

HANUMANTUDU

- Prof M. Madhusudhana Rao

Srinivasa Bala Bharati -122
(Children Series)

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Telugu Version

Dr. Prasadaraya Kulapati

English Translation

Prof M. Madhusudana Rao



**Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,
Tirupati**

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FOREWORD

If a beautiful garden is to be raised, one needs to take proper care of tender flower plants. In the same way in order to create a good society, great care needs to be taken of young children who are going to be future citizens of India. All their intellectual attainments will be futile if they fail to learn of their culture and its greatness. They need to be told of great men and women of this country so that they are inspired by their ideals. The essentials of our culture should be given to them in the form of simple and charming stories. They will cherish these ideals and be guided by them. They will promote good, and they will love the society they live in. They make their families proud and bring great prestige to their country when they grow up into good citizens.

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams have brought out these booklets for children under Srinivasa Bala Bharathi Series. Although meant for children, they are useful to the elderly too. They have found place in the book shelves of every family. The stories of legendary men and women are narrated in a simple way. We hope that more and more children will read them and profit by them.

I congratulate Dr. R. Sri Hari, Editor-in-Chief, for his efforts in bringing out the english translations of SRINIVASA BALA BHARATI SERIES so well. We have received cooperation of many learned men and women in our efforts to popularize this series. I am thankful to them.

In the Service of the Lord



Executive Officer,
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,
Tirupati.

FOREWORD

To-day's children are to-morrow's citizens. They need at tender age apt acquaintance with the life-histories of celebrated persons so that they get opportunity to lead their lives in an exemplary way. They will come to know that great things such as Indian culture, basic tenants of life and moral teachings are abundantly available in the life-experiences of great men. It is observed that there is no scope to teach such subjects in school curriculum.

Observing such circumstances the Publication Division of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has published about hundred booklets in Telugu about the lifes of famous sages and great men written by various authors under the editorship of Dr. B. Raghunathacharyulu under "Balabharati Series". The response over these books is tremendous and it has given impetus to publish them in other languages also. To begin with some of the books are now brought out with English and Hindi rendering by T.T.D. For the benefit of boys and girls and the interested public.

These booklets primarily intended to the growing children and also generally intended to the elders to study and narrate the stories to their children, will go a long way to sublimate the aspirations of the children to greater heights.

R. SRI HARI
Editor-In-Chief
T.T.D.

Welcome To Srinivasa Balabharati Series

The series is the outcome of abundant grace of Lord Sri Venkateswara.

This will be an unfailing source of inspiration to the young.

It enshrines the best of Bharatiya tradition. May this noble endeavour be successful.

India has been known for its culture and civilization, its ethical and dharmic way of life from time immemorial. India has marched ahead with its commitment to dharma, its resistance to adharma, its espousal of life-affirming values and its humane attitude to life as a journey towards God realization. Those who embodied these values in their life have been a beacon of light to us. Their impact is deep on the life we lead. Young boys and girls will find them exemplary and feel proud of their invaluable heritage. They will love their motherland and dedicate themselves to its service.

It is therefore necessary that the young learn about these great men and women so that that they will realize their indebtedness to them for their selfless contribution to the enrichment of life. This should indeed be a chief component of true education which ensures the perennial continuity of Indian culture and civilization. SRINIVASA BALABHARATI SERIES has come into existence to acquaint the young boys and girls with right perspective of Indian life and values through a series of booklets written exclusively for this purpose describing in brief the lives of great men and women.

We welcome you to share our joy in launching these booklets.

