

LIFESTORY OF HANUMANJI

By Sri Swami Shyam Paramahansa

Hiranyavarnam@rediffmail.com (for personal correspondence with Swamiji)

antarbrahmandiya@yahoo.com (for info on more ebooks, cds and videotapes, etc.)

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WHAT IS THE NEED OF THIS BOOK IN HUMAN LIFE?

In this book about Sri Hanumanji, there is one thing about Him which is very important and extensively described, and that is -- HUNGER. We find Sri Hanumanji hungry from the very beginning. Different actors in the life-sketch of this book are also very hungry.

(1) The first scene showing hunger is when Sri Hanumanji as a child leaps into space, conceiving the rising sun to be a beautiful, palatable fruit.

(2) The second scene describing hunger, we find on the south Indian sea-shore where the eagle hero, Sampati, seeing a big assembly of Vanaras says, "For the last many days I have been dying of hunger."

(3) The third scene is the appearance of Surasa in the midst of the great Indian Ocean. She says that she is very hungry and that she is going to devour Hanumanji right away.

(4) In the fourth scene is Simhika, a demonness who is also hungry and snatches Hanumanji by His shadow in order to make a feast of Him.

(5) In the fifth scene is Lankini, the gate-keeper of Lanka City. She also tries to gobble up Sri Hanumanji while He was entering into Lanka, assuming a tiny form.

(6) The sixth scene depicting hunger is when Sri Hanumanji meets Sri Sitaji and conveys the message of Sri Ram to her. When the work is done, Hanumanji says to Sri Sitaji:

Sunahu màtu mohi atishaya bhùkhà.

"Mother, listen. I am very, very hungry."

(7) The seventh scene is a site of congregational hunger when all the Vanaras return to Kishkindha through the space, and instead of going to the king first, they land in the royal garden and start eating fruits.

Many different kinds of hunger are described in this book because in this world everybody is born out of hunger; that means -- HUNGER OF COUPLING. And when he is born, off and on he cries to be fed. As he grows, the same hunger is expressed in his longing for toys, for more knowledge, for more friends, for competition. The same hunger later finds expression in search for a wife, then child, then respect, and money, etc. It is the same energy of hunger.

Everyone is hungry here in this world. Often person has hunger like Surasa's, another one like Simhika's. This book tells what the real hunger is and what the path is to satisfy it permanently. Each one has different kinds hunger, and that makes their personality.

There are only a few selected, chosen fortunate ones whose quality of hunger is similar to Sri Hanumanji. And understanding Hanumanji's method of satisfying the hunger is still rare, and applying it in one's life is still seldom found, and once you do apply it, Enlightenment is at hand. So, all hungers are for Enlightenment. And they are but different perversions of the energy of Enlightenment.

The question may arise, that if someone is busy with his physical hunger, can he say that his personality is perfect? Of course not. But it is also true that no one can avoid hunger. No one can neglect it. As far as physical hunger is concerned, it is a necessity of life, and it is most important and very special.

If you don't feel hungry for a few days, can you afford to feel comfortable? Okay, I have gotten rid of a big problem. No, not at all. On the contrary, you become anxious. You rush to the doctor, you take medicine, you try everything, you make every effort to restore your natural hunger.

What you need is a healthy right type of hunger and also a solution to the problem of this right hunger. And also you need the right kind of food. Then satisfaction comes and you are assured of your normal health. Enlightenment is a perfection of psychological health.

It is very important to know that when the hunger of the belly is satisfied, the hunger of sex arises. That is why, when a country has earned enough to eat and drink, that its eating and drinking problem is solved, it develops a sexual civilization. Therefore, only poor countries are found to be moralistic.

You can easily observe it throughout the history of the world. It is the first time in the history of Europe and America that most of the problems of bodily needs have been solved. Therefore, this civilization has become more sexual.

When a person has solved the problems of the belly, he becomes interested in sex. Then comes the hunger for a wife, then comes hunger for a job, then for children, then hunger for a home, then hunger for a car, and hunger for traveling to Hawaii. All these are interconnected with the hunger

of the belly. As long as you are limited and conditioned by all these, you are still on the level of belly-hunger. And as long as you are just a belly-hungerer, you will remain robot-like, and tension and frustration will be an inseparable part of your life.

Life should not be lived inconsistently, chaotically, or blindly. It should be organized into a Vedic or Tantric way of life. It should be disciplined in such a way that the neutralization of the hunger-energy through satisfaction can result in a more evolved state of life. And the result of an evolved state of life is the rise of another type of hunger, the hunger of the mind.

Human beings are not just bodies. Along with body, the mind, intellect, heart, and soul also exist. For physical health, first the real hunger has to be recognized. And only that should be fed and not the pseudo hunger. And this real hunger has to be fed by right food, full of nourishment, with appropriate vitamins. And more important than this, it should be *sattvic*.

In the same way for psychological health, the hunger of the mind and intellect have to be satisfied with literary materials produced by those who have attained the Absolute Truth in their life, or it was the goal of their life and they were working hard for it. This is like *sattvic* food for the mind.

If you don't have hunger of the mind, you are not actually healthy. For instance when you want some food to eat and someone arrives at your door and throws it at your head, or dashes it in front of you insultingly, will you eat? If you do, can you be considered psychologically healthy? Food should be offered with love and respect. This wanting of love and respect is a healthy state of hunger of the mind.

The desire to discover the mystery behind life and the universe is the cultured and refined state of hunger of intellect. And to crave for the

experience of Absolute Truth or God is the hunger of the soul. When you are not interested in anything other than topics of the Absolute, you torment for God day and night, you have developed hunger of the soul.

All four types of hunger are natural in human beings, and as long as all four are not in perfect balance, one cannot be said to be healthy in the real sense.

There are three types of satisfying hunger:

(1) The food may not be delicious, but because you are very hungry you gobble it up and you feel satisfied.

(2) You are not actually hungry, but your favorite item is deliciously prepared and served to you and you eat it because of the taste.

(3) You only eat when you are really hungry and the food is deliciously prepared according to purity rules and is served with love and respect.

The same thing applies to the hunger of the mind and intellect. You need love and respect, you need entertainment also, but you have to be careful that your entertainment is not palatable only to the whims of the mind. It should not be only with those with whom you just have a good chit-chat, and pass the time away by gossiping. You can find many useless people who will need you for useless purposes. They can show you their love, but that type of love should be considered garbage.

Entertainment should be with those people who give you a larger vision of life. Who not only entertain your mind, but also bestow upon you deeper health, and a profound basis to your life. Your love and reverence should flow towards those who bestow upon you a superior rest. Even if they do not pay any attention to you, you must try to win their glance. Even if they give

very little time, you must consider it more than thousands of loves and sweet words of worldly-minded people.

When you are able to forget all the love of the parents, wife, children, friends, and all others - just to serve a Holy person like a servant, then a great Hunger of Soul has been born in you, and you attain a Superior Rest in higher consciousness.

Budha visràm sakal jan ranjani

ramakathà kalikalush vibhanjani. 1:30:5 Ramayana

This Superior Rest of mind is found in hearing the transcendental topics of Sri Ram in this book, as well as in the Mahabharata, the Vedas, Puranas and texts such as Yoga Vasistha. Association with Holy People, saints, and sages, the study of Sri Ramayana, and Holy pilgrimages are all elevated, higher entertainment, which satisfies your psychological hunger, gives you perfect and permanent health, and (when the time comes) satisfy the hunger of the soul.

Many people ask: is there any scarcity of problems in the world? In order to solve these problems you are now going to the Moon and Mars? Is this your choice just to keep busy? Such solutions to internal boredom in the face of world poverty are raised by those who have not developed a hunger of intellect. Hunger of intellect means an inquiry and search into the mystery behind all that we see in our lives.

As we find in this book, Sri Hanumanji's health is perfect, comprising all the four types of hunger. His hunger represents human hunger and shows how to transcend it through the path of satisfaction. When Sri

Hanumanji in His childhood looks at the rising sun and leaps to get it, it is actually to satisfy His hunger of intellect. And what does that mean?

The sun is the symbol of the light in which a human being attains the wisdom of Absolute Truth. The hunger for higher wisdom and truth inspired Sri Hanumanji to rise up into the sky. Otherwise, He could have eaten many other fruits. The whole mountain was full of gardens and each tree was burdened with fruits and flowers. Sri Hanumanji was not tempted to eat them. He was only attracted upward to higher superiority, towards the expanding life of Cosmic-Consciousness.

There are thousands of people who have risen to high status in the eyes of society, so-called great and learned scholars. But plenty of them are like eagles who fly high in the sky. Their strong wings and sharp eyes are a symbol of action and power and knowledge. There are many people in the world who are rich and powerful and possess many skills, but they use their faculties like eagles, who through their strong wings rise high in the sky only to look for some corpse, some dead body on earth to eat. That is the only use he makes of his sharp eyes and powerful wings. All those great ones who were and are materially well-equipped, but remain devoid of the hunger of soul are like eagles flying high in the sky -- but looking for very cheap and ordinary things.

There are three heroes in this book who travel to the Sun planet. The first two are the two eagle brothers, Sampati and Jatayu. The third is Hanumanji. Sampati and Jatayu flew high, but the inspiration behind their exploits was not for the Absolute Truth. It was ego. They were hungry, but their hunger was only the hunger of the belly, and not of intellect.

Jatayu, although younger, was wiser. So when they arrived close to the sun and their bodies started burning Jatayu said, "Even if we approach the Sun, what benefit are we going to derive other than being known as explorers of the planet Sun? We are going to lose our lives just for this tiny bit of satisfaction of ego and life is not that cheap. It should not be so inexpensive. No, it is not!" So he decided to save his life and use it for a higher purpose, and he was successful. He saved his life from perishing. Later he developed a hunger of the Soul and he attained the Truth.

He returned, but Sampati continued his flight. His spirit was that of an adventurer, the spirit of a mountain explorer, the spirit of a space explorer. He was flying higher and higher, but his aim was not very high. It was just to be victorious and famous, the same aim of the modern scientists and space explorers. It is good to explore space, but one must first consider whether it is going to benefit your Soul, your Being. It should not only satisfy the curious excitement of common people, but should fill the being.

It is good to have a hunger for knowledge like Hanumanji; an ever-developing hunger for attaining light, for meditation and God-realization. This is not anything very special. Many people have this. But it is most important to consider why you want it? What the purpose is behind your search? If it is a causeless, unconditional and natural instinct within you, then it is going to play wonders.

Do you crave for God-realization so that you can become a prophet and the whole world will adore you as Christ? As Buddha? Are you coming to religious conferences so that you can have good times, chit-chat and meet with people? Or do you think that this may provide you financial help? Are you interested in meditation just to get rid of drugs and alcohol? Or to get

some non-medicinal tranquilizer? Are you coming to meditation classes so that you can get psychic powers? If so, then you are only on the level of belly-hunger like Sampati and Jatayu.

Developments can occur in life through the practice of yoga and meditation. Either one will become a balloon-like, packed-with-information, puffed-up egoist -- or a cosmic-void in absolute innocence. If the real experience happens, then one becomes humbler than the humblest. If one only attains intellectual understanding, or a few psychic powers, but remains devoid of the real experience of Absolute Truth, then one becomes more egoistic than all other egoists, very proud and puffed-up. His ego is more complex than those who are puffed-up due to their many material possessions.

If you develop a true hunger of intellect by living a perfect Vedic or Tantrik way of life, you instantly recognize the robot-like, repetitive, ever-changing misery-causing nature of life. Then you become able to develop a hunger of Soul, dedicating your life for something higher. Here then Hanumanji's flight towards the Sun has started in your life.

Then you soar high in the sky of freedom, peace and love. Hanumanji's flight towards the Sun has started in your life. That means that your life has become like a lotus-flower in the water of the universal-pond, spreading divine aroma of Samadhi all around. Now here you need to understand the wisdom of this book desperately.

CHAPTER 1

WHO IS SRI HANUMANJI?

Look at a picture of Sri Hanumanji for five minutes. Everyone would ask why has He such a huge tail, a monkey face, and long golden hair all over His body? A layman would say, because He is a monkey. However, this statement would not satisfy those who have looked at His picture closely. Hanumanji is wearing a crown on His head, underpants on His thighs, and a sacred thread over His shoulder.

Sri Hanumanji is a great exponent of Interplanetary history. He meditates and speaks a very cultured language. At that time (Silver Age), He took baths thrice a day and lived in palaces. His capital Kishkindha (where he was minister and special advisor to King Sugriva) was a civilized, prosperous, underground, well-designed city, adorned with arts and music.

No. Hanumanji is not just a monkey! Actually, the race from which Hanumanji was born was one which would fit into the category of demi-gods. It was superior to the human race. Now, however, this race is non-existent. Their states along with all of their traditions have disappeared from the face of the earth. These beings were equipped with special powers and faculties from birth. To equal them, human beings would require advanced technological help, alchemy, or yogic knowledge.

Almost all the races of demi-gods, gods and demons possess extraordinary powers from birth. For example, they can assume any form at will, and have unrestricted access through earth, space, and water. We can see them in Tibetan and Nepali paintings and sculptures. Also we can see Yakshas and Kinnaras with extraordinary nervous systems. These are not just a myth, as most modern historians believe. There were demi-god races, Vanaras, Rakshasas and many others, approximately one million years ago.

These communities were very prosperous and civilized and had their own states on earth. Although they were demi-gods or semi-divine races, they were known among humans by the names of those animals whose faces they resembled. Thus Sri Hanumanji, King Sugriva, Prince Angada, Dvividya, and Mayanda are known among layman today as extraordinary monkeys, and Jambavan as the king of beasts.

It should be noted that in the semi-divine races only the male community used to preserve the Vanara form which they were born into, and not the ladies. The faces of the ladies of these races were like human ladies. They were extremely beautiful and had extraordinary power.

The ladies of semi-divine races were free to produce a baby at any moment after impregnation. They could give birth immediately after conceiving, or, if they had no facility for nourishing a child, they could keep it in the womb for extended periods. There are many examples of babies who were able to take their perfect form as a youth immediately after their birth. That is why there were seldom fathers found in those days who were fortunate enough to enjoy the child-like plays of their sons and daughters. It was required that these youths be instructed in the Interplanetary way of life. Generally the babies would come and offer their obeisances to their parents as perfect youths or as fully embodied adults.

All ladies and gentlemen belonging to these races wore clothes. They had palaces, cities and educational systems like human beings. The physical structure of semi-divine races was never influenced by disease. Their youthfulness lasted throughout their lives. Their old age was probably not observable except for a little decrease of energy and vitality. Also, they did not perspire unless there was burning heat. Many of them were able to

assume any form they liked, of any size, creed, or nationality. Their clothing and ornaments were also enlarged or decreased by will. A few had the power to appear and disappear as they chose. Each one of them was free to develop his extraordinary power by receiving benedictions from any form of the Absolute Being or through practices of yoga and meditation.

As far as Sri Hanumanji is concerned, He was born with all of these powers. Complete with loin-cloth, sacred thread and yellow eyes. He was adorned with a crown and blue gem earrings, and held a golden mace in His hand. All this was possible because He was an incarnation of the great Lord Shiva.

Lord Shiva is the embodiment of the Absolute Truth (playing the role of the controller of the destruction of creation in the end) and director of the ever-changing nature of phenomena or the destruction of creation prior to regeneration throughout life.

Even though Lord Shiva is perfect and full in His realization, He accepts Lord Vishnu (another embodiment of the Absolute) and any of Lord Vishnu's incarnations, such as Sri Rama and Sri Krishna, as His Beloved God. This is done so that He can enjoy the highest joy of Samadhi. So the great Lord plays and enjoys going to the abode of Sri Rama in Ayodhya and to Vrindaban to worship Lord Krishna. Thus Lord Shiva plays and remains God-intoxicated which is the top privilege of life.

CHAPTER 2

LORD SHIVA INCARNATES AS SRI HANUMANJI

On the huge beautiful top of Mount Kailash Lord Shiva was sitting in Samadhi under a Banyan tree. On His marvelous camphor-white body, His reddish-brown hair was scattered artfully. On His hands, neck and chest, rudraksa beads and snakes were hanging as ornaments. They were there, enjoying the soothing touch of Lord Shiva.

His dear vehicle, Nandi the bull, was sitting in front of Him, and a little further away His attendants were enjoying various love plays. A crescent moon was decorating the top of His matted hair as a symbol of Shiva's mercy. The silvery current of the holy Ganga was visible through her coolness. His third eye was calm and quiet. The sacred ashes pasted in three lines on His forehead were so beautiful and captivating that they cannot be described in words.

Suddenly Lord Shiva broke His Samadhi by chanting, "Rama, Rama," as if a cloud had rumbled. Everybody's eyes were full of love and joyfully turned towards Shiva. From one bush there appeared a beautiful maiden, Sati, the dearest consort of Lord Shiva.

She found her beloved spouse looking at her with special, graceful eyes. She came forward and stood in front of Him with folded hands and a heart full of love. She spoke amiably, "My Lord, my heart swells in joy after seeing You come out of such a long Samadhi. How shall I serve You? May I do any service for you, dear? I feel that You wish to say something."

Lord Shiva replied, "My dear consort, a very pious and auspicious desire is arising in My Being today. Rama (on whom I meditate and contemplate always, whose heart-captivating pastimes I love to narrate to you always) is coming, descending onto the earth with all the gods and representatives of celestial and astral planets. They are taking birth in the

semi-divine and human races so that the earth will receive the great fortune of His service. I wonder why I alone should miss this valuable holy occasion? Let Me also go to the place where He is."

The beautiful Sati, dangling between the feelings of pleasure and pain, (since her husband's pleasure was her pleasure and the separation from Him was great pain) said, "My Lord, Your desire is all auspicious, all sublime, all natural. As I want to serve You, my beloved spouse, so also You want to serve Your Lord, for service is the only expression of deep love. But my Lord, my heart is tormented by just imagining the future separation. Please give me power so that my heart can enjoy Your happiness in totality.

"My Lord, Your Beloved Lord Rama is descending to unburden the earth of a most powerful ten-headed monster, King Ravana. But, King Ravana is your great devotee, to whom You have offered many boons, for he has satisfied You through ten thousand years of austerity and by sacrificing his ten heads one by one in the fire. How can You help anyone in killing him?"

Lord Shiva laughed and said, "My dear consort, you are very innocent. You need not be afraid of separation. I shall remain always with you. I can manifest Myself in various forms. At times I shall be taking you to Lord Rama, but by another form which will be the manifestation of my eleventh expansion.

"Be aware that I divide My energy into eleven spheres or bodies. It is the eleventh expansion that will be incarnated on earth as Sri Hanumanji. In the past, the demon King, Ravana, insulted and left My eleventh expansion un-satisfied. Now that eleventh expansion can be used to fight with Ravana

and serve My Lord Rama. I have decided to take birth from the womb of Anjana by Kesari. Are you happy?"

Sati smiled filled with joy and love. Shiva embraced her, and Sati embraced Shiva, and both became the very embrace itself, and that embrace be-came eternal.

CHAPTER 3

BIRTH OF SRI HANUMANJI

Anjana, who became the mother of Hanumanji, was one of the sixteen matrikas. The matrikas are adored and worshipped ladies of the celestial, astral and material planes of the universe. Once Anjana assumed the form of a lady tourist visiting Svah planet, a few million miles beyond the Polestar. She arrived in the assembly of Indra, the king of Svah planet. Somehow the king was attracted to her and requested her to make love with him. She rebuked him severely and said, "Who would like to make love with you, a fallen one with the signs of a thousand eyes!"

King Indra could not bear this insult and cursing her, he replied, "You are very vain because of your beauty. You will be born in the monkey-faced Vanara race."

While Indra was cursing Anjana, Anjana's dearest friend Adrika (out of love for Anjana), tried to insult Indra by meowing like a cat. Indra then cursed her saying, "You will become cat-faced in your next life!"

In course of time, both friends were born as the twin daughters of Kunja, a Vanara knight. When they grew up, Keshari, a famous knight of the Vanara race, married both of them. Then, one day while Keshari was in meditation at the southern seashore, Maharishi Agastya became the atithi of Keshari. Both of Keshari's wives welcomed the unexpected guest and served

him whole-heartedly. Agastya was highly satisfied and told the wives to ask for any boon they wished.

"I want the mightiest son, who will be highly bold and strong in the world, totally devoted to universal welfare," Anjana requested.

"So be it," Maharishi Agastya approved the wish for both of them. And in due course of time, Anjana gave birth to Sri Hanumanji who became all powerful; and Adrika gave birth to a son, Adri by name, who became governor of all the goblins.

Soon after he granted this boon, Maharishi Agastya realized that Lord Shiva Himself was going to be born as the son of Anjana. He ordered her to go to meditate on the hill Venkatàdri in Vrishàbhachal on the bank of Akàshagangà. This was the most appropriate place to materialize her desire. Thus, one day, as she was absorbed in a long meditation, the Wind God appeared and said,

"Adorable devi, I am very pleased with you. You will attain a mighty son, one who will not be affected by any weapons whatsoever. I shall become your son myself. He will be equal to me in power and speed." Thus saying, the Wind God infused his light into Mother Anjana.

Great souls seldom move from their celestial abodes unless there is a mission for them to fulfill. Then the whole creation awaits their advent. In the same way, there were so many reasons for the advent of Sri Hanumanji.

The natural instinct of Keshari was to wander around to different holy places, and whenever he found a scenic garden he used to sit in long meditation. Once, while he was residing in Gokarna (a holy place of Lord Shiva near Goa), he found a great monster, Shàmbasàdana, continuously persecuting the holy saints who were residing there. Keshari confronted this

monster and hit him forcefully with his fist. There was a great wrestling match and at last Keshari was successful in slaying him.

All of the rishis were extremely happy with Keshari's feat and blessed him so that he might attain an almighty, enlightened son, who would become very hot-tempered to any unjust act. They then offered him a very powerful mantra of Lord Shiva. After Keshari had been repeating this powerful mantra, Lord Shiva appeared and blessed him, and Lord Shiva's light entered into the body of Keshari. Keshari felt as if he was no longer a mortal. When the rishis saw him full of effulgence they suggested that he return to his home.

At the same moment, Anjana returned home after receiving her boon from the Wind God. When she saw her husband after such a long time she was filled with rapturous joy and fell down at his feet. Keshari was overwhelmed with love. He raised her up with his two arms and embraced her, and for some time they became one in that universal silence. Keshari did not remain Keshari and Anjana was no longer Anjana; they became one in Lovetrance and in that Lovetrance Shiva's light, which was abiding in Keshari, was transmitted to Anjana. She felt as if bathed in effulgent bliss, light, and grace. Now Keshari became as he was before the visit of Lord Shiva. All of Lord Shiva's effulgence was transmitted to Anjana.

Anjana abandoned that special simple dress which she had adopted in the time of separation from her dear husband. She wore instead a gorgeous silk sari, golden necklaces, a crown and earrings embedded with gems and jewels. She was adorned beautifully! The husband and wife began to enjoy in the groves on the top of the mountain.

On the planet Bramha, which is situated about one hundred and sixteen million miles above the Polestar, there was a nymph whose name was Suvarchala. She was very fond of blossoming, fragrant flowers. Once she rushed to some flowers in the assembly of Bramha. The creator, Brahma, is fond of good manners and certain formalities and was not pleased with Suvarchala's impulsive action. He cursed her saying, "You, being born into the race of gods, possess no patience, so you will become a crow,"

Suvarchala repented and, falling at his feet, asked for a pardon from Lord Brahma. He mercifully forgave her and said, "In the Silver Age, on planet Earth, King Dasharatha will receive a bowl of divine rice pudding after his ceremony of putreshthi yajna. He will then distribute it among his three queens. You will take away Queen Sumitra's share, and then by the touch of that divine, blessed rice pudding you will attain your original form and come to my planet again."

The time described by Bramha arrived and King Dasharatha was performing his fire sacrifice festivity on the bank of the holy Sarayu river. It was definitely an interplanetary festivity. King Dasharatha fed millions of guests. He offered almost all of his property and empire to Enlightened Rishis, which they, in turn, gave back to him after accepting a small exchange.

A huge masculine form then arose from the sacrificial fire with a bowl of celestial rice pudding in his hand. His body was red like ultraviolet rays. He had long golden hair, a long beard, and large eyes. He spoke like a rumbling cloud, saying, "My dear King Dasharatha, the gods of higher planets are highly satisfied with you because of your sacrificial festivity, and

they have sent you this rice pudding. Let your queens respectfully eat it and then they will give birth to four incomparable babies who will redeem the earth from all the evil forces."

The whole assembly of saints, kings, and rishis were all silent while the King was distributing the rice pudding among his queens. As soon as the King placed a portion in the open palms of Sumitra, Suvarchala, in her form as a crow, jumped at it. She held it fast with her legs and beak and flew away high into the sky. Kousalya and Kaikeyi, the other two queens, shared their portion of pudding with Sumitra. Thus Sumitra gave birth to two babies.

As soon as the crow rushed to the open sky there arose a heavy wind and hurricane. The bird stumbled and the rice pudding was touched by her body. Immediately she regained her celestial form and the body of the crow fell down to earth. The wind god then took the bowl of pudding and appeared on the hill top groves where the couple, Anjana and Keshari, were wandering. The Wind God told Keshari and Anjana that he had come there to offer them the celestial rice pudding, "Allow Anjana to eat it and she will give birth to the mightiest child, a boon I granted her some time ago."

After receiving the order from her dear husband, Anjana accepted the bowl of rice pudding. Feeling much joy she put it against her heart and head and then the wind god disappeared. Anjana ate the pudding and became pregnant. Soon after, as demi-god races do not require the full nine months in the womb, she gave birth to Sri Hanumanji on a Tuesday, in the month of October. That is why all great devotees of Sri Hanumanji observe a fast on Tuesdays. They take only fruits and milk products, and communicate with Sri Hanumanji.

As was already mentioned, Sri Hanumanji did not take birth stark naked as human beings do. He was born completely adorned with a golden crown, gemmed earrings, underpants and a sacred thread. He was yellow-eyed and there was golden hair all over his body.

CHAPTER 4

WHY IS HE NAMED HANUMANJI?

According to the Sanskrit dictionary, Hanuman means one who has a special chin. There is a long story behind the special chin of Hanumanji, which is based on interplanetary history, and is related to Hanumanji's childhood play. In the demi-god races every child attains his full physical size and development very quickly, but still he remains an innocent infant.

Psychologically Sri Hanumanji was also such an innocent child, but physically He was enormously powerful. He had the special power to expand His body or shrink it at will, but He wasn't aware that this was such a special characteristic. He was just what He was. He was His own universe within Himself.

Sri Hanumanji, out of fun and childlike curiosity, began to wander all over the forest, riverbanks, trees, and mountaintops. Whenever He saw some huge elephants He used to raise them high above Himself with His legs to measure their weight. He was never satisfied with the weight of any elephant; and He always wondered why, while raising them up, they got frightened, straightened their trunks and screamed and trumpeted. He was not hurting them or being sadistic in any way. He was just having fun, feeling and testing His power.

All of the elephants seemed weightless to Him, there was no exercise of muscle in raising and juggling them. In the same way Hanumanji used to approach huge, thick, wide banyan trees and shake them with His two mighty arms. Some-times, because of His strength, they were rooted out or fell down with broken branches.

Whenever a lion or tiger chased or frightened some deer, Hanumanji used to jump at the spot and clasp the tail of the lion. Many times the lions and tigers would fall and were tossed about due to their own speed. If they would roar out of wrath, Hanumanji would twist their ears. All the ferocious beasts understood that if Sri Hanumanji was somewhere near, they should be calm and quiet. If they frightened or chased any little animal it could prove to be a costly mistake. When they saw Him coming they would hide in groves or bushes.

Hanumanji liked deer, hares, antelopes, otters and badgers. He used to run and jump with blue cows and leopards, but very soon He would get bored because He would get ahead of all the animals and would always have to check His speed in order to run alongside them. There just wasn't any challenge.

It was through His natural instinct and for amusement that He used to jump over hundreds of sky towering hilltops. It was a beautiful play, but He wondered why these hills would get broken by the shock of His toes and heels. He wondered why they weren't constructed a little sturdier.

One early morning Keshari was at the seashore enjoying his daily meditation. Mother Anjana was also out in the woods, taking her daily bath in a pond and picking some fresh flowers for worship. Baby Hanumanji got up from His sleep, and as usual, He felt enormously hungry.

He looked to the left and to the right but He didn't see anything there to eat. All of a sudden His eyes lifted up to the rising sun on the oriental horizon. He looked and looked at the sun through His innocent yellow eyes - a round red fruit, a sweet fruit it looked like, rising above the trees of the hills. Oh, how sweet a fruit it would be, He thought, and jumped upward.

It seemed that it was quite close, but very soon He realized that it was far away. From infancy He was not accustomed to losing courage, and so He con-tinued His efforts, covering ever-growing distances. He never thought for a moment that He could not reach the sun. As the miles He covered became greater, He grew more and more in His enthusiasm to find His fruit.

It was nothing special for Him to run on the earth or in the sky. The in-creasing distance seemed a challenge to His strength, and determination was presenting itself to Him. How could a baby of absolute power and strength accept defeat? It was not in His nature to start something and leave it undone, or even half-done.

The barriers and difficulties of the path, instead of lessening His hope, were increasing it. The more the sunbeam became bright, the more baby Hanumanji felt as if the fruit was ripening. So shining and glittering, and how sweet the juice would be, He thought, and He rushed faster and faster.

When He flew beyond the gravitation of the earth, the wind god in astral form followed his son to protect Him. He was also curious to know what baby Hanumanji was going to do. Hanumanji flew faster and faster, effortlessly, having full con-trol over His speed.

At last He arrived at the planet Sun, which expanded to eighty thousand miles wide. We cannot conceive of entering into the atmosphere of planet Sun because we have a few examples of a person going into fire and coming out safely. However, higher alchemical possibilities show that if one can develop the fire element in the nervous system, such a one will not be harmed.

In this same way, such a man can enter the planet Svah and enjoy its civilization. So Sri Hanumanji, unlike Sampati, was neither burned up by

the heat of the planet Sun, nor was He affected by any radioactivity.

Astonishingly, He approached the planet and arrived at the main source of light which was none other than the king of the planet, the Sun God.

Hanumanji picked him up with His two powerful arms and just as if He were a fruit, He put him in His mouth.

In Vedic tradition, the existence of the sun is not merely matter, but con-consciousness. According to this tradition, the planet Sun is crowded with people, and the semi-divine king of the planet is known as "Surya". He is a person and planet both together. When Sri Hanumanji put the whole planet in His mouth, the personal sun was very careful to see that baby Hanumanji should not be hurt at any cost, and that the people of his planet would not be disturbed.

But the entire solar system became darkened. The astronomers of the earth declared it to be an eclipse of the sun. The news went round not only the solar system, but also above the Polestar to Svah planet, to the King of the Astral world, Indra. Indra is the appointed Governor of all the planets of the solar system.

He appeared very perplexed and puzzled and could not understand what to do when everything went dark. Hanumanji, however, soon realized that there was no taste in the fruit which He had just swallowed, and He also realized that He hadn't swallowed a fruit, but a living entity. Being a pure vegetarian, He became very frightened. Hurriedly He spat out the sun. There was light all around again.

Hanumanji saw King Indra in space, standing on his astral, white Airavata. This was a special form of aircraft owned by Indra which was produced under the development of alchemy and technological skill. Indra's

planet is said to be so prosperous that every third being owns an aircraft. These aircraft fly by the will of the owner. They are able to shrink and expand, appear and disappear at will.

Indra's horse and elephant can run on the ground, on water, and in space equally well. Long before Einstein's discovery (which is still lying in his files), this planet was using the formula of quick traveling. They just disappeared from one planet and appeared where they were supposed to arrive. Indra's elephant is like that, it carries him through space.

When Hanumanji saw Indra on his white aircraft He thought of a new kind of fun. He rushed at it, but Indra reacted very quickly. Although Indra is celestial, rising above the astral, is grown up physically, and has an important position, he still makes improper decisions. He is not immune to the cosmic law or the will of God.

When he saw Hanumanji rushing towards him, he became very afraid for his life, and immediately he raised his weapon named thunderbolt and released it on the baby Hanumanji. Suddenly there was a flash of lightening and a sound of heavy thunder in the sky. Hanumanji was wounded and felt as if His chin was totally burnt. He fell down unconscious in space and began rotating like some satellite around the planet Sun.

In those days the Interplanetary civilization had developed divinely power-ful weapons which were more powerful and dangerous than atomic weapons. Indra didn't even try to find out whom he had wounded with such a powerful, dangerous weapon.

The Wind God, however, came and took Hanumanji's body in his possession. He brought it to a cave on Mandar mountain, one of the hills surrounding Mount Meru, situated in the north of the Himalayas. (Vedic

Interplanetary literature gives a vast description of these astral worlds.)

Here he set his motionless son on his lap.

His heart was full of pain and sorrow. First he stopped the blood from flowing. In pain and anguish he became very angry at King Indra for using a deadly weapon on an infant. He stopped Indra's movements in all the astral and celestial planets, and, as the wind god, he prevented the air from flowing there. Everyone felt suffocated without air to breath. The Planet Earth was not included because the offender belonged to Svah planet.

Very soon the creator, Brahma, appeared in front of the Mandar hill cave. His goose's feathers had echoed and re-echoed the hymns of Samaveda in the sky as he flew through the air. His vehicle goose was not an ordinary goose, but was also a supernatural aircraft.

The wind god offered the great Brahma his obesiences, and as he raised his head, he saw all the semi-divine and gods standing behind the creator. "My dear one," said Brahma, raising his hand in blessing.

The Wind God rushed to Brahma angrily and said, "You are almighty, you can make anyone the medium of inhaling and exhaling. My son is lying unconscious, I am very angry with my son's enemy and wish for him to no longer live. Please excuse me. Until now I have stopped my movements in space, in the astral and celestial planets. I am also going to stop my movements in each astral body. Then let us see how Indra carries his thunderbolt and how he can release it!"

All the assembled gods cried in great fear, crying, "NO! NO! Please don't do that." For they knew that they would remain no more than stony, motionless objects.

Without uttering a single word, the creator Brahma alighted from his seat on the goose and walked inside the cave and sprinkled a few drops of water from his Kamandalu on the baby. A Kamandalu is a special pot usually kept by saints. It contains water and is considered to be very high in electro-dynamic forces produced by powerful mantras. It was generally used for daily needs, but it can also be used for healing purposes or performing impossible acts. As the drops of water fell upon Hanumanji, He opened His eyes, got up and without any indignation prostrated Himself in front of Brahma.

"My beloved Hanuman!" Brahma said, "You are immortal from this day. Even my highly powerful weapon bramhasstra will not affect You. Do You wish any other benediction?"

"Unflinching devotion to the lotus feet of Lord Ramachandra," Sri Hanumanji requested with folded hands.

"So be it," Brahma replied, placing his auspicious palm on Hanuman's head. He looked at Hanumanji's father, the Wind God, and said, "Please excuse Indra."

The Wind God bent his head low in consent and the suffocation was stopped. Then Indra appeared and said to Sri Hanumanji, "My thunderbolt and all my celestial weapons will not harm You, even if they are released against You, and it is my humble request that You accept the protection of Sugriva in Kishkindha, and all accomplishments of life will follow You in course of time." Sugriva was the younger brother of the great power Bali, who ruled the highly civilized state of Kishkindha.

"I will try to respect your words," said Hanumanji reverently.

With this, the king of the planet Sun stepped forward and gave Hanumanji boons, "I give You one one hundredth of my luster, and from today heat and thirst will never bother You."

Dharmaraj, or Yama, the Lord of Death, also came in front of Hanumanji and gave Him his boon, "No diseases will ever touch Your body, and You will be free from my weapon Yamadanda." After death everyone comes under the control of Yama, and it is through the use of this special weapon that he accomplishes his prime duty.

Then Varuna, the presiding deity of the water element said, "My rope will have no influence upon You. No fear of water will ever overcome You. Water will never harm You."

Kubera, the treasurer of planet Svah said, "You will be fearless of my unbearable club and invincibly protected from all the yakshas and rakashasas. Whomever You wish to be a millionaire will become one."

The engineer of all the celestial and astral planets, Visvakarma said, "I am the maker of all the weapons in the astral and celestial world. I give You my word that You will remain unhurt and safe from all the weapons prepared by me, and also from Pasupatasashtra."

No one noticed when the great Lord Shiva arrived. They were all struck with wonder on hearing His extraordinary, sweet voice. Out of great love and reverence, the wind god and Hanumanji bowed down at His feet. Lord Shiva raised them up and embraced them with His two arms. With His voice full of love, He said to Hanumanji, "Son, You are My Own. Actually this Wind God just projects sonship upon You. You are already immortal. You are the Savior of those who wish protection from You."

After Lord Shiva said this, there followed a huge crowd of presiding deities of natural forces.

"From my weapon agneyashtra and my devastating all-swallowing flames You are free," said the Fire God. (And this became very useful when Hanumanji burnt Lanka City, the capital of the great demon King Ravana.)

All the different governors of natural forces blessed and offered boons according to their capacities. Each boon included protection from their weapons. To become master of these invincible weapons is a very delicate and mystical process. Mastery over anyone of them is enough to become invincible in the whole world. Normally, each weapon is received and mastered through a special kind of meditation and way of life. Hanumanji, however, was not only given protection from the various weapons, but also the power to use them according to His needs and to give them to whomsoever He liked.

Bramha had already departed to his planet. When Shiva wanted to go, Hanumanji and the wind god offered Him obeisances and then Shiva disappeared. Soon after, all the governors of natural forces blessed Hanumanji and proceeded to their planets.

Then the Wind God said to Hanumanji, "My son, You already have the speed equal to mine and now I bless You that Your speedy path will remain unobstructed anywhere. My weapon, Vayavyashtra, will be stopped by just seeing You. All the aerial bodies such as departed souls, goblins, evil spirits, and witches will all run away just by the loud chanting of Your name."

After blessing and embracing Hanumanji again and again, and smelling His head, the Wind God disappeared.

Sri Hanumanji, after attaining all the powers, flew south towards His home. From afar in the sky He could see His mother eagerly looking and waiting for Him on top of the hill. When He landed on the hill mother Anjana rushed and clasped Him against her breasts and out of motherly affection milk flowed from her nipples.

From the groves Keshari also appeared. He had been very worried about Hanumanji. He became highly elated when he saw Hanumanji. Hanumanji told them everything that had happened to Him. Overfilled with great joy His mother said, "Don't run to the sky again without my permission, for there is no fruit there at all."

CHAPTER 5

HANUMANJI FORGETS HIS POWER

The hermitages of rishis and munis (Holy men) were very attractive to Sri Hanumanji. How could He know though, that when those rishis and munis were in deep meditation He should not sit on their laps? He felt that they were as loving and dear as His own father. Whenever He saw them calm and quiet, sitting with their eyes closed, He jumped on their laps with His full weight, not realizing how heavy He was.

Hanumanji had also learned how to imitate. He wanted to carry a Kamandalu, which was made of a dry gourd hull, but whenever He jumped from one bough to another, it would strike against some branch and break. He wanted to try on the clothing of the rishis which were made of tree bark, but they usually ripped while He was putting them on. In the same way their deer skins were torn and ripped.

When He saw the rishis engaged in the fire sacrifice He thought,

"Why is it that only long haired and bearded old rishis can perform the sacrifice? Why can't I?" As soon as He picked up some wooden vessel or instrument, a rishi would follow Him, reminding Him that one should keep the instruments care-fully in their places. Instead of placing them on the ground, Hanumanji used to jump along on some tree and at times throw them down. Thus they were broken.

All the forest dwellers, however, had great love for Hanumanji. They never became angry at Him. Nobody ever wished to curse Him. Repeatedly the branches of the hermitage trees were broken. The clothes were torn and

the worship instruments and Kamandalus were also broken. This caused some discomfort and disturbance to these simple non-possessive rishis. How long were they to tolerate this? Ultimately, however, the rishis became completely detached from material possessions.

One day a few of the old rishis happened to pass by the home of Anjana and Keshari and made a request of them.

"Please come watch over your Son. Hanuman has broken our Kamandalus and at this time the gourds hanging on our creepers are not hard enough to dry and make more."

Another one said to Anjana, "Look at our clothes. This is not the season to draw the bark from the trees, and we do not store or accept things beyond our basic necessities. Why do you let Him disturb all these spiritual beings?"

Anjana and Keshari both felt very shy and despondent and said that they were unable to stop Hanuman from going to the rishis. Otherwise there was a possibility of their child falling in the company of undesirable people.

"I never wanted to disturb anyone," Hanumanji said full of fear. He really never had any bad intention toward anyone; it was only His nature to be impetuous as He had so much energy.

Mother Anjana pleaded with tears in her eyes and folded palms. She was full of repentance and despondency due to these complaints against her son. She said, "You are all enlightened and highly powerful beings. He is your own child, so please pardon Him. Please do something for Him so that He can get rid of His turbulent nature and become absorbed with studies."

"He has some ego due to His power and speed," an old rishi commented after he had seriously considered the matter. "The awareness of

unlimited speed and immeasurable power has made Him very tempestuous and careless, now we can solve the problem."

"His power, His speed ...," Mother Anjana trembled in fear.

"Please don't be afraid," the old rishi consoled her. "Your Son will be the savior of the world and will be worshipped by highly spiritual people. No one who is spiritually elevated could even think of harming Him. We have to do something so that He can become disciplined and organized, that's all."

"You are so kind ...," Mother Anjana bowed her head to the rishis in adoration and gratefulness.

The next day Hanumanji's legs, once again, could not check themselves from going to the Holy hermitage of the rishis. The calm and quietness of the hermitage was soothing to the heart. The meditative environment and huge green trees, caressed with blossoming creepers shaking slowly in the breeze, made it seem as if the whole phenomena of the atmosphere was inviting Him.

Hanumanji climbed a tree and began to enjoy seeing so many rishis engaged in their meditations. Many of them were observing the fire sacrifices, some were in worship or prayers, and others were singing songs of devotion and Vedic hymns. He was observing all, keenly and curiously, through His innocent yellow eyes.

Suddenly His eyes fell on a big ripe red fruit - an apple hanging on the tip of the tree right next to Him. Immediately the thought arose to eat that delicious apple. He jumped on the branch and it broke and began to fall to the earth. Hanumanji jumped on another branch which also broke. The beautiful tree was disfigured and it hurt the hearts of the rishis who were

fond of the harmony of nature. They loved the trees as their own souls and bodies.

The same old rishi who had spoken with mother Anjana the day before, immediately decreed,

"You will forget Your limitless power and unobstructed speed." Then he poured some water on his right palm from his Kamandalu and, dropping it on the earth, he said, "You will remember it only when someone reminds You."

Hanumanji felt as if all His enthusiasm and His immense vitality were disappearing. He became very limp and after some time He forgot all His limitless power. His own heroic performances became stones for Him. He became almost an introvert and began to live entirely around His mother.

CHAPTER 6

SRI HANUMANJI RECOGNIZES THE MISSION OF HIS LIFE

"My dear son, would You become Hanuman?" asked Mother Anjana, with great love and joy, turning her palms on Hanuman's head.

"If You could become Hanuman, Your father and I, and the entire Vanara race will be glorified and famous."

"Mother, I am already Your Hanuman," Hanumanji said, surprised, fixing His eyes on His mother's face.

"Hanuman, the messenger of Sri Rama." Mother looked at the open sky and spoke as if seeing some beautiful dream.

"My son the glorious Hanuman cannot be conceived without being the ageless messenger of the great Olympian Prince of Ayodhya, Sri Rama."

"Sri Rama, Sri Rama, Sri Rama," Uttered Sri Hanumanji in great wonder, as if trying to recollect some deep hidden memory of the remote past. There were thrills all over His body and He became extremely excited. He asked, "Mother where is Sri Rama - where is the great Olympian Prince of Ayodhya? Where is My Master, My ageless Lord?"

Mother told Him about the Ramayana, the wonderful extraordinary frolics of Sri Rama in previous Kalpas, secretly composed in the Vedic codes. She explained that a Kalpa is a span of time of four billion years. In every four billion years there are one thousand cycles of the four ages: the Golden, Silver, Copper and Iron Ages. Vedic literatures record that in the Silver age of every Kalpa, Sri Ram manifests Himself in the holy land of

Ayodhya, and spreads the perfume of His fame, glory and dignity all over the world.

Every day, at a certain time, mother used to enlighten her son to certain areas of Interplanetary history, to give a profound basis to her son's life. Now Hanumanji became interested in only one thing, and that was Sri Rama, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya. He was totally absorbed in these descriptions. One of these was the wonderful story of Sri Hanumanji and his mother Anjana, who were completely dedicated to Sri Rama. There were innumerable hopes and expectations which mother Anjana had for her child Hanumanji, and she was totally merged in these hopes and expectations while telling Him the stories of Sri Rama.

Whenever the child Hanuman heard of Sita, the consort of Sri Rama, He felt as if she alone was His mother. When He heard about the demon, King Ravana, stealing Sita away, He became very angry at the Hanuman of that Kalpa who did not finish him off. When the child Hanuman became very excited and wrathful towards Ravana, mother Anjana laughed and said,

"Ravana is still ruling in Lanka. He lives in his golden capital on MounTrikuta surrounded by the Indian ocean."

"I will kill him!" Hanumanji proclaimed excitedly.

"Why, what harm has he done to You?" Mother smiled and said soothingly. "He has become a friend of Bali, the emperor of the Vanaras and has sworn not to attack Ayodhya."

Ayodhya! Ayodhya as if pouring nectar in His ears - as if enlivening the heart and soul and filling it with joy, the word Ayodhya thrilled all the pores of Sri Hanumanji's body.

"Where is Ayodhya? Where is the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya? Where is Sri Rama?" He asked with all the thirst of His being.

"You cannot go to Ayodhya," his mother said tenderly full of love. "Sri Rama has not incarnated yet, and how can a Vanara child live among human beings?"

"Why can't I live with them?" Hanumanji could not understand why He couldn't live there since the inhabitants of Ayodhya were extremely kind and generous, and open to higher races and guests of other planets. Why couldn't He be accepted there?

His mother told Him that high qualifications such as an extensive education of the Vedic way of life was required in order to serve Lord Ramachandra. Hanumanji kept quiet. He could not utter a single word. He was struck with silence for the first time as He faced a state of utter helplessness. He realized that He neither had His spiritual Master nor the knowledge necessary concerning the Vedas.

There was no doubt that Sri Hanumanji was extraordinarily powerful. He was the possessor of innumerable divine weapons, each one of which was enough to turn the world into ashes. We already know that the power of our guns and atomic weapons fail to destroy space ships. No amount of atomic explosion can harm them, but it doesn't mean that they are invincible. Space ships and astral beings can also be killed, but we don't have those weapons.

Although Hanumanji was the master of innumerable divine weapons, offered to Him by various representatives of different planets, and He had developed a quest for Truth and could easily have dropped into devotional trance, still He found Himself totally helpless. Whenever a man develops a

quest for the Absolute Truth and receives initiation into a special way of life, he realizes, for the first time, how lame he is.

In this hopelessness he realizes his utter helplessness, and discovers that his mind is nothing but a storehouse of garbage. Just a drain of filth which he has been identifying with throughout the past. He observes how restless his mind is, how empty and shallow he is, how dry and poor he actually feels.

Yes, every true scientist, every philosopher, every actionist has to go through this dark night of the soul. This is a very fearful, extremely dreadful experience. The average man of ambition in the world wants to become a big business man, great astronaut, fine musician or artist - someone of importance - but few are there who wish to become a benevolent lover and saint. Instinctively they know that they must face an utter emptiness, an utter helplessness in order for the mind to reach various stages of purity and this is very difficult.

This is why we are always looking for crowds, community activities, and more and more relations, because we don't want to confront our own real face. One is not aware of the dust and garbage as long as it is quietly lying on the floor, unswept. As soon as you begin to clean it by sweeping the broom, the dust rises and fills the room. But no one wishes to remain in a dusty dirty room; the moment he realizes it, he can just walk out.

It is the same for those who are initiated into a higher way of life. They see the world from different angles. Then it becomes impossible for them to pass their lives as they had before. This is a great revolutionary state and a highly delicate moment. The whole spiritual life is based on the profound basis of understanding this moment.

Even Hanumanji, who was highly powerful and had great strength, vitality and all the celestial weapons at His disposal, was made to feel utterly helpless. Ultimately, He decided to receive systematic initiation and education. And those days education included spiritual as well as material subjects.

CHAPTER 7

EDUCATION OF SRI HANUMANJI

"My beloved father, please arrange for my initiation ceremony," said little Hanumanji to His father Keshari, who was preparing to go to the seashore for his daily meditation.

"Who have you selected as your spiritual Master?" he asked, smiling. "Whoever is the greatest man of highest wisdom," Hanumanji replied.

His father asked, "Who could that be? The greatest man of highest wisdom?" He stood silent for a few moments.

"I am not the judge. You must inquire from some rishi," said Keshari and left to meditate at the seashore.

Hanumanji discussed the matter with His mother and so arrived at the hermitage of rishi Agastya, in the Dandakaranya forest, north of Godavari River.

When He met the rishi, Hanumanji said, "Whoever is the man of highest wisdom, him will I make My guru."

Immediately He added, "Will he accept Me as his disciple?"

Rishi Agastya closed his eyes for a while and foresaw the future. Then he opened them and said, "Definitely, he will accept You as his disciple."

"Where shall I find him?" inquired Hanumanji.

Maharishi Agastya replied, "All the aphorisms of the highest wisdom are continually resonant in the vibrations of the life giving rays of Surya Narayana, always radiating by means of the planet Sun. One becomes a rishi only when he is able to perceive the aphorism, resonant in the vibrations, by

performing restraint on any of his rays, and this takes place only due to grace. Then he realizes the full meaning of the aphorism while in Samadhi, the total trance of meditation, and this enlightens, enlivens and relaxes all fields of his life -- thinking, speaking, and acting."

Hanumanji returned home and a few days later there was a huge gathering of kinsmen, rishis, and scholars. With loud chanting of Vedic hymns, and a short performance of the fire ceremony, Sri Hanumanji's sacred thread ceremony - an initiation ceremony which takes place before a young aspirant enters the ashram of the guru to receive a higher education - was performed according to the rules and manners of the Aryan tradition.

The moment had arrived to proceed to the hermitage of His guru, and Sri Hanumanji stood, lit with the luster of knowledge, as if He was the very symbol of austerity. His eyeballs were calm, still and steady, His face peaceful. Now a sacred thread of munja grass was shining on His shoulders, a special stick and Kamandalu were in His hands, and He wore wooden sandals on His feet.

He was to go to His Master's abode. His eyes were raised upwards toward the planet Sun where His guru lives, and He was puzzled as He tried to measure the vast distance between Him and the Sun. His heart lost hope and tears rolled from His eyes because He had forgotten His power and speed due to the decree of the old rishi.

"Why are You so despondent, why are You crying, my Son?" Mother Anjana came closer and embraced Him as she questioned Him.

Hanumanji asked His mother innocently, "How far away is the Sun in space? How can I reach his lotus feet?"

"How far?" Mother laughed wholeheartedly. "When You were a little child my Son, You approached him, misconceiving him as a fruit You wished to eat, and now You think he is far away!" "Getup!" Mother Anjana roared like a tigress. "Girdle Your loins. Is there any thing which could be impossible for my Son?"

"Look, there is the Sun. . . . rush," and mother pointed out the Sun and Sri Hanumanji really found out it was close. It was not far at all.

He arranged and fixed His palasa danda (His special stick), deer skin, and Kamandalu; and, after offering His obesiences to His parents, the priest, and beloved rishis, He flew out into space. He found that it was easier than running on earth.

As soon as Sri Hanumanji encountered the effulgent Lord of the planet Sun, He prostrated Himself and gave him His full introduction. "This Hanuman, born in the race of Vanaras, the Son of Keshari, offers His obesiences to the lotus feet of your Holiness."

The voice of the Sun god resounded through the air, "May You live long! May all Your desires be fulfilled! Hanumanji, I recognize You. How did You happen to come this moment?"

"By the order of My parents. Please accept this Child of yours as your humble disciple. With the aim of studying the Vedic knowledge from you, I have arrived at your lotus feet," replied Hanumanji with folded hands.

"Being a scholar and master of all knowledge, if such a one refuses to bestow it to one who is faithful, humble, intelligent, and highly ambitious to learn, then such a person is said to be a wicked scholar, and after death he becomes a bramharakshasa or brahmapisacha."

These are astral ghosts who speak like learned men and seem to be great scholars, but all their actions are like vampires, shameful and also dreadful. They especially relish the raw flesh of young human beings and drink warm blood.

The Sun god continued, "My dear Hanuman, You are faithful, self-controlled, and a humble Seeker of knowledge. Everything is found to be in order with You. My knowledge would be exalted and successful if I have You as a disciple. So let us start right now!"

ganànàm tvà ganapatim havàmahe

The lesson began immediately and the feeling of the words delivered by the Sun god were imprinted on the bright intellect of Sri Hanumanji. Through the Vedic hymns, the meanings and interpretations unfolded, and the teachings were most powerful because the Sun himself was delivering them.

The slightest ignorance or absent-mindedness of the disciple is unbearable to the guru. Rapt attention is demanded from the disciple in order that he may receive the highest knowledge from the mystical text of the sacred Vedas.

Vedas and the limbs of the Vedas include all the esoteric wisdom. They are to be taught by qualified gurus only. All of the sutras of yoga, wisdom, and devotion, and the secrets of the Sixty-four Arts were covered by the Sun god, as well as the main aphorisms on medical science, music, and engineering.

Sri Hanumanji never required any explanation, nor was it necessary for Him to ask any questions, as all the knowledge was transmitted to His brain merely by sound vibrations.

In the Silver Age, Lord Rama learned all the knowledge of the Vedas in sixty-four days. Also, Lord Krishna later in the Copper Age, was able to comprehend the full knowledge of all the Vedic literatures in sixty-four days. But there is no way of knowing how long it took Sri Hanumanji to learn this wisdom as there is no way of measuring days on the planet Sun.

Very soon Sri Hanumanji's studies were completed and the Sun god gracefully patted His head and blessed Him, saying,

"Dear One, all the knowledge will remain fresh and vibrant with You always. The time element will never be able to obscure Your memory. Human beings will be able to attain the unfoldment of all knowledge by Your Grace."

"My Lord, I am an insignificant Monkey," said Sri Hanumanji in a choking voice with tears in His eyes and with folded palms, feeling gratitude and love for His great spiritual Master. He knew that, just as there is the duty of the spiritual Master to clarify each and every part of knowledge for the ultimate evolution of consciousness, so also there is the duty of a disciple to offer something beautiful and best upon the completion of his instruction.

"My Lord, what shall I offer at your lotus feet? If you could bless Me by requesting anything from Me, I would be spared from the great pain, inner torture and shame by being able to offer guru dakshina, thus fulfilling My duty as your disciple."

The Sun always dwells in his own glory. There is no limit to his generosity. The Sun god said,

"I am fully satisfied by Your faith and homage. There is Sugriva, the brother of Bali in the same Vanara race as Yours. Please go and accompany him, and in time of emergency You will protect him from all dangers."

"I will respect him as I do you," promised Sri Hanumanji, and then He bowed down to him and received permission to return to the planet Earth.

Once again, Sahyadri Mountain, that long range of hilltops expanding from west Maharashtra to the east; from Bombay, Khandala and Rishyamuka to the fall of Godavari river in the east; felt itself fortunate and glorified by having the footprints of Sri Hanumanji on its summits, peaks, valleys, groves, bushes, woodlands, and riverbanks. Hanumanji was still fond of forests, riverbanks, and hills, but not as before.

There was now a great calmness and seriousness in His nature. He would go to the sea beaches, constantly gazing and gazing at the garlanded waves and tears would fill His eyes. He would constantly walk in the forests and hills, and when the face of night came and He would see the rising moon, He would remember some loved one whose beautiful face may be like the moon, but yet one whom He didn't know. In this feeling of helplessness, tears trickled down His cheeks, and an unknown pain erupted in His chest, but He did not know the reason.

Mother Anjana and Keshari were very happy the day their Son returned from the planet Sun, after mastering all of the branches of learning. All the rishis approved and agreed upon His incomparable wisdom. On meeting their beloved Son Hanumanji, Anjana and Keshari's joy knew no limit, but it did not last long.

Very soon they found that their Son had lost His taste for food, sleep and all entertainment. His always wet eyes were searching eyes. Anjana and Keshari wept for their son.

Night after night, Hanumanji roamed over mountains and valleys, through forests and along the banks of the river and streams, seeking for something. These loving parents wondered who it was that their Hanuman sought. Who is he whom their Son seeks? Whose love is tormenting the heart of their Son? Neither they nor Hanumanji Himself knew.

Sometimes when they watched the activities of their Son they found Him in some dark cave in the dead of night, sitting in total calmness, cross-legged, spine erect, eyes closed. What was He doing while the whole world was sleeping?

"It is possible that He meditates," said Keshari to Anjana. "May this pacify our beloved Son's heart."

CHAPTER 8

AT THE FEET OF THE BELOVED MASTER

One deep night Sri Hanumanji was sitting in a cave on one of the sea beaches. Suddenly Lord Shiva appeared and spoke to Him lovingly,

"Hanuman! Would You like to go to Ayodhya with Me? The Lord has now incarnated in the form of Sri Ram in Ayodhya. He has already passed His infant pastimes and is now enjoying His boyhood frolics. You can enjoy the transcendental bliss of His close relationship."

Sri Hanumanji clasped both feet of Lord Shiva and placed His head upon them. His voice was full of love and deep reverence, "Only by Your Grace could this dream blossom into a reality."

"Go ask permission from Your mother," said Lord Shiva.

"Mother, I am going to Ayodhya!" said Sri Hanumanji, and mother Anjana caressed her dear Son and looked at Him with tear-filled eyes as she knew and said in a choking voice,

"Son, may You attain the Grace of that merciful Lord." She blessed her Son and watched Him until He became invisible in the distance.

Ayodhya was not far for Lord Shiva and Sri Hanumanji. The planet Sun had not proven too far for Hanumanji, so how could Ayodhya be far, since it existed only a thousand miles away on the same planet? They landed in the countryside forest outside Ayodhya where They sat under a Banyan tree.

"Do You see that I came without My vehicle, Nandin, and now I am going to change even this form," Lord Shiva said. "If We Gods or demigods

go to Ayodhya in our original forms, We will only have to accept humble obediences and worship from the whole city along with its Lord. This is not the way to enjoy the grace and pastimes of the Lord."

Hanuman saw Lord Shiva standing in front of Him in the form of an outdoor musician, and so, very quickly, Sri Hanumanji turned Himself into an ordinary little monkey.

"I have to bind You," laughed Lord Shiva.

"The soul fails to bind himself with You, therefore he has fallen into the bondage of a most ridiculous misconception, identifying himself with the ever-changing body," Sri Hanumanji spoke to Lord Shiva, clasping His feet with both of His palms.

"Helpless and powerless are the beings of the world if You, the causeless, merciful Lord, do not take steps to bind them to Yourself. How can they be liberated from the terrible troubles of this ignorance of their own true nature."

"I will go away submitting this rope into the hands of the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya," said the great Lord Shiva Whose very nature and adventure is to liberate all beings.

He then tied the neck of Hanumanji with a silk rope and Hanumanji was thrilled and overwhelmed with great joy, imagining the future when He would meet His unknown Beloved. That Beloved One of Whom He had been thinking, seeking and Who had caused Him to wander over hills and dales, forests and riverbanks, staying awake night after night, waiting for the moment when He could be joined with His Beloved Olympian Master.

Today the rope bound around His neck was to be given into the hands of that Beloved. As He thought about it, tears of joy rolled down His cheeks. He wondered if even the great liberation itself could be compared to such a bondage?

"My Dear, do You feel any discomfort?" Lord Shiva asked Hanumanji.

"The creatures of the world suffer discomfort, anxiety, pain and lamentation as long as they escape Your sweet remembrance. If My Lord, You would bind a soul to Yourself You can do it only through Bliss and Knowledge. There is no other way for You -- You Who is the extremity of the Bliss, of the Knowledge, and of the Power personified," replied Sri Hanumanji, jumping, tossing and turning like a turbulent and restless monkey.

"Beautiful, beautiful! You jump very artistically," Shiva's eyes lit up with joy and amazement as He praised the acting.

"You must do a little rehearsal of dancing since You have to please the Prince and the Emperor of Ayodhya."

Lord Shiva played His Damaru and the sound echoed around the forest and struck the ears of the protectors of the city gate.

"A golden-haired monkey!" The gatekeepers observed ecstatically, showing Him to each other.

"Not only does My Monkey have such divine golden hairs, but also He is an expert in so many unimaginable golden arts!" Lord Shiva said to them as He entered the gate and began to play His Damaru.

The sound of the Damaru of the greatest Master of all the arts and music traveled far and wide. Numerous people, male, female, and children, rushed towards Them and Their assemblage increased enormously.

Hanumanji began to dance to the rhythm of the Damaru according to the instructions of Shiva.

All stood silent for a long time absorbed and hypnotized in the captivating, rapturous sound of the Damaru, which was none other than the Anahatanada itself. This is the unbroken and unrestricted sound heard by Nada-yogis in their deep mystic-trance, after a long process of progressively perceiving ten different sweeter and sweeter sounds which are never heard in the material world.

When the sound stopped and Hanumanji stood still and silent, all the assembled gathering woke up as if they had emerged from a trance of meditation. They began to offer valuable ornaments, clothes, golden coins, and other worthy items.

Everybody was giving something. All were enormously generous, but Lord Shiva, in the form of an outdoor musician, spoke to them with folded palms.

"I am a single Person here, and I am always on the move, so please excuse Me and spare Me from carrying this load of gifts, it is a heavy burden."

"I will give You a beautiful golden chariot to carry Your presents," said a child of one of the royal ministers.

He who visits the city of Ayodhya never again wishes for anything more. He feels no necessity of approaching another place to fulfill his ambitions. The people of the city feel that if anyone leaves the city empty-handed, it is an insult to the dignity and fame of the Lord of Ayodhya.

"As I depart, I will be happy to accept the offering of whoever meets Me. It shall be as prasada of the Lord of Ayodhya," said Lord Shiva with a smile.

Hanumanji expressed His joy by jumping because He knew that Shiva was going to disappear without anybody noticing. No one wanted to take their offerings back. Children offered the monkey some eatables; and although He was accepting everything with great respect, everybody was surprised to see that the monkey was not eating. How could they understand that Hanumanji could not eat anything until He visited His Lord.

CHAPTER 9

IN THE MIDST OF BELOVED'S CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE

Suddenly there appeared a royal messenger penetrating the crowd. He approached the outdoor musician and said,

"Well, my good Man, the news of the tremendous hypnotic sound of Your Damaru, and the heart captivating plays of Your golden haired monkey has reached the Royal assembly. His Highness, along with our Princes, are eager to see You."

"As his Highness orders," The musician said, and immediately They proceeded towards the Royal assembly.

On the way They saw the splendor of Ayodhya. Huge sky-kissing marble mansions surrounded with beautiful flowering gardens beside the royal streets were adorning the beauty of the city in all directions. Silver and gold, in various brilliant designs, were embedded in the walls, and beautiful squares.

The city was full of happy, radiant, smiling-faced people. Everyone was wearing silk clothing, and adorned with jewels and gold, gemmed ornaments. Not a single person appeared to be lacking in all the comforts of living. Ladies were beautiful, chaste, and admirably enhanced with all the finest feminine qualities. Not a single person was seen in the streets breaking the regulative principles, or who was dirty, ugly, or unfortunate. All had shining deep eyes and flawless physical features.

The history and description of the city, Ayodhya, is unique.

The city was founded by the great Manu (the first human being on the planet Earth) who arrived here from the planet Sun. That's why his race was called Solar dynasty. King Dasharatha was the sixtieth and Shri Ram the sixty-first King.

The city of Ayodhya was extended into ninety-six miles in length along the bank of the river Sarayu, which flowed all twelve months with the perfume of the herbs and flowers of the Himalayan valleys. The city was twenty-four miles in width.

Wide streets were sprinkled with water and there were green blossoming trees in appropriate places. In the squares, flowers were strewn, and the perfume and smoke of incense floated around.

Flags were flying on the domes of every building, which were mostly made of marbles, and bedecked with gold and other gems. The city was guarded by a hundred rockets. There were mango groves and parks in every part.

