CHAPTER 01

Rāmāyaṇas in Sanskrit Literature - A Brief Survey

(pp. 01 - 37)
Formerly Śrī Rāma going to the forest, killing the golden deer, abducting Sītā (by Rāvaṇa), killing Jaṭāyu, friendship with Sugrīva, killing Vālī, crossing the ocean, burning the city of Laṅkā and then killing Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa. This is the Rāmāyaṇa.

The compounded word “Rāmāyaṇam” is made up of two words “Rāma” and “Ayanam”. The word ‘Rāma’ is derived from the root रम् (रमते) 1A¹ to delight, to please. Bhānuji Dīkṣṭa gives the meaning of ‘Rāma’ he who delights or is delighted, who pleases or is pleased, enjoys carnally and makes other enjoyed, rejoices or makes others happy. Rāmapūrvaratapīṭh Upaniṣad defines the word as Rāma is that in whom the Yogs get delighted.²

Amararkośa enumerates 11 synonyms of the word Ayanam as follows:

अवनं वर्म मार्गंसवपथान: पदवी सृतिः।
सरणिः: पद्वति: पद्धा वर्मंसपवदीति च ॥२/१/१५॥

वर्म - going,³ moving, walking; मार्ग: - walk, path, way, road; अध्वा-passage; पन्था: - a way of entrance, an entrance, road; पदवी - a place, site, track; सृति: - going, gilding, way, road, path; सरणि: - going,

¹ Cp. अमरकोश १/१/२३
² रमते योगिनोऽन्ते नित्यानंदे चिदानन्दि।
   इति रामपदेनासी परं ब्रह्मचिन्तयते॥ १/६॥
gilding, way, road, path; पद्धति - a place, site, track; पथ - a place, site, track; वर्तनी - going, moving, walking; एकपदी - road.

Even the word ‘Ayanam’ is etymologically explained by Bhānuji Dīkṣita like ‘अयन्ते अनेन’ from the root अय (अयते) 1A to go or to move, on the authority of करणे लघूर् (Pa. 3/3/117). It means ‘that (path) on which the people tread’.

Apte V. S. gives 08 meanings of the word Ayanam as follows:

(1) going, moving, walking, (2) walk, path, way, road, (3) place, site, abode, (4) a way of entrance, (5) the Sun’s passage, (6) the period of duration of this passage, (7) equinoctial and solstitial points, (8) the final emancipation.

Out of these 5, 6 and 7 are not applicable in deriving the meaning of the word Rāmāyaṇam.

Thus the word “Ayanam” means going. The word compounded means going of Śrī Rāma (i.e. रामस्य अयनम्). It can also be understood as Śrī Rāma-Caritam, Śrī Rāma saga i.e. life history and exploits of Śrī Rāma.

The 2nd meaning is a path on which if one walks, Śrī Rāma would be accessible or we can say that Śrī Rāma is obtained through that path.

The 3rd meaning of Ayanam also denotes the sense of abode. It (i.e. Rāmāyaṇam) is the abode of wisdom of the Supreme Person and that is Śrī Rāma.

The 4th meaning is ‘entrance’ and hence Rāmāyaṇa is the prime entrance of the path leading to Śrī Rāma, of course, one of the meanings is final emancipation and what really the text offers.

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4 The Student’s Sanskrit-English Dictionary, P.48, col.03.
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The 5th is the path which shows the easiest way to have final emancipation.

This is the entrance of wisdom for all irrespective of caste and creed just next to the Vedas (which are exclusively for the twice-borns), foremost Classical Sanskrit Literature (आदिकाव्यम्) from the pen of the most revered sage Vālmīki, the foremost (आदिकवि) of the poets of the Classical Sanskrit Literature.

According to Rāmāyaṇa-tilakam (commentary on Rāmāyaṇa by Nīlkanṭha), the chief aim of Śrī Rāma saga is nothing but the attainment of the Self.

The Rāmāyaṇa is not only read not only in the India but also the worldwide, as Śrī Rāma has incarnated here. Śrī Rāma is an ideology which is practised by the people desiring a marvelous life. The Rāmāyaṇa contains the most authentic history of Śrī Rāma. It shows the path of a dignified life-style. It deals with social, political, as well as personal life and again it gives the values and ideals of the each phase of human life.

In the Rāmāyaṇa there is a competition that who abandons more. Thus this is not only the life-story or history but the mirror of life.

Gosvāmin Tulasidāsa compares Rāmāyaṇa with the wish-fulfilling tree (कल्पन्वृक्ष).

St. Morārī Bapu explains it as follows:

(1) Bālakāṇḍa as the root which creates the story

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5 पठ रामायण व्यास काव्यवीच सनातनसः
यत्र रामचरिणि स्वातः तदस्त्र शक्तिमात्रः॥ (महाभरतपुराणः प्राणिणः ३०/४७)

6 रामायण सुरतरः को ज्ञाय॥
दुःख भए दुरी निकट जो आय॥ रा.च.मा. माहात्म्य॥
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(2) *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* as the trunk of a tree in which all the characters become strong.

(3) *Aranyakāṇḍa* as the branches as it were containing the *Pañcavaṭi*.

(4) *Kīśkindhākāṇḍa* as leaves due to its greenery of Hanūmān’s appearance.

(5) *Sundarakāṇḍa* as flowers.

(6) *Laṅkākāṇḍa* as a fruit, as Rāvaṇa gets killed here by Śrī Rāma and gets liberation.

(7) *Uttarakāṇḍa* as *Rasa* full of knowledge, devotion and philosophy.

There are crores of Rāmāyaṇas composed by different sages at the number of times as Sage Budhakausika says in his *Rāma-rakṣā-stotram*:

चरितं रघुनाथस्य शतकोटिप्रविष्टरम् ।
एकैकमक्षरं पुंसां महापातकनाशनम् ||१०||

The life history of Śrī Rāma, the chief of the Raghu dynasty extends to a hundred crores of couplets. Every single letter of this (vast life history) destroys the major sins of the people (going through it).

Among these *Rāmāyaṇas* some are available, while the rest of them are obsolete.
Varied extensions of the *Rāmāyaṇas*

Here bellow an attempt is made to present a brief survey of the *Rāmāyaṇas* in chronological order.

(01) *Śravaṇarāmāyaṇam* — It is in the form of a dialogue between god Indra and king Janaka. It is composed in the 40th *Krta* Era of the *Śvāyambhuva Manvantara*. It comprises of 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 1,25,000 verses.

The major episodes are: Daśarath on hunting, the devotion of Śravāṇa to his parents, Śravana’s marriage and his death, his father cursing the king, Mantharā’s birth, etc. It deals with the Rāma story in general and administrative strategy in particular.

(02) *Māhārāmāyaṇam* — Lord Śiva has narrated it to mother-goddess Pārvatī in the *Krta* Era of *Śvāyambhuva Manvantara*. It comprises of 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 2,25,000 verses dealing with the history of Śrī Rāma in general and Vedāntic as well as Yogic description in particular along with 09 sentiments implemented beautifully.

The long description of palaces, inner apartments, mansions, towns, cities, moonrise, seasons etc. are found distinctly.

(03) *Śvāyambhuvarāmāyaṇam* — It is in the form of a dialogue between Lord Brahmā and divine sage Nārada. It contains 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 18,000 verses. It is perhaps also known as *Nārādiyarāmāyaṇam*. It is composed in 32nd *Tretā* Era of the *Śvāyambhuva Manvantara*.

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7 The information of the *Rāmāyaṇas* has been taken from the book, Chaturvedi Satyadev: Goswāmi Tulasidāsa aur Rāmakathā, Hindi Sāhitya Sājana Pariṣada; 1957; pp 55-138.

6
The major episodes are: Sītā worshipping goddess Satī, marriage, exile, Sumantra’s lamentation, Sītā’s abduction, the reign of Dīrghabāhu, Dilipa, Raghu, Aja, Daśaratha, etc.

(04) Lomaśarāmāyaṇam – Sage Lomaśa composed it in 1062nd Tretā Era of the Svāyambhuva Manvantara. It comprises of 07 Kāṇḍas and 32,000 verses.

The major episodes are: The cause of Śrī Rāma’s incarnation is to kill Jalandhara (Daśakandhara?), king Kumuda and his queen Vīrāmati take birth as Daśaratha and his queen Kauśalyā. As a reward of king Janaka visualising the Yogāmaya in the forest, Sītā is born. The marriage of Lord Śiva and Pārvatī is also described.

(05) Agastyarāmāyaṇam– It is composed by sage Agastya in the 2nd Kṛta Era of Svārociṣa Manvantara, It contains 07 Kāṇḍas and 16,000 verses. The story refers to the episode of Rāmacarita mānāṣa in which Lord Śiva listens to Śrī Rāma Saga at sage Agastya’s hermitage.9

The major episodes are: King Kuntala and his queen Sindhumati take birth as king Daśaratha and his queen Kauśalyā, Jānakī’s manifestation from the altar place of Vārṣneya, origin of the sea, the cause of giving the ring as well as the installation of Rāmeśvara-linga, the location of mt. Rṣyamuka, birth of demons Maya and Dundubhi, etc.

