

1: Mahavira and Jainism by Monica Rosales on Prezi

Mahavira is revered as the key prophet of Jainism, an ascetic faith that believes in non-violence toward all living things and beings. Yogapedia explains Mahavira Mahavira was born a prince near the present day town of Patna in Bihar, a state in eastern India.

Jainism is an ancient religion from India. The scholars of religion generally hold that Jainism originated in the 7th-5th century bce in the Ganges basin of eastern India, the scene of intense religious speculation and activity at that time that teaches that the way to liberation and bliss is to live a life of harmlessness and renunciation. The aim of Jain life is to achieve liberation of the soul. Jains trace their history through twenty-four tirthankara and revere Rishabhanatha as the first tirthankara. The last two tirthankara, the 23rd tirthankara Parshvanatha and the 24th tirthankara Mahavira are historical figures. Jainism is somewhat similar to Buddhism. Buddhism is centered upon the life and teachings of Gautama Buddha, whereas Jainism is centered on the life and teachings of Mahavira and other 23 tirthankaras. Jainism is different to Buddhism in its ascetic beliefs. Both these religions emphasize non-violence, but non-violence is the main core in Jainism. In Jainism like Buddhism there is a belief in reincarnation which eventually leads to liberation. Jainism does not believe in God as a creator, survivor, and destroyer of the universe Unlike other religions as we know. However Jainism does believe in God, not as a creator, but as a perfect being. When a person destroys all his karmas, he becomes a liberated soul. Basically as per Jainism, almost any person can become god. Buddhism main goal is to gain enlightenment. There are three main principles of Jainism, I call them the 3 A: Ahimsa - Non-violence Aparigraha - Non-possessiveness Ahimsa: Ahimsa not only means Non-violence, it also means commit the lowest amount of sins. Do not cause harm to any living beings. This is the reason why jains are born Vegetarian and never believe in revenge. Ill later brief on why are they vegetarian Anekantvad: Having multiple faces of the same reality is called Anekantvad, here we see from the neutral prospective as what is correct and what is wrong considering all the factors. As per jainism, at each stage and situation of life, the right deed as per you is different from right deed for someone else. Just understanding from one point of view, narrows down our thinking. For example, while eating we always think as we are hungry but we never take a step further to think what will happen to the lives of animals and plants we are killing so easily? What pain will they feel in their heart? Can we try to minimize their agony? In fact, we just ignore that. Anekantvad says think beyond, think beyond selfishness. If you start thinking today, tomorrow you might find solution which is beneficial to opposite party as well. One girl is - daughter for father,same girl is sister for brother and wife for husband. So for father rest of statement are false. So one will agree when father says, she is my daughter, brother says she is my sister and husband will say she is my wife! This is Anekantvada. Ekantvada is simply "I am Right". In Jainism, worldly wealth accumulation is considered as a potential source of rising greed, jealousy, selfishness and desires. Giving up emotional attachments, sensual pleasures and material possession is a means of liberation, in Jain philosophy. Eating enough to survive is considered more noble than eating for indulgence. Non-violence in thinking;or the multi-dimensional approach in speech; and self-restraint in conduct constitute the master-key to right living. According to science and jain Tirthankaras, Every part of earth is living and we are a part of cosmos. Every being that shows emotions and have 5 senses, like animals, insects and humans, have different leves of sins depending upon size and senses, and should never be harmed. Killing a plant for eating will be far less sinful then killing an insect. But a sin will always be committed be it for food or by mistake. Its obvious that killing anything for pleasure will always be much more sinful then killing by mistake, be it pleasure, fun or food. Another aspect is that humans cannot eat raw meat and stay healthy for long, which again proves that uncooked meat is not good for humans and is scientifically proven. Why eat before sunset? As we all know, in india sun sets at approx. The reason was simple: Secondly waking up early and exercising or meditating is also a healthy way of life. However, it is the life of Lord Mahavira, which is a favourite among all Jains. I hope you guys like it, as im already working on the second part. Kindly upvote if you like, and follow me for more amazing stuff

2: Jainism - New World Encyclopedia

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Conversion of non-Muslim places of worship into mosques The first mosque built in Delhi, the "Quwwat al-Islam" near Qutb Minar was built after the Jain temples built previously under the Tomara dynasty were forcefully converted into Mosques by the Muslim Sultanate. The remains of the temple were used for to provide the building material for the mosque. They also burned Jain books and killed many people. They exerted serious pressure on the Jain community during 13th and 14th century. Mehrdad Shokoohy regards the Muslim monuments at Bhadrashwar to be the earliest Muslim monument in India based on archaeological evidence [12] with architecture similar to the Jain temples of Mt Abu. According to Jain text Jagaducharitra , a grant was provided by the Jain ruler Jagdu Shah for the construction of a mosque. In two chapters that discuss his relationship with the Sultan one of which was actually written by his disciple , Jinaprabha travels to Delhi to recover an image that had been taken from a temple. After impressing the Sultan with his poetic flair and his thorough knowledge of the various religious and philosophical schools in India. In the second chapter, Jinaprabha is called back to Delhi to settle some religious matters for the Sultan. He accompanies the Sultan on his military campaigns and upon his return is awarded a quarter of town in Tughluqabad for the Jain community, including a hall for Jinaprabha to teach in. Amid great fanfare and celebration the Jain community is declared by our author as prosperous and "just as when the Hindus ruled and times were not so bad, the glorious Jinaprabhasuri taught all those who come to him, even those of other faiths, and all rush to serve him. While temples were desecrated, Jinaprabha speaks of these incidents as due to the power of the Dark Age Kali Yuga in which such things are going to happen. He also speaks of these desecrations as opportunities to earn "endless merit" by restoring temples, which laymen did with gusto. He was invited by the ruler of Delhi, who is identified as Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. Akbar honored Hiravijaya , the leader of the Svetambara Tapa Gaccha. Akbar is said to have given up hunting and quit meat-eating forever as it had become repulsive. He rolled back the jizya from Jain pilgrimage places like Palitana. These farmans were also issued in , and Akbar banned animal slaughter near important Jain sites during the Paryushana. Few years later, in , Shah Jahan issued a firman declaring that a wall be constructed between the mihrabs to separate the Muslim area and Jain area, and Jain part be handed back to Shantidas so that Jains can worship in that part. The firman also declared that the Muslim fakirs housed in the building be removed, and the materials carried away from the temple should be restored. The ascetic practices and festive occasions in Jainism involve fasting. In Jain fasting fasting continues during day and night, and Jains break their fast 48 minutes after the sunrise of the day when fast ends. Another difference is that Jain practice is optional and set by the preferences of the Jain any time of the year. In contrast, the month long fasting in Islam is a part of the mandatory five pillars of Islam practice that is set by the Islamic calendar.

