

OCEAN OF NECTAR ISSUE 295

EMAGAZINE FOR EVERY EKADASI (RAMA EKADASI)

[5 NOVEMBER 2026]

OCEAN OF NECTAR

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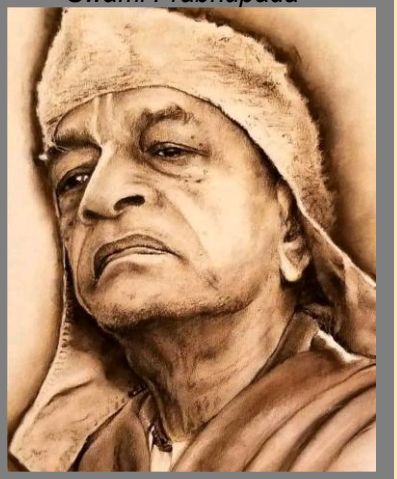
1. **LORD RAMACANDRA CAME BACK TO AYODHYA AND TOOK HIS KINGDOM BACK**

⇓ Ramachandra was very pleased with Hanuman

Hanuman bringing the message of Sita Devi from Lanka and after finding Sita Devi, what did Hanuman do? Hanuman burned Lanka and then he came back the same way he went. And Ramachandra was very pleased with Hanuman. And then Ramachandra told Hanuman - That you are the best of the servants. There are three kinds of servants. The best is one who accomplishes what he has been asked to do and even more than that. He accomplishes more than what he has been asked to accomplish. And Hanuman was told that you have been asked to find Sita's whereabouts and you not only found Sita's whereabouts, you also consoled her with the assurance that we will and rescue her soon, then you found out the enemy. You found out about their fortification and other such arrangements. And on top of everything, you have instilled fear in their hearts, in the heart of the enemy. And then Ramachandra said that the second class is he who just accomplishes what he has been asked to do although he is capable of doing more than that. And the third class one is, the third class one is - he doesn't even do what he has been asked to do. So, these are the three kinds of servants. And Ramachandra told that Hanuman was the best, he was the first class. And Ramachandra told him that, "Look I am in exile, I don't have anything to give you as my appreciation for your service. I am just a person banished into the forest. So, all I can do, all I can offer you, is my embrace"... and saying that Lord Ramachandra embraced Hanuman. Then Rama asked Hanuman "So tell me about the situation of Lanka" and Hanuman told that "Lanka is in an island. Lanka is an island and it is situated on top of a Mountain. The top of the mountain is flat. And the city of Lanka is situated on top of the Trikuta Mountain. It is surrounded by a huge and massive golden wall. The walls of the city are also made of solid gold and then the place is guarded by hundreds and thousands of very powerful soldiers. And around that around the wall there is a moat all around. and those moats are filled with crocodiles and other ferocious aquatics. So, these make Lanka practically invincible, unapproachable. And on top of that, the whole city all around is surrounded by a deep and dense forest. So, the only people who can approach Lanka are the monkeys. So, know you see why the demigods were asked to take birth as monkeys. So, there was a special necessity. So, after getting all the information's. He was told about Ravana how powerful he was. So, Rama said " now is the auspicious time when the *abijit nakshatra* is in the ascending, so let us start our march towards Lanka. Because *Abijit* is the star that brings victory. So, in order to confirm the victory of their onslaught.

The International Society For Krishna Consciousness ISKCON

Founder Acharya His Divine Grace A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



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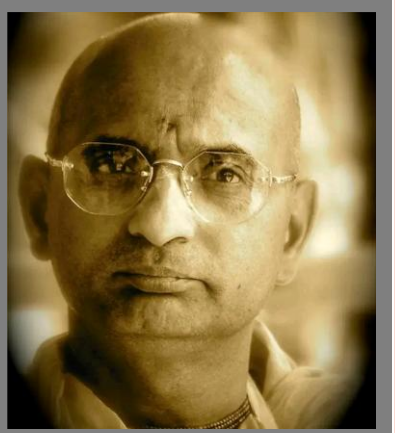


They started and there were billions of monkeys all around. They all started for Lanka in the South. And Hanuman was carrying Rama. And Angad was carrying Lakshmana. And the Monkeys marched towards the South and finally they arrived in the Southernmost part of India. They came to the bank of the ocean. In the meantime, after Hanuman massacred Lanka and killed so many soldiers, so many generals, even Ravana's son was killed. Prahastra's son, his commander in chief's son was killed. Seven sons of his ministers, chief minister was killed and five generals were killed. So, it caused a massive, just one monkey caused such a massive, massive havoc. So, then Ravana called all his ministers and advisers and his other important family members. And Ravana told then that, that this monkey has come and he caused so much damage. So, it seems soon Rama is going to come with his full force so what to do? So different Generals of Ravana just assured him, that "Don't worry, I will single-handedly take care of Rama." Some said " I will kill all the monkeys and eat them up! some said "who cares about Rama and Lakshmana? Two mortal human beings! In no time I will finish them off!" And some said "Ravana, you have captured Sita, Sita is in your custody, why don't you enjoy her? What is preventing you from? And then the whole affair will be taken care of, because the whole business is about Sita, so why are you waiting for her consent?" Because Ravana gave Sita, after kidnapping her, when Sita was completely not submissive, Ravana gave her one-year time and out of that one year, ten months already went by. So, he said that "This two month I am giving you, if you do not submit now, submit to me by that time, I will... kill you."

