

## The untold pastimes of the Ramayan by His Grace Atma Tattva Prabhu

In this very lengthy two part article consisting of 19 chapters are lectures by Atma Tattva prabhu in the late 80's in Sri Dham Mayapur, India. Most of the information is not known by the general populace hence I am posting this article so you can learn more about the unheard kathas/lila's of the Valmiki's Ramayana.

Kindly note that Prabhuji's lectures are very fun and "off-beat" (in a most respectful way I say this). Hence I loved his lectures and still do.

The second part of this article is chapters eight to nineteen and consists of 52 pages.

### **Chapter 8: Background stories**

Sri Lanka was built on top of a mountain called Tri-kuta Giri. This Tri-kuta was a piece of rock that broke from Mount Meru. Long ago, there was some discussion between two Gandharvas. One Gandharva said, "Vasuki is such a powerful strong snake, that when the Lord took incarnation as Matsya, he used Vasuki as a rope to tie the horn of that fish to the boat where Maharaja Satyavrata and the sapta-rishis were traveling. In the dissolution water, this boat was kept safe due to Vasuki binding Matsya and the boat." The other Gandharva said, "Maybe he is strong, but do you think he could be as strong as Vayu, Varuna or Agni?" The other said, "He must be stronger than them, otherwise why did the Lord select Vasuki?" While they were discussing in this way, Vayu, the deity of air, who is present everywhere, he couldn't tolerate this discussion. He personally came in front of them and asked them, "What is this useless discussion?" "Who are you?" they enquired. "I am Vayu," he replied. "Is there anyone as strong as me? Why do you even discuss these things? Don't you know that I am everywhere and I am listening to these things?" One Gandharva said, "Well, I have seen Vasuki. I was the last one to creep into the water at that time. I've seen how strong he is." Vayu said, "Bring that Vasuki, and we can test." Then Vasuki was brought, and he challenged Vayu. "What do you mean? I am so strong! Every time the Lord selects me, so there must be some reason." Vayu said, "Then we can test our strength." Vasuki said, "I will coil around the Meru three times, and you blow and see if you can open my coils." But they never consulted Mount Meru whether they could do it. Around Mount Meru were so many insects and creatures. All the planetary systems were going around it. Vasuki went on there, and Meru did not

mind. So many snakes were on there already. But he didn't know there was going to be some sports. Vasuki coiled around Meru three times and started getting tighter and tighter. And then Vayu started blowing against Mount Meru in full force. Mount Meru started moving back and forth, because Vayu was using all his strength, and Vasuki was not going to give up. So it was not just Vasuki, but Vayu had to work on both, the strength of Mount Meru and the strength of Vasuki. And then Mount Meru started complaining and screaming. "What is this? There are three parties involved in this, but I was never consulted. Why am I being given trouble like this? I am going to turn upside down and create trouble. All the planetary systems will fall." Brahma heard all this, and he appeared on the scene, telling Vayu and Vasuki, "You have your kind of strength, and he has his kind of strength. In your kind of strength, you are the most strong. And in his strength, blowing, that you cannot do. So in that way he is strong." When Vasuki uncoiled after the sports, one rock was broken from Mount Meru, and it fell in the salt ocean. This rock had three peaks, so it was known as Tri-kuta. It was on the salty ocean for a long time. And then Visvakarma, for the purpose of making a nice palace for the pastimes of the devas, he made this Sri Lanka city on top of Tri-kuta mountain. Later, Kuvera, the cousin brother of Ravana, took over this place. He also got an appointment as the treasurer of the devas, so they didn't mind him using it. Kuvera was there for along time. When Ravana, Vibhisana, Kumbhakarna and Surpanakha went there for performing austerities, Ravana's mother Kaikashi became every envious that Kuvera was sitting on this wonderful Sri Lanka city, so she told Ravana, "Why don't you perform some austerities so that you can get a benediction and kick him out of this place. "Kaikashi was the wife of Vishravas, and Vishravas had another wife through whom Kuvera was born. These were co-wives, and they were rivals. Kaikashi was inciting Ravana, "You must perform some tapasya, some great austerities." Ravana performed austerities, Kumbhakarna performed austerities, Vibhisana performed austerities, and Surpanakha also performed austerities as well as Khara and Dusana. Each one was born with 1 hour 45 minutes difference between them. Ravana, then Kumbhakarna, then Vibhisana, then Surpanakha, then Khara and Dusana. So they were all in Himalayas performing austerities. When Brahma appeared before Ravana, he asked for all kinds of greedy benedictions, and he got them. Kumbhakarna was thinking to ask for a benediction by which he will live forever. The word in Sanskrit is "nitya-tvam." nitya means eternal and nitya-tvam means eternity. "I want eternity." But somehow the material nature tricked Kumbhakarna. The

word Devatta, the power of speech came in his tongue, and tilted his tongue. Instead of nitya-tvam, he asked for "nidra-tvam." Nidra means "sleep", so he asked for sleep. Brahma said, "Tadastu, you can have it." Kumbhakarna said, "What? No! I wanted to live forever, not sleep! Please stop this benediction!" Brahma said, "No, I have given you this benediction, I cannot take it back." He begged, "This is not fair! It is a trick of the devas! I did so much austerity, and now I am simply going to sleep. This is not proper! Why would a person ever perform austerities so that he can just sleep forever, and then die at the end?" So Brahma felt very compassionate. "All right, Kumbhakarna, you sleep for six months. And then you get up, and you eat for six months." So Kumbhakarna went to sleep. At the end of the sixth month, waking him up was very difficult. They had to bring a huge army. The army would march on his body. Elephants and camels would walk over him, and they would play bugles and put fire on his chest. Still he would be snoring and wouldn't get up. After all the army marched past shooting astras and creating a lot of noise, then slowly he will feel some pain somewhere and then he got up. When he got up he would smash half of the army. He was a huge big figure. As soon as he got up he would ask, "Where is food?" He hadn't eaten for such a long time, so he eats for six months. This is what he did before he went back to sleep again. While he ate, his education was done. Pandits would sit on both sides and read books to him. He would be simultaneously eating and listening to the shastras. In this way, he also became an expert archer. He got other benedictions also. He was a great yogi, and while sleeping he would come out of his body in his subtle body, and he would travel around and find out everything. One body was asleep, but in his sukshma-sharira, Kumbhakarna visited Kailash, performed austerities and got astras from Lord Shiva. Only his gross body couldn't be seen. Vibhisana was also praying, and when Brahma came, he said, "Give me devotion to the Supreme Lord." Ravana said, "Oh no! One more in the family. First Prahlad, and now him! What are you doing? Brahma is here, so get something worthwhile. But no, 'devotion to the Supreme Lord.' What will you do with this? You have become a demon!" For the demons, a devotee is a demon. "You are not against Hari, you want to worship Him." That was Vibhisana's benediction. And Surpanakha got a benediction for changing her form. Whatever form she wanted she could take. That was how she was trying to attract Lakshmana and Ramacandra. She became a beautiful girl, and she was saying, "Ramacandra, I'm so attracted by you." Ramacandra said, "Yes, anyone will be attracted by Me. The only problem is that My wife is here. If she was not here, I wouldn't mind. But look at My brother! He is also married, but His wife is not here.

You check with Him." Laksmana said, "How is it possible? When My elder brother is in front of Me, how can I do it? You go to My elder brother, He is just joking with You." So she went back to Ramacandra, and said, "Your younger brother is not interested in these things. You are the older one, why aren't You interested?" He replied, "Yes I am the elder, but the point is that My wife is very wild. If she ever finds out that I am talking to you, I don't know what will happen. He is separate from his wife. Go to Him." She went to him, but Laksmana said, "Yes His wife is wild, but she is not here now. You should be utilizing this opportunity. You go try with Him, and if that doesn't work you just come back to Me. "So she went back to Ramacandra, saying, "See? Your wife is not here now." Ramacandra said, "Yes, My wife is not here, but this brother is very political. When she comes back, he will tell her. So you first go to him, and if he is happy then he won't tell." So she ran back to Laksmana. By that time Sita came. Surpanakha said, "All this trouble is because of you!" And she ran and picked Sita up. As soon as she did that, Laksmana came with his sword, and cut off the tips of her nose, ears and breasts, and the original Rakshasi form came out. She was crying, and then she disappeared into the sky. Then Khara and Dusana came with 14,000 able fighters from the demon dynasty. Ramacandra finished all of them with one arrow. Janasthan was a very strategical point. Janasthan was the last point in the mainland. If anyone could conquer the soldiers in Janasthan, then they could dare to cross the ocean and come to Sri Lanka. Ravana was so happy because Janasthan was there, and Khara, Dusana and Surpanakha were just exploiting the area, eating rishis every day. He was so happy. "Who can come to Sri Lanka?" But then, this so-called human being, Ramacandra, he told Laksmana, "Don't even move. I will do it." He killed 14,000 demon soldiers, and Khara and Dusana were destroyed. When the news reached Ravana, he was thinking, "No this is not true. It cannot be true. How can a human being kill 14,000 demons?" Always Ravana was thinking, "No, it's not true. It's not true." But it was true. Everything he heard seemed to him to be like it was not true. When he went to Marica and said, "Please go and become a deer," Marica said, "What? Become a deer and do what? What can a deer do to Rama? I still remember how he pushed me right across the mainland and threw me into the salty ocean with only a blade of grass. That is why I became a babaji, not for searching after the Absolute Truth. In fear of the blade of grass I became a babaji, an ascetic. Don't drive me in front of Ramacandra again." Ravana said, "If you don't go, I will kill you." Marica was thinking, "Ravana will kill me anyway. Ravana or Rama, but it's better to die in the hands of Rama. Why die in the hands of this

demon?" So Marica said, "I will go." Ravana said, "Ahh! I always knew you had great affection for me." "No, I don't have any affection for you." "Then why do you want to go?" Ravana asked. "Well who wants to die in your hands?" Marica said. "I would rather die in the hands of Rama. And I know I will die, so I am going." Ravana made the biggest mistake in his life by kidnapping Sita. Ravana was a great scholar and pandit. He was known as Shastra-jna. He knew all shastras and all of the Vedas he was expert. Nobody at that time had the expert pronunciation of Ravana. Even in the devas assembly sometimes when they held sacrifices, they would bring Ravana for chanting verses. If someone is chanting Sanskrit verses, that does not necessarily mean he is a great devotee. Demons are also chanting Sanskrit verses. Vedais ca sarvair ahameva vedyah. Ravana read all the Vedas, yet due to his lust he could not even accept that another man's wife should not be taken. Ravana's lust was exemplary. Once he was performing a fires acrifice, and Agni appeared there with his wife, in spite of Brahma telling him not to go there, this Ravana was a trouble-maker. Agni said, "Look at his chanting, so perfect. Such wonderful installation of fire, so I must go there personally." Brahma said, "All right go, but don't take your wife." So then Agni said, "How is it Vedic that one goes without his wife? If I go without her I will only be 50%. I must go with my wife." Brahma said, "Well, if that is written in your head, what can I say? You go." So Ravana was circumambulating the fire with folded hands chanting mantras, and then Agni came. "Ravana! I am here." Ravana looked around. Not only was he there, but Agni's wife, Swaahaa, was also there. She looked so beautiful, as beautiful as fire. She is actually the flame of the fire. When Ravana looked at her, he immediately lifted her and flew away in the middle of his yajna, before completing it. The priests were shouting, "Ravana! At least do the purnahuti!" "What purnahuti?" Ravana replied. "Woman is more important." So Agni was shouting, "Please, please Ravana, give me my wife back! I'll give you anyone, but don't take my wife." Every husband thinks like this, "If my wife goes, how will I eat?" The wife is supposed to be the saha-dharmani, one who helps the husband in his religious practices. After Ramacandra had said, "I will finish all the demons in Dandakaranya," Sitadevi was looking so worried that Ramacandra asked her, "How come you are so unhappy after your husband made such a wonderful promise, and flowers fell from the heavens?" She said, "You took the vanaprastha life to live in the forest for fourteen years, as an ascetic. Only for defending me did You say you were carrying your bow and arrows. You have come here, and now, instead of living as an ascetic, You are beating on Your shoulders, saying You will kill the demons. That is one point. Another point is that a

king of noble quality should not become the enemy of someone unless that person has given him some trouble. The demons have given you no trouble. They are eating rishis, but they are not troubling you. And if rishis are being eaten then it is the responsibility of Bharata, he is the king. You are not the king, and You said that you did not want to be, so you are breaking your word." Women give very technical arguments, but sometimes they are totally useless. At least in this case they were. Sitadevi was saying this, but then another time when Gautama Rishi's wife gave her cosmetics which were in two big heavy baskets, she asked Laksmana, "Can you please carry this for me?" Laksmana said, "But mataji, we are in the forest. We are supposed to be wearing tree bark. Only because Dasaratha begged did you get some silk saris, and I am already carrying one basket full of silk saris. We have to climb mountains, cross rivers, I have to carry sword, shield, bows and arrows, an axe, and now cosmetics? What for?" Anasuya, Gautama's wife, was no ordinary woman. She had heavenly cosmetics. You only had to put this make up on once every five or six days. You can take bath, do anything. Laksmana was complaining, "These cosmetics will smell for ten kilometres distance. It is dangerous. We are moving in the forest, and ten miles around we are propagating that we are here. It is unsafe. A tiger, a lion or even some demon may come." Actually these cosmetics were so dangerous that she had so many problems. Even devas were attracted to her. "But I won't use them," Sita argued. "Then what is the use of carrying them?" Laksmana said. This is also traditional for women to carry things that they never use. Poor Laksmana left his wife in Ayodhya, and He had to carry these cosmetics for fourteen years. Even when they crossed the ocean he had to carry it. She said, "When I am back in Ayodhya I will use it." When she was sitting in the Ashoka-vana, she was lamenting, "What did I do? I said such bad words to Laksmana who was carrying all that weight for me. He was even carrying all those useless cosmetics on His shoulder. I criticized Him, 'You want to enjoy me, that is why you are not going'. Why did I say that? Now I am suffering because of it." In this way Mother Sita was lamenting. So back to the original pastime. Ravana knew all these mantras, but why was he a demon? Being the son of Vishravas, he is a Brahmin, not a kshatriya. He is the grandson of Brahma, and a very learned pandit. Still he is a demon. What makes him a demon? He does not accept that the Supreme Lord is the enjoyer, the Supreme Lord is the controller and the Supreme Lord is the friend. Bho ktarama yajnatapasam sarva loka mahesvaram / suhrdam sarva-bhutanam jnatva mamsantim rcchati. So Ravana lost his shanti, he had no peace. Why? Because he was not accepting the Supreme Lord's sovereignty. Ravana was thinking, "Why

