

SENSE
BEYOND THE
SENSES

CHITRABHANU

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**Poojya Shree
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POOJYA SHREE CHITRABHANU

THE IMMORTAL SONG

*May the sacred stream of amity flow forever
in my heart,*

*May the universe prosper, such is my cherished
desire.*

*May my heart sing with ecstasy at the sight of
the virtuous,*

And may my life be an offering at their feet.

*May my heart bleed at the sight of the wretched,
the cruel, and the poor,*

And may tears of compassion flow from my eyes.

*May I always be there to show the path to the
pathless wanderers of life.*

*Yet if they should not hearken to me, may I bide
in patience.*

*May the spirit of goodwill enter all our hearts,
May we all sing in chorus the immortal song of
human concord.*

—Chitrabhanu

INTRODUCTION

Mrs. Indira Gandhi once said, "Muni Chitrabhanu looked very much like what one would imagine Christ to be and gave me an impression of deep peace." This view is shared by Munishree's numerous followers, admirers and friends all over the world.

SENSE BEYOND THE SENSES is a compilation of talks given by Gurudev Chitrabhanu in the United States. His lectures aim at kindling awareness of the Self within all—his philosophy is that of reverence for all life.

One of the spiritual leaders of India's four million Jains, Shree Chitrabhanu is the first Jain master to leave his country. He has travelled extensively throughout Europe and East Africa to acquaint people with the principles of non-violence and the belief that the unfolding of spiritual consciousness is the birthright of every individual.

Gurudev first arrived in the USA in 1971 as a representative of Indian spiritual culture for the Third Spiritual Summit Conference held at Harvard Divinity School and Princeton University. He has lectured throughout the USA and was the keynote speaker at the Quaker Conference on World Peace at Ithaca College in June 1974.

Shree Chitrabhanu is the Founder, President and Director of: Divine Knowledge Society, Bombay, the World Fellowship of Religions and the Jain Meditation International Centre (J.M.I.C.) in New York City under whose auspices he leads retreats and gives weekly talks.

SENSE BEYOND THE SENSES

SENSE BEYOND THE SENSES

I am very glad to be with all of you in this beautiful atmosphere and particularly out in the open. I find the setting symbolic. We all have to be more open in our lives. We are caught up in social conventions and trivial thoughts, trapped by lust and desire, confined in our minds. That is why our vision is limited. And the purpose of life, our mission, is to develop our potential fully. Unfortunately, generations of walls have been built up around us—cultural, social, sometimes religious barriers which prevent us from stretching out and reaching beyond prescribed boundaries.

Our situation is like that of a caged lion, fighting to escape, full of strength, energy, and vigour. When he begins his struggle to get out, he finds the bars too strong, and his energy gets dissipated. He loses his power. Eventually he succumbs, accepts his

This talk was the final lecture delivered by Poojya Shree Chitrabhanu in a series on psychic phenomena and extra sensory perception sponsored by the Universalist Church of New York City. The talk took place at sunset in Central Park on June 11, 1974.

defeat, surrenders to the environment, and lives like a small helpless creature. With the passing of time, he forgets that he is a lion.

This has happened to us. The soul of the human being is fire and light. It has strength. We not only have a potential to develop physical power, but we also have an inner spiritual strength which has to be nourished and sustained as well. It is always said that we need material possessions, material accomplishments, and a position in life in order to survive on that level, but we need to tend the soul too, in order to survive as a totally fulfilled individual. Then life becomes a series of beautiful meetings in the universe. While we live, we live happily. And when we leave, we leave with peace. We understand the importance of this philosophy when we see that for purely materialistic people, both living and leaving involves unhappiness. They live with difficulty, depression, and fear of defeat. When the time comes for leaving, they are sad and fearful, and they go from the world without any awareness.

There is an extra sense, beyond the five natural senses: to touch, taste, smell, see, and hear. It is a spiritual sense, a sixth sense, which gives meaning to the other senses. Without this sixth sense, the senses are senseless. When people look, they do not realize what they are seeing. When they listen, they do not understand what they are hearing. When they talk, they do not know what they are saying, and sometimes, mean, unkind words come popping out. When they touch, they do not grasp what they

are feeling. When they taste, they do not recognize fully what they are eating. All this happens because they have not developed that extra sense which adds true sense to the senses. That is why we often talk about senseless conversation, senseless observation, senseless living. When you develop your sixth sense, life becomes full of meaning. Then we say—"That person is sensible." When "sensible" is used in this way, it means "aware". Every moment, this person knows what he is doing; every hour he knows what he is going to do. He feels actions before they occur because his sixth sense tells him. This sense is in full working order, not rusted, disused, and neglected. It is shining like the sun. And when this inner sense shines like the sun, the whole world is bright.

Why do you enjoy the day? Because there are no clouds blocking the sun. When there are clouds hiding the sun, the day is dull, everything appears gray and gloomy. You do not feel like going out or doing anything, so you sit indoors drinking coffee and wasting energy. When the sun is bright, you want to go out. You cannot help yourself; something draws you out. You feel alive! In the same way, when your sixth sense, the extra sense, is shining like the sun, you feel joy in life. You do a small thing, and the act itself gives you a touch of joy. Even if you shake hands with somebody, you feel a real communication of two lives. If you look at a small flower, it stimulates your communication with the life force. You see life growing, pulsating, and blossoming. The intrinsic tenderness of life

diffuses the fragrance and colour. Even one single flower can give you illumination. You do not look upon the flower as a common object and thoughtlessly throw it away. You establish communication between life and life. When you sit on the grass, you feel the same thing. You are delicately communicating with inner life, and you are growing.

