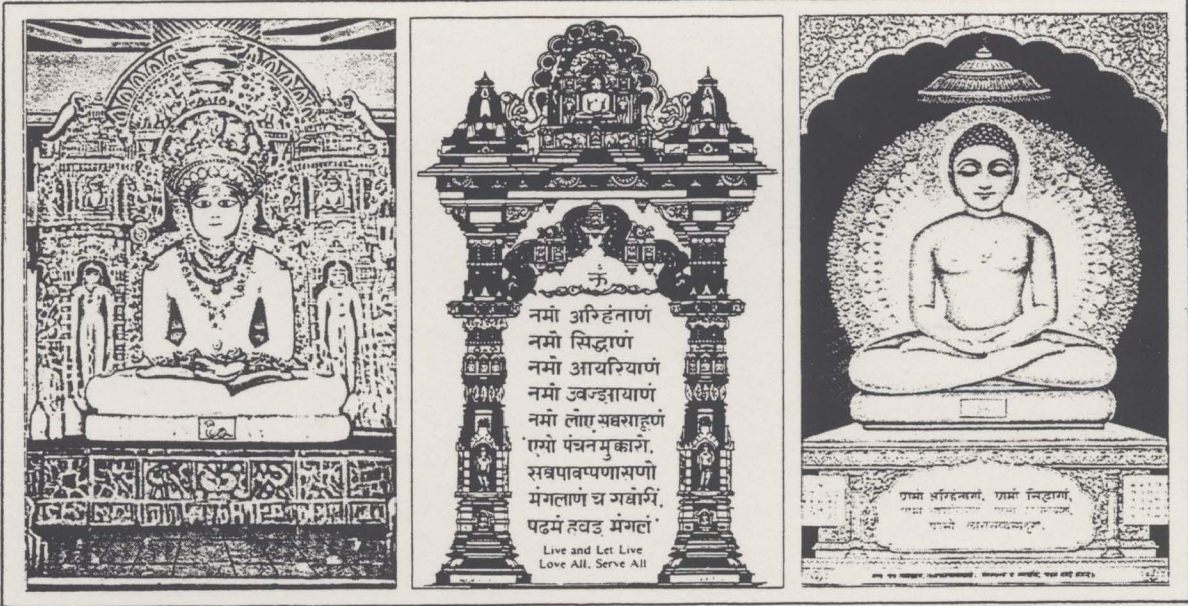


A Translation / Analysis
of
Apoorva Avasar
(Spiritual Progression To Salvation)

by
Shrimad Rajachandra



Jain Study Group
Rochester, NY



Spiritual Progression To Salvation (Moksha)

By

Shrimad Rajachandra

**(Translation of the poem Apoorva Avasar composed
by Shrimad Rajachandra in Gujarati)**

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PREFACE

The Jain Society of Rochester is fortunate to have a core group of people who have been seriously interested in studying Jain philosophy as described by Shrimad Rajachandra. This booklet is the outcome of their discussions that took place almost every week for a period of two years on a beautiful poem entitled "Apoorva Avasar Evo Kyare Avashe" composed by Shrimad . This poem describes the approach to achieving Moksha.

We are publishing this booklet because we felt that many members of the Jain community and their children would be interested in reading this outstanding work of Shrimad in North American English. We also sincerely hope that those interested in understanding Jain philosophy will benefit from our work.

We are indebted to Dr. Sarayuben Mehta, Munishri Santabalji and Shri Raychand Ajani. We have used their works extensively in translating this poem. We are thankful to Manubhai Doshi for reviewing the translation and analysis and giving us constructive comments and Nagin Shah for Gujarati script.

Please accept our apologies if we have misinterpreted the message of Shrimad unknowingly because of our limitations of comprehension and language.

We welcome suggestions and comments. Please address them to The Jain Society of Rochester, 1494 Jackson Rd, Penfield, NY 14526, USA.

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INTRODUCTION

Shrimad Rajachandra, one of the most recognized Jain sages of modern times, was distinguished for his spiritual insight. A born genius and poet, he had a dream. A dream to reach the highest state of self-realization (Moksha). From that dream emerged a song, a song of the soul - the great poem "Apoorva Avsar Evo Kyare Avashe" written in Gujarati. The exact time frame of this poem is unknown but is presumed to be written around 1897 A.D. This poem, a roadmap for spiritual aspirants, depicts the characteristics of fourteen major milestones in the path of spiritual progress. In Jain scriptures these milestones are described as GUNASTHANAKAS (see Appendix 1).

Impressed by the depth and richness of Shrimad's description of these spiritual stages, many famous Jain scholars have written books explaining the meaning of this beautiful poem. Some of them are: Muni Jayavijayji, Muni Santabalji, Shri Kanjishwami, Shri Naginlal Sheth and Dr.Saryuben Mehta. This poem has also been admired by followers of many other religions. Gandhiji liked it so much that he included it in his book "Ashram Bhajanavali". He wrote: "I came in close contact with Shrimad for two years. He displayed the same sense of detachment that is glowing in every stanza of the poem. He has written only what he has experienced."

This poem of twenty-one stanzas can be divided into two parts. In the first part (first twelve stanzas) Shrimad has expressed his intense craving to become a person devoid of all attachments (NIRGRANTH) and describes the characteristics of such a person as he progresses from the 4th to the seventh GUNASTHANAKA. The second part (the 13th through 21st stanzas) of the poem describes his progress from the eighth to the last GUNASTHANAKA, the last one being AYOGIKEVALI.

The third and thirteenth stanzas are very important because they describe the two major milestones of spiritual progress: Self-realization (SAMYAK DARSHAN -fourth GUNASTHANAKA) and a new and unique experience of the true self (APOORVAKARAN - eighth GUNASTHANAKA). SAMYAK DARSHAN is achieved when deluding perception (DARSHAN MOHANIYA KARMA) is eliminated and APOORVAKARAN is achieved when most of the obstacles to right conduct (CHARITRA MOHANIYA KARMA) are destroyed.

