

Ramayana

THE EPIC DEPICTED



Paintings *Vijay Krishna* Narrations *Sukadeva swami*

Ramayana, the epic

Ramayana is the life and activities of Bhagawan Rama. Rama is the Supreme Lord in human form, Maryada Purushottam. There is no mistake in His entire life, in thought, word and deed. He is a perfect Kshatriya or king, one whose word or promise can not go in vain. He always worked for the welfare of His citizens. He is the ideal most in all His relationships, as a son, brother, husband, friend and master.

'If once one has said, that he has taken My shelter, I shall protect him without fail. This is my vow.' This is Lord Rama's vow. His behavior, words and activities are so pure and perfect that one is spontaneously drawn to Him and become His obedient servant. Having gained such a Master, one would not leave Him forever and He is such a glorious Master that He is disposed even to one's smallest service. This has happened in Tretayuga right here on Jambu Dveepa, Bharat Varsa or India as it is presently called.. The Ayodhya is there, the Sarayu river is there now also. Ramayana is not complete without mentioning universal mother Sita for her tolerance and forgiveness. Of course She is chastity personified. And Hanuman, the loyal servant for whom there is no second. Here one can see how the Lord wants His sincere servant to do more than Him and how the Lord wants to glorify His devotees. Although the Lord is one, His brothers Laxmana, Bharat and Shatrugna are non different from Him.

The essence of a huge banyan tree is in the small seed, so is the sweetness of the entire world and more in the two-letter word Rama. Ratnakar, the dacoit turned to become a Mahamuni, Valmiki just by repeating the name Rama.

As humans we all have our own weaknesses and vulnerable attitudes. But by contacting the name of Rama, we can become men of impeccable character without fail.

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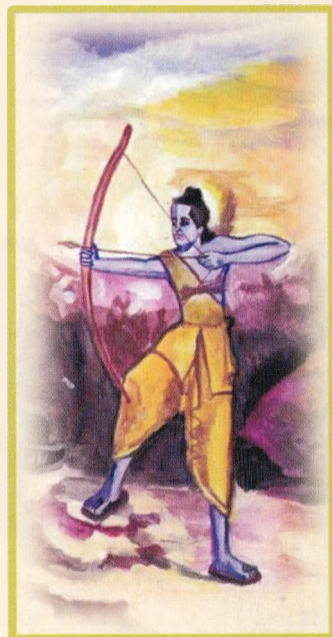
Paintings

Vijya Krishna

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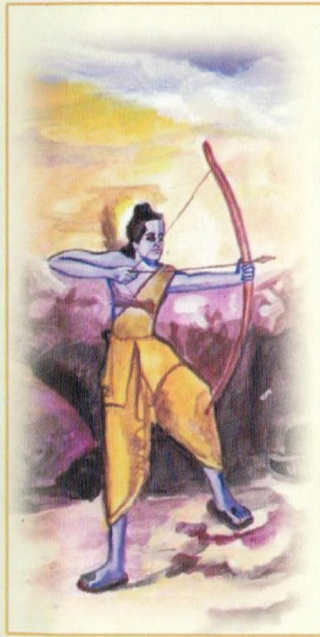
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Dedication

This small work is dedicated at the lotus feet of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada the founder Acharya, International Society for Krishna Consciousness who has given the ultimate gift of Krishna consciousness to the entire world, through his books, disciples and temples. He delivered the infallible mercy of Gauranga deva and Hari nama to all people of the world. He is the rarest person that turned the tide of Kaliyuga and put mankind back on the path of Krishna prema.

His Divine Grace A C Bhaktivedanta swami Prabhupada

Founder Acarya: International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

Srila Prabhupada appeared in this world in 1896 in Kolkota, India. He first met his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati maharaja, a prominent religious scholar and a devotee. He convinced him to dedicate his life to the teaching of vedic knowledge. Srila Prabhupada became his student and later his disciple. In the years that followed Srila Prabhupada wrote a commentary on Bhagavad Gita. He started a magazine called Back to Godhead now being continued by his followers in more than 30 languages. In 1965 when he first arrived by a freighter in United States, Srila Prabhupada was practically penniless. After a hard struggle he established ISKCON and it quickly grew to a worldwide confederation of more than one hundred asramas, schools, temples, instistutes and farm communities. Srila Prabhupada's most significant contribution, however, are his books. Highly respected by the academic community for their authority, depth and clarity, and they are now available in over 40 languages. He has shown the world how to be men of character, how to serve the fellow beings and how to live in this world in harmony with the will of the Lord and finally by becoming the servant of the Lord, go back, back Home, back to Godhead. His books are the windows to the spiritual world and He is an ambassador from the spritual world. He has done the highest welfare work for the people of the world. Now if only we follow in his footsteps, everything can be remedied and everyone can be happy.



Whilst the modern day scholars argue over whether or not Lord Krishna was a real person who actually lived in the city called Dvaraka, now submerged under the ocean, there is no dispute over whether or not Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu really existed. If you read any encyclopedia, or book on Indian religion, His name will be mentioned and the dates of His birth, departure and wonderful achievements will be described. It is officially recognized that at a time when, in the West, man was studying the structure of the physical universe and encircling the world by sea in search of new oceans and continents, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, in the East, was inspiring a revolution directed toward a deeper understanding of the man's spiritual nature. However, Lord Caitanya is no ordinary historical figure, since, in the very same vedic literatures that describe the activities of Lord Krishna, His own mission of spreading the holy names is also foretold. It is further stated that Lord Caitanya is in fact non-different from Lord Krishna. They are one and the same. Although His external reason for appearing on earth was to spread Sankirtan Yajna. His internal reason was to experience, firsthand, the love a devotee has for Him. The greatest devotee of Krishna is His eternal consort srimati Radharani, and so Lord Caitanya is Krishna in the mood of Radharani. Lord Caitanya performed His preaching activities for 48 years and then mysteriously disappeared in the year 1534 in Puri. It is said that He visited the temple of Tota Gopinath and never came out. Although Lord Caitanya preached and taught extensively during His entire life, He left just eight verses in a written form, known as 'Sri Sikshastakam'. Here is the first verse: All glories to the chanting of the holyname of Lord Krishna which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence. This chanting is the waxing moon that spreads the white lotus of good fortune to all the living entities. It is the life and the soul of all education. The chanting of the Holyname of Krishna expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life. It gives the cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste the full nectar at every step. He predicted 500 years ago: In every town, and village of the world, the Krishna conscious movement will be preached

Preface



The thought of existence of God or Supernatural force controlling us occurs to the mind in everyone's life. Fears in life may force us to believe in Him. The problems in life necessitate our dependence on Him. The puzzles in life push us towards Him. When people die, we find consoling in the fact that they go to Him and not see the repetition of misery here on earth. From my childhood, my mind also wandered into such mystical ideas with no confirmation. But definitely I was happy to believe in Him. There was always reciprocation, which can not be explained. I became a devotee without questioning too much. Love for Him found its place in the chamber of my heart.

The ironies of life brought out answers from Him who is within me. I could face unfavorable situations with calmness and fortitude by His grace and guidance from within. People may be happy for many material factors but this satisfaction coming from finding shelter in God, for me, it is very deep and transcends material gains. A blind man cannot see light in the day. Similarly a nonbeliever can never have this transcendental experience. Without faith, there is no further growth in divine life. It is really blindness that with all cosmic phenomena and complete design we dare ignore the creator & plan maker. Nature forces us to recognize Him & appreciate Him and finally be devoted to Him. The variety & beauty, the magnitude & precision and the purpose and fulfillment convince any sane person to supplicate his hands in His honor. Everything is in so much abundance and for no cost. There is no limit to His benevolence. The flowers, the peacocks, the forest animals and the bosom nature far surpasses the artificials of life like science, technology & urban.

Ramayana, the unparalleled epic shows the human & divine at its perfection. Rama is the lord in human form. There can not be anyone equal to Him – not just for the past & the present. And it is forever. I can say it for infinite future to come. There is no one to match Him other than His ownself, who appears in many incarnations from time to time. Before you see Him without, you first find Him within yourself as your everlasting companion, the Supersoul. His energies are everywhere just acting perfectly as per His will. Vaishnava darsan, which is the original darshan or philosophy, expounds the Absolute as the all pervading Brahman, localized Paramatma & finally He is the Purushottama, Jagannatha or Bhagwan. In the Sanskrit, the words are so perfect & precise and it is no surprise because it is the language of God Himself.

We have misfriends. We miss our friends. In both cases we find ourselves in lamentation and anxiety. We become aghast not knowing where to fall back for solace. Relationships of this world do not work out and if by chance they do so, the time is out. The relationship severs. But there is our eternal relationship, the soul related to the Supreme Being. It is original and unbreakable. The Lord is full & perfect. No words can express the bliss of the divine union with Him. So Ramayana is not a story, it is not a legend, it is not a masterpiece. It is our real life. It is the life that we are searching for. Our original identity is Rama dasa, to become one of the servants of the unlimited Master. Once we become Haridasa, our only prayer will be "May I not forget Rama and may I always remember Rama."

The Founder Acarya of ISKCON, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada –the Acarya for the millenium, the jet age Parivrajaka Acarya , his books present God Consciousness as the most complete science, education & culture. Krishna Consciousness or Rama Consciousness, now I understand it as reflections from the same gem from different angles. For human beings Rama's life is the ideal most living. It is thus easy for the common people to accept Lord Rama as God. Lilapurushottama Sri Krishna, although the same Person. He is a mystery for the people in general. All glories to Maryada Purushottam Lord Ramachandra Bhagawan!!! All glories to His pure devotee Srila Prabhupada. Devotees are more merciful than the Lord. They teach us and show us how to become His servant.

