

ISKCON Founder Acharya  
His Divine Grace  
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



# Damodara kartik

**The Holiest Month**



[contact@iskconreading.org](mailto:contact@iskconreading.org)



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**“If even for a short time somebody burns a lamp in the temple of Lord Sri Hari, then whatever sins he has acquired for millions of kalpas (one kalpa equals 1000 yugas) are all destroyed.” - Skanda Purana**

The auspicious Month of Kartik, also known as the Month of Damodara is the holiest month in the Vedic lunar calendar. This month is particularly dear to Lord Krishna.

During this month devotees get the opportunity to personally offer Arati to Him with ghee lamps and sing the very enchanting 'Damodarastakam' to receive the special mercy of the Lord



# Glories of Kartik

“Charity, yajna, japa, and austerity performed in the month of Kartik bring a result, O best of brahmanas, that will never be destroyed.”

**Hari Bhakti Vilasa**

“One who during the month of Kartik gives a small gift to Lord Visnu attains a result that will never be destroyed.”

**Skanda Purana**

“O Narada, I have personally seen that a person who happily reads Bhagavad-Gita during the month of Kartik does not return to the world of birth and death.”

**Hari Bhakti Vilasa**

“Of the twelve months, Kartik is the most dear to Lord Krsna. To anyone who even slightly worships Lord Visnu during its time, the month of Kartik gives residence in Lord Visnu’s transcendental abode.”

**Padma Purana**

# Damodara Lila



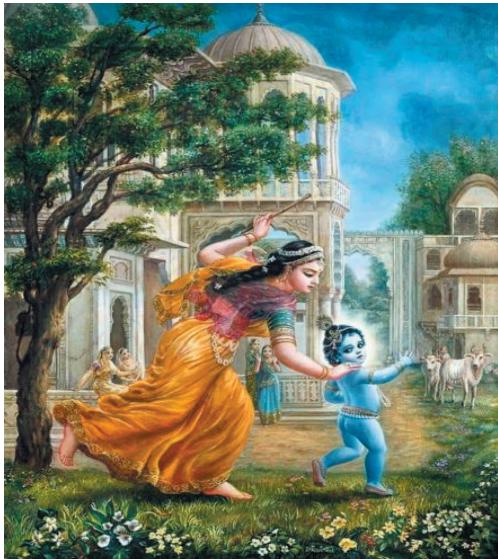
Once Mother Yashoda was churning butter while singing the wonderful childhood pastimes of her son Krishna. At that time Krishna appeared there and was hungry.

Mother Yashoda took Krishna on her lap and started feeding Him. While Krishna was sucking the milk, mother Yashoda enjoyed the beauty of Her child. Suddenly, the milk which was on the stove began to boil over.

Mother Yashoda put Krishna aside and went to the stove. Krishna became very angry and taking a piece of stone, He broke the butter pot. He began to eat the butter in a secluded place.

Soon Mother Yashoda returned and saw the broken pot. She smiled as she thought, "The child is very clever. After breaking the pot He has left this place, fearing punishment." She looked all over and found Krishna sitting on a big wooden grinding mortar, feeding butter to the monkeys.

She saw Krishna looking this way and that way in fear. He saw her and immediately began to flee. Mother Yashoda chased Him, trying to capture the Supreme Personality of Godhead who was playing just like a little child for His great devotee Yashoda. He let her finally catch Him.



In order to punish her naughty child, Mother Yashoda began to bind Krishna with some ropes to a wooden grinding mortar.

But she found that the rope she was using was too short—by two inches. She gathered more ropes and added to it, but still she found the same shortage. Mother Yashoda was astonished!

In attempting to bind her son, she became tired. Then Lord Krishna appreciated the hard labor of His mother and He agreed to be bound up by the ropes.

Krsna is the supreme bestower of all kinds of liberation to His devotees, but the benediction which was bestowed upon Mother Yasoda was never experienced even by Lord Brahma or Lord Siva or the goddess of fortune.

After binding her son, Mother Yasoda engaged herself in household affairs. At that time, bound up to the wooden mortar, Krsna could see a pair of Arjuna trees before Him.

In their previous lives, the trees were born as the human sons of Kuvera, named Nalakuvara and Manigriva.

They were cursed by the great sage Narada in order to receive the highest benediction of seeing Lord Krsna. This benediction-curse was bestowed upon them because of their forgetfulness due to intoxication.

Although Krishna was bound up to the wooden mortar, He began to proceed toward the twin trees in order to fulfill the prophecy of His great devotee Narada. He proceeded through the passage between the two trees. With great strength He pulled the rope tied to the mortar. The two trees fell down with a great sound. Out of the fallen trees came the two purified personalities who bowed down to Krishna to offer their prayers.

