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An Introduction To Charak Samhitokta Rishi Lomash and Evaluation of His Contribution To Ayurveda

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Abstract

Maharishi Lomash was present in the conclave of *rishis* conducted beneath the mountains of Himalayas, some 5000 years ago. This not only shows his interest in the medical science but also put him as the caring person for the sufferings of mankind. Hence, it becomes essential to explore the life of sage Lomash to know about his contribution to the Ayurveda. The reference of sage Lomasha apart from Ayurveda is found in Skanda Purana and Mahabharata. In Skanda Purana, the reason for his name being 'Lomash' is explained. Personality of sage Lomash is also described in Skanda Purana. We also find the discussion between king Indradyumna and sage Lomasha in Skanda Purana. In this discussion, sage Lomash mentioned about the ultimate truth of the life that everyone has to leave this materialistic world one day. Hence, one should avoid collecting the things and building homes. Rishi Lomash asked Pandavas to undertake pilgrimage to different *teerthas*. Rishi Lomash on the request of Yudhishtira, narrated him the story of many rishis, many kings, many pilgrimage site (*teerthas*) during the course of their pilgrimage. Maharshi Lomash also narrated the importance of each *teerthas* and pilgrimage to it. Not only this he actually guided Pandavas on the path of pilgrimage. Sage Lomash introduced Yudhishtira to sage like Bhrigu, Angira, Vasishtha and other rishis at Mahendra Mountain. Surprisingly all these rishis were also present during the famous conclave of *rishis* conducted beneath the mountain of Himalayas. From the stories of rishis and kings which sage Lomash narrates to the Pandavas, it appears that sage Lomash being the longest living rishi, possessed the accurate and reliable knowledge about the different rishis and kings existed in different times in India. This is a little attempt to explore sage Lomash through different stories which he narrated to the Pandavas.

Keywords – *Kalpa, pilgrimage, hair (loma), Japa, Tapa*

Introduction :

Rishi Lomash was staying at 'Kalapa' village in the Himalaya region ahead of Kedarnath. The Kalap gram mentioned above is located in the Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand state of India. It is situated in the upper Garhwal region within Tons Valley at an altitude of 7800 feet. Lord Shiva granted sage Lomash the boon of longevity and made an arrangement that only one hair of his body will fall in each *Kalpa* (Bramha's one day). As per Hindu cosmology given in Vishnu and Bhagwat Purana, one *Kalpa* is equal to 4.32 billion human years which equals to the one day of Bramha. A cycle of four yugas (*Satya, Treta, Dvapara* and *Kali*) equals to 4.32 million years. Each *Kalpa* is composed of 1000 Yuga cycle. Rishi Lomash conveyed the message of God king Indra to the Pandavas resting their anxiety about their brother Arjuna. In Mahabharata, we find Maharshi Lomash suggesting Pandavas to undertake the pilgrimage. Rishi Lomash on the request of Yudhishtira, narrated him the story of rishi Agastya, rishi Bhrigu, rishi Bhrigu, rishi Chyawana, rishi Parshurama, rishi Vibhandaka and rishi Rushyashringa, King Lomapada, King Sagara, King Ushinar, King, Mandhata, King Rama, King Somaka. Sage Lomasha, once sated to have given discourse on the merits of Sagun and Nirgun worship of Brahman. The sage Bhrushundi refused to accept the views of sage Lomash. Angered with this sage Lomash cursed rishi Bhrushundi to become a crow. After that sage Bhrushundi came to know as Kakkbhrushundi. Maharishi Lomash was present in the conclave of *rishis* conducted beneath the mountains of Himalayas, some 5000 years ago.^[1]

Material & Method :

Literary method of research is followed in this article. All the available Ayurvedic and Indological literature is explored to find the maximum information about the rishi Lomash. This information is analyzed logically to come to the conclusions.

