Shri Yogvasishtha Maharamayana Shibir 1 Summary

Pravachan 3 (26.1.2019 Afternoon)

Please Note: This is an English summary of the pravachan by a seeker, Rimaben Dhanky from Dubai and has been uploaded here for the benefit of the English reader.

In the first sarg, Rishi Valmikiji has bowed down to the Pure Soul and created the legend. Sutikshna Brahmin had studied many scriptures, heard many saints, so he became confused. When karma is performed without any selfish motive, the mind becomes pure, with which there is a listening, contemplation, the knowledge goes at the feeling level, then a person gets self-realisation. Indirect, unseen knowledge takes the soul towards the direct knowledge of the Self. After an association with the Guru, how long does that influence stay within you, with that your samyagdarshan date can be fixed. Lalluji Muni got the association of Param Krupalu Dev just for a few minutes at times, but the power of those meetings remained with Him for months together. One letter from Prabhu kept Him high for days together. That was the reason that He got Samyagdarshan in Samvat 1954. Every soul is filled with the knowledge, that is his nature. But with the dirt and instability, he gets flaws and faults. A mirror can be cleaned in the darkness, but with karma, activities and connection, one needs the testimony of words too. The Enlightened One who is a master in scriptures, His knowledge of words, in the light of that knowledge, a soul can have self-realisation, he can feel the oneness.

Story 2: From the tenth shlok to eighteenth shlok, this story is narrated. Agasti Muni is telling Sutikshna Brahmin that I am telling you a story. A Brahmin named Agnivesh kept his son in a Gurukul (Guru's abode), he learnt Vedas and Vedanta from his Guru and came back home. Then he stopped doing his karma. He was not doing his daily rituals, prayers to be offered daily in the morning and evening, offering oblations to fire or sacrificial rites. The father got worried and asked him the reason for it. Karunya (the son) said that he was confused. He had studied many scriptures and laws of conduct. Certain scriptures said that you must maintain a sacred fire and offer oblations to it till you live, pray every day in the morning and evening. The other scriptures and codes of law said that wealth, karma and having children will not give you liberation, you renounce the world, then you get liberation. At one place, karma is appreciated, whereas at the other place, karma is condemned. **Self-realisation comes only with the contemplation upon the Self. Nothing happens with thousands of activities**. To balance the whole thing, one needs a Sadguru. Karunya had bookish knowledge, he had not taken training from a Guru who was learned and experienced. With pieces of knowledge, it is very difficult to gather complete knowledge. You have to eliminate expectations from your activities. You have heard a lot of satsang and stories, but still you have not got self-realisation. When you renounce the karma, then only liberation is possible. With all these different schools of thoughts, Karunya who was thoughtful became confused whether to accept karma or renounce them. **Till the time, purification of mind is not done, even if you listen to satsang a thousand times, there will be no transformation. How you are between two satsangs or two nityakram shows your eligibility.** One must have friendliness, compassion, love and impartiality for all the souls naturally with a pure mind.

For the purification of the mind, one needs karma, then with listening, contemplating, experiencing it profoundly, with which you will get self-realisation, which will make you liberated while living (jivanmukta) and after the death, it will make you liberated (videhamukta). Inner work is very important. If you are very hungry, soup alone will not fill your stomach. With going only for the pilgrimages, leaving sweets, the hunger of the soul does not get satisfied. This is

contradictory to each other. One needs self-realisation and perception of the fundamentals. Then only the strong feelings of sensual pleasures and passions will get milder.

Karunya was confused with two contradictory things, so he stopped doing everything. At that time, Agnivesh told him a story.

