

**Om Sri Ramaya Namah! Om Sri Ramaya Namah! Om Sri Ramaya Namah!**

## **A comparative study of some of the most prominent Ramayanams**

### **Aanandha Ramayanam**

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Aanandha Ramayanam is another popular Ramayanam. This is believed to be composed by and hence attributed to the Great Sage Vaalmiki. We are lucky to have a reasonably good translation and commentary by Shantilal Nagar and the following writing is mostly based on his commentary. Here we can read a lot of additional stories which we could not read in any other popular Ramayanams. This book is very interesting because of many exceptions we see from other popular Ramayanams. This Ramayana starts with Saara-Kaanda and concludes with Poornna-Kaanda. Totally there are nine Kaandaas. They are: Saara-Kaanda, Yaathra-Kanda, Yaaga-Kaanda, Vilaasa-Kaanda, Jenma-Kaanda, Vivaaha-Kaanda, Raja-Kaanda, Manohara-Kaanda and Poornna-Kaanda.

Abduction of Kausalya by Ravana is one of the most interesting exceptions we can read in Aanandha Raamayanam. This episode is at the very beginning, immediately after the Ishta Dhevathaa Vandhanam or Worship of all Favorite and Relevant Deities, of Aanandha Ramayanam.

Near Ayodhddhya, which at that time was being ruled by king Dhesarettha of Solar Race, there was another country called Kosala which was ruled by a king with the same name Kosala. Kosala had a beautiful girl called Kausalya. At that point of time Dhesarettha was enjoying water-sporting in the river Sarayu with his courtiers boarding on a boat. It was at the same time Raavana, the king of Lanka, asked Brahmadheva to tell him frankly at whose hands his death was destined.

Brahma told Raavana that he will be killed by Sri Rama who would be born from Kausalya, the queen of Dhesarettha. Brahma also further clarified to him that the king of Kosala had consulted the Astrologers and Brahmins and fixed to conduct the wedding of his daughter Kausalya with king Dhesarettha on the fifth day from that day. Ravana immediately went to Ayodhya and fought with Dhesarettha and his courtiers and defeated and kicked all of them out of the boat and drowned them and destroyed the boat. As it is so destined, Dhesarettha and his Lieutenant and Minister, Sumanthra, were carried by the undercurrent of the river and taken to Ganga River and from there to the Ocean.

After defeating Dhesarettha and his team Raavana went to Kosala kingdom and waged a terrific war and easily defeated them and abducted Kausalya and carried her through the skyway to Lanka. On the way, he saw a huge Thimingala or a Whale and thought that all the Dhevaas are his enemies and if he hides Kausalya then they could come in some disguised form and steal and save her. Therefore, he decided to keep Kausalya as a trust with the Thimingala. Ravana kept Kausalya in a safe chest and locked it safely and entrusted Thimingala to keep the chest very safe for him. Ravana went back to Lanka with the only key of the chest.

Thimingala safely kept the chest in an isolated island and started fighting with his enemies. At the same time as destiny was so Dhesarettha and Sumanthra were not killed they somehow got hanged on to long pieces of wrecked boat also arrived at the same island. They spotted the box there and opened and delightfully surprised to see Kausalya safely in the box. Thereafter in an auspicious time Dhesarettha married Kausalya according to Genddharva style. After the marriage, all three of them, Kausalya her newly married husband Dhesarettha and best of his courtiers, Sumanthra, entered inside the chest and closed the lid.

At the same time Ravana very proudly sat on his lion-throne in his royal court and summoned Brahmadheva, laughed at him and told that he could falsify his words. He said that he has drowned Dhesarettha and concealed Kausalya at some place and no one can ever locate her. Brahmadheva laughed and asserted that the marriage of Dhesarettha and Kausalya had already performed auspiciously. To

prove that Brahmadheva had been falsified Ravana sent messengers to bring the box or chest in which he had concealed Kausalya. When he opened the box to his surprise he found not only Kausalya but also Dhesarettha and Sumanthra in the same box. Ravana, getting enraged, took out his sword to kill them.

Brahmadheva stopped and told him that he had kept only Kausalya in the box; how come the other two also got into the box without his knowledge. It is destiny for Kausalya to wed Dhesarettha and to beget Rama as their son. If you kill them now before then three crore Kausalya and Dhesarettha would emerge and Rama will be born at the destined time or otherwise Rama will be born before you kill them and that Rama would kill you right now. Why do you want to invite death as you have some more time to live? Therefore, do not indulge in any such mischievous actions as you do not have any control on destiny. Whatever must happen will happen in the future without any failure. My words cannot be otherwise. After advising Ravana like that, Brahmadheva left for his abode of Sathya Loka.

Ravana, taking the words of Brahma to be true, sent the box with Kausalya, Dhesarettha and Sumanthra to Ayodhddhya safely. By seeing the return of all the three of them hale and hearty all the people of Ayodhddhya and Kosala were immensely pleased. King of Kosala again arranged a formal wedding ceremony for his daughter Kausalya and Dhesarettha and entrusted the kingdom of Kosala as a dowry to his son-in-law.

Dhesarettha then married Sumithra, the daughter of the king of Magaddha, as his second wife and Kaikeyi, the daughter of king of Kekaya, as the third wife. See this is again another exception to many other popular Ramayanams as in most of them Kaikeyi is the second wife and Sumithra the third wife. Besides these three he had another seven hundred queen wives in the harem.

Also, there is an interesting exception to how or why Kaikeyi could save Dhesarettha by putting her finger in place of the broken axle of the chariot during the war between Dhevaas and Asuraas. The story is that at the very childhood of Kaikeyi pasted the collyrium or dark eye-shadow on the face of sage Agasthya. Therefore, he cursed her face to be blackened out in such a way that no one

would like to look at her. But when he was to take leave from the palace Kaikeyi lifted the Dhenda or stick and Kamandalu or kettle for the sage with her left hand. The sage was pleased with her action and gave the boon that her left hand would be as strong as Vajra when it is so needed and would never get wounded. That is why Kaikeyi confidently put her finger in the axle hole. The rest of the story about the boons given by Dhesarettha is the same as in other Ramayanams.

The story of Saravana, the Vaisya boy who was killed by Desarettha, also has slight variations. In this Ramayana Saravana was carrying his blind parents in two baskets tied to a bamboo pole on his shoulder and was moving towards Kasi. At that time feeling thirsty due to heat the parents asked him to fetch water and not that they were in the Aasrama according to other popular Ramayanams.

The distribution of Payasam or Grace of Pudding of Puthrakaameshti Yaaga is also different from other Ramayanams. It goes like this: The king Desarettha distributed the Payasam to all the three queens, Kausalya, Kaikeyi and Sumithra. Thereafter the Payasam given to Kaikeyi was snatched away by she-vulture under the idea that if she took the Payasam then she could be released of the curse cast on her by Brahma. The she-vulture was originally an Apsara named Suvarchas who had been cursed by Brahma. Brahma told her that if she can snatch the Payasam from Kaikeyi and throw it over mount Anjani then she will be released of the curse.

Thereafter Kausalya and Sumithra each took a portion from their share and gave it to Kaikeyi. Thus, all the three of them consumed the Payasam of Yaaga and got conceived. Please see the exception here again. In most of the other popular Ramayanams Dhesarettha originally gave the Payasam only to Kausalya and Kaikeyi and then they shared it with Sumithra. The major exception of this Ramayana, though it does have any impact on the main course of the story, is that according to the effect of the share of Payasam Bharatha and Sathrughna are born to Kaikeyi. So here it is spelt out that Bharatha and Sathrughna are the twin sons of Kaikeyi and not Lakshmana and Sathrughna twin sons of Sumithra according to other Ramayanams. This would clearly raise a question whether Aanandha Ramayanam is written by Valmiki.

Manthara, the maid of Kaikeyi, was previously Dhundhubhi, Genddharva damsel. And in the Dhvaapara Yuga this Manthara will be born as Kubja who becomes a devotee of Lord Krishna.

Thadaka was the wife of Sundha and daughter of Sukethuyeksha. She was cursed by sage Agasthya. Of course, other Ramayanams also have reference that Maricha and Subahu are the sons of Thadaka.

In Aanantha Ramayana it is clearly stated that Indhra deceitfully enjoyed the company of Ahalya in seclusion. Though Gauthama initially cursed Indhra to have thousand vaginas all over his body later he gracefully changed to thousand eyes. These are explicit exceptions with other popular Ramayanams.

When Sri Rama and party were going to Mitthila after releasing the curse of Ahalya they had to cross the river Ganga by a ferry. When Sri Rama and the party approached the boatman refused to carry Sri Rama on his ferry boat. The boatman said: "Oh Lord, Oh Rama, in case you so desire, let me wash your feet first and after that I shall allow you to board my boat and carry you across the river. I am afraid that with the touch of dust on your feet, my boat might turn as a damsel because there is hardly any difference between wood and stones. It is well-known in the world that the dust of your feet can make lifeless things turn into human form. Therefore, it is necessary for me to wash your feet."

Asthi me grihinee gehe kim karomyaparaam sthriyam

Ithi thdvaakyamaakarnya vihasya Reghunandhanah

I already have one wife at home. What will I do with another woman? Sri Rama was amused at the words of the boatman. He also indirectly indicated in other Ramayanams that if I take another woman at home my wife is not going to believe me. She would definitely claim and establish that I secretly used to keep another woman also. And my family life would be doomed. The underlying fact was that the boat-man was a staunch devotee of Sri Rama. He knew Sri Rama was the incarnation of Vishnu. He wanted to touch the feet of Sri Rama and wanted to wash and sprinkle the water on his body to get himself sanctified. This story is very conspicuously missing in Adhddhyaathma Ramayanam.

When Sri Rama along with Viswamithra and others reached Mithila along with all other kings were assembled there. Though Ravana was not invited for the Swayamvara of Sitha he was also there as an uninvited suitor. Though Desarettha was invited along with his sons he could not attend the function as, obviously, his two of his sons were away at that time. When Jenaka heard the news of the arrival of Viswamithra, he immediately rushed to receive him. At the same time the Rama and Lakshmana who were playing in the orchard also arrived there and Jenaka took them for disciples of Viswamithra. Jenaka bowed to Viswamithra as well as to the disciples. Then one of the disciples of Viswamithra took Jenaka aside and told him that his teacher, Viswamithra, has told him that they are there along with the most powerful sons of Desarettha. Therefore, the two boys accompanying Viswamithra are the sons of Desarettha. And they would receive the hands of Sitha or Seetha and Urmila in marriage after Saiva Chaapa was broken by Sri Rama. Therefore, you must welcome those boys to the city of Mitthila as grooms. But the news should not be revealed to anyone until the bow is broken by Rama.

Jenaka along with his wife Sumeddhha and other associates and damsels received them very pompously. When Raama and Lakshmana entered the city the damsels of Mitthila reached over the windows and started looking at them and showered flowers. Then they are talking among themselves that Raama is the most suitable match for Seetha and Lakshmana is most auspicious and the best suitor for Urmila. They prayed to God for blessings to see their wishes are fulfilled.

Whereas at the same time there were a lot of kings from all over the world as invitees to try their luck to break the Shiva Chaapa and to win Seetha over as wife. They all overheard Jenaka and Viswaamithra and other Advisors and Ministers of Jenaka discussing that Raama would be the most suitable match to Seetha. They were unhappy that when they came down as prospective grooms to Mitthila they did not see or get the same type of reception as Sree Raama. Also, they were doubtful whether Jenaka would quietly give away Seetha to Raama. They naturally questioned that if that be the case then why were they summoned there

to be disgraced? Raama, Lakshmana, Jenaka and Viswaamithra listened to their conversations. But Raama and Lakshmana went to Sabhaa Mandapa or the galleries where all other invitees were seated and occupied seats along with them.

[About the Siva Chaapa or Bow kept with Jenaka there is an exception. In this Ramayana Siva explains to Parvathi that after he burnt the Thripura the bow was given to Parasuraam. Parasuraam used the bow to destroy all the Kshethriyaas twenty-one times. And when Parasuraama used to visit Jenaka with the bow Seetha used to play with the bow as a toy like a wooden-horse. And from that Parasuraama recognized that Seetha or Jaanaki is none other than Lakshmi Dhevi. That is the reason why Parasuraam kept the bow in the courtyard of Jenaka as a trust. Another popular story is that this Saiva Chaapa is the one created by Viswakarmma for Siva for his combat with Vishnu. As Siva was not victorious in the duel, he abandoned the bow but asked Jenaka to keep it safe as a majestic and marvelous piece.]

Jenaka repeated his vow In the Sabhaa Mandapa or Auditorium. He said: Of the King or Prince who would string the bow in presence of all the kings, Seetha would select him as her husband. On hearing the words of Jenaka, looking at the mountain like a bow, the faces of all the kings fell. Some of them could not even move the bow from the ground. Some of them lifted it up a little bit on one side but could not lift it up from the ground. Thereafter all of them collectively tried to lift it up but failed. The stringing was another impossible task for them.

Then Raavana got up from his seat and proudly stood up and went towards the bow and laughingly said to the king Jenaka: Oh king! Raavana had conquered all the Dhevaas and Asuraas of all the three worlds including Lord Siva who is the owner of Saiva Chaapa. He has even lifted the whole Kailaasa, the abode of Lord Siva. These are all well known to the world. In case you want to witness the power and prowess of Raavana like any of the feats he has performed he can display it again, but he was not sure what type of prowess and power of Raavana was going to be demonstrated by lifting a bow which would be like only a straw to

him. He can even blow up the bow with one little, small blow of air from his mouth.

Thus, speaking Raavana tried to lift the bow with his left hand but could not. Then he tried with his right hand and could not. Then he tried to lift it up with both hands but could not. Then he tried with four, six, eight, etc. and eighteen hands he could not lift the bow. Ultimately with nineteen hands he could lift and move the bow a bit and with twentieth hand he tried to string it. But when he was trying to do so the bow fell on his chest. Raavana could not remove the bow from his chest even after applying all his power and prowess with all his twenty hands. He fell on the ground with a thud. The crown on his head was thrown apart, all his garments were loosened and sweat profusely. All other kings started laughing seeing the pathetic condition of Raavana who had conquered all the three worlds. His eyes started rolling and smoke emerged from his mouth. All his warriors and courtiers surrounded him and tried to move the bow from his chest but could not.

The clothes worn by him became dirty with the passing of stools and urine. Looking at the precarious condition of such a valorous Raavana, Jenaka the host was very upset and spoke: "Is there no valorous person left on earth? Has no warrior been left on earth? If there is any such valorous person in this court, he should come forward and save the life of Raavana." On hearing the words of Jenaka both Raama and Lakshmana were perturbed and started frowning.

They then looked at Viswaamithra. Viswaamithra asked Sri Raama to get up and save the life of Raavana. He is dying in your presence. This is not proper. You save his life and string the bow. On hearing the words of the Sage, Raama got up and bowed before the Sage. He removed the ornaments from his body, tightened his girdle and tightened the crown and slowly moved towards the court. Finding Sri Raama there all the people were surprised, and all the kings looked at him with lotus like eyes and started talking among themselves: How foolish is this boy? When people like us had to keep quiet, what can he do here? And some of them said: That boy came here only to have a closer look at Raavana. Some others said: It appears as if the boy has arrived here for sporting. Someone



doubted loudly: Why has he removed the ornaments and garland from his body? Someone else said: Viswaamithra has sent him for lifting up the bow due to his enmity as he was sure that the boy would definitely be killed with the bow. The sage has sent him to test his strength. But what can Raama do to the bow? Thus, several of the kings were engaged in arguments among themselves.

At that time Jenaka asked Viswaamithra why he has sent the boy. What can the boy do to the bow which could not be lifted by many warrior kings and even by Raavana who is the strongest of all the three worlds? Whatever message you have passed through your disciple would be proved to be false. [What Jenaka meant here is that the disciples of Viswaamithra had told him Sree Raama would tie the string on the bow and wed Seetha. If he is going to die, then that is going to happen.] On the one hand, the boy is of tender age with soft limbs and on the other hand the bow is very hard and terrific and heavy. Even if the pied cuckoo is thirsty could it dry up the ocean? Sumedha and other damsels also worried that Sri Raama is going to be killed or hurt badly. They prayed Brahma, Vishnu and Siva to save the young and tender charming boy. They all prayed for the boy would be able to string the bow because of the noble deeds performed by them in their previous birth. They all prayed Lord Siva and Brahma and Vishnu to make the bow as light as possible so that Raama would be able to string it without any effort. They all prayed that Seetha would be able to garland Raama as her husband.

