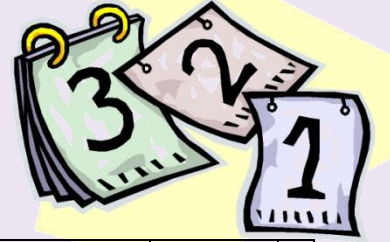




# May 2018 Newsletter

## Upcoming Events



### Sneak peak inside this issue:

This month we wanted to congratulate this year's scholarship winners. We also showed several shibirs that were held all over India as well as in London. There's also a special sneak peak in Swamiji's new book.

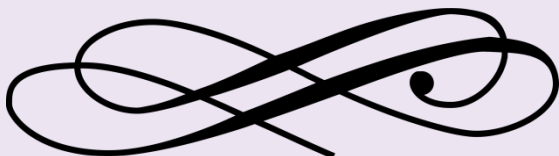
Saman ji Shrutpragyaji's Gujarati and English blog available, link :

<http://www.pomy.org/blog/>

Saman Shrutpragya Spiritual Trip USA - 2018						
4/20/2018	Fri	4/26/2018	Thu	London	UK	
4/30/2018	Mon	5/9/2018	Wed	Chicago	IL	
5/9/2018	Wed	5/16/2018	Wed	Cincinnati	OH	
5/17/2018	Thu	5/20/2018	Sun	Cleveland	OH	
5/21/2018	Mon	5/23/2018	Wed	Wichita	KS	
5/24/2018	Thu	5/25/2018	Fri	Kansas City	KS	
5/26/2018	Sat	5/28/2018	Mon	Denver	CO	
5/29/2018	Tue	5/31/2018	Thu	Dumas	TX	
6/1/2018	Fri	6/5/2018	Tue	Memphis	TN	
6/6/2018	Wed	6/7/2018	Thu	Los Angeles	CA	
6/8/2018	Fri	6/10/2018	Sun	San Diego	CA	
6/11/2018	Mon	6/14/2018	Thu	Fremont	CA	
6/15/2018	Fri	6/18/2018	Mon	Las Vegas	NA	
6/19/2018	Tue	6/25/2018	Mon	Vencuer	BC	
6/26/2018	Tue	7/7/2018	Sun	YJA-Chicago	IL	
7/8/2018	Sun	7/13/2018	Fri	Atlanta	GA	
7/14/2018	Sat	7/15/2018	Sun	Austin	TX	
7/16/2018	Mon	7/18/2018	Wed	Houston	TX	
7/19/2018	Thu	7/22/2018	Sun	Siddhachalam	NJ	

## Discourse at Shiv Nagar, Rajkot, 4 April 2018

V D Bala arranged Samanji's talk at Shiv Nagar in honour of V D Bala's late mother. In her memory Samanji was pleased to offer key points regarding how to maintain as well as enjoy harmonious relations in family life. He outlined five rules one should try to observe to achieve this. The five rules discussed were: 1) keep calm in all unfavourable circumstances, 2) strive continually to be positive, 3) keep a smiling face, 4) appreciate each and every family member, and 5) find ways to contribute to family life, always being willing to give and to carry out seva for them. 200 people attended the event and V D Bala and everyone who participated were greatly appreciative to Samanji for his inspiring and practical discourse.



## Winners of Scholarship Awards in 2017-18

The Peace of Mind Foundation is happy to announce offers of support to eligible students from underprivileged backgrounds, as it aims to create new possibilities for scholarships. Education in India is very expensive and many poor families cannot simply afford to send their talented children to the right schools. Samanji wants to help such children move forward in terms of study opportunities and support even greater numbers of underprivileged students. Samanji has received many offers of money from loving donors to aid him in this process. And the Peace of Mind Foundation is grateful to them for it.