As the shell of an egg is broken and life comes out, in the same way the shell of ignorance is broken and something intelligent comes out. Unfortunately, many people never break through this shell; they die without ever being properly born. Only when you make the real break-through, see and relate to the universe with the extra sense, can you feel and experience real life.

There is a word in Jain philosophy for this sense: *pragna*. In other schools, it is called the third eye or higher consciousness. There are many different words for that special awareness, *pragna*. With *pragna* you break through ignorance, your perception is different. Things dawn on you. Everything you see becomes a means to joy, because your inner mechanism has changed gear—turning all it sees into joy. That is the art. The artist who paints a still life and transmits a living quality onto his or her canvas has this inner sense of perception. This is really ESP. It is not just reading someone's mind, or having a premonition about who is coming to see you. All these are ephemeral phenomena, merely telepathic, child's play, and happen when the mind is becoming clear. You are waiting for some mail, and the next day the mailman delivers the

mail you were thinking about. Your mind wanders to a person you have not seen for a month, and you go out on the street and bump into that person. You daydream and a certain face comes into your head and after a week that same face is introduced to you for the first time. All these things do happen. But friends, these are just *indicators* of a strength and potential we all have within us. We have to go further, to develop this inner power so that everything in life hums with happiness, peace, and serenity.

Then the essence in you will welcome any challenge. You will think: "Here I am, let anything come. I have the art of heart to transform all things and bring balance." Take this challenge now, from today and work on it. Say to yourself: "Let me use my extra sense, my inner sense, my wisdom and intelligence to turn every event into joy, into understanding, into creativity." It is a challenge. Take it up. Try only for a year and see. The wisdom of *pragna* will dawn upon you.

This extra sense requires constant use to make it work properly. If you break a hand and it is in plaster for a month, when the cast is removed and you try to stretch your hand, you will not be able to do so. Your hand has become useless. To bring it back to proper working order, you have to massage and exercise it every day for several days. Then the hand will do things for you. In the same way, people who do not use this extra sense will find it has become numb. In fact, for most people, it is so numb that they do not think they possess

it. They say, "The masters have it, but we don't." They accept that they are lesser mortals and try and make do without it. I call this *spiritual bankruptcy*—not to realize, understand, and feel the inner intelligence which is the essence of this universe.

Great teachers do not take pleasure in people worshipping them; they are not on this earth to respond to flattery. Words of praise mean nothing to them. They exist to show mankind that *pragna* is the birthright of each soul, that we all have this strength inside, that we have to exercise it. It may take some time and patience. If you use your broken hand too quickly and try to force it, you may break it all over again and be back where you started. You bring it into action slowly and gradually. We must treat this inner energy in the same way.

In the morning and in the evening, put aside some time to be alone for a while. The journey to the unknown is always made alone. You cannot go with a crowd. When you are alone, in communication with yourself, ask: "Who am I? What is my pattern and mechanism? Am I manufacturing unhappiness every day or do I have some inner art to transform unpleasant events into pleasantness? Do I have that art? If not, why don't I? Who or what stops my progress?"

The lesson to be learned here is this: that you do not attribute this lack of happiness to another person, blaming your mother, father, teacher or somebody else. Do not rest at that conclusion.

Truly, it hurts you when you settle for the belief that another person is the cause of your unhappiness. You are not really analyzing the situation, facing up to the reality. You are rationalizing *out* true understanding. You must make an effort within yourself to break your own barrier of negativism. Be positive and say, "I want to be happy today anyway. I am not going to spoil my day because of somebody else. I cannot afford to waste a single day. Each hour is precious and meaningful." In reality, each day that you receive is a blessing.

So in the morning, start with this: sit and concentrate on yourself. Feel and believe: "There is pragna inside me and I shall exercise it. I shall limber it up, take it with me and use it throughout my day, in the office, in my work, in the bus, or on the subway, with all my co-workers, friends, and companions. Also whenever someone throws negative vibrations toward me, I will burn them up and turn them into positive constructive energy." It is a very significant decision which takes much courage to make. But with your extra sense, you can conquer your inner enemies. Then you will find that your outer enemies will no longer be a trouble. When you have this inner awareness, outside influences cease to be a limiting factor. Your attitude converts them into positive elements. This metamorphosis is not achieved through intellectual gymnastics. It is done wholly through awareness, meeting all aspects of life and making them beautiful, using your extra sense to give

sense to the senses and to all things.

From now on, let us move in the world, radiating our Self wherever we go. Let us realize that our journey to this planet is to experience our Essence. Let us all understand the intrinsic meaning of this extra perceptive sense and celebrate life with enthusiasm.

PERFECTION IS IN US

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Perfection is in us. Completeness does not come from outside. To find that inner perfection you have to tune into it, then you can experience and enjoy the harmony inside. If completeness comes from outside, it is borrowed. It is not yours and will not last; it will not remain permanently, perpetually, eternally. Only that which is yours will remain permanently. That is the universal law.

You have to bring out your perfection; to do so you have to be aware of your energy. You have to use it to move in the right direction. To turn on the radio, you get up and turn the proper switch. If you stay seated in your chair and just think of turning it on, it is not going to start. In life also, we must move to bring out what is in us. We have come together for that purpose. I am helping you turn on your own radio so that your inner power can come out. Your personal music will be heard and amplified.

Talk given by Poojya Shree Chitrabhanu at Wainwright House, Rye, New York on May 19, 1974.

