

CLASS-I

Lesson 1 The Ramayana-I

Lesson 2 The Ramayana-II

Lesson 3 The Ramayana-III



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THE RAMAYANA - I

Ramayana is an ancient Sanskrit epic which follows Prince Rama's quest to rescue his beloved wife Sita from the clutches of Ravana with the help of an army of forest dwellers or tribes.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to :

- recite all the shlokas correctly without taking help of the book,
- narrate the context of the Ramayana; and
- understand the qualities of Rama.

1.1 BRIEF STORY OF MOOLA RAMAYANA

Dasharatha was the king of Ayodhya and had three wives and four sons, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughana. Rama was the ideal and perfect son, and grows up with his brothers. When he comes of age, he was married to Sita, the princess of a nearby kingdom. Bharata's mother Kaikeyi,



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who resented Rama being the crown prince, she calls upon a debt that Dasharatha owed to her and asks for Rama to be exiled for fourteen years and her son Bharata to be made crown prince instead.

The devastated Dasharatha had no choice and Rama prepares to leave for exile. Sita and Lakshmana followed him into the forest. While in the forest, Surphanaka, a sister of Ravana becomes enamored of Rama and is wounded by Lakshmana while trying to kill Sita. She flees to her brother Khara and asked him to avenge her. However, Khara and his army are defeated by Rama and Lakshmana, and only one member of their entire army survives. This lone soldier flees to the island kingdom of Lanka and begs Surphanaka's brother, the mighty king Ravana to avenge them. Ravana has heard of Sita's beauty and he decided to abduct her. Using trickery and magic, he manages to lure Rama and Lakshmana away from Sita and kidnaps her, taking her away to Lanka.

Rama and Lakshmana travel far and wide searching for Sita but to no avail. Finally, they come upon a band of Vanaras who pledge to help him. One of the might warriors of the Vanaras, Hanuman, becomes Rama's staunch devotee. The Vanaras seek out traces of Sita and find she has been taken to Lanka. Hanuman flies to Lanka and confirms she is imprisoned there. He contacts Sita and informs her of Rama's whereabouts, promising that they will be back to rescue her. Before

returning to the mainland, Hanuman sets fire to the whole city of Lanka.

Rama, Lakshmana and the Vanara army build a causeway from the tip of India to Lanka. They travel to Lanka, where an epic battle follows between the two armies. Ravana is finally killed by Rama, and Sita is freed. They return to Ayodhya, where Bharata returns the crown to Rama.

There are about 24,000 shlokas in Ramayana. To learn entire Ramayana it will take long time. All major events of Ramayana are mentioned in following set of 100 Shlokas, where entire Ramayana is told in short. In following five lessons consisting of 20 shlokas each you will memorize and learn to recite them properly.

Let us practice first twenty verses of The Ramayana,

I. SHLOKAS 1-20

[Saint Narada visits hermitage of Valmiki -- Valmiki queries about a single perfect individual bestowed with all good qualities enumerated by him -- Narada, knower of past, present and future, identifies such a man -- describes virtues, qualities of Sri Rama -- narrates briefly the story of his life.]

तपस्स्वाध्यायनिरतं तपस्वी वाग्विदां वरम् ।
नारदं परिपप्रच्छ वाल्मीकिर्मुनिपुङ्गवम् ॥1.1.1॥



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Ascetic Valmiki enquired of Narada, preeminent among the sages ever engaged in the practice of religious austerities or study of the Vedas and best among the eloquent.

कोन्वस्मिन्साम्प्रतं लोके गुणवान्कश्च वीर्यवान् ।
धर्मज्ञश्च कृतज्ञः सत्यवाक्यो दृढव्रतः ॥1.1.2॥

"Who in this world lives today endowed with excellent qualities, prowess, righteousness, gratitude, truthfulness and firmness in his vows?

चारित्र्येण च को युक्तस्सर्वभूतेषु को हितः ।
विद्वान्कः कस्समर्थश्च कश्चैकप्रियदर्शनः ॥1.1.3॥

Who is that one gifted with good conduct, given to the wellbeing of all living creatures, learned in the lore (knowledge of all things that is known), capable of doing things which others cannot do and singularly handsome?

आत्मवान्को जितक्रोधो द्युतिमान्कोऽनसूयकः ।
कस्य बिभ्यति देवाश्च जातरोषस्य संयुगे ॥1.1.4॥

Who (among men) is self-restrained? Who has conquered anger? Who is endowed with brilliance and free from envy? Who is that when excited to wrath even the devatas, are afraid of (let alone foes)?

एतदिच्छाम्यहं श्रोतुं परं कौतूहलं हि मे ।
महर्षे त्वं समर्थोऽसि ज्ञातुमेवंविधं नरम् ॥1.1.5 ॥

O Maharshi, I intend to hear about such a man whom you are able to place? Indeed great is my curiosity".

श्रुत्वा चैतत्त्रिरलोकज्ञो वाल्मीकेर्नारदो वचः ।
श्रूयतामिति चामन्त्रय प्रहृष्टो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥1.1.6 ॥

Invited by Valmiki to take his seat Narada, knower of the three worlds heard him and said with delight, "Listen to me!". And thus spoke.

बहवो दुर्लभाश्चैव ये त्वया कीर्तिता गुणाः ।
मुने वक्ष्याम्यहं बुद्ध्वा तैर्युक्तश्रूयतान्नरः ॥1.1.7 ॥

"O sage! rare indeed are men endowed with the many qualities you have described. I ascertained one. Listen carefully.