The water was so sweet it excelled the taste of apple juice.

Music was being broadcast throughout the city, around the clock,

The city was inhabited by people of all four classes --

(a) Bramhins - the researchers of Absolute Truth and free helpers of people. Solving their problems by communicating with the astral, celestial and Lovetrance planes of existence. Mostly they were philosophers and scientists of alchemy, the power of sound, and pranic electricity. They were great knowers of the Vedas, and highly cultured by yama and niyama.

(b) Ksatriyas - warrior class were the protectors of the city, working as soldiers, ministers and guards. They were in charge of defense. They were so strong that they were able to wrestle with fierce roaring lion with their

weaponless bare hands and successfully kill them. Still they were very generous and humane.

(c) Vaishya - merchant class was so very rich that their minimum donation to Bramhins and saints was one thousand golden dollars. They were neither miserly nor luxurious. They were neither insomniacs nor fearful of robbers or taxes. Their wealth was for spiritual development of themselves and their country.

(d) Shudra - were faithful and sincere servants, causeless lovers of all.

King Dasharatha was famous all over the world and in other planets for his valor and love for the arts, science and spirituality. He was well-known for his truthfulness and fulfilling his given word. He never found any king superior or even equal to him. The woodland around the city was always crowded with the palatial tents of kings from different countries who had come to pay their tributes. The king was attending to his spies daily. He was getting up before sunrise, taking his shower, giving charity, doing worship, meditation, fire sacrifice, and going to the parliament and supreme court as a daily routine. He was on twenty-four call for justice.

Ayodhya was founded and inhabited by the great Manu, Vaivasvat, the first human being on the planet Earth. Since then it has been the capital of the glorious kings born as his Holy descendants. They were not just materialistic emperors but great philosophers and spiritual aspirants. Ayodhya continuously has been the center of knowledge, prosperity, power, and shelter for the rishis.

When Hanumanji was brought to Ayodhya, King Dasharatha was governing the state. He was the sixtieth Emperor in the Solar Dynasty. King

Dasharatha had four extraordinarily powerful sons. It was as if all of his pious actions were bearing fruit in his four handsome sons.

Their names were Sri Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna. They were all ideals of righteousness and a symbol of love towards each other. They were Lord Vishnu, The Narayana Himself, assuming the forms of the Royal Princes to lighten the earth from its unwanted burden, and to expound the wisdom of eternal freedom in the realization of Absolute Bramhan.

With the advent of the four forms of the Lord, the entire earth was enlivened, especially Ayodhya. The whole city became prosperous and splendid, and full of wisdom.

The entire population was divided into four sections according to their instinctual activities and capacities. Each member of the philosopher class was well educated in transcendental wisdom of Interplanetary history. These philosophic masters were accomplished in the four Vedas, its six limbs, and numberless branches of the six systems of philosophy, arts and music.

The faces of the dwellers of that city were serene, innocent, and they were very serious in their duties and responsibilities, and more than this - they were Seekers of Truth. In Ayodhya a person might have been matchless and victorious in battle, or may have been a possessor of great wealth, but he was not adored by all unless he possessed a unique quality of following dharma.

In this fair city a hero was not one who attracted and pleased the crowd or the general public, or who could excite passions in laymen by his gestures, speech, or dress. Nor was he considered to be a hero who was

puffed-up with pride over his good physique. No, the true hero of Ayodhya was one who had power and enthusiasm, both mentally and physical, combined with outstanding generosity. Who could sacrifice his body and life at any moment for the protection of a lady, a Brahmin, a rishi, a temple, a cow, or for dharma, with full joy and freedom, it was this who was considered a hero!

None of the members of the business class ever sat lazily. They all had an ambition of becoming multi-millionaires. This was followed by hard work. They were faithful and innocent channels of earning money. Each one was well aware of his main duty to make the state prosperous through becoming prosperous themselves. Each one of them was fully prepared to sacrifice his achievements for the nation, for rishis, or for God.

Of course, they were also fond of horse racing, gambling and various forms of entertainment, but these were only amusements, not for competition. Big funds were donated to the spiritual people, given in charity to needy ones, and huge amounts were given in selfless sacrifices.

Every member of the philosopher class was spiritually powerful enough to be able to put anyone in the trance of meditation just by placing his palm on that person's head. Yet none of their followers ever requested this because they preferred to experience that state by their own efforts, and they endeavored to achieve all the elevated states of meditation in their own way.

They knew that "shaktipat" is a borrowed spiritual energy. It is nothing other than killing others potential, killing others originality and naturalness, and thus in a way enslaving others. Rather than borrowing

energy from the philosophers, each student preferred to unfold his own inherent power and dormant potentiality.

Each spiritual master knew that his duty was to keep the nation calm and relaxed, free from problems and frustrations. This was done not by entering into politics, but by sitting in a cozy corner of his own ashram, and going deep into Lovetrance meditation. Thus he radiated the vibrations and influences of peace, harmony, and bliss-consciousness all around. This transmission of meditative peaceful experience was available to all without the least distinction of caste, creed or nationality.

It is interesting to know that the very path of becoming wealthy and prosperous was also an item of spiritual progress. Because, the more financially wealthy one becomes, the more chances there are to express higher levels of generosity and open heartedness. Such a person was able to practice yoga of action more extensively. His offering greater donations, more help to others, and sharing his achievements with others, afforded more chances to evolve in consciousness. The sign of evolved consciousness means one who grows in causelessness and unconditional help to others. And it flows not to a particular person, place or thing, but to the entire universe. Thus, such a one finds the whole universe loves him.

The outdoor musician, Lord Shiva, and the golden monkey, Sri Hanumanji, had walked all the way to the final square of the royal path, seeing the marvelous city and its uncommon dwellers. Now They stood struck with wonder as They gazed at the huge palace which appeared like a white aircraft of ice.

As They entered the golden gates, the gatekeepers welcomed Them, showing Them the way. After going through seven huge doors They entered

into a heavenly royal assembly. There His Majesty was sitting on the golden royal throne surrounded by hundreds of ministers and statesmen.

On one side of the same platform the spiritual master, Brahmarishi Vasistha, was sitting on a costly golden throne, the seat was covered with a silk cloth on which a deer skin was nicely spread. The Rishi was radiant with the light of his spiritual power and higher understanding.

By his side, four flower-faced young Princes were sitting. With eyes full of love, they were innocently looking at times towards the king, their master, and then towards the ministers.

Now all eyes were focused on the new arrivals, the musician and the beautiful golden monkey, as they saluted the six great personalities who were sitting on the royal platform.

His Majesty spoke in a dignified voice, “Blessed One, the golden hair and artistic features of Your monkey convey to us that You are certainly a Master of great arts. It is because of Your skill that You have been able to discover such an extraordinary looking monkey. We know that a true artist is not less than an emperor. When the special mercy of Divine Mother showers into some fortunate one in the form of divine art, even an emperor needs to approach him and sit like an innocent child. Only then can Divine Mother's mercy be received through the channel of the artist.

"A true artist is he who is not allured by rewards, but simply glorifies and respects the benefactor by accepting his offerings. Glorious One, let the thought not come to You that we have devalued Your art by calling You here. We should have come to You, but the street was not a suitable place for Your art. It was through the order of my spiritual master that You are invited here,” said the Emperor looking at his spiritual master, the Rishi.

The Emperor was very dignified and highly aristocratic, therefore he intuitively felt the most exceptional power in his guests.

The musician folded His hands in reverence and bowed down and said, “We are insignificant servants of Your Highness. I feel very shy hearing such words of praise for this little man. This is My great good fortune that I am allowed to enter this heavenly hall.”

Vasistha saluted in return. When the master looked at the monkey, a big pleasant smile spread over his divine face. At the same time Hanumanji jumped on the royal stage and put His head on the feet of the master, who then patted His back in deep love. Artistically the monkey first paid His homage to everyone, and then He totally stretched out at the feet of His Lord Sri Ram, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya.

In the next instant, He jumped up on the chair of the Merciful One and into Sri Ram's lap. The Princes laughed and everyone was watching the scene. Sri Ram's fingers were fondling Sri Hanumanji's back and head and all His limbs, and Hanumanji was shedding tears of joy and ecstasy.

“Not only the external feature of Your monkey is attractive, but the natural movements of Your monkey are also artistic and attractive. He expresses great sensitivity and intelligence by recognizing the right person,” the Emperor said looking at Hanumanji's meeting with Sri Ram with pleasant surprise.

By the order of His Majesty the musician sounded His Damaru, and Hanumanji jumped on the floor, in the center of the assembly, and began to demonstrate His art of dance.

Once again the exhilarating sound of the Damaru captured the consciousness of each person sitting in that wondrous Royal assembly. As

much as the sound moved to higher artistic intensity, everybody's consciousness rose high, up and up and made them established in the unstruck, non-stop eternal sound of Nadabramha. This is the origin of all sounds, constantly echoing beneath the depths of all noises, all languages, all discussions, all philosophies, and all sweet music, as well as the cries of donkeys.

Nada-yogis of India practice a meditation named Nadanusandhana in which this sound is heard. When one hears Nadabramha, he becomes absorbed in limitless, unfathomable peace, serenity and divinity. Such was the state of the Royal assembly; no one knew anything else but that Anahatanada alone was sounding and resounding, echoing and reechoing, permeating all, enveloping all.

Their eyes were absorbed in the divine arts of Hanumanji and their ears were absorbed in the transcendental sound of Lord Shiva's Damaru. The music stopped, the dancing monkey paused, and the little Prince of Ayodhya Sri Ram rushed towards the King and sat down on his lap.

"My dear daddy, please get this monkey for Me, I shall play with Him every day!" This was the Prince's request to the King, who was more a loving father, not only to the Prince, but for the entire state.

"My Son, it is not customary to ask an artist for his valuable instrument of art. I will arrange for some substitute." The King tried to console his impulsive Child.

Sri Lakshmana overheard his Brother's request and rushed to the musician and spoke in a loud voice,

"Blessed One, could You offer Your monkey to our Beloved Brother Sri Ram? He wants to have Him. In exchange for whatever You would request from our daddy, he will be happy to grant Your request."

"Tell your Prince to come and accept My monkey," said the musician with a broad smile.

Lakshmana ran down to Sri Ram, and Sri Ram, full of joy, rushed toward the monkey. The rope was handed over to Sri Ram. Everyone was greatly astonished when Sri Ram untied the monkey and let Him free, but, after all, His very nature is to untie the bondage of those who remember Him.

The Emperor said, "We are very grateful to You. We would never have dared to ask You for Your monkey, which is the most valuable thing to an artist such as Yourself; yet You have handed Him over, gladly, to our most Beloved Son. We feel deeply obliged -- please accept anything You desire!"

"The Reverend Prince should first check and see if the monkey really performs His play or not," said the musician very politely, with folded hands.

Quickly the monkey moved and sat beside the feet of Sri Ram and gently clasped them against His chest. From His eyes two drops of tears of love rolled and flowed.

"He is not going to escape," said the musician. "Now the Prince should make Him dance to see whether it goes well or not."

Sri Ram and the other three Princes were laughing and clapping, and Hanumanji was dancing, dancing, and dancing, and in the rapid course of dancing He became the dance itself. He did the best of dancing in the whole

world that day. And why not? After all, a great exponent of the music tradition was showing His art to satisfy His beloved Lord.

"Kind Sir!" exclaimed the King, who wanted to reward the musician abundantly.

Everyone looked left and right, as if awakened from a deep sleep, but the great Lord Shiva had disappeared. When everyone's eyes were engaged watching the dance, He had flown away to His beloved residence, Mount Kailash. His work was done.

The Chief Minister, Sumantra, engaged many attendants to search in all directions. No one but Vasistha knew that He was the great Lord Shiva Himself, the Master of disappearing.

Now Sri Hanumanji started living among the Princes of Ayodhya. He began receiving much preference and great love from the King and Queens, ministers, citizens and the children. After all He was Sri Rama's dear pet -- Sri Ram, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya.

After the show was over, Shatrughna, the youngest Prince, ran out and brought some sweet fruits and wanted to give them to Sri Hanumanji. Instead of taking them, Hanumanji began to look at the beautiful face of Sri Ram and sat at His feet.

Please give these sweet fruits to the monkey," Shatrughna suggested. He thought that perhaps He would accept it if Sri Ram Himself would offer the fruit to Him by His own hands.

"Take them," Now Sri Ram, Himself, was offering them to the monkey. Even then, Hanumanji kept looking lovingly at Sri Ram's face, clasping His feet.

"Oh, I see dear Brother, He won't eat unless You eat and give Him the remnant. He will only accept Your prasada." Said Shatrughna, remembering something.

Sri Ram lifted a fruit to His lips and ate a little; then, as soon as He wanted to give Him the prasada, Hanumanji leaned up and picked up the fruit and began to eat. And there was no limit to His joy in tasting it! The taste of the fruit started unfolding layers after layers of it. Its deepening experience of joy almost entranced Him and the taste of the fruit became the universe. Probably it was that experience which is known as transcendental mellow.

For the next few years Sri Hanumanji followed Sri Ram like a shadow, wherever He went. He was a humble, obedient and efficient servant of Him. At night He used to sleep under Sri Ram's bed in Koushalya's palace. Hanumanji's happiness knew no limit. But this couldn't last forever.

"My beloved Hanuman," said Sri Ram one day. "There is no longer time for Me to play with You as I must get busy working on fulfilling the purpose of the inhabitants of the planet Svah. I am to redeem the entire Intergalactic atmosphere from the negative forces which are progressing and dominating the world today. It was for this reason that I have taken birth in this human body."

"You too have to unburden Yourself from the debt to Your Guru. You go to the capital Kishkindha and join the ministry of Sugriva. I shall meet You later in that forest and thereafter You will never be separate from Me as long as I reside on this earth."

Sri Hanumanji bowed down to Sri Ram again and again, and looking at Him again and again with tear-filled eyes, he took leave from Him. He rose up in the sky and flew away toward the south.

Everyone in Ayodhya was surprised that the Golden Monkey had left. They wondered how He had been able to leave His beloved Sri Rama.

CHAPTER 10

BACK TO MOUNT ANJANI

There is a town in south India called Hampi. This center was the Intergalactic center of the Vanara civilization. Continuously from the last three to one million years, Hampi has witnessed wonderful feats of greatest superhuman power, freedom and independence. It is surrounded by Mount Malyavan (Pravarsana giri), Rishyamuka, Chitrakuta, Kishkindha, Pampasar, and Mount Anjani.

Even today, these places are expounding and proclaiming the secrets of that extraordinarily powerful race and their culture, of which innumerable proofs exist. In that area are found artistic caves with huge rocks and stonehenges, each one weighing a thousand tons.

Who could have fixed these huge rocks and slabs in such an organized and artistic way? What a great superhuman power they must have possessed! Sri Hanumanji was born in the atmosphere of such a civilization where superhuman power and uncommon deeds were always demonstrated and were a day-to-day ordinary phenomena.

In our modern world, power is only an one-sided achievement. That means we cannot expect a karate fighter to be a philosopher, or a big boxer to be a cultured musician. We cannot imagine a body-builder and weight-lifter to love like Romeo or Juliet. Their heart is not full of feelings.

Sri Hanumanji and His contemporary civilization was not only based on superhuman powers but also on feelings of the heart. They were able to sacrifice everything, even the dignity of their great power, for love, for

spiritual accomplishment. We find a big boxer is also an expert in music. A great warrior is also full of compassion. He becomes a disciple. He loves God. And such a love is understood to be like the intense, causeless, unconditional love developed by a teenage, very delicate and sensitive girl for her lover; about whom she has only heard and never met, never seen through her own eyes, but still gets so occupied and absorbed in her love for him that she loses her taste for food, sleep, and other conversations and entertainments. Everything becomes dry and vacant, as if the entire existence rushes to bite her in separation from her lover.

Only a fortunate one develops such a blessed love. And when such a delicate feeling and love rises for God, it is called Purvaraga. When it takes place in a fortunate one towards a manifestation of the Divine, it is said to be the highest platform of spirituality. And in His teens Sri Hanumanji developed such a kind of love.

Sri Hanumanji is a big karate fighter, big boxer, a great warrior, with extraordinary muscles. He lifts up huge rocks, fixes artistically huge stonehenges. At the same time He is a great musician, a unique philosopher. At the same time a great lover of God. A very refined and most delicate form of love of God called PURVARAGA takes place in His life. In the history of God's love, this Purvaraga state of love of God has taken place only in the heart of the gopies.

In the fulfillment of Sri Hanumanji's Purvaraga, Lord Shiva had taken Him to Sri Ram. Now, by the order of His Beloved, Hanumanji had come back to the abode of His parents on Mount Anjani, one mile away from the sacred pond Pampasar.

It was as if only His physical body had come. His heart, His senses and His interests all remained with Sri Ram in Ayodhya. Even the loving, caressing association of His parents and friends could not console Him. However, the caves, riverbanks, hilltops and groves where He had once wandered with great hopes and expectations of a meeting, began to attract Him once again.

Those were the places where He had sat once long ago, shedding tears in love of some unknown friend. Now He had met that Friend, touched Him, talked with Him, and had been in deep communion with Him. When He was sitting, or wandering, or just looking at the nature's beauty, the love-laden glances of Sri Ram appeared before Him, sometimes within the heart and sometimes outside in the groves.

Sri Ram's way of looking, speaking, smiling, and His way of walking, all came again and again to the mind of Sri Hanumanji. He was tormented with love day and night. Wherever He went His eyes shed tears, His speech became painful, and hunger and thirst disappeared. Sometimes He was found lying under some tree where He had submerged into an oceanic-experience of pure Lovetrance. Keshari and Anjana were worried much and would search helplessly for their dear Son in the groves.

Even in those days of scorching torment there was one thing which was extremely soothing and pleasing to His soaring heart, and that was the Holy Name of His Beloved Sri Ram:

Sri Ram, jai Ram, jai jai Ram!

Sri Ram, jai Ram, jai jai Ram!

These words were nectar to His ears and He would sing aloud the Holy Name with great rejoicing. Hearing His sweet musical voice, Keshari

and Anjana used to be thrilled with pleasure because at least there existed something which was able to console the heart of their Son.

"He must have a substitute," Keshari told his wife one morning. "If we do not make Him busy, His life will become full of sorrows and pain."

"I agree, but what substitute can there be?" Inquired Anjana seriously. "How about marriage?" asked Keshari.

"Oh no, it does not seem to be consistent with my Son. I know Him very well, He has got some other aim of life in which marriage is irrelevant. It does not play a role. It will simply consume His valuable time. If we compel Him to marry we may lose Him, He might go away." Anjana's statement had a very good weight and Keshari agreed with her.

"I am taking Him to Kishkindha." Keshari was referring to the capital and center of the Vanara civilization, a culture famous not only all over the world, but also on other planets.

"I shall introduce Him to the ministry of King Bâli and Sugriva. Our Son might become engaged in various political subjects, and in such activities His sadness might be dispelled."

Keshari conveyed his proposal to his Son after considering over it from different angles. Hanumanji agreed simply. He was not in the habit of arguing with His parents and He also remembered His promise to His guru and Sri Ram.

Keshari and Hanumanji proceeded to Kishkindha. The city was situated on the bank of the Holy river, Tungabhadrà. There were decorated artistic royal paths, magnificent mansions, palaces, ponds, and auditoriums for dancing and lectures. But all of them were so constructed that nobody could recognize them apart from nature. They were not rebellious against

nature, never creating pollution. They were artistically blended into those hills, groves, trees and riverbanks.

The two travelers arrived at the creeper door of one of the cavities of the valley. Suddenly two huge forms of Vanara warriors appeared and welcomed them.

"King's assembly!" Keshari ordered. Immediately the gatekeepers went inside and after a short interval returned.

"Yes you are welcome, His Majesty is waiting for you inside," he said.

They were escorted to a wide, open hall which was majestically adorned with fresh flower garlands hanging on the walls and silk curtains, antiques and paintings adorned the rooms. Hundreds of Vanara ministers were sitting in golden chairs. In the center, on a jeweled golden throne, two huge, tall and bright personalities were sitting discussing some political affairs. Seeing Keshari, they got up from their seats.

"For a long time I had a desire which I could not convey to your Highness because of shyness. My desire was to see your Son, Who has brightened the glory of the Vanara race by conquering death and being blessed with extraordinary benedictions and divine weapons from the higher forces of creation. He has received Vedic knowledge from the Lord of the Sun planet himself.

"I wanted to invite and offer a royal reception to Sri Hanumanji from the side of the Vanara state so that, through His association, I could be empowered in spreading the message of Tungabhadra waves. I am very grateful to you that you have brought Him. All of my ministers will take good care of Him. May He receive the friendship of my son Prince Angada, who has recently returned after completing his education."

Keshari returned to his mountain home and Hanumanji became one of the members of the advisory board of the King. Very soon He became busy in arranging the affairs of the state. Since He had promised His guru that He would look after Sugriva (the younger brother of King Bali) He preferred to be intimately associated with him alone.

In Kishkindha, Sri Hanumanji received inconceivable appreciation, praise, and love for His intuitive suggestions, power, intelligence, and picturesque way of speaking and expressing His ideas. Hanumanji was very busy in different fields of royal activities, but this did not harm His spiritual progress. In fact, it strengthened and solidified His love for Sri Ram.

When one fathoms the deeper and deepest levels of love in the path of Lovetrance, the rapturous joy of love is indicated by different signs and expressions of the physical body -- like tears coming to the eyes, thrills, choking voice, tremors and always being thirsty to hear about the Cosmic Beloved, speaking about Him incessantly, and being transcendently-intoxicated, etcetera. Sri Hanumanji's transcendental love used to overflow into these eight satvic symptoms.

By constantly singing the Holy Name of God, meditating on His transcendental form, contemplating His pastimes, and residing in the place pertaining to His frolics, by diving and floating in the eight satvic feelings, the physical expressions gradually subsided. They became intensified in the form of sthayibhava, which made Him like a meditative yogi.

Sthayibhava is a transcendental mellow-like flow of the electrical energy of Lovetrance in sweetest possible streams and waves of bliss-consciousness. When one gets established in any one of the five relationships with God, he is enveloped by a warm, inexplicable state of

tenderness and sweetness and, abiding in this, he feels himself part and parcel of God. Then, naturally, whatever happens outdoors, such as the blowing of the breeze, the flying of birds, floating clouds, rainbows, showers, or the open sky, green trees, cooing of cuckoos, the flowing of the river, or the light of the moon, all become additional waves of joy, reminding him of the Supreme Lord and he becomes overwhelmed with love and ecstasy.

It was in this way that Hanumanji was able to remain uninvolved and totally unattached, in spite of being in the midst of innumerable activities and intense business. This gave Him a very stable, profound and firm personality which attracted every pure-hearted person like a magnet. Thus, all the pure-hearted Vanaras became very dear friends of Sri Hanumanji and they were learning how to evolve in superior joys.

Prince Angada became one of His great admirers. King Bali trusted Him more than anyone, and Sugriva was unable to live for a single moment without Him. Thus, the Kingdom of Kishkindha became a lovely abode of Sri Hanumanji.

[AN EXPLANATION OF THE FIVE PLANES OF EXISTENCE:

(A) Physical Plane - Where human beings, animals and the three dimensional world live and move. The Earth and all of the planets of the solar system are in the physical plane.

(B) Astral Plane - Where spirits live who have not yet receive a physical body, but are waiting for it. They have an astral and causal body which envelopes the soul. Also the great enlightened yogis live in the astral plane to help the world, remaining invisible.

(C) Celestial Plane - Where more refined and powerful beings live in comparison to the material and astral planes. The body and mind have five thousand times the capacity to enjoy pleasures of the senses. Almost all siddhis which Patanjali describes in Vibhutipada, such as becoming atomical, become large, appearing and disappearing at will, materializing in hundreds of places simultaneously, becoming lighter than cotton, etc., are available. Celestial inhabitants can influence people from the material and astral planes, but not of the transcendental and Lovetrance planes. The planets of these people begin beyond the Polestar. They are called demigods and gods but not The God.

Their bodies are more endurable than the bodies of human beings.]

CHAPTER 11

COMPANION IN THE DAYS OF TROUBLE

According to Intergalactic history, the demon race had many different traditions, such as the Daityas, Rakshasas, Danavas and Asuras. All demons were not necessarily evil-minded people. There have been many realized souls among them.

By instinct, however, they are materialists, interested mainly in satisfying sensual temptations. They have supernatural power by birth and this, combined with their materialistic attitude and lack of interest in spiritual wisdom, leads to exploiting others for their own pleasure.

The state of Kishkindha was surrounded by the states of an extraordinary, powerful demon race which did not originally belong to the planet Earth. These beings only worshipped power and success. They were great scientists and men of knowledge. They used astral-traveling, telepathy and unimaginable weapons through which one could start the blowing of a terrible wind, or a shower water or fire. They also indulged in hypnotism, through the use of other weapons and other feats of black-magic.

They used all of these arts in an attempt to finish off the original dwellers of the planet Earth, and also to conquer other planets of the solar system. They were gaining more success day by day. This class of beings was interested only in material accomplishments, and all their ambitions were sex and belly-oriented.

In the North there lived a very dreadful figure, Viradha by name. In the East dwelled Khara, Dusana and Trishira. In the West the terrible

Kabandha reigned, and in the South, in the Indian Ocean, there was an island where the highly powerful, ten-headed King Ravana ruled.

This demon race was fond of wine and passion. They studied physical pleasure incessantly, and Ravana discovered countless medicines, herbs, drugs, and tantric-procedures for everlasting sexual power. He was a great master of sexual orgies.

He preserved his body along with immense sexual power for more than one million, two hundred and ninety-six thousand years. In this period he enjoyed thousands of maidens from all parts of the world and other planets. In the bars and restaurants many beautiful, young ladies were compelled to serve, and they were available for everyone's enjoyment. Only one condition was required, and that was that the male should belong to the Rakshasa race.

Ravana married thousands of wives and produced more than fifty thousand sons. He wrote a book in verse entitled, "Uddish Tantra," describing methods of developing sexual power and enjoying sex limitlessly.

This race was addicted to meat-eating and they developed various ways to taste meat. Throughout the night in their restaurants, whole buffaloes were being boiled in oil or fried. In order to rout out the human race, they spread the fashion of relishing the taste of human-flesh, and of drinking human blood. They never ate their own people. They wanted to increase their population so they could spread all over the world and to other planets. They especially liked to eat philosophers and spiritual people. They always persecuted this class.

Although the whole world, along with a few planets, was afraid of this aggressive community, King Bali was fearless. He used to pay his homage to the philosopher class, and remained unconquerable even by the combined forces of this race. Therefore, Ravana always respected the vow of friendship which had been made after his defeat in a war with Bali.

Sri Hanumanji by nature hated this community. He was against any cooperation or friendship with this class of people; therefore, deep in His heart, He could not really like Bali. He did like Bali's younger brother, whom Bali also loved like his own soul. Later however, Bali's love for Sugriva turned into a burning hatred.

One twilight, the brother-in-law of King Ravana, Mayavi by name, the son of King Maya, approached the palace of King Bali and roared in great wrath,

"Oh mean, rascally monkey, come out of your cave or I will break your head into pieces! You are all puffed up because of defeating the careless Ravana - come out. I shall teach you what real power is."

Actually, Mayavi had never seen Bali. When he heard the news that his in-vincible brother-in-law, King Ravana, had been caught by the Vanara King, Bali, who belonged to a less powerful race than he, he was very eager to conquer this gentleman, and then to joke about it with Ravana. Ravana, whose ambition was to become the emperor of all the planets and spread his empire throughout the entire cosmic-egg, had been defeated by Bali.

Bali, the greatest power of the Earth, who had put even Ravana's head down, in turn, would be killed by Mayavi. Mayavi would have a good joke on his brother--in-law. This was a very popular situation in India in that kind of relationship. To enjoy this double fun, Mayavi arrived at Kishkindha.

King Bali, as a ruler, as a husband, as a father and brother, and even as a man of knowledge, was unique and successful. But whenever his power was challenged, especially in a duel or fight, he would get totally excited and so obsessed with terrible rage that he could not recognize anyone. Then, only by fighting and killing the opponent was he able to get peace and relaxation.

When King Bali came out of the palace, he was full of extreme wrath. Mayavi, who had never conceived such a dreadful, terrifying face and huge body, became very frightened, lost his courage, and ran away. By now Bali was obsessed with wrath, and he was in no way going to spare Mayavi. The only way Bali could be satisfied was either to kill him or be killed by him.

Bali chased him. He was so confident that he didn't trouble to take any weapons He relied only on his two hands as he was an excellent boxer. Mayavi threw a stone at Bali which angered him even more. Now, how could he be spared?

Because Bali's brother, Sugriva, loved him, he followed him; and because Sri Hanumanji loved Sugriva, he followed also. Very soon Mayavi found himself unable to save himself from the cruel clutches of the dreadful Bali in an open duel. Quickly he escaped into a nearby cave.

Bali turned his terrible gaze, full of wrath, towards Sugriva and Sri Hanumanji and said,

"You just wait here about fifteen days."

Then he entered the deep dark cave. The terrible sounds of boxing were heard, as well as the cracking of bones, and bodies falling to the floor, along with the loud roars as they challenged each other.

Sugriva and Hanumanji waited outside for thirty days, along with all those ministers who had come to see the duel. Bali used to be totally abnormal when he was in a spell of anger. He didn't know how to exclude a third person in a duel. It didn't matter whether the person was coming to help him or to fight with him. Bali never knew, so he would fight anyone within sight - thus the ministers decided discretion was the better part of valor and waited outside the cave.

After one month, all of a sudden, Sugriva and Hanuman heard the heavy sound of someone being dashed against the earth, and the unclear sound of a scream-ing voice of a dying monkey. Soon afterwards, they saw a swift current of blood flowing out of the cave.

After observing this fearful incident, Sugriva became terribly frightened and said,

"Hanuman, it seems that Mayavi has killed my brother. Now he is not go-ing to spare me when he comes out of the cave."

The reason for his fear was the illusive voice created by the demon Mayavi.

Before Sri Hanumanji could give any suggestion, Sugriva stood up and rolled a rock weighing many thousands of tons against the door of the cave and rushed towards the city. He ordered Hanuman to accompany him to the city and to close the door of the fort. He felt that by remaining together, the fear would be less if they were attacked, for they could defend themselves more easily.

The news spread all over the city very quickly. Everyone became terrified, for they believed that King Bali had been killed and that the cruel demon was com-ing to destroy the city. All of the ministers united in thought

and felt that there was a great need for a new king who could guide them in fighting. All of them agreed that Sugriva should occupy the royal throne and command the army. Su-griva was unwilling to have this position, but to no avail, for the Vanara race and kingdom needed protection.

Meanwhile, in the cave, thirty days of constant boxing had made Bali terribly tired and exhausted. On the thirtieth day he killed the demon and dashed him on the floor. Then, after resting, Bali walked towards the door but found that it had been blocked by a heavy rock. Due to the constant fighting, he could not count the days of his combat with the demon and when he saw the door shut his terrible wrath was directed toward Sugriva, who was the guard.

Bali had to use his whole power again to move the rock and make his way out. By this time Bali was a mass of embodied, energized anger. He walked all the way to the city gate and found it closed. He jumped the wall and entered the royal assembly where he found Sugriva sitting on the royal seat which was his. He mis-understood everything. He thought that that rascal Sugriva had tried to kill him by shutting him in the cave, and that now he had occupied his seat.

He thought that all the love which Sugriva had shown him was just show, a deception. Full of anger, with blood red eyes, he roared and jumped on Sugriva, who was quickly approaching him to offer him his respect. Bali dashed him to the floor and began to beat Sugriva's chest with his heavy fists.

Sugriva could not bear it and somehow he arose and ran away. He started running, but Bali had now become enraged. In his chronic anger, he had not learned to spare whoever he took as an enemy, but knew only to kill

him. Bali chased Sugriva, who was faster than himself, wherever he went. Thus they traveled all over the world, right from Kalaparvata (North Pole) to Svetakunjar giri (South pole), and from Tanradvipa and Nagadvip (North and South America) to China. This chase continued for many years.

They were so well-equipped with the art of space travel that for them the world was not very big. Bali was so powerful that he would go around the whole of Eurasia every day before sunrise. He used to go for his morning ablutions on four seashores, the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Antarctic and the Indian Oceans. Thereafter he would take his daily breakfast.

These powers were natural to people living during the time of Intergalactic history, even though they sound fantastic to us now. All people living during this time were equipped with many powers. During this time people were afraid of those who were spiritually advanced because their words possessed great power. Whatever a great spiritual man said happened; and people were especially frightened of being cursed by such men. All these powers were nothing in comparison with spiritual experience.

There is an example of a great and powerful demon named Dundubhi who possessed power to assume any form at will. He used to jump in the ocean and churn it up like an ordinary pond. He used to throw mountains as if they were clumps of clay or footballs.

This demon approached Mount Himalaya one day and said,

"I am feeling itches in my mighty arms. Give me a challenge. I have come here to beg you to challenge me to a fight."

In the Golden Age of Vedic history there was a beautiful philosophy of life: the origin of life was not matter but pure consciousness. It is a subject

full of wonder and mystery. This is apparently inconceivable to us now because our values of life have totally changed. But truth is truth - TRUTH IS whether one believes it or not. If we study the philosophy of consciousness, systematically, we find the mountains, rivers and trees are but different expressions of con-sciousness, and, like human beings, they are united. That's why Saint Francis used to call the sun, Brother Sun, and the moon, Sister Moon. It was with this understanding that Dundubhi spoke to Mount Himalaya.

Himalaya was doubtful that he would win so he replied,

"There are so many yogis and Rishis silently meditating upon my different hilltops. If I am in move-ment, then they may be disturbed and curse us both. So I suggest that you go to the South on the bank of Tungabhadra. There King Bali lives, and he is highly powerful in the world today."

Immediately Dundubhi flew to the South. Within no time he arrived at the city gate and assumed the form of a gigantic buffalo, and entered the city, break-ing its gate, mansions, walls, and killing the inhabitants of the city with his huge horns.

"Oh, scoundrel Bali, why have you hidden in your cave, knowing about my arrival in your city? Oh fool, come and show me how much power you have," Dundubhi roared at the door of King Bali.

"Who is this stupid demon who intentionally wants to enter the mouth of death," the red-eyed Bali said, grinding his teeth and rushing to the door.

As Bali came forward, he gave Dundubhi a heavy kick with his right foot. Dundubhi stumbled for the first time in his life. Bali jumped on him,

dashed him to the earth three times, and then caught his large horns by his mighty arms and began to rotate them. A heavy flow of blood began to flow out as far as the city, and Dundubhi died on the spot. The great Bali raised him by his legs, wheeled him around several times and threw him into space. The body fell on Mount Rishyamuka, about ten miles away, and the terrifying body broke into many pieces.

After it's release from Bali's arms when his body was passing through space pouring blood everywhere, a considerable quantity of blood dripped upon the abode of a great spiritualist named Maharishi Matanga. His ashram and the surrounding gardens were polluted by this impure blood, and the Rishi became enraged. He was very aware of peace and purity and didn't want his holy ashram to be polluted.

He took water in his right palm from his kamandalu and said,

"Let this wicked Bali, who is full of vanity because of his power, die as soon as he enters the boundary of this mountain, and any member of his party when they arrive here, let his skull break into many pieces."

Uttering the words of the curse like a thunderbolt, he dropped the water on the earth. The news spread all around and Bali became very careful and prohibit-ed all of his attendants from going near that place.

While Sugriva was running everywhere in search of shelter and Bali was constantly chasing him, Hanumanji somehow became successful in conveying this message to him,

"Please go to Mount Rishyamuka. It is a safe shelter for you."

Immediately Sugriva recollected the incident which had occurred in the past and found an anchor for the sinking ship of his life. He entered the forest of Matanga-Vana of Rishyamuka hill. Here, Maharishi Matanga's

ashram became a safe shelter for Sugriva, since Bali was not allowed to enter without fear of death. This ashram provided protection for Sugriva, and Bali returned to his kingdom. With Sugriva no longer in the capital, Bali confiscated all of Sugriva's possessions, including his wife Ruma.

Hanumanji tried to explain to Bali that his brother Sugriva was not an offender at all, and that he only wanted peace. But Bali didn't know how to forgive and said,

"I will rub out his name from the planet Earth. I will see how long that rascal keeps hiding like a rat in that ashram. I don't want to hear anything more about him!"

"No one can remove the illusion of one who is so impatient that he cannot even hear a humble statement that is contrary to his own misconception," Hanumanji explained to all of the ministers as He left for Rishyamuka. There He joined Sugriva, along with three other ministers, Jambavanta, Nala and Neela, and all of them began to pass their days very carefully, awaiting the dawn of new hope.

CHAPTER 12

THE BELOVED'S ARRIVAL

The spring disappeared and the rains appeared. The rainy season disappeared and the winter appeared. The years rolled by and Sugriva used to sit with his four ministers on the hilltop over-looking Pampa pond, which extended for eight kilometers.

The pond was beautiful with large lotuses, and their wide green leaves floating on its top. They were all colors, red, blue, white and yellow.

Innumerable kinds of birds, deer, and lions were playing on the green grass, as well as in the water along the hill range extending up to Mount Pravarsana.

Whenever Sugriva looked at Kishkindha his eyes used to fill with tears. Sri Hanumanji would then console him by telling him various stories of wisdom and would remind him of the bright future which had been predicted by the Rishis.

One day while they were sitting on the hill looking at the expansion of the sky, they suddenly heard the crying of a maiden. She passed through the sky in one of the many kinds of chariots that had been discovered those days. It was a golden chariot, able to travel in space, under the water, and on the earth equally. Like a flash of lightening it was flying toward the South.

The maiden was tormented and weeping. As soon as she saw the gentlemen sitting on top of the hill, she dropped a bundle of clothes and ornaments. It fell in front of them. None of them, however, was able to unveil the significance of this mysterious event. Ultimately Sugriva decided to keep the bundle safely in his cave and wait for more secret unfoldment.

After a few weeks, Sugriva was wandering alone on the top of Mount Rishyamuka, overlooking the Pampa pond, which was lying like a mirror on the lap of mother nature, reflecting the green fruit trees, blossoming flowers, encircling creepers, singing bumble bees, cooing cuckoos and chirping birds. It was if the maiden of the forest had fully adorned herself to welcome her beloved guest.

The wide green leaves, moving and trembling in the breeze, appeared to be inviting the passing beloved. The cooing of the birds was if calling the far-off beloved. When all the decoration outside in the form of nature, and

the inner yearning of the soul is complete, and every atom and every cell is invoking the Beloved, then how long can he delay? He cannot delay - he comes - he cannot be stopped. Now he comes.

Sugriva was looking and marveling at the miracle of nature. Suddenly his eyes fell far beyond the grove and he felt a shock of fear. He shouted loudly,

"Oh Hanuman, oh Jambavanta, Nala and Neela, all of you please come immediately."

Instantly they jumped to the spot and looked to where Sugriva was pointing with his finger.

Two extraordinary Beings with magnificent bodily structures, heros, one blue and the other golden-complexioned, were approaching from that direction. They were adorned with strong, large bows and a few arrows strung on their backs. They were fearlessly looking at the beautiful play of nature as They approached slowly - slowly - slowly.

Sugriva said to his ministers, who were full of apprehension,

"From where could They have come? In the North Kabandha swallows up all those who try to come South, from the Eastern to the Western ocean. No human beings live in Kishkindha. The whole forest is full of demons and wild beasts, and this couple is wandering in such a dense forest full of dangers so freely that They must be extraordinary warriors."

"Hanuman! You approach Them in the form of a celibate ascetic and find out if They are engaged by Bali to kill me!" Requested Sugriva.

"Bali is a religious person and if They are his friends, Gods, as semi-divine Vanaras, They would respect an ascetic; and if They are warriors of Ravana then their way of dealing with an ascetic would make them known to

us. After all, with an ascetic none in the modern civilization of the Silver Age deals with a double-faced attitude," said Sugriva.

"Please wait for my sign," Hanumanji said. "Be free from suspicion, Bali cannot approach here and moreover, taking help from others has never been his nature. Nonetheless, I will go to see who They are," Hanumanji assured him.

In the form of a teen-age ascetic, Hanumanji was adorned with a sacred thread on His shoulder, a rod of palasha and a deer skin in one hand and a water--filled kamandalu in the other. He had rudraksa beads around his neck, long brown hair tied in a top-knot on his head, with sacred ash paste on His forehead. Sri Hanumanji jumped from the top of the mountain and appeared before the divine couple as if He was coming from Matanga's hermitage.

"May You meet all auspiciousness in Your life." The Ascetic blessed Them with folded hands and then He continued, "Oh You large armed, lotus-eyed, di-vinely lustrous Youths, may I know why You are taking the trouble to walk on this hard land full of thorns when Your feet are softer than the petal of a flower? I can see that You are adorned with tree bark and matted hair, but, also Your shoulders which resemble those of a lion, bear large and mighty bows. Your muscles and arms show Your unfathomable strength. Your faces shine like the sun and the moon.

"I wonder how You came to this fearful forest? I am puzzled. If You might be Nara and Narayana, then why do You carry these bows and arrows and swords? If You are among Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva, then what is the purpose of this princely human form? Oh, I am constantly feeling a sense of thrill and horri-pulation of the deepest devotion toward You. I guess that

You may be the Supreme personality of the Godhead appearing as twins to shower His grace upon this in-significant servant of Yours. Please kindly tell Me!"

Rama then said, "Oh, Lakshmana, it kindles a pleasant surprise in My heart to find this little Ascetic who speaks such scholarly language. It is really wonder-ful. How did He arrive in this dense forest? He seems to be a master of grammar for not a single letter or word is used without reason during His talk. His accent is correct and His pronunciation is clear, His use of words is scholarly and He never stumbles in His speech."

Na nrgveda vini tasya

nàyajurveda dhàrinah

nàsàmaveda vidusah sakyamevam prabhàsitum

nùnam vyàkaranam kritsnarnanena bahudhà srutam.

Sri Rama continued, "One must be educated in the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, and a master in Sama Veda, to speak in such a beautiful language. Definitely He must have penetrated all fields of grammar and also music. Not a single mistake has been made by Him in His long talk, nor has there been any strain over His eyes, forehead, eyebrows and mouth.

"He has conveyed His message very quickly and in concise terms. None of His words have been harsh to the ears. His voice erupts from the navel, springs up uninterruptedly, and comes in word form which spontaneously flows in the sweetest and most influential tone of music called Madhyam tone!"

Anayà chitrayà vachà

tristhàna vyanjanasthayà

kasya nàràdhyate chitta

mudyatàserarerapi.

Sri Ram spoke further, "Oh Lakshmana, hearing the voice of this little Ascetic springing out from the heart and throat and head, who would not be over-filled with great joy? I believe that even if an enraged enemy with a sword in hand comes to kill, he would definitely change his attitude by hearing such an outstanding speech.

"Even though He belongs to the philosopher's class (as He appears by His dress and manner of speaking) He has saluted Us, seeing Us older and in ascetic dress, although We are equipped with weapons. This denotes His humility. By flawless speech He proves Himself a great grammarian, musician and scholar. He is also fearless, for He roams in this dangerous forest, which indicates great power and the power of wisdom."

Sri Ram then answered Hanumanji's question,

"Born in the dynasty of the Sun, I am Rama, the elder son of Dasharatha, the King of Ayodhya, and this is my brother Lakshmana. Oh Bramhin, by the order of My honorable father I came to the jungle along with My wife, Sita, who has been stolen. We are searching for her all over the forest. Dear Ascetic, would You please tell Us who You really are and why You are wandering in this forest?"

"My beloved Lord!" Sri Hanumanji felt a shock of love and joy and fell down prostrate at His lotus feet. "I, being so ignorant, could not recognize You, but Oh merciful One, why are You asking like an unknown, unacquainted stranger? My Lord!"

Sri Rama stood silent, and Hanumanji wondered why those wondrous arms of His extremely generous and merciful Lord, which were generally so very quick to raise and embrace those who had fallen at His feet, were now

so still and silent? Hanumanji began to think and be tormented. Tears began to wash the feet of His Beloved constantly. In that torment, His psychological state, which bore the form of a celibate ascetic, was dissolved, and Hanumanji was exposed in His original natural Vanara form.

God picks up and embraces everyone. His mercy and compassion is unconditional everywhere. Anyone can perceive and enter into the bliss consciousness of love trance. However, to one who is obscured by even a tinge of hypocrisy, mercy cannot find a way. It cannot overpower him with love and joy or enlightenment.

As soon as the artificial form of Hanumanji disappeared, Sri Rama bent low and raised Him forcibly and clasped Him against His chest and said, "Oh My dear Hanuman!"

In that moment, Hanumanji was dumb-struck. He forgot His body and His mind, and in that loving caress of Sri Ram, Hanumanji became eternal, never changing, the Absolute Reality. In that outstanding experience of Transcendental Reality He found His true goal of life.

"Your bright blue feet, oh My Lord, which are softer than the lotus petals, should not walk over this hard soil in front of My eyes. If so My heart will break into pieces."

Then Sri Hanuman, Who was sitting in front of both Brothers in the particular posture of yoga known as virasana (in which one leg is upraised and the other is fixed on the floor with hand turned upward), made this request,

"If You love Me and feel rightful in Your mercy, please sit on My shoulder."

Sri Rama smiled and looked at Lakshmana, Hanumanji was drenched with nectar.

One Prince sat on each shoulder and held Hanumanji's head with one of Their arms. Both of Their legs were hanging over the chest of Hanuman and He held them fast against His heart as He flew through space. Within a few minutes They landed on the hilltop where Sugriva, Jambavanta, Nala and Neela were eagerly waiting for a new turn to their fortune.

CHAPTER 13

IN CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BELOVED

As soon as Sri Rama and Lakshmana alighted from Hanuman's shoulders, Sugriva came forward and welcomed those heart-captivating, beautiful Princes, Who were dressed like ascetics. Immediately he plucked a branch from a tree and offered it as a seat for Lord Rama.

Sri Rama sat down upon it, and then Hanumanji plucked another branch from a fragrant sandalwood tree and Lakshmana sat down also.

Sri Hanumanji now introduced Sri Ram and Lakshmana to Sugriva and the four ministers on the top of Mount Rishyamuka.

"Even the king of the planet Svah approaches and requests help from those who are able in times of emergency and great wars to give Him aid. This is Sri Rama and Sri Lakshmana, the beloved Princes of the Emperor of Ayodhya, who is feared even by the Intergalactic con-queror, the demon Ravana. Because of his fear, Northern India is not attacked. Certainly They have arrived here to purify our Vanara race by allowing Us to touch the dust of Their lotus feet."

Hanumanji, turning, concluded, "And this is our loving Prince Sugriva, the younger son of the Governor of the semi-divine Vanara race."

"I wonder, my dear friend, what may be the cause behind your homeless condition?" Sri Rama inquired of Sugriva, looking at his face.

"I am an insignificant, exiled Vanara and have been robbed of my wife and all my royal possessions by my powerful older brother Bali. I have found this a place of refuge and am passing my days here waiting for the time of new hope so that I may regain my dear wife and freedom."

Sugriva continued by telling Sri Ram the history of his race from the beginning of creation, and of the accident which had caused him to fall into his present situation.

Everyone listened attentively. Finally Sugriva looked at Sri Rama and in-quired about His ancestry.

"We are the Sons of the late King Dasharatha, the sixtieth king of the Sun Dynasty. He had three queens. When the King went to planet Svah to help in a great war, the youngest Queen, Kaikeyi, accompanied him in the same chariot. The war became very intense and came to its worst point.

"The King was so busy fighting that he did not know what had happened to his aerial chariot. It was almost destroyed by the constant shocks of the attacks, but Queen Kaikeyi realized the danger and made the chariot run well as long as the fighting lasted. When all of the enemies were killed, the King became aware of the Queen's timely action, and knew that it was she who had saved him from the jaws of death. He was highly pleased and asked her to request two boons from him. The Queen had no request at the time.

"After many years the three Queens of the King gave birth to four sons. The first son, Sri Rama, was being prepared for enthronement. He was already the Emperor in the hearts of all the inhabitants of Ayodhya due to His ideal humani-tarian qualities and heroic amiability. A maid servant reminded the youngest Queen of the two boons which had been promised her many years ago by the King. She strongly urged Kaikeyi to ask for the following: First, the exile of Sri Rama for fourteen years, and second, the enthronement of Queen Kaikeyi's son, Bharata, as the emperor of Ayodhya.

"After he heard these boons, the King fell down in a faint on the floor for he realized that he had to keep his promise." Lakshmana continued the story,

"Sri Ram appeared on the spot and, after hearing the news, obediently left for the forest. Because of Ram's outstanding qualities and His love for God, His most beloved wife, Sita (the daughter of King Janaka), and I followed Him. Because of the pain of the separation from His most beloved son, Our father, King Dasharatha, died of a broken heart.

"During this time We have resided in the forest, living among philosophers and meditating monks and ascetics, slaughtering innumerable demons and beasts. We were living in the Panchavati Forest when Sita was stolen away by some unknown assailant. We have come here searching for Sita, without whom my beloved Brother cannot remain peaceful.

"Once Sri Ram asked about a mountainous store of bones, and the Rishis said, `They are the bones of the philosopher class who were eaten up by the demons.' Then Sri Ram, allaying their fears, raised His right arm and said,

`I shall un-burden the earth of such inhuman demons!'"

Lakshmana continued speaking to Sugriva and all the assembled ministers,

"The day before yesterday, We were captured by the great demon Kabandha, whom We killed on the spot. After his death, his spirit sprang up in space and advised Us to come to you and make your acquaintance."

Lakshmana said in conclusion.

"It is my great fortune that the highly spiritual Son of such an elevated Aryan wishes my friendship," said Sugriva. "This is more beneficial to me than to You. My Beloved, You are doing me a great honor by accepting me as Your friend."

Sugriva stretched out his arms toward Sri Ram and concluded,

"All my creativity and energy is Yours. Please accept it and make me Yours."

Sri Ram clasped those out stretched hands of Sugriva's and, filled with great joy, embraced him.

"There is a custom Aryans have of shaking hands in front of a burning fire. Once done they preserve their love and friendship for life, no matter what happens," said Hanumanji, and quickly collected some wood for a fire.

He continued, "The astral bodies and we semi-divine races accept fire as the supreme witness, and so it is My hope that both Your Holinesses will establish this friendship with fire as Your witness."

"Hanuman, You seem to be at the peak of intelligence," Rama said, smiling at Him as Hanuman quickly performed a short worship of fire with flowers.

Sri Ram and Sugriva circumambulated the fire holding hands. Hanumanji was chanting Vedic Hymns.

"You have become my companion, kinsman and friend," Sugriva was say-ing in a choking voice, full of joy.

"Our pain and happiness are one. Your enemy will be my enemy and Your friend will be my friend."

"My friend, Rama does not release an arrow twice; He does not establish a refuge for the homeless twice; and Rama does not speak twice. The same Rama accepts your friendship. Let all the astral and celestial beings roaming in all directions remember it."

These words, spoken by Sri Rama, are not egotistic, they are truth. We will find Him killing Bali by one single arrow and using innumerable arrows for Ravana. It is all a play for Him. Warriors and heroes are always addicted to making fun.

Sri Ram does not give shelter and wealth to the homeless or beggars more than once. This does not mean that He becomes a miser. It means that He gives so much once that the homeless and beggars never need to beg anymore throughout their lifetimes.

It was the tradition in the Sun Dynasty to sacrifice one's body but not to move from a given word. According to modern civilization it would seem a nuisance to stick to a given word because modern man's mind is fickle and restless. There is a great yogi, famous all over the world, who says, "When I find a bigger fish I don't care about the smaller fish I picked up before."

Modern man promises someone, and gives his word to that person, but when a more beneficial person or arrangement comes, then he neglects the previous promise. This is due to fickle mindedness. This happens because man doesn't have the potentiality to decide what is best at once. When you always measure the best on a material level, you lose the origin of

the best within you; then you are caught in a vicious circle. The more the allurements, the more restlessness.

It is actually a sin not to carry through what you have promised, because it makes the mind restless, anchorless, spiritless and empty. No perfume of spirituality will blow. Don't give your word unless you can fulfill it at any cost. If you can always keep your word, then you will receive a greater benediction and meditation in your life than any yogi can give you.

This was an age old system in the dynasty of Sri Ram. That is why He claims

ràmo dvirnà bhibhàsate

Rama does not speak twice.

This is what He had told Sugriva with full feeling and the luster of His dignity.

"Today, my destiny, which robbed me of all possessions and exiled me, proved to be fruitful, for, by Your Beloved Grace I have found You as my loving Friend. It was the golden dawn of my fortune today," Sugriva said to Ram as They sat together on a beautiful blossoming tree branch seat. Lakshmana was sitting close by on another seat made from a branch that was full of sandal blossoming flowers.

The ministers dispersed to arrange for a beautiful feast, and Sri Hanumanji stood nearby with folded palms.

The sky was open, clear and blue. Slow fragrant breezes were enlivening the body and mind, and all was cool and silent.

"One day I was sitting, alone with my four ministers, on this hilltop, like today," Sugriva said to his new Friend, Sri Rama, who was looking like a prince and warrior, lotus-faced, long-armed, clad in philosopher's dress.

Because He possessed such a great and intense love for His wife, Sita, the pangs of separation could easily be read on His face.

Sugriva continued his conversation with Sri Rama,

"We heard a beautiful feminine voice crying in the sky. With great surprise we lifted our heads and saw a line combined with golden and blackish light passing like lightning. The voice we heard from the sky said, 'You become my God-brother and convey my news to my spouse'." Sugriva was telling about the voice full of sorrow which he had heard in the sky. "A scarf was dropped from the sky."

"Where is that scarf?" Sri Rama asked excitedly.

"I have kept it safe," said Sugriva. Glancing at Hanumanji, who leaped to the cave, and in moments brought back the scarf in which the ornaments were wrapped. He put the bundle before them.

"Ah, My beloved! Oh Janaki Sita!" Sri Rama wept tears, placing those bangles, earrings, necklaces, anklets, and the scarf against His bosom.

"My honorable Brother, now We have found our helpers in the best of Vanaras," Lakshmana enjoined politely.

"My dear Friend, I fully believe You are a great scholar and warrior with great intellect acquired from the civilized world. I was only brought up in the jungle," Sugriva spoke in tears, "Bali has stolen my wife, kicked me out, and has insulted me greatly. Still I have not lost my patience and am passing my days silently."

"I will kill the abductor of your wife with My many divine weapons," Sri Rama said with tear filled eyes, looking towards Sugriva.

"I know the wives of Aryans are very chaste, and I can surmise that whom-ever a person like You grieves for is the essence of chastity. I am sure

nobody can harm her. Her purity is like a burning poison," Sugriva said. "I will find her whereabouts and try to throw that rascal who kidnapped her into hell."

"That will be done later," Sri Rama spoke very seriously. At present, Rama does not want to see this fellow who has stolen his friend's wife remain alive."

Sugriva trembled with fear,

"But my brother, Bali, is extremely powerful. We could not even imagine facing him!" Then Sugriva told many things about Bali and took Sri Ram to another place.

"Do You see that?" Sugriva pointed his finger.

"You mean that huge, white, mountainous rock?" Sri Ram asked.

"Well, it's not a rock but the skeleton of a gigantic warrior, Dundubhi, whom Bali killed and threw away, standing in the middle of his own city," said Sugriva.

"Oh, I see!" Sri Ram felt that His friend now wanted to fathom the depths of His powers, and He walked to the huge skeleton and kicked it with the toe of His right foot.

Hanumanji leaped with the skeleton, and soon reported back that it had fallen to earth eighty miles from where they were standing.

When Bali threw it away it was inconceivably heavy due to the large amount of flesh and blood. Now it was just a dry skeleton. Sugriva could not imagine that Sri Ram had kicked it eighty miles, and that Bali, using his full strength and power, using both arms, had thrown it only ten miles. Sri Ram had just kicked it as if it was some cow-dung cake.

Sugriva wanted still more proof of Sri Ram's power, so he took Him to another part of the hill, very close to the Pampa pond. "My dear Friend, do You see those trees?" asked Sugriva.

"You mean those seven palm trees standing in a serpentine way?" queried Sri Ram.

"Yes. Before Bali was cursed by Rishi Matanga, he came here once in the rainy season with seven big ripened dates. Placing them safely in this lonely place, he went to take a bath in the lake. After completing his daily routine he returned and found a huge snake lying on his fruit. 'We cannot eat these fruits because you have polluted them', Bali said. He was very angry with the snake so he cursed it, saying, 'Therefore the seeds of these fruits will sprout, tearing off your body, and they will stand as huge trees'.

"The snake replied, 'I was just attracted by their perfume. Their touch was cool so I laid down upon the fruit. I didn't touch them with my mouth and make them impure. You have cursed me, an offenseless one, so you will reap the consequences of your curse. I now curse you -- whoever shall destroy these trees, shall kill you also'."

Talking to a snake, cursing him and being answered by him seems, nowadays, like a fairy tale. In modern civilization neither curses nor boons are effective. Why? Because we lack endurance and patience. If one is very sincere in his duty and services, and someone else disturbs or persecutes him, and even though he may pardon him, some inauspicious words may spring up from within. These words materialize very quickly-- this is a curse. But we do not curse. We abuse if we become angry, and if we cannot abuse for some reason, then we repress or suppress which pollutes our insides.

Due to lack of depth in the personality, boons are not effective either. We are always wishing for something, flattering and praising others for a reason. We pray, but that praying is usually asking for material needs, our daily bread, or to remove a disease or some discomfort from our life. This kind of wishing, praising and praying robs us of our real inner strength.

One only becomes strong by not taking help from others, by not being a victim of repression, and by facing all problems, persecutions and sufferings of life bravely. Such a one who does not ask God for worldly things, who is in-dependent, and who faces life boldly, has the strength to bless or curse.

How is a snake able to curse? This was not an ordinary snake. There existed a special race with a serpent body and human head. They had an in-dependent civilization on another planet and used to visit the Earth. They were able to curse, as well as offer boons.

This was the special sort of snake Sugriva was telling about, and before he had completed his story, Sri Ram had taken his bow in hand and placed a sharp arrow in it which He released. The arrow pierced each of the huge trees through their roots. The trees broke and fell, creating a terrific noise and the arrow then reversed itself and re-entered Sri Ram's arrow case.

"My Lord," Sugriva's eyes were filled with wonder.

He couldn't speak another word, and when he could finally speak he did not even dare to call Sri Ram his friend. He felt that it was only through Sri Ram's generosity that he had called Him his friend. Sugriva thought that if only he could become Ram's humble servant, that would be a great good fortune! Sugriva saw a new horizon of great power in Sri Ram. His fearful

heart was consoled and he fell down at Sri Ram's feet, Who in turn picked him up in His serene embrace.

Then wisdom erupted in Sugriva's heart and he said,

"My Lord, by Your Grace I am awakened from the lifelong sleep of attachment to prosperity, fame and all the pleasures of the entangling world of maya (illusion) and identification with the body. These are all barriers in the path of Your love. By Your Grace I am awakened in Your transcendental love."

"Oh, Bali is a great benefactor to me. Let him remain King. I have no more enmity towards him. It was because of him that I have found You, my Lord. Take me with You wherever You go. I am Your humble servant."

Sri Ram laughed wholeheartedly, and the echo of His laughter made the whole atmosphere vibrant. Trees shook and dropped flowers, buds straightened their petals and blossomed. In the distance, deer leaped, a peacock cried, and cool, fragrant, calm breezes blew, spreading the enlivening laughter of Sri Ram.

Sri Lakshmana, Hanumanji, Sugriva and the other ministers who had come to invite them for lunch were wonderstruck with the beauty of the laughing face of Sri Ram.

There were two feelings in the laughter of Sri Ram. First, He observed Sugriva's cemetery detachment. This cemetery detachment is a kind of ideas and thoughts of renunciation which seems very cultured, sophisticated, and spiritually advanced, and people become very impressed. The same thing happened to Arjuna in the middle of the battlefield, as told in the "Mahabharatam".

Only an experienced, highly advanced and elevated soul recognizes this as just a spiritual romance. He could laugh at Sugriva, as Krishna laughed at Arjuna's statements and condemned his logic. So also was Sri Ram laughing here. He knew that Sugriva's change of heart towards Bali was due to only a spiritual romance.

Then He peeped through all the garbage of Sugriva's subconscious, hidden, worldly attachments, and his conscious mind. Comparing both, He laughed. Highly advanced elevated souls do not insult anyone even if they know their weaknesses.

Sri Rama was not going to stay on Mount Rishyamuka forever. He had to move and He wanted to accompany Sugriva, for He had to protect his life from the powerful Bali. If Bali had to be killed for the protection of Sugriva, then what was the use of wasting time? After all, Sugriva would not search for Sita wholeheartedly as long as Bali was alive.

"Dear friend, your heart is pure. It has neither greed for the royal throne nor aversion for Bali. However, Ram has accepted you as His friend and has already given His word to kill whomsoever stands against His friend. Therefore, you should help Me in materializing My words. I want to see you as the King of the Vanara race and Bali killed," Sri Rama said.

"As You wish My Lord. Now let us have a nice feast to celebrate Your historical decision."

Yes, yes, everyone was hungry. They returned to the fountain, washed their hands, feet, and faces and assembled under the refreshing shade of a large banyan tree. Sri Ram and Lakshmana were sitting on two elevated seats of soft green leaves and flowering vines. Sugriva sat beside Sri Rama, and Hanumanji was singing a song of Rama's love.

The three ministers were fixing and serving many kinds of fruits, roots, herbs, and minerals placed on a natural dining table. There were separate plates of wide, green lotus leaves for each. Everything was natural and fresh. Nothing was cooked. Fresh spring water was served in a dry gourd.

Everybody was extremely happy and at times Sugriva began to float in the thoughts of a new life in the future. Sri Rama and Lakshmana were enjoying feeling the coolness of the breeze and the sound of cooing cuckoos, as they sat overlooking the Pampa pond, with the hills, dales, and groves all around. They enjoyed, also, the vibrations of the innocent love of this Vanara group.

Hanumanji made sure that Sri Ram and Lakshmana were satisfied. He fed them slowly and gradually up to Their necks. After washing Their hands and mouth, They went to rest.

CHAPTER 14

A REVOLUTIONARY MARCH

Sri Ram, Lakshmana, Hanumanji, Sugriva, and the three ministers arose from their beds one hour before dawn and enjoyed their daily baths and ablutions. As soon as the dawn broke they descended Mount Rishyamuka and marched to-wards the capital Kishkindha. They stopped at a mango grove just outside the city.

Sri Ram said, "It's not the way of Aryans to attack suddenly some unknown person." He paused and said, "My friend, it would be better if you went and challenged Bali to a duel."

Sugriva agreed because he did not want Sri Ram and Lakshmana to attack the capital of Kishkindha. It could ruin the center of Vanara state where the inhabi-tants, with the exception of Bali, were all his own admirers.

"You go ahead. I am coming behind," Sri Ram said.

Sugriva saw that Sri Ram had already fixed a fierce looking arrow on His bow and was surrounded by Lakshmana, Hanuman and two other ministers.

Sugriva arrived at the city gate and fixed his mace on his shoulder and roared like a lion, challenging Bali to a duel.

Bali had just arrived from his morning ablutions at the four sea shores. He was just preparing his breakfast when word came of Sugriva's challenge.

"Oh, has this coward Sugriva become crazy today in inviting his own death by coming to my door!" roared Bali.

Hearing of challenging tone of Sugriva he rushed toward the gate clutching his fists in rage. He opened the gate and jumped like a lion, grabbing Sugriva's mace. They began to fight, using their fists like thunderbolts. The terrible sounds of boxing stirred the ears of the whole city along with Sugriva's party. No longer could Sugriva stay on the ground. There were wounds all over his body and he was almost half dead. The laughing Bali entered his capital.

"My Lord, if You wanted my death why didn't You kill me Yourself? What have You attained by letting me get beaten by my old enemy?" With tear filled eyes and red face, Sugriva was complaining to Sri Ram, Who was standing in a bush with bow fixed and an arrow in His hands.

Immediately Sri Ram threw away His bow and turned His palm on Sugriva's limbs. Suddenly all of Sugriva's pain and wounds disappeared and a new power erupted from within and out. Sugriva began to look at Sri Ram's face.

