

THE PHRALAK PHRALAM or THE LAO RAMAYANA
EPISODE 5

"Construction of the Bridge to Lanka"

Characters: Phralak & Phralam (Phra lakshana & Phra Ram) (Rama & Lakshmana); Thotsakan, King of the Giants; Sakhala (Naga), King of the Underwater Realm; Nang Massa, daughter of King Sakhala, and her sisters; Hanuman, Chief of Staff of the Army of the Apes; and Phiphek (Thotsakan's younger brother, who rallies to the cause of Phralam).

Thotsakan, King of the Giants, summons Phiphek to interpret a dream. Phiphek announces to him that a disaster would occur to Lanka if the princess Sida is not returned. Thotsakan, furious at hearing such news, expels him from his kingdom. In the end, Phiphek rallies to Phralam.

Meanwhile, under the ocean in the Kingdom of the Nagas, King Sakhala sends his daughter Massa to investigate the clamor he hears above the water. She transforms herself into a fish and approaches the disturbance. The monkeys have started constructing a bridge, but as time goes on Massa, along with some of Sakhala's other daughters, sabotages their work. Hanuman tries to determine the cause of this repeated obstruction. To do this, he plunges his head under the water, letting his tail rest on the bank so he can be pulled out in case of danger.

He sees the daughters of the King of the Nagas who, in an unruly commotion, are trying to destroy the pillars of the great bridge. It is then that Hanuman uses his charm to seduce these princesses, and thanks to his geniality and his powers, he manages this without a hitch.

Thus it is possible to continue to advance the bridge toward the island of Lanka. Hanuman returns to camp to report to Phralam. When the bridge is finished, Phralam gives the order to go on the attack, pursuing the goal of freeing Sida from the clutches of Thotsakan and of bringing her back to his kingdom.