

Jinvaani: Youth Special Edition

Subject: Lord Mahavir - Attainment of Omniscience (Kevalgyan) and Establishment of the Jain Order (Shasan)

(For youth aged 15 to 20)

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Chapter 1: The Path of Light: Omniscience and Establishing the Order

Lord Mahavir, whose childhood name was Vardhaman, renounced his kingdom and worldly life at the young age of 30 in search of truth and self-realization. He spent more than twelve years in rigorous penance and meditation.

Attainment of Omniscience (Kevalgyan):

- **Place:** Outside the village of Jrimbhikgram, on the banks of the Rijupalika river.
- **Time:** The holy day of Vaishakh Shukla Dashami (10th day of the bright half of the Vaishakh month).
- **Tree:** Under a Sal tree.
- **Meditation:** The Lord was absorbed in meditation in the Goduhasan posture (like milking a cow).
- **Event:** At the end of nearly twelve and a half years of intense spiritual practice, the four destructive (Ghatiya) karmas covering Lord Mahavir's soul (Jnanavaraniya - knowledge-obscuring, Darshanavaraniya - perception-obscuring, Mohaniya - deluding, Antaraya - obstructing) were completely destroyed.
- **Result:** He attained 'Kevalgyan' - complete, infinite knowledge, and 'Kevaldarshan' - complete, infinite perception. He became omniscient (Sarvagya) and all-perceiving (Sarvadarshi). Nothing from the past, present, or future remained unknown to him.

Establishment of the Jain Order (Teerth/Shasan):

- After attaining Kevalgyan, Lord Mahavir came to be known as a 'Tirthankar'.
- He delivered his first sermon (Deshna) on the day of Vaishakh Shukla Ekadashi (11th day) in the city of Pawapuri (in the Mahasen garden). This day is also known

as 'Veer Shasan Sthapana Divas' (Day of Establishing the Order of Mahavir).

- Listening to this first sermon, 11 Ganadhars (chief disciples), including Indrabhuti Gautam, accepted initiation (Diksha).
- Lord Mahavir established the 'Teerth' or 'Jain Sangh' (four-fold order) based on four main pillars:
 1. **Sadhu:** Monks who renounce the world and follow strict vows.
 2. **Sadhvi:** Nuns who renounce the world and follow strict vows.
 3. **Shravak:** Laymen (householders) who follow the principles of Jainism.
 4. **Shravika:** Laywomen (householders) who follow the principles of Jainism.
- This 'Chaturvidh Sangh' (four-fold order) is the foundation of the Jain Shasan, which exists even today.

Chapter 2: The Art of Living: Inspiration from Incidents

The events surrounding Lord Mahavir's attainment of Kevalgyan and the establishment of the Shasan offer us invaluable inspiration for living life.

- **Dedication to the Goal:** Lord Mahavir gave up the comforts of the palace for the search for truth. This teaches us to be dedicated to higher goals in life.
 - *Example:* Whether you want to get good marks in an exam or win a competition, you have to work hard with full dedication, just as the Lord performed penance.
- **Tolerance/Endurance:** During his twelve and a half years of practice, the Lord endured countless hardships and afflictions (Upsargas), but he remained steadfast on his path.
 - *Example:* When faced with failure, criticism, or difficulties in life, true courage lies in facing them calmly without losing heart.
- **Self-Reliance:** The Lord attained Kevalgyan through his own efforts, without relying on any external power.
 - *Example:* We should believe in our abilities and strive forward through hard work, not depend on others.
- **Compassion:** After attaining Kevalgyan, he did not keep his knowledge to himself but preached for the welfare of the world.
 - *Example:* We should use whatever good knowledge or skills we possess to help others.
- **Equanimity:** Lord Mahavir maintained a state of balance in happiness and sorrow, respect and disrespect, praise and criticism.
 - *Example:* Don't become too proud when you get good marks in an exam, and don't get disheartened if you get low marks; maintain balance.

