

Jaiṁa-dharma

by Śrīla Saccidānanda
Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Chapter – 1

Nitya-dharma, The Eternal
Nature of the Living Entity,
and Naimittika-dharma, His
Impermanent Religious
Duties

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- Jambūdvīpa, the earth planet, is the most precious planet in the solar system, and Bhārata-varṣa, India, is the most auspicious land upon earth.
- Gaura-maṇḍala, Bengal, is spiritually the pre-eminent province of India, and Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is the crown jewel of Bengal.
- Shining eternally in spiritual splendour, the region of Godruma prospers in one corner of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, upon the banks of the Bhāgīrathī Gaṅgā.
- In days past, the woody bowers of Godruma provided places of spiritual retreat to many elevated and saintly souls.

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- Pradyumna-kuñja, a simple meditation cottage, was located in the very same arbour where Śrī Surabhidevī had long ago meditated, worshiping Śrī Gaurāṅga-sundara within her heart.
- The present occupant of this cottage, Śrī Premadāsa Paramahaṁsa Bābājī, was receiving spiritual instructions from Śrī Pradyumna Brahma-cārī, a bhāgavata-pāriṣada, an eternal associate of the Supreme Lord, and was thus known as his śikṣā-śiṣya, a disciple who receives instruction, but not mantra initiation.
- Śrī Premadāsa Paramahaṁsa Bābājī was an erudite scholar, having mastered all the branches of philosophy and the various scriptures.
- He passed his days in continuously chanting harināma, the holy names, in ecstasy.

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- Bābājī Mahārāja had chosen Godruma as his place of meditation with the knowledge that it is, according to spiritual criteria, an exact replica of Nandagrāma in Vraja.
- His daily routine comprised chanting a minimum of two hundred thousand names of Kṛṣṇa and humbly offering innumerable prostrate obeisances to all Vaiṣṇavas.
- He sustained himself by mādhuakarī, thus begging a little foodstuff at the homes of various cowherds until he had enough for the day, just as a bee takes a small amount of pollen from many flowers.
- After these daily chores, Śrī Premadāsa Paramahaṁsa Bābājī never wasted the remaining time in village prattle; daily, he would read aloud the Prema-vivarta, by Śrīla Jagadānanda Paṇḍita, an eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, his eyes brimming with tears of exultation.

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- On these occasions, the saintly devotees from the neighbouring cottages eagerly gathered around Śrī Premadāsa Paramahansa Bābājī to listen.
- Hardly surprising, for the text of Prema-vivarta is saturated with rasa, spiritual mellow, and the sweet flow of Bābājī Mahārāja's voice was so inspiring that it would douse any flames of material misery within the hearts of the entranced devotees.
- One afternoon, after completing his prescribed number of rounds of chanting harināma, Bābājī Mahārāja was seated in a small clearing in the wooded bower named Śrī Mādhavī-mālatī.
- Upon reciting the Prema-vivarta, he soon felt spiritual emotions stir within his heart.

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- At that moment, a person of the renounced order, a sannyāsī, approached him and fell flat before him in utter humility, remaining prostrate for a considerable length of time.
- Already deep in meditation, Bābājī Mahārāja was at first unaware of the sannyāsī's presence.
- However, soon coming out of his meditation and seeing the sannyāsī offering obeisances, Bābājī Mahārāja felt overcome with modesty, for he considered himself lower than the straw in the street.
- So Bābājī Mahārāja also fell down upon his hands and knees in front of the sannyāsī, crying out, “O my Śrī Caitanya! O Nityānanda! Kindly be merciful to this fallen wretch!” Then, turning to the sannyāsī, he addressed him, “Sir, I am very low and without means—why do you embarrass me so?”