At the same time Seetha was also Sri Raama from the top of her palace along with her female friends. She was very much attracted to Sri Raama with her mind and heart. She promised to her friends that she will not marry anyone other than Sri Raama. She would rather kill herself either by jumping from the top of the palace or by drinking poison if something like that happens. She prayed: Oh Siva! Oh Destiny! Oh Dhurga! Oh Saraswathy! Oh Gayathri! Oh Speech! Oh Soorya! Oh Indhra! Oh Varuna! Oh Vaayu! Oh Kubera! Oh Agni! Oh Raama! Oh Vishnu! Oh Brahma! Oh Geruda! Oh Sesha! Oh, All other gods! From the bottom of her heart, she prayed that with the blessing of the gods the bow should become as light as a flower with the touch of Sri Raama. Let the entire prowess enter the arms of Sri Raama and provide him strength and power. Because of that Sri

Raama would be able to string the bow and I would be able to become his spouse and roam about in the forest for fourteen years.

Seetha tried to appease the gods with prayers and promises. Sri Raama was also listening to the prayers of Seetha. Sri Raama went to the bow smilingly and offered his salutation to it and circumambulated it offered his salutation again. Thereafter he bowed in reverence mentally to his father Desarettha, his mother Kausalya and his teacher Vasishta. Thereafter holding the bow with his left hand and the cord or the string in right hand he lifted the bow in a flash of a second just like lifting a flower in front of all the audience and strung it. At that time, the musical instruments started playing, the flowers were showered on his head and the bards started reciting the glory of Sri Raama. In the meantime, with the application of the force by Raama the bow of Lord Siva was broken into three pieces.

With the breaking of the bow a thundering sound was produced which echoed in the globe and the earth was shaken. By hearing the sound Paarvathy got scared and shaken and embraced her beloved consort Siva very tightly. All the oceans were disturbed together with the directions. All the stars started falling on the earth. The head of Sessa or Anantha Naaga started feeling giddy. The fragrant breeze started blowing. The gods started showering flowers from the sky and the musical instruments sounded. The Apsaraas started dancing and rejoicing at the occasion. And at the same time drums were beaten in the Sabhaa Mandapa or Auditorium. The damsels started dancing.

Raavana felt immensely ashamed. Without arranging his clothes and deprived of the crown, getting upset, he fled away towards Lanka leaving the city of Mitthila in utter shame. So, this was the first time Sri Raama and Seetha have seen Raavana. The rest of the wedding ceremony is like in other Raamaayanams with the exception that when Dhesarettha and party arrived at Mitthila, Dhesarettha asked Sathanandha, the priest of Jenaka how Seetha achieved. Sathanandha is the son of Gauthama and Ahalya. He is the one who explains the glorious deed of breaking the Saiva Chaapa by Sri Raama to Dhesarettha. This is the time Sathanandha explained the story of Pathmaaksha who tried to achieve Lakshmi

as his daughter by performing great austerity and penance. Lakshmi was pleased and appeared to him. He requested Lakshmi to be his daughter. She said that she is a slave of Vishnu and not independent and cannot take any decisions independently. If Vishnu gives her away, then she would become the daughter of Pathmaaksha.

Then Pathmaaksha performed austerity and penance to please Vishnu. Vishnu was pleased and gave a citron and disappeared. When Pathmaaksha tore out the citron he found a beautiful girl with immense luster in it. He took her as his daughter and called her as Lakshmi and alternatively as Pathma. At that time, all the torn pieces of the citron joined together and turned out into fruit again. The daughter of Pathmaaksha held it in her hands. The girl kept growing and became of marriageable age. And the king, Pathmaaksha, started worrying about whom the girl should be given in marriage. The king then arranged for her Swayamvara. Swayamvara is the arrangement of marriage that prevailed in ancient times, especially in royal families. The bride's father will invite all kings, princes, Dhevaas, Rishees, etc. and then the girl will be explained of the qualifications of the prospective grooms assembled one by one and then the bride will put the garland on the person of her choice and then the parents will arrange wedding ceremony of the girl with that person.

On hearing the news about the Swayamvara of Pathmaaksha's daughter, the great sages, the gods, the Gandharvas, Dhannavaas, Humans, those who could take any form at will like the Oceans, Mountains, Rivers, etc., Yekshaas, Kinnaraas, Raakshasaas including Raavana arrived. They announced to all those who assembled that: The one who would be able to develop the color of the sky over his body would be able to marry his daughter, Pathma. Or in other words Pathma would choose and marry only the one who could develop the color of the sky over his body.

Everyone assembled there knew that was an impossible task but were very much attracted by the charm and beauty of Pathma. So, they decided to kidnap her. Pathmaaksha, knowing their plan, fought with them. Getting injured with the

arrows of Pathmaaksha the humans and gods fled away. But Pathmaaksha was killed by a demon. Thereafter all the demons collectively rushed to capture.

Pathma. Seeing the attempts of the demons, Pathma jumped into the fire-flame. Realizing that Pathma is missing, the demon king searches Pathma throughout the city. The royal palace was razed to the ground and the earth around it was dug. In a moment, the entire city was turned into a cremation ground.

While meeting Lakshmi, Pathmaaksha had to meet the tragic fate. This is the reason why the sages are never desirous of Lakshmi. Because of Lakshmi the mind gets agitated, the grief and the fear increase and the person gets killed after suffering to a considerable extent. Therefore, one should keep away from Lakshmi. At the killing of Pathmaaksha all his queens, thousands in number, felt terrified and ended their lives with him.

After that all the demons went back to their abodes. After that Lakshmi got out sitting over the fire-altar. At that time Raavana was passing over the skyway of that area on his Pushpaka Vimaan. Saarana, courtier of Raavana, spotted Pathma or Lakshmi, the daughter of Pathmaaksha and pointed out to Raavana and narrated the story of her disappearance from the Svayamvara Mandapa when her father was killed by the demons. Hearing the name of Pathma, Raavana was infested with passion and jumped out of the plane to catch hold of her. But she again disappeared into the fire-altar. Seeing the disappearance of Pathma, Raavana spoke: Oh Pathma! You have already troubled the gods and demons very much by jumping into the fire. I have found your dwelling place today. To have you, I shall search the entire ashes of the fire-altar. He found five gems in it. Raavana picked all the five gems and placed them in a box and took them to Lenka. After reaching Lenka Raavana kept the box in a temple. Then he told Mandodhari that he has brought some very precious gems for her which might give immense pleasure and satisfaction to her. And that those gems are safe-kept in a box in the temple. Then asked her to go and bring the box.

When Mandodhari tried to pick up the jewel box she could not lift it up. She felt disgraceful and went back to Raavana and told what happened. On hearing that, Raavana went back to the temple to fetch the box by himself. But he also could

either lift the box up or even move it a bit. This surprised Raavana also at the same time he was very panicky. He opened the box then and there. Raavana then found a little girl in the box who was as lustrous as the Sun. And the luster or brilliance of the girl started dazzling the eyes of Raavana. His sons and relatives started pouring in to have a look at the beautiful girl.

At that time Raavana narrated the story of the fight between demons and Pathmaaksha and the disappearance of his daughter Pathma. And how obtained the gems from the ashes of the fire-altar where she disappeared. Mandodhari was terrified and in anger she spoke to Raavana: This inauspicious and wicked girl would be the destroyer of our family and race. You better carry her away and drop her in the forest. When she is so heavy at her infancy what would be her position in youthful age. She is certainly going to be the cause of your death. She should not be kept in Lenka even for a moment. Raavana took the words of Mandodhari very seriously and after consulting with his courtiers and Ministers he commanded his messengers: You carry this box carefully and place it in the plane and leave it in the forest. When the messengers were ready to take the child through the sky way or by air Mandodhari told Raavana that this girl is the killer and therefore she should not be left in the open but should be buried in the ground. On hearing the words of Mandodhari the infant child in the box said: I would come back to Lenka again to kill the demons and destroy Raavana with his sons and relatives. Thereafter I will come to Lenka a third time to kill Poundraka, the son of Nikumbha, having a thousand heads, also known as Sahasra Raavana or Thousand-headed Raavana. Thereafter I will arrive here a fourth time to kill Kumbhakarna and Moolakaasura. On hearing the words of the infant child Dhesaanana or Raavana injured at heart and all other demons also felt like dead. Raavana then thought the child should be killed instantaneously and took out his sword and rushed towards Pathma, the child. Seeing this Mandodhari warned her husband not to kill the child because he has a long life left out but if he kills the child then he is sure to die at once. The child's words cannot be otherwise. Whatever must happen let it happen in the future in due course as destined but for the present you must drop her in the forest. Why do you want to invite death today itself which must come after some time?

Thereafter the messengers carried the box in the plane and dropped it in the forest of Mitthila and buried it with the girl in the earth. The king of Mitthila or Vidheha gave away the earth to a Braahmana in charity at the time of solar eclipse. After some time, the Braahmana thought of plowing the land and doing some cultivation but waited for some auspicious time. When the auspicious time arrived, he asked the plowman to plow the land. At that time, the blade of the plow was struck with the box. The plowman thought that the box might have some treasure and handed it over to the Braahmana telling him that he was very fortunate to get the treasures. But the Braahmana took it to the King and gave it to him. The king told him though I am the king I have already donated the land to you. So, whatever emerges from there after you get it belongs to you. Therefore, you can keep the box and its contents. Then the Braahmana insisted that the king had given him only the land, not the gem studded box. Therefore, whatever riches found in the land belongs to the donor, the king. Please do not make me sinful of keeping this box. Thus, a dispute arose between the king and the Braahmana. The courtiers and advisors of the king requested to stop the argument and to have a look at the contents of the box.

Thus, the king asked his messengers to open the box. They found a girl child in the box and got surprised. The Braahmana left the palace leaving the box and the girl with the king. Then the king adopted the girl as his daughter and that time the gods of heaven played musical instruments and showered flowers over and celebrated the most auspicious occasion. The king performed all birth rites of the girl very fabulously. The Braahmanaas were given enormous riches and dancers performed dances. Because she was originally born from citron (remember Pathmaaksha got the citron from Vishnu and Pathma was born from the citron) she was called as Maathulungi (Maathalam is Pomegranate) meaning the one who is born from Pomegranate, and because of her birth from Agni or fire she was called as Agnigerbha, and because she was born from Rethna or Gems she was known as Rethnaavali, because she was born out of Ddharani or earth she was known as Ddharanija, because she was brought up by Jenaka she was known as Jaanaki, because she was found with the striking of blade of the plow she was known as Sitha or Seetha and because she was daughter of Pathmaaksha she was

called as Pathma. Seetha also had innumerable other names. As Sri Raama had the color of the cloud now the words of Pathmaaksha have been fulfilled. Sathanandha then concluded that: Oh, Dhesarettha Mahaaraajan! I have provided answers to your questions. Now please proceed to accept all the four brides for your four sons. Marriage celebrations are also very detailed like in Thulasi Raamaayanam.

An interesting exception at the time of surrender by Parasuraama in the encounter between Parasuraama and Sri Raama is that Sri Raama said: You either allow me to destroy all the three worlds or your two feet. At the end as in other Raamaayanams Sri Raama shot an arrow and destroyed the results of all the deeds of Parasuraama.

At the Diwali or Dheepaavali, meaning festival of lights, festival immediately after marriage Sitha and her sisters Jenaka invited Dhesarettha and family and friends to celebrate the festival at his palace in Mitthila. They celebrated the festival very pompously. Jenaka gave out treasures, riches, gems, ornaments, gold and other gifts very generously and lavishly to his daughters, sons-in-law, Dhesarettha and his wives, his courtiers and all those who attended the festival. With the gifts and presents Dhesarettha along with his army and courtiers were getting ready to return to Ayodhddhya. At that point of time those kings who felt humiliated at the time of wedding of Sitha surrounded Dhesarettha to challenge him. Finding Dhesarettha engrossed in anxiety both Raama and Lekshmana approached him and Raama spoke to him: You should not feel worried when I am there. I shall destroy all of them in a moment. You see my prowess. At that time Dhesarettha protested and told Raama: You are a small boy. You cannot challenge them in the forest. I shall destroy them. You just protect our army. Sri Raama again spoke to Dhesarettha: You should come to my help only when you find my strength decreasing. Till such time you take care of the family and the army.

Thus, Raama mounted his chariot with his bow and arrow and marched on. Lekshmana followed Raama. Seeing that Bharatha and Sathrugna also accompanied them. Finding all the four sons going, Dhesarettha formed an army

of ten thousand warriors to accompany them. On the other hand, the kings noticed Raama moving on the chariot. All the kings joined together, and a terrific battle was fought. Raama was then joined by his brothers. The battle that followed resembled that of Thaarakaasura and Kaarththikeya or Subramanya. In that battle, a hundred kings joined together and fought with Bharatha and wounded him. Bharatha fainted and fell from the chariot. Then the kings fought with Sathrughna, and he also fainted and fell. Then they disturbed Lekshmana also. And after that they shot a large number of arrows at Sri Raama. Kausalya and other mothers, Sitha and other wives of the brothers were peeping through the window of their palanquin. Then Raama shot a Vaayavyaasthra or wind-arrow at the kings who were flown away like dry leaves and reached the seashore. And then by using the Mohanaasthra he made all other enemies senseless of the place, time and friends. This makes the enemies fight against their own friends. The entire enemy army consisting of elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers were also destroyed. Finding Bharatha fainted in the battlefield, Kaikeyi got down from her cow-elephant and taking in her laps started lamenting. Then Dhesarettha and other wives including Kausalya also started lamenting.

Raama then assured everyone that Bharatha will soon regain his conscience and asked Lekshmana to go to the Aasrama or hermitage of sage Mudhgala and get the Sanjeevani and other medicinal plants. Lekshmana immediately went to the Aasrama but the disciple Brahmacharees of Mudhgala prevented him from carrying any medicine from there without the permission of their Preceptor, Mudhgala, who was performing Thapas or austerity at that time and he could not be disturbed. Lekshmana went back and appraised the situation to Sri Raama. Then Sri Rama told Lekshmana that he can remove the disciples of the sage by hand without use of arms but with your hands and get back the medicinal plant. He should not be afraid of the sage, Mudhgala. Lekshmana again went to the hermitage and removed the disciples without using force and carried the medicines to Sri Rama. Rama then removed the arrows from the body of Bharatha and with the use of medicines he was brought back to life. Kaikeyi and



all others were very delighted. King Dhesarettha arranged a fabulous function to celebrate the occasion.

When the sage got out of Thapas and came back to the hermitage his disciples narrated the entire story of what happened in his absence due to Thapas. Mudhgala asked his disciples to go and find out who Lekshmana and for whom he carried the medicinal plants. The disciples went to Dhesarettha and asked him: Who are you and what for he sent Lekshmana to get the medicinal plants. Finding the disciples of the sage angry, the king was worried and said to them: I am king Desarettha and Lekshmana had to get the medicine at my instance. Please convey my salutation to the sage and narrate everything to him and I will be there shortly to pray to the sage. When Mudhgala heard the names of Raama and Desarettha he was very thrilled to meet them. But in the meantime, Dhesarettha alone entered the hermitage and offered his salutation with folded hands. Rama and other sons of the king besides Kausalya and other wives and damsels stood outside and offered salutations. Then Sumathi, the wife of Mudhgala, especially welcomed all the ladies and honored them.

When Dhesarettha requested to forgive for his fault Mudhgala told comforted him by saying that not only he has not committed any fault he also has done immense good that otherwise he could not have the audience of his son, Sri Rama and Sitha who are meditated upon by all the people of the universe. Knowing that Dhesarettha wanted to ask the sage something he took him aside beyond the bushes of Thulasi and asked what he wanted to ask. Dhesarettha requested to tell the future of Rama. Mudhgala explained to Dhesarettha that Rama is the incarnation of Vishnu. And the purpose of the incarnation is to destroy the evil and Asuraas and to establish Ddharmma. And after the departure of Dhesarettha, Rama would rule the country for ten thousand one hundred years. He would be ruler of all the seven islands on the earth. He had two sons and four brides and twenty-four grandsons and twelve granddaughters. The great grandsons of Sri Rama would be innumerable. He would live in the forest of Dhendakaaranya for some time to relieve himself of Vrindha's curse. Then Dhesarettha asked him who was Vrindha and who was her husband. Why did she curse him? Dhesarettha requested Mudhgala to explain everything in detail.

Mudhgala started the story: In the earlier times there was a demon called Jelanddhara. Vrindha was his wife. She was one of the chastest women. Due to the strength of her chastity her husband, Jelanddhara, could not be defeated even by Lord Siva. Thereafter Lord Vishnu at the request of Paarvathi went to the abode of Jelanddhara and desecrated the chastity of Vrindha by cohabiting with her. The story goes like this: At the same time when Vishnu reached the palace of Jelanddhara Vrindha had a dream. And in that dream her husband, bathing with oil, in a naked body, mounted over a he-buffalo moving towards the southern direction. His head was shaven and was surrounded with darkness. This was the indication of death. When Vrindha woke up she became very restless. She went outside with two of her maids. But she could not get any peace of mind and started running here and there in the outside orchards. There she met with two terrific demons looking like lions. She was terribly frightened and started running here and there. She suddenly found a sage keeping silent surrounded by disciples. She hugged the sage tightly and asked to protect her as she was helpless and scared to death. The ascetic asked her to remain there without any fear. When he saw the demons were still frightening the girl he started uttering a thunder-like "humkaara" sound. Getting terrified with the sound of 'humkaara' the demons ran away.

