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Sri Sri Damodarastakam

Eight Prayers to Lord Damodara Whose Belly is Bound by a Rope
including the Sanskrit commentary of Srila Sanatana Gosvami
entitled Dig-Darsini-Tika

Introduction

By HH Bhakti-Prajnana Kesava Maharaja

“One or Two Topics about Sri Sri Damodarastaka”

Sri Krsna-candra, Who is achintyananta-saktiman bhagavan - the Supreme Personality of Godhead and potent source of inconceivably limitless energies - allowed Mata Yasoda to bind Him with ropes to a wooden grinding mortar. By this pastime, He fully tasted the essence of her visuddha-vatsalya-prema-rasa, the totally pure spiritual mellows of her parental love. He also thereby revealed to the world the highest characteristics of His quality of bhaktadhinata, or willingness to subject Himself to the dominance of the devotee. This supremely enchanting dama-bandhana-lila was manifested on the day of Karttika-sukla pratipada - the day after the dark moon day in the month of Karttika. This is also the primary reason for the perfectly glorious month of Karttika becoming famous by the name of Damodara. Acharyapada Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami, the author of the Vaisnava smrti-sastra names Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa, has outlined the devotional activities to be carried out during the month of Karttika. He indicates that the rule to be followed every day is the worship of Sri Sri Radha-Damodara and the recitation of the stotra named Sri Damodarastaka, thus (H.b.v. 16.95-96):

“O learned Vipras! If one worships the deity of Sri Radhika during the month of Karttika for the purpose of Her pleasure, then Damodara Hari becomes very satisfied. One who worships Lord Damodara by daily reciting the prayer known as Damodarastaka, which was spoken by the sage Satyavrata, verily attracts Damodara Himself.”

This stotra names Sri Damodarastaka is found in the Padma-purana, being spoken by Sri Satyavrata Muni during a conversation with Sri Narada, Saunaka and other sages. Srila Sanatana Gosvamipada states in his commentary on this prayer that it is nitya-siddha (an eternally perfect prayer) that it was manifested through Sri Satyavrata Muni, and that it is actually capable of attracting Sri Damodara-Krsna. He has fully elaborated on this prayer's ability to attract Lord Damodara in his exhaustive purports, which are abounding with his own personal realisations.

For a long time, I have been contemplating a desire to publish this exposition of Damodarastaka. Especially, since upon the observance of the Damodara-vrata every year during the month of Karttika, all of us get together and sing the kirtana of Damodarastaka with united voices, at such time, this prayer is manifest in all the devotees' hearts, thereby stimulating the arising of strong

desires for explanation of the verses. Many bhakta-sadhakas have specifically requested me to translate this information for them. Finally, after so many days we have published the eight Sanskrit mula-slokas of Damodarastaka along with a Sanskrit anvaya (word for word synonyms), and Srila Sanatana Gosvami's Sanskrit tika named Dig-Darsini. For the benefit of readers who do not know Sanskrit, we have also included Bengali translations of the mula-slokas and Srila Sanatana Gosvami's commentary.

In the present age many so-called intellectuals, who are provoked and irritated by Kali-yuga's degradation, cast an extremely contemptuous glance upon the usage of the Sanskrit language. In spite of this, I have still published this book on Damodarastaka out of a desire for the benefit of people living in all lands. It is good if the literary scholars of the Bengali language would keep in mind that, above all else, our development of Bengali is wholly dependent on its derivation from the Sanskrit language. It is inevitable that the advancement of Bengali proceeds side-by-side with the advancement of Sanskrit literatures. Those who attempt to develop Bengali by jumping over Sanskrit literatures end up thoroughly steeped in gross error. We have taken note of the language produced by scholars of this type - it is disorderly and haphazard in all ways. Bengali is always subordinate to and dependent on Sanskrit; namely, it is not that Bengali is an independent language and Sanskrit is completely different. The fact is that Bengali is paratantra (totally dependent) and Sanskrit is svatantra (totally independent). Keeping this precept in mind, we have placed this book before the assembly of learned sages.

This astaka written by Srila Vyasadeva is an ideal specimen amongst the world of literature due to its philosophical conclusions, its expertise of composition, and its astonishing excellence in revealing the essence of the Lord's lila. By composing his tika named Dig-Darsini with such clear and elaborate details, Jagad-guru Srila Sanatana Gosvami has fully explained the comparative differences of various mellows within the kingdom of sadhana. By that he has proven in all respects the superiority of the vatsalya-rasa and madhura-rasa.

Sahajiyas Unfit to Taste Rasa-lila

Regarding the impropriety of discussing Sri Sri Radha-Krsna's rasa-lila indiscriminately here and there, in this way or that, as practiced by the prakrta-sahajiyas - Gosvami has discreetly stated the following at the end of his eight purport:

“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 Krsna 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 by a mere hint only, as they are offered obeisances in the words namo nanta-lilaya (my obeisances unto Your limitless pastimes).”

Because the sahajiyas are unfit to taste the rasa-lila, it is not possible to count them amongst the exalted worthy devotees. All we know is - bhakti is transcendental to the three worlds. It cannot be brought into the realm of analysis or discussion that is confirmed to the three worlds. They think that matter can

somehow become cit (spiritually conscious), and that by the power of one's sadhana it is possible to see Bhagavan with one's physical eyes -this is the opinion of the prakrta-sahajiyas. They say that just as bell-metal turns into gold when mercury is added to it, similarly the material body (prakrta) becomes transcendental (aprakrta) by the power of performing bhajana. They say that at such a time, one obtains the darsana of Bhagavan with one's eyes. Srila Sanatana Gosvami has thoroughly refuted these claims of the prakrta-sahajiyas in his book named Brhad Bhagavatamrta, as well as in his commentary of Sri Damodarastaka named Dig-Darsini

Manasa-darsana O Pratyaksa-darsana

Vision of the Lord in the Mind

vs

Vision of the Lord with the Eyes

In regard to these topics, it is necessary to seriously study Sanatana Gosvami's commentaries to the fourth and sixth verses of Damodarastaka. Upon reviewing his discernment of these two verses, the prakrta-sahajiyas think that Gosvamipada is primarily describing darsana with the eyes which is dependent on manasa-dhyana-darsana (seeing Him within the mind's meditation). But the specific aim of the discussion is this - (in Brhad Bhagavatamrta) Gosvamipada eventually does establish the superiority of Gopa-Kumara's darsana with the eyes, which is dependent on the darsana that arises from meditation on brahma. In this, Gosvamipada does not verify Gopa-Kumara's darsana with the material eyes. It is described that only after Gopa-Kumara became situated in the transcendental planets of the spiritual world (Vaikuntha), did he have the Lord's darsana with his eyes. The material senses cannot have any position in the transcendental realm of Vaikuntha. Therefore the direct perception of proximity to the Lord felt by the gopas and gopis is in all ways aprakrta (transcendental) and atindriya (beyond the range of the senses). Beholding Him is not an affair that is directly perceivable by the mundane senses of the prakrta-sahajiyas.

The Observance of Karttika-vrata

Previously I have mentioned that Sri Sri Damodarastaka is to be sung and studied during the observance of Urjja-vrata, also called Karttika-vrata or Damodara-vrata. Those who desire to please Lord Damodara during the month of Damodara must certainly read this Damodarastaka book every day in its entirety. This is the specific recommendation of Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa. The different ways of observing the Damodara-vrata are indicated in the sastras. The Urjja-vrata comes in the middle of Catur-masya-vrata. This period begins from either the ekadasi, the dvadasi or the purnima (full moon), and ends on the corresponding ekadasi, dvadasi or purnima. But these dates should not be observed if they touch (overlap after sunrise) in any way. Sanatana Gosvami says - if the dates (tithi) of a Vaisnava-vrata do not touch each other, then they are observed. Therefore on the days of the commencement and conclusion of Caturmasya-vrata and Urjja-vrata, one should observe the tithis only if they do not overlap each other. The definitive opinion of Hari-bhakti-vilasa is that the tithis should not touch after sunrise to begin the Caturmasya-vrata and the Urjja-vrata.

I would like to quote from a small article written by our Srila Thakura

Bhaktivinoda on the topic of Karttika-vrata. In this article, he has clearly ascertained the days on which the conclusion of the vrata is observed. The rule is - devotees who begin their vrata on the ekadasi day also conclude it on the last ekadasi. Similarly, those who begin on the dvadasi or the purnima also end on their corresponding days. Bhaktivinoda's article states:

The observance of the Karttika-vrata is one of the most important things for the Vaisnavas.