3: JAINpedia > Themes > Principles > Non-violence

Article shared by. Though Mahavira Jaina was the founder of the historical Jainism, the jaina traditions maintained that there were 23 Tirthankars or prophets of that faith before the birth of Mahavira.

Mahavira Jainism and Buddhism were both originally orders of monks outside of Brahmanism. Jainism is at least as old as Buddhism; the oldest Buddhist works mention the Jains as a rival sect, under their old name, Nigantha, and their leader Nataputta Varddhamana. Rsabha, Ajitanatha, and Aristanemi. His predecessor, Parsva, the second-to-last Tirthankara, is said to have died years before Mahavira. According to Uttaradhyayanasutra, a disciple of Parsva met a disciple of Mahavira, and brought about a union of the old Jainism with that of Mahavira. Therefore Mahavira is not regarded as the founder of Jainism, but as the one who gave a new orientation to Jainism and shaped the modern faith. Parsva, the twenty-third Tirthankara, was a historical personage who lived in the eighth or ninth century B. Seals and other artifacts from the Indus Valley Civilization c. Tirthankaras Jainists, like Buddhists, do not worship God , but revere instead the saints who are believed to have achieved complete liberation from the bondage of earthly life. There are 63 significant figures of Jain legend and story. The most important of these are the 24 Tirthankaras, perfected human beings who appeared as teachers at various times in history and represent the highest religious attainment for the Jains. Other, more minor, figures include nine naradas counterparts of the deity Narada, the messenger between gods and humans , 11 rudras counterparts of the Vedic god Rudra, from whom Siva is said to have evolved , and 24 kamadevas gods of love , all of which show Hindu influences. There are also four groups of gods, the bhavanavasis gods of the house , the vyantaras intermediaries , the jyotiskas luminaries , and the vaimanikas astral gods. These deities were assimilated from ancient Indian folk religion. Jainism Today At a few million adherents, Jainism is among the smallest of the major world religions. Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat are likely to have the largest Jain population among Indian states. Another state of India with a relatively large Jain population among its residents is Karnataka. Jainism has a large following in the Indian region of Punjab, especially the town of Ludhiana. Many then fled to the Indian section of Punjab. The Jain rituals for marriage and other family rites are distinct and uniquely Indian. Jain rituals are elaborate and include offerings of symbolic objects, with the Tirthankaras being praised in chant. Jains have few core symbols. One Jain symbol incorporates a wheel on the palm of the hand. The holiest one is a simple unadorned swastika or svastika. Digambar and Shvetambar Sects Jainism has two main variants: Digambar the naked and Shvetambar wearers of white cloths. The rule of wearing white cloths or being naked applies only to the highest monks and not to laymen or inferior monks. Bhadrabahu, chief of the Jain monks , foresaw a period of famine and led about 12, people to southern India. Twelve years later, they returned to find that the Svetambar sect had arisen. The followers of Bhadrabahu became known as the Digambar sect. Historians have noted that there was no clear division until the 5th century, when the Valabhi council of resulted in editing and compilation of scriptures of the Svetambar tradition. The two sects generally agree on all principles of Jainism, but the Digambaras have unique religious ceremonies and a different ecclesiastical and literary history from the Shvetambar. Each sect claims that it maintains the original tradition of Jainism, and that the other is an offshoot dating to around 80 C. The Sanskrit commentaries of the Digambara go back further than those of the Shvetambar. About 84 different schools of Jainism, called gacchas, developed, differing from one another in small details of conduct; the most important was the Kharatara Gaccha Excavations at Mathura have revealed many Kushana period Jain idols. In all of them the Tirthankaras are represented without clothes. Some of them show monks with only one piece of cloth which is wrapped around the left arm. They are identified as belonging to the Ardha-phalaka sect mentioned in some texts. The Yapaniaya sect is believed to have originated from the Ardha-phalakas. They followed Digambara practice of nudity, but held several beliefs like the Svetambaras. Jain History of the Universe and Cosmology According to Jain beliefs, the universe was never created, nor will it ever cease to exist. It is eternal but not unchangeable, because it passes through an endless series of cycles. Each of these upward or downward cycles is divided into six world ages yugas. The present world age is the fifth age of one of these "cycles," which is in a downward movement. All

