

# Vanara Gita



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Pujya Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji  
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## **Episode 1- Nov 19th**

Om Hanumate Namaha.

From today we are going to speak about Vanara Gita. However much a person may sing the praises of Lord Hanuman, the hero of Vanaras, it is always insufficient and inadequate. Even the greatest Gods themselves took on the form of Vanaras and sang the praises of this Pranadeva, Lord Hanuman. Indra (Lord of heaven) and other deities (Devatas) too have praised this Lord in many great ways.

Although Lord Hanuman is in the form of wind (Vayu roopa), He is the image of Lord Sadashiva himself. Also, Hanuman is to be the Brahma (creator) for the forthcoming period.

With such divinity within Him, how much ever He is praised it always falls short. We often hear that Hanuman should be praised immensely and that as He is being praised He begins to show His universal form (Vishwa roopa) and that He thereafter comes to the rescue of the devotee. Yes, it is true. But what should be understood here is that Hanuman does not 'need' any praise. What is implied is that His hymn should be sung and that He should be glorified. Satiated with this, He will come immediately to the rescue of his devotee who is in distress.

References to such great Lord Hanuman can be found in all the sacred texts (Puranas) as well as in the holy text Parasara samhita. Ramayana contains references to this Lord in many various places. Let us briefly discuss about the Vanara Gita that refers to this great Lord.

This ardent devotee of Lord Rama is an ideal example (adarsha purusha) for one and all. He is an eminent jnana pundit (a great learned being who is master in all branches of knowledge). Having achieved mastery in the nine forms of devotion (nava vidha bhakti), this great devotee of Lord Rama, can be aptly said to have reached the pinnacles of devotion (shikhara sthana). There is nothing that escapes His eye, as He is all knowing. After all, He is to be the future Lord of this creation (Brahma). Yet, He chooses to sit at the feet of His master Lord Rama, in all humility, feigning ignorance.

Hanuman gazing intently at Lord Rama symbolizes that the buddhi (intellect) is merging into the manas (mind). Together they represent (mind-intellect) mano-buddhi merger. Such a Lord is eternally seated, with complete concentration (ekagrata) fixed upon the Paramatma. This is to teach that the focus of every being should be eternally fixed on that Paramatma. Only when the buddhi that is action oriented (karma roopa) is channeled towards the supreme energy (Paramatma, the Supreme Lord), will wisdom (jnana) begin to dawn upon the person. It is impossible otherwise.

It is this humility with which He seats himself at the feet of His Lord, that has rewarded him with such greatness. Neither in the presence of the deities (Lord, Devatas), nor in the presence of his devotees has He ever displayed or publicized his knowledge. Being egoistic is unknown to Him. It has taken him to the state wherein even the greatest among the great, felt the need to sing His praises! Every composition refers to His immense devotion (bhakti) and extreme humility (vinaya).

Yet, He behaves in a manner that is easily understood by everyone. He displays great maturity of mind in all His actions. Very tactfully He handled the war with demons. While pardoning and forgiving them and teaching them the methods of saving themselves, He went about with the destruction. With His skill (yukti) He ensured that they were blessed with liberation (jeevan mukti). His greatness can be understood from the very fact that His master Lord Rama, sang His praises! Sita Devi too praised Him and beseeched Him to complete her task (of re-uniting her with Lord Rama) in all earnest. She prayed-

***tvamasmin kaarya niryoge pramaanam hari sattama  
hanuman yatna maasthaaya dukha kshaya karo bhava***

Likewise, Hanuman begs Sita Devi to show Him Her universal form. Hanuman is a Lord that every other Lord and every incarnation of the Lord have praised. Such praises are all compiled in the Vanara Gita. Let us with full devotion and interest, listen to this Vanara Gita.

Om Namo Hanumate namaha.

## **Episode 2 – Nov 20th**

If Lord Rama himself thought that Hanuman was worthy of praise, then how great would Hanuman truly be? Mahatmas never seek that others should praise them; they too never shower unnecessary praise on any other. It is wrong to even expect that others should shower praise. Mahatmas are over and above such wants. Hanuman too likewise never expects that His praises should be sung and that He should rescue devotees in distress only after they have completed singing His praises. The truth is that He guards the sincere devotees of Lord Rama, as an eyelid guards the eye.

All the deities (Devatas) profusely praised Lord Hanuman; simply because they were in awe of Him but not with some expectation of being rewarded. Agastya Maharishi initiated Lord Indra (Lord of heaven) into all these praises and compositions that glorify Lord Hanuman. This initiation by Maharishi Agastya to Lord Indra is found in sacred text Parashara samhita.

Parashara Maharishi said thus to Maitreya Maharishi- O Maharishi! The greatest among the vanaras praised Lord Hanuman in various different ways. All their praises are compiled together and are known as Vanara Gita.

### ***Stotram sarvottamam caiva hanuma tattva darsanam Sarva maya haram caiva aadhi vyaadhi vinashanam.***

Meaning- This stotra (hymn) is the greatest among all the hymns. It depicts the nature (tattva, essence) of Hanuman. It dispels illusion (maya) in totality. It destroys all the physical and mental illnesses that trouble the person.

In the congregation of the Gods (Devatas, Deva sabha), in the presence of all saints and Gods, Lord Indra addressed Maharishi Agastya and said thus- O compassionate Maharishi! This samsara (web of life) is an ocean that is impossible to cross over. Could you please enlighten me as to how the beings, impure as they are and who are bound to this samsara through the aid of their senses, will cross over?

To this Maharishi Agastya replied thus- O Lord Indra, listen! The Vanaras who were absolutely pure in every aspect composed hymns (stotra) on Lord Hanuman. These hymns are known as Vanara Gita. He/she who fixes the mind completely on Lord

Hanuman and recites these hymns, will easily cross over this ocean of samsara. In addition, they will reach the abode of Hanuman.

***Ayuh keertir yashas caiva labhante naatra samshayaha***

Meaning- those who listen, understand or recite this Vanara Gita will be blessed with longevity. Furthermore fame (keerti) will come to them. This is undoubtedly true.

Thus Maharishi Agastya began his initiation (upadesa) to Lord Indra, beginning with the phala sruti (results or fruits of recitation of the hymn). The normal practice is to conclude a hymn with the phala sruti. Contrary to this, here the phala sruti is extolled even before beginning the hymn.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

### Episode 3 – Nov 21

To this Vanara Gita, Agastya Maharishi is the Rishi, the meter (chandas) is Jagati; Hanuman is the Devata (presiding deity); 'Maarutaatmaja' is the beejam (seed letter); 'anjanaa soonuhu' is the shakti (energy); 'vaayu putrah' is the keelakam. This hymn (stotra) is being recited so as to procure the grace (anugraha) of Lord Hanuman. It should be recited with this intent.

Hymns are not some ordinary poetic compositions, composed by eminent saints, for their pass time, sitting idly under the shade of trees while the birds chirped away and water droplets fell on them from the sky. They are the greatest of mantras (maha mantras) that flow in great flow like the Ganga, from the face of eminent saints and yogis, who are masters in yogic science and who have within them tremendous power of penance (tapo balam). It can be emphatically stated that they are veda vakyas (statements from the Vedas).

All such compositions are for the welfare of the world; to uplift all those beings who are drowning in the ocean called samsara. They are meant to alleviate the sorrow of the people in distress. They grant liberation (jeevan mukti). For this reason, whenever a hymn (stotra) is recited, its composer (rishi), its presiding deity (Devata), its shakti (energy) etc. should all be recollected and recited. Reciting thus will ensure that the recitation will bear fruit quickly. Also, it reflects our gratitude towards the composer (rishi) and others. Hence there should be no lapse in such recitation.

In this Vanara Gita, Agastya Maharishi has composed the dhyana shloka (the verse used for contemplating upon the diety). From a proper understanding of this dhyana shloka, we can understand that this Vanara Gita is a great mantra (maha mantra). Any hymn that is preceded by the dhyana shloka as well as the by the anganyasa and karanyasa is a great hymn.

The meaning of the dhyana shloka is as follows-

May He, who has retained the left hand on His left leg, placed the right hand in the position of Chin Mudra, who is praised profusely by the most eminent saints, who has reached the pinnacle of all forms of knowledge, who is seated in the garden of

plantain plants upon the throne of gems (mani maya peetham), who radiates with the luster of crores of suns and who eternally meditates upon the Supreme Parabrahma, grant me the purity of mind.

Hanuman should be contemplated upon with all these above stated points in mind. It grants purity of mind.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 4- Nov 22

Yet another dhyana shloka of Hanuman is-

***Sanjeeva parvotoddhaara mano dukham nivaraya  
Praseeda sumahabahoo traayasva harisattama.***

Meaning- O Lord who lifted up the Mountain Sanjeevini! Please relieve me of my mental afflictions. O Lord who possesses mighty arms! Please shower your grace on me.

It is a common understanding that Hanuman lifted up and carried the Mountain Sanjeevini to revive Lakshmana, who was injured in the battlefield, and to thus bring about joy and happiness to Lord Rama and Lakshmana. The truth however is that in bringing this mountain and in reviving Lakshmana, he destroyed the mental sorrows of every being present there.

Sanjeev refers to prana (life force). The intellect (buddhi) and the actions (karma) attach themselves or accompany this life force. Hanuman is the Lord who lifts up this life force (prana, sanjeeva) and thus dispels all mental afflictions of the being. Here the prayer is- O Lord, you could lift the sanjeevini mountain itself. To such a powerful Lord, how large can my distress be. Please relieve me of my mental distress.' Once the mental afflictions are eliminated, all that remains is devotion (bhakti).

The second line in the hymn refers to his mighty arms (bahu). Arms are symbolic of protection. They rescue the person in distress. Here, the prayer is – 'O powerful Lord, with your mighty arms you could destroy all demons. Please hold me too with those arms'. In other words, it means please shower your grace on me and rescue me.

It is said that the war between Rama and Ravana is beyond all forms of comparisons. When a person is asked draw a parallel to this war, he will say that Rama-Ravana war is like Rama- Ravana war itself. No other war is equivalent to this. Likewise this Vanara Gita is beyond comparisons.



Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 5 – Nov 23

During the war between the armies of Rama and Ravana, Indrajit (son of Demon Ravana) grievously wounded Lakshmana. Seeing the fallen Lakshmana, many of the army leaders concluded that he was dead. The sorrow experienced by Rama at that minute was far greater than that he had experienced when his wife Sita was kidnapped. For months he had been grieving for Sita, but he was most inconsolable with this loss. At this juncture, the vaidya (doctor) of the Vanara army proclaimed that Lakshmana could be revived provided that the herb Sanjivini is brought and supplied to him immediately. How was this to be accomplished?

The war was being fought in the island Lanka while the herb was available in the far away Himalayas. With great difficulty, the monkey army had constructed the bridge to reach this island. To go and fetch this herb was very time consuming. Any delay in getting the herb meant that Lakshmana could not be revived. In this situation, where every minute was precious, Hanuman volunteered for the highly impossible task. He flew at the speed of wind braving all the obstacles on his path and without wasting any time in searching for the herb, carried the entire mountain itself to Lanka. He thus became the cause for the restoration of the life of Lakshmana and in turn brought about immense joy to Lord Rama. He dispelled all the mental sorrows of Lord Rama.

Thus the meaning implied in the dhyana shloka is – Can't this Lord who could dispel the sorrows of Lord Rama Himself, dispel the sorrows and troubles that afflict our mind?

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 6 – Nov 24

Sri Sugriva uvaca-

***Suvarna sailasya gavam ca koti satasya kotechya satasya yaccha  
Daanasya nai vaasti samam phalancha druvam ca tanmaruti darsanena.***

Meaning: Says Sugriva about Lord Hanuman-

The merit that is earned through donating 100 crores of large mountains made out of pure gold, the merit that can be earned through donating crores of cows, can be earned just by the darshan (vision) of Lord Hanuman.

Sugriva was the king of Vanaras. It is the nature of kings to undertake deeds of charity in large scale and thus to teach their citizens the value and merit that can be earned through these acts of charity.

Among all the actions (karmas) undertaken, karmas (actions) relating to charity are the most supreme. Charity is hardest of all the karmas that are performed. Not everyone gets the heart to give away in charity, what they have. The truth is that here on earth, we are but custodians of the wealth that inherently belongs to Paramatma. Giving away in charity amounts to giving back to God what originally belongs to Him! Hoarding and storing wealth is not a healthy attitude. Feeling dejected that we are not able to save up for the future of the children is an unhealthy karma. Such thoughts should be driven away from the mind. Your duty as a parent is to show them the right way of life that is essential to survive in this world. Teach them how to withstand the difficulties that land upon the head and how to survive even under such circumstances. That's all.

If a person hoards all his wealth with intent of saving it for the future of his children and hence does not even give away a rupee in charity, then what is the use? What will come with you at the time of death? Do you realize that in not indulging in deeds of charity in this lifetime, your account (of punya, merit) has completely depleted and that there is no balance left in it? Furthermore, too much of money in hand leads the children on the wrong path and they will become victims of bad habits. Good habits such as charity will never be imbibed by them. They will turn out to be self

centered and selfish. They will waste the money unlawfully. Children learn only when parents practice good traits. But in our foolishness, we only think of saving up for the children and distance ourselves from healthy karmas.

Charity has been called the best among karmas (actions). Charity paves the way for devotion (bhakti), supreme knowledge and wisdom (jnana) and thus takes the person towards vairagya. It is incorrect to think that devotion towards the Lord and supreme knowledge (bhakti and jnana) will sprout automatically in the person at a certain time. Towards this proper foundation is essential. Where the child is taught the essence of sharing and charity (tyaga, dana), then bhakti (devotion) sprouts automatically within him.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## **Episode 7- Nov 25**

Gold occupies the most exalted position among all the objects in this universe. It is the most superior, sacred and precious metal. It is said that even the touch of an iota of gold has a profound influence on the body. For this reason, the tradition of incorporating at least a small bit of gold in the mangala sutra (chain worn by married hindu ladies) or of wearing a golden finger ring have all emerged. The power within this gold is unimaginable.

The best should always be given away in charity. Our smritis emphasize that charity (daan) paves the way for the growth of dharma (rules of righteousness). Dharma causes a growth not only to the individual who undertakes charity, but spreads in all the surrounding areas. This has been emphatically laid down by our scriptures (shastras). Such is the merit that can be earned due to charity.

Among all the various forms of life on earth, human life is the greatest. Often elders reprimand- 'don't behave like an animal after having been born a human'. Or they scold- 'don't eat like a pig', don't behave like an ass. Why are you staring like an owl?' When these animal tendencies are being referred to, it means that some of those animal tendencies still exist within us. Those traits that we exhibited when we took on the birth in those animal forms (in our earlier lives), still have their grip upon us. It is very rare to be blessed with a human birth. God only knows when we shall get it again.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 8- Nov 26

We have discussed earlier that human birth is the best among all the forms of life. In such a human birth, the cow is considered sacred and is duly worshipped. Hence it can be concluded that the cow that is being worshipped by the humans is more sacred than the human being.

The sight of a cow should bring into memory all the Vedas. The milk of the cow is nectar (amruta). In fact, in terms of respect, the cow is at par with the status of a mother. Rearing a cow and nourishing it means nourishing and protecting the Mother Goddess Herself! All the deities (Devatas) reside subtly within the body of the cow. Have you ever observed a cow minutely? Its beautiful, proportionately shaped body and its gentle sattvik traits are very appealing. No other animal can produce milk that is as tasty as the cow's milk. Cow is said to have descended directly from Vaikuntha (abode of Lord Maha Vishnu). The deed of giving away such a cow in charity is considered extremely meritorious.

Gold and cow thus are said to be the best items to be given away in charity. The merit that can be earned by giving them away in charity is beyond all measures. Giving away in charity just an iota of gold, or a cow together with its calf or the fodder of a cow for just one day itself showers unlimited merit (punya). This does not mean that a fistful of grass be plucked and fed to the cow expecting great merit. Fodder should be given in generous quantities or money equivalent of that should be offered to the person who is rearing the cow towards its fodder.

If just generously feeding a cow grants immense merit, what can be said about the merit earned by gifting away crores of cows and innumerable mountains of gold? The merit earned is beyond imagination. The kings, in the ancient past, gifted away cows and gold in large quantities. In the more recent past, saint Purandara dasa, gifted away his house itself.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## **Episode 9 – Nov 27th**

The merit that is earned through this charity of crores of mountains of gold and that which is earned through gifting away crores of cows (go daana) can be achieved merely by having the darshan (vision) of Lord Hanuman, says the king of vanaras Sugriva.

Swamiji is going one step further- "I am saying that this same merit will be earned by chanting or writing the mantra 'Om namo Hanumate namaha' in all earnest". This is your Guru's order. Every true disciple should just abide by your Guru's order. Laziness is unacceptable in this regard.

It should not be misinterpreted to understand that those who have had the darshan of Lord Hanuman could stop all their acts of charity. On the contrary, it means that by having the darshan of this Lord Hanuman, a person is blessed with the prosperity that is needed to conduct such charity. More importantly, he is blessed with the good intellect (buddhi) that is critical to undertake deeds of charity. Even reciting the mantra 'Om Nammo Hanumate Namaha' bestows the same fruit.

Let us now move on to the second hymn in this Vanara Gita.

Gandhamaadhana states-

***Hanumann ithi may snaanam Hanumann ithi may japaha  
Hanumann ithi may dhyanam Hanumat keertanam sadaa.***

Gandhamaadhana is the superior most among all the Vanaras. He states- reciting the name 'Hanuman' is to me, my bath (snana), 'Hanuman' is itself my penance (japa), Hanuman is the Lord on whom I contemplate (dhyana), eternally I seek to hear and sing the glory of Lord Hanuman (keertana). This itself is my liberation (mukti).

In this hymn, Gandhamaadhana highlights the method of worshipping (upasana) Lord Hanuman. What does upasana mean? The devotee should, in every deed (action) witness the presence of his most loved deity to whom he offers worship (upasana Devata). Witnessing the mantra received from the Guru in every deed and at all

times, is itself upasana. The mantra (incantation) received from our Guru should ring in our ears at all times. If we have received initiation into the mantra 'Om Namo Hanumate Namaha' then it should ring in our ears at all times!

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.



## Episode 10 – Nov 28th

Gandhamaadana states that reciting 'Hanuman' itself is a sacred bath. This does not imply that a person should skip his daily mandatory bath just because he performs nama japa. Bathing is pre-requisite for cleansing the physical body. Reciting the name of Hanuman is a sacred mental bath.

We have discussed earlier that the term 'upasana' means visualizing the ishta deva (each individual's sacred/favorite deity upon whom he/she meditates) in every deed that is performed in the daily life.

There are millions of deities (Devatas). Each Devata has millions of mantras associated with Him/Her. If so, then how is a person to choose which mantra is supposedly superior? To a person, that mantra into which he has received initiation from his Guru is the most superior mantra. Based on the individual karma, buddhi (intellect) and mental tendencies (nature), our Guru will bless us with a particular mantra. Such mantra should become the superior most mantra for us.

There are some who do not see the necessity of securing a Guru or a mantra (initiation) from a Guru. They believe that locating mantras in books and reciting them is good enough. Fine. In this case, it will be apt if you consider the holy book as your Guru and treat the mantra as having received from that Guru. Those who have not found a Guru can treat the sound of the mantra that they have heard as a Guru and meditate upon it. Suppose your neighbour is listening to a TV programme and the mantra 'Sita raamaabhyaam namaha' falls into your ears, treat that itself as an initiation and focus on that mantra.

Mantra (chant or incantation) thus received from the Guru should be treated as the most supreme mantra and hence it should be recollected and recited at all times. This is 'upasana' of the mantra. There is a very sacred hymn 'sandhyaa vandana bhadra mastu' wherein the poet very marvelously states- 'I offer my obeisance (namaskara) to all these obligatory duties of bathing, sandhya vandana etc. However to me undertaking the japa of Lord Krishna's name is of utmost importance.'

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 11 – Nov 29th

In Maharashtra the quote- 'dhanya dhanya o pradakshina'- is often heard.

Pradakshina (circumambulation) to the Guru is considered to be very auspicious and sacred. This does not mean that the Guru should be forcibly seated on a chair so that the devotee can go around in circumambulation and in return be blessed with merit (punya) and liberation (moksha).

Great saints have often said that Guru smaran (recollecting, reminiscence of our Guru) itself is Pradakshina (circumambulation to the Lord). Recollecting the name of Guru (Guru naama smaran) is itself the holy bath (snana). This itself is the penance (japa).

Having the darshan of the Guru is considered to be a sacred pilgrimage (Teertha yaatra). Each visit undertaken for Guru darshan is a sacred pilgrimage (Teertha yaatra). No other pilgrimages are required. This is not some rule that has been incorporated so as to give benefit at the time of inconvenience, sickness etc. Even when a person is fit and fine and is capable of undertaking pilgrimages to holy centers, he should opt for Guru darshan only. It is a sacred pilgrimage. Sleeping in His sacred presence is itself dhyana (contemplation). Even sitting for an hour in His sacred presence is akin to visiting Vaikuntha (abode of Lord Vishnu). In fact the person should spend a greater part of his time in such sacred premises.

Temples are great sacred places. It is very essential to sit in a temple and undertake meditation (dhyana) or nama japa (reciting divine names). Japam performed in a temple or in Guru's presence is turns very powerful provided it is performed with concentration (ekagrata).

Similarly, to Gandhamaadana, recollection of Hanuman's name is itself a holy bath as well as a penance. Hanuman is his upasana.

Our scriptures (shastras) state that at the time of bathing, along with the physical body the mind is also purified and this ultimately brings about mental peace. Many people wonder about the necessity of bathing in daily life. The truth is that we have not evolved to a state wherein we are able to achieve absolute purity purely through nama japa. Bathing ensures that along with the physical body, the subtle body

(sookshma shareera) is also cleansed. Bathing and sandhya vandana have been mandated by our scriptures for the same reason. Sandhya vandana also means recollection of the divine names. While it is easy to understand that bathing cleanses our physical body, we wonder as to how the mind is rendered pure with bathing. The trick lies in performing nama japa (recitation of the names of the Lord or reciting mantra) at the time of bathing. The power that exists in the divine names cleanses the mind. Ultimately the mind is rendered peaceful.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 12 – Nov 30th

If while bathing in the River Ganga, the person entertains the doubt as to whether really it has the power to wash away his sins or not, then take it for granted that the bathing is a sheer waste. Due to the doubt entertained, none of the sins will be washed away. All the money, time and energy that were spent in travelling up and down to reach the river will only go for a waste. That's all. The trip will be rendered fruitless.

The person should have immense faith. It is the mind that is at the root of all these doubts and confusions. When the bathing is undertaken with the strong faith that all the sins will definitely be washed out and that the mind will be rendered peaceful, then surely it will happen so.

Reciting the name of Hanuman endlessly also has the same effect, that is, the mind will turn calm and peaceful. For this reason only Gandhamaadana declared that reciting the name 'Hanuman' (nama japa) is a sacred bath!

When reciting or when writing the mantra 'Om namo Hanumate namaha' continuously, say for about a thousand times, then somewhere, at some point of time, the mind will get absolute concentration (ekagrata) for a fraction of a second. That concentration enjoyed during that fraction of second is equivalent of having taken a holy bath in the Ganga. Hence, without any doubts and without heeding to the mental disturbances, the person should continue the Hanuman nama japa endlessly.

Engage in healthy discussions about good matters. There are many good topics, good movies, good songs and good books. Do not waste your time in useless gossip. Continuously reciting the divine names of the Lord (nama japa) automatically cleanses the surroundings and renders it pure. Even the greatest mental disturbances (lack of peace) can be washed away in the least amount of time due to nama japa. It has the power to drive away even the greatest disappointments in a fraction of a second. Nama japa becomes our Guru and begins to direct us in the right way forward. Hence it is of utmost importance that children should be introduced to this at their tender age itself. Our mind is also very child-like. It should be disciplined and trained into undertaking continuous nama japa. Always remember

that the environment that surrounds the person who performs continuous nama japa is always peaceful!

