
.. kRiShNASHTakam (with kRiShNajanmAShTamI info) ..

॥ कृष्णाष्टकं ॥

श्री कृष्ण जन्माष्टमी

नित्यानन्दैकरसं सच्चिन्मात्रं स्वयंज्योतिः ।

पुरुषोत्तममजमीशं वन्दे श्रीयादवाधीशम् ॥

I adore Krishna, the Supreme Person, the Unborn Lord, the Self-effulgent One, the Supreme Lord of the descendents of Yadu, Whose nature is that of existence and consciousness, and Whose essence is entirely that of eternal bliss.

From Prabodha sudhAkara of shrI shankarAchArya
The birthday of shrI Krishna is usually taken to be the Shravana Krishna Ashtami, but is sometimes assigned to the month Bhadrapada, especially in Northern India. According to traditional sources, the Janmashtami is observed on the day when the ashtami tithi occurs at midnight . If the ashtami tithi AND the Rohini nakShatra occur on the same day, then the observance is considered to be doubly sacred; otherwise the observance is held on the day on which the ashtami prevails at midnight. The vrata mainly consists of fasting, spending the whole night in the worship of Krishna, reciting hymns of praise and Krishna's pastimes, reciting prayers from the Bhagavata, offering arghya to Krishna, and the parana or the ceremonial breaking of the fast . The next day is celebrated as Krishna Jayanti.

Celebrations are held on a grand scale in all Krishna temples, especially the ones in Vrindavan, Mathura (Uttar Pradesh), Dvaraka (Gujarat), and other regionally famous temples.

Although, the great Vedantin Adi shankara preached the path of knowledge (Jnana), fiercely criticizing and routing various schools of philosophy, he did not decry the path of devotion (Bhakti). On the contrary, one is able to discern from his writings that he had a soft-corner for Bhakti . shankara did not only believe in the efficacy of Bhakti in the realization of Brahman, but he also actually composed many stotras or hymns in praise of Vishnu, Shiva, Devi, Ganapati, Skanda, etc.

One such hymn is the shrI Krishna Ashtaka or eight verses in praise of shrI Krishna . This stotra, like many of shankara's stotras, has a musical effect and may be easily set to music . It is, therefore, recommended that the stotra be

sung, not just recited . For Lord Vishnu has promised to be present wherever His devotees sing His glories.

यत्र गायन्ति मद्भक्ताः तत्र तिष्ठामि नारद ।
श्री कृष्णाष्टक - शंकर भागवतपाद
भजे ब्रजैकमण्डनं समस्तपापखण्डनं
स्वभक्तचित्तरंजनं सदैव नन्दनन्दनम् ।
सुपिच्छगुच्छमस्तकं सुनादवेणुहस्तकं
अनंगरंगसागरं नमामि कृष्णागारम् ॥ १ ॥

I worship the naughty Krishna, the sole ornament of Vraja,
Who destroys all the sins (of His devotees),
Who delights the minds of His devotees, the joy of Nanda,
Whose head is adorned with peacock feathers, Who holds
a sweet-sounding flute in His hand, and Who is the ocean of
the art of love.

मनोजगर्वमोचनं विशाललोललोचनं
विधूतगोपशोचनं नमामि पद्मलोचनम् ।
करारविन्दभूधरं स्मितावलोकसुन्दरं
महेन्द्रमानदारणं नमामि कृष्णावारणम् ॥ २ ॥

I bow to Krishna Who rid Kama deva of his pride, Who has
beautiful, large eyes, Who takes away the sorrows of the
Gopas (cowherds), the lotus-eyed One . I bow to Krishna
Who lifted the (Govardhana) hill with His hand, Whose
smile and glance are extremely attractive, Who destroyed
the pride of Indra, and Who is like the King of elephants.

कदम्बसूतकुण्डलं सुचारुगण्डमण्डलं
ब्रजांगनैकवल्लभं नमामि कृष्णदुर्लभम् ।
यशोदया समोदया सगोपया सनन्दया
युतं सुखैकदायकं नमामि गोपनायकम् ॥ ३ ॥

I bow to that Krishna Who wears earrings made of Kadamba
flowers, Who has beautiful cheeks, Who is the only darling
of the Gopikas of Vraja, and Who is very difficult to attain
(by any means other than Bhakti). I bow to Krishna Who is
accompanied by Gopas (cowherds), Nanda, and an overjoyed
Yashoda, Who gives (His devotees) nothing but happiness, and
Who is the Lord of the Gopas.

