

## Damodarashtakam with Dig-darshini Tika

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"In the month of Kartika one should worship Lord Krishna by daily reciting the prayer spoken by sage Satyavrata Muni known as Damodarashtakam." - Hari-bhakti-vilasa 2.16.198

### Text One

*namamisvaram sac-cid-ananda-rupam  
lasat-kundalam gokule bhrajamanam  
yashoda-bhiyolukalad-dhavamanam  
paramrstam atyam tato drutya gopya*

### Translation

"To the supreme controller, who possesses an eternal form of blissful knowledge, whose glistening earrings swing to and fro, who manifest Himself in Gokula, who stole the butter that the gopis kept hanging from the rafters of their storerooms and who then quickly jumped up and ran in retreat in fear of Mother Yashoda but was ultimately caught - to that Supreme Lord, Sri Damodara, I offer my humble obeisances."

### Commentary by Srila Sanatana Goswami

Bowing before Sri Damodara-isvara, who is accompanied by Sri Radha, I now commence my purport of Damodarastaka entitled Dig-Darshini.

In the beginning of the mula-shloka, the very first intention is expressed by the word namami - "I bow down". Obeisances are thus offered with love and devotion before commencing the description of the Lord's specific characteristics of excellence that are exhibited by His tattva, rupa, lila, guna and so forth. Also mentioned is the essence of His own divine supremacy as the Supreme Personality of Godhead manifested in Gokula, and also His distinctive features as the origin of all. Furthermore, the word namami is indicative of an auspicious invocation (mangalartham). At the start of all functions it is customary to offer respects to isvara which expresses an attitude of devotional service unto the Lord. For this reason, obeisances are offered first unto the Lord in this verse.

(Now the commentator, Sri Srila Sanatana Goswami examines tattva-vishesha or the excellence of the Lord's truth:) Obeisances unto whom? Unto Ishvara, the supreme controller. Namely - He who is (1) sarva-shaktimanta (endowed with all potencies), (2) jagateka-natha (the only Lord of the universe) and (3) nija-prabhu (my own Master). In the first instance He is addressed as such in order to obtain the power of shakti needed to offer the prayer, in the second instance, He is addressed as such to indicate that He is the one and only Lord Who is praiseworthy; in the final instance, He is addressed as such to signify the specific nature of bhakti or devotion. How is He manifest? As sac-cid-ananda-rupam or a form composed of compressed clouds of eternity, knowledge and bliss. This is the statement of His supreme sovereignty in regards to His tattva-vishesha attribute or excellence of truth.

(Now rupa-vishesha, the excellence of His beauty is described:) His distinct excellence of beauty is illustrated as follows: lasanti (the swinging of His earrings) was manifested when He ran away in fear of Sri Yashoda; or also, His earrings sport upon His cheeks as a result of His continuously playing in the transcendental pastimes of childhood. Thus, His divinely splendrous face is especially portrayed. Or also, yet another meaning of lasat-kundalam is - due to the mahasaubhagya or great fortune of personally kissing His divine cheeks, these earrings have attained a position of superexcellence above all His other ornaments. And this superexcellence also indicates the fortune of the other ornaments adorning His various limbs. Furthermore, lasanti indicates that these earrings are glistening because they are enriched with the splendrous effulgence of the Lord's bodily complexion; therefore Krishna's body is the ornament of His ornaments. This is the meaning. Consequently, it is stated by the gopis in the Tenth Canto (Bhagavatam 10.29.40):

"O Sri Krishna! By seeing Your beauty, which attracts the three worlds, these cows, birds, trees and deer are all experiencing their hairs standing on end!" ("What is the wonder, then, if we are also bewildered?")

In the Third Canto (Bhagavatam 3.2.12), it is also stated by Sri Uddhava to Vidura regarding Sri Krishna's beauty:

"Sri Krishna's beauty is so enchanting that it even astonishes Himself: that beauty represents the supreme zenith of great opulence, so much so that He is actually the ornament of His ornaments."

Now the parivara-vishesha or attributes of His family portray His unique excellence. The word gokule indicates that place where gopas, gopis, cow, calves and so forth reside. The word bhrajamanam indicates a particularly befitting place wherein He can manifest an excellence that surpasses that of previous lilas. Moreover, He is splendrous because only in Gokula does He manifest His svabhavika-sobha, or most natural characteristics of brilliance. It is stated in the Tenth Canto (Bhagavatam 10.32.14):

"(Bhagavan Sri Krishna, Who sits upon the asana formed in the lotus-like hearts of the siddha-yogis...) Manifesting a body that is the abode of all the splendour of the three worlds, He sat upon the asana presented by the gopis, was worshipped by them, and thereby radiated even more splendour."

