

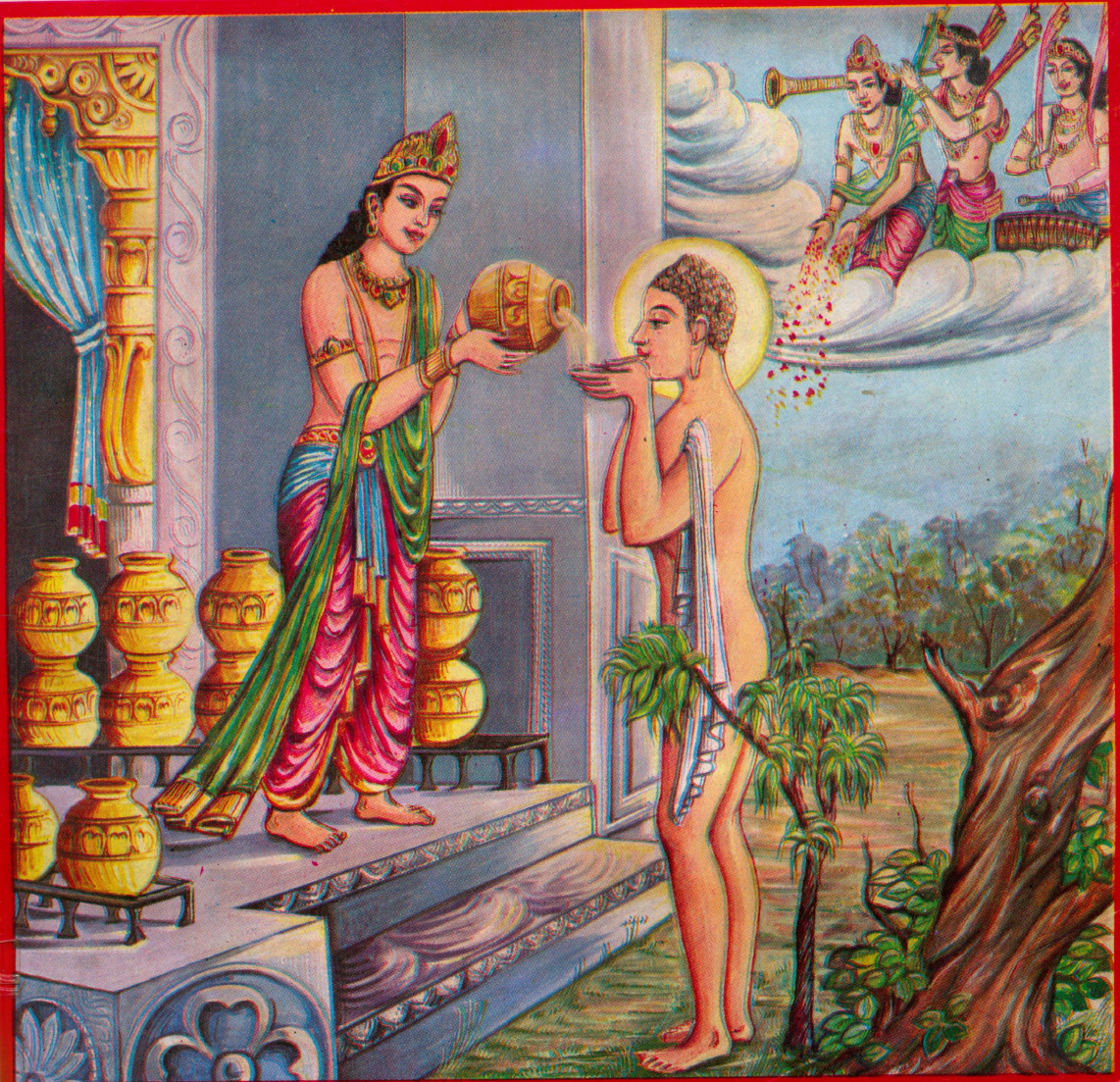
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BHAGWAN RISHABHDEV



A complete story of Our First Tirthankar Bhagwan Rishabhdev

BHAGWAN RISHABHDEV

The three main religions in India are Jain, Buddha and Vaidik (Hindu religion). All these agree that the source of religiousness is many billion years old. As per Jain religion, in the present times, Bhagwan Rishabhdev spread religion for the first time on the earth. In addition to religion, he was the first to give training for agriculture, trade, art, sculpture, politics and government to people. He was the first King of the world, first Shraman (Sanyasi or ascetic) and the first Tirthankar also. That's why he is known as Adinath or "First Tirthankar".

The eldest son of Rishabhdev, Bharat, became the first Chakravarty Samrat. On his name our country became popular as Bharatvarsh.

Bhagwan Rishabhdev was a popular leader as well as a religious leader. For the development of human society, he inspired man for hard work and then also showed the path of retirement for inner peace. After establishing the social administration system and government, he accepted the path of renouncement and set a great example of balance between luxuries and detachment.

In addition to Jain literature, the biography of Bhagwan Rishabhdev is also found in Rugved and Shrimad Bhagvat Puran etc. Finding many similarities between Bhagwan Rishabhdev and Bhagwan Shivshankar, historians wonder whether they are the two different forms of a single great person because both of them had made the development of people their goal in life.

We have presented this biography of Bhagwan Rishabhdev based on the ancient Jain religious books Adi Puran and Trishashti Shalaka Purush.

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नम्र सूचन

इस ग्रन्थ के अभ्यास का कार्य पूर्ण होते ही नियत
समयावधि में शीघ्र वापस करने की कृपा करें.
जिससे अन्य वाचकगण इसका उपयोग कर सकें.

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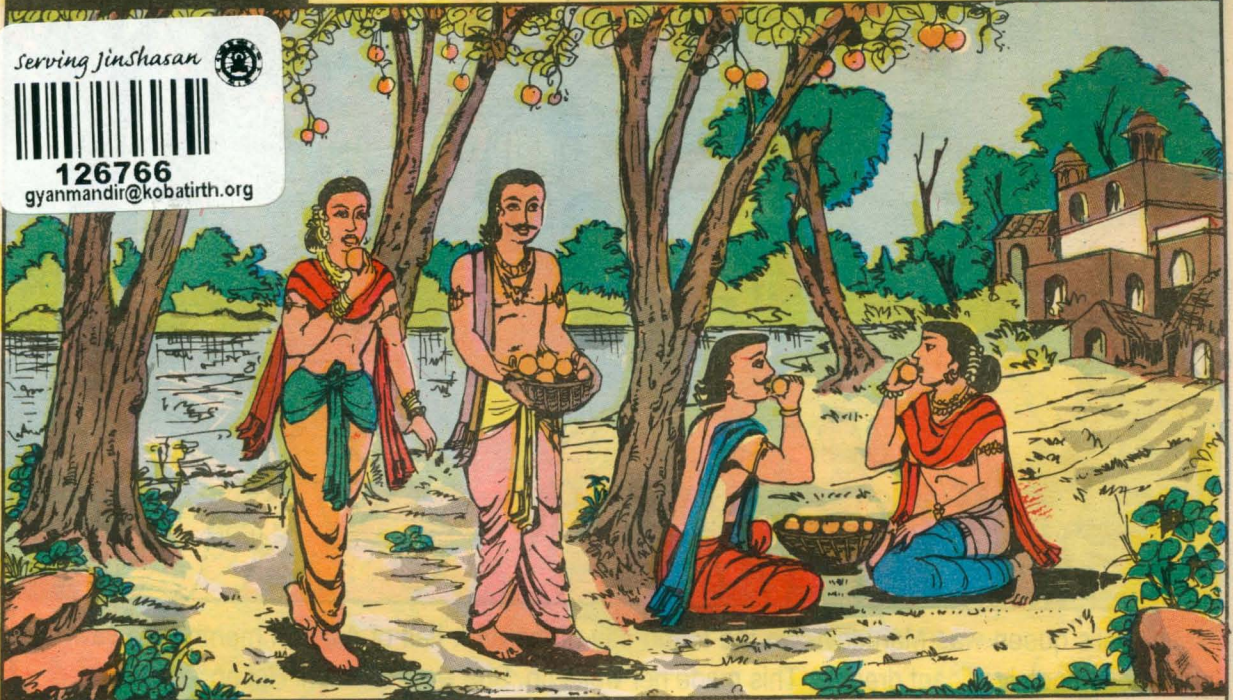
This story is from prehistoric Avaspirmi* times when people had few desires. All were happy as their lives were based on truth, morality and contentment. There was no ruler no ruled. All desires were fulfilled by Kalpavruksha**. There was no conflict.

Serving Jinshasan

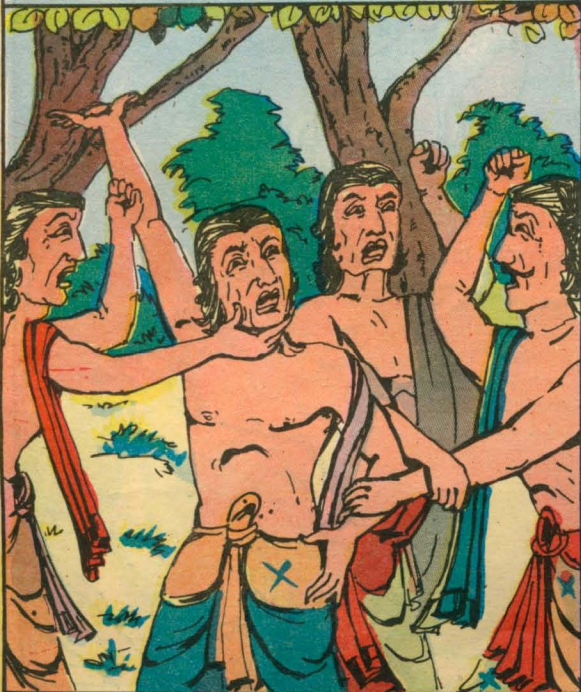


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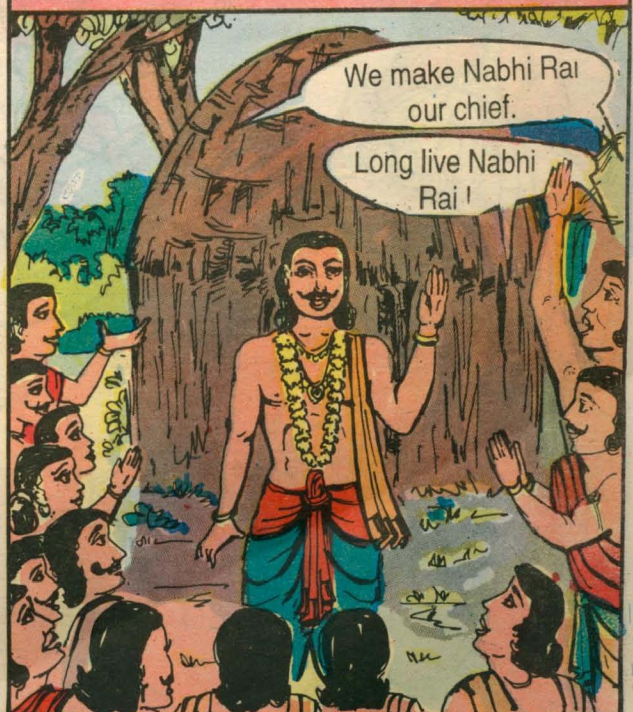
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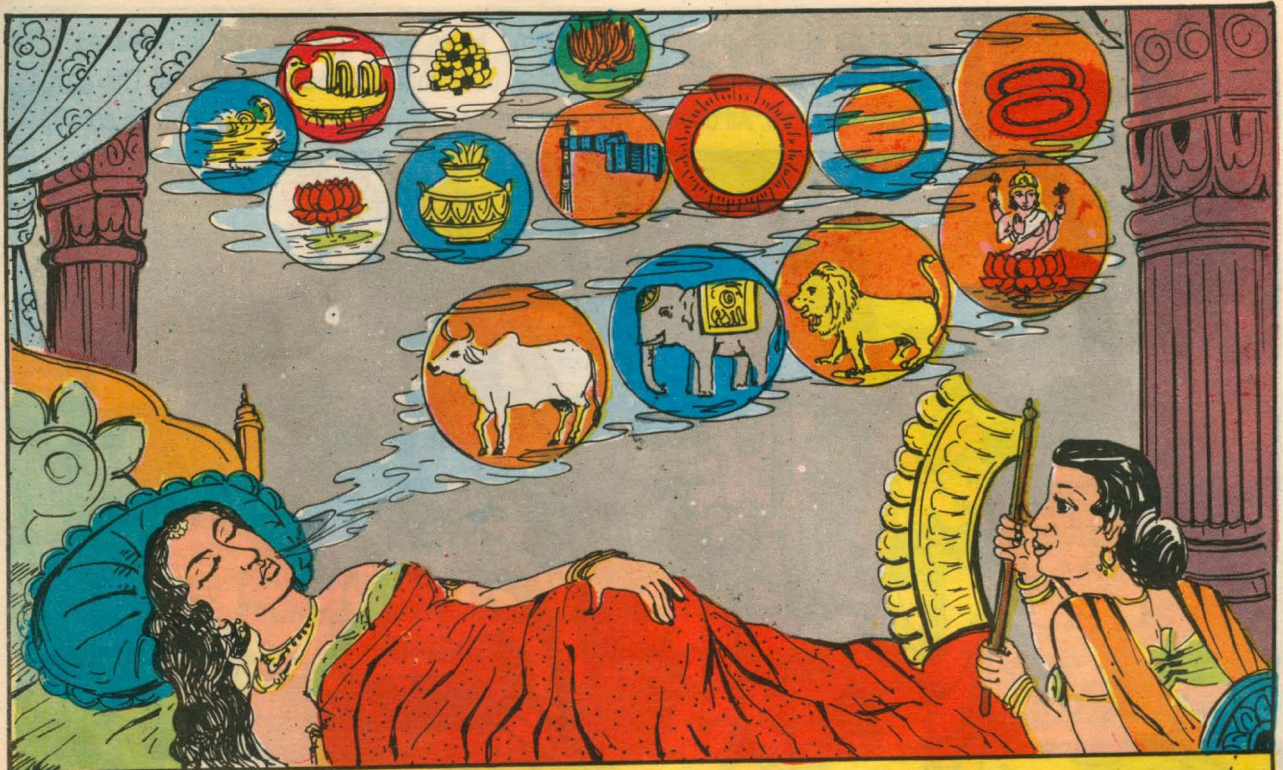
Gradually population increased. Fruits of Kalpavruksha were not enough. Needs increased. This developed friction and conflict.



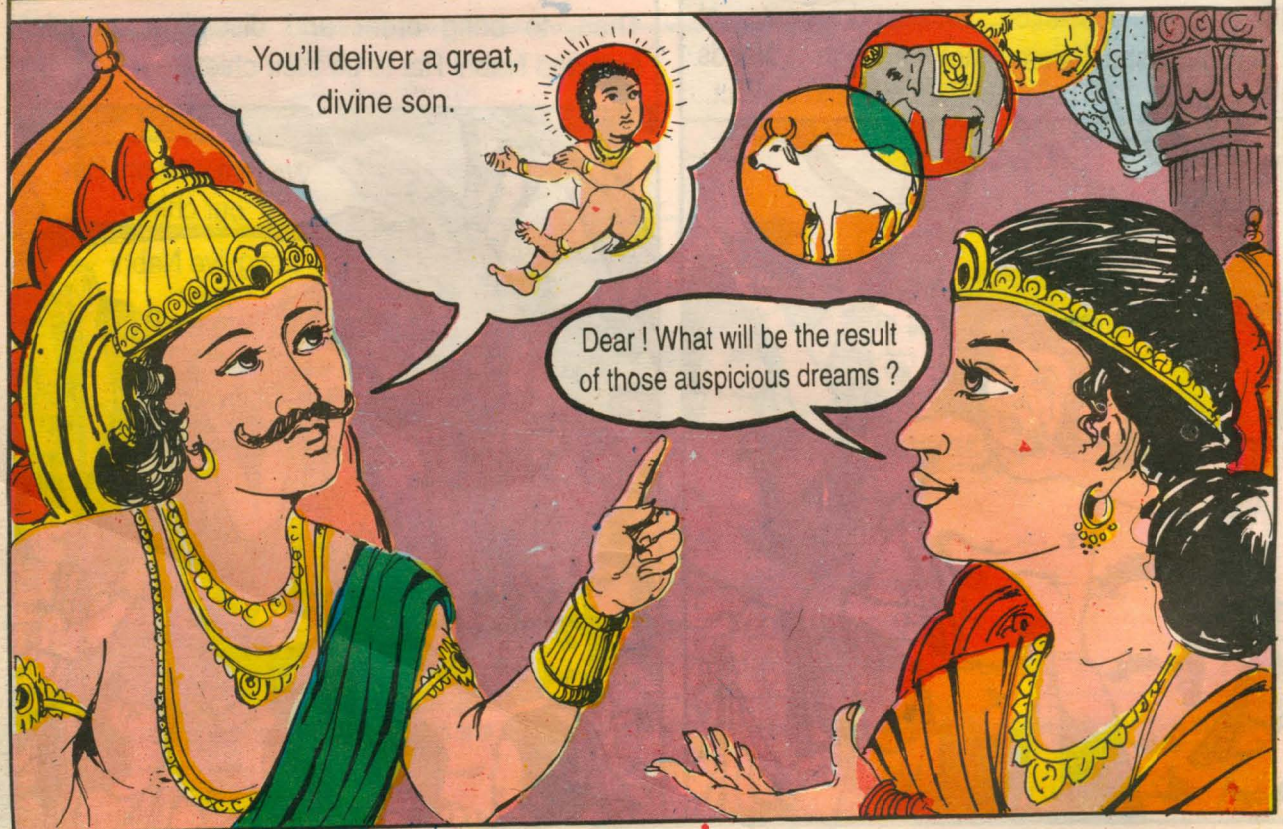
Then, to bring order and discipline, people selected Nabhi Rai to be their chief.



* Avaspirmi : Time cycle. ** Kalpavruksha : The divine tree that fulfills all desires.



Nabhi Rai's queen was Marudevi. On the fourth day of the dark half of Ashadh month, she saw 14 auspicious and significant dreams. This made her wake up. She went to Nabhi Rai and said-



On the eighth day of Chaitra month Marudevi delivered a bright baby boy at midnight. The whole earth got illuminated for a while on his birth. All humans, angels, birds and animals felt delighted. Angels and humans rejoiced the birth ceremony.



Nabhi Rai decided to name his son.

Our son has a sign of Vrishabh (an ox) on chest. So we'll name him RISHABH.



