

## LESSON 17

## FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness means pardoning someone who may have harmed or hurt us. In Jainism, just as Ahinsa is the main goal, forgiveness is also another main action.

We should forgive those who during daytime or during our lifetime might have said harsh words to us or physically might have harmed, hurt or abused us. Even if they have hurt us a lot, we should forgive them.

When someone does nasty things to us or tells ugly words to us, we should think that this is happening because we might have done or said something bad to them either in this life or in previous lives. If we do not want this to happen again, we should not try to get even but rather we should stay calm and not get angry. We must think and accept that those bad karmas are maturing now and these are their results. We must also think that those people who are harming us are just the instrumental in producing the results of our past deeds. Therefore, we must stay calm and peaceful with lots of patience and must develop the feeling of forgiveness towards them. If not we will acquire more bad karmas. So forgiveness is a remedy for future suffering.

The forgiveness reminds us the most popular story of Tirthankara Mahavira who forgave Chandkaushika, the poisonous snake, even though it bit him. This shows that if Tirthankara Mahavira could forgive such an evil snake, then we, his followers, should also forgive those who hurt us.

Forgiving helps our soul to purify while anger pollutes it and increases worldly wandering.

Therefore, just as Ahinsa is part of our life, we should also make forgiveness as a part of our life.