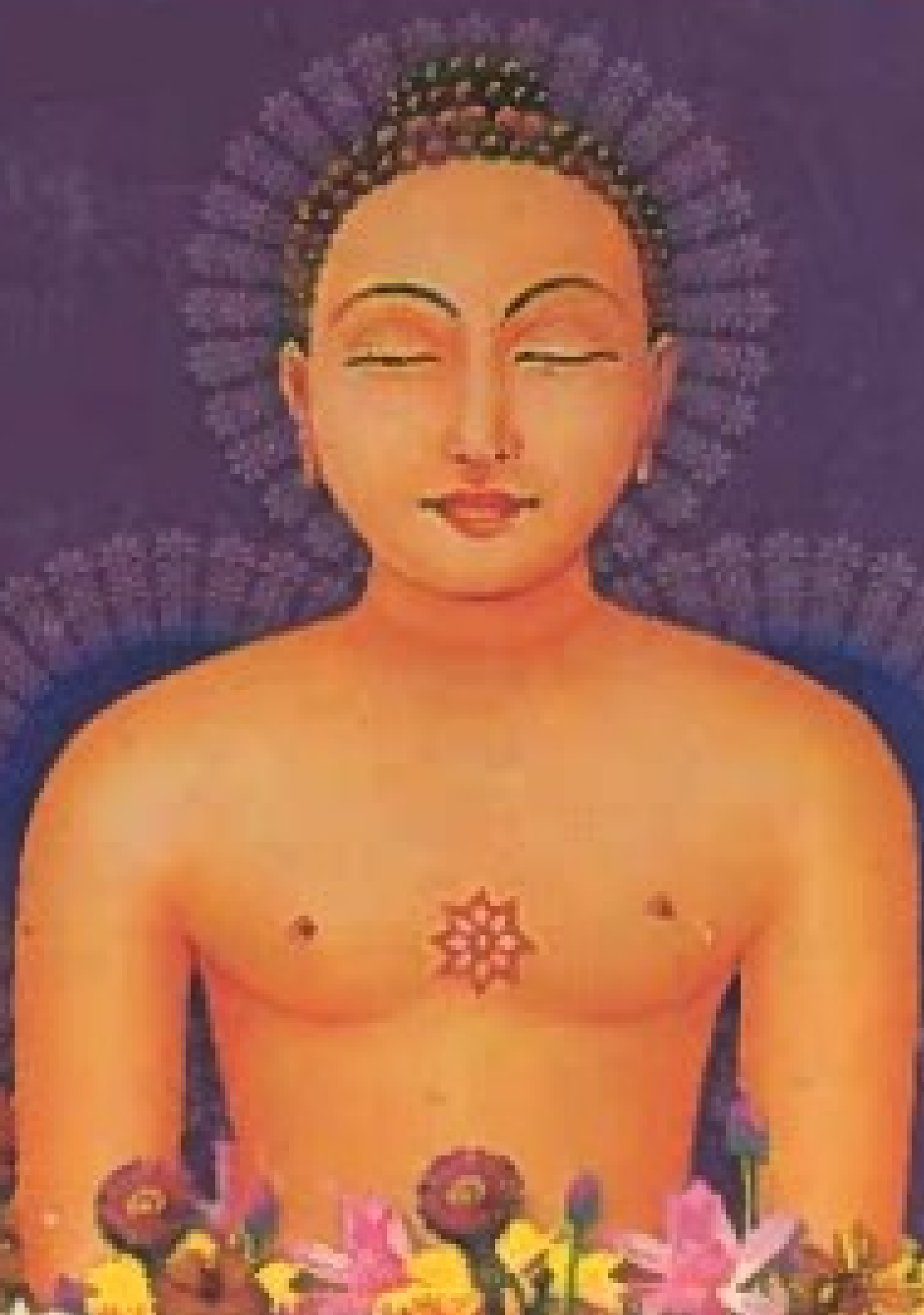


Thus Spake
LORD MAHAVIR





THUS SPAKE LORD MAHAVIR

popular 'Thus Spake' series have
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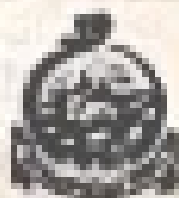
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played a necessary role in
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moulding the rich spiritual
heritage of India



Mr. D. K. ...

Sri Ramakrishna Math

Mylapore, Chennai-4

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Readers of our highly popular "Thus Spake" series have been urging us to bring out a similar booklet on the teachings of the Jain Prophet, Tirthankara Mahavir. With its insistence on simplicity, austerity, ahimsa and compassion for all, Jainism has played a very significant role in moulding the rich spiritual heritage of India.

Mr. Dulichand Jain of Chennai, has provided an English version of the Hindi booklet

“Bhagawan Mahavir ki Vani”,
published by Ramakrishna Math,
Nagpur, which we have utilized
here. He has assisted us at every
stage of the publication of this
booklet. Our sincere thanks to
him.

