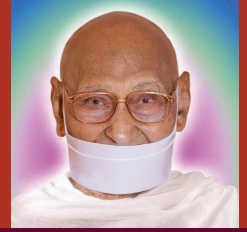




Ahimsa is Protector

Timeless Wisdom...

JVB Preksha Meditation Center Houston



Search Truth Yourself

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 7

JULY 2007



Akshay Pragyaaji



Vinay Pragyaaji

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Acharya Mahapragya: A Man of Era



Acharya Mahapragya, Jain sage, is a well known spiritual leader in India. His erudition, wisdom & compassion combined with

his pragmatic and scientific approach to spirituality, have made him a masterful spiritualist of our times.

Anuvrat Anushasta Yugpradhan Acharya Shri Mahapragya is a name in this era whose multidimensional personality and enormous contribution for the educational, social and religious cause can never be over emphasized. He has enlightened the whole World by his profound knowledge intuitive insight and wisdom.

Born in a small village of Tamkor in Rajasthan, he had unique talents in his childhood itself. He renounced family and all worldly comforts and embraced monkhood at the tender age of 10 on 29th January 1931. Mahapragya's journey to spirituality started as Muni Nathmal.

His intuitive powers and his yearning to learn more and more earned him the title of 'Mahapragya'.

From 'Mahapragya' He became Yuvacharya Mahapragya and afterwards he was declared as Acharya Mahapragya by his guru Acharya Tulsi in 1995.

Acharya Mahapragya is a good writer, scholar, poet, philosopher and the like. He has written more than 200 books.

Mark your calendar for Acharya Mahapragyaaji's Birthday
Saturday, July 21, 2007, 10 to 12 P.M. at JVB Houston Center

JAINA 2007



The 14th biennial JAINA convention was held from July 5th to July 8th at New Jersey, USA. Six Samanis from the three US centers and two from India were invited guests.

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President,
Virginia Tech University

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Contact Us
JVB Houston
1712 Highway 6 S
Houston TX- 77077
Phone: 281-596-9642
info@jvbhouston.org



Acharya Mahapragya: A Man of Era contd...

Past Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee said "I am a lover of Mahapragya's literature". He addressed Acharya Mahapragya as "**Walking Encyclopedia of Religion and Philosophy**", for his contribution to the field of literature.

Acharya Mahapragya was given the title of '**Yug Pradhan**' in 1999 as a mark of the highest honor of this era for his countless services to humanity.

For his exceptional and sustained contribution to the cause of 'Jain Yoga' the epithet of '**Jain Yoga Punruddharak**' (Resurrector of Jain Yoga) was also conferred on him.

He has been regarded as the '**Modern Vivekananda**' of India by many intellectuals including 'Rashtrakavi Ram Dhari Singh Dinkar'. To quote "Mahapragya is a Modern Vivekananda but we have not seen Vivekananda, only heard and read about him. But now we can see Vivekananda through his Vision".

Acharya Mahapragya has been called the "**Columbus of Jain Meditation**" by many intellectual commentators for his contribution in reviving Preksha Dhyana by which innumerable people have been benefited.

On 23 Oct 1999, Netherland Inter Cultural Open University adorned him with the title of D.Litt. (**Doctor of Literature**) at Netherland for his incomparable command on literature.

More over, this great saint has also been conferred and adorned with the well known and prestigious award '**Indira Gandhi National Unity Award**' for his contributions and services to the mankind.

Besides all these he was regularly bestowed with the different titles and awards of National and International level by various organizations such as **Ambassador of Peace, Lokmanya Maharshi, Brahmashri, Dharm Chakravarthi, Mahatma, National Communal Harmony Award, Mother Teresa Peace Award, Doctor of Literature** etc.

In the field of education, he has given a detailed curriculum in 'Jeevan Vigyan' (science of living). It brings about behavioral and attitudinal changes in the students.

Acharya Mahapragya always practices what he preaches. His perceptions are concerned with concrete remedies for various current problems. He has never restricted his thoughts only at the thinking level but has consummated them into actual conduct.

He is credited with discovering the lost links of meditation in the form of Preksha Meditation. In his own words '**My consciousness is free from body and mind. My spiritual practices are not the adulation of the truth but the investigation of it.... Soul is my God. Renunciation is my Prayer. Amity is my Devotion. Self-restraint is my Strength. Non-Violence is my Religion.**'

Thoughts:

The world of goodness and evil are not separate. The same man is partly good and partly evil. The tide of delusion rises and ebbs away in every man. On the basis of how many good qualities he has as compared to his bad qualities, we draw the line of demarcation between a good man and a bad man. It can not be said that the man who is good has nothing bad in him or that the man who is bad has nothing good in him. Therefore one should not despise even a bad man. Our attempt should be to help the seeds of goodness within him, to sprout.





