



## **NEMINATH**

### **Chavan Kalyanak**

### **Aaso Vad Baras**

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

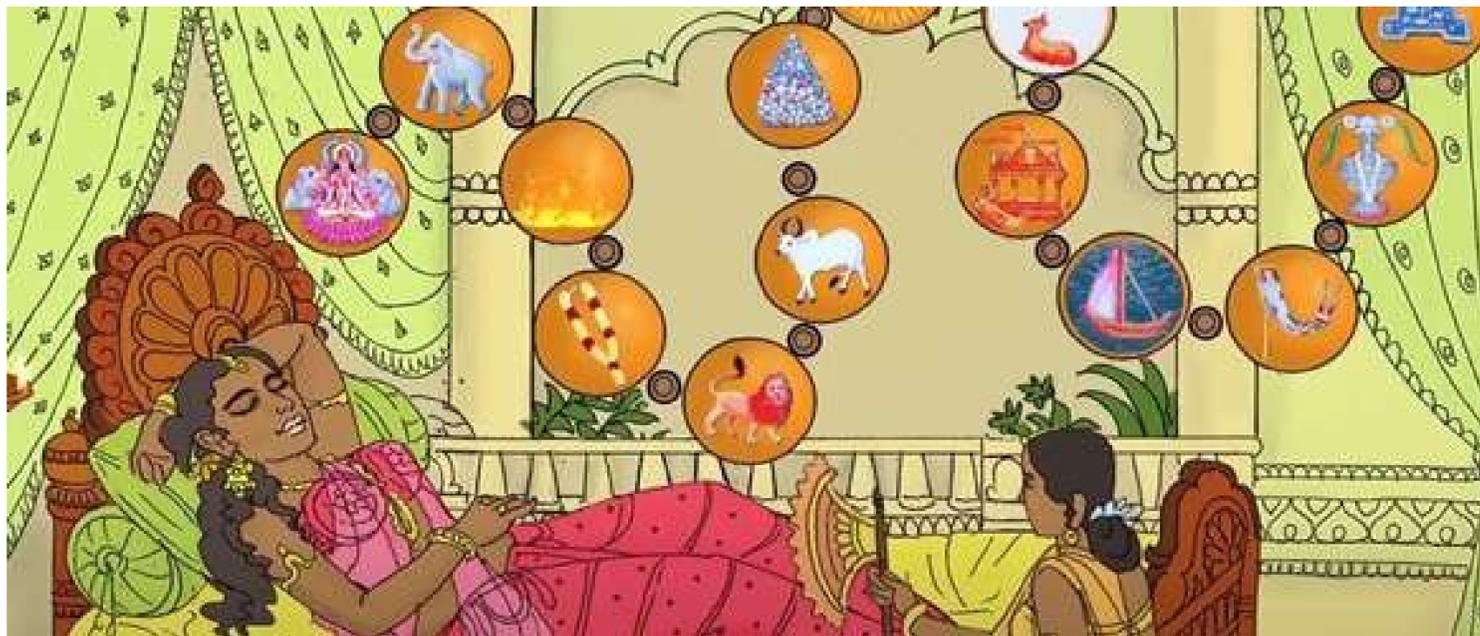
**“Om Hrim Shri Neminath  
Parmeshthine Namah”**

A person is non-violent in whose heart  
kindness and compassion abide.

“The essence of the knowledge of an enlightened man is that  
he does cause violence to any creature. A man becomes an  
*Ahimsak* or a non-violent person by acting thus”



## NEMINATH CHAVAN KALYANAK - AASO VAD BARAS



### Chavan (Conception) Kalyanak

The event when the Tirthankara's atma (soul) departs from its last life, and is conceived in the mother's womb. After the Tirthankara soul is conceived, the mother witness fourteen ( as per Shvetambars) auspicious objects in her dreams.

Neminath Bhagwan is the twenty-second Tirthankara of the present time cycle.