This Ramayana, depicted in summary form is my expression of divine joy portrayed in paintings. I had this God gifted talent from my childhood. Now I've found its perfect use, back in His service. This is for my own purification and the perfect way I can serve others i.e. by making the people recognize and remember Rama and serve Him. I'm sure, Rama centered Rama-Rajya is what is in our dreams. Tainted by three modes of material nature sattva, rajo and tamo, we all have colored and blurred vision. The Rama's pastimes can perfectly correct our blurred vision. Then there will no more be samsaramala-repetition of birth and death. Anyone who chants His name becomes liberated. My artist's heart longed to paint His splendid pastimes. Short narration is also there along with the picture. This makes the whole book a children's classic and also satisfies the taste of connoisseur.

Vijay Krishna



The Lord's appearance on earth as Rama

Ravana performed terrible austerities to please Brahma and wanted from him the boon of immortality. He asked the boon that he may not die in the hands of any creature. He was so arrogant that he did not care to ask immunity from human beings. After attaining this boon, he was out to conquer and harass the rulers of all planetary systems. The Demigods being harassed and defeated by Ravana approached the Supreme Lord for protection. The Lord agreed to appear along with His entourage in the house of pious and devotee King Dasarath.

King Dasarath was assisted by Vasist and other rishis in conducting Putrakamesti yajna. On the successful completion of the sacrifice a celestial being appeared from the fire, with a golden pot of sweet rice. King Dasarath distributed it among his three principal queens Kausalya, Kaikeyi and Sumithra. Rama appeared as the son of Kausalya, Bharat became the son of Kaikeyi and Sumitra mothered Laxman and Shatrugna. All these brothers of Rama are none other than His own self, Adishesha, Sudarshan disc and Pancajanya conch etc.

The Supreme Lord 'is Akhila rasamrita sindhu' or reservoir of all pleasure. Each living entity has some rasa in a small portion. But the Supreme Lord is the reservoir of all rasa to an infinite degree. Like in the fiction, we see romance, surprise, horror and humor etc, the Lord enjoys all these rasas. Hence the Supreme Lord is called rasaraj Sri Krishna. Ravana and Kumbhakarna were originally Jaya and Vijaya, the very doorkeepers of the Lord in Vaikuntha. By the arrangement of Yogamaya, they descended to this material world to participate in Lord's pastimes and give pleasure to the Lord in a particular rasa. Ordinary people who are demoniac do not need personal intervention of the Lord. The expert energies of the Lord see to that everything is under Lord's control and manage according to the will of the Lord.



'Rama' One of the principal names of the Absolute

One day Kaikeyi was feeding Lord Rama by showing Him the moon in the sky . Rama demanded the moon for Himself to play with it or else He would not eat the remaining food. Kaikeyi loved Rama more than she loved anyone else. One might wonder then why at a later stage she demanded the exile of Rama to the forests. The real reason is that it was the will of the Lord Himself and He has the great mission of delivering His devotees and annihilating the miscreants.

Kaikeyi wanted her Rama to eat. Kaikeyi thought for a while and then she handed Him over the image of the moon in the mirror. Rama knew that it wasn't the moon but still He accepted it submitting His mischief to the wits of His mother. Hence Rama is also called Ramachandra. Chandra in Sanskrit means moon. One who possessed the moon or one who has moonlike handsomeness. Rama word means one who is pleasing or one who gives pleasure. Rama, the Absolute, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the source of all beauty, all strength, all wisdom; Rama possesses all the wealth and fame. In Sanskrit, the word Bhagawan is used for God and this conveys the full meaning of God. Although the Lord is master of unlimited universes, He allows them for all His children and He is Atmarama or self sufficient and is full in Himself. Being Absolute, the name of the Lord is also complete and perfect. Mahavishnu appeared as the incarnation of Rama specifically to show the mankind, how to put away t.he selfish interests, and live an ideal life , adhering to dharma, bodily and spiritual as well. Hence Rama is famous all over the universe as Maryada Purushottama, Ramacandra Bhagawan(God , the idealist and Perfect)



The Story Of Sita

King Rathadvaja's family deity was Laxmi, somehow for some neglect, he sidelined Her and immediately Laxmi devi left his home. The neighboring kings invaded his kingdom and conquered him, leaving him bereft of his wealth. He had two sons Khushadhwaaja and Dharmadhwaaja. It was these two sons that by their intense penance, they obtained Lakshmi as their daughter. Sri Maha Lakshmi was born to Khushadhwaaja and his wife Malavathi. Vedas were recited at the time of Her birth and hence She was named Vedavati. When She grew up, Khushadhwaaja wanted to marry Her to a suitable prince. There was no mortal being who can accept Her hand. She was looking for Her eternal Lord Vishnu Himself. But Sri Maha Vishnu was yet to appear hence she decided to undergo penance. While She was contemplating on Maha Vishnu, Ravana interrupted Her and tried to capture Her. Vedavati turned Herself to ashes to escape from Ravana, before that She cursed him that she would become the cause of his death. Ravana not knowing what to do, carried the ashes to Lanka. Mandodari, Ravana's wife fearful of the prediction sent them away to be buried somewhere outside Lanka. Ravana's men buried them in India. By providence, it was the kingdom of Mithila. King Janaka was the ruler. One time King Janaka was ploughing the land personally for some sacrifice and he found a box in the furrow (Sita means furrow) of the soil. When he opened it he found a beautiful female child with all exceptional and divine qualities. She has the names Maithili, Janaki and Sita etc., Although King Janaka became the father of this unborn child, he knew that She was actually the Universal Mother. Sita devi is the original pleasure potency of the Supreme Lord. Hence She is the ultimate example of Chastity and patience of a woman. In fact, the Supreme Lord is the only Purusha or enjoyer and everyone else is Prakriti, or predominated. The separation of Sita and Rama is transcendental pastime. In the material world Union is pleasurable and separation is miserable. But in the Absolute or Rama, Union is blissful and separation is even more blissful.

Sita is the adisakti of the Lord, perfect in chastity & patience in a woman. Here in this world meeting or union brings happiness and separation brings misery. But in the Absolute realm, the union is blissful and separation is even more blissful. This is the Absolute nature of Rasas in relationship with the Lord. Sita and Rama's apparent separation is viewed by rasika devotees in this way.





Rama, Lakshmana accompany Vishvamitra to the Forest

Rama, and His brothers were all brought up with proper training and education under the able tutorship of Vasista and other royal priests in the court of maharaj Dasaratha and it was a matter of formality that they had underwent all this training just to give pleasure to their teachers and parents. They became expert and proficient in whatever they learnt. The fact is that He Himself is the Universal teacher. The four brothers were a source of joy to all the residents of Ayodhya. Oneday the sage Vishvamitra arrived in the court of King Dasaratha. After the courteous exchanges between the king and the sage, the king requested the sage how he can serve him. Vishvamitra muni said, in the forest where they had their hermitages and where they conduct their sacrifices, rakshasas come and spoil the whole place by throwing blood and stool and they also attack them. Dasaratha immediately volunteered to go with him along with a huge military force and exterminate all the rakshasas in the area. But sage Visvamitra put the proposal that he wanted the princes Rama and Lakshmana to go with him. Dasaratha's heart became fearful to entertain this idea as he saw his sons as tender youth and not so mature. Although he unconditionally promised sage Visvamitra, now he was in two minds as what to do. Sage Vasishta and Visvamitra convinced the king that his sons were no ordinary youth but extrordinary like Vishnu Himself and he has nothing to fear. Visvamitra also reminded the king that in the dynasty of King Ikshvaku, no one was ever untruthful to his promise. He also said that Rama and Lakshmana would become glorious for Their deeds and he should be ready to send Them. Although reluctant at heart, King Dasaratha prepared to send his two sons with the sage.



Rama and Lakshmana guard Vishvamitra Muni's hermitage

Rama and Lakshmana followed the sage Vishvamitra and reached his ashrama. They took rest that night and then the sage Vishvamitra got up at Bramha muhurtha hour ie, at 4 o clock in the morning, and took bath. He recited Suprabhatha song to wake up the lord. This is the song celestial remembered from ages until now and is being sung every day to wake up the lord of the seven hills in Tirupati. The song has a great meaning and tune that can stir the dormant spirit with in all of us. The meaning is that it is time to open our eyes and see the lord.

Rama and Lakshmana woke up and They took bath in the river flowing by the side of the hermitage. Sage Vishwamithra, in the role of a teacher taught the lord, the use of all the powerful weapons that he knew. This doesn't mean that the lord is unaware of these things but it is a rasa that He takes the role of a student. It is said that everyone glorifies the the Lord and everyone is subordinate to the Lord and they all have a reverential mood. But the Lord likes to see some one instruct Him or even someone to chastise Him. This opportunity is given to only to the pure devotees of the lord. The lord voluntarily takes a subordinate position to His devotees and enjoys the loving exchanges. Blessed are the devotees of the Lord who personally associate with the lord and have exchanges with the lord and such devotees, for the eternity of their lives, loathe anything of the world and its relations. Without the lord, the devotees find it difficult to live even for one moment, and they find the whole universe vacant in His absence.

