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Adinath's First Meal In 13 Months Marks Akshaya Tritiya

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Baisakh Shukla Tritiya is highly significant in Indian culture. In common parlance, it is also called Akha Teej or Akshaya Tritiya. In Jain philosophy, it is considered as the beginning of the shramana culture. During the third age of Hundavasarpini, Ayodhya was ruled by king Nabhiraj and queen Marudevi. A son, Rishabhath, was born to them. When Nabhiraj reached old age, he handed over Ayodhya's throne to Rishabhath, also called Adinath.

At that time, Kalpavriksha fulfilled all the needs of human beings, but gradually, Kalpavriksha's powers started decreasing. Bhogbhoomi started disappearing, and karmabhoomi was created. At that time, due to rains, various grains and tree sprouts grew in the fields and gave suitable fruits. However, they were

destroyed as people did not know what to do with them. The land of enjoyment vanished, and the era of karma arrived, but people did not know how to do karma, action. Hence, they started suffering from hunger and thirst. Adinathji gave mankind the necessary knowledge. He taught six tasks to live life: asi, weaponry, military action for defence; masi, writing; agriculture, farming and growing food; vidya, actions related to gaining knowledge; commerce, business; crafts, making of statues, buildings and carvings, etc.

He had taught people to do all kinds of work in a planned manner. By imparting the knowledge of scriptology

and numerology to his daughters Brahmi and Sundari, respectively, he spread this knowledge among people. For the first time, he established the governance system, rules-principles, and rights-duties in Ayodhya. Following this, everything started going according to the rules, and religion was established. According to Jain philosophy, in this way, the era changed in the Bharat region from the land of enjoyment to the land of action.

When Adinath became detached from life following the death of nratyangana, dancer Neelanjana, he did penance by fasting for six months. Seeing the sacrifice of Rishabhdevji, many kings and people who had taken sannyas, joined him. Since he was the first tirthankar, people did not know how to feed him or what to give him as food, and hence, they used to give him jewellery, diamonds, and pearls rather than food. Even after six months, when food was not offered, sannyasis with him suffered from hunger and thirst.

It had been more than 13 months since Adinathji took food. One day, while travelling, he reached Hastinapur. Brothers Somprabh and prince Shreyansh Kumar rushed to greet sage Rishabhathji. As soon as he saw Rishabhathji, Shreyansh Kumar remembered that in his previous life he had offered food to a muni. It was in the morning. Following padgahan, inviting with respect, Shreyansh Kumar along with Somprabha and Lakshminati arranged a meal for Rishabhathji. Adinathji was offered Ikshuras, the first food he had accepted after more than 13 months. This day was Vaishakh Shukla Tritiya, celebrated today as Akshaya Tritiya.

Through his sermons, Adinathji instructed people to live a virtuous life by following truth, nonviolence, non-stealing, and non-possession. Only by adopting the principles of tirthankaras can we move towards a more peaceful world with human welfare at its core.

Authored by: Bhagchand Jain

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