Review Of Literature :

Reason for Being Name as Lomash & Longevity

When rishi Lomash was asked about his longevity. Sage Lomash replied that in his last birth, he worshipped the lord Shiva for long time and pleased him. In return sage Lomash asked for the boon that he should never die. Lord Shiva told sage Lomash that he cannot grant that boon as everyone who had taken a birth has to die as a natural rule. Instead, he will grant such a boon that only one hair of his body will fall in each *Kalpa* and he will long in this world *Kalpas* after *Kalpas* till all his hairs fall. Accordingly, only one hair falls from his body in each *Kalpa* and he continue to live long.^[2]

As per Hindu cosmology given in Vishnu and Bhagwat Purana, one *Kalpa* is equal to 4.32 billion human years which equals to the one day of Bramha. A cycle of four yugas (*Satya, Treta, Dvapara* and *Kali*) equals to 4.32 million years. Each *Kalpa* is composed of 1000 Yuga cycle. A *Kalpa* is further divided into 14 Manvantaras. Each Manvantara lasts for 71 Yuga cycle (306.72 million years). At the end of each *Kalpa*, the universe enters a period of dissolution called '*Paralaya*' which is also called as the night of the Bramha (4.32 billion human years). The day and night of Bramha makes 8.64 billion human years.

Personality of sage Lomash

Sage Lomash use to chant the name of the deity

daily. He never hurt anyone with any bad words. He was having friendly attitude towards everyone. Hence, he was also referred as 'Maitra' muni. He used to follow the *trikal sandhya* ritual and used to bath three times a day. He was having long yellowish hairs twisted on his head. He was having bright aura.^[3]

Discussion Between rishi Lomash And King

Indradyumna :

Rishi Lomash was staying at 'Kalapa' village in the Himalaya region ahead of Kedarnath. Once king Indradyumna and Markandeya *muni* visited the place of Lomash rishi. Rishi welcomed them and asked the reason to come. Indradyumna told that he has been driven out of heaven by lord Bramha several times and now wants to attain the *Moksha* through detachment of this materialistic world. That time sage Lomash was seated under bright sunlight covering his head with handful of grass. Seeing this King Indradyumna asked the sage Lomash that why the rishi had not made the hut instead of getting burnt in the heat of the sun. Rishi replied that everything is temporary in this materialistic world; teeth falls, beauty disappears, youth turn old. Everyone has to die one day then why one should create a hut. King said to rishi Lomash that in all the three worlds, only he is long lived then why he is saying so? Sage Lomash replied that in each *Kalpa* he loses one hair. Till the time he lost hairs up to his knee and that's why he fears that when he has to die one day then why he should create the hut. Hearing this King Indradyumna wished to perform the worship of the lord Shiva as like sage Lomash. Accordingly sage Lomash gave him the *diksha of lingapoojana*.^[4]

The Kalap gram mentioned above is located in the Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand state of India. It is situated in the upper Garhwal region within Tons Valley at an altitude of 7800 feet.

Conveying the Message of Indra to Pandavas :

Rishi Lomash use to roam in all three *lokas* at his will. When rishi 'Dhaumya' was explaining the importance of pilgrimage to the Yudhishtira near Kamyak Forest on the bank of river Saraswati (West of Kurukshetra – Modern day Haryana state of India) that time sage 'Lomash' arrived there. He told the Yudhishtira that God king Indra had directed him to tell them all the message of Indra and wellbeing of their brother Arjuna. He said that Arjuna had learnt the celestial weaponry from lord Shiva. Arjuna had also learnt the celestial weaponry from Indra, Kubera, Yama and Varuna. He also learnt dancing and singing from Chitrasen Gandharva in the heaven.^[5]

Suggestion to Undertake Pilgrimage to

Pandavas :