इक्ष्वाकुवंशप्रभवो रामो नाम जनैश्श्रुतः ।
नियतात्मा महावीर्यो द्युतिमान्धृतिमान् वशी ॥1.1.8 ॥

People have heard his name as Rama, who was born in the Ikshvaku dynasty, having steady nature, possessing incomprehensible prowess, self-effulgent, self-commanding and subjecting senses under his control.



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बुद्धिमान्नीतिमान्वाग्मी श्रीमान् शत्रुनिबर्हणः ।
विपुलांसो महाबाहुः कम्बुग्रीवो महाहनुः ॥1.1.9 ॥

He (Sri Rama) is a great intellectual, adherent to rules, eloquent, handsome, destroyer of foes (sins), broad-shouldered, strong-armed, having conch-shaped neck and prominent cheeks.

महोरस्को महेष्वासो गूढजत्रुररिन्दमः ।
आजानुबाहुस्सुशिरास्सुललाटस्सुविक्रमः ॥1.1.10 ॥

Possessing a broad chest, armed with a great bow, with fleshy collar bones, knee-long arms, a noble head, a graceful forehead and great prowess, he is the destroyer of foes (sins).

समस्समविभक्ताङ्गस्स्निग्धवर्णः प्रतापवान् ।
पीनवक्षा विशालाक्षो लक्ष्मीवान् शुभलक्षणः ॥ 1.1.11 ॥

Mighty and powerful, he has a well-proportioned body, neither tall nor short, shining complexion, well-developed chest, large eyes, lustrous body and good qualities.

धर्मज्ञस्सत्यसन्धश्च प्रजानां च हिते रतः ।
यशस्वी ज्ञानसम्पन्नश्शुचिर्वश्यस्समाधिमान् ॥1.1.12 ॥

Pious, firm in his vows, he is ever intent on doing good to his subjects. He is, illustrious, wise, and pure at heart. He is obedient

to elders (or accessible to those who are dependent on him) and ever meditating (on the means of protecting those who take refuge in him).

प्रजापतिसमश्चीमान् धाता रिपुनिषूदनः ।
रक्षिता जीवलोकस्य धर्मस्य परिरक्षिता ॥1.1.13 ॥

Auspicious like Brahma, Sri Rama is the sustainer of this world, destroyer of enemies and protector of all living beings and of the moral code.

रक्षिता स्वस्य धर्मस्य स्वजनस्य च रक्षिता ।
वेदवेदाङ्गतत्त्वज्ञो धनुर्वेदे च निष्ठितः ॥1.1.14 ॥

He has performed the duties of a king and protected his subjects. knowledgeable in the true nature of the Vedas, he is accomplished in military science (he is a great archer).

सर्वशास्त्रार्थतत्त्वज्ञस्मृतिमान्प्रतिभानवान् ।
सर्वलोकप्रियस्साधुरदीनात्मा विचक्षणः ॥1.1.15 ॥

Sri Rama knows the true meaning of all scriptures and has a retentive memory. He is talented (possessing brightness of conception). He is beloved and well-disposed towards all people (and courteous even towards those who have done him harm). He has an unperturbed mind (even in times of extreme grief) and is circumspect (in doing right things at the right time).



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सर्वदाभिगतस्सदिभस्समुद्र इव सिन्धुभिः ।
आर्यस्सर्वसमश्चैव सदैकप्रियदर्शनः ॥1.1.16 ॥

स च सर्वगुणोपेतः कौशल्यानन्दवर्धनः ।
समुद्र इव गाम्भीर्ये धैर्येण हिमवानिव ॥1.1.17 ॥

Sri Rama, like sea to rivers, is accessible to men of virtue and has equal disposition towards all. He always has a pleasing appearance. Sri Rama, bestowed with all virtues, enhanced the joys of Kausalya, He is like the sea in deportment and like Himavant in fortitude.

विष्णुना सदृशो वीर्ये सोमवत्प्रियदर्शनः ।
कालाग्निसदृशः क्रोधे क्षमया पृथिवीसमः ॥1.1.18 ॥

धनदेन समस्त्यागे सत्ये धर्म इवापरः ।
तमेवं गुणसम्पन्नं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ॥1.1.19 ॥

Sri Rama is like Visnu in prowess, the Moon in pleasing appearance, the all consuming fire in anger, the earth in patience, Kubera in charty and the Sun in steadfastness.

ज्येष्ठं श्रेष्ठगुणैर्युक्तं प्रियं दशरथस्सुतम् ।
प्रकृतीनां हितैर्युक्तं प्रकृतिप्रियकाम्यया ॥1.1.20 ॥

With a desire to promote the welfare of the people king Dasaratha decided to install Sri Rama, his eldest and affectionate son as

heir (apparent) who was bestowed with all excellent qualities and true prowess, beloved of the people he was ever intent in the welfare of the people.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.1

1. Ayodhya was being ruled by.....
2.took Sita away from Rama.
3. Greatest devotee of Rama among Vanaras was.....
4. Crown of Ayodhya was returned to Rama by.....



WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT

Rama, prince of Ayodhya, was exiled with Sita and his brother Laksmana for 14 years by his father Dasharatha through the plotting of Bharata's mother Kaikeyi. In the forest Sita was abducted by Ravana, and Rama gathered an army of forest dwellers and bears to search for her. The allies attacked Lanka, killed Ravana and rescued Sita.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Narrate the story of Ramayana in short.
2. What is the moral of the story?
3. What are the qualities of Rama given in the Ramayana?

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ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

1.1

1. Dasharatha
2. Ravana
3. Hanuman
4. Bharata