His excellence of lila-vishesha, or attributes of His pastimes, are stated in the last two lines of the verse. The word yashoda indicates yashodaya, or "From His mother Yashoda". Bhiya indicates the fear of being punished for His offense of breaking the yoghurt pots, stealing fresh butter and so forth. Ulukhalat denotes "from the mortar" - in order to steal the fresh butter suspended from the rafters, He took a large wooden grinding mortar that was kept in the same storeroom, turned it on end, and climbed up on it; but (spotting His mother coming into the room with a stick in her hand) He immediately gets down again. Dhavamanam - He speedily runs away. In this regard, if one desires to know the particulars of this pastime, it can be found in the Tenth Canto (Bhagavatam 10.9.8-9) thus:

"Then Sri Krishna turned the grinding mortar on end, climbed up on it and began distributing the fresh butter hanging from the rafters to the monkeys as freely as He liked. Due to knowledge of His own mischievous thievery, His eyes fearfully darted this way and that. Mother Yashoda saw Him doing this and slowly crept up from behind to catch Him; but He noticed Her coming with a stick in her hand, and He quickly got down from the mortar and started running away, just like a person stricken with fear. Even though highly advanced yogis are enabled by the strength of their penances to merge their minds with brahma, still they cannot get a glimpse of this scene - of Yashoda-devi chasing her son Krishna from behind while attempting to catch Him."

Then, tato-drutya - she ran very swiftly. Due to the samasa conjunction, these two words become one. Gopya - by Sri Yashoda, para amrstam - catching hold of His back. Here the words atyanta tato drutya (running behind Krishna very swiftly) imply the saundarya-vishesha (excellence of beauty) of Yashoda's full breasts, broad hips and so on, as well as the particulars of her affection for her son. The loving use of the word gopya connotes the grand fortune that came upon the gopa caste (by Krishna preferring to appear among them). By the word paramrishtam (caught by His back), the unique attribute of superexcellent affection that Bhagavan Sri Krishna feels for Yashoda-mata (sneha-vishesha) is intimated. In this regard also, one may search out the following verse from the Tenth Canto (Bhagavatam 10.9.10):

"While chasing after Krishna, the slim waisted Yashoda's broad hips caused her pace to slow down. From running quickly, the flowers had come loose from her hair and were falling after her, but she still continued to pursue Him. In this fashion, after chasing and chasing Him, she finally caught Him from behind."

Thus ends Sanatana Goswami's Dig-Darshini-Tika on the first shloka of Sri Damodarashtakam.

### **Text Two**

*rudantam muhur netra-yugmam mrjantam  
karambhoja-yugmena satanka-netram  
muhuh svasa-kampa-tri-rekhanka-kantha-  
sthita-graiva damodaram bhakti-baddham*

### **Translation**

"Upon seeing His mother's whipping stick, He cried and rubbed His eyes again and again with His two lotus hands. His eyes were fearful and His breathing quick, and as Mother Yashoda bound His belly with ropes, He shivered in fright and His pearl necklace shook. To this Supreme Lord, Sri Damodara, I offer my humble obeisances."

### **Commentary by Srila Sanatana Goswami**

After this, Krishna's lila-vishesha (excellence of pastimes) is mentioned, as confirmed in the Bhagavatam (10.9.11) thus:

"(Mata Yashoda saw that) The mischievous child then cried and cried while rubbing His eyes with His hands, thereby smearing the dark eye-lining cosmetics from them. (Krishna saw the stick in her hands, and) His eyes became overwhelmed with fright. In this condition, Yashoda seized His hand and proceeded to chastise Him in order to instil fear in Him."

The details of this pastime are now spoken of in the second verse beginning with rudantam. Seeing the whipping stick in His mother's hand, and apprehending being struck with it, He behaved as if terrified so that she would see His distress and think "He is afraid of being punished". He hoped that by her seeing this attitude of His, she would not hit Him with the stick. Thinking in this way (that He would be spared punishment), therefore karambhoja-yugmena netra-yugmam mrjantam - He rubbed both eyes again and again with both of His lotus-like hands at the same time. This is a natural characteristic of balya-lila, and indeed the normal habit of small children.

Or else, karambhoja-yugmena netra-yugmam mrjantam may also indicate that by the influence of His fright, many tears were actually forming in His eyes; therefore He rubbed them again and again in order to make the tears fall out. Or furthermore, He rubbed His eyes again and again in order to wipe away the tears that were falling again and again; this is yet another meaning. Now satanka-netram - dreading His mother's punishment, His eyes expressed how much He was terrified in His mind. Or else, it refers to His glancing this way and that in extreme fear. In this regard also, He tries to avoid being punished; thus another confidential pastime is disclosed.

Moreover, muhuh svasena - due to His crying and sobbing again and again, kampak - trembling, tri-rekhanka - marked with three lines just like a conchshell, kanthe stitham graivam - all His neck ornaments like pearl necklaces and so forth - He who appears this way. Damodaram - Whose belly is tied with a rope. He is described thus in the Bhagavatam (10.9.14):

"Just as an ordinary mother binds her naughty son, Yashoda Mata considered Sri Krishna to be her own ordinary child and tied Him to the grinding mortar with a rope."

In stating that knots were tied on the rope both to His belly and to the mortar, this indicates the particulars of Sri Krishna's excellence called bhakta-vasyata, or His quality of coming under the control of His devotees. Bhaktyaiva baddham - this refers to He Who responds only to bhakti in the following two ways: from His mother's viewpoint, He is bound by the loving parental devotion she feels for her son; from His viewpoint, He is bound by His mother's devotion in the form of bhakta-vasyata. Baddham - He willingly accepted the binding, although no rope had the power to bind Him. Thus mother Yashoda eventually collected all the ropes in her household, but upon tying them together the length still came out two fingers too short to fit around His waist. This is described in the following shlokas from the Bhagavatam (10.9.15-17):

"While tying up the naughty child, the rope came out two fingers short, so Yashoda Mata tied another length to it. This rope also came out two fingers short, so she tied yet another length to that one; but no matter how many ropes she added, it always ended up too short. Thus she was unable to bind Him, even by combining all the ropes in the house. (Then her gopi friends began to smile and she herself also smiled and laughed in astonishment)."

