

Ramayana – my view by Miraya Gadhia, Year 11

The Ramayana. It is not a black-and-white narrative or a two-dimensional tale. It is not a typical story filled with characters who are either righteous or sinful. It is not just a quest to kill the demon and save the 'damsel in distress' The Ramayana is the inspirational journey of Lord Rama through life, how He tackles vicissitudes that block his path, and how through all the adversities and devastation, He remains to be an ethical example of the ideal son, king, and human.

The first lesson: what matters is not our position, but our spirit of service. Lord Rama was pleasing to every living entity and tolerant of every circumstance. When the bridge was built to Sri Lanka, there was a range of helpers, from powerful monkeys, lifting heavy boulders, to a small squirrel, hurrying back and forth, carrying little pebbles in its mouth. In Rama's eyes, both contributions were equal, as Rama sees no one as inferior or insignificant; He only sees people by their level of love and devotion for him. Similarly, we should strive to do our best in all our endeavors, with a mood of care and humility. Our intention should always be centered on the pleasure of the Lord. Only then will we be truly successful.

Second lesson: we should be aware of temptation. Sita became attracted to a golden deer that looked extraordinarily beautiful. Although She already lived a peaceful existence in harmony with nature, with her husband, she became tempted. Shortly after that, a disaster struck. Therefore, we should be grateful for what we have, keeping our mind focused on our spiritual journey, instead of being wavered by materialistic ideals, which are really facades for trouble.

Lastly: remember that truth always prevails. Rama and his companions never lost hope, despite the insurmountable troubles they were faced with, including the mighty demon, Ravana. Sita Devi too remained courageous despite being held captive in Ravana's Lanka. We must also demonstrate unflinching and unshakable devotion to our dear Lord as we are also in captivity of the shackles of material existence- the arena of Ravana-reminiscent bondage. The Lord will always protect His devotees who act with compassion and truthfulness.