

V. iv: Classics in Translation

“**Sri Ramacharitamanasa**: A Classical Epic of Values and Relations”**Dr. Rajamouly Katta**

Sri Ramacharitamanasa, a classical epic of values and relations is Goswami Tulasidas’ Hindi translation of Valmiki’s Ramayana in Sanskrit. It is one of the most world-famous classics. It is the quintessence of the most exquisite poetry for it teaches values and relations. It has won the hearts and minds of great men like the Great Soul, Mahatma Gandhi by its merits in all respects. He says that it is “the perfect example of perfect book,” for its universal appeal. Goswami Tulasidas, for his Hindi radiant rendering, has won the acclaims and accolades of the people from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, especially Hindi speaking world. Its English rendering with its literary values of original Hindi, **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** is read with abiding interest and devotional reverence for it, rendering a distinctive and spectacular place for its unsurpassed significance by English-knowing readers.

The classical epic **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** is not just the story of success of virtues and values over vices and falsities, but it tells at length the utmost significance of relations mainly between the king and the people. The king should rule his kingdom in the welfare of the people. He should go as per the word of the people. The public pulse is the nucleus force for king’s governance, and it guides him how to govern. People’s welfare is the king’s welfare. Broadly speaking, it is for man-to-man relationship that is established between husband and wife, father and son, mother and son, fraternity, parents-in-law mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, sons-in-law and so on. Cordial relations play an important role for the harmony of a family. **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** reflects the true concept of a family that is the royal family of Sri Rama.

The Ramayana is an unrivalled epic for its central character Sri Rama, the embodiment of virtues and values model to all. He is flawless in actions and thoughts, but he faces suffering despite his invincible powers and embodiment of virtues and values. The character of Sita is model to all women to regard as the most pious and flawless lady. Despite possessing all good qualities like fidelity, she undergoes suffering beyond one’s expectations. The suffering is because of evil acts of demons. There is the most villainous character of ten-headed Ravana with his clan who is responsible for the suffering of Sri Rama for he abducts His consort, Sita when she is all alone at the hermitage. Sri Rama and Sita consequently suffer from the separation of one from the other.

Procedure of Reciting the Ramacharitamanasa: Invocation

Before reading or reciting the **Ramacharitamanasa**, the readers or reciters are to offer obeisance to the poet, Goswami Tulasidas in the south-west, the sage-poet Valmiki in the north-east, the bestower of blessings, Siva in the south-east, Lakshmana with his consort in the southern quarter of the altar, Satrugna with his consort in the western quarter of the altar, Bharata with his consort in the northern quarter of the altar, Hanuman in the eastern quarter of the along the altar, the principal deity Sri Rama with His consort. There are hymns offered to them in ceremonial devotion. At the outset, Goswami Tulasidas offers Arti song: “Soft lights we wave, soft lights display, /Before this lord of Sita lay---/ The Ramayana, so sweet and dear/ So beautiful, without a peer. Which gods like Brahma, Narada sing./ The ant-hill sage, soul-seers’ king...With great delight and voices gay.”

(An Arti Song--**Sri Ramacharitamanasa**)

Goswami Tulasidas invokes his principal deity, the central character Sri Rama with His consort Sita with due devotion and adoration, offering flowers to Him through his hollow palms singing a hymn in rapt prayer:

“I ever adore Sri Rama, whose charming eyes resemble the petals of a red lotus, who is clad in yellow raiments and has a dark brown form endowed with a pair of arms who wears a cheerful countenance, is accompanied by Sri Sita, and is an ocean of nectar in the form of mercy, who is waited upon even by Visnu, Siva and other favourite attendants m(Hanuma, Vasista, and others) and who grants the desire of His devotees.”
(**Sri Ramacharitamanasa-14**)

As per the scriptures, Tulasidas offers his deep invocation to His deity in accordance with the sixteen-fold equiPAGE, expecting His blessings to be showered on him:

“Of this story of Sri Rama , known by the name of “ Manasa-Ramayana,” Lord Siva, the sages Kakabhusundi and Yanavalkya and Goswami Tulsidas are seers ; Sri Rama united with His Consort , Sita, is the deity ; the name of ‘Rama’ is the seed ; devotion which cures the disease of transmigration, is the Sakti (motive force or energy);the object of this reading is to ward off all evils and accomplish all one’s desires though the propitiation of Sita and Rama.”
(**Sri Ramacharitamanasa-14**)

Goswami Tulasidas offers salutations to all living beings as they are so many images of Sri Rama. He offers his prayers not only to saints, sages and immortal bards but also the wicked. The worship is performed in the most befitting manner, sipping water thrice with the recitation of mantras related to KARANYASA, ANGANYSA, DHYANA and so on.

