

Audio Dasbodh

By Meena Murari Tapaswi

Dasbodh is considered as the best of all writings of Samarth Ramdas swami. This contains over 7750 ovya (stanzas) explaining the way of life and Indian philosophy.

1. Why audio version?

Looking at the sheer volume of the text, today's young minds fear of going through the same. Some do have an inclination of learning Indian philosophy; schedule its reading during post-retirement period for want of time. It was noticed that the travel and audio entertainment consumes lot of our time almost every day. There are some in the young generation who are unfortunate not to have fluency in reading Devanagari texts (but understand Marathi) or the old aged people who have lost their eyesight but have interest in knowing what has been written in such an acclaimed monograph. It is for those the idea of recording Dasbodh in audio format had born. It was also an interesting learning experience for me on how to use the software for audio recording and editing.

2. Why select ovya?

Since years, there are some efforts being done to get people interested in studying this monograph. One consistent effort that has become a legend (and spread internationally) is learning Dasbodh by correspondence ([patrAdvAre dAsabodha abhyAsakrama](http://sanskritdocuments.org/marathi/), see the information and booklets at <http://sanskritdocuments.org/marathi/>). This 'movement' as such makes individuals to study certain important Samas from Dasbodh and not entire monograph spread over a period of three years. Interestingly, the results show that those who have completed this course, have become more enthusiasts and find time to read and study complete monograph.

Besides this, there are abridged versions of the Dasbodh too.

Audio Dasbodh is one such effort. In spite of recording of selected ovya in these files, the total volume of recording has gone to 20 hours! If complete Dasbodh would have recorded, imagine what would have been the size of the same. It is therefore the purpose of this recording not to replace complete Dasbodh but to create an interest among individuals to read the monograph. Sufficient care, however, has been taken not to exclude those ovya that otherwise convey the way of life and Indian philosophy - the base of Dasbodh.

2.1. What has been excluded?

(a) Difficult vocabulary:

Swami Samarth Ramdas had a wonderful authority over the language. He has explained a concept by giving several (at times hundreds of) examples from our daily life. Some of the words in his examples are no more in use in Marathi that we speak today and hence do not convey meaning. For example, in Dashak 1 (Samas 10: Naradeha Stavan) there are innumerable fauna that have been described who claim that the house is theirs (or reside in the house as if it is theirs). We do know and understand lizards (35), ants (36), snakes, scorpion (37), however some of the fauna are non-existent or unknown at least in an urban dwellings: Pungal (40), Chanchnya (41), Pisole, Gandhele, Sot (42). No doubt that all ovya have a rhythm but they do not convey meaning in current scenario. Nor it is essential to know this fauna of days of his (Saint Ramdas) times for understanding the way of life or Indian philosophy. Few of the ovya that convey the

meaning not to be so much attached to one's physical body and understand the self have been recorded.

(b) Repetition of a concept:

In order to convince readers, Swami Ramdas has given numerous examples. That has created a repetition at several places. For example: Dashak 2 (Samas 6 Tamogoon Lakshan) have lot of repetition. For example, 15th ovi (kaLaha vhAvA aise.n vATe| jhoMbl ghyAvl aise.n uThe | antarl dveSha pragaTe| to tamoguNa || 15||) has been chanted whereas 16, 17th (yudhya dekhAve.n aikAve.n| svaye.n yudhyachi karAve.n | mArAve.n kl.n marAve.n| to tamoguNa || 16|| matsare.n bhakti moDAvI| devALaye.n vighaDAvI.n | phaLatI.n jhADe.n toDAvI.n| to tamoguNa || 17||) has same concept. It does not explain anything new. Hence these have been dropped. So is the case with 21st ovi (parapIDechA sa.ntoSha| niShThurapaNAchA havyAsa | sa.nsArAchA naye trAsa| to tamoguNa || 21||). That has been selected whereas 22nd and 23rd bhA.nDaNa lA{U}na dyAve.n| svaye.n kautuka pAhAve.n | kubuddhi ghetall jlve.n| to tamoguNa || 22|| prApta jAliyA.n saMpattI| jlvA.nsa karl yAtAyAtI | kaLavaLA naye chittI.n| to tamoguNa || 23||) have been dropped.

Interestingly, at the end of many Samas, where the concept is explained by numerous examples, Saint Ramdas winds up indicating "it is hoped that there are many more such examples but let me now sum up...". So all those interested in extending the list may add their list with contemporary examples!

(c) Unexciting / unimportant ovya:

While the Indian philosophy is based on the concept of 'Bhakti' (faith), there are some ovya that may not be acceptable to the person who wants to know what is in Dasbodh. If those ovya have not been heard/read, it does not matter much to a reader. For example, in Dashak 4 (Samas 3 Namasmara Bhakti), importance of naam bhakti has been explained. But if a person reads ovi indicating "by chanting naam even the poisoning (13) would not affect the person" (though we have heard stories of Meerabai several times), probably the person would give up studying rest of the Dasbodh or get entangled in to arguments on issues that are unimportant. Just to give the flavour of what all that happens by taking the naam some of the ovya have been covered (basics with a belief that the person reading this book do have some faith/ bhakti).

3. Explanations of important concepts:

Each Samas starts with brief commentary. This summary would make listener's mindset ready to understand what has been said in the stanzas. There are some concepts that are to be, in fact, understood from an authority. For example, Dashak 6 (samam 10 Anurvachya Nirupan). Ovyas 49, 53 – are difficult to understand just by listening. However, they are important. In such a situation they have been retained along with explanations in brief.

It is hoped that this effort would be liked by the listeners.

(Recorded in 2004)

The complete text of all 20 dashakas of Dasbodh (listed below) and details of the correspondence course are available at <http://sanskritdocuments.org/marathi/> site.

Send your feedback and comments to

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