

# Shri Rama, The Universal Ideal!!



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*In this paper, the learning from Ramayana has been illuminated and its relevance to virtuous management has been advocated. Lord Shri Rama lived human life in the most practical way possible in its different aspects of social relationships firmly established in the Dharma, through His well-regulated personality and highly refined conduct. An ideal life, whether corporate or personal, can be lived on earth by following the guidance of this glorious leader of humanity, the true representative of the Supreme Divinity who manifested himself for the benefit of all subsequent generations.*

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## 1. Introduction

Shri Rama, the ideal of goodness, mercy, benevolence and divine life on earth, was revealed to destroy the forces of Adharma, to protect and establish Dharma, to personally live the canons of Dharma and thus become an example of life -- perfect and par excellence for all mankind. The Ramayana, the celebrated story of Shri Rama, lists in its first chapter the glorious characteristics of Shri Ramachandra, whom the eminent sage Narada declares as the supreme jewel among the people. Rama's Name, His form and His conduct have been the object of constant remembrance, contemplation and emulation by people for centuries. The word "Rama" is interpreted in the Ramarahasyopanishad as the combination of the essence of the Narayana-Ashta-Akshara and the Shiva-Pañcha-Akshara, that is, "RA" and "MA", without which, the Ashtakshara and the Pañchakshara not only would they not have the proper meaning but they would have the opposite (Sri Swami Sivananda, 2017). The Rama-Nama is also considered as the essence of the thousand Names of the Lord. It is the Taraka Mantra, the "ship" that makes the mortals cross Samsara or death. The power of the Name is well understood when it is known that even the wrong pronunciation turned the delinquent Ratnakara into the sage Valmiki. Shri Rama is an object of meditation because he is the Avatar of Lord Vishnu, the Preserver of the universe. Shri Rama incarnated when the five planets were on their ascendant. The unique planetary condition suggests the glory of Shri Rama's life (Sri Swami Sivananda, 2017). The Dharma that one finds in Him is the best refuge. Read the Ramayana and you will understand the greatness of Shri Rama, the true Arya Purusha, the ideal son, the ideal brother, the ideal husband, the ideal king.

Shri Rama lived human life in the most practical way possible, as a whole in its different aspects of social relationships firmly established in the Dharma, through His well-regulated personality and highly refined conduct. An ideal life can be lived on earth by following the guidance of this glorious leader of humanity, the true representative of the Supreme Divinity who manifested himself for the benefit of all subsequent generations (Sen, 2005).

## 2. Ethics: Follow the Path of Righteousness

The noblest lesson in the Ramayana is the supreme importance of virtue in the life of every human being. Virtue is the spiritual spark of life. The cultivation of virtue is the process of unfolding the latent divinity in man. The glorious incarnation of the supreme Truth, Shri Ramachandra, has set the example through His own life of how to follow the path of virtue. May humanity follow in His footsteps and practice the ideals that He valued, for only in this way can there be lasting peace, prosperity and well-being in this world in general and the corporate world in particular. No one but the virtuous can be truly happy. It cannot be said that someone lives with dignity except the one who has the correct sense of duty and the will to implement it. One must be imbued with a definite conviction about the supremacy of moral principles, ethical values, and spiritual ideals that should guide one's daily actions and serve as a powerful means for the cultivation of human personality (Sri Swami Sivananda, 2020). That is the purpose of life. That is the way to the purpose of the modern virtuous and prosperous Company (MUNIAPAN, 2007).

An example of a successful company is the one that does what promotes harmony, goodwill and peace, and does not do what inspires the opposite effect. Do what is universally considered good, fair and appropriate, what is sure to produce positive effects, and do not do what generates negative results. That is the judgment criterion. This is how one should decide between right and wrong. Another example of a successful company is its virtue of being credible and not deviating from the path of truth. This is the very basis of a company that works ethically and considers the welfare of its employees (MUNIAPAN, 2007).