(06) Manjulārāmāyaṇam –Sage Sutiksṇa has composed it in the 14th Tretā Era of Svārociṣa Manvantara. It contains 07 Kāṇḍas and 10,3000 verses.

The major episodes are: Accounts of Bhāṅupratāpa and Arimardana, the dialogue between Jānakī and Hanumān, etc. It deals with ŚrīRāma Saga in general and Śrī Rāma in particular.

9 "एक बार जेता दुग्ध माहीं संभु गए कुंभज रिपस पाहि॥ ... समकथा सुनिकर्ष बखानी च सुनी महेस परम सुख मानी॥ (भान्स. प्र.सोपन - भू (४७)के पदावलि.)"
(07) *Devarāmāyaṇam* – It is in the form of a dialogue between Indra and his son Jayanta. It is composed in the 6th *Tretā* Era of *Tāmasa Manvantara*. It contains 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 1,00,000 verses.

The major episodes are: Jayanta assuming the form of a crow tests Śrī Rāma for His being the Supreme Reality (परं ब्रह्म), Śrī Rāma’s wrath, meeting Nārada, Nārada’s instruction, the victories of Śrī Rāma, Bharata, Śatrughna and Hanumān, Monkeys’ departure, appointment of Vibhīṣaṇa’s son as a chief commander at Ayodhyā, Fourfold devotion, Hanumān’s coronation, the method of worship, glorifications of sacred places, description of cities, towns etc., rules of linguistic changes (भाषापरिवर्तन) and its description as a supplement to the Vedic literature (शास्त्रपरिशिष्ट) are peculiarities of this *Rāmāyaṇam*.

(08) *Rāmāyaṇamaṇḍiratnam* – It is in the form of a dialogue between sage Vāsiṣṭha and his wife Arundhatī. It is composed in the 14th *Tretā* Era of *Tāmasa Manvantara*. It contains 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 36,000 verses. It presents nicely why Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted mostly in 07 *Kāṇḍas* only.10

The major episodes are: The origin of Pañcavaṭī, Śrī Rāma going to sage Vālmīki’s hermitage, the description of Citrakūta, Anasuyā instructing the duties of women, the description of Ayodhā, reunion of Śrī Rāma and Sītā, various eulogies and Gītās, etc.

(09) *Rāmāyaṇamahāmālā* – It is composed in the *Tretā* Era of *Tāmasa Manvantara*. It contains 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 56,000 verses.

The major episodes are: Lord Śiva in the form of a swan stays on Mt. Nilagiri listening to the Rāma story from the crow (काक) Instructing the deluded Garuda, Lord Śiva revealing Himself, removal of delusion at Kākabhusṇudi’s place, etc.

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10 Such a justification is not found anywhere in the VR as well as Adh.R (the problem of research of the present thesis).
(10) *Samvṛtarāmāyaṇam* — Divine sage Nārada had narrated ŚrīRāma saga in the 5th *Krta* Era of the *Raivata Manvantara*. It is perhaps the same *Rāmāyaṇam* known as *Nāradoktārāmāyaṇa*, as it had been narrated by sage Nārada. It comprises of 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 24,000 verses.

The major episodes are: All the beings are created by Manu and Śatarūpā who are in turn during *Raivata Kalpa* are born as Daśaratha and Kauśalyā and beget Śrī Rāma as their son.

(11) *Maindarāmāyaṇam* — It is in the form of a dialogue between Mainda, the monkey chief 11 and Kairava. It is composed in 21st *Tretā* Era of *Raivata Manvantara*.

The major episodes are: Śrī Rāma’s staying in Rśivāta in Mithilā, serving sage Viśvāmitra, upliftment of Rāmeśvara. Hanumān entering into *Āsokavaṭikā*, etc.

(12) *Sauhārdarāmāyaṇam* — It is ascribed to sage Sara-bhaiga. It is composed in the 9th *Tretā* Era of the *Vaivasvata Manvantara*. It contains 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 40,000 verses.

The major episodes are: Origin of Daṇḍaka forest, Nārada’s delusion and his wrath, Śurpanākhā’s arrival and cutting of her nose and ears, Laksmana’s drawing the line (कर्ष्मणरेखा),12 etc.

(13) *Subrahmarāmāyaṇaṃ* — It is composed in the 13th *Tretā* Era of the *Vaivasvata Manvantara*. It contains 07 *Kāṇḍas* and 32,000 verses.

The major episodes are: The glorification of Prayāga, meeting sage Bharadvāja, the formulas of different gods, Śrī Rāma staying at Chitrakūṭa, the secret of Anasūyā, etc.

11 His name occurs in AdhR 4/6/21, 4/6/24, 6/4/35, etc.
12 This episode is not found anywhere in the VR as well as in the AdhR (the problem of research of the present thesis).
(14) Saupadhyarāmāyaṇam – It is composed by sage Atri in the 16th Tretā Era of the Raivata Manvantara. It comprises of 07 Kāṇḍas and 62,000 verses. It is perhaps also known as Atrirāmāyaṇam.

The episode of entrusting Sītā to the Fire-god and taking the ĺaṅgāsaṅkā back are depicted in details.

(15) Suvarcasarāmāyaṇam – It is in the form of a dialogue between Sugrīva and Tārā. It is composed in the 18th Tretā Era of the Vaivasvata Manvantara. It contains 07 Kāṇḍas and 15,000 verses.

The major episodes are: Meeting Sugrīva, the dialogue between Vālī and Śrī Rāma, Mandodari persuading Rāvaṇa, Sulocana’s lamentation, the ocean creating hindrance, Hanumān bringing the life-restoring herb, the dialogue between Hanumān and Bharata, Sītā cursing Śaṅtā, Sītā’s abandonment, birth of Lava and Kuśa, tying the horse of the Horse-sacrifice, killing of Mahirāvaṇa, division of the kingdom and Śrī Rāma’s ascent to the heaven.

(16) Saurarāmāyaṇam – It is also known as Sūrya-rāmāyaṇam. It is in the form of a dialogue between the Sun god and Hanumān. It is composed in the 20th Tretā Era of the Vaivasvata Manvantara. It contains 07 Kāṇḍas and 62,000 verses.

The major episodes are: Hanumān’s birth, life-story of Śuka, the dialogue between Aṅjanī and Hanumān, the account of Jāmbavān, etc.

(17) Durantarāmāyaṇam – It is in the form of a dialogue between sage Vasiṣṭha and king Janaka. It comprises of 07 Kāṇḍas and 61,000 verses. It is composed in 25th Tretā Era of Vaivasvata Manvantara.

The major episodes are: Greatness of Bharata, Bharata’s oath and his lamentation, Kaikeyī’s shock, Laksmana’s wrath, the dialogue between Niśāda and Bharata, the crest-jewel as the token of
recognition, Sītā’s message, the description of Kīśkindhā, burning of Lāṅkā, etc.

The Rāmāyaṇas given here below are presented alphabetically, as their date of composition is not available in any book.

(18) Adbhutarāmāyaṇam – The story is depicted in the form of a dialogue between sage Vālmīki and Bharadvāja. It contains 27 cantos.

The peculiarities of this Rāmāyaṇam are: (1) Lord Viṣṇu takes incarnation due to the curse of Nārada and sage Parvata. Ambaraṇā’s daughter has been given the curse to be born as Jānaki & her abduction. (2) Nārada curses goddess Lakṣmi and she incarnates as Sītā from the womb of Mandodārī (3) Sītā kills Rāvaṇa who is having 1000 shoulders (स्तन्त्र).

(19) Ānandarāmāyaṇam – It is in the form of a dialogue between Lord Śiva and Pārvatī. It consists of 09 Kāṇḍas and 12,252 verses. The 3rd canto onward it is the dialogue between Rāmadāsa and Viṣṇudāsa.

The major episodes are: After the marriage of Daśaratha and Kauśalyā, Rāvaṇa abducts Kauśalyā; After Sītā’s abduction goddess Umā takes Śrī Rāma’s test; Rāvaṇa taking Śiva’s Ātmaliṅga and Pārvatī, etc.

(20) Bhuṣunḍirāmāyaṇam – It is in the form of a dialogue between Brahmā and Bhuṣunḍi. It comprises of 04 books and 36,000 verses.