Now take the analogy of the diamond. No jeweler can give it the quality to sparkle. By being polished, each facet reflects light. Then the rough diamond begins to look like a real gem and everyone appreciates it. If you put a rough diamond in a ring, no one will believe that it is a diamond. They will wonder why you have put a common stone in your ring.

We are all like rough diamonds. If you polish a diamond and bring its innate quality out, it shines. If you polish your soul and remove all its impurities, gradually its innate quality of light is revealed and that light becomes a guide for further light. One door opens another door, and that door opens another.

Today we are going to meditate on completeness and fulfillment and the wholeness of life. What is completeness? Let us think of what we want in this life. Have you any thoughts about it? If you have, please share your ideas, your dreams with everyone.

(The following comments came from the audience: "To be happy." "To be free." "Contribute to the evolution of man and build a new society." "Fearlessness." "Love.")

Let us examine your thoughts. You say "to be happy." Everyone wants to be happy. Have you ever heard anyone say that he wants to be unhappy? Even those who have a tendency to feel unhappy are also seeking happiness in their unhappiness. In psychology, it is called masochism: to become unhappy in order to be happy. Even

here, the goal is happiness in a way.

You say "to be free." How can you be happy unless you are free? If you are not free you are not in a condition to enjoy happiness. A slave cannot enjoy happiness because of the restrictions on him. In order to be happy, you have to be liberated. You want freedom, but if you have fear, how can you become free? See how all these desires are connected with each other. You say different words, but there is a common source underneath. In order to be happy, we have to be free, and when we are free from fear, then we may enjoy freedom.

How can you have freedom unless the society you live in is healthy? In a narrow, unhealthy society, people around you are negative. Their standards are low in all aspects—commercially, physically, financially, intellectually, and spiritually. You cannot remain aloof, so you have to do your part to change the society. In a healthy society you have freedom, you have fearlessness, you have happiness. And to build that society you need love.

If you don't have love, you can't work for somebody. What you do solely for money isn't real work. At your office, you wait for the clock to show "five," and you hurry out. Here there is only a financial binding, no love. The mother does not tell the child she will not change his diaper past a certain hour of the day. No one pays her a salary, but the relationship between a mother and child is one of love. She would remain hungry to feed her child. She would not care for herself; she

would lose her sleep, everything, in order to make her baby happy.

Have we a mother's heart for the whole world, and do we work with the same zeal, the same feeling, the same love? If you can give this love, you will not criticize someone behind his back; you will lovingly try to correct mistakes. We need this kind of love in our life. This love is not only intellectual, but it is a feeling on the spiritual level. I call this love "faith in action". We have to understand how we can radiate this kind of love toward the society in which we live. We must not think, "I'm happy, why should I worry for the world?" We must know that if the society is not a happy one, we will not be happy. Sooner or later, the prevailing unhappiness is going to affect us all.

You might have heard the story of a lonely woman who was ill with an infection. A physician warned the village sheriff that if she were not treated with medicine, the disease would spread. No one took the doctor's advice or cared for her and gradually her body became so infected that she died. By now the germs which had killed her had spread all over the neighbourhood. An epidemic broke out. In each household, someone contracted the disease. When the woman was alive, she was despised and ignored, but when she died, all the townspeople became her partners and shareholders in the illness! The story warns us that if you don't help a person in distress, ultimately you are going to fall victim to the same problem.

We meditate and know how we can become happy, free, fearless, loving, and how we can rebuild society. The first thing we have to know is where happiness comes from. Do you think happiness comes from the accumulation of wealth or a whirl of social activities, or from name and fame? If inside there is sadness, if inside there is burning, if inside you are upset, you may move among society's elite, have name and fame and riches, but you won't be happy. You must get to the core of the problem. You are starting from the outside, but really you must start from the inside. If you are happy within, you won't care for name, fame, and other extravagant things. If they come, let them come; if they don't, let it be. I've seen happy people with few possessions, and I have seen people with a lot of possessions always dejected, brooding, and worrying about their problems. People who are happy are in touch with themselves. First of all, we have to have a connection with our own selves. That is the main thing. In this materialistic society, the most lonely and forlorn person is the materialist himself, because he does not have insight into spiritual life or inner power. He does not have a sense of these inner values. He has limited himself and lives in a narrow world. When we go inside and make the connection with our own selves, we are happy even with a few things. If more things come, they will add to your happiness; if you have inner awareness, they will smooth your need. But if you don't have inner awareness, your material things can pile up and still there will be a void, an emptiness. The

material things will fail to bring you joy.

We see here how to have the inside touch. When you sit for meditation, concentrate on your energy. Feel each part of your body. "These are fingers, these are arms, this is my head, here the whole body is vibrant." Because of "something," all these limbs are active. Go on concentrating and observing to see what this "something," is. "My body touches, my tongue tastes, my nose smells, my eyes see, my ears hear, and my brain thinks." Why is it that sometimes eyes are there but don't see, ears are there but don't hear, tongue is there but can't taste, skin is there but does not feel, and brain is there but can't think? With this inductive affirmative and deductive negative questioning, you will go inside and come to one conclusion. That is—that it is your soul that makes your body work, and because of it your senses sense, your limbs move, and you communicate. And when the soul leaves, the body starts to decay. Then the corpse becomes an object of fear. It is the same body which was loved, but when the soul has left, no one wants to be alone with it even for one night. It is now only a lifeless corpse and no one wants to have contact with a dead thing. Without the soul, we don't want the body.