A successful manager would one who eliminates what produces a negative reaction in others and reinforces what quickly generates a sense of well-being in him and others as well. But, at the same time does not get carried away by the euphoria of doing well and being good. It is not something special that is expected of you. It is your duty. The only way you can make

tomorrow a better day is to think and do today what will lead to better tomorrow. Have an open heart and mind, but accept only what is good, appropriate, and worth remembering.

Try to correct in yourself first what you dislike in others. Accept only what is good in others and ignore the rest. Your own happiness depends on how you conduct yourself. Don't complain about the circumstances. Try to make the best of everything. Spiritual aspirants, reflect, brood, analyze and reason about what should be the aspiration you should have and what not, what you should do and what you should abstain from. Think correctly. Speak sweetly and truthfully. Act honestly, fairly, and selflessly. Grow, evolve and improve like this every day, every moment.

### 3. The Ramayana Hero

Lord Rama, the hero of the Ramayana is the Purushavatara of the Supreme Being who incarnated as the son of King Dasaratha of Ayodhya. He was the joy of his mother Kausalya and the very life of Dasaratha. True to the Lord's Purushavatara, Shri Rama's qualities of heart and head exemplified the summary of human perfection that man can achieve in life. His body was made of iron. His heart was tender and charming. His mind was flexible. Even as a child, he acquired such skill in archery that there were none to match him in firing arrows lightning fast and hitting the target unerringly (Sen, 2005). This is confirmed by Lord Krishna's statement in the Bhagavad Gita, when He explained His countless aspects to Arjuna, the Pandava prince: "Ramah Shastrabhritamaham- I am Shri Rama in the handling of arrows". Although born and raised in an atmosphere of pleasure and fulfillment appropriate to his royal heritage, he cultivated great simplicity and Vairagya, which showed the philosophical bent of his mind and detachment from the ephemeral objects of the world. He was a "Jitendriya" who expressed, in every sense, a resolute mind and perfect control over the senses. However, he had a heart to feel for others in their sufferings and misfortunes, and he did everything possible to relieve them of their grief. Shri Rama fully translated into his own life the teachings of the Upanishads: "Matri Devo Bhava, Pitri Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava and Atithi Devo Bhava", fulfilling his duty towards his parents, showing great devotion to his Guru and providing hospitality and kindness to those in need. Note his bravery when, as a fifteen-year-old boy, he accompanied sage Visvamitra to the forest. He showed great courage by killing the two Rakshasas, Maricha and Subahu for the sole purpose of protecting the Dharma. Note his respect in the court of King Janaka when he raised the bow and broke it as proof to receive Sita's hand in marriage (Sen, 2005).

Cultivate the qualities of selflessness and sacrifice that he displayed in fulfilling the wishes of his stepmother Kaikeyi by renouncing the kingdom and going to the forest in exile for fourteen years without the slightest feeling of offense or ill will towards anyone, much less towards Kaikeyi. The glory of renunciation, "Tyagenaike Amritatvamanasuh," as the Upanishads declare, is manifested in this act of Shri Rama.

Observe once again Shri Rama's egalitarian view of friends and foes when he gave shelter to Vibhishana, knowing full well that Vibhishana had come to him from Ravana, the king of Lanka who was his staunch enemy, thus establishing his "Sharanagata Vatsalatva - quality of giving refuge to those who take refuge in him".

Note their true friendship by fulfilling the promise he gave Sugriva, the king of the monkeys, to install him as king of Kishkindha after killing his brother Vali and that when he himself was in trouble, thus maintaining his composure even in adverse circumstances (Gombrich, 2005).

Observe his cosmic love when he performed the last rites on Jatayu, the king of birds, who died from the wounds that Ravana inflicted on him with his saber when he tried to rescue Sita from the king of demons. A fact that is indicative of Rama's feeling of unity of all souls.

Notice his kindness and magnanimity in giving Ravana three days of time on the battlefield, asking him to make up his mind to return Sita, even then, thus showing his willingness to forget and forgive all that has happened.

