

**Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa**  
**As Taught by Swami Dayananda Saraswati**

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सान्त्वयित्वा ततस्तां तु बाष्पदूषितलोचनाम् । निवर्तनार्थे धर्मात्मा वाक्यमेतदुवाच ह ॥ २-२८-२

*sāntvayitvā tatastām tu bāṣpadūṣitalocanām ।*

*nivartanārthe dharmātmā vākya metaduvāca ha ॥ 2-28-2*

She just said, “What? What are you saying? You are talking like an ordinary man. Really, you must be joking. I should stay here without you? I will definitely follow you wherever you go.” She said nothing about the loss of the kingdom or of the reasons for his leaving. “I will walk ahead of you and remove the thorns from the brush that blocks your way. You cannot leave me behind. I will never be an annoyance. I will not ask for special treatment. I will be helpful to you. I will eat what you eat with no problem. I will be of use to you.”

Rama said, “Sita, you do not know about the forests, the dense darkness and danger, beasts and biting bugs, snakes and swamps and mountains to cross. It is not a place for a princess of Janaki. You have never been to such a place. Your place is in the palace.”

Sita laughed, “I like the forest. I can swim in the ponds, play with the swans, smell all the beautiful flowers. I know I can hike as well as anyone. I will be right at home in Nature, I do not care that much for the palace life. I will be with you wherever you go. There will be no problem. Anyway, the lions and snakes will run away when they see you coming. Who has seen such a one as you before? Without you I am incomplete. I am going and that’s final.”

Rama let up and said, “Okay. Okay. Actually I was hoping you would say that. Definitely you should come along with me. But I wanted it to be your choice. Be ready. Give away all your extra things and offer them to the Brahmans.”

Then it was Lakshmana’s turn, “I am coming with you as well. I have always been with you. I am not going to stay here without you. I would like to be

allowed to come with you. You can be sure that I will be useful. As Sita follows you, I would like to follow.”

Rama replied, “Dear Lakshmana, out of my concern for Kausalya, I must say no. Please stay and help my mother in her grief and loneliness. She will need your help getting what she needs.”

तवैव तेजसा वीर भरतः पूजयिष्यति । कौसल्यां च सुमित्रां च प्रयतो नास्ति संशयः ॥ २-३१-१९  
यदि दुःस्थो न रक्षेत भरतो रज्यमुत्तमम् । प्राप्य दुर्मनसा वीर गर्वेण च विशेषतः ॥ २-३१-२०  
तमहं दुर्मतिं क्रूरं विधिष्यामि न संशयः । तत्पक्षानपि तान् सर्वास्त्रैलोक्यमपि किंतु सा ॥ २-३१-२१  
कौसल्या विभृयादार्या सहस्रं मद्विधानपि । यस्याः सहस्रं ग्रामाणां सम्प्राप्तमुपजीविनाम् ॥ २-३१-२२  
तदात्मभरणे चैव मम मातुस्तथैव च । पर्याप्ता मद्विधानां च भरणाय मनस्विनी ॥ २-३१-२३  
कुरुष्व मामनुचरं वैधर्म्यं नेह विद्यते । कृतार्थोऽहं भविष्यामि तव चार्थः प्रकल्प्यते ॥ २-३१-२४  
धनुरादाय सगुणं खनित्रपिटकाधरः । अग्रतस्ते गमिष्यामि पन्थानं तव दर्शयन् ॥ २-३१-२५  
आहरिष्यामि ते नित्यं मूलानि च फलानि च । वन्यानि च यथान्यनि स्वाहाद्वीणि तपस्विनाम् ॥ २-३१-२६  
भवांस्तु सह वैदेह्या गिरिसानुषु रंस्यसे । अहं सर्वं करिष्यामि जाग्रतः स्वपतश्च ते ॥ २-३१-२७

