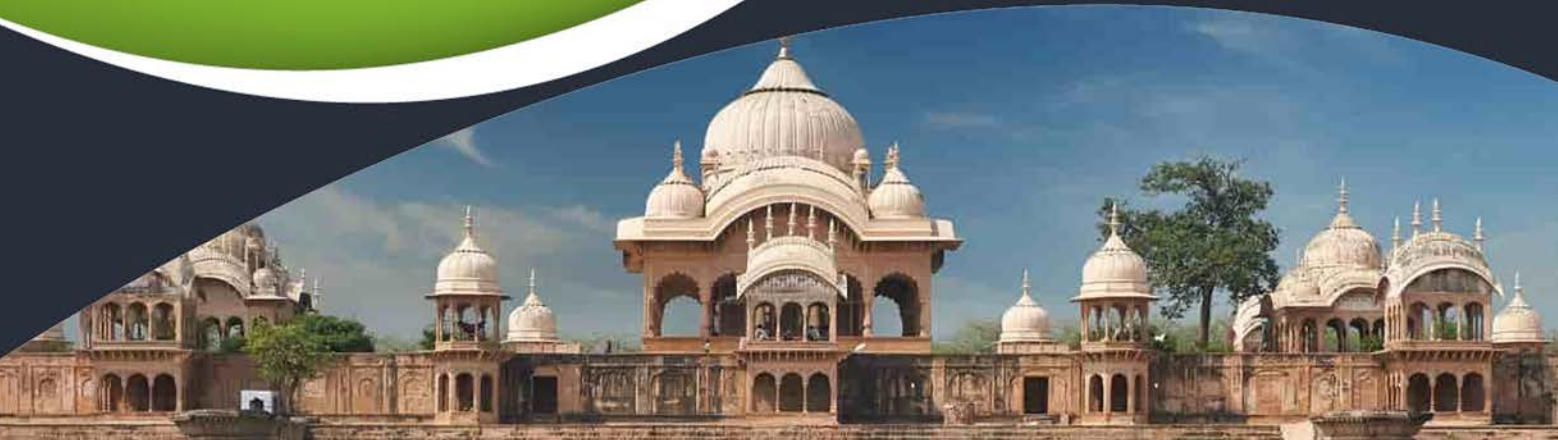


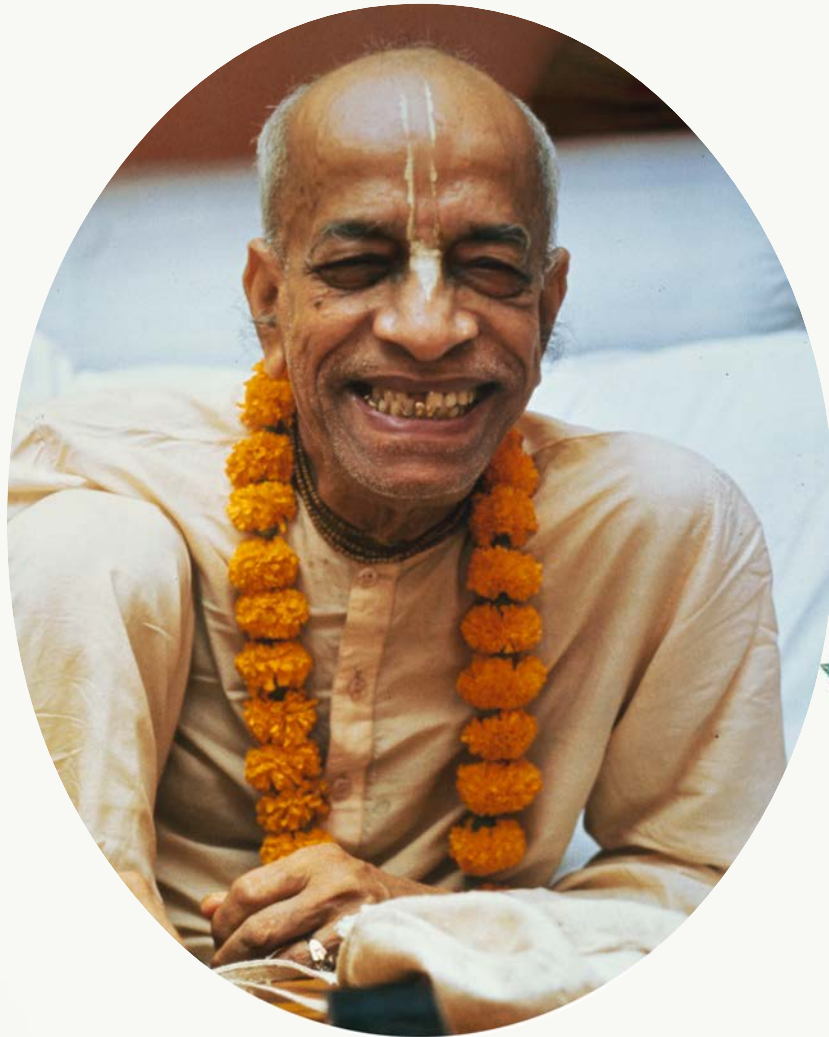
Glories of Kartik Month



International society for Krishna Consciousness

Founder Acharya, *His Divine Grace*

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Importance of Damodara-vrata

In the Padma Purana there is a statement that one should perform the ceremonies for the Lord according to one's financial position. Everyone should observe the different ceremonies and celebrations of the Lord by all means. One of the most important of these ceremonial functions is called Urja-vrata. Urja-vrata (also known as Damodara-vrata) is observed in the month of Kartika (October-November); especially in Vrindavana, there is a specific program for temple worship of the Lord in His Damodara form. In Sanskrit, dama means rope and udara means belly. Damodara refers to Krishna's being bound with a rope by His mother, Yashoda. It is said that just as Lord Damodara is very dear to His devotees, so the month known as Damodara or Kartika is also very dear to them. Devotees observe vows and undertake austerities in the month of Kartika to please the Supreme Lord. The Padma Purana records the following statement of Suta Gosvami: If anyone fasts and observes the Damodara-vrata according to the rules and regulations, the Yamadutas (the messengers of Yamaraja) run away from him. The performance of Damodara-vrata is better than performing one hundred great sacrifices as prescribed in the Vedic scriptures. Kartika is the best of the months and is very dear to Lord Sri Krishna. Srimati Radharani is the presiding Deity of this month. Any vrata observed in this month will yield more results and the effect of performing such vrata will last for one hundred life times. It is said that the pious results obtained by bathing in all the holy

places and giving various charities is not equal to even one ten-millionth part of the result obtained by following the vow of Kartika. Anyone who worships Lord Vishnu in this month gets a residence in Vaikuntha. One who hears the narration related to Lord Hari in this month becomes free from the sufferings of hundreds and millions of births.

How to observe Damodara-vrata

The procedure to observe Damodara-vrata is given below: Wake up early in the morning and take bath. The Padma Purana says: One who bathes early in the morning during the month of Kartika attains the merit of bathing in all places of pilgrimage. Chant more rounds of Hare Krishna maha-mantra. You can optionally observe a fasting vow during this month. Gaudiya Vaishnavas fast from urad dhal for the whole month of Kartika. In the Skanda Purana, Lord Brahma informs Narada Muni:

One should follow Kartika fast and listen to narrations of Lord Sri Hari. Read the 9th and 10th chapter of the book Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, authored by His Divine Grace A. C.

