।। कोबातीर्थमंडन श्री महावीरस्वामिने नमः ।।

।। अनंतलब्धिनिधान श्री गौतमस्वामिने नमः ।। ।। गणधर भगवंत श्री सुधर्मास्वामिने नमः ।।

।। योगनिष्ठ आचार्य श्रीमद् बुद्धिसागरसूरीश्वरेभ्यो नमः ।। ।। चारित्रचूडामणि आचार्य श्रीमद् कैलाससागरसूरीश्वरेभ्यो नमः ।।

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पुनितप्रेरणा व आशीर्वाद

राष्ट्रसंत श्रुतोद्धारक आचार्यदेव श्रीमत् पद्मसागरसूरीश्वरजी म. सा.

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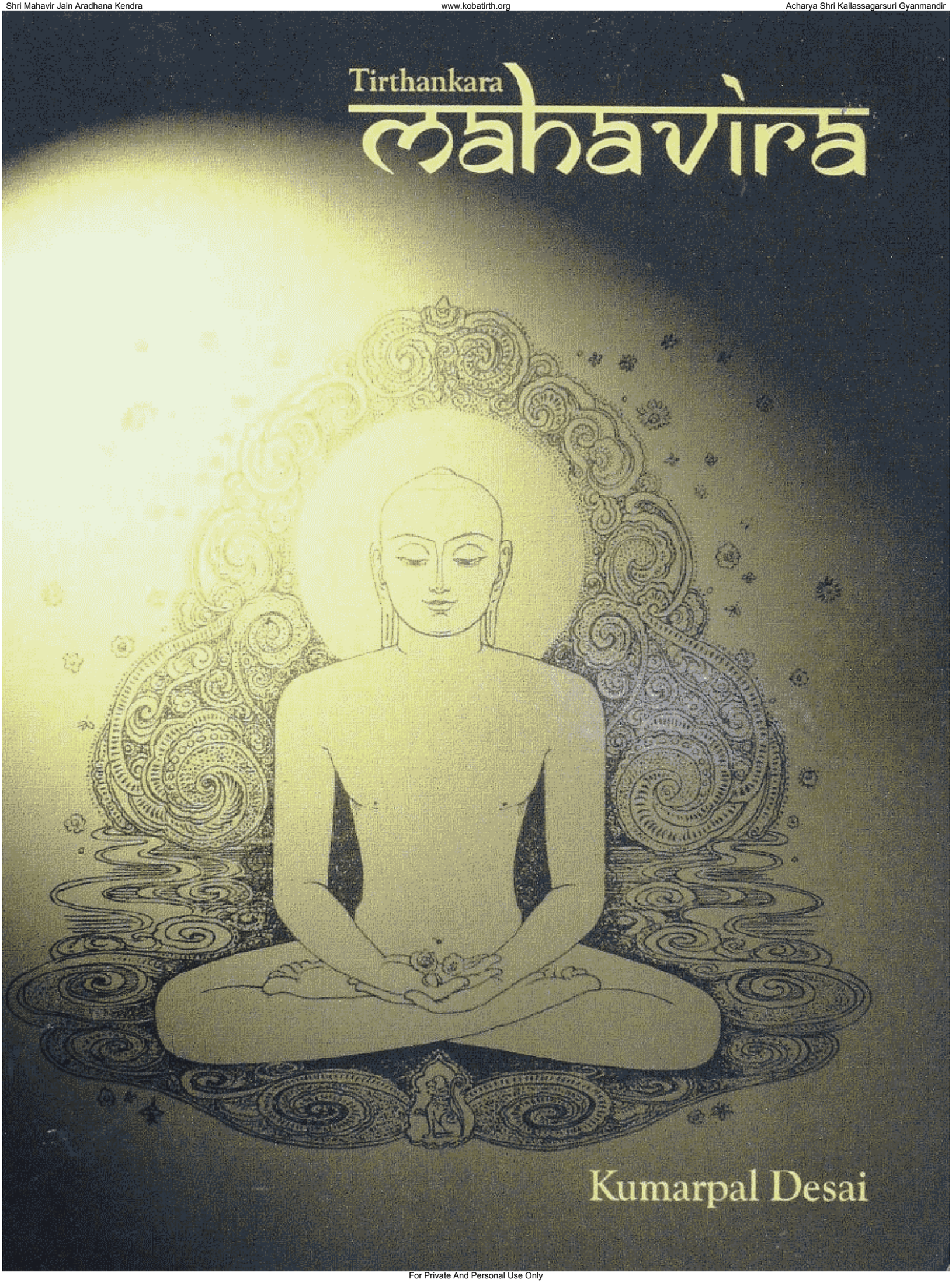
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Tirthankara mahavira



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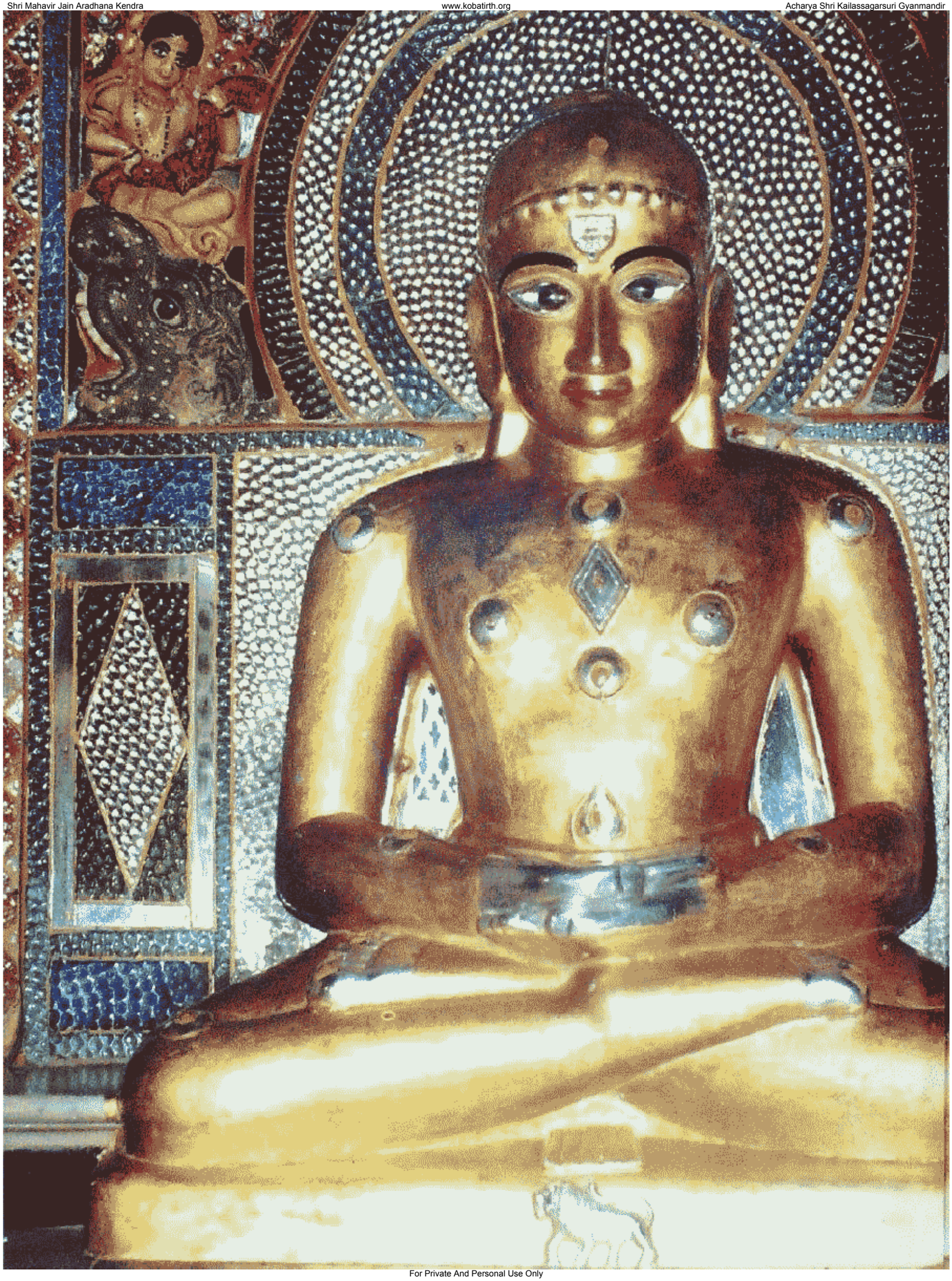
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Tirthankara mahavira

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Dedicated to
the sacred memory of the late
Shri U.N. Mehta
A warm - hearted, affectionate friend and
a companion par excellence
who epitomised the qualities of a Jain Shravak and
led a life which holds a beacon light to others.

Kumarpal Desai

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Preface

I am immensely happy that the book on Tirthankara Mahavira has seen the light of the day today.

Tirthankara Mahavira was born 2600 years ago and since that time his life has been a source of inspiration for millions of people on this earth. Similarly, the message that emits and emanates from his life has been a source of hope and redemption for the entire mankind which is craving for peace and tranquility. In an era when the stockpiles of nuclear weapons are out to annihilate the whole human race, when terrorism and pollution are spreading fear and panic the world over, the teachings of Load Mahavira, emphasising the importance of non-violence, renunciation and Anekant in human life, show a new path to mankind beset with innumerable evils. His gospel of non-violence was transplanted into Mahatma Gandhi through Shrimad Rajchandra who was a great Jain Saint of the twentieth century and that in turn gave a new strength to the people to practice non-violence in settling all kinds of differences and disputes. Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela epitomised the same in the struggle that they led for the emancipation of people and of their countries.

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This book contains a plethora of details on Tirthankara Mahavira and his life and the main purpose of doing so is to give an idea of the encyclopedia to be prepared on him. Many persons were actively associated with the work of bringing out this volume and giving it a refined shape. We are thankful to Late Shri Gokuldas Kapadia, Jitubhai Patel and Ashok Saha (Padma Putra) for the pictures and sketches they have provided for it. The very revered Acharya Yashodevsurishwarjee has penned a very great and valuable work on Lord Mahavira for which we shall always remain eternally grateful to him. Babubhai Shah of Pooja Publications has taken keen interest in the preparation of this book. We are thankful to Acharya Shree Kailassagarsuri Gyanmandir of Shree Mahavir Jain Aradhana Kendra, Koba Tirth for the pictures (Page No. 201, 207, 209, 211, 212, 213 & 216) they have provided for it. In addition, we are also thankful to Naginbhai Shah, Nemu Chandaria, Jaysukh Mehta, Priya Shah, Sheena Mehta, Ashik Shah and Prof. Tushar Purani for the assistance they have rendered in making this book a reality. The present volume has been brought out in conformity with the Shwetamber tradition. The picture in this volume are from one of the authentic and rarest of manuscripts of "Kalpsutra" in golden letters. We thank all Jain organisations and associations the world-over which have shown keen interest in the preparation of this book. We specially thank Shailesh Desai of the Hi Scan Ltd. for the aesthetic touch he has given to this publication. The suggestions given to us by Acharya Pradyumansuriji and Gani Shree Rajhansvijayjee in respect of the selection of pictures to be inserted in the book have proved very valuable. Last but not the least, we are indeed thankful to all those Shree Sangh, donors and friends who associated their sentiments and feelings in the making and publication of this book.

15th August, 2003

– **Kumarpal Desai**



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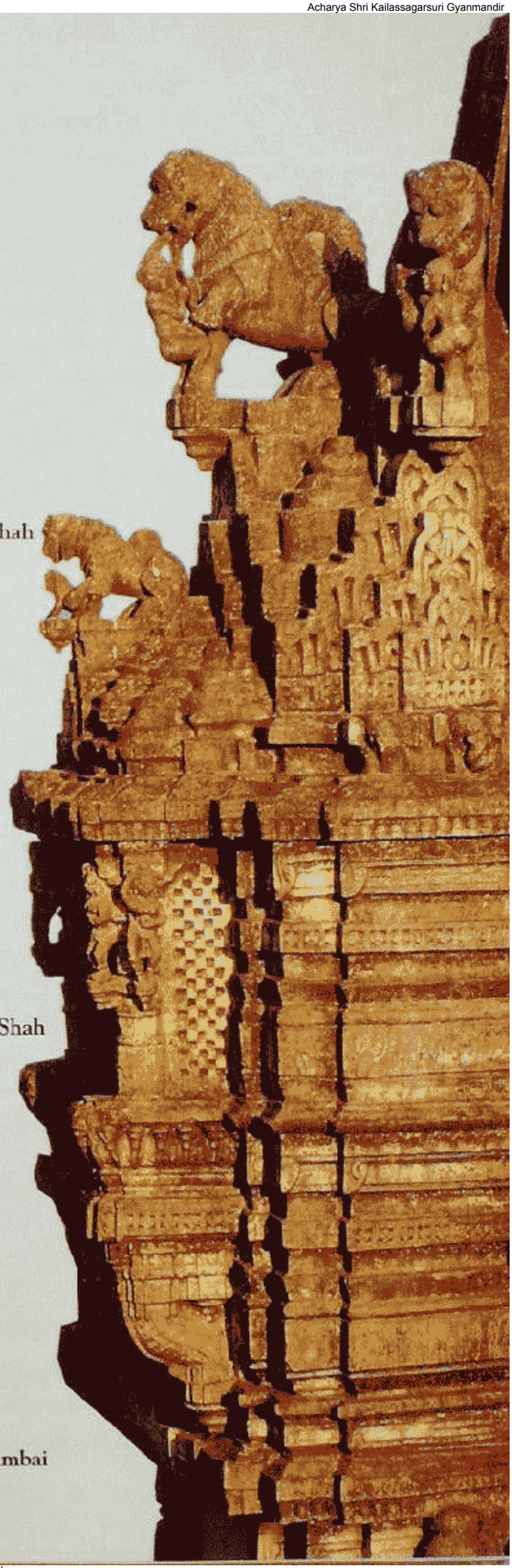
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जो देवाणवि देवो, जं देवा पंजलि नमंसंति ।
तं देवदेवमहिअं सिरसा वंदे महावीरं ॥

Pavapuri

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The Timeless Message of
Tirthnakara Mahavira

I bow to Mahavira, who is a supreme deity – one who is worshipped even by the Gods. When Mahavira was born, the world was quite literally 'hell'

The order of religion had disintegrated leading to miseries of people. This pervaded all levels of society. Temples had become vice dens with animals sacrifices taking place. Kings waged wars to satisfy their ambitions and their greed, with the scriptures of the time holding the belief that those dying on the battlefield would inherit the kingdom of heaven. During these time women suffered; not only were they widowed, they were treated as slaves, as chattel, with no identity of their own. They were seen as a commodity and were dependent on men for all their needs. Caste distinctions too were rigidly enforced, with the lower caste members subject to indignity and humiliation. They lived in miserable conditions, and treated as second class citizens. In these times, enmity was a virtue and this was reflected in the way people treated one another. It was in times such as these that Mahavira was born.

These problems were further compounded by the restriction of knowledge. Knowledge of the scriptures remained the privilege of a select few. Scriptural knowledge did not percolate to the poor or the lower castes. They were even denied the right to listen to the scriptures. The scriptures were in Sanskrit – a language for the upper caste and not understood by the ordinary people. The language spoken by the common man was considered inferior and not worthy of respect. All philosophical discussions were conducted in Sanskrit. The enlightened ones did nothing to remove ignorance of the common people. On the contrary, they were the ones of holding on to the scriptural teachings. The Shudras (lower caste) and women were forbidden to read the Vedas and those who dared were punished.



Tirthankara Mahavira

One of the fiirst things Bhagwan Mahavira did was to break the dominance of

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the Sanskrit language. He said "Knowledge is not for the knowledgeable but for the ordinary person, too, and one must speak the language that they understand." Ardhmagadhi was the language used by the masses and so he began to preach in that language. He expounded the mysteries of existence and religion in a language that was easy comprehensible. In earlier times, people did not understand the *pundits*; now they did.

In Mahavira's time, women were denied social and religious rights and were dependent on men. Treated as slaves, they were bought and sold, bargained for like a commodity. In short, they were denied a fulfilling existence. Mahavira ushered in a revolution in defence of women. He brought about reforms. He laid emphasis on the importance of celibacy, saying if a woman became sadhvi's observing this virtue, she would be entitled to liberation. Mahavira paved the way for women to reach spiritual heights, a path closed to her for centuries for she was considered impious and unchaste.

The rigidity of the caste system and the adherence to it made life terrible for the Shudras. Bhagwan Mahavira succeeded in removing the caste system, emphasising the importance of character. He said, "Your *karma* (action) determines whether you are a Brahmin, Kshatriyas, Vaishya or Shudra", the four main castes of those days. Rituals and procedures were meaningless to him while the character remained supreme. A shraman was one with excellent character, who did not pride himself on his achievements of caste, beauty, knowledge or even penance – this was the ideal. He brought about social revolution, transforming society through his reforms concerning women and the untouchables. Since Mahavira had overcome passions like ill-will, attachment, malice, greed etc. he was called Jin and the followers of Jin are Jains.

His concept of a sadhu was a person with open mind, one who is generous and believes in non-violence, is not lazy and is free of complexes. He will not depend on others, will undertake journeys on foot only, and that too bare-footed. He will be, in short, self-reliant, will be indifferent to pains and pleasures. He will, said Mahavira, continue to walk on the path of liberation.

Mahavira emphasised celibacy for he considered it an act of supreme self-control, dictated by one's soul. Similarly, penance also helps one to get



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rid of *Karma* (action). What he showed was the path of liberation, of getting rid of mental 'slavery'. He sought to dispel the darkness of blind beliefs and rigid customs which imprisoned the soul and prevented one's journey to a higher level of consciousness. He urged people to think before accepting everything blindly and to reject what was worth rejecting. In short, he wanted people to show courage of conviction.

A householder, he said, had also certain duties to perform. A sadhu had to observe five *mahavrat* (vows) and for the householder he ordained twelve *vrat* (restraint) - five *anuvrat* (minor vows pertaining only to lay people) and seven *shikshavrat* (Supplementary vows). If these are observed scrupulously, a person can be said to have led a meaningful life. Mahavira was not for religious disputes and averred that every opinion had some truth, for truth was relative. He urged people to practise non-violence in conduct, *anekant* (the doctrine of manifold aspects) in thought and *syadvad* (the doctrine of qualified assertion) in speech. He said, "Religion is supreme. Non-violence, restraint and penance are its chief attributes. One whose mind is turned to religion is revered even by gods. He stressed the importance of five *mahavrat* (Basic vows) and they are valid today as they were 2600 years ago.

The first *mahavrat* is non-violence. He said, "The one you want to kill is your ownself and the one you want to rule over is also your ownself. Therefore a truly enlightened soul will never think of killing anyone or ruling over anyone, nor does he cause pain to anyone." Non-violence is the most basic tenet of the Jain religion. It is the very heart of the religion and the concept of 'live and let live' is its cornerstone. As all beings are equal, it says, everyone should be able to live happily and with no one causing unhappiness to others. Violence results in the formation of *karma* (action). Bad conduct, lying and indulgence are attributes of violence, truth, *astey* (non-stealing), celibacy and detachment are attributes of non-violence. Violence is committed not only through action but by thought and deed – as the saying goes, "war is born in the heart of man". Non-violence in thought is reflected in *anekant* (the doctrine of manifold aspects).

Mahavira's concept of non-violence encompassed the universe - human beings as well as all other organisms. Cruelty is not physical but is innate, inborn. Compassion to all needs to be practised, he said.



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In the past three thousand years of 'civilised' life, fifteen thousand wars have taken place. Among all creatures on earth, human beings are the only beings that choose to kill their own species. Man invented guns and bombs to kill his fellow men; a single nuclear bomb can wipe out the human race. This reminds one of an incident from the life of Maxim Gorky, the Russian writer. He talked to the villagers about the achievements of science. He said : "Science had helped man to fly in space and to fathom the depths of oceans. Once, when he was discoursing on the wonders of science". An old villager retorted saying : 'You are right. Science has shown us how to fly and how to reach the bottom of a sea, but has it taught us how to live in peace on this planet ?" Gorky had no answer. Yet as Jains, Mahavira has blessed us and taught us how to live. We live today in perpetual danger of war. There are a varieties of bombs, each capable of killing hundreds of thousands in one go ! There is a stockpile of 30,000 nuclear weapons that can decimate the human race in an instant. Violence has become a way of life and is seen in each and every act of a being. The media play a negative role in inflaming our passions and providing an impetus to violence. Human kind is ravaged by poverty and famine. yet money is spent on developing new weapons and on planning war strategies. Around the world, there are people who live in a state of fear, terror and insecurity and as nations, we talk and prepare for war. Is the need for non violence not stronger than ever before ?



Non-violence is a way of life; it comes from within. In the oldest book of Jain religion *Acharang Sutra*, it is said that non-violence is a true universal religion. Acharya Shri Umaswatiji said, "परस्परोपग्रहो जीवानाम्"– each living organism supports another. Mahavira's theory of non-violence encompasses the entire universe and he had also emphasised the unity of life.

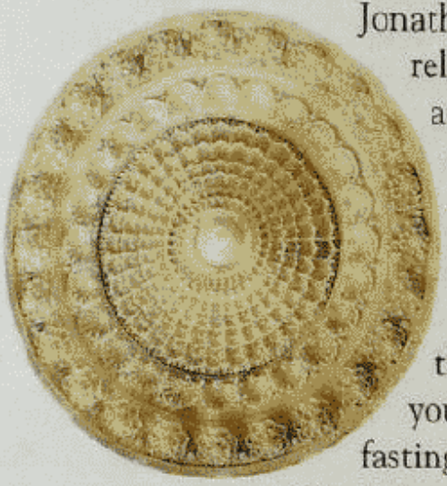
It was after a gap of 2600 years that Mahatma Gandhi felt inspired by the same principles of non-violence and compassion that Mahavira propounded. In August 1946 Mahatma stood, unarmed before a violent mob and his compassion melted their hearts. Mountbatten said , "What a battalion could not have achieved, has been achieved by this frail man and has saved East part of India from a conflagration." Non-violence links Mahavira to Mahatma, "as if there was an invisible traffic between Mahavira and Gandhi."

As we have stepped into the next century, everyone has to make non-violence a part of one's being, the very existence. Jain philosophy lays emphasis on totality of life, not on fragmented existence. There are people who take care to see that tiny insects are not killed but they do not flinch when it comes to exploiting others. Everyone has a split personality and this leads to fragmentation which is highly detrimental. Non-violence must pervade one's life, one's every action and activity. Compassion should be encompassing as was evident in Mahavira's love for Chandkaushik, a venomous snake.

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Acquisitiveness or possessiveness is directly related to violence as are exploitation and corruption. To exploit the disadvantaged or the underprevileged is also a form of violence. "Jain religion affirms the co-existence of non-violence and human existence," says Muni Santbalji.



Jonathan Swift a great satirist, has said, "We have just enough religion to make us hate but not enough to make us love one another." We must annihilate the very idea of violence and fanaticism to reach the ideal of religious fellowship. Truth, detachment and non-possessiveness are the fundamentals of universal religion preached by Mahavira.

Another important feature of Jain religion is that it has thought about food or diet and its effect on man's thinking. 'As you eat so shall you think', it says. It lays greater emphasis on fasting, on abstemious habits as does *Ayurveda*. According to Carrington "Fasting rests the heart and it gains in strength. It also helps in the process of purification of blood." Not only that, it helps one to get rid of unwanted desires. Similarly, Jain religion emphasises the importance of vegetarianism. In the present age when diseases such as heart-attack, blood pressure etc. have become rampant, vegetarianism is the answer to these ailments. The modern mind accepts nothing that is not scientifically proved. Fortunately all that our scriptures said centuries ago has been proved scientifically. American doctors advise the patients to finish eating before sunset and that is what the ancient texts advocated. Meditation and Yoga have been successful in easing tensions and stress and even in removing physical and mental disorders. There is *pachhakhan* to develop mind, *kausagga* (meditation in a standing posture renunciation of attachment towards one's body) for meditation, *pratikraman* (ritualized confession) to know one's faults, *paryushan* (religious festival) for the purification of mind, and forgiveness as an attribute of the brave - these will only help in the remaking of man. Jain religion's panacea is - character, charity, penance and love. These alone can reawaken the dormant humanity.

Martin Luther King Jr., who fought against racism, had a dream about a world where a person's identity is known 'not by the colour of the skin, but by the content of his character.' Jain religion is opposed to discrimination based on caste, colour or creed. "Bow not to a person, but to the virtues he/she has," it says. Take refuge in religion, asserted Mahavira and it will lead you to liberation.

The universe today is in vice-like grip of pollution. Trees are mercilessly razed to the ground and the disastrous consequences in the form of famine or floods, soil erosion etc are there for all to see. We are not sure whether the inhabitants in 21st century will get natural rain or man-made acid rain ! Many living organisms have been annihilated leading to imbalance in the

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eco-system. The message of Jainism rings true - non-violence to one and all. Secondly, it prohibits eating of vegerables on certain day, which reflects its concern for enviornmental protection.

'Truth' is another pillar of Jainism. It postulates : "I will not practise falsehood, will not force others to practise it and will not support it." Truth is God, it says in Acharang Sutra. Truth springs in the human heart and cannot be forced. One must take care to see that one avoids falsehoods or telling lies, consciously or unconsciously. About *nirgranth*, (unattached) Mahavira says : He will think twice before he speaks for if he speaks without thinking he may have to resort to lies. He will never get angry for an angry man may tell lies. He will not be tempted for temptation may compel him to indulge in falsehood. He will overcome fear for fear may lead him to telling lies. He will not indulge in making fun of others for he may inadvertently tell lies. Jain philosophy, thus, emphasises the importance of truth. It says : 'Never say I am right, for others can be right too,' for truth is relative. This liberal view is called *anekant*. It means tolerance, synthesis, coexistence. Try to find an element of truth in everything. Never say : 'I am right; but whatever is right belongs to me'. In Mahavira's time, there were many disputes and controversies and everyone believed he/she was right. Mahavira said : Don't be self-centred and don't look at things from your point of view only (*ekant* - one sided) but from others point of view also (*anekant*). Then and then only you will be able to know undiluted truth. Thus 'anekant' philosophy is Mahavira's greatest gift to mankind, according to Vinoba Bhave. Long before Einstein, Mahavira thought of relativism 2600 years ago.

The key concept in Jainism is 'harmony', or 'synthesis'. As the world shrinks, congruence of religions becomes a necessity. All religions must coexist. Kings Kumarpal and Vishnuvardhan had this vision in mind when they built Shiva and Vishnu temples alongwith Jinalayas. Kalikalsarvagna Hemchandracharya performed *pooja* in Shivalay in Somnath. Not only that he prayed there but composed a verse propitiating *Bhagwan Shiva*. It is, therefore, hoped that the idea of *anekant* will be the foundation of synthesis of the sublime elements of all religions. Mahavira had waged a war against blind beliefs, rigid customs and traditions which hamper one's spiritual growth. The word '*Vardhaman*' connotes 'progress' or 'progressive'. And one whose mind is free from prejudices can only become *nirgranth*. (unattached) Mahavira sought to remove the cobwebs of beliefs and customs and free the soul from these shackles which bind it and prevent its liberation. 'That is true religion which does not bind the soul but facilitates its liberation', he said. His religion has stood the test of time since it encompasses even scinetific vision. Dr. Jagdishchandra Bose proved that there was life in plants and this was what Rishabhdev had said earlier. In fact religion is science - science believes in experiments to find truth, while religion has self-evident truth, truth which is realised by great souls.

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The third Vrat advocated by Mahavira is *asteya* meaning non-stealing or abjuring stealing of any kind. One should not accept anything that one has not earned or deserved and should not be a party to any such deal. Anything that does not rightfully belong to us must not be touched or accepted. Today we witness a spectacle in which people grab everything and anything that does not rightfully belong to them. Modern man has become avaricious - avarice is the besetting sin of the present society leading to so many other evils. If the vow of *asteya* is practised, India will be the envy of the world.

The fourth *vrat* preached by Mahavira is *brahmacharya* (celibacy). Carnal desire is the root cause of all the evils, he said. A river has two banks to control its flow; similarly human beings must also exercise restraint and control their desires.

Permissiveness has done great harm to the existing society and it is there for all to see and hence the need for restraint (*nigraha*). The key to happiness and peace lies in it, asserted Mahavira. Free reign to desires, especially carnal desires, has led the society to the brink of disaster with deadly diseases like AIDS spreading their tentacles and jeopardising the lives of many. Hence the watchword is 'restraint'.

The fifth *vrata* is *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness). Possessive instinct leads to sinning. Everyone is in hot pursuit of things; the desire to possess dominates and in the mad race all sorts of sins and undesirable acts are committed.

Mahavira expressed his views emphatically and courageously and freed people from the tyranny of a coterie which imposed its views on others. He also liberated people from violence and mental slavery. He broke down the barriers of class-system and removed the distinctions based on caste or creed. All are equal, he averred and everyone is entitled to *moksha* (salvation), irrespective of caste, gender, age or status. He was instrumental in Chandanbala becoming the first *sadhvi* (a nun of the svetambara or sthanakvasi sect). Anybody can be great provided he/she practises truth and love and has humanitarian outlook. Greatness has nothing to do with birth, caste or status. Live and let live, he said and preached peaceful coexistence.

Kshatriyas were engaged in fratricidal wars in those days. Violence was rampant and vices had a field day. At that time Mahavira's message

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was : Wars or fights with others will not help; fight with yourself and annihilate the enemies within : desires, possessiveness, attachment, violence. Conquer them and you will be happy, was his message. The way to supreme bliss lies in conquering one's ownself.

Mahavira tested his body and soul during his life-time. During his period of penance of about twelve years and six months, he ate food for only 349 days and that too once a day. Rest of the days he fasted and even abjured water for about four thousand days. He must have walked thousands of miles barefooted and bare-bodied. He, thus, demonstrated soul-force, and triumph of will.

Mahavira founded the sangh of *sadhu* (mendicant), *sadhvi* (a nun of the svetambara or sthanakvasi sect), *shravak* (a jain layman) and *shravika* (a jain laywoman) known as *tirth* (four fold order) and hence he is known as *tirthankar* (builders of the ford). Attachment, he said, is the source of all sins : violence, falsehood, carnal desires etc. The modern age witnesses an unprecedented proliferation of violent tendencies caused by man's instinct of possessiveness. It is this instinct which has rendered human beings inhuman, violent. True happiness lies in "The less I have, the more I have" but who listens ? The principle of *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness) advocated by Mahavira appealed to Mahatma Gandhi so much that he thought of the principle of trusteeship. "You are just a trustee", he said, "of what extra you have; you are a protector of that extra and you have to distribute it fairly among the people to whom it rightfully belongs."



Follow the five *yama*, says Mahavira. Just as fire burns everything, allow your desires to be burnt and follow some ideals and principles and you are sure to taste the fruit of happiness.

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A Saga of
Mahavira's Life



We devotionally bow to Tirthankara Mahavira who has completely destroyed karmic enemies. The Lord of gods, himself praised Tirthankara Mahavira as the Giver and Preacher of Law and Religion. He addressed him as the soothing shelter and the true protector of human beings. Lord Mahavira illuminated every quarter with redeeming knowledge. His was the true liberation, his way inspired many to take the path of liberation.

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Let us briefly look at his wonderful life. First, we recall his memory of his past births. His spiritually lofty life was the result of spiritual practice he observed not only in one birth but in so many previous lives. His previous twenty-six births are regarded as the initial stage of the spiritual life of Tirthankara Mahavira's soul. These previous births are those which occurred after Tirthankara Mahavira's soul attained spiritually wholesome attitude. Before his soul attained this spiritual attitude, it went through innumerable lives – this however is of no consequence from the standpoint of spiritual evolution. A soul's real spiritual life commences with the attainment of spiritually wholesome attitude. Hence, only those lives in which Tirthankara Mahavira's soul took on a spiritually wholesome attitude are taken into account while recounting his spiritual life.

The past lives of Tirthankara Mahavira

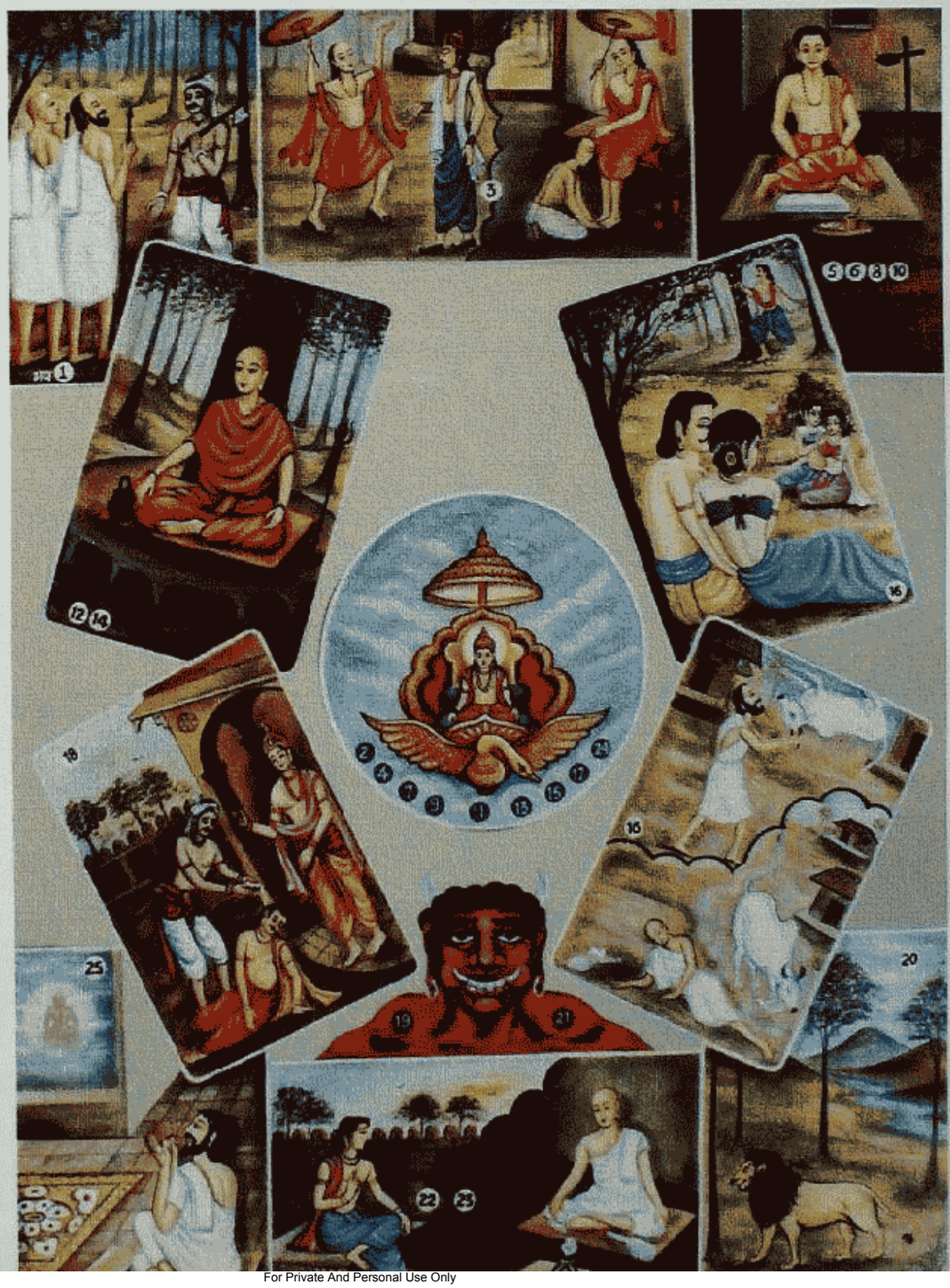
In his first spiritually aware life Tirthankara Mahavira's soul was born as a thoughtful villager named Nayasara. He was very straightforward, humble and cheerful. He believed and felt that one should only take food after having offered it to a guest or visitor. Hence, when he was in a dense forest and he met hungry and thirsty monks who had lost their way, he rejoiced internally at knowing he would be of service. He courteously served them with food and water. These Monks then disclosed to him the secret of Religion. They instructed him that peace, even mindedness and straightforwardness constitute the seed of Religion. Further they told him that devotion to a true God, a true spiritual teacher and the true religion, spiritually elevates a man's life resulting in bliss. Having listened to their discourse, Nayasara cherished these preachings in his heart and as a result, he attained such a spiritually wholesome attitude. Thus, in the life of Nayasara, the soul of Tirthankara Mahavira is seen endowed with the spiritual feelings of compassion and non-attachment.

In his the second past life, Tirthankara Mahavira's soul was born in the heavenly world called Saudharma as a God, who possessed great prosperity and a life-span of countless years. In his third past life, his soul was born as Marichi, a son of the universal ruler Bharata. Marichi, who had become a parivrajaka ascetic, learnt that his grand father was the first tirthankara Rushabhdeva, his father the first universal ruler and he, himself, would be the first great man of true valour, a universal ruler and the last tirthankara. He became egotistical and proud. As a result of this pride, his soul in the future would have to descend in to the womb of Devananda. In the fourth past life, Mahavira's soul was born as a god in the heavenly world called Brahmaloka. His soul was born as Kausika and Pusyamitra Brahmana in the fifth and sixth past lives respectively. In the seventh past life, his soul was born again in the celestial world Saudharma as a god; however, this time with medium-length life-span. His soul was born as Agnidyota Brahmana, as a god with a medium-length life-span

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in the Isana celestial world, and as Agnibhuti Brahmana in the eighth, ninth and tenth past lives respectively. His soul was born as Sanatkumar god, with medium-length life-span, as Bharadvaja Brahmana and as a god with a medium-length life-span in Mahendra heavenly world in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth previous lives respectively. It was born as Sthavara Brahmana in the city of Rajagruha and as a god with a medium-length life-span in the heavenly world Brahmaloka in the fourteenth and fifteenth previous lives respectively. It was born as Vishvabhuti, a son of Vishakhabhuti, and as a god with the longest life-span in the Mahashukra heavenly world in the sixteenth and seventeenth previous lives respectively. In the eighteenth previous life, his soul was born as Triprushta Vasudeva (a great man of incredible valour) who vigorously tore a lion into pieces – for playing havoc in apaddy-field



The past lives of Tirthankara Mahavira

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– and who poured hot lead into the ears of the keeper of bed-room for his carelessness in the performance of duties. After completing the life as Triprushta Vasudeva, his soul was born as an infernal being. In the twentieth previous life his soul was born as a stately lion. On the death of the lion, the soul was born as an infernal being again. After that, the soul took many births in the form of animals and of humans. In his twenty-second previous life, his soul was born as the Prince Vimala. In the twenty-third previous life, in the incarnation of universal ruler Priyamitra there arose in his soul the strong feeling of non-attachment. He renounced the world, became a Jain monk and practised austere spiritual discipline. In the twenty-fourth previous life his soul was born as a god in the Sarvartha celestial aerial car in the Mahashukra heavenly world. In the twenty-fifth previous life his soul was born as a compassionate prince named Nandana who was initiated, by Acharya Pottilla, into the order of Jain monks, and observed severe austerities. Along with the observance of these austerities he accomplished the three virtues of forbearance, service and auspicious meditation, thereby attaining spiritual purity.

In the twenty-third previous life as the universal ruler Priyamitra, Mahavira's soul adopted Jain asceticism through his initiation into the order of Jain monks and in all the following births, the soul undertook the same initiation and the continuous practice of Jain ascetic discipline. This initiation in to the seven lives, led to the attainment of a very high stage of spiritual development. In his life as Prince Nandana, his soul bound the special auspicious karma called tirthankara-nama-karma which in the future in the life of Tirthankara Mahavira would result in the attainment of tirthankarahood. In the twenty-sixth previous life, his soul was born as a god in the heavenly world of Pranata and, at last, in the twenty-seventh life, saw his soul descend into the womb of Devananda. When still in Devananda's womb, his soul possessed three types of knowledge, mati, shruta and avadhi. Mati is the sense perception, memory, recognition, cogitation and inference. Shruta means scriptural or verbal knowledge and Avadhi is the knowledge of hidden spatially distant material objects.

Thus the previous lives of Tirthankara Mahavira show that, having destroyed the defiling passions through practicing of self-control and austerities, his soul attained tirthankarahood. Mahavira's previous lives have the salutary message for man that spiritual vigilance and the realisation of the limitations of material prosperity are necessary prerequisites for the attainment of liberation; only through self-culture and self-discipline one can attain spiritual elevation.

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Having passed through twenty-six previous births in its transmigratory journey, Mahavira's soul attained tirthankarahood in its twenty-seven birth. However, in the last three previous births, the soul had made great spiritual efforts. The soul of a Tirthankara possesses the spiritual capability of attaining tirthankarahood from time immemorial. And in the last three previous lives his Soul actually was bound through the practice of the strictest of austerities and attained the special *karma* called *tirthankara-namakarma*. This definitely resulted in the attainment of tirthankarahood in his twenty-seventh birth.

In the twenty-fourth previous birth Mahavira's soul was born as a god in the seventh heavenly world. In the twenty-fifth previous birth it was born as prince Nandana, the son of the universal king Jitashatru of Chatra city and his queen Bhadra. Prince Nandana renounced the world and became a pupil of Acharya Pottilla. He observed a month-long fast and while breaking this fast at the end of one month, he again took a vow of observing another month-long fast. The lustre of austerity, the efficacy of knowledge and his friendliness towards all beings gradually grew. In the twenty-sixth previous life, his soul was born as a god in the tenth heavenly world called Pranata.

After a long transmigratory journey, the glorious time for the event of Tirthankara Mahavira's birth arrived. There arrived the opportune time for the spiritual practices observed by Tirthankara Mahavira's soul in his lives as Vimalakumara and Nandanakumara to yield its auspicious fruit. The world was shrouded in darkness and there rose the gladdening sound of a divine musical drum heralding the arrival of the Light of the world. The soul of Mahavira descended into the womb of Devananda. She was the wife of Rushabhadatta, the head of Brahmankundapura, a region of the ancient and famous city of Vaishali in the Bihara province, a region charged with religious fervour. It was midnight of the auspicious sixth day of the bright half of the month of Ashadha, of the 544th year, before the commencement of Vikrama Era. The position of the moon was associated with Uttara Phalguni constellation heightening the greatness auspicious occassion. Joy and happiness throughout the three Worlds and divine light pervaded the three worlds.

The life of a venerable tirthankara offers spiritual benefits to all beings, it inspires people to tread the path of liberation. Hence the events of his descent (conception), birth, renunciation, attainment of pure perfect knowledge and liberation are regarded not only significant but also spiritually uplifting. At the time of descent of Lord Mahavira's soul into the womb of Devananda, it possessed

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three types of knowledge, viz. *mati*, *shruta* and *avadhi*. He was also aware that he had descended from the celestial existence.

The unborn tirthankara is regarded as a tirthankara the moment he enters the womb of his mother, and therefore, Indra and the other gods herald the event through well known devotional songs such as '*sakrastava*' (Namotthunam) sutra.

A Tirthankara establishes *tirth* (Ford), which enables beings to cross the ocean of transmigratory existence. Only the *Bharata*, *Airavata* and *Mahavideha* regions are blessed with tirthankaras. Tirthankaras having attained pure perfect knowledge, preach Religion and establish a dynamic *tirtha* (Ford) by firmly formulating major and mini form of conduct in the form of total refrainment from violence for major code. and partial refrainment from violence for minor code. The world submerged in sensual pleasures and materialism is awakened to the spiritual zenith of the lives and gospels of the venerable tirthankaras. All beings receive the light of universal love and compassion from them.

Devananda's Dream and Problem faced by Indra



Indra Sabha

The arrival of a great soul of a tirthankara is a highly auspicious event and is celebrated as such. The manifestation of such light, the birth of a saviour to the world, groping and faltering in the darkness of ignorance can enlighten, rejuvenate and uplift the entire surroundings. A Brahmina woman, Devananda of the Jalandhara lineage, was married to Rushabhadatta Brahmana of the Kodala lineage.

Devananda experienced a sequence of fourteen auspicious visions as she lay half asleep. She dreamt of :

(1) an elephant, (2) a bull, (3) a lion, (4) Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, (5) a garland of flowers, (6) the moon, (7) the sun. (8) a flag, (9) a jar filled with water, (10) a lotus-lake, (11) an ocean, (12) a celestial aerial car, (13) a heap of jewels, (14) smokeless fire.

The heart of Devananda, awakened by the vision of these fourteen auspicious symbols, bloomed like a kadamba flower, and like the raised of this

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Command of Shakrendra

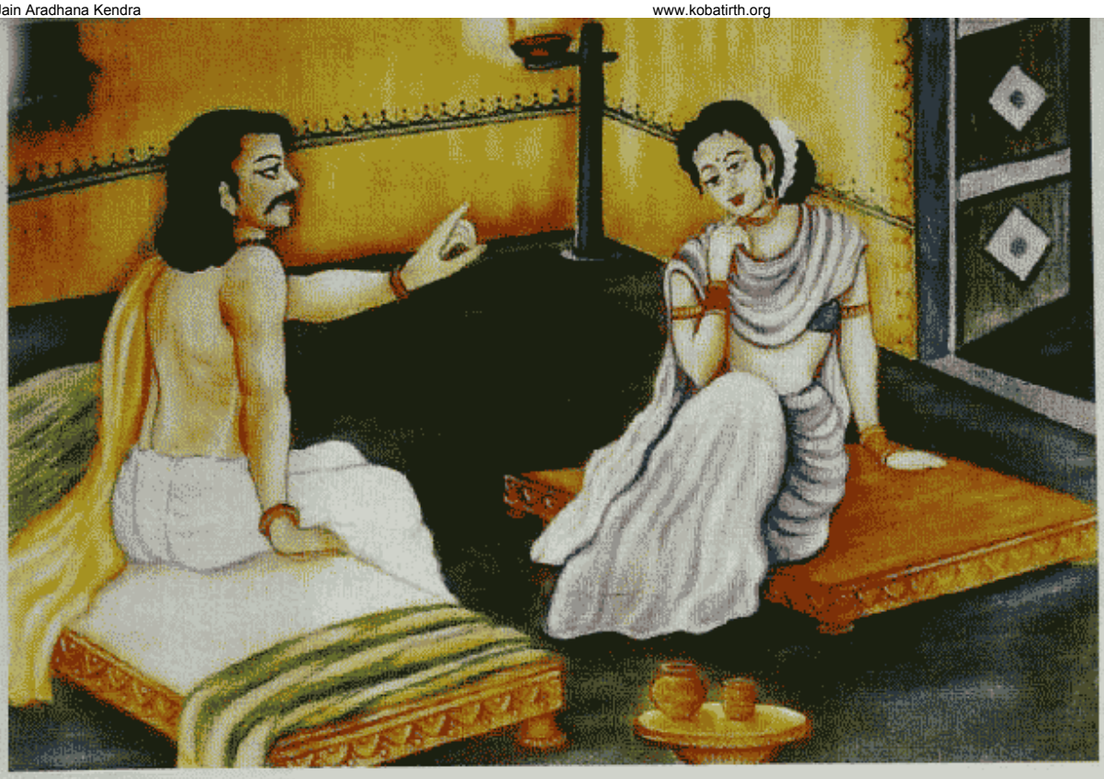
flower, the hairs on her arms stood on end, an expression of her overwhelming joy. She remembered her dreams as she got up and went straight to her husband's bedroom and with the sweet words 'victory, victory to you' she awakened him. Having woken up and sitting on his bed, Rushabhadatta Brahmana, well-versed in Vedas, received her with similar sweet words and asked her to take her seat. When she described him the dreams she had, his joy knew no bounds. On the strength of his study of the science of dreams and his personal experience, he revealed to her the significance of her dreams. He told her that they signified acquisition of prosperity and power coupled with increase in fame. However,those were the secondary benefits. The principal fruit the dreams signified was the birth of an extraordinary son. The son would be highly intelligent, knowledgeable and expert in all the sciences. Intoxicated with boundless joy, they, for the remainder of the night, indulged in worldly enjoyment and pleasure, instead of engaging themselves in the performing religious rites.

Shakra Indra, Lord of gods, destroyer of cities of *asuras* and wielder of the thunderbolt, saw through his clairvoyant powers, the event that had taken place in Bharata. On the one hand, he was filled with joy on seeing the venerable tirthankara descending into the womb of mother Devananda, while on the other, he was puzzled over the unusual situation that the tirthankara would be born in a caste other than the warrior caste; venerable tirthankaras, the great renouncers of the world, always took birth in the brave warrior caste. It was the duty of Indra to transfer the embryo from the womb of this mother, who did not belong to the warrior caste, to a woman who belonged to the warrior caste. Thus, before Indra there arose a grave problem of how the embryo in the womb of one woman could be made to take birth through another woman.

Shakra Indra found the solution to this difficult problem. He summoned the god Harinegameshi, the chief of his infantry, who presented himself before Shakra. He was an obedient servant of his master, and he successfully carried out his orders. He was also a firm devotee of tirthankara, the Supreme Soul, the embodiment of compassion. Joining his hands in salutation

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Rushabhdatta & Devananda

he requested his lord to give him his orders. Aware of his loyalty to his master and devotion to the venerable tirthankara, Indra commanded him to undertake the difficult task.

Consequences of Past Actions Inescapable

A tirthankara, a Supreme Soul, is always born in the warrior caste. Only a brave man of heroic warrior type character can show courage in renouncing the world and its pleasures. In his third life of Marichi, the soul of tirthankara Mahavira became arrogant and proud of his family's status. As Marichi, he believed that his grandfather was the first tirthankara Rushabhadeva, his father Bharata the first universal ruler and he, himself, would be the last tirthankara Mahavira. He became conceited with family pride. On account of such arrogance and pride the soul of Mahavira had to descend into the womb of Devananda, a brahmina woman.

It was Harinegmeshi's difficult task to ensure that despite Lord Mahavira's soul repaying for past *karmas* by entering Devananda's womb, a woman from warrior caste, Trishala, had to have the embryo of tirthankara Mahavira placed in her womb. Harinegmeshi had to ensure that this exchange took place causing no danger or pain to either woman.

Complying with the instruction of Indra, Harinegameshi made proper arrangements for the exchange of embryos. For his descent to the human world, he assumed a special type of astral body and approached the human world with great speed. He approached Devananda who lay asleep in her home in the city of Brahmanakunda. He saluted, with his heart full of

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devotion, the Supreme Soul in her womb and then induced in Devananda a special type of deep sleep, called *avasvapini-nidra* through his divine power. This was to ensure that the mother bearing the great soul would experience no pain whatsoever. He took out the eighty-two day old embryo and took it to the city of Kshatriyakunda. He entered the bedroom of Trishala, the wife of King Siddhartha, took out the female embryo from her womb, and put in its place the male embryo of the tirthankara. With the female embryo he rushed back to Brahmankunda, where Devananda was still in her deep sleep, and placed the embryo in her womb. She was then freed from the influence of the deep sleep. With a speed greater than that which he descended to the human world, he returned to the celestial world. Approaching Indra, he saluted him with due courtesy and politeness and stated : "O Lord Indra ! According to your command, I return only after having accomplished the task of exchanging embryos. I consider myself fortunate that you gave me an opportunity to demonstrate my devotion to the tirthankara."



From the womb of Devanand to the womb of Queen Trishala

Thus there took place a wonderful event of exchange of embryos. Such an auspicious event occurs only once in lacs of years. This even illustrates the theory of *karma* – of action and reaction.

Lord Mahavira's pride at being born into a high caste family as in his third life, invariably resulted in being born into a much lower caste family.

In a previous birth, Devananda's soul was the elder sister-in-law to Trishala's soul. Both women's husbands were brothers. Devanand's husband being the elder brother. On one occasion, the elder sister-in-law hid the younger sister in law's jewellry box containing beautiful ornaments studded with diamonds. The younger sister in law was deeply upset and hurt at not finding her jewellry box. She was certain that the elder sister-in-law had hidden the box and requested it from her. The elder sister-in-law ignored the request and in doing so, she bound negative *karma* to her soul. *Karma* that would obstruct gains in the future.

One who performs an auspicious action will surely experience in the future it's auspicious fruit or consequence of the action and while one who

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performs an inauspicious action will no doubt experience in the future it's inauspicious consequence. In her previous birth, Devananda performed an inauspicious act and thus she suffered the consequences. After bearing in her womb the embryo of the supreme soul for eighty two days, she was forced to lose it. In such a way, gain was converted to loss.

Significance of Fourteen Auspicious Dreams

Queen Trishala, in her half-waken state had a vision and experienced fourteen dreams. She told her husband, Siddartha, who at once summoned the dream-interpreters. The interpretation was as follows.



In the first dream, she had a vision of a four-tusked elephant entering her mouth. The elephant was as white as a cloud after rain, a necklace of pearls, a milky ocean and a moonbeam. It had a gait as dignified as Airavata, Lord Indra's elephant. Its trumpeting call was as sonorous as the thundering sound of lightening. It was adorned with auspicious bodily signs. This dream signified that male child born to Trishala would be the supreme preacher and propounder of the fourfold law. This law governs the conduct of monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen.



In the second dream, Trishala saw a bull that was whiter than a white lotus. The bull had an attractive hump with short, soft, hair covering its body. It had muscular limbs with well shaped and proportioned bones. The bull's teeth were bright and free from defect. The dream suggested that the son would lift up the Chariot of Law or religion that had sunk in the mud of lawlessness. He would preach the law and Religion.



In her third dream, Trishala saw a lion that was as white as a milky ocean. Its teeth were sharp and had a strong and stout jaw. Its eyes rolled, surrounded by a long and dignified mane. The lion had a large, strong chest and thighs, with sharp pointed claws. The lion's appearance was pleasing and serene. The dream signified that the new child would calm passions and protect those beings that are capable of ultimate release (*Moksha*) – just as a lion destroys mad elephants, protecting the jungle from devastation. He would be unequalled in fearlessness, bravery, generosity and nobility.



In the fourth dream, Trishala had a vision of Laxmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. The Goddess was seated among 12,050,120 lotuses. She was adorned with beautiful jewellery. Her ears shown with the ear ornaments dangling down to her shoulders. Her eyes were

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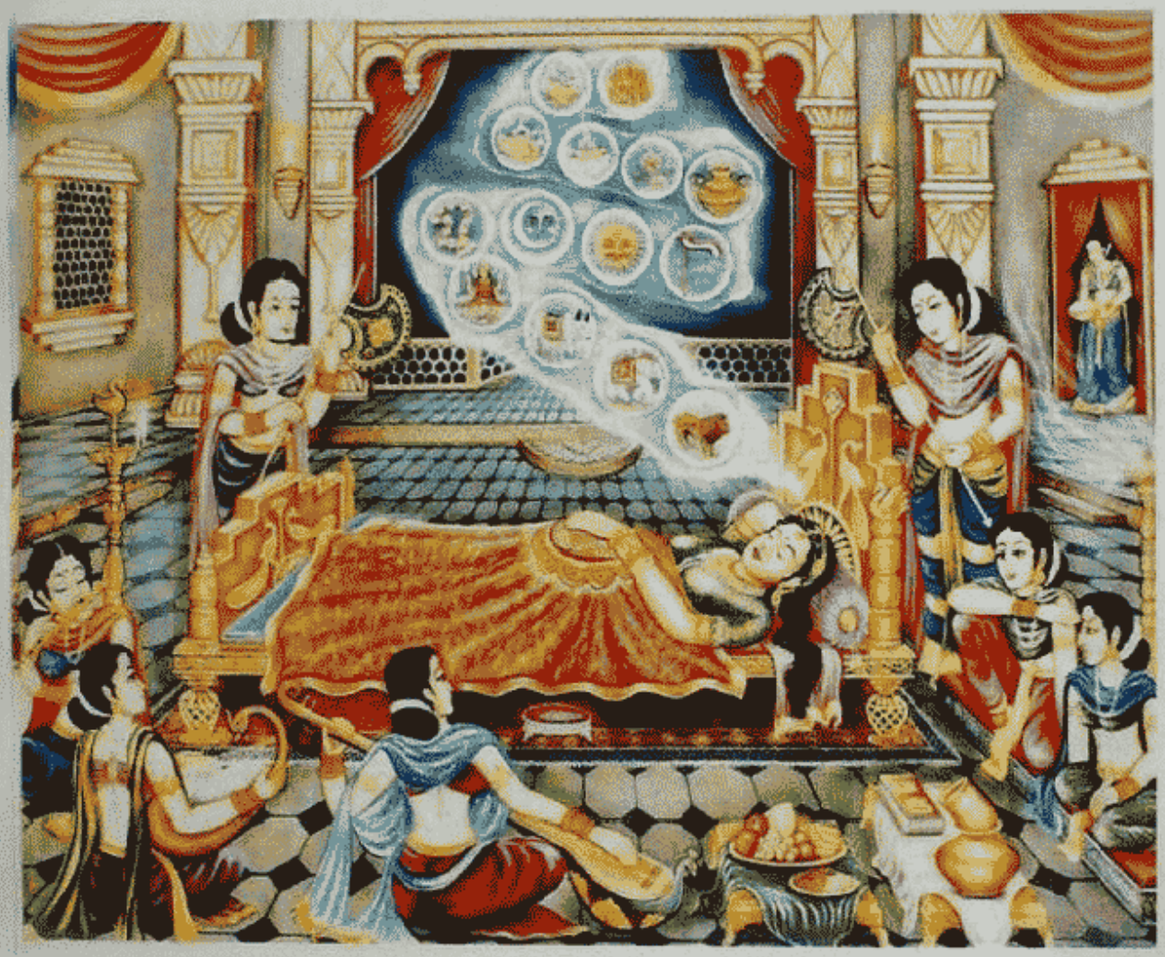
charming and excluded light in all directions. The dream indicated the son would give away all the possessions in donations, renounce the world and enjoy the endless bliss of the State of Tirthankaras.



In the fifth dream, Trishala saw a garland of fragrance, colourful flowers all seasons. The dream signified that the son would be revered in all the three worlds.



In the sixth dream, Trishala had a vision of a delightful full moon, which destroyed the darkness. It caused lotuses to blossom, enhanced the beauty of the night and it looked like the auspicious mark of a pigment on the forehead *of the sky*. The dream signified the son would spread serenity through a world with so much misery. He would preach forgiveness and forbearance, a religion as soothing as moonlight.



The fourteen dreams seen by queen Trishala



In the seventh dream, Trishala saw rising red sun, its light was the enemy of thieves and its heat was the destroyer of cold. It circled around Mount Meru. The dream suggested Trishala 's son would remove the darkness of ignorance by spreading the light of knowledge, he would be brighter than the sun.

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In the eight dream, Trishala saw a large beautiful flag on a golden staff, the end of which was adorned with peacock feathers. The flag bore a figure of a lion and it fluttered in the air. The dream implied that through the unborn son the whole world would be aware of the family.



In her ninth dream, Trishala had a vision of a silver pitcher filled with the purest water. The pitcher was surrounded by lotuses and endowed with all the auspicious features. It was beautiful to look at and it illuminated it surroundings. The dream suggested that the son would have all the riches, perfect power and divine capabilities.



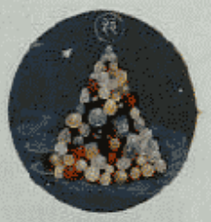
In the tenth vision, Trishala saw a bright lake adorned with lotuses. The water had taken on a red line from the pollen of the lotuses. The dream symbolised that like this lake, the son would remove the mental and physical pains of the people thirsty, though sitting on the bank of the lake of worldly existence, and tired and weary, though resting on the smooth and soft and richly comfortable cot.



In the eleventh dream, Trishala witnessed an ocean of milk. The ocean was as bright as moonlight and tidal waves were rising high and falling back with a tumultuous roar, resulting in rich white foam. This suggested that like the ocean, tirthankara Mahavir would possess the gems of infinite knowledge of vision.



In the twelfth dream, Trishala had a vision of a celestial aerial car called Pundarika. It was lustrous and was adorned with garlands. Along its sides figures of elephants, horses, swans and crocodiles were painted and it illuminated the whole place. It was in fact inhabited by Gods. The dream indicated the sons fame would soar and it would reach the abode of the Gods. The gods would also worship him.



In the thirteenth dream, Trishala saw an enormous heap of jewels. It was filled with the most beautiful and precious of gems, there were sapphires, emeralds, and rubys. The pile was so large, it touched the sky and was as tall as Mount Meru.



In the fourteenth dream, Trishala had a vision of smokeless fire. The flames of the fire were bright red and reached the sky. The dream signified that the son would remove all the elements that tarnished the flames of the fire of his soul. The son would attain a pure spiritual state.

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Joy a Tirthankara's Birth

An invaluable pearl exists in the innermost depths of the ocean. Similarly, the embryo of Vardhamana existed in the womb of Queen Trishala. The queen took great care of the unborn child within her and took great precaution to protect it. She endured the pain and uneasiness with pleasure and serenity. When the foetus was about six and half months old (having spent almost three months in Devanada's womb and a further three a half months in Trishala's womb), Vardhamana felt that he was causing great pain to his mother through the development and movement of his limbs. He thought: his arrival should not cause pain to anyone in the world and that he should work for the good of all beings! Therefore, how could he cause pain to his mother – such a great being.

Believing this to be the case, Vardhamana, as the embryo, became motionless. He remained completely still, fearing his movement would cause his mother pain. However, as the discomfort in her body eased her mental anguish grew. Doubts appeared in her mind and she wondered whether some god abducted the foetus from her womb, or it had dissolved or even still, dead. She was tormented by these doubts and became greatly distressed. She lamented bitterly, fearing the worst. King Siddhartha, too, was very anxious about the future of his unborn son. The court entertainment was discontinued – there were no more stage performances and the sweet sounds of the lutes and soft drums were abruptly ended. The mother Trishala became unconscious. Vardhamana perceived with his supernatural knowledge that his parents and relatives were experiencing grief and anguish. He became aware that his intention to relieve his mother's pain has had the opposite effect, causing her anguish and grief.

Vardhamana, as the foetus, began to move, making small movements the way a fish in a lake might. At this, Trishala's face shone with joy as she smiled, realising that the foetus within her was alive. The world was overcome with a wave of joy at this moment This event had a profound effect on him – he experienced the unparalled love of a mother. He thought that even when he was still in the womb and she had not even seen him, still her love for him was boundless. His soul realized that if he were to renounce the world while his parents were still alive, the distress he would cause them would be immeasurable. He made a vow – even then – that he would only renounce the life of a 'householder' when both his parents had passed away. Thus, even before birth, he conveyed the message of devotion to ones' mother.

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The days were passing: it was the 13th day of the bright half of the month of Caitra, during the summer, 543 years before the commencement of the Vikram era.. It was at midnight, when the constellation of Hastottara was rising - the unborn baby had completed nine months and seven days in the womb of two mothers – that Queen Trishala gave birth to a son. The moon spread her silvery light across the earth yet on that night, the radiance and coolness was even greater than normal. The entire universe – visible and invisible – experienced joy and happiness. The divine light spread over the three worlds; heaven, earth and the nether worlds. Fifty-six celestial damsels, each located all over the universe, were there to look after the mother and



The birth celebrations by fifty six Dikkumaris

child during the birth. They noticed a tremor in their heavenly abode, suggesting the birth of a tirthankara. Once aware of this, they rushed to Kshatriyakunda to undertake their duty and paid their respects to the tirthankara and the mother, Trishala.

