Jain Tradition of Paryūṣaṇa Parva: Global Harmony and Co-existence

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Abstract

India, known for its rich cultural diversity, celebrates numerous festivals throughout the monsoon season. Among them are Guru Purnima, Raksha Bandhan, Janmashtami, Rishi Panchami, and Anant Chaturdashi. A particularly significant celebration during this time in the Jain community is Paryūṣaṇa Parva (observed by the Śvetāmbara sect) or Daśalakṣaṇa

Parva (celebrated by the Digambara sect).

Paryūṣaṇa Parva signifies non-violence, self-purification, and a path to spiritual upliftment. Everyone wants to live a peaceful and happy life, but they can't. So, in Jain tradition, the spiritual festival Paryūṣana Parva is celebrated.

Daśalakṣaṇa, the sacred parva period emphasizes the Ten Universal Virtues (Daśalakṣaṇa Dharma): forgiveness, humility, straightforwardness, truthfulness, self-restraint, austerity, renunciation, non-attachment, celibacy, and supreme penance. The festival transcends ritualistic observance to embody universal values of non-violence, self-discipline, forgiveness, and spiritual purification. This eight to ten-days parva involves intense self-discipline, spiritual reflection, and moral transformation. The Jain tradition encourages individuals to turn inward, surpass ego, and develop compassion for all living beings—ideals that are needed in today's conflict-ridden world.

Objective of this paper is to explore how the core principles of Paryūṣaṇa Parva promote inner transformation and contribute to fostering global harmony and peaceful co-existence. This research explores the modern relevance of the principles such as Ahiṃsā (non-violence), Anekāntavāda (non-absolutism), and Aparigraha (non-attachment), embedded within the festival.

This research explores the philosophical roots, ritual practices, and ethical teachings of Paryūṣaṇa Parva. The study also examines how ancient spiritual insights contribute to resolving modern global conflicts and building a more compassionate and sustainable world. Paryūṣaṇa offers solutions to conflicts, environmental problems, and social breakdown.

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The research involves study of Jain scriptures, traditions, and modern practices. The research reveals that each of the rituals promote certain messages such as Pratikramaṇa (self-reflection) and Michchhāmi Dukkaḍaṃ (asking forgiveness) teach humility, to manage conflict, and to be in unison. This sacred festival can certainly act as a guide for the world.

The study concludes that Paryūṣaṇa Parva is not just a religious celebration. It is an eternal guide for ethical living that can help to establish global harmony and peaceful co-existence. The teachings from Paryūṣaṇa Parva offer a ray of hope.

Keywords: Paryūṣaṇa Parva, Daśalakṣaṇa Parva, Jain Tradition, Daśa Dharma, Michchhāmi Dukkaḍaṃ, Forgiveness, Global Harmony, Co-existence

Research Questions

Does the Jain Tradition of Paryūṣaṇa Parva endorse global harmony and co-existence? How does the observance of Paryūṣaṇa Parva reflect Jain values that support global harmony and peaceful co-existence?

Do the rituals such as Pratikramaṇa (self-reflection) and Michchhāmi Dukkaḍaṃ (asking forgiveness) induce humility, reduce conflict, and encourage reunion?

How the core principles of Paryūṣaṇa Parva and Jainism in general promote inner transformation, a fundamental factor necessary to bring about the desired outcome?

Objective

- To analyse the spiritual and ethical significance of Paryūṣaṇa Parva.
- To explore the relevance of Dash Dharmas, followed during Paryūṣaṇa, to global harmony and peace.
- > To explore how such values, promoted through Paryūṣaṇa Parva, can be implemented.

Methods and Materials

Methodology:

This research is based on qualitative textual analysis. Primary Jain scriptures (Āgamas), secondary literature on Jain philosophy, and contemporary interpretations of Paryūṣaṇa are examined. The study is interdisciplinary, incorporating philosophical, ethical and practical perspectives.

