

## **R.K. Narayan's Reinterpretation of Ramayana**

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**ABSTRACT-** The Indian history is rife with epics of gods,goddess, kings and heroes, who embodied inspiring ideas that led humanity as a whole towards perfection, for example, Brahma, Shiva, Ganesha, Krishna, Lakshmi and so on. The epic *Ramayana* embodied all these aspects where we find love, sublimation and spiritual integrity.

R.K. Narayan(1906-2001) the great Indian writer, who was born and educated in India and hadwritten fourteen novelsand numerous essays, might find in the epic of the great Rama what deserve to be introduced to the English readers in his book *The Ramayana*(1973) which is a shortened modern prose version of the Indian epic. He translated it from the original Sanskrit transcript into English.

**Keywords:** Family, Myth, Good versus Evil, Ethics and Values

Many writers dealt with the story of the great prince Rama in many outstanding concepts keeping the main themes and the same spiritual aspects, but what makes it special with R.K. Narayanthat henarrates*Ramayana* epic reminiscing his grandmother whohad told him many stories, also taught him the classical Indian music and Sanskrit and

enriched his imagination with a magical world. So, he tried to get all these elements together in his book. Furthermore, this epic is a significant part of Indian culture, where the original Sanskrit verses of it are still read in Hindu households. The story is about the great prince Rama who got deprived of his right of being the king and went on exile accompanied by his brother Lakshmana and his wife Sita. Over the history, many critics analyzed Rama's character and see it from different perspectives and each one found a new thing that astonished him. So here we will also try to examine the prince character closely and get deep into inside it. Finding the qualities of Rama as a character depending on the story actions and how it appears in the story:

Rama is the protagonist of the epic who is considered to be the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu who wants to get rid of evil in the world, so he created him as a divine human for this earthly mission. He is a strong skilled knight and a handsome prince, the first son of Ayodhya's king, Dasaratha. King Dasaratha had three wives, one of them, Kaikeyi, made a conspiracy to make the king crown her son, Bharatha, though every citizen of the kingdom wants Rama to be the king. Dasaratha agreed and crowned his son, Bharatha, and he was sadly forced to exile Rama for fourteen years to the forest due to a vow made long ago. Rama demonstrates his decision loyalty when he insists that his father must keep his promise to Kaikeyi, at the same time he accepts his exile and leaves the kingdom.

Here we can see the concept of obedience and humbleness which Rama's character represents when he decided to go into exile to avoid confrontation

so, the kingdom would not decline nor suffer. Although in a very touching scene his father sadly said "Disobey me son" but he didn't.

The story also shows the strong family bonding when Rama decides to go, his brother Lakshmana and his loyal wife Sita strongly insist to leave with him and never let him alone, her unconditional bond of love with Lord Rama was astonishing in the face of extreme hardship. Also, after Kaikeyi's conspiracy his brother Bharata followed Rama to convince him to return and be the king but he refused. So Bharata took his brother's sandals as a proof that he is ruling in Rama's name. We see the tight connection between Rama and his brothers, and with his wife Sita, who he used his unlimited strength to string Shiva's bow and win her hand in marriage and in return she stayed faithful to him.

Rama appears as a strong lovable character attached to all his family members. When Śurpanakha, Ravana's sister falls in love with him, he resists as he has a loving, caring wife. Śurpanakha is persistent in her quest for Rama, even as he tells her of his faithful wife, Sita. Śurpanakha is jealous of Sita on having such honest husband like Rama. Laxshmana cannot handle such attitude, so he cuts Śurpanakha's nose when she advances towards them and she returns to Ravana, humiliated.

Ravana decides to take revenge by kidnapping Sita. Rama asks for Hanuman's help, so he and his followers rescue Sita and Rama kills Ravana, after great adventures show that loyalty, honesty and magic bravery will always win. As Rama said "the soul must overcome numerous temptations and obstacles in order to achieve its final goals". It is the battle

of good against evil is a major theme in *Ramayana*, and it is important to perceive the meaning of all the supreme values since they make the close relationship between the human and the divine.

Some critics claim that the significant thing about R.K Narayan's book is that he has omitted few important scenes out of the original epic and took away the eloquence and complexity of this story by simplifying it but R.K Narayan's book still rich and full of excitement for readers around the world.

Narayan has used Kamban's version for writing and not Valmiki's version. Having read both versions, we could find one major difference is the line of protection drawn by Laxshmana is missing in this version. Also, the part of the story in which Rama shoots and kills Hanuman. The solution is that Narayan tells us that Rama is known to have done that, but he leaves it out of the narrative.

**CONCLUSION-** *Ramayana* emphasizes the role that love plays in the struggle to free Sita. Sita proved her purity so, they all return to the home where the crown is given to Rama. Rama has many virtues not only as a good and a kind character, but also as great warrior and a strong person, who is also a presence that can purifying and free the people who are being punished for bad acts.

The great work of Narayan is that he brought again love, family bonding, strength,bravery of Rama all together and give life to the characters which can hook readers to read the epic again and again. And out of the epic

most people find Rama the brave, warrior, faithful husband which he become role model for a lot of people over the history.

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