

50. When he was once asked where Ram and Sita resided, he tore open his chest and showed Ram and Sita sitting in his heart.

51. He is easily pleased and can do wonders and that too he does quickly. Therefore, the *Hanuman Chalisa* is a favorite with all *Hindus* and they *chant it in time of danger* or in prayer to Hanuman from where they can get to Ram and Sita easier. 52. He has become a very powerful god for all shades of Hindu and even people of other religions are seen asking him for boons when in difficulty — *Tuesday* is his day. Even *Shanni* is soft towards him and accepts the prayer to Hanuman on this day with great devotion.

53. *Hanuman is not married*. He is shown with a *gada* in one hand and the *mountain* in the other. His *vehicle* is the *wind*.

54. This aspect meant for the human being to realize that the animal world is as close to the heart of the almighty as they are.

55. There is always an underlying truth in all the stories concerning the gods and demi-gods and the avatars and that is why they have withstood the test of time and are as alive as they were when conquered up.

## Review Questions:

Answer the following questions in your notebook.

1. Write in brief the four legends regarding the birth of Hanuman.
2. What is the function of Hanuman as a god? Does that in anyway contradict Ganesh's function?
3. How did Hanuman receive such strength and might? Is it somehow similar to how Ganesh became so popular? Explain.
4. Why did Hanuman smear *sindhoor* all over himself when he saw Sita putting *sindhoor* on herself?
5. Where did Ravan get his strength and power? Does it create a *double-standard* when Ram killed Ravan? Explain.
6. Hindu scriptures says that Bali will go to heaven because he was killed by god (Ram). Does that mean if we live unrighteous life and when god kills us, we will still go to heaven? Where is our karma? Please explain.

## Lesson 13 Hanuman



HANUMAN BRINGING THE MOUNTAIN TO LANKA

NAME: _____	DATE: _____
ID: _____	PERIOD: _____

1. The most worshipped and remembered demi-god — especially in time of **trouble or danger** — is **Hanuman**. It is quite normal for a Hindu, educated he or she may be — to invoke the name of Hanuman **whenever in distress**, and offer **offerings** to the deity as soon as the danger or fear has passed.

2. Hanuman has never claimed to be a god, but calls himself the most faithful and **devoted servant of Ram**, an avatar of Vishnu in the **Treta Yug**. Hanuman, as he is lovingly called by all Hindus, is not even supposed to be a human being, but a monkey who met Ram and Lakshman while they were searching for Sita — the wife of Ram who had been kidnapped by **Ravan**, the King of **Sri Lanka**. He most probably belonged to **a tribe who looked like monkeys**.

3. After that he became the greatest devotee of Ram and Sita. He is always there with one who praises Ram and Sita. They say that a seat must always be prepared for him and kept empty in any place where **Ram Charitra Manas** is being read or a gathering of **Ram's** devotees gather to sing his praise.

4. He will rush to help anyone who prays to him sooner than any other god, and is easily pleased or annoyed. One has to be careful and offer offering in his temple as soon as the desire of the person is fulfilled or **he might get angry and send a monkey to remind** one of the promise made to him. 5. The monkey may just jump on a tree or sit on a roof without harming anyone, but it is true that if a monkey is paying special attention to you, it means you have forgotten to offer offerings in a Hanuman temple as promised earlier.

6. Hanuman was the chief lieutenant of **Sugreev**, a prince who had been ousted by his elder brother **Bali** from **Kishkunda** (in Madhya Pradesh) from their kingdom, in the mistaken belief that Sugreev had usurped the throne while Bali was fighting with a demon and consequently was absent from the kingdom for quite a while.

7. According to an agreement between the two brothers, Sugreev would ascend the throne if Bali did not return after a stipulated period. Bali got late in coming and found his brother on the throne. This angered him so much that instead of

41. Then he led Ram towards where his wife was imprisoned. Ram made war on Ravan, and during the war **Lakshman got hit by an arrow** which injured him, and Hanuman was sent to Sri Lanka to bring the personal physician of Ravan. The physician prescribed the **Sanjeevni booti** to heal Lakshman. This herb grew only on the Himalayas. 42. Hanuman was entrusted the task of bringing the herb from there. On reaching the Himalayas he could not distinguish the plant from the other herbs, so he brought the whole mountain to Lanka thus saving Lakshman's life and earned the gratitude of Ram for all times. 43. Ram declared that he himself could never repay Hanuman for what he had done for him and from then on anyone who pleased Hanuman would please him and reach him at the end of life, all his or her sins would be forgiven.