While describing the nature of self realization (SAMYAK DARSHAN), Shrimad also indicates how he attained it. An aspirant who has attained self realization is in the fourth GUNASTHANAKA. According to the Jain scriptures another milestone in spiritual progress is attained at the eighth GUNASTHANAKA as described in stanza thirteen. In this stage, the soul experiences a higher state of self realization through Meditation (DHYANA) that it had never before experienced and hence it is called APOORVAKARAN

A soul reaching the eighth stage can progress further in two different paths (both requiring meditation on itself): KSHAPAK SHRENEE and UPASHAM SHRENEE. In the first path, all Karmas are destroyed while ascending to the last stage (total and absolute knowledge - KEVALGNAN). In the second path, there is a suppression (abeyance) instead of destruction of some of the Karmas and so the aspirant falls back from the eleventh stage. In the poem Shrimad has expressed his strong desire to follow the first path since it is the only way to achieve total and absolute knowledge (KEVALGNAN).

Shrimad concludes this great poem with humility and a firm resolve. He knows how difficult it is to reach Moksha and is aware of his current limitations. But he has a dream, a strong will, and a strong commitment to achieve that state. He expresses unwavering faith in the teachings of omniscient souls and is fully confident that as long as he follows the path shown by them, he will ultimately achieve Moksha, the state of endless happiness, peace and bliss.

Shrimad has written eighteen poems and innumerable letters to his friends and followers describing and explaining the deep principles of Jainism. In all his writings, he has emphasized the importance and the necessity of having a spiritual Guru (Sadguru) to help us understand and progress in the path of Moksha. We are fortunate that, though we do not have the privilege of his actual presence as a spiritual Guru, we have his immortal writings to guide us on the path to Moksha. Although we do not enjoy that privilege now in the western world, we are fortunate that we have access to Shrimad's immortal writings.

TRANSLATION AND ANALYSIS

અપૂર્વ અવસર એવો ક્યારે આવશે ?
ક્યારે થઈશું બાહ્યાંતર નિર્ગં-થ જો ?
સર્વ સંબંધનું બંધન તીક્ષ્ણ છેદીને,
વિચરશું કવ મહત્ પુરુષને પથ જો ? અપૂર્વ...૧

When will I attain that spiritual stage
Which I have never before experienced?
When will I break off
The internal and external bonds due to desires?
When will I totally eliminate
The strong bondage of all relationships
And follow the path of great souls? When...1

Shrimad starts this great poem with a statement of his ultimate goal: Liberation of the soul from the cycles of birth and death and the achievement of ever lasting happiness, peace and bliss (MOKSHA). His very first step to achieve this goal is to eliminate desires and hence break internal and external bonds, i.e. to become NIRGRANTH.

It is interesting to note that he starts with internal purity first and then goes into external relationships and expresses a strong desire to eliminate both.

સર્વ ભાવથી ઓદાસીન્યવૃત્તિ કરી,
માત્ર દેહ તે સંયમહેતુ હોય જો;
અન્ય કારણે અન્ય કશું કલ્પે નહીં,
દેહે પણ કિંચિત્ મૂછાં નવ જોય જો. અપૂર્વ...૨

**When will I be detached
From all feelings and emotions
And use my physical self to achieve
Self control and nothing else?
When will I have no desire
For anything else but self control
And relinquish attachment even to my body? When...2**

**Here Shrimad describes the characteristics of a NIRGRANTH. A
NIRGRANTH is detached from all feelings and emotions (pleasant and
unpleasant) and has no attachment to his physical body and uses it only for
attaining spiritual progress. He maintains equanimity under all
circumstances.**

દર્શનમોહ વ્યતીત થઈ, ઊપજયો બોધ જે,
દેહ ભિન્ન કેવલ ચૈતન્યનું જ્ઞાન જો,
તેથી પ્રક્ષીણ ચારિત્રમોહ વિલોકિયે,
વર્તે એવું શુદ્ધસ્વરૂપનું ધ્યાન જો, અપૂર્વ...૩

By eliminating Deluding Perception (DARSHAN MOHANIYA KARMA)

I have realized that soul is pure consciousness

Separate from the body.

This has enabled me to reduce obstacles to right conduct (CHARITRA MOHANIYA KARMA)

Leading me to increasingly

Experience my pure consciousness.

When...૩

This is the first time Shrimad is making us aware of his spiritual growth. He has developed a firm conviction in the fundamental teachings of JINA (i.e. the soul and body are separate entities and I am the soul, not the body). He has realized his true self (SAMAKIT - 4th Spiritual Stage/ GUNASTHANAKA) by destroying Deluding Perception (DARSHAN MOHANIYA KARMA). This experience has led him to gradually reduce obstacles to right conduct (CHARITRA MOHANIYA KARMA) to a point where he has started concentrating continually on his pure true self.

આત્મસ્થિરતા ત્રણ સંક્ષિપ્ત યોગની,
મુખ્યપણે તો વર્તે દેહપર્યંત જો;
ઘોર પરિષદ કે ઉપસર્ગ ભયે કરી,
આવી શકે નહીં તે સ્થિરતાનો અંત જો અપૂર્વ...૪

Let the inner stability, achieved
By reducing the association of soul
With activities of mind, speech and body,
Remain till the end of this life.
Let severely painful experiences (or even fear of them)
Self-initiated (PARISHAH)
Or Inflicted by others (UPASARG)
Not disturb my inner stability. When...4

Here Shrimad describes the condition of the aspirant in the 5th GUNASTHANAKA in which he strives for permanent inner stability. He advises disassociation of the soul from the daily activities of mind, speech and body and advises full concentration on inner self. He states that painful experiences, whether self-initiated (PARISHAH) or those inflicted by others (UPASARG), should not be allowed to disturb inner equilibrium. These experiences are only temporary phenomena affecting the body and not the soul.

PARISHAH refers mainly to self-initiated actions (such as fasting, meditation, penance etc) undertaken by the aspirant to destroy past karmas and to remain on the path to salvation.

UPASARG refers to painful experiences (mental or physical) intentionally inflicted by others.

