

# HANUMAN

*The Devotion and Power  
of the Monkey God*



VANAMALI

FOREWORD BY SRI KRISHNA DAS



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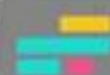
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*The Devotion and Power  
of the Monkey God*

VANAMALI



Inner Traditions  
Rochester, Vermont • Toronto, Canada

*Aum Sri Ganeshaya Namaha!*



Salutations to  
Lord Ganesha!  
May He remove all obstacles on the path of this scribe  
and enable her to write this book on  
the *lilas* of  
Sri Hanuman.



*Aum Anjaneyaaya Vidmahe.*

*Vayu putraaya deemahi,  
Tanno Hanumath prachodayaath.*

I contemplate on Anjaneya,  
I meditate on the son of Vayu,  
May He give me enlightenment.



*Dedicated to my dearest friend, Nilli,  
one of the greatest bhaktas of Sri Hanuman.*

Benediction given by Sri Neeb Karoli Baba  
as conveyed by his chief disciple Sri Siddhi Ma.

Hanuman sama nahi bad bhagi  
Nahi kou Ram charana anuraagi,

Pavana tanaya bala pavana samana



Buddhi viveka vijnana nidhana  
Kavana so kaaj katthin jaga maahi  
Jo nahi chod tatha thum pahi.

There is no one as fortunate as Hanuman, No one who has as much love for  
the feet of Rama,

Son of the wind god, who equals him (the wind) in strength,  
Repository of intelligence, discrimination, and understanding.

O Dear One! If you shower your grace  
No task is difficult in this world.

HANUMAN CHALISA BY TULSIDAS

# HANUMAN

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“Vanamali Devi has done a beautiful and inspiring job of making Hanuman a palpable life, worthy of love, devotion, and respect.”

NAYASWAMI KRIYANANDA, AUTHOR AND SWAMI  
OF THE GIRI (MOUNTAIN) BRANCH OF  
THE ANCIENT SWAMI ORDER

“Vanamali’s work is Universal and helpful for people in all walks of life.”

SHIVARUDRA BALAYOGI MAHARAJ

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*Aum Sri Ramaaya Namaha!*

# Foreword

Sri Vanamali is a rare being. She is a Devotee of the Lord in all his forms who has been blessed with the compassionate desire to communicate his *lilas* (divine acts of play) to the English-speaking world.

In the West, there are many new devotees who desperately need access to the revered ancient Scriptures of India. Sri Vanamali comes as the cool breeze of grace, filling the hearts and minds of the thirsty devotees with the stories of the Lord's joyous play. In this book on Sri Hanumanji, as in all her other books, she gives us access to the inner worlds of our Beloved's *lilas*.

Sri Hanuman is the greatest of all devotees of the Lord. He is a *jnani* (one in complete knowledge) in the fullest sense of the word. He has merged with his Lord, Sri Rama, in his own being, and he sees his Lord in everything and everyone. His realization of the truth does not end there.

*As Sri Krishna says,*

*And when he sees me in all and sees all in me,  
Then I never leave him and he never leaves me.  
And he, who in this oneness of love  
Loves me in whatever he sees,  
Wherever this man may live,  
In truth, he lives in me...*

BHAGAVAD GITA, CHAPTER 6

This is the key to understanding Sri Hanuman. He serves Sri Rama in all beings by removing the obstacles to those beings realizing the truth in themselves. He sees that, in fact, there ARE no "other" beings, only Rama. Motivated by love born of Truth that manifests as compassion for beings who believe themselves to be separate, he works tirelessly to remove their suffering.

Another mystery of Sri Hanuman was revealed by Sri Neem Karoli Baba to one of his great old devotees, Dada Mukerjee. A small party of devotees had, along with Maharaji, climbed to the top of Hanuman Dhara in Chitrakut. They rested by the spring that comes out from the rock at the top of the hill.

Maharaji said to Dada, “This is where Hanumanji came to calm himself and to cool himself off after burning Lanka.”

Then after a few seconds he said very softly, as if to himself, “Of course, Hanumanji was always at peace.”

No matter what he was doing—burning Lanka, destroying the demons, singing Ram Naam, or serving the devotees—Hanuman was never outside of Sri Rama’s being.

May the Lord be gracious to all.

SRI KRISHNA DAS

Sri Krishna Das is well known to all lovers of music, especially in the West, for his numerous recordings of heartrending devotional lyrics. Even though he is known as Krishna Das, he could just as easily be called Ram Das or Hanuman Das, since he is a devotee of both.

*Aum Sri Hanumathe Namaha!*







*Aum Sri Ramachandraaya Namaha!*

## Introduction

*Yatra Yatra Raghunatha Kirtanam  
Tatra Tatra Krita Mastaka anjalim  
Bashpavari pari purna lochanam  
Marutim nammascha raakshasantakam.*

I bow to Maruti, the destroyer of demons,  
Who stands with folded palms,  
In all the places where the glories of Sri Rama are sung,  
Shedding tears of devotion and joy.

RAMACHARITAMANAS BY TULSIDAS

Modern science may claim to have traced the mechanical laws of evolution, but the ancient *rishis* (sages) of India discovered the spiritual law of eternal values called the Sanatana Dharma (eternal law), the divine thrust inherent in the human psyche that enables it to attain greater heights of evolution. This is the great contribution that India has made to the world, one that inspires in human beings a strong desire to shake off their humanity and bring to light the inherent divinity within. This is what is known as enlightenment. Age after age, India has produced enlightened souls who have continuously renewed and refreshed this great *dharma*—the Sanatana Dharma—and made it available to the whole of the human race. The sages wanted our country to progress not just materially but through a constant inner renewal of the cosmic law of righteousness that is guided by the wisdom embedded in our heritage.

The great verse epics of our country called the Mahabharata and Ramayana,

and the massive assemblage of narratives known as the Puranas, are thus storehouses of wisdom, and by reading them, our spiritual evolution will be hastened. Truth is a matter of direct realization by our own individual efforts, but the sages gave us many different methods to attain it. These saints were great souls who were far above the vulgar herd who merely want to see their names emblazoned in anything they write. Thus, their names remain a mystery. We can show our gratitude to them only by trying out the many paths they gave us.