Of furthermore, the reason for this characteristic of the rope around His waist is: bhaktyaiva baddham - He can be bound only by devotion and nothing else. By this He becomes controlled. Such is certainly the conclusion of the afore-mentioned description. In this connection, it is further stated in the Bhagavatam (10.9.18-21):

"While attempting to bind Krishna) Yashoda became fatigued from tying so many ropes together again and again, and she perspired as the flower garlands in her hair fell loose. Then the young child Sri Krishna saw her weariness and mercifully consented to being tied up. O Maharaja Pariksit! Although He controls the entire universe along with its highly qualified demigods, the supreme independent Hari thus displayed how He comes under the control of His devotees. Therefore this gopi Yashoda Mata received such a great benediction from He Who awards liberation - a favour not granted to Lord Brahma, Mahesvara or even Laksmi Devi herself, who sports as half the body of all the Lord's incarnations. Bhagavan Gopika-suta, the Supreme Lord appearing as the son of a cowherd woman, is thus readily available for His devotees, yet remains far away from those absorbed in the bodily concept of the eight fold yoga practices as well as those focusing on visions of the Self through intellectual pursuits." (In other words, the tapasvis and the jnanis embark on a very difficult path of spiritual searching, but - being completely unable to attain Bhagavan - at best can end up realising only a minute fraction of Lord Krishna's true glory".

These verses from the Bhagavatam indicate direct proof of all such conclusions. Elsewhere in the Bhagavatam it is stated (10.10.25):

"Because Devarsi Narada is My dear devotee, and because these two boys are the sons of My devotee Kuvera, I will deliver them in order to fulfil the words previously spoken by Mahatma Narada."

The purport of these words spoken by Sri Krishna is that He totally depends on the devotion of Sri Narada; (being pleased with Narada's bhakti) Krishna therefore dragged the grinding mortar and broke down the two trees in which the cursed brothers stood. This is why the Lord performs these and indeed all other pastimes (-because of the devotion of His devotees).

*Thus ends Sanatana Goswami's Dig-Darshini-Tika on the second shloka of Sri Damodarashtakam.*

### **Text Three**

*itidrk sva-lilabhir ananda-kunde  
sva-ghosam nimajjantam akhyapayantam  
tadiyesita-jnesu bhaktair jitatvam  
punah prematas tam satavrtti vande*

### **Translation**

"Those superexcellent pastimes of Lord Krishna's babyhood drowned the inhabitants of Gokula in pools of ecstasy. To the devotees who are attracted only to His majestic aspect of Narayana in

Vaikuntha, the Lord herein reveals: "I am conquered and overwhelmed by pure loving devotion." To the Supreme Lord, Damodara, my obeisances hundreds and hundreds of times."

### **Commentary by Srila Sanatana Goswami**

Now the excellences of His guna-vishesha (attributes of His qualities) are expressed in this verse beginning with the word iti. It depicts the reason for His coming under the sway of His devotees. And furthermore, iti means "by this Damodara-lila"; it also connotes idrsibhis ca - "by all Sri Krishna's supremely enchanting childhood pastimes like the Damodara-lila." The word svasya indicates His own uncommonly divine pastimes - lilabhih - by all His sportive pastimes (He drowns all the living beings of Gokula in ecstasy). This is confirmed by many statements of the Bhagavatam such as the following (10.11.7-8):

"If you dance, then we will give you a sweet' - by these words, or by clapping their hands, the elder gopis sometimes induced Sri Krishna to dance. Thus Bhagavan, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, danced just like an ordinary child. Sometimes they made Him sing, and He therefore sang just like a bewildered innocent boy. In this way, He came under the control of the cowherd women exactly like a wooden puppet on strings. Sometimes His relatives would order Him to bring their shoes, chair or measuring pot; but if He was unable to lift the article called for, He would grasp it firmly and, just to please His dear relatives, flap His elbows again and again to demonstrate His childish strength."

On the basis of these conclusions of the Bhagavatam, it is further stated - sva-ghosam means all the living beings dwelling in Gokula - ananda-kunde nimajjantam - He immersed them in a deep pool brimming with liquid bliss mellows (ananda-rasa-maya-gabhira-jala). Therefore it is declared in the Bhagavatam verse quoted above: svanam pritim samudvahan - by these actions, He stimulated the complete love of His own dearest relatives (priti). And furthermore, the word ghosah additionally means "the loud proclamation of His glories." Similarly, the word sva also connotes either svasya or svanam - that either His own glory or the glory of the gopas and gopis is proclaimed by these pastimes. In this mood He personally drowned them all in pools of bliss (ananda-kunde nimajjantam) - and they experienced a very special excellence of supreme happiness (parama-sukha).

