

## **Bhagwan Mahaveer- the saviour of this planet Earth**

**In a nutshell: Teachings of Mahaveer given 2600 years ago  
are solutions to all World Problems**

### **Life of Bhagwan Mahaveer**

- ☆ Place of Birth : Kundalpur- (Kundagram) Bihar
  - ☆ Parents : ThrishlaPriyakaruni-King Siddharth
  - ☆ Born as a prince, first 30 years as a prince but was indifferent to pleasure of the royalty like the relationship between lotus leaves and water droplets on them;
  - ☆ Renunciation at age of 30, Life as an ascetic for 12 years - in deep meditation in caves, forests and lonely places;
  - ☆ Attainment of Perfect knowledge (Keavalagyan) at 42;
  - ☆ Preaching principles at different places for 30 years;
- Samavasaran** : Samavasaran is a hall where every being was entitled to go there and the message of Ahimsa ; Establishment of Sangha- fourfold federation - Male ascetics, Female ascetics, Male householder, Female householder
- ☆ Liberation-at Pawapuri
  - ☆ Mahaveera was the 24th Thirthankara; he propounded the Thirth; His Thirth is called 'Sarvodaya' Thirth i.e., religion that preaches the welfare of all living beings;

## **Bhagwan Mahaveer's principles (Teachings) as solution for world problems :**

In Bhagwan Mahaveer's teachings (Principles) which are even relevant today ,for a simple satisfactory solution to all world problems. A better understanding of His principles is a must for present day world threatened by various dreadful problems like Terrorism, Consumerism, Global Warming, Environment & Health issues ;

### **PRINCIPLES**

#### **Right Faith, Right knowledge and Right conduct-**

Rathnaththray -three jewels- Very much essential for conquering delusion, attachment and aversion which are the factors polluting the human mind and consequently create all sorts of problems in the world; right faith, right knowledge and right conduct are also essential for the liberation of the soul.

Bhagwan Mahaveer's Five fundamental principles(vows)

#### **📁 Ahimsa (vow of nonviolence).**

The protection of life in all forms; any harm to any being living in/on earth, water, fire, air and plant, animals and human is completely avoided in thoughts, words and actions; even if non- living objects ( paintings, sculptures, drawings and similar objects representing living beings if treated, handled with lust, aversion or hatred then it also considered to be himsa in thought and action ) sinful thought is as much sin, as the act itself;

📁 **Satya ( Vow of Truthfulness)**

Any feeling of love or hatred or anger or desire etc; should not prompt one to tell lie or even to hide truth; silence or even lie is preferred in situation where violence or himsa has to be prevented; truth should be accompanied by harmlessness;

📁 **Achurya or Astheya (Vow of non-stealing)**

One should not desire for or should not touch or pick up the things that belong to others; even the very thought of appropriating the property belonging to other people by fraudulent means is stealing;

📁 **Brahmacharya (Vow of celibacy)**

For lay people this principle ordains a person to restrict his relationship to his wife only; coveting other women brings disrepute and invariably ends up in wickedness and shame; for an ascetic '**Brahmacharyam**' means immersing himself in thoughts of his soul's true attributes; for an ascetic the liberation is considered to be His maid; this vow has to be followed absolutely and there cannot be any relationship with women; he has to give up any kind of lustful feelings towards the opposite sex;

📁 **Aparigraha or Parimithaparigraha (vow of non-possession of worldly things or limited possession of worldly things)**

A lay man has to limit his possession of articles of personal use; but for an ascetic this vow has to be observed absolutely by complete renunciation of external possessions including money, assets, servants, properties etc and internal possessions such as anger, egoism, greed, like, dislike attachment, aversion, passions etc., **The root cause of all**

**problems, catastrophic events of the present world is due to non-adherence of this principle;**

### **Mahavratha and Anuvratha**

These vows or principles are called

**Mahavratha** (greater vows) - for ascetics who observe the above five vows very strictly and completely.

**Anuvratha** (smaller vows) - for house holders who follow these vows in lesser degree.

### **Importance of principle of Ahimsa**

#### **Bhagwan Mahaveer's Path is**

#### **Path of Non-violence and Compassion for all living beings;**

Every living being is potentially divine;

Ahimsa - non-violence is the most important principle of all; If it is not followed, other principles become inadequate, incomplete and it leads to himsa (violence).

All religious precepts, vows, practices are linked with the doctrine of Ahimsa

Never insult or harm any living being in thought, word and deed.

Self-restraint of senses, non-possession of worldly things or limitation to possession of worldly things are vital for practicing ahimsa, for peaceful living and for world peace ;

Ahimsa is the only choice for peaceful living for the individual and for the community of nations.