Finally, notice his detached feelings even towards Sita for whom he had to go through many trials and tribulations in life. After the coronation, following his successful return from Lanka, he discovered that his beloved wife could not face criticism and public scandal, not because he did not trust her chastity but simply in the interests of the majority. Such was the glory of Shri Rama, the light of the Ikshvakus race. May God bless humanity to absorb the virtues of Shri Rama and put them into practice in their own lives, particularly in this iron age in which the Dharma has receded (Losty, 2008).

### 4. The Ideal of the Supreme Duty

Lord Rama is man's supreme ideal of Dharma, submission and discipline. He shone more for the adornment of his virtues than for his royal garb. His great personality and His blameless life of supreme dignity, compassion and righteousness are a perennial inspiration for humanity at all times. The kingdom of Rama has become immortal as a state par excellence, based on the ethical conduct of life. The secret of the glory of the kingdom of Rama was the conception of duty that dominated all other factors. The people of the time, from the highest, the Rama monarch, to the most humble and lowest, and the last of the citizens were governed by a sense of duty in every aspect of life, private or public. The Ramayana is imbued with this unique spirit. In this ideal Dharma, that could be observed in the golden age of the solar dynasty, Raghuvarsha, the most inspiring was that fervent desire to fulfill one's moral obligations and one's own duty, at any cost, in the interests of the Dharma and human welfare (Gombrich, 2005).

As defender of the faith and protector of the saints, Dasaratha's subtle sense of duty caused him to put aside all consideration and send the two young princes, Rama and Lakshmana, to protect the Yajna from the Rishis in the Dandakaranya. The reaction of Queen Sumitra to Lakshmana's decision to follow Rama to the forest is full of that glorious concept of the supreme duty.

Forgetting herself, she said, “O son, Lakshmana, consider Rama as your father Dasaratha, Janaki as myself (your mother), and the forest as the city of Ayodhya. Go son, go happily to the forest ” (Sen, 2005).

And what did Lord Rama do? He put aside obligations to his loving mother, his brothers and the loving citizens of Ayodhya. Rama felt that at that time a son's greatest duty was to uphold his father's honor in the name of Truth and the cause of Dharma. His loyalty to this ideal was unconditional and foolproof. The divine Prince turned his back on the pleasures of the palace and the throne, and chose the dangers and hardships of the forest. Because He chose the path of duty, that is, He responded to the call of higher duty. Until the end we find this sublime ideal of duty and self-sacrifice. Rather than offend the conception of righteousness and virtue in the least of His subjects, The great king chose to inflict upon Himself the greatest torment and to put the noble Sita through the agonizing ordeal of separation and desolation in the jungle.

Didn't Lakshmana have a duty towards noble Sita? He surely had it and was aware of it as well. But with the greatest pain he saw that the greatest duty was to obey his older brother and carry out his orders as king and ruler, who he knew was the embodiment of virtue and Dharma. The greatest and most moving manifestation of this great Ramayana ideal is the immortal Jatayu's offering of himself on the altar of supreme duty. He was in an uneven fight with the mighty Ravana. Jatayu could very well have avoided the conflict. It had nothing to do with Sita. He was not bound by any particular obligation. But Jatayu had risen from the soil of Bharatavarsha, from the depths of whose mother's heart rises the glorious maxim, “Paropakaram Idam Shareeram” - this body is really meant to help others. The noble and courageous Jatayu responded to this unspoken call for this supreme duty of man - the duty to help others, to serve others, to control the Adharma, and to succor those who are in distress. This is the true life. This is the heroic life. Let faith fill you with strength to live such a life of adherence to supreme duty. May the Name of the Lord give you the power of self-sacrifice in the cause of the supreme Dharma. May the glorious example of the Ramayana ideal inspire all of you with soul force to lead a Divine Life of self-denial, sacrifice and service to all! Be brave in the fulfillment of Dharma and duty. Worship the ideal of Rama. Become like Him through a unique devotion to Him. May His Divine Grace lift you through Paropakara to the Parama-Dharma of the supreme Kaivalya Moksha! Om Shri Ramaya Namah!

