27th March, 2026
Ram Navami Festival Class
By His Holiness Srila Radhanath Swami Maharaj
at ISKCON Chowpatty, Mumbai

Lecture Begins:

Gratitude & Invocation:

Jai Sri Ram, We are sincerely grateful to everyone who has come this evening for the annual celebration of Sri Rama Navami, Appearance day of Ramachandra at Sri Sri Radha Gopinath Temple. Krishna tells in Bhagavad-gita,

janma karma ca me divyam
evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna

One who understands the transcendental nature of my appearance in this world and activities, transcends forever the suffering of birth and death and comes to me.

Divine Dharma

yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya
tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmy aham

This is a great mystery, In today's world, we find so much conflict, so much division and within that division comes suspicion, insecurity, fear, hatred, violence, even in the name of God, the universal principle of all dharma or religion.

Essence of True Religion

sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmo
yato bhaktir adhokṣaje

is unmotivated, uninterrupted, loving service to the Supreme Truth, to God, to Lord Hari. And the symptom of such love, Krishna tells in Bhagavad-gita,

brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā
na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām

Spiritual Consciousness & Inner Joy

When we actually attain this spiritual platform of consciousness, we become joyful, not joyful due to external circumstances, but joyful from within in all circumstances. And even when there's pain, even when there's sorrow, which is natural, living in a world where everything is temporary, still within that, there's the joy of the eternal nature of the soul. And then Krishna goes on to say, such a person does not crave for anything in this world and does not lament over that which is lost in the world. And then the next stage is very important. Such a person becomes a well-wishing friend for all living beings. Knowing Krishna, knowing God to be the ever-well-wishing friend of all living beings. And when we actually live with these qualities, then according to Gita, we begin actual bhakti.

Misconceptions About Bhakti

Some people think that bhakti is just a very simple type of yoga for very simple people who can't do complicated asanas or who cannot understand deep philosophical arguments, but actually a highest philosophy, and the essence of yoga begins when there is love for God. This is stated in the Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament. The first in great commandment, which in the Bhagavatam's term means the essence of religion, is to love God with all your heart, mind and soul, and to express that love by loving our neighbor as ourself.

Questioning Human Behavior

So why, according to this universal principle, which is at the heart of all true dharmas, why people eat each other in the name of a loving God? Why people are so arrogant? One at the heart of every religion, the heart of all dharma, is to be humble, forgiving and compassionate. Why people are so greedy, one at the heart of all true dharmas, is sarva-loka-maheśvaram, Everything is God's property and whatever we're entrusted with is meant to serve God and share with one another.

Purpose of Divine Incarnation

So this particular verse from the fourth chapter of Bhagavad Gita very much clarifies. It's a simple principle, but it's so much. Let us say, forgotten. That whenever and wherever there is a decline in religion, that supreme truth, the father, the mother of all living beings, Bhagavan, Ishvara descends to reestablish these true principles. And if we understand this essence and we live with these principles, then

bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasāṁ
sarva-loka-maheśvaram
suhṛdaṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ
jñātvā māṁ śāntim ṛcchati

Then we could actually be messengers of peace, messengers of Krsna's love.

Avatars & Universal Truth

So Krsna is telling here that He descends in many forms, with many names, in many places. And in the Vedic literatures, we find so many avatars, so many historical events with the Lord descends. There is matsya, kurma, raha, there's Vamanadeva, there's Parashuram, there's Rama, there's Krsna and Balaram. It describes Buddha as an avatar of the supreme Lord in the Vedic literatures. And in the Puranas and the Vedas, there are various types of avatars. They are all coming ultimately for the long purpose of teaching us how to live our lives in such a way that we can actually be happy. ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā, Krsna tells, I'm the supreme father, I'm the supreme mother of all living beings. This is also a universal principle. janmādy asya yato, the Absolute Truth, is the source of everything and everyone.

True Happiness & Relative Happiness & Consciousness

Now any good, stable parent wants their children to be happy. Sometimes we teach them, sometimes we reward them, sometimes we have to punish them, but it's all for their happiness. Not just their temporary pleasures, but their overall future happiness in life.
So, sarve sukhinaḥ bhavantu our Guru Maharaja, Srila Prabhupada escribes, this is a principle of all knowledge. The Vedas are teaching us, let all beings be happy. But then the necessary question is what is actual happiness? Because practically everyone in this world has a different conception of happiness. For some of us, it's happy when we sleep under a mosquito net, But for a mosquito it's happy to drink your blood. So who's right and who's wrong? Among the mosquito community, you are wrong. Some people are happy in tamaguna, sattva-guna, sattva-guna. Some are happy with intoxications, some consider it miserable. Some are happy, inflicting violence and pain on others. Others are happy, healing others, uplifting others. Some are happy just accumulating, some are happy sharing. So what is actual happiness? This is the essential teaching that all the scriptures are either immediately or gradually teaching us. How to uplift our consciousness, to understand that we're not this body with the eternal soul, the happiness of the body mind, It's nice, but it's only really valuable for happiness if it's in harmony with the happiness of the soul.

Purpose of Yoga & Dharma

Yoga, bhakti, dharma, it's not to just deny the body and mind. It's to recognize and engage our thoughts, our words and our actions in harmony with the nature of the soul. So to teach us these principles, there are so many religions in the world in different languages, with different rituals, In different books, but it's the one supreme absolute truth, the one supreme Lord, who is coming to teach us the same principle.

Krishna – The Supreme Source

ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavo
mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate
iti matvā bhajante māṁ
budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ

Krishna tells, I'm the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from me. The wise who know this perfectly engage in my loving surface and worship Me with all their hearts. So that one supreme truth, who we love and worship is Krishna, kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān

svayam, descends in many ways. And one of the most beloved and prominent of all such incarnations is Lord Ramacandra. We are celebrating His appearance today.

Glories of Lord Ramachandra

Lord Ramacandra is a very unique and special avatar. He is called upon his Maryada Purushottama. He is appearing along with Sita, his eternal consort, his Hladini Shakti, his feminine aspect. It's coming in the role of a human being to teach you and me in all humanity for all time. How to live both spiritually, socially, physically on every level in an ideal way? He is teaching Dharma, values, character, and he is teaching Bhakti, love.

Lord Sri Rama– A Life of Compassion

In the history of Lord Ram, especially Valmiki Ramayan, everything in Ram's life is an expression of the purest love and compassion. And his character and values are all harmonized with that essential love and compassion. With the few minutes that we have today, I'd like to just share or let us say highlight a few events in Ram's life that very much illustrates the lessons, He teaches through the interactions he has with his devotees. It is a principle that the Supreme Lord not only incarnates to teach us, but through the hearts of those who love Him, through the hearts of his devotees and through the relationship that we see in the Lord and His devotees, that is where the greatest lessons of life can be learned. That are meant to be applied in our lives in various circumstances. So let's begin in Ayodhya.