It is also known as ĀdiRāmāyaṇam. It is called an original (मूल), because sage Bhuṣunḍi had witnessed it when he was in the form of a crow (क्राक) and Śrī Rāma was yet a child.13

13 The 2nd Rāmāyaṇam in the chronological order should be the Yogavāsiṣṭharaṁāyaṇam, as it is narrated to Śrī Rāma in His student life and that too, before His marriage with Sītā. The 3rd naturally is VR, as it is composed and
(21) **Cāndrarāmāyaṇam** – It is in the form of a dialogue between the Moon-god (चन्द्र) and Hunumān. It comprises of 07 Kāṇḍas and 75,000 verses.

The major episodes are: Nārada’s penance, Indra sending Kāmadeva, Nārada’s delusion, Bharata’s journey to Citrakūṭa, meeting sage Bharadvāja and the accounts of Svayamprabhā, Sampāti, etc.

(22) **Mantrarāmāyaṇam** – The story of Rāmāyaṇam is popular among the masses of India from the time immemorial. Nīlakaṇṭha, the great Sakrīt scholar of Vedic literature has selected about 157 recās imbibing the fragments of ŚrīRāma Saga composed by sage Vālmīki.

(23) **Vālmīkirāmāyaṇam** – Sage Vālmīki is undoubtedly the father of poetic imagination, as poets can see the past as well as the future through their wisdom and they can imagine the harmonic combination of philosophy as well as worldly parlance.

When sage Vālmīki heard the lamentation of one of the pair of curlews (कौकल), his grief came out enwrapped in the form of a stanza (शोक: श्लोकन्तवमागः:)  

He composed the Rāmāyaṇam in 07 Kāṇḍas containing 500 cantos and 24,000 verses.

The entire Śrī Rāma Saga is known to every one and hence it can be summarised in the following verse:

Written after the exile of Sītā begetting Kuṣa and Lava at Vālmīki’s hermitage.

16 यदु कौकलमिथनकालमध्ये: कामप्रभुर्मुि | वा. रा १०/१५ ||
17 cf. चतुर्विंशशब्द श्लोकानुसरण वान्वितः | तथा सर्गशतांशवर्तकोषाणि तथौत्तरम् | वा. रा १/८/२ ||
The *Vālmīkirāmāyaṇam* is as fresh today as it was during the time of Vālmīki, the contemporary of Śrī Rāma. It is one of the world’s most remarkable classics and excels all in its appeal. It is full of lessons for all, deserves to be read with interest and is the oldest specimen of epic poetry. (The detailed summary is given below in this chapter.)

(24) *Vedāntarāmāyaṇam*\(^{21}\) – Sage Vasiṣṭha narrates the life story of Lord Parśurāma to Śrī Rāma.\(^{22}\)

(25) *Yogavāsiṣṭharāmāyaṇam*\(^{23}\) – It is in the form of a dialogue between sage Vasiṣṭha and Śrī Rāma. It contains 06 *Kāṇḍas* and 32,000 verses. It is also known as the *Ārṣarāmāyaṇam* and also as *Vāsiṣṭharāmāyaṇa*

The major episodes are: Sage Vasiṣṭha instructs the path of self-realisation (योग) Śrī Rāma. It was narrated earlier by Vālmīki to Ariṣṭnemi and by Agastya to Sūtikṣṇa. The last chapter deals with the birth story of Kākabhusunḍī.

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\(^{18}\) cf. वाल्मीकिरिकितिः संभृता रामाभोमितिसंक्षेपः।

\(^{19}\) श्रीमद्धरामायणी ग्रन्थे पुनः भुवनस्यक्षम्। (रामायणसिद्धां ग्रन्थसंस्कृतं -मकल्पके - ३)

\(^{20}\) नातित ग्रन्थे समूहे नातित मातुस्यो गुरुः।


\(^{22}\) Only this much information is available.

\(^{23}\) *Vāsiṣṭharāmāyaṇa - A Study*, Meharchanda Lachhmandas.
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Śrī Rāma Saga in the Mahābhārata

The Rāma-story is found in different chapters of the Mahābhārata. The Rāmopākhyaṇam occurs in 739 verses of chs. 273-292 of the Vanaparva. The story occurs also in Ch 59 of Dronaparva in total 25 verses.

The major episodes are: Śrī Rāma’s manifestation, Rāvaṇa securing the boons, origin of monkeys, etc., Śrī Rāma’s exile, abduction of Śītā, meeting Sugrīva, the dialogue between Rāvaṇa and Śītā, construction of bridge, killing Rāvaṇa, Śītā’s purification & Śrī Rāma’s coronation.

Śrī Rāma Saga in the Purāṇas

The dates of the Purāṇas is a hard nut to crack for even the scholars like Upadhyay Baladeva, Hazra R. C., Kane P. V. and others, yet the probable dates accepted by the traditional scholars are adopted.

(01) Viṣṇupurāṇa (2nd Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in 26 verses of Ch 04 of Book IV.

The major episodes are: Manifestation of Śrī Rāma and other brothers from the portion of Lord Viṣṇu, Śrī Rāma’s exile, Śrī Rāma’s reign, killing of Lavaṇa, enthronement of Lava, Kuśa, etc.

Besides, many Rāmāyanas in regional languages are available viz. Kamban’s Kambanarāmāyaṇa (9th-10th Cent. A.D.) in Tamil, Buddhuraja’s Dvipādarāmāyaṇa (12th Cent. AD) known as Raṅganatharāmāyaṇa and Molla’s Mollārāmāyaṇa in Telugu.

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24 ShriMahābhārata, Sastusāhityavardhaka kāryālaya; 1958.
25 ŚrīŚrīViṣṇupurāṇa, Śrī Munilal Gupt; Gitapress Gorakhapur, 1934. Hazra R. C. dates it in 1st – 4th Cent. AD.
Irāmacarita, Adhyātmarāmāyaṇa (14th Cent. AD), Kannasaramāyaṇa and Keralavarmā-rāmāyaṇa in Malayalam, Saint Kṛttivīśa’s Kṛttivarāmāyaṇa (15th Cent. AD) in Bengali, Rāmacaritamānasas of Tulsīdāsa (15th Cent. AD) in Avadhi (Hindi), Balārāmadāsa’s Jagannamohanarāmāyaṇa (15th Cent.) in Oriya is also known as Dāndirāmāyaṇa; In Marāṭhi saint Ekanātha’s ‘Bhāvārtharatārāmāyaṇa’ (16th Cent. AD) and Moropanta’s Rāmavijaya, Narahari’s Toraverrāmāyaṇa (16th Cent. AD) in Kannada, Divakarabhaṭṭa’s Kāśmīrī-rāmāyaṇa (18th Cent. AD), Girdharadāsa’s Girdhararāmāyaṇa (19th Cent. AD) in Gujarati, Mādhava Kandali’s translation of VR in Assami, Durgakavi’s Gitirāmāyaṇa, Raghunātha’s Kathārāmāyaṇa and Ananta Atta’s Ramakirtana and many more.

It is in the form of a dialogue between Lord Śiva and Mother-goddess Pārvatī. Devotion to Śrī Rāma is explained in the light of Advaita Vedānta.

The peculiarities of the story are: (1) Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lākṣmana are identified with the Supreme Self, Primordial Matter and the individual Self. Sage Viśvāmitra, sage Vasiṣṭha, king Janaka, Kauśalyā, Kumbhakarṇa and Rāvana etc. are aware of the secret of Śrī Rāma’s incarnation. (2) The description of sage Vālmīki’s previous life. (3) Lākṣmana observing fast for 12 years. (4) Installation of Rāmesvaralihga before the construction of Setu. (5) Aṅgada destroying the sacrifice performed by Rāvana.

(02) Mātsyāpurāṇam (2nd – 4th Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga occurs in 02 verses of chs 11 and 12.

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26 The Malayalam Rāmāyaṇa composed by Śrī Eduttchan in 1375 A.D. is mere the translation of Adhyātmarāmāyaṇa written in Sanskrit occurring in the Uttarkhaṇḍa of Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa.

27 The influence of Adhṛ is seen on this Rāmāyaṇa.

28 अन्नवधायमः पाश्चात्यममेव पुनर्द्वरूपः।
आववधायमः सोतर मातवत्वमप्रस्तुतस्यः।।१३/१/१३॥

29 सेतुवर्धमणस्तु तत्र रामेश्वर लिख्यम्।
संस्कृती पुत्रपितामह रामो लोकहिंदौ च।॥१६/४/१४॥

Hazra R. C. dates it in 9th Cent. AD.
(03) **Vāyupurāṇam** (3rd Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in 214 verses of Ch 26.  

(04) **Brahmāṇḍapurāṇam** (3rd Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in the Uttarākhaṇḍa as *Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam*. It contains 07 Kāṇḍas, 64 cantos and 4,200 verses.  

(05) **Padmapurāṇam** (5th Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in 733 verses of chs 8, 33, 35, 198 of the *Śrīstikhaṇḍa*, in 4,297 verses of chs 1-68 of the *Patālakhaṇḍa* and in 5,600 verses of chs 73, 242, 254 of the *Kṛīyāyoga sārakhaṇḍa*.