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 13 – Dec 1st

To summarize yesterday's teachings-

1) Nama japa should be undertaken with concentration i.e. without allowing other thoughts to distract the mind.

2) Japa thus performed has the ability to favourably alter the surroundings, rendering it pure. The power contained in the nama japa is such that even the greatest anxieties and ashanti (lack of peace) are simply blown away in fraction of second.

3) Where a person relentlessly undertakes nama japa, the environment (surroundings) automatically is rendered peaceful.

4) To a person, mantra of the ishta deva (chosen favorite deity that a person particularly worships) is the ultimate mantra. For example, to a person who reveres the Guru, Guru mantra will be the supreme most mantra. To him, 'Om namo Hanumate namaha' or 'Sri sadgurubhyo namaha' is the highest mantra. That's all.

This year Swamiji has given the mantra 'Om namo Hanumate namaha' for the entire society at large (saamuhika). Millions of people are either reciting or writing this mantra worldwide. Many non-hindus too are participating in this nama japa yagna. So far this mantra has been recited many crores of times. Unimaginable positive changes are taking places in the lives of those who are reciting it. The fruits of this recitation are tremendous. Their life is taking a beautiful turn for the good. All of you (who are listening to the TV program) please keep reciting this mantra 'Om namo Hanumate namaha'. It is a very simple mantra.

5) Nama smaran (recollecting/ reciting the names of God) takes one towards tyaga (renunciation, performing charity, sacrificial nature).

In a nutshell, everything can be achieved through japa. For this reason, Gandhamaadana sought that eternally he should be blessed with 'nama smaran'.

Moving next in this Vanara Gita, Sushena (yet another Vanara) praises Hanuman in this manner-

***Ramabhakta charita kadhaamrutam vayutanaya gunaanu keertanam  
Ramadasa! tava paada sevanam sambha vantu mama janma janmani.***

Meaning- Sushena states-

In each and every birth of mine, I seek to taste the divine nectar (amruta) in the form of listening to the story (katha) of this Rama's devotee (bhakta) Hanuman, sing the praises (guna) of this son of wind (Vayu putra) and serve the lotus feet Of this Lord who is Ramadasa (servant of Lord Rama). May I be blessed thus!

There are many who do not seek re-birth (they seek salvation). Yet, at the same time, there are many others who seek that even if they were to be re-born, devotion to God should reign most supreme in their lives. Great saints of Maharashtra have stated in their abhang-

***'Na lage mukti dhana sampada santa sanga dei sada' –***

In every birth I seek to be associated with those who are devoted to You O Lord. Sushena belongs to this category of devotees, who seeks to serve the Lord in every birth of his.

We watch countless movies, listen to countless stories, yet none of them stay in our memory long enough. But when one listens to Ramayana, Mahabharata or Bhagavata, the stories therein linger in our memory. We tend to get deeper into the story and somewhere the story gets imprinted in our memory. Why is this so? This is because these stories are real and not fictional; they are eternal stories. It is important to realize that these were not fictitious stories that were penned down by some poets.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## **Episode 14 – Dec 2nd**

All the stories contained in our epics and puranas such as Ramayana, Mahabharata etc. have the capacity to clear away all the doubts and confusions of the human race in each of the 4 yugas (eons). The power to convey the right message to the people across all the eons (4 yugas) rests in these epics. For this reason, they are recollected even today. Lord Brahma has himself declared that Ramayana will be in people's memory as long as the mountains exist on earth. In such an eternal Ramayana, the story of Hanuman appears.

To a true devotee, the story of his Lord is always like nectar.

### ***'O Rama, nee naamame yenta ruchira'***

'O Rama, what a lovely taste exists in your name" sang saint Ramadasa. One who has enjoyed the inherent taste that exists in nama japa (reciting divine names), will never give it up. The taste (ruchi) multiplies as the recitation increases. 'Rama, Rama, Rama' or 'Hanuman, Hanuman, Hanuman' as one continuously recites this, his joy only multiplies. Those who recite the glories of God as well as those who listen to it, both lose track of the time spent in it. Enraptured in singing the names of Vitthala- Vithala, Vithala, Vithala, ....., devotees are oblivious to the passage of time.

An erroneous misconception that people entertain is that the stories of the Lord are to be heard only in old age and that too only for the sake of earning some merit (punya). The truth is that every child should be introduced to them right from infancy. Lessons required for every stage of life are contained in these epics. They contain some stories that are suitable for children; some other stories are apt for the youth and some other stories are for the old. Take for example, the Mahabharata. It contains stories that are suitable for people from all stages and phases of life. Be it a yogi (saint) or a rogi (diseased), a youth (yuvaka), a king, a pauper, a poet etc. everyone can draw lessons from it. The traits and the characteristics of every human being have been incorporated into the characters of this epic. Hence every being can draw suitable inference from this epic.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.



## **Episode 15- Dec 3rd**

Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagvatam are all holy texts. The Supreme Lord, out of his limitless mercy and compassion towards his devotees, got them composed. It can be emphatically stated that He himself had them composed. He incarnated on earth and underwent a lot of hardships. Out of our love and devotion, we think that for our benefit He has undergone a lot of hardships during the incarnation. But in His (Lord's) opinion, there were no hardships or difficulties of any kind.

The Lord incarnated as a fish, as a boar, as a turtle and many more. In each of these incarnations, he suffered and struggled. To save his devotee Prahlada, he took his birth from a pillar in a half-man and half animal form. He experienced so much pain and suffering in a body that was thus formed. Creation itself is very strange. In every incarnation He willingly took on so much pain and troubles. Recollecting all of them will cause the true devotee to turn emotional. Out of devotion, if a devotee thinks that the Lord underwent troubles and hardships, there is nothing wrong.

Each incarnation of His teaches a different lesson. It clarifies the different doubts that different people may entertain. A deep lesson will be hidden behind every story. That is why it is essential to listen to such stories. Everyone should organize gatherings wherein the stories of the Almighty are explained. These are known as Bhagavad sabhas. They should listen and give everyone else a chance to listen to such stories.

It is very important to introduce children to listen to such stories relating to God. Children should be encouraged to sing songs that extol the glories of the Lord. They should be given a chance to enact the roles of the Divine on stage plays. It could be a trivial role but yet it will have a great impact on the mind. It is the best treasure that we can ever give them. Hence, children should be trained to sit and listen to such stories.

By praising the divine qualities that the Lord possesses, the good qualities within us multiply. To inculcate good qualities and traits it is very important to think about them and to glorify them.

Very often we come across people who constantly complain- 'Oh, I do not get the required concentration. I do not somehow get the proper devotion (bhakti)'. The focus here is on driving away the bad or negative traits. This is like trying to forcibly push away the darkness inside. They do not understand that where there is light, there can be no darkness. Where there is knowledge, there cannot be ignorance. So instead of concentrating on what they do not have, they should focus on getting the right knowledge (bringing in light). The bad habits and traits have settled down very deeply inside. They have completely enveloped the mind. There is no use in fighting with them every minute- 'O bad habit, leave me, go away, go away'. Instead sow a good habit. When the good habit increases its grip, the bad habit has no place to sit and rest. It will have to go away and make way for the good habit. This is the correct approach.

Instead of this, people say that until they are totally pure and have rid themselves of all bad qualities and traits, they will not enter the sacred precincts. This will never ever happen. It is akin to waiting for all the waves in the ocean to recede before bathing. The waves will never cease and hence the person can never bathe.

Now there is another class of devotees. They say, "Ah! Let this difficulty pass away. After that I will wholeheartedly join for Swami seva (service to Lord and Guru)". Many people fall under this classification. The difficulties/desires in life will never stop and they can never ever go for seva. "O Swamiji, let me just get through this difficulty, that's all. After that I am ready". Remember that after one difficulty, another will begin to raise its head. The person should be willing to snap the ties with the difficulties. Some desires he should sacrifice. Some others, he should willingly disown. After joining the Lord's service, the person should never even slightly regret his decision. He should not encourage others to even raise the topic about it.

To summarize today's teachings- only when we praise or glorify good habits and traits (qualities), we can inculcate them.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 16 – Dec 4th

Through listening to the stories of God repetitively, a person can cultivate excellent samskaras (good tendencies). That is why it becomes even more important to occasionally organize public gatherings wherein the glories of God are extolled (Bhagavad sabhas). Encouraging our children as well as the public to participate in it, leads to development of good tendencies within all of them. In addition, good and healthy knowledge will sprout within them. The children who are exposed to these healthy stories will develop a desire to increase their stock of good traits. The term 'good traits' does not refer merely to some punya (merit) that will be earned. Even to survive in this worldly life, possessing certain amount of good traits is essential. Children will imbibe such traits.

Our scriptures (shastras) state that one should praise the good traits that exist even in his enemy. He should respect the good trait that he sees in his enemy.

In Hanuman, the good traits (sad guna) such as devotion towards the Lord (bhakti), attitude of sacrifice (tyaga, renunciation), adherence to the rules of righteousness (dharma), prowess and might (pratapa) and the trait of assisting others, showing kindness and favors to others (anugraha) are in abundance. He possesses unlimited good traits. By glorifying the good traits that exist in Him, the good traits within us being to sprout. The insect Brahmara (bumble bee) catches small worms. The tiny worm out of awe goes on staring at the bumble bee. Gradually the body of the worm transforms into that of a bumble bee.

When we glorify the Lord, there is no further need to pray to him to bless us with good traits. It is automatically understood. With this intent, Sushena sought that in every birth he should be given a chance to 'sing the glories of Hanuman'.

The third prayer of Sushena relates to Paada seva. Paada seva means to offer service at the feet of the Lord. One can offer service at the feet of the Lord only when the Lord permits. Without Hanuman's grace and permission, it is impossible to even touch His feet. If so, then how difficult would it be to offer service to him?

An idol, that has been properly consecrated breathes with life. After all, Prana Prathistha (invoking the life force into the idol) has been performed to the idol. Do

not treat it as merely a lifeless stone. We are able to concentrate and focus completely on that idol only because it is duly consecrated.

Our Lord Hanuman eternally serves at the feet of his master Lord Rama. He is eternally holding on to Rama's feet. He is not very keen that others should hold on to his feet when he himself is serving at Rama's feet. Hence not everyone can easily touch his feet. That is why Sushena explicitly prayed for Pada seva in every birth of his. As this cannot happen without the blessing (anugraha) of that Lord, He openly prayed to the Lord to bless him with it in every birth.

Often, we say- O Lord, I offer obeisance at your feet. All these are in reality, mere verbal statements. We have not acquired the ability to hold on to the Lord's feet. We should put in efforts and acquire this ability.

Sushena is seeking paada sevana in each and every birth of his. He prays to be blessed with the nine types of devotion and service. He seeks to offer such service to the Lord.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 17 – Dec 5th

The Vanara, Angada, offers the following prayer in Vanara Gita-

***Mata suvarchaladevi pita may vaayunandanah  
Baandhavaa hanumadbhaktaaha svadesho bhuvanatravam.***

Meaning- Suvarchala Devi (wife of Hanuman) herself, is to me, my mother; Hanuman (Vaayu nandana) is my father. All the devotees of Hanuman are my relatives. To me, all the three planes of existence exist within my nation itself!

Angada was the son of King Vali (brother of Sugriva. Vali was killed by Lord Rama). Angada was no ordinary being. He was a mighty warrior. Many a time, his prowess and might caused extreme surprise to Hanuman himself. Angada played a very significant role in Ramayana. From the time the Vanaras set out in search of Mother Sita, until the coronation of Lord Rama as the King of Ayodhya, intermittently Angada's reference keeps coming up in Ramayana.

It is very rare to come across a temple consecrated for both Hanuman and his wife Suvarchala Devi. Yet, it is not that such temples do not exist at all. Occasionally, at certain places we do find temples wherein both of them have been installed.

The popular belief is that Hanuman is a celibate (Brahmachari). If we read the Parashara Samhita in great detail and completely absorb its contents, if we attentively go deeper into the story of Hanuman and recapitulate his life story in minute detail we will understand about Suvarchala Devi. Often people say that it is wrong to even think of Hanuman as a married man. This is yet another misconception. Debates as to whether this Lord is a celibate (Brahmachari) or a householder (Gruhasta) are not uncommon. It is true that Hanuman has a celibate form (Brahmachari roopam).

It is wrong to interpret divine stories with a human perspective. We should not treat deities at a human level. It is wrong to speak about Guru and God as if they are ordinary humans with worldly needs. It is only when the divinity in them is seen and respected, and their stories read with such faith, that the deepest secrets hidden

behind the stories, begin to be understood by the mind. There is no other way to understand the hidden secrets behind the divine stories.

Suvarchala is the daughter of the Lord Sun (Surya, supreme radiance, illumination). Sun God (Surya) is Hanuman's Guru (teacher). As a Guru dakshina (fees that is rendered to a Guru upon completion of education), the Sun God asked Hanuman to marry his daughter Suvarchala. All our ancient puranas contain this story. Together with Suvarchala Devi, He resides on the Mountain Gandhamaadana. 'Suvarchala' means absolute illumination; light (prakasha). 'Suvarchala' thus means Hanuman's atma shakti (power of the inner self). It is the bright illumination within him. His inner illumination (energy, shakti) grew so vast that he could no longer enclose it within him. It can be said that he pulled it out and gave it a female form of Suvarchala. Thus Suvarchala, his wife, is none other than his own yoga shakti (power acquired through practice of yoga); atma shakti (power of the inner self) or tapa shakti (power of penance).

She fulfills the desire of those who seek this radiance (splendor, varchas). Our Lord Hanuman is eternally seated immobile, engrossed in very deep meditation. Whenever we pray to Hanuman, it is actually Suvarchala Devi who fulfills them. As radiance and power always encircle the person, we can say that Suvarchala Devi never leaves her husband's side.

Let us recapitulate our understanding. Hanuman, who chooses to remain eternally in contemplation of Lord Rama, has, out of his compassion for his devotees, retained his divine energy and power outside of him and given it a female form of Suvarchala. Whenever a devotee prays or seeks anything, it is actually Suvarchala Devi who fulfills it while Hanuman is engrossed his Rama japa. With this plan, Hanuman has ensured that he is undisturbed in his dhyana (contemplation). Happily He is reciting 'Rama, Rama, Rama' endlessly without any disturbance, while his shakti (energy) Suvarchala Devi is fulfilling the needs of all his devotees.

All of us have heard the story of Dhruva. When he was unloved by his worldly father, he sought the divine father. He proudly claimed that to him the Divine father (Paramatma) Himself was his father, mother and relative in this universe. We too should adopt this approach.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha

## **Episode 18 & 19 –Dec 6th and 7th**

There is a very famous verse, wherein the poet has beautifully declared-

***Mata me Parvati devi, Pita devo Maheshwara  
Baandhavaaha Shiva bhaktaas ca Svadesho bhuvanatrayam.***

Meaning- Parvati is to me, my mother; Lord Shiva himself is my father; all the devotees of Shiva are my kith and kin; my nation is to me the three planes of existence.

Angada expresses the similar way of thinking towards Hanuman and Suvarchala Devi. We had discussed yesterday that even Dhruva expressed the same sentiments towards the Lord. He who treats the Lord as his kith and kin, he who enjoys such closeness with divinity, reaps the fruits quickly.

There are some devotees who regret that they had never seen the River Ganga or bathed in it. Why should such thoughts be entertained? Guru Padodakam (water with which the Guru's feet have been washed) is itself the divine Ganga. Being in Guru Seva and regretting that they could not bathe in Ganges is akin to sitting in Vaikuntha (abode of Lord Vishnu) and complaining that they are bored and wishing that they were on earth, which, in their opinion, is a far more interesting place. Everyone is eternally busy, however they are busy due to bad and unwanted deeds. No one wants to engage in good deeds and keep himself busy due to it. People in general do not want to be contented with God-given life and engage the time in good divine activities such as satsang (association with the holy persons), bhajans, nama smaran (singing or reciting the names of the divine) and the like. People are very strange. They are not satiated that they could get Sadguru Seva, which is everything in itself. It itself is Vaikuntha.

Angada stated that he considered Suvarchala Devi as his mother. This can be interpreted in two ways. The first is to treat Suvarchala Devi as his own mother. The second is to see Suvarchala Devi in his own mother. Both are correct.

We can look upon Gods Lakshmi-Narayana (Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Vishnu) as our parents. Second way is to see Lakshmi-Narayana in our parents and serve them

with such feelings. Both are acceptable approaches. To say that God exists within us is one approach. Stating that all of us exist within God is another approach. Both are same and both attitudes are essential. Treating all the devotees of the Lord as our relatives (kith and kin) is one approach. Looking upon all our relatives as devotees of the Lord is another approach. Among our relatives, not everyone will have faith in the Lord. Hence we should pray to the Lord to bless all of them with good faith.

Angada was the crown price of the land. Through his prayer, he also brings out his love for his nation. He declares that all the three planes of existence exist within his nation (kingdom)- svadesho bhuvana trayam. There is yet another lesson to every being within this statement made by Angada. Each one should love and respect his/her own nation (desa bhakti). We should strive to respect our nation. Every one should have the feeling that all the three planes of existence are within his nation.

Moving on to the next shloka in Vanara Gita, Vanara 'Neela' offers the following prayer to Hanuman-

***Bhakta kalpatarum soumyam lokottara gunakaram  
Suvarchalapatim vande maarutim varadam sadaa.***

Meaning- I offer my obeisance to the son of the wind, Lord Hanuman, who is like a wish-fulfilling tree to his devotees; who is gentle and pleasant (soumya), who is a repository of the most extraordinary and exceptional traits (guna) and who is the husband of Suvarchala Devi.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.



## Episode 20 – Dec 8th

Neela, the son of Agni (Fire God), was one of the prominent Vanaras in Rama's army. In the war between Rama and Ravana, he killed the mighty and powerful demon (rakshasa) Prahasta, who was also a minister in Ravana's army. Neela played a very pivotal role during the construction of the bridge to Lanka.

Such a warrior praises Hanuman as a Kalpavriksha. Kalpavriksha is the wish fulfilling divine tree. This sacred tree emerged during the churning of the ocean (amruta mathana). As this tree (vriksha) fulfills all the desires of the Devatas (deities), until the end of the kalpa (period equivalent to 4.32 billion earth years), it is known as Kalpavriksha. It fulfills every desire. Kalpavriksha means not only to fulfill the desires expressed by the devotee, but also to understand and fulfill those desires that are imagined/ created (kalpana) in the mind of the devotee. Going a step further, it means, to recognize the desires that will be born in future and to fulfill them even before they are born. A 'Kalpavriksha' thus understands those desires that will arise in the future birth of the devotee and fulfills them in this birth itself!

When desires are thus being fulfilled even before they are created, what else can the devotee seek? This is the speciality behind the Kalpavriksha. In fact, Hanuman blesses the devotee with much more than what the devotee desires. For thus fulfilling all the desires that creep into the mind of his devotees, Neela praises Hanuman as 'Bhakta Kalpavriksha'.

Gentleness (soumya) is yet another great trait possessed by Hanuman. Soma also refers to the moon. He who is calm and beautiful like the moon, and he who showers his coolness upon others akin to the moon, is known as soumya. When a person possesses a gentle nature (soumya swabhava), it means that just by speaking to that person, our mind will enjoy calmness and coolness. It will jump with joy. That person who just by his speech, grants us this merriment and joy, can aptly be addressed as 'Soumya'. Where gentleness (soumya) exists, peace (shanti) automatically exists. Each of us should imbibe this trait from Hanuman.

Seeing Rama and Lakshmana approaching the Mountain Rishyamukha, Sugriva entertained many apprehensions. The truth was that Rama and Lakshmana were searching for help in locating Sita Devi. Not knowing this, Sugriva suspected them to

be enemies or agents sent by his brother Vali, for his destruction. Seeing two mighty warriors approaching them, Sugriva panicked. Not just Sugriva, his entire retinue, barring Hanuman, panicked. Hanuman was calm and composed. He knew that his master and his Lord had arrived. In a very calm and composed (soumya) manner Hanuman preached Sugriva. He put to rest the unnecessary fears expressed by Sugriva.

Our Lord Hanuman is the repository of unimaginable good traits. Just as an ocean contains all the precious stones, Hanuman possesses within him every good trait.

'Maruti' is one of the most famous names of Hanuman. The troops (ganas) responsible for the sustenance of this entire creation, right from the microcosm (pindanda) up to the Macrocosm (Brahmanda) are collectively known as Marutt. He who possesses this entire ability within him is known as Maruti. By addressing Hanuman as Maruti, it means we are recollecting his good traits (gunas) in entirety.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 21 – Dec 9th

Addressing Hanuman as Maruti thus amounts to recollecting the Marutt ganas who are responsible for the sustenance of this creation, from the microcosm up to the macrocosm. Hanuman possesses every good trait (sad guna) that exists. He is a storehouse of indescribable good traits. The treasures that are held within the ocean include huge mountains, precious stones, caves and many more. Just as it is not possible to locate and measure the treasures that are hidden deep within the ocean, it is impossible to estimate the number of good qualities and traits (sad gunas) that Hanuman possesses! In fact, all the good gunas (traits) emerge out of Him.

When it is said that Hanuman bestows boons upon his devotees, it means that He bestows upon them the 'best boon' (most supreme boon). The greatest of the great Devatas (deities), as well as the mightiest of the mighty demons, all of them secured, what appeared to be the most invincible boon from God. Even then, what was the lifetime of such boons? All the boons are generally short-lived. Every boon generally comes with a hidden clause. Once the lifetime of the boon comes to an end, the clause becomes operational and the boon is destroyed. At that time the being feels ashamed to seek another boon.

Therefore right at the outset, when seeking a boon, the best boon should be sought. Seeking the Supreme Knowledge (Brahma Jnana, knowledge about God) is the best boon to be sought.

Do we even have the eligibility to ask for the Supreme Knowledge? Acquiring this supreme knowledge is a very difficult target. Towards this, we need to understand who is Brahma (God), then we should decipher what is this knowledge (jnana) to be learnt and finally we should put in stringent efforts and undertake sadhana (spiritual pursuits) to acquire this Brahma Jnana (Supreme Knowledge). Hanuman very easily blesses his devotees with this Brahma Jnana. He simply showers it upon them. For this reason, He is adored as 'Varada' and as 'Bhakta vatsala'. Apart from this boon, every other boon can only be called a trivial and temporal boon.

When describing about Rama, the following statement is made- agre vaachayati prabha~njanasute. It means that when Rama was seated on the throne, surrounded by his entire family and retinue, Hanuman reverentially sat the feet of his master

and read out from the various the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras, while Rama happily provided commentary (explanation) for the same. This is not mere imagination. Rama- Hanuman eternally remain thus. Hanuman, who sits at the feet of His master and learns this subject, easily showers it upon his devotees. He blesses his devotees with the atma jnana (knowledge of the self, self- realization).

Now let us move to the next shloka in this Vanara Gita. It is a composition by Vanara Gavaksha.

***Vayuputrena mahata yadya duktam karomi tat  
Naa jaanami tatho dharmam madharmam raksha maam sadaa.***

Meaning- I am adhering to the dharma (rules of righteousness) that has been taught to me by the great son of wind, Hanuman. I do not know any dharma apart from this. O Hanuma! Please protect my dharma.

Gavaksha was a great warrior who was the commander in chief for a troop of 60000 vanara warriors. To lead a team effectively, the leader (commander in chief) should possess the correct knowledge of dharma. Hanuman taught Gavaksha this entire knowledge of dharma (righteousness).