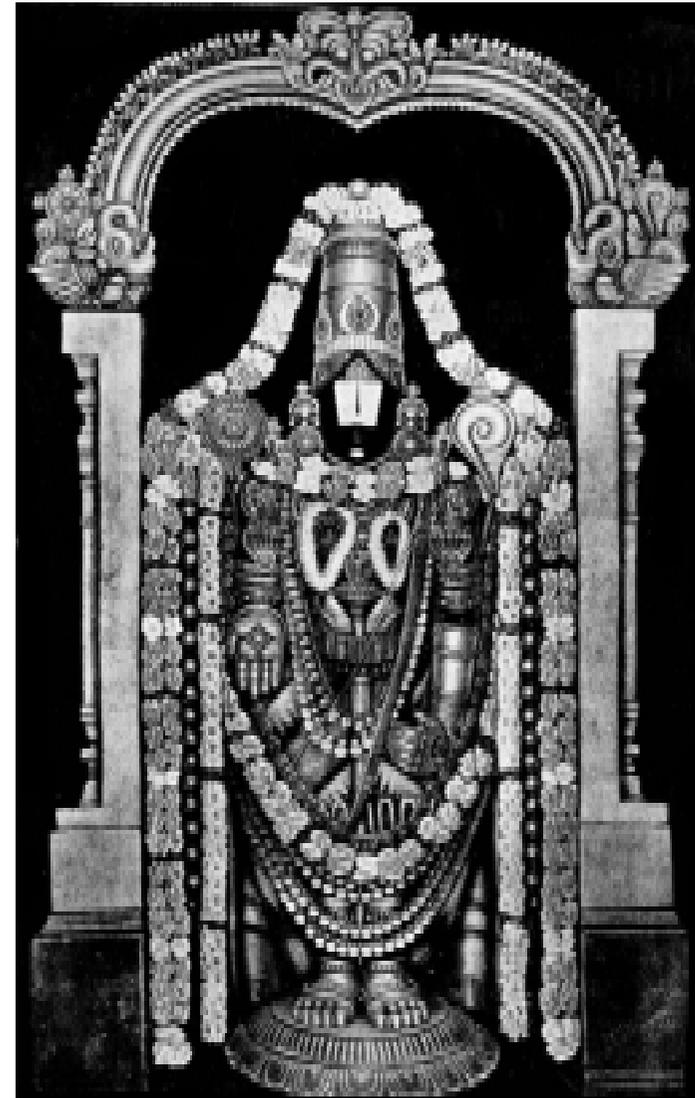
S.B. Raghunathacharya
Cheif Editor

In the fourteenth century there were any number of poets who were more than ready to flatter the rich and those in power for petty gains and gifts. Sadly there was utter disregard for truth when they extolled them for their imagined and non-existent virtues. Their art was for sale and it went in favour of the highest bidder.

But there was a rare exception to this.

The ruler of the land had ordered a poet to dedicate his poem to him, and also made it clear to him that his refusal to comply with his order would put him in great peril. The poet had the courage to defy his diktat and spurn the rich gifts the king had offered. The material gain failed to lure him. He preferred to live in poverty and dedicate his poem to Sri Ram. Who was this unique poet? He was called Potana, a great Telugu poet known for his unrivalled excellence in poetry. He was a self-taught poetic genius and a great devotee of Sri Ram. His translation of SRIMADBHAGAVATAM into Telugu is known throughout the Telugu region.

He should be an inspiring ideal for poets. Let us enjoy his charming devotional poetry.



HANUMANTUDU

We should follow the message of *dharma* in life from our childhood. Good values, like purity, simplicity and holiness help us in leading a happy life. *Dharma* is God's gift to us. A happy life is a life of *dharma*. *Dharmikata* is the essential value of human life.

The fragrance of God's thoughts and sweetness of chanting His names (*Parayana* and *Nama sankeertana*) give us bliss and true joy. Who teaches us Dharma? The lives and deeds of noble minds and saints and mahatmas fill our minds with good thoughts, good deeds and utterance of good words. If young minds are filled with these thoughts of sublime beauty and joy of the purest form, their minds will flower with all the fragrance, sweetness and the light of wisdom of our ancient saints and *rishis*. Devotion is *paramo dharmah*. Our devotion to the noble idea, noble actions or noble utterance gives us *moksha*, liberation of the self to seek union with the Almighty.

One such devotee, *par excellence* is Hanuman, the embodiment of devotion, knowledge ennobled wisdom and heroic deeds. It is always our mind's delight to listen to and sing his songs (*sankeertana*). Let us listen to his story of eternal bliss and joy. It is servitude with a purity of mind and companionship with *trikarana* that he lived in Lord Rama's thoughts, deeds and actions. He is Rama and Rama is him. He is Lord Rama's *altar ego* (*bahihpranam*).

In ancient times, the race of *vanaras* was also sufficiently civilized, like us. They built houses and lived in big towns and cities and led normal domestic life with all the conventions and traditions of marriage. Some of them were even profoundly read in Vedas, *Sastras* and *Puranas*. Perhaps, but for the presence of a tail, they were like us in all qualities and aspects.

Birth:

Among the Vanaras, Kesari was known for his physical prowess. Anjanadevi was his wife. He was living on the most precious of mountains called *Malyaparvatam*. He killed the *asura* called Sambasadanudu, who lived in Gokarna, according to the will of God. The great Hanuman, Lord Rama's best devotee, was born to Anjanadevi, hence he is known as Anjaneya. As he was born by the blessings of the god of Wind (*vayudeva*), he is gifted with unbelievable physical strength.