"You did not tell Me that there is not a single difference between Bali and you. I thought that he would be huge, gigantic and crowned. However, this is not so. It became very difficult for Me to tell you apart. If I had released My arrow and it had pierced the chest of My own dear friend, think what would have happened to Me? The mistake was actually Mine. I should have asked you for the signs of Bali," Sri Ram consoled Sugriva.

Sugriva was tormented by the thought of the arrow piercing himself and said quietly, "There is no special sign. His form, face, hair, dress,

manner of walking and talking are all just like mine and he is not interested in putting on a crown."

"Lakshmana, make some sign on Sugriva," Sri Ram ordered. So Lakshmana made a nice flower garland and put it around Sugriva's neck. "Now there won't be any misconception. I will just stand here behind this tree. You go and challenge Bali once more, and I assure you that it will be a call of death for him."

"Please do not forget this sign of the garland on me and don't wait, for Bali will come in even greater anger now," Sugriva requested. "Do not release any divine weapon which would turn Kishkindha into ashes."

Sugriva did not dare go too close to the city and so began to roar from there. His wounds were quickly forgotten.

Bali, meanwhile, was taking his breakfast, and on hearing the roars, he became highly enraged and rushed out.

Suddenly, his wife Tara clasped his feet and said in tears,

"My dear husband, it seems Sugriva has some greater power behind him, otherwise he would not have challenged you again."

"Don't try to frighten me; don't insult my mighty arms. You go to the gymnasium," Bali scolded his wife.

Tara circumambulated her husband. She knew by intuition that it was the last meeting with him. Weeping, she placed a gold necklace around his neck, put sandalwood on his forehead and touched his feet, but Bali had no time to bother with all of these things and he ran out of the city to where Sugriva was, and slugged him.

That was the start of a terrible fight between the two boxers. Their bodies broke in many places and blood flew out. Sugriva applied all of his

power, but still he seemed to be losing the battle. Again and again he turned his eyes toward that bush where Sri Rama was standing with His long bow fixed with an arrow.

Suddenly, Sri Ram aimed at His target. He pulled His arrow back to His ear and released it. There was a terrible, frightening scream. The whole jungle trembled and Bali fell down flat on the earth. A stream of thick blood began to flow from his chest. He was tossing and turning.

Sri Ram appeared from the bush, His bow still fixed with an arrow. Lakshmana was with Him. Brown-hair-crowned, lotus-eyed, large-armed, ascetic-dressed, cloud-hued Sri Ram was standing in front of the dying Bali.

"Rama! You are a Prince, an Aristocrat and respected among the exponents of the Vedic way of life. I am asking You, what did You derive by killing me, while I was engaged in fighting with another?" Bali raised his head and spoke in great wrath.

"You have put on a philosopher's garment, but you hear neither your con-science nor intuition," Rama spoke sternly.

"Kings fight for the protection of their land, women and religion," replied Bali. "I have neither attacked You for any of these things, nor rebelled, so for what purpose did you kill a forest dweller? Is it some law to shoot a gentleman like a hunter shoots an animal? If You wanted to help Sugriva, then why didn't You face me? Why didn't You come to me to get Your lovely wife Sita back? I would have gone to Lanka and killed Ravana and brought Sita back to You. Of course, Sugriva will gain the state after my death, but Sri Ram, You have killed me breaking the laws of the regulative principles." Bali's throat was getting dry. A lot of blood was flowing. He stopped talking.

"You have not served a spiritual master, that is why you talk all this non-sense. You know neither the mystery of religion nor of regulative principles, you rascal," Sri Ram said, outraged. "One who indulges in sex with the wife of a younger brother, a wife of a son or with one's sister is an offender. He should be shot dead on the spot! Stupid! You, being a criminal, talk to me about regulative principles.

"It has been the tradition from the first Manu that the King of Ayodhya is the King of the entire earth. It is our duty to punish criminals, and it is out of duty to an honorable king to fight face to face with him. You try to save yourself by calling yourself a monkey. You are not an animal, but a semi-divine race. You do ablutions, you have the sacred thread, you study the Vedas. You are a semi-divine race, but still you rape my devotee's wife!"

"To Me everything can be excused, except an offender of My devotee. He cannot be excused at any cost, and that you are!" Said Sri Ram in fiery words.

"I will gain My wife by the power of My own arms and not through the help of a rapist, and so pull him down from the duties of friendship."

"My Lord," Bali realized he was an offender who needed to be punished by the arrow of Sri Ram, who was really a great King and knower of the mysteries of religion. All his harshness and bitterness of heart melted, and with great effort he folded his palms and said,

"Oh, Lord of all, please excuse me for my foolish talk. Oh, great Knower of religion, this insignificant monkey is also a subject of Yours, great Prophet. I am purified by Your arrow. It is my great good fortune that I am dying, seeing Your beautiful lotus face - Your face for whom yogis crave to have a glimpse," and then his words faded out.

"You want to say something. Say it without fear," Sri Ram came closer, removed the arrow from Bali's chest, and lovingly touched Bali's head with His palm.

Bali continued in a gentle and steady tone,

"Now I have no anxiety. Being blessed by Your nectarine touch I have been enlivened. My wife Tara is a lady of wisdom and so I shall not worry about her. My son Angada has a very delicate heart and has been very loving to me. Please accept him as your humble devotee."

"So be it," Sri Ram consented. "You can quit your body easily now!" His words dispersed and Bali fell unconscious chanting, "Sri Ram, Sri Ram, Sri Ram," into the blissful lap of death.

The news spread around the city and everyone was excited and scared. The ministers approached Queen Tara and said,

"Order us, your Highness, to close the door of the city and enthrone Prince Angada."

"Would closing the gate keep such a powerful man away?" Queen Tara scolded them, and out of lamentation rushed to Sri Ram with her son. As soon as she saw the dead body of her husband, smeared with blood, lying on the dusty ground, she wept bitterly and felt immeasurable pain. She raised a piteous wail and caressed his dead body.

Suddenly she looked at Sri Ram standing along with Lakshmana, Sugriva, Hanumanji and the three ministers. She went and knelt down at Sri Ram's feet and said,

"Sri Ram, the King wouldn't feel happy without me in heaven. There are still many arrows in Your arrow case. Please shoot me also. You will

gain merit by donating a wife to my husband Bali. Otherwise, I am going to burn myself with him!"

"You cannot do it!" echoed Sri Ram's voice. "You should accept life in order to contribute to the welfare of others. Look at the face of your son. It is improper for you, a lady of wisdom, to be attached to flesh."

All the lamenting Vanaras paused and their ears lifted to the words of Sri Ram,

"You already know birth and death, pain and happiness comes and goes under the spell of karmas. You cannot hold either. Life erupts like bubbles of water. Death is sure. Therefore, one should not worry about death and troubles. One should only care for the performance of one's duties."

"Oh Queen," Sri Ram said again, "for whom are you lamenting, for body or for consciousness? Body is lying in front of you. Can you stop it from rotting? Does consciousness die? Tell me who was your husband, this inert body, or was he consciousness?"

"Oh great Master, inconceivable are the ways of Your alluring energy." Tara bowed down to His feet, feeling relieved from lamentation and said, "Without Your compassion, beings cannot rise above the darkness of ignorance. Therefore, merciful One, shower Your mercy upon me!"

"Sugriva, enmity ends with death. Please arrange for a kingly burial for Bali. Take the body to the cemetery," Sri Ram ordered Sugriva and all the assembled ministers of Kishkindha.

The body was adorned with silk cloth and flowers. The whole city followed as the body was taken to the cemetery on the bank of the Tungabhadra river. A huge sandalwood pyre was made and Bali's body was

placed upon it. The body was adorned with beautiful flower garlands.

Angada then kindled the fire. Huge sky-touching flames arose reflecting on the holy water of Tungabhadra.

Innumerable Vanaras were standing with tear-filled eyes, struck with won-der, but feeling full of detachment as they thought about the perishable nature of the transient body. Even such a powerful being as Bali dies, and does so helplessly. What a pyre teaches, none of the teachers can teach with a thou-sand words.

CHAPTER 15

SUGRIVA, THE KING OF VANARAS

"By Your grace My Lord, Sugriva is delivered from dangerous persecution. Now please order Sugriva to enter the city so that Kishkindha can worship Your Highness with jewels and pearls, glorifying its own history," said Sri Hanumanji to Sri Ram, representing Sugriva and the assembled citizens of Kishkindha.

"I cannot enter any city until fourteen years have passed," Sri Ram said, and turned towards His younger brother.

"Oh Lakshmana, you go into Kishkindha with Sugriva and inaugurate the abhiseka ceremony, enthrone him on the royal throne and make Angada his prime minister."

"My Lord..." Sugriva was losing his enthusiasm on learning of Sri Ram's intention.

"I am not going to be far from you during these four months of the rainy season," Sri Ram said, pointing to a beautiful hill with his finger.

"You go and rule the state, following the regulative laws and principles of religion. As soon as the autumn season comes you may arrange for the search of My beloved Sita," Sri Ram concluded, and He stood up and walked away.

CHAPTER 16

PANGS OF SEPARATION

Extremely beautiful was that cave in the Malyavan hill of Mount Rishyamuka. Due to its innumerable fountains it was famous as Prasravana giri. It was full of red, black and brown slabs. But the part of the hill where Sri Ram made his residence was made of white coral and marble rocks. They were found scattered artistically, radiating a silvery shine all around.

Sri Ram's marble cave was surrounded by various kinds of creepers with bright blossoming flowers scattering in all directions, decorating the cave, emitting their fragrant perfumes, here, there, and everywhere. Mangos, plantains, apples, oranges, grapes, strawberries, and various roots and herbs were abundant, inviting all to come and enjoy.

As soon as the weather cleared, Lakshmana would go out and pick up some fruit, roots, and fuel. At times Sri Ram would accompany him in walking to some distant shining hill, or would sit on some coral slab near His cave. Many times Lakshmana would ask Sri Ram about various philosophies and yoga. Adhyatma Ramayana records the whole description of Kriya yoga expounded by Sri Ram while He was sitting on such a coral slab.

"No action can be included in yoga, Oh, Lakshmana," said Sri Ram once, "unless it is the spontaneous eruption of a level of consciousness totally devoted to the yearning for the Absolute Divine Mother. It differs in system and structures according to one's natural attraction, either towards the unmanifest and attributeless, or towards the manifest with attributes.

These are all ways of Her expressing Herself through innumerable traditions."

"Look, Lakshmana, at the peacocks, how beautifully they are dancing to the tune of the rumbling and thundering clouds. In the same way a householder, who is naturally attracted to a detached style of life, gets enraptured with joy and dances when a holy saint arrives at his home. But for me, Lakshmana, these thundering clouds are agonizing, unveiling sweet memories of My love, My beloved consort Sita - Oh, where could she be?"

Another time Sri Ram was telling Lakshmana, "Look at the lightning in the clouds. Can you conceive of how the lightning comes so fast and then disappears so fast?"

"How?" Sri Lakshmana asked.

"As the love of a shallow-hearted being does not last long," replied Sri Ram.

Sri Ram constantly, looked at the showering rain over the mountains, and full of feelings, asked, "Could you tell Me, Lakshmana, how the mountain bears the blows of the drops of showering rain?"

"Just like devotees of the Cosmic Mother bear the words of cynical and rascal-like beings without complaint," replied Lakshmana. "And when the crystal clear rain drops mingle with the dusty earth, they lose their cleanliness and they become muddy. This reminds me of Pure consciousness when identified with the body, ego and objects of the senses. It loses it's original purity and becomes polluted."

"Wonderful!" Sri Ram thanked His younger brother, but His eyes were fixed far beyond the hill, on the ponds and lakes filled with trembling

lilies and lotuses. "From so many directions water flows into the rivers and now they are full of water. Could you tell Me how this happens ?"

"To a pilgrim on the path of transcendental wisdom, all the good qualities, regulative principals, limbs of yoga, humanitarianism and patriotism - all these come and fill his entire being with Absolute Perfection. In the same way the waters fill the lakes and ponds," Lakshmana said, gazing in the same direction as his Brother.

"And, as all the swiftly flowing fountains of the mountain constantly flow and flow and flow, assuming the forms of rivers, which, when absorbed into the ocean, become steady, calm and silent, attaining the state of oceanic-consciousness, in the same way restless, sensual, greedy creatures become absolutely calm, cool and blissful, oceanizing themselves in God-consciousness."

As They strolled along a forest path, Sri Ram said to Lakshmana, "Due to ever increasing trees, plants and growing grass, the paths and roads have become overgrown and invisible, just as in the down-trodden Iron Age, Vedic literature and the Vedic way of life disappear, due to the alluring expansion of false, hypocritical sects, isms, and missions."

"Look, Lakshmana, all the trees have been heightened by sprouting an abundance of fresh new leaves. In the same way, a meditator is heightened into a constant series of evolutionary experiences when his discriminating wisdom is awakened."

Sri Ram suddenly saw a small barren part of the hill and said, "Lakshmana, even after these heavy torrents of rain there is not a single blade of grass growing there. Isn't that strange? Really, it's like this. Sex and selfishness are everywhere but they do not arise at all in God-intoxicated

ones. Whenever a strong wind blows, the clouds wither away. Where a wicked son takes charge of the home, long standing family traditions are destroyed. At times there is sunlight and other times deep darkness. Likewise, spirituality, comes and goes as you associate with gentlemen or with wrong men."

Thus the four months of the rainy season passed, along with its floating clouds, blowing winds and showering waters. A beautiful autumn entered the jungle, spreading its splendor from horizon to horizon just as, when the fruits of pious actions in life become ripe, success and prosperity flow, bringing additional waves of joy from all directions. In this way, lilies, lotuses, roses, marigolds, night queens, and jasmine bloomed all over, and bumble bees began to circumambulate, singing the glories of eternity.

New kinds of fruit, roots and herbs were brought by Lakshmana for Sri Ram's dinner.

A great lover of nature, Sri Ram, attracting the attention of Lakshmana, said, "Do you see, Lakshmana, how the ponds, streams and rivers are adorned with crystal clear, transparent water? How do they make you feel?"

Lakshmana said, "Just like the heart of a saint. Just as, when spiritual aspirants evolve to higher and higher levels of consciousness, and their attachments to possessions fall away one by one. At the same time, all great virtues and higher qualities fill the heart drop by drop and it become like a pond of crystal clear water making it an oceanic heart."

Sri Ram added, "In times when there is a shortage of water the ponds become shallow - then the fish become lean and thin, and full of anxiety. So also, family people, during moneyless times become anxious."

Sri Ram went on, "The sky devoid of clouds becomes so beautiful, just like the life of a devotee of Divine Mother becomes vast, all embracing and all encompassing by abandoning the hopes and expectations of a worldly person. Sometimes showers of rain come at unexpected times and places. So, also, there are a select few who are kindled with the fiery intoxication of God."

"As fish enjoy the unfathomable water of the pond, so also does the devotee of God enjoy unconditionally surrendering to the lotus feet of God. Lilies and lotuses are blossoming brightly. In the same way, the unmanifest, attributeless Truth becomes beautiful by appearing in the form of the Cosmic Mother."

"The chataka bird is always tossing in the torture of great thirst just as one who opposes or persecutes the devotee of Divine Mother does not feel rest for a single moment."

"The autumn moon is as soothing and cooling, and fatigue neutralizing, as an encounter with a saint rejuvenates and enlivens the pure-hearted beings. When the moon rises in the autumn evening, all chakoras assemble and constantly look and look to the floating moon over the pond and sky. In the same, way a devotee looks at the Divine Mother when She appears in Her beautiful form."

"The earth is over-flooded with innumerable creatures in the rainy season, but when autumn comes they all disappear, and with the advent of winter all the biting mosquitoes also leave. In the same way, with the advent of a spiritual Master all the distractions and illusions simply disappear in the life of a disciple."

Thus Sri Ram and Lakshmana were talking to each other in the lap of nature.

One day They heard the sounds of ethereal music. Their eyes suddenly lifted upward and They saw an effulgent light descending slowly and elegantly, like a floating foam. Then it stopped and They saw a beautiful, large-eyed face like lotus petals, a wide forehead and long brown hair scattering in the breeze. He was playing on his Vina from Rathantara-sàma (a special tune expounded by Sama Veda).

Sri Ram and Lakshmana both got up, bowed down to him, and offered him an elevated seat. He was Devarsi Narada, the divine being who first inherited the Vedic wisdom, and who handed it over in various forms to different seekers. He is an Intergalactic space traveler.

Devarsi Narada accepted the seat and said,

"Sri Ram, I have come from the planet Svah. There in the assembly of King Indra I came to know that King Ravana has stolen Your beloved wife Sita. But I assure You that she cannot be moved from her chastity because of her immense, overflowing love for You. No matter what efforts Ravana has made, they have been of no avail.

"She is still absorbed under the tree, Shinshupa, in constant meditation on Your form which she saw for the last time when You ran after the golden deer with the bow in Your hands fixed with an arrow. So many months have passed, but she has neither accepted any eatables from Lanka's shops nor any clothing."

"As there is already an Intergalactic law that whenever someone takes a revolutionary step contrary to the normal conditioning of the body, then all responsibility for his care goes either to the Supreme Lord (if he is on the

path of devotion), or to those astral beings who are especially engaged by higher authorities for this work. So, from the planet Svah, a cup of nectarine drink is sent to her which contains all the nutrients which the body requires, and thus she suffers no more from hunger or thirst. This I have seen by myself.

"But I wonder, Oh Olympian Prince of Ayodhya, why are You despondent like a common man? I guess Your intense love for her is as great as hers is for You. No doubt, the tie of love is always like this.

"I will tell You about the Nine Nights Festival ceremony of Mahamaya Bhagavati, through which You will easily become successful in Your aim. It is arriving very soon, in the middle of October. Dear Rama, this Nine Nights Festivity has been celebrated by Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, Visvamitra, Bhrigu, Vasistha, Kashyapa, and Indra in order to solve different problems since the beginning of civilization."

Sri Ram said, "Sir, you are soothing My heart by your sweet news. Merciful One, would you kindly please tell Us about the Mahamaya Bhagavati and Her Festivity?"

"Before this creation was transformed into a nebulous state, before the earth, water, air, fire, sky or ego came into existence, there was a place, an all encompassing, magnetic power of silence, bliss and awareness. Then, when the peace became vibrant, awareness came into motion and bliss exploded into a form. Then that form was effulgent with the transcendental light of an extremely beautiful maiden. She had large eyes, long hair, and a golden complexion. She was dressed in red clothes. That eternal maiden was seated on a lion."

"She then willed, 'I am one alone, let there be many,' and there appeared three dark clouds bearing golden and camphor complexioned, extremely beautiful, transcendental maidens - Mahakali, Mahalaksmi, and Mahasarasvati. Each one of them was given a name and duties by the Cosmic Mother.

"Then the Cosmic Mother produced three companions, by Her will, to be the eternal companions of Her three maidens.

"The six were divided into couples. From Mahakali, Lord Shiva and Sarasvati were born. From Mahalaksmi, Brahma and Lakshmi were born. From Mahasarasvati, Lord Vishnu and Parvati were born."

"All the three pairs of sisters and brothers, along with their mothers, stood in front of the Divine Mother with folded palms, awaiting an order from Her. Thereupon, the Cosmic Mother blessed them and empowered them. Each male was given a lady as his wife for companionship, as if combining two poles of electrical energy in the form of male and female, in order to begin the stream of creation.

"Thus Brahma was given Sarasvati as his life companion; Shiva was offered Parvati; and Vishnu was offered Lakshmi."

The what, why, and how is extensively described in the Srimad Devi Bhagavatam in the form of Intergalactic history.

Sri Ram inquired regarding various mystical pastimes of Mahamaya Bhagavati and the procedures of the Nine Nights Festivity.

Devarishi Narada replied to these inquiries in detail and offered to act as a priest for the Nine Nights Festival.

Sri Ram was highly delighted and He prepared everything according to Narada's instructions. On the eighth day at midnight Divine Mother appeared sitting on her lion and blessed Sri Ram, Lakshmana, and Narada.

Divine Mother spoke, "Oh, lotus-eyed Sri Ram, I am highly satisfied with Your Nine Nights ceremony. I am going to remind You that You are an expansion of Lord Vishnu Narayana, who was My first disciple, and to whom I have handed over the secrets of Vedic wisdom from the beginning of creation. You are the maintainer and sustainer of the whole cosmic egg. You have already incarnated nineteen times before to deliver the whole Intergalactic society from great disaster.

"In the future, at the end of the Copper Age, You will reappear in the world in the form of Lord Sri Krishna and in the beginning of the Iron Age as Lord Buddha. You will carry My special grace and message, and You will be appearing on the surface of human society at the peak of the wildest developments of technical material science and demonizing human psychology. You will descend to unburden the earth from unwanted populations, and to re-establish a new way of life based on My Philosophy of Mother-consciousness. This will regenerate the higher potentialities and supremacy of women.

"Mighty armed Sri Ram! You have the greatest love for Your consort ever possible under the sun. By My Grace Your love will become immortal, and those who sing the song of Your transcendental love will not fall, but will rise above this world in platonic love. They will not bind, but will themselves be liberated into the eternity of love, either in love of the lover or beloved, or in love with the whole universe in Lovetrance. I bless You. The

song of Your life's activity will be sung all over the world as long as the sun and the moon shine in the firmament.

"Very soon the world will see the wicked King Ravana shot dead on the battlefield by Your sharp arrows. You and that emblem of spotless beauty, Sita, will unite, as the moon and its luster unite, as love and sweetness unite, as wisdom and bliss unite. In that union of Yours, the union of the soul and Brahma find fulfillment.

"My dear Son, after re-uniting with Sita You will return to Ayodhya and become the sole Emperor of the world. You will rule the earth for eleven thousand years. In Your reign all the natural laws will follow You, and the subjects will be happy, healthy and wealthy. Sorrow and suffering will be foreign to them," Divine Mother thus blessed Sri Ram and became invisible.

There was no limit to the joy in the heart of Sri Ram. His brother Lakshmana seeing Ram's joyful lotus face, also became very happy. After passing the eighth night, Sri Ram and Lakshmana were sitting on one of the slabs in front of their cave.

They heard a loud roar floating through space as innumerable Vanaras approached Them.

"All glories to the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya!"

"All glories to Sugriva, the King of the Vanaras!" The voice came closer and closer. Then Sugriva ordered all the Vanaras to stay silently in space, and he and Hanumanji came near Lord Ram and fell down at His blessed feet. But Sri Ram picked them up and embraced them and then set them on the slab in front of Him.

"The work performed after the appropriate time is passed, loses its validity and becomes useless. One who gets infatuated, with sensual

pleasures and financial progress, avoiding the principles of religion and the evolution of consciousness, falls flat - like one who is taking a nap sitting on the top of a tree. Therefore, my dear friend, I hope We combine our efforts in search of Sita," This Sri Ram said to Sugriva on the hill.

"I will never be able to repay the favors Your Holiness has showered upon me. I will be consoled only if I am granted the honor of serving Your lotus feet; this would prove to be my greatest golden fortune," Sugriva replied in a choking voice full of softness and politeness.

"Look at these innumerable Vanaras, my Lord. All of them have the capacity to assume any form at will. They have come from various continents, mountains and forests. They all live on forest products. They have come to be at Your disposal, with their tributes of fruit, roots and herbs. If one takes even a little of these herbs, ones does not feel hunger, thirst, or weakness for three to six months. They are all disciplined and are ready and willing to sacrifice their lives for You, my Lord. Please, kindly bless them."

Sri Ram turned His eyes upward toward the sky. It was crowded with yellow, red, black, pink and ice-white haired, Vanaras with huge bodies, all prostrating to Sri Ram from a distance with gestures and expressions full of love and homage. The only reason they did not come to earth was because they didn't want to spoil the natural beauty of Sri Ram's ashram, and didn't wish to disturb Him by any unwanted noise.

Sri Ram looked at them with His eyes full of compassion and mercy and raised His right palm upward in the gesture of blessing.

"This is the King of the beasts, Jambavanta. He was a youth when King Bali was performing an Intergalactic fire sacrifice after his great

victory over various planets of the solar system, about one and a half million years ago. My Lord, nowadays he has grown old but he still possesses superhuman power - the power of ten thousand elephants. Jambavanta is the commander-in-chief of all the black and white-haired bears."

King Sugriva introduced to Sri Ram some important commanders and chiefs,

"This is Sushenà, the father of Tara, the wife of my elder brother Bali. This is my father-in-law, Shatabali, Ruma's father, and these are the famous engineers of the Vanara civilization, Nala and Neela, and here are the greatest warriors of all, Dvidida and Mayanda, Gaya and Gavaksha, Dhumrakesh and numberless others.

"All are self sufficient concerning their lodging and boarding. They have encamped in groves, near ponds and rivers, on slabs, hills and trees within a sixteen mile radius around our capital Kishkindha. I have invited them all from different parts of the world. Order them all. They are Your own subjects."

Sri Ram replied, "I want to know in which part of the world My consort Sita is being kept? What is her condition? You know My task very well, My dear friend. It is only you who can order the assembled Vanaras. Neither Lakshmana or I can do it. You are supremely benevolent toward Me. Please order them."

"As You wish, my Lord." Without a single word, Sugriva accepted Sri Ram's order and began to call the commanders in a loud voice.

"Commander-in-Chief Vinata, we have to search for Mother Sita. She must be returned safely. You go to the East with your soldiers. None of the groves, mountains, ditches, caves, ruined buildings, cities, temples, up to

the Pacific Ocean should be left unexplored," Sugriva shouted, naming the commanders one by one and ordering them to go in different directions.

"Commander Satabali - you proceed to the North and search in all the places beyond the Himalayas up to the North Pole. You need not visit all the states of the Aryans because the Vedic Aryans never steal other's possessions, never think of someone else's wife, nor could they bear a person who would do such an act. There is no need to look upon astral yogis and demigods residing in the Himalayas, for they wouldn't be interested in doing such a thing.

"Commander Sushena, you go to the West and explore all the countries, lands, forests, mountains and royal palaces up to the Atlantic Ocean."

Now Sugriva addressed a special meeting of all Commanders-in-Chief in the presence of Sri Ram and Lakshmana, sitting in a small garden in front of their cave,

"Each one of you should use your full potentiality to make contact with meditators by pleasing them with your behavior and gestures. Ask them about Sita. Also, remember to inquire from vagabonds, professional musicians, dramatists and also from beggars.

"You are free to purge, show your violence, and treat the Rakshasas anyway you like. There is no need to go into the states of spiritual kings. Also, keep away from the cities of Aryan kings. The Rakshasas would not hide Sita there, so don't waste time searching."

Sugriva dispatched two more groups of soldiers to help each group of the Commanders-in-chief, giving them detailed descriptions of mysterious mountains and forests, trees and towns, Sugriva warned the Commanders

of the groups going to the North and West not to become victims of unwanted dangers. "Don't step into that valley, otherwise you will be transported into another dimension of life.

"Jambavan, Angada, Hanuman, Nala, Neela, Suhola, Gaya and Gavaksha, Mayanda, Dvidida and Tar," Sugriva called to his most confidential advisors. "You should all go a little North up to Panchavati where Mother Sita was kidnapped. Bow down to Maharishi Agastya and get his blessing, and then start your search.

"Move towards the South. Not a single valley, hill or corner of the forest should be overlooked. Then go up to Vaidyuta and Sveta Kunjara giri (now known as the South Pole). After crossing the crocodile-infested river Tamraparni, the beautiful hill stations, and the forest, you will be in the domain of the ten headed King, Ravana.

"He was fathered by an Aryan Rishi and born from the womb of a girl of a subterranean planet. You all should be very careful of him. Eight hundred miles away from Kanyakumari, his heavenly capital named Sri Lanka, is located on the top of three hills surrounded by the ocean.

"Although his original form is ten-headed, with twenty armed, possessing extraordinarily powerful physique, he also can change into a one-headed, two armed, very handsome boy. It is in this deceptive form that he poses as being one of the greatest scientific rulers of this age.

"He directs all the five elemental forces of nature. Equipped with the power of space-traveling, he has conquered all the planets of the solar system, and has arrested many of their representatives in Lanka who try to explore his kingdom while remaining invisible to his eyes. I have many

doubts about this wicked, crossbreed monster, who is notorious for his undisciplined sexuality."

Sugriva's face became very stern and he addressed all the Commanders-in-chief and said, "Excuse me, I am very sorry to inform all of you that we only have a month to search. Everybody has to come back within this period. Otherwise he takes his life in his own hands. If anyone of you succeed in bringing a message from Sita, he will definitely be honored with a post equal to me among all Vanaras."

"Hanumanji, You have to wait. Lord Rama wants to see You," And he ordered all the Vanaras to depart.

"All glories to King Sugriva." All the Vanaras saluted the two brothers and King Sugriva, and, levitating themselves, began to float in the sky. Thousands and millions of Vanaras rose up and began to float in the sky, effortlessly. Roaring like lions, their voices echoed in all the ten directions,

"All glories to Sri Rama, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya. All glories to King Sugriva!"

"My Lord!" Sri Hanumanji sat on His knees politely in front of Sri Rama and Lakshmana. Full of love, with His palms folded, He was feeling the pangs of the oncoming separation. Everyday He had been coming to Sri Ram to have darshan at His lotus feet; but now He was going away for a whole month, and His tormented heart was full of agonizing love.

"Oh, Hanuman, You are the Son of the wind god. Your speed is unrestricted all over the earth, water, air and sky. You can float beyond the Polestar and below the planet Earth at an even faster speed than the wind god. There is no equal to You on the planet Earth in power, wisdom, and

dynamism. You are an expert in dealing with circumstances according to time, place and personality.

"You must brighten the face of the Vanara race by searching for Sita. My dear, take this," Sri Ram removed His finger ring, on the front of which His holy name was beautifully written, "And give it to Sita while introducing Yourself." Then Sri Ram told Him the most thrilling message to convey to her, "You will attain success. Let your path be devoid of barriers."

Sri Ram blessed Hanumanji by placing His palm on Hanumanji's head. Hanumanji was thrilled and horripulated. Stretching His palms, He took the finger ring, and placed it inside the knot of long golden hair on His head. Sri Hanumanji then took His leave, his eyes full of tears.

Sri Ram, Lakshmana, and Sugriva watched Him as He levitated into the sky and disappeared into the infinity of the Northern horizon.

CHAPTER 17

THE SEARCH FOR MOTHER SITA

As soon as the fourth group crossed the boundary of Kishkindha, they flew towards the northeastern forest, Dandakaranya by name, because they had to start their activities from Panchavati, on the bank of the holy river, Godàvari. They prostrated at the feet of Maharishi Agastya and his wife, Lopamudra, who were great exponents of the Vedas, and received their blessings.

They then came to the ashram where Sri Ram, Sita and Lakshmana had lived. They saw it from a distance, as if the whole ashram was weeping

because of separation from its beloved dwellers, who resembled the lord of beauty in an ascetic dress, adorned with emperor's marks on his forehead and palms, who was unshakable like a mountain, imperturbable like the ocean, who offered shelter to all like a banyan tree, and who was true to his word.

Sita and Rama had selected a dwelling place surrounded by the five holy trees, each one of which is very auspicious. In their absence these five trees of banyan, peepul, embelica-officinalis, bilva, and neem were as if dripping tears. The waves of Godàvari were humming and whispering some song of torment. Lilies and lotuses in the ponds and all the flowering trees and creepers were still gloomy, as if their beloved friends were lost. The fountains were dried up. Lions, deer, fawns, and all of the forest dwellers were wandering restlessly with tear-filled eyes.

Sri Hanumanji felt very intensely what the entire forest was expressing through its silence, through its vibrations which could not be expressed even by a thousand voices.

For sometime, Sri Hanumanji and a few blessed Vanaras experienced Sri Sita, Sri Rama and Lakshmana as if they were still present in the ashram. Their eyes, developed through the wisdom of Lovetrance, were able to visualize the whole ashram rejoicing, full of the celebration of an everlasting festival of the presence of their three beloveds. They heard the open laughter of Sita and Rama echoing and re-echoing through the whole atmosphere.

A series of pastimes passed through their third eyes. They saw the great love which Rama and Sita had for

each other and how beautifully Sri Lakshmana served them, more than his own body, as his own soul. They perceived everything - how Sri Ram and Sita used to smile, how they used to walk, how they used to swim, how they dined, how they used to play with fawns, monkeys, peacocks and peahens, swans, cranes, parrots and nightingales. They perceived how they used to have music competitions. They even perceived their dialogues on different systems of yoga, devotion, and Vedanta, and various parts of Intergalactic history.

All of the transcendental pastimes of that divine couple enraptured their hearts and they forgot everything. In great love for Sri Ram they entered into a timeless, egoless dimension of life where past and future dropped away and the present deepened and they became eternity. They stood, struck by silence into the NOW - in just a moment, and in that moment they reflected on that world which the transcendentalists call the world of Absolute Truth where everything is composed of the vibrations of rapturous joy.

Sri Hanumanji and Prince Angadaji stood ecstatically motionless, showered with a totally new energy, new light and new delight - they were in a state of complete, exultant joy. Thus, the two realized the Absolute Truth in Panchavati and the love of Sri Ram became their new way of life.

It is the peculiarity of love, and in particular, of the realization of the Absolute Truth through the path of Lovetrance, that the ultimate experience is not only a dead silence or non-duality and inactivity, but there is an endless flow of the transcendental frolics of the beloved, reflected from the non-atomic anti-material world of lovetrance.

In this state, Hanumanji and Angadaji very soon visualized that Mother Sita was pointing to a golden deer, and Sri Ram was fixing His long bow with arrow, chasing the deer. Thereafter they perceived a dreadful, illusive voice of a dying demon, Mother Sita's anxiety, and Lakshmana's leaving and the coming of a gigantic Personality in the form of a marvelous yogi, his talk with Sita, the appearance of a ten-headed monster form and his abduction of Sita.

All of a sudden their mighty arms moved. Enraged and fired-up as they were, they leaped up to save Mother Sita from the hands of that ten-headed monster. Then their conscious minds landed on the material plane where she had been already stolen away, and they had to find her whereabouts.

It had already been revealed to them in their meditation that the thief was not from the planet Earth. He was born of the semen of an elevated Aryan in the womb of a girl from a subterranean planet of the Rakshasa race. This indicated that he was a great scholar of all Aryan Vedic knowledge. Nevertheless, he was abducting other's wives which showed he was very firm in Rakshasa's way of life.

As Hanumanji was already furious with this race because of past events, He developed uncontrollable anger with those people whose leader had committed an unpardonable offense by separating two loving, thrilling and delicate hearts.

Hanumanji spoke to all the Vanaras, "Look, in no way was it difficult for Sri Ram to find out who abducted His beloved Sita, but still we are dispatched to seek in all directions. That can only mean we must root out the

Rakshasa race from the face of the planet Earth. So let us girdle our loins in order to do it."

"It is the law of nature that the whole creation is sustained, maintained, and exhilarated by the power of dharma (the Vedic way of life which is the backbone of Intergalactic civilization) alone. If and when dharma is hampered, harmed, or opposed by the laws of society, then that society unknowingly and unintentionally becomes destructive to the entire human race and to the harmony of the whole universe."

"It causes the earth to turn into deserts, and rivers and mountains to become barren, dry, and devoid of minerals. It causes drought, famine, flood, large scale diseases and untimely death. Therefore we must root out all the elements inimical to the evolution of the universe," said Prince Angadaji.

"An individual has to be eliminated if he is a danger to the family, and the family should be sacrificed to save the society; the society should be sacrificed for the sake of the community, and the community for the nation; while even the nation should be sacrificed for the welfare of the world or the universe.

"Today the Rakshasa community has proven to be detrimental to the universal welfare and so it must be destroyed without a second thought," Commander-in-Chief Jambavanta decided. He ordered all the Vanaras saying, "Not a single Rakshasa must be spared, no matter what is the case."

"All glories to Sri Sita and Rama."

"All glories to King Sugriva."

The Vanaras rejoiced because all of them longed for an outlet to release the tension of extra pent-up energy, due to their extreme power,

which caused their mighty arms to ache. They began to move further, looking everywhere, in the forest and caves, bushes and groves.

"I wonder why the whole forest is so dry?" Sri Hanumanji asked, because He was thirsty and He was passing through an unexpectedly dry area in the forest.

"Somewhere here was the hermitage of Maharishi Kandu. Once a Rakshasa ate Kandu's only begotten son and the father suffered in lamentation. Maharishi Kandu was loved by the trees, ponds, and nature so much that in his agony the whole forest became dry and barren," thus Jambavanta answered the question of Sri Hanumanji.

"This is that monster, King Ravana," some of the Vanaras suddenly screamed, looking at a dreadful and unexpectedly huge Rakshasa who was rushing towards Prince Angada and raising his heavy fist high in space.

Before anybody could jump, Angada swelled high into space and dashed the enormous Rakshasa to the ground, where he died instantly.

"Oh, Ravana can't be so weak," all the Vanaras said and moved further.

"It will take a very long time if we search in such a disorganized way, You know how strict our king is in his discipline," Jambavanta was saying.

"We should separate, making one line from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Ocean, and thus move to the South. None of us should be alone. At least two should always be together, staying within calling or shouting distance of the next."

"Before any oncoming danger, one pair should inform the other, and that pair should in turn inform the couple nearest them before helping, and

so on. Thus the whole line will become aware of the incident and assemble at the danger spot in no time."

The Commander-in-Chief ordered, "No one should go into populated areas. Only those appointed are allowed to enter the hermitages of spiritual people and philosophers to ask the whereabouts of Mother Sita. If there are some Rakshasas persecuting them, finish the Rakshasas off without question. The entire South Indian hills and woods have become the playground of these demons, and we have to transform this area into peaceful groves."

"No one should eat unknown fruit, roots or herbs, and after the day is finished and the sun has set, we will meet together and discuss important matters and then rest."

As soon as they moved further, the line shrunk. They entered into a dense forest which was very dangerous and mysterious, so all of them were exploring every nook and cranny as a collective body. It was the middle of autumn and the scorching sun rays heated their bodies into dripping perspiration. Everybody was extremely thirsty even at the beginning of the day, but there was no water. Everyone's mouth was parched.

Sri Hanumanji could not bear the suffering of His friends. He climbed the top of one of the tallest trees and looked all around. Suddenly His eyes struck on a place full of greeneries and there were cranes, ducks, larks, herons and drakes. He shouted with joy, "There must be a pond."

All the Vanaras were enlivened. They followed Sri Hanumanji and entered the bushes. They found themselves in front of a deep, dark cave. Birds were entering excitedly, and those coming out had wet feathers.

"Definitely this is the passage to reach some water filled pond. All should assume a form comfortable to enter the cave, but beware of any danger which could occur at any moment. No one should touch anything, even water or fruit, without permission," ordered Jambavanta.

Sri Hanumanji led the group and Prince Angada watched from the rear. Quickly the group passed through the dark cave and entered a beautiful, extensive garden full of trees hanging with fruit. In the middle of the garden there was a beautiful pond filled with crystal clear water adorned with lotus leaves and flowers in beautiful colors.

There was a beautiful mansion within sight, made of emeralds and rubies. Standing on a veranda of marble was a beautiful, lustrous, ascetic maiden who was sitting on a shining deer skin. From her personality one would conclude that she came from a Godly race.

All the Vanaras bowed to her in reverence.

"You all seem to be very thirsty. You must be hungry too. Therefore go to the pond-bathe, drink water, eat fruit and then if you need help, come to me," said the large-eyed, white-clad ascetic girl.

As if they were provided with new life, they rushed to the pond, quenched their thirst, satisfied their hunger and then returned to the ascetic maiden.

"Your Holiness, we are the servants of Sri Ram, the Prince of Ayodhya. A monster has abducted His wife from the forest. We are engaged in the search for that Holy One. We would like to know, miss, why you live all alone? Who are you? How did such a heavenly garden become possible in a cave beneath the earth?" Sri Hanumanji asked in His scholarly language, full of politeness.

"You must have heard about 'Maya', the great scientist and engineer of the subterranean planet? He constructed this garden and mansion by his own scientific feats. Many years ago he fell in love with a dancer from planet Svah, Hema by name, and he began to live here with her. Somehow the king of that planet became jealous of them and wanted to kill them. Maya with his own advanced psychology, saved himself, but he had to leave for his own planet, so he gave the place to Hema.

"I am her friend, Svayamprabha, the daughter of Meru Savarni. After a long time, when my friend Hema proceeded to the planet Brahma, she gave this place to me. From then on I have been here, meditating on the lotus feet of Sri Ram to attain His transcendental love, difficult even for great yogis to attain," replied the ascetic maiden.

"We were tired, thirsty and hungry. Your Holiness has provided us with renewed life and thus earned great merit by welcoming your unknown guests. You have saved us from dying how can we repay you?" Hanumanji asked.

"It is not necessary," she replied. "I have been meditating for many thousands of years, just waiting for Lord Sri Ram's advent. Now that the Olympian Prince has appeared, I just wish to go to Him. If you want to, you may use this place," continued the large-eyed, meditative yogini.

"We are afraid, dear Mother, that the time which the king has given us is finished. Please tell us, how can we get out of this place and continue our search for Mother Sita?" Hanumanji asked.

The divine maiden closed her eyes and became absorbed in silence for a few moments,

"This cave is guarded by the scientists of the subterranean planet. Here the measurement of time is different from the time on earth. The door through which you entered is now automatically closed; but the will of one who is aware of the whole mystery of this place can lead you out. So all of you please close your eyes. I will make you reach the shore of the Indian Ocean where you will be able to contact Mother Sita."

"All Vanaras please sit silently with eyes closed," Sri Jambavanji shouted, and he also sat along with them.

Svayamprabha also left the place and raised herself into space, and, traveling by air, arrived at Malyavan Hill. She offered her obeisance to the lotus feet of Sri Ram, circumambulated, and then sang a song out of the great joy of meeting Him.

"Celestial lady, I am satisfied. Ask a benediction - What do you want?" Sri Ram said.

"I am a worthless maidservant at Your lotus feet. I have been meditating all these years just to see Your transcendental face. If You are satisfied, give me the boon that my tongue shall always chant Your Holy Name; that whenever I am under the spell of my karmas, I shall find the association of Your pure devotees; that in my heart and in my eyes, You may always dwell - Sita, Ram, and Lakshmana in their royal forms," she said.

"So be it," Sri Ram consented. "Now go to Badrinatha in the Himalayas and stay there, on the bank of Alakananda River." Lord Sri Rama then transmitted Ram-consciousness to her and she became divinely intoxicated and flew towards the North.

Meanwhile, an agitated Vanara opened his eyes and shouted, "Oh, where are we?"

All the Vanaras came alive, feeling the cool oceanic breeze, and hearing the roar of the ocean. All of them opened their eyes and looked, amazed, for far and wide there was only the extensive, garlanding waves of the ocean.

"How long a time has passed?" one of the Vanaras asked. Everybody looked around and studied the nature and their faces turned pale.

"In this cavity the time measurement is different," another Vanara recollected the words of the yogini.

"Definitely, a whole month was passed in that cave. We haven't done anything! Sugriva will not excuse me!" Prince Angada said in great distress.

"He did not make me prime minister by himself; it was only due to Sri Ram's order. I am the son of his enemy. He would have killed me long before, but now he will not spare me. It is better to die here by my own hands than be killed by him."

In times of great trouble amid problems, the mind becomes confused and frustrated. Then it begins to think in irrelevant ways. In such moments, destruction is sure if one lacks Vedic wisdom or a spiritually-elevated advisor. Prince Angada was in such a condition.

"We all have to die if we go back to Kishkindha," many other Vanaras said.

"Prince, don't worry. We can take shelter in that cave. The yogini has already left and it is big enough, full of trees, water and fruit. It is almost paradise. We will serve you your whole life," another soldier said.

"Prince, this is an evil thought that Sugriva doesn't love you." Sri Hanumanji embraced Angada and said, "Sugriva respects Tara, your

mother. He will never displease her, nor Me, nor Ram. You already know Sri Ram loves you very much, and that I do too."

Hanumanji continued, "First of all, you must remember that the automatic door of the cave is already closed. It is in the hands of the scientists who guard it and they remain on their planet, eighty thousand miles away from here. Even if we conquer those scientists and make it our residence, do you think it would be invincible for the arrows of Sri Ram, who killed your father, who imprisoned even Ravana, the conqueror of all the planets of the solar system?"

Sri Hanumanji went on giving arguments and logic to all those Vanaras who were going to rebel and form new groups.

"Those Vanaras will not be able to remain for a long time, suppressing the attachments to their wives and children. Sri Ram's arrow will not spare anyone, even if one were to hide on the inaccessible planet Rasatala. Therefore, it is foolish for anyone to think of hiding and going astray from his transcendental service."

"Moreover, you already know that no power on earth can deviate Jambavan, Nala, and Myself, from the holy service to Sri Ram," Hanumanji explained, standing in their midst.

"I am not going into the cave. I am not parting, for I believe in the invincible power of Sri Ram's arrow. I will absorb myself in a fast until death. Convey my salutations to King Sugriva, and console my mother, Tara, so that she will not die upon hearing of my death." Angadaji spoke in great sorrow, picking up some kusha grass and making himself a seat.

When all efforts of an individual ego fail, he loses his hopes and expectations from his own strength and sits in silence. Then that silence

becomes the auspicious moment of the descent of the Grace of the Divine. Then the invisible hands of that Merciful God become active and a new ray of light and life flashes in the utter darkness of hopelessness.

"It is our good fortune that we are engaged in the service of Sri Ram, the Supreme Personality," Sri Hanumanji tried to explain.

"Where could we even do that? We have checked all of Southern India and we could not find Sita!" Replied Angada, sitting on the seat of kusha grass.

"I will not maintain this body which has proven to be incapable of the service of that Beloved Lord." He sipped a few drops of water and became silent.

"We are also going to abandon our bodies," all of the Vanaras cried, making their own seats and picking up the kusha grass.

The last words of Angada touched Hanumanji's heart. He too, became silent, picked up kusha grass, and sat facing the East.

"What is the use of preserving the body which has failed to serve the sweet Beloved?" Thought the Vanaras.

Suddenly a huge personality resembling a vulture came out of a nearby cave in the mountain, his whole body burnt black. He looked all around, screeching with pleasure,

"Aha, how kind is my Lord also. . . . I have been starving for such a long time, and now he has sent me food in an enormous quantity. For months my food is arranged. As soon as these Vanaras become half-dead by fasting, I shall keep eating,"

"Alas, Oh, the vulture will eat us!" cried the Vanaras out of fear and mortal pain.

One of the Vanaras spoke, saying,

"Jatayu, who sacrificed his life in the holy service of Sri Ram was also a vulture, and this is another vulture who is waiting for the death of Sri Ram's servants."

"Jatayu was glorious, who abandoned his body for the protection of Sri Ram's consort, and we are also going to do that," Angadaji said.

"But we are not as fortunate as Jatayu, who died in the soothing lap of Sri Ram," replied Jambavanta.

"Why are you referring to my brother, time and gain?" The Vulture person asked excitedly in pure Sanskrit language. "It has been a long time since I have heard my brother's name! What happened to him? I am very eager to know about him. Please carry me close to you on the beach. I promise I will not harm any of you."

Prince Angada stood-up, approached him and brought him to the beach and described the story of Sri Ram's wandering in the forests, the abduction of Sita in the Panchavati, Jatayu's efforts to save Sita, the cutting-off of his feathers by the king of the monsters, and Jatayu's death in Sri Ram's lap.

"I am Sampati and Jatayu was my younger brother. We belong to a semidivine race. Our father, Aryama, lives on the planet Sun. We were both very eager to meet our father so we took flight in the sky. When we flew closer to the sun, extreme heat dispersed our enthusiasm. Jatayu returned, but I was puffed-up with my own power so I continued fly until all my feathers and body were badly burnt and I fell on the earth, unconscious.

"Suddenly a great philosopher, Rishi Chandrama by name, passed that way. Out of mercy, he sprinkled a few drops of water from his

kamandalu on me and made me conscious. Then he placed me in this cave and said, `Your feathers will spring back up again when Sri Ram's messengers come, and you help them by telling them about Sita.'

"That was the beginning of the Golden Age (one million, seven hundred, twenty-eight thousand years ago) and now it is almost the end of the Silver Age (one million, two hundred, ninety-six thousand years). It is only today that I have heard about my brother. Alas, he is dead. I want to offer him a water oblation for the emancipation of his moving soul in the astral plane. Please take me to the seashore. Thereafter, I will help you in whatever way I can."

Angada carried him to the navel-deep water and held him fast so that he could not be dashed on the beach by the mighty waves of the ocean.

Sampati moved his featherless wings and stirred the waters in the direction of the manes - the ancestors waiting after death until their karmas start fructifying.

"Hurrah! How miraculous, how wonderful is the magical touch of Sri Ram's messengers! My whole body is now speedily filling with milky white feathers. Now they are growing longer and longer!"

Sampati flew a little in the sky and sat among the Vanaras saying, "I am now able to fly. My eye sight has come back. Now I can see Mother Sita and fortunately there is no barrier at all."

"Do you see the Princess Sita?" The Vanaras became excited with pleasure.

"Where is she? How far away? What is she doing?" Angadaji asked all at once.

"Eight hundred miles away, surrounded by the ocean, there is an island named Lanka. On it is a mountain peak called, Trikuta. It is crowded with Rakshasas. There is a royal garden connected with the gynaceum of the royal palace. In the middle of that garden, under the Shinshupa tree, a yellow-clothed, down-cast Sita is sitting, weeping. Tear drops are trickling down her cheeks." Sampati said, and his words were as nectar pouring upon all the Vanaras sitting around him.

"Believe me, I am clearly seeing Sita - even a sparrow can see further than man. Owls see better than sparrows, hawks see still further, falcons further, and vultures still further. Only a swan can see further than a vulture. Since I am the son of Aryama, (from a semi-divine race), only Garuda can see further than me. I am seeing her as if she is sitting very close to me. Tears are constantly dropping; she is thin and lean due to excess lamentation, and some dreadful ladies are frightening her."

Sampati became the center of attention for all the Vanaras, and he continued, full of amaze,

"Not only I, but anyone of you can see her who can jump this ocean, which is eight hundred miles in breadth. You must jump to the other side. You are the messengers of the almighty Sri Ram. By your touch I have regained my feathers. What an enormous power is lying within you.

"It is amazing that you were fasting unto death. Despondency is not for you. Get up. Gird your loins. Do your duty, and success will kiss your feet. Please allow me to go now." Sampati stretched his feathers, waved them with full power, flew once around in the sky, and disappeared beyond the horizon.

Raising their heads, all the Vanaras on the seashore constantly gazed after him until he became totally invisible.

CHAPTER 18

MEASURE OF POWER

"Bhagavati Sita is in Lanka." Knowing this, all the Vanaras began to sing, jump, and swing from the branches of the trees.

"Our duty does not end upon hearing the talk of Sampati," Jambavanta stopped all the Vanaras and made them think. "Without going to Lanka how is it possible to see her? And Lanka is not here, it is eight hundred miles away."

The Vanaras looked at the high, spray-crested waves of the limitless expansive ocean and lost their courage.

"I can jump eighty miles," a Vanara, Gaja by name said, capturing their attention, "but Lanka is eight hundred miles away."

"I used to jump two hundred miles," said Gavaksha.

"The maximum length of my jump is two hundred and forty miles," said Sharabha.

"I would go if Lanka were only three hundred twenty miles away," said Rishabha.

"I can jump four hundred miles," said Gandhamadana.

"A four hundred eighty mile jump is easy for me," Mayanda said.

"It is not difficult for me to jump five hundred sixty miles," Dvidida informed everyone.

"Six hundred forty miles is how far I used to be able to jump, but still, that is not going to solve our problem," said Sushena.

When Lord Vamana assumed a cosmic form, and was measuring the whole solar system, two billion miles in circumference, I circumambulated around him seven times; but in those days I was a youth. Nowadays I have grown old, and I don't possess sufficient power, but I can still jump seven hundred and twenty miles," said Jambavanta the king of the beasts.

"As far as crossing the ocean is concerned, I can jump the eight hundred miles; but, Lanka is not just a silent jungle. It is Ravana's capital and he has sons and brothers equal in power to himself. There will be a fight. I don't know whether I will be able to return or not," said Prince Angada.

"Even if you could go and come back safely, how could we let you go all alone among the enemies of our dear prince? The Commander-in-chief will not permit you to go," said Jambavanta.

Suddenly Jambavan turned his face towards Hanumanji, Who was sitting silently in a corner, as if He was a detached recluse having nothing to do with the world.

"Oh, greatest warrior, four kinds of power, and fourteen qualities follow You like shadows. Inconceivable are Your strength and speed. Oh, Son of the wind god, Oh, eleventh part of Shiva, rise, awaken! Your mission in life is to fulfill Sri Ram's work."

The last sentence struck against Hanumanji's bosom, and He suddenly stood up and roared like a lion. The entire vicinity, including the ocean, forests, and mountains trembled, and like Lord Vamana, His form enlarged and enlarged and became mountainous. Like a tremendous golden mountain His body began to shine, and like a ruby His face reddened. His

head struck the floating white clouds. He raised His tail and moved it in space as if He would tie up all the planets and dash them on the earth.

"All glories to Sri Hanumanji." The Vanaras were extremely excited to see the enormous enlargement of Hanumanji's body. All of the Vanaras seemed like insects. Even Jambavan's gigantic, Golden Age form, reached only up to Hanumanji's knees.

In a tone like a thundering cloud, Sri Hanumanji said,

"Oh, king of the beasts, what do you want from Me - please tell Me! I can jump over the entire Indian Ocean. I can dry it up by drinking it or make it flat earth by dashing all the mountains in it. I can jump over the entire solar system; I can root out the whole mountain on which Lanka is inhabited; or shall I seize Ravana by the neck and throw him at the feet of Sri Ram? Or may I bring Sita and offer her to Sri Ram? What do you want from Me? Please tell Me immediately."

"Oh, powerful Son of Mother Anjana, You have ended our lamentation. There is nothing impossible for You on this earth, but there is a limit for a servant, and we are all servants of Sri Ram. He Himself should come with us, along with His army, and conquer Ravana on the battlefield, and rescue Sita by His own power. We should not limit the fame of our Master, but we should heighten it to the extreme," Jambavanji said in an assured way.

"Jump eight hundred miles to Lanka, go to Mother Sita and convey the message to her from her Lord Ram. We all wish You success. If someone becomes a barrier, then You are free to retaliate -- assault him with Your powerful fists."

"All glories to Sri Ram." Hanumanji suddenly leapt to the top of the nearest mountain, Mahendrachala, stood facing South, bent His knees, moved His neck and head back, raised His arms high in the space, and levitated. The mountain began breaking into pieces. Rocks rolled towards the ocean, fountains sprang up, the beasts of the forest began to run screeching and screaming, and the birds began to circle in the sky.

Hanumanji held His ears close to His head, checked His breath, and roared at last, "Jai Sri Ram," and He was in the sky!

The trees and stones sprang up and flew with Him as if a new rainbow had arisen. The ocean swelled up in mountainous waves. The demigods began to shower flowers from other planets. The astral rishis sang hymns of blessings; and, like a burning flame, Sri Hanumanji flew towards the South.

The Vanaras began to dance in ecstasy.

CHAPTER 19

LEAPING THE OCEAN

After a few minutes of flying, Sri Hanumanji heard a human voice speaking. He looked below and saw a beautiful mountain, full of sea-creepers. Its peak was adorned with a beautiful palace made of pebbles, emeralds, sapphires, pearls, and other gems.

A semi-divine being was requesting him from the roof of the palace to come. There was an assortment of many delicious dishes. "Please come and have a little rest on my peak.

"The heroic son of King Sagara, born among the ancestors of Your beloved Sri Ram, has created this ocean. Your father, the wind god, protected you from the thunderbolt of King Indra. We want to pay our homage to You. Please land, eat and rest, and then proceed," said Mainaka, the presiding semi-divine being of that submerged mountain.

"I am obliged to come by your love and affection," Sri Hanumanji said and descended closer to the hill.

He landed on the peak and said, "Honorable sir, you being of like nature, already know that we are semi-divine in our physical structure, and we do not get fatigued unless our heart becomes hopelessly despondent. Without fulfilling My duties toward Sri Ram, My heart is not comforted. My body cannot rest in your gemmed palace without doing Sri Ram's work. Thank you."

So saying, Hanumanji arose again to the heights of the clouds and flew with great speed, like a released arrow. Innumerable astral and celestial beings of other planets were watching His activities from space.

"Halt, Oh, little monkey. Don't escape. You can't run away like this, insulting Surasa, the mother of all dragons." Hanumanji saw the entire sky was filled with an immense dragon lady who stood in front of Him and shouted with a dreadful hissing sound. He recognized her as the third wife of Maharishi Kashyapa, father of Indra, King of Planet Svah.

"Mother, this is your son, Hanuman. I do not insult you; I bow down to you," Hanumanji said politely.

"Dragon ladies are not satisfied with salutations," she hissed. "I am very hungry now and I want to feed my belly. You come and enter into my mouth."

"I am dedicated to Sri Ram's work. He is a great supporter of your planet. He is prepared to save your race from the cruel clutches of Ravana," Hanumanji said.

"I don't want to hear all of this," she hissed.

"Mother, Ravana has been persecuting your sons; he has killed so many of them. So many maidens are still imprisoned by him."

"Don't pretend! Dragons don't show mercy," she yelled.

"Let Me see Mother Sita and bring her the message of Sri Ram, and then I will enter your mouth, believe me."

"It is not a matter of believing. It is a matter of hunger. I am hungry and You are huge and palatable. Enter my mouth," she commanded, and hissed violently."

"Then why don't you eat Me -- do it quickly," He said fearlessly.

Sri Hanumanji had the power to kill her, but blindly killing every opposer is against the Vedic way of life. Vedic laws instruct that the inhabitants of the planet Svah should be respected no matter how they behave.

"Let Thy will be done." Sri Hanumanji bowed down to Sri Ram mentally and prayed, "Lord if You rejoice in the death of Your Hanumanji in such a strange way, then let Thy will be fulfilled."

Suddenly Surasa opened her mouth to swallow Him. At the last moment some inspiration sprang up from within Hanumanji and He expanded His form twice the size of her mouth. She then expanded her mouth eight miles wider, and Hanumanji expanded Himself to sixteen. She stretched her mouth to thirty-two miles, then Hanumanji grew to sixty-four miles. As much as the demon's mouth was expanded and grew wider, Hanumanji became twice as big.

In this competition her mouth became one hundred miles wide, and then, very quickly, Hanumanji assumed a very tiny form like a dove and entered into her mouth. Before she could understand what had happened, Hanumanji jumped out.

"Gentle lady, tell Me what shall I do for your satisfaction? It is in the Vedic manner that great ones do not eat anything which has fallen from their mouths."

"The entire Svah planet loves Sri Ram," Surasa said, assuming her natural heavenly form which had the face of a beautiful girl but the body of a serpent.

She continued, "Our planet has great hopes for Sri Ram and You, as His representative, Who are going to Lanka, the capital of the scientist King,

who is equipped with all of the feats of technical knowledge and extra-sensory perception. The inhabitants of that island have become a great headache for the entire solar system.

"We just wanted to test and measure Your power and intelligence, and I am very happy. There is no limit to Your power and timely determination. You are capable of doing Sri Ram's work. Now proceed. Let Your path be auspicious. May success and accomplishment welcome You." So ordering, she disappeared.

Now Hanumanji began to fly with still faster speed. It was in His seven hundredth mile in space that His body assumed the fastest speed. Suddenly there was a collision and Hanumanji felt His speed hampered, but no one was visible in any direction. He felt like He was being pulled downward.

He began to think, "What happened? Is there some philosopher or spiritual being meditating in the water? Is there some deity of Divine Mother, Shiva, or Vishnu installed beneath the ocean who cannot be trespassed against? Something is definitely pulling Me down. Whose mantra power is this? Whose power of attraction is this?"

Sri Hanumanji peered through the transparent ocean. The water was unagitated and silent. He saw that a dreadful monstress was holding His shadow with both of her terrible arms. With her full power she was grinding all of her teeth tightly.

She was Simhika, coming from the dynasty of Ravana's grandfather on his mother's side, and wife of the demon, Viprachitti.

She possessed a faculty of pulling a bird or animal simply by holding its shadow and drawing it towards her. This is how she used to collect her

meals. This lady was appointed by Ravana to guard the Northern part of his island. The other areas were naturally safe, protected by vast oceans. Only the Northern section was defenseless because India was only eight hundred miles away.

"She must be eating all the innocent, chirping, flying birds passing this way," Hanumanji thought.

He became very angry and jumped on her head with His terrible double strength. There was a dreadful scream and her head was broken into many pieces. For many yards the waters became red with blood.

A number of beings from different planets greeted Hanumanji and shouted, "Hail," and showered flowers upon Him because many of their airplanes had been destroyed and their kinsmen had been eaten up by this demonness.

This area was more dangerous than the Bermuda triangle is today, because in the triangle only material planes and ships disappear; it cannot destroy astral planes and ships. We would be safe if we could transform our body chemicals into astral cells and atoms, but all of the planets of the solar system were afraid of Simhika's triangle because astral and causal beings could be destroyed, as well as physical beings.

After the annihilation of Simhika, the whole oceanic area from India to Lanka was free from danger. Hanumanji arose again into the clouds and began to float onward - ten miles, twenty miles, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety - ninety-five. After seven hundred and ninety-five miles, Hanumanji glanced at the shining Northern beaches of Lanka and spotted a flag flying on the enormous fort. He lessened his speed.

"Rakshasas will be excited if they see My huge form in space. If I land with the force that is normal to My present size, the whole island may shake and Ravana's people and soldiers will rush to Me and a struggle would be compulsory. It is not good to alarm them before I see Mother Sita," Hanumanji thought to Himself.

He reduced His speed and form to the size of a vulture. It was but natural for a vulture to circle around a city of extensive meat and flesh-eaters. Hanumanji flew all around the city and observed it minutely from space.

The whole city was built on the three extensive hills of Mount Trikuta, which is a huge silvery mountain surrounded on three sides by the roaring ocean, with tremendously large waves dashing themselves upon the shore. On the fourth side there were steps descending to Lanka. On the top of the hill, there was a long and wide athletic ground used for the king's amusements. The walls, pillars, floors, chairs, everything, was silver-plated, all shining. Armed watchmen were on guard, marching with their regulated steps.

The central hill was flat and extensive, surrounded by strong, massive walls on all sides. The entire city was gold-plated, shining like the midday sun. This was the real Lanka. All the golden palaces, mansions and bungalows were glittering in their golden brilliance!

Mammoth doors with steel gates, and colossal weapons attached to cement slabs were in place, along with some explosives. Innumerable armed soldiers of extraordinary size were standing at their places. The whole city was populated by highly powerful and brave warriors.

In His flight around the city, Sri Hanumanji came to the Northern hill named Subala, full of green trees with heavy loads of hanging fruit and flowers. The seashores were full of flat black rocks. There were ponds and fountains, but it was all silent. Nobody was there.

Sri Hanumanji calmly and quietly landed there. Even after all of this traveling He was not at all fatigued. His breath was normal. His mental state was calm, natural and unexcited. By stepping on this new land He remembered His Beloved Sri Ram and began to sing. . . .

CHAPTER 20

UPON THE HILL OF SUBEL

Singing the song of Sri Ram's love, Sri Hanumanji's heart began to float in the ocean of ecstasy. He became one with the blossoming trees; He became one with the transparent, crystal clear waters of the ponds; He became one with the endless sky-kissing hills; He became one with the all pervading eternity of the firmament; and, in that Absolute Oneness, He became the universe.

Nay, nay -- He experienced the entire universe within His own self, and this entirety was composed of the atoms of His own being, which is no other than the ecstasy of transcendental love. When one lives, moves, and remains established in this state of consciousness, he becomes highly glorified in Intergalactic history. Then what is supposed to happen, happens, and one becomes what he ought to become, automatically his attainment is reached.

Sri Hanumanji wanted to see the mountain, but as soon as He walked out of the grove, a towering, dreadful form suddenly rushed out and struck against Him. Oh, what inconceivable danger threatened Him, but Hanumanji remained cool and composed and confronted the black-complexioned form covered with serpentine hairs, fiery eyes and oversized, terrifying teeth, peacefully.

Hanumanji said, "Welcome, My dear Death. How do you do?"

"Oh, Sri Hanumanji, please excuse me for my imprudence." Death stood struck with wonder for a few moments; his head was low and he was full of shyness.