And furthermore, it is especially noted that - tadiyesita-jnesu - unto those who are attached to knowledge of the Lord's majestic opulence (aisvarya), and who worship Him accordingly, He declares bhaktair jitatvam - only in front of His own pure devotees does He become totally submissive, being conquered by their loving devotion; akhyapayantam - He has fully displaced this quality for all to see. The meaning is - "I willingly become submissive to the control of My servants who are attached to bhakti, but I will never submit Myself to those fond of jnana." This is confirmed in the Bhagavatam (10.11.9) thus:

"Bhagavan Sri Krishna has proclaimed to the bhaktas of the universe who are fond of aisvarya-jnana that He is fully submissive only to His own pure devotees."

The meaning of this Bhagavatam verse is - the word tad-vidam indicates devotees who are attached to bhagavad-aisvarya-jnana. Or yet another meaning is - tadiyanam suggests that He

displays this quality (of submission to His devotees) only in front of those who are already aware of the prabhava or power of His most dear, favourite devotees; He does not exhibit this feature to others. The reason for such behaviour is - those who are unaware of the special glories of the Vaisnavas, and those who cultivate kevala-jnana (impersonal knowledge) are unqualified to be presented with a display of the supremely confidential truth regarding devotion and the glories of devotion. In this mood, a further meaning of tad-vidam (from the Bhagavatam verse 10.11.9 quoted above) is - this word reveals bhrtya-vasyata-vidam, or those who are unaware of Sri Krishna's quality of submitting to His devotees. Now (in Damodarashtakam) the word prematah denotes "with an excellence of love and devotion"; satavrtti means hundreds and hundreds of times; tam - unto that isvara - punah vande - I repeatedly offer my respectful obeisances. Therefore the only thing worshipful for me is to offer my obeisances unto the superexcellence of the process of bhakti, which brings the Supreme Lord under the control of His devotees. Such a condition can never come about through aisvarya-jnana, or knowledge of His divine majesty. This alone is the mood of the devotee offering this specific prayer.

*Thus ends Sanatana Goswami's Dig-Darshini-Tika on the third shloka of Sri Sri Damodarashtakam.*

#### **Text Four**

*varam deva! moksham na mokshavadhim va  
na canyam vrne 'ham varesad apiha  
idam te vapur natha! gopala-balam  
sada me manasy avirastam kim anyaih*

#### **Translation**

" O Lord, although You are able to give all kinds of benedictions, I do not pray to You for liberation, nor eternal life in Vaikuntha, nor any other boon. My only prayer is that Your childhood pastimes may constantly appear in my mind. O Lord, I do not even want to know your feature of Paramatma. I simply wish that Your childhood pastimes may ever be enacted in my heart."

#### **Commentary by Srila Sanatana Goswami**

In this way, continuing the description of the Lord's particular excellences, the prayer progresses with a request that mentions one's cherished desires. This is presented in two verses (4 and 5), starting with the word varam. The word deva means "O supremely effulgent one!" Or it also implies "O Lord engaged in superexcellent sweet sports!" The word iha means "here in Vrindavana" -varesad - from You, Who can bestow any benediction - varam na vrne - I do not seek any boon. Specifically, I do not pray for moksha, the fourth purushartha or goal of human life (to achieve freedom from material contact by merging into the brahman effulgence); nor do I pray for mokshaya-avadhim, the highest supreme zenith of liberation in the form of eternally living in Sri Vaikuntha-loka, where the excellence of life is the nature of thickly condensed happiness; nor do I pray for anyan ca - other things such as the nine methods of devotional service headed by shravana (hearing, chanting, etc.) - I do not desire the boons that may be

obtained by any of these processes. Furthermore - even if You want to give them to me, and additionally - even if others consider such things to be very appealing - iha, here in Vrindavana I do not have the slightest desire for them. This word iha can also be used in relation to the statements of the rest of the verse. It is naturally understood that the three benedictions referred to - moksha (liberation), mokshavadhi (the highest zenith of liberation) and anya (other things) - all reflect an ascending level of superiority, each being greater than the last. In this regard, the superiority of Vaikuntha to impersonal liberation is clearly described in my (Srila Sanatana Goswami's) Brhad Bhagavatamrta, Uttara Khanda 1.14-15. And the superiority of the nine process of devotion (headed by sravana) to Vaikuntha-loka is described in the Bhagavatam (3.15.49) thus:

"(The four kumaras headed by Sanat, after cursing the disrespectful devotees named Jaya and Vijaya, said to Lord Vishnu Who had just appeared:) Oh Lord, we pray that you let us be born in any hellish condition of life, as long as our ears are always filled with the chanting of Your transcendental qualities."

By these words, it becomes evident that the nine processes of devotion beginning with shravana can be perfected even while living in hell - wherever one is, and in whatever condition of life, one thereby experiences the perfection of living in the eternal abode of Vaikuntha.

This being the case, then what boon does one want from the Lord? The answer is given in this fourth verse of Damodarastakam: he natha! - iha idam te vapur gopala-balam - O Lord! This form of Yours as a cowherd child in Vrindavana - sada me manasi avirastam - may such a form ever be manifest in my mind. Since He is antaryami, situated as the indwelling Supersoul, He may be seen manifesting the divine beauty of His every limb within one's heart, just as clearly as one sees directly with the eyes.