⇓ Brahma cursed Ravana

Ravana told of one incidence, he said that once Punjikastali, one apsara was going to Lord Brahma and Ravana saw her and he became so attracted towards her, that he approached and she refused, saying that she is going to Lord Brahma. So Ravana then molested her, raped her. So finally, this girl approached Brahma and narrated the whole incidence. So, then Brahma cursed Ravana, that if he ever forces any other woman, against her will, then his head will split into a hundred pieces. So Ravana said "So that is why I am afraid to force her, because of Brahmas curse." And so other Generals just assured Ravana, "So don't worry, we are your loyal servants. So, you just take it easy and you carry on with your life, we will take care of Rama and Lakshmana, and all the Monkeys." And they all were shouting and screaming and jumping up and down in excitement. So, at that time Vibhishana, he stood up and he asked all of them to cool down. And then Vibhishana told Ravana, that "Ravana, you know, that it is due to your austerities that you have become so powerful. You have received the benediction from Lord Brahma, because of your punya, because of your pious activities. Now, just this act of your stealing Sita, somebody else's wife, is wiping out all your pious activities and is causing you, an inconceivable sin for you." Vibhishana actually knew that Rama is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Although Vibhishana was Ravana's brother, he was very pious. Although Vibhishana was Ravana's brother, he was very pious. And so, in this way, he tried to pacify Ravana and bring him back to his senses, saying that "Ravana return this lady back to her husband and spare your own life and spare the lives of all the Rakshashas. Because if you don't do that, then the entire Rakshasha kula, will be destroyed." Ravana didn't want to hear that. Whenever somebody advised him to return Sita, Ravana became very, very upset. He was completely possessed with the desire to have Sita. Many others also advised him earlier to return Sita, but Ravana didn't listen to anybody. Vibhishana also started to advise him. Vibhishana was always giving Ravana good council, but Ravana did not listen. So Ravana then dismissed the assembly and returned to his quarters. He just didn't want to hear Vibhishana's words. So next morning, Ravana was, when he woke up and all the birds were singing his, that is, the brahmanas were singing his glorification and chanting auspicious mantras, then Vibhishana again came to him and he started to give him the same advice, saying that "Look, you can see what Hanuman has done, just one monkey has done. Rama himself didn't even come as yet. Just one of his monkey associates caused so much damage. So, you can very well imagine what is going to happen to Lanka when Rama comes with his entire force. "And he started to glorify Rama, that "this Rama is not an ordinary person, He is Vishnu Himself. So, at that time Ravana became extremely angry. Ravana just told him that "You are not my brother"... no he first told him that, "Had you not been my brother, I would kill you right now." He said that "What kind of ally you are, that instead of glorifying me, you glorify my enemy. You are minimizing me, right in front of me, which nobody ever dares to do."

Vibhishana said, "They don't do that, because they are simply your flatterers. They're not your friend, they're not your well-wisher. They're actually causing your destruction. They're just the cause of your destruction. So, do not succumb to their flattery, rather come to your senses." So, in this way, Vibhishana tried to reason with Ravana, but Ravana became so furious, that Ravana just told Vibhishana to just leave him, he banished him, he told him to get out and not to come back to him again. So being insulted in this way, Vibhishana just left and along with Vibhishana went his four associates. Vibhishana had four associates, or four ministers, who always used to be with Vibhishana. They also left with Vibhishana.

⇓ Vibhishana surrenders to Rama

Vibhishana went across the ocean and came to Rama. And in the meantime, Sugriva and Hanuman and other monkeys saw, these Rakshashas coming, so they immediately wanted to accost them. So Vibhishana told them that "We have come here to surrender to Rama." Sugriva didn't want to believe them, so they wanted to get into a fight with them, or he wanted to kill them, thinking that they were spies. Vibhishana at that time told him that "We came to submit to Rama, so please go and report to Rama with that message. I am Ravana's brother, Ravana's younger brother and I have come to surrender to Rama." So, Sugriva then went to Ramachandra. So, Rama asked Sugriva, "So what do you think about their intention? And what we should do?" Sugriva said that "We shouldn't trust them, after all, he is a Rakshasha and if we trust them, he'll probably cause a great damage to us. So, we shouldn't take a chance." And so, then Rama asked other monkey leaders also what they thought, and they all practically thought the same way, that this shouldn't be trusted. Some said "Maybe we can watch them for some time and see if they are really trustworthy." But then Rama said, "No, we don't have the time to watch them and then make the decision. We have to make the decision right away." So, then Rama asked Hanuman, "Hanuman, what do you think?" Hanuman said that "I think, that his intention is honest." And he gave various reasons: A person who is pretending or is duplicitous, he cannot be so composed. Vibhishana, the way he spoke, from his speech it appeared that he was speaking the truth and, in this way, Hanuman gave his impression of Vibhishana. Like, he is honest, from his approach, from his way of speaking and so then Rama told, "Yes, I agree with Hanuman." and Rama also said that "If somebody had to spy, if Ravana had to send a spy, why would he send his brother, such an important person to spy, when he has so many trained spies to do that job?" and then Ramachandra said something very, very wonderful, he said "On top of everything, if somebody comes to surrender to me and says that he is surrendering to Me, I accept him, even if he is not honest about his admission, even if one pretending to surrender comes to me, still I accept him." And then he said that "And I take care of him, not only throughout his entire life, I take care of him life after life." So that is the reward and the result of someone surrendering to Lord Ramachandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the reward and the result of someone surrendering to Lord Ramachandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one approaches him with, even if his intention may not be that pure, but still if he comes with a mood of surrender, Lord accepts him. And by accepting him, the Lord purifies him, whatever he's lacking, He compensates for that. So, in this way, Lord Ramachandra declared the reward for surrendering unto Him. And in the meantime, Vibhishana was brought to Rama. Vibhishana immediately fell flat at Ramachandra's lotus feet with respect and surrender. So, then Rama asked Vibhishana what happened and Vibhishana narrated everything of all that happened between him and Ravana.