We hear many stories of his physical strength and determination, which are as strong as a diamond. One day, while his mother went to the forest to bring some fruits, he became very hungry. As he did not find any thing to eat in the house, he found the rising sun in the eastern sky shining in brilliant red like *DASANAPUVVU*. He found it to be like a ripened fruit, red in colour. In his child-like enthusiasm, unmindful of the consequences, this Balanjaneya flew himself into the sky to catch the supposed red fruit

(which is actually the bright globe of the red sun). As he was flying in the sky with unmatched and unbelievable capacity, perhaps, faster than air and the gods. Rishis, *daityas* and *yakshas* were dumb-struck and wondered at his capacity. The god of Wind shielded his son from the scorching rays of the sun with cool breeze, as the sun also did not obstruct him with his hot rays, since he also realized that this Balanjaneya was meant for greater deeds in the future. However, Rahu tried to obstruct Hanuman, thinking that Hanuman was another Rahu trying to shadow the Sun on that day of eclipse. But, before Hanuman's sparkling brightness Rahu was nowhere. Then, Rahu went to Lord Indra, the ruler of the three worlds to tell him about his fear. Lord Indra, in turn, came on his *Iravat* with his weapon, *Vajrayudha*.

Again, when Balanjaneya, thinking that the *Vajrayudha* also was a fruit, tried to capture it, Indra hit him with it, which made little Hanuman fall and become unconscious. Naturally, Vayudeva, the wind god became angry and withdrew his power and as a result, there was no air in all the worlds, making it difficult for people to live. Then, on the request of all the gods, Lord Brahma (who was aware of these events), consoled Vayudeva, who was weeping by keeping the small Hanuman in his lap. Lord Brahma, who after making the small boy regain his consciousness, told all the gods about Hanuman's capacity to perform greater deeds and asked them to bless him and make him stronger by giving their boons to him.

From then onwards he is known as Hanuman . His jaw bone (*hanuma*) was destroyed by Indra with his *Vajrayudha*. He became immortal as a result of that event. He also acquired the knowledge of all the *Sastras*, with the blessings of Sun, who gave one hundredth of his divine brightness as his boon. In a similar way, other gods such as Varuna (who gave boon of deathlessness due to water), and Yama (who blessed Hanuman with a life of supreme health and immortality beyond the finite qualities of human life). Kubera and Eesanudu blessed him with eternal life without disease, inconvenience or normal contingencies of human life. Viswakarma, too, promised him eternal longevity without being affected by any arms or weapons. Finally, Brahma, the Creator of our world, granted *Chirayuvu* (eternal life) to perform great deeds for the welfare of this world, by striking fear in his enemies and spreading ardent love and friendship in the hearts of his dear ones. These qualities of his devoted friendship and determination, which are as strong and immovable as the Himalayas are fully manifest in his love for Sugreeva and his hatred towards Ravana.

Thus, he became invincible and strong in his powers, in all respects, in his body and mind: the lofty ideals of *dharma* shone in his life, as permanently as the serene waters of the holy Ganges. Once again, after this great event in his life, the god of Wind (Vayudeva), after making him fully accomplished in all respects, in his head and heart, mind and spirit, and making him ready for his noble deeds in the future, returned him to his dear mother Anjanadevi.

This mighty Hunuman 's learning is profoundly inspired by the blessings of the Sun god, who taught him all forms of *Dharma*, intricacies of all *Sastras* and Rhetoric and Grammar. As it is with our life, even the life of Hanuman is blotted by one event. The *rishis* gave him a curse of forgetfulness and becoming unaware of his true and fuller strength, as he was found to be childish and mischievous in his behavior causing so much inconvenience to them .

Perhaps the greatest event in his life is his meeting Sugreeva. His friendship with Sugreeva is one of trust, benevolence and true empathy between two souls. He went to Kishkindha to become the minister in Sugreeva's Court. While Sugreeva was the younger Prince, Vali was his elder brother. Ruksharajanudu the King of Kishkindha was their father. Hanuman played a very crucial role in saving the life of his dear friend Sugreeva, when enmity developed between the two brothers as a result of some misunderstanding. His advice to Sugreeva in this event speaks well of his noble heart in resolving the enmity between the two brothers. This shows his *sahridaya* and desire for *Lok Kalyana* (welfare of the world). Now, we may know this important event: Vali was a great warrior who never tolerated anybody's superior power. His prowess was so great that, fearing his strength, even the mighty Ravana surrendered before him by accepting his hand of friendship.

