

Om Sri Lakshmi Narashimhan Nahama

Valmiki Ramayana – Bala Kanda – Chapter 73

Vasishta Performs the Marriage Ceremony

Summary

sita rama kalyana ghattam

The Marriage of Seetha with Rama

We need not wait for any invitation or wedding card or call for this marriage, as all are welcome, equally and individually. Let us go there straight, without any introductions and preliminaries.



Chapter [Sarga] 73 – in Detail

yasmin tu divase raajaa cakre go daanam uttamam |

tasmin tu divase shuuro yudhaajit samupeyivaan || 1-73-1

On which day the king Dasharatha made the impressive cow donations or, initiatory rites, on that day alone the valiant Yudhaajit turned up. [1-73-1]

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putrah kekaya raajasya saaksaat bharata maatulah |

dristvaa pristvaa ca kushalam raajaanam idam abraviit || **1-73-2**

Yudhaajit, the son of Kekaya king and the brother of Kaikeyi, thus the direct maternal uncle of Bharata, having seen and asked after the wellbeing of Dasharatha said this to him. [1-73-2]

kekaya adhipatii raajaa snehaat kushalam abraviit |

yesaam kushalakaamo asi tesaam sa.mprati anaamayam || **1-73-3**

The ruler and king of Kekaya, viz., my father and your father-in-law, has affectionately asked after the wellbeing of all, and in whose wellbeing you are interested at my place, they are all hale [sound] and healthy as of now... [1-73-3]

svasriyam mama raajendra drastu kaamo mahiipatih |

tat artham upayaato aham ayodhyaam raghunandana || **1-73-4**

Oh, Raghu's legatee, oh, best king, my father and the king of Kekaya is interested to see my sister Kaikeyi's son, Bharata, and for that reason I am sent to Ayodhya... [1-73-4]

shrutvaa tu aham ayodhyaayaam vivaaha artham tava aatmajaan |

mithilaam upayaataan tu tvayaa saha mahiipate || **1-73-5**

tvarayaa abhupayaato aham drastu kaamah svasuh sutam |

Oh, lord of the land, in Ayodhya I have heard that you went to Mithila along with your sons for their marriages, and wishing to see my sister's son Bharata I promptly traveled here... Thus Yudhaajit told Dasharatha. [1-73-5, 6a]

atha raajaa dasharathah priya atithim upasthitam || **1-73-6**

dristvaa parama satkaaraih puujarham samapuujayat |

Then king Dasharatha on seeing the adorable guest who arrived in his presence, and who is a merited [entitled] one for adoration, Dasharatha adored Yudhaajit well, with full observances [customary practice]. [1-73-6b, 7a]

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tatah taam usito raatrim saha putraih mahaatmabhih || 1-73-7

prabhaate punah utthaaya kritvaa karhmaani tattvavit |

risiin tadaa puraskritya yajna vaatam upaagamat || 1-73-8

Then on taking rest for that night along with his noble-minded sons, and again on getting up in the next morning, and on performing morning-observances as a duty-bound king, Dasharatha arrived at the hall of Vedic-ritual, keeping the sages in his forefront. [1-73-7b-8]

yukte muhuurte vijaye sarva aabharana bhuusitaih |

bhraatribhih sahito raamah krita kautuka mangalah || 1-73-9

vasistham puratah kritvaa maharsiin aparaan api |

Rama arrived at his father together with all of his brothers, keeping sage Vashishta and other eminent-saint ahead of them, on an opportune [suitable] and appropriate hour called 'Victory...' and all the bridegrooms are adorned with all kinds of jewelry appropriate for the wedding time, and all have performed the auspicious ceremony for marriage-thread, conducted prior to the marriage and, all have thread-bands tied around their wrists, as they all have performed an auspicious ceremony antecedent [one that precedes] to marriage ceremony. [1-73-9, 10a]

vashistho bhagavaan etya vaideham idam abraviit || 1-73-10

raajaa dasharatho raajan krita kautuka mangalaih |

putraih nara vara shrestha daataaram abhikaanksate || 1-73-11

Then that Godly sage Vashishta on going from Vedic-ritual hall to marriage hall said this to Janaka, Oh, best one among best people, oh, king Janaka, having performed the auspicious marriage-thread ceremony, Dasharatha along with his sons is looking forward for the donor... [1-73-10b, 11]