Sri Ramacharitamanasa begins with the invocation of invocations, “the sixteen-fold worship” to divines for the inspiration to the poet Goswami Tulasidas. It proceeds to its the Descent One (Balakanda) opened with the scene of the Manasa lake overflowing with the exploits of Sri Rama. The poet Goswami Tulasidas offers invocation to Goddess, Vani and God Vinayaka for their blessings are essential in the composition of the epic:

“I reverence Vani (the goddess of speech) and Vinayaka (Lord Ganesa) the originators of sounds represented by the alphabet, of the multitudes of objects denoted by those sounds, of poetic sentiments as well as of mantras and the begetters of all blessings.”
(**Sri Ramacharitamanasa-17**)

Next, Tulasidas offers his invocation to goddess Parvati and Her consort “the eternal preceptor”, Sankara for their blessings:

“I make obeisance to the eternal preceptor in the form of Lord Sankara, who is all wisdom, and resting on whose brow the crescent moon though crooked in shape, is universally adored.”
Sri Ramacharitamanasa--17

Later Tulasidas offers his prayers to the king of poets, Valmiki and the chief of monkeys, Hanuman and Sita, the beloved consort of Sri Rama for their showering of benedictions on him. He offers his worship to Lord Hari, the incarnation of Sri Rama responsible for the creation of the universe for his inspirational guidance:

“For the gratification of his own self Tulasidasa brings forth this very elegant composition relating in common parlance the story of the Lord Raghu, which is in accord with the various Puranas, Vedas and the Agamas (Tantras), and incorporates what has been recorded in the Ramayana of Valmiki) and called from some other sources.”
(**Sri Ramacharitamanasa-18**)



Goswami Tulasidas offers prayers to Ganesa who is kind enough as the evader all hurdle and obstacles to lead one to success:

“May Lord Ganesa, the leader of Siva’s retinue, whose very thought. ensures success, who carries on his shoulders the head of a beautiful elephant who is repository of wisdom and an abode of blessed qualities, shower his grace.”
(**Sri Ramacharitamanasa-18**)

In the series of prayers to gods and goddesses, saints, sages and so on, he invokes Visnu, Siva, Valmiki, the birthplace of Sri Rama Ayodhya, Janaka, Hanuman and so on for their blessings to be showered on him.

All epics start with an invocation to the deity of the poet’s choice, especially the goddess Muse. In the way John Milton starts **Paradise Lost** with the invocation:

“Of Man’s first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire...”
(**Paradise Lost**)

Milton’s theme ‘the Fall of Man’ is high and sublime as it is well-suited to **Paradise Lost**. Adam and Eve in Satan’s provocation eat the fruit of the forbidden fruit and introduce evil and mortality to the race of man as the sign of ‘man’s first disobedience’.

The Sublime and Lofty theme

Every epic narrates the story of victory of virtues and values over evils, sublimities and nobilities over falsities. **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** is the best example as the classical epic for its high theme that the sinners are punished to protect the doers of good deeds. For that mission Lord Visnu rises in a form as per his will and wish in every age. It is not an ordinary theme to be heard and forgotten. It is sublime in theme befittingly dealt by Goswami Tulasidas like Valmiki in a grand manner for the classical epic to have universal appeal. The sublimity of the theme transcends the barriers like narrow confines like region and nation and a particular period as well to rise to the level for universal readership. The epic has achieved the universal appeal and historical significance and there is the most undeniable, venerable truth in it. He praises the composition of **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** in his felicitous words:

“My composition will appear extremely delightful to all by its association with the glory of Sri Rama, even as timber of every description is transformed into sandal and becomes worthy of adoration...”
Sri Ramacharitamanasa--30

The action is related to the earth, the human land with flora and fauna for Sri Rama is born in the human form in Ayodhya in the Indian soil to rule Rama Rajya and achieves fame as a king of the people and for the people. He believes in the people’s word as the right word to which he pays his utmost heed.

