



RĀMA NAVAMI
DEVOTION AND LOVE

FESTIVAL: RĀMA NAVAMI

- From “Hindu Festivals and Celebrations” by Smt. Anasuya Sastry and other sources
- Rāma Navami is the birth day of Lord Rāmā and is celebrated on 9th day of the month Chaitra
- Rāmāyaṇa is the story of the life of Lord Rāmā
- The festival is also called Rāma Navaratri because Rāmāyaṇa is recited for 9 days starting with Ugadi and ending on daṣami (the day after Rāma Navami)

JAI RAM! ŚRI RAM! JAI JAI RAM!



Sri Rāma Rāma Rāmeti Manōrāmē Ramē Ramē

RĀMA NAVAMI

- **Lord Rāmā was born to destroy wicked elements and establish Dharma in the world**
- **Lord Rāmā's life is an example to all humanity**
- **He obeyed his father's directive to go to the forest for 14 years without questioning him**
- **Sita and Lakṣmana accompanied him**
- **Rāmā adhered to dharma even when it was not convenient**

RĀMA NAVAMI

- **The verses of the Rāmāyaṇa were composed by Vālmiki and later by Tulsidas, Kamban and many devoted saints**
- **It has been translated into every language of dialect in India.**
- **Rāmāyaṇa is popular in many countries around the world**
- **Indonesia gets the credit for celebrating the very first World Rāmāyaṇa Festival!**
- **Sri Thyagaraja was a devoted Rāmā bhakta, who created many exquisite compositions in praise of Lord Rāmā**

DEVOTION AND LOVE

- **When we feel close to someone, we can cultivate devotion and love in our mind for that person**
- **When that “person” is Īśvara, we have an opportunity to connect with the infinite!**
- **Devotion for Īśvara, the infinite, alone is capable of evoking and sustaining true love in our hearts**
- **True devotion is true love – it is unconditional**

DEVOTION AND LOVE

- **When we love Īśvara more and more, our connection with Īśvara grows**
- **This connection brings a calmness and serenity to the mind and we understand that we can surrender to God completely - without fear of retribution**
- **We find total and unconditional acceptance in God; something we cannot find even in our closest relationships with other beings and things**

STORY: SAGE VISWAMITRA AND LORD RĀMĀ

- **Sage Viswamitra's yagnas were being disturbed by two demons – Marichi and Subahu**
- **The sage went to King Daṣaratha and asked him to send Rāmā and Lakṣmana, then just 16-year old youths to do eliminate these demons**
- **King Daṣaratha agreed after much debate with the sage**
- **The sage taught Rāmā and Lakṣmana the Bala and Atibala mantras (which keep hunger and thirst away)**

STORY: SAGE VISWAMITRA AND LORD RĀMĀ

- The sage taught them the knowledge of *astras & shastras*
- Rāmā asked the sage why he did not finish off the demons
- The sage replied that his dharma was not waste time in such activities (he was actually teaching Rāmā and preparing him)
- At the sage's command, Rāmā killed Thataki (mother of the two demons) and also Subahu
- Marichi was hurled many hundreds of miles away and later met his death at Rāmā's hands when he helped Rāvana

STORY: ŚABARI AND LORD RĀMĀ

- Śabari served her Guru Matangi faithfully and with devotion
- Matangi Rīṣi told Śabari that she would encounter the form in the form of Lord Rāmā and should bide her time at the ashram after he left his body
- Śabari continued to stay at the ashram as per her Guru's wish and grew to a ripe old age
- When Lord Rāmā arrived with Lakṣmaṇa, she was overjoyed because she knew that Rāmā was the Lord

STORY: ŚABARI AND LORD RĀMĀ

- Śabari lovingly took care of Lord Rāmā and Lakṣmaṇa
- She served them with fruits that she carefully selected and tasted (to make sure they were sweet!)
- Śabari learned about Sita's abduction and gave Lord Rāmā the directions to find Sugrīva
- As promised by Śabari's Guru, she received mokṣa for her service to her Guru and the Lord

STORY: HANUMAN MEETS LORD RĀMĀ

- **Hanuman (son of Anjana and Kesari) was a devoted minister and friend of Sugriva, who was living in exile on the Rishyamukha mountain**
- **Sugriva had been chased all over the world by Vāli over a misunderstanding on the part of Vāli; the only place Sugriva would be safe was on the Rishyamukha mountain**
- **When Rāmā & Lakṣmaṇa arrived at the foot of Rishyamukha, Sugriva was alarmed and asked Hanuman to go investigate**

STORY: HANUMAN MEETS LORD RĀMĀ

- **Taking the disguise of a brahmin, Hanuman approached them**
- **Hanuman was determined not to reveal himself to these strange looking ascetics who carried bows and arrows**
- **When Hanuman spoke, Rāmā knew immediately that he was no ordinary person; Hanuman’s speech revealed that he was adept in the grammar of Sanskrit (nava vyakaraṇa) more than any other being!**
- **Lord Rāmā addressed Hanuman as “O Chiranjeevi”**

STORY: HANUMAN MEETS LORD RĀMĀ

- **As soon as Lord Rāmā uttered the words, the spell of a long-standing curse (imposed by sages to discipline a mischievous young Hanuman who kept disturbing their yagnas) was broken and Hanuman suddenly remembered who he really was**
- **He suddenly recognized who Rāmā was and surrendered himself to the Lord**
- **He revealed everything about himself and Sugriva and told them about the long-standing feud with Vāli**