The major episodes are: Daśaratha’s four queens are Kausalyā, Sumitṛā, Surūpā and Suveṣā, The Rāmarakṣāstotra is a part and parcel of this Purāṇa (*Uttarakhaṇḍ* 73/1-12), Śrī Rāma, Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Satrughna are the incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu, goddess Lakṣmī, Serpent Śeṣa, Discus Sudarśana and Conch Pāñcajanya respectively.

(06) **Śrīmad Bhāgavatapurāṇam** (6th Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in Ch 19 of the 5th Book in 04 verses and in chs 10-12 of the 9th Book in 107 verses.

Upadhyay Baladeva dates it in 6th – 9th Cent. AD.
33 पारंत्रश्च परंप्रेक्षणं गद्यार्थं श्रवणदर्शनं अज्ञातं। काण्डः। क्रममस्मिन्तङ्गमया मवर्गितं। ग्रंथिका ।।
श्लोकानां हु शतस्य शतां शतानं चश्वराय चक्षुर्वै।
संहस्त्रणं समाविष्ठं श्रवितांतर्युक्तनां तत्वावधं ॥पृ. ३९५ ॥
अध्यायमार्त्य (हिन्दी), गीताश्रेष्ठ, गोरखपुर, सं. २०३१॥
34 The Padmapurāṇa, Ancient Indian Tradition & Mythology (part I-X); Dr. N. A. Deshpade, Dr. G. P. Bhatt; Motilal Banarsidass; Delhi, 1989.
Hazra R. C. dates it in 9th – 14th Cent. AD.
35 This Purāṇa mentions 04 queens of king Daśaratha and they are Kausalyā, Sumitṛā, Surūpā and Suveṣā (here Kaikāyī is missing).
36 Ancient Indian Tradition & Mythology, the Bhāgavatapurāṇa; A board of scholars; Motilal Banarsidass; Delhi, 1981.
The major episodes are: Śrī Rāma and Sītā are presented as the incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu and goddess Lakṣmī, the Sītāsvayamvara, Śrī Rāma abandoning Sītā, etc.

(07) *Kūrmapurāṇam* (6th Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in 61 verses of Ch 21 of the *Kūrma Purāṇa*.

The major episodes are: The description of demon’s race, Solar race, Śrī Rāma installing Śivalinga after the war, abduction of Māyāsītā underpativrataopākhyāna, etc.

(08) *Bhaviṣyapurāṇam* (6th Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in only 11 verses (06 verses of *Pratisargaparva* & 05 verses of *Uttara Parva*).

(09) *Liṅgapurāṇam* (6th – 8th Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga occurs in 02 verses of Ch 66 of the 1st Book.

(10) *Skandapurāṇam* (6th – 9th Cent. AD) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in 128 verses of Ch 8 of *Māheśvarakhaṇḍa*, in 53 verses of chs 2 & 7 of *Vaiṣṇavakhaṇḍa*, in 2,194 verses of chs 11, 13, 15, 18, 19 & 43-52 in *Avanti* Section as well as 30-38 in *Dharmāranya* Section of *Brāhma-khaṇḍa*, in 144 verses of chs 20, 96-104 of *Nāgarakhaṇḍa* and in 80 verses of chs 111-113, 123 & 171 in *Prabhāsakṣetramāhātmya* of *Prabhāsakhaṇḍa*.

The major episodes are: Śrī Rāma’s manifestation, Rāvana’s killing, reason of Śrī Rāma’s incarnation, king Dharmadatta and Kahalā take birth as king Daśaratha and Kausalyā, construction of the bridge, Śrī Rāma’s ascent to heaven, Śrī Rāma installing Śivalinga, Sītā’s fire-ordeal, Fire-god eulogizing Sītā, etc.

37 Kalyāṇa-Purāṇāka-Kūrmapurāṇa; Gītā Press, Gorakhpur; 1971.
38 Upadhyay Baladeva dates it in 10th Cent. AD.
39 Liṅgapurāṇam, Jain Shantilal, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1980.
Upadhyay Baladeva dates it in 8th – 9th Cent. AD.
40 Ancient Indian Tradition & Mythology, the Skandapurāṇa; A board of scholars; G.P. Bhatt; Motilal Banarsidass; Delhi, 1992.
Śrī Rāma Saga depicted here is important to prove the historicity of Śrī Rāma’s life and exploits as it gives the data of the events.

(11) **Varāhapurāṇam** (8<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD)<sup>41</sup> - Śrī Rāma Saga occurs in 09 verses of Ch 45. The Rāghavadvādaśī vow is described.

(12) **Agnipurāṇam** (8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD)<sup>42</sup>- The story is depicted briefly in chs. 05-11 in 179 verses. It is the summary of VR.

(13) **Nāradapurāṇam** (8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD)<sup>43</sup> - Śrī Rāma Saga occurs in 895 verses of chs 3/73-75, 78, 79. The story of VR is briefly depicted here.

The major episodes are: Śrī Rāma making Vibhīṣaṇa free in Dravidian country, Śrī Rāma as well as other brothers are incarnation of Narāyaṇa, Sāṁkarsaṇa etc..

(14) **Brahmavaivartapurāṇam** (8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD)<sup>44</sup>- Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in Ch 14 of Prakṛtikhaṇḍa in 65 verses as well as in Ch 62 of Kṛṣṇajānmaḥkhaṇḍa in 99 verses.

The major episodes are: Vedavatl takes birth as Sītā, Sītā’s abduction, the Fire-god creating MāyāSītā etc.

(15) **Brahmapurāṇam** (9<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD)<sup>45</sup>- The story is depicted in chs 53-84 & 87 in 282 verses as well as in Ch 1.67 in 25 verses.

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<sup>41</sup> The Varāhapurāṇa; Śrī Ahibhushan Bhattacharya; Śrī Ānand Swaroop Gupta; All India Kashiraj Trust; Varanasi, 1981.

<sup>42</sup> Agnipurāṇa – Garga Sanhitā anka, Kalyāṇa; Hanumānprasada poddar & Chimanlal Goswami; Motilal Gītā press Gorakhapura.

<sup>43</sup> Nāradamahāpurāṇam; ŚrīVāsudeva M Joshi; Sastu sāhitya vardhak karyalay, Ahmedabad.

<sup>44</sup> Brahmaivaivartapurāṇa, Vinayak-Ganesh Apte; Ānandāśram.

Upadhyaṭ Baladeva dates it in 15<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD.

<sup>45</sup> The Brahmapurāṇa; Ed. Nagasharan sing; Nagpublisher, Delhi; 1985.

Upadhyaṭ Baladeva dates it in 13<sup>th</sup> Cent. AD.
Chapter 01

The major episodes are: The glorification of Rāmatīrtha, Rāvana’s life story, Rāvana’s penance, Rāvana stealing Vāsudeva’s image from Amarāvatī etc.

(16) Garuḍamahāpurāṇam (9th – 10th Cent, AD)\textsuperscript{46} - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in chs 142 and 143 in 72 verses. It depicts few events of Śrī Rāma’s life like Śrī Rāma cutting Śūrpanākhā’s nose and ears, Śrī Rāma going to Gayā to performing the ancestral rites.

The Śrī Rāma saga is depicted also in many other minor texts and they are as under.

(01) Adipurāṇam\textsuperscript{47} - The Rām Saga is depicted in Ch 12.\textsuperscript{48}

(02) Brhadharmapurāṇam - The Rāma Saga is depicted in chapters 18-22, 25-30 (i.e. 11 chapters in total) of the Purāṇa. The story depicted is similar to the story of Mahābhāgavata (Devi)-purāṇam and Nṛsimhapurāṇam

The major episodes are: Hanumān entering into Lalṅkā in the form of a he-cat, the origin of Rāmāyaṇa, etc.

(03) Brhannāradīyapurāṇam\textsuperscript{49} - The story occurs in chs. 75 and 79 of the Purāṇa.\textsuperscript{50}

(04) Śrīmad Devibhāgavatapurāṇam ()\textsuperscript{51} - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in chapters 28-30 under Navarātra Māhātmya of the 3rd

\textsuperscript{46} Garuḍamahāpurāṇa; Sastu Sāhitya Mudraṇālay Trust, Ahmedabad; 1977.
\textsuperscript{47} The information regarding the Purāṇas Nos. 2, 3 & 19 is taken from the book - Chaturvedi Satyadev: Goswāmi Tulsidāsa aur Rāmakathā, Hindi Sahitya Srjana Parisada; 1957; pp 55-138. Hence no further information is available.
\textsuperscript{48} Only this much information is available.
\textsuperscript{50} No further information is available.
\textsuperscript{51} The Devibhāgavatapurāṇa; Ed. Nagasharan sinh; Nagpublisher, Delhi, 1986.
Chapter 01

Book in 187 verses, 01 verse in 4th Book and in 63 verses of the Ch 16 of the 9th Book.

