

Quotations From Scriptures:

*Selections From Acharya Umasvati's TATTVAARTH SUTRA*¹

Introduction

Acharya Umasvati's TATTVAARTH SUTRA presents a systematic and comprehensive view of the seven aspects of reality, relating to the basic principles of Jainism. The first five chapters essentially deal with the first two aspects of reality, souls (JEEV) and matter (PUDGAL). The third aspect of reality, influx of karmic matter toward soul (AASRAV), is the subject of the sixth chapter. Some conspicuous aspects of influx of karmas are presented in chapter seven.

As described earlier, the influx of karmic matter occurs on account of yoga, the activities of body, speech and mind. All living beings indulge in yoga and thus they continually acquire karmic particles, which become associated with their souls. This is bondage of karma (BANDH). Undesirable yoga, immoral thoughts, words and deeds cause the influx and bondage of inauspicious (PAAP) karma, while good, kind and altruistic thoughts, speech and activities lead to the influx and bondage of (PUNYA) auspicious karma. Fruition of auspicious karmas is instrumental in bringing about a 'good' life - peace and harmony, which is conducive to spiritual uplift. However, in the final analysis, mere good deeds and thoughts are not sufficient for attaining the supreme spiritual state. Ultimately, to attain salvation from mundane existence, a worldly soul has to abandon good as well as bad physical, verbal and mental activities to stop karmic influx and bondage. This is a unique feature of Jainism.

When an individual voluntarily adopts the vows of nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness, he/she moves closer to his/her inner self. According to fundamental Jain concepts, the intrinsic

¹ Based on the following commentaries on TATTVAARTH SUTRA:

TATTVAARTH SUTRA by Acharya Umasvati, commentary by Pandit Sukh Lal Sanghvi, English translation by K. K. Dixit, published by L. D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, 1974.

TATTVAARTH SUTRA by Acharya Umasvati, commentary by Pandit Phool Chandra Siddhantacharya, published by Varni Granthmala, Varanasi, 1949.

TATTVAARTH SUTRA by Acharya Umasvati, commentary by Pandit Mohan Lal Shastri, published by Saral Jain Granth Bhandar, Jabalpur, 1983.

Reality, English translation of Acharya Pujya Pad's SARVAARTHASIDDHI by S. A. Jain, published by Vir Sasana Sangha, Calcutta, 1960.

'That Which Is', a commentary on TATTVAARTH SUTRA by Dr Nath Mal Tatia, published by Harper Collins, 1994.

MOKSHASHASTRA, VIMAL PRASHNOTTARI TEEKA by Aaryika Syaadavaadamati, published by Bharatavarshheeya Anekaant Vidvat Parishad, 2004.

attributes of soul - absolute perception, absolute knowledge and absolute bliss, are obscured by the mantle of karmic matter associated with the soul. When the soul sheds the karmas, it is liberated and enjoys its intrinsic attributes. In the same vein, nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness are innate human qualities. When an individual practices these virtues, he/she dwells in his/her inner being and enjoys genuine happiness and peace of mind.

Chapter 7. Influx Of Auspicious Karma

Intrinsic Human Qualities

The five vows:

HIMSAANRITASTEYAABRAHMAPARIGRAHEBHYO VIRATIRVRATAM [7-1]

The five vows (VRATS) are: scrupulously refraining from violence (HIMSA), untruth (ANRIT), stealing (ASTEYA), unchastity (ABRAHMA) and possessiveness (PARIGRAH).

When an individual adopts the five vows, he/she advances from the fourth (AVIRAT, vowless rational) stage of spiritual development to the fifth (DESH VIRAT, partial vows) stage. This implies that rational perception is a significant feature of this process. According to the fundamental concepts of the Jain religion, rational perception and rational knowledge are essential for rational conduct. Rational perception implies that one needs to be open-minded, dispassionate, unbiased, impartial and logical. In such an instance, the knowledge possessed by the individual becomes rational knowledge. Evidently, this knowledge is not necessarily exact, accurate or absolutely true. Further, it continues to evolve as the level of study and understanding of the individual unfolds and develops. Remember, only an omniscient possesses absolute knowledge. Ordinary individuals are expected to ascertain the aspects of reality - the nature of their worldly existence, based on their study, observation, experience and logical thinking. An individual having such a frame of mind adopts the five VOWS.