We hope our readers will
find the life and teachings of the
great Tirthankara inspiring and
illuminating.

Sri Ramakrishna Math
Chennai-4

9 April 1998,

Mahavir Jayanti

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NAMASKAR MANTRA
(The Fivefold Obeisance)

Salutations to the Prophets (Arhats)
Salutations to the Liberated souls
(Siddhas)

Salutations to the Preceptors
(Acharyas)

Salutations to the religious instructors
(Upadhyayas)

Salutations to all the Saints (Sadhus)
of the world.

This sublime five-fold salutation (Namaskar mantra) destroys all sins and is supremely auspicious.

PRECEPTS ON THE AUSPICIOUS

Auspicious are the Prophets
Auspicious are the Liberated souls
Auspicious are the Saints
Auspicious is the religion preached
by the Perfected souls.

Prophets are the Supreme in the world
Liberated souls are the Supreme
in the world

Saints are the Supreme in the world
Religion preached by the Perfected souls
is the Supreme in the world.

I take refuge in the Prophets
I take refuge in the Liberated souls
I take refuge in the Saints
I take refuge in the religion preached
by the Perfected souls.

THE LIFE OF TIRTHANKARA MAHAVIR

Lord Mahavir was the twenty-fourth Tirthankara or prophet of the Jain religion. He was born 2596 years ago in B.C. 599 at Kundagrama in the kingdom of Vaishali, near Patna in Bihar. His father was Siddhartha, a chieftain of Kundagrama and his mother was Trishala. Queen Trishala saw fourteen auspicious dreams when the child was in her womb.

He was named Vardhamana, i.e. he who brings prosperity, because his father's wealth had increased during the pregnancy of the mother. He is, however, popularly called Mahavir, the great hero, because he subdued his passions—the greatest conquest.

As a young boy, Vardhamana was handsome, brave and fearless. He was liked by one and all. Once he was playing with children in the mango-grove, when a huge snake curled itself around the trunk of the tree near-

by. Other boys fled, but Vardhamana coolly held the serpent by its hood and with a jerk threw it away like a piece of rope.

According to the Shvetambara tradition, Mahavir was married to Yashoda and had a daughter. But the Digambara tradition does not accept this view. From his very childhood, he was very quiet, resolute and indifferent to worldly matters. Although he was surrounded by comforts and luxuries, he had a strong sense of detachment. At the age of thirty, after the passing

away of his parents and with the consent of his elder brother he renounced the world and became a *Shramana* or a wandering monk. He vowed to remain equanimous throughout his life. He did rigorous austerities, including prolonged fasts, for twelve and half years till he achieved *Kevala—Jnana* (omniscience). Mahavira faced numerous hardships and indignities during this long *Samnyasa* period but he proved to be an incarnation of forbearance and forgiveness.

After attaining omniscience, *Shramana* Bhagavan Mahavir began to preach, wandering from one place to the other on foot. On hearing his teachings, eleven eminent *Brahmin* scholars led by Indrabhuti Gautama became his chief disciples, and formed the nucleus of the religious Order which transmitted the teachings to others. Lord Mahavira established a four-fold congregation of monks, nuns, laymen devotees and laywomen devotees. In the *Sangha* so established, there was

no difference between men and women. Both were regarded equally. The women were also initiated as nuns, which was a great revolutionary step at that time.

For thirty long years, Mahavir went about preaching the religion of *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Anekanta* (non-absolutism) and *Aparigraha* (non-possession). At the age of 72, he gave up the body at Pavapuri in Bihar.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA
ON JAINISM

What could have saved Indian society from the ponderous burden of omnifarious ritualistic ceremonialism, with its animal and other sacrifices, which all but crushed the very life of it, except the Jain revolution which took its strong stand exclusively on chaste morals and philosophical truths?...

Jains were the first great ascetics, and they did some great

work. "Don't injure any and do good to all that you can and that is all the morality and ethics, and that is all the work there is, and the rest is all nonsense ... Throw it away." And then they went to work and elaborated this one principle all through, and it is a most wonderful ideal: how all that we call ethics they simply bring out from that one great principle of non-injury and doing good.