Of the fifty-six heavenly nymphs, eight came from the lower world. They were responsible for looking after the house during this time. Eight came from the upper world and they sprinkled fragrant water on the ground, then scattered flowers there. The eight from the southern mountain lifted pitchers, carrying water while those from the east, took mirrors in their

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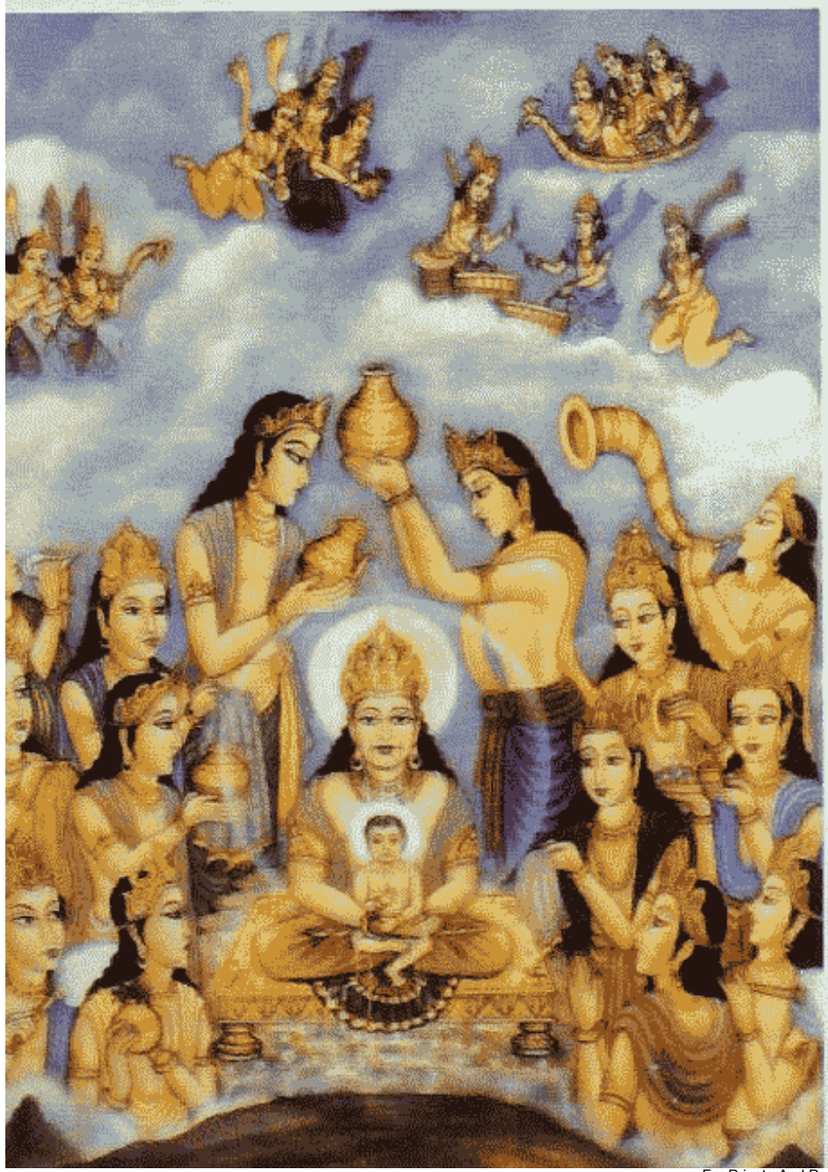
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hands, reflecting the beauty around them. Those from the west waved fans while those from the North had special fans, made from the long white hair of *chamari* cows, that were gracefully waved to and fro. Thus, they undertook their duty in the purifying rites of child birth.

These heavenly girls then constructed three plantain dwellings and four quadrangles were placed between them. In the first quadrangle, the child's body was rubbed with oily and fragrant substances. In the second, he was bathed in pure water and sprinkled with perfumes and in the third space, his body was anointed with sandalwood paste. Then, in the fourth quadrangle, the mother and and chile were seated on thrones while the nymphs performed dances and dramas, played musical instruments and sang sweet devotional songs. It was such a sight to see that not even a poet could have imagined it. After having praised the tirthankara and showed their devotion to him, the divine nymphs returned to their places.

The rejoicings at the birth of Mahavira

The Boundless Joy of Shakra Indra



The fifty-six divine nymphs celebrated the birth of the tirthankara with an inner joy and heartfelt devotion and were not the only celestial beings to rejoice. At the time of the birth, the thrones of various gods of different classes, in different celestial regions, many miles away, felt the tremor, indicating the birth of a tirthanakar. Thrones in the lowest heavenly region of the nether world were affected by the tremors and it was here that Shakra Indra, Lord of the celestial world of Saudharma, knew that the birth of a tirthankara had taken place on the earth.

He immediately prepared himself and asked the God in charge of the Sughosha bell to ring it vigorously. He undertook his journey at once, accompanied by many other gods and goddesses. He had enthusiastically informed the gods that a supreme soul was born on earth and urged them to pay their respect to the tirthankara, salute him

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reverently and praise him devotionally. Many Lords of Gods presented themselves before the tirthankara and included many different classes of gods, such as Bhavanpati, Vanavyantara, Jyotisha and Vaimanika. This great congregation of gods and goddesses rushed to Kundapura and it looked as if they vied with one another in performing their acts of worship and devotion.

Firstly, Shakra Indra circled the tirthankara and the mother Trishala three times. His heart was full of devotion and and he saluted them with great reverence. His desire was to carry the tirthankara to Mount Meru and he saught his permission. The tirthankara granted him permission and Shakra Indra's joy knew no bounds. However, how could he take the child tirthankara from the lap of his mother to Mount Meru. Would a mother give her newly born child to even the Lord of the gods? Trishala's affection for her child was well known and Shakra was aware that he would be unsuccessful if he tried to take the baby with him while Trishala was conscious. Therefore, he used his supernatural powers and induced a state of deep sleep in Trishala, known as *avasvapini-nidra*. Her eyes became heavy with deep sleep and as they did, Shakra gently took the child in his own lap.

There was a tide of joy in the ccean of his heart and the devotional feeling within him swelled. He desired to enjoy the unmatch pleasure of devotion to a tirthankara in solitude and he was granted this opportune moment, How could one have so much good fortune he wondered and he considered himself as the most fortunate of all beings.

Shakra, overwhelmed with the sentiment of devotion, used his paranormal power to assume different bodies and assumed five bodies at one time. With the first body, he lifted the child in his palm and with two other bodies, fanned him with *chamaras*. With the fourth body, he shaded the child, holding a parasol over him and with the fifth body, he led the procession, carrying a thunderbolt in his hand. By assuming five bodies, Shakra had the enviable opportunity of being involved in the thirthankara's purifying rites as well as devotionally serving him.

Gods and goddesses have inexhaustible material prosperity, all worldly comforts and luxuries and the means to sense such pleasures. Despite this, even they can experience great joy in devotional activity for a tirthankara. Those gods and goddesses, who are endowed with a spiritually wholesome attitude, find the life of material riches and sensual pleasure futile and enjoy the unique pleasure in devotion and worship to a tirthankara.

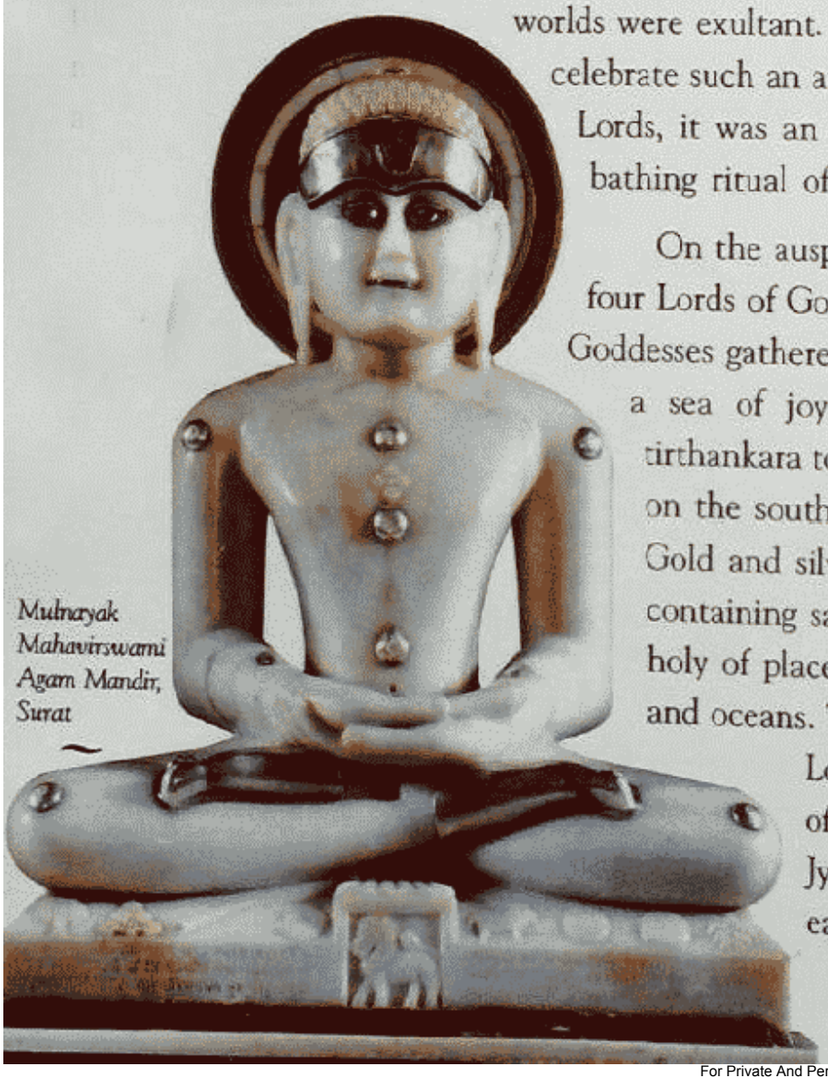
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The arrival of a tirthankara enlightened the whole universe and so Gods rushed to Mount Meru. Some were there on the command of Shakra Indra, some came out of curiosity and some came because of their devotion. Some were inspired to come by friends and wives. Some played musical instruments while others rang bells. The number of gods arriving in their celestial was so large chariots that the sky was filled with them. The entire universe was filled with the din of these chariots and ringing of bells. Innumerable gods and sixty-three Lords of Gods arrived at Mount Meru from their respective dwellings. It is a traditional practice that after the birth, the bathing rites of all tirthankaras are celebrated with great rejoicing and splendour on Mount Meru. Shakra who assumes five bodied carries tirthankars to Mt. Meru adorned with beautiful heavenly pleasure garden Nandanavana as also with splendid temples of tirthankaras.

Indra Thinks; Mt. Meru Quakes

Such joy is always delightful and there was rejoicing and happiness everywhere in the *Mahavideha* region. Mt Meru, four miles high, was situated in the *Mahavideha* region and on this occasion, was submerged in celebratory activity. On the huge and high mountain, there was a heavenly garden named Nandanavana. In the garden, the beauty of nature was there for all to see – there were the most beautiful and colourful flowers, with sweet fragrance. On the mountain, the temples of tirthankaras were adorned with floral bouquets and ornaments, with an unprecedented splendor. The birth of a tirthankara took place on earth however all three worlds were exultant. The Gods would not lose the opportunity to celebrate such an auspicious event. For the Gods, Goddesses and Lords, it was an eternal tradition to celebrate the after-birth bathing ritual of a tirthankar, with the necessary pomp.



Mulnayak Mahavirswami Agam Mandir, Surat

On the auspicious occasion of Vardhamana's birth, sixty-four Lords of Gods, with their wives and numerous Gods and Goddesses gathered. The entire 'upper' world was immersed in a sea of joy and celebration. Shakra Indra took the tirthankara to a huge rock, in the Panduka woods, situated on the south facing, and sat atop the rock, looking east. Gold and silver gem studded pitchers were placed there, containing sacred water, mixed with earth from the most holy of places and sweet smelling herbs from holy rivers and oceans. The ten Lords of the Vaimanika gods, twenty Lords of Bhavanpati gods, the thirty-two Lords of the Vyantara gods and the two Lords of the Jyotishka gods held these majestic pitchers, eagerly awaiting the auspicious moment for

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when they could start pouring the water to bathe the tirthankara.

What a sacred and wonderful moment when the water cascaded down from the pitchers? The life of a tirthankara was so magnificent and mysterious that it aroused various sentiments in one's heart and innumerable images in one's mind.



Saudharmendra towards Mount Meru

The child, Vardhamana, knew at once that a doubt had arisen in the mind of Indra. He pressed the toe of his right foot on Mount Meru and suddenly the mountain quaked. The earth underfoot shuddered and even the peaks of the mountain began to shake. Shakra Indra who was keen to partake of the celebrations experienced the mixed emotions of embarrassment and astonishment. He thought, "How could this happen exactly at the moment we are to celebrate the after-birth bathing ritual? Who wants to obstruct these age old traditional celebrations by such a rash act? Who has caused this?."

Shakra Indra was enraged and he immediately told the Lords and their gods, "Go, start the search for the one who has acted with such wickedness on this important occasion. The one who desires to end our celebrations in which all the Gods have attended – find the person at once. The afterbirth bathing ritual of a tirthankara is an occasion for universal jubilation and rejoicing; how can there be such a violent earthquake at this moment?"

The Lords of the Gods used their supernatural power and became aware that the very child whose celebratory bathing ritual they were about to undertake was responsible for the earthquake. They wondered why the child had done such a thing.

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Saudharma Indra pondered over this question and he realized that the child was aware of his own doubts. Vardhamana has displayed his infinite power simply pressing the toe. Shakra Indra saluted the tirthankara with folded hands and humbly said, "O Venerable One, I doubted your power. I wondered how you , as a child, could bear the heavy weight of the water falling on your head but I was wrong. Your powers are infinite and even the mere action of pressing your toe on the mountain has caused Mt Meru to quake. Please forgive me for my offence."

The event of the mountain quake may inspire one to believe that no other tirthankara had blessed Mount Meru with the touch of their foot and so when Varshamana did so, showing his fondness, the mountain swayed with joy.

On Shakra's command, all the Lords started to pour the sacred water on the the tirthankara and after that, Shakra himself poured holy water on him. And, so they bathed him. After they bathed him, Shakra anointed his body with frangrant substances and then worshipped him with lights, dancing in front of him. There was an atmosphere of devotion created by songs, music and dance and these celebrations continued through the night. At the end of the celebrations, Shakra lifted the child Tirthankara in his hands and began his journey back to Vardhamana's home. He reached Kshatriyakunda, he approached Trishala and gently put the child in her lap. He then left for his heavenly abode.

The fearless has no fear

King Siddhartha celebrated the auspicious occasion with great festivity. He celebrated the occasion in such a manner that poverty of the poor might disappear, debt of debtors might get completely cleared and that people would eagerly engage themselves in devotional songs and worship the Jina images.

The festivity and the auspicious occasion created a novel and unique atmosphere on earth, it was charged with the emotions of joy, devotion, amity and wonder. The farmers approached Siddhartha and said, "O Lord, we are very much puzzled. The fertility of the soil has greatly increased. We have not noticed any reason for this, for this sudden increase in fertility and we are astonished at this miracle.".

The cowherds, too, had something to report; "O Queen, nothing has changed and everything remains the same, as far as we know, yet the grass

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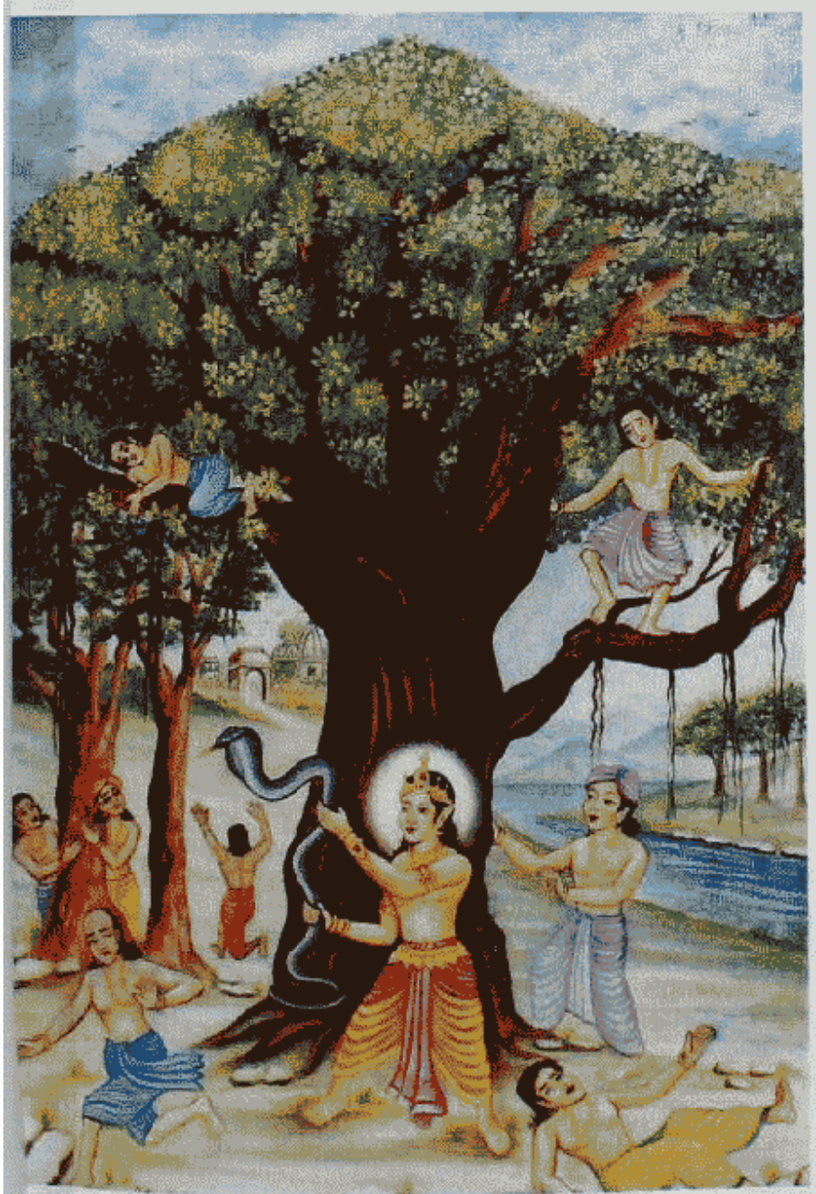
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is growing in the pasture and the cows are yielding more milk. This is surprising to us."

The wood dwellers, too, singing and dancing from their homes, said; "O Lord, the seasons have remained the same and the mango trees have not changed. However, the mangoes on the tree are countless and inexhaustible. The creepers and trees have bent under the weight of the flowers and fruit. There is astanishing growth of flowers and fruit."

Citizens, struck with wonder, arrived and reported, "O Lord, this year is unprecedented and unique in terms of prosperity. No year in the past has been so prosperous and happy. The number of deaths this year is low and not a single untimely death has been recorded. And emotions of joy, happiness, serenity and religious zeal are being experienced for no apparent reason."

King Siddhartha honoured his relatives who had come to his home to participate in the ten-day long celebrations. They all gathered for dinner and on that particular occasion, Siddhartha honoured them all by offering them beautiful flowers, expensive garments, garlands and ornaments. He disclosed his feelings to them : "O dear kinsmen and members of family, such wonderful pleasing events have occurred, from the very day the Soul of this child entered the womb of Trishala and our wealth has grown and our joy has been increasing."



Casting off the serpent by fearless Prince Vardhaman

Trishala said in her sonorous voice : "Uniquely good and auspicious thoughts and sentiments have occurred in my mind and heart for so many days now. Let us give him the name 'Vardhman' (meaning one who brings prosperity) to this child, endowed with such fine qualities."

All the family members and citizens present declared their consent, saying together, "This is the proper name that befits him."

Vardhman was growing up. As a young boy, he displayed qualities of fearlessness and

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courage and was strong. Once his friends insisted he play with them – they wished to play a game called '*amba-pipli*'.

He went with them outside the city. In the game, there must be at least seven players. One of them is made the catcher whose task it is to catch one of the other players while the others try to run from him and hide in the foliage of the tree. A circle is drawn at the base of the tree where the catcher places a stick and then goes off to catch one of the players. Whilst he is away from the circle, one of the players will try to get to it and throw the stick as far as he can. The catcher then has to go and fetch the stick, place it back in the circle and then start catching again. The game was in full swing when suddenly a large cobra black as a moonless night appeared at the base of the tree. It had big yellow glowing eyes and a white moustache. Its hissing was so horrifying that even grown up persons would also shudder from fear. All the players took to their heels to save their lives. Some climbed trees and tightly clung to the branches while others ran away. All the boys were trembling – but not our Vardhman. He had no fear. He was not afraid of the cobra which was moving its tongue in and out making loud hissing noises, its hood fully expanded. Vardhman caught the cobra by the tail and threw it far. He told his friends to come back and restart the game. All his friends congratulated him, calling Vardhman a hero. They praised his courage and bravery. The children then resumed their game.

It is interesting to know what led to this event. Once Sudharma Indra praised Vardhmana's heroic character before the Gods of his heavenly world. On hearing these words, one God decided to frighten and defeat Vardhmana and therefore assumed the form of a terrifying cobra. It was this God that appeared when Vardhmana was playing with his friends. After Vardhmana fearlessly flung the cobra away the God who had set out to scare Vardhmana got distressed and was scared. Tirthankara Mahavira displayed his bravery, courage and patience and won the hearts of all.

Courageous and Brave Vardhamana

Losing gambler will gamble twice as much, thinking he will recover.. Similarly, the defeated god was provoked in to rage. He thought of another plan to frighten and defeat Vardhamana. After disposing off the danger of cobra, Vardhamana and his friends started playing another game called 'Tindushaka'. In this game one player bends down and stands on all fours

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The defeat of the goblin

like a horse. . Other players, one by one, have to jump over his back, putting their two hands on his back for support. One who cannot jump and falls down or tumbles down then becomes the 'horse'. One who loses has to allow the winner to sit on his back and carry him a certain distance.

The god assumed the form of a boy. He went to where Vardhaman and his friends were playing the game. He also joined them in the game. He purposely fell over and became a 'horse'. Prince Vardhamana started to jump over his back. Just when Vardhamana was over his back, the 'boy' stood up straight and the Vardhmana was then on his shoulder.

To the surprise of other boys, that boy suddenly turned into a giant and a horrible goblin. He kept jumping and dancing and kept growing taller. He became as tall as huge palm-tree. He shook his head and long thick dishevelled hair emerged. He opened his eyes to display terrifying eye-balls with an appearance of red burning charcoals. He shouted in loud shrieks which frightened Varchmana's friends. The children were frightened out of their wits and were shocked. They all fled from the playground crying out loudly and shouting for help.

What was to happen to Vardhamana sitting on the shoulder of the giant goblin ? Nails of the goblin were like the blade of a spade. His entire body was covered with long black hair just like that of a wild bear. Snakes were drapped round his neck and their heads dangling making hissing sounds. His long red tongue was hanging out from his mouth. His legs were as big and thick as pillars. He was still moving about and was growing taller all the time.

The goblin, then started running on the deserted road, carrying Vardhamana on his shoulder. There was no one else around. Prince Vardhamana was sitting calmly on the goblin's shoulder. He was quiet and

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unperturbed. There was no fear – nor even slightest worry – in his eyes. He was sitting, with imposing appearance, there on the goblin's shoulder as if on the head of an elephant.



Amalki Krida
(The game of 'hide and seek')

Vardhamana knew, with his supernatural power of clairvoyance, that the goblin was none other than the god who had come down on the earth from his heavenly world to frighten him. He realised that the giant goblin was just an illusion. Prince Vardhamana decided to teach him a lesson. He firmly closed his fist and hit a severe blow to goblin's head. The goblin felt as if a thunderbot had hit him and he screamed in agony. The second blow on the head made the mountainlike goblin bend down with pain and he gave out a loud cry. The third blow brought his head down to his toes. He looked as if he had been sunk into the ground. He tried hard to throw Vardhamana away from his shoulder; but he failed miserably. As a last resort he abandoned the form of a goblin and reverted to be a boy. The three blows had broken him completely.

The god then assumed his normal form and admitted his defeat. He humbly said, "O Vardhamana, I had misjudged you. It was wrong of me to decide to test your bravery and courage. However, your strength and power have humbled me. I was totally unaware of your infinite power. I was ignorant. Please, forgive me."

Prince Vardhamana said, "Now that you have realised your mistake and your offence and that you are now repentant, there is no need for further punishment. The purpose of punishment would be to make the offender or the guilty person realise his offence or guilt. I forgive you."

The god saluted Vardhamana with folded hands and returned to his celestial abode. Vardhamana came out victorious from the severest test of his fearlessness and courage. All gods and goddesses praised Vardhamana's good qualities and wished him victory at all times in future.

When the god was relating the story about the matchless strength and power of Vardhamana before the assembly of gods and goddesses, the entire assembly listened to it attentively. Right from the time of his birth, Vardhamana was strong and brave. The power he possessed was infinite times stronger than that possessed by Indra. And his strength was immeasurably more powerful than that of the universal ruler. Neither a god nor the Lord of gods was capable of defeating him.

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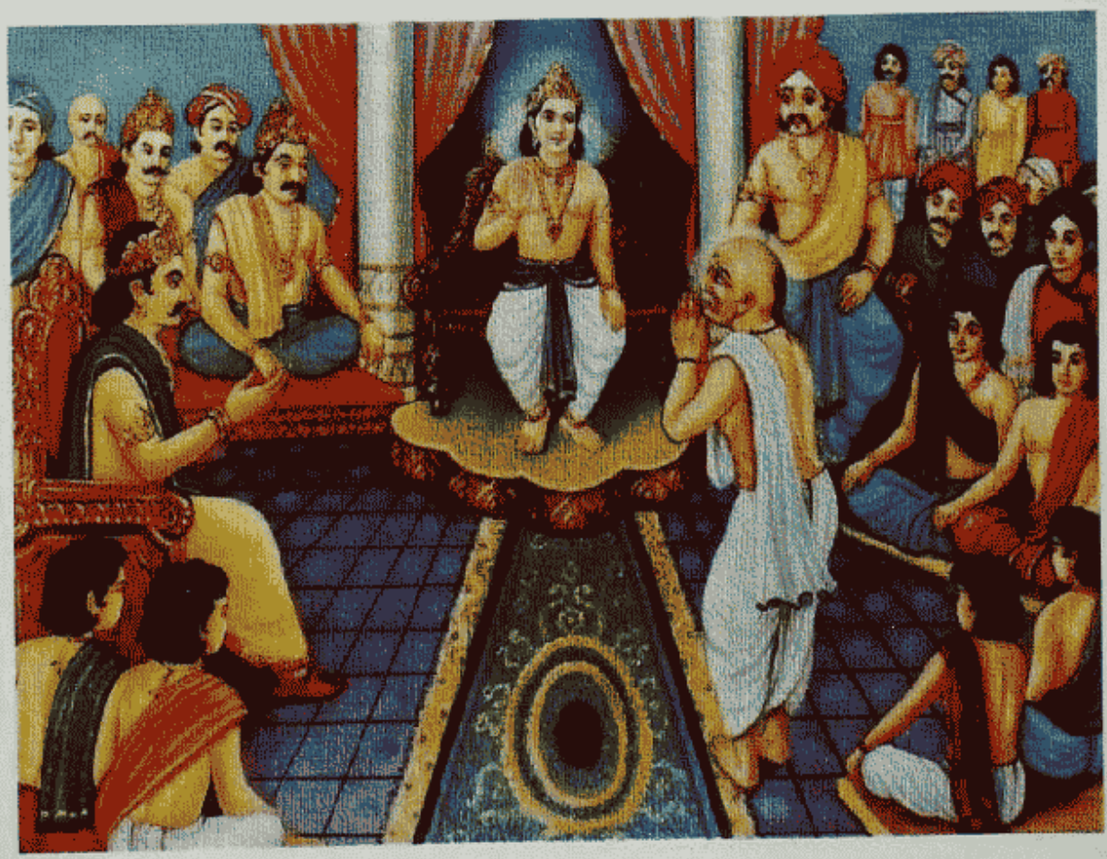
The story of Vardhmana's heroic deeds had amazed the enire assembly. At that time amidst loud voices of joy Saudharma Indra declared that Vardhamana was not only courageous and brave; he was a hero (*Vira*). And since then Vardhamana came to be known by the name Vira or Mahavira.

The Light of the World sent to School to Study

Trishala's little Prince was dearly loved by all. Everyone was very fond of him. His face was as charming as the moon, his hair jet black, his eyes were as bright as stars in the sky and his smile was so sweet and charming that everybody was attracted towards him. He was magnanimous.

Little Prince Vardhamana became the leader of his friends who were of his age. He was the leading light for them. They all had great faith in him. They accepted what he said. After all, it was he who had caught the cobra and flung it away and it was he who had defeated and humbled the horrible goblin with his courage and strength.

Little Prince Vardhamana had become eight years old and his parents were thinking of sending him to school. On an auspicious day and at an auspicious time he was admitted to school with pomp and flourish. As per the tradition on this occasion, his learned teacher was offered a coconut,



Resolution of problems of Indra in Gyanshala disguised as an old Brahmana

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precious garments and ornaments. Sweets and items useful at school were distributed to all the students. The teacher allotted a seat to Vardhamana. On this auspicious occasion the teacher too, had put on new clothes.

When the parents were taking Vardhamana for admission to the school, Indra's throne felt a tremor. Indra knew with his psychic power that Vardhamana was being taken to school. He thought : "Can any ordinary person teach the one who already possesses extraordinary knowledge of all sciences ? Who is capable of teaching the one who knows everything of the past, present and future ? It is like holding an earthen oil lamp to the sun."

Indra (the lord of gods) knew that just as tirthankaras are handsome in appearance even without any adornments, similarly they were highly knowledgeable without having to learn. He thought that if a tirthankara sat on the ground and the teacher on a high seat, then that would be an act of great impropriety and indiscretion on part of the teacher and mark of disrespect to the tirthankara. To avert the awkward situation, Indra assumed the form of an old Brahmana. He went to the school and made Vardhamana sit beside the teacher's seat. Then he started asking him difficult questions. He had selected such questions that even the teacher had difficulty in answering them.



In the presence of teachers and students, there took place a great test of knowledge. Questions asked by Indra, who was in the guise of an old Brahmana, were not ordinary. They were very difficult questions pertaining to the science of grammar considered to be very tough and intricate by everyone. Observers wondered how could a little boy like Vardhamana give answers to questions that had been troubling and puzzling even the great pandits for long time. But to the surprise of all, little Prince Vardhamana started giving answers to them as if they were very simple and easy. All present there were astonished at Vardhamana's display of his vast knowledge. Everybody was puzzled as to how and when he acquired such deep knowledge of the science of grammer, when did he find time to study these sciences. Though he possessed vast knowledge, he was very modest, humble and polite. Though he was an ocean of knowledge, none could notice even a minute sign of pride or egoism.

All were struck with wonder to realise that the little boy Vardhamana was clearing up doubts about various points which even the great pandits had in their minds which they themselves could not resolve until that day. Also some pandits expressed their

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doubts which Vardhamana resolved. The pandits who had come there to impart knowledge, became receivers of knowledge themselves. They acquired knowledge from Vardhamana. They got answers to their intricate questions, they got their doubts removed. Vardhamana's answers covered the entire science of grammar. Before Vardhamana, who was endowed with light of perfect all-comprehensive knowledge of all sciences, the science of grammar itself stood, so to say, with folded hands in reverence.

The time arrived to disclose the fact. Indra who was in the guise of an old Brahmana declared : "Please listen to me. This is not an ordinary boy. In fact, he is an ocean of knowledge, he is a knower of all sciences, he is omniscient. He is not to be taught. He is well-versed in all sciences."

Vardhaman Going to the School



Having said those words, Indra worshipped him with devotional songs and then returned to his celestial abode. Questions asked by Indra and answers given by Vardhamana were collected and compiled to form a grammatical work well known by the little '*Aaindra Vyakarana*'.

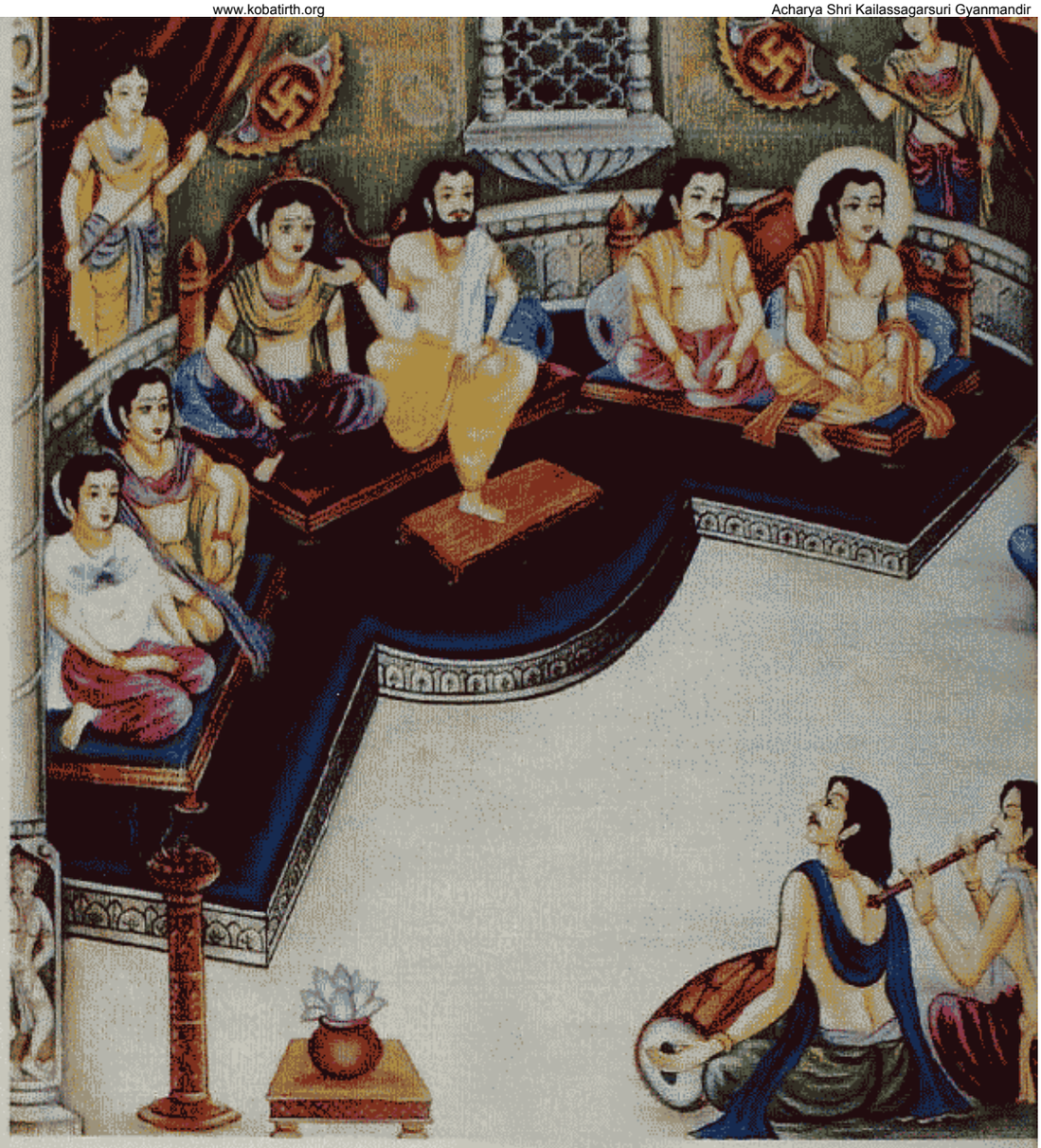
Before Vardhamana's return to the palace from the school, the story of his extraordinary knowledge had already reached there and everyone knew it.

Fortunate and Blessed Yashoda

Prince Vardhamana rode a beautiful white horse and moved in jungles and woods. He enjoyed watching innocent and docile deer grazing soft grass in the green grass-land. He loved to see stags, antelopes and others resting in different parts of the fields. Forests, trees, creepers, flowers, birds, brooks, rivers, mountains – all appeared to him as his beloved ones. Other princes of warrior class/caste indulged in hunting and shooting arrows at the dumb animals. But Vardhamana did not like to hurt any animal. He did not like even to pluck a flower. His companion princes aimed arrows at animals to shoot them, while Vardhamana thought as follows : "In this world all beings are living in their own ways. Mutual love and co-operation is the natural order of the world. The world of mutual love and cooperation is full of joy and happiness. In such a pleasant world how can one kill an innocent being by shooting an arrow at it ? Life is the same in all beings. All beings are equal. As we like to live, so others too like to live. Life is dear to all. An animal, a human, a tree and an ant all love their lives. So one should view others as one views oneself. Others' happiness is ours. Our happiness should not be such as would cause pain and misery to others."

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Preaching of Shri Vardhaman to family members

When shadow of dusk was spreading over fields and streams, princes of warrior class/caste rushed to shoot the arrows at the cranes which were flying in groups. But Vardhamana stopped them from doing so. He said, "One who cannot give life to others has no right to take their lives. It is no bravery to kill an elephant. Bravery consists in saving a life, even that of an ant."

Prince Vardhamana was intelligent and discreet. He solved the difficult problems spontaneously. He felt that true bravery lay in living according to the principle 'live and let others live'. Real discreetness or prudence consists in respecting lives of others. Whatever power and strength one may possess, compared to love and compassion, they are nothing.

Prince Vardhamana's father, Siddhartha, was also known by the names of Shreyansa and Yashasvi. His mother too had three names, viz. Trishala, Videhadinna and Priyakarini. His paternal uncle's name was Supasa. His elder brother's name was Nandivardhana. And Nandivardhana's wife was Jyeshtha. Vardhamana's elder sister's name was Sudarshana. His family was prosperous, powerful and influential.

Vardhamana grew into a handsome young man. Youth manifested itself in all his limbs. His parents desired that he should get married to a suitable girl from a noble family. They made

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their wish known to others. Many kings had arrived to Kshatriyakunda to take part in Prince Vardhamana's birth-day celebrations. Among them was Samaravira, the king of Vasantapura. He saw Vardhamana. He was very much impressed by his appearance and conduct. He thought he was an excellent match for his daughter. He decided to offer his daughter's hand to Vardhamana. He conveyed his offer to Siddhartha through a messenger. On hearing the words of the messanger Siddhartha and Trishala became very happy. They persuaded Vardhamana to accept the offer. Vardhamana wanted to be free from attachment. However, he loved his parents and elder brother and could not disappoint them.. He was humble and obedient. He respected them and their words. What could he do before the pressing words of Mother Trishala to whom he was very devoted ?

Vardhamana understood and respected his mother's sentiments. He complied with her wish. He was married to Yashoda, daughter of Samaravira. Their married life was very happy. It was as fragrant and blooming as jasmine flowers. Though Vardhamana lived a householder's life with his beloved wife Yashoda and dear daughter Priyadarshana, his mind was totally away from the world around. He had not the slightest interest in worldly pleasures or dealings. Inspite of living with royal luxuries, he was not consumed or addicted to the sensual pleasures in the same way as a lotus growing in water remains untouched by it. Yashoda understood that he was not at peace living a life of a householder. She knew that his mind found no peace in the worldly life. She thought that if renunciation could make his mind peaceful and if by his renunciation the living beings of the world were to benefit greatly, then it would be her duty to allow him and help him renounce the world. She did not pay any heed to her personal happiness. She was not selfish. She desired welfare of all. She was not just an ordinary petty woman. She was a great woman. She had recognised her husband's feeling of non-attachment. Blessed you were, O Yashoda.

Vardhamana loved everyone and they all loved Vardhamana. In his family, love and affection were ever growing. The family, which had seven members, namely, king Siddhartha, queen Trishala, elder brother Nandivardhana, his wife Jyeshtha, Vardhamana, his wife Yashoda and daughter Priyadarshana, was living peacefully and happily. In the evening all gathered together. Vardhamana explained secrets of Law or Religion. After that, devotional dancing, singing and music charged the entire atmosphere with fervent spiritual sentiment. The whole family enjoyed those philosophical-religious discourses and devotional performances.

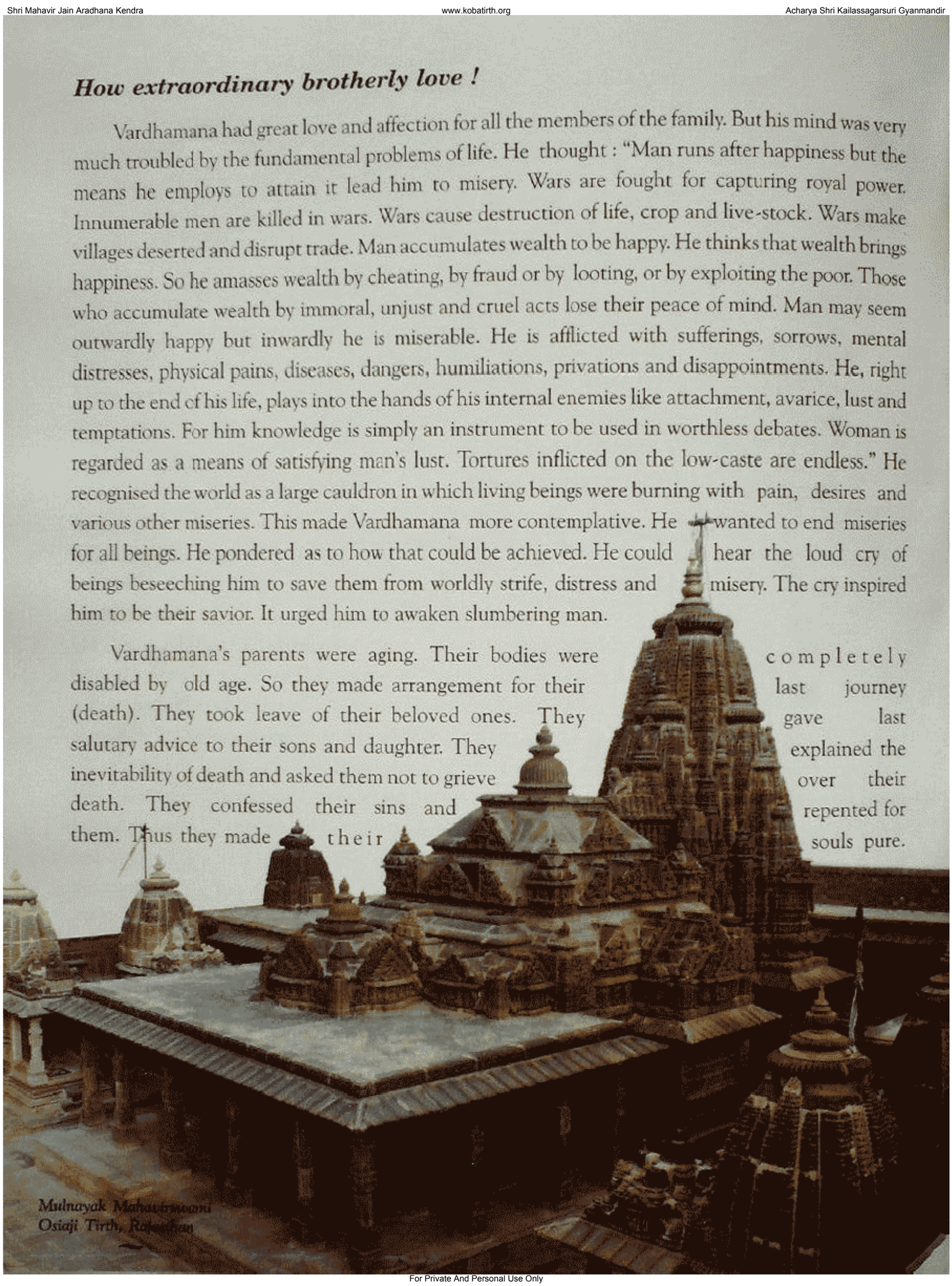
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How extraordinary brotherly love !

Vardhamana had great love and affection for all the members of the family. But his mind was very much troubled by the fundamental problems of life. He thought : "Man runs after happiness but the means he employs to attain it lead him to misery. Wars are fought for capturing royal power. Innumerable men are killed in wars. Wars cause destruction of life, crop and live-stock. Wars make villages deserted and disrupt trade. Man accumulates wealth to be happy. He thinks that wealth brings happiness. So he amasses wealth by cheating, by fraud or by looting, or by exploiting the poor. Those who accumulate wealth by immoral, unjust and cruel acts lose their peace of mind. Man may seem outwardly happy but inwardly he is miserable. He is afflicted with sufferings, sorrows, mental distresses, physical pains, diseases, dangers, humiliations, privations and disappointments. He, right up to the end of his life, plays into the hands of his internal enemies like attachment, avarice, lust and temptations. For him knowledge is simply an instrument to be used in worthless debates. Woman is regarded as a means of satisfying man's lust. Tortures inflicted on the low-caste are endless." He recognised the world as a large cauldron in which living beings were burning with pain, desires and various other miseries. This made Vardhamana more contemplative. He wanted to end miseries for all beings. He pondered as to how that could be achieved. He could hear the loud cry of beings beseeching him to save them from worldly strife, distress and misery. The cry inspired him to be their savior. It urged him to awaken slumbering man.

Vardhamana's parents were aging. Their bodies were completely disabled by old age. So they made arrangement for their last journey (death). They took leave of their beloved ones. They gave last salutary advice to their sons and daughter. They explained the inevitability of death and asked them not to grieve over their death. They confessed their sins and repented for them. Thus they made their souls pure.



Mulnayak Mahavirswami
Osiaji Tirth, Rajasthan

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Vardhaman asking for elder brother Nandivardhan's consent

They gave up food and drink. Their minds were cool, calm and composed. Their hearts were filled with the feeling of universal love and compassion. They muttered continuously : 'Victory to venerable Parshva'. Sitting on the seats of sacred grass, they left this mortal world while in ultra-pure meditation. They left behind them a happy and prosperous family. But the atmosphere of grief prevailed all around.

At the age of twenty eight Vardhamana made up his mind for renunciation. The bond of parental affection had already been removed. His spiritual practice of non-attachment had been going on for a long time even in his state as a householder. After renouncing the world, he wanted to follow that practice rigorously and vigorously. He approached his elder brother Nandivardhana. In royal families, the brothers are the worst enemies. They share the royal power and estate. One brother wishes the death of the other since if one is removed the other has the throne for himself. But with Vardhamana and his brother, the case was quite different. They both loved each other greatly. Nandivardhana took every care to make Vardhamana happy. He was very sad when he came to know that his younger brother was preparing for renunciation. He approached him and said, "Vardhamana, I want to crown you. I desire to see you on the throne, I like to give you the kingdom. I would like to make you king of Kshatriyakunda."

Vardhamana replied, "O Brother, I do not like boundaries that separate different kingdoms and different peoples. My kingdom is the kingdom of love and compassion. To conquer this kingdom I must renounce the world."

Nandivardhana was deeply shocked to hear Vardhamana's decision. He said, "O my dear Vardhamana, I understand your good thoughts and noble sentiments. I also know that the light which has descended on earth to enlighten the entire universe cannot be restricted to the palace for long. But the shock of our parent's death is still quite fresh. I could not bear another shock of separation from my beloved younger brother so soon. So I request you to postpone the renunciation for some time."

Prince Vardhamana humbly said, "O brother, you have not to request me. It is your right to order me. You have earned that right through love and affection. Your wish is a command for me."

Grieved Nandivardhana said, "O brother, it is good of you. It behoves you. I want you to remain in the state of a householder for two more years."

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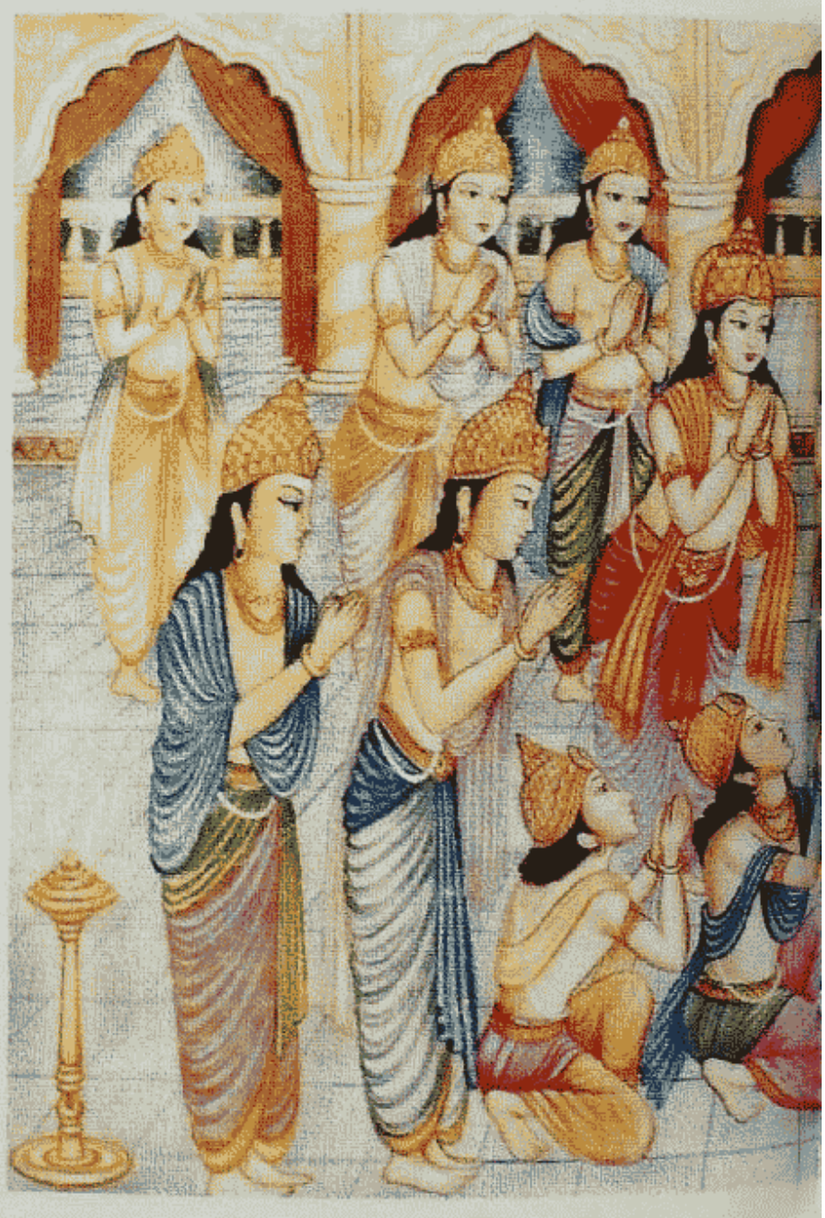
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Respecting elder brother's wish Vardhamana changed his mind and decided to spend two more years in the state of a householder. The atmosphere of the palace changed. The palace turned into a hermitage. He lived the life of an ascetic even in the palace. He spent much of his time in meditation in a secluded part of the big palace. He spread the glory of renunciation while living amidst worldly enjoyments. He practised severe spiritual discipline of non-attachment even amidst royal luxuries.

Citizens think : "How extraordinary brotherly love !"

Gods' Request to Vardhamana to Establish the Holy Path leading to Liberation

Though Vardhamana lived in the palace, his mind was set on renunciation and spiritual practice.



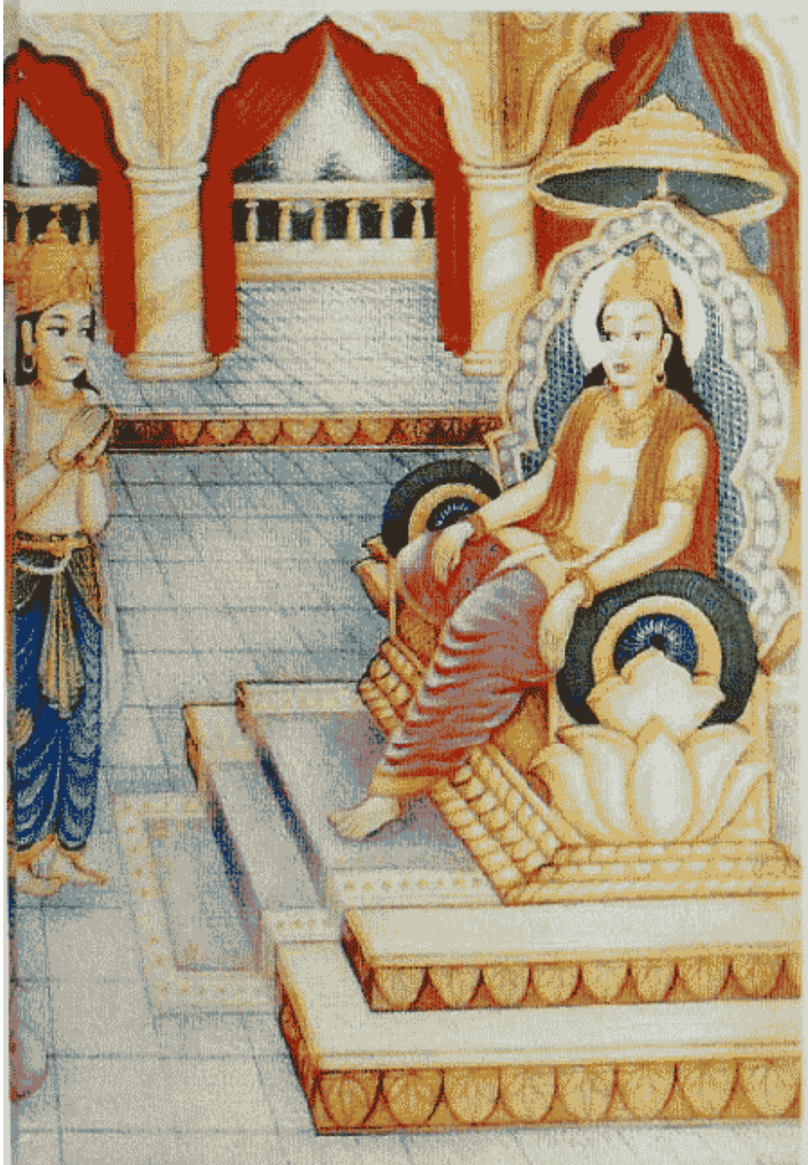
When Vardhamana had descended into the womb of Trishala, the latter had the vision of fourteen auspicious dreams. Again, his body was marked with one thousand eight auspicious signs. Taking into account auspicious dreams and signs, everyone thought that he would become a universal ruler in future. He would conquer many kingdoms. His victorious flag would flutter over the entire earth. Tributary kings of various countries would pay tributes of money, jewellery, etc. to him. The emperors and kings thought that if they established friendly relation with such a powerful would-be universal ruler,

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then they would attain success in political affairs, get firmly established in their throne and have no fear of enemies from any quarter. Thinking so, they sent their princes to Kshatriyakunda to serve prince Vardhamana. Emperor Shrenika kept his son in the company of Vardhamana. King Candapradyota too sent his son to Vardhamana.

Kings have worries about their kingdoms. They live always in fear that their enemies might attack them at any time. They are always thinking out plans as to how to avert those attacks and how to retain their kingdoms in their hands. They have to be always vigilant about the internal unrest, revolt and dissension. They cannot sleep. This was the reason why those kings thought out a plan in advance. The plan was to send their princes to Vardhamana and to urge them to remain in his close company, to entertain him, to foster friendship with him. The bond of friendship and sentiment would help their princes in future in their political career in retaining their hold and influence on their kingdoms and subsidiaries. Service by the strong and powerful is mostly inspired by selfish motives.



Request by nine Lokantik gods for dharmatirthpravartan

But what happened was quite opposite to their expectation. After the death of Siddhartha, Prince Vardhamana had not even cast a glance on the crown, the throne or the kingdom. Princes who were in his service or company thought that when great ascetics have been tempted and enticed by prosperity, power, fame, beauty and sensual pleasures, how could the young prince withstand the temptation and enticing lures of all those things ? He would not. Moreover, in the system of republic, princes had great scope to advance on merit. In the republican system, qualities counted, they were worshipped. The unworthy or mediocre had no place in the system. So all thought that with his own meritorious qualities, one day Prince Vardhamana would occupy the highest place among nine hundred ninety nine kings of Vaishali, he would be crowned and enthroned, there would be his coronation ceremony and therein he would be bathed by pouring on his head holy water of the lotus-lake. Some thought

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that he being the beloved nephew (sister's son) of Chetaka, king of Vaishali, he would easily get the throne.

How could all those worldly manipulations and manoverings influence Vardhamana ? He had already expressed his wish to renounce the world before his elder brother. He had also displayed his non-attachment towards his family members. Though he lived in the palace, he slept on the ground and remained engrossed in the deep reflection on solitude. He reflected : "I am born alone, I die alone, and alone I will reap the fruits yielded by the *karmic* seeds sown by myself in the form of pleasure, pain, etc." Seeing all this, princes who were in his service and company felt that as he had no desire for the kingdom, the question did not arise at all of his expanding or extending his kingdom by conquering and adding other kingdoms to it and thus his becoming a universal ruler was out of the question. He desired quite a unique and novel kingdom. In it one being was not an enemy of another being, nor was one man an enemy of another man. In it there prevailed the rule of love, love was supreme. In it there were only six enemies, viz. anger, price, deceitfulness, greed, attachment and hatred. They dwelled in the mind of man. Man can conquer them all by love alone.

Vardhamana's spiritual kingdom was firmly established on three fundamental things, viz. spiritually wholesome inclination, spiritually wholesome knowledge and spiritually wholesome conduct. Spiritually wholesome inclination keeps a man on the right track. Knowledge coupled with spiritually wholesome inclination was the spiritually wholesome knowledge. With its instrumentality he knew all that was necessary to know for achieving complete release from misery. And the spiritually wholesome knowledge enabled man to conduct his life in such a way as would make him absolutely free from misery. It enabled him to control his senses, speech and mind. Thus it led to spiritually wholesome conduct.

Princes of the great kings realised that Vardhamana was completely free from attachment towards kingdom and had not the slightest interest in acquiring the position of universal ruler. So they left him and returned to their kingdoms.

Of two years, which Vardhamana promised his elder brother to remain in the state of householder, one year passed away. Vardhamana knew, with his supernatural knowledge, that the time had come to renounce the world and take to asceticism. On hearing the news of his forthcoming renunciation, his beloved ones held back, with great effort, the rushing tears in their eyes

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and heartily praised his lofty ideal. They composed their minds and engaged themselves in the preparations for celebrating the auspicious occasion of Vardhamana's renunciation with love and affection. At that time nine Lokantika gods left their celestial world and approached Vardhamana. They, being worshippers of the holy path, requested Vardhamana with folded hands in following words : "Victory, victory to thee, O reverend Lord of the World. Please establish the holy path leading to liberation. All the beings of the world expect you to establish it for their pearendnd welfare."

There was no need to urge or awaken Vardhamana who was shining on the highest peak of spiritual evolution. He was only waiting for the end of the period of those two years.

Farewell to the Universal Victor

Donations galore by Vardhaman

A year of the two year period had passed. Since the start of the second year, Prince Vardhamana had begun giving away a stream of donations. This is a well established tradition and all tirthankaras offer donations for a year



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before they renounce the world. The shower of donations continues until the day of their renunciation. After that, they renounce the world and embark upon the spiritual path of a Jaina ascetic.

Vardhamana followed this tradition. He started offering his possessions in donation. To be a true ascetic, renunciation of all possessions is a necessary prerequisite. He should have nothing that belongs to him. How can he, who does not consider his body even to be his own, possess wealth, jewellery or property ? One who renounces everything is a true ascetic. One does not become an ascetic by merely shaving one's head nor by having matted hair. It is only by giving up all possessions that one starts on the path of asceticism.

Vardhamana donated wealth to those who were destitute of wealth, clothes to those who needed clothes, so on and so forth. He offered, in charity, gold to some and jewellery to others. He gave in donation whatever the donee wanted. Every morning for three hours he gave away one crore and eight lac gold coins.

What wonderful donation ! Vardhamana, the donor, felt compassion for the donee. There was not the slightest feeling of regret when he was donating – either at the time of offering donation or afterwards. There was no expectation of reward or gain. There was mere wish of renouncing possessions and thereby helping the recipients in their righteous development. Donation was beneficial to both the donor and the donees. The influence of donations offered by Vardhamana was such that the greed of the recipients faded away and their temptations disappeared. Those who came there to receive donations did so because they wanted to receive the token-donations from the holy hands of the revered Vardhamana as also as this would aid in their own purification.



Varsidana

Thus, those, who arrived there to receive donations, received whatever they wanted from the holy hands of the supreme donor and returned with great satisfaction. People rushed there from everywhere to receive donations. Among them were masters and meek servants, the wise and the foolish, the beautiful and the ugly, the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the healthy and the diseased, the fortunate and the unfortunate, the peasants and the artisans, the writers and the artists, the beggars and the orphans. King Nandivardhana had established free kitchens for the masses. The total amount of Vardhamana's token-donations came to three hundred eighty eight crore gold coins.

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In the year of the donations, the poverty of the people was removed as gold and silver had been given away in charity. Wealth and food-grains were distributed among the needy. Since the beginning, Vardhamana had remained free from any attachment for the kingdom or royal power. Renouncing all his possessions he became as light as a cloud that had become empty of water after showering it on the earth. As he became lighter, he also felt more cheerful.

The auspicious moment of the renunciation arrived. Though it was renunciation of the world; it involved neither indifference nor disregard, neither disrespect nor slighting, towards anybody. Though it was an occasion of renunciation involving separation of the beloved, there were no wailings or cries of grief. All were thrilled with the joy of renunciation. The occasion inspired noble feelings in the hearts of all.

It was a rare moment. It was a rare event. It was renunciation with the consent of all. It was renunciation undertaken after showing utmost respect for the love and affection of all.

Tears welled up in the eyes of the elder brother – Nandivardhana - who had unbounded love for his younger brother. Nandivardhana looked up to Vardhamana as if the latter was his elder brother. He bowed down before Vardhamana. Eldership due to age seemed wrong to him. But eldership due to knowledge, intelligence and renunciation was right. Nandivardhana's throat was choked with emotion so he could not find any words to express his feelings. He was puzzled as to how he should bid farewell to his younger brother. But he very well understood that his brother's renunciation was for the welfare of all beings. He knew that his younger brother had taken the path which would make him the universal religious ruler working for the good of all beings, instead of taking the path which would have made him a king working for the prosperity of his small kingdom only.

Prince Vardhamana approached his beloved wife Yashoda. Her sentiments were as wonderful as her understanding. Beside her was standing his beloved daughter Priyadarshana and her husband Jamali. Yashoda wished him farewell. She said, "The wife of a warrior makes an auspicious saffron mark on the forehead of her husband while sending him to the battle-field. O my lord, you are the universal victor. Your renunciation is for the welfare of all beings. May you acheive the final goal of ending all the miseries of the world. May you be the supreme saviour. Your memories will always inspire us."

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With hearts as heavy as a cloud laden with water, everyone wished Vardhamana farewell. He proceeded and walked away with firm steps. There were no wailings, no lamentations, no cries of grief.

Celebrations of the Great Renunciation

It was the tenth day of the dark half of the month of Kartika. It was an auspicious day because on that day Vardhamana renounced his palace. Just as when he had mentally renounced it before several years, he experienced not the slightest pain on renouncing it physically.



In celebration of Vardhamana's renunciation ceremony, King Nandivardhana had decorated the entire city of Kundanapura with colourful flags and artistic arches. One thousand and eight golden pitchers, studded with gems, were filled with holy water brought by the gods from the milky ocean. The water was mixed with the holy earth from all religious places and fragrant herbs. Vardhamana had his final bath with the water from these pitchers. Then his body was rubbed clean with the best cloth and anointed with fragrant paste made from sandalwood, etc. He was adorned with garlands made from the flowers of wish-fulfilling trees. He put on white

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clothes, earrings, armlets and a long necklace. He looked so charming and attractive that all eyes stared at him without blinking.

Outside the palace, the *Chandraprabha* ("moonlight") palanquin was kept ready. It was splendid with golden pillars studded with jewels. Vardhamana came and took his seat in the palanquin. People with umbrellas and special fans stood by him while the rest surrounded the palanquin.

Renunciation of Mahavira and his unique initiation

Many gods and goddesses had come in all their pomp and glory. The occasion was unique for humans, gods and the lords of gods. All those who were assembled there wore their best clothes and decorated themselves with ornaments. Everyone was taking part in the celebration with unprecedented zeal and enthusiasm. The four Indras (lords of gods) – Shakra, Ishana, Chamara and Bali – lifted the palanquin. The other gods and goddesses gave their hands in support. The sky resounded with the musical instruments like drums, pipes, conches, cymbals etc.



Hearing the sounds of the musical instruments, the men and women of the city left what they were doing and rushed to the place from where the procession for the renunciation of Vardhamana was about to start. In their haste, some put anklets round their necks, some put waist-chains with jingling bells round their necks, some applied black kohl to their

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cheeks and some applied musk paste to their eyes. They were so eager to see the venerable Vardhamana that they forgot everything and made these amusing mistakes.

The magnificent procession started to move. The palanquin was borne by the four lords of gods on their shoulders. Everyone who had joined the procession was very happy and cheerful. Some showered pearls on him out of devotion, others recited hymns in praise of him. Some performed dances, while others sang and played music that inspired religious feeling. The whole city showed its high esteem, devotion and veneration towards him. Everyone shouted with joy 'Victory to Bliss, Victory to Welfare'. The earth and the skies resounded with those cries of victory.

The palanquin proceeded with the vast multitude of the people through the city. King Nandivardhana had spent all his wealth and energy preparing for the grand procession. It was a spectacular procession in the following order:

- First came goddesses carrying on their heads representations of eight auspicious items;
- goddesses carrying golden pitchers filled with water or small golden thrones on their heads or *chamara* fans or flags or umbrellas in their hands .
- a group of one hundred eight stately elephants and horses each without riders
- one hundred eight majestic chariots equipped with weapons and making tinkling sound of small bells. The chariots were decorated with fluttering flags;
- one hundred eight excellent men;
- the fourfold army – warriors riding horses, warriors riding elephants, warriors moving in chariots and foot-soldiers.
- the *Mahendra-dhvaja* (the banner of Mahendra) – this was a banner on top of a pole — which also had many colourful flags .
- soldiers marching with swords, spears and shields.
- dancers, actors, acrobats, jesters and jokers who were shouting cries of victory.

In a royal Carriage - Chandraprabha

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In front of the palanquin were kings, army-chiefs, merchants, caravan-leaders, gods and goddesses. It was indeed a marvel that gods of heavenly world, humans of human world and spirits of the nether world were walking together in harmony.

