



# Dilipa the Sovereign of Raghuvamsa

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## Abstract

*This topic is based on the Raghuvamsa of Kalidasa. Especially it is focused on Canto 1 and 2. The poet portrays features of an ideal monarch through the depiction of King Dilipa. Here explains the rules should be followed by the Head of the state and subjects. He states about the wisdom and strategies of an ideal king. This could be followed by other successors.*

**Keywords: Kalidasa, Raghuvamsa, monarch, qualities of a king, administration of Dilipa**

## Introduction

Raghuvamsa is one of the Epic poems in Sanskrit Language written by the great poet Kalidasa. Kalidasa is known as Indian Shakespeare. Similie used in his works fabulous and memorable. Hence there is a statement that 'Upama Kalidasasya'. In the Raghuvamsa, poet figures out the merits of an ideal ruler. It focuses on the lineage of king Raghu which starts from Dilipa and ends with Agnivarna. This poem consists of 19 cantos. It can be divided into three phases based on the king SriRama ie.1. Ancestors of Srirama-(Canto 1-9) 2. Ramayana Story-(Canto 10-15) 3. Successors of SriRama- (16-19) Raghuvamsa starts with the narration of merits and qualities of the ideal kings in the Raghu dynasty. Dilipa was the father of Raghu from whom the dynasty gains its name. His wife Sudakshina who

was virtuous and devoted and also a good partner. Raghu was the perfect son with merits of parents. Here discusses the sovereign of Dilipa.

## Purity of Birth

From the twelfth verse of first canto, Dilipa's birth and depiction started in the poem. Born in high family and followed all rules according Vedas and Dharma Sastras. His charming personality attracted the people. Kalidasa described as a proper mixture of Roopa, Rasa Gandha, Sparsha due to his qualities. When he became a king, did his kshatradharma with dedication such as war, hunting, knowledge of traditional wisdom. Obtaining success in the war was only for fame. It was equal to his intellect efforts and achievements. Dilipa shows Royal qualities as well as Amicable qualities. Royal qualities mean



brilliance, goodness, glory etc. Kindness and compassion are meant as Amicable qualities.

### **Valour and Determination**

Solar kings acquire the attribute 'Vira' by the valour of their own arms. There was nothing impossible for the Raghuvamsa kings who were depend upon their bows. Horse sacrifice performed by Dilipa is the best example for his valour and courageousness. He used his power and strength to prevent the thieves and calamities. Army was kept as his ornaments. His valour was only for protection and not for harassment.

### **Discrimination Power**

This is a power or seeing the pros and cons of a thing before taking a decision. When discriminating power is confused in the darkness of the conflicting situations the knowledge of truth will lead the person to take correct decision. According to Manu the actions are dependent on the fate and human being must give prominence to it. A wisdom having the discriminating power is the weapon on the hands of a ruler who is able to achieve the victory against the enemies. It is very necessary quality which required for a king. Dilipa followed the same. He identified the truth and took powerful actions towards the lies. He noted the subjects as well as kings and observed their activities and took right actions.

### **Control Over the Passions**

Dilipa needs only the son from his wife Sudakshina. She was a perfect wife for him. She was as good as the alms gifted in the sacrifices. Even he was a king, not ready for a second marriage. When he came with his wife Sudakshina to the hermitage of Vasishtha, he helped her to get down and then only he himself alighted from the chariot. This shows that his respect and importance towards women. It was also a custom that to be respectful to the ladies.

### **Charity and Tax deduction**

Charity was a prominent virtue which became a part of a life of a king. The kings were ready to bow down, for the service of their supplicants. They were

ceaseless in their charity, and gifts honoured to the subjects. Thus gained the welfare of the people. And the kings had shown a credible aspect to their virtues. Dilipa put forward these virtues and handed over to his ancestors. As a king he had to be take care of his subjects. So, he collected the tax and wealth for charity and utilized for his people. This virtue was possessed by the solar kings to a high extend. They acquired the wealth only for others. The simlie shown by Kalidasa is it's just like a water of a cloud. Not their wealth, but also their qualities also were for the benefits of the subjects. Instead of that honoured by the prayers of supplicants to their desires. It is stated that "He collected revenue from the people for their own prosperity like to pour it thousandfold as rain". King Raghu donated his acquired wealth to the brahmanas and supplicants in place of Visvajith sacrifice. Because of the excess of his charity he had to receive the disciple of Varatantu only with a clay-pot. King Athithi offered magnificent gifts that his name became identical to Kubera.