⇓ An anecdote behind that

Actually, there is a reason also, I mean there is an anecdote behind that. It was, there were three principle demons, those, Sumali, Malivan and Mali. And this, Mali was the youngest brother and they got into a conflict with Vishnu, because they were causing distress to the Demigods and their situation was actually in Lanka. Lanka was built by Visakarma for these demons, Danavas. And then Vishnu came in support of the demigods and they were driven out of Lanka and they were in the lower planetary systems, Patalaloka, they were driven out of there. And then they lived there and Malivan had a daughter. One day Malivan came out to the upper planetary systems and then he saw, Visrava's son Kuvera, he was so powerful. Brahma gave him Lanka. Visrava actually gave him Lanka as his kingdom

and Brahma gave him the chariot, the Pushpak chariot. And Brahma also made him one of the protectors and so Malivan became very envious seeing Visrava's son Kuvera. And he wanted to have someone as powerful as Kuvera and he thought that it has to be a son of Visrava Muni. Visrava is the son of Pulasta. There are original ten sons of Lord Brahma, out of them there were nine who were prajapatis, Pulasta is one of them. Pulasta, Bulaha, Kratu, Anjira, Marici. They're the initial progenitors or prajapatis. So, then Malivan went back to his abode in the Patalaloka and he had a very beautiful daughter. Her name was Koikashi. So, he suggested that Koikashi approach Visrava. And so Koikashi came up to the place where Visrava was meditating, performing his taxpays. So Koikashi, a very beautiful young girl approached Visrava and told him that she wanted a son from him. So Visrava said, "Okay, since you approached me, I will fulfill your desire, but since you have approached me at a wrong time of the day, in an inauspicious moment, your sons will become demons and they'll cause a lot of damage to the creation." You remember, the same thing happened with Diti also. When Diti approached Kasyapa and as a result of that, Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaksa were born. So Koikashi was very sad to hear that her sons would become such miscreants, such sinful ones. So, she prayed that "Please, give me a son who will be pious. And as a result of that, Vibhishana was born. Ravana and Kumbhakarna were extremely sinful, but Vibhishana was very, very pious.

⇓ The ultimate consideration of piety is to become of devotee of the Lord

Pious means, what is the ultimate consideration of piety? The ultimate consideration of piety is to become of devotee of the Lord. There are relative considerations of punya. That is achieved by austerities and penances and performing sacrifice and truthfulness and so forth. But they're relative piety. The result of those piety remains on the material nature. But the ultimate consideration of piety is to surrender to the Lord and become his devotee and that result is both in the material as well as in the spiritual nature. When one becomes a devotee of the Lord, he becomes most pious and as a result of that piety, he derives benefit in the material nature and when he leaves the material nature and goes back to the spiritual sky there also, he receives the actual benefit of becoming a devotee of the Lord. So Vibhishana was a perfect example of that. So, he submitted to Lord Ramachandra and Rama asked Vibhishana, "So tell me about Ravana and his strength, his background". Ravan was very powerful and was meant to be killed by the Lord Himself. Vibhishana then told all the exploits of Ravana and he described how powerful Ravana was, how Ravana defeated not only all the Demigods, Ravana actually defeated even Yamaraj and Ravana conquered death in that way. Which I described yesterday. Ravana went and challenged Yamaraj and Ravana defeated the Yamadutas, who are actually the supervisors of death. And then Yamaraj was surprised that these Yamadutas are defeated by this person. So, he came with his Yamadanda and he fought and then finally when he was about to strike him with Yamadanda which would have killed Ravana, then Brahma intervened and told him not to do that. And he explained why he shouldn't do that, because Brahmas benediction was there which made Ravana invincible to any Demigod. So Yamaraj principally could not actually kill Ravana, but then Yamarajs prowess also is undefeatable and Brahma told him that "If you do that then it will create a tremendous anomaly in the creation and Ravana is actually meant to be killed by the Lord Himself. So just wait for that time." So, then Yamaraj disappeared. So, in this way Ravana defeated even Yamaraj. Ravanas son, Indrajit captured, arrested Indra and brought him to Lanka as a prisoner. Then Brahma himself came and pleaded that, "Let him go." So, this is how powerful Ravana and his son, his eldest son Indrajit was. And he has such powerful army and he's so powerfully situated. So Vibhishana told all the, the entire background of Ravana.

⇓ How to cross the ocean?