A vow is a resolution adopted voluntarily with the intention of improving one's quality of life. Just as infinite perception, knowledge and bliss are intrinsic attributes of a soul, similarly, nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness are considered to be distinctive human virtues and so they conform to the innate nature of man. Therefore, one moves closer to one's inner self by practicing the five vows. The five vows enhance virtues in the lives of individuals and induce inner peace and happiness. Individuals deviating from their inner self

indulge in violence, untruth, stealing, unchastity and possessiveness. Thus the five vices defile the character of an individual.

According to the above concept, there are two facets of vows, like the two sides of a coin:

(a) The first facet entails refraining from vices such as violence and untruth that are deviations from the inner self. This requires self-control and abstinence (regulation/absence of activities of body, speech and mind). This is the negative aspect of vows, which may bring about stoppage of karmic influx (SAMVAR).

(b) The second facet of vows involves embracing the virtues and dwelling in the innate nature of self. This is the positive aspect in which an individual has qualities such as compassion, mutual understanding and amity. These cause the influx of meritorious karmas (PUNYA).

Violence is of two kinds: physical violence (DRAVYA HIMSA) and abstract or mental violence (BHAAV HIMSA). Physical violence implies obstruction of the life processes of self and/or of other living beings. Abstract violence is essentially the defilement of one's thoughts and feelings. The cycle of violence consists of a number of phases. The individual indulges in improper thoughts and feelings and commits abstract violence of self. Then he/she may indulge in physical violence directed toward others and/or self. The victim of physical violence may react and indulge in feelings such as revenge or remorse - an aspect of mental violence. He/she may commit further physical violence on the aggressor. Evidently, all these phases are not present in each instance. The influx of karmas is caused by abstract (mental) violence. The negative aspect of vows implies absence of abstract violence and thus causes stoppage of influx of karmas. The positive aspect of vows, obviously, involves propitious thought activity and so it leads to the influx of meritorious karma.

Essentially, the vows of truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness complement and sustain the vow of nonviolence. In view of the definition of violence, untruth (falsehood) involves violence of thoughts and feelings of self and of others, which in some cases may lead to physical violence. In view of the fact that one's physical health is affected by one's thoughts and feelings, abstract violence can lead to physical violence. Thus the vow of truth is closely related to the vow of nonviolence.

The vow of non-stealing complements the vows of truth and nonviolence. One who indulges in stealing invariably has thoughts and feelings of falsehood, misinterpretation, dishonesty and distortion, which

are aspects of mental violence. Similarly, an individual who indulges in unchastity - pursuit of sensual pleasure, has a defiled mental state. In many instances, such individuals indulge in stealing, untruth and violence. Finally, possessiveness may involve a combination of vices of unchastity, stealing and untruth. Thus the vow of non-possessiveness also is essential for the practice of nonviolence. It should be pointed out that any other vice such as the use of intoxicating substances, gambling, exploitation and bribery involves violence and amounts to a combination of the above five vices.

Two levels of vows:

DESHASARVATOANUMAHATI [7-2]

Partly refraining from the above vices constitutes partial or minor vows (ANUV RAT) and completely abstaining from the five vices comprises total or major vows (MAHAAVRAT).

Householders adopt the five vows of nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness partially. Thus their vows are called minor vows. Ascetics, who renounce all material possessions and all related activities, follow the five vows completely, and their vows are called major vows. The transition from minor to major vows seems to involve a phased renunciation of vices.

In Jain religious books, violence has been classified as follows:

1. Intentional violence (SANKALPI HIMSA), which is the intentional killing or hurting of self and of others.
2. Subsistence-related violence (AARAMBHI HIMSA), which is violence involved in cooking, cleaning, etc.
3. Occupation-related violence (UDYOGI HIMSA), which is the violence involved in pursuing agriculture, industry, business and profession.
4. Adversary-related violence (VIRODHI HIMSA), which is the violence involved in dealing with undesirable elements of society. It is the violence committed in self-defense.

All four kinds of violence cause the influx of undesirable karmas.

A votary may renounce only intentional violence as part of his/her minor vow of nonviolence. Later, he/she may gradually set limits on other kinds of violence. Ultimately, the votary may relinquish all four kinds of violence and adopt the major vow of nonviolence.

Five observances for imbibing each vow:

TATASTHAIRYAARTHAM BHAAVANAAH PANCH PANCH [7-3]

Each one of the five vows has five observances for imbibing it.

