

MANDODARI: VEERANGANA OF IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

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Abstract

Ramayana and Mahabharata are two great epics of India. As both these texts touch on the ideal values of Indian culture and consciousness, even after thousands of years, the masses of India are truly inspired from them. Along with Lord Shree Rama as the lead character of Ramayana, Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman, King Dasharatha and other crucial characters also draw our attention. OR not only Lord shree Rama, but Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman, King Dasharatha and many other important characters draw our attention in the famous epic. For instance, through the characters of Ravana's wife Mandodari. Valmiki has tried to explain us the importance of Dharma and Adharma. Even in the other epic, the Mahabharata, the war happens between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, depicting Adharma and Dharma respectively. In the end, Pandavas win, which is eventually the triumph of Dharma. Similarly, even in the Ramayana, the victory of Rama to Ravana describes the same. Where there is Dharma there is Rama or God. This was Mandodari's exposition to Ravana that Lord Rama is the supreme being, the Dharma.

INTRODUCTION

अहिल्या द्रौपदी सीता तारा मंदोदरी तथा ।

पञ्चकं ना स्मरेन्नित्यं महापातकनाशनम् ॥¹

Meaning: Ahilya, wife of Gautam Rishi, Draupadi, wife of Pandavas, Sita, wife of Lord Ramachandra, Taramati, wife of King Harishchandra and Mandodari, wife of Ravana, those who remember these five mahasatis, their Mahapatakas are destroyed.

Panchkanyas have great importance in Hinduism, which is also called Panchasati. These five symbolize to respecting women. These five women had to face a lot of difficulties in their lives. They all had a relationship with more than one man, due to which questions were also raised on their Pativrata Dharma. Still they were always considered as a symbol of pure and holy religion. Due to various boons, the virginity of these five was never broken. Hence, they are known as Panchkanya. It has been said about them - Kanya means virgin. These satis were married, but why were they called Kanya? A women issue of the Kalyan magazine, explained the meaning of girl: explaining that the body is inert. Karma is also inert. The body does not capture any karma and no karma captures anyone. Doer -ship itself accumulates karma-samskaras. These five women were stable in self-esteem, that's why they neither care about karma nor the value of action.

WOMEN OF BRAVERY

In Valmiki's Ramayana, Mandodari appears in the tenth canto of Sundarkanda. Hanumanji goes to Ravana's antah:pur to find Sitaji, where he finds that Mandodari is sleeping. In order to understand Mandodari, we need to understand her character, and not see her as Ravana's wife only.

Satitva itself is a great instrument through which all achievements are attained. By virtue of her satitva, Mandodari came to know that the supreme man had already incarnated in Ayodhya. Hence, she explains to Ravana that Sri Ram is not a normal being, but the Supreme, the real God. Vaidehi is the yogamaya of the real world and it is not right to take a revenge on them. Ravana responds by saying that Mandodari holds a small stature as she is the daughter of the Maya danav.

Although Mandodari feels insulted, she stands firm like an Aryanari and introduces her personality to Ravana saying, 'Rakshasaraj...! You can't ignore me like this. My mother Hema was Indra's nymph, my father has envisioned great royal assemblies around the world. When the kingdom of the world comes Rakshasaraja's

home, Mandodari is able to save it. But, Maharaj, I am warning you only because the kingdom of the world is going away.'

MANDODARI BIRTH

Mandodari was the daughter of Mayasura, son of Maharishi Kashyap, and Hema, a nymph. She was brought up under the aegis of her father without the shadow of her mother. She inherited the divine rites and beauty of his mother's womb. Some stories describe how a nymph named Madhura was cursed to become a frog and imprisoned in a well for 12 years, after which she regains her beauty, or frog, which blesses a beautiful bride.

MANDODARI AND RAVAN'S RELATIONSHIP

When Mandodari was fifteen, she got married to the demon king Ravana. Ravana had married many devas, gandharvas and naga girls. However, Mandodari was always dear to Ravana.

At the beginning of their married life, Mandodari was proud of the heroic, Mahabahu, Digvijayi husband Ravana. She was the mother of sons like Meghnath, Akshayakumar and Atikya. However, as a wife, Mandodari made many efforts to protect her fortune. As recorded in the Paumachariyan Ramakatha, Mandodari requests all the citizens of Lanka to observe the vow of non-violence for eight days for the victory of Ravana.

Despite staying with Rakshasaraj Ravana, Mandodari was not influenced at all. She always follows the path of Bhagavad Bhakti and Dharma and strives throughout her life for her husband to follow the same path. Despite her husband's faults, Mandodari loves him and advises him to follow the path of righteousness. She constantly advises Ravana to return Sita to Rama, but her advice is always ignored. Her love and loyalty to Ravana is praised in the Ramayana. She was distressed when she came to know about her husband's monstrous act.

Shamal has written Dohra, Chhappa and Chokhra in Ravana -Mandodari Samvad. One of them in which Mandodari informs Ravana of the fate of the dear Sita.

