



Remembering Guruji

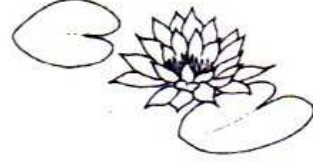
SIDDHACHALAM

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Frontispiece: Guruji, early 1980s, Ohio, rendered in sketch



In Sanskrit, *Gu* means darkness, *ru* means light. One who converts darkness into light is Guru. *Ji* is an honorific suffix.

Guruji redefined Jain monkhood. Perhaps, he returned it to those glorious days when the message of the *Jina* had not splintered into various traditions and Jain monks were also exalted mystics who easily traversed space, time and lives. He was certainly the first modern monk for our times.

He taught to all the gospel of *ahimsa* – freedom from violence of thought, speech or actions, of *anekantavada* – freedom from the belief that truth as perceived by oneself was the whole truth, and of *mantra* and meditation – “watch and awaken yourself,” he said.

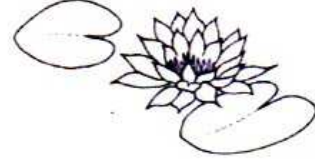
This little booklet begins with Namokar Mantra and its meaning as understood by the editor.

It thereafter collects some of Guruji’s observations and random talks previously published in various Siddhachalam materials. These are bookended, first by the personal recollections of a follower who Guruji tasked to make final edits to his timeless book, The Song of the Soul, then by an essay on Guruji’s life story, and at the end, by an essay on Siddhachalam.

In making this booklet, we are deeply mindful of the task before us – of putting together his works and memories – and of how slight is this baby step. May he guide us.

Jaipat Singh Jain
August 10, 2019





Namokar Mahamantra

Namo arihantanam
Namo siddhanam
Namo aayariyanam
Namo uvajjhayanam
Namo loye savva sahanam
Eso pancha namokaro
Savva pava-panasno
Mangalam cha savvesinh
Padhamam havai mangalam

I bow to the Arhats (the Jinas, the Tirthankars), who conquered all their inner enemies (such as attachment, anger, conceit, deceit and greed), attained omniscience, and taught us the path to moksha – freedom from the cycle of life and rebirth into an everlasting state of infinite consciousness, infinite energy, and infinite bliss attained by them

I bow to the Siddhas, all who attained moksha

I bow to the Acharyas, exemplars of mastery over their inner selves

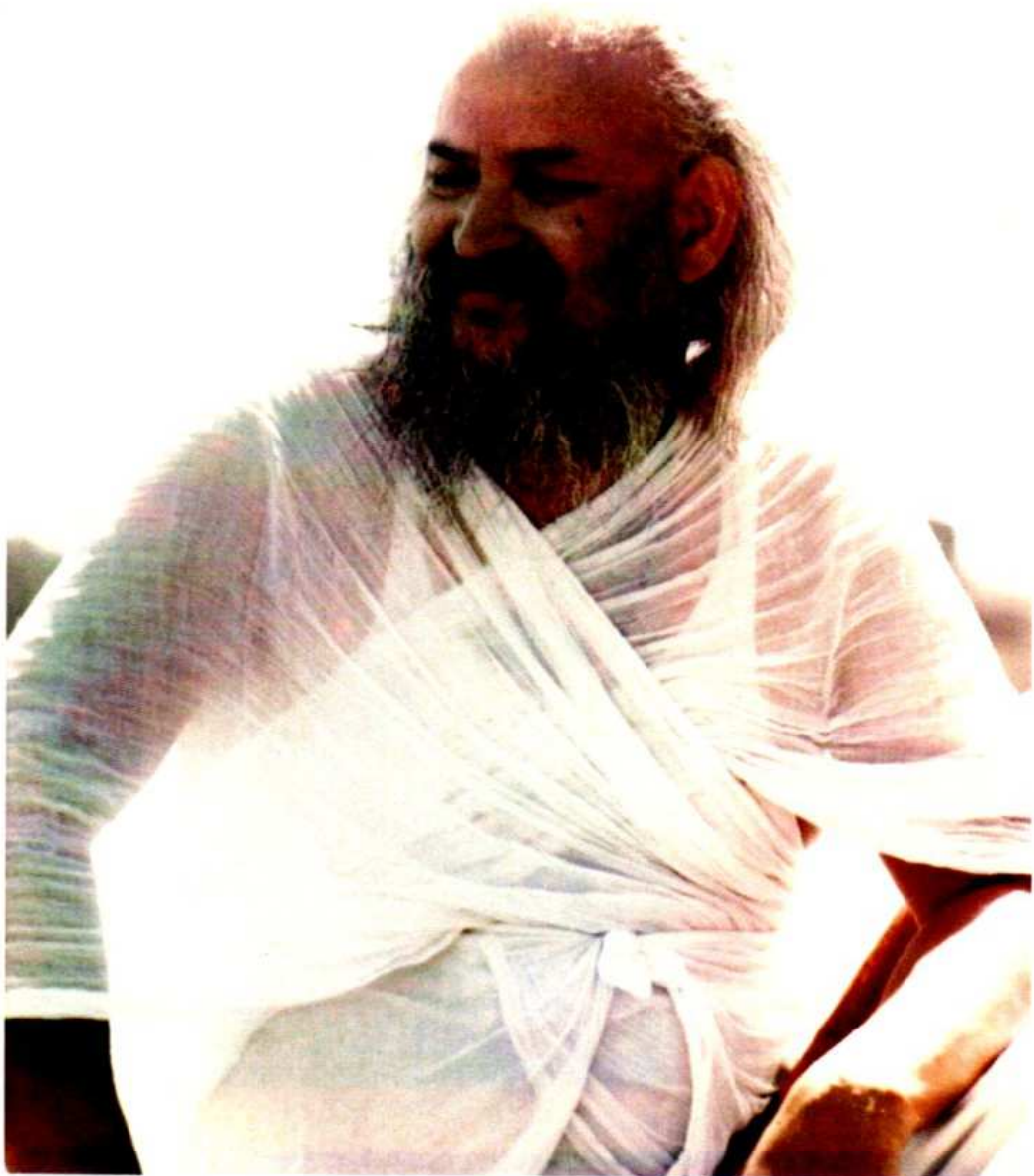
I bow to Upadhyas, who give us the gift of learning

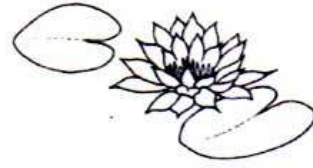
I bow to all Sadhus, spiritual practitioners in pursuit of moksha

This five-fold salutation destroys all sins and evils, and of all auspicious mantras, is the first and foremost.[∞]



[∞] Guruji's book, *The Song of the Soul*, reveals secrets of how practice of Namokar Mantra destroys sins and evils. A copy of the book is available at Siddhachalam.





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My Experiences with Acharya Sushil Kumarji

By Mitch Hall[∞]



Guruji with campers and staff at Siddhachalam summer camp, 1987. The author of this article is the tall, bearded man standing to the left in the back row. The author's 7-year-old daughter is the girl with light blonde hair, crossed arms, blue top, and white pants, fourth from the left in the front row.

In the summer of 1982, I met Guruji at the Sivananda Ashram Yoga Ranch in the Catskill mountains in New York where he led his annual camp for children and families. This was the year before Guruji would found the Jain ashram, Siddhachalam, in the Pocono mountains of northwestern New Jersey.

During that summer of 1982, I was in a transition period in my own professional career that had, up to that point, involved teaching at secondary and university levels, including two years with the Peace Corps in Africa, advising international students, book editing, and peace and environmental movement organizing.

[∞] Mitch Hall lives in Oakland, CA. He served as copy editor of *The Song of the Soul*. In 2013, the Indian Board of Alternative Medicines awarded Mitch a Ph.D. *honoris causa* in recognition of his lifetime of achievements for the advances in yoga and healing.

At the time of meeting Guruji, I was on the Sivananda Yoga Ranch staff, doing organic gardening in exchange for room and board for my family and me. To earn money, I was also offering polarity energy balancing sessions to clients who visited the ashram, some of whom expressly came there for my treatments, following word-of-mouth recommendations.

The swami in charge of the Yoga Ranch announced at a staff meeting that a Jain summer camp would be taking place there over a number of days. When the families started to arrive for the camp, a man from the Jain community asked me if I had heard of Sushil Muni. The man's tone of voice and positive energy conveyed his awe-infused respect for Guruji. Since I had not previously heard of Sushil Muni, he informed me that Guruji was a great man, famous in India, and that he had accomplished so much good.

I was intrigued to learn firsthand about Guruji. Having done my best to embrace nonviolence as a guiding value and practice in my own life, and having worked as a nonviolent activist for peace and protecting the natural environment, I wanted to learn more about Jain nonviolence and Guruji's teachings. Having majored in the study of religions as an undergraduate at Columbia University, and having first begun to practice yoga in 1968 and meditation in 1970, I was open to what I could potentially learn to deepen both my own spiritual search and nonviolent activism. At the same time, I was feeling cautious due to prior disappointments with other spiritual teachers.

On Friday evening, I was free to participate in a session that Guruji was leading. He made a strong impression on me. His powerful voice, resonant chanting, sturdy physique, tall stature, and upright carriage conveyed a self-contained air of benevolent authority. He was, of course, wearing the simple, white clothing of a Svetambara Jain monk. While I do not remember details of his discourse that evening, I was impressed that, among other topics, he addressed the subtle, esoteric, potentially healing effects of sounds, colors, and light. I believe he led a brief meditation that evening. Afterward, he asked if anyone present would like to lie down beside him and experience something. I did not know what such experience would entail.

One by one, some people volunteered to lie down on the floor in the middle of a circle of onlookers. Guruji sat cross-legged next to them and briefly touched them on the head. When they sat up, he asked them to describe what they had experienced. Each participant spoke of wondrous inner surprises, such as seeing beautiful natural scenery, forests, bodies of water, or gardens resplendent with flowers, birds, butterflies. Others spoke of hearing heavenly flute music, bird songs, and more. All seemed happy. Whereas I was favorably impressed, I was still feeling hesitant, so I refrained from lying down beside Guruji.

The following evening, on Saturday, there was a big, celebratory gathering in the meditation hall of the ashram. So many members of the Jain community, more than a hundred, from the area around New York city had come for the event. Guruji and his fellow monks, Subhag Muni and Amrendra Muni, were sitting on a small raised platform and leading the chanting. Garbed in identical white Jain monk's garb, they were each also wearing the traditional white cloth covering, *Muhapatti*, over their mouths. The energy in the room was vibrant. Most of the community members were standing, chanting along, and spontaneously dancing in place to the rhythms of the chanting, which evoked in me subtle feelings, including awe, compassion for all beings, and spiritual longing. Somehow, both the pain and the joy of existence were commingled and given voice through these chants about such themes as nonviolence, peace, seeking forgiveness, and friendship.

After a long period of energetic chanting, Guruji asked everyone in the meditation hall to close their eyes and stand still. I stood accordingly in the silence. Unexpectedly, I felt a light touch on the crown of my head. Immediately, waves of blissful, ecstatic energy rushed upward, throughout and all around my body, extended several inches into the energy field above my head, and palpably pulsed there. Not knowing what had just happened, I opened my eyes and saw Guruji standing next to me, gazing at me. He asked, "Are you happy, Mitchell?" Almost speechless, experiencing a mixture of joy, appreciation, confusion, and fear about whatever had just happened without my consciously seeking it, I managed to answer, "Yes." Much later when I read about *shaktipat*, I

realized I had received this palpable blessing of spiritual energy through Guruji's touch.

Over the next days, when Guruji learned that I was practicing polarity therapy, a subtle, hands-on energy balancing practice, he requested a session with me. I agreed to do it. While I was treating Guruji, Subhag Muni and Amrendra Muni stayed nearby. At the end of the session, Guruji spoke to them in an Indian language that I did not understand. Amrendra Muni brought out a couple of long white strips of cloth and proceed to use the cloths to make measurements on Guruji's body to verify whether my session had indeed led to better energy balance and structural alignment. Guruji uncovered his chest. Amrendra Muni placed one end of the cloth strip on one of Guruji's nipples and measured the diagonal length to the foot on the opposite side of the body. The two lengths, from right nipple to left foot, and from left nipple to right foot, were then compared and discussed. Apparently, my treatment successfully passed this unanticipated test, and Guruji told me he would like more treatments like this. From that time on, I became his polarity therapist whenever I was with him including during my visits to Siddhachalam, which began shortly after he began to reside there.

During one of those visits, I invited some of the other trusted ashram staff to join me in doing a subtle energy treatment practice known as a polarity circle in which each person holds the right and left hand on particular areas of the body to amplify the free, balanced flow of the recipient's own energies. I believe it was Shirley Hardy, may she rest in peace, who commented at that time, "You are so strong, Guruji!" He responded, with a touch of humor, "Would you prefer to have a weak Guru?" Regarding cultivating his physical strength, I knew that Guruji practiced yoga, and I once saw him in a stable headstand at which time, without assistance, he crossed his own elevated legs into a lotus or half-lotus posture. In Guruji's cabin, I had also noticed a set of exercise springs used for resistance training, primarily for strengthening the chest, back, and arms. I do not know the extent to which Guruji exercised with those springs. Since he had so few possessions, I can only imagine that he made use of them.

On one occasion, Subhag Muni also requested a hands-on polarity therapy session. At the end of the treatment, he blessed me and very gently kissed the back of my hands in appreciation.

When I was in Guruji's cabin, I noticed that he had many books on the shelves along one wall. He once told me, "Do you see all of those books on the shelves? I have not read a single one of them, but I can tell you what is in each one." This was one of several mysterious comments that Guruji made to me. I could not fathom how he could know what was in the books without having read them.