Once, an *asura* known as Mayavi created much pell-mell outside Vali's house. He came to fight a

battle against Vali, the mighty warrior. On seeing Vali's immense strength and capacity, he fled fearing his life. Vali did not leave him but ran after him. Mayavi entered a cave to hide himself from Vali's anger and ferocity. He asked Sugreeva, his trusted brother, to wait outside the cave, and told him that he would enter the cave to kill that weak *asura*, who was afraid of him. As Sugreeva waited outside the cave for nearly a year, a torrent of blood gushed out of the cave. He also heard the resounding cries of victory from inside the cave. Fearing that his strong-willed brother might have been killed by that merciless *asura*, in order to protect himself from him, Sugreeva closed the path outside the cave. He returned to his city (Kishkindha) in deep distress, imagining that his elder brother was no more and dutifully performed all the funeral rites of his brother. He occupied the throne to rule the Kingdom. But, as ill-luck would have it for Sugreeva, his elder brother Vali came to Kishkindha, after some years, and finding Sugreeva occupying the throne, showed his wrath on him. Without listening to his words of utter helplessness and his unquestionable love for him, Vali threatened to kill him. Out of sheer fear for his life, Sugreeva fled from Kishkindha. Wherever Sugreeva went, Vali followed to kill him. Sugreeva was continuously advised and accompanied by four of his loyal ministers. Of them, Hanuman was the most prominent, who not only stood by his noble friend, but saved him, by using his sagacity and wisdom. Here, we come to know of Hanuman's

presence of mind and good nature. By his wisdom, he not only saved his friend, but also made Vali realize his mistake later on. Though he was capable of punishing Vali for his behavior in trying to kill his brother Sugreeva, due to the curse of *rishis* in his childhood, Hanuman could not realize his full potential. However, he gave good and sound advice to his loyal friend. He told Sugreeva to go and live in *Rushyamuka parvatham*, as his brother would not enter that place, due to the curse of Matanga Maharshi. The story is like this: once Vali killed a ferocious *asura*, called Dundhubhi who had a mountainous body, and flung him to the far away *Rushyamukaparatam*, where Matanga Maharshi was in penance. A few drops of Dundubhi's blood from his mouth fell on Mathanga Maharshi, who became angry and gave a curse that Vali should not step on the *Rushyamuka parvatam*. Hence, Sugreeva could go there and live happily.

His meeting Rama and Lakshmana is, perhaps, the most complete example of "*dasya bhakti*". He meets Rama and Lakshmana on the banks of the river Pampa. They emanated some special divine qualities; with broad chest, strong and well built arms and shoulders, lotus-like eyes and serene looks. They were like the descendents of heaven on this earth and shining and inseparable like the Sun and the Moon. First, Sugreeva when he saw them on the banks of the Pampa river, feared that his brother Vali might have sent them to kill him. However, after much consultation with his ministers and followers, he

decided to send Hanuman to use his tact and wisdom and presence of mind to discover the antecedents of these God- like figures. Accordingly, Hanuman decided to meet these celestial figures, called Rama and Lakshmana. However, as a form of caution and to facilitate their interaction in an easy and unobtrusive manner, he took the form of a Bhikshu. First, he paid his respects to these strangers, who were his guests. He performed all the rituals according to the *Sastras*, with great care and devotion and asked them about their antecedents with flawless courtesy. He spoke to them in all humility to the godly creatures in this manner: “ O lords of heaven, I welcome you to our land with sincerity and devotion. As you are endowed with all the mighty strength of a lion and power and prowess of great heroes, why are you treading here with your wonderful bows, which are shining like a multi-splendoured rain-bow? Your presence is causing fear among all the creatures on this land. You are aglow with the resplendent brightness of an unbreakable diamond and capable of ruling over all over this earth of ours with justice and goodness. Your arms are so powerful like Indra’s *Vajrayudham* as your swords are ready for a fight like a hissing serpent, ready to bite. Undoubtedly, you are mortals in divine form. I introduce myself as Hanuman, the trusted follower and lieutenant of Sugreeva, the protector of *dharma* and I am here as his messenger to meet you and know your antecedents. I, in fact, belong to the *vanara* race. However, I have assumed a different form to invite

you to our land.” Then , Rama, the wisest and noblest of human race, told Lakshmana in these following words: “My dear brother and true companion , Lakshmana, listen to his words. They are not ordinary words. They bespeak of his profound wisdom of the Vedic knowledge; his grammar is flawless. He evokes the feelings of love and kindness and courtesy to make even his enemies come under his spell. It is a matter of good fortune for Sugreeva to have such a diplomat. Instinctively I love him. I decided that we should live together.” Needless to say, this union of Lord Rama and Hanuman is an eternal union between the *bhakta* and his Lord.