Now the army has arrived, the monkey soldiers, Ramachandra's army arrived at the bank of the ocean. So now the consideration is how to cross the ocean? Hanuman proposed that him, Angad, Nila, Jambavan, Dvivida and Mahinda go across the ocean and defeat Ravana. They were confident that just five or six of them could defeat Ravana. And it's understandable also, like we saw what Hanuman did, and Hanuman actually told Sita, that if he wanted, he can carry the entire Lanka. Later on, we will see, that he carried a mountain. If he could carry a mountain, he could carry Lanka also. And he could carry Lanka along with Ravana, bring him to Rama and take care of him. So, this is how powerful

Hanuman was and Hanuman used to consider himself to be just an ordinary monkey. He used to think that other monkeys are even more powerful than he was. And so, then Hanuman proposed that just few of them go and take care of Ravana and Ravanas army. And he also suggested that Asvini Kumars son Mahinder and Divida, they had a benediction that they would never be defeated in a battle. Hanuman himself also had the benediction, that even brahmastra wouldn't even work on him, so, but Rama said "No, I have taken a vow, that I myself will destroy Lanka and rescue Sita, so I'll go." So, the consideration was how to cross the ocean. So, then Vibhishana suggested that Rama invites ocean to come and assist him. Let's decide how ocean will assist. So, Ramachandra sat down on kusha grass in order to make the ocean god come down to Him. For three days he sat there in meditation, but ocean god didn't come. So, Rama became too angry, that this person has become so arrogant, that even I am calling and he's not coming. So, Rama just took his bow and arrow. He took his bow and placed a Brahmastra and He said "Now I'm going to wipe out this ocean. I'll dry out the ocean, so that my monkey soldiers can walk across the ocean and onto Lanka." So, when Rama became so angry, Lakshmana tried to pacify him, but Rama was just completely uncontrollable and he was determined to chastise the ocean god. Then finally the ocean god came out, trembling with fear. And so, he told Ramachandra that, "I didn't come up, because I didn't know how to fulfill your desire here. Like how could I make this, the ocean is insurmountable, how to take them across?" Then finally he said "You do one thing, you just place, whatever, boulders, trees, rocks, mountain peaks, and I'll make them float. And in this way, you build a bridge. And your associate Nala, the monkey, is a son of Visakarma and he has been endowed with the similar power as his father. Visakarma has invested his architectural engineering skill to Nala. So Nala will be the engineer for the bridge." So, then the construction started. The first day the ocean is, how much? How long? It is four hundred miles, hundred yojanas. So, anyway, lets count in yojanas, whether it's four hundred or eight hundred. So, first day, they constructed 14 Yojenas, the next day they constructed 21 yojenas. In one day, they constructed the bridge. First day it was 14 yojenas, second day it was 20 yojenas and third day was 21 yojenas, fourth day was 22 yojenas and then on the fifth day the bridge was complete. It went all the way to Lanka. And it was 100 yojenas long and 10 yojenas wide. That bridge was built, and then the monkeys marched to the other side of the
ocean, to Lanka. And then in Lanka they had the, there's a mountain, called the Shubala mountain, they climbed up the mountain and from the mountain top in the evening, they say Lanka, a majestic city.

⇓ Lanka a city with palaces made of solid gold

A city with palaces made of solid gold. And there, all the palaces were seven stories high and this city was surrounded by a wall and that wall was made of solid gold. And hundreds of thousands of soldiers were guarding the city. So, then that night, they all took rest. In the meantime, the message was sent, the information was given to Ravana that, Rama has arrived with His monkeys and they're just waiting outside the city gate. So this was also, a solid wall all around the city and the city had four gates, one in the North, one in the West, one in the South and one in the East and all these gates were guarded with a draw bridge over a moat, and so the next morning, Rama just went again, looked at Lanka from Shubala mountain, but this time after receiving the news that the monkeys have arrived with Ramachandra on the outside of the city gate. So Ravana came to see what was the situation. So Ravana was surrounded by his Ministers and Generals on the top of the city gate and Rama saw Ravana and Ravanas description has been given, as I also mentioned yesterday. Ravana used to have ten heads, and twenty arms only when he used to be in the battle, otherwise he used to carry just one head. And it was a very majestic looking person, very powerful, very handsome. And so, Rama was just looking at Ravana and in the meantime, Sugriva couldn't restrain himself, when he saw Ravana. So, from top of Shubala mountain, he just jumped and came right in front of Ravana. Ravana was a little startled when Sugriva just landed. And Sugriva just took that opportunity and just hit Ravana on the head, so hard, that his crown went flying. So, it took Ravana sometime to figure out what was happening but then Ravana and Sugriva just started to fight, just wrestling and they were scratching each other with their nails, they were hitting each other. And then Ravana saw, that it won't be possible for him to defeat Sugriva in a straight battle, so he tried to use his magical tricks. So, then Sugriva realized that and he immediately jumped back to Ramachandra. And when he came back, all the

monkeys were really excited, they just started to (laughter) jump with joy, "Well done Sugriva! Well done!" But Rama chastised Sugriva, he said "A king should never act so whimsically. Sugriva, what would have happened if you were killed? Then our entire endeavor would have been lost. And if you died, then I also would have killed myself. So anyway, in future, never do that, but what you have done is really heroic." He saw the other side, He said that, "It has caused, a lot of confidence in the heart of the monkeys. Seeing you, the way you treated Ravana."