Vrindha was astonished and impressed on the power and prowess of the sage. She prostrated the sage and asked him to find out the status of her husband, Jelanddhara, who is fighting with Siva. Hearing the words of Vrindha the sage looked above as if he was going to telepathically see what is happening in the combat ground of Siva and Jelanddhara. Then two monkeys appeared there. They offered salutation to him. They were carrying the head, the hands and the torso of Jelanddhara. With the sight of that painful scene Vrindha fainted and fell. The sage sprinkled divine water and brought her back to senses. She then prayed to the sage to bring Jelanddhara back to life. He said that it is impossible to bring back the life of Jelanddhara who has been killed by Siva. But I feel special affinity and compassion to you and so I will bring his life back. Thus, telling he disappeared. In the meantime, Jelanddhara, the son of Sagara, appeared and embracing Vrindha, he caressed her. Vrindha finding her husband immensely

delighted kept on roaming in the forest for a long time. Once after cohabiting with him, Vrindha found Jelanddhara in the form of Vishnu. She then denounced him and said: Oh Hari, disgrace to you for cohabiting with other's wife. I now realized that you had been an illusory ascetic and you have shown your two messengers as monkeys. They would be turned as demons and abduct your wife. They were Jaya and Vijaya, your attendants, disguised as monkeys.

Despite your being Lord of all, you would feel the pain with the separation of your wife and would roam about in the forest with monkeys. Your virtuous disciples and Dhevaas would also be turned into monkeys. Several other monkeys would meet you in Dhendaka forest. Thus, speaking Vrindha entered the fire. With the desecration of her chastity, the real Jelanddhara, her husband, was killed at the hands of Lord Siva. Mudhgala continued to Dhesarettha: Oh Raajan! Jaya and Vijaya, the messengers and gatekeepers of Vishnu, are born as Raavana and Kumbhakarna. They are now in Lanka. Raavana would steal the daughter of Jenaka from Panjchavati and carry her to Lanka. Ultimately, they would be killed with the arrows of Sri Rama. After doing all these Raama accompanied with his beloved wife, Sitha, and his brothers would go on pilgrimage, perform Yajnas, would enjoy all the material pleasures of the world and would rule all the seven islands of the world very efficiently and righteously. This is a secret and you should reveal it to anyone. Hearing the story of Sri Rama and Sitha, Dhesarettha wanted to be what he was in his previous birth. Therefore, he requested Mudhgala to tell him that also. More importantly he wanted to find out what noble deeds had he committed to have the incarnation of Lord Vishnu born into his house and Maha Lakshmi was to be able to be achieved by his son and brought to his household as daughter-in-law.

Mudhgala told the story of Dharmadheththa, a devout Brahmin, who lived in the city of Karaveerapura of Sahyadri or Sahya Mountain. He was a staunch and steadfast devotee of Lord Vishnu. He always recited the twelve letter Mantra "Om NaMo BhaGaWaThe VaaSuDheVaaYa". Once in the night he was going to the temple of Vishnu, with material for performing Pooja. On the way he suddenly heard the rumbling sound and found a terrifying demoness with long lips, curved fangs, moving long tongue, red eyes, looking like a skeleton and

without robes. Looking at her, Ddharmmadheththa was terrified. Throwing away the Pooja materials and the water for adoration he started beating the demoness and pouring on the water and the Thulasi leaves on her and reciting the Manthra of Naaraayana. By doing so all the sins of the demoness were washed out and she was reminded of her earlier deeds. Her name was Kalaha. Then she prostrated before Ddharmmadheththa and told him that she reached that stage because of her earlier evil deeds. He asked her to explain her earlier deeds by which she reached this condition. She started narrating her story:

Oh Braahmana! In Sauraashtra, there lived a Brahmin named Bhikshu. I was his wife named Kalaha. I was very quarrelsome. I never used to give him any tasty food I made. Whatever good food I cook would be consumed by me first and only the leftovers were to my husband. And if asked for anything I will do the opposite. Once when he went to one of his friends, he said that I do not care for his needs and words and sought his advice to deal with the situation. His friend thought deeply and told him: You better speak to your wife in the opposite way so that she would do whatever you do not want her to do. In this way, your job would be done. After reaching home he said to me: Oh, dear, don't invite my friend to take food in my house because he is a wicked person. Then I said: Your friend is the best of all the Brahmins and is a quite noble person. I would invite him for food today itself. Then I went and invited my husband's friend home for food. Since then my husband started talking to me in the opposite way and thus, he got his work done by me smoothly. Then on the death anniversary of his father he told: Oh, my wife, I would not perform the Sraadhddha of my father today. I immediately invited Braahmanaas and told my husband: Disgrace to you since you do not want to perform the Sraadhddha of your own father. Then my husband told me: In case you want to perform the Sraadhddha, you invite only one Brahmin and do it. Hearing that, I immediately invited eighteen Brahmins and prepared a big feast with sweets and other dishes. Then my husband told me: First I must take food with him and then give only the leftovers to the Brahmins. I denounced him and first offered meals to the eighteen Brahmins as Pinda-Dhaana. Then my husband said that he was going to fast on that day. Then I served him meals with all the sweets. Then my husband by mistake asked me to

take the Pindaas and consign them in sacred water. Then I threw them in a dirty place. The Brahmins were distressed. My husband thought for a while and asked me not to remove the Pindaas from the dirty place. Then I took it from there. Then my husband asked me not to consign it in sacred water. Then I placed them gracefully in sacred water. As he was fed up with me, my husband married another woman. Then I ended my life by consuming poison.

Then I was bound by the messengers of Yema taken to Yema Puri. Then Yema asked Chithraguptha, his record keeper, to find out whether I had performed good or bad deeds. Chithraguptha told me I had never performed any good deed. He gave the whole account of my deeds. Because of her evil and cruel deeds, I should be born as a cat. But she killed herself because of her husband. Therefore, she should remain alone as a Pretha or goblin for a long time. Then Kalaha told the Braahmana: Thereafter the messengers of Yema carried me to the desert country and left me there. I stayed in the desert for fifteen years as a goblin. Because of my bad deeds I had to remain hungry, thirsty and always suffering. Once perching in the body of a businessman suffering from hunger, I want to see the confluence of Krishna and Venee rivers. Reaching there the messengers of Siva and Vishnu separated me from the body of the businessman and threw me away. Thereafter suffering from hunger, I was wondering, and I found you. With the offering of the water and Thulasi leave by you all my sins have been removed. Oh, Braahmana, be compassionate and get me relieved of my future three births. Oh, best of the Sages I take refuge in you. Please redeem me from the position of the goblin. Ddharmmadheththa, the Braahmana, was surprised and thought for a long time about my words and requests. He then started speaking: By visiting the holy places and performing charities and fasting and penance the sins are reduced. But being a goblin, you have no access to that. My mind feels pain at your miserable condition. I cannot be peaceful till you are relieved of the misery. This degraded form of a goblin and the sins for which you must be rewarded in three future births cannot be washed out by ordinary merits. Therefore, I give away in charity to your half of the merit earned by performing Kaarthika-Vratha by me since my birth. You would achieve a noble place with that.

Thus, speaking Ddharmmadheththa sprinkled Thulasi leaves and water on her and recited the twelve letters Manthra: Om NaMo BhaGaWaThe VaaSuDheVaaYa. She was immediately relieved from the body of the goblin. She took the divine form like the fire-flames and became a beautiful damsel like Urvasi. Kalaha was very pleased with the Braahmana and spoke to him: Oh, best of the Braahmanaas, I have been saved from falling into hell by your grace. You have served as a boat to save me from drowning in the ocean of sins. While she was speaking, a plane descended from the sky in which the attendants appeared in the form of Vishnu. Thereafter the Punyaseela, Suseela, etc. made Kalaha to board the plane and the Apsaraas in the plane started serving her. Ddharmmadheththa was surprised to have a look at the plane. He then found the virtuous Suseela and others bowing in reverence to him. They then spoke some noble words to him: Oh, best of the Braahmanaas, well done. You are very graceful. You are always very merciful to the downtrodden and are aware of the Ddharmma and always remain engrossed in the devotion of Vishnu and perform His Vrathaas. You had been performing Kaarthika Vratha since childhood and bestowed the merit of half of those Vrathaas to her. This has now multiplied your merit to the double of it. By bestowing half of the merit of your Vrathaas the sins of hundreds of births of this lady have been destroyed. And by showering Thulasi leaves and sprinkling holy water all her sins have been washed out. She is now pure and her remaining life is for the sake of offering devotional services to Lord Vishnu. Because of your donating the lamp she has achieved the illuminating form and is proceeding to Vaikuntta. You are an ocean of compassion. You would also achieve the grace of Lord Vishnu and at the end of your life you along with your wife would be able to ascend to Vaikuntta. Only by the Grace of Lord Vishnu, Ddhruva could attain Ddhruvaloka. Remember the story of Indhradhyumna who was cursed Agasthya to be an elephant and it is Lord Vishnu who released from the spell of the curse by killing the crocodile who was the Genddharva named Huhu and took both to Vaikuntta. Indhradhyumna and Huhu were staunch devotees of Lord Vishnu. Therefore, they became the closest Associates and gate-keepers of Vishnu. Indhradhyumna became Jaya and Huhu became Vijaya, the brothers.

Ddharmmadheththa stayed in the Vaikuntta for a long time. And then when the merits of his Vrathaas exhausted he took the birth as you, Dhesarettha. You are also an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu. You would also achieve the vicinity of Lord Vishnu along with your two wives (Kausalya and Sumithra) after thousand years. Kalaha who received half the merit of your Kaarthika Vratha is now born as Kaikeyi, your third wife. She will always remain very close to you. Oh King Dhesarettha due to the establishment of tasks of the gods you performed, Lord Vishnu has now incarnated as your son and he is known by the name Rama. Rama would kill the demons like Raavana and others and rule the country. Your Vrathaas were very severe and therefore you will attain the most esteemed and noble position of Jaya, Vijaya, Punyaseela, Suseela and Associates of Vishnu. When Dhesarettha heard these words, he adored the Sage and embraced Rama and Lakshmana.

In this Ramayana, it is mentioned that Sitha is only six months junior to Rama whereas in Valmiki Ramayana she was eight years junior as she was only eight years at the time of marrying Sri Rama of sixteen years.

Dhesarettha spoke to Rama in a lonely place that Rama is the incarnation of Vishnu and sought his advice to remove his ignorance. Sri Rama gives meaningful advice in the presence of his mother Kausalya and all other wives of Dhesarettha:

Oh King, the entire universe which is the creation of Maaya or Illusion is like the silver in the mother of pearl, water in sand, the snake in the cord or water of the deer-thirst. The people without wisdom also visualize it to be eternal and permanent but the people with wisdom think it to be just the opposite of it. According to their wisdom the soul is spotless, eternal and blissful. Because we are Amsa or Minute Part of the Lord, Brahma the Lord of the universe and all of us are influenced with the illusion act like an actor for creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe, taking to several forms. But the Soul is never attracted towards anyone as the lotus leaf remains unaffected with the water. ... And after a series of philosophical advice Rama reveals to Dhesarettha that because of the great austerity and penance in the previous birth and desired to have Vishnu born as his son now Vishnu has incarnated in the womb of Kausalya.

Rama also told his father that his words will remove all blemish in the mind of Dhesareththa.

In Adhyatma Ramayana only in Sundara Kanda Sitha tells the story of the incident of Jeyantha, the son of Indra, to Hanuman as a secret message. In this Aanantha Ramayana the incident itself is described in Sarga – 6 “Entry of Rama in the Dhendaka Forest” of Sara-Kanda. Also, in Adyatma Ramayana, Rama leaves Chithrakoota after the first arrival of Bharatha, thinking that the people from Ayodhya would visit him whereas in this book many people used to visit Rama after the visit of Bharatha. Then only they left Chithrakoota and went to Dhendakaaranya.

Before Sita was being abducted by Ravana, Sri Rama asked Sita to transform herself in three forms. In Rejoguna she has been asked to enter fire, in Sathvaguna form to reside in his left limbs and in Thamoguna to stay in Panchavati to attract Ravana.

There are many interesting exceptions: Soorpanaka told Raavana that her innocent son who was performing Thapas was killed by both Rama and Lakshmana. Raavana promised Mareecha half of Lanka if the task is completed successfully. Lakshmana drew a protective line and asked Sita not to cross it at any instance. Raavana disguised as a Sanyaasi told her if she wants to protect the household position of Sri Rama then she must cross out the line and give alms because he cannot accept alms from anyone who is bound with the drawing of lines. Raavana caught her when she crossed the line and gave the alms. Raavana’s Pushpaka Vimaana was drawn by eight donkeys and not by horses.

When Raavana left Sita in the Asoka garden under the care of demonesses, Indhra arrived at the instance of Brahmadheva and gave the Paayasam which could remove hunger for one year. Before consuming the Paayasam she took out some for the sake of Rama and Lakshmana. Then she gave a little of it for Dhevaas and some for cows and some for birds and little to Thrijeda, one of the demonesses appointed by Raavana but was faithful to Sita. After that Raavana sent sixteen demons to kill Raama but all of them were eaten up by Kabanddha.



The mountain over which Sri Rama and Sitha had slept over the bed is known by the name RaamaSayyaGiri meaning the hill or mountain where Rama had his bed.

Rama acted like ignorant person in searching for Sitha. On the way Sri Rama performed Homa, making Sitha of Kusa-grass in the absence of real Sitha. When Siva explained it to Parvathi she put a question: Oh Lord Sri Rama whose name is always recited by you, the same Rama getting separated from his wife Sitha is wandering in the forest. At that time Lord Siva answered to his wife, Parvathi: Oh, goddess Rama is Lord Vishnu moving in the form of Rama over the earth to educate the people and is roaming about like an ignorant person. By doing this he wants to convey the message to the people that they should not get so much attracted towards their wives. The attraction towards wife makes people to wander like this. On hearing the words of Siva, Parvathi wanted to test the divinity of Rama. She took the form of Sitha and went to Rama and said to him: Oh lotus eyed Rama! You look at Janaki who is standing before you. You come here and let us enjoy the sport in the forest and achieve the pleasure. Then Rama told her: I am aware as to whom are you? You have uselessly taken the form of Sitha. Why do you want to mislead me? Rama repeated that question again and again. Then at the instance of Siva, Parvathi could realize the true form of Sri Rama. Then she requested him again and again for forgiveness. When you returned to Kailas, Lord Siva asked her about the talk between Rama and her. Siva asked: Why have you come here? Who are you? Ambika (Parvathi) possessing your name, resides in Dhendakaaranya. At that time, you felt ashamed. Because of that a city name Lejjapura, meaning city of shame, was founded.

When Hanuman was sent by Sugreeva to find out who are the two youths in the dress of Muni Kumaaraas: He gave two indications for conveyance: In case they are evil minded then you can indicate with your fingers. In case they are noble then you can smilingly look at me.

There is a story about the seven Thala Trees which Baali used for routine exercise. Once Baali had taken some Thala fruits in his cave out of them seven fruits were stolen by somebody. When Baali looked for it he found a serpent instead of a

thief. Then Baali cursed the serpent that seven Thala trees would be grown on its body. The serpent then declared “Whosoever would cut-off the trees with a single arrow, he would also kill you.” About the garland Baali was wearing which he got from his father, Indhra, was originally given by Lord Siva to Kasyapa as a reward for his severe austerity. Then Kasyapa gave it to his son Indhra. It was a divine garland. Finding the garland around the neck of Baali, the enemy loses half his strength. Therefore, Sugriva warned Sri Rama not to look at the garland when he wanted to kill Baali. Sri Rama released the serpent from his curse and asked it to go to Kishkindha at night and steal away the garland from the neck of Baali when he would be asleep. The serpent stole the garland as per the command of Sri Rama and gave it to Indhra.

There is a very interesting exception in the conversation between Baali and his wife Thaara before he was going to accept the call of challenge from Sugreeva for the second time. ... On hearing the words of Thaara Baali said: “I know Raama pretty well who Naaraayana himself has taken to the form of a human being. In case I get killed at his hands, I would achieve the highest position. Oh Thaara, you remain here and comfortably serve Sugreeva. Oh dear, when Sugreeva enjoyed the conjugal sports with you only then I would have been relieved of his debt by cohabitating with his wife. Oh, beautiful one, today my garland has disappeared and as such I am sure to be killed in the battlefield with the arrow of Rama. Oh, Thaara myself and my parents are grateful that I would meet with my end at the hands of Sri Rama.”