## 5. The Rule of Law

The rule of law, which all democratic governments cherish, was the ideal of Rama Rajya. It was a formal ideal and, although in some respects highly puritan, did not lose sight of realism. He paid attention to the practical aspect and still defended some of the finer principles of government and of individual and social ethics. His concept of international relations was remarkably modern. Persuasion was attempted first and then the Vibhishana episode took place. Lanka was invaded, but it did not become a peripheral province of the Ayodhya kingdom. After the purpose of the war was accomplished, the people were set free under the rule of their own king. It was a magnanimous gesture and highly moralistic in its ideal. Only very democratic governments will be able to meet such an ideal even if it is not in such a short period (Pathak, Singh & Anshul, 2016).

## 6. Ideal Government

The welfare of the subjects was the main consideration of the ruler. Nothing else mattered, not even the king's personal interests. The king's first duty was to see that the people were happy and content, that there was justice and the rule of law, that human considerations were not hampered by social distinctions, and that, above all, public opinion was allowed to exercise its full influence. Even in such remote times, it was understood that the best government is the one that governs the least.

It is surprising to note that Shri Rama went to such an extreme of giving up his pregnant wife and banishing her to a hermitage, being that she was the queen and first lady of the kingdom, and all for the sake of what we could call today a symbolic opinion. But this indicates, above all, the way in which a ruler must conform to a strict standard of living and rigid personal conduct, not only as he would consider it ideal but as his subjects expect of him. Shri Rama's personal life and happiness were indeed secondary to the inflexible rules that governed his imperial life. It is extraordinary and surprising that such an ancient Indian kingdom has harbored and practiced such a meticulous sense of property and that its rulers have voluntarily submitted to it (Pathak, Singh & Anshul, 2016).

## 7. Keep the Lessons in Mind

Shri Rama's devotion to the ideal of monogamy, his refusal to marry again after leaving Sita, was truly magnificent, especially in a time when polygamy in the upper class was more the rule than the exception. There are numerous such lessons in the Ramayana. We also have the beautifully honest and selfless example of Urmila, Lakshmana's wife, to whom Valmiki does not pay much attention. Could a modern wife allow her husband to go into exile, voluntarily, for fourteen long years immediately after marriage, regardless of her personal interests and wishes, and only because of his sentimental attachment to his brother? Every page of this great book has a lesson in humanity. If modern man paid attention to at least some of them and if he had the determination, the courage and the strength to put them into practice, life on earth would be much better, happier, more peaceful, meaningful and justified (Losty, 2008).

## 8. Conclusion: The RAMAYANA Lesson

The teachings of Ramayana help one to rise beyond himself or herself and tune mind accordingly. The descent of the grace of the teachings of Ramayana potentially helps one to rise from a mere manager to a transformational leader. This transformation can really be achieved through the teachings. If something justifies life, it is the law of virtue. Virtue is not just a part of a moral

code; It is the basic principle that sustains the purpose of life, makes one fulfill his responsibility as a unit of society, affirms the dignity of the human being and the dedication of man to the ideals of truth and justice, elevates him from everything whatever is vulgar, mean, bad or unfair.

The Ramayana lesson is a perfect ideal for everyone. Simple yet glorious, normal and yet rarely followed, fundamentally human and still an agent of spiritual conversion. It is an ideal that has had a determining influence on the design of the structure of Hindu society and has always been an inspiring example worthy of emulation for all who are loyal to it (Pathak, Singh & Anshul, 2016).

In Ramayana, there is a striking panorama of hope and despair, sacred idealism and worldly delusion, sacrifice and desolation, attack of weakness and tragedy, magnanimous dedication to virtue and humble devotion, steadfastness and fortitude, triumph over the evil and glory of victory. The Ramayana teaches one to lead a true life as it helps one to practice and spread the virtues that adorned the person of Shri Rama.

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