

SUNDERKAND PATH



Peaceful, without any sins, one who gives liberation, Brahma & Shambu have served you greatest of all the devatas, one who is seen in the human form by Maya, one who washes all our sins, full of pity, best among the Raghuvanshi and the Greatest of all Kings Shree Rama, I salute you. Give all your divine blessings so that we can free our minds from the desires of life & sins.

“ Oh! Treasure of great strength, your body is like “Sumeru” the golden mountain, good qualities are present in you, King of all the monkeys, dearest devotee of Shree Rama, I salute you, oh son of Vayu the wind god.”

Hearing these beautiful words said by Jambuvan, Hanuman told his brothers to eat the fruits & flowers of the forest & faithfully await his return from Lanka after meeting Sita. He also tells them that he had a very happy feeling in his heart & thus was sure that he would be successful in his journey. Saying this, he took leave & leapt towards Lanka.

On the shore he saw a beautiful mountain & playfully leapt on it & prayed to Shree Rama. Then with great force, he resumed his journey to Lanka. The mountain immediately sank to the bed of the ocean once Hanumanji leapt from it. The Ocean thought Hanumanji to be a messenger & therefore he told “Mainak” Mountain to give him shelter so that he could rest & then resume his journey. But Hanumanji just touched him & then with folded hands told him that he would rest only after he had completed his job

The Devatas saw Hanumanji & wanted to test him so they sent “sursa” the mother of snakes to speak to him. She told him that the Devatas had sent her food but Hanumanji told her that only after he accomplished his job of meeting Sita, he would rest & on returning, she could devour him. But Sursa was not willing so Hanumanji told her that she could eat him. He made himself twice as big. Sursa made her mouth 16 times bigger & immediately Hanumanji became 32 times bigger.

In this manner he became double her size each time & then eventually became so small in size that he entered her open mouth & flew out. He then folded his hands & asked for leave. Sursa was very pleased & blessed him. She told him that he was an Ocean of Strength & Wisdom & that he would accomplish Lord Ram’s work.

A demoness used to stay in the ocean, who used to see the shadow of birds in the water & catch them by Maya. Thus they would be unable to fly & fall in the water. She did the same thing for Hanumanji, but he immediately recognised her. He killed her & then flew across to a mountain from which he could see many trees with beautiful flowers & fruits. Then he sat on it & could see the fortress of Lanka. He saw that the city was surrounded by water. There were houses of gold & studded with jewels & gems. He could also see the markets, beautiful roads & well-maintained lanes. Elephants, horses & donkeys were moving around in groups. There were Rakshasas of many kinds who looked very powerful & their strength could not be described. Lanka was full of gardens, lakes, wells, humans, Devatas; Nagas & Gandharva girls who were so beautiful that they could even win the minds of Rishis & Munis. At places there were huge mountains like people who were roaring with energy. They would challenge each other & practice wrestling in the Akharas (schools of learning the art of wrestling.). Strong fighters & warriors were posted at various corners of the city to protect it from enemies.

Tulsidas has mentioned about the people living in Lanka because they were destined to die with the arrows of Shree Ram. Seeing all the scenes, Hanumanji decided that he would have to take the form of a very small insect to get into the city. Thus he took the form of a small fly & with the name of Shree Ram in his heart he flew towards Lanka.

Lankini, a demoness, used to stay near the gate to guard the city. She told Hanumanji that robbers were her food & no one could enter Lanka before taking her permission. Hearing this, Hanumanji gave her one blow, with which she fell down & vomited out blood. She then carefully got up & with folded hands, said that when Ravan received a boon from Brahma, he had told her about the end of the Rakshasa clan. He also told her that when she would get beaten by a monkey, she should realise that the end was near. Putting together all her strength, she then told Hanumanji that she was very happy that she met her end under the hands of Shri Ram’s messenger & that she could meet him. She also told him that all the comforts of heaven are nothing when compared to the teachings & Gyan received in the last minutes of one's life.

Lankini then advises Hanumanji to keep Shri Ram in his heart & do all his duties, by doing thus all foes will turn to friends, the ocean will turn peaceful & even the Sumeru mountain would seem nothing to that person towards whom Shri Ram would look.

Hanumanji searched each & every palace in Lanka & then he entered Ravana's palace, but even there he could not find Sita.