Glory of Ayodhya

Ayodhya was such a glorious city, was a kingdom. The government was so good under the great King Dasharath and his ministers. Such kings, Raja Rishis, they lived with the understanding that everything belongs to Lord Hari. And these are all Lord Hari's children. And the whole kingdom is entrusted. I'm just taking care of them in harmony with the loving, compassionate spirit of the Lord.

Purity Brings Prosperity

And the laws, the taxes, everything is based on that principle. There is no greed. And therefore, the whole kingdom of Ayodhya was so prosperous, and was totally clean. Can you imagine? In India, everything being totally clean. Why was everything so clean? Because everyone in their hearts were so clean. If you clean the ecology of the heart, then naturally we live in harmony with the ecology around us.

Dasharath's Concern

And everyone was so happy. Literally everyone had an abundance. And there was no competition. But still Dassarath was unhappy. Because he was thinking of future generations. In this world, everyone grows old. Everyone has to die. That's not a surprise. Sometimes it comes as a surprise. But it's inevitable. So although Dassarath was loved, he was popular, he was powerful, he was wealthy. And everybody was happy with him and around him. Still, according to the tradition of those days, a king needed to train a son to be his successor. And he had no son. So he was not unhappy for himself. He was unhappy for the kingdom and for the people.

Sacrifice & Blessing

So he began to perform various types of sadhana, spiritual practice. And in those days, in the Tretayuga, the recommended spiritual practice with yagya, performance of sacrificial ceremonies. And he was doing so much service and taking so much instructions for the sake of Dharma to holy people.

Divine Appearance of Nectar

And ultimately, there was a beautiful, beautiful ceremony, especially for a child to be born. And how he worshiped the Lord and how he worshiped the devatas to worship the Lord. And during this ceremony, he gave so...so much charity to the Brahmins, to the Sadhus and the Saints. And then there was the final offering. And from the sacred fire, a celestial, divine personality rose into the sky. He was so effulgent. He descended to the earth. And Dasharath Maharaj and everybody around were bowing down to him. And he had a golden pot with celestial amrita or nectar.

Birth of Lord Ram

It was actually the prasad, the grace of the Lord. And he told Dasharath, you give Dasharath, he said, you give this to your queens. And four sons will be born. Dasharath circumambulated this personality and then he went back into the fire. Then Dasharath Maharaj went back to his palace. And his three principal queens, he gave one portion to kaushaliya, one to Kaikei.
And then they each gave a portion of theirs to Sumithra. So of these three queens, soon after, they all felt very powerful and credible, merciful personalities within themselves. And it was on this day, Ram Navam, that the first and eldest son was born to Kaushaliya, Lord Ramchandra.

Brotherly Love between Lord Sri Ram, Bharat, Lakshmana and Shatrugna,

The four brothers had such love for each other, Ram, Bharat, Lakshmana and Shatrugna, Their qualities, their character, their affection and their wonderful activities from the time of their birth completely attracted the hearts of everyone,

Lord Ram's Divine Nature & Universal Attraction

because Ram is not just an ordinary baby, He is appearing like an ordinary baby. But he's the supreme mother and father of all living beings. The supremely loving, compassionate Lord of the universe in this little form. And he's going to spend his life teaching us how to live, out of his kindness. The whole kingdom of Ayodhya was completely attracted by the qualities of Lord Ram. In fact, even when he was a little child crawling, they couldn't wait till he was their king and the Dasharath, Kaushaliya, Kaikei, Sumitra, Lakshmana,Bharat, and Shatrugna, and everyone else in the kingdom, they couldn't wait till Ram was king. There was not a competition, there was simply affection.

The Call of Sage Vishvamitra

When they were just young boys, the great sage, Vishramitra, came to Ayodhya. And he requested Dasharath. In the forest that I'm living, there's a great disturbance, we're being attacked by demoniac beings, I want your son, Ram, to come to help us. Dasarath, I'll come myself. Ram is just a boy. Who is these, who is these daccoits, these demoniac beings, Rakshasas? He said they are associated with Ravana. As soon as Dasarath heard the name Ravana, he shook in fear. He understood all his armies could not defend themselves against Ravana's people. But Vishramitra, he said, I just want Ram, I don't want you or your army. Dasarath is not seeing Ram as God. He's not seeing him as an all-powerful personality. He's seeing him more or less just the way you would see your child. So he was very apprehensive. Vishramitra said, you already promised me, you would, when I came to the palace, you put me on your throne, you wash my feet, you gave me gifts, then you offered, how can I serve you? And I told you, will you give me what I ask? And you said, of course. So I'm asking. This was the profound values of such a person at that time. When they give their word, they can never go back. Especially when we give our word to an enlightened person. So Vishramitra brought Ram and Lakshman wanted to be with Ram everywhere. He was the most loyal, beloved, younger brother. And they rescued all the sages and the forest from those demoniac people.

Sita Swayamvar – Destiny Revealed

And then Vishramitra brought him to Mithila. And there, it's very interesting, one of Ram's examples. He was not only such an obedient, wonderful, loving, cooperative son in every way. He was quite different than Krishna. They're the same person, but in different moods. Krishna would steal butter. And if you hid your butter, you would pass urine on your floor. You never hear of Ram doing things like that. If you showed him, I would ask, did you steal the butter? Krishna would say, no. He would say a truth higher than a truth. There's relative truth, there's absolute truth. He would say truths in such a way that would increase Yashoda's love. He never told a lie in the sense that we know lies, where we're just afraid of being caught. He would

appear to be afraid of being caught, just to increase the dynamics of the love that we share with Krishna. Krishna danced for Gopis. Ram was very…. Not like that. But in so many of the most important moments of Ram's life, He requested the blessings of enlightened persons. When they went to Mithila's Janak Maharaj told, that we have Lord Shiva's bow. And for generations, this bow has been in my family. It's so big and it's so strong. Nobody gets lift it. And years ago, some years ago, I was plowing a field for a Yagya, a ceremony. And as I was ploughing the field, myself, a beautiful girl came out of the mother earth. And she is my daughter, Sita. And from that time, so many great princes and kings have come here to marry her because she's so beautiful. And she has such divine charming qualities. But I made a vow that only the person who could lift this bow and string it, will marry my Sita.

