

## ABHINANDANSWAMI Kevaljnana Kalyanak

Posh Sud Chaudas

On this day, Jains try & do at  
least one 'mala' reciting:

**"Om Hrim  
Shri Abhinandanswami  
Sarvagnay Namah"**

### ASHARAN BHAVNA

Non - Protection from the Outside World

*Dal Bal Devi Devata, Maat Pitah Parivaar  
Martee Biriyaan Jiv Ko, Koi Na Raakhhan Haar*

At the time of death, no one can save a person,  
not even his peers, his powers, gods, goddesses.  
Or his parents, family, or friends.



Ayodhya Tirth: Abhinandanswami Prachin  
Pratima said to be 2500 years old.

# Abhinandanswami Kevaljnana Kalyanak Posh Sud Chaudas

**Abhinandan Bhagwan** is the fourth Tirthankara in the current time cycle. His parents were King Samvar and Queen Siddharti and was born in the city of Ayodhya. His symbol (lanchan) is ape/monkey. His symbolic colour is gold.

After attaining Samyak Darshan, Abhinandan took three bhavs to attain Moksha.

**Birth 1:** As King Mahabal of Manglavati/ Ratnasanchay town in Purva Mahavideh Kshetra as per Jain cosmology. Although a King, he was simple, generous, and humble person and was not attached either with his kingdom or with wealth and money. He remained humble and equanimous whether people praised or criticised him.

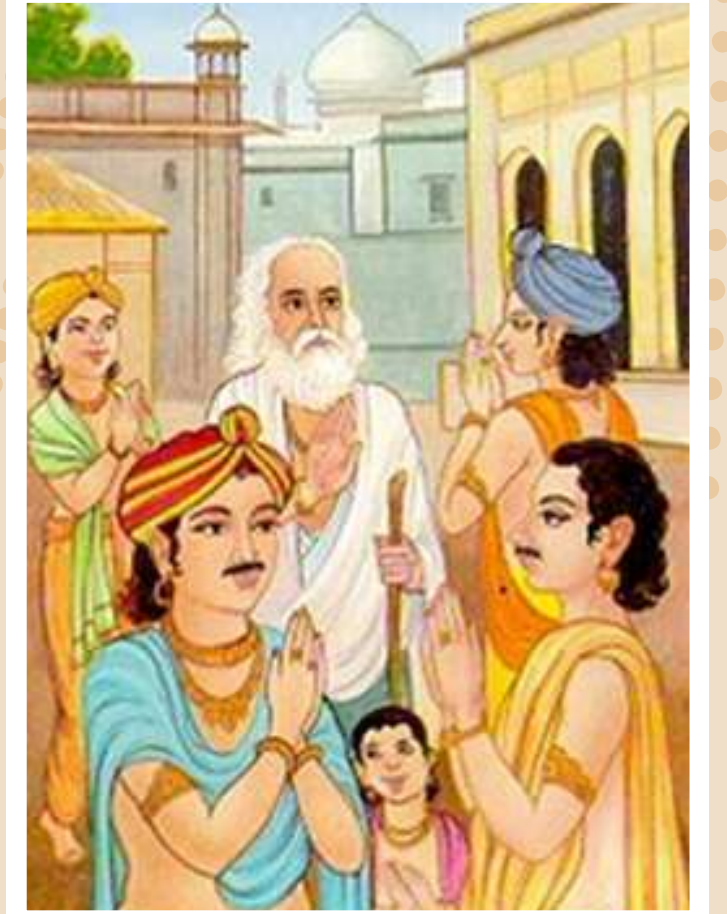
He became influenced by the sayings of Acharya Sri Vimal Chandra that "World is full of challenges and our body is mortal, human life is difficult to get and only a human can attain complete 'moksh' and this is the only time when you can try and attain salvation". After ruling for many years, he took diksha from the Acharya. As an ascetic, he was popular due to his virtuous nature and humility. He practised severe penance and meditation and as a result acquired the Tirthankara naam and gotra karma.

**Birth 2:** As a celestial being in the Vijay heaven as per Jain cosmology.

**Birth 3:** As Abhinandan Bhagwan. Whilst the Queen was pregnant, everyone in the kingdom were happy and elated, filled with feelings of humility and brotherhood. Irrespective of age, caste, creed and status everyone started greeting and honouring others. This was due to pious soul in Queen Siddharti womb. Thus, when she gave birth, after nine months, seven and one-half days, the child was named Abhinandan, which means bringing happiness.

Abhinandan succeeded his father and was King for many years. He eventually renounced the world and became an ascetic. He indulged in rigorous penance and lofty spiritual practices as an ascetic for eighteen years. One day, after fasting for two days, in Sahasramravana, under a Priyala tree, he attained Kevaljanana. His deshna (first sermon) was on **Asharan Bhavna** which is the absence of any refuge or shelter that can protect us from death and the uncertainties of life.

