



KALPA SUTRA

The Kalpa Sutra is among the most revered books of the Shvetambara Jains, as well as the most ancient. Attributed to Acharya Bhadrabahu who lived during the fourth century B.C., the text represents a section of the Jain canon. It is actually the eighth chapter of a larger canonical work, the Dasha-Shruta-Skanda and is known by one of the two titles: Pajjosavana Kalpa or Pajjosamana Kalpa. The term pajjosavana in the first title can be equated with paryushana which in Jain literature signifies the spending of four months of the rainy season in one place. In this context the word paryushana has a wider connotation than when used to denote the well known eight day spiritual

festival which is celebrated in the month of Bhadrapada (August-September). The word pajjosamana from the second title can be equated with paryushana-samana, which implies forgiveness. The term kalpa denotes conduct, "right behaviour" or prescribed rules. Thus this chapter, when referred to as Pajjosavana Kalpa means "conduct appropriate during the period of rain-rest" and when called the Pajjosamana Kalpa, indicates "conduct governed by forgiveness". Both titles are closely related and when designated as the Kalpa Sutra indicate a treatise concerned with the correct forgiving conduct that is followed by the ordained monks and nuns during the rainy season- from the day of the full moon in the month of Ashadha to the same day in the

month of Kartika.



Shrut-Kevali Bhadrabahu Swami who lived about a 100 years after the Nirvan of Bhagwan Mahavir composed the Kalpasutra. Bhadrabahu Swami composed this in Ardha-Magadhi language. (He was the last Acharya who had knowledge of all 14 purvas. He was disciple of Sudharma Swami, who was disciple of Jambu swami, who was disciple of Mahavir Swami).

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For centuries, Kalpasutra was preserved in memory. It was passed orally from one generation to the next. About the middle of the 5th century A.D., the Vallabhi Council was held for the purpose of putting into writing the Jain Sacred books. An important accomplishment of that Council was the completion of the Kalpasutra.

Kalpa means an activity/Aachar, which enhances – Religious knowledge (Jnan) ; Conduct (Charitra) ; Self Control (Penance of Tap). Kalpa Sutra is a scripture which describes how to enhance our Jnan, Charitra and Tap.

Kalpasutra has been divided into three sections:-

Tirthankar Charitra-The biographical sketches of the Tirthankars.

1. 24th Mahavir swami – detailed life story including description of all 27 previous lives.
2. 23rd Parshavanath
3. 22nd Nemi-nath
4. 1st Rushabdev (Adinath)

Sthaviravali-The profiles and chronological lineage of Acharayas who headed the Jain Sangh.

1. Ganadhara charitra (conduct of deciples)
2. Jambu Swami (Disciple of Mahavir Swami)
3. Bhadrabahu swami (Last Shrut Kevali who possessed knowledge of 12th Anga - Drashtiwad)
4. Stulibhadra (Jain Acharya)

Samachari- This the last section and contains the rules of conduct for the ascetics especially during the rainy season (Paryushan) and otherwise.

1. Rules of staying during monsoon (vashavas kalpa) (No vihar starting Ashadh Chaturdeshi until Kartik Purnima (Dev Diwali)
2. Rules of Gochari (Bhikshachar Kalpa)
3. Rules for removal of hair (keshlocha kalpa)
4. Forgiveness (kshamapna)

Kalpa Sutra has 1216 verses (therefore called barsa sutra – 1200 sutras) recited on the last day of Paryushan Parva. Barsa Sutra is basically a summary of the Kalpa Sutra.

Some commentators narrate the following historical incident to explain the beginning of this tradition of reading and reciting the Kalpasutra during the

Paryushan Parva:-

“About 1500 years back, a king named Dhruvasen ruled over the town of Anandpur. He had complete faith in the tenets of Jainism and was a righteous person. It so happened that his only son died during the Paryushan days. In order to disperse the dense fog of sorrow choking the King and his family. A Jain Acharya recited the Kalpasutra before a congregation of the members of the family and public. This alleviated the sorrow of the royal family.”

