

LESSON 01

NAVKAR MANTRA PART 01

Namo Arihantanam: I bow down to Arihanta,
Namo Siddhanam: I bow down to Siddha,
Namo Ayariyanam: I bow down to Acharya,
Namo Uvajjhayanam: I bow down to Upadhyaya,
Namo Loe Savva-Sahunam: I bow down to Sadhu and Sadhvi.

Eso Panch Namokkaro: These five bowings down,
Savva-Pavppanasano: Destroy all the sins,
Manglanancha Savvesim: Amongst all that is auspicious,
Padhamam Havai Mangalam: This Navkar Mantra is the foremost.

The Navkar Mantra is the most important mantra in Jainism and can be recited at any time. While reciting the Navkar Mantra, we are bowing down with respect to Arihantas (souls who have reached the state of non-attachment towards worldly process), Siddhas (liberated souls), Acharyas (heads of sadhus and sadhvis), Upadhyayas (those who teach scriptures to monks and nuns), Sadhus and sadhvis (monks and nuns, who have voluntarily given up social, economical and family relationships). Collectively, they are called five supreme beings (Panch Parmesthi). In this mantra we worship their virtues rather than worshipping any one particular person; therefore, this Mantra is not named after Lord Mahavira, Lord Parshvanath or Dainty, etc. When we recite Navkar Mantra, it also reminds us that, we need to be like them. This mantra is also called Namaskar or Namokar Mantra because we are bowing down.

The Navkar Mantra contains the main message of Jainism. The message is very clear. If we want to be liberated from this world then we have to take the first step of renunciation by becoming a monk or a nun. This is the beginning. If we stay on the right path then we will proceed to a higher state, Arihant, and ultimately proceed to Siddha after nirvana (liberation from the cycle of birth and death). The goal of every Jain is, or should be, to become a Siddha.

ARIHANTAS

Arihanta is pure soul. The word Arihanta is made up of two words: a) Ari, meaning enemies, and b) hanta, meaning destroyer. Therefore, Arihanta means a destroyer of the enemies. These enemies are not people like you, me, or any animal, or plant, etc. These enemies are inner desires known as passions. These include anger, ego, deception, and greed. These are the internal enemies within us. Until we control our passions, the real nature or the power of our soul will not be realized or manifested. When a person (soul) wins over these inner enemies he/she is called Arihanta. When that happens, the person has destroyed the four destructive karmas (ghati karmas) namely knowledge obscuring karma (Jnanavarniya karma), Perception blocking (Darshanavarniya Karma), Deluding karma (Mohaniya karma) and Obstructive Karma (Antray karma). These four karmas are called Destructive karmas (Ghati karma) because they directly obstruct the true nature of the soul. Arihanta attains: 1) Perfect knowledge (Kevaljnan) due to the destruction of all Knowledge obscuring karmas(Jnanavarniya Karmas), 2) Perfect Perception

(Kevaldarshan) due to the destruction of all Perception obscuring karma (Darshanavarniya karmas), 3) becomes passionless due to the destruction of all Deluding karmas (Mohaniya Karmas), and 4) gains infinite power due to the destruction of all Obstructive karmas (Antraya Karmas). Complete knowledge and perception means they know and see everything everywhere that is happening now, that has happened in the past, and that will happen in the future. Arihantas are divided into two categories: Tirthankara and Ordinary. Tirthankaras are special Arihantas because they revitalize the Jain congregation (four-fold Jain Order) consisting of monks (Sadhus), nuns (Sadhvis), male householders (Shrawaks) and female householders (Shrawikas). During every half time cycle, twenty-four persons like us rise to the level of Tirthankara. The first Tirthankara of our time period was Lord Rushabhdev, and the twenty-fourth and last Tirthankara was Lord Mahavira, who lived from 599 B. C. to 527 B. C. A Tirthankara is also called a Jina. Jina means conqueror of passions. At the time of nirvana (liberation from the worldly existence), Arihanta sheds off the remaining four non-destructive karmas (aghati karmas) namely 1) Body-determining karma (Nam karma), 2) Status determining Karma (Gotra karma), 3) Feeling producing karma (Vedniya Karma) and 4) Age determining karma (Ayushya Karma). These four karmas do not obstruct the true nature of the soul; therefore, they are called non-obstructing karmas (Aghati karmas). After attaining salvation these Arihantas are called Siddhas.

Arihanta has total 12 virtues and they are as follows

1. Omniscience
2. Extra ordinary speech
3. Worshiped by mundane souls of whole universe
4. Has no disease and has no likes and dislikes
5. Ashok tree (happiness tree under which arihanta bhagawan sits)
6. Divine arrangements of seats where bhagawan sits. Here there is continuous shower of fragrant flowers on the bhagawan's body
7. Beautiful music accompany bhagawan's speech
8. Angels are wining the fans continuously
9. Divine arrangements by bhagawan's seat call sinhasan from where bhagawan will give sermons
10. Light goes around bhagawan's body continuously
11. Angels announce for everybody to come and listen to bhagawan's speech
12. Three tier of umbrella like structure or bhagawan's head suggested that he is the king of the universe

SIDDHAS

Siddhas are the liberated souls. They are no longer among us because they have completely ended the cycle of birth and death. They have reached the ultimate highest state, salvation. They do not have any karma, and they do not collect any new karma. This state of true freedom is called Moksha. Because of destruction of each 8 different types of karmas, Siddhas have acquired at least most important 8 attributes. They are as follows.

- 1) Infinite knowledge,
- 2) Infinite perception,
- 3) Never-ending happiness,

- 4) Infinite passionless state,
- 5) Immortality,
- 6) Formlessness,
- 7) Individuality and
- 8) Infinite energy.