⇓ Angad carries the last message of Lord Rama

Rama told Angad, "Angad, carry the last message, give Ravana the last chance for compromise." Because, this was a noble gesture from Rama's part. Before they get into the war, give him another chance to compromise. If he didn't, okay, then we launch the attack. So Angad immediately jumped and came in front of Ravana. And told him, "I am the messenger of Rama. So, I have come with a message that, you have lost all your piety. Because of your sinful reactions, sinful activities. The way you have been treating the Sages, the Rishis, the Ascetics. The way you have been causing damage to all kinds of innocent people. The way you have been insulting women. So, these are all leading you to your death. So please check yourself and become situated in proper way of life. And you have stolen Sita, that is the most heinous crime. So, you return Sita and have peace for both your side and our side. If you do not, then your days are numbered. You along with your entire Rakshasha race will be killed." So Ravana couldn't tolerate that. So, he said that, he ordered his Rakshashas around him, "Kill this monkey!" So immediately four Rakshashas went to catch Angad. So they grabbed onto Angad, and at that time, Angad, just as they grabbed him, all these four Rakshashas, Angada jumped high up and all the four Rakshashas also, clinging onto his hands, they also went up and then Angad just shook them off and they all went flying and landed on the ground. Then Angad went onto Ravana's palace top, on top of Ravana's palace, the dome and with one kick, he just broke the dome. And that was an insult, because that is the cause of their pride, the flag is there, so in this way, insulting Ravana Angad came back. Then the war started. Ravana sent his Generals, first one he sent was Dumraksha, and Hanuman killed him with his army. In this way one of them came, then Angad killed him. Then another general nearly killed him. So, in this way, waves of army, were being sent by Ravana and the monkeys were just wiping them all out. And of course, many monkeys also died in this battle, both the monkeys and the rakshashas, so many of them died. There was a flow of river, and the whole field, the battlefield became muddy, soaked with blood. So then, Ravana sent Indrajit. Indrajit is the person, Ravanas principle wife Mandodari's son. Indrajit had an inconceivable amount of power. He was as powerful as Ravana. In some ways he could even be considered more powerful, because he had one benediction, that he received from Brahma, that he could fight invisibly. So Indrajit, hiding, rather invisibly he started to shoot some Nag arrows. Kadru, is the original Nag, the mother of the serpents. Kadrus sons are the celestial serpents, headed by Vasuki. Vasuki is of course is very pious. Two of her sons are pious. Vasuki and Sesa. Sesa is Ananta, who is holding the universes on the tip of His head. And so, these serpents turned into arrows or serpents were made into arrows and they were shot by Indrajit and those serpents pierced Rama and Lakshman's bodies. So, in this way, they became covered, their whole body became covered with such arrows, that there was not even any space left to put a finger in Their body. And in this way, injuring Rama and Lakshman, Indrajit went back to Ravana, he thought that now he killed Them. So very proudly and confidently he went to his father and he said that " I have finished these enemies of yours." Ravana was very pleased hearing that. He immediately sent for Sita and told his messengers, that, tell these Rakshashis who are guarding Sita, to take Sita to the battlefield, with a pushpak chariot, a flying chariot, so that from the chariot, Sita could see the condition of Rama and Lakshman. And so Sita was taken to the battlefield and Sita could, when Sita saw Rama and Lakshman in that condition, Sita just started to cry piteously. Wailing, that, lamenting "When I was young, the saintly astrologers predicted that I will be the mother of children. I'll live a long life and that I will not see the widowhood. That means that I will die before my husband, but now, they have all gone wrong, now that whatever they said was all lies." So, she just started to cry in this way. So, seeing her condition, Trijata the leader of the Rakshashis was actually friendly to Sita, was quite compassionate to Sita. She gave a few points to Sita, "Sita, don't worry, your husband is not dead, because pushpak chariot will not carry a widow and from here we can see, that the monkeys are guarding Rama and Lakshman, so if They were dead, then there is no need for

guarding Them. So, since they are guarding Them, then it means that They are still alive and from here I can see, that Their face has the luster which depicts, which displays that they are still alive." So, in this way, she consoled Sita. In the meantime, when Shushen, the expert physician of the monkeys was considering how to save Rama and Lakshman from this situation. They were thinking of different ways and means, then all of a sudden there was a terrible wind started to blow. And due to the winds, the waves of the ocean became gigantic, high and then they saw one bird coming there, flying there. And that bird came, and as soon as the bird came to the site, all the snakes ran away from there, leaving Rama and Lakshman...So who is this bird? Garuda. Garuda came there, and Rama and Lakshman opened Their eyes and Garuda offered His obeisances to Rama, "My Lord, I am Garuda, Your eternal servant." and then he told him, that "You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so no one can ever do anything to you." Saying that, Garuda said "Anytime you need me, just call me." Saying that, Garuda flew away. The news reached to Ravana, and then all the monkeys started to jump with joy, roaring, "Rama Ki Jay! Jay Sri Rama! Jay Sri Lakshman!" And Ravana heard the tumultuous sound, the roars of the monkeys, so he asked, "What happened?" Then he got the news that Rama and Lakshman had revived. So then, Ravana got back into the battle again, completely disappointed, he thought that now his enemy is now dead, but now he's come back to life. Ravana started to send different generals, but they all were killed, one after another. Then finally Ravana told Prahastra, his commander in chief that "You, me, Kumbha Karna, Indrajit can deal with Rama, so, go and kill Him." But Prahastra went, but he was killed by Rama's soldier, I think it was Angad who killed Prahastra. So again, when the news reached to Ravana, then Ravanas six sons when and lead, I'm sorry, three sons, lead an attack, with the three other generals, they also were killed. And the situation became so frustrating for Ravana, that he started to lament in the assembly, saying that, "When Brahma gave me the benediction, that I will not be killed according to my desire, by the Devas, the Danavas, the Rakshashas, the Havana's and so forth. Then after giving me the benediction, Brahma warned me, "Be
careful of the human beings, because you forgot to ask about your immunity from humans."...so he gave me that warning at that time."

