



## - Wall | Facebook **בבה ג'ון** - Baba Joon

[www.facebook.com/pages/Baba-Joon-116232421764252/](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Baba-Joon-116232421764252/) **בבה ג'ון**?... ▾

Baba Joon - **בבה ג'ון**. 674 likes · 1 talking about this. BABA JOON- بابا جون -feature film- the progress.Persian+Hebrew

## BABA JOON- coming soon - Baba Joon - **בבה ג'ון** | Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=472983676384> ▾ Facebook ▾

BABA JOON- coming soon. Back to Album · Previous · Next. **Baba Joon** - באבא - **בבה ג'ון**. בקרוב November 5, 2010. Silvia Bauer, יעקב בנג'י, Oshra Havivian ...

## iTunes - Music - Ala Ala Ya Baba (**בבה** ... - Apple

<https://itunes.apple.com/...baba.../id495548558> ▾ Translate this page iTunes ▾

Jan 1, 2012 - Preview songs from Ala Ala Ya Baba (**בבה** ... - Apple) by George Bar on the iTunes Store. Preview, buy, and download Ala Ala Ya ...

## iTunes - Music - Ala Ala Ya Baba (**בבה** ... - Apple

<https://itunes.apple.com/...baba.../id495548558> ▾ Translate this page iTunes ▾

Jan 1, 2012 - Preview songs from Ala Ala Ya Baba (**בבה** ... - Apple) by George Bar on the iTunes Store. Preview, buy and download Ala Ala Ya ...

## LIMOR COHEN- PERSIAN **בבה קראם**. לימור כהן - ריקוד פרסי- ...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRTg2g14r3E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRTg2g14r3E) ▾

Feb 17, 2012 - Uploaded by limlimon1

LIMOR COHEN- PERSIAN **בבה** קראם. לימור כהן - ריקוד פרסי- **בבה** קראם. DANCE- BABA KARAM. <a href="/channel/UCegsgRrgYw3-cs3HI1cVSTA ...

## **באבה יאגה** – ויקיפדיה

[he.wikipedia.org/wiki/באבה\\_יאגה](http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/באבה_יאגה) ▾ Translate this page Hebrew Wikipedia ▾

בערך "**בבה**-יאגה" מתוך "המיתולוגיה של עמי העולם", מצוין כי ... של מוסורגסקי, הם הוסיפו לצד הקטע המקורי שלו על באבה יאגה קטע מוזיקלי חדש, שנקרא "The Curse of Baba Yaga".

## Simha Babah - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simha\\_Babah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simha_Babah) ▾ Wikipedia ▾

Baba simcha.jpeg ... Simha Babah (Hebrew: **בבה** שמחה, born 27 November 1902, died 10 December 1973) was an Israeli politician who served as a member of ...

בָּבָא Bābā

He had a crippled leg and was on crutches. He tried to speak to us in broken English. His name was Sita Ram Baba. He sat there with his begging bowl in hand. Unlike most Sadhus, he had very high self-esteem. His eyes lit up when we bought him some ice-cream, he really enjoyed it. He stayed with us most of that evening. I videotaped the whole scene.

Churchill, Pola (2007-11-14). *Eternal Breath : A Biography of Leonard Orr Founder of Rebirthing Breathwork* (Kindle Locations 4961-4964). Trafford. Kindle Edition.

... immortal Sita Ram Baba.

Churchill, Pola (2007-11-14). *Eternal Breath : A Biography of Leonard Orr Founder of Rebirthing Breathwork* (Kindle Location 5039). Trafford. Kindle Edition.

Therefore, seeking out and studying Babaji's theophanies in the scriptures, in literature, and in physical form is my first love. To learn from him and to practice what I learn is the source of my joy and aliveness. I sought Babaji to learn how to become an immortal yogi master. This is what he taught me. I still have a long way to go, learning the basics over and over until I master them.

Krishna, Goraknath, Vasishtha, Chaitanya Maha Prahlu, and of course Herakhan Baba are among his more famous and recent bodies. As mentioned, Babaji is called "Abba" by Jesus in the Bible history; he is also called the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament. In the Koran, he has more than one name. Khadir is his name in human form as the teacher of Moses. Allah is the basic Muslim name for God.

One body I'm focusing on now is Sita Ram Baba in Pokhara, Nepal. He is an obscure saddhu. I meet many saddhus, but they don't have Babaji's style and presence. This one does. This body appears to be about twenty-four years old, with a crippled leg. Because of this handicap, most of the people who accompanied me couldn't recognize him because they expected to see a rock star's model body and couldn't let go of that expectation. But for me he communicated very powerfully on the inside in ways only Babaji can do. He did this because I was open to seeing him in this form. I am willing to look beyond appearances.

[Breaking the Death Habit: The Science of Everlasting Life](#) by Leonard Orr (page 56)

# ראמה

## Rama | Facebook-ראמה ✓

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/ראמה-Rama/416463245130986?rf...>  
ראמה-Rama. Company. ... About. ראמה-Rama. Company. ראמה-Rama was merged with this page. Tamrah, Hazafon, Israel - 0 people like this topic. Want to like ...

## rama raw food)Vegan-Friendly) ראמה מזון אורגני נא ✓

[www.vegan-friendly.co.il/.../ראמה-מזון-אורגני-חי/](http://www.vegan-friendly.co.il/.../ראמה-מזון-אורגני-חי/) Translate this page  
ראמה (Rama Raw Food) הינה חברת מזון אורגני חי אשר בעליה ומנהליה טבעונים. החברה מציעה מגוון מוצרים ובהם קו המוצרים שכולל "גבינות" (עשויות מאגוזים ופרוביוטיקה מייצור אישי) ...

## ... ARE RAMA HARE KRISHNA הארי ראמה הארי קרישנה ✓



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=etXogqajc2c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etXogqajc2c)  
Nov 12, 2011 - Uploaded by haim krasno  
HARE RAMA HARE KRISHNA ... הארי קרישנה ראמה הארי קרישנה  
Rama Hare Krishna [Full Song] | Hare Krishna by T ...

## RaMa ראמה (@ramaaja30) | Twitter ✓

<https://twitter.com/ramaaja30>  
The latest Tweets from RaMa ראמה (@ramaaja30)

## הארי ראמה גסטהאוס | zaznco - zaznco - המזרח הרחוק ✓

[www.zaznco.co.il](http://www.zaznco.co.il) Translate this page  
הארי ראמה גסטהאוס (Hare Rama Guest House) הוא מלך הגסטהאוסים הוותיק של הודו!! גסטהאוס זול וחביב במזמין אליו הרבה תרמילאים ובמיוחד ישראלים. יש במקום מסעדה ושולחן ...

## Ezba, ראמה - חוות דעת על מסעדות - TripAdvisor ✓

[www.tripadvisor.co.il](http://www.tripadvisor.co.il) Translate this page  
Rating: 5 - 12 reviews  
Ezba, ראמה: ראה 12 חוות דעת לא משוחדות של Ezba, שקיבלה ציון של 5 מתוך 5 ב-TripAdvisor.  
At the junction between Rama village and Sajur village, ראמה, ישראל.

ראמה

## Rama راما (@RainbowRocker\_) | Twitter

[https://twitter.com/rainbowrocker\\_](https://twitter.com/rainbowrocker_)

The latest Tweets from Rama راما (@RainbowRocker\_). What you see in yourself is what you see in the world~. Syria - Dubai.

## Rama راما (@RamaEsss) | Twitter

<https://twitter.com/RamaEsss>

The latest Tweets from Rama راما (@RamaEsss). senior15 #NIS BOOMBOOM. UAE | Hama.

## Rama Imad (راما) (@Rama\_Imad) | Twitter

[https://twitter.com/Rama\\_Imad](https://twitter.com/Rama_Imad)

The latest Tweets from Rama Imad (راما) (@Rama\_Imad). I am good, but not an angel. I do sin, but I am not the devil. I am just a small girl in a big world, respect ...

## Rama - راما ساتريا (@RamaSatriya\_24) | Twitter

[https://twitter.com/ramasatriya\\_24](https://twitter.com/ramasatriya_24)

The latest Tweets from Rama - راما ساتريا (@RamaSatriya\_24): "Selain kuli pelaku design build itu jg menjatuhkn fee arsitek RT @mondododo: Rumah sbg ...

## Rama راما تلعب البولينق Rama at TIMEZONE is playing Bowling ...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcoWHeBSI0A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcoWHeBSI0A)

Dec 13, 2013 - Uploaded by RamaMctoom

في التايم زون راما تلعب البولينق وهي وحده من الالعب المفضله عندها وتحب تلعبها دايما ... One of Rama's best games at timezone is bowling so she is

## Rama راما having fun playing air hockey Rama at TIMEZONE having fun playing air hockey ...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3BF\\_N0AKLs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3BF_N0AKLs)

Dec 13, 2013 - Uploaded by RamaMctoom

ملاهي التايم زون في السيرفيس براديس في القوند كوست طلعت راما تلعب، ومن احب الالعب لها لعبة Air Hockey. TIMEZONE at surfers paradise is one

## Rama's new language راما اخترعت لغه جديده Rama - YouTube



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hR\\_34HXmul](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hR_34HXmul)

Dec 13, 2013 - Uploaded by RamaMctoom

A crazy راما اخترعت لغه جديده كلها تخييص و غصب اسولف معها بمصطلحاتها الغريبه. ... Rama has created a new language and wanted me to speak

# Ράμα

[rantevou me ton rama 4 / ραντεβού με τον ράμα 4: clarke ...](#)

[www.amazon.com/rantevou.../960382531X](http://www.amazon.com/rantevou.../960382531X) Amazon.com

rantevou me ton **rama** 4 / ραντεβού με τον **ράμα** 4 [clarke arthur c.] on Amazon.com.

\*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. ΜΕ ΤΑ ΠΡΩΤΑ ΤΟΥΣ ΒΗΜΑΤΑ ΜΕΣΑ ...

[rantevou me ton rama 2 / ραντεβού με τον ράμα 2: clarke ...](#)

[www.amazon.com/rantevou-3c1.../9603825298](http://www.amazon.com/rantevou-3c1.../9603825298) Amazon.com

rantevou me ton **rama** 2 / ραντεβού με τον **ράμα** 2 [clarke arthur c.] on Amazon.com.

\*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. ΤΟ 2197, Ο ΚΟΣΜΟΣ ΓΝΩΡΙΖΕ ΠΙΑ ...

[Renaldo Rama - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaldo\\_Rama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaldo_Rama) Wikipedia

Renaldo Rama (born 27 January 1990) is a Albanian footballer who plays for Fostiras in the ... Jump up ^ Θα λογίζεται ως Έλληνας ο **Ράμα** (in Greek). gazetta.gr.

[Τίμος Ράμα - http://restaurant-pizzeria-rama ... - Facebook](#)

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid...id...](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid...id...)

<http://restaurant-pizzeria-rama.weebly.com> Our new website :)

[Rama - restaurant pizzeria | Facebook](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Rama-restaurant.../291332117598532>

Rama - restaurant pizzeria, Mytilíni, Greece. 70 likes. Rama - restaurant pizzeria is a family shop. It is open FROM 2006 ... Τίμος **Ράμα**. October 28 at 3:47am.

[Έντι Ράμα: Πώς να πάρετε πίσω την πόλη σας με μπογιές ...](#)



[https://www.ted.com/.../edi\\_rama\\_take\\_back\\_you...](https://www.ted.com/.../edi_rama_take_back_you...) TED

Ο Έντι **Ράμα** ακολούθησε αυτή την φαινομενικά απλή συνταγή ως δήμαρχος των Τιράνων ... From 2000 to 2011 Edi Rama was the mayor of Tirana, where he ...

[Ο Ράμα σε σουηδική κλινική. Φήμες για καρκίνο ...](#)

[www.crashonline.gr/o-ράμα-σε-σουηδική-κλινική-φήμ...](http://www.crashonline.gr/o-ράμα-σε-σουηδική-κλινική-φήμ...) Translate this page

4 days ago - **rama**. Άσχημη ατμόσφαιρα επικρατεί στην Αλβανία, λόγω της επετυσμένης εισαγωγής του πρωθυπουργού κ. Έντι **Ράμα** σε ιδιωτική κλινική της ...

[ΑΕΚ: Πήρε τον Ρενάλντο Ράμα για 3 χρόνια - Θα αγωνίζεται ...](#)

[www.betarades.gr/aek-pire-ton-renalnto-rama-gia-3-x...](http://www.betarades.gr/aek-pire-ton-renalnto-rama-gia-3-x...) Translate this page

Η ΑΕΚ έκανε δικό της για 3 χρόνια τον Ρενάλντο **Ράμα**. Ο 23χρονος ποδοσφαιριστής ο οποίος κατέχει αλβανικό διαβατήριο θα αγωνίζεται ως Έλληνας τελικά ...

# ראמה

... HARE RAMA HARE KRISHNA הארי קרישנה **ראמה**



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=etXogqajc2c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etXogqajc2c)  
Nov 12, 2011 - Uploaded by haim krasno  
HARE RAMA HARE KRISHNA. הארי קרישנה **ראמה** הארי קרישנה. <a href="/channel/UCZrXdkisX\_yVd1YbHSr-Hw" class="yt. haim ...

**ראמה יאד – ויקיפדיה**

[he.wikipedia.org/wiki/ראמה\\_יאד](http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/ראמה_יאד) Translate this page Hebrew Wikipedia  
**ראמה יאד** (**Rama Yade**; נולדה כמייסד מאטולאיה יאד; ב-13 בדצמבר 1976, דקר, סנגל) היא פוליטיקאית צרפתית, חברת המפלגה הרדיקלית. כיהנה כמזכירת המדינה לענייני חוץ וזכויות ...

**RaMa ראמה לבן (@ramaaja30) | Twitter**

<https://twitter.com/ramaaja30>  
The latest Tweets from **RaMa ראמה לבן (@ramaaja30)**

**TripAdvisor - ראמה, Azbe תמונה של cauliflower with Thahini**

[www.tripadvisor.co.il/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g2642...](http://www.tripadvisor.co.il/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g2642...) - Translate this page  
תמונה של **ראמה**, Azbe, cauliflower with Thahini - צפה ב-10 תמונות וסרטונים אמיתיים מאת חברי **ראמה**, Sajur Rama Junction | Sajur Rama Junction, Rama ...

**TripAdvisor - ראמה, Azbe - חוות דעת על מסעדות**

[www.tripadvisor.co.il](http://www.tripadvisor.co.il) Translate this page  
מסעדות בראמה > ראמה > ...  
Azbe. ביתא. **Rama**, Sajur Rama Junction | Sajur Rama Junction, **ראמה**, ישראל. אתר אינטרנט. שיפור פרופיל זה. תמונה של Azbe. ביקרת בAzbe? שתף את החוויות שלך!

**הארי ראמה גסטהאוס | zaznsoo**

[www.zaznsoo.co.il](http://www.zaznsoo.co.il) Translate this page  
מקומות לינה > דלהי > הודו > המזרח הרחוק > **ראמה** גסטהאוס (Hare Rama Guest House) הוא מלך הגסטהאוסים הוותיק של הודו!! גסטהאוס זול וחביב במזמין אליו הרבה תרמילאים ובמיוחד ישראלים. יש במקום מסעדה ושולחן ...

راما



راما النتشة | Rama Al natcha | فيس بوك

<https://ar-ar.facebook.com/rama.natcha> Translate this page

راما النتشة | Rama Al natcha . 2462 إعجابًا - يتحدث 20 عن هذا. الصفحة الرسمية لمحبي المنتشة راما

النتشة...منتشة قناة محبوبة الفضائية...ترقبوا كل...

Rama | فيس بوك

<https://ar-ar.facebook.com/.../Rama-10000115281/rama...> Translate this page

إن Rama | راما موجود في فيس بوك. انضم إلى فيس بوك للتواصل مع Rama | راما وأشخاص آخرين قد تعرفهم. يمنح

فيس بوك الناس القدرة على المشاركة ويجعل العالم أكثر...

Pretty girl playing with her mum in the beach RAMA | راما ...



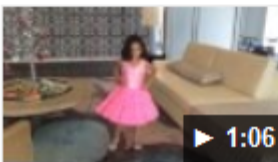
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=xX2h3HNZv80](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xX2h3HNZv80)

Dec 12, 2013 - Uploaded by RamaMctoom

بنوته حلوه تلعب في البحر | راما المکتوم عمرها ٥ سنوات عايشه في استراليا - قولد كوست

.Song by "Nancy Ajram-Ya Banat" Australia Gold Coast

YouTube - Rama - Penguin Dance | راما و رقصة البطريق الجميله



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJh11LJVomk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJh11LJVomk)

Dec 24, 2013 - Uploaded by RamaMctoom

Rama dancing Penguin as | تصوير جميل لراما ترقص رقصة البطريق اللي تحبها.

.she always wants to dance it

## Ράμα

rantevou me ton rama 4 / ραντεβού με τον ράμα 4: clarke ...

[www.amazon.com/rantevou.../960382531X](http://www.amazon.com/rantevou.../960382531X) Amazon.com

rantevou me ton **rama** 4 / ραντεβού με τον **ράμα** 4 [clarke arthur c.] on Amazon.com.

\*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. ΜΕ ΤΑ ΠΡΩΤΑ ΤΟΥΣ ΒΗΜΑΤΑ ΜΕΣΑ ...

Τίμος **Ράμα** - <http://restaurant-pizzeria-rama> ... - Facebook

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid...id...](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid...id...)

<http://restaurant-pizzeria-rama.weebly.com> Our new website :)

Έντι **Ράμα** - Βικιπαίδεια

[el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Έντι\\_Ράμα](http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Έντι_Ράμα) Translate this page Greek Wikipedia

Ο Έντι **Ράμα** (αλβανικά: Edi **Rama**), είναι πρωθυπουργός της Αλβανίας και ο ηγέτης του Σοσιαλιστικού Κόμματος της Αλβανίας, το μεγαλύτερο κόμμα της ...

Renaldo Rama - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaldo\\_Rama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaldo_Rama) Wikipedia

Renaldo **Rama** (born 27 January 1990) is a Albanian footballer who plays for Fostiras in the ... Jump up ^ Θα λογίζεται ως Έλληνας ο **Ράμα** (in Greek). gazetta.gr.

Rama has its origins in the [Sanskrit](#) language. It is used largely in Hebrew and [Indian](#). It is derived literally from the word *rama* which is of the meaning '[pleasing](#)'.

<http://www.babynamespedia.com/meaning/Rama/f>

# Rama

For other uses, see [Rama \(disambiguation\)](#).

“Râm” redirects here. It is not to be confused with [Ram \(disambiguation\)](#).

**Rama** (/ˈrɑːmə/<sup>[1]</sup>; Sanskrit: राम *Rāma*) is the seventh avatar of the Hindu god Vishnu,<sup>[2]</sup> and a king of Ayodhya in Hindu scriptures. Rama is also the protagonist of the Hindu epic *Ramayana*, which narrates his supremacy. Rama is one of the many popular figures and deities in Hinduism, specifically Vaishnavism and Vaishnava religious scriptures in South and Southeast Asia.<sup>[3]</sup> Along with Krishna, Rama is considered to be one of the most important avatars of Vishnu. In a few Rama-centric sects, he is considered the Supreme Being, rather than an avatar.