Maharshi Lomash suggested Pandavas to undertake the pilgrimage. Rishi on the request of Yudhishtira, narrated him the story of Agastya rishi, Kinga Sagara, rishi Rushyashringa, Sage Lomash introduced Yudhishtira to sage like Bhrgu, Angira, Vasishtha and other rishis at Mahendra Mountain (Modern day Goa state of India). There he told him the story of lord Parshurama. Later he told the story of rishi Chyawana. He also told the story of king Mandhata. Later rishi Lomash narrated the importance of various pilgrim sites (*Teerthas*) to the Yudhishtira. After that he told the story of

rishi Ashtavakra. Later he described the pilgrimage at Gandhamadan mountain to the Pandavas. [6]

Narration of story of Elval and Vatapi to

Pandavas :

Maharshi Lomash told to Yudhishtira that in the city of Manimati, there use to be demon king called 'Elval' along with his younger brother 'Vatapi'. Once Elval asked the Brahmin to give him the son like God king Indra. Since, Brahmin failed to do so, he started killing the Brahmanas. Vatapi was having the power to convert in any form and Elval was having the power to call the dead person and see him alive. Using this power Vatapi use to take the form of goat. Elval use to kill this goat and cook the meat. Later he uses to call Brahmins for meal. After serving them the meat in meal, he uses to call his brother Vatapi. Then Vatapi use to come out of their tummy by tearing it apart.

Once sage Agasti saw his ancestors in very bad condition. On asking the reason they told the rishi Agasti that until he produces a son and they get grandson, they will not be able to get the heaven. The family cycle must go on so that universe runs properly. Later sage Agasti searched bride for him but could not get the suitable. Hence, he with his yogic power created a girl foetus and gave it to Vidarbha King. The king kept her name as 'Lopamudra'. When she attained the adulthood, sage Agasti asked the king to give his daughter to him as wife. King succumbed to the demand of sage fearing wrath and married his daughter with Agasti. Once, when Agasti desired a sexual intercourse with Lopamudra for progeny, she asked sage to bring royal cloths and ornaments for her. To fulfill her desire sage Agasti approached the demon

king Elval. As usual Elval prepared the meat of his brother Vatapi and served it to the sage Agasti and later he called Vatapi. But sage Agasti digested him completely and farted. Elval gave the wealth, royal cloths and golden chariot to sage Agasti. Later he tried to kill sage Agasti but sage killed him. Later sage gave the royal cloths and ornaments to the wife Lopamudra and had a son called 'Edhmawaha' from her. The hermit of sage Agasti near river Bhagirathi, came to know as the 'Agastyashrama' [7].

Narration of story of Rama and Vishwamitra to

Pandavas :

Maharshi Lomash told to Yudhishtira that once sage Bhrgu and sage Parshurama on knowing the valour of lord Rama, came to the city of Ayodhya to verify it. When lord Rama went to welcome Parshurama on the boundary of the state, sage Parshurama asked lord Rama to tie the rope to his bow. When lord Rama accomplished it successfully, sage Parshurama asked lord Rama to put the arrow on the rope and pull it near the ear. Lord Rama objected to the kiddish demands of sage Parshurama. In anger he shoots an arrow in the air which generated the thunder, lightning, storm, rain, flood and earthquake. Later that arrow came back and took away all the aura of sage Parshurama. Saddened with the sense of defeat, sage Parshurama went back to the mountain Mahendragiri in exile with lack luster face. Later the ancestors of Parshurama suggested him to take the deep in holy Diptodaka Teertha near the river Vadhusar to regain the luster and aura. Parshuram followed the suggestion and regained the valour and luster. [8]

Narration of story of sage Dadhichi and

Vrittrasura to Pandavas :

Maharshi Lomash told to Yudhishtira that once upon a time a demon king Vrittrasura was ruling over the land of Gods. God king Indra asked lord Bramha a solution to get rid of the Vruttrasura. Lord Bramha asked Indra and other gods to approach the sage Dadhichi and request him to donate his bones for the cause of gods and prepare the unbeatable hardest weapon 'Vajra' from it. Lord Bramha told that with the help of this Vajra, gods will be able to kill the Vrittrasura. Accordingly, gods approached the Dadhichi rishi and requested him to oblige. Sage Dadhichi accepted the request readily and gave away his body. From the bones of the sage Dadhich, Vishwakarma, the God architect prepared the weapon called 'Vajra'. With the help of this weapon god king Indra killed the demon king Vrittrasura.^[9]