We find a great urge on their part to share their vital experiences with all those who have the hearts to understand. This experience is the highest available to the human psyche and is known as *brahmajnana* (knowledge of Supreme Spirit or Brahman). The knowledge by itself is not the aim of life. It has to become a living understanding in which we actually experience the unity of life underlying all living beings—in fact, the entire cosmos. From this is born an overwhelming love for the whole of creation and a burning desire to see human beings free themselves from the strangling limitations and illusions of this waking world of our common experience. This type of love is totally unselfish, characterized by a deep desire to share one's most cherished possession with the whole of humanity. Thus, we see that the *rishis* tried every means in their power to enable our tragic and ignorant human race to acquire that which was the sumum bonum of human life. Every human being is nothing but a reflection of the divine. Involvement in the illusions of this world alone stops us from realizing our divinity.

The Upanishads give us the path of *jnana*, or spiritual wisdom, which is difficult for many to follow. They appeal only to those who are already endowed with great spiritual leanings. However, it is said that the Absolute, Timeless, and Formless Presence descends to this mortal plane in the form of the gods for certain mysterious purposes of Its own. This is known as the *lila*, or the play of god. The sages who came after the age of the Upanishads were determined to cater to the majority of human beings who might not have had any spiritual leanings at all. They resorted to bringing the truths of the Upanishads forcibly to the minds of the average human being in the form of stories. The sage Vyasa, author of the Mahabharata, was the greatest of these storytellers. He said that if we listen carefully to a story, we will never be the same again. The story, especially if it has some spiritual basis, will worm its way into our heart and break down our self-constructed barriers to the divine. Even if we start off by reading these stories as entertainment, one or two of them will eventually slip

through our defenses and explode the hard shell of our humanity to disclose our divinity. These stories have an inexhaustible vitality in them so that people are never tired of hearing them. They can be listened to or read and pondered over, and thus are capable of promoting in the listener a deep understanding of life, death, and destiny. Every story had implicit in it a moral value that is likened to the fragrance of a beautiful flower. The *rishis* taught us that all forms are the letters of a form-word-power alphabet of a language that can help us to realize our spiritual reality, unconditioned by any form yet the supreme source of all forms.

The path of *bhakti*, or devotion to a personal God, is forcibly brought out in the epics and Puranas, which tell stories of the great incarnations and of the numerous gods of the Hindu pantheon who are completely in tune with the truth of life. The culture of the Indian subcontinent was developed in the climate of these great epics. Every child was taught to emulate the classic examples given therein and thus bring his or her own life to perfection. The Hindu mind had no difficulty in picturing the Supreme in the form of either animal or human. Thus we find Ganesha, depicted as a human being with the head of an elephant, and Hanuman, who was a monkey.

Hanuman is one of the most beloved figures in the Hindu pantheon of gods called Kimpurushas, mystic beings that are half-human and half-animal. He is the symbol of utter and selfless devotion to his supreme deity, Sri Rama, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu, scion of the solar race, the pinnacle of human perfection. Hanuman's entire strength came through the repetition of the name of Rama, the greatest *mantra* for this age of Kali, which if chanted with devotion, is said to give liberation from the coils of mortal life. Every temple of Rama has a figure of Hanuman seated at his feet and bowing to him. Wherever the Ramayana is read or recited, a seat is left vacant for Hanuman, since it is believed that he is always present at the reading of the story of his beloved master.

Perhaps the Western reader can best be introduced to the Ramayana by recalling Homer's *Odyssey*, another well-known ancient epic, in which the Greek hero Odysseus goes through many trials and adventures before reuniting with his faithful wife Penelope. But Rama, as an incarnation of the god Vishnu, second of the Vedic triune gods, is on a divine quest. He subdues the demon

king Ravana and restores the balance of good and evil on Earth. The lecherous and prideful Ravana represents the monster we can become when we give our baser instincts full reign. By contrast, Rama is seen as the supreme glory of mankind and teaches us how to behave with valor, dignity, compassion, and chivalry. He is the epitome of a great ruler and husband. His wife Sita is the embodiment of earthly grace, beauty, and virtue. Rama has been described as the sun, or divine consciousness, and Sita as the light of its warming rays on Earth. As Sita says in Valmiki's Ramayana, 5.21.15, "I am as inseparable from Rama as radiance is from the sun." Together, they make up the ideal couple and the verses describing their love are some of the most beautiful ever written. Hanuman, son of the wind god, is the breath that unites them. As a lowly simian, he would not be expected to embody total self-control and discipline, and yet by concentration of mind, he accomplishes just that, ever steadfast in helping his lord Rama to defeat the demon king and rescue Sita. He shows the reader that if he too concentrates his mind on the divine and never wavers, he can control his baser instincts and merge with supreme consciousness. Hanuman is sometimes described as the world's first Superman and, as such, his stories can be appreciated even by young children. He accomplishes feats of amazing strength, but it is his personal commitment to principles of valor and justice, along with his humble demeanor, that help make him such an admired figure. In India today, there exist popular cartoons depicting the many breathtaking feats of Hanuman. However, as stated, the figures of Rama, his wife Sita, the monkey god Hanuman, the demon god Ravana, and others who figure prominently in the Ramayana are all part of a most profound philosophical and religious allegory that can be appreciated on a variety of levels, and this is why these exciting stories have endured through many millennia.

The Sanskrit word *sadhana* refers to any method by which the aspirant, or *sadhaka*, can establish contact with the inner realms of being. One of the easiest methods of *sadhana* is known as *japa*, or the repetition of the name of God in whatever form we picture him. Hanuman gives us the image of an animal that attained perfection solely by chanting the name of Rama, his personal deity, and of the utter and complete self-abnegation of his interests to that of his Lord and god Rama. Humility and selflessness are measures of our knowledge. The more we know, the more we realize how little we know and how little we can do by ourselves.