## **Episode 22 – Dec 10th**

It is the mandatory duty of a king to protect dharma (righteous way of living by every individual). Towards this, Rama has been praised in Valmiki Ramayana as –

***Rakshita swasya dharmasya swa-janasya cha rakshita.***

Dharma should be protected with utmost compassion (daya). In the pretext of protecting dharma, it is wrong to get angry and impose harsh punishments for trivial faults. It is wrong to wage a war for petty reasons. Peace (shanti) is a very important pre-requisite for establishing dharma (righteousness). Hanuman preached Gavaaksha about this peace (shanti).

Our dharma preaches that the 'path of the elders' should be adhered and followed. This does not mean that we should keep following the elders wherever they go. It means that we should follow and practice the same rules and regulations of dharma (righteousness) as was done by them. We should obey them.

Hanuman accepted Rama, who was a personification of dharma (dharma murti), as his Lord and completely surrendered to Him. Undertaking a lot of pain he went to Lanka in search of Sita. Seeing the pitiable state of Sita, his heart wrenched in pain and in that moment of anger, he wanted to kill the Demon Ravana. Yet recollecting his dharma, he stopped short of killing Ravana. He was careful not to transgress his limits as per the dharma. He wanted to meet Ravana in person and hence did all that he could to reach Ravana's court.

Hanuman was powerful enough to kill Ravana together with his entire troops. Yet, he spared him, as it would be adharmic (against the rules of righteousness) for him to kill Ravana. He knew that Lord Rama held dharma in the highest esteem. Hanuman did not want to do any act that would cause even the slightest pain to his Lord.

In Lanka, Hanuman was merely a messenger (dhoota). It is wrong for a messenger to wage a war with the enemy. The messenger should pass on his master's message to the enemy in a peaceful manner. He can advise the enemy and try to resolve the dispute amicably. Hence, Hanuman tried to preach Ravana and hence he sang the glories of His Lord Rama. Nothing however entered Ravana's head. Ravana followed

the demonic (rakshasa) dharma. Hanuman, in displaying his might at Lanka, actually showed the demons the power and might of Rama and of his army. He returned as successfully as he had gone. In addition, he assessed the power and capacity of Ravana and was able to give this valuable information to Rama. All of these are the traits of an efficient messenger.

Within all the deeds of Hanuman, his bhakta dharma (righteous duties of a disciple) and his dhoota dharma (righteous duties of a true messenger) are vividly visible. In Hanuman, many such dharma sookshmas (underlying subtle principles of dharma) are visible. The more we discuss about it, the more of such qualities we will find in him.

Vanara Mainda has praised Lord Hanuman as follows-

***Sameera suthe satatam tva daagnaya tva damsakha prerita  
manasendriyaha***

***Karo myaham ya chha subhaasubham prabho tvat preetaye matkruta mastu  
tat sadaa.***

Meaning-

O son of the wind! I am an amsha (aspect) of you. I have been born due to you. The indriya (sense) called the mind (manas) is deeply influenced by your orders. Therefore, let it be said that all the good and the bad deeds performed by me, are actions that have been performed by me out of love for you.

Mainda was one of the ministers in Sugriva's army. He played a significant role and offered immense help in locating Sita. During the war against Ravana, along with Lakshmana, Mainda was also rendered unconscious.

Such a warrior Mainda, praised Hanuman in this strange manner. From his prayer, it is clear that he was born out of an aspect of Hanuman. Alternatively, perhaps pleased with his services (seva), Hanuman may have reminded him that he had an aspect (amsha) of Hanuman in him.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 23 – Dec 11th

Stating about himself, Hanuman openly declared that from the point of view of the body (deha buddhi) he was a servant of Rama (Rama daasa); from the angle of the soul (jeeva buddhi) he was born out of an aspect of Rama (Rama amsham) and from the point of view of the inner most cosmic atma (atma buddhi), he himself was Rama.

This may sound confusing but however a great tattva (essence) is hidden behind this statement. What is meant by the terms- deha buddhi, atma buddhi and jeeva buddhi?

The term deha means body. It means at a physical (gross) plane he is a servant of God and hence physically he will do all those tasks that please his master Lord Rama. Towards this, He empowered his body and carried an entire mountain in service of His Lord.

Hanuman states that as far as his inner being (individual soul/self, jeeva) is concerned, it is born out of an aspect of Rama (Rama amsha). Thus in terms of the individual soul (jeeva), He is an aspect of Rama.

Going still deeper, at the cosmic plane (atma buddhi, cosmic self), Hanuman said that he himself is Rama.

There are 3 important concepts to be learnt here. They are the deha (body), jeeva (individual soul) and atma (cosmic soul). These three classifications exist within each one of us.

In this prayer, Mainda himself declares that he is born out of an aspect of Hanuman (Hanuman amsha). He states this from the soul (jeeva buddhi) angle. His prayer to the Lord is- 'O Lord, bound by your order, I have been born as an aspect of you. The sense (indriya) known as the mind (manas) instigates me towards good deeds as well as the bad deeds. I offer all the deeds to you.'

There is a very deep lesson to be learnt here. Please listen carefully. Only then this matter will seep into the mind. In just 4 sentences, atma upadesha (knowledge of the self) is being given in a very easy to understand manner. All the Upanishads

merge into these 4 sentences. A powerful lesson to this entire world exists within this prayer.

The mind (manas) is also a indriya (sense). This sense organ (mind) prompts and pushes the person both towards good deeds as well as bad. The person executes the karmas (actions) as directed (pushed) by the mind. For this reason, Mainda states- thus in my actions, my influence (role) does not exist. I offer my actions in entirety (good and bad) to you and pray that all my actions should be pleasing to you.

It is a normal practice to offer only the good deeds to the Supreme Lord. After having been born as a human, it is unavoidable (inevitable) that some mistakes will be committed. Human life is full of mistakes. In order to avoid repetition of the mistakes, it is said that 'Paapa bheeti, daiva bhakti' should co-exist. 'Paapa bheeti' means 'fear of sin'. 'Daiva bhakti' means 'love towards God'. It is Hanuman who blesses us with both of them.

Hence Mainda offered both the good and the bad to Hanuman. 'Shubhaashubha parityaagi' means to offer in totality, to the Supreme God, the good results as well as the bad results (fruits) of all the actions (karma) performed. Only he who is able to do so completely can be called a yogi. Such a person has not been addressed as a 'bhakta'. He has been called a 'yogi' (saint).

We should strive to reach this state of saintliness (yogatvam). We should practise to give up 100% of the fruits of our actions to Hanuman, and request him to lead us in the right path.

We have discussed about the 3 sheaths that envelop us. Therefore service to the Lord (seva) should be offered in all the sheaths (planes). This physical body that is ruled by the senses (indriyas), should be utilized for offering physical service (seva) to the Lord. This should be done with an attitude of being a servant of the Lord. Be it sweeping the premises or washing the clothes, the attitude should be of total service. Every action should be offered to the Lord with such approach. This itself is preaching of enlightenment (jnana upadesham).

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.



## **Episode 24 & 25 - Dec 12th and 13th**

Dividha, another Vanara has glorified Lord Hanuman as-

***Ramadeenaam rane khyaatim daatum yo ravanaadikaan  
Naavadhee svayemay vaika Stam vande hanumatprabhum.***

Meaning-

I pay my obeisance to that Lord Hanuman, who, although single handedly possessed the ability to destroy Demon Ravana together with his entire army, refrained (stopped himself) from doing so, with the intent that the glory of killing Ravana should go to his master Rama and other associates.

Vividha was a very great vanara warrior who was very closely associated with Hanuman. He scrutinized and observed Hanuman from a very close angle. He thus knew the valor and the capacities of Hanuman completely. He knew that only Hanuman could accomplish tasks such as crossing the ocean and having darshan of Mother Goddess Sita, in Lanka and thereafter returning successfully.

Ordinary people may wonder why Hanuman, who possessed such great might, did not destroy Ravana and Lanka when he reached there in search of Sita. He could have simply killed Ravana and brought Sita back, when he possessed such inherent capacity. In the earlier episode, we discussed that at one point, Hanuman too felt like killing Ravana and rescuing Sita.

Hanuman, who was hiding in the trees of Ashoka Vana, trying to watch the happenings there, saw the arrival of Ravana together with hordes of demonesses in the morning. Thunderous noise followed by loud welcoming slogans greeted Ravana upon his arrival. Ravana spoke fearful, dirty, shameful and unworthy words to Sita in order to get her to marry him. Such unholy words should not be spoken to a chaste woman (pativrata). Sita was upset and watching her cry caused Hanuman great agony. It was a heart rendering scene. Ravana's appalling behavior angered Hanuman enormously and that very moment he wanted to kill him. Hanuman was positioned on the very same tree, beneath which Sita was sitting. Hanuman was in a very advantageous position. One leap down from that tree and he would land

straight on Ravana's head. With his might, Hanuman could simply hit the fatal blow and kill Ravana then and there. Yet, with great restraint Hanuman controlled himself. Instead he desired to see the grandeur of Ravana's court and assess his might and thus resisted from killing him.

Through various tricks Hanuman managed to enter Ravana's court. Here once again when Ravana spoke very low of Rama and used unworthy words, Hanuman was tempted to choke Ravana's throat then and there. This was another great opportunity. Once again he used great restraint and controlled himself.

He recollected that his Lord Rama was an incarnation of the Supreme and that He had taken a human form solely for the elimination of the demons. He thought, 'When this was the intent behind the incarnation, why should I take up this task? Of what use will it be if I kill Ravana? Ravana should die exclusively at the hands of Lord Rama. With that, Rama's incarnation would be complete. Moreover, Rama had taken on a pledge that He will kill Ravana. If I kill Ravana now, it will amount to betraying my master. I should take all the steps to ensure that my master successfully accomplishes His pledge. I am a servant of that master. He is my Lord (prabhu), my master. Hence I should leave this task for my master. This is my master's dharma, not mine'. With such thoughts Hanuman let go of the multiple opportunities that he had through which he could have killed Ravana.

Through Mainda's prayer earlier, we have understood that Hanuman considered himself as Rama (from the point of view of the atma, cosmic soul). With this energy of Rama, he could easily destroy Ravana. Destroying Ravana along with his army was like a child's play to him.

While singing the glories of Rama in Ravana's court, Hanuman said to Ravana- 'O Ravana, my army of vanaras and I possess the capacity to easily kill even 1000 demons of your capacity and size. You will not even get a chance to fight Lord Rama, you will be finished much before that. I myself or just Rama himself can single-handedly destroy all of you. Even one strand of hair plucked from the body (roma) of any vanara has the capacity to wipe out the entire demon race. Each and every hair in the body of the vanara vibrates with the name of Rama. In just about 10 minutes I can create ample destruction in this court. But yet, abiding by my dharma, I am leaving you alive. I seek that you should meet your end in the hands of my Lord".

Hanuman's greatness lies in this. Even while possessing the ability to kill Ravana, he did not do so. He believed that he was just a servant and in that sense, he did not seek the fame associated with it. He whole heartedly believed that this fame should go to his master. He wanted to do all that it takes for his master to be rewarded with this glory. He believed that this glory and fame was rightfully Rama's.

In the war that took place afterwards, Rama and Lakshmana killed all the demons and obtained great fame.

Om Namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 26 - Dec 14th

The following is the prayer offered by Sarabha in the Vanara Gita-

***Bhoomasya vasare puja Kartavya hanumatprabhoh  
Bhave tsa suchihi auu sreehi Putra mitra kalatravaan.***

Meaning-

Hanuman should be worshipped on Tuesdays. He who does so, will be rewarded with purity and cleanliness (suchi), longevity (ayu), prosperity, good children, good friends and a good wife (spouse).

Hanuman is worshipped on Saturdays too. While that is also an accepted practice, worship on Tuesdays assumes a very great significance (value). Tuesday is his favorite day.

Lord Sun (Surya) should be worshipped on Sundays, Lord Shiva on Mondays, Hanuman on Tuesdays, Ganapati and Maha Vishnu should be worshipped on Wednesdays, Lord Dakshinamurty as well as the Sadguru should be worshipped on Thursdays and the Supreme Mother (Devi) on Fridays. On Saturday, Lord Shani (Shaneswar) should be worshipped. To get relief from Shani peeda (problems caused by the Planet Saturn), prayers should also be offered to Hanuman on Saturdays. This is a tradition that is coming down the ages.

Bhoomavara stands for Tuesday (mangalavar). Tuesdays are often considered inauspicious (amangala) for beginning any new task. Worship of God renders the inauspicious as auspicious. Hanuman is an auspicious God. His form, his story as well as his nama japa (repetition of his name) renders everything auspicious (mangala kara).

Just as bathing cleanses the body of its dirt, reciting the names of God washes away all the inauspiciousness that envelops us. Many people do not attempt even these little prayers. Just take a bath and with a pure heart, light an incense stick (agarbatti) near the God's photo. Say the hymns (shlokas) that you know. Instead of shlokas, you can also say the Hanuman mantra- 'Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha' for

108 times. Thereafter get ready and leave for work as usual. I assure you that auspiciousness (mangala) will pervade (spread) that place. The small tensions that are there in your life will slowly untangle. All your family members will be healthy, happy and peaceful. To acquire health and peace, it is essential that the family deity (Kula daiva) should be thought upon and worshipped. Can't you even do this little service to God? Can you not sit in japa for even 10 minutes?

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 27 – Dec 15th

Hanuman is the form of auspiciousness (mangala). We have discussed that recollecting his name (nama), form (roopa) or glory (charitra, story), especially on Tuesdays and Saturdays, bestow auspiciousness. Not just that, visiting his temple or even discussing about his temple brings about auspiciousness. Even if you just say- 'In our ashram, a huge temple is being built for Hanuman' it is enough to shower auspiciousness (mangalam) in your house. There is no need to undertake any other seva. If you have the capacity to participate in any other services (seva) to Lord Hanuman, do so. It is your wish. No one will force you to participate. Hanuman's greatness is such that, in reality, we should try hard and do our best in offering services to Him. We should develop (inculcate) such good habits. We should inculcate the habit of being truthful at all times.

To summarize, just as bathing cleanses the body, reciting the names of God (nama smaran, japa) renders everything auspicious. There are people who claim that they have offered one namaskar (obeisance) to their parents and that is adequate enough. Yes, it is true that parents are deities. But is offering one namaskar to them really sufficient? The responsibility of your liberation (janma raahitya) lies only in your hands. You need to increase your positive balance. Hence it is mandatory to recite the names of the Lord (nama japa) for your personal benefit. If you do not have any other expectation, even then, recite the names of the Lord for some time to achieve stability of mind. Towards achieving stability of mind, this recitation (nama japa) plays a very important role. Therefore, in the above shloka (hymn) Vanara warrior Sharabha declares that it is essential to perform worship (puja) to Hanuman on Tuesdays.

Tulsidas, in his Hanuman Chalisa states-

***'pavana tanaya sankata harana mangala Maruti roopa'***

It means that the auspicious form (mangala roopa) of Hanuman (Maruti) drives away all types of inauspiciousness (amangala). 'Mental peace' is the greatest mangalam (auspiciousness) that can ever be attained in this world! Live happily, live peacefully. Laugh happily. Enjoy the company of your family members. What ultimately counts is the 'peace' that is had in life. Puja (worship) blesses the person with mental purity

and peace. Puja is a must. It brings about discipline. BP and other diseases will simply vanish. Longevity increases. Where the God given longevity is utilized properly, then it results in prosperity (sampada). After all, every person earns with the sole objective of leading a happy family life, isn't it?

It is Hanuman who blesses a person with good children. Also Hanuman ensures that you get good friends in life. A Guru is a person's best friend. After having secured Guru as a friend, one should not carelessly let go of that friendship. Problems as large as mountains may land on the head, enormous tensions may rule, mind may undergo severe vacillations, yet the friendship with Guru should not be broken under any circumstances. Be very careful in your relationship with your Guru. Once you lose it, it can never ever be regained. Guru is a true friend who comes to our aid in times of difficulties. He will also show the way out of difficulties to those who are deeply stuck in them.

Such a Guru can be obtained only with God's grace (daiva anugraha). Some good deeds performed in earlier births have resulted in your ability to secure a good Guru in this birth. Hold on tightly to Him. Do not let go of this opportunity. Those who do not have a spiritual Guru should pray to Hanuman so as to be blessed with a Guru. Pray sincerely to Hanuman. Do not say -'Oh I have secured Hanuman himself, why do I need a Guru?' To understand about Hanuman in-depth, we need to be blessed with a good Guru. Without a Guru, it is impossible to obtain any form of good knowledge. It becomes impossible to understand Hanuman without the aid of a Guru.

Those lucky persons, who have been blessed with the presence of a Guru in their lives, should pray to Hanuman seeking the ability to understand the essence of the Guru (Guru tattva). Those who have procured a Guru in this lifetime are really very lucky people.

Hanuman blesses the person who worships Him, with good spouse and with good children too. Ideal couples are those in which both the husband and wife assist each other in undertaking dharmic activities (duties as per the stipulated rules of righteousness). Sarabha states that Hanuman blesses the person with such an ideal partner.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 28 – Dec 16th

The next hymn in Vanara Gita is composed by the Vanara by name Gavaya and is as follows -

***Aamishee kruta maartaandam Goshpadeekruta saagaram  
Truni kruta dasagreevam Anjaneyam namaamyaham.***

Meaning- I bow to that Lord Anjaneya, who tried to gulp down the Sun (surya gola) as if it were a small edible snack; who crossed the vast ocean as easily and playfully as if it were a goshpadi, and, in whose opinion the 10-headed demon Ravana was as insignificant as a blade of grass.

Goshpadi (aavu gitta) is the imprint of the cow's hoof mark (foot mark) found in the soil. At the maximum, an ounce or two of rain water can collect within this. Hanuman crossed the vast ocean as if he was crossing this goshpadi.

Gavaya was a vanara king of another land, who joined hands with Rama and Sugriva in their war against Ravana. Through this strange hymn he brings out the glory of Hanuman.

This is a very popular hymn recited by many. Those who have not heard of it earlier should also learn and recite it regularly. This hymn summarizes the entire story of Hanuman and the entire story contained in Sundara Kanda (of Ramayana).

Tulsidas in his Hanuman Chalisa states-

**Yuga sahasra yojana para bhanu, leelyo taahi madhura phala jaanoo**

It means-'O Lord, You considered the Sun (bhanu), which was billions of miles away, as a fruit and tried to reach it. This act led to your being blessed with the name Hanuman'. Swamiji has translated this Hanuman Chalisa into Telugu with the meaning intact and quite a few recite it regularly in Telugu.



There are two versions behind the story of Hanuman trying to catch the Sun. One story is that little Anjaneya (little Hanuman), saw the large glowing Sun and assuming it to be a fruit rushed to grasp it and in the process he was hit by Lord Indra's thunderbolt. The other story is that Anjaneya saw the small rising Sun and assuming it to be a fruit, put it in his mouth and this led him to be hit by Indra's thunderbolt.

It is immaterial whether he simply grasped it or put it in his mouth. The truth is that this action of his subsequently caused him to be hit by Lord Indra's (lord of heaven) thunderbolt (vajrayudha). Due to the impact of the blow, Anjaneya's jaws swelled up enormously. At that point of time He was bestowed with the name Hanuman. 'Hanu' means large jaws. The one who possesses large and enormous jaws is known as Hanuman. The other meaning behind the name 'Hanu' is knowledge (jnana). Hanuman thus means one who is proficient (master) in all forms of knowledge. Thus from both these angles, this name is aptly suited to Him.

If even to fly up to the Sun requires tremendous courage, trying to catch and eat the Sun requires unimaginable power and strength, does it not? We do not even possess the capacity to gaze directly at the Sun. Therefore, this act of Anjaneya, trying to gobble the Sun, led to his limitless fame. This incident of his childhood days had no witness.

Rama, who desired that his devotee's greatness should come to the limelight, created a suitable opportunity and ensured that Hanuman crosses the ocean. Through the accomplishment of this unimaginable task, Hanuman's greatness and glory became well known. The actions of Rama and Hanuman reflect their wonderful traits and attitude. They bring out the deep essence (tattva) hidden within them. Hanuman sought that his Lord Rama should kill Ravana and subsequently be credited with endless fame. Rama wanted his devotee Hanuman to cross the ocean and be blessed with eternal fame.

If Rama willed, could He not have crossed the ocean on his own? Could He not have used his magical powers to carry the entire army of Vanaras across the ocean? Here He used this opportunity to bring out to the world the greatness hidden within Hanuman.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## **Episode 29 – Dec 17th**

Hanuman crossed the vast ocean as easily as if it were a tiny puddle braving all the obstacles on the way. He crossed the entire ocean in merely four and half minutes.

Great poets always compare this samsara (the endless cycle/journey of births, deaths and re-births together with all the bondages and sufferings therein) to an ocean that needs to be crossed over. Hanuman helps and ensures that his devotees cross this ocean of samsara very easily!

The stature of Ravana was enough to create fear in the hearts of even the mightiest demons. Yet, in Hanuman's eyes, Ravana was no more than a small insignificant blade of grass. Hence he could boldly advise Ravana. May such a great Lord protect each and every one!

Moving on to the next hymn in this Vanara Gita, Vanara Prahasta states-

***Ullangya sindhoo ssalilam saleelam ya ssokavahnim janakaatmajaayaha  
Adaaya tenaiva dadaaha lankaam Namaami tam praanjali raanjaneyam.***

Meaning- I fold my hands in reverence to that extremely brave and courageous Lord Anjaneya, who very easily crossed the ocean; who took away the 'fire' called sorrow from Mother Sita (Janaki) and who, using this fire, burnt and destroyed Lanka completely.

This is a very powerful hymn, which is more commonly used as one of the dhyana shlokas (meditation verses) during recitation of Ramayana.

In this creation, there are many who strive to attain liberation (moksha) and also there are many who have been successful in their attempt. Among them, those who not only successfully cross over this ocean called samsara, but also aid others and help them to cross over this ocean (of samsara), are true Mahatmas (great souls, beings). They are Sadgurus. These are beings who are really of use to us.

When it is said that Hanuman crossed the ocean easily, it is no mere deed. It includes not merely his journey across the ocean, but also includes all the feats accomplished in Lanka such as- having the darshan of Mother Sita, giving her great solace and driving away her grief, preaching and boldly giving advise to Ravana, destroying and burning the city of Lanka, giving the demons a taste of the power and strength of the entire Vanara race including that of himself and also displaying the might and strength of His Lord Rama. Thus the term 'crossing the ocean' includes all the above feats of Hanuman.

Hanuman is Sadguru. He lived selflessly. He proved through his actions that life is meant only for the service of another.

Let us all learn from Him not to live selfishly. Live only for benefit of others.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 30 – Dec 18th

Sadguru Hanuman has taught the world to live selflessly and solely for the benefit of others.

At the time when separation from Rama and being held in the captivity of demons was like a huge fire within which Mother Sita was burning (being tormented), Hanuman poured the nectar (amrita) called Rama Katha (story of Rama) and doused the fire. Sitting atop the tree, he sang the life story of Rama, which was like cool nectar to her who was drowned in unbearable grief. This incident highlights the presence of mind, the wise intellect, skill and talent of Hanuman. He handled this situation very deftly and skillfully. Within minutes the fire raging in Sita's heart was doused.

The visible fire (chita) burns down a corpse within minutes but worry (chinta) is a great fire that eats up a person when living. Chita-agni (fire) burns the body after death however the fire called chinta (worry) burns the mind of the person throughout his life. What a mountain of difference exists between the two!

Such worries (chinta) can be plucked out only by the doctor called Sadguru. He showers coolness upon his devotee and dispels all the inner sorrow. Here Hanuman, in accordance with the requirements of the situation, sang the story of Rama and doused Sita's grief.