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daatri pratigrahiitribhyaam sarva arthaah sa.mbhavanti hi |

svadharmam pratipadyasva kritvaa vaivaahyam uttamam || 1-73-12

In marriages all the purusaartha-s, the component values of life, namely rightness, riches, revelries [merrymaking], and results of final release will be occurring only if the benefactor and beneficiary meet, isn't it. Hence let king Dasharatha come, and then on actualizing [accomplishing] this best marriage you too will be doing your best devoir [responsibility or respect] as royal priest... [1-73-12]

iti uktah parama udaaro vasisthena mahaatmanaa |

pratyuvaaca mahaatejaa vaakyam parama dharhnavit || 1-73-13

Janaka is not just a decidedly valiant king but he is the profound knower of probity [adherence to the highest principles] also, besides being an unreservedly generous king, hence he has already made all arrangements, and when he is spoken in this way by Vashishta that king replied this sentence to that right honorable Vashishta. [1-73-13]

kah sthitah pratihaaro me kasya aajnaa sampratiiksyate |

sva grihe ko vicaaro asti yathaa raajyam idam tava || 1-73-14

Who is that doorman that prevents your entry? Or, for whose orders you all await with a bated [restrained] breath? Do you hesitate in your own house, or what? This kingdom is as good as yours... isn't so... [1-73-14]

krita kautuka sarvasvaa vedi muulam upaagataah |

mama kanyaa munishrestha diiptaa vahneh iva arcisah || 1-73-15

Oh, eminent-saint Vashishta, on absolutely performing the auspicious ceremony for the marriage-thread, and thereby tying thread-band at wrists my daughters have already arrived, and they are at the base of the Altar of Fire, like the irradiant jets of flames of radiant fire... [1-73-15]

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sadyo aham tvat pratiikso asmi vedyaam asyaam pratishitah |

avighnam kurutaam raajaa kim artham hi vilambyate || **1-73-16**

I am already ready and awaiting for you remaining at this Altar of Fire. Let everything be done indeed without any deterrents [inhibitor or delay]. What for the king Dasharatha is dawdling [delaying]... So said Janaka to Vashishta. [1-73-16]

tat vaakyam janakena uktam shrutvaa dasharathah tadaa |

praveshayaamaasa sutaan sarvaan risi ganaan api || **1-73-17**

On hearing that sentence of Janaka, then Dasharatha started towards marriage hall, and then he started to enter his sons one by one, four in all, into marriage hall along with all of the assemblages of sages. [1-73-17]

tato raajaa videhaanaam vashistham idam abraviit |

kaarayasva rise sarvaan risibhih saha dhaarmika || **1-73-18**

raamasya loka raamasya kriyaam vaivaahikiim prabho |

Then that king from Videha bloodline, Janaka, said in this way to Vashishta, Oh, the knower of punctilios [minute detail of conducting a ceremony], oh, Brahma-sage, oh, masterly sage, along with other sages you make happen all of the marriage ceremonies of Rama, the rejoicer of the world... Thus Janaka spoke to Vashishta. [1-73-18, 19a]

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tathaa iti uktvaa tu janakam vashistho bhagavaan risih || 1-73-19

