

# *The Spiritual Scientist*

An ezine for those who think!

## *Why Did Lord Ram Banish Sita ?*



**Question:** In the *Ramayana*, when Sita was wrongly accused by a washerman, why did Lord Rama banish Her?

**Answer:** Firstly, Lord Rama never banished mother Sita. Banishment implied being evicted out of the kingdom into the forest without any arrangements for food, clothing or shelter. That was what happened to

Lord Rama when He was banished by His step-mother, Kaikeyi. But Lord Rama asked Lakshmana to escort Sita to the hermitage of the sage Valmiki, where the venerable sage received Her with a respectful *aarti* (worship) and the elderly lady-hermits lovingly cared for Her. As the hermitage was in the kingdom of Lord Rama and under His protection, it's entirely incorrect to say that the Lord banished Sita, for the Lord indirectly arranged for Her food, clothing, shelter and care.



Now we may ask: why did the Lord sent Sita out of His own palace into the hermitage?

To understand the answer, we need to appreciate the values held sacred by the Vedic culture that the *Ramayana* demonstrates. The Vedic culture considers all relationships and all positions as opportunities for sacred service, service to God and to all his children. When Lord Rama heard the accusations being leveled against His consort, this situation constituted an ethical crisis. In an ethical crisis, one has two choices, both moral, unlike in a moral crisis, when one has two choices, one moral and the other, immoral. To resolve an ethical crisis, one needs



profound wisdom to recognize the higher moral principle and adjust the lower moral principle accordingly. So, through this incident, Lord Rama, who was God incarnate playing the role of an ideal human being, taught us how to wisely resolve ethical crises. As an ideal husband, the Lord was duty-bound to protect His wife. But as the ideal king, He was also duty-bound to exemplify and teach His citizens, whom He loved like His own children, the path to spiritual advancement. Ordinarily, people are very attached materially to spouse, children, house, and wealth. So, the king is duty-bound to demonstrate to his citizens the principle of detachment so that they become inspired toward detachment and thus make spiritual advancement. That's why Lord Rama considered His duty as an ideal king more important than as the ideal husband and so sacrificed His love for His wife for the sake of His love for His children (citizens). But He didn't abandon His duty as a husband; He thoughtfully did that duty by transferring Sita from His direct care in the palace to His indirect care in the hermitage. Mother Sita, understanding the heart of Her Lord, gracefully accepted Her part in His sacrifice. Unfortunately, all of us, for whose sake He did this glorious sacrifice, fail to appreciate Him.

