

## Paryushan Māhāparva : A festival of Non-violence

Paryushan Parva is a spiritual festival which revolves around non-violence. Non-violence is the key principle of Jainism. As Lord Mahavir says 'life is dear to all'. Lord Mahavir gave a new meaning of non-violence. Non-violence does not only mean to not kill but it conveys vast meaning to not hurt any being by thinking, speech or deed . Extension of non-violence is love, amity, forgiveness and friendliness to all. Paryushan Mahaparva, which is celebrated for eight days, gives the message of non-violent life-style.

'Prayushan' is composed of prefix 'pari' and the word 'vasan'; which means 'to stay within' or 'to stay around the consciousness'. It indicates that it is purely concerned with our consciousness and inner awareness. And this is the time to awaken and emanate our inner power, which is dormant, inactive and hidden within us. The objectives to celebrate this festival are:

- ❖ To calm down the passions like anger, ego etc.
- ❖ To contract and control the sense organs.
- ❖ To shift the consciousness from the unwanted acts and attitude.
- ❖ To audit our past deeds
- ❖ To make positive resolution
- ❖ To enhance humanity by expanding amity.
- ❖ To develop a non-violent personality.

This festival says us to develop 'high thinking and simple living'. It is not material-oriented. It does not say to eat more, to visit more or to buy more. But it says to moderate the eating, outer trip and consumption. We should try to understand the difference between our need and wants. A need can be fulfilled, but wants can never be. That's why this festival says to control our wants. To control the desires inner purity or strength is required. One can increase the inner strength by chanting mantra, doing penance and meditation, spending time more spiritually.

This festival increases awareness in our daily activity like minimize the use of water, to not hurt any living being like bugs, to behave friendly, to respect other views etc.

### **How to celebrate Paryushan?**

- ❖ Practice 'sāmāyika' i.e. equanimity.
- ❖ Control over food (only veg-diet, avoid spicy food, drinks)
- ❖ Read spiritual books (at least 15 min.)
- ❖ Speak little and loving words (observe one hr. complete silence)
- ❖ At least 20 min. meditation.
- ❖ Control over anger
- ❖ Think positive
- ❖ Observe celibacy
- ❖ No food at night
- ❖ No party
- ❖ Respect others (elder as well as younger)
- ❖ everyday send the vibration of friendliness to all living-being

By following such life style one can have a peaceful and happy life. It purifies our emotions and thereby consciousness. It is an opportunity to fill the lacking qualities in our life. It is the time to see ourselves. It is the time to give a new shape to ourselves.

In nut shell, we can say that Paryushan Parva is to welcome the forgiveness, compassion and appreciation and to farewell the hostility, ego and rudeness. Celebrate it with full enthusiasm and light the lamp of love.