When Rishabh was about one, Lord of angels Indra came with Ikshu (Sugarcane). Seeing him attracted to Ikshu, Indra said-

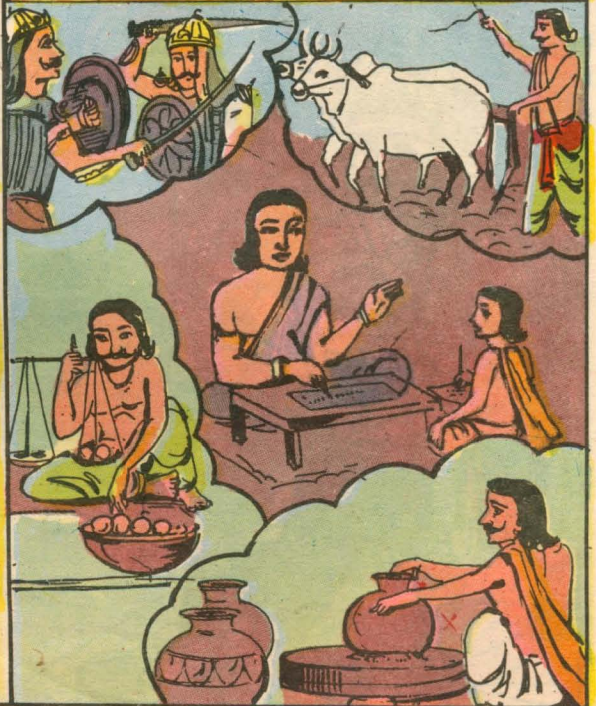
This ilk will be known as Ikshvaku.



Grown up Rishabh married to two females Sunanda and Sumangala and pioneered the system of marriage.

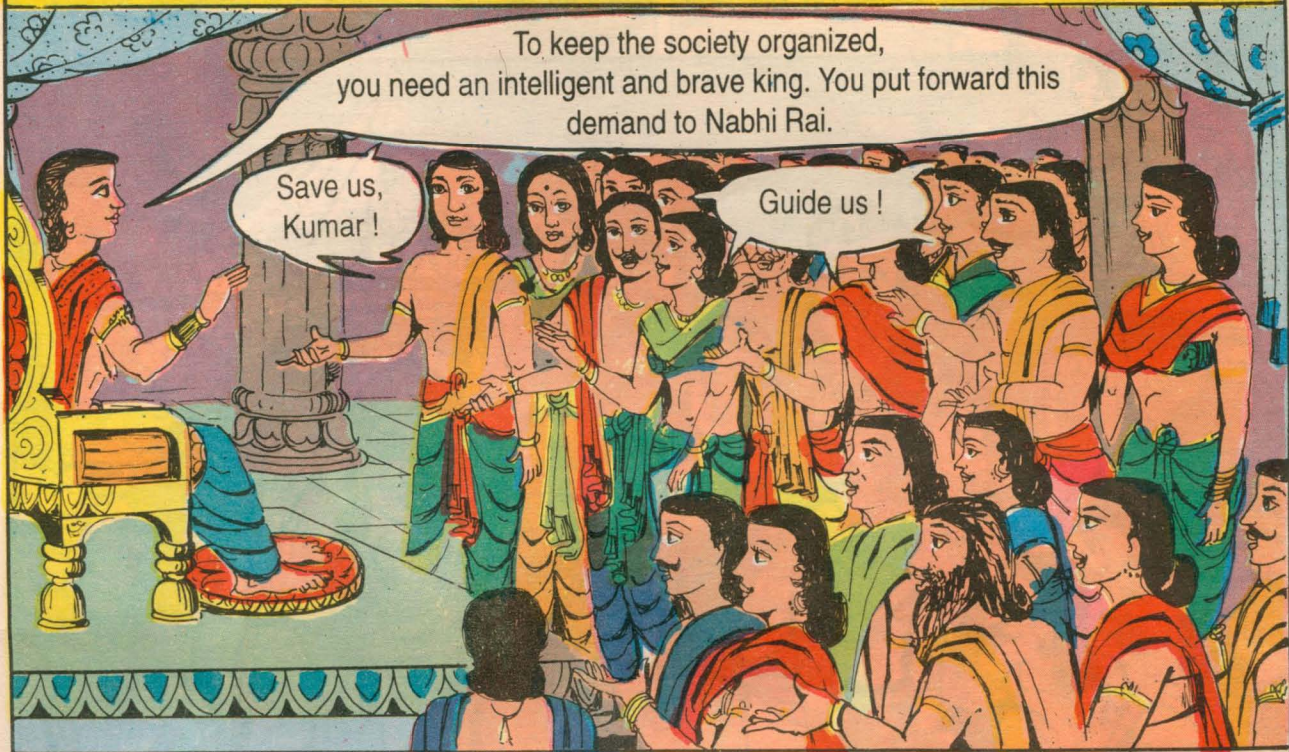


He trained people for defence, farming, mathematics, trade and manufacturing of pots etc.



He got Bharat, Bahubali etc. hundred sons and two daughters : Brahmi and Sundari.

Till the times of Nabhi Rai, man was disciplined and harmless. Gradually, violent ideas crept in. Disorder increased. Frightened people came to Rishabh to complain-



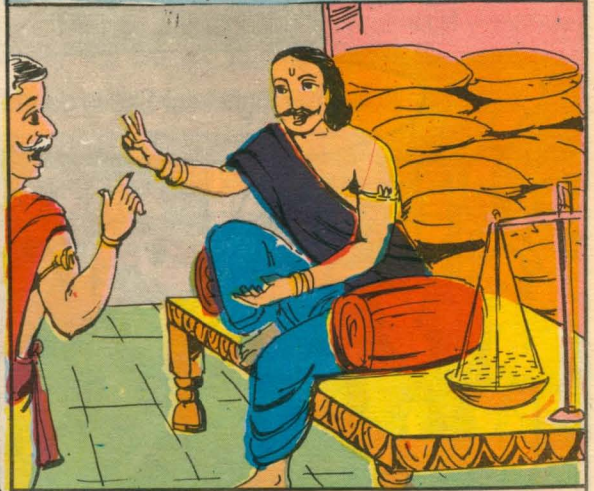
Rishabh's coronation was celebrated. Nabhi Rai and Marudevi blessed their son. All Yugalik* groups, sons-Bharat, Bahubali etc. and daughters- Brahmi, Sundari were present. Yugaliks poured sacred water on his feet. The city where Rishabh stayed was named Vanita.



King Rishabh divided duties to govern the society properly. He deputed brave people for protecting society. They were called Kshatriyas.



Those who were experts in buying and selling were called Vaishyas i.e. traders.

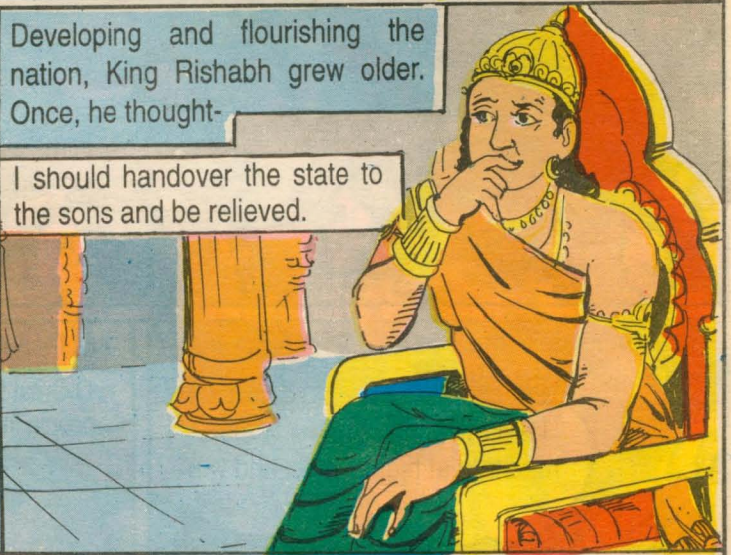


The people who looked after sanitation were called Shudras.



Developing and flourishing the nation, King Rishabh grew older. Once, he thought-

I should handover the state to the sons and be relieved.



The eldest son Bharat was assigned the state of Ayodhya.



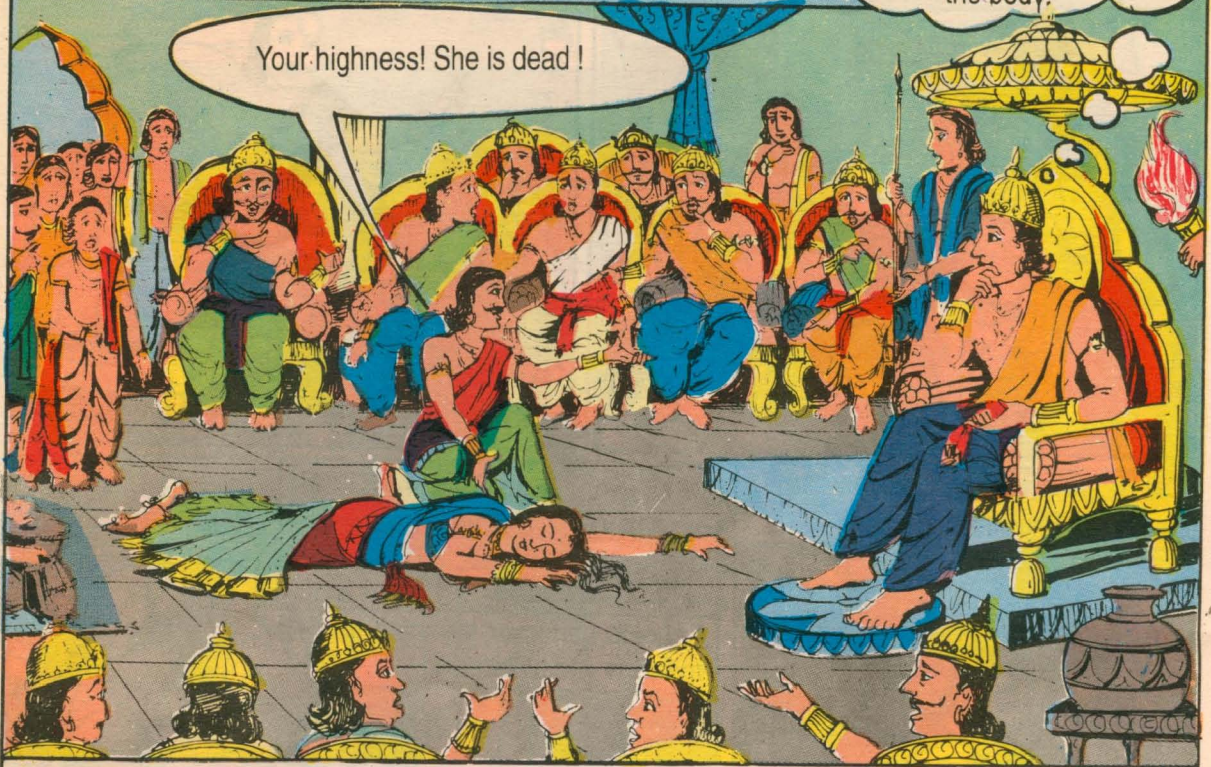
Bahubali got Takshashila. After handing over other states to remaining sons, King Rishabh felt relieved.



One day king Rishabhdev was watching the dance by Nilanjana, a dancer. The entire audience was watching with interest when suddenly Nilanjana fell unconscious on the floor.

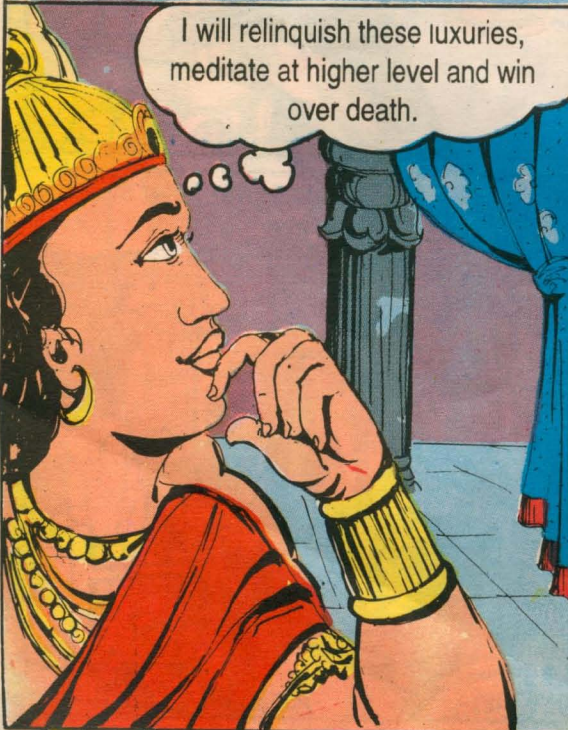
Oh! How short is the human life! How fragile is the body!

Your highness! She is dead!



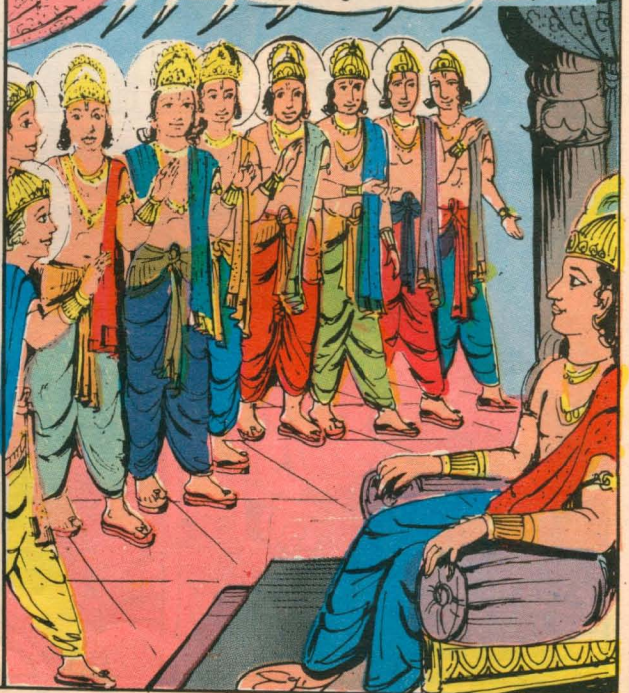
He immediately decided to forsake luxuries and embrace monkhood.

I will relinquish these luxuries, meditate at higher level and win over death.



Just then all Gods of nine heavens appeared and said-

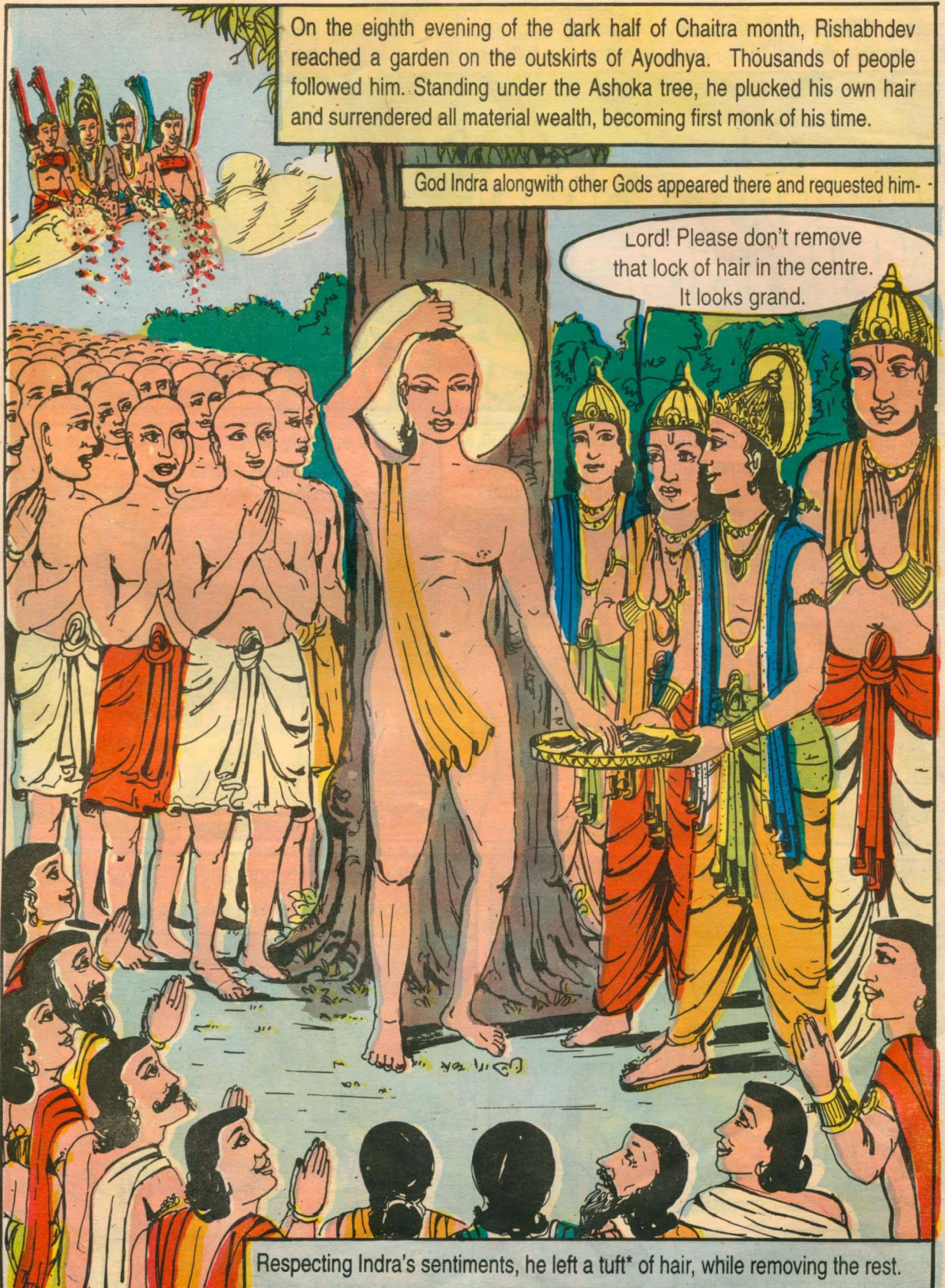
O Great Man! Your decision is magnificent. You teach people the path of relinquishing, restrain and discipline.



On the eighth evening of the dark half of Chaitra month, Rishabhdev reached a garden on the outskirts of Ayodhya. Thousands of people followed him. Standing under the Ashoka tree, he plucked his own hair and surrendered all material wealth, becoming first monk of his time.

God Indra alongwith other Gods appeared there and requested him-

Lord! Please don't remove that lock of hair in the centre. It looks grand.



Respecting Indra's sentiments, he left a tuft* of hair, while removing the rest.

