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SAI SANDESH

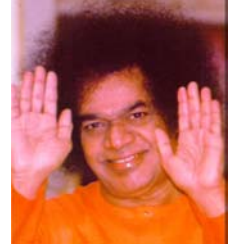
The Monthly Newsletter of Om Sai Mandir

June 2005; Volume 2, Issue 6

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Love All, Serve All

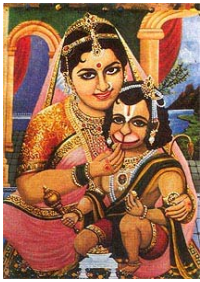
Hanuman Jayanti Special Issue



(Image Credit: ramayana.com)

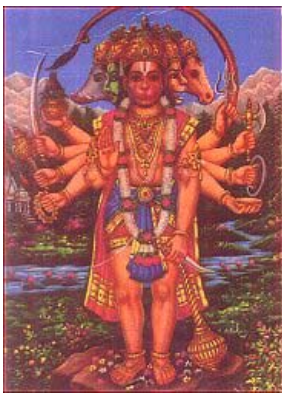
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LORD HANUMAN: THE CHOSEN MESSENGER



In the epic Ramayana, there is one hero who is at once endearing, valourous, intelligent, humble, and the very epitome of devotion and loyalty. He, the life-breath of Lord Rama, is none other than Hanuman. Brihaspati, the preceptor of gods, had an attendant by the name of Punjikasthala. She was cursed to

(Image Credit: pages.prodigy.net/wet_paint/hanuman/pictures/baby.jpg) assume the form of a female monkey. The nature of the curse was such that it would be removed only when she gave birth to the incarnation of Lord Shiva. In accordance with the curse, she was born as Anjana, the wife of Kesari (named for being brave as a lion). As Anjana, she performed intense austerities to appease Lord Shiva. Pleased with her devotion and piety, Lord Shiva granted her the rare boon of being His mother.



The birth. Dashratha, the King of Ayodhya, was given the sacred payasa (pudding) by Agni Deva (The God of Fire) in response to his plea for children. The payasa was of a divine sort and with its blessings, Lord Rama, along with Lakshmana, Bharata, and Shatrughna incarnated in the family of Dashratha. In accordance with divine will,

(Image Credit: saigan.com) a portion of the payasa was snatched by a bird. On its way, the bird dropped the pudding. Pavana Dev (The God of Wind), delivered this pudding in the hands of Anjana Devi, who was then engaged in worship. As a result of this, Lord Shiva incarnated as Hanuman. As Pavana Dev was instrumental in this birth, he is also known as the god-father of Hanuman.



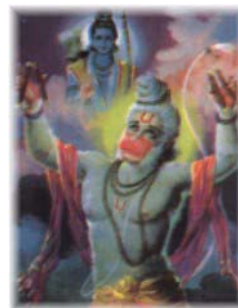
On Anjaneya's (another name for Hanuman) birth, Anjana was freed from her curse and was immediately restored to her heavenly form. As she was leaving, Vayu Putra (the son of wind) questioned her about his future. She assured him that he would never be destroyed and that fruits as ripe as the

(http://in.geocities.com/rangayanrangoliagashi/pages/10MAYUR-Maruti_jpg.htm) rising sun would be his food. Thinking that the glowing sun was his food, the divine child leapt across the sky. As

he was nearing the sun, the planet Rahu, who was well-known for causing troubles, complained to Indra about a child trying to eclipse the sun. Hanumanji had almost devoured the sun, when Indra (the King of Devas) struck the child's jaw with a thunderbolt, causing him to fall earthward. Pavana Dev was infuriated on learning of the treatment his god-son had received. He immediately retreated with Hanuman to the nether region. As wind departed from the earth, all the creatures were unable to breathe. In order to pacify Pavana Dev, all the gods and goddesses conferred great boons, including the boon of immortality, on baby Hanuman. The blessings of all the divine dieties made Hanuman invincible and more powerful than any other being.

The Curse. As a young child, Hanuman was as naughty as other children, with the exception that his naughtiness was often accompanied by an exhibition of his vast powers. Hanumanji could throw mountains as if they were mere pebbles, could swell to the size of the universe, and could perform feats that no being could ever dream of. In childish pranks, he would create whirlwinds and disturb the penance of sages. In fear of his great powers, the sages, in collaboration with Lord Brahma (the creator), devised a plan. They cursed Hanuman to forget his powers; his powers were to be restored to him only on meeting Rama.

