

# ŚAT ŚLOKI RĀMĀYANA

Valmiki Ramayana in 100 verses



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## Foreword

The Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa begins with a summary of the entire story in 100 verses. Since Vālmiki's text is quite bulky and takes a long time to read in its entirety, one may read these hundred verses only to get the gist of the narrative.

The stanzas summarise all the cantos of the Rāmāyana as follows:–

1. Bala Kanda [Book 1] verses 8 to 18
2. Ayodhya Kanda [Book 2 ] verses 18 to 28
3. Aranya Kanda [Book 3] verses 29 to 57
4. Kishkindha Kanda [Book 4] 58 to 71
5. Sundar Kanda [Book 5] 72 to 78
6. Yuddha Kanda [Book 6] 79 to 90
7. Uttara Ramayana [Book 7] 91 to 97
8. Phala Shruti [Results of Recitation] 98 to 100

## Śrī Rām Jayam



tapas svādhyāya niratām tapasvī vāg-vidām varam |  
nāradam pari-papraccha vālmikiḥ muni puṅgavam || 1 ||

*tapas* [niratām] = contemplation/meditation [always engaged in]; *tapasvī* = anchorite [Nārada]; *sva-adhyāya-niratām* = in self-study [of scriptures,] immersed; *vāg-vidām-varam* = best of orators; *nāradam-muni-puṅgavam* = nārada the bull among sages; *vālmikiḥ* = [Poet] Valmiki; *pari-papraccha* = verily inquisitively, inquired about; [ellipt. *sarva-guṇa-samiṣṭi-rūpam-puruṣam* = about such a man endowed with every good quality in abundance.]

The Sage-Poet Valmiki questioned the Divine Sage Nārada, the great ascetic who is perpetually engaged in contemplation and enquired about the greatest person known who is endowed with all the superlative qualities.

### Commentary

The first word *tapas* has several meanings. One meaning is *jñāna* — wisdom, and it is *tap ālocane* – 'thinking on the Absolute, where thinking itself is *tapas* - *yasya jñānam tapas* — thus Nārada is one who is perpetually contemplating on the Absolute or is engaged in meditative austerities. *Svādhyaya* is both the study Veda and also self-reflection.

The Sage Nārada is the mind-born son of Brahma: *brahma mānasa putra*. His name means: *nāram dadāti iti nārada* 'one who gives knowledge' or, *nāram dyati-khaṇḍati – iti nārada* 'one who annihilates ignorance'

There are four epithets of Nārada here:

1. *tapo nirati* — perpetually engaged in meditation
2. *sva-adhyāya nirata* — perpetually engaged in study of the Vedas
3. *vāg vidām vara* — the best of orators
4. *muni puṅgava* — the best of sages.

konvasmin sāmpratam loke guṇavān kaśca vīryavān |  
dharma-jñāśca kṛtajñāśca satya-vākyo dṛḍha vrataḥ || 2 ||

*kaḥ-nu* = who, really; *asmin-sāmpratam-loke* = in this present world; *guṇavān* = well qualified; *kaḥ-ca-vīryavān* = who is also virile; *dharma-jñāś-ca* = and the who knows Dharma well [conscientious one]; *kṛta-jñāś-ca* = grateful; *satya-vākyaḥ* = truthful; *dṛḍha-vrataḥ* = determined, reliable.

Who actually is that person in this world, who is principled and powerful, conscientious, grateful, truthful and unshakeable? [2]

cāritreṇa ca ko yuktaḥ sarva bhūteṣu ko hitaḥ |  
vidvān kaḥ kas samarthaśca kaścaika priya darśanaḥ || 3 ||

*kaḥ-cāritreṇa-ca-yuktaḥ* = who is also possessed of good conduct; *kaḥ-sarva-bhūteṣu-hitaḥ* = who is concerned with the welfare of all beings; *kaḥ-vidvān-ca-samarthaḥ* = who is wise adept and skilled; *kaḥ-ca-eka-priya-darśanaḥ* = who is exceptionally beautiful to look at.

Who is he possessed of good-conduct, who is concerned with the welfare of all beings, who is skilled and also capable and also uniquely good to look to? [3]

### Commentary

The skill of that person is in his broad worldly knowledge which he is able to skilfully apply. His conduct should be noble, and his actions should conform to norms laid down by Veda-s. And he must be benevolent not only to elites but also to lowly subjects, like Guha, Shabari et al., and he should deal both with the virtuous and criminals conscientiously. Furthermore he should be handsome. The word *eka* also means 'unique' and thus his physical features, should be unique.

ātmavān ko jīta-krodho dyutimān ko' nasūyakaḥ |  
kasya bibhyati devāśca jāta roṣasya saṁyuge || 4 ||

*ātmavān* = courageous; *kaḥ* = who; *jīta-krodhaḥ* = who has controlled his anger; *dyutimān* = brilliant; *kaḥ-an-asūyakaḥ* = who is free from jealousy; *kasya* = by whom; *bibhyati-devāḥ-ca* = from whom even the gods are afraid; *jāta-roṣasya-samyuge* = when provoked to war.

Who is that courageous one, who has controlled his anger, who is brilliant, free from jealousy and who frightens even the gods when provoked to war? [4]

### Commentary

Here the word *ātma* (Self) – refers to 'courage' and the word *krodha* is taken as the nominative of other six negative attitudes *ari ṣaṭ varga upalakṣaṇa* — *kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada*, *mātsarya* 'desire, anger, avarice, delusion, hubris, envy' and the import of the word *devāḥ-ca* is that 'not only the enemies like demons, but friendly gods and others are also afraid of him' when provoked.

#### THE SIX POISONS OF MIND — ŚĀḌARIS

Poison	Symptoms	Antidote	
Kāma	Self-referent desire	Gratifying yourself at the expense of others. Seeing others as a means of self-achievement.	Consideration of others, stop thinking of yourself as the centre of the universe.
Krodha	Anger/rage	The emotional response to frustrated desires and expectations.	Friendliness, forbearance and compassion.
Moha	Cognitive distortions	Identity formation – “I” and “mine”, identifying with mind/body complex, class, race, gender etc.	Self-realization that you are the universal <i>ātman</i> & the cultivation of non-attachment.
Mada	Arrogance	Thinking you are better than others, self-promotion, delusions of grandeur and supremacy.	Humility and recognise and acknowledge the virtues of even your enemies.
Lobha	Greed	Hoarding stuff, not sharing your surplus resources with others.	Generosity of resources both material and personal.
Mātsarya	Malicious envy	Jealousy of the possessions and achievements of others.	Empathetic joy and happiness for the achievements of others.

etat icchāmyahaṁ śrotuṁ paraṁ kautūhalaṁ hi me |  
maharṣe tvam samartha'si jñātum evaṁ vidhaṁ naram || 5 ||

*etat-icchāmi-aham* = all this I wish; *śrotum* = to hear *me-kautūhalaṁ* = my inquisitiveness; *param-hi* = is immense indeed; *mahā-ṛṣe* = O Great Sage; *tvam-samarthaḥ-asi* = you are, competent; *jñātum* = to know [him]; *evam-vidham-naram* = this kind of man.

All this I wish to hear from you, O Great Sage, for you alone are able to know a man of this description, and my inquisitiveness is immense indeed. [5]

### Commentary



There are 16 attributes for the hero of the Ramayana required by Valmiki: 1. *guṇavān* (qualified) 2. *viryaavān* (heroic) 3. *dharmajñāḥ* (knowledgeable in Dharma) 4. *kṛtajñāḥ* (grateful) 5. *satya vākyaḥ* (truthful) 6. *dhṛḍha vrataḥ* (steadfast in vows) 7. *cāritravān* (of noble conduct) 8. *sarva bhūteṣu hitaḥ* (considerate of all beings) 9. *vidvān* (scholar) 10. *samarthaḥ* (skilled) 11. *Priya-darśana* (handsome) 12. *Ātmavān* (courageous) 13. *jita krodhaḥ* (free of anger) 14. *dyutimān* (brilliant/radiant) 15. *anasūyakaḥ* (free of jealousy) 16. *bibhyatidevāḥ* (who terrifies the devas).

These sixteen attributes are analogous to the 16 phases of the Moon, and Valmiki is about to describe Rama as beautiful as a full-moon.

śrutvā caitat trilokajñō vālmīkeḥ nārada vacaḥ |  
śrūyatām iti ca āmantrya prahr̥ṣṭo vākyam abravīt || 6 ||

*śrutvā-ca-etaḥ* = on hearing these [words]; *vālmīkeḥ* = of Valmiki; *nāradaḥ* = Narada; *vacaḥ* = words of; *tri-loka-jñāḥ* = three worlds knower/preceptor; *śrūyatām-iti* = I will relate this; *āmantrya* = invited by [Valmiki,] also; *pra-hṛṣṭaḥ* = verily gladly; *vākyam-abravīt* = spoke these words.

On listening to the request of Valmiki, Nārada, the preceptor of all the three worlds, joyfully agreed, after inviting Valmiki [to listen attentively] he said:–

### Commentary

The three worlds are (1) *bhūr-loka* – the physical world. (2) *bhuvan-loka* – the mental world, and (3) *suvar loka* – the spiritual world.

bahavo durlabhāś caiva ye tvayā kīrtitā guṇāḥ |  
mune vakṣyāmyahaṁ buddhvā tair yuktaś śrūyatām naraḥ || 7 ||

*bahavaḥ* = many, *durlabhāḥ* = obscure, *ca-iva* = indeed, *ye* = which, *tvayā* = by you, *kīrtitā guṇāḥ* = exceptional qualities extolled, *mune* = sage, *ahaṁ vakṣyāmi* = I will tell, *buddhvā* = have been informed, *taiḥ-yuktaḥ naraḥ* = the man endowed by them, *śrūyatām* = I will clarify.

I shall duly consider and tell you about [such a hero]. Be pleased to hear from me of the one who is endowed with the manifold rare virtues that you have described.

ikṣvāku vamaśaḥ prabhavaḥ rāmo nāma janaiś śrutaḥ |  
niyatātmā mahā vīryaḥ dyutimān dhṛtimān vaśī || 8 ||

*ikṣvāku vamaśaḥ prabhavaḥ* = emerged from Ikshvaku dynasty; *rāmaḥ nāma* = Rama, named; *janaiḥ śrutaḥ* = by people, heard [by that name]; *niyata ātmā* = self-controlled, [conscientious]; *mahā vīryaḥ* = highly valorous one; *dyutimān* = resplendent one; *dhṛtimān* = steadfast; *vaśī* = controller of the senses.

In the Ikshvaku dynasty there was one born who was known to the people by the name of Rama, and he was conscientious, highly valorous, resplendent, steadfast and fully self-controlled.

### Commentary

Attributes explained by Narada have some Vedanta imports. From *niyata ātma* to *vaśī* these are the attributes which are descriptive of the Supreme Being – Brahman known as *svarūpa nirūpaka lakṣaṇāḥ*.

- *niyata ātmā* = Immutable Absolute: *ya ātmā apahata pāpmā vijaro vimṛtyur viśoko...* “The Self which is free from evil, free from old-age, free from death, free from grief, free from hunger.” (Chāndogya Upanishad 8-7-1)
- *mahā vīryaḥ* = Absolute is Omnipotent = *acintya vividha vicitra śaktivataḥ – parā asya śaktiḥ vividhā iva śrūyate svābhāviki jñāna bala kriyā ca* – “His high power is revealed to be various, indeed. The working of his intelligence and strength is inherent in him”. (Śvetāśvatara Upanishad 6-8)
- *dyutimān* = Self-Resplendent Absolute, or, Resplendence of Consciousness. *tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvaṁ tasya bhāsā sarvaṁ idam vibhāti* – “Everything shines only because of that luminosity and His luminosity illumines the entire universe.” (Muṇḍaka Upanishad 2:2;11)
- *dhṛtimān* = Sublime Bliss, *ānandāt eva khalu imāni bhūtāni jāyante* – “it is from Bliss only that all these being arise.” (Taittirīya Upanishad 6)
- *vaśī* = Absolute is the controller of the entire Universe. *Eko vaśī sarva bhūta antarātmā* - “The one controller of all, the inner Self of all things.” (Katha Upanishad 2-2-14)

The rest of the attributes of Rama described by Narada are identifiable with the causative factors of that Absolute in Projection of the Universe, and the process of projection is the self-expression of the Absolute.

buddhimān nītimān vāgmī śrīmān śatru nibarhaṇaḥ |  
vipulāṁso mahābāhuḥ kambu-grīvo mahāhanuḥ || 9 ||

*buddhimān* = intelligent; *nītimān* = sagacious – having good judgement; *vāgmī* = eloquent; *śrīmān* = prosperous/glorious; *śatru-nibarhaṇaḥ* = eliminator of enemies; *vipula-amśaḥ* = broad shouldered; *mahā-bāhuḥ* = powerful arms; *kambu-grīvaḥ* = neck like a conch-shell; *mahā-hanuḥ* = square jaw.