## **FIVE GREAT CARES**

### **Ahimsa principle is strengthened by Five great cares-**

Care while walking-not to harm any living being -Iryasamithi

Care while talking- not to hurt any living being (humans by speech, one- sensed , organism by vibrations - Bhshasamithi

Care while taking food- care to avoid foods containing organisms - Esanasamithi

Care while keeping and taking things- not to harm living organisms- Adana nikshepanasamithi

Care while attending nature calls- not to harm living organisms on the ground- Vutsargasamithi

## **THREE CONTROLS**

### **Ahimsa principle is defended by Three controls - to keep in check the means of violence**

Control of thought- by thought one should not harm others

Control of speech - by speech one should not hurt others

Control of action- by action one should not harm others

## **THREE LIMITATIONS**

### **Ahimsa principle is safeguarded by Three Limitations to activities to avoid violence and to promote ahimsa**

Limit of travel,

Limit of consumption of articles,

Shunning those activities which are not required, even inadvertently

### **Anekantavadha (non-one sidedness - plurality of viewpoints)**

Salient, important aspect of Bhagwan Mahaveer's teachings - concept of Anekantavadha also known as Syadvadha

- central to the idea of tolerance,
- mutual respect to the views of others;
- accommodative tendency that gives room for reconciliation,
- mutual understanding,
- toleration and promoting brotherhood ;
- The principle of Anekantvada is a perfect a solution for world problems as it recognises and gives importance to the views of others;
- The Anekantvada forbids to be dogmatic and one-sided in our approach.
- It preaches us a broader outlook and greater open mindedness, which is more essential to solve the conflicts taking place due to the differences in ideologies and faiths;
- The theory of many-sidedness (anekanta) is an antidote to war among nations, fight among communities, clashes among religions, feuds among persons, misunderstanding among relations etc;
- Bhagwan Mahaveer's anekantvad or syadvad principle is the best medicine for curing all the ills of the world;
- It is a wonderful doctrine -giving respect and consideration for the views of others;

- it promotes friendliness between foes;
- It promotes accommodativeness;
- Anekant principle of Bhagwan Mahaveer gives right to a person to select and follow his/her own values.

### **Karma theory**

Any action, by thought, word and deed attracts karma towards the soul and binds with it; a soul bound by karma loses its true nature; accordingly the person behaves; substances living and non- living are independent; none depends upon the other; every substance has freedom of its own not to be interfered by any external substance; Complete removal of karma leads to liberation of the soul.

### **Bhagwan Mahaveer's principles (teachings) as Solutions to world problems**

#### **Major world problems-and their causes**

1. Violence in the form of terrorism and wars
2. Religious fanaticism
3. Problem of Conflicts in Ideologies and Faiths
4. Exploitation and corruption
5. Communalism
6. Caste distinctions
7. Economic inequality
8. Over population
9. Sense of insecurity and unequal treatment on the basis of caste, creed and colour, Class-conflicts
10. Climate change and environmental degradation ; ecological imbalance

**Reasons for all problems mentioned above are due to -**

- fear and greed, it is the sense of insecurity which causes fear and vice versa;
- disproportionate distribution of wealth; economic inequalities;
- one-sided view; non accommodativeness for views of others,
- pleasure in harming; pleasure in indulging unlawful activities;
- imposing one's ideology on others; insecurities and frustrations create group conflicts;
- greed for power and possession

These problems are becoming furious day by day and thus disturbing the peace and harmony of human society.

**Solution found in Bhagwan Mahaveer's preaching to solve world problems**

The above mentioned world -wide basic problems of present society may be solved through the three basic tenets of Bhagwan Mahaveer :-

- Non-violent method of opposition;
- positive approach by understanding the problem and determination to resolve employing the anekantha principle;
- sharing the wealth with the needy (limited desire for wealth)

### **Non-violence (Ahimsa), respect to all living beings**

Non-attachment (Aprigraha), - Limiting the possession and sharing of wealth

Non-absolutism (Anekantha). Accepting and practicing the principle of -non-one sidedness -plurality of viewpoints,

### **Environmental degradation:**

Another world -wide problem that threatens the very survival of life on earth is degradation of the environment. Reasons: changed life style endangering the environment; absence of eco-friendly behaviours; unconcerned about the well-being of other forms of life; lack of equilibrium or imbalance of nature and pollution of air, water etc. **environmental degradation is concerned not only with human beings and their environment, but with animal life and plant-life as well.**

### **Solution for protection of environment through Bhagwan Mahaveer's doctrines**

Rampant degradation of our environment and natural resources due to aggressive consumption based development Again ahimsa, parimithaparigraha (limitation to possession of wealth), are the solutions; this ecological problem may be solved by following the principle of non-violence.