Then, Lakshmana narrated the tale of how Rama came to forest to fulfill his father Dasaratha’s vow to his wife Kaikeyi. They came to *Rushyamuka Parvatam* to seek the help of Sugreeva, on the advice of an *asura* called Diti, son of Diti, whose curse was redeemed by Rama. Rama was searching for his noble wife, the Mother of all humanity, called Sita, who was taken away by an *asura*, by deceiving her in disguise. Hence, they were seeking the help of Sugreeva. Vali, Sugreeva’s elder brother, took revenge against him, by taking away his wife and driving him to *Rushyamukaparvatam*. Then , Hanuman promised all help in bringing back Sita to Rama. Hanuman , conversant with the art of communication, (*samvada*) made Rama and Sugreeva agree to help each other. Thus, Rama and Sugreeva , promised to help each other, born out of mutual trust and the true belief of

their minds. Rama took a vow to kill Vali to set free Sugreeva's wife; Sugreeva also took a similar vow to search for Sita, with the help of his followers. Accordingly, in the next few days, Rama killed Vali in the latter's duel with his younger brother Sugreeva, by using a powerful mighty arrow (*ramabanam*); thus, Sugreeva became the emperor of the kingdom. Rama made Vali's son, Angada the Prince.

Searching for Sita:

After that, Sugreeva plunged into action by mobilizing and presenting all his forces before Rama and entrusting them with suitable responsibilities. In that meeting, it was decided that Hanuman would go towards the south with Angada, Tarudu and Jambavanta. Rama also gave his precious ring to Hanuman, out of his trust in him to show it to Sita, when he meets her, so that she could identify him. Hanuman, along with his trusted and strong willed followers set out on his mission to find out Sita's whereabouts in a month. But, their efforts became futile as they had to cross hills, rivers and wild forests; but they had not lost sight of their goal as their determination was strong.

In their journey, they discovered a cave. Birds like swans and *chakravakas* were coming out fully wet. Imagining that there might be some ponds inside, they entered the cave. As they walked endlessly, they did not discover anything and were swooning, due to terrible hunger and thirst. Then, to their utter

dismay and disbelief, they saw all eminently beautiful objects of rare delight, before their eyes; there were flowers with golden hues, bunches of brilliant flowers, golden fish, tortoises and ponds with lotus flowers, golden-bedecked aeroplanes and flowers and sweetening fruits, and ornaments with divine beauty in their resplendent best. As they encountered those delightful objects, they discovered a saint, glowing with the radiant brightness of a dazzling flame. Hanuman, using his presence of mind, obediently explained their pitiable and helpless condition of how they became tired in their search of Sita, the Holy Mother, and asked about her. She told him that the marvellous garden of rare and scintillating beauty originally belonged to Viswakarma, who created it by using his magical powers. However, Lord Indra killed him because of his love to an *apsara* called Hema and from then onwards, that magical world belonged to her. She also told Hanuman that she was the daughter of Swayamprabha and the friend of Hema. Afterwards, Hanuman, along with his followers, hurried on in his journey, after accepting the hospitality of that saint. As the cave was arranged in such a way that anybody, who entered the cave would not go out. Taking pity on them, she asked them to close their eyes and using the powers of her *tapas* took them outside the cave. After showing them all the beautiful places, surrounding the cave, she went into the cave.

A dramatic event took place, when they were in despair, fearing that, anyway, Sugreeva would kill them

if they fail to find Sita's whereabouts. In the meanwhile, Sampathy, an eagle, which was like a mountain, after coming out of a cave in the Vindhyas, had a cruel idea, to eat them to quench its hunger. Then, quite, interestingly and happily though, Angada's words of fear and apprehension of death in the hands of this eagle created hope for Hanuman and his followers, when he told Hanuman that, anyway they would be killed by that bird, just as Jatayuvu was killed. On hearing the mention of the name of Jatayuvu, who was his younger brother, he wanted to find out who killed his brother. Then, Angada explained like this: "Ravana, the leader of *asuras* killed Jatayuvu, *asura*, when Jatayuvu tried to save Sita, from the clutches of Ravana. Sita was living in the forest along with Rama and Lakshmana. We are the friends and followers of Sugreeva and we are all on duty of searching for that Holy Mother, Sita." There was deep commotion in his mind. His mind was filled with uncontrollable sorrow and he spoke thus: "I can not bear this sorrow. I will take revenge against this cruel *asura*. Old age need not deter me. It is true, my bright wings were scorched by the radiant rays of the sun in my effort to save my endangered brother. Be that as it may, I will help you and participate in this holy and pious duty ordained by Rama. I know my strength, which can not be incapacitated by any event or any person; I belong to the Vynateya dynasty, I know, I can see places and people from many *Yojanas*. If you travel towards the southern sea for 800 miles (*satayojanam*),

you will find the island called, Lanka. Ravana is the emperor there. Sita is living there; she is surrounded by the *asuras*. Her mind is full of sadness and despair, as she is separated from her consort, Rama. So, you should go there to save that noblest woman of humankind." After taking leave of Sampati, all the *vanaras* continued their journey to search for Sita and reached the banks of the turbulent sea. On seeing 800 miles (*satayojana*) of sea in front of them, they were frightened and found themselves in disarray. Their minds were filled with deep sadness and fear. However, Angada consoled them with the following words of courage: "My dear friends, let us not be distracted by the fear of seeing this huge sea. Our determination is stronger than the distance of this huge sea. I know that there are heroic men, gifted with enormous powers of body and mind among us who can cross the sea. Let us know them so that we can plan our future effort".