Further, he spotted a beautiful temple, which was surrounded by many tulsi plants & inside was the carving of the bow & arrow of Shri Ram. Seeing this, Kapiraj Hanuman was very happy, but thought to himself that in Lanka, where only demons lived, who could have made Shri Ram's temple. Whilst contemplating, he saw Vibhishan coming in. He immediately decided to speak to him because speaking to a sadhu would never be harmful.

Hanuman then took the form of a Brahmin & spoke to Vibhishan. Vibhishan was so happy that he asked if he was a bhakt of Shri Ram or was he Shri Ram himself & had come to give him darshan in his house as he felt immense pleasure in his heart when he saw him. Hearing this, Hanumanji told him Shri Ram's story & then Vibhishan asked Hanumanji if Shri Ram would accept him because he was very unhappy living in Lanka. But now he was sure that he had the blessings of Shri Ram as he had the good fortune of meeting a saint like him

Bin satsang vivek na hoi, Ram kripa bin sulabh na hoi.

Hanuman then tells Vibhishan that it is Shri Ram's nature to always love his bhaktas. He gives him his own example by saying that he is a monkey who is considered to be low in caste & any person who took their name early morning, would not get food the whole day. Besides all this, Shri Ram has bestowed his blessings on us & saying this there were tears in Hanumanji's eyes. Anybody who does not realise this & runs after the worldly pleasures will always be unhappy. He then told Vibhishan that he wanted to meet Sita Mata. After Vibhishan told Hanumanji about Ashok vatika, he resumed his search in the form of a fly.

Hanuman saw Sita sitting under a tree in the vatika. She looked frail & tired; he observed that she spent the whole night sitting in meditation of Shri Ram.

At that moment Ravan entered the vatika with many Rakshasis. He threatened Sita & told her that she would be very happy if she would marry him. Hearing this, Sita picked up a blade of grass as a shield & told Ravan that he had no idea about the speed & strength of her Lord's arrows & that he would meet his end soon because he had got her in Lanka by deceit. Ravan, in his anger, removed his sword & told Sita that she had insulted him & he could even sever her head from her body if she did not listen to him.

Sita replied to him that she preferred to die by his sword than listen to him. She also told him that Shri Ram's arms were as gentle as a lotus garland but at the same time as strong as an elephant trunk.

Sita then looks at the sword, which was cold & sharp & thinks whether it can lessen her pain, which she is going through on being separated from Shri Ram. Ravan moves

towards Sita, but is stopped by Mandodari, who tells him it is against the valour of a man to raise his hand on a woman.

Ravan then goes home but gives Sita an ultimatum to agree within one month or he will kill her.

Amongst Ravan's Rakshasis there was one "Trijata" who was a bhakt of Shri Ram & was also a Gyani. She explained to the others that they must improve their lives by serving Sita. She also told them of a dream she had seen in which a monkey had entered Lanka & burnt it, killing many Rakshasas. She also saw Ravan sitting on a donkey; naked with his head shaven & all his 20 hands had been cut. She then saw him going towards Yamnagar & Vibhishan ruling over Lanka. She was sure her dream would come true four days later. Hearing this, all the Rakshasis got scared & fell at Sita's feet. Later when Sita was alone with Trijata, she asked her for a solution to her problem, as she no longer could bear being away from Shri Ram. She tells her to bring wood so that she could give up her body, as hearing Ravan's cruel words day after day was a torture to her. Hearing this, Trijata explained & reminded her of Ram's strength & valour & that he would rescue her soon. When Sita was alone she prayed to the Ashoka tree to help her by relieving her of her pain.

Seeing this, Hanuman took out Ram's ring & kept it in front of Sita, the whole tree lit up by its light & Sita picked it up with a sudden happiness. She immediately recognised it as her Lord's but was a little puzzled as to how it had appeared there. She thought to herself that nobody could defeat her Lord & even through Maya one couldn't make such a ring with so much brightness. Thus with many confused thoughts in her mind, she suddenly heard a voice singing the praise of her Lord. Hearing these words, her pain just disappeared & she sat down to listen to these words with great attention.