Such was the procession of renunciation, self-control and spiritual gain. Thousands of people bowed before Vardhamana. The palanquin reached the large Jnatakhandavana Park at the edge of the city. Everyone experienced mixed feelings of joy and sorrow. There, accompanied by the great retinue, Vardhamana descended from his seat and stood under a holy *ashoka* tree. The gods and men started playing their respective divine and human musical instruments. The sound of music inspired the feeling of devotion in the hearts of all. Vardhamana's heroism surpassed the heroism of the greatest of the royal warriors. The adventure of renunciation which he had undertaken , was beyond the capacity of the gods. Could there be anything unattainable for such a hero ?

Vardhamana Isolated with no Companions

Under the holy *ashoka* tree in Jnatakhandavana Park, Vardhamana removed his garlands and ornaments. He removed the rings from his fingers, necklaces from his neck, earrings from his ears, armlets from his arms and the crown from his head. The honourable chief lady of his family lineage - Ikshvaku - came there and collected the ornaments in a silken cloth ('*Hamsa-lakshana*') which was as white and smooth as a swan. Such an event meant that her entire family lineage would attain salvation and would be remembered for all ages to come. While taking leave of Vardhamana, she gave him her last message: "O my dear son Vardhamana, blessed is your family, blessed is your noble ancestry, blessed are your pure-hearted parents. You, son of King Siddhartha and Queen Trishala and a progeny of the Ikshvaku family lineage and the Kashyapa ancestry, are, today, taking to a highly auspicious path. Your heroism is known to the entire world. People call you Maha-vira. You are fighting against the internal enemies. You are displaying your valour against the workings of your past *karmas*. Display your courage, perseverance and vigilance in the observance of great vows. What more should I say ? You know everything. What is the use of my giving any advice to you when you yourself are an ocean of absolute knowledge ?"

Charity of Devadusya (the holy cloth)

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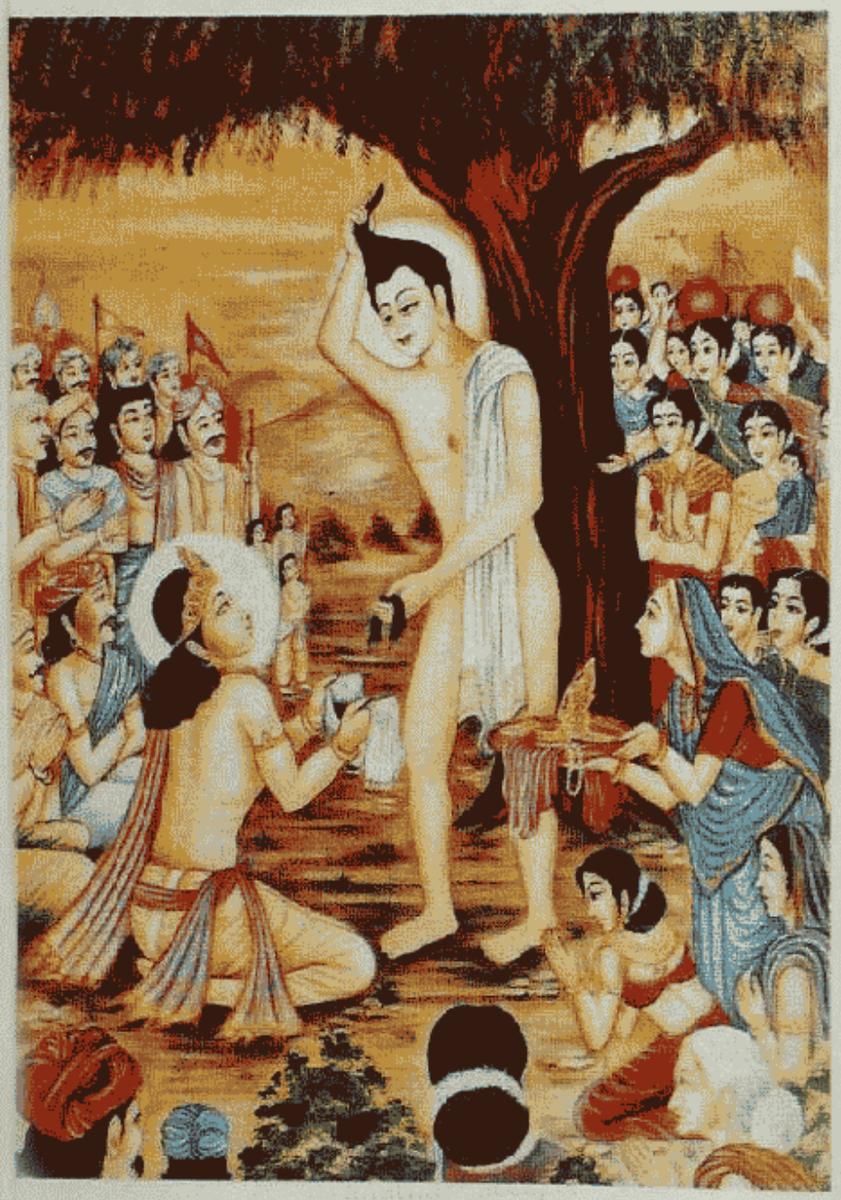
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On that day Mahavira took a vow to fast for two days. And of the four equal divisions of the day it was the fourth and last one - the auspicious moment called '*Vijaya*' ('Victory'). When the moon came in conjunction with Uttara Falguni constellation, Mahavira himself pulled out the hair from his beard, moustache and head in five fistfuls. The hair was collected in the best cloth and then respectfully and ceremoniously floated in waters of the milky ocean.

Having saluted the disembodied perfect souls (*Siddhas*) thrice, Mahavira assumed the life of an ascetic and the life of equanimity. He took the severest vow of his lifelong acceptance of the five great vows. He declared : "I embark upon the lifelong spiritual practice of equanimity and I abandon all evil soul-defiling activities."

Acceptance of initiation by taking the vows and plucking of hair

When Mahavira made the declaration of his assumption of asceticism, peace prevailed all round. Gods and humans became so still that they looked as if they were drawn in pictures. Indra, the Lord of the Gods, covered Mahavira with a magnificent piece of cloth called the 'Devadushya'. Mahavira, who was aware of the three types of knowledge since birth, now came to possess the fourth one which enabled him to read the minds of human beings. The gods and their lords saluted him and having performed the seven-day-long religious rites in Nandishvara continent, they returned to their heavenly abodes.



Vardhamana alone became an ascetic. In the case of previous twenty-three tirthankaras, when they became ascetics along with them so many others too became ascetics. When the first tirthankara, Rushabhadeva, accepted asceticism, four thousand men also accepted asceticism. Vasupujya Swami accepted asceticism together with six hundred men, while Mallinatha and Parshvanatha accepted

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asceticism along with three hundred men. The remaining tirthankaras accepted asceticism along with one thousand men. There was none who accepted asceticism along with Mahavira.

Mahavira accepted asceticism in the afternoon in the Jnatakhanda Park beyond the city of Kshatriyakunda. Sumatinatha, Shreyamsanatha, Mallinatha, Neminatha and Parshvanatha accepted asceticism in the morning. All the other tirthankaras accepted asceticism at noon.

All tirthankaras took the vow of fasting while accepting asceticism. Sumatinathaswami and Vasupujyaswami took the vow of one-day fasting, Mallinatha and Parshvanatha took the vow of three-day fasting and the remaining tirthankaras took the vow of two-day fasting.

The sight of Vardhamana's renunciation was heart-rending. He took his first step on his journey to *Moksha*. He was quite alone. With him there was no friend, no companion, no relative, no kinsman and no other ascetics.

King Nandivardhana approached him. He grasped Mahavira's feet and with reverence touched them with his head bowed. He was so overwhelmed with emotion that tears welled up in his eyes to such an extent that he could not lift his head. Nandivardhana, the King, wept bitterly giving vent to his feelings of sadness. Seeing this the people could not held back their tears. Tears flowed in floods from their eyes. With great effort King Nandivardhana became calm and regained his composure. Vardhamana had won victory on his first step.

The faint golden and red light spread over the sky and the venerable one left Jnatakhanda Park for the forest. Everyone watched him disappearing. Everyone saluted him with great reverence and devotion.

Thorny Path of Spiritual Discipline

The yogi Vardhamana took to the path leading to the forest. He began his spiritual practice of deep reflections and meditation.

He then took leave of his friends. He asked his relatives and beloved ones to return to their homes. At that very moment he took the vow that for twelve years he would not have any attachment for his body-he would peacefully endure all calamities, afflictions and obstacles. He would love even those who tortured him without any cause and he would remain calm and equanimous even if cruel enemies inflict severe bodily pain on him.

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The path of spiritual discipline is not a bed of roses, it is a bed of spikes and thorns. Pilgrims on this path attain higher and higher spiritual stages by destroying their past *karmas* and the past *karmas* are destroyed when their fruits in the form of calamities and afflictions are endured peacefully and patiently. When the spiritual practictioners experience the painful fruits of past *karmas* with courage, keeping the mind calm and unagitated, the past *karmas* get dissociated from the soul in such a way that they do not cause the bondage of new *karmas* in their trail and as a result of it the spiritual practictioners attain liberation - the highest stage of spiritual evolution. But for the attainment of liberation the necessary prerequisite is the attainment of omniscience. And for the attainment of omniscience the necessary precondition is the destruction of negative karmas which cover or adversely affect the natural qualities of soul. Yogi Vardhamana's heart was full of friendliness, love and compassion towards all beings. He sincerely wished for the spiritual welfare of all human beings. He was kind and loving towards the smallest of creatures.

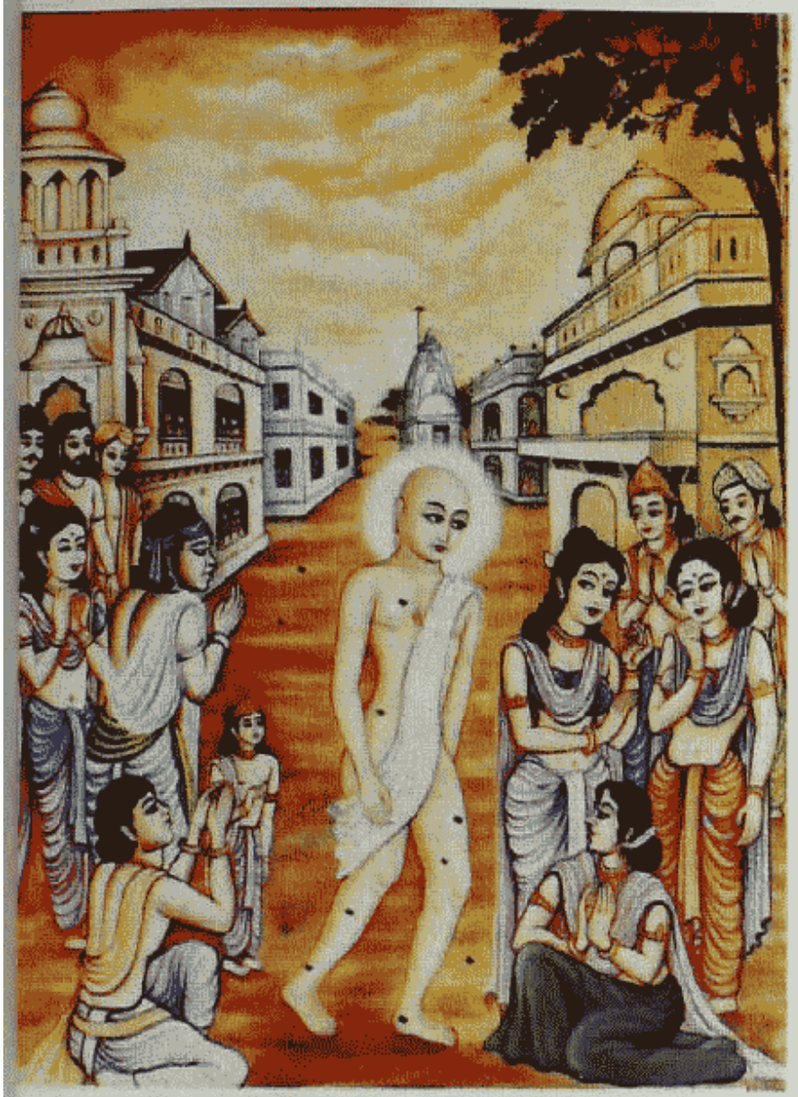
Vardhamana, the compassionate one, was quite alone in his spiritual journey. He mostly observed fasts and remained absorbed in meditation in the standing posture.

Endurance of calamities and afflictions displayed to the world the spiritual strength of Vardhamana. He exhibited his stupendous spiritual energy through patiently enduring all calamities, afflictions and inflictions. By example, he made it quite clear that spiritual strength could vanquish even the mightiest of the mighty.

The workings of past *karmas* are beyond our comprehension and understanding. The fragrant sandal paste applied to his body at the time of his renunciation celebrations was still on his body. The fragrant pollen of the garland-flowers with which he was adorned then were still sticking to his body. The fragrance spreading from his body attracted wild wasps towards the body. The wasps stung him. The wounds were so severe and deep that blood flowed from them. Attracted by the fascinating fragrance, young men ran to the yogi Vardhamana. Some asked him to give them those fragrant substances. Some inquired from where they could obtain those substances. Some scratched his body to get the fragrant sandal paste. Bewitched by his charming body women harassed him in various ways. The harassments they inflicted on him were tempting and enticing. They were so fascinated by his charming and fragrant body that they went mad after him. Some begged him

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Equanimity in the midst of favourable upsarga.

for his love. Some uttered sweet words into his ears. Some, infatuated with amorous feelings, danced before him. Some tenderly touched his body. . The Yogi Vardhamana endured these harassments for four months. Yet there did not appear on his face a single line of dislike, anger or agitation. His mind remained unruffled and unagitated. His meditation continued uninterrupted.

Vardhamana reached a village named Karmara when only the last forty-eight minutes of the day of his renunciation were left. He engaged himself in meditation in standing posture on the outskirts of the village. He completely forgot the outside world. He was totally oblivious of what was happening around him. Spiritual light was spreading in his inner world. He became deeply engrossed in his inner reflection. Although a young lady poked fun at him, a young man jeered at him, or a passer-by taunted him, he would remain engrossed in the meditative trance without being disturbed or agitated in any way. He remained as firm as a mountain.

An ordinary man looks upon an enemy as an enemy. But Mahavira considered his enemy to be his best friend. How could Mahavira have any enemies when he had already turned all enemies into friends by his universal love ? In his twelve and a half years of spiritual practice, Mahavira had to pass through many ordeals and he had to endure many afflictions and calamities. However, the aftermath of these ordeals was such that his soul came out ever more radiant and purer.

Greed Assisted by Temptation

Having renounced inexhaustible wealth and prosperity, the venerable Mahavira was on his way to the forest. For thirteen months he continued to wear the piece of divine cloth given to him by Shakra Indra. Then the following event took place on account of which he even gave up his last piece of clothing.

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For a full year before the renunciation ceremony, in the town of Brahmanakundagrama, Prince Vardhamana had donated all his wealth and possessions. During that period, a local Brahmana called Soma Sharma had left his hungry family in the town and gone to a remote region to beg for alms. He wandered far and wide but got nothing. He returned home crest-fallen and downcast. His wife was very angry with him. She scolded him : "O most unfortunate one, when there was a daily shower of gold and silver in this town, you were not here. Then you were begging for alms in a far-off place. When Prince Vardhamana donated his wealth to the people, you were roaming in a remote region going from one village to another village with an empty bowl in your hands. What cruel fate !"

Soma Sharma said, "O my dear, do not worry. I shall find Prince Vardhamana in no time and obtain donation from him."

His wife said, "O man, your fate is like a broken pot. After the year-long distribution of gold and silver among the people the charity-house has been closed. And Prince Vardhamana has already left Jnatakhanda Park after his renunciation rites. So, you must hurry and run. He is like a moving wish-fulfilling tree. He will surely give you something."

Soma Sharma ran towards Jnatakhanda Park. From a distance he saw Mahavira walking ahead alone and possessionless. There was but only a piece of divine cloth over his shoulder. Soma Sharma saluted him by placing his head on the Prince's feet and then said, "O Vardhamana, I am a friend of your father. You have satisfied everyone, you have fulfilled their wishes and made them rich. It will not be good if you give me nothing. Have all our personal relations ended after the death of your father?"

Mahavira stopped. Soma Sharma said, "What is this? You have removed the poverty of the whole world. Why, then, do you keep me, an unfortunate being, deprived of your compassion? Am I not worthy of it? Please, be kind and compassionate towards me. You love all without any discrimination."

Mahavira became thoughtful. Soma Sharma said in a beseeching tone, "I have approached the wish-fulfilling tree. And yet will my wish remain unfulfilled ?" His eyes were full of tears. Again, he saluted Mahavira and respectfully touched his feet. The eyes of the God of the poor met the eyes of the poor. The sight resembled that when the sun looks at a sunflower.

Mahavira's heart melted. He lifted his hand and pulled off the divine

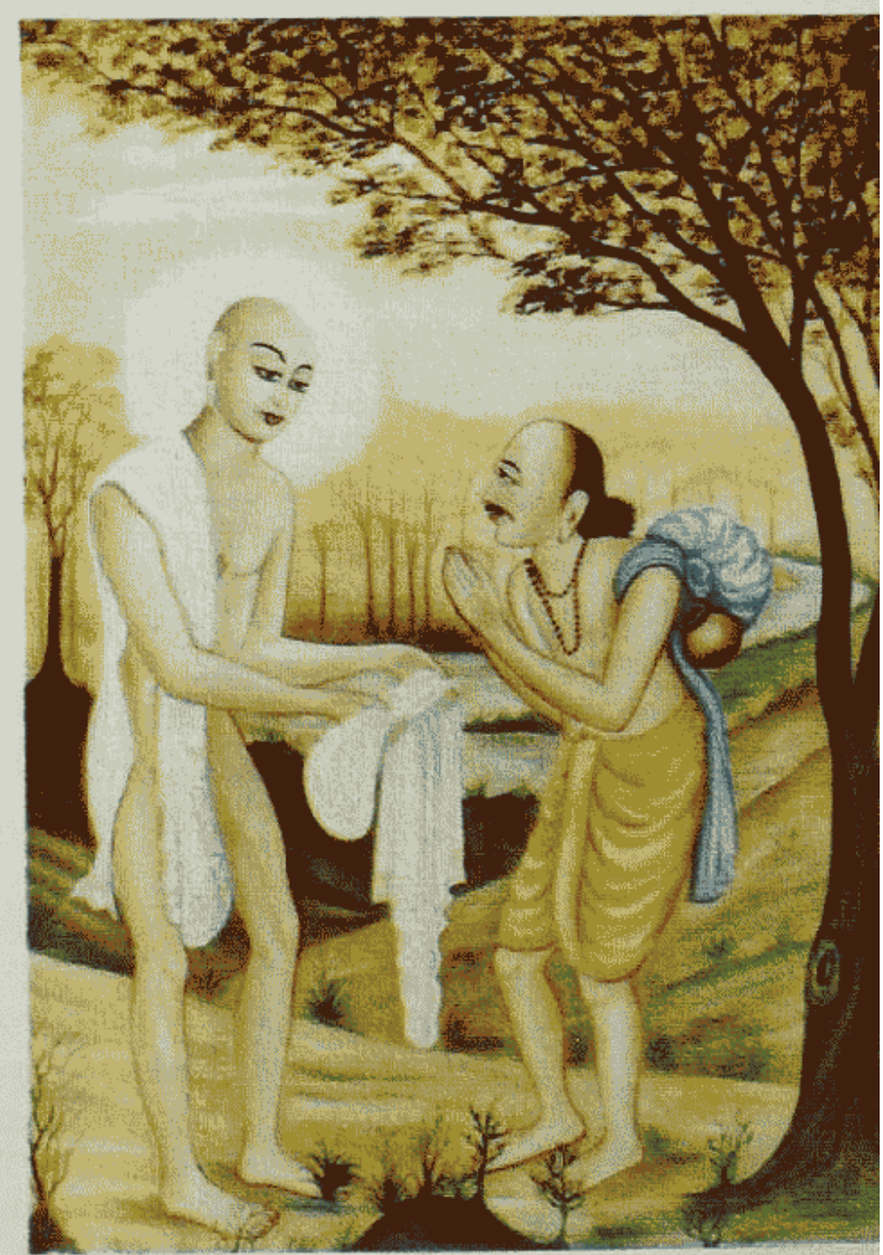
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cloth given to him by Shakra. He tore it into two pieces. He gave one piece to the Brahamana and put the other half back on his shoulder. Soma Sharma's joy knew no bounds because that piece of cloth was very fine, smooth and invaluable. His wife too would be satisfied with it.

To darn one side of the piece of cloth he went to a tailor and gave it to him. The tailor was very surprised to see a piece of the divine cloth. He said, "O Soma, you are lucky. You have brought a rare and invaluable item. If you bring the other half piece of the divine cloth, I will join the two pieces together and make the cloth whole again. Then the cloth will fetch you one lac gold coins. After that you will have all the comforts and luxuries of life. You will enjoy all the pleasures of the senses throughout your remaining life. So, O Soma, go and bring the other half piece of the divine cloth. Do not lose this golden opportunity."

Soma Sharma began to think as follows : "How can I approach Mahavira and request him to give me the other half of the divine cloth? What will be left with him ? I am poor but he is the poorest of the poor. He has only half a piece of cloth over his body. How can I tell him that I have come to take that piece of cloth in donation ? I will lose my power of speech and all my courage. How can I make myself bold enough to beg it from him? My mind refuses to approach him for this purpose."



Giving away the half piece of sacred cloth to Soma Sharma

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The tailor said, "O Soma, why don't you understand ? Will he, who has given you an elephant, hesitate to give you a goad ? Do not waste time. Hurry up and go. Do not miss this invaluable opportunity. Once you have successfully accomplished this mission, you will never have to wander from place to place with a begging bowl in your hand."

Greed has no end. It is insatiable. It destroys the power of right discrimination. When assisted by the winds of temptation, the fires of greed flare up. Temptation urges man to think of his own selfish gains and makes him self-centred. Soma Sharma girded up his loins and set out to find Mahavira. He wandered here and there in search of him. At last he saw him walking ahead steadily. He was overjoyed to see on his shoulder the other half of the divine cloth. But he could not approach him to ask for it in donation. He felt ashamed of doing so. He thought that it would be better if a gust of wind just shake off his shoulder the piece of cloth and so he would not have to beg Mahavira for it. Thus he would be saved from creating an embarassing situation.

Mahavira continued moving forward with Soma Sharma following him at a convenient distance. To Soma Sharma's utter surprise, the wind blew and Mahavira's piece of cloth got caught onto a thorny bush and was pulled off. Mahavira did not pick it up and without stopping carried on walking. When Mahavira looked back, he saw Soma Sharma picking it up.

Soma went to the tailor with the two half pieces of cloth. The tailor deftly joined the two halves together and made a whole piece of cloth. Then Soma approached King Nandivardhana and sold it to him for one lac gold coins.

Thus, Soma's wish for wealth was fulfilled and his poor days were over because he had approached Mahavira - the moving wish-fulfilling tree.

The Lonely Path of the Spiritual Practitioner

There is a village known in the present day as Kamana Chapara in Bihar State. In the days of Mahavira, it was well known by the name of Karmaragrama. The word 'karmaragrama' is a form of the Sanskrit word 'karmakaragrama'. 'Karmakara' means a labourer or an artisan, and 'grama' means a village. Thus, the meaning of 'karmakaragrama' is 'the village of labourers and artisans'.

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After the renunciation rites, Mahavira went to Karmaragrama. He reached the village when the last forty-eight minutes of the first day of his ascetic life were still left. The sun was slowly setting in the west. Birds were flying back to their nests making soft sweet sounds. At this time Mahavira was standing in deep meditation on the outskirts of the village. In the material world the shadow of darkness was advancing but in Mahavira's inner world the dawn of the spiritual light was breaking forth. Mahavira concentrated his mind on the tip of his nose. He was completely engrossed in meditation.

A shepherd with his bullocks passed by where Mahavira was standing in deep meditation. The bullocks were tired after a hard day's work drawing the plough through the fields. And they were extremely hungry. As the sun was almost set, the shepherd was in a hurry to go home and milk his cows. He thought that it was not wise to go with the tired and hungry bullocks because it would take much longer to reach home. So he decided to leave them there to graze under the supervision of someone and once he had milked his cows he would return to collect them. He looked about to see if there was anybody around. He saw Mahavira standing there. Pointing towards the bullocks, the shepherd addressed Mahavira, "O brother, please look after those bullocks. In no time I shall be back from my home after milking cows to collect them." As he was in great haste he did not care to find as to whether or not Mahavira had heard him. Mahavira had complied with his request. The shapherd at once set off for his home.



Tirthankara Mahaivira in Kausagga - Mudra (Meditating in Standing Posture)

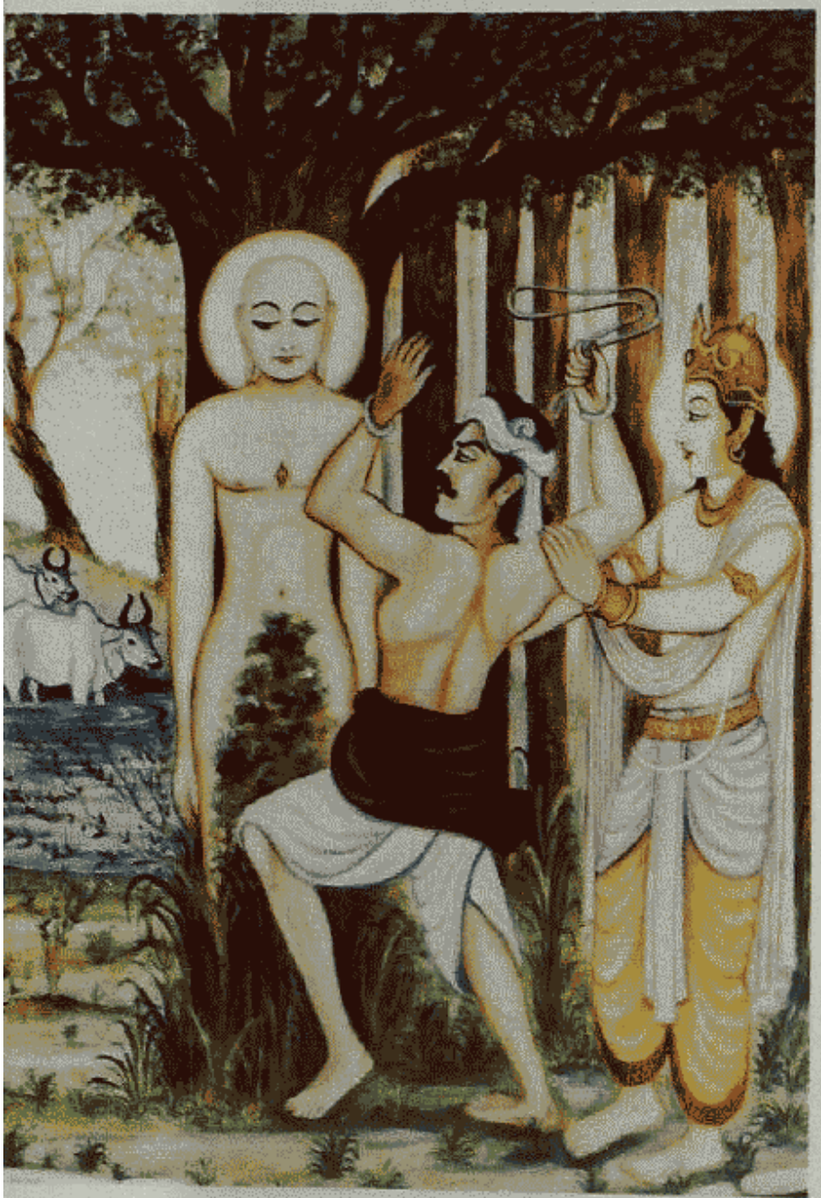
While grazing, the hungry bullocks entered a jungle and went deep inside. The shepherd returned after milking his cows to collect his bullocks. But he could not find them in the vicinity. He asked Mahavira where they were. But he did not get any answer from the meditating Mahavira. So he went to look for them himself. He searched along the banks of a river. He climbed a hill and looked around. He looked in the deep rivulets and culverts. He searched for them in dense thickets and in every nook and corner of the fields. He ran from one footpath to another and from one border to another. He searched far and wide tumbling and falling many a time. But he could not find his bullocks even after thoroughly searching throughout the whole night. He was distressed and disappointed.

The day was beginning to dawn. The sun was peeping through from the east, shooting its first rays on the earth. The shepherd, totally exhausted,

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returned to the place where Mahavira was still standing engrossed in deep meditation. And to his utter surprise, he saw his bullocks sitting beside Mahavira. He became angry. He thought that Mahavira was a thief disguised as an ascetic. He considered him to be a hypocrite. He believed that Mahavira had hidden his bullocks for the whole night. He decided to punish Mahavira for his evil intention.



Lord Indra preventing angry shepherd from attacking meditating Mahavira

In a fit of fury he rushed to beat Mahavira with the rope to which bullocks were tied. At that very moment Indra, the Lord of the Gods, who had unending devotion for Mahavira arrived there to see what Mahavira was doing on the first day of his ascetic life. Indra noticed that the shepherd was about to strike Mahavira with the rope. He at once stopped the shepherd from doing that rash act. He caught hold of the rope and said, "O wicked man, do you know what are you doing ? Do you know the man whom you want to strike with the rope ?"

The shepherd was taken aback on seeing Indra's divine lustre. On hearing his thundering voice, he at once threw away the rope. Indra said, "This man whom you regard a thief is Mahavira, who, having renounced his inexhaustible wealth and possessions, has assumed the mendicant's path for spiritual upliftment. How can he steal your bullocks ? Is it not shameful for you to strike the brilliant son of king Siddhartha ?"

On hearing the words of Indra, the shepherd realised his mistake. He asked for Indra's forgiveness for his misdeed and falling at Mahavira's feet said, "O venerable Mahavira, kindly forgive me. I failed to recognise you. You who have renounced the kingdom was falsely regarded by me as a thief. I am really a fool. Fie up on me for such a mean thought."

The venerable Mahavira's eyes were full of compassion. The shepherd saluted him, begged his forgiveness and went away with his bullocks. Then

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Indra said, "O venerable One, in the coming twelve years of your spiritual practice and austerity there will be many such calamities, afflictions and inflictions. Ignorant, malicious animals and people will inflict pains and sufferings on you. They will unnecessarily harass you. Therefore, please allow me to always be with you. I shall look after you and you will be able to engage yourself in meditation without any hindrance."

Mahavira answered, "The real spiritual practitioner never accepts the help of others. He should help himself. He should be self-dependent. One who is looking to destroy his internal enemies should achieve this goal singlehanded. One has to walk alone on the path of Ultimate Release. The strength or company of another is of no consequence in the life of the spiritual practitioner. If one endures hardships, calamities, bodily pains, afflictions with an unagitated calm mind, one will become spiritually strong and pure."

On hearing Mahavira's noble words, Indra with great devotion, bowed before Mahavira and then returned to his celestial abode.

The Five Great Resolves Conducive to Spiritual Living

Mahavira left Karmaragrama and continued his journey on foot. It was the second day of his ascetic life. He reached a suburban town - Kollaka Sannivesha - near the city of Vaishali. The town was mainly inhabited by members of the warrior class, belonging to the Jnatru lineage. On the outskirts of the town there was a beautiful park with a small temple called "Dyutipalasha". Mahavira broke his two-day-long fast with *khira* (rice pudding) which he had obtained in alms at the house of Bahula Brahmana. The first tirthankara – the venerable Rushabhadeva - broke his first fast after renunciation with sugarcane juice, whilst the remaining twenty-three tirthankaras broke their fast after renunciation with *khira*. Both are as sweet as nectar and were obtained in alms by the tirthankaras.

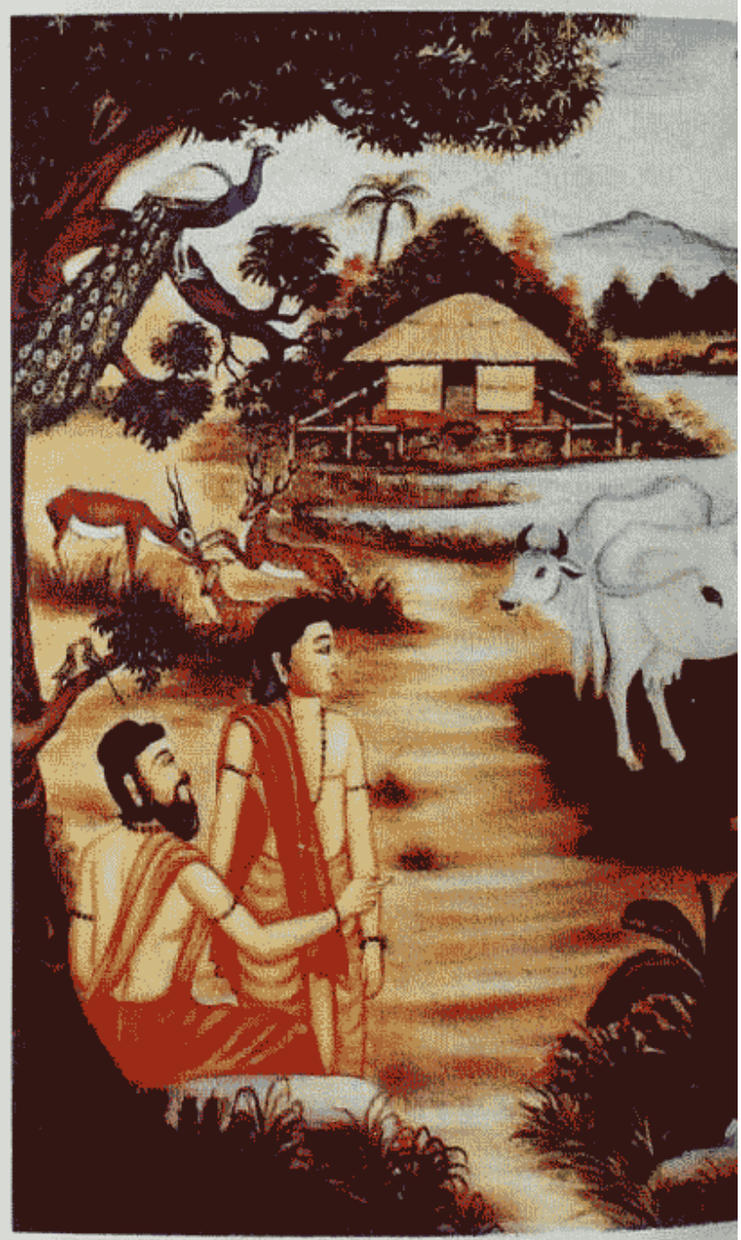
Mahavira went to Moraka Sannivesha from Kollaka Sannivesha. At Moraka Sannivesha, there was a big hermitage of the *duijjamta tapsa* ascetics. The hermitage was on the bank of a beautiful spring near the boundary of a fodder-field. The head of the hermitage was a close friend of king Siddhartha. On seeing Mahavira approach, the head of the hermitage (who was a family friend of king Siddhartha) ran towards Mahavira and spread his arms to embrace him. Mahavira too, opened his arms to embrace him.

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The head of the hermitage insisted that Mahavira spend the night at the hermitage. The next day when Mahavira came to him to take his leave, the head said to Mahavira, "O practitioner of great austerities Mahavira, your father was my friend. So, please, consider this hermitage to be yours. I request you to spend the four months of the rainy season in this hermitage. Your meditation and austerity will surely attain higher stages in this solitary, peaceful and holy place."

On seeing the love with which the head made the request, Mahavira decided to spend the rainy season there. This was his first four-month long stay at one place after renunciation. Mahavira, who had given up the royal palace and all the luxuries and comforts which came with that lifestyle, did not crave for any such comforts. It was only out of love and respect for the head of the hermitage that he accepted the proposal.



Mahavira was as calm as the moon and simultaneously he was as brilliant as the sun. He was as strong as an elephant, and at the same he was as firm as a mountain. His knowledge was as deep as an ocean. He was as fearless as a lion. He was not defiled by any craving for sensual pleasures just as a lotus growing in water is not made wet by it. He kept his mind unagitated and calm whether it was an occasions of misery or happiness, of gain or loss. He maintained perfect equanimity of the mind on all occasions - favourable and adverse. He was the embodiment of universal love. He was always vigilant and avoided injury to any living being. Insects and pests used to bite him often but he did not

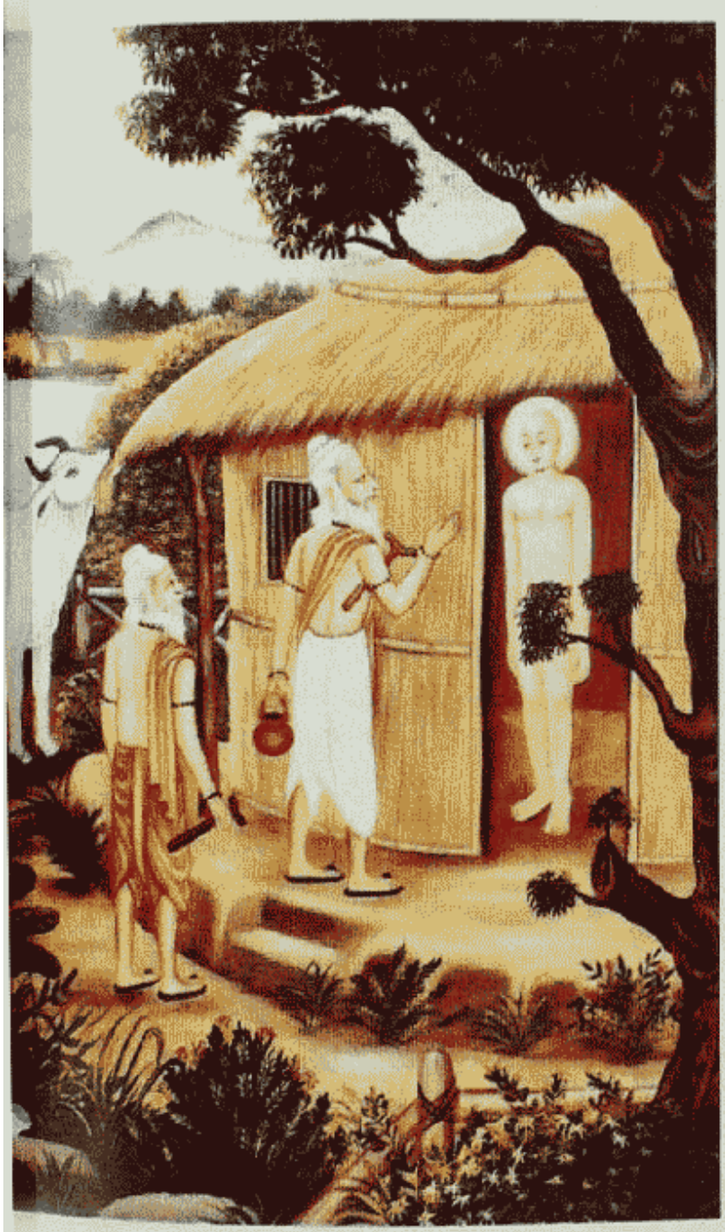
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harm them. He had no attachment to his body. He did not harm even the smallest creatures in order to avert bodily pains.

After visiting other towns and villages during the summer season, Mahavira returned to the hermitage at the start of the rainy season. The head of the hermitage offered him a thatched hut for his stay. Mahavira remained engrossed in deep reflection and meditation inside the hut.

Hungry cows used to move around outside the hut in search of fodder. They tried to pull off the bundles of dry grass from the thatched roof of Mahavira's hut. In the beginning other ascetics guarded Mahavira's hut with sticks in their hands to ward off the cows. But afterwards they thought : "What type of a guest is he ? Can he not even look after his hut ? He does not seem to care. How can he expect others to protect his hut ?" The ascetics were weary and disgusted by Mahavira's attitude. They criticised Mahavira amongst themselves and one day they complained to the head of the hermitage, "O Sir, the guest is so lazy that he does not even guard his hut. If his hut is pulled down by the cows, who will construct another hut for him ?"



Tapas Kulpati advising meditating Mahavira

The head of the hermitage too disliked Mahavira's indifference to this matter. He approached Mahavira and said, "Even birds protect their nests. You are a man. You are a warrior by birth. You should protect your hut."

There was no-one who understood Mahavira. Nobody thought: "When Mahavira does not cause any injury to a mosquito biting him and sucking his blood, how can he beat cows with a staff and prevent them from eating their natural food ?"

Mahavira, engrossed in deep reflection, did not say anything to the head of the hermitage in reply. But he thought to himself : "What a pity ! I, who have renounced the royal palaces, am caught in the net of attachment for a hut. I renounced everything for the sake of spiritual upliftment. Why should I be detained by

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the attachment and care for a hut ? When I do not care for the body in which my priceless soul lives, why should I care for this thatched hut ? Just as I do not have any attachment for my body, I should not have any attachment for this hut. Forgetting my soul, should I engage myself in guarding the hut ?"

Further Mahavira said to himself : "It is on my account that the head of the hermitage and the other ascetics are disturbed and distressed. As a matter of fact, I should choose such a place to meditate which does not cause any trouble or inconvenience to anybody. My peace of mind should never be the cause of another's mental distress or agitation. I should always be vigilant of this."

The venerable Mahavira approached the head of the hermitage. Only fifteen days of the four-month long rainy season had passed. He humbly and lovingly requested the head to allow him to leave the hermitage and with his consent he left the hermitage.

The whole episode made Mahavira to take the following five vows : (1) Not to stay in a place which causes inconvenience or distress to others (2) To always remain engrossed in meditation and to find a place conducive to meditation. (3) To observe silence for most of the time. (4) Not to use utensils for taking and eating cooked food but to use the palms of the hands. (5) Not to flatter a householder.

These five resolves of tirthankara Mahavira became the five great rules which governed his spiritual discipline and practice.

Cruel Tormentor Becomes Humble Devotee

While walking from the hermitage of the *duijjamta tapasa* ascetics, Mahavira entered a village called Asthikagrama in Videha country. The village was deserted because of the cruelty and harassment of a demi-god Shulpani caused to the people. So, it looked more like a cremation ground. Many of the houses were dilapidated and ruined as they had been deserted by their inhabitants a long time ago. Skeletons and bones lay scattered everywhere. The village was thus known as Asthikagrama. The word 'asthi' means bones and the word 'grama' means village.

There was a temple dedicated to Shulpani built on a hill just outside the village. Mahavira decided to spend the night at the temple. It was not

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inhabited by people. It was quite a solitary place. So Mahavira thought that it would be proper for and conducive to his meditation.

The villagers told Mahavira stories of calamities inflicted by Shulpani on them. They said, "The cruel and tormenting demi-god despises not only man but also the smell of their bodies. Anyone who stays in the temple during the night does not see the rising sun the next day. Shulpani kills travellers who stay in the temple overnight. Even Indra Sharma, the priest of the temple, always leaves the temple after the evening worshipping rites. You are delicate and handsome. We shall make arrangements for your night-stop elsewhere. Please accept our offer."



Mahavira, firm as the rock, in the midst of upsarga of Shulpani Yaksha

Mahavira replied, "O friends, I am fearless. I am not afraid of anyone, not even of death. Nor do I frighten anyone. I love all beings. I shall stay tonight at this temple. Kindly give me your consent."

On hearing Mahavira's words the villagers gave him their consent. Mahavira then stood in a corner of the temple and got fully absorbed in deep meditation.

Although villagers and the priest had told Mahavira fearful stories of the tortures inflicted by Shulpani on the travellers who stopped at the

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temple, Mahavira decided to stay there because he wanted to endure the calamities and, more importantly, he wanted to awaken Shulpani to spiritual living.

Shulpani was watching what was going on. He made up his mind to perpetrate cruelty during the night, on Mahavira who had so slighted his power and strength by spending the night at the temple.

Night fell. There was a horrifying sense of loneliness all around. Suddenly there was a burst of thunder as if the entire world was about to collapse. And there appeared the fierce Shulpani holding dazzling frightening spears in his hands. He gave a violent and heart wrenching laugh. There was great commotion in the atmosphere. The whole temple trembled. But Mahavira was not affected in the least. He stood unmoved. Angry at the sight of the calm Mahavira, Shulpani assumed the form of a wild elephant. He caught Mahavira with his trunk, lifted him up and then threw him down. Suddenly the elephant disappeared and in his place appeared a terrifying goblin with long sharp nails and protruding pointed teeth. The goblin gnawed into Mahavira's body with nails and teeth. Blood oozed from the wounds inflicted on Mahavira. After some time the goblin disappeared and suddenly there appeared a poisonous cobra. It was as if the famous Shesha cobra had rushed into the scene after breaking out from the nether world. Making frightening hisses, the cobra repeatedly stung Mahavira. Shulpani inflicted, produced with his extra-ordinary powers, unbearable pains in Mahavira's eyes, ears, nose, head, teeth, nails and back. Even one of these pains would have caused the death of an ordinary person. But Mahavira's mind remained untouched by those pains just as a lotus in water remains untouched by water. He endured all the tortures with a wonderful calmness and remained as firm and unagitated as Mount Meru.

The night of tortures continued. The cruel and wicked demi-god thought that he would defeat Mahavira with his monstrous physical strength. But Mahavira's spiritual strength won victory. How could a wicked person like Shulpani induce fear into the heart of a person like Mahavira who was so spiritually strong and steadfast? Mahavira's heart was full of compassion and love. His mind was completely equanimous.

Finally, Shulpani's heart underwent a dramatic change. He fell at the feet of Mahavira and humbly said, "O Lord, kindly forgive me."



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Mahavira said, "O friend, forgiveness is granted to enemies only. But you are my friend because you have tested my power of endurance and my spiritual strength."

Shulpani was surprised to hear Mahavira's words and he said, "Friend ? And that too your friend ? Do you know how much I have tortured you ?"

Mahavira said, "Yes, you can be a friend and not only my friend but also a friend of the whole world. You thought that you can pacify your enmity through the instrumentalising of enmity. You submitted yourself to anger and hatred and you became anger itself. You inflicted calamities and tortures on men. But, please, remember that cruelty and hard-heartedness will never pacify your mind. Only love and forgiveness will give you peace of mind. Enmity breeds enmity. And love breeds love. The remedy for the disease of hatred is not retaliation and revenge; it is love and forgiveness."

The words of Mahavira had a soothing effect on Shulpani just as a shower of rain cools the parched earth. Shulpani's eyes which had been defiled by the redness of anger and enmity became pure. They were full of love and compassion. His inner eye opened to see the universal truth. His fears subsided on the realisation of the strength of fearlessness. The clouds of calamities hanging over Shulpani dispersed after Mahavira's preaching. The root cause of those calamities was removed.

The villagers also became happy. The cruel and arrogant demi-god Shulpani became a humble devotee of Mahavira. He sang the praises of Mahavira and his unique qualities. Shulpani became happy and cheerful. He, whose violent hoarse-laughter made the earth quake a short while ago, was now himself reciting devotional songs in praise of Mahavira in a sweet voice and nodding in appreciation of Mahavira's noble character.

The Vices and Tricks of Acchandaka

At the end of the four months of the rainy season, Mahavira left Asthikagrama and set out on foot for Moraka village. He stayed in a park on the outskirts of the village. A hypocrite called Acchandaka, who used to cheat the ignorant and innocent people, lived in the village. He would influence them by boasting about his supernatural knowledge of magical formulas, charts and yogic powers. During the day he assumed the role of a practising astrologer, read horoscopes and palms and predicted future

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events. During the night he broke into houses and stole precious things.

Some said that Acchandaka offered magical wrist-bands which made the wearers rich and prosperous. Some reported that the poor became wealthy and barren women bore children when they followed his instructions. Some opined that he fulfilled the wishes of all those who approached him with faith. But the earnings of such people who deceive others with their illusory miracles or tricks eventually vanish.

Every midnight Acchandaka buried all the precious things like gold, silver, etc that he had stolen, in the ground just outside the village. At night he would also indulge in womanising, gambling, wining and eating meat. Acchandaka was a rogue. People went to him out of greed and temptation. Roguery thrive on the greed of the people. Just as flies swarm around filth, so greedy persons swarm around a rogue.



On the other hand we see a being like Mahavira. The lamp of knowledge was burning in the heart of Mahavira. He was endowed with the spiritual qualities of non-attachment, renunciation and universal love. He was aware of Acchandaka's hypocrisy and wickedness. He knew of all the evil activities in which Acchandaka indulged during the night. Mahavira advised Accahndaka to confess his sins and to refrain from committing them further. But how could he accept Mahavira's advice ? How could he wind up his lucrative business ?

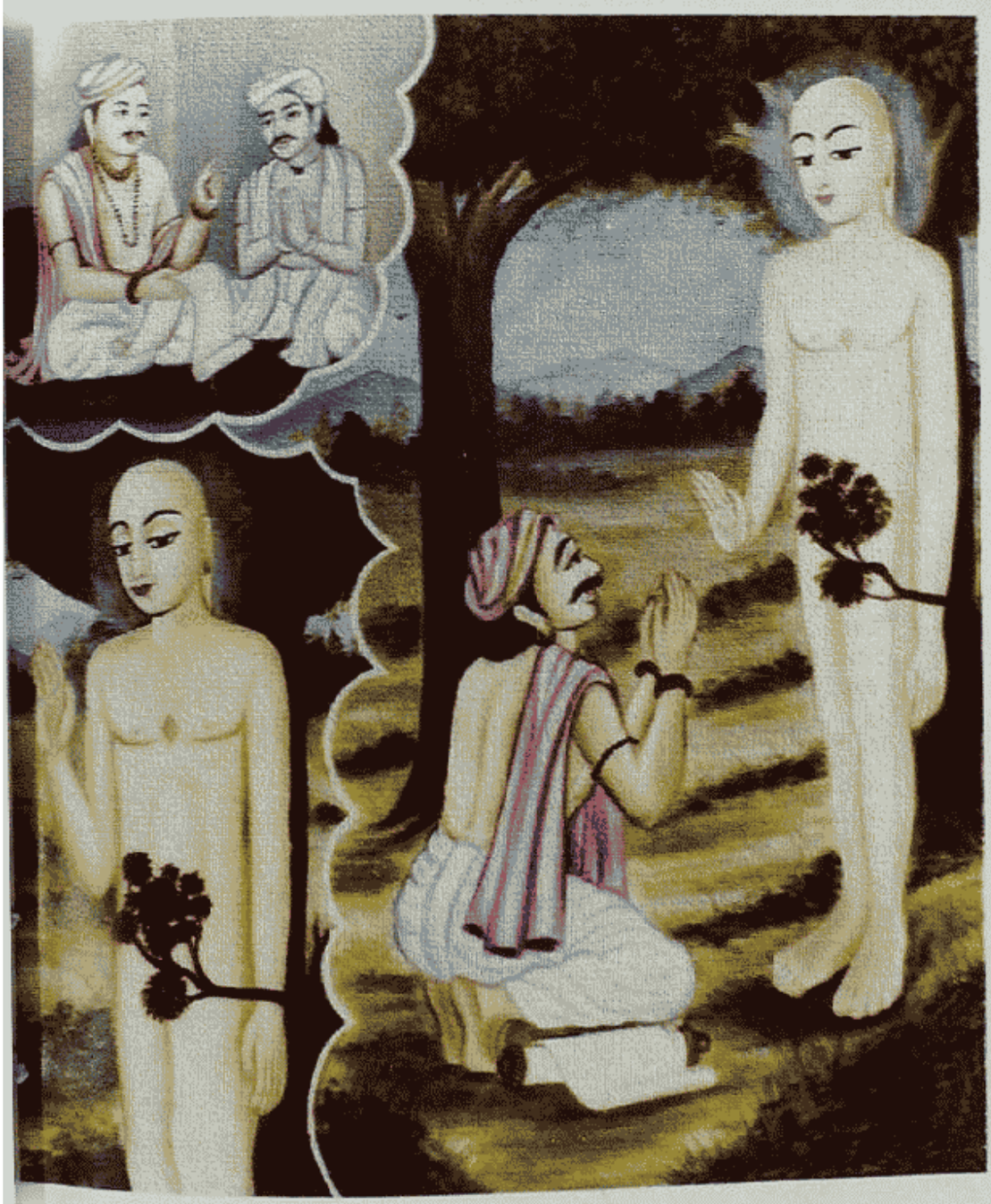
At last Mahavira decided that he must rescue the people from the net of deception spread by the wicked Acchandaka. But it was not easy to break the strong union of the rogue and the greedy. So Mahavira decided that he should display his own real miraculous powers to those who were blinded by the illusions of Acchandaka. No other means would be effective. Reasoning would not work because it would be like reading the scriptures to a buffalo.

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Thus thinking, Mahavira declared to the people : "I can see jewels, gold, silver, etc. concealed in the earth. I can tell you what is happening even in the remote places in the world. Come to me and know the secret of your fate!" A shepherd came forward and said to Mahavira, "If you are really a great yogi and saint, then tell me as to what I ate yesterday." Mahavira answered unassumingly, "O friend, yesterday you ate gruel and *kamga*-rice, then you took your cows out to graze, and during the night you wept bitterly while having a terrible dream." The shepherd was struck with wonder. He related his miraculous experience to everybody in the village. The news spread rapidly in the village. Every one was talking about the great yogi, who could know secrets of others' mind with his yogic powers, who had arrived in the village. They also said that Acchandaka was no match to such a yogi.

Showing the righteous path to Acchandak, a thief and an evil doer



The people were attracted towards Mahavira just as ants towards a lump of sugar. He remained surrounded by them. Things gifted or presented by them were accumulated in heaps before Mahavira. Acchandaka was greatly perturbed and embarrassed. So he contrived to prove Mahavira a liar. He arrived where Mahavira was. There was a blade of wild grass in his hand. He shouted and said, "O Mahavira, if you really know the future, then tell me if I shall be able to make two pieces of this blade of grass by stretching it with my hands."

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Acchandaka's trick was such that if Mahavira answered yes then he would not stretch the blade to the required extent to break it and if he answered no then he would easily make two pieces by stretching it. Mahavira calmly said, "O Acchandaka, it will not be possible for you to make it into two pieces by stretching it with your hands."

Acchandaka was very happy to hear Mahavira's words. He jumped and declared, "Look brothers, this is the proof of his being an imposter. He is not a true yogi or ascetic. He says that I cannot make two pieces of this blade of grass by stretching it with my hands. Now I am exposing his hypocrisy by making two pieces of this blade." Uttering these words, he held the blade in his hand, showed it to the people and tried to stretch it in order to make two pieces. But his fingers were cut with the sharp edge of the blade and blood gushed out. The people laughed at him. And Mahavira narrated to them the stories of Acchandaka's deceitful activities.

The people gained more faith in Mahavira's words. They talked of Mahavira's victory over Acchandaka. They despised Acchandaka and said, "O Acchandaka, we did not know that you are such a great hypocrite. You are a cheat. You are a degraded soul. You have deceived us."

Finally, the frightened Acchandaka approached Mahavira and humbly said, "O great yogi, my means of livelihood has been destroyed because of your presence here. My reputation is in tatters. I request you to go elsewhere."

Mahavira said, "O friend, I bear no ill-will against you. I only wish for your welfare. I advise you to earn your livelihood honestly. Do not deceive the innocent and simple people. And abstain from indulging in wrong activities. May you be happy ! I shall now leave this village."

Mahavira awakened the simple people, who had blind faith in miracles, to the truth. He then continued his journey.

Mahavira, the ocean of compassion

Lord Mahavira left Moraka. He headed towards Svetambi city. He was going from DakshinaVachala to Uttara Vachala. There were two roads to Uttaravachala. One way passed through the land of the Kanakakhala hermitage, where the *tapasa* ascetics lived. However, people had not used this road for the past few years. This was because a cobra named Chandakaushika (whose eyes emitted poisonous rays) moved around this

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road and killed the travellers. So the road had a deserted, solitary and frightening look. The other road was more of a footpath. It was narrow, winding and hilly. It passed just outside the Kanakakhala hermitage. Although it was longer that the other road it was safer to travel by.

Mahavira chose to walk the first road which passed through Kanakakhala hermitage. Some shepherd boys, who were playing under the shade of a tree, saw him and ran to him. They surrounded him. On seeing the lustrous face



Poisonous Chandakaushik serpent and Bhagwan Mahavira

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of Lord Mahavira, they thought that he must have been a prince who had turned into an ascetic after renouncing the crown and the kingdom for the welfare of the whole world. The boys were worried about Mahavira taking this road. They knew that the road passed through the forest where the cobra Chadakaushika hid itself. They shuddered at the thought of the cobra's poisonous rays burning Mahavira to ashes. Radiant heat was generated from the cobra's eyes when it stared at the sun. Then when it looks at any person, that person would be burnt to ashes by the radiant poisonous heat. Usually cobras have poison in their fangs but Chandakaushika had poison in its eyes. The shepherd boys said to Mahavira, "O revered saint, please do not take this route. Go by the other route. There lives a dreadful cobra called Chandakaushika in the forest. A person's burnt to ashes as soon as the cobra looks at him. The trees around the Kanakakhala hermitage have dried and the whole forest trembles with fear when the cobra appears. Those who travel by this road never return. So we request that you to use the other road that lies just outside the Kanakakhala hermitage."

Mahavira listened to them patiently without any sign of fear on his face. He remained calm and composed. He consoled and pacified them and continued his journey on the deserted and dreadful road. His aim was to awaken the cobra to spiritual and wholesome living. No one could swerve Mahavira from his decided course of action and goal.

In his previous birth the cobra Chandakaushika had been an ascetic who was well known for his severe austerities. Once the ascetic was very angry with his pupil and rushed to strike him. But he dashed against a pillar of the monastery and lost his life. After several births, he was born as a human being. He was called Chandakaushika and became the chief *tapasa* ascetic, the head of five hundred *tapasa* ascetics.

One day he saw some princes plucking fruits from the trees in the compound of the hermitage. He lost his temper and rushed towards them with an axe in his hand. But in his blind rage and fury, he could not see a pothole in his way. He fell into the pothole and his own axe struck him on his head and he died on the spot. In the next birth he was born as a cobra emitting poisonous heat from its eyes. The cobra was also known as Chandakaushika - the same name as in the last birth.

This clearly demonstrates how an increasing degree of anger generates

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more and more unfavourable conditions of existence in succeeding births. Corresponding to the higher degrees of anger, the soul of Chandakaushika had found worse and worse dwelling-places in successive births. First, he lived in a holy monastery, then a forest and at last the deserted and solitary forest. Also first he was overcome with anger in old age, then at a young age and at last since his very birth. First, anger manifested itself through the instrumentality of a soft broom, then through an axe and after that through the all-destroying poisonous radiant rays shooting from the eyes. Moreover, with passage of time he grew more and more cruel. First there was the intention to kill a child ascetic, then to kill princes and next to kill a great saint.

Tirthankara Mahavira walked through the forest of Kanakakhala. He found a place and assumed a standing meditative posture and immediately went into deep meditation. In his heart the ocean of compassion was rising. His face was as calm and soothing as moon-light. On the other hand, experiencing the smell of a human body, Chandakaushika came out discharging venom. He thought how dare a human being enter his kingdom. He made fierce hissing sounds. The waves of poison spread all around. As a result, all the butterflies flying in the area fell dead on the ground, in heaps. But the fearless Mahavira remained firm and steadfast.

Failure and defeat to extinguish Mahavira made Chandakaushika even more angry. It coiled its body and shot it like an arrow. It stung Mahavira's toe. The sting was so severe that a fountain of blood gushed out. But it was not common blood. It was not red. It was as white as milk. It was like mother's milk. The cobra stung Mahavira thrice but the latter remained unagitated and equanimous.

Chandakaushika also wondered about the situation. It thought : "Why is Mahavira not affected by the all-consuming poisonous rays shooting forth from my eyes ? Why does white blood flow from his wounds ?" There was uniform shower of affection from the mother-like Mahavira on all living beings of the world just as a mother showers affection on all her children. Mahavira loved all living beings just as a mother loves all her children. Whereas a mother loves only her own children, Mahavira loved all living beings, even those who held malice or enmity towards him for no particular reason. Mahavira said, "O Chandakaushika, be calm and wake up. Why do you harm your own soul? Your anger has destroyed your true nature and

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caused you great harm. Be enlightened." The words worked wonders. They pacified Chandakaushika. Just as rain cools the earth, so the words had a calming effect on Chandakaushika.

As soon as Chandakaushika heard the words of Mahavira, it recalled its past births. It realised what a great set-back he had suffered by succumbing to the passion of anger. The cobra circled Mahavira thrice and bowed in reverence at Mahavira's feet. Chandakaushika took and observed the vow of fast-unto-death and died whilst in pure meditation. As a result, he was born as a god in the eighth heavenly world.



Harassment by Sudanshtra

Savior from the Tempest

Mahavira was on his way to Surabhipura. At one point he had to cross the river Ganges. He was on the bank of the river. The river was bursting over both its banks. A boat-man named Siddhadanta was standing by with his boat and directing travellers to their seats one by one. Mahavira too boarded the boat.

Soon the boat started moving. At that moment an owl hooted suddenly from the left bank. It was very unusual for an owl to hoot in stark daylight.

Among the travellers in the boat was an astrologer named Khemila. He said, "O brothers, we have an evil omen. The hooting of the owl foretells that a great disaster will befall us by which we may even lose our lives." Thus speaking he started watching the faces of his fellow-travellers. He saw Mahavira. On seeing him, the true embodiment of love and compassion, joy spread on his face. He was relieved of all his worries. He said, "O brothers, do not worry at all. Our calamity will be averted. We know that because of the sins of even one man the whole boat wrecks and sinks. Similarly, because of the spiritual merit of even one great saint, even a sinking boat can safely reach the other bank. In our boat, there is such a great saint. Though there may suddenly come a frightening calamity, yet on account of the power of his spiritual merit that calamity will ultimately disappear without causing any harm to us."

The boat-man Siddhadanta was expert in rowing the boat. Within a short time he steered his boat to the middle of the river. Everyone felt that in no time they would be standing on the other bank. But suddenly a storm broke out. Black clouds gathered and darkness spread everywhere. There

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were booms of thunder and flashes of lightning. Torrential rain started pouring accompanied by violent winds. The waves in the river rose as high as mountains The boat started heaving and falling in the river. When it was caught in the whirling wind, the boat spun uncontrollably in the river. Its mast broke into pieces. Its sail-cloth was torn to shreds. And the travellers were in great distress.

What was the cause of the sudden storm ? Mahavira's soul, in its previous birth as Triprushtha Vasudeva, had killed a lion. The soul of that lion was born as a god named Sudanshtra. On seeing Mahavira now, Sudamshtra recalled his past enmity towards Mahavira. The idea of revenge and retaliation possessed him. He decided to wreak vengeance upon Mahavira. And it was he who caused tempest in the river Ganges. All, except Mahavira, trembled with fear on seeing their death before them. Some wept



Bhagwan Mahavir crossing the Ganga, evil doers Sudanshtra and Nagkumar

bitterly. Some screamed in distress. Some were so worried that they ran here and there. Some blamed their fate. All gave vent to their grief differently. Even a skilled boat-man like Siddhadanta was really frightened. Only

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Mahavira was unagitated, firm and steadfast. On his face shone the lustre of fearlessness. Though there raged the most terrific tempest all around, Mahavira remained completely untouched by it as a lotus in a pond remains totally untouched by water.

The storm gathered more strength. The sky was thickly covered with dark clouds. It was as if the whole sky was going to fall down with a deafening thunder and a catastrophe would follow. The boat would sink to the bottom of the river.

Suddenly from the one end of the horizon,dark clouds rushed to the middle of the sky and violently collided against other dark clouds . And there sounded a heart-rending explosive thunder. Everyone thought that death was surely imminent and there was no escape from it.

Two gods named Kambala and Shambala appeared. They belonged to the class of *nagakumara* gods. In their previous birth they had been bullocks. They were the pet animals of a Jaina householder in Mathura city. They stayed with the family in the compound of their house. The name of the householder was Jinadasa and his wife was Sadhudasi. By constant association with them, the bullocks too became religious. Jinadasa and his wife observed fast on the eighth and fourteenth days of every fortnight. Following them even the bullocks observed fast on those days. When the husband and wife read religious scriptures or recited devotional songs, the bullocks listened to them, standing silently. When the bullocks were about to die, the merchant Jinadasa directed them to perform religious rites and softly recited the holy *Navakaramantra* to them. After death, they were born as the *nagakumara* gods named Kambala and Shambala. Whilst one god protected the boat, the other one defeated Sudanshtra who, consequently, ran away.

Hence, the travellers were saved from disaster. The sky became clear as the clouds dispersed. The golden rays of the sun started dancing brightly on the water of the river Ganges. The boat safely crossed the river and reached the other bank where the boat-man anchored it.