Rama and Lakshmana killed one of the two demons, Subhahu that used to attack the hermitage of Vishvamitra. Rama attacked the other Rakshasa, Marichi in such a way that he was flug miles apart by His mighty arrows and was scared to death. He was spared of his life. Then the other rakshasas jumped in the fray in retaliation , Rama and Lakshmana countered them easily and killed them all . The whole place looked like rivers of blood flowing and mountains of flesh from the piled up dead bodies.. All the celestials who were watching the heroic activities of tender Rama and Lakshman were dancing in jubiliation and showered flowers from the sky, singing the glories of the Lords.



Rama slays Rakshasa Thataka

Vishvamisra muni and other sages were doing their dutiful sacrifices for the welfare of all and for pleasing the Supreme Lord. The non-devotees or demons, not knowing what to do with life want to lord over and enjoy sense gratification. They misuse their power. With his own strength Vishvamisra muni could have easily destroyed the demons. But foreseeing the appearance and activities of Rama and Lakshmana he approached the king Dasarath and asked Rama and Lakshmana to accompany him. Although Rama and Lakshmana were of tender age, Vishvamisra wanted the world to know Their valor. Rama and Lakshmana could very easily slay all the rakshasas and by their gentle behaviour could steal the hearts of all ascetics there in the forest. The culmination and perfection of all penances and austerities is to attain personal association of the Lord and His devotees or to be able to serve them and please them. Coming in contact with Rama means achieving freedom from the bondage of birth and death once forever.

When the demons were slain personally by the Lord, they also attain the sayujya mukti or impersonal liberation into His Brahman effulgence.

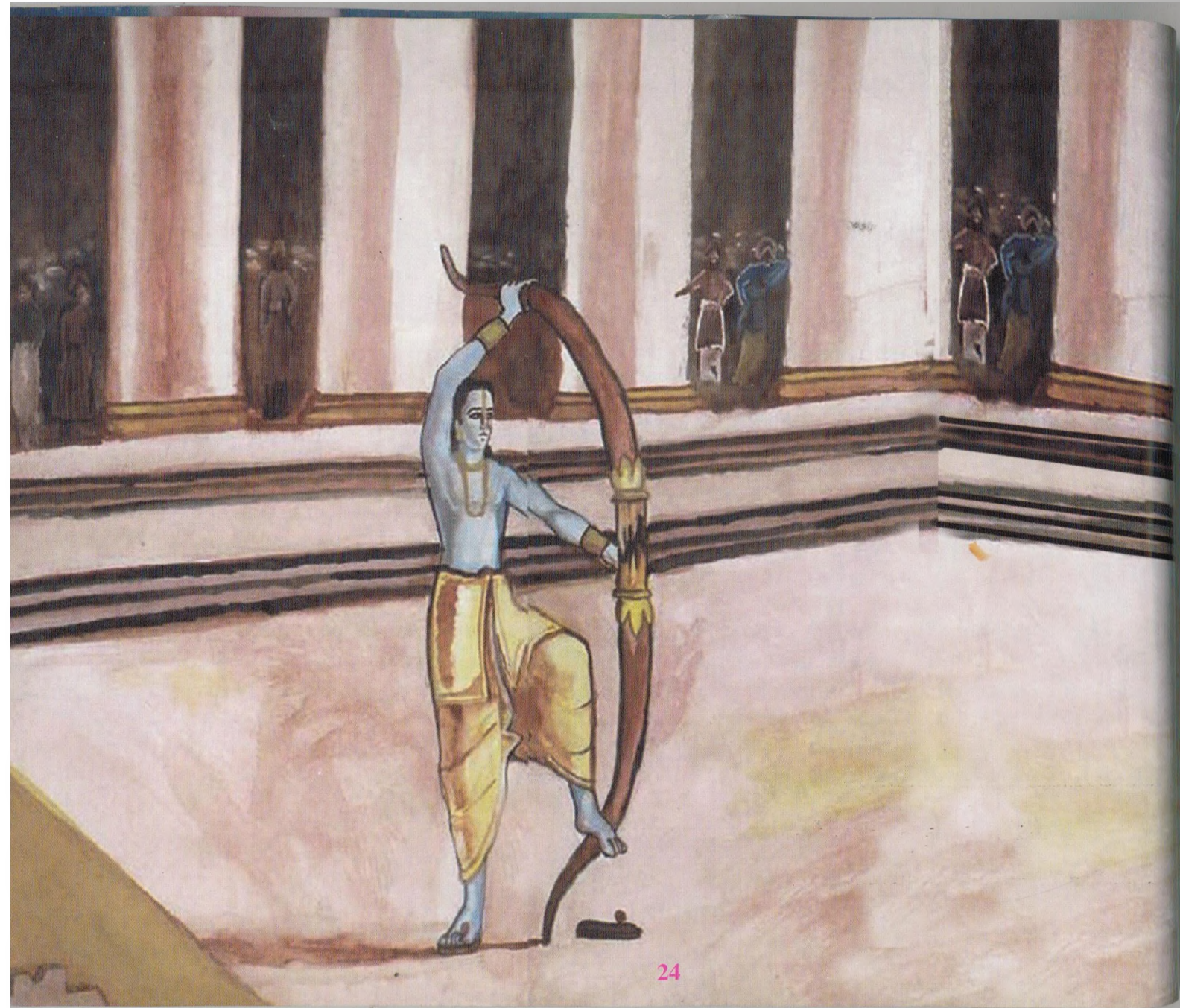


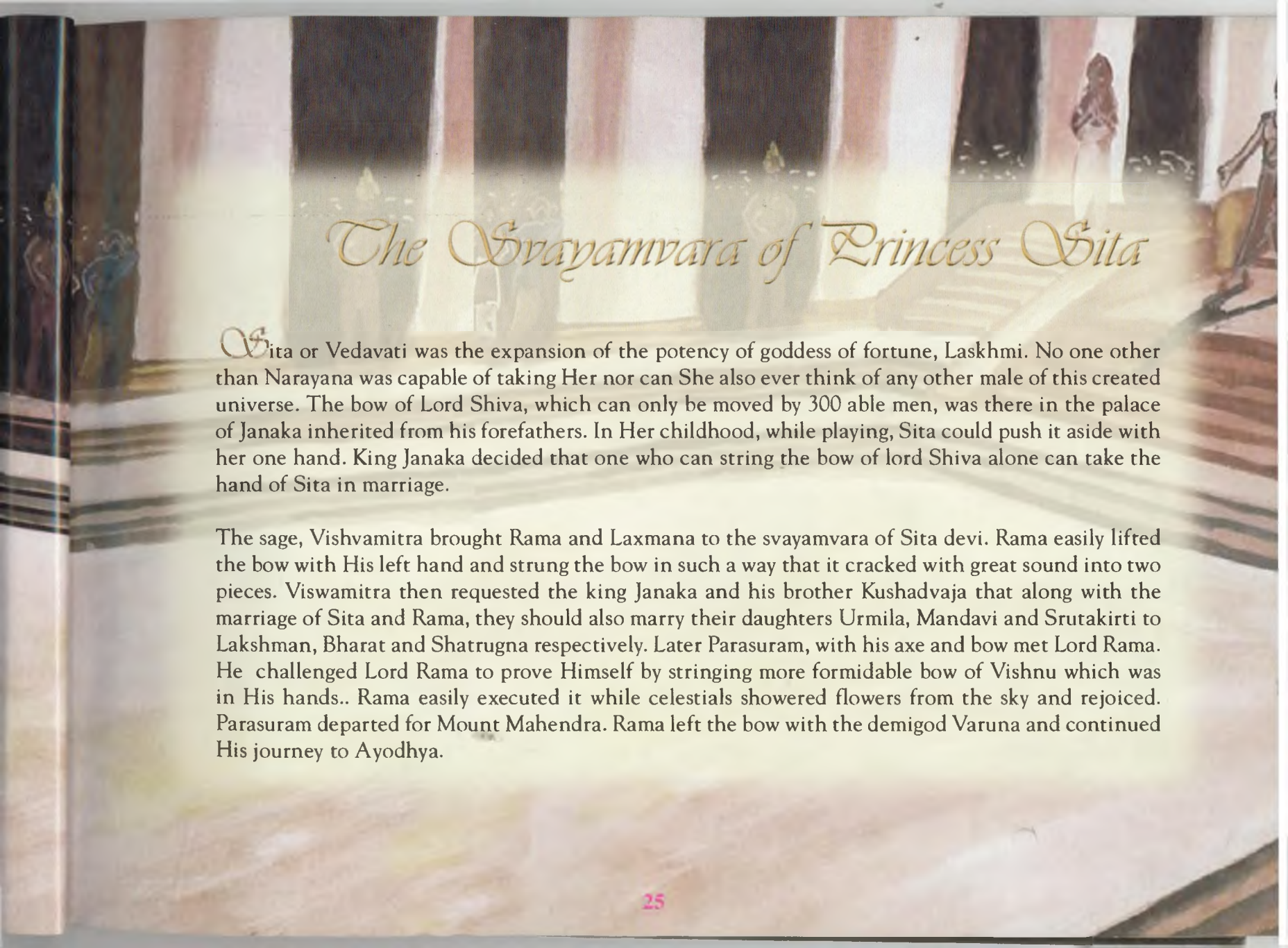


Rama liberates Ahalya

Ahalya was the wife of Gautam Rishi . They were staying in a hermitage of the forest peacefully executing their austerities and prescribed duties. One time Indra came there when Gautam rishi was away to the riverside. Although Indra was an exalted devata, as is common to all embodied beings, envy raged in his heart that Gautama rsi was becoming his rival for the post of Indra by virtue of his successful austerities. He wanted to provoke Gautama rsi to anger so that he will fall from his exalted position. So Indra wanted to entice Ahalya for an illicit relation with him. He even took the form of Gautam rsi to approach Ahalya. Contrary to the principles of chastity for a woman, especially one, who is married to rishi, Ahalya also had a tainted heart and there was illicit union. It shows the flickering nature of sex desire and vulnerability of opposite sexes coming together. It is all punishable according to religious codes.