The major episodes are: Śrī Rāma making Śūrpaṇakhā deformed, Śrī Rāma observing fast in Navarātra to defeat Rāvaṇa, the goddess appeasing Śrī Rāma for defeating Rāvaṇa.

(05) *Mahābhāgavatapurāṇam*\(^{52}\) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in chapters 37-64.

The major episodes are: Gods approaching Lord Viṣṇu and requesting to kill Rāvaṇa, the gods approaching Lord Śiva and Pārvatī, Lord Śiva assumrs Hanumān’s form, Lord Brahmā worships the goddess for Śrī Rāma’s victory, Sītā’s birth from Mandodari etc.

(06) *Harivarmapurāṇam*\(^{53}\) - Śrī Rāma Saga is briefly depicted in 35 verses of Ch 41.

(07) *Kalkipurāṇam*\(^{54}\) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in 58 verses of Ch 03 of Book III.

The major episodes are: Śrī Rāma’s manifestation, Rāvaṇa’s killing, Rāma abandoning Sītā, Sītā entering into the Earth, Śrī Rāma’s ascent to the heaven, etc.

(08) *Kālikāpurāṇam*\(^{55}\) - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in total 10 verses of chs 38 & 62.

The major episodes are: God Brahmā worships goddess Kāli for Śrī Rāma’s victory, Janaka gets 02 more sons while ploughing the land, etc.

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\(^{54}\) Shri Kalkipurāṇam; Pt. Baldevprasad Mishra; Nag Publisher; Delhi, 1986.

\(^{55}\) Kālikāpurāṇa, Edi. Śrī Biśwanārāyaṇa Sāstrī; Chawkamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varansi; 1972.
Chapter 01

(09) **Nṛṣimhapurāṇam** - The story of VR is briefly presented in 741 verses of chs 47-52.

The major episodes are: Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa are the incarnation of Lord Nārāyaṇa and serpent Śeṣa, account of Ahalyā and her transformation to stone due to the curse, etc.

(10) **Śivapurāṇam** - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in 141 verses of chs 20, 24 & 25 of *Satīsamhitā*.

The major episodes are: Nārada’s delusion, Sati testing Śrī Rāma’s divinity, origin of Hanumān as Lord Śiva’s portion, etc.

(11) **Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇam** - Śrī Rāma Saga is depicted in 2,289 verses of chs 200-269. Śrī Rāma and other brothers are identified with Nārāyaṇa, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pardyumna and Aniruddha respectively.

Exhaustive summary of **Śrīmad Vālmīkīrāmāyaṇam**

Any student working on Śrī Rāma Saga is not supposed to constrain himself from presenting the contents (in brief) of the original rather the foremost Śrī Rāma Saga narrated by sage Vālmīki in 645 Cantos and 23,733 verses [FN Many of the modern scholars both Indian and Western, believe that Vālmīki did not compose the *Bālakānda* and the *Uttarakānda*. In that case the total number comes to 346 Cantos and 17,905 verses.] Here below the content or summary is given of the *Vālmīkīrāmāyaṇam*.

**Bālakāṇḍa** (Cantos 77, Verses 2369)

जात; श्रीरघुनायको दशस्थानमुन्याश्रयातात्कां

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56 Ancient Indian Tradition & Mythology The Shivapurāṇa (I-IV); by a board of Scholars; Dr. Arnold Kunst Prof. J.L. Shastri, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi,
57 Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇam, Nag Publishers, Delhi, 1933.
58 The numbers of the cantos and of the verses of each of the kāṇḍa are taken from the Jānkīnātha Sharma’s Vālmīkiya Rāmāyaṇa (Hindi translation), Gita Press, Gorakhapura.
Chapter 01

It begins with celestial sage Nārada narrating Śrī Rāma Saga to sage Vālmīki, when a hunter kills one of the pair of curlew (कृष्ण). Lord Brahmā visits and asks sage Vālmīki to compose Śrī Rāma Sage. The poet gives an outline of the Rāmāyaṇa (01-03).

Śrī Rāma ascends to the throne. Kuśa and Lava sing Śrī Rāma Saga. Ayodhya, its inhabitants and prosperity during the reign of king Daśaratha are described (04-07).

King Daśaratha performs the Horse-sacrifice (08-09). Episode of Rṣyaśṛṅga, the son-in-law of the king is narrated (10-11). King Daśaratha performs the sacrifice for four blessed sons under the supervision of Rṣyaśṛṅga (12-14).

The gods approach lord Brahmā for the destruction of Rāvana. Lord Brahmā implores lord Viṣṇu to descend in the house of king Daśaratha for the said purpose (15). Lord Viṣṇu accepts the proposal and appears from the alter with a basin sacrificial milk-rice (पायसम) (16). Other gods take birth as monkey chiefs (17) Birth of Śrī Rāma, Bharata, Laksmana and Śatrughna follow by the description of festivity. After their religious ceremonies, sage Viśvāmitra arrives and asks Daśaratha to send Śrī Rāma for the protection of the sacrifice (18-19).


59 The verses given in the beginning of the summary of contents of 07 Books are taken from the Ślokabaddhasaptarsirāmāyaṇam, Introduction pp.33-34, Sanksiptarāmāyaṇam
60 Vide. P 12, FN 19.
61 Here onwards the numericals in the brackets indicate the canto number.
They stay night long in a holy hermitage at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Saryū. The sage narrates the life account of ogress Tāṭakā whom Śrī Rāma kills (23-26). The sage being pleased imparts the knowledge of various missiles as well as the method of calling them back and narrates the story of the Siddhāśrama (27-29).

Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa protect the sacrifice by defeating the demons (30). Sage Viśvāmitra along with Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa proceeds to Mithilā to witness the bow-sacrifice of king Janaka (31). An account of Kuśanābha is narrated (32-34). Sage Viśvāmitra and the party reach the bank of Gaṅgā where the sage narrates the story of Gaṅgā’s descent on the earth (35-44). The milky-ocean is churned by gods and demons from which come out one by one the deadly poison, god Dhanvantarī, a bevy of Apsarās, the beverage known as Vārūṇī, the horse Uccaiḥśravā, the Kaustubha gem and nectar. A son of Ikṣūkū, built the city of Viśālā where Diti the wife of Kaśyapa practised austerities. Sumati, the rudder of Visālā receives sage Viśvāmitra and his party (45-47).

On the way from Viśālā to Mithilā, they come across a deserted hermitage of sage Gautama. The sage narrates the account of Ahalyā (sage Gautama’s wife). Ahalyā gets released from the curse of sage Gautama by the very sight of Śrī Rāma (48-49).62

Śrī Rāma and others reach Mithilā, king Janaka headed by his family priest Sadānanda welcomes them and the sage introduces two princes as well as tells the episode of Ahalyā’s release. Śatānanda narrates the life history of sage Viśvāmitra (50-51). The war for cow Śabālā and sage Vasiṣṭha alonge with his Brahmical staff renders ineffectual all the mystic missiles discharged by sage Viśvāmitra.

Sage Viśvāmitra practises severe austerities to attain Brahmanhood (52-56). The episode of Triśaṅku is described. Sage

62 Some of the versions of the Rāmāyaṇa mention Ahalyā’s release after the touch of Śrī Rāma’s holy feet.
Viśwāmitra proceeds to create a new heaven for Triśaṅku (57-60). Sage Viśwāmitra rescues Śunahṣepa from Ambariśa’s bondage and the king gets the reward of the sacrifice without sacrificing him (61-62). Lord Brahmā rewards him at Puṣkara with the status of a seer. The sage enjoys life with celestial nymph Menakā for ten years and hence retires to Mt. Himalayas, when he is rewarded with the status of Maharṣi (63). Sage Viśwāmitra resolves upon a further course of austerities (64). Ultimately he is conferred the title of a Brahmarsi by lord Brahmā (65). They come to the court and Janaka reveals his pledge regarding the bow. Śrī Rāma breaks the bow and the king sends his counselors to Ayodhyā to invite Daśaratha for wedding (66-67).

Daśaratha along with sage Vasistha and his retinue reach Mithilā. Janaka offers the hand of the two daughters Sītā and Urmilā to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa as well as Kuśadhvaja offers the hand of his two daughters to Bharat and Śatrughna. The wedding ceremony is described (68-73).

On the way of their returning to Ayodhyā, Paraśurāma appears before them. He challenges Śrī Rāma to string the bow of lord Viṣṇu, Śrī Rāma does so and puts an end to the worlds earned by Paraśurāma through austerity. Recognizing Śrī Rāma as the Lord he departs for Mt. Mahendra (74-76).

They return to Ayodhyā, Yuddhājīta (Bharata’s maternal uncle) takes away Bharata and Śatrughna to his father’s capital (77).