सदैव पादपंकजं मदीय मानसे निजं
दधानमुक्तमालकं नमामि नन्दबालकम् ।
समस्तदोषशोषणं समस्तलोकपोषणं
समस्तगोपमानसं नमामि नन्दलालसम् ॥ ४ ॥

I bow to the son of Nanda, Who has placed His lotus feet
in my mind and Who has beautiful curls of hair . I adore
Krishna Who removes all defects, Who nourishes all the
worlds and Who is desired by all the Gopas and Nanda.

भुवो भरावतारकं भवाब्धिकर्णधारकं
यशोमतीकिशोरकं नमामि चित्तचोरकम् ।
दृगन्तकान्तभंगिनं सदा सदालिसंगिनं
दिने दिने नवं नवं नमामि नन्दसम्भवम् ॥ ५ ॥

I bow to Krishna Who relieves the burden of the earth
(by vanquishing innumerable demons and other evil forces),
Who helps us cross the ocean of miseries, Who is the son
of Yasoda, and Who steals the hearts of everyone . I bow to
Nanda's son Who has extremely attractive eyes, Who is always
accompanied by saintly devotees, and Whose (pastimes and form)
appear newer and newer, day by day.

गुणाकरं सुखाकरं कृपाकरं कृपापरं
सुरद्विषन्निकन्दनं नमामि गोपनन्दनम् ।
नवीनगोपनागरं नवीनकेलिलम्पटं
नमामि मेघसुन्दरं तडित्प्रभालसत्पटम् ॥ ६ ॥

Krishna is the repository of all good qualities, all
happiness, and grace . He destroys the enemies of the gods
and delights the Gopas . I bow to the mischievous cowherd
Krishna, Who is attached to His exploits, which (appear)
new (every day), Who has the handsome complexion of a
dark cloud, and Who wears a yellow garment (pItAmbara)
that shines like lightning.

समस्तगोपनन्दनं हृदम्बुजैकमोदनं
नमामि कुंजमध्यगं प्रसन्नभानुशोभनम् ।
निकामकामदायकं दृगन्तचारुसायकं
रसालवेणुगायकं नमामि कुंजनायकम् ॥ ७ ॥

Krishna delights all the Gopas and (plays with them)

in the center of the grove (kunjā). He is appears as
resplendent and pleasing as the sun and causes the
lotus that is the heart (of the devotee) to blossom
with joy . I bow to that Lord of the grove of creepers
Who completely fulfills the desires (of the devotees),
Whose beautiful glances are like arrows, and Who plays
melodious tunes on the flute.

विदग्धगोपिकामनोमनोज्ञतल्पशायिनं
नमामि कुंजकानने प्रव्रद्धवन्हिपायिनम् ।
किशोरकान्तिरंजितं दृअगंजनं सुशोभितं
गजेन्द्रमोक्षकारिणं नमामि श्रीविहारिणम् ॥ ८ ॥

Krishna lies down on the bed that is the minds of the
intelligent Gopis who always think of Him . I adore Him
Who drank the spreading forest-fire (in order to
protect the cowherd community). I bow to Krishna Who has
eyes which are made attractive by His boyhood charm and
a black unguent (anjan), Who liberated the elephant
Gajendra (from the jaws of the crocodile), and Who is the
consort of LakShmi (shrI).

यदा तदा यथा तथा तथैव कृष्णसत्कथा
मया सदैव गीयतां तथा कृपा विधीयताम् ।
प्रमाणिकाष्टकद्वयं जपत्यधीत्य यः पुमान्
भवेत्स नन्दनन्दने भवे भवे सुभक्तिमान् ॥ ९ ॥

O Lord Krishna! Please bless me so that I may sing your
glories and pastimes, regardless of the position I am in.
Anyone who studies or recites these two authoritative ashtakas
will be blessed with devotion to Krishna in every rebirth.
Note: The two ashtakas referred to above are the shrI Krishna
Ashtaka and the Krishna Ashtaka.

इति श्रीमच्छंकराचार्यकृतं श्रीकृष्णाष्टकं सम्पूर्णम् ॥
श्री कृष्णार्पणमस्तु ॥

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Please send corrections to sanskrit@cheerful.com
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