

Role Model - Narrative for the Society

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Search for a model personality is an immortal quest since time immemorial. In the human history, we come across such an instance in the opening sequence of Ramayana – national treasure of Bharateeyas (Indians). The task of finding and finalizing the right personality as the role model is not simple at all. It calls for pre-qualification of the search group.

Why the pre-qualification?

In the contemporary society, we have the problem of narrative. Most of us never tend to look at the objective, while following the narrative set up by vested interests with commercial, personal, vicious, immoral and unethical agenda. This narrative develops the concept of popularity.

If the search group, setting a narrative has noble thoughts in mind to shape up the morality and develop character in the society, we will have great and ideal personality leading the polity and society.

Now, contrast the headlines in our media and social media with the traditional depiction of heroism. Currently, the media is obsessed in projecting immoral activities of criminal tormentors, sports people, greedy business men, wily politicians, lustful rapists which starts a negative persona every day in the consumers of the content, whether the print, visual or audio media.

Traditionally, we were fed with the idea of a great hero called Rama – who was of valour and strength yet rooted to the ground, adhering to the commitments of the parents and elders; never attracted to other women or others' assets. The character was of compassion, obedience and welfare of his subjects both before assuming the administration (in private life) and taking over the regime.

How did our fore-fathers find such personality? They had a search group consisting of Rishis Naarada and Vaalmeeki, with the pre-qualifications such as Tapas (Penance), Swadhyaya (Daily Practice of Educational values), Vaagvid (Articulation of Speech), Muni Pungava (Best among the creed of Sages).

Therefore, the a search group had the noble agenda of finding the worthy personality to foster the concept of heroics in the society for generations >>>

Prodded by Brahma- the creator, Naarada the celestial Sage had assigned the duty of depicting the story of great personality, to a seeker of divinity – Sage Vaalmeeki, who had just assumed the divine vision after decades of penance. At that stage, Sage Vaalmeeki was not yet aware of his prowess about finding the content and apt wordings to describe such person and the story there of.

Before going to the point of characteristics, let us understand about the specialty of the qualifiers (Adjectives) to the conversant persons.

(This is from the first Shloka – poem of Ramayana, written by Sage Poet Valmeeki. First Stanza (For English reader's sake, we tweak the order of words for easy reading.)

Type	Sanskrit Word	Roman	Meaning
Kartaa (Subj)	वाल्मीकिः	Vālmiki	Vaalmeeki,
(adj)	तपस्वी	Tapasvī	the great person of penance
Kriyaa (Verb)	परिपप्रच्छ	Paripapraccha	Asked
Karma (Object)	नारदं	Nāradaṁ	Sage Narada,
	तपस्स्वाध्याय निरतं	Tapa S'svādhyāya Nirataṁ	who is ever engaged in Penance and Recitation (Revision) of scriptural understanding.
(Adj)	वाग्विदां वरं	Vāgvidāṁ Varam	Great among Literateurs and
(Adj)	मुनिपुंगवं	muniṣṭhāgavam	Great among Sages.

What were qualifiers to the questioner and replier? What is the significance?

Questions are of three types.

a) Out of Arrogance or belligerence to defeat the other

This model is fit for an exchange between scholars or any person trying to make a fool of other.

b). Out of curiosity to test the mettle (Teachers/ Examiners/ Quiz masters deploy this)

c). With an urge to learn (True seekers and students must adhere to this model)

This conversation (Samvaada) between Naarada and Vaalmeeki represents the third pattern. Obedience is the essence of this model. Let us understand the background of the participants. Naarada with his eternal quest into penance was well known in the Universe for his diligence and erudition apart from the propagation of devotion and resultant access to the deities. Where as, Vaalmeeki earlier known as Ratnaakara, was a person engaged in nefarious practices of violence and loot, but a transformed soul with advice from Sages.

His perseverance in penance and repentance qualified him to become a sage. In fact, the austerity which he followed was amazing, wherein an anthill was formed around him, sitting in a motionless posture. (Valmeeka = Anthill; Valmeeki is the person, connected with it.)

To summarise, any true disciple/ seeker should have the basic trait of obedience and penchant for dedication.

The Master should have these inevitable qualities to qualify as a teacher.