THUS SPAKE
LORD MAHAVIR
TO THE WORLD

By which act can I escape from suffering in this unstable and changing world, so full of misery? ❧

Sensuous enjoyments yield momentary pleasures but cause prolonged misery. By their very nature, they give maximum sorrow and minimum happiness. They are an obstacle to emanci-

pation and a veritable mine of evils. ☪

Even after thorough analysis, one cannot find any essence in a plantain tree, so also one can never find true happiness in sensory pursuits. ☪

In reality, the pleasures enjoyed by emperors and the celestials are painful as they are momentary and agonizing in their effect. Therefore, it is proper to remain away from them. ☪

A person suffering from itch finds pleasure in scratching his body but gets immense pain

later on. Similarly, an infatuated person erroneously considers the sensuous enjoyment as a source of happiness. ❧

He who is immersed in carnal pleasures which tarnish the soul, becomes perverted and knows not what is beneficial and conducive to spiritual welfare. He becomes ignorant, dull and infatuated and entangles himself in his own *karmas* like a fly caught in phlegm. ❧

The embodied soul knows and reflects upon the afflictions caused by birth, old-age and

death, but is unable to refrain from the sensual pleasures which cause suffering. Oh! such is the power of the knot of delusion. ❧

A worldly person becomes the subject of attachment and aversion; as a consequence, *karma* binds his soul; the bondage of *karma* results in cycles of births. As a result of birth, he gets a body; the body has senses; the senses lead to their respective enjoyments which in turn result in attachment and aversion. Thus the soul is involved in the cycles of births and deaths. ❧

Man has to bear his sorrow all alone. Neither his friends nor sons nor his relatives can share his sufferings because *karma* follows only the doer. ❧

Just as a person is free while climbing a tree but becomes powerless when he starts falling (due to carelessness), so also the soul is free while accumulating *karma*, but is helpless when *karma* ripens. ❧

Owing to wrong faith, the attitude of a person becomes perverted. He develops dislike for religion as a person suffer-

ing from fever dislikes sweet juice. ❧

Attachment and aversion are the root causes of *karma* and *karma* originates from delusion. *Karma* is the root cause of birth and death and these (birth and death) are said to be the source of misery. ❧

Even the most insulted and powerful enemy does not cause so much harm as uncontrolled attachment and aversion do. ❧

DHARMA (*Religion*)

The essential nature of any substance is *Dharma*. The ten virtues like forgiveness and others are the ten characteristics of *Dharma*. The triple jewels, i.e., right faith, right knowledge and right conduct, constitute the *Dharma*; and giving protection to living creatures is also *Dharma*. ❧

Supreme forgiveness, supreme humility, supreme straight-forwardness, supreme truthful-

ness, supreme purity, supreme self-restraint, supreme austerity, supreme renunciation, supreme detachment, and supreme continence are the ten characteristics of *Dharma*. ❧

His forbearance is perfect, who does not get excited with anger even when terribly afflicted by celestials, human beings and animals. ❧

I forgive all living beings; may all living beings forgive me. I cherish friendliness towards all and harbour enmity towards none. ❧

I beg pardon from one and all, if, due to attachment and aversion, I have been ungrateful to them or if my speech has been inappropriate and objectionable. ❧

A monk who does not flaunt even slightly his family lineage, looks, caste, learning, austerity, scriptural knowledge and character, practises humility. ❧

If I have behaved towards you in the past in an improper manner due to slightest inadvertance, I sincerely beg your pardon

with a pure heart (without any sting and passion). ☸

He truly commands respect who is always cautious not to insult others. A person who merely boasts but has no virtues cannot command respect. ☸

He who does not think crookedly, does not act crookedly, does not speak crookedly and does not hide his own weaknesses, observes the virtue of straight-forwardness. ☸

A monk who avoids all speech that is likely to hurt others and speaks only what is good for

himself and others, observes
the fourth virtue of truthfulness.
¶

A person suffers misery
before lying, while lying and after
lying. Thus the result of lying
is endless misery. Similarly a
person who steals or a person
who is lustful also suffers misery
and finds himself without a
support. ¶

Beneficial advice given by a
brother monk may appear
unpalatable in the beginning,
but proves wholesome in the
end, like a bitter medicine which

in the end proves sweet like honey. ❧

A person who speaks the truth, becomes trustworthy like a mother, venerable like a preceptor and dear to everyone like a kinsman. ❧

Truthfulness is the abode of austerity, self-restraint and all other virtues. Indeed, truthfulness is the source of all noble qualities as the ocean is that of fish. ❧

If there were numberless mountains of gold and silver as big as mount *Kailasha*, they

would not satisfy an avaricious man; for avarice is boundless like the sky. ❧

He who controls the senses and passions and concentrates on the self through meditation and scriptural study definitely practises austerity. ❧

He alone can be said to have truly renounced (the world) who has turned his back on all available, desirable, beloved and dear objects which are entirely his own. ❧

That mendicant alone acquires the virtue of non-

possessiveness, who, renouncing the sense of ownership and attachment and controlling his own thoughts, remains unperturbed by feelings of pleasure and pain. ❧

We call him a *Brahmin* who remains unaffected by objects of sensual pleasures even while surrounded by them like a lotus which remains unaffected by water though living in it. ❧

He who has got rid of delusion has his misery destroyed; he who has got rid of desire has his delusion destroyed;

he who has got rid of greed has his desire destroyed and he who owns nothing has his greed destroyed. ❧

The soul verily is *Brahman*. So the activity regarding the self of an ascetic who is free from body consciousness is called *Brahmacharya* or continence. ❧

