



Acrostic

An acrostic is a poem or other composition in which the first letter of each line spells out a word or message. Below is an excellent example by Shreyans C Parekh, written when she was only 11 years old.

Oh Lord, guide me to
Acept Ahimsa is the highest religion
Have compassion for all living things
Instil love and tolerance in every heart
Maintain kind attitude towards everyone
Stop harming and hurting other beings
Avoid conflict and achieve inner peace



World Poetry Day

Poetry is an amazing art form, a linguistic feat. Poetry rhymes, charms, delights, and surprises the reader as well as induce curiosity, inspire awe, and pulls one's heart strings. Poems capture all the complexities and paradoxes of the world through words.

The oldest written works on Earth are all present in some poetic form. The style is believed to have aided memorisation and oral transmission. Since time immemorial humans have expressed their deepest emotions through the medium of poetry. Poetry has influenced our stories, pervaded our culture, and conquered our hearts.

Poets paint fantastical ideas on the canvas of imagination with their delightful & brilliant wordplay. A poem can be joyful, powerful, sad, bitter, sweet, lustful, romantic, melancholic or anything the poet's imagination wants it to be. Poetry stops life being dull and dreary.

There are many different types and formats of poetry. Blessed are those who have this gift from God to write something so profound in a few words that can result in thousands of words trying to fathom its meaning.

Jain sutras, stutis, strotras, stavans, stories like Ramyana, Mahabrarata are in a poetic form. Just consider how many books have been written about the 344 sutras of the Tattvartha Sutra and how profound the first sutra is:

Samyag – darsana – jnana – caritrani moksmargah . . .1.1
 Right perception, right knowledge and right conduct
 constitute the path of liberation.



THE JAIN BIRD HOSPITAL IN DELHI



To this small, gentle order of monks and nuns
it is bright Vishnu and dark Shiva who are illusion.

They trust in faith, cognition, and nonviolence
to release them from rebirth. They think that birds
and animals—like us, some predators, some prey—
should be ministered to no less than men and women.

The Jains who deal with creatures (and with laymen)
wear white, while their more enterprising hermit brothers
walk naked and are called the sky-clad. Jains pray
to no deity, human kindness being their sole illusion.
Mahavira and those twenty-three other airy creatures
who turned to saints with him, preached the doctrine of ahimsa

which in our belligerent tongue becomes nonviolence.
It's not a doctrine congenial to snarers and poultrymen,
who every day bring to market maimed pheasants.
Numbers of these are brought in by the Jain brothers
and brought, to grow back wing-tips and illusions,
to one of the hospitals succoring such small quarry.

When strong and feathered again, the lucky victims
get reborn on Sunday mornings to the world's violence,
released from the roofs of these temples to illusion.
It is hard for a westerner to speak about men and women
like these, who call the birds of the air brothers.
We recall the embarrassed fanfare for Francis and his flock.

**The above are some verses from poem –
“The Jain Bird Hospital in Delhi”
written by British Poet William Meredith (1919 -2007)**



CIDANANDA

Cidananda – real name Karpura
Candra was born in the middle
of the 19th century. Not much
is known about his life, but it is
said that once he went on
pilgrimage with a Jaina devotee
from Bhavnagar in Saurashtra
to Girnar and from there he
disappeared. His poetry shows
his profound knowledge not
only of Jain religion and
philosophy, but also of other
faiths and schools of
philosophy. Scholars state that
his ‘verses are direct, full of
rhythm, and excel in poetic
vision and beauty.’

Jain Poets & Poetry

None showeth the right way;
Each praises his own whosoever ye ask
But each looks from one angle
to establish his own viewpoint.
As it not viewed from all facets
This becomes a froth.

The Vedantist speaks of the Brahman
Believing him to be the only reality.

The Mimansaka speaks of the Karma
Which arises at one's own doings.

Says the Buddhist, the Buddha has shown,
The transitoriness of everything.

While the Naiyaika has the notion of a Creator,
To a Carvaka it's all a dream,

And to others it is all void,
And then they have other differences.

Thus each extols his own viewpoint
And none takes an all-pervasive view of reality,
Still calling himself the Omniscient.

Says Cidananda, only the seeker can find
The Right Way shown by the Jina.

Translation by KC Lalwani



Jain Poets & Poetry

Illusion in this world –
Who hath known this knows the Real,
All the pleasures of this body,
Riches and youth
Are but transient
Like the floating clouds
All are transitory
Like the decomposing frame of an ox,
Says Cidananda.
Have no affection for anything
Right preceptor has shown the way.

Ham to kabahun na nij ghar aye,
Par ghar phirat bahut din bite,
nam anek dharaye

I have never been home
have spent a long time in other's home
have had many names

By Daulatramji – Author of Chha Dhaalaa
which we have just started studying.

Neither Digamber or Shevtamber
Or Terapanthi or Sthanakvasi
We follow one path and believe in one Lord
We're Jain and our dharma is Jainism.
That is enough to introduce ourselves.

By Ravindra Jain

Meri Bhavana, which many people will be familiar with, was composed by Pandit Jugal Kishore Mukhtar. It has a collection of eleven verses of 4 lines each in simple and easy to understand in Hindi language. Below are two of my favourite verses.

Ahañkāra kā bhāva na rakkhu nahī kiśī para krodha karūñ
Dekha dusro kī bathtī ko kabhi na īrṣā bhāva dharūñ
Rahe bhāvanā eśī merī sarala satya vyavahāra karūñ
Bane jahā taka esa jīvana meñ auro kā upakāra karūñ

May I never a feeling of ego / pride nor get angry with anyone; May I never feel envious /jealous on seeing the progress of anyone; May I develop a balance, straight and simple, fair and honest feeling towards all; may I be good in my behaviour towards all to the utmost level of my capabilities.

Koi būrā kaho yā ācchā lakṣami āve yā jāve
Lākho varṣo taka jiuñ yā mṛtyū āja hī ājāve
Athavā koī kaisa bhi bhaya yā lālaca dene āve
To bhī nyāya mārگا se merā kabhī na paga digane pāve.

Whether people speak good or ill of me or the wealth comes to me or leaves me; whether I live for thousands of years or die even today; whether anyone allures me with worldly riches or scares me in any way; I pray that I do not leave the path of just in any of these situations.

Translation By Shugan C Jain