He is intelligent, sagacious, eloquent, glorious, and an eliminator of enemies. His arms are strong, and his neck is like a conch-shell and he has a square-jaw. [9]

### Commentary

The following stanzas describe the physical qualities an Emperor should possess by birth, as per *sāmudrika śāstra*, the physiognomic treatise of astrology.

mahorasko maheṣvāso gūḍha jatrur arindamaḥ |  
ājānu bāhus suśīrāḥ sulalāṭas suvikramaḥ || 10 ||

*mahā-uraskaḥ* = broad chested; *mahā-eṣvāsaḥ* = long-bow; *gūḍha-jatruḥ* = concealed collarbones [thick shouldered]; *arim-damaḥ* = subjugator of enemies; *ā-jānu-bāhuḥ* = with arms reaching the knees, *su-śīrāḥ* = high [crowning,] head; *su-lalāṭaḥ* = broad forehead; *su-vi-kramaḥ* = with a regal gait [like a lion.]

He is broad-chested, thick-shouldered, arms reaching to his knees, and he wields a longbow and has collar bones covered with muscle. He is a subjugator of enemies, he has a well-shaped head with a broad forehead, and has a lion-like gait. [10]

samas sama vibhaktāṅgas snigdha varṇaḥ pratāpavān |  
pīna vakṣā viśālākṣo lakṣmīvān śubha lakṣaṇaḥ || 11 ||

*samaḥ* = medium [physically]; *sama-vibhakta-aṅgaḥ* = symmetrically distributed, limbs; *snigdha-varṇaḥ* = soft coloured complexion; *pratāpavān* = courageous; *pīna-vakṣāḥ* = round chested; *viśāla-akṣaḥ* = large-eyed; *lakṣmīvān* = splendiferous; *śubha-lakṣaṇaḥ* = auspicious features.

He is of average stature, with well-proportioned limbs, broad-chested, wide-eyed, with a soft complexion. Courageous, full of splendour and has auspicious marks on his body. [11]

dharmajñāsa satya sandhaś ca prajānām ca hite rataḥ |  
yaśasvī jñāna sampannaḥ śucir vaśyas samādhimān || 12 ||

*dharmajñāḥ* = rectitude, knower, *satya-sandhaḥ-ca* = truthful to a promise also; *prajānām-ca-hitaḥ-rataḥ* = in [his] subject's welfare concerned; *yaśasvī* = glorious; *jñāna-sampannaḥ* = full of wisdom, proficient; *śuciḥ* = pure [in conduct]; *vaśyaḥ* = self-controlled; *samādhimān* = focused, concentrated.

He is the knower of the subtlety of Dharma, true to his promise, intent on the welfare of his subjects, illustrious, full of wisdom, irreproachable in conduct, self-controlled and focused. [12]

prajāpati samaś śrīmān dhatā ripu niśūdanaḥ |  
rakṣitā jīva-lokasya dharmasya pari rakṣitā || 13 ||

*prajā-patiḥ-samaḥ* = similar to Brahma; *śrīmān* = exalted one; *dhātā* = sustainer [of all worlds]; *ripuḥ-ni-śūdanaḥ* = enemy eliminator; *rakṣitāḥ-jīva-lokasya* = guardian of living beings in the worlds; *dharmasya-pari-rakṣitāḥ* = a staunch defender of Dharma.

He is like Brahma, the creator in his involvement with the creation, prosperous, and he eliminates enemies completely, thus he is a guardian of all living beings and he is a staunch defender of Dharma. [13]

rakṣitā svasya dharmasya sva-janasya ca rakṣitā |  
veda vedāṅga tattvajñō dhanur-vede ca niṣṭitaḥ || 14 ||

*rakṣitā-svasya-dharmasya* = champion of his own duty; *rakṣitā-sva-janasya-ca* = champion of his own people's welfare; *veda-veda-aṅga* = Veda-s and the ancillaries of the Veda; *tattva-jñāḥ* = knower of the essence of; *dhanur-vede-ca* = in the science of archery also; *niṣṭitaḥ* = an expert.

He is dedicated to the performance of his own duty, and also champions the welfare of his own people. He is an expert in the essence of Veda-s and their six ancillaries. He is also an expert in Dhanur Veda, the Art of Archery. [14]

### Commentary

The ancillary branches of Vedas (*aṅgas*) are (1) *śikṣa* – phonetics, (2) *vyākaraṇa* – grammar, (3) *chandas* – prosody, (4) *jyotiṣ* – astrology, (5) *nirukta* – Etymology of words, (6) *kalpa* – ritual procedures.

The *dhanur veda* - art of archery, itself is treated as an Upa-Veda taught to warriors. The *danur Veda* is not simply “archery” but a treatise of other missiles that existed in those ages.

The other Upa-Vedas are:

**Āyur-Veda** — Scripture dealing with medicine and health maintenance.

**Śastra-Śāstra** — Scripture dealing with martial arts.

**Gāndharva-Veda** — Scripture of music.

**Sthāpatya-Veda** — Scripture of architecture.

**Śilpa-Śāstra** — Scripture of fine arts.

sarva śāstrārtha tattva-jñō smṛtimān pratibhānavān |  
sarva-loka priyaḥ sādhuḥ adīnātmā vicakṣaṇaḥ || 15 ||

*sarva-śāstra-arthah-tattvajñah* = all scriptures their essence knower of; *smṛtimān* = of excellent memory; *pratibhānavān* = quick witted; *sarva-loka-priyah* = popular in all the worlds; *sādhuḥ* = pious; *a-dīna-ātmā* = high-spirited; *vicakṣaṇaḥ* = shrewd [in discriminating and distinguishing.]

He knows the essence of all the scriptures, has an excellent at memory and a quick wit. He is popular in all the worlds, pious, level-headed and shrewd [15]

sarvadābhigatas sadbhiḥ samudra iva sindhubhiḥ |  
aryas sarva samaś ca eva sadaiva priya darśanaḥ ||16 ||

*sarvadā* = always, *abhigataḥ-sadbhiḥ* = sought by virtuous ones; *samudra- sindhubhiḥ-iva* = like an ocean by rivers; *āryaḥ* = noble; *sarva-samaḥ* = is the same to all; *sadā* = always; *priya-darśanaḥ* = delightful to look upon.

He is always sought out by the virtuous like the ocean is by rivers. He is noble and treats all equally, and is ever delightful to look upon. [16]

### Commentary

*sarva samaḥ* – means, that he does not discriminate against people because of their caste, class, gender or race etc., examples are tribal hunter Guha, a boat-man, low-born Shabari, and nihilist Sage Jābāli et. al.

*samudra- sindhubhiḥ-iva* = like an ocean by rivers; for rivers there is no other course except to wend their way to the ocean; thus, the living beings, may it be humans or birds like Jatāyu, or bears and monkeys have no other recourse than to surrender to Rama.

sa ca sarva guṇopetaḥ kauśalya ānanda vardhanaḥ |  
samudra iva gāmbhīrye dhairyēṇa himavān iva || 17 ||

*sa-ca-sarva* = he is the all, *guṇa-upetaḥ* = embodiment of [noble] qualities; *Kauśalya* = Kausalya's [his mother,] *ānanda-varhdhanaḥ* = magnifier of happiness; *gāmbhīrye-samudra-iva* = an unfathomable ocean, like; *dhairyēṇa* = in endurance, *himavān-iva* = Himalayan mountain like.

He is an embodiment of all noble qualities, and enhances his mother Kausalya's joy, he is as unfathomable like the ocean, and like the Himalayan mountain in endurance. [17]

### Commentary

Rama at times is called 'the son of Kauśalya' rather than Dasharatha, because the word *Kauśalya* has several meanings like *kṣema*, *kuśala*, *sāmarthya*, *puṇya*, *nipuṇatva* wellbeing, skill, capability, merit, expertise.' When dynasty, valour, bravery wish to be emphasized then Rama is called son of Dasharatha.



viṣṇunā sadṛśo vīrye somavat priya darśanaḥ |  
kālāgni sadṛśaḥ krodhe kṣamayā pṛthvī samaḥ || 18 ||

*viṣṇunā* = with Vishnu; *sadrśaḥ* = comparable; *vīrye* = in valour; *somavat* = full-moon like; *priya-darśanaḥ* = attractive in appearance; *kāla-agni* = destructive fire of the universe; *sadrśaḥ* = comparable; *krodhe* = in anger; *kṣamayā* = in forbearance; *pṛthvī-samaḥ* = equal to the earth;

"In valour Rama is comparable with Vishnu, and is attractive as the full-moon, in wrath he is like the fire which consumes the Universe at the end of time but he equals the earth in his forbearance [18]

### Commentary.

Here 'valour' refers to his ability to vanquish his enemies, while remaining himself unharmed. Though Rama is himself Vishnu, but by virtue of his incarnation as human, he is different from Vishnu (*upādhi bheda*) – yet still his valour as a human is equal to that of Vishnu the God. Mother Earth personally does not grieve when people tread on her, trample, dig, cut, or whatever is done to her. Likewise Rama personally gets unaffected, whatever harm is done to him, but he becomes wrathful, if that harm is committed to the innocent or Dharma is infringed.

dhanadena samas tyāge satye dharma ivāparaḥ |  
tam evaṁ guṇa saṁpannam rāmaṁ satya parākramam || 19 ||

*dhanadena* = the giver of wealth – Kubera; *samaḥ* = similitude; *tyage* = in benevolence; *satye* = in truth; *dharma-iva-aparaḥ* = in truthfulness like, *Dharma-rāja* – the King of Dharma; *evam-guna-sampannam* = such-like, merits, possessor of [Rama]; *satya-parākramam* = truthfulness.

In benevolence he is identical to Kubera, God of Wealth-giver, and in his candour he is like Dharma-rāja himself, Rama being the possessor of such merits, truthfulness alone is his courage.

jyeṣṭham śreṣṭha guṇair yuktaṁ priyaṁ daśarathas sutam |  
prakṛtīnām hitair yuktaṁ prakṛti priya kāmyayā || 20 ||  
yauva rājyena saṁyoktum aicchat prītyā mahīpatiḥ |

*jyeṣṭham* = eldest; *śreṣṭha-guṇaiḥ-yuktam* = endowed with best intrinsic values *priyam* = dear; *daśarathaḥ* = Dasharatha's; *sutam* = son; *prakṛtīnām-hitaiḥ-yuktam* = devoted to the welfare of the people; *prakṛti-priya-kāmyayā* = country's, welfare, intent upon; *yauva* = youth; *rājyena-samyoktum* = anointing as the crown prince; *icchhat* = desiring; *prītyā* = affectionately; *mahī-patiḥ* = lord of the land;

Ever intent upon the welfare of his people, the emperor Dasharatha decided to anoint as the crown prince, his beloved eldest son Rama who was endowed with all the greatest prowess and finest qualities and himself was dedicated to the welfare of the citizens. [20, 21a]

tasyābhiṣeka sambhārān dr̥ṣṭvā bhāryātha kaikayī || 21 ||  
pūrvam datta varā devī varam enam ayācata |  
vivāsanañca rāmasya bharatasyābhiṣecanam || 22 ||

*tasya* = his [of Rama]; *abhiṣeka-sambhārān* = anointment arrangements; *dr̥ṣṭva* = on seeing *atha* = then; *bhārya-devi-kaikeyi* = [dear] wife queen Kaikeyi; *pūrvam-dattavaram* = previously promised boons; *varam-enam* = boons from him [Dasharatha]; *ayācataḥ* = claimed; *vi-vāsanam-rāmasya* = banishment of Rama; *abhiṣecanam-bharatasya-ca* = and the anointment of Bharata.