We have been giving first preference to the body. Now when we see soul, we start giving first preference to soul. But we do not neglect body. The combination of soul and body makes life. A materialistic man gives first preference to the body and knows nothing of soul. A spiritual individual sees the spirit and uses body to support his spiritual growth. Then

the body becomes a temple. He uses words, mind, and senses to produce beautiful music. Every hour of the day there will be music if one is aware of one's soul.

When you are connected with your soul, bad thoughts and negative feelings won't arise. Your soul will rebuke you and tell you something is wrong. When you get that kind of advice, you won't think of doing the same thing again. Your soul is your best friend.

A spiritual person is always aware of his thinking. Worthless thoughts are not part of the composition of his life. Being in tune with everything, we can make our life a garden. We cannot live without thoughts, but we must be selective. If you want to make a beautiful garden, you have to select seeds, flowers, and bushes and arrange them thoughtfully. In the same way, let your mind select the thoughts you want. Once someone told me he did not have control over his thoughts. I asked him if he owned his brain or someone else's brain. If it is your apartment, do any worthless people enter without your permission? If it is your brain, how can unwanted thoughts come into your head without your permission? Friends, you have to realize this. Tell yourself, "I will not let any thoughts come in without my permission because I am the master of my mind, my brain."

To question every thought that comes to your mind requires complete awareness, and to be aware, you must exist in the present. If you are not in the present, unwanted thoughts will come in.

That is why all teachers say: "Be Now Here. . . ."

If you are somewhere else, either in the dead memory of the past or in the fantasy of the future, it is as if wandering thoughts know and see the open door and walk in. Once they take possession of your brain, they are difficult to drive out. One needs a lot of effort to get rid of them. Thoughts which have penetrated deep become like old tenants. They don't leave willingly. You may not like them, but they are not going to leave you. If you watch your thoughts and live in the present, your life will become different; your mind will be like a garden. Love your thoughts as flowers, and you will make progress. You have to love yourself, fall in love with your own thoughts. When you can say, "I love my thoughts, they are beautiful, they are like gems to me," when you have that kind of awareness, then every string you touch on the sitar of your mind will create melody. Life will sing with harmony.

Watch each word that comes from your mouth, because it comes from your thinking. See whether it is a healthy, beautiful word or a foul one. If you want to understand the psychology of a man, listen to his words and conversation for one or two days. They will reveal what is inside. The thoughts are the mother, and the words are children. Children often resemble the mother.

Now consider action. Action is last because it shows the inside desire or outside longing. According to our thoughts and words, our behaviour follows. Behaviour is nothing but a by-product of

thought. You may compel a person not to be violent, and he may sit calmly, but you cannot stop the inner turmoil. Once Mahavir told King Shrenik that even the King could not stop the butcher Kalchowrik, who killed five hundred bullocks every day, from killing animals. The King took up the challenge and said that he could stop the butcher for twenty-four hours. Then he sent for the butcher, put him in a basket, and had him lowered into a dry well so that he wouldn't get a chance to kill anything. The next day, the King told Mahavir that the biggest butcher in the land had not killed anything for a whole day. Mahavir smiled and asked the King to ask the butcher what he had been doing while he was in the well. The King put the question to the butcher, and the butcher answered that he had been killing oxen in the well. He said that he had made an ox out of clay at the foot of the well and chopped off its head saying, "One is killed." He had made another and had said, "Two are killed." In this manner, he had passed the day. "What else could I do in the well?" he asked. It was a game; but the game involved emotion, so it was true to life. Mahavir told the King and the others: "If you don't change a man's thought pattern, you can't change his action pattern."

If you change yourself by external actions and your thoughts are the same, there will be no change in you. That is why nothing is greater than meditation. In meditation you are in tune with yourself, with your own music, with everything that you are

doing and thinking. You bring change in your life from inside to outside. The outside change without the inside change can only be temporary. But when you come to your center and start watching yourself, then your progress starts. To do this there are three kinds of meditation.

The first is observation of your thoughts, called "surfacing". To use an analogy, you are sitting in your apartment at a window from which you have a commanding view of the street. Observe the street from your position. Cars and trucks and people keep coming and going. Everything is passing, but it doesn't bother you because you are on the thirtieth floor and are just watching the whole street. The traffic and people are going on and on. Suddenly you spot an acquaintance or friend in the crowd and your attention focuses on that person. Up to now, your attention was on the whole street and you did not pay keen attention to any particular thing. If you had paid too much attention to the traffic you would not have been able to have peace of mind. So you just let the traffic come and go and you remain uninvolved. But now if your friend is there in the crowd, your attention is drawn there. What do you do? You send someone down to ask him to come up. Your friend comes up and you sit and talk together while the traffic moves below. Occasionally, your eye falls on the traffic, but your conversation goes on. You are in tune with one another. Let the traffic pass. In this type of meditation, you let the traffic of your thoughts pass, let it come and go at the back of

your mind. Many things are buried inside us. When you were not aware, as a child in school, or in your business life, many thoughts went deep into your subconscious and still lie buried or hidden there. When you sit for meditation, you will notice that thoughts will come. When you are busy, thoughts don't come, but when you sit quietly, they come rushing. That is the first sign that you are becoming aware of them. The thoughts are always there but only come to the surface because you are still. Let the traffic come and let it pass. Don't pay heed to it. All of a sudden you find a good thought, an inspiration, and you catch it. Be one with it. When you are in tune with that beautiful inspiring thought, other lower thoughts will automatically pass by. Meditation with something pleasant is the first way. Something beautiful comes to the surface and you are in tune with it while other things pass. Hidden thoughts will come out and you will feel an unusual lightness and buoyancy.

