

# June 2018 Newsletter

## Peace OF Mind

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### Upcoming Events



#### Sneak peak inside this issue:

This month we wanted to show various programs held across the US. From Cincinnati, to Cleveland and Chicago and all the way to Memphis is just the beginning of this summer.

Please visit our website at [www.pomyc.org](http://www.pomyc.org)

June 6 & 7, 2018  
Los Angeles, CA  
Contact: Mahesh Vadhar  
Phone: 909-376-4027

June 8 to 10, 2018  
Jain Sangh San Diego, CA  
Venue: 1830 Anna Lane  
Vista: CA 92083  
Phone: 858-254-9599

June 12 -14, 2018  
Topics: 'Understanding LIFE'  
Venue: Avni Mukesh Shah,  
43245 Luzon Drive,  
Fremont, CA 94539  
Cell: 510-449-6035

June 15 -17, 2018  
Venue :Hindu Jain Temple of Las Vegas  
1701 Sageberry Dr.  
Las Vegas NV 89144  
Contact: 702-249-8127  
Nita & Daulat Desai

June 18 - 24, 2018  
Mahendra Mehta  
Jain Center of BC  
Unit 208, 14770 64 Avenue  
Surrey, BC V3S 1X7  
Contact: 778-855-6082

June 26 & 27, 2018  
Chicago Jain Sangh  
Contact: Atul Shah  
phone: 630-501-4373

June 28 -30, 2018  
Raleigh Hindi Group  
Vigyan Luhadia  
Phone: 919-342-5091

July 1 - 3, 2018  
Arti Subhash Choxi  
Maryland, DC  
Phone: 240-418-0359

July 4 - 7, 2018  
YJA Chicago  
<https://yja.org/>

## Cincinnati - Ohio Visit ( May 9 to May 16, 2018 )

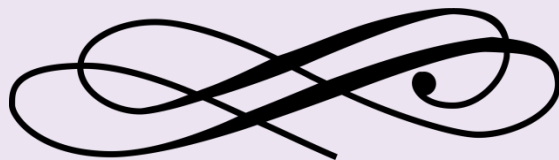
ધર્મ સીધો સરળ છે, પંડિતોએ તેને જટિલ બનાવી દીધો છે - શ્રુતપ્રજ્ઞજી

( સિનસિનાટીમાં 'મહાવીરની દ્રષ્ટિએ જૈન ધર્મ' પર વ્યાખ્યાનમાળા )

સમણ શ્રુતપ્રજ્ઞજીએ તા. 11 થી 13 મે ના અમેરિકાના ઓહાયો રાજ્યમાં આવેલ સિનસિનાટી શહેરમાં મહાવીરની દ્રષ્ટિએ જૈન ધર્મ' પર ત્રણ દિવસ વ્યાખ્યાનો આપ્યા હતા. જૈનધર્મમાં ભગવાન, જૈન આરાધના વિધિઓ અને મુક્તિનો માર્ગ એ વિષયો પર પ્રવચન આપતા એમને કહ્યું હતું કે ' દરેક ધર્મ ગ્રંથોમાં મિલાવટ થઇ છે. મૂળ જ્ઞાનીઓએ આપેલું જ્ઞાન આપણે શુદ્ધ રહેવા દીધું નથી. કહેવાતા પંડિતોએ એમાં પોતાના સ્વાર્થવશ ઘણું ભેળવ્યું છે. બધા ધર્મોની જેમ જૈન ધર્મમાં પણ ઘણી ભેળસેળ થઇ છે. ભગવાન મહાવીર આજે આવીને જોવે તો એમને નવાઈ લાગે કે આ ધર્મ એ જ છે જે હું મૂકીને ગયો હતો. લોકોએ ધર્મને એટલો ચૂંથી નાખ્યો છે કે એને સામાન્ય માણસ માટે જીવવા જેવો રહેવા દીધો નથી.