In one of the early years of my acquaintance with Guruji, I once visited him at a center he had established on Staten Island. If my memory serves well, it may have been called the Kundalini Science Center. During that visit, I saw him greeting other visitors. Sometimes he would just look at a person and say what he saw in the aura. No one openly disagreed with him. One man came to Guruji for blessings. Guruji said, "I can see in your aura that you have been eating meat." He told the man that the meat-eating was adding to his karma and that he needed to stop that and purify himself with chanting the Namokar Mantra.

On another occasion, I spent time with Guruji when he was teaching at a spiritual center in Montreal. He and his followers who came there from other locations slept in the house of a local host. In a session at the spiritual center to which a large number of people came, Guruji said he could either speak on nonviolence in action or could guide people in an esoteric experience. He asked which option we would like. Whereas I would have preferred hearing more from him about ahimsa in action, the majority of participants wanted an esoteric experience.

Following some discussion of options, Guruji led us in astral projection. In preparation, we did a pranayama practice, breathing only through the right nostril while closing the left nostril with the right ring finger. Guruji said breathing this way would build up the high level of energy we would need for astral projection. Then he guided us in visualizing a homunculus, a miniature, cloudy, replica of ourselves in silver-grey light that would emerge from the solar plexus, to which it would remain connected by a silver-

colored cord so that the astral body could find its way fully back into the physical body at the end of the experience. He said we could feel free to send the astral body on any journey we wished. I projected my astral body back to the house in Vermont in which I was then living. As my astral body viewed around the house, I saw the three children sleeping in their respective beds, but did not see their mother in the house. When I spoke with her by phone the next day, she confirmed that she had at that time left the house to go up the hill to visit with relatives. This was external validation of what I had seen during the astral projection. After the experience, Guruji invited participants to talk about what they had seen. Some spoke of traveling to identifiable places on this earth, whereas others appeared to go to other worlds or dimensions, the fantastic descriptions of which could feature in science fiction.

After that session at the spiritual center in Montreal, the organizer asked a few of Guruji's entourage about what was more important to Guruji, his mission with the traditional Jain community or his outreach and work with Western disciples. To my mind, her question presupposed a false dichotomy. I sensed he was equally devoted to both constituencies. The organizer also asked about Guruji's health. She said that she was concerned for his wellbeing based on what she saw in his face. I did not know what she was seeing and was more in touch with his abundant spiritual energy, vision, and selfless service. She was a psychic and may have been seeing earlier stages of the heart condition that would lead to Guruji's death in India in 1994 at the age of 67 years and 10 months.

During my time with Guruji in Montreal, he invited me to move to his new ashram, Siddhachalam, and to work as the caretaker there. He said this could give me and my family "permanent security." I thought about accepting this opportunity, but, for family-related reasons, remained in Vermont and worked there, primarily as a teacher, program director, and international student adviser in higher education.

On a number of occasions, I drove from Vermont to Siddhachalam to be with Guruji and saw him a few times in the homes of other people. In one house, a television set was showing a violent scene, including a closeup of a man's face being punched. I looked at

Guruji and wondered how this apostle of nonviolence would be affected by such a distressing image. He looked impassive. Later I learned that as a youth in India at the time of the violence that erupted during the partition of Pakistan from India he had witnessed much worse in real life, including the murder on a public road of a strong Muslim man being hacked to death by enraged people wielding machetes. That traumatic event was among many antecedents to his lifelong dedication to spreading the Jain ethical path of nonviolence (ahimsa), the Jain epistemological corollary to ahimsa of the plurality, multiplicity, and non-exclusivity of viewpoints with no single belief system as expressing the final word on truth and reality (anekantavada), and fellowship and tolerance among humans of all backgrounds and faiths.

Guruji invited me to stay at Siddhachalam during the time of the children's camp in the summer of 1987. He said I could bring any of my children who would like to participate in the camp activities and, knowing that I had previously edited manuscripts for published books, he asked me to be the final copy editor for the manuscript of Song of the Soul, which he had been writing and getting compiled and edited while at Siddhachalam. I agreed, and my second daughter, 7 years old at the time, came with me for the camp.

During the days, aside from breakfast and lunch times, I read through the manuscript, made copy editing recommendations, and attended events for children and adults in the main meditation hall. In the evenings, after dinner, I attended sessions that Guruji led only for adults at the ashram.

Working on the manuscript went smoothly enough, despite the uncomfortably hot and humid summer days. This time was before personal computers were prevalent, so I used a pen and a typewriter to make the edits and queries. I recommended to Guruji and his team that they also produce an audio cassette of his chanting the Namokar Mantra so that readers could listen and chant along with it as well as read about it. They liked the idea and produced the recording along with the book.

During that week, I also wrote up some of the autobiographical stories that Guruji was narrating to the children at the camp. One day, toward to end of the camp, Guruji asked me to read these stories aloud to all the children assembled in the meditation hall. Guruji said he liked these written versions and that they conveyed his storytelling voice. I have not been able to find copies of those stories and believe they were probably lost during one of my housing moves in the intervening years since 1987.

As he liked my writing, Guruji asked me to write a book on his life's story. He said that if I would complete the project, he guaranteed the book would be published, could sell a million copies in India, and could thereby assure my financial security for the rest of my life. I informed him, however, that since I was raising a family, I could not afford to devote the many hours it would take to research and write such a book if I could not be paid a substantial advance on royalties.

At one of the daytime sessions for the campers, Guruji told the children the story of his recent, single-person, peacemaking mission at the Golden Temple in the city of Amritsar, Punjab, India. It was a tense time. Indian government troops surrounded the temple that was occupied by Sikh terrorists. Guruji alone walked across the bridge to meet with the terrorists and to advocate for a nonviolent solution to the crisis.

After returning to Vermont, I referred to notes I had taken of his talk, as well as to relevant accounts from Indian newspapers that I found at Siddhachalam, and I wrote an article entitled, "*In the Lion's Mouth: The Nonviolent Mission of Acharya Sushil Kumar.*" It is posted on my website: <https://www.breathepeacefully.com/newpage1>.

At another daytime session, Guruji guided adults and children alike in a meditation. After he invited us to open our eyes, my daughter remained still and with eyes closed. Guruji appreciatively commented, "She is meditating. How can we keep them like that?"

Guruji told me that my daughter had Buddhist connections from past lives. In view of this, he said that if she wanted a spiritual name from him, it would be Sujata. In Buddhist lore, Sujata was

the name of the cow herder's daughter who passed by Siddhartha Gautama when he was weakened from practicing severe austerities. She offered him a bowl of rice pudding, which he gratefully accepted. As he gathered strength from eating her compassionate offering, he realized that torturing the body was not the path to awakening to truth.

Regarding the theme of past lives, on one day, I was standing outside speaking with Guruji. As he looked at me, I felt unusual waves of movement in my aura, the energy field around my body. I did not know what was happening. The thought came to me that it felt as if a movie were being played in my aura. Then, out of the blue, Guruji said to me, "Your last life was a difficult one but a good one." I did not ask him what he had seen.

Exploring past life recollections was the theme of some of Guruji's evening sessions for adults. In one of these, Guruji guided us into a meditation for seeing what lives we had experienced as animals prior to our human incarnations. He said that those early lives as other animals can at times be influential of tendencies in our current human lives. On that occasion, I saw in my mind two different animal species in their habitats and later wondered how that might relate to any of my traits. On another evening, he guided us into seeing an important, past human incarnation. He led us with his words to seeing the outside of a door. He said that we could each open the door and witness what was on the other side. I followed through and saw an intense, unforgettable scene that was pertinent to my passion since early childhood in this life regarding the need for humanity to end the tragic suffering caused by wars and other forms of violence.

Here are a few more, random recollections of my experiences with Guruji and some inspired by him.

Once I expressed to him worries that environmental destruction and/or nuclear war could possibly end life on this planet. He said, in that event, there was still much work to be done on the astral plane.

He asked me if I knew what it means to be enlightened. I said I did not. He affirmed that to be enlightened means that there are no

more secrets, no more mysteries, about existence. To my limited understanding, this seemed to be beyond human capacity.

After someone from the ashram community was involved in a minor automobile collision in which no one was badly injured, Guruji advised all to chant the Namokar Mantra before starting the car every time they were about to drive.

Guruji wanted to do an early morning walk and energy clearing ceremony on one of the roads leading into Siddhachalam. He asked the staff to meet him in front of his cabin the next day at something like 6:00 in the morning. We gathered accordingly but did not see him. Finally, someone knocked on his door. He said he had forgotten about this plan. One of his close associates commented that Guruji would often say things spontaneously and then forget them, as if his mind were like flowing water.

Guruji's chanting was so powerful, and collective chanting was a part of every gathering I can remember. He would often say after a round of chanting, "Dissolve yourself. Surrender yourself. Visualize white light (or the Arihant) at the crown of your head, and you will get success." Guruji said that after he would leave his physical body, he could be contacted through his Namokar Mantra body. To this day, I chant the Namokar Mantra and other Jain mantras at the end of the many yoga classes that I teach while the students are lying on their mats in deep, meditative relaxation. They often tell me that the chanting supports their relaxing more deeply.

He told me that in India, he had been known as a healer, but that in the United States he did not want to be recognized in that way. He narrated that once, in his early years as a monk, he chanted the Namokar Mantra for healing purposes after someone had been bitten by a poisonous snake and could see that the line of poisonous infection that had been moving up the body toward the person's heart stopped advancing and disappeared. The person suffered no ill effects from the bite. This experience, Guruji said, reinforced his faith in the power of the Namokar Mantra.

In one of the daytime sessions at camp, Guruji told a folktale about someone who had great powers and could swallow the world. Then a divinity told that person, "But I can swallow you." For

some reason that I did not understand, Guruji called across the meditation hall to me by name, "And I can swallow you."

At Siddhachalam, one of Guruji's followers who appreciated the polarity treatments I was giving said he could show me a healing approach Guruji had taught him. I lay down. The man chanted the Namokar Mantra while circling his hands above the major chakras in my energy field without touching my body.

I applied this method once myself. When traveling, I stopped along the route for a brief bit of rest at the house of a woman I had met at Siddhachalam. She knew of the polarity therapy treatments I had been giving to many people at the ashram. She asked if I could do anything to bring relief to her adult daughter who was upstairs in bed and in bad pain, healing from extensive burns she had suffered on her skin in a recent accident. The mother introduced me to the daughter. Realizing I could not make any physical contact on her body, I chanted the Namokar Mantra and moved my hands in slow, circular patterns above the chakras in the energy field around her. At the end, I held my hands still. I could feel a release of tensions in the field. The woman in the bed expressed thanks that for the first time since the accident she was experiencing a cessation of the burning pain. I felt grateful to help relieve her suffering at least for a time.

In the spring on 1994, my mom was hospitalized near where she lived on Long Island, and I traveled to the hospital to be with her. I sensed that she was possibly near the end of her life while praying she would recover. To support her, either in her healing or in her journey beyond this lifetime, I sat by her bedside and chanted the Namokar Mantra to bring her comfort and spiritual support. On April 14, 1994, my mom died on the bed in that hospital room.

While I was grieving deeply over the loss of my mom, I received a message from Dr. Hema Pokharna, a friend I had met at the Siddhachalam summer camp of 1987. She informed me that Guruji had died in India on April 22, 1994. This was just 8 days after my own mom's passing. I grieved over Guruji's death, too. In my bereaved state of mind, I wished he could help my mom in her ongoing spiritual journey.

Guruji left a vast legacy in India, the US, and many other places around the world. He was an unforgettable, multifaceted, charismatic, courageous, altruistic being who initiated so many visionary projects, touched so many hearts, and inspired so many souls along the path of ahimsa.

Siddhachalam, the first and only Jain pilgrimage site (tirth) outside of India, is one concrete manifestation of his legacy. The trustees, officers, and extended community of Siddhachalam have devotedly continued to enhance its beauty and to support its services since Guruji founded it in 1983.

Some of the organizations that Guruji started, such as the International Mahavir Jain Mission, continue to function to this day. Others, such as his envisioned University of Nonviolence to be located near the United Nations headquarters in Manhattan and the World Movement of Nonviolence for Peace and Environment, both of which he launched in 1992, do not appear to have been realized.

When Guruji embarked in 1975 upon his global outreach mission, necessitating transport by plane and car, he conscientiously broke with the centuries-old monastic restraint according to which Jain monks could travel by no means other than walking. This iconoclastic initiative was at first controversial and met with criticism from more conventionally minded followers of the Jain faith. However, Guruji asserted that we live in a critical time of human history when all religious traditions need to be in dialogue and to share their spiritual treasures generously for the greater good of the whole world. In India, he had already done much ecumenical work along these lines, such as by founding the World Fellowship of Religions in 1950 and the World Religions Conferences that took place between 1954 and 1989.

With such leadership, Guruji set an example about being courageous in realistically facing and creatively responding to current world circumstances in ways consistent with the principles and practices of nonviolence (ahimsa). For Guruji, spiritual practice for the liberation of each soul and proactive engagement in service for the greater good of all sentient beings, human and

other, in the ecological web of life on earth were intrinsically interdependent.

To honor Guruji's life and message, each of us who knew him can contribute, however humbly, to cultivating peace, reducing harm and suffering, advocating the prevention of wars, opposing racism, reducing direct violence and the structural violence of egregious wealth disparities, ensuring the protection and survival of species, seeking the personal and systemic transformations that are needed in this time of ecological emergency, and so much more. At the same time, we need to maintain our own self-care and spiritual practices to cultivate our inner peace, clarity, and relative equanimity in these troubling times.

Jai Jinendra!



The Story of a Boy called Sardar Singh

By Jaipat Singh Jain[∞]

This is a story of a dutiful boy. His name was Sardar Singh. He was born in the year 1926 in a small village in Punjab, the land of five rivers, in undivided India. When he was a child, he began living with his aunt. One day, when Sardar Singh was about seven years' old, a Jain monk visited his home. The monk was Muni Chotelalji Maharaj and the family knew him well. The muni initiated Sardar Singh into meditation. Sardar Singh was carried away by meditation and Muni Chotelalji obtained his aunt's permission to take Sardar Singh along with him.