these ages have fixed time durations of thousands of years. When this cycle reaches its lowest level, even Jainism itself will be lost in its entirety. Then, in the course of the next upswing, the Jain religion will be rediscovered and reintroduced by new leaders called Tirthankaras literally "Crossing Makers" or "Ford Finders" , only to be lost again at the end of the next downswing. In each of these enormously long alternations of time there are always twenty-four Tirthankaras. Jains believe that Lord Rishabha was the first human to receive the philosophy in the present cycle. The twenty-third Tirthankar was Parshva, an ascetic and teacher, whose traditional dates are B. Jains regard him and all Tirthankars as a reformer who called for a return to beliefs and practices in line with the eternal universal philosophy upon which the faith is said to be based. He too was a wandering ascetic teacher who attempted to recall the Jains to the rigorous practice of their ancient faith. Canonical Literature Near the end of the fourth century B. Its final form, however, was established at the Council of Valabhi, presided over by Devardhi around C. Many Jains consider the primary scripture to be the Tattvartha Sutra, or Book of Realities, written over eighteen centuries ago by the monk-scholar Umasvati also known as Umasvami. According to the Digambara, these texts were first written down in 57 C. The epics Cilappatikaram and Jivikacintamani, which are important works of early postclassical Tamil literature, were written from a Jain perspective. Jainas were similarly influential in the Prakrit languages, Apabhramsa, Old Gujarati, and, later, Sanskrit. Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism have a set of concepts in common, such as karma merit , dharma duty , yoga ascetic discipline and yajna sacrifice or worship that permit discourse among them. Jainism shares a number of its characteristics with Buddhism; both deny the existence of an intelligent first cause, worship deified saints , have celibate clergy, and think it sinful to take the life of any animal. The founders of both religions were men who made themselves perfect. There are many coincidences between the two religions; Buddha and Mahavira were contemporaries and died almost at the same time. They share the same holy lands, and both claim to have been patronized by the Maurya princes. Though some Western scholars have claimed that one is a sect or an offshoot of another, Hindu scholars have always regarded them as two distinct religions. It has been conclusively established that Vardhamana was a historical person distinct from Gautama Buddha. The Jain belief that all living things have souls was a protest against the Hindu tradition of making sacrifices to propitiate God. Jainism believes that there is no god who is responsible for the sorrows of life, and that the way to escape misery is through inward and outward austerity. Jainism accepts Vedic concepts of realism. Jiva consists of an infinite number of identical spiritual units; ajiva that is, non-jiva is matter in all its forms and the conditions under which matter exists: Jiva, the life-principle or soul, is distinct from the body and is not the product or property of the body. Both jiva and ajiva are eternal; they never came into existence for the first time and will never cease to exist. Jivas are classified by the number of sense organs they possess; plants belong to the lowest class because they possess only the sense of touch; worms possess touch and taste; vertebrates possess all five sense organs. Human beings, denizens of hell, and liberated souls possess an additional, inner sense organ, manas, by virtue of which they are able to reason samjnin. The four elements, earth, water, air and fire, are animated by souls; particles of earth are the bodies of elementary souls called earth-lives. Reality is external and is perceived through the senses. Jains believe that every action that a person performs, be it good or evil, opens up channels of the senses sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell , through which an invisible material substance, karma, filters in and adheres to the jiva within, weighing it down and determining the conditions of the next reincarnation. Ignorance of truth and four passions of anger, greed, pride and delusion attract the flow of karmic matter which obscures the radiance of the soul. The way to deliverance is through the three jewels of right faith belief in real existence , right knowledge knowledge of real nature without doubt or error and right conduct the practice of the five virtues. It then transcends the cycle of earthly existence samsara and goes to a place or state called Siddhashila, where the jiva, identical with all other pure jivas, experiences its own true nature in eternal stillness, isolation and noninvolvement and dwells in eternal bliss. There are two types of mediate knowledge: Mati, ordinary cognition based on normal sense perception. Mati is sometimes distinguished into three types: Mati is knowledge acquired by means of the senses indriyas and the mind anindriya , and is always preceded by some kind of perception. Mati gives knowledge by acquaintance; sruti gives knowledge by description. There are four kinds of shruta: Avadhi,

clairvoyance, or direct knowledge of things through time and space. Kevala, omniscience unlimited by time or space, perfect knowledge comprehending all substance and their modifications. This knowledge can only be felt and not described, and is possible only for purified souls free from bondage. Knowledge of a particular thing is also divided into two types: Naya is the viewpoint from which a statement is made about a thing. It includes partial knowledge about the innumerable aspects of a thing, and judgment based on this partial knowledge. Matter pudgala and spirit jiva are seen as separate and independent realities. There are innumerable material atoms, and innumerable individual souls, and each of these possesses an infinite number of characteristics of its own. The substance dravya of a thing possesses all its qualities and modes. Relativity of Knowledge Syadvada An ordinary person cannot know all the qualities of a particular thing; to do so would be to become omniscient. The nature of reality is indeterminate and infinitely complex, and human knowledge of it at any given moment is necessarily limited to only certain aspects. The infinite aspects of reality are all relative; therefore all judgments are relative, conditional and limited. It is incorrect to say that anything is absolutely true or absolutely untrue. Ethics Five Mahavratas of Jain ascetics In the Jain community there are monks and nuns, and laymen and laywomen.

4: Life of Mahavira Jaina and his Teachings

Ahimsa (Non-violence or Non-injury). Mahavira taught that every living being has sanctity and dignity of its own and it should be respected just as one expects one's own sanctity and dignity to be respected.