Another way of meditating is to choose an object or idea to which you respond with feeling: a flower, the moon, a beautiful picture, a calm statue, or peacefulness. Looking at the flower, you notice that it is beautiful; there must be a sense of beauty in you because you see that beauty. If you don't have the sense of beauty within you, how can you see the visible token of beauty? The flower is fragrant and there is something in you which enjoys its fragrance. By connecting yourself with the flower, you feel the universal connection. You are not alone. You are connected with the universe and

you can see and feel oneness with the flower, the plant, the moon, or anything you have selected to focus your attention on. Or, if you take an idea, go with it and see its correspondence within you.

In the third type of meditation you concentrate on your breath. Your breath is your life. You can live without most things, but you cannot live without breath. You can fast for a long time, but you cannot stop breathing for even ten minutes. With half closed eyes, concentrate and flow along with your breath and gradually go inside. There will be times when you are completely in tune with yourself. In that peace, you will find unity of body, mind, spirit, and universe. Everything becomes one. You feel whole; no pieces, no fragments, no compartments; the fullness of yourself is complete unity.

I have shown you three examples of meditation. According to your disposition and according to your need, inclination, and metabolism, you may select one of the three. In that way you will be able to glide into meditation.

ESSENCE AND SPIRIT OF JAINISM

ESSENCE AND SPIRIT OF JAINISM

It is customary with us to commence our day and our work with a brief prayer and I will do so now.

मैत्रीप्रमोदकारुण्यमाध्यस्थ्यानि ।

सत्त्वगुणाधिकक्लिश्यमानाविनयेषु ॥

Maitree Pramoda Karunya Madhyasthyani ।

Satvagunadhik-Klishyamana Avinayeshu ॥

The prayer just recited is a prayer offered by the Jains. I have prayed that our conduct in life may be guided by four principles:—*Maitri*-Amity, *Pramoda*-Appreciation, *Karunya*-Compassion and *Madhyasthya*-Equanimity.

Amity, Appreciation, Compassion and Equanimity—I shall endeavour to explain these later in this talk.

Today man lives in a world which is full of strife and frustration. Commercial values keep gaining prominence. Men seem to be full of greed, envy and pride. Not only do we try to keep up with the Joneses but we try to reach out for their throats.

Talk given by Poojya Shree Chitrabhanu at the Second Spiritual Summit Conference in Geneva on April 1, 1970.

There is a sense of isolation within human beings, and hate-inspiring ideologies keep gaining more ground. Our different faiths have a common aim—to make us realize the essential brotherhood of man. In practice they make us more aware of the divisions among us.

Why have we all met here today from the four corners of the earth? Not to argue dogmatically over differences, but to break the barriers of racialism and sectarianism and to learn something from one another; we have come to see the same object from one another's point of view so that we can understand one another better and help one another in solving our problems. The goal for each of us is the same, though the approach may be different. Argument will not take us any nearer the goal. I am here reminded of an incident which will bear out my point.

At an eye clinic where many patients were waiting for treatment, there were four who were blind. One of them inadvertently touched a window pane and importantly announced to the others, "This is a window pane; it is red. My son told me so."

Another cut him short, with the assertion that it was 'green' and cited with equal emphasis the authority of a brother. The other two contradicted them, each with a different colour and different authority, but with the same querulousness and the same conviction. The storm in the tea cup was quelled by another patient who explained to them that the panes were multi-coloured, much to the

amusement of everybody.

A trivial quarrel, no doubt, and perhaps a trivial incident to be related here. But I ask you, have not men of different religions argued with the same triviality, the same intolerance and the same vehemence, over the centuries? Each has the conviction that what he was told by someone who could see clearly must be true. One cannot blame him for his absolute faith in his mentor, but surely there was room for others to be true? And what is the result of this dogmatism? Chaos and conflict, discord and disillusion. You will all share my feelings when I say with the poet:

*And much it grieves my heart to think
What man has made of man.*

Jainism is not a sect or just one more conflicting ideology—it is a way of thinking and living.

The greatness of Jain philosophy lies in the fact that its teachings work for “the greatest happiness of the greatest number,” not only of men, but of all living beings, under all circumstances.

Its philosophy is not essentially founded on any particular writing or external revelation, but on the unfoldment of spiritual consciousness, which is the birthright of every soul. Mere words cannot give full expression to the truths of Jainism which must be felt and realised within.

The Jains are the advocates of the development of man in all aspects: physical, mental and spiritual. Through knowledge and endeavour the individual develops and unfolds the potential within him.

The word Jain is derived from the generic term

“Jina.” A person who conquers his lower nature, passion, hatred and the like and brings into prominence the highest qualities and achieves the state of the Supreme Being is called a Jina. There have been several Jinās and there can be many more in the future. A Jina who is a guiding force to his followers, renews principles of religion and regenerates the community, is called a “Tirthankara”.

Adinath who dates back to the beginning of the world was the first Tirthankara and founder of Jain religion according to Jain philosophy. Today in the twentieth century we live in the era of Bhagwan Mahavira, the twenty-fourth and the last Tirthankara. Bhagwan Mahavira was born in 598 B. C. in modern Bihar, lived up to the age of seventy-two years and attained *Moksha*, salvation, in 526 B. C. He revived the Jain philosophy about 2500 years ago. Since that time Bhagwan Mahavira has been the spiritual guide of the Jains.

Even now about four million Jains of India practise the preachings of Bhagwan Mahavira and it is the duty of their mentors to guide them in practising its spirit in this rapidly changing world. “What then, is the essence, the spirit of Jainism?”