When the scholarship programme started in 2011 eleven students benefited. And this all happened and continues because of the kindness of donors from the UK, the USA, Singapore and Malaysia in particular. At the very start Kirtida ben and Bharat Bhai in Singapore both donated money and thus helped Samanji initiate the scholarship programme. A question asked at that time, and one which is still often raised today, is: "Why do Indian students need money for purposes of study?" The answer to this question is simple and straight forward: There are many poor students in India who are unable to go forward, despite being talented and academically brilliant, due to poverty alone. This is a problem the Peace of Mind Foundation has responded to and wishes further to tackle. It wants to support and encourage the talented and clever youth of India who struggle financially to excel; for they are the future of India and, indeed, of the whole world. If we who are of Indian origin and from Indian religious traditions cannot help them, who will do this? It is a duty and a privilege to support them.

One of Samanji's sutras is kindness creates kindness. Whenever anyone gives a donation, it multiplies. It grows and grows. The Peace of Mind Foundation is well placed to target the right students, ensuring always that all money donated goes straight to the cause for which it is given. This means 100% of the donation goes to the students directly. Samanji believes that this work also is the right way to give money, rather than merely offering it to a temple, as is common practice. The school itself is the true temple, and this is why money is best used to further the interests of talented children who are in great need of financial help. The minimum amount needed by a needy student in a year is Rupees 5,000. But Rupees 25,000 in one year would take care of all the students needs fully. Samanji strongly believes that it is important to invest money in India's academically bright students and to promote the importance of education among those in poverty.

Below are the winners of the current round of scholarships for the academic year 2017-18. The Peace of Mind Foundation is truly thankful to each and every donor who has made this all possible and hopes that donors will continue to give now and in the future.



## Winners of Scholarship Award 2017-2018



Ankita Mehta



Chintan Lakhani



Nancy Dalal



Deval Jilaria



Dhairya Doshi



Dhruvita Ranpara



Yas Gandhi



DOMADIYA HEMANG S.

Hemang Domadia



Heta Doshi



Hiloni Doshi



Jaanvi Mehta



JASANI JENIL K

Jenil Jasani



KASHYAP KOTHARI  
15-11-2013

Kaashyap Kothari



Rinkal Doshi



Krupali Udani



Madhavi kothari



Mahi Khandol



Mansi makvana



Mansi Mehta



Pooja Joshi



Priyanka Doshi



Poojan Doshi



Riya Sanghavi



Smit Doshi



SWATI RANPARA  
17-11-2013

Swati Ranpara



Urja Parekh



Vaibhavi Trivedi



Vilas Katesia



Dhara Joshi



Vipul Bhabhava





Jalpa Karmul Kapdi Nirav Jadav Chhaya Majethiya Sweta Raj Vansh Sanghani Gautam



Jadeja Bhagirath Ganatra Jimee Kavia Nidhiraj Kavia Suhasini Jethava Shubham Gadhi Aandi



Morjariya Shyam Vaishnav Nidhi Sheth Monali Ranpara Mansi Paresha Kinjal Bera Rupal



Bhogyata Anjali Chauhan Komal Gagiya Dhaval Trivedi Kapil Kaushal Tank Gandhi Kruti



Makwana Mansi Pindariya Naga Ravaliya Anjali Tank Sahaj Shah Mohit Sheth Mihir



Ramaia Shivangi Ramaia Swati Trivedi Vibhavi Umraniya Juli Rathod Tejasvi Kevathia Dhara Chudasma Vaishali

## Pujya Rakeshbhai Zhaveri's Visit to Abhavalay, 3 April 2018

Pujya Rakeshbhai Zhaveri came to Abhavalay to hold informal discussions with Samanji, and Samanji was delighted to welcome this great spiritual teacher to his centre in Rajkot. Samanji felt the meeting with Pujya Rakeshbhai Zhaveri was extremely valuable, and the two of them both benefited from it enormously. The meeting itself went on for close to two hours, starting late in the evening. Pujya Rakeshbhai Zhaveri, a highly respected spiritual master, is especially popular with young people, a great leader representing the modern face of Jainism in the tradition of Srimad Rajchandra, with his own centre in Dharampur, Gujarat. He is doing exceptional work there and abroad, advancing the teachings of Srimad Rajchandra, a Jain saint whose message is greatly respected and loved also by Samanji. For all these reasons and for much more, the meeting that was held at Abhavalay was very productive and mutually beneficial. Samanji and Pujya Rakeshbhai Zhaveri enthusiastically talked about each other's work and activities and shared a common interest in their respective spiritual programmes. After the meeting Samanji felt a strong spiritual and personal connection with Him had emerged. Samanji was especially impressed by his teaching about detachment, and He requested Samanji to make a special trip to his centre in Dharampur, Gujarat to continue discussions further and for the purpose of delivering a programme there. Finally, before he departure Samanji escorted him to Abhavalay's library and gave a present of books to him, including his own published biography, which Pujya Rakeshbhai Zhaveri joyfully received.