Peace Through Dialogue



More than 5000 attendees from as many as 60 Jain Centers in USA, Canada, and other countries attended the event. Samanis from all three US centers – New Jersey (Mudit Pragyaji and Rohit Pragyaji), Orlando (Param Pragyaji and Punya Pragyaji), Houston (Akshay Pragyaji and Vinay Pragyaji), and India (Mangal Pragyaji and Pratibha Pragyaji) were present.

More than 20 Sadhus/Sadhvis and 40 scholars adorned the convention. Samanis Rohit Pragyaji and Vinay Pragyaji conducted Yoga and Meditation session each morning from 6 to 7 AM. On day-1, Samani Punya Pragyaji led the Morning Melodies and Bhakti Sangeet. On Day-2, Samani Mudit Pragyaji gave a Power Point presentation on “Source of Peace”.

Day-3 was filled with series of lectures by JVB University Ladnun Vice Chancellor Samani Mangal Pragyaji (“New Era of Education” and “Peace Through Language Management”), Samani Param Pragyaji (Peace Through Forgiveness), and Samani Akshay Pragyaji (Peace Through Anger Management).

In her closing remarks Samani Pratibha Pragyaji said that unity in Jain community is the need of the hour, and challenged all monks & nuns, and Shravaks & Shravikas to become a torch bearer of Lord Mahavira’s message. She asked everyone to think—What I can do for the Dharmasangh? What I can do for the Unity?



Samani Param Pragyaji, both congratulated and thanked the foreign Jain community for bringing the Indian culture and Jain values together. She asked the community to continue to make progress in this path.

Samani Akshay Pragyaji shared Mahapragya’s thoughts on how to make initiatives of this magnitude fruitful. She mentioned that five points—Milan, Sah-Asan, Sah-Chintan, Sah-Nirnay, and Kriyanviti— have to come together for such projects to become successful.

Samani Mangal Pragyaji said – Coming together is beginning; Staying together is progress, and Working together is success. So let us all work together to spread the message of Lord Mahavir.





Enrich Your Memory Workshop

Samani Akshay Pragyaji and Vinay Pragyaji conducted a workshop on “Enrich your Memory Power” on Saturday 06/23rd at the JVB Center. The three hour workshop covered topics such as – What is memory? How does brain work? Why do we forget? and How can I improve my memory?

Samaniiji defined memory as the retention of, and ability to recall, information, personal experiences, and procedures (skills and habits). Reasons for forgetting could be many, namely, rushing, lack of concentration, multi-tasking, stress, and imbalance of left and right brains. Samanijis shared the importance of our food habits, and its impact on memory power. Workshop also included fun exercises and provided tools of memory enhancement. Following testimonials summarize the value received by attendees.



Workshop Feedback

The presentation on “Increasing our memory power and concentration” was very informative. I usually like such session which actually relate spiritualism to our over well being. For example, you stressed the importance of meditation. Sometime we get too absorbed in the world around us that we actually forget about ourselves, our soul which is our inner being. I’ve always been inspired by the principles and practicality of Jainism. I don’t consider it as a religion but I consider it as an art of living and achieving a prospect near God. My grandfather was so much involved into Yoga that sometimes it was difficult to make out whether he’s praying to God or meditating. I wish I could become like him someday.

I was glad to see so many young people at the presentation. It seemed like our new generation is coming forward to take some steps that will certainly shape up their future towards the brighter side of our nature. I learned a lot of interesting insights like two different zones of our brain which control various actions of our body. Everything was pretty organized and went in a flow, presentation followed by some yogic exercises was a good relaxation and then that funny mind twisting game added to it more. My overall experience at the workshop was really good and I’m looking forward to attending more of such presentations in near future.

By: Vaibhav Shrivastava

First of all I would like to Thank Preksha Meditation Center, Houston for offering "Enrich your Memory" seminar. The information you provided us during the session are very helpful and easy to do in day to day life. I had a good experience by learning the yoga exercises for memory enrichment. I am glad I was able to make it for the sessions and will try to be a part of other sessions in future.

By: Vidhi Gosalia

This is very Good Work Shop for all ages. This will enhance proficiency in daily work.