And when Baali was down with the arrow of Sri Rama, Thaara arrived and started lamenting. Baali, finding Sri Raama before him, was filled with emotions and said: “Oh Lord, you have killed me today hiding yourself behind a tree. This is a matter of great merit for me, but you would surely earn a great blemish because of the same. Secondly, I have done you no harm because of which you have killed me.” Sri Rama said: “You had been involved with the wife of Sugriva. Keeping the wife of your younger brother in your house, you intended to kill him. I have killed you because of this sin. Despite that at the end of Dhvaapara Yuga taking the form of Bhila or Hunter reminded of the earlier enmity, you would pierce your arrow

through my foot. Thereafter you would die at my hand and achieve great glory.  
[In Bhaagawatham this is not there.]

Baali said: "Oh Lord, had you come to me then I would have surely informed you about the whereabouts of Seetha and had also snatched her away from Raavana in a moment and could have given her to you. Therefore, now I pray that you should protect Angadha."

At a time when Rama and Lekshmana were staying in a cave at Prevarshana Mountain during the rainy season, once when Lekshmana was returning after taking his bath he found Raama in the company of Sathvaguna- Seetha. Lekshmana offered his salutation to her by immediately merging into the left side of Raama.

In this Anantha Raamaayana Hanuman has killed not only Simhika but also Kraunjcha, a daughter of Raavana. After entering the city of Lenka Hanuman noticed Kumbhakarna sleeping in a cave and Vibhishana reciting the names of Raama. Raavana was sleeping in the royal palace. He extinguished the lamp and unrobbed Raavana and many other demons and demonesses and burnt out the beards and mustaches of the demons.

Initially when Hanuman saw Mandodhari sleeping in the palace he mistook her as Seetha as she was very beautiful. Paarvathi asked Siva: "Oh Sadhaasiva how was the demoness Mandodhari like Seetha in appearance? I have heard that all the damsels of the world were born out of the fragments of Seetha."

Siva said: "Once Kaikasi, the mother of Raavana feeling disturbed had spoken to Raavana that with the breathing of the serpent Sesha my Sivalinga had been flown to Paathaala. Therefore, you go to Siva and get a beautiful Sivalinga for me." On hearing the words of the mother, Raavana approached me and pleased me with his music and worship and asked me for boons. Raavana said: You kindly give me two boons. By one boon I seek the Aathmalinga (Sivalinga) for my mother and with the second boon you give me Paarvathi as my wife." On hearing the request of Raavana, Siva handed over Paarvathi and Aathmalinga and said to him: "O Raavana in case you drop this Linga on earth during the journey then it won't

move forward and would remain installed there.” Raavana said, “All right.” Raavana then departed from Kailaasa, the abode of Siva, together with Paarvathi and Linga. Paarvathi then invoked Lord Vishnu. He then handed over Mandodhari painted with sandal paste to Maya as his daughter. Maya went to Paathaala together with Mandodhari.

Lord Vishnu taking the form of Braahmana, met Raavana on the way and told him, “O Raavana, Lord Siva has cheated you. He has given away the fake Paarvathi to you. The real Paarvathi has been sent by Siva in the house of Maya. He thought that you would search for her only in heaven or earth. You would never go in search of her in the nether world. Therefore, you leave this fake Paarvathi and go to the abode of Maya and get the real Paarvathi from him. Making the real Paarvathi as your wife, you enjoy your life.” Raavana took the words of the Braahmana to be true and returned Paarvathi to Siva and smiled and said: “I have understood the meaning of mind, you have hidden the real Paarvathi in Paathaala and given me the fake one. You keep her with you, I will catch hold of the hidden Paarvathi.”

On the way, he intended to ease himself and entrusted the care of Sivalinga to the Braahmana saying: “O Braahmana accepting my request you carry this Sivalinga in your hand for a while. After easing myself I shall return in a short while.” Lord Vishnu [there is another version that this was Ganapathi] in the form of Braahmana said to Raavana: “O Raavana in case you are delayed, I shall place the Linga here itself and leave the place.” Raavana then started easing himself which continued for a long time and it did not stop. When it was a long time, Vishnu in the form of Braahmana consecrated the Linga over the western shore of the ocean and left for his abode. Thereafter Raavana arrived and found the Linga placed on the ground. He tried in vain to lift it up. A small pit was formed over the top of it which was squeezed in size resembling the ear. Thereafter the Linga which was turned into the shape of an ear came to be known as Gokarna. Thereafter Raavana felt extremely sad and left for Paathaala.

In Paathaala, Raavana found Mandodhari in the house of Maya. Raavana requested Maya to give his daughter to him in marriage. Maya did so. Raavana

was very pleased and gave her the name of Mandodhari because of her slender waist. When he was denounced by his mother, he again went to Gokarna and started performing Thapas. Ultimately with the power of his Thapas, Raavana received the boon from Brahmadheva and overpowered all the three worlds.

After telling these stories, Siva told Paarvathi that because of this, Hanuman found Mandodhari, resembling Seetha.

After the marriage of Raavana and Mandodhari, Maya was also living in Lanka. Maya's illustrious brother Gaya was also staying in Lanka at the time when Hanuman was there in search of Seetha. Because of the boon of Brahma Gaya was to be killed at the hands of Raavana. When Hanuman was searching for the palaces of Raavana in the night he found Gaya sleeping there. The intelligent Hanuman carried the costumes of Gaya and placed them in the bedroom of Raavana and Raavana's costumes were carried and placed over the bed of Vibhishana. We know what could have happened to Gaya.

Before Hanuman could chat with Seetha in the Asoka Garden of Lanka Raavana arrived her to entice and induce Seetha to become his Queen wife. Of course, in all other Raamaayanams also Raavana failed in his attempt. But in this Aanantha Raamaayana the conversation of Seetha is very novel and interesting. Raavana was enraged at Seetha for rejecting his request and he started speaking very harsh words:

“Bhavithree Lenkaayaam thridhesavadhanaglaanirachiraa-

Thsa Raamoapi stthaatha na yuddhi puratho Lekshmanasakhah;

Thatthaa yaasyathyuchchairvipadhamanujenaatha jetilo

Jeyah Sreeraamo syaanna mama behuthoshoatha thu bhaveth. “

Meaning: “Even the faces of the gods would have faded out on arrival in Lanka. Both Raama and Lekshmana can never face me on the battlefield. In case Raama arrives here with his brother then he would have to face great misfortune. Raama having the matted locks of hair over his head could never be victorious here and I would also not be very happy.”

On hearing the words of Raavana, Jaanaki or Sitha said: "You recite the same words again by removing the sixth letter from all the Paadhaas and removing the seventh letter you recite this verse again, you would meet with the same fate. What I mean to say is that in the verse if you remove "thri:", "na", "vi" and "na", these four letters are extracted then it would mean that a great misfortune would befall on Raavana in Lanka, you would be defeated. Raama together with Lakshmana would arrive here to wage a war. Raama with the help of his brother Lakshmana would achieve the highest position. Raama of the matted locks of hair would be victorious then I would feel delighted."

The confronting conversation between Raavana and Sitha continued and at one-point Ravana declared "If she does not arrive on my bed in a month's time then you should kill this damsel and serve her as the food. I would eat her up."

Sitha then spoke to the ten headed Raavana: "You had brought me here in my infancy in a box. At that time, I had told you something. Have you forgotten it? I told you that I am leaving now but I would come here again. And my arrival on the second time would be killing you together with your brothers, sons and the army. I have arrived here to fulfill my words. I shall have all your friends and relatives killed at the hands of Raama, together with your army. Therefore, getting killed with your relatives and brothers, I would return to Ayodhddhya. I would return to the city of Lanka the third time. At that point of time Nikumbhaa's son Paundraka would be residing with his paternal grand-parents in another island and would kill Raavana with a hundred heads who would arrive in Lanka for the help of Paundraka. During my third visit, I would kill both. I would arrive here in a Pushpaka plane and then kill them on the battlefield. I would return to my abode and then again arrive here a fourth time and would kill Moolakaasura, the son of Kumbhakarna. You remember earlier you had abducted Kausalya and king Dhesarettha and you had freed them again in Ayodhddhya. All these stands to show that you want to be killed and that is why you have intended to get attracted towards me. Now you go home and take food comfortably. Raama is sure to kill you shortly."

As mentioned earlier in the morning after Hanuman played all the tricky mischiefs, Raavana when got up in the morning was furious to find the waistband and costumes of Gaya over his back and he thought that Gaya must have come and enjoyed the company of Mandodhari. He took up his sword to kill her. The other damsels prevented him by saying that he should not indulge in killing women. Raavana went to the house of Gaya and beheaded him.

Having seen the costume of Raavana in his bed, Vibhishana rushed to kill his wife. Then all other ladies prevented him by saying that it is sinful to kill a woman. But Vibhishana became fearful of his brother.

The fight between Hanuman and Meghanaadha, eldest son of Raavana, also had many interesting twists in this Raamaayana. Hanuman uprooted a tree and threw it at Meghanaadha. He was wounded and entered a cave. At that point of time Brahmadheva prayed to Hanuman that he should honor the Brahmaasthra and get captured with the same and he should go to Raavana to face him. Hanuman accepted the words of Brahma, and Brahma then went to Meghanaadha and said: "Where has all your prowess disappeared today? Now you use my noose and capture the monkey and carry him to your father." That is how Hanuman was captured by Meghanaadha.

And the conversation between Raavana and Hanuman is also very dramatic. Raavana boasted of his strength and told him: "Brahma recites at my place the daily Panjchaangga. The Sun serves as doorkeeper, the Moon hold my umbrella, Varuna supplies the water, Vaayu brooms my place, Agni serves as a washer-man, Indhra serves as a gardener and Yema serves as a gate-keeper, all the wives of the gods serve as maid servants, Maarththaanda serves as a barber, Genesa looks after my donkeys. Mars, Mercury and other planets serve as the steps of my throne. The goddesses, Sathi and Kaarthyayani look after my children as nurses. I had shaken Kailaasa and conquered Kubera..."

Before Hanuman's tail was set on fire, Raavana ordered his servants to cut-off his tail when Vibhishana told him that it is not justified to kill the messenger of others. So Raavana's servants tried to cut the tail of Hanuman with saws and axes. At that time Hanuman just jerked his tail, and with the jerking all the

weapons were reduced to pieces. Then Ravana told Hanuman that brave people do not conceal the means of their death. Therefore, clearly tell me, how could your tail be destroyed? Hanuman told him that he is eternal. But Ravana did not believe him and insisted for some means. After thinking for a while Hanuman told him: "My tail could be destroyed by fire. This is certain." That is how Ravana and his party arranged to set fire to the tail of Hanuman.

As Hanuman expanded his tail even people must remove their costumes to wrap around the tail. But then they could not ignite the fire to the tail even after puffing air from the mouth of all the soldiers. At that time, Hanuman said if Ravana himself puffs air from his ten mouths, then the fire could be ignited. As soon as Ravana puffed air the flames were ignited which burnt out the hair of his heads besides his beards and mustaches. Ravana then started beating his face with his hands, to extinguish the fire. Then, all the demons started laughing aloud. Hanuman also started laughing. Ravana was enraged and issued a command that the wicked monkey should be captured. That is why they bound and started the procession.

Then he burnt the court of Ravana. Thereafter Raavana accompanied by ten crores of demons went to fight with Hanuman. Hanuman killed all of them and threw them over the heads of Raavana. Raavana's skin was burnt out and fainted with fire burning his face. But Hanuman did not kill him with an idea that in case he is killed by Raama, he would meet with immense glory. Hanuman also left Meghanaadha alive to please Lekshmana.

Hanuman was very careful not to kill any aquatic animals while putting out the fire on his tail at the northern sea-shore of Lanka. Since his throat was choked with smoke, he relieved his throat of the cuff there. After keeping quiet for a little while, Hanuman started beating his chest thinking that Sitha might have also been burnt out. Standing over the sea-shore he denounced himself and soliloquy: "Disgrace to me who has burnt out the wife of his Lord foolishly. Disgrace to me again and again. I have burnt out Janaki, who could please Raama, by mistake. I am a fool and did not think of it before burning Lanka. I would now end my life by coiling my own tail around my neck. How can I show my face to Sri Rama, he



would surely end his life after knowing about the fate of Sitha? Sumithra would die with separation from Lakshmana. Because of the grief of both Raama and Lakshmana, Sugriva would also end his life and infested with the grief of Sugriva's separation even Ruma, his wife, would end her life. On hearing this news Angadha who was lovingly brought up would also end his life. Thereafter Thaara would end her life getting separated from her son and all the monkeys would also die in the absence of the king. After the completion of fifteen years, Bharatha would also die. Getting separated from Rama, Kausalya would also die and the sages would die in the absence of Rama. All the courtiers and friends of Raama and the whole race of Reghu would also die. The races of the father of Sitha, the race of the father of Kausalya, the race of the father of Sumithra, race of the father of Kaikeyi and all their close relatives would put an end to their lives. With the destruction of the royal race, the people would move at will. Thereafter all the moveable and immovable things would meet with their ends. The gods and manes or ancestors in the sky would be deprived of their offerings on earth in the Homaas and they would also feel lifeless. Finding the destruction of the universe created by Brahma would meet with his end. There is no doubt about it. Brahma has made me the cause of all the destruction." Hanuman went on thinking like this and got ready to put an end to his life. At that time, a delightful divine voice was heard saying: "Oh, best of the monkeys don't feel grieved. The virtuous Jaanaki has not been burnt out. You meet her at once and then proceed to Sri Rama."

He went to the Asoka Vana to meet Sitha and reaching there he found the earth covered with a beautiful surface. Siva told Paarvathi that he will explain the reason why it was so. There was a well-known mountain called Thrikoota. It was covered by the ocean of milk from all the sides. It was quite graceful and was spread over an area of Ten Thousand Yojanaas. It was similar in size. Its peaks were covered with silver, iron and the gold which were illuminating the sky and all the Ten directions. On one side of it there was a place for sport of the damsels of Varuna. It had a beautiful tank in which the beautiful lotus flowers had been blossoming. It was beyond the reach and vision of the wicked, ungrateful, cruel and non-believing people. It also had different types of red, blue and white

lotuses. In that tank, there was a wicked crocodile which could be captured with great difficulty and was the one who could swallow even the king of the elephants. Once a white elephant with white tusk and white face arrived there getting disturbed because of thirst. It was surrounded by the cow-elephants. As soon as he entered the water to quench his thirst, the crocodile reached there. Then, the king elephant was caught by the crocodile. This is the story of Indhradhyumna, the Paandian king as elephant, and Huhu, the Genddharva as crocodile. Ultimately, Lord Vishnu killed Huhu with Sudhersana Chakra and released the Elephant. Indhradhyumna was cursed by sage Agasthya and Huhu was cursed by sage Dhevala.

Once Geruda, the king of birds, went there and found a vulture named Bhroobhangga. Geruda killed Bhroobhangga. Thereafter carrying the vulture in one leg and the crocodile and elephant in the other, Geruda started searching for a spotless place. In the meantime, Geruda spotted a golden tree over the ocean of milk. It was spread over the Yojana in length, breadth and height and was very beautiful to look at and comfortable to sit in. As soon as Geruda perched over one of the branches it was broken. With the breaking of the branch, the sixty thousand sages known as Baalakhillyaas were about to fall. Finding them in that condition, Geruda, the king of the birds, became apprehensive of the curse of the sages. Therefore, carrying the branch in his beak, he started roaming about in the sky. In the meantime, he spotted Kasyapa, his father. He offered his salutation and said: "You please tell me the place where I could take my food." Kasyapa said: "There is a place called Lanka which is spread over an area of One Hundred Yojanaas. It is quite spotless, and you can go there and take the food." Geruda reached Lanka and placing the branches with Baalakhillyaas at a considerable height he started consuming his food very delightfully which was carried by him with his claws. Three mountains were formed of the bones of the elephant, crocodile and vulture. Because of those three mountains, Lanka came to be known as possessing Thrikoota Mountain. Geruda then placed the branches with Baalakhillyaas over the peak of the mountain and left the place.