As stated, according to legend, Hanuman is the son of the wind god. Air

sustains all living beings. One can exist without food, spend days without water, but it is impossible to exist even for a short time without air. Air is life. Therefore, Hanuman is also called Pranadeva, or the God of Breath or Life.

Vaishnavites, or followers of Vishnu, believe that the wind god Vayu underwent three incarnations to help Lord Vishnu. As Hanuman, he helped Rama, as Bhima, he assisted Krishna, and as Madhvacharya (1238–1317), he founded the Vaishnava sect known as Dvaita.

In Hindu symbolism, a monkey signifies the human mind, which is ever restless and never still. This monkey mind happens to be the only thing over which man can have absolute control. We cannot control the world around us, but we can control and tame our mind by ardent discipline. We cannot choose our life, but we can choose the way we respond to it. Truly, Hanuman is symbolic of the perfect mind and embodies the highest potential it can achieve. He is the true picture of the *sthitha prajna* (man of steady intellect) of the Bhagavad Gita (literally, Song of God) and had perfect control over his mind. The name Hanuman gives a clue to his character. It is a combination of two Sanskrit words, *hanan* (annihilation) and *man* (mind), thus indicating one who has conquered his ego. According to *yoga* (a physical or mental technique practiced to facilitate union with the Divine), the body is only an extension of the mind. Hence Hanuman, with perfect mastery over his mind, had the most developed body. He is sometimes called Bajarangabali (one whose body is like a thunderbolt and whose movements are like lightning). He is so strong that he can lift mountains, so agile that he can leap across the sea.

His strength is proverbial, and thus he is the patron of physical culture. His image is enshrined in gymnasiums all over India and wrestlers worship him before commencing their practice. The *yogasana* (yogic position) known as *surya namaskara*, or salutation to the sun god, is a mixture of all the main *yogic* postures combined with devotion, and it was composed by Hanuman in honor of his celestial *guru*, Surya. Vayu, his celestial father, taught him *pranayama*, or the science of breath control, which he in turn taught to human beings.

The scriptures refer to several events where Hanuman exhibited his power over the celestial bodies, including the sun and Saturn. Hence he gained power over the *navagrahas*, or nine planets of Hindu cosmology. These planets are

Ravi, the sun; Soma, the moon; Mangal, Mars; Buddha, Mercury; Brihaspati, Jupiter; Shukra, Venus; Shani, Saturn; the bodiless, Rahu (the north node of the moon) and the headless, Ketu (the south node of the moon). Their alignment in the astrological chart is supposed to decide a person's destiny. In many of his images, Hanuman is shown trampling a woman and holding her by her braid. This woman embodies Panavati, or baneful astrological influences.

Sorcerers manipulate cosmic powers to invoke malevolent spirits. People normally call upon Hanuman to protect them from such people. When Ravana invoked two such sorcerers, Ahiravana and Mahiravana, Hanuman turned the tables on them and invoked the power of Kaali to subdue them. Many practitioners of Tantra worship him because he has many *siddhis*, or supernatural powers, such as the ability to change his size and the ability to fly, which he gained through his strict *brahmacharya* (celibacy) and *tapasya* (austerity). Thus he displays the dual characteristics of *bhakti* (devotion) and *shakti* (divine energy). Either one or the other is given prominence in his shrines.

He is also the patron of Ayurvedic healers, since he played a vital role in saving Lakshmana's life by bringing him the magic herb from the Himalayas. He later saved Shatrughna's life with the same herb. Lakshmana and Shatrughna were twins who were also Rama's younger brothers.

As a warrior, Hanuman has no parallel. He uses both strength and guile to overpower the enemy. This was exhibited many times during the war with the king of the demons, Ravana. He used both brawn and brain to achieve victory over his enemies.

Hanuman was also a master diplomat. He knew how to speak sweetly and make others see his side of the matter without the use of force. Hence, he was the spokesman for Sugriva, the monkey king, when he approached Rama to find out his intentions. Again Sugriva sent him to try and subdue Lakshmana's anger at his own lapse. Rama sent him as his envoy to Sita twice—once to the island fortress of Lanka carrying his signet ring, and again to fetch her after the war. He also sent him to his brother Bharata to find out his intentions before setting foot in Ayodhya. All those who came into contact with him were most impressed by his diplomatic method of talking and by his beguiling ways.

Hanuman impressed both Rama and his antagonist Ravana by his mastery

over language: his impeccable grammar, his choice of the right word at the right moment and in the right context, and his perfect diction.

Strangely enough, he was also a great musician. He had been blessed by the goddess Saraswati and was thus able to play on the lute and sing lyrics in praise of Rama. He was the first to sing *bhajans* (songs of adoration) and *kirtans* (songs of praise). His music was an outpouring of his great love for his beloved master and hence even had the power to melt rocks.

Hanuman is the perfect example of a student. He was totally focused, hardworking, humble, determined, and brilliant. He flew to the solar orb in his determination to obtain the sun god, Surya, as his *guru*. However, he never flaunted his brilliance and scholarship but always sat at the feet of Rama—ever the humble servant.

Hanuman had no desire for name or fame. He preferred to live in mountains and caves. As mentioned, he practiced total celibacy, which was very strange in a simian. Even when he lived in the palace, he behaved like a hermit, never indulging his senses. This was what gave him so much spiritual power.

He was also a *hatha yogi* since he practiced *yogasanas* (yogic postures) and *pranayama* (control of the breath). He was a *laya yogi* (one who practices the yoga of immolation, dissolving into the Supreme), since he knew how to control his mind with *mantras* (sacred sounds) and *yantras* (sacred symbols). Thus, as mentioned, he acquired many *siddhis*, or supernatural powers.