Chapter 3: Mahavir's Message: Priceless Teachings

The teachings Lord Mahavir gave after attaining Kevalgyan are a guide for our lives. Key principles:

- **Pancha Mahavratas (Five Great Vows - for Monks/Nuns) and Pancha Anuvratas (Five Lesser Vows - for Laypeople):**
 1. **Ahimsa (Non-violence):** Not causing harm to any living being through mind, speech, or body.
 - *For us:* Not making fun of anyone, not lying, protecting insects and animals, being vegetarian.
 2. **Satya (Truthfulness):** Always speaking the truth. Speaking words that are beneficial, measured, and pleasant.
 - *For us:* Not cheating in exams, not hiding things from parents or friends.
 3. **Asteya (Non-stealing):** Not taking anything that belongs to someone else without their permission.
 - *For us:* Not taking a friend's pen without asking, not plagiarizing someone's ideas.
 4. **Brahmacharya (Celibacy/Chastity):** Exercising restraint over the senses. (For laypeople: faithfulness to one's spouse).
 - *For us:* Staying away from impure thoughts, focusing the mind on studies and good deeds.
 5. **Aparigraha (Non-possession/Non-attachment):** Not accumulating more things than necessary, not having a sense of ownership or attachment.
 - *For us:* Avoiding unnecessary collection of clothes, gadgets, etc., reducing attachment to material things.
- **Anekantavada (Doctrine of Manifold Aspects):** Seeing truth from different perspectives. Not insisting that only one viewpoint about anything is correct.
 - *Example:* The story of the 'Elephant and the Seven Blind Men'. Each person describes the elephant according to their own experience, which is partially true. Similarly, try to understand others' viewpoints on any issue.
- **Syadvada (Doctrine of Conditional Predication):** Discretion in speech. Using the word 'perhaps' or 'maybe' (Syat) before making any judgment or statement, which puts Anekantavada into practice in speech.
- **Karma Theory:** As we sow, so shall we reap. Good actions lead to happiness, and bad actions lead to suffering. We are the creators of our own destiny.

Chapter 4: Dharma Within Us: Keeping the Order Alive

The Shasan established by Lord Mahavir is not just for monks and nuns; it's essential that it remains alive in the lives of youth and householders like us. How?

- **Gyan (Knowledge):**
 - Try to learn about Jain principles, stories, and history.
 - Read religious books, listen to sermons, participate in camps.
 - *Practical:* Allocate some time daily for religious reading, use good online resources.
- **Darshan (Faith):**
 - Have true faith in the principles of Jainism. Believe in the Deva (Gods/Tirthankars), Guru (Teachers), and Dharma (Religion).
 - If doubts arise, seek clarification from knowledgeable people.
 - *Practical:* Visit the temple (Derasar) regularly, seek the blessings of Guru Bhagwants.
- **Charitra (Conduct):**
 - Try to implement the learned principles in life.
 - Follow the Pancha Anuvratas according to your capacity.
 - Perform practices like Samayik (equanimity meditation) and Pratikraman (introspection and repentance).
 - *Practical:* Reduce anger, practice discretion in food (avoiding night meals, root vegetables), help the needy (Jivdaya - compassion for living beings, Manavseva - service to humanity).
- **Tap (Austerity):**
 - Control desires.
 - Perform austerities like fasting (Upvas), eating once a day (Ekasana), or Ayambil (specific bland diet) according to your capacity.
 - *Practical:* Give up a favorite item for some time (like chocolate, mobile games), control the senses.
- **Virya (Energy/Vigor):**
 - Maintain enthusiasm in practicing religion, avoid laziness.
 - Use your energy for good deeds.

Chapter 5: The Way Forward: The New Generation and Jainism

The responsibility of carrying the Jain Shasan forward to future generations lies with all of us, especially the youth. What can we do for this?

- **Understand and Practice Yourself:** First, we must understand the religion properly ourselves and implement it in our lives. Our conduct itself will become an inspiration for others.

- **Simple Presentation:** Try to explain the principles of the religion in a simple, logical language suitable for the modern era.
- **Positive Use of Technology:** Use mobile apps, websites, and social media to propagate correct information and values of Jainism.
 - *Example:* Share good religious videos, create Jain quizzes, start online study groups.
- **Discussion and Dialogue:** Discuss religion openly with friends and family. Ask questions and seek answers.
- **Be Inspirational:** While excelling in fields like studies, sports, and arts, set an example in society by upholding moral values.
- **Camps and Pathshalas:** Organize and participate in interesting religious camps and Pathshalas (religious schools) for children and youth.
- **Language Preservation:** Acquire knowledge of the original languages of religious texts (Prakrit, Sanskrit) and our mother tongue, and keep them alive.

Final Message:

Lord Mahavir's life and his teachings are like a beacon of light. By following the path shown by him, we too can make our lives successful and meaningful and pass on the heritage of the Jain Shasan to future generations. Let's all join together in this endeavor!

MANISH V. SHAH, Subhanpura, Vadodara. Mobile : 94299 26447 (WhatsApp)