The Origin to Rise to the Epic Level:

There were demons like Ravana, known for his exceeding atrocities and cruelties over others. Ravana humiliated angels like Vedavati. There was injustice done to the righteous people.



There were serious complaints against the demon expressed to Lord Visnu. Then He promises to take birth as a human, saying that the time has come for Ravana's fall.

Sri Rama was born in the human form and represented the race of humanity. In His action he punished the demons of vices and safeguarded the people of virtues. He undertook the action and completed it with due respect to it for its execution. The action leads the narration of the story in a series of episodes to attain the status of 'the unity of action.' It is entire, great, central and complete as per the rules of the classical epic that culminated in its success over the evil and the extermination of the demons like Ravana. The epic reflects the fire-examination to prove the purity, fidelity and holiness of Sita ultimately to culminate in Her union with Sri Rama.

Epical Infinite Characters

The classical epic **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** consists of characters in multitude for novelty and variety. The principal characters should however have sublimity, nobility and dignity. Humans like Sri Rama, Bharatha, Lakshmana, Satrugna as sons and Dasaratha as father, Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi as mothers; Sita, Urmila and others as daughters-in-law in the Raghus' family; sages like Viswamitra, Vasista and Valmiki; demons like Ravana, Kumbakarna, and his brother, Vibhisana, monkey-warriors like Hanuman, Vali and Sugriva, birds like Jatayu, animals like squirrel and deer and all to mark variety and novelty. Characters Sri Rama and Sita to represent virtues as a sign of dignity and sublimity on their part to represent human race. Goswami Tulasidas paints the excellences of **The Ramayana** and Sri Rama in his classical epic:

"The narrative of Rama is a lovely wish-yielding gem, and a graceful adornment for saintly wisdom. The hosts of virtues possessed by Sri Rama are blessing to the world and the bestowers of liberation, riches, religious merit, and the divine abode. They are the true teachers of wisdom, dispassion, and Yaga (contemplative union with God), celestial physicians (Aswinikumaras) for the fell of disease of metempsychosis; parents of devotion to Sita and Rama and the seed of holy vows, practices and observances; antidotes for sins, agonies and griefs and beloved guardians in this as well as in the next world... The hosts of virtues possessed by Sri Rama are like a blazing to consume the dry wood of evil ways. fallacious reason, mischievous practices, deceit, hypocrisy, and heresy prevailing in Kali. The exploits of Sri Rama are delightful to one and all even as the rays of this full moon; they are particularly agreeable and highly beneficial to the mind of the virtuous, who can be compared to the white-water lily and the **Chakora** bird... Rama is infinite, infinite are His virtues and the dimensions of His virtues and the dimensions of his story are very immeasurable..."

(**Sri Ramacharitamanasa**: 50-51)

Lord Visnu takes the divine form, human form or the other for the act of killing demons in every age. As a responsibility to protect the virtuous and punish the vicious, he takes the human form to kill the wicked demons: Ravana and Kumbakarna for their violent actions. So, Sri Rama is the embodiment of divinity with His noble and sublime actions that all sages like Agastya admired and adored. The people in Rama Rajya never experience famines as there were sufficient rains every year. Sri Rama's breaking of Siva bow springs a great surprise among all:

"He (Sri Rama) inwardly made obeisance to His Preceptor (Viswamitra), and took up the bow with great agility. The bow gleamed like a flash of lightning as he grasped it in His hand. And then it appeared like a circle in the sky. No one knew when he took it in His hands, strung it and drew it tight; everyone only saw Him standing (with the bow drawn).



Instantly Sri Rama broke the bow in halves; the awful crash resounded through all the spheres.” **Sri Ramacharitamanasa:209**

Sri Rama turns the stone into woman. It was Ahalya, Goutama’s consort who was in the form of stone became free from the curse by the touch of His lotus foot and lived at her husband’s abode in joy. It is the best example of many to say that Sri Rama is the embodiment of divine stature:

“Even Visnu who takes a human form for the sake of gods, is omniscient like the slayer Tripura, Siva. Can He wander in search of His Consort like an ignorant man, --He who is a repository of knowledge, the lord of Sri (the goddess of prosperity) and the slayer of demons? The words of Sambu too cannot be false. Every knows that He is all-wise.” ... He is other than Rama, the Hero’s race. My beloved Deity, whose story was sung by the jar-born Agastya, faith in whom was the subject of the talk I gave to him and illumined sages ever wait upon...”