ત્રણ દિવસની વ્યાખ્યાનમાળામાં સમણજીએ કહ્યું કે ધર્મ સાવ જ સરળ અને સીધો છે. આપણે લોકોએ એને ખૂબ જ જટિલ અને ન સમજાય તેવો બનાવી દીધો છે. ધર્મને ક્રિયાકાંડના વિચિત્ર કપડાં પહેરાવી દીધા છે જેના કારણે આજની યુવા પેઢી ધર્મથી દૂર ભાગી રહી છે. મારો પ્રયાસ આ જટિલ ધર્મને બને એટલો વાસ્તવિક, સરળ અને જીવવા લાયક બનાવવાનો છે. મહાવીરે જે રીતે ધર્મને સમજાવ્યો હતો આપણે એનાથી ઘણાં ઉલ્ટા માર્ગે નીકળી ગયા છીએ. સંઘ પ્રમુખ વિરલ ચોકસીએ સમણજીનું સ્વાગત કર્યું હતું. કલ્પનાબેને પરિચય આપ્યો હતો. અશ્વિનભાઈ પારેખે પીસ ઓફ માઈન્ડ રાજકોટની પ્રવૃત્તિઓ વિષે જાણકારી આપી હતી. આ પૂર્વે સમણજીએ લંડનમાં ચેતના અને દિવેશ મહેતાના નિવાસ સ્થાને શિબિર કરી હતી. શિકાગોમાં ધર્મી અને અતુલ શાહના ઘરે 60 પછી કેમ જીવવું વિષય પર પ્રવચન આપ્યું હતું. ડેટન - ઓહાયોમાં સુરેખા અને કમલેશ સંઘવીના ઘેર પણ સત્સંગ રાખવામાં આવ્યો હતો. પીસ ઓફ માઈન્ડ ફાઉન્ડેશન દ્વારા ચાલતી શિષ્યવૃત્તિ પ્રોજેક્ટમાં અનેક લોકોએ સહયોગ કર્યો હતો.

Ms. Surekha Sanghvi welcomed and hosted in Dayton at her house and arranged Samanji's spiritual pravachan. President Viral Shah welcomed him on behalf of the Jain Center and Kalpana Parekh introduced him to the Jain Center. Mr. Ashwin Parekh briefed the activities of Peace of Mind Foundations, including the sponsorship for the students and presented the vote of thanks.



## Cleveland Trip ( May 17 to 20, 2018 )

During Saman Shri Shrutpragya ji's USA visit, he was invited to visit Cleveland, OHIO Center. He visited Jain Society of Greater Cleveland from May 17<sup>th</sup> to May 20<sup>th</sup> 2018. Samanji conducted total 6 sessions (2 sessions each on Friday, Saturday & Sunday) that included two meditation sessions as well. He gave 4 sessions on four different bhavana – Maitri bhavana, Pramod bhavana, Karuna bhavana & Madhyashtha bhavana. He gave detail explanation with practical examples in each sessions. He also explained how one can practice and implement them in their current life. All the Sangh members were very delighted and impressed with his knowledge and a very simple way to explain any topic. He also conducted two Q&A sessions where Sangh members asked him various questions.

One key question that asked was how to motivate, influence and involve Youth in various activities and keep Jainism alive in future generations. Samanji also gave an overview of different kind of activities that his trust is part of at Rajkot, Gujarat and what his future plans is. He also invited and encouraged Sangh members to visit him at Rajkot whenever they come to India. Though Cleveland Sangh has only about 50 active family, on an average, 60 members attended Samanji's pravachans. JSGC president, Shri Sanket Doshi also expressed his gratitude towards Samanji and invited to visit Cleveland Sangh next year. When Samanji told that next year, he's planning to have sessions only for Youth, Shri Sanket Ji mentioned that JSGC will be the first Sangh to arrange sessions for Youth to support Samanji's initiatives.





## Chicago Trip

Saman Shrutpragya ji came to Chicago from London on the evening of 26th May and stayed there for 10 days. He gave one discourse on the question of "How to live after 50?" During his visit he also conducted informative and joyful satsangs, attended by Sunil Desai, Jagdish and Anjna Shah, Devdeepbhai and Deena Parekh, Hiren and Manisha Shah, Mahendra and Kusum Shah, Jayesh and Parul Shah, Sailesh and Kailash Desai and Chandra, Shah, Ravindra and Pallvi Kobawala, Hemant and Lina Shah, Nilesh and Bina Shah, Jayant and Minal Shah, Arti and Prerak Shah, Darshna and Paresh Malvia, Mosni and Sejal Shah, Yogesh and Nisha Jani, Nirmala and Hasmukh Shah, Pravin Shah and Harish and Nutan Shah



## Wichita and Kansas City, KS Visits ( May 21 to 25, 2018 )

Saman Shrutpragyaji visited Wichita, KS from May 21 to 23, 2018. He gave two talks on What is foremost Priority in LIFE? and How to live Life? Trupti and Nilesh Sheth arranged and welcome everyone in Local Hindi Jain Temple. Saman ji also visited Parul and Raju Sheth, Suresh and Sheela Bhakta and Grishma and Biren Ajmera's home for Gochari. Samanji Also visited Kansas City and gave two talks on May 24th and 25th at Hindu Jain Mandir. Subhadra and Hasubhai Doshi arranged Samanji's trip in Kansas City.