Jainism, viewed as a whole, rests on the four pillars which are *Ahimsa*. Non-violence, *Anekantwad*, the Theory of Relativity, *Aparigraha*, Non-acquisition and *Karma*, Deeds or Action.

Ahimsa—Non-violence

Bhagwan Mahavira has said:

सर्वे जीवा वि इच्छन्ति जीविषं न मरिज्जिउं

Savve Jeeva Vi Ichhanti Jeevium Na Marijjium

“The instinct of self-preservation is universal. Every animate being clings to life and fears death.”

The universe is not for man alone, it is a field of evolution for all living beings. ‘Live and let live’ is the motto of Jainism. Life is sacred, not only irrespective of caste, colour, creed or nationality, but it is sacred to all living beings—at all levels—right down to the tiny ant or the humble worm.

There is not an inch of space in the Universe where there are not innumerable, minute living beings. The entire Universe is full of living beings.

A man cannot even sit quietly and breathe, without killing and harming life around him.

Then the question will arise, ‘How can a man live in this world without taking life and thereby committing violence?’ Life in this manner would become impossible.

An answer is given in the *Dasavaikalika Sutra* as follows:

जयं चरे जयं चिट्ठे.....

Jayam Chare Jayam Chitthe

“Carry out all your activities but with great care.” It demands constant vigilance. Where an action is performed with due care not to hurt anyone, no violence is committed. The emphasis is on the word “Care.”

As long as man lives as a member of society, he owes a great deal to the society in which he has to live.

Man in his desire to continue his life so that he may do the highest good while living here, is obliged to destroy life; but the fewer and the lower the

forms of life he destroys, the less harmful *Karmas* or deeds he generates. This leads to strict vegetarianism.

The doctrine of *Ahimsa* is not merely a matter of profession, but of constant, scrupulous practice to every Jain.

The practice of *Ahimsa* is both an individual and a collective virtue. The principle of *Ahimsa* has great potential significance, because it is basic in concept and universal in its moral principles.

Ahimsa is full of positive meaning, ranging from an act of simple kindness to a comprehensive outlook of universal fraternity.

A great Jain scholar of the 10th century, Acharya Hemachandra, said in the *Yogashastra*:

आत्मवत् सर्वभूतेषु सुखदुःखे प्रियाप्रिये ।

चित्तयन्नात्मनोऽनिष्टां हिंसामन्यस्य नाचरेत् ॥

*Atmavat Sarwabhooteshu Sukh Dukh Priyapriye |
Chimtayannatmno-nistham Hinsamanysaya
Nacharet ||*

“In happiness or suffering, in joy or grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self. We should therefore, refrain from inflicting upon others such injury as would appear undesirable to us, if inflicted upon ourselves.”

Ahimsa, Non-violence in Jainism is not only physical non-violence, but it is non-violence also of speech and thought.

One can harm others by harsh speech or even by uncharitable thoughts and therefore this is also violence and has to be abjured.

The practice of non-violence does not merely

stop at the devotee himself following the principles of non-violence, but it goes further in as much as no violence shall be commissioned or consented to by an honest devotee of non-violence.

Anekantwad,—the Theory of Relativity.

Gunratna Suri, the commentator of a Jain work on "Comparative Philosophy" says:

"Although the various schools of philosophy, through sectarian bigotry, differ from and contradict one another, still there are certain aspects of truth in them which would harmonize if they were joined into an organic whole."

The age-old saying of a coin having two sides is well known to this congregation. Jainism, however, makes this one of its basic principles. It requires that any object, situation or controversy should be looked at from all aspects.

If an individual, a community or nation allows its vision to be narrowed by turning a deaf ear to the opinions of others, it is definitely heading for self-destruction.

Jainism promises to reconcile all the conflicting schools, not by inducing any of them necessarily to abandon their favourite standpoints, but by proving to them that the standpoints of all others are tenable. They may represent some aspect of truth which can, with some modification, be represented. The Integrity of Truth consists in this very variety of all its aspects.

This philosophy makes the Jain universal in his outlook and ever ready to understand the nature of other systems of theology.

Aparigraha—Non-acquisition.

Has it not been said, "It is easy to free oneself from iron chains but not from the attachments of the heart?"

What are, these "attachments of the heart?" They are things that you desire so much that you spend all your energy in acquiring them and when you have acquired them, you get so attached to them that their loss would render your life most unhappy. The principle of non-acquisition teaches us not to give too much importance to acquiring worldly things—a house, a car, all kinds of comfort and not to value them so much that their loss would mean the end of the world for us. Every man needs things to make life comfortable. Jainism does not enjoin a layman to renounce everything—that is only for the *Sadhu*, the ascetic. But Jainism does enjoin even a layman to set a certain limit to his desires and wants so that he does not keep on acquiring and accumulating and in the process deny others their needs.

The ideal is to cut his requirements to the bare minimum.

This non-acquisition or non-possession should extend even to attachments to human beings—to our dear ones. It would be unnatural for a parent not to love the child, but there should be no possessiveness about this love. It is this possessiveness which is called attachment, and one should try not to be bound by it.

How strange is the mind of man! It does not appreciate what it has and hankers after what it has

not. Neglecting the light of the soul that burns within it, how long will it grope in the darkness of the world without—chasing shadows that ever elude him?

In this matter of how possession leads to pain, let me cite here how a *Muni* was given a practical lesson by a number of stray dogs. The *Muni*, engrossed in his philosophical thoughts of acquisition and renunciation, was passing through a street. He was suddenly disturbed by the savage barking of dogs.