Gautam rishi found out all this and he cursed both Indra and Ahalya. Ahalya was cursed to turn into a stone and suffer from thirst, hunger and sleep until Lord Ram's foot dust touched her. Then she will be absolved from her sin. Indra stealthily did this act to provoke anger in Gautum rishi so that he will be disqualified for Indra post. Gautum rishi's curse resulted in Indra losing his testicles. The demigods arranged to graft an animal's testicle onto his body. Material way of life is so full of uncertainties and anxieties.



The background of the page is a painting of a palace interior. It features several tall, white columns with dark capitals. In the distance, a woman in a white sari stands near a doorway. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a serene atmosphere. The title 'The Swayamvara of Princess Sita' is written in a golden, cursive font across the middle of the scene.

The Swayamvara of Princess Sita

Sita or Vedavati was the expansion of the potency of goddess of fortune, Laskhmi. No one other than Narayana was capable of taking Her nor can She also ever think of any other male of this created universe. The bow of Lord Shiva, which can only be moved by 300 able men, was there in the palace of Janaka inherited from his forefathers. In Her childhood, while playing, Sita could push it aside with her one hand. King Janaka decided that one who can string the bow of lord Shiva alone can take the hand of Sita in marriage.

The sage, Vishvamitra brought Rama and Laxmana to the swayamvara of Sita devi. Rama easily lifted the bow with His left hand and strung the bow in such a way that it cracked with great sound into two pieces. Viswamitra then requested the king Janaka and his brother Kushadvaja that along with the marriage of Sita and Rama, they should also marry their daughters Urmila, Mandavi and Srutakirti to Lakshman, Bharat and Shatrugna respectively. Later Parasuram, with his axe and bow met Lord Rama. He challenged Lord Rama to prove Himself by stringing more formidable bow of Vishnu which was in His hands.. Rama easily executed it while celestials showered flowers from the sky and rejoiced. Parasuram departed for Mount Mahendra. Rama left the bow with the demigod Varuna and continued His journey to Ayodhya.



Kaikeyi demands Rama's exile

Rama was the dear most son of His father and Rama was also loved by all the citizens of Ayodhya more than their own lives. Now the young prince won the hand of Sita and has come back to Ayodhya. King Dasaratha, in excitement was simply thinking of handing over the kingdom to the able Rama who was beloved to all the citizens and then he wanted to retire. He was so overwhelmed with the thought that he wanted to do the coronation ceremony at the earliest. Another reason for that was that the idea was supported by everyone in the royal court and people were longing to be under the rulership of Prince Rama. Rama was decorated with all the noble qualities and there was not one quality in Him that they did not like. In fact Rama was already ruling all their hearts and they were looking forward to the day when they can serve Rama as His subjects. Bharata and Shatrugna were away to their maternal home. Nevertheless, knowing the mood of the borhters how they were devoted to Rama, the king ordered the caronation for Rama the very next day . Not only Kausalya but Kaikeyi and Sumitra had the same intense motherly feelings for Rama.

But there was a sudden development as though providence has another plan for Rama. Manthara, the maidservant of Kaikeyi intrigued with her and brainwashed her to do something else. She wanted Bharata, who was kaikeyi's son should become the king instead of Rama and Rama should be banished to forest for 14 years so that Bharat can fully takeover the kingdom without hindrance. Manthara also reminded Kaikeyi of the two boons which the king had promised to fulfil whenever she desired and she suggested that it was now the rightmost time for taking them. In oder to execute her plan, Kaikeyi went to her sulking chamber to press these demands on her husband. The king was shocked to hear the turn of events and he did not want to care for his vows or wife. When the news came to Rama, to uphold the word of His father, he decided to forego His crownship and also go to forest for 14 years. With determination, he conveyed the message to His mother and to His teachers and rightaway started the preparations to leave the palace. Suitable to forest dwellers, he took tree bark as clothing. Laxman came and told Rama that he can not exist without Him and he would also follow Him. Rama had to consent. Sita also came and told firmly her place is at the feet of her husband whatever it means to be and she did not care for the comforts of the palace.



Rama leaves Ayodhya the forest

Rama offered His respects to Vasistha muni before departing to the forest and He also offered His pranams to His mothers and other elders. He summoned brahmins to give away all His personal possessions as charity. In fact no one failed to receive charity from Him on that day, including the needy, beggars and relatives. All the people of Ayodhya said, wherever Rama is there, that is Ayodhya and they all wanted to accompany Him. Maharaj Dasaratha wanted to arrange all comforts of royalty in the forest, which Rama gently refused. Finally Sumantra brought the chariot for the Lord. All residents of Ayodhya followed them begging them not to go and they were all crying. Sita, Rama and Lakshmana got down the chariot to proceed further on foot. They all reached Tamasa river by evening and hence settled down to rest. Rama instructed Sumantra that they leave so early and on such paths that residents of Ayodhya who were following Them have to turn back to their homes. No one in Ayodhya bothered to eat or engage in any kind of entertainment. Everyone appeared lifeless like statues absorbed in thinking of Rama in separation.

Next day proceeding through various territories, villages and forests they reached the southern boundary of Kosala province. Rama folded His hands facing Ayodhya and took leave of His birth place. Finally they reached the mighty Ganga. The king of this territory was Guha, a nishada by birth, received them all. Next day before crossing Ganga Rama told Sumantra 'Please you also return to Ayodhya and engage in My father's service.'



Rama, the Epitome of Renunciation

In the Sanskrit, the God is addressed as Bhagawan. The word Bhagawan means one who possesses all opulences in full and to an unlimited degree. All the opulences are broadly put in six categories and they are Beauty, Strength, Wealth, Knowledge, Fame and Renunciation. Generally everyone is captivated by the opulence like beauty, strength, wealth and wisdom. But it may be noted here that Renunciation is also an opulence. It is rare to find a person who can turn himself away from opulence. There were great kings in the past who renounced everything in search of inner wealth or spiritual realization. Or they are attracted to the source of all opulence, Krishna or Rama. Although Krishna or Rama are the source of all opulence, independent of this, They are complete. Isopanishad says in its invocation prayer 'Om purnam adah purnam..' The meaning of which is that although the Lord is the source of all opulence, He is complete and perfect in Himself. Actually the real renunciation is possible only to the Lord because He is Atmarama (One who rejoices in Himself) and Aptakama (One who has no desires to be fulfilled from outside Himself) Buddha, who is also the partial incarnation of the Lord has also exhibited this opulence of renunciation. Also, the Supreme Lord, in His descent as Gauranga Mahaprabhu has also exhibited complete renunciation in His role as a Sanyasi. There can not be any parallel to His qualities of renunciation. Similarly Bhagawan Rama has shown to the mankind how the duty is above oneself and that one should be ever ready to sacrifice anything in the discharge of his duties. We can never imitate the acts of Rama but can learn great lessons for our lives and try to follow in his footsteps as much as we can. In fact one who is attracted to the Lord ie a devotee alone can have perfect renunciation in the world. This is called Yukta vairagya, ie whatever helps to come closer to the Lord and serve the Lord. Rama renounced His comforts, His own wife who is faultless and He abandoned His entire kingdom and in fact He gave His very life for the benefit of his people. His forgiveness, kindness and dutifulness are all full and the life of Rama is a perpetual source of inspiration for as long as the human race exists on the surface of the globe.





Guha helps Rama cross the river Ganga

*G*uha, the nishada king of this territory near Ganga was a loyal friend of Rama. He was pained to see Rama, Laxmana and Sita in forest clothing. He offered his kingdom at His service. He immediately arranged a royal reception, sumptuous food, comfortable beds and articles of worship. Rama embraced Guha and said 'At heart I accept all that you have offered Me. I have taken a vow to wear only kusa grass, tree bark and deer skin and eat only fruits and roots.' Rama accepted only a little water while fasting that day in the honor of Ganga.

In the night Laxmana and Guha stay awake to guard Rama and Sita. Next morning Rama wanted to cross Ganga and so Guha provided Him with a beautiful boat. Rama sent Sumantra back to Ayodhya and turned to Guha and said 'I do not want to live in forest surrounded by relatives and friends. I want to live like ascetics with matted hair and inhabit in a lonely place.' Bidding Guha farewell, sipping some Ganga water, they boarded the boat and departed.