⇓ The story of Vedavati

He narrated the story of Vedavati, that the daughter of Kind Kushadas, who wanted to marry the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu, and she was performing severe austerities in the Himalayas, and while Ravana was flying in his chariot, he saw this ascetic, beautiful ascetic woman in the mountain. So, he approached and he wanted to win her, appeal to her - "You become my wife." But she politely said that she actually accepted Vishnu, Narayan as her husband, so, she can't accept anyone else. At that time, Ravana forcibly caught hold of her hair and tried to abduct her, at that time, she converted her arm, into a sword, and she cut her hair off and she said, "By your touch, my existence has become polluted, with this body I cannot approach Vishnu, Narayan anymore." Saying that, she gave up her body. And she, at that time, she told, "In my next life, I'll come to be the cause of your death." And most probably, this Vedavati had become Sita. Then he told about Brahmas curse and Nalakuvera's curse and then in the Iksvaku dynasty, there was a king called Anaranya and he fought a battle with Anaranya. After a long battle, Anaranya was dying, by Ravanas onslaught, and while dying, Anaranya cursed him that, "In my dynasty, in my family, someone will come, and He will kill you." So, this Rama, he has appeared in the Iksvaku dynasty. So probably, Anaranyas curse is also now being fructified. So, in this way, Ravana was just lamenting.

⇓ Kumbha Karna

Ravana said, "Wake up Kumbha Karna, he is the only one who can actually deal with them." Now, Kumbha Karna was so dangerous, that when Kumbha Karna wanted to have the boon, Ravana got the boon from Brahma, but all the demigods could see, that if Kubha Karna gets the boon from Brahma, then that will be the end of creation. So, they approached Sarasvati, Bhag Devi, who controls the speech, the Goddess of learning, and said, "Do something about it, that he cannot ask, for an inauspicious benediction." So, when Brahma asked Kumbha Karna, to ask for a benediction, Bhag Devi entered into Kumbha Karnas mouth and the word that came out was that, "Let me sleep." and

Brahma said, "Ok, granted!" So, as a result of that, Kumbha Karna got the benediction of sleeping, so Ravana realized, that something went wrong. He said that "Look", he told Brahma, "Please have mercy on him, I don't know what happened he asked for such a benediction, but it doesn't make any sense." So, then Brahma said, "Ok, he'll sleep for six months, and he'll wake up for a day." But Ravana was so desperate, that, although he knew, that if Kumbha Karna was woken up, before his scheduled time for waking up, then Kumbha Karna will die. But he was so desperate, that he thought, let Kumbha Karna fight and kill Rama and then he let Kumbha Karna die, that's a demon. Doesn't have any mercy, any thought, any compassion for anybody. So, it was an incredible endeavor, after which, Kumbha Karna was woken up. Thousands of elephants were just crawling over his body, twenty thousand drummers were beating the drum, next to his ears. And in this way, after a whole lot of endeavor, finally Kumbha Karna woke up. And they knew, after waking Kumha Karna up, he would want to eat and drink, so they had a few thousand barrels of wine for him to drink and mountains of meat. So, after that, Kumbha Karna went to the battlefield and before going to the battlefield, he chastised Ravana, he said that, "You, you get into this fight...why did you steal someone else's wife? Why did you not consult with anybody? Now that you are in a difficult situation, you are asking for our help...you should have asked, you should have consulted us beforehand, before getting into...anyway, since you have done it, ok, what can be done? Ok, I'll take care of Rama and Lakshman." So Kumbha Karna went in the fight. An elaborate description of the fight is there in the Ramayana. But what Kumbha Karna was doing, he was putting hundreds of monkeys in his mouth and eating them up and their blood was dripping from his mouth and he was just, in this way, he was just slaughtering and killing so many monkeys. So, seeing that, Hanuman confronted Kumbha Karna and one of the other monkeys was trying...so finally Kumbha Karna hit Sugriva and made him unconscious and then he thought that he has defeated the king of the monkeys so he put him under his arms and went back to the city, Lanka. Hanuman thought of rescuing Sugriva, that the king has now been captured and taken into imprisonment. But then he thought that, if he rescued Sugriva, then Sugriva would feel, somewhat insulted, that he had to take the help from somebody to get saved from a situation like that. So, seeing that, Hanuman just stayed back. And in the meantime, Kumbha Karna, huge, like a mountain, it has been described, anyway, he was a huge person and with him, under his arm, Sugriva under his arm, he just walked into the city. And everyone was jubilant, that now, the king of the monkeys has been captured. And all the woman started to through fragrant water, indicating auspiciousness and appreciation. Now, when this water was splashed onto Kumbha Karna, that fell on Sugriva also. So, Sugriva came back to his senses. So when Sugriva came back to his senses, he just freed himself from Kumbha Karnas arms and jumped up to Kumbha Karnas ears and then he ate up his one ear, then he bit into the other ear and dislocated it and he grabbed onto his nose, took away a part of his nose also and Kumbha Karna screamed, and Sugriva just leapt out, and came back to Rama. So Kumbha Karna, very angry, he took a massive hammer and he went to the battlefield, and started to kill the monkeys. So, when they saw that there was no way to confront, no-one could really stop Kumbha Karna, then Rama finally came to confront him. So, with one arrow, Varuna arrow, Rama cut off Kumbha Karnas right hand. And Kumbha Karna kept on fighting with his left hand with Rama. Then, with agni astra, he cut off Kumbha Karnas left hand, still Kumbha Karna was fighting. Then he cut off his two legs, then opening his mouth, Kumbha Karna came to devour Rama. Rama shot so many arrows, that Kumbha Karnas mouth became full of arrows. And then with another weapon, Rama cut off Kumbha Karnas head, so that Kumbha Karnas head rolled into the main street in the city by the gate and Kumbha Karnas body just fell into the ocean. And it has been described, that his body was so big, that when it fell in the ocean, half of his body was submerged in the water and the other half, up to his torso was still above the ocean. So, when the news reached that Kumbha Karna is dead, Ravana fainted. Just the news was so shocking, that Ravana just fainted. And then, when he was lamenting, then Indrajit came and said "Father, don't worry, don't lament, I will take care of them. I've already taken care of them once; I will take care of them now."