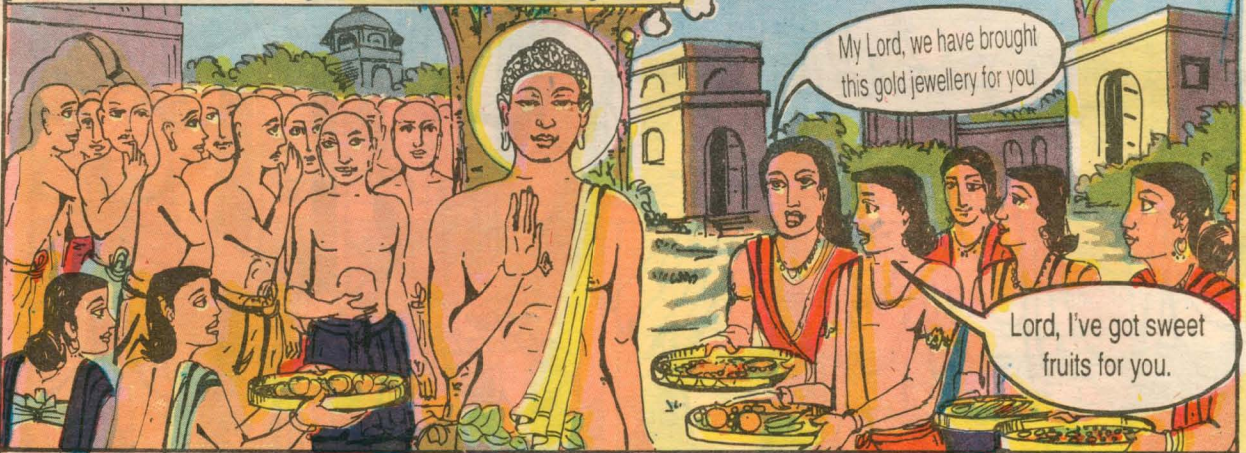
* Because of this tuft of hair he was sometimes known as Keshariyaji or Keshi.

Seeing Bhagwan Rishabhdev becoming a monk, four thousand people including king Kutch, Mahakutch etc. decided to become monk and followed the lord in the jungle.



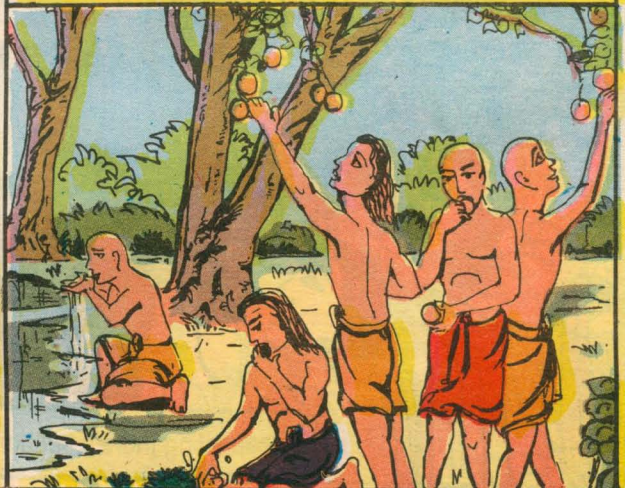
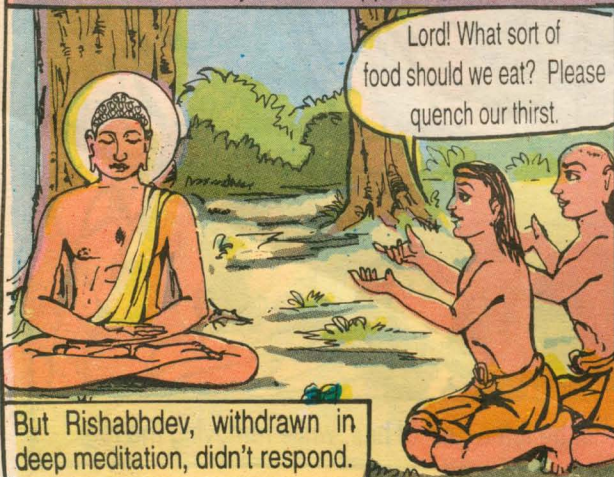
Once Bhagwan Rishabhdev arrived with his disciples in a town for food. To welcome them, people brought various types of fruits, sweets and gifts. But Rishabhdev thought -

I'll eat only simple food. I can't have all this.



Not getting simple food, Rishabhdev returned back in the jungle hungry and thirsty and decided to do penance. Due to starvation many disciples approached the lord.

When the pangs of hunger and thirst began severe, the disciples started eating the fruits and legumes.



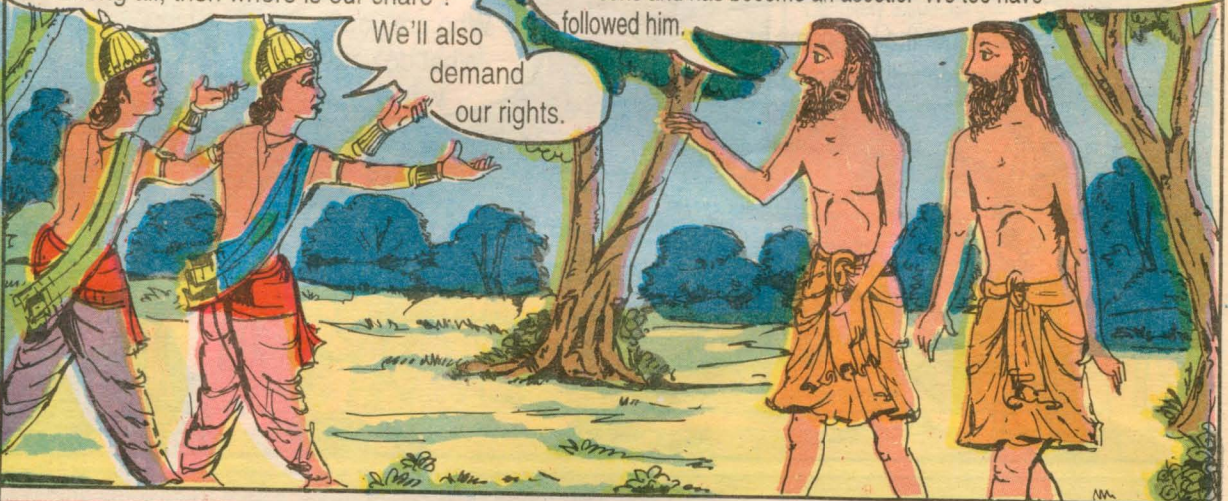
Alongwith lord Rishabhdev, two kings Kutch and Mahakutch had also embraced monkhood. At that time their sons Nami and Vinami were far away. While returning they saw their fathers roaming in the jungles as hermits.



Great father distributed the empire among all, then where is our share ?

Father Rishabhdev has distributed the entire empire among all his sons and has become an ascetic. We too have followed him.

We'll also demand our rights.

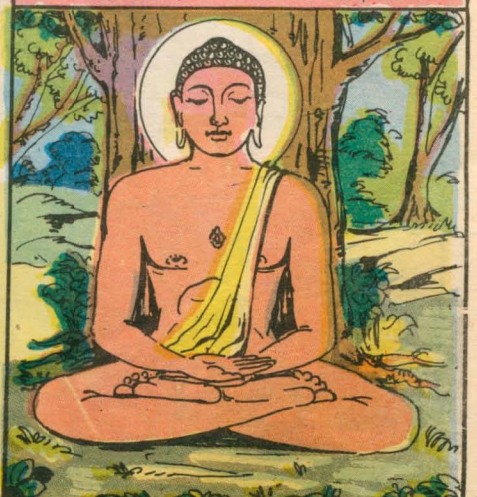


Nami and Vinami located Rishabhdev. They told him-

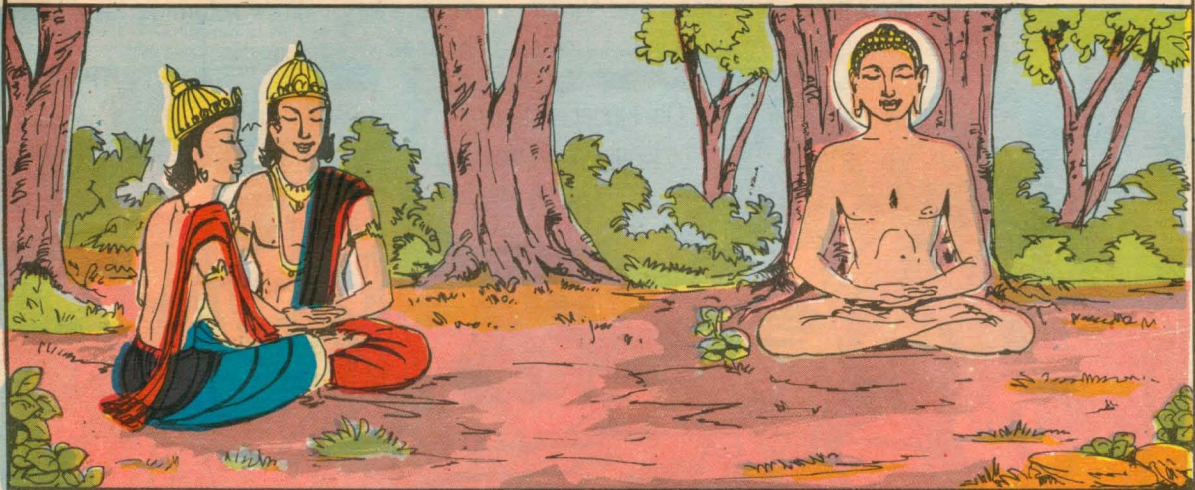
Lord! you've given kingdoms to Bharat and others. Give us kingdom too. We'll consider that small wealth also divine.



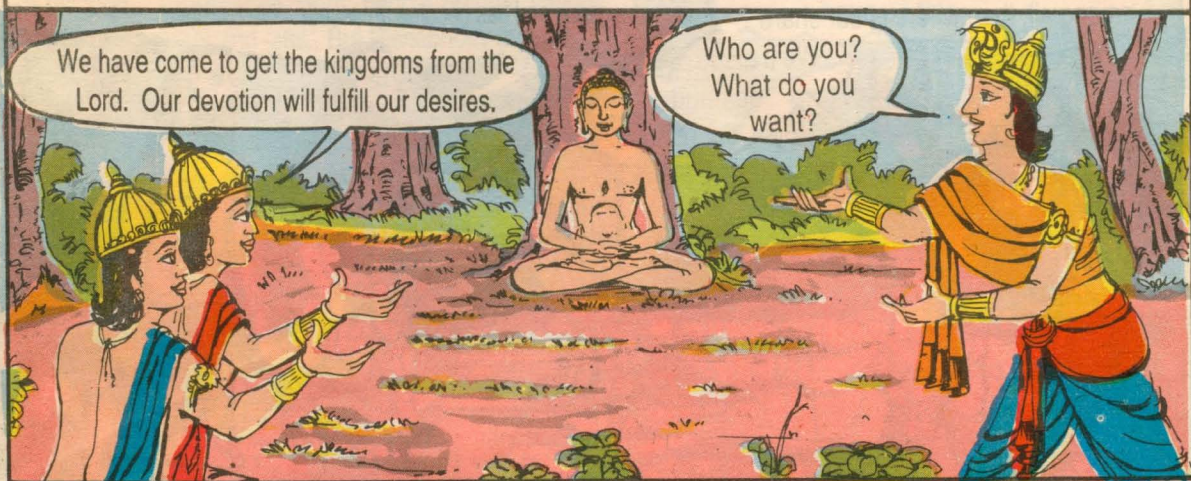
But Rishabhdev had taken a vow to keep silence.



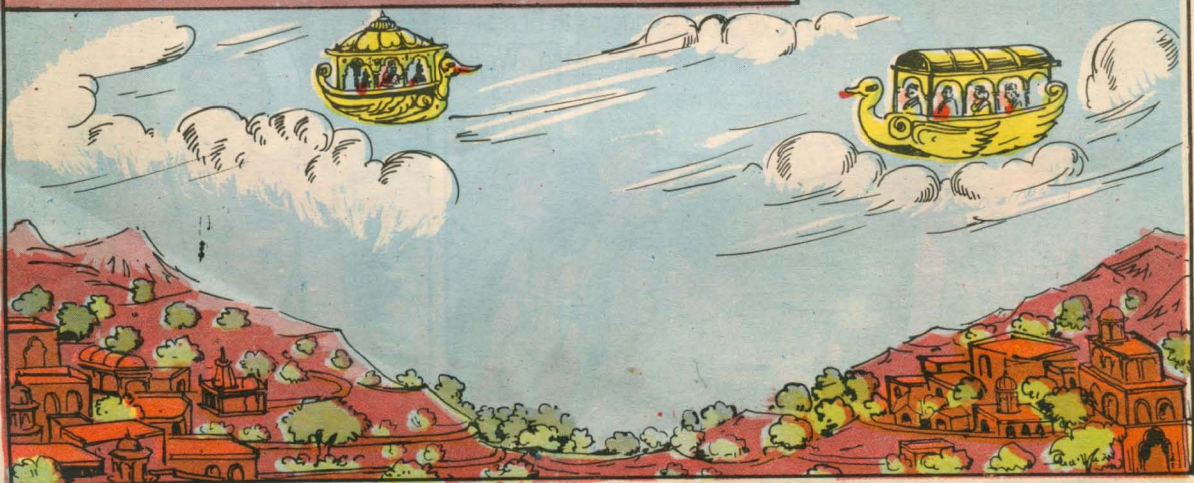
Seeing him silent, both the brothers sat in a meditative worship to please the Lord.



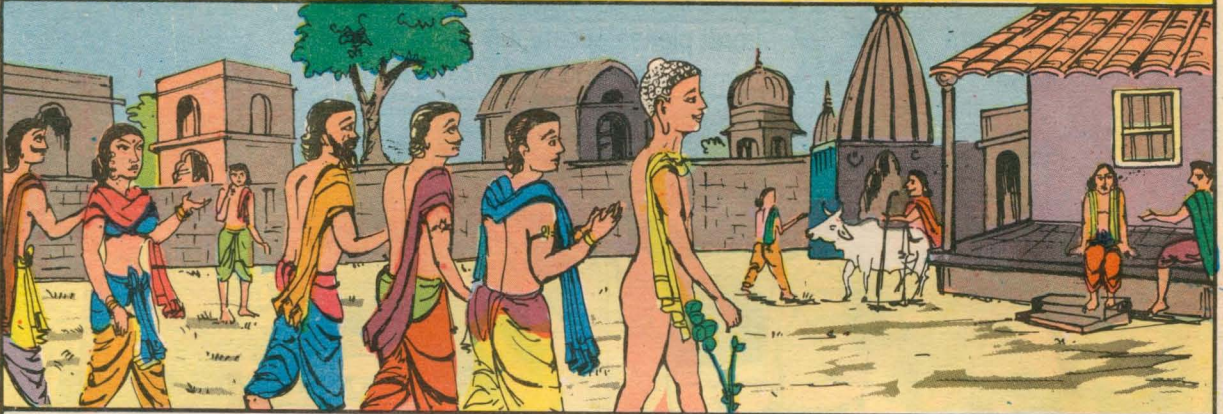
One day Dharanendra, the king of snakes, came to pray the Lord. Seeing the devotion of the princes he asked-



Dharanendra was happy to hear this. He took Nami and Vinami with him to Vaitadhya mountain, where they established towns with his help and reigned happily ever after.



A year after renouncing the world Lord Rishabhdev still did not receive pure food according to rituals. Due to scarcity he had physically become very weak. Travelling through villages, one day, he reached Hastinapur.



In those days Hastinapur was ruled by king Somprabha. His son prince Shreyans kumar dreamt that night, that he was cleaning dirt filled Meru mountain with amrut (nectar).



Prince Shreyans pondered upon his dream.

Definitely a special gain is to be bestowed upon me.



Next morning the prince was sitting in the palace balcony, when lord Rishabhdev passed by, seeing him prince Shreyans recalled his past life.

This is my great father lord Rishabhdev. In the previous birth, I too lived with him as an ascetic. Oh! Lord has still not consumed food or water, since a year.



A wave of devotion smelled in the heart of Shreyans. He came down, bowing to the lord, he requested him to accept sugarcane juice.

Lord! please accept this pure sugarcane juice and thus bless me.



Honoring the request, Rishabhdev drank the sugarcane juice. This auspicious day was the first third day of Vaisakh month. Lord Rishabhdev broke his one year fast by accepting sugarcane juice. Therefore according to Jain tradition this day has become famous as Akshay Trutiya.



* In memory of this day even today lakhs of people perform Varsip (one year fast-one day eating and next day of fast)

*Taking food after fasts.

On the other side in Ayodhya Rishabhdev's mother Marudevi not receiving any news of her son became restless. She met her grandson Bharat and spoke-

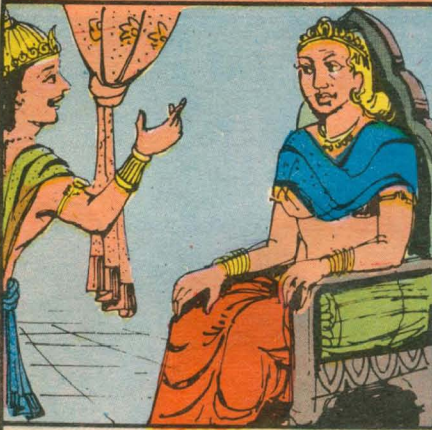


Emperor Bharat sent envoy in all four corners to get news of Rishabhdev. For many days there were no news. Suddenly, one day three messengers entered the Rajsabha.

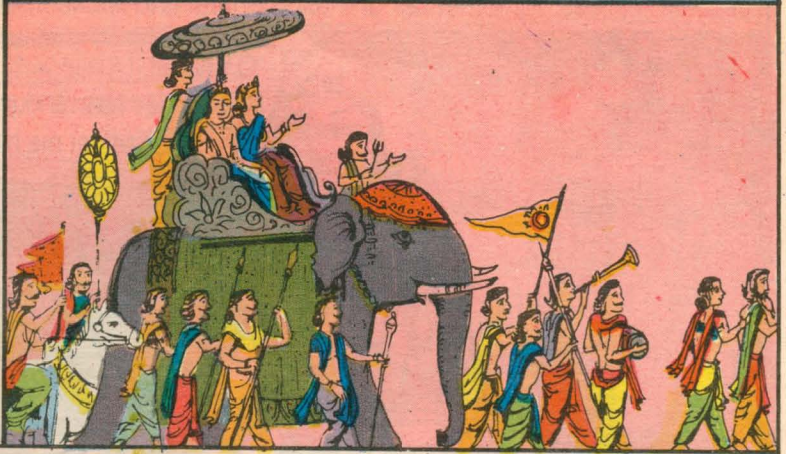


* Kevalgyan = Absolute knowledge.