The Baalakhillyaas completed their Thapas or austerity and penance over that place and went to the abode of Vishnu. The branches of the tree which were

placed by Geruda over the mountain turned into stone. Because of that the demons could not recognize it. When Hanuman burnt Lanka with fire they were also burnt and fell on the demons killing many of them with the juice of the same. And the land of Lanka became like the moon. Hanuman was surprised at it and at once reached Seetha. After bidding bye and taking permission from Sitha, Hanuman climbed over the mountain located over the sea-shore and reduced it to pieces. At that point of time Brahma arrived there and gave a detailed letter to Hanuman. The performance of Hanuman in Lanka was highlighted in the letter. Getting the letter and with the permission of Brahma and bowing at his feet, Hanuman flew from that place creating a thundering sound like other monkeys and departed with force. He crossed the ocean and landed down at the other end of the sea-shore. There he found an ascetic. Filled with pride Maaruthi said to him: "Oh, best of the sages I am returning after performing the task of Rama. I have arrived here to drink some water; you show me some lake. The sage then pointed out towards the lake with his forefinger. Hanuman then placed the finger ring, the Choodaamani (the crest jewel given by Sitha as a sign that he had met her) and the letter given by Brahma with the sage and went to drink water. In the meantime, a monkey appeared on the scene and picked up the finger ring and put it into the Kamandalu (the water-pot or kettle in which the sages carry water) of the sage. At the same time Hanuman also returned from the lake. He asked the sage about the finger ring and the letter. The sage pointed out towards Kamandalu just by moving his eyebrows. When Hanuman looked in the Kamandalu, he found thousands of finger rings of Sri Rama. Hanuman was filled with amazement and asked the sage: "How could so many finger rings be collected? O best of the sages you tell me which one is my finger ring. All the finger rings are placed before me."

The Sage replied: "Whenever Hanuman went to Lanka at the command of Sri Rama to find out about Sitha, all those finger rings were placed before me and the monkey had placed them in the Kamandalu. These are all of them. You search out your own finger ring out of these." On hearing the words of the Sage, the pride of Hanuman disappeared and he spoke to the Sage very humbly: "Oh best of the Sage how many Raamaas had arrived here.?" The Sage said: "You better

take out the finger rings from the Kamandalu and count them.” Hanuman then started taking out the finger rings with the fists full of them but no end of the same could be seen. He then again placed them in the Kamandalu and bowing before the Sage, he thought: “In earlier times hundreds of Hanumans have already gone and brought the news of Sitha then my visit to Lanka is of no consequence. Thus, thinking of Hanuman's pride was humbled. He then went to the place in the southern direction where Angadha and other monkeys were lodged. They were sitting there without taking any food and were delighted to find Hanuman.

Then all of them went and met Sri Rama, Sugriva and Lekshmana. Hanuman narrated all about Lanka and his meeting with Sitha and Raavana and all. Sri Rama appreciated and praised Hanuman and even embraced him. This was a great recognition for Hanuman, the monkey. Even the noblest of the Saints are not fortunate to get embraced by Sri Rama. Hanuman was panicky and nervous to be embraced by the incarnation of Vishnu and so he very humbly narrated about his sin of becoming proud and the story of the finger rings and the words of the Sage. On hearing this Sri Rama smiled and said: “I did so to remove the pride out of you. Look here the finger ring which you bought is already worn by me in my little finger.”

There is an interesting story about how Nala could construct the sea-bridge to Lanka. Once he had thrown the adorable Saaligraama or Salagrama stone of a Braahmana into the Ganga who in turn cursed him that the stones thrown by him in water would always float. Varuna told Sri Rama: “That curse would now be treated as a boon.” Sri Rama then asked Nala to start constructing the bridge and said to Hanuman: “I shall consecrate a Sivalinga in name at the sea-shore. You go to Kaasi and bring the Sivalinga in the auspicious time, otherwise this auspicious time would lapse.” Hanuman went to Kaasi, the city of Siva, by sky-way. He met with Siva and saluted, bowed and prostrated and informed me about the resolve of Sri Rama. Siva gave away two best of Lingaas for use by Rama and told him: “I had been thinking about going to the southern direction since long. This was decided with Sage Agasthya but thereafter I thought that I would go only when I am permitted by Sri Raama.” Then Hanuman asked Siva: “When did you decide

this earlier with Agasthya? You kindly tell me all the story.” Siva answered: “O Maaruthi I will narrate to you the earlier event, you please listen. Once Naaradha took his bath in the sacred river of Narmadha, went to Omkaaresvara and adored Siva there. On the way came across the Vinddhya mountain which removes the suffering of all and is filled with the waters of the Rewa river. The Vinddhya mountain was serving the earth and all the movable and immovable creatures. Finding Naaradha there, the mountain came forward and adored the Sage appropriately. When the fatigue of Naaradha was removed, Vinddhya spoke to him quite humbly: “With the touch of your feet all my sins have been removed. From today onwards I would be considered as an auspicious one by all the adorable mountains.”

Naaradha took a deep sigh on hearing the words of Vinddhya. Vinddhya insisted Naaradha to explain the cause of his concern and suggested that he can remove his pains. Naaradha told him only Himalaya is an adorable mountain. Even Meru or Sumeru, in spite of its being of gold, having the mountain with diamonds and the dwelling place for the gods, is adorable because Himalaya is the father of Gauri or Parvathy and the father-in-law of Param Siva or Mahaadheva. Vinddhya continued to ask whether no other famous mountains are adored by noble people? Vinddhya continued to explain his greatness and nobility among other mountains: Udayaachala is short of wisdom and serves the demons as their abode. Nishaadhagiri houses medicines only, Asthaachala has lost its luster. Nilgiri is only the combination of blue stones. Mandharaachala is short-sighted. Malaya-Mountain is filled with snakes. Raivathaka is pauper. Hemakuntta and Thrikoota have high mountains. Kishkindha, Kraunjcha and Sahya mountains are unable to hold or carry the weight of the earth.

Naaradha then thought in his mind that a proud person cannot be capable of any importance. Are the Sree Saila and other mountains not possessing spotless luster and glory? With the mere look of their mountain peaks, the people with noble spotless hearts achieve redemption. Therefore, his strength should be tested today. Thus, thinking Naaradha said: “You have correctly mentioned the strength of the mountains. But the Meru mountain, who happens to be the best of all, always insults you. This is the reason why I took a deep sigh. Naaradha

wished him well proceeded by the sky-way. Then Vinddhya denounced himself and thought:” Why is Meru mountain so glorious? The Sun circumambulates it with all the planets and all the constellations daily. Possibly for this reason it is proud of its strength and importance.”

Thinking like that and to show and witness its glory Vinddhya raised his body and started obstructing the route of the Sun. In the early morning Sun thought to move towards the southern direction. Finding obstruction on the way, he was stopped. When many days passed like that then with the scorching rays of the Sun, the people of the east and the north started burning. The people on the south and west kept on sleeping. Whenever they opened their eyes, they found the constellations and planets present in the sky. All the Lokaas started shaking because the performing of the Homaas, Svaaddhkaara Vashatkaara, fire sacrifices and Panjcha Yejnjaas came to an end and all the three worlds started shaking. Thereafter, all the gods went to Sage Agasthya who happened to be priest of Vinddhya mountain and prayed to him. Then all the Sages arrived in Kaasi, and they started adoring me (Siva) with prayers. Siva told Agasthya: “You move to the south and influence Vinddhya with jugglery of words and then adore me with devotion. In due course of time, I will also visit South at the time of building the bridge by Sri Rama to remove his sufferings.”

As advised by Siva, Agasthya along with his wife Lopaamudhra went to Vinddhya. Vinddhya started shaking seeing the Sage Agasthya and his wife there. It appeared as if it wanted to sink into the earth. Thus, taking to a tiny form, he spoke to the Sage: “I am your slave. You issue me any command, I will obey.” Agasthya said: “O, Vinddhya! You are a noble person and quite intelligent and you know me very well. Therefore, till such time I return from the south, you remain here in a dwarfish condition bowing your head downwards. And then Agasthya moved south. Vinddhya while shaking his head told the Sage, I have been reborn today. After twelve years when he raised his head, he could not find the Sage there. Therefore, he again bowed his head. Vinddhya was thinking that the Sage will come: “today, tomorrow or day after.” The Sage never returned and Vinddhya was very worried. Agasthya never returned and Vindhya could not raise his head. Sun, who was aware of the time, started moving as there was no

obstacle for him. With the rising of the Sun all the people of the universe started feeling happy and healthy. Siva continued: "Agasthya reaching the Dhendaka forest keeping in mind my words is waiting for me. Therefore, Oh Hanuman! I would surely go there."

After Siva's departure Hanuman flew through the sky-way towards the place of Rama. Hanuman was very proud of carrying the two Lingaas given by Siva. Hanuman felt very proud that he got two Lingaas given by Siva. Sri Raama realized about the pride of Hanuman, and he spoke to Sugriva that the auspicious time of consecration of Siva-Linga was passing. He therefore summoned all the sages and monkeys and preparing the Linga in sand adored it appropriately consecrating the same. Thereafter Sri Raama wishes of Kausthubha gem, which was shining like thousands of thousands of Suns, in his mind and it came into his hand. He then decorated the consecrated Siva-Linga with that gem. Rama then gave out a lot of riches, costumes, ornaments, horses, cows, delicious dishes, etc. to the sages present there for consecration and they all returned happily. Maaruthi spotted them on the way. He asked the sages who adored them will all the riches and all. They replied that Sri Rama after the consecration of Siva-Linga and adoring it adored them as well.

Hanuman was enraged and said: "Sri Rama has uselessly cheated me and made me carry on the useless exercise." Then he went to Rama in anger and forcefully put his feet on the ground before him. With this both his feet were sunk in the ground. Then Hanuman said to Rama: "Did you not remember that Hanuman had searched for Sitha in Lanka and had communicated to you of her welfare. The same Hanuman has been laughed at by sending him to Kasi. In case you had to consecrate the Linga of sand then why did you send me to Kasi and made a fool of me. In case you intended to consecrate the Siva Ling of sand then I would not have gone to Kasi to bring the two Siva Lingaas. I have brought one for you and the other for myself. Now what should I do with the Siva Linga I brought for you?"

Thus, hearing the arrogant words of Hanuman Sri Rama said: "O, monkey! You have spoken truthfully. Now in case you can uproot the Linga of sand

consecrated by me by coiling your tail around it, then I would consecrate the Siva Linga you for me from Kasi.” Hanuman said: “Alright” and then coiling his tail around the Linga of sand he tried to pull it up with the entire strength available at his disposal. Suddenly his tail was loosened, and he fell and fainted but the Linga of sand remained unshaken. By seeing this all the monkeys started laughing. After some time, Hanuman regained consciousness and shedding away the pride, he bowed before Sri Rama and offered salutations and prostrated. He then prayed to him: “Oh, Rama, you kindly forgive me for my fault because you are the ocean of compassion.” Thereafter Sri Rama said: “Oh, Maaruthi! You consecrate your Linga to the north of the Linga of sand consecrated by me under the title of Visvanatha.” Maaruthi did so. Sri Rama then pronounced a blessing on Siva Linga consecrated by Maaruthi and said: “Without adoring the Siva Linga, consecrated by Hanuman, known as Visvanatha, the adoration of Siva would not be complete. The one who adores Sethubenddha Raamesvaram without adoring the Siva Linga consecrated by Hanuman would be of no use.” Sri Rama again continued: “The Siva Linga you brought for me will remain in this temple without any adoration. In the due course of time, it would also be consecrated. The same Siva Linga is still lying beside the main Siva Linga of Visvesvara or Visvanatha. It has not been consecrated yet nor does anybody adore it.” Rama then said to Hanuman: “Your tail has been broken here. Therefore, you remain here, without your tail, in a secret form, thinking of your arrogance.” Hanuman then consecrated an image from his Amsa, a form or as a partial incarnation, there. Even today we can see the image of Hanuman without a tail there. At the place Hanuman fainted and fell and was sanctified by the name of Maaruthi and removed all the sins becoming a holy place. Sri Rama then consecrated an image from his Amsa or Form and that place is called Sethubenddha and is still available there. Lakshmana also has established a holy place at that spot. Thereafter, Sri Rama touched the tail of Hanuman and restored it. Because of the coiling of the tail on the top of Siva Linga at Rameswaram, it was pressed a little. The Siva Linga is still there with the pressed top. Since then, Hanuman remained with Sri Rama without any pride.



Then Siva repeated the story of his Linga to Parvathi which he told Sri Rama after the above incident of Hanuman. Siva said to Rama: "Oh, best of Reghoos! Once I was cladded in old clothes and took the form of a Braahmana and went to the earth to get alms. Thus, moving through the hermitage of the Sages, I roamed about. Finding me like this, many of the wives felt attracted towards me. They did not stop even when they were prevented by their husbands from doing so and they kept on following me. The Sages who could not recognize me, were completely upset and getting enraged, they pronounced a terrific curse: "O, degraded one, you have infested our wives with passions with the intention of enjoying conjugal pleasures with them. Because of that, the source of satisfying the passion would be removed from your body. It would be severed and fall on the ground." Oh Rama! Because of the course I was deprived of the Linga which fell on the ground at once and then I disappeared. When I disappeared all the damsels went to their respective abodes. Then the Linga kept on growing and touched the sky. Looking at it Brahma was surprised and amazed and wanted to find the end of it. He was not successful.

Brahma then went to Siva and said: "Oh, Sambhu! With this the whole world would be destroyed untimely." Siva then narrated to Brahma about the earlier happening and gave his trident and asked him to cut-off the ling into pieces. Then Brahma told Siva that he could not do that and requested Siva himself to cut it. Then Siva divided the Linga into twelve (12) pieces. Then he lifted the pieces one by one with his trident and threw them here and there. Those twelve pieces were fallen at different places and came to be known as Jyotirlingas, meaning Lingaas of flame or Lingaas of effulgence. They are 1) Omkaaranaattha, 2) Somanaattha, 3) Thryembakesvara, 4) Mallikaarjjuna, 5) Naagesha, 6) Vaidhyanaattha, 7) Kaasivisvanaattha, 8) Kedhaaranaattha, 9) Kadhaaresvara, 10) Mahathaala, 11) Grishnesvara and 12) Genddhamaadhana. Of these the last one cannot be seen by any human being. Thereafter the Sages recognized Siva through his Linga and pronounced a boon on him to develop another Linga. Then the Genddhamaadhana Peak, where the Linga fell, was carried by wind and fell near Lanka. Then Siva told Sri Rama to look at the southern side of the confluence of water. The twelfth Genddhamaadhana Linga is lying to the north-east of the

Linga consecrated by Sri Rama. Until that time nobody had seen that Linga but on that day Sri Raama had seen it with all the monkeys. Therefore, the effulgence or flame of this Linga would be merged with the Linga of sand consecrated by Sri Rama. Thus, from that day onwards the twelfth Jyothirlinga is the Sand Linga consecrated by Sri Rama at Rameswaram. Siva said to Sri Rama: "I have arrived here at the instance of Agasthya Muni leaving Kaasi and I would now reside here in the Linga consecrated by you. The one who adores the Siva Linga at Sethubendha Rameswaram would be relieved of all the sins including Brahma-Hathya by my grace and blessings."

Angadha's visit at the court of Raavana is most of the Raamaayanams but this conversation between Angadha and Raavana is unique to Aanantha Raamaayana: "You are the one who had been bound in noose by Baali, my father. You are the one who was pressed under the Kailaasa at the toe of Lord Siva. You were the animal of play for Kaarthhaveerya. You are the one who was punished by the damsels of the Svethadhveepa. O, Raavana I am aware of your strength. I also know that Brahma happens to be the son of Vishnu. Mareechi happens to be the son of Brahma. Kasyapa happens to be the son of Mareechi. Indhra happens to be the son of Kasyapa. Baali is the son of Indhra. The same Baali defeated you in the battle and placed you in the prison. Your head was bound with the cot which was filled with my urine and refuse." Raavana felt immensely hurt at the words of Angadha and he got agitated.

Angadha then bound Raavana's hands and feet with his tail and severely slapped his face. After that Angadha flew from there to Mount Subela where Sri Ram and others were sitting. At the time of flying Angadha carried the palace of Raavana over his head. Seeing that Rama asked Angadha why did he carry the palace with him? Rama said that he has dedicated the city of Lanka to Vibhishana. As it belongs to Vibhishana he could not touch the building. Angadha was surprised at the words of Rama, and he looked above and found the palace over his head. He then said to Rama: "Oh Rama! I am not aware of the fact that this palace is over my head which has been carried from Lanka to this place. I would go and restore it to its original position and return to Sri Raama. He then offered salutation and

apprised of all the events that happened in Lanka before Ravana. Rama embraced him.

Sugriva was listening to all that was explained by Angadha. He went alone to Ravana and administered a powerful fist over Ravana. Because of that Ravana fell on the ground from his throne. Thereafter, Sugriva, the king of the monkeys and Ravana, the king of the demons, started a wrestling match between them. Ravana was badly wounded and feeling fatigued he ran away from the place. At the same time, Sugriva snatching away the crown of Ravana reached before Rama and saluted him. Rama then asked Sugriva: "O, brother, why did you silently go to Ravana for a fight without asking me? In case your life had been in danger then could I have been comfortable even after getting Sitha? Hereafter, you do not repeat such exercise."