Bharata's loyalty unparalleled

When Bharata returned to Ayodhya after Dasaratha's demise and learnt the truth. He rebuked his mother in a fit of rage. Bharata hissed like a serpent, but due to excessive grief he fell to the floor unconscious. He made his firm resolve that to keep his father's vow intact, he will spend 14 years in exile instead of Rama and bring virtuous Rama back to accept the throne. He spoke to the ministers 'I consider myself a servant of my elder brother'. He told apprehensive Kausalya, 'Rama is my very life and soul. My existence has no other purpose but dedication to His service.' He told Vashista and the ministers of the court, who wanted him to be inducted as king, 'I want to go to forest and bring Rama as soon as possible. I can not think of becoming a king even in my thoughts or dreams. Bharata ordered all arrangements to bring Rama back and set out to forest himself. Bharata blamed himself as the cause for all the happenings. He abandoned his comforts altogether and wore matted locks and tree bark. Bharadvaja rishi who gave hospitality to all the Bharata's entourage. He tried to convince Bharata that no one has to be blamed. Behind these happenings there is a divine plan meant for the welfare and happiness of all beings. Finally Bharata saw Rama, Sita and Laxmana in a small cottage.

Bharata clasped Rama's lotus feet and placed them upon his head. When Rama was not willing to change His decision Bharata wanted to fast until death for the folly. At last Bharata surrendered to Rama's desire and brought forth a pair of wooden sandals in-laid with gold and requested Rama to place His lotus feet upon them. Bharata proclaimed "I will remain outside Ayodhya, keeping his matted hair and wearing clothes of tree bark, I will only eat fruit and roots while awaiting your return. It is not surprising that the Lord's expansions like Bharata are the topmost examples of servants of the Lord.



Sita wants the golden deer

The activities of Rama and Sita are auspicious and are for the welfare of all beings. On a superficial level these activities reveal the nature of men and women in general. Like Sita insisting on possessing golden deer, is inviting troubles and men who just follow their wives who are materialistic land their husbands into all sorts of problems. The truth of the matter here is that the Lord has the purpose of accomplishing the wholesale destruction of demoniac race such statments to Laxmana, that he was left and Sita was made instrumental. Maricha preferred to become a golden deer and be killed by Rama than getting killed by Ravana for not agreeing to his plan. Women as a class, for their selfish interests misunderstand the well-wishers. Laxmana knew the invincibility of the prowess of Rama, but Sita made such statement to Laxmana, that he was left with no alternative than to leave her alone and go to find Rama. Then Ravana succeeded in abducting Sita. Marichi in the guise of golden deer imitated Rama's voice and called out in great distress 'Ha! Sita Ha! Laxmana'. When Rama's invincible arrow pierced the golden deer, he collapsed to the ground fatally wounded assuming his rakshasa form. Valmiki has said that women by nature are so fickle and hardhearted that when they become obsessed with some desire, they do not give in.



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Jatayu fights Ravana to rescue Sita

Ravana obtained a boon from Brahma after performing severe austerities. He was invincible in his powers. He conquered all the planetary systems. Yet one who is not self-controlled is not satisfied with any amount of possessions or enjoyments. He has entire Lanka, which was all golden. He had hundreds and thousands of women whom he brought from all over the universe. The word Ravana stands for one who makes others cry. He can not see others happy and peaceful. He lusted even for Sita, who was none other than the very pleasure potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Rama. Sita was the most chaste lady. Chastity is the strength of a woman. When a woman is devoted to her husband and see him as Patideva, non-different from God, she can control all the directions by her power chastity. A person loses all his accumulated merits of all births in a moment by becoming lustful towards such a chaste woman. Otherwise also one should not covet another's wife. So Ravana, instead of doing tapasya for regulating his senses, he wanted sense gratification. He appeared before Sita in the guise of mendicant brahmin. Ravana already had a curse in the past from the husband of an apsara that if he tried to enjoy a woman against her wishes, his head will break into pieces. Lust is so overruling on all conditioned souls, that under its sway one has no shame or fear. By abducting Sita, Ravana paved the way not only for his death but also for the annihilation of his race.

Jatayu although a bird, being a devotee decided to fight and rescue Sita or die in the attempt. Rama was so moved with Jatayu's sacrifice, he conducted final rites for Jatayu like a dutiful son.



Rama laments Sita's separation

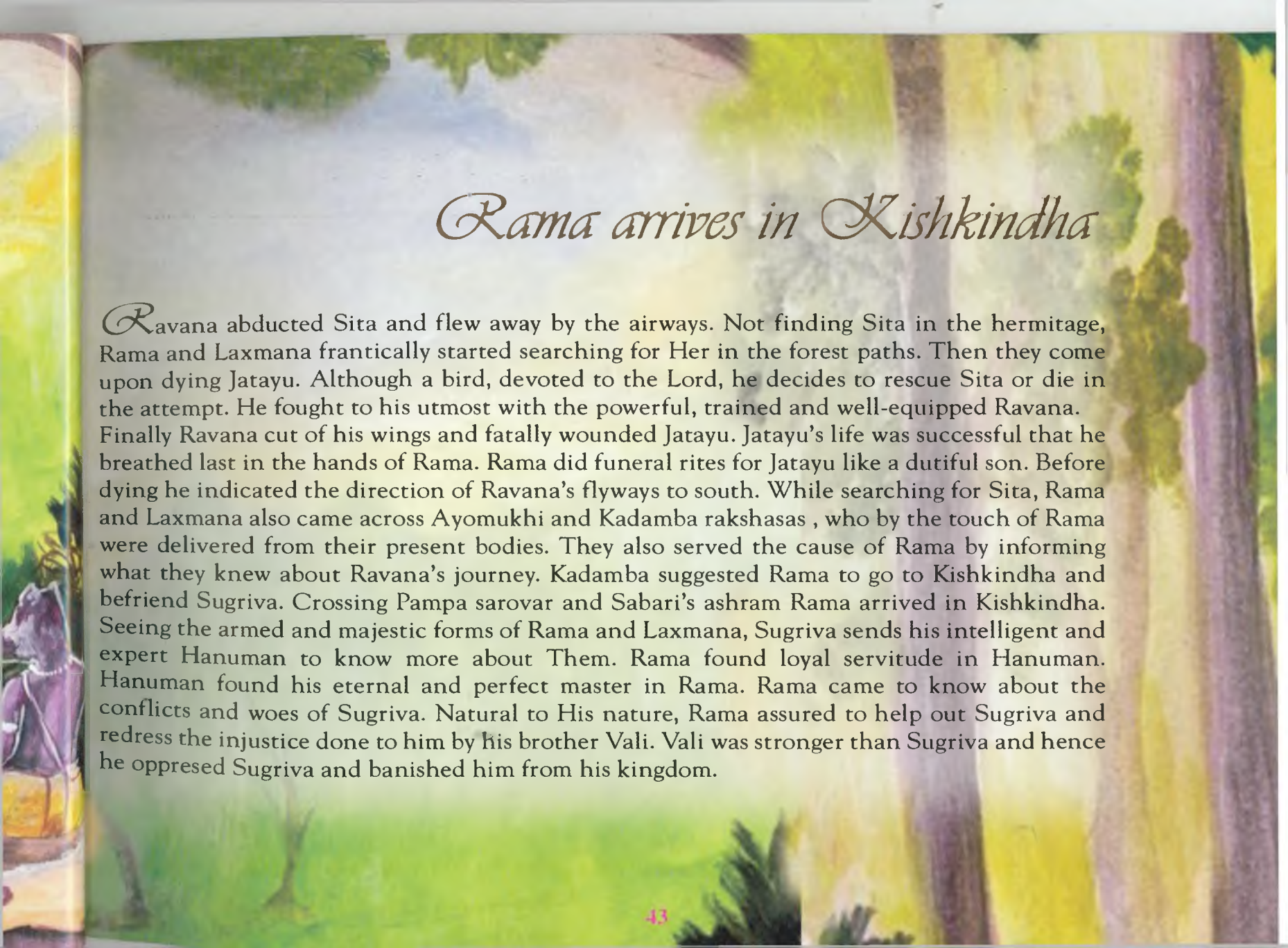
God and lamentation are incompatible words. Rama is Satchid Ananda vigraha - Supreme being of eternity, knowledge and bliss. We lament because we have a perishable body. Our relationships are bound to break. We ourselves have to go helplessly from one body to another according to the laws of material nature. We lament because we are not on spiritual platform. We do not have relationship with Rama or Krishna who alone can satisfy us eternally. Without our relationship with Him, we are simply like the limb severed from the body. Severed limb is useless and will only go rotten, disturbing others also. If we do not allow ourselves to be dictated by the Lord, we come under the slavery of body and mind. This will only increase and perpetuate our lamentation. For a devotee of the Lord there is joy in all directions 'Sarva disa mayo sukha' 'Visvam Purna Sukhayete'. Material nature is miserable and one can rise to transcendence - which is blissful by nature.

There is also transcendental lamentation. Its nature is unlike material lamentation. In transcendence, separation or loss will bring about stronger feelings for the Lord and His devotees. Rememberance of the Lord means ecstasy. When devotees are crying for the Lord, it does not mean, they are destitute or miserable, it is what is giving them solace and association of the Lord. So Lord Rama's lamentation for Sita simply means, He is in ecstatic feelings of love in separation. In transcendence there is no real separation. Sita is never separated from Rama nor is it possible.