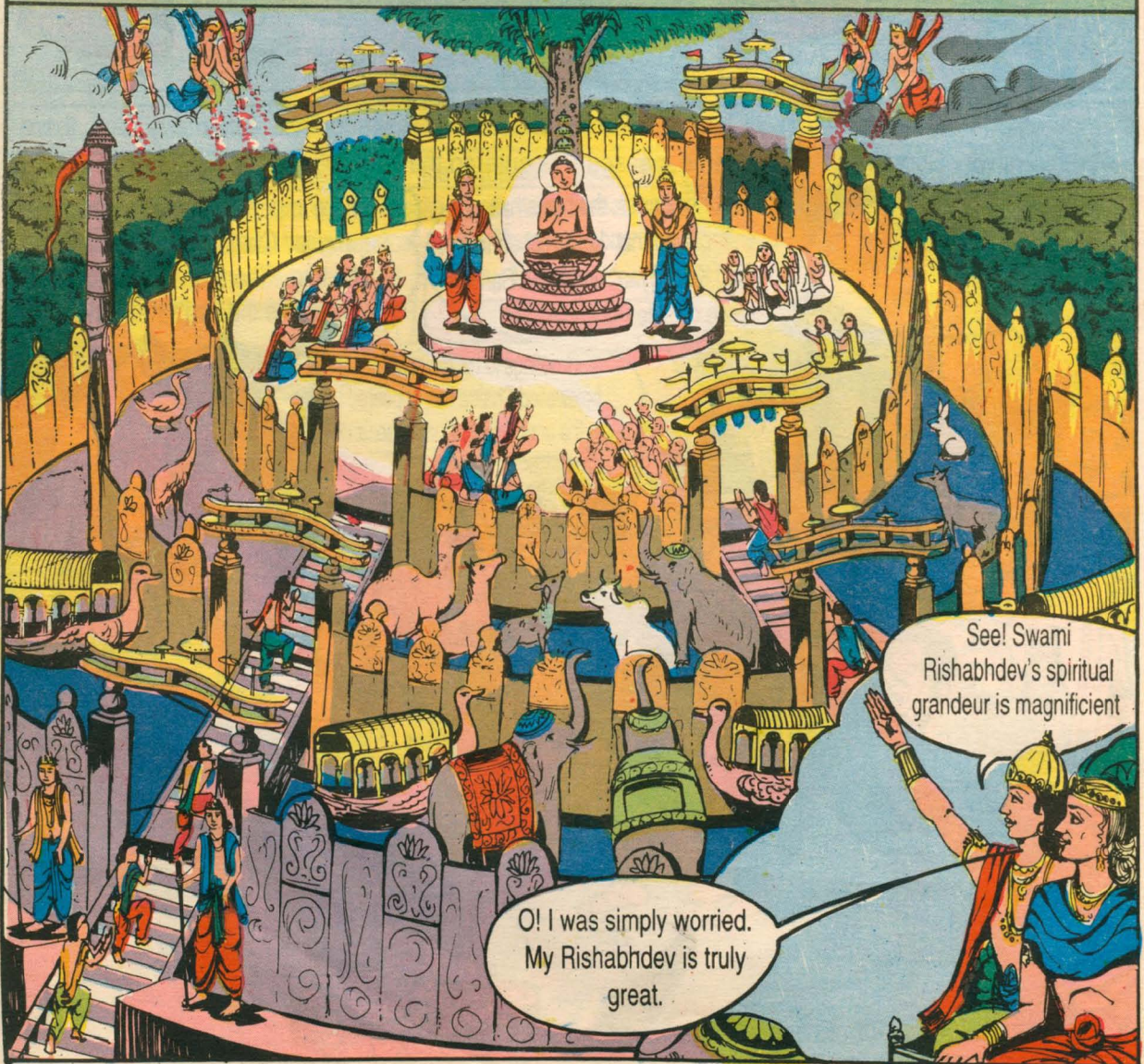
Bharat gave the auspicious news to mother Marudevi.



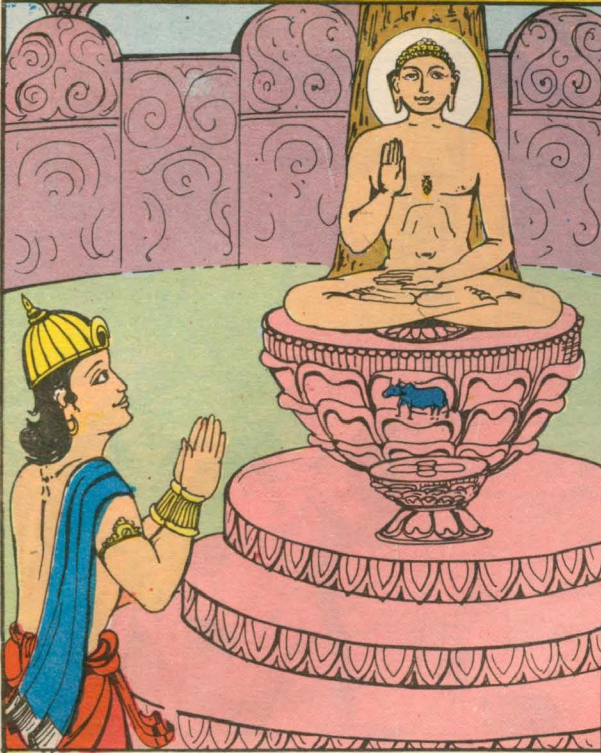
Bharat went along with mother Marudevi to worship lord Rishabhdev.



When the procession reached the gates of samosaran, Bharat gave description of Rishabhdev's divinity to Marudevi.

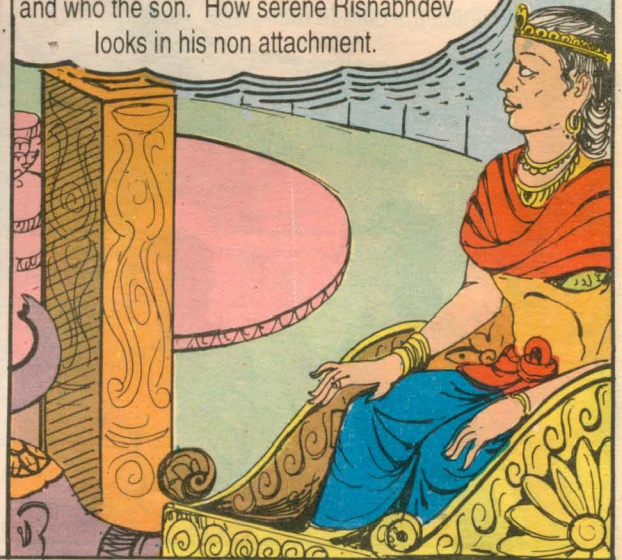


'Entering the samosaran, Chakravarti Bharat bowed down to lord Rishabhdev.



Because of mind's pure and intense concentration, Marudevi recollected all her previous births. She understood everything.

Oh! due to my ignorance, I am entangled in my desires. Rishabhdev has conquered all desires. Now for him who is the mother and who the son. How serene Rishabhdev looks in his non attachment.

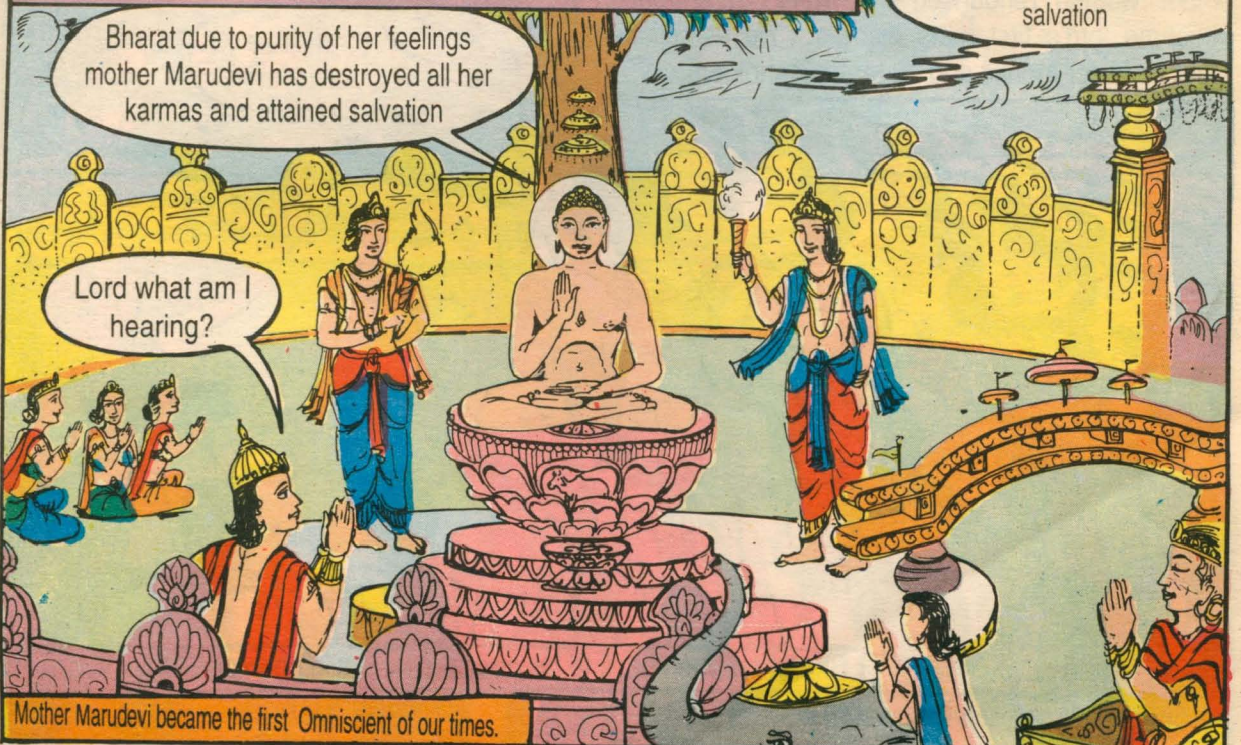


At that moment a divine sound was heard.

Bharat due to purity of her feelings mother Marudevi has destroyed all her karmas and attained salvation

Lord what am I hearing?

Divine Marudevi has attained salvation

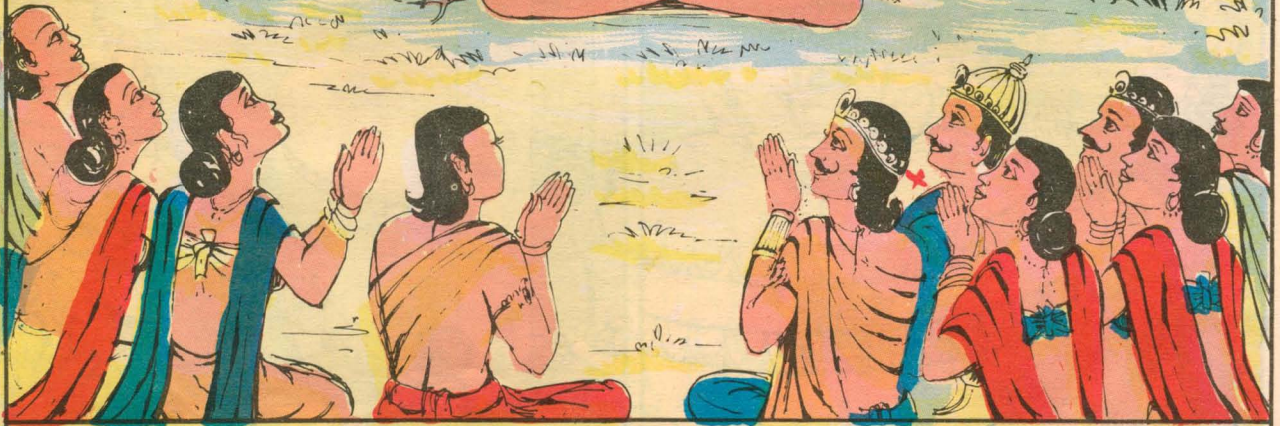


Mother Marudevi became the first Omniscient of our times.

The 11th day of the latter Phagun month, lord Rishabhdev gave his first religious sermon to his children. He created and established four religious tirth namely monk, nun, shravak and shravika.

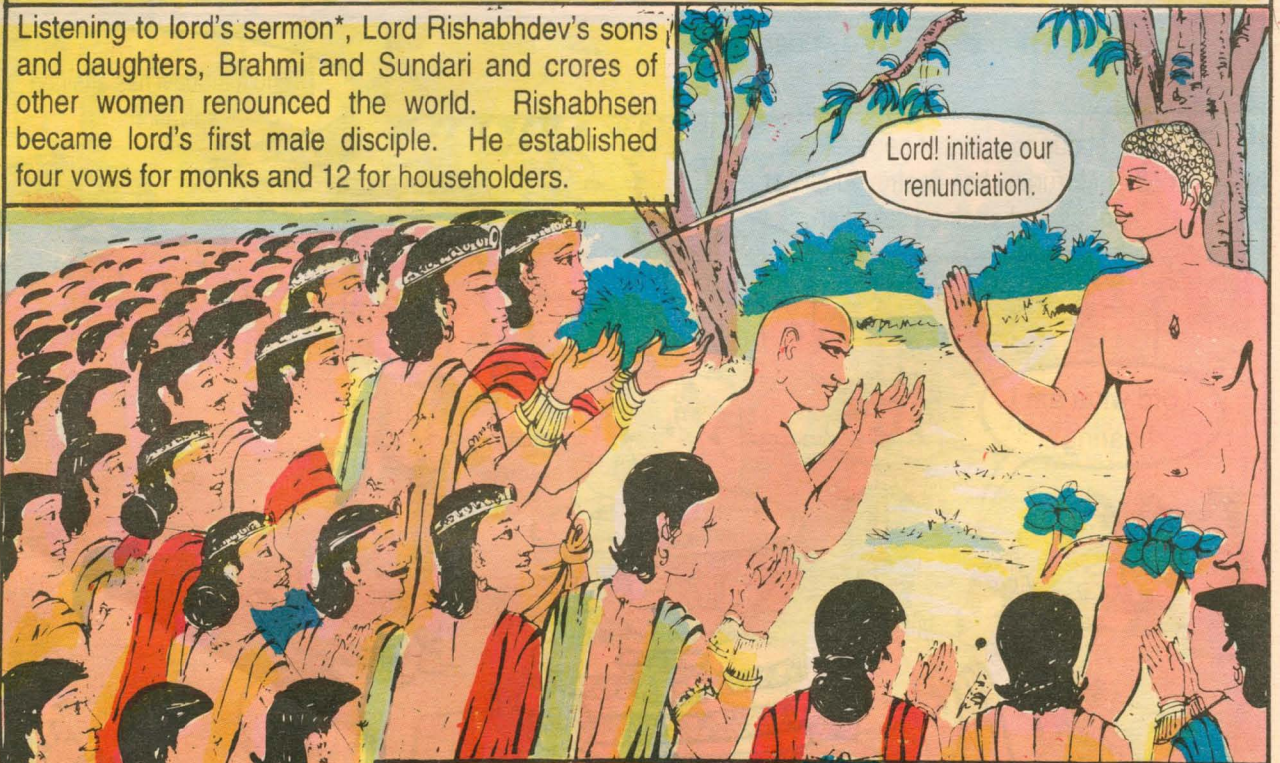
For establishing four religions Tirth, lord Rishabhdev was called as the first Tirthankar. Commencing the religion he was known as Adinath.

The aim of life is not acquisition but renunciation. Life is abandonment not fondness. First know yourself then show others the path to realisation



Listening to lord's sermon*, Lord Rishabhdev's sons and daughters, Brahmi and Sundari and crores of other women renounced the world. Rishabhdev became lord's first male disciple. He established four vows for monks and 12 for householders.

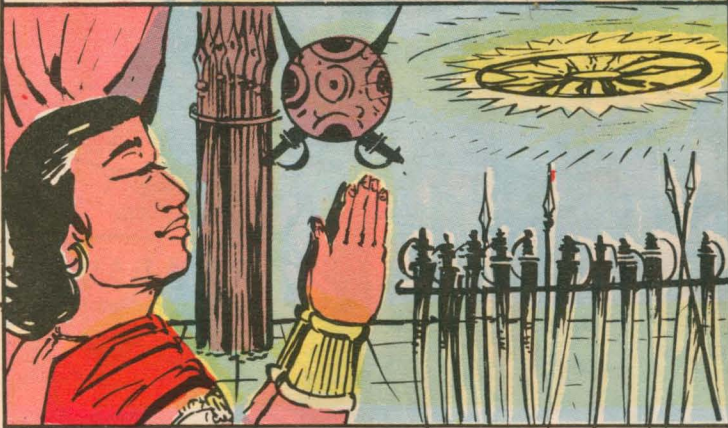
Lord! initiate our renunciation.



Bharat returned back to his capital after paying homage to the lord.

*Sermon- lord's philosophical preaching.

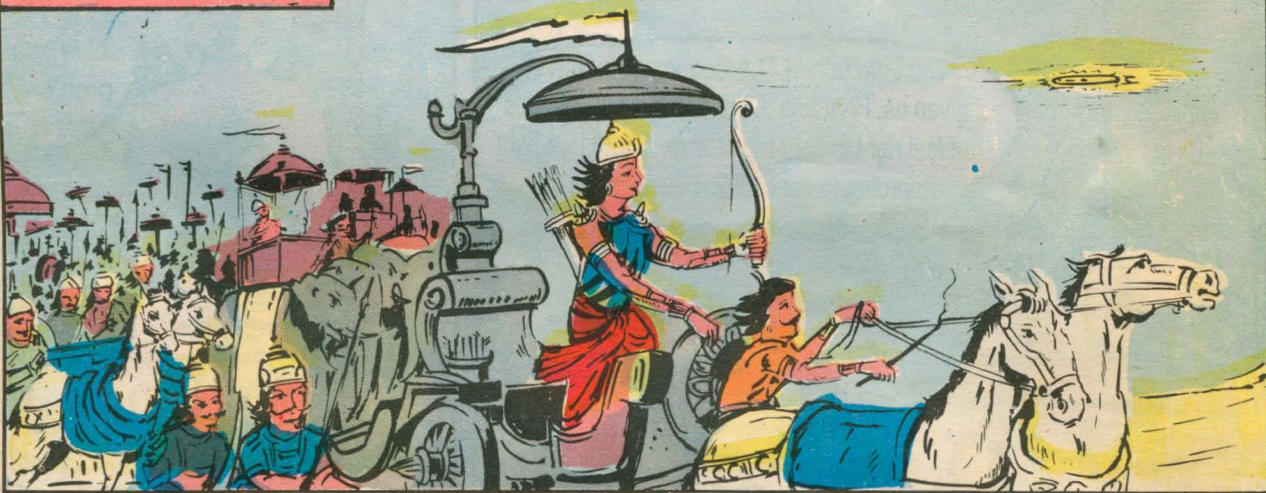
Upon returning from celebrating Lord Rishabhdev's Kevalgyan, emperor Bharat went to his arsenal and performed puja of the bejewelled Chakra.



