



## **Paryushan Celebrations – Saturday, 15 September 2012**

### **Day 4**

#### **Who is a true shraavak of Bhagwan Mahavir?**

Bhagwan has not only spoken about tattva gyaan, about the life of saadhus, but also through little anecdotes, HE has described how the life of a shraavak should be. Swamiji explains this through a little story.

Once a rich merchant, who had four sons and four daughter-in-laws, wanted to find out which daughter-in-law was good for what kind of household chore. So he calls his daughter-in-laws and invites various people of his town to attend a huge ceremony. At the ceremony, he allocates a small task to each one of his daughter-in-laws by giving them five grains of rice each (the type of rice that grows), and tells them to keep it safe as one day, he will ask for it. The ceremony finishes and the daughter-in-laws start thinking about what to do with those grains.

The first daughter-in-law thinks that her father-in-law has gone crazy, and wonders whether it is more important to look after her own life or these five grains of rice. She decides to just throw them away as she found it unimportant to keep them.

The second daughter-in-law, thinking that instead of keeping it and risking a bird or animal or someone else eating it, why not she eat it herself. If the father-in-law asks for it, then she'll get another five grains and give it to him. So thinking, she eats them.

The third daughter-in-law knows that her father-in-law has got a status in society and is a man of great importance. She realises that there must be an important

purpose behind him giving these five grains of rice, and so thinking, she keeps them in a safe for future retrieval.

The fourth daughter-in-law thinks that because she's been given five grains of rice instead of bangles, jewellery or other ornaments, there must be some potency to this thought. Why the five grains of rice, and that too, the type that grows? She decides to send these five grains of rice to her parents house and asks them to plant it and grow them. And when the time comes, she will ask for them back. Any new grains of rice that grows from these, they should replant, and keep the cycle going.

A year goes by, and the merchant calls on the entire town to hold another ceremony and asks for his grains of rice back from the daughter-in-laws. He asks the first daughter-in-law for the grains, and she responds by saying that she threw them away. Was she supposed to take care of the household, or look after these five grains of rice! He moves on to the second daughter-in-law. She exclaims that there is no shortage of rice grains in the household, and because of that, she decided to eat the five grains. If so needed, she can go and get another five grains of rice from somewhere else. But the father-in-law insists that they have to be the same grains she was given - not different.

The third daughter-in-law goes to the safe, and pulls out the grains and hands it over to the father-in-law. The father-in-law is happy that at least she has kept them secure. When the fourth daughter-in-law is asked for her grains, she says that his five grains cannot be obtained so easily. He has to provide a few trucks to bring those grains back. She explains that she used the original five grains of rice to grow more rice. The merchant expresses his pleasure and happiness over this, and returns back to the ceremony. He explains that to assess the suitability of his daughter-in-laws, he assigned this task to them.

He calls the first daughter-in-law who threw the grains away and assigns the duty of clearing out the garbage in the house.

He calls the second daughter-in-law who ate the grains and assigns the kitchen duty to her.

The third daughter-in-law is assigned the job of treasury of the household; handling the finance.

And the final daughter-in-law is assigned the task of managing the other three.

Why Bhagwan presented this story in this way has got great meaning behind it. The daughter-in-law who threw the grains out was named "Ucchika". The one that ate the grains was named "Bhakshika". The third who kept them safe was named "Rakshika". And the last one who multiplied the grains was called "Roohika". Swamiji implores all parents to carefully think about the name they give their children. Look at the quality of your children, and then name them.

A more deeper meaning behind Bhagwan's story is that there are four types of Shraavak. The qualities you were born with and inherited - did you throw it away, use it, keep it safe, or multiply it. So the first type of shraavak is one who has destroyed or misused all the punya's, qualities and characteristics he/she was born with. He has wasted his life in just pure self-pleasure and enjoyment.

The second type of shraavak is one who uses up all his punya's and qualities he/she was born with. The more comforts you enjoy, the more punya's you are using up. And imagine that if you used up all your punya's in your young age, what will you do in your old age? Shantinath Bhagwan gave up all his wealth and royalty and took diksha - only because he realised that the more comforts he enjoys, the more punyas he will use up. Take some pain in your life so that you don't use up all your punyas. When you're young, you should do more "pursharth" (hard work) and not use up your punyas, and when you get to old age, you should use your punyas.

The third type of shraavak is one who safeguards whatever punya and qualities he has, so that when he dies, he can confidently say that whatever I brought with me, I have the same with me when I die.

The fourth type of shraavak is one who expands his/her punya and qualities that he/she was born with.

These four shraavaaks are based on a practical viewpoint. From the angle of "tattva gyaan" (spiritual viewpoint), there are also four types of shraavak.

1 - Sulabh Bodhi Shraavak - Sulabh = easily available. Bodhi = samyak darshan. gyaan. awareness of the self. So Sulabh Bodhi is one who from birth is simple, and straightforward - he does not have to work at it. These qualities are inherent in him. The two main qualities of a Sulabh Bodhi are faith and straightforwardness. They are transparent in their attitude and behaviour, without any pretense - just

like a child.

2 - Samyak Drishti Shraavak - meaning, one who has got the right attitude and clear vision; one who knows right from wrong; one who knows the difference between body and soul; one who sees everything as it is. And to achieve this drishti, one must have knowledge of "nav tattva".

Nav tattva knowledge comprises of:

- a) What is jiva? Living being
- b) What is ajiva? Non-living being
- c) What is punya? Good deeds
- d) What is paap? Bad deeds
- e) What is aasrava? Influx of karmas
- f) What is samvara? Stopping of karmas
- g) What is nirjara? Destroying of karmas
- h) What is bandh? Bondage of karmas
- i) What is moksha? Liberation from karmas

One who has the proper knowledge of all of the above can be called a Samyak Drishti Shraavak. The quality of this type of shraavak is compassion, care and right values.

3 - Vрати Shraavak - meaning one who has accepted the twelve vows. Some of these vows are Ahimsa, Satya, Chaurya, Brahmacharya. So this type of shraavak follows certain rules in his life and conduct. These are "niyams" he has taken throughout his life, and adheres to it. One must take some "niyams" in their life - for example, even if you don't eat meat, you should take a "nyam" of not eating meat for life. This puts you in the category of the Vрати Shraavak. Otherwise not.

4 - Pratimadhari Shraavak - pratima = God's idol / HIS qualities. dhaari = acceptance. So if you accept the idol / qualities of the God, then even your life can be steady, pure and elevated. There are twelve such pratimas like darshan pratima, giving up food at night, etc. Every year, one should add one additional quality, until you reach the final pratima where you live in society and in your house, but you live like a saadhu. These are the qualities and characteristics of a Pratimadhari Shraavak.

In the end, Swamiji expresses his immense happiness that community members arrive in such big numbers and with great pleasure to listen to him. And that

Navnat Vanik Association (UK) 2012

Paryushan Celebrations

inspires him to talk with such passion and intensity. Swamiji also expresses his gratitude towards Acharya Lokeshmuniji for recommending him, and making it possible for Swamiji to come here.