Hanumanji then came in front of Sita & told her that he was her Lord's messenger & that Ramchandraji had sent the ring for her. Sita was very puzzled as to how her Lord had taken help from a monkey, but Hanumanji cleared all her doubts & explained to her their full story in detail. Hearing his words, Sita felt a certain peace flow in her heart & she soon understood as to why her Lord had sent Hanumanji. Her eyes were filled with tears & her body became cold as she heard the praises of Shri Ram. She asked him about Lakshman & Shri Ram. She told him that her Lord was an Ocean of Love & Peace then why had he been so harsh towards her. Did he ever remember her & would her eyes ever see him again. Unable to speak & tell Hanumanji anything further, she tells him that her Lord had completely forsaken her. Seeing her pain Hanumanji in a very soft & gentle tone tells her that Ram & Lakshman are fine by way of health but they too have a lot of sorrow in their hearts. He then tells her Shri Ram's message in his very own words

"Oh Sita, your departure has left me very unhappy. Everything seems so useless. New leaves on trees look like fire. Nights look like dark nights. The moon looks only a small star; the rain feels like oil instead of cold water. Winds feel hot & poisonous. Things that

used to give pleasure now give immense pain. I do not even have anyone to share my sorrow with. No one knows the depth of our love, only my mind knows that, & that mind is with you.”

Hearing Shri Ram’s message, Sita was filled with love & happiness . Hanuman then tells her that she should keep Shri Ram in her mind & meditate on him because he is the one who blesses all his sevaks & devotees. Shri Ram’s arrows are like fire compared to those of the Rakshasas, therefore there was nothing to fear. Ram could destroy Lanka with his one arrow but he wanted to come himself & take her. Thus he tells her to keep faith & have courage for few more days. Hearing this, Sita gets worried as to how a monkey could fight the powerful Rakshasas. To clear her doubts Hanumanji shows her his actual form as big & as strong as “Sumeru” the golden mountain, & then again transformed himself into his tiny form. Seeing this, Sita feels at peace.

He then tells her that a monkey may not have strength but when he has the blessings of Shri Ram even a small snake can kill an eagle. Sita then gave Hanumanji her blessings, saying that he is a treasure of strength; qualities & may he always have the love & blessings of Shri Ram.

Hearing her words, Hanumanji bows to her feet & with folded hands, takes her permission to eat the fruits from the trees in Ashok Vatika. Hanumanji then creates havoc by breaking all the flowers, uprooting trees & even killing a few of Ravan’s soldiers. The news soon reached Ravan about the disturbance caused by a very heavy monkey in Ashok Vatika & all the loss that he had caused. Ravan immediately sent a few of his strong fighters to kill Hanumanji but they were all sent back wounded & hurt as they were no match for him Akshaykumar was then sent to match the skills of Hanumanji. Seeing him arrive, Hanumanji uprooted a huge tree & threw it at him. The army was crushed & a few soldiers went running back to Ravan telling him that the monkey was very brave. Hearing about the death of his son Akshaykumar, Ravan sent his son Meghnath & told him not to kill Hanuman but to make him a prisoner, as he wanted to see him.

Meghnath was a very brave warrior. Seeing him arrive, Hanumanji uprooted a big tree & crushed Meghnath’s chariot. The rest of the army was so frightened that they started running from one end to the other. When Meghnath & Hanuman were fighting each other it looked as though two elephants were at war. Eventually Meghnath tried the Brahmastra & seeing this Hanuman thought it would be disrespect towards Brahma if he would fight it back. Thus when it came towards him he fell down from the branch off the tree he was sitting on, killing many rakshasas under him. He was thus made a prisoner & taken to Ravan. Seeing this Shivji told Parvati that it was not correct to make Hanumanji a prisoner as he was the messenger of Shri Ram, whose name itself had so much strength that it can free mankind from the cycle of life & death. Therefore Hanumanji on purpose got himself trapped for the accomplishment of his Lord’s task. Hanuman also wanted to meet Ravan. When he reached Ravan’s court he was surprised to see all his courtmen standing in such fear because Ravan was very angry with Hanuman since he had destroyed Ashok Vatika & he also wanted to know why he had come to Lanka’

Hanuman replied to Ravan that he had been sent by Shri Ram who created the universe, the one by whose strength Brahma, Vishnu & Mahesh look after the world, the one who takes birth in the human form to protect the Devatas, the Great One who killed Bali, Khar, Dushan & trishira who were all great warriors & he was the messenger of that Shri Ram whose wife had been carried away by deceit. He told Ravan that he had destroyed Ashok Vatika because he was a monkey by nature & therefore liked to create havoc. He ate the fruits since he was hungry & killed his soldiers because they attacked him.