After His extra-ordinary pastime Krishna was freed by Nanda Maharaja and taken onto the laps of the elder gopis. The Supreme Lord Krishna, being completely controlled by the gopis, smiled and danced in their hands.

# Celebrating Damodara

As stated in the Vedic scriptures, any vrata observed within one's capacity, in this best of months will yield a million times results. The effect of performing such vrata will last for one hundred life times and relieve one from suffering.

## **Here are some simple observances you can follow:**

\*Wake up early in the morning and take bath.

\*The Padma Purana says: “One who bathes early in the morning during the month of Karthika attains the merit of bathing in all places of pilgrimage.”

\*Chant the Hare Krishna Mahamantra a fixed number of times

\*Be Vegetarian

**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna**

**Krishna Krishna Hare Hare**

**Hare Rama Hare Rama**

**Rama Rama Hare Hare**



Observe fasting vows during this month.

Observe ekadashis. Gaudiya Vaishnavas fast from urad dhal for the whole month of Kartik.

Hear and Read transcendental narrations

Read the 9th and 10th chapter of the book Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, authored by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, which speaks about the pastime of Damodara in detail.

Cook varieties of vegetarian sattvik food stuffs and offer to Lord Damodara.

Perform Damodara-arati. You can sing the Damodara-ashtaka and offer a ghee lamp to Lord Damodara.

Serve Tulsi devi You can offer a ghee lamp to Tulsi

You may also invite your neighbours, relatives and friends to participate in this sacred Damodara-arati and give them an opportunity to offer ghee lamps to Lord Damodara and accept the prasadam of the Lord.

Please get in touch with ISKCON Reading if you require any information or assistance in this regard!  
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# Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭaka

(found in the Padma Purāṇa of Kṛṣṇa Dvaiḍāyana Vyāsa, spoken by Satyavrata Muni in a conversation with Nārada Muni and Śaunaka Ṛṣi)

"In the month of Kārtika one should worship Lord Dāmodara and daily recite the prayer known as Dāmodarāṣṭaka, which has been spoken by the sage Satyavrata and which attracts Lord Dāmodara."  
(Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.16.198)

## Text One

namāmīśvaraṁ sac-cid-ānanda-rūpaṁ  
lasat-kuṇḍalaṁ gokule bhrājamanam  
yaśodā-bhiyolūkhalād dhāvamānaṁ  
parāmīṣṭam atyantato drutya gopyā

## Text Five

idam te mukhāmbhojam atyanta-nīlair  
vṛtaṁ kuntalaiḥ snigdha-raktaiś ca gopyā  
muhuś cumbitaiḥ bimba-raktādharaṁ me  
manasy āvirāstāṁ alaṁ lakṣa-lābhaiḥ

## Text Two

rudantam muhur netra-yugmaṁ mṛjantam  
karāmbhoja-yugmena sātaṅka-netram  
muhuḥ śvāsa-kampa-trirekhāṅka-kaṇṭhas-  
thita-graivam dāmodaram bhakti-baddham

## Text Six

namo deva dāmodarānanta viṣṇo  
prasīda prabho duḥkha-jālābdhi-magnam  
krpā-drṣṭi-vṛṣṭyāti-dīnāṁ batānu  
grhāṇeṣa mām ajñam edhy akṣi-drīṣyāḥ

## Text Three

itīḍṛk sva-līlābhīr ānanda-kuṇḍe  
sva-ghoṣaṁ nimajjantam ākhyāpayantam  
tadīyeṣita-jñeṣu bhaktair jitataṁ  
punaḥ prematas tam śatāvṛtti vande

## Text Seven

kuverātmajau baddha-mūrtyaiva yadvat  
tvayā mocitau bhakti-bhājau kṛtau ca  
tathā prema-bhaktim svakām me prayaccha  
na mokṣe graho me 'sti dāmodareha

## Text Four

varam deva mokṣaṁ na mokṣāvadhiṁ vā  
na canyāṁ vṛṇe 'haṁ vareṣād apīha  
idam te vapur nātha gopāla-bālaṁ  
sadā me manasy āvirāstāṁ kim anyaiḥ

## Text Eight

namas te 'stu dāmne sphurad-dīpti-dhāmne  
tvadīyodarāyātha viśvasya dhāmne  
namo rādhikāyai tvadiya-priyāyai  
namo 'nanta-līlāya devāya tubhyam