In accordance with these words, the vrata therefore begins on the waxing ekadasi that comes the day after Vijaya-dasami in the month of Asvina. And the vrata will be concluded on Utthana-ekadasi. That vrata which is observed during the month between these two dates is called niyama-seva. The rules of niyama-seva are: every day during this month, one must rise upon the last hour of the night, purify oneself and perform the mangala-arati of Sri Krsna. Then, after bathing in the morning, one should worship Lord Damodara. At night, one should light brilliant lamps filled with either ghee or sesame-seed oil, and place them in these places - in the Lord's temple, around the base of tulasi plants, and in the sky. During the month of Karttika, one should eat only vegetarian foodstuffs and Bhagavan's prasada remnants. One should renounce excessive eating and sleeping, plus avoid using oil, wine, and bell-metal utensils. After honouring prasada, one should hear or recite scriptures headed by Srimad Bhagavatam in the company of Vaisnavas. There should be incessant harinama-kirtana and smarana. Thus passing the entire month in observance of such regulations, on the final Utthana-ekadasi day one should fast from everything including water and stay awake all night absorbed in Krsna-katha. On the next day, after first purifying oneself and engaging in hari-kirtana, one should serve the Lord's prasada to one's dearest intimate Vaisnava associates, and when they are finished one may then honour prasada. That day, at the end of the night, the vrata will be completed.

The chief aim of observing this Urjja-vrata is to please Sri Radha-Damodara. Srimati Radharani is called Urjjesvari (the Queen of the Urjja-vrata). Only because of this, in order to establish the pleasure of Sri Sri Radha-Damodara, the sage Satyavrata Muni uttered (in the eight verse of Damodarastaka) the words namo radhikayai tvadiya priyayai - "My obeisances unto Radhika, You most beloved." By this statement, he indicated that the sole activity to be done during the observance of Damodara-vrata is the worship of Sri Sri Radha-Damodara.

Among the 64 branches of bhakti followed by our Gaudiya Vaisnavas, we see that the observance of Urjja is listed. It is to be understood that one follows the Catur-masya-vrata completely only if one honours Urjja during it. Some devotees are of the opinion - "Because Catur-masya-vrata is not listed among the 64 branches of devotion, we will only follow the (one-month long) vow of Urjja; we will not undergo the difficulty of observing the entire four-month-long vow." In this way, those persons who attempt performing bhajana, but who are unaware of the deep meaning of the sastras, thereby remain in the indulgences of in discipline. Sriman Mahaprabhu Himself observed the Catur-masya-vrata while situated in many different places, and has thereby taught the practice by His own example. We cannot consider such persons, who are unable to follow the instructions that were enacted and preached by Mahaprabhu, to be part of the lineage of pure Vaisnavas.

At this point, we would like to mention that the principle of atma-nivedana

is listed as one of the nine types of devotion (which are counted among the six types of surrender, saranagati). Is it understood, then, that by performing atma-nivedana (offering one's soul), the other five types of surrender are therefore unnecessary? The ultimate surrender among the six processes of saranagati is atma-nivedana - by this being listed as such, it is understood that engaging in the other forms of surrender are also recommended for the sadhaka. Thus it is accepted that a single sadhana takes the form of several different aspects.

Due to the eternal nature of Sri Sri Damodarastaka, it is necessary to study it every day not only during the month of Karttika (or Damodara), but also during the entire four-month period of Catur-masya. And what's more, it is actually fit to be studied every day of every month, year after year. Upon the pure chanting of Damodarastaka, Lord Damodara Himself becomes very pleased - for this objective, I have especially compiled this volume with great care and attention.

During the period when Gosvampada was composing his tika, he quoted some conclusions already written in his own Brhad Bhagavatamrta. We have added these verses in the form of footnotes. They are printed with their mula-slokas along with explicit Bengali translations to facilitate the understanding of the readers.

In conclusion, it is my earnest prayer before the suddha-vaisnavas: that they study this book during Catur-masya or Urjja-vrata and attain priti (the pleasure of the Lord) - then only will I consider my labour fulfilled. This book makes it possible for them to easily gather so many truths; for that reason, I have made such a humble request.

Sri Bhakti Prajnana Kesava

Sri Sri Damodarastakam

Text 1

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto that Supreme Lord
Whose form is composed of eternity, knowledge and bliss
Whose earrings swing and play upon His cheeks
Who is splendrously manifest in Gokula
Who is very fearful of mother Yasoda, and jumping down from the wooden
grinding mortar quickly runs away
Who is chased by Yasoda running very quickly after Him and is ultimately caught
from behind

Dig-Darsini-Tika

by Srila Sanatana Gosvami

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

In the beginning of the mula-sloka, 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 express 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 Gosvami examines tattva-visesa or the excellence of the Lord's truth:) Obeisances unto whom? Unto Isvara, the supreme controller. Namely - He who is (1) sarva-saktimanta (endowed with all potencies), (2) jagat-ekanatha (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 sakti 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-visesa attribute or excellence of truth.

(Now rupa-visesa, 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 Yasoda; 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 maha-saubhagya 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 Krsna's body is the ornament of His ornaments.** This is the meaning. Consequently, it is stated by the gopis in the Tenth Canto (Bhag. 10.29.40):

"O Sri Krsna! 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 (Bhag. 3.2.12), it is also stated by Sri Uddhava to Vidura regarding Sri Krsna's beauty:

"Sri Krsna'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-visesa or attributes of His family portray His unique excellence. The word gokule indicates that place where gopas, gopis, cows, 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 (Bhag. 10.32.14):

“(Bhagavan Sri Krsna, 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-visesa, or attributes of His pastimes, are stated in the last two lines of the verse. The word yasoda indicates yasodaya, or “From His mother Yasoda”. 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 (Bhag. 10.9.8-9) thus:

“Then Sri Krsna 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 Yasoda 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 Yasoda-devi chasing her son Krsna 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 Yasoda, para amrstam - catching hold of His back. Here the words atyanta tato drutya (running behind Krsna very swiftly) imply the saundarya-visesa (excellence of beauty) of Yasoda'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 Krsna preferring to appear among them). By the word paramrstam (caught by His back), the unique attribute of superexcellent affection that Bhagavan Sri Krsna feels for Yasoda-mata (sneha-visesa) is intimated. In this regard also, one may search out the following verse from the Tenth Canto (Bhag. 10.9.10):

“While chasing after Krsna, the slim waisted Yasoda'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 Gosvami's Dig-Darsini-Tika on the first sloka of Sri Damodarastakam

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

(Afraid of the stick in His mother's hand)
Who cries again and again and rubs His eyes with both His lotus-like hands
Whose eyes express extreme fearfulness
Who sobs again and again with quick breathing making the necklaces upon His
three-lined neck quiver
Whose belly is bound only by His mother's devotion. Unto this Damodara I offer
my humble obeisances

Dig-Darsini-Tika

By Srila Sanatana Gosvami

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

“(Mata Yasoda 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. (Krsna saw the stick in her hands, and) His eyes became overwhelmed
with fright. In this condition, Yasoda 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,
kambat - 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, Yasoda Mata considered
Sri Krsna 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 Krsna'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 Yasoda 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 slokas from the Bhagavatam (10.9.15-17):

“While tying up the naughty child, the rope came out two fingers short, so Yasoda 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).”

Or 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 aforementioned description. In this connection, it is further stated in the Bhagavatam (10.9.18-21):

“While attempting to bind Krsna) Yasoda 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 Krsna 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 Yasoda 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 Krsna'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 Krsna is that He totally depends on the devotion of Sri Narada; (being pleased with Narada's bhakti) Krsna 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 Gosvami's Dig-Darsini-Tika on the second sloka of Sri Damodarastakam

Text 3

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

In this way, to He

Who perpetually drowns the residents of Gokula in pools of pure bliss

Who informs those devotees desirous of knowing His supreme opulence and majesty that He is naturally conquered only by His loving devotees

I again offer my obeisances with love unto that Lord Damodara hundreds and hundreds of times

Dig-Darsini-Tika

By Srila Sanatana Gosvami

Now the excellences of His guna-visesa (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 Krsna'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 Krsna 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 displayed 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 Krsna 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 Krsna's quality of submitting to His devotees. Now (in Damodarastakam) 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 Gosvami's Dig-Darsini-Tika on the third sloka of Sri Sri Damodarastakam

Text 4

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

He Deva! O Lord!

