



## CHAPTER 82

### Bharata Rejects Vasiṣṭha's Request

#### SUMMARY

In the presence of all the subjects in the assembly, Vasiṣṭha requested Bharata to accept the kingdom since it had been given to Him by His father and brother. Bharata criticized Vasiṣṭha and told him that He will endeavor with all His might to go to the forest, meet Rāma and bring Him back. On Bharata's request, Sumantra prepared the residents of the city, the army and so on to go to meet Rāma, and brought a chariot for Bharata.



Bharata ordered Sumantra to summon  
the army to prepare themselves  
to go to meet Rāma. (2.82.22)

TEXT 1

तामार्यगणसंपूर्णा भरतः प्रग्रहां सभाम् ।  
ददर्श बुद्धिसंपन्नः पूर्णचन्द्रां निशामिव ॥

*tām ārya-gaṇa-sampūrṇām bharataḥ pragrahām sabhām  
dadarśa buddhi-sampannaḥ pūrṇa-candrām niśām iva*

*tām ārya-gaṇa-sampūrṇām* = it was filled with noble persons;  
*bharataḥ* = Bharata; *pragrahām* = with auspicious planets; *sabhām*  
= the assembly; *dadarśa* = surveyed; *buddhi-sampannaḥ* =  
intelligent; *pūrṇa-candrām* = the full-moon; *niśām* = night; *iva* =  
and resembled.

**Intelligent Bharata surveyed the assembly. It was filled with noble persons and resembled the full-moon night with auspicious planets.**

*Pragrahām* indicates that the assembly was regulated.

GLOSS. [The glossator reads *ārya-guṇa-sampūrṇām* instead of *ārya-gaṇa-sampūrṇām* indicating that] the assembly was filled with noble persons who had the qualities of those elderly in terms of spiritual knowledge and age.

TEXT 2

आसनानि यथान्यायमार्याणां विशतां तदा ।  
वस्त्राङ्गरागप्रभया द्योतिता सा सभोत्तमा ॥

*āsanāni yathā-nyāyam āryāṇām viśatām tadā  
vastrāṅga-rāga-prabhayā dyotitā sā sabhottamā*

*āsanāni* = on their seats; *yathā-nyāyam* = as appropriate to them;  
*āryāṇām* = of the noble persons; *viśatām tadā* = sitting; *vastra-  
āṅga-rāga-prabhayā* = by the effulgence of the color of the clothing;

*dyotitā* = was illuminated; *sā* = that; *sabhā* = assembly; *uttamā* = excellent.

That excellent assembly was illuminated by the effulgence of the color of the clothing of the noble persons sitting on their seats as appropriate to them.

## TEXT 3

सा विद्वज्जनसंपूर्णा सभा सुरुचिरा तदा ।  
अदृश्यत घनापाये पूर्णचन्द्रेव शर्वरी ॥

*sā vidvaj-jana-sampūrṇā sabhā surucirā tadā  
adrśyata ghanāpāye pūrṇa-candrea śarvarī*

*sā* = that; *vidvat-jana-sampūrṇā* = filled with learned people; *sabhā* = assembly; *surucirā* = was very pleasingly; *tadā adrśyata* = to behold; *ghana-apāye* = after the monsoon clouds have dispersed; *pūrṇa-candrā* = the full-moon; *iva* = like; *śarvarī* = night.

Filled with learned people, that assembly was very pleasing to behold like the full-moon night after the monsoon clouds have dispersed.<sup>1</sup>

“After the monsoon clouds have dispersed” means “on the coming of autumn.” Everyone who had assembled were decorated on the occasion of Bharata’s coronation.

## TEXT 4

राज्ञस्तु प्रकृतीः सर्वाः समग्राः प्रेक्ष्य धर्मवित् ।  
इदं पुरोहितो वाक्यं भरतं मृदु चाब्रवीत् ॥

1. It should be noted that Vasiṣṭha had called for people here to discuss the matter of coronating Bharata when the kingdom was devoid of a ruler. The assembly is described here as “filled with learned people.” What is the utility of having ignorant people select their governing executive?

*rājñas tu prakṛtīḥ sarvāḥ samagrāḥ prekṣya dharmavit  
idam purohito vākyam bharatam mṛdu cābravīt*

*rājñas tu* = the king's; *prakṛtīḥ* = subjects; *sarvāḥ* = all of; *samagrāḥ* = had gathered together; *prekṣya* = observing that; *dharmavit* = who knew dharma; *idam* = the following; *purohitaḥ* = the royal priest; *vākyam* = words; *bharatam* = to Bharata; *mṛdu ca* = softly; *abravīt* = spoke.

**Observing that all of the king's subjects had gathered together, the royal priest who knew dharma softly spoke the following words to Bharata.**

Vasiṣṭha observed [that all of the subjects had gathered together] so that he could initiate a discussion.<sup>2</sup>

#### TEXT 5

तात राजा दशरथः स्वर्गतो धर्ममाचरन् ।  
धनधान्यवतीं स्फीतां प्रदाय पृथिवीं तव ॥

*tāta rājā daśarathaḥ svar-gato dharmam ācaran  
dhana-dhānyavatīm sphītām pradāya pṛthivīm tava*

*tāta* = dear child; *rājā* = King; *daśarathaḥ* = Daśaratha; *svaḥ-gataḥ* = has attained Svarga; *dharmam* = dharma; *ācaran* = by executing; *dhana-dhānyavatīm* = filled with wealth and grains; *sphītām* = this

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2. Vasiṣṭha wanted to convince Bharata in the presence of the representative subjects that He should sit on the throne. Notice that dhārmika kings in the Rāmāyaṇa had no desire to sit on the throne by making unilateral decisions. The king is meant to work together with his subjects for their good and for this he has to take them into confidence. Vasiṣṭha, as the royal priest, also wanted the support of the citizens in order to make Bharata the king but Bharata considered that the citizens would be better taken care of by Rāma. The basic principle was that the citizens were children who had to be lovingly taken care of by a dhārmika king, that is, a king who was sufficiently trained, protective, self-disciplined and submissive to genuine brāhmaṇas.

extensive; *pradāya* = after bestowing; *pṛthivīm* = land; *tava* = to You.