He observes the most difficult but pious virtue of celibacy, who is neither infatuated nor attracted even on observing feminine charms. ❧

Just as a jar made of lac, when subjected to fire, melts

go quickly and is destroyed, so is a
monk who associates intimately
with women. ☸

One who has overcome at-
traction towards women, can
overcome all other temptations
of his life as easily as a person
who has crossed the great
ocean, can cross a big river like
the Ganges. ☸

As for men observing celi-
bacy, the company of women is
prohibited; similarly for women
observing celibacy the company
of men is condemned. (Both
should avoid each other) ☸

There are many virtuous women who are renowned for their purity and chastity. They are like goddesses on this earth and are even revered by celestials. ❧

The fire of lust when kindled by the fuel of desires destroys the forest of the three worlds. Blessed is that sage whose youth remains untouched by this fire. ❧

SELF-CONTROL AND VIGILANCE

The nights that pass will never return. They bear no fruit for him who does not abide by *Dharma*. ❧

The soul is the begetter of both happiness and sorrow, it is its own friend when it treads the path of righteousness and its own enemy when it treads the forbidden path. ❧

One's unconquered mind together with four passions and

five uncontrolled sense-organs
are the ten powerful enemies
of man. Conquering these ten,
O great sage, I move about
righteously. ❧

Fight with your own self,
what will you gain by fighting
with the external foes? One who
conquers one's self by one's own
self alone experiences supreme
bliss. ❧

One must conquer one's
own self, for difficult it is to
conquer it. One who does so, is
blessed in this world and also
in the next. ❧

When suppressed passions can bring about the spiritual downfall of even the most virtuous monk, who is akin to *Jina* himself, then what to speak of monks who are under the sway of attachment? ❧

One should not be complacent with a small debt, a slight wound, a spark of fire and an insignificant passion, because what is insignificant now may soon become uncontrollable. ❧

Anger spoils good relations, pride destroys humility, deceit

destroys amity and greed destroys everything. ❧

Conquer anger by forgiveness, pride by humility, deceit by straight-forwardness and greed by contentment. ❧

When a sinful deed is committed, intentionally or unintentionally, one should immediately desist from it with a resolve not to repeat it. ❧

It is on account of attachment that a person commits theft, indulges in sex and yearns for unlimited hoardings. ❧

A person who hoards even the slightest amount of an animate or inanimate object or gives consent to some one for hoarding, will not escape from misery. ❧

Death takes away the man who uselessly thinks, "I have this and I have not that, this I must do and this I should not do". Why then should a person be indolent? ❧

There is fear from every direction for a non-vigilant person, while there is no fear for a person who is vigilant. ❧

An indolent person can never be happy and a lethargic person can never acquire knowledge. A person with attachments cannot acquire renunciation and one who is violent cannot be compassionate. ❧

O man! Always be vigilant. He who is vigilant gains more and more knowledge. He who is non-vigilant is not blessed. Blessed is he who is always vigilant. ❧

Pride, anger, carelessness, illness and idleness are the five obstacles in the path of acquiring knowledge. ❧

Non-indulgence in frivolity, self control, not disclosing the secrets of others, not lacking in good manners, not exhibiting bad manners, not being very greedy, not getting angry, and truthfulness—these eight are the traits of a person competent for learning. ☪

One should meditate on one's soul after controlling one's diet, posture and sleep, and gaining knowledge by the grace of the preceptor, in accordance with the precepts of the *Jina*. ☪

Service to the preceptor and elders, avoiding the company of ignorant people, scriptural study, solitude, contemplation on the meaning of scriptural texts, patience—these constitute the pathway to emancipation. ☸

An austere monk desirous of equanimity of his mind, should seek limited and unobjectionable (pure) food, should have an intelligent companion well-versed in the meaning of scriptures and should select a secluded place for shelter. ☸

Those who take wholesome and healthy food, in lesser quantity, never fall sick and do not need the services of a physician. They are their own physicians. They remain engaged in their internal purification. ❧

One should practise *Dharma* before old age creeps up, the senses become feeble and one falls a prey to all kinds of diseases. (For, it will not be possible to practise *Dharma* later with a feeble and incompetent body). ❧

Knowing the worldly objects as bonds of the soul, the aspirant should proceed in his life with extreme caution. As long as the body remains strong, he should use it to practise self-restraint. When the body is devoid of its strength completely, he should renounce it without any attachment like a lump of clay. ❧

NON-VIOLENCE

Not to kill any living being is the quintessence of all wisdom. One has to understand only this much that equanimity based on non-violence is the essence of *Dharma*, and this is the science of non-violence. ❧

All beings wish to live and not to die; that is why *Nirgranthas* (personages devoid of attachment) prohibit the killing of living beings. ❧

Just as you don't like pain, others too don't. Knowing this, treat others with care, respect and compassion, as you treat yourself. ☪

