Bala – The Subjugator of Vitiated Doshas

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ABSTRACT

Bala is the ability/capacity to carry out various activities. It is derived from ojas, the saara of seven dhatus. Bala, in the form of vyadhi ksamatatwa prevents the occurrence of a disease on one hand and on the other abates the severity of the same. The importance of bala in the period of convalescence, after having afflicted from jwara, is explained in the phrase “balam hi alm dosha nirgahaya” which conveys that the bala is the factor that controls the activity of aggravated doshas. Through this article, an effort is made, to establish a link between the concepts of bala – vyadhi kshamatwa and vikara vighat bhava and also to further elaborate the concept in above phrase, as to how acquiring of bala controls the activity of aggravated doshas keeping few core fundamental concepts.

Keywords: Bala, Dosha, Jwara, Ojas, vyadhikshamatwa, Vikara vighata bhava

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the system of medicine, which targets the root of any disease, prevents its recurrence and also is known for its immunity boosters. Until the recent past the contemporary medical science has been, relating immunity, more to, the diseases of infective origin. But, ever since there has been an exponential rise in the auto-immune disorders, cancer and so on, the scientific fraternity has realized the importance of immunity in non-infective disease conditions too. Search into the texts of Ayurveda reveal, that the Acharyas were very much aware about the concept of immunity, its role and significance in causation and prevention of each and every disease.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE –
Following concepts have been reviewed for better understanding of “Balam hi alam nigrahaya doshanaam”.

Concept of bala -

Bala is defined as “karma-sadhana shakti” (capacity to work), which can be assessed through vyayama shakti.

The teja (superior most essence) which is the resultant of rasadi shukra anta dhatus is called as the ojas, which is equated to bala. Dalhana, has compared ojas to ghruta (ghee). As ghruta (ghee) represents the total content of sneha (fat content) in milk, so is the ojas which forms the essence of seven dhatus.

Prakrutha karma of bala or lakshanas of bala

✓ Sthira upachita mamsa (well nourished mamsa)
✓ Sarva cheshtasu apratighata (capacity to perform all the activities)
✓ Swara prasada (excellence of voice)
✓ Varna prasada (excellence of complexion)

Concept of vyadhi kshamatwa –

The concept of vyadhimkshtma is exclusively a contribution of Charak samhita. It is
defined as the capacity to deter the strength of a disease and ability of the body to resist the occurrence of the disease (5).

Charaka acharyan while elaborating on the concept says, one cannot prevent the occurrence of a disease, merely by following congenial food and activities. That is the reason, why even the persons who follow the congenial diet and lifestyle, still get afflicted with a disease. Not all of the unwholesome diet and aggravated doshas go on to produce a disease and not all unwholesome regimes are equally strong so as to cause a disease. Not everyone is endowed with vyadhikshamatwa (4). Apart from these there are other factors also, such as the trini ayatanani (three causative factors) which play a pivotal role in causation of a disease.

Concept of vikara vighata bhava—
The capacity to prevent/deter the manifestation of a disease is vikara vighata bhava (presence of factors resisting/destroying a disease). The concept of vikara vighata bhava is explained in prameha nidana of charaka samhita and is later adopted by sangrahakara in sootrethstana (6).

Four expressions of vikara vighata bhava are (7),

01. Non causation of a disease. 02. Causing a disease after a very long time after getting exposed to causative factors 03 causing a mild disease. 04. Non manifestation of all the lakshanas in a manifested disease (7).

DISCUSSION

“Balam hi alam nigrayah doshanam” (8)

- Adhyaya adhikarana - jwara chikitsa
- Sthana adhikarana – chikitsasasthana
- Grantha adhikarana – charaka samhita – chikitsa grantha
- Vakya adhikarana –

✓ Sarpi pana nishedha in kaphottara jwara /alanghita
✓ Vidhi for kashayapana

✓ Nirdesha for mamsarasa sevana in kaphottara jwara.

Anvaya – Balam- hi- doshamaam -nigrahaya - alam.

Shabdartha – bala is the component that is capable (samartha) of controlling the doshas.

Tantrayuktis in the shloka- Upadesha tantrayukti.

Paratantra avalokana – similar reference could be found in other samhitas.
1. Balam hi alam doshaharam param (9).
2. Balam hi alam doshaharam param (10).
3. Rakshet balem pumsaam bale sati hi jeevitam (11).

Vyakhyana on this shloka could be made using prasanga, ateeta-anagata vekshana and atidesha tantrayukti.

Before elaborating the shloka, the knowledge regarding the bala is very essential.

Discussion on bala –

Bala is a resultant of sapta dhatu sara (essence of seven tissues) i.e ojas hence, is dependent on them. When the seven tissues lose their integrity, they can no longer impart bala to the body. The loss of integrity in Dhatus (tissues) can happen by three ways –

- Sahaja – beeja dushtijanya (by birth)
- Kaalaja – balahrasa (loss of strength) naturally occurring in seasons
- Mithya ahara viharaja – by adopting improper food and lifestyle.