He continued, "Yama, the Lord of life after death, has already discerned that by an act of benediction You are to be free from his never-failing weapon, and from me, also.

Full of despondency, he pointed towards his loin.

"These days I am a prisoner of King Ravana, who is a great sorcerer-scientist. He has chained me in these fetters of eight metals by the ineffaceable sound vibrations of mahàmrtjunjaya mantram, associated with the power of Lord Shiva.

This horrible man, Ravana, has ordered me to kill immediately anyone who arrives at this spot. I am unable to open or break these fetters."

Hanumanji mentally thanked Ravana for his far-sightedness.

"You are now free!" said Hanumanji, and the fetters disappeared immediately.

"Oh, Mahavira, I am very grateful to you," Death said while departing.

"I promise whoever will remember you with love will have no fear of me." Ravana did not know that the Northern range of hills on his island had become totally defenseless.

Around noon Hanumanji landed at Lanka. He wanted to enter the city in darkness, so in the mean time He began to wander over Subel hill to find a proper place for the encampment of Sri Ram when He would make His attack on Lanka. Mounting the top of the hill His legs suddenly came to a stop.

"Oh, Hanumanji, the great, won't You do me one favor?" someone cried from inside the cave.

"Another prisoner!" Hanumanji was surprised, and entered the cave. He saw a terrifying sight. A second gentlemen with a very black complexion, stout body, blue clothing, and a hard face had also been arrested. He was hanging upside down, dangling from a rope.

Consoling him, Hanumanji broke the rope, helped him stand, and asked, "Did Ravana hang you upside down?"

"Yes my Lord. That wicked scientist is a great astronomer and an astrologer as well. He knew that I, the Lord of the planet Saturn, play a great role in the ups and downs of human fortune. Human life is comfortable only when I am at the eighth or eleventh house in the zodiac of a person's horoscope. That is why most of the people of the world suffer. Ravana did not like it because he and his people were included in this suffering. He traveled to my aerial planet, conquered me and hung me up here." Shani said.

"You may leave this place immediately," Hanumanji ordered.

"Please allow me to stay here for sometime. I want to teach this cruel Ravana what happens at the sight of Saturn," Shani requested.

"No, you can't," Hanumanji replied. "My Lord Rama is going to come to this mountain. I have to prepare this place for Him, and your sight would be inauspicious."

The Lord of the planet Saturn requested,

"You know Hanumanji, that human fortune becomes safe from my inauspicious influences by keeping a pure sapphire. All the philosophers agree that the blue-complexioned Sri Ram is a beautiful sapphire. I cannot prove inauspicious for those who even simply feel Him in their hearts, in the trance of love."

"In that case I have no objection," Hanumanji said, and walked to the mango groves and the plantain garden.

"Oh, beautiful! This can be the camp for My Lord." Sri Hanumanji fixed everything by the time the sun had disappeared and the directions became obscured by darkness. Then He hurriedly moved towards the central hill of the golden city.

CHAPTER 21

IN LANKA

As soon as the sun disappeared into the western oceanic horizon, the redness, spread in all directions, turned into darkness. Then the gems, pearls, and sapphires which were mounted in the steeples, vaults, and walls of the mansions of the city began to shine.

The Rakshasas began to go to bars, cabarets, and nightclubs for dancing and other sensual pleasures.

After twilight, Sri Hanumanji assumed a very tiny, insignificant form and approached the automatic gate. The gate opened immediately but nobody was there. Quickly He entered, wondering why nobody was engaged as keeper at the main gate of the city.

"Who is showing disrespect to me by entering the city? Don't You know that whoever enters here stealthily becomes my meal?" A dreadful feminine form materialized in space, yelling.

"Every citizen of this capital is endowed with kayavyuha siddhi. I know You intend to deceive us. Who are You? Why have You come? As long as You are still alive, tell me."

She had been watching over the gate, remaining invisible. Hanumanji was in great danger. He didn't want to waste His time by replying to her because then more people would know about Him. He immediately became roused into a huge form, waved His fist in the air, and dashed it on her head. She fell down on the street bleeding profusely.

Within moments she organized herself and stood up with folded palms and said, "Oh, Messenger of Sri Ram, please do not kill me - "

"Oh, you know Me," Hanumanji wondered how --

"I am the presiding deity of this city." She gave her identification.

"When a city is built, its presiding deity also enters in."

"In the beginning of the Golden Age the engineer of the semi-divine race and I came from the planet of Brahma. I was despondent. Then Brahma told me, `When you are half killed by the fist of a Vanara, you will know that a great revolution in the city is about to take place, and the whole empire will change.'

"The fall of Ravana's empire is very near. Please enter the city and do Your duty," she said, leaving the path open for Sri Hanumanji.

It was a golden city. The walls, doors, and floors were golden, adorned with various gems, pearls, topaz and coral. Pillars were made of tigereye and marble. Rubies were used for lighting the streets and houses. Every ordinary home had such an enormous quantity of wealth that it was enough to satisfy even heavenly beings.

Hanumanji began to look for the grove Sampati had mentioned.

Meanwhile, He began to measure the power of the state by examining every aspect of the city. He wandered its streets, bars, big hotels, athletic clubs, royal arsenals, granaries and barracks. He wandered everywhere once again in His smaller form.

The whole city was free from diseased, repressed, weak or despondent beings. On the contrary, the city was full of healthy, powerful people, expert in the use of the higher resources of nature - people who

enjoyed life. But the medium of their enjoyment was wine, sex, meat-eating, and wild dancing.

They were not discontented, not suffering, but they were intoxicated. They were madly intoxicated with sensual gratification, which made them forgetful of their real aim, the real bliss of life. Everybody seemed to be enjoying the physical festivity of life, but they did not even dream of the real celebration of life.

Sri Hanumanji entered into the houses of various important persons of Lanka, and minutely observed everything. In front of their mansions their names were shining - written in gems. But He did not hear a single word about her whom His eyes were thirsty to see.

There were many Rakshasas who were most handsome and they had beautiful wives. The harems of all the men of the governing class of the Rakshasas were full of beautiful maidens from many different countries and planets.

Since Hanumanji already knew that Sita was an extremely beautiful lady of Intergalactic vicinity, it became necessary to seek her among these maidens. There were many juvenile girls from highly aristocratic races whom Rakshasas had kidnapped. Eventually they had surrendered themselves to the situation and circumstances.

The best dancers, musicians and artists from all the planets had been kidnapped by Ravana and were compelled to adorn the stages at special parties. At these parties there were hundreds and thousands of varieties of dishes and drinks, but none of them were sattvic foods. Almost all of them were meat preparations or mixed with meat. Special parts of birds and

animals were deliciously prepared. Wine and warm blood were the favorite drinks.

This does not mean that all Rakshasas were atheists. They were studying the Vedas, but they were allowed to study only that commentary of the Vedas which Ravana had written, only those philosophies which Ravana had composed. They were practicing only those mantrams which were adjusted to Ravana's various themes.

More than anything, Ravana's "Uddish Tantra" was popular. In this book he had given his own methods for attaining a long life, developing extraordinary sexual power, killing anyone through mental telepathy, and controlling all kinds of black magic, white magic, and sorcery.

Witches were working spells at midnight. When Sri Hanumanji landed on Lanka, their terrifying tamasic worship went in vain; instead of a colored flame, there arose only a horrible smell. It is but natural that, with the entrance of a holy man, all evil practices or ghostly rituals are hampered.

Where is Mother Sita? Hanumanji's ears were eager to hear talk regarding Mother Sita. His eyes were hungry to see her divine form. He was rushing from one place to another seeking her.

The buffalos, asses, and deer were being fried. Many Rakshasas were intensely engaged in eating raw flesh, chewing terrifyingly, and drinking the warm blood or wine. They would dance out of madness of joy. Many beautiful girls were engaged in nude dancing. They were exciting everybody by touching the erotic joints of each of the participants who were sitting and eating.

Hanumanji wandered everywhere. He would jump like a grasshopper from the middle of one group to another. No one had any time to pay attention to a tiny creature.

CHAPTER 22

IN THE PALACE OF RAVANA

It was midnight as Hanumanji stood in front of Ravana's palace. It was guarded by hundreds of armed soldiers. Each and every corner of the palace was full of light, as if it were day.

At twelve, Ravana dismissed the assembly where he and his ministers were enjoying a dance program after supper, and he entered his private apartment. Then the soldiers felt relief and many of them became drowsy. At that moment, Hanumanji entered the palace and wandered in each and every corner.

Here innumerable naked and half-naked maidens, beautiful except for their disfiguring makeup, had fallen asleep with harps, violins, flutes, tambourines, and guitars in their arms; and many instruments were lying carelessly on the floor. The smell of various liquors coming from their breath, permeating the private apartments was revolting. Hanumanji looked at every beauty. "Can this be she? This cannot be!" Hanumanji felt no attraction to the half-naked damsels, He looked at them as if they were flocks of sheep. His sight ran further and further, never stopping to see anyone twice. Everyone seemed to be satisfied with the association of Ravana. They seemed happy and did not suffer. Only Sita, He expected to find dissatisfied, tormented and weeping, and she was not to be seen anywhere.

The palace of Ravana was prosperity itself, with splendid gems and pearls all stored in one place. But Hanumanji had no time to enjoy them at all. He entered the bedroom of Ravana, who was resting on his golden

bed, covered with milky white silk sheets. His glorious and lustrous face and mighty arms were at rest; and his hypnotic eyes were closed.

Hanumanji perceived and praised his superhuman, extraordinary personality. If this powerful, brave scholar of the Vedas would be righteous and devoted to God, certainly he would be worthy to be King of the whole Intergalactic system. Then even the King of the planet Svah would feel glorified to serve him; but this unrighteous opposer of God and the philosopher's class was not to be respected and admired. Hanumanji turned his eyes away, out of hate.

Suddenly Hanumanji's glance fell on the other bed where an extremely beautiful lady was sleeping. "Aha, hurrah, this must be Sita. I have never seen such a beauty in the whole of Lanka, nor in the whole solar system. Indeed, this must be Sita," thought He.

Out of rapturous joy He kissed His tail and began jumping and climbing up and down the pillars. He bowed down at her feet. He looked at the slender waist and conch neck of this lotus-eyed lady. Her long black hair was let down and scattered around her hypnotically beautiful face -- but -- as Hanumanji observed her He lost hope. Because there were no lines of past grief on her face. In fact, her face was totally devoid of any signs of crying and lamenting.

Second, her beauty was a maddening type of beauty. Although loveliness was dripping from her every limb, it was that kind of beauty which causes an intoxication, rousing sex desires in the observer. It was a burning beauty; not soothing, but a hypnotizing beauty; a violent beauty, not a silencing and peace showering beauty.

Sita's beauty would not be so captivating, so grabbing, so hypnotic. It would be a liberating beauty, inspiring motherly affection and homage.

In great hopelessness, with pain in His heart, Hanumanji walked away from the palace. In this hopelessness a doubt raised its head within and He thought,

"Alas, I have taken a vow of lifelong celibacy, and I have been looking at half-naked ladies, sex-enjoying ladies. Where has My vow gone if, after seeing them, I still claim to be a celibate? Shall I not be deceiving society?"

"All right," thought Hanumanji, "You have seen sleeping and naked ladies, and You have stared at them; but You have done this for some higher purpose. You have been looking for Sita, the most beautiful woman in the entire solar system. If You won't search for her among the ladies, then where will You look for her - among the birds and beasts?"

When the heart is pure, the reply always comes from within. The conscience speaks very clearly.

Hanumanji's inner voice echoed, "Mind is the controller of the senses. If the mind is pure, pollution is impossible on the level of senses. Your mind is pure. It is devoted to the works of Sri Ram, and Your senses are the followers of Your Sri Ram-conscious mind."

Suddenly His great agony disappeared. Only a great vowist can imagine how such an agony tortures.

Another doubt arose. "Has Sita abandoned her body? Is it possible? By the constant persecutions of Ravana and the Rakshasa ladies maybe she gave up hope and has let her body go."

A torturous thought arose in the heart of Hanumanji, "Oh, how shall I show My face to Sri Ram? Leaping the ocean has been in vain."

He began to run. The watchmen were now groggy and careless. Hanumanji ran all the way, once more, to every bar, cave, grove and garden to pushpaka airplane, and to all those places where an abducted princess might be kept; but He could not find her anywhere.

"Just yesterday Sampati saw her crying in some garden; where has she gone today? Has Ravana eaten her? What shall I do? Shall I kill this wicked Ravana?"

Now a terrifying wrath began to redden His face and eyes.

"No, I will carry Ravana through the space, raising him up in my arms, and then dash his body at the feet of Sri Ram, and He will inquire about her."

Walking, Hanumanji mentally bowed down to Sri Ram before doing such an extraordinarily appalling deed.

Suddenly He became enlivened. "Oh, how is it that I have not seen this building until now? How is such a building possible in Lanka?"

Hanumanji looked at a shining disc on the top, the holy name of Sri Ram inscribed on the gate, and a basil garden in all the corners of the flower garden. It seemed they were not only for decoration but they were served and watered and worshipped with respect also. The flame which was offered in the evening was still alight.

"Who lives here? How influential he must be. Even Ravana does not object to his way of living."

"Sri Ram, jai Ram, jai jai Ram." As if nectar was pouring into Hanumanji's ears, a masculine sound echoed and re-echoed from the inside of the building.

Hanumanji desired to make his acquaintance.

"Such a gentlemen cannot be a barrier to the deliverance of an abducted lady," He thought.

The very nature of a God-loving person is to respect the philosopher class. If there is no respect and love for philosophers, then everything is shallow, and havoc is created in his spiritual life.

Hanumanji reasoned, "If this gentlemen has established a temple in such a negative atmosphere, he must be very deep, spiritually."

So Sri Hanumanji assumed the form of an ascetic philosopher, and in front of the main door to the building He chanted quietly, "Sri Ram jai Ram."

The owner of the building was surprised, and quickly got up from his bed and rushed to the door. He greeted Hanumanji with folded palms, saying,

"My Lord, I am Vibhisana, the grandson of Rishi Pulastya, and the younger brother of Ravana, bowing down at Your holy feet."

A tall physical structure, bright loving eyes, peaceful face - Vibhisana satisfied Hanumanji by greeting Him from a little distance as there is a law not to touch a holy man before taking a shower or bath.

"Who are You?" Vibhisana said. "You must have crossed eight hundred miles of the ocean, and You must be aware of what horrible people we are. You must possess extraordinary power and intellect. The purpose of Your visit must be great. You have graced me with Your presence. May I know what service I may do for You?"

Hanumanji knew this was a very humble and intelligent man. He felt that He could talk openly to him.

"I am the Messenger of Sri Ram, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya, and a Minister of Sugriva, the King of the Vanaras. I know that the King of Lanka has abducted the beloved consort of Sri Ram. I want to visit her. If you know where she is, please help Me...please oblige...." His voice trailed off into a whisper.

Vibhisana answered, "There is an Ashok grove beside the royal palace which is very dear to the King. In the center there is a beautiful pond, full of lotuses and lilies, and by the side there is a marble building. A little distance from there is a huge Shinshupa tree, so large and wide that it is easily visible.

"Sitting under that tree You can see a lamenting lady with long, brown, matted hair, like a line of golden flame. She never goes under the roof; neither does she eat nor sleep. She is continually meditating and weeping. No one except the King can go there. Only the female watchmen are engaged to look after her, and to try to make her receptive towards the King by the means of either alluring or frightening her.

"The only entrance to the grove is from the private apartments of the royal palace. My wife has been visiting her at times. I know these things only through her. She says that the sharp rays of the sun do not reach her, rain drops do not wet her, and the cold breeze of winter does not make her shiver,

"King Ravana will be cursed if he should try to rape any lady against her wish. His head will break into a thousand pieces!"

Vibhasana soothed Hanuman by saying, "She has refused to stay in any house of ours, and also will not take shelter under any roof of Lanka state!"

Hanumanji asked, "How does the King bear your way of living, your temples, your basil garden, your devotion?"

"Where is devotion in me? Vibhisana replied with tears in his eyes. "My elder brother is out almost all the time, conquering other states, and his son, Prince Meghanada, accompanies him. Kumbhakarna wakes up from his long sleep just for one day out of every six months. So all the responsibilities of Lanka lie upon me.

"Due to my being the brother of the King, the ministers and citizens all respect me. Due to my utility in state affairs, King Ravana does not interfere in my personal life. But actually, my situation is like the tongue among the teeth. It is becoming unbearable for me to remain a quiet onlooker to the most unrighteous, heinous acts and dreadful sins.

"I have heard the supreme Lord is strolling the face of the earth in the form of Sri Ram. That He is all merciful. Will He, the merciful Lord, shower His mercy upon me - a degraded Rakshasa?"

"Mercifulness is His nature, His play. He never rejects the surrendered ones, never bothers to expect a higher race, education, wealth, graceful acts and meditations. Look at Me, how insignificant I am, but He has accepted Me without condition," said Sri Hanumanji in a choking voice.

"Now I have hope, because I have met You. Without His Infinite Grace His people would not meet," said Vibhisana.

"Jai Sri Sita Ram." Sri Hanumanji bid farewell to Vibhisana. There was no time to waste. He instantly assumed His tiny form again.

CHAPTER 23

VISIT TO SITA

The garden within the Ashok grove was a most beautiful garden, and the favorite of King Ravana. A natural breeze took care of its cleanliness and clouds furnished its watering. Green trees, embraced with creepers, were humming and bowing downwards, laden with fruits that resembled pearls and sapphires. The ponds were filled with crystal clear water, adorned with closed-petaled lotuses and smiling lilies. Water birds were playing there.

Sri Hanumanji was sitting on a huge compound wall and stretching His glances far and wide in the hope of having a glimpse of Mother Sita. There was a huge marble mansion, shining white, and at a little distance a beautiful tree of Shinshupa. Just under the tree he saw a thin line, like a golden flame. A beautiful lady was sitting there as if goldenizing the area all around her.

Hanumanji's eyes remained focused on her with a delightful wonder. He thrilled all over His body. He jumped down on the ground and like a flying serpent, climbed up the Shinshupa tree. Sitting upon the branch and hiding Himself among the leaves, He continued to watch Mother Sita.

Oh, the same yellow sari was there, broken scarf, thin body, constant shedding of tears, lips trembling, perhaps chanting the holy name of Sri Ram. Only those ornaments were not there which had dropped on Mount Rishyamuka. It was as if all the beauty of the universe had accumulated and structured itself in the form of Sita. Oh, even the queen of Lanka is not worthy of being her maid servant in beauty or competition - it was as if she was the last extreme in beauty.

Out of the great joy of success Hanumanji kissed His tail many times. He gave thanks to Sri Ram for remaining alive even after His separation from such a beautiful one. If Sri Ram turned the whole earth upside down for her, it would not have been too much.

Hanumanji had seen many beauties. In the beauty of Tara there was dignity and royalty. Her beauty ruled like a government with no need of power, no need of soldiers, just the beauty which governs and everything goes on systematically, as if she were born to control.

Hanumanji had seen Ruma's beauty, like that of a sensitive plant. Everyone around her would become full of sensitivity and feelings and delicate shyness in her presence. Hanumanji saw the beauty of Mandodari, like a bottle of strong liquor which hypnotizes with sex desires and pulls one closer by tantalizing temptations.

But now Hanumanji was seeing a totally different, new dimension of beauty. Just by seeing it, the mind was showered with peace like an autumn full moon, as if an oceanic breeze was gently blowing, or as if a vast sky and the Himalayan wilderness had borrowed their soothing peace from her.

Mother Sita's beauty was full of dignity, full of delicate feelings and healing, but it was not hypnotizing. Rather, her influence broke the hypnotic state of body identification, and helped one evolve towards new horizons of awareness and joy. A new transcendental festivity erupts in her presence. The heart swells and longs to run down and prostrate at her feet. Hanumanji wondered how Ravana was able to look at her with lust.

"Undoubtedly the fire of Sri Ram's arrow wants oblations of Lanka's Rakshasas," He concluded.

"You won't accept the King of Lanka? Right now I am going to swallow you," said a monstress engaged by Ravana to frighten Sita by opening her mouth wide.

Another one touched her neck with her sword and still another one touched her stomach with a trident. Hanumanji became greatly enraged when He saw this and wanted to jump down and throw each one of them into the ocean.

"Stop, get away!" A three-braided, beautiful-faced lady appeared, pointing towards the private apartment of Ravana.

All looked in that direction and moved far away because the King of Lanka was coming, surrounded by his various queens. The moon began to disappear in the West. The night was ending. Bramha-rakshasas began to chant hymns of the Vedas which deepened the slumber of the Rakshasas, but awakened Ravana.

He entered the garden and spoke to Sita,

"Oh, beautiful, you are unique in the whole world and universe in beauty. I lose my patience looking at you. Our religion doesn't call raping an impious act. Still I have controlled myself, finding you indifferent to me to which I am not accustomed."

Whatever Ravana ever wished, he attained. He did it.

"You are the jewel among the ladies, but your youth is passing. It will not return. The conqueror of the entire Intergalactic system, this Ravana, requests you, please accept me and become the mistress of all the property and splendors of Lanka.

"If you order, I will take all the property of the whole world and offer it to your father, Janaka. All of these queens, along with Mandodari will

begin to serve you from today. Whatever you want, let it be done right now - I am dying of thirst for your heavenly embrace," said Ravana.

"You and all your prosperity are like filth to me," Mother Sita replied, placing a green blade of grass between them.

Hanumanji was happy to hear her speak in an elegant voice suitable to a chaste Aryan lady, in spite of being in such a troublesome situation.

"Scoundrel, why don't you feel ashamed, flattering yourself in front of a helpless lady? You have seen only prostitutes and never a chaste lady. Was there any scarcity of prosperity and splendor in the palaces of my father and father-in-law? Don't you know that I kicked away the incomparable prosperity of the Ayodhyan empire to come to the forest with my beloved Husband?

"Oh, Rakshasa, if you are conqueror of the world, why didn't you show your bravery in front of my husband? Why did you steal me away like a thief and surround me with these snake-like monstresses? But my Husband is like an eagle. He will jump on your chest and kill you and take me away with Him. He can dry up the entire ocean with the fire of His atomic arrow. You will not find any way to escape, you filthy dog."

Sita's tone became more fiery and loud, "As long as those lotus eyes of my beloved Husband are reddened by wrath, you should take refuge at His lotus feet. Otherwise, the foxes and vultures will eat your hog-like fat arms and heads."

Ravana gave his last word to Sita. "Are you still in love with that exiled, dethroned, helpless ascetic? Listen, Oh, princess. You are too puffed-up with your own beauty. Open your ears and listen. I am giving you only two months to come to my bed. If not, my cook will prepare me a nice

breakfast of your body. I will taste you one way or another. It makes no difference to me."

"Demon, are none of your queens benevolent to you? Why are they not stopping you from talking to me, a lioness, in this way. I can turn you into ashes, but you are the object of my Husband's hunting. That is why I have spared you until now, Oh, thief," Sita scolded Ravana.

"I will kill you right now!" the King of Lanka could no longer bear being insulted in front of his queens. He pulled his sword out of its case and rushed towards Sita.

"My husband, please look at the vermilion mark on my forehead." Queen Mandodari clasped both of Ravana's feet and said with tears flowing from her eyes, "This is a very dangerous girl. She might curse you and we might lose you."

Dhanyamalini, another queen of Ravana's, encircled Ravana's neck with her arms and said, "Don't worry my love. What is so special in this lamenting, thin and fiery Sita? She is not worthy of you. Let us go and enjoy the garden."

Ravana somehow got control of himself and called many Rakshasas to him and said,

"Whoever succeeds in bringing Sita under my control will be given a limitless reward." Then Ravana left.

All the Rakshasa ladies surrounded Sita and began to frighten her.

"If you neglect the famous King of Lanka, you will be killed," one of them said.

"You can kill me or eat me. I wouldn't even want to touch him with my left foot," said Sita, and she stood holding a branch of the tree and started to lament, singing a song.

"My Lord, my love, fie upon my life. I cannot remain alive hearing such words. Give me death, my God. My heart seems to be made of a thunderbolt which was unable to break in the separation from my loving Sri Ram. You take so much care of Your devotees, Your subjects -- Oh, Ram, why have You forgotten me?"

Sita was singing and shedding tears as she roamed around the pond. All the Rakshasas were lost in the melodious sound of her song of extreme torment.

"Listen." A monstress sleeping under the tree suddenly awoke and called all of her friends. "You can't eat Sita. She will meet her Husband and Lanka will perish."

"Why do you say such a thing?" asked all the Rakshasas, scared.

"I had a dream, and the dream at dawn always comes true," she replied. "I saw that our King was bathing in a ditch filled with oil. He was clad in red clothes, with a shaved head, drunk with wine, and he had a garland of oleander flowers around his neck. Out of fear I opened my eyes but soon I fell asleep and the dream continued.

"Wrapping him in black clothes, a dreadful woman began to drag him on the floor. I saw him jumping in the ocean, running towards the south. All of his sons and kinsmen were shouting, screeching and screaming.

"I saw Sita putting her arms around the shoulders of Sri Ram, riding on the Pushpaka airplane going to the north. Sri Ram was greeting Sita, plucking out sun and moon beams and offering them to her as a present.

Then a white elephant descended from space. Ram took Sita on the white elephant and they were laughing and singing a song of union of love.

"I saw all the wives of the ministers of Lanka with shaved heads, crying," she continued.

Concluding her dream, she said, "A golden monkey came and he was setting fire to Lanka. Because of the extreme heat, I awakened.

"Oh, the sun is rising," she said, looking at the eastern sky.

"According to my dream it is going to take place within twenty-four hours."

"Pardon us, Oh, honorable princess, for we are only the maid servants of Ravana." All of them bowed down to Sita and scattered away.

Sita began to sing a song of separation from her Spouse, wondering who would be the reliever of her great distress. Suddenly her left arm and left eye palpitated. "Oh, what auspicious one will come to me?" Sita thought.

She then heard a beautiful, melodious song erupting from inside the green leaves of the same Shinshupa tree. The song went like this. . . .

"In the honorable dynasty of the Sun there was a well-known emperor Dasharatha who lived in the city of Ayodhya. He was a dear friend of the representatives of all the planets. Due to his word given to his youngest wife, he sent his loving Son, Sri Ram, to the forest for fourteen years.

"Brother Lakshmana and consort Sita, out of great love, couldn't bear the separation and followed Him. Because the glorious Ram loved His religion more than the pleasures of life, He didn't want to return even after Bharata, the third youngest brother, approached Him in Chitrakuta and prayed to Him with tear-filled eyes to accept the royal throne.

"While marching to the south, Ram and Lakshmana killed many cannibals, monsters and persecutors of cows and the philosophers' class.

"Enjoying the beautiful breeze at the hermitage on the bank of the Godàvari river, hearing the songs of birds, singing with the cuckoos and bumble bees, laughing with the laughter of the river, playing with deer and peacocks, Sri Sita and Ram lived many years like a moment in the Panchavati.

"The whole valley was filled and overflowed with the echoes of their laughter. Then one day, the demon Maricha succeeded in taking Sri Ram far away, and the Rakshasa King of Lanka abducted Mother Sita.

"Sri Ram fell down unconscious on finding the hermitage devoid of Sita. Burning with the fire of separation He began to wander all around shouting, 'Sita, Sita'...

"He checked those ponds where she used to go to pick lotuses, and kissed and embraced those slabs and rocks on which He had sat with Sita. He stared for hours at those banks where they swam in competition. He wept with those birds, deer, and peacocks that Sita had fondled in the past.

"Sri Ram, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya, intoxicated with Love of Sita, left Panchavati and wandered from forest to forest, hill to hill, grove to grove. Still His torment was not over. In the last rainy season the clouds and His eyes both showered drops of moisture together.

"While residing on Mount Malyavan He enthroned his friend Sugriva on the royal seat of Kishkindha, whose huge army is very soon going to attack Lanka. Very soon we will grind this empire into dust and rejoice in the reunion of the divine transcendental couple and we will dance in ecstasy, seeing a wave of serene smiles on their faces once more."

"Oh, invisible, benevolent One of mine, You are pouring nectar upon my ears. Why don't You cool my eyes, too, by appearing before me?" Sita said, as she heard His song.

Hanumanji quickly changed His grasshopper form into His own. She began to look left and right, up and down, and suddenly she saw a ruby-like faced, golden-complexioned, handsome, courageous Vanara, with a crown on his head and dangling sapphire earrings.

Hanumanji descended from the tree in His normal form. With folded hands, placing His head on the ground, He said,

"Mother, I am Hanuman, the Son of the wind god and the Messenger of Sri Ram. I prostrate Myself at your lotus feet. By your luster, austerity and torment you appear to be Sita, the spouse of Sri Ram."

Sita turned her face away in doubt and said,

"Who are You? Tell me! How can I know You are not that cruel magician, Ravana?"

Then Sri Hanuman sang a heart-touching song where He narrated the friendship between Sri Ram and Sugriva. He said,

"Mother, I swear by the merciful Sri Ram that I am His Messenger."

"Do not be so distressed, I believe You, I believe You," rejoiced Sita. Her heart began to melt in motherly affection for Hanumanji because of His deep, innocent, heart-touching song.

"Ah, it is true if one remains alive, the days of joy will return even after passing so many months in torment. Hanuman, have You seen my Sri Ram? How is He? Is He happy? How does He live? What are the signs of His body?" Sita, overwhelmed with pleasure, asked many questions at once.

"Mother, He is lotus-eyed, with heroic shoulders and a broad chest, long-armed, thin-loined, conch-necked, with red palms, red eyes and red lips," said Hanumanji with folded hands.

"Sri Ram walks with a heroic gait, talks like a rumbling cloud, and is all merciful. Sri Ram is constantly tormented with your memory. He has sent to you His own finger ring."

Hanumanji untied His hair and took the lustrous ring in both hands, and with great homage, offered the ring to her.

Sita, out of pleasant surprise, looked and quickly picked it up. Shedding tears of joy she touched it with her eyes and head and pressed it tightly against her heart. All her pores thrilled, tears rolled down from her eyes. All her limbs perspired and trembled. She was struck with silence for many moments with her eyes closed.

When she opened her eyes Hanumanji said,

"Mother Sita, there is also a message for you." He began to sing what Sri Ram had said . . . My beloved, the unfathomable depths of love between you and Me has been perceived by My mind alone, and that mind, Oh, dearest, always abides with you, with your memories--"

Hanumanji was in tears and Sita wept joyously. In the deep, deep love of Sri Ram's message she found herself within the encircling arms of Sri Ram.

She repeated, "Sri Ram, Sri Ram," over and over and Hanumanji saw that Sita's golden hue was transformed in that moment into Sri Ram's bluish hue.

He found that they had never been separated. They had been and still were eternally united in a deep state of oneness. They were ever united as

wisdom and peace, love and joy, water and coolness, the word and meaning, wave and ocean, candy and sweetness, milk and whiteness.

In that oneness of Sita-Ram, Hanumanji visualized the all-pervading eternity of love which alone exists as pure awareness and manifests in the diversity of creation.

"Hanuman, You are a real Messenger of my Husband," Sita said to Him in a tearful and choking voice. What shall I offer You? I don't find any tribute, any prosperity in the whole universe to compare with this message from my Beloved.

"I, Sita, will always remain in Your debt. By my blessings You become immortal in this same body. You become the reservoir of all divine qualities. All siddhis will serve You. By Your remembrance, people will get rid of troubles and problems. You attain Sri Ram's love."

Hanumanji fell down prostrate at her lotus feet and said,

"I am fulfilled today, Mother. I cannot bear your suffering and separation. Please sit on My shoulder. I will take you to Sri Ram."

"Hanuman I would like Sri Ram to come Himself and chastise my abductor and liberate me. In this lies the beauty of our pastimes. In this lies the fame of Sri Ram. I can suffer for His fame. I want to see Ravana dead in the battlefield very quickly, so hurry Hanuman, my Son."

Hanuman stood up saying, "Now He will come very soon to deliver you from this great torture."

"Please remind my Lord Sri Ram of that incident when He released His atomic arrow upon the crooked son of Indra."

Hanumanji consoled Sita - "Believe me, He will march at once as soon as I arrive."

"Give this to my Beloved," she requested, removing her jeweled crest quickly and handing it over to Hanuman. "Now it is up to your hands to save me or to let me be killed."

Hanumanji accepted this challenge and stretched out His palms in homage.

CHAPTER 24

MEASURING THE POWER OF LANKA

"Mother Sita, I am hungry!" The sun was already up and it was the day after the morning that Hanumanji had leaped over the ocean. The whole day and night He had been exploring the capitol. During that time He had not eaten anything.

Now, after twenty-four hours of constant labor He had succeeded in His mission. Thus all the hunger was as if poured upon Him, and looking left and right toward the abundance of fruit hanging upon the trees, Hanumanji said,

"My hunger has increased two-fold, so please allow Me to sample some of the fruits in your garden."

"My Son, this garden is very dear to Ravana and therefore innumerable hostile monsters are guarding it from every side," Sita said sadly,

"Mother, why do you even talk of that wicked fellow? I can tackle him and his warriors," Hanumanji said in full confidence.

"You are present here and this is enough for Me. I just need your permission."

"Remember Sri Ram and enjoy eating fruit, my Son," said Sita.

"Would you mind if the trees were broken and the garden ruined?" asked Hanumanji.

"I don't have any attachment to this garden. Neither have I seen it nor do I want to see it. You just do whatever You must," said Sita because she

knew this intelligent Messenger of Sri Ram now wanted to measure the power of Lanka.

Within a moment His body enlarged like a huge golden mountain. When He swelled up, many trees were uprooted by His velocity. He jumped on a huge tree and began to eat fruit, but the branches no longer bore the weight of His body and it broke and then He jumped onto another one and the heavy shock of the jump broke that branch also. Thus many hundreds of trees were broken and destroyed.

"Why are You breaking the trees of the royal garden?" asked a monstress watchman in great haste, running towards Hanumanji.

"I wonder why this rascal Ravana calls himself the conqueror of the whole Intergalactic system when he has planted trees so weak they are unable to bear the velocity of a mere monkey!" replied Hanumanji, and continued eating.

The watchman informed the force of male-guards. Enraged Rakshasas rushed with their various weapons and attacked the fruit-eating Hanumanji.

Hanumanji suddenly rooted out a huge tree and within a few moments He killed them all.

"Your Highness, your Highness, a strange Vanara has come to the Ashoka grove and He is destroying all your garden and has killed all the guards engaged in its protection."

Almost screeching, all the lady guards of the garden approached King Ravana in his private apartment.

Blind with rage, Ravana sent a special order to the barracks that Jambumati, the son of the Prime Minister Prahasta, should attack, along

with eighty warriors, and either arrest this trouble maker or kill Him on the spot. Quickly Jambumati dressed and proceeded to the royal assembly.

When Hanumanji saw this group coming, He jumped on top of the one thousand golden-pillared, marble mansion. From the shock of His heavy jump the mansion broke into pieces and He began to break the heads of the guards as if they were clay jars. Thus Hanumanji killed all of those eighty armed warriors with one of the huge golden pillars. The northern part of the garden near the royal palace became blood red and broken heads, legs, and hands were scattered everywhere.

Somehow a blood-smearred Rakshasa with a broken hand was able to run down to Ravana's assembly and said, breathing very fast,

"That mischievous Monkey has ruined our royal rest house and killed all the warriors with one of the huge golden pillars. He is still sitting on the broken vault of the rest house with the same golden pillar in His hand."

Ravana asked incredulously, "He is still sitting upon the vault?"

"Yes, my Lord, He is still sitting there, but at any time He can come here, and who can resist His power?"

Ravana sent five young sons of his ministers along with more soldiers. However, they met with the same fate as the first group. Hanumanji gave all of them a blood bath with His shining pillar. They all lay dead on the ground.

Ravana then called his son, Akshayakumar, and said,

"Some powerful Vanara has come. Fight with Him very carefully."

He was the third most powerful warrior after the King. When he departed with soldiers, the ocean became agitated, the air loosened, sun rays became mild, demigods became doubtful.

It didn't matter to Hanumanji for He began grinding Ravana's soldiers, who were showering arrows and different weapons upon Him. All the weapons and arrows broke into pieces, crashing against the body of Hanumanji as if they had struck against the hardest steel.

Observing Hanumanji's dreadful way of fighting, Akshayakumar arose in space. Hanumanji did also and they fought for a long time. Akshayakumar finally broke Hanumanji's pillar into pieces. Thereupon Hanumanji waved His heavy fist in the air and dashed it down upon Akshayakumar's chest. His bones broke into pieces and after shedding much blood, he fell down to the ground dead.

Hanumanji again went and sat upon the vault and picked up another pillar and placed it upon His shoulder.

Ravana was purple with wrath upon hearing of his son's death. He looked around with blood red eyes and roared,

"Where is Meghanada?"

Suddenly Meghanada appeared and saluted his father the King.

"You are the master of atomic, astral and celestial weapons and all others which are released by sound vibrations. You take all of them and fight against this Vanara. He seems to be extraordinarily powerful!" said King Ravana.

Then Meghanada said, "Dad, don't you worry, I will turn that Vanara monkey into ashes by my unfailing ajneyastra."

"No, don't kill Him. Just arrest Him and bring Him to me. It is necessary to know from where He has come and who has sent Him. We want to know who sent such a powerful, dangerous monkey to our state," Ravana said very peacefully.

Hanumanji jumped down from the vault on seeing the powerful prince approaching, followed by thousands of warriors. Then He began to enjoy breaking the heads of the Rakshasas like clay pots.

Meghanada showered arrows upon Hanumanji to stop Him but it was to no avail. He confronted Hanumanji only when all of his soldiers were shot dead. Then Hanumanji and Meghanada fought and Meghanada broke all the pillars and trees which Hanumanji used as weapons. Hanumanji praised his skillfulness in fighting but at the same time He kicked him in the chest.

Meghanada's head reeled and he fell down unconscious. Then Hanumanji could only wait as He was an upholder of the moral codes. When Meghanada got up he admitted that if Hanumanji hit him again with His fist he would not survive, so he immediately released vayavyastra but he was wonderstruck to see that it didn't faze Hanumanji in the least. His dangerous weapon couldn't even move Him. He constantly released various other weapons but all failed." Then he released brahmastra.

Hanumanji had already received a boon of protection from the effects of this weapon from Brahma himself, and so the released energy touched Him and then disappeared in the sky. However, Hanumanji, through admiration for his presiding deity, fell down on the ground, but He fell grinding more soldiers who had just been dispatched by Ravana to help Meghanada.

The prince knew that the faint was only temporary so he immediately bound Him with brahmapasha. After Hanumanji fell, the on-looking Rakshasas saw He was down and so they rushed hurriedly and began to tie Him by thick strong ropes.

Oh, what foolishness, Meghanada knew brahmapasha could not bear any association with natural bindings, and so it disappeared. He also knew that Hanumanji could break the ropes at any moment. However, Hanumanji, even though He was completely aware that He could free Himself, remained quiet because He wanted to talk to Ravana.

He was carried to the royal assembly and enjoyed this journey in a palanquin. He was totally free and enjoying the fun, but the people thought that He was arrested and miserable. Human beings are slaves to situations, although they think themselves free and happy, but as they develop more awareness they understand the real situation and develop a quest for Truth.

CHAPTER 25

IN THE ROYAL ASSEMBLY

"This is that terrible, mischievous Vanara," Meghanada said, pointing out Hanumanji in the royal assembly of King Ravana.

Hanumanji saw a new extreme of power and prosperity. The assembly was more highly decorated and impressive than any Hanumanji had ever seen. The presiding deities of water, air, and fire, and representatives of various planets were in the service of Ravana.

He was sitting on a huge, gorgeous lion throne made of gold and inlaid with many jewels. There were four more elevated seats on his left and right sides in which Prime Minister Prahasta and Mahaparshva were sitting. Meghanada also took a seat to the left of Ravana.

Ravana was looking most handsome in his costly red royal uniform, with his wide forehead, big eyes, athletic arms, and wide chest. On his head was a huge jeweled crown. He was full of luster, seriousness, and had a governing quality. He was a great scholar of the Vedas.

"Ask Him where He has come from and why He is here? Why has He destroyed my garden and killed my son and warriors?" Ravana requested, turning towards Prime Minister Prahasta.

The whole assembly looked at Hanumanji Who was fearlessly and innocently looking around. Ravana saw such fearlessness for the first time in his life. Knowing that Hanumanji was the murderer of his son, he became extremely furious.

Hanumanji looked from left to right and noticed that everyone sat on elegant seats, but no one offered Him one, so He enlarged His form, curled His tail in a circle and made a high seat for Himself, even higher than Ravana; perhaps He didn't like to sit on a seat lower than the thief of Sri Ram's wife.

"I came here to pay a visit to Mother Sita," Hanumanji replied, sitting on the top of His high tail seat. "Almost one day and night had passed and I had not eaten anything. I was hungry so I jumped from branch to branch, from tree to tree, and in jumping, the trees of your garden broke. It was just to inform you that such weak trees are not suitable for the garden of a conqueror of all the planets.

"Self defense is a natural right for all. Whoever attacked Me, I too attacked him. What is My offense? If there is one it lies upon the head of this gentlemen who bound me by the rope and brought Me here," Sri Hanumanji, speaking so innocently, pointed to Meghanada.

Ravana ground his teeth in wrath and twisted his fists with anger. His eyes blazed like fireballs as he looked at Hanumanji, but that One continued,

"I am not putting the blame on you. Nor am I bothered about being arrested. But you have committed an unpardonable crime by stealing the wife of the almighty Sri Ram. Still it is not a matter of anxiety for you now.

"My Lord Sri Ram is all merciful -- a symbol of overflowing love. You just come along with Me, keeping Sita in front of you, and beg His pardon, falling flat at His lotus feet. Thus your long life will be assured and the empire of Lanka will be safe for everyone. By becoming a loving devotee of Sri Ram you would be admired by all the philosophers and high minded yogis. Thus you could glorify the face of your ancestors."

"Oh, foolish Monkey!" The King lost his temper and trembled in great anger. Hissing like a dragon, he uttered the following words like a thunderbolt,

"So fearlessly You are jabbering in front of me. Don't you know that all the VIP's of the material and astral planets stand with folded palms before me?"

"I know the power of Sugriva who kept roaming all around in fear of his elder brother Bali, and then had him killed by deceptive means in order to become King. The One You call Rama was exiled by His own father because He proved unfit for the royal seat You praise! I am going to kill each One of You," Ravana said.

"Wicked scoundrel, can you kill any of us?" Hanumanji roared, angrily grinding His teeth as His face became redder.

"Can you kill Me? I am their servant - you apply all your own power on Me first."

"Kill this Monkey immediately!" Ravana screamed.

"Wait a moment," said Vibhishana, who suddenly appeared in the royal assembly surrounded by his ministers and accepted his seat beside the King, "In our long tradition as warriors, messengers are never killed. If they were they wouldn't dare to speak out their masters' messages.

"Frankly, what is required by both parties is that they should talk this matter over very fearlessly. Your excellency, it would be a blot upon your worldwide fame if a great person like you transgressed or disrespected the laws of ethics. The effort invested in education and study would be gone, wasted in vain."

"I don't see any mistake in killing Him," Ravana said in wrath, looking at Vibhishana.

"If He does not return to His Master, He will send another messenger, and he will create more trouble by destroying other parts of our capitol and killing our soldiers and no one would know when he might come," Vibhishana said, convincing all the ministers.

"Such a dangerous Vanara could come at any moment and destroy any home, killing any of us. It would be better to invite the fight at once instead of remaining fearful and suspicious over it all the time. If Hanuman is killed, this will happen."

"You are right, a messenger should never be killed," Ravana said, because he saw that all his ministers agreed with Vibhishana. "Therefore break any of His limbs you wish and let Him approach His Master with broken legs and blinded eyes. Hanumanji prepared to attack as soon as they approached Him to cut off His limbs.

"Wait, Vanaras love their tails the most so let us set it afire! It will be better entertainment. Then He should be taken through all the streets of Lanka so they may see the One Who has killed their kinsmen. It will console them and everyone will enjoy the sight," Ravana ordered and dismissed his assembly, and went back to his palace.

CHAPTER 26

LANKA IN THE FIRE

There was great noise, great enthusiasm and a lot of talking among the Rakshasas. Hanumanji was taken to the central square in front of the royal assembly, and all the Rakshasas began to tie clothes, cotton and various flam-mable substances on His tail.

Hanumanji preferred to enjoy the fun. He had already shown supreme bravery and heroism. All the arrows shot at Him, instead of piercing Him, broke into pieces by crashing against His steel-like body. He also knocked down the palace just by kicking it.

However, according to Vedic wisdom this is not the height of powerfulness. There is yet another dimension. It is easy to bear the shock of arrows or guns, but it is very difficult to bear the shock of abuse and insults.

Hanumanji, being a *jñāninamagraganyam* (the supreme or highest among men of wisdom), as well as possessing inconceivably enormous power, was easily able to pass through this test of abuse, insult, being kicked and spat upon, etc. He enjoyed both extremities of praise and blame alike. He didn't complain or yell or show anxiety. He was all cool, all peaceful, always aware of Sri Ram's grace. This was His heroism.

This was the proof of His full attainment of transcendental wisdom. When one is surrendered to the divine-will, then the cosmic-power itself takes care of every-thing. Then the cosmic-will finds expression in every

activity. Whatever he speaks the cosmic-intelligence speaks, and then all problems of the world are solved.

In this surrender lies the emancipation of the entire world. That is why people ignorant of this mystery are bewildered when they read about Jesus Christ showing innumerable miracles. These miracles unveil deep, deep mysteries of knowledge and surrender. He performed miracles almost every step so easily and effortlessly. Yet he allowed himself to be crucified. Why?

Because Christ was never a doer. He was just a humble observer of what was happening. He was totally surrendered to the Father, what he called God. The cosmic-will was being materialized through his every thought, word and action. This is the case with all Realized souls.

Before we can understand Realized souls it is important that we study the Vedic literature of Intergalactic history, which describes the way of living and dealing with others of all the Realized souls in different millenniums. By perceiving the deeper regions of lovetrance, one can understand Realized souls better.

Sri Hanumanji is one of those heroic personalities of Intergalactic history Who is still residing in the Himalayan mountains.

"Wrap the cotton and clothes and wood around the Vanara's tail so He cannot move His tail."

Hanumanji's body was tied all over with thick rope. His tail was wrapped with innumerable pieces of cloth and cotton,

"Take Him all around the city," Prime Minister Prahasta ordered.

Then He was taken in a procession all around the city. Rakshasas were beating their drums, blowing their bugles, playing their trombones

and blowing whistles. Rakshasa boys were clapping and dancing and directing filthy words at Him. At every square everyone would come and kick and slap or beat Him with their fists. Small boys were pulling His ears and hair, as well as beating Him with sticks.

"We have captured a spy. He is a thief, a murderer. He has killed our numberless kinsmen. Anyone who wants to punish Him may do so." They were proclaiming this at every square.

"What a good opportunity My Lord has given Me to inspect Lanka in the day-light. I can observe everything very clearly now."

He didn't mind the slapping fists and the kicking of the Rakshasas. It was no more to Him than the buzzing of flies. He was keenly watching which streets could be used at the time of fighting, where the weapon house was, which place to destroy first. The enemies themselves were showing Him everything in their city.

The ladies were looking at this procession from their terraces and laughing at Him. Rakshasas were enthusiastic. After taking Him to all the main places on the main roads, they then brought Him to the central square and poured ghee (melted butter) upon His tail. Then they set fire to Hanumanji collectively.

A huge gathering was waiting to see the torturous jumping and painful scorch-ing of the helpless monkey.

"Sita, the monkey you were talking to this morning has been arrested. He has been taken all over the city tied with a thick rope, being beaten all along the way. Now by the order of the King under the direction of the Prime Minister, they setting fire to His tail." Female watchmen of the garden rushed to Sita to give her the news.

"Oh, my Lord, if I am truly a chaste lady, if there is strength in my verdict that I have never thought of any man with sex desire except my Husband, then with the power of this truth let the fire become cooling and soothing to Hanumanji." At once Sita willed this, closing her eyes.

"If Sri Ram loves me, if I have ever followed the regulative principles, let the fire be cool and soothe Hanumanji."

As soon as the Rakshasas set fire to His tail they quickly removed themselves, and then Hanumanji shortened His body and He was out of the bonds of thick rope. He was able to do the same with His tail, but He let it remain as long as He could use the fire to burn those wicked people.

He then threw away all the loosened ropes and enlarged Himself again. Now He started another play. He began to beat all the assembled Rakshasas with His huge burning tail. Wrapping some powerful people in His tail, He began to dash them on the earth. In their efforts to run away, many of them were trampled. There arose a great cry among the burnt Rakshasas.

Somehow, Prime Minister Prahasta was able to run away.

Hanumanji immediately leapt over a nearby mansion and began to burn it from all sides. Then Hanumanji jumped to the top of the other seven-storied building. Suddenly He was surprised to feel that the fire had become very cool and soothing. Previously it was not actually burning Him, but now it really felt cool.

Hanumanji roared loudly, deafening the ears of the Rakshasas.

"Hail to Sri Ram, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya!" And His tail began to move faster and faster, burning everything all around and His kicks began to wreck huge buildings and mansions.

First He burnt the storehouses of weapons and grains and then barracks and other important places. Then He leaped on Ravana's palace and began to roam everywhere like the embodiment of fire itself.

"Kill this mischievous monkey!" Ravana roared at the Lord of death along with other directors of the five elements.

Now, as soon as they rushed at Hanumanji, He grabbed the Lord of death and put him in His mouth, and waved His burning tail towards those directors. This frightened them and they ran away quickly to their own planets. The air, in order to help Hanumanji, blew faster.

Then Ravana ordered forty-nine forces of the water element to extinguish the devastating fire.

Hanumanji's mountainous golden body was reclining, spreading a golden hue like one of the flames.

The whole city became full of the painful groans of half-burnt people. Wherever the fire was slow, Hanumanji jumped-up to revitalize it.

His tail was running in the sky like a blazing golden pillar. He was roaring again and again like a devastator. He was continuously demolishing arches, steeples, vaults, tombs and terraces with the blows of His chest, hands and feet. He destroyed all the four main gates of the fort, huge technological institutions.

Thereafter He began to burn Lanka again, concentrating upon its main centers. All Rakshasa gentlemen and ladies were weeping, suffocated by the extreme heat. If they closed all their doors and windows, they died in the heat. Ultimately all families ran down towards the ponds and ocean throwing their clothes away and running stark-naked.

"Kill this wicked monkey immediately," Ravana yelled to the directors of the clouds, "Shower, shower, torrents of rain."

"Stop, stop." Ravana transmitted his order again to the water forces because he found that, due to the dreadful fire, all the water was quickly being broken into its original components of gases, hydrogen and oxygen. Oxygen was increasing the fire a thousand times and the hydrogen was making a series of explosions everywhere.

Hopelessly Ravana entered his cell. All the ministers of Lanka, even Meghanada, saved themselves by taking shelter in their cells. The golden city was burning like butter and the gold paved mansions, minarets, and arches were flowing like fountains. Everywhere burnt bodies and half-burnt bodies were lying wounded on the earth.

Hanumanji spared only three places: First, the area surrounding Mother Sita's abode, second, Vibhishana's bungalows along with his ministers and Trijata's, and third, the cave of Kumbhakarna, the elder brother of Ravana, who was addicted to constant sleeping.

When Sri Hanumanji felt the work was done, He jumped into the Indian Ocean.

"The mischievous Vanara has gone." The news spread like wildfire.

The efforts to extinguish the fire were succeeding. Everywhere there was the bad smell of burning flesh. With parched dry throats, all the Rakshasas in a lamentable state were busy repairing their city again.

Ravana sent out a proclamation that all citizens should return to their homes and that the ruined homes would be reconstructed with money from the King's treasury. Within a few weeks the city was reconstructed. Its streets, assembly halls, educational institutions, markets, gardens, and forts

were nicely re-paired so that no one could guess that the city had been in such a shambles.

CHAPTER 27

SON OF HANUMANJI

When Sri Hanumanji jumped into the ocean it swelled and high waves erupted wetting the foot of the hill Trikuta, and He enjoyed swimming for awhile. The ancient scriptures record that when Hanumanji was burning Lanka, even though the fire was cool to Him, due to Sita's immense power of chastity, owing to the extra labor of running all over the city, He did perspire.

When Hanumanji jumped into the ocean His sweat fell into the ocean, but before it could mix with the water, a huge fish drank it. Since a great celibate like Hanumanji must be highly powerful, not only His semen, but also His sweat is highly powerful. The sweat of Hanumanji made the fish pregnant, and then it was caught by a fisherman of Nagadvipa. When the fish was cut open the fisherman found a handsome boy lying inside.

This is not impossible because of the different laws of alchemy and chemistry which work when one rises above the level of sensory attractions.

The fisherman took the handsome boy whom he found in the fish to his com-manding officer and the officer took him to the King. The King of Demons, Ahiravana, was very pleased with the boy. He grew fast and became a powerful romantic youth named Makaradhvaja. The King engaged him in the protection of his capitol which he successfully did.

Once when the demon king kidnapped Sri Ram and Lakshmana for the purpose of sacrificing them to Mother Kali, Sri Hanumanji came searching for them and this young man wouldn't let Hanumanji enter the

gates of the kingdom. Then there was heavy boxing and Hanumanji tied the youngster with His long tail and entered. Hanumanji killed the demon and saved Sri Ram and Lakshmana. Then Sri Ram made the youngster King of the whole island.

CHAPTER 28

BACK TO SRI RAM

"Mother, it is through your grace that Ravana's vanity has been challenged successfully and I am able to open the path for My Lord to conquer Lanka victoriously. Now everything is all right. Please give Me permission to go to Sri Ram." After the ocean bath, Hanumanji leaped into space, prostrated and stood in front of Mother Sita with folded palms. There was no need to conceal Himself, and all the lady watchmen ran away when they saw Him.

Mother Sita's face was radiant, and with her eyes alight, she blessed Him, raising her palm in a blessing gesture.

"Let Your path be auspicious, my Son. Now go and make every effort so that my Lord may come quickly."

Hanumanji jumped on Mount Arista (the silver hill) and standing upon the top He roared, and that roar echoed all around the city. By the velocity of His leap the mountain broke into pieces, frightening all the people. His roar was a challenge to all of Lanka city to come and stop Him if they had the power.

Hanumanji again began to float among the cottony clouds in the sky at a speed as fast as if an arrow had been released.

After crossing the eight hundred miles of ocean He roared again and again out of joy. All the Vanaras who were waiting eagerly for Him at the seashore began to jump with joy, kissing their tails and ascending and descending the trees. It was inconceivable that their Friend, Who, had departed several days before, could return today before evening.

Quietly Hanumanji descended on the hill of Mahendra and looked at the friends who were watching His arrival. He approached them in common human form and saluted the Commander-in-Chief Jambavan and other elders. He embraced Prince Angada and greeted all warmly.

He said, "I saw and conversed with Mother Sita. The description of Sampati was true, word for word."

"Now we will hear from You the whole description on our way to Sri Ram," Jambavan stood up with all the Vanaras as there was no time left.

All of them rose into space and began to float with the clouds towards the north, singing and dancing in ecstasy at Hanumanji's victory.

Very soon they arrived at Kishkindha (modern Hampi). While entering the southern gate of the city they saw a beautiful royal garden, Madhuvan by name. Its red and yellow fruits, hanging branches of grapes, honey and various drinks reminded them of their hunger.

"Prince, we are hungry. Our Hanumanji has to be welcomed nicely," the Vanaras said to Angada.

"Eat and drink as much as you can. The garden is yours," the Prince re-plied,

With great rejoicing they landed and began to eat the fruits. Then they threw fruit and honey on the head of the gardener-in-charge, Dadhumukha, who ran down to King Sugriva as he was sitting on the hill of Pravarsana with Sri Ram, and told him that the Vanaras were destroying the royal garden.

"That means they are jubilant and they must have discovered Mother Sita." Sugriva was very happy and said to him,

"Convey to all of them that I wish them to come soon. I am very eager to meet them."

CHAPTER 29

DELIVERANCE OF THE MESSAGE AND THEIR MARCH TO THE SOUTH

All the Vanaras were enthusiastic. Looking from the sky they saw a beautiful scene on the hill of Pravarsana. Sri Ram's cloud-like hue was encircling everything all around Him.

He was sitting upon a coral slab. On His right side was sitting Lakshmana, and on the left side, Sugriva. They were conversing about Absolute Truth. Sri Ram was explaining some facts with the gesture of Jñanamudra. A considerable distance away some ministers were sitting.

Suddenly Sugriva's eyes looked into the distance and he saw all the Vanaras coming full of joy. He informed Sri Ram who stood up. With great rejoicing, Sugriva greeted them all by raising his tail high in the air.

"All glories to Sri Ram, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya!"

"All glories to Sugriva, the King of the Vanaras," the Vanaras exclaimed, their shouts echoing over all the hills and dales.

On landing, they all saluted Sri Ram and Sugriva by prostrating themselves flat upon the earth.

"My Lord, Hanumanji has saved us from the jaws of death!"

Commander--in-Chief Jambavanta said.

"He leapt across the ocean, visited Mother Sita, burnt Lanka and brought the information which we require. It is better to hear the story from Sri Hanumanji Himself."

A wave of great joy ran over the faces of Sri Ram, Lakshmana, and Sugriva and all the ministers of Kishkindha.

Hanumanji came forward and circumambulated Sri Ram and then fell prostrate at His feet.

"Did You see Sita? Where is she? How is she? How does she feel about Me?" Sri Ram inquired incessantly and His deep, deep torment was peeping through His questions.

Sri Hanumanji prostrated to the southern direction where Sita was. He spoke to Sri Ram and all the assembled Vanaras very seriously, as if He were talking about some dreamland.

"My Lord, eight hundred miles away from the southern peninsula of India there is an island, Lanka. There is a royal garden beside the royal palace, called the Ashoka grove. I saw the Mother sitting in the middle of the garden under the Sinshupa tree near the pond - a lustrous embodiment of austerity.

"She does not take shelter under any roof. She always sits under the tree and constantly chants Your Holy Name. She has one hope, that You will deliver her soon. This one thought has kept her from leaving the body," Hanumanji said with His eyes filled with tears.

"My Lord, the monstresses constantly frighten her and Ravana threatens to kill her because she will not submit to him. There is only one old sari on her body and she has abandoned her meals and water. She never sleeps and always sits. Her matted hair has become one braid."

"She has told Me to deliver this message to You. `The prince of the planet Svah hurt me only a little, and even for that You released the brahmastra. Why have You now been so late in delivering me from this cruel demon?'

**"She has sent her finger ring and crested jewel for You and has said,
`And now these ornaments along with my life are in Your hands, my Lord.'"**

Hanumanji offered two shining jewels to Sri Ram.

**Sri Ram picked them up and clasped them against His heart, shedding
tears from His eyes. He spoke in a choking voice,**

**"As a dying man is delivered from the death bed, in the same way,
Hanuman, You have given Me a new life by conveying Sita's news."**

Hanumanji looked at Lakshmana and said,

**"Mother Sita has conveyed her salutations to Prince Lakshmana and
has asked, `Why has my younger prince neglected and forgotten me? '"**

**Prince Lakshmana knelt down in the direction of Mother Sita. His
eyes became wet and fiery and without saying a single word he brought the
bows, sword, and arrow case and put it in front of his elder Brother, as if
saying, "Let us go, let us go."**

**"She will remain alive only for one month more waiting for You to
come. After that You may not find her alive," Hanumanji concluded.**

Sri Ram, full of wrath and love praised Hanumanji wholeheartedly --

**"Hanuman, You have enlivened not only Me, but Lakshmana,
Bharata, Mother Koushalya, the state of Ayodhya, and the whole Solar
dynasty."**

**Ram stood up and said, "Ram is a pauper, Hanuman. He has nothing
to give You Who has brought such a resurrective message. But I have My
heart, My love alone. This is My everything."**

And He looked all around at the Vanaras and said,

**"In the sight of you all, I am giving everything of My life to
Hanumanji," and He stretched out both of His mighty long arms and**

embraced Sri Hanumanji, and two drops of tears of love fell onto Hanuman's head, transcendentalizing His heart, His whole life.

prati upakara karoun ka tora

sanmukh hoi na sakatmana mora

suna suta tohi urin mai nahi

Hanumanji heard this song as if it were erupting from all the ten directions in a thousand voices, and Sri Ram was singing, "What shall I do for You, My dear, I am always in debt to You."

Hanumanji saw Sri Ram's face smiling, enrapturing, and His love-filled glances filled His heart with inexhaustible joy. It was this smile of Sri Ram's for which Hanumanji had sacrificed His life to bring the message of Sita at any cost.

That day He was successful, and this was His liberation, and this was His emancipation. This was the attainment which humanity tries to conceive of through thousands of philosophies and hundreds of meditations and by the study of numberless scriptures. It was this transcendental embrace of Sri Ram which made Hanumanji a Hanumanji. The whole structure of Sri Hanumanji's life and glory is composed around this love-filled touch of Sri Ram, the love-laden glances of Sri Ram, the nectar-showing caress of Sri Ram.

Once it happens it goes on for eternity. Of course, it may not be possible for it to exist for long physically, but those incidents which occur inside on the spiritual plane, those moments become everlasting. The material body may exist for a hundred years. The subtle body may go for millions of years, and the causal body may stay for billions of years, but this experience is eternal, transcending the lifetimes of innumerable creations.

This experience became the Being of Sri Hanumanji. His activities began to flow from its very origin, enlightening all dimensions of His life in bliss- consciousness.

Sri Ram set Him in front of Him and playing with His golden hair with His fingers asked,

"Tell Me, Hanumanji, how did You cross the ocean? How did You meet Sita? How great is the power of Lanka and how did You burn it? "

"Lanka is founded upon the table lands of three hills My Lord," Hanumanji began to describe. "The main fort of Lanka is situated upon the central table land. It is a golden city with four gates in four directions with highly developed technological weapons that are fixed at all the four gates. These are set to go off at any needed moment, and they can destroy in one moment any amount of People.

"Dangerous rivers are flowing outside, and on the top of a steep slope there is a fort. All around the island there are hidden under water dangerous mountains so that the shore is not accessible by ship. At the eastern, western and southern gates there are ten thousand soldiers, always prepared to fight, and there are one million soldiers at the northern gate appointed to protect the city.

"The city is full of gardens, jewel-encrusted homes, mansions and buildings, gardens, ponds and playgrounds. But My Lord, by Your Grace, I have burnt all of them," Hanumanji continued.

"One-fourth of the soldiers are killed and I have psychologically frightened the citizens. Before they regain their mental fitness and get their fort recon-structed, we should attack. Therefore, we should advance without

delay. We will make our camp on the hill of Subel. It is very safe, rich with fruits, flowers and water."

"My dear Sugriva, after receiving the news of Sita, Ram cannot delay. This most auspicious moment, Vijaya by name, is passing. We must leave immediately."

There was a great roar of rejoicing. The tremendous noise resounded in all directions.

Sri Ram bowed down to Ganesh and remembered the illustrious Mother Durga. She appeared in space offering her blessings.

"We should step on the earth as little as possible and just travel through the air. Hanuman and Angada should fly slowly, keeping themselves in the center, and all Vanaras would fly encircling them. Neela should be in the front. We will stop at the seashore," King Sugriva proclaimed to all the warriors.

"Let us leap and fly through space."

"Lanka is very far away and we must reach there very soon. Please adorn My shoulders by riding upon them," Hanumanji requested of Sri Ram with folded palms.

Prince Angada picked up Sri Lakshmana upon his shoulders and began to fly towards the south.

Whoever used to get sweet fruits and roots used to offer them to Sri Ram first. However, Sri Ram seldom ate any. He would taste it and then offer it to Hanuman, Sugriva, Angada or Jambavan.

Observing various auspicious omens they arrived at the shining blue ocean of the Indian peninsula.

All the Vanaras were given time to bathe and take their fruits from nature. The whole forest was full of mango trees and plenty of drinking water. Sri Ram and Lakshmana took their bath and performed their evening oblations. Sugriva came with fruits, roots and herbs on a leaf plate and water in a leaf glass.

Angada and Hanumanji fixed Sri Ram's bed with soft leaves and flower petals. It was a silvery moonlit night -- the seashore was shining.