Hanuman then joined his hands & told Ravan to leave Sita Mata as he came from a very pious family. Shri Ram would forgive as he is an ocean of pity & never refuses his devotees or those who take refuge in him.. He also tells him that Shiv, Vishnu & Brahma will not help him if he goes against Shri Ram. He asks him to give up his ego & gives him a lot of examples about Bhakti, knowledge & Vairagya to which Ravan replies in a conceited tone that he has found a Gyani monkey. But when Hanumanji tells him that his death was very near under the hands of Shri Ram, Ravana's anger knows no bounds. He immediately told his soldiers to kill him, but his courtmen then explained to him that it was unjust to kill a messenger & they should punish him in some other way. Ravan then tells them to put his tail on fire & let him go because only then he can tell his Swami Ramji about Lanka. Hearing this, Hanumanji began to smile, as he understood why Saraswati Goddess had given him such thoughts. Hanumanji's tail was tied up with cloth dipped in ghee but so much was consumed that all the cloth in Lanka was consumed as Hanumanji went on increasing the length of his tail. All the people of Lanka collected to watch the sight. As Hanumanji's tail was set alight he took a very small form & started jumping from one palace on to the other, setting Lanka ablaze. People frantically started running from one place to the other & there was a lot of loss & destruction except for Vibhishan's house which stood quiet & peaceful watching all the other houses go down in flames. Hanumanji did not get hurt by the fire because he was a messenger of Shri Ram the one who himself made fire. Thus after finishing Lanka he plunged into the ocean

He then resumed a small form to meet Sita Mata. He folded his hands & told her that she should give him some remembrance to give Shri Ram. Sita took out one of her bangles & gave it to Hanumanji for Ram. She then tells Hanumanji to tell Shri Ram that since he is the one who is always at peace, does not have any desire, he is the one who blesses the poor & removes all their obstacles, if he did not rescue her within 1 month then he would never see her. Sita is also very sad because Hanumanji is going back but he tells her that their army would soon come to rescue her.

When Hanumanji reached back home all the monkeys were very happy. They kept asking him many different questions & then went to Ramji. Shri Ram & Lakshman were extremely happy to see all the Vanars with Hanuman & Jambvan. Jambvan tells Shri Ram that his devotees will always be happy & that his victory will be known in the 3 worlds. All the Vanars were happy that their mission had been completed. Shri Ram embraced Hanuman & then asked him about Sita.

Hanuman gives him a detailed picture of Sita & her message. He tells Ram that he is the Lord of the 3 worlds then why was he taking so long to rescue his wife. How every second was like a 100 years for her. Hearing his words Ram has tears in his eyes & he tells Hanuman that Sita is his by mind body & speech & no harm can come to her even in her dreams.

Hanuman then narrates his journey to Lanka, how he destroyed Ashok Vatika, frightened all the rakshasas & burnt Lanka.

Shri Ram then tells Sugreev that they should make preparations to march towards Lanka, as there was no reason to delay. He then spoke to the Vanar army & with divine eyes spoke to them of victory. Hearing his words each monkey was filled with so much of energy that they looked like mountains with wings.

Devtas, Munis, Gandharvas & Nags were pleased because they knew that Ravan's end was near.

Once the Vanar army reached the shores of Lanka they started plucking the flowers & eating all the fruits. The people of Lanka were frightened after Hanuman had set fire in Lanka. They used to lock up their homes & wonder who would protect them in troubled times because if the messenger was so powerful & mighty how strong would the Lord itself be. Meanwhile Ravan's wife Mandodari pleaded with him to stop the war & send back Sita, as this would please Shiv & Brahma. She then compares Ram's arrows to poisonous snakes & those of the Rakshasas to frogs & toads. Even harsh words had no effect on Ravan & he just laughed it off, saying that by nature women had a soft heart & even in happy times they got upset. He told her that he had defeated Devtas & Rakshasas so humans & Vanars should be no problem.

Vibhishan also came to Ravan & fell at his feet. He told him that if a person wanted fame & fortune in life, he should not even look at another person's wife. Kam & Krodh always brought about destruction; therefore they should leave everything & take Ram's name since he was the King of all Kings, & would give riches, fame, knowledge & vairagya, destroy enemies & preserve dharma.