Still - (even if Krishna were to personally address the devotee and offer:) "O he! The above-mentioned three kinds of boons beginning with moksha are not ordinary; they are most desirous, and anyone would immediately accept them...would you accept them?" The answer is given herein - kim anyaih - "What is the use of all these things? They have no value to me." This is the meaning. The reason behind this attitude is - Sri Krishna is composed of all the bliss in the universe, so if He is attained then everything else is automatically and perfectly attained. But if one cannot attain Krishna, then the imperfection perceived in the absence of the desired goal especially creates a grand distaste and lamentable misery at the mere thought of attaining something of lesser value. Therefore it is said here that other boons are useless - kim anyaih - "What good are they?" This is the mood.

Or else, the words kim anyaih show yet another meaning. (Again the Lord may ask) "Even though you do not pray for the boons beginning with moksham, would you care then for the boon of directly seeing and conversing with My supremely worshipable four-armed form (of Sri Narayana and other aisvarya-maya-murtis)?" The answer remains the same - kim anyaih - "Other boons are useless to me." The intention behind this is - "If Your divine form of a cowherd child (which is the crest-jewel of all splendours) would always be manifest in my heart, then I would feel very, very pleased; nothing short of that would satisfy me." This is the mood.

For further details regarding the glories of antar-darshana (seeing the Lord within the heart), please see Brhad Bhagavatamrta, Uttara-Khanda 2.86-96. Therein the sage Sri Pippalayana on the planet Tapoloka has explained all these principles very elaborately. Now the Damodarastaka prayer offered by Satyavrata Muni similarly demonstrates that the longing for inner darshana is the best goal of all - from this prayer all these things can be clearly understood.

Thus ends Sanatana Goswami's Dig-Darshini-Tika on the fourth shloka of Sri Sri Damodarastakam.

### Text Five

*idam te mukhambhojam avyakta-nilair  
vrtam kuntalaih nigdha-raktais ca gopya  
muhus cumbitam bimba-raktadharam me  
manasy avirastam alam laksa-labhaih*

### Translation

" O Lord, the cheeks of Your blackish lotus face, which is encircled by locks of curling hair, have become reddened like bimba fruits due to Mother Yashoda's kisses. What more can I describe than this? Millions of opulences are of no use to me, but may this vision constantly remain in my mind."

### Commentary by Srila Sanatana Goswami

And furthermore, the longing to see Your sri-mukha, Your divine lotus face that is parama-manohara (supremely enchanting) is stated in this verse beginning with idam te. Sometime while one is meditating deeply within and perceives such indescribable beauty and splendour - that is what is revealed in this verse. His face is praphulla-kamalakara 0 it resembles a fully-blossomed lotus flower; nikhila-santapa-hari - His face is the remover of all kinds of distress; and paramananda-rasa-maya - and it is pervaded with the supreme mellows of pure bliss. That lotus face - manasi muhur-avirastam - may it be revealed again and again within my mind.

What does that lotus face look like? It is surrounded (vrtam) by curling hair (kuntala) that is very dark blue (avyakta-nila), glossy (snigdha) and tinged with red (rakta). The word vrtam suggests that just as a lotus flower is surrounded with hovering honeybees, similarly the Lord's lotus face is encircled with curly locks that bounce around whenever He moves. The word gopya ("by the gopi") indicates that His face is kissed again and again by either Sri Yashoda or by Sri Radha. The word muhuh (again and again) is relative to this word gopya, and it reads properly exactly where it is in the verse. This being the case, may that divine lotus face - muhus-cumbitam - kissed repeatedly by the supremely fortunate gopi-mama manasi - in my mind - avirastam - may it manifest even once. This is the meaning.

Or else - the word sada (always) found in the previous verse carries over to is definitive conclusion in the present verse, thereby indicating "may it always manifest" - this intention can also be accepted. Finally, that lotus face is especially described thus - bimba-vad-raktadharam -

He Whose lips are cherry red like the bimba fruit. (If that form is manifest within my mind, I will be fully satisfied). Therefore it is said about laksa-labhaih, the attainment of millions and millions of other types of benedictions - alam - they are of no use to me whatsoever. This is the meaning. This is most definitely the message that is conveyed by the fifth verse.

*Thus ends Sanatana Goswami's Dig-Darshini-Tika on the fifth shloka of Sri Sri Damodarashtakam.*

### **Text Six**

*namo deva! damodarananta! visno!  
prasida prabho! duhkha-jalabdhi-magnam  
krpa-drsti-vrstyati-dinam batanu-  
grhanesa! mam ajnam edhy aksi-drsvyah*

### **Translation**

"O unlimited Vishnu! O master! O Lord! Be pleased upon me! I am drowning in an ocean of sorrow and am almost like a dead man. Please shower the rain of mercy on me; uplift me and protect me with Your nectarean vision."