Bhagwan Mahaveer had shown that not only human and animal beings, but there are earth bodied, air bodied, water bodied, fire bodied living beings besides vegetable kingdom; these are all sentient and living beings. To pollute, to disturb, to hurt and to destroy them is a sinful act. Hence one should apply the principle of ahimsa while handling them;

Bhagwan Mahaveer's principle provides a new voice for the development of eco-friendly behaviours, compassion which are the key factors for the protection of life; protection of environment; Thus the observance of non-violence paved a way for the protection of ecological balance. Again hunting of animals goes against the principle of non-violence and it is one of the seven serious offences or vices, declares Bhagwan Mahaveer. This paves the way to protect wild life; thus Bhagwan Mahaveer's principle of Ahimsa emphasises a mutual sensitivity toward living things, a recognition of the inter-connectedness of life-forms, and a call to respect and protect living systems;

The principle of Ahimsa, detachment or restricted wants for worldly things, giving room for consideration of plurality of view - points or non-absolutism (anekanta) all together form an antidote to war among nations, fight among communities, clashes among religions, feuds among persons, misunderstanding among relations etc; Bhagwan Mahaveer's anekantvad or syadvad principle is the best medicine for curing all the ills of the world; Mahathma Gandhi , Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King and other great personages who toiled for a happy world, a world bereft of war and indiscriminatio n, in one way or other carried forward the principles of another human being who was born about 2600 ago, and elevated himself by his own efforts as the greatest person in the history of mankind; h e is none other than Bhagwan Mahaveer

If mankind observes these principles of Bhagwan Mahaveer, peace and harmony can certainly be established in the world; Bhagwan Mahaveer laid the foundation for popularising the concept of ahimsa or nonviolence. First, he laid down the principles of fearlessness and then of truth.

Where there is parigraha or possession, there is fear. Where there is aparigraha, or no possessions, there is no fear.

**Hunger and Poverty** - reasons: Problem of Economic Inequality and Consumer Culture possessiveness, amassing wealth blindly without any concern for the well-being of fellow men; greed, unrestrained thirst for sensual pleasures; unlawful use of wealth for accumulation of more wealth. The root of violence is attachment or will for possession

**Solution:** Bhagwan Mahaveer's preaching is 'limit your want'. "Nature can fulfil one's needs, but not greed" -Mahatma Gandhi. accumulation of wealth on the one side and the lust for worldly enjoyment on the other, are jointly responsible for the emergence of present-day materialistic consumer culture. Material possession as well as in the modes of consumption have divided the human race into two categories of "Haves" and "Have Nots".

### **Violence and terrorism**

**3A's- Ahimsa, Anekanta and Aparigraha** of BhagwanMahaveer' philosophy can provide answers to many modern day problems. Bhagwan Mahaveer's Philosophy of Ahimsa (non-violence) and Aprigraha (limiting possessions) is a sustainable solution for violence and terrorism. If we want to save humanity from the class-conflicts we will have to accept self-imposed limitation on our possessions and modes of consumption.

That is why Bhagwan Mahaveer has propounded the vow of complete non-possession for monks and nuns and vow of limitation of possession for laities. The property and wealth

should be used for the welfare of humanity and to serve the needy he prescribed the vow of charity; violence cannot be justified as a virtue in any case;

The principle of non-violence -Ahimsa is the solution here; In our times Gandhiji also planned a non-violent method of opposition and applied it successfully. Similarly Mandela, and Martin Luther King followed the principle of non-violence in their struggle against oppression; anekantvant is the solution here; “If you want to fight, fight against your passions. It is much better to fight with one’s own passionate self than to fight with others, If someone is to be conquered, it is no other than your own self. One who has got victory over one’s own self is greater than the one who conquers thousands and thousands of warriors . Equally true is the fact that a householder cannot be without possessions. Bhagwan Mahaveer found a solution. If you cannot give up possessions, observe restraint. This is the solution to today’s problem.

### **Conclusion**

Jainism, from its inception, accepts the oneness of human race and opposes these man made divisions of caste and creed. Bhagwan Mahaveer declared that ‘human race is one’. He further says that there is nothing like inferiority and superiority among them. All men are equal in their potentiality. None is superior and inferior as such. It is not the class but the purification of self or a good conduct that makes one superior; Jaina Acharyas hold that it is not the mutual conflict but mutual co-operation, which is the law of peaceful living.

## **Bhagwan Mahaveer and His Philosophy of Ahimsa**

### **Introduction:**

Ahimsa (non-violence) and its practice is universal, non-denominational, and has no boundary of time, place, culture, geography, weather, politics, power, position or status in society. It is unconditional and free from caste, creed, race, gender, age or any other human-made or natural differences.

