhism.

7. **Jain Heritage** is very rich and profound and Jain philosophy dominated the Indian subcontinent from about 600 BCE to 600 CE. but it does not find its rightful place in the mainstream curriculum in schools or colleges and is not covered in history books. We suspect that this aspect of Indian history is either not presented properly or is being suppressed. **These 1000 years should be considered as golden period of India and should be declared as Jain era in Indian history**

8. **Jain philosophy and concepts are scientific** and show the way the nature works. This aspect needs to be documented, substantiated, and propagated. The current period in the world is the century of knowledge and the whole world is prepared to accept knowledge based suggestions, provided it is logical and properly placed on the global platforms. Jain darshan has all the ingredients of resolving various global problems, like intolerance, social disharmony, environmental degradation, gender inequality etc, the world is facing today, but Jain concepts and practices are not known globally and not taught in schools. By proper dissemination of Jain philosophy, the current century can become the **century of Jains** and bring peace, prosperity and harmony in the world.

9.The number of **Jain scholars** worldwide is limited and even in India, the number of Acharyas and Pandits is large but Jain scholars who can present Jain concepts in modern, jargon-free language, reinterpret Agams in current context, carry out research projects, and place the Jain concepts on logical and scientific foundation is negligible. The world is eager to adopt many concepts mentioned in Jain texts and agams but we do not have qualified scholars to take them on global platforms.

10.Several unknown, uncared, **neglected Jain idols, historical sites, caves** and abandoned temples exist throughout India.They need to be documented and should form part of Indian heritage.

11.Some work is being done to resolve the above problems by a many individuals and organisation but it's impact is negligible. To have sufficient impact, it is felt that there should be at least one Global non-sectarian academic platform (like JITO is for business) which takes care of various problems of Jains society in **ONE VOICE**.

Solutions

- **Top Down** approach vs **Bottom up** approach: amplifier effect
- **Apex Gyan Kendra**: Exchange of scholars: visiting Fellowships Scholarships
- **Agams** simplified: connect with science, school curriculum, logic and contemporary issues
- **prepare 100 scholars in 5 years.**

Ideal philosophy for modern civil society

- जैन दर्शन बहुत ही सरल है, इसके सिद्धांत भी और इसकी पालना भी, परन्तु साधारणतयः इसको बहुत ही क्लिष्ट ढंग से प्रस्तुत किया जाता है। जैन दर्शन और उनकी जीवन शैली केवल तीन सूत्रों में समाहित है:
- (1) जैन दर्शन का **आधार स्तंभ ज्ञान है**: केवल ज्ञान। **GYAN IS THE FOUNDATION OF JAIN DARSHAN**. Charitra will automatically follow.
- (2) प्रकृति, परम शक्तिवान है, और नियमों से संचालित होती है, और वह सतत चेतना के विकास में लगी हुई है; हमें उसके विरुद्ध कुछ भी कार्य नहीं करना चाहिए। **MINIMUM INTERFERENCE WITH NATURE**
- (3) आत्मा में अनंत गुण है और जैन दर्शन उनको विकास करने की पद्धति बतलाता है। **PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING POWERS OF SOUL**
- इसमें पहला सिद्धांत जैन दर्शन का मूल है, और दूसरा और तीसरा सिद्धांत जीवन शैली से संबंधित है। तीसरे सिद्धांत को हम और भी सरल भाषा में प्रस्तुत कर सकते हैं कि हमें प्रकृति के कार्य से कोई भी इंटरफेरेंस नहीं करनी चाहिए। हमारी जीवनशैली, अन्य जीवों और अजीव पदार्थों के मिनिमम इन्टरफेयरेन्स पर आधारित होनी चाहिए।
- जैन दर्शन की सभी धारणाएं, अहिंसा, संयम और तप, इन तीनों मूल सिद्धांतों से निकलकर आती है। जीव में अत्यंत शक्तिशाली संभावनाएँ हैं, जिनको कोई भी, अपने प्रयत्नों से विकसित कर सकता है।
- इन तीन धारणाओं से नीचे लिखें निम्नलिखित जैन धर्म के 9 तत्व उभर कर आते हैं:

4 Sutras: Jainism simplified

- 1. संसार सूत्र: संसार में दुख ही दुख है; सुख का हर स्रोत अंततः दुख में बदल जाता है।
- 2. कर्म सूत्र: इस दुःख का कारण कर्म है।
- 3. ज्ञान सूत्र: ज्ञान द्वारा कर्मों का उन्मूलन किया जा सकता है।
- 4. ध्यान सूत्र: ध्यान द्वारा ज्ञान प्राप्त किया जा सकता है।

Seven unique features of Jain Darshan

• जैन धर्म के 7 तत्व

- 1. **Equality:** (i) Equality of all before universal Laws, such as Law of Karma, coexistence
 - (ii) Equality of all species: all species have same powerful soul
 - (iii) Equality of gender : male and female
- 2. **Responsibility:**
 - (i) One is responsible for his/her own deeds. No one, including GOD can do any thing good or bad to you (**Karma Theory**)
 - (ii) **Purushartha:** Your efforts are required for anything you want to achieve. One can even attain omniscience (Godhood) by your efforts
- 3. **Equidistribution:** Apathy
 - It is the Best form of voluntary socialism, without compulsion. It has enormous benefits:
 - (i). Creates harmony in the society
 - (ii) Avoids over-exploitation of resources
 - (iii) Does not put any restriction on earning: only involves passing away of the excess wealth.

4. **Anekantavad: Respecting everyone's views**

- (i) Creates harmony at the individual level, in family, society, and nationally and internationally
- (ii) leads to tolerance, fearlessness
- (iii) Avoids conflicts : good for mental peace

5. **Ahimsa:** All life is sacred; avoid or minimise killing of living beings, howsoever insignificant : enshrined in the iconic shloka

Parasparopagraho jivanam-Ajivanam

- (i) **vegetarianism:** good for health
- (ii) **Jiva daya:** establishes friendship and resonance with all living beings and they all help in your well being
- (iii) **Forgiveness/Vinay:** epigenetic effects of forgiveness: activates one's dormant genes.

6. **Anusashan (आत्मानुशासन):** self restraint: minimum interference with nature

- (i) gives control of various faculties
- (ii) develops confidence
- (iii) preserves environment by minimum use of resources

7. **Personal ethics** : Brahmcharya (with emphasis on sexual ethics):

- (i) conserves physical energy which can be used for better purposes
- (ii) brings harmony in married life, and society
- (iii) safety of men and women
- (iv) leads to well being of children and future generations

Concluding Remarks

- **Noble prizes on Jain Concepts:** Bosons: Autophagy (2016), Chowihar (2017)
- **Why Jains do better in life??** Because of practice of Ahimsa, All jiva of the universe help them.
- **Can Jain Darshan guide science??**
- This august group and these leading Institutions may like to take a note of these issues.



Thank you