સંયમના હેતુથી યોગપ્રવર્તન,
સ્વરૂપલક્ષે જિનઆજ્ઞા આધીન જો;
તે પણ ક્ષણ ક્ષણ ઘટતી જાતી સ્થિતિમાં,
અંતે થાયે નિજ સ્વરૂપમાં લીન જો અપૂર્વ...૫

Let all my efforts be aimed at self control
In accordance with the direction of JINA
Solely to realize the True Self.
Let even these efforts diminish moment by moment
Until I am totally absorbed with my true self. When...5

Here Shrimad continues the description of the 5th GUNASTHANAKA. At this stage the soul has acquired partial control over the desire for sensual pleasures.

He suggests that all efforts to disassociate soul from the activities of mind, body and speech to realize the true inner self should be carried out per the teachings of JINA (the soul and body are separate entities and I am the soul, not the body).

He adds that as concentration into true self increases, self-control becomes effortless, like second-nature, and this eventually leads to full absorption into the true self.

પચ વિષયમાં રાગદ્વેષ વિરહિતતા
પચ પ્રમાદે ન મળે મનનો ક્ષોભ જો;
દ્રવ્ય, ક્ષેત્ર ને કાળ, ભાવ પ્રતિબંધ વણ,
વિચરવું ઉદયાધીન પણ વીતલોભ જો. અપૂર્વ...૬

Let experiences through the five senses
Be without craving (feelings of attachment) or aversion.
Let the five types of undesirable behaviors (PRAMAD)
Not disturb my mind.
Let my behavior not be influenced
By external objects, place, time and feelings.
Let me accept my present situation
As the result of my past actions (KARMAs)
And let me behave without expectation of reward. When...6

Here Shrimad describes the behavior of the aspirant in the 6th GUNASTHANAKA.
In this GUNASTHANAKA, the aspirant is generally a monk (MUNI) but in rare
situations can be a lay person.

First, he states that the aspirant should develop control over the 5 senses
(Hearing, Seeing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching) resulting in no craving
(feelings of attachment) or aversion.

Second, the aspirant should avoid the five different types of undesirable
behaviors (PRAMAD) - 1. Arrogance, 2. Sexual Pleasures, 3. Passions
(KASHAYAS, namely Anger, Pride, Deception, Greed), 4. Excessive sleep, 5.
Malevolent Talk. The aspirant should be vigilant toward these undesirable
behaviors and maintain equanimity.

Third, he states that the present life should be accepted with equanimity
because it is the result of past karmas over which one has no control. Furthermore,
the aspirant's behavior should be devoid of any preferences for material objects,
place, time, and feelings, and without expectation of any rewards.

The objective is to avoid acquiring new karmas and to cultivate inner tranquility.

કોધ પ્રત્યે તો વર્તે કોધસ્વભાવતા,
માન પ્રત્યે તો દીનપણાનું માન જો;
માયા પ્રત્યે માયા સાક્ષી ભાવની,
લોભ પ્રત્યે નહીં લોભ સમાન જો. અપૂર્વ...૭

Let my anger be directed only toward anger.
Let me take pride only in being humble.
Let me have feelings of a neutral observer toward deception
Let me be greedy with greed. When...7

The first and most important step for all aspirants who seek progress in the spiritual path is to overcome the four major undesirable passions (KASHAYAS) such as Anger, Pride, Deception and Greed. Shrimad shows a very practical approach to overcome these undesirable passions: By always being vigilant for the feelings of Anger, by being very humble, by developing the habit of becoming a neutral observer in daily life and by constantly curtailing the desire for worldly possessions as well as the desire for the respect and adoration of others.

બહુ ઉપસર્ગોક્તો પ્રત્યે પણ ક્રોધ નહીં
વંદે ચક્રી તથાપિ ન મળે માન જો;
દેહ જાય પણ માયા થાય ન રોમમાં,
લોભ નહીં છો પ્રબળ સિદ્ધિ નિદાન જો. અપૂર્વ...૮

Let me not be angry towards any living being
Who inflicts severe physical or emotional pain on me.
Let me not be proud or arrogant
Even if an emperor bows to me and touches my feet.
Let me maintain an attitude of detachment
Even if costs the loss of life.
Let me have no temptation, even to attain or use supernatural powers. When...8

In this stanza Shrimad further describes, in detail, for Munis and spiritually advanced persons, how to overcome undesirable passions (KASHAYAS). They should not have, Shrimad emphasizes, any anger even if anyone inflicts physical or emotional pain on them. Shrimad describes the expected mental attitude and the conduct to be observed by Munis and spiritually advanced souls with examples such as not being proud even if an emperor bows to them, by remaining detached even if the body is destroyed, and by not having any desire to attain or utilize supernatural powers. In other words, one should be totally devoid of anger, pride, deception and greed in daily life. A concrete illustration of this attitude and behavior is seen in the stories of Mahavir, Parswanath and Gajsukumar as described in Jain scriptures.

નરૂભાવ, મુંડભાવ સહ અસ્નાનતા,
અદતઘોવન આદિ પરમ પ્રસિદ્ધ જો;
કેશ, રોમ, નખ કે અંગે શૂગાર નહીં
દ્રવ્યભાવ સંયમમય નિર્ગ્રંથ સિદ્ધ જો. અપૂર્વ...૯

Let me be like a Nirgranth,
whose external characteristics are:
Unclad body, shaven head, unwashed body and teeth,
Non-use of cosmetics and self discipline.
This will lead me to a state of detachment. When...9

Here Shrimad further describes the state of a monk (MUNI) who has reached the 7th spiritual stage (7th GUNASTHANAKA). He says that the aspirant at this stage is indifferent to heat and cold, to appearance and social conventions, and has conquered all emotions - pain, pleasure and even the shame of not being clothed. He has total control over his feelings and has no desire to acquire any material possessions.

