

Exploring the Depths of Jain Mysticism: Paths to Liberation & Spiritual Insight

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Author:

Dr. Tayyaba Razzaq

*Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies,
Emerson University, Multan*

Email: tayyaba.razzaq@eum.edu.pk

Abstract

Jain mysticism, an integral facet of Jain philosophy and spirituality, delves deeply into the metaphysical and ethical dimensions of existence. Rooted in ancient Indian traditions, Jainism emphasizes non-violence, truth, non-possessiveness, and asceticism as pathways to liberation from the cycle of rebirths. Central to Jain mysticism is the concept of *jiva* (soul), which seeks purification from accumulated karma through rigorous ascetic practices and profound introspection. Key principles such as *Anekantavada* (Non-Absolutism) and *Syadvada* (Doctrine of Conditional Predication) guide adherents towards a holistic understanding of reality and truth. Through meditation, contemplation, and the study of sacred texts, Jain mystics strive for spiritual insights and the ultimate goal of *moksha* (liberation). Jain mysticism's enduring legacy lies in its influence on Indian spirituality and its universal teachings of compassion, ethical living, and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment. The purpose of this study is to provide profound path towards Jain spiritual enlightenment, proven based on discipline. This research explored Jain “*Tirthankaras*, their approaches’ of mystical realization and liberation in practice through Pilgrims etc. Descriptive methodology has been adopted with relevant references of Jain Teachings.

Keywords: Mysticism', *Jiva*, *Tirthankaras*, Asceticism, *Moksha*

Introduction of Jain Mysticism

Jain means ‘the conqueror’. The conqueror or victorious over all worldly needs emotions and wishes. Jain mysticism, rooted deeply in the ancient Indian tradition of Jainism, offers a profound exploration into the spiritual dimensions of existence. At its core, Jainism emphasizes non-violence (*ahimsa*), truth (*satya*), non-possessiveness (*aparigraha*), and asceticism (*sanyasa*), guiding adherents towards liberation from the cycle of rebirths (*samsara*). This is a religion based on non-violence and personal efforts to progress the soul towards the divine consciousness. In Jainism morality, practices for monastic monks, nuns and public separately. Main teachings of *Mahavira* ‘the spiritual leader of Jainism’ are summed up in five terrific vows; non-violence, non-stealing, non-laying, sexual purity and non-possession”.¹

In their basic believes they are proud of possession to be follower of king *Zenana*,²who was famous for his purity. Their major teaching consists of ethics. Although ethical values are very important in human life but in their many believes, there is greatest severity on violating ethical conduct. According to Mahavira the actual destination of a Jain is *nirvana*.

To achieve the level of *Nirvana*; there are 3 methods to apply. First is the right and accurate believes, second is right knowledge and third is the right action. Jains have believed in soul exists in all animal, plants, human beings. Every creature has soul that is valuable and should be respected. Spiritual purification can achieve only by excluding ambiguity all Karma from the soul. Classical Jain

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believed in to maintain karma. There is association of both karma and soul described as “*ekaksetravagaha*” or “occupying the same locus.”³Karma is the result and reward of previous life. It occupies the soul.⁴The *āsrava* ‘fundamental reality of the world’ is passing through karma as karma is attraction of soul by appealing activities of mind, deliverance and body.⁵Adultery is accounted one of the most heinous sins, equivalent to taking life (*Jiva Himsa*) and the layman or the monk who breaks the vow of chastity is held to have broken all his vows. Every sin of impurity whether it is lies in thought , words, or deed, must be confessed to ones director (Guru) as soon as possible and the penance imposed by him performed. The usual penalty for unchastely is for a monk nothing short of expulsion from the other, and he must undergo long fasting before he can hope to obtain preordination. A layman guilty of impurity is held to have slipped back on the ladder of rebirth and fallen below the stage not only of being a jain but even of being human, and he must observe the strictest fast with the idea of torturing the body which led him to commit such crimes before he can win back again the birth right which he has forfeited. If the sin not repented of confessed, the most hideous torments await the offender in future rebirth as a hell-being.⁶The worst fault that a man can commit is to eat meat, if this were done open and persistently, he would be put out of caste absolutely and never be allowed to eat with his equals again. If however it were done accidentally and repented of, the offender would confess it and have to observe very strict fasts before he would be regarded as purified. The rule is the same for drunkenness.⁷