When Hanuman went to collect the divine medicinal plants from Dhrona mountain, a Kaalanemi demon in the form of a false Sanyaasi obstructed him on the way as wished by Ravana. As Kaalanemi told Hanuman that with the divine power of vision he saw that Rama, Lakshmana and others had been relieved from the effect of the illusory trick of Meghanaadha's arrow and Hanuman did not need to rush back. He went to drink water from the nearby lake or pond and was caught by a she-crocodile. When the crocodile was killed by Hanuman the crocodile turned out to be an Apsara or divine Angel. This Apsara told him the story of previous life and revealed that Kaalanemi was the demon deputed by Ravana to obstruct him. Hanuman must rush back the medicinal plants. Hanuman then went to Dhrona mountain and conquered the Gendharvaas guarding the divine plants, collected the plants and flew by sky-way to Rama and party. On the way Bharatha shot an arrow at the monkey who was carrying a mountain in his hand and flying through the skyway. Because of that he fell on the ground. Hanuman took Bharatha as Rama and was upset. He spoke in a sweet voice: "O, Raama! Why have you arrived here? Have you conquered Raavana? Or have you deserted the battlefield and come here?" Hearing these words, Bharatha took Hanuman to be a demon and intended to shoot an arrow at him. Finding the bow and arrow in his hand, Hanuman realized that he could not be Raama. He said: "I am a messenger of Raama, you can look at me." On

hearing these words, Bharatha said: "How could you meet Sri Raama, my brother, who is dwelling in Dhendakaaranya, you tell me the details." Thereafter Maaruthi narrated the entire story to Bharatha. Carrying the mountain again, he moved on. He reached Lanka and brought Lakshmana and all others back to life. Then he restored the Dhrona mount back and visited Bharatha again conveyed the news about Lakshmana's getting back to life. Then Hanuman went back to Lanka. Bharatha assembled all the kings and resolved to get to Lanka to help Sri Rama.

At that time Raavana, in Lanka, summoned all the demons. Then he asked a messenger to go to the nether world and invite Mairaavana and Ayiraavana, his friends, to Lanka to help him in the battle. Getting the invitation both Mairaavana and Ayiraavana arrived in Lanka. They went to the camp of Raama and Lakshmana and abducted both at night. Hanuman had created a fort by coiling his tail around the monkey army. The demons then moved through the sky-way and carried both Raama and Lakshmana with the slab over which they were sleeping and proceeded to the nether world. On the way at the southern shore of Lanka there was a cave called Nikumbhila in which a pregnant she-pigeon was talking to her husband: "O, lord today I am desirous of eating the human flesh." The husband said: "Today two demons have carried Raama and Lakshmana in the nether world who would be killed before the goddess. They will be killed tomorrow morning." On hearing the words Maaruthi felt satisfied and moved forward going further he found Makaraddhvaja who caught hold of Maaruthi and asked him: "Who are you and wherefrom you are coming? Maaruthi said: "I am the messenger of Sri Rama; two demons have kidnapped Rama and Lakshmana when they were sleeping in Lanka and they have brought them to the nether world. I have arrived here in search of them, in case you know something about them, you tell me."

On hearing those words of Maaruthi, Makaraddhvaja asked him: "Do you know about my father Hanuman, the son of Anjana. Is he quite well there?" Hearing this, Hanuman was surprised and asked him: "O, monkey! Hanuman had no wife then how could you be born?" He replied to Maaruthi: "When Hanuman after burning Lanka extinguished the fire of his tail in the water of the Ocean, at that

point of time his throat was filled with smoke, and he spat out the cough in the water of the ocean which was consumed by a fish and I was born out of it. I am therefore his son.” Then Maaruthi said: “In case it is so, then I happen to be the son of Anjana, this is the truth.” Makaraddhvaja then offered his salutation at the feet of Hanuman and conveyed to him all the news. He told that when the demons went to Lanka to kidnap Rama and Lakshmana, they had resolved to sacrifice at the temple of goddess Kaamaakshi. So, they would be sacrificed tomorrow morning. You go and wait for them in the temple. You can carry them back from there.

Then Hanuman, assuming the smallest form of an atom, entered the temple and stood there quietly. Maaruthi then imitating the voice of the goddess said: “You should adore me today through the ventilator and thereafter you adore Rama and Lakshmana, the holders of the bow and arrow with flowers and garlands and present them to me alive for my pleasure. You bring them and slowly open the door, slightly, just push them in. Whosoever looks at me today would surely become blind.” The demons were pleased with the command of the goddess as they understood the goddess is very happy and pleased with them. Then adored the goddess through the ventilator. They offered fried sweets and the Paayasam through the ventilators. Crores of pitchers of Panchaamritha were poured inside and crores of fruits were dropped through the ventilators. Consuming all of them, Maaruthi said: “You have supplied me with a small quantity of food, I am still quite hungry.” On hearing those words, the demons were surprised. They immediately sent messengers and collected all the sweets and fruits from all the shops and homes in the city and poured through the ventilators, which were like mountain heaps, inside the temple. With this the entire city was disturbed and agitated. Nothing was left even for the consumption of the children there. Thereafter, Rama and Lakshmana holding the bow and arrow adorned with garlands of forest flowers were presented alive to the goddess. Finding them, Maaruthi bowed in reverence and devotion to them and in turn they embraced him. Thereafter, Maaruthi opened the door and challenged the demons. Then Raama and Lakshmana also came out and killed all the demons in a moment.

But suddenly both the demons got back to life. Raama again killed them, but they came back alive again. Thus, Raama killed them hundreds of times, but the demons came back to life again and again. Maaruthi was thinking of a way to end the lives of the demons forever. He roamed the city searching for some ways and means. At a lonely place, he found a keep of Raavana and learnt from her the method of putting an end to the demons permanently. She said: "I am a Naagakanya and Ayiraavana has used force against me. Mairavana also looks at me with an evil eye. I am unable to oblige them for their passions. One of them is my friend and the other is my enemy, but I am troubled by both. Therefore, I would feel pleased if both are killed. But O Maaruthi! In case Sri Rama accepts me as his wife only I would be able to spell out the means for killing them." Then Maaruthi said: "In case your bed does not break when Sri Raama sits over it, he would surely be your husband." Then, Naagakanya said: "Alright, in earlier times once the boys pierce through into the bodies of black-wasp which were freed by Ayiraavana and Mairavana both. Feeling satisfied, the black-wasp said to them: "You have saved us from death. Therefore, all of us would save you from death by whichever means it might be possible."

Thus, speaking all the black-wasps started residing in the city of demons. These black-wasps bring the best of the nectar and drop them over the bodies of the demons again and again bringing them back into life. Oh Monkey, these black-wasps are still residing in the bedrooms of the demons. They are crores in numbers, and you can kill them. At the advice of the Naagakanya, Hanuman killed them all. But one of them took refuge with Hanuman who said to it: "You go to the Keep of Ayiraavana and eat out her bed from inside like the elephant eating the wood-apple." The black-wasp did as desired by Hanuman. Thereafter Sri Raama killed both demons, Ayiraavana and Mairavana and installed Makaraddhvaja as the king of that place. After all these Hanuman requested Sri Rama: "Let us go to the place of Naagakanya and witness the beautiful painting there. You catch hold of the Naagakanya lovingly and smilingly and sit with her over the bed breaking it at the same time. After doing all these Sri Rama said to her: "You discard this body, go to the earth and be born as the daughter of a Braahmana and perform Thapas for a long time. After performing Thapas for a

long time you would become my wife in Dhvaapara Yuga.” After many births, she was born as Kanyakumari, the daughter of a Braahmana on the earth. Thereafter Rama mounted over the shoulders of Maaruthi and went back delightfully. Makaraddhvaja, the son of Maaruthi also entrusted his duties as the King to his courtiers and carried Lakshmana, who was the incarnation of Sesha Naaga or Anantha Bhagawaan who carries the earth over his head, over his shoulders and went to Lanka. Finding Raama and Lakshmana there Sugriva and other monkeys felt delighted. On the other hand, Raavana heard the news of the death of Ayiraavana and Mairaavana in his court and was very upset and he started narrating his earlier story to the demons.

Raavana said: “Brahma the great Sire, had already told me that I would be killed at the hands of humans, now it appears that Raama is Naaraayana and has arrived here. There is no doubt about it. This Raama had to become the son of Dhesarettha only to kill me. In earlier times, I had killed Anaaranya, a predecessor of Dhesarettha, the king of the Solar race. At the time of his death, he had pronounced a curse on me that Lord Vishnu will be born in his race and kill me. He would kill you with sons and grandsons. ... It appears that the time has now come for my death. All of us should go at once and wake up Kumbhakarna and bring him here.”

For waking up Kumbhakarna no other Ramayana has mentioned that many heaps of woods were burnt over him.

About Meghanaadha, Vibhishana told Rama that he can be killed only the One who would have remained without sleep and without food for twelve years, and Brahma had ordained the death of Meghanaadha by Lakshmana. Ever since Lakshmana left Ayodhddhya, he has neither slept nor taken any food, serving you at the same time. That is why he could kill Meghanaadha. Sulochana, the daughter of Anantha, is the wife of Meghanaadha. Therefore, Sulochana is the daughter and Meghanaadha is the son-in-law of Lakshmana. The severed arm of Meghanaadha wrote on the earth with blood: “O, damsel don’t feel grieved. I have been redeemed with the arrow of Lakshmana who is the incarnation of Sesha or Anantha and therefore I have achieved salvation. Now you go to Rama

and ask for my head. He would surely give it to you. Holding that head in your lap, you enter the fire and follow me.” Sulochana went to the battlefield in a palanquin to meet Rama. The monkeys thought that Raavana sent Sitha to them. They surrounded the palanquin to have a look at their Dhevi, Sitha. But found out that was Sulochana. Sulochana begged before Raama for the head of her beloved husband. Raama was very merciful to her and promised that he could bring Meghanaadha back to life if she is agreeable to abandon the idea of offering herself into fire. Sulochana said: “O, Lord how could my husband get again killed at the hands of Lakshmana and attain salvation? Therefore, you please do not bring him back to life.” Then at the command of Sri Rama, Sugriva got her the head of her husband. She ended her life in the same pyre of her husband. She attained salvation and reached Vaikuntta.

There is exceptional narration of the Homa or offering to fire by Raavana. He plastered blood over his entire body and wore a garland of skulls around his neck and sat on human corpses. And in the fire, he was offering the heads of first born children and their flesh and blood.

Brahma has already informed Sitha that Raavana was going to show the severed head of Rama which will be false.

At the time when Raama and Raavana were fighting, according to most of the Raamaayanams it was the King of Heaven who sent his heavenly Chariot with his driver Maathali. But in this Raamaayana it is Raama who invokes His own chariot. Dhaaruka, the chariot driver, came immediately with the chariot which was adorned with Garuda in its flag. The four horses yoked in the chariot were Saibya, Sugriva, Balahaka and Meghapushpa.

And about the fight, Sri Raama severed all the ten heads of Raavana. Then all the heads spread in the sky thinking that they had been killed at the hands of and smiling then fell over the feet of Sri Raama. When Rama noticed the heads, they opened the mouth to devour him. Rama got in panic and shot several arrows at them. It was the most amazing scene. Raama got fed up. Dhaaruka, the chariot driver, knowing the panic condition of Raama, Dhaaruka shot Brahmaasthra at the navel of Raavana. Then the arrows shot by Raama pierced through the heart of



Raavana. At that point of time a divine luster emerged from the dead body of Raavana and in full view of the gods entered the body of Sri Raama. Mandodhari ended her life together with Raavana and proceeded to Vaikuntta. This is another major exception from other Raamaayanams. Vibhishana was crowned as king of Lanka and kept as a trust of Hanuman. After the battle when Indhra came to thank and worship Rama he was asked to bring all the dead monkeys back to life by sprinkling nectar on the dead bodies. He did so. But Rama then found a monkey missing. He asked Hanuman why one monkey is missing even after Indhra brought all of them back to life. Hanuman replied that he might have been eaten by Kumbhakarna. Hanuman also said that in case any of the nail, hair or blood had been available in the battlefield he could have gotten back his life with sprinkling of nectar. The answer to the question why demons killed in the battlefield were also not brought to life by sprinkling of nectar is that their dead bodies were thrown into the ocean. On hearing the words of Hanuman, Rama looked at Yama who felt panicky and he brought back the monkey before Rama.

Dhaaruka, Garuda and Makaraddhvaja also accompanied Rama and party in the Pushpaka Vimana to Ayodhddhya. In the plane Vibhishana asked Rama: "When you had gone to the nether world with Ayiraavana why you had kept quiet and did not kill the demon then and there." At that time Rama smiled and said: "Brahma has ordained that the black-wasp could be killed only at the hands of Hanuman. Therefore, I kept quiet for Maaruthi to perform the task. And the second reason was that I wanted the world to know the prowess of Maaruthi and wanted to earn the glory that Maaruthi had freed Sri Raama and Lakshmana from the nether world. He is the same Hanuman, my attendant. In this way, to popularize Hanuman and his strength in the universe, I kept quiet there. Otherwise, could I not destroy the demons with a simple Humkara, the sound, on the way. I am the one who with the weapon of a dry blade of grass broke the eyes of Jayantha, the son of Indhra. I am the one who had thrown Maricha at hundred Yojanaas in the battlefield, was I then deprived of my prowess? No, it can never happen. Hey, Vibhishana, I did all that to highlight the prowess of Hanuman in the universe." Then Hanuman smiled and spoke to Vibhishana: "Have you forgotten the incident at the time of building the bridge? Raama found

me with pride and ordered me to uproot the Sivalinga with my tail and I broke my tail. I am without any prowess and whatever prowess I have is by the grace of Sri Rama. Oh Vibhishana, Sri Rama did not kill them just to uphold my fame.”

Thereafter Sri Rama at the instance of Sitha, who had already boarded the plane, pronounced a boon over Thrijeta: “Oh Thrijeta, during the four months of Kaarthika, Vaisaakha, Maagha and Chaithra, all the people could take bath to please you and you would feel beholden for the same. All the Dhekshinaas offered in Sraadhddhaas and Homaas would belong to you and many other boons.”

When Sri Rama and others were going back to Ayodhddhya in the Pushpaka Vimana after killing Raavana and other demons, first he was explaining about the battlefield in detail. Then they crossed the Sethubenddha, the bridge constructed by Nala and the monkeys at the instance of Rama. Then he descended from the plane and holding his bow broke the bridge by striking it with the end of the bow. That place where Sri Rama cut-off the bridge is a sacred place and known as Dhanushkoti. There is another story very popular in Jenakpur, Sitha’s birthplace, currently in Nepal. When Sri Rama broke Thryembaka bow, the Saiva Chaapa, at the time of his marriage it was broken into three pieces. One piece was flown into heaven, another piece fell there itself in Jenakpur and the third piece fell at Dhanushkoti. That is how that place got the name.

When Sri Rama reached Ayodhddhya he took innumerable forms and met all the people individually embracing them. Finding many Raamaas there, the people were immensely surprised.

When Hanuman was asked to accept a boon, he requested: “My mind is not satisfied with the reciting of your name, therefore till such time your name remains on earth I should keep on reciting your name till I remain alive. O best of the kings, this is the desired boon which you kindly bestow on me. Wherever your auspicious story is recited, I should be able to reach there to listen to the same. Leaving aside the temples, the banks of the rivers, the holy places, step-wells and the lakes and everywhere recitation of your story should continue.”

According to Aanantha Raamaayana, all the battles conducted by Sri Raama were performances of Yaagaas or Yejnjaas or battle-Yejnja with special offerings. The battle-Yejnja of Sri Rama started with the killing of Subaahu and other demons with the Yejnja of Visvaamithra. Visvaamithra, of course had completed his Yejnja but Sri Rama did not. Therefore, to satisfy himself Sri Rama washed the vase of the blood of Viraaddha and severing the nose and the ears of Soorpanaka made amazing offerings.

There is a very interesting narrative given by Siva to Paarvathi about the Yejnja of Rama: "Rama, who in earlier time had started, the Yejnja of battle in the abode of Visvaamithra and had not completed it, the same Yejnja was completed after his occupying the throne. In that Yejnja, battle was the fire-altar. Not to flee from that place represented the Brahmasaththva prescribed in Vedhaas. The sound of the use of the weapons was the material for performing Homa. In the battlefield, the weapons were rubbed for removing the dirt which could amount to the cleaning of Sruka-Sruva, the ladles and spoons. The spreading of arrows on the ground amounted to the spreading of Kusa-grass. The patience was the collecting of all of them. The great fire of death was the fire of the fire-altar, in which the Sruva like the arrows, the offerings of the flesh were made. The stream of blood represented Vasuddhaaraa, meaning offering of oblations. The terrific cries represented Omkara and Vashatkara. The luster of the weapons were the fire flames. The perspiration was like smoke. The killing of the creatures in the battlefield was like the donation of the lamps. Those who preserved loveable attraction in their bodies were the thieves who stole the material for Puja and those who could carry away the lamps in their hands. And it continues... and all other welfare ceremonies were part of the Yejnja. In this way Sri Rama completed the Yejnja with all the parts.