શત્રુ મિત્ર પ્રત્યે વર્તે સમદર્શિતા,
માન અમાને વર્તે તે જ સ્વભાવ જો;
જીવિત કે મરણે નહીં ન્યૂનાધિક્તા,
ભવ મોક્ષે પણે શુદ્ધ વર્તે સમભાવ જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૦

Let me have equanimity
To friend and foe
Honor and dishonor
Let me be indifferent to life and death.
Let me remain in a pure state
Whether I am in this world
Or in the liberated state (MOKSHA). When...10

Here Shrimad describes the picture of an internally balanced and detached monk (NIRGRANTH)). The monk treats friend and foe, life and death, with equanimity and is not influenced by bestowed honor or dishonor. To him, life and death, rebirth and liberation are equal. At this stage, he is free even from a desire for the liberated state (MOKSHA).

એકાકી વિચરતો વળી સ્મશાનમાં,
વળી પર્વતમાં વાઘ સિંહ સંયોગ જો;
અડોલ આસન, ને મનમાં નહીં ક્ષોભતા,
પરમ મિત્રનો જાણે પામ્યા યોગ જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૧

Let me be like a monk who
Wanders alone on cremation grounds or mountains
Where he encounters tigers and lions
Remains unmoved and
Has no apprehension as if
He is amongst best friends.

When...11

Here Shrimad describes the aspirations of a monk. Normally monks remain in groups. However, as the monk progresses, he initiates even more severe penance to further accelerate his progress by wandering alone on cremation grounds and mountains; places where he may encounter ghosts or ferocious animals who may attack and inflict bodily harm. He maintains internal tranquility and remains absorbed in meditation regardless of these external situations so he may give up his total attachment to his body. He reaches such a state that he considers even animals and ghosts as his best friends. He has reached the pinnacle of equanimity with friendship for all living beings.

ઘોર તપશ્ચર્યામાં પણ મનને તાપ નહીં
સરસ અન્ને નહીં મનને પ્રસન્નભાવ જો;
રજકણ કે શિદ્ધિ વૈમાનિક દેવની,
સર્વે માન્યા પુદ્ગલ એક સ્વભાવ જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૨

Let me be like a monk
Whose mind is not perturbed even during severe penance
Who gets no joy from delicious food
To whom a particle of dust is the same
As the immense wealth of heavenly gods (VAIMANIK DEVA)
Since they are different forms
Of the same non-living matter (PUDGAL) When...12

In the previous stanza, Shrimad described the impact of external situations on the behavior of a monk. Now he describes the impact of self-initiated efforts to reach the higher stages of spiritual progress. Here the monk does not allow any physical or mental strains resulting from his penance (TAPA) to bother him; nor does he rejoice in tasty food. To him, a particle of dust and immense wealth are the same non-living matter and he has no interest in them.

This concludes the first part of the poem in which Shrimad describes his desire for attaining a pure internal state and the behavior befitting a real NIRGRANTH. This first part has reference to GUNASTHANAKAs 4-7. The second part consists of the remaining 9 stanzas relating to GUNASTHANAKAs 8-14, which relate to the process of progressively eliminating karmas (KSHAPAK SHRENEE), attainment of total and absolute knowledge (KEVALGNAN) and liberation (MOKSHA). The spiritual progression from Gunasthanaka 8 through 13 is achieved via deep meditation and introspection (Shukla Dhyan).

એમ પરજય કરીને ચારિત્રમોહનો,
આવું ત્યાં જ્યાં કરણ અપૂર્વ ભાવ જો;
શ્રેણી ક્ષપકતણી કરીને આરૂઠતા,
અનન્ય ચિંતન અતિશય શુદ્ધ સ્વભાવ જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૩

After conquering the delusive karmas
Which mask Right Conduct (CHARITRA MOHA),
Let me go through the unique experience of the soul
Never before encountered (APOORVAKARAN);
And start on the ladder of Karma destruction (KSHAPAK SHRENEE),
And, through deep meditation, experience
The true nature of the soul. When...13

Here Shrimad describes the state where most of the remaining MOHANIYA KARMAS are destroyed and the aspirant goes through a unique experience of the true self never experienced before (APOORVAKARAN 8th GUNASTHANAKA). APOORVAKARAN is the unique experience of having a significantly higher level of control over 25 different types of passions such as Anger, Pride, Deception, Greed, Pleasure, Sorrow etc. He states that KSHAPAK SHRENEE is the only path to salvation. Jain scriptures expound on the theory of two ladders: KSHAPAK SHRENEE and UPASHAM SHRENEE. The first ladder refers to the process in which there occurs a progressive elimination of karmas as one climbs up from the 8th to the 12th spiritual stage. The second ladder refers to the process in which the soul moves to the 11th spiritual stage very fast, only to fall back to any of the lower spiritual stages because karmas were being suppressed and not destroyed along the way. The first ladder (KSHAPAK SHRENEE) is the only way to achieve MOKSHA.

મોહ સ્વયંભૂરમણ સમુદ્ર તરી કરી,
સ્થિતિ ત્યાં જ્યાં ક્ષીણમોહ ગુણસ્થાન જો;
અંત સમય ત્યાં પૂર્ણ સ્વરૂપ વીતરાગ થઈ,
પ્રગટાવું નિજ કેવળજ્ઞાન નિધાન જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૪

Let me cross the large ocean (SWAYAMBHOORAMAN) of delusion (MOHA)
And reach the state
Where practically all delusive karmas are eliminated (KSHINAMOHA).
At the end, let me attain perfection through complete detachment
And acquire the treasure of absolute knowledge (KEVALGNAN). When...14

Here Shrimad describes the state of soul as it passes through the 12th spiritual stage (KSHINAMOHA) and says that conquering MOHA is as difficult as crossing the largest ocean but is possible solely through self effort and meditation. MOHA, at this stage, implies subtle attachment and delusion and even a small trace of it prevents the soul from achieving total perfection. After conquering this formidable foe -MOHA - and burning off other remaining karmas (namely: Gnanavaraniya, Darshanavaraniya and Antaraya), the soul encounters the ultimate experience of self and acquires absolute knowledge (KEVALGNAN)/ perception (KEVALDARSHAN) and enters the 13th stage. It takes less than 48 minutes (ANTARMUHRT) for the soul to pass through 8th to 12th stage.