Dear child, King Daśaratha has attained Svarga by executing dharma after bestowing this extensive land filled with wealth and grains to You.

King Daśaratha executed dharma by being truthful [to his promises].

#### TEXT 6

रामस्तथा सत्यधृतिः सतां धर्ममनुस्मरन् ।  
नाजहात्पितुरादेशं शशी ज्योत्स्नामिवोदितः ॥

*rāmas tathā satya-dhṛtiḥ satām dharmam anusmaran  
nājahāt pitur ādeśam śāśī jyotsnām ivoditaḥ*

*rāmaḥ* = Rāma; *tathā* = similarly; *satya-dhṛtiḥ* = who is fond of truthfulness; *satām* = of persons obedient to their fathers; *dharmam* = the dharma; *anusmaran* = remembering; *na* = did not; *ajahāt* = abandon; *pitur* = His father's; *ādeśam* = instruction; *śāśī* = moon [does not abandon]; *jyotsnām* = its effulgence; *iva* = like; *uditaḥ* = the rising.

Similarly, remembering the dharma of persons obedient to their fathers, Rāma who is fond of truthfulness did not abandon His father's instruction, like the rising moon [does not abandon] its effulgence.

*Tathā* ("similarly") indicates that Rāma was like His father.<sup>3</sup>

Regarding the dharma of persons obedient to their fathers, [the Smṛti] states:

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3. It should be remembered that this is like the statement *iṣuvad gacchati savitā*: "The sun moves like an arrow."

*jīvato vākya-karaṇāt pratyabdarṁ parvanena ca  
gayāyāṁ piṇḍa-dānena tribhiḥ putrasya putratā*

“A son is a putra [or a deliverer of his father from hell] when he carries out the instructions of his father while [the father is] alive, when he carries out the annual ceremony [of offering annual oblations to his departed father] and when he offers his respectful oblations unto his forefathers at Gayā.”<sup>4</sup>

TEXT 7

पिता भ्रात्रा च ते दत्तं राज्यं निहतकण्टकम् ।  
तद्भुङ्क्ष्व मुदितामात्यः क्षिप्रमेवाभिषेचय ॥

*pitṛā bhrātrā ca te dattam rājyaṁ nihata-kaṇṭakam  
tat bhunṅṣva muditāmātyaḥ kṣipram evābhiṣecaya*

*pitṛā* = by Your father; *bhrātrā* = brother [and so]; *ca* = and; *te* = to You; *dattam* = given; *rājyam* = kingdom; *nihata-kaṇṭakam* = devoid of thorns; *tat* = this; *bhunṅṣva* = enjoy; *mudita-āmātyaḥ* = delighting Your ministers; *kṣipram eva* = quickly; *abhiṣecaya* = coronate [Yourself as the king].

Delighting Your ministers, enjoy this kingdom devoid of thorns given to You by Your father and brother [and so] quickly coronate [Yourself as the king].

TEXT 8

उदीच्याश्च प्रतीच्याश्च दाक्षिणात्याश्च केवलाः ।  
कोट्यापरान्ताः सामुद्रा रत्नान्यभिहरन्तु ते ॥

4. This statement is also found in Vikrama-carita (southern recension) 4.3. Of course, it is implicit that if the instructions of a father are not in line with Vedic dharma, they are to be rejected. A father's instructions that are within the bounds of Vedic dharma are meant to be taken seriously.

*udīcyās ca pratīcyās ca dākṣiṇātyās ca kevalāḥ  
koṭyāparāntāḥ sāmudrā ratnāny abhiharantu te*

*udīcyāḥ ca* = let those living in the north; *pratīcyāḥ ca* = west; *dākṣiṇātyāḥ* = south; *ca* = and east; *kevalāḥ* = the unthroned; *koṭyā* = by the millions; *apara-antāḥ* = yavanas living in the western extremities; *sāmudrāḥ* = and those living in the islands; *ratnāni* = gems; *abhiharantu* = procure; *te* = for You.

Let those living in the north, west, south and east, the unthroned yavanas living in the western extremities, and those living in the islands procure gems for You by the millions.

TEXT 9

तच्छ्रुत्वा भरतो वाक्यं शोकेनाभिपरिप्लुतः ।  
जगाम मनसा रामं धर्मज्ञो धर्मकाङ्क्षया ॥

*tac chrutvā bharato vākyaṃ śokenābhipariplutaḥ  
jagāma manasā rāmaṃ dharmajñō dharma-kāṅkṣayā*

*tat* = these; *śrutvā* = hearing; *bharataḥ* = Bharata; *vākyaṃ* = words; *śokena* = in sorrow; *abhipariplutaḥ* = became overwhelmed; *jagāma manasā* = remembered; *rāmam* = Rāma; *dharmajñāḥ* = that knower of dharma; *dharma-kāṅkṣayā* = desirous of following dharma.