Sri Ramacharitamanasa—65

The god of gods, Sankara adores Sri Rama for his unrivalled virtues as the king to the people, son of His parents, as brother of Bharata, Lakshmana and Satrugna. He wins the adoration of monkey warriors. He is the embodiment of virtues in plenty about which Sankara tells His consort: Girija:

“Hark. O Girija: The Vedas and the Tantras have sung numerous charming and sinless exploits of Sri Hari. The cause of Sri Hari’ descent cannot be precisely stated. Listen, O sensible lady: Sri Rama is beyond the grasp of intellect, mind or speech: such is my conviction. Yet, O charming lady, I tell you the reason as I understand it and even as the saints and sages, the Vedas and the Puranas have stated according to their intellectual level. Whenever virtue declines and vile and haughty demons multiply and work unquity that cannot be told, and whenever Brahmans, cows, gods and earth itself are in trouble, the gracious Lord assumes various (transcendent) forms and relieves the distress of the virtuous.”

Sri Ramacharitamanasa--115

Goswami Tulasidas offers his deep adoration and devotion to Sri Rama to ‘enjoy the status of eternal bliss’. Sri Rama and Sita are in fact divines to take the human form as per their will in the execution of their mission. Goswami Tulasidas worships both Sri Rama for His noble character and royal stature and Sita for her extraordinary qualities like fidelity excelling all others as model to women:

“In the midst of Her companions, Sita shone as a personification of supreme beauty among other embodiments of beauty. She held in one of Her lotus hands the fair wreath of victory, resplendent with the glory of triumph over the whole universe. While her body shrank with modesty, Her heart was full of rapture; her hidden love could not be perceived by others. As She drew near and beheld Sri Rama’s beauty, princes stood motionless as a portrait... She uplifted her hands shone as if a pair of lotuses with their stalks were timidly investing the moon with a wreath of victory...”

(Sri Ramacharitamanasa-211)

There are two kinds of characters besides gods Brahma, Siva and so on and goddesses like Saraswati, Uma and so on portrayed in the epic. Characters like Sri Rama and Sita represent virtues. Characters like Ravana represent the evil. Demon-characters like the ten-headed Ravana represent vices and evils, brutalities and cruelties as they are the actions of the three brother-demons. The ten headed Ravana practiced various kinds of austerities, offering his prayer,



“Listen, O lord of the universe; my prayer is that I should be die at the hands of none save monkeys and men.” “So be it; you have done great penance.” This was the boon Brahma and I granted (said Siva). Then the creator then approached Kumbakarna and was astonished to see his gigantic form. Brahma said to himself, “Should this wretch have his daily repast, the whole world will be waste.” So, Brahma directed Sarada, who changed his mind. Accordingly the demon asked for continued sleep, extending over six months...Last of all Brahma went up to Vibhishana and said, “Ask a boon my son.” He asked for pure love for the lotus feet of the Lord.”

Sri Ramacharitamanasa---150

Ravana’s sisters like Surpanakha helped Ravana in demonic actions. Maricha and Subahu who tried to disturb the sacrifice of Viswamitra. Goswami Tulasidas presents a clear pen-picture of the actions of demons:

“I tell you, this king with his family, was born as a demon. He had ten heads and twenty arms. His name was Ravana; he was a formidable hero. The king’s younger brother Arimardana by name became the powerful Kumbakarna. His minister, who was known as Dharmaruchi, became Ravana’s half-brother Vibhisana by name, who is known to the whole world as a devotee of God Visnu and repository of wisdom. And the king’s sons and servants, they were born a fierce demon crew. These wretches could take any shape they liked and belonged to various orders. They were all wicked, monstrous and devoid of sense, and ruthless, bloody and sinful. They were a torment to all creation beyond what words can tell.”

(Sri Ramacharitamanasa—150)

Satan who represents the evil as delineated in **The Paradise Lost** is powerfully drawn character like Ravana in **Sri Ramacharitamansa**. Satan beguiles by provoking Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree to introduce death and sin in man against the will of God. They innocently disobeyed God and failed to “justify the ways of God to men”.