Ayodhyākāṇḍa (Cantos 119, Verses 4317)

दास्या मन्याया दयारहितया दुःभेदिता केकरी
श्रीरामप्रथमत्रभिषेकसये माताप्रस्वयाच्छदीः।
भरतीरं भरतं प्रशास्तु धरण्यां रामो वनं गच्छता—
दित्याकर्ण्यं स चोट्यं न नंदी दु:खें मूच्छ्यं गतः॥२॥
(अयोध्याकाण्डम् - अन्त्रः)
It begins with the aging king of Ayodhya, Daśaratha, his wives Kausalyā, Kaikeyī and Sumitṛā, and the four princes: Rāma, son of Kausalyā, Bharata, son of Kaikeyī, and Laksmana as well as Śatrughna, sons of Sumitṛā. Daśaratha determines, amid general approval, install Rāma as Yuvardāja, the crown prince or heir-apparent (1-6), but Kaikeyī urged on by her servant Manthara (7-9), contrives to have him supplemented by Bharata and banished to the forest for 14 years (10-12). Daśaratha feels forced to give in to her petulance in fulfillment of 02 boons he has previously granted her, but his agony of mind doing so it touchingly portrayed; so profound is his grief that he dies shortly after Rāma’s departure from Ayodhya, attributing his death, separated from his son, to retribution for having accidentally killed an ascetic (13-15).

His distress is shared by almost all the inhabitants of the town, but not by Rāma himself, who accepts the decree with absolute submission and with the calm self-control that regularly characterizes him (16). The more completely to fulfill his father’s commands, he suggests sending messengers to recall Bharata, who, with Śatrughna, is away from Ayodhya on a visit, and so innocent and ignorant of his mother’s machinations; Rāma then makes preparations for his departure with no protest whatsoever, accompanied at their insistence by his wife Sītā and his brother Laksmana (17-35). Daśaratha feels intense pain of separation, scolds Kaikeyī. Kausalyā persuades him and begins to lament, Sumitṛā consoling her. Śrī Rāma and party take hault on the river Tamasā (36-39). The trio sons evade the huge crowd of mourning citizens who flock after them (40-41), the citizens helplessly return to Ayodhya. In the mean time Śrī Rāma having crossed the revers Vedaśrutī, Gomafi and Syandikā, reacher the bank of river Gaṅgā (42-43) and make their way, first by chariot, then on foot, to Mt. Citrakūṭa, visiting en route the Niśāda chief Guha (44-45) and the ascetic Bharadvāja (46-48). On Citrakūṭa they erect a hermitage where they live happily for a while, enjoying the beauties of nature (50, 58-60), Minister Sumantra returns to Ayodhya. Kausalyā and

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63 Taken verbatim from Brockington J. L.: Righteous Rāma The Evolution of an Epic, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1984.
Daśaratha lament for Śrī Rāma, Daśaratha narrates the episode of Sravaṇa and the curse given by his parents. The king dies (51-57).

Meanwhile, to avert the graphically predicted evils of a kinless state, Bharata has been recalled to Ayodhyā (61-65), where he confounds his mother’s schemes by angrily rejecting the proffered kingdom (66-73) and setting off (74-75), accompanied by the 03 queens and huge retinue, to fetch Rāma back (76). They too meet Guha (77-81), start for Prayāga (82-83) and are entertained to a miraculous banquet by Bharadvāja (84-85). Crossing the river Yamunā Bharata and party reach Rāmāśrama (86-89). Rāma greets Bharata with none of the rancour displayed by the excitable Lakṣmana (90-93), Rāma along with His brothers performs but enquires calmly about his conduct of public affairs (94); but he insists on carrying out to the letter of his father’s express wish, undeterred alike by Bharata’s impassioned pleas and offers to change places with him (97-99), by the cynical materialism expressed by the courtier Jābāli (100), and by the defence of orthodox traditional values put forward by the court chaplain, Vasiṣṭha (101-102), followed by the glory of Solar dynasty (103). Eventually Bharata and his train return to Ayodhyā (106), taking with them Rāma’s sandals as a symbol of his authority (104-105); Bharata retires to nearby Nandigrāma, from where he administers the country as Rāma’s regent (107). Meanwhile Rāma and his companions decide to leave Citrakūṭa for a remote part of the forest, by way of the hermitage of Atri and Anasṭiśyā (108), who listen to their story and present them with handsome gifts of clothing and ornaments (109-111).

**Aranyakāṇḍa (Cantos 75, Verses 2446)**

श्रीरामः पितृशासनादनमाणि।
गवः प्रायः जयः निवध्य सपुहः।
कृत्वा तत्र पिष्क्रियां सधर्तो दचाध्यं दण्डे।
प्रायः अगस्त्यमद्यनीश्रं तदुद्विं धृत्रं धनुशाक्षयम्।

(अरण्यकाण्डम् - भरद्राजः)
Chapter 01

Book three, *Aranyakāṇḍa*, narrates the exiles life amongst the hospitable, respectful sages (1) and the hostile Rākṣasas of the Daṇḍaka forest. Despite Rāma’s resolve to live like an ascetic, it is his role as the perfect *Kṣatriya*, or warrior, which now comes to the fore. The brothers have to rescue Sītā from the clutches of a Rākṣasa, Virādha (2-3), meet sage Śarabhaṅga who then ascends to heaven (4) and the sages extract a pledge from Rāma to protect them against the depredation of the Rākṣasas (5). Sītā (or, more realistically, a relatively late redactor of poem) feels that such conduct may lead to a charge of aggression, but Rāma counters this argument with an appeal to his duty to protect the ascetics (8-9). For ten years Rāma and his party wander among the sages; we have specific accounts of their visits to Śarabhaṅga (4), Sutikṣṇa (6-7), and Agastya, who gives him divine weapons and advises him to build a hermitage in nearby Paṅcavaṭī (10-12); on the way there, they meet the vulture Jaṭāyus, who narrates his lineage and offers them his protection (13).

While they are living in the hut they have built in Paṅcavaṭī (14) where they enjoy the autumn season (15), the hideous but none the less amorous Rākṣasī Śūrpankhaṇḍa makes advances to the brothers; infuriated by their disdain, she attacks Sītā, and Lakṣmana multilates her as a punishment (16-17). Her brother Khara attempts to avenge her, first by sending a posse of fourteen Rākṣasas to kill the brothers (18-19), and then, after they have all been killed (21-22), by leading an army of fourteen thousand to attack them (20); Rāma alone defeats them all (23-24), killing the generals Dūṣana (25) and Triśīrā (26), and finally Khara himself (27-28), to the delight of the Daṇḍaka sages (29). Śūrpankhaṇḍa then seeks a different kind of vengeance from another brother, Rāvaṇa, king of Laṅkā, whom she incites to abduct Sītā (30-32). He compels the aid of the unwilling and timorous Mārīca (33-39), whose disguise as a golden deer and feigned call for help induce Sītā to send both brothers after it (40-43); Rāvaṇa, disguised as a mendicant, thus has not difficulty in seizing her (44-47). Jaṭāyus is fatally wounded when he attempts to intervene (48-49), and Sītā is taken to Laṅkā (50), where, having vehemently rejected all Rāvaṇa’s blandishments, she is confined in a grove of *Aśoka* trees (51-54).
Chapter 01

Sugrīva (29-30, 32) remind him (33) of his promise to help (34-35). A vast army of Vānaras is mustered (36-38), divided into four, and sent off with instructions to search for Sītā in every direction (39-42). Rāma places most faith in the party led by Hanumān and Aṅgada, and entrusts his ring to Hanumān as a token for Sītā (43). The monkey chiefs set forth towards the quarters assigned to them by Sugrīva (44-45). The other three parties return without success (46), it sure now that Hanumān alone will be able to discover Sītā (47), but after much searching and several bouts of suicidal despair (48-54), Aṅgada and Hanumān’s troop meet Sampāti, Jaṭāyus’ brother (55); Aṅgada narrates him the whole story form the entry of Śrī Rāma into the Daṇḍaka foreset to his own fasting and from him they learn that Sītā is on the island Laṅkā (56-57), Sampāti narrates his past life and the incident how he lost his wings (58-64) and Hanumān resolves to leap over the sea to find her (65-66).