Story 3: There is a group of nymphs. The best one is Suruchi. She asked certain questions to the messenger. The messenger said that her questions will be beneficial. So the messenger narrated the story of Arishtanemi. Arishtanemi gave away his kingdom to his son and went on the Mountain Gandhamardan to perform austerities. Indradev saw it and he was very happy with his austerity, so he sent an invitation for the king to live in Devlok. Arishtanemi asked about the advantages and disadvantages of Devlok. The Messenger described them according to his own understanding. He said that you get things in Devlok according to your meritorious karma. If you have the best quality of meritorious karma, you will get the best of facilities. If you have medium quality of meritorious karma, you will get it accordingly. If you have lower quality of meritorious karma, you will get facilities according to that. With your volition only, your sensual pleasures are fulfilled. There is no old age and you remain young forever. There are no physical problems or worldly entanglements.

The faults of the happiness of Devlok are 1. The moment wealth of meritorious karma is over, you are thrown back into the world of mortals. The sensual pleasure is limited and is not permanent. 2. In Vedanta mode, devlok are bhogbhoomi (world where there is no scope of fresh endeavours, but one has to enjoy the fruits of his past actions). Without karma that is free from expectations, there is no purity of mind and without purity of mind, there is no knowledge, so there is no liberation. From Devlok, one cannot get liberated. 3. There is a lot of competition, dissatisfaction, jealousy and ego. There is always a fear of reduction of meritorious karma.

With all these things, Arishtanemi did not have any desire for heaven. It shows that he was a true spiritual aspirant, a seeker and is detached. He is not interested in material pleasures, but in internal bliss, something that is permanent, which is not dependent outside. He is not observing austerities for material pleasures or to get rid of troubles. The true seeker's aim cannot be worldly things. He asks for the ultimate devotion and dharma of the dispassionate one. Except that everything else is false. We don't mind committing sinful activities if we don't get scared of hell, we have a problem with the result of the sins. To stop the habit of smoking, many people are given cigarettes that give an electrical shock, so next time they don't use cigarettes only. Just check whether in your austerity or renunciation, fear should not be an important factor. If you don't go to other women except your wife due to shame, it is dispassion. If you don't go to other women due to the fear of hell, then it is not spiritual aspiration of a mumukshu, you don't want to get rid of transmigration.

If we are given temptation that if you do one ayambil, you will get these many years of Devlok, if you fast, so many years of heaven etc. But how many years these temptations and fear last? One needs mumukshuta, which was there is Arishtanemi. He got an invitation from Indra, but still he decided to follow more spiritual aspiration and leave this impure body forever. The way a snake leaves its skin, I will leave the body and attain liberation. He has no feeling of 'I' and 'mine' in his body. Message here given is don't do things for meritorious karma or entertainment of people.

When the snake leaves its skin, 1. The snake does not feel sorry to leave the skin. It does not feel that it is mine. The body is not mine. 2. When the snake leaves its skin, it does not even bother to look at it again. If your instincts are not changed, nothing will help you. Arishtanemi was genuine and he was not interested in heaven. He had no feeling of 'I' and 'mine' in the body.

When the messenger talked to Indra, Indra realised that he was a detached soul. He asked the messenger to give the message to Valmikiji. When the messenger went back to Arishtanemi, he was ready to go to Maharshi Valmikiji and the messenger told Valmikiji that he is a genuine seeker, please show him the remedy of getting liberated while living.

Story 4: We are now going towards the divine vedic story. In the ashram of Rishi Agasti, Sutikshna Brahmin went to find out the solution of his doubt, to clear his doubt, Agasti told him the story of Karunya and his father Agnivesh. Agnivesh said the story of the nymph and the messenger to clear the doubts, where he spoke about Arishtanemi taken to Maharshi Valmikiji. The messenger and Arishtanemi went to Valmikiji's ashram. Valmikiji asked Arishtanemi about how he was, he built up a friendly relationship with him. When Valmikiji asked him about his son, Arishtanemi said that he did not know anything about his son, he had left everything like a snake's skin. He also asked Arishtnemi about his physical and mental well-being to know whether he has come with some miseries or he is interested only due to curiosity or he actually has interest in liberation.