Though modern civilization is characterized by a concern for fellow human beings, the foremost problem of our age is growing violence, both in thought and action. Terrorism is becoming common place and, ironically enough, respectable at some places. With religion getting separated from, and spreading commercialization getting assimilated in daily life, we see that in the present day world killing has increased many-fold and sensitivity to life, whether animal or human, has declined in proportion. The need, therefore, is that this trend should be reversed and man should be made more humane not only in relation to man but also to other living creatures. Ahimsa is the central concept of Jain philosophical and religious tradition.

Mahaveer, the last Tirthankara (Propounder) of Jainism, identified it with “Dharma” (the duty) itself and declared “Ahimsa Parmo Dharma” which means “Ahimsa is the highest or ultimate duty”. Ahimsa is the core principle in the teachings of Bhagwan Mahaveer which maintains equality of all souls. It firmly believes that like human beings, all other living beings have the same soul. The only difference being that of the level of development of consciousness.

Vardhaman Mahaveer was born in Kundalpur-(Kundagram) Bihar to King Siddhartha and Mother Trishala on

Chaitra Shukla Traiodashi in 599 B.C. He was a senior contemporary of Buddha and preached the art of living through the vrata culture and the art of embracing death when it strikes through the great vow of Sallekhana. Born as a prince, he lived a life of realization and remained detached and absorbed in contemplation of the self. He renounced the world at the age of 30 and became an Arihant and attained omniscience at the age of 42. He preached the nirgrantha dharma (Jain dharma – one without bonds, Etymologically ‘Nir’ means ‘without’, ‘Granth’ means ‘knot, ties, attachment’, Bhagwan Mahaveer preached to remain unconditional and have no tight knot with this material world till the age of 72 and attained Nirvana in 527B.C. His greatest teaching is the all encompassing principle of Ahimsa i.e., non-violence. Bhagwan Mahaveer, the 24<sup>th</sup> Tirthankara was the greatest promoter and crusader of Ahimsa. He was an embodiment of Ahimsa.

It is through the practice of non-violence he became a conqueror of his inner enemies of anger, ego, deception, and greed (Jina, Arihant). After which he became an omniscient (kevala-jnani) and revealed that all living beings desire to live, none wants to die. He revealed that violence to any creature is violence towards one’s own-self.

“Respect of life wherever found” and principle of reciprocity i.e. “we should do to others as we would like to be done by or treat others as we want to be treated by others”, inevitably becomes the most important and fundamental duty, as defined in Jainism.

Moreover, merely abstaining from the killing of a living being is not enough for a practitioner of Ahimsa. Along with this, he is expected to engage in activities which help in saving and improving the quality of life of every creature in the universe.

### **The three great principles taught by Bhagwan Mahaveer**

The three great principles practiced and preached by Bhagwan Mahaveer are:

- Ahimsa - Non-violence
- Anekanta - Non-absolutism
- Aparigraha - Non-possession/Non-attachment

As you sow, so you reap-sums up the Karma theory in a nut shell and so the three A's - viz Ahimsa, Anekanta, Aparigraha become indispensable more so in modern times.

Ahimsa-nonviolence, Anekantavada-multi faceted viewpoint and Aparigraha non-possession/non-attachment are the three cardinal principles and pillars of Jainism. Ahimsa or non-violence does not mean non-injury alone in its wider sense, it means compassion towards one and all. Jainism says that in essence we are all one but this one underlying unity manifests in many diverse forms, and so Jainism advocates looking upon others as we look upon ourselves. Mahavira said that whom you desire to hurt, abuse, kill, insult or injure is your own self, and so non-violence is the highest virtue. When you can't give life to anyone you have no right to take their life. Anekantaradh is regard for others' view points. Reality is multi-faceted and should be looked at and revealed from different standpoint. Anekantavada is non-violence in thought. Six blind men fight over their understanding of an elephant to be right, but none is completely right, Anekantavada comes at hand and enables them to understand that each is partially right. The conventional wars that are taking place around the globe have their cause in the silent wars. Anekantavada inculcates a spirit of tolerance and enables us to live in harmony. Aparigraha i. e. non-attachment and non-possession is the heart and soul of Jainism. Desires are unlimited as space and the wants

increase with every gain. The worldly people believe that by fulfilling their desires they can become happy, but happiness eludes them at every step. Real happiness is in contentment and non-attachment. A person may possess nothing but still be attached and on the other hand a person may possess everything and still remain detached. Aparigraha is an attitude of the pure self. It doesn't matter as long as the boat is in water or we are in the world but when water enters the boat or we are materially inclined that it cause bondage the fruit of which has to be reaped by none other than the doer. As you sow, so you reap-sums up the Karma Theory in a nut shell and so the three A's - viz Ahimsa, Anekanta, Aparigraha become indispensable more so in modern times.