Then on observing the arrangements for the consecration of Rama as crown-prince, illustrious Kaikeyi, the dear wife and a queen of Dasharatha, claimed the boons, which were previously accorded to her by Dasharatha viz., the banishment of Rama and coronation of Bharata. [21b, 22]

### Commentary

The boons were previously given to Kaikeyi in recognition of her outstanding personal courage and service to her husband on the field of battle. She was provoked to this dastardly act by her maid-servant Mandara.

sa satya vacanāt rājā dharma pāśena saṁyataḥ |  
vivāsayāmāsa sutaṁ rāmaṁ daśarathaḥ priyam || 23 ||

*saḥ* = he; *satya-vacanāt* = truthfulness of his promise; *rājā* = the king; *saṁyataḥ* = bound by; *dharma-pāśena* = obligation noose; *vi-vāsayāmāsa* = banished; *priyam-sutam* = his beloved son.

King Dasharatha, bound as he was by the noose of Duty (in the form of his promise) due to his commitment to the truth (at all costs) banished his dearly beloved son, Rama. [23]

sa jagāma vanam vīraḥ pratijñām anupālayan |  
pituḥ vacana nirdeśāt kaikeyyāḥ priya kāraṇāt || 24 ||

*saḥ* = he; *jagāma-vanam* = repaired to the forest; *vīraḥ* = that hero; *pratijñām-anu-pālayan* = in order to follow through; *pituḥ-vacana* = by father's verbal; *nirdeśāt* = directive; *kaikeyyāḥ-priya* = Kaikeyi to appease, *kāraṇāt* = by reason of;

In obedience to his father's directive and in order to uphold his father's obligation and to please Kaikeyi, that heroic Rama repaired to forest.

taṁ vrajantaṁ priyo bhrātā lakṣmaṇo 'nujagāma ha |  
snehād vinaya sampannaḥ sumitrānanda vardhanaḥ || 25 ||

bhrātaraṁ dayito bhrātuḥ saubhrātram anu darśayan |  
rāmasya dayitā bhāryā nityaṁ prāṇa samā hitā || 26 ||

*tam* = him; *vrajantam* = who is going; *priya* = dear; *bhrātā* = brother; *lakṣmanaḥ* = Lakṣmana; *anu-jagāma-ha* = followed indeed; *snehāt* = from affection; *vinaya-sampannaḥ* = humbleness abounding; *sumitra-ananda- vardhanaḥ* = [his mother] Sumitra's happiness augments.

*Bhrātāram* = to brother, *dayitaḥ* = fondly; *saubhrātram-anu-darśayan* = exemplifying brotherhood ideals of; *rāmasya* = of Rama; *bhāryā* = spouse; *prāṇa-samā-hitāḥ* = dear to him as life itself.

His loving younger brother Lakshmana – who enhanced the delight of his mother Sumitra and who was not only endowed with humility but was the favourite brother of Rama, followed him out of the ideals of sibling affection. Rama's wife Sītā was dear to him as life itself. [25, 26]

janakasya kule jātā deva māyeva nirmitā |  
sarva lakṣaṇa sampannā nārīṇām uttamā vadhūḥ || 27 ||

*janakasya-kule-jātā* = born in Janaka's family; *nirmitā-deva-māya-iva* = fashioned by divine marvel as though; *sarva* = all; *lakṣaṇa-sampannā* = possessor of qualities [befitting to an ideal lady]; *nārīṇām-uttamā* = among ladies, the best; *vadhū* = daughter-in-law [of Dasharatha].

She was born in Janaka's family, possessing all best qualities [befitting to an ideal lady,] appearing as though she had been created by Divine Magic (māyā), she was the best of all women.

### Commentary

Here *deva-māyā* refers to *Viṣṇu māyā*, when He assumed an extraordinary female form called Mohini, when distributing *amṛta*, the ambrosia of immortality to gods and demons. After that He assumed the form of Tilottama, a divine beauty to deceive the antigods Sunda and Upasunda.

Another is grammatical connotation, *mā - yā* where, *mā* = Goddess Lakṣmi; *yā* = who that is; meaning *yā sītā sā mā* = “Goddess Lakṣmi she is Sītā”.

sītāpyanugatā rāmaṁ śaśinaṁ rohiṇī yathā |  
pauraiḥ-pitrā-daśarathena ca || 28 ||

sītā = Sītā; api-anugatā-rāmam = even followed, Rama; yathā-rohiṇī-śaśinam = as Rohini the Moon. Pauraiḥ-pitrā-daśarathena-ca = citizenry father, Dasharatha, also; anu-gataḥ-dūram = following for a distance;

Sita also accompanied Rama [to the forest] as Lady Rohini follows the Moon. All the citizens and his father Dasaratha followed from afar.

### Commentary

The deities are all accompanied by their wives. Chandra, the Moon has Rohini, while Surya the Sun has Prabha – Sunshine. So also, Rama has his inseparable wife. Though Sītā and Lakṣmana were not exiled, they followed Rama out of a concept of inseparability.

śṛṅgavera-pure sūtaṁ gaṅgā kūle vyasarjayat |  
guham āsādyā dharmātmā niṣādādhipatiṁ priyam || 29 ||

śṛṅgavera-pure = in [town called] Sringaberapura; gaṅgā-kūle = on the bank of Ganga; sūtam = charioteer [Sumantra]; vyasarjayat = dropped them off; guham-āsādyā = Guha, on getting at; dharmātmā = virtuous Rama; niṣāda-adhipatiṁ = tribal, with chief; priyam = beloved [to Rama];

The charioteer Sumantra dropped them off at Sringaberapura on the banks of the River Ganga, leaving them in the charge of virtuous Rama’s beloved friend Guha the chief of the Nishadas.

### Commentary

The word Sringaberapura means a township where the replicas of stags with sets of antlers are prepared and placed at places in order to attract other stags or deer, and then the tribals can catch them. The word Guha means *guhāti it guhaḥ* 'one who hordes/steals others' wealth by waylaying etc.' thus, though the tribal chief is a lowly subject by birth and caste-oriented activity, Rama has no aversion for such subjects, because Guha loved Rama.

guhena sahito rāmo lakṣmaṇena ca sītayā |  
te vanena vanam gatvā nadīs tīrtvā bahu udakāḥ || 30 ||

guhena-sahitaḥ = together with Guha, Rāmaḥ = Rama; lakṣmaṇena-ca-sītayā = together with Lakshmana and Sita; te-vanena-vanam-gatvā = they [the trio,] wandered from forest to forest; nadīḥ-bahu-udakān-tīrtva = rivers with much waters, tīrtva = crossing;

Rama, Lakshmana and Sita together with Guha wandered from forest to forest crossing over-flowing rivers.

### Commentary

Another parsing is *tevane vanam gatvā* 'playfully, from forest to forest they went'. It was a play (*līlā*) for them to enter the forest to joyfully play their appointed roles and to resolve the purpose of Ramayana and their incarnations.

citrakūṭam anuprāpya bharadvājasya śāsanāt |  
ramyam āvasatham kṛtvā ramamāṇā vane trayah || 31 ||

*citrakūṭam-anuprāpya* = on arriving at Chitrakuta; *bharadvājasya* = of Bharadwaja; *śāsanāt* = at his instruction; *ramyam* = congenial; *avasatham-kṛtvā* = constructed a hut; *ramamāṇā-vane* = cavorted in woods; *te* = they, *trayah* = three of them.

On arriving at Chitrakuta, [and reaching the hermitage of] Sage Bharadwaja, they took his advice and constructed a congenial hut [in the forest there] and the three of them dwelt untroubled in the woods.

### Commentary

Another meaning is *te avane* – 'they protecting each other' *te ramamāṇāḥ* – 'those two Rama and Sītā, frolicked delightfully or enjoyed the essence of forest-life' and Lakṣmana enjoyed the essence of his servitude – *sevā rasa*. And they rejoiced without feeling any difference between city dwelling and forest dwelling – as every part of Universe is theirs.

deva gandharva saṅkāśās tatra te nyavasan sukham |  
citrakūṭam gate rāme putra śoka āturas tathā || 32 ||  
rājā daśarathaḥ svargaṁ jagāma vilapan sutam |

*tatra* = there [at Chitrakuta]; *deva-gandharva-saṅkāśāḥ* = gods, celestials, similar to; *nyavasan-sukham* = lived, happily; *citrakūṭam-gate-rāme* = to Chitrakuta, having gone Rama; *putra-śoka-āturaḥ* = for son, by grief, aggrieved; *tathā* = thus; *rājā-daśarathaḥ* = King, Dasharatha; *svargam-jagāma* = departed to heaven; *vilapam-sutam* = grieving for his son.

There they dwelt happily like devas and gandharvas. On Rama's going to Chitrakuta thus, King Dasharatha was plunged into grief, and pining for his son departed for heaven.

gate tu tasmin bharato vasiṣṭha pramukhair dvijaiḥ || 33 ||  
niyuḥyamāno rājyāya naicchad rājyaṁ mahābalaḥ |  
sa jagāma vanam vīro rāma pāda prasādakaḥ || 34 ||

*gate-tu-tasmin* = on departing but in that [matter of Dasharatha's death]; *bharataḥ* = Bharata; *vasiṣṭha* = sage Vasishta; *pramukhaiḥ-dvijaiḥ* = by other prominent Brahmins; *niyuḥyamānaḥ-rājyāya* = being urged for investiture as king; *na-icchat-rājyam* = did not desire the kingdom; *mahā-balaḥ* = highly mighty; *saḥ -jagāma-vanam* = he [Bharata,] went to the forest; *vīraḥ* = the hero; *rāma-pāda* = at Rama's feet; *prasādakaḥ* = to please.

Due to the King's departure, the Brahmins headed by Sage Vashishta urged Bharata to accept the throne, but he being resolute, rejected the kingdom, and went to forests to seek the favour of the venerable Rama [in order to convince him to return and accept the crown]. [33b. 34]

gatvā tu sa mahātmānam rāmaṁ satya parākramam |  
ayācad bhrātaram rāmam ārya bhāva puraskṛtaḥ || 35 ||  
tvam eva rājā dharmajña iti rāmaṁ vaco'bravīt |

*gatva-tu* = on reaching but; *saḥ* = he; *mahā-ātmānam* = great-souled; *rāmam* =, Rama; *satya-parākramam* = invincible prowess; *ayācat* = begged of; *bhrātaram-rāmam* = from

brother, Rama; *ārya-bhāva-puraskṛtaḥ* = noble sentiments; *tvam-eva-rājā* = you alone the king; *dharmajñāḥ* = knower of probity; *iti-vacaḥ-abravīt* = thus word said.

Approaching the munificent Rama, of invincible prowess, Bharata humbly and reverentially addressed the following words to his brother; “O Knower of Dharma, you alone are the rightful king.” [35, 36a]

rāmo’pi paramodāraḥ sumukhas sumahāyaśāḥ || 36 ||  
na caicchat pitur ādeśād rājyaṁ rāmo mahābalaḥ |

*rāmaḥ* = Rama; *parama-udāraḥ* = supremely magnanimous; *su-mukhaḥ* = pleasant faced; *su-mahā-yaśaḥ -api* = of very great renown; *mahā-balaḥ-api* = highly, capable; *rāmaḥ* = Rama; *na-ca-icchat* = also did not desire; *rājyam* = kingdom *pituh-ādeśāt* = in deference to his father’s decree.

In deference to his father’s decree, the supremely magnanimous Rama of pleasant demeanour and great renown, declined to accept the kingdom. [36b, 37a]

pāduke cāsya rājyāya nyāsaṁ dattvā punaḥ punaḥ || 37 ||  
nivantayāmāsa tato bharataṁ bharatāgrajaḥ |

*bharata-agra-jaḥ* = by Bharata's elder born; *rājyāya* = for the kingdom; *asya* = to him [Bharata]; *pāduke* = sandals; *nyāsam-datvā* = for custodial care, on giving; *tataḥ* = then; *bharatam-nivantayāmāsa* = Bharata started to turn away; *punaḥ-punaḥ* = again & again [persuasively].