vishvaamitram puraskritya shataanandam ca dhaarmikam |

prapaa madhye tu vidhivat vediim kritvaa mahaatapaah || 1-73-20

alam cakaara taam vediim gandha puspaih sama.ntatah |

suvarna paalikaabhih ca citra kumbhaih ca sa ankuraih || 1-73-21

a.nkura aadhyaih sharaavaih ca dhuupa paatraih sa dhuupakaih |

sha.nkha paatraih shruvaih srugbhih paatraih ar.hghyaadi puujitaih || 1-73-22

laaja puurnaih ca paatriibhih rakshitaih api samskritaih |

Thus said, that Godly sage Vashishta on saying, so be it, to Janaka, embarked on arranging Altar of Fire keeping sage Vishvamitra and the virtuous sage Shataananda afore of him, and that sage with great asceticism, Vashishta, has arranged an Altar of Fire in the midpoint of the cool-thatched manorial-marriage-shed [mansion like marriage shed], decorating it with sandal paste and flowers. Then he promptly sanctified [purified] variously colored handy vessels, and lid-like concave earthen vessels, which are full with just sprouted sprigs [twigs], and he sanctified even other golden vessels, censers with fumes of incenses, conch-shell like vessels, and short handled wooden scoops for scooping oblatory [items offered to God] items from vessels for putting it in long-handled scoops, and long-handled wooden scoops to drop those oblatory items into Ritual-fire, and vessels filled with oblatory items like ghee, water, milk etc., and vessels filled with toasted rice-flakes and vessels filled with holy yellow-rice duly treated with turmeric, and he sanctified all articles of wedding ceremony by sprinkling holy-yellow-rice, as a kind of dry-ablution [the act or action of bathing]. [1-73-19b, 20, 21, 22, 23a]

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darbhah samaih samaastiirya vidhivat ma.ntra puraskritam || 1-73-23

agnim aadhaaya tam vedyaam vidhi ma.ntra puurvakam |

juhaava agnau mahaatejaa vashistho munipungava || 1-73-24

Then that great resplendent [brilliant] and eminent-saint Vashishta neatly overlaid even-sized sacred grass on that Altar of Fire synchronizing with Vedic-chants, and on preparing Ritual-fire by rubbing two wooden sticks, called arani, he placed that fire in the pit of Altar, which is aflame now, and then reverently and in tune with the Vedic-hymns he effused [poured] oblatinal liquids into that Altar of Fire, with short-handled and long-handled wooden scoops. [1-73-23b, 24]

tatah siitaam samaaniya sarva aabharana bhusitaam |

samaksham agneh samsthaapya raaghava abhimukhe tadaa || 1-73-25

abraviit janako raajaa kausalya aana.nda vardhanam |

Then that king Janaka led forth Seetha, who by now is decorated with every variety of bridal jewelry, and on positioning her en face Raghava in the presence of Altar of Fire, then Janaka addressed Rama who is the enhancer of his mother Kausalya's rejoice. [1-73-25, 26a]

iyam siitaa mama sutaa saha dharma carii tava || 1-73-26

pratiiccha ca enaam bhadram te paanim grihniisva paaninaa |

This is Seetha, my daughter, she acquits [conducts satisfactorily] herself in whatever duty you undertake. Take her wishfully, let safeness betide you, take her palm into your palm... [1-73-26b, 27a]

pativrataa mahabhaagaa chaaya iva anugataa sadaa || 1-73-27

iti uktvaa praakshipat raajaa mantra puutam jalam tadaa |

She who is prosperous and husband-devout, will always be abiding you like your own shadow... So saying that king Janaka then poured forth water into the palms of Rama, which is sanctified [purified] with hymns. [1-73-27b, 28a]

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saadhu saadhu iti devaanaam risiinaam vadataam tadaa || 1-73-28

deva dundubhi nir.hghosah puspa varsam mahaan abhuut |

Then there occurred great flower-showers from firmament [heavens], while sages and Gods staying in firmament have exclaimed, nice... fine... to the drumbeats of heavenly drums. [1-3-28b, 29a]

evam dattvaa sutaam siitaam mantra udaka puraskritaam || 1-73-29

abraviit janako raajaa harsena abhiparipluta |

On handing over his daughter Seetha who is duly sanctified with sanctified waters, King Janaka is completely overwhelmed with exhilaration [cheerful and excited] for the successful performance of his bit as a father and he said this. [1-73-29b, 30a]

laksmana aagaccha bhadram te uurmilaam udyataam mayaa || 1-73-30

praticcha paanim grihniisva maa bhuut kaalasya paryayah |

Come on, Lakshmana, safe betides you... say yes to Urmila, the one who is decided by me to be given to you... take her palm into yours... lapse not the time... [1-73-30b, 31a]

tam evam uktvaa janako bharatam ca abhyabhaasata || 1-73-31

grihaana paanim maandavyaah paaninaa raghuna.ndana |

Janaka having said to Lakshmana that way, he also addressed Bharata, Oh, Bharata, the delight of Raghu-s, take Maandavi's palm into your palm... [1-73-31b-32a]

shatrughnam ca api dharmaatmaa abraviit mithileshvarah || 1-73-32

shrutakiirteh mahaabaaho paanim grihniisva paaninaa |

That honorable king of Mithila even said to Shatrughna, oh, dexterous [skillful] Shatrughna, take the palm of Shrutakiirti into yours... [1-73-32b, 33a]