For the sake of advancing and sustaining the vows, five observances have been established for each vow. Obviously, maintaining the vows is a challenge and an individual may need some support, which is provided by the observances. The observances involve contemplation and appropriate physical activities that provide incitement and stimulation to practice the vows. The observances help the votary embrace a proper frame of mind and follow a decorous lifestyle.

The five observances for the vow of nonviolence:

VAANGMANOGUPTTEERYAADAANANIKSHEPANASAMITYAALOKITAPAANABHOJANAANI
PANCH [7-4]

The five observances for the vow of nonviolence are: self-restraint of speech (VACHANAGUPTI), self-restraint of thought (MANOGUPTI), conscientiousness in walking (EIRYAA SAMITI), conscientiousness in picking up and placing objects (AADAANANIKSHEPAN SAMITI), and conscientiously minimizing violence in procuring and preparing foods and drinks (AALOKITAPAANABHOJAN).

Self-restraint of speech implies avoiding arguments, disputes and contentions, and staying calm and quiet in controversial situations. Self-restraint of thought entails evading untoward thoughts and feelings such as malice, hatred, resentment and bitterness. Conscientiousness in walking and conscientiousness in handling different objects are meant for avoiding/minimizing violence of tiny living beings in the environment. Similar considerations apply to practicing conscientiousness in obtaining and preparing foods and drinks.

The word 'AALOKIT' means properly lighted or illuminated. This entails that the foods and drinks be prepared and consumed during the daytime when there is ample sunlight mostly and the bacterial content in the atmosphere is minimal. Thus AALOKITAPAANABHOJAN implies giving up eating and drinking at night (RAATRIBHOJANATYAAG).

The five observances for the vow of truth:

KRODHALOBHABHEERUTVAHAASYAPRATYAAKHYAANAANYANUVEECHI-
BHAASHANAM CHA PANCH [7-5]

The five observances for the vow of truth are: renunciation (PRATYAAKHYAAN) of anger (KRODH), renunciation of greed (LOBHA), renunciation of cowardice (BHEERUTVA), renunciation of frivolity (HAASYA) and speaking in conformity with the scriptural view of reality (ANUVEECHIBHAASHAN).

Individuals tell lies because of iniquitous passions such as anger, greed, fear and frivolity. Therefore, for the practice of the vow of truth, it is

essential to realize that violence is involved in anger, greed, cowardice and frivolity. It is inappropriate to hide the truth on account of fear. Further, a votary should concentrate on the scriptural view of reality.

The five observances for the vow of non-stealing:

SHOONYAAGAARAVIMOCBITAAVAASAPAROPARODHAAKARANABHAIKSHASHUDDHI
SADHARMAAVISAMVAADAAH PANCH [7-6]

The five observances for the vow of non-stealing are: living in a desolate place (SHOONYAAGAARAVAAS), living in an abandoned place (VIMOCBITAAVAAS), sharing one's residence and possessions with others (PAROPARODHAAKARAN), accepting clean and simple food (BHAIKSHYASHUDDHI), and avoiding arguments with one's coreligionists (SADHARMAAVISAMVAAD).

Individuals who practice non-stealing do not claim ownership of any residence or materials. They consider that even their personal effects do not exclusively belong to them. Thus they reside in desolate places such as forests, caves and abandoned houses. Generally, while visiting any town or city, they stay in rooms and houses (DHARMASHAALAS) that are community property. They willingly share their residence and possessions with others and are satisfied with clean and simple food. Further, they avoid altercations with their coreligionists or with any other individuals over material possessions. Evidently, a plain and simple social life filled with contentment is conducive for practicing the vow of non-stealing.

The five observances for the vow of chastity:

STREERAAGAKATHAASHRAVANATANMANOHARAANGANIREEKSHANAPOORVARATAA
NUSMARANAVRISHYESHTARASASVASHAREERASAMSKAARATYAAGAAH PANCH [7-7]

The five observances for the vow of chastity are: renunciation of tales of adoration of the opposite sex (STRIRAAGAKATHAASHRAVAN), relinquishing looking at their attractive physique (TANMANOHARAANGANIREEKSHAN), evading thoughts of past sensual encounters (POORVARATAANUSMARAN), abstaining from stimulating or delicious foods and drinks (VRISHYESTARAS), and refraining from beautifying one's body (SVASHAREERASAMSKAAR).