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- After touching the feet of Bābājī Mahārāja in awed respect, the sannyāsī stood up.
- Bābājī Mahārāja was quick to offer his guest a straw mat, upon which he sat in the assembly of Vaiṣṇavas.
- Bābājī Mahārāja began to speak with a faltering voice, choked with devotional sentiments, “Dear sir, how may this fallen soul be of any service to you?”
- The sannyāsī put down his kamaṇḍalu, water pot, and addressed Bābājī Mahārāja with folded hands, “Respected master, I am a very unfortunate soul! Whilst residing in holy places of pilgrimage like Vārāṇasī, I have thoroughly studied the six branches of philosophy—Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Patañjali, Uttara-mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta—all of which are related to the Vedas, Brahma-sūtra, and Upaniṣads.

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- I have thus spent a good number of years in serious debate and contemplation upon the different conclusions of the scriptures.
- Twelve years ago, I accepted initiation into the sannyāsa order from Śrīla Saccidānanda Sarasvatī.
- After my initiation, I travelled widely to all places of pilgrimage, always associating with other sannyāsīs in the line of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya.
- I passed through the first three levels of the renounced order, namely kūṭīcaka, bahūḍaka, and haṁsa, and some time ago, I attained the final stage of sannyāsa, the paramahaṁsa level.
- In Vārāṇasī, I accepted the vow of silence and contemplated deeply the teachings of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, who had compressed the essence of his philosophy into a number of statements from the Vedas such as ahaṁ brahmāsmi,

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- ‘I am Brahman’; prajñānam brahmā, ‘Brahman is consciousness’; and tat tvam asi, ‘You are that,’ calling them the mahā-vākyas, great sayings of the Vedas.
- “One day, when I was meditating, a Vaiṣṇava saint passed by, loudly singing the glorious pastimes of Śrī Hari.
- I opened my eyes and saw the hairs on his body standing on end and tears cascading down his cheeks, soaking him.
- Rapturously he sang, ‘Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda!’ He danced with faltering steps, sometimes tripping and falling to the ground.
- “The sight of him and the sound of his song stirred up such unknown emotions in me that I find it impossible to fully describe this experience to you.

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- Certain deep feelings were touched within me.
- Nevertheless, desiring to maintain my position of respect as a paramahansa, I did not attempt to meet him.
- What a shame! Fie on my position of respect! A curse upon my luck! From that time on, however, for some strange reason my mind has become attracted to the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- “Later, I anxiously searched for that Vaiṣṇava saint, but without success.
- I clearly perceived that by seeing this Vaiṣṇava saint and hearing his chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s name I had experienced a pure joy that I had never felt before—an intense bliss I had never believed possible for a human being.

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- After pondering upon this subject for a few days, I finally concluded that the best thing for me was to take shelter at the feet of a Vaiṣṇava.
- Therefore, I left Vārāṇasī and went to Vṛndāvana-dhāma.
- “There I saw many Vaiṣṇavas repeating the names of Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī with deep feelings of separation and sorrow, absorbed in meditation upon the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa.
- They also spoke of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, going immediately into ecstasy, falling down to roll in the dust. My desire to see Navadvīpa increased greatly and after first circumambulating the area of Vraja-dhāma, I started for Navadvīpa.
- A few days ago, I arrived here in Māyāpura, and hearing your praises I have come to find shelter at your feet.

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- Kindly bestow your mercy upon me and accept me as your servant, making my life worthwhile and complete.”
- Bābājī Mahārāja, exhibiting great humility, took a straw between his teeth and then spoke with a quavering voice, “My dear sir of the renounced order, I am a useless soul.
- I have spoiled my life, in trying only to fill my belly, get enough sleep, and in talk about trivialities.
- I have taken shelter of this land, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu has performed His many pastimes and now somehow or other I am passing my days.
- Unfortunately, I cannot perceive the true nature of spiritual love of Godhead, kṛṣṇa-prema.

