

Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam

Explanation of the Fifth Verse

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

*idaṁ te mukhāmbhojan aṅyakta-nīlair-
vṛtaṁ kuntalaiḥ snigdha-raktaiś ca gopyā
muhuś cumbitaṁ bimba-raktādharaṁ me
manasy āvirāstāṁ alaṁ lakṣa-lābhaiḥ*

“*He deva!* Your extremely blackish (dark blue) lotus face, covered by Your glossy and slightly reddish curling locks, is kissed by Yaśodā Maiyā over and over again. May Your supremely captivating lotus face, which is beautified by Your lips as red as ripe *bimba* fruits, always remain manifest in my heart. Millions of other attainments are useless to me.” (Śloka 5)



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Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī explains in his commentary:

“Among all the limbs of Kṛṣṇa’s Śrī Vighraha, Satyavrata Muni is particularly interested to see His supremely enchanting lotus face. To reveal this inner desire, he speaks the śloka beginning with *idaṁ te...*”

Satyavrata Muni desires to have the *darśana* of Śrī Vighraha (the form of Bhagavān). Among various forms, he is desirous to see this particular *murti* and not any other, and he is clearly expressing this to Bhagavān. In having *darśana* of Bhagavān, there are two considerations. In one instance, the devotee prays to Bhagavān to show him that *murti* which he is qualified to see. The other case is when the devotee has already decided which particular form he wants to see. When they clearly express their desires for a particular form, it is suggestive. A question may be raised here. Does such a

or proposal not show a lack of surrender? The answer is “no.” They are expressing such desire with the help of that intelligence which is bestowed by Bhagavān alone. If they speak anything without using the intelligence bestowed by Bhagavān, it will be erroneous. However, if they speak anything using the intelligence granted by Bhagavān, it is fully appropriate. We have to understand this factor. Anything devoid of *anugatyā*, being under the guidance of the *guru* and *guru-paramparā*, will be a hindrance in one’s progress or advancement of *bhakti*.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī further says, “Sometimes in his deep meditation, Satyavrata Muni experienced the indescribable beauty and sweetness of his *iṣṭa* (worshipable Deity) through a momentary vision. *Mukhāmbhojam*. Your face is like a very beautiful, fully blossomed lotus, which steals away all types of suffering and is the embodiment of supremely blissful *rasa*. May this lotus face appear in my mind time and again.”

What are the characteristics of that lotus face? He continues, “That face is supremely blackish, and is covered by *snigdha*, soft, glossy and curling locks of hair. Just as the lotus is constantly hovered over by bumblebees, Your lotus face is covered by curly locks. It is kissed over and over again by a *gopī*, Śrī Yaśodā (or Śrī Rādhā). May that lotus face, which is repeatedly kissed by the supremely fortunate Śrī Yaśodā, appear in my mind even one time.”

The word *sadā* (forever) is mentioned in the previous verse. When applied in this verse, the meaning can also be accepted: “May that lotus face always remain manifest in my mind. May it remain manifest forever in my mind and not disappear

from there—not even for a moment.”

Does such a stage come in the life of a *bhakta*? Yes, it comes.

*grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe
bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe
amāni mānada hāṣa kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la’be
vraje rādhā kṛṣṇa-sevā-mānase karibe¹*

(C.c. Antya 6.236)

What is the reason for using the word ‘*sadā*’ (forever) here? Does it mean that the *bhaktas* never eat or sleep? At least they have to take rest for 2 to 4 *daṇḍas*. How they will take rest in this case? When they rest, how do they perform *harināma*? Those who are able to keep Bhagavān on the path of their remembrance twenty-four hours a day are Vaiṣṇavas—they are *guru*. The parameter is set like this. This instruction is given for all of us. In no circumstance should we forget Bhagavān for even a moment.

“*Vraje rādhā kṛṣṇa-sevā-mānase karibe*” How shall we do this? Our mind is very wicked and uncontrolled. How is it possible? It is said that even in our dreams we should see Rādhā-Govinda. But what do I see in my dreams? A snake, a fish, a leopard, a bear,

etc. When does Bhagavān come in my dreams? How shall I have His *darśana*? How shall I have His constant remembrance like an unbroken flow of oil? *Bhaktas* are able to remember, and *abhaktas* (non-devotees) are not. Remembrance occurs for one who is a realized soul. Only the *nitya-siddha* or *nityā-mukta mahātmās*, whose *citta-vṛtti*,

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inclination of the mind, is like this, can have constant remembrance. They remember Him and have *darśana* of His *līlā* at all times. It is not possible for an ordinary human being.