For the next several years thereafter, Sardar Singh wandered with Maharaj Saheb. During this time, Sardar Singh learned to meditate on the Namokar Mantra. A life-saving incident disclosed that Sardar Singh had learned to use Namokar Mantra to ward-off danger and heal the wounded and ill. His powers were magical. Mindful of their potential, at one point, Chotelalji Maharaj restrained the boy from using his powers. Sardar Singh used the restraint to intensify his study of the Mantra and to immerse himself in meditation.

Soon, Sardar Singh was privately in communication with another Jain monk. He had long conversations with the monk and followed the monk's instructions dutifully. He even began treating him as his spiritual Guru. That Jain monk, Roop Chandji Maharaj Saheb of Jagraon, Punjab, had in fact left the world several decades before Sardar Singh was born¹; yet, Sardar Singh regularly met with him in his meditations.

One day, when Sardar Singh was 15 years' old, Roop Chandji Maharaj prompted Sardar Singh to become a Jain monk. Sardar Singh, as was his practice, dutifully reported that to Muni Chotelalji and expressed his desire to become a monk. Muni Chotelalji, however, advised Sardar Singh that he could not be

[∞] Jaipat Singh Jain is an Honoree Trustee of Siddhachalam.

¹ Roop Chandji MS had left for his heavenly abode in the year 1880.

given diksha (ordination as a monk) without the express consent of Sardar's parents.

At about that time, Sardar Singh's older brother died. Sardar Singh was now the eldest son of the family and his mother wanted Sardar to end his wanderings with Muni Chotelalji and return home. She approached Muni Chotelalji. The Muni asked her to identify her son from two boys of near-equal age that were accompanying him, one of whom was her son. She confidently identified one of the two boys as her son. As it happens, the boy she identified as her son was not Sardar Singh (that boy later became a Jain monk and came to be called *Pujyashri Sobhag Muniji Maharaj Saheb*). The incident inspired her to giving Sardar Singh to monkhood. Thus, on April 20, 1942, Sardar Singh took diksha as a Jain monk of the Sthanakwasi Shraman order and came to be called Muni Sushil Kumar. The name Sushil Kumar likely comes from being an obedient disciple.



Children and Guruji loved each other

Soon, India savagely broke into parts. A million men, women and children were butchered in Punjab alone. A religious zealot killed Mahatma Gandhi, the symbol of love, peace and awakening. The country plunged into a decade of faithlessness in ahimsa.

In such a dismal setting, a young Jain muni drew attention. He had the unusual practice of addressing followers of different faiths on the values of ahimsa found in their own scriptures. One day, he approached India's political and religious leaders and invited them and leaders in other parts of the world to an all-faith conference. Thus, in 1957, there was held under this young monk's leadership, the first World Religions' Conference. It was held at various locations in Delhi, including the Red Fort, and was attended by several hundred thousand people, including India's prime minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, president Dr. Rajendra Prasad, vice-president Dr. Radhakrishnan and education minister Dr. Abul Kalam Azad. It had a healing effect on a traumatized country.



Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Vice-President (later President) Dr. Radhakrishnan with Guruji at the 1957 World Religions' Conference. Right: Pandit Nehru greeting Guruji at the Conference.

That young Jain monk was Muni Sushil Kumar. Ever since then, he came to be regarded by successive prime ministers, presidents, religious leaders and common man as a perennial source of wisdom and one to whom all communities – Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains and others – could turn to in times of personal and national strife. He was a much-sought monk and walked hundreds of thousands of miles barefoot across the length and breadth of India.

Amidst all bustle, Muni Sushil Kumar remained intensely engaged in his private practice of meditation. A favorite place for him for meditation was the forest near Dadabari in Mehrauli, New Delhi. There, he frequently secluded himself in deep meditation for days at a stretch. Dadabari is the site of the *samadhi* of the legendary 12th c. Jain monk, Manidhari Jinchandra Suri Dada Guru.

During meditations there, he met with Dada Guru. One day, Dada Guru admonished the young monk from engaging in meditation



solely for his personal salvation. Your job, said Dada Guru to the monk, was to be a global missionary of Lord Mahavira; personal salvation must wait. Thus was born the idea of stepping outside India and of organizing missionaries to promote the message of Lord Mahavira (the principal

organization he founded after coming to North America was unsurprisingly called International Mahavira Mission, later named International Mahavira Jain Mission).

Although Jain monks traveled outside India during ancient times, the idea of a Jain monk traveling outside India by use of mechanical means was abhorrent to many in the Jain community; such a step had not been taken in at least a millennium by anyone who vowed to remain a monk. But Dada Guru's instructions had to be complied with and Guruji publicly announced his decision to shed the taboo. On June 17, 1975, the dutiful disciple took the unprecedented step of boarding an aircraft to travel outside India. Monkhood, after all, is a personal quest for mastery over one's inner self. It is not leaving one community to merely join another.



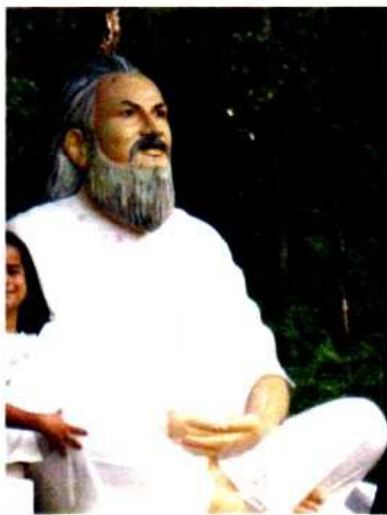
Pope John Paul II and Mother Teresa in India

The decision of Muni Sushil Kumar was so significant and momentous that after he announced it, members of India's federal

legislature convened at the Parliament House to give the monk a ceremonial send-off, even as thousands lined up near the Palam airport in India's capital to denounce the step. Jain religion, as customarily known, was being shaken to its roots.

Muni Sushil Kumar traveled, among other places, to America. Here, he inspired the founding of many institutions, temples, courses on Jainism in American universities (for example, in Columbia University in New York City), and representation at the United Nations. Many disciples of his from Main Street America were not Jains by birth and had never heard of Bhagwaan Mahavira but followed him joyously like a band of missionaries as his powers of meditation helped transform an abandoned, haunted campground in rural, northwestern New Jersey, into the place we now know as Shri Siddhachalam Tirth. Siddhachalam means a mountain in homage to the gods, the siddhas. Jains regard Siddhachalam as a place of pilgrimage; for many among the thousands who visit it each year, it continues to be suffused with Muni Sushil Kumar's sacred vibrations and energy.

At Siddhachalam, he wrote a slice of his life's work – a practitioner's easy-to-use manual containing many secrets of the Namokar Mantra – *The Song of the Soul*. The book is available at Siddhachalam.



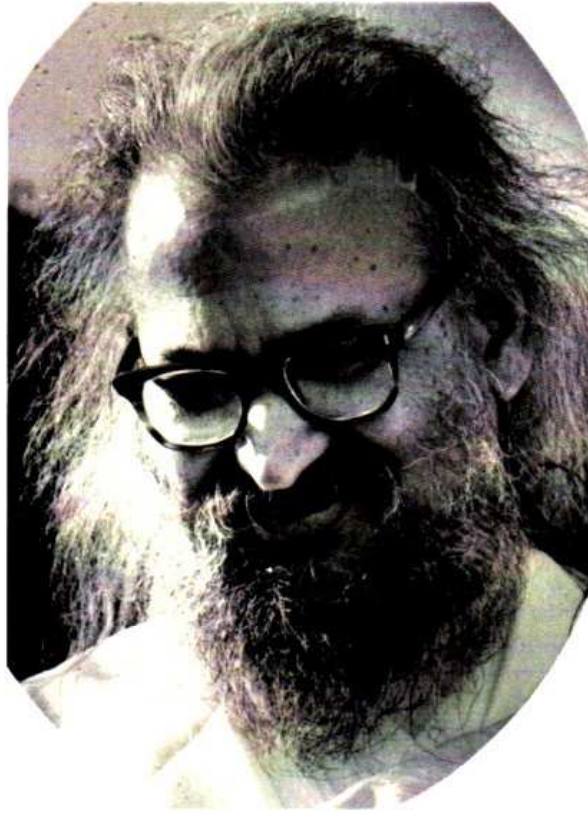
Guruji in Tapasya Sthal

Like Mehrauli in New Delhi, Siddhachalam has large forest areas. In it, Muni Sushil Kumar engaged in deep meditation. Since 2008, there is a life-size statue of the Muni in one of the forested areas close to where he often engaged in meditation. Every year in the third weekend of April since then, his followers come together to unveil that statue (the statute is veiled every year after Deepawali). That weekend is significant: on April 20, 1942, Sardar

Singh became a Jain monk and on April 22, 1994, he left for his heavenly abode.

Muni Sushil Kumar envisioned that in the 21st c., Jains in America would rekindle the light lit by Bhagwaan Mahavira and be exemplars to the world of a more enlightened form of spirituality. One that was free from the divisions of race, color, religious tradition and rooted in its essential principles of *ahimsa* (restraint from intentional or careless injury to anyone) and *anekantvada* (recognition that no person has a monopoly on truth).

Then, as now, we and our children, and their children, and all those in search of the soul within will find her or his way to Siddhachalam to commemorate the colossal life of that dutiful boy we lovingly call Guruji.



A memorial in his honor at Siddhachalam reads as follows:



Om Arhum Hreem

“This mountaintop homage to Siddhas – perfect, liberated souls possessing infinite perception, knowledge, energy and bliss, whom some call God – is a gift of the revolutionary saint, yogi, teacher, peacemaker and environmentalist, His Holiness Acharya Sushil Kumarji Maharaj.

Guruji, as his followers call him, was born on June 15, 1926 in Sikhopur, near South Delhi (later named Sushilgarh in his honor). When 7 years’ old, he forsook home to live with HH Chotelalji Maharaj, a Sthanakwasi Jain monk. Guruji became a Jain monk on April 20, 1942 and left for the heavens on April 22, 1994.

Guruji was a renowned spiritual leader of India. He was sought by successive prime ministers and presidents of India, heads of other nations, faith leaders and ordinary people for his boundless wisdom, love and peacemaking. In 1975, he publicly announced that he will be breaking the age-old taboo against Jain ascetics’ use of mechanical means of transport. He said he was prodded in meditation to do so by the 12th c. Acharya, Dadaguru Manidhari Jinchandra Suriiji Maharaj. Dadaguru asked him to go to faraway lands to spread Bhagwaan Mahavira’s message of ahimsa (non-injury) and anekantvada (belief that no one has a monopoly on truth).

The assignment was not unexpected. Guruji said that when he was 14 or 15, he described Siddhachalam during meditation to his spiritual Guru, the 19th c. Jain monk, HH Roop Chandji Maharaj, as a shrine to Siddhas that he will one day build. On June 17, 1983, the 8th anniversary of his momentous act of traveling to the United States, Guruji founded Siddhachalam.

Guruji often said that his purpose in life was to become one with Lord Parsvnath, the perfect yogi (“Sushil Muni ka dheyyay yahi hai, Paras may ram javo rae”). Bhagwaan Parsvnath had attained omniscience in 84 days of unbroken meditation. Guruji said:

“This is my basic faith – if someone does not have love for the higher souls, such person cannot realize truth. My

Lord appear before me. I want to see you. I want to see you.”

Guruji was known to stay in steadfast meditation for days. He naturally traversed previous lives, time and space. Yet, he disavowed the life of a recluse. Instead, he helped others spiritually awaken themselves. A testimony to his endeavors was peace and political accord in Punjab in mid-1980s.

From his teens when he first felt Namokar Mantra’s healing powers, Guruji devoted himself to mastering it. At Siddhachalam, he taught the Mantra and its principles to ashram residents – most of whom were white Americans. In the Song of the Soul, which he wrote at Siddhachalam, he said of the Mantra:

“There is a deep, secret science to the combination of sounds. Specific syllables are seeds for the awakening of latent powers...Namokar Mantra is my goal and my life. It is my love and my destiny. Through it, I can serve and guide along the path of non-violence.”

When he visited Siddhachalam, it was a haunted and abandoned children’s summer camp. Ascetics with him said it was unfit for meditation. Guruji engaged in sadhana, tapa and meditation here and transformed it into a vibrant ashram, monastery and animal and nature preserve. In suffusing it with energy and vigor, he said:

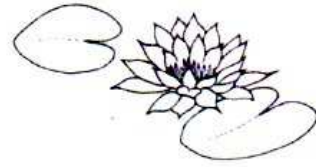
“There is a powerful vibration here. Ultimately, the situation at Siddhachalam will be that when anyone [true seeker] comes here, he will get enlightenment. I will do some work perfectly; I know what the result will be. Whether the Guru sits here or not, whether anyone gives suggestion or not, kundalini will awaken. This will be the situation, and I will do this in my lifetime and yours. You can accomplish anything here. You can meditate and you will get success. You can do business and you will get success. And you can play. The time is coming.”

For a spiritual aspirant, Siddhachalam is a place of pilgrimage and illumination. Guruji conceived it as the wellspring of an enlightened form of Jain belief and practice, free from divisions

of race, religion, caste, creed, sect, sex or attainment.
Siddhachalam welcomes all. Below are Gururji's charankamal.

Dedicated in the 25th year of Gururji's devlok on August 10, 2019."





Characteristics of a True Guru¹

The guru is searching for his student. When he is getting anything [of value], he wants to give it to others [his students]. A seed becomes a tree and then it produces fruit. And when the fruit is ripe, the tree wants to distribute it. The tree will bear fruit whether we pick it or not, but it waits for those people who are ready to take it. It is the same thing with the guru. When he has this quality to produce 'fruit,' then he has to distribute it. The fruit of the tree can rot and decompose, but it is not possible that the guru's knowledge can be wasted.