Arishtanemi addresses Valmikiji as the knower of the essence of dharma. He is not addressed as one who knows the scriptures, as he knows the internal state of Valmikiji. This way, Arishtanemi cleared all the tests. Arishtanemi was asked about his physical and mental well-being, at that time, he says that I have become fine while offering salutations to you. Arishtanemi loves saints. With the darshan of saints, his illusion of transmigration and fear of public opinion disappeared. Saints are incarnate upanishads. They illumine the path, influence and allow us to grow in the right direction. Scriptures only light up the path. The Enlightened One always is at the other side of the bank. But we feel that they are with us. Even if He is with us, they are millions of miles away from us, they have crossed the ocean of delusion. He will give us His hand, company and path. His eyes and speech are simple and easy. He makes you learn the words of the Dispassionate One to make you happy. In His kind look we don't have to work hard. Arishtanemi offered salutations to Valmikiji and felt that he does not even want liberation.

If a senior boy is bullying a young child and the child calls his wrestler father once, and looking at him, the senior runs away. In the same way, the king delusion bullies you, at that time, if God gives a kind look, there is a purity of mind. Guru has given us more than destiny can give. You should feel that your Guru is cuter and innocent like a small baby, if you don't feel that way, then you have seen someone else. Guru is egoless and wishes for your benefit only. Listen to this Innocent One, He has experienced that I am a pure powerful soul.

Arishtanemi wants to know the remedy for liberation. Valmikiji says that He will tell him the whole Ramayana. With that you will have the knowledge of the original truth and you will be liberated while living (jivanmukta). Valmikiji says, "I know the essence of the soul. You are an eligible soul. This dialogue will become the reason for liberation while living. That's why what Vasishthaji told Ramaji, I am telling you. Arishtanemi asked, Who is Rama? If I can become liberated by listening to His story, please tell me who He is. Is He an Enlightened One or is He an ignorant one? Why is He here in this world? If He is the Enlightened One, why is he the disciple of Vasishthaji? If He is an ignorant soul, why are you telling me His story?

Story 5: Valmikiji says that the one who had taken the form of the king, He was originally Vishnu, Hari, Bhagwan. Due to the curse, with His own wish, He became like one who was ignorant. He had kept His inner height and silence intact. Jains can understand it as the person with samyagdarshan has very few births. But still He became ignorant and One knowing very little. This is not the talk of the Omniscient, it is talking about a person with samyagdarshan. Instead of a curse, take it as a karma, which has no other choice but to be endured. Even

samyagdrashti soul has to suffer the old karma and one has to experience its fruition. They look like human beings, they are separate from within.

Bhagwan Vishnu was omniscient and omnipotent. Manifestation of God (Avatari) is one only, but they have many births (Avatar). This is the philosophy of specific work to be done by a particular incarnation of God (Avtarvaad). Whenever there is a particular reason, He can take birth whenever, wherever He wants and in whichever form. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, For the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age. That's why Jesus chose Virgin Mary, Krishna chose Devki and Yashoda. When an Avatar is born, we call it He manifested and when He dies, we call it He is absorbed in the infinite. Birth and death are for the ignorant souls only, they have to suffer the fruits of their karma. God is free from birth and death, that's what is philosophy of avatarvad. That's why Ramanavmi is the manifestation day of Shri Rama. Jain Darshan calls Dehavilay- absorption of the body for samyagdarshani soul, for Muni, we call it Kaaldharma- duty of religion appropriate to the prevailing time. For Tirthankar, word used is Nirvana and for the ignorant soul, we call it he died.

The curse given to Shri Rama are all by His devotees. They had some trouble in their love towards Him and they manifested their wishes. Negatively it is called curse. But Bhagwan loves His devotees and says that if my devotee has said that you have to live like us, I will live like them. I won't make them wrong, so Bhagwan manifested.

Story of the first curse: When Vishnu came, Sanatkumar was focused inwardly, so he did not give any respect to Vishnu. Vishnu told him that you have become egoistic about your inward focus, when you got the opportunity of devotion and respect, you missed it. Sanatkumar was a devotee of Vishnu only. He loved Vishnu. But at that time, he cursed saying that you will live like an ignorant one. In the incarnation of Rama, till you don't get enlightenment from Vasishthaji, you will remain ignorant only, then you will understand the Ultimate Truth and become liberated while living.