He said, the reason I made this vow,

- one is that I was told by great rishis that she's the feminine expansion of the Supreme Lord Vishnu. And Lord Vishnu will come here to marry her. So I know nobody could lift this bow except Vishnu, Siva's bow.
- And second reason, when Sita was just the little girl, I used to love to secretly watch what she was doing. And sometimes she would just pretend to be like the adults and she would clean things. So one day she was dusting the altar where the bow was on. And little girl, with tiny little soft hands, she lifted the bow, dusted under it. And then put it down effortlessly. And then I confirm my vow, nobody will marry her unless they could lift this bow.

Breaking Shiva's Bow

And he said, so many people were trying to come, so many princess and kings.And when they all failed, even Ravana came. They become so upset with me, they attacked me. They joined together to attack me with armies to kidnap Sita. And I had to fight with all my force for over a year with the help of the devatas. But now I'm saying this boy, Ram, he's telling Vishvamitra, It is my great prayer that he marries Sita. So Visvamitramini, brought Ram and Lakshman to the place where the bow was. And it's so beautiful. Ram is the Adiguru. He is the Jagatguru. He's the guru of the universe. But yet he's teaching us by his example how to be a disciple when he was traveling for the forest with Vishwamitra, He was massaging his guru's feet and legs every evening, along with Lakshman, Balarama. He would bring water for him to make little fires, to keep warm. He would go out and collect wood and bring it back. And there are so many beautiful descriptions of Ram and Lakshman in asking spiritual questions to Vishwamitra. The history of the Ganges, the history of great rishis. There are so many beautiful stories of Vishwamitra instructing Ram and Lakshman. Vishwamitra knows that they are that Ram is God. He's Bhagavan. But he's playing his role for Ram to teach us how to be a disciple. Vishwamitra takes the role of being a guru for his ultimate guru. That is Ram's lesson. When Ram looked

down at the ball, he asked for Vishwamitra's blessings before attempting to lift it. Now here, Ram and Sita are eternal consort. But yet Ram is asking Vishwamitra's blessings to show us, to show the world for all time, the value of receiving blessings from saintly people. And Sita was watching from a balcony with her friends. And she completely was in love with Ram. It's suspenseful. And everyone in Ayodhya, and everyone in Mithala, who was assembled, was watching, practically breathless, hoping and praying Ram would do it. And Ram just put his hands on that bow one hand and just held it for some time. While everyone was watching in such intense anticipation. And then when Vishwamitramuni gave the signal, Ram lifted the ball. Effortlessly, like an elephant with his trunk lifts a flower. He lifted it over his head. And everybody gasped. And then he took the string, and he had to bend the bow and put the string on one hand, then he tied the string to the other hand. He strung it. But then he did something extra. After he strung the bow, he put it straight up over his head, and he pulled the string, and he pulled it, pulled it, pulled it and the bow broke.

Sita-Ramachandra got married

And Sita was, her eyes were glistening with tears of love and happiness. And Janak Maharaj brought his daughter, and she had a beautiful golden garland of flowers, and she placed it around Ram's neck. And then the arrangements were made for Dasharath, and the leaders of the Ayodhya community to come to Mithala were Rama is to be married to Sita.

The Sitadevi’s three other sisters got Marriage Proposals

And at that time it was proposed to Dasharath Maharaj, that you have three other sons here. Sita has a sister, Urmila. She could marry Lakshmana. And Janak's brother, Kushadbaj, he had two daughters. One was Mandavi. She could marry Bharat. And Shrutikirti can marry Shatrugna. And Ram was very happy. And Dasharat was very happy. And Vashishtamuni came here. He was very happy. And Bharat, and Mandavi, and Shatrugna, and Shrutikirti, and Lakshmana, and Urmila are very happy. So they all got married together.

The Night Before Coronation

Then they returned to Ayodhya. They lived together in the service of the whole kingdom and that day was awaiting. And this is such a beautiful story, but it's a tragic story. Dasharat was inspired and also instructed by the great saints around him of the auspicious time for the ceremony to coronate Ram as the Prince Regent as the coming king. And all of you, I believe most all of you know this story. And it's almost time to end. The ceremony was going to be the next day and everyone in Ayodhya was ecstatic. There were so many decorations.

Manthara's Poison

Everything was so beautiful. But Manthara, she was the maid-servant of Kaikeyi, the mother of Bharat, she was seeing all this, and she asked someone, why is there so much music and dancing, and everything is being decorated? She was told, tomorrow, Ram will be coronated, she became insecure, she became fearful and by the higher powers, she became filled with envy. And somehow, even though Kaikeyi loved Ram just like her own child, Kaikeyi convinced her that she and her son will be discriminated against and suffer if Ram is coronated. And together they hatched a plan. It it was Mantara's idea. Don't you remember long ago?

Kaikeyi's Two Boons

When dasharath was fighting in a battlefield, and he was injured, and you nursed him to hell. He was so grateful to you. He offered you two benedictions. And you said, at another time I will ask you, now is the time. Now you demand your benedictions.

- One, that your son Bharat is coronated as King.
- And two, in order to secure your son's position, Ram be exiled to the forest to live in the bark of trees for 14 years.

By that association, Kaikeyi's mind changed. It's quite symbolic. From her loving mother, she became suspicious, fearful, and hateful. And when Dasarath came to meet her, she made these demands, and he was devastated. He never really agreed to it, but he couldn't.

Ram's Unshakable Dharma & Mother's Breaking Heart

When Ram came to take his father's blessings in the morning, he saw his father just laying there in a completely miserable state and said, what's wrong, my father? And Kaikeyi said, he's not able to tell you, because he loves you so much he doesn't want to hurt you. But he promised me these two boons. And before I tell you what these boons are, you must promise me that you will not cause him to break his promise. Ram said, ofcourse, I will always honor my father's promises. She said, my son will be coronated, and you will be exiled to the forest. You will dress in the bark of trees and only eat the roots and berries, and for 14 years you will not enter any village, town or city. Dasarath heard her tell Ram this, he fell unconscious. And Ram, he said, if that's what my father wants, of course I will. He had no attachment. He said, my only pain is to see my father's pain. If I could protect his word of honor by going to forest for 14 years, I'm happy to do it. But my father, please don't be pained. I will do it. He couldn't even speak. He couldn't even look at Ram. Ram came to the palace in the morning, he was to be coronated in beautiful robes on a chariot surrounded by people. And he walked outside and went to his mother's chambers. And she was fasting and stayed up all night doing beautiful ceremonies,

celebrating to get blessings for her son. And upon seeing Ram, she couldn't understand why are you coming to my room like this? Today is a beautiful, wonderful day. And he told her what happened. She fell unconscious. She cried in every way she tried to convince Ram not to do it. When Ram was insistent, she tried to convince him, I will come with you. But Ram said, my beloved father needs you at his side. You must stay. When she saw that he was determined, his only unhappiness was her unhappiness. And she gave her heartfelt blessings. Go, my son, I'm proud of you. I wish all blessings to you. I wish all blessings for your good health, for your happiness, for your living by the values that you hold so sacred.