Both guru and disciple have a special quality – the magnetism and a magnet. Magnetic current has the power to attract metal, and metal has power to receive the attraction. Both are waiting for this kind of vibration and compatibility. However, the magnetic current can't attract wood or stone.

Everybody has a different need, a different kind of hunger, thirst or problem. And its frame is different. The subconscious sends the message "he is my guru." Then any way you like, nature makes some arrangement for a meeting and something happens. If the guru's vibration, teaching, practice, color, aura and light can fit into your frame of life, then the guru can start the relation and you can receive the relation. This is the most beautiful relation – very deep, like energy flowing.

In the world there are many kinds of gurus. Imagine three types of gurus as three types of boats, one of wood, one of stone and one of paper. Take the three boats to the river. The stone boat is very big and strong, but it is very heavy and when you put it into water

¹ This was a talk delivered by Guruji in Long Beach, CA on February 6, 1984. Dates of other talks and observations are noted where known.

then what happens? It will sink. The boat will go down deep and you will go with it. At the time when you need it, that boat will not give help. The paper boat is very light and beautiful, but when you want to cross the river you put it into water and at most it will float for a few minutes. Then, it will collapse. The wooden boat may not look so beautiful, but in this boat you can sit and it can easily take you across.

These are three kinds of gurus. One is so light, he cannot give help. He has something very attractive but when you look deeply, there is nothing there. Some gurus are like a rock. They have big following, an old tradition and great honor, but when you talk spiritually with them, you discover they do not know anything.

The first test of a guru is non-violence. Non-violence requires love. Non-violence requires devotion, detachment and non-possession. Give up everything and serve people and feel oneness with all living beings. This is the basic thing. A guru must teach non-violence and self-control. Some teachers are teaching the tantra system which may be suitable for a few people, but when you apply this for the whole society, then problems start. If this teacher has 1,000 disciples, then mostly 99% will involve in sex. They are feeling free – “no problem.” But this system is not useful for society.

The guru is one who knows the divine energy and all its characteristics, he knows the inner anatomy, the etheric body and aura, and how the subtle body works. He knows how to read the causal body and past live, what kind of effect they have and what the disciple's needs are. He can open your centers and awaken your energy. “Gu” means darkness and “ru” means light. If somebody can convert darkness into light, then he is a guru.

This is a system of sublimation – with love, with oneness, with peace, without attachment or demand. If he has demands, he's not a guru. Ego means identity with outer things or ideas – may be beauty, knowledge, building, this or that. The same thing with greed or pride.

One guru was talking to a man and boasting, “I have 7,000 disciples and so many are millionaires. When I go, then hundred cars are following me.” What's the meaning? What is the relation

of this with guruhood? General Motors has millions of cars. Then, can the president of General Motors become a bigger guru? I went to Bangkok last year and saw how one person is keeping and breeding 40,000 crocodiles. People are teaching and training them also. Then, is this man a guru? No, this is a business.

If someone is humble and he wants to serve the people, if he can change darkness into light, if he can touch your inner self and open your heart or navel – if someone can do this, then he is a guru.

The first test is non-violence, because everything is affected by violence – the whole world, family, society, country, international relationships – everything can change for the worst if we lose ahimsa. The second is humility. And the third test is his spiritual power to transmit energy, awaken knowledge and inspire all good qualities in the disciple, and to guide and direct the awakening of the self.

When you meet your guru, something will fit. A deep relationship is there. You will feel some vibration when you sit near him. Something will attract you. “He has something to give me and I can receive it from him” – this will come in your mind and you will feel it. Om Arhum!



“If you can surrender, if you can become like a five-year-old child – innocent and pure, then you can know your reality.”



Your Experience Will Guide You

Truth is one but there are many aspects of truth. We must become open-minded. There is so much confusion on the spiritual path because people think that there is only one way, and all other ways are not correct.

For example, some people think “So Hum” practice, or navel practice, or third-eye practice is the “only way.” In reality, these are all related. Many spiritual groups promote their gurus and the only true master for this era. They feel that their way is completely separate, unique and superior. Some say they are teaching the true “kundalini” yoga. Some say they are teaching the true yoga of light and sound. Then what are we teaching – deafness and darkness?

I choose to teach you all things so that you do not become prejudiced. And after that, you can follow one system. For practice, follow one system. For knowledge, you must understand all systems.

If you feel some prejudice, that yours is the *only* [right] practice, then problems start in your practice and living of the Jain principles. In a subtle way, you are building up and sheltering the ego.

If you feel that your guru is the only guru, and that others are false, then this will create obstacles in your progress. At the same time, however, in the first stage of the disciple’s development, this form of ego is good. Lord Mahavira himself taught that this attachment is useful in the beginning of the relationship between guru and pupil. It establishes a bond with the guru and sets a base for practice. But then, slowly, the truth appears. In the beginning, the guru is “God,” the embodiment of the highest principles; he is everything. But after some time, deeper practice and divine ideals awaken in the disciple, and then the guru and the practice have equal effect and value.

Slowly, practice and experience begin to guide you. In a subtle way, the guru is there, but experience grows more and more powerful. And one day, when you get complete experience, everything will come from your True Self. Your experience will

guide you. You will, of course, have deepest love for your guru, but experience will have become your true guru.

Go and practice Jain principles, with serene egoless-ness, fearlessness, and detachment. Get experience, and this will guide you. Attachment for the guru falls away, and subtle connection to the true nature of reality begins.



How To Know True Self

Lord Mahavira taught us a beautiful, practical method of knowing the True Self. Firstly, we must think positively and feel that we are divine. Then, follow the four steps to self-realization:

Thanenam – ask yourself, “who am I?” Contemplate your true reality.

Monenam – experience silence in a word, thought and body. The silence of the body is total relaxation. The silence of the mind means thoughtlessness, when no thoughts of the past, present or future disturb the mind.

Jhanenam – meditate with alertness and watchfulness. This is meditation with concentration on a particular point, such as the third-eye center.

Apananam vosirami – give up whatever conceptions you have of yourself. Give up your ego, fears, anxieties, insecurities, and identification with body. Experience a new birth of True Self.



Questions on Meditation

May – June 1984

Q: Can we meditate anytime, and is there a certain time limit?

Guruji: The first thing is ‘one work at a time.’ Focusing the mind on one work, then there is no need for a specific time for meditation. Meditation is going on every time. But this is difficult. So, you can fix your schedule and devote some time for meditation – 20 minutes, 30 minutes, 48 minutes, one hour, three hours or more. But the starting point is 3 minutes or 20 minutes. If you practice *shanmukhi mudra* for 3 minutes, this is enough. But with different systems if meditation using watchfulness and mindfulness, then 20 minutes is enough.

Q: Is 3 minutes as effective as 20 minutes?

Guruji: Yes, if you know the system of *shanmukhi mudra*.

Q: Only 3 minutes?

Guruji: Yes, 3 minutes – at least 3 minutes. The starting point for meditation without *shanmukhi mudra* is 20 minutes. Anyway, if someone is not doing any practice but he is doing one second’s meditation, then one second is very good. And one minute is a big thing. If he’s meditating one hour, two hours, three hours, then meaning is he has reached the real state of meditation. If you can enter within yourself – in the fontanel or other special centers – then you can meditate hours and hours. Many people have found the ‘door.’ They open the door and enter inside and then do not want to come back. But they have to come back. The first problem is how to meditate, the second is after getting success with actual meditation, people are thinking: “Why come back? The external world is not so beautiful, not so attractive. Why should we come out? It is better to stay inside.”

How to Control Desires

There are four types of attachments – food, fear, sleep and sex. When these desires arise, and when you decide to control them, then for some minutes analyze your situation without prejudice. Next, breathe “so hum” deeply six times with love. Between the “walls” of discipline and faith in the Guru, hold the energy current of desire. When inhaling “so” absorb the energy in the navel, with “hum”; exhale the waste or negativities of the desire such as greed, anger, jealousy, etc.

In this practice will-power is strengthened and psychic powers are developed, by the retention of energy.

By this practice we do not repress the desires; repression creates weaknesses in body and mind. We are rather transforming the energy of the desires, and using it for our benefit, as we also rid ourselves of the negativities.



“The awakening of true knowledge comes through meditation, not through intellectual understanding.”



Soldier of Mahavira

We are our own enemy or our own friend. Harmony must be maintained from within.

This reminds me of an incident which happened some years ago when Pakistan and India were divided. A curfew was being enforced at various times in the day when no one was allowed to be out of his house. One morning, I went outdoors for a walk and in the distance, I could see an army tank patrolling the area. The tank drew closer to me as I walked and finally an officer jumped out with a pistol in his hand. He saw me with my broom and mask and carrying a pot.

He demanded: “Who are you?” “I am a soldier of Mahavira,” I answered. “What is that?” he questioned, pointing to the broom on my shoulder. “My gun,” I retorted, and he flinched. “Are you using this gun?” “Yes, for cleaning the minds of doubt, anger and hate, such as yours. Can’t you see, it is a broom. This is my pot for carrying water, not bullets, and this is my mask to protect small germs from harm. I am a Jain monk.”

Then he bowed to me and meekly asked: “Why did you say you were a soldier, *Maharaj ji*?” “I am,” I answered. “I am part of the internal military, fighting internal enemies. You are part of the external military. You are patrolling the area today to maintain order during the curfew. But I am patrolling inwardly at all times. If you can be mighty enough to follow this system and overcome your inner enemies, then no one will be your enemy.”

This is our duty as monks or laymen – to be soldiers of Arihants – to boldly fight and overcome all inner enemies which bind us to ignorance and discontent.



How to Control Anger?

Four factors, time, karma, nature and destiny are directing and controlling our lives. However, we need not be slave to these four factors. We possess a fifth factor – self-effort. With self-effort, self-experience and self-realization, we can change anything. Our main purpose is to convert the individual “I” [ego] into the principal “I” [our true self]. By exercising dispassion and through continuous practice, we can achieve this goal. We must increase our will power! Be strong. Life can be a struggle but there is no need to fear life.

Life is also a grace and a blessing, but we tend to obscure this thought when we express forms of violence in our thoughts, words and even actions.

Q: How can I become less violent?

Guruji: If you control [watch] your desire and remove your possessiveness, violence will stop automatically. Violence is usually caused by excessive attachment of your mind to things such as passions – greed, desire, anger, egotism, ideas and ideals. When you increase your will power, control your desires and remove your attachments, then violence can't exist anymore.

Q: How do I control my desires?

Guruji: Do not take more than you truly need. Do not collect surplus of anything. When you are collecting and storing things unnecessarily, violence is bound to occur. Do not go against your inner voice. When you contradict this inner sound or message and begin to feel an attachment or possessiveness, violence will result.

Q: Is it wrong to express anger?

Guruji: You can learn to convert your anger to a good purpose. Stay busy. Do some beneficial work. If someone approaches you with anger in his heart and you in return, respond with anger, nothing at all will be accomplished. Suppose you are driving to a grocery store and you have a collision with another car. The driver shouts: “What are

you doing, you must be blind!” A fight starts, the police comes, and a case will develop. After some time, this case will go to court and someone will go to court and someone is going to be punished. If you have the same collision with a rock, you won’t start to fight with the rock. You won’t shout: “rock, are you blind?” No, you will think, “I was wrong, I was not aware and observant, I was careless.” If you can use the same policy with the other driver, maybe he will apologize. Then friendly feeling will have a chance to develop.

Anger is caused by irritation. Anger enters by the backdoor like a thief in the night when you are not aware. If you watch yourself, you will come to think: “This is not part of my nature. Anger is a poison, a disturbance in my peace and balance of mind. Go away!” Anytime you want to remove any disturbing thoughts, just observe your emotions. This can help you so much. Any thief (anger, greed, etc.) will not enter your mind when you are observing yourself carefully. Thoughts, like thieves, are coming from outside. Peace, balance, mercy and a state of equilibrium will come from the outside. You can adjust your mind and control your thoughts. If your thoughts are pure, you will not become irritated. Think: “I am an ocean of peace, balance, wisdom, intellect, perception. My mind is completely peaceful, and I can distribute peace to others.”

Q: Does chanting and meditating help?

Guruji: Chanting Om can remove bad thoughts, sadness, depression and anger. It is a cleaning and balancing process. Chanting, slow and concentrated breathing and relaxation will still your mind by calming your life force. Meditation is the natural result of deep physical and mental relaxation.

Q: Thank you, Guruji!



Peace for Mankind

Extract from lecture delivered at Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival, Oxford, UK, April 1988

We have two main enemies – ego and fear. Through persuasion, we have to change the hearts of men in power all around the world. We must urge them to surrender their personal and collective egos for the sake of humanity. A large ego can turn a man into a midget. The unrest, conflict and violence of thought, word and deed that we see in the world today are a result of individual and collective assertion of ego and against reason, justice, freedom and humanity. Ego deprives us vision and often leads us into racial, communal and state terrorism. Ego is the mother of terrorism.

The second big enemy we face all over the world is fear. Those who kill are neither brave nor strong. They are very weak and frightened. They kill because they fear being killed. They hate because they suspect others hate them. They are intolerant in their thought and speech because they nurse the suspicion that others are intolerant of them. They are greedy because they are deprived of the spiritual richness of generosity.

So, I submit, that in 1988 from here, the town of learning and understanding, this famous city of Oxford, let us launch an action program entitled Freedom From Fear! Let mankind's hearts be free from fear, and many of our global conflicts will disappear. It is well known that fear breeds fear, and love breeds love. Let us use love and persuasion as our instruments. Let us consolidate the spiritual forces against material forces; compassion against prejudice and hatred; humility against egotism; fearlessness against fear...But remember, poisoned hearts and minds are more dangerous than poison gas. Let us rid human hearts of spiritual and intellectual pollution and we shall certainly be on our way to pollution-free and ecologically balanced mankind. Let us try to change the hearts of our enemies and not destroy them. We must remember that while wars are born in the hearts and minds of men, so are love and peace. This is our challenge.