Which may be due to 1.Impaired dhatugata agni 2. Due to dosha dushiti/pradosha.

In other words, they are 1. Adibala 2. Janmabala 3. Doshabala pravruttra balahrasa (13).

Above shloka could be understood, through the following fundamental concepts,

1. Concept of Vyadhi kshamatwa –

Vyadhii kshamatwa is defined as “vyadhibala virodhitwam vydhii upada pratibandhakatwam iti yaavat” (5).

This concept is introduced and
explained in *vidha ashita pitiya adhyaya* of *Charaka Sootastrhanna*, which speaks of *ahara dhatuparinamana* (digestion-metabolism and assimilation of food) and *pradoshaja vikaras*. This concept of *vyadhi kshamatawa*, is sandwiched between the *Ahara – dhatu parina- manana and pradoshaja vikara*. When aggravated *doshas* get lodged in rasadi sthanas (*dhatus*), the diseases manifest and they are termed as *pradoshaja vikaras* (14). As per uhya tantrayukti, it could be said that, *pradoshaja vikaras* or the affliction of *dhatus* from *doshas*, happens only when the *vyadhi kshamatwa* is low. That might be the reason, why *vyadhi kshamatwa* is explained soon after prakrutha *ahara parinamana*, and just before the description of *pradoshaja vikaras*. This could be interpreted as the *tantrakatru abhipraya* (intention of the author).

The aggravation of *doshas*, due to the indulgence in causative factors, is at the level of *koshtha* and is further carried by means of *ahara rasa* (nutrient fluid) to entire body. The aggravated *doshas* can get lodged in a *dhatu* and give rise to a disease, only if there is low *vyadhi kshamatawa*. While explaining the concept of *vyadhi kshamatwa*, the author says, all the *apathyas* (unwholesome food and activities) do not go on to produce a disease and not all people possess the capacity to prevent a disease. As per *vakyashesha*, even the indulgence in unwholesome food and activities will not give rise to a disease, if a person has good *vyadhi kshamatwa*, and on the other hand, if a person has low *vyadhi kshamatwa*, even the *alpa bala nidana* (i.e unwholesome) will cause a disease. Because, of the *vyadhi kshamatwa*, even the aggravated *doshas* that are constantly present in the circulation in the medium of *rasa*, will not cause any disease. In other words, *vyadhi kshamatwa/bala* controls the activity of the aggravated *doshas*.

**Vyadhi kshamatwa and bala** -

_Vyadhi kshamatwa_, is a result of _bala_. First and foremost feature of _bala_ mentioned by *Sushruta* is the _sthira upachita mamsa_ (sturdy well developed muscles) (3). He also states that, _madhya shareeri_ (moderate build) is endowed with _bala_ (15) Charaka, in the context of *vyadhi kshamatwa*, mentioned _atistoola_ (obese) _atikrusha_ (emaciated) and _anivishta-mamsa shonita asthi_ (ill formed muscle, blood and bone) as a sign of _vyadhi kshamatawa_, which are exactly opposite to features of _bala_ of Sushruta. There is _anumata* (agreement) between the two _acharyas_ on the concept of _bala_, though have named it differently. The _gunas_ opposite to features of _bala_, could be considered as features of _low vyadhi kshamatwa_. By viparyaya tantrayukti, the _gunas_ similar to features of _bala_, could be considered as features of good _vyadhi kshamatawa_. This goes to prove that, the _bala_ and _vyadhi kshamatwa_ are one and the same and could be used synonymously.

Indulgence in unwholesome food and regimes and presence of aggravated _doshas_ are controlled by the presence of _bala/vyadhi kshamatawa_. Therefore, “balam hi alam nigrahaya doshanam”

**2. Concept of Vikara vighata bhava bhava – Vikara vighata bhava bhava** –_Vikara vighata bhava bhava_ is the presence of resisting factors towards a disease (7) it also includes _vyadhi kshamatwa_ / _bala_.

The concept is introduced in _prameha nidana_ of _charaka saamhita_. In _prameha, shareera shaithilya_ (slackness of bodily components) is an important and inevitable event of pathogenesis (16). The body which has _shaithilya_, becomes vulnerable to affliction from the aggravated _kapha_.

_Shirata_ (sturdy bodily components) is a feature of _bala/vyadhi kshamatwa_. Loss of _sthairya_ (sturdiness) can be considered as a feature of _low yadhi kshamatwa_ or absence of _vikara vighata bhava_. Hence, a body devoid of
vikara vighata bhava cannot resist the affliction from aggravated kapha and causation of prameha. This shows that the concept of vyadhi kshamatwa is equally important and contributing to the manifestation of any disease for that matter.

The primary threat to vyadhi kshamatwa/bala is the dosha. In prameha, the shaithilya provides room for its manifestation. But the question is, what resulted in shaithilya? The causative factors for the shaithilya/increased water element in the body are again the doshas (kapha/pitta). This goes to prove that, bala and vikruta dosha are inversely proportional. Maintaining one’s bala/vyadhi kshamatwa will lead to attainment of control over dosha.