Innumerable Vanaras, full of enthusiasm, prepared to sacrifice their lives for the work of Sri Ram. Wandering here, there and everywhere, and singing songs, they were full of joy at having Sri Ram in their midst.

Very soon Sri Ram's lotus eyes were closed in sleep.

CHAPTER 30

VIBHISHANA IN SURRENDER

The next morning Sri Ram took a bath before sunrise and completed His worship. As soon as He sat under the tree surrounded with Vanaras, they discussed how to cross the ocean. The Commander-in-Chief Jambavanta in-formed Him that five huge armed Rakshasas had traveled in space from Lanka and were waiting to see His Holiness.

One of them, Vibhishana, said,

"I am the younger brother of the same Ravana who has abducted Mother Sita and killed Jatayu. Being insulted, kicked out by that sorcerer scientist Ravana, who is the great enemy of godly races, the philosopher class and cows, I have come to the cooling and soothing lotus feet of Sri Ram, Who is always prepared to bestow all love and shelter, even if the whole of creation comes in surrender."

Sri Ram looked at Sugriva's face and asked him what he felt.

"I would not feel badly if we killed all of them, but if we don't, we should arrest them all until our victory is assured."

Sri Ram's face became very serious. All the warriors were actually Sugriva's warriors, and whatever was going to happen was going to influence the whole army.

"I would like to invite suggestions on this matter," Sri Ram said and stared at the face of Jambavan.

"Nothing is unknown to Your Holiness. We should totally surrender to Your mission. But he is coming from the enemy's party at a very delicate time, and that is why we have doubts about him," Jambavanta said.

"He shouldn't be believed. He has to be tested. If he proves to be sincere, then You should accept him; otherwise reject him," Prince Angada suggested.

"Better engage one spy to observe him and then deal with him according to that information," Sarabha said.

"Better that we call him and talk to him and then decide," Mayanda said.

Sri Ram's eyes fell upon Sri Hanumanji, Who condemned all of the suggestions and gave one of His own.

"My Lord, no one can equal You in dignity, debate and struggle. Even the Vrihaspati, the advisor of the King of planet Svah, would feel diffident in advising You. We are Your humble servants and must do what-soever You wish.

"Vibhishana is coming to You as a great man, after abandoning that most heinous of men, Ravana. He has heard of Your supernatural powers and divine qualities and how You have given shelter to the forlorn and homeless Sugriva. Vibhishana's request doesn't seem to be unreasonable, nor does he seem to be double-faced.

"He might want to become the king of Lanka, but that is not a dangerous desire, so, easily, we are getting the brother of Ravana as our helper, and this is the first step to our success. My Lord, I am in favor of accepting him, but only as You wish, My Lord," Hanumanji replied.

"Whether he is wicked or a gentlemen, we accept him," Sri Ram said, looking lovingly at Sri Hanumanji. "One who approaches Me in the hope of love or material possession, I do not reject, even if he is full of mistakes and has committed many crimes. I cannot discourage him, even if he is a very wicked man.

"There is only one qualification which I require and that is that he should approach only Me. My vow is that whosoever comes to My refuge, I will give him shelter," Sri Ram declared.

"But my Lord, it is true that he has come to us abandoning his brother in time of trouble, so how could we be sure he won't desert us under the same circumstances?" Sugriva persisted.

"What you say is valuable." Sri Ram's amiability was greater than anyone's, for He didn't remind Sugriva that when he came to Him it was for protection from his older brother also.

Sri Ram continued, "If Vibhishana aims at gaining the kingdom, his goal is going to be achieved by our success and not our failure. In Lanka he was probably condemned and suspected because he tried to help Hanumanji.

"Ravana could have sent him as a spy to convey all of our secrets so that he could attack us at any time," Sugriva persisted again.

"My dear friend," Sri Ram said to Sugriva, full of warmth and revealing the depth of his gorgeous personality, "Suppose you are right that he may attack Me at any moment. Even then Vibhishana cannot be abandoned. Even My younger brother Lakshmana has quite a number of weapons by which he can destroy not only this world, but also innumerable other planets of the solar system in a single moment.

"We have been wandering from forest to forest in great danger only because we never want to trespass or hurt the moral codes of the Vedic way of life. At no cost could we desire to destroy an innocent person only just because we want to kill Ravana. Actually, killing Ravana or grinding any empire into dust on any planet of the cosmic egg is like child's play.

"However, the mission of our life is to give a living example of the benevo-lent Vedic way of life so that the history of humanity may rise to a climax of everlasting peace. So my friend, My vow is -- Whosoever comes into My refuge, whether he be an atheist, a monster, a goblin, an enemy or a drunkard, I shall not abandon him.

"This has been one of the principles of My forefathers and moreover, Ram likes it so much that not only in this lifetime but even when I shall depart from the planet Earth, whosoever will take refuge in My name, My form, My life style, My abode, I assure him eternal happiness, materially as well as spiri-tually. This will be until the end of creation.

"My friend, no matter what you speak of others, even if Ravana should come, I will accept him, even knowing Rakshasas are great sorcerers, great scientists. I cannot escape the very way of My life like a coward. No, not at all. Fear, selfishness, and misconception cannot move Me from My path.

***sakdeva prapannaya tavasmiti cha yachate abhayam
sarvabhutebhyo dadamyetad vratam mama***

**"Whoever accepts and surrenders
to Sri Ram wholeheartedly,
he or she is taken care of in every way
and in everything.**

This is the vow of My life.

I make him or her fearless

and free in all walks and

all dimensions of life,

in all parts of the world."

Then Sri Ram said in a commanding tone,

"Go and bring Vibhishana. I have assured him freedom and if his brother Ravana comes bring him too without asking Me."

"My Lord, Oh, merciful One, You know very well the secret of religion. I was just talking according to the laws of politics. Now I understand that religion is the way of life of the greatest, powerful ones, or otherwise, when one becomes supremely powerful on the physical, psychological, astral, causal and transcendental planes, the way of life which he automatically develops is no other than the religion itself. By Your order, my Lord, let Vibhishana become my friend," Sugriva said with folded palms in deep gratefulness.

"Welcome brother, Lord Rama is waiting for you." Sugriva and Hanumanji went to receive Vibhishana who was still in the air waiting for permission to see Lord Ram.

Vibhishana was overwhelmed with humility and love when he saw Sri Hanumanji and Sugriva, and he fell down at their feet. Hanumanji raised him in His arms and took him to Sri Ram.

He was stumbling in ecstasy at the thought of meeting Ram. His eyes were showering the inner joy of meeting Sri Ram and his whole body was thrilled and enlightened in the wisdom of Ram-Realization.

Vibhishana saw that Ram was power, love, compassion, and wisdom united into one form of an Olympian princely dignity which was beyond description. He had lotus eyes, long arms, a round face, long hair, a radiant complexion, and was carrying a huge bow. He was sitting in the middle of the Vanaras on the sea-shore.

"My Lord, this Vibhishana, the heinous one, the younger brother of Ravana, has come after hearing about Your spotless fame. I fall at Your lotus feet. Make me Your Own, Oh, Lord of all orphans," Vibhishana cried from a distance, fall-ing prostrate on the earth in front of Sri Ram and His ministers.

Sri Ram rushed to him with both arms stretched out and enfolded him in His warm embrace, that same embrace which Princess Sita achieved as her greatest asset after renouncing two empires of worldly prosperity and performing extreme vows of chastity.

The embrace of Sri Ram gives instantaneous Realization. That embrace calms all sorrows and the sufferings of innumerable lifetimes.

"I have come to You abandoning everything to become Yours," Vibhishana said.

"Ask for any benediction," Sri Ram's voice echoed.

"When I started out, my heart was not totally desireless, but after seeing You I can ask for only one thing - give me more love towards Your lotus feet," Vibhishana's voice asked beseechingly.

"So be it. But friend, you will have to accept a little tribute for taking the trouble of coming here," Ram said mysteriously.

"Lakshmana, is not the ocean the combination of all the holy waters?" Sri Ram looked at His younger brother.

"Yes, my Lord," Lakshmana said.

"I want it," Ram said and Lakshmana immediately brought the crystal clear water of the Indian Ocean in his kamandalu.

Sri Ram set Vibhishana upon the nearby slab and performed the abhiseka ceremony and uttered a slogan,

"All glories to Vibhishana, the King of Lanka."

All the thousands of Vanaras shouted loudly and it echoed all around the beach and the ocean arose in tides as if it had received the news to spread in all directions.

"I have given you the empire of Lanka. You are the emperor of it for one kalpa (four billion years). Now I have just to fulfill the formality by killing Ravana. He cannot save himself by escaping to any other planet. I will not spare him even if he takes refuge in Brahma and Shiva." Sri Ram's bold and firm heroic voice echoed and everybody heard it.

Prince Angada suddenly raised a question -

"What will happen if Ravana takes refuge at Your lotus feet? "

"Now Lanka has become Vibhishana's and if Ravana comes to his senses and takes refuge in Me, the empire of Ayodhya will be provided to him. Ram is confident enough that He can establish a new empire in the forest by the power of His bow," Sri Ram replied without any pause, looking at the face of Prince Angada.

"All glories to the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya!" Sugriva jumped in the air and shouted loudly.

"All glories to the Lord of Mercy incarnate," Vibhishana shouted to Ram, overflowing with great joy.

All the Vanara army began to dance in ecstasy and celebrate a festivity in the name of Sri Ram's unique generosity, and it continued for the whole day.

CHAPTER 31

WRATH UPON THE OCEAN

"How can we cross the ocean?" The next morning Sri Ram was asking the same question He had asked the day before and the same ministers surrounded Him. He glanced at Vibhishana.

"My Lord, this Indian Ocean, along with its bays, was created by Your ancestor the princess of King Sagar. Thus it is called Sagara. Therefore it can manifest into form by prayer and tell us the way." Vibhishana had a weakness for giving advice very quickly as he had been an efficient advisor to Ravana.

"Very good advice." Sri Ram found the suggestion acceptable.

"Presiding deities of the forces of the five elements seldom respond to prayers, my Lord. We must get help from some technological instrument," said Prince Angada.

Lakshmana, being a fiery personality, did not like the idea of either prayer or technology. According to him the first was cowardice and the second seemed like a waste of time.

So he said, "Sir, praying to the ocean is not worthy of the power of the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya. Please raise the bow or order me to do so. The waters will dry up by my atomic weapon. Let the arrow be released from my bow and we will see in a few minutes that all the water will be broken into its original components."

"You are right," Sri Ram said, smiling and looking at Lakshmana.
"However, first we should try the peaceful non-violent procedure, and if that doesn't work, then we will take your suggestion."

Immediately Hanumanji fixed a comfortable seat of kusa grass. Sri Ram sat facing the ocean with straight spine in a triangular posture. He was experiencing deep peace and power while His big beautiful eyes were closed.

"Lakshmana, bring Me My bow and arrow."

Sri Ram sat for three days and nights without any meals or without any water. On the fourth day His eyes became red with anger and He gave this order to His younger brother:

"Mean and shallow people always interpret peace, forgiveness, simplicity and all of the qualities of a gentlemen as weakness. This stupid ocean deity translates My peacefulness as cowardice."

"Give Me My bow and arrow," Sri Ram said. His eyebrows were lowered.

Lakshmana, who had already wanted this, handed it over immediately and Sri Ram fixed a dreadful weapon. Before its release a tremendous noise was created and then a great wind blew. The ocean and the creatures in it became restless.

"Forgive me, my Lord, I am Your servant. Please protect me." A cool wave of the ocean washed the feet of the enraged Sri Ram and spread a bunch of shining pearls all over the beach as if offering tribute.

There appeared a green-complexioned, white-haired, pearl-ornamented human form with folded hands, trembling with fear. He prayed to Sri Ram,

"My Lord, it was You alone Who conditioned the consciousness by materializing it into an inert state. I was just following Your law, my Lord. Please excuse me," the Ocean said.

"My weapon is unreturnable. Tell Me first the target, otherwise the whole ocean will be finished," Sri Ram said, and the ocean indicated a particular spot which within a moment was turned into a waterless desert.

"This whole army must reach the other shore of Lanka Island. Give it passage," Sri Ram said to the ocean in a commanding tone.

"I can be dried up by Your order but I wonder if it will be harmonious with the glorious fame which You have established by protecting the ideals of moral codes," the Ocean said hesitatingly.

"Is there any easy and comfortable way which upholds the codes of moral conduct?" Sri Ram asked.

"Yes, there is, my Lord. If You can construct a bridge joining both shores it will enhance the glory of Your extraordinary power and remembrance of it in songs and topics will keep purifying the innumerable beings born in future generations," the Ocean replied.

"Bridge the ocean?" Sri Ram looked at the Ocean in pleasant surprise. "Nala and Neela, the twin brothers and sons of Vishvakarma (the engineer of the six planets above the Polestar) are present already in Your army. Even huge mountains thrown by them into the water will not sink, but float. The rest I will arrange," the ocean said.

"All right," said Sri Ram and the ocean disappeared among its huge, encircling, garlanding blue waves,

CHAPTER 32

CONSTRUCTING THE BRIDGE

"You naughty monkeys. From today whatever stones you may throw in the water will never sink. They will just float." The rishis were tired of the mischievous playing of the two children.

Everyday they came and jumped on trees and ran everywhere playing with the deer, cows and lions of the ashram. That was tolerable, but whenever the rishis were busy, Nala and Neela used to pick up their worshipful deities and throw them into the ponds or rivers. That was unbearable.

When the same mistake was repeated three times, the rishis cursed the twins, thus solving the problem. The same curse proved to be a boon, for when the time came, the twins became the greatest engineers of the Vanara civilization.

"We will bridge the ocean." There was great enthusiasm among the Vanaras.

Nala and Neela flew all around and inspected the whole area from the air and returned to Sri Ram surrounded by all the Vanaras.

"My Lord, I am very happy to examine the place. I believe the minimum width of the bridge to accommodate our army would be eighty miles." (This was the distance from Kanya Kumari where Sri Ram was standing to Rameswaram, where He inaugurated the bridge with worship of Lord Shiva.)

"Today we are late so we can only construct one hundred and twelve miles of the bridge by evening. I assure You that every day we will be

quicken our speed. I am very sorry, my Lord, that since most of the bridge materials have to be brought from the Himalayas, I will need five days to complete a bridge eight hundred miles in length." Nala and Neela conveyed their further plans of construction to Sri Ram.

"All right, but what about the materials?" Sri Ram said, looking all around.

"If we use all the nearby mountains for bridge material the whole south of India will be turned into a desert very quickly. The Himalayas have one hundred and twenty five thousand hills extending from Shanghai to Spain. I guess that would serve our purpose without harming the punctuality of the cycles of the six seasons for the whole country. My Lord, allow Me to go to the Himalayas," Hanumanji pleaded.

"I am engaging one thousand powerful Vanaras who can leap and travel through space carrying five mountain peaks at once. They all will pick up mountains and bring them here under Your direction," King Sugriva said to Hanumanji.

All of them flew like space ships towards the north at a fast speed. Some weak Vanaras were sent to bring nearby mountains, rocks, huge trees, etcetera.

Then Nala and Neela worshiped Ganeshji and laid the foundation stone. Very soon they saw that the slabs and mountains did not sink in the water, but floated. However, the turbulent, mighty waves of the ocean dispersed the mountains, not allowing them to remain fixed in one long chain.

All the Vanaras began to ponder what to do. Nala meditated on the answer. He picked up one mountain and wrote "RA" on it and left it in the

ocean. He then took the next mountain and wrote "M" on it and gave it also to the dancing waves. Surprisingly everyone saw those two mountains automatically joined together. All the Vanaras sang and danced in ecstasy.

Now all ten thousand Vanaras began to come from the Himalayas with mountain tops and they would write "RA" on one and "M" on the other. Then they were handed over to Neela and Nala's expert hands, which began to work like the fastest machine. Every two mountains on which RAM was written began to combine into a stronger force than even cemented ones. The magnetic pull of RA and M joined all the mountains together. Only pairs were being joined together with other pairs and their peaks leveled.

Innumerable Vanaras were working on the construction under Nala and Neela and more than one thousand were constantly bringing mountains from far and wide. Intense activity was going on.

Amidst all the activity Sri Hanumanji's eyes suddenly fell upon a tiny little creature. It was a chipmunk and he was taking a dip in the ocean, getting thoroughly wet and then coming to the beach and rolling and plastering the soft clay all over his body. Then he went to the bridge and shook his body and the clay fell upon it. Then he would again take a dip, plaster his body and pour it on the bridge. He was very busy doing this.

Hanumanji was surprised to see this soft tiny soul here. He was in great danger because he could be stepped on or crushed at any moment by one of the innumerable Vanaras running between space and earth with huge mountains, trees and rocks. How had he remained alive?

Sri Hanumanji picked him up and setting him on his palm asked in his own language, "Why have you come here? There is nothing for you to eat on the bridge. Don't go on it."

"Is this bridge Yours or Sri Ram's?" the tiny little soul asked angrily, dashing his tail back and forth.

"Of course it belongs to Sri Ram but we are His servants," Hanumanji declared.

"Sri Ram is the Lord of the universe," the little fellow said very strongly. "Each and every being of the universe has his duty to perform and therefore each one of us has the right and the freedom to perform service for Him and to be in serene satisfaction."

"What service would you do in this large scale activity? You can only be ground under the heavy soles of the Vanaras. Please don't pollute the purity of the bridge by getting your blood smeared upon it," Hanumanji said.

"Don't You see how soft are the feet of Lord Sri Ram? Like lotus petals.

The bridge is so rough and uneven. Can't You imagine how sharp those bricks and stones are and how they would pinch His soles? And how His lotus feet would shrink in pain! His peach-showering, soothing smile would disappear. If You call Yourself His servant, then how could You bear it? I am only paving the bridge with clay and sand so it won't hurt His feet."

Hanumanji's heart was deeply touched by this tiny soul and He gracefully and lovingly looked at him. His body was still wet and the sand was mixed in with his fur.

"But very soon you may die by dipping in the water again and again. Then how will you be of service?" Hanumanji asked him.

"You may be immortal, but not I. If my body were ground under the feet of any of my Lord's servants, then I would be fortunate and my body

would be sanctified. What greater privilege could there be than that? I have to die someday, and the body has to fall, but is there a place where He is not?"

"That omnipresent, all pervading, all inclusive Lord is residing everywhere. Anywhere my body falls, it will be on His lap. Then why would the bridge be impure with my blood?" The chipmunk said, dashing his tail against Hanumanji's palm and raising his head confidently.

Sri Hanumanji considered him very great and this sent Him into deep thought.

"What is the value of material things and great works in order to satisfy that Lord of the universe? Is He not satisfied only with a strong determination and a bold stand to do something beautiful for Him? Does He care whether something is completed or not or whether a golden or clay spoon is used?

"Are not all these huge performances in the name of spirituality just the glammers of sentimental people, people who are playing games of spiritual romance? He is satisfied just by offering something nice to Him, doing something beautiful for Him. God has never declared what He likes or doesn't like. Then why do people project their own concoctions in His name!"

Hanumanji stood silent, absorbed in thought. His attention was diverted when smiling Sri Ram came and stood in front of Him. Sri Hanumanji saw how very gracefully and lovingly Sri Ram was looking at the tiny little chipmunk standing on His palm.

Sri Ram then took him onto His own palm which was red and soft like lotus petals. The chipmunk sat silently and then out of great joy and transcendental wonder he began to sniff the palm of Sri Ram.

"I am very much satisfied with you," Sri Ram said to the chipmunk in his own language and began to pass His right palm over his back which was instantaneously marked with lines, which can still be seen on the backs of all his generations of chipmunks.

"Now you don't trouble yourself anymore, because while crossing the bridge Hanumanji will take Me on His shoulders. You just abide on My planet and enjoy My love." Sri Ram blessed him.

Sri Ram and Hanumanji began to watch the construction of the bridge. It was almost evening and the bridge was now one hundred and twelve miles long and eighty miles wide. Sri Ram patted the backs of the twin brothers and ordered them to take a rest.

The next day Nala and Neela extended the bridge up to two hundred and seventy-two miles, the third day it reached four hundred and forty miles, the fourth day it went up to six hundred and sixteen miles, the fifth day one hundred eighty-four miles more, and then the bridge was completed.

Sri Ram and King Sugriva became very happy to see the bridge which was eighty miles wide and eight hundred miles long, resembling a necklace upon the chest of the ocean.

We can conceive of a hanging bridge, a suspension bridge, but this was a bridge of floating rocks made by a chemical radio action through the power of Sri Ram's Holy Name. By the power of the Holy Name of Sri Ram, the inaccessible ocean of problems and sufferings of the world can be easily

crossed. In comparison with that, this ocean was insignificant. It was all just Ram's lila, Ram's play to establish the faith of suffering creatures in His Holy Name.

It was all beautiful, extremely attractive, made of multi-colored mountain parts, rocks and stones with artistically grown flowers and fruit-bearing green trees and wide roads. In the joints of the pairs of mountain parts, Nala and Neela had planted huge wide trees. Also, on both sides of the bridge huge trees stood, which were showering flowers and leaves into the ocean. It appeared as if the ocean was offering a long garland to receive Sri Ram. Actually the bridge resembled a rainbow.

When Sri Ram saw that the bridge was completed, He immediately ordered the Vanaras to fly in all directions over India and tell those Vanaras who were bringing more mountains just to put those mountains down wherever they were at that moment. Thus innumerable mountains from different places were placed at random in south India.

We find this even now. Sri Hanuman received this message when He was in the vicinity of Vrindaban (a holy place between Delhi and Agra) on His way from the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari. An order is an order. Hanumanji gently landed on the earth and carefully placed the mountain on the bank of the Yamuna River.

Hanumanji said to the mountain,

"Reverend Sir, I am very sorry that I have caused you to be separated from your loving parents and even then I could not take you to the lotus feet of Lord Ram, but let Me convey this situation to Him and I will reply to you accordingly."

Then He flew on to Sri Ram and there He spoke about the incident, to which Sri Ram replied, "Hanuman, please fly away and console Giri Goverdhan, the mountain You had to put down, that at the end of the Copper Age I will appear in the form of Sri Krishna and he will enjoy My association and My stay on his top. I will play on his peaks, rest in his caves, climb on his trees, bathe in his ponds and fountains. I will reside there for eleven years."

Hanumanji conveyed the message of Sri Ram and Giri Goverdhan was thrilled with pleasure. His days and nights began to pass in the trance of waiting for Sri Ram to adorn his peaks, dales, caves and everything so that they would be suitable for the pastimes of Beloved Krishna.

Thinking and imagining the pastimes of Krishna, he entered into intense communion with Him, since thoughts and imaginations of Krishna are identical with Him, and He, being the Absolute Reality, transmitted His future pastimes into the heart of Giri Goverdhan.

He visualized all the lilas Krishna was going to perform about one million years later in the trance of his meditation, which is, of course, a mirror of eternity, and he arranged his whole area accordingly.

CHAPTER 33

ON THE HILL OF SUBEL

On the sixth day, Sri Ram inaugurated the bridge with a huge worship ceremony of Lord Shiva. On this very day, even now, in the same spot, the same image of Lord Shiva is gorgeously worshipped. There is a palatial

temple, and the town built around it is famous as Rameswaram. It was at the eastern extremity of the bridge.

After the distribution of prasad Sri Hanumanji set Sri Ram upon His shoulders. Angada set Lakshmana on his shoulders, and Vibhishana carried a club in his hand, and along with the ministers, they walked in front. Jambavanta and Sushena walked on both sides and King Sugriva walked in back.

As soon as Sri Ram provided the lead the sky became thrilled with the great rejoicing of the Vanaras. Innumerable auspicious omens occurred in all directions. Vanaras leaped in the sky and began to fly. They landed on the bridge and rested only when they became exhausted.

The flower of life has bloomed fully in Sri Ram and Hanumanji. They are the pinnacles of the evolution of consciousness. Wherever such personalities pass, the whole of existence celebrates and feels the glory of Their presence. As all life is interconnected, we are one mass of consciousness and the sense of individuality or separateness stems only from the ego idea. The more transparent, sensitive and meditative one becomes, the more he takes delight in himself.

In the presence of a fully bloomed flower of life, nature corresponds in transcendental rapture. So when Sri Ram and Hanumanji passed, innumerable souls of the ocean -- fish, seals, octopus, starfish, sharks, eels, crabs, etcetera, raised their heads from the ocean and rejoiced in the Holy presence of Sri Ram and Hanumanji.

"Encamping upon the hill of Subel is enough to frighten the capitol of Lanka." Vibhishana told Sri Ram after they had all arrived at the northern beach of Lanka.

"Lakshmana, look at this hill full of fountains and fruit trees. Occupy this place and allow all our soldiers to eat fruits and take a rest," Sri Ram said and turned towards Sugriva.

"Order the Vanaras to stay anywhere on this hill, but they should not approach Lanka. However, they are free to punish any Rakshasas who might try to come up here."

Sri Ram and Lakshmana went to a fountain for their evening bath and meditation.

Sri Hanumanji collected soft leaves and flower petals and fixed a beautiful bed for Sri Ram and spread a deer skin over it. The whole eastern horizon reddened all around and the full moon shone, whitening and silverizing the entire field of nature. Sri Ram lay down on His bed and Hanumanji and Angada sat near His feet and began to massage His feet gently. Vibhishana and Sugriva and Lakshmana were surrounding Him.

Suddenly Sri Ram's eyes noticed the south and He said,

"Friends, it seems that we will have to rest in some cave. A big black cloud is starting to overshadow the sky and I hear the rumbling sound of thunder and see lightening."

"My Lord, that is not a cloud," Vibhishana replied politely, "but the canopy of the lion throne of King Ravana in his athletic ground on the southern silvery hill of Trikuta. This is not rumbling, but music played with the wrestling and that is not lightning, but the reflection of his wife's earrings!"

"Oh, this is the show of Ravana's vanity," Lakshmana said, quietly handing over the bow and arrow to Sri Ram, and continued, "Let the Rakshasas see the skill of Your archery, my Lord."

"Well, Sri Ram smiled, looking at Lakshmana's face. He fixed the arrow in the bow and released it toward the silver hill. All of the ten crowns of Ravana's ten heads, the earrings of his wife and a huge canopy were pierced by the arrow and they fell to the floor.

It was the start of the athletics. Ravana wanted to show his bravery and he wanted to divert the attention of the public to the athletics so they wouldn't feel fear, but his plan back-fired. They all became highly fearful!

"I cannot sit in this unsafe place anymore." Mandodari, the wife of Ravana stood up, looking at the King with sharp eyes.

Everybody stood up in reverence of her Highness.

"Cancel this program until tomorrow," Ravana ordered the wrestlers.

The queen was greatly frightened, so it was necessary for him to accompany her to the palace.

After Sri Ram's arrow had pierced the King's crown, the queen's earrings, and the canopy, it returned back to the arrow case of Sri Ram. There were no more clouds rumbling nor was there lightning, and all began to enjoy the soothing peace and the white glimmering moon.

Sri Ram stood up and began to walk, looking at the city of Lanka, and then He became despondent and said to His people,

"Can't this beautiful city be saved? After a few days it will be turned into a cemetery. The ladies will be weeping, spreading out their hair in deep sorrow. Of course, Sita has been assured that I will meet her, but after the warriors of this city have been killed, this will be no consolation to the widows.

**"We should try once more to negotiate for peace," Hanumanji said.
"Prince Angada could go. He is intelligent and there was friendship between
his father and Ravana. Possibly he will listen to him as our envoy."**

**"Angada, you are a master of politics, ethics, and diplomacy. You can
use sàma, dàmà, danda, and bheda. My mission is not only to regain Sita,
but also to preserve the safety of the Vedic wisdom, the wisdom of the
saintly and godly races, and we must try to save this city."**

**So Angada was sent to Lanka for this purpose. He returned the next
evening and declared that war was inevitable. Ravana did not care to
negotiate.**

CHAPTER 34

THE GLIMPSES OF SRI HANUMANJI IN THE RAM-RAVANA BATTLEFIELD

War was declared from both sides. Sri Ram's soldiers surrounded the fort from all sides. Sri Ram appointed Neela, Mayanda and Dvivida on the eastern gate, Hanumanji on the western gate, Angada, Gaya and Gavaksha, on the southern gate, and Sri Ram Himself attacked the northern gate. Sugriva, Jambavanta and Vibhishana were engaged in helping wherever they were needed.

Ravana ordered his soldiers to kill the Vanaras, throw them into the ocean and eat them up.

As soon as the Rakshasas mounted the fort, the Vanaras leaped and pulled them down and dashed them to the ground. They began grinding them, pressing them with steel, tearing them with nails and biting them with their teeth, sending them whirling in the space.

Angada was fighting with Prince Meghanada, Hanumanji with Jambumali, and six highly powerful ministers of Ravana attacked Sri Ram. Very soon the whole sky became filled with the arrows of Sri Ram. One fourth of Ravana's soldiers were killed in the battle on the first day.

Ravana then appeared full of wrath, seated on his chariot surrounded by Akampan, Atikay, Mahodor, Narantaka and Meghanada. All of them were huge, tall and lustrous.

Sri Ram said, "Lakshmana, fortunately this thief has come in front of Me. Bring Me My Sharanga and protect Me from the back."

Sri Hanumanji was carrying Sri Ram on whom Ravana was incessantly showering arrows, which were all breaking into pieces by striking against Sri Hanumanji's steel-like body.

Soon Sri Ram took over the situation and broke the flag of Ravana's chariot. Next He killed the charioteer and the horses, and then He destroyed the chariot and showered so many arrows on Ravana's body that he fell to the earth. Ravana's whole body began to tremble.

"I don't kill an exhausted enemy," Sri Ram said as He cut off Ravana's crown. Then He said in a commanding tone,

"I order you to go back to Lanka and convalesce. Then come and I will show you My power."

"All my austerity from the past has been in vain. To me, the conqueror of the whole solar system, a human being has defeated me." Ravana's vanity was broken and he dared not go into battle right away.

Ultimately Kumbhakarna was awakened and he proceeded to the battlefield never to return as Sri Ram's arrows cut him into many pieces.

Ravana lamented bitterly and he repented for his blunder and praised Vibhishana, who gave him some benevolent advice.

Meghanada, surrounded by his powerful brothers, came and, consoling his father, said, "We will come to you only after putting an end to our enemy."

"Be victorious." Ravana blessed them, but they were all killed by the Vanaras.

The battlefield was obscured with the dead bodies of Rakshasas who were thrown into the ocean. Meghanada, a great master of sorcery and black magic, became worried looking at the great destruction of his army. He went

to Nikumbhila temple, took off his uniform and put on black clothes and offered oblations to the fire.

A shining automatic chariot arose from the flame which was able to disappear and appear at will. Meghanada got on the chariot and disappeared and then he ordered his soldiers to divert the Vanara's attention by attacking them.

Most of the Vanaras were pierced by arrows and lay dead on the battlefield. The rest fell down in a great faint.

Meghanada then went to the place where Sri Ram and Lakshmana were. He hypnotized them and pierced all their limbs with sharp arrows. When he thought they were dead he returned to Lanka.

A great wave of joy flowed and Ravana, out of love, embraced his son again and again.

There was no sign of life in Sri Ram's army. After the sun set, the darkness grew and obscured the sky as if it were the black shadow of death. Only Vibhishana was saved. But it proved to him to be more horrible than death.

He lit a firebrand and moved all the dead bodies over to find if someone was alive. The bodies of Sri Ram and Lakshmana were lying dead and lifeless. As soon as he approached Hanumanji, He awakened and accompanied Vibhishana.

Mayanda, Dvidida, Nala, Neela all were lying as dead. They found the body of Commander-in-Chief Jambavanta. He was lying on the ground. Hearing them invoke him, he said,

"I recognize you, Vibhishana. I am coming to my senses gradually. You just tell me, is Hanumanji alive?"

Vibhishana was surprised and asked,

"Sir, you didn't inquire about Sri Ram, Lakshmana, Sugriva or Angada. Why did you ask about Hanumanji first?"

"If Hanumanji is saved, I have hope for everyone. He can give life to all the dead ones," Jambavanta said. In sinking tones he went on, "If He is dead, then Meghanada can kill the ones that remain alive."

"Please order me." Hanumanji touched the feet of that age-old warrior of the Golden Age.

"Oh, we are all saved." Jambavanta was highly contented. "Now we can plan for revival."

"No medicines are left on the Gandhamadana hills," Hanumanji said in disgust.

"In Lanka there is a great physician, Dr. Sushena," Vibhishana's brain also became active. "He has mastery over botanical herbs, roots, and leaves. He knows the whereabouts of all medicines, all over the world."

"This is the time to use Your power, Hanumanji," Jambavanta looked at Hanuman and continued, "You are already hearing the great sounds of a drum celebration. They are busy with their festivals. On such an occasion You can easily bring us the physician."

Vibhishana gave Hanumanji the directions to the physician's home.

Hanumanji leapt and arrived at the spot. He found the physician sleeping. Due to remaining constantly engaged in research, Sushena could not find time for marriage. So he was a bachelor.

He had a nice bungalow built on a huge rock in a silent corner of the city. He loved his patients and allowed them to approach him whenever they suffered, so he had never arranged to have any gatekeepers. He had

servants, but all of them had gone to celebrate at the festival. The celebration was of no use to Sushena so he went to bed after making some new experiments.

Hanumanji thought - After all, his books and medicines will be in his home, so let us take him with his home. So He raised his house up and flew towards the north.

Sushena was awakened by the movements and as he dressed and came to the door he saw Vibhishana greeting him.

"A physician has neither friend nor foe. I deal only with patients. Just take me to the patients," Dr. Sushena said.

"But here are all the soldiers lying dead," Vibhishana said, full of agony.

"Whoever's body is in one piece cannot be pronounced dead, even if there are hundreds of wounds. If the man was healthy before the wounds, then medicine can make him alive before the sun rises," Sushena affirmed.

Dr. Sushena examined Sri Ram and Lakshmana and became very serious for a while. Then he looked at Hanumanji and said,

"Only You can do it. Please go to the Himalayas without delay. Cross all the hills and reach the area of Mount Kailash. Just near there is Dronagiri Hill. It is full of the right kind of medicines and herbs I need here."

He told Him the description and said, "Bring these herbs. They are all lustrous in the night. It is about dusk now and You have to come back before the sun rises."

Without giving any reply Hanumanji leapt into the sky and flew to the north like a space saucer towards Dronagiri, about twenty-six hundred miles away.

Ravana and his sons were very careful. They engaged spies and warriors who could prevent any help coming from the sky because they knew that the planet Svah was very much in favor of Sri Ram.

At once a spy informed Ravana that their great physician had been taken away by the Vanaras, and that the same One Who had taken him was now going towards the north very fast and they had no power to resist Him.

Immediately Ravana made a decision and arrived at the home of the greatest black magician of the time. His name was Kalanemi. Without wasting any time in formalities he said,

"Please hurry and stop Him just for this night."

"As you wish, so be it," said Kalanemi, and he arose in the air and disappeared from Lanka.

He appeared in north India on the earth where Hanumanji was to pass fifteen minutes later. There was an old ruined pond where Kalanemi created a heavenly grove, a most beautiful and attractive hermitage, and turned himself into the form of a highly elegant yogi by the power of his black magic. He threw his hypnotic influence all over the space.

When Hanumanji reached that part of space He felt very thirsty. His throat began to be parched.

The moon was rising and when He glanced downward He saw the most beautiful hermitage and a great yogi sitting in yogic posture on a slab under the open sky. There must be a water pond around him - Hanumanji

thought and so He descended near the hermitage, entered the compound, and bowed down to the yogi in reverence.

"Oh, Hanumanji, God bless You my Son. Be successful in Your mission," the black magician said rejoicing.

"We dwellers in solitude always meditate on the heart-sanctifying bliss and enlightening, beautiful pastimes of Lord Sri Ramachandra. I always see His pastimes in the light of my own divine meditation. Nowadays He is playing a game of fighting with Ravana but He will be victorious no doubt."

Kalanemi knew that Hanumanji loved to hear the pastimes of Sita and Ram and that whenever He heard them He used to forget everything else and a long time would pass. So he tried to entangle Hanumanji by this.

"I am very thirsty, please tell Me where the water is?" Hanumanji was not so careless in Sri Ram's work. He had to go so He requested the yogi with folded hands to let Him have a drink of water.

"Oh, I am sorry, I forgot, please take this water." Kalanemi moved his water filled kamandalu in which he had already mixed the sharpest poison toward Hanumanji.

"This little water!" Hanumanji objected, "What to speak of quenching My thirst, this will fail even to wet My throat. Please tell Me the way to the pond quickly."

"You also have to go to bring medicine," The pseudo yogi replied.

When the poisoning plan had failed, Kalanemi played yet another trick.

"Those medicines are definitely extraordinary. They begin to shine only to those who are initiated in certain mantras. Just behind those bushes

there is a pond. You drink and bathe, and come quickly. I will initiate You and give You the most powerful mantra." He thought he would pass the whole night teaching Hanumanji various compulsory rituals of the mantras.

"So kind of you, how merciful you are." Hanumanji was very innocent. He never knew to doubt anyone who was in saintly garb, which is the nature of a real devotee.

He hurried off to the pond.

He drank water from the pond and as soon as Hanumanji entered into the water to take a dip, a crocodile captured His leg and began to swallow Him, but His other foot was still free so He raised it a little up and dashed it on the crocodile's head with full velocity.

As if a rock had fallen upon it, her head broke into pieces and she died on the spot.

Immediately a most beautiful damsel arose out of the water, and standing in the space, she said with folded palms to Hanumanji,

"I am an astral damsel from planet Svah. Everyday I used to come to the Himalayas to play. There I loved a youth very much but he never bothered about me. He was always busy in his meditations and discussions with elderly saints.

"One day I saw he was reciting some Vedic mantras while standing in the water. I wanted to give him a pleasant surprise and so I entered into the water and clasped his feet from the back. He was jolted and was in a quandary and he forgot his mantras. It gave me great joy. Then I began to laugh wholeheartedly. He became angry and cursed me to become a crocodile.

"Oh, Messenger of Sri Ram, by Your Grace I am delivered from this heinous specie. Listen, my Lord, this is not a yogi, but a dreadful black magician, Rakshasa Kalanemi, who has been sitting here especially to detain You." And the damsel disappeared.

Hanumanji was as if awakened. He came out of the pond and walked to the yogi who had already fixed everything suitable for initiation.

But Hanuman said, "Oh, great revered yogi Maharaj, excuse Me. You will have to initiate Me later. Please take this donation first."

Saying this, Hanumanji wrapped His tail around his neck and dashed him on the huge stone. His magic ashram disappeared and his huge demonic form appeared. His blood was scattered all around.

Hanumanji arose in the sky and made His fastest speed and arrived at Dronachala before midnight. He saw the whole mountain shimmering with lights from the herbs. He was puzzled about the particularity and the quantity and so He took up the whole mountain and returned posthaste.

This time He happened to pass through the space of Nandigram of Ayodhya.

It was the second half of the night. Shri Bharata, the second younger brother of Sri Ram, due to extreme suffering owing to his separation from Sri Ram, was living an ascetic way of life. He was just finishing his daily worship and meditation in his cave, and was sitting outside in the moonlight.

He suddenly saw a huge form coming fast from the north with a shining mountain in His hand. He thought He was some demon carrying a huge mountain which He could dash on the hermitage of some rishi. He must be going to attack someone; otherwise, why was He in such a hurry?

He quietly took his bow and fixed a tipless arrow and released it when Hanumanji was out of the residential area.

As soon as it struck against His heart, Hanumanji cried, "Ram, Ram, Sri Ram," and fell down on the earth unconscious. The wind god held the mountain in the space.

The moment Bharata heard Sri Ram's Name he threw his bow away and rushed to Him.

"Who is He? Whom have I killed? It is another offense to the lotus feet of Sri Ram."

Bharata ran down and saw Hanumanji and he was extremely tormented and wept in tears.

"If I really love Sri Ram, if Sri Ram really loves me, then by the power of this Truth let this Vanara be saved," said Bharata.

"Sri Ram." Hanuman suddenly opened His eyes and sat up and said, "My merciful Lord." Hanuman misconceived Bharata for Ram, as the resemblance was striking.

"Brother, I am the younger son of King Dasharatha and younger brother of Sri Ram. My name is Bharata. I have committed an offense by shooting an arrow at You. Please excuse me, and may I make Your acquaintance?"

"I an insignificant Servant of Sri Ram, this Hanumanji bows down to your lotus feet. I am sanctified today by having this vision (darshan) of you."

"Where is my beloved Brother? After so many years I have met One Who is related to Him. Please tell me where is my younger brother Lakshmana and Mother Sita? Are they all happy and healthy? What are they

doing? Where were You going with such a huge mountain?" Bharata was really excited with pleasure and asked many questions at once.

What Hanumanji told him in a few words was very heart-breaking, and then Hanumanji asked,

"My Lord, please give Me permission to go. I must reach Lanka before sunrise."

"Can You not donate a few moments to the tormenting souls of Ayodhya?" Bharata requested, full of humility.

"This is the second half of the night. After sunset You started and now You have passed three-fourths of Your whole journey. How would my mother pardon me if I let You go without meeting them?"

"My life would be fulfilled if I could touch their feet," Hanumanji replied.

So Bharata took Hanumanji, who assumed His normal form, in his chariot to the Royal assembly.

At midnight Ayodhya's Royal assembly became crowded. Three mothers came, along with their three son's wives. The spiritual master of the state, Bramharshi Vasistha came. Sumantra and other important ministers and the Commander-in-Chief came. Hanumanji greeted them all. All of them began to look at Him full of curiosity and love.

Hanumanji described everything in a nutshell and concluded,

"When I started, My Lord was coming to consciousness and Prince Lakshmana was totally unconscious."

The Commander-in-Chief of Ayodhya's army cried out, his face and eyes red and fiery,

"I will see this scoundrel Ravana and the power of his people." He roared like a lion, "Revenge, revenge. We want revenge because of the insult to our Empress, by the stealing of Sita. I want to march with my army right this minute."

He wanted to blow his conch and gather his troops. He was just waiting for an order from Shatrughna, his commander, who looked at Bharata, who was his commander, and who in turn looked at the spiritual master, the main director of all the affairs of the Royal assembly, who was sitting quietly on his elevated seat hearing everything with closed eyes.

"Shatrughna, you don't need permission from anybody," Mother Sumitra's tone echoed in the assembly. "My Ram is alone in the middle of the enemy's army. You go hurriedly to join Him and convey this message, `Don't lament for Lakshmana. He has performed his duty well. You finish Ravana and come here soon along with Sita.'"

"Hanuman," Mother Kaushalya's voice echoed, "Hanuman, You convey my message to my Son Ram. If He can return to Ayodhya along with Sita and Lakshmana, He should return; otherwise, if He is alone, He shouldn't bother to come to Ayodhya."

"No, no, no," Sumitra said loudly. "Hanuman, this is my order to You, not a message - Sri Ram must come with Sita. Tell Him to forget Lakshmana and as a substitute take Shatrughna. If he too is sacrificed in such a noble cause, then He shouldn't turn back. He should just come with Sita."

The silent midnight was witnessing the stunned Royal assembly. The quietness deepened and whatever was spoken echoed tremendously.

"All of you please excuse Me for interrupting," Hanumanji said as He heard and looked around with His yellow eyes, wondering where such a

beautiful melodious tone full of humility and dignity was coming from, as if stability and amiability were vibrant in a feminine tone.

As Hanumanji looked up He saw an incarnation of beauty.

Urmila, the younger sister of Sita and wife of Lakshmana arose from her seat and said,

"Nothing has happened to my husband," and she raised her palms upright and showed her bangles to everyone.

Her eyes were burning and hypnotizing the whole assembly and they knew that whatever she was saying was absolutely true.

"Don't you see, nothing has happened to my bangles, they are still unbroken. Look at the vermilion on my forehead. Look at me. Urmila is still alive, still healthy. This is the sign, this is the proof that your younger Prince is absolutely all right. I am always in full empathy with my husband."

"Thank you, thank you. All glories to Princess Urmila." The spiritual master, who was quietly sitting, now got up and blessed her out of joy and then looked at the audience.

"My blissful selves," the spiritual master said addressing the assembly and finalizing everything and giving one decision. "Our Prince is safe by the power of the chastity of blessed Urmila. I assure you that even the combined forces of nature have no power to undo the will of such a chaste lady. Lakshmana will get up before morning with a new life's awareness and the rascal who has attacked him will have lost his life. He will not be able to see even tomorrow's sunset."

Then the master continued, "No one need go from here because Sri Ram's victory does not expect anyone's help. Let Ravana be killed by Ram Himself and let the whole world sing the song of His glorious victory and

receive inspiration to love all lightness within oneself and to do service to the philosopher's class."

The master laughed and said, "Why do you forget that the expiration of Sri Ram's banishment is already finishing. We need to adorn our city, our state, in His welcome, Whom we love as our own souls."

The whole assembly's attention was directed towards a new program, full of new hope, of new excitement.

Hanumanji prostrated Himself at the feet of the spiritual master of Ayodhya, who stretched out his right palm and blessed Him. "Be victorious, be successful, let Thy path be auspicious."

There was no more time. The moon was constantly moving westward. All of them gave farewells with drops of tears in their eyes. Hanumanji, along with Bharata and Shatrughna, boarded the chariot and came to Nandigram.

"Sri Hanumanji, I have wasted a lot of Your most valuable time. You have a long way to go. Please, take Your mountain and be seated on my arrow. It will get You to Lanka very quickly," Bharata said.

Now Hanumanji understood why the Commander-in-Chief was asking for an order to march immediately. Anyone could reach his destination quickly if they were sent by Bharata's arrow.

Hanumanji requested with folded hands. "My Lord, by your Grace itself I could reach Lanka in time with the speed of your arrow."

"Convey our obeisances to our Lord," Bharata and Shatrughna said with tears in their eyes.

Hanumanji arose in the air and moved with the speed of sound. Great music echoed all around --

Jai Sri Ram!!!

Vibhishana was waiting on the battlefield of Lanka. Jambavanta was waiting. Innumerable Vanaras, who by that time had been healed by nature, were impatiently awaiting Hanumanji. They were sitting around lamenting.

Sri Ram started crying for Lakshmana and placed his motionless body on His lap. Dr. Sushena was sitting and looking very seriously while taking Lakshmana's pulse. All the Vanaras kept looking at the sky hoping to see Sri Hanumanji soon. It was the end of three-fourths of the night.

Then a great voice echoed all around,

"Jai Sri Ram!"

Hanumanji landed on the earth.

The doctor immediately got up, mounted the hill and picked up some herbs. He requested Hanumanji to take the mountain all around the whole battlefield. By the perfume of the herbs, the dead bodies were enlivened. By the Visalyakarani herb, automatically the arrows came out from the bodies. By the Vranaropini plants the wounds were healed completely. By the perfume of Samrohini, where limbs had been cut off, new and healthy ones sprang up.

When Sri Hanumanji returned from Lanka, having placed Dr. Sushena and his house back in place, He saw that Sri Ram and Lakshmana were perfectly healthy and happy.

"His highness should try to understand. A physician sees a patient as a patient, never as a Rakshasa or a Vanara, just as a human being. I have never neglected any service of the state," Dr. Sushena was trying to explain to Ravana after he had been called in front of the royal assembly,

The next morning Sulochana requested of her husband, Meghanada,

"My beloved husband, just for today, please do not go to the battlefield. My right eye and right arm are fluttering -- please favor me with this request?" Meghanada smilingly embraced his wife and said,

"How come? How can I stop myself from going to the war when the enemies are roaring at the door? I have given my word to my father. How can I sit at home afraid of death? You have said many times that my fortune is safe because of your chastity."

"It is true my beloved, you are my fortune. I am confident that my fortune is totally safe by the immense power of my chastity. But my dear, we all have a certain limit to our power. For instance, Sita is the greatest among all the chaste ladies. My power of chastity seems to be insignificant compared to hers. Please honor my request. I find all the directions are darkening, and one of my bangles broke today," Sulochana said full of tears, sobbing and sighing.

"You are worrying for nothing. I am safe by my own power by which I conquered the king of the planet Svah. Lanka is the topmost in sorcery, black magic, necromancy, clairvoyance, physical powers, alchemy and archery. Why are you, the beloved of an incomparable master of all of these, frightened by those two poor philosophers?" Meghanada said, consoling his wife.

Then Meghanada appeared in the sky over the battlefield and laughed loudly and began to shower arrows from the air.

All the Vanaras ran to Lakshmana. He became very angry and started to release a highly powerful weapon, Bramhastra, in order to destroy the entire Rakshasa race.

Sri Ram objected and said,

"It is not right, with such a weapon all the innocent and non-fighting Rakshasas will also be killed. You just finish this crooked necromancer."

Meghanada was very cunning. He saw that Ram and Lakshmana had become careful and that they could release any weapon by which he could not be spared, even by hiding beyond physical existence. Then he appeared and posed as if escaping from the battlefield.

The Vanaras shouted that Meghanada was escaping. Since Aryan warriors never shoot the escaping enemy, Lakshmana began to fight with other Rakshasas.

Very shortly, some Vanaras brought very special news to Ram. Immediately Hanumanji, Lakshmana and a group of Vanaras under the guidance of Vibhishana marched towards the silvery hill. Crossing was very difficult but top secret paths led them to Nikumbhilài temple.

From a distance Vibhishana pointed to some rising smoke and told Lakshmana,

"This is the secret center of Royal sorcery and necromancy and the innumerable researches of Lanka state. By the special power produced here by various experiments, this tiny Lanka island has conquered the three worlds."

"Now Meghanada is sitting in a black robe offering oblations of blood, wine, and flesh in the fire to satisfy Smanakalika. If it is completed successfully, undoubtedly he will become invincible and immortal for a few years. Therefore, he has to be finished before his yajña is completed."

There was a powerful group of Rakshasas engaged in guarding the temple where Meghanada was performing his worship. They were ordered not even to allow the King entrance at this time of special worship.

Lakshmana killed them all with a single arrow and entered the cave.

"Hypocrite! Coward! Escaping from the battlefield! You are hiding here!" Hanumanji challenged Meghanada and shook him by his hair, while Meghanada having taken a vow of silence, was sitting constantly offering oblations into the fire.

Lakshmana freed all the animals collected to be slaughtered and broke all the sacrificial pots. Hanumanji kicked his sacrificial arena and broke it into pieces. Meghanada ran down the yard and jumped on his chariot, but the arrows of Lakshmana destroyed the whole chariot.

A great fight ensued between the two, and then Lakshmana fixed a dreadful weapon on his bow and said,

"If Sri Ram is firm in truthfulness and Vedic wisdom then let this arrow cut off this magician's head.

That arrow flew erupting fire all around and its half-circled edge cut down Meghanada's head, which was adorned with a crown, diadem and earrings.

Innumerable people of other planets who were watching the battle from space showered flowers and thanked Lakshmana.

A fresh, red, perfumed rose fell from space upon the lap of Urmila who was constantly sitting absorbed in meditation after the departure of Hanumanji from Ayodhya. Out of transcendental wonder she opened her eyes and placed the rose against her eyes and her forehead.

She felt thrilled and ran down to the other apartment to the members of the Royal assembly. A wave of joy spread throughout the city. "Victory, victory to my beloved husband."

Sulochana was also sitting absorbed in deep meditation in the Royal palace of Lanka.

"No, no, this is not possible. Victory is not for the snakes and scorpions to bite humanity all the time."

Some invisible sound was resounding in the heart of Sulochana. "No, no," she screamed often.

A deathly darkness was surrounding her. At last all of her bangles broke loudly and she fell down and cried, "I am defeated," and then fell on the floor in a faint.

"Only he who was able to observe a constant fast for twelve years along with a vow of celibacy was able to kill Meghanada. Sri Ram unfolded the mystery to Lakshmana when the soldiers returned to Sri Ram, full of enthusiasm. Then the Vanaras celebrated a festival.

Everybody was tired and feeling sleepy. Sri Hanumanji enlarged His tail so long that He created a huge campus of it and Sri Ram, Lakshmana along with all the Vanaras fell into a deep sleep. Sri Hanumanji stood alert watching everything at the gate.

"Is there anyone else who has a last oblation for the fire sacrifice of the Ram-Ravana war?" In Lanka Ravana's brain became vigilant.

"Ahiravana!" Suddenly Ravana remembered that years ago this son was born. He is the king of an island.

Ravana went straight to Nikumbhilài, esoteric experiment apartment.

"You remembered me, Daddy?" Ahiravana was busy with his own affairs.

He was almost indifferent to his parents. But today he suddenly felt a great attraction to meet his father, and, as if he were being hypnotized and

pulled up without any second thought, he reached Lanka and entered that particular apartment where Ravana was sitting in his tantric experiment room.

He understood and requested politely, "Is there any service you wish from me?"

"My dear son, your mother-land is in danger. All the main pillars of the state have been killed in the battlefield. Your maternal grandfather has made you an expert in sorcery. You can help me in my bad days." Ravana who had been full of vanity throughout his lifetime, was looking at the face of his son in great tension and lamentation.

"I will take away both of those Princes and sacrifice their heads to Mother Kali tonight," Ahiravana promised his father.

"If you could do this, you have given me new life. Then the Vanaras will scatter and disappear and those who will remain I will finish by morning. But how shall I know that you have successfully stolen away those Princes?" Ravana inquired.

"When you see a flash of light in the sky over Sri Ram's army you will know that your enemies have been stolen away," he said.

Ahiravana came to Sri Ram's army and found that all the Vanaras were tired after so many days of terrible fighting. They were sleeping carelessly but a huge powerful Vanara, Hanumanji, was encircling all of them with His tail. He had lengthened his tail so long that it formed a wall of protection around them.

Ahiravana radiated a hypnotic influence all over the atmosphere and when he was assured that everyone was under his control he assumed the

form of Vibhishana and stood in front of Hanumanji, Who was still not under his control.

"Why are you coming at this late hour?" Hanumanji asked.

"I went to perform my evening bath and meditation at the seashore so I am late," the artificial Vibhishana replied.

Hanumanji let him pass, but just a few moments later a noise arose and grew within the ranks.

After the hypnotic state was cast over Sugriva, he rushed and awakened Jambavanta, fearfully saying, "Sri Ram and even Lakshmana who were asleep are not now in their beds."

"Where, where have they gone?" Jambavanta asked as he awakened Vibhishana and within moments the whole army was awakened.

They all were puzzled and all of them went to the gate to ask Hanumanji.

"Sri Ram and Lakshmana are absent from their beds. Did anybody leave the campus after twilight?" they asked.

"I did not see anyone going outside the circle of My tail and no one can actually cross My tail unless he has My Lord with him," Hanumanji said," and after the sun set only Vibhishana came inside the campus.

"What?" Vibhishana was wonder-struck. "I was with Sri Ram and Lakshmana right from the time we killed Meghanada today. It seems someone came in my form and he has stolen them away."

Hanumanji thought more and remembered seeing a circle of light in the sky for a moment before someone entered in Vibhishana's form.

Vibhishana said to them with great anxiety,

"There is a certain strict rule in our race that only a member of the royal family can assume the form of another royal family member, and all the sons of Ravana and Kumbhakarna have been killed. Ravana cannot be so mean as to defame me. It must be another son who has taken Sri Ram and Lakshmana. Where can he be keeping them?"

Suddenly his eyes glowed with light and he said,

"Certainly it is the act of Ahiravana. No one else has done it other than he. Please Hanumanji, go and search for our two Lords now at his island and bring them back before sunrise."

Hanumanji nodded in agreement and said, "Please be careful for no one should know that Sri Ram, Lakshmana and Myself are absent."

He noted the proper location of his continent and flew to the west. Ahiravana's island was somewhere between South America and Australia.

Hanumanji was surprised to see that the defense officer of the state was a Vanara and resembled Himself in face, form and strength.

"Did the owner of this state go out somewhere today?" Hanumanji asked.

"Our King Ahiravana went somewhere and has brought back with him two beautiful Princes whom he is preparing to sacrifice to Mother Kali. Do you hear the sound of music coming from the Kali temple?" The officer asked.

"Yes, I hear, but who are you?"

"I am the son of the great powerful Sri Hanumanji. My name is Makaradhvaj. I am a defense officer engaged by our King here," that Vanara replied with full dignity.

"I am a born celibate. How could you be My son?" Hanumanji stared at him, realizing he was an exact duplicate of Himself.

"Oh, how fortunate I am that I have seen the lotus feet of my Father." The officer prostrated himself at Hanumanji's feet and said with folded hands.

"When Your Holiness burnt Lanka and jumped into the ocean, a few drops of perspiration from Your body fell into the ocean. A huge fish picked it up in her mouth and my body was formed inside her stomach. A fisherman caught that fish and a baby was born when he cut the fish open. This extraordinary incident was narrated to the King. He saw me and engaged me as a defense officer of this island.

"Recently Devarshi Narada visited this state and he narrated my story and said, "Very soon you are going to see your beloved Father."

Hanumanji was stunned, but He had to be about His business as time was elapsing.

"I have to go to your temple of Kali. Those Princes are My Masters and I have come to take them back with Me," Hanumanji said and stepped inside the gate.

Makaradhvaj jumped in front of Him and said,

"Although I am Your son and must be obedient to You, I am also an officer here in charge of the safety of the entire state, so I have my duty to perform. As long as there is strength in my body, I cannot let You enter."

Then there was a great fight between the Father and the son. There was not much time left, as Hanumanji dashed His son to the floor and tied him tightly with His son's own tail, left him lying there and entered the city.

He removed the deity of Mother Kali and sat upon her throne assuming her form.

"Mother Kali is very satisfied today." The Rakshasas were very enthusiastic and excited because whatever eatables they offered Hanuman on the alter simply disappeared.

Sri Ram and Lakshmana had been given a nice bath with hot water and perfumes and the Rakshasas adorned flowers in their hair, pasted sandal powder all over their limbs, and put dark red clothes and flower garlands on their bodies. Palatable fruits were offered to them.

"Now whoever is most dear to You, You can remember him at Your eleventh hour." Ahiravana stood them in front of Mother Kali and raised his sword to cut off their heads.

"I remember Sri Hanumanji. He is most dear to Me and you also remember Him," said Sri Ram to Lakshmana and confidently closed His eyes in deep remembrance of that merciful Son of the wind god.

As soon as Ahiravana pointed his sword towards Sri Ram's neck a great roar like thousands of thunderbolts arose from Mother Kali's seat and resounded in all directions. All the assembled Rakshasas became almost deaf.

Hanumanji jumped from His seat, took the sword and cut off Ahiravana's head. Within a few moments the entire floor was covered by Rakshasas' heads and bodies.

Hanumanji then fell down prostrate at the feet of the two Lords and with eyes filled with tears set them upon His shoulders and walked out.

"Who is he?" Sri Ram's eyes suddenly fell upon Makaradvaj who was lying outside, still tied with his own tail.

"This was the fellow who was stopping Me from going inside the palace," Hanumanji replied, freeing him from bondage.

"But how wonderful. Look, Lakshmana, doesn't he resemble Hanumanji's son?" Sri Ram asked.

Lakshmana, full of joy, gracefully glanced at Makaradhvaj, and Hanumanji out of shyness kept bending His head low.

Makaradhvaj, with full reverence, circumambulated both Brothers and his Father and saluted Them.

"My dear, you are now the King of this island," Sri Ram ordered, touching His palms to his head.

"Do not accept demonic attitudes. Follow the way of life of Aryans like your Father, Hanumanji."

About the time of sunrise, all the Vanaras who were constantly gazing at the sky, saw the trinity of light blue, red and gold, and recognizing them as Sri Ram, Lakshmana and Hanumanji, began to celebrate the festivity and a great sound of glorification echoed and re-echoed in all directions.

CHAPTER 35

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MENTAL PROJECTION, HYPNOTISM, AND GOD-REALIZATION

How powerful is the magic of black magicians when even Sri Ram-like personalities are stolen away, by which Vanaras are infatuated by being shown innumerable Rams, and showers of fire, water and dangerous

storms, and this magic was performed in front of Ram, Himself. What does it mean? It means none of the visions and encounterments of God can be said to be God's original form authoritatively. Then how can you be confident that you have seen God? That whatever has been seen is really related to God.

The state of consciousness itself is the proof. If you have had visions of God, then the diversified manifestations of ignorance would evaporate, then the fear, body-identification, attachment, aversion, and all the contradictions of duality would disappear. Your face would be without wrinkles from tension, your words would be all-embracing, your eyes would be cooling, soothing and benevolent; otherwise, whatever form and visions you have seen can only be either some black or white magic or your own mental projection and concoction.

The same law applies to meditation also. It doesn't matter which meditation method belongs to which religion, to which mission, to which guru, if you experience in your natural spontaneity a thoughtless, timeless and egoless trance of peace or bliss and it keeps permeating your entire life structure unconditionally. You are getting some anchor within you, you are being rooted upon your own Being deeper and deeper at the same time. You are developing your own free and independent personality. Then it can be said to be real meditation; otherwise someone has simply hypnotized you, someone has simply fooled you in the name of religion or meditation and nothing else.

Ahiravana was worshipping Mother Kali. Meghanada was trying to satisfy Smasanakalika, Ravana's Nikumbhita esoteric experiment and research was centered around the Shakti Mother-consciousness. There was

no doubt that their approaches to Mother remained incomplete and demonic, but their approach was power producing, energizing and desire fulfilling. There is no doubt in it.

Sri Ram wanted to satisfy the Divine Mother, but Lakshmana was not interested in Ugratàrà, Chhimmamastà, Smasàachandikà, who were dreadful and terrifying figures of Divine Mother.

The Divine Mother is the Lord of all Lords, Director of all forces and She is one alone; but She manifests Herself in various forms assuming the three tendencies of nature.

In the entire field of nature, the mode of activity is more powerful than the mode of inertia. In the same way, the mode of peacefulness is still more powerful than the mode of activity. All actions depend on relaxation for power and success, it is a common law, but in the state of intoxication or deep sleep, or the unconscious state, the mode of inertia is predominant, whereas in excitement or in a rebellious state, in dreadful acts and in all sorts of displays of rites and performances of daily duties, the mode of passion (activity) is powerful in different degrees.

In spiritual quests, in a philosopher's residence, in the silence of knowledgeable persons, the mode of sattva (or peacefulness and silence) is predominant. Mother also manifests Herself in three kinds of forms.

The demonic races of the Daityas, Danavas and Rakashasas were under the spell of their mode of passion and inertia. They took shelter in rajas and tamasic forms of Divine Mother, whereas sattvic personalities can only meditate on Her sattvic manifestations such as Mother Durga, Tripursundari, Tripurbhairavi, Gayatri, Sakambhari, etcetera.

She is to be worshipped by the whole universe. We will worship the lion seated, ten-armed Mother Durga.

CHAPTER 36

DIVINE MOTHER SPEAKS TO SRI RAM AND THE FIRST ROUND OF WAR BEGINS

All the Vanaras sat in the prayer posture at the beach and at dawn they began to pray. Before the prayer was complete, there appeared an effulgent light filling all the directions. In the center of the light there shone a beautiful lion-seated, multi-weaponed, red-clothed, three-eyed, moonlit-crowned, heart-captivating woman.

A long, golden-haired, dreadful-jawed, huge lion was standing in extreme peacefulness looking at the Vanaras with his innocent eyes. The Divine Mother was sitting upon the lion showering Her blessings with Her palm as well as Her eyes.

Sri Ram offered a handful of flowers and bowed down to Her lotus feet.

"Ram Raghunandana, You are ever victorious.

"This invincible Ravana is one of Your own people and wherever Your own people are in any form, in any circumstances, nobody else can defeat them. They remain invincible all over the cosmic-egg, but after all, they are Yours. You just remove their form, their present shape and that's all.

"Ravana can be turned into ashes by a Vanara if a Vanara simply wished it, but You want to establish a tradition of My worship in the face of the battlefield. Then let it be done. Since Ravana worships Me, in order to

kill him You must have My permission. If You want it, I have given it. Let that player of the great egotistical role be delivered."

The whole atmosphere in all the directions was thrilled and danced with the echoes of the inconceivably sweet and love-soothing, melodious tone of Divine Mother. She turned Her palm upward in blessing, and the whole surrounding area reddened.

Flowers showered, and the Divine Mother disappeared.

All the Vanaras saw that the great light of the Divine Mother had now descended into Sri Ram. His face was rapturous, His eyes were mesmerizing, and His gait surprising.