Neminath's symbol (Lanchan) is conch (shankh) and his symbolic colour is said to be blue or black. Ambika Devi is said to be the dedicated deity (Shasan Devi) of Neminath Bhagwan.

Neminath Bhagwan, born in the city of Sauripur, Gujarat.

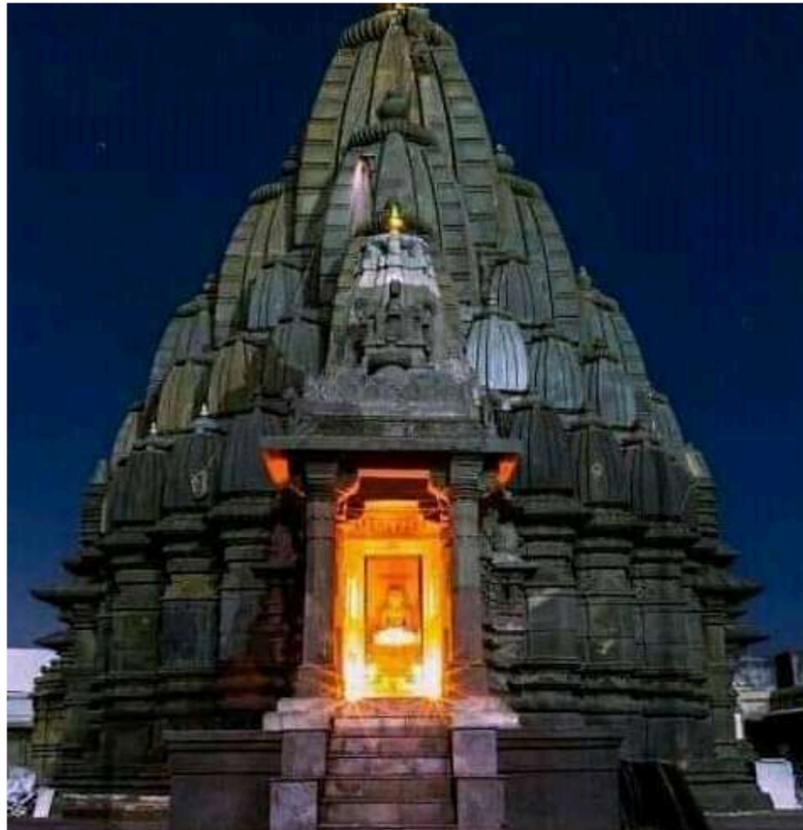
Parents: King Samudravijay and Queen Shivadevi of the Yadav clan. King Samudravijay was the eldest brother of all 10 brothers. His youngest brother was Vasudev, the father of Lord Krishna. Thus, both Lord Krishna and Lord Neminath Bhagwan were first cousins.

When Queen Shivadevi conceived, she saw fourteen dreams. 1. The Elephant, 2. The Bull, 3. The Lion, 4. Goddess Lakshmi, 5. Garland of Flowers, 6. The Moon, 7. The Sun, 8. The Flag, 9. Kumbh, 10. Lotus Lake, 11. Sea of Milk, 12. Vehicle of Devas, 13. Precious Gems, 14. Fire without Smoke. These dreams augured the birth of a great person – A Tirthankara. On this auspicious day, Neminath soul completed its lifespan as a celestial being in its eight birth and was conceived in the womb of Queen Shivadevi

Whilst pregnant, Queen Shivadevi had seen 'ristanemi' – 'part of gemstone (rista) wheel'. After his birth, his parents named him as Arishtnemi – 'A' was added to avoid any ill-effects. He was also known as Nemi Kumar.



# NEMINATH CHAVAN KALYANAK



## PAST LIVES



Jain tradition states that after attaining Samyak Darshan, Neminath's soul took birth nine times to attain Moksha. Of these nine births, five were as a human being and four were that of a celestial being. In each of these nine lives, there is an incredible underlying story of the deep affection and love of Rajimati (also known as Rajul, Rajulakumari, Rajamati) for Neminath Bhagwan.