Sita's Eternal Commitment

Lakshmana was furious. When Ram calmed him down, then they went to meet Sita. And when Ram told Sita, she insisted, if that's what you're going to do, I'm coming with you. Ram said, how can you come? You're a princess. You're born in royalty. If you come with me, you'll be living sleeping on the ground of the forest. All your beautiful robes will be left behind. You'll just be wearing tree bark. There's cold winters, hot summers, stormy rainy seasons, and so many wild animals, lions, tigers, elephants, snakes, scorpions, mosquitoes, and many rakshasas, Demoniac beings, you must stay home and take care of our parents. She insisted, I've given my heart to you, to be with you in the forest will be like the Palace of Ayodhya. But without you in the Palace of Ayodhya will be like the forest, My father is given my word. I will be with you through good times and hard times. You must allow me to perform my duties of love and keep the word of my father. You're keeping the word of your father. Let me keep the word of my father. Ram said, yes, you come. And Lakshman said, I'm coming too. And Ram said, you come too. So, they had to leave that day. Kaikeyi, she had the tree bark clothing for Ram Lakshmana and Sita, And when they saw Sita trying to put it on, she was bewildered. Everyone was crying except Kaikeyi And even Vashishtamuni became so obsessed. And there's a beautiful narration. They went to take leave of Dasharath. Kaushaliya come to the chariot to give her blessings, even though it was breaking her heart beyond comprehension. And after some time, the whole town of Ayodhya came with them.

The Departure from Ayodhya

But then Ram, after they walked all day, he left in the middle of the night on the chariot with Sumantra, the charioteer, the minister of Dasarath. All everyone was sleeping. And he had them go through rivers and streams so nobody could trace the pathway of the wheels.

Guha – Devotion Beyond Caste

And there was a beautiful interaction where they came near the bank of the Ganga in a very natural forest. The tribal king of that area is named Guha, He heard that Ram was there, and Guha was actually a very good friend of Ram. Because Guha used to go to Ayodhya sometimes.

By community or caste, he didn't have any. He was from a classification called Nishada, which was like a tribal outcast. That's what he was considered at the time. But Ram never considered a person's caste. He was a person's external qualifications. He only considered a person's character. And here is Guha. He's actually the king of this tribal area of the forest. And he had his army. And he had houses. He had so much everything, food. So when he heard Ram was there, he came running to see Ram. And he couldn't believe what he was saying.

The Vow of Renunciation

When he came before Ram, Ram was sitting under a Banyan tree, worshiping mother Ganga, wearing tree bark. And it was there that Ram, with the sap of the trees, matted his hair with Lakshman. And Guha offered him incredible feast. Guha came with his ministers, with his assistants. And they brought wonderful, wonderful forest food. And they brought beds. And Ram said that I have given my word to my father. In one sense, he gave his word to protect his father's promise that he gave to Kaikeyi. He said, I cannot eat any. He said, I cannot eat. Just bring me a little water. You could feed the horses of my chariot with this feast because they're my father's horses. And they have not taken the vow to be living in them. So I will not sleep on the bed. Lakshman just put some leaves on the ground for Ram and Sita to lay in. And that night, Maharaj Guha said to, he said to Ram, I offer you everything in this kingdom. If you're banished for 14 years, you come and live in happiness. And myself and everyone will be here to serve you. But Ram refused. And that night, Lakshman told, while Ram and Sita slept on the leaves, Lakshman told him the same story. And when Guha wanted to make a bed for Lakshman, Lakshman said, I have vowed I will not sleep for 14 years. 24 hours a day, I will guard Sita and Ram.

Urmila’s Silent Sacrifice

Now this is a very instructive part of the story. Why didn't Bharat's wife Urmala, come with him? And Sita came with Ram, because Ram was, He's the Supreme Lord everyone was serving. But Ram wants to serve his servants. Lakshman came to the forest so that he could give 24 hours of his complete attention to protecting Sita and Ram. And Urmala understood she was feeling the same separation from her sister Sita And Ram, the Lord of her life, and Lakshman, her beloved husband, she was in the same situation similar to Sita. But she could best serve by remaining in Ayodhya, taking care of the parents, and giving Lakshman the opportunity to give his complete attention and this unity and diversity we've been discussing a lot.Sometimes the best way we could serve, sometimes the principles of Dharma are different for different people. It's not just black and white. Urmala perfectly performed her Dharma. And in many ways, she endured separation from Lakshman Ram and Sita for 14 years. Because that's the way she could best offer her love and serve. Yes, Maharaja Guha became one of the most celebrated greatest

historic devotees of Ram where Ram showed the world that character and devotion, Dharma, is above any external situation.

Chitrakoot – The Forest of Peace

The next morning they crossed the Ganga, and Ram came to Prayagraj, the confluence of the rivers Yamuna, Ganga, Saraswati, There they met the great Bharatvaj Muni. He had an ashram there. And when he heard what happened, Ram asked, where is a quiet place where nobody will find us? A natural forest. And Bharadvaj said, I know the perfect place. Just close by his mountain named Kamagiri Chitrakut. And he gave pages of the Ramayana, his great sage's description of the beauty of Chitrakut. The important event of lifting the bow and marrying Sita was with the blessings of Vishvamitramuni. Ram went to live in Chitrakut with Lakshmana and Sita with the blessings of Bharadvaj. An interesting later on, when Ram finally did liberate Ravana, how did he do it? With an arrow given by Agastyamuni, an arrow and a mantra. So these most prominent parts of his life were very much the bow with the blessings of Vishvamitra, The arrow was with the blessings of Agastya. And the most beautiful part of his life in Chitrakut was with the blessings of Bharadvaj.

The Passing of Dasharath maharaj

So as he was living in this beautiful forest, on the banks of the Mandakini Ganga river, Ram and Sita in Lakshman were just living such simple lives. Sometimes Sita would tell Ram, this is the happiest time of my whole life. Ayodhya was such a busy kingdom and city and there was so much. Now we're exiled, that was very painful. But at the same time, we're just together here. And their favorite pastime was assisting the sages and the rishis and the yogis. They would collect flowers for them, they would collect water for them. They would just do menial services and they were so happy. But meanwhile in Ayodhya, after Ram left, Ram loved his father so dearly that he was willing to protect the honor and the dignity of his father's promise he was willing to leave. Everything. And Dasaratha loved Ram so dearly that after Ram left, he couldn't live. Chanting Ram's name, he gave up his body. And now in Ayodhya there's no king. So Vashishta is saying Bharat with Sathugna were away at their uncle's house.