The being whom you want to kill is none other than you, The being whom you wish to govern and enslave is none other than you. Killing a living being is killing one's own self; compassion towards creatures is compassion towards oneself. Therefore he who desires his own good should not harm any creature. ☪

Even an intention of killing is the cause of the bondage of *karma*, whether you actually kill or not. ❧

Oh, mortal being! Be free from fear and let others be free from fear. In this transitory world, why do you indulge in *Himsa*? ❧

It is said by Lord *Jina* that absence of attachment etc. is *Ahimsa* while their presence is *Himsa*. ❧

of living beings. ❧

THE SOUL

The soul has no colour, no taste, no smell, no touch, no gender like male, female or neuter, no bodily form and no bone structure. ❧

The pure soul is free from the activities of mind, body and speech. It is conflictless, detached, formless, dispassionate, blemishless, free from delusion and fear. ❧

The soul is free from complexities, attachment, blemishes,

desire, anger, pride, ego, and all kinds of deficiencies. ❧

The soul is neither the body nor the mind, neither the speech nor their cause. It is also neither the doer, nor the cause of action, nor the approver of any action. ❧

I am alone, pure, free from attachment and full of infinite knowledge and perception. Firmly established in the self, I destroy all those modifications which are alien to me. ❧

TRIPLE GEMS

Faith, knowledge and conduct together constitute the path of liberation. The saints have averred that if this is followed in the right way it will lead to liberation, otherwise it will lead to bondage. ❧

Just as a fetter, whether made of iron or gold, binds a person, so also *karma*, be it auspicious or inauspicious, binds the soul. ❧

Better it is to go to heaven observing vows and austerity

de than to suffer acutely in hell
by committing forbidden deeds.

There is great difference, between
one who stands in the shade and
the other standing in the sun. ☞

Belief in the existence of
six substances like *Dharma* etc.
is right faith; understanding of
Angas and *Purvas* is right knowl-
edge and the practice of auster-
ity is right conduct. These three
constitute the pathway of liber-
ation as understood from the
practical view-point. ☞

By knowledge one under-
stands the nature of substances,

by faith one believes in them, by
conduct one puts an end to the
flow of *karmas* and by austerity
one attains purity. ❧

Knowledge without right
conduct, asceticism without right
faith, and austerities without self-
control are all futile. ❧

Without (right) faith there
is no (right) knowledge; without
(right) knowledge there is no
virtuous conduct; without vir-
tues, there is no annihilation of
karmas (salvation) and without
annihilation there is no liberation
(Eternal Bliss). ❧

Whatever use of living or non-living objects a man of right faith may make through his senses, is all for getting release from the *karmas*. ❧

He who desires no honour, no worship, not even salutation, how will he desire praise? He, who has self-control, observes the vows correctly, practises penance and seeks to know the true nature of the soul, is the real monk. ❧

According to the teachings of *Jina*, knowledge is that which helps to understand the truth,

controls the mind and purifies
the soul. ☞

The wise man should
not conceal the meaning of a
scriptural text nor should
he distort it; he should not
harbour pride or a tendency
to self-display; he should
not make fun of anyone or
bestow words of blessing on
anyone. ☞

Oh *Gautama*! when you
have crossed the mighty ocean,
why tarry near the shore? Hurry
to go across, be not careless even
for a moment. ☞

After listening to scriptures, a person knows what are good and evil deeds and having known both, he should practise that which is conducive to reaching the highest goal. ❧

With scriptural knowledge, an aspirant becomes firm in his faith, meditation, observance of vows and self-restraint and lives a life of purity throughout his lifetime without any wavering. ❧

He only knows the whole doctrine of the *Jina*, who realises the soul unbound by *karmic*

matter, different from everything, devoid of all particularities and without beginning and end. ❧

As the light from millions of burning lamps is of no avail to a blind person, so also the study of numerous scriptures is of no use to a person who has no character. ❧

If one performs austerities (*tapas*) or observes vows (*vratas*) without contemplation on the Supreme Self, the omniscients call all that childish austerity (*balatapa*) and childish vow (*balavrata*). ❧

An ignorant person who fasts for months and takes just a morsel of food to break each fast, will not attain even the sixteenth part of what constitutes religion proclaimed by the *Jinas*. ❧

Right conduct is really what constitutes religion, which in turn, is pointed out as equanimity. Equanimity is that state of the soul which is free from delusion and agitation. ❧

ANUVRATA (Primary Vows)

The seven vices (from which a householder should abstain) are: 1. sexual contact with a woman other than one's own wife, 2. gambling, 3. taking intoxicants, 4. hunting, 5. uttering harsh words, 6. giving disproportionate punishment and 7. misappropriation of other's property. ☞

Consumption of meat increases pride; pride creates a desire for intoxicants and one

indulges in gambling. Thus one falls a prey to all the above vices. ❧

207 Injuring living beings, falsehood, taking things which are not given (theft), sexual intercourse with a woman other than ones own wife, and limitless desire for possession—abstinence from these acts are called five primary vows. ❧