not me? I am the lord." That is why he called himself, "Trilokeshvara Ravana." This means "the controller of the three worlds." That was his ambition, even while he couldn't control a common cold. But still he was Trilokeshvara. In any case, Ravana got so many curses. He was cursed that a monkey would burn his city down. Another curse was that monkeys will spit on his face. When a monkey spits on his face, the tenth day after that he would die. He would be killed by human beings who were surrounded by monkeys. This was all predicted, but the foolish Ravana couldn't accept this, because of lust. Ravana did not carry his ten heads all the time. If he lost one head, another would come. And if he lost that head, the previous one will come back again, because his life point was somewhere else, not in the neck or the chest. This was one trick of the demons. They would keep their life point somewhere else. It may be in a bird, a lizard or a lotus flower, and from here they extend their power. If you killed him, slashed him or did anything to him, he wouldn't die because his life was somewhere else. So these heads were coming whenever one was removed, and these ten heads possessed ten kinds of intelligence. This was the benediction he got from Brahma. One head was expert in politics, one in Vedic dharma, one in administration, one in how to enjoy, another in traveling plans, etc. In this way when he was going to take Sita, he consulted all the ten heads. Nine heads refused, "Don't kidnap Sita." Only his own head refused to listen to that instruction. So many powerful things he had, but by exploiting the property of the Supreme Lord, Ravana met his death. Once he even challenged Narada Muni. Narada was flying, and Ravana saw him. He called out, "Hey! Come here." Narada Muni thought, "Why should I be of any trouble? Let me go there." Ravana said, "You teach me the meaning of om, right now." Narada said, "No. Meaning of Om is not to be taught to people like you. I won't teach." Ravana said, "Why not? I am a disciple, and you are a guru. You must teach me." This started in Treta-yuga, the disciples telling their guru what to do. So then Narada said, "This is not for this age, Ravana. You please wait." Ravana said, "No! Do you know who I am? I am Trilokeshvara Ravana. Here is my sword!" He had a sword called Candrahasa. This sword was so wonderful, that you can just tell the sword, "You go and kill him." It will chase you through the fourteen planetary systems, kill you and then return. Such a missile he had. Candrahasa can go through steel, through brass, even through illusion. Suppose a person creates an illusion by magic, Candrahasa would go through the illusion and kill that person. This is the sword he used when fighting with Airavata, the white elephant. So Narada said, "You are showing me some sword, and you think you are going to frighten me into teaching you the Vedas? This is not

the principle for learning Vedas. What kind of knowledge will you get from me? That knowledge will become useless, so I will not teach you." Ravana said, "All right Narada, get ready." "I am always ready," Narada said. "What do you mean? Get ready now!" So he took the Candrahasa sword and slashed Narada. It went right through him, but nothing happened. Narada was standing there smiling. Ravana got so angry. "I am going to finish you!" he screamed and took his trident which emits fire, which is only used by Lord Shiva and which is more powerful than the Brahmastra. It went right into him, but Narada was still standing there chanting, "Hari! Hari!" Ravana took all his astras and weapons at his command and threw everything at Narada, who was catching them and giving them back, "Don't lose his weapons aside, touched Narada's feet, and gave him a seat. "Please tell me," he inquired. "How come you are not killed?" Narada said, "This is a benediction from the Supreme Lord, that I have got a spiritual body. You don't understand this. Once upon a time you also had one, but you lost it because of some mistake. Don't waste time trying to kill me, because I won't die." Ravana said, "That's what I want also! Can you teach me the trick?" Narada said, "Very simple, just accept Vishnu as the Supreme Lord. Surrender to Him." Ravana's face screwed up. "Oh! Aaargh! Again that Vishnu! I don't want to listen to His name! Get out of my palace, you and your transcendental body. All bogus!" So then Narada Muni said, "But Ravana, you have unnecessarily used your anger on me, so this will not go in vain. A monkey will spit on your face, and the tenth day after that you will die, although you are thinking you are so powerful." Narada Muni cursed him. Actually it was a benediction. All curses by Narada are benedictions. Because of that curse that he would get spat on by Sugriva, he got the arrow of Rama in his chest. Sometimes when a Vaishnava is agitated, that is also auspicious. But we have to be a demon to agitate a Vaishnava. If we are not a demon, and he becomes agitated, he may not curse us but the material nature will take action. In any case, Hanuman thought, "Let me go and find Sita."

## Chapter 9: Hanuman`s adventures on Sri Lanka

All these pastimes were going through Hanuman's mind as he stood there before Sri Lanka, how Ravana got cursed in many places, and how he is so foolish. Hanuman actually felt very compassionate, and he was thinking, "If I see Ravana, by any method, I will give him good advice. I will tell him that he is very intelligent, and that maybe he could use his intelligence. Just give back Sita, and everything will be alright." Hanuman went into the city, and it was just before midnight. The moon was present, and he

could smell wine all over the city. Practically 99.9% of the population was drunk. Everyone was in the enjoying mode, and in Sri Lanka there was plenty of enjoyment to be had. These demons went all over the world, and brought women from all over the world. Ravana had more than 12,000 wives. All of them liked him, although he was a demon. He had a brownish colour, but the form of his body was next to the beauty of Upendra (the brother of Indra, not the dwarf incarnation of Vishnu). He had a very broad chest and a handsome face. Sometimes he is depicted as very ugly, but actually he was not ugly. When he got angry or lusty, he could produce such ugly forms, but Ravana's true form looked very handsome. The Vishnu Purana, Valmiki and all the narrators describe him as a person of great grandeur. When Hanuman and Sugriva, or anyone for that matter saw him for the first time, they would think, "This cannot be Ravana, because his body is so handsomely designed. This man must be full of good qualities. He cannot be a demon. We must have made a mistake." He was so handsome. He had this hole in his chest which was from the tusk of Airavata. He had other holes in his body from Sampati, but he covered these with his silk cloth. He had a beautiful hairstyle. His speech of course was so excellent that he could speak and make day look like night. These are the glories of Ravana. Amongst his queens were nagas, and there were princesses from Satyaloka, Siddhaloka, Caranaloka, Gandharvikas, every species of life was present in his palace as queens. They all liked him and respected him. Ravana's country was so good. There was plenty of fruit and food, and they had dharma which was followed. Ravana was ruling wonderfully, and no-one had any fear in Sri Lanka. They had no fear even from Indra, Candra or Agni, because Ravana was so respected. So Hanuman was going from room to room. "Is Sita here? Is Sita there?" In every room he found about ten beds and so many queens sleeping. Hanuman was a naisthika brahmacari (never lost a drop of semen), and he was thinking, "Oh God, I have to do this. All these queens of Ravana are sleeping here, and most of them are drunk." It is not good for a brahmacari to see a woman while she is sleeping, and Hanuman had to do this. At first he thought, "Should I do this?" And then he concluded, "I am serving Rama, and if I don't look at all of them, Sita may be somewhere in between, and I will miss her." So he made up his mind, "I'm not going to be attracted. How will I not be attracted? I won't stop chanting Rama's name." So he was chanting, "Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama," and he was looking everywhere. When Hanuman saw so many queens, their make-up and dress, their beds and their silk, he was completely shocked. "What kind of place is this? It is like a heavenly planet." They had false eyelashes, they had shaven their

eyebrows, and they had coloured in 12 tones from the eyelash up to the eyebrows. Hanuman actually saw this. He got scared by looking at them. He said, "If they are so beautiful, why do they have to put false eyelashes on?" Hanuman saw all this, and he was very happy. "This man, whatever he has done, is enjoying his senses very nicely. At least he is good at that." And then he came and saw in the middle of a room a wonderful bed made of coral and diamonds, and on top of it was white silk covering the bed. There was a brown figure lying there with big shoulders and wonderful bodily beauty, and he was snoring. Hanuman said, "So beautiful, but he is snoring and his mouth is wide open. He must be very ignorant person." Although Ravana has so much knowledge, still there is ignorance." Then Hanuman looked around and saw that there was a white umbrella on the side of the bed. That means he is the king. So Hanuman looked at him, and then he walked backwards to get a better look. And then closer and closer. He looked from all angles. "Oh! What a great fighter." Then he saw the hole, and he said, "I have heard about this hole. This man would have fought with Airavata." Hanuman was getting fired up, and he thought, "I would like to fight with him. But if I wake him up everything will be spoiled." And then he looked around on the other side, and he saw a very beautiful woman lying down on the bed. The smell of wine was coming from her mouth. Hanuman had never seen Sita. He inspected the woman and said, "Oh! A heavenly body. This person must be Sita. No, how can it be Sita? She is the chaste wife of Ramachandra. Here she is brought by the demon, and she is dressing herself nicely with silk and ornaments, and she's lying there with wine on her breath. I am a monkey, but I do have some discrimination. How can this be Sita? Sita would be lean and skinny and crying with demonesses around her. That is Sita, not this. This is not Sita." Then he looked everywhere but he couldn't find Sita. So he came out of the palace, and he was thinking, "What should I do? I was preaching to Angada, 'Don't give up your body. And don't try for some security.' But now it looks like I will have to do that, jump in the ocean and die. How can I go back and tell them, 'Yes, I went across the ocean, I saw Ravana, but no Sita'. What will they do to me? If I go to Sugriva he will kill me. Even Angada himself may kill me. And if I see Ramachandra's dissatisfied face I will die myself. What is the use of my existence? Let me die." And then he was walking and crossing the gardens and coming to the ocean. He thought, "Let me check once more." He looked at the garden. It was Ashoka-vana, Ashoka trees. Very thick garden. He thought, "Sita must be in this forest. Why? Because Ravana would have kept her in a nice garden, but she will be thinking of these Ashoka trees. In Panchavati where

Ravana lifted Sita from, there were Ashoka trees. I remember Ramacandra telling me that he was going to the Ashoka trees and crying, "Oh Ashoka trees, please tell me where is my wife?" So she must be remembering that when she sees these Ashoka trees. She must have walked in here. At least she must have been through here at some stage. Let me ask the Ashoka trees, they may tell me" In this way, Hanuman, with some little glimmer of hope came into the Ashoka forest. There was a very tall tree which he climbed up, and when he got to the top he looked down. To his surprise, under the same tree was Mother Sita. She was sitting there with Vibhisana's daughter, Trijata. Trijata was consoling her. "I had dreams that Ravana was smearing oil all over his body and drinking oil with his two hands, and he was sitting on a chariot driven by monkeys. This chariot was being driven through the southern side. This means he will die. I also saw that Sri Lanka was burning, and a monkey was flying over. I also saw that Ramacandra was sitting in the coronation ceremony with you. So don't lose faith. Don't give up your body. One day or other Ramacandra will come here." Hanuman was listening to all this and he was so happy. Then Ravana came and gave so much preaching to Mother Sita. "You must marry me!" She refused and he said to the demonesses, "You kill her if she won't listen to your advice." The demonesses were preaching to her, and then when she wouldn't listen they decided, "We will kill her." Exactly at that point, Hanuman jumped. As soon as they saw this monkey jumping, they all fled this way and that. Sita looked at him and she said, "Ravana, you can take any form, but I'm not going to be attracted. Why did you think that if you took a monkey form I would be attracted?" Hanuman said, "Wait wait, I am not Ravana! I am the servant of Rama, and I have come here to serve you." So she said, "I don't believe it. If you are from Rama, then how did you cross the ocean?" Hanuman said, "Oh, that is very interesting. I grew big." "You grew big? How can monkeys grow big?" Hanuman said, "I will show you," and then he grew, and he touched the skies. Sita got so scared, she said, "Maybe this is another demon." While he was growing he was chanting, "Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama," and she thought, "Ravana would not chant so many Rama-namas. It is not possible. He can't be a demon." Then Hanuman reduced this form, and said, "Here I have the sakshi, the evidence that I am coming from Ramacandra. This is His ring." Hanuman talked with Mother Sita and she gave him the hair ornament. Hanuman took it, and after taking it he said, "I am a monkey. I cannot just come like a saintly person and go, I want to do some naughtiness here in this forest. You won't be affected, don't worry. Some nonsense must be there. You just watch." So he put the chudamani hair ornament somewhere

safe, and then he started uprooting the Ashoka trees, throwing them here and there. There was a rock waterfall, and he destroyed it, and the water flooded all over the place. He took the creepers and threw them this way and that. Then he took the demonesses and put them in his mouth, biting them and spitting them out. He was shouting and slapping his shoulders. He was yelling, "I am the servant of Rama! Who will stop me? I will destroy Sri Lanka! I will swallow Ravana! Anyone who is as powerful as me should come for a fight! Challenge! Challenge!" And then he jumped up on the entrance of Ashoka-vana, and he was eating fruits and spitting everywhere. The minister for Ravana in charge of the Ashoka forest came in front of Hanuman. It had been a long time since he had landed in Sri Lanka, gotten in the gate, checked everyone, seen and spoken to Sita, but he had not passed water the whole time. It had been six or seven hours. When the minister came and opened his mouth yelling, "What are you doing?" he got Hanuman's blessing. The minister said, "Hey! Hey! Stop!" Hanuman said, "I am a monkey, what do you expect?" The minister felt very bad, and he went into the forest and asked the demonesses, "What are you doing? A monkey is doing so much harm." They said, "What are you doing? The monkey is doing so much harm, but why are you telling us?" "Yes, what am I am doing?" the minister said, and then he went to Ravana. He said, "A monkey has passed urine in my mouth." Ravana said, "You came to report this?" And he gave him a slap. "What kind of a caretaker are you? You come and tell me that a monkey passed water in your mouth." The minister said, "What was I supposed to do? I was speaking to him." Ravana said, "Don't you know that you never open your mouth when monkeys are around?" The minister said, "Well you have to do something, he has destroyed the whole Ashoka forest." Ravana said, "What? One single monkey?" Vibhisana closed his eyes and he was thinking, "Hmm, monkey. Monkey. Monkey smashing Ashoka forest. I remember this." Then he left the palace, and went to his place and he was sitting and thinking. "Monkey, Ashoka forest. Monkey, Ashoka forest. I heard it somewhere." And he was trying to figure it out. It took him two days to understand it. He understood it. Ravana said, "You call Prahasta's son Jambumali. He is the first card. "This Jambumali is in a big lake of wine. He is sleeping there; and whenever he wakes up he drinks a little bit. And then again he sleeps, and he wakes up and drinks more. He can't wait to go fill up the cup and drink, it takes too much time. So he is in a lake of wine, and he is kept like that so that whenever war comes he can be used. Jambumali was woken up. They had some anti-liquor medicine, so they gave him that and he woke up. He asked, "Why are you calling me? You want to change the lake or put me in another one?" They said, "No, a

fighting!" He came to Ravana and said, "With whom should I fight? With Indra, with Agni?" Ravana said, "No no, with a monkey." "I'm going back," Jambumali said. "No no, it's not an ordinary monkey. It's a very great monkey. He has finished our Ashoka-vana, so we must finish him. Take 80,000 soldiers and go." So 80,000 demon soldiers and Jambumali walked up. He was a very young demon, Jambumali. Hanuman was still sitting on top of the arch, and he was saying, "I am the servant of Rama. Who is there to fight with me? I can swallow Ravana. Come on, challenge! Challenge!" Jambumali said, "Hey monkey, you are talking too much! Do you understand that Ravana's son has tied Indra to a flag post here? Do you know that the nine planets are serving in the kitchen cutting subji (vegetables)? What do you know? You don't know the power of Ravana. You don't know the power of my father Prahasta. He has eaten mountains and digested them." So then Hanuman said, "All past. What about now? This has happened, that has happened. But now you look, I can also tell you that the whole Ashoka-vana has been destroyed. That has happened, and now something else is going to happen. Don't waste time." Jambumali said, "What? You think you can fight with me?" Hanuman said, "Why are you talking?" and he began to pick up rocks and throw them at him. The rocks were coming so fast and furious, and he couldn't fight them. Then he got on the chariot and started shooting arrows. Hanuman said, "Oh, these demons are very cultured. He is sitting on the chariot doing achaman, chanting mantras and firing astras." All these astras were coming, and Hanuman was holding them, breaking them and giving them back. No astra can affect Hanuman, that is a benediction. Jambumali saw this and said, "Now I will have to do some magic," and he started growing, and he became so big. Hanuman was only up to his ankle. That is what Jambumali was thinking. He was thinking, "That big? All right, I will grow more." He closed his eyes and grew more. Then he thought, "Now I have grown so much, Hanuman will be this big." And then he opened his eyes. He saw some big round thing in front of him. He looked at it, and he thought, "What is this? It is not Hanuman's face. There is no mouth and no teeth. It's just a big round thing." He looked to the other side, and it was just another round thing. "What is this one?" he thought. He was looking, and he was so confused. Then he heard a sound from way way above, "They're my knees Jambumali!" He looked up, and Hanuman was way up there. Jambumali thought, "My God, what a growth! This is the topmost I can do, and I am only up to his knees." So then Jambumali looked back, because he didn't want to discourage the soldiers. Hanuman said, "What are you looking at? I finished them all." He had finished the 80,000 soldiers already. There was a