### **Commentary by Srila Sanatana Goswami**

Now, by the potency of prayer, feelings of spontaneous love arise and one especially craves to have the direct vision of the Lord. In this regard, when referring to topics about saksat-darshana or direct vision of the Lord, only sri nama-sankirtana is the parama sadhana or supreme method for this attainment. After fixing His beauty in the mind, one then offers sorrowful prayers by way of sri nama-kirtana, as in this verse beginning with namo. In the text of a mula-shloka such as this sixth verse, usually the word tubhyam ("unto You") would be found in order to complete the sense of the prayer; but in this case, the excitement of prema causes the reciter to neglect all feelings of awe or reverence. Therefore, in the mood of being in the personal presence of the Lord, the word tubhyam is neglected.

He prabho - means he madiya isvara, O my controller! (Offering You my obeisances, I beg) prasida - this word indicates prasadam, or be pleased with me and show Your mercy. (The reason for praying is) I am duhkha-jalabdhi-magnam - immersed in the ocean of misery. Specifically, the word duhkha (pain, misery, distress) indicates either the agony of repeated birth and death in the samsarika material world, or else the torment of not seeing You (resulting in feelings of ocean-like infinite desolation). Jalam - (meaning net, illusion, deception), and abdhiih (ocean) denotes the extreme vastness - (By the force of my own karma) I am thus magnam (submerged). (I am tortured by all these harsh afflictions); therefore I am ati-dinam - very distressed.

Or else, another meaning of the word ati-dinam is - I am completely bereft of the association of saintly persons, and consequently without their assistance I am extremely fallen. Or else, yet another meaning is - (due to not seeing You) I am just like a living dead man. In this regard, I am also ajnam - I am particularly ignorant about how to resolve this problem. Then krpaya drsti-

vrstyā - showing Your own mercy, please shower me with Your nectar-laden glances -  
anugrahāna - thereby uplifting me and once more enthusing me with life. This alone is the purport  
of the prayer. Then aksi-drśyo-edhi - please become visible before my eyes.

Prayers are usually made according to the sequence in which this one is prayed; as such it is not  
appropriate in this case to first mentioned the boon that is being requested, due to its nature of  
being the topmost of rarely attained benedictions.

The glory of attaining the direct vision of the Lord (saksat-darshana) within the mind is  
explained very logically by the personal associates of the Lord (sri bhagavat parsada) in the  
Bṛhad Bhagavatamṛta, Uttara Khanda 3.179-182. From this passage one may gain specific  
knowledge of these topics.

(Now the devotional kirtana of the Lord's names, used to address Him at the beginning of the  
mula-shloka, will be explained:) In this sixth verse the word deva indicates he divya rūpa - O  
Lord of divine beauty! This beauty is the cause for desiring His darshana. The address of  
damodara intimates specifically that He is glorified for His excellence of bhakta-vatsalya, or  
affection for His devotees (up to the point of allowing them to bind Him around the waist).  
Therefore I will be qualified only by bhakti to see Him with my own eyes. He Who has no end  
(Whose mercy has no limits) is addressed as ananta. Therefore He will certainly shower His  
glance of mercy and thus favour me. The address prabhu connotes he acintya-ananta-adbhuta-  
maha-sakti-yukta - O You Who are endowed with inconceivable, limitless, astonishingly grand  
potency! Therefore You Who cannot be perceived by the senses can only become visible to my  
eyes by dint of this same inconceivable sakti of Yours. Addressing Him as isa suggests - he  
parama-svatantra - O You Who are supremely independent! In showing Your favour even to  
unfit souls, You are dependent on no one else. And moreover, the address vishnu means he  
sarva-vyapaka - O You Who are all-pervading! Furthermore, it means - O You Who are fond of  
entering into Vrindavana's secluded caves and bower-cottages! Praying like this indicates that it  
is not difficult for Him to come before one's eyes; He does not have to labour hard to come from  
a distance.

(Some additional interpretations of the above-mentioned forms of address are now given:) Or  
else, he ananta means that He is aparicchīna or continuously existent without interval or  
separation. The address of vishnu means He is sarva-vyapin or living everywhere. Therefore, he  
damodara proclaims Him thus - under the sway of His own parama-vatsalya-vishesha or  
supremely affectionate attribute, there is absolutely nothing that He cannot do. The purport of the  
other words used for addressing Him may also be understood in terms of these expanded  
indications.

*Thus ends Sanatana Goswami's Dig-Darshini-Tika on the sixth shloka of Sri Sri  
Damodarashtakam.*

### **Text Seven**

*kuveratmajau baddha-murtyaiva yad-vat  
tvaya mocitau bhakti-bhajau kṛtau ca*

*tatha prema-bhaktim svakam me prayaccha  
na mokshe graho me 'sti damodareha*

### **Translation**

"O Lord Damodara, in Your form as a baby Mother Yashoda bound You to a grinding stone with a rope for tying cows. You then freed the sons of Kuvera, Manigriva and Nalakuvara, who were cursed to stand as trees and You gave them the chance to become Your devotees. Please bless me in this same way. I have no desire for liberation into Your effulgence."