If *yoga* is the ability to control one's mind, then Hanuman was the perfect *yogi*, having perfect mastery over his senses, achieved through a disciplined lifestyle and as discussed, by a strict adherence to celibacy and selfless devotion. He controlled his mind through absolute faith in the divine. Every event in his life was a gift from his master to be accepted without question. His life is a classic example to be followed by all devotees of God in any form. He shows us how a devotee should spend his or her life so as to reach the Supreme. He symbolizes the pinnacle of *bhakti*, and Hindus consider him to be the eleventh *avatara*, or incarnation, of Rudra or Lord Shiva. Once it is said that Narada asked Brahma whom he considered to be the greatest devotee of Vishnu. No

doubt the sage was hoping that his name would be suggested. However, Brahma directed him to Prahlada, the king of *asuras* (demons) for whose sake Vishnu had taken a special *avatara* as Narasimha (the man-lion). Prahlada, who was himself a great devotee of Vishnu, with characteristic humility told him to go to Hanuman, whom he thought to be the greatest devotee of Vishnu since he chanted the name of Rama constantly.

Hanuman was a perfect *karma yogi* (one who practices the *yoga* of action), since he performed his actions with detachment, dedicating everything to Rama, his God. He was totally free from any desire for personal aggrandizement. In the whole of the Ramayana, there is no incident in which he did anything for himself. All his feats were for the sake of others. When he described the war to his mother, she chided him for not killing Ravana and rescuing Sita by himself, for that would have made him more famous than Rama. Hanuman replied that his life was not given to him to gain fame for himself but for serving Rama. His utter selflessness comes into great prominence when he saw how dejected the writer Valmiki was by his work. Without hesitation, he threw his own immortal classic into the sea.

Hanuman spent his entire life in the service of others. First he served Sugriva, then Rama. He personifies *bhakti* through *dasa bhava*, or the attitude of the servant. This type of devotion is the perfect instrument to destroy the ego. He performed his duties humbly, modestly, and with great devotion. He chose not to marry and have a family of his own so that he could devote himself entirely to the service of others. He never exceeded his orders even when he was capable of doing so. For instance, he could easily have killed the demon Ravana and conquered the island of Lanka on his own, as his mother said, but he refrained from doing so since he wanted to be a true servant and obey his master's orders.

He is one of the seven *chiranjeevis* (those who live until the end of this cycle of creation). He is noted for his mighty intellect and is thought to be the only scholar who knows all the nine *vyakaranas* (explanations of the Vedas). He is thought to have learned the Vedas from the sun god himself. He is the wisest of the wise, strongest of the strong, and bravest of the brave. He had the power to assume any form he liked, to swell his body to the size of a mountain or reduce it to a thumbnail. One who meditates on him will attain power, strength, glory, prosperity, and success in life.



Hanuman is the epitome of wisdom, self-control, devotion, valor, righteousness, and strength. His indispensable role in reuniting Rama with Sita is likened by some to that of a teacher helping an individual soul realize the divine.

Rama himself describes Hanuman thus: “Heroism, cleverness, strength, firmness, sagacity, prudence, prowess, and power have taken up their abode in Hanuman.”

Sage Agastya endorses this view and said to Rama, “What you say regarding Hanuman is true, O Raghava! None else is equal to him in might, speed, or intelligence.”

He is easily reachable just by chanting the *mantra* “Rama.” Conversely, it is also held that the easiest way to attain Lord Rama is to worship Hanuman.

He is worshipped on Saturdays and Tuesdays, which are associated with Shani and Mangal, or Saturn and Mars. Both these planets are associated with death and war and known to disrupt human life by their malefic influence. His offerings are simple—*sindoor* (red lead), *til* oil (sesame), husked black gram and garlands of a certain tree (*Calotropis gigantea*) in the north, and garlands of betel leaves in the south. Also in the south, his idols are often pasted with butter that, strangely enough, never melts, even during the hottest summer. He is also adorned with garlands of rice and savory lentil doughnuts (*vadas*).

The reason for the vermillion paste will be given in the chapters below. But esoterically speaking, red is the color of strength and virility. *Til* oil is used by wrestlers and gymnasts to massage their body. Butter and dal are sources of protein and generate energy, stamina, and muscle.

The two scriptures that are read by all Hanuman devotees are the Sundara Kanda of the Ramayana, where he discovered Sita in Lanka, and the forty verses of the Hanuman Chalisa by Tulsidas, the great sixteenth-century poet. And as mentioned earlier, wherever the Ramayana is read, a special seat is always reserved for Hanuman since the belief is that he will always be present at such a reading.

What are his physical characteristics? Is he the black-faced *langur* or the red-faced *bandar*? Sometimes he is described as a golden monkey with a red face. His face is supposed to have turned black when he wiped his face with his tail

after destroying Lanka.

His tail is arched upward and is the symbol of strength, agility, and virility. He wears earrings made of five metals: gold, silver, copper, iron, and tin. He came to the world already adorned with these. Normally, he wears only a loincloth in the manner of wrestlers and bodybuilders. His images usually show him saluting Rama or standing guard and displaying his strength as he holds the mountain in one hand and his mace in the other.

The Hanuman Chalisa declares categorically that there is no blessing that he cannot bestow. Sita granted him the power to bestow the eight *siddhis* and nine types of wealth on others. However, the greatest boon one can ask of Hanuman is the uplifting of the spiritual qualities that he himself is known for.