beautiful parliament hall called Chaitya, belonging to Ravana. This hall had very huge marble and diamond pillars. Ravana took one of the pillars, and he just put it on top of the army. They were nicely organized so that simply by a little work Hanuman could finish the mall. This happened while Jambumali was growing. Jambumali was alone. His chariot had been smashed and his horses killed. Jambumali was standing there alone. Hanuman said, "What are you going to do? If you want to take shelter of my feet, they are way down there. You will have to look for them." So Jambumali was very insulted, and he said, "No! This is maya! You come before me in your original form!" Hanuman said, "What are you doing then? That is also maya. You come in your original form." So he came down, and then Hanuman came down also. Hanuman said, "All right Jambumali, there are three minutes for you. There is one nice mantra I will teach you. If you chant this mantra while dying you will attain the Supreme Lord. There is only two syllables in it. Ra-ma. Chant." Jambumali said, "What? I didn't come here to learn mantras. I am here to fight with you. I want to finish you." Hanuman said, "You cannot do that, so you might as well do this. You cannot finish me, so why don't you do something within your means. Just chant Rama, and then go back home." Jambumali screamed, "Aaarghh!" and jumped on Hanuman. Hanuman put his index finger in his navel and lifted him up, and then he circled and threw him. All his liver and everything came out of his mouth, and then he died. When the news came that Jambumali was finished, immediately Ravana's son Indrajit got up and said, "This must be a deva, so he must be fought nicely." So Indrajit came. With Indrajit there were some scenes, and then Indrajit said, "I am going to use Brahmastra on you." So he threw the Brahma rope. Hanuman thought, "I have done enough harm now, so I must see Ravana. If I get bound by this rope, I can see Ravana." He looked at the rope and thought, "I will respect Brahma." Then the rope came and tied him. Indrajit was pulling the rope, and he pulled Hanuman to the court of Ravana. As they entered there, Ravana said, "Hey, you mischievous monkey! Who are you?" Hanuman said, "I am a servant of Rama, and a messenger. You please give me a seat." Ravana scoffed, "A seat for a monkey? You can climb up in the tree if you want." Hanuman said, "No, that is not proper. I have come here to talk politics, and I have come here to give you a message. You must give me a seat." Ravana said, "In my assembly, I don't give a seat to animals." Hanuman said, "You mean that to get a seat in your assembly I have to be less than an animal?" Ravana said, "Hey, you are talking too much." By that time Hanuman had extended his tail and made a big big seat. It was above Ravana's head, and he jumped up and sat on that. Then he said, "So

Ravana, I think this is a good seat for me." So then Ravana was looking up. Then they had a discussion, and Hanuman gave a very good piece of advice. "You please give up Sita. I saw your palace. You have so many beautiful queens. Why do you want to take Sita? I can tell you, Sita is beautiful." Hanuman was using some sama dhanabheda danda. He said, "Sita is not that beautiful. Vandudari is much more a beautiful dancer. Surely you must be satisfied with that. You can have so many others. I will myself procure women for you if you want. Just give up this Sita, for your own benefit." Ravana said, "No, I won't listen to this. I will keep Sita, and not only that, I will finish you." Hanuman said, "Finish me? How can you finish me?" And Ravana said, "You are tied up." Hanuman said, "I am not tied up, I am just holding myself. And then he lifted his hands and Brahma's rope broke. Indrajit's jaw dropped. "What is this? This monkey has broken Brahma's rope." So then Hanuman said, "If you want you can use ordinary rope and tie me. Only if I want to be tied can you tie me. Now I allow you, tie me. Let me see what sort of punishment you will give me." So then they tied him with ropes, and great demons were pushing him on both sides with tridents. He made no objection. Ravana said, "Put fire to his tail." So they set his tail on fire, and Hanuman said, "Wonderful, you gave me an idea. I was just wondering what to do. I wanted to do so many things, but I didn't want to do it myself, because Ramacandra will say, 'Why did you do it?' Now I have no problem. They put fire, and I was just jumping around and things happened to catch on fire. I didn't want to burn Lanka. Why should I? I am just a messenger. A messenger cannot attack the opponent. But what can I do? They put fire on my tail, and I am a monkey so when I jump the tail goes this way and that way." So in this way Hanuman was jumping from roof to roof, window to window, and everywhere he put fire. Even in Ashoka-vana he put fire. Everything was burning. Hanuman was jumping up and down."Aah, wonderful! Wonderful!" And then suddenly he thought, "Maybe Mother Sita is also burnt! What have I done? Oh no!" So he went into the Ashoka forest and he was looking, and he saw Mother Sita sitting under the tree. No harm was there. So then he told her, "Why should you wait? Just climb on my shoulder. You know I crossed the ocean here, so I can also cross the ocean back. You sit on me, and I will take you. Before I fly from here, I will kill Ravana. "So Sita said, "No! What are you doing? You already told me that Ramacandra promised He will kill Ravana and take me back. If you do this, my husband's promise will go in vain. Ramacandra has one word, one wife and one arrow. He uses only one arrow, He has only one wife, and if He says a word, He keeps it. So don't do this, you are not supposed to do it. Even if you are supposed to do it, I'm not

going to sit on your shoulder. On the way you may see some fruit that you like, and you will shake the tree and I will fall into the ocean. I don't trust you completely. So you enjoy yourself, and go back and tell my Lord that I am waiting. And if He doesn't come in this many days, then I will leave my body."

## **Chapter 10: The army goes to Sri Lanka**

So Hanuman flew back. And then while coming back, and when they reached Kishkinda, there was a beautiful forest called Madhuvana. This Madhuvana was a private garden of Sugriva. There was so many honey hives there, and honey was flowing on the ground and so many fruits. It was well guarded. There was one great monkey called Dadhimukha. Dadhimukha was sitting in front of this garden at four doors. Only Sugriva was allowed in. So when the monkeys were returning, they went to Hanuman and said to him, "We have done a great task, so we must have some enjoyment. Let us go inside Madhuvana and drink honey." Hanuman said, "What? Go inside Madhuvana? Sugriva will get angry. He will know we have done a good job. We are not allowed to go in there." Then Jambavan said, "Oh Hanuman, you don't think properly. That Madhuvana is such a wonderful place, there is so much honey there. We have worked so hard. All these monkeys were so patient. They must be rewarded. If you are not going, I am going." So Jambavan entered the Madhuvana, and all the monkeys entered the Madhuvana. There was a difference of opinion, but eventually they were won over, and then all the monkeys were all drinking honey like anything and eating fruits. Dadhimukha went to Sugriva and said, "What is this? Even your defense minister Hanuman is totally useless. Even your great uncle Jambavan is also useless. They are all coming inside the royal forest, and they are drinking the honey." Sugriva looked at Ramacandra and said, "O Lord, Your work has been accomplished." Ramacandra said, "How do you know that?" Sugriva replied, "How can they dare enter Madhuvana, my garden, and drink honey? This means they have done some wonderful task. Maybe Sita is with them, otherwise they wouldn't dare to do it." So he told Dadhimukha, "Give them more honey! Give them more fruits. Open the gates of Madhuvana, it is open for everyone." And then Hanuman came, and he was saying, "We found Sita! We found Sita!" Hanuman was thinking, "If I say 'Sita...' then Ramacandra may think that I have not found her." He did not want to confuse him. First of all he said, "Found, found, found." When Ramacandra heard this, he said to Sugriva, "What you said was true. Hanuman is in the sky, and he is saying, 'I have found.' What would he have found? He would have found

Sita, because he was looking for Sita." So then Hanuman came and there was discussion, and then Ramacandra decided, "Attack!" So to summarize, they built this wonderful bridge and crossed over it. Then they arrived there on the shore. As soon as they arrived there Sugriva was looking this way and that, and Vibhisana said, "That is Ravana's palace, that ten-floor building. "So then they all commented, "What a beautiful building." When Ramacandra looked back there was no Sugriva. He said, "Sugriva! Where is Sugriva?" Vibhisana said, "Some demon is playing a trick. We must be on guard, everyone be ready." Everyone took their weapons but Sugriva was not there. Sugriva flew to the tenth floor of the building. He simply could not tolerate that Ravana was living therewith Sita under his custody, and Ramacandra was here. Sugriva got so angry, he went there, and Ravana was as usual looking upon the mirror. Sugriva became small, and he went around his face and spat on it. Ravana was doing his make-up with fifteen assistants spraying, and doing all sorts of things to make up his face, and then he felt something wet. "What is this? What is that?" Sugriva was spitting all over his face. Then he told his servants to stop doing what they were doing, but still it was coming. He said, "There's some bee or mosquito here." He looked around, and then he caught hold of Sugriva, holding him in his hand. Ravana said, "How dare you do this? What are you doing, spitting on my face?" He looked closely, and realized it was a monkey. "Another monkey! And so small?" The monkey was speaking, "Ravana, I spat on your face. Now I am happy," and before he could catch him he flew away. He landed in front of Ramacandra. Ramacandra said, "Sugriva, where have you been?" Sugriva said, "I went there and spat on the rascal's face!" Ramacandra said, "What did you do? Oh, I have made a great mistake by associating myself with monkeys. I am the son of Dasaratha. I have landed in another man's country, and you have already gone and spat on his face." Sugriva said, "I am sorry my Lord, but You must understand that after all, I am a monkey. When I get angry, I can't control it. All Your yuga-dharma You can keep in Your pocket. Nobody will blame You, because they will say, "Sugriva was a monkey. What can You do? It was not Ramacandra's defect." So then Ramacandra said, "I want to send a messenger." So Sugriva said, "The only person who has got so much sense control, apart from Hanuman, and he has already gone anyway, is Angada." So Ramacandra called Angada and embraced him. He said, "My dear Angada, I am going to send you to Ravana. He is a very dangerous person so be careful. You go to him and tell him that Ramacandra does not have any intention to fight with him. All I desire is that he give back Sita, and I will leave. I will make friendship with him. I will be his greatest

friend. If anybody attacks Lanka, I will protect him. You please tell this to him. Only Sita, nothing else do I want from him. I don't want these monkeys to get killed and I don't want to kill his demons, and I don't want to kill Ravana." So Angada said, "All right, I will take this message to Ravana." He circumambulated Rama and Laksmana, touched Rama's feet. Then he came to Hanuman, touched his feet and said, "You must bless me, because you were the first one to go." "Go there," Hanuman said, and he called him close by and in his ear he said, "You must insult them." And then Angada flew off. Angada came straight in front of Ravana, flying in, landing right in front of him. He said, "Ravana, my name is Angada. I am the son of Bali. You may remember him." This Bali did one wonderful pastime with Ravana. Anyone who goes in front of Bali will lose half his strength, he was thinking, "This means that he will become more powerful than me in this world, so I must first control Bali." So he went there, and Bali had made a vrata or vow that he would worship Salagram in four holy places every day. He would worship in Rameshvaram, Badrinath, Jagannatha Puri and Dvaraka. All that he would do in one way. Each place he would visit in one leap. He would leap from Kishkinda to Rameshvaram. He would do the worship, and before it is too late then he will jump back to Kishkinda. From there he would jump to Dvaraka. He was just leaping. Then to Badrinath and coming back. While he was doing this he would make sure that he would keep his foot on top of Sugriva's head and press it a little bit. That he was doing also. Sugriva was hiding there, in one area. In that place Bali cannot go because he was cursed that if he entered there his head would break into 10,000 pieces. Sugriva took shelter in that place. Even then, before going to Dvaraka, Bali would make sure he would give him one kick on his head, and then he would go to Dvaraka. While coming back, again one kick. In a day, eight kicks Sugriva was getting. Hanuman could not tolerate, so once when Bali was kicking like that Hanuman caught Bali on his waist, and he was trying to pull him down, because if he touches the ground he would be dead. Bali knew that if he touched the floor he would be dead, so he was trying to pull Hanuman up. One was pulling down and one up, and they were in one spot. They had equal strength, ten thousand elephant strength. Neither was going anywhere. Bali said, "Leave me alone! Let me go!" Hanuman said, "I will let you go on one promise; you don't do this kicking any more. Otherwise, I will pull you down." Bali said, "All right, we will make a truce. I am not against you, you are not against me. I am against Sugriva. I will not come here and kick him, and you leave me alone." He left. After being harassed by Hanuman, he went to Dvaraka and quickly he was doing his worship and Ravana was behind. Ravana did

not come in front because he knew he would lose half of his strength. From the back he was thinking, "Slowly I will catch hold of the tail, and then I will do something." So when Ravana came close to the tail, he caught it, and he was thinking, "Oh that was very easy." But when he was trying to pull the tail, instead of pulling the tail the tail pulled him. And then the tail extended and came around his body. He held him in his tail, and then he leaped to Kishkinda, from there to Badrinath, from there back and to Puri, leap back. Ravana was hanging in the tail. Even the Gandharvas were laughing, the women and the Caranas were laughing, and Ravana was closing his eyes, and he said, "Bali, please leave me, don't tie me in the tail. At least carry me in the hand, it is more prestigious than being tied in a monkey's tail. This is not good." Finally when they arrived in Kishkinda he brought his tail around in front of him and said, "Hey, you be careful. You don't come in this area any more." Ravana said, "I am surrendered to you, I am your servant. And don't attack Sri Lanka, and I won't come here." So Ravana made a pact. Angada told him, "Ravana, do you remember Bali? At least you should remember his tail. I am his son. I am the smallest in the army that Ramacandra has brought. That is why Ramacandra picked me to come and see you. I am a very small person. I am a prince, and there are bigger monkeys there. But I am requesting you one thing. Ramacandra said that if you give back Sita, He would go back, and He does not want anything." Ravana said, "Why are these monkeys coming and talking like ministers to me? You had better put your tail between your legs and run away from here before I kill you." Angada said, "Oh, you are going to kill me? You can kill me later." He lifted his leg and put it in front of Ravana. "But for now you please move my foot. Then we can think about scheming and murdering and killing." Ravana said, "Come here Indrajit." So Indrajit got up and went there. He slapped, and after slapping he saw his palm swell up, because it was like a rooted Banyan tree. Then he sat down and used both hands and tried to shake it, and found that it was like Mount Meru. Indrajit was sweating profusely, and he gave up. Vibhisana got up and said, "Ravana, your time is coming. Look at this. A monkey's foot cannot be shaken. Don't you understand that there's something happening? You were keeping the planets in your kitchen and now a monkey's foot cannot be shaken? Something is wrong somewhere. Think about it." Ravana said, "You are so weak-minded. I will do it," and he got up. Angada said, "You want to touch my foot?" Ravana said, "Aaargh! I have lifted Kailash!" So Ravana had all his twenty hands going, he was holding his legs and straining like anything, but he couldn't move it. Angada said, "Try my toe. You may be able to do that." Ravana bent down and he was