To conduct this research following approach was followed:

- To study global harmony and co-existence & ancient Jain theory

- To derive the deeper meanings communicated in Jain texts

The following literature is referred through the study:

- 1. Jain, Laksmi. Dalal, Tarla. Jain, Manoj. (2005) Jain Food: Compassionate and healthy cooking, vegetarian cook book. Publisher Manoj Jain
- 2. Madhukar Muni. (2023). Uttarādhyayana Sūtra. Āgam Prakashan Samiti.
- 3. Mosher Luninda Allen (2005). Faith in The Neighbourhood Praying: The Rituals of Faith
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Introduction

In Jain cosmology, the cosmic time cycle is divided into two halves, known as Kālacakra. Utsarpiņī is the progressive phase, and Avasarpiņī is the regressive phase. After both phases are completed, life begins again. According to the Digambaras, seven types of good and bad rains fall for seven days each, and then life starts on Bhādrapad Śukla Pañcamī. The Śvetāmbaras believe that the seven types of rains fall for one day each, and life also begins on Bhādrapad Śukla Pañcamī.

This day is celebrated as Khamat Khamnā or Saṃvatsarī in the Śvetāmbara tradition. In the Digambara tradition, it is observed as Uttama Kṣamā Day. On this day, Śvetāmbaras perform kṣamā yācanā, meaning they request forgiveness from everyone. Digambaras seek forgiveness in Jain temples and celebrate Kṣamāvaṇī Parva on the eleventh day after Bhādrapad Śukla Pañcamī.

The Śvetāmbaras believe that during the days of seven rains, one should perform as much puṇya (virtue) as possible and remove pāpa (sin). On the eighth day, with Khamat Khamnā, they begin life afresh, free from hatred and animosity. The Digambaras believe that since new life begins on this day, it should be celebrated for ten days.

This holiest celebration for Jains comes in late August or early September as per English calendar. Paryūṣaṇa Parva is a time of intense spiritual reflection and ethical living, observed annually by the Jain community. "Śvetāmbara sect calls it Paryūṣaṇa Parva (Coming together Festival) which lasts for 8 days. Digamber sect calls it Daśalakṣaṇa Parva (Ten Virtues Festival) and lasts for 10 days" (Mosher, 2005). Meaning of Paryūṣaṇa Parva is coming together from all directions for self-growth and transformation. Another meaning of Paryūṣaṇa is "Pari + Ushan = all kinds + to burn= to burn (shed) all type of karma" (Shah, 2012). It emphasizes introspection, penance, forgiveness, and renunciation. It is considered the most sacred period in the Jain calendar. It offers an opportunity to purify our soul by

observing and correcting our own faults, asking for forgiveness for the mistakes we have committed, and taking vows to minimize our faults. To purify the soul Tapaḥs (austerities), Svādhyāya (scripture study), Pratikramaṇa (repentance) and others are observed.

Many ceremonies are arranged in Jain temples or community halls during this Parva. Jain monks and nuns deliver sermons on the Daśa Dharmas for ten days to laymen and laywomen. Five essential activities followed during Paryūṣaṇa, as mentioned in the book available on the Jain Library website (Jain Foundation, n.d.) are:

Amari Pravartan: Which means leading a non-violent life, working towards a non-violent world, and supporting animal welfare activities.

Sädharmik Vätsalya: Means Respecting fellow human beings and supporting humanitarian activities.

Attham Tapah: Means observing fasts for the last three days of Paryūṣaṇa.

Chaitya Paripäti: Means visiting different Jain temples, Jain libraries, Upäshrays, and supporting other charitable and religious organizations.

Kshamäpana: Means repenting our sins, forgiving others and requesting forgiveness from others.

In an era marked by conflict, ecological degradation, and cultural division, the values practiced during Paryūṣaṇa —non-violence, forgiveness, truth, and non-possessiveness—offer timeless guidance. These practices resonate with the ideals of global harmony and coexistence, emphasizing empathy, tolerance, and respect for all forms of life.

Global Harmony and Co-existence

As Jawaharlal Nehru said, "The only alternative to co-existence is co-destruction." We are living in an era full of problems. We are surrounded by warfare, pandemics, global warming, and more. These problems cannot be solved by any individual alone. They cannot be solved by a small group either. The problems can be solved only when we are united. We must find solutions together. Technology alone will not be able to solve these problems. Each individual must realize deeply that "I myself, other people, and the Earth are an inseparable oneness" (Lee & Kim, 2023).

