

SRI SATHYA SAI CENTRAL COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA
National Spiritual Wing

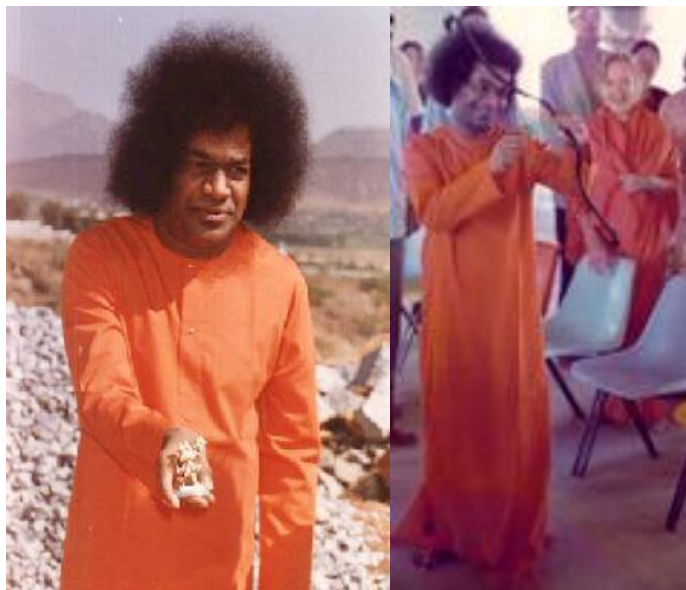
Sri Rama Navami

1. Name of religious event / Observance / Celebration:

Sri Rama Navami

2. Picture:

2.1 Picture or symbol pertaining to the particular observance/celebration



2.2 The date/period of the religious event

Sri Rama Navami is the festival that celebrates the birth of Lord Sri Rama, the Avatar of the Treta age. It falls in the 'Chaitra' month in the Shukla Paksha Navami (ninth day of the bright fortnight) of the Hindu lunar calendar

http://srisathyasai.org.in/Pages/AshramInfo/Sri_Ram_Navami.htm

The child of Kausalya was born at a most propitious moment—Uttarayana (the Divine Half-year), Chaitra month, the bright fortnight, the ninth day, the Punarvasu star, Monday, Simhalagna, (the zodiacal sign of the Lion) and the abhijith period (the period of Victory), when the world was resting happily, when the weather was equable (neither hot, warm nor cold).

[Ramakatha Rasavahini part-I – The sons](#)

3. About the festival:

For the occasion, Followers of Hinduism fast or restrict themselves to a specific diet in accordance to VedaDharma. Vedic temples are decorated and readings of the Ramayana take place. Along with Sri Rama, people also worship Sita, Rama's wife; Lakshmana, Rama's brother; and Hanuman, an ardent devotee of Rama and the leader of his army in the battle against the asura Ravana.

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Some highlights of this day include

- *Kalyanam*, a ceremonial wedding performed by temple priests
- *Panakam*, a sweet drink prepared on this day with jaggery and pepper.
- *Procession* of murtis in the evening, accompanied by playing with water and colours.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama_Navami#Celebration

Symbolic:

Rama is the in-dweller in every body. He is the Source of Bliss (Atma-Rama) in every individual. His blessing, surging from that inner spring, confers 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 name Rama is the essence of the Vedas. Rama is the guardian deity of the Hindus.

[Ramakatha Rasavahini –part I– Inner meaning](#)

Rama is the Principle which attracts—and endears through that attraction—the disparate elements in Nature. The attraction that one exerts over another is what makes the Universe exist and function. That is the Rama principle, without which the cosmos will become chaos. Hence, the axiom: If there is no Rama, there will be no Panorama (Universe).

[Ramakatha Rasavahini - part –I, Rama prince and principle](#)

Swami on Rama on His Discourses

The Divine Name of Rama is full of sweetness and it remains sweet forever. There have been many incarnations of God on earth. But the Divine Name of Rama has remained eternal. Since ancient times, Rama Nama has remained as the Taraka Mantra (Mantra that liberates) for one and all. Right from children to elders, everyone can derive the bliss of chanting Rama Nama. Age is no obstacle in experiencing the sweetness of Rama Nama. There is immense sweetness in this name. We should never give up such a sweet, nectarine and blissful Rama Nama even for a second. Unfortunately, today people are neglecting the chanting of Rama Nama. It is their misfortune.

<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2006/d060407.pdf>

Raama Naama (name) will save you, if you have at least the Pithru Bhakthi and Maathru Bhakthi (devotion to father and to mother) that Raama had. If not, Raama Naama is merely a movement of the lips. Meditate on the Raama swaruupa (form of Raama) and the Raama swabhaava (the true nature of Raama), when you recite or write Raama Naama. That will give exercise to the mind and it will be made healthy and strong, in the spiritual sense. Make this Dharmaswaruupa your Aathmaa Raama, on this Janmadhina (birthday) of Raama. That is My advice and My blessing.

Discourse of Sathya Sai Baba, Rajahmundry, 1 April 1963
<http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume03/sss03-10.pdf>

Raama, whose birthday, Raamanavami, you are celebrating today was the exponent of the means of saving the self in this perilous journey from birth to birthlessness. Raama is the embodiment of Dharma; that is why He was able to re-establish Dharma. Today is a sacred day because you get the chance to recapitulate the glory of God and His relationship with man. As a matter of fact, if you go deeper into the Raamaayana, you will find that Raama is

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the universal Aathma, the Aathma in every being. He did not come down to kill the Raakshasa ruler, Raavana; he is not the son of Dasaratha or of Kausalya; nor is He the husband of Seetha, weeping for her loss and gladdened by reunion.

