

## LESSON 10

## PUNIA SHRAVAK

Punia Shrawaka and his wife were the poor villagers by their own choice, who lived in a small shack made of mud and grass. Punia had a vow not to earn more than 12 Dokadas (1/12 rupee) every day. He did that by spinning cotton yarn in the house and selling it. They also had another vow in which he would fast one day and his wife would fast on the next day. Even in such a tight situation, they offered the hospitality to fellow Jain. In this way, the couple performed Sadharmik Bhakti (helping people of same faith) every day.

Punia shrawaka was known for his practice of samayik. Once during samayik, he could not concentrate on meditation. He started thinking to himself what had he done that would disturb his meditation. He could not recollect anything relevant. Therefore, he asked his wife, "What have we done different that I can't concentrate today." At first, his wife could not think of anything different happened today. But as she kept thinking, she remembered that today while coming back from market, she had picked up dry cow-manure and used that as fuel to cook. She told Punia about this. He told her that she should not have done that even though it did not belong to any one. We should use only things which are bought from our daily earnings. Punia could do true samayik because he lived such high moral life.

Even Lord Mahavira praised his samayik. Once when king Shrenik asked Lord Mahavira how he can destroy his bad karmas to avoid being born in hell. Lord Mahavira said, "If you can buy Punia shrawak's samayik then it may be possible." King Shrenik went to Punia shrawaka and asked him, if he could buy his samayik. He said, "I do samayik not to sell, but to uplift my own soul. Religious rituals can't be purchased. One has to do for himself." King Shrenik left in disappointment but with admiration for Punta's real faith in religion.

This shows that one can live content life even with limited earnings. We should not take anything which is not given to us. We should accumulate more money if we have set our limits because it will disturb the peace. Vows or rituals are done for spiritual uplift and not for monetary gain.