Education. Anjaneya mentally chose the Sun God as his preceptor. He reverently approached the divinity with a request to learn scriptures. Surya, the Sun God, agreed but pointed to the fact that it was not possible for him to stop his journey across the sky as that would cause chaos in the world. Hanumanji, the ocean of intelligence, however did not see this as a problem. He assumed a mighty form and concentrated on his lessons while traversing backward. In a record time of sixty hours, Hanumanji had mastered all the scriptures. Pleased with the progress of his divine disciple, Surya declared the period of preceptorship as complete. On being pressed for accepting fees, Surya requested Hanumanji to assist his son, Sugriva, the Monkey King, as a minister and constant companion.



(Image credit: dalsabzi.com) with Sugriva, he once met Lord Rama, when the latter was in a period of exile and was

searching for Mother Sita, who was abducted by Ravana. During their search for Sita, Rama and Lakshmana visited the vicinity of Pampa Lake situated at the base of the mountain Risyamukha. Sugriva, along with his ministers was hiding in this region in fear of his brother, Bali. When Rama and Lakshmana arrived, Sugriva suspected that they were sent by his enemy Bali. To ascertain their intent, Sugriva sent Hanuman in the guise of a brahmin. Lord Rama immediately recognized the brahmin as his chosen devotee, Hanuman. Hanuman too reverentially clasped Rama's feet and was overjoyed.

Rama dispatched the monkey army, headed by Hanuman, to search for Sita. In order to find Mother Sita, Hanuman had to cross the Indian Ocean. For the sake of his master, Hanuman assumed a mighty form and leapt across the entire Indian Ocean, as if in child's play. On reaching Lanka, he created havoc in the demon city, uprooted trees, destroyed demons, consoled Mother Sita, and burnt the entire city of Lanka. Undaunted by the demon hosts, Hanuman returned in the service of his master with a message from the divine mother.



In the days that followed, there was a most terrifying war between Lord Rama and the demons. Hanumanji played a major role in this war and destroyed the demons, as if they were mere flies. His exploits in the holy war are so expansive that millions of books have not been able to recite his glory in all completeness. On one occasion Lakshmana, Rama's younger brother, was wounded by a poisonous spear, rendering him unconscious. The antidote to this injury was a certain herb that could be found only in the Himalayan region. Hanumanji flew from Lanka to the Himalayas in search of the herb; on reaching the Himalayas, he located the mountain but could not find the right herb. In order to save time, he lifted the entire mountain and brought it to Lakshmana's rescue. It was with Hanuman's help that Rama overcame the terrifying demons of Lanka and ultimately succeeded in rescuing Mother Sita. Mother Sita was so pleased with his loyalty that she blessed him with infinite powers.

His devotion. There has never been a devotee as devoted, and dear, to the Lord as Anjaneya. Ceaslessly chanting Rama's name, Hanuman accomplished the most impossible of feats. His devotion was so great that the Lord himself used to feel indebted to him. Hanuman's

entire life is an offering to his master. Once Hanuman witnessed Mother Sita wearing the sacred saffron mark on her forehead. He immediately questioned her about the practice. The mother indicated that she wore the mark so that her husband would enjoy a long and healthy life. Hanumanji immediately smeared his entire body with saffron powder. When Rama questioned Hanuman about this, he responded saying that if the mother's little mark could give Rama a long life, smearing the same all over his body would give Rama a much, much longer life. Anjaneya's devotion brought tears to the Lord's eye.

There is another incidence that demonstrates Hanuman's devotion. On returning from Lanka, Rama was distributing gifts to all His subjects, to the exception of Hanuman. Mother Sita questioned this discrimination. The all-knowing Lord responded saying that to Hanuman, these gifts were too trivial.



He sought only the Lord and nothing else. Not satisfied at this, the mother gifted Hanuman with a pearl necklace. Immediately, Hanumanji started biting the pearl into pieces and discarded them as if they were mere pebbles. All those witnessing the incidence were dumbfounded and scolded Anjaneya for wasting the precious necklace. To their questions, Hanuman responded that he was trying to find his Rama in those pearls and without his presence those pearls were mere dust to him. To illustrate, Hanumanji immediately tore his chest and to the astonishment of all present, they saw in his heart the images of Rama and Sita, along with Lakshmana.

Hanumanji's role was not restricted to the Ramayana period. He was as active during the Mahabharata and even assisted Krishna and Arjuna in the war against evil forces. He is so pure and powerful that evil forces flee at the very sound of his name. When Lord Rama was departing to His divine realm, he asked Anjaneya to stay back and protect His devotees. Hanumanji, in place of liberation, chose the boon of staying on earth till the name of God is chanted. Hanumanji is still actively assisting pure devotees of God.