"You are all incomparable. The greatest warriors of the world. No one can conquer you. Let us march and attack the enemies,"

Ravana was sounding the alarm to his soldiers in Lanka. Then suddenly his voice became harsh.

"All of you should know that if anyone escapes, hides, or is frightened in the line of battle, I will kill him piteously with my own hands."

A large army of the Rakshasas came out from the fort and attacked Sri Ram's army. A great, dreadful battle ensued.

"This is Ram standing here." All the Rakshasas began to see Ram in each other and started killing each other because Sri Ram released a weapon of mass-memorization, gandharvasta by name.

Ravana's chariot reached Sri Ram and there arose the greatest, most dreadful fight. Nobody was using ordinary weapons, and the earth and mountains began to tremble. The ocean began to swell due to constant jolts from celestial weapons. When the fire produced by the weapon Ajneyastra began to burn everything, the Parjanyastra weapon extinguished it by

showering torrents of water. Parvatastra, Aindrastra and innumerable weapons were released and cut down by Sri Ram.

"All glories to Sri Ram," the devas sounded with joy.

Sri Ram's volley of arrows became intense. He was removing one arrow from the case. It then became ten by fixing it on the bow, and by pulling and releasing it, it became hundreds, and then thousands. After hitting the target the main arrows were again entering his case.

Ravana never saw this miracle. His body was being pierced from all sides. His charioteer took him back to Lanka.

In the night when Ravana could not console himself, he went to the planet Venus and fell down prostrate at the feet of the great master Sukràcharya.

"Master, even in your lifetime I am seeing such bad days," Ravana said.

"Dear, I am sorry, but I have already promised Brahma that my science of resurrection will not be used except for my disciples, whom I accept from only one race, Daitya's royal race. But since you have approached me I shall not let you go away empty handed.

"I am giving you a powerful mantra. You just go to your Nikumbhita prayer room and offer oblations ten thousand times in the fire observing complete silence. At the last oblation there will arise an astral personality. He will immortalize you for a certain period and will offer you an invincible weapon. You will become unconquerable."

After receiving the mantra and the other techniques Ravana returned to Lanka and ordered his soldiers to close all the doors of the city and he became absorbed in his fire sacrifice.

The sun shone in its total brightness, but Ravana did not appear and Sri Ram wondered why the doors were still closed.

"We see the fragrant smoke rising up from Nikumbhila. Ravana is a great sorcerer, and the spies have informed us that last night he visited the planet Venus. It must be that their spiritual master Shukra has suggested some invincible method. We should bring him to the battlefield before he completes the rituals."

Vanaras rushed toward the esoteric temple Nikumbhila, led by Angada and Hanumanji and saw Ravana in red clothes offering oblations in the fire. Even when his guards were killed and enemies were standing at the door, Ravana did not look up.

Vanaras began to break the most precious valuable instruments and parts of the building, but even then Ravana did not turn back. Hanumanji threw all the sacrificial materials into the fire, and slapped and kicked Ravana, but still he kept sitting, hoping that although it was performed only by Japa, maybe the ritual would still be as powerful.

When his wives approached him complaining about the ruin of their palace, Ravana could not hold his patience any longer and rushed with his sword in hand. All the Vanaras gathered about Sri Ram.

Ravana was discouraged with his incomplete effort and began to console his wives by saying, "Respect and insult, loss and gain always come and go in life."

Ravana appeared in the battlefield surrounded by numberless Rakshasas. Black horses were carrying his chariot which was adorned with a huge flag and flowers and golden garlands. In a few hours all the Rakshasas were killed by Hanumanji and Angadaji.

Then a duel started between Sri Ram and Ravana. After hours of fighting, Sri Ram released thirty arrows and cut off Ravana's ten heads and twenty arms, but immediately they sprang back up again. This encouraged Ravana and he began to shower arrows.

Sri Ram again cut off the new heads and arms which arose, and all over the space over the battlefield, Ravana's heads and arms began to fly shouting,

"Capture Ram, hold Him, let Him not escape."

Vanaras leaped up and started catching and throwing the heads and arms into the ocean and this went on endlessly for cutting Ravana's heads off was no more painful than the cutting of hairs.

"Where is the end of this magic?" Sri Ram looked at the sky and asked Divine Mother.

Suddenly, He remembered a special weapon and removed it. It was all shiny and He released it. All the directions were burnt up, and huge swells loomed in the ocean. The skylab fell from the space. The weapon pierced Ravana's navel and broke his chest, his chariot, and killed his driver. Ravana fell down on the earth vomiting gallons of blood.

The whole firmament, and entire solar system was struck with wonder. They could not contain their joy and sang and danced and showered flowers. All the directions resounded with the glorification of Sri Ram. Waves of festivity pervaded the entire cosmic egg.

CHAPTER 37

THE WAY SRI RAM TALKS

"No Reverend Empresses, Lanka needs you desperately. Ram would like to see you after the funeral ceremony of the late Emperor of Lanka!"

Sri Ram arrived at the cemetery and stopped all of the lamenting Queens of Ravana from entering into the fire with his dead body. Sri Ram explained that chastity was a life-pervading meditation of love and not an emotional, sentimental performance of fire-entering. Sentiment is momentary, but love meditation is life-purifying, spirit-unfolding and divinity-establishing.

Those ladies who are really chaste never lament over the death of their beloved and vice versa. Rather their faces light up with the light of a profound steadiness and an inconceivable decision of sacrifice, which divinizes their whole body, and none of the Queens of Ravana had that kind of qualification. They were lamenting and many were only shedding crocodile tears. In such cases entering into the fire is only committing suicide.

Sri Ram did not allow them to do this. By His extraordinary ability as an orator He turned their attention into a new dimension of a selfless way of life. Living life not for sense gratification but for others' happiness. This happiness becomes one's own happiness and unites with the universe on the level of transcendental happiness.

After the ceremony of installing Vibhishana on the Royal throne, Hanumanji took Lakshmana and the whole party to various places of Lanka and they found that Ravana was a great scientist, sorcerer and alchemist. His Nikumbhila esoteric research center was left with four unfulfilled master plans -

- (1) He wanted to turn all the salt water of the ocean into sweet water.**
- (2) To connect all the different planets by lift passages.**
- (3) To root out the distinction between sinner and righteous person, between material and astral, and have one unsplit humanity throughout the solar system.**
- (4) To eliminate disease, old age, and death from the human physical structure.**

CHAPTER 38

THE TRANSCENDENTAL REUNION

OF SRI SITA RAM

With the fall of Ravana all the clanging and clattering of weapons and chattering and roaring of Vanaras stopped. In the heart of Sri Ram a sweet restful stillness began to spread. Up until now the whole energy of His love

was channeled toward the innumerable engagements of war. Now the engagements were completely finished. All of them.

Then everything became still and quiet for some time, as if all the agitated waves of the ocean had become submerged and oceanized, and the pacific peace remained in its absolute calmness. From that quietness a bubble erupted - that was the memory of the message of Sita.

"If You don't come by the end of this month then, my love, my Ram, You won't find me alive ---," echoed in Sri Ram's heart, and He moaned and He cried within Himself,

"Yes, yes, I am coming. You have waited for Me for all these twelve months. Now, in just a few more moments Your Ram will come."

Ram walked out in one direction. He didn't know where He was going. Nobody knew where He was going, but all of them followed. King Vibhishana, King Sugriva, Sri Hanuman and all the Vanaras and Rakshasas unknowingly followed in the footprints of Sri Ram.

In such a state of lovetrance, in whatsoever path you step, you reach the aim. A shrine is at each step. In such a state of love-enlightenment in whatever action you become engaged, you are in the path of righteousness, and that becomes the path of religion. Without this state of one unifying love consciousness, even if you take each step after pondering over the subject, there are a thousand and one possibilities of being misled and misleading others. This is what has been happening throughout the history of all religions.

Sri Ram's feet suddenly stopped in the Ashoka garden as He glanced at an image under the tree of Shinshupa.

Sita sat as if all the peace of the Himalayan wilderness had assumed a feminine form, as if the entire silence of the Pacific ocean had intensified in one place, as if the quietness of the vast firmament had incarnated as a damsel, as if all the compassion of all the prophets of the past and future had combined and found an expression in this symbol.

But what about her tears? Certainly it seemed as if the goddess of beauty, the goddess of serenity and placidity was weeping and she was suffering and tormenting. As if the transcendental experience of meditation was suffering, the embodied satori was sighing and sobbing - her beauty was like that. Sri Ram and all the people following Him saw Sita as if a beautiful sky dropping tears.

Her large, lotus-petaled eyes were closed and she was constantly thinking about the past incidents which occurred with her Beloved Sri Ram, and her lips were whispering some mantram, possibly the name of her Beloved. Her eyes were dripping drops of crystal clear tears which were rolling down her cheeks, wetting her heart, which was constantly being heated by long, long breaths of lamentation. There was a thin, dusty silk sari clad on her limbs, brown matted hair scattered around her face, which was like a moonbeam.

The garden was crowded with people, but was as silent as if no one had come at all. When that assembled gathering saw Sita were struck dumb with wonder. Such a great yogini - how could have Ravana become able to abduct her away?

Suddenly Sita breathed in enlivening fragrance in the air.

"Ah tremendous, what is it?"

It was the fragrance of her Beloved Husband, for Whom the pangs of separation were burning her day and night. She opened her big eyes and a great flood of joy overwhelmed her. She saw her Beloved Husband standing in front of her with Prince Lakshmana and all the Rakshasas and Vanaras.

She looked and looked to check whether it was true. Her heart lost all limits of joy and she rushed to Sri Ram's arms and Sri Ram's eyes were filled with tears of joy.

They embraced and embraced, and they looked into each other's eyes and again caressed, touching the shoulders of each other. Offering the garland of arms and heartbeats to each other they forgot their identities. They forgot who Ram was and who Sita was. Then Sri Ram became Sita with golden luster and Sita became Ram with sapphirish luster and by constantly looking into each others' eyes they began transforming into each other.

No one knew who they were. They were embracing each other as if they were meeting each other after millions of years, as if they had been apart forever. In every embrace they enjoyed the bliss which was the unifying bliss of the whole universe. In separation they had felt the unifying torment of the whole universe. Now Sita and Ram both lost their identity and became one blissful universe.

In that ocean of bliss-consciousness two waves arose - Shyam and Gour - sapphirish and golden, golden and sapphirish, sapphirish and golden - two waves were rising and submerging. The golden wave was merging into the ocean and rising into the sapphirish wave and that one was submerging into the ocean and rising as a golden wave. They were ONE. Just one ocean and two waves- the unmanifest absolute state of Lovetrance and SITA RAM.

Looking at the Divine union of the couple, all assembled devotees became submerged in the ocean of Lovetrance, and they lost their separate identities. They oceanized into the trance of love of Sita Ram. Even the whole garden which had been previously burnt by Hanumanji became full of green trees clad with creepers. The fountain began to flow with crystal clean sweet waters. The Rakshasa ladies thrilled and horripulated looking at the union of Sita Ram.

The influence and radiations of this trance of love spread all over Lanka and removed all of its intense rajas and tamas vibrations which were created by Ravana's way of living. The love of Sita Ram transformed Lanka totally. All the stony looks and crude hearts of the Rakshasas became cool, peaceful and soothing, befitting the nature of Vibhishana.

CHAPTER 39

IN THE SPACE TO AYODHYA

Hanumanji was busy fixing and decorating the seats for Sri Ram and Lakshmana in Pushpaka airplane. Unique and extraordinary was that plane. It was in the shape of a full blooming lotus flower. It had no pilot. Whoever used it controlled it by his will. It was able to fly faster than sound and slower than a goose. It could fly on earth, water and sky. It was also able to stay in space for a long time through the will of the owner.

The plane was air-conditioned, cold proof, heat proof, storm proof and rain resistant. None of these outside influences could obstruct it. It was able to fly to any planet of the cosmic-egg by becoming invisible and it could even fly very close to the planet Earth comfortably. There was a way to enlarge or shrink it into any size. Although it was a passenger plane it could at any moment be made into a war plane. None of the material weapons were able to harm it. It did not jerk at the time of ascending or descending into a fast flight.

The whole plane was neat and clean and well decorated. Light was available according to necessity. At the time of flight it echoed with sweet music like the giggling of swans. Inside it was totally sound proof. It was more than an intelligent robot. The seats and sleeping couches were made of sapphires and silk cushions.

Sri Ram, Sita and Lakshmana sat on the three seats in the cockpit. Sugriva, Vibhishana, Angada, Jambavanta, Nala and Neela, Mayanda, Gaya and Gavaksha all sat on surrounding seats.

By the order of Sri Ram, the plane arose in space from the middle of all the assembled citizens of Lanka, and the Vanaras who were looking constantly at their Beloved Sri Ram. They shouted loudly, "Jai Sri Ram," but their voices choked and their hearts pained at the thought of separation from Sri Ram.

All the Vanaras scattered in different directions, thinking again and again of the attributes of Sri Ram - how He looks, speaks, smiles and, last of all, the meeting of Sita and Ram and their love union. In loving contemplation of the frolics of Ram and Sita they lost all attractions for worldly sensual pleasures.

By living silently in the forest on fruits and roots they developed the supreme peak of evolution of consciousness, the state of Lovetrance, in which their body identifications were completely evaporated, and only pure love consciousness remained. In that state they found the entire universe was none other than the gross form of their self which was the absolute melting of their material life.

So says the Divine law that absorption in the loving contemplation of the love of Sri Sita Ram is none other than the attainment of the Absolute Reality.

The airplane arose slowly in the sky and turned to the north. Very soon it began to fly over the battlefield and Sri Hanumanji and Ram began to point out different warriors lying dead and described how they were killed.

Then Sita saw the extraordinary bridge eight hundred miles long and eighty miles wide.

They arrived in the space of Rameswaram. They all bowed down to Lord Shiva, and then the plane flew on to Kishkindha which was now being ruled by Keshari, Hanumanji's father, and Tara.

They landed and Sugriva arranged the affairs of his state and then Ruma and Queen Tara joined the party to accompany them to Ayodhya.

"Let Me have a visit with My mother, My Lord. I will catch the plane before it enters the boundary of North India," Hanumanji requested of Sri Ram.

"Why should we miss this opportunity?" Sri Ram said and smiled.

The plane moved to Mount Anjani. Before the plane could land on the hill, Hanumanji flew out and offered His obeisances to His mother and conveyed the news of Sri Sita Ram's arrival.

"My Son, you have sanctified me and the entire race," Mother Anjana's tears of joy were wetting the head of Hanumanji. Then quickly she began to arrange things for the reception and worship of their honored guests.

Hanumanji saw His mother was very busy fixing so many things so He said,

"If you do all these things, He will feel very shy. Sri Ram is also the Lord of shyness. He will enjoy just touching your feet and receiving your humble blessings."

Within moments Sri Ram and Lakshmana were bowing at her feet. As soon as Sita bowed, Mother Anjana clasped her against her heart.

"I have taken away your Son. He is now my Son," Sita said smilingly to Mother Anjana.

"He is already your Son," Anjana said in a choking voice. "I am just a nurse to prepare Him to serve you. Now I am free from the responsibility. Please accept Him."

"This is Sugriva, the King of the Vanaras. This is Jambavanta, the Commander-in-Chief, and this is Vibhishana, the King of Lanka." Hanumanji was gradually introducing the very important persons.

Anjana questioned, "But isn't the King of Lanka the famous Ravana?" Since Mother Anjana remained in constant solitude she did not know about any happenings in the external world.

"He is lying dead on the battlefield pierced by the arrows of Sri Ram," Hanumanji said, and briefly narrated in a nutshell the whole story to her.

"Shame upon Your power. For what reason have You drunk the milk of my breast?" Anjana's face and eyes became red and she was very fiery with her Son Hanumanji.

"Even after drinking my milk how did You dare to bear the weeping of my delicate Sita? Why didn't You kill Ravana on the spot? Why did You trouble my Ram, Whose limbs are soft like lotus petals. Why did You allow Him to make a bridge and to fight so long?"

"Pardon Me, pardon Me, Mother, I was not free to do that. Ask Jambavanta. He did not allow Me to do anything," Hanumanji replied, accepting His faults.

Jambavanta came forward and spoke to Mother Anjana.

"Mother, please excuse me. It is the beauty of the service of a servant to glorify his master. We all have to be very careful to do that."

"You are right." Mother was pleased, but she turned to Lakshmana and said, "You doubt, Prince?"

Lakshmana was thinking that she was overpraising her milk, and the thought was caught by Mother Anjana. In front of all the soldiers she showed the power of her milk.

"You all have seen the miracle of the milk of a tigress and a lioness, but even they can't compare with the milk of Anjana," and she pressed the nipple of her breast and the white milk came out and fell upon a nearby rock. Like some atomic explosion, a great noise resounded through the air and the rock broke, separating into many pieces.

The hills echoed and resonated with the joyous roar of the Vanaras.

"Lakshmana is your baby. Excuse him!" Sri Ram bowed down to Anjana in reverence.

Overfilled with joy she could not move but kept looking, while lovingly touching Sri Ram's limbs.

"Mother, we are in a hurry. We have to arrive at Ayodhya before sunrise; otherwise a great danger can befall us."

All the guests were quiet, so Hanumanji told His future plans to His mother and asked her permission to leave.

"Hanuman, Sri Ram is Your Father, Sita Your Mother. My Son, serve them with full faith and adoration."

The Pushpaka airplane flew to the north.

"This is Mount Rishyamuka, Oh Beloved Sita. Do you see overlooking it, the cave and grove? There I passed the four months of separation from you in sighing, sobbing and extreme torment. There My eyes and the clouds

used to shower water together. On that ridge of the valley I walked night after night recalling sweet memories of you."

Sita looked downward and she felt that the whole jungle was still echoing and reechoing those songs of Sri Ram. That is why the trees seemed to be weeping, lotuses appeared to be sighing, and peacocks looked like they were sobbing. Sita looked at Ram and four teardrops fell down on the hill and it was as if the whole existence rushed to store them and keep them safe. Nature centered around those drops and four beautiful plants sprouted with smiling flowers. People say that still there seems to be great pain and great joy combined together in the generations of those flowers.

The plane moved on and Sri Ram continued,

"And these are the forest paths in which I walked without you. How lonely and empty I was feeling. And it was here that Hanumanji met Me."

They both looked at Hanumanji, Who bent His head low in shyness because He didn't recognize His Lord Who had assumed the form of an ascetic. Hanumanji bowed down to that place, that pond of Pampa, in reverence to the bank on which He had found His Lord.

The plane moved on,

"This is Panchavati, My Beloved Sita, our old ashram. Do you remember it?"

Sita wept tears. She saw the same broken-down hermitage, and her old docile deer, after a year still moving here and there impatiently, as if she were still crying for her friend Sita who went away without informing her. The parrots, cranes, deer, peacocks and cuckoos, all the creatures who had witnessed the love of Sita and Ram were wandering restlessly, seeking and looking for them everywhere. Although they had been seeking for one year,

still they continued, hoping they would meet their beloved friends. It was on this special day that their friends, Sita Ram were passing the same way.

The plane came very close and Sita Ram stepped down to meet these dear friends. Their friends from the whole area surrounded them and began singing. Sita Ram petted them and cast their looks of love upon them. As they beheld their love-laden glances they temporarily forgot their trip to Ayodhya.

The trees and plants welcomed their Sita Ram with festoons of flowers and leaves. All the dry trees became green, full of flowers and fruits once again. The bumble bees hummed, birds twittered and chirped, singing and offering their love to Sita Ram. Sita Ram greeted them by accepting their love and bestowing the highest fulfillment of life upon them.

The visit of Sita Ram became eternal, constant and all pervading. Their love, their petting, their fondling, their loving glances all became immortal to them. It became a deeper reality, a vaster experience than their own life in the day-to-day world. The overflowing transcendental love of Sita Ram was infused into the vibrant waves of the river Godavari, into the trees on its bank, into the hills and dales and the groves of Panchavati and into all its dwellers.

When Sita Ram entered the plane Pushpaka, no one knew it at all because even before they entered the plane, all were absorbed in Lovetrance, in the bliss of love enlightenment.

Every atom, every particle of dust, every corner of the silence of the wilderness of Panchavati still gives a taste of their transcendental Realization to whoever visits that Holy ground.

The plane Pushpaka moved on and they arrived at Chitrakuta, another woodland of Sita Ram love. From there the plane flew to Prayag now well known as Allahabad, which is still full of vibrations of the life-evolving influences from time immemorial. A fresh cool Himalayan breeze enlivened the whole plane.

"This is My beautiful native place, My dears, look at the rising waves of Sarayu River. Oh, how long I remember how I enjoyed swimming among those waves. These waves are as if rising to touch me," and Sri Ram bowed down in reverence to His holy native land.

All of them folded their hands in reverence and then Sri Ram turned to Hanumanji and said,

"You go on to Ayodhya and convey the message of My returning to Bharata and observe his feelings so that I can decide where to proceed from Prayaga."

"Feelings of Bharata?" Hanumanji kept staring at the face of Sri Ram. The feelings of Bharata were unknown to Sri Ram? Many times He had found Sri Ram shedding tears in the remembrance of him and His enthusiasm to meet Bharata alone had hurried Him to finish all His business in Lanka.

"My revered father gave Me banishment for fourteen years." Sri Ram's voice became serious. "Due to the overflowing love of the citizens I could not leave the capital with the sunrise. It was almost afternoon. Bharata said in Chitrakuta that if I did not come to Ayodhya after the last day of banishment he would enter into the burning fire. I want to fulfill the last second of banishment, but I have to decide when it is finished only after learning Bharata's calculation. If he counts the end of expiration with the

end of night, our airplane will land in Ayodhya with the first ray of the sun. If he can wait, I would like to enter the city after passing those moments."

What amiability, what delicate feeling was given to the words - so ascetic, so disciplined, yet, still respecting the feelings of the heart over and above everything. Hanumanji saluted and flew.

"Halt at Sringaverapur and meet Nisadaraj, the ferryman," Sri Ram said. Hanumanji landed at Nandigram. There He saw Prime Minister Sumantra and all the other ministers sitting, surrounding Prince Bharata in a grove near his underground cave. It seemed as if the embodiment of austerity was sitting - so thin was he, so lustrous, his matted hair shining brown. But Bharata's face was despondent today.

"Only this night remains until the expiration of Sri Ram's banishment and we have not heard about His arrival -- even a hundred miles away." Bharata was speaking in deep anxiety.

"Alas, my Beloved Lord has recognized me as a crook and a hypocrite, that is why it appears He has forsaken me. Oh, how fortunate is Lakshmana who kicked off the kingdom and accompanied Sri Ram," and his eyes began shedding drops of tears in the remembrance of his lotus-eyed elder Brother Who always showered torrents of love upon him and now due to His great love for the Truths of religion had gone far, far away, abandoning everything.

"How cruel and insincere I would be if I preserved this body after the time of expiration has passed, for this body was the cause of His long banishment. No, no, Bharata cannot do it."

Then Bharata's eyes lit up with a decision and he said to all of the ministers with folded hands,

"Please, all of you excuse me. I have given you a lot of trouble. Forget this unfortunate Bharata who will enter into the fire with the first rays of the sun. You are all free to choose what to do for the state, as well as yourselves."

"That is already decided," the Prime Minister Sumantra said.

"Tomorrow by this time there would be only the ashes of pyres found everywhere in Ayodhya. No one would care to survive, I believe."

As soon as Hanumanji heard this He could bear it no longer. Quickly He descended from space and, bowing down to Prince Bharata, He said,

"Sri Ram is arriving very soon accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana. They have already reached Prayaga."

"The Messenger of Ram," Prince Bharata screamed with rapture and clasped Hanumanji against his bosom and his joy knew no end.

Every minister's face lit up with an unsurmountable joy and new life. Very soon Hanumanji's wonderful news had spread and waves of joy went all over Ayodhya. Soon the city was adorned like a newly wedded bride.

Hanumanji disappeared and reappeared at Sringaverapur. Nisadaraj was sitting under the Shinshupa tree in the gesture of prayer before the two beds of kusa grass upon which Sri Sita Ram passed their second night after their departure from Ayodhya. By this time it had become a sacred shrine for all the forest dwellers. Earthen flames were lit and flowers were offered to those grass beds. This man was constantly staring at them, his eyes filled with tears.

"Excuse Me. May I know where to find Nisadaraj?" Hanumanji asked.

"That is my name. I am that unfortunate fellow. Please tell me how may I serve You?" The man replied very humbly, but his eyes were

complaining that someone had disturbed his silence and aloneness, which showered unfathomable peace.

"May I know about Your good self?"

"Your Friend Sri Ram is coming here tomorrow morning. I am His insignificant Servant Hanuman."

"You are the Messenger of Sri Ram!" exclaimed Nisadaraj, standing up and clasping Him to his chest. "I heard You come to Ayodhya one night when there was a war going on."

"That has now become one of the items of Intergalactic history. Nowadays, Vibhishana is the King of Lanka and all of them are arriving tomorrow morning by Puspaka airplane. All of them are tempted to have their morning breakfast with you," Hanumanji said and smiled.

"Please come in," Nisadaraj requested so that Hanumanji might sanctify his residence, which was constructed in a completely non-violent way. It resembled a part of nature, made of the greeneries of that grove, although the grove was full of all amenities.

"I have to inform My Lord about tomorrow. I will come and eat the remnants of My Lord's meal," Hanumanji said and disappeared.

The mad ferryman, in love, was sitting staring at the waves of the river Ganga talking to himself,

"I left them at the edge of that dreadful jungle. How gracefully He asked me to take them across the river, and how roughly I replied, 'If You want to board my boat ask me to wash Your feet since they contain some life-giving herbs by the touch of which the stone statue was turned into a beautiful damsel.'

"That merciful One did not become angry with me. He is an honorable Prince of a King of Kings, but He simply smiled and enjoyed, and also made the Princess and His younger brother smile and enjoy the whole situation. But there was no limit to my cruelty and I washed their feet! How soft, how loving, how enlivening those feet were."

For the ferryman it was as fresh and new as if it had just occurred. He kept reminiscing,

"And they sat upon the boat and the elder Prince boarded the boat at last and I sailed the boat on and on. Sitting on the elevated seat were Sita and Ram. How beautiful they looked!"

The ferryman drew a lot of pictures on the canvas of his heart which could not be made dim, even by the lapse of time. And these pictures kept dancing throughout the times of his bathing, eating, resting, and working. The lotus eyed couple made him weep in love. The constant blue transparent waters of the river Ganges, the golden rays of the morning sun, the sapphirish and golden hue of the couple, the slow, cool and fragrant breeze, their waving garments, their freshly fixed long hair pasted with banyan milk.

The remembrance of the whole scene touched an unknown string of the heart which echoed in an unknown music and the whole field of experience seemed to be transported into a new dimension of life where no other way of life is able to be lived, except only one of love, peace and bliss.

"Sita prayed to the Ganges and a voice erupted and consoled her from the depth of the blue transparent water. They alighted on the next bank and the elder Prince became shy because He could not give me anything. He Who was used to fulfilling the financial requirements of the whole life time

to whoever approached Him, how could he not feel embarrassed if He could not pay me? But how could I explain to Him that sovereignty over the whole world would prove to be dirt and dust in comparison with what I got in those few moments of their association.

"Alas, there was no way to explain this. Princess Sita read the feelings of her Beloved Prince and gladly she removed her finger ring, and it was the most precious ring of Ayodhya City, shining like the stellar system. She handed it over to her Husband, Who wanted to hand it over to me but I could not do anything but fall down at His feet and in a choking voice I uttered only this -

"`What have I not attained today my Lord? The ageless cravings of my innumerable lifetimes have ended forever. But my Lord, if You are interested in giving me something, please give it while returning and I shall be waiting,' and they all looked at me with love again and again and then walked away and became invisible in the thick groves beyond the other bank.

"I gazed after them constantly until their form and perfume disappeared, the perfume of those emblems of serenity and beauty. Have they really disappeared? My experience is contrary, for they have appeared in their full glory in my heart and it is growing more and more, deeper and deeper, vaster and vaster. I have been waiting here from that time. Every morning and evening I sit on this bank of the Ganges, and the same breeze which fondled Sita and Ram once, comes to fondle my heart, the same waves which washed the feet of Sita Ram cools and soothes my being, and the same scene of Sita Ram sitting on my boat becomes my present, all my past and

future evaporates. One eternal present has kept my attention, in which I live and which is my whole life.

"For the last fourteen years I have been waiting. Before the moment of waiting the meeting was attained. Before that moment I remembered Him, I visualized Him in His fullness within myself. Before that moment I chanted His Holy Name. He had come in totality, occupying the entire depths of my being, my life. This is the last day of the fourteenth year. Will that transcendental couple come to transmit to me the final fulfillment which I requested? Oh, this is the last night. This is the same breeze, the same Ganges waves, the same silvery sands." The ferryman was absorbed in his own little world.

"Ferryman, Oh, ferryman, would you please stop talking to the river for a moment and loan me your boat to bring Sri Sita Ram from across the river?" Sri Hanumanji could not figure out how to convey His message to this strange devotee, so He gave him a jolting surprise.

"What, what?" the ferryman couldn't believe his own ears and he chuckled.

"Have you not heard the good news traveling all around, that Sita Ram and Lakshmana are coming here in the morning?" Hanumanji asked and disappeared.

The ferryman rushed to his boat and kept adorning it the whole night and the next morning he saw the lotus-eyed, matted brown-haired, bow on shoulder, cloud-complexioned Lord, and His golden-flame Princess standing at the bank of the river Ganges, smilingly calling him so that he could bestow the final experience for the fulfillment of his total devotion.

CHAPTER 40

THE BLISSFUL DAYS IN AYODHYA

The cool, mild and fragrant waves of the breeze greeted Sri Ram in Ayodhya. The trees became green and full of blossoms, and the hills and rivers offered their homage, becoming full of jewels, pearls, and minerals. The forests became full of fruits, roots and herbs. The whole terrace of the capital became full of ladies and gentlemen standing at their doors with tributes in their hands. As the tide rises to the full moon, the city of Ayodhya rushed to have a glimpse of Sri Ram, Who was slowly and quietly descending from the sky.

For the benefit of the readers we are not describing in detail the blinding bliss of Sri Ram's arrival because due to inaccessible joy one can die.

During the insurmountable joy and huge festivities, Sri Ram once again adorned the Royal seat of Ayodhya. Yes, living in Ayodhya is the same as living in Sri Ram-consciousness.

On the occasion of the Abhisheka ceremony, the representatives of all the different planets of the cosmic-egg offered their tributes to the lotus feet of the Emperor and Empress of Ayodhya by touching their footstool with their heads, and they felt fortunate and glorified. The whole of Ayodhya was crowded and surrounded by different races of people living in their tents. The rishis, munis, and great philosophers came to offer their blessings to

Sita and Ram, and endless feasting and festivities erupted all over the capital.

At last, in the farewell ceremony, Sri Ram invited all of them and offered prasadam to everyone. All the very important persons of different planets, kings of the planet Earth, rishis, munis, philosophers, artists, musicians, leaders of the armies, and representatives of the public, received the offerings from the Beloved Empress and Emperor. Angada, Sugriva, Jambavanta, and Vibhishana received the most valuable gifts they could ever imagine.

Suddenly the Empress Sita picked out one of the most costly necklaces from around her neck and looked at Sri Ram with her beautiful large eyes. The whole assembly wondered who the most fortunate one was for whom the Empress herself was going to offer this shining garland.

"Empress, there is no reason to hesitate. Whomsoever Her Highness wants to reward, so be it," Sri Ram smilingly said.

And the Empress looked at Hanumanji Who was quietly sitting at the feet of Sri Ram. She tossed the precious garland in the air and it fell on Sri Hanumanji, encircling His neck. The whole assembly rose to their feet and simultaneously shouted,

"Hail our great Hero!"

Hanumanji was amazed. A whole assembly was saluting Him and a lustrous, costly necklace was decorating His chest. For a few moments He gazed at it with His yellow, wonder-filled eyes and glanced at the excited assembly and then looked at Sri Sita Ram Who were smiling lovingly at the innocence of their loving Devotee.

"My Empress Mother has presented it to Me before such an Intergalactic gathering, so it must be very special," He thought.

"The entire creation is made of five ever-changing elements. So whether it is pearls and gems, or man or woman, nothing is special. They are all only displays of the three gunas. That which is special is beyond the three gunas and five elements and the ever-changing phases of relativity." According to Sri Hanumanji.

"The Absolute Reality is transcendental and these lovely smiling figures of Sita Ram were but embodiments of transcendence, vibrant Divinity, the Absolute Truth manifest. Wherever they resided, wherever they were, whomever they liked became special."

Hanumanji removed the necklace from around His neck and began to look at it - up and down, from left to right, from all angles, but He did not find His Sita Ram there.

"Sita Ram always prefers to abide inside, within, so maybe they can be seen inside these," He thought. He picked up one of the large lustrous pink pearls and bit it with His teeth, but there wasn't a transcendental form of Sita Ram, nor their Divine Sweet Name inside. He threw it on the floor, and kept breaking the gems and pearls open and looking at them and throwing them on the floor.

The entire assembly was shocked. Their eyes were wide open, staring at Hanumanji. At last they couldn't bear it any longer. They said,

"Hanumanji, why are You destroying the necklace, the like of which is seldom seen, even in the planet Svah, and which the Empress Herself has given to you? Don't You know how valuable each one of those shining gems is?" A minister said.

"That's why I am looking inside them, but in none of them have I found Sri Sita Ram, without which its valuation is highly dangerous. Our generations in the Iron Age will suffer extremely because of projecting value on things. To value people and things devoid of the transcendental name and form of Sri Sita Ram is to invite more tension, misery and frustration of the world into your life. I am just trying to spare Myself from the origin of all misconceptions," Hanumanji replied, and again became busy in breaking open the pearls.

"You have such an enormously large body. Does it have Sri Sita Ram inside or not?" A turbulent Vanara asked mannerlessly.

"Your question is right. And I would say, My body does have, I believe." Hanumanji's attention was now diverted and He stood up in the middle of all and said,

"But I have not tested it, and I am sorry. This is My mistake. Let us see. Certainly it is brainless to carry such a huge burden of a body if its pranas, thoughts, and blood, do not flow in the rhythm of the music of Sri Sita Ram's Holy Name. It is a waste of time to adjust with a body in which the eyes and heart do not reflect the nectar-emanating forms of Sri Sita Ram, on whose faces a serene smile is always dazzling and dancing. I won't allow this body to continue if it proves to be devoid of Sri Sita Ram," Hanumanji said seriously with very great determination.

He placed His arms on His chest and clawed with His nails and pressed it, and His chest was torn into two parts and blood poured out. The chest was wide open and in front of all present, Hanumanji showed His heart chakra, where, on the pericarp of the sixteen-petaled lotus, Sri Sita

Ram were sitting lovingly, smiling, just as they were sitting in front of the Royal throne.

The whole assembly saw this transcendental scene with their eyes struck with wonder. It was the first time in history that someone had shown his chakra in public. It exists in the subtle body, and can only be perceived and experienced by rising above the senses, and if it is seen it can only be perceived by the third eye. Sri Hanumanji's aura was lustrous, expressing the greatest possible love power and peace, and His astral body was very neat and clean. Everybody visualized His heart plexus very clearly, more clearly than even their own bodies, own mind, intellect and ego - like an alive embodied Truth. In comparison with that Truth, everything in existence seemed like a phantom.

The light of Sri Sita Ram began enlightening their eyes, giving them new eyes of knowledge. The Holy Name of Sri Sita Ram was sounding and resounding, vibrating and reverberating throughout everyone of Hanumanji's pores, through every heart beat and every circle of breath, and the whole assembly began to become mesmerized by it and dance about with its rhythm.

The city of Ayodhya knew that day why Sri Ram loved Hanumanji so much. And they shouted glorification to his great valor, "Jai Hanuman".

Hearing this, Hanumanji became ashamed and He sat nearer to the feet of Sri Sita Ram. Sri Ram placed His life-exhilarating palm on His chest and the wound was healed at once.

At the end of the ceremony, the Empress and Emperor gave a delicious farewell banquet and all the guests proceeded to their homes.

At last, Sri Ram said to Vibhishana and Sugriva, Angada, Jambavanta and all the Vanaras,

"My friends, you all abandoned the pleasures of your family, and jumped into great danger for Me, You are all so dear to Me, whatever you wish or need, I will be pleased to fulfill it.

"Still, My dears, everybody has his duties to perform right from birth and without performing these there would be a great decline of human values and an animalistic nature prevailing in society. The purpose of My descending on planet Earth from My original planet Saket is to reestablish the disappearing Vedic way of life, in which the performance of one's real duties is the only joy in life. I expect all of you to go to your homes and meditate on My pastimes and love the entire universe, finding Me in everything."

Hearing the words of Sri Ram, all of them stood as if made of stone. They kept looking at Him, shedding tears of the pangs of separation, and with His great tie of affection for them Sri Ram told them the wisdom of Vedanta and adorned them with silk robes and valuable jewels. After bowing down to the feet of Sita Ram they all proceeded towards the south.

Angada was looking at Sri Ram, again and again, in hopes He would ask him to stay with Him as He had Hanumanji, but Sri Ram had already promised Angada's father Bali that He would see to it his son would take up the position of Prime Minister of the state.

All the sweet memories of Sri Ram were coming again and again to Angada's mind - how He looked, the way He spoke, the way He walked, the way of His meeting people. All these scenes were coming again and again to his memory and passing through his heart. Acknowledging the wish of Sri

Ram, he walked out, and Sri Ram ordered Hanumanji to accompany him to the gate of the city.

When they were out of the city, Angada said with tear-filled eyes and folded hands,

"Hanumanji, please convey my obeisances to the Lord and remind Him often of me."

Hanumanji returned to the palace and conveyed the message to the Lord. Sri Ram horripulated time and again hearing of Angada's love.

"Dear Nisadaraj, please always keep coming back to Ayodhya to see Me, do you hear?" Sri Ram said to Nisadaraj, offering him a large container of edibles.

After the departure of all the guests and kinsmen, Sri Ram reorganized the affairs of the state. A new wave of revolution in every field of activity spread all over. Very soon Sri Ram became the one sovereign Emperor of the planet Earth.

The abundance of prosperity was exposed by nature and there was a plentiful supply of everything for everyone. All the subjects of Sri Sita Ram became extremely generous and benevolent to each other. They all developed a taste for the service of the philosophers' class. Unwavering service to the spiritual master spontaneously developed into a center of bliss-consciousness within themselves. Having found the center of permanent joy within, Sita Ram's subjects were naturally elevated above - not only over drinking, but also above the allurements of sensual temptations, which is the basis of all crime.

When the possibility of immoral indulgence and crimes disappeared from the face of human society. Then permanent peace was established all

over the empire. Sex and sense enjoyment remained a way of love-expressions and adornment to their way of living. The male became happy with one wife and ladies became highly chaste, and this way of living influenced the whole surroundings.

The earth became abundant with harvest and the forests with green trees full of fruits. No one required fans and air-conditioning because there was always a cool, fragrant and mild breeze which began to always blow. Even the dreadful beasts began to roam in universal brotherhood with other animals, as well as with human beings.

Gosvami Tulasidas has sung in his Ramayana that rivers flowed with crystal clear, cool sweet waters, and the mountain tops were full of minerals, diamonds and jewels. Everywhere the mayors began to perform yajnas. The sun and clouds showered their heat and waters according to the requirement.

Maharishi Valmiki describes in his Ramayana that the city of Ayodhya, situated on the bank of the Sarayu river and was ninety-six miles in length and twenty-four miles in width. Its homes were row upon row of beautiful mansions. None of its people were miserable, frustrated or afflicted. They were sincere and loyal to the King, as well as to the King of the universe, God. There was plenty for eating, drinking and living. Rivers of milk and curd were flowing. Each member of the philosopher's class was the master of the six systems of Vedic philosophy. Each one of them had more than six hundred disciples. Each member of the warrior class was able to conquer ferocious lions and tigers in dual wrestling. The merchant class was so prosperous that when even the poorest donor was donating, it was never less than one thousand golden coins.

Every dawn Sri Ram used to take His bath and swim in the river Sarayu, accompanied by Sita, Lakshmana, Bharata, Shatrughna and Hanumanji. He used to sit in the sunshine for His meditation. After breakfast He would go and sit in the Royal assembly and Hanumanji would always sit near His feet, the Empress Sita on His left, and Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna surrounding them. There was no separate courthouse. Sri Ram Himself used to adorn the seat of the Chief Justice and He was on call twenty-four hours and available to everybody.

One day, even a dog approached Him for justice because a priest of a temple had hit him on the head. Sri Ram freely gave him justice and so for hitting a dog a human being was chastised. In the affairs of any natural imbalance or untimely death, the King himself used to be held responsible and Sri Ram did fulfill this duty. He was always prepared to chastise any of the directors of the natural forces if they disturbed His people, His subjects. He also snatched the soul of a child from the jaws of death. He took rest only after He saw the child resurrected.

Such a personality was the Master of Sri Hanumanji. There could not be any greater joy than the service to such a loving supreme Boss. All higher accomplishments are dust and dirt compared to the trance of love of such a great Master.

Sri Hanumanji used to do each and every little service which was pleasing to Sri Ram, as well as Sita. Everybody wanted to serve Sita Ram but no service was ever left for them, due to the over-efficiency of Hanumanji. Thus Hanumanji became closer and closer to the Emperor and Empress.

"Hanumanji, please, a great Soul like You should not interfere in the duties and services of others." Satrughnaji and his friends spoke to Sri

Hanumanji one morning as He was going to Sri Ram's apartment in the palace.

"Reverend Prince, I could not understand you," Hanumanji said, wondering what the matter was.

"Look at this paper, here is the signature of the Emperor and Empress." Shatrughna showed Him a paper.

Hanumanji's yellow eyes read the whole paper in one glance. All the services of Sri Ram were divided among - Empress Sita, Prince Lakshmana, Bharata, Shatrughna and Sumantra, and there was not a single service left for Hanumanji.

"By the order of His and Her Majesty all the services have been divided among His own family. And here is the Royal stamp. We can only hope that You would kindly help us in our services to the Lord," Shatrughna said.

Hanumanji felt as if He was robbed in clear daylight, because the service of Sri Ram was the only accomplishment of His life. As in the moment of losing everything, one remembers God -- Hanumanji remembered Sri Ram, and immediately the light came, which is just a shadow of His remembrance.

"Whatever the Lord has accepted became My acceptance at that very moment, but this is My humble request. May I have the service which is left off of this paper?" Hanumanji requested.

"Why not? Certainly You may," Lakshmana said and Bharata and all his friends said excitedly. They were fully confident that there was not a single service of the Lord which could have been missed.

"Let it be granted by the Lord Himself," said Hanumanji, for He was also very careful in such matters.

They all went to Sri Ram in His private apartment where He was sitting on His seat and smiling. The matter was presented before the Lord and the Lord accepted.

"Whatever is left off of the paper, Hanumanji can certainly do," He said compassionately looking at Sri Hanumanji.

"Whenever the Lord will yawn I will do the service of finger-snapping," Hanumanji said.

Everybody was struck with wonder. No one had ever imagined this kind of service. They knew it was not possible to beat Hanumanji in any way. His proposal was accepted and Hanumanji was very pleased now.

Because there was no fixed time when yawning could come, He had found a service which enabled Him to sit in front of the Lord and constantly gaze on His beautiful face. Hanumanji really relished this service more than anything on earth. The whole day He passed in gazing at the lotus face of the Lord. He even took His meals with the Lord. Even if He talked to someone He did it without looking at the person speaking, for He was gazing at the soothing and cooling countenance of the Lord.

The day passed into evening and the Lord dismissed His assembly and went to His palace. Even then Hanumanji was with Him and They had dinner. In the early evening, Sri Ram entered the gynaeceum, the most private apartment where only Empress Sita and Sri Ram used to relax together, have love talks and go to bed,

Hanumanji was stopped by the gatekeepers. "Excuse me please, I cannot allow a third person in, whoever he may be. This is the private

apartment of Sri Sita Ram and it is time for the Emperor and Empress to retire. If You come in, it disturbs Your Sita Ram."

"It disturbs Your Sita Ram." The last words touched Hanumanji and He stepped back, but He was worried about doing His service. "What shall I do if My Lord yawns, especially at night, for yawns come easily then. If I miss the mantra and finger-snapping I will be proven insincere and careless in My duty."

Hanumanji walked upstairs to the terrace at the top floor of the palace overlooking the waves of the river Sarayu and the nearby groves. It was a beautiful moonlit night, and Hanumanji took a seat and started finger-snapping to the rhythm of the chants of the Holy Name of Sri Sita Ram.

Night vigil was no problem for Him. The problem was how to save Oneself from failing in One's duty. So Hanumanji thought of a plan. Even if Sri Ram yawns in His bedroom, Hanumanji would already be doing mantra and finger snapping for Him, and He could easily do it for the whole night. That was easy for Him.

But very soon a great problem arose in the palace. The gatekeepers became restless and the maidservants began to run all over the palace. Soon all three mothers were called, all three brothers came, a few ministers came, and ultimately the Royal physician was called, but he could not understand the disease.

All of them were sitting and lamenting, while surrounding Sri Ram, Who was sitting on an elevated chair. His mouth was wide-open and He was unable to close it. He was not able to speak or convey anything. It was as if His mouth was forcibly kept open by some invisible power.

Nobody understood what the matter was and there was no limit to the anxiety of Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughnaji. Empress Sita had tears pouring from her eyes and her face became very red. At last Lakshmana rushed to the hermitage of the spiritual master Brahmarshi Vasistha.

Immediately the master came in his chariot. He hurriedly climbed the stairs. Sri Ram saw him from a distance and He stood up, walked out and offered His obeisances - His mouth remained open all the while.

The master blessed Him and felt very sorry to see His condition. Such a handsome Figure, a great Warrior, a most successful Emperor. What great love He had for religion and the spiritual master. What wrong today had happened to His mouth? The tears came to his eyes. He asked all to sit in their places and then he asked the Empress Sita about the matter.

"I am extremely sorry, Master, I will never complain again in my life," Empress Sita said sobbing. "We had just taken off our Royal dress, washed our feet, hands and face, and we were wearing our night clothes, desiring to relax.

"Somehow the memories arose in my mind of those days when I used to pass my days and nights sighing and sobbing under the tree in Lanka. The remembrance of my Lord alone was the reason for my survival. I was tormented, and now today I feel that Sri Ram was not so uncomfortable without me. He killed Ravana just to save the dignity of His race and my deliverance was optional.

"It was not the main concern, so tonight I was mad at Him and I said, `You don't know love till You possess such loving features that everybody that looks at You begins to love You - You never bother for anybody else's love. When I was abducted and alone, I was so tormented and You came

comfortably at Your own time. I even heard that You were playing with Ravana in the battlefield. Why didn't You burn him with one single arrow? If You had possessed any love for me then You would have done it. Where is love in You?'

"Here in Ayodhya also, You are always busy with Your state affairs, Your ideals, and Your morals. Everyday, this rishi is coming, that philosopher is coming - You are inaugurating some fire sacrifice, discussing urgent materials and all sorts of business. You never seem to have time for me. Where is love in You, I wonder?

"Sri Ram wanted to reply but His mouth suddenly fell open and it has remained open ever since. I had hoped that it happened due to His being shocked by my sharp words, so I repented. But all in vain because the Lord is the same. What has happened to His mouth? Master, please save the Emperor?"

Vasistha Maharishi heard everything silently and looking through the deep agony over-shadowing all the faces, he suddenly, as if remembering something, looked left and right and said,

"I do not see Hanumanji here. Where is He?"

Empress Sita became alert, Lakshmana began to recall, and Bharata asked Shatrughna to send all the attendants to find Hanumanji. Everyone was calling while searching for Him.

"Hanumanji where are You, our master is awaiting You. The Lord wants You. How can You be absent?"

As soon as Hanumanji heard Himself called, He rushed down the stairs but He kept right on snapping His fingers. He arrived at the gate, and

this time the gatekeepers did not stop Him, but welcomed Him with warm words and said,

"Please come in. Everybody is waiting for You."

Hanumanji entered and fell down prostrate at the feet of the master. He stopped His finger-snapping for it was no longer required now that Sri Ram was standing in front of Him. As Hanumanji prostrated, Sri Ram's mouth became all right.

"What happened to You?" Vasistha Maharishi questioned Sri Ram.

"Nothing, Gurudev," Sri Ram replied.

"Nothing happened?" Empress Sita's surprising words echoed in the apartment. "Your mouth stayed wide open. You weren't able to talk and I was terribly frightened, all the mothers were scared, the master was called, and You say nothing happened to You!"

"This morning Hanumanji was given the duty of finger-snapping for My yawning. It had another aspect also, and that was when Hanumanji would snap His fingers, I would definitely be in the middle of a yawn."

Ram continued. "Ram never entertains any schizophrenic, wavering relationships. Ram keeps afar from fickle personalities. Whenever, and with whomsoever He deals with and tackles, are persons of great depth. Hanumanji is a deepest possible depth of heart. To say truly, He is a bottomless abyss and His relationship with Me is an expression of those infinite depths which have layers after layers - unfathomable. In such a relationship, Ram and Hanumanji are interconnected, intertwined, eternally embraced. So also His snapping and My yawning are inter-linked. If My yawning is broken, left split, where is Ram then? - What is the meaning of love then?"

Sita's eyes became wide and full of joys and thrills. Hanumanji thrilled and clasped the feet of Sri Ram. Vasistha Maharishi looked at Shatrughna and the competitive parties all became very shy.

"Hanumanji, You needn't do that snapping business anymore. You serve Your Emperor as before," Sita said, as she tore into pieces the paper dividing the services.

Everybody shouted, "All glories to Sri Hanumanji."

CHAPTER 41
THE VERMILLION WAS ALL OVER THE PLACE

sadrsam chestate svasyàh prakrterjñàvànapi

Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad-gita that even after the Realization of the Absolute Brahma, even when the binding influences of all actions are completely finished, still the Realized soul continues to act according to his previous habits.

Man's common acts remain totally in the hands of his preconceptions and prejudices, which are the constant by-products of his lifelong karmas (in work which he was engaged). It is not possible to get rid of these without kindling the fire of wisdom in the state of deep Lovetrance, and burning them by permeating all the dimensions of life with the experience of the beyond, and being resurrected in the new planet of bliss-enlightenment within oneself. It is from here that activities flow in the river of happenings.

As long as the binding influences of actions exist, as long as the preconceptions, prejudices, and superstitions are there, DOING is the way of life. And you can in no way save yourself from the tensions, worries, and miseries of life. As long as you are a doer, there is no way to escape prejudices and superstitions. If you remain a doer, you can only fool and console yourself by declaring yourself to be free and independent, and this is how our planet has constantly remained a fool's paradise for innumerable people.

When the incident occurs which Krishna indicates --

jñànàgni dagdhah karmànām

burning all actions in the fire of knowledge, then from the ashes springs a new planet of bliss-enlightenment where a Realized soul always lives, moves, and talks. Then all the actions, all the large scale industries, all the master plans erupt as manifestations of bliss. They spring up as a proof that there exists a kingdom of heaven. They are just silent proclamation of God's existence.

Then THE HAPPENING becomes the way of life, and there is no way to escape from the shower of permanent peace, undisturbable joy, and inner contentment. The act springs from happiness. In itself, it is pure happiness, and this dissolves in eternal happiness.

Then man has gotten rid of his long troublesome tail of his past, and his big nose in the form of his future. He just stays in the present which transforms into one eternity -- But this eternity is vibrant, dynamic, diversified, and innumerable miracles are always happening there. This river of happening alone, is beyond preconceptions, prejudices, superstitions, and then there is no sin nor merits.

Then innocence is the way of life. Whatever the existence offers, he relishes it, enjoys it, and is rejuvenated. Then freedom is everlasting and independence is approved, not by some politician or religious preacher, but approved by the whole of nature, by the entirety of this existence.

But even then in such universal freedom and cosmic-independence, Lord Krishna says -- Most Realized souls act as they have been acting or behaving previously, dealing with or tackling the problems as before. Although they have full control over their habits and temperaments, they can choose to compose new habits, new psychological states, and a new fashion of living, but they just "let go".

Sri Hanumanji had a habit of eating. Every early morning he felt hungry, an extreme hunger. There is only one beautiful place for Him to approach, and that is the abode of Mother Sita.

This particular day, Mother Sita was a little late with her bath. She had put on a fresh new silk sari and sitting near a dressing table she was putting vermilion on her forehead. She was so absorbed, so joyfully fixing it, that she was not aware of the arrival of Hanumanji Who was standing behind her, innocently looking and wondering what that red stuff was.

When the Empress finished the act she turned back and saw Hanumanji.

"Oh, Hanuman, how long have You been standing here. Look, Your breakfast is all ready."

"I arrived just now, Mother Sita," He said after saluting the Empress. "But before I eat, I want to know what that red stuff is you have fixed on your forehead with such deep affection?"

Hanumanji must have seen it before, but since it was not His subject He never thought about it until Mother Sita herself was applying it. Hanumanji thought it must be a very important part of spirituality so He asked very seriously.

"Hanuman, Your Emperor feels happy to see it," Mother Sita replied laughingly, as she offered Him a big plate of sweet balls made from the flour of garbanzo beans and ghee.

"All ladies are very good," Hanumanji was thinking while eating. "Each one of them puts vermilion on so carefully and joyfully - They all want to satisfy My Lord. How sweet they are."

He finished His breakfast and then He went to His room and took a big bottle of perfumed oil and poured it over His head, and then pasted vermilion all over His body from head to toe. His whole body became dark red. His large features, wide chest, golden hairs all over His body were colored with red paste. Hanumanji resembled the rising sun reddening all around.

It was time to be in the Royal assembly so He rushed out and as He entered the gate the whole assembly looked at Him greatly amazed and began to smile, but when the Emperor and Empress laughed whole heartedly the laughter became epidemic. All laughed and laughed.

Finally, when the laughter subsided, Sri Ram asked,

"Hanumanji, why did You put on the vermilion all over your body?"

"My Lord," Hanumanji replied with folded hands in deepest reverence, "Mother said that this red paste pleases You, so I thought that if even a tiny mark on a forehead pleases You, My Lord, then how much greater would be Your joy if I pasted it all over My body," Hanumanji spoke peacefully.

Sri Ram became silent for a while and declared in a graceful voice.

"Today is Tuesday, Hanumanji's birthday! Whoever worships Him today with oil and vermilion paste, his desires, his ambitions will certainly be fulfilled, and if he has no desire at all, he will attain My love transforming into universal-consciousness."

Sri Ram's voice echoed in the assembly and all the members clapped their hands for a long time and developed greater love and respect for Hanumanji. Thus all the brothers of Sri Ram, the mothers and other ladies

of the palace, all the ministers of the assembly, even all the citizens of Ayodhya developed a greater love and adoration for Sri Hanumanji.

"As the Father hath loved me, I loved you, and as I loved you, you love one another."

Sita loved Ram and Ram loved Sita; this love was unique. Hanumanji loved Ram and Ram loved Hanumanji and this love was unique. Urmila loved Lakshmana and Lakshmana loved Urmila and they loved Sri Ram and Sri Ram loved them and this love was unique. The whole city of Ayodhya loved Sita Ram and Sita Ram loved their subjects and this love went on spreading, encircling, embracing the whole universe.

The firmament of Ayodhya became colored with the color of Lovetrance. This enlightened all life atoms on the planet Earth like one sunbeam enlightens the whole solar system. It infused into the atmosphere of the whole earth a greatest possible serenity and placidity and it expressed the transcendental love of Sita Ram in a thousand and one divine intoxications.

CHAPTER 42

WAR BETWEEN THE LOVER AND THE LOVED ONE

In fact, the entirety of existence is one organic wholeness. The whole creation is one absolute, non-dual aloneness. It is one consciousness, a non-split totality, and one who finds it and lives in it in its virgin originality, his peace becomes eternal, his love becomes immortal, and whoever loves such a peculiar personality, his joy becomes everlasting.

But the accident takes place, when man divides the one whole existence into good and bad, right and wrong, sin and merit, hero and villain, God and Satan, Purusa and Prakriti, Jesus and Judas, Krishna and Kamsa, Buddha and Devadatta, Mahatma Gandhi and Adolph Hitler. With such a dividing, separating and analyzing mind, the human being can only cut himself off from the virgin reality of the universe. He can only be a split, schizophrenic personality whom tensions, restlessness, suffering, and the innumerable problems of life, necessarily follow like shadows.

One who sees in all these masks of diversity the one absolute unity, he really sees, says Krishna in the Gita. One who finds out the absoluteness of the constant continuity of the cosmic-void, only he has discovered the Reality, says Buddha in Dhammapada. One who loves and loves and loves and transcends beyond the lover and beloved becomes the absolute lovingness and perceives the whole universe expanded wide into that lovingness like floating clouds in the sky, like rising waves in the ocean, like the bluish appearance of the firmament, he really loves his beloved, says the yoga of Lovetrance. It is I alone who can love you and none else, said Jesus

to Mary Magdalene. Then the whole of relativity is just proven to be an appearance.

But if someone sticks to his own concocted prejudices and tries to materialize them in his life and sufferings and tensions result, then he alone is responsible for it. Such people alone can be held responsible for spreading unhealthy vibrations and patterns of behavior which invite and seduce others to flow in the same current. This is why life turns into hell and the world faces international stupidity turning the globe into one big hellish atmosphere.

In the Interplanetary civilization people recognized the internal flow of one and the same energy in sex and celibacy, attachment and detachment, wrath and creativity. Therefore, they used to respect and adore Rishi Durvas also, who was famous all over the cosmic-egg for his dreadful anger and terrible curse. He was a great ascetic, a great yogi, a great man of knowledge and the fastest space traveler. He used to roam all over the world to all the planets.

One day he appeared in the Royal assembly of Ayodhya extremely furious, his eyes and face reddened with anger, his eyebrows turned up. For the philosophers' class it was not required to ask permission to see a King. Even the Emperor was on twenty-four hour call. So when Rishi Durvas entered the assembly, Sri Ram stood up with His whole assembly. All the ministers rose from their seats to deliver their homage, and an elevated seat was offered by the Emperor.

"Oh Ram, even in Your presence on the earth, in Your reign, such a great insult has been done to a member of the philosophers' class!" Durvas uttered sinking between pain and wrath, taking his seat.

"Who is it? Who has stepped on the hood of a poisonous snake?" Sri Ram's face also started to become red in wrath.

Actually what had happened was this - Maharishi Durvas was a free traveler all over the cosmos. Early one morning in a beautiful river in a Himalayan valley he took his bath and began to perform his Sandhya-vandanam. After doing this, while he was in the middle of offering a water oblation to the invisible God by pouring a handful of water in a certain direction, he became completely absorbed, taking handfuls of water, chanting a mantram full of devotion, and offering them towards the sun beam. This continued for a while. At the same time a gandharva, the Celestial musician of the planet Svah, passed that way in his airplane. His name was Chitrasena.

The musician was chewing a betel leaf, and felt like spitting. He spat outside the airplane and the spit fell upon the busy palms of Durvas. Enraged with great wrath, he looked at the airplane and recognized it by the flag. Anyhow he completed the ablution and then traveled through the space and arrived in the assembly of Ayodhya and told everything to Sri Ram Who was famous as the greatest power, as well as the greatest protector and admirer of the philosophers' class.

Here Sri Ram found another chance for a new play. His every play unfolds new mystery, new understanding, new facts. Sri Ram hardly ever got enraged and whenever He allowed anger to come in, He totally merged in it. In his full awareness the anger entered in Him and He remained a vigilant, constant watcher or witness to it. Whereas with us, anger, sex, sleep come totally obscuring our vigilance and intelligence. We become

obsessed by these feelings as if certain spirits or ghosts occupy a person's consciousness.

Sri Ram's state is different. He is fully aware of the arrival of these tendencies and they come only when He wants, and when they come He welcomes them. In this occasion He is angry, He is fully experiencing this anger, but also witnessing it at the same time.

"This is an insult, a great insult to not only philosopher Durvas, but an insult to Ram's government," Sri Ram said enraged, and the whole assembly was frightened.

Durvas became very happy looking at Sri Ram's face. He found a deep affinity and compassion for Him which soothed his burning heart. He forgot the pain of his insult.

Sri Ram took three shining arrows from His quiver and said,

"Ram will not accept even a drop of water without slaying him.

Wherever he may be, he will be sought after and killed before midnight."

The news spread everywhere quickly because all the planets were so close that every day innumerable representatives came to Sri Ram to offer their tributes. The musician Chitrasena also heard it from Devarshi Narada and became very frightened and, in fear of death, he became so restless and impatient that he started trembling and crying. When Devarshi Narada saw his condition his heart was moved with compassion.

This is the nature of the lovers of God. If and when their hearts melt over someone they try every possible way to remove the cause of suffering. Then they never care against whom they are going to act. They simply know that the motive is to remove someone's pain and see him happy. The rishis are found many times in Interplanetary history taking steps against the

greatest powers of creation and against incarnations of God, simply to protect and glorify the lover of God.

"Why are you so frightened? Of course Sri Ram is invincible, but it does not mean you are some stone or brick. I want you to feel that you too have an ATMA, and therefore one should try to save himself until his last breath. Let's go for a ride, bring your plane," Devarshi Narada said.

Away they flew and sometime later the plane landed on the hill of Mount Anjana where the mother of Hanumanji was residing, passing her days in meditation and deep peacefulness.

"Do you see that white Laotian bungalow?" Devarshi pointed with his finger. "Go there and clasp the feet of Mother Anjana and weep as much and as loudly as you can and do not leave her feet until she gives you her word to finish your suffering," said Devarshi and disappeared.

"Tràhi màm Tràhi màm, (protect me), Mother." Chitrasena fell down at the feet of mother Anjana, who was still sitting on her meditation seat in the midst of some vines and bushes which made a natural greenish room in the garden of her bungalow. Extremely compassionate, merciful was Mother Anjana's nature. "Get up my son, do not be frightened, do not lament, for this place is for peace and fearlessness. Look at the blooming flowers, how they are smiling and shaking with the breeze." Mother's eyes lit up with a new light of love and delight.

"Tràhi màm, Tràhi màm," Chitrasena was still crying, wetting her feet with his tears.

"Now you are free from all fears," Mother said consolingly.

"Are you giving your word to me?" Chitrasena now raised his head and asked in great distress, still crying. After all Devarshi Narada has taught him.

"Yes. Anjana gives you safety now. Even the Lord of death cannot harm you."

The musician related his story and said, "Sri Ram has taken a vow."

Then Mother became very serious and said in a peaceful and profound tone,

"I shall try. You just rest there." Mother pointed out her livingroom. It was a most heavenly and comfortable place, completely natural, as if part of that green atmosphere. Mother Anjana closed her eyes in the remembrance of her son. A telepathic message is more powerful and quick than a telegram or call. Mother Anjana's remembrance reflected in the mind of Hanumanji as He sat before Sri Ram in the Royal assembly of Ayodhya.

"My Lord, if You allow I would like to see My Mother and offer My obeisance," He said.

"Of course," Lord Ram said, giving Hanumanji His permission to go. "Convey at her feet the obeisances of Ram. I am also awaiting her blessings."

Hanumanji disappeared from the city and simply appeared on Mount Anjana. As always, Mother took Him in her arms and caressed Him with great motherly affection. When He bowed down at her feet He noticed that Mother was a little serious and worried about something.

"I was just remembering You," Mother said, looking at the face of her Son and patting His back.

"Your order Mother." Hanumanji felt Mother wanted to say something.

"I have a very difficult task," Mother said gravely and stared into the eyes of her Son. She sat on the chair and gestured to Hanumanji to sit on the other one.

"At least tell Me, Mother," Hanumanji insisted.

"It is an extremely puzzling problem, my Son. That is why I am hesitating."

Hanumanji was then excited. Mother knew His power very well. He had been scolded by her for sparing Ravana and troubling Ram to kill him, so Hanumanji vowed,

"I swear, Mother, by the grace of Lord Ram that however big a task it might be, I will do it."

"I hope so," Mother smiled in satisfaction, patting her Son on the back and calling the musician who was sitting in the next room.

"We have to protect this man's life until midnight." Mother said.

Looking at this musician, Hanumanji was puzzled for awhile because He already knew the story.

"The vow of My Master, Mother, you know - -."

"I know, but I have given him my word," Mother said very strongly and she continued, "I don't have another Son to handle this task and You have already sworn." And her tone became despondent.