## Bengaluru Trip, 23 March – 1 April 2018

The Shree Stanakvasi Jain Sangh invited Saman Shrutpragyaji to celebrate Aymbil Oli for nine days in Bengaluru, Karnataka. Samanji delivered a collection of discourses during the morning sessions of his visit, all of which had a focus on the Bright Tradition after Mahavir Swami. In addition, he offered a youth seminar series for five days during his visit. This dealt with various topics relating to the modern way of life of young people and the modern way of life according to the principles of Jainism. In the morning lectures more than 200 people attended; and in the evening more than 100 young people benefited from Samanji's knowledge. Almost all attendees were from Gujarat and Samanji's lectures were delivered in Gujarati. Samanji stayed throughout the nine days programme at the home of Binduben Girish bhai Damani. Aruna ben and Bharat bhai Modi sponsored Samanji's new book "Jain Dharma" and presented copies of it to family and friends for their personal upliftment and spiritual benefit. Kirit bhai Turkiya President of the Sangh welcomed and introduced Samanji. Samanji stressed throughout his talks that one should not judge or label people. Negative judgement is always based, not on what the person is on the inside, Samanji explained, but on a one dimensional reading of the individual from an external and often misguided perspective. This key point was a central theme in all the talks he gave and the message was whole heartedly embraced by the Shree Stanakvasi Jain Sangh.



## London Trip: Shibir at Nirvana, 21 April 2018

Samanji delivered a day long programme at the home of Dilesh and Chetna Mehta in Chorleywood, north London. He spoke about the foremost priority of life, emphasising the necessity of the spiritual dimension for a full and meaningful life. Raising one's consciousness to the spiritual level was the main theme. Samanji explained that there is a hierarchy of priorities in everyone's life, starting from physical and material needs through emotional and spiritual concerns. But the spiritual dimension should be central in every aspect of day to day living, Samanji stated, and for this reason he said that this should be one's ultimate priority in order to achieve happiness. Some 40 participants took part in the activities at the home of Dilesh and Chetna Mehta, doing yoga and meditation led by Samanji and listening to his discourse. Also, Samani Pratibhapragya and Samani Unnatipragya attended the shibir later in the day and spoke alongside Samanji, following his earlier presentation. The new book "Jain Dharma" authored by Saman Shrutpragya and Dr Graham Dwyer (and sponsored by Dilesh and Chetna Mehta) was given to the participants and was very well received. Graham Dwyer gave an outline of the book to the assembled group, as well as offered a short discourse on the importance of silence in spiritual life. A question and answer session was held, providing an opportunity for the invited guests to explore Samanji's key note speech and the contributions of other speakers. It was a very special day, and Samanji expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Dilesh and Chetna Mehta for organising the shibir and for their hospitality and loving support.