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- You are truly fortunate! You were blessed by seeing a real Vaiṣṇava and this meeting granted you, if only for a moment, the divine relish of kṛṣṇa-prema.
- Indeed, you are a recipient of the special mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.
- I will remain ever grateful if, in the moments of your ecstatic kṛṣṇa-prema, you can remember a fallen wretch like me with fondness.”
- Bābājī Mahārāja went over to the sannyāsī, warmly embraced him and showered him with the tears of joy streaming from his eyes.
- The Sannyāsī Thākura immediately experienced spiritual exultation through the touch of a pure Vaiṣṇava and began to cry and dance.

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- While dancing, he sang this refrain:

*jaya śrī-kṛṣṇa caitanya śrī prabhu nityānanda
jaya śrī-premadāsa guru, jaya bhajana ānanda*

- “All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu! All glories to my spiritual master, Śrī Premadāsa Bābājī! And all glories to the bliss devotional worship!”
- Composing himself after singing and dancing for a long while, Sannyāsī Ṭhākura sat down and started to converse with Bābājī Mahārāja.
- Bābājī Mahārāja said with humility, “O great sage, please spend a few days here in Pradyumna Kuñja and purify me by your association.”

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- Sannyāsī Ṭhākura replied, “I surrender my body and life to you. Why only a few days? I pray that I may spend the rest of my life here in your service.”
- Being well versed in all the scriptures, Sannyāsī Ṭhākura knew well that one should stay in the āśrama of one’s guru, known as the gurukula, and there receive spiritual instruction.
- Thus, he resolved to stay on in Pradyumna Kuñja.
- One day, Bābājī Mahārāja addressed Sannyāsī Ṭhākura, “O great one! Śrī Pradyumna Brahmācārī Ṭhākura, my spiritual master, has shown great compassion towards me and granted me sanctuary at his feet.
- Presently, he resides in a remote section of Navadvīpa, in the village of Śrī Devapallī, intensely absorbed in worshiping Śrī Nrsimha-deva.

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- Let us visit him today after we have completed mādhuakarī.”
- That afternoon, they crossed the Gaṅgā and arrived in Śrī Devapallī.
- As they came down the Sūryaṭilā mound, they saw Śrī Pradyumna Brahmācārī inside the Śrī Nṛsimha-deva temple.
- While still at a distance, Bābājī Mahārāja offered obeisances to his guru, prostrating himself fully upon the ground.
- Moved by tender affection, Śrī Pradyumna Brahmācārī Ṭhākura came out of the temple and, lifting Bābājī Mahārāja up with both hands, lovingly embraced him and inquired about his well-being.
- They then sat down and discussed spiritual topics at length.

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- Finally, Bābājī Mahārāja turned to Sannyāsī Ṭhākura and introduced him in detail to Pradyumna Brahmācari Ṭhākura, who then addressed him affectionately, “My dear son! You have found the proper spiritual master.
- Now try to sincerely study the Prema-vivarta from the able Paramahansa Premadāsa Bābājī, as is stated in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.128:

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei ‘guru’ haya*

- “Whether one is a brāhmaṇa, sannyāsī, or śūdra—regardless of what one is—one can become a spiritual master, if one knows the science of Kṛṣṇa.”

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- Following the example of his guru, Sannyāsī Ṭhākura offered prostrate obeisances to Śrī Pradyumna Brahmācārī Ṭhākura, whom he now saw as his grand spiritual master, parama-guru.
- He humbly replied, “Dear master! You are a pāriṣada, an eternal associate, of Śrī Caitanya.
- Your compassionate glance can purify many thousands of sannyāsīs like me, so I beg for your kindness.”
- Having previously never learnt the rules of Vaiṣṇava etiquette, Sannyāsī Ṭhākura keenly observed the ensuing dealings between his guru and parama-guru.
- Realizing that this was the standard of behaviour, he resolved to emulate it unreservedly.

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- Bābājī Mahārāja and Sannyāsī Ṭhākura stayed for the sandhyā-ārati, evening worship, and afterwards returned to Godruma.
- The days passed quickly and Sannyāsī Ṭhākura developed the desire to ask Bābājī Mahārāja certain philosophical questions.
- Except for the adoption of the Vaiṣṇava attire, Sannyāsī Ṭhākura had all the distinguishing features of a devotee.
- From his previous training, he had already developed the qualities of sama, equanimity; dama, sense control; and brahma-niṣṭhā, unwavering establishment in the all-pervading, non-dual, Absolute Truth.

