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Ramayana Introduction

Ramayana is one of the greatest epics of ancient India. The other one is Mahabaratha. An epic is a long poem describing the adventures and pastimes of a great personality. Sage Valmiki originally composed 24000 couplets known as Valmiki Ramayana in Sanskrit. Another sage called Tulasi Das composed in Hindi popularly known as Ramacharitmanas. A great tamil poet Kambar who was also a weaver, rendered Ramayana in tamil known as Kamba- Ramayanam. Ramayana is divided into seven sections or Kandas, each describing the story of Lord Ramachandra.

The Seven Kandas are

1-Bala Kanda Rama's birth and early life

- 2-Ayodhya Kanda
- Rama's life in Ayodhaya and His banishment **3- Aranya Kanda** Rama's life in forests and abduction of sita

4-Kishkinda Kanda Rama's stay in Kishkinda the capital of Sugriva- the monkey king.

5-Sundara Kanda

Rama's passage to Lanka and arriving Lanka

6-Yuddha Kanda

Rama's war with Ravana and killing him 7-Uttara Kanda

Rama's life after returning from Lanka in Ayodhya

The important characters in Ramayana



Lord Ramachandra-Lord Rama -an incarnation of Lord Maha vishnu. He was born as the son of King Dasaratha and queen Kausalya. His mission was to destroy the demons and reestablish dharma.



Sita Devi- an incarnation of Sri Mahalakshmi. She appeared as the daughter of King Janaka of Mithilapuri. The king found Sita while ploughing the ground.



Lakshmana -an incarnation of Anantasesha. He appeared as the son of King Dasaratha and queen Sumitra and dear brother of Lord Rama. He accompanied Lord Rama to the forest and was part of his adventures till Ravana was killed.



Bharata- the son of King Dasaratha and queen Kaikeyi. He ruled the kingdom of Ayodhya by keeping Lord Rama's sandals on the throne for fourteen years.



Shatrugana-the son of Dasaratha and queen Sumitra . He is twin brother of Lord Lakshmana. He is known as the destroyer of enemy.

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Sage Vishwamithra- kshetriya(warrior) by birth. Because of his penance and meditation he became a Brahma-rishi. He is well known for his anger and curses.



King Dasaratha -the noble king of Ayodhya. He was very much attached to his children especially to Lord Rama. He was the descendent of *Ikshwaku dynasty*-Suryavamsa(Sun-God)



King Janaka- the righteous king of Mithilapuri. He was a great Karmayogi(dutybound) and also a renounced person. He is one of the Mahajanas.



Ghuha- the boat man and the king of Nihadas. He was a faithful friend of Lord Rama and refused to take any wages for helping Him, Sita Devi and Lord Lakshmana to cross the river Ganga.



Hanuman- the son of Vayu(the Wind-god). He is the best example for a right servitor. He is always chanting and remembering Lord Rama's holy name.

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Jatayu-an old pious giant bird. He tried to prevent Ravana from kidnapping Sita to Lanka. He fought his might but could not succeed, he lost his wings in the fight.



Vibishana- one of the brothers of Ravana who advised him to send back Sita to Lord Rama. He is an embodiment of good qualities though born in a demonic family. He later surrendered to Lord Rama- which is very well known as *Vibishana-Saranagathi*.



Surpanaka- sister of Ravana, a powerful rakshasi who got her nose cut by Laksmana in the forest. She induced Ravana to kidnap Sita.



Maricha -son of demoness Tatakka. He was an expert in changing his body and mimicking. He changed himself as a golden deer and enchanted Sita Devi in the forest.



Ravana - a great rakshasa king with ten heads who ruled Lanka. He was one of the Jaya-Vijaya in his previous life. He was a great devotee of Lord Siva and a great scholar and musician.

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Ahalya- the faithful wife of Gauthama maharishi. Once Indra-the king of demi-gods duped her. Her husband Gauthama suspected her modesty and cursed her to become a stone. She regained her original form by the touch of Lord Rama's lotus feet.



Mantara- a hunch back woman, was a servant maid of queen Kaikeyi. In his childhood Rama played pranks on her. To take revenge she poisoned queen Kaikeyi's mind to stop Rama's coronation.



Sugriva-the king of monkeysa friend of Lord Rama and later helped Him to find out Sita.



Vali-brother of Sugriva, was a powerful monkey who had the boon that he will get fifty percent of the power with whom he fights. He was killed by Rama hiding behind the tree because of his misdeeds towards Sugriva.



Sabari- a very old ascetic woman who waited for a long time to meet Lord Rama in the forest. Out of love and affection, Lord Rama accepted the fruit she offered after tasting them first.





Lord Rama shooting Tataka who came to disturb the sages



Guha rowing his boat across Ganga











Ravana disguised as sage to kidnap Sita



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Vali and Sugriva fighting



Hanuman leaping from Mahendra hill to Lanka





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Hanuman burning Lanka 20

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Lord Rama receiving the jewel from Hanuman. Can you find out how many are curious about it.







Lord Rama and Lakshmana fell unconscious while fighting- Hanuman brought the whole mountain as he could not find the sanjeevani herb to cure them. Find atleast 6 differences between the above pictures.



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Help Ravan to get his other nine heads.





Battle between Lord Rama and Ravana 27







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Answers



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