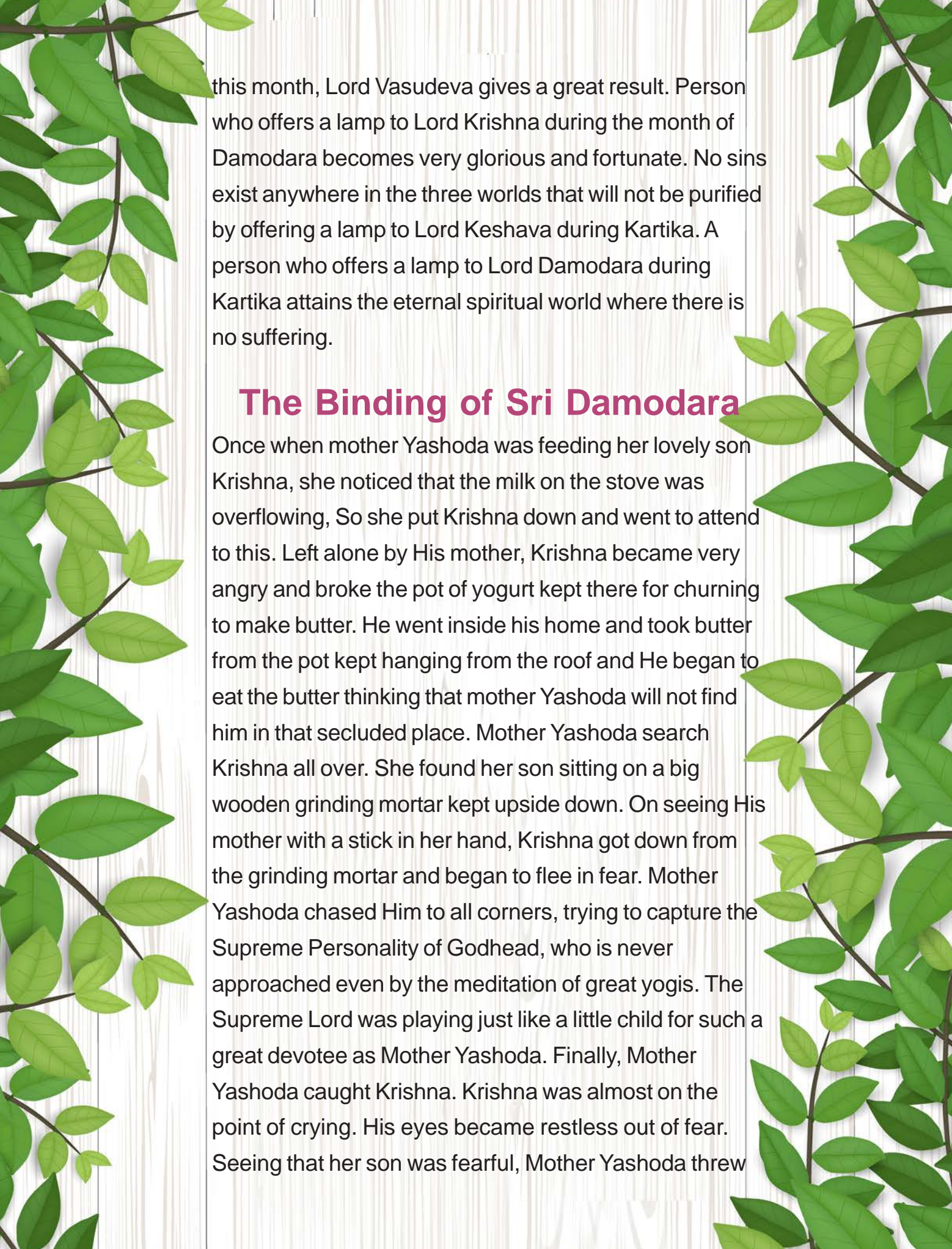
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, which speaks about the pastime of Lord Damodara in detail. A summary of the pastime is also given in this booklet.

Cook varieties of vegetarian food stuffs and offer to Lord Damodara. Perform Damodara-arati daily. You can sing the Damodara-ashtaka and offer a ghee lamp to Lord Damodara. The Damodara-ashtaka song is there in this booklet, also one can recite Gopi Geet in this

month daily following the footsteps of vrajavasis. In vraja, vrajavasis recite this throughout the month.

Benefits of offering a ghee lamp to Lord Damodara

In the Padma Purana it is said: Anyone who offers a ghee lamp to Lord Damodara in the month of Kartika will be freed from all kinds of sins and he goes to the abode of Lord Hari. The glories of offering ghee-lamp is elaborately described in the next section. You can also offer a ghee lamp to Tulasidevi and pray for eternal service at the lotus feet of Radha and Krishna. You may also invite your neighbors, relatives and friends to participate in this sacred Damodara-arati and give them an opportunity to offer ghee lamps to Lord Damodara and accept the prasadam of the Lord. Glories of offering ghee lamp in Kartika month, the following references are from the Skanda Purana (a conversation between Lord Brahma and Sage Narada) If one offers a ghee lamp to Damodara in the month of Kartika, his sins of many thousands and millions of births perish. Even if no mantras are chanted, no pious deeds performed and no purity observed, everything becomes perfect when a person offers a lamp during the month of Kartika. Offering a lamp to Lord Keshava in the month of Kartika is equivalent to performing all yajnas and bathing in all holy rivers. When someone pleases Lord Keshava by offering Him a lamp during the month of Kartika, then by the mercy of the Lord, the ancestors in the family will all attain liberation. To one who, either at home or in a temple, offers a lamp during



this month, Lord Vasudeva gives a great result. Person who offers a lamp to Lord Krishna during the month of Damodara becomes very glorious and fortunate. No sins exist anywhere in the three worlds that will not be purified by offering a lamp to Lord Keshava during Kartika. A person who offers a lamp to Lord Damodara during Kartika attains the eternal spiritual world where there is no suffering.