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- Now, moreover, he was developing realization of the divine pastimes of the parama-brahma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and so, concomitantly, he was gradually developing true humility and meekness.
- One day at sunrise, Bābājī Mahārāja, his morning bath completed, sat in the calmness of the Śrī Mādhavī-mālatī Maṇḍapa grove and began to chant harināma upon his mālā, chanting beads, made from the tulasī tree.
- Awareness of his body and the surrounding phenomenal world faded away.

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- He was soon deep in meditation upon the niśānta-līlā, the dawn pastimes of Goloka Vṛndāvana—in particular those amorous exchanges of the Divine Couple, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, in the love groves of Vṛndāvana, which would be ending soon with the coming of daylight, forcing Their separation and return to Their respective homes.
- Incessant tears streamed down his cheeks and, becoming transfixed in his siddha-deha, perfected spiritual form, he executed in meditation the devotional duties assigned to him in the dawn pastimes of the Divine Couple in Their transcendental abode.
- Sannyāsī Ṭhākura, watching at first from a polite distance, gradually came nearer and with awestruck wonder began observing closely the ecstatic symptoms now exhibited upon Bābājī Mahārāja's body.

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- Still deep in meditation, Bābājī Mahārāja called out, “O sakhī! Quickly quieten that hag of a monkey, Kakkhatī! She will disturb the blissful sleep of our most dear Rādhārāṇī and Govinda.
- If They awaken, Lalitā-sakhī will be most upset and surely chastise me.
- Look over there! Anaṅga-mañjarī is signalling that we must do this! You are Ramaṇa-mañjarī, and having been given this duty, you should execute it conscientiously.”
- After speaking these words, Bābājī Mahārāja fell down in an ecstatic swoon. Realizing that the words were addressed to him, Sannyāsī Ṭhākura understood, at that moment, both his siddha-deha, spiritual form and identity, and his specific devotional service.

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- Thus, he began to ready himself for these new devotional assignments.
- Dawn was spreading across the eastern horizon.
- The sun was peeping out, aglow with the radiance of morning, which was enveloping the beautiful bowers of the Śrī Mādhavī-mālatī Maṇḍapa of Pradyumna-kuñja in its fiery aura.
- Birds chirped in greeting, and a light breeze carried their songs in every direction.
- In the early sunlight, Nature blushed with pristine beauty.
- Bābājī Mahārāja, sitting upon a straw mat, showed signs of slowly coming back to external consciousness. He then began to chant quietly upon his mālā.

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- Taking this opportunity, Sannyāsī Ṭhākura sat near Bābājī Mahārāja and addressed him, “Dear master! Your poor servitor would like to ask a question.
- Kindly soothe his raging mind with your answer. Let your words infuse the divine sentiments of Vraja within his heart, which is terribly seared by the flames of monism and impersonal Brahman realization.”
- Bābājī Mahārāja, “As you are a most fit candidate, I will try my best to answer any question you have.”
- Sannyāsī Ṭhākura, “Dear master! Wherever I have been, I have heard paṇḍitas expound the importance of dharma, religious duty, and, in response, I have always enquired what dharma actually is in truth.

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- However, the sad fact is that all the answers I have received are varied and contradictory.
- Therefore, now, from you, I would like to know—what is the true dharma of mankind? Why does each of the different religious teachers preach his particular version of dharma as being the only true religion? If there actually is but one dharma, then why are the numerous religious leaders not in agreement, and following that singular spiritual path?”
- Bābājī Mahārāja quietly began his dissertation while worshiping the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu within his mind, “O fortunate one! Listen attentively as I explain to you man’s true religion, his nitya-dharma.