Although You are capable of granting any boon I do not pray to You for liberation, nor for eternal life in Vaikuntha, or for any other benediction

He Natha! O Lord!

May Your form as a cowherd child forever remain manifest in my heart

Other than this I have no need of anything

Dig-Darsini-Tika

By Srila Sanatana Gosvami

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 Vrndavana” -varesad - from You, Who can bestow any benediction - varam na vrne - I do not seek any boon. Specifically, I do not pray for moksa, the fourth purusartha or goal of human life (to achieve freedom from material contact by merging into the brahman effulgence); nor do I pray for moksaya-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 sravana (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 Vrndavana 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 - moksa (liberation), moksavadhi (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 (Sri Sanatana Gosvami's) Brhad Bhagavatamrta, Uttara Khanda 1.14-15 **please see Appendix A, page 23**. 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 Visnu 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 sravana 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 Vrndavana - 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 Krsna were to personally address the devotee and offer:) “O he! The above-mentioned three kinds of boons beginning with moksa 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 Krsna 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 Krsna, 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 moksam, 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-darsana (seeing the Lord within the heart), please see Brhad Bhagavatamrta, Uttara-Khanda 2.86-96 **please see Appendix B, page 24.**. 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 darsana is the best goal of all - from this prayer all these things can be clearly understood.

Thus ends Sanatana Gosvami's Dig-Darsini-Tika on the fourth sloka of Sri Sri Damodarastakam

Text 5

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

O Lord! Your lotus like face is completely surrounded by very dark blue, glossy reddish-tinted curling hair and is kissed again and again by mother Yasoda
Your lotus face is endowed with lips red as bimba fruits - may it always remain visible in my heart

The attainment of millions of other boons is completely useless to me

Dig-Darsini-Tika

By Srila Sanatana Gosvami

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 - 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 Yasoda 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 its 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 Gosvami's Dig-Darsini-Tika on the fifth sloka of Sri Sri Damodarastakam

Text 6

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

Obeisances to You, O Deva! O Damodara! O Ananta! O Visnu!
O Prabhu! Be pleased with me. I am sinking deeply into the ocean of tribulations
Shower the rain of Your merciful glance upon me who am so pitifully fallen
Alas! Kindly exhibit Your favour and deliver me O Isa! I am totally ignorant
Please become visible to my eyes

Dig-Darsini-Tika

By Srila Sanatana Gosvami

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-darsana 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-sloka 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 dukkha (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 abdhih (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-vrstya - showing Your own mercy, please shower me with Your nectar-laden glances - anugrhana - thereby uplifting me and once more enthusing me with life. This alone is the purport of the prayer. Then aksi-drsyo-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 mention 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-darsana) within the mind is explained very logically by the personal associates of the Lord (sri bhagavat parsada) in the Brhad Bhagavatamrta, Uttara Khanda 3.179-182 **please see Appendix C, page 27** 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-sloka, will be explained:) In this sixth verse the word deva indicates he divya rupa - O Lord of divine beauty! This beauty is the cause for desiring His darsana. 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 visnu means he sarva-vyapaka - O You Who are all-pervading! Furthermore, it means - O You Who are fond of entering into Vrndavana'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 aparicchinna or continuously existent without interval or separation. The address of visnu means He is sarva-vyapin or living everywhere. Therefore, he damodara proclaims Him thus - under

the sway of His own parama-vatsalya-visesa 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 Gosvami's Dig-Darsini-Tika on the sixth sloka of Sri Sri Damodarastakam

Text 7

kuveratmajau baddha-murtyaiva yad-vat
tvaya mocitau bhakti-bhajau krtau ca
tatha prema-bhaktim svakam me prayaccha
na mokse graho me 'sti damodareha

O Damodara! Although You were bound to the mortar with ropes tied by mother Yasoda

You mercifully liberated the sons of Kuvera who were cursed by Narada Muni to stand as trees and You gifted them with Your own devotional service

Therefore please also bestow upon me Your own prema-bhakti in the most profuse way

This is my exclusive longing - I have no desire to any other type of liberation

Dig-Darsini-Tika

By Srila Sanatana Gosvami

In this way, by the attributes of pure ecstatic love (prema-visesa) one becomes infused with supreme longing and prays for direct audience with the Lord (saksat-darsana). From the attributes of that prayerful longing arises ecstatic loving service (prema-bhakti), which demonstrates the supreme rarity of saksat-darsana. This prema-bhakti is verily the only means for attaining His darsana; 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 moksa 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 vighraha (divine bodily form) was bound with ropes tied to the grinding mortar by Sri Yasoda; by that sri vighraha (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-darsana (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. (Krsna 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 Gosvami has elucidated upon this verse in his own commentary on the Bhagavatam). The purport is - The word vam (“You two”) indicates that Lord Krsna was addressing the two boys thusly: “The most desired 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 (asraya) of Your own lotus feet, or else - the exclusive objective (visaya) 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 prakarsena or “with profusion or intensity”).

Verily, it is just like Lord Sri Krsna 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 mokse 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 moksa)?

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 mokse 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 Vrndavana” - this intention also follows. To interpret further,, one prays thus because Sri Vrndavana is the exclusive agent for the arising of prema-bhakti's unique happiness, also, only in Vrndavana Sri Krsna especially appears; also, the attributes of His saksat-darsana are found there in that

form) with His belly bound); and further, one prays for perpetual residence in Vrndavana because only there does Sri Bhagavan desire to especially manifest as the enjoyer of the forest - Vrndavana-Vihari. All this is additionally evidence. Further details of these topics could be ascertained as we have been doing herein. Thus ends Sanatana Gosvami's Dig-Darsini-Tika on the seventh sloka of Sri Sri Damodarastakam

Text 8

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

O Lord Damodara! I offer my obeisances unto the exalted rope binding Your waist which is the source of splendrously brilliant effulgence
I offer my obeisances unto Your belly which is the support of the entire universe
I offer my obeisances unto Radhika, Your dearest beloved
And I offer my obeisances unto Your wondrous, uncommon pastimes

Dig-Darsini-Tika

By Srila Sanatana Gosvami

Now at the conclusion of the prayer, in order to summarise 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-pasa, 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-pasa 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 visvasya 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 Vrndavana) He bodily displayed the visva-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 Yasoda 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 Isa (the supreme controller), but He willingly accepts binding as an attribute of His superexcellent affection for His devotees (bhakta-vatsalya-visesa). 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-visesa 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 Krsna (prema-visesa) 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 Krsna 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 dint as they are offered obeisances with the words namo 'nanta-lilaya (obeisances unto Your limitless pastimes) **please see Appendix D, page 29*

The word devaya indicates that obeisances are offered unto Bhagavan Who is lokottara - supernatural, divine, transcendental. With this it is intimated that by Damodara Krsna'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 Vrndavana. I offer my obeisances unto all those lilas, such a mood is most certainly expressed in this verse.

Thus ends Sanatana Gosvami's Dig-Darsini-Tika on the eight sloka of Sri Sri Damodarastakam

Appendices

verses from Sri Brhad Bhagavatamrta quoted by the author Sri Srila Sanatana Gosvami in his Dig-Darsini commentary on Sri Damodarastakam (as elucidated by Sri Bhakti-Prajnana Kesava Maharaja)

Appendix A

(ref. Text 4, page 14)

Brhad Bhagavatamrta 1.14-15:

Those who worship Bhagavan Sri Krsna without any motive for personal gain (the *niskama-bhaktas*), go directly to the abode of Vaikuntha. That abode is composed of condensed bliss, it is pervaded with transcendental consciousness, and it is rarely attained even by the liberated souls. (That is, those who become *mukta*, liberated by dint of their cultivation of *brahma-jnana* (impersonal knowledge), can never attain that Vaikuntha-dhama). (14)

Those *niskama-bhaktas* who live in Vaikuntha perpetually enjoy the happiness of directly serving the lotus feet of Sri Krsna. They sport along with Him in numerous pastimes and thereby become immersed in the ocean of bliss. Compared to the pure happiness felt in performing this *seva*, such devotees consider *amrta* (the nectar of impersonal liberation) to be totally insignificant.