Narration of story of sage Agasti and Kaleyaka

Daityas to Pandavas :

Maharshi Lomash told to Yudhishtira that after the death of the Vrittrasura, all the demons called Kaleyaka took the shelter of the sea. In the day time they use to hide under the sea and in the night time they use to come on the earth and kill Brahmins. They entered the ashramas of Vasishtha rishi Chyawan rishi, Bhardwaj rishi and killed several innocent Brahmins. God king Indra approached lord Vishnu to get rid of this problem as he rescued them several times from such dangers. Lord Vishnu asked them to request the sage Agasti to drink the water of the sea and dry it completely so that demons become visible and gods can kill them. Accordingly, the team of gods requested the sage

Agasti. Sage Agasti obliged and drunk entire sea and made it dry. In the daylight, gods killed the demons and made everyone free from the terror of *Kaleyaka* demons.^[10]

Narration of story of King Sagar to Pandavas :

Maharshi Lomash told to Yudhishtira that when sea was dried by the sage Agasti, gods and brahmins were worried about the dryness of sea. The approached the lord Brahma and asked him about the solution. Lord Brahma said that kind Sagar's great grandson will refill the dried sea with water. King Sagar of Ekshwaku lineage was ruling at Ayodhya. He was having two beautiful wives naming Vaidarbhi and Shaibya. But he was childless. Hence, he started observing the penance and worshipping the lord, Shiva. Lord Shiva offered him the boon that one of his wives will give birth to short lived 60000 sons while other wife will deliver single male child who will become very famous king and carry on the family tree. Once King Sagar organized the *Ashwamedh Yagya*. He kept his 60000 sons for the protection of the horse of the *Yagyas*. After some time, the horse got missing. In search of the horse these 60000 sons came to the hermit of Kapil muni. Without knowing the fact, they blamed Kapil *muni* for stealing the horse. Furious with this allegation, Kapil *muni* burnt all of them with his yogic power. Sagar's other son Asamnjas turn out to be cruel person. Hence, king Sagar disowned him. King Sagar adopted the son of Asamanja, the Anshuman as the heir to the throne. Anshuman pleased the Kapil muni and got the boon from him that his ancestors will be revived. Anshuman's son Dilip also tried hard to bring river Ganga on the earth.

But he did not succeed despite his best attempts. King Dilip's son was 'Bhagiratha' who with his extraordinary efforts dig out the land up to the origin Gangotri and brought river Ganga on the earth and filled the ocean with the water. His ancestors also got the *mukti* with the water of river Ganga.^[11]

Maharshi Lomash told to Yudhishtira that in the lineage of king Ekshwaku, there was a king called Yuwanashva. He was childless. Maharshi Chywana had prepared a medicated water for his wife so that she can deliver the valourous child. But as king was thirsty, he entered the hermit of the rishi and himself drank that water. Seeing this rishi Chywana told that he had infused the *Bramhateja* in that water. Hence, king himself will have to deliver the child. After few years the baby came out of the tummy of the king Yuwanashwa by tearing the abdominal walls. But somehow king Ywanashva survived. Indra came to see this brilliant child and put his finger in his mouth. Child started sucking it. Seeing this Indra kept the name of the child as 'Mandhata'. This child later became the king and own all three peoples. He ruled very nicely and in a noble way. Everywhere he performed *yagyas*. He donated lacs of cows to Brahmins. King Mandhata performed *yagas* on the bank of river Yamuna.^[12]

Suggestion To Follow Ekadashi Vrata :

As per Padmapurana, Maharshi Lomash is of the view that those who so ever will observe fast on the day of Ekadashi (11th date) will never suffer from diseases. The fasting on Ekadashi keeps the body healthy.^[13]

From modern studies also it is well evident that fasting at regular intervals avoid many life style

related diseases such as metabolic syndrome, obesity, diabetes, ischemic heart disease, cancer etc. Fasting allows the process of autophagy in the body through which all toxic metabolites and free radicals are removed from the body.

