

Lord Ramachandra (birthday 2nd April)



WHO Lord Rama

WHAT was born

WHERE in a city called Ayodhya

WHEN over 5,000 years ago in a royal family.

WHY His father who was King Dasharatha, His mother Queen Kaushalya and 2 step-mothers: Kaikeyi and Sumitra had prayed for children to the gods.

He had 3 brothers Bharata, Shatrugna and Laxman

Ram grows into Adulthood and gets married to Sita

- There were many princes who wanted to marry Sita so she had many proposals.
- However, her father King Janaka, had made a condition that whomever can lift Shiva's heavy bow and string it, they can marry Sita.
- No-one could lift it, but Ram bowed to the bow and lifted it, stringed it and bent it until it broke.



Because Ram broke the bow, he won Sita's hand in marriage.



Ram is sent into Exile

- On their return from marriage, King Dasharatha announced that Ram would be his successor and the next king.
- But, Queen Kaikeyi was jealous and wanted her son Prince Bharata to be king even though he was younger. So she told the king to send Ram into the jungle for 14 years.
- His wife Sita, and Laxman joined him.



.... In the jungle



Ravan the demon king tricked Ram and Laxman to leave their living place and then kidnapped Sita while they were gone.

When they came back, they saw that she was gone, but she had left a trail using her jewellery.



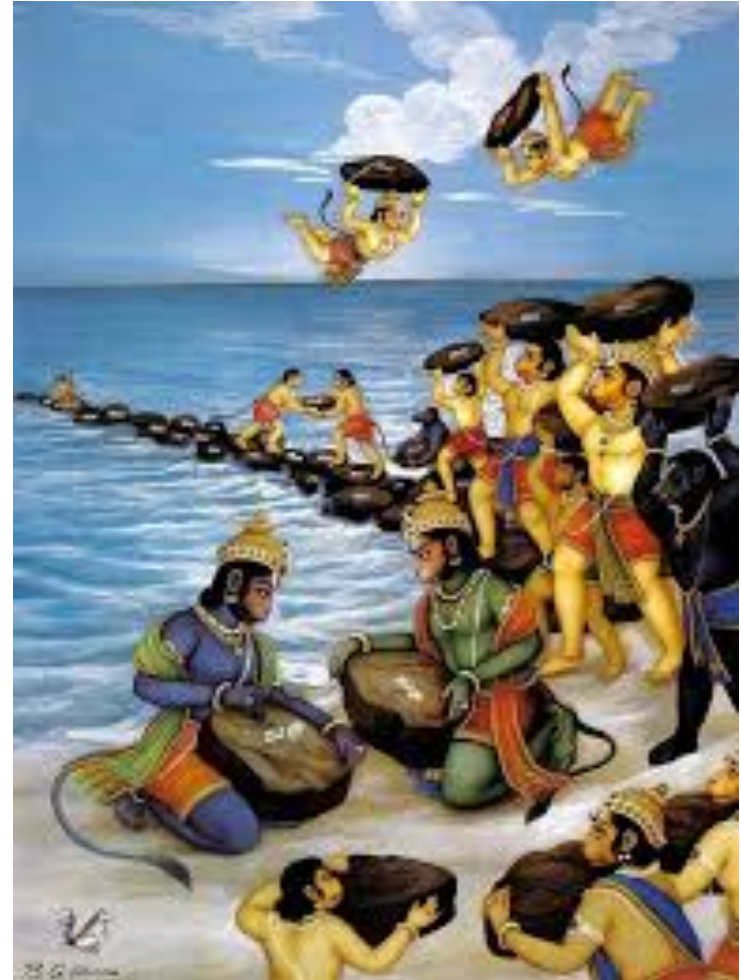
The trail led to an Island called Lanka (Also known as Sri Lanka).

On the way there, they met the monkey god Hanuman who said he would help them.



Going to Lanka

- Hanuman went to Lanka by flying there to find Sita.
- When he found Sita, he told her Ram is waiting for you
- Sita gave him a pearl from her hair to give to Ram
- When Hanuman got back to India, he got his monkey army to build a stone bridge from India to Lanka so that Ram could cross it to save Sita



Ram fights Ravana

- For many days, Ram, Laxman and the monkey army fought Ravana's demon army.
- They pushed back the demons until finally Ram and Ravana were facing each other on the battlefield.



Ram finally kills Ravan

- Ravan was too powerful to kill and only Vibhishan, Ravan's brother, knew how to kill Ravan
- Vibhishan told Ram how to kill him.
- Every time Ram fired an arrow and cut Ravan's head off with it, a new one grew in its place

.....Until finally after 5 days, Ram fired a golden arrow into Ravan's belly button which was his weak point, which killed him



Ram rescues Sita

- Ram brought Sita back to Ayodhya and the whole city had lit Diwas to celebrate the victory of light over dark



- And this is why Hindus celebrate Diwali with fireworks



Jains believe that Ram..

- ...later gave up all worldly possessions and became a monk
- This way, Ram achieved Moksh which means liberation, where the soul becomes free of all material and achieves eternal happiness after shedding all Karma (Nirjara).
- These souls are called Siddh bhagavan



A prayer about liberated souls that, like Ram, achieved Moksh

Namah Arihantanam

I bow to the Arihantas (the perfect human beings)

Namah Siddhhanam

I bow to the Siddhhas (liberated body less souls)

Namah Ayariyanam

I bow to the Acharyas (masters and the heads of congregations)

Namah Uvjhayanam

I bow to the Upadhyayas (spiritual teachers)

Namah Loye Savva Saahunam

I bow to all the Sadhus (spiritual practitioners) in the world

Aiso Panch Namahkkaro

Worshiping all these five

Savva Paav Panasano

destroys all sins and obstacles

Manglanancha Savvesim

Among all that is auspicious

Padhmam Havei Mangalam

this "Navkar Mantra" is the foremost.