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Rama arrives in Kishkindha

Ravana abducted Sita and flew away by the airways. Not finding Sita in the hermitage, Rama and Laxmana frantically started searching for Her in the forest paths. Then they come upon dying Jatayu. Although a bird, devoted to the Lord, he decides to rescue Sita or die in the attempt. He fought to his utmost with the powerful, trained and well-equipped Ravana. Finally Ravana cut off his wings and fatally wounded Jatayu. Jatayu's life was successful that he breathed last in the hands of Rama. Rama did funeral rites for Jatayu like a dutiful son. Before dying he indicated the direction of Ravana's flyways to south. While searching for Sita, Rama and Laxmana also came across Ayomukhi and Kadamba rakshasas, who by the touch of Rama were delivered from their present bodies. They also served the cause of Rama by informing what they knew about Ravana's journey. Kadamba suggested Rama to go to Kishkindha and befriend Sugriva. Crossing Pampa sarovar and Sabari's ashram Rama arrived in Kishkindha. Seeing the armed and majestic forms of Rama and Laxmana, Sugriva sends his intelligent and expert Hanuman to know more about Them. Rama found loyal servitude in Hanuman. Hanuman found his eternal and perfect master in Rama. Rama came to know about the conflicts and woes of Sugriva. Natural to His nature, Rama assured to help out Sugriva and redress the injustice done to him by his brother Vali. Vali was stronger than Sugriva and hence he oppressed Sugriva and banished him from his kingdom.



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Rama kills Vali

Hanuman expertly acted as a messenger between Rama, Laxmana and Sugriva and made a strong tie of friendship. After listening to the injustice done to Sugriva by his arrogant and powerful brother Vali, Rama promised to put him back on the throne and get his wife back to him. To the joy of Rama, Sugriva also showed Him jewellery, which fell from skyways, and Rama could immediately recognize them as Sita's.

One time Mayavi challenged Vali to fight and the fight went on. Mayavi ran into a cave followed by Vali. Sugriva was waiting for his brother to return at the cave. After many days, no outcome was known and blood was flowing from the cave. Apprehended of Vali's death, Sugriva closed the cave with a big rock and came back to the city lamenting. The court members suggested Sugriva to take up the duties of king himself, as a state could not be without king. There in the cave, it was Vali who was victorious, and he doubted Sugriva's loyalty and drove him away without consultation. He also usurped Sugriva's wife for himself.

One time, one great demon Dundubhi wandered as a buffalo challenging everyone. Himavan directed Dundubhi to fight with Vali. After fierce battle Vali lifted Dundubhi and threw him several miles away into air. The blood dripped into the ashram of Matanga rishi. He became angry for this mischievous act and cursed Vali that his head will break to pieces if he ventured into his ashram area. Having known this, Sugriva took shelter of this place to protect himself from Vali. To assure Sugriva of his prowess Lord Rama did pierce all 7 tal trees and kicked Dundubhi's remains more than Vali could. Then Sugriva went out to challenge Vali. He was defeated by Vali. Now assured of Rama's intervention he again challenged Vali. Rama released His infallible arrow and killed Vali, fulfilling his promise to Sugriva.



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Rama confides in Hanuman to find Sita

Rama fulfilled His promise of getting the kingdom back to Sugriva. Like all mortals, Sugriva revelled in royal pleasures and became forgetful of his gratitude to Rama. Sugriva forgot his promise of finding Sita for Rama utilizing all his vanara sena. Hanuman gently persuaded Sugriva and Laxmana also warned Sugriva of his shortcomings. Sugriva acted in time and gathered all his generals and warriors and sent them in all directions. Hanuman and other valiant group of monkeys were chosen to search out for Sita in the southern direction, towards the sea beyond which was Ravana's kingdom, Golden Lanka. Rama hugged Sugriva without bearing any grudge for his past negligence.

Sugriva considered Hanuman to be the most capable of finding Sita. Sugriva said, 'Hanuman, you are exceptional among all the powerful monkeys. No one is capable of obstructing you. You had received boons from all the demigods. You are also courageous, intelligent and resourceful.' Rama also became convinced of this and taking off His ring, He handed it over to Hanuman. Rama said "When Sita will see this ring, She will be convinced that you are My envoy". Hanuman took the ring and touched it to his forehead. Then he bowed down to Lord Rama and departed.



Hanuman leaps to Lanka

Hanuman, Angada and their team of monkeys wandered in the south, searching the caves, mountains and forest. Finding no success, they became restless. At one point Angada gave up the hope and he also did not want to return for the fear of the wrath of Sugriva. All of them wanted to fast and give up their lives. Hanuman somehow got them out of the situation and continued the search for Sita. One day Sampath, the elder brother of Jatayu spotted the monkeys. Sampath had lost his wings and was starving and now wanted to feed on the monkeys who just arrived there. But on hearing about Jatayu, his brother, he became keen to know about their mission. Sampath narrated his side of his story, of defeating Indra and soaring to sun planet, got his wings burnt. Although unable by his age and burnt wings, using his exceptional vision, he informed them of Ravana's kingdom, Lanka on the other side of the ocean. He also remembered the benediction of a rishi, that when he serves the mission of Rama in finding Sita, he will get back his burnt wings and youthful energy. The monkeys came to the shore of the ocean and seeing the vastness of water, they all became dejected again. Angada got everyone together to find out how to reach Lanka. Each monkey expressed his ability but there was none who can leap across the ocean, find the whereabouts of Sita and also leap back. Jambavan said Hanuman can do this, if he was reminded of his ability. In the childhood the rishis cursed Hanuman that he will forget his powers until he was reminded. Then to the great joys of all the monkeys Hanuman began to expand himself into a gigantic form. Hanuman boasted 'If I so desire I can fly 1000 times faster than Garuda and uproot the entire city of Lanka and carry it.' After saying this, for his monumental leap, he took advantage of mighty Mahendra hill, offered his obeisances to Rama, Surya, Vayu and others and sprang into air like an arrow shot from the Rama's bow.



Hanuman finds Sita

While leaping across the ocean, Hanuman was so single minded in his purpose that he gently put aside the offers of resting places in the middle of the ocean, he does not waste his time in egoistic wrangles with the demons and to those who have boons to put hurdles on his journey, he respectfully honored them and also countered them. When he reached the shores of Lanka, he resumed his normal size. He awaited the setting of the sun, and then contracted his body to the size of a small cat and entered the city jumping over the high wall. Lanka personified, a hideous rakshasa woman checked Hanuman. Combat ensued and the blow of Hanuman brought her fall on the ground moaning with pain. Then she remembered the prediction of Brahma that when a monkey overpowers her, it was time that the destruction of Lanka is imminent. Hanuman then started searching for Sita throughout the city, in all the private palaces of Ravana. Having scoured Lanka in vain Hanuman became depressed for a while. He also entertained the doubt that the rakshasas may have sacrificed Sita to Lord Shiva. Hanuman then sat on the high walls of city lost in pondering about what to do. He happened to gaze at a large grove of Ashoka trees on the outskirts of city which he had not the explored. Then remembering Rama, he leaped from the defense wall to the Ashoka grove. He spotted a woman dressed in a single dirty, wornout, yellow saree. She appeared emaciated due Her fasting. But Her divine radiance could not be obscured by all the externals. Many rakshasa women surrounded Her. Hanuman was waiting for the opportunity to meet Her. Night passed, in the morning Ravana came to seduce Sita in so many ways, Sita sat with no wavering mind, and calmly said, "I will never be tempted by these trivial things, I'm as inseparable from Rama as sunlight is for the sun. Rama is like mighty elephant and you are like tiny rabbit. I could reduce you to ashes Myself, nobody can touch Me, destiny has made Me instrumental to your death, that is why you have brought Me here." Ravana left the place cautioning the guards. Finding the right opportunity Hanuman started reciting Rama katha from the tree branches. Creating confidence in Her, Hanuman also gave Her Rama's ring.



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Hanuman burns Lanka

*H*anuman consoled Sita and according to Her wish, only Rama shall come, kill Ravana and rescue Her. Hanuman wanted to expedite the process as quickly as possible. Sita gave Hanuman a locket worn on head as a mark of his meeting Her so that Rama can plan the rest of the things.