For practicing the vow of chastity - purity of body and mind, it is imperative to avoid sensual stimulation and temptations. Thus votaries who adopt the vow of chastity should abstain from hearing the tales of sensual encounters. They should not watch scenes depicting lust, desire and passion. They should not think about past sensuous experiences. They should avoid rich delicious foods and drinks, and refrain from adornment of their bodies.

The five observances for the vow of non-possessiveness:

MANOJNAAMANOJNENDRIYAVISHAYARAAGADVESHAVARJANAANI PANCH [7-8]

The five observances for the vow of non-possessiveness are, respectively, giving up yearning (RAAG) and revulsion (DVESH) for pleasant (MANOJNA) and unpleasant (AMANOJNA) objects of the five senses.

Some material possessions bring about comfort and sensual pleasure. Certain materials cause physical discomfort and pain. Experiences of physical pleasure and pain lead to an assortment of thoughts and feelings involving attachment and aversion, which cause the influx of meritorious and demeritorious karmas. Votaries who adopt the vow of non-possessiveness contemplate on these aspects of worldly existence. Thus they give up attachment and aversion for means of pleasure and pain relating to the five senses of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing.

Defilement of Human Character

Deleterious impact of immoralities on life:

HIMSAADISHVIHAAMUTRAAPAAYAADVADARSHANAM [7-9]

Immoralities, such as violence and untruth, tarnish and vitiate the purpose and objective of present life as well as of afterlife, and bring disgrace and infamy to the individual.

All living beings yearn for peace of mind, happiness and honorable status in life. Those who are in pursuit of spiritualism also wish for an exalted afterlife. The five vices, violence, untruth, stealing, unchastity and possessiveness, are detrimental to these objectives. Individuals who indulge in physical and/or mental violence, falsity, stealing, unchastity and blind pursuit of materialism lose the respect of all. They suffer shame and contempt in the present life. On account of their indecorous and immoral mental activity, they obtain painful karmas that vitiate their afterlife as well.

In particular, one who commits violence out of feelings of anger, pride or revenge, loses his calm and peace of mind. One, who indulges in lies and misrepresentations, loses the confidence of his fellow men. The thief, who revels in corrupt practices, even if he/she is not caught, faces living hell due to the fear of being exposed. An unchaste person, especially one who indulges in illicit conduct, has an uneasy mind due to amorous excitement and loses control over himself/herself. He/she cannot discriminate between right and wrong. The pursuit of material possessions is like a fire being intensified with fuel. Desires know no limit. In sum, the five vices bring only misery and shame to individuals. One

should realize that the discipline of adopting the five vows is a welcome retreat from the trials and tribulations of life.

Ultimate consequence of vices:

DUHKHAMEV VAA [7-10]

In the ultimate analysis, these vices are quintessence of physical and mental suffering.

A votary contemplating on the real nature of worldly existence, thinks that vices of violence, untruth, stealing, unchastity and possessiveness involve considerable physical and mental anguish, and thereby make a substantial impact on the individual and society as a whole. They are the root cause of anxiety, stress and strife. Violence procreates violence, untruth leads to mistrust, stealing leads to incertitude, unchastity brings about conflict in one's psyche and in society, and possessiveness leads to indiscretion and greed. One can see that all ills of mankind stem from these tendencies. The five vices are the curse for humanity. As more and more people adopt the five vows, the moral standard of society will rise and there will be genuine peace and harmony in the world. Those who profess to establish peace through violent endeavors (wars) only perpetuate the cycle of violence.

Mental state of a rational and ethical individual:

MAITREEPRAMODAKAARUNYAMAADHYASTHAANI

CHA SATTVAGUNAADHIKAKLISHYAMAANAANAVINAYESHU [7-11]

A rational individual, on adopting the five vows, fosters the feelings of amity towards all living beings, delightfully respects the virtuous who are spiritually advanced, showers compassionate regard on those who are afflicted, and practices equanimity towards the discordant ones.

One cannot expect that all people will be ethical and develop impeccable character. Sometimes individuals make errors of judgment, although their intentions may be good. Some people are distressed and afflicted. Some people are worthy in our estimation while some people hold contentious views. The votaries who practice the five vows accommodate all sorts of people. They have the feelings of friendship for all living beings. They realize that the function of living beings is mutual help. The votaries take delight at the sight of virtuous people and shower kindness on those who are afflicted. They do not hold any resentment toward those who do not agree with them and whose actions are unpleasant. This observance provides an effective stimulus and support for the practice of five vows.