completely helpless, because he couldn't move it. Ravana sat down and said, "Where do you get your strength from?" Angada said, "The same old question. Where are you getting your strength from? Where is anyone getting their strength from? The source of strength is Rama, and simply by chanting His name I am holding my breath. That is why you are not able to move my toe. I am the smallest monkey in the army. There are bigger monkeys than me. And with all of us is your brother Vibhisana who is helping. Laksmana is also there, and above Him is the Supreme Lord Ramacandra. Use your intelligence Ravana, and give back Sita." Ravana said, "No! I'm not giving back Sita. I don't believe any of this." Angada said, "Then you will meet your death," and he flew back. When he came back, Jambavan came to him, and asked him, "They couldn't move your toe?" He was seeing Ramayana over and over. So then Angada said, "How do you know this?" Jambavan said, "I am Jambavan. I have been here for a long time. " Then the monkeys asked Angada, "Tell us the pastime." Jambavan said, "I will tell you the pastime, Angada go and tell Ramacandra what happened." So Angada went and told Ramacandra. Vibhisana said to Rama, "Now is the time. We must attack." Ramacandra said, "We will wait for tomorrow," and they all took rest. Vibhisana told Hanuman, "You can't believe these demons, they're very tricky. Especially when the sun sets they become more strong. This is one property of demons. I know, because I am from this civilization. Be careful with these demons." So Vibhisana said, "We have to protect Rama and Laksmana," and he told Hanuman, "You build a fort with your tail, and we will put Rama and Laksmana inside. Then we won't lose them. You and I should guard." They divided the monkey army into four groups, east, west, south and north. Angada, Nila, Sugriva, Jambavan, they all became guards. No-one slept, because they were expecting someone to come and kidnap Rama and Laksmana. So he made a huge big fort with his tail. It had rooms, verandas, courtyards, seven stories. To enter this fort you have to first go through the ear of Hanuman, and from there enter the mouth. From there you go to the back of the neck. There is one nerve that goes from there straight to the tail. You go into that, and past the tail. You travel in the tail and a little bit along there is a small opening. That is the gate. How could anyone enter Hanuman's ear and go through his mouth and all that? So everyone was satisfied, "This is such a good defense." The tail had been circled, and circled differently in some places to make windows. Everything was there, recreation and swimming pool. Everything was created by the mind of Hanuman, and it was all inside his tail. Outside Hanuman was going around that tail fort guarding. It was a conscious building, because it was

the tail. Rama and Lakshmana were there inside. Hanuman and Vibhisana were patrolling back and forward guarding. Then at one point when Hanuman saw Vibhisana, Vibhisana said, "I want to go in and check. Please make sure that no-one comes over to this side. You stay here." Hanuman was standing and standing and standing, but he did not come. He said, "Let me take a quick flight." He flew across and he came back. When he was coming back he saw Vibhisana standing outside. He said, "If you went inside, why didn't you come back? I was in the door." Vibhisana said, "I never went inside." Hanuman said, "There is something wrong," and they both went inside. They saw that there was no Rama and no Lakshmana. They were missing. They checked everywhere but they couldn't find them. Then all the monkeys were crying and lamenting. Vibhisana said, "This must be the work of Mahi-Ravana, the brother of Ravana. He stays in the netherlands, he has a secret city somewhere underneath. He is a great Mayavi. Somehow or other he has taken Rama and Lakshmana. Hanuman, only you can go and get them, and I can tell you how to reach this place." Hanuman decided to go and get Rama and Lakshmana.

### **Chapter 11: Ravana goes to Bali for help**

After the spitting happened, Ravana was thinking, "This is bad. My time has come. But I am Trilokeshvara, and I can conquer time. How I can conquer it I don't know, but somehow it will happen. I am very powerful, and up till now everything has gone good. Why should it go bad?" Still his political mind was thinking, "I should take help from another king. Even if it is not necessary, if something happens then I can run to him at least. So which king should I take help from? These Devatas are useless, they are my servants. I don't need to take help from them. Other demons? Well, no-one is as powerful as me. In our family, who is as powerful as me? Bali Maharaja! He is most powerful, and he is still living, because he was put down to the Sutala planet." Ravana knew that Bali Maharaja was there, and that he was a very charitably disposed person. He gave his whole kingdom to Vamana. "He came from a demon family, and I am also a demon, so we can shake hands and we can kill Ramacandra." He decided to go and see Bali Maharaja, so he went to the Sutala planet. At the entrance to the Sutala planet, there was Vishnu, Vamanadeva with a club on His shoulder, and He was walking back and forward guarding the gate. Ravana came there, and he looked at Him. Ravana travels with his club and his sword. He said, "Who is this dwarf?" He came there and tried to get in the gate. Vamanadeva put His club there, and said, "Mmm-mmm!" making a

sound indicating no. He didn't speak, He had taken a vow of silence. Everything shook inside Ravana. Still he didn't show it. "I will try another method," he thought, and he became invisible. It was one of his perfections. But he was invisible only to the material eyes, not to Vishnu. Again the club came. He became very small and tried to enter very quickly. Vishnu put His foot on his body. Vamana was just standing there, and Ravana was screaming, "Aaargh!" and gasping for air. But because Vishnu touched his body he became qualified to be killed by Ramacandra. Up till that time he had not been qualified. Because Vamana stepped on him, some Vishnu-sambandha had come. "All right, your body is purified. Now Ramacandra's arrow can come." That is why Vamana kept His foot there. He could have crushed him, but He just held him there. Then He let him in. Ravana increased his form and came before Bali Maharaja. As if nothing happened, he said, "I came to see you. There is no place in this world that I cannot go. I am Trilokeshvara." Bali Maharaja said, "But what about Vamanadeva at the gate? Didn't He stop you?" Ravana said, "If He stopped me how can I be here?" Bali said, "He has stopped you and He has let you in." "How does he know?" Ravana thought. Bali continued, "He must have stopped you, then He became merciful and let you in." Then Ravana said, "Who is He to become merciful on me?" Bali said, "He is Vishnu, the Supreme Lord!" "Don't say that again," Ravana said. "I am the Supreme Lord!" Bali said, "Oh, you are the Supreme Lord? Can I know why you are here?" Ravana said, "I came for help." "Oh, this is a wonderful Supreme Lord," Bali said. "He is the Supreme Lord, he has come for my help. I must be the Supreme Lord." Ravana said, "You are an elderly person, so don't laugh at me. It's not fair. Dharma-shastra says that you should not mock a younger person because he has less qualities than you." Bali said, "Oh, you still remember the dharma-shastras?" Ravana said, "Why should I have forgotten it?" Bali said, "If you have not forgotten it then why are you here?" Ravana said, "I came to see you because you are my great great great great grandfather." Bali said, "I am your great great great great grandfather for so long, but you never came. Why did you suddenly come now?" Ravana said, "Let's forget all that. Look, one human being has landed in Sri Lanka with monkeys." Bali said, "A human being has landed in your country? How did he come?" Ravana said, "He crossed the ocean, or built a bridge they say." Bali Maharaja closed his eyes, and he smiled and said, "Oh! Isn't He the son of Dasaratha." Ravana said, "Aarggh, yes! That's him! That Ikshvaku dynasty bunch of weaklings. Again and again I have controlled them, but still they have no shame and they continue to come and give trouble." Bali said, "What kind of monkeys has he got?" Ravana said, "Well one monkey

came and burnt the Lanka city. Another one came and I couldn't move his toe. The next one spat on my face." "Really?" Then he closed his eyes, and again he smiled. "Oh wonderful! And what did you decide Ravana? Did you decide to give back Sita?" "How did you know?" Ravana said. "That's all right. I'm your great great great great grandfather, I know better that you must give back Sita." "No," Ravana said. "I won't do it. Why should I do it? It's some monkeys only, some human beings." Bali said, "Yes some monkeys only! One burnt the whole city, another you couldn't move his toe, and another spat on your face. Just some monkeys only. And these are just messengers who came without the intention of fighting. When they come with the intention of fighting, what will happen? Your brother is on their side, Vibhisana. This is a big point for you. Your brother, who knows everything about you is on the other side. At least if he is on the other side, you must not fight. As long as your brother is living, and he is on the other side. What a clever king you are. You are waging a war. He will tell everything about you!" Ravana said, "Anyway, he's one of those weaklings who are always crying Vishnu! Vishnu! He's against the grain of our family. He's become a demon." Bali Maharaja said, "All right, what do you want from me?" Ravana said, "You must help me." Bali said, "How can I help you, such a religious person? After all, you just took somebody else's wife. That's all. It's natural for a demon to do that. What is the complaint?" Then Ravana became very happy and said, "See? You have intelligence. You understand me." "Yes, I understand you," Bali said. "Anyway, you have come, you are in my kingdom, so I want to give you some gift before we talk politics. Don't worry, I will help you. Let me give you a gift. You come with me." He took him into a big maidang, open ground. It is mentioned that it was four yojanas, thirty-two miles. There was a big mountain with a diameter of thirty-two miles. It was nine yojanas, seventy-two miles high and thirty-two miles wide. And very nicely shaped, and it was solid gold, and on the side were diamonds bigger than Ravana's face. They were nicely shaped. Ravana said, "What a wonderful mountain. It's made of gold with diamonds on it, and it's all very nicely arranged. Who gave you this mountain?" Bali said, "Who gave it to me is of no importance. I want to give it to you." Ravana's eyes opened wide, and his mouth opened wide also. "You're giving this to me? All of it, not just one diamond?" Bali said, "All of it! This whole mountain!" Ravana was thinking, "Why go back to Lanka? Forget Sita and Rama. Just take this mountain and go somewhere else, have a nice time." Demons always make plans like this. Bali said, "But I will only give it to you if you can lift it first." So Ravana was trying, but he could just barely get it off the ground. Ravana was very powerful, but he

couldn't lift this mountain of gold and diamonds. So Bali said, "Now step back a bit and take a better look at it. What does it look like?" So Ravana said, "It looks something like an earring, an earring studded with many beautiful diamonds." So Bali said, "Yes, that's right. This is the earring of Hiranyakasipu. During the fight between Hiranyakasipu and Lord Nrsimhadeva, this earring fell down here. In your previous birth you were Hiranyakasipu, and the Lord killed you. You were much more powerful than you are now. You can't even pick up this earring that you used to wear. Now Vishnu has come again, and He will surely kill you." But even after that example, Ravana couldn't understand. He left the kingdom of Bali.

### **Chapter 12 = Rama and Lakshmana are kidnapped**

This Mahi Ravana was very difficult to kill. Even if you cut his body into three thousand pieces, and throw it in three thousand places, it will come back again and join. You can do anything to him, but he won't die. The reason is that his life point is in two places, not in his body. His life point is in a diamond which is kept very secret in Mahipuri. But even if you crush the diamond, that is not enough. Only his five heads will disappear, and ten hands will disappear. The other five heads and ten hands will still remain. Half of the life was kept in there. And half of the life was kept in the Himalayas. There is one mountain which is very difficult to reach with ice glaciers surrounding it. Huge big pieces of ice are floating on the top. If you cross there, there is a cave. Inside the cave, there are five lamps burning. These five lamps are guarded by five snakes. These snakes were very mystical, they were not actually snakes, they were illusion. Any time someone comes there they will spit poison. Anyone who breaths the poison from a hundred miles away will die. If you can get past the snakes, then in order to kill him you have to blow these five lamps simultaneously. At the same time you have to crush the diamond, and at the same time you have to shoot an arrow in the chest of Mahi Ravana. If you can do that, he will die. So he was very clever, a great scientist. When Ravana called for Mahi Ravana, Mahi Ravana came in front of him. If you just think of him, he would come. Demons, snakes, politicians and women. These four beings will come closer if you think of them. Snakes, if they are close, they make you think of them. Ghosts, who don't have gross bodies are like that. The more you think of them, the closer they come. They get attracted when you speak about them. Whistling, and scratching pots attracts them also. If you scratch a pot while serving prasad, that sound cuts the ether. It makes a way for the subtle body to come there. Wherever you cut the ether, they will

come through that gap. Whistling also cuts the ether, and they will come to that point from where the whistling is coming. Also you shouldn't scratch the floor with your feet. This is very bad. So the demon came, and asked, "Why did you think of me?" Ravana said, "I'm in trouble." "From whom?" the demon asked. "Two human beings and some monkeys." Mahi Ravana said, "I saw that tail fort, is it these people? Are they doing some magic for your pleasure?" Ravana said, "No, no magic. They have come to fight." Mahi Ravana said, "I give you a promise. It is four o'clock now, and I promise you that by twelve o'clock tonight I will offer them to Maha-Kali in sacrifice. I will bring the blood to you, and you can mix it with wine and drink. This is my promise." Ravana said, "Ahh! This is a brother. That Vibhisana is useless." So he gave so many gifts to Mahi Ravana. Mahi Ravana said, "Don't worry. Don't talk with your ministers. Don't try and do anything, you just go and enjoy. At midnight, they will be offered. This is a promise." So Mahi Ravana came back to his city. He was fired up, so excited. He was calling his ministers. His wife asked, "Where are you going? You are preparing for something?" "Yes, yes," Mahi Ravana said. "I have already offered 999 princes of kshatriya families to Kali. If I offer one more I will get great benedictions from her. Now I got two!" She said, "You got two? Oh very good. Where are they, and who are they?" He said, "They are in my brother's place. They have come to attack him. Dasaratha's sons Rama and Lakshmana." She said, "Oh! What are you talking about? He's the Supreme Lord!" Mahi Ravana said, "What? Supreme what? This is Mahipuri. At least here, I am supreme. There is no-one superior to me. Everything moves because of me. Don't you know this?" She said, "That's right, you are the supreme lord of here, but then He is Supreme of everything." Mahi Ravana married this girl from the snake family. Snakes are devotees of Vishnu. She said, "I know this person. I have heard a prediction from Narada Muni that He will come and kill your brother. I also heard that when a monkey enters your city, you will also be killed. Don't get into trouble. There are monkeys there, so your monkey may also be there. Let Ravana go to hell. What do you have to do with it? You are not His enemy. Leave the Supreme Lord alone otherwise you will have trouble." Mahi Ravana said, "This is why people say to marry in your own family, your own dynasty. Why did I marry you, you are a snake and you are spitting poison." So he left her, and he got his ministers and told them, "We only have a few hours left. We have to smuggle Rama and Laksmana and offer them in a sacrifice to Kali." They all clapped hands, "Wonderful plan! Wonderful!" Demons are like that. One of them gives a demoniac plan, and another comes and gives a demoniac clap to it. He took four of his

expert assistants. One was known as Catur, another as Sadhya, another was known as Sarva-prana, another was known as Dushmati. Sometimes people give bad names to their children, such as Duryodhana or Duhsasana. They all came up on the bank of Sri Lanka. Mahi Ravana said, "OK, come on. We have to get ready. One of you must go, so who wants to go?" The first one said, "I will do it. Give me a box, and I will bring Rama and Lakshmana in it." So he was given a box. He went in there and he was checking out this fort, going around and around it. "This is very big," he thought. So he laid down and looked up, still he couldn't see it. So he came back to Mahi Ravana and said, "This is not a place for me to go. It is so big, and a monkey is walking back and forward guarding there. I hear so much sound. All the armies are awake playing drums and singing songs. I can't do it." Sadhya said, "Ahh, weak person! Look at me! I can do it. I don't need a box, I will bring them in my hand." So he expanded himself, and then he came in. He thought, "A small wall, so I will just expand myself a little bit." He saw this tail come. In the meantime, somebody may come here. Even Ravana may come, taking my own form. Don't let him in. Give him a hard time." Then he went into the ear, and came into the fort. He took Rama and Laksmana. He expanded his form, looked up, and he expanded his form more, and then without touching anything he flew up to the top and escaped. He was very good at holding his breath, so nothing was felt by the tail. The tail had antennae. If anything was happening, Hanuman could feel it. But this time he didn't feel anything, as Mahi Ravana was such an expert yogi. He stopped his breath as if he was not existing, and he took off. He reached Mahipuri and put them in front of Maha-Kali. They were sleeping. Lakshmana was also put to sleep by Mahi Ravana by his special tricks. The Supreme Lord undergoes these things so that these wonderful pastimes can happen. The actual Vibhisana came after his round of the fort, and Hanuman said, "Is everything all right? Wait a minute, how come you are outside? You went inside." Vibhisana said, "I didn't go inside. I just told you I am going around and I am coming back now." Hanuman said, "Now I am feeling that there is something wrong somewhere. You'd better go in and check." So Vibhisana went in, and he discovered there was no Rama and Laksmana. All the monkeys were jumping up and down and crying. Vibhisana came out and said, "Hanuman, you spaced out. Rama is not there, Laksmana is not there. I'm going to commit suicide." Hanuman said, "Wait, wait! You are the only source of information. You tell me where Rama and Laksmana could have been taken." So Vibhisana described Mahipuri. Hanuman said, "I cannot wait here any longer. I am going to take that Mahi Ravana and crush that Mahi Ravana between my hands."