ચાર કર્મ ઘનઘાતી તે વ્યવચ્છેદ જ્યાં,
ભવના બીજતણો આત્મ્યતિક નાશ જો;
સર્વ ભાવ શાતા દ્રષ્ટા સહ શુદ્ધતા,
કૃતકૃત્ય પ્રભુ વીર્ય અનંત પ્રકાશ જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૫

Let four types of obscuring karmas be destroyed
Eliminating the seed of life and birth cycles.
Let the self in its purest form
Become just the knower and observer
Uncovering infinite energy.

When...15

Here Shrimad describes the condition of the soul upon reaching the 13th spiritual stage (13th GUNASTHANAKA) and becoming a SAYOGI KEVALI. A SAYOGI KEVALI possesses a physical body but acts beyond it. At this point, the soul has completely rid itself of the four types of obscuring karmas (GHATI karmas connected with the soul) -namely: GNANAVARANIYA (Knowledge obscuring), DARSHANAVARANIYA (Perception obscuring) , ANTARAYA (Result blocking), and MOHANIYA (Deluding). Having destroyed these karmas, the soul gets total control over feelings, emotions, attachments, and aversion. At this stage the soul is only a knower and observer and uncovers the infinite energy to move on to the next spiritual stage of AYOGI KEVALI.

It is appropriate to look at the meaning of the first two lines of Navakar Mantra at this point. The first line "NAMO ARIHANTANAM" means bowing to those souls who have conquered the inner enemies-i.e. those who have destroyed GHATI karmas and reached the 13th spiritual stage (SAYOGI KEVALI) described above. The second line "NAMO SIDDHANAM" means bowing to those who have destroyed not only GHATI karmas but also AGHATI karmas, the latter being connected with the physical body (the 14th stage - AYOGI KEVALI further described in stanza 17). ARIHANTAS (e.g. Simandharswami, etal. in Mahavideh kshetra are SAYOGI KEVALI) have a physical body and have been placed first because they assist all souls by teaching the right path. Once their life span is over, they become SIDDHAS and achieve the highest spiritual stage. Their legacy is with us even after thousands of years.

વેદનીયાદિ ચાર કર્મ વર્તે જહાં,
બળી સીંદરીવત્ આકૃતિ માત્ર જો;
તે દેહાયુષ આધીન જેની સ્થિતિ છે,
આયુષ પૂર્ણ મટિયે દૈહિક પાત્ર જો, અપૂર્વ...૧૬

At this stage, the four AGHATI karmas such as VEDANIYA etc
Are like a burnt rope
Which has shape but no strength.
They exist as long as life exists.
Once life ends, they (SAYOGI KEVALIS)
Do not acquire a new physical body. When...16

Here Shrimad describes the condition of the soul upon destroying GHATI karmas. At this stage, the soul must still complete the experience of the AGHATI karmas- namely physical pain and pleasure (VEDANIYA), physique determining (NAMA), inherited identity (GOTRA) , and life span (AYU). These four karmas are related to the body and linger on as long as a person is alive. Their impact, however, like that of a burnt rope, is very minimal. They are just not strong enough to form a new bondage causing another birth. The SAYOGI KEVALI's daily activities are performed with detachment and karmas are produced while sustaining life but the bondage is extremely weak and is destroyed within a moment. As the SAYOGI KEVALI nears the end of his life, he enters the final stage of Shukla Dhyana (highest form of meditation producing ultimate happiness) and, if necessary, performs SAMUDGHAT by accelerating the process of shedding the remaining karmas and destroying them all in less than 48 minutes (ANTARMUHRT).

મન, વચન, કાયા ને કર્મની વર્ગણ,
છૂટે જહાં સકળ પુદ્ગલ સંબંધ જો;
એવું અયોગી ગુણસ્થાનક ત્યાં વર્તેતું,
મહાભાગ્ય સુખદાયક પૂર્ણ અબંધ જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૭

Association of soul with all matter

Through mind, speech, body and karmas totally ceases.

This stage of AYOGE KEVALI

Yields eternal happiness and total freedom from all bondage When...17

When the association of the soul with all matter and karmas through mind, speech and body ceases, the soul achieves the highest spiritual stage called AYOGE KEVALI or the 14th GUNASTHANAKA. This stage of eternal happiness and total freedom from all bondages is acquired by the most fortunate souls.

એક પરમાણુમાત્રની મળે ન સ્પર્શતી,
પૂર્ણ કલક રહિત અડોલ સ્વરૂપ જો;
શુદ્ધ નિર્જન ચેતન્યમૂર્તિ અનન્યમય,
અગુરુલઘુ અમૂર્ત સહજપદરૂપ જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૮

Here, the soul has no association with even
A single particle of matter
It is totally flawless, unwavering,
Pure, faultless, omniscient, incomparable
Neither heavy nor light, formless
And without any effort stays in a natural state. When...18

Here Shrimad describes the attributes of a perfect soul upon achieving NIRVANA. In this stage, the soul has no bondage with even a single particle of matter including all karmas. It is an independent entity with no physical attributes such as mass, color, shape, smell, speech, touch, taste etc. It is pure, faultless, omniscient and incomparable and stays effortlessly in a natural state. The cycle of birth and death is broken forever .

પૂર્વપ્રયોગાદિ કરણના યોગથી,
ઉર્ધ્વગમન સિદ્ધાલય પ્રાપ્ત સુસ્થિત જો;
સાદિ અનંત અનંત સમાધિસુખમાં,
અનંત દર્શન, જ્ઞાન અનંત સહિત જો. અપૂર્વ...૧૯

With the momentum generated
By past spiritual experiences
The soul goes straight up
Reaches the abode of SIDHHAS (perfect souls)
And stays there forever.
This state is the beginning of endless happiness
Coming from the stability of the soul within itself
Along with infinite perception and knowledge. When...19

Here Shrimad states how the soul reaches the abode of the liberated souls (SIDDHALAYA or SIDDHASHEELA). The soul fulfills its intrinsic nature to move upwards with the momentum acquired by the continuous past efforts to shed karmas. The soul, has infinite perception and knowledge and remains in eternal bliss.