The Binding of Sri Damodara

Once when mother Yashoda was feeding her lovely son Krishna, she noticed that the milk on the stove was overflowing, So she put Krishna down and went to attend to this. Left alone by His mother, Krishna became very angry and broke the pot of yogurt kept there for churning to make butter. He went inside his home and took butter from the pot kept hanging from the roof and He began to eat the butter thinking that mother Yashoda will not find him in that secluded place. Mother Yashoda search Krishna all over. She found her son sitting on a big wooden grinding mortar kept upside down. On seeing His mother with a stick in her hand, Krishna got down from the grinding mortar and began to flee in fear. Mother Yashoda chased Him to all corners, trying to capture the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is never approached even by the meditation of great yogis. The Supreme Lord was playing just like a little child for such a great devotee as Mother Yashoda. Finally, Mother Yashoda caught Krishna. Krishna was almost on the point of crying. His eyes became restless out of fear. Seeing that her son was fearful, Mother Yashoda threw



away the stick. To punish Him, she thought to bind Him with ropes. She did not know that it is actually impossible for her to bind the Supreme Lord. When she tried to bind Him, she found that the rope was always short by two fingers. She gathered more ropes from the house and joined them, but still she found the same shortage. In attempting to bind her son, she became tired. Then Lord Krishna appreciated the hard labor of His mother, and being compassionate upon her, He agreed to be bound up by the ropes. Krishna, playing as a human child in the house of mother Yashoda, was performing His own selected pastimes. Of course, no one can control the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But He agrees to be controlled by His pure devotees. Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura says that the incident of Krishna's breaking the pot of yogurt and being bound by mother Yashoda took place on the Deepavali Day. This pastime is elaborately described in the ninth chapter of the tenth canto of Srimad Bhagavatam.



Sri Damodarastakam

(Found in the Padma Purana of Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa, spoken by Satyavrata Muni in a conversation with Narada Muni and Saunaka Rsi)

In the month of Kartika one should worship Lord Damodara and daily recite the prayer known as Damodarastaka, which has been spoken by the sage Satyavrata and which attracts Lord Damodara.

(Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa 2.16.198)

Text One

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

TRANSLATION

To the Supreme Lord, whose form is the embodiment of eternal existence, knowledge, and bliss, whose shark-shaped earrings are swinging to and fro, who is beautifully shining in the divine realm of Gokula, who [due to the offense of breaking the pot of yogurt that His mother was churning into butter and then stealing the butter that was kept hanging from a swing] is quickly running from the wooden grinding mortar in fear of mother Yashoda, but who has been caught from behind by her who ran after Him with greater speed-to that Supreme Lord, Sri Damodara, I offer my humble obeisance

Text Two

**rudantam muhur netra-yugmam mrjantam
karambhoja-yugmena satanka-netram
muhuh svasa-kampa-trirekhanka-kantha-
sthita-graivam damodaram bhakti-baddham**

TRANSLATION

[Seeing the whipping stick in His mother's hand,] He is crying and rubbing His eyes again and again with His two lotus hands. His eyes are filled with fear, and the necklace of pearls around His neck, which is marked with three lines like a conch shell, is shaking because of His quick breathing due to crying. To this Supreme Lord, Sri Damodara, whose belly is bound not with ropes but with His mother's pure love, I offer my humble obeisance

Text Three

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

TRANSLATION

By such childhood pastimes as this He is drowning the inhabitants of Gokula in pools of ecstasy, and is revealing to those devotees who are absorbed in knowledge of His supreme majesty and opulence that He is only conquered by devotees whose pure love is imbued with intimacy and is free from all conceptions of awe and reverence. With great love I again offer my obeisance to Lord Damodara hundreds and hundreds of times.



