

# The Avanti PRE Curriculum

## Resource Sheet 7.6.6a (2)

### “Sita’s Trial by Fire”

After Ravana's death, Vibhishana was duly crowned as king of Lanka. The message of Rama's victory was sent to Sita. Happily she bathed and came to Rama in a palanquin. Hanuman and all other monkeys came to pay their respect. Meeting Rama, Sita was overcome by her joyous emotion. Rama, however, seemed to be far away in thought.

At length Rama spoke, "I am happy to rescue you from the hands of Ravana but you have lived a year in enemy's abode. It is not proper that I should take you back now."

Sita could not believe what Rama said. Bursting in tears Sita asked, "Was that my fault? The monster carried me away against my wishes. While in his residence, my mind and my heart were fixed on my Lord, Rama, alone."

Sita felt deeply grieved and decided to end her life in the fire.

She turned to Lakshmana and with tearful eyes she implored him to prepare the fire. Lakshmana looked at his elder brother, hoping for some type of reprieve, but there was no sign of emotion on Rama's face and no words came from his mouth. As instructed, Lakshmana built a large fire. Sita reverently walked around her husband and approached the blazing fire. Joining her palms in salutation, she addressed Agni, the God of fire, "If I am pure, O fire, protect me." With these words Sita stepped into the flames, to the horror of the spectators.

Then Agni, whom Sita invoked, arose from the flames and gently lifted Sita unharmed, and presented her to Rama.

"Rama!" addressed Agni, "Sita is spotless and pure at heart. Take her to Ayodhya. People are waiting there for you." Rama delightfully received her. "Don't I know she is pure? I had to test her for the sake of the world so that the truth may be known to all."