

Explanation of Sri Damodara Ashtakam

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Hare Krsna, you don't say? [Hare Krsna] I like it atleast to say Hare Krsna at the beginning of the class. I also like that you are here in the courtyard of Krishna Balarama mandir and underneath the Tamal tree. This morning you could see there is no Bhagavatam verse written on the board. So there is no Bhagavatam, we have Damodaraashtakam verses.

Damodaraashtak ki.... jai

Yes, I just thought of staying in the mood of this month. Damodaraashtak certainly connects us with that mood or revives the mood of the most auspicious month- Damodaraa month. As I decided to do that, I don't know whether you are happy or not that I decided to do this. But you know this garland (in his neck) is from Radha Damodara temple. I don't ever remember receiving any garland from Radha Damodaraa. Today, in the morning, when one mataji said "Maharaja, Radha Damodaraa garland for you", then I thought Damodaraa is happy with me so I selected this topic- some indication. It (garland) did not fall from His neck around my neck but someone brought it over and now it is here.

Radha Damodara ki.....Jai

Yashoda Damodara ki... jai

Radha Damodara were the first deities of Vrindavan that I had taken darsana of, all the way in 1972. We used to sit there for listening Srimad Bhagavatam and Nectar of Devotion classes from Srila Prabhupada under the Tamal tree there also. Now it is the same month, same deities garland and same Vrindavan.

Vrindavan dham ki jai

Many, many things –not things, festivals and past times keep happening throughout this month every day, every other day and every night. Radha kunda appeared in the middle of the night and so day and night, things or past times keep happening throughout this month. However, I think of all those happenings, the past time between Yashoda and Damodara is most significant and highlight of this month. Something that happened – just one day.

ekada g?ha-dasisu yasoda nanda-gehini [SB 10.9.1]

Wife of Nanda Maharaja, she asks her maid “Do something else today. You do this sweeping, you do cleaning etc. Today I am going (swayam) to do the churning up of butter.”

Ekda- Sukdev Goswami is not putting any date, he is making a general statement by saying ekda-once upon a time. That time was the month of Kartik (pointing to the audience) Some of you already started sleeping, Krishna just woke up. It was early morning hour and there was no Yashoda around. Yashoda did not come to wake Him up. Uthi uthi gopala-she did not do that, that day. uthi uthi-Please get up. As soon as he would get up, the first thing that he would do or the first pastime of Krishna was to drink the breast milk every morning.

yasoda ca maha-bhaga

papau yasyah stanam harih [SB 10.8.46]

The most fortunate lady, yasoda cha mahabhaga papau-someone is drinking, who is that? Hari. Hari is drinking the breast milk of Yasoda. What a good great fortune of Yasoda? Sukdev Goswami says that Yasoda is mahabhaga. Krishna would do that, drinking breast milk every morning. But that morning-ekda-once upon a time or one morning that did not happen. Anyway, I am getting into narration of the past time which I did not want to get into because I wanted to go through these eight prayers of Damodarashtak. But what I meant to say was that, this past

time took place just one day and it did not take place the whole day only part of the day. Basically and ultimately what happened was that Yasoda bound Krishna and the mortar with the rope. That was the final act of the episode and from that day onwards Balagopal Krishna became known as Damodara.

Dam and uddar put together becomes Damodara. Dam is rope and uddar is belly-Krishna's stomach. Lord bound up with the rope that is Damodara. So that happening, that past time has become eternal past time, a topic of deep meditation and topic of discussion. And Lord has become famous of becoming Makhanchor. He is stealing and still He became popular. So Krishna is known as Damodara. It is confirmed that He steals butter. He is butter stealer. So many complaints were coming from the ladies. But Yasoda always denied. "No, no, how this is possible? My sweet little boy is stealing. Is there any shortage of butter at home? We have 9 hundred thousand of cows, tons of butter. Why He would go next door to steal butter"? Like that Yasoda would always deny. But ekda once upon a time that day was Diwali. On the day of Deepawali, Sri Ram arrived in Ayodhya, after the victory on Lanka. It was the same day but another age. Difference of one age, that was Treta Yuga but this is Dwapara Yug. That day, on Deepawali , Krishna who was supposed to be good, well behaved boy, was caught white handed by Yasoda. I knowingly said this what kind of Krishna's hand was it, what colour? White hand. Usually thieves, robbers and thieves are caught red handed. Their hands become blood red but Krishna's hands were bright white because of the butter. And He was caught then He had to be punished and not only He should be punished but also one who helped Him to steal the butter, should be punished. So who helped Him? The mortar helped Him. If there was no mortar around, there was no way Krishna could have reached the butter hanging from the ceiling. He found the mortar, placed it right underneath the pot full of butter. He climbed up and then he had fun that morning, good morning. Hari hari time is running out (to the audience) we better get to our business, actually