He saw that a dozen dogs were chasing one dog who was running away with a bone in his mouth. Soon they caught up with him and mauled him. Bleeding from the wounds, the dog dropped the bone and left in peace. No sooner had he dropped the bone than another picked it up, and he too met with the same fate. So the chase for the bone and the consequent punishment went on.

Reflecting on this ugly incident, the *Muni* realised the truth. So long as the dog clung to the bone, he had to bleed for it; the moment he gave it up, he was left in peace.

“Does not man bleed mentally and spiritually to gratify his lust for acquisition and would he not attain serenity if he renounced it?” thought the *Muni*.

It is only human to desire, but the noblest desire for man should be to attain a state of “Desirelessness” when he can accept things as they come to him, and can look on indifferently when they leave him.

This ancient principle of limited possession is extremely significant and valuable in the context of the economic conditions prevailing in the world today. The object is to secure equitable distribution and economic stability for society. A social order based upon this principle of limited possession will certainly prevent unnecessary accumulation of wealth and its inseparable counterpart, poverty and wretchedness. It will lay the foundation for the welfare of all society.

The principle of *Aparigraha*, non-acquisition can guide every individual, society or nation in its positive efforts to enhance the happiness of mankind in general.

“The Law of Karma”—Deeds or Action

Destiny is shaped by deeds done during the previous birth as well as deeds done during this life. We enjoy the fruits of those good deeds now, during our present life. We should be careful not to fritter away or misuse these fruits. Rather we should think of moulding our destiny for the next incarnation, ever progressing in our spiritual evolution. It is easy to waste these fruits and so much more difficult to utilise them in shaping our future destiny.

Jainism explains joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity, and differentiation in physical, mental and spiritual abilities through the theory of *Karma*. It explains the problem of inequality and apparent injustice of the world.

Karma can be understood as that substance which we continually absorb as the result of our bodily and mental activity. We produce *karma*

through all our daily activities. Different kinds of activity produce different kinds of *karma* which may ripen either immediately or after some time, or even in one or another of our subsequent existences.

And yet, Jain philosophy does not view the soul as hopelessly condemned to act and react upon the consequences of its earlier deeds, as if it were an automatic machine beyond all responsibility for its moral attitude and action. On the contrary, it clearly states that the individual is capable of free will. It emphatically declares that the soul is invested with the freedom to exercise its own resolution.

Acting under its own free will, it can break the heaviest fetters of this *Karma*. It implies that to a considerable extent, by positive application of one's own free will, the soul is indeed the lord of its own fate.

The law of *Karma* should not be thought of as limiting human capacity. On the contrary, this dynamic truth should inspire a human being to mould and shape his future with positive thought and action.

Good deeds that spring from love, compassion, charity, hospitality and selfless service secure the basis of happiness; whereas bad or undesirable deeds will sow the seeds of future sorrow.

Life existed before this birth and will continue to do so after death. It is here, on this shore, and will be there, on the opposite shore, too. In between is the flow of birth and death. Because of *karma* and attachments the soul has to revolve in the cycle of birth and death.

Bhagwan Mahavira while explaining the true nature of the soul said :

“The nature of the soul is like that of a hollow gourd; it keeps afloat. But when this hollow gourd is filled with clay, then, even though its inherent capacity is to keep afloat, it will sink.

Similarly, a soul polluted with violence, falsehood, dishonesty, intemperance, anger, pride, hypocrisy and greed becomes heavy; inspite its original nature of being able to keep afloat, it sinks to the bottom.

When the gourd is free from the clay, it will gradually recover its natural tendency to keep afloat. So, too the soul. Were it to get rid of the eight vices by acquiring eight corresponding virtues: non-violence, truth, honesty, temperance, forgiveness, modesty, sincerity and generosity, it would unburden itself and regain its natural virtues of lightness and volatility.”

Having explained the four pillars of the Jain philosophy, I shall now go back to the prayer in which I have asked our conduct to be guided by Amity, Appreciation, Compassion and Equanimity.

Amity: By Amity we mean attainment of a mentality which wants to be friendly with and bear goodwill towards one and all.

Just as the dry bed of a lake is criss-crossed with a myriad of cracks, because it is devoid of fresh water, similarly a religion that is not sweetened with the milk of human kindness is soon weakened by the cracks of internal dissensions.

Mere austerity may shrivel up a man's nature.

Even as he does penance and practises renunciation, his heart must be full of love.

What supports this wide world? Surely not the much-trumpeted deeds of the blustering heroes, but the silent sacrifice of the humble servers of humanity—little deeds of amity as the one in the following story.

A young Brahmin trudging along the way was startled by a scream of terror. A Harijan girl—an outcaste—was bitten by a cobra. Failing to get anything to check the venom from spreading through the blood stream, he cut the holy thread with his penknife, tied it tightly around the foot and saved her life.

A cry of sacrilege was raised by the orthodox. Could anything be more sacrilegious than the holy thread being tied around the foot of an untouchable?

The answer given by the youth was very brief, but to the point. What could be more humane than the saving of a human life with a holy thread?

A humanitarian approach to life is holier than the mere wearing of a holy thread. Religion has to be practical and not theoretical. It should pulsate with life.

“The aim of religion is to establish peace and harmony both at home and in society.”

The spirit of Amity, if understood well, can bridge the gulf between one religion and another as between one nation and another.

Appreciation and Compassion are in a way two other aspects of Amity.