With the intent that the person who caused this grief to his mother Sita should be taught a lesson, Hanuman destroyed the Ashoka Vana (garden) of Ravana. Not content with this, he decided to burn down the entire city of Lanka. He destroyed the entire army that was sent to capture him. He transferred the entire worry (chinta) that he had taken away from Mother Sita, to Ravana. Ravana was now burdened with the worry that Rama would arrive any minute and that he would be killed. From that minute, Ravana knew no peace. He was constantly worried. After achieving this great feat Hanuman peacefully left Lanka. With great humility He approached Rama and said 'drshta Sita' (I have seen Sita). With these two words, Rama's worries (chinta) simply vanished.

By crossing the ocean, Lord Hanuman, thus dispelled all the anxieties and worries from Sita, Rama as well as from the entire Vanara army, and transferred them to Ravana. Obeisance to such a great Lord Hanuman!

The next hymn is composed by Nala, the great Vanara-

***Namaa myaham vayuja paadapankajam  
Karomi ta dvaayuja poojanam sadaa  
Vadaami vaataatmaja naama mangalam  
Smaraami vayoorbhava keertnam subham***

Meaning- At every moment I bow down at the lotus feet of the son of the wind (Vayu putra Hanuman), I perform worship to this son of wind every minute; eternally I utter the divine and pure name of this Lord Maruti and at all times I reflect about the glories of this great Lord.

The vanara army consisted of crores of vanaras. How to take so many warriors across the ocean to Lanka? This problem was weighing heavily on Rama's mind. At that time, the Lord of the Ocean, Lord Varuna appeared and suggested that the abilities of Vanara Nala be utilized to construct a bridge across the ocean. The verse 'Nalam setu makaarayata' appears in Valmiki Ramayana, which means, Rama utilized the services of Nala to build the bridge across the ocean to Lanka. Nala played the most critical role in the construction of the bridge.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 31 – Dec 19th

Nala, the great vanara who played the most significant role in the construction of the bridge, states that eternally he pays obeisance (namaskara) at the lotus feet of Lord Hanuman.

Just as a root supports the tree, and just as a foundation supports the building, the feet (of the Lord) are the foundation for the spiritual journey.

'I bow at the feet of Paramatma, which are the foundational support for my spiritual pursuits (sadhana)' is the essence behind this prayer. Here the term 'feet' refer to the Guru's feet. Hanuman is being worshipped in his position as a Guru.

The Guru's feet are always compared to a lotus. A lotus blooms in a pond amidst all the filth and muck, yet it does not allow any of the dirt from the pond to attach to it. The lotus leaf, the stem, as well as the lotus flower shake away every drop of water falling on them, even though the plant grows only in water. For this reason, lotus is considered to be very auspicious flower.

In a similar manner, great Mahatmas survive in this illusory world, which is a vast murky pond full of impurities, without allowing even a trace of impurity to touch them. The great mahatmas emerge, live and perform expansive and marvelous deeds, yet they are untouched by this impurity. Hence, their lotus feet are worshipped.

Not a trace of impurity can touch the lotus feet of Lord Hanuman, who travelled far and wide to great unseen places, who is omnipresent and who showed his universal form (vishwaroopa). Nala offers obeisance (namaskar) at such holy feet.

We have earlier discussed about the fruits (results) that are obtained by worshipping Hanuman in various ways such as- worshipping his form, reciting his name, offering pradakshina (circumambulation) around his temple, being seated within his temple while intently gazing at him, offering various decorations (alankara) and offering vadamala to him (vada is a doughnut shaped fried snack prepared from black lentils popularly offered to Lord Hanuman).

Reciting the name of this Lord is exceptionally auspicious. That is why, in this year, Swamiji has given a universal mantra- Om Namo Hanumate Namaha. The recitation of this mantra will continue for the next year too. Reciting this mantra should turn into a well-drilled habit. As of now, crores of this mantra have been recited by people and tremendous results have been found. Everyone is urged to practise the recitation of this mantra and reap its benefits.

To sing the 'glory of Hanuman' (keerti) means, to recollect again and again, the great accomplishments of Hanuman. With this, our glory also will increase. As the recitation of his name (nama japa) increases, as the meditation increases, as the worship increases, our well-being (shubha) increases.

The speciality of this hymn is that the word 'vayu' (wind, air) appears in each of the 4 lines. This is to stress on the significance of Pranayama in our life. This word 'vayu' also highlights the importance of meditation (dhyana) and sadhana (spiritual pursuits) in addition to pranayama. Recollecting Hanuman's name again and again (smaran) blesses the person with yoga. It increases the inclination towards spirituality within the person. This mantra -'Om Namo Hanumate Namaha' is applicable to people of all languages.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 32 – Dec 20th

Vanara Dharmaka states-

***Saptashastir hataan koti  
Vaanaraanam tarasvinaam  
Ya sanjeevana yaamaasa  
Tham vande maarutaatmajam.***

Meaning- I bow down in reverence to that great Vanara hero, Hanuman, who brought the Sanjeevani herb and brought back to life 67 crore strong Vanaras who were lying dead in the battlefield.

Through their hymns, each great vanara warrior showers limitless praise upon Hanuman. It can be said that the entire life story of Hanuman is being brought out through these compositions.

67 crore vanaras could be revived just by the smell of the herb Sanjivani! The next logical question would be-'why couldn't the smell of this herb bring back to life the dead demons as well?' It is true that the demons could not be revived. This was because Ravana had given stringent instructions that the body of any demon (rakshasa) who had died on the battlefield should be disposed off into the ocean instantly. The number of dead demons should not be counted. He did not want Rama to know how many demons had died in battle. The bodies that were being thrown into the ocean instantly became the food for the animals inhabiting the ocean. How then could they be revived?

During the war, Indrajit, the son of Ravana, began to fearfully strike Sugriva's army with fierce weapons. He was invincible in war. Using the powerful weapon Brahmastra, he wiped out crores of vanaras. Rama who was watching all this, called Lakshmana and said-'Indrajit is waging a ferocious war. Due to the boon received from Brahma, he has made himself invisible and is striking our army with his Brahmastra. We cannot attack him when he is invisible. Therefore, let us stand here in the battlefield in a composed manner and allow the weapons to pierce us. For the time being, give up your anger as well as your desire to fight. Let us pretend to have fallen in a swoon due to the effect of the Brahmastra. Seeing us unconscious, Indrajit



will be under the illusion that he is victorious. He will make himself visible and will leave the battlefield". This was Rama's strategy.

Our ancient Puranas contain innumerable stories wherein Brahma gives away very powerful boons to the demons. It also appears to us that such boons eventually land Brahma in trouble. However, it should be noted that all these happen as per God's will. The events are pre-destined. Brahma has to give away these seemingly invincible boons to the demons, the Lord has to incarnate as a result of these boons and through that incarnation the Lord has to destroy these demons. All these three steps are inter-twined. Indrajit likewise had the boon from Brahma due to which he could become invisible. Using this boon, he began to strike the helpless vanaras from various directions.

Rama and Lakshmana fell into a swoon. Whether this was the effect of the Brahmastra or whether they did this due to their will, has been retained as a secret in Ramayana. This is also a debated topic. If it is said that Rama and Lakshmana fell into a swoon due to the effect of the Brahmastra, then people question- how could the brothers, who were incarnation of the supreme, be affected by a Brahmastra? If it is argued that they did not allow the Brahmastra to affect them, then the question that props up is – how can the all-powerful Brahmastra be rendered ineffective? Now, from the conversation between the two brothers we clearly understand that they pretended to be in a swoon. Indrajit's response was exactly as predicted by Rama, and in great elation Indrajit returned back home.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

### **Episode 33 – Dec 21st**

Due to the effect of the Brahmastra, other prominent vanara warriors such as Angada, Jambavanta, Neela and Sugriva were rendered motionless even though they were alive. They were absolutely distressed upon seeing the plight of Rama and Lakshmana. In their uncontrollable grief, they also fell into a swoon. The weapon had only rendered them immobile; their grief however caused them to periodically lose their consciousness.

Addressing these warriors Vibhishana (brother of Ravana) said- 'Great heroes. Do not panic. Do not grieve that Rama and Lakshmana have fallen unconscious. To show their respect to Lord Brahma (Brahma-astra means weapon created by Brahma), they have willingly fallen unconscious'.

On that pitch dark night, Hanuman and Vibhishana carried fire torches (kagada) in their hand and went about the entire battlefield searching for the vanara warriors. They spent the whole night carrying the warriors back to the camp, consoling and reassuring them.

At one spot, Vibhishana located the great hero Jambavanta. Even in that immobile state wherein he could barely speak, Jambavanta asked Vibhishana, - "Is Hanuman alive?" This brings out Jambavanta's faith in Hanuman, which is - 'For us to win the war, it is sufficient if just Hanuman remains alive. Singlehandedly he will bring us victory.' He did not want any other reassurance or consolation from Vibhishana. He continued- 'Do not worry about me. Leave me here itself. Please tell me if Hanuman is alive'.

Expressing his astonishment, Vibhishana asked, "Sir, is it not strange that you enquire about Hanuman instead of enquiring about the welfare of Rama and Lakshmana?" To this Jambavanta said, "Vibhishana, if Hanuman is alive, not only will we all remain alive but also all the dead soldiers will be brought back to life. You will see this happening shortly. On the other hand, if just Hanuman is absent, the combined force of all the other vanara warriors will be of no use. We will fare miserably. Even collectively we cannot win the war."

Jambavanta then called Hanuman and asked him to fetch a herb from the Himalayan range so that Rama and Lakshmana could be revived. During the war, Hanuman fetched the mountain twice, of which this was the first. Hanuman flew up to the Himalayas and returned back with the entire mountain in hand. The herb Sanjivani, which was plucked from this mountain, restored back to life 67 crores of dead warriors, in addition to bringing Rama and Lakshmana back to consciousness.

Flying up to this remote part of the Himalayan range is itself a complex task, especially if one has to travel both up and down on the same night. Added to this, Hanuman had to brave the many obstacles that came on his path during his onward journey. Further, Hanuman could not even locate the herb on the mountain. At last, he decided to carry the entire mountain itself to the battlefield. He carried the entire mountain just on one palm!

Even the photo of Hanuman carrying the mountain on his palm amazes us. It looks so fearful. We doubt whether it is a fact or a fiction. Wasn't this an unimaginable achievement? It was immaterial whether Rama and Lakshmana willingly fell unconscious or not. However once they were completely unconscious, they needed to be revived.

May Lord Hanuman who is thus being praised by Dharmaka and Jambavanta, protect us!

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 34 – Dec 22nd

The next hymn is composed by Vanara Gaja-

***Tanov valapasaha pitaa paarvateesaha  
Sphurat baahudandav mukhe vajradamstra  
Satee ca anjana yasya mataa thatoonyam  
Na jaane na jaane na jaane na jaane.***

Meaning- This mighty Lord retains in his body, a tail, that is as powerful as a noose (pasha), has Lord Shiva himself as his father, possesses mighty arms (baahu) that glow with limitless radiance, has teeth that are as razor-sharp as a thunderbolt (vajrayudha) and has Anjana devi as his mother. To me, no one apart from this Lord exists.

Through this hymn, the Vanara by name Gaja emphatically re-iterates that he does not know anyone apart from Hanuman. Towards this, the phrase 'na jaane' is repeated four times. 'Everywhere and in everyone I can see only Hanuman. Hanuman has enveloped the entire surroundings. I see no one but him everywhere' is the essence behind this hymn.

The tail assumes a unique significance in Hanuman's form. It is said that just sighting and touching the tail in the idol of Hanuman is enough to drive away all sorts of sorrows. It frees the being from all forms of bondages. Such bondages are the noose within which the being is trapped. Hanuman shreds these bondages amongst his devotees.

At the same time, Hanuman holds within his noose-like tail, the wicked and evil minded persons who are his enemies. This tail also traps the enemies of those devotees of his, who ardently worship his tail. The tail tightens itself around such wicked beings and swallows them in totality. For this reason, Gaja compares Hanuman's tail to the noose held by Yama (Lord of death). There is no escape from this noose-like tail of Hanuman. It can be said that it wields even more power than the Brahmastra.

It was this tail that drove away Sita's grief in entirety. Hanuman did not do anything; it was his tail that showed its might and achieved complete success. When Hanuman, in the form of a little monkey, appeared in the Ashoka Vana where Sita was held captive, Mother Sita at first sighted the tail that was hanging down from the branches of the tree. From then on, the tail assumed full responsibility of driving away her grief. The moment this tail was torched with fire, it burnt down the entire city of Lanka. Mother Sita fervently prayed to the Lord of Fire (Agni Deva) - 'O Lord, please protect my son Hanuman. After all, He is also your grandson. Please ensure his safety'. She prayed in many such ways. This tail ensured that every demon (rakshasa) in Lanka was grieving. It transferred the sorrow of the Divine Mother Sita to these demons. The greatness of this tail is such that many ardent worshippers (upasakas) of Hanuman worship only his tail.

Hanuman killed another form of Ravana known as Shata kanta Ravana (100 faced Ravana). In this war with Shata kanta Ravana, Hanuman stood on His tail. The tail grew in size and from the earth, it reached the skies. It enveloped the entire creation (Brahmanda). Using this tail as a ladder, all the vanaras climbed up.

Anjaneya is born out of an aspect of Lord Shiva and hence is known as 'Shivaamsha sambhoota'. He is also addressed as son of Lord Shiva. By addressing him in this manner, the traits of Shiva that exist within him are being highlighted. Bound by the order of Lord Shiva, the Lord of Wind (Vayu deva) handed over the fruit containing the luster (radiance, tejas) of Shiva to Anjana Devi, who was seated in intense penance (tapas). She would daily consume one such fruit. Thus Anjaneya, with the complete radiance of Lord Shiva was born to her. Anjaneya was ayonija (not born in the ordinary course through the womb of the mother).

Obeisance to that holy Lord who possesses such a powerful tail.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## **Episode 35 – Dec 23rd**

Hanuman's arms are tremendously powerful. Tulsidas, in his Hanuman chalisa, praises the Lord's powerful arms through the verse-

### ***Mahaaveera vikrama bajarangi***

It is impossible to describe the strength that exists within those arms. During the battle with the other Ravana, he lifted the brothers Rama and Lakshmana on his mighty shoulders all the way from earth to high up in the skies (akasha)! Just this incident gives us an insight into the power stored within those arms!

Countless demons were crushed under Hanuman's tail. With his arms he smashed limitless demons against trees. Many more were hurled against mountains and killed, and an infinite number were thrown into the ocean and crushed under his feet. In this manner, in his universal form (vishwaroopa), he destroyed hordes of demons.

Devotees of Hanuman find His face appealing and peaceful. To the wicked, however, his sharp canine teeth resemble thunderbolts (diamond weapon that sharply cuts through) thereby causing great fear. During the war, the sight of his razor sharp teeth frightened en masse many demons and caused them to faint. Such a mass fainting took place in the vanara army only when the demons used the powerful weapon Brahmastra.

The face that caused the demons to simply collapse out of fright appeared absolutely calm and peaceful to the vanaras. Those who commit sins and those who do not adhere to dharma (rules of righteous living) find it impossible to look into his face.

Many persons avoid looking into the face of the Sadguru. They shy away from it. The reason being they have sinned. Their sin deters them from looking into the Guru's face or even from having the darshan of his feet. There is no expiation for such sins. Such persons find his face very fearsome.

Hanuman's mother Anjana Devi, was a great ascetic (tapasvini) and a great saint (maha yogini). Forced by circumstances, Maharishi Goutama cursed his sons Vali and

Sugriva to turn into monkeys. Vali in turn cursed his elder sister Anjana to turn into a monkey. Without any grievance, Anjana adopted quickly to the new life as a monkey. She led a very pious (sattvik) life. Adhering to Sage Narada's advice, her father Maharishi Gowtama gave her away in adoption to the Vanara king Kunjara. Kunjara in turn gave her away in marriage to the Vanara by name Kesari.

Anjana was initially a Gandharva (celestial being) maiden by the name Sukanya. In her next birth she was born as a woman by name Sadhvi. In this birth she performed intense penance. Sadhvi was re-born as Anjana. To understand the janma rahasya (secrets behind the birth) it is essential to dig back into the past lives. When the present experience is seen in isolation, it appears puzzling, funny or queer. It creates many doubts. However, it is from such doubts that profound messages appear. Ultimately, they clarify our doubts. For this reason, in the character of every deity, the past births and stories are detailed.

Here, through the knowledge of the past births of Anjana Devi, we understand the extent of penance that she performed. In this birth, even after having been transformed into a vanara, Anjana performed intense penance and procured the grace of Lord Shiva. With steadfast determination she continued her penance. She consumed the fruit containing the luster of Shiva and thus with the blessings of the Lord of Wind (vayu), she gave birth to Lord Hanuman. No sooner was He born, than He, considering the Sun as a fruit, flew up to catch it. All these incidents are intertwined. Any amount of explanations that are given for these incidents seem insufficient.

Vanara Gaja offers his prayers to Anjana Devi who was such an elevated and profound being.

Om Namō Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 36 – Dec 24th

Ruksharajasa has composed the next hymn of the Vanara gita-

***Buddhirbalam yasho dhairyam nirbhayatva marogataa  
Ajaadyam vaakpatutavancha Hanumat smaranaat bhavet.***

Meaning- By merely remembering Hanuman, the person is blessed with good intellect and wisdom (buddhi), strength (balam), fame (yashas, keerti), courage & daring (dhairyam), fearlessness (nirbhayatva), good health (arogya), agility and alertness in the intellect (ajaadyam) and excellent oratory skills (vak patutvam). These are the 8 essential traits of life.

People these days talk continuously and irrelevantly, argue uselessly, have a suspicious attitude about every aspect of life to such an extent that the husband and wife do not trust each other, place no trust in the children, do not raise them properly, get agitated and disturbed for every trivial issue, laugh one minute and quarrel in the next. Due to all these traits displayed by people there is no peace and happiness within a family. Added to this, mental and physical weaknesses, ill health and habit of telling lies surround the family members paving the way to total destruction of family ties. This has become all the more prevalent in these present times.

Hence, remembering Hanuman is the need of the hour. By merely thinking about Hanuman, He will shower upon you all these good traits and qualities as mentioned in the hymn.

This is the most popular hymn (shloka) among all hymns about Hanuman. The Vanara who composed this is Ruksharajasa. Reciting this hymn any number of times is a great penance. We should always remain indebted to Ruksharajasa, who blessed us with this all- powerful hymn. The eight traits mentioned in the hymn are the eight super-natural accomplishments (ashta siddhi).

Ruksharajasa was the vanara emperor who raised the brothers Vali and Sugriva. It can be said that he was their father. This great personality was lucky to be associated with Hanuman right from His infancy. He noticed the unique capabilities in



the little infant Hanuman and realized that this extra-ordinary child possessed the eight super-natural traits (ashta siddhi). It is essential to remember that within these super natural traits exhibited by Hanuman, there are many inherent hidden messages.

After the death of Ruksharajasa, Vali became the king of the Vanaras. Having understood the intellectual capacities, wisdom and cleverness of Hanuman, the brothers Vali and Sugriva appointed him as their minister. Later on, when problems cropped up between the brothers and Hanuman had to choose between them, He chose to support Sugriva, who was righteous (dharmic). At that critical juncture, he did not sway towards the unrighteous side (adharmic) even though it wielded extreme power. To Hanuman, Vali's seniority, might and power were valueless when compared to righteousness (dharma). Hence He discarded Vali instantly. With his fine wisdom and maturity (buddhi), He guided the helpless Sugriva at every stage. Hanuman declared that He will stay wherever truth and righteousness prevail. Through His might and intellect He protected dharma. It is said that, in the end, when Vali lay dying, he sang hymns (stotram) on Hanuman. He complimented Sugriva on having such an able and wise minister.

All of us are aware of the various obstacles faced by Hanuman when he was flying across the ocean. Using his sharp intellect and wisdom (buddhi) he successfully sailed through them. In tackling these obstacles on the path, he adopted varied techniques – he killed the demons, he expanded his size enormously when it was required and thereafter shrunk himself into an almost invisible state, he gave the respect that was due to some divine beings on the path and he amazed some others with his skills. Sundara Kanda of the Ramayana details all these feats and skills of Hanuman.

It is not possible to even remotely describe the extraordinary strength and the power (bala) contained within His body. Likewise, even his fame (glory, yashas) is limitless. At times we have praised his tail, at other times we have glorified the strength contained in his arms and in certain other situations, we have adored his face. In some other situations, we have glorified His compassionate eyes. We have profusely praised His heart, that has the images of Rama and Sita sealed within. Thus in so many varied ways, Hanuman's glory is being brought out.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 37 – Dec 25th

From the very moment when Hanuman undertook to execute his master, Lord Rama's task, His fame began to spread to all the worlds. Even before this, Hanuman was famous. But now, after undertaking Rama's task, his fame enveloped all the planes of existence.

His fame enveloped even the Deva loka (plane of Gods)! It evoked discussions even among the Gods. His marvelous deeds and his fame brought him the support as well as the protection from all the Gods. The fact that a vanara was performing so many marvelous deeds, that too in the form of a service towards his master, stirred the Gods to move and come to his aid. All the 333 crore Devatas (Gods) helped Hanuman in his mission that was undertaken in service of Lord Rama. It can be said that to ensure success in execution of Rama's task, each and every God (Devata) transferred his energy and strength (balam) to one strand of hair (roma) in Hanuman's body!

Destruction of the massive Ashoka Vana (Ravana's private garden) in Lanka, killing singlehandedly the ferocious and terrible demon Aksha (son of Ravana), standing at the centre-most major crossroad in Lanka and singing loudly the glories of Lord Rama, boldly sitting in Ravana's court and advising him are instances that prove the courage (dhairya) of Hanuman.

Standing boldly amidst crores of demons, in the centre of the city of Lanka, Hanuman had the guts to loudly shout victory slogans glorifying Lord Rama. What better example than this is needed to display his courage? Not just Ravana, but also his sons and his entire set of ministers, were terrible demons who possessed limitless magical powers. Remember that there are two kinds of supernatural powers- good and evil. The demons of Lanka possessed unlimited evil supernatural powers, not to forget that they possessed tremendous physical strength as well. Hanuman was a one-man army. Yet, the courage he displayed by loudly and boldly shouting victory slogans about Lord Rama, sitting in the centre of Ravana's court and preaching Ravana are praiseworthy. His commanding language and the manner in which he opposed Ravana is amazing. How much ever it is spoken of, it will never suffice.

The manner in which he ultimately brought peace to Mother Sita, and the way in which he set fire to the city of Lanka are praiseworthy. When his tail was torched, he fearlessly flew across the city setting all the buildings on fire. Remember that these magnificent buildings in Lanka were magical and illusory. Even such buildings melted like wax. For containing the power to burn down the entire city, his tail is glorified.

Every part of his body, be it his eyes, nose, heart, tail, ears, or even the tip of the tail is as strong as a diamond. He has a Vajrakaya i.e. body that is as strong and hard as a diamond. Even many Vajrayudhas (diamond weapons) collectively could not have injured, even minutely, any part of his body. As we all know, Vajrayudha is the weapon held by Lord Indra (Lord of Heaven). Akin to the Brahmastra (weapon of Brahma), this powerful weapon when struck cannot miss its mark. If Hanuman's body itself is compared to this diamond weapon Vajrayudha, then how powerful would he be? He is a moving thunderbolt, a flying thunderbolt, a thunderbolt whose strike will never miss its mark. He is a thunderbolt who crushes the demons and zealously protects his ardent devotees.

