

Ahimsa is Protector

Timeless Wisdom...

JVB Preksha Meditation Center Houston



Search Truth Yourself

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

APRIL 2007

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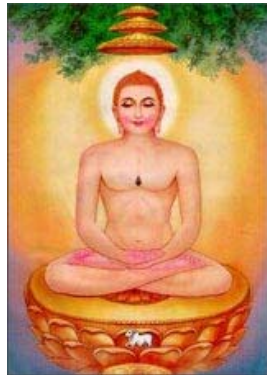
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Happy Mahaveer Jayanti



The birthday of Lord Mahaveer is called "Mahaveer Janma Kalyanak" and also popularly known as Mahaveer Jayanti.

Lord Mahaveer was the twenty-fourth and the last Tirthankara of the Jain religion. He was born in 599 B.C. in Bihar, India on the 13th day of the bright fortnight in the month of Chaitra, i.e. Chaitra Sudi Teras.

King Siddharth and queen Trishala's son, the prince was given the name of Vardhaman at birth. At the age of thirty, he left his family and royal household to become a monk. The Lord practiced severe austerities and deep meditation for the subsequent twelve years. He then reached the village Jrambhika and stayed on the banks of the river Rijuvaluka where he attained Keval Gyan / Omniscience on the Tenth day of the bright half of the month of Vaisakh i.e. Vaisakh Sudi Dasam.

Mahaveer Swami spent the next 30 years preaching the path to eternal freedom or Moksha. At the age of 72, Lord Mahaveer attained Nirvana and his purified soul left his body.

Mark your calendar for Akshay Tritiya celebration on
(April-21st at 10 a.m.)

7th Annual Family Spiritual Camp



JVB Houston held its camp on Preksha Meditation in the serene setting of Margaret Austin Center 60 miles west of Houston. The camp was conducted by Samani Akshay Pragyaji and Vinay Pragyaji from Houston, and Samani Param Pragyaji and Punya Pragyaji from Orlando.

IN THIS ISSUE

Mahaveer Jayanti

Annual Camp
Pramod Bengani
Ajay Khater

Comments & Feedback

Tidbits

- Mantra: The Problem Solving
- Test Your Knowledge
- Voice of the Omniscient
- Calendar of Events

Contact Us

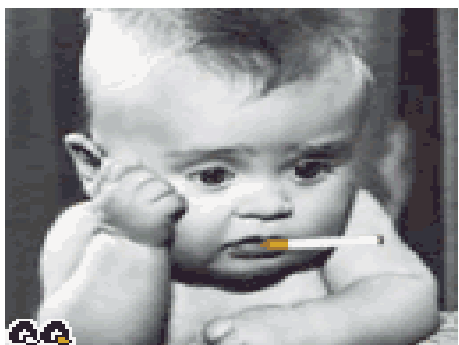
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7th Annual Camp on Preksha Meditation Benefits Many

The 7th annual camp was attended by close to 65 participants from Houston, Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, and Florida. Participants were mostly adults but included 15 children as well. The three day camp started on Friday afternoon and continued until mid Sunday. Morning started with Bhaktambar & Preksha Meditation followed by Yoga & Pranayam, and then a full day of diverse activities. Samanjis gave lectures on Anger Management, How to Energize your Body, and Art of Eating, and provided discourses on Mantra & Healing, Contemplation of Tolerance. Meditation, Relaxation, and Gaman Yoga provided ample opportunities for soul searching.

One of the most exciting sessions of the Annual Camp was the Caption Speaking Contest. It is really a very simple idea but one which tests people's observation power, speaking skills, imagination and creativity. Here is how it works: A contestant from the audience is asked to come to the stage and a picture is shown to them as well as all the audience on the projection screen. Then the contestant has 2 minutes to observe the picture and speak on it. A time keeper keeps time and gives a warning when 15 seconds are remaining. Two judges award marks on delivery and content. The set of 20 pictures put together by Samaniji's were very interesting and covered a wide range of diverse subjects.



Please look closely at the picture whose speaker won the contest and see if you can come with a good speech in 2 minutes. Almost every camp attendee took part including the kids, and we were amazed by everybody's imagination and speaking skills. The contest was won by Veronique Moore. Honorable mentions were given to Anshuman Desai, Sanjay Joshi and Nidhi Sankhala on their oratory skills.