Bharat mulled-



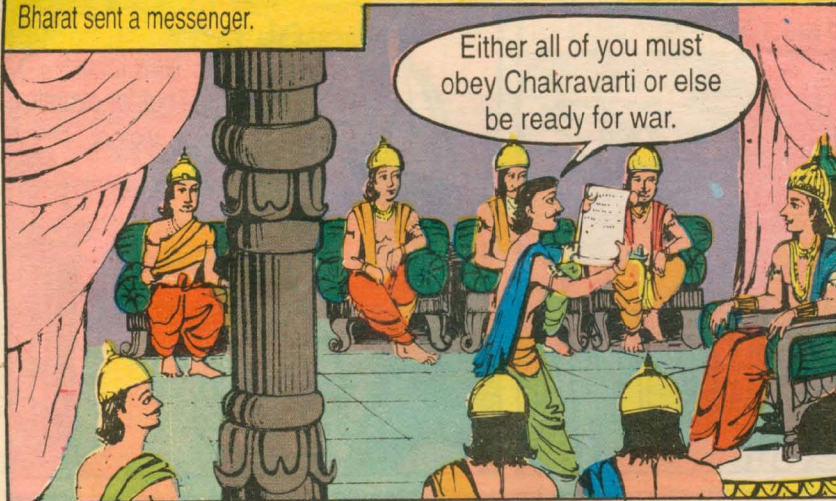
To conquer all states of India, Bharat set out with a huge army for triumph.



Years later when Bharat the victor returned back to Ayodhya, they celebrated the conquest. He established six principalities under his realm and thus became the first Chakravarti emperor.



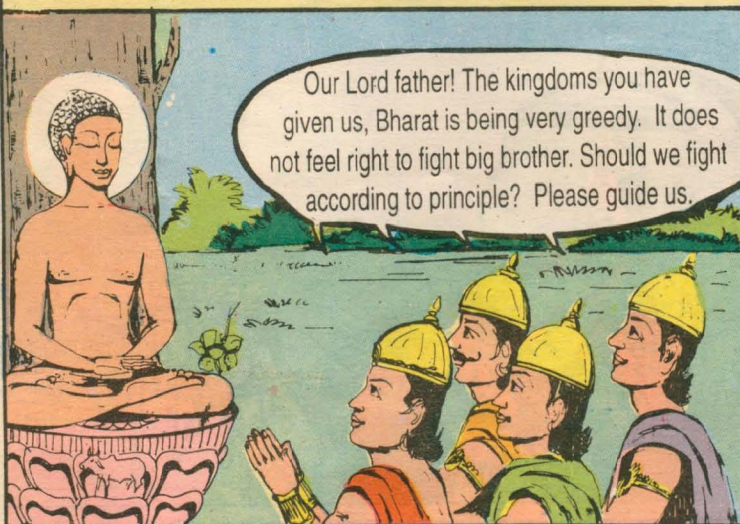
In this victory celebration, Bahubali and other 98 brothers did not participate, therefore Bharat sent a messenger.



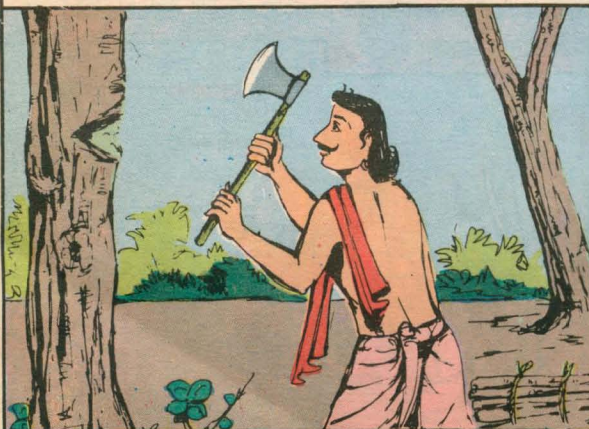
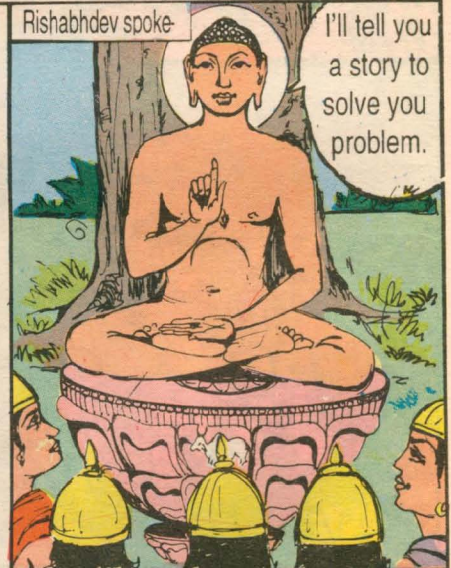
Listening to Bharat's message, all brother had a secret meeting.



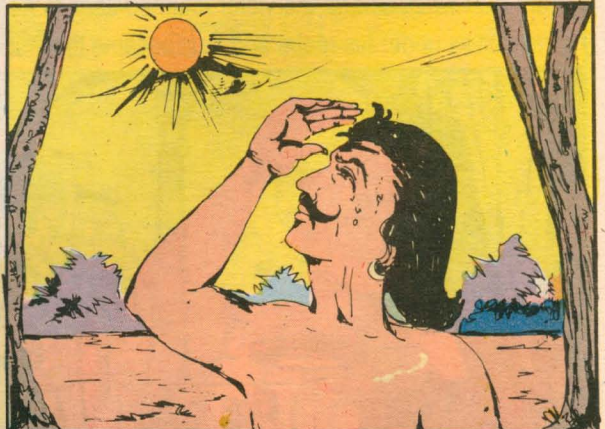
All brothers went to Lord Rishabhdev.



Rishabhdev spoke-

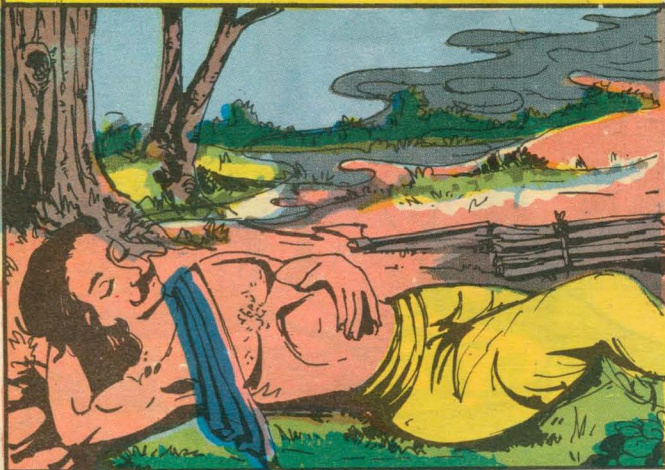


Lord Rishabhdev starts telling a story—
Once there was a foolish woodcutter. He lived by means of cutting wood in the forest everyday.



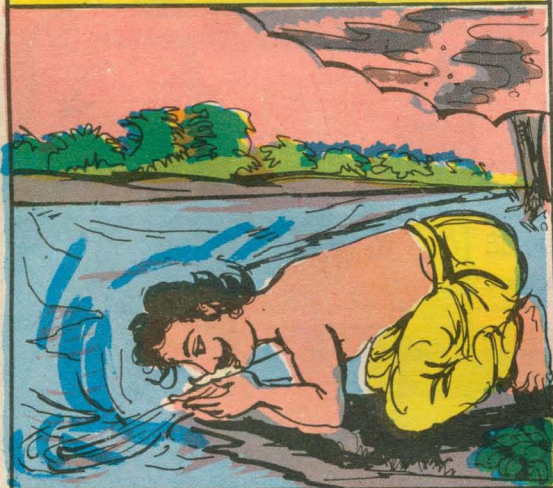
Once because of an intense heat, he felt an acute thirst. In search of water he ran helter skelter but could not locate water anywhere.

Troubled over his parched throat he laid down in the shadow of a tree and fell asleep, he dreamt—

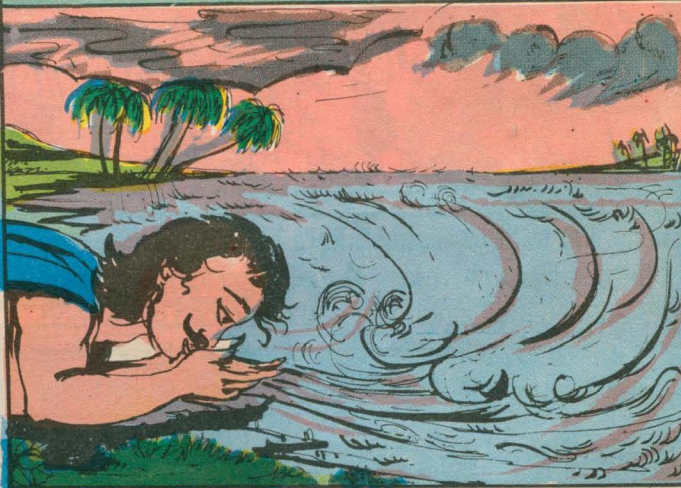


He went to a well and drank all the water. still he remained thirsty.

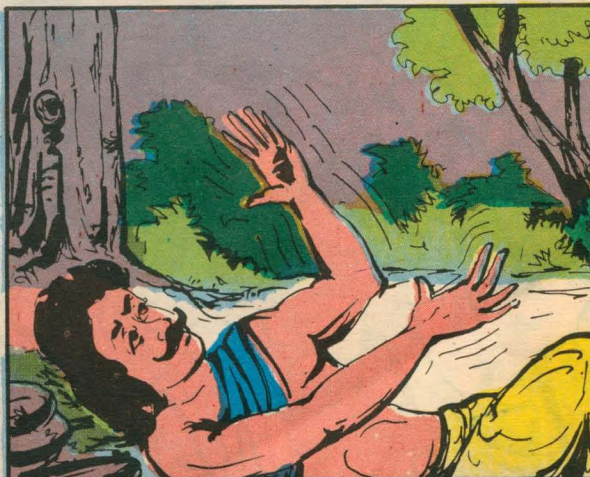
He went to the banks of a river and drank up all the water, still his throat was dry.



Inspite of drinking the ocean, he remained unquenched.



Running here and there for water he came across a wet bunch of twigs. He tried to squeeze out every drop of water to drink.



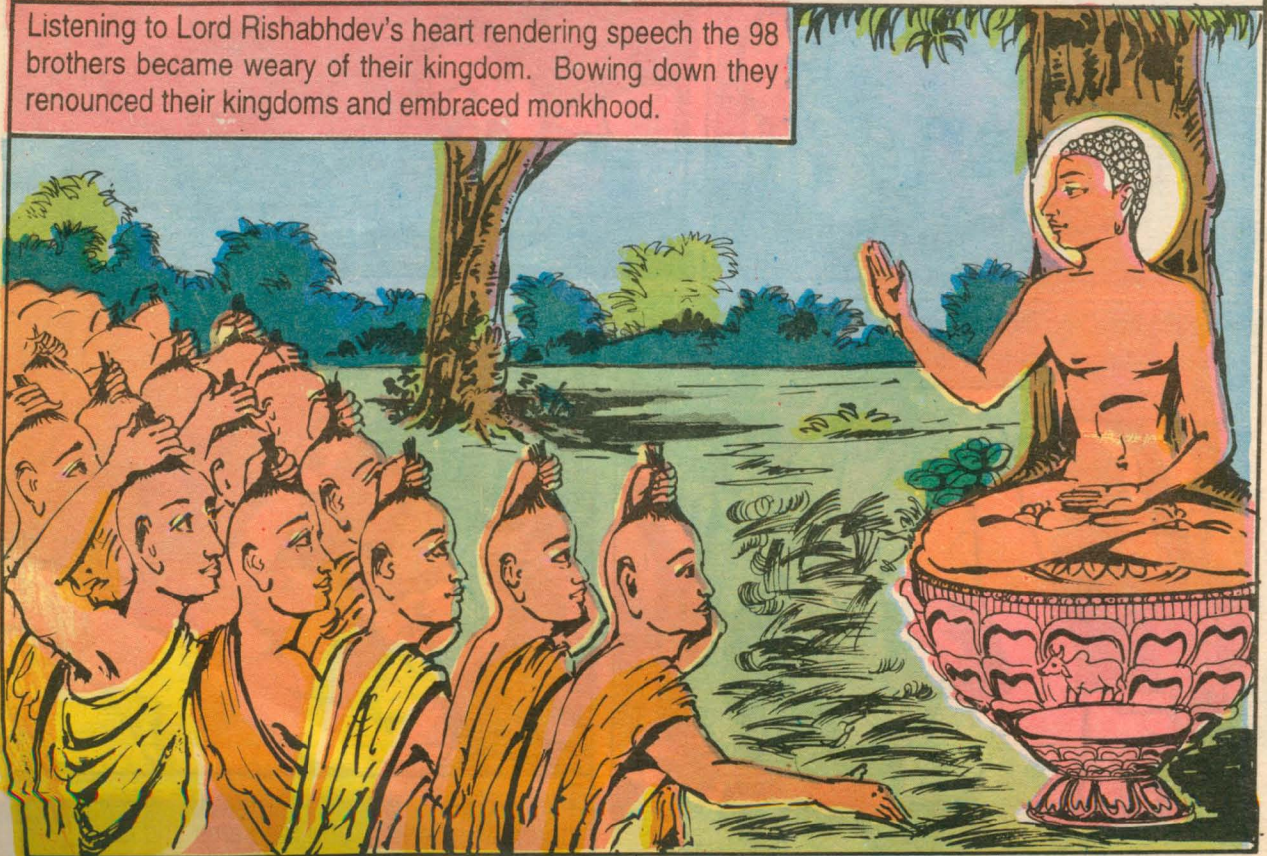
Then, with a twist in his arm he awoke, the dream was broken, and the same arid land.

After relating the story Lord Rishabhdev spoke to his sons—

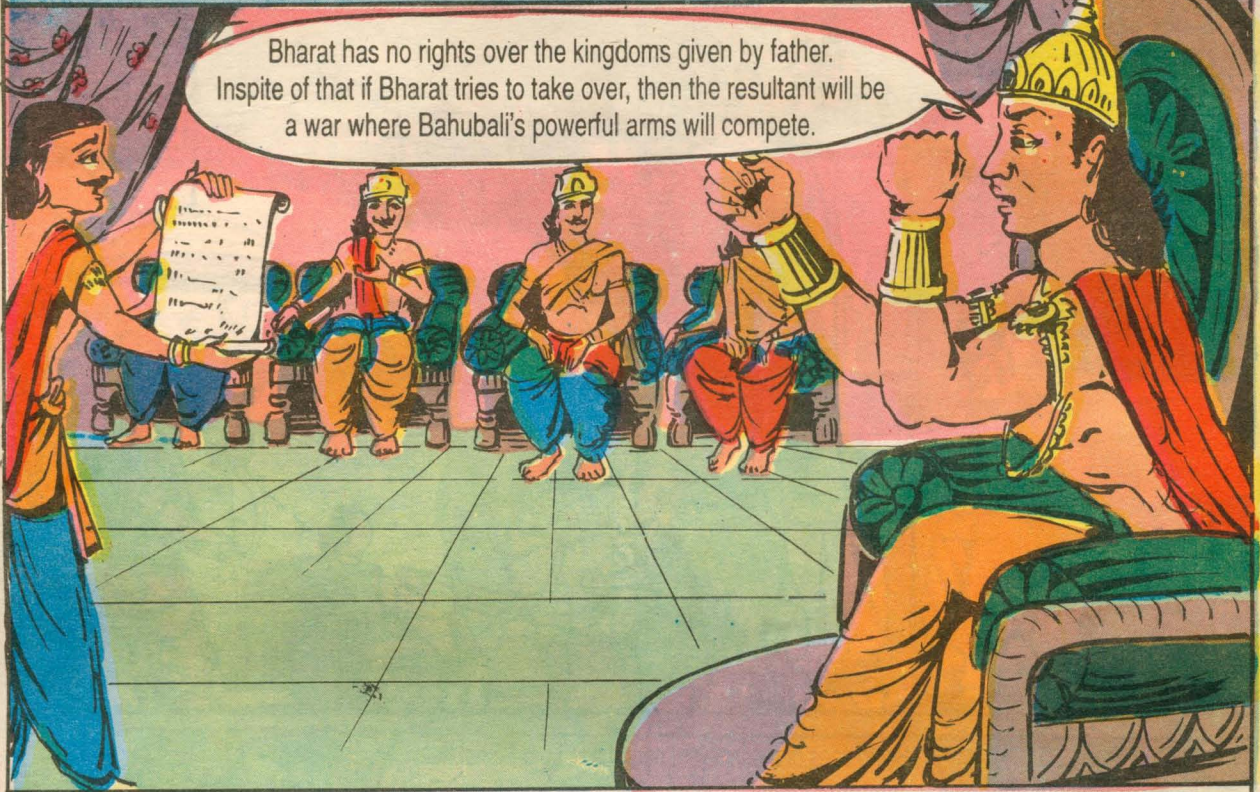
Sons! The thirst which did not subside even after drinking the river and ocean, will it go after squeezing drops from wet twigs? No, never. Sons! Desire is peculiar aspect of mind's thirst. After conquering six states when human's wants are insatiated then how will it satisfied by conquering small kingdoms? Desires encourages desire. Satisfaction reduces desires. You must bring out the hidden internal divinity within your soul. You must acquire soul's infinite wonders. Comparatively glory of the three worlds will be worthless.



Listening to Lord Rishabhdev's heart rendering speech the 98 brothers became weary of their kingdom. Bowing down they renounced their kingdoms and embraced monkhood.



Rishabhdev's second son Bahubali had more strength and vigour than Bharat. He too received Bharat's message of accepting subjugation. He was upset over the news of his 98 brother's renunciation. Upon which Bharat's message was like adding salt over his wounds. Bahubali flew into a rage.