*Having polished with the dust of my master's feet the mirror of my heart,  
I narrate the pure fame of Raghupati (Rama), who bestows life's four desires.  
Considering myself to be devoid of intellectual merits,  
I invoke Sri Hanuman, the son of the wind god.  
Bestow on me strength, intelligence, and knowledge.  
Remove my bodily ailments and vicious qualities.  
(And allow me to write this book.)*

HANUMAN CHALISA BY TULSIDAS

*Aum Sri Hanumathe Namaha!*



# APPENDIX ONE

# Poems on Hanuman

## Verses Composed by Vanamali

*Hail to Thee O Son of Wind!  
Messenger of Rama!  
Harbinger of light and life!  
Light to Sita,  
Life to Lakshmana,  
You flew into my heart,  
Like a tender bud,  
And made it blossom into a full blown lotus.  
What did I know about bhakti,  
Until you came and took residence in my heart.  
What did I know of shakti,  
Until you empowered my limbs,  
Ah! precious harbinger of hope and love,  
Show me your form when you crept into Lanka,  
Sweet and small like a baby cat,  
The form that enticed Sita,  
As you parted the leaves and gazed at her.  
As you chanted the tales of her beloved,  
Filling her with rapture.  
I shudder to think of your enormous frame,  
Reducing Lanka to cinders.  
O gentle one!  
People say you are mighty and impossible to control,  
But I see thee kneeling at Rama's feet....  
Vanamali's feet that I cherish in my heart.  
O Lordly One!*

*Terrify me not with thy brooding looks,  
And horrific grimaces scattering the demons in fear,  
Let me drown in thy amber eyes,  
Piercing me to the depths of my soul,  
Filled with compassion,  
For this hapless soul,  
Floundering in the sea of samsara.*

*Give me the eyes to perceive thee,  
Take me to thy abode.  
In the heart of the golden peak,  
To the land of the Kimpurushas  
Half wild, half-human,  
Waft me away in thy arms to the mystic mountain,  
Surrounded by celestial beings.*

*I shall turn my face to thy father,  
And feel his caressing tendrils on my face,  
I shall lie near thee on the lap of nature,  
And gaze upon the face of god,  
For you will be where Rama is,  
And Rama is none but my beloved,  
Vanamali!*

*Therefore O Vanara!  
Take me to Vanamali!  
I have searched for him far and wide,  
In thee I have found the perfect vehicle,  
My sweet Maruti,  
Deny me not this request,  
For I am thy eternal servant,  
Sent by him to me,  
For now I know that thou and he,  
Are never two but always one.  
Who came first, god or bhakta?*

*None can tell, for they are united in eternity.*

*I gaze at the monkeys that flock in my garden,  
And wonder if you could be among them,  
They destroy the garden like you did,  
They eat up the fruits and despoil the pools,  
Am I to tolerate their inequities?  
They belong to your race.  
Tell me, O Divine Vanara!  
Why the violence and worry?  
Can you not protect me from this?  
Am I your servant for nothing?  
Teach them to curb their nature,  
As indeed you did.  
And then I shall love you even more.*

*My noble Hanuman, help me to understand,  
The vagaries of the monkey mind,  
Help me to control mine,  
Direct me to the source divine,  
From which alone your inspiration comes.  
Hold me aloft in your hand like the herb mountain,  
Waft me to Vaikunda, the abode of Vanamali,  
O Vanara! Be my messenger to Vanamali!  
Whisper in his ear as you did to Rama,  
Of the love of Sita for Rama,  
Of the love of Devi for Vanamali!*



*Mantra heenum, kriya heenum,  
Bhakti heenum sureshwara,  
Yad poojitam maya Deva,  
Paripoornam tadastu.*

O Lord! I beg of you to accept and make perfect  
This *puja* (work) of mine, that is, Devoid of proper chants, actions, or devotion.

*Aum Sri Hanumathe Namaha!*



## APPENDIX TWO



# Names of Hanuman

Anjaneya	Son of Anjana
Bajarangabali	Strong as a thunderbolt
Balaji	Baby Hanuman
Bhaktavatsala	One who is kind to devotees
Bhima	One with a huge form
Daityakulantaka	Destroyer of the rakshasa clan
Hanuman	One who has controlled the mind; one with a broken jaw
Jitendriya	One who has controlled his senses
Kapindra	King of monkeys
Kesari Nandana	Kesari's pet
Kesari Putra	Son of Kesari
Lakshmana Pranadhata	Giver of life to Lakshmana
Lokabandu	Relation of the world
Mahabala	One with extraordinary might
Mahatejasvin	One who is filled with spiritual luster
Mahatman	The noble one
Mahavira	The great hero
Mangala Murti	The form of auspiciousness
Maruti	Son of Marut (wind god)
Pavana putra	Son of the wind god
Pranadeva	Giver of breath (life)
Ramadasa	Rama's servant
Ramaduta	Messenger of Rama
Ramapriyan	Beloved of Rama
Rudrasya-Soonu	Son of Rudra (Shiva)
Sahasravada	Possessing a thousand faces
Sankata Mochana	Dispeller of sorrow
Shoora	The courageous one
Shubangana	Having auspicious features
Shubham	Auspicious
Sugriva Mitram	Sugriva's friend
Sundara	Beautiful
Tapaswin	One who practices austerities
Uttaman	The noblest one
Vatamaja	Born of wind
Vayu Putra	Son of Vayu (wind god)

Veera  
Virupa

Heroic one  
Strange-looking one

## APPENDIX THREE

### Names of Other Characters in the Hindu Pantheon

Agastya	Great sage with divine powers
Agni	God of fire
Ahalya	Wife of sage Gautama
Ahiravana	Sorcerer; son of Ravana
Akampana	Name of a rakshasa
Aksha Kumara	Ravana's youngest son
Amabalika	Celestial nymph
Anasuya	Wife of sage Atri
Angada	Son of monkey king Vaali
Anjana	Hanuman's mother
Ananta	Celestial serpent on which Vishnu sleeps
Arjuna	The middle sibling among the Pandavas
Aruna	Charioteer of the sun god Surya
Atikaya	One of Kumbhakarna's sons
Atri	Great sage
Ayyappa	Incarnation of Dharma Shasta
Bhadra	Rama's friend
Bharadwaja	Great sage who lived in Prayaga
Bharata	Rama's brother
Brahma	The Creator in the Vedic Trinity
Brihaspati	Preceptor of the gods
Bhima	The strong man of the Pandavas
Dasaratha	Rama's father
Devantaka	One of Kumbhakarna's sons
Devi	Goddess
Dharmashasta	Son of Shiva and Vishnu
Dhumraksha	Ravana's general
Dhushana	Ravana's general
Dundubhi	Buffalo demon
Durvasa	Sage noted for his bad temper