208 One should not tie, injure, mutilate, load heavy burdens and deprive from food and drink any animal or human being with a mind polluted by anger and other

passions—these five are the transgressions (*Atichara*) of the vow of *Ahimsa*. ❧

Refraining from major types of falsehood is the second vow. This is of five kinds—speaking untruth about unmarried girls, animals and lands, repudiating debts or pledges and giving false evidence. ❧

Making a false charge rashly (or without consideration), divulging any one's secret, disclosing the secrets confided by one's own wife, giving false advice and preparation of a false

in document—these should be avoided. ❧

One should desist from buying stolen goods, inciting another to commit theft, avoiding the laws of the State, use of false weights and measures, adulteration and counterfeit currency. ❧

The householder should keep away from sexual contacts with all married or unmarried women other than his wife, from arranging marriages of other than one's own children (alternatively from himself marrying twice)

and from intense sexual desires. ❧

One should refrain from accumulation of unlimited property due to insatiable greed as it becomes a pathway to hell and results in numerous faults.

A righteous and pure-minded person should not exceed the self-imposed limit in the acquisition of land, gold, wealth, servants, cattle, vessels and pieces of furniture. ❧

Meaningful activities do not cause as much bondage as meaningless activities, since the

meaningful activities are conditioned by time, place, etc. and can only be performed under certain circumstances. But this is not the case with meaningless activities. ❧

Setting limits to the consumable and unconsumable objects of enjoyment, practising mental equanimity (*Samayika*), offering food etc. to monks, guests and the needy and performing religious fasts called *Pausadha*—these are known as four disciplinary vows. ❧

Charity is said to be of four kinds, viz., that of food, that of medicines, that of scriptural teaching and that of assurance of protection to all living beings. According to the code of conduct of householders (*Upasaka-dhyayana Sutra*), this four-fold charity is declared worthy of performance. ❧

A house-holder who eats that which is left after a monk has taken food, enjoys the best material comforts and will gradually obtain the bliss of

emancipation. Such is the preaching of the *Jina*. ☉

The charity of giving protection to living beings in fear of death, is known as *Abhayadana* and is supreme amongst all charities. ☉

MAHAVRATA (*Great Vows*)

A wise monk, after adopting the five great vows of non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy and non-possessiveness, should practise the religion preached by the *Jina*. ❧

Ahimsa is the heart of all stages of life, the core of all sacred texts, and the sum (*pinda*) and substance (*sara*) of all vows and virtues. ❧

One should not speak or excite others to speak harmful

and false words, either in the interest of oneself or of another, through anger or fear. This is truthfulness, the second great vow. ❧

He who desists from a desire to take anything belonging to others, on seeing it lying in a village or town or forest, observes the third vow of nonstealing. ❧

A mendicant should not take anything animate or inanimate, whether cheap or expensive, not even a toothpick, without the permission of the owner. ❧

Since sexual intercourse is the root of all irreligiosity and is of the form of a massive accumulation of great defects, the monks refrain from it completely. ☸

When you come across the three forms of women, see in them the reflections of a mother, a daughter and a sister (according to their age) and refrain from telling stories about women. Celibacy is worthy of veneration in all the three worlds. ☸

The fifth great vow for monks who are the followers of

right conduct is renunciation of attachment for all things with a dispassionate mind. ❧

When the supreme *Jina* has advised the aspirants not to have attachment even for their own bodies, where is the question of possession of other objects? ❧

A monk can only keep such things which are necessary for the observance of *vratas* (vows) and are not desired by worldly people and which are incapable of creating any attachment. Anything else that

may create even a slight attachment is unacceptable to a monk. ❧

Jnataputra (Bhagavan Mahavir) has said that the possession of an object itself is not possessiveness; what that great saint meant is that attachment to an object is possessiveness. ❧

A monk should not possess anything, not even as little as a particle of food. As a bird flies away with its wings so he should wander alone without any possessions. ❧

Just as possessiveness consists in a sense of attachment, so violence consists in the intention of killing. ❧

A monk, ever vigilant in his moves while he stands, sits, sleeps, eats and talks—is not bound by evil karmas. ❧

A monk should be extremely careful while walking; he should not disturb or frighten any animals and birds which may have gathered for their food in his way. ❧

Even when asked, a monk ought not to utter a sinful word,

a senseless word, a heart-rending word, either for the sake of oneself or for the sake of another or for the sake of both. ❧

Similarly, he should not call a one-eyed person as one-eyed, a eunuch as eunuch, a diseased person as diseased or a thief a thief. ❧

Carefulness in speech (*Bhashasamiti*) consists in avoiding slanderous, ridiculous, harsh, critical, boastful and meaningless talk. These bring good neither to oneself nor to others. ❧