Vibhisana said, "Be careful. His life is not in one place. But I don't know where it is. Someone in Mahipuri will be able to tell you. You have to find someone who is close to him. They will be able to tell you where it is." So Hanuman left for Mahipuri.

### **Chapter 13: The killing of Mahi Ravana**

Hanuman was flying over the ocean looking for lotus flowers. He came to an area where there were many lotuses, and he saw one particularly big lotus. "That must be the lotus," he thought. He entered it, and he was thinking, "What are those sounds? I should have asked Vibhisana. Anyway, I can't waste any time." He prayed to Vayu, and Vayu came in front of him. "What is the problem Hanuman?" Vayu asked. Hanuman said, "The problem is that I have to go inside here, and some sound is supposed to be pronounced. I forgot." Vayu said, "Don't worry. This is working by suction system. Suction system is by air, and I am that. You go." The lotus opened, and Hanuman went through very quickly, and he landed on the bottom, and looked around. What he saw was a big tank which was known as kalpa, or the desire fulfilling tank. People were coming from the city, taking a little water from there to go and worship Kali. Hanuman thought, "This is the outside of the city, and it looks so wonderful. The inside must be even more beautiful." Then he was wondering how to enter, and there was a brick fort. On top of the brick fort there were two thousand lakhs of demon soldiers walking with their bows and arrows. Hanuman saw them and thought, "I want to finish all of them together and it is very good that they are all on the fort. If they are spread out it is very difficult, but they are all in one spot. This is good arrangement. Now what should I use to kill them?" and he was looking around. Then he heard a sound. "Hanuman! I am here! Use me!" He looked back, and there was a big tall tree, very big and fat. The tree was talking. Hanuman said, "Who are you, and how are you talking?" The tree said, "I am a deva. I was cursed by Narada Muni to become a tree. 'Why will you make me a tree?' I asked him. 'I will become useless.' He said, 'No, I will make you a useful tree. You will grow in Mahipuri, and when Hanuman comes he will use you for the war.' Please use me Hanuman, that is what I am here for." So Hanuman took that whole tree, and then he held it up and brought it down upon the fort wall. Two thousand lakhs of soldiers were finished. Then he opened the door wide and went inside. He crossed a forest. That was the brick fort, and now there was a brass fort. So many more soldiers were there. He stood there and he slapped his shoulders, challenging them. They all jumped off and they formed themselves into an army. They were marching, left right left

right. Hanuman increased his hands. His form was the same, but his hands increased. He went as much as the army was there, and he closed the hands and threw the soldiers to one side. He opened that door and went inside, and he went through a forest. Then he came to the copper fort. There was three times more soldiers there. There were eighteen thousand lakhs of soldiers. So he grew and took his visvarupa, a huge big form, and then he looked at them and he breathed. They were all finished. He opened that fort. Then he came to the white metal fort. At that fort there was one demon who was leading all of them, and he had got mystic perfections. He produced a storm, and began producing rain. He produced stool rain, bone rain and all kinds of rain. Hanuman came there, and said, "This is very bad." He looked at them, and they all disappeared. They were illusion. They couldn't stand the gaze of Hanuman. Hanuman took that demon in his hand and said, "You create all this illusion. You are so vile that even your dead body shouldn't remain here." And he ate him up. Hanuman is not vegetarian. When the soldiers saw this, they thought, "Oh, this is very difficult, we must run away." But Hanuman did not let them run away. He took them all in groups and started eating them. He was hungry for a long time and had not eaten anything. He ate some, crushed some, threw some away. He finished all of them, and then he opened that gate. Then he came to the bell metal fort, and each one was to do with all this?" And then he sat in one place, and he got so angry. He looked, and the fire came out of his eyes. The whole fort just melted. In that melting, all the soldiers died. This time he didn't open any door, because it was all finished. He just climbed over. The white metal fort was finished, and he came to the golden gate. In front of the golden gate was a machine. It was a big meter, and it had a hand on a scale. When anyone passes that way, it would show whether they were a friend of Mahi Ravana, or they are inimical toward Mahi Ravana. According to your inimical feeling, it would show ten degrees, twenty, thirty degrees. It was very difficult. If it moved a little bit this way, the army was ready to come and finish you. Hanuman thought, "Now I have to do some lila," and he was waiting outside. In the meantime, Mahi Ravana was sitting in his room, and he called his sister. There is a pastime that his sister, who was married to another demon, they had a son. When the son was gone there was an ashariri from the sky who told them, "This son will become king when Mahi Ravana dies." Mahi Ravana did not want to die, and he did not want anyone else to become king, so he put that family in the jail, just as Kamsa did. So her name was Duratandi. This Duratandi and her son Nilamega were both in jail. But this Duratandi had a very auspicious power that any abhiseka or puja that had to be done, if you ask

her to bring water then the puja was always successful. Now they had to do a very important puja, sacrificing Rama, so that is why he gave her a release. He only released her legs from the chain, her hands were still bound up. Servants would go with her and only at the water tank would the chains be opened. She would collect the water, and the chains would be locked again, and she had to bring back the water. This was the plan of Mahi Ravana, and he was telling Duratandi to do that. So Duratandi was coming to the water tank and thinking how to get in the gate. She came and while taking water she was lamenting, openly cursing Mahi Ravana. "What a brother I have! He wants to kill Rama and Lakshmana." When Hanuman heard that he jumped up and came in front of her. "What did you say? You know where Rama and Lakshmana are? I am looking for them!" She said, "Who are you? Are you Ravana, taking another form?" "No, no, I am Hanuman, the servant of Ramacandra." She said, "Oh, you must help me!" She told the whole story, and he said, "Don't worry. If you help me I will help you." She said, "How will I help you?" He said, "I will become small, and I will enter a leaf. You put the leaf in your water pot and carry me inside. I want to trick these people." She said, "What happens if they find out? They have got a scale there, and if you don't like Mahi Ravana, it will show." He said, "All right, I like Mahi Ravana." "No, no, no. How can you like Mahi Ravana and Rama? It's not possible." Hanuman said, "Anyway, why don't you do it? I like a thrill, and I want to trick them." So he became very small and entered into a mango leaf. When you bring water for bathing, you put a mango leaf in it. She put mango leaves in there with Hanuman. And then very peacefully she was bringing it. The meter was there, and she was slowly coming, and she was shivering. Some demons were saying, "Hey! Why are you shivering? What is that you are bringing?" She said, "No, no. This is abhiseka water, we are going to kill Rama today." As soon as she came in front of the meter, it went right over the other side and there was no more numbers it could go to. They said, "Hey, stop! You are hating Mahi Ravana so much. You used to hate him before, but it was only thirty degrees. Now it's coming out of the meter." She said, "No, I have become friendly now, otherwise how has my brother let me out?" So then they said, "There must be someone inside the water!" And they looked in the water. So they concluded, "There is something wrong with this machine. You walk past, and let us check again." So she went back and then came past the machine again. "Boing!" and it broke. "Who is this who does not like Mahi Ravana?" they asked. Hanuman jumped out of the pot and said, "It is me!" and he became huge and took everyone and began to make a big mess, he couldn't wait to see Rama. He was smashing some people,

crushing some people, biting some, walking on them, throwing a bunch and another bunch another way. He took a group and another group and smashed them against each other. In this way he finished them all. Then she said, "There are ten houses around Mahi Ravana's house. These are his great corporals and generals. You must kill them." "No problem," Hanuman said. He went there and stood in the middle and put his tail slowly inside each house. First one house, where one general was sitting with his wife telling her, "You look like the moon." And she was saying, "You look like the sun." In the meantime the tail came and bound both of them, pulled them out of their house and started flapping them on the floor. In the same way he went to every house and smashed them all. All the houses were finished. Then the news reached Mahi Ravana. Mahi Ravana came out in front of Hanuman and said, "Hey! I will kill you!" And he got on his chariot. Hanuman flew up and fell on the chariot. He crushed the chariot. Mahi Ravana was smashed. Hanuman said, "Jaya Ramacandra Bhagavan ki jaya!" And then Mahi Ravana came up again. Hanuman gave him a big punch on the chest, making him unconscious. Hanuman said, "Jaya Ramacandra Bhagavan ki jaya!" Again he got up. Hanuman thought, "Every time I say Jaya he gets up. Next time I'm not going to say it." So he took Mahi Ravana in his hands and tore him to pieces, and he threw the pieces everywhere. He sat down, and they all joined together and Mahi Ravana got up. He used his special martial arts techniques. He locked Mahi so he couldn't breathe. Then Mahi Ravana disappeared. Hanuman said, "No one can get out of my locking system!" Then he looked around and he saw a silver mountain, a rock. Duratandi told him, "This is not a silver rock, this is Mahi Ravana. He can take any form." Hanuman sat on it and crushed it. Again Mahi Ravana came out, and he started running. This time he was so fast that Hanuman couldn't catch him. Hanuman went to Duratandi and said, "Now what? Where has he gone?" She said, "He is performing a yajna for killing you." Mahi Ravana went inside a cave and he was quickly performing some yajna, and from the yajna, a big brahma-rakshasa came. He was saying, "Who? Who? Whom should I eat?" Mahi Ravana said, "Hanuman, over there!" So he jumped up and came to Hanuman. Hanuman got ready to fight the bhuta, but Duratandi said, "Don't fight with the bhuta, it's a waste of time. Go and spoil the yajna. Automatically the bhuta will die." Hanuman said, "Oh, that's good." So he went there and spoiled the yajna by passing urine on the fire. The yajna became contaminated, and the brahma-rakshasa disappeared. Again Mahi Ravana disappeared. Hanuman came back to Duratandi and said, "I am confused. What should I do?" Duratandi said, "Even if you crush him he won't die, because his life is

in three places." She told a secret. So he came to the Kali temple and saw Ramacandra dressed up with turmeric powder, sindhur and a flower garland. He was going to be sacrificed, so He had to look good. He came to Rama and said, "My Lord, You must help. I did everything that I know. This man is invincible." Ramacandra said, "No problem. At midnight he will kill Me. At that time, I will make some trick and I will shoot the arrow. At the same time, you must go and finish those lamps. I will get Lakshmana to crush the diamond." Rama was the Supreme intelligence. So Lakshmana got Duratandi to find out where the diamond was, and he reached that place and was waiting for midnight. He was going very, very fast. Finally he landed there. He saw this cave, and he saw five entrances. They all connected inside, and there were five lamps burning. He came in there, and he blew one out. He came to the next, and he put that one out. He looked back, and the other one had again lighted up automatically. He put one off, and another lighted, back and forth. Then he said, "I will do everything at once." So he turned his head while blowing. They all went out, but all came on again. In the meantime the snakes had come out spitting poison. The poison was not doing anything to him, but they were coming and moving mystically, and Hanuman came out and said, "Oh, what am I going to do?" Again he thought of Vayu. Vayu came and said, "Hanuman, what's the problem now? You don't have much time, only three minutes left!" Hanuman said, "Well what can I do? This lamp goes out and another one starts. This lamp that lamp, back and forth. I am confused." Vayu said, "Ahh! You forgot who your father is!" Hanuman said, "I didn't forget. You are my father." Vayu said, "You know that only because of me is any light burning?" And Vayu withdrew from there. As soon as Vayu withdrew from that cave, it became a vacuum. And at that point, they all went out at once. Immediately Hanuman remembered Brahma, and he prayed to him, "I want to use that benediction, that special benediction. I want to reach Mahipuri right now." Next moment he was in Mahipuri. At the same time Lakshmana crushed the diamond. Just before that, Mahi Ravana had come and told Rama, "Pay obeisances! And then I will offer you to Kali!" Rama said, "I don't know how to pay obeisances. I forgot. I was in shock. Can you teach Me how to pay obeisances?" So Mahi Ravana said, "All right, I will show you. This is how you pay obeisances." As soon as he bent down, Rama took his arrow and shot him. All these things happened at the same time, crushing the diamond, putting the lights out, and Rama shooting the arrow in Mahi Ravana's chest. And then he started dying. When he started dying, everything began to cave in. The jewels became powerless, the roads were cracking, the buildings were crumbling. And

then Hanuman came and said, "Rama and Lakshmana, sit on my shoulder!" And he broke everything and flew off. He came back to Sri Lanka. And then the war started.

### **Chapter 14: Ravana killed and Sita recovered**

In the area of Mahipuri, Nila the engineer of the Vanara army reconstructed the city, and Mahi Ravana's nephew was established as the king. Now the war started. This war was different from how the Kuruksetra war was fought. Day and night the fighting was going on. Demons especially become more strong after sunset, and a lot of damage was done to the monkey army. Especially when Indrajit came to the battlefield, and when Kumbhakarna came to the battlefield, a lot of damage was done to the monkeys. Indrajit used a lot of illusory techniques. By becoming invisible he fought, and at one point he made Rama and Lakshmana unconscious by using some special snake weapon. Then on the advice of one of the great doctors of the Vanara army and Vibhisana, Hanuman flew to the Himalayas and brought the Puspa-samjivani mountain. Puspa-samjivani means, "The flower of revitalisation." Actually they told him to bring the Puspa-samjivani leaf. But the Puspa-samjivani leaf had some sparkle or shine. Hanuman arrived in the Himalayan region and went to that particular mountain. The rishis who were meditating on the mountain, for them this Puspa-samjivani leaf was very valuable, because if you just took one leaf you wouldn't have to eat for five years. No food, no thirst, no hunger, no sickness. It was very nice. They saw that Hanuman had come. They knew if anyone came there they only come for Puspa-samjivani. There was nothing else there, just Puspa-samjivani plant and rishis closing their eyes and meditating for thousands of years. They knew that there was some danger, so they used their mystic power and made all the leaves shine like Puspa-samjivani. Hanuman was looking. "Ah, this one! But that one is also shining." He saw the whole mountain was shining. Hanuman said, "Oh, now I have a problem. I don't know which one to take. I will take the whole mountain." So he put his hand under the mountain and he lifted it up. The rishis were alarmed. "What's going on?" He flew, and before Hanuman came with the mountain, Jambavan very cleverly used the monkey army to kick all the dead bodies of demons into the ocean. He cleaned the whole place. Only the monkey dead bodies were kept. Because otherwise, when Puspa-samjivani mountain comes, then everyone will get up. They will be as before. So very cleverly Jambavan arranged that all the dead bodies of demons were kicked into the ocean, and some stones put on their head that they wouldn't come to the surface.