Sundarakāṇḍa (Cantos 68, Verses 2865)

दूतो दाशरथे: सलीलमुद्धरि तीव्रच हनूमान महान्
दुष्टवाणशोकवे स्थितां जनकजां दत्ताशुलेखमर्त्रिकाम्।
अक्षादीनसुरानिहत्य महतीं लुक्ष्या च तत्त्वम् पुनः
श्रीरामं च समेत्य देव ! जननी दुष्ट्य मयेत्यक्षवीत्।॥५॥
(सुन्दरकाण्डम् - गीतम्:)

Book five, called the Sundarakāṇḍa after its account of the beauties of Laṅkā, opens with a long account of Hanumān’s fantastic leap (1), after which he alights unnoticed in Laṅkā and wanders about the city, dazzled by its splendidours (2-5). Entering Rāvana’s magnificent palace, he searches in vain for Sītā (6-9), having fail to find Sītā even on searching for her all round Hanumān enters to the grove (10-12) and eventually discovers her in the Aśoka grove (13), his eyes filled with joy on beholding Sītā. On seeing Rāvana surrounded by hundereds of young women approaches Sītā, he hides himself under the boughs in order to avoid observation (14-17) and overhears her rebuff Rāvana’s entreaties and threats (18-20). Her guards also try to persuade her to accept Rāvana, though one, Trijaṭā,
cheers her by recounting an auspicious dream (21-25). Sītā experiences good omens (26-27). Hanumān gently reveals himself to the incredulous Sītā (28-33) and proves his identity by producing Rāma’s ring (34). Sītā refuses to escape with Hanumān, preferring to be liberated by Rāma in person, but gives the Vānara a jewel as a token for Rāma (35-36). Hanumān consoles Sītā and hands over Śrī Rāma’s ring (37-38). Instead of hurrying back in secret, Hanumān then embarks upon a course of ostentatious and wanton destruction (39-41), kills a number of Rākṣasa champions (42-45) and finally, curious to see Rāvaṇa, allows himself to be captured by Indrajit, Rāvaṇa’s son (46). Commended by Rāvaṇa Prahasta inquires of Hanumān why he has ruined the grow and killed the demons he warns Rāvaṇa if he longed to survive, he should restore Sītā to Śrī Rāma (47-49). The angry Rāvaṇa is dissuaded from killing Hanumān outright by his virtuous brother Vibhīṣaṇa’s reminder of the inviolability of envoys (50), so he merely sets fire to the Vānara’s tail (51). This does not have the desired effect; Hanumān uses it as a brand to complete the destruction of Laṅkā (52). Reassuring himself of Sītā’s safety (53-54), he re-crosses the sea (55) and reports to his eager companions (56-58). They are overjoyed, the rampage through Sugrīva’s private orchard, the Madhuvana, to the discomfiture of its guards (59-61) before returning to Kiskindhā with the news of the success of their mission (62-66).

**Yuddhakāṇḍa (Cantos 128, Verses 5783)**

रामो बद्धयोनिनिधि: कपिलवंशीरीर्नलाब्धव्रुतो

लक्ष्ण प्राप्य सकुम्भभक्षणतुमन्य हत्वा रणे रावणम्।

तत्स्यां न्यास्य विभीषण पुनःससौ सीतापति: पुप्पकाःस–

रूढः सन् पुर्माणात्: सभरत्स: सिसहसनस्यो बभी ||६||

(लक्ष्णकाण्डम् - जमदग्नि)

Book six, the *Yuddhakāṇḍa*, concerns with the final battle between the armies of Rāma and Rāvaṇa, hearing the report from Hanumān as well as the description of Laṅkā, Rāma and the Vānaras march southwards (1-4), Śrī Rāma reminds Sītā and laments (5). The
Rākṣasas prepare for war (6-8), Vibhīṣaṇa defeats when his conciliatory advice is refused (9-10). After some debate, he is welcomed into Rāma’s camp, and consecrated as king of Laṅkā (11-13). When the sea did not allow a passage Śrī Rāma looses fierce arrows (14). The problem of how to cross the sea is solved by Nala’s construction of a causeway (15). Rāvaṇa receives information from his spies about the size of the besieging army (16-21) and after trying in vain to frighten Śītā into submission by showing her the illusion of Rāma’s severed head (22-24) Mālyavān persuades Rāvaṇa. On reaching Laṅkā Vibhīṣaṇa apprises them of arrangement made by Rāvaṇa at 04 gates for the defence of Laṅkā (25-30) and Rāvaṇa rejecting Rāma’s ultimatum delivered by Aṅgada (31), joins the battle (32-34).

Disaster soon strikes, Indrajit and puts Rāma and Laksmana out of action (35), to the despair of Vānaras (36) and the watching Śītā (37-38), but eventually the brothers are resorted by the divine intervention of the bird Garuḍa (39-40). There follows a long series of duels, resulting in the eventual deaths of all the most fearsome Rākṣasa champions at the hands of Rāma, Laksmana and the monkey-chiefs (41-46). During this time, Rāma overcomes Rāvaṇa but spares his life (47). One of the most terrible of the Rākṣasas is another brother Kumbhakarṇa who is under a curse of deed sleep (49); the elaborate efforts of his desperate comrades to wake him provide some much needed comic relief from the tension of the battle scenes, (48) Kumbhakarna twists Rāvaṇa for all his misdeeds and rushes to battlefield (50-54), but after causing initial havoc among the Vānaras even he is slain by Rāma (55). Hanumān slays Devāntaka and Trīśirā. Aṅgada, Nīla, Rṣbha and Laksmana kill Narāntaka, Mahodara, Mahāpārśva and Atikāya respectively. Indrajit presides over Brahma missile make Śrī Rāma, Laksmana as well as the monkey army unconscious. Hanumān fetchs the herbs, Aṅgada, Dwivida, Mainda, Sugrīva, Hanumān kill Śoṇitākṣa, Yupākṣa, Kumbha and Nikumbha respectively (56-67). Indrajit repeatedly resorts to magic to strike terror into the Vānaras: one of his stratagems is to show Rāma and Laksmana the illusion of Śītā being executed (68), he also embarks upon a sacrifice to ensure
victory (69), Vibhīṣaṇa asks Rāma to send Lākṣmaṇa with army to march against Indrajit who is prevented from completing it by Lākṣmaṇa (70-73), who eventually kills him (74-78). Rāvana being enraged due to his son’s death proceeds to kill Sītā but is stopped by Supārśva (79-82). Only Rāvana is left, and at least he takes the field again amid bad omens (83). Rāvana along with the demon army marches to the field. Sugrīva destroys the army and ogress chief Virupākṣa. Aṅgada kills Mahāpārśva. The war is between Śrī Rāma and Rāvana (84-96). His duel with Rāma is protracted, but finally, after Rāma receives divines help in the form of Indra’s chariot and driver, Rāvana too is killed (97). Vibhīṣaṇa performs funeral rites (98-99) and then he installed as the king (100).  

However, later qualms about Sītā’s virtue cause Rāma to be made coldly to spurn her, saying (for the first time) that he undertook the quest and combat simply to vindicate his own and his family’s honour, and not for her sake and asks her to seek shelter elsewhere (101-103). In desperation, Sītā undergoes a fire ordeal (104). The gods appear to Rāma and reveal that he is in fact an incarnation of Viṣṇu (105) and Agni hands Sītā back to her delighted husband, unhurt and exonerated (106). Daśaratha now appears, blesses his sons, and tells Rāma to return to Ayodhya and resume his reign (the fourteen years of exile have, it seems, just expired) (107). At Rāma’s request, the dead Vānaras are restored to life by Indra (108); then Rāma, Lākṣmaṇa and Sītā, and all the Vānaras, and Vibhīṣaṇa and his counselors, all climb into Rāvana’s chariot Puspaka, and — surveying as they go the scenes of their earlier advantages — they fly back to Ayodhya (109-111).  

After greeting Bharadvāja (112), Rāma sends Hanumān to find Bharata, who is living the life of an ascetic (113). Bharata is delighted by the news of Rāma’s triumph and return (114), and

64 Brockington J. L. in his Righteous Rāma The Evolution of an Epic, comments here, “Little trace remains of what was no doubt the original simple happy ending of the story: there is no reason to suppose that Rāma and Sītā were not joyfully reunited and lived happily ever after in the version, now extant.”
restores to him the kingdom (115). This is followed by an elaborate ceremony of installation, and the epic is rounded off with a eulogy of Rāma and his righteous ten-thousand-year reign (116).65

**Uttarakāṇḍa (Cantos 111, Verses 3459)**

श्रीरामो हयमेधसुख्ममखकृतू सम्प्रक्ष प्रजा: पालयन्
कृत्वा राज्यमथालुभैष्ट मुचिरं भूरि स्वधमानिन्वितो।
पुजो भानुसुतानिन्ती कुशलवी संस्थाय्य भूमण्डले
सोड्योध्यापुरवासिभिः सरयूस्तनातः प्रेषेदे दिवम् ||||
(उत्तरकाण्डम् - वपसिः)

Book seven, the the Uttarakāṇḍa, begins with the arrival of the great seers arriving to meet Śrī Rāma and Agastya discloses the origin of Viśravā, the race of demons and the origin of Rāvana etc. (1-9).