Drs Lata Joshi, and Anand & Daksha Basi conducted voluntary tests of Blood Pressure, Sugar, BMI, and Body Fat Analysis of all attendees including Samanijis. They then presented the data in separate groups for men,



women, and Samanijis. Results showed how Samanijis living style provided a healthy balance to body.

On 03/31st, Mahaveer Jayanti. Childrens put together a skit to commemorate the day.

Feedback and comments from attendees are dispersed throughout this newsletter, and provide a glimpse of how the camp's focus on mental peace, fitness, and spirituality—in other words "*mind, body, and soul*" was met.

By: Pramod Bengani & Ajay Khater

Ti dbi ts

The Problem Solving Mantra

“Om aim om namah”

- Chant everyday 9 times.
- Time: while going out of the house.
- Benefit: Success in desired work.

Test your knowledge about Jain religion

The answers of last month’s questions are as follows:

1. What is the name of first Aagama?

Answer: ACHARANGA (AYARO)

2. Who gives ‘diksha’ (initiation) to Tirthankar?

Answer: Nobody, Tirthankar himself gets initiation.

3. What is the meaning of ‘Tirth’ & ‘Tirthankar’?

Answer: ‘Tirth’ is a technical word in Jainism. It stands for ‘Monk (Sadhu), Nun (Sadhvis), Layman (Shravak), and Laywoman (Shravika)’. One, who establishes these four, is known as ‘Tirthankar’.

Questions for this month are:

1. Who is Siddha, and how many karma Siddha has?
2. What is karma?
3. What is meant by destructive and non-destructive karma?

Voice of the Omniscient

“bandh pamokkho tujjha ajjhattheva” (Acharanga)

(Bondage and liberation both are within you.)

“Tumameva tumam mittam kim bahiya mittamicchasi” (Acharanga)

(You yourself are your friend, why are searching friend outside.)

(Abstract From Jain Agamas)

Calendar of Events:

- ◆ Tuesday: 10.30 to 11.30 AM. : Sanskrit Classes
08.00 to 09.15 PM. : Masters in Jainism Classes
- ◆ Wednesday 07:15 to 08.00 PM.: Meditation
08:15 to 09:15 Swadhyaya (on Bhaktamar and Utradhyaya Sutra)
- ◆ Thursday 09:30 to 11.00 AM.: Yoga and meditation for General Health & Mental Peace.
- ◆ Saturday 09:30 to 11.00 AM.: Yoga and meditation for General Health & Mental Peace.
- ◆ Sunday
- 1. (1st and 3rd) 10:00 to 12:00 noon : Gyanshala for Children. Meditation & Pravachan for parents.
- 2. (2nd and 4th) 10:00 - 12:00 AM.: Meditation, Pravachan & Bhajan

Upcoming Work-shops:

Saturday, May 19, 2007 -“Stress Management” (11:00 to 15:30 at JVB Center)

Saturday, June 23, 2007 –“ Children’s Camp” (10:00 to 15:00 at Jain Center)

Camp feedback.....

A Do-it -Yourself Guide to Infinite Happiness :

The 2007 JVB annual spiritual camp was a do it yourself guide to attain infinite happiness. I hope the lessons learnt from the JVB Spiritual Camp, will live for an infinitely longer period of time. In 2 days the Camp brought a lot of happiness to me.

The meditation journey made us look into our inner-self. I am sure the other participants, like me, must have journeyed deep down to realize the happiness of knowing themselves; although short-lived, it is an exhilarating experience. The more we observe meditation, the more we can attain the contentment that we get by knowing ourselves. Prior to this, I did have amateur information from some books and from people that it was an amazing experience to be able to look into oneself by meditation; but it never did make much sense until I actually practiced it. Moreover, Samaniji's proficient guidance made all of us successful on this path to contentment. For the first time I realized, how it is to delve into self to find happiness and peace of mind.

The Art of Healthy Eating :

Samani Akshay Pragyaji's discourse on the art of eating gave importance to the knowledge itself rather than the source of knowledge. The secrets of healthy eating were so simply spelled-out, with examples from the JAIN SCRIPTURES, the GITA and the AYURVEDA that even a non-Hindu could attain this knowledge. The graphic presentation of the information made a deep visual impact.

The Yoga, Rejuvenation of the Mind & Body :

Samani Vinay Pragyaji and Samani Punya Pragyaji conducted the yoga sessions skillfully, without discriminating the beginners from the experts. I happened to attend the second session of the day. I realized for the first time, when I saw the first session participants come out of the room with their faces lit up, how a 15 minute, properly conducted yoga can rejuvenate the mind & body.

