

“Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi”

*Jihvagre varthathe Lakshmi
Jihvagre mithra bandhava
Jihvagre bandhanam prapthi
Jihvagre maranam Dhruvam*

*The tongue is the cause of Truth and Prosperity.
The tongue also earns for us friends and relatives.
It is the tongue that brings bondage and death.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

The Power of Words

Embodiments of Love!

THE words of man earn him wealth and riches.
It is the words of man that cause bondage.
Hence words are cause for good and evil. It
is better to speak every word after due rumination and
reflection. Words help us a lot in life.



Man should use his words with utmost care and caution. It is important that man uses words after weighing pros and cons. He should not be hurt nor should he hurt others. Words give life and take away life.

Words are dainty delicacies.

Words are aromatic fragrance.

Words are the essence of nectar.

Words are the essence of the Vedas. (Telugu Poem)

The words uttered by Rama were sweet and delicious. Words should be pleasant and they should be used in moderation.

Words were the cause of Rama's exile into the forest, Kaika's infamy and Dasaratha's death. As words contain potent sounds, we should use them with utmost care and caution, discretion and discrimination. The words of promise given by Dasaratha to Kaikeyi at the time of battle brought sorrow and suffering to him. So we should use words with utmost care.

Life is impermanent.

Impermanent are wealth and youth.

Wife and children are also impermanent.

Only truth and good reputation are permanent.

(Sanskrit Verse)

The four sages Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujata live in human beings and render help to

them. They come to the rescue of human beings in times of dangers and ward off calamities. The four noble sages are eternal benefactors who work for the welfare of humanity day and night. When Rama was about to leave for the forest, Kausalya said to her son, "Rama! May the four sages Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujata be with you always and protect you as eyelids protect the eyes,"

Rishyasringa at Putrakameshti

Before Kausalya gave birth to Rama she had a daughter by name Shanta. As she was a female child and was not qualified to succeed to the throne, Dasaratha gave her in adoption to King Romapada. The King brought her up and gave her in marriage to sage Rishyasringa.

Dasaratha invited many noble sages to attend *Putrakameshti yaga* on the advice of his minister Sumantra. He also invited Sage Rishyasringa to come and grace the function. Rishyasringa was a noble sage. There were timely rains, peace and prosperity and people lived in joy and plenty wherever Rishyasringa set his foot. Sumantra went to Rishyasringa and requested him to be the chief *rithwik* for the *yaga*. Rishyasringa replied, "I cannot come alone. I agree to be the chief *rithwik* but my consort Shanta also should come with me. She shall also function as a *rithwik*." Sumantra agreed to this. Shanta and Rishyasringa reached there.

As soon as she reached Ayodhya, Shanta did prostrations at the feet of Dasaratha and Kausalya. Dasaratha wondered who she was as she looked like a rishi. Wherever she set foot, drought vanished, making place for timely rains. When the parents wondered who she was, Shanta had to reveal her identity to Dasaratha and Kausalya. She said “I am your daughter Shanta”. Dasaratha and Kausalya were overjoyed when they realised that she was Shanta whom they had given away in adoption to King Romapada.

Vishwamitra’s Yagna and After

Rama and Lakshmana, led by sage Vishwamithra reached Siddhashrama. Both the brothers guarded the *yagna* with great care and killed the demons that tried to disrupt the *yagna*. They kept strict vigil over the *yagna* without food and sleep. Vishwamithra was very happy on the successful completion of the *yagna*. Rama and Lakshmana prayed for permission to go back to Ayodhya. Vishwamithra had promised Dasaratha, “O King! Being their father, you are deluded to think that they are ordinary boys. Nothing untoward will happen to them. As soon as the *Yajna* is completed, I would send them back hale and healthy.” At the time of the completion of Vishwamithra’s *yagna* a messenger came from Mithilapura with a message to him. Janaka had sent a message to Vishwamithra praying him to come and attend the function, where the bow of Shiva was to be lifted and strung. After reading the message of Janaka,

the venerable sage said to Rama and Lakshmana, “You should go to Mithila to see the bow of Shiva”. He described at length the greatness of the bow of Shiva. As the two brothers were interested to see the bow, they obeyed the command of the sage and went to Mithila with him. Rama broke the bow but he refused to marry Sita without the permission of his parents. Rama said to Vishwamithra, “We have come with you for the protection of the *yagna* and not for entering into marital relationships. I won’t take a step further in this regard without the permission of our father.”

Vishwamithra was not an ordinary sage. Earlier he was a great emperor. He wanted to take away Shabala, the wish-fulfilling cow from the ashram of Vasishta by force. A fierce battle ensued between the army of Vishwamithra and the army created by the cow. Vishwamithra was defeated in the battle and all his sons were dead. Realizing that material wealth and power was no match to spiritual splendour and wealth, he became an ascetic.

Rama said, “O Master! The descendents of Ikshvaku always observed the command of their parents. They would not do anything without the permission of their parents. Hence it is not proper on our part to act without the permission of our parents.” Rama was steadfast in his adherence to Truth. He always spoke Truth and never swerved away from it. It is said,

*The world is born of Truth.
Everything merges in Truth.
There is no place in the world
where the power of Truth is not felt.
This is the pure Truth
that all of you should know* (Telugu Poem)

Encounter with Parashurama

Dasaratha and his three consorts, Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi agreed for the marriage. After marriage, as they were returning to Ayodhya, Sage Parashurama encountered them on the way. “Who is the one who broke the bow of Shiva?”, roared Parashurama. He challenged Rama for a fight. Rama defeated him and Parashurama submitted his two *kalas* (splendours) to Rama, who was endowed with twelve *kalas*. Rama shone with his own twelve *kalas*, two *kalas* from his brothers and another two given by Parashurama. That is how Rama shone brilliantly with all the sixteen *kalas* of the Virat Purusha.

