

# The Beauty of SUNDARA KANDA

The *Sundara Kanda* shows us the power of the name 'Rama.'

**S***undara Kanda* of Valmiki *Ramayana* is most frequently read and referred to though each *kanda* is unique in its own way.

In the *Bala Kanda*, Valmiki charmingly narrates the story of Sri Rama's birth, growth from childhood to adulthood climaxing in the everlastingly joyful celestial wedding of Rama and Sita. Though the *Ayodhya* and *Aranya Kandas* unfold many painful events and separations in the family that sadden all in Kosala empire, they convey the message that no one is above dharma and everyone must adhere to it dutifully.

Hardship and suffering do not corrode the fortitude of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana when they embark on their fourteen-year exile. It was during this period that they received the hospitality

and blessings of such great sages as Atri, Bharadwaja and Agasthya. The *Kishkindha Kanda* unveils the art of communication through Hanuman, the master emissary, ending with the soothing motherly affection and devotion of Sabari.

## Glory of Hanuman

Then follows the celebrated *Sundara Kanda* highlighting the valour of Hanuman, the glory of Rama Bhakti and the noble dignity of Sita in the midst of *rakshasas* in Ashokavana. Scholars have given various interpretations of the significance of the word 'Sundara'. Every writing or interpretation is read with devotional fervour.

Those in distress and pain often turn to *Sundara Kanda* for relief from suffering, solace in distress and renewal of moral and spiritual reinvigoration.

Tattvaloka 26 May 2017

Hanuman's astuteness as an emissary and heroic exploits in Ravana's impregnable fortress constitute the soul of *Sundara Kanda*. Tulsidas's *Hanuman Chalisa* is chanted every day by devotees across the world. Children, in particular, are enthused and inspired by tales of Hanuman's valour.

There is another beautiful message portrayed by Valmiki in this *Kanda*. Hanuman cautiously sneaks into Ashokavana and on seeing the plight of the Divine Mother his heart is filled with sorrow and admiration for her courage and unwavering love for Sri Rama. He succeeds in convincing Sita that he was Sri Rama's emissary and after moments of disbelief Sita was transported into a state of blissful ecstasy when Hanuman hands over the signet ring given by Rama to Hanuman.

## Blissful Union

Similar was the ecstatic experience of Sri Rama when Hanuman after his triumphant flight to Lanka returns to Rama with glad tidings and hands over the *Chudamani* Sita gave him to be handed over to her husband. The signet ring and the *Chudamani* exchanged by Rama

and Sita through Hanuman symbolised the *manasa kalyanam* of the divine couple. The minds of both Rama and Sita were filled with happiness as they recalled the unforgettable moments of their wedding celebration. Hanuman was the cause of that *Manasa kalyanam* of Rama and Sita though they were separated from each other physically. It was Hanuman's valour that not only ended their grief but also raised hopes of reunion.

Most importantly for both Rama and Sita, Hanuman created space in their grief-stricken minds to recollect those joyful moments of their wedding. For the devout, reciting *Sundara Kanda* is a way of celebrating *Sitarama Kalyanam*! Sadguru Thyagara, in that immortal *krithi Sita Kalyana Vaibhogame*, begins by extolling Hanuman's *bhakti* "Pavanaja sthuthi pavanacharitra..." and how celebration of that celestial wedding brings peace and happiness to all 🙏

[ayyagariprasannakumar@gmail.com](mailto:ayyagariprasannakumar@gmail.com)

A. Prasanna Kumar

Tattvaloka 27 May 2017

S  
u  
l  