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- The natural characteristics of a vastu, eternal entity or substance, are related to its ghaṭana, intrinsic constitution.
- By the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, a vastu, once brought into existence, inherently possesses a permanent nature—known as its dharma.
- Thus, the innate nature is the nitya-dharma, the eternal occupational activity, of the vastu, entity.
- “However, by force of circumstance, or by contact with other substances, the original character of the vastu may apparently be transformed and changed.
- In the course of time, when this transformed character becomes stable, it then appears to be a seemingly permanent quality of the vastu—apparently being the genuine original, eternal and immanent nature.

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- Nevertheless, this new distorted character is not the svabhāva, inherent nature. Actually, this new character is defined as nisarga, a condition that only appears to be natural.
- Appearing to be eternal, the nisarga deceptively usurps the actual svabhāva of the vastu, entity.
- “Let us take, for example, the substance water. Liquidity is its inherent nature. However, when water freezes to ice, solidity becomes its assumed nature—its nisarga.
- Nisarga is a temporary condition because it is brought about by an agent acting as a catalyst.
- When the agent is removed, the false temporary nisarga also disappears; whereas, conversely, the true inherent nature is maintained eternally.

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- Even if the vastu apparently transforms, the nitya-dharma remains its intrinsic nature, latent within the seemingly changed vastu, and by the amelioration of the alien circumstances the nitya-dharma will, in time, surely reassert itself.
- “The inherent nature, svabhāva, is the eternal religion of a vastu—the nitya-dharma. In contrast, the assumed nature of a vastu—the nisarga—is its naimittika-dharma, temporary nature.
- One who possesses vastu-jñāna, knowledge of the Absolute Reality, is able to discriminate between nitya-dharma and naimittika-dharma, temporary, material, religious performance.

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- However, without this knowledge, a person will falsely consider the temporary nisarga and resultant naimittika-dharma to be the nitya-dharma.
- Sannyāsī Ṭhākura then asked, “Kindly further elucidate the definitions of vastu and svabhāva?”
- Bābājī Mahārāja answered, “The Sanskrit word vastu is a derivative of the root vas—which means ‘to exist’ or ‘to dwell’—conjugated and made into a noun by the suffix tu.
- Therefore, vastu means ‘that which exists being self-evident and perceivable.’
- Vastu is of two kinds: vāstava-vastu and avāstava-vastu. Vāstava-vastu is transcendental truth—eternal spiritual substance.

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- Avāstava-vastu is matter—temporary objects possessing inert qualities, having but an illusory semblance of the actual eternal reality.
- The existence of vāstava-vastu is absolute, transcendental reality wherein the manifested attributes are a display of the actual intrinsic nature—the nitya-dharma.
- The jīva is an element of transcendental vāstava-vastu; and the jīva's intrinsic nature is his nitya-dharma, permanent, inherent characteristic.
- “It is a matter of perception. Perception of the intrinsic dharma is at times accurate and, at other times, illusory.

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- The statement of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 1.1.2: ...vedyam vāstavam atra vastu śivādam... ‘The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the benefit of all,’ assures us that vāstava-vastu decisively denotes spiritual, transcendental truth.
- Ultimately, the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone is that vāstava-vastu, truly abiding substance.
- The jīva is a fractional part of that vāstava-vastu and māyā—the external potency that produces illusion—is His energy.
- Therefore, vastu indicates the Supreme Lord, the jīva, and māyā—all three principles together.
- Proper comprehension of the relationships amongst these principles is śuddha-jñāna, true knowledge.

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- “There are various conceptions about these three principles, but almost all of them are illusory and mundane.
- For instance, in the Vaiśeṣika school of thought, the argumentation and classification of dravya, objects, and guṇa, qualities, are based entirely upon their avāstava-vastu, temporary nature.”
- Sannyāsī Ṭhākura continued, “Master, I would like to have a better grasp of this subject.”
- Bābājī Mahārāja answered, “Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja is a most elevated saint who has received the direct mercy of Śrī Nityānanda.
- He once showed me a handwritten manuscript, entitled, Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, which contains the deliberations of Śrī Caitanya upon this topic.