So again, Indrajit went, and started to fight, invisibly. And all the monkeys, they couldn't see where the arrows were coming from, they were seeing the weapons coming, but they couldn't see anybody. They were completely baffled, even Hanuman was baffled. Then Rama and Lakshman said, "Let's pretend that we have been injured." So, they all lay down on the ground, and thinking that they had been defeated, Indrajit left the battlefield. So, at that time, and then another thing happened, now, this Indrajit

came back with an illusory Sita on his chariot and this illusory Sita that was flying on the chariot, everyone saw Sita on the chariot. Hanuman was about to attack the chariot, but when he saw Sita, he couldn't attack, and this Sita started to cry, "Oh Rama, please save me save me." And when Sita was crying like that, Indrajit just hit her on the face. And seeing, Hanuman saw that she was being treated like that, and he was so angry, but still, he didn't know what to do. Then, Indrajit said, "See, everybody now sees, to end this battle, I'm going to now end this person, because all this battle, all this struggle is for this woman, so let everything come to an end, along with her." Saying that, he took his sword and diagonally slashed her body. And when Rama saw that, Rama fainted, thinking that Sita has been killed. Vivishan was not there when the news reached Vivishan, that this is what happened, and Rama is in such a condition. So Vivishan came and told Rama that, "Ravana will never allow anyone to kill Sita. He's too attached to Sita to let anyone kill her, so it is just an illusory trick that this Indrajit has done." So, then Vivishan said, "Our biggest impediment to our victory now is this Indrajit." And he told that, "There is only one way that this Indrajit can be killed, and that, is, before coming to the battlefield, Indrajit performs a yajna called Nikumbila. And after performing the Yajna, he becomes invisible. So, before he becomes invisible, you have to deal with him." So, early, early hours in the morning, when Indrajit was about to perform this yajna, Lakshman and Hanuman and other monkeys, were led by Vivishan. They arrived, into that area, where Indrajit was performing his sacrifice. And a terrible battle took place between Lakshman and Indrajit. And then finally Lakshman killed Indrajit.

⇓ A terrible battle took place between Ravana and Rama and Rama kills Ravana

When the news reached of Indrajits death to Ravana felt that now, it's, he really stared to lament, that, "I wish I had listened to Vivishans advice."...But it was already too late. So, as a hero, Ravana himself came to the battlefield. He came to the battlefield, and a terrible battle actually ensued between Ravana and Lakshman was confronting Ravana. Ravana took up a lance, that was, that pierced Lakshmans body. And Lakshman became unconscious. So that is a time, as you know, like to revive Lakshman, Hanuman had to bring the Gadhamandan mountain. Hanuman jumped all the way to the Himalayan mountain to bring these herbs called Vishalakarani. Actually, there were four types of herbs that was needed, Vishalakarani, Suvarnakarani, Sandini and Ritasanjini. Hanuman could not find these herbs himself, so he just uprooted the mountain and carried the whole mountain to Lanka. Then Shushen found the herbs, and he made a paste of it, and made Lakshman to smell it. And when Lakshman inhaled it, Lakshman came back to life. Then Rama confronted Ravana. Ravana was fighting from a chariot, so in order to match Ravana's situation, Indra sent his own chariot, driven by Matali, Indras chariot driver and then a terrible battle took place between Ravana and Rama. Rama found, it was very difficult to subdue Ravana. Because he would shoot an arrow and cut one of the heads of Ravana, the head would fall on the ground, but another head would just appear. In this way, hundreds of heads of Ravana were chopped off and all those things were lying, but Ravana was totally unaffected by that. So then, Agastamuni came there, actually, at one time, Ravana became mortally, fatally injured, that his chariot driver took him out of the battlefield. And when Ravana was away from the battlefield, Agasta came and reminded Rama to chant the Adityahridaya Mantra and he reminded Him to use the weapon that he gave Him when Rama came to visit him in Dandakaranya. This was a weapon that was personally created by Lord Brahma. And so, in this way, Agasta Rshi advised Rama, to use that weapon, not to cut his head, but to pierce his heart. Ravana actually had nectar in his heart, preserved in his heart, that's why he became immortal. So, this time when Ravana came back to the battlefield, Ravana was very upset. He told his chariot driver, "Why did you take me out of the battlefield?" And the chariot driver said that, "I took you out, so that you could regain your consciousness." And so finally Ravana was persuaded. So, when he came to the battlefield this time, Rama just used this terrible weapon, Brahmastra. It hit Ravana in his chest and Ravana was dead. So, after Ravanas death, when the news reached Lanka, all his Queens came crying and they were lamenting and seeing their condition, Rama told Vivishan, "We have to cremate him, we have to conduct his funeral as soon as possible, otherwise these ladies will not be pacified. Because, as long as his body is there, they will be wailing. "Vivishan refused to do the funeral conduct of Ravana. The funeral is meant to be conducted by a family member. Now in his family all his sons were dead. The only male person, family member that was alive was Vivishan. But Vivishan refused to do that, he said "He is such a sinful person, I don't want to conduct his funeral." But Rama reasoned with him that,

"whatever he has done, he has done, but now that he is dead, he is not subjected to that. After all, it is his body that has to be cremated. Finally, Vivishvan conducted Ravana's funeral. And after Ravana's funeral, Vivishvan was coronated to the throne by Ramacandra.