‘*Aṣṭa prahar yāma sevā*,’ service in the eightfold pastimes of the Divine Couple, is possible for those who keep Bhagavān in their hearts for *aṣṭa prahar* (24 hours), and do not leave Him even for a moment. Only for such a person is *aṣṭa prahar yāma sevā* recommended. Those who perform *yāma sevā* will also perform *smaraṇa* (remembrance). Such persons are very rare. As far as we are concerned, we have not even properly undergone the processes of *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana*. Without that, how is *smaraṇa* possible? For us such *adhikāra* (qualification) has not yet come. If we can properly perform *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana*, then we can do *smaraṇa*. Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, in the poem *Vaiṣṇava Ke*, gives instruction to the mind. He has said, ‘*kīrtana-prabhāve, smaraṇa haibe*.’ By the influence of *kīrtana*, one will be able to do *smaraṇa*. We cannot bring remembrance forcefully, that is, without *kīrtana*.

Just as by performing *sādhana-bhajana*, by performing worship of Kṛṣṇa, *vairāgya*, renunciation, comes on its own, remembrance is exactly like that. It cannot be brought through any artificial means or conceptions. It will come automatically by following the process.

*vāsudeve bhagavati
bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyaṁ
jñānaṁ ca yad ahaitukam²
(Bhāg. 1.2.7)*

Here *vairāgya* and *jñāna* are not mentioned as limbs of *bhakti*. However, those who engage in *bhakti* will naturally develop them. We have to understand this concept.

Satyavrata Muni further glorifies the lotus face of Bhagavān by using another adjective—*bimbaraktādharaṁ*. This means one whose two lips are as red as the *bimba* fruit. He prays, “May that lotus face appear in my mind. Only then will I feel blessed. *Lakṣa-lābhaiḥ*—*lākhs* and *lākhs* of other types of attainments and gains are useless for me.” The

topmost attainment for Satyavrata Muni, for whom *lākhs* and *lākhs* of other goals are insignificant, is that lotus face of Kṛṣṇa which is kissed by the greatly fortunate Yaśodā. His desire is that this beautiful face may appear in his heart.

We, the conditioned souls of this world, do not perform any activity without foreseeing a reward or hope of profit in it. If profit is foreseen by us, we endeavor to advance in that field of activity. This is the rule of enterprises. “I have started a business. I must earn profit, and I should not experience loss.”

Śāstras make us understand that we will not always be able to get profit by desiring it. While desiring to earn profit in business, many times we have to bear loss. This should also be kept in mind. Then what shall I do? *Śāstra* says: *upayam cintayet prajṣaḥ tvapāyamapi cintayet*. Just as we think about the means

for success, those who are wise also consider the ill-effects. At all times, good and bad, favorable and unfavorable, are to be considered well in advance. Then only will any activity be executed perfectly, and this is confirmed in *śāstra*.

*karmāṇy ārabhamāṇānaṁ
duḥkha-hatyai sukhāya ca
paśyēt pāka-viparyāsaṁ
mithunī-cāriṇām nṛṇām³
(Bhāg. 11.3.18)*

In this world, all of us perform *karma*, reward-seeking activity, but not everyone gets the same type of result at all times. We desire more, but achieve less. Then what should we do? What is the purpose of performing *karma*? All of us know that we perform *karma* for two reasons, as we desire two types of results: *duḥkha-hatyai sukhāya ca*. “All my suffering and pains may be eradicated, and I may attain happiness and peace.” All of us know this. But *śāstras* inform us that, despite desiring in such a way, it will not always happen as we want. *paśyēt pāka-viparyāsaṁ*. The result may be exactly the opposite. This should be understood from the very beginning. We desire something very grand, and if we do not achieve it, and we undergo loss, we can die of heart failure.

Do not die like this. You are a *jīva* whose *dharma* is to search for the eternal life. You should live according to the occupation of your *ātmā*. We have

²By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world.”