Birth impurity (*vrddhi sutaka*), death defilements (*mrtyu-sutaka*), touching any outcaste also cause all conditions are of physical impurity. In Jainism ‘*Brahmcharya Pratima*’ is a custom for a devout layman to observe celibacy before any of the great Jain festivals or fasts, before going on pilgrimage, and for twenty days of every month, as he advances in holiness.⁸ With regard to ritual purity and purification the Jain themselves says that they have borrowed their rituals from Hindus (Brahmins). A jain is always most anxious to maintain ceremonial purity , for only when a state of ritual holiness can he go to temple or monastery, or perform any of his religious duties, such as meditation, adoration, or reading the sacred book ; but ceremonial pollution is very difficult to avoid, accruing, as it does, I so many minor ways.⁹

Mystical Realization and Liberation

Jain mysticism culminates in the ultimate goal of achieving moksha, liberation from the cycle of birth and death. This liberation is attained through shedding all karma, achieving perfect knowledge (*kevala jnana*), and residing eternally in a state of pure consciousness.

Mahvira had given practical right conduct is two folds: 1st less rigid for householders and 2nd strictly austere, the direct cause of liberation, to be persuaded by ascetics and saints.¹⁰The 1st one, above mentioned class has to observe five vows of *Ahimsa* (non-injury), *Satya* (truthfulness), *Acourya* (non-theft), *Brahmacarya* (chastity) and *Aprigraha* (non-attachment).¹¹ Then he gradually improves his observances of the vows, step by step, through what was technically known as *pratimas*, till he also becomes a saint a (*Sramana*). These pratimas are eleven in numbers and mark the spiritual progress made by the soul from time to time and signify the improvement made in the next step from the preceding one.¹²There are four levels for spiritual purification in Jainism, Impermanence of material life, none sheltering, separate from material body and meditation in solitary.¹³In Jainism, adultery is accounted one of the most heinous misdeeds, equivalent to taking life (*Jiva Himsa*). A layman or the monk who breaks the vow of chastity is held to have broken all his vows. Every misdeed’ whether it

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is lies in thought, words or deed, must be confessed in front of guru as soon as possible. The penance imposed by him would perform. The usual penalty for unchastely is for a monk nothing short of expulsion from the other, and he must undergo long fasting before he can hope to obtain preordination. A layman guilty of impurity is held to have slipped back on the ladder of rebirth and fallen below the stage not only of being a jain but even of being human, and he must observe the strictest fast with the idea of torturing the body which led him to commit such crimes before he can win back again the birth right which he has forfeited. If the sin not repented of confessed, the most hideous torments await the offender in future rebirth as a hell-being.¹⁴

The worst fault that a man can commit is to eat meat, if this were done open and persistently, he would be put out of caste absolutely and never be allowed to eat with his equals again. If however it were done accidentally and repented of, the offender would confess it to hos director and have to observe very strict fasts before he would be regarded as purified. The rule is the same for drunkenness'.¹⁵

According to Jainism we are deeply attached to our physical body and so profound and deep in accepting that body and soul are same. When knowledge about separation of the body and soul awakens, spirituality steps in. Personality feature memory, imagination and thinking are mechanical while sentiments are related to soul.