On Celibacy

Lord Mahavira considered celibacy to be a matter of paramount importance. He said: "If I am not here or if I am not available or if I was to leave this body and someone wants to see me, go see any celibate person. He has Mahavira in him and he represents me." Celibacy is the base of life. You can increase, develop, awaken your powers by celibacy.

In nature, energy flows from top to bottom. A celibate changes the complete direction of flow; his flow of energy is from bottom to top. He is bringing his energy up. That is celibacy.

Lord Buddha said do not go against desire; welcome desire. But you watch. When you watch, desire will be no more. Lord Mahavira said desire is not bad. Without desire, no one can get any strength or power. Therefore, do not allow any impotent person to become monk or nun. Because, being monk or nun is not beneficial to one lacking in energy.

What you really want is your capacity for creating energy and making a mental implosion. Without complete desire and without sexual desire you cannot sustain energy. Sexual desire is base of whole life force and energies. When desire comes, do not control it, do not suppress it. Absorb it. Lord Mahavira taught different systems for *pratisalinta*, which means, to absorb. If you can absorb this desire by breathing, by thinking, by watchfulness, then you are getting more strength and power.

Lord Mahavira used to fast for months and after that he wanted to break the fast. The wish to break the fast created in him desire for food. He welcomed desire but yet did not give in. He would not break his fast until his preset conditions were all fulfilled. Then nature, mind, senses and desire are all working together. Thus, he attained completeness.

Celibacy does not mean that desire is sinful; or sexual desire is sinful. The sexual desire, the union with opposite sex is natural. This is by instinct. This is the way of nature. But you want supreme consciousness. You have to go opposite to that nature.

You have a lot of energy in your head. You are letting this energy flow downwards. This is nature. The desire is very strong. But Mahavira, Buddha, *rishis*, celibates, the supporters of celibacy are telling us: “We have one system. By breath, we can bring up your whole energy to the top of the head – to the *sahasrar*.”

The main energy for life-force is *kundalini*. The main center of life is *sahasrar*, the top of the head. If you can bring up the *kundalini* energy to *sahasrar*, you get boundless and limitless happiness. This experience is described as “*atmarati*,” self is the divine male and the divine female on a spiritual plane. Then, physical sex becomes mud and worthless and desire for it is absorbed and does not have to be controlled or suppressed.



On Love and Beauty

Talk in Long Beach, CA, Winter 1984

Love is the first principle. When you feel so much love, then you can't forget it. Anywhere you go, love will inspire you, remind you, prepare you. Again and again you will remember it. Love is a beautiful thing.

“Love your body” – this is a good principle. But you are not loving your body. You have to analyze, with love, what is attachment. Many people spend a lot of money on make-up, shampoos and creams. I do not know the names of these things. But I have seen them in the bathrooms of rich persons' homes (and their bathrooms are as big as another person's house). There are hundreds of different bottles – something for eyes, something for lips, something for this and that. Something for hair, something for cleaning. But think deeply - this is not love, this is attachment.

Even if someone has used all kinds of make-up, can you compare this beauty with a flower? When a flower is blooming, how lovely! It is not using any make-up, is it? All beauty is coming naturally. You are a flower of nature. Don't think otherwise. If you really want to love, then watch. Watch with love, with peace, with balance. Watch, and you will develop more highly. If you are so attached, then watch. Love is a different thing. Love has no demands. Love is innocent. If there is demand, there is no love. Attachment means we want to occupy something. Look at this flower. If we have attachment, if we like it, then we want to pluck it from the plant, keep it and occupy it. We want to possess it. If we have love, then we want to leave it in the same situation. We will give it help to grow, become bigger and more healthy. We do not want to cut it or destroy it or make any problem. Love means to give help, to sacrifice. How much can you sacrifice? Love starts here.

When a person is reaching a higher state, he's not feeling any difference or separation between man, animal or any living being. Everything is the same. If you have love, it is not possible to treat inanimate objects harshly also. When you are loving and peaceful, and your actions and thoughts are perfect with love, then you can't treat anyone or anything negatively. If you have love inside, then you can't keep hate. If you have hate, you can't keep love. There is one saying, "The street of love is so narrow; there is only room for one." You can keep love, or you can keep hate – this is your choice. But it is not possible to keep both. One thing is available for you. Choose what you like.



Faith in Imagination

Years ago, after I gave a lecture in Ujjain, a young man came up to me. He was very bright and active and a beautiful orator. He told me, “Muniji, when you were giving the lecture, so many times I saw your hair standing up, and I was thinking, what was going on? Sometimes, light was appearing, and another time I saw what looked like Lord Parsvnath sitting behind your head. The face was so beautiful and peaceful. On top of your head, I saw the cobra snake!” The young man was talking and I was thinking – “This must be his imagination. I have so much love for Lord Parsvnath, but it is not possible he can appear like this!”

Then one day when I was sitting in meditation, something appeared. I felt a special presence but I had some doubt and was thinking I was my imagination. Slowly, I began to realize that imagination is a gift of supreme nature. All things are appearing in the world by imagination. It is not a simple thing, we must love and respect it. My attitude changed towards imagination. After that, I did not think that it was a false thing; I began to see that it is the beginning of reality. Now, this my firm faith, but without experiencing, you can't increase your confidence.

So many times, I talk inside with Lord Parsvnath. He is a perfect Siddha. You can't talk with him as an embodied being, but if your faith is perfect and strong, then he will appear. This is due to your will and your power of imagination. I decided by imagination, by will, by mediation, by visualization, we can make contact with the supreme powers. Imagination becomes reality.

Lord Mahavira did so much meditation, so his image, his vibration, his electric current is here – everywhere, even now. Then why can't we contact him? During the cow protection movement in 1966 in India when it was reaching its climax, one time I was thinking inside, “Lord Mahavira, am I doing good? Can we get success?” And the answer came clearly, “If you are honest in your purpose, success or failure is not so important, but sincerity, dedication and pure motive are. If you have perfect love in your purpose, then purpose is perfect.”

Imagination appeared in reality so many times in my life. I saw many small things and I saw very big things. I talked so many times with Dadaguru Jinchandra Suriiji Maharaj. He lived [more than] 800 years ago. I asked him hundreds of questions and he gave perfect answers. He was the one who told me that I would come to America and that I would establish many centers in the world. I talked with Maharaj Roop Chandji, who appeared to me many times in my life. Maharaj left his body more than 100 years ago.

In India, years ago, I was suffering from a 105 degree temperature in the hospital after an operation. I was feeling very sick – so much pain. I called on Roopchandji Maharaj and told him that I wanted to remove the fever (mostly in life, I did not do anything for myself. I did not use mantra for personal gains for self-healing). Maharaj told me, “Your karma is not finished. You have to suffer.” I asked him, “How can I believe you? Can you remove my pain for one hour?” He removed it instantly, but said, “In one hour, your fever and pain will return.” Then, he left. After that I was normal. The doctor checked me and my temperature was normal. I was walking around eating and talking and I forgot what Maharaj had said. Exactly one hour later, my fever returned to 105 degrees and the great pain again filled me.

One day in 1978 I visited a beautiful chapel in Hamilton, NY. It was very calm and quiet, and a comfortable place for meditation. Inside, there was a large crucifix. I sat for mediation and before long, I heard a voice saying: “I am accepting you. You will get all things, my disciple. You will get success, but it will take time...” I opened my eyes and saw the cross converting into Christ, and Christ converting into the cross. I was watching this, and blinking my eyes, but the figure of Christ was very much alive. He told me some things (which are to be kept secret), and he showed me my future.

These experiences have no concern with sect or religion, truth is truth, reality is reality. You are Christ, you are Krishna, you are Mahavira, Buddha, Parsvnath, Mohammed, you are God. You can contact the divine. In the first stages, have faith in your imagination, then you can convert yourself. You are divine.

Forget yourself, dissolve yourself into the divine object, and the object will appear in front of you.



Questions on Practice

Q: Guruji, would you say something about disciples comparing their practice with others? What about the feeling of inferiority or superiority?

Guruji: It is better not to discuss your experiences with others. You can talk to your Guru, or to another experienced practitioner whom your Guru suggests you can confide in. The problem is, many times, you can feel superiority. This is a danger when you are comparing yourself to inexperienced or ignorant people. Maybe they are your friends, but still you can feel superior if they do not have knowledge of these matters. This kind of ego will disturb you; it will destroy your practice. You will lose the fruit of your practice. It is better to think that anyone can have the same experiences as you, if they practice.

Q: And inferiority?

Guruji: Same thing – maybe you are talking with someone who has had a great experience, like one you never had. Then you can think, “Oh, I am so inferior. I will never make progress. I am full of negativities and I will never change.” If you are feeling this way, you are insulting your practice, you are insulting your Guru, and his tradition. It is better if you talk with your Guru or any proper person if you have any question or a special joy you want to express. Ultimately, there will be no need to discuss anything. You can drink the nectar of experience.



On The Absolute

Siddhachalam, Summer, 1984. Lecture in response to a question from a visiting professor of philosophy

We have a problem when we try to describe the Absolute. According to the Jain system, there are six principles of creation – soul, matter, space, action, rest and time. You say the Absolute is the cause of all sounds, colors, thoughts, smells, etcetera, but you do not know the meaning of Absolute. We began our relation with this world through sound, but in the level beyond sound there is no relation with this world or nature.

What is the Absolute of a tree? It is the seed. But what is the Absolute of the seed? Seed is tree and tree is ultimately seed. This is expansion and contraction manifesting in all of nature. And when you go deeper into seed of seed, seed of seed, seed of seed – you find the same reality in all. Like a molecule or atom – there is a whole world in a molecule, the same world in the subtlest form of existence.

The term Absolute will create many misconceptions. Like “God” and “karma” – in the name of God, how much violence has been committed throughout the world. The same is true with karma. Through religious beliefs many problems are solved, but many confusions also arise.

Why have some people accepted the theory of karma? If you are not accepting “God,” then you have to accept Karma. Karma is a more polished, more intellectual answer to the questions of man and the world. And the “God” answer is devotional. You have to believe blindly. Who created this world? God. Okay, problem is over. But nobody is thinking who created God.

...We use the term Absolute, but we are talking about our own thoughts. And thought is very gross. If you do not have much vocabulary, you have little thought. You have no dream in your life. All dreams are based on your language. You can't think without words. Then the meaning is - you have some vocabulary.

Animals have small vocabulary, then their thinking is small. If you have a great vocabulary, then your thinking is great.

There are so many social and political problems because of this Absolute term. Nationalist pride can create feelings of great prejudice and superiority. You have a boundary and within that boundary, you say "This is our country." What is the meaning of this? When raw materials for industry, natural resources, and food supplies are coming from other countries - we are all inter-dependent. But if you want to fight, if you want to rule, then conflicts start. What is our country? Our country is our mother. The earth is our mother. That we can agree on. The earth is giving everything we need. But we create boundaries - "This is my country! This is my culture!" And if someone crosses you, you will fight. If you can't rule the whole earth, then you have to make some problems for others. And nations fight each other.

We are [also] creating this with the term Absolute. Some people are against the term "God," and others are scared of atheism. So now we have a new word - Absolute. This is your intellectual God. But look at this ignorance - you are using the word Absolute, then you are saying all things are coming from it. If it is Absolute, then it is not producing anything. If anything is the cause of anything, then what is this - cause and effect. This is nature. How is it Absolute? The Absolute is "*Paratpar Brahma*," which means beyond cause and effect. It is the same thing when we say God is perfect and complete, and then we say he created the world. Without desire, who can create? Desire can't come without incompleteness. If you are complete - then how can you have desire? When we have eaten enough food that our stomachs are full, we can't eat more. We have no desire. After some time, desire can start again. Or if we are missing some special taste, desire for that taste can come. Food desire can come, sex desire, any desire can come, but only if you are missing something, if there is a deficiency. Is God missing something?

Here we have a big story - God was alone, and he wanted to become "more." The desire came to create. Then he planned, using knowledge. He started to work, but how is he working? He has no hands. If he has hands, then he has body. If he has body, he took birth. If he took birth, then he will die. If he is caught in the

birth and death cycle, then he is not God. How is he working? Is he working by will? But how did the will start if he is Absolute? He is Absolute? And he's creating smells? He's creating thoughts? He is the cause of sound? Sound means vibration, and if something is vibrating then this is matter. This is not Absolute. We are putting ash in the eyes of the people and using the word Absolute...Absolute means there is no vibration, no pulsation, no cause and effect, no rest, motion, time or space. Absolute means there is nothing. We can't describe it. This is "*Anant Paratpar Brahma*." It has no beginning and no end. It is beyond all. Om Arhum!



Who Is a Religious Man

Some people define a religious man as one who goes to church or temple. Are these buildings the source of religion? You go there and you are now a religious person, and when you come out you are not?

In India, people are required to leave their shoes outside before entering a temple or holy place. There is a big problem there – of shoe thieves! So, you go in and worship and pray to God, and when you come back, you will not find your shoes!

If a religious person is one who goes to temple, then maybe the shoe thieves are very religious – they are always there!

No. Church will not give help if you are not a religious man. You must think how you reunite with your true self. Religion means "dharma" or nature. What is your true nature? Follow this. You separated, my dear, from your true nature. Come back to your original source.