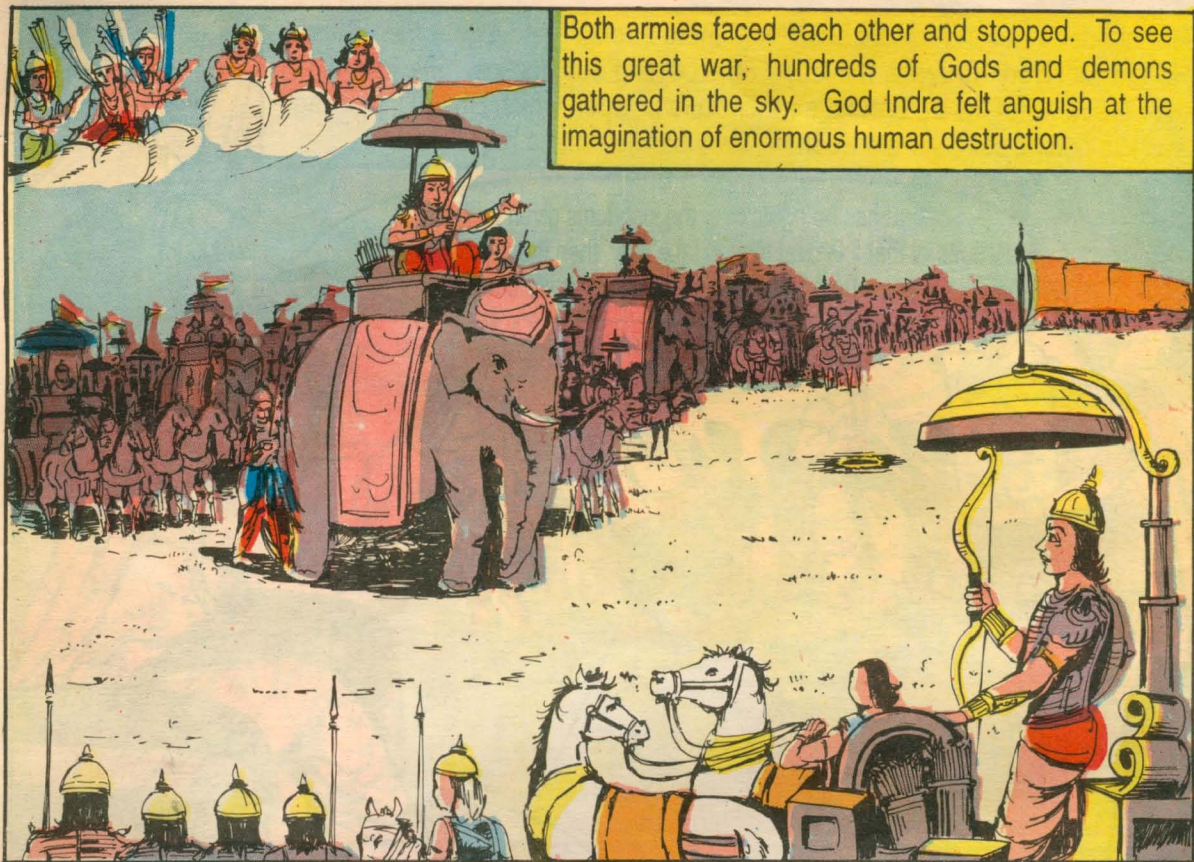
Messenger returned back to emperor Bharat and read Bahubali's message.



Without conquering Bahubali, Bharat's Chakravarti empire was incomplete. Therefore he declared war on Bahubali.



Both armies faced each other and stopped. To see this great war, hundreds of Gods and demons gathered in the sky. God Indra felt anguish at the imagination of enormous human destruction.



Being sons of a nonviolent personage Lord Rishabhdev you are promoting a war. What a shameful thing. To cease the human destruction the army will act as a silent spectators while you two brothers will have duel fight- who ever wins will be the victor.



To stop the unnecessary bloodshed, god Indra came and stood in between the two armies.

First commenced the war of staring. Bharat and Bahubali started glaring at each other's eyes without blinking their eyelids.



By evening Bharat's eye blinked

Then there was a war of screaming, their vociferous bellowing scared the life out of horses, elephants etc.

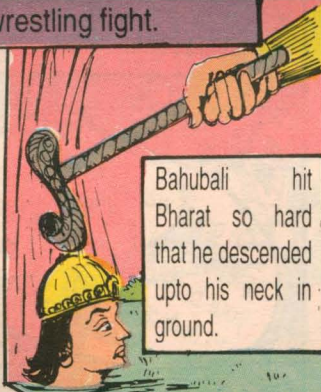


On the third day was the wrestling fight.

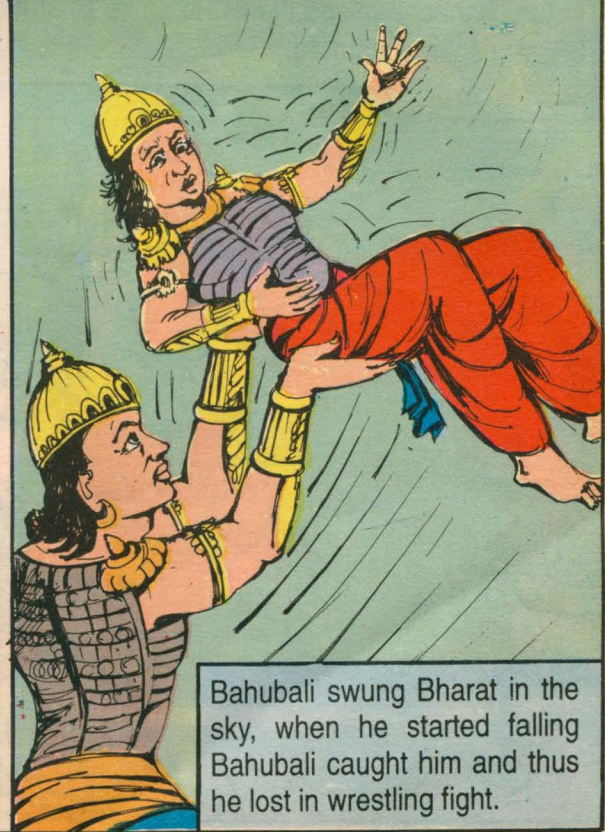
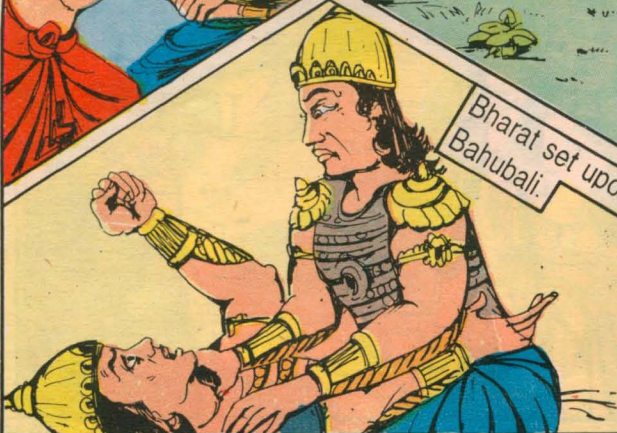
Bharat enclosed Bahubali in his embrace.



Bahubali hit Bharat so hard that he descended upto his neck in ground.



Bharat set upon Bahubali.



Bahubali swung Bharat in the sky, when he started falling Bahubali caught him and thus he lost in wrestling fight.

In despair and bitterness, Bharat forgot his limitations and in exasperation he threw his chakra.



But it was a divine Chakra, it does not kill blood relatives, therefore it circled Bahubali and came back.



In fury Bahubali raised his fist to strike Bharat. Bharat became alarmed.



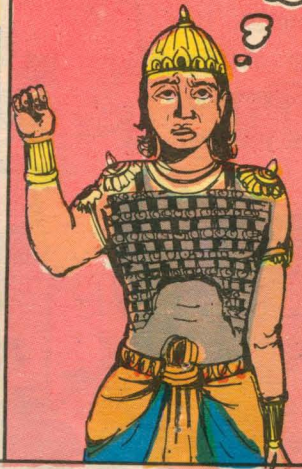
Observing the view, God Indra, other Gods, Ministers, Priests etc came in front of Bahubali and pleaded to him.



Hearing the request of the Gods and respected citizens, Bahubali's raised hand stopped and began to think—

They all are right. For a small piece of land, I am about to kill my father like brother. How disgusting of me!

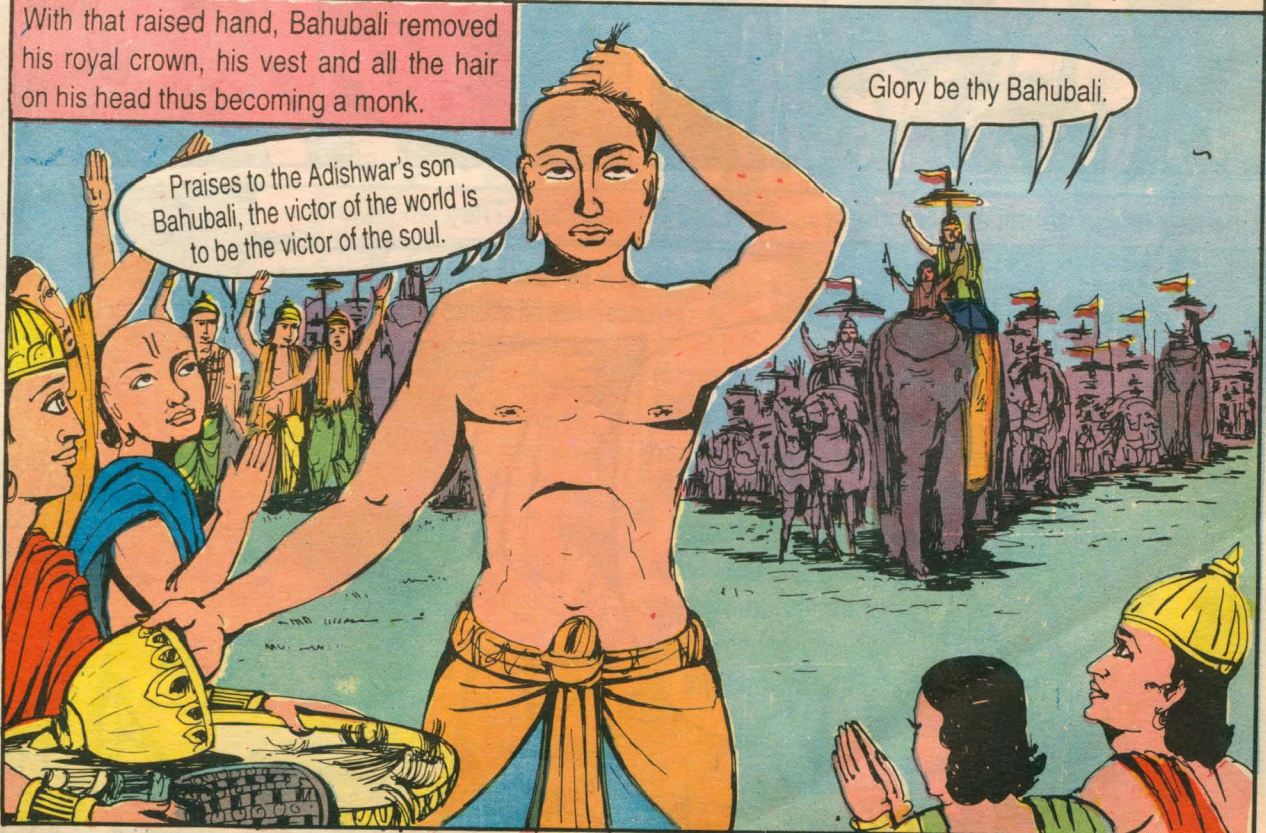
My pride made me blind. I can't kill my brother. My enemy is not my brother but my arrogance. I don't need any kingdom nor honour. I will follow the foot steps of my revered father.



With that raised hand, Bahubali removed his royal crown, his vest and all the hair on his head thus becoming a monk.

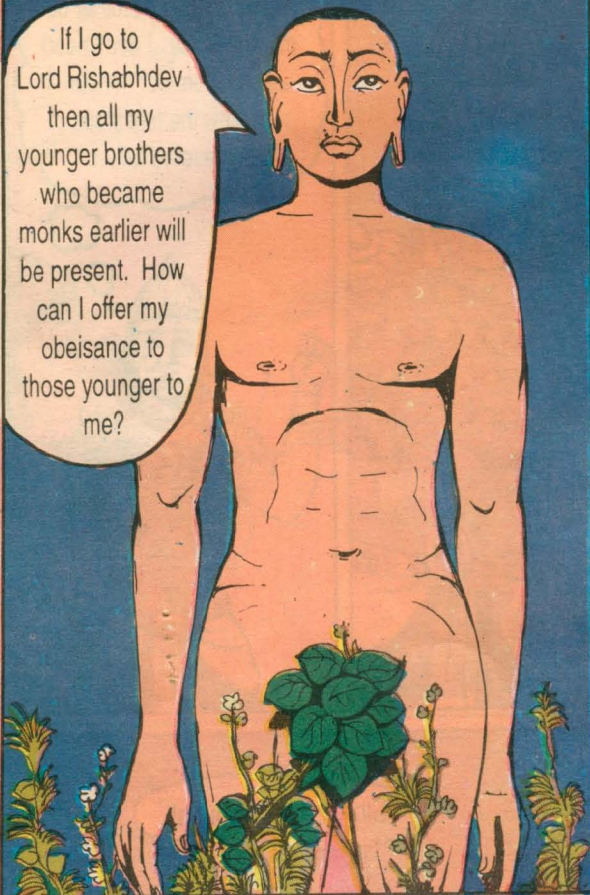
Praises to the Adishwar's son Bahubali, the victor of the world is to be the victor of the soul.

Glory be thy Bahubali.

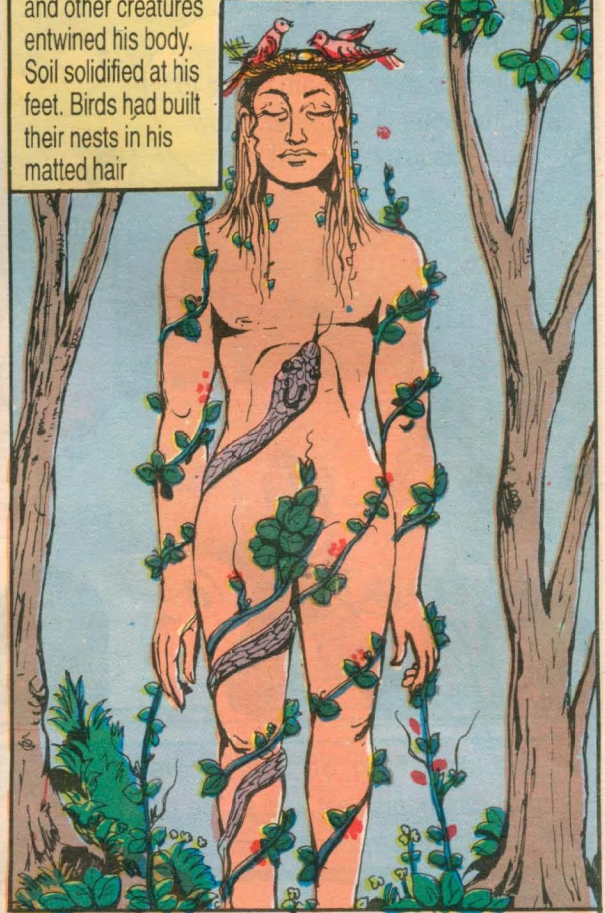


Bahubali the conqueror of Chakravarti was defeated by the mind's ego. He started thinking-

If I go to Lord Rishabhdev then all my younger brothers who became monks earlier will be present. How can I offer my obeisance to those younger to me?



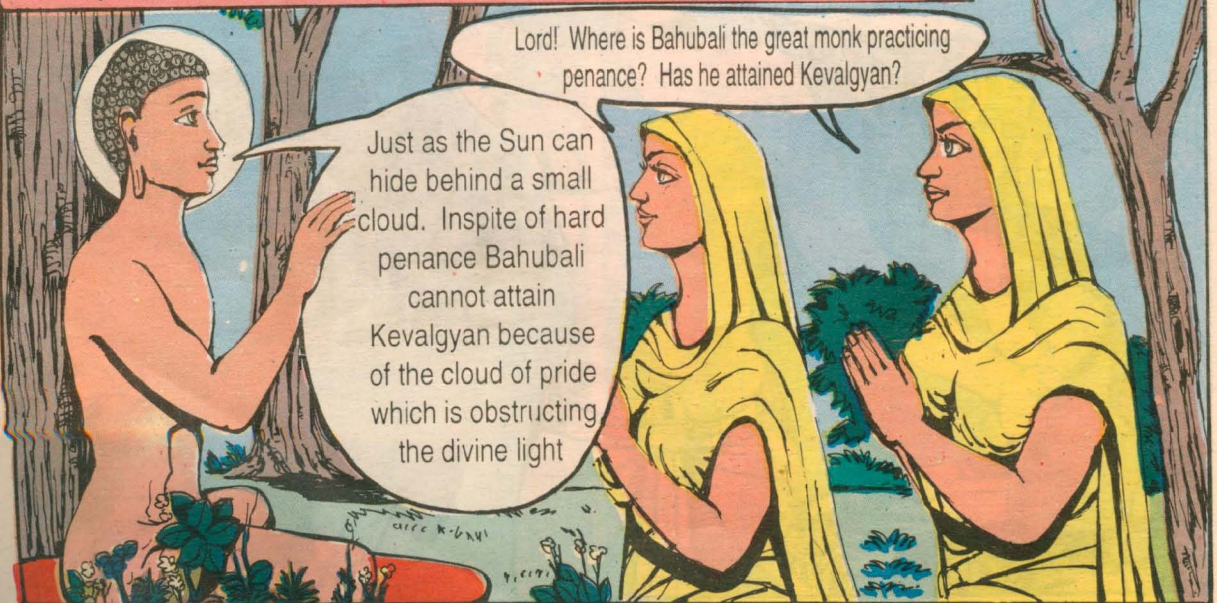
The small question of pride entered Bahubali's mind like a thorn. For one year he deeply meditated standing like a Himalaya. Creepers grew round him and snakes entwined his body. Soil solidified at his feet. Birds had built their nests in his matted hair



One day nuns Brahmi and Sundari came to Lord Rishabhdev. They asked him-

Lord! Where is Bahubali the great monk practicing penance? Has he attained Kevalgyan?