All the travellers climbed out of the boat onto the bank. The astrologer said to them, "O brothers, come, let us pay our respects and salute the saint on whose account our lives are saved." They all approached Mahavira and bowed before him. It made no difference to Mahavira whether people saluted him or not. He remained even-minded and equanimous.

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The Bitter Consequences of the Passion of Anger

With the arrival of Mahavira, the prosperous city of Vaishali was overwhelmed with joy. Prince Vardhamana was visiting it for the first time after his renunciation. Every house was decorated with garlands. Attractive archs were erected at crossroads. City-gates were adorned with garlands, paintings and banners. Colourful flags were fluttering from buildings and shops. Men, women and children were in a festive mood. The whole city was ready for the grand reception of Tirthankara Mahavira.

The rich merchants dwelling in lofty mansions invited Mahavira to their places. The royals too invited him to their grand palaces. They wanted their residences sanctified with the holy foot-steps of the saint Mahavira. All guessed as to whose place he would choose for his stay. Who would get the opportunity to earn such auspicious merit ?

The blacksmith attacking meditating Mahavir with a hammer



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For Mahavira a grand luxurious palace or a simple small hut were equal. He saw no difference between the rich and the poor. He wanted to choose a place where his stay would not cause any inconvenience to others and which would not cause infatuation and attachment to him.

He selected the solitary workshop of a blacksmith. The blacksmith was suffering from a terrible disease. Hence, he had gone to some remote place for the change of climate. The workshop was away from the densely populated residential area. It was quite peaceful. There was no traffic and no coming-and-going of people. It was conducive to meditation. His stay there would not cause any harm or inconvenience to anybody. So he chose the workshop, instead of a lofty mansion, for his stay.

As fate would have it, the blacksmith who had been away for the last six months came back having recovered his health. To his great surprise, he saw a naked ascetic living in his workshop. He thought that in his absence the ascetic had usurped his property. On seeing him he became red with anger and trembled with rage. And while entering his house he had a very evil omen. He believed that the sight of a naked ascetic foreshadowed future calamity.

Anger blunts the faculty of thinking, anger makes man blind. Under the sway of anger, he loses the power of recognising the consequences of what he is about to do. A blind man cannot see but he can understand what he is doing and recognise the consequences of his actions. But a man blinded by anger cannot understand what he is doing or what the consequences will be.

The blacksmith was very furious. He lifted a heavy hammer. He thought that he would strike the ascetic so violently that the latter would die instantly. On seeing this dreadful scene, people rushed there. Someone said to the blacksmith, "O brother, you have regained your health after long treatment. You should take care of your health. Excitement is not good for your health. Why do you yield to anger and harm your health ? Be at peace and be calm."

A second man said, "O brother, one should not be angry with a saint. Look at the calmness and equanimity of the saint against your anger. Be calm. It is true that the mind gets easily excited due to weakness resulting from long illness. But it is not proper to behave rashly with a saint and to think of killing him."

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A third man said, "Neither a thief nor a dacoit has occupied your house. Only a saintly ascetic has made a temporary halt at your house. To kill such a great saint is considered to be a deadly sin. Just think a little."

All tried to pacify the blacksmith. But all their efforts were in vain. The anger of the weak blacksmith increased greatly.

The moment was critical. The blacksmith could not contain his anger. The fire of anger burned him. His face became contorted with anger. He twisted his eyebrows. He gnashed his teeth. His eyes were as red as burning charcoal. He lifted the heavy hammer and was about to hit it vigorously on the head of the saint in deep meditation.. But Tirthankara Mahavira stood firmly without moving his body. There was no fear, no agitation. His face exuded pure bliss and peace. In his meditative trance he was as unagitated as Mount Meru.

The blacksmith was very distressed and disturbed by Mahavira's peace and composure. He felt that the saint was defying and ridiculing him. He decided to teach him a lesson. He brandished the hammer at him. Everybody thought that within a fraction of a moment the hammer would hit the saint on his head and he would fall down dead.

But a miracle happened. The blacksmith was brandishing the hammer vigorously and his hands were trembling with rage. His hands lost his grip on the hammer and the hammer fell back on his own head. The hammer hit him on his head instead of hitting the yogi. Thus, the blacksmith who had been saved from a terrible disease became the victim of his own anger. The angry blacksmith, who had desired to kill Mahavira, inadvertently killed himself.

Harassment by Kataputana



The Highest Peak of Equanimity

From Gramaka Sannivesha, Tirthankara Mahavira went to Shalishirsha village. On reaching the village, he halted at a charming park on its outskirts. There, he assumed the meditative standing posture and went into a trance.

It was the month of Magha in the winter season. It was freezing cold and piercing wind was blowing. Plants were being destroyed by frost. But Mahavira was standing in a vast open park with the wind piercing his naked body as sharp spikes would. The cold was so severe that even the strongest of the strong shivered. The villagers were sleeping under thick woollen

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blankets. Yet they were shivering under their blankets. During such a freezing cold night, Mahavira stood under a tree in deep meditation. He was quite oblivious of the outside world. But the light of knowledge was spreading throughout his inner world. He was so firm and established in the practice of meditation that neither the blasts of winds nor the biting cold could agitate or perturb him. He remained unagitated, unmoved and free from attachnment.

At that time a goddess named Kataputana, belonging to the *vyantara class* of gods, saw Mahavira standing in deep meditation. And her past enmity towards Mahavira flared up. In his previous birth Mahavira had been born as Triprushtha Vasudeva. Triprushtha had an unfavourite queen called Vijayavati. After much transmigratory wandering she was born as Kataputana. When she saw Mahavira, the holy feeling of devotion did not rise in her heart but instead a devastating conflagration of hatred burst out. On seeing the lotus-like face of Mahavira, her heart experienced the heat of the fire of enmity and revenge instead of the feeling of love and affection. Due to the enmity she felt towards Mahavira, she decided to destroy Mahavira's meditation. And she began to think about the ways of harassing Mahavira.

She thought : "The winter cold is so severe that nobody can withstand it. Even the mightiest man's limbs will freeze. It is true that Mahavira is still standing firm against the shivering cold and biting winds, but as soon as I pour ice-cold water on him, he will begin to shiver with cold, his teeth will rattle and his limbs will be numbed. When this happens, my heart burning with revenge will cool down a little."

Kataputana assumed the form of a female ascetic of the *tapasa* order. She showered ice-cold water from her matted hair on Mahavira. Tirthankara Mahavira's delicate and tender body did not flinch when the cold water touched it and was as steadfast as a rock. Blasts of strong cold winds as cutting as swords also blew against Mahavira's body.

Kataputana burst out laughing loudly. She expected the yogi to start shivering, break his meditation and to run away to save his life. He would be unable to bear the blasts of winds and he would start screaming and crying.

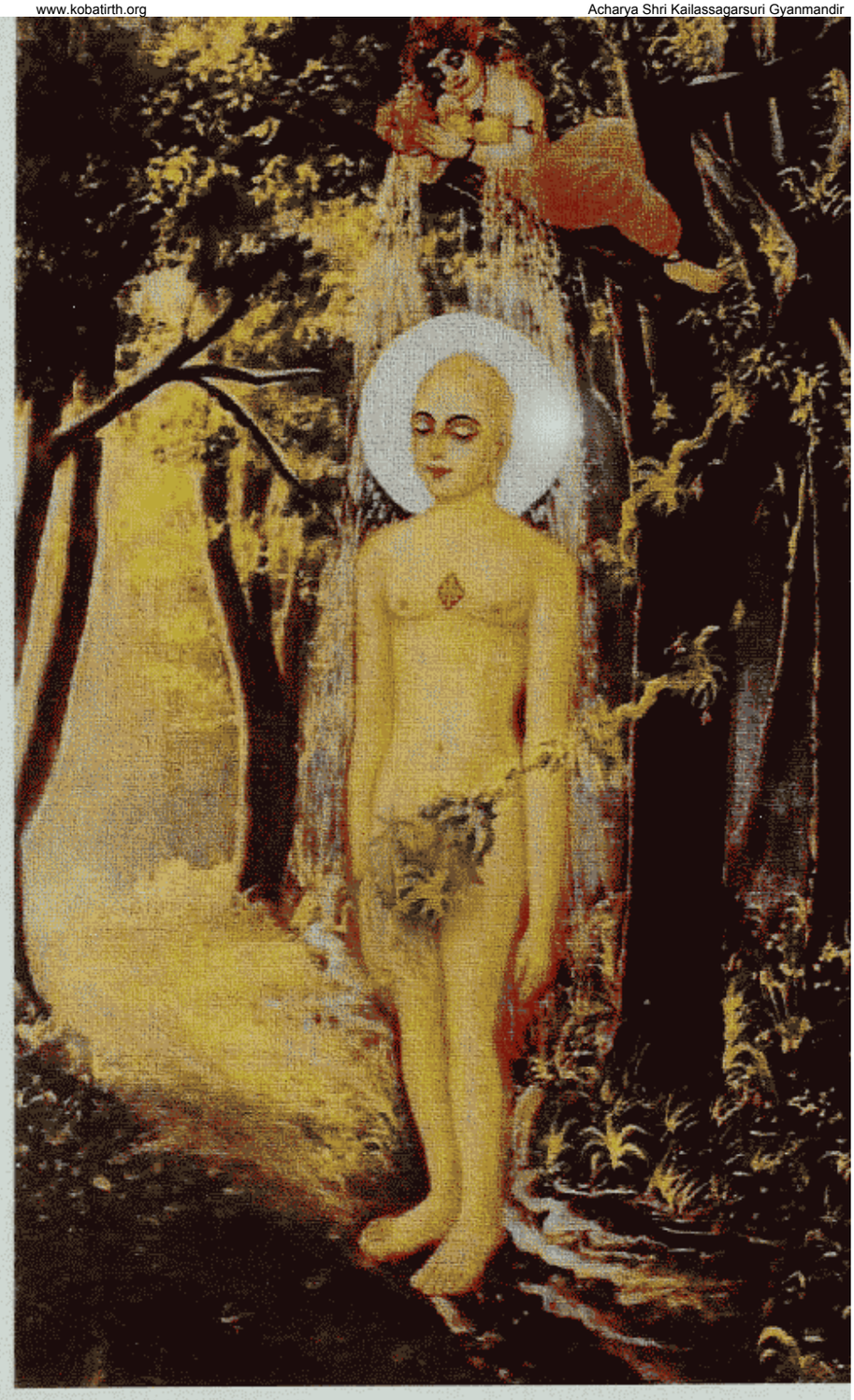
The calamity of cold inflicted by Kataputana on Mahavira was such that an ordinary man might become numbed, stiff and die.

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Kataputana subjected Mahavira's body to severe tortures. But Mahavira had no attachment for his body. He had realised the separateness of the soul from the body. So how could bodily pains make his mind restless ? How could external calamity distress him ?

However, Kataputana thought that Mahavira might endure tortures for sometime but he would not be able to endure them for long. She felt sure that the yogi would surely run away from the park. Thinking so, she continued her attacks with abundant ice-cold water and blasts of biting cold wind. She tried hard to agitate and disturb Mahavira, but the latter remained as firm as Mount Meru and endured the tortures calmly. He welcomed the shower of ice-cold water as he would welcome spiritual calmness arising from the soul itself. He turned the blasts of wind into ripples of bliss.



Bathing in cold shower by Katputana

Finally, Kataputana was exhausted. She accepted defeat. Her hatred and anger subsided. Abandoning her past enmity and hatred for Mahavira, she thought, "How wonderful is Mahavira's power of endurance ! How endless and infinite is his equanimity !" She fell at his feet and sought his forgiveness for her great offence. The Ganges of universal love was constantly flowing from the heart of Tirthankara Mahavira who himself was an embodiment of love and an ocean of forbearance.

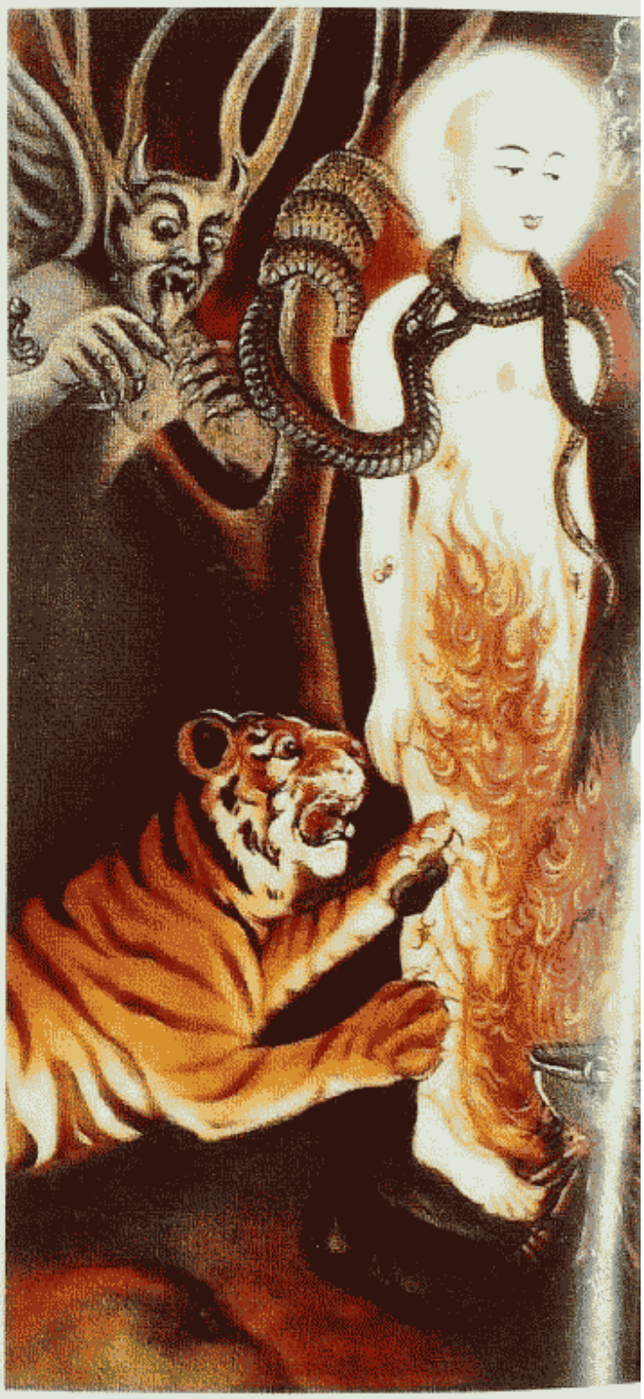
At this moment, Mahavira's spiritual purity increased to a great extent. He attained a higher stage of spiritual evolution and gained a special type of supernatural knowledge with which he was able to know any material thing lying anywhere in the universe.

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The Eyes wet with Compassion

Having taken the vow of a three-day-long fast, Tirthankara Mahavira stood in silence and in meditation in a small temple called Polasha in the Pedhala Park outside the village. He was so engrossed in meditation that bullocks, mistaking him for a post, rubbed their flanks against his body. On seeing his mental concentration, endurance, perseverance and unflinching forbearance, Indra, the Lord of Gods, paid his obeisance to Tirthankara Mahavira and said in a voice choked with emotion, "O Revered One, in granting forgiveness you are like the earth, in enduring calamities you are like a mountain, in steadfast persistence in spiritual efforts you are like an ocean and in concentrating the mind you are like a rock. Neither a man, nor a powerful god, nor a mighty demon can swerve you from the spiritual path you have adopted."



All agreed with Indra in his praise of Mahavira. But a god named Sangama could not tolerate this. He was very proud of his godhood. He wished to prove that man is nothing before god. He believed that a man, however great he might be, would succumb to the lures of wealth and damsels. Obtaining the permission of Indra, he arrived where Mahavira was standing in deep meditation. He thought : "Indra has made a mountain out of a mustard seed. I shall turn that mountain into a mustard seed again."

He put his plans into action. He played his tricks one by one on Mahavira. He inflicted innumerable favourable and unfavourable calamities on Mahavira in quick succession. In one night he inflicted twenty dreadful calamities on Mahavira. He assumed the form of a violent wind and threw basketfuls of dust on Mahavira's eyes, ears and nose. After that he sent ants to bite him. The pain from this was as sharp as being pricked incessantly by pointed needles. Then he sent gadflies and mosquitoes to suck his blood. After that he sent white ants to bite every inch of Mahavira's body. Then he sent an army of scorpions to attack Mahavira with their poisonous stings. Sangama's cruelty was unending but Mahavira's saintliness proved superior.

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Once more, assuming the following forms he inflicted pains upon Mahavira : Mungooses nibbled off small pieces of Mahavira's flesh. Poisonous cobras struck him with fangs. Mice gnawed at his body. Moreover, he transformed himself into a terrible goblin, dreadful lions, tigers, wolves and hounds to attack him. Sangama assumed the form of a whirlwind, lifted Mahavira and threw him to the ground. The pain was as unbearable as that which an elephant experiences while dying after a violent dash against the ground. Inspite of all such pains inflicted on him by Sangama, Mahavira did not move even his hands or feet, nor did he groan or moan in pain. He remained firm and unagitated.



Terrible upsarga of Sangamdev and meditating Mahavira

Sangama decided to deceive Mahavira. He assumed the forms of king Siddhartha and mother Trishala. They stood before Mahavira. Weeping and lamenting they said, "O dear son, look at our condition. We are very miserable. Old age has made us very weak. Where have you been all these days ? Why have you abandoned us when we are quite helpless in our old age ?" But Mahavira remained undisturbed. He was free from all attachment. He was not moved. His mental peace was not disturbed.

Mahavira was not perturbed by the unfavourable calamities. So Sangama inflicted favourable calamities on Mahavira. He sent charming celestial damsels before Mahavira

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to entice and seduce him. They showed off their youthful limbs. They danced and sang before Mahavira. They made graceful amorous gestures. They shot side-long glances at him. They said in sweet voices, "O my dear, you are so tender and delicate. Why do you unnecessarily subject your body to severe austerities ? And you are so young. This is the age when you should enjoy the pleasures of the senses. Please, come, we invite you to join us. You love all living beings of the world. Why do you deprive us of your love ? You remove the miseries of others and make them happy. Then, why do you distress us ? We long for your company, your loving touch and your sweet words. But you stay away from us. This separateness is unbearable. Please, have mercy on us."



Calamities created by Sangamdev

Cupid or lust can defeat even those who are otherwise invinicible. Under the influence of lust, age does not matter, nor is prowess recognised, nor is time considered. But Mahavira experienced not the slightest wavering of thought. He was unagitated and motionless. The beautiful damsels were disappointed. They wept in despair and vanished.

Sangama was losing his game and if anything he now wanted to save face. So Sangama thought that he should create a situation which may force Mahavira to seek the help of a god in his moment of mental distress or bodily pain and ultimately compel Mahavira to recognise the greatness of godhood. Sanagma thought that he would then be able to return to the celestial world having made the point.

So, a cook made a fireplace between Mahavira's feet and lit a fire there. A bird-catcher hung cages from Mahavira's body. But Mahavira's body remained as motionless as the trunk of a tree. Hungry birds pecked out flesh from his body by their beaks.

At this time a thief was caught. He said, "I am innocent. I have only followed the order of my teacher. He is the real culprit. Please, come with me and I shall show you my great teacher." The thief brought the policemen to the place where Mahavira was in meditation. The 'pupil' was released. And the police-men started beating Mahavira. But Mahavira did not utter a word nor did he call out anybody for help.

In the past six months Mahavira had not obtained any proper food as alms. But he was not downcast or broken-hearted. On the contrary, his spiritual strength was growing. Just as at long last, pure gold pours forth from

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the furnace so Mahavira proved his spiritual purity and strength by passing through these ordeals.

At last, one day, the exhausted and defeated Sangama fell at the feet of Mahavira and said to him in humble tone, "O Venerable One, I am Sangama. I did not recognise you. You are the most venerable, not only to men but even to gods. Your self-restraint and self-victory are amazing. What a unique sense of forgiveness you have ! What a wonderful power of endurance you have !"

Though Mahavira had been tortured for the last six months he was not perturbed in the least. He lifted his hand to bless Sangama. His merciful heart felt, "Oh, what will happen to this miserable creature ?" When he opened his lotus eyes there were two drops of tears in the corner of his eye-lids. On seeing them, Sangama was overjoyed and danced merrily. He said, "Oh, the merciful Lord's eyes, wet with compassion, will surely save a sinner like me."

Wonderful Donation

Mahavira came to the city of Kaushambi. He was begging alms from house to house. The locals requested him to accept food from their houses but he did not take take any food from anyone. Usually, he would accept cooked food once a fortnight, or once in a month. Sometimes he would not collect alms for upto four months. But whenever he did beg for food, he accepted whatever proper food he obtained from any house.

But once a rare and unique situation arose. Everyday Mahavira would set out to beg for food and he would wander from house to house but retrun to his meditation spot empty-handed. So the people of Kaushambi became very worried. They could not sleep and they constantly asked themselves why he was not accepting food in alms. How could it be that fish remained thirsty in a lake full of water ? Mahavira visited all the houses in Kaushambi - from luxurious palaces to poor huts. Everyone rushed to offer food to Mahavira but he accepted nothing from anyone.

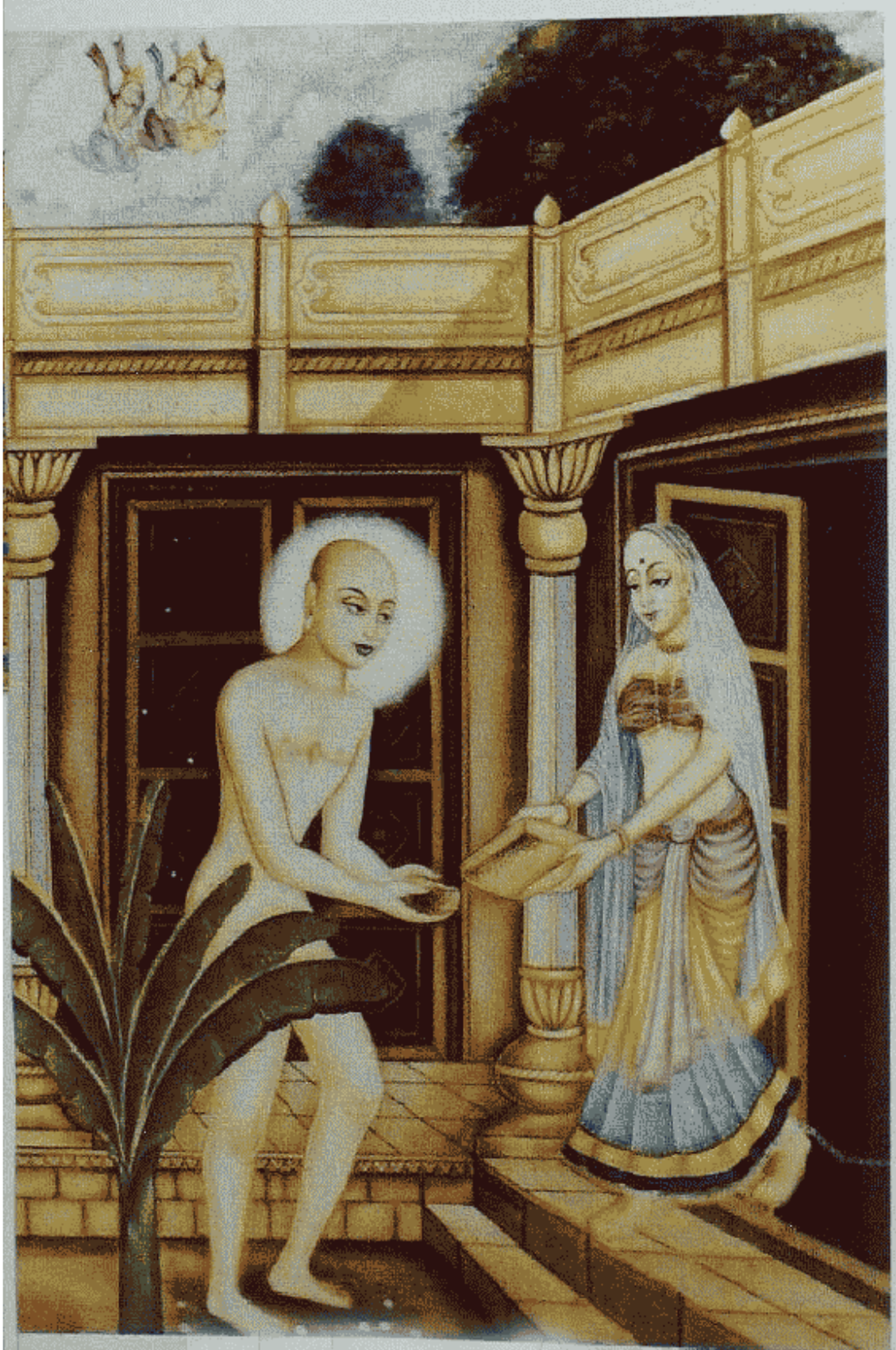
The people wondered as to what type of food he wanted. Nanda, the wife of the Minister Sugupta and a great female devotee of Tirthankara Mahavira, became very sad when Mahavira turned back without accepting any food from her. She said to her husband, "What sort of a minister are you ? Mahavira has not eaten a grain of food in the last four months. Why

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does he not get the proper food in this vast city ? Please, use your brain and find solution to this problem." Shatanika, the King of Vaishali, and his Queen Mrugavati were also very worried. The noblemen of the city who knew the means of winning over enemies were quite ignorant of why a great yogi refused to accept food offered to him in alms. Even the persuasive powers of such statesmen to convince Mahavira to have a morsel of food was of no avail.

Accepting alms from Chandanbala



Mahavira had entered the city of Kaushambi on the first day of the dark half of the month of *Posha*. On that day he made a secret resolution (*Abhigraha*). It was not an ordinary resolution and would be extremely difficult in fulfilling It related to the four conditions of (i) substance, (ii) place, (iii) time and (iv) state. Mahavira resolved that he would accept:

(i) boiled unsplit black beans in alms;

(ii) the black beans should be those in a corner of a winnowing basket.

(iii) the black beans from a person whose one foot was in the threshold and the other foot out of the threshold; and

(iv) the black beans given when the lunchtime was over.

He also resolved that the person offering him black beans should be a pure chaste princess turned a slave-girl with chains in her legs, head clean shaven, eyes wet with tears and who had been

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subjected to three-day-long fast. If only all the conditions of his vow were fulfilled, then he would accept the food offered.

What an austere vow of Tirthankara Mahavira ! The conditions were so difficult that they could be hardly fulfilled. So passed five months and twenty-five days. He went to the house of Dhanavaha, a rich merchant, asking for food in alms. Dhanavaha had a maid-servant named Chandana. She had been captured from the city of Champa by the soldiers of a victorious army. The merchant Dhanavaha had then bought the girl from a slave-market at a high price and had brought her to his house in Kaushambi to be a maid-servant. In fact she was the daughter of King Dadhivahana and Queen Dharini and her real name was Vasumati. Though she was Dhanavaha's maid-servant, he looked after her as he would look after his own daughter.

When Dhanavaha would return from his business trips, Chandana would bring water and pour it on his feet to wash them. Once, when she bent low to pour the water, her hair fell on his feet. Dhanavaha lifted up her hair to prevent it from falling in the dirty water. Mula, Dhanavaha's wife, saw the scene secretly and the fire of jealousy flared up in her heart. When Dhanavaha went on his next business trip to another town for business, Mula severely beat Chandana, had her head clean shaven put her into iron chains and threw her into a dark cellar. She gave Chandana nothing to eat. Chandana remained hungry and thirsty for three days.

When the merchant returned to Kaushambi, he realised what had happended. He was about to go to fetch a blacksmith, when he noticed boiled black beans in a winnowing basket to feed the cattle and he gave them to Chandana to eat. He then went to fetch the blacksmith. At that point, the yogi Mahavira arrived there. Chandana was very happy to see him. She was ready to offer him the boiled black beans.

Mahavira accepted boiled black beans from Chandana and broke his six-month long fast. Chandana was fortunate and blessed. A shower of twelve and a half crores of gold coins rained from the skies. Five divine beings appeared. Divine words 'Wonderful donation ! Wonderful alms' rang out from the skies. The whole atmosphere resounded with the sound of divine drum beating. The iron chains on Chandana's legs turned into golden anklets and her beauty was in full bloom.

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When Dhanavaha returned to his house with the blacksmith, he was surprised to see such a beautiful scene. The people of Kaushambi had assembled there. They experienced mixed feelings of joy and sorrow – joy because the great yogi had accepted food offered by Chandana after a six-month-long fast and sorrow because they knew that the princess had been sold as a slave-girl in the market as a consequence of war. Because of the terrible disaster of wars, a princess had to suffer the plight of a slave-girl and experience endless humiliation and miseries. They prayed, "May the evil of war be removed from the world. The mighty declare wars but the poor and the weak have to bear the disastrous consequences of wars. Young men die on the battlefield. Crops and cattle are destroyed. Children become orphans." The people realised the dreadfulness of war and repented for taking part in war. A great yogi, Mahavira, silently slipped away from the crowd leaving the people repenting and regretting.

Another Ordeal

It was the thirteenth year of Mahavira's asceticism. On his journey, he reached the village Chammani via Jambhiyagrama and Medhiyagrama. Chammani village was near Madhyama-Pava city and on the way to the city of Champa. Mahavira stood in meditation under a tree on the outskirts of the village Chammani. It was dusk. At that time an incident happened that was similar to the one that he had suffered on the first day of his renunciation The first ordeal had been inflicted on Mahavira by a shepherd and the last ordeal too was inflicted on him by a shepherd.

A shepherd with his bullocks was passing by the place where Mahavira was meditating. He asked Mahavira to look after them and went to the village. However Mahavira was in deep meditation and hence he was completely oblivious to the shepherd's request. The bullocks while grazing wandered far away. The shepherd returned very late. He could not see the bullocks anywhere in the vicinity. So he asked Mahavira, "O noble One, where are my bullocks ?" But as Mahavira was in meditation, he could not respond to his question. Getting no answer, the shepherd repeated the question. But the great yogi did not reply. On receiving no response to his repeated questions, his anger grew more intense. He angrily shouted, "O you, why don't you hear me ? Don't you have ears ?"

Mahavira's silence made the distressed shepherd very furious. He said, "O man, you speak nothing. Nor do you show me my bullocks. I think you

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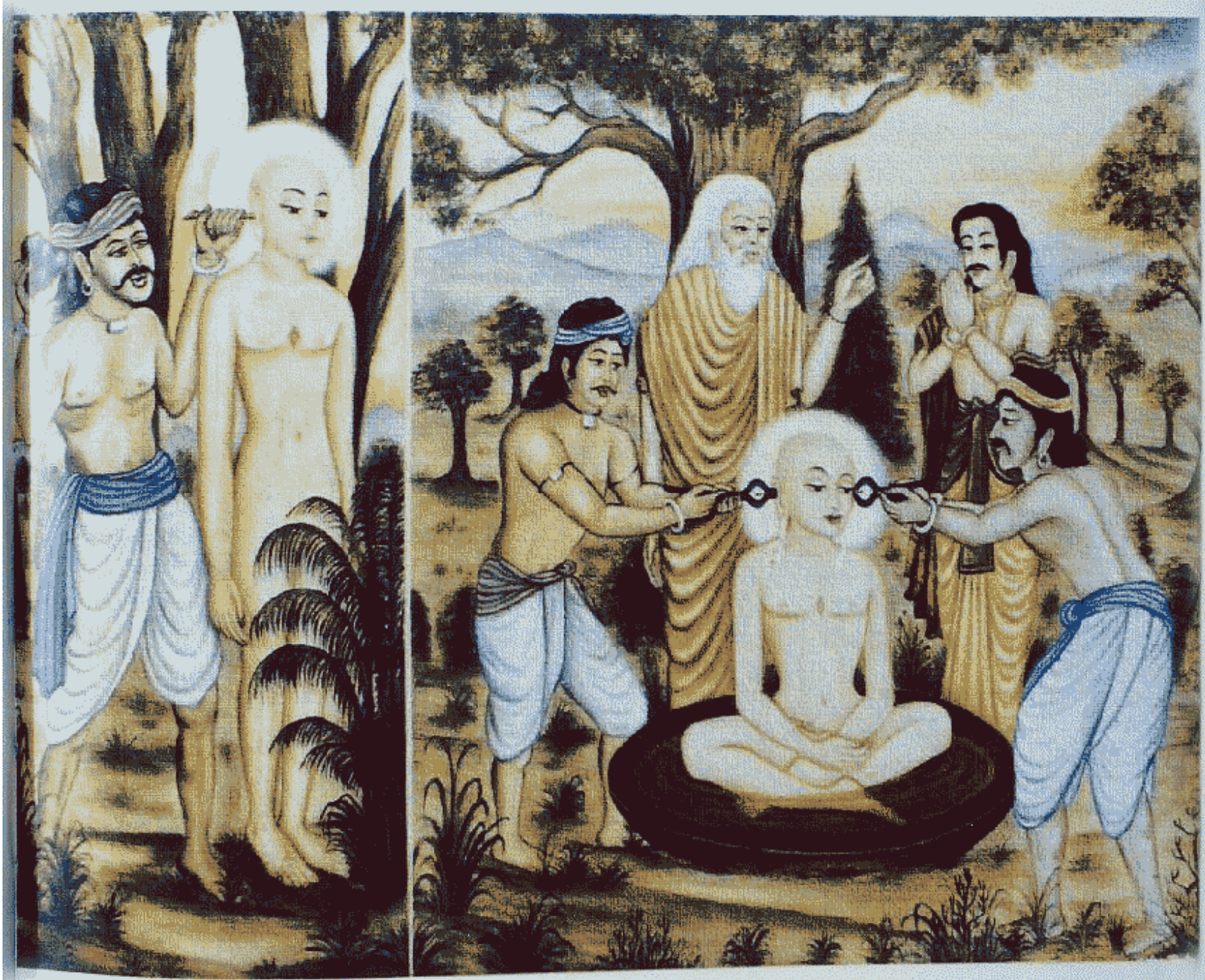
hear nothing. Have you filled your ears with oil? Just see how I clean them now."

The shepherd brought two thick roots of *darbha* grass. He sharpened them, made them as pointed as large nails and then thrust them in Mahavira's ears, hammering them deep with a heavy stone. He cut the outer ends of the roots so that no one could pull them out.

Anger is as wild as fire. The angry shepherd had lost his power of discrimination. He thought that he had rightly punished Mahavira. Under this illusion, he went away.

Shepherd thrusting wooden nails in the ear and vaidya Kharak and Siddharth pulling them out.

The pointed roots stuck into Mahavira's ears caused him unbearable pain but Mahavira remained peaceful and patient. His face did not show any



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sign of distress or agitation. He remained equanimous and serene. There was not an iota of animosity or spite in his heart. Transcending the outer surface of the endless pain, Mahavira's inner eyes searched for the real reason as to why he had to suffer like that. With his omniscient knowledge, he realised that it was the inescapable consequence of an evil deed that he had committed in his past birth as Triprushtha Vasudeva. Triprushtha had poured hot lead into the ears of his guard and had thus clogged his ears. The fruits of acts carried out with intense attachment or hatred are unalterable and inescapable. Their consequences have to be suffered.

Lord Mahavira resumed his journey. He left Chammani village and reached Madhyama-Pava. He went to the house of a merchant called Siddhartha for alms. An eminent physician named Kharaka had also come to Siddhartha's house. He was pleased to see Mahavira but he sensed that there was some thorn-like object embedded somewhere in Mahavira's body. When he told Siddhartha of this, the compassionate Siddhartha requested the physician to locate the object. When Kharaka examined Mahavira's body, he noticed that nail-like roots were thrust into Mahavira's ears. Siddhartha's heart bled out of pity for Mahavira and he said, "O Kharaka, please remove those roots from the ears of this great yogi. I shall pay whatever amount you ask for." Kharaka humbly replied that it was his duty as a physician to remove the roots from the ears of a saint. While they were discussing this, Tirthankara Mahavira left Siddhartha's house.

Siddhartha and Kharaka took the necessary instruments and medicine and went to a park outside the village. They found Mahavira there standing in deep meditation. Kharaka started the procedure of removing the nail-like roots. He began by massaging Mahavira with oil to relax his body. Then two strong men pulled out the nail-like roots from the ears with pincers. The roots came out with jets of blood. Mahavira had always endured ordeals with equanimity, but the pain caused by the removal of the roots was so agonising that he let out a shrill scream. The scream caused the entire park to tremble. The sound collided with mountains and produced loud echoes and caused tremor in the mountains. Even the sky resounded with the waves of the scream. How cruel was the shepherd's behaviour towards an embodiment of compassion! Kharaka stopped the bleeding and applied medicinal paste on the wounds. Kharaka and Siddhartha bowed down before Mahavira and begged his forgiveness. They then returned to the village.

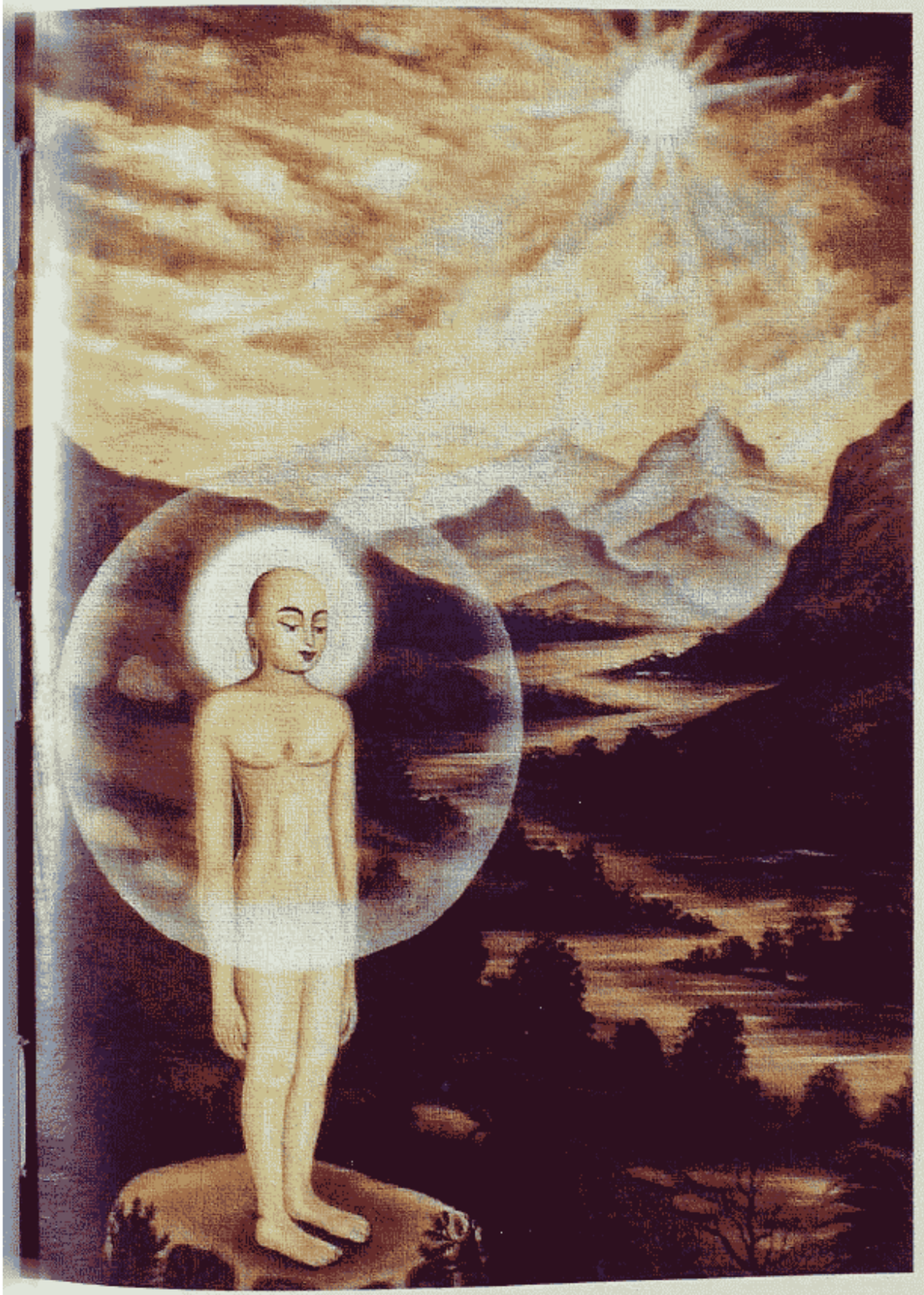
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Austerity and Spiritual Practice

The path of spiritual discipline is not a bed of roses. It is strewn with thorns. While walking on the path, one has to face countless ordeals and difficulties. Innumerable ordeals, challenges and obstacles surfaced during the spiritual practice of Mahavira. With his inner spiritual strength he stood like a rock against such situations, enduring them with perfect equanimity.

Bhagwan Mahavir in Shukla Meditation



He manifested love against anger and affection against hatred. The stream of friendship and compassion was constantly flowing from his heart towards those who caused him pain and wished ill of him. . His meditation remained undisturbed whatever the surrounding – be it deserted temple or a cremation ground - and whatever the weather condition - be it the biting cold or the scorching sun. While meditating in the standing posture, he remained so still and motionless that the bullocks would mistake him for a post and rub their flanks against his body. Gods, demons, humans and animals tried unsuccessfully to disturb him, but Mahavira remained peaceful and equanimous against the challenges. He had no attachment for friends, nor had he hatred for foes. In his eyes all were

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equal. He had compassion for all and enmity towards none. Thus through self-restraint and self-discipline he destroyed the soul-defiling *karmas*. Mahavira forged ahead with his spiritual efforts, facing challenges with firm conviction. The challenges faced by Mahavira can be classified into three groups – mild, severe and the most severe. The ordeal inflicted by Kataputana is included in the class of mild challenges. The ordeal inflicted by Sangama god is included in the class of severe challenges. And the ordeal of thrusting thick roots of *darbha* grass into Mahavira's ears is included in the class of the most severe challenges. Whatever the challenge – be it small or great, mild or intense– Mahavira faced and endured the ordeal firmly with an unagitated and calm mind. He equanimously endured all ordeals and hardships, miseries and agonies to cultivate spiritual strength and to remove all defiling elements from soul.

The *Kalpasutra*, which gives an account of Tirthankara Mahavira's life, demonstrates his glory in glowing terms. It says : "He was as unstainable as a vessel made of an alloy of zinc, tin and copper. He was as spotless as a conch. His motion was as unobstructed as that of the soul that is liberated. He was as independent as the sky. He was as free from bondage like the wind. He was as strong as an elephant. He was as heroic as a bull. He was as formidable as a lion. He was as pure as autumn water. And he was untouched by worldly enjoyment as the lotus is untouched by water."

Other scriptures further state about Mahavira : "He was as unfathomable as a deep ocean. He was as cool as the moon. He was as brilliant as the sun. He was as lustrous as gold. He was as tolerant as the earth. He was as glowing as fire. And in enduring ordeals he was as firm as Mount Sumeru."

Having attained the highest stage of virtuous meditation, he entered the stage of pure meditation. His meditation and austerity were extraordinary. In his life of ascetic practice, out of 4515 days he took food for only 339 days and that too only once a day and whatever he could get. He never accepted food specially prepared for him. For the remaining 4166 days he observed fasts without taking even water. Once of his fasts lasted six-months, another five months and twenty-five days. In addition, he fasted nine times for four months, twice for three months and two and a half months, twelve times for one month, seventy two times for a fortnight, once for two days and once for four days, once for ten days, two hundred twenty nine times for two days and twelve times for three days; three hundred forty nine days were break-fast days and one day was the day of renunciation rites. Such is the account of Mahavira's austerities.

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According to the religious books Mahavira's austerity was more severe than that of the other Jaina tirthankaras. 'Sutrakrutanga' says : Among oceans, the ocean named Svayambhuramana is the best, among juices the sugarcane-juice is the best, similarly among practitioners of austerity, the victorious Vardhamana is the best.

Mahavira's convictions were pure, his intentions were pure, his vision was pure and his nature was pure. He was free from all defilements. He had no obstructions, no bondage in this world or the other. He had attained the soul's pure and pristine state that was completely free from attachment and aversion. He had destroyed the passions of anger, pride, deceitfulness and greed. He had crossed the ocean of transmigratory existence. He made constant and conscious efforts to destroy karmas. His soul manifested all the meritorious qualities. He shone with infinite vision, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss and infinite energy. Thus twelve and a half years of his spiritual ascetic practice went by.



Kevaljnana (Omniscience) under teak tree on the bank of the Rujuvalika river

Attainment of Pure Knowledge

The conditions during the twelve and a half years of Mahavira's ascetic life were very harsh. He lived in dense forests and faced difficult challenges. The display of such fearlessness and power of endurance was unheard of.

During the thirteenth year of his ascetic life, having travelled from the city of Madhyama-Pava, Mahavira reached the bank of the river Rujuvalika flowing on the outskirts of the village Jambhiya on the tenth day of the waxing moon in the month of Vaishakha.

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The sun was setting and the farmers were returning to their houses with their ploughs and bullocks singing joyful folk songs. The shepherds were making their way back to the village with their herds of cows. They filled the atmosphere with the sweet tunes of their flutes. The jingling bells around the necks of cows added to the musical melody of the evening.

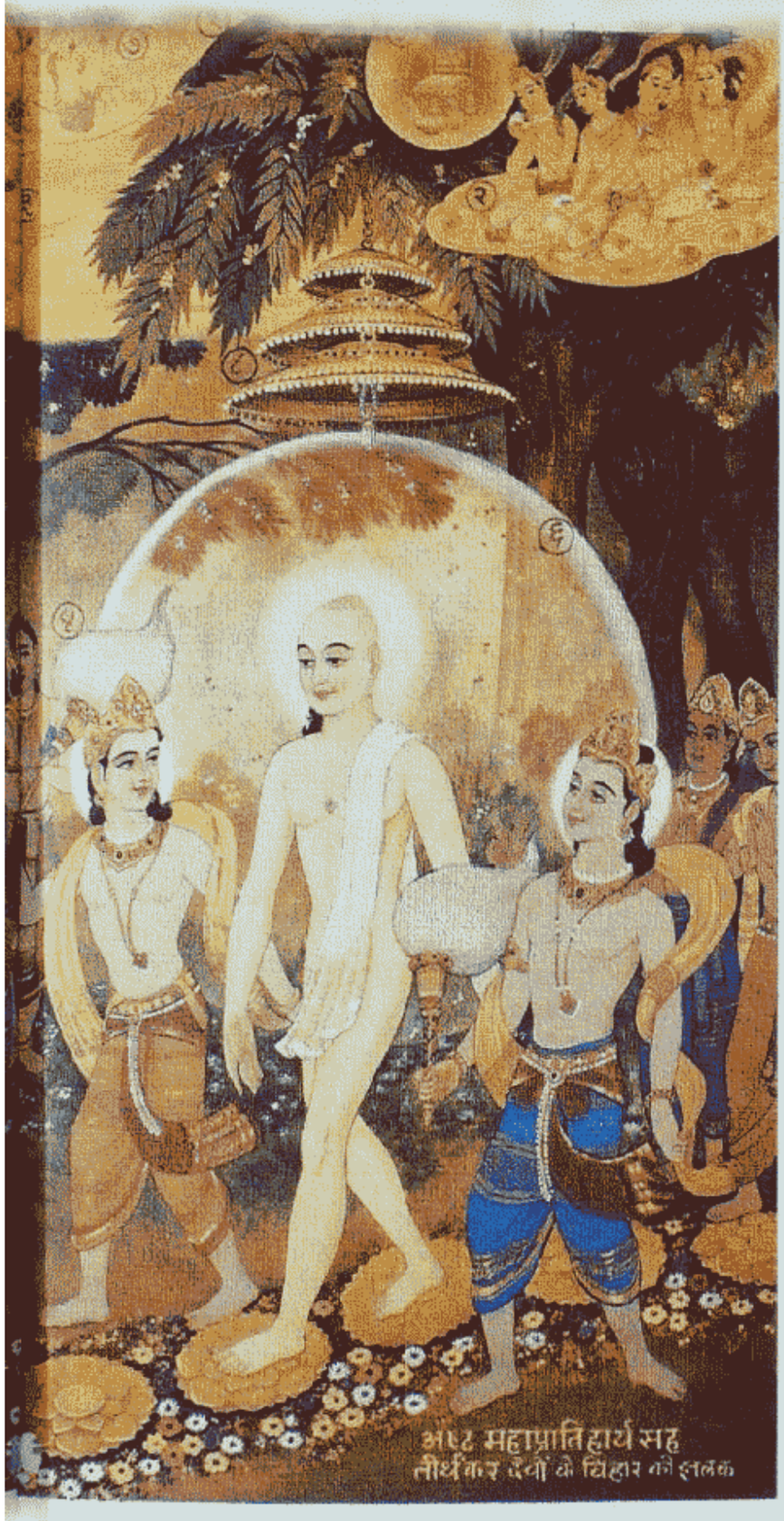
The water of the river Rujuvalika was very pure. The river made a soothing rippling sound as it flowed . There were paddy fields on the banks of the river. One of the fields had teak trees with dense green foliage under which stood a ruined old temple. It was the last quarter of the day. The moon was in conjunction with the constellation *Uttaraphalguni*. Mahavira was observing fast of two and a half days, not even taking water. Mahavira sat in meditation behind the temple in the squatting posture that a shepherd assumes while milking a cow, with his heels joined, knees up, hands on knees and the head low. Mahavira was engaged in deep pure meditation.Like a ship about to reach the shore after a long arduous journey, Mahavira was about to attain the highest fruit of his spiritual practices

There was a sudden change in the atmosphere. The hot winds of summer stopped blowing and were replaced by fragrant cool breeze. An inspiring light spread in the sky and the earth danced with joy. The world which had been afflicted with the fire of pain, agony and anguish experienced soothing cool breeze of love, peace and friendship. Age-old enemies became the best of friends. There were deer leaping about and playing in amusement without any fear from a tiger standing in front of them. In the ambience of love and compassion, even the violent tiger lost its aggressive nature and became loving and affectionate towards his traditional victims.A mongoose and a serpent suddenly came out from the thicket in the field. What an amazing scene ! They were happily playing together having forgotten the enmity they had inherited from generation to generation.

But what was the cause of this change ? Mahavira had attained pure knowledge and had become omniscient. Having destroyed the four soul-

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Tirthankara Mahavir with eight mahapratiharya

defiling *karmas*, namely deluding *karma*, knowledge-covering *karma*, vision-covering *karma* and obstructive *karma* in the second stage of pure meditation, pure knowledge and pure vision manifested in him. Pure knowledge was infinite and perfect, in which there remained no ignorance or misery of life. The knot of attachment and aversion had been severed. And immediately the atmosphere was filled with vibrations of congratulations 'Victory to Mahavira'. The whole world was resplendent with extraordinary light and there was an atmosphere of peace. The gods had descended on the earth to celebrate the auspicious event and played on divine drums..

The omniscient Tirthankara Mahavira became *'Arihant'*, the Worthy Conquerer. He became worthy of being worshipped with the eight auspicious objects. He became a Jina, [one who has overcome attachment and aversion]. He had knowledge of past, present and future and of all things. He knew whence beings had come, where they would go, and what they would be reborn as. He had complete knowledge of their thoughts and deeds.

It was as if the earth was receiving shower of nectar. With his body, Mahavira walked and ate. With his voice, Mahavira preached the principles of non-violence, love, self-restraint, non-possession. With his thoughts he dispelled doubts in the minds of gods in the highest heaven called Anuttaravimana. How splendid that moment was ! How extraordinary it was ! The whole world was surrounded by the light of enlighenment.

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Samavasaran : The Holy Assembly Hall

It was the tenth day of the bright half of the month of Vaishakha of the year 557 B. C. The sun was setting and the twilight cast its shadow over earth. On the bank of the river Rujuvalika Mahavira had just attained pure knowledge and pure vision. He became worthy of being worshipped with eight extraordinary divine objects (*pratiharyas*). The term '*pratihara*' means harbinger. Objects which are presented to a tirthankara by gods appointed by Indra are called *pratiharya*. The eight *pratiharya* are : the *Ashoka* tree, a shower of divine flowers, divine sound, a special fan prepared from the long hair of chamari cows, a throne, a halo, a divine drum and a white umbrella. These objects represent the presence of a tirthankara.

Gods overwhelmed with joy arrived to celebrate the fourth auspicious occasion in the life of the tirthankara Mahavira. They bowed to him. It is a universal rule that when a tirthankara attains pure knowledge and pure vision he halts for forty eight minutes at the place of attainment and delivers his first sermon on the observance of non-violence and self-restraint.

The gods constructed a holy assembly hall for the first sermon of Tirthankara Mahavira. The construction of the holy assembly hall is a unique occasion. It is eagerly awaited by gods, demons and men. Indra with his retinue arrives there and personally supervises the construction of the assembly hall. Wind-gods remove dirt, debris and thorns from the ground. Rain-gods sprinkle fragrant water on it and make it sweet-smelling. The presiding gods of all the six seasons shower flowers of five colours. The *vyantara* gods prepare a plinth nearly two miles in height, shining with gold and jewels. The *bhuvanapati* gods construct a silver fort ten thousand steps in height and make the ground of the fort level. The *jyotishi* gods construct a golden fort five thousand steps in height.

The holy assembly hall has three forts. Each fort has four entrances. The forts contain beautiful parks with gardens of flowers, holy temples, fluttering banners and decorative statues of the eight auspicious objects. They have gods or goddesses as gate-keepers. In the first fort there is the parking space for vehicles. In the second fort there is the assembly place for animals and birds like lions, tigers, goats, peacocks. The third fort accommodates human beings, gods and goddesses. In the middle of this third fort there is an *Ashoka* tree adorned with flower-garlands, flags, arches and an umbrella. Under it there are four thrones facing four quarters. Gods, goddesses, humans, animals and birds too come in this assembly hall to listen to the first sermon of a tirthankara. On two sides of a throne there stand two gods holding two special fans. In front of each throne there is a wheel of Religion or Law on a golden lotus. In each of the four directions there is a grand flag on a very tall post.

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Religious discourse of Bhagwan Mahavir in Samavasaran

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The *Ashoka* tree is twelve times the height of a tirthankara. On it gods reproduce a holy tree under which a particular tirthankara attained pure knowledge. Tirthankara Mahavira had attained pure knowledge under a teak tree. So the gods reproduced a teak tree as a holy tree on the *Ashoka* tree.

Having entered the holy assembly hall, a tirthankara circumambulates thrice the *Ashoka* tree on which the holy tree is reproduced. Then he takes his seat on a throne facing the east, and delivers his first sermon to the audience of the three worlds. The remaining three thrones are occupied by yogic bodies identical to the actual body of the tirthankara. These yogic bodies are created by the tirthankara with his supernatural yogic powers - and gods, goddesses, humans, animals and birds all feel that the tirthankara himself is delivering the sermon in front of them.

In such a splendid and holy assembly hall Tirthankara Mahavira occupied his high seat and delivered his sermon on non-violence, self-restraint and renunciation to an audience which consisted only of gods. However, none of the gods accepted the vow of complete renunciation to became an ascetic. The reason for this is that gods are always incapable of complete renunciation and ascetic life. Thus the first sermon of Mahavira was not successful. The religious books consider it to be a *accheru* (miracle).

After delivering his first sermon the venerable Mahavira started his journey towards the city of Apapa.

From Doubt to Knowledge of the Truth

In the city of Apapa, a wealthy Brahmana called Somila Arya had arranged Vedic sacrifice on grand scale. He had invited many pundits from different parts of India. The eleven renowned pundits of that time had arrived to conduct the sacrificial rites. They were great scholars and such experts in reciting Vedic verses and in conducting Vedic ritualsthat even the gods had to present themselves during their recitals. Among these great pundits were three brothers – Indrabhuti, Agnibhuti and Vayubhuti. They were eminent scholars and well-versed in the fourteen branches of learning. Each of the them was accompanied by his five hundred pupils. In addition, other pundits like Vyakta, Sudharma, Mandita, Mauryaputra, Akampita, Achalabharata, Metarya, Prabhasa, were also present along with their pupils.

Thus, Vedic sacrifice began in the presence of those eleven great pundits who were well-versed in the Vedas, adept in all sciences and expert in the

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Sacrificial alter and two Brahmins

art of public debate. Somila Brahmana was very happy. And when he noticed gods arriving in their celestial vehicles his joy knew no bounds. But when he found that the vehicles, instead of landing near the sacrificial enclosure, went past it, he and Indrabhuti were deeply perplexed.

Indrabhuti Gautama asked Somila, "O Noble One, what is this ? What are the celestial vehicles heading for, having crossed our sacrificial site. Is anybody else visitng this city ?"

Arya Somila said, "Prince Vardhamana of a warrior class, who renounced the world thirteen years ago, has come to this city. He leads a pure ascetic life. He practices severe austerities. He has attained a very exalted spiritual state, supernatural knowledge and yogic powers. Even the gods worship him with devotion."

The great pundit Indrabhuti felt deeply humiliated. He thought, "Who is Mahavira compared to a great pundit like me? I am an expert in all sciences. Sure, he might have secured magical power through the practice of austerities. But so what? His magical illusion will last only so long as ignorance prevails. In the bright light of my knowledge it will surely disappear."

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Somila Brahmana said, "The enemy and disease should be nipped in the bud. Mahavira's strength and power should be checked and destroyed at once. Before his thoughts and ideas reach countries like Magadha, Vaishali and Kapilvastu he should be defeated in public debates."

Gloomy silence prevailed at the sacrificial site. Indrabhuti thought : "Today I have an opportunity to defeat Mahavira. He preaches his doctrines in the language of the ordinary people instead of in the divine language Sanskrit. Moreover, he has opened up the doors of religion and spiritual practice for all irrespective of caste or creed. He allows everybody to study the scriptures and the Vedas. He declares women equal to men in status, elevates them to the same position as men hold in the field of religion, and regards them as qualified for ascetic life. All his ideas are against Vedic tradition. He should be strongly opposed at any cost. I should at once challenge and defeat him." Charged with such thoughts Indrabhuti, who was fifty years old, suddenly got up and went straight to Mahavira's assembly hall along with his five hundred pupils.

Two powerful personalities were about to meet face to face. It was anticipated that there would ensue clashes and sparks. Indrabhuti Gautama, an incarnation of the Goddess of Learning, arrived in the Mahasena park. He saw the great yogi Mahavira. There prevailed peace and equanimity all around him. Indrabhuti was greatly surprised to see the splendour of Mahavira's holy assembly hall. At the mere sight of it, Indrabhuti's pride and vanity disappeared. The whole atmosphere was filled with feelings of universal love, compassion and non-violence. Thousands of gods were bowing in reverence to Mahavira. Indrabhuti heard a divine sound and he looked at the face of Mahavira. What divine lustre ! What brilliance of spiritual wealth ! Indrabhuti became alert. And he heard words as sweet as the tunes of a flute in woods : "Please come, Indrabhuti Gautama, I welcome you. Are you happy and healthy ?"

At first, Indrabhuti wondered how Mahavira knew his name. Then he thought that as he was well known in the world, it was not surprising that Mahavira too knew him. Just like a lit lantern has darkness underneath it, Indrabhuti Gautama, despite emitting the light of his knowledge all around him, had the darkness of doubt in his mind.

Tirthankara Mahavira removed his doubt through his pure knowledge and Indrabhuti spontaneously folded his hands in reverence to Mahavira.

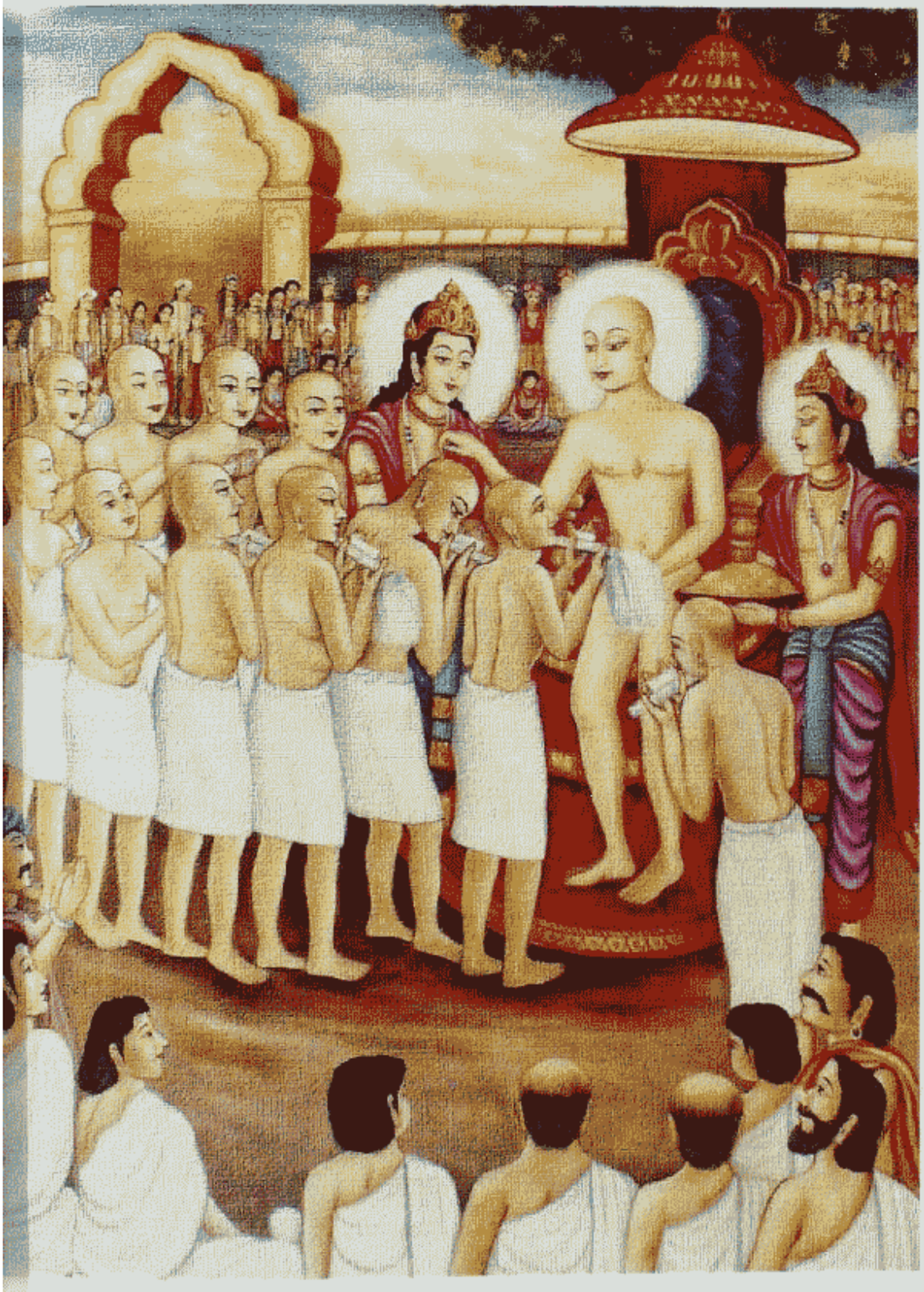
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Mahavira's Debate with his Eleven Principal Disciples

The great pundit Indrabhuti Gautama was a sincere seeker of truth. He practiced non-absolutism and was straightforward and humble by nature. His conscience constantly persuaded him, "O Indrabhuti Gautama, abandon bigotry. Search for the truth alone. The truth is within you. Turn your attention inward and engage yourself in pure meditation."

Doubts of eleven pandits dispelled



Mahavira convinced Indrabhuti of the existence of soul demonstrating how existence of soul could be effectively proved with perception, experience, introspection and intuition. Indrabhuti's doubt about the existence of the soul gradually vanished.

Indrabhuti folded his hands in humility and bowed down in reverence before Mahavira, "Sir, you are quite right. You are truly omniscient. You have cleared the doubt which I have had for so many years. Please accept me and my five hundred pupils as your disciples."

Mahavira had love and respect for Indrabhuti. He said, "O Indrabhuti Gautama, an auspicious future lies ahead. We shall together endeavour to eradicate violence, to spread the religion of non-

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violence and universal friendship and to bring harmony amongst various religions and philosophies."

Indrabhuti was delighted to hear this. He said, "O venerable Mahavira, you are really omniscient. Kindly teach me wisdom."

Mahavira explained how one could achieve self-welfare as well as universal welfare through the practice of universal love, compassion, self-control and austerities. Mahavira's speech enlightened Indrabhuti. Indrabhuti's whole being and thought permeated with devotion for Mahavira.

On the other side of the city of Apapa, Somila Brahmana and other eminent pundits were eagerly awaiting the return of a victorious Indrabhuti, who they were sure would have defeated Mahavira in public debate. However, they received the shocking news that Indrabhuti had surrendered himself to Mahavira and became his disciple. Distressed, Somila postponed his grand Vedic sacrifice and as a result the animals which had been brought for sacrificial offering, were set free. The citizens slowly departed from the sacrificial site.