### Previous Births:

**Birth 1:** As Prince Dhanpati. When Prince Dhanpati was in the womb, his mother had a dream showing a mango tree planted in nine different places. When she enquired about the significance of this dream, she was told the child in her womb would take births for the next nine lives, each better than the previous one.

Prince Dhanpati married Princess Dhanvati

**Birth 2, 4, 6 & 8 :** As celestial beings.

**Birth 3:** Vidyadhar Chitragati and Princess Ratnavati

**Birth 5:** King Aparajit and Queen Pritimati.

**Birth 7:** King Shankh and Queen Yashomati. Shankh was the eldest son of King Shristen of Hastinapur, and grew up to be an accomplished diplomat and strategist. According to Jain tradition, one day, whilst out, he heard the cry of help of a young princesses abducted by a Vidyadhar (a minor God). Shankh fought and defeated the Vidyadhar and saved Princesses Yashomati. Upon seeing each other, they fell in love and got married. Shankh eventually ascended the throne to become King Shankh.

King Shankh asked a scholarly ascetic, "Why am I so deeply in love with Yashomati that all my desires to renounce come to a naught." The ascetic said, "Your marital ties are many a life-time deep. For last six lives you are being married to each other, this is the seventh birth. That is the reason for such intense and deep feeling of love for each other."

The king asked, "When will these ties will be broken?" The ascetic replied "In your ninth incarnation you will be born as Neminath and she as Rajimati. In that birth you will be able to break this tie of love and become twenty second Tirthankar. Rajimati will also follow you on the path of renunciation and get liberated."

With this knowledge, he relinquished his kingdom and became an ascetic. Due to his penances and devotional worship as an ascetic, he acquired the Tirthankara-naam-gotra karma.

**Birth 9:** as Neminath Bhagwan, born in the city of Sauripur, Gujarat.

## NEMINATH CHAVAN KALYANAK

Like Lord Krishna, Neminath was of dark complexion, handsome and charming. However, he was introvert and growing up, was completely dispassionate about worldly relations and pleasures. He stayed more introspective as he was inclined towards spiritual life.

As a young man, after much persuasion, he agreed to be married to Princess Rajimati. Most Jains will be familiar with the story of his wedding procession during which he hears frightful shrieks and crying sounds. He asked his charioteer, "Where are these sounds coming from?" The charioteer replied, "Dev! These are the screams of the livestock. They will become the food of the people attending your marriage. They will be slaughtered. They are crying and wailing due to the fear of death."

Shocked and repulsed by this, he feels deep compassion for the lives of the animals and orders them to be released immediately. He states *"as these animals were prisoners in the cages, we all are prisoners in cages of karma which are much stronger than these fences. See the feeling of joy evident in the animals freed. Know that happiness is in freedom, not in bondage. I want to tread the path of breaking this bondage of karma – of birth and death and embrace eternal bliss."*

The karuna flowing in his heart could not bear the cries of these helpless animals and he decided to call off his wedding and follow the life of an ascetic – a very striking example of live and let live.

Neminath called off the wedding, sacrificed the pleasures of married life and material life and renounced the world and become a Jain ascetic. So this was compassion, but compassion with personal sacrifice.



### WEDDING PROCESSION OF NEMINATH.

The painting depicts Neminath wedding procession, showing Neminath mounted on an elephant, many people watching the procession, with streets decorated and music being played. The foreground of the painting shows enclosure with screaming animals. On the top left, the painting shows Neminath as a Monk, standing in a meditative pose.

Source - Painting: Art of Enlightenment



BY KISHOR B SHAH

## NEMINATH CHAVAN KALYANAK -AASO VAD BARAS



This event in the life of Neminath Bhagwan teaches us to do our utmost to avoid harming any living being. From our Pratikraman ritual, we will be familiar that first amongst the 18 sinful acts is the vow of Pranatipat – the killing of any living being. Similarly, the importance of compassion – Karuna Bhav is highlighted as a means of salvation from the cycle of birth and death.