*tavaiva tejasā vīra bharataḥ pūjayiṣyati |*

*kausalyāṁ ca sumitrāṁ ca prayato nāsti saṁśayaḥ || 2-31-19*

*yadi duḥstho na rakṣeta bharato rajyamuttamam |*

*prāpya durmanasā vīra garveṇa ca viśeṣataḥ || 2-31-20*

*tamahāṁ durmatim krūraṁ vidhiṣyāmi na saṁśayaḥ |*

*tatpakṣānapi tān sarvāstrailokyamapi kintu sā || 2-31-21*

*kausalyā bibhryādāryā sahasraṁ madvidhānapi |*

*yasyāḥ sahasraṁ grāmāṇāṁ samprāptamupajīvinām || 2-31-22*

*tadātma bharaṇe caiva mama mātustathaiva ca |*

*paryāptā madvidhānāṁ ca bharaṇāya manasvinī || 2-31-23*

*kuruṣva māmanucaraṁ vaidharmyaṁ neha vidyate |*

*ḥṛtārtho'haṁ bhaviṣyāmi tava cārthaḥ prakalpyate || 2-31-24*

*dhanurādāya saguṇaṁ khanitrapīṭakādharāḥ |*

*agrataste gamiṣyāmi panthānaṁ tava darśayan || 2-31-25*

*āhariṣyāmi te nityaṁ mūlāni ca phalāni ca |*

*vanyāni ca yathānyani svāhārdvāṇi tapasvinām || 2-31-26*

*bhavāṁstu saha vaidehyā girisānuṣu raṁsyase |*

*ahaṁ sarvaṁ kariṣyāmi jāgrataḥ svapataśca te || 2-31-27*

Lakshmana said, “Rama, Bharata will take care of Kausalya and the family. I know that he is not such a bad guy. He will protect the people. In spite of how wrenching a turn things have taken, Bharata will be here to protect the *dharma*. He will hold you, great brother, as his example. I have no fear in this. If by word or deed Bharata does fall away from *dharma* and fails to protect our people I will immediately return from the forest and deal out punishment. I will return and slay a cruel-thinking Bharata. If hundreds of fellows join him I will destroy them as well. If the three worlds join him they too will fall before my sword. Kausalya has the wealth and resources to protect herself and those who are close to her. She could protect me and a thousand others without suffering. Please allow me to come with you, there is no *adharma* in this. This is my fulfillment, for you are like my father. As you follow the words of our father, it is my duty to follow my elder brother. I will in no way stifle your purpose. Both of us will be fulfilled. With bow in hand I will walk before you in the forest, and I will clear away anything that might detain us. I will be your pathfinder, your guide. Route and root I will find. Every day I will bring fresh fruits, the wealth of the forest, all that is good for *tapasvins* to eat. You can spend your time enjoying the mountains and trees. I will stand guard at night, watchman. You know about the forest at night. I will guard us. You must let me come.”

रामस्त्वनेन वाक्येन सुप्रीतः प्रत्युवाच तम् । व्रजापृच्छस्व सौमित्रे सर्वमेव सुहृज्जनम् ॥ २-३१-२८

वसिष्ठपुत्रं तु सुयज्ञमार्यं त्वमानयाशु प्रवरं द्विजानाम् ।

अपि प्रयास्यामि वनं समस्तानभ्यर्च्य शिष्टानपरान् द्विजातीन् ॥ २-३१-३७

*rāmastvanena vākyaena suprītaḥ pratyuvāca tam |*

*vrajāpṛcchastva saumitre sarvameva suhr̥jjanam || 2-31-28*

*vasiṣṭhaputrāṁ tu suyajñamāryaṁ tvamānayaśu pravaraṁ dvijānām |*

*api prayāsyāmi vanaṁ samastānabhyarcya śiṣṭānaparān dvijātīn || 2-31-37*

Again Rama had to give up, “Okay, okay. Go now and take permission from your mother, Sumitra. Get your weaponry ready and prepare to take off. When you come back this way, ask the great *ārya* Suyajna, son of Vasishtha, and the other Brahmans to come with you. I am going to distribute our wealth to these

great-souled men. I want to worship them and get their blessings before we proceed." Lakshmana took leave.

तमागतं वेदविदं प्राञ्जलिः सीतया सह । सुयज्ञमभिचक्राम राघवोऽग्निमिवार्चितम् ॥ २-३२-४

*tamāgatam vedavidam prāñjaliḥ sītayā saha |*

*suyajñamabhicakrāma rāghavo'gnimivārcitam || 2-32-4*

When Suyajna came he was received like the reception shown to the light which has been offered to the Lord in a temple. That *agni* is *prasādam*, the bright blessing from the Lord that enlightens all who partake. No less was that Suyajna, as pure as fire, as brilliant as flame, sacred. Both Rama and Sita prostrated to this *muni*. The phrase *paṇḍitaputraḥ*, son of a wise-man, is sometimes used in Sanskrit literature to describe a fool. Because that is often the case. That is because a scholar often finds no time to take care of his son. The boy grows like a wild grass. But that was not the case with Suyajna; he was as great as was his father. All the Brahmins and *ṛṣis* came to see Rama off and to see him off well. Queues of people formed, and each person received Rama's blessing and something which would remind them of Rama's care. Sita and Lakshmana gave away their possessions as well.

One *paṇḍita* who was poor came with his wife. Rama asked what the fellow would like. The man said, "Dear Rama, whatever you offer I gratefully accept."

With a generous mind, Rama told him, "Well, now, just take this stick and throw it across the field where those cows are grazing. Wherever that stick lands, up to there you will have all the cows that the stick measures. They will all be yours." Thrilled, the man seized the stick firmly, took a deep breath, and with all his might launched the stick out into the pasture. Rama laughed and took great pleasure in the effort of this fellow. Rama assured the fellow that he was not trying to make fun of him and that he was very happy to give him all this. Even more Rama gave to this fellow along with his blessing.

*To be continued...*