Rama defeated Parashurama with love. Parashurama gave away his powerful weapons to Rama and said to Him, “Rama! You are now shining with sixteen *kalas*.” Rama was the embodiment of truth. There is no power greater than truth. Hence, Parashurama surrendered to Rama. With the surrender of Parashurama, Rama’s power became full and complete.

Brahma’s Boon

Once some sages went to Dasaratha and told about the atrocities perpetrated by Ravana. Dasaratha asked them to go to Brahma and pray for his help. When they prayed to Brahma, he said, “Ravana shall die only at the hands of a human being, since I had given the boon that he would not be killed by gods and demons. You go to Lord Vishnu and seek his help.” Moved by the prayers of sages and the people, Vishnu said to them, “I know all about your sufferings. Very soon I will be born as a son to Dasaratha and then I will relieve you of your sufferings.” Vishnu fulfilled His promise, which he had given to the sages by killing Ravana ultimately.

When Hanuman was about to enter Lanka, Lankini, who was guarding the gates of Lanka said to him, “It will not be possible for you to enter Lanka without my permission. I am the guardian of Lanka.” Saying these words she moved forward to hit at Hanuman. When she was about to hit him, Hanuman lifted Lankini with his left hand and threw her down. Then Lankini remembered the prophecy of Brahma, “It would be the beginning of the doom of Lanka, when a monkey would hit you.” Further she said, “Hanuman! Your touch has sanctified me.” *Darshanam Papa nashanam, Sparshanam karma vimochanam, Sambhashanam sankata nashanam.* (The vision destroys all sins, the touch frees a person from consequence of all actions and conversation

eliminates all troubles.) “It is time for me to leave my body” saying so she breathed her last.

Kausalya felt sad that she was not able to experience the divinity of Rama. “As he has taken human form and born to me, I am unable to consider him as divine. I will regard Rama as a human till he shows me the sign of his divinity.” That is how Kausalya was treating Rama as a human. One day Sumitra came and said to her, “Sister, Rama is not an ordinary boy. Lakshmana, Bharatha and Shatrugna also are not ordinary mortals.”

Sita was firm in her decision to follow Rama into the forests. She said that it was her bounden duty to follow Rama.

Bharatha at Nandigram

Bharatha settled at Nandigram, twelve miles away from Ayodhya. He installed the *padukas* of Rama on the throne and worshipped them with great devotion.

The four brothers were the incarnations of the four Vedas. Rama was Yajur Veda, Lakshmana who would always chant the praises of Rama was the Rig Veda. Bharatha who would always sing the glory of Rama was the Sama Veda. Shatrugna who wielded the weapons for protection of Ayodhya and his brother were the personification of Atharvana Veda.

Bharatha lived in Nandigram devoting himself entirely to the contemplation of Rama. He was

immersed in the contemplation of Rama, forgoing even food and sleep. His wife Mandavi was also a great devotee of Rama. She also lived in Nandigram for fourteen years serving her husband. Since Bharatha was immersed in the contemplation of Rama, He too shone like Rama. When he entered Ayodhya with Rama, people could not distinguish between Rama and Bharatha. ‘*Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi*’ (As you think so you become). Mandavi was a virtuous lady, who was devoted to her husband by paying due obedience to the mothers-in-law and her husband. She shone as an ideal to others. She too became an ascetic with her hair in a single plait. When Rama was entering Ayodhya followed by three brothers and their wives, people could not distinguish between Sita and Mandavi. Sita shone like an ascetic due to fourteen years of contemplation on Rama. Mandavi also shone like her since she was always immersed in the contemplation of the lord. *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati* (The one who realizes the Brahman becomes Brahman himself.). As all the brothers had oneness of thought and feeling, their four consorts also had the same. All of them constituted an ideal home.

Women are more Virtuous

The other day, the lady from Greece mentioned about *Vishwakutumba* (Universal family). God is universal. The people of the universe are his kith and kin. The four consorts of the four brothers were the

embodiments of virtues and ideal conduct. In a sense, women are greater than men for, men have only three powers whereas women are endowed with seven powers. As they have four powers extra, they shine with greater splendour.

Was not Savitri who revived her dead husband an Indian lady?

Was not Chandramati who extinguished the consuming flames by the power of her truthfulness an Indian lady?

Was not Sita who leaped into the burning fire to prove her chastity an Indian lady?

Was not Damayanti who burnt to ashes the wicked hunter, an Indian lady?

*Bharath, surrounded by the sea of sacredness
and sanctified by the women of chastity,
A land of noble culture,
Was indeed the teacher to the entire world.*

(Telugu Poem)

Can you find chaste women like Savitri, Damayanti, etc., anywhere else in the world? India is a great nation. Many eminent men took birth in this country, lived noble lives and stood as examples to the entire mankind. *Ramayana* is full of ideal men and women who shone as examples to humanity.

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