In worship in its simplest form; have a group of persons trying as a group to get into relationship with God."¹⁶Worship may be of several kinds even within the same religion like co-operate worship (Congregational) and individual or personal prayer, elaborate and complicated rituals to release spontaneous confidential devotion.¹⁷ Jains sing their religious hymns at their temples where the image of *Tirthankaras* is placed in center, made of white alabaster to depict purified state. This image is regularly washed and adorned to the accompanied of songs and offering.¹⁸

Jainism has also the same pattern of prayers and almost purpose is also same. One must worship the God, serve the Guru, study the scriptures, control the senses, perform austerities and give alms.¹⁹In daily routine Jains wakes up early' with counter beads, folded hands, bows into the four directions and says; 'I bow to the "*arhats, siddhas, dcharyas, upddhydyas, and all sddhus*" in the world'. They worship for forty-eight minutes three times a day, and fasting. In the monastery there is confession of sin, and acceptance of a penance given by the director to get rid of Karma. "*Svetambara*" Jains daily visit the temple, after seven o'clock in the morning. Having bathed and put on freshly-washed clothes, put a saffron mark on brows and a sacred thread round his waist only during worship, he proceeds to the temple and walks three times around it. During this walk they meditate on three jewels of right knowledge, faith and conduct.²⁰*Digambara* is morning worship of Jains. Across the way from these shrines is a little temple of the *Digambara* sect, which has lately been restored through the zeal of the Bombay Provincial Association of *Digambara* Jaina. Through the courtesy of their representative in A'bu, followers are being permitted to watch their morning and evening worship. Two steep flights of steps lead to the temple court, in the center of which is a shrine of *A'dinatha*, and round the court are windowless cells, built for the occupation of visiting monks, nuns and pilgrims. There is an additional room with five or six separate hearths which serves as a kitchen. We arrived about 8 A. M., and found the Jaina Pujari taking an early cup of tea before beginning his work. After removing our shoes, we were allowed to stand on the floor before the door of the temple during the worship, which lasted about an hour and a half, and which consisted in cleansing the idols, marking them and

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offering rice. In the main circle of the temple, or *Rariga Mandapa* were two figures of *A'dinatha* and two of *Mahavira*.²¹

Ceremonial s in Jainism

Jainism is the religion believed in no god as a supreme reality. Only good works, are collect like a deposit on the soul, make it light and rise upwards towards the reward. Bad deeds form a heavy deposit on soul and tied it to the material world in the endless cycle of existence.²²“*Ahmisa*” is to do respect of all creature in the universe. Jain monks are used to walk about in white cloth on their mouth to atop inhaling insects. They make vows not to kill, not to speak untruth, not to steal, to practice continence and to renounce pleasure in all outside things. They do not engage in butchering, fishing and any such profession that need to kill any living creature. They keep limited possessions. They do not cheat and lie with each other. Meditate regularly or on daily basis. . Austerities (tapas) practices are for all Jains to abstain from intoxicants, meat, intoxicated drinks, gambling, hunting and adultery. *Svetambaras* (white-clad) and *Digambaras* (sky-clad) are two main sects with some different rituals. *Digambaras* sect believed that as Mahavira went about naked so Nirvana cannot gain with clothing as *Svetambaras* have practiced. On important ritual for worshipper is to wash *Tirthankara* images. After removal of jewels, old flowers, it is washed with water, milk and five nectars and marked with liquid saffron in fourteen places of the body. Offering of rice (*aksata puja*) is made on a table in the shape of a crescent, in three heaps (three Jewels of religion) and *swastika*. “*Bhavapuja*” is the most important spiritual worship. He prostrates thrice in front of figure and remembers the honor, integrity of the *Tirthankara* by singing. On their return they utter the word “*Avassahi*”, with bowed hands towards the image.²³

Fasting is a common ritual to be observed by most of the religions of the world. It has been an almost universal practice of human race from early times.²⁴ Fasting controls passion and emotions. It is the state of repentance of sins. Keeping fast can purify entire body system. A person becomes purer by repeated fasting.²⁵The four of the full moons are special fast days in Jainism.

