Paryushana is an eight-to-ten day Jain festival of coming together when lay adherents fast and pray, reciting their sacred texts and emphasizing their five ethical duties or vows. They also make an effort to stop cruelty to other life forms, freeing captive animals and preventing their slaughter. The festival ends with Samvatsari, a day of focused prayer and meditation, when forgiveness is asked for offenses committed during the previous year.