Mahavira is stated to be its founder. It won adherents only in India and survived every assault directed against it by the Brahmins. It has continued to exist till today and its adherents are mainly found in India. Number of its followers is not more than 10 million although some conservative estimates place it at 6 million. Such prophets or great masters called Tirthankaras of Jainism are 24 in number among whom Mahavira is the last in line. Early in the history of the faith, the Jains divided on the question of wearing clothes. Still another Jain sect, the Sthanakvasis, tolerates no idols and have no temples. The Jains form an almost closed circle of beliefs, no longer growing in number. The broom represents the Jain belief that all life is sacred. A monk uses it to sweep aside insects so he will not step on them. He carries the bowl to collect food for himself. Mahavira is believed to be a historical person, whereas the Jinas who preceded him probably are legendary. Mahavira married and had a daughter. At the age of 30 he formally enunciated his princely life and became ascetic. He plucked out his hairs and thereafter wandered naked, subjected his body to all kinds of discomforts even tortures. In order to avoid killing he allowed vermin to inhabit his body. He wandered for 12 long years in the villages, forests and plains of central India in quest of release from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth the Hindu doctrine of transmigration of soul. His two fundamental beliefs were: At last, after a long wandering and undergoing a severe discipline of self-torture, he achieved enlightenment at the age of 42 while in meditation. Hence forth he reorganized the Jain monastic community and started teaching and preaching his religion. Conversions to his way of life followed. It despises caste distinctions and modifies two great Hindu doctrines of Karma and transmigration. Jain philosophy is based on ahimsa or non-injury to living beings. Jains believe in sacredness of all life and refuse to kill even the smallest insect. In their view, non-injury to any or all living creatures is the highest religion. Vegetarianism is its corollary in diet. The avoidance of taking life was and is so strictly adhered to by advanced Jain ascetics that they eventually succumb from starvation. It was perhaps in reaction to such extremes that the Buddha, who was alleged at one time to have been a Jain monk, advocated a less ascetic way of life. Its code of ethics is based on sympathy and compassion for all forms of life. Of all the Indian religions, rather of all the world religions, Jainism practices the most extreme form of non-violence. It influenced the philosophy of great Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi who was a great preacher of non-violence. Jains also believe that every living thing consists of an eternal soul called the Jiva and a temporary physical body. The eternal Jiva is imprisoned in the body as a result of involvement in worldly activities. To free the Jiva, one must avoid such activities as much as possible. Each Jiva is reincarnated in many bodies before it is finally freed. After being freed, it exists eternally in a state of perfect knowledge and bliss. These men and women try to separate themselves from the everyday world. They are not allowed to kill any living creature. They carry brooms to sweep all surfaces to avoid crushing insects accidentally. Monks may not own any property except a broom, simple robes, bowls for food, and walking sticks. They may not live in buildings except for brief periods, and they must beg for all their food. The highest goal for a monk or nun is to cease all bodily activity and die of starvation, but this rarely happens. Other followers of Jainism are the laity people who are not monks or nuns. The laity support the monks and nuns and obey less strict rules of conduct. Most of the laity engage in business activities because such occupations do not directly involve killing any living thing. They look forward to becoming monks or nuns themselves in a future life. Soul-matter and nonliving matter must be separated for liberation Kaivalya of the soul to occur. For the followers of Mahavira there is no acceptance of a supreme being in its commonly accepted meaning. Stories developed about his divine origin and attributes. His birth was regarded as supernatural. He descended from heaven to enter the womb of a woman. He grew up sinless and was omniscient. However, with passage of time these legends evaporated and Mahavira was declared to be the last among 24 prophets or great masters called Tirthankaras. Thus we can safely say that the Jains do not believe in any Supreme Deity or universal God not even in any deity. They honour the 24 teachers or Tirthankaras as

holy persons but do not believe that they are gods.

5: Jainism by A R on Prezi

This book is an authentic introduction to Jainism and a welcome contribution to the Jaina literature. The first essay, an English translation of Colette Caillat's French work Le Jinisme by Bal Patil, gives a compact history of Jainism in relation to the ruling dynasties of the time.

They belonged to a religion called Parsvanatha, whose contributing founders were known as Tirthankaras, little did they know that their child would eventually become the twenty-fourth and final. Many stories exist detailing childhood events of the boy Vardhamana. Most serve to extol to us the promise evident in him, even as a boy. One such story tells of a group of youngsters, Vardhamana among them, playing in a mango grove. Allegedly a huge snake appeared, and as the other boys ran in fear, he calmly took it in his hands and carried it away. Shah 29 Another describes a game in which the loser of a race was to carry the winner on his back. However, the story states that a heavenly being joined in, taking the form of a boy, and purposely losing the race. Unfazed by this, Vardhamana, as the story goes, punched the giant so hard it was shocked at his incredible strength. It is believed that from this particular story, Vardhamana acquired his more widely used alias, Mahavira, or the Great Hero. Yet another, and perhaps the most important of the childhood stories, details an instance in which his parents were asked where in the house Mahavira was located. His mother replied upstairs, while his father, downstairs. Seemingly conflicting and mutually exclusive viewpoints, we are alerted to the fact that he was in fact on the middle floor, while his mother and father respectively on the first and third floors. Shah 29 This story demonstrates a fundamental concept in Jainist philosophy of relative pluralism, the notion that contradictory statements can possibly both hold validity, when seen from the proper light. Many other stories exist that illustrate his physical and mental prowess; it was even claimed that he was born with three types of knowledge, mind-based, reasoning, and more incredibly, clairvoyance, the latter being a common theme among Tirthankaras. Shah 31 Two schools of thought exist on his interactions with the opposite sex. The Svetambara sect claims he married a woman named Yasoda and had by her a daughter Priyadarsana, while Digambara sects maintain he took his ascetic vows while still single. Regardless of the truth, taking into account the wishes of his parents to be a great warrior and ruler, Vardhamana waited until their deaths, and two years later, with the permission of his brother, Nandivardhana entered into the ascetic life. One of the first stories of his ascetic life tells of the exodus from his city and of an old man, Harikesi. He indicated that he wished for the old man to proceed, and embraced him, to bid him farewell. Harikesi was overwhelmed with gratitude and wept as he paid his respects. This incident foreshadowed the dynamic social change that Jainist philosophy was to eventually advocate, that of universal equality. At the moment of his renunciation, it is written that Mahavira acquired a fourth knowledge to accompany the three he was born with. To a greater extent one can study the details of these twelve years in the Kalpa Sutra. He took food only from the hollow of his hand, and erased from his mind all thought of pleasure, pain, pride, deceit, greed, lustful thoughts and severed his ties to the earth he knew. It is written that he did not ever spend more than one night in a single village, and no more than five in any town. He slept only occasionally, perhaps an hour at a time, and not ever for the sake of pleasure. He sat in a squatting position in the field of a landowner, Samaga, on the bank of the Rujupalika river. Exposed to the sun and heat, with his head bowed, he obtained the supreme and infinite form of knowledge and intuition known as Kevala Jnaana. From then on we can describe Vardhamana as a Kevali or Arhat, one who has attained enlightenment. Law 31 Another term frequently used to describe him from this point on is Jina, or one who has conquered himself. Shah 31 Now, at forty-two years of age, having achieved his liberation, Mahavira began the next stage of his life, and perhaps the most influential in contemporary life, the stage of religious teacher. His followers were to be referred to as Nirgranthas, and himself Nirgrantha, or he who is freed from all bonds. Law 20 He travelled from place to place, spreading enlightenment. In particular, his first declaration was so moving it inspired many to join him, it went as follows: Whether I am walking or standing still, whether I sleep or remain awake, supreme knowledge and intuition are with me, constantly and continuously. There are, O Nirgranthas, sinful acts that you have done in the past which you must now undo by this acute form of austerity. Now that you will be