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sarve bhavantah saumyaah ca sarve sucarita vrataah || 1-73-33

patniibhih santu kaakutsthaa maa bhuut kaalasya paryayah |

Oh, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, Shatrughna ... you all are tender-hearted, well-behaved and well-intentioned brothers from Kakutstha lineage [descendents]... without lapse of time take up other ceremonies... So said Janaka to bridegrooms. [1-73-33b, 34a]

janakasya vacah shrutvaa paaniin paanibhih asprishan || 1-73-34

catvaarah te catasrinaam vasisthasya mate sthitaah |

All the four bridegrooms are palm-in-palmed [holding the palm of the hand] with all the four brides, paying heed to Janaka's words, and abiding in Vashishta's orchestration of Vedic hymns and procedures. [1-73-34b, 35a]

agnim pradaksinam kritvaa vedim raajaanam eva ca || 1-73-35

risiin caiva mahaatmaanah saha bhaaryaa raghu udvahaah |

yathaa uktena tathaa cakruh vivaaham vidhi puurvakam || 1-73-36

On performing circumambulations [to go around in circles] along with their wives around the Ritual-fire, and around the Altar of Fire, and that way, around king Janaka, the awarder of wives, and around sages as well for they conducted the marriages well, those great-souled bridegrooms that have emerged from Raghu's dynasty on performing further deeds of ritual consistent with custom as directed by Vashishta, they are all wed. [1-73-35b, 36]

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puspavristirmahatyaasiidantariksaatsubhaasvaraa |

divyadundubhini rghosairgiitavaaditranihsvanaih || - yadvaa –

puspa vristih mahati aasiit a.ntariksaat su bhaasvaraa |

divya dundubhi nir.hghosaih giita vaaditra nihsvanaih || **1-73-37**

nanrituh ca apsarah sa.nghaa gandharvaah ca jaguh kalam |

vivaahе raghu mukhyaanaam tad adbhutam adrishyata || **1-73-38**

There occurred rich and highly dazzling flower showers from firmament [heavens], and that ambience is filled with the drumbeats of divine drums and with vocal and instrumental music, and promenades [stage where audience and the actors are placed in the same] of Apsara-s danced, and even the Gandharva-s sang tunefully, and because it is the marriage of celebrated bridegrooms from Raghu's dynasty, such a charming spectacle is envisioned [to weigh in the mind or to reflect on or unthinkable].. [1-73-37, 38]

iidrishe vartamaane tu tuurya udghusta ninaadite |

trih agnim te parikramya uuhuh bhaaryaa mahaujasah || **1-73-39**

In this kind of on-going-ness of harmonious music of vocal, instrumental and that of dancers, those great resplendent [shining brilliantly] brothers married their wives on circumambulating [to circle on foot especially ritualistically] the Ritual-fire fire thrice. [1-73-39]

atha upakaaryaam jagmuh te sa daaraa raghuna.ndanaah |

raajaa api anuyayau pashyan sa risi sanghah sa baandhavah || **1-73-40**

Then those legatees of Raghu went to their visitatorial-palace with their wives, followed by king Dasharatha along with the assemblages of sages, kinfolds, queens and wives included, and Dasharatha feasted his eyes on sons and daughter-in-laws. [1-73-40]

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iti vaalmiiki raamaayane aadi kaavye baala kaande tri saptatitamah sargah

Thus, this is the 73rd chapter in Bala Kanda of Valmiki Ramayana, the First Epic poem of India.

Sriman Moola Rama Vijayate

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