Jain Festive

The birthday of Mahavira is celebrated in temples. Special practices have been performed at this occasion. After the completion of the fast (*Pajyusana*) in monsoon season this birth day is celebrated. On the last day of *Pajyusana*, a very fast is observed. Processions held publically. Hymns are sung all night till the return to the Temple. *Divali* is also celebrated in Jainism as they say that The Jains say it originated with Mahavira, and on the third day of the festival he attained salvation.

The Jain temples are filled with the images beyond this world as they believed in. The use of images in worship is justified from the example and inspiration they inspired by The Lord in a Jaina temple, the mind will become filled routinely with a sentiment of renunciation. The thoughts are purified via meditation and worship of the *Tirthankaras*. Images of the *Tirthankaras* makes one to enjoy the pleasures of heaven after death and prepare for Nirvana'.²⁶Most Jaina temple contains images of *Tirthankar* that are meaning to serve as example of the liberated state. I practice these images, as well as those of Hindu deities, are worshipped in the hope of divine response. *Hanuman* is worshipped as Great Hero (Mahavira) at many village shrines; pictures of him in an attitude of devotion before the glorified some of these images filled the temple of Gujarat and Rajhistan and the colossal statues at Sravana Belogala in Karnataka.²⁷

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The Jainas regard their images as remembrances; by seeing the image of their *Tirthankaras*, whom they believe to be historical personage they call to their mind their Nobel lives, excellent deeds, their lofty preaching's, their high ideals; and to their memory they offers various articles of worship in token of reverences. The object of worship to hypothetical being such as the *Yakasas* and *Yaksinis* with four faces, eight arms or with other abnormalities and with a strange vehicles, they are relegated to the sphere of idolatry.²⁸ The image of *Tirthankaras* is placed in center, made of white alabaster to depict purified state. This image is regularly washed and adorned to the accompanied of songs and offerings. The image of *Tirthankaras* in temple is often surrounded by smaller images of other twenty three *Jinas*. Another sacred object is the saint-wheel.²⁹

Every religion has a stronger concept of spirit. The spirit has the greatest body of potential. Through meditation a Jain follower can increase our spiritual potential level to that ideal stat.³⁰ Meditation is the highest level of physical and mental concentration toward the god. Jains meditates on daily basis. But the rituals vary from sect to sect. A pious Jain of *shvetambara* meditate daily on three faiths Right knowledge, Faith and conduct. The central image of of *Tirthankaras* washed daily and offerings presented to it. Sometimes rosaries assist in meditations. In *Digambara* sect, presentation of their offering paid in group by a minister, who maintains the temple.³¹

***Tirthankaras*", in Jainism**

In Jainism, there have been twenty-four "*Tirthankaras*", in the present period' "*Mahavira*" is regarded as the last "*Tirthankara*". "*Tirthankara*" was the spiritual leader, ford-finder, across the dark water of life; a Jain savior saint.³² There is no concept of priests' in Jainism. The religious people are called Jain monks and nuns. Jains spend austere lives.³³

1 Aachaarya "*Aachaarya*" is rector person who leads the monks and mendicant.

2 Sadhu "*Sadhu*" is also the person who leads the holy order of the Jainas ascetic and saints. Sadhu has mastery in their religious scripture. He educates his disciples. Later on he becomes the head of "*Sangh*", mendicant group, spiritual leader and monk-scholar.³⁴

3 Arhat "*Arhat*" (worthy) a Jain saint, who has broken the ten fetters of sensuality, pride, self-righteousness, doubt, ignorance, dependence on rules or forms, or so forth, and has attained nirvana.³⁵

4 Jina "*Jina*" means the conqueror. "*Jina*" is a saint of Jain sect.

5 Nirgrantha "*Nirgrantha*" is the one without knots of passion or possession, is a Jain saint or ascetic, often belonging to a nude sect.³⁶

Criteria to Become a Jain Saint for Liberation & Spiritual Insight

1; Five Vows

In Jainism after completing the given practical conduct of a layman; five vows of "*Ahimsā*" (non-injury), "*Satya*" (truthfulness), "*Acourya*" (non-theft), "*Brahmacarya*" (chastity) and "*Aprigraha*" (non-attachment).³⁷ A Jaina gradually improves his observances of the vows, step by step, through what was technically known as "*pratimās*", till he also becomes a saint a "*Sramana*". These "*pratimās*" are eleven in numbers and mark the spiritual progress made by the soul from time to time and signify the improvement made in the next step from the preceding one.³⁸ Austerities (tapas) are practiced especially by monks.