Text Four

**varam deva moksam na moksavadhim va
na canyam vrne ëham 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 the boon of impersonal liberation, nor the highest liberation of eternal life in Vaikuntha, nor any other boon [which may be obtained by executing the nine processes of bhakti]. O Lord, I simply wish that this form of Yours as Bala Gopala in Vrindavan may ever be manifest in my heart, for what is the use to me of any other boon besides this?

Text Five

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

TRANSLATION

O Lord, Your lotus face, which is encircled by locks of soft black hair tinged with red, is kissed again and again by mother Yashoda, and Your lips are reddish like the bimba fruit. May this beautiful vision of Your lotus face be ever manifest in my heart. Thousands and thousands of other benedictions are of no use to me.



Text Six

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

TRANSLATION

O Supreme Godhead, I offer my obeisance unto You.
O Damodara! O Ananta! O Vishnu! O master! O my
Lord, be pleased upon me. By showering Your glance of
mercy upon me, deliver this poor ignorant fool who is
immersed in an ocean of worldly sorrows, and become
visible to my eyes.

Text Seven

**kuveratmajau baddha-murtyaiva yadvat
tvaya mocitau bhakti-bhajau krtau ca
tatha prema-bhaktim svakam me prayaccha
na mokse graho me ësti damodareha**

TRANSLATION

O Lord Damodara, just as the two sons of Kuvera-
Manigriva and Nalakuvara-were delivered from the
curse of Narada and made into great devotees by You
in Your form as a baby tied with rope to a wooden
grinding mortar, in the same way, please give to me
Your own prema-bhakti. I only long for this and have no
desire for any kind of liberation.

Text Eight

**namas te ěstu damne sphurad-dipti-dhamne
tvadiyodarayatha visvasya dhamne
namo radhikayai tvadiya-priyayai
namo ěnanta-lilaya devaya tubhyam**

TRANSLATION

O Lord Damodara, I first of all offer my obeisanceís to the brilliantly effulgent rope which binds Your belly. I then offer my obeisanceís to Your belly, which is the abode of the entire universe. I humbly bow down to Your most beloved Srimati Radharani, and I offer all obeisanceís to You, the Supreme Lord, who displays unlimited pastimes.



Other auspicious events during the month of Kartika

- ***Bahulastami** commemorates the appearance of Shyama kunda and Radha kunda.
- *The **Deepavali festival** takes place on the dark-moon night in the month of Kartika.
- ***Go puja and Govardhan puja** are celebrated after Deepavali
- * **The disappearance anniversary (tirobhava divasa) of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada** is observed two days after Govardhan puja.
- ***Gopastami** is celebrated on the bright fortnight eighth day.
- ***Utthana-ekadasi** is also the disappearance day of Srila Gaura Kishora Dasa Babaji. The last five days of Kartika are called **Bhishma panchaka**.
- ***Utthana-dvadasi** takes place the day after ekadasi in the waxing fortnight of the moon in Kartika.
- * **The Rasa-yatra**, or rasa dancing of Krishna takes place on the full-moon night of Kartika.
- *During the month of Kartika, Maharaja Ambarisa worshiped the supreme personality of Godhead, Hari, in Madhuvana after observing a vow for one year.





The Gopi Geet

(The Gopis' Songs of Separation SB 10.31 Summary)

This chapter relates how the gopis, overwhelmed by feelings of separation from Krishna, sat down on the bank of the Yamuna and began praying for His audience and singing His glories.

Because the gopis had dedicated their minds and very lives to Krishna, they were beside themselves with the transcendental pain of separation. But their crying, which appears like evidence of misery, actually shows their exalted state of transcendental bliss. As it is said, *yata dekha vaisnaver vyavahara duhkh/ niscaya janiha sei paramananda sukh:* Whenever one sees a Vaisnava acting unhappy, one should know it for sure that he is actually experiencing the highest spiritual bliss. Thus each of the gopis began addressing Lord Sri Krishna according to her individual mode of ecstasy, and they all prayed for Him for His mercy.

As the pastimes of Krishna spontaneously arose in the minds of the gopis, they sang their song, which relieves the agony of those suffering from the burning pain of separation from Krishna and which bestows supreme auspiciousness. They sang, O Lord, O lover, O cheater, when we remember Your smile, Your loving glances and Your pastimes with Your boyhood friends, we become extremely agitated. Remembering Your lotus face, adorned with locks of blackish hair smeared with the dust of the cows, we become irrevocably attached to You. And when we remember how You followed the cows from forest to forest with Your tender feet, we feel great

pain.