³Accepting the roles of male and female in human society, the conditioned souls unite in sexual relationships. Thus, they constantly make material endeavors to eliminate their unhappiness and unlimitedly increase their pleasure. But one should see that they inevitably achieve exactly the opposite result. In other words, their happiness inevitably vanishes, and as they grow older their material discomfort increases.”

not come to die; we have come to save ourselves to enjoy eternal life. What is the meaning of saving ourselves? *Śrīvāntu viśve amṛtasya putraḥ*. “I am the son of *āmṛta*, immortality personified. Therefore, I have to live an eternal life—not a temporary life full of death.”

A question comes: “Why do we not want to die?” This is answered in the scriptures. Bhagavān is inexhaustible, eternal and immortal. The *jīvātmā* is also inexhaustible and immortal. Therefore, we do not want to die. Sometimes, being troubled by worldly sufferings and pains, we say out of frustration and anger that we want to die.

*aie mātra bhikṣā dau hari / āja yena ekebāre mari
bhāgyavān tāḍātāḍi mare / abhāgāre yame bhaya kare⁴*

These are the expressions of worldly poets. However, their expressions are only verbal, and are not from the inner heart. From the core of our heart, no one of us wants to die. Why not? The *jīvātmā* is inexhaustible and eternal, and, therefore, there is no question of its death. The suicidal cases which occur these days are simply incidental; no one ever wishes to die.

Once an old lady was making efforts to die. She had no one in this world. She used to maintain herself by collecting wood from the forest, and, after selling it in the market, she would use that money to make offerings for her Ṭhākuraḥ and accept the remnants. She once collected a lot of dry wood and tied them in a bundle, but in that forest there was no one to help her lift that bundle on her head. She thus condemned her life. She thought, “How is it possible to live amidst such sufferings? He Yamarāja, where are you? Please take me with you!” When she repeated this twice or thrice from the core of her heart, Yamarāja personally came before her. He said, “O my dear old mother, in this world no one likes me, nor does anyone ever call me. Why have you called me with such great earnestness?” The old lady replied, “Since you have come here, please lift this bundle and put it on my head.” Yamarāja asked with anger, “Have you called me simply for this? No one

calls me for such petty things, nor is anyone able to see me with these two eyes. I am Yamarāja. However, as you are asking, I am putting this bundle on your head.” After that, Yamarāja left. Did the old lady really want to die? Never.

Many such examples are there in the *śāstra*. One poet has spoken:

*marna re tuhu mora śyāma samāna
marite cāhina āmi sunder bhuvane⁵*

Many people talk like this, but the reality is that no one in this world wants to die. This is because we are actually part and parcel of Bhagavān, who is inexhaustible and eternal. We atomic conscious entities emanate from the infinite conscious entity, Bhagavān. Therefore, we don’t want to die.

We have to perform *sādhana bhajana* to attain Bhagavān. This is all right, but how shall we do this? How many ways are there? How quickly we can enter it? We have to understand all such processes. However, particularly in the age of Kali, the only process is *nāma-sankīrtana*.

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā⁶
(Bṛhad Nārādīya 38/126)*

*kṛṣṇa nāma bhaja jīva āra saba micche
palāite path nāhi yama ācche picche⁷*

*sādhu saṅga kṛṣṇa nāma aie mātra cāhi
sāmsāra jinite āre kona vastu nāhi⁸*

*aei ghora samsāre, paḍiyā mānav nā pāye dukhera śesa
sādhu saṅga kari, hari bhaje yadi, tabe anta haye kleśa⁹*

(Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrika*)

⁴Lord Hari, I only want to beg You that I may die immediately and not suffer as I die. Those who are fortunate die very quickly, while those who are unfortunate (impious)—even Yamarāja is afraid of them.

⁵Hey Death! For me you are like Śyāma (I want to embrace you); however, seeing the beauty and allurement of this world I don’t feel like dying.

⁶In this age of Kali there is no other means, no other means, no means for self-realization other than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari.

⁷O *jīvā*! Engage yourself in *kṛṣṇa-nāma bhajana*, because everything else in this world is false. If you think that you can live happily by avoiding *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*, it is your foolishness. Yamarāja is always chasing you.

⁸I only want *sādhu saṅga* and *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. Except for this, there is no other means to conquer over this material world.

⁹The *jīvā*, fallen in this fierce material existence, is undergoing unlimited miseries. If, however, he performs *hari-bhajana* in the association of *sādhus*, then only can his sufferings be stopped.