Ganesha	Elephant-headed son of Shiva
Ganga	The holy river
Garuda	Eagle vehicle of Lord Vishnu
Gautama	Great sage; husband of Ahalya
Hanuman	Son of the wind god
Hayagriva	Horse-faced incarnation of Vishnu
Hema	Mandodari's mother
Himavan	King of the Himalayas
Indra	King of the gods
Indrajit	Ravana's eldest son
Jambavan	King of the bears
Jambumali	Son of Ravana's general
Janaka	Sita's father
Janaki	Janaka's daughter Sita
Jatayu	Vulture who was Rama's friend
Jayanta	Indra's son who came in the form of a crow
Kaala	The spirit of Time
Kaali	Horrific aspect of the goddess
Kaikeyi	Dasaratha's wife; Bharata's mother
Kalanemi	Rakshasa who tried to obstruct Hanuman
Kampan	Author of the Ramayana in Tamil
Kartikeya	Shiva's son; general of the gods
Kausalya	Wife of Dasaratha; Rama's mother
Kesari	Hanuman's monkey father
Khara	A rakshasa
Krishna	Supreme incarnation of Vishnu
Kubera	God of wealth; Ravana's stepbrother
Kumbhakarna	Ravana's brother known for his enormous body and appetite
Kunjara	Anjana's father
Kusa	A type of grass; one of the twin sons of Rama
Kuvachana	A man who had insulted his ancestors
Lakshmana	Rama's brother
Lakshmi	Goddess of wealth and auspiciousness
Lankini	Guardian goddess of Lanka
Lava	One of the twin sons of Rama
Madhavi	Goddess of the earth
Madhvacharya	Founder of the Dvaita school of Vedanta
Mahakaala	The great god of death; one of the names of Shiva
Mahakaali	The great Kaali; horrific form of the Devi
Mahaparshava	Ravana's trusted general
Maheswara	The great god; name of Shiva

Mahiravana	Sorcerer son of Ravana; king of the netherworld
Maithili	Sita, princess of Mithila
Makaradwaja	Hanuman's son born of a crocodile
Mandavya	Great sage
Mandodari	Chief wife of Ravana
Manthara	Hunchbacked maid of Kaikeyi
Manu	Progenitor of the world
Swayambhu	
Maricha	Rakshasa who enticed Sita in the form of a golden deer
Matali	Indra's charioteer
Matanga	Great sage
Mayan	Architect of the demons
Mayavi	Rakshasa who fought with Vaali
Meghanatha	Eldest son of Ravana, later known as Indrajit
Mohini	Alluring form of Vishnu as a woman
Muruga	Another name of Kartikeya, son of Shiva
Nala	Monkey who designed the bridge to Lanka
Nandi	Bull vehicle of Shiva
Narada	Celestial sage noted for his mischief
Narantaka	One of Kumbhakarna's sons
Narayana	The primeval being who slumbers on the waters
Narasimha	Fourth incarnation of Vishnu
Nila	Another monkey who helped to design the bridge
Panavati	Embodiment of baneful astrological influences
Pandavas	Five brothers who were heroes of the Mahabharata
Parashurama	Sixth incarnation of Vishnu
Parvati	Wife of Shiva; daughter of Himavan
Prahastha	Commander in chief of Ravana's army
Prahlada	Demon boy who was a great devotee of Vishnu
Punchikasthala	Celestial nymph who became Hanuman's mother, Anjana
Raghava	Another name of Rama
Raghu	An ancestor of Rama
Rahu	Malignant node of the moon that eclipses the sun
Rama	Seventh incarnation of Vishnu
Ramachandra	Another name for Rama
Ravana	King of Lanka and of the rakshasas
Riksha	The very first vanara (monkey)
Rudra	Fierce aspect of Shiva
Rumi	Wife of Sugriva
Sagara	Name of the monarch of the ocean

Sampati	Vulture brother of Jatayu
Sanat Kumara	One of the four boy sages
Saraswati	Goddess of all arts and sciences
Satabali	White-furred bear
Shabari	Old female ascetic
Shambasaadan	Rakshasa who tried to entice Anjana
Shani	Saturn, the malefic planet
Shatrugna	Rama's brother and Lakshmana's twin
Shilada	A sage
Shilavati	A very chaste woman
Shiva	The destructive aspect of the trinity
Shurpaneka	Ravana's sister
Sita	Rama's wife; princess of Videha
Skanda	Kartikeya; Shiva's son; general of the gods
Suka	Ravana's minister
Sugriva	Monkey king; brother of Vaali
Sulochana	Indrajit's wife
Sumantra	Charioteer of Dasaratha
Sumitra	Mother of Lakshmana and Shatrugna
Surya	Sun god
Sushena	1. Father-in-law of Sugriva; 2. Ravana's court physician
Swaminathan	Another name for Kartikeya
Swayamprabha	Nymph who was guarding the cave
Tara	Vaali's wife
Trijata	Rakshasi who helped Sita
Trisira	One of Kumbhakarna's sons
Tulsidas	Author of Ramacharitamanas
Tulsiram	Previous name of Tulsidas
Ugrati	Leper husband of Shilavati
Vaali	Monkey king; Sugriva's brother
Vaidehi	Sita, princess of Videha
Vaishravas	Ravana's father
Vajradamshttra	Name of a rakshasa
Valmiki	Author of the first Ramayana
Varaha	The second avatara of Vishnu as a boar
Varuna	Lord of the waters
Vasishta	Great sage; guru of clan of Ikshvaku
Vayu	Wind god; Hanuman's father
Vedavati	Name of Sita in a previous incarnation

Vibhishana	Noble rakshasa; half-brother of Ravana
Vinata	Sugriva's general
Virupaksha	One of Ravana's generals
Vishnu	The Preserver in the Vedic Trinity
Vishwakarma	Architect of the gods
Vishwamitra	The royal sage
Vrishakapi	Monkey god mentioned in the Vedas
Vyasa	Author of the Mahabharata and eighteen Puranas; compiler of the Vedas into four books
Yama	God of Death
Yayati	King of Kashi
Yudhistira	Eldest of the Pandavas

## APPENDIX FOUR



# Alphabetical List of Mantras

The mantras that open and close every chapter of this book have been listed here in alphabetical order to facilitate location of their translations.