Born as the eldest son of Kausalya and Dasharatha, king of Ayodhya, Rama is referred to within Hinduism as *Maryada Purushottama*,<sup>[4]</sup> literally *the Perfect Man* or *Lord of Self-Control* or *Lord of Virtue*. His wife Sita is considered by Hindus to be an avatar of Lakshmi and the embodiment of perfect womanhood.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

Rama's life and journey is one of adherence to dharma despite harsh tests and obstacles and many pains of life and time. He is pictured as the ideal man and the perfect human. For the sake of his father's honour, Ram abandons his claim to Ayodhya's throne to serve an exile of fourteen years in the forest.<sup>[6]</sup> His wife Sita and brother Lakshmana decide to join him, and all three spend the fourteen years in exile together. While in exile, Sita is kidnapped by Ravana, the Rakshasa monarch of Lanka. After a long and arduous search, Rama fights a colossal war against Ravana's armies. In a war of powerful and magical beings, greatly destructive weaponry and battles, Rama slays Ravana in battle and liberates his wife. Having completed his exile, Rama returns to be crowned king in Ayodhya and eventually becomes emperor,<sup>[6]</sup> rules with happiness, peace, duty, prosperity and justice—a period known as *Ram Rajya*.

The legend of Rama is deeply influential and popular in the societies of the Indian subcontinent and across South East Asia. Rama is revered for his unending compassion,<sup>[7]</sup> courage and devotion to religious values and duty.

## 1 Etymology

The name Rama appears repeatedly in Hindu scriptures. Besides the name of the protagonist of the *Ramayana*



*Sita (far right), Rama (center), Lakshmana (far left) and Hanuman (below seated) at Bhaktivedanta Manor, a temple in Watford (England)*

(subject of the current article), the name is also given to other heroes including Parashu-Rama (Bhargava Rama) and Balarama (Bala-Rama).

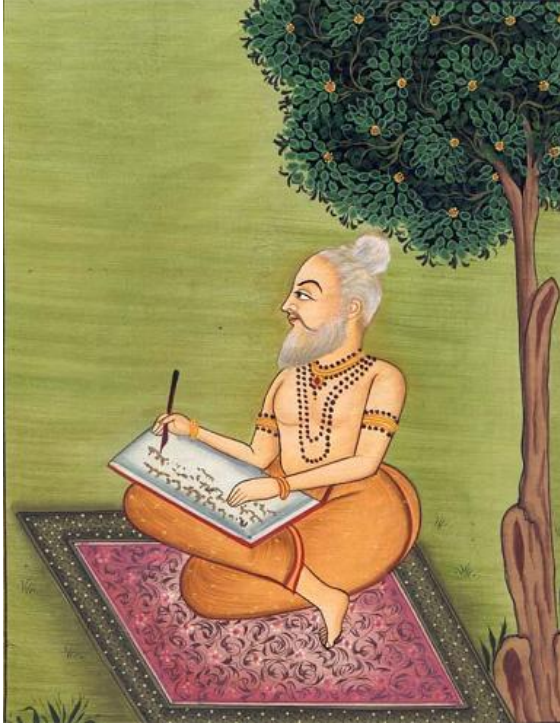
In the Vishnu sahasranama, Rama is the 394th name of Vishnu. In the interpretation of Adi Shankara's commentary, translated by Swami Tapasyananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Rama has two meanings: the supreme Brahman who is the eternally blissful spiritual Self in whom yogis delight, or the One (i.e., Vishnu) who out of His own will assumed the enchanting form of Rama, the son of Dasaratha.<sup>[8]</sup>

Other names of Rama include Ramavijaya (Javanese), Phreah Ream (Khmer), Phra Ram (Lao and Thai), Megat Seri Rama (Malay), Raja Bantugan (Maranao) and Rammar (Tamil).

The greatness of chanting of Rama's name is mentioned in the *Ramacharitamanasa*.<sup>[9][10][11][12][13][14][15]</sup>

## 2 Literary sources

The primary source of the life and journey of Rama is the epic *Ramayana* as composed by the Rishi Valmiki. The Vishnu Purana also recounts Rama as Vishnu's seventh avatar, and in the Bhagavata Purana, ninth skandha, adhyayas 10 & 11, the story of the *Ramayana* is again recounted in brief up to and including the slaying of Ravana and Prince Rama's return to Ayodhya. Additionally, the tales of Rama are reverently spoken of in the *Mahabharata*. The earliest documentation of Ram is in



Valmiki composing the Ramayana.

the Buddhist text of Dasharatha Jataka.<sup>[16]</sup>

The epic had many versions across India's regions. However, other scriptures in Sanskrit also reflect the life of Ramayana. The followers of Madhvacharya believe that an older version of the Ramayana, the mula-Ramayana, previously existed. They consider it to have been more authoritative than the version by Valmiki. Another important shortened version of the epic in Sanskrit is the *Adhyatma Ramayana*. The seventh century CE Sanskrit "Bhatti's Poem" Bhaṭṭikāvya of Bhatti who lived in Gujarat, is a retelling of the epic that simultaneously illustrates the grammatical examples for Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as well as the major figures of speech and the Prakrit language.<sup>[17]</sup> Versions of the Ramayana exist in most major Indian languages; examples that elaborate on the life, deeds and divine philosophies of Rama include the epic poem *Ramavataram* by the 12th-century poet Kambar in Tamil, and *Ramcharitmanas*, a Hindi version of the Ramayana by the 16th-century saint, Tulsidas. Contemporary versions of the Ramayana include *Sri Ramayana Darshanam* by Kuvempu in Kannada and *Ramayana Kalpavruksham* by Viswanatha Satyanarayana in Telugu, both of which have been awarded the Jnanpith Award. The epic has transformed across the diverse regions of India, which boast their own unique languages and cultural traditions.<sup>[18]</sup>

The essential tale of Rama has also spread across Southeast Asia, and evolved into unique renditions of the epic – incorporating local history, folktales, religious values as well as unique features from the languages and literary discourse. The *Kakawin Ramayana* of Java,

Indonesia, the *Ramakavaca* of Bali, *Hikayat Seri Rama* of Malaysia, *Maradia Lawana* of the Philippines, *Ramakien* of Thailand (which calls him *Phra Ram*) are great works with many unique characteristics and differences in accounts and portrayals of the legend of Rama. The legends of Rama are witnessed in elaborate illustration at the Wat Phra Kaew temple in Bangkok. The national epic of Myanmar, *Yama Zatdaw* is essentially the Burmese *Ramayana*, where Rama is named *Yama*. In the Reamker of Cambodia, Rama is known as *Preah Ream*. In the *Phra Lak Phra Lam* of Laos, Gautama Buddha is regarded as an incarnation of Rama.

To the *Valmiki Ramayana*,<sup>[19]</sup> Rama was born in Ayodhya, India, on 9th day (now celebrated across India as Ram Navami) of Chaitra lunar month (March–April), when Moon and Jupiter were rising in the east in Cancer sign and four other planets (Sun, Mars, Saturn, Venus) were exalted in their exaltation signs. Jupiter in the sign Cancer is exalted.

Commonly it is proposed that Rama was born about 1.2 million years ago, during the Treta Yuga, age that lasted 1,296,000 years.<sup>[20][21][22]</sup>

Composition of *Ramayana* in its current form is usually dated to 7th - 4th Century BCE.<sup>[23][24][25]</sup>

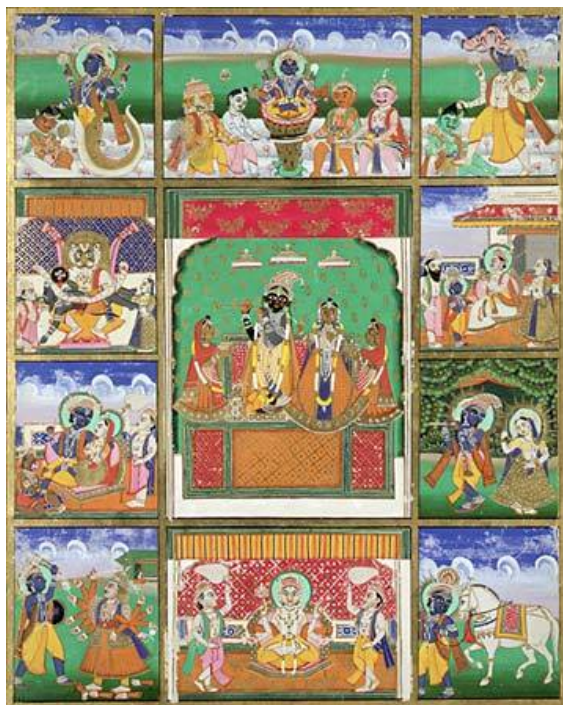
## 3 Balkand

### 3.1 Birth as an avatar

See also: Reasons for Ram avatar and Genealogy of Rama

The *Ramayana* speaks of how the earth goddess Bhumidevi, came to the creator-god Brahma begging to be rescued from evil kings who were plundering her resources and destroying life through bloody wars and evil conduct. The deva (gods) also came to Brahma fearful of the rule of Ravana, the ten-headed rakshasa emperor of Lanka. Ravana had overpowered the devas and now ruled the heavens, the earth and the netherworlds. Although a powerful and noble monarch, he was also arrogant, destructive and a patron of evil doers. He had boons that gave him immense strength and was invulnerable to all living and celestial beings, except man and animals.<sup>[26]</sup>

Brahma, Bhumidevi and the gods worshipped Vishnu, the Preserver, for deliverance from Ravana's tyrannical rule. Vishnu promised to kill Ravana by incarnating as a man – the eldest son of Kosala's king Dasharatha.<sup>[26]</sup> Goddess Lakshmi took birth as Sita in order to accompany her consort Vishnu and was found by king Janaka of Mithila while he was ploughing a field. Vishnu's eternal companion, the Shesha is said to have incarnated as Lakshmana to stay at his Lord's side on earth. Throughout his life, no one, except himself and a few select sages (among which are included Vasishtha, Sharabhanga, Agastya and Vishwamitra) know of his destiny. Rama is continually



Rama (left third from top) depicted in the Dashavatara (ten avatars) of Vishnu. Painting from Jaipur, now at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

revered by the many sages he encounters through his life, but only the most learned and exalted know of his true identity. At the end of the war between Rama and Ravana, just as Sita passes her *Agni pariskha*, Brahma, Indra and the gods, the celestial sages and Shiva appear out of the sky. They affirm Sita's purity and ask him to end this terrible test. Thanking the avatar for delivering the universe from the grips of evil, they reveal Rama's divine identity upon the culmination of his mission.<sup>[27]</sup>

Other scriptures provide other reasons for the avatar. The chastity of Vrinda, wife of the demon Jalandhara, that protects the life of her husband is destroyed by Vishnu by deceit so that Shiva can slay the demon. She curses Vishnu be born on earth; while Jalandhara is born as Ravana.<sup>[28][29]</sup>

Another legend narrates that Jaya and Vijaya, the gatekeepers of Vishnu, were cursed by the Four Kumaras to be born on earth three lives; Vishnu took avatars each time to free them of their earthly existence. They are born as Ravana and his brother Kumbhakarna, who are both killed by Rama. Also, due to a boon, Kashyapa and Aditi are born as the parents of Rama, Dasharatha and Kausalya.<sup>[30]</sup> In another version, Svayambhuva Manu and his wife Satarupa are blessed to be born as Rama's parents.<sup>[31][32]</sup>

Another tale says that the sage Narada cursed Vishnu to be born on earth as a king, to be helped by monkeys and suffer separation from his wife. Narada also curses Jaya and Vijaya to be born as the demon brothers.<sup>[33][34]</sup>

### 3.2 Initiation of the Avatara

Sage Vishwamitra takes the two princes, Rama and Lakshmana, to his ashram, as he needs Rama's help in slaying several Rakshasas that have been harassing him and several other sages living in the area. Rama's first encounter is with a Rakshasi named Taataka, who is a celestial nymph cursed to take the form of a demoness. Vishwamitra explains that she has polluted much of the habitat where the sages reside and there will not be any contentment until she is destroyed. Rama has some reservations about killing a woman, but since Taataka poses such a big threat to the Rishis and he is expected to follow their word, he fights with Taataka and kills her with an arrow. After her death, the surrounding forest becomes greener and cleaner.

Vishwamitra presents Rama with several astras and satras (divine weapons) that will be of use to him in the future, and Rama masters the knowledge of all the weapons and their uses. Vishwamitra then tells Rama and Lakshmana that soon, he along with some of his disciples, will perform a yagna for seven days and nights that will be of great benefit to the world, and the two princes must keep close watch for the two sons of Taadaka, Mareecha and Subahu, who will try to defile the yagna at all costs. The princes therefore keep a strong vigil for all of the days, and on the seventh day they spot Maricha and Subahu coming with a whole host of Raakshasas ready to pour their bones and blood into the fire. Rama points his bow at the two, and with one arrow kills Subahu, and with the other arrow flings Mareecha thousands of miles away into the ocean. Rama deals with the rest of the demons. The yagna is completed successfully.

Rama also frees Ahalya, the wife of Gautama Maharishi, from a curse. She was cursed to turn into stone by her husband after a displeasing incident. However, the dust on Rama's feet touched the stone and turned it back into a woman again. Gautama Maharishi was gratified that everything was back to normal again.

Sage Vishwamitra then takes the two princes to the *Swayamvara* a wedding ceremony for Sita. The challenge is to string the bow of Shiva and shoot an arrow from it. This task is considered impossible for any ordinary king or living being, as this is the personal weapon of Shiva, more powerful, holy and of divine creation than conceivable. While attempting to string the bow, Rama breaks it in two. This feat of strength spreads his fame across the worlds and seals his marriage to Sita, celebrated as *Vivaha Panchami*.<sup>[35]</sup>

After Rama weds Sita and the entire royal family and the Ayodhya army begin their journey back, the great rishi Parashurama (Bhargava Rama) appears before them, having descended from his mountainous hermitage. Parashurama is an extremely powerful rishi, responsible for killing all of the world's tyrannical and oppressive emperors and kings 21 times. He is the sixth



*Ahalya offering fruits and flowers to Rama - her saviour, a 5th-century AD Stone sculpture from Deogah, currently in the National Museum, New Delhi.*

Avatara of Vishnu, and finds it unbelievable that anybody could break the bow of Shiva. Considering himself to still be the most powerful warrior-rishi on earth, he brings with them the bow of Vishnu, and intends to challenge Rama to prove his strength by stringing it, and then fighting a battle with him to prove superiority.<sup>[36]</sup> Although the entire Ayodhya army is forestalled by his mystical power, Rama is himself angered. He respectfully bows to Parashurama, and within a twinkling of an eyelid snatches the bow of Vishnu, strings it, places an arrow and points it straight at the challenger's heart. Rama asks Parashurama what he will give as a target to the arrow. At this point, Parashurama feels himself devoid of the tremendous mystical energy he possessed for so long. He realizes that Rama is Vishnu incarnate, his successor and definitely his superior. He accepts Rama's superiority, devotes his *tapasya* to him, pays homage to Rama and promises to return to his hermitage and leave the world of men.<sup>[37]</sup>

Rama then shoots the arrow up into the sky with Vishnu's bow, performing a feat true to his supreme, divine nature with his natural weapon. His overpowering of Parashurama and using the supreme weapon with incredible ease and perfection dazzle the spectators and his relatives, but no one save Parashurama and Vasishtha associate this with his true identity. It is said that the Rama's arrow is still flying across space, across time and across all of the universe. The day it will return to earth, it is said, it will bring the end of the world. Others say that the flying arrow destroys all evil on earth to uphold dharma and righteousness.<sup>[37]</sup>

## 4 Dharma of exile



*Rama portrayed as exile in the forest, accompanied by his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana*

King Dasaratha announces to Ayodhya that he plans to crown Rama, his eldest child the *Yuvaraja* (crown prince). While the news is welcomed by everyone in the kingdom, the mind of queen Kaikeyi is poisoned by her wicked maid-servant, *Manthara*. Kaikeyi, who is initially pleased for Rama, is made to fear for the safety and future of her son Bharata. Fearing that Rama would ignore or possibly victimize his younger brother for the sake of power, Kaikeyi demands that Dasaratha banish Rama to a forest exile for fourteen years, and that Bharata be crowned in Rama's place. She had been granted two boons by the king when she had saved his life a long time ago in battle, and the queen now used them to serve her purpose.<sup>[38]</sup> The king's court and the people are outraged at this turn of events. Dasaratha loved and cherished Rama dearly, and is in personal turmoil. Completely estranged now from his younger wife, he abhors the prospect of separation from Rama. But Rama realizes that the king must not break a solemn promise at any time, and neither should a son disobey his father's command. Sita joins her husband in exile despite his discouraging her, as it is her duty and out of love for Rama that she must be at his side at all times. His younger brother Lakshmana also immediately decides to join Rama rather than remain in the city.<sup>[39]</sup>

As he leaves for exile, the people of Ayodhya are deeply saddened and angered at Dasaratha and Kaikeyi. Dasaratha's heart is broken and he collapses and dies

during the night of the sixth day, unable to bear the agony of separation from Rama. Despite the reasoning of Vashistha and the pleas of his brothers, Rama refuses to return. Although horrified at the news of his father's death, Rama finds it impossible that he should break his dead father's word. Rama does not bear any anger towards Kaikeyi, believing firmly in the power of destiny.<sup>[40]</sup> According to the explanation of the classic, this exile actually presents Rama the opportunity to confront Ravana and his evil empire.

## 5 Rama and Sita



*Rama with Sita on the throne, their children Lava and Kusha on their laps. Behind the throne, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna stand. Hanuman bows to Rama before the throne. Valmiki to the left*

Rama and Sita are the protagonists in one of the most famous love stories of all time. Described as being deeply in love, Sita and Rama are theologically understood as Incarnations of Lakshmi and Vishnu respectively. When Rama is banished from the kingdom, he attempts to convince Sita not to join him in a potentially dangerous and certainly arduous existence in the jungle, but Sita rejects this. When Rama orders her in his capacity as husband, Sita rejects it, asserting that it was an essential duty of a wife to be at her husband's side come good or ill.<sup>[39]</sup> Rama in turn is assiduously protective and caring for Sita throughout the exile.

When Sita is kidnapped by Ravana, both Sita and Rama undergo great personal hardships during their separation. Sita protects her chastity assiduously, and survives over a year in captivity on the strength of her love and attention to religious values and duty. She is completely unfettered in her resolve despite Ravana's courting, cajoling and threats. Meanwhile Rama, not knowing who had kidnapped Sita or where she was taken, often succumbs to despair and tears, denouncing himself for failing to defend her and agonizing over her safety and pain. Sita knows that it is in Rama's destiny to fight to rescue her (she refuses to be rescued thus by Hanuman, who discovers her), but is deeply anxious for his safety and fearful of Ravana's power.