we haven't even started yet.

**namamisvaram sac-cid-ananda-rupam
lasat-kundalam gokule bhrajanam
yasoda-bhiyolukhalad dhavamanam
paramrstam atyantato drutya gopya**

Satyavrat Muni is the compiler of Damodarashtakam. It is supposed to be dialogue between Narada and Shaunak Muni. These are beautiful eight prayers. So namami. These prayers are worship. This way we worship the Lord. We offer our obeisances unto the Lord. We glorify the Lord. Different things we do as we recite this Damodarashtakam. So the compiler of Damodarashtakam , begins the ashtak with namami. What is namami? I offer namami-namaskar. I offer my obeisances. Satyavrat Muni would do this from time to time. He would do that in the beginning, in the middle and in the end. He would do that again and again like.

aise sri bhagavan ko barambar pranam hai

Krishna is like this. Because He is like this, I would like to offer Him my obeisances. Because He is like this, I love to offer my obeisances unto such Krishna. So namami I offer my obeisance unto whom? Namami Ishwaram-I offer my obeisance unto Ishwar. Namami Ishwaram- this is one thing. I offer my obeisances to Ishwaram, Parmeshwaram, Krishnam, Sacchidanand rupam. I offer my obeisances so -vande has to be said every time. It is not said, not written –every time. It won't fit into the meter like that. But vande goes with lots of items in this first verse also.

Sacchidananda rupam namami and who is offering namaskar? Aham namami –aham Ishwaram namami- aham sacchidanand rupam namami. There are small statements in the poetry but you could make that in the prose form-for understanding. You understand better when it is put in the prose form.

lasat-kundalam gokule bhrajanam

The brilliant effulgent earrings unto such Damodara, I offer my obeisance. yasoda-bhiyolukhalad dhavamanam offer my obeisance unto him the Damodara- dhavmanam-who ran. Now – dhavamanam-one who was running, why was He running? Yasoda-bhi Because of the fear of Yasoda, He was running and ulukhalad –from where to where? He was on the ukhal-the mortar and He jumped down and started running away. Unto that Damodara, I offer my obeisance. paramrstam atyantato drutya gopya and Yasoda followed Him. He was running very fast- atyantato drutya gopya. He is running fast and she is trying to run faster but not able to manage because of her size and Krishna is little young boy. Okay, so he is trying to stay away, not allowing Yashoda to catch him up not as yet. It will happen later and as He tried and tried, I think it could be, while He is still running, He is afraid.

rudantam muhur netra-yugmam m?jantam
karambhoja-yugmena satanka-netram

He is still running or He has been caught and as that happened, what is He doing? – rudanta? He starts crying, crying again and again. In fact He is crying constantly, not that He is stopping and then crying and then stops and again cries.

muhuh svasa-kampa-trirekhanka-kantha-
sthita-graivam damodaram bhakti-baddham

First of all as He is crying, tears are coming out from both His eyes. He is using His both fists to rub His eyes. As He is crying, He is fearful, cannot even look at His mother or His eyes into mother's eyes. That could also be the reason why He is trying to close His eyes "No no Yasoda, I can't."

karambhoja-lotus hands, yugmena – two hands, satanka-netram – atanka means fearful, very much afraid of-satanka. Atanka-atankwad –like a terrorism, you know Krishna is terrorised because of mother Yasoda. He is afraid of Yasoda.