Global harmony means a state where diverse nations, cultures, religions, and communities live together peacefully. It means respecting each other's differences. It also means nurturing shared values of compassion, justice, and mutual understanding. Coexistence is more than just tolerance. It needs active engagement. It needs open dialogue. It needs collaboration

across divisions. We must see diversity not as a threat, but as a strength. As the African proverb says, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

Religious and philosophical traditions across the world have always promoted peace and co-existence. Jainism emphasizes Anekāntavāda — the respect for many viewpoints — teaching that no single view holds the complete truth. Buddhist teachings on compassion (karuṇā) and Christian teachings on love and forgiveness also support unity and empathy. Today's world faces huge challenges. Climate change, pandemics, economic inequality, and armed conflict affect us all. No nation or community can survive alone. Solutions need co-operation that crosses all borders.

Organizations like the United Nations promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve peace, justice, and strong institutions, all based on cooperation and mutual respect. Global harmony begins at the individual level. It starts with cultivating empathy. It grows by practicing non-violence in speech and action. It strengthens by embracing cultural diversity. It deepens through respectful dialogue. Education, interfaith movements, cultural exchanges, and global citizenship all help in creating a world where co-existence is not just an ideal, but a daily reality.

In essence, global harmony and co-existence are not ideal dreams. They are achievable goals. They are rooted in ancient wisdom. They are urgently needed for our shared future.

Daśa Dharmas (Ten Virtues) in Jainism: Global Harmony and Co-existence

In Jain philosophy, the Daśa Dharmas are not just personal values but are seen as universal principles. Practicing them leads to Ahiṃsā (non-violence), Satya (Truth), Asteya (Non-stealing), Aparigraha (non-possessiveness), and Brahmacharya (Celibacy) — the five pillars of Jain thought that naturally promote global harmony and peaceful co-existence.

Jains believe that each soul is equal and independent. Hurting another being, whether through violence, lies, or greed, is seen as hurting oneself. Therefore, the Daśa Dharmas guide not only personal growth but also social and global well-being.

In today's interconnected world, these ten virtues offer timeless solutions to problems like war, inequality, environmental degradation, and social unrest, helping humanity move toward a more compassionate, just, and sustainable future.

The Daśa Dharmas (Ten Virtues) are essential principles that guide a person toward spiritual growth and a peaceful society. These ten virtues are:

- Kṣamā (Forgiveness)
- Mārdava (Humility)
- Ārjava (Straightforwardness or Honesty)
- Shaucha (Purity)
- Satya (Truthfulness)
- Saṃyama (Self-restraint)
- Tapaḥ (Austerity or Penance)
- Tyāga (Renunciation)
- Akiñcanya (non-attachment)
- Brahmacharya (Celibacy or Control over Senses)

Kṣamā (Forgiveness)

Kṣamā teaches us to let go of hatred and resentment. We forgive them who have ill-treated us and seek forgiveness from them. Forgiveness is sought from all living beings ranging from one sense to five sense beings. Forgiving and seeking forgiveness oils the wheel of life, allowing us to live in harmony with our fellow beings (Shah, 2000). In today's divided world, forgiveness can heal relationships between individuals, communities, and nations.

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"खमावणयाए णं पल्हायणभावं जणयइ | पल्हायणभावमुवगए य सव्वपाण-भूय-जीवसत्तेसु मित्तीभावमुप्पाएइ ।" 29.17 (Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)
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Through the practice of forgiveness (kṣamāvaṇā), one generates a gentle and peaceful disposition. Once peacefulness is achieved, a feeling of friendship (mittī-bhāva) arises towards all living beings—humans, animals, and all forms of life.

Forgiveness dissolves anger and hatred. It heals deep wounds between individuals, communities, and nations.

The ability to forgive and ask for forgiveness makes an individual truly powerful. Sant Tukaram in one of his abhangas (devotional poems) says:

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"क्षमा दया शांती | बाण अभंग हे हाती ||
तुका म्हणे बळी | तेचि एक भूमंडळी ||"
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"Forgiveness, compassion, and peace are the arrows in my quiver; Tuka says, the one who embodies these is the true warrior on this earth" (One Hundred Poems of Tukaram).

In this verse, Tukaram compares the ability to forgive/ask for forgiveness to weapons. It means that the real power is not in physical abilities but in ability to forgive or to say sorry.

Mārdava (Humility),

Mārdava teaches us to respect everyone, no matter where they come from. It helps us see all people as equal. It removes ego and pride. This helps stop fights and brings peace.

Wealth, beauty, high family status, or intelligence can make people feel proud. Pride means thinking you are better than others. It also means looking down on them. Pride is based on things that do not last. Money or looks will leave you, or you will leave them when you die. Avoiding pride or being humble avoids pain to self and others too.