Indrabhuti Gautama's younger brother, Agnibhuti, set out determined to defeat Mahavira. Mahavira welcomed Agnibhuti with love. He dispelled Agnibhuti's doubt about past *karma* and Agnibhuti also became Mahavira's disciple.

On hearing that both his elder brothers along with their one thousand pupils had renounced the world and assumed the ascetic life as disciples of Mahavira, the youngest brother Vayubhuti arrived hoping to defeat Mahavira. Mahavira clarified Vayubhuti's confusion about whether the soul and body were identical or different. Vayubhuti, too, became the disciple of Mahavira.

Upon hearing the news about Vayubhuti, pundit Vyakta approached Mahavira. He had a doubt about the five physical elements and wanted to know whether earth, water, fire, air and ether were real or illusory. Mahavira removed his doubt too.

Mahavira went on to dispel the doubts and confusions of the other pundits. He removed Sudharma's confusion about this world and the other world. He explained bondage and liberation to Mandika Brahmana. He cleared Mauryaputra's doubt about the existence of gods and Akampita's doubt about the existence of hells. He explained auspicious and inauspicious *karmas* to Achalabhrata. He clarified Metarya's confusion about other world



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and life after death and Prabhasa's doubt about Ultimate Release. This debate about the Truth, which Mahavira had with the eleven great pundits, came to be known as 'Ganadharavada'.

Mahavira cleared the confusions of the pundits with love and on the basis of universal experience. Mahavira's method of synthesis and his catholic outlook recognized truth in every view, and these were the logical counterparts of his ethical doctrines of universal love and equanimity. Five hundred pupils of each of the first five pundits, three hundred fifty pupils of each of the next two pundits, and three hundred pupils of each of the last four pundits surrendered themselves to Mahavira. Thus four thousand four hundred and eleven blessed men accepted Mahavira's teachings and became Jaina ascetics. This auspicious event took place on the eleventh day of the bright half of the month of Vaishakha in the 500th year before the Vikram Era.

A Merchant becomes a Jaina Monk

Two rich men lived in the city of Rajgruhi - Shalibhadra and his brother-in-law Dhannasha. They had as much wealth as the god Kubera, the treasurer of gods. Their merrymaking, sensual enjoyment and prosperity was well-known in the city. Shalibhadra's father Gobhadra had become a Jaina ascetic under the leadership of Tirthankara Mahavira. His young son Shalibhadra had been brought up by his mother and was very spoilt. Shalibhadra lived in absolute luxury. He remained so indulged in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures that he never found time to step out of the seventh storey of his grand mansion. One day a merchant arrived in Rajagruhi. He was out to sell sixteen shawls embroidered with precious jewels, the price of each one being one lac and twenty five thousand gold coins.

He first approached King Shrenika. But the king could not afford even one shawl. So the merchant went to the grand palatial mansion of Shalibhadra. Shalibhadra's mother Bhadra, who managed all the household affairs, told the merchant that she had thirty two daughters-in-law. She took immediate delivery of all the sixteen shawls and asked the merchant to send her another sixteen shawls later. She asked her accountant to settle the bill without waiting to know the exact amount to be paid.

Next day King Shrenika's wife, Queen Chelana, insisted that he buy at least one shawl embroidered with jewels for her. King Shrenika asked his men

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to find out who had bought the sixteen shawls. He learnt that they were sold to Bhadra who made two equal pieces of each shawl and then distributed all the thirty-two pieces among her thirty-two daughters-in-law. He was astonished to further learn that Bhadra's daughters-in-law, finding the touch of the shawls rough and hard, used them as door-mats. King Shrenika went to Bhadra's mansion. Bhadra asked Shalibhadra to come down and pay his respects to King Shrenika.

Shalibhadra said, "O mother, you are the owner of the house. Please buy Shrenika and pay its price. What is the need of my coming down for that ?"

Bhadra said, "O my dear son, Shrenika is not a thing to be bought and sold. He is our king. He is our protector. He is our master."

On hearing the word 'master' Shalibhadra's mind became perturbed and thought: "Am I not the master of myself ? Is somebody else my master? Am I to be dependent on some other person ? Let me adopt that course which can free me from all masters, make me self-dependent and fearless." He was determined to overcome dependence and helplessness. Obeying his mother's order he paid his respects to Shrenika. But he was troubled by the question: "Why am I not my own master despite all my wealth and prosperity ? What is real freedom ? What is Ultimate Release?"



At that time he had an occasion to listen to the preaching of a Jaina monk named Dharmaghosha. On hearing the discourse, he made up his mind to adopt the course of spiritual discipline and conquer his

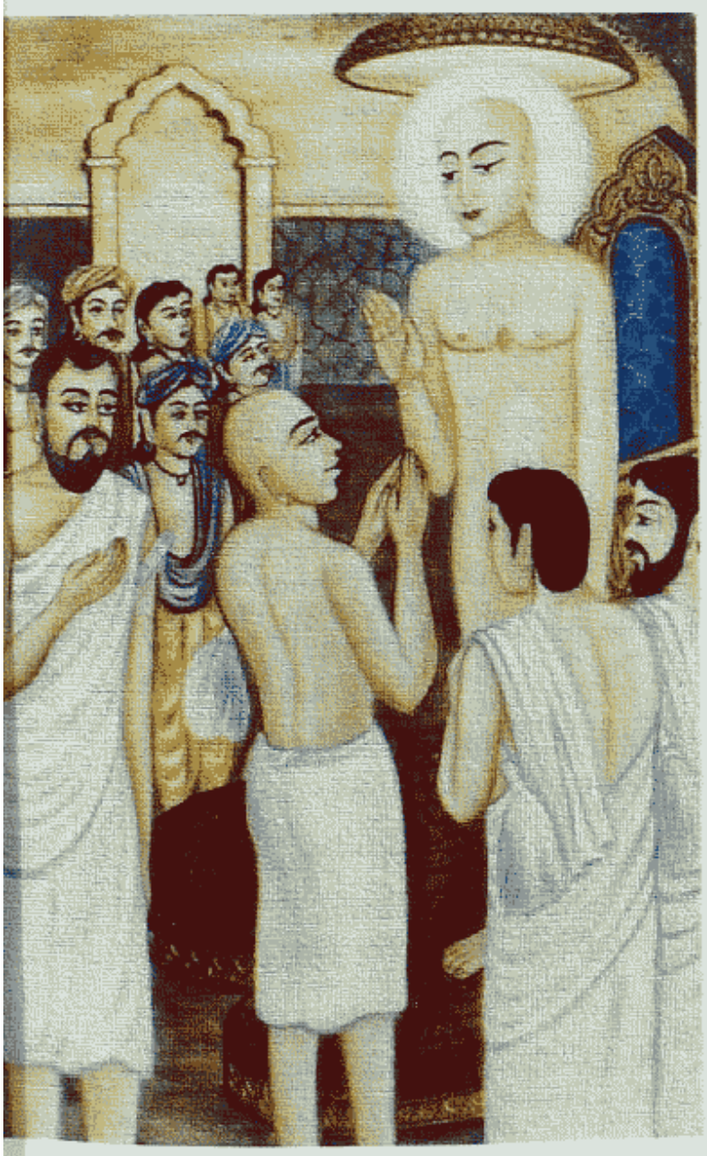
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attachment to worldly pleasures. He informed his mother of his resolve. His mother advised him to renounce his wealth and wives gradually and slowly. She told him that gradual and progressive renunciation would ultimately make him a true ascetic. The tempting and enticing charms of his wives and the attraction of worldly enjoyment could not swerve him from his resolve, which was strengthened with the persistent persuasion of his mother

Shalibhadra's sister Subhadra also lived in Rajagruhi with her husband Dhannasha, a rich merchant. Once, remembering Shalibhadra's resolve to renounce the world, tears welled up in her eyes. On seeing this, Dhannasha said, "Shalibhadra will not attain his desired end by gradually renouncing his wives one by one on different days. That is no heroism. It is cowardice. If he is really determined to assume the life of an ascetic, he should renounce everything at once." Subhadra retorted, "That is easier said than done." The taunting words of his wife pierced Dhannasha's heart like an arrow and at that very moment he renounced Subhadra and his other seven wives, went straight to Shalibhadra and said, "O Shalibhadra, in renouncing the world it does not become you to act like a coward. Renounce everything at once." The words had great impact on Shalibhadra. Both he and Dhannasha renounced all attachments to worldly objects and abandoned everything. The citizens of Rajagruhi witnessed a miracle. Two rich men, who had lived in great luxury and pomp all their lives, had renounced the world to become ascetics.

Conversation between Dhannasha and Shubhadra and initiation of Dhanna-Shalibhadra



Shalibhadra and Dhannasha went to an assembly hall outside Rajagruhi to see the venerable Mahavira. They accepted the vow of spending the rest of their lives as Jaina ascetics under the leadership of Mahavira. They made firm resolutions to divert their life from the path of luxury and worldly enjoyment to that of severe austerity and self-control. The spiritual strength that they received from within induced them to forget all bodily attachment, comforts and worries. When they renounced the world and became ascetics, they became free from all bondages and desires. They were not

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enticed by temptations and no longer remained slaves to their senses. They were their own masters. They remained engaged in spiritual practice and deep meditation and experienced inner bliss.

Enmity and Non-attachment

The teacher-disciple relationship between Mahavira and Indrabhuti Gautama, which was the result of their past *karmas*, strengthened. Gautama had deep respect and devotion for Mahavira, and was always ready to render service to Mahavira. He would seek instant clarfication from Mahavira whenever any doubt arose in his mind, like an inquisitive child. The questions pertained to all branches of learning. They included topics related to three divisions of time, the three worlds, the four main classes of transmigratory existence and the four groups of post canonical texts. Gautama would address Mahavira as '*bhante*' ('O Venerable One') and express his curiosity or doubt in the form of a question. And Mahavira would affectionately addressed him as '*Goyama*' ('O Gautama') and answer his question.They travelled together from place to place expounding and propagating the spiritual truth.

Once, on the outskirts of a small village, they came across a pitiful sight. A farmer was tilling his field with a plough drawn by bullocks. The bullocks were completely exhausted and could not move. But the farmer, who had to till the whole farm at any cost, was beating them with a stick.

On seeing this, Mahavira's heart bled out of pity. He said to Gautama, "O Gautama, go and stop this cruelty. Explain to the farmer that he is harming his own self by inflicting pain on the bullocks. Show him the difference between good acts and bad acts so that he may stop beating the bullocks." Gautama approached the farmer who was surprised to see the glowing face of Gautama. Gautama's simple teaching deeply impressed him. He was convinced of the truth. He left tilling the field and sat at the feet of Gautama to listen to his teaching. Gautama explained the difference between good acts and bad acts. He showed him the path of spiritual welfare. He demonstrated the means by which man could attain inner peace and infinite bliss. The farmer was overjoyed to learn the highest truth expressed in the simplest language by Gautama. He accepted Gautama as his spiritual teacher and became a Jaina monk.

Gautama was glad that he could change the course of one man's life towards the highest good.

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Mahavira asking Gautamswami to preach Halik, the farmer and Halik running away

Gautama and his new disciple began their journey to meet Mahavira. The new disciple thought: "If my teacher is so learned and wise, then how learned and wise my teacher's teacher must be !" He was very eager to meet Mahavira.

Gautama and the farmer arrived at the place where Mahavira was staying. The farmer, who had been looking forward to seeing Mahavira throughout the entire journey, was very happy to catch a glimpse of Mahavira from a distance. Gautama and his pupil moved closer to Mahavira, whose eyes were wet with tears of compassion. As soon as his eyes met Mahavira's, the farmer became restless. He cast away the monk's dress and ran away as if he was being chased by some spirit or ghost. He was not willing to listen to anybody. Gautama was taken aback by the odd behaviour of his pupil. The mere sight of the venerable Mahavira spiritually uplifted many living beings. Then, why did the farmer experience distress at the sight of Mahavira and run away ?

Tirthankara Mahavira explained to Gautama, "O dear Gautama, every living being is bound by his past *karmas* and past animosity. When I was Triprushtha Vasudeva in my past birth, this farmer was a lion who terrorised the people. Triprushtha Vasudeva killed the lion. The lion was born as a god

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named Sudamshtra in the class of the *nagakumara* gods. In the beginning of my ascetic life, Sudamshtra tried to wreck the boat in which I was travelling. The same god is now reborn as this farmer. O Gautama, the past impressions of animosity were revived in him when he saw me. This is the reason why he felt restless when he saw me, threw away the monk's dress and ran away. The past impressions accompany us from birth to birth if we do not destroy them by our spiritual efforts. The true means to destroy defiling passions of animosity is the cultivation of the feeling of non-attachment and universal love."

Lust and Non-attachment

Innumerable sorrows had befallen Queen Mrugavati. Her husband died suddenly and the heavy burden of ruling the kingdom of Kaushambi fell on her shoulders. Her son Udayana was still a child. Queen Mrugavati was a loving mother and an expert ruler. The king of Ujjaini, Pradyota, was a lustful person who had no control over his passion and could not discriminate between right and wrong. He was so arrogant that he was known by the name of Chanda Pradyota.

He was obsessed with Queen Mrugavati and wanted her to be his wife. King Pradyota's army was very large and could easily defeat Kaushambi's small army. King Pradyota besieged the city of Kaushambi and sent a message that he would attack Kaushambi unless Queen Mrugavati agreed to become his wife. The army of Kaushambi wanted to protect their queen and were ready to fight.

However, Queen Mrugavati very well knew that it would be impossible to defeat King Pradyota. So, she came up with a plan. She sent a message to King Pradyota which said : "O King Pradyota, please give me some time to think over your proposal. My husband has died only very recently - even the mourning period is not over. Prince Udayana is still a child. It is my duty to make proper administrative arrangements in the kingdom before I can make the decision. Many surrounding kingdoms are eyeing my kingdom with a view to attacking and conquering it. I realise that if we enter into matrimonial alliance, then our kingdoms will become stronger and invincible. But it is not yet time for that. Please wait for a short while. I will write to you myself when I feel that the opportune moment has arrived."

Proud Chanda Pradyota agreed to wait for some time. He went back

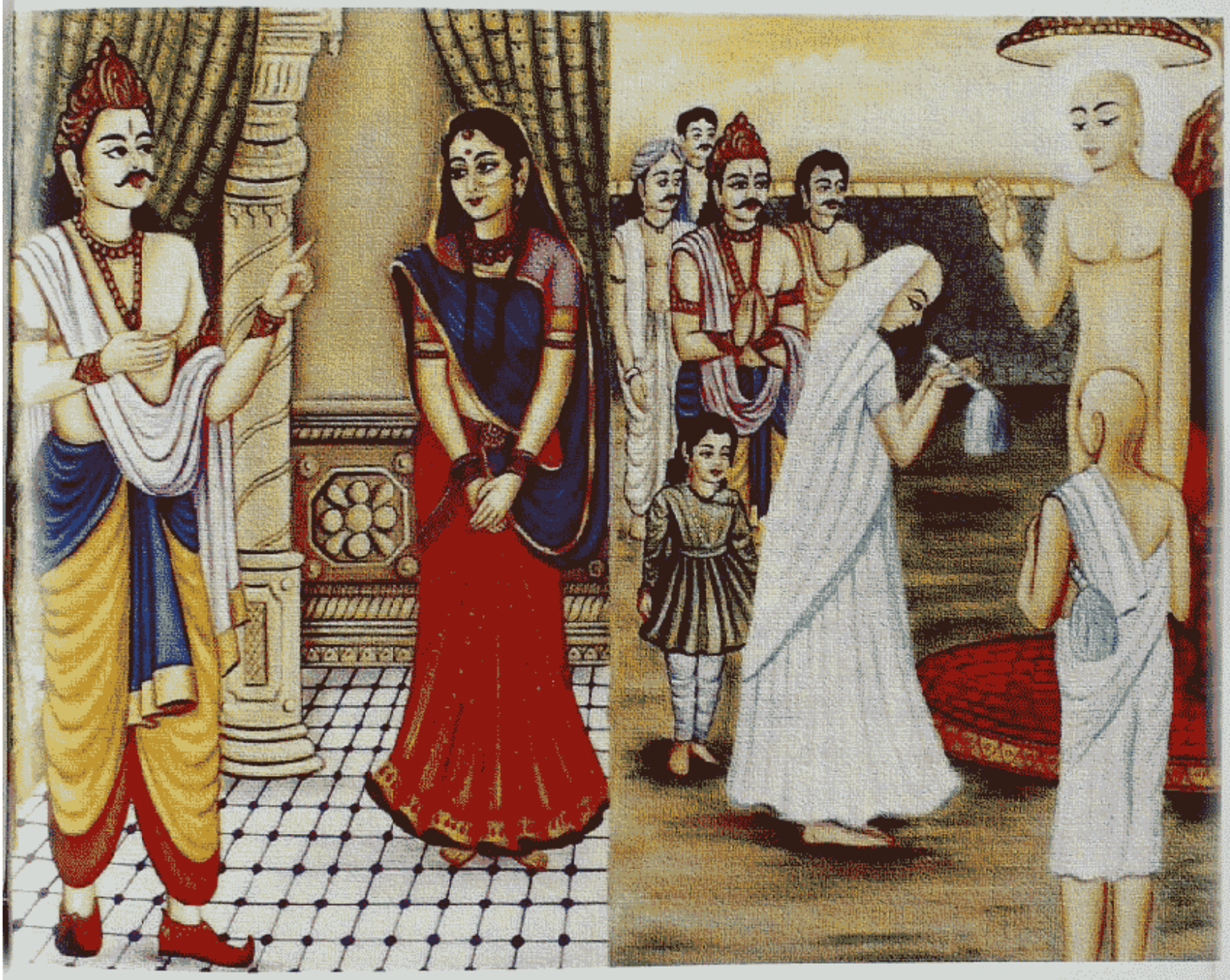
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to Ujjaini with his army. Queen Mrugavati's plan worked. She found time to make her army strong. She fortified her fort. She collected arms and ammunition. She stored food in sufficient quantity. She made all the necessary preparations for the imminent war.

King Pradyota was eagerly awaiting Queen Mrugavati's invitation. Many days passed but he did not hear anything from Mrugavati. So he sent a messenger to her. She told the messenger to tell the King that she would send a letter of invitation within a few days. The King waited for some more days. Then he sent message after message but there was no response from

King Chandpradyot and Queen Mrugavati and Mrugavati getting initiation



the queen. So his anger flared up and he gave orders to make preparations for war against Kaushambi. He did not want to waste any more time. He wanted to invade and defeat Kaushambi and to carry away the Queen with him as soon as possible.

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A war was imminent. However, at that time, a miracle occurred. The venerable Mahavira had arrived in the city of Kaushambi from Alabhiya and vibrations of peace and friendship were spreading everywhere. Queen Mrugavati knew that only Mahavira, an apostle of peace, could prevent the imminent war. She ordered the guard to open the gates of the city which had been shut to protect the people from attack. With her little son Udayana, she went to the holy assembly of Tirthankara Mahavira to listen to his teaching. King Pradyota was also present in the assembly with his queens. Tirthankara Mahavira's discourse, full of inspiring examples and anecdotes, aroused feelings of non-attachment and renunciation in the audience. He said, "O friends, fight with your own self. Defeat your internal enemies like anger and greed. Why fight with external enemies ? External fight is futile. He who conquers himself by himself will attain true happiness and spiritual welfare. A man who conquers nobody but himself is a greater victor than one who conquers thousands and thousands of valiant enemies. The right means of saving oneself from downfall is always to keep one's mind pure, fortified with courage and patience, and unsullied by passions and perverse desires so that one may not be defeated and degraded and may remain peaceful and unagitated."

Mahavira's teaching changed the hearts of many listeners who took the vow of asceticism. Queen Mrugavati too was overwhelmed with spiritual awareness. She expressed her wish, "With the permission of King Pradyota I would like to become a female ascetic under the leadership of Mahavira." The whole assembly was astounded that the Queen should seek King Pradyota's permission in the presence of so many people. Before the preaching he might not have accepted her wish. But After listening to the discourse the King Pradyota's feelings had also become pure and, whereas before the discourse he may not have accepted her wish, he now gave her his consent without any hesitation. Thereupon Queen Mrugavati said, "O King, from hereon consider my son Udayana as your own son. Kindly look after him. Be his guardian and well-wisher. Please train him to become a good and benevolent king. "

King Chanda Pradyota of Ujjaini accepted the responsibility. He said, "O Queen, I shall consider Udayana as my own son. I shall take every care of him and train him in politics. Be free from all worries about your son and assume the life of a Jaina ascetic."

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Thus, Queen Mrugavati put her son in the custody of King Pradyota and became a female ascetic. Following the example of Queen Mrugavati, Angaravati and seven other queens of King Pradyota requested their husband to allow them to become female ascetics. Obtaining the permission, they too assumed the ascetic life.

Lord Mahavira's teaching prevented war and bloodshed. Instead, it brought about universal love and non-attachment and the city of Kaushambi experienced well-being and peace.

Predeterminism Versus Human Effort

A very rich potter named Saddalaputra lived in the town of Polasapura. He belogned to the Ajivika sect. He possessed three crore gold coins and ten thousand cows. He had five hundred workshops outside the town, where earthen wares were made and sold. Saddalaputra and his wife Agnimitra believed in the doctrine of determinism, propounded by Mankhaliputra Goshalaka, a leader of the Ajivika sect. Goshalaka had formerly been a pupil of Mahavira but he went on to become his opponent and adversary. He maintained : "Whatever is destined to happen will happen. The course of future events cannot be changed. It is firmly fixed. Human effort is futile and cannot change it."

On his journey, the venerable Mahavira left Kampilapura and arrived in Polasapura. Saddalaputra invited Mahavira to accept food and shelter at his house.

Mahavira went to Saddalaputra's house. Saddalaputra was moving the dry wares from sunshine to shade and the wet ones from shade to sunshine. Mahavira had the following dialogue with him :

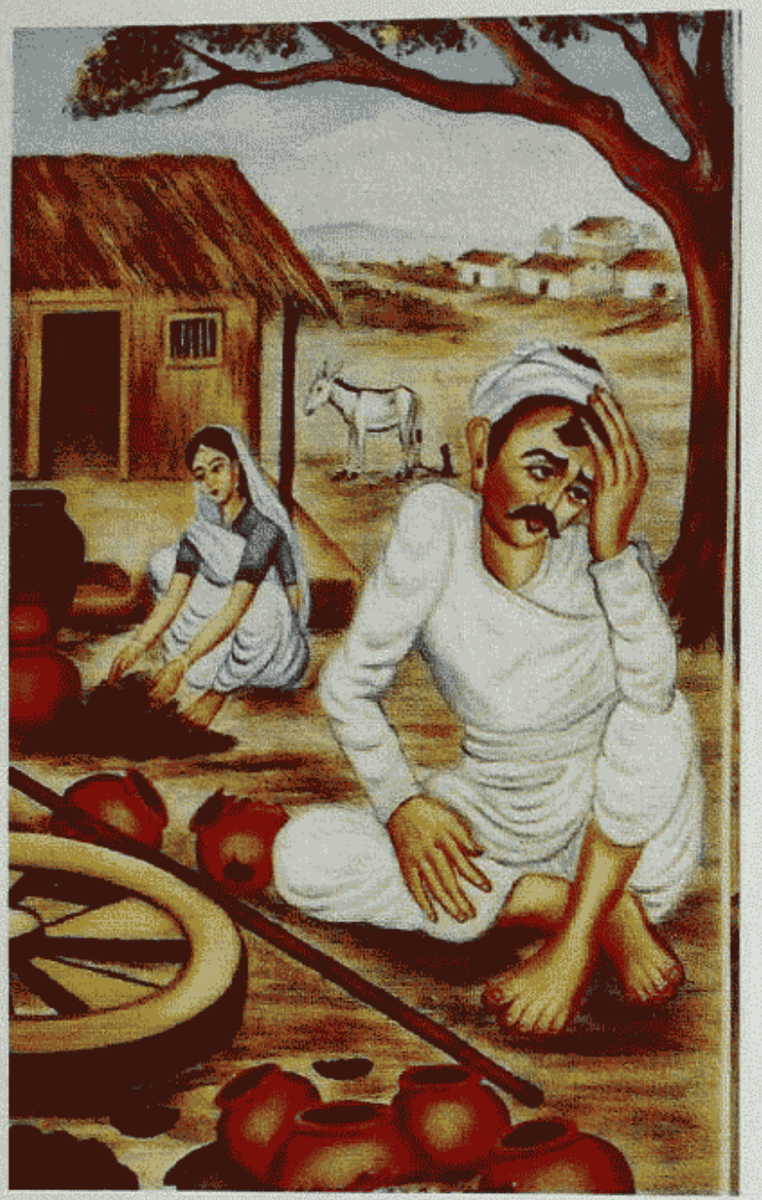
Mahavira : "O Saddalaputra ! Are the potter's wares made by human effort or not ?"

Saddalaputra : "They are made by force of Fate. All things are predetermined. Their states are fixed. Their creation and destruction require neither human efforts nor the operation of causes."

Mahavira : "O Saddalaputra ! Suppose someone breaks your pots or makes advances to your wife. Will you hold him responsible for his misdeeds ? Or, will you consider them to be ordained by Fate and hence remain calm ?"

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Saddalputra

Saddalaputra : "I shall strike the culprit, or even kill him. How can I remain calm ?"

Mahavira : "This means that you hold that man responsible for his acts. If the acts are fixed by Fate or Destiny, then why should you hold him responsible for the acts ? Should man accept determinism solely to disown his responsibility for his evil deeds and reject it solely to take revenge upon others for their offences ? O Saddalaputra ! Is the doctrine of determinism conducive to progress ? Can it bring and establish order in the world ?"

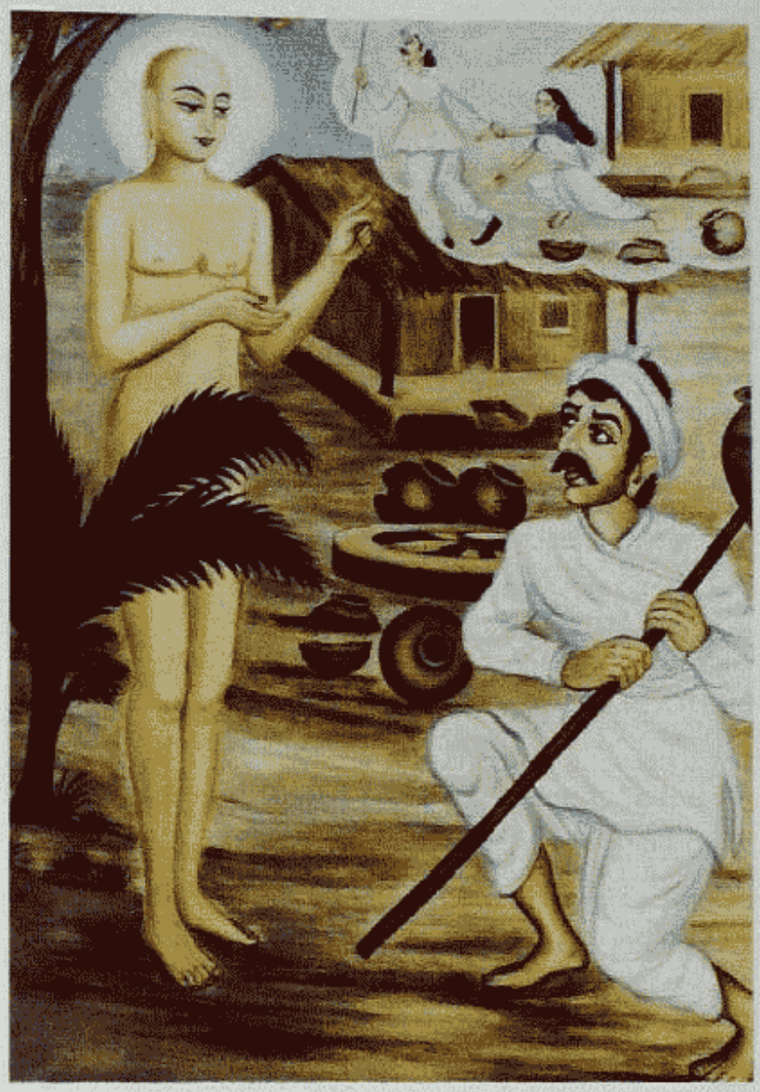
Lord Mahavira's persuasion and explanation enlightened Saddalaputra who declared : "O Lord ! By your grace I have realised the truth. Now I can clearly see that determinism leads to idleness, dullness and hypocrisy; it is escapism; it is an excuse for escaping from the responsibility of one's own sinful life. By accepting it one deceives oneself and others."

Mahavira said "O Saddalaputra ! One may deceive oneself. One may deceive even others. But one can never deceive the well-established order based on causation."

Saddalaputra was very impressd by Mahavira's cogent arguments and deep knowledge. He bowed down in reverence before Mahavira and requested him to enlighten him more by his teaching. Tirthankara Mahavira delivered a sermon on the essence of Jaina philosophy and religion. Saddalaputra was convinced of the truth of the principles propounded by Mahavira. He became a Jaina lay devotee. He resolved to follow the twelve vows of the Jaina householder. He rejected the doctrine of determinism and accepted the Jaina path of spiritual discipline that recognised importance of human effort. When he came home, he explained the whole story to his wife Agnimitra. Agnimitra adorned her chariot with garlands and went to see

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Mahaviraswami advising Saddalputra

Mahavira. She bowed down before him.Agnimitra's heart was filled with devotion for Tirthankara Mahavira when she heard his exalted teachings. She became a Jaina lay devotee and took the twelve vows prescribed for the Jaina lay people.

The Humility of Gautama

It was noon on a hot day and Indrabhuti Gautama, the prime disciple of Tirthankara Mahavira, was making his way back, having received alms for the day.

While Gautama was crossing the main road, he heard from the people that Mahavira's lay-disciple Ananda had taken the vow of fasting-unto-death and was lying on a bed of holy dry grass. Gautama, an embodiment of love, went to see him. Ananda was a very rich man. He possessed eighteen crore gold coins and sixty thousand cows. When he saw that the venerable Gautama had come to see him, he was very happy and paid his respects to Gautama. He asked Gautama, "O venerable Gautama, can a householder, who has not become an ascetic, attain the power of supernatural sight ?"

Gautama answered, "Yes indeed, even a householder can attain the power of supernatural sight."

On hearing the answer, Ananda's face glowed and he said to Gautama, "If that is the case, then, O venerable Gautama, I would like to inform you that I can see an area of two thousand miles across the earth in all directions, and upwards to the first heaven, and downwards to the first hell. I can see everything in this area, whether it is covered or exposed, subtle or gross."

It seemed from Ananda's voice that he was truly experiencing this supernatural vision. The members of the family and relatives who had gathered round Ananda were surprised to hear this. Even Gautama, who had many wonderful cognitive powers, was puzzled for a moment but at last he said to Ananda, "I do maintain, Ananda, that a householder can indeed possess

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supernatural sight, but not to such an extent as you claim. Therefore, Ananda, it is only proper that you should acknowledge that you have broken your vow of speaking the truth and repent for it."

Ananda had firm belief in his supernatural sight and its range. The conviction was firmly rooted in his actual experience. He said, "O venerable Gautama, is it required by the law of the omniscient Mahavira that one should atone for speaking truth ?"

Gautama replied, "No, it is not so required."

Ananda said with self-confidence, "O venerable sir, if what you have said is true, then you should indeed acknowledge that you have violated the vow of speaking the truth and atone for that."

Gautama was perturbed. The people thought : "Ananda has insulted Gautama. He is very proud. The householder Ananda cannot even compare against the great monk Gautama."

Gautama wanted to know the truth. He went to Tirthankara Mahavira and reported the whole incident to him. He asked, "O venerable Mahavira, tell me, is it for Ananda to acknowledge the violation of the vow of speaking the truth and to atone for it, or is it for me to do so ?"

Then venerable Mahavira turned to Gautama and said without hesitation, "O Gautama, it is indeed you who should acknowledge the violation and atone for it. And you should ask Ananda to forgive you for contradicting him."

Tirthankara Mahavira had commanded his prime ascetic disciple to seek forgiveness of a householder. This was indeed quite a shocking decision. There were some people who thought : "Perhaps Gautama, a great learned ascetic, has broken the vow, But Tirthankara Mahavira should have asked him privately to atone for that rather than humiliating him in public, and he should not have asked Gautama to seek the forgiveness of the householder Ananda. The course that Tirthankara Mahavira has adopted will put the Jaina religion to shame, disgrace and disrepute, and will inspire people to mock at Jaina ascetics. A great Jaina monk requesting a householder to forgive him, indeed ! That is impossible and improper. Look at the difference between Gautama and Ananda. Gautama is a great ascetic possessing vast knowledge of the principles of religion, while Ananda knows so little of the essence of religion."

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Gautamswami

But Gautama was very modest and straightforward. He was not proud of his knowledge or position. He was a lover of the Truth alone. He humbly accepted the decision of the venerable Mahavira. He went straight to Ananda and said, "O Ananda, you are right. You spoke the Truth but I contradicted you and thus violated the vow in this matter. I acknowledge my violation, atone for that, and seek your forgiveness. O Ananda, please forgive me."

Ananda was moved by Gautama's humility and his eyes welled up with tears. He said, "O venerable sir, you are indeed great. The humility you have displayed is very rare in the world. You have completely conquered pride. Victory to Mahavira, victory to you. Today Mahavira and you have elevated the Jaina religion to a very lofty position. People will have nothing but praise for the Jaina ascetics who uphold the Truth. I am truly blessed that I have spiritual teachers like the venerable Mahavira and you."

Alas, I am ruined !

After spending four months of rainy season in the city of Mithila, Mahavira arrived in the city of Shravasti. Mahavira and his former ascetic disciple Goshalaka found themselves in the same city after sixteen years. Goshalaka had previously been Mahavira's obedient pupil and ardent devotee. He would sing praises of Mahavira's glory even though it brought trouble, pain and agony to him. But he, then, became Mahavira's opponent and adversary. He proclaimed himself an *arhan*, a tirthankara and an omniscient one. He made his headquarters in Shravasti at the workshop of a potter woman called Halahala and wandered in the surroundings of Shravasti. Halahala and Ayampula, a householder in Shravasti, were staunch devotees of Goshalaka.

While Indrabhuti Gautama was collecting alms he heard people saying that there were two tirthankaras residing in Shravasti. Gautama asked Mahavira, "O venerable Mahavira, is Goshalaka really a tirthankara ?"

Mahavira replied, "O Gautama, Goshalaka is neither an omniscient one nor a tirthankara. Twenty four years ago, Goshalaka approached me and begged me to take him as a disciple. I granted his request. He became an ascetic under my leadership. We spent six years together. He followed me with devotion. He knew my supernatural power of prediction. He attained the powers by observeing austerities. But he became a slave to fame that he gained through the supernatural powers. He left me and lost self-control.

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He possesses the knowledge of the sixfold prognostics. But he is not an omniscient person, nor is he a tirthankara. Since he is expert only in *ashtangnimitta* prognostics he is able to predict some future events. But besides this, his claim to omniscience or tirthankarahood is false. He has no internal purity which is the prerequisite for the attainment of omniscience or tirthankarahood."

The news of Mahavira's exposure of Goshalaka rapidly spread throughout the city and reached Goshalaka. Goshalaka was very perturbed and feared that Mahavira would destroy the fame which he had spent sixteen long years in earning. He thought that if people came to know of his hypocrisy, he would be completely ruined by them.



Ananda, an ascetic disciple of Mahavira, was collecting alms and passed by Halahala's workshop where Goshalaka was residing. On seeing him, Goshalaka called out to him and threatened that if Mahavira continued to slander him, he would reduce Mahavira to ashes. He further cautioned him that if Mahavira provoked him, then he would gain nothing, but on the contrary he would invite troubles and would be ruined.

Ananda was terrified and returned and reported the entire everything to Mahavira. Mahavira pacified him and calmed his fears, saying, "O Ananda, Goshalaka may reduce an ordinary man to ashes by his yogic powers. But he can never injure a tirthankara whose yogic powers are infinite and efficacious than those possessed by a person like Goshalaka. Moreover, a tirthankara possesses tremendous yogic powers because he has cultivated, to their fullness, the meritorious spiritual qualities of forgiveness, love, compassion and friendship."

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Lord Mahavira advised and instructed his disciples : "If Goshalaka comes here, you should not say anything against him." Goshalaka finally approached Mahavira, attended as usual by a band of followers. He was very angry and rudely cursed Mahavira. Mahavira's two ascetic disciples Sarvanubhuti and Sunakshatra tried to pacify Goshalaka. But Goshalaka turned his anger upon them and immediately reduced them to a heap of ashes with his supernatural power.



The Flames of fire discharged by Goshalak entering his own mouth

Lord Mahavira asked his disciples to stay away and came forward and tried to pacify Goshalaka. But Goshalaka was mad with rage. He stared at the blazing sun, collected the radiant heat of the sun in his eyes, stepped back and sent a ring of fire from his eyes towards Mahavira. But Goshalaka's yogic power had no impact on Mahavira. Instead, the ring of fire circumambulated Mahavira and then made its way towards Goshalaka and penetrated his body. Goshalaka's handsome body became black and ugly.

Mahavira stood calm and composed, full of compassion for Goshalaka. He bore no ill-will towards him.

Goshalaka's whole body was burning with fire and he was writhing in pain.He cried, "Alas, I am ruined !"

On the seventh night before his death, Goshalaka gained enlightenment. Attachment and aversion that acted as impediments in gaining spiritually right attitude were destroyed, as were his spiritually unwholesome and perverse inclination. As a result, he come to possess spiritually right attitude. He realised and repented for his evil conduct. He told his disciples that he was no tirthankara, but a fraud, a killer of ascetics, a betrayer of his teacher, and dying from the effects of his own yogic powers that had rebounded on him. He recognised Mahavira as the true tirthankara.

Goshalaka was full of remorse and repentance. He gave instructions for his funeral to his disciples. They were to tie a rope to his left foot, to spit thrice into his face, and to drag his body round the streets of Shravasti, proclaiming that he was not a tirthankara but a cheat and a killer, and that Mahavira was the only true tirthankara. The disciples according conducted the funeral on Goshalaka's death.

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The Teachings of Tirthankara Mahavira

From the day that the venerable Mahavira attained pure knowledge or omniscience, he taught the principles of spiritual living for three hours daily. His teachings brought spiritually wholesome changes to the lives of many a man and woman.

In those days, there was a prevailing belief that discourses on philosophy and religion should only be conducted in Sanskrit, the language of gods. The common people could not, therefore, understand the principles of religion, and they had to accept what the so-called 'high' or 'learned' persons said. The glory of religion consisted in its being incomprehensible. It was thought that the science which was comprehensible was 'lower' science, while the science which was incomprehensible was 'higher' science. As a result of such a belief, religion, moral causation and philosophy were not discussed in the language of the people.

Lord Mahavira took a revolutionary step. He set aside Sanskrit, the language of the elite and pundits. He propagated his teachings in Prakrit, the language of the common people, because he wanted to spread Truth to the masses. He delivered his sermons in Ardhamagadhi Prakrit, the language of the Magadha region. The secrets of religion and spiritual living were disclosed and expounded by him in the simple and comprehensible language of the people. His message of non-violence, love and friendship rapidly spread among the people. He travelled on foot from place to place, expounding the principles of good living and the means to attain peace in the language of the people, without distinguishing between race, caste, class, age or sex.

He cleared the confusions of eleven great Brahmana pundits, as a result of which 4411 people simultaneously became ascetic disciples of Mahavira in a single day. Chandanabala was inspired to become a female ascetic under the leadership of Mahavira. Mahavira initiated her into the spiritual discipline of asceticism and thus established an order of nuns of which Chandana eventually became the head.

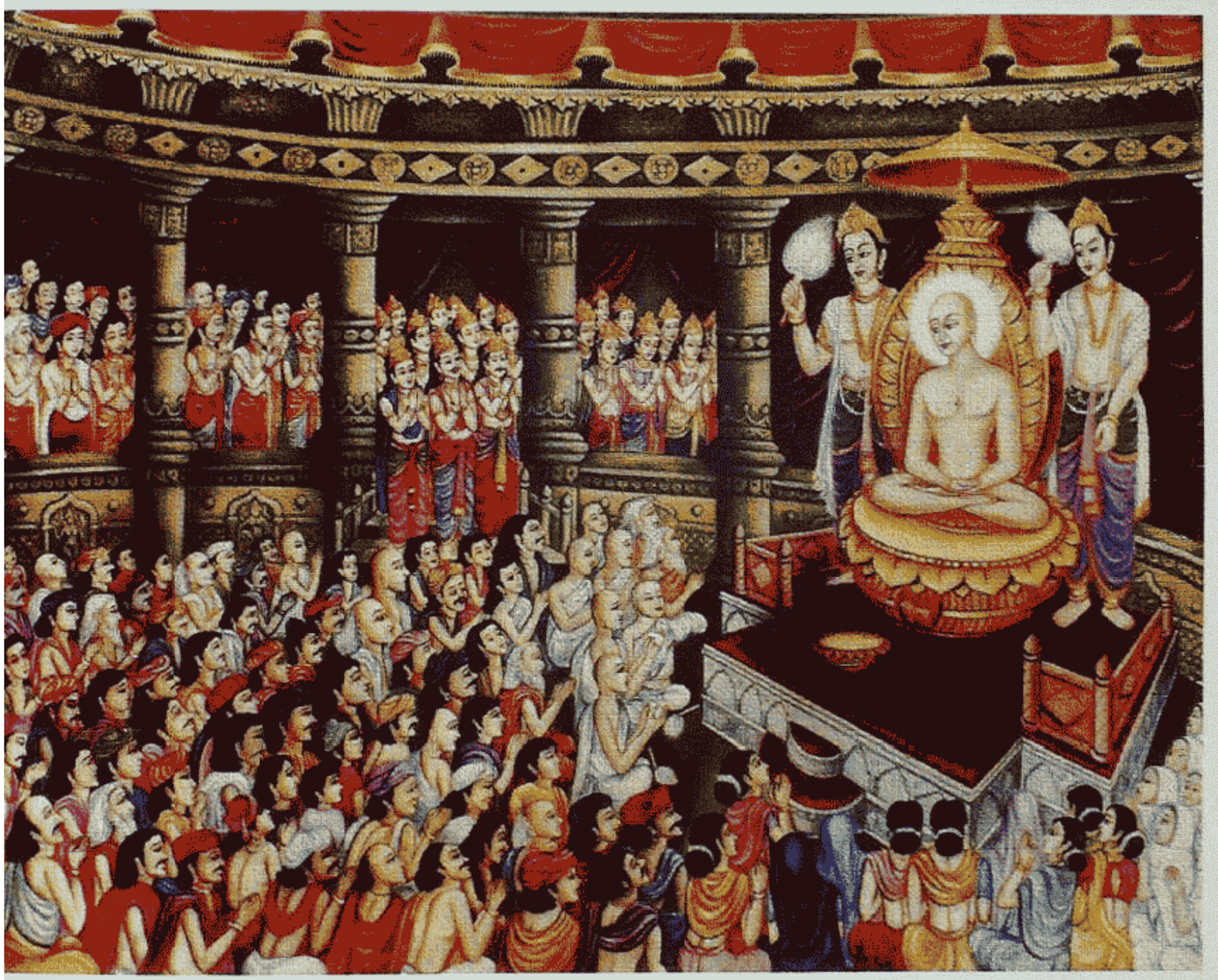
Great social changes took place. Mahavira declared women equal to men in status, elevated them to the same position as men held in the field of religion, regarded them as qualified for ascetic life and accepted them to the monastic order. Thus Mahavira spread knowledge among women. Tirthankara Mahavira established the fourfold order of monks, nuns, laymen

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and laywomen called *tirtha* (ford). The order is helpful ,like a ford, to cross the ocean of transmigration. Tirthankara Mahavira, being its maker or establisher, was called tirthankara. Mahavira imparted the knowledge of the threefold nature of reality to his eleven direct principal ascetic disciples and conferred the title *ganadhara* on them.

The venerable Mahavira left Madhyama-Pava, stopped at various places on the way and eventually arrived in the prosperous city of Rajagruhi. He was giving daily discourses. On hearing the teachings, King Shrenika attained



Bhagwan Mahavirswami's preaching

the jewel of spiritually wholesome inclination and conviction, and Abhayakumara with other householders took the vows of a Jaina householder. The inspiring words of Tirthankara Mahavira awakened King Shrenika's son Meghkumara to the spiritual Truth. Nandishena, son of Shrenika, became

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an ascetic under the leadership of Mahavira. Many men and women made their lives spiritual, practising the noble principles of non-violence, truth, renunciation and friendship.

The venerable Mahavira left Rajagruhi and went to Videha, where Rushabhadatta Brahmana, a resident of Brahmanakundagrama, and his wife Devananda, went to pay their respects to him. On seeing Mahavira, Devananda experienced motherly affection for Mahavira. Mahavira explained to her why she was experiencing motherly love for him. On hearing the story from Mahavira, Rushabhadatta and Devananda took the vow of asceticism.

Mahavira thus wandered from place to place to propagate and propound the principles of universal love, truth and renunciation.

Mahavira once went to a barbaric country to propagate his message of love and friendship. But he was met with much hatred and violence. The people set hounds after him, threw stones at him and pierced spears into his body. Despite this, Mahavira remained calm and unagitated. For Mahavira, it was a real test to see whether he could maintain his equanimity amidst violence and hatred.

Mahavira's message of love, truth, peace and the glory of the human birth spread far and wide. He said, "However great a god may be and however pleasant his heaven may be, he is not greater than man. No one is greater than man. Liberation can be attained through the human body only. Gods, by nature, lack self-restraint. So, it is not possible for them to attain the supreme state of liberation directly from their state of godhood. It is only man who can fully develop his spiritual powers and attain perfection. This is the glory of man. A man who does not know the immense spiritual value of the human existence, and wastes it in the pursuit of pleasures or in the acquisition of worldly possessions, is like a person who burns precious jewels to ashes. If a man remains truly humane and cultivates humanity, even the gods will fall at his feet. He should cultivate the qualities of love and compassion. Each and every man can become great by his thoughts, actions and efforts. Man is not required to take birth in a high caste or a wealthy family to achieve greatness. A great person is one who has noble thoughts and does noble deeds, and a low person is one who has unwholesome thoughts and does unwholesome actions. The greatness of a man is based on and determined by his noble and cultured thoughts and deeds."

Mahavira further said, "O friends, it is quite wrong to maintain that practice of good conduct and spiritual discipline is prescribed for ascetics only, while householders are free to indulge in sensual pleasures. Even a householder should observe his vows. A monk fully observes the vows, while a householder observes them partially according to his capacity. A monk should build his noble character by the observance of the five great vows while a householder should build his good character by the observance of the twelve vows – the five minor vows, the three supporting vows and the four vows of rituals. If a householder is unable to take all the twelve vows, he can adopt as many as he is able to observe. Thus, even householders, who are not qualified for monastic discipline, can make their lives fruitful by observing some spiritual discipline. If a man

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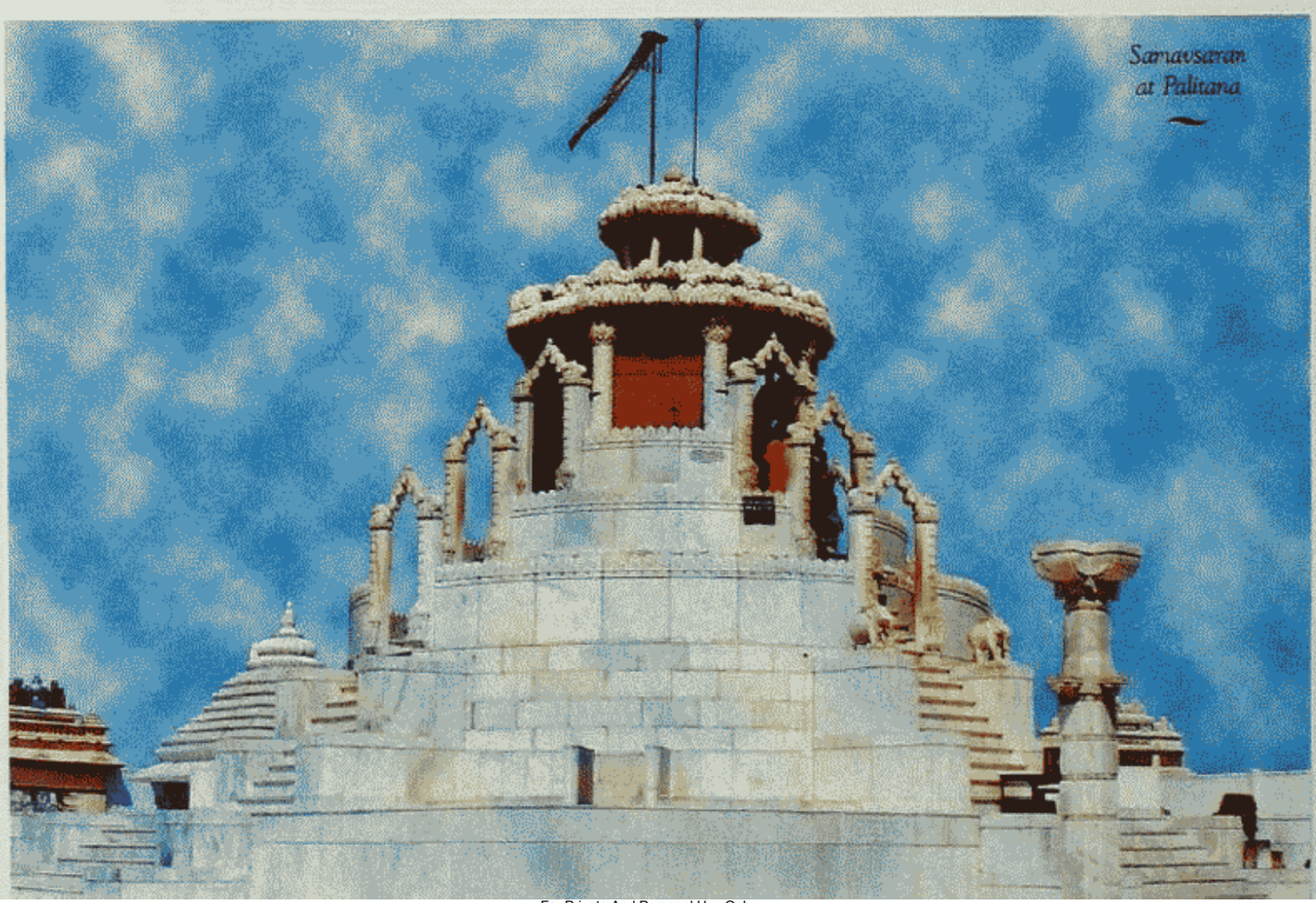
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lives according to the code of conduct formulated by a tirthankara, he will certainly be liberated from misery." Mahavira went on to expound the five great vows pertaining to non-violence, truth, non-theft, self-control and non-possession.

Then he said, "Friends, never think that what you know is the whole truth. Reality has infinite facets. Correspondingly there are infinite views. Each view is true, relative to a particular facet. Thus truth is relative. So we should respect the views of others. This outlook is called non-absolutism. It promotes reconciliation of all conflicting views. It prevents us from being dogmatic and obstinate about our own views. It ends all hostility and fosters intellectual toleration. It gives rise to universal friendship and turns a miserable world into a blissful world."

Through this discourse, the venerable Mahavira aroused noble feelings in the hearts of the audience and purified their hearts and minds to elevate them spiritually.

In the thirtieth year after his attainment of omniscience(which was the forty-second year after his renunciation and seventy-second year after his birth), the venerable Mahavira arrived from Rajagruhi to spend four months of rainy season in Pavapuri. He stayed in the room that was used by the clerks of King Hastipala. The gods constructed a holy assembly hall. Mahavira entered the hall, occupied his seat and began his last sermon which lasted for forty-eight hours. In the assembly, there were gods of all classes, the fourfold order of monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen, the eighteen confederate kings of Kashi and Koshala, royal personages, dignitaries, affluent bankers, traders, businessmen, artisans, artists, labourers, warriors and other groups of



Samavsaran at Palitana

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common people. Mahavira delivered his last sermon on good and bad acts, their corresponding impressions and the resultant fruits.

The Liberation of Mahavira

Three and a half months of Mahavira's stay in the office-room of King Hastipala's revenue clerks passed. Mahavira's death was fast approaching and the citizens of Pavapuri got to know this. There was sorrow, gloom and grief in every house.

The people were distressed. They wondered when they would have the opportunity to see the divine form of Tirthankara Mahavira again. They felt that they would be deprived of Mahavira's benevolent speech. The learned saints advised others to remain calm and unagitated in both pleasant and unpleasant circumstances. They knew that by discarding his body Tirthankara Mahavira would attain liberation. Yet they themselves could not pacify their own hearts. Even the gods were sorrowful. The learned saints and gods managed to compose themselves and started the funeral preparations. They blew their conches. Having made all arrangements for the funeral, Indra, the lord of the gods, who had arrived there to serve and worship the venerable Mahavira, became very distressed at the thought of Mahavira's death. He approached Mahavira and said, "O venerable Mahavira, your conception, birth, initiation and omniscience occurred in the Hastottara constellation. At present Bhashma planet is passing through the constellation which marks the time of your death. This period is inauspicious. It will be better if you postpone the event of your death. You can do that because you are omniscient and omnipotent." Indra thought to himself : "Once the event of death is postponed, the battle is won. Later on, I shall see to it that Mahavira lives for some more years. There is a belief that one who survives a critical moment, lives for a hundred years."

Tirthankara Mahavira replied, "O Indra, you make such comments because of your attachment to my body. You forget the universal rule that a life-span can never be lengthened. Neither a tirthankara nor anybody else can lengthen his or her life-span by even a fraction."

In his last sermon which lasted for forty-eight hours, Tirthankara Mahavira expounded in fifty-five sections (*Adhyay*) the consequences of auspicious *karmas* and in other fifty-five sections (*Adhyay*) the consequences of inauspicious *karmas*. While expounding the thirty-seventh stanza entitled

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Pradhana, he assumed the *paryankasana* sitting posture. At the end of his sermon, he gradually arrested his mental and vocal activities, first gross and then subtle. His mind became very stable and pure – with the result that the deluding *karmas* were absolutely dissociated from his soul, which in turn led to the absolute elimination of knowledge-covering *karmas*, vision-covering *karmas* and obstructive *karmas*. Then, taking recourse in subtle bodily activities he put an end to gross bodily activities. Finally, he arrested even the subtle bodily activities and became free from all activities and consequently from all *karmas*, and he attained liberation. He became pure, enlightened, perfect and unblemished.

Nirvana



A dazzling disc of light appeared. The dark night of the last day of the month, adorned with clusters of twinkling stars, suddenly shone brightly with the divine light. Cries of victory were heard everywhere. It was the fifteenth day and the last night of the dark half in the fourth month of rainy season. An age is divided into five *samvatsaras*. It was the second *samvatsara* called Chandra. A year has twelve months. It was the fourth month called *Pritivardhana*. A month has two halves, which are divided into fifteen days and fifteen nights each. It was the fifteenth day (Agniveshya) and fifteenth night

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(Devananda) of the monthly half called Nandivardhana. At that time there was *lava* (a particular duration of time) called *Arca*, *prana* (a particular duration of time) called *Muhurta*, *stoka* (a particular duration of time) called Siddha, and *karana* (a particular duration of time) called *Naga*. A day (day-night) has thirty *muhurtas*. The *muhurta* at the time was Sarvarthasiddha. The moon was in conjuction with the constellation *Svati*.

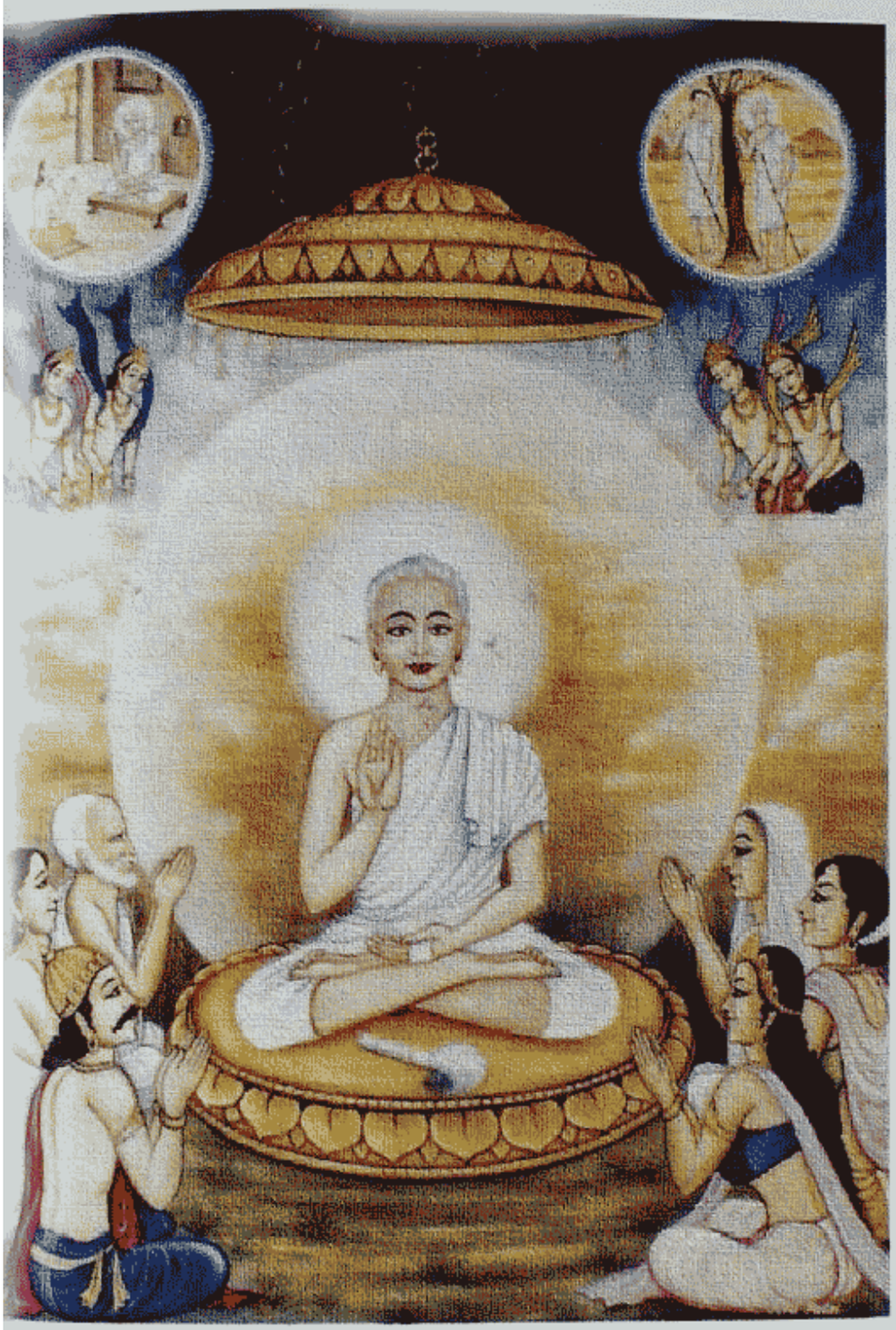
On the night, during which the venerable Mahavira passed away, the eighteen confederate kings of Kashi and Koshala were observing the vow of *paushadha*. They said, "Since the internal light of intelligence is gone, let us make an illumination with the external light of lamps." The brilliant lamp of internal spiritual light enlightening the inner eyes of man was extinguished in front of the physical eyes. On account of the coming and going of gods the whole earth was illumined. Having overcome the terrible moments of delusion, attachment and grief, Indra became calm and composed. He said to everyone, "The venerable Mahavira died. Light lamps and arrange them in rows." The dark night shone brightly with innumerable rows of burning lamps. All Indras with their retinues had arrived there to take part in the funeral. Shakra Indra issued orders to make arrangements for the funeral ceremony. Gods brought the Goshirsha sandalwood and they made a pyre. They bathed the body in scented milky water, anointed it with harichandana sandal paste, clothed it in rich silken attire, bedecked it in all kinds of gold and diamond ornaments, and adorned its head with a golden crown studded with invaluable bright jewels. They respectfully lifted the body and placed it in the palanquin prepared by special gods. There were gods playing on divine musical instruments and showering flowers. Thus, the gods conducted Mahavira's funeral with great glory and eneration..

The Enlightenment of Gautamswami

Though Mahavira knew the exact time of his *Nirvana* (death), he had sent his prime ascetic disciple Gautama to another village to teach the Brahmana Devasharma, a resident of the village, the essence of spiritual living. Gautama enlightened Devasharma on the essence of religion, self-restraint, self-culture and spiritual evolution within a short period of time. Tirthankara Mahavira had sent Gautama away from him at the time of his final departure because he knew that Gautama would not be able to bear the sight of his death. Gautama had wanted to return immediately to Pavapuri after he had taught Devasharma, but he had to spend the night there because it was getting dark.

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Shri Gautamsuami preaching after attaining Kevaljnana

The next day, as Gautama was on his way to Pavapuri, he received the sad news of Mahavira's *nirvana*. He was deeply shocked and tears rolled down his eyes. He was so moved with emotion that he lamented, "O lord, you were omniscient. Then why did you separate me from you at the time of your *nirvana* ? Did you think that like a child that I would have prevented you from being liberated from your body ? Or, was my devotion for you not true ? At whose feet shall I now fall? To whom should I pay my respects? Who will call me 'Gautama, Gautama' with affection ? Whom shall I address 'Vira, Vira' ? Who will remove my doubts ? O lord, what did you do ? Why did you not ask me to accompany you ? Was there no place for me in the abode of the liberated ?"

It was difficult to console Gautama. Gautama had strong attachment for the omniscient Mahavira and the news of Mahavira's death made him sorrowful and distressed. While lamenting, Gautama uttered the word 'attachment-free' (*vitaraga*) which had a sudden impact on him. He reflected deeply on the meaning of the word. He thought : "The venerable Mahavira was completely free from attachment while here I am severely afflicted with attachment. What infatuation and delusion ! It is only my delusion that makes me to lament and wail. I indulged in worshipping his body instead of his soul and spiritual qualities. I became restless when I did not see his bodily form for long. Attachment is attachment, whether it is for an ordinary worldly thing or for a great saint. Many a time Mahavira used to say that I should not cultivate attachment for the means

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or instruments I employed to achieve the final goal. One who uses a raft to cross a river should abandon it after having crossed the river. Scaffolding should be removed when the building is ready. One should not cling to means and instruments. I must turn my attention inward. At this stage I must depend solely on my soul. I must follow the path of non-attachment shown by tirthankara Mahavira. I should not lament for the death of such an attachment-free Mahavira."

Guatama's delusion and infatuation gave way to knowledge and his wisdom shone.His repentance led to self-examination and he thought : "Of the eleven principal direct ascetic disciples of Tirthankara Mahavira, nine attained liberation. Tirthankara Mahavira himself went to the abode of the liberated. How long should I, - Gautama - the first and foremost disciple of the venerable Mahavira, remain bound in delusion and infatuation ? I must become free from delusion and infatuation. They defile my soul. They make me blind to the spiritual Truth. They foster attachment and result in clinging to it." Gautama thus advanced on the path of destroying delusion.

Gautama said to himself, "O ! My attachment to the body of my spiritual teacher made me wail and lament. I was confused as to why my teacher had sent me away from him at the time of his death. The confusion has now gone and I am free from delusion. The infinite light of a thousand suns enlightens my heart. My venerable teacher kept his words. He had promised me, 'O Gautama, you and I will be equal. We shall attain that highest spiritual state where there is no difference between a teacher and a disciple.' Tirthankara Mahavira attained perfection. Thus my own attainment of perfection is certain."

Just as one lamp kindles another lamp, Mahavira's liberation was instrumental in Gautama's attainment of omniscience. Gautama's soul became pure with the result that he acquired infinite pure knowledge (*kevaljnana*). The gods started playing on the divine drums. Men and women celebrated the auspicious occasion. The event occurred in the last quarter of the night of the fifteenth day of the dark half of the month of Ashvina, 470 years before the commencement of Vikrama Era. The day of Dipavali every year reminds us of the attainment of liberation (*moksha*) by Tirthankara Mahavira. and the New Year Day (of Hindu calendar) reminds us of the attainment of omniscience (*keval jnana*) by the revered teacher Gautamaswami.