Ravana as a representative of the evil was a nasty demon of lusty nature. As a flaw of his character, he resorted to the abduction of Sita and met his death at the hands of Sri Rama. For the abduction of Sita, he had his trickish plan of sending his sister Maricha in the form of a gold deer which Sita had longed to tame it for her. To fulfil Her desire, Sri Rama went to bring the deer for her. The situation of Sita’s being alone was created against all expectations for Ravana (in disguise) to abduct Sita:

“Ravana (the demon king of Lanka) had sought from Brahma, the boon of death at the Hands of a human foe; and the Lord would have the words of Brahma come true. If I do not go to meet Him, I shall ever regret it.” Siva pondered but found no solution to the puzzle. The Lord was thus lost in a reverie, Meanwhile the vile Ravana (who had no less than ten heads) took with him the demon Maricha, who forthwith assumed the illusory form of a deer, The fool (Ravana) carried off Videha’s daughter (Sita) by fraud ; the lord’s real might was not known to him, having killed the antelope Sri Hari returned with his brother (Laksmana); and His eyes were filled with tears when he saw the empty hermitage . The lord of Raghus felt distressed at the loss like mortal man, and the two brothers roamed about in the woods in search of Her. He who knows neither union nor separation showed unmistakable sign of grief born of separation. **(Sri Ramacharitamanasa—64)**

Despite his royal throne of Lanka empire, enormous scholarship and deep devotion to Siva, he had lusty nature, the weakness that led him to meet his fate. Due to his demonic nature, he abducted Sita in the absence of Her Consort Sri Rama at the hermitage. Hence, there arose a great



battle between him and Sri Rama that was between the good and the bad, virtues and vices, values and falsities.

The Principal Character, the Hero

The principal character of **Sri Ramacharitamanasa**, its hero is Sri Rama. He is the representative of man's race. Though human in form he is the embodiment of divine qualities as He is the incarnation of Lord Visnu. He has invincible powers by possessing the Rama Arrow that knows unfailing success. He as the representative of virtues has success over the evil, represented by Ravana. He possesses all virtues to be called a perfect man. Next comes Sita as the consort to be the central character of the epic in all respects:

“...the name of ‘Rama’ is the seed; devotion which cures the disease of transmigration, is the Sakti (motive force or energy); the object of this reading is to ward off all evils and accomplish all one's desires through the propitiation of Sita and Rama...”
(**Sri Ramacharitamanasa**-14)

Supernatural characters in the Epic

Demons have supernatural powers. They can get any form as per their will. Surpanakha can take the form of gold deer for its false looks to deceive Sita and in turn Sri Rama. Ravana has ten heads and sixteen arms. When one head is cut off it joins again to be in the previous position. He has extraordinary powers. The invincible king Sri Rama faces a test to slay Ravana for his supernatural powers for he as a divine has invincible powers. He uses his unfailing Rama arrow to kill Ravana. Kumbakarna is gigantic in stature sleeps for over six months and is awake the rest of the time, eating repast. There are many instances of supernatural powers in classical epics like **Sri Ramacharitamanasa**.

Duels and Combats:

Sri Rama takes a vow to kill the demons as per his will to put an end to evil doers or sinners and protect the people virtues. There is a combat of Rama and Lakshmana with Maricha and Subahu on Viswamitra's invitation to protect his sacrifice from obstructions to it. The combat of Jatayu and Ravana shows the bird's concern for Sita. When its wings were mercilessly cut off by Ravana, Jatayu's wingless state is heart moving. Later we find the duel of Vali and Sugriva and finally the most incomparable one between Rama and Ravana. The battle had a speciality that the battle of Rama and Ravana was like the one of Sri Rama and Ravana.

The Beautiful, Elaborate Descriptions:

There are graphic descriptions of nature in **Sri Ramacharitamanasa**. The description of rain is the best example:

“The clouds are fast gathering in the sky and making a terrible noise. Bereft as I am of my darling (Sita) my heart trembles to see all this. The lightning flashes fitfully amid the clouds, like the friendship of the wicked, which never endures. The pouring clouds cleave close to the ground even as the learned stoop beneath accumulated lore. The mountains endure the buffeting of showers even as a saint would put up with the taunts of the wicked. The swelling streamlets rush with great speed just as the wicked would feel elated even with the small fortune. The water becomes turbid the moment it descends on earth even as the Jiva (an embodied soul) is enveloped in Maya as soon as born. The water coming from various directions gathers into a pool even as commendable virtues find their way into the



heart of a noble soul. The water of the stream becomes still once it pours into the ocean, just as the ego finds eternal rest on attaining union with Sri Hari.”
Sri Ramacharitamanasa--579

Tulsidas describes the objects of nature: mounts like Chitrakuta, rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Mandakini, Sarayu and so on. The poet describes forests like Dandakaranya. Sri Rama expresses his joy, living in exile. He says that the beauties of Chitrakuta fill his heart with full content. He with His concert crosses rivers in delight when boatmen welcome them to sail by their boat. Sita too loves life in exile. She loves animals like the gold deer and birds like parrots, peacocks and pigeons. She loves the gold deer for its attractions, but she does not know that the gold deer she wanted to tame for herself has false attractions.