Hearing these words, Bharata became overwhelmed in sorrow. Desirous of following dharma, that knower of dharma remembered Rāma.

Bharata is described as a knower of dharma because He knew the dharma practiced generation after generation in His lineage, the dharma of coronating the eldest son. He desired to carry out this dharma.

## TEXT 10

स बाष्पकलया वाचा कलहंसस्वरो युवा ।  
विललाप सभामध्ये जगर्हे च पुरोहितम् ॥

*sa bāṣpa-kalayā vācā kala-haṁsa-svaro yuvā  
vilalāpa sabhā-madhye jagarhe ca purohitam*

*saḥ* = He; *bāṣpa-kalayā* = and inarticulate because of His tears; *vācā* = voice; *kala-haṁsa-svaraḥ* = melodious like [that of] the royal swan; *yuvā* = with a youthful; *vilalāpa* = lamented; *sabhā-madhye* = in the midst of the assembly; *jagarhe* = criticized; *ca* = and; *purohitam* = the royal priest.

**With a youthful voice melodious like [that of] the royal swan and inarticulate because of His tears, He lamented and criticized the royal priest in the midst of the assembly.**

By thinking of Rāma and the sin [that had been committed], Bharata's voice became inarticulate because of His tears. Sage Vālmīki has glorified Bharata by referring to His voice as being *youthful*. The sage thought, "How wonderful that at a time when Bharata could enjoy Himself, He has a desire to give up the objects of enjoyment!"

*Sabhā-madhye* ("in the midst of the assembly") indicates that Bharata ventured to even break the [general] rule that one should privately instruct [one's guru] who has transgressed the scriptural regulations. He did so because He was overcome by distress [that Vasiṣṭha] had enjoined something extremely cruel and adhārmika. [Therefore] Bharata criticized Vasiṣṭha without distinguishing between what to speak in private and what to speak in public.<sup>5</sup>

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5. This is an indication of what to do when something extremely cruel and adhārmika is publicly presented by worshippable superiors.

He intended to [sarcastically] tell Vasiṣṭha, “You have nicely considered the future welfare of this dynasty! [Do you think that] many people can get together and take away My dependency and service [to Rāma] though I am alone?”

GLOSS. Bharata criticized [His guru] by saying, “How can you, My well-wisher, engage Me in something that will lead Me to a disaster?”

NOTE. The following verse explains the principle behind Bharata’s public criticism of His guru:

*guror apy avaliptasya kāryākāryam ajānataḥ  
utpatham pratipannasya kāryam bhavati śāsanam*

“One should discipline even a guru who has become too proud, not aware of what is to be done and what is not to be done, and who has gone beyond the boundary of Vedic dharma.” (Rāmāyaṇa 2.21.14)

TEXT 11

चरितब्रह्मचर्यस्य विद्यासनात्स्य धीमतः ।  
धर्मे प्रयतमानस्य को राज्यं मद्विधो हरेत् ॥

*carita-brahmacaryasya vidyā-snātasya dhīmataḥ  
dharme prayatamānasya ko rājyaṁ mad-vidho haret*

*carita-brahmacaryasya* = of one who has undergone brahmacarya; *vidyā-snātasya* = and graduated in Vedic studies; *dhīmataḥ* = who has understood the meaning of the Vedas; *dharme prayatamānasya* = and who has endeavored to carry out dharma as understood from the Vedas; *kaḥ* = how can a person subservient to the scriptures; *rājyaṁ* = the kingdom; *mat-vidhaḥ* = like Me; *haret* = usurp.

How can a person subservient to the scriptures like Me usurp the kingdom of one who has undergone brahmacarya and graduated in Vedic studies, who has understood the meaning of the Vedas and who has endeavored to carry out dharma as understood from the Vedas?

“One who has undergone brahmacarya” indicates that [Rāma] had completed His residential training at His guru's home. “Graduated in Vedic studies” indicates that He had undergone the ceremonial bath of graduation after having studied the entire Veda in accordance with the Smṛti: *vedam adhitya snāyāt*.

In the next text, Bharata describes the meaning of “a person [subservient to the scriptures] like Me.”

#### TEXT 12

कथं दशरथाज्जातो भवेद्राज्यापहारकः ।  
राज्यं चाहं च रामस्य धर्मं वक्तुमिहार्हसि ॥

*katham daśarathāj jāto bhaved rājyāpahāraḥ  
rājyaṁ cāham ca rāmasya dharmam vaktum ihārhasi*

*katham* = how can; *daśarathāt* = of Daśaratha; *jātaḥ* = one born; *bhaved rājya-apahāraḥ* = steal this kingdom; *rājyam ca* = the kingdom; *aham* = I; *ca* = and; *rāmasya* = belong to Rāma; *dharmam* = according to dharma; *vaktum* = speak; *iha* = about Me; *arhasi* = You should.

How can one born of Daśaratha steal this kingdom? The kingdom and I belong to Rāma.<sup>6</sup> You should speak about Me according to dharma.

6. It is not that the Vaiṣṇavas have misunderstood the Rāmāyaṇa and conceptually interpolated in their own ideas about Bharata. Bharata is a *devotee* of Rāma in the full sense of the expression. Earlier on also, when Bharata had just met Queen Kaikeyī, He identified Himself as Rāma's servant (see text 2.72.32). In the above verse of the Rāmāyaṇa, “and I” reveals that He does consider Himself to be like the kingdom—belonging to Rāma.