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2 Gunavrata's

To become a monk, a Jain has to follow certain rules such as “*Gunavratas*” (particular vows), “*Siksāvarta*” (limitations in diet, socialization and time bound in prayers etc), “*Sāmāyika*” (meditation) “*Prosada*” (every 8th and 14th days fasting) etc.³⁹

3 “*Kaushal*” & “*Akushal*”

“*Karma*” can be of two types: Good (*Merit*) and bad (*Demerit*). In Buddhist philosophy a good action is called as “*Kaushal*” or (skillful) that generates an elevating intellectual condition in the active person, or it is also called as a ‘wholesome action’. A bad action is “*Akushal*” or unskillful or unwholesome action, as it does not uplift /elevate a person’s (doer’s) healthy state of mind.⁴⁰

4 Mahā-Vratas

After completing these vows now layman becomes a Saint. The next step called “*Mahā-Vratas*”. Now he fulfill six duties; 1st worship of the Holy one, 2nd service to preceptors, 3rd vows of controlling mind and senses, 4th recitation Holy books, 5th contemplation and 6th charity. This is the stage of self-absorption (*Gunasthānas*).⁴¹ Now he is pure.⁴²

5 Ayogakevali

When a Jaina reaches the last stage of “*Gunasthānas*”, he becomes “*Ayogakevali*”- Non-vibrating perfect soul, perfect God. In this stage – a very brief one indeed- the vibration of the holy body ceases, and the soul attaining peace and bliss becomes one itself and leaving the body is called “*Siddha*”.⁴³ Austerities “*tapas*” are also practiced by the monks.

Ten Duties of Jain Monks and Nuns for Liberation

There are ten duties, the Dcts'a Yatidharma⁴⁴ binding on monks and nuns of all sects.

1st Ksama’: An ascetic must bear and forgive any injury inflicted on him.

2nd Nirlobhata: He must be absolutely free from greed. He must not covet new clothes even if in need of them. He must wait till they are offered to him, and even then he must only accept those of which the giver has no further need.

3rd A’rjava: He must be perfectly straightforward and never be guilty of any kind of intrigue or fraud.

4th Ma’rdava: He must be absolutely humble, never proud of his purity of life, his learning, or any other virtue and he must never speak a harsh word.

5th Tapa: An ascetic must practice many austerities, which will all help to free him from rebirth.

6th Samyama: The restraint of the passions is the sixth duty binding on all monks and nuns

7th Satya: The 7th duty is to be absolutely truthful in every particular. An ascetic must not tell any conventional lies, he must not speak ambiguously, his speech must be free from all egotism and simply consist of the plain unvarnished truth.

8th - S'auca: The eighth duty is purity.

9th Akincinya: he must have no possessions.

10th Brahmacharya: An ascetic must strictly observe celibacy. It will be noticed that the last five duties closely resemble the five great vows.⁴⁵

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Duties of Jain Priest-Monk

In Evening worship, the priest only enters the inner shrine, lighting lamps and incense sticks before the chief image. The highest bidders from the worshippers receive lamps to wave, singing as they do so while the rest of those present beat drums and gongs. All the rice and dried fruit offered is taken by the priest in front of the main image. Then with intoning and kneeling he transfers the contents of the full tray to an empty one marked with a swastika, thus effecting consecration. The priest repeats mantras to himself, bowing, kneeling, and touching the ground with his head. At night a lamp is lit, protected by glass against insects, hymns and sacred verses recited.⁴⁶