living a restrained life as regards your acts, speech and thought, this will negate the effects of Karma for the future. Thus, by the exhaustion of the force of past deeds through penance, and the non-accumulation of the effects of new acts, [you are assured] of the end of the future course [of the effects of karma] and the resultant rebirths, of the destruction of the effects of karma, and from that the destruction of pain, and from that of the destruction of mental feelings, and from that the complete absence of all kinds of pain. Though this claim is a little fantastic, it still expresses once again the desire to erase the bonds of classes and sexes in an attempt to communicate to all the people of the nation. In fact it is likely this just embellishes the novel practice he had of speaking to the lesser people in their indigenous languages instead of the Sanskrit they held little knowledge of. Vardhamana was also a great leader and organizer, he divided his followers initially into two categories, those who could follow his teachings fully, ascetics, and those that were to be held to less strict standards, lay followers. The ascetics as they were to be known took the five great vows: Ahimsa – non-violence and reverence for all life 2. Satya – truthfulness 3. Brahmacharya – control over the senses, chastity 5. Aparigraha – non-attachment to worldly things Shah From this classification and that of gender we arrive at the current-day four-fold structure that exists today. Mahavira is widely regarded as the greatest sage to have ever lived. His legacy is a lasting one in the form of the religion he helped crystallize into what is known as modern day Jainism. It has experienced many downturns and revivals in the years since his passing, and is most known for its committed non-violence and respect for all living beings, which is paralleled in the vows its early followers took.

6: Give an account of the life and teachings of Mahavira

'Mahavira: Prophet of Non-Violence' Bal Patil writes about the doctrine of non-violence - ahimsa - in Jainism and the revolutionary teachings of the 24th Jina Mahavira, who stressed non-violence and individual responsibility for salvation.

Give an account of the life and teachings of Mahavira Jyoti The Jainas believe in twenty four Tirthankaras or prophets. The first Jaina Tirthankars was Rishavadeva. No historical informations are available regarding the first twenty two Tirthankaras who are considered as legendary figures. Parsvanath was the twenty third Tirthankara. He lived years before the birth of Mahavira Parsvanath was the son of king Asvasena of Benares. He taught four principles namely non-injury, or Ahimsa. Non-Stealing or Asteya, and Aparigraha or non possession. The last and the twenty-fourth Tirthankara was Mahavira Jaina. Some Historian fix the date of this birth as B. His father Siddartha was the head of the Kshatriya clan called the Jnatrikas. His mother was Trisala, Vardhamana during his childhood was given education in all branches of learning and art. He was married to Yasoda. He led the life of a house holder and was blessed with a daughter. Vardhamana was not very much attached to the worldly in his thirtieth year after the death of his parents Vardhamana left his home and renounced the worldly life. He became an ascetic to find out the truth of life. For long twelve years he led the life of an wandering ascetic. He practised deep meditation and severe penances. At the age of forty-two in the thirteenth year his asceticism Vardhamana attained the Supreme Knowledge. He came to be known as Mahavira or the great hero or Jina. His followers were called the Jainas or Nirgranthas or persons free from bonds. For the next thirty years Mahavira spent his life in preaching his religious principles in Magadha, Anaga. He came in contact with kings like Bimbisara and Ajatasatru of Magadha. Mahavira died at the age of seventy-two in B. Teachings or Principles of Jainism: Mahavira did not accept the authority of the Vedas. He rejected the Vedic rituals. He also objected to the supremacy of the Priestly class or the Brahmins. He rejected the ideas that the world has been created by a supreme creative power. According to him "God is only the highest noblest and fullest manifestations of the powers which lie latent in the soul of man. The principal aim of the teaching of Mahavira is the attainment of Nirvana or salvation. According to him salvation meant the liberation or the freedom of the soul from the earthly bondage. By following a life of severe austerities and discipline of the body it is possible to achieve salvation. The destruction of the forces of Karma or actions would pave the way for the attainment of Nirvana One should follow die Three paths namely Right Faith, Right Action and Right Knowledge, for the liberation of the soul from the body. These three principles are known as three jewels of Jainism or Tri Ratna of Jainism. Mahavira taught the principles of Ahimsa or Non-violence. According to Jainas all objects living and non-living possess life or soul. For this reason the policy of non- violence should be followed even towards animals, plants and trees. The policy of love and kindness should be extended to all creatures. One should avoid the evil karmas in order to achieve Nirvana or Salvation. So both the monks and house holders should observe five vows or principles of religion. These are Ahimsa or Non-violence. Satya or Speaking the truth, Asteya or Non-stealing. Aparigraha or Non-possession and Brahmacharya or Non-adultery. By following these five principles of religion one can control both the mind and body. Jainism became popular in Kosala. Towards the Third century B. Jainism could not spread beyond the boundaries of India, but even today it is one of the important religions of the country.

7: What is Mahavira? - Definition from Yogapedia

violence and non-absolutism are the three pillars of Jainism, and are fully competent to meet the needs of our age and to establish peace and harmony in the world.