योभरो : मंदोदरी- प्रेमदा पेभता परम पामे घणो, चेतना आण रे चित्त चाडे; सीता साटे घणुं साल तुं लावियो, परठियुं पाप ते जोर जाडे; त्रिलोकपति नाथनी साथ शत्रु थयो, कनकनो कोट अे सत्य पाडे; कहे छे मंदोदरी कथ इडुं कर्तुं, मानिनी मूल समूल काडे. ३५²

Chokhro: Mandoari : premada pekhta param pame ghano, chetna aan re chitta chade; Sita sate ghanu salt u laviyo, parthiyu pap te jor jade; Trilokapati nathni sath shatru thayo, kankno kot ae saty pade; kahe Mandodari kanth kundu karyubecame an enemy with Nath, Kanak's coat will tell the truth; Says Mandodari Kanth Kundu karyu, Manini mul samul kade That is, by abducting Sita, you have committed a sin and enmity with Trilokpati(God), O Nath, you have done wrong, now, Ravana's roots and lineage will be completely destroyed.

Mandodari was well aware of the evil deeds done by her husband; she always advised Ravana to give up the path of evil and take refuge in truth, but Ravana, who was proud of his power, never listened to Mandodari. Being a Veerangana, she continues to challenge Ravana's misdeeds with her insight and understanding. Despite her efforts, Ravana is not willing to hand over Sita to Rama. Then the Lankan Patrani Mandodari finds her splendor hollow and painful.

Expressing her pain to the women of the world, She says, O women, external splendor does not get you true happiness, places care about it. Tthan that more pleasant will be the hut of the pure, righteous poor.

MANDODARI'S CALAMITY

Being a pativrata herself, it is natural to seek the welfare of her husband. Mandodari goes to Ashokavatika to meet Sitaji despite Ravana's strict prohibition to prevent evil from happening to Lanka and her husband. Both the satis meet. She apologizes to Sitaji and expresses her grief over her husband's reprehensible act. She says, I have an idea of the brilliance(power) of pativrata women. I am feeling the influence of your sattva.

That is why I have come to you and ask that you do not burn my husband by cursing or in any other way. On this occasion, Sitaji tells Mandodari many bitter words about Ravana. Mandodari listens helplessly. Here Mandodari's helplessness and Sitaji's anger reveal the mentality of Purush Pradhan (male dominated) society. Mandodari's fight against Ravana was a fight for all entire females. Its suffering is given by Purusha Pradhan Samaj (male dominated society).

Mandodari has served her doomed husband Ravana with a true heart. At the end, a heart- broken Mandodari, had to see Ravann's dead body.

She ran and put Ravana's head in her lap, lamenting

तव बस बिधि प्रचंड सब नाथा। सभय दिसिप नित नावहिं माथा॥

अब तव सिर भुज जंबुक खाहीं। राम बिमुख यह अनुचित नाहीं॥6³

Tav bas bidhi prachand sab natha, sabhay disip nit navahi mataha. Ab tav sir bhuj jambuk khahiin, Ram bimukh yah auchit nahi. Hey Nath, the entire creation of the creator was under your control. Lokpal always used to bow his head to you in fear,

That is, the one who is alienated from God will end up in a similar condition. Then, remembering her grief, she gave tribute to her great valiant husband and said, I am sorry that you could not leave the non-righteousness path, but you must have been purified by the breaking of the Amritakumbha in your navel by the arrow of Shree Rama. "You need salvation at the hands of Shri Ram. You must have reached the place of Dharm. You have died a hero. Jagannianta has judged," she said.

Forgive if your spouse has spoken bitterly to you or offended you. Kshama Virsya Bhushanam is said, here Mandodari seeks forgiveness as his wife. Her own fault was that she was Ravana's wife. Asking for forgiveness is also bravery. In medieval works such as Krittivas Ramayana, Paschatya Vrittant, Balaramdas Ramayana etc., it is mentioned that after the death of Ravana, Vibhishana becomes the king of Lanka and he is married to Mandodari. But I would say that in the neutral heart of Mandodari there was no longer any expectation or value of neglect.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned in Panchkanya Mantra that worshipping them will destroy sins or wickedness. When had brief look at Mandodari's life we would like to conclude with a strong feeling "Holy and brave Mandodari".

A woman with various (Rainbow) shades of life. Our Indian mythological stories gives motivation to face and fight all situations of life. A woman can handle family and also be a warrior at the same time. She can be a strong yet emotional woman. She can be a fighter for her and others' rights too. She can be adamant but agreeable at the same time in different situations.

कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा॥३४॥⁴

In Vibhutiyaog (Chapter Ten) of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita Lord Shri Krishna says that, among women I am Kirti, Lakshmi, Vani, Smriti, Buddhi, Dhriti and Kshama. A woman Mandodri had all these qualities. As a woman, Mandodri had all these qualities. She had the ability to become a mentor to her husband by engaging in ideological conflict with him to protect social values. Although she lost the ideological battle, she was fighting till the end as a brave soldier.

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