Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

Married to frog queen

Ravana is a character from our mythic past whom we have not quite cared to fully understand. If you look at his life, you will find he was a wonderful person by himself. It is just that out of his own foolishness and egoistic nature, Ravana was unable to benefit from his great accomplishments.

Ravana was a devotee of Shiva and he worshipped Shiva from down South where his kingdom was. Then after some time he thought, “Why don’t I bring Kailash closer to my home.” So he walked all the way from Sri Lanka to Kailash and started lifting Mount Kailash. This made Parvati very angry and she told Shiva, “It does not matter how dear he is to you, you cannot allow Ravana to take Kailash to the South. That is not possible.” Shiva also got angry with Ravana’s egoistic nature and so he pressed the mountain down trapping Ravana’s hands beneath Kailash. Ravana struggled in pain but Shiva refused to release him.

Then Ravana with his hand stuck beneath Kailash, started pouring out his love for Shiva in various beautiful hymns. After he had formed 1,001 hymns of utter love and surrender, Shiva released him and said, “You can have a boon. Ask me what you want.” Once again Ravana’s asura nature manifested itself and he said, “I want to marry Parvati.” Shiva said “Ok. She is at Mansarover Lake. You can go and marry her.”

All the ganas who were around Shiva got excited and wondered, “How can it be? How can Ravana ever touch Parvati? This is not possible.” They all ran to Parvati at Mansarover Lake and told her, “Ravana is coming. Shiva has given him permission to marry you.” Then Parvati called Manduka, the queen of the frogs, and converted this frog into a beautiful woman. Ravana had never set eyes on Parvati and when he came and saw the woman Manduka. Instantly, he was attracted to her and he took her and married her. That woman was Mandodari.

Mandodari was a graceful woman, but Ravana came back to Kailash again. This time, he came to the southern face of Kailash and started singing extempore. Ravana was climbing up the southern face because the southern face is rich with occult sciences. He wanted to acquire occult powers. He started beating his drum and climbing the mountain. Shiva was so enthralled by his music and poetry that he did not notice Ravana coming up. Parvati saw the man coming up and she told Shiva, “This man is coming up!” So Shiva said, “Oh, is he up?” And he just kicked Ravana, who went sliding down the mountain. As he slid down, his drum left a furrow in the middle of the southern face of Kailash.