Much of its early history is not known, or has come down to us in a form in which historical fact is difficult to distinguish from miraculous stories. However we do know that this ancient religion was passed on to us through the high spiritual genius of one of the greatest religious teachers of all time, Mahavira. We must be clear, from the start, that Mahavira was not the founder of Jainism. The social order which he created has endured to the present day. Mahavira was not some imaginary being. He was a real man and we know, with reasonable certainty, that his life on earth ended just over years ago, in B. We know details of his life. He was born in B. His father, Siddhartha, was a prince or lord, and his mother, Trisala, also came from a noble family. His birthplace is believed to have been near the modern city of Patna, in Bihar in north-eastern India. Until his late twenties he doubtless led a life not very different from that of any other young man in his level of society. We should nowadays call them Jains. Parsva, who had lived some years before Mahavira, is recognize as the twenty- third Tirthankara or prophet of Jainism. He gave up all his possessions, even his clothes, and lived for the next twelve years a life of great hardship, training himself to endure the pains and discomforts of the body until he became indifferent to them. The wandering ascetic, seeking knowledge alone in the wilder places, or in company with fellow seekers for truth, was and still is an accepted figure on the edge of Indian society. The sixth century B. The best-known individual, at least in historical perspective, was the Buddha, a near contemporary of Mahavira. Some of the earlier Western scholars who encountered Jainism did not distinguish it from Buddhism for there are some similarities, as well as very marked differences and even confused the persons of Mahavira and the Buddha. Mahavira persevered with this austere life style, marked by long spells of fasting and other penances, and by deep meditation. At last, during one period of meditation by the side of a river, he came to a comprehension of the whole nature and meaning of the universe. This total knowledge, omniscience, keval jnana; is very important to Jainism. Most of us have had the experience, at some time, of puzzling over something we do not quite understand, when, suddenly, almost as though a cloud clears, we get a flash of understanding and we see the solution to our problem. Can we imagine this flash of understanding spreading out, clearing the clouds over not just our small problem but all the problems of the universe, giving us an understanding of the whole nature and workings and meaning of the universe? This is what happened to Mahavira. And it can happen, and has happened, to other people as well. This total knowledge does not come easily: The fifth great event, nirvana or moksa came thirty years later. During these thirty years Mahavira, strengthened by his knowledge, spread his message among the people. He spoke in the language of the region, Ardhamagadhi, not in the classical Sanskrit of the scholars and the oldest Jain scriptures are preserved in that language. Some people, men and women, were inspired to give up all possessions and become monks and nuns. Mahavira taught a scientific explanation of the nature and meaning of life and a guide as to how we should behave to draw this real nature and meaning into our own life. We must start with three things. Nobody can tell us what we can believe, but we can look at the message of Mahavira and believe that he really did know what he was talking about and that his message makes sense. Life is a puzzle. Where did we come from before birth? Where do we go after death? Mahavira teaches us that this is not the result of the whims of some distant god. No, each one of us is what we have made ourselves by our actions in this life and in previous lives. Every individual and not only humans, but animals and plants is basically a pure spirit or soul jiva is the Jain word for it which is capable of complete knowledge and complete freedom. But by our actions and thoughts we have, as it were, covered this pure spirit with the gross material of karma which obscures our knowledge and limits our freedom and ties us down to one life after another. Although we may have a lot of happiness in life we also, all of us, have a great deal of unhappiness. We want to know the way in which we can get rid of the restrictions of karma and gain the state of complete knowledge and glorious freedom which is known as moksa or nirvana. Although this may be a very long, very slow process for most of us, over countless lives, Mahavira teaches us how to make a start in freeing ourselves from the restrictions and miseries

of karma. Strength of passions is the worst thing, passions of violence and desire and possession. This is the first and fundamental rule which we should try to follow, to get rid of violence in all our actions and even in our thoughts. Yes, in our thoughts as well, for violent thoughts can be potentially as harmful as violent deeds. Firstly, they produce a better society for every creature to live in, and secondly, they enable the individual to improve his or her own inner feelings and character. So, following on from ahimsa, we are taught to be truthful and honest, to create both individuals and a society in which lies and theft, and general insecurity, are absent. Lies and theft are the result of our passions and possessiveness. True peace and harmony in society and in the individual are possible only if we can restrain our passions and desires. So Mahavira tells us to reduce our longing for the things of the world, for material possessions and for sexual activities. We can never have real peace of spirit so long as we are constantly seeking more and more possessions and pleasures. These then are the five rules of conduct which Mahavira taught, non-violence, truthfulness, no stealing, non-acquisition and control of sexual desires. It is a hard program and not everybody can follow it all at once. So Mahavira set up a society in which some people, monks and nuns, try to follow his program as far as is humanly possible. Others, ordinary lay people, men and women, do not give up their homes and jobs and families, but they try as far as possible in the circumstances of daily life to follow the five rules of conduct. While the monk or nun can take precautions to avoid harm even to the tiniest living creature, the rule of non-violence must mean something less for ordinary people caught up in the ordinary business of our lives.

8: A Comparative Study of World Religions (Chapter 9)

Mahavira, also known as Vardhamāna, was the twenty-fourth Tirthankara (ford-maker) of the Jain tradition, it is believed that Mahavira was born in the early part of the 6th century BC into a royal kshatriya family in what is now Bihar, India.