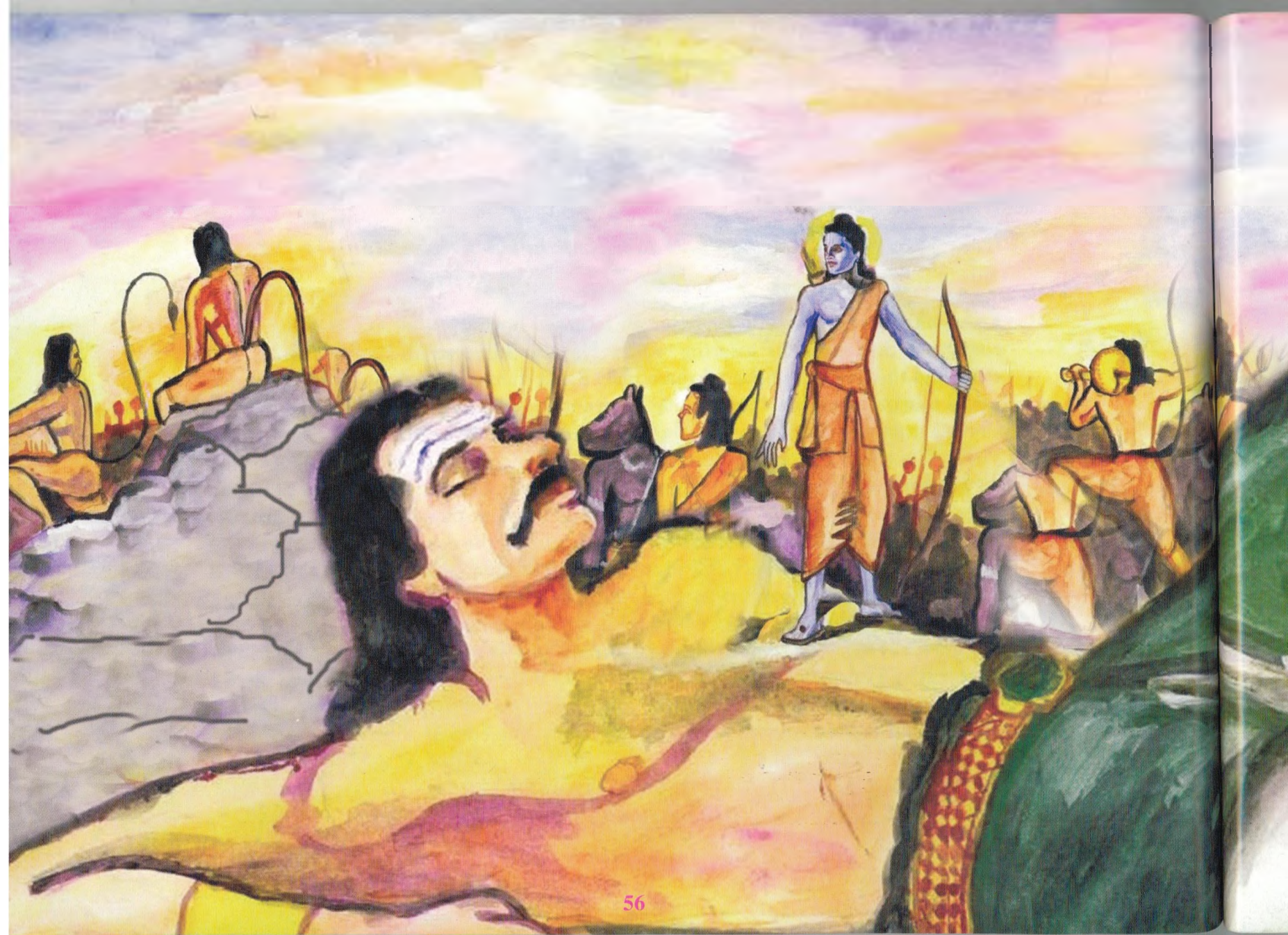
Hanuman thought that his mission would not be complete without ascertaining the strength of the rakshasas. He mischievously destroyed the pleasure groves of Ravana. Angry Ravana immediately despatched 80,000 fierce rakshasas. Effortlessly Hanuman killed them all, and also the batches of rakshasas that Ravana had sent again. Finally Indrajit arrested Hanuman with brahmastra. Then Hanuman allowed himself to be tied just so that he would have the chance of meeting Ravana. Hanuman said to Ravana 'I destroyed the groves to get an audience from you and I had to kill all your men for self-protection.' He provoked Ravana by saying there is no one immune to the arrows of Rama including Brahma and Shiva. In fact he can annihilate entire Lanka in no time. Furious Ravana shouted 'kill this monkey' Vibhisana who was also in the court forbade Ravana to kill one who has come as messenger..He suggested that some punishment can be given to him and then let him go back. Ravana sarcastically said monkeys prize their tails highly, hence ordered his men set fire to his tail and then parade him on the streets of Lanka. This way he will return back with a burnt tail and also suffer humiliation and pain. Rakshasas wrapped lots of ragged cloth to his tail and poured oil all over it and then set it on fire. Sita coming to hear about, she prayed to Agnidev, that he be cool to Hanuman. In the twinkling of an eye Hanuman slipped out of the bonds, assumed a huge form, jumping from one rooftop to another he ignited a great fire all over Lanka avoiding the palace of Vibhishana. Due to fat from the burning bodies the fire blazed up higher and higher. Hanuman becoming greatly satisfied, he put out the fire on his tail by dipping it in the ocean. When the thought of Sita came to him that She may also be engulfed in fire, his intelligence prompted him that, Her chastity is more powerful than fire itself. He actually went back to find that Sita was safe. Finally Hanuman leapt from Mount Arista, expanding his size to cross the ocean.





Rama Bridges the ocean

Rama was very happy that Hanuman returned having found Sita. Hanuman also comforted Sita with his assuring words. He also surveyed the entire Lanka and estimated the strength of the rakshasa race. Rama then arranged the army so that He would ride on Hanuman's back, while Laxmana would ride on Angada. The powerful monkey army marched with great bravado, roaring like lions, leaping up and down. They all reached the ocean shore and now they faced the problem of crossing the formidable sea in front of them. First Rama, with folded hands solicited the presiding deity of the ocean to give way. With no response for three days Rama became furious.. He pulled out His bow and brahmastra arrow to punish the ocean. Suddenly the ocean god rose up from the waters and prostrated before Rama. He conceded to Rama to enable the stones to float, in the formation of the bridge. Thereafter under Rama's supervision all the monkeys teared off great rocks, unearthed hills and uprooted trees and gradually floated them across the ocean all the way to other side to Lanka. The demigods and celestial rishis had all assembled in the sky just to behold this wonderful bridge. It looked like the Milky Way spanning the deep blue sea. It was one hundred yojanas long and ten yojanas wide. The work was completed in only five days.



Rama Delivers Kumbhakarna

Ravana's so many senior generals and warriors died one after the other in the battle Yet it was the nature of the demons that in their false ego they don't see the reality and underestimate the strength of others. Even after the defeat, they hoped against hope and continued the fight. They think they can kill God also. Ravana was seeing and hearing the news of so many senior generals die yet he did not stop his plan making. Kumbhakarna was the brother of Ravana. When he did tapasya along with Ravana and Vibhishana, Brahma asked Kumbhakarna to accept a boon. Inadvertently he asked that he might be allowed to sleep many years at a time. It was as though he was misled by someone. Now during the war Kumbhakarna was asleep and Ravana wanted his help badly.

The ministers, carried with them enormous quantities of food consisting of meat and blood. They had to make a war like disturbances around him to wake him up. Finally he woke up and the news of seizure of Lanka and Ravana's order was conveyed to him. Kumbhakarna was born with a gigantic body and was capable of doing colossal destruction. Kumbhakarna frankly told Ravana that he better correct his blunder of kidnapping another's wife. But in the end, he yielded to Ravana as a brother would and got ready to fight. With his body to the proportions of the sky, Kumbhakarna created havoc and stampeded countless monkeys to death and no one dared to stand before him. He took Sugriva in his grips. By Lord's grace, Sugriva tore off his earlobe and slipped away from him. When Laxmana confronted him, Kumbhakarna yelled 'I want to fight with Rama and kill Him.' Although Kumbhakarna wanted to devour miniature Rama before him, the celestial weapons of Rama tore off his legs, filled his gaping mouth with arrows making him gasp for breath. Finally Rama's Aindra weapon tore off Kumbhakarna's head and illuminated all the directions.





Laxmana conquers Indrajit

Next to Ravana, Indrajit was the most powerful of the rakshasas. He was expert in conjuring tricks and also stay in the space invisible. Ravana had a huge army and day after day he was loosing dozens of maharathis or generals and countless soldiers. Now Indrajit had to come forward to boost the morale of the rakshasas who were all shattered. First Indrajit went to his sacrificial altar to seek blessings of Agnideva, then remaining invisible Indrajit started showering weapons upon his enemies. Monkeys could not know where to fight. Rama and Laxmana made a trick of falling uncunscious from the attacks of Indrajit. Thus he may become visible thinking that he was victorious, Jambavan instructed Hanuman to bring herbs from Himalayas to bring Rama and Laxmana back to consciousness. Hanuman unaware of the plants brought the whole mountain itself to Lanka. When Rama and Laxmana were revived, Indrajit re-entered the battlefield after propitiating at his sacrificial altar.

In the middle of the invisible war Indrajit conjured to do something else. He brought illusory form of Sita before the monkeys and stabbed Her into two halves, which he dropped in a pool of blood. Hanuman, Laxmana and many other became very disturbed to see this. Laxmana vowed to vanquish Lanka that very day. Vibhishan came aside and solaced Laxmana and suggested that one should actually go to Indrajit's sacrificial altar and interrupt the ritual so that he would not become invincible. Laxmana attacked innumerable guards at sacrificial altar of Indrajit and Indrajit had to come out leaving his ritual half way. Indrajit blamed Vibhishan for revealing his family secrets to the enemy. Laxmana mounted on Hanuman to fight with Indrajit. After a fierce battle and exchange of celestial weapons, Laxmana released a special arrow invoking Rama's sakti and cut off Indrajit's head. In the sky demigods and rishis exclaimed Laxman's victory and showered flowers.



Rama kills Ravana

Where ever there is the Lord, the dharma will be there. Where ever there is dharma, the victory is there. The demoniac nature is that they defy the established order of the Lord. Instead of pleasing the Lord, they want to do that which pleases their senses. Ultimately when one is uncontrolled and remains on the tottering platform of the senses, he will be frustrated. A demoniac person creates troubles for himself and he also troubles others. All of us who are in this world are more or less rebellious of the will of the Lord. Hence in stead of listening to the belligerent mind and ruin one's life, one can approach a bonafide spiritual master or a vaishnava and learn from him the science of self realization. It is possible to train oneself in the art of sense control and serve the Lord favorably. Ramayana is a historical battle between the Lord and the demoniac men. Every one of us has a choice as to be on the side of Rama or Ravana. Demons want to usurp the energy of the Lord and enjoy it for themselves. The devotees want to bring the energy and unite it back with the Lord. Using everything to serve the Lord is uniting the energy back with Him. Hanuman is pure devotee of the Lord and he is an eternal servant of the Lord. Although such devotees may be small in numbers or that they may not be so sophisticated by material means, they will certainly surpass the demoniac forces. By the grace of the Lord, they can perform superhuman feats. The Lord can empower His devotees to do anything extraordinary.