Bharat’s Return and Shock

So Vashishta sent a message to Bharat, there's an emergency, please come back. But he didn't tell him what it was. So when Bharat came back, he entered Ayodhya and he saw everything was so depressing and everyone was so sad and also many inauspicious things. When he found out what happened from his mother, he became so furious. I will never allow your evil plot to be fulfilled. I will go to wherever Ram is and I will offer him the kingdom and I will remain in the forest for 14 years.

The Most Misunderstood Devotee

This lesson of Bharat's relationship with Ram is very much at the heart of the Ramayana. Bharat was misunderstood by everyone. Ram was his life and soul. He just heard Ram's banished to the forest. Sita was the most worshiped goddess for him. She's banished to the forest. His loving brother and companion Lakshmana. And at the same time, his father's dead from the agony of separation was horrible. He went to Ram's mother, Kaushaliya. And she said, congratulations, you're successful. Now you could rule the kingdom. You and your mother, your desire is fulfilled. What about my Ram and Sita? What about your father who's dead? Bharat was heartbroken not only to see the suffering but also that he was being so misunderstood. But as soon as he explained his heart, Kaushaliya immediately accepted. And Vashishtamuni said the same thing, but then he understood. And Bharat, he planned for himself and the queens to go. Sumantra told where Ram was in Chitrakut to go there and convince Ram to return.

Bharat Meeting at Chitrakoot

So in Chitrakut and Ram and Sita and Lakshmana are so happily, they don't know what's going on in Ayodhya externally. They're just living such a peaceful life. And one day they hear all these chariots and they hear these elephants and they hear these soldiers and they hear thousands of people. So Lakshman climbs a tree and he looks over and he sees large crowds coming to Chitrakuta. This never happened. This is before there was Yatras. Some day we should do this. But they were all going and Lakshmana saw, he's telling Ram from the treetop, I'm seeing all these people and I'm seeing a chariot and I'm seeing a flag on the chariot. It's Bharat's flag. Lakshmana became as angry as fire. He said, first Bharat has exiled you to the forest and now he must be afraid that when you come back you'll take the kingdom away. So he's coming with all his armies to kill you. Lakshmana became like a cyclone of anger. He said, on this day I will kill Bharat and I will destroy the whole army of Ayodhya if they try to harm you.

Lord Ramachandra crying in the tears of separation

And Ram is totally calm he chastised Lakshmana. He said, Lakshmana, Bharat loves me just like you love me. He had nothing to do with the exile. I know his heart, he's coming to offer me to come back and be the king. Lakshmana became very humble. And then Bharat, Shatrugna, they left everybody else behind and they saw the little hut that Lakshmana made for Ram. And he saw the bows of Lakshmana and Ram leaning outside the hut. And he saw Ram's, he came running and running, just Shatrugna and Bharat. And upon meeting Ram, they embraced. And if you go to Chitrakut, even today in the stone where they met, as they embraced the stones melted and their footprints are still there. And Shatrugna and Lakshman embraced. And Kaushaliya was there and she embraced Sita. And there there was a wonderful conversation.

Ram said, why you have come? But I don't see my father anywhere. Bharat told the story, our father is no more. Ram cried. He informed Sita and Lakshmana. They wept, They went to the Mandakini Ganga or around performed the last rites for his father. The love that is shared even among the Lord and the devotees and the most enlightened people is actually the deepest revelation of affection.

Someone may ask if Krishna says in Gita we are not these bodies, Ram knows that, so why is he crying? Because the body is a medium by which we can exchange love. And the separation from that connection is not a material connection. There is crying in an enlightened state and an unenlightened state. An enlightened state we understand the soul. The soul of a great soul person is in a very happy destination. The soul is eternal. na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre, can never die. But the medium of the body that is reciprocated love, the love of the souls with is no longer. And in many ways that creates very, very deep. There may be tears of separation, but it is tears of love for the eternal soul in separation. It is not tears of just the loss of a life.

Bharat begged to Lord Ramachandra to come back and rule the kingdom

After the offering of ablations on behalf of Dasharath Maharaja, Bharata told Ram his mission, everyone here has assembled all the citizens of Ayodhya, and actually even Kaikeyi came. Everyone is here to bring you back to Ayodhya to be the king. But Ram refused said, our father has given his word. I must protect that. That is my Dharma. Bharata said then transfer it to me. I will stay in the forest for 14 years and you go back and make all of Ayodhya happy. Ram, what his principles of Dharma were so unshakable. All the rikshi, all the sages, along with Bharata, along with the citizens of Ayodhya, they were all trying to convince Ram to go back. And there are so many pages of Ramayana with all of the arguments and how Ram defeated every argument. Just on the principle of his love for Dharma and his father's word. But the dynamics of this conversation are so rare and special. How many people in this world do you know who are literally fighting over who could give something to another? There are not many court cases. Two brothers are arguing that my brother should have everything but that's what they are arguing. Bharata is saying, I want to give you everything I want to be in the forest like this And Ram is saying, I will stay in the forest. You take everything and live in Ayodhya. And it wasn't just pretentious. They both deeply, deeply respected and loved each other and cared about each other.

Bharat kept the Lord Ramachandra’s Sandals on the Throne

And ultimately, when Bharata saw that there was no way that Ram was going to compromise, he brought wooden sandals that were very nicely decorated. And he put them on the ground and told Ram, please, one time, put your lotus feet in these sandals. And if I have to go back to

Ayodhya, I will put these sandals on the throne. And I will live in a forest outside and I will rule the whole kingdom wearing tree bark for 14 years, and I will do everything on your behalf in the form of these sandals. So Ram stepped in the sandals and Bharata brought them back. And he would come to Ayodhya to do his duties as king. But he lived in a hut just as simple as Ram's hut in Chitrakut and he mattered his hair. And for the next 14 years, Bharata just ate the roots and the herbs that were on the ground. After some time, because they were discovered, and because there were rakshasya influences, where the sages need help in the Dandakaranya forest, Ram's seat in Lakshmana left Chitrakut and came to Nasik, actually quite next door to Mumbai, Panchavati,

