

LESSON 09

REMOVAL OF KARMA PART 03

INTERNAL TAP

Internal (Abhyantar) Austerity by its nature is inner in nature contrasting from external austerities, which can be observed or noticed by other. So only you will know if you are performing internal austerities. There is a spiritual progress by external austerities but compared to that spiritual progress by internal austerities is much faster and much broader. There are six divisions of internal austerities and they are:

- I. Atonement (Prayaschit),
- II. Politeness (Vinay),
- III. Serving others (Vaiyavachch),
- IV. Giving away (Vyutsarg),
- V. Spiritual study (Svadhyay),
- VI. Meditation (Dhyan).

Atonement (Prayaschit)

Atonement is the first step in the process of internal austerities. It is the foundation of spiritual progress because here one realizes and becomes aware that he/she has done something wrong or harmed someone and does not want to do such things and wants to come back from there. In atonement (prayaschit) one asks for forgiveness for any harm done to others by ones actions committed knowingly or unknowingly.

Therefore, this being the beginning of realization and first step towards to journey in spiritual thinking as well as life the atonement can be said as gateway to internal austerity. Atonement helps us to reflect upon ourselves in a way that leads to self-correction. This is the beginning of spiritual traveling. Even for a small fault we begin to say, " Michchhami Dukkadam". Once we atone, our mind and thoughts get purer and we do not trouble or harm anyone. We want to be with ourselves with our true Self. When that comes from the bottom of our heart the vibration it sends in the surroundings are of peace, love and respect for all kinds. Our true atonement can resolve most disputes or unfriendly relationship with someone else and if not then at least we are at peace with our self. In real sense we have to rise above the situation where we have no need to even atone because the nature of our soul is not to hurt or harm anyone. So we must keep that as focus of our behavior but in case we regress then take the help of atonement to come back to true nature of self.

It sounds very easy but then question arise that why are we not able to see it being practiced in our life? Well, as the time has passed by we have lost touch with spiritual aspect of life. We have become unconcerned to what happens to Self. Our priorities are mixed up. We have accepted manipulation and crushing others as way of our life. So most of the time, we do not see anything wrong in what we are doing. What does that mean? It means we will have to watch all our actions before they happen. We will not be impulsive in our reactions. So, not only we will control our own responses but we will also control our responses to someone else's actions. If someone offends us we will now think that he/she does not know what wrong he is doing (that is his/her Paryay) and I do not want to make my paryay like his/her. So you will not react to his actions and the question of atonement will not arise. It may take time to form this habit but once we

make a serious commitment for it and if be vigilant of our actions then there will be less and less responses to hurt or harm anyone. So slowly but steadily we will reach to this stage of being unaffected by someone else's actions.

Performing of atonement is for both ascetics as well as householders. All are suppose to atone as soon as the mistake is realized. Ascetics are more vigilant because they have taken vow not to hurt anyone at anytime. But even householder should not put it off for a later time or day because harm done to the soul by way of accumulating karmas is much bigger as more time goes by. Ascetics perform atonement in front of their teacher (guru Bhagwan) and in doing so if he/she is asked to perform any austerity he must do so. Same way householders will perform atonement in front of sadhu or sadhvi and if he is asked to perform any austerity then he/she should do that too. Sometime if there is no sadhu or sadhvi then he can perform atonement in front of elder person and if that is also not possible then he will sit down quietly and do self-atonement. Ascetics as well as householders also do atonement during Pratikraman, which is done twice a day, once in the morning and other one at the evening time. In case if the daily pratikraman is missed out then it should be done at least once in 15 days. If one gets lazier then he/she should do it every four months, but no later than once a year. The reason he should not miss year mark because atonement helps to remove strongest bondage of karma for the things done.

Humility (Vinay)

One must cultivate feeling of reverence and humbleness towards their superiors or for that matter for everybody. Atonement has laid the foundation in our behavior because once we asked for forgiveness form everybody, respect for others or reverence for others or humbleness will automatically appears in us. The humbleness leads to the development of tolerance and sympathy towards others and in turn that helps us to overcome ego and anger. As soon as we get our ego and anger under control the karmas that are attached to the soul through them fall off.

