

Hanuman - Lesson 2



Hanuman, an incarnation of Lord Shiva, is the greatest devotee of Lord Sri Rama, who was none other than Lord Vishnu, who came down in human form. Hanuman is the chosen messenger, warrior, and keeper of the gates of Sri Rama. He carries Rama's message, fights his battles, and helps His devotees in their struggle against the evil forces. And why did Rama choose Him as His messenger and none else when so many other Vanaras were at His service? It is because Hanuman is the wisest of wise, strongest of strong, quickest of quick, and the most intelligent among the cleverest. We should bow to Him every morning, and we should chant his Name.

Last week we learned why and how a curse was put on Hanuman. This week we will learn how Hanuman meets Rama and Lakshmana, and how he is reminded about his own strength to overcome the curse.

Story: Hanuman Meets Rama

Hanuman met Rama when he was a minister to Sugriva, who was the brother of King Vali. Rama and his brother Lakshmana were searching for Rama's wife Sita. Rama was looking for Sita because she had been kidnapped by the evil demon Ravana. Does anyone know what a demon is? Demons were a race of people that lived on the Earth millions of years ago. Not all of them were bad, but most of them were inclined to do bad things. That is why Rama was sent to Earth, in order to stop the evil demons from terrorizing the gods and humans.

Rama was very upset about losing Sita. Have you ever been somewhere and not been able to find your Mother and Father? This is the way Rama felt. He felt lost without her.

While Rama and Lakshmana were wandering through the forest looking for Sita, Hanuman and Sugriva spotted them. "What handsome youths!" thought Hanuman. He changed himself into a youth and came and asked them what they were doing there. "We are looking for Rama's wife, Sita" said Lakshmana. She has been abducted. Do you have any sign of her?

Hanuman introduced them to Sugriva. "Some time ago, we saw a huge demon flying through the sky with a maiden in his hands" said Sugriva. "She dropped this" he said, showing them a piece of cloth and jewelry. Hope sprang in Rama's heart. The items belonged to Sita. Before long, a friendship emerged between Rama and Sugriva. Sugriva agreed to use all his resources to help Rama find Sita, provided that Rama removes his brother Vali from the Kingship of all

the monkeys and bears, which he ruled. Rama helped Sugriva regain his honor and made him king of Kishkindha.

Hanuman and his comrades were sent all over the South of India to look for Sita. They got to the very end of the South of India but found no sign of Sita, even though they looked high and low. "What shall we do?" wondered Prince Angada, who is son of Vali. Everyone was very discouraged. "Perhaps we should just stop eating and let ourselves die" suggested one of them.

Fortunately, there was a big vulture named Sampati. Sampati took sympathy on the group and said "Because I am a vulture, my eyes are extremely sharp. A long ways from here is an island called Lanka. On that island the demon Ravana lives. Ravana is the one who kidnapped Sita. You will find her there."

This helped the group a lot. They became very excited. But how could they get to the island to verify that Sita was there? There was no bridge. They didn't have a boat. They didn't have any airplane. What could they do? Prince Angada thought he might be able to jump that far, but he probably couldn't jump back. There was a very ancient and powerful bear with them named Jambavan. He said he was too old to make the jump. Everyone looked at Hanuman. They reminded him that he had great strength. "Yes – I can jump there and come back with no trouble at all!" said Hanuman.

He got up on top of a hill. He pressed his feet deep down into the Earth. There was such a rumbling and pressure that all the snakes had to come out of their holes! All the lions and tigers came out of their caves. The birds all flew out from the trees. All the flowers and fruits began to fly off the trees. Then he pressed off and the whole hill shook!

Flying across the ocean at supersonic speed, he had various adventures. While he was flying a big sea serpent, like a dragon came out of the water. She had a huge mouth. She said to him – "Please enter my mouth, I am very hungry." Hanuman was very polite. He said "May I please come back after I have finished my mission for Sri Ram? After I am finished, then you can eat me." The monster said "No, I need to eat you right now because I am hungry!" Hanuman made himself 100 times bigger, 10 miles across, so she could not get him in her mouth. So she made her mouth bigger so she could swallow him. So Hanuman made himself 50 miles wide! She made her mouth even bigger! Then he made himself 100 miles wide. She increased the size of her mouth even bigger! Then Hanuman had a thought. He made himself

as small as a little bird, and flew right through the mouth and out the other side, before she knew what he was doing!

The serpent was actually Surasa, wife of Rishi Kashyapa and Mother of Indra, King of the Gods. “Very good Hanuman!” she said. “The gods sent me her to test you and see how clever you are. We have high hopes for what you and Sri Ram will accomplish here.” So Hanuman flew on, and eventually landed on Lanka, where he had even more adventures which we’ll learn about next week.

CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

- 4 Big seaserpant
- 6 Son of Vali
- 8 Hanuman is an incarnation of the god
- 10 Indra's father
- 12 The vulture who told the vanaras about Lanka
- 13 Rama's brother
- 14 Sugriva's brother

DOWN

- 1 King of vanaras
- 2 King of gods
- 3 The island that Ravana lived on
- 5 The demon who kidnapped Sita
- 7 Sugriva's kingdom
- 9 The bear with the Vanaras
- 11 Sugriva's minister
- 12 Sri Rama's wife

Drawing Exercise: Use Crayons to Color Hanuman