The 'Wedding of Rama and Sita' concerns two entities coming together to form a whole. An Indian marriage forges an alliance not only between two people, but also two families. The marriage of Sita and Rama creates an alliance between two people, two families, and two kingdoms: Mithila, home of Sita, and Kosala, home of Rama. Furthermore, Rama's marriage to Sita on earth parallels the celestial union of Vishnu and Lakshmi; each deity took birth on earth, and so when Rama marries Sita, he is actually reuniting with his divine consort Lakshmi, Goddess of Good Fortune, who brings prosperity to Kosala. At an allegorical level, the union of Rama and Sita represents the relationship between God and the devotee, with Rama as the beloved divine king and Sita as his devotee. Finally, at a societal level, the dance drama brings together north and south Indian dance traditions.<sup>[41]</sup>

### 5.1 Agni pariksha

Lord Rama sent a messenger to Ravana that said, "Come to me and I will forgive you," before he slays Ravana. After Rama slays Ravana and wins the war, Sita wants to come before him in the state which over a year's imprisonment had reduced her to, but Rama arranges for Sita to be bathed and given beautiful garments before they are re-united. But even as Sita comes before him in great excitement and happiness, the society starts doubting Sita's purity so Rama decided to prove that his Sita is still pure and chaste in front of the society, so he tells her that she has to give Agni pariksha. At this sudden turn of events, all the vanaras, rakshasas, Sugriva, Hanuman and Lakshmana are deeply shocked.<sup>[42]</sup>

Sita begs Lakshmana to build her a pyre upon which she could end her life, as she could not live without Rama. At this point, Lakshmana is angered at Rama for the first time in his life, but following Rama's nod, he builds a pyre for Sita. At the great shock and sorrow of the watchers, Sita sits into the flames. But to their astonishment and wonder, she is completely unharmed. Instead, she glows radiantly from the centre of the pyre. But the gods headed by Brahma and Shiva appear, reveal Rama's and Sita's true identity and requests that Rama take Sita back as she is truly pure. Rama replies that he had never doubted her



*The Agni pariksha*

purity for a second, but, the people of the world would not have accepted or honoured her as a queen or a woman if she had not passed this *Agni pariksha* before the eyes of hundreds. Agni would destroy the impure and sinful, but not touch the pure and innocent.<sup>[43]</sup> There is a version of Tulsidas's *Ramacharitamanasa*, which is popular, which states that Rama had Sita under the protection of Agni God. After Sita was released it was necessary to bring her out of security of Agni god.<sup>[44]</sup> This finds echo in the *sthal* purana of Tirupathi. Another version of this, used in Ramanand Sagar's *Ramayan*, was that Rama had known Sita was going to be abducted by Ravana ahead of time. So he entrusted her to Agni, the god of fire. Rama did this so that he, who in reality was Vishnu, could kill Ravana. Sita, in turn, left behind a "shadow", or twin-like version of herself behind. The "shadow" Sita had been abducted by Ravana. Therefore, the *lila* of Agni Pariksha was to retrieve the genuine Sita from the temporary care of Agni Deva. Rama explains this to Lakshmana before the "Pariksha" is done. This version has also been written in the *Ram Charit Manas*.

## 6 Sita's Exile

In the *Uttara Kanda*, Rama banishes his wife Sita, even as she is pregnant, asking Lakshmana to deliver her safely to the forest. He does so after receiving word that some of his subjects in Ayodhya believed that Sita was unfit due to her long captivity in Ravana's city. As a king is expected to uphold moral principles, Rama reluctantly banished Sita in order to uphold his duty. Sita took refuge under the noble sage Valmiki.

A legend by Rishi Agastya in the epic states that Vishnu in a previous age had been cursed by Rishi Bhrgu, whose wife had been killed by Vishnu for sheltering his enemies escaping from battle. The Rishi condemns Vishnu to be denied for a long age the companionship of his soul mate, just as Vishnu, had deprived the rishi of his loving wife. Thus Rama, Vishnu's incarnation, must live the rest of his life without Sita.<sup>[45]</sup>



*Rama fighting his sons Lava and Kusha*

Many Hindus, such as the followers of Sri Vaishnavism, consider this entire section of the *Ramayana* to be interpolated, and thus they do not accept the authenticity of this story claiming that Sita was banished. An alternate narration of *Ramayana* does not state it so. It says that Sita later lived in her father's kingdom of Mithila with her sons Lava and Kusha as per the North Indian (especially in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar) custom that children be brought up in their *nanihal*, or maternal grandmother's place. Sita and her sons later live in Valmiki's ashram for the boys' education and military training. As per Tulsidas's *Ramcharitmanas*, both the princes grew extremely intelligent and strong under Rishi Valmiki's tutelage. .

### 6.1 Children

Main articles: [Kusha \(Ramayana\)](#) and [Lava \(Ramayana\)](#)  
According to legend, Kusha and Lava are the twin sons of Lord Rama and Sita. Born in the forest after the banishment of Sita from Ayodhya, the twins were educated and trained in military skills as their mother took refuge in Sage Valmiki's ashram, located in a forest on the banks of the River Tamsa.

As Rama performed the *Ashvamedha Yajna*, a horse





*Lava and Kusa, the sons of Rāma.*

strayed into their forest, Rama sent Hanuman to retrieve the horses. Rama's sons Luv and Kush captured the horses. Hanuman, seeing Luv and Kush recognised that they were the son's of Rama. He let them capture him and tie him up. There Hanuman started meditating on the name Rama. Worried Rama sent his brothers to look for the horses. As they saw Hanuman tied up and two boys guarding him, they thought that the two boys had stolen the horses. So Ramas brothers started attacking Luv and Kush. Although Rama's brothers should have won, but Luv and Kush defeated them all, knocking them unconscious. Luv and Kush were protected by Hanuman. Then Rama himself went looking for the horses fearing that Hanuman and his brothers had been attacked. On his way there, Rama intuitively knew that Luv and Kush were his sons and purposely slept on his chariot to delay tension and confrontation with his sons as he knew it would be inappropriate for a father to fight his sons. Upon reaching the battlefield, the sage Valmiki interrupted the potential battle between father and sons by explaining to Rama that Luv and Kush were his sons. A familial reunion took place.

When Devi Sita found out that Lava and Kusha had defeated Ayodhya's forces, she proudly revealed their/her identity. Rama desired Sita and his sons to live with him in his kingdom but as this took place, the general population of the kingdom resented Sita from returning. In response, Sita forsaken her like and sought final refuge in the arms of her mother Bhumidevi, the Goddess Mother Earth and ultimately returned to Rama in the form of Vishnu in Vishnu's abode - indicating that forced separation from her beloved husband is only limited in life on earth compared to her eternal union with her beloved in life after death.

## 7 Later life

Rama's reign is known as the *Rama Rajya* which lasted for 11,000 years. During this period, people were



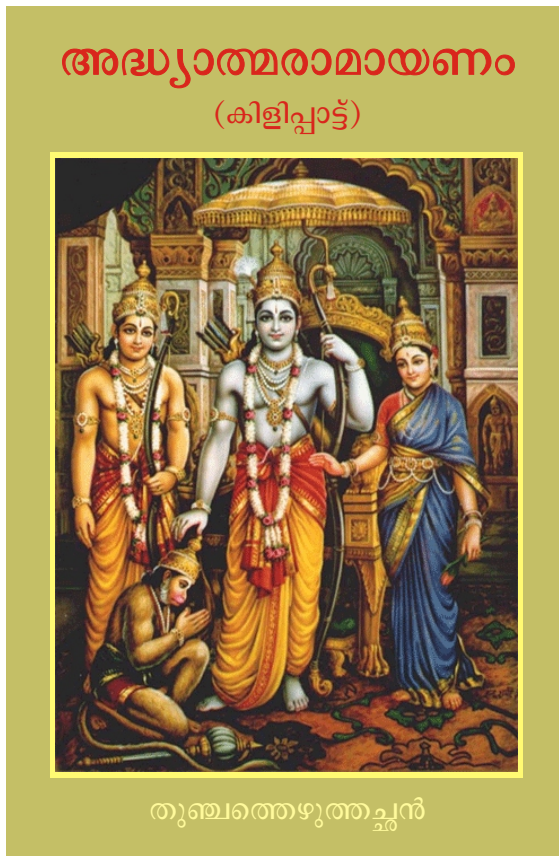
*Rishi Agastya (Father of Tamil literature) -Rama acquired a rare gem from him which entombed the powers of the gods Indra, Varuna, Yama and Kubera*

healthy, holy, satisfied and lived with complete peace and harmony.<sup>[46]</sup> There was no evil, no wars, no natural calamity and no diseases. Rama ruled the whole earth without using military force as all kings submitted themselves to him. Once a Brahmana came to him, lamenting over his dead son. According to the Uttara Kand, a later edition and possible non-canon part of the Ramayana, Sage Narada told Rama that a Sudra was doing a penance somewhere in his kingdom, which was a sin because in the Treta Yuga only Brahmanas and Kshatriyas were expected to do penances. Vaishyas and Sudras could attain salvation by doing their duty only. Rama set out in the Pushpaka Vimana (which Kubera had given it in gratitude for killing Ravana) and travelled in North, East and Western directions but Rama did not see any sinful activities. Rama then went out in the southern direction where he found a Sudra, Sambuka, on top of a hill in sirsana position, who was . Rama asked him his caste and on receiving the reply that he was a Shudra, beheaded him, establishing Dharma of the Yuga once again. His brothers Bharata and Shatrughna settled in their later lives. Bharata, with the help of his uncle Yudhajita, conquered the eastern land of the Gandharvas and ruled it. Shatrughna slew the Asura Lavana and founded the city of Mathura. Rama acquired a rare gem from Rishi Agastya which entombed the powers of the gods Indra, Varuna, Yama and Kubera, which helped the king rule efficiently. After his reign, Rama and his brothers and his allies peacefully left the earth on the river Sarayu

abandoning their mortal bodies. Lava and Kusha ruled Kosala and continued the solar race.

## 8 Maryada Purushottama

As a person, Rama personifies the characteristics of an ideal person (purushottama)<sup>[4][47]</sup> who is to be emulated. He had within him all the desirable virtues that any individual would seek to aspire, and he fulfils all his moral obligations (maryada). Rama's purity and piety in his intentions and actions inspires affection and devotion for him from a variety of characters from different backgrounds. For example, he gave up his rightful claim to the throne, and agreed to go into exile for fourteen years, to fulfill the vow that his father had given to Kaikeyi, one of King Dashratha's wives. This is in spite of the fact that Kaikeyi's son, Bharat, begged him to return to Ayodhya and said that he did not want to rule in place of Rama. But Rama considered his dharma as a son above that of his own birthright and his life's ambition. For such supreme sacrifices, and many other qualities, Rama is considered a *maryada purushottama* the best of upholders of Dharma, a basically human but exemplary figure<sup>[48]</sup> Some of his ideals are as follows:



Rama, Sita and Lakshman from the Ramayana

1. At the time when it was normal for kings to have more than one wife, Rama gave the ideal of having a single

wife. After Sita was banished, he was doing penance with a gold statue of Sita. In Balakanda of Valmiki Ramayana it is written that Rama and Sita resided in each other's heart.

2. Rama always followed his promise at any cost. In fact, he went to forest to make his father's promise to Kaikeyi true. Another instance was when, he had promised the Spirit of Time that during their conversation, if anyone was to intrude, Rama would have pronounce an instant death sentence upon the individual. They were intruded upon by his beloved younger brother Lakshmana, and to keep his part of the promise, pronounced the death sentence. There are many examples of Rama's promises which he kept. Most important are the promise to sages to save their lives from Rakshasas, getting back Sugreeva's kingdom, making Vibhishana the king of Lanka.

3. Excellent friend: Rama had very touching relations with his friends irrespective of their status. Some of his friends are Nishada-raj Guha, King of Nishadas (a caste whose profession was hunting the birds), Sugreeva (the Vanara king) and Vibhishana a Rakshasa.

4. Even towards his enemies, Rama showed great nobility and virtue. To gather information about the enemy army's strengths and weaknesses, Ravana sent two of his spies, Suka and Sarana, to the Vanara camps. Disguised as Vanaras they blended into the enemy camp, but Vibhishana saw through their deceit. The duo sought Rama's protection when the monkey warriors thrashed them. Rama gave them refuge. He then asked them what their mission was and whether they fulfilled it. After listening to them, he sent for a Vanara to give them a proper tour of all the Vanara camps and give them all the information they desired about the major soldiers and their strengths. He then told the spies to give this message to Ravana. "Tomorrow morning, I will destroy all of Lanka. Keep all sides of your palace well defended and be ready with all of your men by sunrise." The spies were greatly astonished with Rama's charisma, courage, and adherence to the codes of war. After Rama gave them leave, they knew that their king was bound to lose against this virtuous and courageous man. When Ravana first fought with Rama, Rama defeated him to such an extent that Ravana lost his charioteer, horses, chariot, flag, weapons and armor. Though the situation was at his advantage, Rama instead praised Ravana for a great fight that day, and asked him to retire and take rest, as he must be quite tired. Ravana was greatly embarrassed at this, but he was also gratified that Rama saved his life, and this led him to consider for a moment whether to retreat and give Sita back...

## 9 Companions

Even as Rama is the ideal conception of manhood, he is often aided and complemented in different situations by

the characteristics by those who accompany him. They serve Rama devotedly, at great personal risk and sacrifice.

## 9.1 Bharata and Lakshmana

Main articles: Bharata (Ramayana) and Lakshmana

See also: Shatrughna

Absent when Rama is exiled, upon his return Bharata



*Rama and Sita worship the Shiva Lingam at Rameswaram, as his companions Vibhishana (right) looks on with Lakshmana, Tumburu and Narada along with the Vanar Sena.*

is appalled to learn of the events. And even though Kaikeyi had done all this for his benefit, Bharata is angered at the suggestion that he should take Ayodhya's throne. Denouncing his mother, Bharata proclaims to the city that he would go to the forest to fetch Rama back, and would serve out his term of exile himself. Although initially resentful and suspicious, the people of Ayodhya hail Bharata's selfless nature and courageous act. Despite his fervent pleas to return, Rama asserts that he must stay in the forest to keep his father's word. He orders Bharata to perform his duty as king of Ayodhya, especially important after Dasaratha's death, and orders Shatrughna to support and serve him. Returning saddened to the city, Bharata refuses to wear the crown or sit on the throne. Instead, he places the slippers of Rama that he had taken back with him on the throne, and rules Ayodhya assiduously keeping Rama's beliefs and values in mind. When Rama finally returns, Bharata runs personally to welcome him back.

Bharata is hailed for his devotion to his elder brother and dharma, distinguished from Lakshmana as he is left



*Ramanathaswamy Temple, Rameswaram*

on his own for fourteen years. But he unfailingly denies self-interest throughout this time, ruling the kingdom only in Rama's name.<sup>[49]</sup> Vasishtha proclaims that no one had better learnt dharma than Bharata,<sup>[50]</sup> and for this piety he forms an essential part of the conception of perfect manhood, of the Seventh Avatara of Vishnu. Shatrughna's role to Bharata is akin to that of Lakshmana to Rama. Believed to be one-quarter of Vishnu incarnated, or as the incarnation of his eternal companion, Ananta Sesha, Lakshmana is always at Rama's side.<sup>[51]</sup> Although unconstrained by Dasaratha's promise to Kaikeyi, Lakshmana resists Rama's arguments and accompanies him and Sita into the forest. During the years of exile, Lakshmana constantly serves Rama and Sita – building huts, standing guard and finding new routes. When Sita is kidnapped, Rama blazes with his divine power and in his immense rage, expresses the desire to destroy all creation. Lakshmana prays and pleads for Rama to calm himself, and despite the shock of the moment and the promise of travails to come, begin an arduous but systematic search for Sita. During times when the search is proving fruitless and Rama fears for Sita, and expresses despair in his grief and loneliness, Lakshmana encourages him, providing hope and solace.

When Rama in his despair fears that Sugriva has forgotten his promise to help him trace Sita, Lakshmana goes to Kishkindha to remind the complacent monarch of his promise to help. Lakshmana twangs the bow inside the hall quaking the entire building and threatens to destroy Sugriva and the monkey kingdom with his own divine power. Lakshmana is unable to tolerate Sugriva breaking his vow to Rama while enjoying material and sensual pleasures while Rama suffers alone. It is only through the diplomatic intervention of Queen Tara, Sugriva's wife, that Lakshmana is pacified. Tara then scolds and gal-

vanises Sugriva into honoring his promise to Rama. Sugriva and Rama are then reconciled with the help of Lakshmana and Tara. Sugriva sends the monkey hoards to find the location of Sita and lead the monkey army into battle against the demonic forces of Ravana.<sup>[52]</sup>

Lakshmana is uniquely responsible for slaying **Indrajit**, the invincible son of Ravana who had humiliated Indra and the devas, and outwitted the brothers and the Vanaras on several occasions. Rishi Agastya later points out that this victory was the turning point of the conflict. Rama is often overcome with emotion and deep affection for Lakshmana, acknowledging how important and crucial Lakshmana's love and support was for him. He also trusts Lakshmana to carry out difficult orders – Lakshmana was asked to take Sita to the ashrama of Valmiki, where she was to spend her exile. Lakshmana's deep love for Rama, his unconditional service and sacrifice, as well as qualities of practical judgment and clear-headedness make him Rama's superior in certain situations and perspectives. Lakshmana symbolizes a man's duty to his family, brothers and friends, and forms an essential part of the conception of ideal manhood, that Rama primarily embodies.

## 9.2 Jatayu, Hanuman and Vibheeshana

Main articles: [Jatayu \(Ramayana\)](#), [Hanuman](#) and [Vibheeshana](#)

When Rama and Lakshmana begin the desperate search



*Ravana kidnapping Sita while Jatayu on the left tried to help her. 9th century Prambanan bas-relief, Java, Indonesia*

to discover where Sita had been taken, after traversing a distance in many directions, they come across the magical eagle Jatayu, who is dying. They discover from Jatayu that a rakshasa was flying away with a crying, struggling Sita towards the south. Jatayu had flown to the rescue of Sita, but owing to his age and the rakshasa's power, had been defeated. With this, Jatayu dies in Rama's arms. Rama is overcome with love and affection for the bird which sacrificed its own life for Sita, and the rage of his death returns to him in the climactic battle with Ravana.

Rama's only allies in the struggle to find Sita are the **Vanaras** of Kishkindha. Finding a terrified **Sugriva** being hunted by his own brother, king **Vali**, Rama promises to kill Vali and free Sugriva of the terror and the unjust charge of plotting to murder Vali. The two swear everlasting friendship over sacred fire. Rama's natural piety and compassion, his sense of justice and duty, as well as his courage despite great personal suffering after Sita's kidnapping inspire devotion from the Vanaras and Sugriva, but especially **Hanuman**, Sugriva's minister. Devoted to Rama, Hanuman exerts himself greatly over the search for Sita. He is the first to discover that Sita was taken to Lanka, and volunteers to use his divine gifts in a dangerous reconnaissance of Lanka, where he is to verify Sita's presence. Hanuman hands Rama's ring to Sita, as a mark of Rama's love and his imminent intention of rescuing her. Though captured, he candidly delivers Rama's message to Ravana to immediately release Sita, and when his tail is burned, he flies and sets Lanka on fire. When Lakshmana is struck down and near death and Rama overcome with love and concern for his brother, Hanuman flies to the **Himalayas** on the urgent mission to fetch the *sanjeevani* medicinal herbs, bringing the entire mountain to Lanka so that no time is lost in saving Lakshmana.<sup>[53]</sup> The Vanaras fight the rakshasas, completely devoted to Rama's cause. They angrily dismiss Ravana's efforts to create international divisions within their army when he suggested that Rama considered them, monkeys, as mere animals. At the end of the war, Indra restores life to the millions of fallen Vanaras.<sup>[54]</sup>

Before the onset of war, rakshasa prince **Vibheeshana**, Ravana's youngest brother comes to join Rama. Although he loves his brother and Lanka, he fails in repeated efforts to make Ravana follow religious values and return Sita. Vibheeshana believes that Ravana's arrogance and callousness will cause the destruction of Lanka, which is a gross violation of a king's duty, and that Ravana's actions have only propagated evil. Vibheeshana refuses to defend the evil of Ravana's ways and inspired by Rama's compassion and piety, leaves Lanka to join the Vanara Army.<sup>[55]</sup> His knowledge of rakshasa ways and Ravana's mind help Rama and the Vanaras overcome black magic and mystical weapons. At the end of the war, Rama crowns Vibheeshana as the king of Lanka. Vibheeshana, and to a greater extent Hanuman, embody the perfect devotee in the wider conception of perfect manhood.