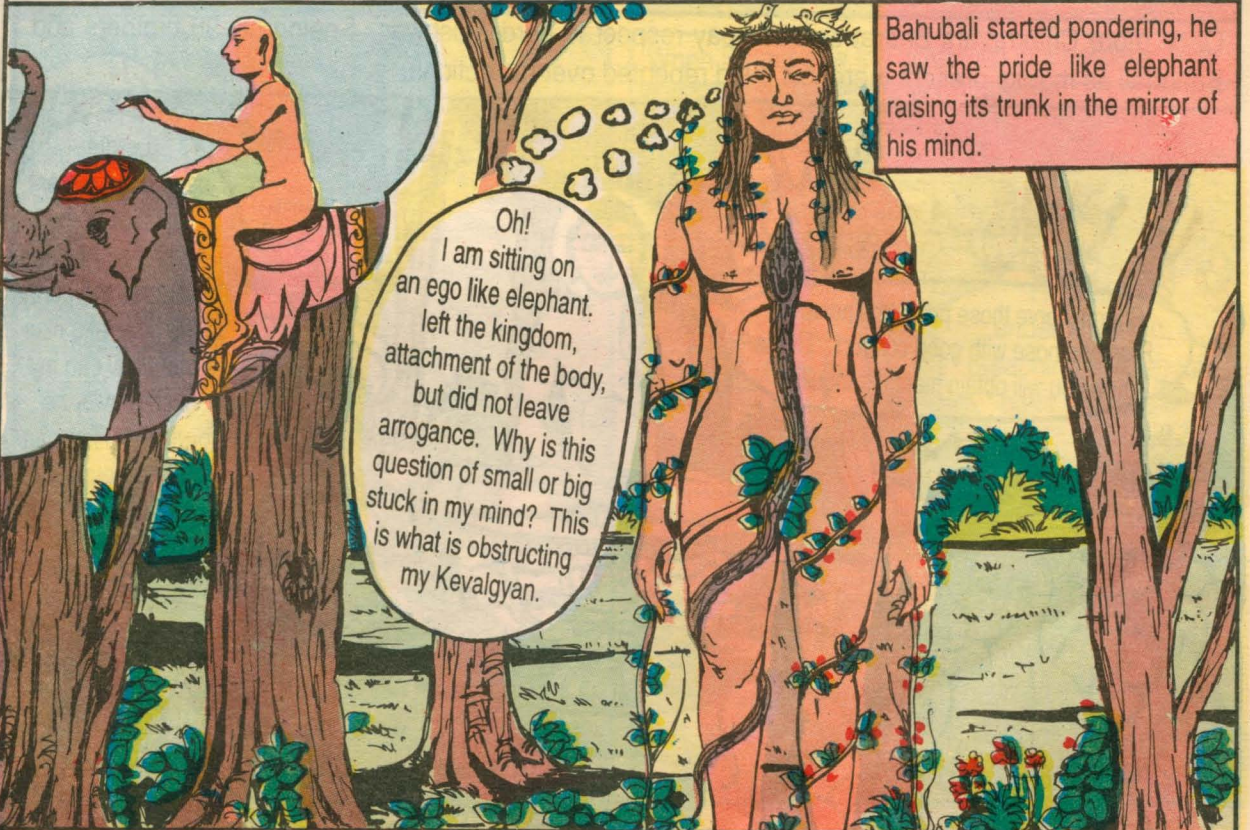
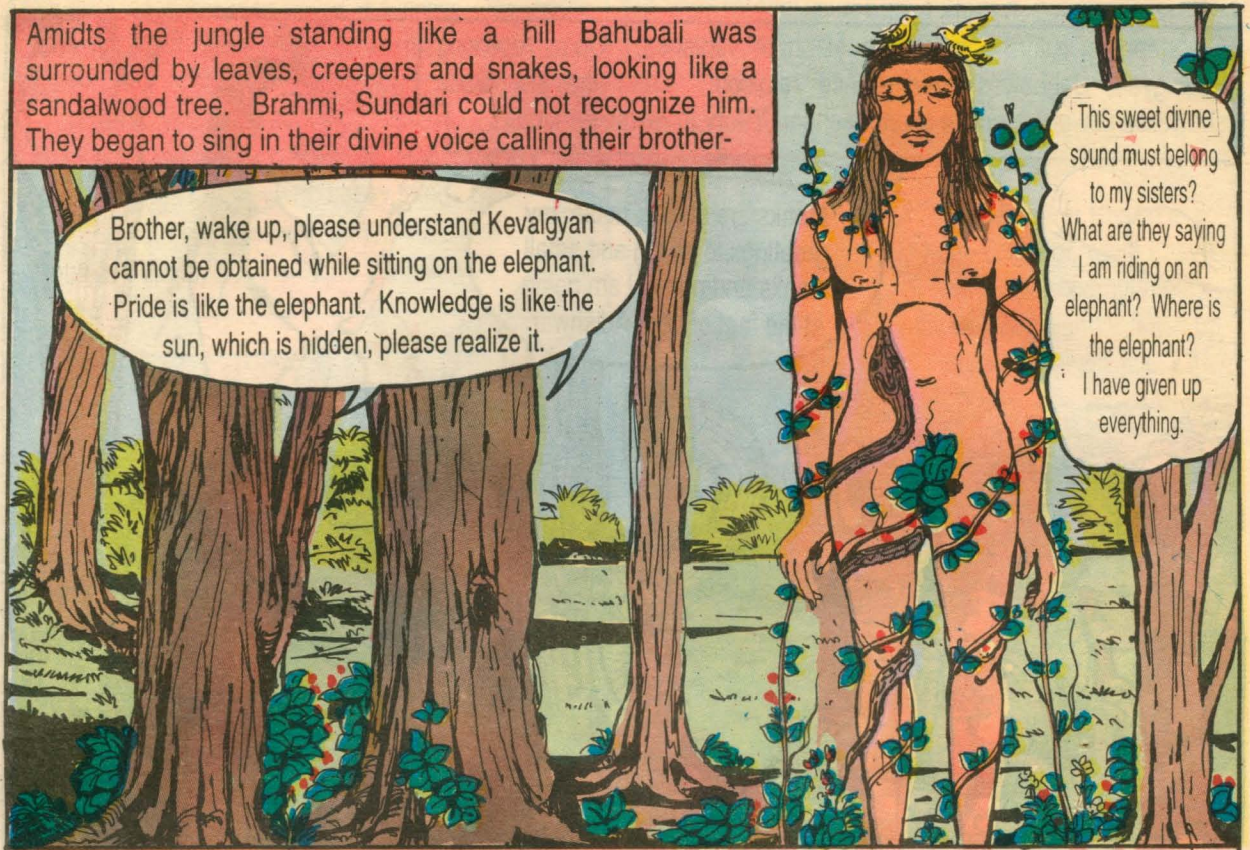
Just as the Sun can hide behind a small cloud. In spite of hard penance Bahubali cannot attain Kevalgyan because of the cloud of pride which is obstructing the divine light



Amidst the jungle standing like a hill Bahubali was surrounded by leaves, creepers and snakes, looking like a sandalwood tree. Brahmi, Sundari could not recognize him. They began to sing in their divine voice calling their brother-

Brother, wake up, please understand Kevalgyan cannot be obtained while sitting on the elephant. Pride is like the elephant. Knowledge is like the sun, which is hidden, please realize it.

This sweet divine sound must belong to my sisters? What are they saying I am riding on an elephant? Where is the elephant? I have given up everything.

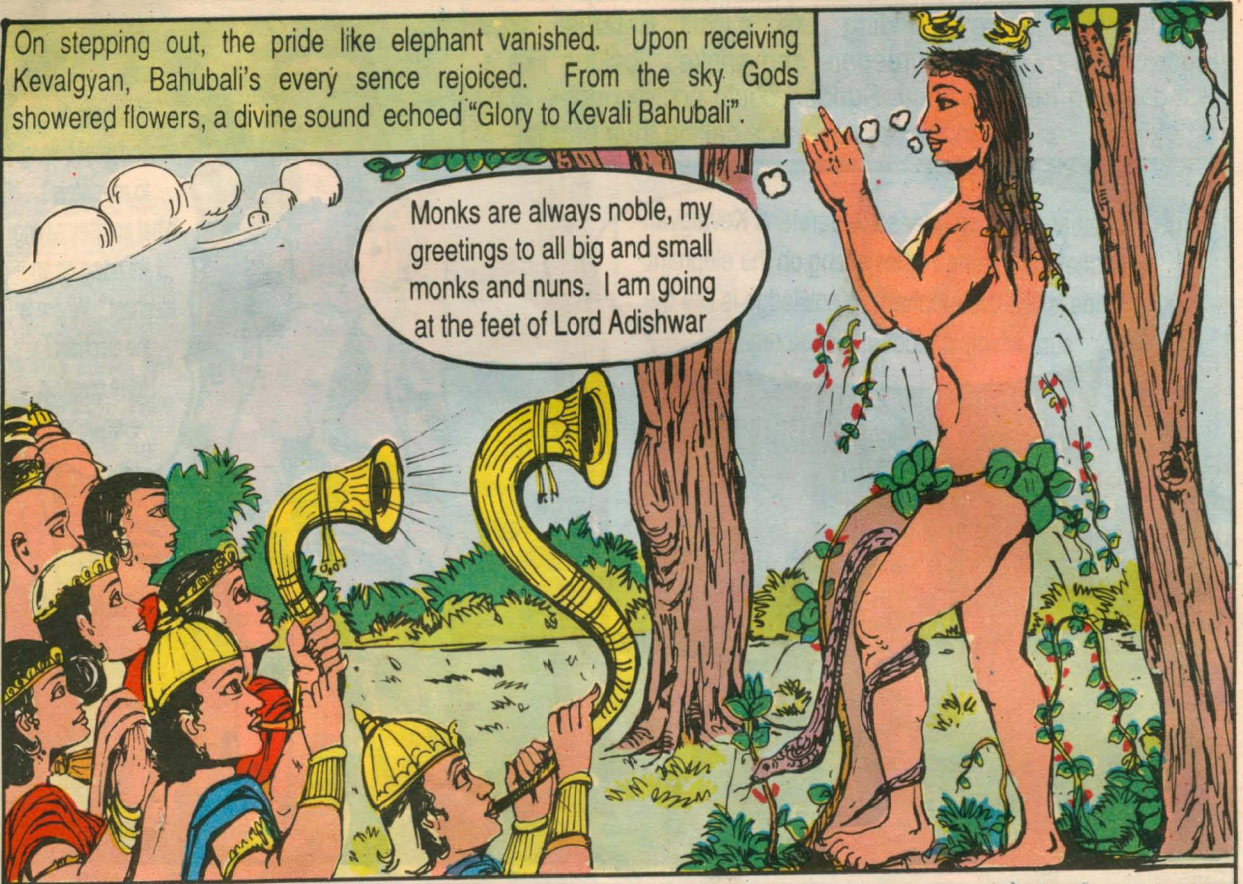


Bahubali started pondering, he saw the pride like elephant raising its trunk in the mirror of his mind.

Oh!
I am sitting on an ego like elephant. I left the kingdom, attachment of the body, but did not leave arrogance. Why is this question of small or big stuck in my mind? This is what is obstructing my Kevalgyan.

On stepping out, the pride like elephant vanished. Upon receiving Kevalgyan, Bahubali's every sense rejoiced. From the sky Gods showered flowers, a divine sound echoed "Glory to Kevali Bahubali".

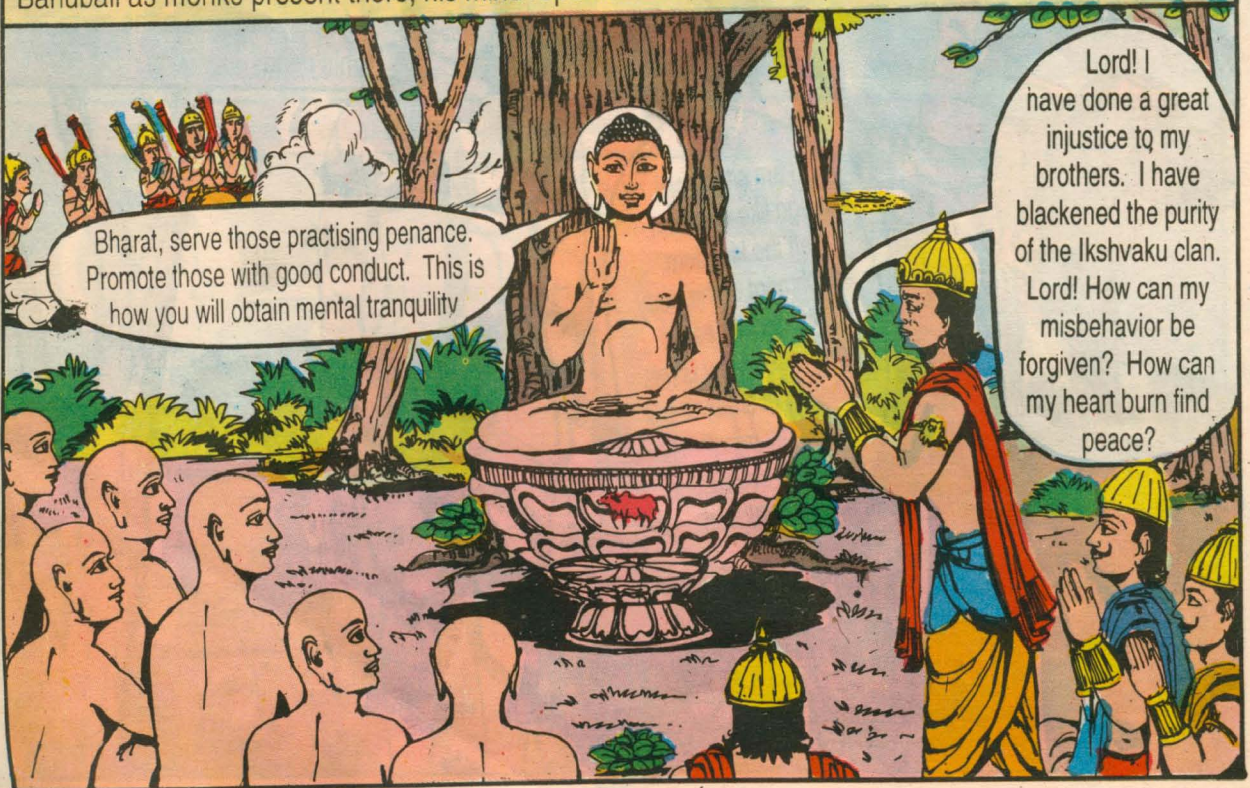
Monks are always noble, my greetings to all big and small monks and nuns. I am going at the feet of Lord Adishwar



Once more Chakravarti Bharat came to pay respect to Lord Adishwar. Seeing his 98 brothers and Bahubali as monks present there, his mind repented over his actions.

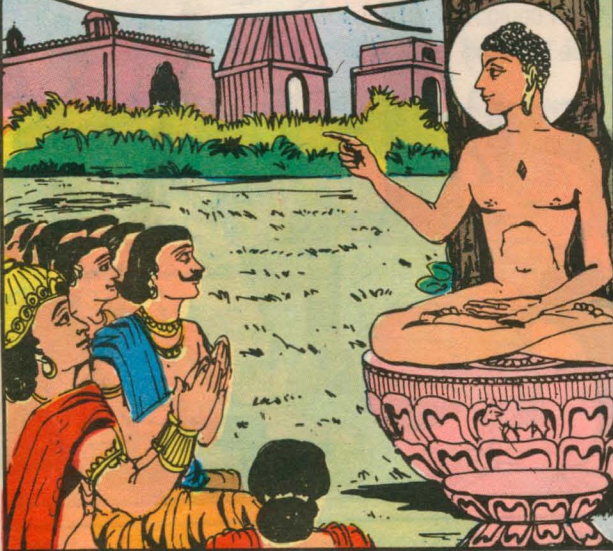
Bharat, serve those practising penance. Promote those with good conduct. This is how you will obtain mental tranquility

Lord! I have done a great injustice to my brothers. I have blackened the purity of the Ikshvaku clan. Lord! How can my misbehavior be forgiven? How can my heart burn find peace?



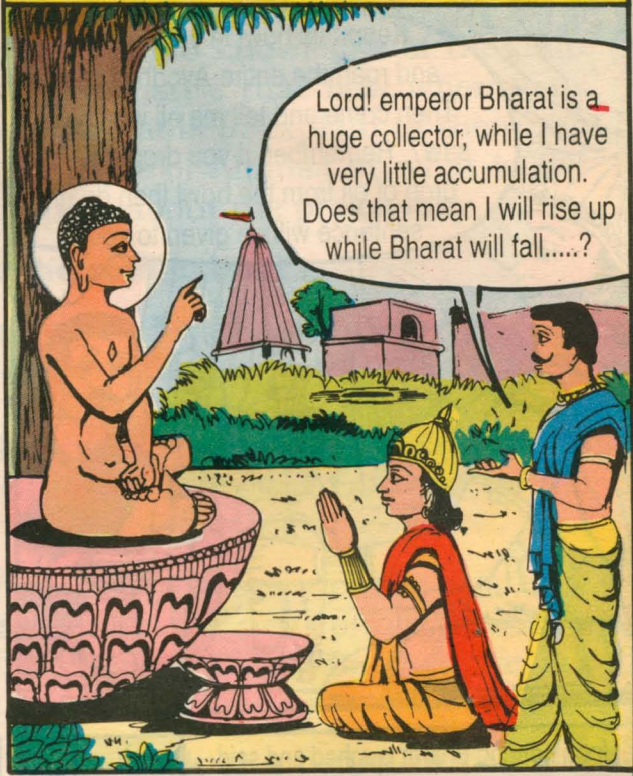
One day Lord Rishabhdev arrived at Ayodhya. Thousands of people alongwith Bharat went to hear his sermon.

Fellow beings, lighten your mind by dispensing the affection for wealth etc. Just as light things rise upward, heavy things go downwards, in the similar manner, the more you have the less you are and the less you have the more you are.



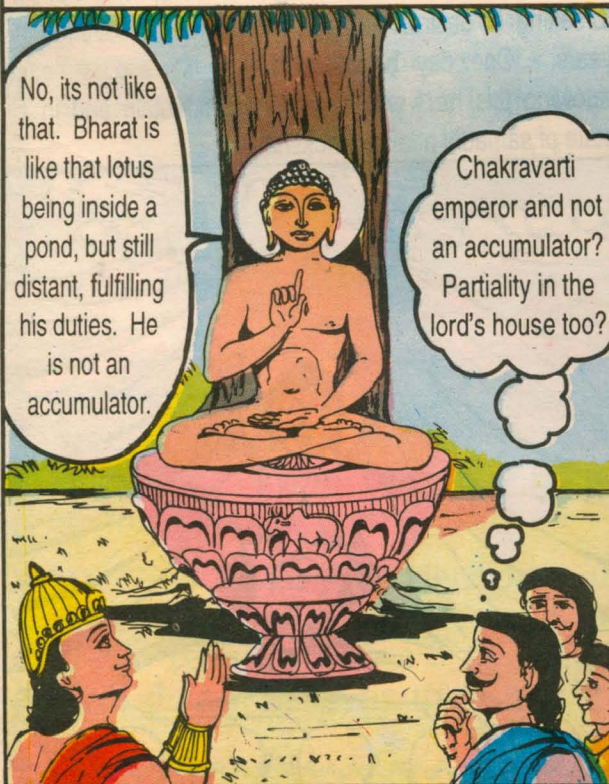
In this religious congregation a goldsmith was present listening to the preaching, upon hearing it he asked Lord Rishabhdev-

Lord! emperor Bharat is a huge collector, while I have very little accumulation. Does that mean I will rise up while Bharat will fall.....?