The Story of Jatayu – True Victory Defined

There is Ravana, the great king of the dynasty of rakshashas He disguised himself in Kidnapped Sita where Ram and Lakshman were laying. Ram dedicated, practically the next part of his life, searching for Sita, while Ravana was carrying Sita away, the great bird jatayu, he happened to see them overhead. Jatayu was very old. He actually didn't have much strength. He heard Sita crying out. He was sleeping, actually. I'm getting that experience when you get older and you like to sleep more. But he was sleeping. He don't like it. You just, it happens. And to tell you, heard Sita crying out his name, please tell Ram the direction I've been taken. But Jatayu, he couldn't just sit there and allow this to happen. He immediately cried out to Ravana that if you want to take Sita away in this totally immoral cowardly way, you must first fight me. So, Ravana , who was young, who was strong, who had so many weapons, he came and attacked Jatayu and Jatayu attacked Ravana, It was an incredible battle. And eventually, Ravana with his sword, he cut off the wings of Jatayu, who fell to the ground, in mortal pain. And Sita was crying to see, to protect me Jatayu has given his life. And Ravana grabbed her by the hair and took her away, as Ram was searching everywhere, came to the river Godavari. Ultimately, he saw Ravana's broken chariot. And then he saw blood all around this bird who was laying there, a huge bird. And Ram called out that this evil monster has eaten Sita and her blood is everywhere. On this very day, I will send him to the abode of death. And Ram took his bow and his arrow. And Jatayu is laying there. And he said, I am Jatayu. I tried to protect Sita. And when Ram heard that, he immediately put down his bow and his arrow. And Jatayu told him the whole story. And so beautiful, Ram put the head of Jatayu in his lap. As Jatayu was telling him all the details of where Sita was, the direction she was being taken, how he gave his life to protect her. And he chanted the name of Ram and looked up and Ram's beautiful lotus face. And Ram told Jatayu, on this very day, I am giving you the supreme perfection of liberation in my abode. And Jatayu passed away in the arms and in the Lord Ramchandra. So a story to meditate upon here.

What is Real Success?

What is success? What does it mean to win? In the battle, Ravana won. He was victorious. Jatayu tried to protect Sita. Ravana successfully took her away. Jatayu tried to fight Ravana. Ravana killed him. So who won? This story is a very clear understanding what it means to be successful in this world. Jatayu was on the side of Dharma. Jatayu, he served with love. When Jatayu passed away in Ram's arms, Ram cried. And he said to Lakshman, that hearing about my father's death was painful to me. Seeing that Sita was kidnapped was painful to me, but nothing is more painful to me than seeing a devotee like Jatayu who has given his life for my Sita. Ram was humbled, Ram's heart was conquered by the devotion of Jatayu. And he gave Jatayu the eternal success and victory of life. By his surrender, he attained the perfection. And as far as Ravana, how many people celebrate Ravana today? Please raise your hands. How many people celebrate Jatayu? Jatayu won.

Meeting Hanuman and the Mission to Find Sita

It's not about the external appearance of winning and losing. It's about our purpose. It's about our motive, It's about our principles, our character, our values, and ultimately our love and our compassion. And eventually, Ram was directed through many different events while they traveled by foot, about a thousand miles looking for Sita, They came to Pumpasarovar And there they met Hanuman. And I'd like to begin the story here.

We know the story of Hanuman, of course, to serve Lord Ram to find Sita, He was willing to jump over an ocean. Ram trusted Hanuman with Sita with a ring to give to Sita. So she would recognize him as her messenger. And all the Vanaras, the followers of Sugriva, they went in all the four directions looking for any sign of where Sita could be. And ultimately, Sampathi, the brother of Jatayu, told them, he's across, she is across the ocean and Ravana's kingdom in Lanka. 800 miles in those days. And in the Sundarakanda of Ramayana, it tells the incredible obstacles that Hanuman had to cross in order to reach Lanka. But there was just nothing that could stop his compassion for Sita and his loving service to Ram.

Hanuman’s Heroic Service in Lanka

And ultimately, when he discovered Sita, he secretly disguised himself when she was all alone and gave for the ring of Ram and gave her his message And assured, he said, Sita, I will take you back right now. Just get on my back. Sita, she said that wouldn't… She, in her love for Ram, she wanted Ram to come to fulfill his mission. And then Ravana started tearing apart the structures in the beautiful Ashok garden where Sita was being held as prisoner. Ravana was daily threatening Sita to surrender to him. But she remained completely faithful and chased in her love for Ram. But Hanuman, he was eventually fighting battles because he was causing so much

disruption and he was face to face with Ravana, tied up with ropes and he told Ravana that if you just give back Sita and Ram will protect you, you're such a coward, you kidnapped her. When he was away, why didn't you fight with him? If you don't return Sita, you and your entire dynasty will be destroyed. Ravana was furious. He said, monkeys are very proud of their tails, light his tail on fire, They soaked Hanuman's tail in all sorts of different wrappings and lit it on fire. And Hanuman... very heroically, he burst from the ropes and he jumped building to building to building and touched his tail. And he set almost the entirety of Lanka on fire.

Sita's Blessing and Hanuman's Triumph

And it is said that when Sita heard what was going on, she was praying to Agni, the fire God that Hanuman will only feel a very cool, refreshing experience by the fire on his tail And when Hanuman was burning the whole city, he felt his tail was so cool and he knew this is Sita's blessing and literally armies were destroyed, generals were destroyed, Hanuman was fighting, he killed so many, and then he was burning the city. And he concluded by calling out in a very loud voice, Ravana, I'm just one single messenger among millions of messengers of Ram, If this is what I could do, what will Ram do? Give back Sita. And then he jumped in the ocean and put his tail out and then jumped back to cross the ocean.

Ram's Gratitude to Hanuman

And the most beautiful part of the story is when he returned to Kishkindi Kshetra where Rama and Lakshma, we're living in a cave called Prsravana. Still there today, Hanuman told the whole story to Ram and gave a jewel. And gave Sita told, was it a jewel? And gave a jewel, one of Sita's jewels to Ram. And shared beautiful story. When Ram heard this, he cried with gratitude. He said, Hanuman, I'm living in the forest with no possessions in a cave. You have risked your life, you have endured so much just for My Sita. And your love for me, I have nothing to repay. The only thing I have is my very self. Ram embraced Hanuman. I have nothing to offer except myself and he embraced. And Hanuman wanted nothing else. But this is such a beautiful principle.

The Supreme Love Between Lord and Devotee

Krishna told the Gopis when they gave up everything for him that even in an entire lifetime of Brahma, in all of the universal creation, I have nothing that can compare to your love for me. Krishna tells, I have no way to repay you, to Gopis. He said, it allow your own love to be your happiness. In other words, Krishna felt unable to repay the Gopis, so he gave himself completely. And in this beautiful narration, Ram was feeling I have no way to repay. Hanuman, I give myself. And then they all go and they build a bridge across the ocean.