On Spirituality and Mantra

Siddhachalam, February 1988

People frequently ask, “What is spirituality?” In ancient times people felt that spirituality was something that worked from the spirit. That is, they felt that the spirit was the soul. Basically, they connected the subtle body with different types of energy. When their inner energy began to move and they felt vibrations, they were able to receive and perceive clarity concerning their questions in life. They called this energy spirit. Eventually, their concept of spirit became known as spirituality. All of us have the capability to call on any spirit, great, small, lower or higher – any kind of spirit. We all have the power to connect with this type of energy.

There is a story about a devotee who went to the Himalayas to seek the answer to the question of spirituality and to know about himself. Eventually, he found a Guru, a Master, and asked: “My Guru, I came here with great difficulty. But I cast off all things to find only one answer.” The Guru was in deep meditation but finally said “My dear child, what is your question?” The devotee asked, “What is the definition of spirituality?” The Guru laughed and replied, “My dear son, you don’t understand. Listen. Someone can describe spirituality to you 100,000 times over and over and still you will not completely understand this concept. But then, even the Guru does not completely understand! This is spirituality.”

In reality though, spirituality means different things to most people. It is as difficult as deciding on how the world began. Even here, the scientist cannot agree on one theory. We know that the amoeba was the first form of life on earth. But what is life? Life force is sperm and sperm is life force. By *prana* we can produce life force. *Prana* is the base of life force. The chemical composition of our life force is 20% oxygen, 74% nitrogen, 4% carbon and 1% miscellaneous elements. But we still don’t know the real root of our life force. We still don’t know how it began on earth.

According to the Jain system, there are two types of energy or life force. This energy is called *Ayu* or age. This type of energy is connected with our causal body or our unconscious mind. The unconscious mind is connected with the base of our spine, the *muladhara*. As this point, we produce two types of power – one is the life force and the other is the power of speech. Ultimately, scientists have found that life force, speech, thoughts, breath, light, color, and electricity are no different. They are the same form of energy only functioning at different vibrational frequencies. You can convert any of these things into another. You can convert color into light, and you can convert thoughts into color. You can convert your life force into electricity.

We all possess two types of current, electric and magnetic. Our brain produces the first type, electric. Our brain is capable of creating, producing or manufacturing this chemical type of power. But the second type, or magnetic current, cannot be produced chemically. Our *pranic* force or magnetic power is a gift. This type of energy is a mystery. It is the healing force, the life force within us. Most devotees are not seeking the knowledge of electrical current, what they are seeking is knowledge of the magnetic or healing current.

Our bodies cannot function without electric current. However, when healing takes place, it comes from magnetic current. We must learn to draw upon magnetic current (*pranic* force) in order to stimulate the electric current within us so that our bodies can heal themselves. It is like being able to transform OM into MO or MONA into NAMO. It is this creation or transformation of energy which allows healing to take place.

Let me explain further. A disease means that one part of our body loses its connection with the brain. For example, the brain orders the knee to work. The knee says “No, forget it. I don’t want to listen. You have misused my power, misused my strength. Forget cooperation. I am separate from the rest of the body. I will not join the group.” This means that the brain and the knee are fighting – this is a disease. In reality though, it is only an obstacle. And obstacle of energy can produce a disease. It is the lack of

electricity along the backbone which prevents the body part from receiving the signal (electricity). But the real lack of energy takes place in the *sushumna*. The current from this channel affects our subtle or light body. Through meditation, we can draw prana or magnetic current into the *sushumna*. If the magnetic or *pranic* current is missing, the brain will not be able to send energy to other parts of the body that require extra help.

All diseases are due to obstacles or improper movement of energy. If energy moves properly, no disease will result. When the body is healing, it says, "Knee, be good." We send a love message or special type of electricity (*prana*) to the knee. Soon the knee will feel some attractions or love for the spiritual or *pranic* healing force. When the *prana* begins to work, it occupies the brain and healing can begin to take place. This is also the secret of the *mantra* – any *mantra*.

We can awaken our own energy for healing. Anyone can be a healer. When we remove our ego, our existence, when we don't think about ourselves, then we can be healers. If you think "I am a healer," you won't be able to heal. Forget yourself, become a channel or a medium. When you apply this type of healing, magnetic current will occupy you. You will feel so many vibrations. Anybody can be healed with this type of power. Forget yourself completely, dissolve yourself, merge into an Ocean of Love. Ultimately you will be a channel. The energy will come and then you can heal anyone.

But spirituality is more than just reaching toward the *pranic* force. According to Raja Yoga, Buddha, Patanjali and Jain systems, spirituality means awakening or awareness. It doesn't matter what type of activity you are engaged in, shopping, working, cooking, meditations, etc. – if you work with awareness, this constitutes spirituality. In our literature we see and read of the great masters doing different types of work. We see pictures of Lords Krishna and Mahavir meditating. We also see pictures of Christ doing work. All of the great masters worked with awareness and focus – this is spirituality.

It is only our minds that make us think that meditating is more spiritual than physical work. But whether you work or meditate,

only do one thing at a time; this is the rule. If you are working, concentrate. Do not talk with others, do not waste your energy. Always focus and concentrate your mind on only one work – then you are a Yogi, then you are spiritual.

But we ask why meditation is important. Our mind has the habit to run, to collect thoughts like a dumpster. We fill our minds with bad or dirty thoughts. By meditation one to two hours daily, we can fill our minds with pure, clean thoughts. Our mind will become a temple of God. Our mind is so powerful. If you meditate, you can change anything in the world. Mind power is a big thing. But if we don't care and [instead] fill our minds with useless, careless thoughts, the mind will become difficult to control. People today have great difficulty in stopping or controlling their minds because their negativity rules them.

When reading the history of society, we see so much fighting and killing based on just one thought "I am superior to you." This is how so many people think. Look at what happened to the people in Africa. The men, women and children were collected, chained and sold to other nations. They were beaten, killed or enslaved in the name of superiority. This type of torture is going on in Africa, in America, in India or anywhere in the world. There is no country in the world where one person did not torture another person. By war, man has done so much; by slavery he has done so much; by wealth he has done so much; but most, in the name of religion he has done so many negative things. The maximum amount of torture in this world has been done in the name of religion. Religion can be the purest thing – but it also has been a big poison for the world. In the name of religion, people think that they are superior. They think "I am a Jain, I am a Buddhist, I am a Christian," and so on. Religion should be a uniting force. Instead, in the name of religion entire societies have been divided. These are our habits, this is how we think. We all think that we are different, that we are separate. We do different jobs, we have different organizations, we belong to different communities. Ultimately none of us are superior or better. We are all one.

My dear, by spirituality we mean awareness and awakening. If you are aware of yourself, if you focus your entire concentration

on one work at a time, if you can accept all as one, then you are spiritual.

When we recite a *mantra*, it can be any *mantra* or rhythmic chanting, we receive so much help. The *mantra* vibrates and inspires different parts of the body. You can open and awake yourself. This is a mysterious system of the physical and subtle bodies. Ultimately, you will unlock your causal body. You are purifying yourself. You are removing all negativities – the kind of materials that cause problems, diseases, negativities, obstacles or sickness. Begin by chanting OM – beautiful OM!



On Karma

Karma² is the basic principle of Jainism. Jains do not say that God is the creator.

God is the absolute pure state of consciousness. Each soul has the power to achieve this state and to become perfect. Only problem is karma. That is the big difference between God and you. God is beyond all kinds of bondage. You have karma. If you can remove all the karma, you can get total liberation. That is moksha. Moksha means total liberation.



² Editor: Karma in Jainism does not have the commonly understood meaning of the term. Instead, it refers to a form of defilement of the soul – as if coal dust that dulls a luminescent object. Presence of karma signifies bondage of the soul and is responsible for the endless cycle of life and rebirth. Karma arises from attachment and aversion and passions such as anger, greed, lust, jealousy, conceit and deceit.

On Forgiveness

Delivered on Samvatsari, the festival of forgiveness

*Khamemi Savve Jiva
Savve Jiva Khamantu Me
Metti Me Savve Bhuyesu
Veram Majjham N Kenai*

I grant forgiveness to all living beings
All living beings grant me forgiveness.
My friendship extends to all living beings
In me, enmity is totally non-existent.

We are connected consciously and unconsciously with all living beings – angels, bugs, grass, birds, etc. We all come from the same source and just as one has to soften the land before planting seeds, we must soften our hearts and minds completely before feelings of friendship can grow within ourselves. This is one of the meanings of universal friendship: I am forgiving everyone, and if I did some wrong, please grant me forgiveness—no matter when this deed occurred, yesterday or centuries ago.

I like universal friendship. I do not want to have enemies and only keep one, two or three friends. No, no! I want a universal friendship with all living beings. I have no space in my heart for separateness and disputes. Woodchucks, trees, life in any form and shape—they are not my brothers but myself. I feel oneness with all. May the gods and Siddhas – the perfected, discarnate beings – witness this: I have finished with all feelings of bitterness, hate and attachments – all causes of bondage. I am not ignorant anymore; I am not collecting karmic particles any longer. At this point in time I have finished with all of this. My consciousness expands, and I feel oneness with all forms of life.



Total Survival or Total Destruction

*Guruji's message for
seminar October 1988*

Thought is force. Thought has unlimited power. You are what you think. Anyone can achieve complete success by spiritual awareness. 2,500 years ago, Lord Mahavir gave this perfect truth: "All mankind is one. There is no superiority or inferiority, no caste or creed" – no Caucasian or Aryan. Weather conditions in various areas may have produced amounts of pigmentation as far as our skin is concerned, but since our systems of birth and death are the same, our smiling and weeping is the same, our reactions to pain and pleasure are similar, how can we make distinctions by caste, color or religion? A cow's skin may be red; white or black but the milk is the same.

If all the nations of the world can accept the principle of nonviolence, who will attack? If no country is ready to attack there will be no problem between China or Pakistan and India or between Iran and Iraq.

Mankind is like a big lake. If someone puts poison in any part of the lake, all the water will become poisonous and people will die. It is not possible to poison only a portion of the lake and expect the people on that portion to die and those on other portions to survive. Total survival and total destruction are related. Science has advanced to such a degree that all mankind on this planet must either die together or all must survive together.

It is time to stop the sinful waste of money which is being poured into the production of instruments of destruction. This money should be used for the betterment of the world, mankind and all living beings. It is the perfect time for people to begin to understand the need for nonviolence. Mankind has suffered much from world wars. They understand the result of fighting and destruction. It is time to practice peace and awareness, to achieve perfection and total enlightenment. We must stand. We must not sleep. We must awake and stand but not with weapons. We must fight for the betterment of society – not with weapons. We must

fight for the betterment of society – not for jealousy or destruction. Inside each of us there is a violent army disturbing us. Anger, jealousy, ego, greed, desire and madness of thoughts comprise this army. We must organize a stronger nonviolent army of peace, contentment, realization, complete health, bliss and total *samadhi* [a state of meditation]. We must work for peaceful coexistence and universal brotherhood. We will march for the betterment of mankind. Then we will accept a nonviolent system of society where there is no lord and no servant. We will help each other and be friendly to one another.

The days have gone when the nonsensical principle of killing or survival was upheld. We must help one another. The whole world is existing through and by mutual help. We are all interdependent. Without trees no living being can survive. Trees are converting the minerals of nature in edible fruit. Mankind cannot survive without animals. Animals are eating what is excess and sending it back into nature. The cycle of the universe is going on with the help of trees and animals as both poles, north and south. This is the main energy center. If one pole would become weak and create imbalance, the whole cycle would be destroyed. If you want to live, then you must be ready to live and let live. We all have to accept it and now is the time. The U.N. is thinking of human rights. We must think about animal rights and ecology rights; without the animals and the trees, we can't survive.

If we even think about destruction, the negative thoughts create a vibration that could destroy our whole system. Lord Mahavira taught we must practice oneness by body, mind and word. Feel oneness with all living beings and expand yourself. When you experience the universal feeling that all is one and one is all – that is enlightenment. That is universal man – superman. Jainism is calling such a universal man “Arihant.” *Arihant* means the superman who has awakened all extrasensory perception. Christ-consciousness, bodhisattva or avatar – all mean the same thing. We are awaiting the birth of a superman who has all powers of mercy, survival, love and oneness, but the basic idea is nonviolence. That is the beginning. If you think about others, they will think about you. What you do not want for yourself, do not do to others. When you feel oneness with all, jealousy, anger and

greed, the army of Satan, cannot exist. The time has come when we must decide either for total survival or total destruction. If we accept violence in any form, we cannot expect the world to survive. If we want total survival, the only way is to feel oneness with all living beings – love, brotherhood and coexistence. Nonviolence is the guarantee for world peace and world existence.

IMJM and the Jain Society of Toronto have my blessings and good wishes for their admirable work in organizing this seminar on nonviolence. I think this seminar will show the path of peace and inspire oneness.

Om Peace! Om Shanti!



Random Quotes

Language is our best method of teaching but it is only at the gross level and cannot express our experiences, it can only indicate.

When the body is completely relaxed, then naturally the mind will relax.

A great leader is measured by his capacity to tolerate. Praise the good qualities in other and tolerate their faults. Develop your own good qualities. In order to compromise with anyone, you have to be ready to tolerate difficult situations and the faults of others.



On Volunteering

Siddhachalam is becoming increasingly popular, and it is important to us that all people who embrace ahimsa (non-violence) see this place as their special retreat they can come to.

In order to operate efficiently and have clean and comfortable facilities available for everyone, the help and support of ALL PEOPLE — visitors and residents alike – is urgently needed. Whether it is picking up after oneself, cleaning the cabins, or washing the dishes after a meal, it is necessary that EVERYONE is pitching in to help.

All our residents are volunteers who give their time freely and selflessly, and we strongly recommend and encourage that our visitors, too, should see themselves as volunteers and part of our community and be ready and willing to donate some of their time to do this special service of *Karma Yoga*. Not only will all the work get done much faster and leave more time for recreational activities, but this loving service will also promote a more intimate and friendly atmosphere between guests and residents. It has been our experience that we all may start working together as strangers but during the course of the work soon become friends. In addition, this selfless service helps to draw our eastern and western cultures closer together which is part of Siddhachalam's purpose – we are an international community based on the concept that everyone is equal and every culture has benefits to offer.

