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MAHAVIR JANMA KALYANAK

Mahavir Janma

Kalyanak is one of the most important religious festivals in [Jainism](#). It celebrates the birth of [Mahavir](#), the twenty-

fourth and last [Tirthankara](#) of present [Avasarpini](#).^[a] On the [Gregorian calendar](#), the holiday occurs either in March or April.

BIRTH

According to [Jain texts](#), Mahavir was born on the thirteenth day of the bright half of the moon in the month of [Chaitra](#) in the year 599 BCE (Chaitra Sud 13).^{[3][4]} Most modern historians consider Kundagram (which is today's Kundalpur in Champaran district of Bihar) as his birthplace.^[5] Mahavir was born in

a democratic kingdom (Ganarajya), Vajji, where the king was chosen by votes. [Vaishali](#) was its capital.^[6]

Mahavir was named 'Vardhaman', meaning "One who grows", because of the increased prosperity in the kingdom at the time of his birth.^[7] In Vasokund, Mahavir is revered by the villagers. A place called *Ahalya bhumi* has not been ploughed for hundreds of years by the family

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that owns it, as it is considered to be the birthplace of Mahavir.^[6]

LEGEND

Mahavirswami was born into [Ikshvaku dynasty](#) as the son of King [Siddhartha of Kundagrama](#) and Queen [Trishala](#). During her pregnancy, Trishala was believed to have had a number of [auspicious dreams](#), all signifying the coming of a great soul. [Digambara](#) sect of Jainism holds that the mother saw sixteen dreams which were interpreted by the King Siddhartha.^[8] According to the [Svetambara](#) sect, the total number of auspicious dreams is fourteen. It is said that when Queen Trishala gave birth to Mahavir, [Indra](#), the head of heavenly beings ([devas](#)) performed a ritual called *abhisheka on Sumeru Parvat*, this being the second of five auspicious events ([Panch Kalyanakas](#)), said to occur in the life of all [Tirthankaras](#).^[9] In the book of Jainism "Aao Jain Dharm Ko Jane", it is written that Mahavir Jain Ji in his previous birth as Marichi had started 363 hypocritical practices which are evolved into different religions practiced today worldwide.^[10]