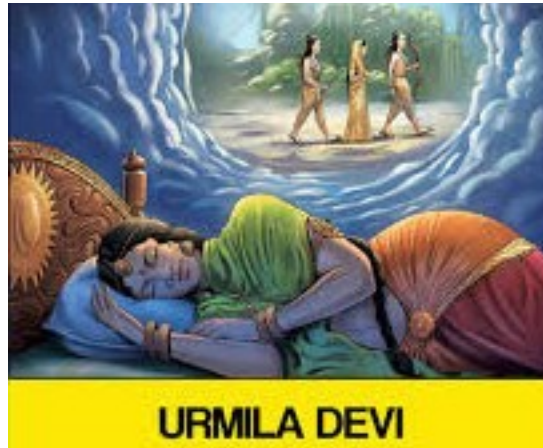


## Urmila Devi – The Unsung heroine of the Ramayana



Sita-devi was an adopted daughter of Maharaja Janaka and Maharani Sunanya. He had found a baby 'Sita' while ploughing the land for a yagna (fire sacrifice/havan). Urmila on the other hand was the biological daughter of Maharaja Janaka and Maharani Sunanya. She was younger to Sita-devi by a few years.

**She was betrothed to Lakshmana when Lord Raam and Sita-devi's marriage was fixed**

When Lord Raam broke Lord's Shiva's bow He immediately became the person eligible to marry Sita-devi. Next, Maharaja Dasharath came to Maharaja Janaka's kingdom of Mithila to talk about the wedding dates and time. This was the time when Rajkumari Urmila was betrothed to Rajkumar Lakshmana. Both Sita-devi and Urmila were married to Lord Raam and Lord Lakshmana on the same day.



**She Wanted to Accompany Lakshmana  
during the 14 Year Exile, but Lakshmana refused her wish.**

According to Valmiki's Ramayana, Urmila was all set to accompany her husband along with her sister Sita-devi and brother-in-law Lord Raam when the trio was leaving for the forest. However, Lakshmana advised her to stay back to take good care of her in-laws. Further stating it he is going to the forest as a slave of his brother where he will be busy serving them and will have no time to look after her or even care for her. He begged her to stay back and Urmila reluctantly had to agree her husband's request.

**She remained asleep for 14 Years so  
that Lakshman could fulfill His duty attentively**

On the very first night of the exile, Lord Raam and Sita-devi went to sleep in the forest while Lakshman kept a watch on them. Next, Goddess Nidra (the Goddess of sleep) approached Lakshman. He however begged her to excuse him for next 14 years so that he could carry out his dharma (duty) unconditionally without any hurdle. The goddess was impressed by his devotion and agreed to allow him to remain awake for the next 14 years.

Further information:- In the fifth chapter of the Durga Paath (Saptashati) verses 23-25 states "Salutations again and again to the Devi who abides in all beings in the form of sleep (Nidra)". So Nidra Devi is none other than Mother Durga.



However, as per the law of the nature somebody else had to bear the share of Lakshman's sleep. This is when Lakshman requests the Goddess Nidra to go to his wife Urmila as he knew she would readily agree as she too wanted to contribute with Him to fulfill His duty. When Goddess Nidra explained the situation to Urmila she at once replied, "Give me my husband's share of sleep for the next 14 years so that He can constantly stay awake without any stress or fatigue." This is how Urmila slept night and day during the 14 year exile while Lakshmana could serve Lord Raam and Sita-devi attentively.



### **Nidra-devi (the Goddess of Sleep)**

#### **Without the help of Urmila, Lakshman could never defeat Meghnath**

Ravana's son Meghnath was very mighty and powerful. In fact, nobody could ever defeat him in any sort of war but only a man who had not slept for years. This is the reason how Lakshman could easily defeat the invincible Meghnath. Without the help and contribution of Urmila, it was really impossible for Lakshman to defeat Meghnath.

#### **Urmila woke up from her slumber and saw Lord Raam being crowned as the King of Ayodhya**

After 14 years when Lakshman returned to Ayodhya along with his brother Lord Raam and sister-in-law, Goddess Nidra approached him once again reminding him of his promise. This is when Lakshman had to go to sleep and Urmila woke up from her long slumber to see Lord Raam being crowned as the King of Ayodhya.

Urmila's contribution in Ramayana is truly praise worthy and unparalleled as mentioned by Sage Valmiki in his book. Her devotion towards her husband and family is not just praise worthy but exemplary. This is the reason why she is often addressed as the 'Heroine' of Ramayana.

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