

A MORNING QUINTET ON RAMAYANA

(Sri Rama Prabhata Panchakam of Sri Sujnanendra Teertha Swamiji)

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Sri Sujnanendra Teertha, a pontiff (1836-1861) of Mantralayam Mutt in the lineage of Sri Raghavendra Swamy was a great scholar. Among his literary works, is a concise quintet which summarizes the entire Ramayana and hence is very useful for devotees for daily chanting. Sri Madhwacharya in his *magnum opus* 'Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya' provided definitive rulings on many aspects of the great epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. Sri Narayana Panditacharya in his exhaustive 'Sangraha Ramayana' explained the Ramayana on the basis of rulings provided by Sri Madhwacharya. Later on, Sri Raghavendra Swamy in his 'Sri Rama Charitra Manjari' provided a summary of the entire Ramayana in only eleven verses making it easy for devotees to get a quick read on Ramayana based on the rulings of Sri Madhwacharya. Sri Sujnanendra Teertha has gone a step further to summarize the entire Ramayana in a quintet (5 verses). In this article, an attempt is made to provide a simple translation of this quintet. It is interesting to note that the author has used many of the same terms and terminology used in both 'Sangraha Ramayana' and 'Sri Ramacharitra Manjari' leading one to surmise that the quintet not only a concise summary of Ramayana but also an authentic one as it builds on these two great works which themselves are based on the rulings of Sri Madhwacharya.

प्रातः स्मरामी रघुराममनेकरक्षो भीतस्वभक्तजनता परिपालनाय ।

जातं स्वतो दशरथादिति कैतवेन नीति प्रकाशित महामुनि शिष्यभावं ॥१॥

Translation: To protect His devotees terrorized by the demons, Sri Rama Himself incarnates in this world as the son of King Dasharatha. The sage, Vishwamitra brings Sri Rama and Lakshmana to his abode to get protection in the conduct of sacred rituals from the demons. Sri Rama plays the role of a student with sage Vishwamitra and goes through the act of learning sacred hymns. Let us remember Sri Rama in the morning times.

Notes: It is interesting to note that in *Sangraha Ramayana* of Sri Narayana Panditacharya, in the 4th chapter there is a reference to Sri Rama acting as a student of sage Vishwamitra. Note that the author here uses the Sanskrit word 'Kaitava' which means 'acting'.

प्रातर्भजामि गुरुसत्रविरोधिरक्षो जातं निहत्य कलयन् विमालामहल्यां ।

यातां सतीसारणिमीशधनुश्च भंक्त्वा सीतामवाप्य पथि दर्शित भार्गवैक्यं ॥२॥

Translation: Sri Rama destroys the demons who were placing obstacles in the conduct of sacred rituals by the sages. Sri Rama then liberates innocent Ahalya who was cursed and was awaiting the arrival of Sri Rama. Sri Rama then wins the hand of Seeta in marriage after winning a contest to lift (and break) Lord Shiva's bow in the palace of King Janaka. Sri Rama on his way back to Ayodhya runs into Sri Parasurama who then merges with Sri Rama (both being the incarnation of Lord Sri Hari). I sing praises to Sri Rama every morning.

Notes: It is interesting to note that in *Sangraha Ramayana* of Narayana Panditacharya, in the 8th chapter there is a reference to Sri Parashurama who circumambulates around and merges with Sri Rama and then retreats to the Mahendra Mountains.

प्रातर्नममि पुरमाप्य पितुर्निदेशात् भ्रातुःप्रदाय निजराज्यमरण्यमेत्य |

सीतां स्थितामपहृतेति चरन् तदासै वातात्मजोक्तिसचिवीकृतसूर्यसूनुं ||३||

Translation: After returning to Ayodhya, Sri Rama as per the wishes of his father relinquishes the throne in favour of his younger brother Bharata and goes to the forest (with Seeta and Lakshmana). When Seeta is abducted, Sri Rama goes in search of her and en route meets Hanuman, the son of Vayu, who will be serving as the minister of Sugreeva, the son of Surya (Surya Soonu). Sri Rama fulfils the request of Hanuman which is to help Sugreeva win back his kingdom from his estranged brother, Vali. I offer my prostration to Sri Rama every morning.

Notes: It is interesting to note that in the sixth verse of *Sri Rama Charitra Manjari* of Sri Raghavendra Swamy, Sugreeva is also referred to as Surya Soonu (son of Surya).

प्रातर्निरंतरमहं मनसार्चयामि सीतास्थितिम् दशमुखस्य वने विदित्वा |

ज्नात्वा च लौकिकवदात्मरुत्सुतेन सेतुं निबध्य जलधौ हतरावणादिम् ||४||

Translation: Hanuman succeeds in his search of Seeta and informs her of Sri Rama's welfare and returns to Sri Rama with information of Seeta's whereabouts. Hanuman helps in the construction of the bridge on the sea to reach Lanka and helps Sri Rama in winning the war against Ravana and his army. I will continuously worship Sri Rama in the mornings.

प्रातः स्तवीमि दशकंधरराज्यमस्य भ्रातुः प्रदाय दहने विनिपात्य यातां |

सीतां प्रग्रह्य भरतार्पितसर्वराज्य पातारमात्म शरणामरधेनु रत्नम् ||५||

Translation: Sri Rama after winning the war with Ravana (Dasha Kandhara), hands over the kingdom of Lanka to Vibheeshana who performs the final rites of his brother Ravana. Along with Seeta, Sri Rama returns to Ayodhya and accepts the kingdom back from Bharata and rules over the kingdom for many years. I surrender before the Lord who had appeared in the form of a sacred cow (Amara Dhenu). I chant prayers on Sri Rama every morning.

Notes: Typically, Ravana who had ten heads is called 'Dashanana' or 'Dasha Mukha'. It is very rare to call him as 'Dasha Kandhara' (one made of ten necks). It is interesting to note that this terminology used in this work also appears in the 14th chapter of *Sangraha Ramayana*. Secondly, this verse also invokes the name of the Lord as Amara Dhenu, which is one of the lesser known forms of the Lord. Note that in the 8th chapter of *Sangraha Ramayana* there is a reference to the Lord as Amara Dhenu as meditated upon by Hanuman at the end of Ramayana.

फल स्तुति

Prayer Benefit:

श्री मध्वसुजनेन्द्रै तन्मध्यस्थगुरुहृद्गतः रामः प्रीतोस्तु वाग्रत्नैः कर्मन्दिविभवोचितैः ।

सुजनेन्द्रकराब्जोत् सुज्जानेन्द्रयतीरितं प्रभातपंचकं नित्यं पठन् रामप्रियो भवेत् ॥

Translation: May Lord Sri Rama who is resident in the heart of Sri Madhwacharya who himself is resident in the heart of Guru Sri Sujanendra Teertha be pleased by this superior prayer. Sri Rama will indeed bless one who recites daily this prayer composed by Sri Sujnanendra Teertha, the disciple of Sri Sujanendra Teertha.

॥ इति श्री सुज्जानेन्द्रयतिकृतम् श्री रामप्रभातपंचकम् ॥

॥ End of Sri Rama Prabhata Panchakam composed by Sri Sujnanendra Teertha Swamiji ॥