After that, the *vanaras* one after another tried to show their capacity of how many miles they could cross the sea. While Gaja said that he could fly eighty miles (ten *yojanas*), Gavaksha said that he would fly thirty, Sarabha forty, Gandhamadana fifty, Myndudu sixty, Dvididudu seventy, Sushena could fly eighty miles, Jambavanta, *Bhallukapati*, old, yet strong in will, said that he would cross upto ninety *Aamadas* with ease; in fact, in his fuller strength in his youth he covered the whole world. Then, Angada himself came forward, saying that while he could easily

fly hundred *yojanas*, it was a bit of an uncertainty whether he could come back. To this, Jambavanta, using his knowledge of royal practice, advised Angada that, as a king he should not go but send somebody, though it was a fact that his power was well known. Thus, while, they were in this dispirited mood, Jambavanta came forward to find a way out. He said that he had faith in the capacity of a hero among themselves. He went to the mighty Hanuman, the Ramabhakta Hanuman, the true devotee, among all the devotees of Lord Rama. Finding Hanuman in a disengaged and pensive mood, he pleaded with Hanuman with these words: “ Oh Hanuman, the mighty and valiant warrior, why are you sitting in such a pensive mood? What ails you? What makes you feel so sad and unconcerned with the world? In what way are you inferior to Rama and his illustrious brother, Lakshmana and the mighty Sugreeva, who is your trusted self? Your capacity, and profound wisdom in men and matters are unmatched. You are as powerful as Garutmanta. Arise and realize your true potential for *Lok Kalyana*. Lead us all, your followers, by your unmatched strength and display your indefatigable self and all round prowess.” With these words, the mighty Anjaneya, the son of Vayudeva, rose like a huge and insurmountable mountain. His enthusiasm was undimmed; he realized his true strength. He rose like a fierce wind. His face was aglow with brightness. His spirit was rejuvenated with all the fire and energy of his full strength. He got into action, as

all the fellow *vanaras* went on chanting his name to enthuse him. Their prayers and praise of his undoubted and incalculable capacity went on multiplying in unbelievable proportions. In that crescendo of high pitch of voices of prayer to Hanuman, he spoke these words to the wise elders, in all humility and quiet dignity:” I am the son of Vayudeva, unequalled in my capacity. None can outreach me; even Garutmanta is no superior to me. I can shake and even trample the mighty hills and cause uncontrollable destruction to the seas. I can bring with great ease and comfort the ambrosial (*amruta*) from the holy hands of Lord Indra and Brahma. Nothing can deter me in my will and determination. I know the strength of my will, I will go to Lanka and bring the Holy Mother, Sita. All of you rest assured.”

This fire of Anjaneya naturally transformed the till then sullen and despairing minds of the fellow *vanaras*. All his followers, like Jambavanta gave their best wishes in plenty and hoped that his mission- a holy mission for human welfare- becomes successful. Then, Hanuman decided to fly from the *Mahendraparvata*, as it would be easy and quick for him to fly from that mountain. His flight quaked the earth; all the world was galvanized: the trees trembled and all the flowers fell on the ground. Wild animals roared in fear and came out of their caves; all the celestial creatures in their joyful activities flew into the blue sky out of fear. But, the *Rishis* and *Siddhas* felt

rejoiced to know that the mighty and valiant Hanuman is doing divinely inspired duty. He is performing the duty ordained by Lord Rama. Now, the mood is upbeat. Hanuman explained his iron will and strong determination to bring Sita in these words to his companions, who were spell-bound seeing his unmatched power: “ First, I will go to Lanka like a shooting star and like the powerful arrow of Lord Rama (*ramabanam*). If I do not see Sita there, then I will go to heaven (*Devalokam*) , and if I do not find her there, too, I will return to Lanka to trample Lanka under these mighty feet and bring her home”. With these words, he flew away like a sparkling arrow, like Garutmanta. Thus , his journey began in a joyful moment. Nature also celebrated this ultimate victory of the Divine Will over the cruelty of Ravana. Hanuman is ably supported by the forces of sea: Samudra, who was helped by Sagarudu asked Mynaka to help Hanuman in this noble mission. When Mynaka tried to raise himself in the sky, Hanuman opposed him, thinking that Mynaka was an obstruction. However, he accepted Mynaka’s friendly overtures, when he came to know that the latter was only helping him. He also realized that Mynaka was helped by Vayudeva, Anjaneya’s illustrious father.