Aum Anjaneyaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the son of Anjana
Aum Banda-mokshadaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one who releases us from bondage
Aum Bhaktavatsalaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the lover of devotees
Aum Brahmachaarine Namaha!	Prostrations to the celibate
Aum Daityakulanthakaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the killer of the race of the demons
Aum Dhumraketave Namaha!	Prostrations to the one who is fierce like a comet
Aum Kapishwaraaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the king of monkeys
Aum Kesari Suthaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the son of Kesari
Aum Lakshmanaprana-dataaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the savior of Lakshmana
Aum Mahakayaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one with a huge body
Aum Mahatejase Namaha!	Prostrations to the effulgent one
Aum Mahatmane Namah!	Prostrations to the noble soul
Aum Mahaviraaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the great hero
Aum Mangalaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the auspicious one
Aum Manojavaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one who is as swift as the mind
Aum Marutaatmajaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the son of wind
Aum Pingalakshaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the tawny-eyed one
Aum Ramabhaktaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the devotee of Rama
Aum Ramadhutaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the messenger of Rama
Aum Ramayana-priyaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one who loves the Ramayana
Aum Raudraaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the fierce one
Aum Ravana-maradanaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the scourge of Ravana
Aum Sahasravadanaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one with a thousand faces
Aum Samsara-bhayanashakaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one who releases us from fear of rebirth
Aum Sathyavachaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one who is ever truthful
Aum Satyasandaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one who keeps to the path of truth
Aum Shashwathaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the eternal one
Aum Sita Shokavinaashakaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the dispeller of Sita's sorrow
Aum Shooraaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the courageous one
Aum Shubakaraaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one who does noble deeds
Aum Shubhangaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to the one with auspicious features
Aum Sri Ganeshaaya Namaha!	Prostrations to Lord Ganesha

Aum Sri Hanumathe Namaha!

Aum Sri Ramaaya Namaha!

Aum Sri Ramachandraaya Namaha!

Aum Tatwajnanapradaaya Namaha!

Aum Uttamaaya Namaha!

Aum Vajrakayaaya Namaha!

Aum Vayuputraaya Namaha!

Aum Veeraaya Namaha!

Prostrations to Sri Hanuman

Prostrations to Sri Rama

Prostrations to Ramachandra

Prostrations to the one who gives knowledge of Reality

Prostrations to the noblest one

Prostrations to the one with a body like a thunderbolt

Prostrations to the son of Vayu

Prostrations to the Hero

# Glossary of Sanskrit Terms

**abhijit:** A favorable star

**abhishekam:** Ceremonial bath for gods and kings

**adharma:** Unrighteousness

**adi kavi:** The first poet (Valmiki)

**ahamkara:** Ego

**amavasya:** Night of the new moon

**amsa:** A part or portion

**anga:** Limb; individual soul

**apana:** The outgoing breath

**apsara:** Heavenly nymph

**artha:** Wealth

**arya:** Noble

**ashoka:** A tree; without sorrow

**ashrama:** Spiritual sanctuary

**ashramite:** One who lives in an ashrama

**ashwamedha yaga:** Horse sacrifice conducted by kings to establish supremacy

**astra:** Weapon

**asura:** Demon

**atma(n):** The divine spirit embodied in the human being; the soul

**Aum Namashivaaya:** Mantra for Shiva

**avatara:** Incarnation

**Ayurveda:** Vedic science of healing

**bandar:** Monkey

**Bhagavad Gita:** Song of God

**bhajan:** Religious song of adoration

**bhakta:** Devotee

**bhakti:** Devotion

**bhakti yoga:** The yoga of devotion

**brahmachari:** A celibate

**brahmacharya:** Celibacy

**brahmajnana:** Integral knowledge of the Supreme Brahman

**brahmarishi:** A sage who has brahmajnana

**brahmastra:** The weapon of Brahma

**chakora:** Bird that is said to drink moonbeams

**champaka:** Tree with sweet-smelling flowers

**chandala:** An outcaste

**chiranjeevi:** Long-lived person

**chourie:** Yak tail fan

**chudamani:** A crest jewel for the hair

**daitya:** Demon

**dakshinayana:** The six months of the year from July to December

**dalit:** A low caste

**darshan:** Auspicious sight of god or a noble being

**darshanas:** The different schools of Hindu philosophy (six in number)

**dasa bhava:** Attitude of a servant (male)

**dasya bhava:** Attitude of a servant (female)

**deva, devi:** God, goddess; shining one

**dharma:** Righteousness

**dhoti:** Cloth worn around the waist by men

**dhruva:** Type of grass

**dwarapalas:** Guardians of the gate, especially in temples and palaces

**gada:** Mace

**gandharva:** Celestial singer

**gayatri mantra:** Famous hymn to the sun god

**ghat:** Bathing place on the river

**griha:** House; planet

**grihastashrami:** One who leads a householder's life

**gunas:** The three strands of nature—*sattva* (harmony), *rajas* (passion), and *tamas* (inertia)

**guru:** Spiritual preceptor

**guru-dakshina:** Fee given to the guru

**han:** To destroy

**hanan:** To annihilate

**hanu:** Jaw

**hatha yoga:** Special branch of yoga in which bodily postures, breathing techniques, and principles of meditation are taught