There are four types of Vinay:

- I. Jnan Vinay - One should be humble and respectful to those who are superior in knowledge and wisdom.
- II. Darshan Vinay - One should be humble and respectful to those who have acquired the true insight of religious principles.
- III. Charitra Vinay - One should be humble and respectful to those who have good morals and follow religious principles.
Mana Vinay – Even in mind one should pay respect and be humble to all saints who help others in their spiritual uplift.
Vachana Vinay - One should pay respect and be humble to all saints when speaking to them.
Kaya Vinay: One should offer salutation to all saints.
- IV. *Kalpa vinay*: One should pay the reverence to the religious books.

3) Serving others (Vaiyavachch)

Vaiyavachch means serving religious teachers, ascetics, virtuous people, sadhus, colleagues, and companions with devotion. One should especially render services to the

sick, the weak, the helpless and who are suffering by giving them food, water, shelter, or clothing. Though this austerity seems to be external activity it makes a person humble and serves the purpose of overcoming ego and hatred.

4) Feeling absolute indifference (nonattachment) to the body (Vyutsarg)

In Vyutsarg, one feels absolute indifferent or nonattached to the body and its needs and gets immersed in the meditation of the Jina, Paramatma or Self (soul) for whatever duration it is possible. It is usually done in standing posture where one does not even move to any physical or other stimulation. It is also called Kayotsarga (because body is renounced to respond to any physical or other stimulation). It is also called as kausag. What is achieved by this is that while in meditation one he does not feel the existence of body and immersed in to Self (Atma) only. We all do kayotsarga but it will be very hard to say how many of us really reach to that level. When soul purifies itself of passions then that is possible. Examples are: Metarya Muni, Gajaskumar Muni, etc.

5) Self-Assessment (Svadhya)

Svadhya means to study self. This means one has to contemplate on oneself that where I am today in respect to my goal of liberation or salvation. Am I on right path? Do I have right conviction? If not, why not? What should I do to develop that? Do I have right knowledge to achieve path of liberation? Am I acting according the path of liberation? These are some of the questions one has to ask oneself. If I do not find answers to those questions then I have to study Jain scriptures to find answers and also to understand the true nature of the self. Through study I will know; who am I? Who should I be? What is the role of and people around me? This is called Svadhya.

Once we become aware of current state of our soul today then we will be able compare it with to the pure nature of the soul and attempt to move in that direction. This will lead us to contemplate on the question: what am I doing in this body? What am I doing to reach that goal? When real urge to be pure soul will arouse in our mind then we will make all the attempts to be that pure soul. It is not that easy that in very first contemplation we will be on right track, not for most of us. But once the journey start it ends where it is suppose to reach. We all will have to be optimistic approach regardless of what we may look today or where we might be in our spiritual search or a status. Thus, through svadhya let us define ourselves, let us define our goals and let us get on that right path as soon as possible as per our abilities then only we will be where we want to be.

The svadhya is divided into five levels:

- I. When we start reading the scriptures is called Vachana.
- II. While reading some doubts may arise and trying to resolve them is called Prachana.
- III. Contemplating on what is learnt is called Anupreksha.
- IV. Reciting Sutra again and again. This repetition is called Amnay.
- V. One should teach others of what has been learnt, is called Dharmopadesh.

These are external svadhya, but they lead us to study the internal status of our self and that is why it is internal tapa. After doing svadhya not only one's conviction or faith will

be strongly established but also will have knowledge and followed by right conduct will open up the path to ultimate liberation.

6) Meditation (Dhyan)

Dhyan means concentrating on one thought or subject. While concentrating on our thoughts we would realize that our thoughts (mind) run in various directions from simple regret for a loss of something or being happy when we get something that we like, or some time we might be building up a rage and sometime our thoughts may be even calm and purer. This means our mind runs in uncontrolled manner in any direction without any scrutiny. Many times we may start thinking in some particular directions but before we realize the mind is already off to the different directions. So in Jainism it is said that we better take control of our thoughts and direct them in right directions and reach to a stage that even good thoughts have to go away and just see the subjects around us and that is about it. Therefore, we need to know what different types of thoughts are so that we can concentrate on them to keep our thoughts in auspicious nature.

Dhyan is divided into four categories:

Arta Dhyan,
Raudra Dhyan,
Dharma Dhyan,
Shukla Dhyan.

They will be discussed in detail in coming lessons.