## 10 Rama in war

When Rama is thirteen years old, he and his brother Lakshmana are taken by Vishwamitra to the forests, with the purpose of killing rakshasas who are wrecking the tapasya and sacrifices of brahmins. When asked to slay the demoness, Rama demurs, considering it sinful to kill a woman. But Vishwamitra explains that evil has no gender. Rama replies that "My father asked me to follow your

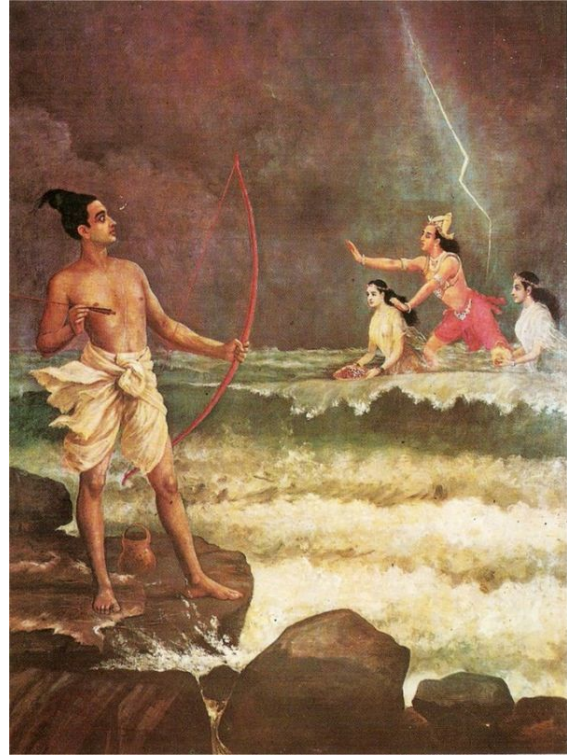


The epic story of Ramayana was adopted by several cultures across Asia. Shown here is a Thai historic artwork depicting the battle which took place between Rama and Ravana.

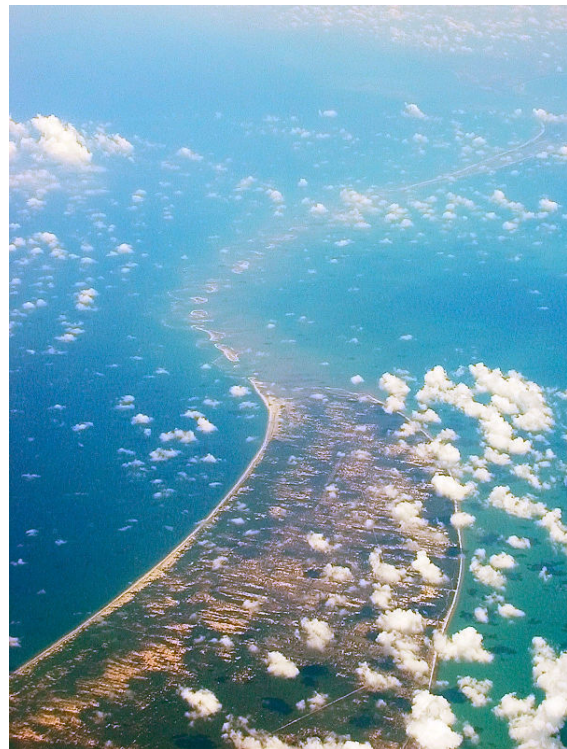
orders, I will obey them even if it is a sin". Rama proceeds to slay Tadaka, a cursed yaksha demoness. The killing of Tadaka liberates the yaksha soul who was cursed for a sin, and had to adopt a rakshasi's body. It restores the purity of the sacrifices of the brahmins who live nearby, and protects the animals who live in the forest, and travelers. Rama and Lakshmana are taught the advanced military arts and given the knowledge of all celestial weapons by Vishwamitra. The main purpose of Vishwamitra's excursion is to conduct his yagna without interruption from two evil demons, Maricha and Subahu sons of Tadaka. Rama and Lakshmana guard the sacrifice, and when the two demons appear, Rama shoots an arrow named Manava Astra that carries Maricha across the lands and into the ocean, but does not kill him. Rama and his brother then proceed to kill Subahu and accompanying demons. Rama explains to Lakshmana that leaving Maricha alive was an act of compassion, but the others did not heed the point and chose to attack.<sup>[56]</sup> During the forest exile, sages plead for protection and help against evil rakshasas who spoil their sacrifices and religious activities and terrorize them. Many rakshasas had even killed and eaten sages and innocent people. At Janasthana, Rama uses his exceptional prowess to single-handedly kill over fourteen thousand demon hordes led by the powerful Khara, who is a cousin of Ravana and Dushana.

## 10.1 Varuna

Faced with the dilemma of how to cross the ocean, Rama performs a penance *tapasya*, fasting and meditating in perfect *dhyana* for three days and three nights to Samudra, the Lord of Oceans. The ocean god does not respond, and Rama on the fourth morning, pointed the Brahmastra towards the ocean. The Vanaras are dazzled and fearful at witnessing the enraged Rama demolish the oceans, and Lakshmana prays to calm Rama's mind. Just as Rama invokes the Brahmastra, considered the most powerful weapon capable of destroying all creation, Varuna arises out of the oceans. He bows to Rama,



Raja Ravi Varma Painting – 'Rama Conquers Varuna'



Rama Setu (Adam's) bridge as seen from the air, Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu, India

and begs for pardon. Since Rama had to use the weapon, he suggests Rama re-direct the weapon at a demonic race that lives in the heart of the ocean. Rama's arrows destroys the demons, and establishes a purer, liberated en-

vironment there. Varuna promises that he would keep the oceans still for all of Rama's army to pass, and Nala constructs a bridge (Rama's Bridge) across to Lanka. Rama justifies his angry assault on the oceans as he followed the correct process of petitioning and worshipping Varuna, but obtaining the result by force for the greater good.<sup>[57]</sup>

The bridge today is known as Rama Setu, which supposedly has its existence between India and Sri Lanka, originates from Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu, India.

## 10.2 Facing Ravana

Main article: [Ravana](#)

Rama asserted his dedication to dharma when he offered



*Ravana, Demon King of Lanka*

Ravana a final chance to make peace, by immediately returning Sita and apologizing, despite his heinous actions and patronage of evil, but Ravana refused. In the war, Rama slayed the most powerful rakshasa commanders, including Atikaya, Ravana's brother, Kumbhakarna along with hundreds of thousands of rakshasa soldiers. He defeated Ravana in their first battle, destroying his chariot and weapons, and severely injuring him, but he allowed Ravana to live and return to fight another day. But since he was playing the part of a human being, Rama also proved "vulnerable" on occasion to his enemies. He was put to a deep sleep along with Lakshmana by the *nagapash* of Indrajit (though this is attributed by Vaishnavas to his Rama-lila or divine play, as he is to purposefully

lose consciousness from the nagapash so that his devotees could engage in the divine task of serving him), but they recovered when Garuda, the vehicle of Vishnu and enemy of serpents appear.

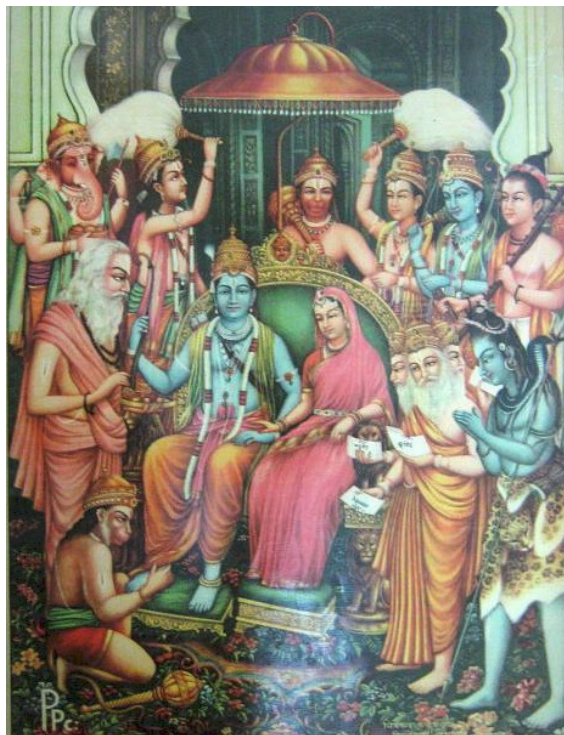


*Rama launched at his foe a fearsome a bolt*

In the grand finale of the battle, Rama engaged Ravana, who through the devastation of losing his sons, his brothers and friends and millions of his warriors, aroused his magical powers and made full use of the boons of Siva and Brahma, and the magical knowledge of warfare possessed by the greatest of rakshasas. Rama and Ravana competed fiercely, inflicting severe injuries on one another with powerful weapons capable of destroying the universe. After a long and arduous battle, Rama successfully decapitated Ravana's central head, but an ugly head, symbolic of all of Ravana's evil powers arose in its place. After another long battle, Rama decapitated it again, only to find another growing in its place. This cycle continues, and as darkness approached, Ravana's magical powers increased in force. Mathali, Indra's charioteer who had been sent by Indra after being counselled by the witnessing Rishis, Danavas and Devas; seeing this then told Rama that Ravana had obtained amrita, the nectar of immortality, from the gods. Though he could not consume it, he nevertheless stored a vessel of it in his stomach. This amrit was causing his heads to regenerate as soon as they were cut off. Upon the advice of Agastya, Rama worshiped Lord Aditya, the Sun, with the famous *Aditya Hridayam* prayer and then invoked Brahmastra. Rama fired an arrow into Ravana's chest/stomach and evapo-

rated the store of amrit, finally killing him. however it is stated in the Ramayana that Ravana called for Rama as he was shot and as a result, was immediately dispatched to Heaven.<sup>[58]</sup> Following Ravana's death, Rama expressed deep compassion. After investing Vibheeshana as the next king of Lanka, he asked the new king and the surviving rakshasas to properly cremate their dead king, despite his patronage of evil.<sup>[59]</sup>

### 10.3 Rama Rajya



Coronation of Rama with Sita (center on the throne), surrounded by his brothers and other deities including Hanuman (bottom left)

The end of the war coincides with the end of Rama's tenure of exile. Flying home on the *Pushpaka Vimana*, Rama returns to a joyous Ayodhya. His mothers, brothers and the people joyously welcome him. The next day, Rama is invested as the King of Ayodhya, and Emperor of the World. Although he first asks Lakshmana to become the *yuvaraja*, upon the rejection of Lakshmana he invests the position to Bharata, who has had fourteen years of experience as the ruler of Ayodhya. Rama performs the holy *Ashwamedha* sacrifice, purifying and establishing dharma across earth.<sup>[60]</sup> Rama's birthday is Celebrated as Rama Navami (On Chaitra Shukla Navami, Punarvasu Nakshatra fourth Pada) as Rama Born On that Day. **Rama Navami** is also the Same Day as the Day Of Killing Demon **Ravana** and Successfully Returning Victorious Rama to Ayodhya With **Sita**, Lakshmana, Hanuma, Sugriva, Jambavantha, Angadha etc., from Completing his Exile Period and then Rama's Coronation(Saamraajya Pattabhisekham) Cere-

mony took Place on the Following Day or very Next Day when returned from Exile On Chaitra Shukla Dasami, **Pushya** Constellation (Chaitra Shukla Dasami, Pushyami Constellation, the same Muhurtha kept for Rama's Coronation which is given by Dasaratha and Vasista before Rama's **14 years** of Exile, **Padhuka Pattabhisekham** [happened before Rama completing his exile time] done by Rama's brother Bharatha, when then Ayodhya is ruled by his Padhuka or Rama shoes till the end of 14 years exile time period of Rama returning Ayodhya) which is on Darmaraja Dasami day after Rama Navami day, Lord Rama and his virtues besides, his popular regime '**Rama Raajyam**' to mark **DharmaRaja Dashami** as part of Sri RamaNavami as 'Ramo Vighrahan Dharmah' Which Means Rama is The Embodiment Of Dharma Or Dharma has taken a form of Ramachandrah , It is the Happiest and Unforgettable Day to Every Hindu.

Beyond the *Ramayana*, the eleven thousand years of Rama's rule over the earth represent to millions of modern Indians a time and age when God as a man ruled the world. There was perfect justice and freedom, peace and prosperity. There were no natural disasters, diseases, ailments or ill-fortune of any nature on any living being. There were no sins committed in the world by any of his people. Always attentive and accessible to his people, Rama is worshipped and hailed by all – the very symbol of moksha, the ultimate goal and destination of all life, and the best example of perfect character and human conduct, inspiring human beings for countless succeeding ages.

Rama like other Indian kings went undercover every night to hear the pleas of his subjects and have a common man's perspective of his rule. During Rama's tenure as King, the people apparently had no locks on their doors as they feared no burglaries or other such misfortunes.

## 11 International influence

Rama remains an immensely revered and inspirational figure to people across the Indian subcontinent and South East Asia, as well as increasingly across Western civilization, where the Hindu epics and values are gaining recognition and popularity. In Jainism, Rama is enumerated among the nine "Baladeva". Hundreds of towns and villages are named after Rama.<sup>[61][62]</sup>

Rama is a great hero to the adherents of Agama Hindu Dharma and to the Muslims who practice Abangan, a syncretic form of Islam and Hinduism, in Indonesia. He is revered by the people throughout Indochina who otherwise adhere to different forms of Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism. His regal bearing and fighting prowess is emulated in various Indian martial arts which in turn influenced various Southeast Asian fighting systems such as silat. The *Rama Leela* is performed across South East Asia in numerous local languages and the story has been the subject of art, architecture, music, folk dance



Rama (Yama) and Sita (Thida) in *Yama Zatdaw*, the Burmese version of the *Ramayana*

and sculpture. The ancient city of Ayutthaya stands in Thailand, as the tribute of an ancient Thai kingdom to the great legend. Many ancient and medieval era kings of India and South East Asia have adopted *Rama* as their name.

Reviewers linked the imagery of the blue-skinned Na'vi in James Cameron's film *Avatar* to Rama as one of their possible conceptual prototypes.<sup>[63][64][65]</sup>

Muslim poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal had presented tribute to Rama through a poem.<sup>[66][67]</sup>

## 12 Festivals

Main article: Rama Navami

See also: List of Hindu festivals

Rama's day and time of birth,<sup>[68]</sup> as well as marriage to Sita are celebrated by Hindus across the world as *Rama Navami*. It falls on the ninth day of a Hindu lunar year, or *Chaitra Masa Suklapaksha Navami*. This day is observed as the marriage day of Rama and Sita as well as the birthday of Rama. People normally perform *Kalyanotsavam* (marriage celebration) for small statues of Rama and Sita in their houses and at the end of the day the idols are taken in a procession on the streets. This day also marks the end

of nine-day utsavam called *Vasanthotsavam* (*Festival of Spring*), that starts with *Ugadi*. Some highlights of this day are:



A Home shrine with images of Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman, on Sri Rama Navami

1. *Kalyanam* (Ceremonial wedding performed by temple priests) at Bhadrachalam on the banks of the river Godavari in Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh.
2. *Panakam*, a sweet drink prepared on this day with jaggery and pepper.
3. Procession of idols in the evening that is accompanied with play of water and colours.
4. For the occasion, Hindus are supposed to fast (or restrict themselves to a specific diet).
5. Temples are decorated and readings of the *Ramayana* take place. Along with Rama, people also pray to Sita, Lakshmana and Hanumana.



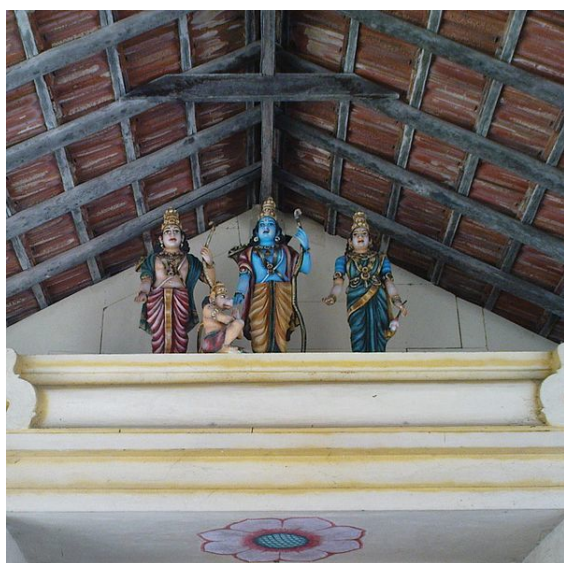
*Vijayadashami* celebrations

The occasion of victory over Ravana and the rakshasas is celebrated as the 10-day *Vijayadashami*, also known as *Dussehra*. The *Rama Leela* is publicly performed in many villages, towns and cities in India. Rama's return to Ayodhya and his coronation are celebrated as *Diwali*,



also known as the *Festival of Lights*. The latter two are the most important and popular festivals in India and for Hindus across the world. In **Malaysia**, Diwali is known as *Hari Deepavali*, and is celebrated during the seventh month of the Hindu solar calendar. It is a federal public holiday. In many respects it resembles the traditions followed in the Indian subcontinent. In **Nepal**, Diwali is known as *Tihar* and celebrated during the October/November period. Here, though the festival is celebrated for five days, the traditions vary from those followed in India. On the first day, cows are worshipped and given offerings. On the second day, dogs are revered and offered special food. On the third day, celebrations follow the same pattern as in India, with lights and lamps and much social activity. On the fourth day Yama, the Lord of Death, is worshipped and appeased. On the fifth and final day, brothers sisters meet and exchange pleasantries. In **Guyana**, Diwali is marked as a special occasion and celebrated with a lot of fanfare. It is observed as a national holiday in this part of the world and some ministers of the Government also take part in the celebrations publicly.