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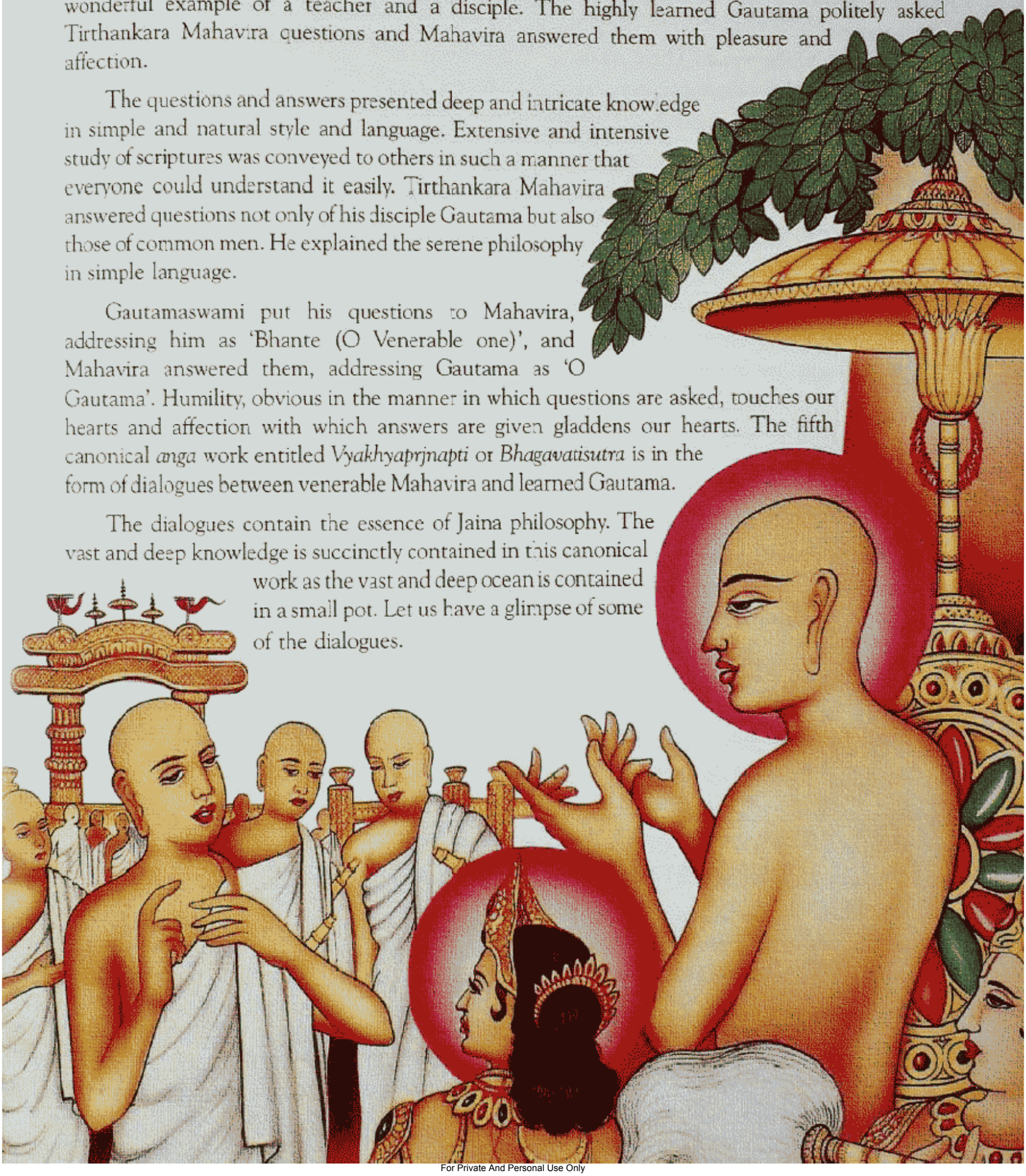
Unique Dialogues

The venerable Tirthankara Mahavira and his principal direct disciple, Gautama, made a wonderful example of a teacher and a disciple. The highly learned Gautama politely asked Tirthankara Mahavira questions and Mahavira answered them with pleasure and affection.

The questions and answers presented deep and intricate knowledge in simple and natural style and language. Extensive and intensive study of scriptures was conveyed to others in such a manner that everyone could understand it easily. Tirthankara Mahavira answered questions not only of his disciple Gautama but also those of common men. He explained the serene philosophy in simple language.

Gautamaswami put his questions to Mahavira, addressing him as 'Bhante (O Venerable one)', and Mahavira answered them, addressing Gautama as 'O Gautama'. Humility, obvious in the manner in which questions are asked, touches our hearts and affection with which answers are given gladdens our hearts. The fifth canonical *anga* work entitled *Vyakhyaprjnapti* or *Bhagavatisutra* is in the form of dialogues between venerable Mahavira and learned Gautama.

The dialogues contain the essence of Jaina philosophy. The vast and deep knowledge is succinctly contained in this canonical work as the vast and deep ocean is contained in a small pot. Let us have a glimpse of some of the dialogues.



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Determinant of Life-span

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What causes the bondage of short (inauspicious) life-span ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! There are three things which cause the bondage of short life-span (i) violence, (ii) false speech and (iii) offering disagreeable and hence defiling food and drink etc. to *shramana* and *brahmana* ascetics."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What causes the bondage of long (auspicious) life-span ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! There are three things which cause the bondage of long life-span (i) non-violence, (ii) true speech and (iii) offering agreeable and hence non-defiling pure food and drink etc. to *shramana* and *brahmana* ascetics."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What causes the bondage of long but inauspicious (miserable) life-span ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! The following are the causes of the bondage of long but miserable life-span. They are : performing activities involving violence, telling lies, despising, disparaging, defaming, accusing and insulting the *shramana* and *brahmana* ascetics, and offering them disagreeable food, drink, etc."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What causes the bondage of long and auspicious (pleasant) life-span ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! The following are the causes of the bondage of long and auspicious (pleasant) life-span. They are : abstaining from activities involving violence, refraining from telling lies, praising and venerating *shramana* and *brahmana* ascetics, and offering them agreeable and non-defiling food, drink, etc."

Haven and Hell

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! Which activities result in birth in hell ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! One who performs activities involving violence, who speaks lies, who steals things, who has sexual contacts with



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wives of others, who indulges in amassing wealth indiscriminately, (that is, one who does not observe five minor-scale vows), who gets angry easily, who is egoistic, who is impudent, who is deceitful, who is cruel, who is sinful, who gossips, who is very greedy, who wrongly accuses good persons, who is irreligious, who speaks incoherent and inconsistent speech, who is ungrateful and whose intellect is perverse, becomes very miserable and pathetic and is ultimately born in hell."

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! Which activities result in birth in heaven ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! One who is inclined towards austerities, self-control and donation or renunciation, who is candid and compassionate, who has firm faith in the words of a spiritual teacher and who strives for right knowledge, right faith and right conduct is reborn, after death, in the heavenly world."

Heavy Soul and Light Soul

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What makes a soul heavy with the weight of *karmic* particles ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! The following eighteen sinful acts cause *karmic* particles stick to the soul and consequently the soul becomes heavy. The first sinful act is to deprive living beings of their lives. The second is to speak lies. The third is to steal. The fourth is to have sexual intercourse with someone other then one's own wife. The fifth is to be possessive. The sixth is to get angry easily. The seventh is to be egoistic. The eighth is to deceive others. The ninth is to have uncontrolled greed. The tenth is to have attachment to material things. The eleventh is to be averse to. The twelfth is to be quarrelsome. The thirteenth is to make false allegations. The fourteenth is to indulge in gossip. The fifteenth is to have fickle disposition. The sixteenth is to indulge in false accusations. The seventeenth is to tell malicious lies. The eighteenth is to entertain false faith."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What makes the Soul light? Or how can the *karmic* particles be shed?

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Mahavira : "O Gautama ! By renouncing the above eighteen sinful acts the soul sheds the karmic particles and thus becomes light."

"The soul which does not renounce the eighteen sinful acts, strengthens its attachment to worldly objects, and prolongs its wandering in its transmigratory existence. The soul which renounces these sinful acts loosens its attachment to worldly objects, shortens its journey, by crossing over the ocean of transmigratory existence."

"Unburdened soul, on account of having shed the *karmic* particles, loosening of the attachment to worldly objects, shortening of the transmigratory journey and crossing of the ocean of transmigratory existence — these four things are good, praiseworthy and auspicious. On the other hand, a soul burdened on account of adherence of *karmic* practicles — the adherence caused by sinful acts, strengthening of the attachment to worldly objects, lengthening of the transmigratory journey and wandering in the transmigratory existance — these four things are evil, condemnable and inauspicious."

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! What causes soul to take its next birth in the animal world ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! That man, who befriends another person for selfish motives and then abandons him after his purpose is served, who causes misery to his friend, who speaks ill of his friend, and who is not candid with his friend, and who is cruel and deceitful is reborn in the next life as an animal."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What causes the soul to take its next birth as a human?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! That man, who is frank and humble, whose passions like anger etc. are mild, who helps the needy, who is unbiased or impartial, who is just and equitable, who praises and appreciates the meritorious qualities of good men or spiritual ascetics, who has limited his possessions to his needs, who is contented, and who is devoted to the perfected souls and spiritual teachers is reborn as a human being."



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Soul : Self-control to Liberation

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What is the result of self-control which is nothing but renunciation of sinful activity ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! Self-control stops the inflow of inauspicious *karmic* matter into a soul."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What happens when the inflow of inauspicious *karmic* matter into the soul is stopped ?

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! When the inflow of inauspicious *karmic* matter into the soul is stopped, the soul gets eager to practice austerities."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What is the consequence of practicing austerities ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! Practice of austerities removes the defiling *karmic* matter from the soul."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What is the result of the removal of the defiling *karmic* matter from the soul ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! On account of the shedding of the defiling *karmic* matter from the soul, the mental, vocal and bodily activities of the soul gradually come to an end. And when all the activities are totally diminished, the soul becomes totally free from all *karmic* matter and all activities."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What is that soul called which has become totally free from all karmic matter and all activities ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! That soul is called *Siddha* (Prefected soul)."

The Fortunate and the Unfortunate

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! What kind of activities cause the particular karmic bondage which will make a soul fortunate and happy ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! A man who honours the spiritual teacher, the Supreme Soul and monks, and whose language is always polite, friendly and compassionate is born in the next birth as a human

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being whom even good and noble men would like to meet and he attains good fortune and happiness."

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! What kind of activities cause the particular *karmic* bondage, which will make a soul unfortunate and miserable ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! A man who ignores even the existing merits of others, who pretends to possess even the non-existing merits in himself, who condemns and despises the meritorious and wise ascetics, who indulges in sensual pleasures, who prides himself upon his family, lineage, wealth, etc., and who hurts others, is born in the next birth as an ugly and miserable living being."

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! Why does a soul not get means of pleasure in the next birth ? Or if it has the means, why is it not able to enjoy them?

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! A person, who does not make donations, who regrets donations – either when he is about to make a donation or afterwards –, who asks the donee to return the thing given in donation, and who causes obstruction to others engaged in the noble act of donation, does not get the means of happiness or does not enjoy them in spite of possession them in his next birth."

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! Why does the soul get and enjoy the means of happiness in the next birth ?

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! A person, who offers, with devotion and respect, to the reverend monks non-defiling things like bedding, seat, pieces of cloth, cot, staff, woollen shawl, utensils, food, boiled water etc., gets and enjoys the means of happiness in the next birth."

Good Intellect and Evil Intellect

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! Which activities cause the bondage of the *karma* which endows a man with good intellect in his next birth ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! A man who studies scriptures, who deeply reflects over what he has learnt through the studies, who

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listens to the scriptural discourses directly from the spiritual teacher, who teaches scriptures to others, who preaches the essence of Religion, who respects and worships scriptures, and who devotedly serves the spiritual teacher is born as a person endowed with good intellect in his next life."

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! Which activities cause the bondage of the *karma* which equips, a man with evil and perverse intellect in his next birth ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! A man, who insults ascetics, the learned and the meritorious, who harasses them, who is ungrateful to them, who entertains hatred towards them, who neglects them, and who disrespects them by asking 'what do they know ?', is born after death as a person with evil and perverse intellect whom people despise and dislike."

Gautama : "O compassionate one ! Which activities cause the bondage of the *karma* which makes a man pundit in his next birth ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! A man who devotedly serves the aged and the elders, who desires to know the nature of virtue and vice and who shows respect and devotion towards scriptural knowledge and spiritual teacher becomes a pundit in his next birth."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! Which activities cause the bondage of the *karma* which makes a man fool in his next birth ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! A man who preaches and propagates unwholesome path, who denigrates the wholesome one, who adopts negative attitude and behaviour towards the means of spiritual welfare, and who thinks and says, "Kill living beings, eat meat and drink wine, what will one gain by study ? what is the use of observing vows and practising austerities ?" is born after death as a fool."

Threefold Activity of the Soul

Gautama : "O venerable one ! Does dirt stick to cloth without human effort (i.e. naturally) or with human effort ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! Dirt sticks to cloth in two ways – with human effort and without human effort."

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Gautama : "O venerable one ! Do the *karmic* particles similarly stick to the soul of a living being in two ways – with its effort and without its effort ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! The *karmic* material particles stick to the soul of a living being only with Soul's own effort , and they never stick to it without that effort. The Soul has three types of activities – mental, vocal and physical. This threefold activities are the cause of accumulation of *karmic* particles."

Fruit of Self-control

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What is the fruit of knowledge ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! The fruit of knowledge is the discriminatory cognitive power which discerns merits and demerits of things and consequently enables one to accept what is beneficial and avoid what is harmful."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What is the fruit of the discriminatory cognitive power ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! Its fruit is the vow or determination of renouncing sinful activities."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What is the fruit of that vow ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! Its fruit is self-control."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! What is the fruit of self-control ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! The fruit of self-control is the stoppage of the inflow of *karmic* particles into the soul."

Attainment of Omniscience

Gautama : "O venerable one ! Can anyone gain the knowledge of Religion propounded by the omniscient without listening to what religion is from the mouth of the omniscient or the learned monk or nun or the learned lay-devotee man or woman ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! Some may gain the knowledge of Religion propounded by the omniscient, while some may not. The man



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who has diminished or destroyed the karma that casts veil over the knowledge; can gain knowledge of Religion even without listening to what Religion is from the mouth of the omniscient. But the man who has not effected subsidence-cum-destruction of the knowledge-covering karma can never gain knowledge of Religion without listening to what Religion is from the mouth of the omniscient (The same logic is applicable to the attainment of spiritually right attitude or conviction and spiritually right (pure) conduct or asceticism)."

Gautama : "O venerable one ! Can anyone attain omniscience without listening to the discourses of the omniscient ?"

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! The person who destroys knowledge-covering *karma* can attain omniscience even without listening to the discourses of the omniscient ?"

Gautama : "O venerable one ! Can one attain knowledge of Religion upto onmiscience by listening to what Religion etc. are from the mouth of the omniscient, etc. ?

Mahavira : "O Gautama ! One can attain knowledgeof Religion up to omniscience by listening to what Religion etc. are from the mouth of the omniscient, provided one has effected subsidence-cum-destruction or complete destruction of knowledge-covering *karma*, deluding *karma* and obstructive *karma*, but not otherwise."

~

Many persons have doubts about soul, *karma*, *moksha*, universe, etc. They expressed them before tirthankara Mahavira who removed them. Let us have some idea of the nature of doubts and their solution offered by Mahavira.

There lived a *parivrajaka* ascetic named *Skandaka* in the city of Shravasti. He was expert in many sciences. He was well-versed in mathematics, phonetics, ethics, prosody, grammar, philosophy, poetics, etc. He went to pay respects to Mahavira. He was very much impressed and pleased to see the divine and majestic form of venerable Mahavira. He expressed his doubts before Mahavira.

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Universe, Soul and Liberation

Skandaka : "O noble one ! Do the universe, the soul and *moksha* have an end ? Or, are they endless ?"

Mahavira : "O Skandaka ! The universe has four aspects - substantive, spatial, temporal and modal. From the substantive standpoint the universe is one and has an end. From the spatial standpoint its length and breadth are of innumerable-crore times-innumerable-crore *yojanas* (1 yojana = 4 miles), its circumference or boundary is also innumerable-crore-times-innumerable-crore yojanas, and so it has an end. From the temporal standpoint there was not a day when it did not exist, there is not a day when it does not exist and there will not be a day when it will not exist. It exists always in all the three divisions of time. It is permanent, eternal and indestructible. So it has no end. From the modal standpoint it has endless modes of colour, smell, flavour and touch; it has endless modes of structure; it has endless modes of the quality 'light-heavy'; and it has endless modes of quality 'neither-light-nor-heavy'. So from the modal standpoint the universe has no end."



Skandaka : "O nobel one ! This means that from the substantive and spatial standpoints the universe has an end but from the temporal and modal standpoints it has no end. Thus, the universe is both with an end and with no end or endless."

Mahavira : "O Skandaka ! If one ponders over the soul from the substantive, spatial, temporal and modal standpoints, one will naturally arrive at the following conclusion. From the substantive standpoint it is one and has an end. From the spatial standpoint it has innumerable space-points and hence it has an end. From the temporal standpoint it existed in the past, it exists in the present and it will exist in future; so it is permanent, it will have no end at any time. From the modal standpoint it has endless modes of cognition, it has endless modes of the quality 'light-heavy'. So from the modal standpoint the soul has no end. Thus, O Skandaka, from the

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substantive and spatial standpoints the soul has an end but from the temporal and modal standpoint it has no end."

"The same logic applies to liberation. From the substantive standpoint liberation is one, and it has an end. From the spatial standpoint, its length and breadth are forty-five lac *yojanas*, its circumference or boundary is somewhat more than one crore forty-two lac thirty thousand two hundred forty-nine *yojanas*; so it has an end. From the temporal standpoint liberation was there in the past, it is there in the present, it will be there in future. There is no time when it is non-existent. At no time it ceases to exist. So from the temporal standpoint it has no end. And from the modal standpoint too it has no end. In short, from the substantive and spatial standpoints liberation has an end but from the temporal and modal standpoint it has no end."



"O Skandaka ! You do have a doubt as to whether or not the perfected soul *siddha* has an end. In its case also, you should think along the same lines, that is the four standpoints, substantive, spatial, temporal and modal. From the substantive standpoint the perfected soul has an end. From the spatial standpoint it has innumerable space-points and hence it has an end. From the temporal standpoint it has beginning but no end. From the modal standpoint it has endless modes of pure knowledge and pure vision."

Twelve Ways of Balamarana

"O Skandaka ! You want to know the answer to the following question about death : Which type of death prolongs and strengthens the transmigratory existence and which type of death shortens the transmigratory existence ? Death is of two types — *balamarana* (death inspired by ignorance, superstition and blind faith) and *panditamarana* (death inspired by wisdom, understanding, universal love and compassion)."

Skandaka : "O venerable one ! How does one voluntarily invite death when one is inspired by ignorance, blind faith or superstition ?"

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Mahavira : "O Skandaka ! There are roughly twelve ways which are adopted by one who voluntarily invites death through ignorance, blind faith or superstition. They are as follows :

- Putting an end to one's life by subjecting oneself to severe hunger causing pain and distress.
- Putting an end to one's life by completely surrendering oneself to sense-organs etc. that is, by excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures, etc.—
- Putting an end to one's life by beheading oneself (that is, by offering as sacrifice one's head to a deity) – this indicates one's deviation from the good and spiritual way of living.
- Putting an end to one's life in order to bind *karma*, enabling one to take birth in the same life-species.
- Putting an end to one's life by jumping from the holy peak of a mountain.
- Putting an end to one's life by jumping from a tall tree.
- Putting an end to one's life by drowning in the sea.
- Putting an end to one's life by setting oneself on fire.
- Putting an end to one's life by consuming poison.
- Putting an end to one's life by weapons.
- Putting an end to one's life by hanging oneself.
- Putting an end to one's life by offering oneself to vultures and other birds to peck at.

One who adopts any one of these twelve ways to put an end to one's life, will have to take infinite births in different hells, will have to be reborn several times as animal and this will also lengthen one's fourfold transmigratory existence. So it is said that death lengthens transmigratory existence."

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Meaning of Panditamarana

Skandaka : "O venerable one ! What is called *panditamarana* ? And what are its types ?"

Mahavira : "O Skandaka ! There are two types of *panditamarana* — (1) *Padopagamana* and (2) *bhaktapratyakhyana*. Again, there are two sub-types of *padopa-gamana*— (1) *nirharima* and (2) *anirharima*. *Bhaktapratyakhyana* too, has two sub-types — (1) *nirharima* and (2) *anirharima*. For a monk who has voluntarily chosen to die within the confines of the monks' lodgings through *padopagamana* or *bhaktapratyakhyana* and his body is taken away from the city and cremated there, his death is called *nirharima*. On the other hand, the dead body of a monk who has voluntarily chosen death through *padopagamana* or *bhaktapratyakhyana* started in woods and has died there is not taken away anywhere out of the woods and the cremation rites are performed there only. So this death is called *anirharima*. *Padopagamana* — *nirharima* or *anirharima* — is always *apratikarma* because in this method the aspirant receives no services from others. But *bhaktapratyakhyana* — *nirharima* or *anirharima* — is always *sapratikarma* because in this method services from others are not forbidden. Thus, those who voluntarily choose death called *panditamarana* are not born as infernal beings, nor do they take infinite births; they shorten their transmigratory existence."



Universe and Non-universe

The venerable Mahavira had his halt in the city of Rajagruha. He came to know that the ascetic Roha regularly pondered over philosophical problems. Roha had some doubts in his mind about universe (*loka*) and non-universe (*aloka*), about perfected soul (*siddha*) and transmigratory soul (*asiddha*). So he politely expressed his doubts before Mahavira.

Roha : "O venerable one ! Is universe prior to non-universe ? Or, is non-universe prior to universe ? Is universe posterior to non-universe ? Or, is non-universe posterior to universe ?"

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Mahavira : "O Roha ! Both universe and non-universe are eternal, they have neither beginning nor end, so the temporal relation of priority- posteriority does not exist between them."

Roha : "O venerable one ! What is first in time – sentient substance (soul) or insentient substance ?"

Mahavira : "O Roha ! Both the sentient substance and insentient substance are eternal. So even in their case there exists no relation of priority-posteriority. ."

Roha : "O venerable one ! Which is first in time–bhavasiddhika or abhavasiddhika ?"

Mahavira : "O Roha ! Both bhavasiddhika and abhavasiddhika are eternal. So there is no order of priority-posteriority in their case."

Roha : "O venerable one ! Who is first in time–*siddha* or *asiddha* ? "

Mahavira : "O Roha ! Both *siddha* and *asiddha* are eternal. So there is no order of occurrence in their case."

Roha : "O venerable one ! What is first in time — a hen or an egg ?"

Mahavira : "O Roha ! From where came an egg ?"

Roha : "O venerable one ! Certainly from a hen."

Mahavira : "O Roha ! From where came the hen ?"

Roha : "O venerable one ! Certainly from an egg."

Mahavira : "O Roha ! Egg and hen are eternal. Both are there from the beginningless time."

Roha : "O venerable one ! Which is first in time–*lokanta* or *alokanta* ?"

Mahavira : "O Roha ! Both *lokanta* and *alokanta* exist from the beginningless time. So there obtains no temporal priority-posteriority relation between them."

Roha : "O venerable one ! Which is first in time — *loka* or the seventh *avakashantara* ?"

Mahavira : "O Roha ! Both *loka* and seventh *avakashantara* are eternal. They are beginningless. So there is no temporal order of their coming into existence."

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Roha : "O venerable one ! Which is first in time – *lokanta* or *tanuvata* ?"

Mahavira : "O Roha ! Both *lokanta* and *tanuvata* are eternal. They are beginningless and endless. So there obtains no relation of priority-posteriority between them."

Roha : "O venerable one ! Which is first in time — the seventh Earth or *lokanta* ?"

"O Roha ! Both the seventh Earth and *lokanta* are eternal and hence beginningless. So there obtains no relation of posteriority-priority between them."



Mulnayak Mahavirswami
Pansar Tirth, Gujarat

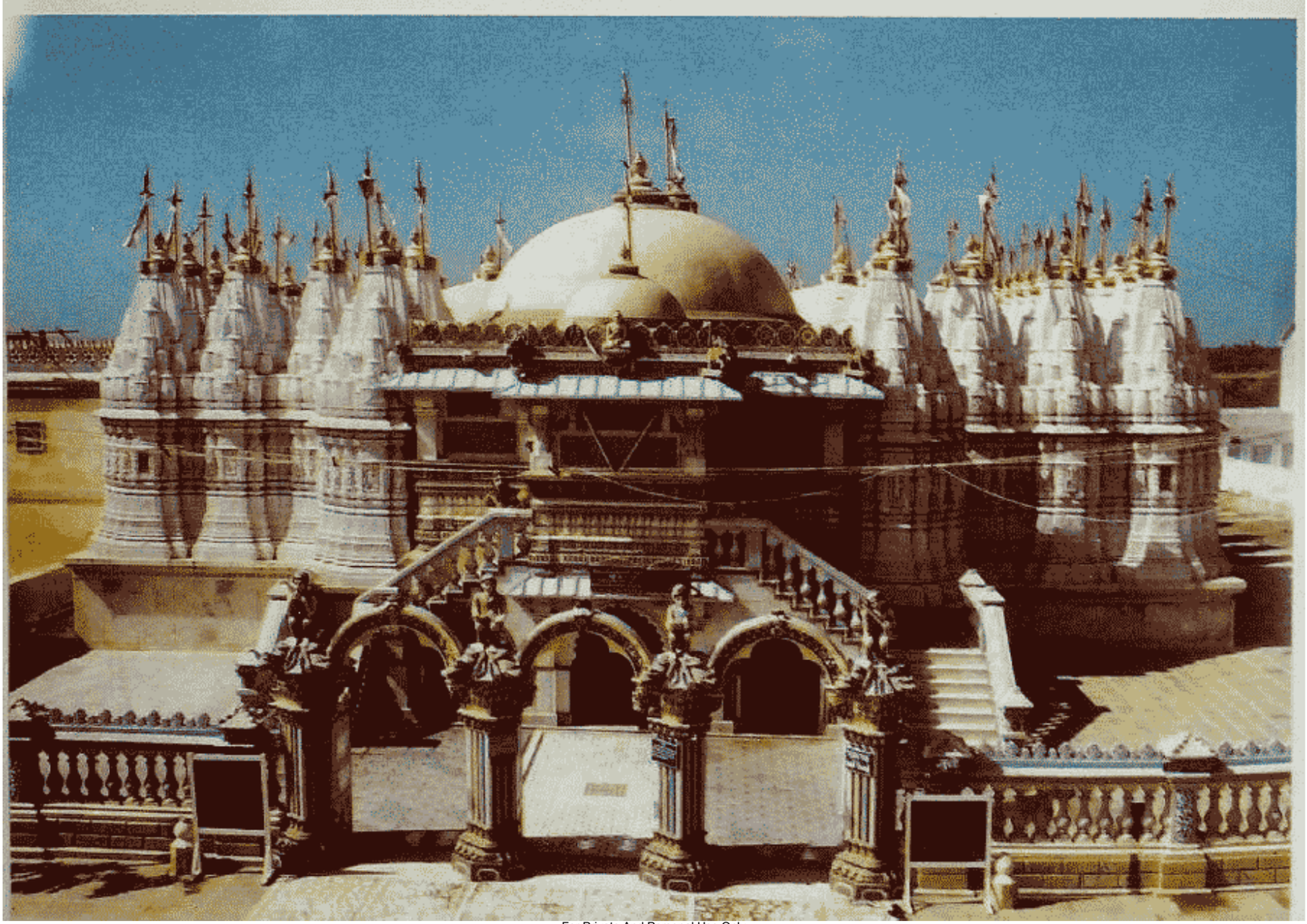
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27 Previous Births of Venerable Mahavira

1. Nayasara (Village headman),
2. God in the Saudharma heaven
3. Prince Marichi
4. God in the fifth Brahmaloka
5. Kaushika Brahmana
6. Pushpamitra Brahmana
7. God in the Saudharma Heaven
8. Agnidyota Brahmana
9. God in Ishana heavenly world
10. Agnibhuti Brahmana
11. God in Sanatkumara heavenly world
12. Bharadvaja Brahmana
13. God in Mahendra heavenly world
14. Sthavara Brahmana
15. God in Brahma heavenly world
16. Prince Vishvabhuti and observance of self-control
17. God in Shukra heavenly world
18. Triprushtha Vasudeva
19. Seventh hell
20. Lion
21. Fourth hell
22. Human birth and renunciation
23. Universal ruler Priyamitra and renunciation
24. God in the Mahashukra heavenly world
25. Prince Nandana, renunciation and binding of the tirthankara namakarma
26. God in the tenth heaven called Pranata
27. Venerable ascetic Mahavira

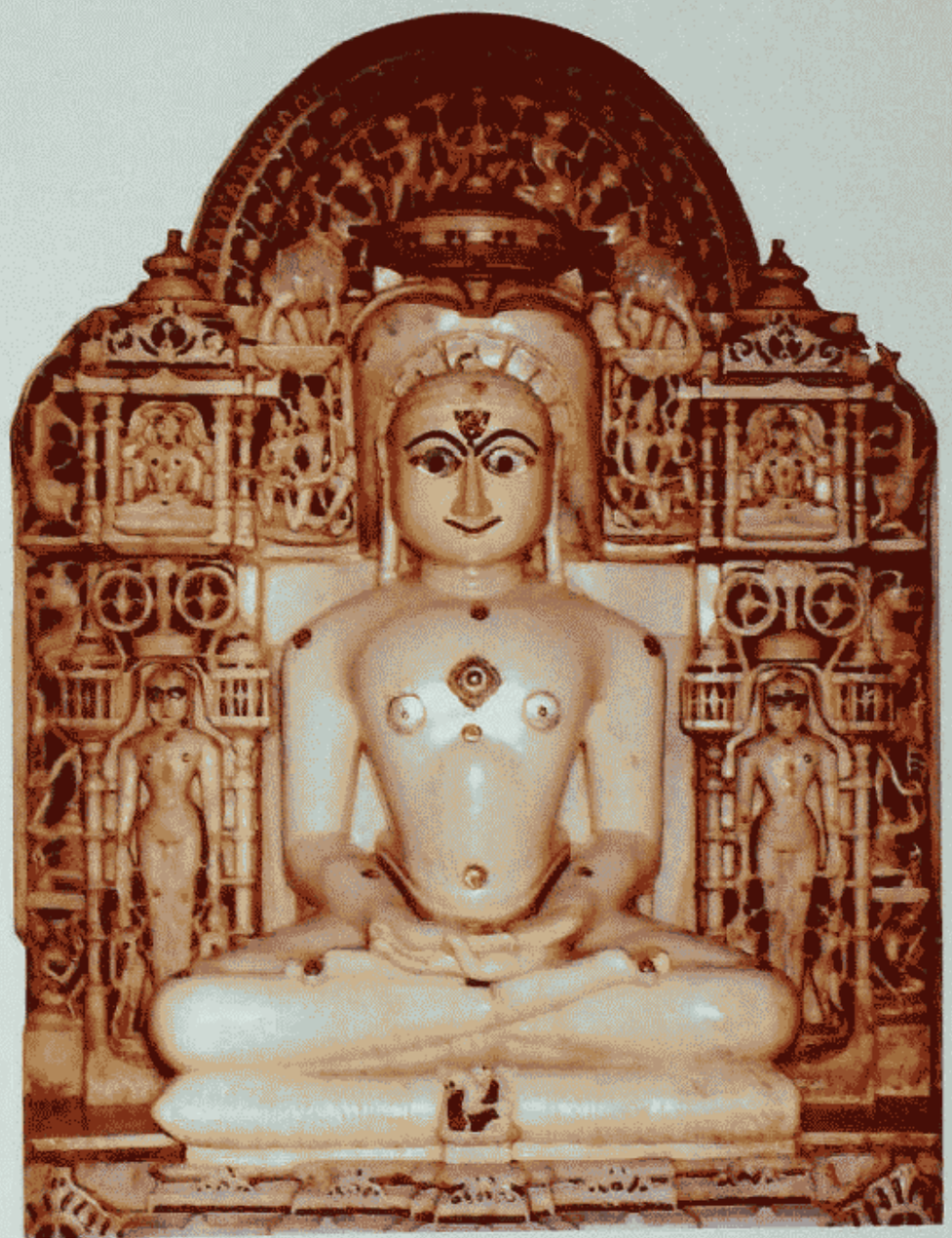
Bhadreshwar Tirth, Kutch
(Before Earth Quake-2001)



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The concise division of the life span of
Bhagwan Mahavira



Mulnayak Mahavirswami
Nana Tirth, (Rajasthan)

Duration as householderness	- 30 years
Life after initiation	- 42 years (and the same number of monsoon halts)
Life incognito	- 12 and a half years and fifteen days
Life after absolute enlightenment	- 29 years five and a half months
Total life span	- Complete seventy two years (according to the ancient Jain calender)

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Five Auspicious Events (Kalyanak) in the life of Tirthankara Mahavira

There occur important events in the life of all the venerable tirthankaras, the supreme saviours of living beings, who possessed extraordinary personality. The events are called *kalyanaka* (auspicious events). These auspicious events are instrumental in bringing to living beings spiritual welfare.

In the life of every tirthankara there occur five auspicious events. They are : conception (or descent in the womb of the mother), birth, renunciation, enlightenment and final death. Regarding the five auspicious events in the life of venerable Mahavira, we give below the information as to when and where they occurred.



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Name	The time from present	Before Vikrama Era	The year before Christ	Day Gujarati Month	Place	The state
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Auspicious occasion of descent	before 2569 years, 9 months and 7½ days	544	600 B.C.	Ashadh Shukla Paksha 6th day	Brahmin kundagam Nagara	The state of Videha [N.Bihar]
Auspicious occasion of birth	before 2569 years	543	599 B.C.	Chaitra Shukla Paksha 13th day	Kshatriya kundagam Nagara	The state of Videha [N.Bihar]
Auspicious occasion of initiation	before 2539 years	513	569 B.C.	Kartik Krishna Paksha 10th day	Kshatriya kundagam Nagara	The state of Videha [N.Bihar]
Auspicious occasion of absolute enlightenment the state of omniscience	before 2527 years	501	557 B.C.	Vaishakh Shukla Paksha 10th day	The town of Jrim-bhika (on the bank of the river Rujuvalika	Present state of Bihar
Physical redemption Nirvana i.e. end of earthly life	before 2497 years	471	527 B.C	Aso Krishna Paksha Last day [Amavas]	Pavapuri	Present state of Bihar

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Mahavira's Family

Relation	Name	Place	Gotra
• First mother [Who bore the initial embryo]	Devananda	Brahmanakundagrama	Jalandhara
• First Father	Rushabhadatta	Brahmanakundagrama	Kodala
Mother	Trishala	Videha Janapada	Vashishtha
Father	Siddhartha	Kshatriyakundagrama	Kashyapa
Paternal Uncle	Suparshva	Kshatriyakundagrama	Kashyapa
Elder Brother	Nandivardhana	Kshatriyakundagrama	Kashyapa
Wife of the elder brother	Jyestha	Vaishali	Vashishtha
Sister	Sudarshana	Kshatriyakundagrama	Vashishtha
Wife	Yashoda	Kshatriyakundagrama	Kaundinya
Daughter Daughter's	Priyadarshana	Kshatriyakundagrama	Kashyapa
husband	Jamali	Kshatriyakundagrama	Kashyapa
Daughter's daughter	Sheshavati	Kshatriyakundagrama	Kashyapa



Prince Vardhaman & Family

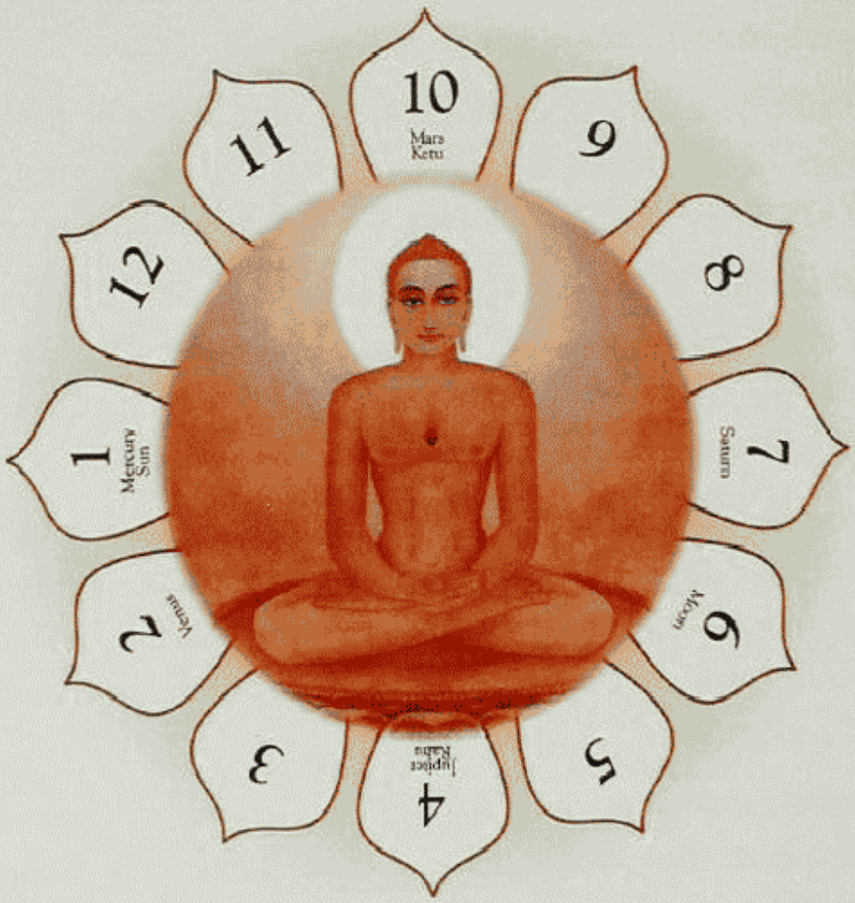
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Horoscope of Tirthankara Mahavira

Some of the published works dealing with the life-story of Venerable tirthankara Mahavira give his horoscope. And many scholars have discussed this horoscope and pondered over it. The horoscope, as is available to us, is as follows :

Birthday	:	Thirteenth day of the bright half of the month of Chaitra, Monday, year 599 B. C.	Birth Place	: Vaishali - Kundalapura (Kshatriyakundagrama)
Constellation	:	Uttara Phalguni	Father	: Siddhartha
Samvatsara	:	Siddharthi Samvatsara (53)	Family Lineage	: Natha
Zodiac Sign	:	Vergo	Clan	: Lichchavi
Time	:	End of night	Ancestry	: Ikshavaku
			Mother	: Trishala
			Family Lineage	: Kashyapa



This horoscope clearly shows that Tirthankara Mahavira was born in the period when the earth was in capricornus (*Makara Lagna*). In this period Mars was in high position.

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The Sun, being in the fourth place, was also in high position. Jupiter, being in the seventh place, was in high position. And Saturn too, being in the tenth place, was in high position. Thus only four planets were in high position. But the speciality of this horoscope is that in it all the four planets are centrally seated in the high house.

In this horoscope Venus is in his own house, at the fifth place. The moon is in the ninth house. And Mercury alongwith the sun is seated in the fourth place. Thus the strength of all the planets is gathered together. In this horoscope not a single planet is in low position. In other words, in this horoscope no planet is in those places which are regarded as inauspicious or undesirable.

Regarding this horoscope it can also be said that according to the modern astrology if even one out of five planets, viz. Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Mercury and Venus is in the centre and at the high position in the Zodiac then it will signify a favourable situation which may make the person a great man.

If we take into account this view, then this horoscope can be regarded as offering five favourable chances to the person to attain the status of a great man. Again, as three planets in high position are at the centre, the horoscope indicates the favourable circumstance making the person an extra-ordinary great man, that is, a tirthankara.

In this horoscope the sun, even in the fourth place, attained the high position. Thus all the four important centres are completely pervaded with the four planets which occupy high positions. And if we take into account the position of the sun in the Zodiac, then even the sun occupies the centre, this circumstance offering five favourable chances to the person to attain the status of a great man.

Against this goes the statement that if seven planets occupy high positions, then the person will become a tirthankara. But in the Jaina canonical literature it is recorded that the constellations at the time of the birth of different tirthankaras were different and also that the months of their birth were also different. So, the view that if seven planets occupy high positions in the horoscope, then the person will attain tirthankarahood, is difficult to accept.

If we consult the second book of *Acharangasutra* in order to clearly understand this horoscope,

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then therein we shall find the following description of the time of Lord Mahavira's birth : " In summer season (grishma), in the first month, in the second fortnight, on the thirteenth day of the bright half of the month of Chaitra when the moon was in conjunction with the constellation Uttara Phalguni Venerable Mahavira was born."

From the references of the canonical work it is quite evident that in those references there is no clear indication of the prevalence, in those days, of what we today call signs for the Zodiac. Moreover, the references do not mention the time of birth, so it is not clear as to what was the lagna at the time of his birth. Even in the ancient works of those days there do occur the discussion about lunar day, constellation and karana (period of 30 ghatikas i.e. 12 hours) but there occurs no discussion about the Zodiac. So we can safely maintain that the Zodiac signs, viz. Aries etc. might not have been prevalent in those days.

Commentators of the Kalpasutra, a work posterior to Acharangasutra, have noted that in the horoscope of Tirthnakara Mahavira seven planets were in high position. When the savior soul of Lord Mahavira took birth, according to the ancient astrology the position of seven planets was high, as shown below :

In Aries, the sun was of 10 degree.
In Taurus, the sun was of 31 degree.
In Mruga (The fifth lunar mansion), Mars was of 28 degree.
In Virgo, Mercury was of 15 degree.
In Cancer, Jupiter was of 5 degree.
In Pisces, Venus was of 27 degree.
In Libra, Saturn was of 20 degree.

The fruits of these seven planets in their high position are happiness, enjoyment of worldly pleasure, wealth, leadership, feudatory kingship, monarchship, universal rulership

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respectively. If of the seven planets the three are in high position, then the person will become a king. If the five planets are in high position, then he will become a quasi-universal-ruler. If the six planets are in high position, then he will become a universal ruler. If the seven planets are in high position, then he will attain tirthankarahood.

Thus commentators of the Kalpasutra note that all the seven planets are in the high position in the horoscope of Lord Mahavira. Taking into account all the available information we feel that in the days of Acharangasutra the Zodiac signs were not in vogue, that afterwards at the time of composition of the Kalpasutra in astrology the use of the Zodiac signs might have become prevalent. If this is the case, then it cannot be maintained that this horoscope of Lord Mahavira was prepared at the time of his birth.

Relatives of Tirthankara Mahavira in his Different Births

Tirthankara Mahavira had innumerable previous births. But the birth as Nayasara is regarded as his first previous birth because it was the birth in which he attained the right and wholesome spiritual self – realisation (*samyaktva*). After that birth, Tirthankara Mahavira had some important previous births, the remaining being unimportant are not counted as his previous births. Apart from his fifth, thirteenth, fifteenth and twenty-first previous births other births were unimportant. His birth as Mahavira is the twenty-seventh and the last birth. Of the twenty six previous births, in thirteen he was born as a human being, in ten as a god, in two as infernal being and in one as an animal. In the following previous births he was born as a human being – the first, third, fifth, sixth, eighth, tenth, twelfth, fourteenth, sixteenth, eighteenth (Triprushtha Vasudeva), twenty-second, twenty-third (Universal ruler Priyamitra) and twenty-fifth (Muni Nandana). In the following previous births he was born as a god – the second, fourth, seventh, ninth, eleventh, thirteenth, fifteenth, seventeenth, twenty-fourth and twenty-sixth; and the corresponding heavenly worlds were Saudharma, Brahma, Saudharma, Ishana, Sanatkumara, Mahendra, Brahma, Mahashuktra and

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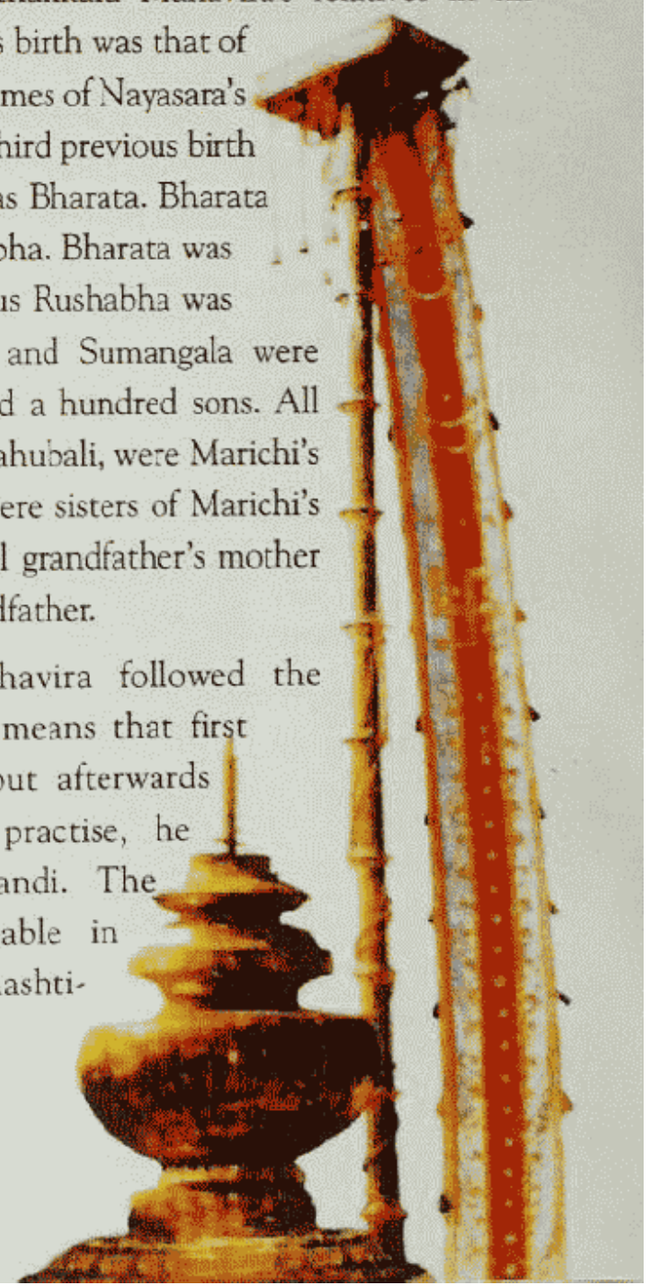
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Pranata. In his ninteenth and twenty-first previous births he was born as an infernal being in the seventh and fourth hells respectively. In his twentieth previous birth he was born as a lion, that is, as an animal.

If we confine our account only to his those previous births in which he was born as a human being, then we will have to give the concerned account of only twelve previous births. They are the births of Nayasara, Marichi, Kaushika Brahmana, Pushyamitra Dvija, Agnidyota Dvija, Agni Dvija, Bharadvaja Dvija, Sthavaraka Dvija, Yuvaraja Vishvabhuti, Triprushtha Vasudeva, Priyamitra Chakravarti and Rajkumara Nandana.

This shows that out of these twelve previous births as a human being, in six he was born as a brahmana. And it is noteworthy that in none of these twelve previous births as a human being, he was born as a female child.

Now we give an account of Tirthankara Mahavira's relatives in his previous human births. His first previous birth was that of Nayasara. We do not come across the names of Nayasara's relatives in any Jaina work. Mahavira's third previous birth was that of Marichi. Marichi's father was Bharata. Bharata was a son of the first tirthankara Rushabha. Bharata was also a universal ruler (chakravarti). Thus Rushabha was Marichi's grand father, and Sunanda and Sumangala were Marichi's grand mothers. Rushabha had a hundred sons. All hundred brothers except Bharata and Bahubali, were Marichi's paternal uncles. Brahmi and Sundari were sisters of Marichi's father. Marudevi was Marichi's paternal grandfather's mother and Nabhi was his paternal great grandfather.



In the birth of Marichi, Mahavira followed the religion of 'Tridandi' parivrajaka. It means that first Marichi accepted Jaina asceticism but afterwards when he found it very hard to practise, he abandoned it and became a tridandi. The description of a tridandi is available in Acharya Hemachandracharya's Trishashti-shalakapurushacharita.

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- Jaina ascetics have abandoned (rather have control over) three staffs of the form of (activities of) mind, speech and body, while I am under their control. Therefore, my external differentiating mark is a group of three staffs.
- Jaina ascetics pluck the hair from their heads with their own hands, while I shave the hair with a razor and keep a tuft of hair on my head.
- They observe great vows while I observe small vows.
- They have no possessions, while I possess a ring, etc.
- They are free from delusion or attachment, while I am afflicted with it. To show this, I keep an umbrella.
- They tour bare-footed, while I wear shoes to protect my feet.
- Jaina ascetics are fragrant with their good conduct, while I am not so good in conduct as they are. Therefore, for fragrance I mark my forehead with sandal paste.
- Jaina ascetics wear white old pieces of cloth signifying their total freedom from passions, while I, being under the sway of passions, wear ochre-coloured pieces of cloth.
- As the use of water causes injury to infinite water-bodied living beings, Jaina ascetics have abandoned its use in bathing, etc. On the other hand, I use it in limited quantity in bathing etc.

When Marichi became tridandi, his external appearance was as follows :

His head was clean-shaven but it had a tuft of hair on it.
He wore ochre-coloured pieces of cloth.
He had some water and fragrance of sandal paste, etc.
Three staffs in his hand.
An umbrella on his head.
A ring in his finger.
Shoes in his feet.

Of the twenty-six previous births of Tirthankara Mahavira, in seven he as a tridandi. Those seven previous births were of (1) Marichi, (2) Kaushika,) Pushyamitra, (4) Agnidyota, (5) Agnibhuti, (6) Bharadvaja, and (7)

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In all those seven previous births except that of Marichi, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as a brahmin. The story of tridandi suggests the important point that those Jaina ascetics who could not follow the hard code of Jaina ascetic conduct became tridandi. If a Jaina ascetic was lax or loose in the observance of Jaina code of ascetic conduct, he could not retain his status of a Jaina ascetic.

In his fifth previous birth Tirthankara Mahavira was born as Kaushika brahmana who accepted tridandi religion. After that he had several unimportant births.

In his sixth previous birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as a brahmana who accepted tridandi religion. In his eighth previous birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as Agniudyota brahamana who too accepted tridandi religion. In his tenth previous birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as Agnibhuti brahmana. His father was Somila and his mother was Shivabhadra. Agnibhuti received initiation from *parivrajaka* ascetic Surasena. In his twelth previous birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as a brahmana named Bharadvaja who accepted tridandi religion. No information is available about Tirthankara Mahavira's various unimportant births after his thirteenth previous birth. They are not counted as his previous births.

In his fourteenth previous birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as a son of Kapila brahmana and his wife Kantimati. He was given the name Sthavara. He accepted tridandi religion. In his fifteenth previous birth Tirthankara Mahavira was, born as a god. After that he had several unimportant births which are not listed as his previous births. In his sixteenth previous birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as Vishvabhuti. Vishvabhuti's father was Vishakhabhuti and his paternal uncle was Vishvanandi. Vishakhabhuti's wife Dharini was his mother. Vishvabhuti was married to thirty-two girls. He had a wife named Madanalekha (Priyangu). This Madanalekha was his paternal aunt. Vishvabhuti had a son named Vishvanandi.

In his nineteenth previous birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as Triprushtha. Triprushtha's father was Prajapati and his mother was Mrugavati. Tirthankara Mahavira had several unimportant births after the twenty-first previous birth. Hence no information is available about them. In his twenty-second previous birth, his father was Priyamitra and his mother was Vimala.

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In his twenty-third previous birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as a son of King Dhananjaya and queen Dharini. Dhananjaya was the king of the city of Muka in Mahavideha Region. His son was named Priyamitra. Priyamitra became supreme ruler (*Chakravarti*). He was married to many princesses. Like other universal rulers, he had sixty-four thousand wives. At last, he renounced the world and became a Jaina monk. He was a pupil of Acharya Pottila.

In his twenty-fifth birth, Tirthankara Mahavira was born as a son of king Jitashatru and queen Bhadra. His name was Nandana. He gave his kingdom to his son and became a Jaina monk. His spiritual teacher was Acharya Pottila. In this birth, Tirthankara Mahavira practised special austerity called Visa-Sthanaka and as a result of it bound *tirthankara-namakarma*, a type of *karma* which secures for the practitioner its fruit, tirthankarahood.

The twenty-seventh birth was Tirthankara Mahavira's last birth. His soul descended in to the womb of Devananda and remained there for eighty-two days. Devananda's husband was Rushabhadatta. After eighty-two days, the embryo was transferred from Devananda's womb to Trishala's womb. It was Trishala who gave birth to Mahavira. Tirthankara Mahavira's father (Trishala's husband) was Siddhartha, the king of Kshatriyakunda. In scriptures two other names of Siddhartha are available. They are : Shreyamsa and Yashasvin.

Even queen Trishala had two other names. They are available in scriptures. They are : Videhadatta and Priyakarini. The name of prince Vardhamana's (Mahavira's) paternal uncle was Suparshva. The name of Vardhamana's elder brother was Nandivardhana.

Many names of Venerable Mahavira are available in scriptures. When he was born, there was remarkable increase in happiness, peace and prosperity in the kingdom. So his parents gave him the name Vardhamana. A god who assumed the form of a goblin to test bravery and strength of child Vardhamana, at last surrendered himself to Vardhamana and bowed down before him. So he was called by the name Mahavira. In ancient times a person was known by the name of the family lineage. So Vardhamana is mentioned by the name *jnata-nandana* or *jnata-putra*. A person was also known by the name of his city. So the Jaina canonical work Sutrakrutanga employs the name *Vaishalika* for Mahavira. As he was free from the knot of attachment and aversion, he was also known by the name Nirgrantha. On account of his long severe austerities, he was well known as Shramana. In Kalpasutra there occurs the name Videha and in Digambara works there occurs the name Sanmati. For people he was *Devarya*. Tirthankara Mahavira was contemporary of Gautama Buddha. In Buddhist works, Tirthankara Mahavira is mentioned by the following names – Nataputa, Nataputta, Nayaputta and Nigantha.

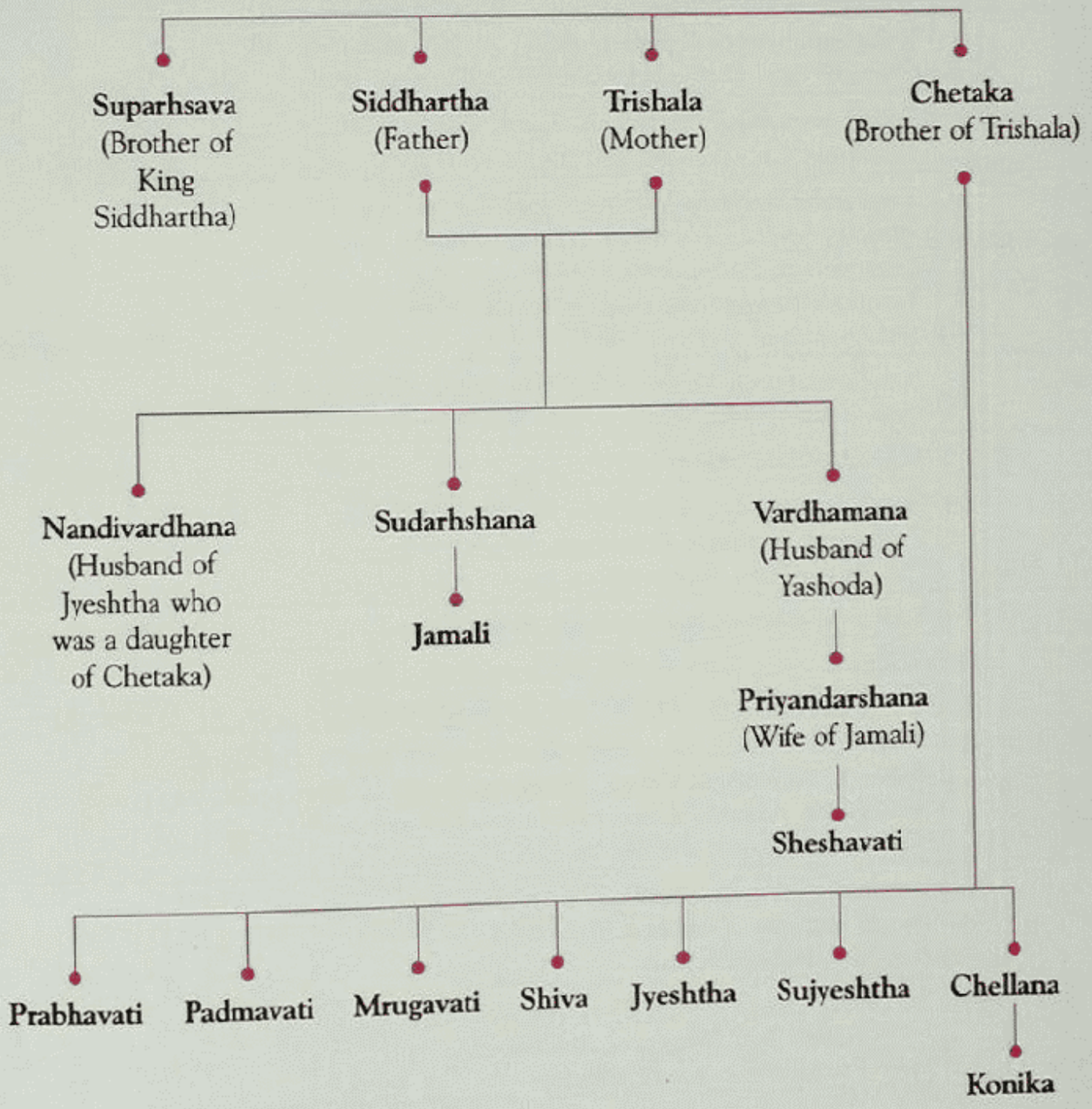
The name of Mahavira's wife was Yashoda. His daughter had two names – Anavadya and Priyadarshana. His daughter's daughter also had two names – Sheshavati and Yashasvati. Prince Vardhamana's maternal uncle was Chetaka. King Chetaka had seven daughters – 1. Prabhavati,

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2. Padmavati, 3. Mrugavati, 4. Shiva, 5. Jyeshtha, 6. Sujyeshtha, and 7. Chellana. Of these seven daughters, Sujyeshtha became a Jaina nun. Prince Vardhamana's six sisters' husbands were — 1. Udayana, 2. Dadhivahana, 3. Shatanika, 4. Pradyota, 5. Nandivardhana, and 6. Shrenika. This shows that Mahavira's elder brother Nandivardhana was married to Chetaka's daughter. Her name was Jyeshtha.

The name of Vardhamana's elder brother Nandivardhana's wife was Jyeshtha. His elder sister's name was Sudarshana who had a son named Jamali. Vardhamana married his daughter Anavadya (Priyadarshana) to Jamali. Thus Jamali was the husband of Vardhamana's daughter. Vardhamana's father Siddhartha was the son of Vardhamana's maternal aunt. We can understand Vardhamana's relations easily from the following chart :



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Account of Mahavira's Vihar & Chaturmas

Before the Attainment of Omniscience

Year (B.C.)		Tour Route	Four-month-stay
569	1	Kundagrama, Jnatakhandavana, Karmaragrama Kollagasannivesha, Morakasannivesha, Duijjamtaga Hermitage, Asthikagrama.	Asthikagrama
568	2	Morakasannivesha, Vachala, Dakshinavachala, Suvarnavaluka (river), Rupyavaluka, Kanaka- khala Hermitage, Uttara-vachala, Shvetambi, Surabhipur, Ganga river, Thunkasannivesha, Rajgruha, Nalandasannivesha	Nalandasannivesha
567	3	Kollagasannivesha, Suvarnakhala, Champa City , Brahmanagrama	Champanagari
566	4	Kollayasannivesha, Pattakalaya, Kumaraka-sannivesha,Chorakasannivesha,Prushtha-champa	Prushtha-Champa
565	5	Kayamgalasannivesha, Shravasti, Halidduyam, Jamgala, Avatta, Chorayasannivesha, Kalambu-kasannivesha, Radha-desha (Anarya country), Purnakalasha (Anaryagrama), Malayapradesha, Bhaddiyanagari	Bhaddiya-nagari
564	6	Kayali-samagama, Jambusanda, Tabayasanni-vesha, Vaishali, Gramakasannivesha, Shalishi-rsha, Bhaddiya-nagari	Bhaddiya-nagari
563	7	Magadhabhumi, Alambhiya	Alambhiya
562	8	Kundalasannivesha, Maddanasannivesha, Bahusalaga, Shalavana, Lohargala, Purimatala, Unnaga-gobhumi, Rajagruha	Rajagruha
561	9	Lodha, Vrajabhumi, Sumhabhumi, Anarya-desha	Vrajabhumi
560	10	Siddharthapura, Kurmagrama, Siddharthapura, Vaishali, Gandaki (Mandaki) River, Vanijya-grama, Shravasti.	Shravasti
559	11	Sanulatthiya, Sannivesha, Dradhabhumi, Polasa-chaitya, Baluka, Subhoga, Suchchheta Malaya, Hatthisisa, Tosali, Siddharthapura, Vrajagrama, Alambhiya, Seyaviya, Shravasti, Kaushambi, Varanasi, Rajagruha, Mithila, Vaishali, Kamamahavana	Vaishali
558	12	Samsumarapura, Bhogapura, Nandigrama, Mendhiyagrama, Kaushambi, Sumangala, Succheta, Palaka Champa.	Champa
557	13	Jambhiyagrama, Medhiya, Chammani, Madh-yama-Apapa, Jambhiyagrama, Rujuvuluka (river) (attainment of omniscience)	—

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After attainment of Omniscience

Year (B.C.)		Tour Route	Four-month-stay
557	13	Rujivaluka, Pavapuri, Rajgruha	Rajagruha
556	14	Rajagruha, Brahmanakunda, Vaishali	Vaishali
555	15	Vaishali, Kaushambi, Shravasti, Vanijyagama	Vanijyagrama
554	16	Vanijyagrama, Rajgruha	Rajagruha
553	17	Rajagruha, Champa, Vitabhaya, Vanijyagrama	Vanijyagrama
552	18	Vanijyagrama, Varanasi, Alambhiya, Rajagruha	Rajagruha
551	19	Rajagruha	Rajagruha
550	20	Vairajagruha, Alambhiya, Kaushambi, Vaishali	Vaishali
549	21	Vaishali, Mithila, Kakandi, Kampilyapura, Posalapura, Vanijyagrama, Vaishali	Vaishali
548	22	Vaishali, Rajagruha	Rajagruha
547	23	Rajagruha, Krutamgala, Shravasti, Vanijyagrama	Vanijyagrama
546	24	Vanijyagrama, Brahamanakunda, Kaushambi, Rajagruha	Rajagruha
545	25	Rajagruha, Champa, Rajagruha	Rajagruha
544	26	Rajgruha, Kakandi, Mithila, Champa	Champa
543	27	Champa, Shravasti, Medhiyagrama, Champa, Mithila	Mithila
542	28	Mithila, Hastinapura, Mokanagari, Vanijyagrama	Vanijyagrama
541	29	Vanijyagrama, Rajagruha	Rajagruha
540	30	Rajagruha, Prustha-champa, Champa, Dasharnapura, Vanijyagrama	Vanijyagrama
539	31	Vanijyagrama, Kampilyapura, Vaishali	Vaishali
538	32	Vaishali, Vanijyagrama, Vaishali	Vaishali
537	33	Vaishali, Rajagruha, Champa, Prushtha-champa, Rajagruha	Rajagruha
536	34	Rajagruha, Nalanda	Nalanda
535	35	Nalanda, Vanijyagrama, Nalanda	Vaishali
534	36	Vaishali, Saketa, Vaishali	Vaishali
533	37	Vaishali, Rajagruha	Rajagruha
532	38	Rajagruha, Nalanda	Nalanda
531	39	Nalanda, Mithila	Mithila
530	40	Mithila	Mithila
529	41	Mithila, Rajagruha	Rajagruha

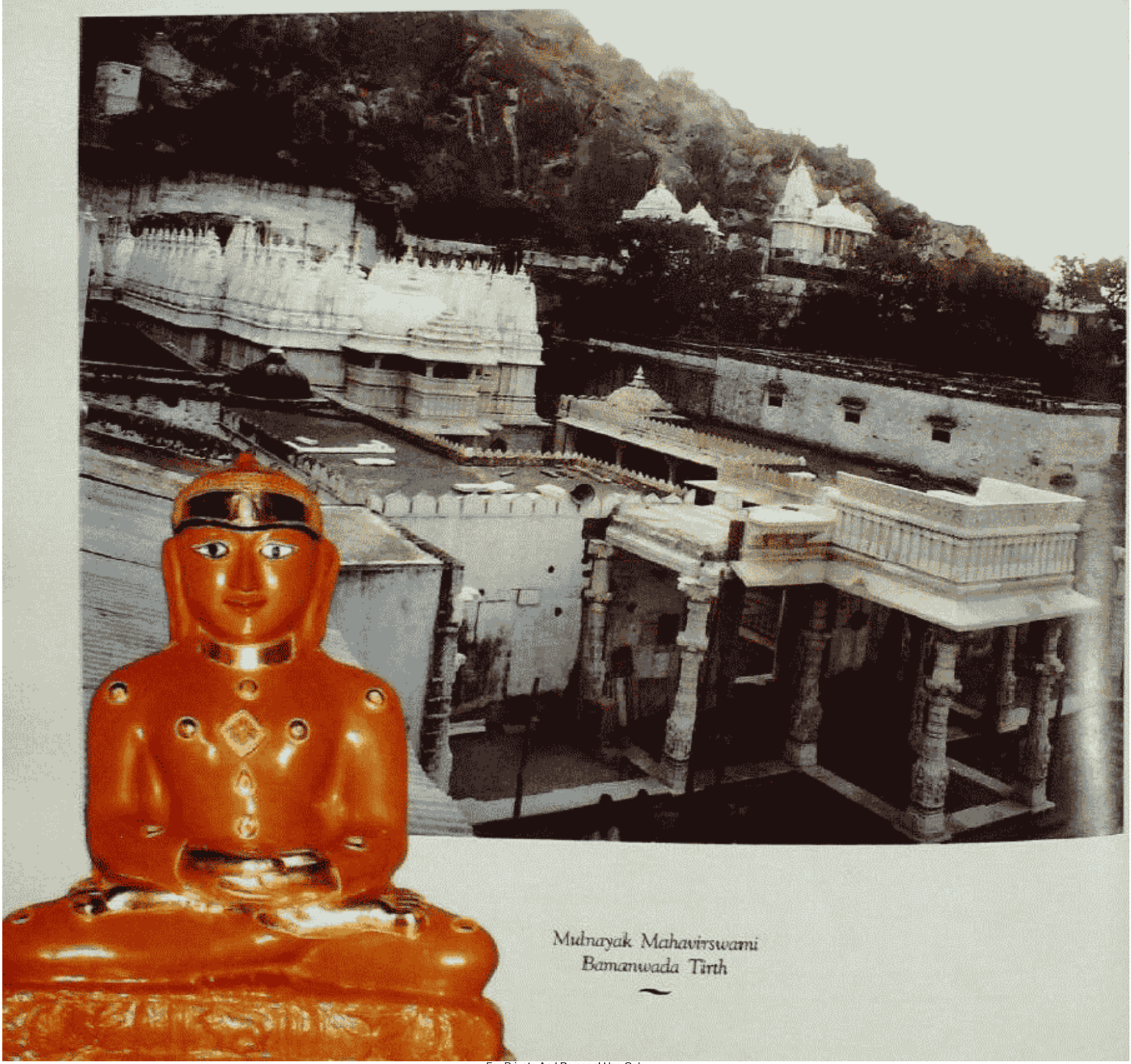
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Ordeals (upasarga) of Tirthankara Mahavira

Shri Bamanwada Tirth

The tirth is situated on a hill of a mountain in a jungle adjacent to Viravada which is at a distance of 7 Kms. from Sihori Road in Rajasthan. Here we have an idol of *Mulanayaka* Shri Tirthankara Mahavira; of coral colour, about 76 cms. in height and in *Padmasana* posture. The idol of is highly impressive and lustrous. The hearts of devoted pilgrims set filled to the brim by devotion. Even the natural beauty of the jungle all-around is pleasant. It is said that at this spot there ocurred the calamity of pricking of a wooden thorn in the ear. (see opposite page) The tirtha is also known by the name of Jivitaswami.