44. Hanuman was then sent to Ayudhya to inform the family and the people of Ayudhya that Ram had won the war against Ravan and would return with Sita and Lakshman along with the whole tribe that had helped him and **reach in twenty days** time after fourteen years of exile. 45. Thus **Dessara** is the **day of victory for Ram at Sri Lanka**. Hanuman reached Ayudhya and gave the good news. The mothers of Ram and the brothers were overjoyed. 46. They lighted lamps in and around their houses and paths. The next day was the day of revelry and joy and the whole of Ayudhya became a fairyland with every home lighted with earthen lamps and decorated and painted anew. 47. There was much dancing and joy as Ram, Lakshman and Sita arrived by the **Uran katolah** (flying chariot) which they took from Ravan's kingdom. 48. It is said that Ravan had taken it by force from his half brother **Kuber**, the custodian of all the wealth of **Aryavarta**. The day Ram, Sita and Lakshman arrived at Ayudhya is celebrated as **Diwali** and comes after **twenty days** after **Dessara**.

49. Once when Hanuman saw Sita putting **sindhoor** on the parting on her hair, he asked her why she did so. She told him it was a token to show how much she loved Ram. Hanuman could not wait for another moment and smeared **sindhoor** all over his body, face and arms. Ever since then his image is always covered with **sindhoor**, in every temple in the country.

33. **Brahma** was also there and he **named him Hanuman**. He told the gods that this child would play wonders on this earth to the amazement of even the gods. The child was given all the knowledge by the sun god and the god **Varun** made him immune to water. 34. Hanuman became extremely strong and was known as **Bajrang Bali** (the thunderbolt) while being taught by the sun, he got so exposed to it that his skin got very tanned and his whole body became red in the process.

35. As a child Hanuman was very naughty although so very strong that he created problems for the **rishis**. One of them cursed him by saying that he would **become unconscious of his own strength** from then on and **until someone reminded him** of it he would feel like any other person in strength. He could also expand his body and **become very tall and large**, or diminish himself and **became very tiny** — at his will.

36. While staying with Sugreev after he became king of Kishkunda, Ram entrusted Hanuman **with his own ring** and sent him to Sri Lanka to inform Sita that he was close by and that he would come soon to her rescue. **Jamvant** the bear **reminded Hanuman of his strength and that he could fly** as he was in a quandary as to how to cross the ocean. 37. Soon Hanuman arrived at the abode of Sita, who was living in a small garden outside the capital of Sri Lanka. Ravan used to come everyday and trouble her, demanding her consent to marry him, which she has vehemently been refusing. Ravan had been cursed that if he took any woman by force, he would die. Therefore, he could not force her. 38. Anyway, Hanuman dropped the ring into Sita's lap from a tree and introduced himself when she looked up. Soon with her permission he created havoc in the garden by eating up all the fruits and uprooting all the trees, etc. and creating chaos.

39. When caught by the men of Lanka and produced before Ravan it was decided to **set fire to his tail**, as a monkey loves his tail. Everyone was shocked to see **Hanuman elongating his tail** to such an extent that the fire never reached his body. 40. Hanuman then jumped on a tree and from there ran amuck all over Sri Lanka and burnt down the city which was reputed to be made of gold, so rich the kingdom of Ravan was supposed to be.

understanding that it was his own fault, he threw Sugreev out of the kingdom with some of the Sugreev's faithful followers. Bali also took Sugreev's wife as one of his own.

8. So Sugreev lived in constant fear of his brother and hid himself in the jungles of **Kishkunda**. He was afraid of any one who ventured near his hide out. On seeing the two youths coming that side, he sent Hanuman to find out if they were spies of Bali! 9. On learning that they were the sons of **King Dasrath**, he welcomed them with great honor. Ram was naturally very sympathetic with Sugreev on hearing of Bali having taken Sugreev's wife as his own Sita had been taken by Ravan. 10. They decided to wage a war with Bali, in which **Ram killed Bali secretly** by hiding behind a tree and shooting an arrow when Bali's back was turned towards him. Although Bali went to heaven straight because he had been killed by Vishnu himself, still he asked Ram before he died as to the unethical method that was employed in killing him. 11. The reply was that taking a woman against her wishes was the greatest of crimes in the scriptures and all methods were justified in bringing the culprit to a just end. 12. Well, this incident is even today a very controversial subject and in the eyes of many has lowered the prestige of Ram, and is being still argued by great philosophers, some in defense of the act and some against it.