## 13 Temples



Ram, Sita, Lakshman, Hanuman, at Vallipuram Temple, Sri Lanka

- Ram Janmabhoomi , Ayodhya
- Kalaram Temple, Nashik
- Raghunath Temple, Jammu
- Ram Mandir, Bhubaneswar, Odisha
- Kodandarama Temple, Chikmagalur
- Kothandarama Temple, Thillaivilagam
- Kothandaramaswamy Temple, Rameswaram

- Odogaon Raghunath Temple, Odisha
- Ramchaura Mandir, Bihar
- Sri Rama Temple, Ramapuram
- Bhadrachalam Temple, Telangana

## 14 In Jainism

Main article: Rama in Jainism

Rama, Lakshmana and Ravana forms one of the nine set of Baladeva, Vasudeva and Prativasudeva whose stories forms a basis of Jain universal history.<sup>[69][70]</sup> Rama is described as a pious layman in Jain scriptures. Jain scriptures tells different version of Ramayana than Valmiki's version. According to this version, Lakshmana (Vasudeva) is the one who kills Ravana (Prativasudeva). Rama (Baladeva) is described as a non-violent person who attains moksha. Lakshmana and Ravana, on the other hand, goes to hell on account of their violence & will attain moksha in their next birth. Ravan will take birth as tirthankara of next era.

## 15 See also

- Genealogy of Rama
- Nama sankeerthanam
- Ram Nam
- Ramayana

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# Sita

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Sita** (Devanagari: सीता, listen<sup>ⓘ</sup>, also spelled **Seeta** or **Seetha**, meaning "from the furrow") is the central female character of the Hindu epic *Ramayana* and was born in Sitamarhi present day Bihar, India and raised in Janakpurdham present day Mithila, Nepal.<sup>[1][2]</sup> She is the consort of the Hindu God Sri Rama (avatar of Vishnu) and is an avatar of Lakshmi, Goddess of wealth and wife of Vishnu. She is esteemed as a paragon of spousal and feminine virtues for all Hindu women.<sup>[3]</sup> Sita is known for her dedication, self-sacrifice, courage and purity.

## Contents

- 1 Etymology and other names
  - 1.1 Birth
  - 1.2 Marriage
  - 1.3 Exile and abduction
  - 1.4 Abandonment and later life
- 2 Speeches in the Ramayana
- 3 Symbolism
- 4 Portrayal
- 5 Temples
- 6 See also
- 7 References
- 8 External links

<b>Sita</b>	
	
Sita with her son Lava	
<b>Devanagari</b>	सीता
<b>Sanskrit Transliteration</b>	Sītā
<b>Affiliation</b>	Avatar of Lakshmi
<b>Consort</b>	Rama
<b>Texts</b>	<i>Ramayana</i>

## Etymology and other names

She is best known by the name **Sita**, derived from the Sanskrit word *sīta*, which means furrow.<sup>[4]</sup> According to *Ramayana*, Janaka found her while ploughing as a part of a yagna and adopted her. The word *sīta* was a poetic term in ancient kingdom of Nepal & India, its imagery redolent of fecundity and the many blessings coming from settled agriculture. The Sita of the *Ramayana* may have been named after a more ancient Vedic goddess Sita, who is mentioned once in the Rigveda as an earth goddess who blesses the land with good crops. In the Vedic era, she was one of the goddesses associated with fertility. A Vedic hymn (Rig Veda 4:57) recites:

“ *Auspicious Sita, come thou near;*

*We venerate and worship thee*

”

*That thou mayst bless and prosper us  
And bring us fruits abundantly.*

In *Harivansha* Sita has been invoked as one of the names of goddess Arya:

“ *O goddess, you are the altar's center in the sacrifice,*

*The priest's fee  
Sita to those who hold the plough  
And Earth to all living being.*

”

The *Kausik-sutra* and the *Paraskara-sutra* associate her repeatedly as the wife of *Parjanya* (a god associated with rains) and Indra.<sup>[4]</sup>

Sita is known by many epithets. She is called *Jānaki* as the daughter of Janaka; *Maithili* as the princess of Mithila.<sup>[5]</sup> As the wife of Sri Rama, she is called *Ramā*. Her father Janaka had earned the sobriquet *Videha* due to his ability to transcend body consciousness; Sita is therefore also known as *Vaidehi*.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Birth

Sita's origin has been the subject of scholarly studies. Sita's birth and parentage have been depicted differently in different versions of *Ramayana*.<sup>[6]</sup>

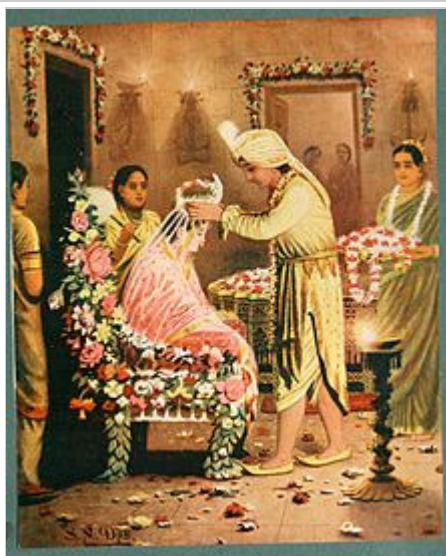
- **Valmiki's Ramayana:** In Valmiki's Ramayana and Kamban's Tamil epic Ramavataram, Sita is said to have been discovered in a furrow in a ploughed field, and for that reason is regarded as a daughter of Bhūmi Devi<sup>[7]</sup> (the goddess earth), Sita Birthstar is Ashlesha Constellation in Chaitra month. She was discovered, adopted and brought up by Janaka, king of Mithila, and his wife Sunayana.
- **Ramayana Manjari:** In *Ramayana Manjari* (verses 344–366), North-western and Bengal recensions of Valmiki Ramayana, it has been described as on hearing a voice from the sky and then seeing Menaka, Janaka expresses his wish to obtain a child. And when he finds the child, he hears the same voice again telling him the infant is his spiritual child, born of Menaka.<sup>[6]</sup>
- **Janka's real daughter:** In *Ramopkhyana* of the *Mahabharata* and also in *Paumachariya* of Vimala Suri, Sita has been depicted as Janaka's real daughter. According to Rev. Fr. Camille Bulcke, this motif that Sita was the real daughter of Janaka, as described in *Ramopkhyana Mahabharata* was based on the authentic version of *Valmiki Ramayana*. Later the story of Sita miraculously appearing in furrow was inserted in *Valmiki Ramayana*.<sup>[6]</sup>
- **Reincarnation of Vedavati:** Some versions of the *Ramayana* suggest that Sita was a reincarnation of Vedavati. Ravana tried to molest Vedavati and her chastity was sullied beyond Ravana's redemption when she was performing penance to become consort of Vishnu. Vedavati immolated herself on a pyre to escape Ravana's lust, vowing to return in another age and be the cause of Ravana's destruction. She was duly reborn as Sita.<sup>[6]</sup>



Deities of Sita (far right), Sri Rama (center), Lakshmana (far left) and Hanuman (below seated) at the Bhaktivedanta Manor in Watford, England.

- Reincarnation of Manivati:** According to Gunabhadra's *Uttara Purana* of the ninth century BCE, Ravana disturbs the asceticism of Manivati, daughter of Amitavega of Alkapuri, and she pledges to take revenge on Ravana. Manivati is later reborn as the daughter of Ravana and Mandodari. But, astrologers predict ruin of Ravana because of this child. So, Ravana orders to kill the child. Manivati is placed in a casket and buried in the ground of Mithila where she is discovered by some of the farmers of the kingdom. Then Janka, king of that state adopts her.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Marriage



Sri Rama placed a flower crown on Sita's head

When Sita reaches adulthood, Janaka organises a *swayamwara* with the condition that Sita would marry only that person who would be able to string *Pinak Dhanu* (bow of Shiva). Janaka knew, the bow of Shiva was not even liftable let alone stringable for ordinary mortals, and for selfish people it was not even approachable. Thus, Janaka tries to find the best husband for Sita.

At this time Vishvamitra had brought Sri Rama and his brother Lakshmana to the forest for the protection of sacrifice. Hearing about this *swayamwara*, Vishvamitra asks Sri Rama to participate in it and takes Sri Rama and Lakshmana to the palace of Janaka. Janaka is greatly pleased to learn that Sri Rama and Lakshmana are sons of Dasharatha. Next morning, in the middle of the hall, Sri Rama lifts up the bow of Shiva with his left hand, fastens the string tightly and finally breaks the bow. However, another incarnation of Vishnu, Parashurama, became really angry as the bow belonged to Lord Shiva and it was broken. However, he does not realise that Sri Rama is also an incarnation of Vishnu, therefore after being informed of this, he apologises for getting angry. And thus Sri Rama fulfils Janaka's condition to marry Sita. Later

on Vivaha Panchami, a marriage ceremony is conducted under the guidance of Satyananda. Sri Rama marries Sita, Bharata marries Mandavi, Lakshmana marries Urmila and Shatrughna marries Shrutakirti.<sup>[2]</sup>Janaki Mandir

## Exile and abduction

Some time after the wedding, one of the mothers of Sri Rama was compelled into making Bharata king in order to use one of the boons that she received from Dasharata. She was forced by one of the workers of the palace named Manthara (whose name is not spoken in order to avoid bad luck in some traditions) and forced Sri Rama to leave Ayodhya and spend a period of exile in the forests of Dandaka and later Panchavati. Sita and Lakshmana willingly renounced the comforts of the palace and joined Sri Rama in braving exile, even living in the Dandaka and Panchavati forests. The Panchavati forest became the scene for Sita's abduction by Ravana, King of Lanka. Ravana kidnapped Sita, disguising himself as a brahmana mendicant, or begging holy-man, while her husband was away fetching a magnificent golden deer to please her. Some versions of the *Ramayana* describe that Sita takes refuge with the fire-god Agni, while Maya Sita, her illusionary double, is kidnapped by the demon-king. Jatayu, the vulture-king, who was a friend of Dasratha (Sri Rama's father), tried to protect Sita but Ravana chopped off his wings. Jatayu survived long enough to inform Sri Rama of what had happened.

Ravana took her back to his kingdom in Lanka, and Sita was held as a prisoner in one of his palaces. During her captivity for a year in Lanka, Ravana expressed his desire for her; however, Sita refused his advances and



Ravana cuts off Jatayu's wing while abducting Sita

struggled to maintain her chastity. Hanuman was sent by Sri Rama to seek Sita and eventually succeeded in discovering Sita's whereabouts. Sita gave Hanuman her jewellery and asked him to give it to her husband. However, Hanuman was caught by Lankan forces. As punishment for trespassing in Lanka and seeing Sita, Hanuman was punished by having his tail set on fire. As a result of his punishment and due to his superior strength, Hanuman was able to escape after his tail had been set on fire and he burnt down much of Lanka before returning across the sea to his Lord Sri Rama.



Sita discovered

Sita was finally rescued by Sri Rama, who waged a famous battle to defeat Ravana. Upon rescue, Sri Rama worried about the future of human society – that no man or woman may use this as an excuse to live with each other without marriage – makes Sita walk on fire to prove her chastity.

In some version of *Ramayana*, during this test the fire-deity Agni appears in front of Sri Rama and hands over him the real Sita as during the abduction she was already taken away from Ravana, while he was fighting with Jatayu. Whom Ravan took to Lanka there-after is Chhaya-Sita, a shadow of Sita.

The Thailand version of the Ramayana, however, tells of Sita walking on the fire, of her own accord, to feel clean, as opposed to jumping in it. She is not burnt, the coals turn to lotuses. Walking on live coals is still a common custom in the South of India.

## Abandonment and later life



Rama's servant listening to the dhobi quarrelling with his wife.

The couple came back to Ayodhya, where Sri Rama was crowned king with Sita by his side. While Sri Rama's trust and affection for Sita never wavered, it soon became evident that some people in Ayodhya could not accept Sita's long captivity under the power of Ravana.

During Sri Rama's period of rule, an intemperate washerman, while berating his wayward wife, declared that he was "no pusillanimous Sri Rama who would take his wife back after she had lived in the house of another man". This statement was reported back to Sri Rama, who knew that the accusation of Sita was baseless. Nevertheless, he would not let slander undermine his rule, so he sent Sita away.

Thus Sita was thus forced into exile a second time; she was not only alone this time but also pregnant. Abandoned Sita wandered about in the forest and at last reached the hermitage of Valmiki who gave her refuge in his hermitage, where she delivered twin sons named Kusha and Luv or Lava. The other hermits discouraged Valmiki giving Sita shelter and protection and saying, "Sita is impure, otherwise her husband would not have abandoned her".<sup>[2]</sup>

In the hermitage, Sita raised her sons alone, as a single mother.<sup>[8]</sup> They grew up to be valiant and intelligent, and were eventually united with their father. Once she had witnessed the acceptance of her children by Sri Rama, Sita sought final refuge in the arms of her mother Bhūmi. Hearing her plea for release from an unjust world and from a life that had rarely been happy, the Earth dramatically split open; Bhūmi appeared and took Sita away to a better world (that is, back to Sri Rama in the form of Vishnu in Vishnu's abode).

## Speeches in the Ramayana

While the *Ramayana* mostly concentrates on Sri Rama's actions, Sita also speaks many times during the exile. The first time is in the town of Chitrakuta where she narrates an ancient story to Sri Rama, whereby Sri Rama promises to Sita that he will never kill anybody without provocation.

The second time Sita is shown talking prominently is when she speaks to Ravana. Ravana has come to her in the form of a Brahmin and Sita tells him that he doesn't look like one.

Some of her most prominent speeches are with Hanuman when he reaches Lanka. Hanuman wants an immediate union of Sri Rama and Sita, and thus he proposes to Sita to ride on his back. Sita refuses as she does not want to run away like a thief; instead she wants her husband Sri Rama to come and defeat Ravana to save her.

## Symbolism

A female deity of agricultural fertility by the name Sita was known before Valmiki's *Ramayana*, but was overshadowed by better-known Goddesses associated with fertility. According to the *Ramayana*, Sita was discovered in a furrow when Janaka was ploughing. Since Janaka was a king, it is likely that ploughing was part of a royal ritual to ensure fertility of the land. Sita is considered to be the child of the Mother Earth, produced by the union between the king and the land. Sita is a personification of the Earth's fertility, abundance, and well-being.

## Portrayal

Sita has been a much revered figure amongst the Hindus. In the blurring of the boundary between religion and mythology, between history and fiction, she has been portrayed as an ideal daughter, an ideal wife, and an ideal mother. These portrayals of her never change, and are more or less constant in various texts, stories, illustrations, and even movies and modern media. Sita is often worshipped with Sri Rama as his consort. The occasion of her marriage to Sri Rama is celebrated as Vivaha Panchami.

The actions, reactions and instincts manifested by Sita at every juncture in a long and arduous life are deemed exemplary. Her story has been portrayed in the book *Sitayanam*.<sup>[9]</sup> The values that she enshrined and adhered to at every point in the course of a demanding life are the values of womanly virtue held sacred by countless generations of Nepalese and Indians.

What is ambiguous is her portrayal as an ideal queen. Was she a good statesperson? Was she a warrior? Her sacrifices and actions are most often portrayed in her personal capacity and not as a governance figure. Sita was



Sita returns to the Earth's womb with her mother as Sri Rama, her sons and sages watch in astonishment.



abducted because she had to step out of the safety line to give alms to Ravan disguised as a Brahmin. The giving of alms to Brahmin in those times was more of a duty to be performed, rather than an optional charitable act. This held true more so for the royals and they were to lead by example. Also, the incident of Sita's refusal to come back with Hanuman like a common thief, her renunciation of queen-hood and exile from Ayodhya after her return. All her key aspects are shown in a favourable light, but not as a head of state, but as an ideal woman. This is in stark contrast to Sri Rama, who is always portrayed as an ideal king who was just and fair and always thought of his people before all else in addition to being depicted as an ideal husband and an ideal son.

Popular culture sees Sita as an *abla naari* or a helpless woman. She is portrayed as someone who needs support and assistance of the male folk in the myth. However, this would have to be balanced with Sita's steadfast demonstration of honour and dignity, compelling her to both enter the fire and to ask Mother Earth to take her from a setting filled with pain and misunderstanding. In this light, Sita becomes a complex figure of what it meant to be a woman in ancient India.

## Temples

- Janaki Mandir, located at Janakpur, Nepal
- Sita Mai Temple, situated in Sitamai village in the Karnal district of Haryana in North India
- Sita Kund, Punaura Dham, situated in Sitamarhi District in Bihar
- Seetha Devi Temple, Pulpally in the Waynad district, Kerala,India
- Seetha Amman Kovil, Nähe Nuwara Eliya,Srilanka

## See also

- Amba
- Seetha kalyanam

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Janaki Mandir of Janakpur, Nepal a center of pilgrimage where the wedding of Sri Rama and Sita took place and is re-enacted yearly as Vivaha Panchami.

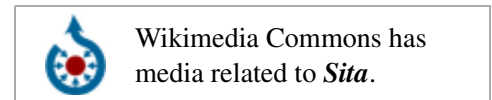


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## External links

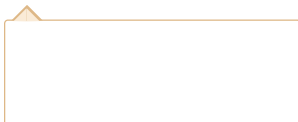
- Sita Kalyanam in the Valmiki Ramayana (<http://ancientindians.wordpress.com/sita-devi/>)



Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Sita&oldid=640914017"

Categories: Madhesi people | Nepalese people | Mithila | Hindu goddesses | Mother goddesses | Members of the Ikshvaku clan in the Ramayana | History of Nepal | Nepalese princesses | Kidnapped people | National heroes of Nepal

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# Rama

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Rama** (/ˈrɑːmə/<sup>[1]</sup> Sanskrit: राम *Rāma*) is the seventh avatar of the Hindu god Vishnu,<sup>[2]</sup> and a king of Ayodhya. Rama is also the protagonist of the Hindu epic *Ramayana*, which narrates his supremacy. Rama is one of the many popular figures and deities in Hinduism, specifically Vaishnavism and Vaishnava religious scriptures in South and Southeast Asia.<sup>[3]</sup> Along with Krishna, Rama is considered to be one of the most important avatars of Vishnu. In a few Rama-centric sects, he is considered the Supreme Being, rather than an avatar.


Born as the eldest son of Kausalya and Dasharatha, king of Ayodhya, Rama is referred to within Hinduism as *Maryada Purushottama*,<sup>[4]</sup> literally *the Perfect Man* or *Lord of Self-Control* or *Lord of Virtue*. His wife Sita is considered by Hindus to be an avatar of Lakshmi and the embodiment of perfect womanhood.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

Rama's life and journey is one of adherence to dharma despite harsh tests and obstacles and many pains of life and time. He is pictured as the ideal man and the perfect human. For the sake of his father's honour, Ram abandons his claim to Ayodhya's throne to serve an exile of fourteen years in the forest.<sup>[6]</sup> His wife Sita and brother Lakshmana decide to join him, and all three spend the fourteen years in exile together. While in exile, Sita is kidnapped by Ravana, the Rakshasa monarch of Lanka. After a long and arduous search, Rama fights a colossal war against Ravana's armies. In a war of powerful and magical beings, greatly destructive weaponry and battles, Rama slays Ravana in battle and liberates his wife. Having completed his exile, Rama returns to be crowned king in Ayodhya and eventually becomes emperor,<sup>[6]</sup> rules with happiness, peace, duty, prosperity and justice—a period known as *Ram Rajya*.

The legend of Rama is deeply influential and popular in the societies of the Indian subcontinent and across South East Asia. Rama is revered for his unending compassion,<sup>[7]</sup> courage and devotion to religious values and duty.