Appendix B

(ref. Text 4, page 15)

Brhad Bhagavatamrta 2.86-96

(Editor's note: The devotee named Gopa Kumara was wandering throughout the universe, from one planetary system up to the next, in search of the flute-playing Lord. By the power of a mantra given by his guru, he now found himself on the planet called *Tapo-loka*. Surrounded by austere and peaceful *urdhva-reta* *yogindras* and *naistika-brahmacaris*, his thirst for meeting the Lord face to face grew more and more urgent. Finally, he became very restless for running away to meet Lord Jagannatha in *Nilacala*; consequently the great sage *Pippalayana* could read his heart and addressed him as follows,, outlining the meditative philosophy of the *jnani-bhaktas* thus:)

Sri *Pippalayana*, the son *Rsabhadeva*, said: Why do you want to leave this *Tapo-loka*, the exalted abode of great sages, to go elsewhere? And why do you wander about, aspiring for the vision of *paramesvara* Sri Krsna, Who is not perceivable by any of the senses including the eyes? (86)

First concentrate your mind on deep meditation within, and in such a condition you will naturally see the Lord. *Svayam* Bhagavan perpetually lives everywhere, both within and without, and thus He is just as perceptible as any other plainly visible thing. (87)

The Lord *Vasudeva*, Who is known as *Paramatma* (the Supreme Soul), remains within the heart as the monitor of the soul, and His very form is *sac-cid-ananda-vigraha* - composed of eternity, knowledge and bliss. Thus He is manifest only unto a heart that is continuously being purified by the mode of *visuddha-sattva* (pure goodness); He is not perceivable by other senses. (In other words,

because His form is composed of sac-cid-ananda, and due to His power of self-manifestation and eternal consistency, He cannot be grasped by the external senses). (88)

(The attainment of bhagavad-darsana in the heart is called dhyana, and if one obtains this, then is that not vision by the eyes? Specifically, is there any need to leave this Tapo-loka and go elsewhere to have His vision with the eyes? In response to this argument, the answer is given:) **When one beholds Sri Hari directly with the eyes, that vision is also perfectly accomplished by the mind. This is because when one sees Bhagavan, then no other thoughts can arise within the mind.** (That is, upon beholding the darsana of Sri Bhagavan-murti within the deeply absorbed meditative mind, that is verily perceived as a vision of the eyes). (89)

(If someone says that all this is acceptable, but still there is more pleasure in beholding Him directly with the eyes, then the response is given:) **Upon the arising of pleasure within the mind, then (why just the eyes?) all the senses naturally become pleased.** (Due to the mind's centralised functioning, the pleasure of all the senses is included in the mind's pleasure). **The functions of all the senses including the tongue, eyes, ears and so forth are accomplished through the sole means of the mind.** (that is, the senses cannot independently grasp their objects such as taste, form and sound without the mind accepting them with its perception.) (90)

Without the function of the mind, the functions of all the senses are ineffective. If the senses grasp their respective objects, and if the mind has not accepted such stimuli, then the objects are still not perceived by the soul. This is because in the absence of the mind's functions, the jivatma cannot perceive those sense objects. (Therefore Bhagavan is manifest within a purified mind's function - visuddha-chitta-vrtti-visesa - that is actual darsana. The vision that is directly perceived by the eyes is not darsana, because He is imperceptible by the functions of the senses.) (91)

(At this, another question may be raised - we have heard that Sri Dhruva, Prahlada and other devotees have seen the Lord with their own eyes; how was that? In answer to this, it is stated:) **When the Lord sometimes appears before the eyes of His devotee, due to His attribute of bhakta-vatsalya (extraordinary affection for His devotees), then that vision is actually observed through the mind's eyes.** (The word kadacit (sometimes) herein indicates that His appearance is not fixed according to some strictly-calculable rule). **This darsana takes place by the faculty of jnana-drsti - the eyes of knowledge within the functioning of the mind - and not by the physical eyesight.** (This is because the external senses are fully under the sway of temporary things, being completely incapable of grasping objects whose nature is supremely limitless transcendence. Then we note the reason for the celebration of the above-mentioned vision by the eyes:) **Upon receiving the darsana of the Lord within one's mind (purified to a state of suddha-sattva), then the devotee only thinks proudly that this is a vision seen with the eyes.** (Although in actuality, it has not been perceived with the physical eyes). (92)

(Additionally it is said) **Bhagavan occasionally becomes visible to the external eyes of a devotee out of His potency of mercy (for what cannot be accomplished by His all pervading energies?); even upon this form of darsana, the**

bliss created thereof is manifest only in the heart (since the heart or mind is the seat for the arising of ananda). (93)

And furthermore - if one obtains the darsana of Bhagavan and afterwards He disappears, then the bliss generated in the heart by His vision sports about within the heart, resulting in the experience of many kinds of successive visions and re-visions. Therefore bhagavad-darsana (the vision of the Lord) is resolved only in the mind. And the mind is the single most great receptacle capable of realising the bliss of His vision. (Therefore there is no need of endeavouring to see Him with one's eyes).(94)

(Someone may say - the mind, just like all the other external senses, is also limited to perceiving only temporary material things; therefore it is similarly incapable of experiencing the darsana of the supreme transcendental bhagavan-murti. The response to this is given:) Even though the mind is limited to matter, by the mercy of the Lord (prasada) the mind can become pure enough to experience the increase of bliss associated with His direct vision, and such a transformed mind gradually expands in its capacity to behold Him. Other than the mind, the other senses cannot be elevated and illumined in this way because they are all external. (That is, because the purified mind is so subtle, it is actually capable of perceiving the form of spirit. This principle is well-known - that upon obtaining the form of something seen in the mind's eye, one experiences the arising of knowledge of that thing. None of the other senses have this property; this is because they are external, very dull and bound by strict material limitations). (95)

(One may say - it is accepted that darsana in the mind is superior to seeing with the eyes, but it is only possible to enjoy the bliss of conversing with Sri Bhagavan (about the requesting and granting of boons) during the time of seeing Him with one's eyes. This question is resolved thus:) When the transparent mind becomes absorbed in uninterrupted meditation and Sri Bhagavan becomes visible in the heart, then that vision is just like the direct sight of the eyes. At that time, Prabhu (the Lord of all potencies) is very pleased and shows His special mercy in bestowing the requested boons (of His jnani-bhaktas)* The chief witness who bears testimony to this process is Lord Brahma, who was born from the lotus. (96)

(At the dawn of creation, Lord Brahma, the first created being who was born from the lotus sprouting from Bhagavan's navel, became immersed in meditation on the Lord for the purpose of begetting progeny in the empty universe; when he attained samadhi, Bhagavan bestowed His darsana. Seeing the vision of the Lord within the rapture of his samadhi, Brahma respectfully bowed down, and Bhagavan personally took him by the hand and said, "I am very pleased with your penance; now you may request a boon." After praying for a boon, Brahma directly obtained from the Lord the catur-sloki bhagavat - the four seed verses of Srimad Bhagavatam. The pastime illustrates how in the state of samadhi one perceives bhagavad-darsana and has an experience that is complete with the supremely merciful blessings of seeing the Lord, obtaining boons, conversing with Him, being touched by Him, and so forth. For more elaborate information in this regard, one may study the Srimad Bhagavatam, Second Canto, Ninth Chapter, and also the Third Canto, Eight Chapter).

*{Editor's Note: This entire philosophical presentation of antar-darsana being superior to direct vision of the Lord with the physical eyes is true only for the

jnani-bhaktas - the austere, meditative devotees who prefer sitting in seclusion while deeply focusing on the Supersoul, the Lord in the heart. Later we will find that Srila Sanatana Gosvami quotes further passages from his Brhad Bhagavatamrta in his commentary on the sixth verse of Damodarastaka, and these verses will ultimately prove that the best type of the Lord's darsana is that which is perceived directly with the senses, as in the case of His suddha-bhaktas or pure devotees}.