Malyawan was a learned mantri in Ravan's court. He also told Ravan that Vibhishan's words were true & felt very peaceful after hearing him, but this angers Ravan because they are in praise of his enemy. Vibhishan also tells Ravan about good & bad thoughts as Subudhi & Kubudhi, where Subudhi will always bring peace, goodwill & happiness but Kubudhi will bring about destruction & unhappiness. He also gives him many examples from the Vedas & Puranas but these only angers Ravan further. Ravan tells him that he was being traitor & taking the enemy's side although he was his brother. Nobody had ever defeated him so he had nothing to fear. Vibhishan then talks to the people of Lanka & warns them that they were in the clutches of Kaal & it was his duty to warn them.

Vibhishan was very anxious to touch Shri Ram's feet, which gave immense pleasure to devotees & bhaktas, whose touch gave freedom to Ahilya, whose feet Sita ever

worshipped & were even present in the heart of Shivji. Thus he feels good fortune coming to him as even Bharat kept Shri Ram's padukas & worshipped them for 14 years.

When the Vanars saw Vibhishan coming towards them they thought he was a spy sent by Ravan. Sugreev asked Ram what had to be done because he knew that the Rakshasas were Mayavi, they could take any noble form & deceive them. Shri Ram tells Sugreev that he cannot refuse him or anybody who came to him for help even if there is deceit & lies no harm will come to them as Lakshman can kill all the Rakshasas in a split second. When Vibhishan was brought in front of Ram he kept staring at him without even blinking his eyes. He kept admiring his posture in his mind, his huge & powerful arms, beautiful lotus-like eyes, broad chest, strong shoulders, & tears literally came to his eyes. Vibhishan then told Shri Ram that since he was Ravan's brother he had a tamsik body, which loved sin; therefore he had come to Ram for help & shelter.

Hearing his noble words, Ram embraced him & told him that though he lived amidst sin & cruelty, he was disciplined & truth was by his side. Vibhishan then told Ram that even God would never help sinners & now that he had got a chance to touch Shri Ram's feet he wanted no more. Hearing this Ram tells Vibhishan that any human being who is a sinner in the world but leaves everything & comes to him for shelter, he is always saved & can even become a sanyasi if he has given up the relations of mother, father, brother, wife, child & house. One who has no desires & considers fear, happiness & pain all equal, such a man is always dear to him. Vibhishan had all these qualities & therefore he was dear to him.

Vibhishan is overwhelmed by his love & asks Ram to give him everlasting Shakti. Ram crowns Vibhishan "King of Lanka" & all the devtas shower flowers & blessings on them. Shri Ram then asks Sugreev & Vibhishan as to how they will cross the mighty ocean, which is full of snakes, fishes & crocodiles. Vibhishan replies to Ram that his one arrow can dry up millions of oceans, but it would be more respectable to take permission from the ocean & ask for a solution. To this Lakshman replied that only a coward would ask for permission & it would be a wastage of time if they would wait further. Ram pacifies Lakshman & then with folded hands sits in deep meditation in front of the ocean.

When Vibhishan left Lanka, Ravan sent two of his soldiers in disguise behind him, but these soldiers were so impressed by Shri Ram's love & acceptance that they came into their original rakshasa form & started singing Shri Ram's praises. Sugreev's vanars caught them & took them as prisoners to Lakshman but he set them free & sent a letter with them for Ravan. Lakshman warns Ravan in his letter that even Vishnu & Brahma cannot save him & he has brought about the destruction of his clan. He asks him to take refuge in his brother Shri Ram's feet or otherwise face his fiery arrows. This immediately brought fear in Ravan, but he put it aside, saying that Lakshman was behaving like a child who wanted to catch the sky while sleeping. Ravan's messengers also plead with him & told him about Ram's mighty vanar sena. They ask him to give up his pride & save the kingdom by returning Sita gracefully.

Shri Ram had been sitting on the bank of the ocean for 5 days but it did not give way, so he asks Lakshman to give him his bow & arrow because it was no use pleading with someone who was stuck in Mamta or giving Gyan to a greedy man. At that instance the Ocean God took the form of a Brahmin & asked for forgiveness, because the sky, wind, water, fire, earth were all made by the same creator. Only by his grace & permission they can do anything not otherwise. It was against Nature for him to dry up but since it was the wish & command of his Lord, he would make way for the army. The Ocean then tells them about the boon received by Nal & Neel & any stone or rock thrown in by them in the water, will always float & never sink. Saying this, he goes back to his abode.

The Sunderkand helps human beings in Kalyug to overcome problems. It has been sung by Tulsidas & anyone who says it, can go through life without pain & difficulty, as Shri Ram is an Ocean of Peace & happiness.