Handing over his wooden sandals as his proxy to rule the kingdom, Rama the elder brother of Bharata persuaded him to return [to Ayodhya] after repeated importunities. [37b, 38a]

sa kāmam anavāpyaiva rāma pādāvupaspr̥śan || 38 ||  
nandi grāme ‘karod rājyaṁ rāmāgamana kāṅkṣayā |

*sah* = he [Bharata]; *kāmam-an-avāpya-eva* = desire being unfulfilled; *rāma-pādau* = Rama's feet; *upaspr̥śan* = on touching; *nandigrāme* = from Nandigrama [a village]; *akarot-rājyam* = carried on, kingdom; *rāma-āgamana* = Rama's, return; *kāṅkṣayā* = longing for.

With his desire remaining unfulfilled, Bharata after touching Rama's feet [and taking his sandals, returned from Chitrakuta, and without entering the capital Ayodhya,] ruled the kingdom from a nearby village called Nandigrama, longing for Rama's return. [38b, 39a]

gate tu bharate śrīmān satya sandho jitendriyaḥ || 39 ||  
rāmas tu punar ālakṣya nāgarasya janasya ca |  
tatrāgamanam ekāgro daṇḍakān praviveśa ha || 40 ||

*gate-tu-bharate* = on departure of Bharata; *śrīmān* = effulgent; *satya-sandhaḥ* = truth-bound/resolute ; *jita-indriyaḥ* = conquered senses; *rāmaḥ-tu* = Rama, but; *punaḥ - ālakṣya* = again thought about; *nāgarasya-janasya-ca* = citizens ordinary subjects also; *tatra* = to that place; *āgamanam* = their arrival; *eka-agraḥ* = focussed-mind; *daṇḍaka* = to Dandaka forests; *praviveśa-ha* = [he] entered indeed.

After the departure of Bharata, the illustrious Rama, resolute and self-controlled, reflected on the [anticipated] arrival of citizens and other subjects to that place and, with a focused-mind decided to move [his residence] to Dandaka forest. [39b, 40]

### Commentary

*śrīmān* = effulgent, illustrious — for his self-effulgence was just marred by Bharata's arrival, but soon regained.

*satya-sandhaḥ* = truth-bound/resolute — for his truthfulness was uncompromised even by the supplications of Bharata, Kausalya, and even Kaikeyi.

*jita-indriyaḥ* = sense-controlled — for the lure of kingdom had not affected him.

*nāgarasya janasya ca* — In this compound the 'ca' is indicative of Bharata, who may make habit of frequenting Chitrakuta, on one pretense or the other.

*eka-agraḥ* = focussed-mind — to fulfil his promise to remain in exile for 14 years and in order to elimination the troublesome demons

praviśya tu mahāraṇyam rāmo rājīva locanaḥ |  
virādham rākṣasam hatvā śarabhaṅgam dadarśa ha || 41 ||  
sutīkṣṇam cāpyagastyam ca agastya bhrātaram tathā |

*praviśya* = on entering; *mahā-aranyam* = the great forest; *rājīva-locana* = lotus-eyed; *virādham-rākṣasam* = Virādha the demon; *hatvā* = having eliminated; *śarabhaṅgam* == Sage Sharabhaṅga; *dadarśa-ha* = saw, indeed; *sutīkṣṇam-ca-api* = and the Sage Suteekṣṇa, also; *agastyam* = the Sage Agastya too; *agastya-bhrātaram-tathā* = Agastya's brother, likewise.

On entering the vast forest of Dandaka, the lotus-eyed Rama eliminated the demon Virādha, and saw one after the other, the great sages Sharabhaṅga and Sutīkṣṇa, as well as Agastya and his brother Idhmavāhaṇa. [41, 42a]

### Commentary

Some say the name of Agastya's brother is Sudarśana and he was a sage in name only and because of reflected fame from his illustrious brother, he is not actually named.

agastya vacanāc caiva jagrāhaindraṁ śarāsanam || 42 ||  
khaḍgam ca parama prītas tūṇī cākṣaya sāyakau |

*agastya-vacanāt* = at the insistence of Agastya; *jagrāha* = has taken; *aindraṁ-śarāsanam* = Indra's great bow; *khaḍgam-ca* = and sword; *parama-prītaḥ* = highly, pleased; *tūṇī-ca* = quivers also; *akṣaya-sāyakau* = ever replenishing with arrows.

At the insistence of Sage Agastya, Rama accepted with supreme delight, a bow of Indra<sup>1</sup>, a sword and two quivers that contained an inexhaustible supply of arrows. [42b, 42a]

vasatas tasya rāmasya vane vana caraiḥ saha || 43 ||  
ṛṣayo 'bhyāgaman sarve vadhāyāsura rakṣasām |

*vasataḥ* = while staying ; *tasya* = his; *rāmasya* = of Rama; *vane* = in forest; *vana-carai-saha* = along with inhabitants of the forest; *ṛṣayah* = [high-ranking] sages, *abhi-āgaman* = towards, approached; *sarve* = all; *vadhāya* = for eliminating; *asura-rakṣasām* = anti-gods and demonic beings.

While Rama was staying in forest along with all the other inhabitants thereof, all the high-ranking sages approached him to request the elimination of anti-gods and demonic beings [that were disturbing their spiritual practices.] [42b, 43a]

<sup>1</sup> Which Indra once gave to Sage Agastya

sa teṣāṃ prati śuśrāva rākṣasānāṃ tathā vane ॥ 44 ॥  
 pratijñātaś ca rāmeṇa vadhas saṃyati rakṣasām |  
 ṛṣiṅgām agni kalpānām daṇḍakāraṇya vāsīnām ॥ 45 ॥

*saḥ* = he [Rama]; *prati-śuśrāva* = having conceded/listened to; *teṣām-tathā* = of those; *rākṣasānām-vane* = the demon's in the forest; *rāmeṇa-ca* = by Rama, also; *prati-jñātaḥ* = promised; *ṛṣiṅgām* = to sages; *agni-kalpānām* = radiant as fire; *daṇḍaka-araṇya* = in Dandaka forest; *vāsīnām* = dwellers of; *rākṣasām* = of all demons; *vadhaḥ* = elimination; *saṃyati* = in combat.

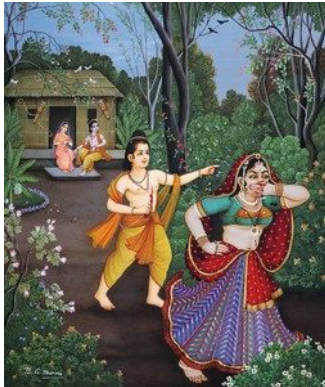
Rama conceded to the supplications of those sages of Dandaka forest who were as radiant as fire, and promised them that he would eliminate all of the ogres in combat. [44b, 45]

tena tatraiva vasatā janasthāna nivāsīnī |  
 virūpitā śūrpaṇakhā rākṣasī kāma rūpiṇī ॥ 46 ॥

*tena* = by him [Rama]; *tatra-eva* = there [in Dandaka,] only; *vasatā* = while living; *janasthāna-nivāsīnī* = a resident of Janasthāna; *vi-rūpitā* = disfigured; *śūrpaṇakha-rākṣasī* = Shurpanakha the ogress; *kāma-rūpiṇī* = shape-shifter.

Shurpanakha a shape-shifting ogress who dwelt in Janasthāna [a place in Dandaka forest,] was disfigured by Rama while living in that very forest. [46]

### Commentary



This is metonymy. Rama did not do it himself, but his brother Lakṣmana severed the nose and ears of this demoness, which is the actual turning point of the story. She was named as Shurpanakha because her fingernails were like winnowing fans, *śūrpa tulya nakhā iti śūrpanakha*; She was the sister of Ravana, and she was the actual instigator in the epic. She tried to seduce the brothers and when they rejected her advances she attempted to attack Sita and was prevented by Lakshmana

tataḥ śūrpaṇakhā vākyāt udyuktān sarva rākṣasān |  
 kharam triśirasam caiva dūṣaṇam caiva rākṣasam ॥ 47 ॥  
 nijaghāna raṇe rāmaḥ teṣāṃ caiva padānugān |

*tataḥ* = then; *śūrpaṇakhā-vākyāt* = by Shurpanakha's instigation (words); *udyuktān* = prepared for [battle], *sarva* = all; *rākṣasān* = ogres; *kharam* = Khara; *triśirasam-ca-eva* = Trishira, also thus; *dūṣaṇam* = Dushana, also, [their chiefs]; *nijaghāna* = eliminated; *raṇe* = in combat; *teṣām* = all of them; *pada-anugān* = followers [foot-soldiers]

Then Rama eliminated all the ogres that came prepared for battle at the instigation of Shurpanakha; including their chiefs [and the cousins of Shurpanakha and Ravana,] named Khara, Trishira, Dushana along with all their followers. [47, 48a]

vane tasmin nivasatā janasthāna nivāsīnām ॥ 48 ॥  
 rakṣasām nihatāni asan sahasrāṇi catur daśa |

*vane* = in forest; *tasmin* = that one, *nivasatā* = during stay; *janasthāna-nivāsīnām* = Janasthāna's inhabitants; *rakṣasām* = ogres; *nihatāni-asan* = eliminated, they are; *sahasrāni-catur-daśa* = fourteen thousands.

During his stay in Janasthana, Rama eliminated no less than fourteen thousand ogres who were inhabiting that forest. [48b, 49a]

tato jñāti vadhaṁ śrutvā rāvaṇaḥ krodha mūrccitaḥ || 49 ||  
sahāyaṁ varayāmāsa mārīcaṁ nāma rākṣasam |

*tataḥ* = then; *jñāti* = kinsmen; *vadham* = slaughter; *śrutvā* = on hearing of; *rāvaṇaḥ* = Ravana; *krodha* = in anger, *mūrccitaḥ* = stupefied; *sahāyam* = for help; *varayāmāsa* = sought; *marīcam-nāma-rākṣasam* = from Mārīca named ogre.

Then on hearing of the slaughter of his kinsmen, Ravana was stupefied from rage and sought the help of an ogre named Mārīca. [49b, 50a]

### Commentary

Ravana is the chief of ogres and the main antagonist in this epic. His name is Daśa-grīva, meaning that he is an ogre with ten heads. He is the antithesis of Daśa-ratha the father of Rāma whose name means “ten chariots”.

The name Ravana obtains from the root *ru*: *rāvayati iti rāvaṇaḥ* 'one who makes people weep by his violent actions.' and it also means *viśravasaḥ apatyam pumān rāvaṇaḥ*, *viśravaso viśravaṇa ravaṇau* 'the son of one named Viśravasa' — “One who is well informed”.

Mārīca was one of the two sons of the ogress Tāḍaka who had already been killed by Rāma.

vāryamāṇaḥ subahuṣo mārīcena sa rāvaṇaḥ || 50 ||  
na virodho balavatā kṣamo rāvaṇa tena te |

*marīcena* = by Mārīca; *saḥ* = he; *rāvaṇaḥ* = that Ravana; *vāryamāṇaḥ* = deterred, discouraged; *su-bahuṣaḥ* = very, many times; *te* = your; *virodhaḥ* = rivalry; *tena* = with him [Rama]; *balavatā* = with formidable [Rama, for he cannot be surmounted by the fourteen thousand clansmen of ours]; *na-kṣamaḥ* = not, pardonable.

Mārīca repeatedly attempted to dissuade Ravana [from his intent to kidnap Sītā] saying: “O Ravana, unpardonable will be your rivalry with that formidable Rama, [as fourteen thousand clansmen of ours could not defeat him]”. [50b, 51a]

anādr̥tya tu tad vākyaṁ rāvaṇaḥ kāla coditaḥ || 51 ||  
jagāma saha mārīcas tasya āśrama padaṁ tadā |

*an-ādr̥tya-tu* = not heedful of; *tat-vākyaṁ* = that, word (advice); *rāvaṇaḥ -kāla-codita* = Ravana, being impelled by Time (his own doom); *jagāma* = proceeded; *saha-mārīca* = along with Mārīca; *tasya* = his [Rama's,] *āśrama-padam-tadā* = hermitage's threshold then.

Then heedless of Mārīca’s advice and ushered by the time [of his own doom,] Ravana advanced to the threshold of Rama's hermitage, along with Mārīca. [51b, 52a]





tena māvāvinā dūraṁ apavāhya nṛpātmaṁ ॥ 52 ॥  
jahāra bhāryāṁ rāmasya ḡḍhram hatvā jaṭāyuṣam ।

*tena* = by him; *māvāvinā* = trickster; *dūram* = to a distance *apa-vāhya* = distracted; *nṛpātmaṁ* = the two princes; *jahāra* = kidnapped; *bhāryāṁ* = the wife; *rāmasya* = of Rama; *ḡḍhram* = the vulture; *jaṭāyuṣam* = Jatāyu; *hatvā* = having killed.