Ultimate goal:

JAGATKAAYASVABHAAVAU VAA SAMVEGAVAIRAAGYAARTHAM [7-12]

A virtuous individual meditates upon the nature of reality to imbibe non-attachment to worldly affairs and to ultimately renounce all sensual pursuits.

All men wish to enjoy happiness and peace in life. The starting point for this endeavor is realization of the transient nature of the universe (JAGAT) and of our bodies (KAAYA), including the inner self and mental states. Such an understanding is expected to bring about non-attachment to our environment, animate as well as inanimate. It will also lead to disinterest in worldly affairs and renunciation.

According to the Jain concepts, the universe is permanent from the point of view of the innate attributes of its entities. However, it continuously undergoes transformations according to the laws of nature - the intrinsic attributes of the entities. This concept is close to modern scientific concepts of entities and their transformations. Two of the entities of the universe are, innumerable souls and matter (including energy).

Soul is an entity different from matter. Souls associated with matter are worldly souls. The worldly souls indulge in various kinds of thoughts and emotions, depending upon their level of development. Man is at the top in this respect. The various emotional states constitute abstract karma, which cause the influx of material karmas that become associated with soul. Essentially, material karmas constitute the blueprints of the worldly existence of soul. Evidently, a worldly being has different emotional states at various times. Thus success and failure, hope and disappointment, pleasure and pain, and happiness and misery are part of our worldly existence. Such realization of self and of the surrounding universe leads us to believe that attachment to our animate or inanimate environment, which continually undergoes transformations, is undesirable. To attain real happiness and peace, we should renounce the world. We should concentrate on the inherent qualities of a human being - the virtues of nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness.

Definition of violence:

PRAMATTAYOGAAT PRAANAVYAPAROPANAM HIMSA [7-13]

Violence (HIMSA) is defined as obstruction of the life processes (PRAANS) of self or of other worldly beings effected by lack of conscientiousness (PRAMATTAYOGAAT).

Violence involves impairing, partially or completely, the life processes of living beings, including the self. Life processes are of two kinds: physical (DRAVYA) and abstract (BHAAV). Physical life processes are anatomical and physiological aspects of a living being. These include the five senses, energy, respiration, life-span, and, organs of speech and mind. Abstract life processes include mental activities such as thoughts, feelings and emotions. Violence of physical life processes is called physical violence (DRAVYA HIMSA) and violence of abstract life processes is abstract or mental violence (BHAAV HIMSA).

Indulging in unpleasant or evil thoughts constitutes abstract violence of self. It is undesirable because it causes the influx of painful karma. If an individual thinks of killing or hurting another living being and does not succeed in his/her endeavor, he/she suffers the consequences of ominous karma. On the other hand, if an insect is killed when a votary walks with conscientiousness (EIRYAA SAMITI), little violence is committed in such an instance.

Violence includes much more than killing a living being. Sometimes, the undesirable thoughts and intentions of an individual are latent and at other times, they come out in the open. In either case, the individual commits violence. Becoming angry, abusing, insulting, blaming, scheming and deceiving, all these are aspects of violence. In a nutshell, ignoring and disregarding the means of spiritual pursuit, and indulging in passions of attachment and aversion is violence.

Essentially, worldly beings indulge in two kinds of thought activity on account of passions: sentiments of attachment (RAAG) and sentiments of aversion (DVESH). The latter obviously constitutes aspects of violence. One may try to justify violence in some instances, especially those related to attachment. For example, when one's religious establishment is under attack, one may resist the assailants and commit violence. However, in such situations, the vow of nonviolence entails that the votary should have the sentiments of preserving the establishment and not of revenge or of killing of the assailants. An ascetic who observes the major vow of nonviolence does not condone or encourage any violence involved in protecting a religious establishment on any grounds.

Sentiments of attachment have been described to be of two kinds: auspicious (PRASHAST) and inauspicious (APRASHAST). Interest in entities instrumental in spiritual pursuit is auspicious attachment, while interest in rest of the entities is inauspicious. Both are aspects of violence. But, as long as a votary is in pursuit of spiritualism, he/she is bound to indulge in

auspicious attachment. However, in such circumstances, the votary maintains thoughts and feelings of renunciation.