Vibhishan's Courage to Choose Dharma

But just one little more story. In Lanka, Ravana had two brothers, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishan. Vibhishan was a great devotee of the Lord. He was one of the chief ministers and advisors for Ravana. And when Ravana, he saw, or he had his spies tell him that Ram and Lakshmana are coming for Sita and they have a army of monkeys, powerful soldier monkeys, thousands and thousands, They are all assembled for battle, Ravana had a council with all his generals, like a war council. His generals, his ministers, his advisors, he asked, what should we do? And all the generals were saying, we should fight them and kill them, they are nothing. Ravana said, well Hanuman is just one of them. Look what he has done. And Prahashtha, one of the chief generals, he said, he caught us off guard. If we were prepared, we would kill him in a second. They were so proud. And one after another, they were saying, I alone could destroy Ram, Lakshmana and all of them. They are just ordinary humans and monkeys. We are Rakshasas. And as they were all speaking like this, the Bhibhishan stood up. He said, my brother, you are such a coward. First you distracted Ram to go someplace and then you stole his wife. He is on the side, He is the supreme absolute truth, He is God, He represents Dharma, He is all powerful, On every level, you are wrong, You will be defeated. Not only will you be defeated, but your whole dynasty will be destroyed. All these people, all these generals of yours are ignorant. Generals were listening, Ravana was listening. He did not like it all what he heard. He said, let me meditate on all of this and tomorrow we will have another meeting

Vibhishan Surrender to Lord Ramachandra

The next morning, Vibhisham was so concerned about his brother. He actually loved his brother, despite all his flaws. He went to privately meet Ravana in his palace and he was begging him, just return Sita. Ravana became very angry. Then they went back into the meeting and Vibhishan spoke and indrajit, Ravana's eldest, actually Kumbhakarna, his brother, he stood up and spoke. He said, he was very, he was very blunt with his brother. Because he had that power. He said what you did was the actions of a coward. If you are going, you are kidnapped a man's wife. You are holding a prisoner here. This is wrong. Why did you ask us whether you should do that first? Now after you have Ram and Lakshmana and all these millions of monkeys coming to fight us, now you are asking us, why didn't you ask us that first? You should return Sita. But if you are not going to do that, I am your brother, I am loyal to you and I will destroy Ram and Lakshmana and everyone. So he had wisdom, but he had the wrong loyalties and Vibhishan, he had wisdom and he was representing the truth. And he stood up again. And when Indrajit started chastising Vibhishan, you have no courage, You are just an ignorant coward. And Vibhisham chastised Indrajit. You do not know what you are saying, you are just a foolish boy. And Ravana seeing Vibhishan chastised Indrajit for defending him, He became outraged. And he

told his brother, Vibhishan, if you are not my brother, I would kill you at this moment. From this point on, I disown you. And Vibhisham seeing this. He with four of his ministers, he told Ravana that we are leaving.

The Shelter of Ram – Supreme Compassion

And I am going to end with this little story. Vibhishan came to take shelter of Ram. He met Sugriva in the other generals of Sugriva's army and said, I have come to surrender to Ram. Please let me meet him. And Sugriva went to Ram. And said, Vibhishan has come to meet you. Ram said, what should we do? Sugriva said, we should kill him. He is the brother of Ravana. He may be saying he is comijng to, he may be disturbed with Ravana, He may have rejected Ravana because of a disagreement, but they have the same blood, They have the same parents, They are coming from the same race. We can't trust him. If we let him into our ranks, he could cause chaos. Havoc, he is probably just a spy. Ram asked others, and they all basically said the same thing. We cannot trust him. We should either reject him. We should punish him or we should kill him. Ram was listening. Hanuman was sitting silently. Ram said to Hanuman, what is your advice? Hanumanji said, my Lord, you know everything, and you know everyone's heart. What can I say? But because you are asking me, I saw his face. He is so sincere. We should embrace him. We should love him and treat him just like a brother with fullest. When Sukhriva heard that, he went wild with anger and that is that historic moment that Ram proclaimed. If anyone, whoever they are, whatever they have done, if anyone even wants, sincerely says, my Lord, I am yours. I promise to give that person protection and free that person from all fear for all eternity. This is my vow. Even if Ravana were to come, Sharnagati, to take shelter, I would protect him forever. Bring Vibhishan now.

War, Victory and the Spirit of Forgiveness

And Vibhishan came, and then there was a whole war, but that is many chapters. But ultimately, Ravana was killed by Ram, and Sita was returned to Ram. And Vibhishan arranged the Pushpaka, the beautiful chariot that his brother had stole from their brother, Kubera. And it was a beautiful celestial chariot, and they got on it. And Ram told all the Sukhriva and all the monkeys and Vibhishan that now all of you should, actually before that, Ram told Vibhishan to perform the last rites for his brother, Vibhishan said, what? He was your enemy. I'm your devotee. How could I perform the last rites for the liberation of my brother? Ravana. Even though he hated Ram, Ram had no malice. And he told Vibhishan, he's your brother. Now he could do no more damage. You should forgive him, and you should perform the last rites for him. And similarly, in Chitrakut, going back, Lord Ram, completely forgave Kaikeyi for banishing him. And even though Bharat had rejected her, Ram told Bharat, you must forgive her, and you must care for her for the rest of her life.

The Journey Back to Ayodhya

And when they boarded the Pushpaka, the chariot, Sugriva and the other said, actually we would like to come to Ayodhya to see you coronated. And Ram said, yes, everyone come. And then he looked toward Vibhishan, he said, you come also. And they all boarded. And as the Pushpaka was in a air, Ram directed to go to all the places they went on their way and he was telling Sita, you see, this is Sri Lanka, the battlefield. This is where Ravana's last rites were, and this is where Kumbhakarna, and this is where Hanuman got Prahasthta, and this is where, you see the bridge that the monkeys built for me, across the ocean. And they came to Khishkinda Shetra, this is is Pampasarovar where I met Hanuman and I met Sugriva and Sita very affectionately said, it will please my heart if all the wives of the monkey soldiers could come to our coronation also. So they landed the Pushpaka and all the wives got on. And they went to Nasik , and they went to Chitrakut , and then they stopped at Bharadvajmuni's ashram to get his blessings to come back.

Hanuman Meets Bharat – Pure Devotion Revealed

And their Ram told Hanuman that you should go ahead and tell Bharat that I'm coming. Tell him that the 14 years has expired. Today's the last day, I'm coming back to Ayodhya. And examine his expression. If you see or feel even the slightest inclination in Bharat to want to continue ruling the kingdom, then you tell me. And I'll give it all to him. He said he may be such a pure devotee and a great devotee, but still all the luxuries and all the power and all the popularity of being a king for 14 years, there may be some amount of attachment that has come. And if there's any attachment, then I want to honor him and let him continue. So Hanuman jumped to Nandigram. So it's a forest outside of Ayodhya, and they're actually an important part of it.

