

# Jaiiva Dharmma

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# Chapter Seven

## Nitya-dharma and Saṃsāra, Material Existence

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- The ancient township of Saptagrāma with its predominant mercantile class is situated upon the banks of the holy River Sarasvatī.
- For hundreds of years, many thousands of gold traders and jewellers had lived there.
- However, since the time of Śrī Uddhāraṇa Datta, this trading society had by the mercy of Śrī Nityānanda practiced with deep sincerity the congregational chanting of harināma.
- Yet, presently, a certain wealthy but miserly trader, Caṇḍīdāsa Vanik, had refused to join the congregational chanting, being afraid of a possible increase in his expenses.
- Similarly, his wife, Damayantī devī, who had also become infected with the parsimonious tendencies of her husband, never invited guests nor served the Vaiṣṇavas.

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- The couple had four sons and two daughters from early in their marriage.
- Gradually, they had settled the daughters by marriage and were now keeping aside immense savings for the sons.
- In a household that is not visited by Vaiṣṇavas the family members, especially the children, easily lose their charitable disposition.
- And so, as Caṇḍīdāsa's children had grown older, they had become most selfish. In fact, they had become so greedy for the wealth of their parents that they now began to wish them dead.
- The worries and pain of Caṇḍīdāsa and Damayantī knew no end.
- Gradually, Caṇḍīdāsa and Damayantī found suitable brides for their sons and launched them into household life.

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- However, the daughters-in-law, as a result of close association with their husbands, also adopted self-centered ways and soon also desired the quick demise of their parents-in-law.
- Having become capable of handling the business independently of their aging parents and soon managing all the shop transactions themselves, the sons gradually divided most of their father's wealth amongst themselves.
- One day, Caṇḍīdāsa called his family together.
- He said, “Listen! I was able to save a great deal of money for you all by being thrifty.
- Your mother and I were never extravagant in regard to our own lifestyle, eating, or dress.

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- As we are now approaching old age, it is actually your duty to serve and care for us, but I notice that you are not looking after us properly, which is causing us great pain and suffering.
- Therefore, I have hidden a fair amount of wealth, which I will give to the one who is obedient to me.”
- The sons and daughters listened mutely to their father’s monotonous monologue, finally dispersing and meeting clandestinely somewhere else later.
- There they conspired to send their parents far away, confiscate the hidden wealth, and share it amongst themselves.
- They were concerned that out of sentimentality their father might eventually donate his money to some undeserving person outside the family.

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- They were convinced that their parents had buried the treasure in a secret place in their bedroom and that to take the treasure away from them was the most sensible decision.
- One morning, Haricaraṇa, the eldest of the sons, approached his father and feigning concern and humility suggested,
- “Why don’t you and our beloved mother visit at least once the holy place of pilgrimage, Navadvīpa-dhāma, and thus fulfil the purpose of your human birth?
- I have heard that in Kali-yuga no other place of pilgrimage is as auspicious as Navadvīpa-dhāma.
- The journey to Navadvīpa-dhāma is quite inexpensive; if you cannot travel on foot, a passenger boat can be easily hired to take you upstream for a few pence.

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- There's even a vaiṣṇavī, Vaiṣṇava lady, who wants to accompany you.”
- Caṇḍīdāsa informed his wife about the proposal, waiting for her advice.
- Damayantī devī was overcome with joy, so they made plans together, “Our earlier talk has had a positive effect upon our sons.
- Actually, we are not too old to walk to Navadvīpa. Let us take the route that will take us through Kālnā and Śāntipura.”
- Consulting the religious almanac, they picked an auspicious date and started their pilgrimage, taking the vaiṣṇavī with them.



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- They arrived in Kālnā the next day, where they found a guesthouse, cooked, and were just beginning their meal when a traveller from their hometown walked in.
- Recognizing them, he broke the harsh news, “Your sons have broken open your room and grabbed all of your possessions, plus they have looted and shared out your secret savings.
- Now both of you are no longer welcome in your own house!”
- News of the loss delivered a terrible blow to Damayantī and Caṇḍīdāsa.
- They fell into dismal, grey melancholy.
- Their food lay half eaten and forgotten as tears of self-pity soaked their frail frames.

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- Meanwhile, their companion, the vaiṣṇavī, tried to console them with sensible spiritual advice, she said, “Do not be so attached to home and hearth.
- Come, let us continue on to Navadvīpa and become mendicants.
- We can build a small āśrama for Vaiṣṇavas and beg food for sustenance.
- Such a life is better than to go back to those who have become so evil and inimical to you—even though you have done so much for them.”
- Caṇḍīdāsa and his wife, still under the shock of the atrocious behaviour of their sons and daughters-in-law, began repeating,

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- “We will not return to them, better to die!” Thinking in this way, they stayed in Ambikā-grāma in the house of a Vaiṣṇava for a few days.
- From there, they went to see Śāntipura and then toured all the places of Navadvīpa, eventually staying in Māyāpura in the home of a merchant relative.
- Then they visited the seven localities of Kuliyā-grāma, which is situated on the opposite bank of the Gaṅgā to Navadvīpa.
- However, after this lengthy time of travelling, they began to feel homesick and affection for their sons and family began to well up in their hearts.
- Caṇḍīdāsa said, “Come, let us return to our Saptagrāma. Is it possible that our own sons will not show us any affection?”