Appendix C

(ref. Text 6, page 18)

Brhad Bhagavatamrta 3.179-182

{Previously we have seen the quotes from Srila Sanatana Gosvami's Sri Brhad Bhagavatamrta, Uttara Khanda, Chapter Two. Therein, the sage and resident of Tapo-loka, Sri Pippalayana, established the significance of darsana of the Lord within one's mind being superlative to darsana with one's eyes. Contrary to this position, now in the following group of verses quoted from Sri Brhad Bhagavatamrta, Uttara Khanda, Chapter Three, the Srimad Bhagavata-parsadas (personal associates of Lord Narayana), who are residents of the transcendental realm of Vaikuntha, will establish the superiority (and supreme effectiveness) of direct darsana with the eyes as compared to seeing the Lord during the samadhi or dhyana within the mind. They expound their view by using scriptural citations and logical arguments found in the following four verses:}

The direct vision of the Lord with one's very eyes is the highest grace attained by the successive waves of His merciful benedictions. (Since Kardama Muni, Dhruva and other devotees received the darsana of Bhagavan and thereby attained His great mercy, these stories illustrate the supreme glories of seeing Him the eyes.) From this type of direct vision comes extremely profound bliss that surpasses all (other forms of darsana such as in meditation). This vision of Sri Krsna in person through the eyes is the final reward of practicing the nine-fold process of devotion headed by sravana. (179)

The direct vision of the Lord is the topmost fruit of all sadhana practice. Upon attaining this, the nescience of maya within the soul is destroyed down to the root, while simultaneously the illumination of prema increases more and more. (180)

(Now by citing ancient examples from the scriptures, proof is offered regarding the supreme delightfulness of beholding the Lord with one's eyes:) Sri Prahlada Maharaja, the son of Kayadhu (Hiranyakasipu's wife), as well as other great devotees, although constantly seeing the Lord within their own hearts, still (due to its supremely delightful nature) they always longed for the vision of the all-powerful Prabhu with their eyes - this is a fact. The proof of this is that one day Prahlada Maharaja was sitting on the shore of the sea and obtained the direct vision of Sri Bhagavan; thereafter the bhava of his ecstatic love especially increased. (In this regard, one may refer to the book named Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya). (181)

(Someone may say, on the basis of verses such as the te va amusya verse of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.15.44) that when the four Kumaras headed by Sanaka were directly beholding Sri Bhagavan, they turned their eyes upward to see His smiling lotus face; and then they cast their eyes downward to see the splendour of His toenails. At this, since the eyes and all the other senses are bound by limitations

and are incapable of grasping the beauty and splendour of all His limbs at the same time, therefore the four Kumaras closed their eyes and meditated upon His entire body from head to toe. This example portrays how the sages prefer the process of dhyana (meditation within the heart) over that of direct vision with the physical eyes. Therefore is dhyana superior to direct vision? In answer to this, the krsnaya verse (182) is given now in order to establish the relative greatness of the different forms of bhagavan-murti-darsana; in ascertaining this, all arguments opposing the supremacy of direct vision of Him with the eyes are settled conclusively.)

Sometimes it happens that when someone attains the direct darsana of Sri Krsna, their eyes close as the other senses become inert. When this occurs, it is not because they are meditating on Him within. Rather, it is an expression of ecstatic symptoms as the devotee becomes overwhelmed with bliss; this is a specific transformation of love (prema-vikara) that is similar to the eight sattvika-bhava symptoms headed by shivering (kampa).

(Here it is also worth considering - it was described that Lord Brahma executed severe penances, and only while deeply absorbed in meditative samadhi did he attain bhagavad-darsana and was touched by the Lord, engaged in a conversation with Him, and thereby received great mercy from Lord Krsna personally. The purport is that by the process of dhyana or samadhi some devotees receive the favour of the Lord (as indicated previously in B.B. 2.92 by the word kadacit). In this matter, there is never any fixed rule governing the Lord's appearance. He has been perceived only by Lord Brahma and other bhagava-bhaktas of his calibre. But the conclusive truth is - compared to seeing the Lord within the mind during meditation, the most profound bliss is definitely attained by beholding Him personally with the eyes or the other senses).

Appendix D

(ref. Text 8, page 22)

Footnote by Tridandi Swami Bhakti-Prajnana Kesava Maharaja

The statement namo 'nanta-lilaya is usually understood to mean "obeisances unto ananta-lila-bhagavan Sri Krsna", or He Whose pastimes are limitless. But Srila Sanatana Gosvami looks toward the esoteric intention of Satyavrata Muni and also according to his own mood of realisation has revealed a very confidential purport. Thus - "Obeisances unto sri rasa-lila." The word ananta indicates "that which has no end"; namely perpetual, inexhaustible, countless, and so forth. In the expression lilaya, the word lila is of the fourth case ending in the singular number (in conjunction with the word namah). The derivation of lila is - li + la = lila. The meaning of the word li is "to embrace", and the meaning of la is "to accept". Therefore, the word lila is indicative of that sportive pastime in which Lord Krsna accepts the embraces of the gopis; thus it is understood to mean in this context that obeisances are being offered unto the rasa-lila and other associated pastimes. For this reason it is stated ananta-lilaya. And as Srila Sanatana Gosvami has written in his tika - "...it is suggested to include all the pastimes associated with the realm of Gokula Vrndavana. I offer my obeisances unto all those lilas; such a mood is most certainly expressed in this way." By writing this, he has himself fulfilled the quotation of madhurena samapayet - "all undertakings should be completed sweetly."

Yet another topic is necessarily indicated at this point. Srila Gosvami-pada

has revealed that the final sloka of Damodarastaka shows Sri Krsna's pastimes headed by the rasa-lila to be the topmost of all. He states "...since these are the topmost of confidential topics, they are not mentioned directly ... Therefore such confidential pastimes are referred to by a mere hint only, as they are offered obeisances in the words namo 'nanta-lilaya." The meaning of this is - because the rasa-lila is the most highly confidential pastime of the Lord, therefore Satyavrata Muni has mentioned it only with the briefest clue or tiniest glimpse. By so doing, he has made it known that it is always inappropriate to casually hear and chant about the rasa-lila here and there, whenever and wherever. Not only that, but if an unqualified person deceives himself with an attempt to banish lust, but then contemplates, performs or imitates the rasa-lila, then such a person certainly becomes degraded due to the offense of minimising the glories of the factually transcendental rasa-lila. Eventually he will fall down to become a lusty debauchee and attached householder just like the prakṛta-sahajiyas who prematurely dabble in the highest truth.

In regard to ascertaining who is qualified to hear and chant about the Lord's rasa-lila, it is especially noteworthy to examine the statements of Srīmad Bhagavatam presented at the conclusion of the rasa-lila description (10.33.30). Thus:

“One who is not a great controller should never imitate the behaviour of ruling personalities, even mentally. If out of foolishness an ordinary person does imitate such behaviour, he will simply destroy himself, just as a person who is not Rudra would destroy himself if he tried to drink an ocean of poison.”

The purport of this is - one who is not an isvara truly qualified by being endowed with divine potency should never even mentally contemplate, perform or imitate the Lord's rasa-lila. Only Lord Siva himself is able to drink an entire ocean of poison. If an unqualified person who is arudra (not Siva) falsely considers himself to be greatly qualified and tries to drink poison in the form of hearing and chanting about the rasa-lila, then he would certainly die - that is, he would become tightly bound within the death-like condition of samsara or gross material existence.

Lord Sri Krsna's rasa-lila pastimes are the crest-jewel of all His pastimes, and the benefits of cultivating such pastimes are the crest jewel of all benefits. Therefore those who are qualified to relish these topics will be the crest jewels among all devotees. The Lord's rasa-lila should never be studied in any way by those who are seized by the disease of the heart, who are lusty for personal gratification, or otherwise unfit. In matters of ordinary education, if one wants to dispel one's ignorance it is necessary to gradually master the highest knowledge of the university; but a beginning student or someone of little knowledge is never admitted prematurely into the highest class. Similarly, it is never appropriate to give instructions about the most elevated topic - the rasa-lila - to persons of little knowledge who are simply attached to the external bodily senses.

Appendix E

Sri Sri Damodarastakam

from songs of the Vaisnava Acaryas

(Note: Below is the translation found in the first ISKCON songbook, published in

1974. It had some slight inaccuracies in the interpretation, and consequently the translation was technically overhauled and revised for the 1979 blue edition of Songs of the Vaisnava Acaryas. Herein we have included the original version for nostalgia's sake; it is very sweet and this is the way we heard it every night during the month of Karttika by Visnujana Swami).

**namamisvaram sac-cid-ananda-rupam
lasat-kundalam gokule bhrajanam
yasoda-bhiyolukalad-dhavanam
paramstam atyam tato drutya gopya**

1) 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 Yasoda but was ultimately caught - to that Supreme Lord, Sri Damodara, I offer my humble obeisances.