muhuh svasa-kampa

I am sure you cried like this. Each one of you at some point of time, cried like that. Is there any exception? No exceptions. Because Krishna cried, we cried also. Krishna has set the standard.

mama vartmanuvartante manusyah partha sarvasah [BG 4.11]

Lord says in Bhagavad-gita, the path which I follow, the acts I perform, they are followed by the whole world. So the way, He cried as a baby, all the babies keep crying. It cannot be the other way because the babies around the world, the way they cry, Krishna looked and understood, they cry like this so let me also cry like that. No, it is the other way around. Krishna cried as a baby, the genuine, original eternal baby. He has set the standard. Of course the perverted reflection of that but whatever reflection we see, where it is coming? It has origin in Krishna.

trirekhanka-kantha

And there are three lines on the neck of Sri Krishna, they are always there. This way you get to know the details of the form of the Lord. When you go, next time, go back to Krishna standing face to face then you will remember, we were told, it's exactly like that it is confirmed . Anyway you don't have to really go and see and then confirm because this is in the sastra. This is praman, sastras see and show. Or those who have seen they have compiled the sastras-scriptures and the form. So it is confirmed. Because the scriptures say so, because Damodarashtakam says so, it has to be like that and it is like this.

sthita-graivam damodaram bhakti-baddham

And there is a locket- graiva is neck .And something hanging from his neck. Griva becomes graiva. There is a locket or pendant and that is also moving as His whole body is shaking.

Whatever He is wearing, is also shaking.

**itidrk sva-lilabhir ananda-kunde
sva-ghosam nimajjantam akhyapayantam**

Satyavrata Muni further says- itidrk sva-lilabhir- lila like this-iti- means whatever has been only briefly explained. Certainly He is clearly stating, which lila- itidrk-like this- sva-lila by His own lila- by His past times. ananda-kunde- Damodara Krishna fills the kind the pool, lake or even ocean with ananda. There is so much bliss-ocean of bliss. This lila becomes the cause of ananda-so much ananda- ananda-kunde. Who is taking the advantage of this kunda? –sva-ghosam-the residents of Vrindavan, His associates. And what do they do?- nimajjante. They jump right into that lake, they swim, dive deeper into it. This is what we could say,

sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate- sri-krishna-sankirtanam

Sankirtana andolan, movement of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu sankirtana

**Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Ram, Hare Ram, Ram Ram Hare Hare**

When we chant this, we are also supposed to be creating kunda, lake of ananda. Here it is referred about this lila -itidrk sva-lilabhir. But when we chant Hare Krishna as already stated,

anandambudhi-varadhanam prati-padam purnamrtasvadanam

What is the chanter supposed to be doing- sarvatma-snapanam. He drowns, he dives deeper into that ananda. Nimajyanti nimajyanti te maha anarth sagre-Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Prabodhanand Saraswati Thakur also said this. Anyway, if we keep talking like this, we will never see the end of this ashtakam. Okay we'll just carry on, so nimajjantam-merging, entering into, becoming part of nimagna..

**sva-ghosam nimajjantam akhyapayantam
tadiyesita-jnesu bhaktair jitatvam
punah prematas tam satavrtti vande**

Again vande has come here. I offer vande –vandana. I worship-again namami-I offer my obeisances unto the Lord-how many times-satavriti. Avrtti means repetition. How many times-hundreds and hundreds of times-satavrtti vande and how do I do this? prematas- full of devotion-love for my Lord. I offer vandana-namaskar unto the Lord. One thing that is also mentioned –why I offer my vandana unto this Lord- bhaktair jitatvam.

Damodara becomes conquered-jitatvam. He becomes conquered. He is conquered by whom? bhaktair- by the bhaktas. Devotees conquer Him, otherwise He is unconquerable-Ajita Krisna even Ayodhya -unconquerable. No matter what kind of yudha- battle you come up with-Ayodhya the capital of Sri Ram is never conquered- unconquerable. Lord is like that but He becomes conquered by bhaktair jitatvam. Then akhyapayantam -He has become famous like this-famous for being conquered by his devotees- by His devotees' devotion Lord is conquered. This is a statement, this Damodara Lila is making this statement. He could be conquered, He could be conquered-see how Yasoda conquered Him, arrested Him, bound Him up.