How can one born of Daśaratha, who died as soon as Rāma had departed, steal a kingdom that had been abandoned [by both of them]?

Bharata considered, “Just by analyzing My nature, [one can understand that] I don’t deserve this kingdom.” Therefore He said, “The kingdom and I belong to Rāma.”

These were Bharata’s thoughts, “How can one subservient dependent object possess another subservient dependent object?<sup>7</sup> How can the kingdom possess Me [or I possess the kingdom]? The kingdom is related to Rāma [as His property] and I am also related to Rāma [as His property]. Both the kingdom and I are subservient dependent objects to be used by Rāma [as He wishes for His purposes]. In this world, there are persons who restrain their fathers and other [authorities] and take over the kingdom. Don’t think that I am also like them.”

“You should speak about Me according to dharma” means “You should speak about dharma in consideration of My nature.”

He intended to convey this [to Vasiṣṭha], “You should speak about dharma in terms of the protected and the protector.<sup>8</sup> A subservient dependent object cannot protect another subservient dependent object. Had that been the case, why wouldn’t the kingdom protect Me?”

Vasiṣṭha might object, “[Consider the position of a jewel and its casket.] Both of them are subservient dependent objects and yet

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7. A dependent subservient object (*śeṣa-vastu*) is that which can be used by its owner as he likes for his purposes. For instance, the owner of a chair uses it as he likes.

8. Remember that “protect” in scriptural parlance refers to “provide what is needed and preserve what has been provided.”

one of them protects the other.<sup>9</sup> So You can protect the kingdom like that.”

[But in this verse] Bharata implies, “No. The owner [of the jewel and the casket] uses the casket to protect the jewel using a key and so on. I have not been used by Rāma [to protect this kingdom]. The owner [of the jewel and the casket] sometimes places it in the casket even though he could wear it. Similarly, the kingdom can well be protected by Him personally, despite our endeavors to please Him to the best of our ability. But when He places the kingdom under Me, like the casket, I can, empowered by Him and as His subservient dependent object, protect [the kingdom] till He arrives [here]. Therefore, we should endeavor in every manner to bring Him back. First of all, the idea that the kingdom belongs to Me because of the boons [sought by Queen Kaikeyī] and so on should be given up in the presence of Rāma.”

### TEXT 13

ज्येष्ठः श्रेष्ठश्च धर्मात्मा दिलीपनहुषोपमः ।  
लब्धुमर्हति काकुत्स्थो राज्यं दशरथो यथा ॥

*jyeṣṭhaḥ śreṣṭhaś ca dharmātmā dilīpa-nahuṣopamaḥ*  
*labdhum arhati kākutstho rājyaṁ daśaratho yathā*

*jyeṣṭhaḥ* = He is the eldest; *śreṣṭhaḥ* = the best [among Us, the sons of the king]; *ca* = and; *dharmā-ātmā* = that dhārmika; *dilīpa-nahuṣa-upamaḥ* = who was equal to Dilīpa and Nahuṣa; *labdhum arhati* = should get; *kākutsthaḥ* = descendant of Kakutstha; *rājyaṁ* = the kingdom; *daśarathaḥ* = Daśaratha; *yathā* = like.

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9. The casket protects the jewel from damage and so on.

He is the eldest and the best [among Us, the sons of the king]. That dhārmika descendant of Kakutstha should get the kingdom like Daśaratha who was equal to Dilīpa and Nahuṣa.

The dharma that Vasiṣṭha should have spoken is described here.

Dilīpa and Nahuṣa have been referred to here for they were excellent kings in the lunar and solar dynasties. Other such kings are included herewith [by implication].

TEXT 14

अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यं कुर्या पापमहं यदि ।  
इक्ष्वाकूपामहं लोके भवेयं कुलपांसनः ॥

*anārya-juṣṭam asvargyam kuryām pāpam aham yadi  
ikṣvākūṇām aham loke bhaveyam kula-pānsanaḥ*

*anārya-juṣṭam* = that is carried out [only] by the uncivilized; *asvargyam* = and that does not lead to the heavens; *kuryām* = were to commit; *pāpam* = this sin; *aham* = I; *yadi* = if; *ikṣvākūṇām* = of the Ikṣvākus; *aham* = I; *loke* = in the world; *bhaveyam* = will [certainly] become; *kula-pānsanaḥ* = a disgrace to the dynasty.

If I were to commit this sin that is carried out [only] by the uncivilized and that does not lead to the heavens, I will [certainly] become a disgrace to the dynasty of the Ikṣvākus in the world.

TEXT 15

यद्धि माता कृतं पापं नाहं तदपि रोचये ।  
इहस्थो वनदुर्गस्थं नमस्यामि कृताञ्जलिः ॥

*yad dhi mātrā kṛtam pāpam nāham tad api rochaye  
ihastho vana-durgastham namasyāmi kṛtāñjaliḥ*

*yat hi mātṛā* = by My mother; *kṛtam* = committed; *pāpam* = the sin; *na aham tat api rocaye* = I abhor; *ihasthaḥ* = I who reside here; *vana-durgastham* = to Rāma residing in the difficult forest; *namasyāmi* = offer My respectful obeisances; *kṛta-añjaliḥ* = with My palms joined in supplication.