Mulnayak Mahavirswami
Bamanwada Tirth

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Upasargas

No.	Year	Place	Type
1	1	Kumar Gram	Impending attack by cowherds
2	1	Asthika Gram	From Shoolpani
3	2	Near Uttar Vachala	Chandakaushika the serpent rushing to bite
4	2	Surabhipur	From god Sudanshtra
5	4	Chorak	Dipping in the well
6	5	Kalambuka	Tied with rope and bitten
7	5	–	Harassment in the Anarya region of Lodha-Radha
8	6	Kupika Sannivesha	Beating and arrest
9	6	Shalishirsha	Katputna Vyantri (goblins)
10	8	Lohargala	Detention
11	9	The vajra Shuddha Bhumi of the Ladha- Radha region known as Anaryan	Ordeal from men
12	11	The Polas Chaitya of Pedhala Gram of Dridha	20 ordeals from Sangam hanging at Tosli etc.
13	13	Shanmani	Hammering the thich grass spikes in the ears by the cowherd and their removal

The release of fatal energy (Tejoleshya) by Goshalaka was also an ordeal but Bhagwan Mahavira had already reached the state of absolute enlightenment by then. This event is noted only as a miracle.

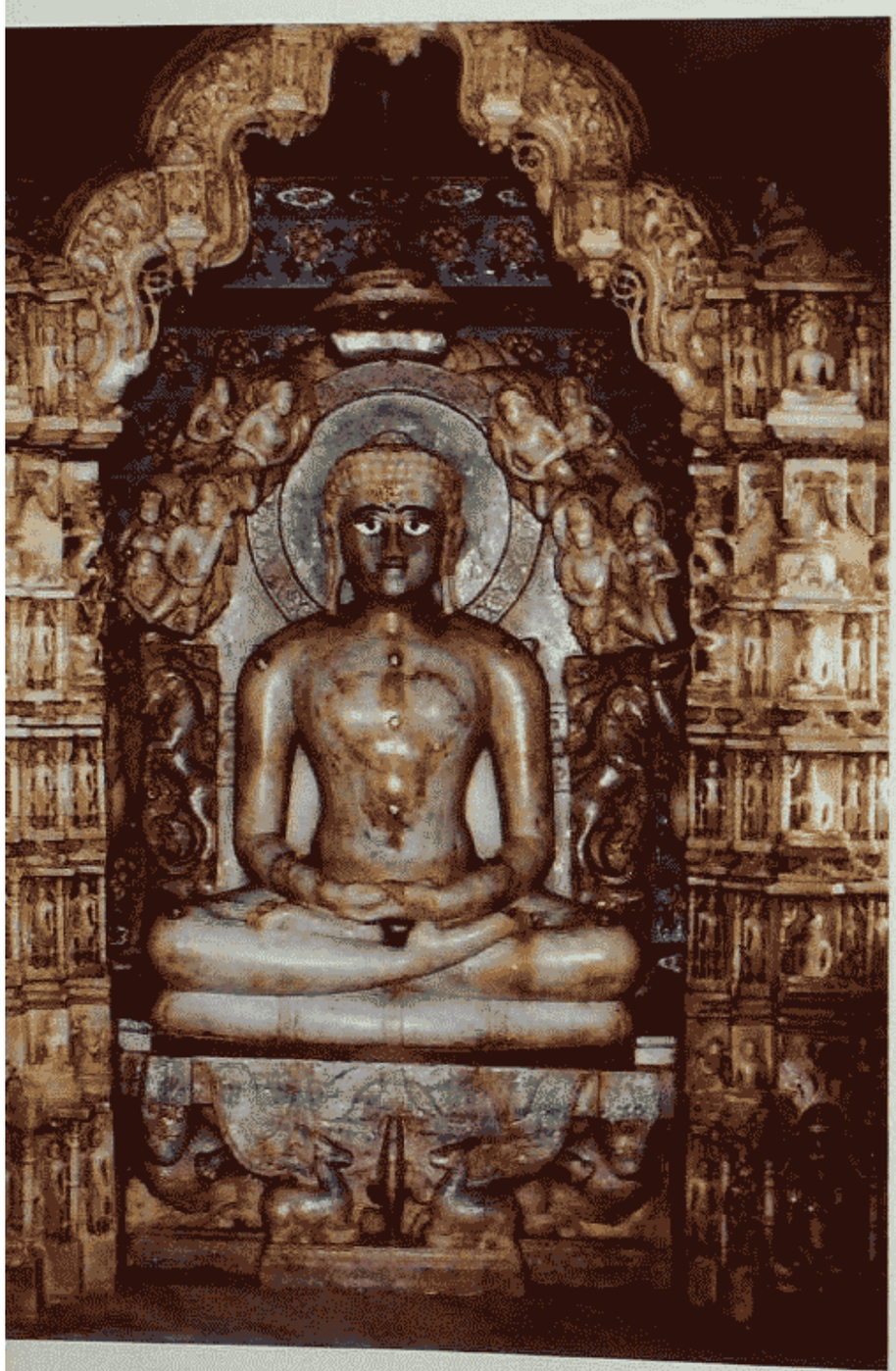
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Unprecedented, Unique, Wonderful and Severe Austerities of

Mahavira

All over the world, Jaina religion is well known as a religion of austerity. And Tirthankara Mahavira is famous for his long and severe austerities. How was his austere life ? How did he endure biting cold and burning sun ? How were the places where he halted or dwelt ? How did he walk ? What type of calamities and afflictions from cruel men and wild animals did he endure while passing through dense, dreadful forests ?



Mulnayak Mahavirswami
Nandiya Tirth

The oldest Jaina canonical work, entitled *Acharangasutra*, draws vivid pictures of Tirthankara Mahavira's practice of austerities. It describes events which illustrate his unique heroism exhibited in his victory over terrible situations and calamities that arose before him. Let us have a glimpse into his austere ascetic life embodied in the words of Acharangasutra.

Venerable Sudharmaswami relates :

"O Long-lived Jambu ! I present before you the description of Tirthankara Mahavira's austerities as I myself have heard about them. In severe cold, Tirthankara Mahavira made great spiritual efforts, realised the miseries of worldly existence, renounced the world and took the vow of asceticism. And on that very day, which was the day of the season of severe cold, he left the city and went on tour.

He was determined not to cover his body with any cloth, even in biting cold.

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And it was, indeed, quite proper for venerable Mahavira who bravely faced terrible calamities and won victory over them. (1-2)

Though his body was not protected against severe cold with cloth, yet he did not thrust his hands in armpits to warm them.

At times in winter, he sat in the shade of a tree and engaged himself in meditation. And in hot summer he performed meditation in sun with uncovered body completely exposed to scorching heat."

Endless Ocean of Pain

"As his body was not covered with cloth, he endured, with equanimity, prickings of pointed wild grass, biting severe cold and burning sun. (40)

While walking on the path, he firmly set his eyes on the nearest portion of the path measuring the length of a man, without moving his eyes sideways.

If someone urged him to speak, he would speak very little. He remained always inward, keeping his eyes steady.

Boys were frightened to see him naked and his eyes motionless; they would gather shout and throw stones at him." (5-21)

Places of his Residence or Halts

"Sometimes he stayed in places like deserted houses, assembly-halls, water-huts and small shops, sometimes in black-smith's workshops or near heaps of paddy-husk, sometimes in caravanserais, parks on the outskirts of cities, or houses in cities, and sometimes in cremation grounds, ruined empty houses or under trees.

Ascetic Mahavira spent more than thirteen years in this manner."

Vigilance about sleep

"During these years he remained, day and night, mindfully engrossed in deep meditation. He slept very little. When sleep attacked him, he at once got up and stood in meditation. When he reclined on his side, it was not because he wanted to go to sleep. Sometimes when he felt that he was going to be sleepy, he immediately got up and moved to and fro at night for nearly an hour to ward off sleep. He regarded sleep as a cause of spiritual lethargy."

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Reign of Harassment

"In halting-places, Tirthankara Mahavira endured calamities and afflictions of various sorts. Insects and birds living there inflicted pain and suffering on him by stinging, biting or pecking. The wicked men troubled him in various ways. Sometimes villagers harassed him with weapons in their hands. Sometimes lustful women and men disturbed him, seeing him alone. Those who wandered single at night asked him as to who he was. He, being in meditation, could not reply them. So they became furious with him. But when he was not in meditation, he simply answered that he was a religious beggar. He said nothing more. So they too became very angry. But venerable Mahavira kept his mind cool, calm and equanimous, and engaged himself in meditation. Thus supreme was the spiritual practice of Tirthankara Mahavira."(31-1, 34-5)

Neutral or Disinterested Attitude

"While staying in places where many other people lived, he never cast a glance at women; on the contrary he turned his eyes inward and engaged himself in meditation. He kept himself aloof from householders. He established no relation with them. He was always in meditation. Even if anybody asked him questions, he would not answer. If anybody saluted him with reverence, he would pay no heed to it. And if anybody harassed him, he would endure it with equanimity. He had no interest in hearing stories, songs or music, nor had he any interest in witnessing theatrical performances, dances, plays, duels, fist-fights, acrobatic feats, magical shows, etc., nor had he any interest in overhearing conversation of other people. He never felt sorry. He never experienced grief. He was indifferent to pleasures and pains. He remained always neutral or disinterested. He always kept himself engaged in spiritual practice, deep reflection and meditation. He endured, with equanimity, unbearable pains and distresses. That was his supreme heroism. In all places, at all times and in all circumstances, he remained unagitated, calm and equanimous. He never expected or sought any help from anybody to overcome terrible calamities. He bravely endured them."(6-10)

In the Conflagration of Violence

"Venerable Mahavira toured even in Ladha country, Vajrabhumi and Shubhrabhumi which were very difficult to travel. There he had to use beds and seats which were highly uncomfortable. The people of those country were barbarians. They were cruel. They beat him, tortured him. He could get only tasteless and dry food. The people let loose hounds on him. They provaked them to bite him. And they bit him. The people of Vajrabhumi were very cruel. Ascetics of other sects, while on tour, kept staffs or pipes in their hands to protect themselves from hounds. At times hounds bit Tirthankara Mahavira and tore out flash from his body. But even in such barbaric countries, he took no recourse to any type of violence, renounced all attachments to his body and endured all pains and afflications with equanimity. He bravely won victory over all calamities, as does a victorious elephant in the front row of the infantry on the battlefield."

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A Great Hero who won over All Calamities

"In Ladha country many times he did not come across a single village for many miles during his tour. Sometimes when he reached the outskirts of a village, the villagers came out of the village, beat him and drove him away. Sometimes they sat on his body and cut pieces of flesh from it. Sometimes they threw sand and dust at him. Sometimes they lifted him up and then threw him down on the ground. Sometimes they pushed him down from his seat. In spite of all these calamities and tortures, venerable Mahavira remained calm, polite and equanimous, renouncing all attachments to his body and abandoning all desires. Like a great hero fighting fearlessly in the front line on the battlefield, he endured all calamities firmly and calmly without any agitation or distress and toured regularly without any fear." (41-53)

Care for All Living Beings

"Venerable Mahavira had renounced drinking cold water two years before he took to asceticism. As he knew that earth, water, fire, air, moss, plants and mobile living beings were sentient, he toured with utmost care and vigilance so that none of them was killed or injured. He also knew that immobile living beings were born in the class of mobile living beings and mobile living beings were born in the class of immobile living beings, or that living beings afflicted with delusion were born in any class of living beings according to their *karma* – they wandered in the transmigratory existence according to their karma. Tirthankara Mahavira definitely knew that deluded living beings always bound new karmas. Having comprehended the nature and function of karmas, Tirthankara Mahavira renounced all vicious or evil activities." (11-5)



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Defectless Food

"Tirthankara Mahavira never accepted food specially prepared for him because he knew that acceptance of such food caused bondage of *karma*. As he had renounced all evil or defiling activities, he used only such food and drink which were free from all defects. He did not use others' utensils for food, nor did he use others' pieces of cloth. Shunning all consideration about his honour-dishonour and desiring no help from others, he went on tour all alone." (18-9)

Flavourless And Tasteless Food

"Tirthankara Mahavira knew well as to how much quantity of food and drink an ascetic should consume. He knew that he should be very moderate. So he was never tempted to relish delicious food. He never expected or desired such food. He lived on plain rice, flour of parched grams and pulses. He lived on these three items alone for eight months. For several fortnights or months he did not even drink water. Even in that state, he toured continuously for two to six months, making very few halts. As he had no desire, sometimes he ate cold cooked food offered to him and sometimes he ate food after fasting for three days, four days, five days or six days. " (58-60)

Search For Food Free from the Defect of Violence

Having entered a village or a city, he vigilantly searched for food which was not specially prepared for him. He avoided houses where hungry and thirsty birds like crows etc. perched on trees, or where *Brahmanas*, *Shramana* ascetics, beggars, guests, untouchable low-caste men, cats, dogs, etc. had gathered and slowly and silently moved away from those places so that he might not be an obstruction in their obtaining food and drink ; he searched for suitable food elsewhere. Sometimes he accepted soaked, sometimes dry or sometimes cold cooked food. Sometimes he obtained in alms several day's old *khichri* (hotch-potch) , or boiled unsplit pulses, or lump of boiled rice, or rice-water. When he obtained no food in alms, he peacefully passed his day or days without food." (62-67)

Free from the Desire of Sensual Pleasure

"Though venerable Mahavira was not afflicted with any disease, he never ate to fill his stomach completely, kept it partly empty. He was moderate in eating. He never took medicines. For maintaining wholesomeness and purity of his body, he never took recourse to purging, vomiting, anointing,

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bathing, tooth-cleansing, etc. For relief of physical pain, he never took recourse to massage or similar treatments. (54-5)"



Mulnayak Mahavirswami
Bhadreshwar Tirth

Equanimity Amidst Calamities

"He was a true *brahmana* because he was free from lust for sensual pleasures and spoke very little. Having realised and attained supremely pure and pristine state of the soul, he had completely extinguished fire of passions. His vision was pure and lucid.

He was so engrossed in his spiritual practice that he never rubbed his eyes and never scratched his body. He had no desire left. He was wise and intelligent. He had risen above likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion. He remained always unagitated and calm. He endured with equanimity all calamities inflicted on him by worldly beings, gods and demi-gods. He endured various types of smells and sounds with evenness of mind." (56, 11, 20, 32-33)

Spiritual Hero

"The unruffled and calm venerable Mahavira adopted various meditative postures and engaged himself in deep meditation. Experienced in meditation and freed from desires, he deeply reflected on the nature and structure of the universe – the upper world, the middle world and the lower world. As he had completely exterminated all passions, he had no attachment for worldly objects and he displayed his heroism in spiritual practice. Renouncing all lethargy, he remained always vigilant in the performance of his spiritual practice. Without the instruction of any person, he himself knew the nature of transmigratory existence; and having known it,he always mindfully practised spiritual discipline required for purifying the soul. He always remained unagitated, calm and equanimous throughout his whole life. Those who are desirous of liberation should lead their lives in this manner, I say so." (70)

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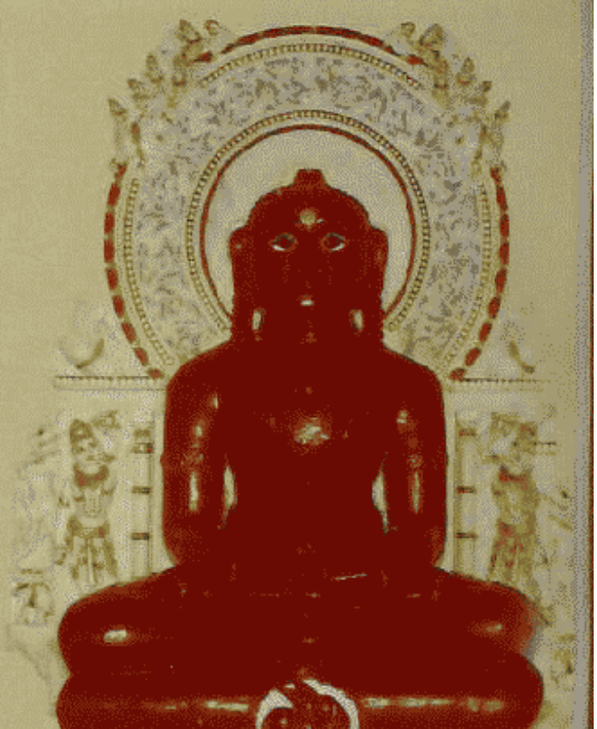
Long Austerities of Tirthankara Mahavira

Time and Four-month-stay with ordinal No.	Type of Austerity	Place of Austerity	Place of Breaking the fast
At the time of renunciation	two-day-long-fast	Kshatriyakunda	Kollaga
Four-month-stay-1	fifteen-day-long-fast	Moraka Asthika	Kollaga
After four-month-stay	fifteen-day-long-fast	Kanakakhala Hermitage	Uttara Vacala
Four-month-stay-2	one-month-long-fast-1 one-month-long-fast-2 one-month-long-fast-3 one-month-long-fast-4	Nalanda Nalanda Nalanda Nalanda	Nalanda Nalanda Nalanda Kollage
After four-month-stay	Two-day-long-fast	Brahmana	–
Four-month-stay-3	2 one-month-long-fast 2 one-month-long-fast	Champa Champa	Outside Champa town Outside Champa town
Four-month-stay-4	Four-month-long-fast	Prushtha Champa	Outside Champa town
Four-month-stay-5	–	Bhadrika	Outside Champa town
Four-month-stay-6	–	Bhadrika	Outside Champa town
Four-month-stay-7	–	Alambhika	Outside Champa town
Four-month-stay-8	with various self-imposed restrictions (abhigraha)	Rajagruha	Outside Champa town
Four-month-stay-9	four-month-long-fast	Vajrabhumi	Outside Champa town
Four-month-stay-10	with diverse austerities	Shravasti	Outside Champa town
After-four-month-stay	Bhadra, Mahabhadra and Sarvatobhadra Pratima (two-day- long, four-day-long and ten-day-long fasts)	–	–
After four-month-stay	six-month-long fast (due to Sangama god)	Pedhala	–
Four-month-stay-11	four-month-long-fast	Vaishali	Vaishali
After-four-month-stay	five-month-twenty-five-day-long-fast (due to self-imposed restriction)	Kaushambi	Kaushambi
Four-month-stay-12	Four-month-long-fast	Champa	Champa
Four-month-stay-42	two-day-long-fast	Pavapuri at the time of his death	–

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Name of a person who offered food for breaking fast	Food with which the fast was broken
Bahula Brahmana	Preparation of rice, milk and sugar (Khira)
–	–
Nagasena	Preparation of rice, milk and sugar
Vijaya Shresthi Ananda Sunandaa Bahula Brahmana	Preparation of kura etc. Sweet cooked food Preparation of rice, milk and sugar Preparation of rice, milk and sugar
Nanda	Rice mixed with curds
– –	– –
–	–
–	–
–	–
–	–
– –	– –
–	–
Bahulaa Maid-Servant	Rice mixed with sugar
Vatsupalikaa	Preparation of rice, milk and sugar
Maid servant of Purana Merchant	Boiled unsplit black beans
Chandanabala beans	Boiled unsplit black
–	–
–	–



Mulnayak Mahavirswami
Hathundi Tirth

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Eleven Chief Disciples *(Ganadharas)* of
Tirthankara Mahavira

Sr. No.	Name of Ganadhara	Name of his Village/ City	Father's Name	Mother's Name	About what he had doubt
01	Indrabhuti	Gobara	Vasubhuti	Pruthvi	Soul
02	Agnibhuti	Gobara	Vasubhuti	Pruthvi	Karma
03	Vayubhuti	Gobara	Vasubhuti	Pruthvi	Identity of body and soul.
04	Vyakta	Kullaga	Dharmapriya	Varuni	Five material Elements.
05	Sudharma	Kullaga	Dhammila	Bhaddila	Rebirth
06	Mandita	Maurya	Dhanadeva	Vijaya	Bondage
07	Mauryaputra	Maurya	Maurya	Vijaya	Gods
08	Akampita	Mithila	Deva	Jayanti	Infernal beings
09	Achalabhrata	Kaushala	Vasu	Nanda	Auspicious karma
10	Metarya	Vachchhapura	Datta	Varunadevi	Other world
11	Prabhasa	Rajagruhi	Bala	Abhibhadra	Liberation



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Total Years of the Life-span of *Ganadharas*

Sr. No.	Name of Ganadhara	Years of his householders life	Years of his ascetic life before the attainment of kevalajnana (omniscience)	Years of his ascetic life after the attainment of kevalajnana (omniscience)	Total years of his life-span
01	Indrabhuti	50	30	12	92
02	Agnibhuti	46	12	16	74
03	Vayubhuti	42	10	18	70
04	Vyakta	50	12	18	80
05	Sudharma	50	42	8	100
06	Mandita	53	14	16	83
07	Mayuraputra	65	14	16	95
08	Akampita	48	9	21	78
09	Achalabhrata	36	12	14	62
10	Metarya	36	10	16	62
11	Prabhasa	16	8	16	40



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King-devotees of Tirthankara Mahavira

Sr. No.	Name of King	Region/City	Special Note
01	Adimashatru	Hastishirsha	—
02	Apratihata	Saugandhika	—
03	Arjuna	Sughosha	—
04	Alakarava	Varanasi / Kashi	Acceptance of asceticism
05	Udayana	Kaushambi	—
06	Udrayana	Sindhu-Sauvira	Acceptance of asceticism
07	Kanakadhvaja	Tetalipura	—
08	Karakandu	Kanchanpura	*Pratyekabuddha*
09	Kunika	Magadha	Lay-devotee
10	Gagali	Prushthachampa	Acceptance of asceticism
11	Chandrapradyota	Ujjain	Lay-devotee
12	Chetaka	Vaishali	Lay-devotee
13	Jitashatru	Navanagari	—
14	Datta	Champanagari	—
15	Dadhivahana	Champa	Acceptance of asceticism
16	Dasharnabhadra	Dasharnapura	Acceptance of asceticism
17	Dvimukha	Kampilya	*Pratyekabuddha*
18	Dhanavaha	Rushabhapura	—
19	Nami Rajarshi	Mithila	*Pratyekabuddha*
20	Naggati	—	—
21	Nandivardhana	Kshatriyakunda	—
22	Pushyapala	—	—
23	Pradeshi	Setavya	Lay-devotee
24	Prasannachandra	Potanpura	Acceptance of asceticism
25	Priyachandra	Kanakapura	—
26	Bala	Mahapura	—
27	Shatanika	Kaushambi	—
28	Shahja	Mathura	—
29	Shiva Rajarshi	Hastinapura	—
30	Shaurikadatta	Shaurikapura	—
31	Shridasa	Mathura	—
32	Shrenika	Magadha	—
33	Sala	Prushthachampa	Acceptance of asceticism
34	Mahasala	Prushthachampa	Acceptance of asceticism
35	Siddhartha	Patalikhanda	—
36	Seya	Gramakalpa	Acceptance of asceticism
37	Sanjaya	Kampilapura	Acceptance of asceticism
38	Hastipala	Apapapuri	Acceptance of asceticism

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Tirthankara Mahavira's Congregation

Nine units of monks. ❖ Eleven chief disciples (Indrabhuti, etc.). ❖ 14,000 monks (Indrabhuti, etc.) who accepted vows of asceticism directly from Mahavira. ❖ 36,000 nuns (under the supervision of the chief nun Chandanabala) who accepted vows of asceticism directly from Mahavira. ❖ 1,59,000 laymen (Shankha, Shataka, etc.) who accepted twelve vows of a Jaina lay devotee. The Jaina laymen devotees who accepted no vows or less number of vows were lacs in number. ❖ 3,18,000 laywomen (Sulasa, Revati, etc.) who accepted twelve vows of a Jaina lay devotee. The Jaina laywomen devotees who accepted no vows or less number of vows were lacs in number. ❖ 300 monks who had the knowledge of fourteen purva works. ❖ 1300 monks who had the supernatural power of perceiving covered or spatially and temporally remote material things. ❖ 700 omniscient monks. ❖ 1400 omniscient nuns. ❖ 700 monks having supernatural power of assuming any physical form. ❖ 500 monks having higher type of supernatural power of reading other people's minds. ❖ 400 monks expert in debates. ❖ 700 monks who attained liberation in that very birth. ❖ 1400 nuns who attained liberation in that very birth. ❖ 800 monks who attained after death the *anuttara* heaven, and then after one birth, liberation. ❖ 10,089 ordinary monks. ❖ 14,000 casual or scattered monks. ❖ 14,000 monks who were self-enlightened.



The 'three jewels' (triratna) & Devotees
Uttar Pradesh, Mathura, Kankali Tila

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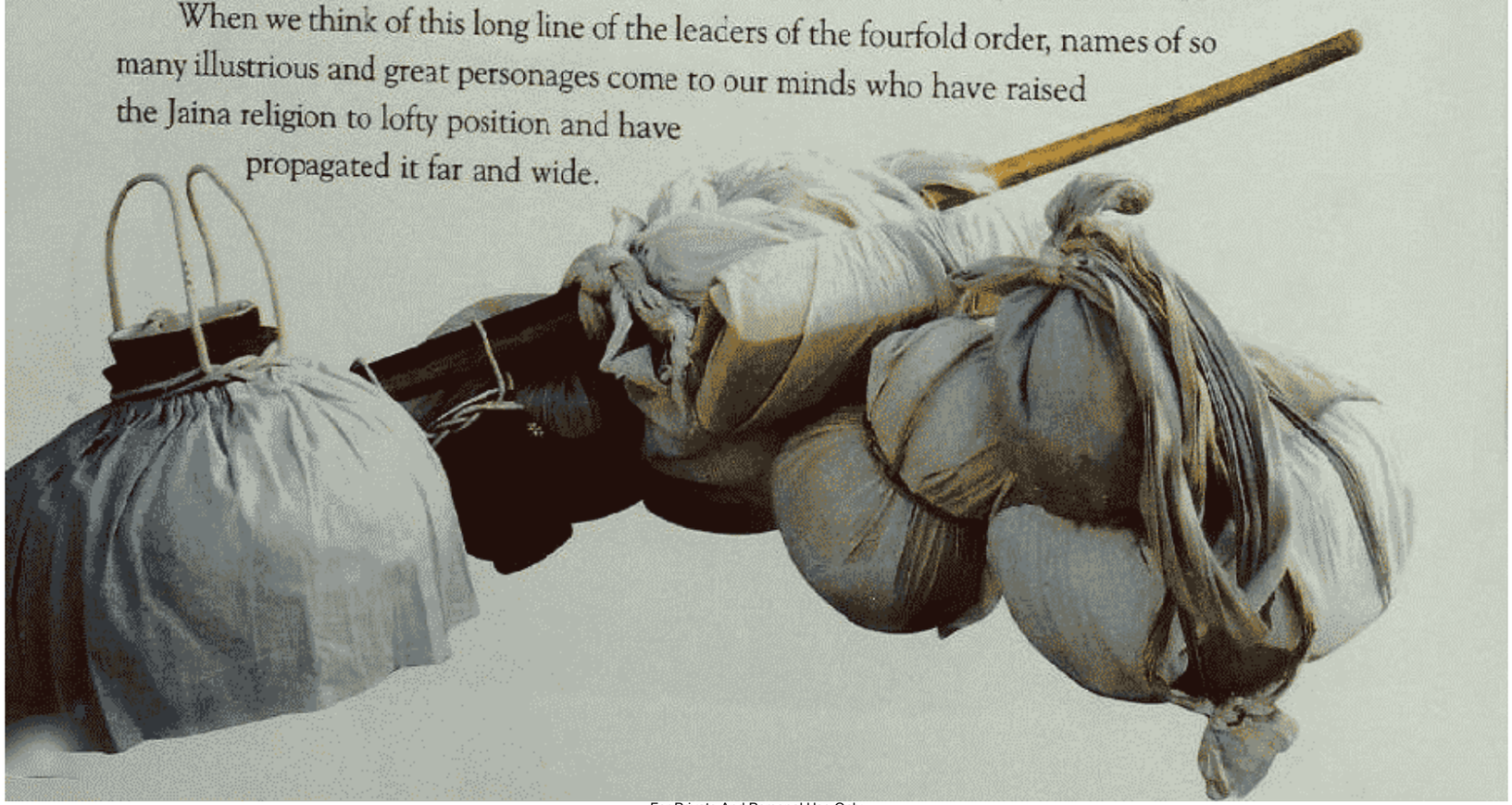
Genealogy of Venerable Mahavira

Jain religion is beginningless. In order to preserve and protect it and also to make it easily accessible to all, the venerable tirthankara established the fourfold order of monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen. This fourfold order served as the four main supporting pillars of the great palace of religious organisation of the tirthankara. The task of keeping the religion alive was assigned to the fourfold order. And to firmly establish the glory of the fourfold order, the tirthankara himself saluted it with the words "namo titthassa".

Venerable Mahavira was the twenty-fourth and the last tirthankara of this half-time-cycle. 430 years before the commencement of Vikrama era, Tirthankara Mahavira left the mortal world. And Shri Gautamaswami, the first chief disciple of venerable Mahavira, attained omniscience on that very day. The responsibility of leading and protecting the fourfold order fell on the shoulders of Sudharmaswami, the fifth chief disciple of Tirthankara Mahavira. So the genealogy of Mahavira starts with him as the first and foremost leader of the fourfold order. The succession list of the leaders of the fourfold order begins with Sudharmaswami. This is the reason why all sects, groups, *gacchas*, *kulas* and *samudayas* of monks and nuns consider Sudharmaswami as their first head.

Jambuswami, a disciple of Sudharmaswami, was the last omniscient. After Jambuswami, the responsibility of leading the fourfold order was borne by the great monks expert in scriptures, venerable *sthaviras*, brilliant *acaryas* and other illustrious torch-bearers. This long uninterrupted line of leaders of the fourfold order has come down to the present day, from the days of Mahavira. It has imparted glory to the Jaina tradition of religious practices and scriptural learning.

When we think of this long line of the leaders of the fourfold order, names of so many illustrious and great personages come to our minds who have raised the Jaina religion to lofty position and have propagated it far and wide.



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1. Sudharmaswami, the fifth chief disciple of Mahavira
2. Jambuswami
3. Prabhavaswami
4. Svayambhavasuri
5. Yashobhadrasuri
6. Sambhutivijaya

6B. Bhadrabahuswami

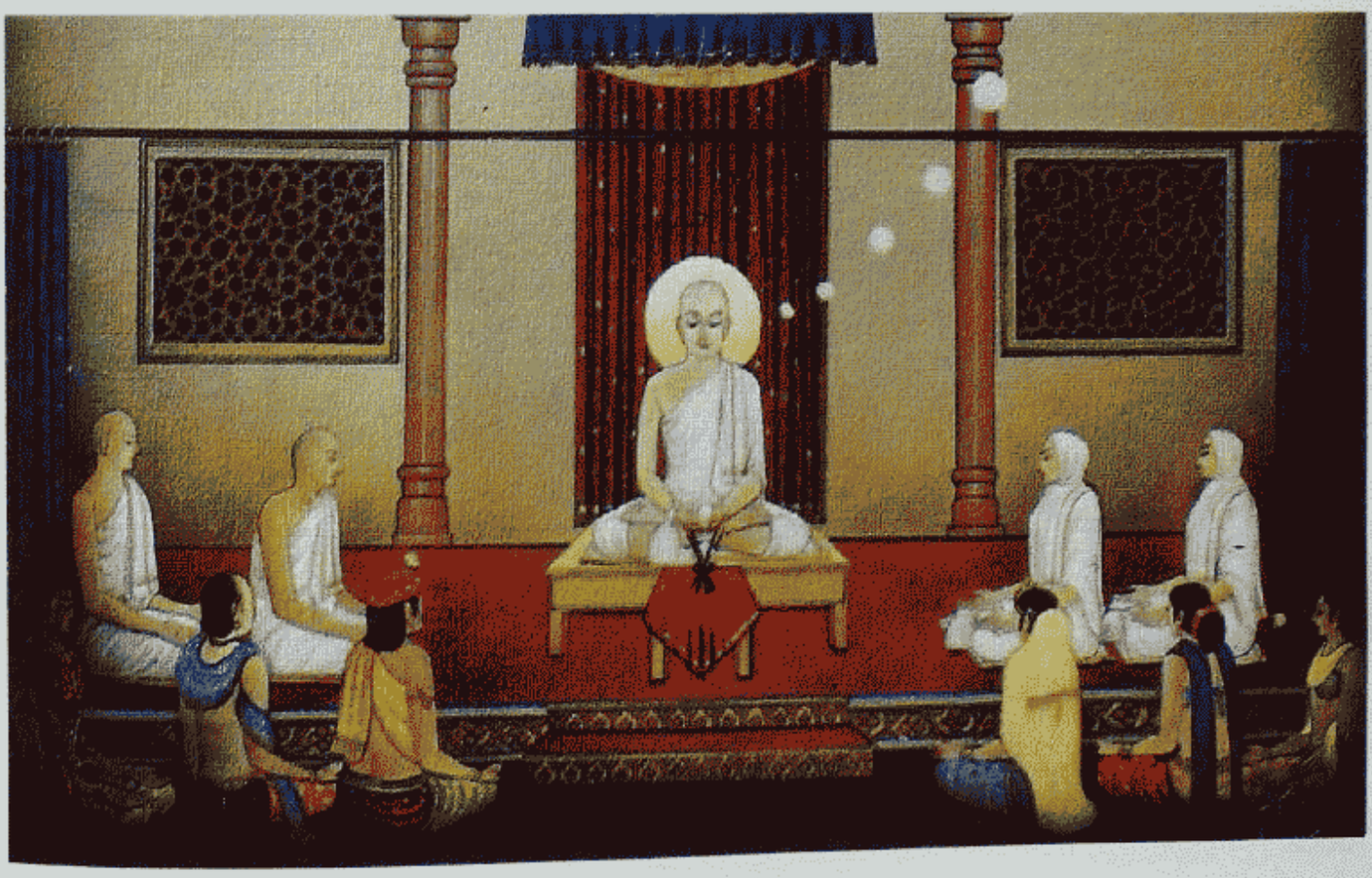
7. Acharya Sthulabhadraji

7B. Vishakha Muni established separate line of Digambara tradition

8. Acharya Suhastisuriji
9. Acharya Susthitasuriji

9B. Supratibaddhasuriji
* *Kotika Gaccha* (Vira Samvat 300)

10 Sthavira Indradinnasuriji
11. Sthavira Dinnasuriji
12. Sthavira Simhagirisuriji
13. Sthavira Vajraswamiji
14. Sthavira Vajrasenasuriji
* *Chandra Gaccha* (Vira Samvat 630)
15. Sthavira Chandrasuriji
In Vira Samvat 609 Shivabhutiji established Digambara view as a separate sect.
16. Acharya Samantabhadra
17. Acharya Vruddhadevasuriji
18. Acharya Praddyotasuriji
19. Acharya Manadevasuriji
20. Acharya Mantungasuriji
21. Acharya Virasuriji
22. Acharya Jayadevasuriji
23. Acharya Devanandasuriji
24. Acharya Vikramasuriji
25. Acharya Narasimhasuriji
26. Acharya Samudrasuriji
27. Acharya Manadevasuriji



Acharya Bhadrabahuswami

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28. Acharya Vibuddhaprabhasuriji
29. Acharya Jayanandasuriji
30. Acharya Raviprabhasuriji
31. Acharya Yashodevasuriji
32. Acharya Pradyumnasuriji
33. Acharya Manadevasuriji
34. Acharya Vimalachandrasuriji
    * *Vada Gaccha* (Vira Samvat 1964)
35. Acharya Uddyotanasuriji
    In Samvat 1080 Rev. Jineshvarasuriji founded *Kharatara Gaccha* and so started separate branch line.
36. Acharya Sarvadevasuriji
37. Acharya Devasuriji
38. Acharya Sarvadevasuriji
39. Acharya Yashobhadrasuriji and Acharya Nemichandrasuriji
40. Acharya Munichandrasuriji
41. Acharya Ajitadevasuriji
42. Acharya Vijayasimhasuriji
43. Acharya Somaprabhasuriji and Acharya Maniratnasuriji
    * *Tapa Gaccha* (Vira Samvat 1755)
44. Acharya Jagatchandrasuriji
    * (bright hero who practised severe austerities)
45. Acharya Devendrasuriji
46. Acharya Dharmaghoshasuriji
    In V.S. 1169 Rev. Acharya Aryarakshitasuriji founded *Vidhipaksha - Achala Gaccha*. So started a new branch line.
47. Acharya Somaprabhasuriji (II)
48. Acharya Somatilakasuriji
49. Acharya Devasundarasuriji
50. Acharya Somasundarasuriji
51. Acharya Munisundarasuriji
52. Acharya Ratnashekharasuriji
    In V. S. 1531 Shri Lokashah founded *Loka Gaccha* known as Sthanakavasi sect.
53. Acharya Laxmisagarasuriji
54. Acharya Sumatisagarasuriji
55. Acharya Hemavimalasuriji
56. Acharya Anandavimalasuriji
    After 56th succession seat, from 57th one started a sub-branch named *Vimala Shakha* of the main branch known as *Tapa Gaccha*. It started with Riddhivimalaji on the seat.
57. Acharya Danasurishvaraji
58. Acharya Vijay Hirasurishvaraji
    In *Tapa Gaccha* from Vijaya line branched off *Sagara Shakha* from the 58th succession seat with Rev. Upadhyaya Sahajasagaraji on the seat Samvat 1755.
59. Acharya Vijayasenasuriji
60. Acharya Vijayadevasuriji
61. Acharya Vijayasimhasuriji (II)
    After the death of Vijayasimhasuriji in Vira Samvat 1708, for 235 years (from Vira Samvat 1708 to 1943) there flourished no Acharya in Vijaya branch-line.
62. Pannyasa Stayavijayaji Gani (Kriyoddharaka)
63. Pannyasa Kapurvijayaji Gani
64. Pannyasa Kshamavijayaji Gani
65. Pannyasa Jinavijayaji Gani
66. Uttamavijayaji Gani
67. Pannyasa Padmavijayaji Gani
68. Rupavijayaji
69. Kirtivijayaji
70. Amivijayaji

70A. Kasturvijayaji

71. Pannyasa Manivijayaji
72. Pannyasa Buddhivijayaji (Buterayaji)
    After some time in V. S. 1943 he became Acharya.
73. Acharya Vijayanandasuriji (Atmaramaji Maharaja)

Such is the grand genealogy or succession list of the Acharyas who led the fourfold order of the through ages. Like a banyan tree the Jaina religious organisation expanded into various banches, great units and groups each of which had separate identity within a grand organisation.

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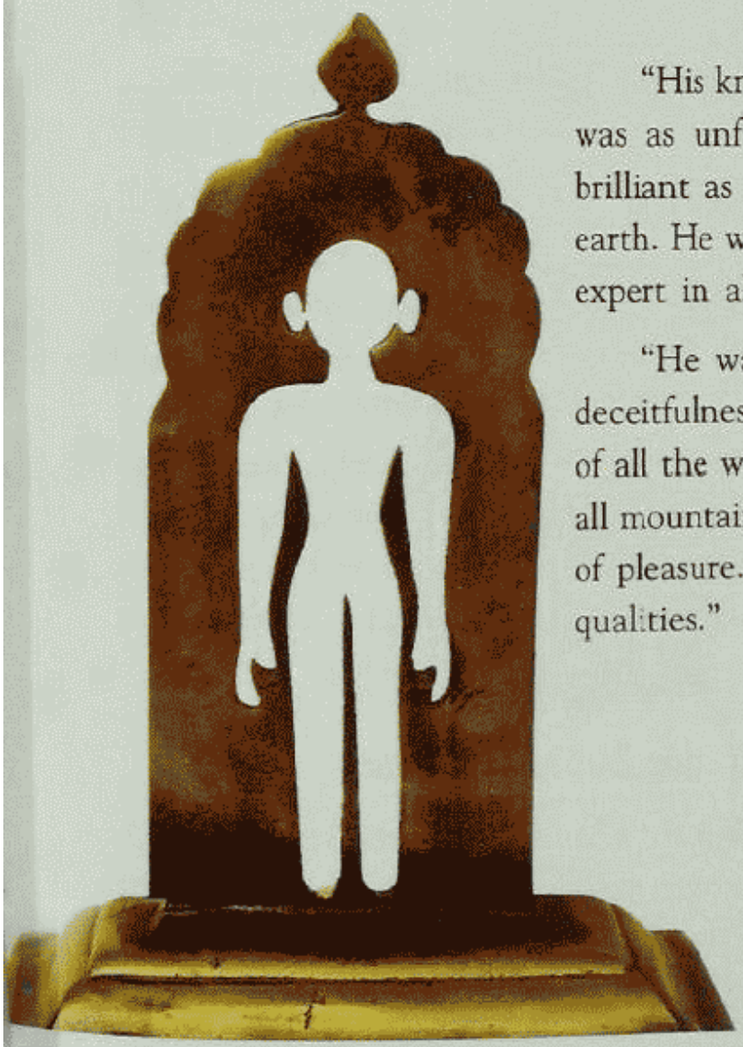
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Rare Description of Mahavira's personality in the very old and highly valuable Jaina Canonical work

|| Sutrakrutanga ||

Finding an occasion and opportunity to know about venerable Mahavira, Jambuswami requested Sudharmaswami as follows : "O venerable one ! Like me, many others desire to know about Tirthankara Mahavira, who propounded and preached Religion for the spiritual welfare of infinite number of living beings. We want to know everything about him. So, please tell us what you have known or heard about him."

Rev. Sudharmaswami narrated as follows : "That great man was all-seer and all-knower. He was omniscient. He possessed pure knowledge. He was free from all defilements. He was brave, courageous and resolute. He was a supreme hero. His mind was unperturbed and calm. His intellect was bright and sharp. He had freed himself from knots of attachment and aversion. He is now beyond the cycle of births and deaths. He was an ascetic who had truly renounced the world. His observance of matchless severe austerities was superior to any other."



Perfect Hero

"His knowledge was as deep and vast as the milky ocean. He was as unfathomable and pure as a great ocean. He was as brilliant as Indra, the lord of gods. He was as enduring as the earth. He was experienced, auspicious, supremely intelligent and expert in all sciences and arts."

"He was free from the internal passions like anger, pride, deceitfulness and greed. He was a perfect hero. He was the best of all the wise and saintly persons as Mount Meru is the best of all mountains. He was a reservoir of bliss as heaven is a reservoir of pleasure. In short, he was endowed with all the meritorious qualities."

The Best of Monks and Men

Among the tall mountains, Mount Nishadha is the best. Among conical mountains, Mount Ruchaka is the best. Among trees, Shalmali tree, where suparna gods play, is the best. Among gardens, the pleasure garden Nandana Vana is the best. Among sounds, the sonorous thundering sound of

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clouds is the best. Among planets and stars, the moon is the best. Among fragrant substances, sandalwood is the best. Among oceans, Svayambhuramana ocean, is the best. Among serpents, Dharanendra serpent is the best. Among juices, sugarcane-juice is the best. Among elephants, Airavata – Indra's elephant – is the best. Among animals, lion is the best. Among rivers, the Ganga is the best. Among birds, eagle is the best. Among warriors, Krishna is the best. Among flowers, lotus is the best. Among Kshatriyas, Dantavakra is the best. Among donations, donation of freedom-from-fear-of-one's-life is the best. Among true statements, the statement which causes harm to none is the best. Among austerities, celibacy is the best. Among those whose life-span is long, the *lavasattama* gods are the best. Among assemblies, the assembly of Sudharma is the best. Among all the spiritual states, the state of liberation is the best. Similarly, among all monks and men Jnataputra Mahavira is the best in knowledge, good conduct and austerity.

Karma-destroyer Religion

"Having renounced enjoyment of all sensual pleasures available in this world and the other world, he practiced very severe austerities with a view to destroying all miseries. He renounced enjoyment of women, eating at night and objects of worldly pleasures for ever. At last, after having gained pure meditation, that great monk attained liberation."

"Though he knew all the opposite views of *kriyavadi* (believer in moral and spiritual action), *akriyavadi* (non-believer in moral and spiritual action), *vainayika* (indiscriminate believer in all gods and all scriptures) and *ajnanavadi* (an agnostic), prevalent in his times, the venerable Mahavira practised, throughout his whole life, the religion of self-control and renunciation, which he considered to be the right and wholesome one. And knowing the true nature of all things, he propounded such religion as would be spiritually beneficial to all living beings. Like a bright burning fire, his religion is the destroyer of all karmas."

Attainment of the Supreme State

"With firm faith, follow diligently and vigilantly, the religion which Mahavira has established with cogent arguments. Those who follow it with faith and understanding, attain either the supreme state of liberation or the highest position of lordship of gods in heaven."

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Shri Kshatriyakund Tirth

Shri *Kshatriyakund tirth* is the sacred land of *Kalyanaks* (auspicious events) of Shri Bhagwan Mahavir-*Chyavankulnayak*, *Janmakalyanak* and *Dikshakalyanak*. He spent the first three decades of his life on this sacred land. It is 81 km from Pavapuri, 56 km from Guniyaji and 30 km from the Lakhisarai, Jamui, and Kiyul stations. Not many knew about the exact location of the birth place of Mahavir. Some believed Vasukund in Muzzafarpur to be Kshatriyakund, especially the western scholars. In fact he was born in Kshatriyakund near Lachhvadatt. It was called so because it was the capital of Lichhavi kings. In the *tirth* there is the idol of Mahavir, in meditative sitting posture, 60 cm high, in black colour. This ancient idol is a fine specimen of craftsmanship and its sight



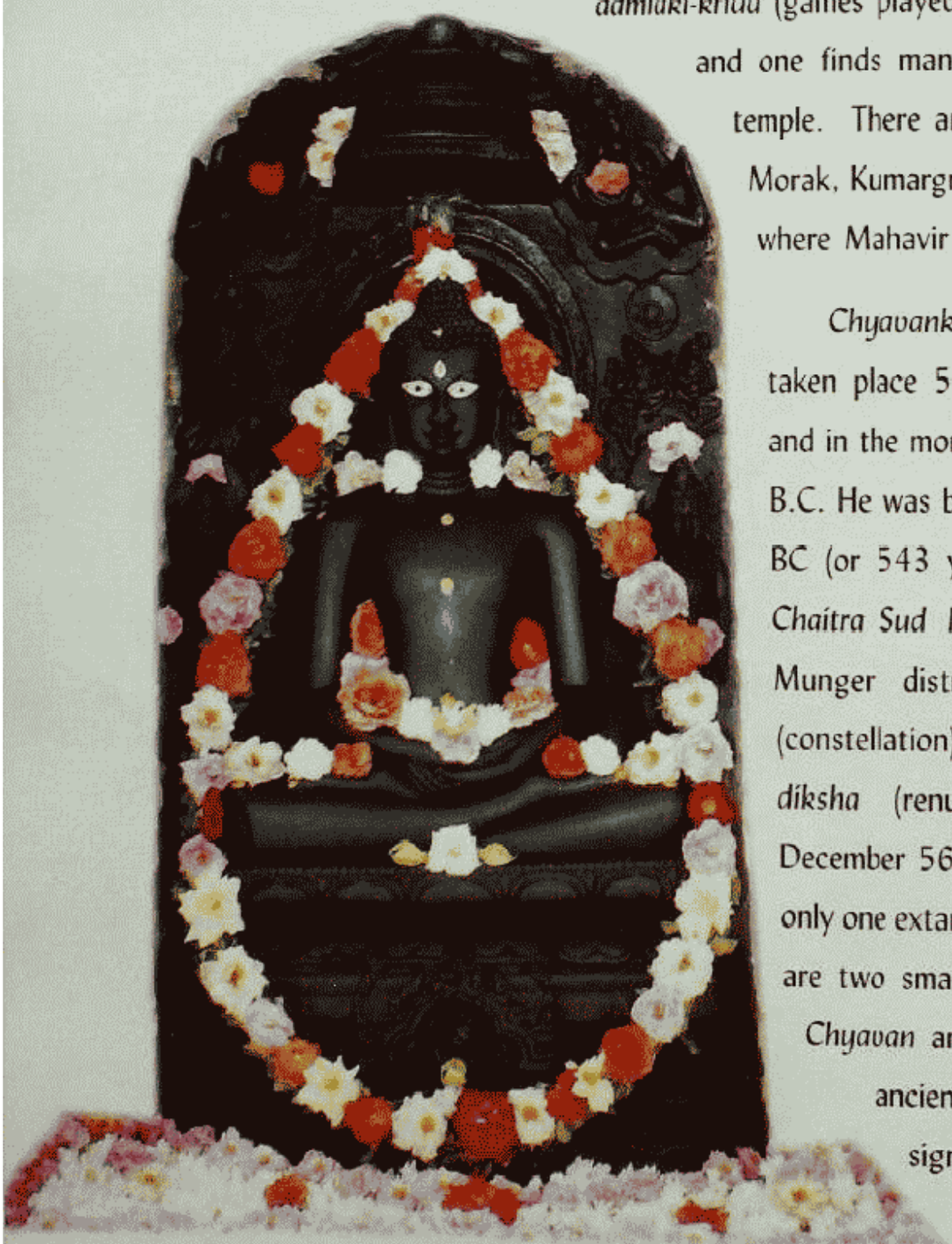
Birth Place of
Tirthankara Mahavira

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arouses spiritual thoughts. The serene atmosphere is conducive to such thoughts. The *tirth*, surrounded by hills, lakes and nature's beauty, has inspired many a soul. There are other temples too which tell us about Bhagwan's *chyavan* (descent in to the mother's womb), birth and *dikshakalyanak* (renunciation).

There is also in the temple, the idol of king Nandivardhan, Bhagwan's elder brother, carved out of rocks, and is surrounded by gardens teeming with flowers, especially roses. The forest nearby is called *gyatvankhand*, since Bhagwan belonged to *gnatruvansha* (clan). There is a reference to an incident called *aamlaki-krida* (games played at the tamarind tree) in his life and one finds many tamarind trees here near the temple. There are also found the remains of the Morak, Kumargram and Mahankundgram villages where Mahavir must have sojourned.



Chyavankalyanak of Mahavir must have taken place 544 years before Vikram Samvat and in the month of *Ashadh* on *Sud* sixth, 600 B.C. He was born on Monday, March 30, 599 BC (or 543 years before Vikram Samvat) on *Chaitra Sud 13th* in Kundagrama in Jamui in Munger district of Bihar. The *nakshatra* (constellation) was *Uttara Falguni*. He took *diksha* (renunciation) on Monday, 29th December 569 B.C. The present shrine is the only one extant on the Kshatriyakund hill; there are two small shrines, at the foothill, called *Chyavan* and *Dikshakalyanak*. The place is ancient and sacred and has historical significance.

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Shri Pavapuri Tirth



In the history of *Jinshasan* (Jain Religion), Pavapuri is considered the greatest in terms of sanctity and importance. Unique incidents in the life of an extraordinary soul took place here and their very mention causes devotion in the hearts of many. 10 km away from the Pavapuri station, 44 km from Bhakhtiyarpur, 23 km from Navada and 15 km from Biharsharif in Bihar, the place has been sanctified by the *nirvan* (salvation) of Bhagwan Mahavir.

The essence of Jain religion is found in *deshna* (sermon) of *Ganadharvad* of Mahavirswami. It was the last one by him in Pavapuri and was celebrated by lighting a lamp known as *dravyadyot* and thereafter it came to be knowelebradeepavali. After his *nirvan*, Gandhar Gautam experienced great grief and then he as *deepavalikalgyan*. All these incidents happened here and hence the sanctity of the place. Hokevalgyante must have been the people of Pavapuri who were alive at that time ! rtunate

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In the middle of a lake outside Pavapuri, in a shrine, are the footprints of Bhagwan Mahavir carved in black marble. On the last day of *deepawali* festival devotees throng the place. This is the place where Bhagwan took into his fold as disciples eleven famous Brahmin scholars who became his *Ganadhara* and composed *Dwadshangi* after listening to a discourse by Bhagwan. It was on this land that Mahavir established fourfold *sangha* (order) of *Sadhu, Sadhvi, Shravak* and *Shravika*.

Today Pavapuri stands divided between Pava and Puri and the place of pilgrimage is in Puri. It is believed that Mahavir's elder brother Nandivardhan had installed the footprints of Bhagwan by constructing a small square. The temple in the Lake (*Jalmandir*) is surrounded by lotuses and one can enter it by crossing the 600' long marble bridge. Spread over an area of 84 *vigha* of land, the shrine has the footprints of Bhagwan with an umbrella over it. Devotees offer lotus flowers and worship the footprints. As one enters the *Jalmandir*, one gets saturated with devotion. Besides the footprints, there is the idol of Mahavir made of metal and is worshipped during *snatra pooja*. The *paduka* of Shri Gautamaswami and Shri Sudharmaswami are there on the right and the left of the idol. There are old *Samavasaran* shrine, new *Samavasaran* shrine and the shrine of Mehtabkuvar.



Tirthankara Mahavira's
Foot Prints (Charan Paduka)

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Few places of pilgrimage where the image of
Mahavira is Mulnayak (Chief Idol)

Sr. No.	Name	State	Height of Image (Appro.)	Other Description
1.	Kshatriyakunda	Bihar	60 cm	In Padmasana, Black
2.	Rujuvaluka	Bihar	15 cm	Foot-prints in four directions, white
3.	Pavapuri	Bihar	18 cm (f.print)	Foot-prints, Black
4.	Vaishali	Bihar	38 cm	Black
5.	Mahavirji	Rajasthan	–	In Padmasana, Copper
6.	Khimvasara	Rajasthan	37 cm (f.print)	Sandalwood colour
7.	Osia	Rajasthan	80 cm	In Padmasana, Golden
8.	Muchala Mahavira	Rajasthan	120 cm	In Padmasana, White
9.	Hathundi	Rajasthan	135 cm	In Padmasana, Red
10.	Korata	Rajasthan	–	In Padmasana, White
11.	Radabara	Rajasthan	–	In Padmasana, White
12.	Virawada	Rajasthan	90 cm	In Padmasana, White
13.	Bamanwada	Rajasthan	76 cm	In Padmasana, Red
14.	Nandiya	Rajasthan	210 cm (with Parikara)	In Padmasana, White
15.	Ajari	Rajasthan	75 cm	In Padmasana, White
16.	Diyana	Rajasthan	90 cm	In Padmasana, White
17.	Nana	Rajasthan	1.20 m	In Padmasana, White
18.	Pindawada	Rajasthan	–	In Padmasana, White
19.	Bhandawaji	Rajasthan	60 cm	In Padmasana, White
20.	Svarnagiri	Rajasthan	100 cm	In Padmasana, White
21.	Satyapur	Rajasthan	–	In Padmasana, White
22.	Deladar	Rajasthan	62 cm	Standing Meditative Posture, White
23.	Mundasthala	Rajasthan	1.07 m	In Padmasana, White
24.	Varamana	Rajasthan	1.4 m	In Padmasana, White
25.	Mandar	Rajasthan	120 cm	In Padmasana, White
26.	Dhavali	Rajasthan	-	In Padmasana
27.	Khedbrahma	Gujarat	90 cm	In Padmasana, Catechu Colour
28.	Jakhau	Gujarat	84 cm	In Padmasana, White
29.	Bhadreshwar	Gujarat	61 cm	In Padmasana, White
30.	Mahuva	Gujarat	91 cm	In Padmasana, White
31.	Pansar	Gujarat	91 cm	In Padmasana, White
32.	Bodeli	Gujarat	104 cm	In Padmasana, White
33.	Kataria	Gujarat	-	In Padmasana, White
34.	Siddhavarakuta	Madhyapradesh	1.21 m	Standing Meditation-Posture Black
35.	Kundalpur	Madhyapradesh	4.57 m	In Padmasana, Red
36.	Dahigamva	Maharashtra	2.44 m	In Padmasana, White
37.	Ponnur Malai	Tamil Nadu	75 cm	In Padmasana, White
38.	Jina Kanchi	Tamil Nadu	150 cm	In half Padmasana
39.	Agama Mandir, Surat	Gujarat	–	In Padmasana, White
40.	Jammu	Kashmir	–	In Padmasana, White
41.	Kobe	Japan	–	In Padmasana, White
42.	Houston	America	25"	In Padmasana, White
43.	Los Angelis	America	25"	In Padmasana, White

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Predictions of Tirthankara Mahavira

Venerable Mahavira arrived at Pava from the city of Rajagruha on foot for his last four-months-stay-in-rainy-season (*chaturmas*). What he predicted about Jaina religion and the world at that time has traditionally come down to us. One version of it is available in Acharya Jinaprabhasuri's 'Vividha-tirthakalpa' while another version is found in Acharya Hemachandra's 'Trishashtishalakapurushacharita' and 'Deepmalika'.

Acharya Jinaprabhasuri recorded in 'Vividha-tirthakalpa' that once Gautama, the chief of the principal disciples of Tirthankara Mahavira, politely asked Mahavira the question as to what important events would take place after the latter's death.

In answer to that question, Tirthankara Mahavira said, "After three years and eight months from my death there will set in the fifth division called Dusama of the present half Time-cycle. After twelve years from my death Gautama will attain liberation (*moksha=siddhagati*). After twenty years from my death Sudharma will attain liberation and after sixty four years from my death the last omniscient Jambu will attain liberation. From the day of Jambu's attainment of liberation, the following twelve things will disappear from India (Bharata) : perception of thought-forms of other's mind, highest type of clairvoyance, supernatural power called pulaka, subtle body called *aharaka*, spiritual evolution by destruction of *karmas*, monastic conduct modeled on the conduct of Jina Mahavira, right conduct dominated by certain special types of austerity, right conduct free from all types of passions except an extremely small amount of greed, right conduct completely free from all passions, pure knowledge (omniscience) and liberation."

"After my death there will flourish 2004 epoch-maker acharyas in my Jaina tradition. Of them the first will be Arya Sudharma and the last will be Duhprasaha. Duhprasaha will flourish in the end-part of the fifth division of the present half Time-cycle."

"After 170 years from my death there will occur the death of Acharya Bhadrabahu. And after his death the following four things will disappear from India (Bharata) : symmetrical body-shape called *samachaturasra-samsthana*, supremely strong bone-joint called *vajrarushabhanaracha, samhanana*, meditation-type called *mahaprana-dhyana* and the last four purva works (books)."

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"After 500 years from my death and in the days of Acharya Vraja the tenth purva work and the first four types of bone-joint will become extinct."

"After my death Palaka will rule for 60 years, (nine) Nanda kings for 108 years, Pushyamitra for 30 years, Balamitra and Bhanumitra for 60 years, Gardabhilla for 13 years, and Shaka for 4 years. After Shaka, that is, after 470 years from my death there will be the political rule of king Vikramaditya. He will be a great emperor and he will start his own Era (Samvata)."



"After 453 years from my death there will flourish Acharya Kalaka who will bring the end of the rule of Gardabhilla."

"Jaina ascetics will conveniently forget the tradition of pure monastic conduct. They will formulate monastic code according to their sweet will and by doing so they will deceive the ignorant and credulous people. They will indulge in praising themselves and slandering others."

The following predictions too were made by Tirthankara Mahavira in the four-month-stay during his last rainy-season. At that time in Pava he adorned Rajjuka assembly of king Hastipala. Unique assembly hall was constructed by gods. And therein Tirthankara Mahavira lectured regularly.

One day, after Tirthankara Mahavira's lecture ended, king Punyapala politely said to him, "O Venerable One ! Last night I dreamt eight queer dreams. I had eight inauspicious dreams of an elephant, a monkey, a milky tree (a

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fig tree), a crow, a lion, a lotus, a seed and a pitcher. I am concerned that they may signify inauspicious or evil future events."

These dreams were signs of future events. Interpreting and explaining them Tirthankara Mahavira said, "You saw an elephant in the first dream. It suggests that in future polite and devotional Jaina householders will become mad with pride and passion on getting short-term prosperity or wealth. They will behave like a mad elephant. They will never think of renouncing the transient prosperity or wealth and accepting the vow of asceticism even in the face of terrible calamities and very hard times. And in case they took the vow of asceticism, they would not observe it rightly and sincerely. Only very few monks will observe it firmly, strictly and honestly."

"In the second dream, you saw a monkey. It signifies that in future, the nature of even great acharyas will be like that of a monkey. They will be as restless as a monkey. They will put forth very little spiritual effort and will be very careless and lazy in the observance of vows. Like a monkey they will be thoughtless, impudent and restless."

"In the third dream, you saw a milky tree (a fig tree). It signifies that in future the Jaina monks will become hypocrites and throng householders making donations with selfish motives. They will regard those monks firm and strict in the observance of monastic code, as lax in the monastic conduct. On the contrary, they will consider the monks careless and loose in the practice of monastic code to be firm and strict in the monastic conduct. Like thorny babul trees, the hypocritical Jaina monks will be in great majority."

"In the fourth dream, you saw a crow. It suggests that in future Jaina monks, in great number, will transgress the monastic code of conduct. Again, abandoning all rules and restrictions laid down for monks in the monastic code of conduct, they will take shelter in the heretical sects. In other words, they will break away from the main stream or tradition, will found various heretical sects and subsects and will take shelter in them. Like crow, they will be cunning. They will indulge in fruitless sophistry and dialectics as do crows in making harsh and unpleasant sounds - 'ka' 'ka'."

"In the fifth dream, you saw a lion caught in difficult situation. It signifies that in future, Jaina religion propounded by an attachment-free omniscient saint and as brilliant and vigorous as a lion, will suffer a severe

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set-back and become very weak. Having turned their face away from true Jaina religion, the people will accept wrong religious views. Such people will gain reputation and their wrong views will greatly gain ground."

"In the sixth dream, you saw a lotus. It suggests that in future under the influence of evil times, even persons of noble birth will keep company of the wicked and vicious persons; as a result of it they will abandon the right path of religion and will indulge in evil activities."

"In the seventh dream, you saw a seed. It means that in future the Jaina householders, having lost their differentiating and discriminating power, will give donations to the non-deserving persons, neglecting and abandoning the deserving ones, just as a thoughtless farmer sows excellent seeds in infertile land and rotten seeds in fertile land."

