

Harihi Om

THE RARE JUDGEMENTS
(From the oriental literature)
(Outside the court preview)

Introduction: Indian oriental literature like Veda, Upanishad, Ramayana, Puranas, Mahabharata etc. make an interesting and absorbing study. All these literature are in Sanskrit language. This is an enchanting language. This is the language of Deva's too. If one even the translated works, that itself gives enough insight and invokes interest. Reading the original texts of this vast range of literature is an added advantage for a proper understanding. There is abundant wisdom contained in these sources. As it is not possible to understand and retain the contents even in several readings, they remain fresh any number of times one reads them. At this moment, my concern is to cull out some significant instances to suit the above heading.

The points of justice that are quoted here are not the judgements or the verdicts delivered in the modern conventional courts where two parties at loggerheads having opposite views, argue their cases through advocates and finally a judge delivers his judgement. The types of judgements appearing in the oriental literature are delivered at different times and recorded by Bhagavan Vedavyas. They are available in Vedic literature particularly in Upanishads. The following cases may be anybody's case anytime. The judgements have already been pronounced circumstantially and are advisable even today through the literature.

Judgement of Yudhisthira: This is a case from Mahabharata. Pandav prince had to spend their time in exile, as a result of losing in the game of dice with Kaurava princes. As the days were rolling on, it happened on one warm day that Yudhistir felt thirsty and asked Nakul to find some water to drink. As per instructions, Nakul climbed a tree and spotted a lake.

‘ततोऽब्रवीत् सत्यधृतिः कुन्तिपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः। गच्छ सौम्य ततः शीघ्रं तूष्णीं पानीयमानय॥’

Nakul rushed to the lake and thought of quenching his thirst first. When he touched water, he heard a warning voice 'Don't drink water till you answer my questions. Should you still disobey my orders, you will die, that is all.'

'अनादृत्य तु तद्वाक्यं नकुलः सुपिपासितः।अपिबच्छीतलं तोयं पीत्वा च निपपात ह॥

Nakul couldn't control his thirst and drank water although warned. Soon he swooned by the side of the lake as Yudhistira was waiting for water. As Nakul didn't return for long, Yudhistir instructed Sahadev to look for Nakul. Sahadev went in search of Nakul and found him lying near the lake. He was also thirsty. He tried to drink water ignoring Yaksha's warning. He met the same fate as Nakul. In turn Arjun and Bhim also followed the same footprints. Finally Yudhistir appeared on the scene. He was about to drink water. Yaksha warned him in a firmer tone. Yudhistir condescended to answer the questions of Yaksha prior to satisfying his thirst. Yaksha's list of questions is too long and covers a vast area. Each question needs careful thinking with the background of Dharma and the answers are like judgements. Only a few are stated here.

'Which is the best way to heaven' Yaksha asked, 'Virtue is the best of the roads' was the answer. Yaksha asked 'Which is the best of virtues'. Answer given was 'hate none'. Yaksha questioned 'worst enemy of man' 'Anger' was Yudhistira's reply. 'Who is the man both rich and poor?' Yaksha asked. 'Niggard' was the reply. 'How can a poor man become rich' asked Yaksha. 'By feeling contented' replied Yudhistir. Yaksha questioned 'Who is the greatest man' 'Feeling the same in joy and sorrow' was Yudhistira's reply. Their question and answer cover a vast area. Yaksha got amply satisfied and asked Yudhistira to quench his thirst and granted him a boon to get one of his brothers back to life.

‘आनृशंस्यं परो धर्मः परमार्थाच्च मे मतम्।आनृशंस्यं चिकीर्षामि नकुलो यक्ष जीवतु’॥

Yudhistir took a good look at four of his brothers laying there. He conveyed his judgement to Yaksha. He conveyed his judgement to Yaksha. **‘Keeping in mind the kindness and impartiality which are the ingredients of Dharma, my choice is Nakul. I request Nakul to come back to life.’**

Yaksha was puzzled at the choice of Yudhistira. He asked Yudhistira instead of choosing Arjun or Bhim who are the well known warriors, why Nakul was chosen? Yudhistir explained that Kunti and Madri are his mothers. As Kunti's son, he is alive. Therefore Nakul as Madri's son has the right to live and he is my

choice. Other considerations are immaterial. This is the best justice declared by Yudhisthira.

यक्ष उवाच: 'तस्य तेऽर्थाच्च कामाच्च आनृशंस्यं परं मतम्।तस्मात्ते भ्रातरः सर्वे जीवन्तु भरतर्षभ' ॥

Yaksha appreciated Yudhisthira's subtle sense of justice and granted all his brothers to return to life. Here Yudhisthira's Judgement is of great significance.