When that trickster Mārīca distracted the two princes Rama and Lakṣmana to some distance from the hermitage, Ravana kidnapped Sītā, the wife of Rama, killing the vulture Jatāyu, [which came to her rescue.] [52b, 53a]

ḡḍhram ca nihataṁ dr̥ṣṭvā hṛtām śrutvā ca maithilīm ॥ 53 ॥  
rāghavaś śoka saṁtāpto vilalāpākula indriyaḥ ।

*ḡḍhram* = the vulture; *ni-hatam* = mortally wounded; *dr̥ṣṭvā* = on seeing; *hṛtām* = abduction; *śrutvā* = on hearing about; *maithilīm* = Sītā; *rāghavaḥ* = Rāma; *śoka* = anguish, *saṁtāptaḥ* = tormented; *vilalāpa* = wept over; *akula-indriyaḥ* = agitated senses.

On seeing the mortally wounded vulture and hearing from him about the abduction of Sītā, Rāma was overcome with grief and wept aloud. [53b, 54a]

tatas tenaiva śokena ḡḍhram dagdhvā jaṭāyuṣam ॥ 54 ॥  
mārgamāṇo vane sītām rākṣasaṁ saṁdadarśa ha ।  
kabandham nāma rūpeṇa vikṛtam ghora darśanam ॥ 55 ॥

*tataḥ* = then; *tena-eva* = by him [by Rama,] alone; *śokena* = in sorrow; *ḡḍhram-jaṭāyuṣam* = the vulture Jatāyu; *dagdhvā* = having cremated; *mārgamāṇaḥ* = while searching; *vane* = in forests; *sītām* = for Sītā; *rākṣasaṁ* = an ogre; *saṁdadarśa-ha* = was seen; *kabandham-nāma* = named Kabandha; *rūpeṇa-vikṛtam* = in looks, misshapen; *ghora-darśanam* = ghastly to look at.

Then with great sorrow Rama cremated Jatāyu, and while searching for Sītā in forest, came upon an ogre named Kabandha, who was misshapen in appearance and ghastly to look upon. [54b, 55]

### Commentary

Jatāyu was a dear friend of Rama's father Daśaratha and hence his death is as poignant as his own father's death. Rama performed the orthodox Vedic funeral rites for a vulture which shows his lack of concern with hierarchies of social value.

taṁ nihatya mahābāhur dadāha svargataś ca saḥ ।  
sa cāśya kathayāmāsa śabarīm dharmā cāriṇīm ॥ 56 ॥  
śramaṇām dharmā nīpuṇām abhigaccheti rāghava ।

*mahā-bāhuḥ* = great-armed [dextrous]; *tam-nihatya* = him, [Kabandha,] eliminated; *dadāḥ* = cremated; *svargataḥ-ca* = heavenwards, also; *saḥ* = he; *kathayāmāsa* = started to tell; *asya* = to him; *rāghava* = O Rāma; *dharmā-cāriṇīm* = of right conduct; *dharmā-nīpuṇām* = an expert in Dharma; *śramaṇām* = ascetic lady; *śabarīm* = to Shabari; *abhigaccha-iti* = proceed to, thus.

Having dispatched Kabandha, the mighty armed prince Rama cremated him too, and the ogre [obtaining his original form as a Gandharva] rose heavenwards, saying:– “O Rama, proceed to visit the ascetic lady Shabari of right-conduct and an expert in Dharma!” [56, 57a]

so'bhya gacchan mahātejāḥ śabarīm śatru sūdanaḥ ॥ 57 ॥  
śabaryā pūjitas samyak rāmo daśarathātmaṁ ॥

*saḥ* = he; *abhi-āgacchat* = duly arrived at; *maha-tejāḥ* = great, resplendent; *śabarīm* = Shabari; *śatru-sūdanaḥ* = enemy-eliminator; *śabaryāḥ-pūjitaḥ* = by Shabari, venerated, *samyak* = properly; *daśaratha-ātmajaḥ* = Dasharatha's son.

That glorious Rama the son of Dasharatha, the vanquisher of enemies accordingly went to visit Shabari and was duly worshiped by her. [57b, 58a]

### Commentary

By mentioning the name of Dasharatha it is indicated that the hospitality given by this ascetic lady Shabari is more satisfactory to Rama, than that which was accorded by his own father Dasharatha. (Govindaraja).

From the next verse onwards the episodes in Kishkindha are introduced. Now Rama meets Hanuman, the Vānara. Traditionally this character is taken as a monkey god. *vanena* = in forests, *carati* = moves about, *iti* = thus; therefore *vānara* = 'forest-ranger' is the declination of the term. It means neither an absolute monkey or a god but a humanoid living in the jungle. These vanara-s are the principle characters in this epic. They have their cities, hierarchies, culture, language, traditions and customs.

pampā tīre hanumatā saṅgato vānareṇa ha || 58 ||  
hanumad vacanāt caiva sugrīveṇa samāgataḥ |

*pampā-tīre* = on the banks of Pampa lake; *hanumatā-saṅgataḥ* = [Rama] came into contact with Hanuman; *vānareṇa-ha* = with vanaras, indeed; *hanumat-vacanāt-ca* = Hanuman's, upon word, also; *sugrīveṇa* = with Sugrīva; *samāgataḥ* = approached or befriended.

On the banks of Lake Pampa, Rama came into contact with the vānara Hanuman and with his intercession met and befriended Sugrīva. [58b, 59b]

sugrīvāya ca tat sarvaṁ śamsat rāmo mahābalaḥ || 59 ||  
āditaḥ tad yathā vṛttaṁ sītāyāś ca viśeṣataḥ |

*sugrīvāya* = to Sugrīva; *tat* = that [had occurred]; *sarvam* = detailed *śamsat* =, narrated; *mahā-balaḥ* = the mighty; *āditaḥ* = from beginning; *tat-yathā-vṛttam* = all that had happened; *sītāyaḥ* = Sītā's [abduction]; *viśeṣataḥ* = in particular.

That mighty Rama narrated to Sugrīva all that had happened from the beginning, the whole of his story in general, and the abduction of Sītā, in particular. [59b, 60a]

### Commentary

Here the use of “mighty” Rama is to indicate that though he himself is capable enough to resolve the entire fiasco but as a human, he needs some help and cooperation. As such, Rama has to befriend Sugrīva and to inform his new friend of the circumstances of his predicament.

sugrīvaś cāpi tat sarvaṁ śrutvā rāmasya vānaraḥ || 60 ||  
cakāra sakhyaṁ rāmeṇa prītaś caivāgni sākṣikam |

*sugrīvaḥ* = Sugrīva; *tat-sarvam* = that all; *śrutvā* = on listening; *rāmasya* = of Rama; *vānaraḥ* = that vanara; *cakāra* = made; *sakhyam* = friendship; *prītaḥ* = delightedly; *agni-sākṣikam* = by the sacred fire as witness.

Sugrīva, being pleased to hear all the events of Rama, befriended him, with the sacred fire invoked as the witness<sup>2</sup>. [60b, 61a]

<sup>2</sup> Hanuman kindled a fire and presided over their friendship ceremony.

tato vānara rājena vairānukathanam prati || 61 ||  
rāmāyāveditam sarvam praṇayāt duḥkhitena ca |

*tataḥ* = then; *vānara-rājena* = by vanara, king [Sugrīva]; *vaira-anukathanam* = his feud with Vali saga; *prati* = in reply [to Rama's query]; *rāmāya* = to Rama; *āveditam* = informed; *sarvam* = in entirety; *praṇayāt* = friendship; *duḥkhitena* = woefully.

Sugrīva, king of monkeys, in friendship, woefully informed Rama, about the saga of his feud [with his brother Vali in reply to Rama's query,] in its entirety. [61b, 62a]

pratiñātam ca rāmeṇa tadā vāli vadham prati || 62 ||  
vālinaś ca balam tatra kathayāmāsa vānaraḥ |

*prati* = in turn; *ñātam* = make known; *rāmeṇa* = by Rama; *tadā* = then; *vāli* = to Vali; *vadham* = killed; *prati* = in retaliation [for his misdeeds]; *vālinaś* = Vali's; *balam* = strength; *kathayāmāsa* = started to tell; *vānaraḥ* = vanara [Sugrīva.]

Then Rama also solemnly promised to eliminate Vali in retaliation for his foul deeds, and then Sugrīva, described the prowess of Vali. [62b, 63a]

### Commentary

Vali, the elder brother of Sugrīva, is another principle character of Ramayana. He is mightier than Ravana, the chief villain of the epic, and Ravana was once subdued by Vali' in combat.

sugrīvaḥ śaṅkitaś cāsīt nityam vīryeṇa rāghave || 63 ||  
rāghavaḥ pratyayārtham tu dundubheḥ kāyam uttamam |  
darśayāmāsa sugrīvo mahā-parvata sannibham || 64 ||

*sugrīvaḥ* = Sugrīva, *śaṅkitaḥ* = doubtful; *āsīt* = he remained *nityam*; = always; *vīryeṇa* = about powers; *rāghave* = of Rama; *pratyayartham-tu* = confide in, by reason of, only; *dundubheḥ* = Dundubhi's; *kāyam-uttamam* = remains, big [massive one]; *darśayāmāsa* = started to shown; *mahā* = great; *parvata* = mountain; *sannibham* = similar to.

Sugrīva always remained sceptical about the capabilities of Rama and in order to apprise him of the exceptional prowess of Vali, showed him the massive mountain-like remains of a demon Dundubhi [killed by Vali]. [63b, 64]

utsmayitvā mahā-bāhuḥ prekṣya cāsti mahābalaḥ |  
pādānguṣṭhena cikṣepa saṁpūrṇam daśa yojanam || 65 ||

*utsmayitvā* = smilingly; *mahā-bāhuḥ* = great-armed [Rama,]; *prekṣya-ca* = looked at, also; *asti* = skeleton; *mahā-balaḥ* = very powerfull; *pādānguṣṭhena* = foot, by toe; *cikṣepa* = flicked it [tip of big-toe]; *saṁpūrṇam* = a full; *daśa* = ten; *yojanam* = yojana-s lengths.

That omni-dextrous Rama who possessed extraordinary strength, looked disdainfully at the skeleton, and then with tip of his big toe, flicked it to a distance of 10 Yojanas (145 kilometers) [65]

### Commentary

Vali was able to kick that massive mountain-like body, with his whole foot, only up to two hundred bow-lengths – 365 meters. But Rama could kick that heap of bones 145 kilometers away, only with a flick of his great toe. But Sugrīva murmurs that “then this skeleton was with flesh and blood, now it is much lighter, show me more of your strength.”

bibheda ca punas sālān saptaikena maheṣuṇā |  
giriṁ rasātalam caiva janayan pratyayam tathā || 66 ||

*bibheda-ca-* = rip, also; *punaḥ* = again; *sālān* = sala trees; *sapta* = seven; *ekena* = with one; *maha* = great; *iṣuṇā* = arrow; *girim* = a mountain, *rasātalam-ca-eva* = nethermost subterranean of earth, also, like that; *janayan-pratyayam-tadā* = inculcate confidence [in Sugrīva,] thus.

Again in order to engender confidence in Sugrīva, Rama pierced seven sala trees [standing in a row] with a single mighty arrow, [which not only pierced the trees but also rent through] a mountain, and reached the nethermost subterranean regions. [66]

### Commentary

The *rasātala* is deepest subterranean plane, and it forms the base of other planes called, *atala*, *vitāla*, *sutāla*, *talātala*, *mahātala*, *rasātala* underneath its surface of earth at its core.

tataḥ prīta manās tena viśvastas sa mahākapiḥ |  
kiṣkindhām rāma sahito jagāma ca guhām tadā || 67 ||

*tataḥ* = then; *prīta* = gladden; *manāḥ* = at heart; *tena* = by him; *viśvataḥ* = confiding in [Rama,] also; *mahā-kapiḥ* = great monkey; *kiṣkindhām* = to Kishkindha; *rāma-sahitaḥ* = Rama along with; *jagāma* = advanced to; *guhām* = to cave; *tadā* = then.