Lord Hanuman symbolizes strength and victory and it is said that wherever there is Hanuman, there is victory. The picture to the left is said to be an original picture of Hanuman that was taken recently by a devotee.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

“Man must always proceed toward 'Balam' (strength); he should not take to untruth, wickedness and crookedness, all of which denote the fundamental trait of cowardice. This cowardice is born out of accepting an inferior and false image of oneself. You believe that you are the husk, the outer covering. But, truly you are the kernel, the core. This false identification is the fundamental mistake. All Sadhana (spiritual effort) must be directed towards the removal of the husk and the revelation of the kernel. So long as you say 'I am so and so', there is bound to be fear, but once you say and feel 'I am Brahman', you get unconquerable strength.” - Baba

UPCOMING EVENTS

June

Wednesday, June 01: Hanuman Jayanti

Sunday, June 19: Father's Day

July

Monday, July 04: America's Independence Day

Thursday, July 21: Guru Poornima/Vyasa
Poornima

OM SAI MANDIR'S DAILY ACTIVITIES

DAILY ARATIS:

Kakad Arati	8.00 A.M.
Madhyana Arati	12.00 P.M.
Dhoop Arati	6.00 P.M.
Sheja Arati	8.00 P.M.

SPECIAL BHAJANS:

Every Thursday	7.00 P.M. – 8.30 P.M.
Every Sunday	2.00 P.M. – 3.00 P.M.

SAI NAAM JAP (CHANTING BABA'S HOLY NAME):

Last Saturday of Every Month 8.30 A.M. – 8.30 P.M.

STOTRAS (CHANTING SAHASRANAM, BABA'S 108 NAMES, ETC.): Daily 12.30 P.M. and 6.30 P.M.

ANNADAN [FOOD SERVICE]: Daily at the Temple
ANNADAN [FOOD SERVICE] FOR HOMELESS

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Every Saturday at 1 p.m 29th
and 1st Ave. For more information, call the temple at:
(718) 461-0454.

PUJA SPONSORSHIP

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Satyanarayana Vrata.....	\$81
Vahana Puja.....	\$15
Annadan.....	\$251

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To sign-up, simply visit the temple's website at:

<http://www.omsaimandir.org>

Once there, submit your email address. It takes less than a minute to sign-up.

REMEMBER, HE IS OMNIPRESENT

Thirupandar was a great devotee of lord Shiva. Once he happened to visit a famous pilgrim center dedicated to his favorite Lord. After the darshan of Siva, he felt that he was too exhausted and weak to walk further, and therefore rested for the night in the temple itself. Early in the morning, the priest entered the temple with a potful of water to perform abhishek to the Lingam. To his utter consternation, he found an aged man sleeping right in front of the shrine with legs stretched towards the sanctum sanctorum.

He got wild at the sight and sprinkled some water on the face of the old man. But, there was no sign of any movement. So, he bent down and tried to lift the old man's legs. Immediately the old man opened his eyes and said in an appealing tone, "My dear Son! Why are you pulling my legs?" The priest shouted "Oh! For your age, is it not shameful on your part to indulge in such a sacrilegious act of stretching your legs toward God?" The

old man said calmly, "My dear son, I feel a cramp in my legs and cannot get up. Will you place my two feet in a direction you like, where God is not? I shall certainly get up after a while." The priest did not want to waste time in arguing with the man, so he held the two feet of the man, lifted them up and placed them in the opposite direction. Suddenly, there sprang out a lingam from underneath the feet! The priest tried to place the old man's feet in another position, but there again sprang up another lingam! In a minute, the place was full of lingams! The priest fell at the feet of the old man and said, "Oh revered one! You must be a realized soul. Pardon me for my insulting words and actions." The old man got up and said "My dear son, have you not read in the scriptures that God is omnipresent? Can you limit God to a place and to an image or a picture or in a frame? Of course we have temples with idols and pictures of worship; but they only help devotees to direct their faith and devotion to God as embodiments of the various Divine shaktis in this vast boundless universe. The Supreme Creator, the Almighty God is only one, and remember, He is Omnipresent."

- Adapted from *Oka Chinna Katha* by N. Kasturi

DEVOTEES' EXPERIENCES

Dr. T. Vytautas (39), Doctor of Human Sciences from Lithuania, relates a few of his experiences of the Divinity of Bhagavan in his own words. (Continued from May Issue)

"In 1999, I came to Prasanthi Nilayam. One night I had a dream in which Shirdi Sai appeared and transformed into a roaring lion about to attack. It later turned into Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who told me that one of the persons I have known well was going to commit suicide. 'It is bad', Swami told me in my dream, and 'so she would be born as a cat'. 'No, Swami', I prayed to Him intensely, 'pray don't let it happen'. Then I woke up when I heard a shriek from a lady in the nearby ladies shed. I went there. A scorpion bit two ladies there. I helped to take them to the hospital. The doctors attended on them and assured that no harm would come to them, as the scorpion was not a dangerous one. In the same year, a lady called Mrs. Ona came to me and said, 'pray for me. I need Swami'. I then put the ring Swami gave me to her forehead allowing the stone in the ring touch her face. After a month she came to me again. 'I am a cancer patient suffering a lot', she told me, 'I went to the doctor after you prayed for me, keeping your ring on my forehead. My doctor told me that I recovered from cancer completely. I thank you.' 'Thank, Swami', I told her and felt immense joy that Swami allowed me to