His body glows with infinite divine radiance. His radiance dazzles like that of a diamond (vajra kanti). Each and every hair on his body is as large as the city of Ayodhya and possesses infinite power. On his vast body there are crores of such hair. Each hair eternally vibrates with the name of Rama- 'Rama, Rama, Ram, Rama...'. When Hanuman says 'Rama' once, each and every hair vibrates with the name 'Rama'. Thus his whole body vibrates with the divine name 'Rama'. Just listening to this makes every hair on our body stand up.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 38 Dec – 26th

The weight of Hanuman's vajrakaya (strong body that is as hard and powerful as a diamond), caused the enormous Mountain Mahendra to be reduced into tiny pieces! When Hanuman was flying to Lanka, Mountain Mainaka rose up from under the seas. It is impossible to describe the strength contained within this massive and mighty Mountain Mainaka. Even such a mountain shuddered fearfully when Hanuman hit it with His chest. It is said that Mainaka's head reeled and he fell down due to the effect of this blow.

Likewise, Hanuman hit Lankini Devi (deity who zealously guarded the impregnable gates of the city of Lanka) with his fist and caused her to fall down. Who do you think was Lankini? She was a Devata (Goddess); a yaksha (a type of celestial being). It can be said that she was a cursed magician (mayavi) who appeared as a Devata yaksha. One blow from Hanuman's fist was enough for this being to collapse. It is another matter, however, that with this blow, she was rid of her curse.

The strong and healthy body that Hanuman possesses is the outcome of never-ending practice of Pranayama and meditation (dhyana). Endlessly He meditates upon Lord Rama- 'Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama...'. That's all. There is no other thought and no other talk. Rama is included in each and every word spoken by Him. As devotees of Lord Hanuman, we too should put this at least a little bit into practice. Every word spoken should have reference to Lord Rama. Be it in mind or in speech, the eagerness to complete Lord Rama's task should exist within us.

Every minute and in every situation Hanuman sang only the glories of Lord Rama. Be it at the time of flying across the ocean, or when He met Mother Sita, or at the time of meeting Rama's devotee Vibhishana, when he was seated in Ravana's court, when carrying the Mountain Sanjivini, or even when Demon Indrajit shot the powerful weapon Brahmastra, Hanuman only sang the praises of Rama. All the demons that He came across when flying over the ocean were told the glories of Lord Rama. Was there even one minute when his thoughts were away from Lord Rama?

Hanuman has fixed the mantra 'Rama' into every breath of His. It is a noiseless repetition of the name. During inhalation the word 'Ra' is uttered mentally and during exhalation it is the word 'Ma'. Thus every breath automatically states

'Ra...ma...,Ra...ma., Ra ...ma....' Thus it goes on endlessly. We too should put this into practice. This can be achieved when the mind is trained/tuned towards this. When heard carefully, the mantra is audible within the breath.

Om Namō Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 39 Dec – 28th

Hanuman's eagerness and desire in completing the tasks allotted by his master is deeply ingrained in his blood. This deep-rooted enthusiasm, as well as His firm determination that only dharma (rules of righteous living) should eternally emerge victorious, have bestowed Him with an agile and alert intellect (ajadya). These two factors have ensured that His intellect (buddhi) does not turn inert or lazy. His intellect is eternally alert in the waking state (jaagrata avastha) as He does not know when He would be assigned the next task.

In every single instance and in every single task that concerned His master, irrespective of whether it was small or large, Hanuman displayed the same eagerness in its completion. This was His greatness. 'My master will be pleased if this task is complete. Therefore I should complete it. Let Him just mention the task to be done and I shall complete it that very instant'- was His line of thinking. With this attitude, He completed every single task allotted to him in no time and eagerly awaited the next. 'O Lord, what is the next task that I should complete? What should I do? How should I behave?' He would thus ask in great humility, as soon as the job was complete. He believed that whatever might happen, Lord Rama's tasks should be completed successfully.

We presume that searching for Mother Sita was the only major task that Hanuman had undertaken for his master. But what we do not know is that there were many other tasks, big and small, apart from this, which Hanuman completed for Lord Rama. The entire character of Hanuman in Ramayana reveals his attitude of service towards his master. His service towards his master (seva) is both limitless and indescribable.

In merely 5 minutes, I can never relate to you Hanuman's Guru seva in detail. How do you suppose that I can justify all His great accomplishments in just a day's time? Even if you ask me to speak for this entire day, it will still be grossly insufficient. Moreover, you should have the ability to listen for that long. Only when the student is ready, the master can teach.

The Guru is eternally ready to teach provided the student shows inclination towards listening and learning. Krishna taught each and every time Arjuna asked, irrespective

of the time, location and the situation. He never even once said, -'this is not the right time. I shall teach later.' Whenever the disciple faces a spiritual doubt, the Guru clarifies.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 40 – Dec 29th

Hanuman displayed great eloquence (ability, vak patutvam) in His speech when He met the brothers Rama and Lakshmana for the first time. Unlike Sugriva, He did not have any apprehensions about Rama and Lakshmana. Due to selfishness, Sugriva was worried that Rama and Lakshmana were magicians deputed to kill him and hence he feared them. Hanuman, on the other hand, was undoubtedly sure that it was His master who had arrived. Hanuman could figure out the true identity of the brothers from their appearance, way of walking, shadow, way of speech and so on.

Hanuman undoubtedly was an orator par excellence. When he addressed Rama and Lakshmana for the very first time, His words were grammatically sound (without any grammatical error), peaceful, pleasant, captivating, soft and warm. Not everyone possesses this art of speaking pleasantly. Hanuman offering solace to Mother Sita and His choice of words when the enemy Vibhishana sought shelter under Lord Rama are the other examples where He displayed this wisdom and eloquence in speech.

Before the war, Vibhishana, the younger brother of Demon Ravana, approached Rama and sought protection from Him. That the person who approached them was a demon by birth was obvious from the fact that the person had come flying in the air. Only demons have this ability to fly. We humans do not. From his speech it appeared that he was of gentle nature, but he possessed the body of a demon. He was explaining his entire background as well as the circumstances that led him to seek shelter under Lord Rama. He openly admitted that he is the brother of Demon Ravana. Yet, he sought shelter. How could one offer shelter to an enemy? This was the dilemma faced by Rama's camp.

Rama skillfully asked every member of his army present there for his opinion. Everyone unanimously declared that the enemy should not be trusted and should be shot then and there. Hanuman however was seated silently far away. Calling him near, Rama asked, "Hanuma, what is your opinion?" Hanuman was now in a fix. He could not approve of the decision of the elders in the group. But He could not openly go against his own elders and give a decision contrary to theirs. What would they think of him? At the same time, He could read the mind of his master in this aspect. He understood that Lord Rama wanted to offer shelter to Vibhishana. For this reason, in spite of having got the opinion of all the elders present there, Rama was still asking Hanuman for an opinion. Tactfully, assessing the situation, Hanuman said, "O



Lord, do you really have to ask beings like us for our opinion? Please do whatever you feel like in this aspect.”

Through these simple sentences, Hanuman conveyed emphatically a great message. The first was that his teammates were ordinary beings whose wasteful opinions did not really matter. Secondly, Rama was the king as well as God, and was superior to all of them. He had every right to take a unanimous decision in this regard without heeding to the wasteful advices of ordinary beings. Thirdly, whatever Rama decides is for the good and hence it is acceptable to all. Thus, Hanuman’s reply was acceptable to one and all.

Speech has to be in line with the situation on hand. To speak skillfully not wasting any words, keeping the situation in mind is a very great ability. For possessing this skill, Hanuman has been aptly praised as ‘Vaagvidaam varaha.’ He is an eminent pundit.

Tulsidas in his Hanuman Chalisa states-

***ashta siddhi nava nidhi ke daata***

This means that Lord Hanuman bestows these ashta siddhis (the eight accomplishments) upon us. Hanuman advises us to use these ashta siddhis bestowed, exclusively for the service of the Lord and in turn to secure the grace of Lord Rama, as has happened to Him.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## **Episode 41 Dec – 30th**

***Hanuman anjana sunuhu, vayuputro mahaabalaha  
Rameshtaha phalgunasakaha pingaakshoh amita vikramaha  
Udadidkramanischaiva Seetasokha vinaasanaha  
Lakshmana pranadaata cha dashagrivasya darpaha***

Spiritual aspirants have to face numerous tests in the process of their sadhana (spiritual pursuits). The life story of Hanuman (Hanuman Charitra) contains in it the answers to all of them. Further, with Hanuman's grace, the aspirant (sadhaka) enjoys a very smooth spiritual journey. If the sadhana (spiritual efforts) is undertaken together with the re-capitulation of Hanuman's life story, recollection of His form and thinking about Him, then He will ensure that all the hurdles on the spiritual path are simply blown away.

Securing Him amounts to securing everything in life. There is no need to bother about procuring any other siddhis (accomplishments). It is enough if He were to be just by our side and cast one glance at us.

Hanuman could earn so much blessedness (dhanyata) not through achievement of any special accomplishments (siddhis) but purely through sincere performance and completion of His Lord's tasks.

There is absolutely no blessing received in leading a selfish life. Selfish persons are limited to satiating their own needs and filling their stomach. Their thoughts, worries and cares are wholly centered towards achieving their personal goals. They remain like a frog in the well.

Like a tree or a river, he who lives only for others is truly fortunate (dhanya). A tree or a river- what wonderful examples have been selected here! Even the Mahatma (great being or saint who lives for others) has been excluded from this list. The tree gives away every part of it, be it a fruit, leaf, flower in the service of another, to such an extent that even after it sheds its life, its trunk is useful to others. Through its shade it provides a great resting place. Likewise the river supplies us the water for our sustenance. It supports our life.

Hanuman, who lives exclusively for the benefit of others, is truly blessed (dhanya). In Hanuman's opinion, Jatayu (the bird that gave up its life, trying to protect Sita from being kidnapped) was a very fortunate being. Sampati, the brother of Jatayu, however opined Hanuman to be a very fortunate being. Salutations to the Son of the Wind, who is very fortunate and who ensures that his devotees are bestowed with such blessedness- is the intent behind this hymn (shloka).

There is no end to describing the qualities of Hanuman. Rameshta is the fifth name in this shloka (hymn). Rameshta has two meanings. The first is 'he who is very fond of Rama'. Secondly, it means 'he, towards whom Rama has got extreme fondness'. Both are correct in this context. The first interpretation is true because Hanuman's world exclusively consists of Rama; His entire speech and thoughts are occupied by Rama nama (repetition of the name of Rama). At times it appears as if Hanuman does not know to speak anything apart from the topic of Rama.

The second interpretation is that Rama is very fond of Hanuman. Yes, to Rama, Hanuman is his life essence (maha prana). To emphasize this, Tulsidas in his Hanuman Chalisa has used the phrase-

***kaha bharat sama tum priya bhayi***

To Rama, both Hanuman and Bharata are brothers. In other words, Rama treats Hanuman at par with Bharata. Treating Hanuman at par with Bharata and addressing him as His brother both have a profound significance.

Merely recollecting and thinking about this outstanding hero Hanuman is adequate to drive away all the problems. It grants good health too. For this reason, Tulsidas in his Hanuman chalisa states-

***naasai rog harai sama pira, japat nirantara Hanumat veera.***

***Sankat se Hanuman chudaavai, man krama vachana dhyana jo laavai.***

Meaning- the ardent devotees of Hanuman are relieved from all the hurdles and problems of life and are bestowed with good health.

Hanuman is the future Brahma (creator). The story goes that Hanuman once went to the abode of Brahma (brahma loka) and fetched from there, a ring for Mother Sita. Presenting the ring to Her, He bowed in all humility. This is an extraordinary feat performed by Hanuman and has a very unique place in His life story. Also He emerged successful from a test that was imposed upon him. Returning from Brahma Loka means to overcome illusion in entirety.

Lord Rama, in immense happiness, addressed Hanuman and said- "Hanuma! You have secured the grace of Lord Brahma itself! You have returned from that abode called 'Brahma loka' which can neither be thought about, imagined nor described. You have overcome illusion (maya). My blessings are eternally with you. Many a times in the past, I had asked you to seek any boon. Being over and above the desires, you have never had anything to seek from me. You have favoured me in many ways. Not one or two, but in limitless varied ways you have always helped and served me. How many ever boons I were to shower upon you, they will fall grossly insufficient in regard to your service".

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 42 – Dec 31st

The Vanara by name Rundhra Greeva states-

***Hanumat sadrusam daivam naasti naasteeti bhutale  
Tham pujayanti satatam Bramha gowri mahesvaraha.***

Meaning- I emphatically state that on this earth there is no other God who is equal to Lord Hanuman. Even the great Gods such as Brahma, Gowri and Shiva eternally worship Lord Hanuman.

Hanuman chalisa states-

***aur Devata chitta na dharayi, Hanumat seyi sarva sukha karayi.***

Meaning- The other Gods need not be worshipped; it is adequate if only Hanuman is worshipped for it is only Hanuman who grants all joys and happiness.

Neither do the Gods nor do any of their divine incarnations remain eternally on this earth. Once the task for which they had incarnated is duly complete, the Gods return back to their abode. Even the greatest incarnations such as Rama and Krishna abided by this policy.

Only Hanuman lives eternally on earth. With Rama's permission, Hanuman lives forever on the Mountain Gandhamadana, in steadfast contemplation upon Rama. He is always present in those places where the glories of Rama are sung, where the name of Rama (Rama koti) is constantly written and wherever his mantra 'Om Namo hanumate namaha' is recited. This is the protection for this earth.

On this earth, we are living completely under His protection. It is said that Hanuman is the protector for this earth plane (kshetra palaka). For this reason, whenever the Gods descend to earth, they firmly believe that there is no God who is superior to Him and with these intense feelings, they too revere and worship Him.

We have discussed earlier that Hanuman will be the future Brahma. We had also discussed that Hanuman was born out of an aspect of Shiva. We yet wonder whether it is right on Hanuman's part to accept worship on behalf of Shiva? An important point that one should be noted here is that the deities (Gods) do not have the concepts of differentiation. On this human plane, we entertain feelings of I, mine, you and yours. The Gods on the other hand, follow the principle of oneness (Brahma bhavana). Due to this trait they are addressed as Gods.

From their perception therefore, Hanuman worshipping Brahma, or Brahma, Shiva and other deities worshipping Hanuman is one and the same. In other words whether Hanuman worships all other Gods or whether all other Gods worship Hanuman, it is all the same. The worship does not assume significance in this context. It is their innermost mental perception and emotion/attitude (bhavana) that are important. Where feelings of pure oneness exist, where is the place for the following questions such as- who conducted the abhishekam? To whom was the Abhishekam offered? Who took the Prasadam of that Abhishekam? Who offered the Camphor light? Who rang the bell? Who distributed the prasadam etc.?

It is these deep feelings and perceptions (bhavana) that Rindhra Greeva stresses in his hymn. Hanuman's philosophy in terms of His relationship with Lord Rama was-

***aatma buddhyaa tvame vaaham***

It means – O Rama, when seen from viewpoint of atma (inner most self) and buddhi (intellect), I am you and You are me. I am not able to see any forms of differences'.

When one worships Hanuman with total concentration and devotion, he/she will experience all the three states of Dvaita, Advaita and Visishta-advaita (Advaitam, Dvaitam and Visishta-advaitam are three aspects of Vedic Philosophy.)

-When we listen to His story, it appears to be dualistic (dvaita- feeling of separateness)

-When we intensely worship Him, all the feelings of dualism vanish away in totality, and Hanuman blesses us with complete feelings of non-dualism (advaita)

-His innermost perceptions (bhavana) are that of Vishista-advaita (conditional non-dualism).

How beautifully the concepts of advaita, dvaita and vishista-advaita are intertwined here!

Anyway, we should remember that in the end, He blesses us by bestowing the fruit called non-dualism (advaita) upon us!

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## **Episode 43 – Jan 1st**

The next hymn has been composed by Vanara Dadhimukha-

***Alodya vedasastrani Sarvaanyapi maharshibhihi  
Ida maykam suneernitam na daivam hanumatparam.***

Meaning- After an elaborate analysis of the entire Vedas and Shastras (scriptures), the Maharishis have come to one beautiful conclusion that – there is no God greater than Hanuman.

Hanuman's is a unique and extraordinary incarnation. The aspects Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva all exist within Him. For this reason, Hanuman is the form of the Trinity. This great Lord has acquired the complete essence (tattva, nature) of Parabrahma, Mahavishnu as well as Paramashiva. In His form of Trinity He is ensuring the welfare of the world (jagat kalyan).

As Parabrahma, He wards off major natural disasters and catastrophes, and thus protects life on earth. With His aspect of Maha Vishnu, He ensures that His devotees walk on the path of dharma and encourages them to involve in dharmic activities (activities that are in tune with the prescribed rules of righteousness living). As an aspect of Paramashiva, He rescues people from the clutches of the demons (rakshasa), yaksha, ghosts (pishaca) and brahmarakshasa (fierce demon spirits). These are His daily duties.

In the very ancient past, once Maharishi Narada prayed to Hanuman seeking the destruction the demon Trishularoma. This hymn of Sage Narada, clearly brings out the aspect of Trinity in Hanuman-

***Sootraatmane namastubhyam sookshma roopaaya Vishnave  
Shankaraayaadi devaaya yoginaam pataye namaha.***

At another point of time, when Lord Hanuman was engaged in a battle with Lord Yama (Lord of death), Yama's wife appealed and prayed to Hanuman. From her prayer too, the aspect of the Trinity within Him is clearly brought out-



***Namste brahma roopaaya swa roopaaya te namaha  
Namostu Vishnu roopaaya Surya rupaaya te namaha.***

From an in-depth analysis of all these hymns, it becomes explicitly clear that Hanuman is the embodiment of all the Gods. Hence, when Hanuman is worshipped, all the Gods are pleased. Such is His greatness.

After successfully completing his assignment of locating Mother Sita, Hanuman together with his vanara comrades reached Madhuvana, the private garden of King Sugriva. When the vanaras, in their merriment of having found Mother Sita, sought permission to enter this garden, Hanuman consented. None of the vanaras had ever sighted this garden until this point of time. It was impossible to enter this garden. This garden was a gift from Lord Brahma and for this reason no one could even step into it. This was Sugriva's special garden. Dadhimukha, the maternal uncle of Sugriva zealously guarded this garden. In Dadhimukha's opinion, Hanuman was no more than an ordinary vanara. Dadhimukha tried to prevent the vanaras from entering his garden and in the process was badly beaten up by them.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## **Episode 44 – Jan 2nd**

Dadhimukha ran to Sugriva complaining about the actions of the Vanaras and the damage that they had caused to the garden. Sugriva could not control his happiness upon learning of these developments. Addressing Dadhimukha, a joyful Sugriva said- “No one can enter this garden that has been gifted by Lord Brahma himself. If Hanuman has been able to gain entry into it, it is sure that He has successfully completed Rama’s mission”.

Thus, Hanuman’s actions were like an intimation of the good news that was to shortly arrive to them. It was now confirmed that Mother Sita had been located. The vast garden Madhuvana, consisted of thousands of bonsai plants and was secretly tucked away in a valley between two mountains. Bonsai plants existed even in that period of time. Hanuman was very well aware that this garden belonged to Lord Brahma and hence it should not be trespassed into. Yet, if He had entered the garden, it was obvious that in the merriment of having been successful, he had done so. Sugriva consoled Dadhimukha in many ways. He said – “Did you presume them to be ordinary Vanaras? If so, you are mistaken”.

After this incident Dadhimukha found out in detail all the accomplishments of Hanuman. He realized that Hanuman was a divine energy (Divya shakti) and from then on Dadhimukha developed feelings of devotion towards Hanuman. He turned out to be a great devotee of Hanuman. He felt great remorse that he had tried to stop Hanuman Himself from entering the garden. All the great saints (Maharishis) who were present there extolled the greatness of Hanuman. Dadhimukha realized the truth in the words of the great seers (Maharishis) that there is no God greater than Hanuman. With a view that this message should reach one and all, Dadhimukha composed this hymn.

Sudhamstra, the Vanara, glorifies Hanuman in the following hymn-

***Mangalam hanumanityam mangalam kapi pungava  
Mangalam ca njana suuno mangalam raghavapriya.***

Meaning- O Hanuman! May you be eternally auspicious. O hero of the vanaras, may you be eternally auspicious. O son of Ajanana, may auspiciousness always come to you. O darling of Rama, may you emerge auspicious at all times.

The mental impurities of those who ardently worship Hanuman are totally washed out and peace finally reigns in them. New enthusiasm sprouts within them. As Hanuman is none other than Karyasiddhi Hanuman, tasks taken up after offering Him due worship always turn out to be successful.

The mental tensions and sorrows of both Rama and Lakshmana simply vanished the very moment they spotted Hanuman, for the first time, on the banks of the River Pampa. They felt greatly reassured that their task would be successfully completed. All this could happen just by seeing the complete form of Hanuman! Lakshmana said to Rama, " Dear brother, our troubles and sorrows have all ended. We will emerge successful." Rama and Lakshmana experienced profound mental peace.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 45 – Jan 3rd

Sorrows cannot exist where Hanuman exists. This single factor ensured that Sugriva, who had completely placed his faith in Hanuman, could be eternally happy and peaceful even amidst hostile surroundings. Vali, the brother of Sugriva was a demon of indescribable might. Added to this, he was also an expert magician. Using magic, he could have in some way or the other killed Sugriva. If Sugriva could remain alive, even under such a dreadful situation, then it was only due to the presence of Hanuman by his side. Had Hanuman not been around, surely Sugriva would have met his end in the hands of his brother Vali. Having Hanuman by his side brought about all auspiciousness to Sugriva in life. It was Hanuman who brought about his friendship with Lord Rama. This in turn led to his becoming the king and enjoying the luxuries of kingship.

Being omniscient, Rama when He first saw Hanuman, understood that it was an auspicious turn in life. He realized that His life would now take a turn for the good. From that very moment, every event in the life of Rama turned out to be auspicious. Every day was a special day.

The team led by crown prince Angada was ordered to go in the southern direction in search of Mother Sita. Hanuman was also a member of this team. Rama had implicit faith that Hanuman would accomplish his task and would thus come back with the good news. In the presence of numerous mighty Vanara leaders, Rama especially called Hanuman and gave him a ring with the specific instructions that it should be handed over to Sita. There were many warriors who were senior to Hanuman in that congregation. Yet, if Rama chose Hanuman, what faith He would have had in Hanuman? Specifying that the ring be handed over to Sita, implies that Rama already knew the whereabouts of Sita.

Upon sighting the majestic and mighty ocean in front of them, Angada's team realized that they had hit upon a dead end and were totally dejected and were grieving. Their king Sugriva would kill them for their failure in completing the task allotted. Just dying at the hands of their king was not so worrisome. The fact that Sugriva would mercilessly torture and kill them was very dejecting. So they concluded that it was better to die by the ocean than going back home with the news of failure.

At this critical juncture, Hanuman, with the intention of re-assuring and motivating the team, proved his might by simply shaking his tail. Just this was greatly reassuring to the others. 'Why do you grieve when I am around? Just see the feats that I can achieve with my tail.' He said, and hit the ocean just once with his tail. The power of his tail was such that the ocean receded vastly for invisible lengths. The dried up bottom of the ocean was clearly visible to everyone present there. 'If Hanuman's tail can accomplish such a major task, then how wondrous would be the feats that Hanuman can accomplish?' Thinking thus, the Vanaras were greatly encouraged. They shed all their fears. Hanuman assured them that he would cross the mighty ocean in a jiffy. He could also carry them and fly, He said.

Anyway, events in life have to take place in the orderly manner. After this, several events took place. In the presence of all the vanaras, while listening to all their praises and victory slogans, Hanuman playfully crossed the ocean. Hanuman has been cursed to recollect His universal form (vishwaroopam) and grow enormously only when others praise Him. At all other times, He cannot remember it. As the vanaras were thus continuously praising and singing His glories, Hanuman began to grow enormously, showed them His complete universal form (vishwaroopam) and took off for Lanka. Here, it appears that, by singing His praises, the vanaras helped Him recollect his capacities in entirety. For every single praise sung, He began to grow by one foot.