Then that great monkey Sugrīva, being greatly reassured [at the prospect of his success] with a joyful heart marched together with Rama to Kishkindha, situated cave-like [in the midst of the mountains] [67]

tato'garjat harivaras sugrīvo hema pingalaḥ |  
tena nādena mahatā nirjagāma harīśvaraḥ || 68 ||

*tataḥ* = then; *agarjat* = roared; *hari-varaḥ* = monkey the best; *hema-piṅgalaḥ* = golden, in hue; *tena* = by that; *mahatā* = loud; *nādena* = shout; *nir-jagāma* = out emerged [of cave,] *hariḥ-īśvaraḥ* = king of monkeys [Vali.]

Then Sugrīva the best of monkeys, who was tawny as gold, let out a mighty roar and Vali, the king of monkeys, hearing [that challenge] emerged with a loud shout. [68]

anumānya tadā tārām sugrīveṇa samāgataḥ |  
nijaghāna ca tatrainam śareṇaikena rāghavaḥ || 69 ||

*anumānya* = reassuring; *tadā* = then; *tārām* = Tara; *sugrīveṇa-samāgataḥ* = with Sugrīva; *nijaghāna-ca* = killed, also, *tatra-enam* = therein [the combat,] him [Vali]; *ekena* = with one; *śareṇa* = arrow.

Vali, reassuring Tara [his devoted and highly intelligent wife who had pleaded with him to ignore the challenge], emerged to engaged with Sugrīva [in a wrestling match]. Rāma killed Vali during that encounter with one arrow. [69]



tataḥ sugrīva vacanāt hatvā vālinam āhave |  
sugrīvam eva tat rājye rāghavaḥ pratyapādayat || 70 ||

*tataḥ* = then; *sugrīva-vacanāt* = by Sugrīva's word; *hatvā* = on eliminating; *vālinam* = Vali *āhave* = in combat; *sugrīvam-eva* = Sugrīva, alone; *tat* = in that; *rājye* = kingdom; *pratyapādayat* = [Rama,] established.

Then, having eliminating Vali in combat at the insistence of Sugrīva, Rama established Sugrīva on the throne of the kingdom. [70]

sa ca sarvān samānīya vānarān vānararṣabhaḥ |  
diśaḥ prastāpayāmāsa didṛkṣur janakātmajām || 71 ||

*saḥ* = he; *sarvān* = all of them; *samānīya* = on summoning; *vānarān* = monkeys; *vānara-ṛṣabhaḥ* = the best of monkey; *diśaḥ* = to all directions; *prastāpayāmāsa* = sent forth; *didṛkṣuḥ* = in search of; *janaka-atmajām* = Janaka's daughter [Sītā]

Sugrīva being the ablest among monkeys, on summoning all of the monkey hosts sent them forth in all directions in search of Sītā, the daughter of Janaka. [71]

tato gṛdhrasya vacanāt sampāteḥ hanumān balī |  
śata yojana vistīrṇaṁ pupluve lavaṇārṇavam || 72 ||

*tataḥ* = then; *gṛdhrasya* = by vulture's; *vacanāt* = advice, counsel; *sampāteḥ* = [named] Sampāti; *hanumān-balī* = Hanuman, efficacious one; *śata* = hundred; *yojana* = yojana, *vistīrṇam* = breadth-wise; *pupluve* = leaped forth; *lavaṇa* = salty; *ārṇavam* = ocean.

Then, taking the counsel of Sampāti, the vulture [elder brother of Jatāyu who could see Sīta in Lanka] the mighty Hanuman leaped forth over the salty-sea [to Lanka], which was 1287 kilometers away<sup>3</sup>. [72]

tatra lankām samāsādyā purīm rāvaṇa pālītām |  
dadarśa sītām dhyāyantīm aśoka vanikām gatām || 73 ||

*tatra* = therein; *lankām* = at Lanka; *samāsādyā* = on reaching; *purīm* = city; *rāvaṇa* = Ravana; *pālītām* = ruled by; *dadarśa* = seen; *sītām* = Sītā; *dhyāyantīm* = meditating; *aśoka-vanikām* = in Ashoka, gardens; *gatām* = entered [lodged.]

On reaching the city-state Lanka ruled by Ravana, Hanuman found Sita confined in the Ashoka gardens meditating [upon Rama]. [73]

nivedayitvābhijñānam pravṛttim ca nivedya ca |  
samāśvāsya ca vaidehīm mardayāmāsa toraṇam || 74 ||

*nivedayitvā* = on presenting; *abhijñānam* = mark of identification [the signet ring of Rama,]; *pravṛttim-ca* = disposition of Rama, also; *nivedya-ca* = on delineating, also; *samāśvāsya-ca* = on solacing, thus; *vaidehīm* = Sītā; *mardayāmāsa-* = started to smash; *toraṇam* = welcome-arch [of Ashoka gardens.]

Hanuman presented Rama's signet ring to Sita in order to identify himself, then after relating all the news about Rama and consoling her, Hanuman started smashing the decorative-arch above the gateway [of those beautiful Ashoka gardens.] [74]

pañca senāgragān hatvā sapta mantri sutān api |  
śūram akṣam ca niṣpiṣya grahaṇam samupāgamat || 75 ||

*pañca* = five; *senā-gragān* = army, chiefs; *hatva* = on wiping out; *sapta* = seven; *mantri-sutān-api* = minister's, sons, even; *śūram* = valiant; *akṣam-ca* = Akṣa, also; *niṣpiṣya* = crushed; *grahaṇam* = captivity; *sam-upāgamat* = [Hanuman] duly, entered into.

Having dispatched five army chiefs, seven sons of ministers, and crushed the gallant Akṣa Kumara, Hanuman allowed himself to be bound [by a powerful weapon<sup>4</sup> shot by Indrajit, the son of Ravana.] [75]

<sup>3</sup> The actual distance is about 1428 kilometers.

<sup>4</sup> The Brahma Astra had the power of immobilization

astreṇa unmuktam ātmānaṁ jñātvā paitāmahāt varāt |  
marṣayan rākṣasān vīro yantriṇaḥ tān yadṛcchayā || 76 ||

*astreṇa* = from astra/weapon; *unmuktam* = released; *ātmānaṁ-jñātvā* = though knowing; *paitāmahāt-varāt* = by Brahma's, boon; *marṣayan* = tolerating; *rākṣasān* = ogres; *vīraḥ* = valiant one [Hanuman]; *yantriṇaḥ - tān* = [allowed to be] fastened, by them; *yadṛcchayā* = intentionally.

Though knowing full-well that the *astra* had no power over him, due to a boon given to him by Brahma, Hanuman deliberately bore with those ogres [allowing himself to be bound] in order to meet with Ravana. [76]

tato dagdhvā purīm lankām ṛte sītām ca maithilīm |  
rāmāya priyam ākhyātum punaḥ āyāt mahākapiḥ || 77 ||

*tataḥ* = thereafter [after an audience with Ravana,]; *dagdhvā* = having burnt; *purīm-lankām* = city, Lanka; *ṛte-sītām-ca-maithilīm* = except, Sītā of Mithila; *rāmāya* = to Rama; *priyam* = pleasant [news,]; *ākhyātum* = to narrate; *punaḥ* = again; *āyāt* = returned; *mahā-kapiḥ* = great monkey.



After [an audience with Ravana], Hanuman burnt that city of Lanka except [the Ashoka garden] where Sītā, the princess of Mithila was, and then flew back to Rama to bring him the good news [of Sītā's whereabouts]. [77]

sah abhigamya mahātmānaṁ kṛtvā rāmaṁ pradakṣiṇam |  
nyavedayat ameyātmā dr̥ṣṭā sīteti tattvataḥ || 78 ||

*sah* = he [Hanuman,]; *abhigamya* = on approaching; *mahā-ātmānam* = great, souled Rama; *kṛtvā* = on performing; *rāmam-pradakṣiṇam* = around Rama, circumambulation; *nyavedayat* = recounted; *ameya-ātmā* = inestimable, intellectual [Hanuman]; *dr̥ṣṭā* = seen; *sītā* = Sītā; *tattvataḥ* = in actuality.

Hanuman, on approaching that magnanimous Rama, and on circumambulating him in reverence, Hanuman of inestimable intelligence, informed him that he had actually seen Sita. [78]

tataḥ sugrīva sahito gatvā tīraṁ mahodadheḥ |  
samudraṁ kṣobhayāmāsa śarair āditya sannibhaiḥ || 79 ||

*tataḥ* = then; *sugrīva-sahitaḥ* = Sugrīva along with; *gatvā* = on going to; *tīraṁ* = shore; *mahā-udadheḥ* = of great ocean; *samudram* = Samudra the Ocean-god; *kṣobhayāmāsa* = started to churn; *śaraiḥ* = with arrows; *āditya-sannibhaiḥ* = radiant as sunrays.

Then, Rama along with Sugrīva [and other vānaras] on reaching the seashore [requested passage from the Samudra – the Seagod and were ignored] Rama began to churn the ocean to its depths with his arrows, as glorious as the Sun. [79]

### Commentary

Rama became angry at the ocean for not yielding way for the army to cross over. In order to force the compliance of the Sea-god, Rama starts depleting its waters with arrows, *śarāḥ* – in Sanskrit this word is synonyms with the rays of sun thus the similitude of Rama with Sun-god.

darśayāmāsa cātmānam samudras saritām patiḥ |  
samudra vacanāt caiva nalam setum akārayat || 80 ||

*darśayāmāsa* = revealed; *ātmānam* = himself; *samudraḥ* = Samudra, Ocean-god; *saritām-patiḥ* = the lord of rivers; *samudra-vacanāt* = Ocean-god, upon the agreement of; *nalam* = by Nala; *setum* = a bridge; *akārayat* = was built.

Samudra, the lord of rivers, then revealed himself [and taking refuge in Rama and begging his forgiveness] consented to the construction of a bridge by Nala. [80]

### Commentary

Nala, a Vanara engineer, had a boon from his mother. In his childhood he used to throw toys into water, only to see them sink and this caused him great anguish. His mother then gave him a boon, saying that whatever articles he throws in waters will always float, may they be toys or stones or boulders. Here that boon is taken advantage of, and a boulder bridge is built on sea.

tena gatvā purīm lankām hatvā rāvaṇam āhave |  
rāmas sītām anuprāpya parām vṛḍḍām upāgamat || 81 ||

*tena* = by that [bridge]; *gatvā* = on reaching; *purīm-lankām* = to the city of Lanka; *hatvā* = on eliminating, *rāvaṇam* = Ravana; *āhave* = in battle; *rāmaḥ* = Rama; *sītām-anuprāpya* =, on being united with Sita; *parām* = much; *vṛḍḍām* = humiliation; *upāgamat* = came down with.

Reaching the city of Lanka by that bridge, and on eliminating Ravana in battle, and on being reunited with Sita, Rama experienced a sense of shame [since her remaining in enemy's place for so long her chastity may become a source of gossip among the people.] [81]



tām uvāca tato rāmaḥ parūṣaṁ jana sansadi |  
amṛṣyamāṇā sā sītā viveśa jvalanaṁ satī || 82 ||

*tām* = to her; *uvāca* = [he] said; *tataḥ* = then; *rāmaḥ* = Rama; *parūṣam* = harsh words with asperity; *jana-samsadi* = in public; *amṛṣyamāṇā* = intolerant; *sā-sītā* = that Sītā; *viveśa* = entered into; *jvalanam* = burning fire; *satī* = suttee [Sītā.]

Then Rama spoke harsh words to her words in the assembly [of monkeys, bears and the others.] Being highly resentful of those words, Sita the chaste, entered the burning fire. [82]

### Commentary

Rāma said to her – “Now that I have liberated you, you may go wherever your please!” — he was in actual fact fully convinced of her chastity but knew that the common folk would doubt her, and so he wittingly engendered this scenario in order to convince the others.

tato ‘gni vacanāt sītām jñātvā vigata kalmaṣām |  
karmaṇā tena mahatā trailokyam sa carācaram || 83 ||

*tataḥ* = then; *agni-vacanāt* = Fire-god's testimony; *sītām-jñatva* = Sītā realised; *vigata-kalmaṣām* = rid of sins; *karmaṇā-tena-mahatā* = accomplishment, of his, great one; *trailokyam* = three worlds; *sa-cara-acaram* = with mobile & immobile.