Judgement of Bhrigu: Some time in the long past, on the bank of Saraswati river, one Yagna was conducted which was attended by great sages like Kashyapa, Narada, Bhrigu etc. During the course of the discussion, a question arose as to who is the supreme deity out of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvara and to whom the final oblation should be offered.

‘तस्य जिज्ञासया ते वै भृगुं ब्रह्मसुतं नृप।तज्ज्ञाप्यै प्रेषयामासुः सोमऽभ्यगात् ब्रह्मणः सभाम्’ ॥

Since no conclusion could be reached, the sages (particularly Narada) deputed Bhrigu to visit three Lokas and three personalities and return with the judgement. He went to the court of Brahma. There he found him expressionless and felt he might be under illusion. Then he reached Kailas to meet Shiva. Shiva was there with his consort. He got angry at the unexpected arrival of the sage. The meeting resulted in anger of Shiva and Bhrigu reacted with curse. Then Bhrigu continued his journey to Vaikuntha, the abode of Lord Vishnu. There He was reclining with His eyes closed and Lakshmi serving Him near His feet.

‘शयनं श्रियउत्सङ्गे पदावक्षस्यताडयत्।तत उत्थाय भगहान् सह लक्ष्म्या सतांगतिः’ ॥
स्वतल्पादवरुहयाथ ननाम शिरसा मुनिम्।आह ते स्वागतं ब्रह्मान् निषीदात्रासने क्षणम्।
अजानतामागतान् वः क्षन्तुमर्हथ नः प्रभो’ ॥

Sage Bhrigu straight away walked to Hari and kicked Him at His chest. He woke up, alighted from the bed and approached the sage with Lakshmi. Sri Vishnu begged his pardon since He did not notice the sage's arrival. He bowed His head to the sage and requested him to be comfortable on the seat. Oh great sage your feet are so soft saying this Lord began to kneed his feet with His own hands. He washed sage's feet and expressed, the water touching your feet would purify Him

and all others in Vaikunta. I have become pure and Lakshmi the goddess of wealth would reside in my chest where your foot has made a mark.

‘एवं ब्रुवाणे वैकुण्ठे भृगुस्तन्मन्द्रयागिरा। निर्वृतस्तर्पितस्तूष्णीं भक्त्युत्कण्ठोऽश्रुलोचनः॥
पुनश्च सत्रमाव्रज्य मुनीनां ब्रह्मवादिनाम्। स्वानुभूतमशेषेण राजन् भृगुरवर्णयत्’ ॥

Listening to the extra-ordinary kind and respectful words of Lord Vishnu in a low deep tone, Bhrigu felt happy that his voice got joy/choked out of devotion. Unable to utter a word, tears gushing out of the eyes and with a sense of satisfaction (the task undertaken has been accomplished with success) returned to the assembly of sages.

By the brief visit to Vaikunta, Bhrigu realised that Lord Vishnu is independent in every way (Swatantra), He is complete with auspicious qualities (Gunapurna), free from any kind of blemishes (Nirdosha), everything is under His control (Niyamaka), He is the Lord of Lakshmi.

Sage Bhrigu delivered his judgement in the assembly of sages that **Lord Vishnu is the supreme deity** for the above reasons.

Judgement of Lakshmi: From the time immemorial, fights were going on between Devas and Asuras. Devas used to be bruised often. Lord Vishnu thought of giving nectar to Devas. Both Devas and Asuras agreed to churn the ocean of milk. As they churned, many invaluable articles and persons came out. Lakshmi was also one amongst them. As she came out, she was presented with so many presentations from several deities. She was holding a garland also. Everyone was eagerly waiting to see whose neck would be adored by the garland. She did not look at the Asuras at all.

‘नूनं तपो यस्य न मन्यु निर्जयो ज्ञानं क्वचित् तच्च न सङ्गवर्जितम्।-----।

As she passed through the rows of Devas, she pointed out one defect or the other with every Deva except Lord Vishnu.

‘एवं विमृश्याव्यभिचारिसद्गुणैर्वरं निजैकाश्रयतागुणाश्रयम्। वद्रे वरं सर्वगुणैरपेक्षितं रमा मुकुन्दं निरपेक्षमीप्सितम्॥’

She pronounced her judgement that only Bhagavan Vishnu is free from any defect and He is complete with auspicious qualities. He is totally independent

(Swatantra). With these reasons, **she judged Vishnu** alone would be acceptable to her in all aspects and adorned the garland in his neck.