Hanumanji could not bear any cloud of sadness on His Mother's face and He said with confidence,

"If it is your order Mother, then be assured. Now permit Me to go. Not much time is left. I shall do My best."

"Let the goddess of success kiss thy feet." Mother blessed her Son as He bowed down. And again He bowed down for Sri Ram as He had been asked, so Mother laughed and said,

"Convey to Sri Ram all my blessings, but tell Him that whenever there is a war between Him and His lover, the garland of victory will wreath the lover and not Him."

Both Hanumanji and Chitrasena flew back to Ayodhya in the musician's plane. The plane landed on the bank of the river Sarayu on the outskirts of the city.

"Stand navel-deep in the water of the Sarayu and constantly chant the Holy Name of Sri Sita Ram. Whenever there is a detrimental situation, neither come out of the water nor stop chanting." Hanumanji told Chitrasena as he laid a foundation for His further activities. Chitrasena was greatly afraid so he simply surrendered to the situation. Hanumanji came to the Royal assembly and bowed down to Sri Ram.

"Oh, so quickly You have left and come back!" Sri Ram stated.

"Yes, My Lord, I want something from You," said Hanumanji.

"Hanuman, there is no need for an introduction. Ram is always in Your debt. You just ask whatever You desire. Anything in creation will be given to You." Sri Ram was very happy to hear Hanuman's words because He had never before heard Hanumanji ask for anything.

It was not difficult for Hanumanji to ask Sri Ram to spare Chitrasena, but it was not befitting for a lover to pull His loved one down from His words of promise and vows, and Hanumanji would never ask for such a thing.

"I want to remain as a guard, as a protector, for one who is engaged in chanting Your Holy Name," said Hanumanji.

Sri Ram embraced Hanumanji with all His love and said,

"Forever You are appointed guard and guardian of all those who are and will be chanting and meditating on My Name and Form. My Name is non-different from Me. It is ME alone in the Form of Sound Vibrations. No danger can ever come to him who will enjoy it. Still, I am giving You this mace in case some powerful personality releases some highly invincible celestial weapons like Brahmastra, or Pashupatastra. Even My own arrows would prove to be a failure against the wonderful mace of My Hanumanji," Sri Ram said in His own ecstasy of love as He gave the mace into Hanumanji's right hand.

Hanumanji bowed down to Sri Ram with great reverence.

Evening was nearing and He came to the bank of the Sarayu and began to roam around with the dreadful mace in His hand.

The news spread all around and a huge crowd gathered at the bank of the Sarayu where Chitrasena stood in the river chanting. Suddenly a fearful weapon appeared rushing toward the musician like a devastating fire. The crowd became afraid and started scattering away due to its unbearable heat spreading all around.

Chitrasena looked at Hanumanji with eyes filled with fear. Hanumanji insisted that he stick to chanting the Holy Name and greeted the weapon with reverence. The weapon circumambulated both of them, waited in space, and returned back to Sri Ram.

After half an hour another arrow flew all around, shining and dazzling like a thunderbolt, and moved through space. The musician began to chant louder and louder, faster and faster.

"Sri Ram, jai Ram, jai jai Ram, Sita Ram, Sita Ram, Sita Ram, Sita Ram."

Hanumanji patted his back and both became more confident in their protection.

The next weapon came closer and circumambulated both a few times and turned and flew back to Shri Ram,

"I can only respectfully circumambulate the chants of Your Holy Name and the greatest Devotee Hanumanji is there, Whose every pore chants constantly the Holy Name of Yours. Please do not destroy our invincibility," the weapon resounded.

All the ministers and brothers were surprised and shocked.

Ultimately Sri Ram boarded His golden chariot, in which the flag of Kovidar was flying all around. The chariot came to the bank of the Sarayu and Sri Ram alighted with the arrow fixed on His bow.

Devarshi Narada, Durvas and Vasistha, the spiritual master, also came to the spot and as Vasistha arrived, spoke aloud,

"Hanuman, let Sri Ram's words be fulfilled. It would be an ugly blot in Your glorious fame to stand against Sri Ram with a mace in Your hand. Come here and let the musician be killed."

A huge crowd had been gathered to watch.

"I am an insignificant Servant of your Sovereign Disciple. My Lord has ordered Me to protect the chanters of His Holy Name. That is why I am standing here. If your goodness wants that I should not be obedient to Sri

Ram, then please order Me to come to you right now," Hanumanji replied to the Gurudev, with required humility, and the musician, out of fear, chanted faster and still louder.

"And please ask Sri Ram - What about the boon He offered Me today? Will His arrows destroy His own promise? And will the significance of His Holy Name not be reduced by this?" Hanumanji added.

"Hail Hanuman, no mistake is ever possible by You," said Vasistha, and he became a little serious and pondered for a few moments.

Then he looked at the musician and said to him,

"My son, bow down to Maharishi Durvas and ask for his pardon."

Durvas was standing there with Vasistha. Hanuman indicated that the musician should fall down upon the water prostrate. "Pardon me my Lord," he prayed fervently.

"Sri Ram, put Your third arrow back in Your quiver," Durvas said to Sri Ram. He himself was puzzled. He never expected such a situation to be created.

"I have pardoned him. Please take Your weapon back."

CHAPTER 43

HANDING OVER THE WISDOM OF THE ABSOLUTE

It is easy to find emotional blind followers. It is easy to gather a crowd around oneself and that is what most of the men of ambition, swamis and yogis are doing today. But as long as the glamour exists the followers stay, and they stay not because of the yogi, not because of the knowledge, but because of the fulfillment of the expectation of themselves. And because of their own particular hang-ups, particular images and prejudices, the thing becomes confused and the followers lose clarity of vision and then they run away.

It is very difficult to find a follower who can really listen in reference to the master. Anyone who can really listen, instantaneously he can recognize the uncomplex virgin originality of himself and develops a deep affinity with the master in which automatically the knowledge of the master is transmitted. When the master's knowledge has flown into the disciple then everything changes in his life, his quality of service becomes unworldly and unique. His way of loving becomes peculiar.

Hanumanji loved Sri Ram in such a peculiar way and thus Sri Ram's divine mystery was most naturally transmitted to Him; therefore even to stand against Him with a mace in His hand was also a great service to Sri Ram. Sri Hanumanji's standing in war against Sri Ram was not based on some selfish or political motive. Its origin was the very basis of Sri Ram's personality. It was the very "Ramness" of Ram.

It was that law for which Sri Ram abandoned all His pleasures of life and lived in the dense forest for fourteen years. It was because of that law that He suffered the pangs of separation of His most beloved wife Sita. It is not a man made law, but that law out of which man is born. It is that secret point, knowing which one's love becomes transcendental, otherwise it remains just emotional, just romantic, shallow, and any misunderstanding can pop out and devastate the whole structure of love relations.

Sri Hanumanji loved Sri Ram and Sri Ram loved Hanumanji with oceanic profundity. And it was unconditionally transcendental...

sàdhùnàm hrdayam tvaham

madanyatte na jànantì

nàham tebhyo manàgapi

In Srimad Bhagavtam the Lord says to Durvas -

"I am the heart of the sadhus and sadhus are the heart of ME. I do not know anyone except Sadhus and they don't know anyone else except ME.

One day Sri Ram wanted to give Hanumanji the wisdom of the Absolute Truth. This day Sri Sita Ram were sitting on the Royal throne in the assembly with all the brothers, ministers, and leaders of the different states. Hanumanji came and bowed down to Sri Sita Ram and they smiled, looking at each other.

Sri Ram said to Sita, "Please explain to Him My Original Reality."

"Look My Son Hanuman, at the beautiful form of Your Emperor. His taking birth, His infantly pastimes, His going to Siddashram with rishi Visvamisra, His protection of the fire sacrifice, His coming to My birthplace Mithila, His breaking of Shiva's bow, His marrying Me, His wandering on the forest paths with Lakshmana and Me. My abduction, His meeting with

You, friendship with Sugriva, the killing of Ravana and being enthroned on the Royal seat of Ayodhya, and our sitting here and conversing are all done by Me.

"I alone am the doer of all and Sri Ram is an actionless, motionless, non-vibrant expansion of consciousness. In Him, in the ocean of stillness, in the wilderness of cosmic silence, I have awakened the vibrant waves of joy and festivity of creation. I am still in My frolics.

"My frolics can be unpalatable and extremely bitter too. I am not only the soothing union of two thrilling hearts, but I am also the devastating flames of the pangs of separation. Great prosperity is My adventurous frolic and extreme poverty is also. War is one expression of My frolic and peace is another. Great intuitive wisdom, yoga, and brilliance of intelligence is one way of My being and utter materialism, chaos, and confusion. Misunderstanding is another frolic of mine. Great danger, and a terrifying situation is also My frolic, but protection, compassion, Grace, is also."

Empress Sita was speaking in an unheard-of, unexpected tone of sovereign elegance and Hanumanji kept looking at Her face with His unwinking, wonder-filled, innocent yellow eyes.

"But My frolic is a purifier and elixir for all souls, My Son, those who understand this knowledge or one who is surrendered to Me transcends all unpalatableness of life and enjoys chronic-bliss."

Then She looked at Sri Ram through Her dreamy eyes and said, "Your Emperor, Your Master Sri Ram, who He is, how He is, what He is I don't know. Nobody knows Him. Nobody can know Him. He cannot be known; there is no way. Words cannot explain Him. Mind cannot imagine Him. Intellect cannot explore Him. Ego cannot touch even His shadow.

Whatever You see, whatever You can see, all past, future and present are just My play. Whatever can be seen, heard, imagined, are all My play, are all I AM.

"And I am the invincible power of Him. He, the Cosmic-void, is perceived as pure existence, pure consciousness and bliss, the Sat chidananda Bramhan only due to ME, and again this SAT-CHIT-ANANDAM manifests as Sri Ram. This too is because of ME. That's why devotees conceive of Me as the center of Sandhini, Samvit and Hladini potencies. The shadow of My Sandhini potency grossifies as the mode of inertia, the shadow of Samvit grossifies as the mode of passion, and the shadow of Hladini grossifies as the mode of pleasures and sufferings, and thus they give a structure to almighty nature.

"I am Mahamaya constantly working in the transcendental planets. I am the yogamaya at the disposal of the incarnation of the Lord. The reflection of this yogamaya in all the cosmic-eggs is called maya, which causes the perception of innumerable planets in the existence of Sri Ram. The soul is slumbering in the lap of maya from time immemorial, and dreaming far and wide of life, death, and the universe. I alone can awaken him, and I certainly awaken him when he happens to adorn his dreams with the remembrance of the lotus-eyed Sri Ram." Empress Sita concluded Her blessing and looked at Sri Ram.

Sri Ram said, "Hanumanji, in You I see the flower of detachment has bloomed in fullness which is generally born when a healthy discrimination is practiced in life. Without which, even if one attains the knowledge of the Absolute Bramhan, he becomes stuck at the theoretical level or else the knowledge causes his downfall. Because the phantom of knowledge

(knowledge devoid of experience of Absolute Bramhan) which reflects in the brain of a body-attached, sense object-attached, talkative person, makes him more and more centered around his body and his senses, his conceptions and prejudices, and these are points from where he falls into a bottomless abyss of ignorance.

"Hanuman," Sri Ram's voice echoed, "I am the unmanifest, formless, attributeless Absolute Bramha, and it can be realized by the wisdom and experience of *aham Bramhasmi*.

"As long as the creation exists, there is no way to refuse its perception and visualization. Although it is ever-changing and subject to destruction, still, it is not baseless, not originless, not directorless. It is not chaotic. It has a profound base and origin, and it has an extremely powerful director, and that is this manifest form of Emperor Ram.

"I am both unmanifest and manifest. The first is only experiencable by becoming one with That in Nirvikalp Samadhi, but the next is full of frolics, fun and festivities in the transcendental planet. And the same fun, frolic and festivity when reflected in the womb of nature by yogamaya, a cosmic-egg is materialized which includes innumerable planets along with the planet Earth. This manifest form of the absolute is available for all to enjoy in causeless unconditional love.

"You know very well that the whole of creation is the fun and frolic of Empress Sita; therefore, without Her grace and mercy no one can attain Bramhavidya (the wisdom of transcendence), without which any realization in the spiritual world as Absolute Truth, witness-consciousness, Cosmic-consciousness, Nirvana or Kaivalya remains just a futile psychological

projection. The very structure of Bramhavidya is the causeless, unconditional love of this couple in the form of Sita and Ram."

Sri Ram concluded His blessings. The whole Royal assembly heard this wonderful sermon of SitaRam with rapt attention and instantaneously they entered into the trance of Kaivalya.

The wisdom of the Absolute Truth erupted from their Being and they experienced that they were no longer the body, mind, or ego, but pure Absolute Bramhan. "I am Bramhan. Thou art Brahman, and All this is Bramhan."

In that Cosmic-consciousness, in that flow of realization of Bramha nirvāna, their life, their activities became qualitatively one with the transcendental, which was the very nature of their Being.

CHAPTER 44

TEST OF THE DISCIPLE

The members of Sri Ram's Royal assembly were not the immature seekers of today who, having just a slight glimpse of a vision or two, start talking very loudly about their experiences and become careless towards their duties and responsibilities. Instead of developing a serene humility towards the entire existence, they develop vanity and a superiority complex, and break themselves from all people around. They start breaking disciplines and laws of higher consciousness and thus become strange and weird in the eyes of people. Or they run away to solitude, or become monks and nuns and wear strange robes.

No, the members of the Royal assembly of Ayodhya were not shallow spiritualists. They were perfect disciples of Sita Ram and therefore no one escaped to solitude and no one appeared in the assembly with shaved head and strange clothes. They came at the right time in their usual dress, with extreme humility, without breaking their disciplines.

They bowed down to Sri Sita Ram with extreme homage and devotion. But one thing had happened - instead of heads having been shaved, ego had been totally shaved. Not the dress, but the heart had changed color entirely. Their eyes, faces and gait all expressed the deepest relaxation and peaceful awareness. They all did their duties and services as if they were moving meditations, as if samadhi was in motion. As if the Nirvana was vibrant and active.

Sri Sita Ram were sitting on the Royal throne and the whole assembly was sitting in all quietness, in extreme stillness. But it was not a dead silence; there were waves of full-awareness and the whole atmosphere of the parliament was vibrant with the deepest possible joy.

Then Sri Hanumanji entered the hall and bowed down to Sri Sita Ram.

Sri Ram looked straight away into His eyes and asked,

"Who are You?" And Sri Sita Ram smiled, full of mystery.

Hanumanji was in an ecstasy of transcendental wisdom with full-awareness, so immediately a verse erupted from His Being,
dehadrstyà tu dàsoham jivadrasya tvadamkah
neoline vastutastu tvame vāham iti me nischità matih.

He knew the couple of the Lord wanted to know how much He had remembered from the lesson delivered yesterday. So Hanumanji said,

"My Lord, the body is a part of nature. It is a combination of clay, water, air, fire, and space, and every particle of the body is changing every moment. A constant exchange is going on between the atoms of the body and all the bodies of trees, flowers, animals, and human beings. Therefore, the body is not personal. It belongs to existence.

"It is a part of creation and there is one director of this creation. His body is never changing. His body is not made of five elements and three gunas. That is trans-material and anti-proton composition. And that is why the Director is transcendental and He is directing each movement of the world."

So on the level of body-consciousness everybody is His servant. Whether one is a cosmic-conscious, liberated soul Laotzu, Buddha,

Shankaracharya, or just an ordinary ignorant. If you appreciate and love this relation it is okay, if not, much possibility is for you to fall and become complex, though one is still a devotee of God.

Shankaracharya has sung a song--- "My Lord, although the ocean and the waves are one, still people have to say ocean's waves and not the wave's ocean."

Acknowledging this relation is sincerity and just speaking on oneness while rejecting the eternal relation of the Lord with His creation expresses a great imprudence.

"So My Lord, I am Your `DAS' (a servant) on the level of body and on the level of soul I am part and parcel of You, never to be divided from You. Soul is not pure consciousness. Soul is just a chidabhasa, a reflection of You, the supreme effulgence, conditioned in the astral body.

"The rays can only be a part of the sun. A spark can only be a part of the fire. The chidabhas can only be a reflection of the effulgence of pure consciousness. I am constantly part and parcel with You on the level of soul.

"By logic, the effulgence of pure consciousness is all-pervading but by deeper experiences in Nirvikalpa samadhi, in all pervading consciousness, the feeling of "ALL" is merely psychological. It has no independent existence. When the feeling "ALL" is evaporated, the concept of pervading becomes unnecessary. When the concept of "ALL" is finished, instantaneously pervading also disappears. Then a ONENESS exists in its absolute suchness, expanding into one, entire- wholeness.

"On the level of this ONE WHOLENESS," Hanumanji said, "My Lord, how can I have any separate identity? In a fast unifying force of electrical energy of bliss consciousness, where the entirety is exploding into one

unique wholeness, there is no way to love one another other than dissolving and transforming oneself into that ONE wholeness. So I am You, My Lord."

Everybody's eyes widened in a great joy and wonder. The presentation of Sri Sita Ram's gospel of yesterday was so perfect. Before it was a little philosophical but Hanumanji's commentary was short, straightforward and very easy to understand. Everybody thanked Hanumanji and flowers were showered upon Him.

Sri Ram greeted Him by offering Him a highly perfumed flower garland from His own heart and the assembly echoed and re-echoed --

Jai Hanumanji,

Jai Hanumanji

CHAPTER 45

HANUMANJI, WRITER OF A NEW RAMAYANA

A little confusion about the ideals and dignity of the way of life causes a great downfall in the masses. Therefore, the Srimad Bhagavadgita says,

One should not confuse the minds of laymen by anyone's thoughts, speeches and actions. Even liberated souls should act and live such a way of life by which the common class of people can be inspired and encouraged for those thoughts and engagements which could evolve their levels of consciousness.

Sri Ram as an Emperor, as the Supreme Ideal of human life, as an Upholder of moral codes of human society, had a great mission and the greatest responsibility. The duties of a Vedic King are very hard and extremely difficult. Vedican King means approximately God-realization, knowledge of the scriptures, ruling capacity, extraordinary physical strength, great adoration for the rishis, and great capacity of great donations. All rolled in one. He is expected to be full of paternal love for all his subjects.

Modern man of this Iron Age cannot conceive of this, since the long chain of histories of all Kings of all countries have been totally defamed and have polluted the spotless, clean and super-human characters of the Kings who ruled the earth in Golden, Silver, and Copper Ages described in the history of Interplanetary civilization.

Sri Ram was the top-most among all of them, and therefore, it would be unjust to Sri Ram if we criticized or even tried to understand Him

without a background of a short knowledge of Interplanetary history and Vedic way of life, along with recognition of human values from the standard of life which was popular one million years ago.

Sri Ram was extremely generous to His subjects, but His generosity was not less or chaotic. Generosity and love for all beings was extremely active in Him and He was very careful at every step of starting each action, not confusing the minds of a single being and enlightening the path of their ultimate fulfillment, not harming the astral and celestial laws of the other planets -- All these make a picture of Sri Ram's personality.

Such a careful and alert lifestyle Sri Ram lived. By such a great dedication and all sacrificing fashion of life, Sri Ram regenerated and brightened it, and gave hope to all the Royal races that while remaining in an Royal environment such a life could be lived.

That is why - recently when India attained independence in 1948 - the great pioneer Mahatma Gandhi had a dream of Ram Rajya. He wanted to bring Sri Ram's government once again. But his dream remained a dream because it required the highest wisdom, greatest power, and a spirit which was able to sacrifice all pleasures of life for any of his countrymen.

Only Sri Ram had that qualification in the whole world's history. To save the long traditions of Ages from bewilderment so they wouldn't be confused or frustrated, and keep them from falling from the path of higher consciousness, He had to become very hard in His own love. He exiled Her whom He loved more than His own life in all the bygone past.

Some Farahada or Majanu, or Chandidas, some Romeo Juliet, can abandon society or sacrifice his own life instead of abandoning his beloved, but for Sri Ram His own life was not His. His life was the costliest jewel of

the nation, most valuable pearl of that civilization, of the whole world. So He felt that whatever or however was the path to the higher evolution of the world, that was the only way to move for Him.

So He abandoned His most beautiful, chaste and loving wife Sita, who sacrificed everything for His love. At that time the path of the evolution of the world's consciousness required a great sacrifice, the sacrifice of the separation of two of the world's greatest lovers - Sita and Ram, whose songs of love and bliss are still resounding, echoing, and re-echoing all over the jungles and hills of Chitrakuta and Dandakaraya.

The lovers whom Viradha failed to separate, Khar and Dushana failed to separate, and even the great scientist sorcerer Ravana could not separate, a lowly layman of Ayodhya, a washerman, succeeded in separating.

The washerman's wife went out and returned late one night, and the washerman denied her entry, saying he was not Ram Who allowed Sita back even after remaining one year in Ravana's castle. One of the spies overheard it and he conveyed this to Sri Ram and Ram felt that it was the cosmic-will that Sita should be out of the scene, for the public should recognize that Sita was not only the chaste wife of Ram and the successful Empress of Ayodhya, but also a living Goddess, by Whose Grace one could achieve success and prosperity in life for thousands of generations.

For this benevolent cause Empress Sita became an ascetic, a yogini, and was seen wandering in the groves of Maharishi Valmiki's hermitage sobbing and sighing in the remembrance of Her Beloved Sri Ram. Her sobbing and sighing melted the hearts not only of cows, deer, birds, trees, creepers, and all the surroundings, it also melted the heart of the great ascetic rishi Valmiki who had been absorbed in the mystic trance of

meditation for a very long time during that Age. He was later inspired to write the whole story of Sita and Ram which became popular everywhere.

After losing its Empress, Ayodhya became lusterless. Everything was still there, all the activities were being performed, musicians were playing, but they were lifeless and tasteless to Hanumanji. He remained in shock, in dismay.

Sri Ram remained now just an Emperor. He preferred to remain either very busy or alone. He avoided the services of even Hanumanji.

"Hanuman, at least You should allow Your Ram to be busy some time with His own necessities." This used to be His answer whenever Hanumanji wanted to serve Him. Sri Ram's whole night was being passed in trances of meditation.

All the brothers, ministers, citizens, were very grave in deep unspeakable torment, but very firm and strong in the path of righteousness. The places of religious performances, moral duties and services in society became their life breath. It was very good for all, but to Sri Hanumanji, Ayodhya without Sita became unbearable. He was unable to control His tears seeing Sri Ram sitting alone on the Royal throne.

In those days, Hanumanji used to fly away from Ayodhya as soon as He had finished His duties. He used to pass His time at the beach of the Indian Ocean near Kanyakumari where there are innumerable rocks and flat stones which the Vanaras had brought from far and wide for the bridge. When the construction was over the rocks were all collected in one place. Hanumanji used to sit there, sit until the darkness obscured everything.

The pangs of love and devotion made Him a poet and poetries began to flow from His heart and His fingers began to write what He did not know

perhaps was the most outstanding and thrilling story of Sita Ram. The days passed and His wild pen filled up innumerable stone slabs with wonderful, exciting poems of Sri Sita Ram's pastimes. His eyes wet with tears, His heart throbbing with feeling, His mind was floating in the ebbs and tides of the pastimes of Sri Sita Ram, and His fingers were moving the pen.

The ocean and the breeze, the flowers and birds used to be happy to see the smiles on His face. Absorbed in the circumstances of the pastimes of Sita Ram, Hanumanji used to laugh at times. His wild laughter amazed and gladdened the heart of the deer, birds and other animals. Sometimes He became very serious, and at other times He used to cry bitterly. When it became unbearable to His spiritual master, Surya Narayana, the sunbeam used to disappear in the western horizon and then Hanumanji had to stop. Then He would return to Ayodhya. Then next morning His writing would begin again.

One day when Hanumanji came to Sri Ram, Lakshmana told Him that Hanumanji was in the process of writing an epic. But Sri Ram didn't reply, He only closed His eyes in deep meditation on Sita.

Devarshi Narada and many astral travelers informed Lakshmana that on the rocks of the beaches of the Indian Ocean an outstanding transcendentalizing epic was being inscribed by Hanumanji in the most picturesque and vivid language.

The news had gone all over the solar system - and the whole night the beach was crowded with readers from different planets, and as the day broke they excitedly rushed to Ayodhya to have the darshan of the Hero and Heroine. Everyday, newcomers in large scale were visiting Ayodhya. Everybody was asking - 'Where is the Heroine? Where is the Empress Sita?'

Many dignified personalities from different planets, after reading the verses of the epic and paying a visit to Sri Ram, renounced everything and settled in Panchavati, Chitrakut and on the banks of the Sarayu River. Through the groves and gardens of Ayodhya these people were wandering, deep in love with Sri Sita Ram, singing the songs of the divine love of Sri Sita Ram, conversing about the incidents of the wonderful epic. Their joy knew no limits.

At times they were found shouting, "We need our Empress." They said, "There could not be any greater injustice than the exile of the Empress of Ayodhya. We don't need any dry religion. We don't need rigid rules and dry philosophy. Even duties and services are not required if the heart is filled to over-flowing with devotion to Sri Sitaji.

"In the flowing tears of love of Sri Sita Ram is hidden the mysteries of all philosophies and all religion. From where those tears flow, those eyes and those hearts are divinized and transcendentalized. Evaporation of individuality in the trance of love of Sita Ram is the liberation we need. This is the kind of religion we want. The world needs this." And this they had learned from the poems Hanumanji has composed at the beach.

All the rishis and munis became interested in this epic which had stirred the atmosphere of the whole Intergalactic society.

Maharishi Valmiki arrived one day and said,

"Hanumanji, I have heard You are very busy writing an epic on the biography of Sri Sita Ram!"

Hanumanji felt very shy and replied, "How can I write an epic, my Lord, I am just somehow passing the times of day!"

"Hanumanji, I want You to know that I too have composed an epic on the Holy Ramayana in verse by the order of Bramha Himself. As a writer I want to see the art of another writer," Valmiki muni said.

"All right, sir, if you want to read I can help you with these stone slabs. This is the order," Hanumanji said, showing all of His writings.

Valmiki very soon became absorbed in reading those poems. Many times his eyes grew lustrous and shone. Many times he smiled, many times he laughed, and many times he became serious and tears flowed from his eyes as he was reading the descriptions, the selection of words, the use of proverbs, idioms, ornamental language, and the flow of feelings.

The delicacy and supremacy of Sri Sita Ram's love Valmiki rishi recognized, and he relished everything and became absorbed in it. Valmiki rishi was thrilled and overwhelmed with joy, but after all this, all of a sudden he became despondent and sat down tired and discouraged.

"I see sadness on your face, sir. Is there any mistake in this epic? Wrong uses of words, or misconception of the facts, my Lord? Please do tell Me," Hanumanji requested extremely politely.

"Hanumanji, Your composition is so perfect that it is my firm belief that no one can find a single mistake in the whole epic. The story is fully alive, the description is extremely picture building. There cannot be any literature under the sun which can equal this creation of Yours. I became sad because I had great hope that my composition would be famous all over the world and would be sung and studied by the masses down the Ages. But today after seeing Your literature all my hopes have been turned into ashes. Nobody will be interested in my literature in comparison with this epic of Yours," Maharishi Valmiki replied.

"Sir, do not be despondent. Do not be so sad because of this little thing. Everybody will be interested. Yes everybody, my Lord. I will make it done." Sri Hanumanji said remembering the lotus feet of Sri Sita Ram.

Upon saying this, Hanumanji placed all the rock slabs one on top of the other until they became a huge, mountainous pile of slabs and then He put them on His shoulder and leaped to the space of the wild Indian Ocean. There He dropped them into the womb of the ocean.

He returned very soon to Valmiki feeling very happy within Himself, and said,

"Excuse Me, my Lord, now your literature will be famous all over the world, and I am sure it will wash out the sins which human beings have committed by invalidating Mother Sita, and it will even help wipe out misunderstandings and confusions which ignorant people will have in the Iron Age because of not recognizing the mystical glories of Sri Ram and criticizing Him for exiling Mother Sita."

Hanumanji looked at Valmiki, whose eyes were wet and red, but he seemed to be more and more sad, more despondent.

"Hanumanji, in greed for fame I have done a greater offense. I have made people lose such a great glorification of the Lord," Valmiki replied in great despondency.

"I am very grateful to you. You have saved Me from a great offense. Holy, transcendental names and glorifications of Sita Ram would have been lying written on stones in the open. People would be walking over them. Birds would have flown and passed filth over them and beasts would have made a mess of it. You have saved Me, my Lord. How kind, how merciful you are," and Hanumanji touched the feet of rishi Valmiki.

Rishi Valmiki very quickly took Hanumanji in his arms and embraced Him closely out of great love and blessed Him again and again.

CHAPTER 46

WORLDWIDE VICTORY OF SRI RAM AND HIS INTERNATIONAL FIRE-CEREMONY

That dusk when Sri Hanumanji flew towards Ayodhya, only one agonizing thought was reeling in His mind and that was how to save Himself from the torment and loneliness of Ayodhya! Now His service to Sri Ram had been taken away, and His joy in writing a new Ramayana was gone as well.

The palace of Ayodhya, the Royal assembly, the banks of Sarayu and royal gardens all seemed to be lifeless and empty without Mother Sita. Even Sri Ram's life remained now as a dry leaf. This describes the inner state of Hanumanji's mind. Hanumanji was thinking about some new engagements when He arrived in Ayodhya.

He received a message that the King wants to see Him in the Royal assembly as quickly as possible. Hanumanji appeared at once. Sri Ram was discussing with His spiritual master the performance of the fire ceremony.

The purpose of performing such sacrifices was so that all the Kings and Emperors of all times should not remain just the puppets of their selfish whims. They should not be prisoners and slaves of their family, society, and state affairs. They should not become victims of their own conceptions and prejudices.

Sri Ram had to establish an ideal for all the Kings and Emperors or Presidents and Prime Ministers of the world who were to come for thousands of years in the future.

Hanumanji heard the discussions and became very happy. At least His Master Sri Ram would have more engagements and He would find occasions to serve Him.

A group of soldiers was sent all over the world under the direction of Prince Satrughna and Hanumanji was engaged to help him as commander-in-chief. The sacrificial horse went first, and Jambavanta, Sugriva, Angada, Nala, Neela, and Vibhishana all followed in the footprints of the sacrificial horse -- a snowwhite blue-eared special horse. A golden plate on which Sri Ram's message was written, was fixed on his head like a crown. If anyone tried to arrest, steal, or stop the horse, the soldiers had to fight him.

After a few days of enjoyable journey, the horse entered the ashram of Maharishi Chyavana who was a great master of medical science in those days. One of his remedies for regaining youth in old-age and revitalizing all the cells and chemicals of the body making them fresh and alert like teenagers is still popular in the world of Ayurvedic medical science and it works. Its name is Chyavanprasha. It is very delicious and powerful tonic of today. Of course, its capacity is reduced due to the Iron Age -- since certain herbs of its ingredients are not available, therefore it does not miraculously turn you into a youth but it makes you more dynamic, alive - giving a younger look. It cost only three or four dollars, and is still available in medicine shops of Svargashram, Rishikesh. Maharishi Chyavana greeted the Prince and Hanumanji with the full warmth of his heart and the army halted there around his ashram and spent the night joyfully hearing a lecture of the rishi on his inventions of medical science.

"Revered sir, could you sanctify our fire sacrifice ceremony by your Holy presence? Very soon it is going to be started by His Majesty Sri Ram," the Prince and Hanumanji requested of the rishi.

"It would be my great good fortune if I could become a member of Sri Ram's fire sacrifice ceremony," The rishi replied.

A charioteer was ordered to take the rishi to Ayodhya, but Hanumanji said that the rishi's presence in Ayodhya was urgently required, so with the permission of the Prince, He sat him on His shoulders and traveled through the space.

Within minutes He placed him before Sri Ram in the Royal assembly. From this time on Hanumanji used to take all the important rishis to Ayodhya by carrying them on His shoulders. It was fun for Him plus having an opportunity to see Sri Ram once more.

Hanumanji did not expect that everywhere they would go they would be received with warm greetings and welcome. Most of the emperors of the world accepted Sri Ram as sovereign Emperor. They welcomed the army of Ayodhya and a huge crowd gathered to see those famous figures like Hanumanji, Vibhishana and Sugriva, all heros they had been hearing about for a very long time.

Most of the kings offered their greatest warmth of love and invited them to stay as their guests and then presented tributes to them and promised to join the fire sacrifice ceremony. But there were also kings who stopped the horse and fought bravely. They were not all demons but handsome, glorious heros who loved their dignity. Many of them were peculiar and stubborn devotees who fought only to create a situation in

which Sri Ram Himself would come and they would have the darshan of Sri Ram and take Him to their palace and worship Him.

First the horse was arrested by the Prince of Punjab -- Daman. The king was a man of tremendous power and the son of King Subahu. He was the proudest personality -- And war became compulsory. In the course of a long, wild fight the sharp arrows of Puskal (the son of Prince Bharata) pierced him, and Prince Daman fell unconscious.

The King Sabahu entered the battlefield and really proved that he was an efficient celebrator of the festivity of war - War for a right cause was a festival to him. Frightening the whole army of Sri Ram, Subahu pierced all the limbs of Hanumanji with his arrows.

Hanumanji became very angry and wrapped him with His long extended tail along with his chariot, and raising him high up in the sky, dashed him to the earth. The driver of the chariot died and the chariot broke into pieces, but Subahu was still alive. Hanumanji dashed His right foot on his chest and he fell down unconscious on the ground, vomiting blood.

It was the kick of Hanumanji which worked a great miracle. Instead of slipping into a state of inertia of a faint, the King Subahu's consciousness fell into the trance of transcendental plane and he saw very clearly on the screen of his pure-consciousness the Olympian Emperor of Ayodhya, Sri Ram, on the alter of the fire sacrifice ceremony, surrounded by all the great representatives of different planets and great philosopher rishis, with flowers being showered upon Him.

Having a vision of Sri Ram, all his sins were washed away and he was transformed into a great devotee.

He shouted to his son, "Oh stupid, stop the war immediately. Sri Ram is not an ordinary human being. He is the Supreme Bramha."

He was shedding tears of joy talking to his son and ministers. "In my youth I used to go to the hermitage of the great rishi Astanga for spiritual knowledge. I was a great absolutist, a vedantin. I believed only in the unmanifest, absolute, abstract Truth and that the God can never be in a form.

"The rishi used to explain that the Truth is indefinable and inconceivable. He is unmanifest and also manifest. `Look,' he said, `He is going to incarnate very soon on the earth in the form of Sri Ram in Ayodhya.'

"I couldn't believe this, and by logic and arguments I cut his statements down. The rishi became enraged at my crudeness and he cursed me saying, `You will fail to attain the Bramhavidya, the transcendental wisdom, by which Absolute Bramhan is Realized.' Then I fell down at his feet and asked for pardon.

"He foretold that after many years the Messenger of Sri Ram would come and kick me in the chest and then instantaneously I would be enlightened, and in the light produced by the shock of the kick the mystery of form and formlessness would automatically be understood.

"Today I am sanctified by the lotus feet of Sri Hanumanji. Now we shouldn't have war, but rather welcome and worship the Messenger of Sri Ram," the King concluded.

For many days the army of Sri Ram rested in the palace of Ekachakra City. Prince Daman and King Subahu served them with great respect and homage.

Time and again, and again and again, the King clasped the feet of Hanumanji saying, "My spiritual Master, You are my redeemer, by Your merciful kick I attained the Knowledge Supreme."

The horse proceeded further and Sri Ram's army followed. With a great army and a huge tribute of wealth, King Subahu went to Ayodhya, where he saw the manifest transcendence, the Form of the Formless, on the bank of the Holy Sarayu in the sacrificial arena, surrounded by the shining faces of rishis.

The horse came to the bank of the river Narmada and the army visited Maharishi Aranyaka. He welcomed the army. When he saw Hanumanji he rushed and in great ecstasy of love he caressed Him.

"Take me to Ayodhya," the rishi demanded. For this Hanumanji is always prepared. He put him on His shoulders and gently placed him on the bank of the River Sarayu.

Then the horse arrived at Ujjain, the city of Lord Mahakala, and here the horse was again arrested by Prince Rukmangada, the son of King Viramani, who was a great devotee of Lord Mahakala who had blessed the Royal race by promising to protect it in an emergency.

A great war ensued between both the parties. In the wild intoxication of terrible war, when the King and Prince were felled by the heavy fist of Hanumanji, Lord Mahakal himself entered the battlefield, surrounded by his fierce warriors. A terrifying war ensued. The whole army of Ayodhya was killed. Puskal's head was cut off by the trident of Virabhadra (a warrior of Shiva). Shatrughna came forward but Shiva's trident hit him also on the chest felling him unconscious. The remaining army was shocked and stunned.

Hanumanji came forward and scolding thus,

"Mahakal, shame upon you. Many times you have proclaimed you are one with Lord Narayan. If your word is true then why did you dare to raise your trident against his own people, Sri Ram's brother?"

Lord Mahakal said, "Of course, You are right. I am a devotee myself. But I have already given my word to Viramani. I have to protect him at any cost."

Hanumanji became angry. He dashed a big rock on Lord Mahakal's chariot and it was totally smashed. Lord Mahakal rode on his bull. Hanumanji wrapped His tail around the bull and began to grip him tightly. The bull began bellowing and grunting.

Lord Mahakal was very pleased and said,

"I am satisfied by Your art of fighting. You can have a benediction from me."

Hanumanji asked for this boon:

"Prince Shatrughna is lying faint. Puskal and innumerable soldiers are dead. I want to go to the shore of Ksirodaka Ocean to bring life-giving herbs to them. As long as I am away, please keep guarding all My friends."

"I will protect all living, faint, and dead ones until You return," Lord Mahakal promised.

The Ksirodaka Ocean is a part of the astral world, but Hanumanji's entrance was not restricted by any part of nature in the form of air, water, fire, and presiding beings of the astral and celestial plans. When He began to root out the whole mountain of herbs, the protectors of the mountain asked Him why?

"I have nothing to do with the mountain, but I need these herbs. Either you give Me the life-giving herbs or I am taking the mountain. If anyone of you disturbs Me I will kill him without question," replied Hanumanji.

The protectors consented to give Him the herbs. Hanumanji returned, thanked Mahakal and flew all around the battlefield. Just by striking the perfume of the herb, Puskal's head was reunited with his body and came to life. Shatrughna got up fresh and all the soldiers regained a new life, rejuvenated, completely healed, and relaxed as if awakened from a good healthy sleep.

The war started again and when the King fell down in a faint, Lord Mahakal appeared again and began to cut off the heads of warriors like crops of vegetables. The fierce figure of Lord Mahakal was bringing untimely devastation, and he could not be defeated.

Hanumanji saw that Shatrughna was getting tired in a dual with Lord Mahakal so he suggested,

"There is no other way except to remember Sri Ramachandra."

As soon as Shatrughna focused his attention on his ajña chakra, he overflowed with love and remembered Sri Ram. Instantaneously Sri Ram appeared in between the two armies in the beautiful rishi style dress which he wore specially for the fire sacrifice. The entire environment was enlivened and enlightened.

As soon as Sri Ram's army surrounded Him, Mahakal also ran to Sri Ram with King Viramani and made him bow down to the lotus feet of the Lord, He said,

"Viramani is offering his kingdom, along with his life, into Your lotus feet. Please accept him."

"There is no difference between Me and you. Whoever has surrendered to you has surrendered to Me. Whomever you have accepted is dear to Me also as he is dear to you," Sri Ram said smilingly.

Until then the King had been lying unconscious. Lord Ram passed His palm, overflowing with compassion, over him and he became conscious. As soon as he got up he saw Sri Ram with His lotus eyes, long arms, and yellow garments.

"Tràhi màm, tràhi màm," the King cried. He was dangerously wounded and therefore requested for protection.

The Lord raised him and blessed him. After a short conversation with the army Lord Ram disappeared.

The King enthroned his son and he himself proceeded to Ayodhya to offer his tributes and live in a spiritual environment which was greatly available in Ayodhya.

The horse moved on and on and the army, which was continuously enlarged with new victories, with new youths, followed him.

They all were highly surprised to see that the horse, mounting one of the Himalayan ranges of Kullu Manali, suddenly came to a halt and stood like a lifeless doll, only his terrified eyes conveyed that he was still alive. All the efforts to move and drive him on, went in vain.

"What should we do now? What can be disturbing him?" The Prince called all the leaders together and requested them to help him find a solution to the problem.

"Some omniscient rishi can tell us, I suppose," someone said.

"We must search for some Realized soul. They must be somewhere around here?" All affirmed this opinion. And they found not far away, Maharishi Shounak was residing in a beautiful grove in the nearby valley. All bowed down to him and asked for the solution.

Maharishi Shoak closed his eyes for a few minutes and then opened them and said,

"A spirit under the pressure of tremendous sins has possessed the body of the horse. If in any way you could burn away the influences of this spirit's bad karmas, he would be relieved of the heavy pressure of the intoxication of ignorance and pain in which he has been hovering for such a long time in this ghostly body. The horse would be delivered from the spirit and then he would be all right."

To suffer and enjoy the influences of bad and good karmas, the soul requires hundreds and thousands of lifetimes. All these years one is bound to live in the intoxication that he has created by the influences of his thought, speech, and actions. How could they make him free so quickly. It was a puzzling problem, Everybody knew it must be a very powerful evil spirit.

The rishi became compassionate and asked, "Is Hanumanji with you?"

It was a small group of people who were engaged in the search for a Realized soul.

"Hanumanji, Shatrughna and Vibhishana are resting at the campsite," They said.

"He has composed the Ramayanam in beautiful poetry. If He could recite that before the horse for nine days, it would solve the problem for it is

highly potent material which can heal, convalesce and deliver anyone anywhere from incurable physical, mental and spiritual diseases, and the heavy pressure of evil deeds will simply disappear. Even the most dreadful sin will be burnt in no time." The rishi enlivened the heart of all by saying this.

All of them saluted the rishi and returned to their camp. A huge canopy was stretched. The mountain dwellers came from far and wide and made everything available and comfortable according to the request of Prince Shatrughna, and the whole army along with mountain dwellers and local villagers sat as audience.

Hanumanji accepted the seat of the Speaker and began to sing the songs of the beautiful pastimes of Sri Sita Ram. A current of heart-soothing, nectarine music began to flow all around and the atmosphere was thrilled and sanctified and divinized.

Hanumanji's music was so captivating that the deer, parrots, peacocks, even the rishis from their caves and hermitages, as well as denizens from other planets assuming different forms, appeared from the jungles and space. All sat silently absorbed in the transcendence of love of Sita Ram.

The horse began to whinny and everybody saw that he was moving and the whole army was excited with joy.

Everyone noticed an aura of faint effulgence of light come out from him and then the aura bowed down in gratitude to Hanumanji in front of the whole audience and then arose upward and disappeared in the sky. This program of deliverance of a troubled spirit by musical discourse of Ramayana unfolded an unknown part of Hanumanji's personality.

At the end of the program Hanumanji was adorned with the post of third master of the musical tradition by His important listeners who were Interplanetary figures.

Nowadays, His tradition of music is still popular. Whoever practices it instantaneously expands the conscious capacities of the heart, and waves of thrills spread all over the body and a dance erupts from the heart. The style of music is called "Hanumat Sangit", and even today there are many experts in this tradition. They are specially found in India and Nepal.

The horse walked further and further. He entered Kundalpur state. The King was a great devotee of Lord Ram. Everyday he used to worship Sri Ram, used to sing aloud His Holy Name and meditate on His pastimes. He always requested His saints to speak about Sri Ram's lila. The army was surprised when the horse was arrested in his state.

After inquiry, it was made known to them that it was not a mistake that the horse had been arrested. By the order of the King the horse had been captured and he was being held in His Majesty's custody. It was the ambition of the King along with his family and all the citizens to see Sri Ram. He thought that if Ram's younger brother were in trouble, he would invoke Sri Ram and Sri Ram would come immediately to help him. Very strange and independent are the ways of love.

Prince Shatrughna sent Angada as a messenger to the King. He was respectfully welcomed in the royal assembly and was offered an elevated seat.

Angada described the great influence of the Prince and the great power of Hanumanji in detail and requested with full respect, "Your Highness, please don't be so emotional. Decide precisely."

But the King laughed in his own ecstasy, his belly moving when his laughter paused, he said, "Angada, I know very well how insignificant is the power of man in comparison with that of the Almighty. I know that the Almighty has come in the form of Sri Ram. I know the Prince's great mastery over archery and Hanumanji's great power, but that does not mean I will abandon my way of life as a Ksatriya. I am a Ksatriya and I believe in His Grace only.

"Angada, go and tell all of them, they are not going to find their horse until Sri Ram Himself comes here and gives me His darshan. If Hanumanji is so powerful, He can take His horse back, but only after killing or defeating me. As long as I am alive or unconquered none of you can touch your horse." Thus the King replied and his face was glowing in full confidence and love of the Unseen Beloved.

When the message was delivered to Shatrughna's party, Hanumanji said, "Again we are defeated here."

Everybody looked at Him. Why did He say that?

"Obstinacy is centered around vanity and ego. And into different degrees every non-spiritual individual is obstinate. Circumstances keep breaking this ego in many different ways. Any competing greater power, greater intelligence, or even any big problems or great sufferings fall upon his head just to break it and this is how it is always being reduced by different circumstances. Nature cultures a personality, and it continues till Enlightenment."

"But when some loving devotee becomes stubborn, remaining totally dependent on the Grace of God, then all the powers of the world cannot move him, they all fall in failures. This King knows My great power, he

knows Sri Ram is Almighty, and he himself is totally surrendered to Him. Still he is standing against us in war. Now the case becomes serious," Hanumanji said.

Everybody became very serious and silent.

Shatrughna was absorbed in thought. A long time passed. The army was tired of constantly traveling and fighting.

Suddenly Hanumanji broke the silence.

"Let us fight. This war is going to prove to be the Supreme war, for which even a thousand generations of world peace can be sacrificed. This war is arising out of love. It will be all love and end in love; therefore we must engage in it intensively. Only in the intensity of action we become non-split, one Being. On the level of one Being, that which erupts is the Truth -- the Absolute. And it changes everything all over with the energy waves of an unknown love and the wholeness of life begins to flow at into deep oceanic love, with the entire universe.

"In such a love environment Sri Ram is always available. Sri Ram is directly perceptible. Peace and war have been detrimental and contradictory to each other throughout the Ages. But when the bottom of intensity of action is touched by the majority of the citizens of any country, then whatever step will be taken by the country, that itself will bring permanent peace. Even war can bestow no other than peace, benevolence and progress. Actually, it would be only an expression of love by two parties of stubborn natures, stubborn being free and independent in love.

"So," Hanumanji concluded, "If the King is stubborn, then we too must be stubborn, having unshakable Trust in Sri Ram, we must engage intensively in the battle and watch what is happening in each moment.

Whatever happens in the moment is the shrine. Find every moment of doing as eternity and take each step towards eternity as The Supreme Goal. To achieve this goal is victory.

"This kind of victory has been constantly showering peace, harmony and bliss enlightenment throughout the Ages of Intergalactic civilization, and in this war such a victory is possible to both of the parties. Let us not miss it. Let us fight intensively."

With rapt attention everybody heard and understood Sri Hanumanji and girded their loins for an exciting, horrifying war. Prince Champaka, the son of King Suratha, broke into pieces in the air from all the rocks which Hanumanji threw at him. He was a great expert in archery. His efficiency was very great. He could fight with many warriors and also protect himself from all sides. His quickness was really praiseworthy. Hanumanji grabbed him by his arms, took him up in the sky and dashed him down on the earth. He fell unconscious.

King Suratha came face-to-face with Hanumanji and challenged Him. "Hanumanji, You are a great Devotee of Sri Ram, and I am also one of His slaves, but today I will make You my prisoner and arrest You and take You to my city. Try to save Yourself."

"Dear King, if you will be successful My merciful Lord will enjoy greatly by releasing His own from the fetters. Try, if you can, to fulfill your words," Hanumanji replied.

And there arose a terrible fight. The sky was crowded with the planes of astral beings who had come to see the battle. The King was an expert archer but it was not easy to arrest Hanumanji. Hanumanji threw his chariot eighty feet away. The horses and charioteer died and the chariot

broke into pieces. The King knew the situation and quickly called in a second chariot which was fully equipped. Hanumanji broke that one also, and continuously He broke into pieces forty-nine chariots and eight bows. But the energy and enthusiasm of King Suratha was incredible. He released divine weapons, but they didn't work on Hanumanji. He released Brahmastra but Hanumanji remained safe.

Then Suratha released Sri Ramastra. There was no way to absorb it. It was invincible. Hanumanji fell down on the ground unconscious. Then whoever came in front of Him fell into a faint, pierced by the fierce arrows of King Suratha. Sugriva, Angada, Jambavanta and Shatrughna all lay in a faint, and Suratha put all of them into his chariot and returned to his city.

His heart was heavy with thrills and joy with the imagination of what Sri Ram is going to do next. Definitely He will come. He will see Him. The King was floating in the ebbs and tides of the ocean of love -- Seeing Ram.

When Hanumanji's eyes finally opened, He found Himself in the royal assembly of King Suratha. He looked to His left and right and saw all the leaders of His army arrested. Even Prince Shatrughna was standing there as a prisoner. Big crowd of citizens were thronging outside the gate to see them. In the eyes of all of them there was no limit or hatred, vice versa, there was reflected great reverence and homage.

As soon as Hanumanji's curious yellow eyes met the King's glance, the King said,

"Sri Hanumanji, could You please remember Your Deliverer now?"
The King's love-filled, soothing voice echoed in the assembly.

All the royal prisoners closed their eyes in remembrance of that lotus-eyed Sri Ram.

"My Lord, You are the eternal Liberator of Your devotees - Please, why have You forgotten us? Give us Your Holy darshan." All prayed to Sri Ram. Their hearts thrilled and their eyes became wet with tears of love.

Immediately there shone an effulgent light in the expanse of space above the assembly and there in the center of the light appeared a lotus-shaped airplane, Puspaka by name. In the middle of the royal assembly that little plane landed and Sri Ram descended, surrounded by Lakshmana, Bharata and various rishis.

"My Redeemer has come." The King jumped from his royal throne and ordered his ministers to free all of the prisoners, and then he fell down at the feet of Sri Ram, offering a garland of feelings and great thrills of his heart and his eyes were wet with the tears of love.

"You have rightly performed the duty of the Ksatriya (warriors) class. All the religions spring up from ME and human beings who rightly follow their own religion satisfy ME. I am very much pleased with you." Sri Ram raised the King by both of his long arms and embraced him to His chest.

A wave of festivity and music spread all over the capital. Sri Ram, Hanuman, and all the brothers, ministers, and rishis, were the guests of King Suratha. His love and ways of service were inconceivable. Such service had never been seen or heard before.

After a few days Sri Ram returned to Ayodhya in His plane.

The horse walked further. He was on his way back to Ayodhya, enjoying palatable herbs and green grass and looking at beautiful sights the horse walked eastward. The army was relaxed not expecting a big war any more.

It was on the bank of the Ganges near the ashram of Maharishi Valmiki that again the horse was caught. This time by a thirteen-year-old, very handsome boy with a cloud-complexion, large chest, long arms, and silky-soft, long brown hair scattering around his face. His name was Lava.

Lava tied the horse to a tall tree. The soldiers behind the horse thought that he must be the son of some rishi and that his bows and arrows must be toys and not for real use. They thought the boy doesn't know what he is doing arresting the royal horse, and that it was due to childish turbulence that this boy has caught the horse.

"I have arrested this horse. Keep away in your efforts to take him or you will be killed," The voice of the boy echoed.

The guards paid no attention to his warning and they laughed. But as soon as they reached to untie the horse, two arrows flew from the bow of the boy and their hands were cut off - pierced by sharp arrows. Now the soldiers became alert.

Shatrughna sent the commander, Kaljit by name, to the boy to explain to him the situation.

"I am not interested in your horse, but in the golden plate on his head, whatever you have written is challenging to the warriors of the whole world. As long as it is there you cannot get the horse back. Throw that plate away and take your horse, I have no objection," replied Lava.

His powerful way of talking surprised and slightly frightened everybody. War became unavoidable. Amazing, very soon one-third of the army was found fallen on the dust of the battlefield. Even Shatrughna was lying faint on his chariot.

Hanumanji came and as usual He wrapped His tail around the boy and flew towards the sky in order to dash him on the ground with greater velocity.

The boy, Lava, tried constantly to free himself and at last he cried, "Mother," and with this he gave a heavy blow with his fist. It was extremely painful to Hanumanji, extremely torturous, the bondage of His tail loosened and He fell down on the earth, Lava freed himself.

By then Lava's twin brother Kush had also come, and both of them began to shower arrows on the army.

The news was conveyed to Ayodhya and Lakshmana and Bharata came one after the other, and fighting a dangerous fight, they also were forced to lie down on their chariots. When nobody was left to fight with them, the twins began to play with Hanuman and Sugriva.

Lava released a tipless arrow and shot it at the lying-down Hanumanji, which took Him away high in the sky. When in course of falling He came closer to the earth another arrow was released by Kush which took Him again high in the sky. By this time Lava was playing the same game with Sugriva. When they were repeatedly being thrown up and then coming down again closer to the earth, Sugriva screamed terribly, and they both fell to the ground unconscious.

Then the twins stopped their play, tied Hanumanji and then, looking all around with their innocent eyes, found one of the best golden chariots. They placed Hanumanji on it, picked up some precious jewels from the crowns and necklaces of the Prince and other warriors, and drove the chariot towards the ashram.

"Mother, Mother," Lava shouted full of joy and enthusiasm for conveying the news to his Mother, "There is a King of Ayodhya, Ram by Name. He has started a horse fire ceremony . How big is His ego. Come and see what He has written on the crown of the horse ---"

"Have you arrested the horse?" The Mother's trembling question echoed. "Not only arrested, but we have defeated the whole army of Ayodhya. All the three brothers are lying faint on the battlefield and we have brought the most powerful golden-haired Vanara to show You," Lava went on describing excitedly.

"Alas, you naughty boy, you have committed a great offense. It is the horse of your own Great Father!" Mother Sita screamed and hurriedly rushed out and began to release Hanumanji.

The twins were shocked and in great wonder, they became quiet and sad, and seriously began to help their Mother untie Hanumanji.

Through the merciful glances of Mother Sita, Hanumanji opened His eyes and understood everything and fell down at Her feet and began to weep in love, remembering all the past.

"Hanuman, please excuse these little children. They are very naughty. I am worried about the lives of Your warriors," Mother Sita said in tears.

"Do not worry Mother, they all can be resurrected within moments. If Indra of the planet Svah does not shower nectar, we, your three sons, are prepared to chastise him," Hanumanji said.

"Does Indra have nectar, Mother?" asked Lava, fixing his arrow on his bow.

"No, no fighting anymore. Put your weapons away," Mother scolded, and they immediately threw their weapons away and began to look at their Mother's face for the next order.

"Go and inform Maharishi Valmiki, He will direct us what to do."

Maharishi Valmiki the Prachetas and Mother Sita came to the battlefield and She glanced at the warriors with Her merciful eyes - All of them regained their life and were highly enraptured to see their Empress in the form of a yogini. They all bowed down to Her.

A limitless joy arose in the hearts of Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna when they realized who the twins, Lava and Kush were Sri Sita Ram's own children, and they embraced them and smelled their heads with deep feeling.

They requested all of them to go to Ayodhya with them, but Valmiki rishi refused the request and consoled them saying that after some time he himself would come with Sita, Lava and Kush to Ayodhya.

The horse successfully returned to Ayodhya and the horse fire sacrifice began and ended with a great celebration. The Emperor fed the whole city and innumerable guests with delicious meals and donated all the wealth He had received as tributes from the innumerable kings of the world. It was distributed among the philosopher class and the general public according to the rule of the ceremony. Thus Sri Ram became the Emperor of everyone's heart.

CHAPTER 47

EMPRESS SITA'S RETURN FROM EXILE

When Ayodhya's army departed, Valmiki, Sita, Lava, Kush and the rishis who came to see, walked towards the ashram. The twins were greatly puzzled and they asked their Mother,

"If Sri Ram is our Father, why do we live in the jungle?"

"My children," Maharishi Valmiki knew that this question would hurt the heart of Sita, so he himself replied.

"Please don't disturb your Mother. Come, I will tell you all about that."

So the twins followed the rishi to his cottage. There he taught them his beautiful epic Ramayanam. He also taught them how to sing it. Very soon they learned it and began to sing it melodiously. A few other disciples also joined them. Thus they loved to sing this epic so much that they kept singing and whispering it for days.

Maharishi Valmiki asked them to go to Ayodhya and sing songs from the Ramayanam about Sri Ram's exile, in the streets, in the public squares, and in all the social places. They did this and everywhere huge gatherings of people heard it with rapt attention and tears dripping from their eyes.

The whole city began to talk about it and wondered who the twins were who had composed such charming songs of incidents they had seen many years ago. "Who has depicted it so picturesquely?" Everybody wondered.

"One who can describe the epic so accurately, so minutely, so clearly and truthfully, definitely knows the last part of it which also happened in the forests and in Lanka." So they requested the twins sing the last part of the Ramayanam.

A huge canopy was stretched in the middle of the city and millions of people assembled there. Guests from different countries and planets sat in deep silence. Lava and Kush sang and sang and the whole audience stood blissed, thrilled and excited. After hearing of the bravery of Ram and the supremacy, chastity and deep love of their Empress and Emperor, they all began to repent, because it was only because of them that the Empress Sita was exiled.

A great revolution began. The leaders of the public requested the Royal Assembly to kindly listen to the Ramayanam. The Emperor Himself set a particular day. He already knew through His spies what was happening in the city so He sent a message to Maharishi Valmiki to visit the Royal Assembly with Sita.

In the morning, as soon as the Emperor entered the Royal assembly it was flooded with millions of people from all over the world. It was open to all. The large audience sat in deep quietness, and Lava and Kush accepted their seats next to the Emperor and their melodious sound echoed as they sang and sang and sang.

The members of the assembly, guests from other planets, and citizens, heard the unknown part of the Ramayanam - About how Sita, Ram, and Lakshmana, had lived in the jungle; how the life of Sita was in the garden of Lanka; what a great sacrifice she did to maintain her love and chastity to Ram; how they came to Ayodhya after Sita's ordeal; and after a short time of joy how she was exiled. And they wept and wept and cried to the Emperor that they wanted to see their Empress.

The similarity of Lava and Kush in complexion, face and physical structure to the Emperor was astounding. The assembled audience became

enlivened and when the singing was completed and they lifted their eyes, they saw the great sage Maharishi Prachetas the Valmiki entering the hall and Empress Sita as a goddess of beauty, as an effulgence of light, clad in saffron-colored clothes, walking behind him.

The Emperor and the whole assembly stood up from their seats and welcomed them with the warmth of their greatest adoration.

Maharishi Valmiki climbed up on the stage and the Emperor bowed down to him in full reverence. All the rishis greeted him. The Emperor offered them seats but Maharishi Valmiki stood on the stage facing the large audience, raised his right hand and proclaimed :

"Oh citizens of Ayodhya, oh ministers, representatives of all countries and different planets -- I the Prachetas who meditated sitting in one posture unmoved, for such a long period of time that worms made their abodes under my skin, and my name became Valmiki, I swear, by all my spiritual powers and strictly disciplined life, that Empress Sita in her thought, speech, and action, is absolutely spotless and bright in character. She is as serene as the shine of the moon. She is so pure as the Holy water of the Ganges, as She is innocent as the smile of a lily."

"Hail Maharishi Prachetas the Valmiki," the audience shouted with great enthusiasm and joy, and then Sita stood up and innumerable eyes were lifted unto her.

She walked on the stage and said, "As sweetness belongs to love, as peace belongs to inner bliss, as freedom belongs to the knowledge of the Self, so also I belong to Sri Ram. My mind has never moved away from Him for a single moment, even in a dream or deep sleep. This is the truth. If Nature accepts this as true, then let Mother Earth take me in her lap."

At once the front of the stage broke into two parts and before millions of eyes a shining throne sprang up and a beautiful damsel with large eyes and a shining crown on her head walked out on the stage and spoke in an astounding voice which echoed all around -

"The Emperor of Ayodhya, the rishis, the ministers and citizens, all of you listen to my words. As impurities cannot exist in fire, as darkness cannot exist in the light, as restlessness cannot exist in samadhi (satori), so also impurity of life cannot touch my daughter, Sita. For proof of this, as she has desired, I am taking her on my lap."

Mother Earth took Sita on her lap - taking her by the hand, she sat on the throne with Sita and in the midst of showering flowers and the blessings of the rishis and the wonder-filled eyes of all the citizens, they disappeared within the earth, and the two parts of the earth joined together.

Then there arose a great noise of lamentation. All the citizens became aware that they have lost their Empress forever and they will now never find her, never see her, and their weeping, crying, and sighing, took them beyond subject and object and they slipped into eternity. Their vision became transcendental and they were able to see who Sri Sita Ram really were.

Even the Emperor Sri Ram's face became very sad and tears dropped from His eyes. His brothers, his sons Lava and Kush, and Hanumanji, all fell down unconscious. All the rishis wanting to escape this tragedy closed their eyes and entered into the mystic trance known as samadhi.

Very soon Sri Ram prepared to depart from the earth to meet His Beloved Sita and He divided the empire among Lava and Kush, and the other six sons of Lakshmana, Bharata, and Shatrughna.

Then Sri Hanumanji saw His last sight of that glorious Emperor as He departed from the earth.

Smilingly He told Hanumanji, full of love, "Stay on the planet Earth as the guardian of all those who chant My Holy Name. Wherever You choose to remain, all the world will follow You. Your philosophy, Your music cult will be widely accepted in course of time." And He embraced His most Beloved Servant and that embrace has never ended.

Such is the glory of Sri Hanumanji that by only hearing and thinking about Him, the heart and mind become sanctified, serene and blissful.

CHAPTER 48

THREE EGOS AND HANUMANJI

yàvadràma kathà vè charisyati mahitàle

tàvacchharère vatsyantù prànà mama na samsayah

--Valmiki Ramayan

Hanumanji promised Sri Ram:

"My Lord, as long as Your mind-sanctifying, heart-enlivening, life-culturing pastimes are sung on the earth, so long will My body also survive, and Your glorification alone will be the basis of My survival, My Master."

Hanumanji maintained His body according to that promise. But then when the Silver Age of one million two hundred ninety-six thousand solar years had passed and the Copper Age started for eight hundred sixty-four

thousand solar years and human values began to deteriorate, Hanumanji left the plains and entered the Himalayan wilderness.

Many astral yogis say that our world, which modern man believes to be the whole world, is part of a bigger earth and there exists more beautiful countries and mysterious dimensions of the earth beyond the North Pole. One part of that subtle world is called Kimpurush varsa. It is the center of Sri Hanumanji's permanent residence and worldwide activities. He has been closely related to the three main esoteric astral ashrams of the Himalayas - Siddhashram, Jnanaashram and Yogashram. Almost all the astral yogis are aware of His large scale benevolent activities for mankind, which have been unfailingly going on for one million years.

Although His main center is Kimpurusa Varsa, beyond the North Pole, the second center is Kajalivana in the Himalayas, He is free to materialize Himself anywhere at any moment and play the role of a valuable protector for those who are surrendered to the Holy Name of Shri Sita Ram.

At the end of the Copper Age, Hanumanji appeared on the screen again when Lord Krishna was handling the destiny of the earth five thousand years ago, residing in the city of Dvarka at the shore of the Arabian Ocean. Lord Krishna was a great philosopher, as well as a prophet of love. Krishna wanted everyone to realize the Absolute Truth by making others merge in the transcendental love of His Holy Name, Form, Abode, and Pastimes -- which are all Divine, so he loved his gopis and gopas, his friend Arjuna, Uddhava and innumerable other fortunate souls.

But at times, the tragedy behind his love was that, a few selected ones whom he loved, instead of transcending body consciousness and ego and universalizing themselves in Lovetrance, got puffed up, their ego was fed.

You already know Krishna was not merely an ignorant blind lover. He was a deep and practical prophet. He never wanted to see any of his beloved friends as egoists.