On another occasion, his indefatigable capacity was tested by the gods. They sent an *asura* called Surasa, who threatened him by his fearful appearance. Obstructing Hanuman, he threatened that he would eat him. Hanuman pleaded with her by explaining his

noble mission; but the remorseless *asura* did not heed his words. Finally, however, he entered her mouth like a small creature, of the size of his thumb and prayed her to allow him to go on his mission. Then, Surasa, greatly pleased with his heroic capacity and the nobility of his mission, blessed him to achieve success. In his journey, he again met with another dangerous enemy, in the form of an *asura* called Simhika. Hanuman enlarging his body into a huge cloud countered it. He entered its body by contracting his huge body. After destroying its stomach, he came out triumphantly as the *asura* fell into the sea. *Siddhas, Gandharvas* and others praised his courage.

Finally, he entered Lanka, the splendid and dazzling city. It was shining in all its golden hues and resplendent brightness of diamonds and jewels. Anybody would be captivated by its pomp and splendor. Hanuman also was greatly over whelmed with the marvellous city. However, he made himself into a tiny form by diminishing his body. As he tried to slowly enter it, in a surreptitious manner, he was stopped by Lankhini, the gatekeeper. She asked him to reveal his true identity. For, nobody should enter Lanka without the permission of the mighty Ravana. Ravana was the most celebrated king of the *asuras*. His word was unquestionable as was his leadership. Hanuman, somehow, tried to pacify the fierce anger of Lankhini by telling her how he was greatly fascinated by the colourful gardens and magnificent buildings. The city itself was a place of wonder and marvel.

Lankhini was not at all satisfied with Hanuman's words. She insulted him by powerfully hitting him on his chest with her hand. Hanuman became angry, and feeling that he was greatly insulted, he gave a mighty bow with his fists. Unable to bear, she fell down at his feet praying to him to save her life. She told him about a curse on her life from Brahma. The curse was that she would be defeated by a *vanara* and from then onwards, Lanka would be unsafe as all the *asuras* would be wiped out. Hence, she told him thus, "oh, great warrior, you can perform your duty without any difficulty now". Accordingly, he entered the city by stamping his left foot over the dead body of the deceased Lankhini. On entering it, he found to his surprise, *asuras* in many forms and appearances. He also listened to the melody of wonderful songs and saw with great joy the dances and other delightful activities. He finally reached the majestic palace of Ravana's abode, which was safely guarded by innumerable mighty and youthful warriors.

The most celebrated moment of his life occurred. He saw Sita, in her lonely, yet serenely quiet and beautiful form. It was a moment of happiness. Nature was also shining in bright moon light. He searched for Sita, the *Loka Pavani*, in that twilight. He entered the royal palace of Ravana, the glorious king. His palace was like a closely guarded forest. Many valiant warriors were guarding it with their arms ready for any battle. He also searched the palaces of other important leaders, like Prahasta and Mahaparsva. He

also went round the palaces of Vibhishana, Kumbhakarna and Indrajit. Finally, he visited Ravana's palace and closely searched it. That palace was filled with the most beautiful women. He further moved in the palace to discover Ravana sleeping like an elephant in a rut. Unable to find Sita, anywhere in the gardens, palaces and royal abodes, finally he entered *Ashokavana*. There, he found Sita, the ultimate personification of transcendent beauty and purity, lying under a Simshupa tree, like a ray of moon light on **shukla padyami**; her face was not shining. It was sorrowful, but not glittering with the usual brilliance. Not properly attired, she was made dark by the darkening presence of the surrounding *asuras*. She was like a spark of holy transcendent fire, in the surrounding gloomy darkness. He imagined that she could be none other than Sita, according to the identification marks given to him by Rama. He further confirmed that she could be Sita by noticing the similarity of the piece of sari in his hands. This piece of sari was part of the sari which carried the valuable jewels, which fell from *rushyamuka parvata*, when Ravana was taking her by force and deceit. He was deeply moved and saddened on seeing her in that state; but he showed restraint. He should not forget the heroic duty, ordained by Rama.