## London Trip: Programme at Navnat Vanik Sangh, 22 April 2018

Bhupendra bhai Mehta, former Navnat President, and also Dhirubhi bhai Ghelani, the current Navnat President, invited Samanji to conduct a two hour programme. This started with invigorating physical exercises and was followed by Samanji's discourse. He focused the lecture on the subject of his new book, "How to Live Beyond the Age of 60." Samanji explained that the life of everyone is like the journey of the sun through the sky. When the sun rises people feel joyful, just as they do when they are young in years. And when the sun finally sets and disappears from the sky there should be the anticipation of a new day and a new life to come. However, when people enter old age they often become sad or experience internal suffering rather than embracing this natural process joyfully. Samanji said that everyone needs to be happy with their old age and should resist any tendency to become gloomy or depressed about it. Indeed, he pointed out that, if one reaches old age there is no choice about living through that time. It becomes a fact of one's existence. Yet everyone, in fact, does have the choice of embracing it gladly, Samanji emphasised. Everyone can thus choose to enter old age either in a spirit of happiness or sadness. When the latter selection is made life sinks into darkness. But this can and should be avoided. It need not and should not be a mournful affair at all; and for this reason Samanji encouraged everyone to choose the positive acceptance of old age. Thinking positively, Samanji stated that every person in later life should aim to achieve three things: to remain physically fit as far as one can do that; to find ways to ensure mental peace is realised; and to maintain and ensure that harmony in family and social relationships prevails. At Navnat in London 80 people registered for the morning programme and after the event they all enjoyed a delicious lunch.



## Satsang and Lecture in Kingsbury, North London, 23 April 2018

Vinu bhai Kotecha organised a Satsang and lecture for Samanji at the home of Chandrika bhai Hathi in Kingsbury, north London, following dinner at the home of Shaila ben Mandania. Some 50 people attended the event, with participants coming from the Jain and Hindu communities of the wider surrounding area. Samanji was invited to give a discourse on the subject of karma, pap and puniya. It was a very popular and well received lecture, which was followed later by questions and answers and during which the audience was given the opportunity to gain additional knowledge from Samanji. Many of the participants later eagerly bought Samanji's books and recorded lectures, with his new book "Jain Dharma" (introduced and briefly summarised by Graham Dwyer) being especially popular. Samanji also gave one discourse at Hareeshbhai and Geetaben Shah's residence in Isleworth –London. They also visited local Amaravati Buddhist monastery and talked with Buddhist monks.



Take a look at this special inside article from the new book  
Jain Dharma.

## Concept of God

(Extract from the Peace of Mind Foundation's New Publication.

Jain Dharma:

### Reflections on the Original Teachings and Practices of Mahavir Swami)

Concentrating on the task of cultivating the inner spiritual journey...rather than looking without in order to achieve salvation...became the pre-eminent feature of Mahavira's entire work. And he made it clear that this inevitably demands great effort and indeed requires one who enters upon such a path to be brave and bold, taking full responsibility for one's own actions. Looking to God without, a principal tenet pervading Hindu thought meant in Vedic times, for instance, that the place of the sacrifice removed personal responsibility, finding a substitute for one's failings in the immolated animal, which was ritually killed in order to gain divine favour. In effect, for Mahavira, it amounted to a misguided attempt to persuade all so-called outer gods to behave benevolently towards the donator of the sacrificed beast. Indeed, according to Mahavira, this was doubly weak, as it not only removed personal responsibility for taking charge of one's own self or one's own spiritual development; but, as an act of barbarism to the sentient creature immolated, it was considered by him to be a cruel and unnecessary act of violence. Indeed, such preventable violence could be terminated forever, Mahavira proclaimed, with the means to achieve it being made possible by taking an inward turn to the self and by assuming a stance of pure self-reliance in the quest for truth or spiritual emancipation.

In place of the concept of God as an external agent, Mahavira...emphasised the importance of inner divinity, the divinity found within each and every living being. For him, all forms of life thus need to be acknowledged as such and also allowed to thrive, as all sentient beings have the potential to become for themselves self-actualised souls, an *arhat* (*arihanta*). Instead of carrying out rituals motivated by outward projection, an inner focus removed all need to propitiate the gods, thus ending not only the need for the violence inherent in any sacrificial culture, but enabling self-realisation as the final outcome of such practice to flourish. Going within ensured that every soul (*atma*) could become *paramatma* (a fully enlightened being). As already made clear, therefore, Mahavira's approach represented a complete departure from the theistic world into which he was born, with a radically new way of engaging spiritual practice being initiated, one in which the concept of God was fully replaced by a focus on the self, the soul being viewed as capable of discovering its own inner truth or divinity entirely for itself.

