

monkeys unconscious. At that time Vibhīṣaṇa was away to arrange for food.

When Vibhīṣaṇa returned with food he was taken aback to find Lakṣmaṇa and others lying in an unconscious condition. Rāma was informed about the matter and when he came to the battle-ground and saw Lakṣmaṇa, Sugrīva, Hanūmān and all the others lying there unconscious he lost self-confidence for a short while and remarked that it was all the result of his having put faith in Vibhīṣaṇa, Rāvaṇa's brother whom he had put in charge of the battlefield. This comment of Rāma pained Vibhīṣaṇa much; but Śrī Rāma soon treated him kindly.

Even the Devas who witnessed the scene were alarmed. But Rāma sat there for sometime immersed in meditation and then a light emerged from his right eye, shot towards the north and disappeared in the horizon. At once Garuḍa appeared on the scene from the west and removed with his beak the nāgāstra from Lakṣmaṇa's body. Lakṣmaṇa jumped up from his unconscious state; Sugrīva and others also regained consciousness. In the fighting that followed all the Rākṣasa leaders were killed. It was Hanūmān, who killed Kumbhakarna. At the time of his death Kumbhakarna made a last request to Rāma, i.e. his head should be cut off and thrown into the sea as otherwise the Rākṣasas would laugh at him to see the head from which the ears have been bitten off by monkeys. Accordingly Rāma got Hanūmān to throw Kumbhakarna's head into the sea.

Then Śrī Rāma told Lakṣmaṇa thus: Today I shall fight Indrajit. The war shall not continue yet further. Today Indrajit and tomorrow Rāvaṇa should be killed and the next day we will return to Ayodhyā. Lakṣmaṇa answered:—"I shall fight Indrajit. I have told Vibhīṣaṇa that I will kill Indrajit within three days."

With Śrī Rāma's blessings Lakṣmaṇa began fighting again. Indrajit shot Nārāyaṇāstra which attracted by the 'seven-letter-Mantra' (Namo Nārāyaṇāya) of Lakṣmaṇa circled him thrice and entered his quiver. The Rākṣasa minister called Mahodara converted his elephant into Airāvata and himself changed into Devendra and encountered Lakṣmaṇa. Saying that he had no quarrel with Indra and would not fight him Lakṣmaṇa put down his bow, and Indrajit, exploiting the situation shot Brahmāstra against Lakṣmaṇa under cover of the clouds. Lakṣmaṇa, Sugrīva and others fainted. Then Śrī Rāma was in the army-camp, worshipping weapons to render them more powerful. Rāma returned to the battle-ground to find Lakṣmaṇa and others in life-less condition and crying like a mere ignorant fellow he lay by the side of Lakṣmaṇa. Vibhīṣaṇa, who returned with food prayed for the grace of Devas. Indra appeared, gave to Vibhīṣaṇa Gaṅgā water in a golden vessel and asked it to be given to Hanūmān and Jāmbavān, who, though unconscious were not dead.

Vibhīṣaṇa did so and both Hanūmān and Jāmbavān regained consciousness. Jāmbavān told Hanūmān that if mṛtasañjivini (herbal medicine which will put life back into the dead) were brought from the distant Himālayas before dawn the next day all the dead ones like Lakṣmaṇa and Sugrīva could be brought back to life. (See under Mṛtasañjivini). Accordingly Hanūmān started for the Himālayas. Meanwhile Indrajit had

told Rāvaṇa about his victory, and as suggested by the latter Rākṣasa women took Sītā to the battlefield in the Puṣpaka Vimāna, showed her Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and others lying there in a life-less condition and told her that all of them were dead. Sītā wept aloud, but Trijaṭā consoled her by saying that the Puṣpaka Vimāna would not carry widows and therefore Rāma was not dead.

Hanūmān returned before dawn the next day. As he could not distinguish mṛtasañjivini he had brought with him a mountain peak where the four medicinal plants, Śalyaharaṇi, Viśalyakaraṇi, Sandhānakaraṇi and Mṛtasañjivini grew. Jāmbavān distinguished mṛtasañjivini from the others and carried the four herbs into the battlefield. Contact with the air, which carried the smell of mṛtasañjivini brought the dead back to life. Viśalyakaraṇi removed all the arrows from their bodies and Sandhānakaraṇi healed the wounds.

Lakṣmaṇa again went out to fight Indrajit. Reluctant to fight with the former, Indrajit resorted to a new magical trick. He created an artificial or illusory Sītā and with her seated in a chariot he rose up in the sky and said as follows: "Rāvaṇa has abandoned Sītā who brings about humiliation to the Rākṣasas and ruin to Laṅkā. So, I cut her to pieces." So saying he cut into two, by one stroke of his sword, Sītā, who cried Oh! my lord! oh! brother." Blood fell on the battlefield and Indrajit disappeared. Though Rāma and others were alarmed by all these, Vibhīṣaṇa explained that it was all the magic of the Rākṣasas, and in the fierce fighting that followed Lakṣmaṇa killed Indrajit. By now all the important and prominent Rākṣasas were killed. At last Rāvaṇa himself entered the battlefield. His first encounter was with Lakṣmaṇa. Then the fighting turned into one between Rāma and Rāvaṇa. The former broke the bow of Rāvaṇa and did not want to fight with the weaponless Rākṣasa King. Next day Rāvaṇa brought Pātāla Rāvaṇa and Kumbhodara to Laṅkā. Both of them entered Rāma's camp during night, but Pātāla Rāvaṇa, who realised that nothing could be achieved there returned to Pātāla with Kumbhodara. He built a tunnel from Pātāla upwards to earth, where in the fort created by Hanūmān's tail twisted in a circle lay Śrī Rāma and others. The tunnel opened into this 'fort', and Pātāla Rāvaṇa and his brother made Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa unconscious by making them inhale sammohana medicine and carried them off into Pātāla. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were laid in the court-yard of a Kālī temple to be sacrificed to Mahākālī the very same night. Arrangements for the sacrifice were completed.

Hanūmān had been frequently looking inside the fort. As soon as the absence of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa was noticed, Sugrīva and others, under the leadership of Vibhīṣaṇa reached the Kālī temple through the tunnel. In the fighting that followed Hanūmān killed Pātāla Rāvaṇa and Aṅgada killed Mahodara. The only son of Pātāla Rāvaṇa, Sumālī, was crowned King of Pātāla. Rāvaṇa entered the field again against Rāma. Rāma shot the Mahendra arrow against Rāvaṇa. The arrow, which represented in itself the effulgence of Mahendra, the hardness of diamonds, the intensity of fire and Viṣṇu's glow cut off the ten heads of Rāvaṇa. His physical body fell on earth and his spirit ascended to heaven.