1. Tapas - Penance. Indulgence in Penance (To refresh the mind and improve concentration)
2. Swadhyaya - Recitation (Revision) of scriptural understanding. This is the principle behind continuing education, deployed by knowledge industries in contemporary society. Unless, a person is well acquainted in the subject he is speaking, the talk would be futile, uninspiring for a listener and wastage of time for both.
3. Vaagvid - Usage of the Right Words is the key to any conversation. This is more important in teaching, because the student will naturally pick up the patterns/ phrases and inculcate the same, along with the subtle meaning connoted by these words and sentences.
4. Muni - One with control of senses. Deployment without the capacity of withdrawal could be quite disastrous. This is more true, in case of words. True master should be capable of using the right words as well as enjoy the bliss of silence. This Mounam (Silence from words and thoughts is the factor that can elevate the teacher into the highest plane. Ofcourse, this is the basic trait of penance.)
5. Vara - Great. Selection of teachers is obviously a tough task. Parents with their experience choose a brand of school or a teacher based on the stature. However, a grown up person, should be quite diligent in choosing the right person, because treading the wrong path potentially destroys the prospects beyond path.

Since, the search group consisting of the duo- Qualified Guru (preceptor) and Competent Shishya (disciple), great results could be expected.

Now the POINTS of Reference:

कोन्वस्मिन्साम्प्रतं लोके गुणवान्कश्च वीर्यवान्।

धर्मज्ञश्च कृतज्ञश्च सत्यवाक्यो दृढव्रतः॥1.1.2॥

अस्मिन् लोके, साम्प्रतम् कः नु now, in this world who indeed is,

1. गुणवान् endowed with excellent qualities,
2. वीर्यवांश्च with prowess,
3. धर्मज्ञः च knower of righteousness,
4. कृतज्ञः च grateful (who remembers even little help done by others),
5. सत्यवाक्यः truthful in his statements,
6. दृढव्रतः firm in his vows (till such time he achieves the results),

Who in this world lives today endowed with excellent qualities, prowess, righteousness, gratitude, truthfulness and firmness in his vows?

चारित्रेण च को युक्तस्सर्वभूतेषु को हितः।

विद्वान्कः कस्समर्थश्च कश्चैकप्रियदर्शनः॥1.1.3॥

चारित्रेण युक्तः endowed with good conduct

7. सर्वभूतेषु हितः benefactor for all living beings,
8. विद्वान् learned man (knower of everything which is to be known),
9. समर्थः च competent (capable of doing things which cannot be done by others),
10. एकप्रियदर्शनः च solely delightful in appearance to everyone?

Who is that one gifted with good conduct, given to the wellbeing of all living creatures, learned in the lore (knowledge of all things that is known), capable of doing things which others can not do and singularly handsome?

आत्मवान्को जितक्रोधो द्युतिमान्कोऽनसूयकः।

कस्य बिभ्यति देवाश्च जातरोषस्य संयुगे॥1.1.4॥

11. आत्मवान् self-restrained,
12. जितक्रोधः one who has conquered anger,
13. द्युतिमान् one who is endowed with splendour,
14. अनसूयकः one who is free from envy (envy depicting one's merits as weak points),

15. जातरोषस्य कस्य संयुगे देवाः च बिभ्यति (in the battle, celestial beings, devatas, are afraid of) Capable of Frightening even the Deities

Who (among men) is self-restrained? Who has conquered anger? Who is endowed with brilliance and free from envy? Who is that when excited to wrath even the devatas, are afraid of (let alone foes)?

एतदिच्छाम्यहं श्रोतुं परं कौतूहलं हि मे।

महर्षे त्वं समर्थोऽसि ज्ञातुमेवंविधं नरम्॥1.1.5॥

Inquisitiveness of Vaalmeeki (through the 16 aspects) was appreciated by Naarada, who compassionately responded.

“It is a rare occasion to find such personality. However, I will think about such personality and inform you.”.

He narrated about Srirama with about 77 Traits.

इक्ष्वाकुवंशप्रभवो रामो नाम जनैश्श्रुतः।

नियतात्मा महावीर्यो द्युतिमान्धृतिमान् वशी॥1.1.8॥

इक्ष्वाकुवंशप्रभवः Illustrious Line-Age, born in the race of king Ikshvaku,

1. रामः नाम Delightful, known as Rama (One who also delights others),
2. जनैः श्रुतः Popular, as heard by people for his Deeds
3. नियतात्मा Steady Natured (meaning thereby immutable form),
4. महावीर्यः Incomprehensible prowess
5. द्युतिमान् Self- Effulgent,
6. धृतिमान् Self-Commanding,
7. वशी Self-Controlled (subjecting the entire world under his control).

बुद्धिमान्नीतिमान्वाग्मी श्रीमान् शत्रुनिबर्हणः।

विपुलांसो महाबाहुः कम्बुग्रीवो महाहनुः॥1.1.9॥

बुद्धिमान् Great intellectual,

8. नीतिमान् Learned in ethical (statecraft) philosophy,
9. वाग्मी Proficient in speeches,
10. श्रीमान् Possessing vast auspiciousness,
11. शत्रुनिबर्हणः Destroyer of foes (sins),

Physical Attributes, which reflect the majesty in any person, inspiring Awe.