He had 116 Gandharas - his chief disciple was Vrajnabh. He attained Moksha at Samet Shikhar.



# ASHARAN BHAVNA

The twelve bhavnas – also referred to as anuprekshas or reflections encompass many facets of Jainism. These reflections help us to see life as it really is and awaken our inner awareness. They are spiritual tools to mediate and reflect to facilitate one's spiritual progress leading to the path of liberation.

Asharan Bhavna is one of the twelve bhavnas and deals with the feeling of helplessness. We are always trying to seek some protection, some saviour. We find comfort when somebody is leading us, taking care of us. We seek refuge in our wealth, achievements, fame, family, Gods, etc. Mental dependence is built from childhood. If the mother goes away, the baby cries. It is natural. But even in adulthood and senior age we continue. Why? Because we are constantly engulfed in a feeling of helplessness. It is easier when we have someone to hold responsible for all the unpleasant things that happen or could happen to us.



Despite advances in medical treatments, which can prolong life, death is unavoidable. We have known the experience of being totally helplessness seeing loved ones dying in pain. The money, fame, achievements, friends, relatives – none of these can come to rescue and change the inevitable.

Reflecting on Asharan Bhavna, leads one to understand that no one in this world can provide protection against suffering and death. One needs to be self-reliant. The only way one can conquer death and suffering is by destroying one's karmas and taking refuge in the true path of religion as shown by the Tirthankaras.

Sharana means refuge. Asharan means lack of refuge or helplessness. That which takes one closer to oneself, that which awakens one's consciousness, that which helps one recognize ones' infinite power, bliss and consciousness is Sharan.

Learned Jain scholars say Sharan is neither of a particular person or scripture, nor a temple or ritual; it is the refuge in four pure elements:

**Chattari Shranam Pavajami,  
Arihante Sharanam Pavajami,  
Siddhe Sharanam Pavajami,  
Sahu Saranam Pavajami,**

**I take refuge in the four entities of the universe. I take refuge in the Arihantas – those who have conquered all inner weakness; I take refuge in the Siddhas – the perfect souls; I take refuge in the Sādhus- the saints – our guides and role models through the religion; I take refuge in the religion explained by the omniscient. These are expounded by self-control, non-violence and compassion.**



# ASHARAN BHAVNA

It must be emphasised that the above four cannot prevent death, dismiss pain, old age etc but can only help in gaining understanding of truths, the path to destroy karmas. The refuge to others is due to delusion and must be avoided.

Lesson for us all is to realise that we have to find out our own course in life. We have to tread on the path by our own efforts, discrimination, and wisdom. When we are, overtaken by pain, physical or mental, no one can save us from its pangs. We are the makers of our own future and our pleasures and pains. We have to learn to bear them with equanimity and without depending on others.

## From Namuthunam Sutra

### "Saran Dayanam"

(Arihantas provide true refuge or protection of our soul)

### "Magga Dayanam"

(Arihanta shows a path of liberation of soul),

### "Abhaya Dayanam"

(when we realize our true self is ever lasting and we are not the body or mind, one becomes immortal)

### "Chakshu Dayanam"

(Arihanta provides us divine vision)

### "Bodhi Dayanam"

(Agam texts provide us powerful teachings for liberation of soul)

### "Tinnaam-Taryanam"

(Lord Mahavir and all Tirhtankars are liberated soul and have infinite compassion to liberate each soul in the universe)

if we can practice daily mediation on sutras like Namuthunam Sutra, to reflect on, all our fears and false attachments will begin to dissolve gradually and we can experience peace, happiness, and blissful state. Then every moment of our life becomes a divine sanctuary of joyful journey to Nirvana!

Extracted from a article By Pravin L Shah

POEM BY  
MARY ELLEN JOSEPH

## BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

Believing in yourself  
standing for what you believe in  
regardless of the odds against you  
and the pressure that tears at your resistance  
**MEANS COURAGE**

Keeping a smile on your face  
when from the inside you feel like dying  
for the sake of supporting others  
**MEANS STRENGTH**

Stopping at nothing  
and doing what in your heart  
you know is right  
**MEANS DETERMINATION**

Doing more than is expected  
to make another's life a little more bearable  
without uttering a single complaint  
**MEANS COMPASSION**

Helping a friend in need  
no matter the time or effort  
to the best of your ability  
**MEANS LOYALTY**

Giving more than you have  
and expecting nothing  
but gratitude in return  
**MEANS SELFLESSNESS**

Holding your head high  
and being the best you know you can be  
when life seems to fall apart at your feet  
and facing each difficulty with  
the confidence that time will bring  
you better tomorrows and never giving up  
**MEANS BELIEVING IN YOURSELF**