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- In the Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, Chapter 20, verses 108 and 117, there is the following statement:

*jīvera ‘svarūpa’ haya—kṛṣṇera ‘nitya-dāsa’
kṛṣṇera ‘taṭasthā-śakti’ ‘bhedābheda-prakāśa*

- “The nitya-dharma of the jīva is to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa because he is the taṭasthā-śakti, marginal energy, of Kṛṣṇa and thus a manifestation simultaneously one with and different from the Lord.’

*kṛṣṇa bhuli’ sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha
ataeva māyā tāre deya saṁsāra-dukha*

- “Forgetting Kṛṣṇa, the jīva has been attracted by the external feature from time immemorial. Therefore, māyā, the illusory energy, gives him all kinds of misery in his material existence.’

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- “Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the cit-vastu, wholly and absolutely spiritual entity.
- When describing Him, many persons use the analogy of the sun: He is the only sun of the spiritual world and the jīvas are the innumerable particles of His rays.
- It would be an inaccurate parallel to compare the jīva, an infinitesimal part of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to a rock—a minute part of a gigantic mountain—since the countless millions of jīvas who emanate from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, do not in any way affect or diminish the absolute wholeness of the Lord.
- Therefore, the Vedas compare the Supreme Lord to a fire, and the jīvas to its tiny sparks.

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- “Actually, no comparison is truly appropriate. Whether the jīva is described as a tiny spark of a fire, a minute particle of a sunray, or a speck of gold from a gold mine, none of these comparisons is actually perfect.
- Nevertheless, if one can overlook the mundane imperfections in these analogies, then the actual truth about the jīva will easily crystallize: Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the infinite spiritual substance, while the jīva is His infinitesimal part and parcel and therefore also a spiritual substance.
- Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the jīva are qualitatively the same, being of the same spiritual nature.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- “However, the Supreme Lord is br̥hat-cit-vastu, the complete, infinite, spiritual entity; whereas, the jīva is anu-cit-vastu, the infinitesimal spiritual entity, the Lord’s part and parcel.
- Although they are one in the quality of their spiritual nature and consciousness, this contrast of quantity between the Lord and the jīva is a permanent feature of their natures.
- Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the jīva’s eternal master and the jīva is Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s eternal servant.
- This is their natural constitutional relationship. Kṛṣṇa is the supreme ruler and observer; the jīva is the ruled and observed.
- Kṛṣṇa is independently omnipotent—the Supreme Controller—and the jīva’s potency is dependent and controlled.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- Kṛṣṇa is the complete whole; the jīva is a minutely tiny part. With His infinitely superior opulence, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the all-attractive person, who thereby attracts all the jīvas to Himself.
- Thus, it is natural for the jīva to be in kṛṣṇa-dāsyā, eternal subservience to Kṛṣṇa, and this is the jīva's sva-bhāva, intrinsic nature, his dharma.
- “Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the possessor of unlimited energies.
- For instance, to manifest the spiritual world the Lord displays His pūrṇa-śakti, full-blown internal potency, the antaraṅga-śakti.
- Similarly, to create the jīvas and to carry out the other tasks involved in the organization of this imperfect material cosmos, He employs another of His energies, the taṭasthā-śakti, the marginal energy.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- By nature, the material and spiritual energies are diametrically opposed and are therefore incompatible.
- The taṭasthā śakti, however, creates an entity that can interact with both the material and the spiritual natures.
- “The taṭa-rekhā, the marginal line lying between the water of a river and its bank, is both water and land, being situated where the two meet.
- Since, in this case, the divine taṭasthā-śakti is situated at the margin of matter and spirit, it displays the characteristics of both matter and spirit—it is one principle, yet it displays two natures.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- The jīva is a spiritual spark, a product of the higher spiritual nature, yet, being the divine taṭasthā-śakti, he has a nature that enables him to relate to the mundane material energy and be always prone to coming under her influence.
- Thus, on one hand, the jīva cannot be wholly likened to the pure spiritual nature, which is transcendental to and entirely beyond the influence of the material nature.
- Nevertheless, on the other hand, the jīva cannot be categorized as material since, by his intrinsic constitution, he is spiritual.
- Therefore, being an entity with innate characteristics different from both matter and pure spirit, the jīva receives a separate designation as the jīva-tattva, the jīva principle.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- In this respect, one must accept the eternal distinction between the Supreme Lord and the jīva.
- “Bhagavān, the Supreme Lord, is the master and controller of māyā, who is fully subservient to His will.
- In contrast, the jīva is prone to come under the influence of māyā; at any time, the jīva may be forced to submit to the dictates of māyā.
- Therefore, all these three principles—īśvara (the Supreme Lord), jīva, and māyā—are mutually distinct eternal realities.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- “Amongst them, the Supreme Lord is described in the Śrī Kāthopaniṣad, 2.2.13, as:

nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām

- “The Supreme Lord is the one supreme eternal entity amongst all eternal entities, and the fundamental conscious being amongst all conscious beings.’
- “Thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is declared the ultimate eternal cause of all three entities—īśvara, jīva, and māyā.
- Constitutionally, the jīva is the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa and the direct manifestation of His taṭasthā-śakti.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- From this analysis, we can conclude that the jīva is the bhedābheda prakāśa manifestation of Bhagavān, simultaneously one with and different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
- The jīva may be subject to the domination of māyā, while the Supreme Lord is eternally the controller of māyā—herein dwells an eternal difference between the jīva and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
- The jīva is one of the Supreme Lord’s divine energies; thus, the jīva’s constitutional nature is spiritual, just as the Supreme Godhead is intrinsically spiritual.
- In this respect, the jīva and the Supreme Lord are non-different. However, the jīva and the Supreme Lord are simultaneously non-different and different, and the concept of eternal difference may be seen to predominate.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- “Servitorship to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the nitya-dharma of the jīva, and when the jīva, somehow or other, turns away from Kṛṣṇa, this change of attitude is tantamount to rejection of the Lord and His service.
- From the point of this occurrence, the jīva is subject to the domination of māyā because of his neglectful ignorance and consequent forgetfulness of the Supreme Lord.
- Furthermore, upon thus entering the material world, the jīva brings with him no historical record of this fall as this fall originates outside the purview of material time, thus justifying the use of the phrase anādi-bahirmukha, beginninglessly—in terms of material time—turned away from the spiritual realm.

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- “Serving Kṛṣṇa is the nitya-dharma, of the jīva, and the instant the jīva neglects and forgets this truth his eternal nature becomes perverted and progressively enslaved by māyā.
- In contact with māyā, he develops a mundane nature, nisarga, paving the way for naimittika-dharma, impermanent religious duties dictated by material contact.
- Nitya-dharma, the eternal religious activity born from the inherent nature of the jīva, is complete and pure in itself—it is constant and flawless.
- Naimittika-dharma, on the contrary, appears in many diverse forms under the varying material circumstances and when expounded upon by the less-enlightened men of conflicting opinions.”

Chapter – 1: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties

- Abruptly, Bābājī Mahārāja fell silent and began to chant upon his beads.
- Sannyāsī Ṭhākura, who had been listening keenly throughout the discussion, now offered his prostrate obeisances to Bābājī Mahārāja, saying, “Master, today I will meditate on your esoteric teachings.
- Tomorrow I will return with whatever queries I may have and present them at your lotus feet.”

Thus ends the first chapter of Jaiva-dharma, entitled: Nitya-dharma, The Eternal Nature of the Living Entity, and Naimittika-dharma, His Impermanent Religious Duties.