In their separation from Krishna the gopis considered a single moment an entire age. Even when they had previously seen Him they had found the blinking of their eyelids intolerable, for it blocked their vision of Him for a fraction of a second.

The ecstatic sentiments for Lord Krishna that the gopis expressed may appear like symptoms of lust, but in reality they are manifestations of their pure desire to satisfy the Supreme Lord's spiritual senses. There is not even the slightest trace of lust in these moods of the gopis.

TEXT 1

gopya ucuḥ

**jayati te  dhikam janmana vrajah
srayata indira sasvad atra hi
dayita drsyatam diksu tavakas
tvayi dhrtasavas tvam vicinvate**

TEXT 2

**sarad-udasaye sadhu-jata-sat-
sarasijodara-sri-musa drsa
surata-natha te  sulka-dasika
vara-da nighnato neha kim vadhah**

TEXT 3

**visa-jalapyayad vyala-raksasad
varsa-marutad vaidyutanalat
vrsa-mayatmajad visvato bhayad
rsabha te vayam raksita muhuh**



TEXT 4

na khalu gopika-nandano bhavan
akhila-dehinam antaratma-drk
vikhanasarthito visva-guptaye
sakha udeyivan satvatam kule

TEXT 5

viracitabhayam vrsni-dhurya te
caranam iyusam samsrter bhayat
kara-saroruham kanta kama-dam
sirasi dhehi nah sri-kara-graham

TEXT 6

vraja-janarti-han vira yositam
nija-jana-smaya-dhvamsana-smita
bhaja sakhe bhavat-kinkarih sma no
jalaruhananam caru darsaya

TEXT 7

pranata-dehinam papa-karsanam
trna-caranugam sri-niketanam
phani-phanarpitam te padambujam
krnu kucesu nah krndhi hrc-chayam

TEXT 8

madhuraya gira valgu-vakyaya
budha-manojnaya puskareksana
vidhi-karir ima vira muhyatir
adhara-sidhunapyayayasva nah

TEXT 9

tava kathamrtam tapta-jivanam
kavibhir iditam kalmasapaham
sravana-mangalam srimad atatam
bhuvi grnanti ye bhuri-da janah

TEXT 10

prahasitam priya-prema-viksanam
viharanam ca te dhyana-mangalam
rahasi samvido ya hrdisprasa
kuhaka no manah ksobhayanti hi

TEXT 11

calasi yad vrajac carayan pasun
nalina-sundaram natha te padam
silatrnanakurair sidatiti nah
kalilatam manah kanta gacchati

TEXT 12

dina-pariksaye nila-kuntalair
vanaruhananam bibhrad avrtam
ghana-rajavalam darsayan muhur
manasi nah smaram vira yacchasi

TEXT 13

pranata-kama-dam padmajarcitam
dharani-mandanam dhyeyam apadi
carana-pankajam santamam ca te
ramana nah stanesv arpayadhi-han

TEXT 14

surata-varadhanam soka-nasanam
svarita-venuna susthu cumbitam
itararaga-vismaranam nrnam
vitara vira nas te edharamrtam

TEXT 15

atati yad bhavan ahni kananam
truti yugayate tvam apasyatam
kutula-kuntalam sri-mukham ca te
jada udiksatam paksma-krd drsam

TEXT 16

**pati-sutanvaya-bhratr-bandhavan
ativilanghya te ënty acyutagatah
gati-vidas tavodgita-mohitah
kitava yositah kas tyajen nisi**

TEXT 17

**rahasi samvidam hrc-chayodayam
prahasitananam prema-viksanam
brhad-urah sriyo viksyā dhama te
muhur ati-sprha muhyate manah**

TEXT 18

**vraja-vanaukasam vyaktir anga te
vrjina-hantry alam visva-mangalam
tyaja manak ca nas tvat-sprhatmanam
sva-jana-hrd-rujam yan nisudanam**

TEXT 19

**yat te sujata-caranamburuham stanesu
bhitah sanaih priya dadhimahi karkasesu
tenatavim atasi tad vyathate na kim svit
kurpadibhir bhramati dhir bhavad-ayusam nah**





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