Then, having received the testimony of Agni - Rama was convinced that Sītā was free of all blame, and willingly accepted her back. All the three words and all animate and inanimate beings [ lauded him] for his great deeds. [83]

sa devarṣi gaṇam tuṣṭam rāghavasya mahātmanaḥ |  
babhau rāmas samprahrṣṭaḥ pūjitas sarva devataiḥ || 84 ||

*sa-deva-ṛṣi* = with gods, sages; *gaṇam* = gangs; *tuṣṭam* = exultant; *rāghavasya* = of Rama; *mahā-ātmanaḥ* = of great souled one; *babhau-rāmaḥ* = self-resplendent Rama; *sam-prahrṣṭaḥ* = immensely gladdened; *pūjitaḥ* = revered; *sarva* = by all; *devataiḥ* = gods.

All hosts of the gods and sages were exultant for the accomplishments of the high-minded Rama [- the elimination of Ravana etc.] Being thus honoured by all the gods, Sri Rama looked extremely delighted. [84]

abhiṣicya ca lankāyām rākṣasendram vibhīṣaṇam |  
kṛtakṛtyas tadā rāmo vijvaraḥ pramumoda ha || 85 ||

*abhiṣicya* = anointed; *ca-lankāyām* = in Lanka; *rākṣasa-indram* = demons' leader; *vibhīṣaṇam* = Vibhīṣana; *kṛta-kṛtya* = fulfilled task; *tadā* = then; *rāmaḥ* = Rama; *vi-jvaraḥ* = rid of febrility; *pra-mumoda - ha* = highly rejoiced indeed.

On enthroning Vibhīṣana, the chieftain of ogres in Lanka, Rama having accomplished his purpose, was ecstatic and free of all anxiety, so the tradition goes. [85]

devatābhyo varām prāpya samutthāpya ca vānarān |  
ayodhyām prasthito rāmaḥ puṣpakeṇa suhr̥d vṛtaḥ || 86 ||

*devatābhyaḥ* = from gods; *varam* = boon; *prāpya* = on obtaining; *sam-utthāpya-ca* = really raised up, also, *vānarān* = monkeys; *ayodhyām-* = towards Ayodhya, *prasthitaḥ* = travelled; *rāmaḥ* = Rama; *puṣpakeṇa* = by Pushpaka aircraft; *su-hṛt* = with friends; *vṛtaḥ* = around him.

With the grace of the gods all the [dead] monkeys were resurrected and Rama then departed for Ayodhya in the Pushpaka the aircraft, surrounded by all his family and friends. [86]



bharadvājāsramam gatvā rāmaḥ satya-parākramaḥ |  
bharatasyāntikam rāmo hanūmantaḥ vyasarjayat || 87 ||

*bharadvāja-āsramam* = Sage Bharadwaja's hermitage; *gatvā* = on going to; *rāmaḥ* = Rama; *satya-parākramaḥ* = truth-valorous; *bharatasya-antikam* = Bharata, to the near of; *rāmaḥ* = Rama; *hanūmantaḥ-vyasarjayat* = Hanuman, is sent.

On reaching the hermitage of Sage Bharadwaja, Rama of invincible prowess dispatched Hanuman to Bharata [at Nandigrama, to inform him of his safe return, lest he be unawares and to give him to to prepare himself.] [87]



punar ākhyāyikām jalpan sugrīva sahitas tadā |  
puṣpakaḥ tat samārūhya nandigrāmaḥ yayau tadā || 88 ||

*punaḥ* = again; *ākhyāyikām* = episodes; *jalpan* = jovially telling; *sugrīva-sahitah* = Sugrīva, along with; *tadā* = then; *puṣpakam-sam-ārūhya* = Pushpaka [aircraft,] well boarded; *nandigrāmam* = to Nandigrama; *yayau* = travelled; *tadā* = then.

Then [after leaving the hermitage of Bharadwaja,] and animatedly chatting and recounting episodes from their adventure, they all boarded the Pushpaka aircraft and flew to Nandigrama. [88]

nandigrāme jaṭām hitvā bhrātr̥bhis sahitō 'naghaḥ |  
rāmaḥ sītām anuprāpya rājyaḥ punar avāptavān || 89 ||

*nandigrāme* = in Nandigrama; *jaṭām-hitvā* = having removed matted hair-locks; *bhrātr̥bhiḥ-sahitah* = brothers along with; *anaghaḥ* = impeccable; *rāmaḥ* = Rama; *sītām-anuprāpya* = Sītā on regaining; *rājyaḥ* = kingdom; *punaḥ* = again; *avāptavān* = regained.

In Nandigrama they removed their matted hair-locks, and that impeccable Rama, met with all of his brothers there, and with recovered Sītā, he again regained his kingdom. [89]

pahr̥ṣṭo mudito lokas tuṣṭaḥ puṣṭas sudhārmikaḥ |  
nirāmāyo hyarogaś ca durbhikṣa bhaya varjitaḥ || 90 ||

*pra-hr̥ṣṭaḥ* = highly regaled; *muditaḥ* = rejoiced; *lokaḥ* = world is; *tuṣṭaḥ* = exuberant; *puṣṭaḥ* = abundant; *su-dhārmikaḥ* = rightly righteous; *nir-āmāyaḥ* = without troubles; *arogaḥ* = without diseases; *durbhikṣa* = famine; *bhaya* = fear; *varjitaḥ* = free from.

During the reign of Rama, the citizens are well-entertained, joyfull, contented and well-fed, exceedingly righteous, anxiety-free, disease-free, and free from fear [of robbers etc. and famine. [90]

na putra maraṇam kecit drakṣyanti puruṣāḥ kvacit |  
nāryaś ca avidhavā nityam bhaviṣyanti pati vratāḥ || 91 ||

*na* = not; *putra* = son's; *marāṇam* = death; *drakṣyanti* = is seen; *kiñcit* = in the least; *puruṣāḥ* = by men; *kvacit* = anywhere; *nāryaḥ -ca* = ladies, also; *a-vidhavāḥ* = without being widowed; *nityam* = always; *bhaviṣyanti* = are there; *pati-vratāḥ* = faithful.

Nowhere are folks witnessing the deaths of their children, also the women are devoted to their husbands and remain un-widowed [during their lifetime.] [91]

na cāgnijaṃ bhayaṃ kiñcit nāpsu majjanti jantavaḥ |  
na vātajam bhayaṃ kiñcit nāpi jvara kṛtam tathā || 92 ||  
na cāpi kṣud bhayaṃ tatra na taskara bhayaṃ tathā |

*na-ca* = not also; *agni* = fire; *bhayam* = fear; *kiñcit* = in the least; *na* = not; *apsu* = in [flood] waters; *majjanti* = they drown; *jantavaḥ* = creatures; *vāta-ja* = due to wind; *bhayam* = fear; *kiñcit-api* = in the least; *jvara* = fever; *kṛtam* = caused; *tathā* = thus; *kṣud* = hunger; *bhayam* = fear of; *tatra* = there; *taskara* = of robbers; *bhayam* = fear from; *tathā* = as well.

There is no fear of wildfires, nor are any creatures drowned in floods, there is no fear of gales, nor the least fear of epidemics or famine, nor of robbers. [92, 93a]

nagarāṇi ca rāṣṭrāṇi dhana dhānya yutāni ca || 93 ||  
nityaṃ pramuditās sarve yathā kṛta yuge tathā |

*nagarāṇi* = in townships; *ca-rāṣṭrāṇi* = in the states; *dhana* = wealth [coin]; *dhānya* = grain; *yutāni* = having [replete]; *nityam* = always; *pra-muditāḥ* = delighted; *sarve* = all [people]; *yathā* = as was; *kṛta-yuge* = Satya age; *tathā* = so is.

All the townships and provinces, are replete with coin and grain, and all the citizens are joyful as if it were the Satya Yuga. [93b, 94a]

aśva-medha śatair iṣṭvā tathā bahu suvarṇakaiḥ || 94 ||  
gavāṃ koṭyayutaṃ dattvā vidvabhyo vidhi pūrvakam |  
asaṅkhyeyaṃ dhanam dattvā brāhmaṇebho mahāyaśāḥ || 95 ||

*mahā* = greatly; *yaśāḥ* =, illustrious [Rama]; *aśva-medha* = Horse Sacrifice; *śataiḥ* = hundreds; *bahu* = much; *suvarṇakaiḥ* = gold; *iṣṭvā* = on performing; *tathā* = like that; *gavām* = cows; *koṭi-ayutam* = in millions, ten thousand; *a-saṅkhyāyam* = not countable; *dhanam* = wealth; *brāhmaṇebhyaḥ* = to Brahmins; *vidvabhyaḥ* = to scholars; *vidhi pūrvakam* = customarily; *dattvā* = on donating; [*brahma-lokam-gamiṣyati* = to Brahma's, abode, he will proceed.]

That highly illustrious Rama, on performing hundreds of Horse-Sacrifices and yajñas wherein abundance of gold was bounteously donated, and on giving millions of cows and uncountable wealth given to Brahmins and Vedic scholars, will proceed to Brahma's abode. [94b, 95a]

rāja vaṃśāṃ chata guṇān sthāpayiṣyati rāghavaḥ |  
cātur varṇyaṃ ca loke 'smin sve sve dharme niyokṣyati || 96 ||

*rāja* = kingly; *vaṃśān* = dynasties; *śata-guṇān* = in hundredfold; *sthāpa iṣyati* = can establish; *rāghava* = Rama; *cātur-varṇyam-ca* = four, caste-system; *loke-asmin* = in this world; *sve-sve-dharme* = each in their duties; *niyokṣyati* = established.

In this world the highly renowned Rama will establish royal dynasties a hundred times more prosperous than before, he will guide all the members of the four classes in the performance of their duties. [96]

daśa varṣa sahasrāṇi daśa varṣa śatāni ca |  
rāmo rājyam upāsītṛvā brahma lokam prayāsyati || 97 ||

*daśa* = ten; *varṣa* = years; *sahasrāṇi* = thousand; *daśa* = ten; *śatāni* = hundred; *rājyam* = kingdom; *upāsītṛvā* =, on reverencing; *brahma-lokam* = Brahma's realm; *gamiṣyati* = voyages.

After serving the kingdom for eleven thousand years, Rama will journey to the realm of Brahma. [97]

### Commentary

In *rama rājyam upāsivā* – the word used is *upāsana* which is not ruling by sceptre i.e. by coercion but rather by service — he would attentively serve the citizens as one would worship a deity.

idaṁ pavitraṁ pāpaghnaṁ puṇyaṁ vedaiś ca saṁmitam |  
yaḥ paṭhet rāma caritaṁ sarva pāpaiḥ pramucyate || 98 ||

*idam* = this; *pavitraṁ* = pure; *papa-ghnam* = sin eradicating; *puṇyam* = holy merit-endowing; *vedaiḥ* = with [teachings of] all Veda-s; *saṁmitam* = conformable; *yaḥ* = whoever; *paṭhet* = studies; *rāma-caritaṁ* = Rama's legend; *sarva* = all; *pāpaiḥ* = from sins; *pra-mucyate* = is liberated.

The recitation of this Legend of Rama is capable of purifying the mind and eradicating sin and generates merit, and is conformable with the teachings of all Vedas – the recitation will indeed absolve one from all sins. [98]

etat ākhyānam āyuṣyaṁ paṭhan rāmāyaṇaṁ naraḥ |  
sa putra pautras sa gaṇaḥ pretya svarge mahīyate || 99 ||

*etat* = this; *ākhyānam* = narrative of; *āyuṣyam* = lifespan-enriching; *paṭhan* = if read; *rāmāyaṇam* = Rama's peregrination; *naraḥ* = by a person; *sa-putraḥ -pautraḥ* = will be with, with sons, grandsons; *sa-gaṇaḥ* = with, groups [of kinfolk, servants etc]; *pretya* = after demise; *svarge* = in heaven; *mahīyate* = adored.

