Rama and Lakshmana’s Departure with Vishvamitra

Summary

King Dasharatha sends Rama and Lakshmana along with Sage Vishvamitra as requested by the sage. In their course of travel, Sage Vishvamitra imparts a secret knowledge to the young princes Rama and Lakshmana, called bala atibala vidya-s, by practicing which nothing can wither their vigor and vitality.

Chapter [Sarga] 22 in Detail

tathaa vasiste bruvati raajaa dasharathah svayam |
prahrista vadano raamam aajuhaava sa laksmanam || 1-22-1

When Vashishta said that way, king Dasharatha with an air of satisfaction personally fetched Rama along with Lakshmana. [1-22-1]

kritah svastyayanam maatraa pitraa dasharathena ca |
purodhasaa vasisthena mangalaih abhimanritam || 1-22-2

sa putram muurdhni upaaghraaya raajaa dasharathah tadaa |
dadau kushika putraaya supriitena antaraatmanaa || 1-22-3

Rama is blessed for a propitious [auspicious] travel firstly by his mother Kausalya and then by his father king Dasharatha, thereupon the royal priest Vashishta rendered [delivered] Vedic hymns blessing the journey, then Dasharatha well pleased in his heart of hearts kissed his son Rama on forehead and entrusted him to Vishvamitra. [1-22-2, 3]
Then on seeing the lotus-eyed Rama following Vishvamitra the breeze became dustless
and breezed pleasant for touch. [1-22-4]

pupaa vritisah mahati aasii deva dundubhi nihsvanaih |

shankha dundubhi nirghosah prayata tu mahaatmanii |

When the great-souled Rama forged ahead there occurred an abounding downpour of
flowers with the booming of divine drums, together with the boom and blare of drums and conch-
shells of Ayodhya. [1-22-5]

vishvaamitro yayau agre tato raamo mahaayashaah |

kaaka paksa dharo dhanvi tam ca saumitrih anvagaat || 1-22-6

Rama with jet-black hair-locks handling his bow followed Vishvamitra who walked ahead,
while Lakshmana handling his own bow followed Rama. [1-22-6]

kalaapinau dhanus paanii shobhayaanau disho dasha |

vishvaamitram mahaatmaanam tri shiirsau iva pannagau |

Rama and Lakshmana, with two quivers [a case for carrying or holding arrows] each and
two bows in their hands, and making all the ten directions of compass lambent [softly bright or
radiance] followed Vishvamitra, as if three headed serpents followed Vishvamitra, and with their
highly dynamic physiques and spiritedness they look as if like the Ashwin twin gods of unequal
charm following Brahma, the Forefather. [1-22-7, 8]
Those two youngsters with charming and bejeweled [ornamented with] physiques are handling bows and swords and their fingers have leathern [made of leather] covers. Both the unreprovable brothers Rama and Lakshmana are highly resplendent and effulgent by their worth. While they are following Vishvamitra they looked like the sons of Fire-god, namely Skanda and Vishakha, following the great god with inscrutable potential, namely Shiva, and thus the brothers have made Vishvamitra to shine forth in even pose with God Shiva. [1-22-8, 9, 10a]

And on going one and half yojana distance Vishvamitra addressed Rama in a harmonious voice calling, 'oh, Rama', on the southern riverbank of Sarayu. [1-22-10b, 11a]

"Take water, my boy, and like that you receive a group of hymns, bala and atibala from me, and let no time lapse. [1-22-11b, 12a]

"On receiving these hymns neither tiredness nor fever, nor disfiguring of personality can effect you, nor the demons can charge you either you are sleeping or unvigilant. [1-11-12b, 13a]
“As it is none whosoever on earth can equal you in dexterity [mental skill or quickness], Rama, and by reciting these hymns none can equal you in the three worlds. [1-22-13b, 14a]

balaam atibalaam caiva pathatah taata raaghava || 1-22-14

na saubhaagye na daaksinye na jnaane buddhi nishcaye |

na uttare prati vaktavye samo loke tava anagha || 1-22-15

"My dear Raghava, if bala atibala hymns are practiced, oh, impeccable one, none can equal you in the world by your handsomeness, caliber, erudition [knowledge], by your discernment, and even in replying or rebutting you. [1-22-14b, 15]

etat vidyaa dvaye labdhe na bhavet sadrishah tava |

balaa ca atibala caiva sarva jnaanasya maatarau || 1-22-16

"On receiving these two teachings there will be none similar to you, for bala and atibala are the mothers of all knowledge. [1-22-16]

ksut pipaase na te raama bhavisyete narottama |

balaam atibalaam caiva pathatah taata raaghava || 1-22-17

“Oh, best one among men, Raghava, if you go on reciting bala and atibala hymns, my dear Rama, there will be no hunger or thirst to you. [1-22-17]
And if these twin teachings are practiced an inestimable renown will also accrue, oh, Raghu's legatee [one to whom a legacy is bequeathed], these two hymns that possess brilliance are the daughters of Forefather Brahma, and oh, Rama of Kakutstha, I intend to impart these hymns to you, oh virtuous one, as you are the most eligible one, hence take the teachings that are kept safe from the world. [1-22-18, 19a]

"Though all of these numerous qualities are undoubtedly available with you, that too in abundance, yet these hymns if ascetically nurtured will yield various results." Thus spoke Sage Vishvamitra to Rama. [1-22-19b, 20a]

Then Rama on touching water to purify himself received those teachings from the contemplative [marked by concentration on spiritual things] soul Vishvamitra with gladness beaming on his face. [1-22-20b, 21a]

Rama, the one with marvelous valiance, on obtaining those teachings performed all his duties of a student in respect of a teacher and then shone forth like the thousand rayed sun on a cloudless sky of autumn. Then those three very happily stayed on the riverbank of Sarayu for that night. [1-22-21b, 22]
Though both Rama and Lakshmana slept on an undeserving grass bed, nestled by the comfortable words of Vishvamitra that night is as though pleasant to the noteworthy children of Dasharatha. [1-22-24]

Thus, this is the 22nd chapter in Bala Kanda of Valmiki Ramayana, the First Epic poem of India.

References