Much of its early history is not known, or has come down to us in a form in which historical fact is difficult to distinguish from miraculous stories. However we do know that this ancient religion was passed on to us through the high spiritual genius of one of the greatest religious teachers of all time, Mahavira. We must be clear, from the start, that Mahavira was not the founder of Jainism. The social order which he created has endured to the present day. Mahavira was not some imaginary being. He was a real man, and we know, with reasonable certainty, that his life on earth ended just over years ago, in B. We know details of his life. He was born in B. His father, Siddhartha, was a prince or lord, and his mother, Trisala, also came from a noble family. His birthplace is believed to have been near the modern city of Patna, in Bihar in north-eastern India. Until his late twenties he doubtless led a life not very different from that of any other young man in his level of society. We should nowadays call them Jains. Parsva, who had lived some years before Mahavira, is recognized as the twenty-third Tirthankara or prophet of Jainism. He gave up all his possessions, even his clothes, and lived for the next twelve years a life of great hardship, training himself to endure the pains and discomforts of the body until he became indifferent to them. The wandering ascetic, seeking knowledge alone in the wilder places, or in company with fellow seekers for truth, was and still is an accepted figure on the edge of Indian society. The sixth century B. The best-known individual, at least in historical perspective, was the Buddha, a near contemporary of Mahavira. Some of the earlier Western scholars who encountered Jainism did not distinguish it from Buddhism for there are some similarities, as well as very marked differences and even confused the persons of Mahavira and the Buddha. Mahavira persevered with this austere life style, marked by long spells of fasting and other penances, and by deep meditation. At last, during one period of meditation by the side of a river, he came to a comprehension of the whole nature and meaning of the universe. This total knowledge, omniscience, keval jnana; is very important to Jainism. Most of us have had the experience, at some time, of puzzling over something we do not quite understand, when, suddenly, almost as though a cloud clears, we get a flash of understanding and we see the solution to our problem. Can we imagine this flash of understanding spreading out, clearing the clouds over not just our small problem but all the problems of the universe, giving us an understanding of the whole nature and workings and meaning of the universe? This is what happened to Mahavira. And it can happen, and has happened, to other people as well. This total knowledge does not come easily: The fifth great event, nirvana or moksa came thirty years later. During these thirty years Mahavira, strengthened by his knowledge, spread his message among the people. He spoke in the language of the region, Ardhamagadhi, not in the classical Sanskrit of the scholars, and the oldest Jain scriptures are preserved in that language. Some people, men and women, were inspired to give up all possessions and become monks and nuns. Mahavira taught a scientific explanation of the nature and meaning of life and a guide as to how we should behave to draw this real nature and meaning into our own life. We must start with three things. Nobody can tell us what we can believe, but we can look at the message of Mahavira and believe that he really did know what he was talking about and that his message makes sense. Life is a puzzle. Where did we come from before birth? Where do we go after death? Mahavira teaches us that this is not the result of the whims of some distant god. No, each one of us is what we have made ourselves by our actions in this life and in previous lives. Every individual and not only humans, but animals and plants is basically a pure spirit or soul jiva is the Jain word for it which is capable of complete knowledge and complete freedom. But by our actions and thoughts we have, as it were, covered this pure spirit with the gross material of karma which obscures our knowledge and limits our freedom and ties us down to one life after another. Although we may have a lot of happiness in life we also, all of us, have a great deal of unhappiness. We want to know the way in which we can get rid of the restrictions of karma and gain the state of complete knowledge and glorious freedom which is known as moksa or nirvana. Although this may be a very long, very slow process for most of us, over

countless lives, Mahavira teaches us how to make a start in freeing ourselves from the restrictions and miseries of karma. Strength of passions is the worst thing, passions of violence and desire and possession. This is the first and fundamental rule which we should try to follow, to get rid of violence in all our actions and even in our thoughts. Yes, in our thoughts as well, for violent thoughts can be potentially as harmful as violent deeds. Firstly, they produce a better society for every creature to live in, and secondly, they enable the individual to improve his or her own inner feelings and character. So, following on from ahimsa, we are taught to be truthful and honest, to create both individuals and a society in which lies and theft, and general insecurity, are absent. Lies and theft are the result of our passions and possessiveness. True peace and harmony in society and in the individual are possible only if we can restrain our passions and desires. So Mahavira tells us to reduce our longing for the things of the world, for material possessions and for sexual activities. We can never have real peace of spirit so long as we are constantly seeking more and more possessions and pleasures. These then are the five rules of conduct which Mahavira taught, non-violence, truthfulness, no stealing, non-acquisition and control of sexual desires. It is a hard program and not everybody can follow it all at once. So Mahavira set up a society in which some people, monks and nuns, try to follow his program as far as is humanly possible. Others, ordinary lay people, men and women, do not give up their homes and jobs and families, but they try as far as possible in the circumstances of daily life to follow the five rules of conduct. While the monk or nun can take precautions to avoid harm even to the tiniest living creature, the rule of non-violence must mean something less for ordinary people caught up in the ordinary business of our lives. A monk or nun can give up all possessions and seek no more: Monks and nuns can go very much further than married men and women in subduing their attachment to sex. Mahavira taught his message for thirty years until his life on earth ended and he passed on to that state of complete freedom and bliss and peace which we call moksa. For most of us moksa is a very long way away. But he taught us how we can approach it ourselves by rules which lead to inner peace and harmony inside ourselves and outward peace and harmony in human society. He taught more than that, a democratic organization in the society which he set up, with all men and women playing their part and with no barriers of class or caste. He also taught tolerance and an appreciation that things can be seen from more points of view than one. Above all he taught that we ourselves produce our own fate by our own actions and emotions: When we honor Mahavira we do not ask him for present help, but we meditate on his example and teachings and seek to draw the real meaning of these into our own life and spirit.

9: Mahavira's Teachings

parshva, prophet before mahavira introduced 4 of the 5 principles non-violence, not stealing, truthfulness, and not owing things Mahavira added last principle of chastity.