A fundamental concept of Jainism is independence of each individual soul, which is achieved through self-endeavor. That is why Jainism is called the religion of the self-reliant (SHRAMAN DHARM). It is observed that individuals accumulate inordinate quantities of money and materials. They secure power, believe that their viewpoint is absolutely correct and that the well-being of others is in their hands. In many instances, this is considered as a noble endeavor. Imperialism, capitalism, communism, and various groups and institutions have resulted from such tendencies. The concept of God seems to be a consequence of similar motivations. Such schools of thought have resulted in a series of conflicts in the history of the world. When man disregards his inner self and concentrates on his animate and inanimate external environment, violence is generated. Disregard of one's inner self is self-directed violence. The best course is to look inward, realize one's weaknesses and limitations, and seek a healthy social life involving mutual cooperation. This is the concept of independence of each individual, which is closely related to our practice of nonviolence.

Definition of untruth:

ASADABHIDHAANAMANRITAM [7-14]

Untruth (ANRIT, exceptionable speech) is defined as stating what is fallacious and afflictive (ASAT). In this context as well, the phrase 'effected by lack of conscientiousness (PRAMATTAYOGAAT)' of aphorism 7-13 is applicable.

Exceptionable speech consists of false, inaccurate, offensive, distasteful and unpleasant words. Activities like making elusive and misleading statements, trying to cover up facts, using abusive language, and using harsh words are objectionable. Attempts to deny the facts with false assertions, backbiting and talking nonsense/gibberish are unacceptable. Exceptionable speech does not conform to human virtues, the intrinsic qualities of man. Therefore, it is a form of violence of self. Further, it is detrimental to the welfare of other individuals and society as a whole.

In many instances of human interactions, it is important to consider the phrase 'effected by lack of conscientiousness'. For example, when a parent or teacher censures and disciplines a child, some unpleasant words are spoken and feelings may be hurt. The intention of such censure and discipline is the welfare of the child. There is no malice or negligence

involved. Both parties should realize this. The teachers and parents also should be reasonable and avoid using unkind words.

Definition of stealing:

ADATTAADAANAM STEYAM [7-15]

Stealing (STEYA) is defined as appropriating objects, amenities and rights that have not been given. In this context as well, the phrase 'effected by lack of conscientiousness (PRAMATTAYOGAAT)' of aphorism 7-13 is applicable.

Stealing means indiscreetly or discreetly taking any material that is not given by the owner. There are many aspects of stealing. In general, people consider that taking an object without the knowledge of the owner is stealing. However, any corrupt practice involving transfer of money and/or material is theft. For example, cheating the customers by providing inferior goods and services, giving or accepting bribes, evading taxes, and other similar activities constitute stealing. If a teacher does not perform his/her duty with the best of his/her ability to teach the students, or if a public servant does not do enough to serve the masses, he/she is stealing.

It should be pointed out that when an ascetic walks along roads and streets and lives in a cave or forest or building/room freely available to the public, he/she does not commit theft, because these things are free for everybody's use. The ascetic does not have any passion in using the streets, entrances and dwellings.

Definition of unchastity:

MAITHUNAMABRAHM [7-16]

Unchastity (MAITHUN) is defined as indulgence in pursuit of sensual pleasures.

An individual indulges in unchastity on account of fruition of conduct-deluding (CHAARITRA MOHANEYYA) karma. In general, the Sanskrit word 'MITHUN' implies a couple and copulation (MAITHUN) implies the desire of a couple to touch each other. However, not all interactions between individuals amount to copulation or sensual activities. The activities should arise from lust, desire and passion to be deemed sensual. Thus, interactions between couples such as father and daughter, mother and son, and, brother and sister, are free from lust, and so they cannot be classified as unchastity.

Obviously, unchastity does not necessarily involve a man and a woman. It can be the sensual interaction between two men or two women. Even an individual self may indulge in activity of sensual nature

and commit unchastity. Various acts of unchastity represent an aberrant passionate behavior, deviant from virtuous human qualities. Therefore, they represent the violence of self. Further, unchastity may lead to problems such as misunderstanding, conflict and physical violence.

Definition of possessiveness:

MOORCHHAA PARIGRAHAH [7-17]

Possessiveness (PARIGRAH) is defined as affectionate regard (MOORCHHA) for material possessions.

Affectionate regard or infatuation for external materials such as money, houses, cars and other means of comfort, coupled with indulgence in passions such as anger, pride, intrigue and greed, is possessiveness. Here the emphasis is not on material possessions but on the desire, ambition and endeavor to accumulate riches, and the feeling of attachment to them. Thus, depending upon his mental state, a poor man can be covetous while a rich man can be abstinent and austere.