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

2) 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 Yasoda 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.

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

3) Those superexcellent pastimes of Lord Krsna'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.

varam deva! moksam na moksavadhim va

na canyam vrne 'ham varesad apiha
idam te vapur natha! gopala-balam
sada me manasy avirastam kim anyaih

4) 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.

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

5) 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 Yasoda'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.

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

6) O unlimited Visnu! 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.

kuveratmajau baddha-murtyaiva yad-vat
tvaya mocitau bhakti-bhajau krtau ca
tatha prema-bhaktim svakam me prayaccha
na mokse graho me 'sti damodareha

7) O Lord Damodara, in Your form as a baby Mother Yasoda 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.

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

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

Second Vilāsa

Daikṣika Initiation

1. I offer my respectful obeisances to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva, the master of the worlds, by whose mercy even a dog can easily swim across the great ocean.

The Rules of Initiation

2. Following the descriptions found in Keṣavācārya's Krama-dīpikā, I will now write about the rules for initiation. Without first becoming initiated no one is qualified to engage in Deity worship.

One Must Always Be Initiated

3. In the Agama-śāstra it is said: A person born in a brāhmaṇa family who has not yet accepted initiation is not qualified to perform the duties of a brāhmaṇa. Such a person must accept initiation.

4. Such a person who is not yet initiated is not qualified to chant mantras, worship the Deity, or perform other brahminical duties. For his own benefit such a person must accept initiation. This truth is confirmed by the words of Lord śiva."

5. In the Skanda Purāṇa, Kārttika-māhātmya, in a conversation of Brahmā and Nārada, it is said: Persons who are not initiated into the path of devotion to Lord Hari and who do not worship Lord Him are like animals. What benefit can they attain by living such a life?"

6. In the Viṣṇu-yamala, Śrī Rukmāṅgada tells Śrī Mohini: O girl with the beautiful thighs, all the actions of an uninitiated person are worthless. A person who is not initiated will take birth in an animal's womb."

7. It is specifically said in the Viṣṇu-yamala: If a guru accepts a person as a follower but does not give him initiation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

places a curse on that guru and his disciples."

8. It is also said in the Viṣṇu-rahasya: A person who, ignorant of all the rules of worship, worships the Deity with sincere devotion, attains a result a hundred times better than a person who merely follows the rules without devotion."

The Glories of Accepting Initiation

9. In the Viṣṇu-yamala it is said: Philosophers who are expert in knowing the truth affirm that spiritual initiation brings transcendental knowledge and destroys sins.

10. Therefore one should bow down before a genuine spiritual master, surrender everything to him, properly accept initiation from him, and receive from him a Vaiṣṇava mantra."

11. In the Skanda Purāṇa, in a conversation of Brahmā and Nārada it is said: The best persons in the world, persons who are austere and faithful performers of pious deeds, accept initiation into the worship of Lord Hari, initiation that frees them from all sufferings."

12. In the Tattva-sāgara it is said: As bell metal is turned to gold when mixed with mercury in an alchemical process, so one who is properly trained and initiated by a bona fide spiritual master immediately becomes a brāhmaṇa. "*"

The Time of Initiation. During That Time the Purity of the Month.(Māsa-ṣuddhi)

13-15. In the Āgama-śāstra it is said: For one who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Caitra (March-April), there are many troubles. One who accepts initiation during the month of Vaiṣākhā (April-May) attains precious jewels. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Jyaiṣṭha (May-June) attains death for certain. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Aṣāḍha (June-July) attains the destruction of his friends and kin. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of śrāvaṇa (July-August) becomes free from fear. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Bhādra (August-September) attains the destruction of his children. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Aṣvina (September-October) attains all auspiciousness. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Kārttika (October-November) attains great wealth. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Mārgaśīrṣa (November-December) attains auspiciousness. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Pauṣa (December-January) attains the loss of knowledge. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Māgha (January-February) attains great intelligence. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Phālguna (February-March) attains control over all. These truths the great ācāryas confirm."

16. In the Agastya-saṁhitā, Śrī Rāmārcana-candrikā, it is said: One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of śrāvaṇa attains prosperity. One who

accepts mantra initiation during the month of Kārttika attains knowledge. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Phālguna attains prosperity. One should avoid accepting mantra initiation during a malamāsa (intercalary) month."

17-19. In the Gautamiya Tantra it is said: One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Caitra attains all goals of life (puruṣārtha). One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Vaiśākha attains precious jewels. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Jyaiṣṭha attains certain death. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Aṣāḍha attains the destruction of his friends and kin. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of śrāvaṇa attains a long life. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Bhādra attains the destruction of his children. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Aṣvina attains a treasury of jewels. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Kārttika or the month of Mārgaśīrṣa attains the peefections offered by chanting mantras. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Pauṣa attains the power to torment his enemies. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Māgha attains great intelligence. One who accepts mantra initiation during the month of Phālguna attains all he desires. One should avoid accepting mantra initiation during a malamāsa (intercalary) month."

20. In the Skanda Purāṇa, in a conversation of Śrī Rukmāṅgada and Śrī Mohinī it is said: When it is performed during the month of Kārttika, spiritual initiation becomes like a sword that cuts the cycle of repeated births. Therefore one should endeavor in every way to accept initiation during the month of Kārttika.

21. There is no disadvantage in accepting during the month of Caitra initiation into chanting the Gopāla mantra. Learned philosophers recommend accepting that kind of initiation at that time."

Purity of the Day of the Week (Vāra-śuddhi)

22. One should accept initiation on Sunday, Thursday, Monday, Wednesday, or Friday.

Purity of the Stars (Nakṣatra-śuddhi)

23. In the Nārada Tantra it is said: Rohiṇī, śravaṇā, Ardrā, Dhaniṣṭhā, Puṣya, ṣatabhiṣa, and Uttarātraya are said to be auspicious when one accepts initiation."

24. In the scriptures it is also said: One should accept mantra initiation or perform an abhiṣeka during the times of the stars Aṣvinī, Rohiṇī, Svāti, Viśākhā, Hastā, Jyaiṣṭha, or Uttarātraya."

Purity of the Day (Tithi-śuddhi)

25. In the Sāra-saṅgraha it is said: One should (accept mantra initiation) during the dvitīyā, pañcamī, or ṣaṣṭhī. One may also accept it during the dvādaśī or trayodaśī."

26. In the scriptures it is said: The pūrnimā, pañcamī, dvitīyā, saptamī, trayodaśī, and daśamī are glorious (days in which to accept mantra initiation). They fulfill all desires."

27. In this way on an auspicious day during the śukla-pakṣa (bright fortnight), on a Thursday or a Friday, at an auspicious moment during the time when a favorable star is conjoined with the moon, one should accept mantra initiation."
(1)

Special Circumstances (Apavāda)

28. In the Rudra-yāmala it is said: At a holy place, or during a solar or lunar eclipse, or during the Pavitrāropana festival (the full-moon day of the month of śrāvaṇa, when Lord Kṛṣṇa accepted the sacred-thread), or during the Damanakāropana festival (in the month of Caitra), one may accept mantra initiation without considering the purity of the month, stars, or anything else.

29. All auspicious moments and auspicious situations of the moon and stars always reside in those situations. A person who accepts mantra initiation in one of these situations attains long life, wealth, and good children.

30. No auspicious time is equal to the time of the solar or lunar eclipse. Whatever auspicious deed is done at that time brings limitless benefit. During the Sūrya-parva times (solar solstices, equinoxes, or eclipses) there is no consideration of purity of the month, day, day of the week, or anything else."

31. In the Tattva-sāgara it is said: When one attains the rare and difficult to attain association of a bona fide saintly spiritual master (sad-guru), then whatever moment he gives permission to accept initiation is a very auspicious moment for initiation.

32. Whether he comes in the city, in the forest, in a holy place, during the day, or during the night, whenever or wherever he permits, one may accept initiation from him.

33. If such a saintly spiritual master wishes, there is no need of the candidate's having visited holy places, followed vows, performed homas, bathed in holy waters, or chanted japa. Such a saintly spiritual master's consent is the only thing needed for initiation."

Construction of the Pavilion (Maṇḍapa-nirmāṇa-vidhi)

34. There are four kinds (kalavati, kriyavati, varnamayi, and vedhamayi) of initiation. Kalavati initiation will now be briefly described in this book.