Rules of Conduct which Impede Karma for Jain Monks & Nuns

- (1) *Iryd Samiti*; to walk carefully, rules of Conduct and avoiding treading on anything.
- (2) *Bhdsd Samiti*; to speak soft and sweet, wholesome, true words.
- (3) *Esand Samiti*; in take only such food as is allowed by the *S'astras* and avoiding the forty-two sins of eating.
- (4) *A'dananiksepana, Samiti*: To sweep the ground and make it clear of insects before sitting down.
- (5) *Parithdpanikd Samiti*: right disposal of refuse known as "The Three *Gupti*" "There are three "*Gupti*" also impede *Karma*; they are strictly binding on monks and nuns. They are;
 - *Manogapti* or controlling the mind: a monk must give up wandering thoughts and fix the mind on meditation.
 - *Vacanagupti*; controlling the speech: a monk should speak as little as possible and occasionally vow silence for a whole day.
 - *Kdyagupti*; restraining bodily movement. If a monk is meditating, he should not start even if a snake appears; whenever he moves, he should take care not to injure any living thing.⁴⁷

Woman as a Jain Nun

According to Mahavira's traditions there are two sects concerned women status as a nun. One liberal sect named "*Shvetambaras*" accepts women in monastic life. The other sect "*Digambaras*" quotes "Mahavira", "*women are greatest temptation of the world, easily make you sinful*". So they refused her as a monk until her rebirth as a man.⁴⁸

Jiana Pilgrimage to achieve Liberation & Spiritual Insight

The pilgrimage to sacred sites is an important element of the custom in Jainism. The sufferings of the passages restraint & control the body and the companionship of other deities heighten the spiritual confidence. The sacred visit inspirationally elevates their followers to worship at the particular monuments of their religious chief and saints. The soul gains worth and the mind gets harmony.

India is a territory of mysticism and dedication. Indian Jain temples exposed an essential union of the Jain "*Tirthankars*". The *Tirthankars* have broadened the idea of "*Ahimsa, Anekantavada, and Aparigraha*". The sacred sites have their particular back-grounds. A number of such sites were known as the birth place of *Tirthankars*. Several sacred sites are known as the places where they got

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enlightenment, “*Diksha*”, and earned freedom “*Moksha*”. These places were visited and touched by ‘*Tirthankars*’ so it declared sacred by the religious leaders. There were fixed many idols & images of ‘*Tirthankars*’ in the temples’ & shrines of Jainism. The sense of inspiration & admiration and adoration along with inner satisfaction & peace to strengthen of the soul’ brought up here.⁴⁹ Some of the famous Jain Temples are Ranakpur Jain Temple, Dilwara Temple, “*Mirpurjain*” temple, “*Shri mahavirji*”, “*Sanghiji*”, “*Sanganer*” (Jaipur) and “*Soniji Kinasiyan*”(Ajmer Jain temple) etc. There are many Jain temple but they do not believe in gods to worship. They paid honors to the twenty four Jainas (conquerors) or “*Tirthankar*”. The Jaina seems always to have chosen for their sanctuaries the crests of wooded hills. The contribution of religious scriptures and sacred sites were taken as holy & virtuous work. In every village of India, there is one Jain temple, where the followers comes and pray on daily basis. Worship Places were made to illustrate the major events of ‘*Tirthankaras*’ lives. There are some pilgrimage sites of Jainism;

Parasnath Hill & Rajgir: “*Parasnath*” Hill and “*Rajgir*” both sacred sites are situated in the Indian district “Bihar”.

Satrunjaya & Girnar Hills: “*Satrunjay*” and “*Girnaar*” hills on the Kathiawar Peninsula are among such important ancient pilgrimage sites.

Sravana Belgola: “*Sravana Belgola*” shrine is one of the famous shrines that have become pilgrimage destinations in Karnataka.

Mounts Abu & Kesariaji: Mounts Abu & Kesariaji both are situated in Rajasthan, known as a sacred site.