જે પદ શ્રી સર્વજ્ઞે દીઠું જ્ઞાનમાં;
કહી શક્યા નહીં પણ તે શ્રી ભગવાન જો;
તેહ સ્વરૂપને અન્ય વાણી તે શું કહે?
અનુભવગોચર માત્ર રહ્યું તે જ્ઞાન જો. અપૂર્વ...૨૦

CONCLUSION

**When Omniscient Souls have seen
This stage of SIDDHA through their knowledge
But have not been able to describe it in words
How can anyone else describe that stage?
It can only be experienced.**

When...20

Here Shrimad describes the limitation of word and mind to describe the highest spiritual stage of SIDDHA. He states that since even Tirthankaras cannot express this stage through words, how can he or anyone else describe it. The knowledge of the eternal bliss of that stage is indescribable and has to be experienced to comprehend its depth and richness.

એહ પરમપદપ્રાપ્તિનું કયું ધ્યાન મેં,
ગજા વગર ને હાલ મનોરથરૂપ જો;
તોપણ નિશ્ચય રાજચંદ્ર મનને રહ્યો,
પ્રભુઆજ્ઞાએ થાશું તે જ સ્વરૂપ જો. અપૂર્વ...૨૧

I aspired to attain that highest spiritual state (SIDHHA)
Now a dream beyond my reach
And only in the form of ambition.
However I, Rajachandra, am sure of achieving that state
By following the teachings of Tirthankaras. When...21

Shrimad concludes this great poem with humility and a firm resolve. He knows how difficult it is to reach Moksha and is aware of his current limitations. But he has a dream, a strong will, and a strong commitment to achieve that state. He expresses unwavering faith in the teachings of Tirthankars and is fully confident that as long as he is following the path shown by Tirthankars, he will ultimately achieve Moksha, the state of eternal bliss.

Appendix 1

GUNASTHANAKAS (SPIRITUAL STAGES)

What is a GUNASTHANAKA ?

"Guna" means virtues, characteristics or natural attributes and "sthanaka" denotes location, condition, stage or level. The spiritual level of a soul with respect to its natural attributes (relative to its maximum potential) ie. Infinite Knowledge (Gnan) and Perception (Darshan) is called GUNASTHANAKA. Jain scriptures stipulate fourteen stages as milestones of spiritual progression and regression (not necessarily in chronological order) and describe them in detail.

The degree of freedom from karmas manifests itself in the aspirant's thoughts and behavior. The poem "Apoorva Avasar" describes this process of achieving freedom from karmas as the soul progresses through various spiritual stages.

The following briefly names and describes each stages:

1. **Mithya Drashti (Wrong Perception):** Spiritually blind due to the influence of karmas, the person neither has the knowledge nor does he believe in the teachings of Tirthankara as a means to achieve Moksha. To go to higher spiritual stages, one must cultivate full faith in the teachings of Tirthankara and practice them accordingly.
2. **Saswadana (Retained Taste):** This is a transitory stage through which a soul passes for a very short duration of time only when descending from a higher stage. This stage is not encountered during an upward advancement from the first stage. The soul in this stage retains the taste of SAMYAK DARSHAN (previously acquired) before further degeneration to the first stage occurs.
3. **Mishra Drashti (Mixed Perception):** The aspirant, wavering between right and wrong beliefs, has mixed feelings toward the teachings of Tirthankaras. The soul temporarily passes through this stage while descending from the fourth or ascending from the first.

4. **Avirati Samyak Drashti (Self Realization):** In this stage, all forms of Darshana Mohaniya karmas are destroyed and an aspirant gets glimpses of the real self and develops firm conviction that the body and the soul are two separate entities. This important phenomenon is known as "Samyak Darshan". The glimpses may be momentary or last for a long duration of time. However short the duration, the soul manifests this conviction in behavior, reactions and attitude in daily experiences of life. This is a critical step for further spiritual growth because any soul reaching this stage invariably acquires Moksha sooner or later. This stage marks the beginning of the end of the journey. Interestingly, the aspirant in this stage is not yet able to relinquish worldly attachments and desires. The soul now prepares itself for the rest of the journey by working on acquiring external and internal purity.

5. **Desh Virati Samyak Drashti (Partial Renunciation):** This stage is a logical evolution of the fourth stage. Due to continued faith, the aspirant acquires partial control over sensual pleasures and desires to progress toward the ultimate goal.

6. **Pramatta Sanyata (Partially Controlled Behavior):** In this stage the aspirant makes a major effort for complete renunciation and refrains from all kinds of sins. It is the stage of a Muni or a Saint with good control over desires. However, he is not yet totally free from internal desires and often displays undesirable behaviors (PRAMAD), hence the name Pramatta.

7. **Apramatta Sanyata (Improved Controlled Behavior):** This stage is a further evolution of the sixth stage. A Muni reaches this stage when he strives hard and is able to eliminate undesirable behaviors (Pramad). This stage represents further purification and a vigilant state of mind. However, any time he displays undesirable behaviors (Pramad), he descends to the sixth stage. Thus a Muni often oscillates back and forth between the sixth and seventh stage for a long time. This seventh stage lasts up to 48 minutes (one Antarmuhurat) after which time the aspirant progresses to the eighth stage or falls back to the sixth.

8. Apoorvakaran (Never before experienced): This is the stage where an aspirant experiences the true nature of self never before experienced and lasts up to one Antar Muhrat. All material attachments are long gone, the purification of the self is of a very high state and now, the aspirant proceeds on one of the two following ladders: 1. KSHAPAK SHRENEE or 2. UPASHAM SHRENEE. In KSHAPAK SHRENEE an aspirant progresses up without falling back because he sheds or destroys karmas in the process. In UPASHAM SHRENEE an aspirant continues to suppress some karmas Vs. destroying them. When the suppressed karmas surface, the aspirant invariably falls back to either the sixth, fourth or even the first stage. Obviously, the only ladder to the ultimate goal of Moksha is KSHAPAK SHRENEE. The condition of an aspirant from the eighth through twelfth stages represents the progressive stages of a highly focused mind.

