All of us know that Ramayana is all about Sri Ramaâ€™s
story.

Kaikeyi asked for boons ordaining Rama to go to the
forest, Sita humbly following Him, her falling in love
with a deer, Ravana taking her away, Rama waging a war
with Ravana and eventually getting Sita back.

Beyond this, Ramayana is a great benefit to our
everyday life too. How? If we read Ramayana
carefully, chapter by chapter, we can realize the
import of the story in our daily life, as conveyed by
the great Maharshi.

The first part of the epic talks about a prosperous
Ayodhya. The overflowing Sarayu river, the abundance
of grains, the devoted king and the devoted subjects,
the affluence of the people â€“ all these signifying a
wealthy and prosperous land of Ayodhya is clearly
depicted.

One day, Dasharata addressed the masses and expressed
his wish to crown Rama and retire from his regal
duties. The citizens rejoiced. Rama was then
informed about the crowning ceremony scheduled for the
following day. The whole city was agog with this
happy news â€“ decorations and preparations for the
crowning ceremony were on.

Hearing this news, Kaikeyiâ€™s aide, Manthara (Kuni)
rushed to Kaikeyi â€˜Hey! Did you hear that Kausalyaâ€™s
son Rama is going to be crowned?â€™
Kaikeyi, being a noble person at heart immediately
gifted her with a necklace.
â€˜Rama is like my own son! I love him even more than
Bharata. What difference does it make crowning Rama
or Bharata?â€™

Manthara said, â€˜Oh! My dumb Mistress! Donâ€™t you
realize that if Rama becomes the king, even Kausalyaâ€™s
servants will disrespect you? You will be trampled
once Rama is crowned. Bharata will be doomed!â€™
Saying thus, she poisoned Kaikeyiâ€™s mind so much so
that the latter merely submitted to her - â€˜What should
I do now?â€™

Manthara said â€˜Long ago, when you assisted Dasharata
in a war, he granted you two boons. Exercise them!
One, let Bharata be crowned. Two, have Rama exiled
for 14 years.â€™

Kaikeyi was ready to ask these boons.

That night, when Dasharata came to her harem, she lay
there as if in abject misery. As instructed by Kuni,
she asked Dasharata for the two promises. It was a
blow to the king.

Dasharata pleaded with her to take back her request.
He beseeched her, â€˜Let Bharata rule. But donâ€™t
separate Rama from me. You know I canâ€™t live without
him.â€™ Kaikeyi was stubborn.Begging with Kaikeyi all
through the night, Dasharata was completely wrecked by
grief and swooned.

At dawn, Kaikeyi summoned Rama and explained
Dasharataâ€™s promise to her. â€˜Your dad has given me a
word that you shall go to the forest!â€™ she said.

If we read this part of the story, we find that the
whole town was plunged into grief. Rama leaves for
the forest and the entire Ayodhya follows him. Wails
of sorrow sound in every home and there is
inauspiciousness all over. The queens Kausalya and
Sumitra wail, Vasishta cries, the whole kingdom is in
tears as they see Sita following Rama to the forest.

As Rama leaves the kingdom, he halts on the bank river
Sarayu for the night. The citizen who have followed
him, lie down to sleep. Rama sheds tears seeing their
pitiable plight â€“ Such a flourishing and happy kingdom
as Ayodhya now bears a deserted and orphaned look! The
scene is now transformed into a gloomy one. There is
inauspiciousness all over. The king, who ruled for
60,000 years, passes away. The queens are widowed.
Bharata renounces the kingdom and is disturbed because
of the false blame on him.

In a moment, the whole scenario has turned
topsy-turvy. Who is the reason behind this? Is it
God? Fate? The kingâ€™s misconduct? No! It is thanks to
the woman with a hunchback (Kuni) named Manthara.

Introducing an insignificant character called
Manthara, Valmiki shows how she could cause a whole
kingdom, its king, princes and everyone to crash.

Any organization or setup should be wary of the fact
that it could be shaken to its roots by sinister
designs of even lowly employee from an insignificant
corner.

This important management precept which is a part and
parcel of our everyday life is being eloquently taught
to us by Ramayana.

Regards

Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
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Spirituality, Mental peace or problems in life or
about dharma, please write to us by clicking here:
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His Holiness Sri Sri Swamiji personally answers these
questions for you and suggests prayers.
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