Judgement of Gautama: This episode appears in Chandogya Upanishad. Gautama was the Vedic teacher running the school. At that time one by name Satyakama, a sweet little boy, seeing his playmates going to school, he too wished to go to school. He went to school and requested the teacher to admit him as a student. Teacher Gautam asked him what was his Gotra (family origin). Satyakama ran home and asked his mother. His mother informed him that she does not know the family origin. She knew only 'you are satyakama and she is jabala. So you are Satyakama Jabala.' Satyakama went back to school again and told the truth.

तं होवाच 'नैतद्ब्राह्मणो विवक्तुमर्हति समिधं सौम्य आहर। उप त्वा नेष्ये न सत्यादगा' इति॥

Teacher Gautam made a logical analysis decided and declared his judgement that 'unless your origin is noble (Ruju) such understood truth cannot be revealed by you. Therefore I have decided to admit you to this school. Go and fetch **Arani**, I shall initiate you.' **Thus Satyakama was a beneficiary of a rare justice.**

Judgement of Ushasti Chakrayana: Once the land of Kurus was devastated by hailstorm. As a result crops were destroyed and a severe famine prevailed in the region. At that time Ushasti son of Chakrayana with his young wife, wandered in search of food, in the Ibhya village where wealthy people (owners of elephants) were living.

‘उषस्तिर्ह चाक्रायणः इभ्यग्रामे प्रद्राणक उवास। स हेभ्यं कुल्माषान् खादन्तं बिभिक्षे। तं होवाच नेतोऽन्ये विद्यन्ते यच्च ये म इम उपनिहिता इति। एतेषां मे देहीति होवाच। तानस्मै प्रददौ हन्तानुपानमिति उच्चिष्टं वै मे पीतं स्यादिति होवाच। न स्वीदेतेऽप्युच्चिष्टा इति। न वा अजीविष्यमिमां न खादन्निति होवाच। कामो म उदपानमिति॥’

He saw an Ibhya (wealthy man) eating forest beans. Ushasti begged him and got some of the beans. He ate some and preserved a part for his wife. The Ibhya offered him water too. **Ushasti refused water saying that it was Uchista** (Uchista=remains of the used food or water). Ibhya remarked 'the beans which were given to you were not Uchista?' Although the beans which he ate were the remains of the used food, **Ushasti affirmed, had he not eaten them, he would**

have died. Water is available and he can take it at his will. Ushasti being conscious about Dharma, exhibited remarkable restraint by refusing water though offered. He almost drew a demarcation line, a sort of judgement to show how much deviation is permitted from Dharma under adverse conditions.

Citation of Judgements by Purandaradas: Purandaradas quotes a series of judgements (Nirnayas). 1) During the churning of the milky ocean many things surfaced. Out of them Lakshmi was one. Holding the garland in her hand, given by Sarawati, charmingly walked in the rows of Devas and Asuras. Everyone was anxiously watching to see who would be the likely groom. She did not look at Asuras and pointed out some defect in every Deva and finally adored the garland in the neck of Sri Vishnu. Because of the selection of Lakshmi **Sri Vishnu was declared Lord Supreme.** 2) When King Bali was conducting Yagna, Vishnu incarnated as Vamana. Circumstantially he grew as Trivikrama so huge that the toe of his feet touched the peripheral wall of the universe and resulted in crack. Through the crack gushed the water which was called the Ganges. That water was collected by four headed Brahma and washed the feet of Lord Trivikrama. The water which touched the Lord's feet was sprinkled by Brahma on his head. Then he sprinkled it on Hara (Shiva). Subsequently that water was sprinkled on the head of all deities. No body raised any objection or dispute. Hence the instance was so conclusive that the assembly of **all Gods decided/judged that Lord Trivikrama (Vishnu) was/is supreme.** 3) When the king of elephants was caught in the lake by the crocodile the tussle ensued between them. Finally the elephant got tired and surrendered to Adimula (Sri Vishnu). Although listening to the loud cry of elephant the other deities came there. They did not help the elephant since they are not called nor none of them is Adimula. Finally Lord Vishnu came fast on Garuda, relieved the elephant from the clutches of the crocodile. The situation proves that Lord Vishnu is the supreme. 4) During churning of the milky ocean, first the deadly poison surfaced. Requested by Devas, Shiva came all the way from mount Kailas and drank the poison. But it troubled him. He got rid of the after effects by chanting the name of Sri RAM. Only a blue mark remained as a mark of drinking poison.

Purandaradas concludes that all these situations have proved beyond any doubt that Lord Vishnu is supreme and Bhagawan Vedavyas has given the judgements/verdicts accordingly.

Like this Vidura Niti, Bhartruhari Shtakas contain a fund of knowledge which throws light on the fundamental virtue. The decisive thoughts are like judgements. Circumstantially they can be taken like that.

OM TAT SAT