9. Anivrutti Badar (Suppresses or eliminates Gross forms of subtle Deluding Karmas): This stage represents further progress of an aspirant in either of the above ladders. An aspirant in this stage begins to work on gross forms of remaining subtle passions as they surface. An aspirant in UPASHAM SHRENEE suppresses them and the one in KSHAPAK SHRENEE eliminates all deluding karma except the minutest level of Greed.

10. Sukshma Samparaya (Surfacing of Minute Levels Of Greed): Having worked on the gross forms of subtle passions in the previous stage an aspirant has only minute levels of Greed (Sanjvalan Lobha) left to eliminate. When they surface, the aspirant either destroys or suppresses them as he progresses further. When suppressed (UPASHAM SHRENEE), he moves to the eleventh, if destroyed (KSHAPAK SHRENEE), he moves to the twelfth stage. This stage lasts up to one Antarmuhrat.

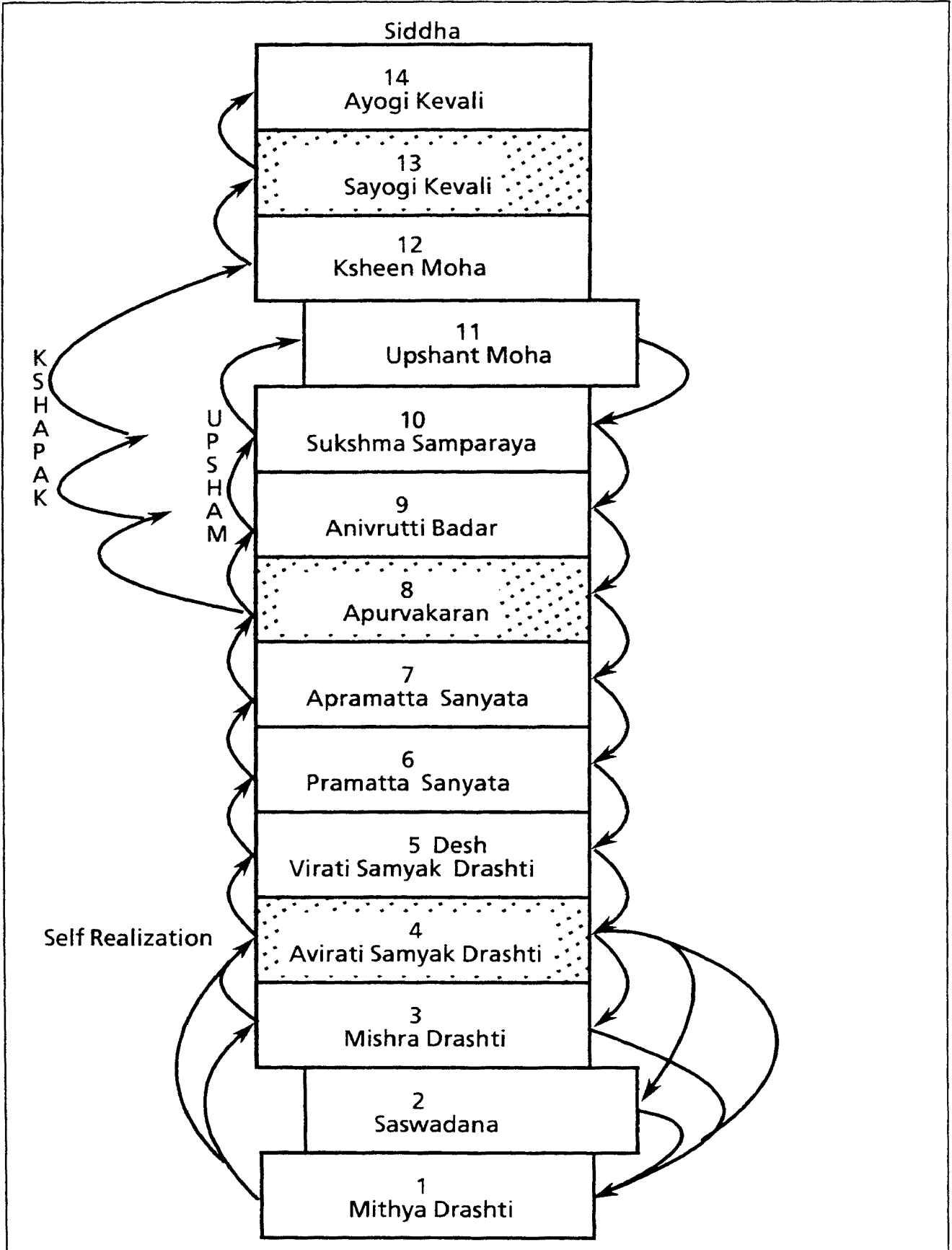
11. Upshant Moha (Suppressed Passions) The aspirant who had been an UPASHAM SHRENEE earlier experiences a state of complete renunciation for a short duration (up to 48 min.) in this stage. When the suppressed passions surface, he falls back to a lower stage and starts all over again.

12. **Ksheen Moha (Complete Detachment):** Those aspirants who were destroying their Deluding (Mohaniya) karmas as they were progressing (KSHAPAK SHRENEE), move directly from the tenth to this the twelfth stage without going through the eleventh. By the end of this stage, all forms (Prakriti) of Darshana Mohaniya (which occurred in the 4th stage) and Charitra Mohaniya Karmas are gone and the soul has become "Vitaraga". At the end of this stage the remaining three Ghati Karmas (namely: Gnanavaraniya, Darshanavaraniya and Antaraya) are completely destroyed and the soul moves to the next stage of KEVALI. The four body related "Aghati" Karmas (AYU, NAMA, GOTRA and VEDANIYA) still remain.