Antariksa Parsvanatha: “*Antariksa Parsvanatha*” is also known as pilgrimage site of Jainism situated in Akola district, Maharashtra.⁵⁰

Satrunjaya & Mount Abu: Pilgrimages are arranged to famous Jain monuments, like “*Satrunjaya*” and *Mount Abu*. These sacred sites are decorated with lamps and sermons given. On one of these full-moon days the scriptures are especially worshipped, cleaned, dusted and freed from insects. Before the April-May moon fairs are held at the centers of pilgrimage and vows made.⁵¹ Mostly during the pilgrimage the fasting has been observed to attain highest spirituality.

Jainism flourished in India, north of Bombay, Gujarat and Rajputana and some southern areas. These territories’ are renowned for Jain temples. ‘Jain temple’ is a place of worship & enormous peace and tranquility. Jain temples are gorgeous, peaceful and passive place to reflection of factual nature and spirit. It develops contemplation and produces sentiment that God/Soul exists in the heart of a man. So a man can chase a way of refining himself by avoiding all kind of misdeeds and misconducts like annoyance, ego, dishonesty and selfishness etc.

Gujarat

The most sacred city of “*Satrunjaya*” (*Politana*) is Gujarat which has 863 temples. They are magnificence and have majestic structure.

Monuments in Eastern India

Some other temples are in Gwalior, (with great statues cut out of the hillside) in the united providences, and at the Mount “*Painath*” in Bihar, which are center of Jain worship in eastern India.⁵² In these monasteries, there is confession of sin, and acceptance of a penance given by the

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director (priest-monk) to get rid of Karma. “*Svetambara*” Jains daily visit the temple, after bathed, put on neat clothes, and a sacred thread round his waist only during worship. They proceed to walks three times around it. During this walk they meditate on three jewels of right knowledge, faith and conduct.⁵³“*Sravana Delgola*” with its 60-ft. nude figure of “*Gomatesvara*” is very famous.

Mount Abu & Mount Girnar

The most famous of all are at Mount “Abu”, 'the Olympus of India', in southern Rajasthan; by the intricacy of detail and delicacy of carving of figures and flowers in marble, these temples with their fretted ceilings and pillars contain perhaps the finest marble sculpture. Mount “Girnar” is also considered sacred, with its magnificent stairway.

Difference in Svetambara & Digambara Temples

In the “*Svetambara*” temples the images have big glass eyes and stone loin-cloths, and are adorned with jewels and flowers. The “*Digambara*” images have eyes cast down and no loin-cloths.⁵⁴Every temple contains the central image of Mahavira accompanied by smaller images of twenty four “*Tirthanaras*” and a saint wheel (*siddha chakra*). The saint wheel is saluted daily and eight days worship in spring and autumn.⁵⁵Some rules are to be followed before entering a temple. These rules are that a person be obliged to take off his shoes first. A person is not allowed to in take any kind of food & drink or champ something during his stay in the temple. One should not rush in this area or speak out loudly or meet people in the temple. A person should say “*Nissihi*”,(to depart it at the back). “*Nissihi*” is that a person has left out of the temple’ all kind of worldly thoughts & relationships and all kind of activities that involved physical or mental elements called “*Kashayas*”. In the temple, there is normally a donation box to encourage anonymous donations.⁵⁶

Sacred Shrine & Mountains of S’vetambara and Digambara

In Western India there are three shrines of special sanctity and beauty to which the “*S’vetambara & Digambara*” Jaina go on pilgrimage. The most sacred of these, ' the primary of locations of pilgrimage, the bridal corridor of folks that could marry everlasting relaxation is the hill of “*S’atrunjaya*”, near “*Palitana*” in Kathiawad. This hill, which is sacred to “*A’dinatha*”, rises to the height of some 1977 ft above sea degree, and the summit is completely covered with temples.“Street after street and square after rectangular, make bigger this shrines of the Jain religion, with their stately enclosures, half of palace or castle, raised, in marble magnificence, upon the lonely and majestic mountain.”Indeed, so many are the temples, that to go round them all is said to require ninety-nine pilgrimages.