STORY: HANUMAN MEETS LORD RĀMĀ

- **Lord Rāmā told Hanuman why they were there and expressed a desire to meet Sugriva**
- **Joyfully, Hanuman took them to Sugriva (who was shaking in his skin because his friend and minister Hanuman disregarded his directives and brought the strange looking ascetics to his presence); the next episode of this story is in the Rāmāyana**
- **Hanuman is the ideal of a bhakta and shows how to surrender totally to the Lord**

STORY: LORD RĀMĀ AND RĀVAṆA

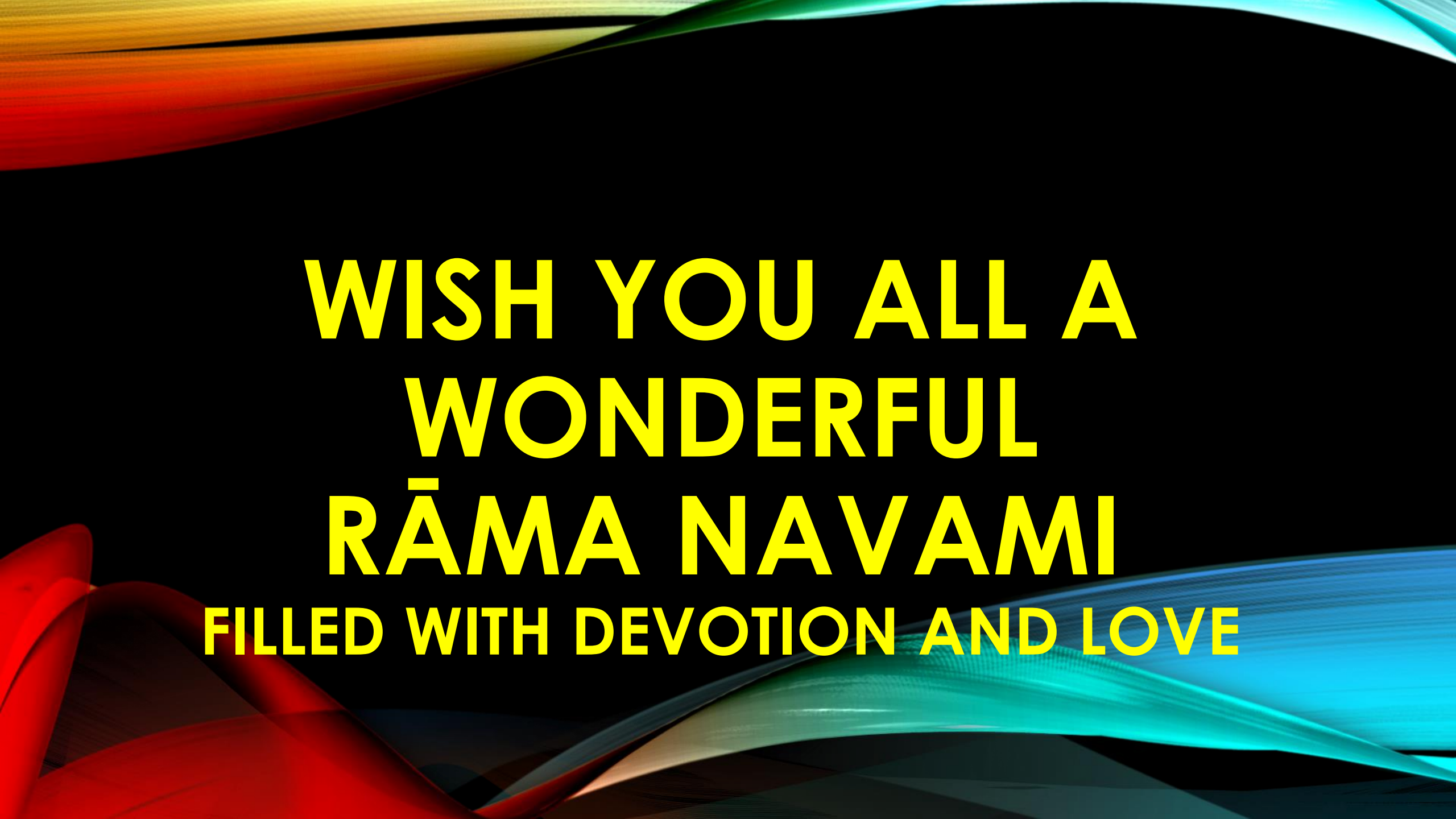
- **Rāvana performed penance for ten thousand years and obtained a boon from Brahma that no gods or demons or spirits would be able to defeat or kill him**
- **He terrorized the three worlds, drove out Kubera from his kingdom (Lanka) and occupied it – he was essentially invincible**
- **Lord Viṣṇu reincarnated in his seventh avatar as Rāmā and killed Ravana (the story is told in the Rāmāyana)**
- **Rāmā is the embodiment of dharma and shows human beings how to lead successful lives**

LOVE AND ONENESS

- **When we feel Oneness with everyone (and everything in creation around us), then we begin to experience greater and greater love.**
- **At its pinnacle, our love is infinite. This is the true meaning of “*Vasudeva Kutumbakam*”**
- **Rāmā Navami evokes love in the hearts of all devotees**

LOVE AND ONENESS

- It is said that chanting the name of Rāmā constantly is a great purifier of the mind and will allow the devotee to develop the virtues of Rāmā
- It is said “*Yadṛṣam vapate bījam tādṛṣam labhate phalam*” OR “As you sow so you reap”
- If we sow Rama’s name in our heart, the entire universe will be ours!



**WISH YOU ALL A
WONDERFUL
RĀMA NAVAMI
FILLED WITH DEVOTION AND LOVE**