All souls are equal. No soul is higher or lower.

Be kind to all living beings. Have friendly feelings toward everyone. A humble heart respects all beings and dissolves barriers of race, religion, and power.

The well-known verse preached by Sant Dnyaneshwar emphasises on righteousness and love and friendship toward all living beings:

"Let the evil-minded abandon their malevolence; Let their inclination towards righteous deeds increase. Let all beings develop mutual love and friendship." (Teachings of Dnyaneshwari: Chapter-Wise Summary)

Sant Dnyaneshwar preaches to be righteous as it will lead to love and friendship among all living beings.

Ārjava (Straightforwardness, Honesty)

Ārjava builds trust in relationships. When people and nations are honest and transparent, misunderstandings and wars can be avoided.

A deceitful person thinks one thing, says another, and does something else. Their thoughts, words, and actions do not match. People stop trusting them. They also fear being caught, which causes stress. Being honest makes life peaceful. Others trust you.

The Jain concept is reflected in this Sanskrit expression:

"Ārjavam tu samācārah svacitta-prabhāvitah."

It means straightforwardness is natural conduct influenced by purity of mind.

Being simple, genuine, and free from deceit reduces conflicts, encourages transparency, and strengthens mutual trust among people and nations caused by lies and deception.

Shaucha (Purity)

Shaucha inspires inner and outer cleanliness, not just physical, but also mental (thoughts and intentions). It leads to a healthier and more peaceful society. Pure mind is one that stays away from four Kaṣāya anger (krodh), pride (māna), greed (lobh) and attachment (māyā).

As an example, greed will drive one to be cunning or deceitful. The Sūtra prescribes to control your wants or desires:

"जहां लाहों तहा लोहों, लाहा लोहों पवढई। दोमास - कयं कज्जं, कोडीए वि न निट्टियं॥" 8.17 (Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)

Wants are insatiable, more you get more you want. As one gains more, one's greed also grows. Even if one has a lot, it is not enough. What two small coins can do, even a crore gold coins cannot satisfy.

The Sanskrit expression defines purity as "Śuddha bhāvaḥ śaucaṃ.", meaning purity of thought and emotion is the real purity. Outer rituals alone are not enough; real purity is in inner thoughts. It leads to cleaner minds, hearts, and environments. If the minds are pure, the societies will be pure and it will lead to lasting global harmony and peaceful co-existence.

Satya (Truthfulness)

Truthfulness is the foundation for lasting peace. Lies and deceit breed distrust, while truth connects people at a deeper level.

Speak only when needed. Use few words, and always speak the truth. Talking too much disturbs the calm mind. A person who lies lives in fear of being caught. One lie leads to many more. Such a person becomes trapped and loses trust.

The preachings from Uttarādhyayana Sūtra goes a level deeper.

"आहच्च चण्डालियं कटु, न निण्हविज्ज कयाइ वि । कडं 'कडं' ति भासेज्जा, अकडं 'नो कडं' ति य ॥" 1.11(Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)

One should be so truthful to oneself that he/she should never hide his/her accidental cruel acts. If one has done something wrong one should always accept and say that I have done something wrong. Likewise, if one hasn't done anything wrong one should say so.

This reflects the Jain value of impartiality and truthfulness, focusing on the truth.

Sant Tukaram says that the truthfulness automatically rewards you without applying any forceful measures. It will give you the lasting peace.

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"सत्य सत्ये देते फळ। नाहीं लागतिच बळ॥
तुका म्हणे सत्य। तेथे देवाची मती॥"
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"Truth yields its own fruit; no force is needed. Tuka says, where there is truth, there resides the intellect of God" (One Hundred Poems of Tukaram).

Sant Tukaram, in this verse, is suggesting that truthfulness rewards you with divine peace. You don't have to take any efforts to seek the peace. It follows simply by being truthful.

Samyama (Self-restraint)

Saṃyama promotes discipline over thoughts, words, and actions. When people practice restraint, it prevents violence, exploitation, and environmental destruction.

Do not harm any living being. Jains do not kill or harm even the smallest form of life. Root vegetables are not eaten because they have countless tiny beings called "nigod." During Paryūṣaṇa, even green vegetables are avoided to reduce harm. Desires and passions that cause pain should also be controlled.