35. After cleansing the area and worshipping the Vastu-devatā demigod, one should construct a pavilion seven cubits in size, a pavilion with a charming altar

(vedi). (2)

36. The pavilion should have eight flags, four entrances, an archway of ksira trees. It should be opulent with a triple rope. It should be surrounded by a kuṣa garland. (3)

Constructing the Kuṇḍa

37. In that place, facing north, an intelligent person should construct a kuṇḍa, a kuṇḍa 24 fingers in size, a kuṇḍa with three mekhalās (belts) and four corners.

38. That person should dig up three mekhalās. Outside that dug-up area he should create a kaṇṭha (neck) one finger in size.

39. The first mekhalā should be four fingers in size, the second three fingers, and the third two fingers.

40. In the west, above the third mekhalā, he should construct a yoni. The yoni should be six fingers wide and twelve fingers long.

41. It should be one finger high. In its midst should be an opening. Then he should construct a gajādhara (elephant's lip) with its own mekhalā.

42. Then, for the purpose of performing fifty homas, he should construct a kuṇḍa the size of a raised fist.

43. For the purpose of performing a hundred homas he should construct a kuṇḍa the size of an aratni cubit (measured from the elbow to the tip of the small finger). For the purpose of performing a thousand homas he should construct a kuṇḍa the size of a pāṇi (cubit). For the purpose of performing ten thousand homas he should construct a kuṇḍa the size of four cubits. For the purpose of performing ten million homas he should construct a kuṇḍa the size of eight cubits. He should make the kuṇḍa as deep as it is wide.

44. The size of the kuṇḍa may be increased beyond these numbers, but it may not be decreased to less than these minimum sizes.

45. Following these instructions, an intelligent person should carefully construct the kuṇḍa. If he does not carefully follow these instructions, there will be many faults and many troubles will come.

46. The Tāntrikas explain: When these instructions are followed, the construction of the kuṇḍa brings the fulfillment of desires. If these instructions are not followed, the kuṇḍa will bring many troubles.

47. Therefore a person who desires auspiciousness will strive to follow these instructions. If the homa will be brief, the area of the homa may be only one cubit."

48. In the Hārīta-śāstra it is said: A person who makes the kuṇḍa too small will not live a long life. He who digs the kuṇḍa too deeply becomes diseased. His prosperity is destroyed. One who makes the kuṇḍa crooked will suffer. One who breaks the mekhalā will die.

49. One who makes the mekhalā too small will lament. One who makes the mekhalā too large will lose his cows. One constructs a kuṇḍa without a yoni will lose his wife. One who constructs a kuṇḍa without a kaṇṭha will lose his wealth."

50. The size of the aṅguli (finger) is described in these words: Eight

barleycorns placed lengthwise, or three grains of rice are the measurement of one aṅguli, a measurement that is taken in the middle part of the finger."

51. More detailed descriptions of all this, as well as descriptions of the sruk, sruvā, and the various rituals employing them may be found in other books. Fearing this book will become very large, I will not write of them here.

The Initiation-circle (Dīkṣā-maṇḍala)

52. The maṇḍapa (pavilion) should be sprinkled with pañca-gavya and scented water. Then the dīkṣā-maṇḍala (initiation-circle) should be drawn on the top part of the vedi (altar).

53. In the middle of the vedi should be drawn an eight-petal lotus. Outside the lotus should be drawn three vṛttas (circles). Then should be drawn the rāṣis (the signs of the zodiac). Then should be drawn a pīṭha (throne) with four feet (catuṣ-pāda).

54. Outside that should be drawn four vīthīs (pathways) going in the four directions. Around all this should be drawn a graceful square with four doorways.

Dīkṣāṅga-pūjā Worship

55. After performing his morning duties, the spiritual master should place before the completed maṇḍala a conchshell and various articles of worship.

In the Beginning, Placing of the Kumbha (Waterpot)

56. First one should worship the spiritual masters and Gaṇeṣa. Then one should place in the midst of the lotus (drawn in the maṇḍala) unhusked rice (ṣāli), husked rice (taṇḍula), and kuṣa grass.

57. Over the kuṣa one should chant the mantra of the ten flames and the mantra beginning with the word yā". Then one should offer worship, chant the syllable Om, and place the kumbha. (4)

58. The ten flames are given in these words: Dhūmrārci, Uṣmā, Jvalanī, Jvālīnī, Viṣphuliṅginī, Suṣṛī, Surūpā, Kapilā, Havyahavā, and Kavyahavā are the ten flames." (5)

59. Then, chanting in the proper sequence (anuloma) the mantra beginning with the syllable ka" and ending with the syllable ṭha", and then chanting in the reverse sequence (viloma) the mantra beginning with the syllable bha" and ending with the syllable ḍa", one should place the twelve parts (kalā) of the sun in the kumbha and then offer worship.

60. The twelve parts of the sun are described in these words: The twelve parts of the sun are: Tapanī, Tāpanī, Dhūmrā, Bhrāmarī, Jvālīnī, Ruci, Suṣumnā, Bhogadā, Viṣvā, Bodhinī, Dhāriṇī, and Kṣamā." (6)

61. Chanting the mūla-mantra, one should then place in the kumbha a white flower, ṣarkara, gold, jewels, kuṣa grass, and rice grains mixed with water.

62. Then one should properly fill the kumbha with pure water from a holy place. Placing in the water the mantra for the sixteen phases of the moon, one should then offer worship.

63. The sixteen phases of the moon are named in these words: Amṛtā, Mānadā, Pūṣā, Tuṣṭi, Puṣṭi, Rati, Dhṛti, ṣaṣinī, Candrikā, Kānti, Jyotsnā, Śrī, Prīti, Aṅgadā, Pūrṇā, and Pūrṇāmṛtā are the sixteen phases of the moon." (7)

Placing the Conchshell (ṣaṅkha-sthāpana)

64. Into the conchshell filled with pure water one should place the eight fragrances. After one by one invoking the presence of the kalās (the parts of the fire, sun, and moon previously described), one should worship the prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā (the basis of life). (8)

65. The eight fragrances are described in these words: Uṣīra, kuṅkuma, kuṣṭha, bālaka, aguru, murā, jaṭāmāmsī, and candana (sandal) are the eight fragrances pleasing to Lord Hari."

66. Some other authorities say the eight fragrances are: candana, karpūra (camphor), aguru, kuṅkuma, rocanā, kakkola, kapi, and jaṭāmāmsī.

67 and 68. From the letter "a" (in the sacred syllable Aum) the ten-syllable mantra beginning with "ka" is born. From the letter "u" (in the sacred syllable Aum) the ten-syllable mantra beginning with "ṭha" is born. From the letter "m" (in the sacred syllable Aum) the ten-syllable mantra beginning with "pa" is born. From the letter "ṛ" (in the sacred syllable Aum) the four-syllable mantra beginning with "ṣa" is born. With the sixteen svaras one should place the sixteen parts of the letter "ṛ" in the conchshell.

69. Sṛṣṭi, ṛddhi, Smṛti, Medhā, Kānti, Lakṣmī, Dhṛti, Sthirā, Sthiti, and Siddhi are the ten parts (kalā) born of the letter "a" (in the sacred-syllable Aum).

70. Jarā, Pālinī, ṣānti, Aiṣvarī, Rati, Kāmikā, Varadā, Hlādinī, Prīti, and Dīrghā are the ten parts (kalā) born of the letter "u" (in the sacred-syllable Aum).

71. Tīkṣṇā, Raudrā, Bhayā, Nidrā, Tantrī, Kṣut, Krodhanī, Kriyā, Utkārī, and Mṛtyu are the ten parts (kalā) born of the letter "m" (in the sacred-syllable Aum). Prītā, ṣvetā, Aruṇā, and Asitā are the four parts (kalā) born of the letter "ṛ" (bindu) (in the sacred-syllable Aum).

72 and 73. Nivṛtti, Pratiṣṭhā, Vidyā, ṣānti, Indhikā, Dīpikā, Rocikā, Mocikā, Sūkṣmā, Sūkṣmāmṛtā, Jñānā, Ajñānā, Apyāyanī, Vyāpinī, and Vyomarūpā are among the limitless parts born from the letter "ṛ" (nāda) (in the sacred syllable Aum).