**varam deva moksam na moksavadhim va
na canyam vrne 'ham varesad apiha**

No, no, I do not want, don't give me varam, don't give me benediction- Dev-0' lord, do not give me benediction. moksam na moksavadhim va -anything all the way upto moksha and whatever is in between- bhuktikami, siddhi kami and this kami and that kami all the way upto mukti. There are so many kamnas all the way upto mukti. Even mukti I don't want-moksavdhim-upto mukti. Anything from bottom all the way upto moksha, I don't want.

na canyam -cha anyam and other similar var. Varesad-I know you are Var -ish, you are varada the giver of benediction or I know you are Varadraj- the king amongst the benedictors.

Varesad-Var-ish. But for me, I have no interest.

**idam te vapur natha gopala-balam
sada me manasy avirastam kim anyaih**

Oh! Gopal, Gopal-Gopalabalam-Bal Gopal- all that I want is sada-always-manasya virastam. Please stay in my mind, in my heart. Enter my mind. Let me always think of you-manmana. Let me do this,

manasy avirastam kim anyaih

All other things, I don't care- kim anyai?-all other items I don't care. I only want that-may Krishna be with you, may God be with you-like that we always say-so you be always with me and you be always in my mind. Let me always think of you.

**idam te mukhambhojam atyanta-nilair
vrtam kuntalaih snigdha-raktais' ca gopya**

Now it is the turn of mukhambhojam – lotus face like karambhojam-lotus hand as said earlier. Now lotus face-mukhambhojam. You are mukh ambuj-you are lotus faced. Krishna is not ever trying to look for any lotus face here but maybe some of you may resemble. But your atma your spirit has. If I could see the spirit, the spirit's face is like lotus-like father like son or like father like daughter. Why not, so many daughters are sitting here. We are all children of Krishna. So if our father is beautiful then it is also seen that if parents have beautiful features then children are also beautiful. If Krishna is beautiful then here also we must be, we are beautiful.

So Lord's face is mukhambhojam but then he says atyanta-nilair. Well okay Krishna's form is like that-deep bluish-Ghanshyam-ghan eva shyam. Krishna's complexion is ghan eva-

ghan is the clouds and they have to be not the clouds of the month of Kartik but of the month of rainy season. Like fresh monsoon clouds. Srila Prabhupada says –fresh monsoon clouds are loaded with lots of water drops and their density is very high then that complexion resembles Krishna’s complexion-ghan eva shyam.

atyanta-nilair vrtam kuntalaih

And that bluish face is covered, is hidden by the curly hair of you O’Bala Gopal.

**snigdha-raktais’ ca gopya
muhus cumbitam bimba-raktadharam me
snigdha-raktais’ ca gopya
muhus cumbitam bimba-raktadharam me
manasy avirastam alam laksa-labhaih**

So, similar earlier statements have been repeated here, that you please enter my mind. Please let me think of you O’ Lord. Now what kind of Lord- muhus cumbitam bimba-raktadharam me - something reddish. Two reddish things have been pointed here. First, the lips of the Lord which are reddish like the bimb fruit or the pomegranate seeds inside. So the Lords lips are red. Seven parts of the Lord’s body are reddish. One of them is the lips. The reddish bimb- raktadharam me and the cheeks are also reddish. There are red marks because of muhus cumbitam. Yasoda is always, doing chumban, kissing Him every now and then. She kisses her darling little boy Bala Gopal and His cheeks are very tender-not like the elderly faces. The skin on His face is not like the buffalo skin. No matter what you do with the buffalo’s skin, you bite it, it is not going to leave any impression. But the face of the Bala Gopal is so tender that even if Yasoda touches His cheeks, it seems as if will eat Him up. He is so sweet, we like to put Him in the heart. So as she kisses, His face becomes reddish-reddish cheeks and reddish lips-that is nice beauty. Beauty is enhanced. He is already beautiful but then His beauty is

enhanced specially because of reddish lips. Lips get your attention. When you look at a person, first you see the eyes and lips of the person. You may see the nose, ears, hair later on. But first thing you see is the eyes and then the lips. So He wants,

manasy avirastam alam laksa-labhaih

He wants to keep the image, wants to store, preserve this. And He says, I do not care for millions of other kinds of benefits and benedictions. No, no I am not interested. Now moving along if we are allowed.