This was the beginning of the tradition of the public recital of the Kalpasutra. It is considered very auspicious to listen to the Kalpa Sutra readings during the Paryushan





द्वारा
द्वारा
सुद
वि
द्वारा
णा
दा

तदासु
गारास
गाचन
द्वारासु
रिक्तस
गसदा
गागसे



Renunciation of Mahavira

Folios from a Kalpa Sutra manuscript circa 1500

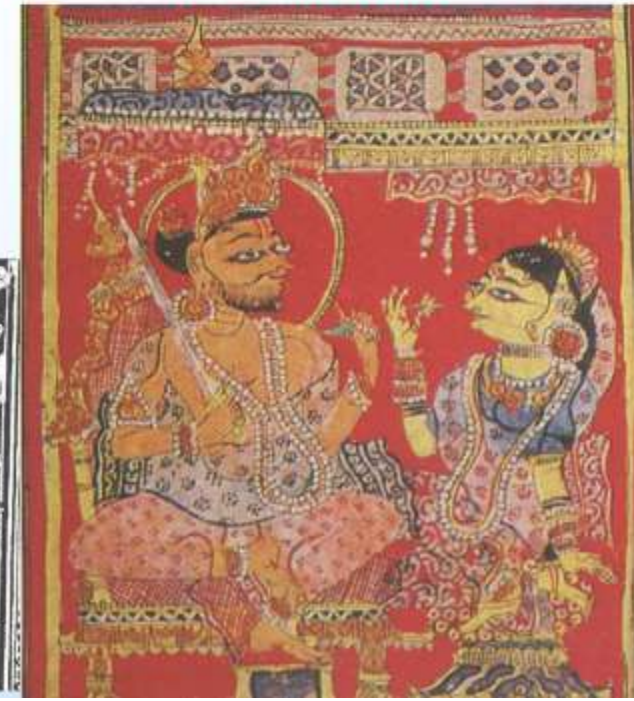
CHARACTERISTICS FEATURES OF JAIN PAINTING.

The Kalpa Sutra is the most frequently reproduced and profusely illustrated text of Shvetambara Jains. Hundreds of Kalpa Sutra manuscripts were prepared between the 12th and 20th centuries and kept in Shastra-Bhandaras.

Some of these manuscripts were embellished with miniatures and the more sumptuous ones were adorned with border decorations. Certain manuscripts were written with gold and silver inks. The illustrations in these manuscripts are mostly in the style of Western Indian painting - having pointed noses, double chins and a farther eye projecting in space against a red background.

These are the prominent characteristics features of Jain painting

Folio from Kalpa Sutra 1550AD



A folio from the manuscript of Kalpasutra and the Kalakacharya Katha - which deals with stories from the life of Kalaka



By Kishor Bhimji Shah



CHANDAKAUSHIKA BITES LORD, BUT LORD ENLIGHTENS HIM

Once when some shepherds saw Lord Mahavir entering the forest they warned him “Do not go that way as you will be burnt to ashes by the terrible cobra who lives along this path. It has already killed many innocent travellers”. Lord Mahavir heard this warning but knew about this cobra. In his previous life it had lived as a Jain Monk named Chandakaushika who had died in a fit of anger and was reborn as a cobra. The cobra eyes emitted venom and anything coming within the sphere of his vision succumbed to his deadly poison. Lord Mahavir knew all this by his divine knowledge and in order to enlighten the cobra by his universal love and compassion he entered the forest and stood motionless in deep meditation by the place where the cobra resided. After some time the cobra came out of his snake hole hissing fiercely. It looked at Lord Mahavir with his venomous red eyes. Its poisonous eyes emitted waves of venom and it hissed awesomely. But all this had no effect on Lord Mahavir, who stood motionless and unperturbed. Blind with rage the cobra bit him on the toe. A plume of blood spurted forth but the cobra was astonished to see that it was not red, it was white like milk, the symbol of Lord Mahavir’s love and compassion for all living beings, including this hateful cobra. Lord Mahavir cast a gentle glance and said “O’ Chandakaushika! open your inner eyes. Be calm and remember your past life. Give up your rage and hatred-they are only harming you and destroying your true nature. Be peaceful and realise the truth”. Upon hearing these words a wave of peace and tranquillity engulfed the cobra’s inner self. He remembered his fateful past and repenting sincerely for the past sins, he renounced violence and Chandakaushika was freed from his hatred. The cobra hid away from sight and silently took the last vow-fast unto death. After fifteen days he died. The soul who had once lived as a Jain Monk Chandakaushika and who had later preyed upon the innocent as a cobra was reborn as a Godly being in the heavenly realm.