**hatha yogi:** One who practices this type of yoga

**japa:** Repetition of the names of god

**jivatma:** The embodied spirit; individual spirit

**jnana:** Wisdom

**kaala:** Time

**kadamba:** A type of flower

**kalas:** The sixty-four art forms, or the classical curriculum of sacred studies

**kama:** Love

**kanda:** One portion of a book

**kapha:** Phlegm

**karma:** Action

**karma sakshi:** The witness of all action (god)

**karma yogi:** One who practices the yoga of action

**Kimpurushas:** Mystic beings that are half-human and half-animal

**kirtan:** Spiritual song of praise

**kshetrapalas:** Guardians of the temple

**kund:** A lake or pool

**kunjara südana:** Killer of elephants

**kusa:** Type of grass used in rituals

**lakh:** One hundred thousand

**langur:** Black-faced monkey

**laya yogi:** One who practices the yoga of immolation, dissolving into the Supreme

**lila:** Play; game of God

**lingam:** A stone symbol of Shiva

**loka:** An astral world

**madari:** Trainer of monkeys

**Mahabharata:** The great classical epic poem of Vyasa

**man:** Mind

**manduka:** Frog

**mantra:** Mystic sound

**Maryada Purusha:** The perfect human being; Rama

**maya:** Illusion

**mohastra:** Weapon to banish illusion

**moksha:** Liberation from mortality

**mrityusanjivani:** Herb that brings the dead to life

**munja:** Type of coarse grass

**murti:** Idol

**naga:** Snake

**naga pasha:** Rope made of snakes

**navagrahas:** Nine planets of Hindu cosmology

**navami:** Ninth day of the lunar calendar

**navaratri:** Nine days of worship of the goddess

**panchamukha:** Five-faced

**Paramatma:** The Supreme spirit

**pitta:** Bile

**Prakriti:** Cosmic matter

**prana:** Life current

**pranava mantra:** Aum

**pranayama:** Science of breath control

**pratyaksha devata:** The god that can be seen by our physical eyes; the sun god

**puja:** Ritual worship of god

**Puranas:** An important collection of post-Vedic classical literary texts written in Sanskrit; from “purana” (of ancient times)

**puranic:** Pertaining to the Puranas

**Purusha:** Spirit that dwells in the body; person

**putrakamesti yaga:** Fire sacrifice for getting a son

**rajas:** One of the three strands of nature; passion

**rajasic:** Pertaining to rajas; passionate

**rakshasa:** Malevolent, cannibalistic spirit

**rakshasi:** Female rakshasa

**rakshasic:** Having the nature of a rakshasa

**Ramacharitamanas:** Hindi Ramayan by Tulsidas

**Ramayana:** Great epic that recounts Rama's journey to save his wife

**Rig Veda:** Oldest of the Vedas, this is a collection of ancient Sanskrit hymns; from "rig," or praise and "veda," or knowledge

**Rigvedic:** Pertaining to the Rig Veda

**rishi:** Great sage

**sadhaka:** One who does spiritual practices

**sadhana:** Spiritual practice

**sal:** Type of ironwood tree

**saligrama:** Stone symbol of Vishnu

**samadhi:** Super-conscious state

**samana:** Equilibrium

**samkhyā yoga:** Yoga of wisdom

**sandal:** Sandalwood tree

**sandhani:** Herb capable of joining fractured bones

**sandhya:** Twilight devotions

**sankalpa:** Intention

**sannyasi(n):** One who has renounced the world

**sapta rishis:** The seven original sages

**sari:** A five-meter piece of cloth worn by Indian women

**sattva:** One of the three stands of nature, standing for balance and harmony

**sattvika:** Harmonious; peaceful

**Shaivite:** Follower of Shiva

**shakti:** Power

**Shakti:** The divine feminine force

**Shani:** The malefic planet Saturn

**shastras:** Scriptures

**siddhis:** Supernormal powers

**sindoor:** Red powder used to put a dot on forehead of married women

**sita:** Furrow

**soma:** Medicinal plant used in Vedic sacrifices

**sthitha prajna:** One of steady intellect (enlightened one)

**stree rajya:** Land of women

**surya namaskara:** A yogic exercise in praise of the sun god

**suvarnakarani:** Herb that restores the color of a dying person

**swarupa:** Actual form

**swayambhu murti:** Self-formed idol

**tamas:** One of the three strands of Nature, standing for inertia, dullness

**Tantras:** Scriptures giving rules for esoteric rites

**Tantric:** Pertaining to the Tantras

**tapas; tapasya:** Askesis; austerity

**til:** Sesame

**tulsi:** Holy basil

**tyaga:** Renunciation

**udana:** One of the five breaths

**uttarayanam:** The six months of the year from January to June

**vaal:** Tail

**vadas:** Savory doughnuts

**Vaishnavite:** Follower of Vishnu

**vajra:** Thunderbolt

**vanara:** Monkey

**vata:** Wind

**vayu:** Air

**Vedas:** Oldest sacred texts of Hinduism; from the root “vid,” to know

**Vedic:** Pertaining to the Vedas

**vina:** Stringed instrument like a lute

**vira bhava:** Hero's pose



**vishalyakarani:** Magic herb

**Vishnu Sahasranama:** Thousand names of Vishnu

**vyakarana:** Text that explains the meaning of the Vedas

**vyana:** One of the five vital breaths

**yaga; yajna:** Fire sacrifice

**yajna kund:** Hollow in the ground in which fire is kindled for the sacrifice

**yajnashala:** The place where the (yajna) or sacrifice is conducted

**yaksha:** Celestial being; guardian of wealth

**yantra:** Mystic geometric diagram that is meant to convey a concentrated aspect of the divine

**yoga:** Controlled physical or mental exercises that lead to union with the divine

**yogasanas:** Physical postures that purify the body and mind

**yogi:** One who practices yoga; one who is in union with the divine

**yojanas:** A distance measurement that spans several thousand miles

**yogini:** A female yogi

**yuga:** Epoch

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## About the Author

[Mataji Devi Vanamali](#) has written six books on the gods of the Hindu pantheon, including *Hanuman*, *The Play of God*, *The Song of Rama*, and *Shakti*, as well as translating the Bhagavad Gita. She is the founder and president of Vanamali Gita Yogashram, dedicated to sharing the wisdom of Sanatana Dharma and charitable service to children. She lives at the Vanamali ashram at Rishikesh in northern India.

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