



SRIMAD RAMAYANA

(based on the teachings of Sribhashyam Appalacharya Swamy) -
Ramanujamma Ramanuja Dasi

The Story of Sage *Va:Imi:ki*

None of us can say that we fully understand this human life or how we can best make use of it. Even though we try and rely on our common sense, experience, intelligence and intuition, we can never really say that we have everything figured out for our lives. We can never truly explain why sometimes even the best-intended actions lead to disappointment, or why sorrow can sometimes come when we least expect it, or why happiness is sometimes so hard to achieve. Nor can we ever be sure that our intuition and experience can ever lead us in the right direction. To truly understand these, our sages and elders say that we must seek out the Eternal Wisdom contained in *Ve:da*.

The *Ve:da* consists of two parts, namely, the *Pu:rvabha:ga* and the *Uththarabha:ga*. The first part explains what humanity should practice to attain happiness. The second part teaches us how each of us should behave in order to achieve our specific goals. But, such vast wisdom is not within the reach of everyone. So, our great seers, the sages, decided that the wisdom of the *Ve:das* should be brought forth by bringing the story of *Ra:ma*, the *Ra:ma:yana*, to the world.

God incarnated as *Ra:ma* to show the world how a human being should be, so that His life and actions could serve as the ideal guide for all people. The sages realized that to bring this story to the world, they would need a rare and blessed soul,

whose personal experiences would lead him to the enlightenment needed to appreciate the depth of *Sri: Ra:ma*'s incarnation. All these rare qualities were found in the great sage and poet, *Va:Imi:ki*.

Va:Imi:ki had not started his life as a sage. He was originally a hunter named *Ruksha*, who spent his days killing for the sole purpose of making money and supporting his family. Through the guidance of the sages, *Ruksha* abandoned this life and took to performing deep penance. Such was his concentration on the holy name, *Ra:ma*, that he became totally unaware of the world around him, even to the point of ignoring the insects that had built a giant anthill, a "*Va:Imi:kam*", around him. Recognizing him to be a realized soul, the god of rain, *Varuna*, who is also known as *Prache:thasa*, showered him with rain to wash away the anthill and restore the sage to the world. Since he returned to this world from an anthill, the once-hunter *Ruksha* took on the new name of *Va:Imi:ki*. And, since his emergence was caused through the blessings of the rain, he is also referred to as *Pra:che:thasa*.

Va:Imi:ki himself became the ideal example of the power of the holy name of *Sri: Ra:ma*, as it could transform a person whose life was filled with nothing but violence and pure material pursuits into the greatest of sages.

Jai Sriman Narayana !