He had to seek every available situation to break the egos of his beloved ones, and they would find their egos broken and melt into a liquidity, into the watery Personality of true love or Lovetrance state of consciousness. The Mahabharatam records all those incidents of how Krishna used to kill many birds with a single stone. He did this with Arjuna, to whom he delivered the knowledge of the Bhagavadgita. He did this with Uddhava. He did not even spare his own wife.

Now there were three candidates whom Krishna loved and who became all puffed up with pride. It is quite natural that, if a Krishna-like personality loved someone it would be always intensive, and those whom he loves would feel very fortunate and feel that he was the only one and the greatest one. So simultaneously with the love, a barrier was being created which was against Krishna's message. So by his own mercy, by his own compassion, Krishna had to do something like an operation. And it used to be a severe operation at times. And in such moments their love was tested.

Satyabhama, one of Krishna's main eight wives, was extremely beautiful and Krishna loved her tremendously, innocently, but with great intensity. One day in deep love moments, she asked Krishna Sita, on whose separation Sri Ram had wept and tormented over so much in the jungles, was more beautiful than herself? Krishna knew that she had gotten puffed up. His invincible carrier Garuda, who was able to fly with the speed of light, and Sudarshan Chakra, who was able to burn even the fire into ashes, these friends also had become swollen with pride and ego.

One day Hanumanji was enjoying Himself at the valley of Mandarachala, east of Mount Meru. He felt that Lord Krishna is remembering Him. He paid attention and He heard an echoing voice of Krishna.

"Hanumanji, many years have passed and You have not tasted the fruits of my royal garden frequently. When will the fruits be successful by being eaten by You? Come and see me quickly." A clear voice erupted in the heart of Hanumanji.

Krishna's wish was the most urgent work for Hanumanji, so He flew faster than the speed of light. He crossed about two hundred forty-nine thousand miles within a few minutes and entered the fort of Dvarka. He assumed a huge monkey form and entered the royal garden and began to eat delicious fruits. By jumping from one tree to another He began to break the branches, and by His shaking the trees, all the fruits fell to the earth.

The guards rushed in and saw Hanumanji. Such an enormous form, they were afraid to face Him, so they ran to Krishna and conveyed the message.

Krishna was very happy to hear the news and said to Garuda, who was standing nearby,

"A Monkey has come from somewhere. He is eating the fruits, breaking the branches and destroying our royal garden. Go instantly and bring Him here to me!" And Krishna smiled.

The smiles of great philosophers and great saints include great mysteries within them. Insensitive people miss the mystery behind the smile of Krishna; thus they miss a great joy of life. To become sensitive to the

serene smiles and mannerless laughters of a spiritual master is a great accomplishment in the spiritual field.

Garuda was a great personality. He had conquered the planet Svah single-handed. He was a great power and also great in knowledge, but still he missed it:

hàso janonmàdakari cha màyàm

Krishna's laughter is the source of great alluring energy. It infatuates one. Garuda flew into the royal garden and asked Sri Hanumanji rudely,

"Why are You destroying the garden?"

"I am just eating fruits. Please don't disturb Me!" Hanumanji replied and kept eating as if Garuda was a nobody.

"Let us go. Lord Krishna wishes to speak with You," Garuda ordered.

"What have I got to do with your Lord Krishna? I am not going." That omniscient spirit, Krishna, was inspiring Hanumanji to break down the ego of Garuda.

"Are you coming or not? Don't You know my name is Garuda? "

"I have seen many birds," Hanumanji said, and kept on eating fruit.

Several times He saved Himself from the violent attacks of Garuda.

When it was too much He looked at Garuda, caught him with His mighty tail, and wrapped him all around in it. When He tightened the bondage --

Garuda screamed and said, "Please excuse me!"

Hanumanji freed Garuda and then Garuda adoringly requested again,

"Sir, I am sorry for my rude behavior. I came to invite You. Lord Krishna Himself wishes to see You. Please accompany me."

"Sri Ram is My Master. What have I to do with Krishna?" Hanumanji still refused to go,

"Sri Ram Himself has come in this Age in the form of Krishna. Do You know this?" Garuda asked.

"I know it. Still My heart is sacrificed to the lotus-eyed, long-armed, Olympian form of Sri Ram. I believe the whole universe is the manifestation of Himself. All forms are His forms, but I love His original Sri Ram form. I am ananya. I have nothing to do with His other forms," Hanumanji peacefully replied.

"You will have to go," Garuda roared.

"You being a bird, why don't you understand that monkeys, birds and chipmunks have a natural right to these fruits. Please do not disturb Me. Let Me eat fruits," and He threw some fruits before Garuda as He began His eating job again.

Garuda then played a trick by catching Him from the back, hoping to arrest Him, but Hanumanji swiftly caught him by the wings and threw him far away in the high waves of the ocean.

"Hooray! How do you do, Garuda? I sent you to the royal garden to fetch the Vanara and I find you had been to take a sea bath. What is the matter?" Lord Krishna said and laughed whole heartedly, for he had developed the habit of enjoying the troubles of puffed-up people. Garuda was ashamed. He guessed that Krishna knew everything. His great ego was broken. He said in a trembling tone,

"My Lord, the Vanara is extremely powerful. I am unable to bring Him forcibly."

"Well, now go and say that Sri Ram wants to see You," Lord Krishna ordered Garuda.

He called to Sudarshan Chakra, "Just stand at the gate of my palace and don't allow any new visitor to come in."

Then he called the Queen Satyabhama and said,

"I am adorning myself as Lord Ram. You must adorn yourself as Empress Sita and come quickly. Sit beside me on the throne because Hanumanji is coming. Please make up carefully." After completing His breakfast, Hanumanji was just resting under a tree when Garuda came again, saluted Him, and very humbly requested, in the palace of Dvarka, Lord Ram is waiting for You. Won't You please come? "

"I am coming. You just start," said Hanumanji.

"It would be quicker if You could sit on my back. Otherwise, You will be very late." Naturally Garuda wished to show his fast speed to Hanumanji.

"I don't accept any vehicle. I shall try to reach him soon," Hanumanji was very conscious of His way of service. Being a humble Servant, how could He sit on the seat of His own Lord?

Garuda felt bitter and rejected, but he quietly returned. He was already frightened of this strange fellow. He flew away.

Hanumanji arrived at the gate and Sudarshan chakra stopped him.

"It is the matter I am telling you about. My Lord has called Me and you are preventing Me from going in?"

"No, the Lord is not available now. You have to wait." As in most situations, a big man's secretary talks in the same tone the ego's tone is always the same. Vanity's echo is qualitatively always the same.

Hanumanji caught him by His mighty hands and kept him in His own armpit, and when He pressed him a little Sudarshan Chakra cried, "I am dead. Please no more. Please spare me for God's sake!"

Hanumanji loosened His armpit and laughed,
"With this little power you were so puffed-up?" and He walked straight away in and fell down at the feet of Lord Krishna, who was sitting there in the form of Lord Ram.

Lord Krishna laughed and blessed Him and they both talked for sometime.

Then Hanumanji turned His eyes to the left and asked the Lord,
"Where is Mother Sita? Who is this maid servant whom the Lord has given so much credit by allowing her to sit at His left?"

As Satyabhama heard this remark, her vanity about her beauty was totally smashed. She got up from her seat and ran down inside the gynaeceum and said sobbingly to Rukmini,

"Your Hanuman has come and He calls me a maidservant. Go and see Him!"

"Where is He?" Rukmini rushed out and there she saw Hanumanji. Hanumanji fell flat at her feet and she was petting His head with her palms.

"Hanuman, did anyone stop You at the door?" Lord Krishna asked smilingly.

"Oh, yes, My Lord, this tiny creature would not allow me inside, even knowing that I had been called by you," Hanumanji said as He removed Sudarshan Chakra from His armpit.

Ashamed, Sudarshan Chakra was unable to raise his head. He now totally surrendered to the will of the Lord.

"And I sent Garuda to help You in arriving here?" Krishna asked.

"Its a waste of time to choose such a low-speed weak bird for a vehicle in My presence. My Lord, I am already at your disposal," Hanumanji replied.

At the same time Garuda came in and he saw that Hanumanji had already arrived. As he heard the last sentence uttered by Hanumanji, he totally melted. His ego was totally smashed and a unique humility flowed from his Being. And that is what Krishna wanted.

All philosophers, saints and yogis want only liquid egos. This is the point from which the joy and festivity of life begins.

CHAPTER 49

ENCOUNTER WITH ARJUNA

In those days, Arjuna was looking for a suitable place in the Himalayas for his long meditation, which was not for liberation, not for peace, but was to attain the Pashupat weapon. It was so powerful that all alone it was enough to destroy not only the planet Earth, but the entire solar system. He was preparing for the great war of Mahabharata.

On his way to Pashupatinatha he saw a handsome ascetic on the bank of the river Who was constantly chanting the Holy Name of Sri Ram. Arjuna was impressed by His personality and inquired politely about Him. When he learned that He was the famous, the great Hanumanji, naturally he became eager to know and learn many things.

"Revered Sir, I have heard the Ramayanam from great rishis many times and one thing that I can't understand is why Sri Ram went to so much trouble to construct a bridge. I believe He was the great archer. Why couldn't He make a bridge of arrows?"

"To make an eight hundred mile bridge of arrows was not impossible," Hanumanji said. He discovered a touch of vanity in Arjuna's statement but He politely replied, "But so many Vanaras like Me were to go across the ocean, and it is a fact that an arrow bridge cannot hold much weight."

"I guess not," Arjuna said.

"Forget the ocean," Hanumanji said. "Here is a mountain lake. The arrow bridge constructed even on this lake cannot bear My weight."

"What is the value of such an arrow bridge if it breaks down under the tossing and jumping of the Vanaras?" Arjuna challenged, and began a constant release of arrows and he really constructed a wonderfully strong bridge of arrows within a few minutes.

He turned to Hanumanji and said,

"You can test it by jumping, tossing and playing on it as much as You wish."

"If it breaks down simply by My stepping upon it, then what?" Hanumanji asked.

"It cannot be," Arjuna replied in a confident tone.

"Suppose it does happen? Are you taking full responsibility for My falling down in that lake and getting wet and hurt?" asked Hanumanji.

"If the bridge breaks down under Your weight, I will die entering the burning fire right now," Arjuna vowed.

"If it successfully bears My burden and remains safe, I will sit near the flag of your chariot and help you in the battlefield for your whole life, " Hanumanji vowed.

As soon as Hanumanji put His right foot on the bridge, a part of it broke with a great deafening noise and with the breaking of one single part the whole bridge collapsed in the middle of the lake.

Arjuna became very sad and without saying a single word, he began to pick up fuel to die.

Hanumanji became despondent. He just wanted his ego to be broken down, not his death. But now it was not possible to stop him.

All of a sudden a young swami appeared from the bushes and stood in front of Arjuna.

"Sir, who are you? Why are you picking up the fuels?" He asked. Arjuna described everything to him.

"That's nice. You are a good gentlemen. It is best to always fulfill one's words, but may I ask you one thing? Who was the witness to this incident? What is the proof that this gentleman (pointing towards Hanumanji) has not played any tricks? Without a witness, any discussion cannot be concluded into a decision."

In an authoritative tone he ordered Arjuna to reconstruct the bridge.

"Now if it breaks by His climbing and jumping upon it, then I will tell you who wins the bet." The strange swami looked at Hanumanji.

"I have no objection," said Hanumanji.

Arjuna took up his bow and began a constant shower of arrows and constructed a strong bridge within a few minutes.

Arjuna could have made the bridge stronger, but he did not do so because he had no enthusiasm since he had seen the fallen condition of the last one. He had no hope. But still the bridge was very strong. As far as any fast train or bus is concerned it was durable enough to last for hundreds of years.

But for Hanumanji, it was like a toy. Just standing on the earth, He put His right foot on the bridge and pressed it with His toe. The bridge remained unbroken. He was surprised and put His full weight on His foot which was on the bridge. Even then the bridge remained safe. Then He pressed it with His knees and hands and nothing happened.

He was about to jump up and down, but before He did, He peeped underneath the bridge. "Oh, Lord Krishna!"

Lord Krishna Himself was supporting it and saving it from collapsing as the previous one had. "My Lord," Hanumanji cried. The swami turned into Lord Krishna and embraced Hanumanji.

"Arjuna, your friend has helped you and I am defeated!" Hanumanji embraced Arjuna and said,

"Blessed are you, Arjuna, whose life Krishna values so highly. I promise I will always be present by your flag. Nobody will be able to cut it down, and when your chariot enters the war I will always be at your disposal."

Thirteen years later, when the Pandavas boarded their chariots, Arjuna painted on his flag a picture of Hanumanji, and His constant presence was always experienced.

In the battlefield of Kurukshetra, in the Inter-continental war, when Lord Krishna became the charioteer of Arjuna, he suggested to Hanumanji,

"Please remember that this is the Copper Age and not the Silver Age. It is not the time for You to show Your great power. The capacities and strength of people have reduced with the human values. Even if You just roar in Your natural loudness as You did in Ram-Ravana war, all the soldiers will fall flat on the earth and their hearts will be torn asunder. Therefore, just keep sitting quietly."

There are many incidents in the Mahabharatam where Arjuna is being helped by the silent presence of Hanumanji.

CHAPTER 50

SRI HANUMANJI AND THE EGO OF BHIMSEN

Man suffers only because of the ego, and into a degree ego is reduced, into the same extent you feel relaxation, you become very sensitive, you become friendly to your surroundings. And when it is totally disappeared, you become one with the whole existence.

Ego is the last and the greatest barrier in the spiritual path. The moment you transcend the last and finest point of your ego, the last extremity of your "I" ness, God becomes realized. Nothing can stop you from universalizing into Absolute Bramhan.

Whatever method of meditation the guru teaches you, it does only one thing. It refines your ego - refines, refines. It becomes subtle - more subtle. And in each state of refinement, your way of looking at the world changes.

Your dealing with your friend changes. Your degree of enjoying the joys of the world increases into deeper peacefulness.

And when through the spiritual practice, the ego is totally evaporated - your enjoyment becomes unlimited, unbounded, perpetual. Different circumstances of the world cannot disturb your enjoyment at all. In that increasing degree of enjoyment you become liberated. That is why even the nature, even the great masters make a great effort to finish the ego of some chosen one.

Chosen one's are those who have taken shelter at the patronage of the wisdom of one's own spiritual master. As much as the surrender is deep - the ego evaporates. If there is some delicate or difficult point in the ego, the master breaks it. But it is done only to some surrendered one. Not to others. Others can feel offended - they may lose faith. So only chosen one's are operated on. This is mercy of the master. This is great mercy of God. If the master does not do it, an astral yogi does it. Otherwise, God Himself does it.

Bhimsen was one among such chosen ones. And Hanumanji operates on it in a very, very, interesting way.

After receiving benediction from Lord Pashupatinatha in Nepal, Arjuna went to the planet Svah to receive special education in archery and esoteric weapons. The four brothers, Yudhisthira, Bhima, Nakul, Sahadeo, and the wife Draupadi, were waiting for him, residing in Badrinath on the Nara Narayana hill of the Himalayas.

One day, the wind blew in and an extremely aromatic and beautiful, blue lotus flower from the astral land of the Himalayas fell upon the flow of the river Alakananda. It flowed on, and when it reached near Pandava's ashram, Draupadi picked it up, highly surprised and captivated by its beauty

and perfume. She showed it to her husbands and wanted some more flowers like that.

Bhimsen walked out, placing his dreadful mace on his shoulder, in search of the flower. He walked up and up the steep slopes and found a mysterious, deep silence. Since he was possessing ten thousand elephant power, being filled with ego, he was roaring again and again, echoing all around. It was so loud that his voice was echoing all over the hills and dales, valleys and jungles. It scared all animals and the elephants, boars and tigers started running towards the denser forest.

The whole of the Himalayas were like a playing field for Hanumanji. At this time He was sitting on one of the hills nearby, absorbed in the remembrance of that lotus-eyed, long-armed, large-chested, Olympian King Sri Ram. His heart was full of joy, so much so that He was unable to contain it, and His heart was overflowing in the form of tears. He heard the roar and knew why the beasts were escaping. Although Hanumanji had not seen Bhimsen before, yet He knew that he was His own brother, born by the mercy of the wind god at the end of the Copper Age.

He felt compassion for this innocent brother who was ignorantly moving towards danger land of the Himalayas. Bhimsen did not know it. Because of his great enthusiasm and loud roars, huge chunks of ice would break off and fall down upon him. Hanumanji also became conscious that Bhimsen should not encounter the Yakshas (a special superhuman race of Himalayan dwellers) who could either dangerously harm or insult him.

So Hanumanji, out of compassion, laid down on the narrow little path leading to the mysterious part of the Himalayas.

Bhimsen arrived there and saw that to the left and right there were steep mountains, and between them there was a narrow little path which was blocked by an old golden-haired monkey looking being. There was no way to proceed except by jumping over that insignificant looking, sleeping Vanara. So in order to awaken Him, Bhimsen roared and roared.

Hanumanji looked at him and said,

"I am old and sick, sleeping peacefully in silence. You are a human being and you appear to be intelligent and literate. Why did you awaken Me? Human beings cannot proceed any further. You may be prosecuted or misled by the astral protectors of this land. Where do you want to go?"

"Who is asking You the way?" Bhimsen replied in an unhumble, crude tone. "You just get out of the way and let me go."

"Look, here are many sweet fruits and roots. Eat them and rest and you will be more powerful. Then you can go back from here. Who are you to come to this inaccessible part of the world?" Hanumanji asked.

"I am Bhimsen, son of King Pandu, born in the dynasty of the Moon," And getting tired of talking to this useless being he said, "I don't need Your suggestions. You know now who I am. Show me the way."

"I have already told you that this path is not open to human beings. You may run into danger," Hanumanji said.

"Don't bother for me. Just move over a little," Bhimsen persisted.

"I am feeling too sleepy, I cannot get up. You jump over My body and make your way," said Hanumanji.

"By jumping, Sri Hanumanji crossed the ocean. I can also jump over this mountain, but God resides in every living being, so it is against the law of reverence of life to cross over any alive soul," Bhimsen replied.

"Who is Hanuman?" Hanumanji innocently asked.

"The Messenger of Sri Ram, the Son of the wind god. In the search for Sita He leapt eight hundred miles across the ocean. He is my elder Brother. Just move Your tail, even that will be sufficient for me to pass," Bhimsen replied.

"I am unable to move any of the limbs. If you are in a hurry, kindly move My tail by yourself and make your own passage," Hanumanji said.

Bhimsen bent low and with the fingers of his left hand tried to throw away His tail, but the tail did not move. He used his right hand carefully, but the Monkey's tail did not move. He put his mace down on the ground and tried again within both hands. He applied his whole power, got hot and perspired, and began taking long, deep breaths, but the tail was so mysterious. It didn't move one tiny bit.

Then he stood with folded hands and said politely, "Please excuse me for my imprudence. If You feel me worthy, please introduce Yourself."

"I am Hanumanji," He replied.

"In this wilderness?" Bhimsen was surprised.

"It is not really a wilderness. So many astral musicians, dancers, and nature lovers from other planets have made their residence all around here. They satisfy My heart through singing the pastimes of Lord SitaRam. By the blessings of Mother Sita, all the enjoyments I require are arranged and presented by devas, gandharvas, and apsaras, and since they cannot move freely among human beings, I also stay in this area. The Sougandhika lotus you want is quite near here. Its lake is there on the outside of the hill. Stop marching upward. This area is occupied by the beings of other planets," Hanumanji said politely.

"It is my great, good fortune that I saw the lotus feet of my revered elder Brother," said Bhimsen, and he fell down at the feet of Hanumanji.

In answer to his request, Hanumanji described the various mystic incidents of the Ramayana. When Bhimsen heard about the huge, gigantic form of Hanumanji by which He leaped the ocean, he wanted to see it, after all Bhimsen was a power-lover.

"Don't wish to see it. In this Copper Age, neither you nor anyone else, even a human being, cannot bear the great luster and effulgence of that superhuman form. Man's capacities and higher faculties have been considerably reduced. The degree of higher values of human life has gone down," Hanumanji explained. "Why did it happen?" Bhimsen asked.

"Because Dharma is the root cause, the very basis of memory, physical strength, endurance, and capacity to face the bliss. Dharma also influences the size of human beings. From the Golden Age until now, dharma has considerably reduced. And this has shortened the size of man. Now you can not even face My enormous size I exhibited at that time. I am afraid you may lose consciousness," Hanumanji explained lovingly.

"I cannot move without seeing You in that powerful form." Bhimsen had a very stubborn and innocent personality, he clasped Hanumanji's feet and insisted.

"Well then, look," Hanumanji said, and He willed, and within a moment, a blinding, dazzling light flashed throughout the space, and Bhimsen saw that he was like a tiny little creature in comparison with the enormous size of Hanumanji, Who was larger than even the Gandhamadan hill, at the foot of which they were standing. It was shockingly wonderful and scary. The manifestation of extreme power, extreme velocity, and

limitless strength is always frightening. In its natural state it looks dangerous.

The dazzling, sharp, piercing light emanating from Hanumanji's face was so powerful and so scorching to the eyes that Bhimsen ultimately closed his eyes. And His loud roar was so deafening that Bhimsen closed his ears. He perspired and began to tremble. It was almost the same situation as when Krishna showed his cosmic-form to Arjuna in the beginning of the Mahabharatam war.

"That's all, that's all my Lord. Please return to Your previous calm and quiet form. I am unable to see Your horrifying eyes, terrible jaws and scorching luster," Bhimsen screamed.

Hanumanji appeared in His small, peaceful humanly form and began to smile, but Bhimsen was still trembling with folded hands.

"Oh, I wonder why Lord Ram fought with Ravana by Himself when He had such an enormously powerful minister as Your Good Self at His disposal?" Bhimsen asked Hanumanji.

Hanumanji is a practical person and did not give him a theoretical reply.

"That will be talked about later. First I want to present you some gift because you are My younger brother. I don't want My visit to be fruitless for you. I think due to the wickedness of Duryodhana, your kingdom has been robbed off, and your wife was insulted. What do you think?"

"If you allow Me - I am going to kill Duryodhana with all his brothers, or arrest him and throw him at your feet? Or I can dash a whole mountain down upon his capital, Hastinapur, and destroy it for you. Any one of these you may choose. I want to do something special for you. I love you. You are

My brother," Hanumanji said, and began to observe the changing lines of Bhimsen's face.

**Bhimsen became serious and kept quiet for a moment. Then he said,
"Revered Brother, be graceful to me. That is all I want from You. As far as enemies are concerned, by Your grace we shall destroy them."**

**"My dear brother," Hanumanji smiled,
"In the same way My Lord Ram wanted to destroy the Rakshasas Himself, and since I and many others were His servants, we wanted to glorify Him, we wanted to spread His fame, not ours. I could have killed Ravana, it is true, but it would not have been so adorning to the Lord's pastimes as it has become when our Lord Himself has done it." Hanumanji explained the situation and Bhimsen was very happy.**

"Look, there shines the footpath to Sougandhika lotus lake," Hanumanji pointed out the way with His finger.

While Bhimsen was looking in that direction, Hanumanji disappeared.

Bhimsen was at a loss. He looked all around, searched everywhere, but could not find his elder Brother Who was so generous and compassionate to him.

Remembering the wonderful meeting with Hanumanji, Bhimsen walked towards the lake.

"Whenever you are in danger, remember Me -- I'll help you."

Great yogis convey this message at times through outer ether or inner ether, the voice within. Hanumanji was also telling this to Bhimsen, who was in deep remembrance of Him.

CHAPTER 51

FACING SATURN

One evening, Hanumanji was sitting on the bank of the Ganges in Kajalivan contemplating the pastimes of Sri Sita Ram. There appeared a phantom's body. It stood in space and spoke in a very harsh tone.

"Hanumanji, I want to warn You that the moment Lord Krishna departed from the planet Earth, the Iron Age started, and its influences are taking over everything everywhere, causing the deterioration of the higher values and faculties of life. Therefore, Your size and power, as well as everybody else's will be reduced and my power, my influences will rise high.

"Since You played the role of my savior in the Silver Age in Lanka, I adore You. That is why I came to You personally, to inform You that for seven and a half years You will be under my severe influences," Saturn said.

The knowledge of Saturn was very poor regarding mystical laws in the field of Lovetrance (Samadhi.) In the heart of those in whom glimpses of the effulgence of Sri Sita Ram flash, the influence of time, place, and the situations of the planets have no entrance. They are banned and paralyzed. The laws of destiny and fate do not work. Sri Sita Ram controls them, directs them, and arranges for their yoga and kshema.

"Will you please look for a place somewhere else? The influences of the planets work on mortal beings only. Leave Me alone. Nothing can possess, obsess, or occupy My body except the intoxication of Sri Sita Ram's love," Hanumanji replied.

"I am not free from certain laws of creation," Saturn said. "You are staying on Earth. This is enough to have You under my control. I can influence You. I can influence everybody who possesses a body for seven and a half years in every twenty-two and a half years. I am possessing over Your body right now and You cannot undo it," he replied.

"If you have decided to come, then please come, but it would be more comfortable for you to spare Me, distinguishing Me as old and different from human beings. I belong to the semi-divine race," Hanumanji said.

"In the Iron Age, none of the semi-divine, astral and celestial races should stay on Earth permanently. They must make their residence in the subtle worlds. Whoever tries to remain on Earth will be in my grip. He will have to suffer either physically or psychologically, and my favorite place is old men's bodies because they are closer to death," Saturn said.

"All right, accepted. May I know from your Holiness which part of My body you would prefer first?" Hanumanji asked.

"The head," he replied full of vanity.

"It is regular procedure when I possess someone, for the first two and a half years I work on his head. I frustrate it, make him misunderstand things, misconceive things. After his life is uprooted, and has become a mess, for two and a half years I work on his stomach. I spoil all the machineries of his body and make it weak. Then, since pollution of the stomach is the source of all sorts of diseases, he gets entangled in a vicious circle of endless diseases. After he loses his brain, he loses his health, and then his credit and money also is gone. Then the last two and a half years I reside in his feet causing him to indulge in fruitless wandering," Saturn said.

"Welcome sir, now you are coming on My head, okay." Hanumanji said. "Please take a seat. I shall think of My stomach and legs later."

In his ghostly form, Mr. Saturn possessed the head of Hanumanji.

After sometime, "Ah, what are You doing?" Saturn screamed, being ground under a heavy mountain.

As soon as Saturn had occupied his seat on His head, Hanumanji felt itches in His head, and He rooted up a mountain and placed it on His head.

"This is My own way of scratching the itches," Hanumanji replied.

"As you act according to your own nature, I too have My own way of curing. You do your job, I am not disturbing you. You also please do not disturb Me," Hanumanji said and took another mountain and placed it on top of the previous one.

Poor Saturn shouted, "Please remove them. I agree to be friendly. I can stay on Your body for only two and a half days."

Instead of giving a reply, Hanumanji rooted out the third mountain and placed it on his head on top of the other two.

Saturn cried, "Please be kind. Now I shall never come to You."

Even this promise was not satisfying to Hanumanji and He broke the fourth mountain, and Saturn yelled and screamed --

tràhi mà̀m, tràhi mà̀m

"Hanumanji, please save me, save me. Please let me get down. I will not harm You or even to those who will remember You, I will not disturb. Have mercy upon me."

Hanumanji removed all the mountains from His head and then He looked at Saturn, who was tortured in pain.

"I just wanted to have five mountains on My head, and I can keep them comfortably like a crown until the end of creation, but you were in a hurry."

Saturn fell down at His feet and begged His pardon.

"I will always remember the words which I gave You. Please give me some oil for my aching limbs," he requested.

"You already see that I am a vagabond and I mostly stay in the jungles. You must know that I don't have any oil. Go and beg it from those whom you will possess," Hanumanji said and walked away.

Up until now, astrologers suggest to those who are suffering from the evil influences of Saturn, as part of a remedy they must offer oil to Saturn according to the rules for the sake of satisfying him.

CHAPTER 52

TWO PROPHETS OF SRI HANUMANJI'S PHILOSOPHY

IN THE IRON AGE

His name was Narayana, the dearest son of a Bramhin mother. She loved him as her own outer soul, and with great care and festivity she celebrated all the ceremonies. In due time, this loving mother performed all the samskaras to be done. Now he was young and she was eager to see her son's Vivaha Samskara performed.

As regular parents in Indian villages, she too had projected all her ambition on seeing a nicely performed wedding ceremony of her son. But

Narayana's consciousness was highly elevated, so a wedding, producing and fondling rest-less children, were too elementary for him. It was a waste of his valuable time. Narayana was tormenting to get rid of all attachments and to devote his time entirely in love of God, absorbed in deep meditation.

His mother with other family members and neighbors were eagerly dream-ing for his marriage, and Narayana was dreaming when he will be in some wilderness all by himself absorbed in the transcendental love of God. Now there was a clash between two dreams.

Narayana had to agree with his mother, as Indian boys are by blood very re-spectful and obedient to their elders. A beautiful girl was selected for the hand-some Narayana, and the auspicious date was filed.

All performances and rituals were nicely done. Everybody was happy, and the joy of Narayana's mother was boundless. The bride and groom, all adorned, were sitting while tributes were offered. Musicians were playing wedding music, while ladies were singing the wedding songs. Suddenly, as a part of a new ritual, the sacred man who was performing this samskara, shouted loudly --

shivamangala savadhan

As if Narayana was hit on his head, "Careful? Why are you asking me to be careful?" He asked the priests, because the last part of their shout means. Be efficiently careful.

The priest smiled and replied,

"Because from now on, you will be a prisoner. Fetters of household duties and attachments are going to be tied with your feet. Therefore, we are warning you for the last time."

shivamangala savadhan

Narayana's brain started working rapidly. He thought,

"My word which I gave to my mother is fulfilled. Marriage was my promise and nothing else after that. So why, should I not proceed to fulfill my urgent and supremely blessed duty? The priest has already declared, from now on my legs will be tied by the invisible fetters of attachment followed by the vicious circle of worries, tensions, and problems.

"At the most, the possibility can be like innumerable others who have either forgotten their real duty, or keep postponing it throughout life. I cannot afford to stay just to pass a conditioned life of a household prison. I want freedom -- Eternal Freedom." Narayana suddenly decided firmly his next step.

He sternly looked to his left and right, back and front, far and wide. All were sitting and very happy -- the kinsmen, relatives, neighbors, and very important persons of the town. In the distance, his mother, filled with the greatest joy was welcoming all guests, including every newcomer, as if she was offering all the possible love of her heart.

At his left side, his fifteen year old bride was sitting. Her beautiful glowing face covered with curtains of flowers hanging from the beautiful bridal crown on her head. Perhaps her eyes were closed in seeing the golden dreams of the future.

Narayana threw a last glance on all of them as he suddenly stood up. All at once he threw away his marriage crown, garlands, and upper garments, and he ran very fast, faster, and fastest.

It took a little time for all the assembled kinsmen to be aware of the situation. They then chased Narayana, but it was as if Narayana had grown some wings. Nobody was able to catch him. Their body's were covered with

long, uncomfortable ceremonial dresses, therefore, they were unable to run very fast.

Of course about fifty people ran fast, and a few of them rushed to a stable for horses. But it was too late. Narayana was too smart, and he was young, only twenty years old, a well-built body. Very soon he disappeared in the bushes, never to be found again as the same young, smart and handsome Narayana. But of course he came back into the world, but as the Great Enlightened soul of that time -- in the name of Samartha Sri Swami Ramdas.

He lived in a quiet, cool, blossoming forest and constantly put his whole effort to be in the state of Lovetrance. He lived in the state of Lovetrance constantly for about twelve years. And thus such a great energy was produced and stored in him that he became Samartha, which means approximately almighty and approximately omniscient.

Long before sunrise, Ramdas used to take a bath in the river Godavari. Standing motionless in the navel-deep water, he would chant the Holy Name of Lord Ram. As soon as he started to chant in melodious tones, Hanumanji would relish it and come to sit on a nearby banyan tree.

For about twelve years Hanumanji did this without fail. One day, He descended from the tree and stood in front of him. Naturally Ramdas was filled with great joy, but Hanumanji without any delay, assuming a very subtle form, entered his body and awakened his Kundalini.

Not only this, but He also energized and enforced it to pierce through all the chakras and reach the Sahasrar. Ramdas instantaneously became an Enlightened soul equipped with all the siddhis. When Hanumanji was working inside Ramdas with his astral and causal bodies, Ramdas' eyes

were closed. When he opened them, Hanumanji was standing in front of him in His famous Ramayana Age form.

Out of great devotion he sang a song in His glory, and Hanumanji was very much satisfied and transmitted His special blessings to him. Because of Hanumanji's blessings he was able to lay the foundation stones of India's history of Independence, which was later fructified through the instrumentality of Mahatma Gandhi.

Swami Ramdas started a new system of Hanuman worship called -- Syenamaruti worship festivity, which is still popular in the Bombay locality, Maharashtra.

When King Shivaji approached Saint Tukaram in quest of God and requested him to accept him as his disciple, Tukaram told him that he was not his pre-destined guru. Tukaram and Ramdas were contemporaries, so he suggested, "Your guru is there. Go to Sri Samartha Guru Ramdas."

Ramdas initiated King Shivaji and infused in him a great charm, great revolution, and great love for the nation and Vedic way of life, as well as for the lotus feet of the Mother Divine. There are numberless inspiring stories of Swami Ramdas and Shivaji which instantaneously enlivens and raises the level of consciousness of the hearers and readers.

Those days, most parts of India were persecuted by foreign invaders. Being a renunciant, Swami Ramdas never took part in politics, but by his blessing, Chhatrapati Shivaji was able to establish a huge empire just in a single generation to give shelter to afflicted, persecuted, and homeless ones. By the blessing of Samartha Guru Ramdas, Shivaji became the greatest power of the time. A great place was reserved for him in the hearts of the

people. A great dignified place belongs to him in the history of his country, India.

Another prominent personality among those who attained quick Realization in the last five hundred years, was Goswami Tulasidas.

Goswami Tulasidas renounced his family life in quest of God and began to live in Varanasi. A long tradition of spiritual seekers habitually prefers to live a natural life in which any kind of barrier in freedom, or depending on others, is not allowed.

So Goswami Tulasidas, away from human residences, made a small hut of dry leaves and ordinary woods in the bank of the Ganga river, and early in the morning he used to go for his morning walk in the jungle. Everyday after returning from his toilet, he used to pour the remaining water at the root of a particular mango tree. Goswami Tulasidas constantly meditated for twelve years.

There was a certain spirit, a good one of course, who had been living in that tree for several years. He was obliged with the act of Tulasidas. One day he materialized himself and said,

"I am very much satisfied. Please ask for something."

"May I make your acquaintance?" Tulasidas asked.

"I am a spirit of the astral world. There are many classes in our species. As far as I am concerned, I am forbidden by nature itself to drink crystal clear, pure water. Remaining under the catharsis of my previous karmas, I have no right to use the best and even good things of creation. I was thirsty, and the impure water poured on my abode by your Holiness quenched my thirst. So you can ask for any-thing you like to achieve," the ghost insisted.

"If you can do something for me, please make Sri Sita Ram available to me," Tulasidasji said with great excitement. Tulasidas wanted only God. He didn't find anything else worth seeking in the world.

"Well sir, ask me for something which I can do. We are conditioned by our Physical structure and we cannot chant God's Name because that is the most Holy thing. I cannot help you attain that, for it is beyond my capacity and reach. But if you want to surprise the world by materializing things in a moment, or if you want to bring anything from thousands of miles within moments, if you want to foresee incidents which are going to happen in somebody's life and thus gain great respect in the world, or become a big billionaire, or any other similar magic, I can do it for you immediately. For these magic-feats I am at your disposal."

"Thank you sir, I don't need anything else than an encounter with Sri Sita Ram. Excuse me for the trouble. God bless you," said Tulasidas and walked on.

"Listen, please," the spirit requested. He was amazed with such absolute-ly detached, one-pointed peculiar devotee.

"I was very thirsty and you have given me life. I certainly want to help you." The ghost paused and said, "I can unfold a secret to you," and he indicated a certain place in Varanasi.

"In this Holy place, every twilight, the pastimes of Sri Sita Ram are being sung, and when the discourse starts, Sri Hanumanji Himself comes. He sits behind the audience in a corner, and He comes in such a makeup, a sick man wrapped in a dirty blanket, that no one likes even to look at Him. He is the first one to arrive and last one to leave. You just go and hold His

feet fast. As long as He has not promised to fulfill your desire, so long don't release His feet," suggested the spirit.

Tulasidas was surprised and became very happy to have at least a key which might help him to fulfill his lifelong craving. Long before the beginning of the discourse, Tulasidas arrived at the spot and established himself in such a place where he could observe everyone in the hall. Just before the discourse began, Hanumanji entered in that unattractive, repulsive form with signs of wounds and pus oozing from His body, covered with a dusty old blanket.

Tulasidas's eyes fell upon Him. Rightly, He sat in a corner where nobody sat around, and where nobody would be interested to look, and he was listening to the discourse, diving deep into the transcendental mellows of Sri Sita Ram's pastimes. The waves of the eight satvic symptoms spreading all over His body. Thrilled, He was so happy that He didn't notice that somebody was watching Him today.

At last when the discourse was finished and everybody had left the hall, Hanumanji stood up, acting like a sick person and walked out.

Tulasidas followed Him very vigilantly, and when He reached to a lonely place, he fell down at His feet, clasping them very tightly but lovingly.

"Pooh, Oh Holyman, leave Me. Leave Me alone. What on earth are you doing? Quickly leave Me, I am a leprosy patient, don't you see sir? Take a bath in the Holy Ganga. See how much pus has stuck to your palms and clothes." Hanumanji wanted to frighten him.

"You are almighty and I am weak and insignificant. You can kick me off and go Your way." Tulasidas was crying, because he had a great longing to see Lord Ram. "Please do not try to fool me, I recognize You. You are Sri

Hanumanji Himself. Please, come into Your original form, otherwise I am going to do away with my life," Tulasidas requested.

This is the last extremity, when someone wants to attain something at the cost of his life. It takes no time, he attains it. In this situation what ever he will attain will be God.

People all around the world go to India and meet all sorts of saints and sadhus. They receive initiation into this kind of meditation and that kind of Vedanta system and return empty handed, saying that all saints are hypocrites and that there are no God-realized souls. Actually, this condition is only the reflection of their own psychological state.

As long as one wants God to add to his achievements in life, or wishes to attain God as another accomplishment like wealth, wife, cars, friends, and credit so long he is bound to come up against hypocrites. As much as one values his body, his money, his credit to that extent the shrine of God is far away, and one will meet meditation-sellers, peace-sellers, or God-sellers only.

As long as you have not put all accomplishments of your life at stake for God realization or a visit to a real saint, so long much possibility is you will be meeting only religious business men, even if you will meet Buddha. You will try to buy some enlightenment, in which you will not succeed so you will return criticizing, condemning, broken-hearted and agitated. Then, either you adjust to such people, or you console yourself and thus suppress your true quest and deceive yourself as most of the institutionalized people are doing.

God consciousness, God realization, requires an intense craving for only for God alone, and it has to be at the cost of one's life, at the cost of all

the pleasures of life, at the cost of one's husband or wife and family, one's bank account, and at the cost of all the respect and approval for you in the eyes of society. When all of these become shallow and insignificant and the seeking becomes most important, most valuable, then a real Realized soul will meet you and then Realization is not very far off. Then strenuous meditation and yoga tech-niques are no more required. The state of consciousness itself deepens into Lovetrance, and by the grace of a Realized-soul, you can encounter the form of the formless right there and then.

When Goswami Tulasidas wanted to see Hanumanji at the cost of his life, Hanumanji could not hide Himself anymore. He appeared in His original form and it highly enlivened and enraptured the heart of Tulasidas limitlessly. Hanumanji ordered him to go to Chitrakuta and meditate upon His pastimes in a particular place, Yajnavedi, on the bank of river Mandakini.

"My Lord, please be available to Tulasidas," Hanumanji requested to Lord Ram one day.

"Whomsoever You request Me to come to, I have already come to him. For Tulasidas I would come not only once, but twice. I will appear, but it should be Your responsibility to see that he recognizes Me," Sri Ram said. Actually the main role in Realization is to recognize Him. The moment you start the Vedic way of life, God and high beings begin to come, but due to the obscuring energy of the infatuation of physical attachment, one's narrow prejudices, one fails to recognize them. Even if they come to the door, we would pay no attention to them and fail to recognize them. It takes the greatest ability and refined intelligence to recognize them. Therefore, a guru is re-quired.

Now Lord Ram had given His word to appear before Tulasidas and Hanumanji was made responsible for his being able to recognize Him.

It was the winter season and Goswami Tulasidas was in his long meditation. From sunrise to midday he was absorbed in meditation. At twelve he used to come out to wash in the Mandakini river. One time he was standing on the bank of the river relaxing-the blue transparent water was flowing through the rocks, green trees were moving in the mild breeze. There he saw two handsome youths on horseback passed that way. They were princely looking, charming, a Shyam and Gour couple.

After sometime, Hanumanji came to him and asked, "Did you see Sri Ram and Lakshmana?"

"Where were they?" Tulasidas was shocked, and then Hanumanji told him that they were the handsome youths who just passed on horseback.

Tulasidas then wept and wept to think that he had not recognized them. He repented.

Hanumanji consoled him and said, "They will come again."

Now Tulasidas became more alert. Every moment, vigilantly waiting and looking for their arrival. Then one day in the early morning, Tulasidas was grinding sandalwood paste for his worship. Two most delicate, charming, lotus-eyed youths arrived.

"Sir, could you please give us some sandal paste?" A musical soft voice echoed from one of the youths.

Tulasidas lifted his eyes upon hearing the soothing soft tone. He could not recognize them.

Work is a hostile process. When you are working, you are under a certain influence of hostility, a certain intoxication of a strong, insensitive,

approxim-ately inert state. That's why Shankaracharya has said that action is detrimental to liberation Because work makes you very gross, body conscious; and Realization is very subtle, delicate. It needs sensitivity. Extreme sensitivity grows in the deeper levels of experience in yoga of Lovetrance, and it is always farsighted and penetrating. That's why all actions must be colored in the colors of Lovetrance.

Tulasidas, even this second time, could not recognize the Lord, and he gave a little sandalwood paste to these nice boys. Sri Ram and Lakshmana began to paste sandalwood paste on each other's foreheads.

Hanumanji was careful when He saw that Tulasidas was again going to miss. He assumed the form of a pair of parrots sitting on the bough of a nearby tree and sang loudly ---

*chitrakuta ke ghat pe bhai santan ki bhir
tulasidas chandan ghise tilak deta raghuvira*

"On the beautiful bank of Mandakini in the Chitrakut, in the valley of saints and sages, Tulasidas is grinding sandalwood and Sri Ram is pasting it on His fore-head. Do not miss. Please." The Parrot sang.

Tulasidas heard it and threw away his sandalwood grinding, threw away everything which was making him so insensitive and forgetful, and fell down at the lotus feet of Lord Ram and Lakshmana and wet them with the tears from his eyes.

After this incident, Tulasidas became a great lover of Hanumanji. He composed many poems and invocations, which Hanumanji out of love, has energized, empowered, made alive and potent, so that anyone who reads and sings them, will attain communion with Him and receive special help in the time of troubles and dangers.

For the last four hundred years, Goswami Tulasidas has been a shining star in the galaxy of Sri Ram's love sky and has been continuously inspiring all throughout northern India.

Certainly anyone can touch the heart of the villagers of India, who are the real Indians, not necessarily by Vedanta or yoga or other philosophies, but simply by the Holy Name and pastimes of Shri Hanumanji.

I am confident that the true India, the real philosophy of India, and the real conception of the human goal, the ultimate Realization, are successfully uni-fied in Sri Hanumanji's role in Intergalactic history.

CHAPTER 53

AND HE WAS BLISSED OUT-

SRI SAMARTHA RAMADAS

AND HIS ASHRAM'S PRESIDENT

"After all, what is the aim of life?"

Day after day, night after night, he contemplated, he pondered over it -- The question was not merely a fickle mind's entertainment but was coming from the depth of his heart. His quest was intense. Avadhesh desperately needed the answer even at the cost of his life.

It is the law of nature that if the quest is real it never calms down unanswer-ed. And if the performances of one's duties and responsibilities have purified the thinking-principles then the quest is bound to arise.

Cosmic consciousness or God realization. If you are head-oriented then your goal is Cosmic consciousness. If you are heart-oriented God realization is your goal; if fifty-fifty then Lovetrance is your goal.

Avadhesh was born in a warrior class. He was very firm in his decisions of life. By analyzing the circumstances and pleasures of life and through his habit of strong determination he understood very well that all the attractions of the world are baseless and seeking joy in them was as if seeking water in a mirage.

"He alone can show the path of Realization who has already Realized the Truth. Certainly anyone who has gone through the whole path and attained the goal can guide you, otherwise if a man is only acquainted with

the path he can make mis-takes and it is very dreadful to invite such danger in your life -- Such a person's life goes in vain. Only Sri Samartha Ramadas can be the shelter of my life," Avadhesh ultimately decided.

The problem was -- Where should he go to search for Sri Samartha Ramadas? He did not stay permanently in any particular place. He traveled all over the coun-try.

After a couple of years, Avadhesh visited Satàrà, a town near Poona, Mahàràstra. If one has a deep quest for Truth it cannot be suppressed nor can it wait. Avadhesh discovered a temple of Sri Hanumanji in the town of Satàrà. There he took a seat in the temple and addressed to Sri Hanumanji,

"My Lord, I am sitting near Your feet and I am not going to get up from this seat. Sri Samartha is Yours. He is traveling to fulfill Your mission. I am not going to get up from this seat unless I see him. He is my beloved master."

True Saints are not available by wandering or searching. A great space traveler, Devarshi Narada says,

"They are available only by their compassion and their mercy." He also says, "There is no distinction between Him and His messenger Saints."

It has never happened that a tormenting soul has invoked Sri Hanumanji that He would have not responded. No one ever knew when Sri Samartha would arrive at Satàrà, but after his arrival he always used to go to Sri Hanumanji temple.

Suddenly out of nowhere, Sri Samartha entered Sri Hanumanji temple and offered Him his obesiences and found Avadhesh prostrated at His feet. Sri Samartha's eyes lit up with joy and he said,

"Come, I have been looking for you," and he raised the youth up from the floor and took him into his embrace.

The young boy shed tears of love and joy and said, "If you, Oh merciful One would not look for me, then how could an incapable, ignorant one like me be able to attain your grace?"

"Why are you sitting here in that way?" Sri Samartha's voice echoed through the temple. "God Himself is asking for the services of youths like you in the form of citizens of the nation!"

Avadhesh requested with folded palms, "Human life is seldom provided again. This I have heard from many high-souls, so please shower your compassion on me so that my life won't be passed in vain."

"Sri Hanumanji is full of compassion, full of mercy. There is no miserliness in His grace, the whole world can float in it. It is showering all over, all around. You just surrender to Him, be sensitive to it and feel what is happening. And you will be excited with miracles," Sri Samartha Ramadas's consoling voice echoed again.

Samartha Ramadas initiated Avadhesh into the art of experiencing Lovetrance and engaged him in very intensive action. To be Samartha's disciple did not mean someone who was just a detached recluse or talkative preacher or cross-legged sitting monk, devoid of actions. No. Samartha's disciple means one who was an embodiment of a companion for the troubled ones, an intimate friend of the poor, a causeless helper of sick and weak people.

By the order of the master, within six days a huge ashram was established for fifty youths from all around the state who dedicated their life to the philosophy of Sri Hanumanji. This ashram was established for the

service of the suffering humanity. Samartha himself trained them in the mystery and arts of service, as well as spiritual knowledge and deeper understanding of the Vedas.

One day Sri Samartha Ramadas proceeded on his journey to the north for an indefinite period. Day after day, week after week, month after month, season after season, year after year passed -- five years in all. One morning a wave of great joy spread all over the ashram -- the master had returned! All the dis-ciples rushed and fell down at his feet.

Sri Samartha's compassion-filled eyes were showering nectar of love upon them.

"You seem to be very despondent Avadhesh, what is the matter with you?" Sri Samartha looked at his disciple, who was now the president of the huge ashram and was the most popular among the followers of Sri Hanumanji's philosophy.

Avadhesh replied, "I find myself unworthy of the large scale, increasing activities of your ashram. If I could have permission from your Holiness I would like to remain in solitude and try for spiritual upliftment."

Avadhesh said this full of sorrow and inner torture, as he felt that his time was being wasted in worldly activities and not improving enough in his meditation. So he wept holding the feet of his master.

"What kind of effort are you going to do?" Samartha smiled, overfilled with fatherly affection.

Avadhesh replied, "I shall try to stop the turbulence of my mind. Your Holiness himself has already taught me that establishment in inaction is the path to Self realization."

"No, not the path, but establishment in the state of total inactivity and Self realization are synonymous," Sri Samartha corrected the statement.

"But tell me one thing. How are you going to be in inaction? By abandoning all actions? "

"Yes, your Holiness, if you permit me," The young disciple replied. "In the ashram the mind is always in movement and restless due to the innumerable engagements of the ashram's activities."

"In solitude can you stop your breathing, eating and drinking, and all the ma-chineries of the body also?" Sri Samartha questioned him in a master's tone. "Even if you could do that, what difference would there be between you and an inert stone?"

"My beloved master," the youth clasped his feet. He felt as if some cur-tain of darkness was going to be removed.

Sri Samartha continued, "The Self is a state of total inaction. Experience of the Self means entrance into that layer of consciousness which is absolutely inactive, a realm of powerful silence, on which all activities and its influences and endless results are only superimposed, simply over-shadowed. To be in total Oneness with this oceanic dynamic silence, that is to recognize the Self."

Sri Samartha stopped talking for awhile. He felt that his disciple finds it diffi-cult to comprehend his explanation so he changed the wording.

"Watch! The dir-ector of the action is Sri Hanumanji. The supplier of the fruits of action is also Sri Hanumanji. And the enjoyer of the entire performance is also Sri Hanumanji. And listen! You and all the people of the world are just instruments in the hands of Sri Hanumanji. You have to offer yourselves completely to the lotus-feet of Sri Hanumanji and then you are

already in the state of inactivity, even while you are engaged in various kinds of intense activities." Sri Samartha concluded his lesson.

"I have already offered myself completely to Him on the same day I saw you there, Your Holiness," the youth replied in full devotion and confidence.

"An instrument is always an instrument and therefore it is inactive. All its activities are the Director's activities," Sri Samartha suddenly removed the curtain of darkness of ignorance.

"If you have offered yourself to Him really, then inactivity is already achieved because an instrument is just an instrument. Then why are you going to falsify your instrumentality by becoming a controller of the turbulent mind?"

The youth replied, "This restlessness, this lack of peace, is making me unable to be in bliss-consciousness which is the very nature of the service of Sri Hanumanji."

"It is true that even after adopting a spiritual life, if we are not in mental peace and inner happiness then definitely there is something missing. There is wrong somewhere and because of that, life has not perceived a glimpse of spir-itality, adoption of religion has not taken place. And when some religion is full of such people, who have assumed the role of religious man without such a state of adoption, then that religion degenerates. It becomes a show. You should have abandoned the idea of being a doer," said Sri Samartha. He immediately caught the mistake which cannot be perceptible by most of the seekers and masters.

He continued, "In truth, no one in the whole world is miserable, no one is ill, no one is ever persecuted. Neither are you a redeemer or a helper.

In fact, only Sri Hanumanji is coming to you in all these forms to receive services by His own mercy, His own compassion. By performing services to His lotus feet you are just filling the emptiness of your being. You are being fulfilled, getting absolutely per-fect and sanctified. Night after night, your life is being transformed into a festivity of the joys of service. Why don't you let this service go on for an eternity without expecting anything?" Sri Samartha's rumbling voice kept echoing and reechoing in that silent ashram.

The birds came out from their nests and began chirping. Somewhere in the distance a peacock cried, and in the pond ducks and swans fluttered their wings.

A deep silence, a penetrating quietness entered into the heart of Avadhesh and he fell down at the feet of the master and the master blessed him.

Sri Samartha walked out of the ashram and was off on his indefinite journey again. Months after months, years after years rolled by -- seven more years passed and once again Sri Samartha sanctified the ashram by his footprints. He received an extensive heartfelt reception not only from the ashram but from all over the town and the whole Maharashtra province.

After the sun set, all the disciples sat around the master and waited to hear the talks of wisdom from the master's lips.

"You can go and find your place somewhere in solitude," Sri Samartha suddenly spoke to the president of the ashram who was just sitting very close -- near the feet of the master.

"Did I commit any offense?" Avadhesh put his head on the master's feet.

All the sanyasins and bramhacharis of the ashram were struck with wonder, all of them were shocked. What offense had their beloved Avadhesh committed? Avadhesh who had been in complete surrender and unconditional causeless love with the whole universe. Because turning out anyone from the ashram was the greatest punishment of Sri Samartha. Suddenly everybody's face and lips became dry and parched from anxiety.

"I am not giving any punishment," Sri Samartha Ramadas was smiling. Cheer-fully he said, "This is your own decision for inner peace and unconditional joy ... if you need to go into solitude?"

"Let there never be any necessity in my life that would take me away from your lotus feet," Avadhesh said in a choking voice full of feelings.

"Ignorant people make mistakes, but the merciful ones pardon them. Now his Holiness has already provided the great opportunity of his sacred service. How can there be any lack of bliss? I am in the immense shower of happiness. Each new service brings me an additional wave of joy. Each new movement of mind fondles my soul as a cool, calm sea breeze. I am "blissed-out" and I am sure it is permanent," The president replied.

"I have come to tell you this," Sri Samartha looked a penetrating glance over the assembled disciples. "He Who is the creator, director and protector of the universe is not weak. He is not less intelligent than us in any way and He does not depend on anybody else. He is self-dependent and therefore He does not require our services. It is only a false frustrated ego of an ignorant man that makes him think that he serves, that he is a great leader of the nation, that he is highly benevolent. All are but frustrated vibrations of a confused ego."

A young sanyasin who was recently initiated questioned, "Then what about our ashram which is famous all over the country as a highly benevolent center for suffering humanity and all of us are constantly engaged on twenty-four hour call. We are so busy here. What about that?"

"It is His compassion, His grace Who is merciful. This is a causeless mercy of Sri Hanumanji that He has provided us His most charming and joyful service. He has given us this particular opportunity and when we perform this service in such a way that we transcend the object and subject of the performance we become the performance itself, then we suddenly rise above the relativity. There erupts a transcendence during which we have a glimpse of Sri Hanumanji. Then such a moment becomes a worship, a prayer, a meditation of Him, of that Cosmic- Beloved, and when it permeates throughout our life successfully, we have accomplished His service. Then we instantaneously become attained, enlightened.

"Our duty," Sri Samartha's voice reverberated far and wide in the silence of the cool moonlit night. "I know you feel it difficult to comprehend this fact, but why?" Sri Samartha paused and again spoke flowingly. "You have physical strength, valor, mastery over the arts of weapons and many different aspects of knowledge. All these means have been provided to you by Sri Hanumanji out of mercy. These should be used for the good of all around you. All over, the nation is passing through a strange transition period. Everywhere there is suffering per-secuted humanity screaming and shouting for your help. Their call is the call of your duty.

"The means and situations for performing the duties have already been provided which is material for your super-active meditation. Now it is up to you how you respond to the timely call and flow into the service. As

long as thought, speech and actions of human being is body-oriented he is a layman, he becomes a burden to society. That's why when sex-oriented people grow, they complain about over population. Things of daily use become expensive. Nothing is free, even religion becomes full of prejudices and sectarianism.

"When human being becomes duty-oriented, society is easy and comfortable. Things are inexpensive, there is more freedom in life. Religions are full of moral and powerful persons.

"But when the life of most of the human beings floats on the ocean of joy with the performance of one's duties and services of Sri Hanumanji, so much so that the property of the performance and property of the fruits, or result of action, and the self become one and synonymous, then the society lives in a Golden age, creating an atmospheric-flow of the bliss of Lovetrance.

"Then the society is the forest. Everything is available free of charge. Pay-ing is out of love ritual. Trillions of people live on earth comfortably because then all mountains and deserts become green and fertile. Religion is not a re-ligion with some name. It is just a way of life of Interplanetary civilization.

"Therefore in intensive engagement during the service of Sri Hanumanji we get glimpses of divine intoxication which is no other than a taste of liberation. In the intensive service, in the dense jungle of the intensity of dynamic action, in a fast flow of the river of constant service of Sri Hanumanji, you transcend. You touch the beyond suddenly. You rise above the relativity.

"In the intensity of service when you slip beyond the server and the served, you become the Service itself, then suddenly there opens the gate to the Kingdom of Heaven. Nay, nay, the door of Eternal Liberation, the state of inaction, the nature of which is to be "blissed out".

"When you aim to become "blissed out", and for that you abandon or escape your duties, then you are attacking the state of inaction. By abandoning the ac-tion you are being involved in non-action. In this case you are going to miss and lose the Holy service of Sri Hanumanji. The service of Sri Hanumanji which is a most valuable meditation in this Iron Age, and when you miss this labor of love, or service meditation, you are blocked out, spaced out in misery. Life becomes complicated."

Saying this, Sri Samartha became silent and vibrations of his silence became like a cloud, showering all over, and all the disciple's thirst for silence was quenched forever.

Next morning, when a huge gathering arrived at the ashram with flowers and fruits in their hands, of course they could not see the master. He was gone, but they saw those fifty youths whose personalities were combined with the peace of Buddha, the love of Krishna, and the compassion of Christ. They were coming to serve them, but the people felt if they could serve them in any way would be the greatest satisfying opportunity.

And there a deep silence and love permeated throughout the space which found its expression in a loud utterance of:

Jai Hanumàn!

And they began to sing songs of love of Sri Hanumanji;

Jai Hanuman jñàna gunasàga!

Jai kapisha tihu lokaujàgara!

Sri Hanumanji gave a message of service to the whole world. We bow down to Him and try to understand Him, His philosophy, His love, and this would prove a great benediction to the modern world.

CHAPTER 54

THE LEAPING OF HANUMANJI REPRESENTING THE EXHILARATION OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS

Sri Hanumanji's forgetfulness of His limitless power and strength, and His instantaneous reattainment after being reminded by Sri Jambavantaji, represents the age-old forgetfulness of each human being - of the infinite power, knowledge and happiness which is his original, eternal and natural state. Man also needs to be reminded, and this is done when he approaches the spiritual master.

The ignorance within each man, which is the cause of all suffering, is the ten-headed king of Lanka island which is situated in the middle of the inexhaustible ocean of the complicated involvements of the world. The king resides on the three hills of human psychology - the mode of quietness, the mode of passion, and the mode of inertia, along with his friends and kinsmen -- lust, anger, greed, aversion, vanity, etcetera. and he has abducted Absolute Peace, which is represented by Mother Sita who is a constant companion to Sri Rama, the embodiment of the Absolute Wisdom of Lovetrance.

The human being, his peace stolen away, is wandering about frustrated and miserable, transmigrating through eight million, four hundred thousand species which automatically come into being again and again, according to the level of the soul's evolution of consciousness.

Mother Sita is sitting on the island, eight hundred miles away beyond the vast Indian Ocean. With ordinary efforts, one cannot cross the ocean of complicated worldly involvements in order to contact permanent peace. Only the most solid upliftment of the superior layers of consciousness can enable one to succeed as the son of the wind god, Sri Hanumanji succeeds.

Success is assured when one is provided with extra strength by receiving Sri Ram's finger ring, which represents the upliftment of consciousness based on the Vedic way of life. The presence of the symbol of upliftment of human consciousness means that Sri Hanumanji is able to leap over worldly involvements to approach everlasting peace, represented by Mother Sita.

The first obstacle which always falls on the path of the spiritual aspirant is the alluring energy of sensual pleasures, the invitations of Mount Mainàka. He says:

"Here is plenty of every entertainment. Come, just rest and enjoy the comfort."

That is why when one renounces the world and advances in spiritual attainment, many temptations associated with the objects of the senses follow him without his desiring them. Those who stay with these temptations lose their spiritual advancement. Therefore Sri Hanumanji says,

"Thank you very much but I am very busy." And He continues His journey.

The second obstacle is extrasensory perception, represented by Surasà, the dragon lady. One can entirely reject the first obstacle, but one needs extrasensory perception to a certain extent for spiritual advancement. However, if one gets too involved in it, a fall comes. That is why Sri Hanumanji goes inside the mouth of Surasa, but not inside her stomach. This is what a spiritual aspirant ought to do.

The third obstacle which falls on the path of spiritual advancement, is the desire for name and fame, meaning the monstress Simhikà. Name and fame have nothing to do with higher realization, and those who have fallen into their grip become en-tangled in such a vicious circle that they cannot think independently. They cannot live in the present, in the HERE AND NOW. They are chewed up and swallowed by the thoughts of past and future.

No one seems to be satisfied with his accomplished name and fame unless he has attained Absolute Peace. Name and fame are like a shadow. As long as one runs after it, it escapes endlessly. And as soon as one turns back and runs towards his aim, the shadow follows him. Sri Hanumanji instructs all the spiritual aspirants of the future, to kick Simhika and finish her at once, before she grabs anyone by the shadow and pulls him toward her to swallow him.

The fourth obstacle which falls on the path, is attachment to the body. Lankini represents this barrier. It is necessary to preserve the body carefully as long as Absolute Love and Peace have not been attained. But while preserving the body for realization, the spiritual aspirant becomes identified and attached to the body and indulges in sense gratifications.

Without a healthy body, how can one perform his sadhana? In a diseased, or weak physical or psychological state, one cannot attain the ultimate fulfillment - Eternal Peace. So Hanumanji, answering all the questions and giving the solution to this problem, gives Lankini a heavy blow with his fist. Not in order to kill her, but just to turn her from a dominator into a humble follower. She leaves the door and then Hanumanji enters Lanka and starts his activities.

In the same way, if one can rise above these obstacles, he can enter into a new life's consciousness. When these obstacles are successfully tackled, then there is no possibility of a fall, and the binding influences of karmas will not affect him.

As long as Mother Sita is not visualized, Sri Hanumanji remains concealed, absolutely hidden. So also, as long as glimpses of Peace are not perceived in samadhi, the aspirant has to conceal his progress in meditation. He has to be private, more secret. Otherwise, the fast-developing series of higher experiences will make him puffed up, egotistical, and careless about the more mystical facts of higher consciousness.

As soon as Sri Hanumanji visits Mother Sita and conveys the message of Sri Ram to her, He eats the fruits of the Ashoka grove and then sets fire to the city of Lanka. That means, that as soon as the spiritual aspirant perceives the Eternity of Peace in nirvikalp samadhi, and begins to live it in the daily activities of life; the transcendental fire of knowledge, which has already started working in his life, never spares the old rotten way of living and dealing (always adjusting with ignorance) and sets fire to it.

After awakening into higher levels of consciousness, all the karma which were the main basis of ignorance, are burned up in the fire of

knowledge. Then comes Sri Ram, the Olympian Prince of Ayodhya, the Divine Wisdom, Who slays the ten-headed Rakshasa king of Lanka. Ravana's heads are pierced by the sharp arrows of Sri Ram, and he falls flat on the battlefield along with all his kinsmen.

It is then that Sita and Ram unite. The two eternal companions, Wisdom and Peace, meet and become ONE, and the same Ashoka grove which was torturous for Sita becomes their playground resort. This means that when all of the karmas are burnt up in the fire of Knowledge, there is an explosion of Divine Wisdom, with the advent of which the ten-faced monster of suffering and ignorance instantaneously disappears along with all his friends and kinsmen - lust, greed, anger, vanity, aversion, etcetera.

Then Peace and Wisdom unite, shining in all directions with the light of Love-trance. And the same world which was troublesome and torturous before, now be-comes a manifestation of Lovetrance where Peace and Bliss and Love reside for eternity.

FOR PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE WITH SWAMIJI:

HIRANYAVARNAM@REDIFFMAIL.COM

WEBSITES:

[HTTP://VEDIC-FILMS.FREEYELLOW.COM](http://VEDIC-FILMS.FREEYELLOW.COM)

[HTTP://HINDU-DIGEST.FREEYELLOW.COM](http://HINDU-DIGEST.FREEYELLOW.COM)

[HTTP://ANTARBRAHMANDIYA.TRIPOD.COM](http://ANTARBRAHMANDIYA.TRIPOD.COM)

[HTTP://WWW.SWAMISHYAM.ORG](http://WWW.SWAMISHYAM.ORG)