The reading of this narrative is conducive to longevity, and if the Ramayana is read by anyone, on departing this world will rejoice in heaven along with children and grand-children and with the host of kinfolks and servants etc., [99]

paṭhan dvijo vāk ṛṣabhatvam īyāt |  
syāt kṣatriyo bhūmi patitvam īyāt ||  
vaṇik janaḥ paṇya phalatvam īyāt |  
janaḥ ca śūdro 'pi mahattvam īyāt || 100 ||

*paṭhan* = if read; *dvijaḥ* = by Brahmin; *vāk-ṛṣabhatvam-īyāt* = in speech, superiority obtains; *syāt* = if he be; *kṣatriyaḥ* = kshatriya; *bhūmi-patitvam* = land-lord; *īyāt* = obtains; *vaṇik-janaḥ* = if a Vaishya, person; *paṇya-phalatvam-īyāt* = monetary-gains, accrue; *janaḥ -ca- śūdraḥ* = [any] if the person, is a Shudra; *mahattvam* = greatness; *īyāt* = is acquired.

If a Brahmin, [one from teaching-class,] reads this Ramayana, he obtains pre-emminence in eloquence, and should he be a Kshatriya, [from ruling-class,] he obtains land-lordship, and should he be a Vaishya, [from trading-class,] he will be sure to secure profit in trade, and should he be a Shudra, [from working-class,] he will acquire personal-excellence. [100]

Thus Sage Nārada gave a gist of the Rāmāyana to Sage-poet Valmiki.



Valmiki Ramayana is an epic of allusion and every expression has more than one meaning. And this is said to have been composed based on each of the letters in Gāyatri mantra — starting a verse with that letter, and a thousand books are composed for each letter. The 24 letters of Gayatri and the twenty-four verses associated with those letters of Gayatri, is known as the Gayatri Ramayana. This Gayatri Ramayana is enough for regular recitation, as it contains core verses and this is given in the appendix.

tapas-svādhyāya nirataṁ tapasvī vāgvidāṁ varam |  
nāradāṁ paripapraccha vālmīkir munipuṅgavam || bālakāṇḍa 1.01.001 || 1 ||

The great sage Valimiki asked Narada, who does penance and reading of vedas, and who himself was a great sage, as well as an expert over words.

sa hatvā rākṣasān sarvān yajñaghnān Raghu-nandanaḥ |  
ṛṣibhiḥ pūjitas tatra yathendro vijayī purā || bālakāṇḍa 1.030.024 || 2 ||

That son of the clan of Raghu by killing all the rakshasas, and protecting the yajñas, was worshipped by the sages, similar to Indra when he was victorious.

viśvāmitrastu dharmātma śrutvā janaka-bhāṣitam |  
vatsa rāma dhanu paśya iti rāghavam abravīt || bālakāṇḍa 1.067.012 || 3 ||

Visvamitra, the personification of Dharma, after hearing the words spoken by Janaka said, “O child rama, please see this bow.”

tuṣṭāvāsya tadā vaṁśaṁ praviśya ca viśāmpateḥ |  
śayanīyaṁ narendrasya tadāsādyā vyatiṣṭhata || ayodhyākāṇḍa 2.015.020 || 4 ||

Then he<sup>[1]</sup> reached the bed-room of the king, went near and standing outside and praised and, narrated the detailed pedigree of the king.

vanavāsaṁ hi saṅkhyāya vāsāmsyābharaṇāni ca |  
bhartāram anugachhantyai sītāyai śvaśuro dadau || ayodhyākāṇḍa 2.040.014 || 5 ||

Based on the years that sita has to live in the forest, when she would accompany her husband, her father in law gave her sufficient dresses and ornaments.

rājā satyaṁ ca dharmasca rājā kulavatām kulam |  
rājā mātā pitā caiva rājā hitakaro nṛṇām || ayodhyākāṇḍa 2.067.034 || 6 ||

The king is the truth and Dharma, he is the lord of people, of good families, he is the father as well as mother, and he is the one who does good to people.

nirīkṣya sa muhūrtaṁ tu dadarśa bharato gurum |  
uṭaje rāmamāsīnaṁ jaṭāmaṇḍaladhāriṇam || ayodhyākāṇḍa 2.099.025 || 7 ||

After waiting for an auspicious time, Bharata saw his teacher Rama, who was having matted hair and was, wearing cloth made of bark,

yadi buddhiḥ kṛtā draṣṭum agastyāṁ taṁ mahā-munim |  
adyaiva gamane buddhiṁ rocayasva mahāmate || aranyakāṇḍa 3.011.043 || 8 ||

Oh great one, if you are desirous Of seeing the great sage Agasthya, Take decision soon to start to do that.

bharatasyārya putrasya śvaśrūṇāṁ mama ca prabho |  
mṛga-rūpam idaṁ vyaktaṁ vismayaṁ janayiṣyati || aranyakāṇḍa 3.043.018 || 9 ||

O lord, this deer which is very pretty, would create a great sense of wonder, to Bharata noble son, you and my in laws.

gaccha śīghram ito rāma sugrīvaṁ taṁ mahābalam |  
vayasyaṁ taṁ kuru kṣipram ito gatvā'dya rāghava || aranyakāṇḍa 3.072.017 || 10 ||

O Rama go immediately from here, to the very strong Sugreeva, and make him your very intimate friend.

deśa-kālau bhajasvādya kṣama māṇaḥ priyāpriye |  
sukha-duḥkha sahaḥ kāle sugrīva vaśago bhava || kiṣkindhākāṇḍa 4.022.020 || 11 ||

Understanding the time and place, being patient with likes and dislikes, treating joy and sorrow as equal, become obedient to Sugreeva.

vanditavyās tataḥ siddhās tapasā vīta kalmaṣāḥ |  
praṣṭavyā cāpi sītāyāḥ pravṛttir vinayān vitaiḥ || kiṣkindhākāṇḍa 4.043.033 || 12 ||

The sidhas who do penance are fit to be venerated, for they are devoid of sins due to their penance, you can enquire with great humility from them of Sita's whereabouts.

13.Sa nirjithya purim sreshtaam,

Lankaam tham Kamaroopinim,

Vikramena maha thejo,

Hanuman maruthathmaja.

Hanuman the son of wind God, Who is valorous and shining, Won over Lanka, the town's goddess, Who can assume any firm she wishes.

14.Dhanyodhayaa sa gandharwa,

Sidhascha paramarshya,

Mama pasyanthi ye nadham,

Ramam rajeeva lochanam.

I see Rama who is my lord, Who has eyes as pretty as lotus, Is seen by Gandharwas, Sidhas and saints, As if it is the rise of their luck.

15.Mangalabhimukhi thasya,

Saa thadassn maha kape,

Upathasthe Visalakshi.

Prayathaa havya vahanam.

That lady with an auspicious face, Deciding to bless the great monkey, Saluted and prayed to God of fire, After making herself pure.

16.Hitham mahartham mruduhethu sammitham,

Vyatheetha kalayutha samrathikshamam,

Nisamya thadvakya mupasthitha jwara,

Prasanga vanuthara methad abhraveeth.

After hearing those words which were meant for good, Which would give great results, which were sweet, Which were logical and suitable for past, present and future, With very great anger that Ravana replied thus.

17.Dharmathma Rakshasa sreshta,

Samprapthoyam Vibheeshana,

Langaiswaryam dhruvam sreema-,

Nayam prapthothya gandakam.

That great Rakshasa who was personification of Dharma, Called Vibheeshana has come and joined me, And without any doubt with certainty, He would attain the wealth of Lanka.

18.Yo vajrapathaasani sannipatha-

N na chukshubhe napi chachala Raja,

Sa Ramabhanabhi hatho brusatha,

Schchala chapancha mumocha veeraa.

That king who never bothered by the hit of Vajrayudha,

And that of thunder is now hit by Rama's arrow,

And that hero has become sad by the shock, and became very nervous,

And started trembling and his bow slipped from his hands.

19.Yasya Vikrama masadhya,

Rakshasa nidhanam gathaa,

Tham manye Raghavam veeram,

Narayanamana matam.

Caught by his fame, Many Rakshasas died, And I consider that valorous Rama, As the real God Narayana.

20.Na ye dhadru sire Rama,

Chindanda mari vahineem,

Mohithaa paramasthrena,

Gandharvena mahathmana.

Those Rakshasas were not able to see, Sri Rama who was burning the army of enemies, For they had lost their senses by the great arrow, Called Gandharwa sent by the great Rama,

21.Pranamya devadhabyascha,

Brahmanebhascha Mythili,

Badanjali putaa chedha-

Muvachagni sameepatha.

After offering her salutations, To Brahmans and Devas, Mythili with saluting hands, Went near the fire and told.

22.Chalanath parvathendrasya,

Ganam devascha kambitha,

Chachala Parvathi chapi,

Thadaslishta Maheswaram.

When the king of mountains moved The Ganas of Shiva and the devas trembled. And even Goddess Parvathi trembled, And rushed and embraced the great God.

23.Daraa puthra puram Rashtram,

Bhogachadana bhajanam,

Sarva mevapi bhakthanno,

Bhavishyati Hareaswara.

Oh Lord of the monkeys from today, Let the fields, children, towns, countries, Luxuries, meals and the fields, Become our common property, and be shared equally among us.

24.Yameva rathrim Shathrugna, Parna salaam samavisad,

Thameva rathrim Seethapi, Prasoothaa darakadwayam.

On the night when Shatrugna, Stayed in the hermitage, And on that same night, Sita, Gave birth to two sons.

### Phala Sruthi

Idam Ramayanam Kruthsnam,

Gayathri bheeja samyutham,

Trisandhyam, ya paden nithyam,

Sarva paapai pramuchyathe.

If this Ramayana is recited,

Along with the root chant of Gayathri,

At dawn, noon and dusk daily,

One would get rid of all committed sins.

sa nirjitya purīm laṅkāṁ śreṣṭhām tām kāmarūpiṇīm |

vikrameṇa mahātejā hanūmān kapisattamaḥ || sundarakāṇḍa 5.04.001|| 13||

dhanyā devāḥ sagandharvāḥ siddhāśca paramarṣayaḥ |

mama paśyanti ye vīraṁ rāmaṁ rājīvalochanam || sundarakāṇḍa 5.026.041|| 14||

maṅgalābhimukhī tasya sā tadāsīnmahākapeḥ |

upatasthe viśālākṣī prayatā havyavāhanam || sundarakāṇḍa 5.053.026|| 15||

hitam mahārtham mR^idu hetusaṁhitam vyatītakālayatisampratiksamam |

niśamya tadvākyamupasthitajvaraḥ prasaṅgavānuttarametadabravīt || 6.010.027|| 16||

dharmātmā rakṣasaśreṣṭhaḥ samprāpto.ayaṁ vibhīṣaṇaḥ |

laṅkaiśvaryamidam śrīmānśruvam prāpnotyakaṇṭakam || yuddhakāṇḍa 6.041.068|| 17||

yo vajrapātāsanisannipātāna chukṣubhe nāpi chachāla rājā |

sa rāmabāṇābhīhato bhR^iśārtaścachāla chāpaṁ ca mumocha vīraḥ || yuddhakāṇḍa

6.059.139|| 18||

yasya vikramamāsādyā rākṣasā nidhanaṁ gatāḥ |

taṁ manye rāghavaṁ vīraṁ nārāyaṇamanāmayam || yuddhakāṇḍa 6.072.011|| 19||

na te dadR^iśire rāmaṁ dahantamapivāhinīm |

mohitāḥ paramāstreṇa gāndharveṇa mahātmanā || yuddhakāṇḍa 6.093.026|| 20||

praṇamya devatābhyaśca brāhmaṇebhyaśca maithilī |

baddhā~njalipuṭā chedamuvāchāgnisamīpataḥ || yuddhakāṇḍa 6.116.024|| 21||

chalanātparvatasyaiva gaṇā devāśca kampitāḥ |

chachāla pārvatī chāpi tadāśliṣṭā maheśvaram || uttarakāṇḍa 7.016.026|| 22||

dārāḥ putrāḥ puram rāṣṭram bhogāchChādanabhojanam |



sarvamevāvibhaktaṁ nau bhaviṣyati harīśvara ॥ uttarakāṇḍa 7.034.041॥ 23॥  
yāmeva rātriṁ śatrughnaḥ parṇaśālāṁ samāviśat ।  
tāmeva rātriṁ sītāpi prasūtā dārakadvayam ॥ uttarakāṇḍa 7.066.001॥ 24॥

idaṁ rāmāyaṇaṁ kṛtsnaṁ gayatrībījaśaṁyutam ।  
trisandhyaṁ yaḥ paṭhennityaṁ sarvapāpaiḥ pramuchyate ॥

iti gāyatrīrāmāyaṇaṁ sampūrṇam ।