One may point out that knowledge, perception and conduct are also possessions of a worldly being. However, they do not relate to possessiveness because they are not accompanied by lack of conscientiousness. Essentially, knowledge, perception and conduct are inner attributes of a soul. However, having pride or ego of one's scholarship and knowledge is undesirable.

Possessiveness fuels the pursuit of materialism, the root cause of conflicts and upheavals in the world. Once people begin to attach prominence to material wealth, the state of society starts to decline. It is sad that our institutions and places of worship are involved in similar practices. Considerable time and effort is expended in collecting funds and acquiring expensive objects to decorate the temples and idols. Our temples are places where the concept of VEETARAAG (one who is beyond attachment and aversion) is worshiped. Keeping the temples and celebrations tempered will elevate the concept of VEETARAAG. It will promote our practice of non-possessiveness.

Mindset Of A Virtuous Individual

Characteristics of a votary:

NIHSHALYO VRATI [7-18]

A votary is beyond stings (SHALYA) of ego, intrigue, delusion, desire of sensual pleasures, and the like.

Emotions such as delusion, ego, intrigue and desire for sensual pleasures arouse feelings of guilt, which are like stings that dispirit our

conscience. A votary does not suffer from any sting. He/she has a clear conscience and enjoys genuine peace of mind and happiness.

It is imperative to give up stings in order to adopt the vows. Further, the practice of vows results in absence of stings. This means that one has to be in a proper frame of mind to adopt the life of virtues of nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness.

There are three kinds of stings: delusion-related (MAAYAA) sting, longing-related (NIDAAN) sting, and irrationalism-related (MITHYAADARSHAN) sting. Adopting the vows with hypocritical motive, for the purpose of acclaim, status, and deceiving one's unsuspecting supporters and followers is delusion-related sting. Such individuals are not votaries. They are impostors. Adopting the discipline of a votary with the desire for good karmas resulting in means of comfort and pleasure in the present life and afterlife is longing-related sting. Finally, maintaining faith in concepts described in any religious text or preached by scholars without unbiased objective logical analysis constitutes irrationalism-related sting.

Householders and ascetics:

AGAARYANAGAARASHCHA [7-19]

Votaries belong to two categories: householders who maintain their families and ascetics who renounce their families and all worldly possessions.

A householder resides with his/her family and possesses all materials necessary for sustaining the family. He/she pursues a trade/profession to earn his/her livelihood, and engages in other life-sustaining activities such as cooking and cleaning. The family members support each other and look after the well-being of the family. A householder gradually mitigates his attachment to his home and family with the intention of eventually joining the category of ascetics.

An ascetic, on the other hand, renounces his/her home and, in general, depends on his supporters/followers for his/her subsistence. He/she dwells in caves, forest, abandoned dwellings or community halls. An ascetic does not have a feeling of possessiveness for his/her dwelling or meager possessions, such as a whiskbroom and water pot.

Householder's minor vows:

ANUVRATOAGAARI [7-20]

Householders practice minor (partial) vows (ANUVRAT).

Renunciation is a gradual process. A votary aspires to attain the status of an ascetic. Householder's life is the starting point in which the

votary practices minor vows. He/she practices nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness partially.

The partial vow of nonviolence entails renouncing intentional violence completely and minimizing subsistence-related, occupation-related and adversary-related violence, as much as possible. The partial vow of truth implies refraining from telling blatant lies. In situations where speaking the truth may lead to violence, the votary may keep silent or may change the topic. Much depends on one's discretion. In the case of non-stealing, the votary does not usurp others' property and is discreet in his/her dealings. One, who observes the partial vow of chastity, refrains from premarital and extramarital sex. He/she remains content with his/her spouse. The partial vow of non-possessiveness entails essentially limiting one's desires and acquiring only what is needed for sustenance of one's family. A votary gradually minimizes the degree of violence, untruth, stealing, unchastity and possessiveness in his/her life. In this process, self-restraint of passions and emotions plays a significant role. This endeavor results in advancement of the moral character of self, balance and harmony with one's environment, and inner peace and happiness.

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Originally acquisition was according to need, but as man became used to convenience and material comfort, needless acquisition also started. Then ambition and competition, selfishness and bloated ego, and hoarding and waste resulted because of lack of self-discipline and non-possessiveness. Evidently, to keep ourselves from transgressing on the realm of others, it is imperative that we adopt a mindful exploration that is focused on nonviolence. At social level this attitude will breed harmony as well as reduce the abuse of available resources.

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