समो निन्दा-पसंसास्, समो माणावमाणओ ॥" 19.91(Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)

This verse means one should treat equally happiness and sorrow, success and failure, life and death, blames and praises & respect and insult.

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"वरं मे अप्पा दन्तो, संजमेण तवेण य।" 1.16 (Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)
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One should understand that it is better to control one's ego through self-restraint and penance.

Thus self-restraint (gupti) is proper guarding of body (kāya), speech (vachan), and mind (māna). Saṃyama, controlling passions and senses, prevents violence, cruelty, addiction, exploitation, and destruction. It builds a disciplined and respectful global society.

Tapah (Austerity or Penance)

Tapaḥ teaches sacrifice and simplicity, helping to reduce greed and overconsumption which helps in maintaining balance in the world's resources.

Penance is not just fasting. It also means eating less, avoiding certain foods, and staying away from tasty items. The goal is to control desires and passions. Too much enjoyment brings sorrow.

Meditation is a first step of Tapaḥ that can be practiced by lay person. It stops desires and passions from rising.

"माणुसत्तंमि आयाओ, जो धम्म सोच्च सद्दहे ॥" (Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)

When the soul is born as a human, it listens to true religion, develops strong faith in it, and through effort in penance and self-restraint, stops the inflow of karmas. It then destroys the accumulated karmas and gets rid of them.

Tyāga (Renunciation)

Tyāga urges to let go selfishness and promotes spirit of giving.

Letting go of possessions brings peace and helps control desires. Monks give up everything, even their homes and clothes. The real strength is in giving up not in keeping for self. Monks and balanced people without attachment are truly rich.

"सुहं वसामो जीवामो, जेसिं मो नित्थ किंचणं ||" 9.14 (Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)

I have nothing my own, so I happily live and dwell.

Tyāga is a supreme form of non-possession. Letting go of material attachments frees individuals from conflict, inequality, greed and environmental damage, allowing resources to be shared fairly among all beings.

Even Sant Tulsidas insists on equanimity.

"शत्रु न काहू किर गनै, मित्र गनै निहं काहि। तुलसी यह मत संत को, बोलै समता माहि॥"

"He considers none as an enemy, nor does he regard anyone as a friend. Tulsidas says, such is the nature of a saint, who speaks with equanimity." (Vairagya

Sandipani of Goswami Tulsidas: Verse-by-verse Roman transliteration of original text with English exposition and notes.)

This verse means that the ideal of impartiality, viewing all beings with equal regard, indicating non-bias and rationality, free from any prejudice, involves with renunciation or tyaga (including relations).

Akiñcanya (non-attachment)

Non-attachment reduces conflicts that arise from possessiveness and competition. It promotes peaceful co-existence by encouraging people to live simply and share freely.

This helps us stay detached from things we own. The possessions as identified in the literature include land, gold, clothes, and others. Today, things like money, cars, and investments are also possessions. They also include relationships and friendships, staying detached from them controls desire and one's outlook towards every other living being.

It also helps us let go of inner attachments like false belief, anger, pride, greed, and desire.

"सुवण्ण-रुप्पस उ पव्वया भवे, सिया हु केलाससमा असंखया।

नरस्स लुद्धस्स न तेहि किंचि, इच्छा उ आगाससमा अणन्तिया ||" 9.48 (Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)

"There are innumerable mountains of gold and silver as vast and high as Kailash mountain, even then the greedy person cannot get a bit of contentment because the desires are infinite, as vast as the space."

Non-attachment reduces competition, jealousy, and violence over material things, fostering rational behaviour, justice, peaceful co-existence and environmental stewardship.

Brahmacharya (Celibacy or Control over Senses)

Brahmacharya helps channel energies into constructive and creative pursuits, fostering a culture of respect, harmony, and non-violence.

Brahmacharya means not only avoiding sexual acts but also avoiding pleasures derived from any of the five senses, like wanting a cool breeze or using soft cushions. It helps control desires. Monks follow this fully with body, speech, and mind. Householders follow it by being faithful to their spouse.

"नो सद्द-रूव-रस-गन्ध-फासाणुवाई हवइ, से निग्गन्थे |" 6.12 (Uttarādhyayana Sūtra)

Who does not incline towards words (voices-sounds) sight (beauties-colours), smells, tastes and touches, he is a knot-free monk.