**I abhor the sin committed by My mother. With My palms joined in supplication, I who reside here offer My respectful obeisances to Rāma residing in the difficult forest.**

Here Bharata atones for having spoken or listened [to His mother].

TEXT 16

राममेवानुगच्छामि राजा स द्विपदां वरः ।  
त्रयाणामपि लोकानां राज्यमर्हति राघवः ॥

*rāmam evānugacchāmi rājā sa dvipadām varaḥ*  
*trayāṇām api lokānām rājyam arhati rāghavaḥ*

*rāmam* = to Rāma; *eva* = only; *anugacchāmi* = I will become subservient; *rājā* = the king; *saḥ* = that; *dvipadām varaḥ* = prince [should become]; *trayāṇām* = over the three; *api* = even; *lokānām* = worlds; *rājyam* = rule; *arhati* = can; *rāghavaḥ* = that descendant of Raghu.

**I will only become subservient to Rāma. That Prince [should become] the king. That descendant of Raghu can even rule over the three worlds!<sup>10</sup>**

NOTE. Śrī Bharata teaches the whole world through this verse that we should voluntarily submit ourselves to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

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10. What to speak of this earthly kingdom?

Such subservience to the Supreme Lord will only benefit us as Prabhupāda explains:

The world revolves because every living being thinks that he is the lord and creator of the material world. Material consciousness has two psychic divisions. One is that I am the creator, and the other is that I am the enjoyer. But actually the Supreme Lord is both the creator and the enjoyer, and the living entity, being part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, is neither the creator nor the enjoyer, but a cooperator. He is the created and the enjoyed. For instance, a part of a machine cooperates with the whole machine; a part of the body cooperates with the whole body. The hands, legs, eyes, and so on are all parts of the body, but they are not actually the enjoyers. The stomach is the enjoyer. The legs move, the hands supply food, the teeth chew, and all parts of the body are engaged in satisfying the stomach because the stomach is the principal factor that nourishes the body's organization. Therefore everything is given to the stomach. One nourishes the tree by watering its root, and one nourishes the body by feeding the stomach, for if the body is to be kept in a healthy state, then the parts of the body must cooperate to feed the stomach. Similarly, the Supreme Lord is the enjoyer and the creator, and we, as subordinate living beings, are meant to cooperate to satisfy Him. This cooperation will actually help us, just as food taken by the stomach will help all other parts of the body. If the fingers of the hand think that they should take the food themselves instead of giving it to the stomach, then they will be frustrated. The central figure of creation and of enjoyment is the Supreme Lord, and the living entities

are cooperators. By cooperation they enjoy. (*Introduction to Gītopaniṣad*)

## TEXT 17

तद्वाक्यं धर्मसंयुक्तं श्रुत्वा सर्वे सभासदः ।  
हर्षान्मुमुचुरश्रूणि रामे निहितचेतसः ॥

*tad vākyam dharmasamyuktam śrutvā sarve sabhā-sadaḥ  
harṣān mumucur aśrūṇi rāme nihita-cetasaḥ*

*tat* = those; *vākyam* = words; *dharmasamyuktam* = in accordance with dharma; *śrutvā* = upon hearing; *sarve* = all; *sabhā-sadaḥ* = of the members of the assembly; *harṣāt* = of joy; *mumucuḥ* = shed; *aśrūṇi* = tears; *rāme* = to Rāma; *nihita-cetasaḥ* = [for] their minds were dedicated.

All of the members of the assembly shed tears of joy upon hearing those words in accordance with dharma [for] their minds were dedicated to Rāma.

This verse is spoken by the sage Vālmīki as an interjection.

## TEXT 18

यदि त्वार्यं न शक्यामि विनिवर्तयितुं वनात् ।  
वने तत्रैव वत्स्यामि यथार्यो लक्ष्मणस्तथा ॥

*yadi tv āryam na śakṣyāmi vinivartayitum vanāt  
vane tatraiva vatsyāmi yathāryo lakṣmaṇas tathā*

*yadi* = if; *tu* = and; *āryam* = the noble Rāma; *na śakṣyāmi* = I cannot; *vinivartayitum* = bring back; *vanāt* = from the forest; *vane* = in forest; *tatra eva* = that very; *vatsyāmi* = I will reside; *yathā* = like; *āryaḥ* = the noble; *lakṣmaṇaḥ tathā* = Lakṣmaṇa.

And if I cannot bring the noble Rāma back from the forest,  
I will reside in that very forest like the noble Lakṣmaṇa.

The word *ārya* (“noble”) has been used here to refer to Lakṣmaṇa who is junior to Bharata [in accordance with the sequence of Their mothers’ eating the pāyasa sweet rice] because Lakṣmaṇa was absorbed in the dharma of following His elder brother Rāma.<sup>11</sup> “Like the noble Lakṣmaṇa” means “with [noble] Lakṣmaṇa.”<sup>12</sup>

TEXT 19

सर्वोपायं तु वर्तिष्ये विनिवर्तयितुं बलात् ।  
समक्षमार्यमिश्राणां साधूनां गुणवर्तिनाम् ॥

*sarvopāyaṃ tu vartīṣye vinivartayitum balāt*  
*samakṣam ārya-miśrāṇāṃ sādḥūnāṃ guṇavartinām*

*sarva-upāyam tu* = everything possible; *vartīṣye* = I will do; *vinivartayitum* = bring Him back; *balāt* = to forcibly; *samakṣam* = in the presence; *ārya-miśrāṇāṃ* = of the assembled [1]; *sādḥūnām* = saintly persons; *guṇavartinām* = on the path of auspiciousness.