After taking diksha, Neminath lived an ascetic life, strictly observing the five rules of conducts (Samitis) and three rules of avoidance of misconduct (Guptis). He spent 54 days as Chadmashth (i.e. before he got enlightened i.e. attained Keval Gyan) wandering from place to place. Finally, having undertaken a vow of 3 consecutive fasts – Attham tap – standing in kayotsarg dhyana, under the Vaitas tree in the Sahasamra forest, Girnar, he eradicated all his Ghati karmas and attained kevaljnana.

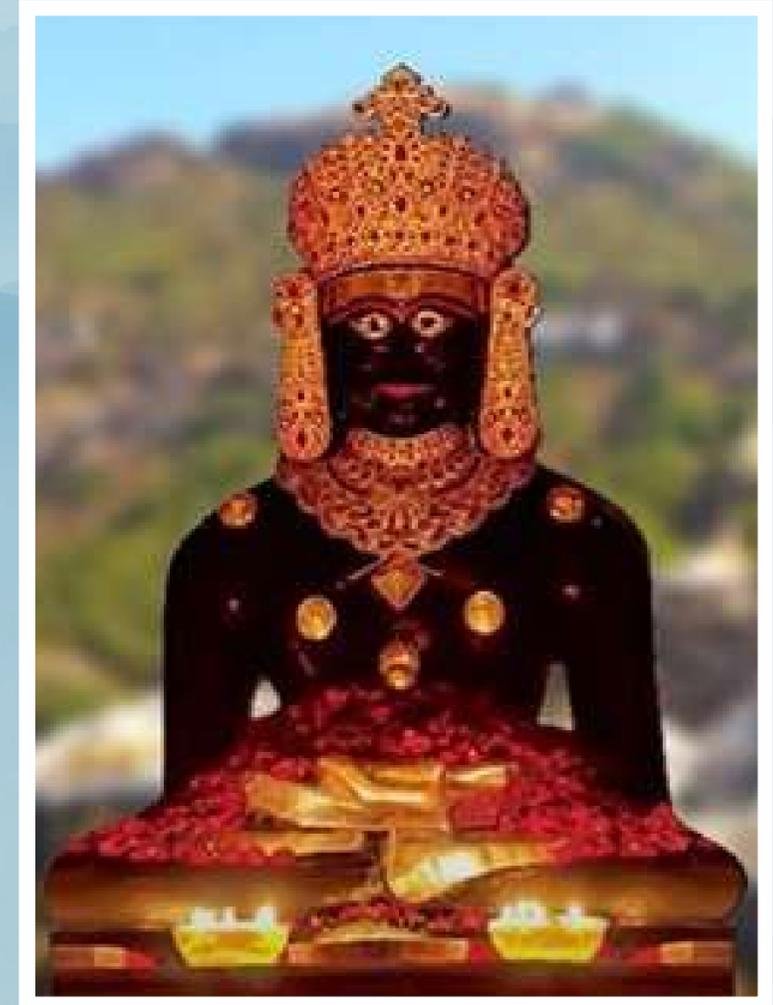
He had 11 Gandharas, three of which were in his past nine lives, either as friends, brothers or ministers.

The topic of his first sermon (deshna) was on Abhakshya (alcohol & non-vegetarian food) Tyag – (to give up). During the time of Neminath Bhagwan, due to his sermons, the idea of eating food without harming other living creatures blossomed among the Jain community i.e. the idea of vegetarianism (the term was not known then) was spread across the Jain community.

Princess Rajimati also took diksha and became a Sadhvi, and is said to have attained moksha even before Neminath Bhagwan.

Neminath Bhagwan is said to have lived for 1000 years. Took diksha at the age of 300 and therefore spent 70% of his for the salvation of the world. He attained moksha on Mount Girnar.

The life of Neminath Bhagwan teaches us to do our utmost to avoid harming any living being. Similarly, the importance of compassion – Karuna Bhav is highlighted as a means of salvation from the cycle of birth and death.



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