One of things most needed here is the volunteer work. This also will keep the spirit of ahimsa alive: the simple act of dropping a piece of litter to the ground instead of into the waste basket and polluting the environment with unnecessary noise are acts of violence done to our environment as a whole and to Siddhachalam in particular. VISITORS AND RESIDENTS – all are volunteers – and both can show proper respect to Siddhachalam and the environment by volunteering their time and helping hands whenever and wherever it is needed in the spirit of the selfless service of *Karma Yoga*.



On Jainism and Existence of Soul

October 1988

The question whether humans and other living beings indeed possess a soul, i.e. an immortal, eternal and invisible essence as the unifying factor between all beings, has been a controversial issue for many centuries, particularly in the Western world. At all times, doubts and arguments have been voiced to disclaim the existence of the soul, the main reason being that no one is actually able to see the soul. Especially those among us who were born and raised in Western societies usually learn very soon in their lives only to believe what they can see or at least hear, feel, touch or smell. In short, one – if not more – of our five sense organs ought to be activated in order to perceive something as existent and, therefore, real.

Philosophers and sages from both East and West usually counter argue with the statement that the soul is a self-contained entity, and that its existence is well-proven. However, because it is formless, it is not perceptible to the eyes nor to any of the other four sense organs. Since Jainism endorses the reality of the soul, how does Jaina defend their point of view?

Basically, Jain philosophers contend that there is no reason to disbelieve what is imperceptible to us; after all, if someone asks us if our ancestors have ever really existed, we certainly would answer in the affirmative even though we have never seen them with our own eyes. But judging from our own existence, we conclude that they must have existed as well. How can we see the root of a plant? We know there has to be one, simply because of the fact that the plant is alive and thriving; it grows leaves, flowers and fruit. Therefore, we hold the viewpoint that the root is the necessary cause of the effect (the plant). This effect is one of the actions of the soul (*atma*), i.e. one of the ways in which the soul manifests itself, it is said in the Jain teaching. It is perceptible in a living human because he moves, walks, plays and works in various ways. He even thinks – which is not possible for a dead human. A split-second before death actually occurs, one can still see movements – however subtle – in a human body; conversely,

after the person has died, all movements will have ceased. From this, so the Jain philosophers argue, it would be evident that, a) there is a soul residing in each human body, b) the soul goes away when the body dies, and c) there is no soul in a dead body. In this way, the effect of the existence of the soul is obviously perceptible to us, and therefore, we should be able to comprehend the reality of such an immortal essence.

Jainism maintains that the body is the abode of the soul. The resident who dwells in a house is distinct and separate from the house. If this house should collapse or the period of tenancy comes to an end, the resident will leave the house and, presumably, start to live somewhere else in another dwelling. It is the same with the soul. When the duration of time of the existence of the soul in the body comes to an end, that same soul goes away to another place (which is determined by a person's deeds in this and past lives), i.e. it will live in another body until that lifespan is over at which point the entire process will be repeated according to the law of *karma*. In this way, the line of births and deaths continue on and on until the circle of rebirths is finished.

The eternal question of "Who am I?" automatically establishes the existence of a soul. A material thing such as a table, cloth, or vessel doesn't have any perception that it exists. Only when there is a soul in the body does it speak such words as "I am happy" or "I am sad," or is able to feel any emotions and sensations at all, because knowledge is an attribute of the soul only — not of physical matter. Why can't dead humans see? It is because the eye is not able to see by itself; it is the soul that sees the utility of eye as an instrument. Just as the fire in firewood and the yogurt in milk are not perceptible to us though latent in them, the soul is also not perceptible even though it exists in the body.

In summation, then, the main argument for the existence of the soul according to Jainism is that although we are not able to directly perceive the soul with our ordinary five senses, we are able to perceive the effects (actions) of the soul without which all living beings would cease to exist as such. And this perception of the ways in which the soul manifests itself is seen in Jainism as a proof that it truly exists.



Jain Unity

November 1986

It has been my life's experience that no good can come from sectarianism or groupism. By sectarianism, we are spoiling the purpose of religion. Religion means reunite with your true self. *Dharma* means, to follow your true nature. But when we are involved in sectarianism, naturally we forget the meaning of Dharma and forget the *Arihants*.

Unfortunately, for 2,000 years of Jain history, many religious authorities have promoted sects rather than one common religion. Some are working for religion, but sects divide us and pull us back to narrow-mindedness.

Now is the time to make a change. We must focus on non-violence. We are children of the *Arihantas*, and worshipper of the *Namokar Mantra*. We see this universe as the essence of the six substances. Lord Mahavira and Lord Parsvnath taught self-realization through yogic practice, the unity of all living beings, and the purification of our *karma*. Health, self-realization and total bliss – this is the purpose of [religious] practice as described by the *Arihantas*.

When we involve in narrow-mindedness, we neglect this purpose. Many monks have spread the message of non-violence and the yoga of the *Arihantas*. But unfortunately, we could not maintain continuity due to fear of sectarian rules and regulations.

In Lord Parsvnath's and Lord Mahavira's time, their preaching was spread to many corners of the world when disciple monks traveled extensively. According to 8th c. [and later] accounts – Harivamsa-purana by *Acharya* Jinasen and Jnanarnava by *Acharya* Shubhachandra – these teachings were spread not only in India but elsewhere in Asia, in the Far East, the Middle East, Africa, Greece and the Balkan countries. It is unfortunate that this system was not maintained.

Now is the time for Jain clergy and laity to become more active and work to spread the teaching of the *Arihantas*. Jainism is the only religion where there is no system of conversion. Any Christian, Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist can also be a Jain – as long as he or she has total faith in non-violence. It is a matter of a change of heart – to awaken mercy and feel oneness with all living beings.

There are nearly 500,000 Jains residing outside of India in Asia, Africa, North America and Europe. Now bold steps must be taken to unite, educate and enlighten all brothers and sisters. This is the purpose of the World Jain Congress and the International Jain Conferences. And specifically, through the efforts of the Indo-American Conference, we are working to increase communication between India and America.

Accomplishments have been made with the founding of the international center, Siddhachalam, and the establishment of more Jain societies and temples throughout the United States and Canada. Each individual must make efforts to spread the teaching of non-violence, then the time will not be far when we can find Jain ashrams, temples and centers all over the world.

My thanks and blessing to all sincere devotees who are working on local, national international scales to bring about a greater sense of unity among Jains.



Meaning of the Arhum Yoga Logo



In order to describe the meaning of the logo, we must describe the meaning of Om, Hreem, Arhum. These three interrelated sounds symbolize knowledge of the eternal, the internal and the Supreme. They are Right Knowledge (Arhum), Right Faith (Om) and Right Conduct (Hreem).

Visualize the picture of Hreem, Om, Arhum. First, on the outside is Hreem, this is the universe, nature and the five elements. Then within this is Om whose positive energy moves in one direction to the Supreme completely, wholeheartedly. In the center there is an unmoving flame of fire burning brightly. This is Arhum, the power of the soul. This is the Arhant, the soul in its perfected state.

The meaning is that you are the universe... Hreem, your entire energy is Om, and your soul is realizing its highest state of perfection... Arhum. By this system you can know the world, you can see how energy moves, and you can see your Self-how all powers are awakening. Watch...and awake yourself.

Sound is the base of this knowledge. When you will see reality, then you will understand that this is the complete picture of the Supreme – omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent.



SoHum Practice

As taught by Guruji

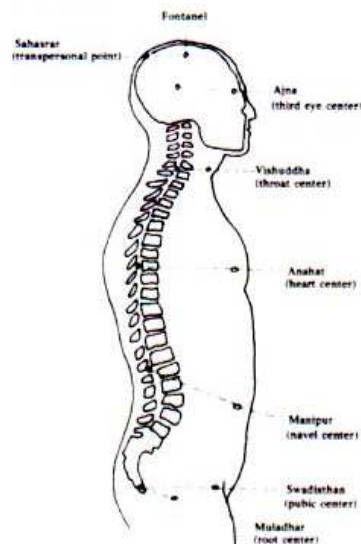
Excerpted from instructions given to ashram residents and Arhum Yoga camp attendees, Siddhachalam, Blairstown, NJ in the 1980s

SOHUM translates as “I am That.”

Technique

Imagine sound of “So” coming into the body with inhalation from 36 fingers’* distance from the tip of the nose. “So” enters by the tip of the nose and moves with the breath to the fontanel [center of head], the sahasrar [top of head],

The following diagram shows general spinal and frontal body locations of the chakras.



medulla oblongata and down the sushumna [central nerve in spine] to the root of the navel. At that point, “So” converts into “Hum” going up the same path. From navel to tip of the nose is also 36 fingers’ distance. Figure 1, source: Song of the Soul, Acharya Sushil Kumar, page 54, © Siddhachalam 1987.

In the beginning, you must use your imagination to hear the sound of the breath as “So” and “Hum,” but after some time, you will actually hear it.

Comments and Variations

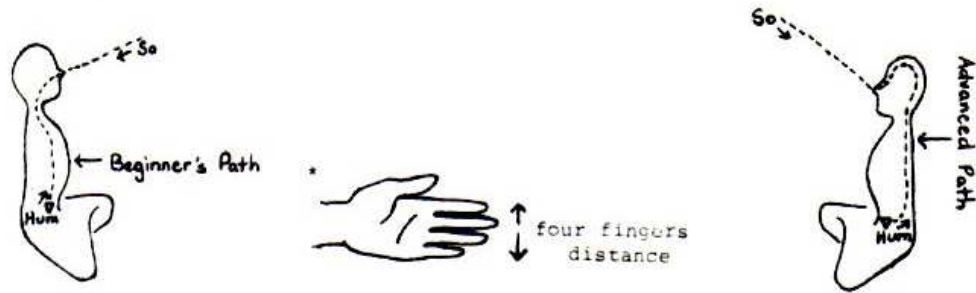
This practice will have a great energizing effect. “So” represents water and moon energy. “Hum” represents fire or sun energy. The power of the second sound influences the end result of the practice. Therefore, Sohum practice may be too stimulating for some (with its great fire influence), and Guruji will have to recommend Humso practice having a more peaceful water influence.

There are many variations to Sohum practice. For the beginner, the breath can simply be visualized as entering the nostrils and

following the common path through chest and abdomen and then to the root of the navel (since it may be difficult for a beginner to tune into the sushumna path). The breath then exits the same simple path – from abdomen to chest and out the nostrils.

Another variation is the visualization of the Sanskrit letters for “So” and “Hum” (see above), with the letters moving in and out with the breath.

Sohum practice is a “ajapa jap” or repetition without repetition. The breath is considered the universal mantra. With Sohum practice, there is an inner mala [rosary] of 108 “beads.” The breath moves the distance of 108 fingers widths in one round. From space to tip of nose is 36 fingers, from tip of nose to the root of the navel is 36 fingers, and back to tip of nose again is 36 fingers – totaling 108.



Sohum practice is meditation and it is very subtle prananyama. Lord Mahavira himself was practicing this type of meditation. Through Sohum practice, one experiences the mind, breath and mantra moving as one. And according to the Acharang Sutra [the first canonical literature of the followers of Lord Mahavira, the Jina, also called Tirthankar – the one who makes the ford from this life to moksha], the following can also be attained:

1. The realization of past lives
2. Knowledge of past and future
3. Knowledge of inner anatomy by direct experience and realization of the elf as a microcosm
4. Mastery of inner body and awakening of energy.





What's So Special About Siddhachalam

The Significance of Siddhachalam in the History of Jains

By Jaipat Singh Jain

A frequent observation of yatris (pilgrims) to Siddhachalam is that they find peace and calm here. “There is something special about this place,” note many a yatris. “I like to come here again and again.” A song composed by a devotee has a line that says: “...*dhyaan se dekho Guru milenge Siddhachalam ke karn-karn main*” (search and you will find the Guru here in every grain).

Every once in a while, we receive a yatri who narrates, or a letter from an ashram resident or yatri from many years ago that relates, a miracle-like experience involving Guruji. These constantly tease the curious. Then, there is a legion of those who have a special relationship with Siddhachalam. Like the admirers who come every month on fixed days or the old-time ashram resident who sends a fixed check every month, each for as long as one can remember. And thanks to personal coincidences that are too numerous to relate here, even skeptics like me over the years became a faithful.

A transformative moment for me came during one of my weekend explorations of our forested areas. This occurred before the trails were reopened to the public. There was something special about that area. It drew me in again and again, including on weekdays.

I might enter it in a confused state of mind but would invariably find repose and resolve. It soon became my favorite area. On enquiry, I learned that Guruji frequently meditated here. For me, what followed was a restless period of further enquiry followed by confirmation. The area has since then been reopened to yatris and is called “*Guruji’s Tapasya Sthal*” (Guruji’s meditation place). A life-size *pratima* (statue) of Guruji sits on a beautiful trail close by.

All this make one pause and wonder: what’s so special about Siddhachalam? As times roll by and those with first-hand experience of being with Guruji gradually recede, is it possible that the significance of Siddhachalam to the modern history of Jainism might be lost? That would be unfortunate.



The lake at Siddhachalam is made from waters flowing from springs throughout the ashram. Guruji often held camps by a pool adjacent to the lake. After Guruji, the pool area went into disuse, but the lake continues to come alive with lotuses, water lilies and birds during spring and summer.