According to most of the Raamaayanams, Ravana had only two brothers and one sister. But in Aanantha Raamaayana there were three brothers and three sisters. In addition to Soorpanaka there were Kraunchi and Kumbheenasi. Of these Kumbheenasi was mentioned as a cousin, daughter of Pushpolkata who the elder sister of Kaikasi is the mother of Ravana, who was married to the demon called Maddhu.

Another interesting story is that once Kaikasi, mother of Ravana, sent him to Siva for bringing Sivalinga. He reached Kailas, the abode of Siva. There, cutting a part of his hand, he prepared a Vina. By preparing the base of the Vina with head and its back from his body and the fore-part with his feet and pegs with his fingers. He prepared hundreds of thousands of wires by cutting out his entrails. Ravana played songs like Genddharva with that Vina by mouth. Then Siva sent his associate Nandheesvara to go and tell Ravana: "Touching Vina playing of Ravana, you tell him that Siva can never give Sivalinga to a demon like him. I know the mind of Siva. Therefore, you go back to your place." As desired by Siva, Nandheesvara went to Ravana and joined the head of Ravana to his body and communicated the message of Siva. But Ravana stayed overnight and from the next day he again started praying Siva as before. Siva again sent Nandhi with the same message. Ravana and Siva repeated it for ten times. Then Siva was pleased and said to him: "You ask for a boon." Ravana asked a boon from Siva: "You give me Sivalinga for my mother and give me Parvathi to be my spouse." Lord Siva gave him both.

But when Ravana was about to start with those two things, Siva said: "Oh, valorous warrior, you have cut off with your sword your head ten times which pleased me. Therefore, in my words you would have ten heads and twenty arms." Thereafter, Ravana possessed ten heads and twenty hands. Ravana then proceeded to his place with Parvathi and Sivalinga. [In certain texts, Ravana is said to have severed his heads hundred times and hence he achieved two hundred hands and hundred heads.]

Thereafter, Lord Vishnu finding Parvathi with Ravana snatched her away, but Parvathi cheating Vishnu separated herself from him. Like Vishnu, Parvathi snatched away the Sivalinga from Ravana and established it over Gokarna. Ravana returned empty handed. According to the words of Vishnu Mandodhari, the daughter of Maya was given to Ravana. Because Ravana could not accomplish the task for his mother, he was ashamed but by marrying Mandodhari, he felt pleased. Once when Kaikasi, mother of Ravana, found Kubera moving on the Pushpaka Vimana denounced her sons saying: "You are eunuchs and are like dead

persons. Don't you feel ashamed with the upliftment of your step-brother." The rest of the stories are there in most of the Raamaayanams.

According to Aanantha Ramayana Ravana arranged the marriage of his sisters as follows: Soorpanaka to Vidhyutjihva and sent her to Dhendakaaranya, Kumbheenasi to Maddhu and gave Maddhu-Vana as dowry and Kraunjchi to Khadgajihva and gave Para-Lankaapuri as dowry. [Of these the last two are exceptions to many Raamaayanams.]

Raavana's defeat to Baali, the monkey, is not new. But Baali pressed him under his arm upside down and took him to all the four oceans. Thereafter, he took him to Kishkindha. Reaching there he looked at Angadha, the son of Baali, who was a toddler child. As soon as he picked up Angadha to kiss, Ravana fell on the ground from under his arms. Looking at him, all the damsels were delighted and showed him all the friends and relatives and laughed at him. Baali then placed Angadha in the cradle and made Ravana to sit under it for a long time. The urine passed by Angadha fell over the mouth of Ravana. After keeping Ravana under custody for a long time he was set free.

Another interesting exception is that when he visited Paathaala he met with Vaamana, the fifth incarnation of the ten incarnations of Vishnu. Vaamana was lustrous like crores of rising Suns and was wearing yellow silk costumes. He was with Lakshmi Dhevi, His consort. Vishnu in the form of Vaamana and Lakshmi was guarding the palace of Beli or Mahaabeli, the grandson of Prehlaadha, who was Asura Emperor. Seeing Vaamana and Lakshmi at the gate, Raavana asked them who was the king of the city. Vaamana did not respond and kept quiet as he was an enemy. Then taking Vaamana to be a deaf person Ravana entered the palace. There he found Emperor Mahaabeli playing dice with his queens. Ravana silently stood there and observed the riches and treasures possessed by Beli. In the meantime, the dice was thrown from the hands of Beli at a distance. Beli asked Ravana to pick the dice and bring it to him. Ravana immediately rushed to pick it up. He tried to lift it up with his hand but could not move it. Then he tried with two hands and then three hands and like that at the end with all his twenty hands but he could not move it at all. And on the contrary, all his fingers were pressed

under the weight of the dice. They were injured and blood started flowing from them. Then he started crying aloud out of pain. Thereafter a slave girl came and picked up the dice very easily and gave it to the king, Beli. Then Beli denounced Ravana and sent him out of the palace. Outside the palace, the guards of the king caught hold of Ravana and fed him with their left-overs.

Then Ravana was given the work of carrying the horse-dung and throwing it out. After some days Ravana came to the gate and met Vishnu in the form of Vaamana and requested him to arrange for his release. With that request, Ravana fell at Vamana's feet and prostrated. Then striking with the big toe Vamana threw Ravana in the sky, because of which Ravana reached Lanka delightfully after a long time.

Once Ravana met with Sanathkumaaraas. He asked to tell him who is the best of all gods. Sage told it is Vishnu. Then Ravana asked what the position is achieved by a demon who is killed by Vishnu. Sage told them they will reach Vaikuntta and attain Moksha or salvation. Sage also told him that in Thretha Yuga, Vishnu will incarnate as Rama in Ayodhddhya and Ravana would be fortunate to be killed by Rama. Ravana then asked the Sage who is more powerful than him. Sage told: "The people of Svetha-Dhveepa have gigantic bodies and always adored Lord Vishnu. Such people who are killed at the hands of Vishnu would become an invincible form of the gods and the demons and take their birth there." Hearing this, Ravana immediately went to Svetha-Dhveepa to pick up a fight with the people there. But due to the dazzling light of Svetha-Dhveepa, Raavana's plane could not move. Ravana then left the plane and started walking. While entering the Dhveepa a woman caught hold of his hands. She was the slave girl of someone and was going to collect flowers. The girl asked him who he was and who sent him there. While she was asking like that, some other woman joined her and started slapping her face. Thereafter, they held his foot and hung him upside down and threw him away like a ball. And Ravana reached Para-Lanka in the lavatory block.

In this way Ravana could escape from the clutches of those women with great difficulty. Then wicked Ravana thought: "What a surprise? Those who are killed

by Vishnu become so powerful. Therefore, I should also get killed at the hands of Vishnu and become the dweller of Svetha-Dhveepa. For that I should do something to enrage Vishnu.” For that only Ravana abducted Vaidhehi or Sitha from the forest. He also realized that Sitha is the daughter of Earth and is Mahalakshmi. Therefore, he cared for her like Mother.

After listening to the above stories Sri Rama asked Agasthya to explain the stories of the birth of Baali and Sugriva. Agasthya continued: “Over the golden peak of Meru mountain, once in the assembly of all Dhevaas, a drop of tear of bliss emerged out of the eye of Brahma. Brahma took it in his hand and after thinking for a while he placed it over the earth. With the drop of tear over the earth a great monkey was born out of it. Then Brahma said: “Oh son, you remain here.” The monkey was named as Riksharaaja. He used to roam around Meru mountain and collect fruits and roots. One day he found a well or pond with steps paved of gems and precious stones. When he was about to drink water, he found his own shadow. Thinking it to be his opponent he jumped into the water. But he could not find the other monkey. He came back to the shore and found himself turned into a beautiful damsel. He was immensely surprised. Thereafter, Indhra spotted her and was infested with passion, because of which his semen fell over the hair of the damsel. A monkey as powerful as Indhra was born. He was named Baali. At the same time Soorya also arrived there and he was also infested with love for the damsel. Because of that his semen fell onto the neck of the damsel. The result was the birth of the powerful Sugriva.

The damsel carried both the boys and went somewhere and slept. When she woke up in the morning, she found herself in the form of a male monkey. On hearing the story Brahma gave Riksharaaja the kingdom of Kishkinddha. He lived there with his sons. After the death of Riksharaaja, Baali became the king of Kishkinddha. Agasthya concluded the story of the birth of Baali and Sugriva. Then Sri Rama asked him when Baali drove Sugriva away from Kishkinddha, Hanuman was with him. Then, why Hanuman could not use his immense power and strength against Baali and challenged him. Then, sage Agasthya narrated the story as follows: A monkey named Kesari dwelling over the mountain called Anjana had two wives. One of his wives was Anjani. Once she was sitting over

the mountain. At that time a ball of Payasam fell in her hands which was being carried by a vulture. This was the Payasam which had been snatched away by the vulture from the hand of Kaikeyi. The nectar like Payasam was consumed by Anjani, the she-monkey. In the meantime, another she-monkey called Maarjaaraasyaa, who was the other wife of Kesari, also reached there. Both started playing some fun games in the absence of their husband. In the meantime, Vayu Bhagawaan or Wind-god removed their costumes and looked at their thighs. Thereafter, he enjoyed the company of Anjani with conjugal plays. At the same time Nirirthi requested the company of Maarjaaraasyaa and enjoyed conjugal plays on the mountain top. Hanuman the son of the Wind-god was born out of Anjani and a terrific Pisaacha or devil was born out of Maarjaaraasyaa.

In Adhddhyaathma Ramayana and other Raamaayanams we can see how Hanuman got the name because he was struck on the cheek by the thunderbolt of Indhra. When the story was narrated by Agasthya, Sri Rama asked him: "Why did Indhra give Surya to Rahu?" Agasthya narrated the story: "In earlier times the demon Rahu became eternal after consuming the nectar and became the eighth planet and started troubling the Dhevaas. At that time Soorya or Sun and Chandhra or Moon were given to Rahu with the intention that all the people with the fulfilment of their desires would free both Sun and Moon by performing Ddharmma. Because of that whenever the Sun and Moon are eclipsed, the humans for the accomplishment of their tasks give away in charities performing Ddharmma to appease and satisfy Rahu and relieve both Sun and Moon from his clutches."

"It is difficult to narrate the glory and strength of Hanuman. Once he went to the Aasrama of Sages and frightened them. He threw away here and there the materials for performing Yaaga. Then, the Sages pronounced a curse on him. From today onwards you would forget and lose your strength and you would come to know of your strength only when you hear it from the mouth of others. While he was staying with Sugriva he had forgotten his inherent strength. That is why only when Jaambavaan praised and reminded of his strength Hanuman recollected his prowess."



It is interesting that Yaathra-Kaanda is the beginning of the Ramayana epic. Let's see how Lord Siva explains it to his consort Parvathi. Once, the sage Valmiki together with his disciple Bharadvaja went to the river to take a bath. On the way keeping the Kamandalu on the ground as soon as he was free from the nature's call and went for taking bath holding Kusa in his hand, he witnessed an astonishing scene: At the bank of the river, Thamasa, a hunter shot an arrow at a pair of heron birds and the male heron was killed with the arrow. The female bird was filled with grief and started lamenting. She lost her counterpart, who had a red forehead like copper and who was intoxicated in her with love. Seeing the tragic scene, the sage Valmiki was filled with compassion, and he thought: "This is the greatest sin committed on earth." Thinking like that the sage said:

Nisamya rudhatheem kraunjchamidham vachanamabreveeth:

"Maa nishaadha prethishttaam thvamagemah saasvatheeh samaah

Yethkraunjchamitthunaadhekamavaddheeh kaamamohitham"

Thasyeyam buvathaschinthaa bebhoova ithi veekshathah.

The Moola Kavya of Valmiki Ramayana is quoted here also. But then Valmiki was surprised with the uttering of the verse. He then looked at the heron bird and thought in his mind: "Alas! What have I done with the hunter? What have I spoken to him about? I have committed a great sin." He kept on thinking like this in his mind about the sinful act of cursing the hunter and believed that it would bring him disgrace. Then he spoke to his disciple, Bharadvaja. "Oh son, getting influenced with the grief I pronounced a curse on the hunter. This has been an improper thing done by him but over-powered with grief I uttered a verse with four steps or lines and eight letters. A couplet which could be sung with musical notes in the form of a verse. I would intend that this verse should transform into grace and not a disgrace." Bharadvaja analyzed and supported Valmiki. Valmiki was pleased with him. They took ablution in the sacred river Thamasa. Valmiki was thinking how to convert his curse words of disgrace into grace and returned to hermitage. While Valmiki and his disciple Bharadvaja were debating the same Brahmadheva appeared there. They exchanged routine formalities, hosts and

guests and seated. But Valmiki's mind was disturbed at the thought of the heron being killed by the hunter. He was still thinking that the sinful hunter killed the sinless bird and as such the hunter committed a heinous crime. With those thoughts in mind Valmiki repeated the same curse words before Brahmadheva. After listening to the curse words Brahmadheva smiled and spoke: "Oh Braahmana, the words suddenly uttered by you would be turned into your glory and you should not have any doubt about it. It was uttered by you under the influence of Saraswathi Dhevi, the goddess of education and knowledge, who did so at my instance.

Then Brahma said: "Oh best of the Sages! At my command you create the story of highly intelligent king Rama in its complete form. You have already heard the story of Rama, who is quite patient and intelligent, from the mouth of Naaradha. You, therefore, compose the entire story Sri Rama, based on the story narrated to you by Naaradha adding whatever secret or well-known events known to you about him. Your voice would not be false while composing the story. You recite the auspicious Raamakatha in verses which should please the mind. Till such time rivers, the mountains would remain on earth, up-to that time the Raamakatha composed by you would be popular with the masses. Till such time, the Raamakatha composed by you would remain with the people, you would remain present with pleasure in all the worlds created by me." Thus speaking, Brahma himself narrated to Valmiki the story of Sri Rama through Vedhic passages. Thereafter, Brahmadheva disappeared after being adorned by Valmiki.

All the disciples of Valmiki were immensely surprised with the appearance of Brahma and his advice and instructions. They all started reciting the verse unmindfully uttered by Valmiki again and again. Influenced with grief Sage Valmiki himself recited the verse again and again. Thereafter, Valmiki desired that he should compose the entire Ramayana like the verse he had already spoken in the same meter and style. When he composed the story of Sri Rama the number of such verses ran into a Hundred Crore or One Billion. After composing the verses describing the story of Sri Rama, he recited in his hermitage. At that time, all the gods were spread in the sky seated over the planes, to listen to the recitation of Ramayana. After listening to the recitation,

they showered the author, Valmiki, flowers from the sky and cheered him with victory slogans.

Thereafter, the gods, Genddharvvaas, Yekshaas, the kings and emperors started gracefully fighting among themselves to possess the epic of Ramayana. The gods, Brahma, Naagaas and the humans claimed the possession of the epic of Valmiki to carry the same to heaven. Dheithyaas, Dhaanavaas, Asuraas and the serpents desired to carry it to the nether world. The kings and the people besides the sages declared that they would not allow it to be carried to any other place except the earth. They declared that they will not allow Ramayana to be carried to heaven or to the nether world. That became a heated discussion. At that Siva intervened and convinced all of them and prevented them from quarreling and prevented from the heated discussion. Siva took all of the ocean of milk and adored Vishnu with Vedhic hymns. Vishnu appeared and smiled at them. He then divided the entire composition into three parts. In each part thirty-three crores, thirty-three lakhs, thirty-three thousand three hundred and thirty-three (333,333,333) verses were there. The Lord of Rama divided the Manthraas containing ten letters. The remaining two letters were given by Vishnu to Siva. Siva residing in Kaasi always recites the name of two letters from his mouth and preaches the same to all the people.

Siva continued to his consort Parvathi: "Oh, Parvathi, those two letters from the word Raama serve as a boat to cross the ocean of the material universe."

