

RAMAKATHA RASAVAHINI

Part - I

The Rama Story
(Stream of Sacred Sweetness)

by

BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA
Rendered Into English By N. Kasturi



PRASANTHI NILAYAM

SRI SATHYA SAI BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS TRUST

Prasanthi Nilayam - 515 134

Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Grams: BOOK TRUST STD: 08555 ISD: 91-8555

Phone: 87375 Fax: 87236

Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam P.O. 515 134, Anantapur District, A.P. (India.).

All Rights Reserved

The copyright and the rights of translation in any language are reserved by the Publishers. No part, passage, text or photograph or Artwork of this book should be reproduced, transmitted or utilised, in original language or by translation, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photo copying, recording or by any information, storage and retrieval system except with the express and prior permission, in writing from the Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam (Andhra Pradesh) India - Pin Code 515 134, except for brief passages quoted in book review. This book can be exported from India only by the Publishers - Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam (India).

International Standard Book Number 81-7208-300-9
81-7208-132-4 (set)

First Enlarged Edition: June 2002

Price Rs. 65.00

Published by:

The Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Books & Publications Trust

Prasanthi Nilayam, India - Pincode 515 134

STD: 08555 ISD: 91-8555 Grams: BOOKTRUST

Telephone: 87375 Fax: 87236

Printed at: Omkar Offset Printers

No.3/4, 1 Main, N.T. Pet, Bangalore - 560 002.

THIS BOOK

The Rama Story, Stream of Sacred Sweetness, has been for millions of men, women and children, for many centuries the perennial source of solace during sorrow, vitality when floored by vacillation, illumination while confounded, inspiration in moments of dejection and guidance while caught in quandaries. It is an intensely human drama where God impersonates as man and gathers around Him, on the vast world-stage, the perfect and the imperfect, the human and the subhuman, the beast and the demon, to confer on us, by precept and example, the boon of Supreme Wisdom. It is a story that plays its tender fingers on the heartstrings of man, evoking lithe, limpid responses of pathos, pity, exultation, adoration, ecstasy and surrender, rendering us transformed from the animal and the human, into the Divine which is our core.

No other story in human history has had such profound impact on the mind of man. It transcends the milestones of history and the boundaries of geography. It has shaped and sublimated the habits and attitudes of generations. The *Ramayana*, the Story of Rama, has become a curative corpuscle in the blood stream of mankind, over vast areas of the globe. It has struck root in the conscience of peoples, prodding and prompting them along the paths of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Love.

Through legends and lullabies, myths and tales, dance and drama, through sculpture, music and painting, through ritual, poetry and symbol, Rama has become the Breath, the Bliss, the Treasure of countless seekers and *sadhakas* (aspirant for spiritual progress). The characters in the Rama Story have invited them to emulation and to be elevated themselves. They have provided shining examples of achievement and adventure. They have warned the wavering against vice and violence, pride and pettiness. They have encouraged them by their fidelity and fortitude. To every language and dialect that the tongue of man has devised for the expression of his higher desires, the Story of Rama has added a unique, sustaining sweetness.

Sai (Isa, God), whose Thought is the Universe, whose Will is Its History, is the Author, Director, Actor, Witness and Appraiser of the Drama that is ever unfolding in Time and Space. He has now deigned to tell us Himself the story of this one epic Act in that Drama, wherein He took on the

Rama role. As Rama, Sai instructed, inspired and invigorated, corrected, consoled and comforted His contemporaries in the Tretha Age. As Sai Rama, He is now engaged in the same task. Therefore, most of what the readers of *Sanathana Sarathi* perused, month after month, (during these years) with ardour and pleasure, as instalments of this narrative—the Ramakatha Rasa Vahini—must have appeared to them “contemporary events and experiences,” and “direct counsel to them in the context of contemporary problems and difficulties.” While reading these pages, readers will often be pleasantly struck by the identity of the Rama of this story and the Sai Rama they are witnessing.