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

So here we quickly point out that Satyavrata Muni is addressing the Lord in various ways. There are many addresses. You understand addresses like-O, aho, ye etc. are addresses to get attention. Namoh is there again-I offer my obeisances, this is going on. This mood is always there. While he is saying all other things, he wants to offer obeisances constantly. He is offering obeisance to whom again.

Deva is one address-Adi Deva, Govind deva, Hari deva. O! Deva-that is one address. Damodara is another address. O! Damodara, O! Anant means unlimited. Ananta Vishno- O! Vishno- like hey Krishna karuna sindho. This is also a type of address. He is karuna sindhu but when you address, it becomes Karuna Sindho. He is dina bandhu but when you address, it becomes Dina Bandho. He is Vishnu but when you address, you say Vishno like she is Radha but when you want to address, she becomes Radhey. Radha is addressed as Radhey. Hare Krishna is also an address. Krishna Krishna-8 times and each one is an address. There are 16 names in the maha-mantra. There each one is address. That is why it is Krishna not Krishnah. Two dots in front then

it is Krishnah- the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You take away the 2 dots (visarga)-you remove them immediately-becomes O' Krishna. So there is difference. So Hare Krishna means Hey Krishna, Hey Radhey.

prasida prabho -Prabhu here becomes Prabho- O! Prabho and another address grhanesa –esa is also an address. So these are addresses. esa is an address, Prabhu is address, Dev is address, Damodara is address, Anant is address, Vishnu is address. About by half a dozen of addresses, he is addressing. But each address has a reason- why he is saying Vishno, Damodara Anant? There are whole emotions and feelings and so there are reasons why is he addressig Lord with that particular address.

Now kripa drishti-and you are this, you are that, you are Prabhu, you are Vishnu, you are Ananta or you are Damodara. These are you, okay and what about me, look at poor me-and what kind of me.

Dukhjalabdhimagnam

Here I am drowning in the ocean of dukha- -abdhi means ocean. I am not drowning in a drop of suffering, a little lota full of suffering or a pool but in the whole of ocean. Where ever I go, I suffer. I cannot get rid of this. Where ever I go, everywhere- dukhjalabdhimagnam. I am absorbed in it and now- dinam- poor I am. But alas oh I am ajnam- on the top of all this, I am ignorant, fool. I am ignorant, fool. I am agyam, I am dinam, dukhdjalabdhimagnam. As I already said who you are, so what do I expect from such you and such kind of me- Kripadrusti. Only kripa-drsti-vrstyati- -shower kripa (mercy) with your dristi-with your glance. Shower merciful glance on this wretched. edhy aksi-drasyah – let me with my eyes see such you-Ananta, Damodara, Vishnu ,Prabhu, Ish. Let me have darsana of you. Now 2 more paragraphs to go if you could tolerate.

**kuveratmajau baddha-murtyaiva yadvat
tvaya mocitau bhakti-bhajau krtau ca**

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

This past time also took place the same day- the day Krishna was caught white handed and He became known as Damodara because He was tied with the rope to the mortar. kuveratmajau the two sons of Kuvera.

kuveratmajau baddha-murtyaiva yadvat

You are bound up and inspite of being bound up-what you did? tvaya mocitau. You were bound up but you freed those two sons of Kuvera -Manigriva and Nalakuvara and not only you freed them but also liberated them.

bhakti-bhajau krtau ca

ou loaded them with so much bhakti bhava ,endowed them with so much devotion- so much prem for you. Yadvat-the way you dealt with those two sons of Kuvera-Satyavrata Muni says-tatha-like that- I like the way you dealt with those two sons. You liberated them but that is not big deal. You gave them so much bhakti bhava. You made them eligible-kripa patra, qualified, deserving candidate for having bhakti tatha-like that,

tatha prema-bhaktim svakam me prayaccha

Give me your bhakti, give me that kind of bhakti. Again repeating-no moksha, do not insist na mokse graho. I do not insist, not at all on this moksha business.

