

The Merciful Glance of Lord Rama

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Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,
Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Today is the auspicious day of Sri Rama Navami, the appearance day of Lord Rama. The qualities and greatness of Lord Rama are immeasurable and they are glorified in Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavata purana. One important aspect of Lord Rama's incarnation is that merciful glance of Lord Rama on whoever He came across. The Ramayana states that whomever was blessed by the merciful glance of Lord Rama were relieved of their material miseries. When we take darshan of the Lord, two things happen. We see the deity form and more importantly the Lord sees us. The Lord is omnipresent in His transcendental form and He is seeing us all the time. However, He is very merciful in His deity manifestation and when we stand in front of Him, His merciful glance falls on us and our miseries are mitigated (at least for the time we are in front of the deity). This is the reason we feel very much relieved of our miseries when we take darshan of the Lord in the temple. Due to our defective vision, we may not see the deity as non different from the Supreme Lord. However, when we stand in front of Him, irrespective of our qualification, the Lord will see us with all His compassion and this will enable us to make spiritual advancement and get relief from miseries. So no matter what our advancement is, by standing in front of the deity, we are blessed. We see the following verse in Bhagavata purana (SB 3.28.31) related to the Lord's glance.

*tasyāvalokam adhikam kṛpayātighora-
tāpa-trayopaśamanāya nisṛṣṭam akṣṇoḥ
snigdha-smitānugūṇitam vipula-prasādam
dhyāyec ciraṁ vipula-bhāvanayā guhāyām*

The yogis should contemplate with full devotion the compassionate glances frequently cast by the Lord's eyes, for they soothe the most fearful threefold agonies of His devotees. His glances, accompanied by loving smiles, are full of abundant grace.

Srila Prabhupada explains, "As long as one is in conditional life, in the material body, it is natural that he will suffer from anxieties and agonies. One cannot avoid the influence of material energy, even when one is on the transcendental plane. Sometimes disturbances come, but the agonies and anxieties of the devotees are at once mitigated when they think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His beautiful form or the smiling face of the Lord. The Lord bestows innumerable favors upon His devotee, and the greatest manifestation of His grace is His smiling face, which is full of compassion for His pure devotees." There is a verse in Ramayana (Ayodhya Kanda- 17/14) confirming this:

*yaśca rāmaṁ na paśyettu yaṁ ca rāmo na paśyati
nindataḥ sarvalokeṣu svātmāpyenaṁ vigarhate*

One who does not see Lord Rama and one who is not seen by Lord Rama, is very unfortunate among all worlds. Even their own mind will ridicule them.

Sabari also attained the fructification of her devotional service after being glanced by Lord Rama. Her spiritual master Mathanga Rshi advised her that she should continue her service and wait for the arrival of Lord Rama. Sabari was insulted by many people around her, she was tormented by the onslaughts of old age and her dwindling body. But she patiently endured all these and continued her service. Because of her sincere service, Lord Rama came with His brother and blessed Her with his glance. And Sabari said, "**O Rama being blessed by your compassionate glance, I am ascending to the spiritual sky.**"

The great acharya Madhva composed wonderful prayers in glorifying the Lord. When it comes to glorifying His affectionate glances, He chose to glorify Lord Rama as follows:

*smarāmi bhavasantāpa-hānidāmṛtasāgaram
pūrṇānandasya rāmasya sānurāgāvalokanam*

I think of the gracious and love-filled look of Sri Rama, whose form is full of bliss. His kind look is like the ocean of nectar which can remove all the sorrows and miseries caused by saṁsāra.

On this auspicious day, I pray at the lotus feet of our spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada and Lord Rama so that they shower their compassionate glance on us and enable us to perform unalloyed bhakti.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.