

## BHAGAVAN MAHAVIR

Bhagavan Mahavir was son of Sidhartha, an influential *Kshatria* leader of Baisali. He was born on 30th March, 599 B.C. Bhagavan Mahavir had everything. He enjoyed enormous wealth, a beautiful wife and a nice family. He was against the sacrificial rituals. He supported the reincarnation of Veda but was against the many rituals '*Jagya*'. He wanted to find the truth of human existence. He abandoned all worldly comfort and family life.

He taught his disciples that getting Salvation is the best form of joy. Salvation comes through honest thinking, honest living and honest faith. He called them '*TRI-RATNA*' i.e. three gems.

Bhagavan Mahavir was the follower of Parsanath Tirthankar. Tirthankar established 'Jainism'. Bhagavan Mahavir was a revolutionary. Animal slaughter was extremely painful to him. He protested against Caste System. He said contribution of *Bramhin* need not be considered as superior. He showed that '*Baisyas*' i.e. business class people contribute more to humanity compared to the ritualistic *Bramhins*. Business community of Baisali started supporting and following Bhagavan Mahavir in a big way. They started calling themselves as Jains.

Jainism propounded four cardinal principals as (i) Non violence (ii) Honest living (iii) Not to steal (iv) Not to covet others property. Bhagavan Mahavir added *Bramhachariya* (Celibacy) as the fifth principle. Bhagavan Mahavir wrote an important holy book named '*Purba*'. This book has twelve chapters known as '*Dadash Anga*' and followers of Bhagavan Mahavir adopted this book as their guide. 'Jain Kalpasutra and Jaina Bhagabali Sutra' are two other important sources to understand Bhagavan Mahavir's philosophy. Followers of Bhagavan Mahavir, known as 'Jains', are strict vegetarians.