74. One by one, one should perform nyāsas of all these parts (kalā). One should chant these names, placing each one in the dative case and following each one by the word namaḥ (obeisances). (9)

75. After performing the prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā, and after the āvāhana (invocation), one should recite the five hymns from the ṛg Veda. Then one should worship the kalās (portions of the sun, moon, and fire).

76. The five hymns from the ṛg Veda are, in proper sequence, the hymns beginning "hamsaḥ ṣuciṣad", "pratad viṣṇuḥ", "try-ambakam", "tat savituḥ", and "viṣṇur yonim". (10)

77. Chanting the mūla-mantra, one should then pour the conchshell water into

the kumbha. Then one should cover the kumbha's mouth with śakravallī leaves, mango leaves, or other like leaves. (11)

78. Over this one should place a lid decorated with flowers and other things. Then one should coil two strips of cloth around the kumbha. Then one should decorate the kumbha. (12)

Within the Kumbha, Worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Is Placed

79. Then the ācārya should invite (āvāhana) the effulgent Supreme Personality of Godhead to enter the kumbha. Considering the Lord to be everything, the ācārya should worship the Lord by offering Him a throne and by presenting other offerings also.

80. Then he should offer ṣaḍ-aṅga-nyāsa to the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He should consider the Lord everything.

81. Some authorities say that, employing all nyāsas except for the kara-nyāsa and pīṭha-nyāsa, one should meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the supreme power (tejaḥ).

82. Then, with various offerings described in sacred books, one should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who resides in the kumbha with His primary limbs (aṅga), secondary limbs (upāṅga), and coverings (āvaraṇa).

83. Then, after presenting the offerings to the Lord, one should place outside the circle paistika cakes, lamps, seeds, sprouts, and receptacles.

The Homa for Initiation (Dīkṣā-homa)

MISSING

Footnotes From Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's Commentary

1. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī explains one should not accept mantra initiation at sunset.

2. Cleansing the area" means removing husks of grain, hairs, fragments of burnt wood, bones, pebbles, or anything else that might make the sacrificial pavilion impure.

This process has been in the book Sāradātilaka and in other books also, in their description of constructing a temple. Fearing that we will here be drawn into a lengthy description, only a summary of this is written here in this book. Here it is said the pavilion should be seven cubits. Some authorities say the pavilion may be six cubits, eight cubits, or twelve cubits. In the Vaṣiṣṭha-saṁhitā it is said: The pavilion may be six cubits, eight cubits, or twelve cubits." That the altar should be charming means that it should be beautiful. It should be neither too big, too small, too high, or too low. It should be placed in the middle of the pavilion. It is also said in the scriptures: The pavilion should be five cubits in size. It should have

four corners and four faces. In the middle of the pavilion one should construct a beautiful altar that is one cubit in size." In the *Vaṣiṣṭha-saṁhitā* it is said: In the northeast or the northwest one should construct an altar. The altar should be one cubit high. It should have four corners."

3. The "eight flags" here means one flag in each of the eight directions. Outside the entrances of the pavilion should be placed in the ground an archway made of plakṣa trees and other trees of the kṣīra group. This is described in these words of the *Matysa Purāṇa*: In the east should be an archway of plakṣa trees, in the south should be an archway of uḍambara trees. In the west should be an archway of aṣvattha trees. In the north should be an archway of nyagrodha trees." The entire area should be surrounded on all sides by a triple rope. This means three ropes bound together by kuṣa. Some authorities say the triple ropes here is three ropes made of kuṣa..

4. Over the kuṣa grass one should place the mantra consisting of the ten flames. Then one should circumambulate. Then with sweet fragrances, flowers, and other offerings one should offer worship. Then one should chant the sacred-syllable Om̐. Then one should place the waterpot over the kuṣa grass. How is that done? It is done with the ten-syllable mantra beginning with yā" and ending with kṣa". In this verse the words "yathoditam" mean "without disobeying the instructions spoken by persons learned in the scriptures".

5. "Dhūmārciṣe namaḥ" is given here as an example of the mantra of the ten flames. (Translator's note: In this way the mantra becomes: Dhūmārciṣe namaḥ, uṣmāyai namaḥ, jvalanyai namaḥ, jvālinyai namaḥ, visphuliṅginyai namaḥ, suṣriye namaḥ, surūpāyai namaḥ, kapilāyai namaḥ, havyahavāyai namaḥ, kavyahavāyai namaḥ.") Some say one should meditate on the ten-petal lotus, in the whorl of that lotus one should place the mantra "maṁ vahni-kamalāya namaḥ", and in the ten petals of that lotus one should place the mantras for the ten flames. Then one should meditate on a twelve-petal lotus situated between the eyebrows and one should also meditate on a sixteen-petal lotus situated on the neck. Meditating in this way one should chant the two mantras "am̐ arka-maṇḍalāya namaḥ" (for the first lotus) and "um̐ soma-maṇḍalāya namaḥ" (for the second lotus). One should place these mantras on the whorls of these two lotuses. On the petals of these two lotuses one should then place the names of the flames of the sun (on the first lotus) and the flames of the moon (on the second lotus). This is explanation some authorities give. Some other authorities say one should place these 38 mantras on the vahni-maṇḍala and other places and one should place fifty recitations of Om̐ on the conchshell filled with pure water.

6. (Translator's note: The mantras then become: tapanyai namaḥ, tāpanyai namaḥ, dhūmrāyai namaḥ, bhrāmaryai namaḥ, jvālinyai namaḥ, rucaye namaḥ, suṣumnāyai namaḥ, bhogadāyai namaḥ, viṣvāyai namaḥ, bodhinyai namaḥ, dhāriṇyai namaḥ, kṣamāyai namaḥ.")

7. (Translator's note: The mantras then become: amṛtāyai namaḥ, mānadāyai namaḥ, pūṣāyai namaḥ, tuṣṭāyai namaḥ, puṣṭāyai namaḥ, ratāyai namaḥ, dhṛtāyai namaḥ, ṣaṣṭhyai namaḥ, candrikāyai namaḥ, kāntāyai namaḥ, jyotsnāyai namaḥ, ṣriye namaḥ, prītāyai namaḥ, aṅgadāyai namaḥ, pūrṇāyai namaḥ, pūrṇāmṛtāyai namaḥ.")

8. The method of worshiping the prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā is described in Śrī

Puruṣottamavana's commentary on the book Krama-dīpikā.

9. (Translator's note: The resulting mantras are given here: sṛṣṭaye namaḥ, ṛddhaye namaḥ, smṛtaye namaḥ, medhāyai namaḥ, kāntaye namaḥ, lakṣmyai namaḥ, dhṛtaye namaḥ, sthirāyai namaḥ, sthitaye namaḥ, siddhaye namaḥ, jarāyai namaḥ, pālīnyai namaḥ, śāntaye namaḥ, aiśvāryai namaḥ, rataye namaḥ, kāmikāyai namaḥ, varadāyai namaḥ, hlādīnyai namaḥ, prītaye namaḥ, dīrghāyai namaḥ, tīkṣṇāyai namaḥ, raudrāyai namaḥ, bhayāyai namaḥ, nidrāyai namaḥ, tantryai namaḥ, kṣude namaḥ, krodhanyai namaḥ, kriyāyai namaḥ, utkāryai namaḥ, mṛtyave namaḥ, prītāyai namaḥ, śvetāyai namaḥ, aruṇāyai namaḥ, asitāyai namaḥ, nivṛttaye namaḥ, pratiṣṭhāyai namaḥ, vidyāyai namaḥ, śāntaye namaḥ, indhikāyai namaḥ, dīpikāyai namaḥ, rocikāyai namaḥ, mocikāyai namaḥ, sūkṣmāyai namaḥ, sūkṣmāmṛtāyai namaḥ, jñānāyai namaḥ, ajñānāyai namaḥ, apyāyanyai namaḥ, vyāpīnyai namaḥ, vyomarūpāyai namaḥ.)

10. These five hymns each refer to a part of the sacred-syllable Om. The first refers to the letter "a", the next to "u", and the succeeding ones to "m", "ṁ" (bindu) and "ṁ" (nāda) respectively.

11. The "other leaves" are aśvattha leaves and other like leaves.

12. Here the lid may also be decorated with fruits, husked rice (taṇḍula), and other things. The kumbha may be decorated with flowers, sandal paste, and other things.