The marriages, rituals and Celebration of coronation:

There are elaborate descriptions of marriages, rituals, **yagas**, sacrifices, coronations to come to the throne and so on. The wedding of Sri Rama and Sita is beautifully described as a feast to the readers:

“The gods perceived that it was a fit occasion for happy rejoicing; hence they rained down flowers and beat their drums. Siva, Brahma and hosts of other gods mounted aerial cars in several groups. Their frames thrilling over with emotion and their hearts overflowing with joy, they proceeded to witness Sri Rama’s wedding. The gods felt enraptured to see Janaka’s capital that their own realms appeared to them as of small account. They gazed with amazement at the wonderful pavilion and all the different works of art which were of a transcendental character. The people of the city, both men and women, were so many mines of beauty, well-formed, pious, amiable and wise. In their presence all the gods and goddesses appeared like stars in a moonlit night. The Creator (Brahma) was astounded above all; for nowhere did he find his handiwork.”
Sri Ramacharitamanasa--243

There are descriptions of rituals, coronations and all in a befitting manner to impress the readers who are welcome to share their beauty.

Dialogues in Epic for Dramatic Element:

There are not just the descriptions of nature, duels and combats but innumerable dialogues in the epic to make the epic, **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** dramatic. Dialogues between Kaikeyi and Mandara, Dasaratha and Kaikeyi, Kaikeyi and Sri Rama, Sri Rama and Sita, Sri Rama and Hanuman, Sri Rama and Sugriva, Sri Rama and Vali, Ravana and Hanuman, Sri Rama and Ravana and so on make the epic very interesting like the drama. The dialogue between Sri Rama with Bharata makes clear how he admonishes Laksmana’s opinion and appreciates Bharata’s role as a model brother to be adored in the coming generations.

The Most Befitting Images and Similes:

Sri Ramacaritamanasa, the title itself reflects a metaphoric expression. It is the Manasa lake to overflow with the exploits of Sri Rama. It at the same time is full of similes for the felicity of expressions as the sign of grand style suited to a classical epic. Sita is described with an appropriate simile. She is compared to the moon:

She (Sita) uplifted her hands shone as if a pair of lotuses with their stalks were timidly investing the moon with a wreath of victory...”

(Sri Ramacharitamanasa- 211)**The use of Sublime words and Language**

The language with its words of its stature is surely sublime. The thoughts or ideas are expressed in it are sublime. Sublimity in all respects suits the classical epic. **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** is a noted epic for its sublime thoughts and exalted style. Sri Rama's thoughts and actions are characterised by sublimity and dignity. The sublime style which is otherwise called grand style, maintained by the extensive and elaborate use of metaphors and similes, idioms and classical language words. The essence of an epic is a moral of universal appeal to attain historical significance. It aims at teaching in the welfare of humanity. It respects virtues and values and discards and ignores vices.

Significance of the title, Sri Ramacharitamanasa:

Sri Ramacharitamanasa as the rarest specimen of most exquisite poetry, is the Manasa lake to brim with the exploits of Sri Rama reflecting the teachings of values and relations. Sankara narrates its unmatched greatness to Uma:

“Hear the blessed of the holy **Sri Ramacharitamanasa** which was narrated at length by the sage Bhusundi and heard by the king of birds, Garuda...The virtues, names, stories and forms of Sri Hari are all unlimited and innumerable and immeasurable. Yet I proceed to tell them according to the best of my intellectual capacity; listen, Uma, with reverence.”
Sri Ramacharitamanasa—114

Sri Ramacharitamanasa has the theme of universal appeal. It transcends the barriers—local, regional and national. At the same time, its significance is ageless and timeless. Goswami Tulsidas conforms to the rules of the epic and places his work as one of the best classical epics.

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