



## **Paryushan Celebrations - Friday, 14 September 2012**

### **Day 3**

#### **The five duties of Paryushan**

Swamiji starts his talk with an anecdote.

Once, Lord Krishna and Satyabhama were taking a morning walk. Suddenly, Bhamasa got curious about why Lord Krishna keeps on praising Arjuna. Why is it that you always speak his name? What has he got that you don't get tired of praising him? Arjuna may be a great warrior, but he does not need to be praised that much! Satyabhama felt that he is so close to Krishna that no one else should be as close to him. Lord Krishna only smiles back, without responding to his question. It so happens after a few days that Krishna and Satyabhama were sitting alone, whilst a few feet away, Arjuna was sleeping. But Arjuna's hair was scraping the floor. Krishna could not bear to see this, so he asks Satyabhama to go and lift his hair and put it on the bed. But he asks him to make sure Arjuna does not wake up.

Satyabhama goes and slowly lifts his hair and puts it on the bed. And suddenly, Satyabhama just freezes there for ten minutes. When he returns to Krishna, the Lord asks him the reason for his delay. Satyabhama exclaims that "Lord, your leela is unparalleled. Whilst I was lifting Arjuna's hair, I could hear the words 'Shri Krishna', 'Shri Krishna', 'Shri Krishna' in his hair. You are ever so present in my heart, but you are absorbed into every every cell of Arjuna's body. And now I understand why you talk about him and praise him so much."

When such a bhakti rises in the heart of a devotee, even God has to acknowledge

and salute him. If you have the eyes, you can see God in a rock, and if you don't, even when God is in front of you, you will be oblivious to it. We should live such a life, and have such a devotion that a mahapurush will be compelled to remember you in his prayers. So what do we need to do to achieve such a life?

In the Kalpasutra, Bhagwan talks about five essential duties that one must perform during Payushan.

1 - Amaari Pravartana - Amaari = non-violence. Pravartana = to establish. To establish a non-violence attitude in your thought, actions, deeds and words. History is a witness that most wars that have been fought in the name of dharma have sacrificed more innocent lives than atheists have ever done. Swamiji implores that everyone should teach their children at least to eat vegetarian food, if nothing else. He defines vegetarianism, according to Jain dharma, as "no meat, no sea food, no eggs." - adopt a principle of non-violence in food as well. He also requests everyone to visit the website [www.meat.org](http://www.meat.org) - a website that will be an eye opener for all those that eat meat.

Think about this - all animals that are peaceful and useful to society are all vegetarian; Elephants, horses, cows. All that are dangerous are non-vegetarian; Lions, tigers, cheetahs. All vegetarian animals drink water with their mouth. All non-vegetarian animals drink with their tongue. By human nature, we are meant to be vegetarians. We also have a large intestine which is designed for a vegetarian diet.

Swamiji further states that according to Jain dharma, one should not eat stale food, or left over food. All food that is left over creates a breeding ground for small organisms and life forms. All food that one eats should be saatvik and cooked fresh. This creates positive vibrations and energy in your body. When cooking, one should listen to spiritual music or stavans to create positive energy. This is all part of developing an "amaari" attitude in one's life.

A big aspect of "amaari pravartana" is Jeev Daya. The foundation of Jain dharma is jeev daya. Jain dharma states that if you feed grass to a cow, all your unfavourable planets become favourable for you. If you feed the birds, your family experiences more happiness and bliss. If you feed "rotla" to a dog, your enemies look favourably on you. If you feed flour to ants under a tree, all your debts start to clear off. If you help any fellow human being, your wealth and

fortune increases. These are various aspects of jeev daya mentioned in Jain dharma; whilst difficult to establish according to scientific facts, there is still a deep science and spiritual connection behind it.

2 - Sadharmik Vatsalya - This does not just mean feeding people at a big occasion, which is still very good. But Jain dharma goes further to state that you should feed five poor people anonymously; "gupt daan". We all share a connection with each other. Before you got married to your husband or wife, his/her parents did not mean anything to you. After you got married, you developed a connection; not only with the parents, but the extended family. Similarly, anyone who builds a connection with Mahavir Swami, inturn builds a connection with the entire community; the Jain praivaar. If anyone within the community is suffering, another should make the necessary arrangements to satisfy their needs. Anonymously. This is Sadharmik Vatsalya.

Swamiji goes on to state a few things we should never forget in our life:

Maatru bhumi - your birth place. Never forget the land where you were born because you are indebted to this land.

Maatru data - mother, or more appropriately, your parents. You are indebted to your parents for the life you have, the values you have. Their blessings are essential to the success of your life. Even Lord Krishna used to remember his mother first thing every day.

Maatru bhasha - mother tongue - Whatever Jain dharma scriptures and material exists today is all in Gujarati and Hindi. At least one much make an effort to understand and speak Gujarati, even if they cannot read and write. The magic of any language can only be understood in that language. Otherwise it gets lost in translation.

In the times of Mahavir and latter years, there was a provision for four types of daans that were a part of every shraavak and shraavika's life:

- a) - Anna Daan - Feed the hungry and poor with your own hands
- b) - Aushad Daan - Provide medicine to the ailing and needy
- c) - Gyaan Daan - Provide scholarship and education to needy students
- d) - Abhay Daan - Tell all your friends that because of you, there will never be any difficulty for any of them. Regardless of whether you remain friends or not, they can rest assured that you will not be trouble for them. They can be fearless.

3 - Kshamapna - Forgiveness - Through the eight days of Payushan, forgiveness is the epitome of the celebration. One should reach a state of forgiveness where after Samvatsari Pratikraman, one should go to each of their enemies (or those family members who are not on good terms), and clear out all misunderstandings and problems. Even if you don't ask for forgiveness from the 84,00,000 life forms, it is fine. But you must forgive your near and dear ones, and resolve any disputes.

4 - Attham Tap - When and where possible, one should do at least three upvaas (fasts). It doesn't matter when you do it, but it is imperative that during Payushan, one should do it. There is a divine connection with the three upvaas. When you do these upvaas, the devtaas provide support to fulfill your wish and make your "tap" fruitful.

5 - Chaitya paripati - Every day during Payushan, one should bow down and pray to Jineshwar Bhagwan. If you are a Sthanakvasi, you can at least remember Jineshwar Bhagwan through great devotion and feeling. Chaitya = mandir, Jin Bhagwan. Paripati = tradition. So you have to establish the tradition of remembering and praying to Jineshwar Bhagwan during the eight days.

If one follows these five duties during Payushan, one can lead a pure, devoted life that pleases Bhagwan and HIS grace then shines upon you.