### **Administration**

King Dilipa was too sharp to identify the enemies and friends. The two things accomplished that the intelligence in the science and a string stretched out on the bow. Based on the Sastras importance given to Dharma-Artha-Kama- Moksha which are the fundamental goals of human life according to Vedic culture. These are also known as Purusharthas. Here through Dharma ie. righteousness, he physically and mentally healthy to protect himself as well as his subjects. Artha means the material prosperity which helps to lead a comfortable life. Dilipa used the earnings from the revenue for deserved without any greed. Kama is sensory enjoyment and pleasure. He enjoyed his life without being more attached to the worldly pleasure. Moksha is spiritual liberation which means ultimate self -realisation. He performed all duties well for Sadhana or Moksha. The king has to provide the security and protection to their people. His personal merits led him to provide a good professional management towards the country and subjects.



Dilipa was an ideal king based on the qualities described in the Artha Sastra of Kautilya. According to him Born in high family background, possessed of valour, seeing through the medium of aged persons, virtuous, truthful, not having a contradictory nature, grateful, having great aims, enthusiastic, not addicted to procrastination, powerful to control enemies, of resolute may having an assembly of ministers no mean quality and possessed for a taste of discipline. Dilipa was an ideal one with all these qualities. A good leader never hesitates. It may be a matter of being patient and understanding the enemies and well-wishers and fights back. He knows how to protect those who need and how to punish others as per the methods of protection and punishment referred in the Manusmriti. In the Raghuvamsa it is stated that a good fellow even he happens to be an enemy was acceptable to him like medicine for a sick man. And an evil one was rejected by him though he was dear to him like a finger bitten by a snake. This type of skill of governance can be found in Dilipa. When he had no child, no disappointment shown, but waiting with hope and expectation. When he goes to hermitage to perform the rituals and sacrifices in connection with the birth of son, he handed over the duties to the ministers for a while, but not a permanent relocation of power. Because he knew that his son will be the ultimate heir of the kingdom. There is a chance that there may be greedy ministers. Hence, he shows his diplomacy. Enemies feared his power of conquer. He ruled over his kingdom as a graceful responsibility, not as a privilege. Kalidasa refers to him as the father of his subjects not only though his virtues, but also protection provided by him. He was known as Rajarshi, because he led a life of a king as well as a sage with equal determination. When he arrived to the hermitage, after the hospitality and evening rituals, Sage Vasishtha asked the well-beings of the country to that sage like ruler of the country. This clearly shows equal importance of dual duties as Rajarshi. As a husband, he always shows he care love towards his wife. When Sudakshina became pregnant the king performs rituals such as Pumsavana and expressed his love for his beloved. At the time of delivery when she had

pain, he also experiences the same. Through this it may be understood that he was very attached to his wife as a normal man.

As a father he also performed his role very well. At the time of the birth of Raghu, he distributed gifts like ornaments to all as a symbol of his pleasure. But he kept the chatra and Chamara which are the emblems of an emperor for his son. This was his care for his child. As per the Vedic concept, there are three Runas-Pitru- Deva-Rishi. By the birth of son, he freed from these debts. As a guardian, he was responsible to make his son as a good human being and delivered well teachings and knowledge. When Raghu became able to take the charge of the emperor, father happily handed over the powers. He advised the ruling strategies and power with the assistance of ministers. Then left for Vanaprastha with Sudakshina. The solar kings attributed as 'the kings who march ahead of those whom self-respect is wealth'. Self-respect is a fundamental quality for a Vijigishu who acquires the desire to get the highest position among the other kings. These qualities supported the king Dilipa to won the position of emperor.

The most important story related to Dilipa is the protection of Nandini which was described in the second canto of the Raghuvamsa. Nandini the daughter of was considered as a divine cow. As per the instruction of Sage Vasishtha, Dilipa served and protected Nandini as act of penance. While the lion attacks Nandini in the forest, Dilipa put forwarded an offer that himself as food for lion. The lion receded from the view because it was an illusion created by Nandini to examine the deep devotion and responsibility of Dilipa. On his selfless service, she was pleased and blessed him with a son. Later the dynasty known by him as Raghuvamsa.

### Conclusion

Kalidasa portrays the king Dilipa as an ideal one who filled with justice, peace, strength and wisdom. He was a symbol of Dharmishtha king. His commitment to dharma is nevertheless. Even though he had military powers, it was only for the protection of his subjects. He was a perfect example of righteous



king and role model for future kings. Kalidasa points out the statecraft and transformation through Dilipa as a sovereign who shows the diplomatic skills. The aspects of governance and statesmanship described here. The message is that leaders should protect the kingdom in a proper way through Sama- Dana- Bheda- Danda. This is applicable for nowadays. In democracy also can apply these traditions to protect the people.

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