Chapter – 1: Summary

- Krsna's mercy empowers a Vastu to exhibit its dharma.
- The innate nature of the Vastu is called the nitya-dharma or svabhava.
- “However, by force of circumstance, the original character of the vastu may apparently be transformed and changed.
- In the course of time, when this transformed character becomes stable, it then appears to be a seemingly permanent quality of the vastu.
- This distorted nature is called Nisarga or naimittika dharma.
- Appearing to be eternal, the nisarga deceptively usurps the actual svabhāva of the vastu, entity.

Chapter – 1: Summary

- For example liquidity is the svabhava of water. But, when it freezes, solidity is nisarga.
- Nisarga is a temporary condition brought about by an external agent, but svabhava is eternally maintained.
- Vastu is of two kinds: vāstava-vastu and avāstava-vastu.
- Vāstava-vastu is transcendental truth—eternal spiritual substance.
- Avāstava-vastu is matter—temporary objects possessing inert qualities.
- The existence of vāstava-vastu is absolute, transcendental reality wherein the manifested attributes are a display of the actual intrinsic nature—the nitya-dharma.

Chapter – 1: Summary

- Ultimately, the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone is that vāstava-vastu, truly abiding substance.
- The jīva is a fractional part of that vāstava-vastu and māyā is His energy.
- Therefore, vastu indicates the Supreme Lord, the jīva, and māyā—all three principles together.

*jīvera ‘svarūpa’ haya—kṛṣṇera ‘nitya-dāsa’
kṛṣṇera ‘taṭasthā-śakti’ ‘bhedābheda-prakāśa*

*kṛṣṇa bhuli’ sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha
ataeva māyā tāre deya saṁsāra-dukha*

Chapter – 1: Summary

- The Supreme Lord is br̥hat-cit-vastu, the complete, infinite, spiritual entity; whereas, the jīva is anu-cit-vastu, the infinitesimal spiritual entity, the Lord's part and parcel.
- Although they are one in the quality of their spiritual nature and consciousness, this contrast of quantity between the Lord and the jīva is a permanent feature of their natures.
- Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the jīva's eternal master and the jīva is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant.
- This is their natural constitutional relationship.

Chapter – 1: Summary

- Spiritual world is a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa's pūrṇa-śakti, the antaraṅga-śakti.
- To manifest the jīvas and to carry out the other tasks involved in the organization of this imperfect material cosmos, He employs another of His energies, the taṭasthā-śakti, the marginal energy.
- By nature, the material and spiritual energies are diametrically opposed and are therefore incompatible.
- The taṭasthā śakti, however, creates an entity that can interact with both the material and the spiritual natures.
- It displays the characteristics of both matter and spirit—it is one principle, yet it displays two natures.

Chapter – 1: Summary

- The jīva is a spiritual spark, a product of the higher spiritual nature, yet, being the divine taṭasthā-śakti, he has a nature that enables him to relate to the mundane material energy and be always prone to coming under her influence.
- Thus, on one hand, the jīva cannot be wholly likened to the pure spiritual nature, nevertheless, the jīva cannot be categorized as material since, by his intrinsic constitution, he is spiritual.
- Therefore, being an entity with innate characteristics different from both matter and pure spirit, the jīva receives a separate designation as the jīva-tattva, the jīva principle.

Chapter – 1: Summary

- Therefore, all these three principles—īśvara (the Supreme Lord), jīva, and māyā—are mutually distinct eternal realities.
- Śrī Kṛṣṇa is declared the ultimate eternal cause of all three entities—īśvara, jīva, and māyā.
- From this analysis, we can conclude that the jīva is the bhedābheda prakāśa manifestation of Bhagavān, simultaneously one with and different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
- Eventhough bheda and abheda principles are there, the bheda principle is predominant.

Chapter – 1: Summary

- “Servitorship to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the nitya-dharma of the jīva, and when the jīva, somehow or other, turns away from Kṛṣṇa, this change of attitude is tantamount to rejection of the Lord and His service.
- From the point of this occurrence, the jīva is subject to the domination of māyā because of his neglectful ignorance and consequent forgetfulness of the Supreme Lord.
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