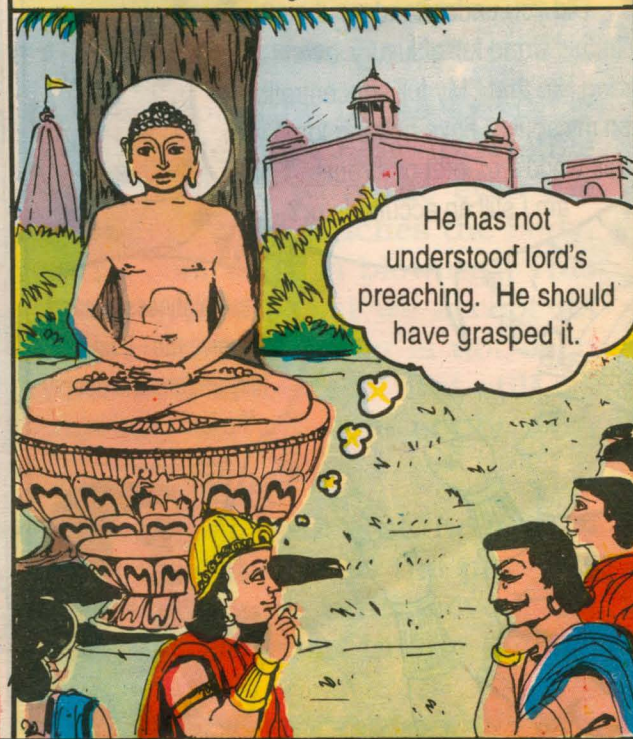
No, its not like that. Bharat is like that lotus being inside a pond, but still distant, fulfilling his duties. He is not an accumulator.

Chakravarti emperor and not an accumulator? Partiality in the lord's house too?

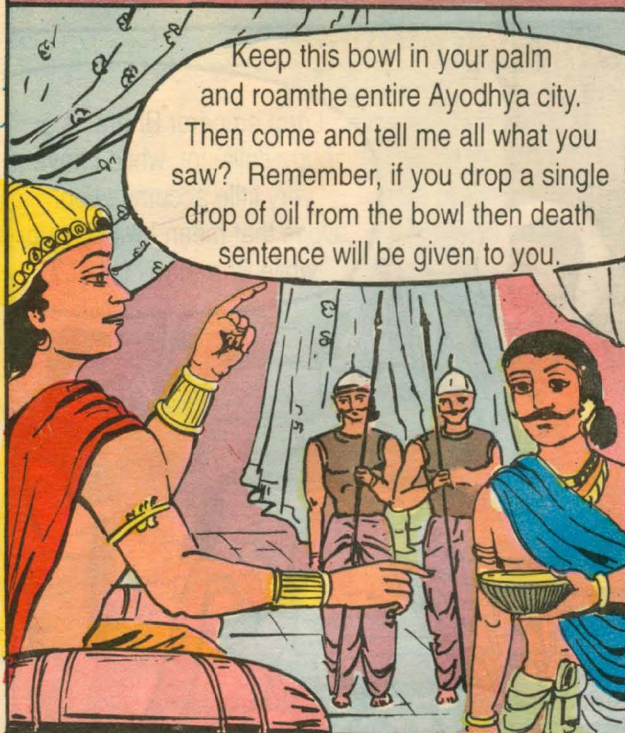


When Bharat saw the goldsmith in a perplex state-

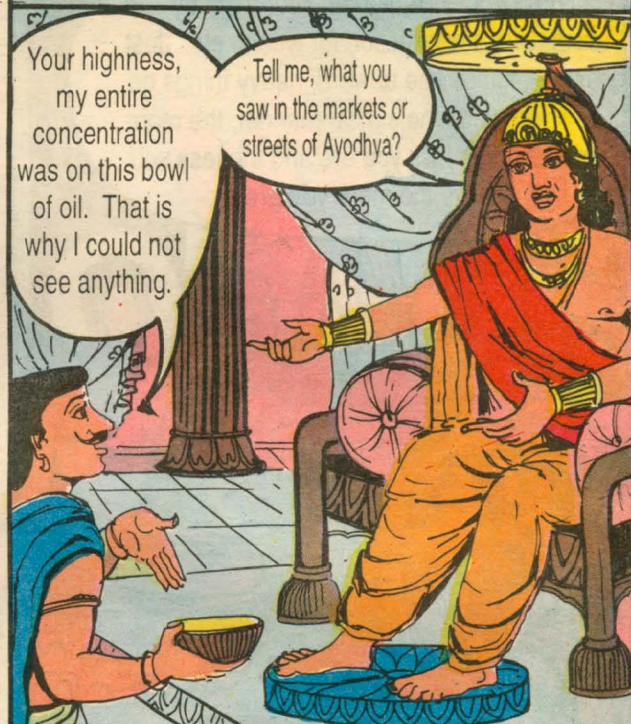
He has not understood lord's preaching. He should have grasped it.



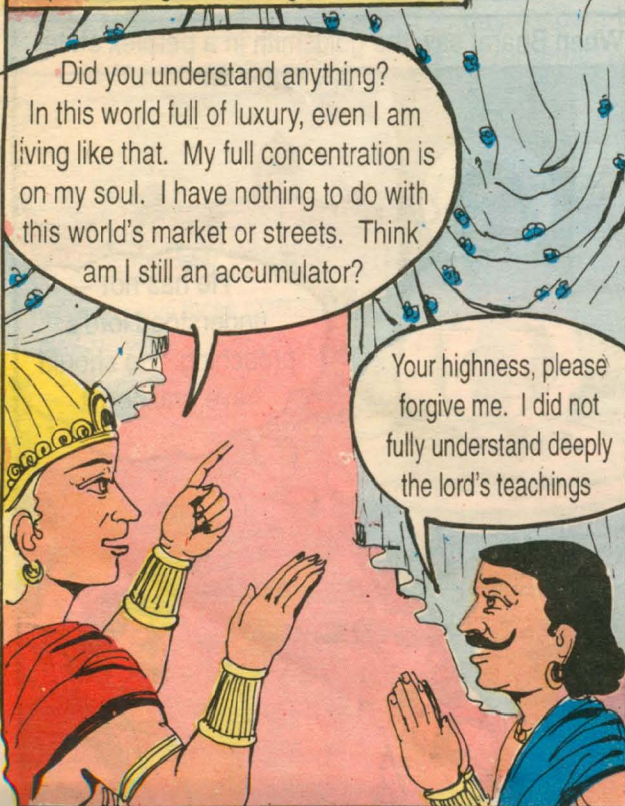
Next day Bharat called the goldsmith to his palace. Giving him a bowl of oil filled to the brim, he said—



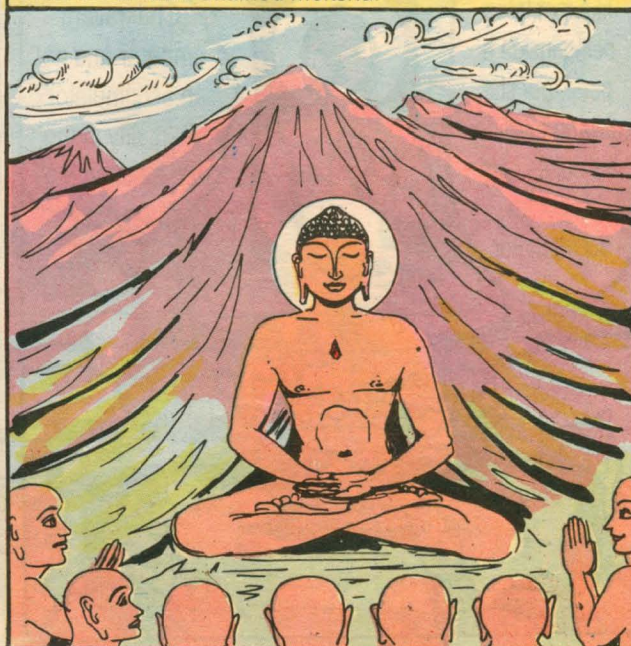
Goldsmith takes the bowl and travels the entire Ayodhya city and returns back to the royal court. Bharat asks him—



Upon hearing Bharat laughed and said—



In this manner teaching the significance of renunciation, forsaking of desires etc took Rishabhdev thousands of years. One day he realised that his end is near. Knowing this he went to Ashtapad mountain and in a state of samadhi attained moksha.



Dear Friends,

By this time you must have gained some knowledge of the Jain philosophy and its technical terms. I am sure that now when your friends ask you about Jainism you will be able to explain to them the meaning of Navkar Mantra or the principle of Ahimsa or what is the theory of Karma. Today let us learn more about the philosophy.

Q. 26. How do we know that the soul exists?

Ans. The existence of any entity can be established by reason, examples and arguments. Let us explore the question further more. Jain philosophy is based on the acceptance of the existence of the soul. If the soul does not exist then why should one work for its liberation? It is therefore very important to prove the existence of the soul.

Some people of reason and education do not accept the existence of the soul. They argue that, "If the soul is not perceptible then how could we accept its existence? Show it actually to us then we are prepared to accept it."

But soul is not a commodity like a book or a pencil which can be shown in hand. Soul is an invisible and formless entity that requires effort to prove its existence. When one exercises one's intelligence and uses its logic it is not difficult to accept its existence.

Is it true that only visible entity is accepted by us as existing? No. We accept the existence of an invisible entity by its visible operative effect. For example, Who can perceive with the eyes the wind, the air? But in summer when a whiff of wind touches the body, one feels cool sensation and one says the cool wind is blowing. This means that the wind is not visible to the eyes and yet we accept its existence through its operation. Similarly the electricity is not seen when the light is turned on or when the iron is heated. But still we accept it. From this it is established that an invisible entity with visible effect or result exists.

Now let us consider whether the effective operation of the soul is visible. When a man dies all his senses are intact and the physical frame remains where it is. The body does not move until moved, the eyes do not open by itself and the body does not react to any kind of

abuse or a punch. What happened? Just a few minutes ago he could do everything. Now all of a sudden everything ceased. Why? Because the one who saw, who felt, who moved, who spoke, who heard, who smelt, who tasted and who could act at will left the body. So it proves that the activity was because of the existence of something else other than the body. That other is the soul or Atma.

When the soul leaves, the body is dead and inactive. So anything that grows, flourishes or moves has life and wherever there is life there is soul e.g. plants, veges, insects, fish, serpents, horses etc. That which does not grow, flourish or move has no life. Hence one sees the growth, the movement and the multiplicity of life but the soul is not seen. So we have to accept the existence of an invisible entity by its visible operative effect. As fire can be inferred from smoke, soul can be inferred from life and all sentient activities.

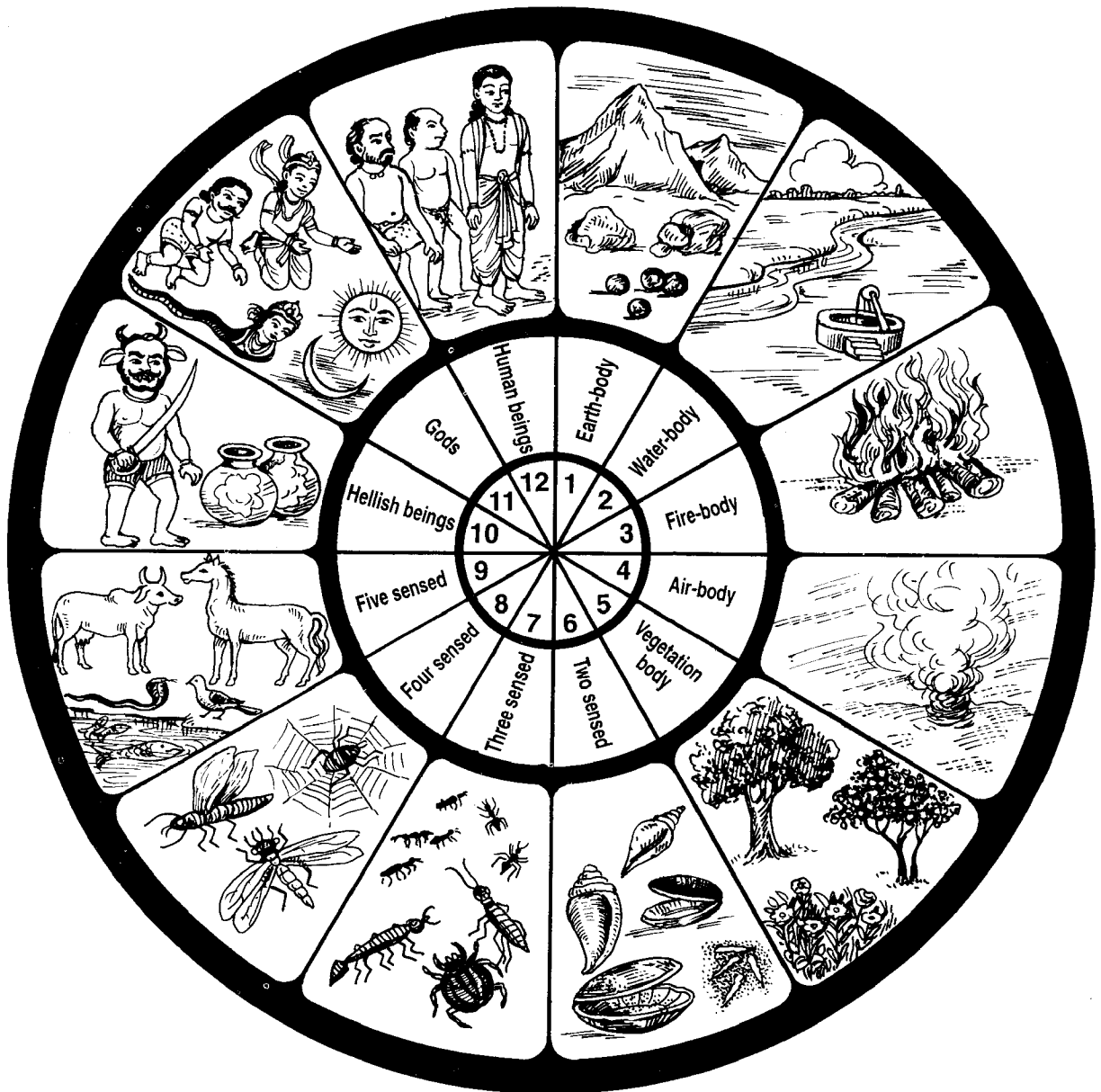
Thus the acceptance of the concept of the existence of the soul is the very fundamental plank in the spiritual journey of self realization and the freedom from bondage.

The broad translation of a poem by Dr. Bharil of Jaipur; summarises the attributes of the living soul. In the poem the soul describes itself in the following way.

**"I am self sufficient,
without trace of anything else,
Tasteless, formless,
without colour, without attachment,
without hatred, I am unique,
I am invisible body of consciousness,
happy in my own physique.
I am responsible for my success or failure and none else.
I am pure, omniscient, one unaffected by other's act.
I realise myself through me,
I am knowledge and bliss perfect."**

**Pramoda Chitrabhanu's
Jai Jinendra**

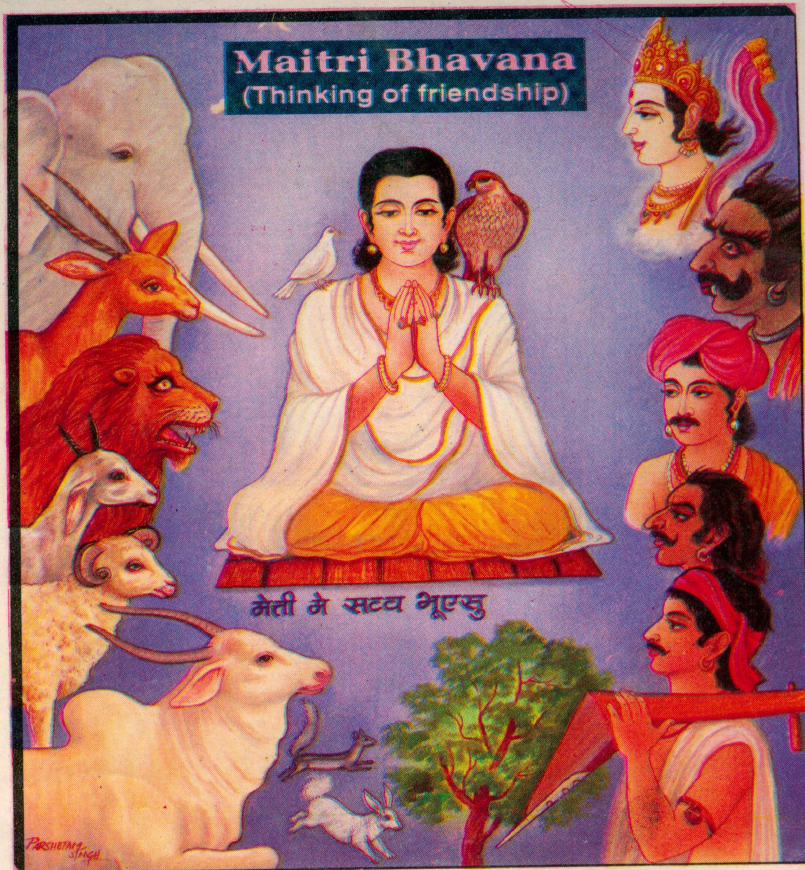
CIRCLE OF WORLD



The soul is continually transmigrating in this Circle of World

Maitri Bhavana (Thinking of friendship)

Lord Mahavira said we must be a friend within all living beings. Feeling of Friendship should be the foundation of all our future thinking. This way once we make friendship with someone or for that matter with all living beings how can we think of harming, deceiving or quarreling with them. How can our actions be harsh towards anybody? We would never hurt our friends on the contrary we would support them and protect them. So this way we develop the bond for each other. Friendship teaches us to be tolerant, to forgive and care and share among one another.



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