### **Commentary by Srila Sanatana Goswami**

In this way, by the attributes of pure ecstatic love (prema-vishesha) one becomes infused with supreme longing and prays for direct audience with the Lord (saksat-darshana). From the attributes of that prayerful longing arises ecstatic loving service (prema-bhakti), which demonstrates the supreme rarity of saksat-darshana. This prema-bhakti is verily the only means for attaining His darshana; first establishing this as a fact, prayer is then offered to Him. Or else - if one does receive His vision but once, the mind is unsatisfied, and (due to not seeing Him the very next second) the agony of separation sets in. Holding an apprehension like this, which perpetually brings the Lord under one's sway, is a feature of prema-bhakti - which is the one and only means of maintaining such a condition. This being declared the case, then how could it possibly be accomplished by such an utmost offender like me? The answer to this concern is that Sri Bhagavan's quality of bhakta-vatsalya (affection for His devotees) makes the impossible quite possible. In order to resolve this for certain, the proposal of moksha is again rejected here in the seventh verse beginning with kuveratmajau, where the prayer is made purely for attaining prema-bhakti.

The words baddha-murtya indicate that His sri vigraha (divine bodily form) was bound with ropes tied to the grinding mortar by Sri Yashoda; by that sri vigraha (He liberated the two sons of Kuvera). Thus by His dragging the mortar between (the two trees known as yamalarjuna) Bhagavan personally demonstrates the supreme fortune that comes in the form of saksat-darshana (seeing His form), personally touching His form, and so forth, which are integral attributes of His supremely beautiful pastimes. (Even though He Himself was tied up, now it is described how he liberated Nalakuvara and Manigriva:) The word mocitau denotes that they were liberated not just from the curse of Sri Narada, but from samsara (the material world) as well; they were not awarded with kevalam or impersonal liberation of merging into His all-pervading effulgence, but it is definitely stated that they were gifted with prema-bhakti. These two boys are described as bhakti-bhajau - they took shelter of bhakti as the supreme goal. Those who cannot give up the shelter of devotion in any way, shape or form are called bhakti -bhajam. (Krishna personally transformed them in this way). Thus it is the intention of the author to specifically declare that not only were they liberated, but that they were also awarded with prema-bhakti. In this regard, the Lord has declared to these two boys in the Bhagavatam (10.10.42):

"The sprout of prema for Me, which was your most supremely cherished goal, has now fully arisen in both of you. From this ecstatic mood, you will never take birth in the material world again."

(Srila Sanatana Goswami has elucidated upon this verse in his own commentary on the Bhagavatam). The purport is - The word vam ("You two") indicates that Lord Krishna was addressing the two boys thusly: "The most desire thing you have prayed for is parama-bhava and you both have fully developed this prema for Me. Therefore you will never again experience bhava, the repeated birth and death in the material world, nor will you feel the misery of samsara even while living here."

Then, he damodara! tatha - just like that - svakam - the exclusive shelter (ashraya) of Your own lotus feet, or else - the exclusive objective (vishaya) of such a beautiful form as Yours; namely prema-bhakti - me - unto me - prayaccha - please bestow it unto me in the most lavish way. (yaccha means "please give" and the prefix pra indicates prakarshena or "with profusion or intensity").

Verily, it is just like Lord Sri Krishna is saying, "O he! Why are you so enthusiastic for prema-bhakti? Just accept liberation like the two sons of Kuvera, whereby the miseries of birth and death in the material world are finished." To that, the answer remains the same - neti - no, thank you. Other than iha, this goal named prema-bhakti - na mokshe graho me asti damodara - I have no eagerness for any other type of liberation, O Damodara! The purport of this is: one may think, "If the samsara is destroyed by engaging in prema-bhakti, let it be." Or, "If prema-bhakti doesn't destroy the samsara, then let me not develop it." I truly have no inclination for either mentality. The confidential mood is thus - if a cintamani lies in the palm of your hand, then all activities you undertake will be perfect; therefore what is the value of grasping a tiny, insignificant thing (like moksha)?

Or else, the phrase he damodara! prema-bhaktim svakam me prayaccha means - this Bhagavan's belly is bound with ropes, so from Him one prays for prema-bhakti in order to perpetually bind His belly; the eagerness for this reciprocation makes it actually possible. Apprehending such, the prayer continues (na mokshe grahah, etc.), wherein the alarmed devotee offers - "Do I not have eagerness for You to become liberated from the ropes?" The purport is: "Yes, I certainly care." This is precisely the meaning. But all I want from You (in Your bound up form) is that You bestow my most cherished benediction of prema bhakti.

Or else, yet another meaning is - the word iha indicates "please bestow prema-bhakti here in Vrindavana" - this intention also follows. To interpret further,, one prays thus because Sri Vrindavana is the exclusive agent for the arising of prema-bhakti's unique happiness, also, only in Vrindavana Sri Krishna especially appears; also, the attributes of His sakshat-darshana are found there (in that form) with His belly bound); and further, one prays for perpetual residence in Vrindavana because only there does Sri Bhagavan desire to especially manifest as the enjoyer of the forest - Vrindavana-Vihari. All this is additionally evidence. Further details of these topics could be ascertained as we have been doing herein.

*Thus ends Sanatana Goswami's Dig-Darshini-Tika on the seventh shloka of Sri Sri Damodarashatakam.*

### **Text Eight**

*namas te 'stu damne sphurad dipti-dhamne  
tvadiyodarayatha vishvasya dhamne  
namo radhikayai tvadiya priyayai  
namo 'nanta-lilaya devaya tubhyam*

### **Translation**

"O Lord, the entire universe was created by Lord Brahma, who was born from Your abdomen, which was bound by a rope by Mother Yashoda. To this rope I offer my humble obeisances. I offer my obeisances to Your most beloved Srimati Radharani and to Your unlimited pastimes."