** Importance of bala rakshana in jwara –**

Bala is maintained by the integrity in seven tissues. Dhatvagni (8) should be functioning well to maintain their integrity and if it gets impaired, the integrity of the dhatu is lost; in such case it becomes susceptible to and provides room for the circulating doshas to settle. This explains the role of agni in maintaining bala.

“Dehe dhatu abalatwaat jwara jeerne anuvartate”(17)

Above phrase says that, as the dhatus are weak, there is every chance that the jwara can go jeerna (deep). Properly functioning dhatvagni only results in the formation of healthy dhatu. The impairment in dhatvagni in case of jwara can happen, by indulgence in causative factors or by the disease jwara itself. As there is avarodha (obstruction) in rasa vaha srotas and due to impaired agni in kasha, the nutrient fluid formed is ama and the same is transported. The transportation of ahara rasa (nutrient fluid) also is incomplete due to the avarodha (obstruction) in rasa vaha srotas. As a result of lack of proper nourishment, the integrity of rest of the dhatus will be gradually lost, making them durbala (weak). In both these conditions, the jwara can become jeerna (deep seated). Therefore, maintaining bala or vyadhi kshamatwa is very important, for preventing the jwara from going deep. For the same reason, laghu ruchya ahara (light- taste increasing food) is prescribed despite having aruchi only for the purpose of maintaining the bala (19).

Here too it is further substantiated that bala is important in controlling the severity of a disease, to prove once again that, “balam hi alam doshaaya nigrhaanaaam”

3. Concept of dosha nirharana

Doshas, whether pakwa or apakwa (metabolised or not), should be expelled out of the body, otherwise bala vyapat will occur (20). The aggravated doshas even if they are pakwa (metabolised), should not be allowed to settle, but have to be expelled out, as they pose a serious threat to bala. Bala and aggravated dosha impact and affect each other in inverse proportions. If the bala is good, the negative impact of dosha is less and vice versa. This again proves that, “balam hi alam doshanam nigrhaaya”.

**Discussion on adhikarana of the given shloka –**

“Balam hi alam nigrhaya doshanam” is mentioned in the context of sarpipana nishedha (contraindication for ghee intake) in kaphottara jwara (8) of Charaka samhita. After attaining the niramatwa in case of taruna jwara, if it is vata pittottara and nirama then sarp (ghee intake) has to be resorted to, after seven to ten days (21). And sarpipana is contraindicated if the jwara is kaphaottara or if the person has not undergone samyak langhana. In such cases kashayapanama is advised. In conditions, where sarpipana is contraindicated, maamsarasa sevana is advised. Even though mamsarasa is kapha producing, it is advised to be used in kaphottara jwara after attaining niramavastha to maintain bala of the jwarita.
so as to prevent the *doshas* from going deep leading to causation of *jeerna jwara*.

“*Dosa prakupita kshhpayati atmatejasa ---- ukha gata iva udakam*” (22)

Aggravated *doshas* cause depletion of dhatus by their innate characteristics. *Katu ushna guna* of *pitta*, *rookshata* of *vata* and *maragavarodha* by *kapha*, cause depletion of the dhatus, resulting in loss of *bala*. Therefore, to counter this, *sarpipana* in *vata pitta nirama* and *mamsa rasa* in *kaphattara* are advised after seven to ten days of *jwara*.

If *bala dana karma* (modalities imparting *bala*) is not done after *langhana avastha* of *jwara*, the disease easily becomes *jeerna* (deep), as the patient has weak *dhatu*, due to affliction of *jwara*. By *atidesha tantrayukti* it could be interpreted that, after affliction with any disease, the natural integrity of *deha dhatu* is lost in turn the *bala*. Therefore, the *bala* has to be restored. If not restored, body will become prone to other diseases or will lead to severity of the same disease. Therefore *balakara karma* has to be resorted to.

Until the *jwararogi* regains his *bala*, he should not indulge in any unwholesome food and activities. Otherwise, it will result in *vishamajwara* or *punaravartaka jwara*. By *viparyaya tantrayukti*, it could be understood that, after attaining *bala*, even if indulged in unwholesome food and activities, it will not be that harmful because, the body is endowed with *bala* and is capable of resisting diseases. This is another example in support of *balam hi alam dosha nigrahaya*.

*Jwara* is one disease, where, *bala hrasa* (loss of strength) is commonly seen after typhoid and so on. That being the reason, even after attainment of *niramata*, the *dhatus* are still weak, hence have to be strengthened in order, for the bodily tissues to become capable of resisting diseases. That is why the above *shloka* is mentioned in *jwara* section.

**CONCLUSION**

*Bala* is the capacity to perform different activities. *Bala* and *vikruta dosha* are inversely proportional to each other. Hence, protecting *bala* of a diseased is of prime importance, as it is the one that can regulate the aggravated *doshas*.

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