By: R. S. Patel, Managing Director PKF Capital





Tidbits

The Problem Solving Mantra

“Om a-si-aa-u-sa namah”

- Chant everyday 108 times (one rosary)
- Time: if possible in the morning, otherwise any time.
- Benefit: It will calm down the family-conflict and bring about peace.

Test your knowledge about Jain religion

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

1. How can one get rid of karma?

Answer : 1) Samvar i.e. inhibition of new karma by avoiding sinful activities
2) Nirjara i.e. shedding of karma by doing spiritual activity like penance, mediation etc.

2. How many real entity (Tattva) does Jainism accept?

Answer : Nine

1) Jiva(soul) 2) Ajiva(non-soul) 3) Punya(Merit) 4) Papa (Demerit) 5) Ashrav (Influx)
6) Samvar (Inhibition) 7) Nirjara (Shedding off) 8) Bandh (Bondage) 9) Moksha (Liberation).

3. What is the path of salvation?

Answer : Right knowledge, Right belief and Right conduct –these three altogether is the path of salvation.

Questions for this month are:

1. What is the difference between ‘Arhat’ and ‘Siddha’?
2. What are Acharyas and how many Acharya’s virtues are there?
3. Who is Sadhu?

Voice of the Omniscient

“anusam-veyanam-appanenam jam hamtavvam ti nabhipatthe” (Acaranga Sutra : 5.103)

One has to suffer the result of his own deeds; so don’t wish to hurt others.

“padhamam naanam tao daya” (Dasvaialiyam 4.10)

First step is knowledge then the conduct.

Calendar of Events:

- ◆ Wednesday 07:15 to 08.00 PM.: Meditation
08:15 to 09:15 Swadhyaya (on Bhaktamar and Uttradhyaya Sutra)
- ◆ Thursday 09:30 to 11.00 AM.: Yoga and meditation for General Health & Mental Peace.
- ◆ Saturday 09:00 to 10.30 AM.:Yoga and meditation for General Health & Mental Peace.
- ◆ Sunday 10:00 - 12:00 AM.: Meditation, Pravachan & Bhajan

Upcoming Events:

Saturday, July 21st 10 to 12 PM ‘Pragya Diwas’ (Celebration of 88th B’day of HH Acharya Mahapragya ji)
 Saturday, July 21st 1 to 5:30 PM, Workshop and Power Point Presentation by Shri Ramesh Jain
 Saturday, August 04th, 1:30 to 4:30 PM, Advanced Yoga and Meditation Refresher Workshop
 Saturday, August 11th, Kids camp and Family picnic





Reply from Virginia Tech

“On April 16th, 2007 a mentally disturbed student killed 32 innocent people on Virginia Tech campus before taking his own life. We asked Acharaya Mahapragyaji to make sense of it all and he sent a letter to the university with his message. The letter was published in our May 2007 newsletter. Following is a reply from Charles W. Steger, President of the University.

We sincerely thank you for the kind messages of care and concern you sent to us. These have lifted our spirits and greatly aided us in the dark days surrounding this tragic event.

Your thoughtfulness reminds us as well of the beauty and goodness in the world and helps give us strength to go forward.

We hope you will continue to keep the Virginia Tech family in your thoughts and prayers as we begin to recover from this tragedy.

As much as we deeply appreciate each and every message, we regret that we cannot respond individually to the thousands upon thousands of cards, letters, and other expressions of sympathy and support. But, please be assured that we are humbled and thankful for this outpouring of care and the reassurance that it provides.

Again, we are most grateful for your thoughtfulness and send you our wishes for peace.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Steger
President



Kid's Special Summer Camp

JVB Preksha Meditation Center conducted a kid's summer camp under the auspicious guidance of Samani Akshay Pragyaaji and Vinay Pragyaaji. Camp was held on 07 01st from 10 AM to 1 PM. While the camp was meant for kids ages 3 to 11 years, many of the parents also joined in the session as the content was universal in nature.

Camp started with Namaskar Mahamantra and Logassa, followed by power point presentation by Samani Vinay Pragyaaji on '**Jain way of Life**'. It included - When & why of Namaskar Mahamantra; Jain festivals; Jain symbols; and other moral and practical aspect of non-violence to become a good person. Presentation was not only informative but also effective in inspiring both kids and parents. Yoga, stories and brain-storming games provided relaxation and fun to the session. Volunteers Ila Patel, Kajal Jain, Suvarna Jain, and Indu Gosar helped in the class. This camp was wrapped-up with feedback from attendees and 'Mangal Path' by Samaniji.