I will do everything possible to forcibly bring Him back in the presence of the assembled saintly persons on the path of auspiciousness.

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11. *Ārya* (“noble”) is used to refer to a senior. We have already come across several instances of Bharata using this expression to refer to Rāmacandra who was both senior and elder to Bharata. While Lakṣmaṇa was junior to Bharata in terms of Their mothers’ eating of the divine pāyasa as noted in the commentary to text 1.16.30, Bharata’s usage of the expression *ārya* also indicates that Lakṣmaṇa is elder to Bharata by *birth*. Therefore, in Chapter 67 of this Canto, the ministers referred to Lakṣmaṇa immediately after referring to Rāmacandra while discussing about who could be enthroned as the king after Daśaratha’s departure. There will be a similar allusion to this fact at the end of Canto 6.

12. “I will reside with Rāma just as Lakṣmaṇa resides with Rāma.”

He implies, “All of you should come [with Me to convince Rāmacandra].”

## TEXT 20

विष्टिकर्मान्तिकाः सर्वे मार्गशोधकरक्षकाः ।  
प्रस्थापिता मया पूर्वं यात्रापि मम रोचते ॥

*viṣṭi-karmāntikāḥ sarve mārga-śodhaka-rakṣakāḥ*  
*prasthāpitā mayā pūrvam yātrāpi mama rocate*

*viṣṭi-karmāntikāḥ* = unsalaried country workers and salaried workers; *sarve* = all; *mārga-śodhaka-rakṣakāḥ* = to guard those who clear the route; *prasthāpitāḥ* = have dispatched; *mayā* = I; *pūrvam* = already; *yātrā api* = to embark on this journey [immediately]; *mama* = and I am; *rocate* = eager.

**I have already dispatched all unsalaried country workers and salaried workers to guard those who clear the route, and I am eager to embark on this journey [immediately].<sup>13</sup>**

Therefore it can be inferred that Vasiṣṭha proposed the coronation [of Bharata] without knowing that Bharata had ordered that campsites [on the route to the forest to meet Rāma] be set up.

GLOSS. *Viṣṭi* indicates that unsalaried workers who were only given food supplies [had been dispatched].

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13. Why did Bharata arrange for having the route cleared? So that His army and the residents of Ayodhyā can accompany Him to meet Rāma. And why was this difficult work needed? Why couldn't He alone go in a single chariot, just as Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā-devī had gone? To convince Śrī Rāmacandra that He was not alone in His decision that Rāma should rule the kingdom and that *the entire kingdom* wanted Him to rule the kingdom. Bharata thought that Lord Rāma is most affectionate to His great devotees and there was a good chance that He might listen to them, if not to Bharata. This will become clear in the upcoming chapters.

## TEXT 21

एवमुक्त्वा तु धर्मात्मा भरतो भ्रातृवत्सलः ।  
समीपस्थमुवाचेदं सुमन्त्रं मन्त्रकोविदम् ॥

*evam uktvā tu dharmātmā bharato bhrāṭṛ-vatsalaḥ  
samīpastham uvācedaṁ sumantraṁ mantra-kovidam*

*evam* = this; *uktvā tu* = having said; *dharmā-ātmā* = whose mind was dhārmika; *bharataḥ* = Bharata; *bhrāṭṛ-vatsalaḥ* = and who was affectionate to His brother Rāma; *samīpastham* = seated next to Him; *uvāca* = spoke; *idam* = the following words; *sumantram* = Sumantra; *mantra-kovidam* = to the expert minister.

Having said this, Bharata whose mind was dhārmika and who was affectionate to His brother Rāma spoke the following words to the expert minister Sumantra seated next to Him.

## TEXT 22

तूर्णमुत्थाय गच्छ त्वं सुमन्त्र मम शासनात् ।  
यात्रामाज्ञापय क्षिप्रं बलं चैव समानय ॥

*tūrṇam utthāya gaccha tvam sumantra mama śāsanāt  
yātrām ājñāpaya kṣipram balaṁ caiva samānaya*

*tūrṇam* = quickly; *utthāya* = get up; *gaccha tvam* = go; *sumantra* = Sumantra; *mama śāsanāt* = on My order; *yātrām* = for the journey; *ājñāpaya* = and arrange; *kṣipram* = quickly; *balam* = the army; *ca eva* = and; *samānaya* = summon.

Sumantra, on My order quickly get up, go and arrange for the journey. And quickly summon the army.

## TEXT 23

एवमुक्तः सुमन्त्रस्तु भरतेन महात्मना ।  
हृष्टस्तदादिशत्सर्वं यथासंदिष्टमिष्टवत् ॥

*evam uktaḥ sumantras tu bharatena mahātmanā  
hr̥ṣṭas tadādiśat sarvaṁ yathā-sandiṣṭam iṣṭavat*

*evam* = this; *uktaḥ* = said; *sumantraḥ tu* = Sumantra; *bharatena* = Bharata; *mahā-ātmanā* = the great soul; *hr̥ṣṭaḥ* = happily; *tadā* = when; *ādiśat* = ordered; *sarvaṁ* = everyone; *yathā-sandiṣṭam* = as instructed; *iṣṭavat* = and desired [by Bharata].

When the great soul Bharata said this, Sumantra happily ordered everyone as instructed and desired [by Bharata].