Thereafter Lord Vishnu at the request of his consort Lakshmi, Garuda, Sesha or Anantha, gave away separately to them the three Manthraas. Lord Sesha took his Manthra to the nether world. Lakshmi took her Manthra to Vaikuntta. Garuda carried the great Manthra with great interest to the earth. The Manthra carried by Sesha to the nether world was made available to the Naagaas or serpents residing there. The Manthra carried by Lakshmi was made available to all the gods of heaven and upper world and the people of earth received the Manthra carried by Garuda. The part of Ramayana received by earth was further divided by Lord Vishnu into seven islands and for that purpose each one of the islands received four crores seventy-six lakhs nineteen thousand and forty-seven verses ( $333,333,333/7 = 47,619,047$ ). The remaining four (4) verses were given over by

Vishnu to Brahma who is a great devotee who prayed for them with immense devotion. Out of those portions also, the portion ear-marked for Pushkara-Dhvipa was further divided into two (2) parts.

Under Pushkara-Dhvipa there were two (2) Khaandaas or Cantos and each one of them received two crores thirty-eight lakhs nine thousand five hundred and twenty-three verses ( $47,619,047/2 = 23,809,523$ ), which were all having sixteen letters (16) separately. Thereafter, Lord Vishnu out of the shares of Saaka-Dhvipa, Kraunjcha-Dhvipa, Saalmali-Dhvipa, Pleksha-Dhvipa and Kusa-Dhvipa were further equally divided. The shares of each island were further divided into nine countries and received sixty-eight lakhs two thousand seven hundred and twenty-one ( $6,802,721$ ) verses. Thereafter, the seventh Jembu-Dhvipa including the nine countries including Bhaaratha Varsha or country of Bhaaratha was further divided into nine parts. Each Varsha or Country received fifty-two lakhs, ninety-one thousand and five ( $5,291,005$ ) verses. These verses were composed of seven (7) letters and were divided into nine Khaandaas.

Only Sri was left out and this single letter was left out by Vishnu for all the nine Khaandaas. This word Sri could be affixed with all types of verses and there is no rule about it. Thus, dividing the text of Ramayana, Vishnu disappeared.

Lord Siva continued to Parvathi: "Oh, goddess in future Ravana having ten heads, finding the Braahmanaas with little wisdom and influenced with his own intelligence, would divide the Vedhaas into different parts and would make them suitable for recitation of the Braahmanaas. Besides, Lord Krishna would incarnate himself on earth in the form of Vyasa and for the welfare of the people would create Seventeen Puraanaas separating the epic of Ramayana in different ways. He would also compose an epic of Mahabharata which would be the best of literature. Even after creating all those works, the mind of Vyasa would not be satisfied. Getting upset he would then meditate upon the banks of river Saraswathi. At that point Brahma gave the four Slokas given by Vishnu to him. Naaradha would recite those four stanzas and tune it in his Vina and recite it again and again. Then, he would go to Vyasa, the son of Sathyavathi, and recite those verses to him. Sage Vyasa receiving the four verses of Ramayana would

expand them with his peaceful mind. Taking refuge with the meaning of these verses, he would create a beautiful poetic excellence composing of eighteen thousand verses under the title of Srimadbhagawatha Mahapurana for the welfare of the people. Because of this, the language of Srimadbhagawatha would be entirely different and amazing.

Oh dear, the language of all the Puranas compares well with that of Valmiki. Despite that the sage Vyasa, the composer of Satha Ramayana would have his separate entity and identity and unique position. The sage Vedha Vyasa dividing Ramayana over the earth, besides other sages, would compose Six Saasthraas. Oh, daughter of the Mountain! If you come across any other work in poetry or in prose on earth, you consider those to be parts and parcels of Ramayana itself.”

Then Parvathi asked Siva that she is interested in listening to the four verses heard by Naaradha from the mouth of Brahma and he then further narrated to Vyasa. Siva was delighted by the question and replied that he will recite those four verses to her. Those verses were recited by Vishnu to Brahma when the former divided Ramayana.

Lord Vishnu said: “In this movable and immovable universe, before the emergence of Panjchbhoothaas or Five Elements there was neither Sath nor Asath, meaning there were no dualities. I was only there being the seed of creation for everything. Similarly, after the time of dissolution whatever was left was myself alone. Such things which do not exist really look to be real in the absence of the noble thought but when one thinks about Aathma and Anaathma then nothing seems to be of any importance or of existence except the soul. Like lifeless things, the soul is influenced with illusion. The illusion which is related to the soul like the mirage and has not been in existence like the blue color of the sky. As the earth, like otherwise Panjchabhoothaas, all the material things look separate from them, though they are part and parcel of the earth. Similarly, I in spite of having been present in Panjchabhoothaas, remain aloof from worldly affairs. Thus, the true seekers of Aathmathaththva should always differentiate between the soul and the illusion and consider the illusion separately from the soul.” Siva then told Parvathi that on the basis of Ramayana getting popular in

Bharatha, several sages like Agasthya, Bharadvaja, etc. would compose hundreds of Ramayanams. But a person of wisdom should not consider them to be separate from the Valmiki Ramayana.

Siva told Parvathi that he has answered her question and inquired whether she would like to know anything more. He then further clarified that having five faces would never be able to recite the entire Ramayana consisting of over a hundred crore verses. If it cannot be recited by me with five faces no one else would be able to do it. Valmiki could compose it only because of his austerity or Thapas. But I can repeat what was recited by Ramadhasa to Vishnudhasa.

Then Parvathi asked who is Ramadhasa and where is he? Who is Vishnudhasa? Why would Ramadhasa narrate to Vishnudhasa the Ramayana in detail? Please tell me all the stories. Siva replied: "In future, there would be a sage named Nrisimha, who would be lodged over the banks of Godavari in Dhendakaaranya in the central region of Andhaka province. Ramadhasa would be the son of Nrisimha. Vishnudhasa would be the disciple of Ramadhasa. Both the Guru and Sishya would be devoted to Rama and would be engaged in reciting the story of Rama. They would debate and discuss the story and the disciple would ask questions and the preceptor would answer. Once Vishnudhasa said: "O, great teacher, I would like to know the lives of Rama and Sitha and the expansion of his kingdom. How and when did he perform the Yejnjas? I would also like to know the expansion of his family and his brothers' family." Let's jot down some of the exceptions we have not heard in other Ramayanams.

This story happened when Sri Rama and Sitha were living in Ayodhddhya after killing Ravana along with his family and friends. One day when Rama and Sitha were sitting alone, Sitha asked a question with the permission of Rama: "O, the best of Reghoos! When we were crossing the river Ganga on the boat in the mid-stream, I had taken a vow that after returning I would adore Ganga with wine and meat and several other materials. You also heard that. I am now reminded of that. Therefore, all the mothers and brothers should accompany me to the bank of Ganga to fulfill my words." Sri Rama was very happy and spoke to her: "As desired by you we will go to Ganga tomorrow." The arrangements for the trip

and camps for accommodation were very fabulous. The next morning Rama called an astrologer named Gopala and asked him to find out the most auspicious time for the trip. He calculated and said that the same morning was the Pushya constellation and was very auspicious. Sumanthra was entrusted to protect the city of Ayodhddhya and they all proceeded as a procession to perform adornments to Ganga by Sitha.

On the way at places, they stayed for a day and some other places they stayed for two or more days. And thus, after a month they reached at the hermitage of the sage Mudhgala which he had left by that time. But knowing that Sri Rama was going to visit his old Aasrama he came back. After the welcoming formalities Rama asked Mudhgala to explain the reason why he left the Aasrama. He told that because none of the sacred rivers like Sarayu or Ganga are nearby and that was the reason he abandoned the old Aasrama. Then Rama asked why Sarayu is considered very sacred and where from it originates reaches earth.

Mudhgala told the story of a demon called Sankaasura. Once he stole away all the Vedhaas. Then you took the form of a huge fish and killed him and recovered Vedhaas to Brahma. Then you took the real form of Vishnu. At that time, the tears of delight started flowing down from your eyes. The delightful teardrops that fell over Himalaya were turned into the form of a spotless stream with clean water. That stream of water formed a Saras or Lake like a river. It was called Bindhusaras of Maanasarovara. At that point of time Vaivasvathamanu, the ancestor of Rama, wanted to perform a Yejnja. The priest who came to perform the Yejnja told him though Ayodhddhya was eternal city it does not have any sacred river to perform a Yejnja. The priest also told Vaivasvathamanu that if he wanted to perform the Yejnja in Ayodhddhya then better he must bring a sacred river there. Hearing these words, the king shot an arrow from his bow. That arrow, pierced through the Maanasarovara lake from which a river emerged. And that river is called "Sarayu" because it followed the "Sara" or arrow also there is another interpretation that because it is originated from Maana" Sar" ovara it is called Sarayu. Thereafter, king Bhageeretha to redeem the sons of Sagara who had been burnt out with the anger of sage Kapila brought the Ganga here. Ganga was emerged out of your feet. Then, with the blessing of Siva the same river

Ganga was made to unite with Sarayu. After listening to the story told by Mudhgala, Sri Rama asked Lakshmana to shoot an arrow and breaking the bank of the river Sarayu bring her here. Lakshmana did so and the Sarayu was divided into two parts one which arrived in the Aasrama of sage Mudhgala in no time. Finding that the Sarayu had arrived with the confluence of Jaahnavi Ganga, Rama said, "Lakshmana has cut-off the river and brought her here. Therefore, a famous city named Dadhri would be established here. This city of Dadhri would be more auspicious on the earth than even Badharinaadh or Badhrinaadham. Thereafter, Rama, Sitha and all others proceeded to Ganga to perform the adornments as resolved by Sitha. She completed all the Pujas according to her desire and gave a feast to all the Braahmanaas and others assembled there. Then they returned to the new confluence of the river at Dadhri which is at the confluence of Bhagirathi and Sarayu. There also they performed Pujas with great pomp and show, hundred times more than the one performed in Ganga.

After completing the adorations for Ganga and Sarayu like that Sri Rama, Sitha and others camped there. Then he told Lakshmana that he wanted to stay there for nine days. Then he asked Lakshmana to depute messengers on all the boundaries that no traveler, Brahmachaari, Grihasttha, Vaanapresttha or Sanyasi should leave the place without accepting his hospitality. If anyone happened to violate his instructions, then the messenger would be punished. On the other hand, when the famous sage Chyevana heard about the arrival of Sri Rama, he went to meet with Rama. He told Rama that he has a beautiful hermitage in Magadha over the southern bank of Ganga. But the messengers of Magadha obstruct in getting fruits and roots. Therefore, Chyevana wanted to protect him from those obstructions. Then, Rama shot an arrow and constructed a mot around the hermitage and no wicked people could cross the mot to get near to the hermitage. There was also a line drawn on the side of the mot. That line was called "Rama-Rekha". And a river named Rama-Rekha started flowing from there. Chyevana was very pleased and told him that Kikata country is very degraded and requested Rama to make it an auspicious one. Rama blessed him and said that Gaya in Kikata country and river Punpuna, Chyevana's Aasrama and Rajagriha would become sacred and holy places at his instance.



Rama then established a community kitchen in which crores of Brahmins and Ascetics arrived and took food. One-day, sage Kumbhodhara while on pilgrimage to Ganga arrived in the kitchen from Preyaga. Finding a messenger there Kumbhodhara spoke: "O messenger, under whose command are you staying here? The beautiful flag touching the sky which is embossed with the effigies of Hanuman, Kovidhaara, Garuda and arrows having white, blue, green and yellow colors belong to whom? The sound of whose victory is being heard?" The messenger humbly replied: "The lotus eyed Rama, the Lord of Ayodhddhya has arrived here on pilgrimage. We are here under his command. This kitchen was established by him. If you are hungry, please have food." But hearing the words of the messenger the sage started to return by the way he came. The messengers obstructed him and said: "You are returning the same way you came. Please tell us the purpose of your visit." The sage thought in his mind: "If Sri Rama would return from here to Ayodhddhya, then how can the people of other places have the opportunity to see him? How could Raamathirththaas be established in other places to enable the people to wash off their sins. How could places like Rameswaram be established which could provide salvation to people? Therefore, I should do something by which Rama and Sitha could go to several other places for pilgrimage. With that thought the sage spoke to the messengers: "O, messengers, you listen to my words, the one who has killed Ravana, the son of a Braahmana, and after doing so who has not visited the holy places nor has performed the Yejnja, I would not take food from such a Rama. Therefore, please allow me to go back. You can convey my words to Rama and on hearing my words he would definitely perform the pilgrimages and Yejnjaas."

On hearing the words of the sage, they allowed him to return as they were afraid of pronouncing curse on them. They went to Rama and explained what happened and all what the sage told them. Sri Rama understood the intention of the sage. He consulted with his Ministers, Courtiers and sage Vasishta and decided to perform pilgrimages first and then Yejnjaas. Rama returned to Ayodhddhya and conveyed his decision to Sumanthra. Sumanthra immediately arranged everything needed. Sri Rama then commanded Pushpaka: "You have immense strength, therefore, please expand yourself to accommodate comfortably the

elephants, camels, horses, chariots and other paraphernalia needed for the pilgrimage and Yejnja. You should inculcate your strength according to our needs.” On hearing the words of Sri Rama, the Pushpaka was bestowed with hundreds of palaces with steps decorated with gems and gold having the luster of crores of suns, built with several metals, decorated with gold. Thousands of golden pitchers studded with gems, decorated with the garlands of gems were placed in it. Thus, the Pushpaka Vimana was filled with all luxuries and expanded to Ten Yojanaas in length and Two Yojanaas in width. The explanation of the paraphernalia goes for pages with precise arrangements like where the camels, where the horses, where the elephants, where the kitchens, bed rooms, pools, etc., etc. The Vimana was shining like the Sun. Flags were fluttering embossed with the name of Sri Rama. First, they moved from east to west.

Vishnudhasa requested Ramadhasa to explain about the flags of Sri Rama. So, Ramadhasa continued: During childhood Rama occupied the chariot of his father. Therefore, one of the flags was of Kovidhaara and it will be white in color and Sumanthra is the driver. Another one bears the symbol of arrow, because it was with the arrow Rama killed Thaataka and earned the title of Vanadhvaja and is in blue and Chithrarettha drives the chariot with arrow flag. And because Sri Rama cut off the flag of Vajra because of his making Hanuman to perch over his flag and known by Kapiddhvaja in green and would be driven by Vijaya. Finding Maathali having fainted on the battlefield, Sri Rama made Garuda to perch over his flag and therefore he was known by the name Garudaddhvaja in yellow color and Dhaaruka is the driver.

First Sri Rama went to Preyaga. There he offered coconut and four finger length of Sitha’s hair adorned with ornaments. Thereafter he shaved off his hair and his brothers, mothers and relatives also did the same. He then visited Triveni, Veneemaadhava, Somanaattha, Bharadhvaja, Naagavaasuki, Akshayavata and Dhesaasvetha. These happened to be eight sacred places. Akshayavata is the eternal sleeping place of Lord Vishnu at the time of great dissolution. All of them adored all the eight holy places or Theerththaas. Then they went to Vinddhyaaachala and adored deity in the temple, Vinddhyaaavaasini Dhurga. Then they proceeded to Kaasi. The people of Kaasi, seeing the plane illumination like

crores of Suns, climbed over the rooftops in thousands and started discussing variously. Someone said some divine fire was burning over the mountain. Someone told the Sage Naaradha was arriving on earth. Someone told the Sun was falling on earth from heaven. Someone mentioned that Hanuman was arriving carrying the Dhrona Mountain. ... and so many guesses. Someone took it to be Lord Vishnu. But in the meantime, Pushpaka Vimana arrived close to them. Then they started telling one another: "Lord Rama, the king of Ayodhddhya, has arrived with the people of Ayodhddhya in Kaasi. Siva, collecting huge offerings, mounted over his bull and accompanied with the people of Kaasi appeared before Sri Rama. In the meantime, Rama adored Delhi-Vinayaka and Dhunddhiraaja. Then Rama embraced Siva, accepting his offerings, and Rama himself adored Siva with costumes and ornaments. Then they visited Manikarnnika, Chakrapushkarani Kunda, Anthargrihi, Mahaayaathra and Maanasaas with forty-two Lingaas beside eight Lingaas. Rama, Sitha and others visited fifty-six Gopaalaas, eight Bhairavaas, sixty-four Yoginees and Navadhurggaas. They visited Ashtadhikpaalaas and performed Panjchakrosi circumambulation. Thus, Sri Rama completed all the fourteen pilgrimages appropriately.

Then they went to river Varuna and consecrated Siva Linga known as Rameswara and established Ramathirththa over the banks of divine river Bhagirathi. Learning about the arrival of Rama and Sitha and subjects, Hanuman also arrived there. He prepared a separate Ghat with beautiful stones on the banks of Ganga. This Ghat is popular even today in the name of Hanuman-Ghat.

Let us now conclude this humble effort on the study of Ramayanams with the hope that we can continue the study further with the addition of a few more Ramayanams in our list in the coming years.

**Om Sri Ramaya Namah! Om Sri Ramaya Namah! Om Sri Ramaya Namah!**

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