Appreciation: In this world we come across those

who are better than we are in many different ways. Too often do we see the sad spectacle of men filled with envy for those who are more fortunate than themselves. Our prayer teaches us that we should learn to appreciate those who act better than us, admire them if they are worthier than we are, whether or not they are of the same religion, race or country. If this were practised, much of the envy and jealousy we find in this world would be removed.

Compassion: Compassion should govern our attitude towards those who are less fortunate than we are. It should extend to the erring and even to the criminal.

After all, since Jainism believes that living beings often suffer because of their past misdeeds, does it not behove a true Jain to extend compassion rather than criticism to one who pays for his misdeeds of the past?

Equanimity is more of an introspective virtue. It governs our attitude towards ourselves, irrespective of the world around us. We achieve a certain balance of mind that remains unruffled in spite of the vicissitudes of life. Whether the world treats us well or ill, whether we reap a reward for our good deeds or not, whether the pathless wanderers pay heed or not to the path we try to show them, we should maintain a serenity of mind that is bound to bring contentment in its wake.

When a tiny pebble is dropped into the still waters of a pool, soon it is filled with ripples. It is in the very nature of water to break into ripples. But

when the pool is frozen, even if you drop a handful of pebbles in it, there is hardly any disturbance in its smooth, hard surface.

The mind reacts to circumstances by breaking into ripples of disturbance. One would say it is only natural. Perhaps, but is it inevitable? When the mind is trained to resist stoically all outward disturbances, it will acquire a calm that nothing can ruffle.

I hope I have succeeded in making it clear that these four principles, put into action guarantee the highest degree of happiness and peace within the whole brotherhood of all living beings. I wish they would be universally adopted and followed for the benefit of all living beings.

This, then, is the basis of Jain philosophy.

It is a philosophy which can be practised by a follower of any religion.

It is indeed very difficult to distil the elusive essence of religion so as to use it in your daily life, but he alone is truly religious who carries out the precepts of his religion in all his dealings with the world.

We have spoken at some length trying to explain the fundamental principles of our religions and how the essential elements in all are very similar.

Coming to the problems that face us, they, too, are essentially the same: the menace of destructive weapons of war, the malaise of racialism, the problem of economic imbalance and the unrest among our youth.

After having discussed *Ahimsa*, non-violence,

what is left for me to add about missiles or bombs ? If to a Jain, the killing of a worm is an act of cruelty, it would be superfluous to talk about the atrocity of wiping out the human race! So too, we have already covered the ground for the malaise of racialism. If we recognise the fact that the soul is the same, whatever outward form it may be given, where then is the reason for racial prejudices? In *Aparigraha*, Non-acquisition, lies the solution for the unequal distribution of wealth. There need not be any 'ism' about it. Jainism is not like any of the modern 'isms.' 2,500 years ago Bhagwan Mahavira gave us the antidote to unequal distribution of wealth in His Doctrine of *Aparigraha*, Non-acquisition.

The last problem—Youth Unrest—calls for a more detailed analysis. I will endeavour to show how we may deal with it.

What is the relevance of religion to Modern Youth?

Is not the modern youth justified in demanding to know why so many crimes have been committed in the name of Religion? He has read in his history books lurid accounts of persecution and atrocities by religious fanatics in all parts of the world. He is fully conscious that it is might, and not right, that rules the world. He sees the truthful and the just be-laboured by the selfish and the unscrupulous, and no gods rush down to their rescue in heavenly chariots as one is told in legends. How can he then believe that "God is in His heaven—all's right with the world?" He sees for himself that all's wrong

with the world, and he doubts whether there is a God in heaven or anywhere and if He exists, whether He is as Omnipotent as they make Him out to be.

Jain philosophy, with its theory of *karma*, can explain to him that suffering—of an individual or a nation or a race—is the result of misdeeds of the past, that there is a causal relationship between the woes of this life and the evil done during an earlier incarnation. Therefore, he cannot maintain that there is no justice in the world. As for religious persecutions that fill him with revulsion, the tolerance and broad mindedness that Jain philosophy emphasises might persuade him to modify his outlook on religion. Amity and Appreciation would not be incomprehensible to him, for youth is not wicked. He may have become a sceptic, a cynic, even an atheist, but he is not wicked. If approached with sympathy and understanding, he will respond to the treatment we give him. Think of the stress and strain of modern life. The speed, the noise, the hectic bustle of today has robbed the young man of the opportunity to move in life with measured strides. The machine has taken the place of hands. The bubbling, creative energy of youth was formerly channelled into constructive crafts, be it spinning, weaving, pottery, metal-work, wood-work or carving. Today, that energy is turned into destructive channels.

In what way can religion help to divert this flow of energy once again into constructive channels? The simplifying of religion may do it. Stripped of

rituals, prejudices, superstitions, even separated from the noble but complicated philosophy that is the bedrock of religion—the simple essence of religion: Friendliness, Sympathy, Tolerance and Justice, would be understood by youth and not be rejected summarily as “humbug” or “hocuspocus,” or “beyond my comprehension.”

If homes and teaching institutions would sow the seeds of religion as suggested here, emphasising particularly the oneness of all religions, we may be reasonably optimistic that this early initiation to religion will bear fruit in good time.

The aim of all religions and philosophies is to seek the freedom of man from the bonds of ignorance and blind faith, from the meshes of prejudices and superstitions and rituals. Religion means freedom. Only when man rids himself of his mundane bonds, does he free himself from the bonds of *karma*. Just as gold attains its pristine purity only when the dross is separated from it, so, too, the soul only after it has shed all desires and *Karma*, will attain a state of blissful tranquillity and immortality.

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