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- Their vaiṣṇavī companion quickly retorted, “Have you no pride?”
- This time they will definitely murder you.”
- Her words had a sobering effect upon the couple, and they realized that most likely she was speaking the truth.
- Caṇḍīdāsa turned to her, saying, “My dear respected lady, you have made us wise to the stark reality, please return to your home—we will remain here and find a proper spiritual guide.
- Taking instruction from him, we will live our lives humbly by begging.”
- The vaiṣṇavī left them and returned home.

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- Damayantī devī and Caṇḍīdāsa, plunged themselves into the task of building a small dwelling in the village of Kuliyā on a property owned by one Chakaurī Caṭṭopādhyāya.
- They went around soliciting help from the village gentry, constructed a hut, and began to live there.
- Kuliyā-grāma is a holy place. It was common knowledge that if one resided there all one's previous sins and offences would be exonerated.
- Therefore, it was known as aparādha-bhañjana-pāt, the place that absolves offences.
- One day, Caṇḍīdāsa told his wife, “O mother of Hari! Is it not high time that we stopped talking or even thinking about our children?”

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- We must have committed many sinful activities to have taken birth in the families of merchants.
- Influenced by our association and surroundings, we were always stingy and never hospitable either to guests or to Vaiṣṇava sādhus.
- Now, if we can earn some money here, we should try to be generous and hospitable and serve the sādhus.
- This will ensure for us a better birth in the next life.
- I have decided to open a grocery store and will borrow some money from the landlord to start the business.”
- A few days later, Caṇḍīdāsa opened a small shop and soon he began profiting from the sales.

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- So, after satisfying their own hunger and needs, the couple could feed at least one guest every day.
- Caṇḍīdāsa now happily foresaw an end to his days of struggle.
- Having had some previous education, he spent his leisure time in the grocery shop reading a book called Śrī Kṛṣṇa-vijaya by Śrī Guṇarāja Khān.
- For six months, he ran his business honestly and hosted guests daily.
- By then the residents of Kuliyā-grāma had become acquainted with Caṇḍīdāsa's background and looked upon him with a new respect.
- Yādava dāsa, a gr̥hastha-vaiṣṇava, was also living in that village.

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- Every day, he held a public reading of the famous biographical work on the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya, called the Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata, which Caṇḍīdāsa would sometimes attend.
- Yādava dāsa and his wife had dedicated their lives to serving the Vaiṣṇavas, and now Caṇḍīdāsa and his wife, being inspired by this example, also began to serve the Vaiṣṇavas.
- One day, Caṇḍīdāsa enquired of Yādava dāsa, “What is this saṁsāra, material existence?”
- Yādava dāsa replied, “The holy island of Godrumadvīpa on the other side of the Gaṅgā shelters many knowledgeable Vaiṣṇavas.
- Let us both go there and place this question to them. Many times previously, I have been there for spiritual education and at present,



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- the Vaiṣṇava scholars of Godrumadvīpa are known to be much more learned in the scriptures than the brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas.
- Everyone knows that recently the brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas received a good thrashing from the hands of one Śrī Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī in a scriptural debate.
- So definitely the Vaiṣṇavas will be able to properly answer your question.”
- Yādava dāsa and Caṇḍīdāsa decided to cross the Gaṅgā the next day and visit the Vaiṣṇavas.
- Damayantī devī, whose miserliness had disappeared by regularly serving the Vaiṣṇavas, said, “I would like to accompany you both to Godrumadvīpa.”

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- Yādava dāsa replied, “None of the Vaiṣṇavas there is a gr̥hastha; they are mostly renounced Vaiṣṇavas who have left their homes.
- I am worried that if you come they may be disturbed.”
- Damayantī insisted, “I will remain at a respectable distance and from there offer my obeisances to them.
- I will not enter inside their kuñja, grove. I am just an old lady; certainly they will not be angry.”
- Yādava dāsa replied, “Yes, it is not customary for a woman to enter their kuñja.
- You should remain at another place close by and on our way back we can all return together.”