Story of the second curse: Bhrugu Rishi's wife was Khyati. Once Bhrugu Rishi had gone out and Vishnu appeared before Khyati. She was so happy to see Vishnu that she asked Him to absorb her completely in Him. Vishnu did it, so she left her body and got absorbed in Vishnu. When Bhrugu Rishi came back, he realised that his wife was dead, so he said that in the birth of Rama, you will be separated from your wife.

Story of the third curse: In Brahmavaivart Purana, this story is there. Guru of Devas, Bruhaspati asked the king of Devas, Indra felt like bowing down to Bhagwan Shankar in Kailash. Shankar realised that and felt like testing them, whether they can recognise Him in any form or not. Shankar took a frightful form and went on the way. Indra asked that frightful form, who he was. Shankar did not answer him. So Indra asked again with anger and threatened to throw his thunderbolt on Shankar. With this threat, Shankar got angry and His third eye opened up. A lot of anger came out of it and Bruhaspatiji understood that this is no one else but Shankar. So He took the neck of Indra, the way father holds his child's neck to bow down to God and asked for forgiveness. Shankar said that this lava of anger can't be taken back. So He threw it in Lavan Samudra, from which the form of a child came out. Everyone went back to their own place. At that time, Brahmaji was passing through Lavan Samudra, Samudra did not know what to do with the child, so he kept the child on the lap of Brahmaji. The child held Brahmaji's neck and Brahmaji had tears in His eyes. With this Brahmaji got impressed and He named the child as Jalandhar. He said that this child will become the king of demons. Even Vishnu will be scared of

him and Shiva will get angry with him. He will be destroyed only if the chastity of his wife is broken. Otherwise he won't be losing in any way.

Jalandhar became the king of demons. He got married to Vrinda. When there was an incident of churning of ocean to get the nectar of heaven by Devs and demons, with deceit, Devs took away all the jewels. Vishnu took the form of Mohini and accompanied the Devs. He took away the nectar and gave it to Devs to drink it. At four places, some drops fell, they were Allahabad, Ujjain, Nasik and Haridwar, where Kumbhmela is organised. Jalandhar realised the deceit of Vishnu and asked him why was the ocean churned without his permission? He asked Vishnu to give back everything.

Jalandhar attacked Vishnu and Vishnu started losing. He had to give away most of the jewels to Jalanadhar. Then Vishnu said, "You are my brother-in-law as my wife Lakshmi is also the daughter of the ocean." Jalandhar told Him that now you are my family member and stay like that only. So Vishnu became Sheshnaag. To save the situation, Narad instigated Jalandhar and told him that he does not have the best of jewel of a woman, she is Parvati. Jalandhar took the form of Shiva and went to Parvati and asked for sensual pleasures. At that time, Parvati knew that he was not Shiva, so she remembered Vishnu. Vishnu took the form of Jalandhar and went to Vrinda and asked her for sensual pleasure. Vrinda did not realise and her chastity was broken. Immediately Jalandhar died. When Vrinda came to know about it, she cursed Vishnu and entered the fire.

Fourth curse: Devdatt's wife saw Vishnu as a lion and got scared, she died on the spot. Devdatt cursed Vishnu, so Ramaji got separation from Sitaji. Vrinda had said that I was stigmatised for no fault of mine, so your wife will also be stigmatised. So Sitaji was kidnapped and had to stay among demons, she was stigmatised. **This way, Vishnu was cursed by Sanatkumar, Bhrugu Rishi, Vrinda and Devdatt a**nd Vishnu was manifested as a human being. I gave you all the reasons of the curse, now I am telling you the means of liberation in complete Ramayana, listen to it with single mindedness.

This way, the first sarg of Yogvasishtha got over and 66 shloks of the sarg are over.