1. To the Supreme Lord, whose form is the embodiment of eternal existence, knowledge, and bliss, whose shark-shaped earrings are swinging to and fro, who is beautifully shining in the divine realm of Gokula, who [due to the offense of breaking the pot of yogurt that His mother was churning into butter and then stealing the butter that was kept hanging from a swing] is quickly running from the wooden grinding mortar in fear of mother Yaśodā, but who has been caught from behind by her who ran after Him with greater speed-to that Supreme Lord, Śrī Dāmodara, I offer my humble obeisances.
2. [Seeing the whipping stick in His mother's hand,] He is crying and rubbing His eyes again and again with His two lotus hands. His eyes are filled with fear, and the necklace of pearls around His neck, which is marked with three lines like a conchshell, is shaking because of His quick breathing due to crying. To this Supreme Lord, Śrī Dāmodara, whose belly is bound not with ropes but with His mother's pure love, I offer my humble obeisances.
3. By such childhood pastimes as this He is drowning the inhabitants of Gokula in pools of ecstasy, and is revealing to those devotees who are absorbed in knowledge of His supreme majesty and opulence that He is only conquered by devotees whose pure love is imbued with intimacy and is free from all conceptions of awe and reverence. With great love I again offer my obeisances to Lord Dāmodara hundreds and hundreds of times.
4. Lord, although You are able to give all kinds of benedictions, I do not pray to You for the boon of impersonal liberation, nor the highest liberation of eternal life in Vaikunṭha, nor any other boon [which may be obtained by executing the nine processes of bhakti ]. O Lord, I simply wish that this form of Yours as Bāla Gopāla in Vṛndāvana may ever be manifest in my heart, for what is the use to me of any other boon besides this?

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

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

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

8. Lord Dāmodara, I first of all offer my obeisances to the brilliantly effulgent rope which binds Your belly. I then offer my obeisances to Your belly, which is the abode of the entire universe. I humbly bow down to Your most beloved Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and I offer all obeisances to You, the Supreme Lord, who displays unlimited pastimes.



# Chanting Hare Krishna Mahamantra

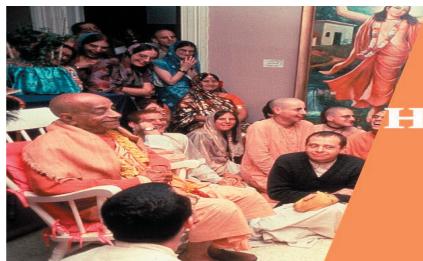
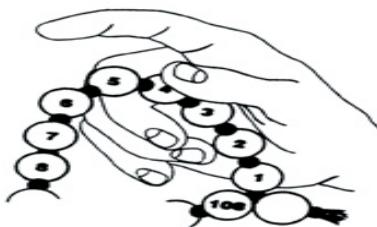
Bhakti yoga practice includes chanting the Hare Krishna mantra softly to oneself. This is called japa.

Before we start to chant the Hare Krishna Mantra 108 times on the beads we should chant the Pancha Tattva mantra once before each round. This is a prayer to Lord Chaitanya and his associates to help avoid offenses whilst chanting. Also In order to derive the full benefit of chanting the Hare Krishna maha-mantra, we must first take shelter of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, learn the Pancha-tattva mantra, and then chant the Hare Krishna maha-mantra. That will be very effective. The Pancha-tattva mantra is:

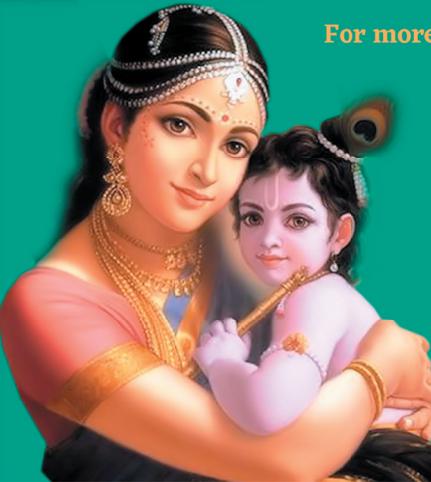
(Jaya) shri-krishna-caitanya  
prabhu nityananda  
shri-advaita gadadhara  
shrivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrinda

Now to chant the Hare Krishna Mantra, the japa mala is traditionally held in the right hand. The index finger never touches the mala. Beginning with the bead next to the head bead, gently roll the bead between the thumb and middle finger of your right hand while chanting:

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna  
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare  
Hare Rama Hare Rama  
Rama Rama Hare Hare



**CHANT  
HARE KRISHNA  
AND  
BE HAPPY**



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