## TEXT 24

ताः प्रहृष्टाः प्रकृतयो बलाध्यक्षा बलस्य च ।  
श्रुत्वा यात्रां समाज्ञप्तां राघवस्य निवर्तने ॥

*tāḥ prahr̥ṣṭāḥ prakṛtayō balādyakṣā balasya ca  
śrutvā yātrām samājñaptām rāghavasya nivartane*

*tāḥ* = the; *prahr̥ṣṭāḥ* = became delighted; *prakṛtayaḥ* = subjects; *bala-adhyakṣāḥ* = the military commanders; *balasya* = by the army; *ca* = and; *śrutvā* = upon learning; *yātrām* = that a journey; *samājñaptām* = had been ordered to be undertaken; *rāghavasya* = Rāma; *nivartane* = to bring back.

Upon learning that a journey had been ordered to be undertaken by the army to bring back Rāma, the subjects and the military commanders became delighted.

## TEXT 25

ततो योधाङ्गनाः सर्वा भर्तृन्सर्वान्गृहेगृहे ।  
यात्रागमनमाज्ञाय त्वरयन्ति स्म हर्षिताः ॥

*tato yodhāṅganāḥ sarvā bhartṛṅ sarvān gr̥he gr̥he  
yātrā-gamanam ājñāya tvarayanti sma harṣitāḥ*

*tataḥ yodha-aṅganāḥ* = of the wives of the warriors; *sarvāḥ* = all; *bhartṛṅ sarvān* = all of them; *gr̥he gr̥he* = in every home; *yātrā-gamanam* = that a journey will proceed; *ājñāya* = upon learning; *tvarayanti sma* = hurried up; *harṣitāḥ* = delighted.

Upon learning that a journey will proceed, all of the delighted wives of the warriors in every home hurried all of them up.

GLOSS. *Yātrā-gamanam* indicates that they understood that a journey to bring Rāma back to the city was to take place. The journey took place because Rāma had departed. The purpose of the journey was to celebrate the worship of Śrī Rāma.<sup>14</sup> The wives of the warriors were in joy that they would bring Rāma [back].

## TEXT 26

ते हयैर्गोरथैः शीघ्रैः स्यन्दनैश्च महाजवैः ।  
सह योधैर्बलाध्यक्षा बलं सर्वमचोदयन् ॥

*te hayair go-rathaiḥ śīghraiḥ syandanaiś ca mahā-javaiḥ  
saha yodhair balādhyakṣā balaṁ sarvam acodayan*

*te* = the; *hayaiḥ* = horses; *go-rathaiḥ* = bullock carts; *śīghraiḥ* = swift; *syandanaiḥ* = chariots; *ca* = and; *mahā-javaiḥ* = high-speed; *saha* = with; *yodhaiḥ* = warriors [to march]; *bala-adhyakṣāḥ* = military commanders; *balam sarvam* = the entire army; *acodayan* = ordered.

14. "Yātrā tu yāpanopāye gatau devārcanotsave" iti viśvaḥ.

The military commanders ordered the entire army with horses, swift bullock carts, high-speed chariots and warriors [to march].

GLOSS. [The glossator reads *saha yoṣid-balādhyakṣāḥ* instead of *saha yodhair balādhyakṣāḥ* indicating that] the military commanders were accompanied by their wives.<sup>15</sup>

TEXT 27

सज्जं तु तद्बलं दृष्ट्वा भरतो गुरुसंनिधौ ।  
रथं मे त्वरयस्वेति सुमन्त्रं पार्श्वतोऽब्रवीत् ॥

*sajjam tu tad balam drṣṭvā bharato guru-sannidhau  
ratham me tvarayasveti sumantram pārśvato 'bravīt*

*sajjam tu* = ready; *tad balam* = the army; *drṣṭvā* = noticing; *bharataḥ* = Bharata; *guru-sannidhau* = in the presence of His guru Vasiṣṭha; *ratham* = chariot; *me* = My; *tvarayasva iti* = quickly get ready; *sumantram* = Sumantra; *pārśvataḥ* = standing next to Him; *abravīt* = told.

Noticing the army ready, in the presence of His guru Vasiṣṭha, Bharata told Sumantra standing next to Him, “Quickly get My chariot ready!”

Bharata spoke in the presence of His guru Vasiṣṭha by way of receiving His approval.<sup>16</sup>

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15. Rāmāyaṇa-bhāva-dīpa: *yoṣidbhiḥ saha vartanta iti tathā te ca te balādhyakṣāś ca.*

16. This is an instance of respectful civilized behavior on the part of Bharata despite Vasiṣṭha having irritated Him earlier in this chapter, for which Bharata chastised and corrected him. The lesson to learn: dhārmika inferiors must learn to forgive and forget the blunders of their dhārmika superiors *if* those superiors factually give up those blunders; under such circumstances, the inferiors should *continue* to deal with them respectfully. All of this requires basic control of one's own body and mind, failing which there is no question of even attaining the benefits of karma, what to speak of the benefits of jñāna or bhakti.

## TEXT 28

भरतस्य तु तस्याज्ञां प्रतिगृह्य च हर्षितः ।  
रथं गृहीत्वा प्रययौ युक्तं परमवाजिभिः ॥

*bharatasya tu tasyājñāṃ pratigrhya ca harṣitaḥ  
ratham grhītvā prayayau yuktam parama-vājibhiḥ*

*bharatasya tu tasya* = of Bharata; *ājñām* = the order; *pratigrhya* = accepting; *ca* = and; *harṣitaḥ* = Sumantra joyfully; *ratham* = a chariot; *grhītvā* = got; *prayayau* = brought [it]; *yuktam* = yoked; *parama-vājibhiḥ* = with first-class horses.