Then the Puspa-samjivani mountain came, and all the monkeys got up. Now the demons were small and the Vanaras were more. Even when he was bringing the mountain, even before he had landed they all got up, the power of Puspa-samjivani was so much. The fight was going on and everyone had very powerful weapons. Indrajit means 'the conqueror of Indra'. But he had a benediction that he would be killed only if while he is performing a sacrifice someone stops him and fights with him. Because Indrajit was very powerful, he was thinking, "Who would dare to stop me while I am performing sacrifice?" In between the war he disappeared and went to a very secret place to perform a sacrifice. But Vibhisana knew the place, and he brought Hanuman and Angada there, and they contaminated the sacrifice and pulled him out. Then there was a big fight, and finally Lakshmana killed Indrajit. One by one everyone was killed, and only Ravana was left. The devas helped a lot in the war, and Indra sent his chariot and his charioteer Matali there, which Ramacandra was using. He broke Ravana's chariot, killed his charioteer and his horses, broke the bow, broke his club and flag. And then he said, "All right Ravana, I will give you some time. You go today, and you come back tomorrow, with the good decision of giving Sita back to Me. If you do that, everyone who is dead will come back. You will get all your opulences. As if it has never happened, people will forget what they knew of you, and you will be known as a noble king. I will go back to Ayodhya in good friendship." Ravana felt this a great insult that he was not killed, so he went back to his palace. Then he remembered that Lord Shiva once said to him, "When your life is in danger, you call me. I will save you." There is a vina known as Rudra-vina, Lord Shiva's personal instrument. That was with Ravana, so he took that vina and started singing songs in praise of Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva is easily pleased, so he immediately came before Ravana and said, "Why did you call me?" Ravana said, "My life is in danger." Shiva said, "How is your life in danger? You tell me." Ravana said, "I took the wife of the son of Dasaratha, and He came here with his army of monkeys, and they have killed everybody. Even Kumbhakarna, Indrajit, everyone is gone. I am the only one left. And that king insulted me by telling me, "You go. I won't kill you today. Come back tomorrow." So over and above everything, I am insulted. Please save my prestige and my life." Shiva said, "Yes, I must save your life. I will save your life. Here, I am saving your life. Give Sita back." Ravana said, "No! Oh, the same thing again! You are cheating me! You promised me you would save my life, but you are not doing it." Shiva said, "No, I am saving your life. Did I say that to save your life I would go and fight with someone? I have my own method of saving your life. Just take

this small piece of advice: Give back Sita. Everything will be wonderful." Ravana said, "No, I expected that you would go and fight with Rama and finish Him." Shiva said, "I don't mind. I can go and fight with Rama, but I will be finished." Ravana said, "No, I am not going to give back Sita." Shiva said, "All right, then you will die. Who can protect you?" Then Ravana came the next day. When he came, Ramacandra was standing there holding His bow. Even to carry that bow was very difficult. It was much bigger than His body, and very heavy. He used to hold it like he was holding some grass. When Ravana came and Lakshmana said, "Jaya! Finally, he is surrendering!" Then the next moment Ravana said, "What am I doing? No, I am here to fight with you." Then Rama fired His arrow, and he finished Ravana. Then all of Ravana's queens came, and they were crying. Then Vibhisana and Hanuman came to Ramacandra, and they said, "So the war is over, and we are arranging for the cremation of Ravana. We are performing shraddha for all the ones who are dead. Please instruct us about bringing Sita." Ramacandra said, "Yes, you both go and tell Sita that Ravana is killed, and you bring her here." So they went there, and Sita devi had already got all the news from Vibhisana's daughter. Hanuman told her, "Mother, you are being called by Ramacandra, so you must come." So she dressed in the same cloth in which she was taken away by Ravana, and which was hanging on the tree. She dressed herself up, and she came. When she came, Hanuman and Vibhisana came and said to Ramacandra, "Here is your wife, Sita." Ramacandra said, "Tell her that she can do anything she likes and go anywhere she likes. I have killed Ravana, and she has no fear now. She can go where she likes." Hanuman cried, and he was looking at Vibhisana saying, "What is this? Cross the ocean, build a bridge, kill the demons, bring a mountain, and then, 'You go wherever you like.' Did He actually say this?" Vibhisana said, "Yes, he did. I am also confused." So then they went to Lakshmana, and asked him, "What is this?" Lakshmana said, "That's what I am also wondering. What is this?" So then they all came back to Rama, and Vibhisana was leading the party. "O Lord Ramacandra, can You please repeat what You have said?" Ramacandra said, "Didn't you hear Me? Now our work is done. You have killed the demons, so we will go back. You can tell this lady to do whatever she wants." So then Hanuman came to Sita devi, and he was looking at her face. Sita said, "Did you hear what He said?" Hanuman said, "Yes, He said you can do whatever you like." Sita to "You tell this king, my husband, that in going anywhere I liked, I did not have to wait all this time. I could have gone anywhere I liked. I was only waiting for Him to come. Now why is He rejecting me?" Then she prayed to all the devas, and they all appeared

there. Even Janaka and Dasaratha came. They were all present, and they said, "Ramacandra, this is Your wife, Sita. This whole program You did was to get her back. Now You take her back." Ramacandra said, "No. I don't have to take her back." Dasaratha and Janaka came and said to Him, "No, no. This will be too hard for her. Please take her back." Ramacandra said, "How will I take her back? She is not My wife." And then everyone became confused. Brahma came there and said, "This is Your lila. You just take an avatar to finish the demons and protect the devotees. But You don't do too much lila, because we will get confused. Lila is all right, but not too much lila. So here is Your wife, just take her." Rama said, "She is not My wife." Brahma said, "Why?" "How can she be My wife? She stayed in Ravana's garden for so long, four months. I may take her as my wife, but when I go back to Ayodhya, what will I say to My citizens? They will say, "Rama, You went to the forest. How was everything?" "Everything was all right except that My wife stayed with Ravana for four months." What will they think? Will I be able to keep this lady on the throne as my queen? On the simhasana, the great seat of the Ikshvaku dynasty, some woman who left her husband and stayed somewhere else for four months? They will complain to Me." Hanuman asked Ramacandra, "Then what are You supposed to do?" Rama said, "You ask Sita." So Hanuman came back with Sita and said, "You solve the problem." Sita said, "Ask Him. If He wants I can go to the fire, and prove that I am pure." Vibhisana came and told Ramacandra, and Ramacandra said, "Yes, that's a good idea. Tell Lakshmana to make a fire." Sita would walk into the fire, after all that trouble. So he left that place. And Vibhisana also left that place. They couldn't tolerate. Lakshmana was a thankless person all the time. He was always given the thankless jobs. So he went to Mother Sita and told her, "Please come, and go into the fire." Sita climbed into the fire. She was sitting on the fire and the fire was glowing. Nothing happened to her. That's all there in Ramayana. But something did happen. What happened was that Agni came there and brought the original Sita. Sita was actually never in Sri Lanka. This was a big scandal. This scandal was arranged by Lakshmana. When Marica got the arrow of Ramacandra in his heart, he shouted, "Oh Lakshmana! Oh Sita devi!" Sita devi told Lakshmana, "Your brother is in trouble! You must go and save Him!" Lakshmana was smiling. Sita said, "What kind of a demoniac person are you? How can you smile and laugh when Your brother is getting killed by the demons?" Lakshmana said, "What problem is there? When people get a problem they chant Rama's name. How can He have problem? Anyone who is afraid of an enemy, they chant Rama's name and they get protected. How can He have

any enemy? He is protecting everyone in this world. How can He have a problem?" Sita devi said, "Now I know your plan! You always wanted to have me as Your wife. Now that Rama will be dead You will be happy." Lakshmana closed his ears. "Oh no! What is this?" Then she said, "If not, then You must go now." So he said, "All right, I will go." But then he thought, "I'm not just going to leave like this." So He took His Agni astra, the astra of fire, and He drew a line in front of the ashrama. He said, "You be beyond this line. Don't cross this line." So then Ravana came as a sannyasi, and he was trying to first enter the house. When he came, he touched the line and the fire came, and he couldn't go in. Then he called, "Is there anyone in the house?" Sita devi came, and Ravana asked, "Is this the son of Dasaratha's house. He is in exile. Nobody who comes to this house goes without getting something. So I will give you something." Then she brought some fruits. Ravana said, "I don't enter houses. I am a naisthika sannyasa. You have to come outside and bring it to me." She said, "I have been told by my protectors not to cross this line." He said, "All right, I won't take. I'm going, and I'm angry." She said, "No, no, don't go angry." He said, "Yes, all these Dasaratha and Rama, they are all just misers. They don't give any charity. I'm going, and I'll tell everyone, `This is Rama'." So Sita devi thought, "Oh, this is very bad. I have to protect the name of my husband." So she crossed the line. When she crossed the line, the fire came again and Agni took her to his palace. He produced a Sita who was illusory, and that was the Sita Ravana took. One may say, "If she is illusory then what is the whole problem with this scene?" No, even that Sita belongs to the Lord only. She's not supposed to be in Ravana's garden. But then Ramacandra had a vow that He only married one Lakshmi in that incarnation. He was not going to take the other Lakshmi. He told her, "You can go wherever you like." He was not cruel, he just told her what she is supposed to be told. But this happened in a very secret manner, not many people knew. At least in the Ramayana, it is not stated. In the Kurma Purana, the pastime is mentioned. Agni brought the original Sita and handed her over to Ramacandra.

## Chapter 15: Return to Ayodhya

After getting back the original Sita from Agni, Ramacandra said, "Now we must go to Ayodhya." There was a big pushpa-vimana (flower airplane), which flew not by steering but by mind and mental instruction. So they all got on the pushpa-vimana, along with a few leading monkeys. Then the other monkeys said, "Well we're not going by this bridge and walking all the way to Kishkinda. We will also go by flight." So Ramacandra told the pushpa-vimana, "You expand." So it expanded and took all the Vanaras in it. They all took a flight. While they were going, Ramacandra was showing Sita, "This is Janasthan where I fought with 14,000 rakshasas and killed them with one arrow. This is Panchavati. This is the Dandakaranya forest. This is Kishkinda." They had a stop over in Kishkinda, and then they took Sugriva's family also. They all got in the pushpa-vimana. Then they were flying over Bharadvaja ashrama's. All the places where they visited Ramacandra was showing to Sita. "Do you remember this place? Do you remember that place?" In this way they were coming to Ayodhya. In the meantime Hanuman told Ramacandra, "We have to go fast, otherwise tomorrow sunrise, Bharata will jump in the fire. It is fourteen years already." Ramacandra told Hanuman, "You go before us." So Hanuman flew very fast and jumped in front of Bharata. By that time it was sunrise already, and Bharata was circumambulating the fire and preparing to jump into it. He went once, twice round. On the seventh round he would get into the fire. When he completed the second round he heard the sound, "Rama is coming! Rama is coming!" He was looked up, and he said, "Where is Rama coming?" Then he went around again. The third round he saw this figure jumping in front of him, a big tail and a club on his shoulder with a crown and so many ornaments on his chest. Bharata looked at him and said, "Who are you?" He said, "I am Hanuman, the servant of Rama." Bharata said, "What? I think that by fasting too much, I am having some hallucination." So he asked everybody else, "Do you also see this monkey?" They said, "Yes we see him." So then Hanuman jumped up on a tree, and he began to speak Ramayana. How everything happened, and he shortly summarized the whole thing. When Bharata heard this he was very happy. And then the pushpa- vimana came. So all the citizens of Ayodhya, because of Hanuman's prior information, they were able to receive Ramacandra properly. Bharata took Him to the simhasana, and said, "Here are Your shoes. Now I hand this country back to You. You will be king." And then there was a coronation ceremony. At this ceremony, everyone was given some gift. Ramacandra was giving, Sita was giving. Hanuman was very happy seeing that so many people are coming and getting something and

going. He was in ecstasy and he was chanting and dancing and jumping. So then Sita devi felt very merciful, and she called him." Hanuman, nobody gave you anything. Here, take this necklace." And she gave him a pearl necklace which she was wearing. Hanuman broke the pearls and started eating them. All the saintly people in the assembly were saying, "What is this monkey doing with Sitadevi's necklace?" They were all murmuring amongst themselves. "Ramacandra went to the forest, but why is He bringing the forest into the city? And what is he doing with the queen's necklace? He is insulting the kingdom." Ramacandra said, "Hanuman, they are all having some confusion over you." Hanuman said, "What is the confusion?" Ramacandra said, "Well, they are all saying that you don't think about Me so much, you do not value me so much." Hanuman said, "Then what should I do?" Ramacandra said, "You show them how nicely you value Me, and how you are respecting Me." Hanuman said, "If that is Your order I will do it." So then he put his hands on his chest and opened his body, and showed his heart. In his heart was a court-hall, and there was Ramacandra and Sita, and in front of them was Hanuman, and he was opening his chest, and inside the chest was, Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Bharata, Satrughna and Hanuman. And Hanuman was opening his chest. In this way they had an unlimited vision of Rama bhakti, and they were all convinced. The coronation was over, and then everyone did some service. Everyone, because He had not been there for fourteen years. So thousands of people were waiting to serve Ramacandra, and Hanuman was thinking, "What do I do all day here in Ayodhya?" He was walking and telling people about Ramayana, but he got bored. He came to Mother Sita and said, "Let's go to the forest again. This is nice, but I want some personal service of Ramacandra. I'm getting bored here." So Sita devi called the palace manager and said, "Any service?" He said, "No, there is a waiting list of people waiting to take service." Hanuman said, "You have brought me here for what? If I cannot serve Rama, then what is the meaning of me sitting here? You must get me some service. I'm depending on you." So he was given the service of waking up Rama in the morning, and he was happy. Another day, Hanuman went to Sita devi's house, and he said, "Mataji, I'm very hungry. Please give me something." She said, "I am putting sindhur on my hair. Please wait, and I will give you something." Hanuman said, "Oh, I can't wait. I'm very hungry." "No-one can be that hungry," she said. "You just wait." "No mataji, I'm so hungry I could die. I need some fruit." She said, "Just wait until I have finished putting this sindhur in my hair." Then Hanuman looked at her and said, "Why do you this? Why are you putting this red stuff on your hair?" She said, "You know why I do this? Because if I