A wise ascetic should speak what he has seen; his speech should be brief, free from ambiguity and clearly expressed. His speech should neither be deceptive nor cause anxiety to any one. ❧

A selfless alms-giver and a detached monk who practises faultless begging, both are rare. Both, selfless donor and detached monk, eventually acquire noble birth. ❧

A monk should not take food for the sake of (physical) strength, taste, bodily improve-

ment or lustre, but only for acquisition of knowledge, self-restraint and meditation. ☪

Just as a bee gathers honey from many flowers and satisfies itself without harming them, so also the detached monks, who are free from all possessions, get their food from different householders without being a burden to them. ☪

The monk should not use words that are harsh or harmful to others. He should not speak such truth by which he might incur sin. ☪

THE MONK

Monks who are in search of the supreme path of liberation resemble a lion (in fearlessness), an elephant (in dignity), a bull (in strength), a deer (in uprightness), a beast (in freedom from attachment), the wind (in being companionless), the sun (in brilliance), an ocean (in serenity), the *Mandara* mountain (in firmness), the moon (in coolness), a diamond (in lustre), the earth (in patience), a serpent (in being

homeless) and the sky (in not being dependent). ❧

One does not become a monk by merely tonsuring, nor a *Brahmana* by reciting the *Omkaara Mantra*, nor a sage by living in the forest, nor an ascetic by wearing clothes woven out of the *Kusha* grass. ❧

A person becomes a monk by equanimity, a *Brahmana* by celibacy, a sage by knowledge and an ascetic by austerities. ❧

The monks do not sleep long at night as they are engaged

in the study of scriptures and in meditation. They are not under the control of sleep as they are engrossed in contemplation on the meaning of precepts. ☸

The true monks are free from attachment, self-conceit, companionship and egotism, they treat impartially and equally all living beings, whether mobile or immobile. ☸

A true monk maintains equanimity in success and failure, happiness and misery, life and death, censure and praise and honour and dishonour. ☸

A monk remains completely unaffected by honour, passions, punishment, affliction and fear; he is undisturbed and unbound and is free from laughter and sorrow. ☸

A monk is interested neither in this world nor in the next. He is indifferent to food or fasts. He does not care whether his limb is smeared with *Sandal* paste or cut off with an axe. ☸

A monk should bear hunger, thirst, an uncomfortable bed, cold, heat, fear and anguish with an unperturbed mind. For for-

bearance of physical sufferings produces great merit. ❧

Of what use is secluded residence, mortification of body, different types of fasts, study of scriptures, keeping silence etc., to a monk who is devoid of equanimity? ❧

An enlightened and self-restrained monk should go to towns or villages with equanimity and preach the path of peace. Oh Gautama! Don't be careless even for a moment. ❧

Dress is no proof of a person's self-control. Cannot a

person without self-control wear the same dress? Does not poison kill a person who swallows it, even if he changes his dress? ☸

Renunciation of external possessions is done for mental purity. Such renunciation is futile if it is not combined with internal non-attachment. ☸

A monk belonging to a *Sangha* (congregation) has the right to knowledge and acquires it and is specially rooted in faith and conduct. Blessed are those who do not leave the *Sangha* throughout their life. ☸

AUSTERITY

Austerities are of two kinds; external and internal. External austerities are of six kinds and internal also are of six kinds. External austerities are : 1. fasting, 2. eating less than one's normal diet, 3. seeking alms, 4. abstention from tasty food, 5. mortification of the body and 6. living in solitude. ☪

He who voluntarily gives up food for a day or more, for the purging of *karmas*, practises

the external penance of fasting. ❧

He who takes minimal food for undertaking study of scriptures is said to be a *tapasvi* (i.e. one practising the penance) according to the scriptures. The penance of fasting without scriptural study amounts only to starving. ❧

That fasting is true when the person observing it does not entertain any inauspicious thought, when his senses do not become weak and when the activities of his mind, speech

and body remain unimpaired. In short, subjugation of senses is described as fasting; therefore those who have conquered their senses, are said to be fasting even though they may be taking food. ☞

☞ A person who takes food less, even by a morsel, than his usual diet, is said to practise *Unodari* (partial fasting). ☞

☞ A monk who avoids delicious foods like milk, curds, butter etc. practises the penance of *Rasaparityaga* (renunciation of delicious dishes). ☞

The penance of having his bed and seat in a solitary and unfrequented place, shunned by women and animals, is called *Vivikataśhayasana* (i.e. solitary residence). ❧

Adopting difficult bodily postures like *Virasana* etc. in dangerous caves and mountains, which are beneficial for the individual, constitute the penance called *Kayaklesha* (mortification of body). ❧

The knowledge acquired at a time when one is comfortable vanishes away when one begins

to experience discomfort. Hence a Yogi ought to contemplate on the self in the midst of hardships keeping in mind his capacity for tolerance. ❧