13. Hanuman took Ram with such devotion that even when Sugreev was crowned king, he forsook his allegiance to him and could think of nothing else except to serve Ram and Sita in every way possible and always remained with Ram.

14. Hanuman's birth is a mystery and no one exactly knows who his father was. Of course, **Anjani** is his mother and she was the wife of **Kesari** and both were faithful to Sugreev and lived in the jungles during Sugreev's banishment, but Hanuman is described as Shankar Suvan (son of Shankar) or Vayu putra (son of Vayu) or **Shiva Himself in the garb of Hanuman**. He is even portrayed as Ram's brother.

15. In the *Shiv Puran* and some other scriptures, it is mentioned that during the churning of the ocean, Vishnu had to take the form of a beautiful woman named *Mohini* to enchant the asurs and lure them away while the gods took the amrit to make them immortal. 16. Shiva was very susceptible to the charms of beautiful women. During this incident he also ran after *Mohini* in his sexual lust, but prematurely ejaculated. 17. The seed of Shiva was too precious to be wasted, so the *sages collected* it in *some leaves* and later implanted it into *Anjani's womb*. Hanuman was thus born and is Shiva's son.

18. Another legend relates that Shiva was very keen to witness the reincarnation of Vishnu as Ram on the earth. Ravan, as a great devotee of Shiva, received boons from him whereby he could not be killed by anyone of the gods. 19. He wasn't concerned about the danger from the human race and the animals, as he could easily conquer them. Therefore, Ram came as a human being and Shiva decided to be a monkey and helped Ram to kill Ravan who had become a demon.

20. Shiva realized his mistake in granting him (Ravan) the boon. Shiva is also the god of all animals; therefore, it did not bother him to take the form of a monkey. He stayed very close to Ram, after he became acquainted with him in the guise of Hanuman.

21. One more legend in the Anand Ramayan tells the story of a *fairy named Suvarchala*, who tried to entice the creator himself. Brahma cursed her to become a vulture and on her pleading relented and told her that in Treta Yug, she could steal some butter from the portion of Keikeys' and then would become the beautiful fairy again. 22. That butter contained the seed that had the sperm of the almighty. It happened as predicted but this fairy in the form of the vulture could not carry this butter in her beak as it proved too hot. 23. She dropped it in the forest of Kishkunda where Anjani got hold of it and ate it up. Hanuman was born to her because of the sperm in the butter. Thus he became a brother of Ram, Lakshman, Bharat and Shatrughan.

24. The fourth legend describes *Vayu* as having embraced *Anjani* and getting her pregnant, since Anjani and Kesari could not conceive as a couple. Anjani was reincarnation of a sage's wife who had unwittingly got cursed by her husband to become a monkey in *Treta Yug* and would be only redeemed by having *Hanuman* as her son. 25. Vayu god gave her a boon that he will father a son for her as Kesari was not able to. Thus Anjani agreed on the advice of a sage named *Matange*. This is a story featured in the *Vaishnava* section of the *Skand Puran* and also in the *Valmiki Ramayan* and is the most accepted version of today.

26. *Kesari* of course accepted Hanuman as his son without fuss as was the custom of those times.

27. The birthday of Hanuman is celebrated on the *full moon night* somewhere *between 15th of March and 15th April*. When the child was born Anjani named him *Sunder* as he had the *most beautiful physique*. He was a *very strong child* in any case.

28. Once as a baby, Sunder was left alone sleeping in a cave. He woke up and found no one there. He was feeling very hungry and could find nothing in the cave to eat. He looked out and saw the Sun just coming out, looking like a red fruit. 29. Since Vayu was his father and he could fly easily he flew right up to the Sun and gobbled it up and there was complete darkness in the three worlds.

30. The gods got very disturbed and tried to get the sun out of Sunder's mouth but the boy charged at them — even with his mouth full. *Indra* threw his thunderbolt on him which *hit him on his chin and made him dislodge the sun*. Although the chin later healed yet it has still got a bit out of shape. 31. Of course, the wind god was very angry and stopped blowing his breeze which made the gods very uncomfortable and the inhabitants of the world could hardly breathe. 32. The gods then assured Vayu that his son Hanuman would be the strongest being in the three worlds and shall be immortal as the other sages and they —the gods — would never try to get the better of him, if Vayu gave them their breath back and again cooled the three worlds with its breeze.