do it then Ramacandra will be happy, and He will live long, and He will have great opulence. All these things will happen." Hanuman said, "Oh," and then he left. Quickly Sita finished, and got the fruits together. She called out, "Hanuman! Hanuman! Where are you?" Hanuman was not to be found." But he was so hungry." She clapped. They all went, but they couldn't find him. Then two minutes later, some figure entered Sita's room. It was completely red. She looked, and it had the shape of a monkey, you couldn't see the face, the nose, chadar, dhoti, anything. He was completely red. He had taken bath in red. She said, "Who are you?" He said, "I am Hanuman." "What did you do?" "I covered my whole body with sindhur. You said that if you only colour this much, then Rama will get happy and prosperous, so I cover my whole body and He will get more." That is why when you see Hanuman deity it is all red, because he puts sindhur all over his body. The mataji only put it one place, but he took bath in sindhur. That was how much love and affection Hanuman had for Ramacandra. So in this way they were living very happily in Ayodhya till Sita devi got pregnant. She had a desire to go to the forest, because she liked the forest so much. Wildflowers, bumble-bees, deer and peacocks. So she had this desire, "I should go to the forest again." So one day she told Ramacandra, "Can we go to the forest again?" Ramacandra said, "Why the forest? No-one is giving any delegation." She said, "I like the forest." He said, "All right, I will take you." Every evening, Rama and Lakshmana would dress up like ordinary citizens and go around Ayodhya. Who is doing what, who is saying what, they will check it. They were feeling the pulse of the citizens, seeing if they liked them or if there is some enemy, a very important job. Ramacandra and Lakshmana were going around like that. They heard a big scene in a colony, a small colony. Dhobis were living there. So they hid and saw what was going on. There was a lady being kicked by her husband and she was crying. She was holding his feet and saying, "Do anything, but don't send me out of the house." He said, "No! You are not qualified to enter this house. You can go away, I don't like you." So then she was calling all the villagers. "Please help me. What did I do wrong" So they all came for judgement, and the husband said, "No judgement! I am husband, she is wife. I decide what she does, and she is not coming in this house any more. She can go." Then some elder people came and said, "What are you doing? This is very bad. She is not a bad woman, she likes you and wants to serve you. Why are you kicking her away?" He said, "You are saying all this, but if your wives did the same thing, you wouldn't be even standing and talking, you would have finished her." "What did she do?" they asked. He said, "This lady went to washcloth, and she never came back. Three days later she

came. I asked her what happened, she is saying, `Somebody came and said that my father was sick, so I had to go. I was only in my father's house." They said, "So what is the problem? She was only in her father's house." He said, "How do I know? She may have gone anywhere. She is not pure, I am not taking her." They said, "No, you must take her. She is crying, she is very affectionate for you." He said, "Do you think I am Lord Ramacandra, that after keeping my wife in someone else's house I will take her back? I'm not as cheap as Lord Rama." Ramacandra heard this, and he looked at Lakshmana. Lakshmana pretended that he hadn't heard this, and he was looking away. He didn't want any more scenes. When they came back they were very silent and didn't discuss anything. Ramacandra didn't take any prashad that night. Then he called Lakshmana and said, "Tomorrow morning, just at the time of sunrise, you take Sita and you drop her in the forest." Early in the morning, Lakshmana's chariot came, and he knocked on the door. Sita was thinking, "It must be Ramacandra." She said, "Who is it?" "Lakshmana," came the answer. "What is the news Lakshmana?" she asked. He said, "Ramacandra has told me to take you to the forest." "Jaya!" she said. She had wanted to go to the forest, and she thought that Ramacandra was now sending her with Lakshmana. So she went and Lakshmana told her, "Ramacandra said you are not taking anything." She said, "What about those cosmetics?" "No. Nothing. Just get on the chariot." "I can't take anything at all?" she asked. "Nature will provide you everything," He said. He was actually worrying and pining in His heart, but He could not say anything. She happily got on the chariot, and they went. They crossed the Tamasa river, and they came to the banks of the Ganges. Lakshmana said, "You get down." She got down, and Lakshmana took the reins. She said, "Hey, where are you going?" He said, "I am leaving you in the forest." "You are leaving me like this in the forest, in this place? There is nobody here!" "Yes," he said. "You are banished to the forest. Your husband, My brother has banished you to the forest because of the dhobi's criticism." He couldn't stand there any more. Quickly He drove the chariot, and disappeared. Sita started crying, she fell on the ground and became unconscious. Two brahmacaris were coming from Valmiki's ashrama to gather some firewood in that area, and they saw this queen lying there. They ran back to the ashrama and told Valmiki. "There is a queen there, she is pregnant and unconscious." So Valmiki knew who that was. He came up to her, and told her, "You stay in my ashrama and deliver the children there. I promise you, somehow I will make compromise between you and Lord Ramacandra." She stayed in the ashrama.

## Chapter 16: Sita proves her chastity

Two or three days passed, and all the brahmacaris in the ashrama were talking. "Prabhu, do you know what has happened? Why has this queen visited our ashrama?" "Kings and queens always visit ashramas." "You are too innocent. This queen has been banished by her husband." "Then we should give her shelter." "What do you mean, give her shelter? Ashrama is not meant for giving shelter to destitute matajis. If her husband has kicked her out, she must go. What is she doing here? It's a bad name for our ashrama. Tomorrow even the king will get angry at us. Even the devas will be unhappy." So they were talking like this. It became bigger and bigger, and everyone was talking. Valmiki was sitting in his yajna-shala doing some yajna, and he saw someone talking. "Sssh! Silence!" He continued the yajna, and then he noticed someone talking again. Quickly he finished the yajna and did a purnahuti. "Everyone come here! What is your problem?" They said, "No problem, everything is all right." "No, no, there is some problem." Valmiki said. "What problem? If some queen comes here, what is the problem for us? We are brahmacaris, we don't care. We didn't say anything. Who is saying?" Valmiki said, "No, you are saying something. Don't play jokes with me. I don't want to know who said it. Just tell me what is the subject." One of the brahmacaris said, "They say that maybe the queen is not chaste, and maybe they will tell something about us, maybe it is bad for our ashrama. They are all telling like that." Valmiki said, "We can solve this problem. I am telling you, she is chaste." When the founder was not there, they could give so many opinions, but this was the founder himself. They said, "Maharaja, you say she is chaste." Valmiki replied, "Yes, I say she is chaste." "How do you know?" they asked. Valmiki said, "All right, let us argue. How do you know she is unchaste?" They said, "Why does her husband keep her like this in the forest?" Valmiki said, "Do you know who is her husband?" They said, "Yes, we know. The king of Ayodhya, Ramacandra." "Do you know who he is?" Valmiki asked. "We know He is the Supreme Lord." Valmiki said, "So then, if the Supreme Lord is kicking someone out, that must be a very qualified person. What is the problem for you and I?" They said, "But still, others will criticize." Valmiki said, "All right, we will do a test. Bring Sita here." Sita came, and Valmiki said, "They are all saying you are unchaste. I know you are chaste, but you have to prove it." She said, "Anything you say, I will do. Do you want me to go into fire again?" Then they all said, "No, no! Brahma-hatya will come. Suppose you die, and then what happens?" Valmiki said, "She is saying that she is ready for any test, so you prescribe that test." Then they all went outside and made a committee. Then they came back, and said, "She

must cross the Sitiba-sala lake. Then she is chaste." Valmiki said, "All right, we will arrange it today." So they all went to the lake. This Sitiba-sala lake was very huge, almost like an ocean. It is in the Himalayas. This lake had also expanded outside its region into a forest part of Ayodhya, because some rishi wanted to have the lake there, so she expanded there. This lake was known as Sitiba-sala because there was a couple of birds. The husband bird one day came back after getting grains, and he saw the wife bird was not there. He was waiting, and after sunset the bird came. Around the lake are the trees, and that is where the rishis are, speaking so much dharma and religion. So even the birds were influenced. He said, "It is already sunset. Why are you coming so late?" She said, "I lost my way. And somehow I found my way back here again." He said, "No, no. You have to do some prayascitta, some atonement. I think you are unchaste." The female bird said, "Birds don't have these rules!" The male bird said, "Well we are living in this ashrama area, and here everyone has dharma. We cannot have adharma, it will not be acceptable. You can go, go somewhere." And he started crying, "What happened to my family? Why has it become like this?" So as the female bird was flying, some devas known as the Dik-palas, guardians of the eight directions, and there was the Pala or controller of the directions, they were in the tank taking bath. All the devas took bath in that tank. They saw the bird crying, and they said, "Come here. Why are you crying?" She said, "What to do? My husband says I am not chaste." They all laughed and said, "What? But you are a bird! What does he want?" She said, "He says I must do some prayascitta." "There is no prayascitta for animals and birds. Even the human beings don't do it." She said, "Somehow or other, please take me back to my husband." They came there and said, "Hey! What is this? You don't have these things, you are birds. She lost her way and came back, now come on, take her." He said, "No. This is a religious area. Everyone is religious here. How can I be irreligious? Not possible. You are devas, and you know so much shastra. Please prescribe some prayascitta." So they said, "All right. You cross this lake." The bird said, "You think that this small bird can cross this lake?" They said, "She will cross it. And if she crosses the lake, you accept that she is chaste." So then the bird said, "I will cross this lake," but she fell in the water. But the Dik-palas, the controllers of direction, made some arrangement that she crossed the lake and came to the other side. When she got there, they said, "Look, no bird can do it. She has done it, so she must be chaste. Take her." From that time this lake was known as Sitiba-sala, because a Sitiba bird crossed the lake and proved her chastity. So the ashrama inmates of Valmiki decided that Sitadevi should also prove her

chastity in this way. So Sita devi looked at the lake, and she said, "Even if I have thought about another man when I was asleep, unconscious, dreaming, sick, or in my mind, if I have ever thought of another man, I will drown." And then she jumped. She didn't even try to swim, but the waves of the lake carried her across to the other side. She was dropped there. Valmiki looked at the brahmacaris as if to say, "What do you say now?" When he looked they were all gone. As soon as they saw she was halfway over they went back. Then they made an outhouse for her and accommodated her. She stayed there. Every day she was worshipping Ramacandra, and would perform some austerity for His welfare. Although He had kicked her out, she was performing some austerity for Him. That is a wife.

### **Chapter 17: The great festival**

Slowly the time passed, and Sita devi gave birth to children. There are opinions that she only gave birth to one child and that Valmiki created the other child. Whatever happened, there were two children called Lava and Kusa. Valmiki wrote the Ramayana up to the point of Rama's coronation, so he taught Lava and Kusa this Ramayana, how to sing it. But Lava and Kusa were not told who they were. They were told that there was a great king, and this is the lila of the great king, and they must learn it. So they learnt it very nicely and they would sing it in front of Sita. Sometimes Sita would cry. They would ask, "Why are you crying?" and she would say, "I was just thinking how much suffering that lady Sita would have been having." Lava and Kusa became expert Ramayana singers, and Ramacandra decided to perform ashvamedha-yajna. Satrugna went with the horse all around the world. Ramacandra could not perform the yajna without the wife, so they made a golden deity of Sita. The deity was next to Him, and in this way they were doing the yajna. A big yajnashala was built, and all the rishis from all over India were there. So there was large accommodation, and entertainment, drama etc. They didn't know where to go, because there were so many programs going on at the same time. Lakshmana was arranging all the shows, all the dramas, dances and music. Vibhisana took care of the treasury, he was in the reception. They were all accommodated and everyone was having a nice festival. Then Valmiki came to the gate. Not everyone was allowed to come, so as he came in the gate, he left Lava and Kusa and said "You go and try to get inside." In front of him was Angada, standing there. There were many gates, so Lava and Kusa came and were walking. Angada put his tail there and said, "Hey! Where are you going?" They said, "Yajna is happening, so we must go." Angada

said, "Who are you? Have you been invited?" They said, "We are disciples of Valmiki." Angada said, "Oh, disciples of Valmiki! But one thing, you have to have an invitation, otherwise we don't let you in." So then Lava and Kusa said, "How do you know we don't have invitations?" Angada said, "I have the list of people who are invited. Your name is not here." They said, "You read it properly. Our name is there. It must be there." He started reading, and they went inside. Angada informed someone that they had gotten in. The guards came there and they saw Lava and Kusa. "Hey, where are you going? You are not allowed here. We have information that you have come inside without permission." So immediately they took their vinas and started singing. They were singing the dynasty of Ikshvaku. Then the guards heard this, and they were entranced. Very soon there was a big crowd. Any rishi who was walking past also stopped and listened, thinking it was one of the programs. They didn't know it was just someone singing spontaneously. They were sitting there listening and relishing Ramayana. So then Bharata came there and said, "What is this crowd? Move along." Someone said to him, "Just listen to this. Ramacandra has just taken birth." Bharata said, "Ramacandra just took birth?" "Just listen," they said. Bharata sat down, and he also forgot where he was going and what he was doing. Hanuman was going on patrol, checking everything. When he heard this kirtan, he also came and sat down, and forgot everything. All the activities of the yajna came to a standstill, because Lava and Kusa were narrating the nectarean pastimes of Rama. Finally Lakshmana came, the chief controller. "What's going on here?" They said, "Some gurukulis are doing Ramayana." Lakshmana said, "This is a good thing! I can make this into a program." He called them over. "Come here boys. Why don't you do Ramayana as a program?" They said, "We don't mind doing it, but how can we do it if we are not invited?" Lakshmana said, "I will invite you as special guests. Who is stopping you here?" So he announced to the guests, "Lava and Kusa can go anywhere, do any thing, pick up anything, eat anything, sit anywhere they like, play any style, they can do anything. They must just do the Ramayana class every day, that's all. They have nothing else to do all day, just Ramayana and maybe a little astrology in the morning. That's all." So Lava and Kusa came on the stage, and they were singing Ramayana. All the guests were sitting there listening. Then at one point they thought, "Why shouldn't we call Ramacandra for this?" So Hanuman went there and said, "There is a wonderful Ramayana program going on there in the yajnasala." "Ramayana? What's that?" Hanuman said, "Your pastimes." Rama said, "Oh, I would like to hear that." Ramacandra came there, and sat down. Everyone was listening. They were describing the

Vanaras, killing of the demons, and everything like that. Ramacandra was so happy that every ten minutes he was throwing pearl necklaces, giving wonderful gifts to them, embracing them, covering them with kisses. They were so fired up they were going on and finally they came to the coronation, and then they stopped, because that's where Valmiki's Ramayana ends. Hanuman said, "Go more, go more!" The boys said, "Go more? That's all we know! And that's why we came here, because we wanted to know what happened afterwards?" So then Lakshmana said, "I will show you. This is Hanuman. Remember Hanuman, whom you were singing about?" They touched his feet and got his blessings. "I am Lakshmana." They circumambulated Lakshmana and paid obeisances. They had so much respect for the characters of Ramayana. "This is Vasistha, Visvamitra, Gautama," and everyone was introduced. Hanuman brought them to Ramacandra. "This is Ramacandra." Then they also paid obeisances. And then they asked, "Where is Sita?" Hanuman looked down. They ran to Vasistha, and asked, "Where is Sita?" He looked the other way. They came to Ramacandra, and they were on both sides of him, shaking him and demanding, "Come on, tell us! Where is Sita?" He was just crying. Then they went around asking everyone, "Where is Sita? Where is Sita?" Some lady told them that Sita was in the forest. "What is she doing in the forest? How did she go to the forest?" Someone told, "Some dhobi gave some criticism, so she was sent to the forest." Lava and Kusa took their vinas and came in front of Rama. They broke the vinas there in front of him, throwing them on the floor. "You are not glorious. We made a mistake. Why did we sing Your glories? What a demoniac person You are! You are more demoniac than Ravana! He is bringing somebody else's wife and he is a demon. You are a great Ikshvaku king and you're kicking your wife out because some dhobi said something. Shame! Shame! Shame! No-one should read this Ramayana. We won't copy it or give it to anyone. We are going." No-one could say anything. What could they say? And then Ramacandra came to them and said, "Please bear with Me. Just give Me some time to explain things. You are rishi-putras, sons of saintly people. You must not lose sense control." They said, "You talk of sense control! You sent your wife to the forest because some dhobi criticized her, and now you are talking of sense control. You have no more dharma. You were always thinking that you were the personification of religion. No! You are a great cheater! Why did you waste our vach-sakti, our power of speech by describing the glories of a person who has no honour in this world? We are going." Then Valmiki was waiting outside. The boys came out, and he said, "So? What happened?" "What happened? There is no Sita there! They sent her to the

forest." Valmiki said, "Did you talk with Ramacandra?" They said, "Who was this Ramacandra? We don't want to see His face any more." Then they were running, and Valmiki said, "Wait, first let me go and say something to them, and then I will come." So he went and told Ramacandra, "My students are upset because you don't have Sita. So, what is wrong with Sita? Why don't you take her?" Ramacandra did not say one word, He just went inside the palace. Valmiki came back and said to Lava and Kusa, "Whatever it is, you must not offend elders, He is a great personality. You must be careful not to commit any aparadha." They said, "What aparadha? We won't even think of Him. How can we then commit aparadha? He's not even qualified to be thought of by someone like us." They completely rejected Rama. Then they came to Sitadevi's room, and Sita was writing "Rama" and worshipping Rama. They said to her, "We saw Him face to face. Do you know what He did? He sent His wife to the forest." She said, "You are good boys, you shouldn't say like this." So they kept quiet.