For households the message is not to overindulge in any pleasures derived from any of the senses. Like over indulgence because of taste may lead to unhealthy society, too much food for some people whereas some will not afford it, it will have minimum impact on environment. Likewise, over indulgence in any sensory pleasure has adverse impact on the individual, society and the environment as well.

Thus, practicing brahmacharya in its true sense will promote healthy and disciplined lifestyle, considerate society and ecological balance.

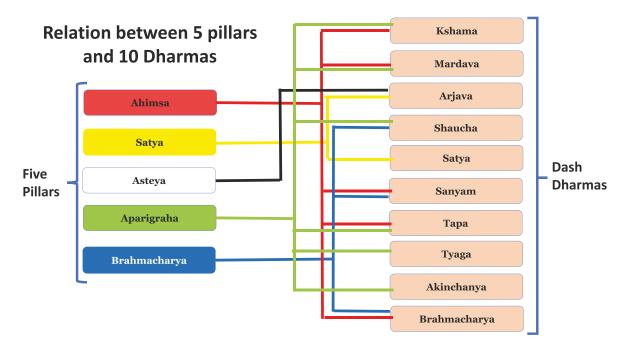
Summary

The Daśalakṣaṇa / Paryūṣaṇa Parva emphasizes specific values through various activities, rituals and lectures. The Daśa Dharmas practiced during the parva deeply sow the values essential for harmonious and peaceful life. These practices ensure that one gets deep understanding of the values and the associated benefits. One also realizes the implications of not following these.

Daśa Dharma	Key Message for Global Harmony & Co-existence
Kṣamā (Forgiveness)	Healing relationships, reducing hatred,
Mārdava (Humility)	Respect and equality, manage ego
Arjava (Honesty)	Trust and transparency, reduce deceit and conflict
Shaucha (Purity)	Clean mind, clean world
Satya (Truthfulness)	Justice, transparency and peace
Saṃyama (Self-restraint)	Discipline and respect
Tapaḥ (Austerity)	Simplicity and environmental balance
Tyāga (Renunciation)	Fairness and sharing and equality
Akiñcanya (Non-attachment)	Lessens greed, promotes sharing and co-existence
Brahmacharya (Sense control)	Moral strength. Enhances respect, responsible behaviour

These dharmas are manifestations of the fundamental Jain teachings – the 5 pillars of Jainism namely Ahiṃsā, Satya, Asteya, Aparigraha and Brahmacharya. The dharmas are essentially the behavioural aspects connected to these pillars and suggest a way to practically follow

these principles. The following picture denotes relationship between the dharmas and the 5 pillars.



Ratnatraya, Right Knowledge, Right Faith & Right Conduct, establishes a rational approach to learning and understanding, then believing what you have analysed and learnt and behave accordingly. If one really focuses on understanding the values promoted through Daśa Dharmas one will then believe them with heart and the conduct will automatically follow them leading to desired outcome.

Conclusion

Daśalakṣaṇa or Paryūṣaṇa Parva is more than a ritual observance—it is a universal call for inner transformation and ethical living. The Daśalakṣaṇa Dharmas encourage reduction of passions and building good qualities.

The principles highlighted during Paryūṣaṇa —such as Kṣamā, Mārdava, Ārjava, Shaucha, Satya, Saṃyama, Tapaḥ, Tyāga, Akiñcanya and Brahmacharya, stem from the five pillars of Jainism: non-violence (ahiṃsā), truth (satya), stealing (asteya), self-control (brahmacharya), and spiritual purity (aparigraha).

Practicing these principles is possible using the Ratnatraya framework. Cultivating these virtues requires constant and conscious effort rooted in Right Faith and Right Knowledge which in turn leads to Right Conduct. It fosters global peace, environmental balance and coexistence. It directly supports the global goals of Global Harmony and Peaceful Co-existence.

Limitations of the Study:

While this study offers insights into the relevance of Paryūṣaṇa Parva in promoting global harmony and co-existence, certain limitations must be acknowledged:

- While the insights are reflective, they are not analytically validated. Analytical validation can be taken up as a separate project.
- The research is qualitative and philosophical in nature, based on scriptural analysis rather than empirical field studies or surveys.
- While the research touches upon the potential of Jain philosophy in global contexts, it does not include a comprehensive comparison with other world religions or philosophical systems that also promote global harmony and peaceful co-existence.

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