Accepting the order of Bharata, Sumantra joyfully got a chariot yoked with first-class horses and brought [it].

The following summarizes what has been described [so far].

## TEXT 29

स राघवः सत्यधृतिः प्रतापवान्ब्रुवन्सुयुक्तं दृढसत्यविक्रमः ।  
गुरुं महारण्यगतं यशस्विनं प्रसादयिष्यन्भरतोऽब्रवीत्तदा ॥

*sa rāghavaḥ satya-dhṛtiḥ pratāpavān  
bruvan suyuktam dṛḍha-satya-vikramaḥ  
gurum mahāraṇya-gatam yaśasvinam  
prasādayiṣyan bharato ’bravīt tadā*

*saḥ* = that; *rāghavaḥ* = descendant of Raghu's; *satya-dhṛtiḥ* = sobriety was infallible; *pratāpavān* = and He was powerful; *bruvan* = speaking; *suyuktam* = very reasonably; *dṛḍha-satya-vikramaḥ* = He was firmly in possession of true valor; *gurum* = His spiritual master Rāma; *mahā-araṇya-gatam* = who had gone to the great forest; *yaśasvinam* = illustrious; *prasādayiṣyan* = to please; *bharataḥ* = Bharata; *abravīt* = spoke [the following]; *tadā* = then.

That powerful descendant of Raghu was filled with infallible sobriety. Speaking very reasonably to please His illustrious spiritual master Rāma who had gone to the great forest, Bharata, firmly in possession of true valor, then spoke [the following].

## TEXT 30

तूर्णं समुत्थाय सुमन्त्र गच्छ बलस्य योगाय बलप्रधानान् ।  
आनेतुमिच्छामि हि तं वनस्थं प्रसाद्य रामं जगतो हिताय ॥

*tūrṇam samutthāya sumantra gaccha  
balasya yogāya bala-pradhānān  
ānetum icchāmi hi taṁ vanastham  
prasādya rāmaṁ jagato hitāya*

*tūrṇam* = quickly; *samutthāya* = get up; *sumantra* = Sumantra; *gaccha* = and meet; *balasya* = the army; *yogāya* = to consolidate [2]; *bala-pradhānān* = the military chiefs; *ānetum* = and bring; *icchāmi hi* = I wish; *taṁ vanastham* = who [now] lives in the forest; *prasādya* = to please; *rāmaṁ* = Rāma; *jagataḥ* = of [the whole] world; *hitāya* = for the welfare.

Sumantra, get up quickly and meet the military chiefs to consolidate the army. I wish to please and bring Rāma who [now] lives in the forest for the welfare of [the whole] world.

## TEXT 31

स सूतपुत्रो भरतेन सम्यगाज्ञापितः संपरिपूर्णकामः ।  
शशास सर्वान्प्रकृतिप्रधानान्बलस्य मुख्यांश्च सुहृज्जनं च ॥

*sa sūta-putro bharatena samyag-  
ājñāpitaḥ samparipūrṇa-kāmaḥ  
śaśāsa sarvān prakṛti-pradhānān  
balasya mukhyāṁś ca suhrj-janaṁ ca*

*sah sūta-putraḥ* = the son of a sūta; *bharatena* = by Bharata; *samyak-ājñāpitaḥ* = was [thus] clearly ordered; *samparipūrṇa-kāmaḥ* = his desires were fully satisfied; *śaśāsa* = he called for; *sarvān* = all; *prakṛti-pradhānān* = the chief subjects; *balasya* = of the army; *mukhyān* = the leaders; *ca* = and; *suhṛj-janam* = well-wishers; *ca* = and.

When the son of a sūta was [thus] clearly ordered by Bharata, his desires were fully satisfied and he called for all the chief subjects, leaders of the army and well-wishers.

## TEXT 32

ततः समुत्थाय कुले कुले ते राजन्यवैश्या वृषलाश्च विप्राः ।  
अयूयुजन्नुष्ट्रथान्खरांश्च नागान्हायांश्चैव कुलप्रसूतान् ॥

*tataḥ samutthāya kule kule te*  
*rājanya-vaiśyā vṛṣalāś ca viprāḥ*  
*ayūyujann uṣṭra-rathān kharāṁś ca*  
*nāgān hayāṁś caiva kula-prasūtān*

*tataḥ* = then; *samutthāya* = got ready; *kule kule* = in their homes [3]; *te rājanya-vaiśyāḥ* = kṣatriyas, vaiśyas; *vṛṣalāḥ* = śūdras; *ca* = and; *viprāḥ* = brāhmaṇas; *ayūyujan* = and got ready; *uṣṭra-rathān* = their camels, carts; *kharān ca* = donkeys; *nāgān* = elephants; *hayān* = horses; *ca eva* = and; *kula-prasūtān* = of good breed.

Kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and brāhmaṇas then got ready and got their camels, carts, donkeys, elephants and horses of good breed ready in their homes.

## QUOTATIONS

[1] *ārya-miśrāḥ pāriṣadāḥ sadasyāḥ sāmavāyikāḥ* (Sajjana).

[2] *yogaḥ sannahanopāya-dhyāna-saṅgati-yuktiṣu* (Amara).

[3] *kulaṁ jana-pade grhe* (Amara).