The most important moment in his life occurred: he talked to Sita and she trusted him that he was the true messenger of her dear Rama. Ravana reached *Ashokavana* in his handsome dress. He tried to attract

her by uttering many sweet words. He cajoled her, threatened her; yet she was unmoved and treated him with the utmost contempt and utter disdain. She warned him of his impending death in Rama's hands. Rama is an *avatar* for *Lokakalyana*. Killing Ravana is the Will of God. None can stop it. Ravana, in his wrath and unending pride threatened Sita, the Mother of the Universe, *Lokapavani*, (though in his foolishness) that he would kill her, if she did not accept his love, in two months. Further, he entrusted the duty of pacifying her and change her mind to the women surrounding her. Hanuman was observing all this atop the tree. He hid himself in a tiny form in the small nestling branches of the tree. After Ravana's departure, he endeavoured to speak to Sita about his mission, though his mind was filled with doubt and apprehension that she would distrust his words, like the words of Ravana. To overcome this difficulty, he followed the pious method of chanting (*sankeertana*) of the beautiful and noble life of Rama, the *dheerodatta* – starting from Dasaratha to the friendship of Sugreeva – he rendered names of Rama, the Lord Benefactor of the world- with beauty (*saundarya*), melody (*suswara madhurya*) and purity (*punya*). Naturally, Sita was both surprised and overwhelmed with joy. To remove the doubts and suspicions in her mind, she asked a number of questions about Rama and Lakshmana. Hanuman not only answered them with unfailing accuracy, but also established his credentials beyond doubt by showing the precious golden ring given to him by Rama. Then,

she felt convinced and for a moment, lost herself in the thought of Rama, her Lord's presence in front of her. Her mind was overjoyed. She praised Hanuman's courage and strength in crossing over eight hundred miles (*satayojana*). She told some secret yet precious moments in their lives and asked him to tell Rama to recollect and rejoice in them. Then, Hanuman offered to take her on his valiant shoulders. Sita was initially doubtful of his capacity. But, on seeing his superior strength, she praised and acknowledged his infinite capacity to achieve great things, but she expressed her desire that it would be proper and respectable that Rama Himself came and took her to Ayodhya, by destroying Ravana, the evil-doer. Thus he could establish the triumph of Virtue over Evil, in this world. So, she told him that Rama and Lakshmana should come with *vanaras* and *bhallukas* (bears) to fight a valiant battle. She also gave him a diamond (*chudamani*) to Rama.

Having finished his ordained duty, he took leave of her. As a messenger, he should also perform certain related activities. He wanted to test the true heroism and strength of the Lankans. He thought of a plan to do this: he first burnt away a garden with divine beauty. Ravana sent his followers and men of strength to punish him. But, Hanuman defeated them with his valour. When Hanuman's tremendous capacity was reported to Ravana, he sent Jambumali, the great warrior and the son of Prahasta, his minister. Hanuman mercilessly killed all the warriors one by one.

He defeated Virupaksha, Upaksha and other valiant soldiers. When Ravana sent his son and great warrior called Aksha, he also became a victim of Hanuman's strength. Finally, he defeated Indrajit (who was known for his wisdom and versatility in many fields and skill in warfare). After this, Indrajit, using his ultimate power in using the *brahmastra* felled the mighty Hanuman, who became unconscious. When Hanuman was presented before Ravana, he cautioned Ravana about the might and power of Rama and Lakshmana. Ravana, in a fit of rage, ordered him to be killed. However, Vibhishana said that as Hanuman was a messenger, he should not be killed but a smaller punishment could be given to him. They decided to set his tail ablaze as *vanaras* love their tails. This was, indeed, a frightening moment for Lanka. He went round with his tail aflame and destroyed all the beautiful places of Lanka. He left only Vibhishana's palace. Finally, he left Lanka, after visiting Sita, in her *Ashokavana*, once again. He offered respects to her and began to fly away from Lanka. He met Rama and told every thing about his adventures and triumphant journey. Naturally, every body was overwhelmed with joy. He went to Rama joyfully to tell him about his great happiness in seeing Sita. Rama was also overjoyed as tears brimmed his eyes. He expressed his gratitude to Hanuman.

Thus began the preparations for the war. The bridge was built on the sea. Rama and Lakshmana crossed the sea with the help of *vanaras* and



bhallukas. Hanuman's prowess in the war in destroying innumerable *asuras* is well-known. He helped in bringing Lakshmana to life, when he was struck by Ravana. He brought *Oshadhaparvata* by facing many difficulties. His multi-prolonged activities in Ramayana make him an invaluable presence. His devotion to duty, scholarship, ability in skilful conversation make him a heroic character. He symbolizes the spirit of *dharma* in Ramayana. After the death of Ravana and after the test of fire to Sita, he went to Ayodhya as ordained by Rama, to make Bharata accept to be the king, by telling him the entire story. After knowing his mind, he made preparations for Rama's return. Thus, this holy story of Hanuman ends with infinite gratitude shown by Rama to him. Rama honoured him with the rarest and most valuable and glittering diamond ornament. He also granted eternal life and blessed him to occupy the seat of *Brahma*, in future. In this manner, we have the pleasure of listening to the tale of Hanuman. As his scholarship is unmatched, his heroism is equally praiseworthy. His devotion and utter humility are commendable. He is a great *bhakta*. His is *dasyabhakti*. His ideal life should inspire all humanity. His spirit is immortal.

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