Mount *Girnar*, (the hill of *Neminatha*, can be seen on a clear day from *S’atrunjaya*, to which it is only second in sanctity. It is situated in the *Mahmedan* State of Junagardh, and its Summit is won with the aid of the most opulent stairway inside the world, flight upon flight of stone steps, which lead from the apparent underneath, beyond the “*Neminatha*” citadel with its.⁵⁷“*Bhavapuja*” is the most important spiritual worship during their visit. He prostrates three times before the image and recalls the virtues of the *Tirthankara* by singing. On their return they utter the word *Avassahi*, with bowed hands towards the image.⁵⁸

In the month of March or April, eight days before “*Cuitri Puneina*”, or “*A’mhela*” is observed. At this time women and men take unique vows with reference to the food they’ll devour, as that it shall

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consist simplest of 1 kind of grain for that day and that they will most effective drink boiled water. Women are mainly unique in keeping those vows. This, too, is the great season for pilgrimages; both *S'vetambara & Digambara* Jaina go on pilgrimage to *Palitana, Samedshikhara* (near Gaya), A'bu or Girnar, where large fairs are held and the temples decorated.⁵⁹

Digambar & Shvetambar Temples

Both the sects of Jainism worships picture, portrait or statue of 'Tirthankar' in their temples. There are two major kinds of images. "*Digambar*" has chosen the images with partially-closed eyes while opened eyes are the chosen icon of '*Shvetaambar*'. '*Shvetaambar*' takes the adorned & splendid images in the temples' while the others take it in naturally plain form. According to '*Shvetaambar*' the ornamented and decorated image of "Trithankara" gives the impression of his royal life style. The statue of Tirthankar in "*Padmaasan*" position represents his cordial meditation. The "*murti*" of Tirthankar symbolizes his inner traits. Every images of Tirthankar depicts the exceptional & complicated fine art skills of both sects. Each '*Tirthankar*' has a distinctive motif or icon (*Laanchhan*) that distinguishes every image from the other. Every image has a specific base or idea.⁶⁰

Conclusion

Jain mysticism, rooted deeply in the ancient Indian tradition of Jainism, offers a profound exploration into the spiritual dimensions of existence. At its core, Jainism emphasizes non-violence (*ahimsa*), truth (*satya*), non-possessiveness (*aparigraha*), and asceticism (*sanyasa*), guiding adherents towards liberation from the cycle of rebirths (*samsara*). Jain mysticism offers a rigorous and profound path towards spiritual enlightenment, emphasizing ethical living, deep introspection, and the pursuit of ultimate truth and liberation from the cycle of rebirths. The great purpose of "*Mahavira*" was that a man could attain salvation through his own independent efforts. It has been said that as knowledge is wisdom to the Brahman, and purity & love to the Buddhist, so is asceticism wisdom to the Jaina. It is easier for an ascetic to attain heaven than for a layman. A "*Bala-brahmchari*" (remain single) is higher honored. To become a monk, one has to leave his parents or guardians and if married, he needs permission of wife or until his death, he can become ascetic. In Jainism, obtaining "*Moksha*" relieves all the good and bad deeds and this frees a person from the cycle of births and deaths and this is the stage where he gets salvation. A self-controlled person, leave all worldly desires, think about the ultimate reality of the world is just like a ship, which bears the storms and at last reaches the shore. Such a person gets the everlasting salvation."⁶¹ A Jain must overcome this obstacle on the deliverance & do this by identifying the body with the religious substance of immortality or entirely denying the needs of a normal body: totally shave their hair & move about totally nicked "*Naga, Dighabara*" (clad in air). The Jain monks keep continuous fast and sometimes this starving ends with death. A Jain died with hunger, considered very pious.⁶²

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