13. **Sayogi Kevali (Omniscient Souls):** This is the stage of spiritual perfection. In this stage the soul has infinite knowledge (Gnan), Perception (Darshan) and Energy (Virya). However, the soul still resides in the body and continues the activities of mind, speech and body but acts only as a knower and observer, hence the name "SAYOGI KEVALI". KEVALIS in this stage spend their lifetime in preaching the religion (Example: Gautamswami). Those KEVALIS who rejuvenate the religion during this stage are called Tirthankaras (Example: Mahavirswami). At the end of this stage, these souls in "Shukla Dhyana" begin the final preparations of eliminating the four remaining karmas (namely, AYU, NAMA, GOTRA and VEDANIYA) through the process of "SAMUDGHAT" if necessary.

14. **Ayogi Kevali:** At the beginning of this stage, the KEVALI disassociates his soul from the physical body and becomes "AYOGI KEVALI". This stage lasts for a very short duration (the time required to pronounce five simple letters). At the end of this stage, the soul rises to "Siddhashila". In Siddhashila the soul resides in eternal bliss and free from all bondage. This is the final goal and ultimate aspiration of all souls. This marks the end of the journey.

Appendix 2. Gunasthanaka Ladder



Glossary

"Apoorva Avasar Evo Kyare Aavashe"

Atma	Soul, Consciousness
Ayu	Life span
Antarmuhrt	Time duration upto 48 minutes
Aghati Karma	Karma related to body, viz. Nam, Gotra, Vedniya and Ayu
Agurulaghu	Not heavy nor light, not big nor small
Amoort	Not having any shape or figure
Ananyamaya	One of a kind, Unique
Antaraaya Karma	Karma which obstructs desired results
Apoorva	Never happened before
Apoorvakaran	Never before experienced
Arihant	One who has conquered inner enemies, or Jina
Avasar	Occasion
Ayogee	Without activities of mind speech and body
Ayogi Kevali	Kevali whose association with all matters and Karmas through mind speach and body has ceased - 14th gunasthanak.

Bhagvan	Liberated soul, Prabhu or Siddha
Chaaritra	Conduct
Chaaritramoha	Obstacles to right conduct
Chaaritra Mohaniya Karma	Karma that impedes right conduct
Chaitanya	Soul, Consciousness
Chakree (<i>Chakravarti</i>)	Emperor
Darshan	Perception, Belief
Darshanamoha	Delusive perception
Darshana Mohaniya Karma	Karma that deludes right perception
Darshanaavarneeya Karma	Karma obscuring right perception
Dhyan	Concentration, Meditation
Dwesh	Aversion, dislike or hatred
Ghanaghaati	Highly obscuring the true nature of soul
Ghati Karma	Karma obscuring the true nature of soul: Four types, viz. Gnaanaavarneeya, Darshanaavarneeya, Mohaneeya & Antaraaya
Gnaan	Knowledge
Gnanavarniya Karma	Karma obscuring right knowledge
Gotra	Inherited identity
Gunasthanak	Spiritual stage

Jina	Person who has conquered all inner enemies (attachment and aversion), synonymous to Arihant or Veetaraagee
Karma	Actions of mind speech and body, often used synonymously with karmic matter
Karmic Matter	Very fine particles of matter that attach/ detach to souls due to actions of their mind speech and body
Kashaya	Undesirable passions (Anger, Pride, Deception & Greed)
Kevalgnan	Total and absolute knowledge (omniscience)
Kevali	Soul who has achieved kevalagnaan
Krodh	Anger
Kshapak	Process of elimination (of Karmas)
Kshapak Shrenee	Ladder of progressive elimination of karmas as one climbs up from 8th to 12th spiritual stage
Kshayopashamik	Partially destroyed and partially subsided passions
Ksheen Moha	12th spiritual stage at the end of which Mohaniya Karmas are totally eliminated
Labdhi	Supernatural powers occurring during the process of self purification
Lobh	Greed
Maan	Pride, Egoism

Maya	Deception, Fraud, Attachment
Moha	Attachment resulting into Delusion
Mohaniya Karma	Deluding Karma
Moksha	Liberated state (14th spiritual stage)/ Nirvaan
Nam	Self identity related to Physical Attributes
Niranjan	Spotless
Nirgranth	One who has severed all bondages of attachment & aversion
Nirvan	Liberated state / Moksha
Parishah	Self-initiated penance or hardship undertaken to destroy karmas
Parinamik	Resulting In
Prabhu	Liberated soul, Siddha or Bhagavan
Pramad	Five types of undesirable behaviors, viz. Arrogance, Sensual Indulgence, Passions (Anger, Pride, Deception & Greed), Excessive Sleep and Malevolent Talk
Pudgal	Particles of matter
Raag	Attachment
Riddhi	Wealth and material possessions
Samadhi	Deep Meditation, State of eternal bliss
Samakit	Self realization

Samyak	True or right
Sanyam	Self control
Samudghat	Accelerated process of shedding Aghaati Karmas
Sarvagna	Omniscient, Kevala
Sayogi Kevali	A person who has eliminated all Ghati Karmas and attained total and absolute knowledge (Kevalagnan)
Shree	Resourceful, Honorable
Shrenee	Ladder or path
Shukla Dhyam	Highest form of meditation on the soul
Siddha	Liberated soul
Siddhi	Spiritual accomplishment
Siddhalaya	Abode of liberated souls (siddhasheela)
Smashan	Cremation ground
Svabhav	Self nature or characteristics
Swayambhooraman	Name of the largest ocean, as described in Jain scriptures
Tapa	Self initiated penance, austerities
Tirthankar	An omniscient who re-establishes Tirtha, i.e. religious order and achieves Moksha during the life time. Mahavir is the 24th Tirthankar.
Upasarg	Pain inflicted by others

Upasham	Suppression or calming down (of Karmas)
Upasham Shrenee	Ladder of suppression of karmas as one climbs from 8th spiritual stage to 11th, only to fall back
Upayog	Process of acquiring knowledge
Vaimanik Dev	Heavenly angel
Vedaniya Karma	An aghati karma on account of which pleasure & pain are experienced
Veetarag	Devoid of attachment and aversion
Vishaya	Subject matter related to bodily senses
Yoga	Association of soul to activities of mind, speech or body