Lomasha's Pilgrimage At Kushasthali :

During the time sage Lomash, city of Ujjain was known as Kushasthali. Sage Lomash undertook pilgrimage there and worshipped lord Maheshwara. He observed penance for long time at Kushasthali and got himself free from senility, worries, and diseases and got longevity. Rishi Lomasha took holy bath at all the *teerthas* (places of worship) situated in Kushasthali. The rivers and lakes at Kushasthali are full of lotuses. He further narrated that lord Mahadeva always resides there with Parvati.^[14]

Lomasha's Participation in Yagya of King

Ravishchandra :

In the *Swayambhuv Manvantara* of *Aadi Kalpa Satyayuga*, there was a king called Ravishchandra in the lineage of Chandra. He was the king of Kanchi and won over all the kings (*Chakravarti Samrat*). Once his royal priest rishi Shandilya took him to the Agasti Teertha located on the bank of river Narmada. He introduced the king to the sage Agasti and requested him to guide the king. Sage Agasti asked the king to perform Yagya in the nearby holy land called 'Asho Vanika'. Accordingly, king organized the Yagya there. Rishi Lomash participated in this Yagya along with other rishis like Vishwamitra, Bhardwaj, Kashyap and Bhargava.^[15]

Contribution To Ayurveda :

Rishi Lomash was present in the conference of rishis that held beneath the mountain Himalaya some 5000 years ago to discuss the burden of diseases occurring in the society and to find the solution over it. The assembly of Rishi, Maharshis and Bramharishis appointed rishi Bhardwaj as their leader to bring the knowledge of medical science from God king Indra. After learning Ayurveda from Indra, rishi Bhardwaja disseminated this knowledge among all the rishis present in the conference. Rishi Lomash was one among in the assembly. Hence, he received knowledge of Ayurveda from the rishi Bhardwaja.

Discussion :

Rishi Lomash was the longest living human being of that era. Sage Lomash use to chant the name of the deity daily. He never hurt anyone with any bad words. He was having friendly attitude towards everyone. He used to follow the *trikal sandhya* ritual and used to bath three times a day. Through the long-determined meditation, he pleased lord Shiva and got the boon of longevity. He never bult his home because of his disinterest in materialistic things. Discussion between rishi Lomash and King Indradyumna endorsed the fact that there is nothing which is permanent in the materialistic world. Rishi Lomash conveyed the message of God king Indra to the Pandavas about the wellbeing of their brother Arjuna in the heaven. He suggested Pandavas to undertake the Pilgrimage to various places of worships (*Teerthas*). He narrated the story of demon king Elval and Vatapi to Pandavas emphasizing the importance of Agasti *teertha* and sage Agasti. He narrated the story of lord Rama and Vishwamitra to Pandavas telling the importance of

various weapons given by Bramharishi Vishwamitra to lord Rama. He narrated of story of sage Dadhichi and Vrittrasura to Pandavas highlighting the highest sacrifice done by the sage Dadhichi for the interest of Gods. He narrated the story of sage Agasti and Kaleyaka Daityas to Pandavas talking about how sage Agasti dried the entire ocean and killed the demons. He narrated of story of King Mandhata and King Sagara to Pandavas. He suggestion to follow *Ekadashi Vrata* to stay healthy and blessed. Rishi Lomash was present in the conference of rishis that held beneath the mountain Himalaya some 5000 years ago to discuss the burden of diseases occurring in the society and to find the solution over it. Rishi Lomash was residing in the Himalayan kingdom at Kalap town which is situated on the Indo-China border. Hence, it was easy for him to attend this conference.

Conclusion :

It is concluded that Rishi Lomash was versatile long-lived scholar having deep knowledge of the metaphysics, Ayurveda and the ancient Indian history.

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