Thus Hanuman not only brought cheer to the Vanaras but also to Rama, Sita and to the 330 crores Devatas as well. By handing over Rama's ring to Sita and Sita's jewel choodamani to Rama, He breathed life into both of them. He brought brightness & joy to the eyes of Rama and Lakshmana, who had been weeping for months.

Rama was the Supreme Lord's incarnation as a human being. In this form, He enacted the role of a human being in totality to such an extent that He wept profusely for months at stretch for Sita. All this is maya (illusion). Did He not know where exactly Sita was? But for having incarnated as a human being He acted like one. He did not think of himself as the Supreme Lord. Hanuman brought joy to Rama who was thus grieving.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## **Episode 46 – Jan 4th**

Lord Rama is the Purusha (supreme consciousness). Mother Sita is the Prakriti (nature). Hanuman is the Prana shakti (life or vital energy). Through Hanuman, both Rama and Sita were rendered courageous, fulfilled their dharmic duties and emerged totally victorious.

Lord Hanuman resides within all of us in the form of the life force (prana shakti). Jnana (knowledge) and Yoga remain with the person who recollects/remembers (smaran) Hanuman through the process of Dhyana Yoga. Such a person is also relieved from these sorrows of samsara (samsara is the unending cycle of births and deaths together with all its bondages).

***Anjaneya namastubhyam samsaaraarnava taarakah  
Praseeda jagataam naatha deva deva namostute***

The vanara by name Rushaba states-

***Karunaarasa poornaya Jagadananda hetave  
Kukshisthakila lokaaya Hanumat bramhane namaha.***

Meaning- I offer my obeisance to Lord Hanuman, who is abounding with the feelings of compassion (karuna rasa), who is the cause for the bliss (ananda) enjoyed by this entire universe (jagat), who retains all the planes of existence (lokas) in his stomach and who is none other than Brahma.

For this kalpa (period of 4.32 billion earth years) the 4 faced (chaturmukha) Brahma is the creator. Hanuman will take on this position as Brahma in the next Kalpa. Vanara Rushaba therefore offers his salutations to Hanumat Brahma.

Hanuman is full of compassion; His intellect (buddhi) and mind eternally overflow with feelings of compassion (karuna rasa). Hanuman cannot bear to see any of His devotees suffering with difficulties. He stays by the side of such devotees and takes all the pains to drive these troubles away from them.

The mind has been compared to a rock. Just as a rock gradually dissolves with the force of flowing water, the rock-like mind melts under the feelings/sentiments of compassion (karuna rasa). Water is compared to this karuna rasa. Our scriptures declare that total dissolution of mind (mano naasha) is itself liberation (Moksha).

Hanuman has been praised here as the 'cause' behind the bliss (Ananda, happiness) enjoyed by all the planes (worlds, lokas) of existence (Jagadaananda kaaraka). How is this possible?

Lord Rama, is in reality none other than Paramatma, and hence is eternally blissful. The traits of Paramatma are Sat (eternal, undying), Chit (supreme consciousness, knowledge) and Ananda (eternally blissful). All these various planes of existence (lokas, worlds) derive their bliss (Ananda) from His bliss. This bliss that Paramatma is showering upon the world is His grace (krupa).

By driving away the sorrows of this Paramatma Rama, Hanuman brought bliss to this Lord. He also brought bliss to the universal mother (Jaganmata) Sita. Thus, for showering bliss on that Supreme Paramatma who himself is eternally blissful, Lord Hanuman has been bestowed the title 'Jagadaananda Kaaraka' (the cause for the bliss enjoyed by the entire creation).

At one point of time, when the abode of serpents (naga loka) was filled with ashanti (lack of peace), the Serpent-Gods (Naga Devatas) invited Hanuman to their plane and through Him secured bliss. The mere arrival of Hanuman brought about happiness in the entire Brahma Loka (abode of Brahma). When Hanuman arrived in patala (a type of hell) for killing the Demon Mayi Ravana, some of the demons residing there, seeing Hanuman, enjoyed great bliss and were transformed into saints. Hanuman did not kill all the demons in Patala. He spared some of them because they had transformed into saints! Such a major transformation could take place merely by seeing Him (darshan)!

We have discussed earlier that Hanuman is an aspect (amsha) of Lord Shiva. At one point of time Lord Shiva consumed the Halahala poison. At that minute, His consort, Goddess Gowri, pressed His throat tightly with her hand. "Why are you squeezing my throat in this manner?" asked the Lord. To this, the Divine Mother replied, "O Lord, all the planes of existence (various lokas) exist within your stomach. If this poison reaches your stomach, all the beings residing within creation will suffer". Likewise,

Hanuman, who is an aspect of Shiva, also holds this entire creation within His abdomen.

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.



## Episode 47 – Jan 5th

The vanara by name Prudhuvu praises Hanuman in the following manner-

***Daata daapataitha chaiva lokaanaam rakshaka stadha  
Preraka chhanumoodascha Kartaa bhoktaa kapeesvaraha.***

Meaning- Kapeeswara is – the giver of everything, the cause behind everything being given away, the protector of the all the planes of existence (lokas), the one who encourages the performance of good deeds, it is He who performs good deeds and He who experiences the resultant fruits of the deeds. (Kapeeshwara is Hanuman).

Isn't this a hymn that is helpful to the true spiritual aspirant in his sadhana (practices)?

The person performing the deed (action), the person who causes (ensures) the performance of the deed, the person who instigates (inspires) the performance of the deed as well as the person who derives enjoyment from the deed, all these 4, share the good as well as bad results of that action in equal proportions. The yajamana (person who performs the yagna or offering), and all the people under him, have all got an equal share in the results of the yagna. It is therefore very essential to exercise full caution.

The person who has reached the pinnacle of devotion (bhakti), sees God in everyone and in everything. This hymn brings out the mental perception and feelings (bhavana) of such a devotee.

While fulfilling all the desires of the devotees, Hanuman, also motivates them towards seeking self-realization. In other words, Hanuman does not limit Himself to fulfilling all that is desired by the devotees; most importantly, He creates in them a desire to acquire self-realization (awareness of the self, atma tattva).

Hanuman is being praised in this hymn as 'Daapayita'. It means that when a devotee is in distress, Hanuman uses some other person (third party) as a medium and through him drives away the distress of the devotee. For example, many a times

important lessons are imparted to people not directly, but through the medium of another human being. Paramatma does not directly descend from Heaven. Instead He motivates some beings for the completion of His tasks. There are many examples of this.

It is Hanuman who protects all the lokas (planes of existence) in entirety.

Hanuman encourages the performance of good deeds. Not everybody is lucky to possess a good intellect that pushes him or her to perform good deeds. In fact, it is extremely difficult to get the inclination and wisdom to perform good deeds. Hanuman causes such good intellect to sprout in the individual. Seeing people perform good deeds, gives Him immeasurable happiness. For every good task performed, the devotee should learn to attribute it to the Lord- 'It is He who has performed it and it is He who has motivated me to perform this'. This is true bhakti (devotion).

It is wrong to apply this principle of attribution to our sinful and evil deeds. 'O God, You are the motivating force behind everything. Hence, You only instigated me to perform this evil deed. Hence You are responsible'. This is a perverse way of argument where the argument is driven purely for the sake of winning in it. Such attitude when demonstrated in our sinful deeds reflects demonic traits. The demons discard the good motivation received from the Lord and continue to cling towards the evil. They then say that it was God who motivated them towards the evil.

The Lord has motivated countless demons to undertake good deeds. Following this, most of them have transformed into saints and yogis. Prahlada is the good example of this. Although Prahlada was born in the clan of demons, through constant recollection of God's names and God's deeds, he turned out to be a great saint.

Let us, for argument sake, assume that it is really God who instigates the person towards the evil deeds. Even then, the realization that the deed is evil in nature exists within the person, does it not? He participates in the deed with this complete realization. It is the past karma that drives him towards it. When a person willfully undertakes a deed, knowing fully well it is sinful in nature, then on what basis can he hold God responsible for it? It is demonic behaviour. Destruction (samhara) is the punishment that is meted out for demonic behaviour. In other words, it means

`teaching a lesson`.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 48 – Jan 6th

### ***Naa ham bhokta-***

This is a vedic verse which means, I am not the one who is enjoying the fruits (of the action). Attaining of this realization by a person is said to be of utmost importance in Advaita philosophy (philosophy of non-dualism). 'I am only the performer of the Karma (action). It is the Supreme Lord who is the enjoyer of the resultant fruit of this good action" is the meaning implied behind this verse. As discussed before, this is applicable for the good deeds.

What is the difference between a demon and a true devotee? A true devotee attributes everything in entirety to God. He sees God in every action performed by Him. He believes that it is God who has performed the action, that God triggered him to perform that action and that it is God who will deliver the result for that action. He sees himself as a part and parcel of that God. 'I too belong to Him. This body of mine also belongs to that Lord'- such will be his deep-rooted belief. He will say, 'O Lord, it is you who have bestowed me with everything in life. You have given me this prosperity. You are the force behind my intellect (buddhi), my body, my sense organs (indriyas) and everything else'. It is only true devotion that leads the person to develop such thoughts. It is impossible to have such feelings otherwise.

A demon (rakshasa), on the other hand attributes everything to his inherent greatness. He will say, "I am everything. This world belongs to me. I will do only as I wish".

"Everything belongs to you. Did I ever think that I would get birth in such a good family? You have made it happen. Could I ever come to You with my own efforts? You have attracted and pulled me. This world consists of billions of people. Out of them, you have mercifully, motivated and pulled me to come to You. Why have you given this faith to me? There is some reason; some purpose. Therefore, with feelings of complete surrender, I offer my services to you". Such thoughts should prevail in the minds of true devotees.

The Lord has drawn us towards Him. It is His wish whether our problems are to be resolved or not. Within the mind there should be the deep faith that 'He' is the giver

of the problems and that it is 'He' who resolves them. With this faith, everything should be left to His discretion. All the results also should be surrendered to Him. When such feelings are practised, where is the question of separateness? Where is the place for concepts such as 'Yours' and 'mine'?

Hanuman has this kind of faith. He brings about such faith in us. Hanuman is a jeevanmukta (he who is liberated when living). A jeevanmukta is eternally free from any form of doubts, he is unaffected by praise or insult, has no ego and no sense of separate identity. The one who truly seeks this type of liberation (jeevanmukti) will consider himself as having merged into that Lord. He will not entertain thoughts of self-pride and egoism. Where a person exhibits such traits, it means that he considers himself as separate from God.

A true devotee of Hanuman will practice equanimity, will be eternally free from any form of doubts, will enjoy the supreme bliss (Ananda) and will be form of the self.

Being a Brahma Jnani (possessing the Supreme Knowledge of God), Hanuman is distressed whenever He sees any devotee in distress. This is because He sees himself in everybody. Where the devotee is happy, Hanuman is happy. He identifies those who are truly pure minded (those with nirmala antahkarana), and gives them ever-lasting contentment and happiness (santosha). He makes sure that while such people interact within the external visible world in the routine normalcy, internally they experience divine bliss, peace and purity. The bliss and purity here have been compared to the all-pervading akasha (space). Further, He blesses them with broadmindedness and with the feeling that they are seeing themselves everywhere; as existing in all the beings.

True worship of Hanuman takes the devotee not only to the pinnacle of devotion (bhakti) but also helps them scale the highest peaks in charity ('giving away'). The person is brought to the stage wherein he is able to give away his own body in charity. True worship of Hanuman creates in the person an incessant drive to make the world a better place to live; it causes the person to think about the measures that would truly make it a better place and strive endlessly towards making this happen.

It increases the feelings of equanimity within the devotee. By instilling good qualities in the person, this worship of Hanuman, gradually takes the person to the

experience of Sat (eternal, undying truth), chit (supreme consciousness) and Ananda (everlasting bliss).

Hanuman is all pervading. It is He who has enveloped all the animate and inanimate objects in this universe. Worship of this Lord helps us recognize Him everywhere and in everything.

This is the message that Vanara by the name Prudhuvu is passing on to us through this hymn.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 49 – Jan 7th

In his hymn, Jambavan states-

***Bhukti mukti pradam naama Vihaaya Hanuman tava  
Samsaranti janaa moodaah Kim vichitra matah: param.***

Meaning- O Hanuman! People in this world are fools who have forgotten even your divine name, which blesses a person both with bhukti (worldly enjoyments) and mukti (liberation, salvation). What could be more peculiar and weird than this?

Jambavan feels sorry that the people of this world are unable to fathom the importance behind Hanuman's name. Considering Hanuman as an ordinary Vanara, they have erased his name completely from their memory. Through this hymn, Jambavan expresses his anguish at this foolishness exhibited by the people.

Venerable Jambavan is considered to be very wise. He was born in the Krta Yuga (the first of the four Yugas or eons) and his life, spans across all the 4 Yugas. Hanuman, born in the Treta Yuga (the second of the 4 Yugas or eons), is far younger in age to Jambavan. It is said that during the Krta Yuga (the first eon), when Jambavan was playing the Mridangam (percussion instrument) and circumambulating Lord Trivikrama (Vamana, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu), a mountain peak pierced into his knee. From then on, he has been slightly limping. That he was blessed with the chance to perform circumambulation (pradakshina) to the universal form of the Lord (vishwaroopam) itself is proof to us of his greatness! Jambavan had the darshan (has seen) of Lord Vamana in the Krta Yuga, Lord Rama in the Treta Yuga and Lord Sri Krishna in the Dwapara Yuga. It is said that he will see Lord Kalki during that incarnation which will take place during this Kali Yuga. Through this too, we can understand his greatness.

(Among the set of 4 Yugas, Krta is the first, followed by Treta, Dwapara and Kali Yuga.)

(Vamana, Rama, Krishna and Kalki are 4 out of the 10 incarnations (Dashavataras) of Maha Vishnu.)

Great people always give great and valuable information. Here Jambavan preaches to us the greatness that exists in the name 'Hanuman'. This is very sacred and pure name, which bestows the person with both worldly enjoyments (bhukti) as well as liberation (mukti).

The mantra 'Om Namo Hanumate Namaha' showers both materialistic enjoyments as well as liberation (bhukti, mukti). This is the experience of many of our Datta devotees. Even at the time of greatest difficulties, all they recite is 'Om Namo Hanumate Namaha'. That's all. They greet each other with the words – 'Jaya Guru Datta, Sri Guru Datta' and thereafter it is 'Om Namo Hanumate Namaha'.

Both in Kishkinda Kanda (the section that deals with the Vanaras empire) and Yuddha Kanda (section that deals with the Rama- Ravana war) of Ramayana, Jambavanta extols the greatness of Hanuman. In the Kishkinda Kanda, the Vanara search party who were on the look out for Mother Sita, reached the shores of the Indian Ocean. Here Sampati, the huge eagle, through his long distance vision, confirmed the presence of Mother Sita in Lanka. The next obstacle faced by the Vanaras was crossing the ocean and reaching out to Her. Each Vanara began to assess his individual capacity in this matter.

A Vanara by the name Gaja stated that he could fly for a distance of only 10 yojanas, Gavaksha claimed to reach 20 yojanas, Gavaya affirmed that he could fly for 30 yojanas, Gandhamaadana said he would fly up to 40 yojanas, Mainda confirmed that he could fly for 60 yojanas, Dividha could fly for 70 yojanas and Sushena boldly said that he could fly for 80 yojanas.

(A yojana is a measure of distance that was in vogue at that period of time. Each yojana equals a distance of many miles, general assumption being about 8-9 miles).

Crown prince Angada now proudly spoke, "I am better than all of you. I can confidently fly for a distance of 100 yojanas. I will undoubtedly reach Lanka safe and sound. But with this all my powers will come to an end. I will not be able to fly back and return to you all".

The enthusiasm and excitement totally drained out from all the Vanaras and they turned pale.



## Episode 50 – Jan 8th

Seeing the crestfallen faces of the Vanaras, Jambavanta said, "O Vanara heroes. You have forgotten the best amongst us, Hanuman. Look, there he is, seated on that far away rock, with his hand upon his head, lost in his own thoughts. Perhaps he is contemplating about Rama. Let us all approach him".

The Vanaras now looked around and found Hanuman, who was seriously performing Rama nama japa. Jambavan approached Hanuman and said, "What is this, Hanuman? Why are you seated so far away? While all the others there are engrossed in serious discussions about crossing the ocean, with each trying to prove his superiority, you are lost in your own thoughts". To this Hanuman said, "even I am waiting for them to fly to Lanka. But they only seem to debate, none of them is attempting to go."

Jambavanta reassured Hanuman, "Why are you speaking in this manner? Do you know your capacities? If you make a firm resolve, within minutes you will cross over and reach Lanka. Get up and recollect your capacities. You are so courageous, you are full of valour, you possess limitless might, your intellect is very sharp." In this and many more ways, Jambavanta made sure that Hanuman recollects His capacities.

As Jambavanta was thus saying, Hanuman stood up and made a firm resolve to reach Lanka. Had Jambavanta not praised Hanuman in so many ways, at that time, perhaps Hanuman would not have attempted to cross the ocean.

Jambavanta, who possesses such wisdom, teaches us through this hymn the essence and power that exists within the name 'Hanuman'.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 51 – Jan 9th

Jyotirmukha, the Vanara prays to Hanuman through the following hymn-

***Matprardhana phala midam mama janmana chha  
Nechhami kinchi daparam hanuman! mahatman!  
Tva ddasa dasajana pada rajoniketam  
Asmaddito bhavatu sevakapaarijaata.***

Meaning- O Mahatma Hanumanta! You are the supreme most Parijata flower (night flowering jasmine) amongst all the devotees of the Lord. In this birth, there is only one reward that I seek for all my prayers – may the dust from the feet of those devotees (sevaks), who are offering service at your lotus feet, bring about auspiciousness to me.

Here the Vanara seeks to offer services to a servant who is a servant of another servant of the true devotee (it means to offer services to that devotee of the Lord who is at the bottommost position in the hierarchy of devotees offering services), with the faith that serving such an ardent devotee of the Lord should bring about auspiciousness to him.

This hymn composed by Jyotirmukha contains within it the complete essence (tattva) of Bhagavatam. All traditions and all doctrines endorse the view that God is to be revered and worshipped. However, the Bhagavata Sampradaya elicits that, along with the Supreme Lord, His ardent devotees too should be worshipped. This is why in Bhagavatam, all the supreme, pure and saintly devotees of the Supreme Lord headed by Prahlada are remembered through the hymn Prahlada, Narada...

Worshipping the Supreme Almighty bestows liberation (mukti). Liberation, in turn, is dependent upon acquisition of the true ripened knowledge (jnana paripakvata) by the individual. To bring about this maturity in the knowledge possessed by the individual, the Supreme Lord arranges for an association (friendship) between the individual and the supreme saints (sadhu, satpurusha) and/or supreme devotees (bhaktas). This spiritual association (satsang) increases the faith and dedication (shraddha) in the person and through this it gradually causes a ripening/maturity in the knowledge possessed by him.

Every person should therefore earnestly pray and seek such association with saints who are ardent devotees of the Lord.

Lord Narasimha asked little boy Prahlada to seek any boon, Prahlada did not ask for his father to be brought back to life. Instead he sought jeevanmukti (liberation when alive). The Lord continued to insist that Prahlada would henceforth be the emperor and could seek anything he desired it did not interest Prahlada in the least. "I do not want even a trace of these worldly enjoyments to come near me, O Lord. If I become an emperor, my ego is only bound to shoot up. I will be distancing myself from you. I do not want it". cried Prahlada.

Prahlada prayed, "Lord, I do not seek anything. Everything that you will bestow is only transitory in nature and will perish with the passage of time. I find that in this world, everything is of temporal existence, be it riches, fame, authority, power and the like. What will I do with such temporal acquisitions that are bound to perish? If at all you really desire to bless me, then grant me the association with holy people (satsangatya). Let me enjoy the friendship with your divine devotees".

Prahlada sought such holy satsang. He opined that it yielded invaluable and unimaginable fruits; the value of which could not even be assessed.

Says another great saint,

***Na lage mukti ani dhana sampada. Sant sangat deyi sadaa***

I do not even seek to be bestowed with liberation. However I deeply seek the association of your devotees and of saints'. This means to be in the holy presence of the Lord, to speak about the Lord at all times, to sleep in His presence, to enjoy the association of saints and holy persons (satsang) and to serve such saints and devotees at all times. Every objective in this world is achieved through this.

We humans with our limited understanding believe that Prahlada let go off a golden opportunity to claim the best worldly accomplishments. But the truth is, by seeking eternal satsang Prahlada sought the best that one could claim.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 52 – Jan 10th

Jyotirmukha in this hymn states that merit of the good deeds of all his various past births (samskaras), has culminated in being blessed with the chance of holy association (satsang) with true devotees (daasa) of the Supreme in this birth. Here, it is essential to understand that Jyotirmukha does not express that the meritorious deeds of the various past births, has resulted in a chance to see God. Instead, he states that these meritorious deeds of the past births have enabled him with the chance to associate with holy persons and saints who are truly devotees of the Supreme Lord.

To be blessed with an association of holy persons and saints (satsang) is not extremely simple. True devotees of the Lord, who live with feelings of complete surrender, are absolutely unconcerned about associations with the neighbourhood and with others in the society. They turn a deaf ear to what is being said to them by the society. Sadguru is the focal point of their attention; He is their goal and they eternally contemplate upon Him. Nothing apart from this even faintly touches them. Hence they do not care for what is being said by others. For this reason, obtaining their friendship is almost impossible.

Great saints of Maharashtra have declared that discussions about great devotees have a cooling effect on the body. Such is the effect that greatest devotees (bhaktas) have upon us. Jyotirmukha seeks that the dust of the holy feet of such devotees should always bring about his well being. This dust soothes, cools and calms the body far more effectively than the application of sandal paste would have done.

Through this hymn, Jyotirmukha implies that he seeks to forever remain and spend time in the company of supreme devotees, adhere to their way of life and offer obeisance to their holy feet. Offering services to the great saints (mahatmas) yields complete results and fulfillment (paripoorna phala). Jyotirmukha very cleverly seeks it.

To ardent devotees, Lord Hanuman is the wish fulfilling Parijaata (night flowering jasmine) plant. Paarijaata is a divine plant that was born at the time of the churning of the ocean. It emerged out of the nectar (amruta) and belongs to heaven. As its

seeds scattered and fell on earth, Paarijaata plants began to grow on earth and in turn it led to a surge in the plant life on earth.

Hanuman has been compared to this divine plant Paarijaata that emerged during the churning of the ocean. Through this comparison, the fact that the Supreme Lord cannot be visualized by a person unless and until the required churning (mathana) is complete, is being driven home.

Paarijaata is a plant that has fallen on this earth many eons back based on the intention of the Supreme Lord. After lying in the soil for many eons, it has little by little mixed with the water and other elements and is now, after so many eons, within our reach. From this we understand that unless and until the divine name of the Lord is taken up as a spiritual sandhana (pursuits) for many eons, God cannot be visualized. He will not be within our reach. To emphasize this, the Lord has been compared to this paarijaata plant.

***Anjaneya mathi patalananam,  
Kanchanadri kamaneeya vighram,  
Parijatha tharu moola vasinam,  
Bhavayami bhava mana nandanam.***

This hymn states that Lord Hanuman has a figure that is as vast as the Mountain Kachandri. It is very difficult to reach out to this mountain. He resides in the Paarijaata plant.

The sight of the Paarijaata plant instantly reminds us of Lord Hanuman.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## **Episode 53 – Jan 11th**

The following hymn has been composed by Vanara Sumukha-

***Rasane rasasaargnye madhuraasvaada kaamshini  
Hanumannama piyusham sarvada rasane piba.***

Meaning- Oh tongue, you know the essence (saaram) of all the tastes (rasa). And you crave eternally to enjoy the supreme most nectarous tastes. Please eternally drink the delicious divine nectar (amruta) called Hanuman nama (name of Hanuman).

