

**Navnat Vanik Association (UK) 2012
Paryushan Celebrations**



Paryushan Celebrations – Wednesday, 19 September 2012

Day 8

Past, present and future

Our life is made up of past, present and future. Remove these from your life, and there will be no way to identify with life. The formula for life is past + present + future. So what is considered a good life? One who has a good past, good present and good future has a good life. A good past equates to 25% good life. A good future equates to 25% good life. And a good present equates to 50% good life.

Bhagwan Mahavir says that despite living in the material world, one can attain moksha. It is not important where you are in this life, but it matters what your vision is. The vision matters, not your location. If your vision is dharma, then even living in the material world does not create bondage for you.

Now, think about this. Out of all three states of life, which is the most important - past, present or future? Present. The past is dead, and future isn't born yet. So all we have is the present. But realistically, how much time do you spend in the present? Hardly any. However, living in the present does not mean that you shouldn't plan for the future. For example, right now, you could be sitting here and writing down your itinerary for a future trip. You are planning for the future, but working in the present.

But what does one do? Having dinner with the family, everyone is talking about a future plan. Your present moment task is to be eating food, but you are engrossed in talking about the future. That is not living in the present. Multi-tasking is not the way to live in the present, and it is against the basic principle of life. That is why it is said to keep silence when eating food. So where possible,

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avoid multi-tasking in most situations.

Swamiji digresses a little to talk about taste, and the misconceived belief that Saadhu's don't have taste when they eat. He clarifies the misunderstood point that when it's said that Saadhu's don't taste food, the message being conveyed is don't get consumed by the taste and indulge in gluttony. Saadhu's eat by not being consumed by taste. Every morsel of food they take, they taste. But they are not consumed by the taste and they keep control over what and how much they eat. Don't be a slave to taste. The most tastiest of foods should be consumed the least.

Coming back to the main point again, the reason why most people are unable to live in the present is because they have not released the shackles of the past. You need to clean and purify your past to live peacefully in the present. In Jain dharma, Pratikraman has been highly recommended to clean up your past. Through pratikraman, you are able to revisit the past and clear off any remaining issues to create a liveable present. It is one of the highest order of techniques in the Jain tradition. You may forgive and seek forgiveness from the 84 lac life forms, but real pratikraman starts from those life forms with five senses, i.e. human beings. And in that, the ones closest to you. Forgive and seek forgiveness from your near and dear ones first, and when doing so, state the mistakes you have made specifically. That is real pratikraman. It is a process by which you can unburden yourself, and shed the load.

A very important aspect of pratikraman to remember is if you forget to ask forgiveness and to forgive someone during pratikraman, and if that issue lingers on, you are accumulating karmas again. And these karmas can also turn into nikachit karmas which one will have to suffer at one point in this life, or another. It is very important that one forgives and seeks forgiveness from everyone who he has wronged and done wrong to. Without that, pratikraman is not considered as done.

Bhagwan Mahavir has said that a shraavak should to pratikraman every day. If that is not possible, then once every fifteen days (paakhi pratikraman). If that too is not possible, then at least do once in four months (chaatur maasik pratikraman). And finally, if you are unable to do any of these, then the Samvatsari day Pratikraman is essential. One must do it. One must recall the

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entire year's mistakes and wrong doings and ask forgiveness from everyone. And forgive those that have wronged you.

When one does pratikraman, one must perform six essential duties:

- 1 - Samayik
- 2 - Chauvistav - what we call Logassutra. It is the remembrance, reverence, praise and thanks to the 24 tirthankaras.
- 3 - Vandana - Bow down and thank the Guru. Guru Vandan.
- 4 - Pratikraman
- 5 - Kausag - Kayotsarg - detachment from the body
- 6 - Pachchkhaan - A vow or resolve to not repeat the mistakes you have made during the year again.

So to clear the past, one must do pratikraman. Now, what must one do to purify the present life? Samayik. Pratikraman relates to the past, and Samayik relates to everything in the present. Raag Dwesh arises in the present, and then gets ingrained into your brain which then becomes the past. So what does one do in Samayik?

Firstly, Samayik takes 48 minutes to do. But for the sake of simplicity, let's take a round figure of 50 minutes. Swamiji gives us a breakdown of how we can use these 50 minutes.

- 10 minutes - Dhyaan Yog - Dhyaan (meditation)
- 10 minutes - Jap Yog - Jaap or chanting mantras (Aum Rheem Arham Namaha) - or any other mantra. But maintain the rhythm to create powerful vibrations.
- 10 minutes - Smruti Yog - Memorise something. Pick some shlokas or stutis, or other religious words, and try to memorise them.
- 10 minutes - Stuti Yog - Prayer - it could be stavan, bhavna, stuti.
- 10 minutes - Swadhyay Yog - Read some good book or material that will elevate your soul.

Swamiji implores us all to do at least one samayik a week. The advantages of samayik cannot be overstated, and Swamiji really implores us to start and experience the benefits for ourself.

So what does one do now to clean the future? The idea behind this is prevention, to stop any future influx of bad deeds. And the name for this is pachchkhaan. But

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remember, one should take pachchkhaan of those things that one is able to consume or use. Not something that one cannot get access to or cannot use. Something that you can do, but you don't want to. Something that you can eat, but don't want to. That is real pachchkhaan.

There are ten types of pachchkhaan in the shastra:

- 1 - Anagat - Taking a vow in the future. Example, doing aradhna during paryushan, and then tapasya after paryushan
- 2 - Atikraant - Taking a vow in the past. Example, doing athai before paryushan.
- 3 - Kotisahi - Before your current pachchkhaan finishes, you continue for the next period. Or you take pachchkhaan for a new thing before the old one finishes.
- 4 - Niyantrit - Irrespective of the conditions or situation, you resolve not to break the pachchkhaan.
- 5 - Anagaar - Until death, you resolve not to break your pachchkhaan.
- 6 - Sagaar - With agar. Pachchkhaan with exceptions. Example, eating sweets for only 4 days in a month.
- 7 - Niravashesh - This is done in santharo. Four types of food and water are disallowed.
- 8 - Parimaan - Consuming food based on a defined quantity. Nothing more than that.
- 9 - Sanket - Pachchkhaan is taken until an event happens.
- 10 - Kaal - Pachchkhaan that depends on the circle of time like chauvyahar.

So, to clean your past, do pratikraman. To clean the present, do samayik. And to clean the future, take pachchkhaan.