### **What is AHIMSA ?**

Ahimsa means the absence of the desire to injure or kill and a disinclination to do harm. It also means both mental and physical concern for the welfare of others; humans and nonhumans.

Ahimsa should be an everyday experience. However, for many people, violence is an everyday experience. They would not think twice about arguing with someone or even having a fight. Many do not care how or where their food comes from—they seem to be angry all the time. A non-vegetarian diet is the norm and vegetables the exception. The message of Ahimsa is quite remote from their day-to-day life. Many of these people have not experienced genuine love—ever. To them, it is normal to argue and quarrel. And the modern world of greed and materialism exacerbates this violence. According to Bhagwan Mahaveer, Ahimsa is the atmaa (soul) — it is the only vehicle (means) to cross this ocean of Samsara (worldly existence).

Prof. Gary Francione of Rutgers University defines ahimsa as “staying in equanimity” and notes that any step away from equanimity is himsa or can be understood as walking towards himsa. Himsa (violence) refers to any action accompanied by the giving of pain or rise of passions, whereas ahimsa is about not inflicting harm and pain to one’s self or others in thoughts, words, or actions.

In fact, animals also possess a moral and spiritual dimension. A popular Jain tale relates to an elephant, the leader of a large herd, caught in a raging forest fire. Seeking shelter, all animals crowded around a lake. After a while, the elephant raised one leg to scratch himself, and a small hare/rabbit swiftly occupied this tiny vacancy. Feeling deep compassion for the small animal, the elephant kept his leg raised for more than three days until the fire died out and the hare/rabbit departed. By then, his leg had gone numb; he toppled over, unable to set his foot down and walk again.

Maintaining purity of mind until he died, the elephant severed all ties with his animal destinies. He was later reborn as Prince Megha, son of King Srenika of Magadha, and became an eminent Jain monk under Bhagwan Mahaveer. This is the essence of Ahimsa in Jaina philosophy—it is compassion, empathy, a profound wisdom that a common soul pulsates in all beings, making each equally worthy of life, and denying the human-made hierarchy that sets a human or more-powerful mammal above a creature that it has the power to kill. Ahimsa is not a passive or mechanical act of merely refraining from an act of violence; it is a proactive affirmation of divinity in all creation. According to Jainism, true religion is that which sustains all species of life and helps to maintain harmonious relationship among them.

## **Ever increasing violence**

Before we understand the principle of Ahimsa let us try to understand the modern context that is full of all kinds of violence. We see today that 'himsa' i.e., violence has become the order of the day. The newspapers and the T.V channels are full of news of all kinds of violence. We see that there is no value for life. There is so much of bloodshed everywhere and mankind is torn apart that too in the name of religion. Although all religions have professed that all life is sacred and violence of any form is violence, we are not paying much heed to this great virtue of non-violence. The entire planet is bleeding. Man has become so insensitive to the sufferings of others.

Inspite of the technological advancement, humanity is at crossroads. None is secure, fearless, humane or selfless. This is the price man is paying for the excessive materialism. Before we understand the great principle of non-violence let us examine briefly the kinds of violence rampant today in the society. The youth of today need to be aware of these so that he/she can give them up and adhere to the practice of non-violence and pay a fitting tribute to Bhagwan Mahaveer and free the society from all kinds of violence and save the planet.

## **The Root Cause**

The ever increasing greed to control and possess the limited resources of the planet is the main reason for man taking to different kinds of violence. The root cause of violence is desires. As desires grow, four passions grow. The four passions are anger (krodha), pride (mana), deceit (maya), greed. Together they are called as moha (delusion), raga (attachment), dvesha (aversion). As passions grow one keeps away from his own bhava-prana i.e., conscious nature and harms the dravya-prana i.e., the vitalities (those necessary to sustain life) of one-self and of others.

Thus violence to others is first violence towards one's own-self. Depriving the soul of its true spiritual nature of peace, enlightenment, forgiveness, compassion, kindness, etc. and causing karmic bondage through violent, sinful activities is violence towards one's own self.

### **AHIMSAK:**

Ahimsa is not only the supreme religion or virtue but is also the only motto or identity of a spiritual person. Without the practice of ahimsa, one cannot be a practitioner of spirituality. The one who follows ahimsa (including householders and mendicants, sadhu, sadhvi, shravak and shravika) is called ahimsak. An ahimsak not only believes in ahimsa but also actively and proactively practices and lives by ahimsa in his daily living, moment by moment. An ahimsak is always mindful of others well being, practices ahimsa with utmost care and due diligence, and strives to find an alternative to minimize himsa (violence) continuously, in all circumstances and ways. For an ahimsak, ahimsa is the only way of life and he constantly strives to avoid harm to any living being by thoughts, speech, or actions. Such a code of conduct can then be called the Ahimsak Way of Life, or AWOL. We all should try to achieve this way of life. Then the world will be a garden of peace and happiness.