12. विपुलांसः Broad shouldered,
13. महाबाहुः Strong-armed,
14. कम्बुग्रीवः Possessing conch-shaped neck,
15. महाहनुः Having prominent and strong cheeks.

महोरस्कः महेषासो गूढजत्रुररिन्दमः।

आजानुबाहुस्सुशिरास्सुललाटस्सुविक्रमः॥1.1.10॥

16. महोरस्कः Having a broad chest,

17. महेषासः Armed with a great bow (meaning thereby having a body strong enough to carry a bow),

18. गूढजत्रुः Fleshy collar bones,

19. अरिन्दमः Destroyer of foes (sins),

20. आजानुबाहुः Lnee-long arms,

21. सुशिराः Head with noble qualities,

22. सुललाटः Large and beautiful forehead,

23. सुविक्रमः Valiant

समस्समविभक्ताङ्गस्त्रिगधवर्णः प्रतापवान्।

पीनवक्षा विशालाक्षो लक्ष्मीवान् शुभलक्षणः॥ 1.1.11॥

24. समः Neither too tall nor too short,

25. समविभक्ताङ्गः Well-proportioned limbs,

26. त्रिगधवर्णः Shining complexion,

27. प्रतापवान् Mighty and powerful,

28. पीनवक्षाः Strong well-developed chest,

29. विशालाक्षः Expansive eyes,

30. लक्ष्मीवान् Lustrous body,

31. शुभलक्षणः Auspicious qualities (according to science of palmistry).

^{32.}

धर्मज्ञस्सत्यसन्धश्च प्रजानां च हिते रतः।

यशस्वी ज्ञानसम्पन्नश्शुचिर्वश्यस्समाधिमान्॥1.1.12॥

Knowledge Traits

33. धर्मज्ञः Mindful of duties (of protecting those who take refuge in him) of life,

34. सत्यसन्धः Firm in his vows,
35. प्रजानाम् हिते रतः Intent on doing good for his subjects,
36. यशस्वी Renowned,
37. ज्ञानसम्पन्नः Omniscient,
38. शुचिः Pure and Devout,
39. वश्यः Obedient to elders (or accessible to those who are dependent on him),
40. समाधिमान् Meditating on the means of protecting and Finding Answers to problems with composure
प्रजापतिसमश्श्रीमान् धाता रिपुनिषूदनः ।
रक्षिता जीवलोकस्य धर्मस्य परिरक्षिता ॥ 1.1.13 ॥

- प्रजापतिसमः Equal to Brahma, by caring for his subjects like a father
41. श्रीमान् Surpassed the entire world in auspiciousness,
42. धाता Sustainer of this entire world,
43. रिपुनिषूदनः Destroyer of enemies,
44. जीवलोकस्य रक्षिता Protector of all living beings,
45. धर्मस्य परिरक्षिता Protector of Righteousness (Code of Morality)

- रक्षिता स्वस्य धर्मस्य स्वजनस्य च रक्षिता ।
वेदवेदाङ्गतत्त्वज्ञो धनुर्वेदे च निष्ठितः ॥ 1.1.14 ॥
46. स्वस्य धर्मस्य रक्षिता Follower of the Self-duties
47. स्वजनस्य च रक्षिता Protector of his own subjects
48. वेदवेदाङ्गतत्त्वज्ञः Knowledgeable in the true nature and Purpose of Vedas and Vedangas
49. धनुर्वेदे च निष्ठितः accomplished in military science, one of the upavedas, (a great archer)

सर्वशास्त्रार्थतत्त्वज्ञस्मृतिमान्प्रतिभानवान्।
सर्वलोकप्रियस्साधुरदीनात्मा विचक्षणः॥1.1.15॥

50. सर्वशास्त्रार्थतत्त्वज्ञः Knower of the Proport of all scriptures,
51. स्मृतिमान् Infallible retentive memory,
52. प्रतिभानवान् Talented and Spontaneous,
53. सर्वलोकप्रियः Beloved of all people,
54. साधुः Well-disposed and Courteous (even towards those who have done harm),
55. अदीनात्मा Unperturbed mind (even in times of extreme grief),
56. विचक्षणः Discrimination (is circumspect in doing right things in right time).