You reading should indicate why this is so. What is the ultimate source of value and significance? For many, but not all religions, this is given some form of agency and portrayed as a deity deities. It might be a concept or ideal as well as a figure. What does the belief system say about the world? Where do they come from? How do they fit into the general scheme of things? What is their destiny or future? What is the principle problem for humans that they must learn to deal with and solve? How are humans to solve or overcome the fundamental problems? What is the moral code as promulgated by the religion? What is the idea of community and how humans are to live with one another? Does the religion offer an explanation for events occurring in time? Is there a single linear history with time coming to an end or does time recycle? Is there a plan working itself out in time and detectable in the events of history? What are the major rituals, holy days, garments, ceremonies and symbols? What is the explanation given for what occurs after death? Does he religion support a belief in souls or spirits which survive the death of the body? What is the belief in what occurs afterwards? Is there a resurrection of the body? What is the prescribed manner in which believers are to regard other religions and the followers of other religions? If you have iTunes on your computer just click and you will be led to the listings. Mahavira like Buddha belonged to the warrior caste. In many senses Jainism is similar to Buddhism. Both developed as a dissension to the Brahmanic philosophy that was dominant during that period in north-east India. Both share a belief in reincarnation which eventually leads to liberation. Jainism is different to Buddhism in its ascetic beliefs. Both these religions emphasize non-violence, but non-violence is the main core in Jainism. In Jainism like Buddhism there is a belief in reincarnation which eventually leads to liberation. Neither of these religions their religious philosophy around worship. But Jainism is different than Buddhism in its ascetic beliefs. Both these religions emphasis on non-violence, but in Jainism non-violence is its main core. Jains believe that every thing has life and this also includes stones, sand, trees and every other thing. The fact that trees breath came to be known to the science world only from the 20th century. Mahavira was also extremely ascetic and walked around completely naked because of his renouncement of life. After years of hardship and meditation he attained enlightenment; thereafter he preached Jainism for about 30 years and died at Pava also in Bihar in BC. But the religious Jains will do everything possible to prevent hurting any being. They also cover their mouth to prevent the possibility of swallowing small invisible microbes. They mostly do not work in professions where there is a possibility of killing any living being like in agriculture instead professions like banking and business. But it is not clear what came first, businessmen who adopted Jain philosophy because it was easy for them to follow or Jainish philosophy which convinced the Jains to adopt non violent professions. There are two Jain philosophies. The Digambers include among them only men. The Shvetembers monks wear white clothes and they include women. He was a contemporary of Lord Buddha. He was the 24th and the last of the Tirthankars. The present form of Jainism was shaped by him. The cardinal principles of Jainism are: Anekantvada multiplicity of views 3. Brahmacharya The first and the third are quite simple to understand but the second one needs some explanation. Difference of view points, quite often, add to the knowledge and one should infer, only after hearing diverse views on any subject. If it is not done, then the conclusions reached could be biased or incorrect. It provides for the tolerance for the views of the others. One can have a better perception only after hearing others. For example, we are all familiar with the story of the eight blind men and an elephant. There the views expressed about the elephant by each of the blind men were correct but only partial knowledge could be obtained from any one view. The total knowledge about the elephant could be had only by listening to all of them. An object can, on occasions, be described by two completely opposite statements, i. These two statements can be made referring to 1 substance, 2 place, 3 time, and 4 form. Let us take an example of a piece of furniture. A piece of furniture made of jungle wood is not made of sandal wood. Similarly, it could be located in a given room but not in other rooms. Thus, it can be specified in either way which seem to be opposite to each other. Another set of logic lines has been developed

by the Jain thinkers which postulate that there can be as many as seven modes of prediction in a given case. This introduces an element of uncertainty in the predictions and therefore introduces the concept of probability. If we consider the Jainist and the Vedantic philosophies, we will find that both are correct in their own ways. They do not contradict each other. The Jain philosophy does not go into the depth of the process of creation as does the Vedantism and therefore it Vedantism arrives at the conclusion of The God as the First Cause. On the other hand, the Jainism comes up with the understanding of the complexity of the universe for the common humans and proposes the Syadavada which is a marvellous concept of accommodation which is necessary for the correct evaluation of anything. The Jainism defines life in almost everything, and therefore, preaches non-violence of extreme degree. In summary, the Jains consider the highest ideal - Tirthankara who possesses infinite knowledge, infinite bliss and infinite power. Jainism makes distinction between Arhat and Siddha which are analogous to the Vedantic Jivan Mukta free form life and Videha Mukta free from body. Tirthankaras are those Siddhas who profound the truth during their life time which is a higher thing. The Jains have Arhats, the Siddhas, and the Tirthankaras who in the simpler terms and in the corresponding manner are: It is possible for every man to attain the highest state. Tirthankaras take the place of God in the Jain philosophy Jainism begins with a serious concern for the human soul in its relationship with the laws governing existence in the universe, with other living beings, and to its own future state in eternity. First and foremost, it is a religion of the heart: Jains have deep compassion for all forms of life Jainism offers a quiet, overwhelmingly serious way of life, a cultural insistence on compassion, a society of ethics that has dramatically changed the world and will continue to effect change. Jainism is an ecologically responsible way of life which is nonviolent in thought, action, and deed. Jina and the Soul The "Jains" are the followers of the Jinas. The Jains refer to the Jina as God. Origins of Jainism Originating on the Indian subcontinent, Jainism -- or, more properly, the Jain Dharma -- is one of the oldest religions of its homeland and indeed of the world. Jainism has prehistoric origins dating before BC, and before the beginning of Indo-Aryan culture. Jain religion is unique in that, during its existence of over years, it has never compromised on the concept of nonviolence either in principle or practice. It upholds nonviolence as the supreme religion Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah and has insisted upon its observance in thought, word, and deed at the individual as well as social levels. The holy text Tattvartha Sutra sums it up in the phrase "Parasparopagraho Jivanam" all life is mutually supportive. Jain religion presents a truly enlightened perspective of equality of souls, irrespective of differing physical forms, ranging from human beings to animals and microscopic living organisms. Humans, alone among living beings, are endowed with all the six senses of seeing, hearing, tasting smelling, touching, and thinking; thus humans are expected to act responsibly towards all life by being compassionate, egoless, fearless, forgiving, and rational. The Jain Code of Conduct In short, the code of conduct is made up of the following five vows, and all of their logical conclusions: Ahimsa, Satya truthfulness , Asteya non-stealing , Aparigraha non-possessiveness , and Brahmacharya chastity. Vegetarianism Vegetarianism is a way of life for a Jain, taking its origin in the concept of compassion for living beings, Jiva Daya. The practice of vegetarianism is seen as an instrument for the practice of nonviolence and peaceful, cooperative coexistence. Jains are strict vegetarians, consuming only one-sensed beings, primarily from the plant kingdom. While the Jain diet does, of course, involve harm to plants, it is regarded as a means of survival which involves the bare minimum amount of violence towards living beings. Many forms of plant material, including roots and certain fruits, are also excluded from the Jain diet due to the greater number of living beings they contain owing to the environment in which they develop. Introduction Jainism, religion of India concentrated largely in Gujarat and Rajasthan, in parts of Mumbai formerly Bombay , and in the state of Karnataka Mysore , as well as in the larger cities of the Indian peninsula. The Jains totaled about 3. Origins Jainism is somewhat similar to Buddhism , of which it was an important rival in India. As do the Buddhists, the Jains deny the divine origin and authority of the Veda and revere certain saints, preachers of Jain doctrine from the remote past, whom they call tirthankaras "prophets or founders of the path". These saints are liberated souls who were once in bondage but became free, perfect, and blissful through their own efforts; they offer salvation from the ocean of phenomenal existence and the cycle of rebirths.

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