Homage to the Twenty-four Tirthankaras

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Homage to the Twenty-four Tirthankaras

I shall bow with devotion to those radiant ones, the Tirthankaras, From Rishabhanatha to Mahavira.
In this world, they bore the 1008 auspicious signs; Crossed the ocean of knowledge; Truly destroyed the web of transmigration; Were more radiant than the moon and the sun; And were worshipped through musical hymns by Multitudes of monks, celestial divinities, their lords, and celestial nymphs.

Nabheya (son of Nabhiraja) Rishabhanatha is worshipped by celestial beings. Ajitanatha enlightens the whole world. Sambhavanatha is omniscient. Best among munis, Abhinandananatha is worshipped by demi-gods. Sumatinatha is the destroyer of the enemy named karma. Padmaprabha has lotus-like fragrance and complexion. Suparshvanatha is full of forgiveness and has conquered his senses. Chandraprabha has the splendour of the full moon.
I worship all the Jinas with absolute reverence.
Pushpadantanatha is renowned.
Shitalanatha, lord of the world, has destroyed the fear of transmigration.
Shreyamsanatha is the treasury of celibacy.
Vasupujyanatha is a preceptor to the most excellent men,
And preeminently worthy of worship.
Vimalanatha is liberated,
Has destroyed the horses of sensuous desire,
And is the master of all mendicants.
Anantanatha is the son of King Simhasena,
And a monk of great renown.
Dharmanatha is the standard-bearer of true religion.
Shantinatha is the abode of tranquillity and has subdued his senses.
I worship all the Jinas with absolute reverence.

Kunthunatha resides in Siddhalaya, the abode of the liberated souls.
He is the lord of all ascetics.
Aranatha has transcended the cycle of (sensuous) enjoyment.
Mallinatha comes from a renowned family.
Worshipped by celestial divinities, Munisuvratanatha embodies bliss.
Naminatha is worshipped by the kings of the heavens.
Neminatha is the ornament of the Harivamsha clan
And has destroyed his circle of transmigration.
Parshvanatha is worshipped by the demigod Dharanendra.
I have attained the shelter of Vardhamana.
I worship all the Jinas with absolute reverence.

I worship all the Jinas with absolute reverence.

Names of Tirthankaras referred here
1 Rishabhanatha 2 Ajitanatha 3 Sambhavanatha 4 Abhinandananatha
5 Sumatinatha 6 Padmaprabha 7 Suparshvanatha 8 Candraprabha
9 Pushpadantanatha 10 Shitalanatha, 11 Shreyamsanatha 12 Vasupujyanatha
13 Vimalanatha 14 Anantanatha 15 Dharmanatha 16 Shantinatha
17 Kunthunatha 18 Aranatha 19 Mallinatha 20 Munisuvratanatha
21 Naminatha 22 Neminatha 23 Parshvanatha 24 Vardhamana Mahavira
Please note that all Tirthankaras have similar qualities and are equally venerable. All of them destroyed their karmas and attained liberation from the cycle of transmigration and live forever in eternal bliss. The poet who composed this hymn to all twenty-four Jinas has not tried to undermine one Jina at the expense of the other. He has used different adjectives and similes to describe each Jina. Thus one must appreciate his devotional fervour, his knowledge of the Jain faith as well as his poetic erudition.

Reflection:
Why Do We Worship The Jinas?
We worship them in order to become like them. All Jinas have the same qualities. As a fruit of worshipping the Jinas, we attain samyak darshana enlightened perception. And as a fruit of studying their teachings, we get samyak jnana enlightened knowledge. And when we walk on the path of the Jinas, we attain samyak caritra enlightened conduct.

Hymns to the Jinas are composed in order to inspire us to become like them. Those who recite them with deep reverence and resolve to follow their teachings in their daily lives, attain enlightened perception and a great deal of solace from the Jinas and their dharma.

Jains have a crystal clear understanding of devotion. They realise that liberation can only be attained by one’s own efforts. But they know that reciting the name of the Jinas with complete devotion results in an inflow of merits and shedding of demerits. Also, true worship of the Jinas leads to the attainment of enlightened perception. Those with enlightened perception who follow in the footsteps of the Jinas attain supreme detachment and liberation.

English translation by Manish Modi (April 9, 2017)