Sri Rama knows the true meaning of all scriptures and has a retentive memory. He is talented (possessing brightness of conception). He is beloved and welldisposed towards all people (and courteous even towards those who have done him harm). He has an unperturbed mind (even in times of extreme grief) and is circumspect (in doing right things at the right time).

सर्वदाभिगतस्सद्भिस्समुद्र इव सिन्धुभिः।
आर्यस्सर्वसमश्चैव सदैकप्रियदर्शनः॥1.1.16॥

57. सिन्धुभिः समुद्रः इव सर्वदा सद्भिः अभिगतः Approachable by noble persons, like a sea joined by many rivers
58. आर्यः Man of virtue,
59. सर्वसमः च Equitable disposition towards all
60. सदैकप्रियदर्शनः Delightful countenance at all times.

61.

स च सर्वगुणोपेतः कौसल्यानन्दवर्धनः।
समुद्र इव गाम्भीर्ये धैर्येण हिमवानिव॥1.1.17॥

62. कौसल्यानन्दवर्धनः सः च Pleasing the mother with traits and deeds
(Enhancer of Kausalya's Joy)

63. सर्वगुणोपेतः Endowed with all virtues,
64. गाम्भीर्ये समुद्रः इव Comparable to the ocean in the Depth of his thoughts
and personality
65. धैर्येण हिमवान् इव Fortitude like Himalaya mountain.

विष्णुना सदृशो वीर्ये सोमवत्प्रियदर्शनः।

कालाग्निसदृशः क्रोधे क्षमया पृथिवीसमः॥1.1.18॥

धनदेन समस्त्यागे सत्ये धर्म इवापरः।

Divine Qualities

66. वीर्ये विष्णुना सदृशः In prowess, similar to Visnu,
67. सोमवत् प्रियदर्शनः Pleasing in appearance like the Moon,
68. क्रोधे कालाग्निसदृशः Comparable to the all-consuming fire, in fury
69. क्षमया पृथिवीसमः Equal to earth in patience,
70. त्यागे धनदेन समः Equal to Kubera, divine treasurer in charity
71. सत्ये अपरः धर्मः इव Steadfast like the Sun in truth

तमेवं गुणसम्पन्नं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम्॥1.1.19॥

ज्येष्ठं श्रेष्ठगुणैर्युक्तं प्रियं दशरथस्सुतम्।

प्रकृतीनां हितैर्युक्तं प्रकृतिप्रियकाम्यया॥1.1.20॥

यौवराज्येन संयोज्यमैच्छत्प्रीत्या महीपतिः।

एवं गुणसम्पन्नम् him who was possessing all such good qualities,

72. सत्यपराक्रमम् One whose prowess is not in vain,
73. श्रेष्ठगुणैः युक्तम् Endowed with excellent virtues,
74. प्रकृतीनाम् प्रियम् Beloved, for his subjects,
75. हितैः युक्तम् Endowed with good deeds,
76. ज्येष्ठम् सुतम् Eldest son (Senior by the hierarchy)

तं रामम् Sri Rama,

प्रकृतिप्रियकाम्यया Ever intent on the welfare of the people,

प्रीत्या with affection.

यौवराज्येन संयोक्तुम् heir-apparent, to anoint,

महीपतिः दशरथः ऐच्छत् lord of earth, Dasharatha, wished.

With a desire to promote the welfare of the people king Dasaratha decided to install Sri Rama, his eldest and affectionate son as heir (apparent) who was bestowed with all excellent qualities and true prowess, beloved of the people he was ever intent in the welfare of the people.

Therefore, it is imperative and essential for anyone setting a narrative for the society to be:

1. Pre-Qualified with Virtues
2. Intent with the welfare of the Subjects
3. Benevolence

This is the reason, why we remember Sri Rama after millennia. It is also pertinent to remember the characters of Quarter that presented Sri Rama to us.

- 1) Naarada – Who informed about the Personality in detail
- 2) Vaalmeeki – Who depicted and presented the Narrative comprehensively
- 3) Vasishta (Kula Guru) – Who shaped the character and prodded the anointment
- 4) Dasharatha (Emperor) – Who Anointed and brought the Illustrious Character to the stage, with benevolence towards the Citizens of the Empire.

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Sri Rama Jaya Rama Jaya Jayarama

Written by Dr. Vamshi Krishna Ghanapathi, an independent scholar based in Mysore, India on the occasion of the Grand Inauguration of Sri Rama Janmabhumi Teertha Kshetram, Ayodhya.

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श्रीराघवं दशरथात्मजमप्रमेयं सीतापतिं रघुकुलान्वयरत्नदीपम्।

आजानुबाहुमरविन्ददलायताक्षं रामं निशाचरविनाशकरं नमामि।।