Fearlessness & the Unconscious Mind:

Samani Akshay Pragyaji's meditation session, of conquering the unconscious mind with Abhay (Fearlessness) was not an easy task. It began with a psychic color meditation and Samaniji then took us into our unconscious mind. I knew about the conscious and the subconscious mind, that some of our everyday actions like, driving, etc. can be easily related to the subconscious activity. But to experience the unconscious mind was a totally new venture for me. It was a major hurdle for me in the entire camp. But I would like to make it a daily activity, at least for a few minutes.

Ways to Success:

Samani Param Pragyaji's discourse on how to be successful, emphasized on how we could avoid twisting the truth or making it flexible to accommodate our weaknesses. Her points very significantly highlighted the importance of setting our preferences free and making success a tendency.

OM & Bhaktamar meditation:

The first session of the day, began with the chants of "OM" and Bhaktamar shlokas (hymns). The entire room reverberated with the chants, creating an aura of positive energy that cannot be experienced in any living room.

Gaman Yoga:

Until I observed the Gaman Yoga, I didn't realize the importance of synchronizing breathing while walking. We were taught how to concentrate on the breathing with each step and when the walk was over, it truly was a spiritual walk.

Anger Management :

This was a well-informed discourse by Samani Akshay Pragyaji, blending the scientific reasons with the spiritual reasons, on the cause and effects of anger. Now, even if I get angry, I would at least be aware of the harm that it causes on the health and maybe one day attain the '*pani rekha*'.

A Priceless Camp :

Before the camp began, I wrote a check, towards the participation fees. After the camp I realized that it was priceless.

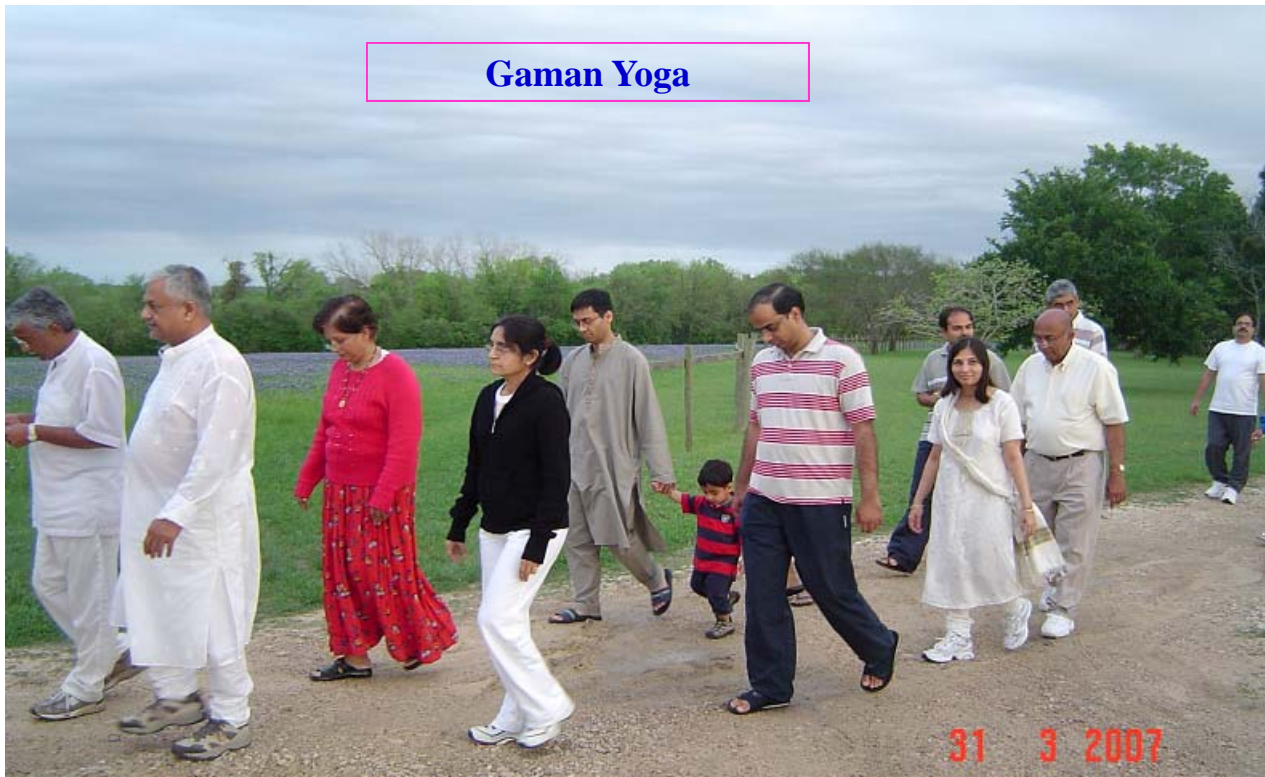
Feedback & Vote of Thanks:

The Secretary of JVB, Mr. Pramod Bengani, filled out pages and pages of comments from all participants, as they all spelled out their experiences and gave suggestions for the future JVB camps. It was quite evident that the camp was a GREAT SUCCESS! The President, Mr. Hasmukh Patel, in his Vote of Thanks expressed great thanks to the Samanijis, the committee, the participants, and the Acharya, without whom this camp would not have got the inspiration.

By: Shridhar



Gaman Yoga



Camp feedback.....

First of all, congratulations to all of you for a very successful spiritual camp. It must have taken a tremendous amount of planning, coordination and physical work. Your executive committee and camp volunteers did an exceptional job.

I left the camp charged up and with very positive feeling and with a resolve to make every effort to attend the camp next year as well as to encourage my wife and a few friends to join me. This was my first camp and I am not a regular attendee at the center. However, at the camp you all made me feel "at home". From my first conversation with Shri Parimalbhai Shah until the end of the camp, I felt very welcome. In addition, being in *Satsang* with Pujya Samaniji-s for two days is just a priceless experience. In two days, even after a brief interruption due to weather, several self improvement techniques and very subtle spiritual concepts were presented in enough detail and with tremendous clarity for one to be able to practice, which I sincerely hope to do. Although four Samaniji-s took turns to take us through the experience, they all had the same way of teaching, and I never felt that they were different. In addition, seeing the video of Samaniji's training and program in Ladnoo, India, I have developed a great appreciation of JVB's rigorous and precise training program and the Vision of Gurudev Tulsi ji and Acharya Maha Pragya ji. I will be ever indebted for the *Sneha* of Samaniji-s. Thank you everyone at JVB Houston for giving me the opportunity to be a part of a great experience

By: Anshuman Desai

Thank you so very much, this week-end experience has been an inspirational, a learning curve and an awakening my commitment definitely is to continue this new pathway, to practice all I learned, to incorporate into daily living. I have already begun to-day!!!! With Gratefulness & Appreciation to all involved.

By: Annie Browell-Hook

The weekend camp at Margaret Austin Center was a wonderful experience for me. I learned a lot in two and half days. I have now started a new vegetarian diet and I haven't missed the meat at all. I learned to cook several Indian dishes. I really loved the food we had during the weekend. The early morning yoga session and the meditation was very rejuvenating and relaxing, especially in such a beautiful place in the country. The Saminijis provided a lot of beneficial information that I will use. I was very impressed to see how much work the Saminijis have gone through to become who they are today - total selflessness. I also want to thank Ajay Khater for spending his time translating for us. Every one was so nice and I felt very comfortable around everyone even though we don't speak Hindi. I also like that the retreat is so close to Houston and doesn't take long to drive to. I'm looking forward to going again.

By: Veronique Moore

I am pleased to give my feedback. It's already a week now, since I came back from the retreat. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Indeed it was an eye opening experience for me, this has given me an opportunity to see the life from different perspective. I am trying to follow the preaching and yoga to energize mind, body and spiriting our so called busy life for which God has given all of us 24 hours without any discrimination.

The retreats like this are necessary, as they not only help us recharge but also offer an opportunity to understand ourselves better and brings us close to our soul, being away from our day today's surrounding helps considerably. I would definitely like to attend other retreats in future with my family and would recommend others too.

I would like to extend my special thanks to Samanijis for showing us the right path, ways and true meaning for Preksha and Anupreksha Dhyaan. Also my sincere thanks to all the committee members for hosting the program in such a way where no one was at any discomfort and all the needs were met. Excellent work in my opinion.

By: Jalpa Mehta

Thoughts

It is said that the more a man studies religious texts (swad-hyaya), the more will he increase his bliss. One question arises: where did the bliss come from? It is man's nature to be pleased when he gets something he wants. One who does Swadhyaya does not get any object, then where does his happiness come from? The source of happiness is not the object itself but the knowledge of the object associated with it. The man who knows the value of diamond gets far more joy when he gets a diamond than a man who does not know the value of it.