Guruji Opens Doors

Notwithstanding references in literature of Bhagwaan Mahavira having crossed river Ganga by boat at least 17 times after becoming a monk, of Jain ascetics and scholars having traveled to distant lands during the times of Bhagwaan Parsvnath¹ and Bhagwaan Mahavira, and of Jain influence in those lands, monks’

¹ Bhagwaan Parsvnath preceded Bhagwaan Mahavira (599-527 BC) by 250 years. He was the 23rd of the 24 *Jinas* (conquerors). Jains are the followers of *Jinas*.

crossing of the oceans or travel other than by foot has been a taboo in Jainism. Walking barefoot thousands of miles across the length and breadth of India is a hallowed tradition. It has many auspicious consequences, including the greater opportunity for ascetics to reflect, and of lay people to meet with them in their local surroundings.



While on his way to Rajagraha from Surabh pura, Bhagwaan Mahavira had to cross the river Ganga in a boat. Serpent prince Sudamstra bore a grudge against Bhagwaan, as the serpent prince – who was then a lion – was killed by Bhagwaan Mahavira in one of their previous lives. In order to have his revenge, the serpent prince created a terrible cyclonic storm by his magical powers. The boat rocked by the huge waves of the river Ganga, the mast was broken, and pandemonium prevailed everywhere. But Bhagwaan remained seated calmly and serenely, deeply absorbed in meditation. Two gods of nether regions, Kambala and Sambala, came to know and rushed to the spot. They drove away Sudamstra and the storm subsided. All aboard the boat bowed before Lord Mahavira with great respect and gratitude, as they were convinced they owed their lives to the presence of the great saint. Plate 31, Tirthankar Bhagawan Mahavira Illustrated, Munishri Yashovijayji Ma Sa. Copyright Jain Chitrakala Nidarshan Samiti 1974. Reproduced with permission.

For his decisions, Guruji drew inspiration from great saints of the past such as Manidhari Shri Jinchandrasuriji Maharaj (Dada Guru) and Roop Chandji Maharaj. Guruji said that he communicated with them in the course of his meditations. In a video recording available at Siddhachalam, Guruji says that Dada Guru instructed him to travel outside India and spread the message of Bhagwaan Mahavira. Guruji, it seems, initially resisted the instructions.

At that time, Guruji was an enormously respected monk, not just by Jains but by all, including successive prime ministers and presidents of India. Traveling by air outside the country could result in excommunication by some among the Jain community. Yet, for too long, the message of the *Arihants* had remained largely shut to the outside world. Also, the institution founded by Bhagwaan Mahavira comprised of monks, nuns, laymen and lay women. Yet, hundreds of thousands of Jains had migrated to foreign lands and there was no monk or nun amidst them.

On the occasion of national celebrations to mark 2,500 years of the moksha of Bhagwaan Mahavira, Guruji made a daring announcement: he shall break the taboo against travel by use of mechanical means and will cross the oceans. He openly invited discussion on the scriptures.

On June 17, 1975, Guruji boarded an aircraft to travel to the United States. **That solitary act is probably the most significant event in the history of Jainism in modern times.** It opened doors for all times to come for monks and nuns to use mechanical means of travel, including for travel outside India.

During his travels, Guruji helped found many organizations and communities across the globe that engage in promoting *ahimsa* and *anekantvada*. In the tradition of great teachers and saints, Guruji generated in all, regardless of sect or faith, a profound love and respect for ahimsa, respect for all forms of life, peace, brotherhood and desire to grow spiritually. His manner of communication was simple, direct and practical. His message did not need the crutches of sophistry or elaborate scholarship because it was based on truths he had personally experienced and realized as a great yogi and saint. And anybody who came in contact with him experienced the force of his aura, wisdom and effect on

oneself. They said that their misgivings, doubts and worries melted away in his presence.

Acharyapad

On March 1, 1980, Guruji visited with *Rashtra Sant* Upadhaya Kavi Amar Muniji MS in Rajgir, the city Bhagwaan Mahavira most observed His *chaturmasa* (the four-months during monsoon when Jain monks restrict movement). It was purnima (full moon) on the eve of Holi, a festival of joy. On that day at Rajgir, at a large public event, Amar Muniji and other gathered ascetics² and members of the laity formally declared Guruji an Acharya.

The news was followed by similar declarations from different *sanghs* and leaders of Jain sects. Felicitation events held were presided by the President of India,³ cabinet ministers, and leaders of various faiths and orders. Ivory and white shawls were symbolically placed on Guruji's shoulders and declaratory messages from heads of several Jain sects and other faiths were read in large public events.⁴ Jain "church" had come to acknowledge that the role of Jain ascetic had been irreversibly redefined in ways once considered revolutionary.

² The word *acharya* is derived from *acharan*, meaning conduct. An acharya is one whose conduct indicates exemplary mastery over inner enemies. The event was presided by Pandit-Ratna Vijay Muniji MS, scholar-monk Shri Rakesh Muniji MS of the Terapanth Sangh, and Shri Chandanaji MS (later Acharya) of Veeraytan, among others.

³ March 29, 1987 when *Arhat Sangh*, founded by Guruji, was formally launched.

⁴ Notably, from Acharya Deshbhushanji of the Digambar order, Acharya Anand Rishiji of the Sthanakwasi Shraman order, Acharya Padamsagar Suriji and Acharya Yashodev Suriji Maharaj of the Swetambar Murtipujak Tapogach Sangh, and Acharya Jinudaysagar Suriji Maharaj of the Swetambar Murtipujak Khattargach Sangh, among others.



Guruji with children at a camp

Siddhachalam Tirth

Siddhachalam, Guruji said, is the place he had seen in his vision when he was around 15 years old.⁵ He saw a place with many shrines in homage to the Siddhas.⁶ More than four decades later, in 1983, the site of present-day Siddhachalam was an abandoned children's camp. It was also a site of battle between the natives and the colonizers. Guruji, however, created here a tempest of sorts as the place resonated daily in the chanting of Namokar and other mantras, including those that he crafted, as he went about transforming it with his power of meditation and mantras into a sacred place of pilgrimage. The haunted land soon became suffused with his energy and vibrations. Soon, it came to be regarded as a place of pilgrimage.

⁵ When I was Fourteen or Fifteen, Acharya Sushil Kumarji Maharaj, 1998, page 4.

⁶ This might appear surprising to some because Guruji was a monk in the Sthanakvasi tradition. Sthanakvasi reject temple-going. Guruji, however, was an iconoclast in the tradition of great reformers who sought to bring people together, often in chanting, prayer, meditation and lectures.



After an extended period of intense meditation soon after founding Siddhachalam, Guruji explained as follows:

The land has already taken the sacrifice of so many people. Long ago it was a battlefield. Much blood was shed.

In the past, people fought among themselves. But now, we will fight with inner enemies as Lord Mahavira did.

We must sacrifice our comforts, devote our time and work hard.⁷

Guruji made Siddhachalam an ashram for all who believe in ahimsa, regardless of sect or faith. He also made it a protected land for animals, birds and nature. That tradition continues. Siddhachalam contains several bird-feed stations and a peacock

⁷ Siddhachalam Newsletter, December 3, 1983. Siddhachalam has three goals – to promote education on ahimsa and anekantavada, to be a place of pilgrimage and self-discovery, and to foster in the community the spirit of loving, selfless service.

aviary. All animals, including wild animals like bears, have unimpeded access and protected living in the ashram. And each winter, more than 25,000 pounds of corn and warm drinking water is made available to deer, other animals, and birds. For Guruji, Siddhachalam belongs to all, not just humans.⁸ “All Life is Sacred.” is a statement that is routinely found on Siddhachalam stationary now.



Ashram residents can spot a showoff when they see one!

Nestled amidst rolling fields, lush forests, natural springs and ponds, Siddhachalam is comprised of temples, residence for visiting monks and nuns, library, cabins for temporary stay, congregation hall, community dining hall, playgrounds, and a faithful replication of Shikharji over three miles of nature and meditation trails.

Siddhachalam reflects Guruji's grand vision in many ways. The main temple (picture at beginning of this essay), for instance, has unornamented, magnificent marble idols of

Lord Adinath, Lord Parsvnath, Lord Mahavira, Lord Chandraprabhu, and Lord Shantinath, all on one altar. Yet, two of the idols are in the Digambar and three in the Shwetambar tradition.⁹ The temple is thoughtfully made to draw even those who reject idol worship.

⁸ The place is swarmed with turkeys around Thanksgiving. Visitors soon find that animals and bird know that they have a right to freely roam. They do not fear coming near humans. Moreover, the night belongs exclusively to animals – the ashram switches off lights during the night.

⁹ Traditionally, temple-goers of the two sects have had separate temples.

Song of the Soul

Ever since a child, as a protégé of Chotelalji Maharaj, his diksha Guru, Guruji experimented with the Namokar Mantra.¹⁰ In it, he found immeasurable ways to awaken his kundalini to cure, heal and protect. That started in him a life-long quest to realize the secrets contained within the Mantra. “When we recite a mantra,” Guruji said, “- it can be any mantra or rhythmic chanting, we receive so much help. The mantra vibrates and inspires different parts of the body. You can open and awaken yourself. This is a mysterious system of the physical and subtle bodies. Ultimately, you will unlock your causal body. You are purifying yourself. You are removing all negativities – the kind of materials that cause problems, diseases, negativities, obstacles or sickness.”



*Guruji with his diksha guru,
Chotelalji Maharaj*

Guruji understood early in life that the Namokar Mantra was the most potent mantra known and he joyously gave his life to unlocking its secrets through *tapasya* (self-imposed austerities), *dhyaan* (meditation) and ceaseless *sadhana* (practice). Finally, after having perfected his mastery over the Mantra, he decided to share some of the fruits of his life's work in the form of a book, *The Song of*

the Soul. **Siddhachalam was the place where this historic work was performed.**

¹⁰ Guruji was born on June 15, 1926 in Sikhopur (later also named Sushilgarh in his honor), now in Haryana, India. When seven year's old, he left home to join Muni Chotelal Maharaj. When 15-year-old, he became a Jain monk. Guruji obtained academic degrees of Shastri, Acharya, Vidya-Ratna, and Sahitya-Ratna. However, his considerable yogic powers were realized through direct experience, meditation, and through recollections from past lives. Guruji left his human body on April 22, 1994. Guruji appointed no individual as his successor.

In *The Song of the Soul*, Guruji writes: "...The Namokar Mantra is my goal and my life. It is my love and my destiny. Through it, I can serve and guide along the path of non-violence."¹¹ He adds:

There is a deep, secret science to the combination of sounds. Specific syllables are seeds for the awakening of latent powers. Only the person who has actually experienced this level of reality, can fully understand the science of letters [matrika vidya]. Thus, the Namokar Mantra is a treasured gift of humanity of inestimable worth for the purification, upliftment and spiritual evolution of everyone.¹²

Guruji further writes:

The Namokar Mantra is the essence of the gospel of the Tirthankars...They have taught the complete knowledge of the esoteric science of letters describing the special powers of each vowel and consonant. Subsequently, the Tirthankars' chief disciples, known as Ganadharas, have used this precious knowledge to actually form a mantra by combining letters and their sounds and powers for the most beneficial effect...For every era, the Namokar Mantra has taken a different form, but its essence has remained the same. As only a Ganadhar is qualified to combine sounds as taught by the Tirthankar, no one else can change the form of the mantra without distorting it.¹³

The secrets of the Mantra, explains Guruji in one of his talks, were lost to humanity with the passage of time. Every once in a while, however, there comes a saint who, through his recollections from past lives and yogic powers, rediscovers the secrets. Guruji did just that in our era at Siddhachalam.

At Siddhachalam, Guruji gave form to his discovery and shared some of its secrets with ashram residents and other disciples.

¹¹ *The Song of the Soul*, page 14. Copyright Siddhachalam, 1987.

¹² *Id.*, at 23.

¹³ *Id.*, at 22-23.

Soon, Siddhachalam came to be called a *tirth*, a place of pilgrimage.

The Song of the Soul is a small but rare masterpiece from a spiritually exalted guru who realized, practiced and taught the secrets of the Namokar Mantra. The book is not in the mold of a typical work of scholarship. Instead, it is a narration of methods to purify oneself, as explained by a self-realized master. The words, phrases and sentences encapsulate direct knowledge acquired through personal experience.¹⁴



Eighteen years after Guruji left for the heavens, his dream of Siddhachalam as a place with many shrines in homage to the Siddhas was finally fully realized. Shikharji, Jains' most important place of pilgrimage, was replicated here in 2012. Shikharji at Siddhachalam is the world's first, to-scale replication of the storied sacred mount dotted with shrines in homage to those who attained moksha there.

¹⁴ *The Song of the Soul* is available at negligible or no cost at Siddhachalam.

"You Can Accomplish Anything Here"

In times to come, Guruji's immediate disciples would no longer be with us. Nor would others who experienced first-hand the many miracles associated with him. Even so, Siddhachalam will remain full of life, joy and hope. Many of us will not know why this place brings so much peace and joy. They will likely not know the legends behind the place or its significance. But as Guruji said:

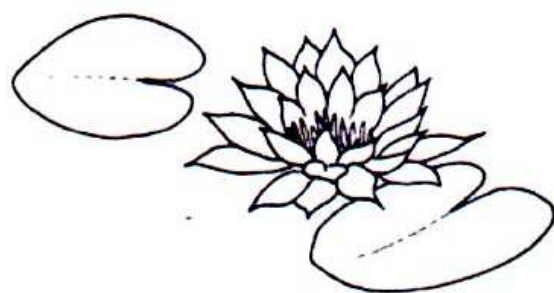
"There is a powerful vibration here. Ultimately, the situation at Siddhachalam will be that when anyone [true seeker] comes here, he will get enlightenment.

I will do some work perfectly; I know what the result will be. Whether the Guru sits here or not, whether anyone gives suggestion or not, kundalini will awaken. This will be the situation, and I will do this in my lifetime and yours.

You can accomplish anything here. You can meditate and you will get success. You can do business and you will get success. And you can play. The time is coming."¹⁵



¹⁵ *Id.*, note 3 above.





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