act as His instrument to help and serve others. In 2002, I came to Prasanthi Nilayam for Shivarathri. A few days before the festival, a plump lady began to cry that her heart was thumping rapidly. I took her to the doctor. 'What medicines are you using?' the doctor asked her. 'I forgot them in the room', she replied, 'I don't remember the names. I will die. Oh! My Lord!' she began to cry. I went out and got some Ayurvedic medicine but her heartbeat did not return to normalcy. I took some water and poured on the stone of my ring that Swami gave me. I collected that water and gave her as teertham. Next day she told me that she was better relieved of her cardiac throb and felt happy.

In 1999, I went to a forest along with a lady near Vilnius. There a small insect bit her. If a red patch appears on the skin where the insect bit, it is considered infectious and may cause brain fever. It could be fatal. I went to my house, collected vibhuti and prayed for her intensely. I recited ashtottara sata namas of Bhagavan and returned to her with vibhuti. She was talking to me and, suddenly, turned towards the place where the insect bit her. To the surprise of both of us, we saw a cross, imprinted on the patch on her skin. As I was praying to Swami, the cross gradually disappeared. I applied vibhuti and put a pinch of it in her mouth. She went to a doctor who brushed it off as a minor affair and not a dangerous one. She, being a Christian, felt reassured on seeing a cross that appeared miraculously at the affected part of the skin. Once in July 2004, I had a dream. In it Swami appeared with the face of Hanuman. He was of muscular build sporting the attire of an aboriginal of Australia. We went in search of Him. 'He appears now and after a few seconds disappears. He then reappears.' Like that he gave us darshan in the dream. In 2004, I had another dream. Swami and I were walking along. Swami was wearing His sandals. By mistake I tread on it, and the sandal was broken. I felt sorry and began to cry. I also offered to get new pair of sandals for Swami. But Swami politely declined my offers in the dream. He then walked along. After going some distance, He suddenly turned back. He gave me smilingly a wave of His hand by way of blessing. Earlier to this incident, I had information about the fall of Swami and the surgery He underwent. I was wondering why this happened to Bhagavan. Perhaps this dream may have been an answer to my doubt. I do not remember the year but I had a dream one day in which Swami appeared. I went towards Him in the dream carrying a coconut, which I offered to Him. He gave me padanamaskar and blessed me. He then told me, 'you are all born out of the earth. I am from the skies'. The dream ended.'

Source:

<http://www.vedamu.org/forum/ExperienceoftheDivinityofBhagavan/DrTVytautas.asp>

TEMPLE JOURNAL

EASWARAMMA DAY, MAY 06, 2005



CHILDREN'S CORNER

Sai Ram Children,

Hope you enjoyed reading the story of Lord Rama's birth and how he helped Vishwamitra perform the sacred fire sacrifice in the previous issue of the newsletter. As promised, here's another story; this story is about how Lord Rama got married to Sita.

The day after Vishwamitra performed the fire sacrifice, Lord Rama, Lakshmana and Vishwamitra went to the city of Mithala. The king of Mithala, Janaka had invited Vishwamitra to attend a fire sacrifice that he was performing. King Janaka was a pious king and had received a bow from Lord Shiva. He was looking for a strong and brave prince for his beautiful daughter named Sita. So he had arranged the fire sacrifice and vowed that he would give his daughter in marriage to the prince who could string the heavy bow that Lord Shiva had granted him. Many princes came and tried but no one could even move the bow.



When Vishwamitra arrived with Lord Rama and Lakshmana, King Janaka received them with respect. Vishwamitra then asked

King Janaka to show the bow to Lord Rama. Lord Rama stood up with humility and lifted the bow with ease. He placed one end of the bow against his toe and as he tried to bend the bow to string it, the bow broke into two pieces. Everyone around was shocked to see this. Sita was happy to see this too because she liked Lord Rama from the time she first saw him.

When King Dasharatha (Lord Rama's father) was informed, he gladly agreed for the marriage and came to Mithala. The other three brothers Lakshmana, Shatrughna, and Bharata also got married at the same time. King Janaka made arrangements for the wedding and Vishwamitra blessed them.

Lord Rama and Sita lived happily in Ayodhya for 12 years. Everyone in the kingdom was very happy with Lord Rama.

Courtesy:

<http://www.indolink.com/Kidz/Stories/ramayan a1.html>

**DEVOTEES ARE REQUESTED
TO CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES,
EXPERIENCES, STORIES,
ETC. FOR PUBLICATION IN
THE UPCOMING ISSUES OF
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AN APPEAL

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