na mokse graho me 'sti damodareha

0'' Damodara-he is addressing-0'' Damodara only give me bhakti and finally-

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

Now namah, again you see namah is there-I offer my obeisances. So finally, he offers obeisances to 2 parties or 2 items, there are more also but in first half of this last ashtak, he offers obeisances to 2 parties. One part is- namas te 'stu damne -let my obeisance be unto damne. What is damne?-Dam is rope and damne is unto rope. I offer my obeisance unto damne. I offer my obeisance unto damne the rope – sphurad-dipti-dhamne

Who is the abode or source of dipti-the effulgence. The rope is the abode of the effulgence-the brilliant effulgent rope. So one is dam and another is dhama. Dam is dhama, dhama of what? The rope is dhama-abode, refuge-take the shelter of, the protector etc. So to this brilliant effulgent rope, I offer my obeisance unto. This one obeisance is to the rope and other is to,

tvadiyodarayatha visvasya dhamne

I also offer my obeisance unto your uddar your belly. I want to offer my obeisance unto your belly which is uddar. I just offered my obeisance to dam-rope- Damodara, now I offer my obeisance unto uddar. One obeisance is to dam another obeisance unto uddar the belly. As rope was dhama of the effulgence, your belly is dhama- abode of visva- visvasya dhamne . Your little belly is abode of entire visva. The whole universe is within you-brahmanda like brahmanda ghat. When Yasoda says open your mouth-as Krishna opens His mouth, what was inside, the whole brahmanda. Whether that brahmand was right in the mouth or in His form or it was in the belly. Here it is said, your whole belly is the abode of the visva- the universe. And my obeisance unto uddar and that is the reason why Yashoda was finding difficulty in tying Krishna. No matter what length of the rope, she managed to get, Krishna's belly was swelling, growing in size. Was He taking viratrupa-universal form? No the form remained the, same- maybe one foot or half meter or less big but the trouble was inside because there is the whole universe. So the rope has to be long enough

to go around the universe. That is why too short-every time too short.

Okay, now 2 more obeisances are there in the last verse. It begins with obeisances and obeisances are going on and on. Now- namo radhikayai- my obeisance unto Radhika also. What kind of Radhika? tvadiya-priyayai- who was very very dear to you- tvadiya-priyayai.

namo radhikayai tvadiya-priyayai

He had to say this- Radhikayai, Vrindayai. If you have to offer obeisance to Radhika, don't say Radhikah namah, it is incorrect. We end up saying Vrindai, Tulsidevai-all wrong. Most of the world is pronouncing it wrong. If Brahmins of south India hear us here- Vrindai, Tulsidevai-they will have no clue-what we are talking about or what we are singing. They will only think these are ignorant people or fools. They don't know even simple things. If you have to offer obeisance unto Vrinda, then you have to say Vrindayai tulsidevyai priyayai.. Why make so much effort, it is easy Vrindai, Tulsidevai. But Vrindayai tulsidevyai-takes a lot of effort and that is what the sanskrit language. The language wants you to make effort. It is not for lazy bums. Yes, like effort be conscious also. So Radhayai namah, Vrindayai namah,

**vrndayai tulasi-devyai
priyayai kesavasya ca
krsna-bhakti-prade devi
satyavatyai namo namah**

Devi is also an address but Devi doesn't change. So, next time when you sing tomorrow morning sing it correctly. It is not difficult if you think you can do it, you could do. I know you can do only thing you never thought of doing it. My obeisance unto Radhe who is very dear to you.

namo 'nanta-lilaya devaya tubhyam

My obeisance unto Devayai unto Dev who is Ananta- nanta-
lilaya-performer of unlimited past times, so many past times
and each past time becomes eternal. In that sense it is also
ananta. There is no end and so is unlimited and that's why
this class is not coming to end. It is unlimited-no limit.

namo 'nanta-lilaya devaya tubhyam

Okay, let us stop somewhere, so stop here and see you singing
Yasoda Damodarastakam.

Damodarastakam kijai.