### **Commentary by Srila Sanatana Goswami**

Now at the conclusion of the prayer, in order to summarize the presentation of topics that are being prayed for, and also to arouse the attributes of bhakti, obeisances are given separately unto Bhagavan's unique binding, bodily limbs, associates, and so on in the verse beginning with *namas te 'stu*. It is stated *te damne namo 'stu* - I bow to the maha-pasha, the magnificent rope that binds Your belly. What is this grand rope like? It is *sphurantya dipte dhama* - the source or shelter of a splendrous effulgence. In this regard, it is suggested by the author that such a maha-pasha is the very abode of the (endlessly radiant) concentrated brahma-teja, or all-pervading brahman effulgence.

After that, *tvadiyaya udaraya namo 'stu* - I bow to Your belly. The reason for this is because while bound with ropes, You especially manifest the beauty and other qualities of Your belly as well as the glorious characteristics of *vatsalya-lila* and other pastimes. What is that belly like? It is stated *vishvasya dhama* - that belly is the support for all the universes in creation, including all the stationary and moving beings contained therein. From the lotus navel on His abdomen has sprouted a gigantic lotus flower that sustains the fourteen worlds. Additionally, (during His childhood pastimes in Vrindavana) He bodily displayed the *vishva-rupa* or universal form to His mother on two occasions. This is another indication. Therefore, in such a pastime of binding Him by the waist, mother Yashoda bound up the whole universe, indeed, she brought the entire creation under her control. This is the proclamation.

It is never possible to factually bind the (all-pervading, limitlessly potent) Lord, Who is Isha (the supreme controller), but He willingly accepts binding as an attribute of His superexcellent affection for His devotees (*bhakta-vatsalya-vishesha*). And by that acceptance of binding we are informed that such pastimes are imperceptible to all the logic and reasoning available within all the material universes. This is an intimation of His *aisvarya-vishesha* or attributes of majesty.

The reason for offering obeisances first unto the rope (*dama*) and then unto the Lord's belly (*udara*) is - because the rope is situated upon His belly. Or furthermore, to indicate the ascending

superiority in the significance of different things, (respects are first offered to the rope, then to His belly).

Now, namo radhikayai - obeisances are offered unto His beloved, Bhagavati Sri Radhika. This is done in order to show that the mercy of His beloved enables one to fully attain the desire objective - including objectives that are even beyond the range of desire. By offering obeisances unto Sri Radhika, it is implied that obeisances are also being offered unto all the gopis. Or else, since Sri Radhika is the foremost of them all, obeisances are offered only unto Her.

The word radhika is used here to denote the attributes and excellence of one who is always engaged in Sri Bhagavan's aradhana or worship (arranging only for His pleasure); this is the purpose of using Her specific name "Radhika" in this text. Therefore - tvadiya-priyayaih - obeisances unto Your beloved. Or else, this name "Radhika" indicates rudhi (in grammatical terms, it is capable of conveying a meaning not supported by derivation). Therefore, regardless of Her aradhana or worship of You, She is still Your eternally dearest beloved (nitya-priya). In this connection also, the word tvadiya indicates that not only is She dear to Yourself, but to all Your other devotees as well; what more, then, could be said about how dear She is to You? Additionally, this statement implies that You are also Her nitya-priya (eternally dear beloved). By such the excellence of Sri Radhika's love for Sri Krishna (prema-vishesha) is suggested. This the words priyayaih namah in this verse can either mean - my obeisances unto You, Radhika's beloved; or, my obeisances unto Radhika, Your beloved. Whoever is beloved to You, such a person is certainly worshipable for the entire universe. Therefore, since Radhika is Your own dearest beloved, namo 'stu - I bow before Her.

And finally at the conclusion of the prayer, the author desires to describe the supreme superexcellence of the rasa-lila and other transcendental pastimes that Lord Sri Krishna performs with Sri Radhika, but since these are the topmost of confidential topics, they are not mentioned directly. The logic of madhurena samapayet - "all undertakings should be completed sweetly" - applies here. Therefore such confidential pastimes are referred to only by a mere hint as they are offered obeisances with the words namo 'nanta-lilaya (obeisances unto Your limitless pastimes).

The word devaya indicates that obeisances are offered unto Bhagavan Who is lokottara - supernatural, divine, transcendental. With this it is intimated that by Damodara Krishna's divinely supernatural quality, then all the lilas performed by Him are also similarly transcendental. Or else, it could also be interpreted to mean - my obeisances unto You Who are continuously engaged in pastimes along with Sri Radhika. Therefore, ananta-lilaya tubhyam namah - I offer my respectful obeisances unto You Who are thus performing limitless pastimes. By the words ananta-lila, it is suggested to include all the pastimes associated with the realm of Gokula Vrindavana. I offer my obeisances unto all those lilas, such a mood is most certainly expressed in this verse.

*Thus ends Sanatana Goswami's Dig-Darshini-Tika on the eighth shloka of Sri Sri Damodarashatakam*