<h2>Contents</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 1 Etymology</li> <li>■ 2 Literary sources</li> </ul>
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**Rama**



Painting of Rama with his bow

<b>Devanagari</b>	राम
<b>Sanskrit Transliteration</b>	Rāma
<b>Tamil Transliteration</b>	ராமர்
<b>Affiliation</b>	Avatar of Vishnu
<b>Abode</b>	Ayodhya, Santanaka
<b>Mantra</b>	Om Shri Ramaya Namah
<b>Weapon</b>	The Bow (Kodandam)
<b>Consort</b>	Sita

- 3 Balkand
  - 3.1 Birth as an avatar
  - 3.2 Initiation of the Avatara
- 4 Dharma of exile
- 5 Rama and Sita
  - 5.1 Agni pariksha
- 6 Sita's Exile
  - 6.1 Children
- 7 Later life
- 8 Maryada Purushottama
- 9 Companions
  - 9.1 Bharata and Lakshmana
  - 9.2 Jatayu, Hanuman and Vibheeshana
- 10 Rama in war
  - 10.1 Varuna
  - 10.2 Facing Ravana
  - 10.3 Rama Rajya
- 11 International influence
- 12 Ram Worship
  - 12.1 Festivals
    - 12.1.1 Rama Navami
    - 12.1.2 Vijayadashmi
    - 12.1.3 Diwali
  - 12.2 Temples
- 13 In Jainism
- 14 See also
- 15 Notes
- 16 References
- 17 External links

## Etymology

The name Rama appears repeatedly in Hindu scriptures. Besides the name of the protagonist of the *Ramayana* (subject of the current article), the name is also given to other heroes including Parashu-Rama (Bhargava Rama) and Balarama (Bala-Rama).

In the Vishnu sahasranama, Rama is the 394th name of Vishnu. In the interpretation of Adi Shankara's commentary, translated by Swami Tapasyananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Rama has two meanings: the

supreme Brahman who is the eternally blissful spiritual Self in whom yogis delight, or the One (i.e., Vishnu) who out of His own will assumed the enchanting form of Rama, the son of Dasaratha.<sup>[8]</sup>

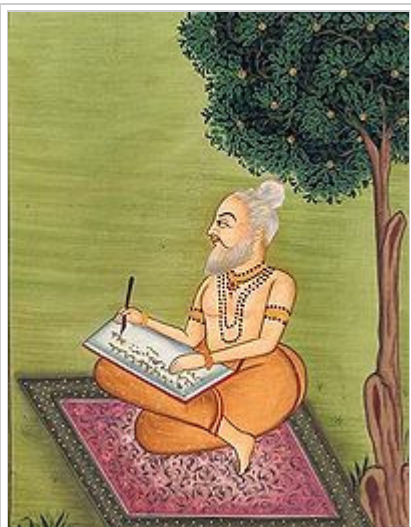
Other names of Rama include Ramavijaya (Javanese), Preah Ream (Khmer), Phra Ram (Lao and Thai), Megat Seri Rama (Malay), Raja Bantugan (Maranao) and Ramar (Tamil).

The greatness of chanting of Rama's name is mentioned in the *Ramacharitamanasa*.<sup>[9][10][11][12][13][14][15]</sup>

## Literary sources



Sita (far right), Rama (center), Lakshmana (far left) and Hanuman (below seated) at Bhaktivedanta Manor, a temple in Watford (England)



Valmiki composing the Ramayana.

The primary source of the life and journey of Rama is the epic Ramayana as composed by the Rishi Valmiki. The Vishnu Purana also recounts Rama as Vishnu's seventh avatar, and in the Bhagavata Purana, ninth skandha, adhyayas 10 & 11, the story of the Ramayana is again recounted in brief up to and including the slaying of Ravana and Prince Rama's return to Ayodhya. Additionally, the tales of Rama are reverently spoken of in the *Mahabharata*. The earliest documentation of Ram is in the Buddhist text of Dasharatha Jataka.<sup>[16]</sup>

The epic had many versions across India's regions. However, other scriptures in Sanskrit also reflect the life of Ramayana. The followers of Madhvacharya believe that an older version of the Ramayana, the mula-Ramayana, previously existed. They consider it to have been more authoritative than the version by Valmiki. Another important shortened version of the epic in Sanskrit is the *Adhyatma Ramayana*. The seventh century CE Sanskrit "Bhatti's Poem" Bhattikāvya of Bhatti who lived in Gujarat, is a retelling of the epic that simultaneously illustrates the

grammatical examples for Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as well as the major figures of speech and the Prakrit language.<sup>[17]</sup> Versions of the Ramayana exist in most major Indian languages; examples that elaborate on the life, deeds and divine philosophies of Rama include the epic poem *Ramavataram* by the 12th-century poet Kambar in Tamil, and *Ramcharitmanas*, a Hindi version of the Ramayana by the 16th-century saint, Tulsidas. Contemporary versions of the Ramayana include Sri Ramayana Darshanam by Kuvempu in Kannada and *Ramayana Kalpavruksham* by Viswanatha Satyanarayana in Telugu, both of which have been awarded the Jnanpith Award. The epic has transformed across the diverse regions of India, which boast their own unique languages and cultural traditions.<sup>[18]</sup>

The essential tale of Rama has also spread across Southeast Asia, and evolved into unique renditions of the epic – incorporating local history, folktales, religious values as well as unique features from the languages and literary discourse. The *Kakawin Ramayana* of Java, Indonesia, the *Ramakavaca* of Bali, *Hikayat Seri Rama* of Malaysia, *Maradia Lawana* of the Philippines, *Ramakien* of Thailand (which calls him *Phra Ram*) are great works with many unique characteristics and differences in accounts and portrayals of the legend of Rama. The legends of Rama are witnessed in elaborate illustration at the Wat Phra Kaew temple in Bangkok. The national epic of Myanmar, *Yama Zatdaw* is essentially the Burmese *Ramayana*, where Rama is named *Yama*. In the Reamker of Cambodia, Rama is known as *Preah Ream*. In the *Phra Lak Phra Lam* of Laos, Gautama Buddha is regarded as an incarnation of Rama.

To the *Valmiki Ramayana*,<sup>[19]</sup> Rama was born in Ayodhya, India, on 9th day (now celebrated across India as Ram Navami) of Chaitra lunar month (March–April), when Moon and Jupiter were rising in the east in Cancer sign and four other planets (Sun, Mars, Saturn, Venus) were exalted in their exaltation signs. Jupiter in the sign Cancer is exalted.

Commonly it is proposed that Rama was born about 1.2 million years ago, during the Treta Yuga, age that lasted 1,296,000 years.<sup>[20][21][22]</sup>

Composition of *Ramayana* in its current form is usually dated to 7th - 4th Century BCE.<sup>[23][24][25]</sup>

## Balkand

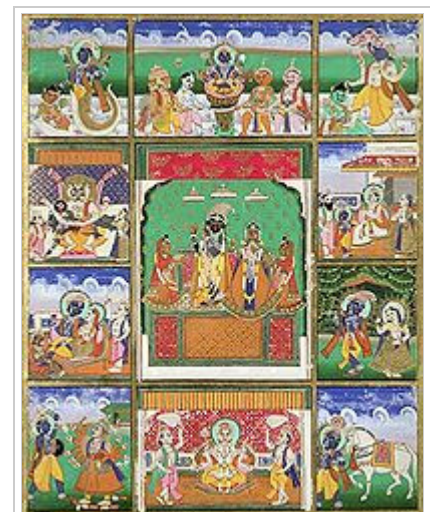
### Birth as an avatar

The *Ramayana* speaks of how the earth goddess Bhumidevi, came to the creator-god Brahma begging to be rescued from evil kings who were plundering her resources and destroying life through bloody wars and evil conduct. The deva (gods) also came to Brahma fearful of the rule of Ravana, the ten-headed rakshasa emperor of Lanka. Ravana had overpowered the devas and now ruled the heavens, the earth and the netherworlds. Although a powerful and noble monarch, he was also arrogant, destructive and a patron of evil doers. He had boons that gave him immense strength and was invulnerable to all living and celestial beings, except man and animals.<sup>[26]</sup>

Brahma, Bhumidevi and the gods worshipped Vishnu, the Preserver, for deliverance from Ravana's tyrannical rule. Vishnu promised to kill Ravana by incarnating as a man – the eldest son of Kosala's king Dasharatha.<sup>[26]</sup> Goddess Lakshmi took birth as Sita in order to accompany her consort Vishnu and was found by king Janaka of Mithila while he was ploughing a field. Vishnu's eternal companion, the Shesha is said to have incarnated as Lakshmana to stay at his Lord's side on earth. Throughout his life, no one, except himself and a few select sages (among which are included Vasishta, Sharabhanga, Agastya and Vishwamitra) know of his destiny. Rama is continually revered by the many sages he encounters through his life, but only the most learned and exalted know of his true identity. At the end of the war between Rama and Ravana, just as Sita passes her *Agni pariskha*, Brahma, Indra and the gods, the celestial sages and Shiva appear out of the sky. They affirm Sita's purity and ask him to end this terrible test. Thanking the avatar for delivering the universe from the grips of evil, they reveal Rama's divine identity upon the culmination of his mission.<sup>[27]</sup>

Other scriptures provide other reasons for the avatar. The chastity of Vrinda, wife of the demon Jalandhara, that protects the life of her husband is destroyed by Vishnu by deceit so that Shiva can slay the demon. She curses Vishnu be born on earth; while Jalandara is born as Ravana.<sup>[28][29]</sup>

Another legend narrates that Jaya and Vijaya, the gatekeepers of Vishnu, were cursed by the Four Kumaras to be born on earth three lives; Vishnu took avatars each time to free them of their earthy existence. They as born as Ravana and his brother Kumbhakarna, who are both killed by Rama. Also, due to a boon, Kashyapa and Aditi are born as the parents of Rama, Dasharatha and Kausalya.<sup>[30]</sup> In another version, Svayambhuva Manu



Rama (left third from top) depicted in the Dashavatara (ten avatars) of Vishnu. Painting from Jaipur, now at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

and his wife Satarupa are blessed to be born as Rama's parents.<sup>[31][32]</sup>

Another tale says that the sage Narada cursed Vishnu to be born on earth as a king, to be helped by monkeys and suffer separation from his wife. Narada also curses Jaya and Vijaya to be born as the demon brothers.<sup>[33][34]</sup>

## Initiation of the Avatara

Sage Vishwamitra takes the two princes, Rama and Lakshmana, to his ashram, as he needs Rama's help in slaying several Rakshasas that have been harassing him and several other sages living in the area. Rama's first encounter is with a Rakshasi named Taataka, who is a celestial nymph cursed to take the form of a demoness. Vishwamitra explains that she has polluted much of the habitat where the sages reside and there will not be any contentment until she is destroyed. Rama has some reservations about killing a woman, but since Taataka poses such a big threat to the Rishis and he is expected to follow their word, he fights with Taataka and kills her with an arrow. After her death, the surrounding forest becomes greener and cleaner.

Vishwamitra presents Rama with several astras and sastras (divine weapons) that will be of use to him in the future, and Rama masters the knowledge of all the weapons and their uses. Vishwamitra then tells Rama and Lakshmana that soon, he along with some of his disciples, will perform a yagna for seven days and nights that will be of great benefit to the world, and the two princes must keep close watch for the two sons of Taadaka, Mareecha and Subahu, who will try to defile the yagna at all costs. The princes therefore keep a strong vigil for all of the days, and on the seventh day they spot Maricha and Subahu coming with a whole host of Raakshasas ready to pour bones and blood into the fire. Rama points his bow at the two, and with one arrow kills Subahu, and with the other arrow flings Mareecha thousands of miles away into the ocean. Rama deals with the rest of the demons. The yagna is completed successfully

Rama also frees Ahalya, the wife of Gautama Maharishi, from a curse. She was cursed to turn into stone by her husband after a displeasing incident. However, the dust on Rama's feet touched the stone and turned it back into a woman again. Gautama Maharishi was gratified that everything was back to normal again.

Sage Vishwamitra then takes the two princes to the *Swayamvara* a wedding ceremony for Sita. The challenge is to string the bow of Shiva and shoot an arrow from it. This task is considered impossible for any ordinary king or living being, as this is the personal weapon of Shiva, more powerful, holy and of divine creation than conceivable. While attempting to string the bow, Rama breaks it in two. This feat of strength spreads his fame across the worlds and seals his marriage to Sita, celebrated as *Vivaha Panchami*.<sup>[35]</sup>

After Rama weds Sita and the entire royal family and the Ayodhya army begin their journey back, the great rishi Parashurama (Bhargava Rama) appears before them, having descended from his mountainous hermitage. Parashurama is an extremely powerful rishi, responsible for killing all of the world's tyrannical and oppressive emperors and kings 21 times. He is the sixth Avatara of Vishnu, and finds it unbelievable that anybody could break the bow of Shiva. Considering himself to still be the most powerful warrior-rishi on earth, he brings with them the bow of Vishnu, and intends to challenge Rama to prove his strength by stringing it, and then fighting a battle with him to prove superiority.<sup>[36]</sup> Although the entire Ayodhya army is forestalled by his mystical power, Rama is himself angered. He respectfully bows to Parashurama, and within a twinkling of an eyelid snatches the bow of Vishnu, strings it, places an arrow and points it straight at the challenger's heart. Rama asks Parashurama

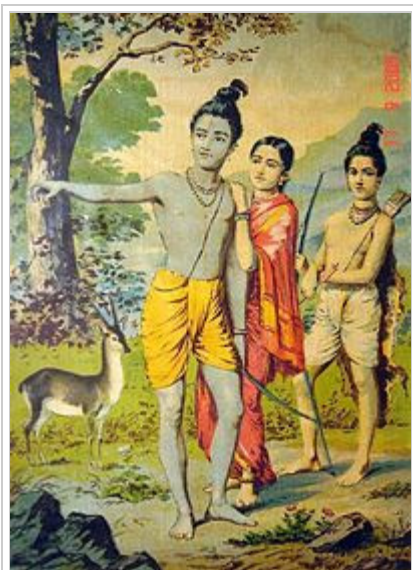


Ahalya offering fruits and flowers to Rama - her saviour, a 5th-century AD Stone sculpture from Deogah, currently in the National Museum, New Delhi.

what he will give as a target to the arrow. At this point, Parashurama feels himself devoid of the tremendous mystical energy he possessed for so long. He realizes that Rama is Vishnu incarnate, his successor and definitely his superior. He accepts Rama's superiority, devotes his tapasya to him, pays homage to Rama and promises to return to his hermitage and leave the world of men.<sup>[37]</sup>

Rama then shoots the arrow up into the sky with Vishnu's bow, performing a feat true to his supreme, divine nature with his natural weapon. His overpowering of Parashurama and using the supreme weapon with incredible ease and perfection dazzle the spectators and his relatives, but no one save Parashurama and Vasishta associate this with his true identity. It is said that the Rama's arrow is still flying across space, across time and across all of the universe. The day it will return to earth, it is said, it will bring the end of the world. Others say that the flying arrow destroys all evil on earth to uphold dharma and righteousness.<sup>[37]</sup>

## Dharma of exile



Rama portrayed as exile in the forest, accompanied by his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana

King Dasaratha announces to Ayodhya that he plans to crown Rama, his eldest child the *Yuvaraja* (*crown prince*). While the news is welcomed by everyone in the kingdom, the mind of queen Kaikeyi is poisoned by her wicked maid-servant, Manthara. Kaikeyi, who is initially pleased for Rama, is made to fear for the safety and future of her son Bharata. Fearing that Rama would ignore or possibly victimize his younger brother for the sake of power, Kaikeyi demands that Dasaratha banish Rama to a forest exile for fourteen years, and that Bharata be crowned in Rama's place. She had been granted two boons by the king when she had saved his life a long time ago in battle, and the queen now used them to serve her purpose.<sup>[38]</sup> The king's court and the people are outraged at this turn of events. Dasaratha loved and cherished Rama dearly, and is in personal turmoil. Completely estranged now from his younger wife, he abhors the prospect of separation from Rama. But Rama realizes that the king must not break a solemn promise at any time, and neither should a son disobey his father's command. Sita joins her husband in exile despite his discouraging her, as it is her duty and out of love for Rama that she must be at his side at all times. His younger brother Lakshmana also immediately decides to join Rama rather than remain in the city.<sup>[39]</sup>

As he leaves for exile, the people of Ayodhya are deeply saddened and angered at Dasaratha and Kaikeyi. Dasaratha's heart is broken and he collapses and dies during the night of the sixth day, unable to bear the agony of separation from Rama. Despite the reasoning of Vashistha and the pleas of his brothers, Rama refuses to return. Although horrified at the news of his father's death, Rama finds it impossible that he should break his dead father's word. Rama does not bear any anger towards Kaikeyi, believing firmly in the power of destiny.<sup>[40]</sup> According to the explanation of the classic, this exile actually presents Rama the opportunity to confront Ravana and his evil empire.

## Rama and Sita

Rama and Sita are the protagonists in one of the most famous love stories of all time. Described as being deeply in love, Sita and Rama are theologically understood as Incarnations of Lakshmi and Vishnu respectively. When Rama is banished from the kingdom, he attempts to convince Sita not to join him in a potentially dangerous and certainly arduous existence in the jungle, but Sita rejects this. When Rama orders her in his capacity as husband,



Sita rejects it, asserting that it was an essential duty of a wife to be at her husband's side come good or ill.<sup>[39]</sup> Rama in turn is assiduously protective and caring for Sita throughout the exile.

When Sita is kidnapped by Ravana, both Sita and Rama undergo great personal hardships during their separation. Sita protects her chastity assiduously, and survives over a year in captivity on the strength of her love and attention to religious values and duty. She is completely unfettered in her resolve despite Ravana's courting, cajoling and threats. Meanwhile Rama, not knowing who had kidnapped Sita or where she was taken, often succumbs to despair and tears, denouncing himself for failing to defend her and agonizing over her safety and pain. Sita knows that it is in Rama's destiny to fight to rescue her (she refuses to be rescued thus by Hanuman, who discovers her), but is deeply anxious for his safety and fearful of Ravana's power.