Ram told Hanumanji, on your way to Ayodhya, stop to give all the news to Guha, It's been 14 years since they had asked him to come and join us for the coronation. This person from Ram's perspective, from the Kingly perspective, is just an insignificant man living in the jungles but Ram, even after 14 years, he was remembering that one day of love and devotion and pure friendship that he shared with Guha and he sent Hanuman there and Hanuman came to Nandigram and he saw Bharat, matted hair, emaciated from just eating roots and herbs, tree barked clothes, hanuman was so moved, he offered his pranaams to Bharat and said, Ram is coming today.

The Joyful Reunion

He told them the whole story of what happened. Bharat was so happy. His heart was flooding with joy. And Hanuman was so happy to see his heart flooding with joy. He didn't even have the

slightest trace of insecurity or envy or pride or anything. He was simply filled with love, And they were both crying on each other and they were embracing each other. And Bharat immediately told Shatrungna that go back to Ayodhya and tell everyone, Ram's coming today. Bring the queens, bring all the citizens and let us all welcome Ram at Nandigram. And we'll make a beautiful road and decorate the whole city and we'll welcome home.

Lord Ramachandra's Return to Ayodhya

Can you imagine the joy of Kaushaliya, her son's coming home and everyone, they all assembled in Nandigram. And Bharat was asking, Hanuman, are you sure he's coming? Why isn't he here yet? Hanuman said that when they went to meet Bharadvaj Muni, for his blessings to come back, Ram asked Bharadvaj Muni for a blessing. Bharadvaj Muni,said, what blessing can I give you? He said, put many, many wonderful fruits on the trees for all the monkeys that are with me. So that all the way back to Ayodhya they can have nice feast. So they may be late. He's coming, he's coming. And Bharat was so much in anticipating, they were just looking into the sky from the direction of the South. And then Hanuman cried out, bursting with joy. There is Ram and all the citizens of Ayodhya looked up and they saw the chariot of Ram coming down from the sky. And when Ram landed, Bharat ran to him and they embraced. Bharat was so eager. He brought the sandals. He said, you took care through your sandals, you took care of this kingdom for the last 14 years. And the treasuries and the prosperity are ten times more than when you left. And it is all your grace and now I give it all back to you.

The Love of Family and Devotion

And it's interesting because Bhibishan and Sugriva sing the shedding of tears of love in the selfless affection that was shared between Bharat and Ram, They started crying, Everybody was crying. And of course Sugriva, his brother Bali, they didn't have that relation. And Bhibhishan, his brother Ravana, they didn't have this relation. So how rare and how beautiful it is when brothers can be together on the level of such love and such selfless affection for one another. After Bharat welcomed Ram and all of them, and they shared such intimate brotherly love, the crowds of Ayodhya started gathering around Ram and Ram left all of them because standing on the outskirts of this assembly was his mother Kausalya. And Ram bowed at the feet of his mother, clasped her feet with tears of happiness. And his mother picked him up and embraced, and then Ram took the dust from the feet of Sumithra, Lakshmana's mother, and kaikeyi, Bharat's mother, One of the great heroes of Ramayana that is kind of invisible is Sumitra. Sumitra and Urmila, the mother and the wife of Lakshmana, they had to bear the same separation, but they were willing to do so in the service of Lord Ramachandra.

Conclusion – The Eternal Message of Ramayana

I will end this narration with this beautiful meeting of Lord Ram and his mother Kausalya, after 14 years of separation and how happy was Kausalya to once again after all these years to embrace Sita and they had a wonderful, wonderful procession back into the kingdom of Ayodhya, where the coronation ceremony took place. Ramayana is 24,000 verses. But on this special day, the values, the character of Ram and his devotees in their interactions. Ram and all of these great souls throughout the Ramayana are going through one crisis, one challenge, one tragedy after another, why? Life is meant for happiness. Why is Ram exhibiting so many challenges? Because life is full of challenges and the inner joy of the intimacy of the love that Ram expressed to all of us by giving us these beautiful stories. It's like a map through life itself, the beautiful Ramayana and the life and teachings of Lord Ramchandra, essentially this only one subject, the love and compassion of Ram for all living beings, the love and compassion of Sita for all living beings and this reciprocal love that we have an opportunity to share and all the beautiful priceless lessons that help us navigate through life to understand, realize and receive that love. Let us pray.

The Eternal Mercy of Sita Ram through the compassion of Srila Prabhupada

Srila Prabhupada describes that when we chant Hare Rama, it's also Sita and Ram. Just today I was listening to recording of Srila Prabhupada in Mumbai in those days it was Bombay and Srila Prabhupada in Bombay he installed deities of Sita Ram Lakshmana and Hanuman and in Delhi there are in Srila Prabhupada's temple, there's deities of Sita Ram Lakshmana, Hanuman.
The capital of India is Delhi, And in the capital of the United Kingdom, London, there is Sita Ram Lakshmana, Hanuman and in the capital of the USA, Washington, D.C., there is Sita Ram Lakshmana and Hanuman.

Srila Prabhupada influence, he installed Radha Krishna and Sita Ram Lakshmana and Hanuman and all these capital cities, Because Ram Rajya, Because Ram and Sita and their associates are teaching us in all circumstances, in all relations, what are the highest ideals of character. And Srila Prabhupada is the representative is who is establishing those principles.

In this age we can connect with Sita Ram, we can connect with their Sri Sri Radha Krishna by chanting this beautiful Maha-Mantra, Shri Caitanya mahaprabhu to Murari Gupta, when he want to reciprocate with Murari Gupta's love, He manifests himself as Sita Ram Lakshmana, Hanuman. In fact, he said to Murari Gupta, in your previous life, you were Hanuman. Murari Gupta was an Ayurvedic doctor, He was an associate of Lord Chaitanya. And during Mahaprakashlila, Lord Chaitanya was fulfilling everyone's desires. He said, Murari, look. And he

was Ram and Sita and Lakshman. And Murari was astounded, He was shocked, He looked and he said, don't you remember? You are Hanuman. And Murari looked down and he saw that he had a tail. So the oneness of God and the love of the devotees for the Supreme Lord and all of his beautiful, merciful forms and names, we should pray for this benediction.
Sri Sri Radha Gopinath, our blessing all of us on this very holy day.

Thank you very much.
Hare Krishna