“Science” has moulded this earth into the compactness and capsularity of a spaceship in which mankind has to live out its destiny. “Saience” is, we know, fast moulding this spaceship into a happy home of Love. This book must have been willed by Sai as a paramount panacea for the removal of the ills that obstruct that Universal Love—the morbid itch for sensual pleasure, the mounting irreverence towards parents, teachers, elders, spiritual leaders and guides, the disastrous frivolity and flippancy in social, marital, and familial relationships, the demonic reliance on violence as a means of achieving immoral ends, the all-to-ready adoption of terror and torture as means of gaining personal and group gains, and many more evils besides.

Sai Rama has recapitulated herein, in His own simple, sweet and sustaining style, His own Divine Career, as Rama!

What great good fortune, this, to have in our hands, to inscribe on our minds, to imprint on our hearts, this Divine narrative! May we be processed by the study of this book into efficient and enthusiastic tools for consummating His Mission of moulding mankind into One Family, of making each one of us realise Sai Rama as the Reality, the only Reality that IS.

Sai has declared that He is the same Rama come again, and that He is searching for His erstwhile associates and workers (*bantu*, as He referred to them, in Telugu) in order to allot them roles in His present Mission of resuscitating Righteousness and leading man into the Haven of Peace. Let us pray, while ruminating over the first half of this Story, that we too be allotted roles and may He grant us, as reward, the Vision of that Haven.

N. KASTURI
Editor, Sanathana Sarathi

THE INNER MEANING

Rama is the Indweller in every Body. He is the Atma-Rama, the Rama (Source of Bliss) in every individual. His blessings upsurging from that inner Spring can confer Peace and Bliss. He is the very embodiment of *Dharma* of all the Codes of Morality that hold mankind together in Love and Unity. The *Ramayana*, the Rama story, teaches two lessons: the value of detachment, and the need to become aware of the Divine in every being. Faith in God and detachment from objective pursuits are the keys for human liberation. Give up sense-objects; you gain Rama. Sita gave up the luxuries of Ayodhya and so, she could be with Rama, in the period of “exile.” When she cast longing eyes on the golden deer and craved for it, she lost the Presence of Rama. Renunciation leads to joy, attachment brings about grief. Be in the world, but not of it. The brothers, comrades,

companions and collaborators of Rama are each of them examples of persons saturated with Dharma. Dasaratha is the representative of the merely physical, with the ten senses. The three *Gunas* (qualities)—*Sathwa* (calm serenity), *Rajas* (passion, activity) and *Thamas* (sloth, dullness)—are the three Queens. The Four Goals of Life—the *Purusharthas*—are the four Sons. Lakshmana is the Intellect; Sugriva is *Viveka* or Discrimination. Vali is Despair. Hanuman is the embodiment of Courage. The Bridge is built over the Ocean of Delusion. The three *Rakshasa* (demon) chiefs are personifications of the Rajasic (Ravana), Thamasic (Kumbhakarna) and the Sathwic (Vibhishana) qualities. Sita is *Brahma Jnaana* or the Awareness of the Universal Absolute, which the Individual must acquire and regain undergoing travails in the crucible of Life. Make your heart pure and strong, contemplating the grandeur of the *Ramayana*. Be established in the faith that Rama is the Reality of your existence.

—BABA

CONTENTS

1. Rama—Prince and Principle	1
2. The Imperial Line	11
3. No Progeny From His Loins	27
4. The Sons	39
5. The Guru and The Pupils	59
6. The Call and The First Victory	81
7. Winning Sita	121
8. Another Challenge	195
9. Preparations for The Coronation	211
10. The Two Boons	227
11. Lakshmana Too	267
12. Sita Insists and Wins	303
13. Entering Into Exile	321
14. Into The Forest	332
15. Among Hermitages	363
16. Gloom Over Ayodhya	381
17. The Brothers Meet	418
18. Sandals Enthroned	469

Note: The charming picture of the holy icons of Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman on the cover page of this book is from a photograph of the icons created by Bhagawan and granted graciously to a devotee of Rama from Mumbai for daily worship.