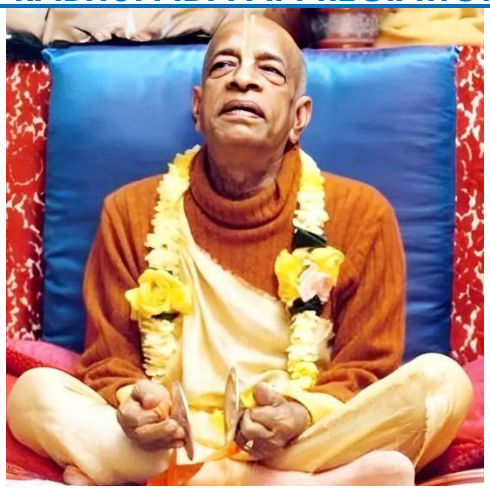
⇓ Sita's test of purity

Then news was sent to Sita. By Hanuman news was sent about Rama's victory and Ravana's death. And Sita became so excited, she immediately wanted to come. But Hanuman said, no you take your bath, get dressed up properly and then come. When Sita came, she found that Rama was very grave and she wondered why Rama seems to be so grave at the time like this. Then Rama told: "You have been kidnapped by somebody, stayed in his house for so long. So, naturally people will question about your purity. And here it is not my feelings which are of consideration. What is of consideration is the honour of our dynasty? So Sita was crying. Sita was saying: "Why did you not tell me before that you are not going to accept me? Then I would have given up my life. What was the use of killing of so many monkeys, killing of so many rakshashas, so many lives have been lost for nothing? She said that: "I am going to enter into fire and give up my life". And then Rama consented to that. He said: "Lakshmana, light the fire." A huge fire was lit and Sita entered there. But then Agnideva himself appeared from the fire with Sita. Everybody saw that Sita's dress, her hair not even a touch nothing got burned, and then Agnideva declared Sita was pure. In this way, Sita was united with Rama again. Then Rama told Sita:" I knew about your condition, but just to pacify everybody, so that no one will ever question your character, that's why I have arranged that. Then it was arranged that Rama along with Lakshmana and Sita will go back to Ayodhya. Vivishan requested them to stay for longer, but Rama insisted, "No". He wanted to go. So then, it was arranged that Vivishan wanted to come with Him.

⇓ They all got into the pushpaka chariot and they all came to Ayodhya

Then it was arranged that Vivishan wanted to come with Rama, so did Sugriva. And all the monkeys also wanted to come. They all got into the pushpaka chariot and they all came to Ayodhya. And at that time Bharata was not in Ayodhya. Bharata actually shifted the capital to Nandigram. And there, living like an ascetic, living in a cottage, eating only roots and fruits, Bharata was spending his days. So, Rama arrived and Bharata came back with His shoes. He said that: "Making these shoes your representatives, I have been ruling this kingdom, conducting the affairs of the kingdom for all these years. So now you please take your kingdom back. In this way Ramacandra came back to Ayodhya and took his kingdom back. And after that, for eleven thousand of years He reigned over the earth planet. Sri Ramacandra ki jay ! Thank you very much. All Glories to Srila Prabhupada!

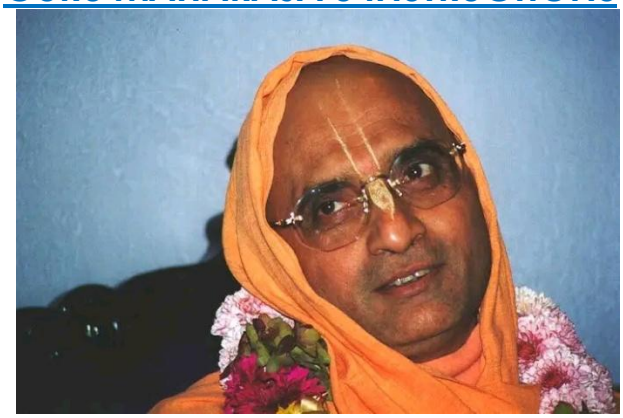
2. SRILA PRABHUPADA APPRECIATION



I first met Srila Prabhupada in a dream. I got a book written by Srila Prabhupada, Nectar of Devotion, and as I started to read it, from the very first page it occurred to me that this is what I was actually looking for. And the next night I had a dream of Srila Prabhupada. And I saw Srila Prabhupada was sitting on a majestic throne and those days I did not know what a vyasasana was, because in India the saintly people they sit on a rather simple seat, they don't sit on such a gorgeous throne, it looks rather like a throne. So,

I saw Srila Prabhupada sitting on a throne. And there was a brilliant light around Srila Prabhupada, as if the light was coming out of his body. And just the sight of Srila Prabhupada made me feel that finally I found my spiritual master. *(Excerpt from "Prabhupada Realisations" by HH Bhakti Charu Swami)*

3. GURU MAHARAJA'S INSTRUCTIONS



Ramachandra said something very, very wonderful, he said "On top of everything, if somebody comes to surrender to me and says that he is surrendering to Me, I accept him, even if he is not honest about his admission, even if one pretending to surrender comes to me, still I accept him." And then he said that "And I take care of him, not only throughout his entire life, I take care of him life after life.";

(The content of this E-magazine was based on a Ramayana Seminar given by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami in the North American Retreat Day 4)
(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)