### **TRAITS OF AN AHIMSAK**

An ahimsak will be marked by the following traits:

1. Love
2. Honesty
3. Humility
4. Joy
5. Peace
6. Patience
7. Kindness
8. Goodness
9. Faithfulness
10. Gentleness
11. Self-control
12. Soft spoken

### **Freedom of choice:**

All jivas (life forms) have in common four essential traits; these include: hunger, reproduction, sleep, and fear. Only humans

have the freedom to make a choice of what kind of food to eat (with minimum of himsa) or what kinds of clothing to wear (again, with minimum of himsa). All nonhuman life forms don't have as much freedom of choice. They operate in these four essential areas based on natural instinct and need

An act of himsa (violence) by a jiva can be divided into two categories; the act is either a natural habit, or instinct, such as a carnivorous animal (predators) killing other jiva for food, or a choice, in which the chooser and doer of himsa is generally a human being. In this world, human beings cause the greatest himsa because they choose to cause himsa. They are not required or forced to commit himsa through either habit or natural predisposition. Humans have choice to refrain from killing. Generally, only humans hoard, enslave others, engage in wars, destroy the environment, kill and rape for pleasure, commit assaults, terrorize others, or participate in trafficking of other beings. No other species does such things and thus cause such massive amounts of himsa, all by choice. We humans have the freedom to make the right choice, to take the right path. But often we fail to do so.

### **Dimensions of Non-violence**

Ahimsa is a universal principle. Its application in various fields is not a difficult mathematical problem, it takes one's willingness to change and have a disciplined life. Ahimsa can be applied in almost all the fields; be it spiritual, psychological, environmental, etc. and in day to day life.

### **Teachings of Bhagwan Mahaveer**

Bhagwan Mahaveer experienced and envisioned the subtlest form of nonviolence and thus made it the very heart of all his doctrines, ethics, and spiritual practices. He defined ahimsa/

nonviolence as follows: “I so pronounce that all omniscient lords of all times state, speak, propagate, and elaborate that nothing which breathes, which exists, which lives, and which has any essence or potential of life, should be destroyed, or ruled, or subjugated, or harmed, or denied of its essence or potential.” He further said, “That which you consider destroying or disciplining or harming or subjugating or killing is [like] yourself. The results of your actions have to be borne by you, so do not destroy anything.”

The above doctrine, preached by Mahaveer, is based on the eternal truth that “the nature of all living beings is to be happy, peaceful, and enjoy bliss.” Put another way, nonviolence is our very nature. The first global survey of deaths by suicide, homicide, and war, conducted by the World Health Organization also concludes that “violence is a preventable disease.”

### **THE NET BENEFITS OF OBSERVING AHIMSA**

Practicing ahimsa leads to:

- **Respect for all life forms (democracy of existence),**

Destroying any life in any form is the action against the principle of life. To cease the actions of violence, the synchronization of mind and body is necessary. Everything is depending on the state of mind and the intention of hurting or committing violent acts. The mere thought of injuring is also a moral evil, influence by impure state of mind. Everybody is morally responsible for the evil actions, they have committed. In a way or many they commit evil actions through instigation. In this way, the principle of Ahimsa naturally implies purity of thought, word and deed and is a result of universal love and sympathy towards all living beings, however low they may be in the scale of evolution

- **Respect for others' views (democracy of views and beliefs),**

Truth is complex and many sided. It is necessary to look every situation and condition from different angles in order to understand the truth underlying its different aspects. It can make us realize the view-points of others. The firmness of a person to one particular angle or view-point denying looking at the various angles or view-points of a situation will make him fail to comprehend the essence of truth in its varied aspects. We should not impose our own thoughts or views on others without respecting their thought or views, but should try to reconcile with the thoughts or view-points of others. We have no right to discard the view of others as totally false based on a certain angle or view point. This theory, if earnestly put into practice, will remove our short-sighted, selfish and partial outlook. It preaches us how to remove disharmony and establish concord and harmony in life, by being tolerant in our outlook and attitude towards others.

