

MAHABHARATA TATPARYANIRNAYA - 7

(Continued)

– Prof. K. T. Pandurangi

When Sugriva again appealed to Sri Rama to kill Vali Sri Rama threw a strong arrow at him and killed him. It is well-known that Sri Rama killed Vali from behind a tree. The reason for this was neither fear nor treachery. But Vali was also a great devotee and would have prostrated at the feet of Sri Rama if he had seen him. Then, it would have been a dilemma whether to stand by his promise to Sugriva or to stand by Vali who had prostrated at the feet. Therefore, Sri Rama preferred to be invisible.

भक्तो ममैष यदि मामभिपश्यतीह ।
पादौ ध्रुवं मम समेष्यति निर्विचारः ॥

योग्यो वधो नहि जनस्य पदानतस्य ।
राज्यार्थिना रविसुतेन वर्धोर्धितश्च ॥
तस्माददृश्यतनुरेव निहन्मि शक्रपुत्रम् ।
त्वितिह तमदृश्यतया जघान ॥

(VI-19.20)

Then, during rainy season for four months there was a halt. Sugriva had not taken any initiative to find out Sita. However, on the strong advice of Hanuman the vanaras spread over different parts were gathered and started. Sri Rama gave his ring to Hanuman to show it to Sita for identity. After a good deal of wandering they found that the time limit given by Sugriva was over. Tara and Angada suggested that the efforts should be abandoned. But Hanuman opposed this. They moved on and ultimately reached Mahendra mountain. At this place they met sampati the elder brother of Jatayu. He informed them that he had seen Ravana taking away Sita. She is kept in Asokavana. The distance between Mahendra mountain and Lanka was a hundred yojana. Other Vanaras were not able to

jump. They all appealed to Hanuman to cross the sea and trace Sita. With this the VI chapter closes.

Hanuman offers salutation to Sri Rama in his mind before he takes a big jump over the sea. The sea torrented, the living beings within the sea came out. The trees on the Mahendra mountain were uprooted and the mainaka mountain came out of the sea to offer him a resting place. As he moves on the mother of the serpents viz., Surasa confronts him. He enters into her belly and comes out. Then, simhika a demoness who used to drag persons by attacking their shadows drags him. He destroyed her also. Finally he lands on Trikuta hill that surrounded the city of Lanka. Through out the process of his crossing the sea he had considerably expanded his body. Now, he contracts it to as small a size as a cat. He finds Sita in Asokavana under a Simshupa tree. He hands over the ring to Sita given by Sri Rama. In return Sita gives her Chudamani to be given to Sri Rama.

In order to make Ravana aware of his strength and mission Hanuman starts destroying Ravana's gardens. On hearing this Ravana asks his army to punish him. Finding that they were not able to do the task he deposes his son Aksha. Hanuman kills Aksha. Then Indrajit is deputed. Indrajit employs Brahmastra against him. Out of respect for Brahma he pretends to have been caught. The demons tie him with Nagapasa. Finding that they have used an inferior weapon Brahmastra returns. Then he is taken to Ravana's presence. Ravana orders his tail to be burnt. With the fire applied to his tail Hanuman burns Lanka and returns. He offers Chudamani to Sri Rama. He embraces him with great affection, as it were, offering himself as a present to him.

स्वात्मप्रदानमधिकं पवनात्मजस्य ।
कुर्वन् समश्लिषदमलं परमाभितुष्टः ॥

(VI-50)

The VIII chapter begins with Sri Rama lying on a grass mat in order to persuade the sea to make the way for him to go to Lanka. This was the mild way of persuading the sea before any harsh step was taken. At that time Vibhishana came to join Sri Rama and fight against his own brother Ravana, since his conduct was adharmā. Sugriva and all others opposed accepting him as he belonged to the enemy's group. However, Hanuman stated that Vibhishana is genuinely supporting Sri Rama and he be accepted. Sri Rama accepted him and coronated him on the kingdom of Lanka as he was sure of the defeat of Ravana.

Since the sea did not make the way easily Sri Rama took his arrow to aim at him. The Samudraraja came out and suggested that a bridge be built over the sea. Sri Rama got the bridge built by Nala assisted by Vanaras. He crossed the sea and landed on Lanka. Ravana had made elaborate arrangements to protect the four gates of the city of Lanka. Sri Rama also made appropriate distribution of Vanara Army. A detailed description of the battle is given in this chapter.

After Ravana is killed Siva challenges Sri Rama to fight, since he had killed his devotee Ravana. Then, Sri Rama gets his arrow ready to aim at Siva. However, Siva realises his mistake. Then, a fire ordeal is pretended for Sita pratikriti. Sita returns from Kailasa. Sri Rama returns to Ayodhya by Pushpaka Vimana. Sri Rama is coronated. He favours all suitably. Hanuman asks for only uninterrupted devotion for Sri Rama.

प्रवर्धतां भक्तिरलं क्षणे क्षणे
त्वयीश मे ह्यसविवर्जिता सदा ।

(VI-19.20)

with this happy note this chapter closes.

(To be continued)