## Saman Shrutpragyaji's Visit to Denver (May 26 – May 28)

During the Memorial Day weekend we had the privilege to have Saman Shrutpragyaji visit us in Denver. The three day Satsang give the samaj an opportunity to not only meet a spiritual and well known leader but learn how we can live a better and healthier life. Samnaji' was hosted by Chiraag and Swetha Shah for first part of his stay and then Raj and Ketna Shah for second part of the stay. We look forward to seeing Samanji every year and getting the opportunity to learn from a great leader. Below are the details of the program that got over –

### May 26<sup>th</sup> Topic – How to stop the mind from chattering

Life is always full of events and activities and never a dull moment. We are always looking to do multiple things and fitting as much as possible. This topic helps us to realize that give time to yourself; spend some time to glance through your thoughts occurring at point of time and calm your mind from internal and external constant thoughts.

### May 27<sup>th</sup> Topic – Spiritual Growth

We had wonderful location for this satsang. In presence of Shri Sai Baba's murti, this pravachan was delivered. Samanji explained why spirituality is different than religion and what does one need to do to be more spiritual. Basics of respect, honesty, kindness were shared with all.

### May 28<sup>th</sup> – Topic – Joy of Giving

This session taught us that it is not about receiving but we need to be joyous in giving. We learnt 10 steps of giving – food, medicine, home goods, knowledge, responsibility, talent and experience, appreciate, forgive, spiritual vibration.

Samanji visited Red Rocks Amphitheatre and Wild Animal Sanctuary. Samanji left to Amarillo on May 29<sup>th</sup>.





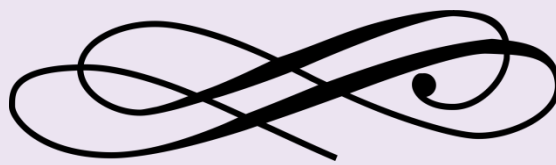
## Memphis, TN ( June 1 - 5, 2018 )

**Saman Shrutpragyaji's** visit to Memphis, TN from June 1st-5th, 2018. His lectures on topics such as, Mind - the Yogic Perspective, Foremost priorities in Life and a one day full camp was well received with more than 70 enthusiast participants.

On June 1st he talked about the Mind. He asked: What is the Mind from the Yogic Perspective? He explained how the mind was different in the Eastern and Western Perspective. He then described the 5 types of Mind. Swamiji provided the solution to the question, what should we do with our agitated mind? Answer is, we need to self-reflect, write, and meditate.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, his lecture was on what should be our priorities in life. He described 6 priorities - PHYSICAL, MATERIAL, MENTAL, INTELLECTUAL, EMOTIONAL and SPIRITUAL.

Then on June 3rd, Samanji conducted an all day camp On Life and Spirituality with over 55 people in attendance. The lectures were transformative for many and appreciative by all. He gave two talks on what is Life and how to live it meaningfully and What is spirituality and how to be true spiritual? Saman ji also taught Yoga and Meditation Techniques. Lots of sadhaks asked questions to Samanji. Chanchalaben and Vinay bhai Mehta arranged whole day camp and coordinated well. Every one enjoyed camp very much. Many Sadhaks were expressing that how Swamanji's spiritual guidance has changed their day to day lives.



## "Ahimsa and Reverence of Life"

Ahimsa is the key to understanding the whole Jain tradition and lies at the heart of all Jain dharma. Ideally, every aspect of behaviour, culture and social practice adheres to the principle...

Moving on to consider the word ahimsa itself, it is interesting to note that it is a negative term. The prefix "a" indicates not merely the negation of *himsa* or violence but its use functions specifically as a constant reminder to actively refrain from doing it. Choice of this word, then, is neither arbitrary nor accidental but quite deliberate. *Mahavira* engaged it along with a number of other related lexical expressions given in the form of the negative (hence, use of words such as *aparigraha* [non-possessiveness] and *achaurya* [non-stealing]).

In the case of ahimsa, as with other related negative terms, there is for *Mahavira* no comparable linguistic form that will serve the purpose of his intended meaning. Words like compassion (*karuna*) and love (*prema*) are sometimes employed by him, as they are in many other religious traditions the world over, but *Mahavira* neither makes them an alternative for ahimsa, nor does he ever employ them merely as synonyms. Without question compassion (*karuna*) and love (*prema*) are embraced in the broad application of the term ahimsa, but only the latter carries the uniqueness of Mahavira's emphasis, namely, the imperative to remove within oneself and in all one's actions all manifestations of violence, which are the cause of harm to others as well as to oneself...