- **Non-attachment (absence of hatred and attached love),**

Peace means soul devoid of passions and desires. It is a state of tranquility of mind. It is the state in which one rests in its own nature, undisturbed by external forces. Peace can be explained into two forms-inner peace and external peace. Inner peace is the mental peace attained by the self and the external peace is the peace that remains in the whole society. No external peace can be established without achieving the inner peace of the self. Thus, forgiveness is the foremost moral virtue, because it is the indispensable need for establishing the external peace of the society. Inner peace is regarded as the state of the renunciation of all passions, desires and hatred. External

peace is regarded as the state of termination of wars, conflicts, confusions, hostilities among the individuals, social groups and ethnics because of the inequality, slavery, injustice, hatred and exploitation among them.

- **Limits on possessions (democracy of possessions),**

Desiring more than the reasonable needs is worldly attachment. The desire to acquire the necessary things in large quantity due to excessive greed, expressing wonder at the prosperity of another becomes insensible. It is depriving other of their legitimate rights. It should be well controlled. Attachment to worldly things is violence. It is a source of evil. The mind is exaggerated by passions, greed and delusion when the worldly attachment is beyond control and unreasonable. To protect the excessive possession of property beyond the necessity, human beings are likely to commit violence and involve in falsehood. In order to pursue right conduct and non-violence, attraction towards worldly possession must be avoided. To remove such kind of evils and illusions we should voluntarily decide upon the extent of property and wealth. It will take one to realize the perfection of the soul.

- **Inter-dependence on and hence respect for all (bound together as we are, no one survives independently)**

The practice of compassion and reverence towards all living beings involves not only caring and protection for others but also sharing with and service to others. It represents internal and external security, friendliness and forgiveness. The concept of non-violence includes the regard to caring for nature and the environment. If one wishes to have pleasure and earn good karmas, one must

be compassionate towards all living beings. As ecology is the interrelationship between organisms and their environments under natural conditions, any abuse or violence against this relationship is bound to react against humans.

Bhagwan Mahaveer preached, “Nonviolence and kindness to living beings is kindness to oneself. Thereby one’s own self is saved from various kinds of sins and resultant sufferings and is able to secure one’s own freedom.”

### **Conclusion**

The outward aspect of environment may be pollution, environmental degradation, climate change, global warming, natural disasters and all kinds of abuse but the inward aspect which causes all these is a mind devoid of ahimsa and compassion. It is the violent ideas in the minds of people that cause destruction in the world. A compassionate mind is spiritual, eco-friendly, humane, selfless, truthful, and pure in thought, word and deed and is devoid of lust and greed. On the other hand a polluted mind which is devoid of wisdom and compassion is materialistic, greedy, lustful, untruthful, and selfish and it ruthlessly takes to exploitation of natural resources. Man alone is responsible for sustaining himself as well as all others.

In essence non-violence (Ahimsa) in all its meaning and splendour is the core of Bhagwan Mahaveer’s teachings. Ahimsa is the way to achieve other attributes of a real human being. Ahimsa is the remedy for all the present ills this world is experiencing.

Reference book shodhganga – chapter 9

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**Prize Winners of III Mahaveer Award for Essays**  
**Level- I English**

S.No	Name	Class	School	Prize
1	R.Nikita	VIII	BMPB Girls Higher Secondary School.	I
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3	S. Nithya	VII B	Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Padappai.	III
4	R. Lathika	VII B	„	C
5	S. Sudharshini	VII	Sri Venkateshwara Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Royapettah.	C
6	K. Harish Kumar	VIII C	„	C
7	S. Jeevitha	VII A	MBN Government Girls Higher Ssecondary School, Chromepet.	C
8	S. Nagammai	VIII B	Shri Anand Jain Vidyalaya	C
9	B. S. Monica	VII C	Gurushree Shanti Vijay Jain Vidyalaya, Vepery.	C
10	S. Monika	VII A	Kennedy Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Rettanai.	C
11	M. Shwetha	VII S	„	C
12	J. Saloni	VIII A	Agarwal Vidyalaya	C
13	K. Karthiga	VII A 1	MBN Government Girls Higher Ssecondary School, Chromepet.	C

**Level- I Tamil**

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3	S. Prakash	VIII	Government Higher Secondary School, Avalur.	III
4	E. Malathi	VIII	„	C
5	S. Eswari	VII B	Municipal Higher Secondary School, ZaminPallavaram.	C
6	Y. Hena Fathima	VIII B	Maria Matriculation Higher Secondary School.	C
7	P. Thulasi	VIII D	Municipal Higher Secondary School, ZaminPallavaram.	C
8	G. Vinodhini	VIII G	Jaigobal Garodia National Higher Secondary School, Tambaram.	C
9	A. Ramya	VII	Panchayat Union Middle School, Sithampoondi.	C

S.No	Name	Class	School	Prize
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11	K. Pushpalatha	VIII B	Government Higher Sec. School, Avalur.	C
12	R. Thillainayagi	VI	Panchayat Union Middle School, Sithampoondi.	C
13	S. Priyatharshini	VIII B	SJNS jain Matriculation Higher Secondary School.	C

