

4. The Flying Guide: Garuda's Divine Role in Srimad Ramayanam

Ramayana Collection

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 **Description:** An exploration of the fourth Rahasyam revealing how Garuda serves as a constant spiritual guide throughout the Ramayana epic, embodying Vedic wisdom and appearing at crucial moments

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The Flying Guide: Garuda's Divine Role in Srimad Ramayanam

This secret is titled "The Flying Guide" and focuses on the integral role and significance of Garuda (Periya Thiruvadi) throughout the epic.

Title and Central Theme: "The Flying Guide"

The fourth secret, "The Flying Guide," emphasizes that Garuda (Garudaazhvan, also known as Periya Thiruvadi) serves as a constant and guiding presence from the beginning (*upodghatam*) to the end (*irudhi varaikkum*) of the Srimad Ramayanam. Garuda functions as a guide who remains present throughout the journey. The comparison is made to a spiritual guide, suggesting that just as a soul needs a "GPS" (guide) to reach Vaikuntha, Garuda serves as this flying guide in the narrative.



Garuda's Divine Form and Vedic Connection

Garuda is depicted not merely as a large bird, but as the embodiment of Vedic knowledge and spiritual sound. Garuda's entire physical form is identified with various parts of the Vedas. His eyes (or twin sight) are identified with the Gayatri Mantra, which links back to the second Rahasya, "Catch 24," which deals with the 24 syllables of the Gayatri Mantra. The sound produced by the flapping of his wings is said to be the Sāma Veda. This establishes him as the repository (or representative) of all Vedic sound.



Presence in Key Narrative Moments Across the Kāṇḍas

Garuda's presence or influence is woven into major events across several Kāṇḍas (sections) of the Ramayana.

Bāla Kāṇḍa (Beginning)

When the Devas request Vishnu's descent (Avatar), Vishnu (Perumāl) decrees that Vāyu's son, Hanumān, must possess strength equivalent to Garuda (*Vainateya Samojave*). Later, when King Daśaratha plans the Aśvamedha Yāga (horse sacrifice), the sacrificial altar (*Vedikai*) must be constructed in the shape of Garuda (*Garudo Rukmapakshovai*).

Ayodhyā Kāṇḍa

When Rāma prepares to leave for the forest after the boons are granted, Rāma's mother, Kauśalyā, offers him a blessing. She invokes the exact two verses (*ślokas*) that Vinatā (Garuda's mother) used to bless Garuda when he departed to fetch Amrita (the elixir of immortality). This conveys the mother's wish for divine protection.

Āraṇya Kāṇḍa & Kiśkindhā Kāṇḍa

The location of Mārīcha's penance before the abduction of Sītā becomes significant. Mārīcha meditated under the shade of a Banyan tree called Sudharmā. This tree was significant because it was the branch upon which Garuda once rested, holding a tortoise and an elephant in his talons. Garuda

saved the Vālakilyās (mini-rishis) who were hanging from the branch by placing the branch between his beak.

Yuddha Kāṇḍa (Climax)

When Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa are bound by the Nāga-pāśa (serpent weapon), Garuda arrives at the battlefield, and upon his arrival, all the serpents flee, thus freeing Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa from the binding spell. This specific episode led to a hymn by Kambar that is said to be a remedy for Nāga Doṣam (serpent affliction).



Connection through Garuda's Family

Garuda's immediate family—his brother and nephews—provide crucial assistance to Rāma's mission, reinforcing the title "The Flying Guide". **Aruṇa** (Garuda's elder brother) is the charioteer (*Sārathi*) of Sūrya (the Sun). Rāma is of the Solar Dynasty (*Sūrya Vamśa*), establishing a continuous lineage and connection.

Sampāti and Jatāyu (Aruṇa's sons) act as key informers and protectors. Jatāyu sacrifices his life attempting to stop Rāvaṇa from abducting Sītā. Sampāti provides the decisive clue to the Vānaras, informing them that Sītā is in Laṅkā, based on information given by his son, Supārśva. Sampāti essentially serves as the guide who directs the Vānaras south, thus enabling Hanumān's mission.



Spiritual and Philosophical Significance

The structural role of Garuda underscores the divine nature of the entire epic. Garuda's association with Sāma Veda is noted when Perumāl flies away; the sound of his wings is the sound of Sāma Veda. Garuda acts as the vehicle (*Vāhanam*) for Perumāl (Viṣṇu), and the sources highlight the concept of divine entourage (or Divya Retinue) where the Lord's weapons and associates take birth alongside him. Garuda's constant presence suggests that the Lord is always accompanied by his devoted vehicle and the power of the Vedas themselves.



Reference

This blog post is based on notes taken from the following video : **Video Source:** [Watch on YouTube](#) For a more detailed explanation, I highly recommend watching the original video.



Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

These articles are based on discourses by **Sri Dushyanth Sridhar**, who renders discourses in English & Tamil on Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavata, Vishnu Purāna, Bhagavad Gitā, Vishnu Sahasranāma, and Divya Prabanda in the upanyāsam, pravachanam, or kālakshepam style. Visit <https://desikadaya.org> for more information. These notes are presented solely for educational purposes to help viewers download and benefit from these teachings. Any incorrect interpretations or inaccuracies are mine and unintentional—please forgive me. For any feedback, please send an [email](#).

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