The 'Wedding of Rama and Sita' concerns two entities coming together to form a whole. An Indian marriage forges an alliance not only between two people, but also two families. The marriage of Sita and Rama creates an alliance between two people, two families, and two kingdoms: Mithila, home of Sita, and Kosala, home of Rama. Furthermore, Rama's marriage to Sita on earth parallels the celestial union of Vishnu and Lakshmi; each deity took birth on earth, and so when Rama marries Sita, he is actually reuniting with his divine consort Lakshmi, Goddess of Good Fortune, who brings prosperity to Kosala. At an allegorical level, the union of Rama and Sita represents the relationship between God and the devotee, with Rama as the beloved divine king and Sita as his devotee. Finally, at a societal level, the dance drama brings together north and south Indian dance traditions.<sup>[41]</sup>



Rama with Sita on the throne, their children Lava and Kusha on their laps. Behind the throne, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna stand. Hanuman bows to Rama before the throne. Valmiki to the left

### Agni pariksha

Lord Rama sent a messenger to Ravana that said, "Come to me and I will forgive you," before he slays Ravana. After Rama slays Ravana and wins the war, Sita wants to come before him in the state which over a year's imprisonment had reduced her to, but Rama arranges for Sita to be bathed and given beautiful garments before they are re-united. But even as Sita comes before him in great excitement and happiness, the society starts doubting Sita's purity so Rama decided to prove that his Sita is still pure and chaste in front of the society, so he tells her that she has to give Agni pariksha. At this sudden turn of events, all the vanaras, rakshasas, Sugriva, Hanuman and Lakshmana are deeply shocked.<sup>[42]</sup>



The Agni pariksha

Sita begs Lakshmana to build her a pyre upon which she could end her life, as she could not live without Rama. At this point, Lakshmana is angered at Rama for the first time in his life, but following Rama's nod, he builds a pyre for Sita. At the great shock and sorrow of the watchers, Sita sits into the flames. But to their astonishment and wonder, she is completely unharmed. Instead, she glows radiantly from the centre of the pyre. But the gods headed by Brahma and Shiva appear, reveal Rama's and Sita's true identity and requests that Rama take Sita back as she is truly pure. Rama replies that he had never doubted her purity for a second, but, the people of the world would not have accepted or honoured her as a queen or a woman if she had not passed this *Agni pariksha* before the eyes of hundreds. Agni

would destroy the impure and sinful, but not touch the pure and innocent.<sup>[43]</sup> There is a version of Tulsidas's Ramacharitamanasa, which is popular, which states that Rama had Sita under the protection of Agni God. After Sita was released it was necessary to bring her out of security of Agni god.<sup>[44]</sup> This finds echo in the sthala purana of Tirupathi. Another version of this, used in Ramanand Sagar's Ramayan, was that Rama had known Sita was going to be abducted by Ravana ahead of time. So he entrusted her to Agni, the god of fire. Rama did this so that he, who in reality was Vishnu, could kill Ravana. Sita, in turn, left behind a "shadow", or twin-like version of herself behind. The "shadow" Sita had been abducted by Ravana. Therefore, the lila of Agni Pariksha was to retrieve the genuine Sita from the temporary care of Agni Deva. Rama explains this to Lakshmana before the "Pariksha" is done. This version has also been written in the Ram Charit Manas.

## Sita's Exile



Rama fighting his sons Lava and Kusha

In the *Uttara Kanda*, Rama banishes his wife Sita, even as she is pregnant, asking Lakshmana to deliver her safely to the forest. He does so after receiving word that some of his subjects in Ayodhya believed that Sita was unfit due to her long captivity in Ravana's city. As a king is expected to uphold moral principles, Rama reluctantly banished Sita in order to uphold his duty. Sita took refuge under the noble sage Valmiki.

A legend by Rishi Agastya in the epic states that Vishnu in a previous age had been cursed by Rishi Bhrigu, whose wife had been killed by Vishnu for sheltering his enemies escaping from battle. The Rishi condemns Vishnu to be denied for a long age the companionship of his soul mate, just as Vishnu, had deprived the rishi of his loving wife. Thus Rama, Vishnu's incarnation, must live the rest of his life without Sita.<sup>[45]</sup>

Many Hindus, such as the followers of Sri Vaishnavism, consider this entire section of the Ramayana to be interpolated, and thus they do not accept the authenticity of this story claiming that Sita was banished. An alternate narration of Ramayana does not state it so. It says that Sita later lived in her father's kingdom of Mithila with her sons Lava and Kusha as per the North Indian (especially in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar) custom that children be brought up in their *nanihal*, or maternal grandmother's place. Sita and her sons later live in Valmiki's ashram for the boys' education and military

training. As per Tulsidas's Ramcharitmanas, both the princes grew extremely intelligent and strong under Rishi Valmiki's tutelage. .

## Children

According to legend, Kusha and Lava are the twin sons of Lord Rama and Sita. Born in the forest after the banishment of Sita from Ayodhya, the twins were educated and trained in military skills as their mother took refuge in Sage Valmiki's ashram, located in a forest on the banks of the River Tamsa.

As Rama performed the Ashvamedha Yajna, a horse strayed into their forest, Rama sent Hanuman to retrieve the horses. Rama's sons Luv and Kush captured the horses. Hanuman, seeing Luv and Kush recognised that they were the son's of Rama. He let them capture him and tie him up. There Hanuman started meditating on the name Rama. Worried Rama sent his brothers to look for the horses. As they saw Hanuman tied up and two boys guarding him, they thought that the two boy had stolen the horses. So Ramas brothers started attacking Luv and Kush. Although Rama's brothers should have won, but Luv and Kush defeated them all, knocking them

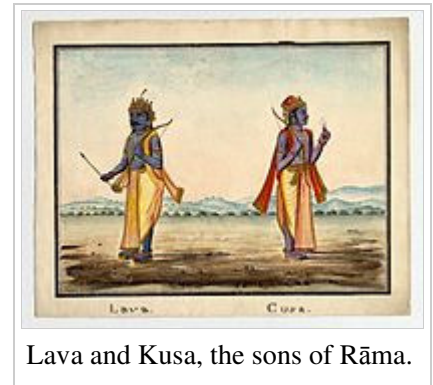
unconscious. Luv and Kush were protected by Hanuman. Then Rama himself went looking for the horses fearing that Hanuman and his brothers had been attacked. On his way there, Rama intuitively knew that Luv and Kush were his sons and purposely slept on his chariot to delay tension and confrontation with his sons as he knew it would be inappropriate for a father to fight his sons. Upon reaching the battlefield, the sage Valmiki interrupted the potential battle between father and sons by explaining to Rama that Luv and Kush were his sons. A familial reunion took place.

When Devi Sita found out that Lava and Kusha had defeated Ayodhya's forces, she proudly revealed their/her identity. Rama desired Sita and his sons to live with him in his kingdom but as this took place, the general population of the kingdom resented Sita from returning. In response, Sita forsaken her like and sought final refuge in the arms of her mother Bhumidevi, the Goddess Mother Earth and ultimately returned to Rama in the form of Vishnu in Vishnu's abode - indicating that forced separation from her beloved husband is only limited in life on earth compared to her eternal union with her beloved in life after death.

## Later life

Rama's reign is known as the *Rama Rajya* which lasted for 11,000 years. During this period, people were healthy, holy, satisfied and lived with complete peace and harmony.<sup>[46]</sup> There was no evil, no wars, no natural calamity and no diseases. Rama ruled the whole earth without using military force as all kings submitted themselves to him. Once a Brahmana came to him, lamenting over his dead son. According to the Uttara Kand, a later edition and possible non-canon part of the Ramayana, Sage Narada told Rama that a Sudra was doing a penance somewhere in his kingdom, which was a sin because in the Treta Yuga only Brahmanas and Kshatriyas were expected to do penances. Vaishyas and Sudras could attain salvation by doing their duty only. Rama set out in the Pushpaka Vimana (which Kubera had given it in gratitude for killing Ravana) and travelled in North, East and Western directions but Rama did not see any sinful activities. Rama then went out in the southern direction where he found a Sudra, Sambuka, on top of a hill in sirsana position, who was . Rama asked him his caste and on receiving the reply that he was a Shudra, beheaded him, establishing Dharma of the Yuga once again. His brothers Bharata and Shatrughna settled in their later lives. Bharata, with the help of his uncle Yudhajita, conquered the eastern land of the Gandharvas and ruled it. Shatrughna slew the Asura Lavana and founded the city of Mathura. Rama acquired a rare gem from Rishi Agastya which entombed the powers of the gods Indra, Varuna, Yama and Kubera, which helped the king rule efficiently. After his reign, Rama and his brothers and his allies peacefully left the earth on the river Sarayu abandoning their mortal bodies. Valmiki Ramayana mentions an abode named *Santanaka* invested with all spiritual qualities and located beyond Brahmaloaka, which was attained by all followers of Rama, after Rama along with his brothers, entered into Vaishnava potency. Lava and Kusha ruled Kosala and continued the solar race.

## Maryada Purushottama



Lava and Kusa, the sons of Rāma.



Rishi Agastya (Father of Tamil literature) -Rama acquired a rare gem from him which entombed the powers of the gods Indra, Varuna, Yama and Kubera

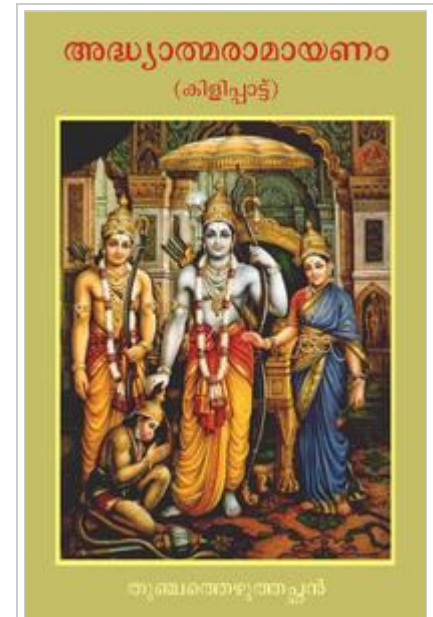
As a person, Rama personifies the characteristics of an ideal person (purushottama)<sup>[4][47]</sup> who is to be emulated. He had within him all the desirable virtues that any individual would seek to aspire, and he fulfils all his moral obligations (maryada). Rama's purity and piety in his intentions and actions inspires affection and devotion for him from a variety of characters from different backgrounds. For example, he gave up his rightful claim to the throne, and agreed to go into exile for fourteen years, to fulfill the vow that his father had given to Kaikeyi, one of King Dashratha's wives. This is in spite of the fact that Kaikeyi's son, Bharat, begged him to return to Ayodhya and said that he did not want to rule in place of Rama. But Rama considered his dharma as a son above that of his own birthright and his life's ambition. For such supreme sacrifices, and many other qualities, Rama is considered a *maryada purushottam* the best of upholders of Dharma, a basically human but exemplary figure<sup>[48]</sup> Some of his ideals are as follows:

1. At the time when it was normal for kings to have more than one wife, Rama gave the ideal of having a single wife. After Sita was banished, he was doing penance with a gold statue of Sita. In Balakanda of Valmiki Ramayana it is written that Rama and Sita resided in each other's heart.

2. Rama always followed his promise at any cost. In fact, he went to forest to make his father's promise to Kaikeyi true. Another instance was when, he had promised the Spirit of Time that during their conversation, if anyone was to intrude, Rama would have pronounce an instant death sentence upon the individual. They were intruded upon by his beloved younger brother Lakshmana, and to keep his part of the promise, pronounced the death sentence. There are many examples of Rama's promises which he kept. Most important are the promise to sages to save their lives from Rakshasas, getting back Sugreeva's kingdom, making Vibhishana the king of Lanka.

3. Excellent friend: Rama had very touching relations with his friends irrespective of their status. Some of his friends are Nishada-raj Guha, King of Nishaadas (a caste whose profession was hunting the birds), Sugreeva (the Vanara king) and Vibhishana a Rakshasa.

4. Even towards his enemies, Rama showed great nobility and virtue. To gather information about the enemy army's strengths and weaknesses, Ravana sent two of his spies, Suka and Sarana, to the Vanara camps. Disguised as Vanaras they blended into the enemy camp, but Vibhishana saw through their deceit. The duo sought Rama's protection when the monkey warriors thrashed them. Rama gave them refuge. He then asked them what their mission was and whether they fulfilled it. After listening to them, he sent for a Vanara to give them a proper tour of all the Vanara camps and give them all the information they desired about the major soldiers and their strengths. He then told the spies to give this message to Ravana. "Tomorrow morning, I will destroy all of Lanka. Keep all sides of your palace well defended and be ready with all of your men by sunrise." The spies were greatly astonished with Rama's charisma, courage, and adherence to the codes of war. After Rama gave them leave, they knew that their king was bound to lose against this virtuous and courageous man. When Ravana first fought with Rama, Rama defeated him to such an extent that Ravana lost his charioteer, horses, chariot, flag, weapons and armor. Though the situation was at his advantage, Rama instead praised Ravana for a great fight that day, and asked him to retire and take rest, as he must be quite tired. Ravana was greatly embarrassed at this, but he was also gratified that Rama saved his life, and this led him to consider for a moment whether to retreat and give Sita back...



Rama, Sita and Lakshman from the Ramayana

## Companions

Even as Rama is the ideal conception of manhood, he is often aided and complemented in different situations by the characteristics by those who accompany him. They serve Rama devotedly, at great personal risk and sacrifice.

## Bharata and Lakshmana



Rama and Sita worship the Shiva Lingam at Rameswaram, as his companions Vibhishana (right) looks on with Lakshmana, Tumburu and Narada along with the Vanar Sena.

Absent when Rama is exiled, upon his return Bharata is appalled to learn of the events. And even though Kaikeyi had done all this for his benefit, Bharata is angered at the suggestion that he should take Ayodhya's throne. Denouncing his mother, Bharata proclaims to the city that he would go to the forest to fetch Rama back, and would serve out his term of exile himself. Although initially resentful and suspicious, the people of Ayodhya hail Bharata's selfless nature and courageous act. Despite his fervent pleas to return, Rama asserts that he must stay in the forest to keep his father's word. He orders Bharata to perform his duty as king of Ayodhya, especially important after Dasaratha's death, and orders Shatrughna to support and serve him. Returning saddened to the city, Bharata refuses to wear the crown or sit on the throne. Instead, he places the slippers of Rama that he had taken back with him on the throne, and rules Ayodhya assiduously keeping Rama's beliefs and values in mind. When Rama finally



Ramanathaswamy Temple, Rameswaram

returns, Bharata runs personally to welcome him back.

Bharata is hailed for his devotion to his elder brother and dharma, distinguished from Lakshmana as he is left on his own for fourteen years. But he unflinchingly denies self-interest throughout this time, ruling the kingdom only in Rama's name.<sup>[49]</sup> Vasishtha proclaims that no one had better learnt dharma than Bharata,<sup>[50]</sup> and for this piety he forms an essential part of the conception of perfect manhood, of the Seventh Avatara of Vishnu. Shatrughna's role to Bharata is akin to that of Lakshmana to Rama. Believed to be one-quarter of Vishnu incarnated, or as the incarnation of his eternal companion, Ananta Sesha, Lakshmana is always at Rama's side.<sup>[51]</sup> Although unconstrained by Dasaratha's promise to Kaikeyi, Lakshmana resists Rama's arguments and accompanies him and Sita into the forest. During the years of exile, Lakshmana constantly serves Rama and Sita – building huts, standing guard and finding new routes. When Sita is kidnapped, Rama blazes with his divine power and in his immense rage, expresses the desire to destroy all creation. Lakshmana prays and pleads for Rama to calm himself, and despite the shock of the moment and the promise of travails to come, begin an arduous but systematic search for Sita. During times when the search is proving fruitless and Rama fears for Sita, and expresses despair in his grief and loneliness, Lakshmana encourages him, providing hope and solace.

When Rama in his despair fears that Sugriva has forgotten his promise to help him trace Sita, Lakshmana goes to Kishkindha to remind the complacent monarch of his promise to help. Lakshmana twangs the bow inside the hall quaking the entire building and threatens to destroy Sugriva and the monkey kingdom with his own divine power. Lakshmana is unable to tolerate Sugriva breaking his vow to Rama while enjoying material and sensual pleasures while Rama suffers alone. It is only through the diplomatic intervention of Queen Tara, Sugriva's

wife, that Lakshmana is pacified. Tara then scolds and galvanises Sugriva into honoring his promise to Rama. Sugriva and Rama are then reconciled with the help of Lakshmana and Tara. Sugriva sends the monkey hoards to find the location of Sita and lead the monkey army into battle against the demonic forces of Ravana.<sup>[52]</sup>

Lakshmana is uniquely responsible for slaying Indrajit, the invincible son of Ravana who had humiliated Indra and the devas, and outwitted the brothers and the Vanaras on several occasions. Rishi Agastya later points out that this victory was the turning point of the conflict. Rama is often overcome with emotion and deep affection for Lakshmana, acknowledging how important and crucial Lakshmana's love and support was for him. He also trusts Lakshmana to carry out difficult orders – Lakshmana was asked to take Sita to the ashrama of Valmiki, where she was to spend her exile. Lakshmana's deep love for Rama, his unconditional service and sacrifice, as well as qualities of practical judgment and clear-headedness make him Rama's superior in certain situations and perspectives. Lakshmana symbolizes a man's duty to his family, brothers and friends, and forms an essential part of the conception of ideal manhood, that Rama primarily embodies.

## Jatayu, Hanuman and Vibheeshana

When Rama and Lakshmana begin the desperate search to discover where Sita had been taken, after traversing a distance in many directions, they come across the magical eagle Jatayu, who is dying. They discover from Jatayu that a rakshasa was flying away with a crying, struggling Sita towards the south. Jatayu had flown to the rescue of Sita, but owing to his age and the rakshasa's power, had been defeated. With this, Jatayu dies in Rama's arms. Rama is overcome with love and affection for the bird which sacrificed its own life for Sita, and the rage of his death returns to him in the climactic battle with Ravana.

Rama's only allies in the struggle to find Sita are the Vanaras of Kishkindha. Finding a terrified Sugriva being hunted by his own brother, king Vali, Rama promises to kill Vali and free Sugriva of the terror and the unjust charge of plotting to murder Vali. The two swear everlasting friendship over sacred fire. Rama's natural piety and compassion, his sense of justice and duty, as well as his courage despite great personal suffering after Sita's kidnapping inspire devotion from the Vanaras and Sugriva, but especially Hanuman, Sugriva's minister. Devoted to Rama, Hanuman exerts himself greatly over the search for Sita. He is the first to discover that Sita was taken to Lanka, and volunteers to use his divine gifts in a dangerous reconnaissance of Lanka, where he is to verify Sita's presence. Hanuman hands Rama's ring to Sita, as a mark of Rama's love and his imminent intention of rescuing her. Though captured, he candidly delivers Rama's message to Ravana to immediately release Sita, and when his tail is burned, he flies and sets Lanka on fire. When Lakshmana is struck down and near death and Rama overcome with love and concern for his brother, Hanuman flies to the Himalayas on the urgent mission to fetch the *sanjeevani* medicinal herbs, bringing the entire mountain to Lanka so that no time is lost in saving Lakshmana.<sup>[53]</sup> The Vanaras fight the rakshasas, completely devoted to Rama's cause. They angrily dismiss Ravana's efforts to create international divisions within their army when he suggested that Rama considered them, monkeys, as mere animals. At the end of the war, Indra restores life to the millions of fallen Vanaras.<sup>[54]</sup>

Before the onset of war, rakshasa prince Vibheeshana, Ravana's youngest brother comes to join Rama. Although he loves his brother and Lanka, he fails in repeated efforts to make Ravana follow religious values and return Sita. Vibheeshana believes that Ravana's arrogance and callousness will cause the destruction of Lanka, which is a gross violation of a king's duty, and that Ravana's actions have only propagated evil. Vibheeshana refuses to defend the evil of Ravana's ways and inspired by Rama's compassion and piety, leaves Lanka to join the Vanara



Ravana kidnapping Sita while Jatayu on the left tried to help her. 9th century Prambanan bas-relief, Java, Indonesia

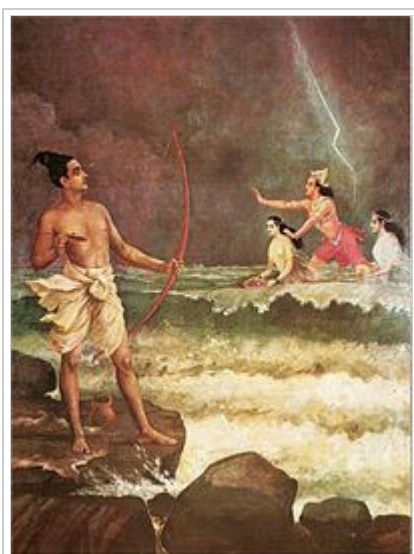
Army.<sup>[55]</sup> His knowledge of rakshasa ways and Ravana's mind help Rama and the Vanaras overcome black magic and mystical weapons. At the end of the war, Rama crowns Vibheeshana as the king of Lanka. Vibheeshana, and to a greater extent Hanuman, embody the perfect devotee in the wider conception of perfect manhood.