Discourse of Sathya Sai Baba, Rama navami, 25th April 1961, Shanthi kuteer
<http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume02/sss02-07.pdf>

4. Suggested programme or method of observing the event:

Suggestion/Guide for South Africa at centre level (a programme):

- Conduct bhajans (3 Oms, bhajans, Aarathi)
- Talk on Ramayana from Rama katha Rasavahini or other
- Our Bal Vikas children could present a short cultural item/s.
- Total duration 90 minute.

5. Verbal dedication / prayer / chant / other:

Rama Gayatri Mantra
Om Daserathaya Vidhmahe
Sita Vallabhaya Dheemahe
Thanno Rama Prachodayath

“Om Shri Rama jaya Rama jaya jaya Rama” can be chanted 108 times

6. Any personal offering / sacrifice / practice

Food and drinks that cool the body are prepared on the day and is consumed after the fast. Paanakam – Jaggery and dry ginger powder mixed in water sweets, Fruits, Flowers or anything that a devotee can offer.

7. Other material for preparation / discussion:

Any other recommended material that could be used for additional information / preparation, such as VCDs, DVDS, books, charts, etc

8. Bibliography / Reference Section for all references used

<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2006/d060407.pdf>

http://srisathyasai.org.in/Pages/AshramInfo/Sri_Ram_Navami.htm

<http://www.sathyasai.org/calendar/ramnavmi.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama_Navami#Celebration

Rama Katha Rasavahini

<http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume02/sss02-07.pdf>

9. Divine Discourses:

Rama is the in-dweller in every body. He is the Source of Bliss (Atma-Rama), the Rama 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 Ramaayana, 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, and you gain Rama. Seetha gave up the luxuries of Ayodhya so she could be with Rama during His exile. When she cast longing eyes on the golden deer and craved it, she lost Rama's presence. Renunciation leads to joy; attachment brings about grief. Be in the world, but not of it.

Rama's brothers, comrades, companions, and collaborators are all examples of people saturated with dharma. Dasaratha is the representative of the merely physical, with the ten senses. The three qualities (gunas) --serenity, passion, sloth (sathwa, rajas, thamas)-- are the three Queens. The four goals of life (purusharthas) are the four sons. Lakshmana is the intellect; Sugriva is discrimination (viveka). Vali is despair. Hanuman is the embodiment of courage. The bridge is built over the ocean of delusion. The three demon (rakshasa) chiefs Ravana, Kumbhakarna, and Vibhishana are personifications of the passionate, slothful, and serene (raajasic, thaamasic, and sathwic) qualities. Seetha is the awareness of the Universal Absolute (Brahmajnana), which the individual must acquire and regain while undergoing travails in the crucible of life.

Make your heart pure and strong, contemplating the grandeur of the Ramaayana. Be established in the faith that Rama is the reality of your existence.

[Sathya Sai Baba \(Ramakatha Rasavahini \(The Sweet Story of Rama's Glory\)\)](#)

The entire Ramaayana is like a game of chess. The scene, in the Ramayana, is a kind of battlefield, where the forces of right and wrong are waging war. Rama represents righteousness and Ravana represents unrighteousness. The battle between the two is the war fought on the battlefield.

Ravana taught a great lesson to the world. He exclaimed: "Oh men! Do not live as I have lived and ruin your lives." What is the root cause of Ravana's ruin? Unable to conquer his desires, unwilling to get rid of his impulses, he ruined his entire clan. His sons were killed, his brother and other kinsmen were killed, and ultimately his country itself was reduced to ashes. Ravana confessed, "In the end I ruined myself." This was Ravana's message to his countrymen in his last moments.

Only by suppressing desires does a man manifest his humanness. A man who is unable to put an end to his desires puts an end to himself.

By his good conduct, a good man achieves greatness. Ravana sought to achieve greatness but did not strive to lead a good life.

[Divine Discourse: 16 April 1997](#)

This day, the birth of Sri Rama is celebrated in all lands. Rama had deed, word and thought, body, speech and mind, ever pure and totally free from blemish. Really speaking, one ought to revere the story of Rama as a profound allegory. Every act and actor in that story attracts attention and gets imprinted on the memory because the allegory is personal to each of us.

It is often said that Rama followed dharma at all times. This is not the correct way of describing him. He did not follow dharma, he was dharma. What he thought, spoke, and did was dharma and is dharma forever.

[Divine Discourse: 18 April 1986](#)

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From time immemorial, every individual in Bharat (India) has regarded Sri Rama's life as an ideal and has sought to sanctify every moment of his life by living up to it. Sri Rama incarnated as a human being to promote peace and happiness in the world. "Rama is the very embodiment of righteousness (Ramo Vighrahaan Dharmah)." It was as if righteousness itself had incarnated on earth. Dharma and Rama are inseparable.

The word Rama has the triple power of destroying sins, conferring peace, and dispelling ignorance. When you utter the word "Ram", you first open the mouth with the sound Ra. All your sins go out when your mouth is open. When you utter M by closing the mouth, the entry is barred against the sins that have gone out. Everyone should recognize the sweetness, sacredness, and divinity enshrined in the name Rama. It is good to utter the name Rama with full understanding of all that it signifies. But even without that understanding the chanting of the name has the power to destroy all sins.

We must learn to chant the sweet name of Rama with a pure, unsullied heart, in a spirit of selfless devotion. Men should learn to speak sweetly and pleasingly. Sweet speech confers peace. It is the means to self-realization. Sri Rama loves to dwell in the heart of the man who speaks sweetly. Wholehearted chanting of the name of Rama even once can destroy mountains of sins. But the chanting should not be done mechanically, like a gramophone record. It should emanate from the depths of the heart. You must seek to redeem your lives, by living up to Rama's ideals and proclaiming them to the world. Remember the name of Rama with love. God can be realized only through love and by no other means.

[Divine Discourse: 14 April 1989](#)