### Level- II English

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3	M. Yogapriya	XI A	MPB Girls Higher Secondary School	III
4	J. Eljo	IX A	Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Padappai	C
5	V. Abisha	IX B	AnnaiVelankanni Matriculation Higher Secondary school.	C
6	Srividhya	XI A	AnnaiVelankanni Matriculation Higher Secondary School.	C
7	A. Jayaram	XII	Government Higher Sec. School, Avalur.	C
8	B. Ragavi	X	AIMS CBSE, Cheyyar.	C
9	M. Shruthi	X A	AIMS CBSE, Cheyyar.	C
10	R. Poornima	X B	Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Padappai.	C
11	H. ZoharaJabeen	X A	„	C
12	U. Abinaya	XII D	RKM Sarada Girls Higher Secondary School, T.Nagar.	C
13	Bhavana S. Jain	XI A	Sri Sanathana Dharma Matriculation Higher Secondary School.	C

### Level- II Tamil

S.No	Name	Class	School	Prize
1	R. Banapriya	XI B2	Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Padappai.	I
2	Akshaya T	XI A	Singaram Pillai Girls Higher Secondary School.	II
3	S. Devika	XI C2A	Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Padappai.	III
4	V. Prema	XI C2A	„	C
5	K. Elangovan	XII	Government Higher Sec. School, Avalur.	C
6	L. Jency Mary	X A	Sri SushwaniMatha Jain Vidyalaya.	C
7	M. Saloni	XII B	MPB Girls Higher Secondary School	C
8	S.Divya	XII B	MPB Girls Higher Secondary School	C

S.No	Name	Class	College	Prize
9	A. Abinaya	IX D	Municipal Higher Secondary School ZaminPallavaram.	C
10	T. Thenmozhi	IX D	..	C
11	S. Divya	IX	..	C
12	B. Harssitha	X A	AIMS CBSE	C
13	R. Sophia Grace	XIA	Sri RKM Sarada Girls Higher Sec.School	C

### Level- III English

S.No	Name	Class	College	Prize
1	Mary Susan George	I B. Ed	Lady Willingdon Institute of Advance Study in Education, Triplicane, Chennai.	I
2	S. Divya	B.Com Hons.III	Guru Nanak College, Velachery, Chennai.	II
3	B. Aiswarya	UG	Krishna Teja Pharmacy College, Renigunta, Thirupathi.	III
4	S. Tamilarasi	B.Tech IT III	GanadipathyTulsi's Jain Engineering College, Vellore.	C
5	Anjana S kumar	B.Sc. Che.III	Vidyasagar Women's College, Chengalpattu.	C
6	Shreiya Venkatesan	UG	Ethiraj College for Women, Egmore, Ch.	C
7	Heeral Bhandari	UG	MOP Vaishnav College for Women, Nungambakkam, Chennai.	C
8	C. Megala	UG	GanadipathyTulsi's Jain Engineering College, Vellore.	C

### Level- III Tamil

S.No	Name	Class	College	Prize
1	T. Kalaiselvi	UG	Dharmamurthi Rao Bhahadur CalavalaCunnan Chetty's Hindu College, Pattabiram,Chennai.	I
2	P. Monisha	B.Ed	Lady Willingdon Institute of Advance Study in Education, Triplicane, Chennai.	II
3	D. Tamilselvi	UG	Ganadipathy Tulsi's Jain Engineering College, Vellore.	III
4	D. Meena	III MCA	..	C
5	J.Deepalakshmi	MCA II	..	C
6	R. Sheeba	B.Sc	Micro Biology Asan Memorial College of Arts & Science, Medavakkam, Chennai.	C
7	M. Soniya	UG	Dharmamurthi Rao Bhahadur CalavalaCunnan Chetty's Hindu College, Pattabiram,Chennai.	C
8	A.Karthikeyan	B.Ed	Bhavani Ammal College of Education, Cuddalore.	C

## QUOTES OF BHAGWAN MAHAVEER

- Silence and Self-control is non-violence.
- Every soul is in itself absolutely omniscient and blissful.  
The bliss does not come from outside.
- Have compassion towards all living beings.  
Hatred leads destruction.
- Respect for all living beings is non violence.
- Fight with yourself, why fight with external foes ?  
He, who conquers himself through himself, will obtain happiness.
- It is better to win over self than to win over a million enemies.
- The soul comes alone and goes alone, no one companies it and no one becomes its mate.
- Kill not, cause no pain. Nonviolence is the greatest religion.
- In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief,  
we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self
- The greatest mistake of a soul is non-recognition of its real self and can only be corrected by recognizing itself.

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