Ravana or Indrajit have performed great austerities and attain boons. But the Lord always outsmarts all such demoniac powers. The Lord is also the source of power in the demons. The nature's laws by the arrangement of the Lord favor the sattva guna and hence devotees always come out victorious in the end. Sometimes apparently the Lord allows the demons to flourish and then cut them down. The ego of the demons is boosted and then they are crushed bringing the whole scene to a climax.



Rama returns to Ayodhya

When Ravana was killed, all the remaining rakshasas accepted the subjugation to Rama. After coming to the camp Rama ordered Laxmana to perform Vibhishana's coronation ceremony. Rama sent a message to Sita through Hanuman. Hanuman told Sita that if she gives permission, He will kill all the rakshasas that tormented Her. Sita devi said 'After all, as servants, they had to carry out the orders of Ravana, so I forgive them all.' Then Sita was brought before Rama. Lord Rama sternly said that She prove Her chastity before He accepted Her again. . Sita requested for a sacrificial fire, and praying to Agnideva and all other witness demigods that if She was truthful and chaste to Rama in all Her thoughts, words and deeds, let Agni not burn her and She entered the fire. The illusory form of Sita who went with Ravana disappeared and Agnideva presented original Sita and announced that Sita is chastity personified and She is without blemish. All the demigods who came to witness the scene wanted to offer benediction to Rama. Then Lord Rama requested for the revival of all monkey soldiers who died for His sake, back to life. All the monkeys that died came back to life as though as though they got up from sleep

Rama told Vibhishana, "There in Ayodhya My Bharat is doing severe austerities, opulence of this victory does not appeal to Me." He also wanted a speedy passage back to Ayodhya. Vibhishana brought celestial Pushpaka vimana, which can travel everywhere just by mental indications of the driver. Hanuman went ahead through the air to inform the residents of Ayodhya. Rama, Laxmana and Sita mounted the Pushpaka vimana, on the way they stopped to meet Bharadvasa rishi and Guha. News spread like wild fire in Ayodhya that Rama is returning back and they made all preparations to receive and worship Rama. Bharat, accompanied by the brahmins amidst blowing conchshells and musical instruments, carried the sandals of Rama to receive Him and worship Him.



Ramayana in Zoem

Ayodhya Kanda

Akanitha-Gunakana-bhooshitha - Ram
Avaneedhanaya-kaamitha - Ram
Rakachandra-samanana - Ram
Pithru-vakyachritha-kaanana - Ram

Priya-Guka-vinivaathitha-patha - Ram
Thathchaalitha-nija mrutha patha - Ram
Bharathwaja-mukananthaka - Ram
Chitrakoota-thri-nikethana - Ram

Gautama-muni-samboojitha - Ram
Suramuni-varakama-samsthutha - Ram
Naavikathavitha-mruthupatha - Ram
Mithilapura jana-mokana - Ram

Vidhayaga-manasa-ranjika - Ram
Dharyampaga-karmuga-panjaga - Ram
Suutharpitha-varamalika - Ram
Kriitha-vaivakika-gauduga - Ram

Bhargava-dharpa-vinasaka - Ram
Srimada-Ayodhya-palaka - Ram
Rama Rama Jaya Raja Ram
Rama Rama Jaya SitaRam



Dhasaratha-santhana-chinthika - Ram
Kaikeyi-dhanaya-thritha - Ram
Virachita-nija-pithru-karmaka - Ram
Bharatha-ptthithanija-paathuka - Ram

Bala Kanda

Suktha-bhrama-parathpara - Ram
kaalathmaka-parameshwara - Ram
Shasathalpa-sukanithritha - Ram
Brahmathyamara-prarthitha - Ram

Chandaki-ranakundala-mandana - Ram
Srimad-Dasaratha-nanthana - Ram
Kausalya-suka-varthana - Ram
Viswamithra-priyadhana - Ram

Kora-Thadaka-kathaka - Ram
Marichathi-nipathaka - Ram
Kausika-magasam-rachaga - Ram
Srimada-halyo-tharaga - Ram

Rama Rama Jaya Raja Ram
Rama Rama Jaya SitaRam



Aranya Kanda

Dhandayavana-jana-pavana - Ram
Dhusta-viratha-vinasana - Ram
Sarabanga-choothichana-arthitha - Ram
Agastya-anugraga-varthitha - Ram

Krithrathipa-samsevitha - Ram
Panchavadithada-choochitha - Ram
Soorpanakarthis-vidayaga - Ram
Kara-dhoochana-mukasuthaka - Ram
Sita-priya-harinanuka - Ram
Maaricharthis-kriithaa-suka - Ram
Vinasta-soothan-vaasaka - Ram

Hithakara-Lakshmana-samyutha - Ram
Rama Rama Jaya Raja Ram
Rama Rama Jaya SitaRam



Nishkanda Kanda

Sanumath-sarita-nijapatha - Ram
Natha-Sugriva-beesutha - Ram
Garvita-Pati-sambhara - Ram
Vanara-dootha-prayachuka - Ram

Shista-Sanumath-bhooshita - Ram
Veete-veditha-khadha-arana - Ram
Kruthe-chutamani-dharshana - Ram
Kapirata-rasana-srasitha - Ram
Rama Rama Jaya Raja Ram

Shundara Kanda

Kapirata-santhitha-samsrutha - Ram
Thaigathe-rigra-kransaka - Ram
Sita-prana-tharaga - Ram
Shista-thesaganana-dhooshita - Ram

Krutimathipagathi-drayaga - Ram
Bakamathu-balesana - Ram
Kadrona-badhu-chaitana - Ram
Rama Rama Jaya Raja Ram
Rama Rama Jaya Sita Ram

Fudha Kanda

Karana-nithana-prithitha - Ram
Vanara-sanyasa-samarutha - Ram
Shochitha-sarithechathitha - Ram
Vibhishana-paya-drayaga - Ram

Larratha-sethu-nibhanthaga - Ram
Kumbhakarna-chirachethaga - Ram
Rakchasa-shanga-rimaruthaga - Ram
Animadi-ravana-sarona - Ram

Bamhatha-dasamukha-ravana - Ram
Pilibhara-muhesura-sambhutha - Ram
Kasthitha-Desarathu-veechitha - Ram
Veete-dharshana-mothiga - Ram

Abhisiktha-Vibhishana-natha - Ram
Duspayayana-rojana - Ram
Sharata-rajapusharana - Ram
Sharata-prana-priyakra - Ram

Shakathapuri-bhooshana - Ram
Shakata-sreera-samanatha - Ram
Rathna-kosath-peedesthitha - Ram
Lattabi-sacha-lankritha - Ram

Parthiva-kula-samantitha - Ram
Vibhisana-pitha-rangaga - Ram
Keesa-kulaanu-gajakara - Ram
Shakala-jeera-san-rakshaga - Ram

Shamasta-leka-taraka - Ram
Rama Rama Jaya Raja Ram
Rama Rama Jaya Sita Ram



All glory to the Rama Nama, the taraka mantra.

Ramanama is more than Rama Himself. Rama being the Absolute Truth, there is no difference between His name and Him. In this material world, a name is only a sound and the substance is factual. Rama is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. So is the Rama nama. By remaining in contact with the name of Rama, one can attain all perfection. Only the pure devotees can get the personal association of the Lord. But any one can associate with the Rama nama and can make his life complete and perfect. With out the Nama, the material world is all vacant and miserable. The highest limit of knowledge and happiness is the Rama nama. By our improper thoughts, speech and actions, we are all undergoing unforetold trails and tribulations. God consciousness and service to God is our natural state of existence. Everyone is a servant in one way or the other but when we become servant of Rama, our service will be complete and perfect and we become eligible to return to Back Home, back to Godhead.

Ramayana is hinted in several places of Bhagawad Gita. In the Chapter 10, text 31 Lord Krishna says, 'Pavana pavata masmi Rama sastra brthamaham' Of the purifiers, I am the wind and of the weilders of weapons I am Rama. It means no one can be as powerful as Rama. No one can use power as wisely and meaningfully as Rama. No one can be as powerful and yet unattached and humble like Rama. No one can be so infallible as Rama. Rama's control over everything that be is complete and inimitable.

In the 3rd chapter, text 20 Krishna says : 'Karmannaivahi samsiddhir asthita Janakadaya / Lokasangaraha mevapi sampasyan karthu marhasi. 'Kings such as Janaka attained perfection solely by performing prescribed duties. Therefore just for the sake of education the people in general, you should perform your work. Janaka is a king and a great devotee. A Devotee has no need to perform work yet he works assiduously, for the welfare of other and for the pleasure of Rama. A devote administrator is capable of taking care of his subjects at the same time he does as a humble service and without desire for distinction and profit.

Bhaktivinod thakur said, in all the fourteen world there is nothing worth while except the name of the Lord Hari.



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May the fruits of this effort be diverted to my parents Janaki Venkateshwarlu who encouraged my spiritual leanings.



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