Mulnayak Mahavirswami
Muchhala Mahavir Tirth



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"In the eighth dream, you saw a pitcher. It signifies that in future it will be very difficult to find Jaina monks endowed with meritorious qualities and observing rightly and strictly the monastic vows and rules."

While interpreting the dreams of king Punyapala, Tirthankara Mahavira drew a very vivid picture of the future. After that he gave an account of conditions prevailing at that time in his days as also of those that will take shape in future. He said, "When a tirthankara (in this context, Mahavira) is present in a country (in this context India, that is, Bharata), that country flourishes with wealth, prosperity, crops, etc. in abundance. Its cities and villages look like heavens. A village looks like a city, and a city looks like a heavenly world. a head of the family becomes as prosperous as a king, and a king becomes as prosperous as Kubera, the treasurer of gods. Acharyas are as brilliant as Indra, the lord of gods. Mothers-in-law shower love on their daughters-in-law as do mothers on their daughters. Fathers-in-law have unbound affection for their daughters-in-law. The people are wise, prudent, judicious and polite. They are devoted to the Supreme Soul, spiritual teacher and true religion. The learned are honoured. And kings are mostly Jaina devotees."

While predicting conditions of the future Ages he said, "In future, a tirthankara, a universal ruler, an excellent hero (Vasudeva), etc. will not be born in India. Pure knowledge (omniscience), perception of thoughts of other's mind and the highest type of clairvoyance will disappear from India. On their disappearance, conditions of India will deteriorate progressively. The intensity of passions like anger, pride, deceitfulness, greed, etc. will gradually increase. Unrighteousness and immorality will grow, and prudence and humility will wane. The strong will harass the weak as a big fish devours a small one. Like a ship without sails, India will become unsteady and shaky in all spheres. Theft will thrive. Rulers will levy heavy taxes. Judges will accept fat bribes. Man will hanker after material objects for sensual pleasures."

"All decency of teacher-pupil relationship will disappear. Teachers will not teach the secret of their subjects / sciences to their pupils, and pupils also will not serve and respect their teachers. Malignant microbes and insects will appear and multiply themselves to a dangerous number. Sons will hardly serve their parents. Donation, good conduct, austerity and good feelings will gradually become rare. Quarrelsome mentality, violent temperament, passion for revenge, etc. will grow in intensity and extent. People – rather traders – will largely use false weights and measures to deceive their customers. The excellent things of excellent colour, smell, flavour and touch will vanish."

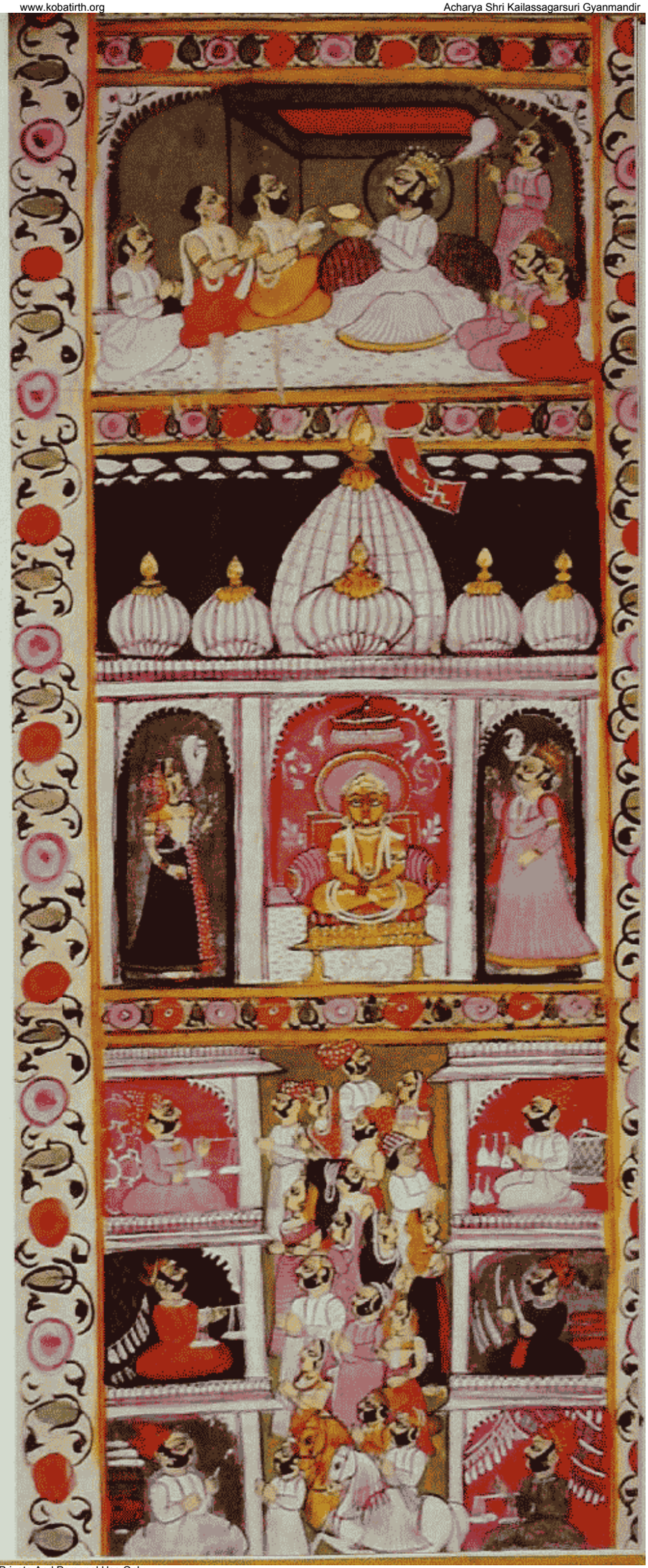
Then Mahavira described conditions of the coming fifth division of the current half Time-cycle. He said, "In the end-part of the fifth division of the current half Time-cycle, there will flourish a Jaina Acharya Duhprasaha, a Jaina nun Phalgushri, a Jaina householder Nagila, a Jaina lay-woman Satyashri, a king Vimalavahana and his minister Sumukha. Human body will

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be nearly three feet in height. Human life-span will be of twenty years only. On the last day of the fifth division of the current half Time-cycle, in the morning, the observance of monastic code of conduct will completely disappear, in the noon the practice of kingly duties will completely disappear, and in the evening fire will completely disappear."

Then Mahavira drew a picture of the coming sixth division of the current half Time-cycle. He said, "On the completion of the fifth division made up of twenty one thousand years, there will set in the sixth and last division, called *Dushama-dushama*, of the current half Time-cycle called *Avasarpini* (Descending). In this sixth division, conditions will deteriorate even further to a great extent. Religion, society and government system will become completely extinct. There will be nothing like family. Father-son relationship and all behaviour based on it will come to an end. In the beginning of this division, there will blow terrific winds and there will be torrential rains. They will cause Deluge and Destruction. Only human beings and animals will survive with seeds. They will reside in hollows or caves on the banks of rivers Ganga and Sindhu. They will live on flesh and fish."



Part of request letter
(Vijnapti Patra)
V. S. 18th Century

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Then Mahavira described conditions which will take shape after the completion of the sixth division of the current half Time-cycle. He said, "At the end of the sixth division of the current half-Time-cycle called *Avasarpini* (Descending), there will set in the first division of the half-Time-cycle called *Utsarpini* (Ascending). The conditions prevailing in the first division of *Utsarpini* will be the same as those prevailing in the sixth division of *Avasarpini*. And the second division of *Utsarpini* will be similar to the fifth division of *Avasarpini*. In the beginning of the second division of *Utsarpini*, earth will receive rains of two types called *Pushkara Samvartaka* which will remove heat from earth. The earth will cool down. Then the earth will receive milky rains called *Kshira-megha* which will generate unctuousness in things. After that, earth will receive fourth type of rains called *Amruta-megha* (Nectar-rains) which will produce herbs and vegetation with varied properties. Then the earth will receive the fifth type of rains called *Rasa-megha* (Flavour-rains) which will make the earth fertile and also capable of producing fruits, grains, etc. of various flavours. All these rains of five types will descend heavily and uninterruptedly on earth."

"Conditions will be conducive to progress again. Human beings residing in hollows or caves on the banks of rivers will come out from them and will settle on plains. With the change in time, human intellect will gradually become cultured and brilliant. The human body-form will become attractive and the human life-span will increase in length. In the third division called *Dushama-sushama* of *Utsarpini* villages, towns, cities, etc. will come into existence. Tirthankaras will flourish. They will explain the importance of spiritual, religious and cultural life.

In the fourth division of *Utsarpini* human beings will be born as twins only : a brother and a sister. A brother and a sister born as twins will marry each other; that is, a brother will become the husband of his sister and they will die together. Human body will be very huge and human life-span will also be commensurably extremely long. Human beings will satisfy their desires with the help of wish-fulfilling trees. These trees will offer everything they desire. All things and living beings will undergo development or evolution in the right direction. Even in the fifth and sixth divisions of *Utsarpini* the development and evolution will go on continuously. On the completion of the sixth division there will be an end of *Utsarpini*. The half-Time-cycle called *Avasarpini* (Descending or Retrogressive) and the other half-Time-cycle called *Utsarpini* (Ascending or Progressive) together will make one complete Time-cycle. Time-cycle moves on ceaselessly and eternally. In the past there have been infinite Time-cycles and in future there will be infinite Time-cycles. In other words, the past has no beginning and the future has no end. Having understood rightly the essence of the religion of man, one who translates this understanding into practice and lives up to the principles of pure religion, breaks this Time-cycle, rises above Time and attains eternal bliss."

Thus venerable Mahavira predicted the future, while answering his chief disciple Gautamaswami's question.

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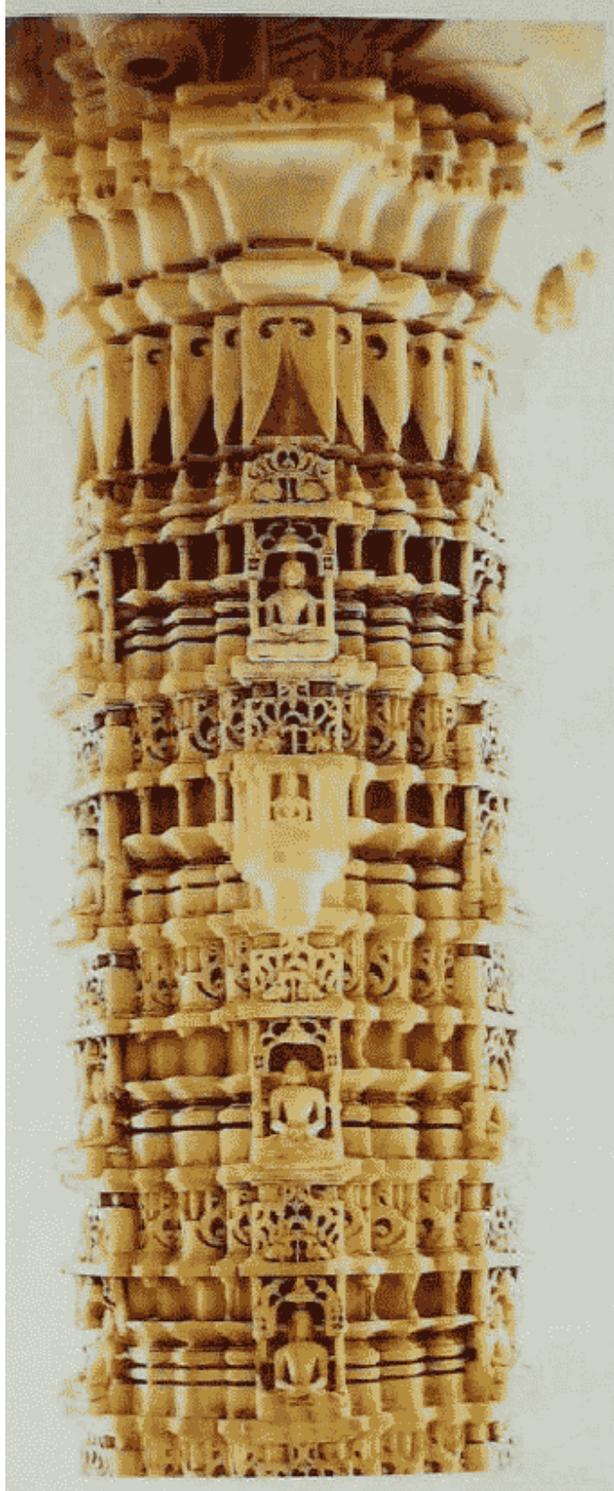
Teachings of Tirthankara Mahavira

धम्मो मंगलमुक्किट्ठं अहिंसा संजमो तवो ।
देवा वि तं नमंसंति जस्स धम्मे सया मणो ।।

– दसवैकालिक सूत्र. १-१

Religion is supremely auspicious. Non-violence, self-control and penance are its essentials. Even the gods bow down to him whose mind is always engaged in practising religion.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 1-1



से जाणमजाणं वा कट्टु आहम्मियं पयं ।
संवरे खिप्पमप्पाणं बीयं तं न समायरे ।।

– दसवैकालिक सूत्र. ८-३१

If knowingly or unknowingly an irreligious act is committed, one should immediately withdraw one's self from it and should ensure that such an act is not committed again.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 8-31

गुणेहिं साहू अगुणेहिं ऽ साहू
गेण्हाहि साहूगुण मुंच ऽ साहू ।
वियाणिया अप्पगमप्पएणं
जो रागदोसेहिं समो स पुज्जो।

– दसवैकालिक सूत्र ९(३)-११

A person becomes a monk by virtues and a non-monk by vices. Therefore, develop all the virtues and be free from all the vices. Know your self through the self. He who maintains equanimity in all the matters of attachment and hatred becomes worthy of respect.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 9(3)-11

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मुहत्तदुक्खा हु हवंति कंटया
अओमया ते वि तओ सुउद्धरा ।
वायादुरुत्ताणि दुरुद्धराणि
वेराणुबंधीणि महब्भयाणि ।
– दसवैकालिक सूत्र, ९(३), ७

When a sharp iron nail pricks the body, it can be easily removed; the pain does not last for a long time; but when a sharp nail in the form of hurtful words pricks, it cannot be easily removed; it creates enmity and generates fear.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 9 (3) 7



सव्वे जीवा वि इच्छंति जीविउं न मरिज्जिउं ।
तम्हा पाणिवहं घोरं निग्गंथा वज्जयंति णं ।।
– दसवैकालिक सूत्र, ६-१०

All living beings desire to live. Nobody likes to die. Therefore self-restraining persons refrain from the great sin of killing living beings.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 6-10



वितहं पि तहामुत्तिं जं गिरं भासए नरो
तम्हा सो पुट्ठो पावेणं किं पुण जो मुसं वए ।
– दसवैकालिक सूत्र. ७-५

It is sin to speak something which may appear like untruth. Then what to say about speaking obvious untruth ?

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 7-5



कोहो पीइं पणासेइ माणो विणयनासणो ।
माया मित्ताणि नासेइ लोभो सव्वविणासणो ।
– दसवैकालिक सूत्र. ८-३७

Anger destroys love; ego destroys modesty; deceit destroys friendship and greed destroys everything.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 8-37



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उवसमेण हणे कोहं माणं मद्दवया जिणे ।
मायं च ऽ ज्जवभावेण लोभं संतोसओ जिणे ।।
– दसवैकालिक सूत्र. ८-३८

Destroy anger through calmness, overcome ego by modesty, discard deceit by straightforwardness and defeat greed by contentment.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 8-38

जरा जाव न पीलेई वाही जाव न वड्ढई ।
जाविंदिया न हायंति ताव धम्मं समायरे ।।
– दशवैकालिक सूत्र. ८-३५

A person should properly practise religion before old age afflicts, before diseases become chronic and before the senses becomes powerless.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 8-35

जयं चरे जयं चिट्ठे जयमासे जयं सए ।
जयं भुंजंतो भासंतो पावं कम्मं न बंधई ।।
– दसवैकालिक सूत्र, ४-३१

Walk carefully, stand carefully, sit carefully, sleep carefully, eat carefully and speak carefully so that no sinful act is committed.

– Dasavaikalika Sutra, 4-31

चत्तारि परमंगाणि दुल्लहाणीह जन्तुणो ।
माणुसत्तं सुई सद्धा संजमम्मि य वीरियं ।।
– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, ३-१

Four great things are very rare in this world for a living being : (1) Birth as a human being, (2) Listening to scriptures, (3) Faith in religion and (4) Energy to practise self-control.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutra, 3-1

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जो सहस्सं सहस्साणं संगामे दुज्जए जिणे ।
एगं जिणेज्ज अप्पाणं एस मे परमो जओ ।।

– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, ९-३४

In war a man may defeat a million invicible enemies but conquering one's own self is the greatest victory.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutra, 9-34

अप्पा कत्ता विकत्ता य दुक्खाण य सुहाण य ।
अप्पा मित्तममित्तं च दुप्पट्ठियसुपट्ठिओ ।।

– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, २०-२७

The soul is the architect of one's happiness and unhappiness. Therefore, the soul on the right path is one's own friend and a soul on the wrong path is one's enemy.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutra, 20-27

जहा लाभो तहा लोभो लाभा लोभो पवड्ढई ।
दोमासकयं कज्जं कोडीए वि न निट्ठियं ।।

– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, ८-१७

Where there is gain, there is greed; greed grows as one gains more. A work which could have been done with two grams of gold is then not done even with ten million grams of gold.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutra, 8-17



Bronze Idol
V. S. 6th Century

सुवण्णरुप्पस्स उ पव्वया भवे
सिया हु केलाससमा असंखया ।
नरस्स लुद्धस्स न तेहि किंचि
इच्छा हु आगाससमा अणन्तिया ।।

– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, ९-४८

A greedy person is not satisfied even if he accumulates gold and silver worth numerous Kailas mountains because desire, like the sky, is endless.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutra, 9-48

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खपमेत्तसोक्खा बहुकालदुक्खा
पकामदुक्खा अनिकाम सोक्खा ।
संसारमोक्खस्स विपक्खभूया
खाणी अणत्थाण उ कामभोगा ।।

– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, १४-१३

Sensuous pleasures give temporary happiness but bring unhappiness for a long time; they give more unhappiness than happiness. They are great hindrances to emancipation and they are really a mine of misfortunes.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutra, 14-13



नाणेण जाणई भावे दंसणेण य सद्दहे ।
चरित्तेण न गिण्हाई तवेण परिसुज्जई ।।

– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, २८-३५

One knows the nature of substances through Knowledge, keeps faith in them by right *Darshan*, develops self-control by right Conduct and purifies the soul by Penance.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutra, 28-35



तस्सेण मग्गो गुरु-विद्धसेवा
विवज्जणा बालजणस्स दूरा ।
सज्झाय एगंत निसेवणा य
सुत्तत्थसचिंतणया धिती य ।।

– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, ३२-३

To serve the teacher and old people, to keep away from the company of ignorant people, to study the scriptures, to meditate on the meaning of Sutras, to remain alone and to be patient-all these constitute the path of Moksha.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutram, 32-3



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एवं खु नाणिणो सारं
जं न हिंसइ किंचण ।
अहिंसासमयं चेव
एतावंत वियाणिया ।।
– सूत्रकृतांग सूत्र, १-४-१०

It is the essential characteristic of a wise man that he does not kill any living being. One should know that non-killing and equality of all living beings are the main principles of religion.

– Sutrakrutang Sutra, 1-4-10



Jain Shresthi
V. S. 13th Century

पंचिंदियाणि कोहं माणं मायं तहेव लोभं च ।
दुज्जयं चेव अप्पाणं सव्वमप्पे जिए जियं ।।
– उत्तराध्ययन सूत्र, ९-३६

It is difficult to conquer the five senses as well as anger, pride, delusion and greed. It is even more difficult to conquer the self. Those who have conquered the self have conquered everything.

– Uttaradhayayan Sutra, 9-36

सयं सयं पसंसता गरहंता परं वयं ।
जे उ तत्थ विउस्संति संसारं ते विउस्सिया ।।
– सूत्रकृतांग सूत्र, १-२-२३

Those who praise their own views and condemn the world of others, only to show off their so-called learnedness, are indeed wandering in the worldly cycle of birth and death.

– Sutrakrutang Sutra, 1-2-23

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Devotional Salutation to Tirthankara Mahavira

दाणाण सेट्ठं अभयप्पयाणं, सच्चेसु या अणवज्जे वयंति ।
तवेसु वा उत्तम बंभयेर, लोगुत्तमे समणे णायपुत्ते ।।
– सूयगडांग, १-६-२०

danana sttam abhaya-ppayanam, sachchesu ya anavajjam vayamti |
tavesu va uttama bambhayeram, loguttame samane Nayaputte ||
– Suyagadamga, 1-6-20

Among donations, donation of freedom-from-fear-to-life is the best, Among true statements, the statement without the defect (of violence) is the best. Among austerities continence is the best. Similarly, among ascetics, Mahavira is the best.

जयई जगजीवजोणी-वियाणओ जगगुरु जगाणंदो ।
जगणाहो जगबंधु, जयइ जगपियामहो भगवं ।।
– नंदी, गाथा १

jayai jaga-jiva-joni-viyanao jaga-guru jaga-anando |
jaga-naho jaga-bandhu, jayai jaga-piyamaho bhagavam ||
– Nandi, Gatha 1

Victory to venerable Mahavira who is the teacher, guide, protector, saviour, friend and affectionate grandfather of the world of living beings, who knows all species of living beings and who bestows blessings and bliss on all living beings.

सो जयइं जस्स केवलणाणुज्जलदप्पणम्मि लोयालोयं ।
पुढ यदिबिंब दीसइ, वियसियसयवत्तगब्भगउरो वीरो ।।
– जय धवला ३ : मंगलाचरण

so jayaim jassa kevalananujjala-dappanammi loya-aloyam |
pudha yadibimba disai, viyasiya-sayavatta-gabbha-gauro Viro ||
- Jaya Dhavala 3 : Benedictory verse

Victory to Tirthankara Mahavira whose bright pure knowledge bears the reflection of both Universe and Non-universe (Empty Space) as does a bright pure mirror, the reflection of things, whose face is as lustrous as the inner part of a hundred-petalled white lotus and whose complexion is as golden as heated gold.

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थणितं व सद्दाण अणुत्तरं उ, चंदे व ताराण महाणुभावे ।
गंधेसु वा चंदणमाहु सेट्ठं, एवं मुणीणं अपडिण्णमाहु ।।
– सूयगडांग, १-६-१९

thanitam va saddana anuttaram u, chande va tarana mahanubhave |
gandhesu va chandanam ahu settham, evam muninam apadinnam ahu ||
– Suyagadanga, 1-6-19

Thunder of clouds is the best of all sounds, the moon is the best of all stars, sandal-wood is the best of all fragrant things, similarly Tirthankara Mahavira is the best of all monks.

देहज्योतिषि यस्य मज्जति जगद् दुग्धाम्बुराशाविव,
ज्ञानज्योतिषि च स्फुटत्यतितरां ओंभूर्भुवः स्वस्त्रयी ।
शब्दज्योतिषि यस्य दर्पण इव स्वार्थाश्यकासत्यमी,
स श्रीमानमरार्वितो जिनपतिर्ज्योतिस्त्रयायास्तु नः ।।
– तत्त्वानुशासन प्रशस्ति, श्लोक २५९

deha-jyotishi yasya majjati jagad dugdha-ambu-rashav-iva,
janana-jyotishi ca sphutayaty-atitaram om-bhur-bhuvah-svastrayi |
shabda-jyotishi yasya darpana iva sva-arthash-chakasty ami,
sa shriman amara-archito jinapatir jyotis-trayaya astu nah ||
– Tattvanushasana Prashasti, Verse 259

Tirthankara Mahavira is worshipped by gods. The whole world is immersed in the light (lustre) of his body as is the whole world in the milky ocean. The three worlds are revealed in the light of his knowledge. And meanings of words are manifested in the light of his words. May he guide us for the attainment of the three lights.

Tirthankara Adinath
V. S. 6th Century



हत्थीसु एरावणमाहु णाते, सीहो भिगाणं सलिलाण गंगा ।
पक्खीसु वा गरूलं वेणुदेवे, णिव्वाणवादीणिह णायपुत्ते ।
– सूयगडांग, १-६-२१

hatthisu eravanam ahu nate, siho miganam salilana Ganga |
pakkhisu ya garulam venudeve, nivvanavadini ha Nayaputte ||
– Suyagadanga, 1-6-21

Airavata, the elephant of Indra, is the best of all elephants. The Lion is the best of all animals. The Ganga is the best of all rivers. Venudeva Eagle is the best of all birds. Similarly, Tirthankara Mahavira is the best of all those who propounded the Path leading to Liberation.

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पन्नगे च सुरेन्द्रे च, कौशिके पादसंस्पृशि ।
निर्विशेषमनस्काय, श्री वीरस्वामिने नमः
– योगशास्त्र, १-२

pannage ca surendra ca, Kaushike pada-samsprushi |
nirvishesha-manaskaya, shri Virasvamine namah ||
– Yogashastra, 1-2

I respectfully salute Tirthankara Mahavira whose mind was uniform, balanced, equanimous and even towards both Indra who touched his feet with reverence and king cobra Chandakaushika who stung him in his toe.

जहा सयंभू उदहीण सेट्ठे, णागेसु वा धरणिंदमाहु सेट्ठं ।
खोओदए वा रस वेजयंते, तहोवहाणे मुणि वेजयंते ।।
– सूयगडांग, १-६-२०

jaha sayambhu udahina setthe, nagesu va dharanimdam ahu settham |
khoodae va rasa vejayamte, tahovahane muni vejayamate ||
– Suyagadanga, 1-6-20

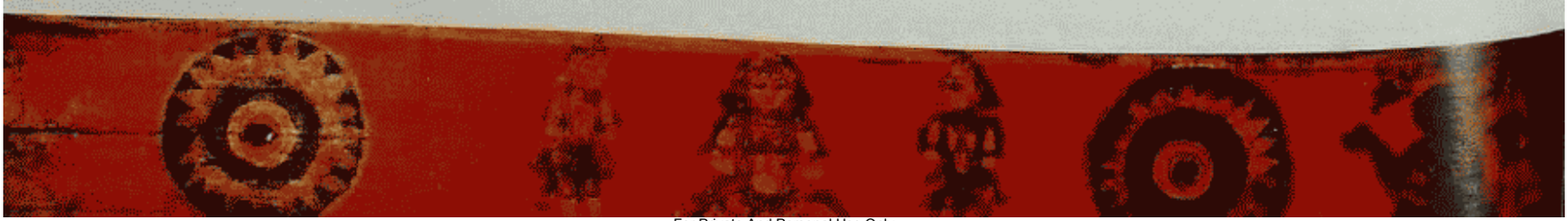
Ocean named Svayambhu is the best of all oceans. Naga god named Dharanendra is the best of all naga gods. Sugarcane juice is the best of all juices. Similarly, Mahavira is the best of all those who practise austerities.

शमोद्भुतोद्भुतं रूपं, सर्वात्मसु कृपाद्भुता ।
सर्वाद्भुतनिधीशाय, तुभ्यं भगवते नमः ।।
– वीतरागस्तव, १०-८

shamo'dbhuto'dbhutam rupam, sarva-atmasu krupa-adbhuta |
sarva-adbhuta-nidhishaya, tubhyam bhagavate namah ||
– Vitaraga-stava, 10-8

O Venerable One ! your equanimity is wonderful. Your complexion (form) is wonderful. Your compassion for all living beings is wonderful. You are the lord of treasure of all wonderful things. I devotionally bow down before you.

Wooden Penal, Gujarat Style
V. S. 14th Century



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बन्धुर्न नः स भगवानरयोपि नान्ये,
साक्षान्न दुष्टतर एकतमोऽपि चैषाम् ।
श्रुत्वा वयः सुचरितं च पृथग् विशेषं,
वीरं गुणातिशयलोलतया श्रिताः स्मः ।।

– **लोकतत्त्वनिर्णय, ३३**

bandhur na nah sa bhagavan arayo'pi nanye,
sakshat na drushtatara ekatamo'pi ca esham |
shrutva vachah sucharitam cha pruthag vishesham,
Viram guna-atishaya-lolataya shritah smah ||

– **Lokatattvanirnaya, 33**

Mahavira is not our friend and Kanada etc. are not our enemies. Yet on hearing ethically and spiritually inspiring words of Tirthankara Mahavira, we are attracted towards him and we have taken shelter under him.



वीतराग ! सपर्यातः, तवाज्ञापालनं परम् ।
आज्ञाराद्धा विराद्धा च, शिवाय च भवाय च ।।
आकालमियमाज्ञा ते, हेयोपादेयगोचरा ।
आस्रवः सर्वथा हेय, उपादेयश्च संवरः ।।

– **वीतरागस्तव, १९-४**

vitaraga ! saparyatah, tava ajnapalanam param |
ajna-araddha viruddha cha, shivaya bhavaya cha ||
akalam iyam ajna te, heya-upadeya-gochara |
asravah sarvatha heyah, upadeyash cha samvarah ||

– **Vitaraga-stava, 19-4**

O Attachment-free Lord ! it is better to follow your commandments than to worship you. Practice according to your commandments is the cause of liberation, while practice against your commandments is the cause of bondage. Your eternal commandment is : "Discriminate between what is worthy of acceptance and what is worthy of rejection. Influx of *karmic* matter into soul (cause of bondage) is always worthy of rejection. And the stoppage of the influx is always worthy of acceptance."





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यत्र तत्र समये यथा, योसि सोस्याभिधया यया तया ।
वीतदोषकलुषः स येद् भवान्, एक एव भगवान ननोस्तु ते ।।

– **अयोगव्यवच्छेद द्वात्रिंशिका, २९**

yatra tatra samaye yatha, yo'sy so'sy-abhidhaya yaya taya |
vita-dosha-kalushah sa ched bhavan, eka eva bhagavan namo'stu te ||

– **Ayogavyavachchheda Dvatrimshika, 29**

You are the only one who is absolutely free from attachment, though known by various names in different forms at different times. Even in different external forms you are one. O Lord ! I devotionally bow down before you.



इयं विरुद्धं भगवन् ! तव नान्यस्य कस्यचित् ।
निर्ग्रंथता परा या च, या चौच्चैश्चक्रवर्त्तिता ।।

– **वीतरागस्तव, १०-६**

iyam viruddham bhagavan ! tava nanyasya kasyacit |
nirgranthata para ya cha, ya chochchaish chakravartita ||

– **Vitaragastava, 10-6**

O Lord ! there co-exist in you two opposite qualities – one is the supreme renunciation and the other is excellent sovereignty.



उदधाविव सर्वसिन्धव; समुदीर्णास्त्वयि सर्वदृष्टयः ।
न च तासु भवानुदीक्ष्यते, प्रविभक्तासु सरित्स्विवोदधिः ।।

– **द्वत्रिंशिका, ४-१५**

udadhav-iva sarva-sindhavah samudirnas tvayi sarvadrushtayah |
na cha tasu bhavan udikshyate pravibhaktasu saritsv-iva udadhih ||

– **Dvatrimshika, 4-15**

All different philosophical views are synthesized in your comprehensive philosophy, just as all rivers merge in to a vast ocean. In those separate philosophical views you – your philosophy – are not found, just as in separate rivers the ocean is not found.



न श्रद्धयैव त्वयि पक्षपातो, न द्वेषमात्रादरुचिः परेषु ।
यथावदाप्तत्व परीक्षया तु, त्वामेव वीरप्रभुमाश्रिताः स्मः ।।

– **अयोगव्यवच्छेद द्वात्रिंशिका, ३१**

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na shraddhayaiva tvayi pakshapato, na dveshamatrad aruchih paresu |
yathavad aptatva parikshaya tu, tvam eva Viraprabhum ashritah smah ||

– Ayogavyavachchheda Dvatrimshika, 31

I am not partial to you on account of faith. Nor do I dislike others on account of my aversion towards their faith. I have critically examined as to who can be regarded as an authority. On the basis of this examination, I found you, O Tirthankara Mahavira, to be an authority and hence I have taken shelter under you.

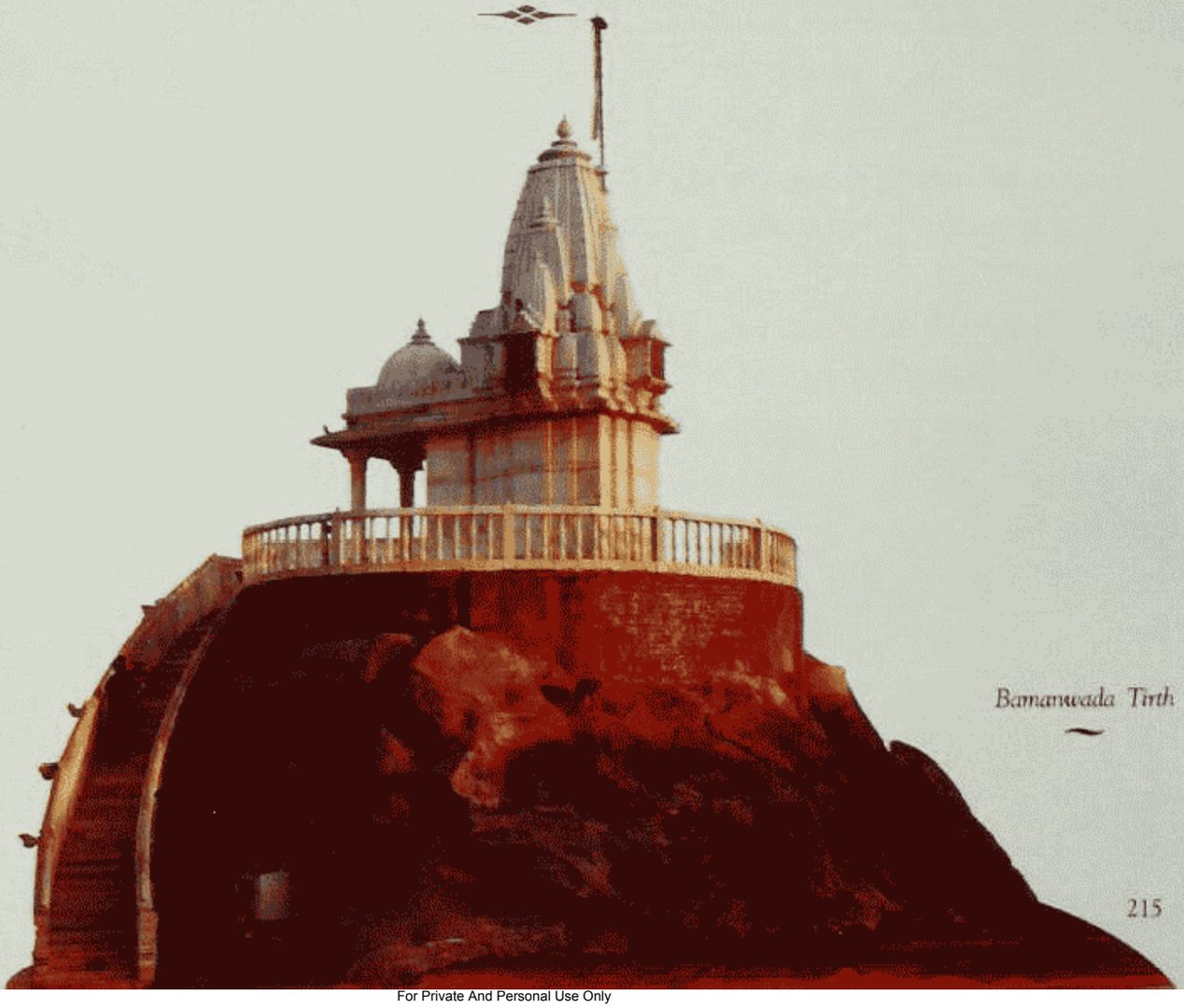
युगान्तरेषु भ्रान्तोस्मि, त्वद्दर्शनविनाकृतः |
नमोस्तु कलये यत्र, त्वद्दर्शनमजायत ||

– वीतरागस्तव, ६-७

yugantaresu bhranto'smi, tvad-darshana-vina-krutah |
namo'stu kalaye yatra, tvad-darshanam ajayata ||

– Vitaragastava, 6-7

O Venerable One ! I wandered, through the ages, in the transmigratory existence because I got no opportunity to worship you then. But now in this *Kali* Age I have got the opportunity to worship you. Therefore I salute *Kali* Age.



Bamanwada Tirth

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O Venerable Vira ! I Salute You



I respectfully salute you, who are worthy of adoration, who are possessor of spiritual qualities, who are self-enlightened, who are the supreme support of living beings, who are the supreme soul, who are the pioneer of religion, and who are the founder of the Path of Religion.

I offer my salutations to you, who are superior to, master of, and benevolent to all living beings, and who are like a lamp to them and hence enlighten them.

I bow down before you, who are the bestower of happiness, who are the supreme of all men just as a lion is the supreme of all animals and a 'scent elephant' is the supreme of all elephants.

I pay obeisance to you, who are the donor of fearlessness, inner eyes (true vision), the Path, Shelter, right faith and Religion, who are the preacher and propounder of Religion, and who are the religious leader.

I respectfully salute you, who are the universal ruler of the supreme Religion, who are the destroyer of the state of non-omniscience, and who are endowed with right vision and spiritual faith.

I devotionally bow down before you, who have conquered passions and help others conquer them, who have crossed the ocean of transitory existence and help others cross it, who have destroyed *karmas* and help others destroy them, and who are enlightened and help others gain enlightenment.

I offer my salutations to you, who have unobstructed infinite knowledge and vision, who possess all the excellences, and who have destroyed all the eight *karmas*.

I salute you, who are the unique field where grow spiritual qualities to their fullness, who are worthy of adoration, who is the Ford for those who desire to cross the ocean of transitory existence, who are the supreme soul, who speak non-absolutist speech, who are free from attachment, and who are a true ascetic.

I pay obeisance to you , who are worshipped by the venerable, who are greatest of the great, who are the supreme spiritual leader, and who are superior to all elders.

I salute you , who are savior of all living beings, who being the supreme *yogi* are the protector of all *yogis*, who being perfectly pure help others purify themselves, and who being the supreme soul are the highest spiritual ideal for others.

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I bow down before you, who have washed off all the internal impurities, who are the excellent teacher of the yogic discipline and practice, who surpass all in meritorious qualities and spiritual powers, who are the lord of Speech, and who are an embodiment of auspiciousness.

I offer my salutations to you, who are the brilliant Sun and will remove the darkness of ignorance, and who are worthy of being praised by the speech '*Om bhur bhuvah svah*'.

I salute you, who always do good to others, who have achieved all the spiritual objectives, who are firmly established in spiritual living which itself is immortality, who are the perfect teacher, and who are expert in all sciences and arts.

I bow down before you, who are generous, who are free from all defilements, who are Compassionate par excellence and whose bone-joints and body-structure are supremely strong.

I pay obeisance to you, who know all things of all the three divisions of time, who are the supreme spiritual Victor, who are self-created, and who are endowed with pure knowledge, strength, energy, brilliance, power and excellences.

I respectfully salute you, who are the first and foremost man, who are the supreme Soul, who are the greatest lord, and who are the luminous bright Ultimate Light.

I offer my salutations to you, who are like the moon in the milky ocean of king Siddhartha's ancestry or family lineage, who are as serene as deep ocean, and who are the lord of the three worlds.

— Omniscient-of-the-*Kali*-Age
Acharya Hemchandra



Hemchandracharya
Palmleaf, Patan
V. S. 12 Century

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Lord Mahavira

But for Mahavira
Jealousies and heart-burnings would increase in the world,
Destruction would spread everywhere,
Moses would not reach Mount Tur,
Travellers of life would be exhausted.
Blackness is being proclaimed whiteness.
Whiteness is dubbled blackness
Man would be tenderless, (merciless)
Brother would have swallowed brother,

Peace and Prosperity's way would be lost.
Had not the world found the Star of Trisla.
There would be no distinction between man and beast.
But for Mahavira's way.

2. Had not Vardhamana blessed mankind with his gospel,
Hearts would inflame with boundless passions.
If Mahavira had not shown the way of Truth,
Everyone would be fighting the other,
Nightingale's haven would not be safe.
Lightenings would appear as from clouds.
To share unhappiness and suffering of the unhappy.
No compassionate bosom would heaved.

Waves would be overwhelming each other.
If man had not found the sheltering brink of his NAME.
Bharat could not have raised high her head.
But for Mahavira's showing the way.

3. World would be a slaughter-house,
Daggers would be swimming the blood of innocence,
Had he not caused bloom in life.
Life's forehead would be ever in wrinkles.
Kill, cut, finish and burn.
Such would ever be the trailings.
Innocence would be unsafe from such devilry,
Evil reports would hold the day.

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Gandhi would not have seen his way of life.
Had not he inspiration from his peaceableness,
Frightfulness would be dancing everywhere.
But for Mahavira's teachings.

4. Had he not delivered his message of life to world,
Had not songs of love echoed,
Neither life nor happiness would have smiled,
Had not the inspired drunk deep his message,
His name could not be obliterated,
Eras have appeared and gone.
Whoever catches his self-denial and pennance,
Forgets difference between own and else.

Anyone trading his name,
Would not suffer a loss.
Life's successful sport would be lost,
But for Mahavira's message.

5. Life's aim is service and assistance.
He taught tenderness and mercy towards helplessness.
He laughed even on thorns, He bloomed in autumn too.
He a flower blooming in all seasons,
When his penance reached highest pitch,
Indra's seat was affected.
Merciful, renunciating and helpful.
Come to protect the honour of the downtrodden

'Komal' sees many a star in the firmament of heaven.
But never a star so bright as He,
Temples would be devoid of scent of Love.
But for Mahavira's way of love and tenderness.

— Tara Singh 'Komal'

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Where Shvetambar texts differ from Digambar Texts

There are a number of similarities in Digamber and Shvetamber tradition in respect of the biographical details of Mahavira. A few details where they differ have only been given here.

Sr. No.		Shvetambar Tradition	Digambar Tradition		
			Harivansha	Uttarpurana	Tiloy
1.	Mother's Name	Trishala	Priyakarini	Priyakarini	Priyakarini
2.	Birth Place	Kundapur Kundalpur	Kundapur	Kundapur	Kundapur
3.	Constellation to descent	Uttara Falguni	Uttar-ashadha	Uttar-ashadha	Uttar-ashadha
4.	Date of initiation	The month of Kartak and the tenth day of bright half according to Jain calender	Month of Marga Shirsha and the tenth day of the dark half according to the Jain calender	Month of Marga Shirsha and the tenth day of the dark half according to the Jain calander	Month of Marga Shirsha and the tenth day of the dark half according to the jain calander
5.	Companion at the time of initiation	None	None	None	One
6.	The first Penance	Chhattha (Bela)	Chhattha	Atthama (Tela)	Atthama (Tela)
7.	First Break of fast	The home of Bahula	Bahula	Kula	Kula
8.	The town of the first break of fast	Kollaka	Kundalpur	Kundalpur	Kundalpur
9.	The period of remaining incognito	12 and a half years and fifteen days	12 years	12 years	12 years
10.	The constellation at the time of absolute enlightenment	Uttara Falguni (twelth lunar mansion consisting of two stars)	Magha (tenth lunar mansion consisting of five stars)	Magha (tenth lunar mansion consisting of five stars)	Magha (Tenth lunar mansion consisting of five stars)
11.	Place of absolute enlightenment	Rujuvalika	Rujuvalika	Rujuvalika	Rujuvalika
12.	Number of female ascetics	36,000	35,000	36,000	36,000
13.	Number of followers (Shravaka)	1,59,000	1,00,000	1,00,000	1,00,000
14.	Number of ascetics who could assume different type of bodies and forms	700	900	900	900
15.	Number of mother	two	one	one	one
16.	Whether transplantation of foetus took place	Yes	No	No	No
17.	Whether married	Yes	No	No	No
18.	When was fist discourse	First day of initiation	Sixty Six days after initiation	Sixty Six days after initiation	Sixty Six days after initiation
19.	Where was the successful discourse	Pava Madhyama	on the mount Vipulachal	on the mount Vipulachal	on the mount Vipulachal

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What the great Indian minds think



Bhagwan Mahavira was an incarnation of non-violence. He triumphed over the world. The principle for which he is worshipped is non-violence. It was Mahavirswami who spread the message of non violence as no other person ever did.

— *Mahatma Gandhi*

Bhagwan Mahavira was a superman who had the well-being of all the living organisms at his heart.

— *Lala Lajpatrai*

Mahavirswami was the last of the 24 tirthankaras. It was he who brought Jain religion into limelight. Non-violence as a creed spread far and wide. Animal sacrifice in *Yagnas* (sacrificial fire) has stopped. Hindu religion and Brahmins have given up meat-eating and drinking; and this is due to the infulence of Jain religion.

— *Lokmanya Balgangadhar Tilak*

Bhagwan Mahavira's message is not for any particular community or sect but for the entire world. He was a great *tapasvi* and propagated truth and non-violence.

— *Purashottamdas Tandon*

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Bhagwan Mahavira propagated that religion cannot be practised by observing social customs but by following the path of truth and non-violence. There cannot be divisions among human beings. It is astomising that Mahavira's preaching erased the distinctions and won over the entire country.

— *Ravindranath Tagore*

Bhagwan Mahavira was Jina, a victor, though he had neither fought a war nor had won any country. He had conquered his own self by fighting against his own instincts.

Bhagwan Mahavira is such an ideal before us who got rid of all the worldly and material attachments and becames victor by discovering the path leading to enlightenment.

This country, since his birth, has been founded on these ideals.

— *Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan*

The message of Bhagwan Mahavira is not for any particular community or sect but for the entire world. If one follows his preaching, one can lead an ideal life. Peace and happiness will prevail in the world only when we choose to follow the path shown by him.

— *Chakravarti Rajgopalachari*

If the political leaders of the world follow the message of *anekant* preached by Bhagwan Mahavira 2600 years ago, then surely peace can be established in the world. It is a sin if we think one thing for ourselves and another for others. I believe that if people understand Mahavira, accept his point of view and propagate his ideals, then peace and harmony will provail in the world.

— *National Poet Dinkarji*

What does the word Mahavira stand for ? The one who destroys the evils, protects the world and permeates the universe is a Mahavira. Mahavira is he who is devoted to his mother, who abandons all wordly comforts, who has compassion for all living organisms and who has triumphed over all his senses. Mahavira is one who realises the ideals and virtues envisaged by the Aryan race. One who triumphs is a *veer* and one who triumphs over outer and inner selves is a Mahaveer. Veer means *Arya*, Mahaveer means *arhant*.

— *Kaka Kalelkar*

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Bhagwan Mahavira rejuvenated the Jain religion and re-established its supremacy. His preaching led people back to Jainism, causing a wave of non-violence and renunciation. A number of kings, men and women renounced the world and adopted the way of life of an ascetic. Not only Jain religion got rid of meat-eating but even Vedic religion too accepted the creed of non-violence and a majority of Hindu population turned to vegetarianism.

— *Kishorlal Mashruwala*

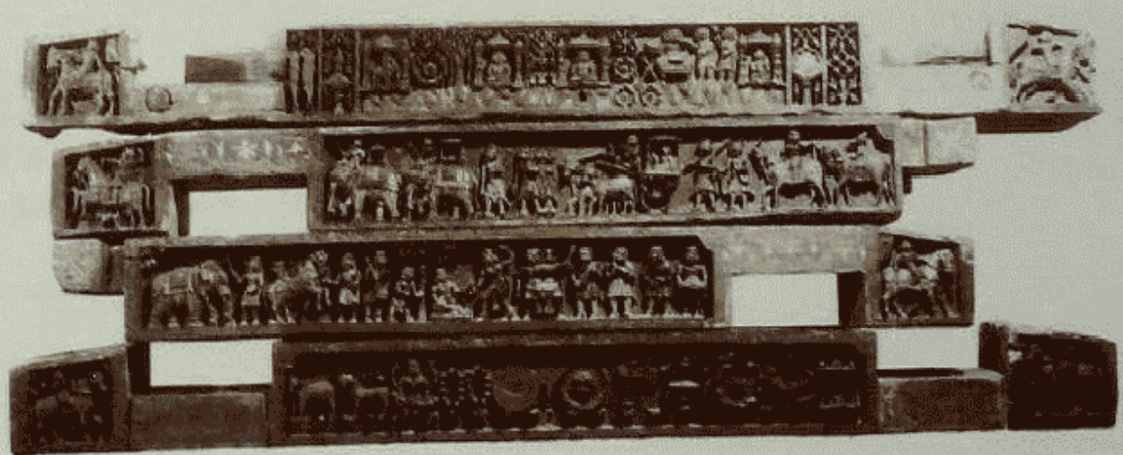
In my view the eternal value of Mahavira is that he attained the highest level of spirituality. He was reborn spiritually through his inner vision. Celibacy, truth, non-violence, self confidence and compassion for all were incarnated in him. He wedded those values to eternal religion of the world.

— *Dr. Vasudevsharan Agrawal*

Gujarat is heavily indebted to Jain religion. Jains have preserved the past of Gujarat. When Gujarati literature was in disarray, Jain *munis* kept the flame burning by preventing it from getting extinguished. The entire society, not only Gujarat, owes a great deal of debt to Jains. Buddhism and Jainism were the only two religions which propagated non-violence, loud and clear. Jain religion is the only religion today which is synonymous with compassion. Western poets like Tennyson had a vision : A time will come when swords will be hammered into ploughshares. The preachings of Jain *munis* may not have hammered swords into ploughshares, but certainly into measuring rods.

You may legitimately be proud but there rests great responsibility on you. You have to do a lot. You have not propagated Bhagwan Mahavira's message in the entire coutry, it has not reached every nook and corner. Barring certain parts of India, the world at large is violent and non-vegetarian. Your triumphal march will remain incomplete, till you make the whole world non-violent.

— *Kavi Nanalal*



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Jainism from the point of view of foreign dignitaries

I admire the principles of Jain religion. If there is life after death, I would like to be born in a Jain family.

— *George Bernard Shaw*

As a curious student, I began taking keen interest in Indian religions. I hear the voice of my conscience telling me that of all the religions, the one shown by Shri Mahavirswami is the best. I had heard that Jain religions is a religion which alone is capable of alleviating the suffering of all living beings. My belief in it became stronger and I arrived in India to study Jain philosophy. I was convinced that Mahavirswami's religion was not merely confined to scriptures or to its principles, but it manifested itself in its rituals and thought and action too.

It shows the right path to those who seek mental peace and satisfaction. The essence of Jain religion is to cause minimum of suffering to others and to think of others' welfare to the maximum possible extent. I believe that the chief article of faith of this religions is to give up personal comforts and happiness and to think of others and this in itself is the hallmark of its superiority over other religions. This is what made me embrace Jain religion.

— *Ms. Charlotte Krauseaka (Subhadra Devi)*
A German devotee

The salient feature of Bhagwan Mahavira's preaching has been its emphasis on non-violence than any other religion. In the ancient history of the religion, non-violence was not only taught or explained but was practised.

— *Prof. M. Vietbidge*
(Chekoslovakia)

The suffering and helpless people of the world cried out for redemption and in response Bhagwan Mahavir showed the right path. It is difficult for those aspiring for peace and harmony in the world not to get attracted to the principles laid down by Bhagwan Mahavira.

— *Dr. Walter Shubbing (Germany)*

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Bhagwan Mahavira was a divine being. He was a paragon among the practitioners of penance, greatest among the thinkers, a leader among the evolutionists of soul and a beacon light in all the branches of knowledge. On the strength of his severe penance, he presented everything before the masses in a positive way.

— *Dr. Ernest Liey (Germany)*

Bhagwan Mahavira's name is synonymous with non-violence, absolute peace and liberation of soul. He was a great pious soul.

— *Dr. William H. Talwar (England)*

The 'soul force' of Bhagwan Mahavira is the most striking thing, psychologically speaking. His thinking is considered most significant and unique in history.

— *Dr. Felix Valthi (Hungary)*

Bhagwan Mahavira's principles of non-violence and truth defeated the notions of materialism in the world. He is a super man of the highest order.

— *Smt. Joseph Meribaan (Germany)*

One who is victorious on a battlefield is *veer* - brave, one who hunts a lion is *veer* - brave; but Mahavira is bravest among the brave for he conquered his soul.

— *Shri Herder (Noted Germany Thinker)*

Mahavira's preachings are a proof that he had conquered his soul and they reflect the profound knowledge of a conqueror.

— Dr. Albarge Pajja (An Italian Scholar)

Bhagwan Mahavira practised celibacy to its extremes and showed the path of non-violence and truth through the ideals of sacrifice and devotion.

— *Dr. Hurbart Waran (England)*

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Glossary of Sanskrit and Prakrit Words

abhigraha - resolution

abhiseka - anointing ceremony

acarya - head of a mendicant group; spiritual leader;

adhyayana - lecture

agama - scripture; canonical literature

aghatiya - karmas that generate embodiment and particular conditions thereof

ahimsa - non-harming

ahimsavrata - refraining from harming

ajnana - ignorance

akasa - space

akriyavada - doctrine of non-action

anagara-dharma - mendicant discipline

anasana - fasting

anekantavada - the doctrine of manifold aspects

anekatva - multiplicity

anga - a group of twelve jaina canonical texts

anitya - impermanent

anityavada - nonesternalism

anukampa - compassion

anuvratas - minor vows pertaining only to laypeople

aparigraha - non-possession

arati - the lamp-waving ceremony

arcana - worship

arham - identical to arhat

arhat - "worthy of worship"; an epithet of one who has attained kevaljnana; a synonym for kevalin

asamyama - nonrestraint

asarva - karmic influx

astanga - eight limbs [of samyak-darsana]

astaya - not stealing

asubha-karma - unwholesome karma

atman - soul; self

avadhijnana - supermundane knowledge such as clairvoyance

avasarpini - regressive half-cycle

avidya - ignorance

avirati - nonrestraint

bandha - karmik bondage

bhagavan - venerable

bhakti - devotionalism

bhasya - commentary

bodhi - enlightenment

bodhi-durlabha - the rarity of enlightenment

brahmana - a member of the priestly caste

caitanya - consciousness

caitya - temple

caityavasi - temple-dweller

caritra - conduct

caritra-mohaniya - conduct-deluding karmas

caturvimsati-stava - praise of the twenty-four Tirthankaras

dana - charity; alms-giving

darsana - a system of philosophy

darsana-mohaniya - insight-deluding karmas

darsanavaraniya - perception-obscuring karmas

deva-dusya - "divine" cloth; a finely woven piece of cloth

devagama - the arrival of gods at a holy gethering

devapuja - worship of the Tirthankaras

dharmadhyana - virtuous concentration

dharma-katha - religious tale

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dharma-labha - increase in righteousness

dharma-tirtha - holy path

digambara - sky-clad; name of the Jaina sect whose mendicants practice ascetic nudity

digha-tapassi - one who engages in extended penances

digvrata - restriction on the distances a person may travel

diksa - initiation

divyadhvani - miraculous sound

ekanta - one-sided

ekantavada - extremism; absolutist doctrine

ekantavadin - one who holds an absolutist doctrine

ekatva - unity

gacchha - a chapter of monks

gana - a residence unit for monks

ganadhara - supporters of the order; i.e. the first mendicant disciples of a Tirthankara

gandharva - celestial musician

ganin - leader of the order

garbha - conception

gati - birth; destiny

gotra - exogamous groups

granthi - knot

guna - quality

indriya - sense organ

Jaina - follower of a Jina, a synonym for Nigantha

Jaina-sasana - teaching of the Jainas

jati - birth caste

Jina - spiritual victor; a synonym for Tirthankara

Jina-agama - Jaina Scripture

Jina-bhavana - Jaina Temple

Jiva - soul; sentient

jyotiska - the stellar gods

kala - time stages within the progressive and regressive half-cycles

kalyanaka - auspicious moments

karma - a form of matter, action

karma-prakrti - the particular form into which karmic matter is differentiated

katha - narrative literature

kayotsarga - abandonment of the body, a standing or sitting posture of meditation

kesa-loca - the practice of pulling out one's hair in five handfuls

kevalajnana - knowledge isolated from karmic obstruction; infinite knowledge; omniscience; knowledge involving awareness of every existent in all its qualities and modes.

kevalin - one who has attained kevaljnana; a synonym for arhat

kriyas - actions; a Jaina term for sacred rites

krodha - anger

ksama - forgiveness

ksamasramana - an ascetic who suffers with equanimity; title used in addressing a monk during the ritual of confession

ksullaka - minor; junior monk; a Jaina layman on the eleventh pratima

kula - family

lesya - karmic stain, the color of which indicates a soul's degree of purity

madhya-loka - middle of terrestrial world

mahavrata - the five great vows of a mendicant

mantra - holy litany

matijana - mind-based-knowledge

maya - deceit

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mayavada - illusionism

mithyadarsana - synonymous with mathyadrsti and mithyatva

mithyadrsti - incorrect view of reality, the first *gunasthana*

moksha - salvation, emancipation from the cycle of birth and death

mulasutra - a group of texts belonging to the subsidiary canon

nama-karma - karma that determines destinies and body types

namaskara-mantra - reverent salutation to the five holy beings

naya - view; partial expression of truth

nayavada - doctrine of nayas

nigantha [Sanskrit Nirgrantha] - unattached, without possessions

nirjara - dissociation of karmas

nirvana - release from bondage; the final death of an enlightened human being [arhat] followed immediately by moksa

nirvana-bhumi - the place at which a tirthankara attained nirvana

niryukti - Prakrit verse commentary

nitya - eternal

nityavada - eternalism

niyati - fate

niyativada - fatalism

paduka - footprint

panca-kalyana - the five auspicious events in the life of a Tirthankara

panca-mahavrata - the five great vows of a mendicant

papa - unwholesome karmas

paramesthin - the supreme divinity

parigraha - possession

pariksa - examination

parivrajaka - a non-Jaina mendicant

parva - Jaina holy days

paryay - mode; a synonym for bhava

posaha-sala - fasting hall

prajna - wisdom

prasama - ease

pratiharya - miraculous phenomenon

pratikramana - ritualized confession

pravrajya - renunciation

pudgala - matter

puja - worship

punya-karma - wholesome karma

purva - a group of fourteen Jaina canonical texts

rajoharana - a whiskbroom

rasa - taste

ratnatraya - the three jewels; right faith or insight, right knowledge, right conduct

raudradhyana - meditation of the perverse pleasure of causing injury to others

sadhu - mendicant

sadhviji - a nun of the svetambara or sthanakavasi sect

samadhi-marana - death while in meditation

samanaska - endowed with the mental capacity

samavasarana - holy assembly of the Jina

samaya - moment

samayika - attaining equanimity; fusion with the true self

samgha - order of monks; nuns, laymen and laywomen

samiti - self- regulation

samsara - cycle of transmigration

samsaya - doubt

samskaras - sacred rites

samvatsari - annual ceremony of public confession

samyak-darsana - correct view of reality; true spiritual insight; faith in the teachings of the Jina

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samyak-mithyatva - a state of transition in which both correct and incorrect views are present; the third *gunasthana*

samyama - restraint

sapta-bhangi-naya - the sevenfold prediction

sarira - body

sasana-devata - guardian spirits

sastra - scripture

satya - truth

siddha - a liberated soul; a kevalin freed from all activities whatsoever

siddha-gati - the destiny of the siddha

siddha-loka - the permanent abode of the siddha; a synonym for *isatpragbhara-bhumi*

sraddha - faith

sramana - a non-Vedic mendicant, usually a Jaina or a Buddhist

sreni - ladder, a term applied to the eighth, ninth and tenth *gunasthanas*

sruta - the oral tradition of Jaina scripture

srutajnana - knowledge derived from instruction and reasoniong

stava - hymn of praise

sthanakvasi - dwellers in halls; name of a Jaina sect whose members do not worship in temples

sthapana - ritual act of asking a monk to stop for alms

sthavira - elder

sthavirakalpin - a monk who lives in an ecclesiastical community

stupa - reliquary mound

suddhi - purity

sukla-lesya - luminous white karmic stain

susama - happy

susama-dusama - more happy than unhappy

susama-susama - extremely happy

sutra - style-aphoristic made of presentation

svadhyaya - the study of the scriptures

Svetambara - white [cotton] clad; name of a Jaina sect whose mendicants wear white garments

syadvada - the doctrine of qualified assertion

tapas - austerity

tattva - the [nine] reals, regards as objects of faith for a Jaina

tirtha - ford; the path of Jaina practice; the monastic order

Tirthankara - builders of the ford; the omniscient spiritual teachers of the Jainas; a synonym for Jina

ucchedavada - doctrine of annihilation after death

upabhoga - repeated enjoyment

Upanga - subsidiary to the Anga; a group of twelve canonical texts

upasarga - calamity

urdhva-loka - the celestial world

utpada - origin; acquisition

utsarpini - progressive half-cycle

vairagya - aversion leading to renunciation

vandana - reverent salutation

varna - caste hierarchy, class

vasana - trace

vedaniya-karma - karma responsible for mundane experience of pain and pleasure

vinaya - reverence to the elders

Vira-nirvana - beginning of the Jaina era

vitaraga - free from possion; an epithet for an arhat

Vyantaravasi - the peripatetic gods

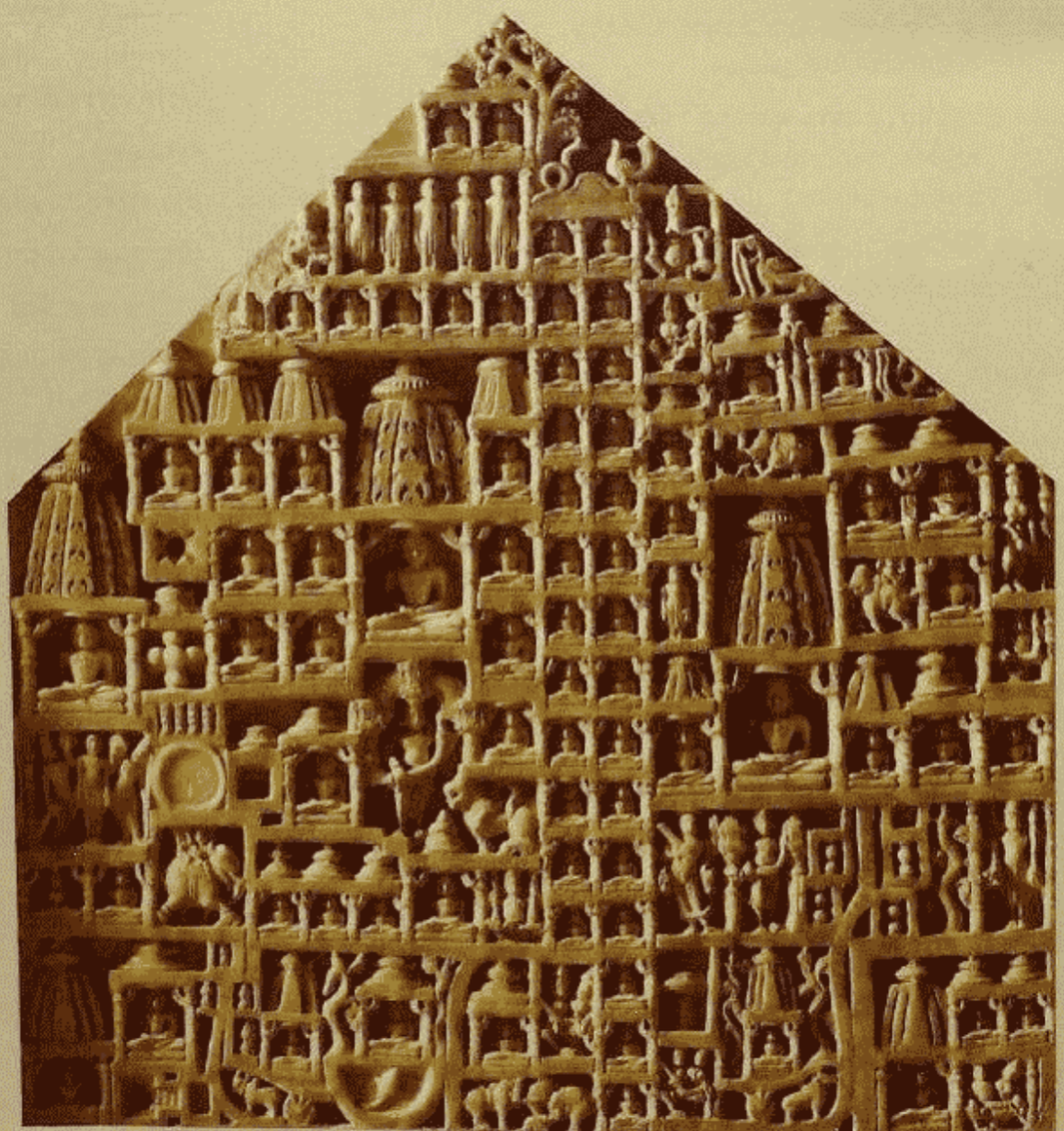
yatra - pilgrimage

yoga - vibration; activities

joyana - a measure of distance equal to about eight or nine miles

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