Rāvana and younger brothers perform penance and obtain boons. The demons occupy Lankā and Rāvana is installed as the ruler (10-11). The marriages of Śūrpanākhā, Rāvana and his brothers as well as the birth of Meghanāda take place (12-13). Rāvana’s exploits are described. Rāvana attacks on the Yakṣas, defeating Manibhadra and Kubera holds Puspaka (14-15). Lord Śiva curses Rāvana and curbs his pride (16). Vedavatī being insulted by Rāvana, curses him and enters into fire. Rāvana kills Anaranya and receives curse from him (17-19). Rāvana invades the domain of Yama, destroys the forces, fights with Yama and being triumphant leaves the place (20-22). He forcibly carries off the celestial damsels and other ladies who curse him. He accompanied by Madhu invades the realm of gods (23-25).

Rāvana violates celestial nymph Rambhā and receives a curse from Nalakūbara. He invades the realm of Indra, the fight takes place between demons and gods. Vasu kills Sumālī. A combat takes place

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65 Brockington J. L. ends his summary here, because he believes that the First and the Seventh Books are not the parts of the original epic.
between Meghanāda and Indra’s son Jayanta as well as god Indra and Rāvana (26-28). Meghanāda captures Indra and returns to Lanka. Brahmā grants him boons against the release of Indra from captivity (29-30). There is the encounter of Rāvana and other demons with Sahasrārjuna who captures Rāvana and bears him away to his city Māhiṣmatī. Pulastya secures the deliverance of Rāvana from the bondage. After Rāvana’s humiliation at the hands of Vālī he makes friendship with him (31-34). There is a description of Hanumān’s descent, past life and his heroic super human deeds. Due to a curse of some sages, he remains unconscious of his might. Śrī Rāma requests Agastya and other sages, he remains present in the sacrifice performed by Śrī Rāma and they depart. King Janaka, Yudhājīta, Pratardana and others proceed to their respective dominions (35-38).

Śrī Rāma accepts the presents, distributes them to His friends, the monkeys, the bears as well as the demons and sends them back to their respective abodes (39-40). Bharata describes the glory of Śrī Rāma’s reign Śītā wishes to visit penance groves and Śrī Rāma accords His consent. Bhadra reports ugly remarks made by citizens about Śītā, Śrī Rāma orders Lakṣmana to take Śītā away in the forest and to leave her in the vicinity of sage Vālmīki’s hermitage (41-45). Lakṣmana does so. He laments and talks with a heavy heart. Śītā utters plaintive words and her message to Śrī Rāma. Lakṣmana departs. On hearing Śītā’s wailing, sage Vālmīki approaches her and takes her to his hermitage. There is a dialogue between Lakṣmana and Sumantra (46-50). Sumantra consoles Lakṣmana by narrating the account of Bhṛgu. Lakṣmana meets and comforts Śrī Rāma. Śrī Rāma persuades Lakṣmana with the narrative of king Nṛga and instructs him to perform the duty towards the subjects (51-54).

There is the story of king Nimi as well as sage Vasiṣṭha’s reincarnation. King Nimi resides in the eyelids of living beings (55-57). Śukrācārya curses king Yayāti who has borrowed youth from his son Purū in exchange for his own old age. Yayāti consecrates Purū and curses Yadu (58-59). The sages terrorised by demon Lavaṇa approach Śrī Rāma and appeal to dispel the fear by destroying the demon. Śrī Rāma coronates Śatrughna and dispatches
him with a view to killing Lavaṇa (60-63). Śatrughna dispatches his army in advance.

Sage Vālmīki narrates to Śatrughna the story of Kalamāśpāda, the son of Sudās. Sage Cyavāna appraises him with the power of Lavaṇa’s lance. Śatrughna kills Lavaṇa. He establishes the city Madhupūrī, proceeds to Ayodhyā in the twelfth year to meet Śrī Rāma. On the way he listens to Śrī Rāma’s glory being sung and gets surprised, meets sage Vālmīki as well as Śrī Rāma, stays there for a week and returns to Madhupūrī (64-72). A Brahmin with his son’s dead body comes to Śrī Rāma and laments blaming Him for the death. Nārada shows the reason as an unauthorized practice of penance of a Śūdra called Śambūka. Śrī Rāma goes there in the plane Puspaka and kills him for which gods applaud Him. Sage Agastya welcomes Him, presents celestial ornaments and narrates the story of king Śvetā (73-78). There is an episode of king Daṇḍa. Śrī Rāma leaves the hermitage and returns to Ayodhyā. Śrī Rāma denies performing the Rājasūya sacrifice and performs the Horse-sacrifice as per Laksmaṇa’s advice. Śrī Rāma narrates to Laksmaṇa the story of king Ilā (79-90).

Then come the descriptions of the preparation of the sacrifice, arrival of sage Vālmīki with Lava, Kuśa and he orders and asking them to sing the Rāmāyaṇam. Śrī Rāma hears the sweet song. He dispatches an envoy to sage Vālmīki. Sītā takes an oath for purification to which the sage supports. Sītā enters into the hole of the ground offered by Earth and Śrī Rāma laments (91-99). Bharata proceeds towards the territory of the Gandharvas and defeats them. He installs his son Takṣa on Takṣasīlā and Puṣkara on Puṣkarāvati. Aṅgada and Candraketu are coronated by Bharata and Laksmaṇa in the territory of kārupapataha (100-102).

Durvāsa in the form of an ascetic approaches Śrī Rāma to convey Lord Brahmā’s message and wishes to meet Śrī Rāma and warns him not to enter the chamber. Laksmaṇa on breaking the condition is abandoned by Śrī Rāma. He departs to heaven along with his body. Śrī Rāma ascends to heaven with the citizens (103-110).
Relevance

As the literature is the mirror of the society, the mind of a poet is equally reflected in the poetry. Sage Vālmīki has illustrated the nature of a poet along with the form of the best poetry. Even the importance of an epic, its nature, form and the quality came to be known in their fullness. In spite of numerous poetic compositions existing in the world literature, the qualities of lucidity, beauty and sweetness found in Vālmīkirāmāyaṇam are rare elsewhere.

The Rāmāyaṇam is an excellent source-text as well as a fantastic work of inspiration and hence it has become a model for the poetic genius like Bhāsa, Kālidāsa, Bhavabhūti and manyy others of the regional languages. It is such a powerful composition that it grows true love in the human heart through the charming literary art. Its incessant chanting and repetition create the human excellence in the society adorned with the humanity and chastity. For this reason Śrī Rāma saga based on Vālmīkirāmāyaṇam (1/2/37-38)66 is read, recited and listened to by the masses in all over India.

The Rāmāyaṇam is a perfect text of ethical and moral values in all aspects like household duty, family concord, social life, political segment, righteous progress and spiritual development. It is a historical saga dealing with numerous ideals and it puts an example before the society how one can live a gorgeous life. As e.g. When Kaikeyī decides for Śrī Rāma’s exile, she calls and asks Him to follow father’s command. At that time Śrī Rāma enumerates 03 categories of a son. (1) The best (उत्तम:) who follows father’s command without telling any thing. (2) The middle one (मध्यम:) follows the command after telling. (3) The inferior one (मलः:) disregards father’s command.

In this way, the Rāmāyaṇam, a marvelous piece of the poetic excellence occupies a unique place in the human heart since ages.

66 यावदु स्थायस्यन्ति गिरयः सतित्व महीतले | तावदु रामायणकथा लोकेकु प्रचरिष्यति ||
यावदु रामस्य च कथा त्वत्कृता प्रचरिष्यति | तावदु धर्मद्विगुणः तव महीद्वेषसु निवस्यसि ||
Moreover it is portrayed in the light of spiritualism and hence it shines more with the title *Adhyātmarāmāyaṇam* (=AdhR) which dealing with the spiritualism imbibed in Śrī Rāma Saga is an important treatise for the devotees of Śrī Rāma as well as the students of Vedanta esp. the followers of Kevalādvaita. It has its great influence on the later Rāmāyaṇas like Ānandarāmāyaṇam, Kambarāmāyaṇa, Kṛttivasarāmāyaṇa, Ramacaritamanasa and so on.

**Conclusion**

Thus the study of the *Rāmāyaṇam* gives rise to the divine thoughts leading one to the supreme human goal of Absolution.

The calculation of the couplets of all the available texts on the *Rāmāyaṇam*, life history of Lord Śrī Rāma, it undoubtedly extends to a hundred crore couplets in total. The reading, reciting and listening to of these numerous *Rāmāyaṇa* texts eulogizing Śrī Rāma destroy the major sins of the people, naturally by pointing out to them the righteous path.

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67 वरं कर्षणं करं तु वायुं संतार्यत्याशु च सर्वलोकम्।
सक्तिपतीप्रदामदिकविच्युत्वा च रामस्य पदं प्रयाति॥
श्रीमद्वालम्बीरामायणमहादृश्यावतं १/२८॥

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