### **Chapter 18: Lava and Kusa's challenge**

Now the horse was coming back. After going all around the world, it was coming back to Ayodhya. Right on the bank of the Tamasa river, Lava and Kusa saw it. There were soldiers going past with the horse. They saw the symbol of the sun dynasty on there. "It must be something to do with that..." but they wouldn't even mention the name. Kusa said, "Let us go and see." So they saw this horse with a golden plate, and they read the plate. "This horse belongs to Lord Ramacandra of Ayodhya. He is performing ashvamedha-yajna. Anyone who stops this horse must meet the army of Ayodhya. Anyone who does not stop this horse must give a gift." Lava and Kusa said, "We will give a gift!" They told all the boys, "Tie this horse." Then the army was coming and Satrughna was coming. They saw the horse, and some children were standing there playing. That was normal. When he got closer he saw that they also had bows and arrows, and Satrughna said, "Hey, you are playing some Brahma? You are holding bows and arrows." They looked up at him, and they said, "Why are you talking? You must fight with us. We have stopped your horse, and we are not giving you any gift." Satrughna said, "Fight with you? You are just small children. Do you know who I am?" Lava said, "By looking at you, I can see that you are Satrughna." "How do you know me?" he asked. "That is not the question! Why are you wasting time? If you have any backbone, you fight with us!" So Satrughna went back and got on the chariot. "All right boys, get ready." They said, "We are ready." They were playing marbles. Then Lava said to Kusa, "He is going to throw snakes. That's what he will do."

They knew the whole Ramayana, who has what astra, how they will use it. They have all information. Satrughna was chanting all the mantras. "How am I going to do it? All right, I will perform my duty," and he gave the naga-parsha. While they were coming, Kusa took a piece of grass and threw it. When Satrughna saw that, he said, "I have seen this somewhere, taking a grass and throwing it." So Kusa threw the grass and it came and ate the naga-parsha, and hit Satrughna on the head. He fell unconscious. One tenth of the army fled to Ayodhya, which was very close, only about five or six hours of travel away. They came there and there was a drum there, which they beat. Everyone came there, and they told Lakshmana, "Danger! Satrughna has fallen! There are two boys who look like rishi-putras, and they are very good in astra-shastra. They just took a blade of grass and counteracted Satrughna's snake weapon." Lakshmana said, "I have seen this before." And then he remembered Visvamitra's yajna. "How is it that these small boys are doing it? Bharata! Go and see." So Bharata went, taking half of the Ayodhya army with him. Bharata came there and saw the boys, and he gave him some sweets. They took the sweets, and then Bharata said, "So are you going to give the horse back?" "No," they said. "But I gave you sweets." "You gave me sweets, and I ate them." "So no horse?" Bharata asked. "No horse." they said. "Now fight." Bharata said, "Fight? Do you know who I am?" "Yes," they said. "You worship shoes." Bharata said, "Are you not the same boys who were singing Ramayana there in the yajnasala?" They said, "Yes, we are the same boys, and we know that you worship shoes. You are offering camara to the shoes, and you were going to enter the fire. And then a monkey came out of the sky and told you something, and you believed it all." They were taking the Ramayana and making it into a Kimayan. They were upset with Rama. Bharata said, "Don't say this, this is aparadha. Don't say like this. With one astra I can finish your whole ashrama." "Oh, whole ashrama?" they asked. One of the boys took an arrow and drew a square, one foot by one foot, on the floor. They said to Bharata, "You please pluck the grass from here this one foot square patch. If you can do it, then I will see that you have strength." Bharata looked at that, and Kusa said to Lav use the Agni astra." He took the Agni astra, and he was going to burn that place and show them how powerful he was. Kusa took a hair from his sikha and kept it in front of him. Agni astra was coming, and this hair was standing there. As soon as the Agni astra hit that, it cooled down and couldn't move any more. Bharata said, "What is this?" So he took the Brahmastra. Before he could chant his mantras, and he was just getting ready, the Brahmastra was just starting from his bow and they both uprised Brahmastras, Lava

and Kusa together. Both used Brahmastras. Before his Brahmastra was away, Bharata saw two coming. "Oh! What is that?" He was burned, and he fell down. Half of the army was also finished, all burnt into coal, everybody was black. The messenger ran off to tell Ramacandra, "Bharata also fell." So then Lakshmana said, "This is very bad. I will go myself." He came in His chariot with the sun symbol on the top, so Lava and Kusa were standing there with their bows and arrows. Kusa had said, "Next is Lakshmana, so we can't just play around." Lakshmana said to them, "Listen to my advice. You may know a few astras, you may do some tricks, because your guru is protecting you. But you must understand, I am Lakshmana." They said, "Yeah, yeah, you are Lakshmana. You were chastised by Mother Sita. You wanted to enjoy her, isn't it? Don't you remember that?" Lakshmana said, "Oh! Why are you bringing this information to the surface?" And then they said, "And you were the rascal that brought Sita to the forest, we heard in Ayodhya. At least tell us, where did you leave her?" He had promised Rama that he would not tell anyone, and he said, "Why are you talking politics? Let us fight." So he took his astras, and the combat went on for some hours. It was tough to beat Lakshmana down. Finally he was also shot down. He received wounds on the face, and he fell down. The news reached Ayodhya. Ramacandra had not been informed yet. Lakshmana was superintending all of this, and now Lakshmana had left. Ramacandra had not been informed of the loss, He was only told that the horse had been stopped, and something was going on. Now He was told what the real story was and He got upset. He rose and said, "I am going." Hanuman said, "This is my job. You sit down and do your yajna." So Hanuman went alone, flying through the space. So Lava and Kusa were talking. "Who will come next? It must be that monkey. We will give him fruits." "No, no. He will not be into fruits, he will get upset, because we have put Lakshmana down. When Hanuman sees this he's going to get on our case." "So what should we do? Should we go to Valmiki?" "It's not that desperate yet. We can manage the situation." So he called some boys, and told them, "Do some Rama kirtan." So they began chanting, "Raghupati raghava rajarama, patita pavana sita-rama." They were all chanting and dancing. Hanuman was coming there. "Oh! Kirtan!" And he completely forgot everything. He was dancing in front, "Raghupati raghava..." Lava and Kusa said, "Keep going, and don't come back. Even the message won't reach Ayodhya. We'll have the horse." So they were having kirtan and going around the whole forest. Hanuman was leaping and dancing. He was leading kirtan, and then playing mrdanga. He had totally forgotten what he had come for. Lava and Kusa were sitting there

laughing. "What an army! What a king! And what a monkey! What a crew!" Hanuman had not come back for a long time, so Ramacandra said, "We must go." So Vasistha, Visvamisra, Gautama, all rishis and saintly people and the leading citizens of Ayodhya came to the forest. Then they saw this Lava and Kusa playing there next to the horse. They were acting as if they didn't hear Him or see Him. They were completely ignoring Him. Ramacandra called out, "Lava, Kusa. Come here." So they said, "Who are You to order us to come there? You come here!" He said, "I am the Lord of Ayodhya." "That may be," they said. "But we are the princes here in Valmiki's ashrama. We are rishi-putras. You cannot order the rishis, it is not possible. You want to hear some lilas on that? Do you remember what happened to Visvamisra when he went to Vasistha's ashrama? Didn't you learn these things? Where did you go to school?" Ramacandra came to them and caressed their heads. "Just control your senses, please. Be patient. I have not done anything wrong. Just for the prestige of My dynasty, I don't want anyone to criticize the Ikshvaku dynasty. That is why I did that." They said, "We are not asking explanations from you. Where are the arrows? Why don't you fight?" Ramacandra said, "No, I won't fight. If I use one arrow, that's enough." Kusa said, "Some 14,000 drunkards came in Janasthan. They didn't know what to do, bumbling around, and you finished them with one arrow. Big glory! You don't scare us with this. We know the whole Ramayana." Ramacandra said, "That's all right. They were all weak, you are very strong. But if you are strong you should also be intelligent. If your guru sees this, he will not allow it. Did you get the blessings of your guru?" They said, "Did you get the blessings of your guru when you sent Sita to the forest? Did you ask Vasistha?" He hadn't done it. In fact, after doing it Vasistha asked him, "Why did you do this?" Ramacandra had no reply to this. Kusa said, "Oh, you can do it without your guru's instruction. We can't though, because you are tall and we are short, isn't it? Let us see your arrows! Come on!" Ramacandra got very upset. "Maybe this has to be done," he said. He took acaman, and he was going to take his arrow. Just then, Hanuman, who had been going around and around, came to a big banyan tree and then the boys tied him on the tree. He was so absorbed, "Rama, Rama, Rama." They tied him. And then they stopped the kirtan. As soon as kirtan was stopped, he said, "Chant! Chant! Why did you stop?" They said, "No, no. We are going because we have work in the ashrama. But we will give you some engagement. You please count how many leaves are on this tree. You have nothing else to do." And they left. He was looking up, and suddenly he remembered, "I came here for some other purpose." He broke the rope, and he came to

where everything was happening. He saw there was Rama, and there were these two boys, and he looked at Rama who was going to touch his arrow. Hanuman said, "There's something wrong here. I must get some help." So he ran into the ashrama of Valmiki, and he was asking everyone, "Where is Maharaja?" "Here is Maharaja," they said. He came to Valmiki and said, "Ramacandra and your disciples are there, and they will be finished and the whole ashrama will be burnt. Rama is angry." Valmiki said, "Oh!" He got up and was running. And then Sita devi came out. Hanuman saw her and said, "Sita! You are here!" She said, "Yes, they are my children." Hanuman said, "Do you know what's happening? Ramacandra is going to kill them." So Sita devi ran out also.

### **Chapter 19: Conclusion - Rama ends His lila**

Everyone was running to the place where the confrontation between Rama, Lava and Kusa was. Sita came and said, "Stop! What are you doing? You are going to finish your own dynasty!" Ramacandra said, "Who is that? Sita! Valmiki!" So He stopped. He went to Valmiki, and Valmiki said, "This is your wife Sita. These are your children, Lava and Kusa. Somehow they are upset with You, because You sent Sita out of the country." Lava and Kusa were listening to all this, and it all came together in their minds. "Oh, this is my father!" So they fell at His feet. Ramacandra said, "Now I am very happy. At the end of Ashvamedha, somebody stopped My horse, but they were only My children. Otherwise it would be a very bad name for Me. All right Lava and Kusa, you come. We will go, and I am very sorry for sending Sita to the forest. I won't do this any more." When He was talking like this, Sita was folding her hands and closing her eyes, and she was praying. Ramacandra said, "Sita, come and we will go." She said, "No." "You're not coming?" "No, I'm not." "Where are you going to go?" Rama asked her. "Wherever I'm supposed to go. I've had enough. I'm not taking any more of this treatment. I'm going." Ramacandra said, "No, no, you must come with Me." Sita said, "No, I am not coming." And she prayed to Mother Earth. The earth opened and Bhumidevi came out and took her inside. Ramacandra lamented and came back to Ayodhya, kept Lava and Kusa as the kings of Ayodhya, and then he ruled for 30,000 years after that, and so many demons were killed. The Madhu demon was killed near Vrndavana area, and a city was established there, Mathura. Satrugna was sent to the Sind region. Lakshmana and Rama were there, and the time came when he had to wind up His pastimes. So Brahma instructed Yama, to go and tell Rama that it is time for Him to come back. Yama came, and he dressed himself like a Brahmin, and said, "I want to get some charity from

Ramacandra." So he came in there. When Ramacandra asked him what he wanted for charity he said, "I want a private, confidential discussion with you. No-one should be there." So Ramacandra said, "Hanuman, you go. And Lakshmana, you also should go." The Brahmin said, "No-one should come in between. If anyone comes during our discussion, he must be banned to the forest." So Rama said, "That's no problem, no-one will come. You can tell me." So then he started talking with him. In the meantime when Lakshmana went outside, he saw the four Kumaras there. He paid obeisances and said, "Oh, you are here! This is a great fortune for us! Here is a nice guest house for you to stay." They said, "We didn't come here to stay, we came to see Rama." Lakshmana said, "You can see Rama, but come and take rest, take some prashad." They said, "We will see Rama first, then rest and prasad." So then Lakshmana said, "No, you cannot go." They said, "What? Same thing again? Someone did this before, and do you know what happened?" Lakshmana said, "Please don't get angry with me. I know you are absolute personalities, but Ramacandra has given some promise to a brahmin that no-one will come in." "So?" they asked. "What will happen if you go in?" "I will be banned to the forest," he said. The Kumaras said, "You won't take this sacrifice for serving us saintly people?" He said, "Yes, I must take it! Why didn't I think of that?" and he ran inside. As soon as he came inside, the Brahmin stopped talking. "Oh! He has heard my secret! What will happen now?" Ramacandra said, "Lakshmana, you are banned to the forest." Lakshmana said, "Yes, you are very expert in banning people, so I will go. My only point is that the Kumaras are outside. They came to see you." "The Kumaras are here?" Rama said, and he ran outside. When he got outside, there were no Kumaras. They only came to do that, and they had already left. When he came back, there was no Brahmin. He had also left. Then he was looking for Lakshmana, but there was no Lakshmana. He had gone to the forest. Lakshmana went to the forest and sat down. He meditated, opened His eyes and Sesha Naag came out of His mouth and He entered the ocean. Then Ramacandra called Lava and Kusa and said, "Now I am going." All the citizens said, "No. Where are You going? We will also go with You." He said, "If all of you go with Me, then Lava and Kusa won't be kings. They have to rule somebody." He made a calculation on who stays and who goes. Sixty percent of the population decided to go, and Ramacandra walked out with His mothers and the elderly people like Sumantra. The citizens were also there, and they went to the Sayayu river, and Ramacandra entered the Sayayu river with all of His citizens, together. No-one's bodies were found. They were all elevated to the spiritual abode of Ayodhya. Lava and Kusa ruled and the dynasty was

continued until fourteen generations after the beginning after the beginning of Kali-yuga. The last king had no child, and in this way the surya-vamsa was over. Ramacandra does these pastimes a little different in each Treta-yuga. Sometimes Sita was taken from the forest, sometimes from Janaka's palace, sometimes from Ayodhya. A little bit different every time, but still the same thing. Ravana is stealing, and Rama is destroying the demons. He leaves us this wonderful literature through Valmiki, that we can all listen to it and if we know the appearance and activities of the Lord in principle, then after leaving this body we won't come back to this material world.

**RAMACANDRA BHAGAVAN KI JAYA!**

This article was a pravachan (lecture given by His Grace Atma Tattva Prabhu

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Compiled for the upliftment of Sanatan Dharma

Narottam das & Arjun Nandlal

**E-mail [info@dipika.org.za](mailto:info@dipika.org.za)**

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