## Rama in war

When Rama is thirteen years old, he and his brother Lakshmana are taken by Vishwamitra to the forests, with the purpose of killing rakshasas who are wrecking the tapasya and sacrifices of brahmins. When asked to slay the demoness, Rama demurs, considering it sinful to kill a woman. But Vishwamitra explains that evil has no gender. Rama replies that "My father asked me to follow your orders, I will obey them even if it is a sin". Rama proceeds to slay Tadaka, a cursed yaksha demoness. The killing of Tadaka liberates the yaksha soul who was cursed for a sin, and had to adopt a rakshasi's body. It restores the purity of the sacrifices of the brahmins who live nearby, and protects the animals who live in the forest, and travelers. Rama and Lakshmana are taught the advanced military arts and given the knowledge of all celestial weapons by Vishwamitra. The main purpose of Vishwamitra's excursion is to conduct his yagna without interruption from two evil demons, Maricha and Subahu sons of Tadaka. Rama and Lakshmana guard the sacrifice, and when the two demons appear, Rama shoots an arrow named Manava Astra that carries Maricha across the lands and into the ocean, but does not kill him. Rama and his brother then proceed to kill Subahu and accompanying demons. Rama explains to Lakshmana that leaving Maricha alive was an act of compassion, but the others did not heed the point and chose to attack.<sup>[56]</sup> During the forest exile, sages plead for protection and help against evil rakshasas who spoil their sacrifices and religious activities and terrorize them. Many rakshasas had even killed and eaten sages and innocent people. At Janasthana, Rama uses his exceptional prowess to single-handedly kill over fourteen thousand demon hordes led by the powerful Khara, who is a cousin of Ravana and Dushana.



The epic story of Ramayana was adopted by several cultures across Asia. Shown here is a Thai historic artwork depicting the battle which took place between Rama and Ravana.



Raja Ravi Varma Painting – 'Rama Conquers Varuna'

## Varuna

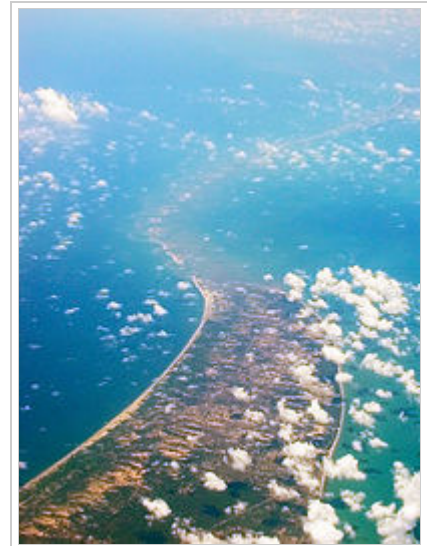
Faced with the dilemma of how to cross the ocean, Rama performs a penance tapasya, fasting and meditating in perfect dhyana for three days and three nights to Samudra, the Lord of Oceans. The ocean god does not respond, and Rama on the fourth morning, pointed the Brahmastra towards the ocean. The Vanaras are dazzled and fearful at witnessing the enraged Rama demolish the oceans, and Lakshmana prays to calm Rama's mind. Just as Rama invokes the Brahmastra, considered the most powerful weapon capable of destroying all creation, Varuna arises out of the oceans. He bows to Rama, and begs for pardon. Since Rama had to use the weapon, he suggests Rama re-direct the weapon at a demonic race that lives in the heart of the ocean. Rama's arrows destroys the demons, and establishes a purer, liberated environment there. Varuna promises that he would keep the oceans still for all of Rama's army to pass, and Nala constructs a bridge (Rama's Bridge) across to Lanka. Rama justifies his angry assault on the oceans as he followed the correct process of petitioning and worshipping

Varuna, but obtaining the result by force for the greater good.<sup>[57]</sup>

The bridge today is known as Rama Setu, which supposedly has its existence between India and Sri Lanka, originates from Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu, India.

## Facing Ravana

Rama asserted his dedication to dharma when he offered Ravana a final chance to make peace, by immediately returning Sita and apologizing, despite his heinous actions and patronage of evil, but Ravana refused. In the war, Rama slayed the most powerful rakshasa commanders, including Atikaya, Ravana's brother, Kumbhakarna along with hundreds of thousands of rakshasa soldiers. He defeated Ravana in their first battle, destroying his chariot and weapons, and severely injuring him, but he allowed Ravana to live and return to fight another day. But since he was playing the part of a human being, Rama also proved "vulnerable" on occasion to his enemies. He was put to a deep sleep along with Lakshmana by the *nagapash* of Indrajit (though this is attributed by Vaishnavas to his Rama-lila or divine play, as he is to purposefully lose consciousness from the nagapash so that his devotees could engage in the divine task of serving him), but they recovered when Garuda, the vehicle of Vishnu and enemy of serpents appear.



Rama Setu (Adam's) bridge as seen from the air, Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu, India



Ravana, Demon King of Lanka



Rama launched at his foe a fearsome a bolt

In the grand finale of the battle, Rama engaged Ravana, who through the devastation of losing his sons, his brothers and friends and millions of his warriors, aroused his magical powers and made full use of the boons of Siva and Brahma, and the magical knowledge of warfare possessed by the greatest of rakshasas. Rama and Ravana competed fiercely, inflicting severe injuries on one another with powerful weapons capable of destroying the universe. After a long and arduous battle, Rama successfully decapitated Ravana's central head, but an ugly head, symbolic of all of Ravana's evil powers arose in its place. After another long battle, Rama decapitated it again, only to find another growing in its place. This cycle continues, and as darkness approached, Ravana's magical powers increased in force. Mathali, Indra's charioteer who had been sent by Indra after being counselled by the witnessing Rishis, Danavas and Devas; seeing this then told Rama that Ravana had obtained

amrita, the nectar of immortality, from the gods. Though he could not consume it, he nevertheless stored a vessel of it in his stomach. This amrit was causing his heads to regenerate as soon as they were cut off. Upon the advice of Agastya, Rama worshiped Lord Aditya, the Sun, with the famous *Aditya Hridayam* prayer and then invoked Brahmastra. Rama fired an arrow into Ravana's chest/stomach and evaporated the store of amrit, finally killing him. however it is stated in the Ramayana that Ravana called for Rama as he was shot and as a



result, was immediately dispatched to Heaven.<sup>[58]</sup> Following Ravana's death, Rama expressed deep compassion. After investing Vibheeshana as the next king of Lanka, he asked the new king and the surviving rakshasas to properly cremate their dead king, despite his patronage of evil.<sup>[59]</sup>

## Rama Rajya

The end of the war coincides with the end of Rama's tenure of exile. Flying home on the *Pushpaka Vimana*, Rama returns to a joyous Ayodhya. His mothers, brothers and the people joyously welcome him. The next day, Rama is invested as the King of Ayodhya, and Emperor of the World. Although he first asks Lakshmana to become the *yuvaraja*, upon the rejection of Lakshmana he invests the position to Bharata, who has had fourteen years of experience as the ruler of Ayodhya. Rama performs the holy *Ashwamedha* sacrifice, purifying and establishing dharma across earth.<sup>[60]</sup> Rama's birthday is Celebrated as Rama Navami (On Chaitra Shukla Navami, Punarvasu Nakshatra fourth Pada) as Rama Born On that Day. **Rama Navami** is also the Same Day as the Day Of Killing Demon **Ravana** and Successfully Returning Victorious Rama to Ayodhya With **Sita**, Lakshmana, Hanuma, Sugriva, Jambavantha, Angadha etc., from Completing his Exile Period and then Rama's Coronation(Saamraajya Pattabhisekham) Ceremony took Place on the Following Day or very Next Day when returned from Exile On Chaitra Shukla Dasami, Pushya Constellation (Chaitra Shukla Dasami, Pushyami Constellation, the same Muhurtha kept for Rama's Coronation which is given by Dasaratha and Vasista before Rama's **14 years** of Exile, **Padhuka Pattabhisekham** [happened before Rama completing his exile time] done by Rama's brother Bharatha, when then Ayodhya is ruled by his Padhuka or Rama shoes till the end of 14 years exile time period of Rama returning Ayodhya) which is on Darmaraja Dasami day after Rama Navami day, Lord Rama and his virtues besides, his popular regime '**Rama Raajyam**' to mark **DharmaRaja Dashami** as part of Sri RamaNavami as 'Ramo Vighrahavan Dharmah' Which Means Rama is The Embodiment Of Dharma Or Dharma has taken a form of Ramachandrah , It is the Happiest and Unforgettable Day to Every Hindu.



Coronation of Rama with Sita (center on the throne), surrounded by his brothers and other deities including Hanuman (bottom left)

Beyond the *Ramayana*, the eleven thousand years of Rama's rule over the earth represent to millions of modern Indians a time and age when God as a man ruled the world. There was perfect justice and freedom, peace and prosperity. There were no natural disasters, diseases, ailments or ill-fortune of any nature on any living being. There were no sins committed in the world by any of his people. Always attentive and accessible to his people, Rama is worshipped and hailed by all – the very symbol of moksha, the ultimate goal and destination of all life, and the best example of perfect character and human conduct, inspiring human beings for countless succeeding ages.

Rama like other Indian kings went undercover every night to hear the pleas of his subjects and have a common man's perspective of his rule. During Rama's tenure as King, the people apparently had no locks on their doors as they feared no burglaries or other such misfortunes.

## International influence

Rama remains an immensely revered and inspirational figure to people across the Indian subcontinent and South East Asia, as well as increasingly across Western civilization, where the Hindu epics and values are gaining recognition and popularity. In Jainism, Rama is enumerated among the nine "Baladeva". Hundreds of

towns and villages are named after Rama.<sup>[61][62]</sup>

Rama is a great hero to the adherents of Agama Hindu Dharma and to the Muslims who practice Abangan, a syncretic form of Islam and Hinduism, in Indonesia. He is revered by the people throughout Indochina who otherwise adhere to different forms of Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism. His regal bearing and fighting prowess is emulated in various Indian martial arts which in turn influenced various Southeast Asian fighting systems such as silat. The *Rama Leela* is performed across South East Asia in numerous local languages and the story has been the subject of art, architecture, music, folk dance and sculpture. The ancient city of Ayutthaya stands in Thailand, as the tribute of an ancient Thai kingdom to the great legend. Many ancient and medieval era kings of India and South East Asia have adopted *Rama* as their name.

Reviewers linked the imagery of the blue-skinned Na'vi in James Cameron's film *Avatar* to Rama as one of their possible conceptual prototypes.<sup>[63][64][65]</sup>

Muslim poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal had presented tribute to Rama through a poem.<sup>[66][67]</sup>

## Ram Worship

### Festivals

#### Rama Navami

Rama's day and time of birth,<sup>[68]</sup> as well as marriage to Sita are celebrated by Hindus across the world as *Rama Navami*. It falls on the ninth day of a Hindu lunar year, or *Chaitra Masa Suklapaksha Navami*. This day is observed as the marriage day of Rama and Sita as well as the birthday of Rama. People normally perform *Kalyanotsavam (marriage celebration)* for small statues of Rama and Sita in their houses and at the end of the day the idols are taken in a procession on the streets. This day also marks the end of nine-day Festival celebrated in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh called Vasanthotsavam (*Festival of Spring*), that starts with Ugadi. Some highlights of this day are:

1. *Kalyanam* (Ceremonial wedding performed by temple priests) at Bhadrachalam on the banks of the river Godavari in Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh.
2. *Panakam*, a sweet drink prepared on this day with jaggery and pepper.
3. Procession of idols in the evening that is accompanied with play of water and colours.
4. For the occasion, Hindus are supposed to fast (or restrict themselves to a specific diet).



Rama (Yama) and Sita ( Thida) in Yama Zatdaw, the Burmese version of the Ramayana



A Home shrine with images of Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman, on Sri Rama Navami

- Temples are decorated and readings of the Ramayana take place. Along with Rama, people also pray to Sita, Lakshmana and Hanumana.

## Vijayadashmi

The occasion of victory over Ravana and the rakshasas is celebrated as the 10-day *Vijayadashami*, also known as *Dussehra*. The *Rama Leela* is publicly performed in many villages, towns and cities in Northern India and also in places where there is a large population of North Indians. Hindus also celebrate Vijayadashmi as the day of victory of the Goddess Durga over the Rakshas Mahishasur.



Vijayadashami celebrations

## Diwali

In some parts of India, Rama's return to Ayodhya and his coronation is the main reason for celebrating *Diwali*, also known as the *Festival of Lights*. In Malaysia, Diwali is known as *Hari Deepavali*, and is celebrated during the seventh month of the Hindu solar calendar. It is a federal public holiday. In many respects it resembles the traditions followed in the Indian subcontinent. In Nepal, Diwali is known as *Tihar* and celebrated during the October/November period.

In Guyana, Diwali is marked as a special occasion and celebrated with a lot of fanfare. It is observed as a national holiday in this part of the world and some ministers of the Government also take part in the celebrations publicly. Just like Vijayadashmi, Diwali is celebrated by different communities across India to commemorate different events in addition to Rama's return to Ayodhya. For example, many communities celebrate one day of Diwali to celebrate the Victory of Krishna over the demon Narakasur.



Deities inside the Kalaram Temple, Nashik

## Temples

Temples dedicated to Rama are found all over India and in places where Indian migrant communities have resided. In most temples, the standing idol of Rama is accompanied by that of his wife Sita and brother Laxman. In some instances, the monkey God, Hanuman sits at the feet of Rama or is situated facing the Rama family at a distance or at the entrance of the temple. Important Rama temples include:

- Ram Janmabhoomi , Ayodhya
- Kalaram Temple, Nashik
- Raghunath Temple, Jammu
- Ram Mandir, Bhubaneswar, Odisha
- Kodandarama Temple, Chikmagalur
- Kothandarama Temple, Thillaiwilagam
- Kothandaramaswamy Temple, Rameswaram
- Odogaon Raghunath Temple, Odisha

- Ramchaura Mandir, Bihar
- Sri Rama Temple, Ramapuram
- Bhadrachalam Temple, Telangana(Previously Andhra pradesh)

## In Jainism

Rama, Lakshmana and Ravana forms one of the nine set of Baladeva, Vasudeva and Prativasudeva whose stories forms a basis of Jain universal history.<sup>[69][70]</sup> Rama is described as a pious layman in Jain scriptures. Jain scriptures tells different version of Ramayana than Valmiki's version. According to this version, Lakshmana (Vasudeva) is the one who kills Ravana (Prativasudeva). Rama (Baladeva) is described as a non-violent person who attains moksha. Lakshmana and Ravana, on the other hand, goes to hell on account of their violence & will attain moksha in their next birth. Ravan will take birth as tirthankara of next era.



Ram, Sita, Lakshman, Hanuman, at Vallipuram Temple, Sri Lanka

## See also

- Genealogy of Rama
- Nama sankeerthanam
- Ram Nam
- Ramayana

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# Baba (honorific)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Baba** (Persian: بابا, Urdu: بابا, Pashto: ; Sanskrit, Punjabi, Bengali, Hindi and Marathi: बाबा; father; grandfather; wise old man; sir,<sup>[1]</sup>) is a Persian honorific term used in several West and South Asian cultures. It is used as a mark of respect to refer to Sufi saints.

The Bektashi Order, headquartered in Albania, use the term of *baba* for all its priesthood.

During the Muslim rule in South Asia it was also used for Hindu and Sikh ascetics (sannyasis) is also be used as a suffix or prefix to their names e.g.: Ramdev Baba, Baba Ramdevji, etc.<sup>[1][2]</sup> *Baba* is also a title accorded to the head of certain order of Sufi saints: Baba Bulleh Shah and Rehman Baba.<sup>[1]</sup> The Persian term was also adopted in Malaysia as an honorific of respect to address Chinese people born in British Straits Settlement.<sup>[3][4]</sup>

In Shona, a language spoken in Zimbabwe, and also in Yoruba, a language spoken by the Yoruba culture in the south western part of Nigeria, Baba is an honorific for father, wise man or, simply, elderly man. It is also a term of respect used by wives, other women, children and other youth to an older man.

"Patera" is the formal translation of the word "father" into the modern Greek language (Meaning, "Priest" {as in 'Father Dennis'}, "father" {as in, 'Listen to your father'}, and is also used as a term of respect towards fathers in law). While "Patera" may be the formal way to address elders (out of respect) the word "Baba" is a more casual way of saying father, and much more commonly used. It can be most directly translated to the English words "Dad," "Daddy," and "Pops."

## See also

- Baba (name)
- Indian honorifics

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# بابا

Definition from Wiktionary, the free dictionary

## Contents

- 1 Arabic
  - 1.1 Noun
    - 1.1.1 Related terms
- 2 Ottoman Turkish
  - 2.1 Noun
    - 2.1.1 Declension
- 3 Pashto
  - 3.1 Pronunciation
  - 3.2 Noun
    - 3.2.1 Synonyms
- 4 Persian
  - 4.1 Pronunciation
  - 4.2 Noun
    - 4.2.1 Synonyms
    - 4.2.2 Derived terms
- 5 Urdu
  - 5.1 Noun

## Arabic

### Noun

**بَابَا** • (bābā) *m* (plural **بَابَوَات** (bābawāt) or **بَابَاوَات** (bābāwāt))

1. pope, patriarch
2. papa, daddy, father

### Related terms

- بابوي
- بابوية

## Ottoman Turkish

## Noun

**بابا** (baba)

1. papa, daddy, father

## Declension

declension of <b>بابا</b>	[show ▼]
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## Pashto

### Pronunciation

- IPA<sup>(key)</sup>: /baˈba/

## Noun

**بابا** • (bābā) *m*

1. (*informal*) dad, daddy, father
2. grandfather

## Synonyms

- (*father*): پلار

## Persian

### Pronunciation

- audio

## Noun

<b>Dari</b>	بابا
<b>Iranian Persian</b>	بابا
<b>Tajik</b>	бобо (bobo)

**بابا** • (bâbâ)

1. (*informal*) dad, daddy, father
2. grandfather

3. (*colloquial*) fellow

## Synonyms

- (*dad, daddy*): پاپا (pâpâ)
- (*father*): پدر (pedar)
- (*grandfather*): پدربزرگ (pedar-bozorg)

## Derived terms

- ای بابا (ey bâbâ)
- بابا نوئل (Bâbâ No'el)

# Urdu

## Noun

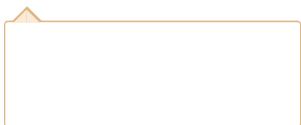
**بابا** • (bābā) *m* — Hindi spelling **बाबा**

- papa, daddy, father

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# سیتا

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جب بڑا ہوا تو اس کی تادی ویدہ کے راجا جانک کی بیٹی سیتا سے ہوئی۔

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