Internal austerities are (of six kinds) : 1. Atonement of sins, 2. humility, 3. service, 4. scriptural study, 5. meditation and 6. renunciation. ❧

Just as a child speaks of his good and bad acts in a straightforward manner to its mother, similarly one ought to confess one's guilt without deceit and pride. ❧

He who is pricked by a thorn feels the pain all over his body but becomes free from such pain when the thorn is removed. Similarly, he who hides his faults fraudulently becomes miserable, but he who confesses his faults honestly becomes pure and free from mental affliction. ❧

To get up at the arrival of an elder, to welcome him with folded hands, to offer him (an honoured) seat, to serve him with a feeling of reverence—these constitute humility. ❧

If one (elder) is insulted, it amounts to an insult to all: if one is venerated, all of them are venerated. ❧

Humility is of five kinds: humility in faith, in knowledge, in conduct, in penance and in decorum or etiquette. These lead to liberation. ❧

Humility is the foundation of the *Jain* faith. The practice of self-restraint and austerity should make one humble and modest. To a person who is not humble, righteousness and austerity are of no avail. ❧

Learning, tempered with humility is beneficial in this world and the next. Just as a plant cannot grow without water, learning will not be fruitful without humility. ❧

Service to a monk (*Vaiya-vrtya*) consists in providing him bed, residence, seat, proper cleaning of his implements and with due respect arranging for his food, medicine, a reading of scriptural texts and disposal of refuse. ❧

Offering protection to, and taking care of, a monk who

becomes fatigued on his way or is threatened by a thief, a wild animal, a king or is obstructed by a river or gets afflicted by a contagious disease or famine, is considered the austerity of service (*Vaiyavrtya*). ❧

Study of scriptures (*Svādhyaya*) is of five kinds: 1. reading of scriptural text, 2. questioning, 3. repetition, 4. pondering over and 5. narration of religious discourses opening with auspicious praise (of *Jina*). ❧

He who studies scriptures with devotion and without any

desire for personal praise and honour but for purging of his *karmic* pollution, will have the benefit of scriptural knowledge which conduces to happiness. ❧

Perfect meditation is attained through knowledge and by meditation all *karmas* are annihilated. By annihilating the *karmas* a person becomes liberated. Hence, one should be engaged constantly in the acquisition of knowledge. ❧

A monk who makes no movements of his body while sleeping, sitting or standing and

checks all activities of his body is said to observe the sixth penance of bodily steadiness. ☪

Just as the head is most important to the body and the roots to a tree, meditation is fundamental to all religious practices of a monk. ☪

A steady state of mind constitutes meditation while an active mind might be engaged in either contemplation or deep reflection or apprehension. ☪

In the case of monks who have steadied their mind, speech and body, and who have

thoroughly concentrated their mind on meditation, it does not matter at all whether they stay in a densely populated town or in a secluded forest. ❧

A monk devoted to penance and desirous of practising meditation should neither have attraction for pleasant objects of senses nor repulsion for unpleasant sense objects. ❧

Oh monk! Undertake no bodily activity, utter not a single word and think not a single thought; thus you will become steady. Certainly,

supreme meditation consists
in abstinence from these three-
fold activities and concentra-
tion on one's own self. ☉

Just as fire fanned by
powerful winds destroys heaps
of firewood in no time so
also the fire of meditation
destroys heaps of *karmas* in
a moment. ☉

NIRVANA (*Emancipation*)

It is not possible to describe the state of liberation as it transcends verbal expression. Nor is there the possibility of argument as no mental activity is possible. There is no pride as it is devoid of all the blemishes of the mind. Having transcended pleasure and pain even knowledge of the seventh hell does not cause melancholy. ☞

Where there is neither pain nor pleasure, neither suf-

fering nor obstacle, neither birth nor death, there is emancipation. ☸

Where there are neither sense organs, nor is there any obstruction caused by others, nor infatuation, nor surprise, nor sleep, nor thirst, nor hunger, there is emancipation. ☸

Where there is neither *Karma* nor *quasi-karma* nor worry, nor any type of thinking, such as, *Arta* (depressive), *Raudra* (violent), such as *Dharma* (virtuous) and *Shukla* (pure), there is *Nirvana*. ☸

In the emancipated souls, there are attributes like absolute knowledge, absolute bliss, absolute potentiality, absolute visic., formlessness, existence and extension. ☪

Emancipation, which is realized only by the great souls, is the state of unobstructedness, perfection, residing at the summit of the universe, well-being, goodness and freedom from obstacles. ☪

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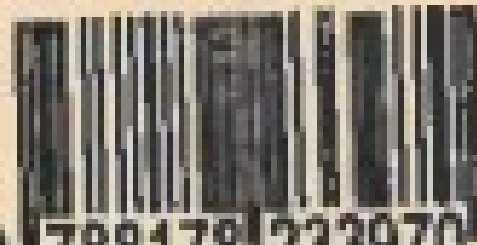
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