In his composition, Saint Ramadas sings –

***O Rama, nee naama yenta ruchi raa***

Rama (Oh Lord Rama, what a delicious taste exists within your name 'Rama'!) He continues in his song that this taste far surpasses the taste that exists even within the sweetest of grapes.

The taste that one savors during the recitation of the name 'Rama' eclipses every other taste that is enjoyed by the tongue. Akin to this is the taste (rasa) that emerges during the recitation of the name of 'Hanuman', Oh tongue. You exhibit forceful craving towards the tastiest of foods. Now you practise reciting the divine name of Hanuman. Pray to him every hour and every minute.

This hymn also reminds us of the famous keertana-

***Pibare Rama rasam, rasane***

Tulsidas, in his Hanuman Chalisa has expressed the same fervor through the verse-

***Rama rasaayana tumhare paasa, saadara tum raghupati ke daasa.***

Meaning- Hanuman, the eternal devotee of Lord Rama, possesses with Him the magical medicinal composition called Rama rasayana (taste/essence contained in the name 'Rama').

To His ardent devotees, Hanuman passes on this delicious nectarous essence of Rama rasam. As it is impossible to directly experience this nectarous essence 'Rama rasam' we should aim at reaching it through 'Hanuman' as a medium. We should incessantly recite His mantra. To put it differently, first and foremost we should enjoy the divine taste (rasa) called 'Hanuman'.

One may probably wonder as to how any taste (rasa) could exist within the name 'Rama', when, recitation of divine names is not something that could be eaten and relished? Towards this, it should merely be understood that the taste that exists within this name cannot be relished, unless tasted.

It is not enough to eat only those foods that the tongue relishes, isn't it? Foods that are enjoyable for the body should also be consumed. Consumption of that food which is enjoyed by both the tongue as well as the body, renders the person healthy.

Strength (energy, shakti) and nourishment are provided to the body through recitation of divine names.

The erroneous belief entertained by people is that the tongue is controllable. One's lack of control over the tongue is beautifully brought out in Saint Purandaradasa's composition –

***aacharavillada naalige ninna neecha buddhiya bidu naalige  
vicharavillade parara dooshihipudakke chaachikondiruvamta naalige  
praatah kaaladoleddu naalige Sri Hari Hari ennabaarade naalige***

Meaning- Oh tongue, that knows no refinement! Give up your lowly traits. Indiscriminately and eternally you lie in wait to criticize and find faults about others. Can you not instead wake up early morning, eager to recite the divine names of that Lord Vishnu?

Although being boneless, it is the tongue that retains us absolutely under its domination. For this reason, the prayer is offered to that tongue. The holy text Srimad Bhagavatam outrightly condemns that a mouth, which does not sing the glories of the Lord, is not a mouth at all! Only that tongue which sings the praises of Lord Hari, is the real tongue, it says.

It is nothing else but the taste of nectar (amruta) that is contained within the name 'Hanuman'. After thorough churning and completing an in-depth analysis of all the Vedas and of all the scriptures (shastras), our ancient seers (Maharishis) have finally concluded that the taste contained in the recitation of the divine name of the Almighty transcends every other taste. Isn't clarified butter (ghee) the outcome of rigorous churning? There is nothing to beat its taste.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.



## Episode 54 – Jan 12th

The tongue that otherwise enjoys varied tastes in food, fails to appreciate any taste when the body develops fever. Yet, even under sick, diseased and disturbed conditions, the tongue continues to enjoy the taste that emerges out of the recitation of the divine names. In fact, at such troubled times, this recitation turns even tastier. The person is inclined to conduct more nama japa during such troubled times. Nama japa (recitation of divine names) turns out to be a medicine for troubled times. Thus, this taste cuts through all situations and all times. Nama japa is a divine medicine that smoothens the future journey.

Golaangoola praises Lord Hanuman in the following verse-

***Kuto durdinam vaa kutho bhoumavaraha  
Kutho ydhruti stasya bhadraa katham vaa  
Kutho vaa vyateepaatadosha kshutam vaam  
Hunumat padadhyana veeta subhasya.***

Meaning- Where is the question of having an inauspicious day, where is the need to scan the almanac to locate a good/ auspicious time, star (nakshatra), yogam and karanam to that person who has washed away all his impurities through the worship of the feet of Lord Hanuman? Such a person need not fear anything; for every moment is only an auspicious moment for him.

Tuesdays (mangalwar) are commonly considered inauspicious for any new beginning. The almanac (panchanga) is scanned to locate the planetary position (star, nakshatram) and time (yogam) ideally suited for the task on hand. The Rahu kaalam and yama gandam timings during the day are considered unfavorable for taking up many a task. A cat crossing the path, or the person sneezing before the start of the activity are also treated as inauspicious sentiments. Golaangula declares that the person undertaking errands on behalf of Hanuman, need not entertain such sentiments. To them, every task will be rendered auspicious.

The almanac (panchanga) is used as the basis to identify the good and the bad timings within any given day. To be rendered successful, a task should compulsorily be taken up with absolute purity in body, mind and speech. This is known as

Trikarana shuddhi (purity in all three aspects). As it is impossible to retain the mind and the speech under total control, the almanac is studied to identify the good and the bad time slots during the day. Keeping this in mind, if the task is taken up with total purity of body, it is accomplished successfully.

The real truth is that the divisions of good and bad times are non-existent. Time is an endless flow. Nevertheless, only when a task is taken up in accordance with time, it is rendered successful. A fruit that is plucked only when it is fully ripened is useful. Does plucking a small unripened fruit serve any purpose?

Likewise developing knowledge about time (kaala jnana) is of utmost importance. Based on their experience, our knowledgeable ancient sages have established various time slots that are suitable for various activities in daily life. This declaration of theirs is known as the almanac (panchanga). As it has in it 5 primary constituents (limbs) such as the tithi (day as per the lunar fortnight), vaara (day of the week) nakshatra (prevailing star), yogam and karanam (other divisions of time involving astronomical calculations), it is known as Panchanga (5-limbed).

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.

## **Episode 55 – Jan 13th**

Sun is the visible form of God and is known as the Pratyaksha daiva. Non-appearance of the Sun is considered to be an ill-fated day. The famous text Amarkosha states -

### ***Megha channe 'ti durdinam'***

It means that the day on which the sky is entirely covered with clouds is a very bad day. No new assignment ought to be begun on such a day. Likewise, Tuesday is generally considered inauspicious for starting any new tasks. Within the Panchanga too, there are many ill-fated and inauspicious times specified, based on the stars (nakshatras), yogam, karanam and tithi (day as per lunar calendar).

Nevertheless, none of these limitations of the almanac apply to those ardent devotees who are eternally engrossed in contemplation about Hanuman. Since they possess a pure intent/will (suddha sankalpa) they are free to begin any new assignment at any hour. Hanuman remains eternally by their side.

To recapitulate, Golaangula emphasizes that any form of limitations regarding time and classifications of auspicious and inauspicious times, do not apply to the ardent devotees of Hanuman who are relentlessly engaged in His nama japa. Such persons should assess for themselves whether their intent is pure and whether they are constantly engrossed in contemplation about Hanuman or not. Persons with such pure intent will be engaged in constant nama japa (repetition of divine name of Hanuman).

Where a person lacks this pure intent and is unable to undertake relentless nama japa, he should resort to taking the help of the almanac (panchanga) to choose auspicious times during the day.

The following is the hymn composed by Kumada-

***Traataro bhuvī padaaccha maargaaccha rasane tvaya  
Hanumannirmitaa ssanthi janaanaam heenatha kutaha.***

Meaning- Those feet of Hanuman, that are a refuge for all the beings, reside on this earth. Oh tongue, you have with you the hymns and other paths leading towards Hanuman that have been allotted to you. Where then exists the question of deficiency (heenata) amongst the people of earth?

The sheer luck of the human beings ensured the incarnation of Hanuman on to this earth plane. Unlike other incarnations, Hanuman does not disappear after the stipulated time and instead remains eternally on earth. To Him, this earth is His residence; it is His Vaikuntha (abode of Lord Vishnu); this is His own plane (loka) of existence. The very moment He incarnated on earth, all the various types of inauspiciousness that had enveloped this earth were simply washed off. The mountains and the seas also were freed from all inauspiciousness and were rendered pure instantly.

In such a situation, where is the place for fear? Why should anyone entertain feelings of aversion towards this earth? Amongst the innumerable planes of existence (lokas) in this creation, we have been born on this plane called earth, where Hanuman has incarnated. The luck is not just in being born here on earth, but also in the fact that we possess the required consciousness (pragnya) while on this plane. Isn't this our greatest fortune? In such a situation, when we continuously undertake Hanuman nama japa, where is the need to agonize about inauspicious and auspicious happenings?

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 56 – Jan 15th

Hanuman resides on this earth plane solely for our benefit. This being so, not contemplating upon Him and refusing to hold on to His feet reflects our utter foolishness. Letting go of this golden opportunity in this life is nothing but stupidity.

All of us are familiar with the stories from our Puranas which state that all Gods, be it Rama or Krishna or Kartikeya (Lord Subrahmanya), they all retired back to Heaven upon completion of their tasks. That they left behind on earth, their energized shadow images, (chaya roopa shakti) is also a well-known fact. Apart from Hanuman, the Sun with its self-illuminating (swayam bhru) natural energy is the only other visible God for us on earth. Amongst them, the Sun is neither completely visible nor within reach. Hence Hanuman is the only God who is both visible and within our reach. How can we not remember him then, when we are living on this earth?

Hanuman has preached varied good pathways, all of which have been penned down as poetic compositions by eminent poets. Through the reading and understanding of these poems and following the path prescribed therein, everyone will transform into worthy beings of great character.

Every being necessarily enters this world in the form of a small infant. All infants are alike and labels such as good, respectable, evil and sinful cannot be attached to any being at the time of birth. It is the individuality that transforms them into adults. No one is born as neecha (inferior or mean). It is the samskaras as well as the actions of the individual that labels them as good or bad. Meditating upon Hanuman prompts the person towards performing good deeds. In turn this helps in building an excellent individuality and character. Good character brings with it the resultant respect and fame.

To lead a respectful life on this earth, devotion (bhakti) is a very critical pre-requisite. Even though people in the society greatly retain the tendency to ridicule others, deep down they entertain a certain degree of respect towards true devotees of the Lord. A true devotee thus earns his respect. 'Oh, he is a great devotee' or 'He is a firm devotee of Lord Hanuman' or 'He visits the Venkataramana temple every single day' – people make such respectful observations about devotees in general.

What could be greater luck and respect than to be addressed in this manner by the entire neighbourhood?

For example, there are many who customarily offer a vadamala (garland of doughnut shaped lentil-based dish) to Hanuman upon the completion of every good assignment in their life. The society holds such devotees in great respect and awe. This boosts the devotee even further and encourages him to accelerate the participation in such good deeds. It also, in addition, strengthens their good character. Thus the terms 'devotion' and 'devotee' are steps to building a great character in the individual.

Earth is the only plane in which the person has a chance to build a good character. This is possible because of Hanuman's grace. Under such circumstances, abstaining from talking about and worshipping Hanuman is nothing but complete foolishness. Engaging in sinful deeds while externally displaying pretentious devotion serves absolutely no purpose. Ramayana and other great epics are the holy books, reading which will help in developing a great character.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 57 – Jan 16th

Vanara Satabali says-

***Dhanyo asmyanugrahitoosmi punyosmi maheeto asmyaham  
Hanumaan tva paadaambhoja sevaa vibhava yogataha.***

Meaning- Oh Hanumanta! By obtaining this chance of serving your lotus feet I have been absolutely blessed. You have favoured me. Due to this grace upon me, I have become meritorious and great.

To be bestowed with an opportunity to serve the lotus feet of Hanuman is an exceedingly great fortune that is very rare to attain. It is a great yoga. When those who obtain this golden opportunity use it wisely, they are rewarded with immense blessedness (dhanyata).

What exactly is dhanyata (blessedness)? Dhanyata means serving that Paramatma (Almighty) who is the root cause (karana) behind this birth of ours. Performing actions towards knowing the Supreme is true blessedness.

While many entertain the desire to serve the Paramatma, only a select few actually are blessed with this opportunity. Why is this so? This is because even to serve Him, His (Paramatma's) blessings and grace are critical pre-requisites. If this is so, how does one obtain 'His' blessings and grace? The answer to this is simple- if the person has ever prayed to be blessed with an opportunity to serve His feet, then he will be adequately blessed with it. The devotee should have asked, "O Lord, I seek a birth in which I have an opportunity to serve your lotus feet. Please bless me accordingly".

It isn't too late even now. A devotee can pray, "O Lord, please bless me with an opportunity to serve your feet within this birth". He may or may not be blessed with a chance in this birth. There is no necessity that such a prayer should yield results in this birth itself. In the event that this blessing is not showered in this birth, then it will automatically get transferred to a future birth.

All our scriptures and holy texts decisively state that serving and helping others (paropakaara, philanthropic activity) is greatly meritorious (punya) and that harming/troubling others is highly sinful (paapa). Even the emergence of a sincere desire to reach out and help others is proof that at least a drop of merit (punya) exists within us. Just as a seed is nurtured to grow into an enormous tree, this good thought of assisting others should be nurtured by transforming the thought into action. With an increase in such charitable deeds, this will grow into a gigantic meritorious tree (punya vruksha).

Adi Shankaracharya has declared that the desire to serve Paramatma will not emerge in the person unless and until the person has some merit (punya) to his credit. It is only when we have some merit with us that we are attracted towards God.

At times Swamiji says to his devotees- "Your quota is finished" or "Your quota is depleting quickly". This leaves the devotee confused. However what does this imply? "The merit from the various good deeds that you had performed during your many earlier births has resulted in this friendship between you and Me. From the moment you found your Guru, you have stopped participating in any form of meritorious deeds. Prior to this, every single day you were praying and contemplating about Guru and God."

Om Namoh Hanumate Namaha.



## Episode 58 – Jan 17th

To recapitulate, merit from the good deeds performed in earlier births, gives its good results in this birth. Engaging in philanthropic deeds yield immense merit (punya). Sprouting of such a desire in the mind reflects the existence of a certain degree of merit (punya) within the individual. He should then convert this desire into actions. Only then it will transform into a meritorious holy tree. In the absence of such merit within him, a person will not even get the thought of offering service (seva) to the Lord.

The presence of all these above-mentioned traits brings about greatness within a person. Only then will he acquire the required eligibility and competence (yogyata). This yogyata will bestow the title of 'devotee' (bhakta) upon the person.

It is not so simple to be addressed as a 'devotee'. Very often people complain, "For the past few weeks I had feelings of great devotion towards God. Suddenly such feelings seem to have disappeared." Such a person will not be addressed as a true and great devotee. There is a distinctly visible difference between the feelings of a true devotee and such a person. The difference is visible in the speech itself. Regarding such a person, others may at most say, "Oh, that person was a regular visitor to the temple. Of late he is not to be seen. Perhaps he is unwell". They too will never address him as a great devotee.

Only he, who participates without fail in everyday activities of the Lord is addressed as a great devotee. Reaching such a state is a hard task. Such a state should be maintained as well. Due to such deeds, the balance of merit to one's credit should also be increased.

It is the good deeds, good traits/habits and good sincere devotion of a person that fetch him a good name. The power, fame and wealth that one enjoys today may not remain tomorrow. The power also brings with it a lot of ego and self-pride. Contrary to this, the good traits and habits (sad gunas) acquired by the person remain eternally with him. People often speak about a true devotee in the following manner- "God only knows, in which birth this person would have performed which meritorious deed to have been blessed with such intense devotion" or "This is the result of some meritorious deed of an earlier birth" or "It is due to the merit earned in many births

that he is blessed with uninterrupted devotion to the Guru in this birth". Thus, even when being clueless about earlier births, we often speak in this manner. Should we not aim to scale this level in terms of our devotion and good traits? Our good habits also protect us.

Troubling and harming others is a sinful deed. Increase in bad habits (durguna) only lead to an increase in the balance of sins of the individual. No one will even want to think about such an individual.

Only the thoughts about his chosen deity (Ishta Devata) circulate within the intellect (buddhi) of a true devotee. They speak solely about their deity and the traits of their deity. A devotee of a Guru will speak only about his Guru, the form of his Guru (Guru roopa), the essence behind the Guru principle (Guru tattva), and so on. Starting from the inner being (atma), the devotee will wonderfully praise even the physical form of his/her Guru. His glories are sung at all times. This turns out to be an endless obsession.

Likewise, only thoughts about Hanuman will flow in the intellect (buddhi) of the ardent devotees of Hanuman. They speak about Hanuman at all times. Hanuman transforms his devotees to become like Him. Every deity transforms the ardent devotee, who constantly reflects and thinks about Him, into Himself. Hanuman blesses such devotees with devotion towards Rama. This is exactly what happened to Vanara Shatabali.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 59 – Jan 18th

The following is the hymn composed by Kesari-

***Tvatoonya saranam naasti tva meva mama rakshakaha  
Ato mayee krupa drustyaa hanuman raksha maam sadaa.***

Meaning- O Hanuman! There is no one apart from You, who can provide me refuge (shelter). You are my only protector. Hence with feelings of complete compassion, kindly protect me at all times.

Who is this Kesari who is offering such a fervent prayer to Hanuman? He is none other than the father of Hanuman and husband of Anjana Devi.

How are we to be sure that Kesari, the composer of this hymn, was none other than the father of Hanuman? Was he the only Vanara with this name in the entire Vanara tribe? Let us assume here that the father of Hanuman was the only Vanara with this name Kesari. Even if this were to be acceptable, is it right on the part of a father to pray to his own son? This is a doubt entertained by many.

Mahatmas do not have feelings and perceptions (bhavana) such as 'I am the father; he is the son' or 'I am elder, he is younger'. They solely praise and glorify the great traits when they have recognized them in the other.

Ordinary people will normally feel- 'Oh, what is this? Should I worship my own son? Should I praise and glorify him? I can love my son but I cannot pray to him'. Here, what people overlook is that fact that the son has surpassed the father in acquiring good traits. The wonderful traits of the son have brought him great renown. Hence such traits in the son should necessarily be praised and worshipped.

Maharishi Kashyapa and his wife Aditi, the first couple (adi dampati) in this universe, offered worship to their own son Vamana. (Vamana is the incarnation of Lord Vishnu). Don't we all know that Vasudeva and Devaki, the parents of Lord Krishna, as well as Nanda and Yashoda, His foster parents, all worshipped and praised

Krishna profusely? Time and again they recollected His wonderful traits (gunas). Did Devahuti not compose hymns and worship her own son Kapila Maharishi?

Guru Sandipani (also addressed as Saandipani) eulogized and prayed to his own disciple Krishna. You may probably wonder as to how a Guru can worship his own disciple? But what is wrong in it? There are innumerable stories wherein the teachers (Gurus) have glorified, profusely praised and sung hymns about the magnificent traits of their disciples.

It is the disciple's personal choice to let such praise either increase his ego and self-pride or to enhance the traits of humility and modesty within him. The disciple should reflect for himself- 'My parents as well as my Guru (teacher) are praising me. Upon hearing this, should I further increase those good traits or should I increase my self-conceit and ego which are nothing but ultimately destructive in nature?' We can understand the strength of the disciple's samskaras (deep mental impressions of the earlier actions, including those of earlier births) from his decision and resultant behavior.

In this instance, Kesari recognized not only the good traits but also the divinity that existed within his son and hence he sung hymns in praise of his son. Here the father emphasizes that there is no one apart from his son, who can give him refuge.

It is said that one should never beg. If at all one has to beg, then he should beg only from Him who is supreme and who is the giver of everything. The Supreme Paramatma undoubtedly bestows everything upon us. Kesari therefore prays to his son, Hanuman, realizing that He is none other than the Supreme Paramatma who bestows us with everything that we need. Kesari seeks eternal protection and refuge from such Paramatma. 'Oh Hanuman, I will not pray to anyone apart from you. You are the Supreme Lord. Apart from You there is no one who can protect me. You are the most supreme. The capacity to listen to my prayers and to grant me the suitable boon rests purely with You', prayed Kesari.

Paramatma eternally protects us. Paramatma protects the being every second, right from the time it enters its mother's womb. It is Paramatma who graces us with birth. He is worshipped as the Trinity. As a creator He is worshipped as Brahma; for protecting this entire creation He is glorified as Vishnu and in the end, for absorbing us back unto Himself (laya), He is worshipped as Shiva.

Hanuman is the form of the Trinity and hence offering protection is one of His duties. Although he is aware of all this, Kesari does not display a careless attitude and say- "Ah, as it is the Lord's duty to protect, He will anyway protect me'. Instead he fervently prays, 'Oh Lord, through your limitless compassion kindly protect me at all times'. Thus, through his behaviour he teaches that one should approach the divinity with all humility.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 60 & 61 – Jan 19th & 20th

The Vanara by the name Maareecha states-

***Sada paapougha nistyootam paapeshu hrusta maanasam  
Paapaatmaanam mahaapaapam raksha maam hanumat prabho.***

Meaning- O Lord Hanuman! I am forever immersed in sins. This mind of mine derives tremendous delight and pleasure from sinning and is inclined towards it. I am a dreadful sinner who commits the worst sins (mahaapaapam). Yet, Oh Lord, I seek your protection. Please protect me at all times.

Sadaa paapogha means 'to be eternally drowned in sins'. Nishtyootam means to be known through the sins committed. Paapaatma is a 'wretched sinner'.

From this hymn, it is clear that the Mareecha, the Vanara who has composed it, is a highly enlightened being (maha jnani), an extremely righteous being (dharmatma) and a great sage (rishi) who is glowing with infinite illumination (tejas). Only he who is wholly dedicated in the observance of the rules of truth (satya) and righteous living (dharma) has a total awareness (knowledge) about virtues (punya, merit) and sins (papa). Being extremely righteous, Mareecha had the realization that he is sunk into the depths of sinning and that he derives a great mental pleasure from sinning. A thorough analysis reveals that through this hymn he is teaching profound lessons to this world.

The fundamental lesson here is that this samsara (samsara is the unending cycle of births and deaths together with all its bondages) is itself a deep mire. The person, while living in this samsara without allowing even a trace of this mire to touch him, should glow like the lotus leaf. The mind should be focused on the Lord at all times. This is the deep hidden meaning of this hymn.

In this context, let us discuss the practical lesson regarding sinning that has been taught to us by Lord Hanuman himself. Lord Hanuman had to enter the inner apartments of Ravana's palace as a part of his search for Mother Sita. Here, He had to face a test. He witnessed many ugly scenes that should not be witnessed. With this, Hanuman began to ponder, "With an intent of undertaking a meritorious task, I

came here in search of Mother Sita. Unfortunately I have seen those scenes that should not be seen. Due to this, did I commit any sin? Oh my God, what did I do? Perhaps some trace of sin would have attached to me.”

Hanuman is inherently sinless. As a form of the life force, Hanuman is all-pervading. To the one who exists everywhere and who permeates everything, from where does the question of accruing virtues or sins (punya-paapa) arise?

Hanuman undertook this reflective thinking merely to pass on to the world some important lessons of life. Through this incident, He teaches that every being within this samsara should constantly reflect about the right and wrong results of his/her actions.

The individual who begins to think about the consequences of his actions becomes hesitant. He will then begin to wonder about the do's and don'ts that are applicable to the mind. How is the mind to decide as to which task is rewarding and which task is sinful in nature? Should any task be taken up or not? In the absence of any clear direction, the mind will simply vacillate without being able to effectively decide what is right and what is wrong.