Now, although ahimsa is but one at the level of principle, it has numerous applications, and one can even talk, in a sense, of different types of ahimsa. These include, for example, personal ahimsa, family ahimsa, social ahimsa and institutional ahimsa, to mention but a few. The first of these (personal ahimsa), however, is ultimately both the beginning and end consideration for all other manifestations of non-violence. When the idea or thought of violence is invoked there is a tendency for many people to bring to mind such things as war or military conflict, perhaps on a grand scale, involving use of weapons or instruments of mass destruction. There is a tendency, in other words, to look to the distant horizon, to border disputes between different nations, for instance, or armed struggle in different regions around the globe. Such thoughts, however, in turn, have a tendency to take one away from consideration of the self or from introspection. In the process of projection of thoughts to the world without, rather than reflecting on the world within, the latter typically comes to be neglected or it is ignored altogether. Yet it is to the inner world that Mahavira draws specific attention. It is not by looking to the other or to distant battle fields that problems of violence should first be tackled. On the contrary, for Mahavira, it is by taking an inward turn to the self that counts most, and it is to the self always where the primary focus of effort should be concentrated. All personal forms of violence thus need to be controlled and finally transcended for a peaceful world to be realisable.

With regard to family ahimsa, it means that every family member should work diligently for peace and harmony to prevail in all kinship relations. Instead what is commonly found is the reverse of this. Violence to one degree or another dominates relations between husband and wife, between brothers and sisters and between other extended members of the household. Family members act like terrorists, gangsters and despots. They insist often on selfish demands and do not respect each other. After marriage husbands become possessive and controlling of their wives, expecting them to cook and to clean for them whenever they desire it, as well as treat their spouses on some occasions as though they are mere sex slaves, insisting also that they be pampered by their wives whenever the whim for this arises in them. On the other hand, wives put pressure on their husbands to earn more and more money and frequently when there is no real

necessity for this or when it has no genuine justification. On some occasions, too, a mother will gang up against her husband with the support of her daughter, joining forces in order to make him accept terms he would otherwise never agree to. In addition, brothers and sisters compete for attention and for special privileges from their parents, bullying each other in the process. Moreover, extended members of kin often also are ignored or are made to feel like they are a burden in the household, with all value for them removed. And elderly or senior members of the family are frequently, in turn, far too critical of younger members of the household, as well as being intolerant of their faults or shortcomings. In terms of social ahimsa or non-violence within society, this is greatly promoted in the teachings of Mahavira, too, and is a major directive shaping the kind of behaviour that all *Jains* are expected to adopt. Throughout society worldwide, however, the reality is otherwise, with untold strife and division prevailing. Division is found between groups on the basis of caste, class, ethnicity, wealth and religion. Different groups compete for status and for access to jobs, money and privilege. One class within society exploits others and is unconcerned about the welfare of the poor. People become sick and homeless with no one to take care of their needs, and they are left to languish in suffering and misery.

The same is also found in the case of institutions of every kind. They look after their own interests and ignore how their own behaviour and practices affect others. Mostly such interests are motivated by profit or money. One might hope that relations between different people or different groups the world over are greatly improved because of the presence of large religious organisations; but division and suffering is perpetuated by them too. One religion thus considers itself to be superior to all other faiths, and they go to war to establish their dominance or to promote their own teachings and practices. Those who are of different faiths thus often persecute or kill each other. The history of religion, in fact, is also a history of struggle, intolerance, hatred and warfare. Even with quietist traditions like Buddhism and Jainism, there has been much division, too, with this arising frequently as it tends to do because of pride, ego, jealousy and the like.

Division itself is inherently violent, and it is due to human weakness that this negative state of affairs continues to be perpetuated throughout the globe, including in religious institutions. It is not enough for a Buddhist, for example, to proclaim that he or she is a follower of a peaceful dharma. He or she will thus often as not insist on being a Buddhist of a particular type, such as the orthodox Theravada variety, or claim to be a member of group called Zen or announce simply that his or her affiliation is to Mahayana Buddhism. Pride and ego swell consciousness whenever this happens, as membership of the particular group to which he or she claims to belong is invariably seen as superior to other Buddhist sects and communities. The same is found within Jainism and is the reason, in part, why different groups have emerged and continue to splinter. Jainism historically has produced not only two sizeable nodal communities of *Digambara* and *Swetambara Jains*, but each, in turn, has given rise to further schisms, with Swetambara Jains in particular having very many different sects or organizations.

The message of Mahavira's teaching, of course, does not promote division in any fashion whatsoever and thus is completely opposed to all forms of identity based upon sector group. This means also rising above and beyond the very label of Jainism, as every type of designation in terms of group tends to be generative of the kinds of problem to which attention has already been drawn. As ahimsa requires one to avoid and, indeed, remove all manifestations of violence, in whatever form they might arise, those who are socially recognised as being Jain need always to be mindful of this and endeavour to apply the logic of Mahavira's emphasis on non-violence in all aspects of their lives. And it is personal ahimsa, as pointed out above, that is the key to all of it.