In such a situation, the intellect (buddhi) will firmly resolve and give its final judgment to the mind whether the deed is virtuous or sinful in nature and hence whether it should be taken up or not! The mind will get its instructions- 'Do this' or 'Don't get into this'.

No sin or virtue (paapa- punya) can attach to any being merely because he has seen or heard something. On the other hand when the mind is inclined towards sinning, sins (paapa) attach to the person irrespective of whether he has physically seen the deed with his eyes or not. Likewise, where the mind is inclined towards meritorious deeds, virtues (punya) automatically accrue to the person.

In other words, where the mind is attached towards good deeds, virtues (punya) accrue and where the mind has a longing towards evil and sinful thinking, sins (paapa) accrue. For this reason, it is imperative to control the wavering mind.

These mental evildoings are several times more sinful than the physical offences. Mentally we commit innumerable offences at all times. For example, we crave for

everything in this universe. We think about many unnecessary and useless topics. We criticize and comment upon others. We find faults in their speech. All of these are wasteful activities that should be forcibly controlled. There is absolutely no need to think about all these. The mind should be reined to think only good at all times.

The king (ruler) of the land punishes the person for the mistakes committed physically, however, it is Yama, the Lord of death, who punishes the being for the mental sins committed-

***antaha prachchanna paapaanaam shaasta vaivasvato yamaha***

It is easy to inflict punishment upon the body and the ruler of the land takes up this responsibility. The body can be tied and beaten up for its mistakes. But who will take up the responsibility of imposing punishment on the being for the sins committed by him mentally? No person or ruler can issue punishment for such sins. Who will then take the responsibility of punishing such sinners? Paramatma takes it up as He is the witness.

Had Hanuman decided that what he had seen was really sinful in nature and with this conclusion had He given up searching for Sita, then can we imagine what would have happened? If He had to sit remorsefully thinking- 'Oh my God, I have sinned. Now what should I do? How should I atone for these sins? What have I done?' then He would have not made any progress. Instead, He wisely decided that His Lord knew whether his actions were sinful in nature or not and hence left the net result in the hands of the Lord. Thus He decisively reined in his mind, continued his search for Mother Sita and emerged victorious.

Likewise, the worldly beings (samsari), while living in this visible external world, should completely control/restrain the mind and should emerge victorious. Have we not discussed earlier that mental wrongdoings are many times more sinful in nature than the sins committed through the body? Restraining the mind is therefore critical. Even while being stuck in this samsara and even when experiencing the resultant joys and sorrows, the being should continue his dharmic (righteous) activities. Under no circumstances, should he take his focus away from God. There should be the in-depth realization that 'He' is the only saviour of one and all.



Mareecha the Vanara, has passed on to this world such an important lesson through his hymn. This is a lesson that periodically everyone should recollect.

When we evince interest and ponder over the life of true devotees, their methods of worship, the mental penance (tapas) undertaken by them, and the harsh physical (external) penance (tapas) that they performed, we too develop a desire to emulate them and live in that manner.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 62 – Jan 21st

The next hymn is composed by a Vanara by name Taruna-

***Hanumadagnayaa yachha bhaavi tatbhavati dhruvam  
Yada bhaavi na tatbhaavi vrudha dehapisramaha.***

Meaning- If Hanuman ordains that an event should take place, it will inevitably materialize, no matter what. If Hanuman wills that an event should not happen, it can never ever turn into reality. This being so, all these physical exertions and efforts that we consider essential and obligatory may be actually unnecessary.

It is only Hanuman's will that gets executed at all times says Taruna. When this is the reality, what is the logic in worrying about those physical efforts, which in reality are useless? Instead one should wisely spend his time in thinking about that which is truly useful.

Only when experience (anubhava) acquired by the person has reached its zenith (peak), can a hymn of such essence be composed. Only he, who due to his ripened, complete experience has surrendered all his actions to the Lord, can praise the Lord in this manner. In its absence, it is impossible.

Fate is pre-destined/ pre-planned. The individual's destiny has already been inscribed upon his forehead by Lord Brahma. It has all been computerized a very long period before. Even the smallest event that takes place during a day has been pre-destined. The event will happen solely in accordance to this plan.

Very similar to the individual's destiny is the destiny of this entire universe. Every event and movement that pertains to this universe is entirely pre-destined. Every action in this world takes place totally in conformity to this. This destiny creates false impressions as if it will accommodate alterations, however the real truth is that it cannot be altered even by a minute fraction.

It is said that unless ordained by Lord Shiva, even an ant cannot bite a person. However, if ordained by the Lord, just an ant bite can prove fatal to the person! Without Shiva's command, even an ant cannot move!

Observe this creation. Who is it that provides food to that frog that is hidden deep within the huge rocks? Frogs in certain areas burrow deep into the ground and stay there for a period of six months. Which is the force that ensures their survival during this period when they do not consume any food? Such frogs surface from their burrow only after this period of six months only to go back once again after the stipulated period. Isn't this strange? The same is the case with the white polar bears. They hide deep within the caves which are enveloped with snow and live there for a year without any food.

At the same time, there are many scriptures which declare that personal efforts are the stepping-stones for success. This is also true. How at all can anything be achieved in the absence of one's own efforts? If someone were to predict that you would receive the Supreme Lord's blessings in a couple of days, then you would simply sit waiting for the stipulated date and time. Shouldn't you put in the required efforts during that time?

Suppose any Guru were to foretell to his devotee that in seven years' time he would achieve the spiritual success, then during this period of seven years, this devotee will commit the worst mental sins, that were otherwise unimaginable. He will thus misuse his time. How can any accomplishment be then achieved within seven years? Forget the period of seven years, even after seven births such a person will not taste success.

Where the Guru has foretold that the success would be achieved within seven years, then it means that the disciple should put in stringent efforts during this period. The disciple should think in the following lines- "after I achieve accomplishment (siddhi), I may not have the time for completing my sadhana. Hence let me try to complete as much as I can before I reach that state". With such planning, the disciple should accelerate his efforts in sadhana. With such multifold efforts, the result will be supreme.

The hymn states that every thing that happens (or does not happen), is on account of God's will. The scriptures state that without personal efforts nothing can be

achieved. Both these appear to be contradictory in nature. How can any reconciliation be brought out between the two theories?

Here, it should be understood that without God's ordain/command, the person would not even be inclined towards putting in his personal efforts. In the example given above, the disciple will not get the inclination to undertake stringent personal sadhana unless and until this has been ordained by the Supreme Lord. With this, the person putting in personal efforts should realize that it is happening entirely due to God's grace upon him.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## **Episode 63 & 64 - Jan 22nd and Jan 23rd**

At times, in this world, we come across persons who seem to achieve spiritual success (siddhi) very easily without any personal effort on their part. How is this possible? It appears as if lady luck is smiling upon them for no apparent reason. Their easy success causes immense jealousy in everyone including that devotee, who is really putting in tremendous efforts to reach the goal.

Due to envy, this devotee now begins to think- "Ah, I have been working so hard but have seen no success. However, without any effort, he has achieved great spiritual successes". That's all. With such retrograde thinking, the entire spiritual efforts that the aspirant has put in till date has gone down the drain. Upon seeing other devotees, if he thinks, 'Look, I am so devoted. But it is he who is getting all attention. He is so close to Swamiji', then remember that all the devotion and efforts put in so far have simply been washed out.

Instead, one should think, "One day even I will get such luck" and with this belief if he continues his sadhana uninterruptedly, then in all probabilities, he will surely get this luck one day. The other acceptable alternative is to think- "Not being bestowed with such luck is also acceptable to me."

If, on the other hand, he thinks, "Oh, I am not so lucky, I will never ever get such wonderful chance", he will never ever secure it. At the same time, to secure God's grace (daiva anugraha), sadhana (spiritual efforts) should not be undertaken with an expectation that it will unquestionably yield successful results. The focus of the aspirant should not be upon the end result but on the efforts to be put in by him.

He should learn to think- "I will continue to put in my efforts irrespective of whether I am to be blessed (graced) by Him or not. I undertake my sadhana solely because I love it". Sadhana when undertaken with such attitude will undoubtedly be successful.

Why are certain people acquiring spiritual successes (siddhi) easily in life without any strenuous personal efforts on their part? Here, it is to be understood that it is happening due to God's will. It is the efforts that they had put in during some prior birth, which is paying off in this birth.

We cannot even visualize the efforts that any person is putting in within this birth. How then are we to know about the efforts that he had put in during any previous births? Outwardly, it may appear as if the person is not even putting in the required basic efforts during this birth. It appears as if he arrives, pays his obeisance to the Lord and then sits simply. He does not recite any mantra nor write it. What we

cannot visualize however, is the efforts that he is putting in within his mental plane. We cannot observe his mental prayers.

Our observation being limited to his physical movements, we tend to think, "Without any efforts on his part, he is securing so many blessings. I have written the mantra crores of times; yet Swamiji does not even look into my face. That person has written just once or twice, but look, Swamiji is speaking so affectionately to him." With this statement the result of all the 10 million mantras that you had written up to now is simply washed down the drain.

Why are you bothered about others? You do not know in which birth, and how many crores of mantras that person has written. A change should be brought in our way of thinking- "Oh, his efforts of some previous birth are bearing fruit now. If I undertake my sadhana to the best of my ability in this birth, then in some future birth I may reap its benefit". This is good.

"Oh, what is the use of all my efforts that I have put in so far? I might as well stop writing the nama from now on". The person who decisively thinks in this manner will be a total loser on both counts. The merits of the nama japa done to-date has already been washed out for reasons explained above and hereinafter as he has decided to discontinue the same, there cannot be any further accumulation in this aspect. This is the worst possible outcome.

The discretion with respect to the type of fruit (result) to be bestowed for any sadhana that has been performed by someone, be it in this birth or any previous births, rests solely with the Guru. He will decide what type of reward is to be showered for the sadhana performed. As He knows the past history of one and all, He chose to speak to that person who had recited the mantra only 10 times in this birth. What could be wrong in this?

Time is just an endless flow. It is best to go with the flow of time. The one who completely restrains his mind and goes with the flow will emerge victorious. He will successfully cross over this vast ocean called samsara. Even the best swimmer cannot swim against the current (tide). Likewise, it is foolish to go against time.

Entertaining such needless doubts only ruins the person who would have just taken the baby steps in spiritual sadhana. Due to these doubts, he will completely bring to a halt all these spiritual activities. Further, spoiling of the mind in this manner, is the individual's loss. He is harming his own mind. It is self-destruction.

Vanara Taruna did not stop with just these two statements- 'what is destined to happen will necessarily happen. What is not destined to happen can never ever materialize'. He further continued that happening or non- happening of any event is the sole discretion of Lord Hanuman. Every happening is based on his orders only.

When some event does not take place, it should be understood that Hanuman did not want it to occur. The entire secret/trick lies within the term 'Hanumad ajna' (Hanuman's order). The one who realizes this will prosper.

Om Namo Hanumate namaha.

## Episode 65 & 66 - Jan 24th and 25th

Gomukha, the Vanara, praises the Lord in this manner-

***Aparaadha shatam nityam kurvaanaam maam nrusamshakam  
Kshamasva daasaa bhudyaa tvam hanuman karunanidhe.***

Meaning- O Hanuman! O Lord who overflows with endless compassion!  
Compassionately forgive and protect me, the miscreant, who has been committing  
hundreds of mistakes every day, considering me as your servant (daasa).

There is a very famous hymn with a very identical meaning to Parameshwara-

***aparadha sahasrani kriyanthe aaharnisam maya,  
Daso yam ithi maam mathwa kshamaswa parameshwara***

Meaning- O Supreme Lord Parameshwara! I have been committing thousands of  
wrongdoings. Treating me as your servant (daasa), please forgive and protect me.

Everyone commits mistakes. However, only a few accept their mistakes. Great  
Mahatmas accept even those mistakes that they would not have committed. They  
will say, "Perhaps this mistake took place because of me. Maybe it was my fault. Ok,  
why all this fuss. This is my mistake". So saying, they will simply accept it. The truth  
would be that they were in no way responsible for it. Yet, as they have been  
accused, they will accept by saying, "as far as I know, the mistake did not take  
place. It may have happened without my knowledge. But ok, since you are saying, it  
must be true. It is my mistake. I am responsible". In this manner, they speak the  
truth yet at the same time they take upon themselves the responsibility of the  
mistake.

Mean and petty-minded people, on the other hand, will counter the person who is  
accusing them, "What is this? How can you say that I am responsible? I am meeting  
you for the very first time and you say that I have broken your spectacles? Do you  
mean to say that you wear spectacles? I have never seen you wearing spectacles  
and you say that I have broken them. How could it be possible?"



Such petty minded persons commit mistakes and refrain from accepting them. They will go to any extreme to prove themselves right. They will declare that they do not have even the minutest idea about the mistake and that they were not present in the vicinity around that time. In the middle of all these claims, will be the added claim about their inherent great traits and qualities. Tell me, who can ever help such persons? Only Hanuman should come to their rescue and set them right.

The person, who has lost the object, loses on both counts. The object is lost and on top of it he has to hear a lot of unnecessary harsh statements from the person who has caused the damage. At last, he will decide to simply keep quiet.

Great personalities, the Mahatmas, simply accept mistakes and seek forgiveness. This is a small, yet profound difference that exists between the Mahatmas and petty minded persons.

Thus, a very small percentage of persons accept their mistakes although it is natural for every person to commit mistakes. A great majority of people deny them.

Gomukha is a great person who acknowledges that he commits not one, but hundreds of mistakes every day and seeks forgiveness from the Lord. He states that he commits limitless mental mistakes and towards them too he seeks forgiveness.

Great persons, even if they have not committed mistakes will pray, "O great Lord! It is natural that everyone commits mistakes. I do not know the list of all the mistakes that I have committed in each and every birth of mine. This birth with this good intellect (buddhi, wisdom) that I have is very sacred. Please forgive all my mistakes committed across various births O' Lord. I commit mental sins and mistakes practically every second of my life. Please be compassionate and save me. I have no clue about the mistakes that I commit. When I breathe in, I take in so many germs (krimi). When walking on the ground, I step upon so many ants and insects, thereby injuring and killing them. Treating me as your servant, please forgive me for my mistakes and sins".

Servants (dasa) commit mistakes. The Lord, the supreme master, forgives them. Here it is important to note that the prayer is offered with feelings of humility from servant to master.

What a great teaching is hidden within this prayer made by Gomukha!

Life of every being is as short-lived as a water bubble. No life is permanent. Results of the action (karma phala) have to be mandatorily experienced, irrespective of whether a mistake is committed knowingly or unknowingly. A person who performs good deeds acquires good merit (punya). The person who commits sins and mistakes accumulates sins and suffers. The result is visible then and there. It is only the list of sins and merits (paapa-punya) that accompany a being on its onward journey after death. Have you ever heard of anyone taking with them their property and house with them after death? Can a person claim that his house being extremely dear to him, he will take it with him to the other planes after death? Everyone leaves this earth penniless. What can the being, who has to leave behind even his body on this earth, take with him? He will take only his share of virtues and sins.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 67 – Jan 26th

Life is extremely short. Within this, we should take steps to ensure it is fruitful and productive. As it is only the balance of virtues and sins that accompany a being after death, it is very important to engage in the performance of good and meritorious deeds at all hours.

Through the process of engaging in these dharmic (righteous) activities, good fame should be earned. Without stopping to look back at the earlier achievements, the person should move continuously forward in this path of dharmic activities. He should never provide a chance for his actions to be praised by others. The firm opinion and belief that they are truly dharmic activities should exist within him. Under no circumstances should the person feel sorry that he was neither recognized nor praised. One should make life fruitful and meaningful (saarthakam), as life is short.

Many persons do not get involved in the performance of good deeds. Not engaging in such deeds is also a grave mistake on the part of the being.

Absolute success in any deed comes only when the being has achieved total victory over the senses (indriyas). In its absence, total victory is impossible. Yet, at the same time, obtaining absolute victory over these senses is no easy job. All the trivial desires entertained, seeking of recognition, fame as well as the anger that we display, are all to be overcome as part of control of the senses (indriyas).

How then can the ordinary being, who cannot even repair and set right any part of his body, try to achieve absolute control and victory over the senses? How can he overcome the society? How can he go beyond the karmas that surround him? What is the way out then for the ordinary being? How is he to cross over this samsara and attain salvation? Gomukha, the ardent devotee of Hanuman, pondered about all the ordinary people and thought of a solution. He then composed this hymn.

This was the period of Treta Yuga (the second of the 4 eons). The fear that sins would drag the being into hell and that as a result he would not be able to make the journey into heaven (upper worlds) existed in the mind of every being. The concepts of virtues and sins began during the Treta Yuga itself. If during that pure period,

when Lord Rama was ruling, if the beings were scared that they could commit sins, then imagine what should be the fear that people should exhibit during the subsequent eons of Dwapara and the present period of Kali?

Beings at that period of time were very knowledgeable. They were aware of the various planes of existence and how the journey to these planes took place after death. They understood that evil deeds and sins dragged them down to hell and prevented them from moving into the higher planes after death. This fear prevented them from committing sins.

It is said that even the demons of that time feared transgressing dharma (rules of righteousness) and they followed the rules of dharma even during warfare (dharma yuddha). Barring a few demons like Ravana who existed sporadically, all other demons adhered to the life of dharma. Ravana went against dharma so as to be blessed with death at the hands of the Supreme Master. It was not exactly a sin but a visible deed undertaken to show the world the outcome of such evil deeds.

Om namo Hanumate namaha.

## **Episode 68 – Jan 27th**

It can be said that demons, although they disliked Paramatma, dedicatedly adhered to about 80% of the rules of dharma (righteousness). It was this dedication in the observance of the rules of dharma that protected them at all times. This also made it all the more difficult to subdue or defeat them. In certain aspects however, their atrocities, vices and evil-mindedness were unabated. Paramatma would instigate them to proceed further in this evil path, so that it would pave the way for their destruction.

Gomukha, who was a very righteous being (dharmatma), advises that everyone should have a fear of sin (paapa bheeti) as well as an intellect that will guide him on the path of dharma (dharma buddhi).

Hanuman's prayer to Lord Rama was-

### ***daasoham kosalendrasya***

'Oh Lord Rama, please eternally retain the feelings that I am your servant (daasa)'. Only a person who entertains the feelings (bhavana) that he is a servant of the Lord (daasa) ultimately emerges successful. Dharma (righteousness) protects such a person. It is totally wrong to entertain thoughts such as- 'Why should I surrender to the Lord?' One should always entertain the feelings that everyone is a servant of the Sadguru.

There is a hymn in which the composer in all humility prays-

### ***Daasaradhi karuna payonidhi***

'O Son of Dasaratha, Lord Rama, the ocean of mercy'. Gomukha teaches that the Lord showers His compassion upon those devotees who are full of such humility. He will forgive them too.

Panasa, the Vanara composes the last hymn of this Vanara Geeta-

***Hanumato na param paramaardhathaha  
Idi vadaami janaan paramaardhataha  
Na hi param bhavataatra vichakshanaha.***

***Iteedham Vanara Proktam sarva paapaharam varam  
Sarva jnanapradam chaiva sarva soubhaagya vardhanam.***

***Iti shri paraashara samhitaayaam, paraashara maitreya samvaade  
Shri pancha mukha hanuman mantra vivarane  
Sri Vanara geeta naama samaaptaha.***

Meaning- When seen from the angle of the Supreme truth (highest essence, paramaatha), there is absolutely no truth (essence) which is greater than Hanuman. There is nothing more superior to Him, that needs to be thought of.

There is nothing greater than Hanuman. Hanuman and Hanuman mantra eternally exist. Hanuman is the life force (prana shakti). Life force is all pervading and eternal. When this universe was born, it was born together with the life force. How then can this life force disappear from here? There is no knowledge that is superior to this knowledge. Therefore the understanding that Hanuman is the only true essence (supreme truth) should seep into one and all. This is the most superior knowledge. Panasa declares that acquiring this knowledge is everything in itself (sarvasvam, entirety)!

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

## Episode 69 – Jan 28th

Panasa, the Vanara, in this hymn declares that when seen from the angle of the supreme essence, there is no truth superior to Hanuman. With Paramaarthā drishti (explained below) I am advising thus to all the fellow beings, says Panasa. There is nothing beyond Him that can/needs be thought of. A complete understanding of this truth is in itself the most supreme knowledge.

Just step back and deeply reflect, "I know nothing. All that I know is that there is no one greater than Hanuman. There is no mantra superior to His mantra". Such in-depth understanding is in itself the Upanishad and it is the supreme-most knowledge. Panasa (also known as Pavanasa) states that acquiring such knowledge is everything in itself (sarvasvam)!

In this last hymn of Vanara Geeta, the essence (tattva) of Hanuman (Hanuman tattva) has reached its zenith (paraakaastha)!

Every being should necessarily possess the Paramaarthā drishti. Paramaarthā drishti means possessing the ability to visualize the supreme essence (Para tattava, Parabrahma or Paramatma) in every being and in every object seen. Through this, the real secret will be known.

By saying that there exists no truth greater than Hanuman, it is implied that Hanuman is none other than Parabrahma (Paramatma). Thus, Panasa, in this last hymn of Vanara Gita, authoritatively and affirmatively proclaims that Hanuman is the Supreme Parabrahma!

'Panasa' means Jackfruit. Jackfruit has a prickly and hard exterior but, when cracked open, it contains numerous bulb-like fleshy fruits inside that are deliciously sweet. Each of these fleshy fruits within the enormous jackfruit is exactly identical in shape and in sweetness. (The same essence flows through all the fleshy fruits within the jackfruit). Likewise, what appears as manifold forms (beings) is only the lone Paramatma. One Paramatma takes up so many varied forms just as the jackfruit has in it so many identical fruits.

The Vanara by name Panasa opines that for the welfare of the universe, the Supreme Lord has assumed attributes and qualities (saguna), and has incarnated in the form of Hanuman. He further affirmatively declares that there is no need to harbour any other thought besides this.

Without wasting time, continuously recite Hanuman mantra. Give up all useless suspicions and doubts. Life is full of doubts and suspicions, which pop up at every step. With continuous recitation of Hanuman mantra, all these doubts that are basically a sheer waste, will begin to disappear.

Hanuman means Shiva. Who is this Shiva? Shiva means 'Parama Guru'. The term 'Parama Guru' means the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. All these connections are linked. The combination of this Trinity is the Mahaa shakti (the Supreme Mother, Adi Paraashakti). For this reason, Guru is addressed as the Mother (Adi Paraashakti). Guru is also addressed as the Father and this is because He is Shiva. Guru, being Shiva is also addressed as the Parama Guru. Such Lord Shiva has incarnated as Hanuman. Who is Hanuman? Hanuman is the all-pervading life energy/force (prana).

Here, the hymn states that one should contemplate on such Lord Hanuman and recite His mantra at all times.

This Vanara Geeta is a collection of hymns that were composed by the Vanaras. It is a great powerful hymn that washes away every sin. It bestows every form of knowledge on the person. This Vanara Gita has the capacity to increase all forms of auspiciousness. It grants the paramartha (the supreme knowledge/truth). Those who recite this Vanara Gita with utmost devotion will receive blessings and grace of Hanuman.

Thus concludes the Vanara Geeta, which exists within the description being given of the Panchamukha (five faced) Hanuman mantra. It is the 76th chapter that exists as a conversation between Parashara and Maitreyi within the holy text Parashara Samhita.

We are all very fortunate. It is my (Swamiji, referring to Himself) great fortune to be able to narrate it to all of you. You are all very blessed and fortunate to hear this Vanara Geeta. Together all of us are exceedingly fortunate to be able to listen to the glories of that great Lord Hanuman and to be able to recite His mantra. The deep



feelings and reverence that each vanara had towards Hanuman has been brought out as a hymn that is contained within this Parashara samhita.

Om Namo Hanumate Namaha.

Courtesy: Parimala Eshwarla