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- It was three in the afternoon when they alighted from the ferry-boat and proceeded towards Pradyumna-kuñja.
- Damayantī devī offered her praṇāmas, obeisances, from the entrance of the kuñja and went away to sit at a distance under a shady old banyan tree.
- Yādava dāsa and Caṇḍīdāsa entered the kuñja and offered their daṇḍavat-praṇāmas with sincere devotion to the assembly of Vaiṣṇavas seated upon the Śrī Mādhavī-mālatī Maṇḍapa.
- Śrī Paramahansa Bābājī was sitting there, surrounded by Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, Lāhirī Mahāśaya, Ananta dāsa Bābājī, and many others.
- Yādava dāsa and Caṇḍīdāsa came near and quietly sat down next to them.

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- Ananta dāsa Bābājī questioned, “Who is this new person?” Yādava dāsa explained the recent history of Caṇḍīdāsa and the reason for their visit.
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī spoke out with a touch of humour, “Ah yes! This is actually saṁsāra!”
- One who has understood what saṁsāra means is intelligent and he who is swirling unknowingly in the whirlpool of saṁsāra is pitiable.”
- Nitya-sukṛti unfailingly brings great spiritual benediction and Caṇḍīdāsa’s consciousness had been becoming purified gradually through his recent activities.
- Serving Vaiṣṇavas, reading Vaiṣṇava literature, hearing spiritual topics are all nitya-sukṛti, and by performing these activities the heart is cleansed and faith in pure devotional service is easily evoked.

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- This being Caṇḍīdāsa's present condition as Ananta dāsa Bābājī spoke his heart softened and he enquired, “My humble prayer is that you may kindly enlighten me about the true nature of samsāra.”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Caṇḍīdāsa, your question is somewhat difficult.
- I would rather enquire from Śrī Paramahaṁsa Premadāsa Bābājī or Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī.”
- Paramahaṁsa Premadāsa Bābājī responded, “Ananta dāsa Bābājī's capacity is equal to the gravity of this question.
- Today we will receive spiritual instruction from him.”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī started, “Now that I have the approval of the assembly to speak, I will most certainly say everything within my knowledge.

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- At the very outset, I meditate upon the lotus-feet of my Gurudeva, Śrīla Pradyumna Brahmācārī who is an eternal associate of the Supreme Lord and beg for his blessings.
- “There are two distinctive conditions of the jīva: he is either liberated, or, otherwise, he is entangled in material life, saṁsāra.
- The liberated jīva is a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa who has never come under the sway of māyā, or
- alternatively he has transcended the material nature by the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and is now in the liberated situation.
- “One who has turned away from Kṛṣṇa and denied his relationship with Him falls into the clutches of māyā; thus he is in entangled in saṁsāra from a time without beginning.

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- The liberated jīva, on the other hand, being fully engaged in service to Kṛṣṇa is transcendently situated.
- He is not located in the material nature but is an eternal resident of one of the transcendental, spiritual abodes—such as Goloka, Vaikuṅṭha, and Vṛndāvana.
- There are an unlimited number of liberated souls.
- “The number of the materially entangled souls is also endlessly numerous.
- Since they have rejected Kṛṣṇa, māyā, the illusory energy and shadow potency of Kṛṣṇa, has imprisoned them in the mundane nature by covering them with the three material guṇas: sattva, goodness; rajaḥ, passion; and tamaḥ, ignorance.

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- Diversity in the material condition of the jīvas is a result of the varying intensities and combinations of these three guṇas.
- These variations are evident in the jīvas' physiognomy, mentality, habits, geographical situations, speed of movement, physical capability, and so on.
- “In his pure state, the self-cognition of the jīva is ‘I am an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.’
- However, upon entering the mundane plane each jīva adopts false identities throughout his many different lives and thus perceives himself in so many changing roles—‘I am a human being,’ ‘I am a deva,’ ‘I am an animal,’ ‘I am a king,’ ‘I am a brāhmaṇa,’ ‘I am a caṇḍāla,’ ‘I am a sick man,’ ‘I am a hungry man,’ ‘I am a insulted person,’ ‘I am a benefactor,’ ‘I am a husband,’ ‘I am a wife,’ ‘I am a son,’ ‘I am an enemy,’



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- ‘I am a friend,’ ‘I am a scholar,’ ‘I am handsome,’ ‘I am rich,’ ‘I am poor,’ ‘I am happy,’ ‘I am sad,’ ‘I am courageous,’ ‘I am weak,’ and so on, endlessly.
- These false identities are known as ahaṅkāra, false egoism.
- There is also a further covering energy, which is known as mamatā, attachment.
- This compels the jīva to identify himself as the possessor of material objects and persons.
- This is illustrated with such concepts as ‘This is my house,’ ‘These are my possessions,’ ‘This is my body,’ ‘This is my caste,’ ‘This is my race,’ ‘This is my strength,’ ‘These are my looks,’ ‘These are my qualities,’ ‘This is my education,’ ‘This is my renunciation,’ ‘This is my knowledge,’

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- ‘These are my achievements,’ ‘This is my wealth,’ ‘These are my servants,’ etc., etc.
- So this massive intricate net woven by the false concepts of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ is, in a word, saṁsāra.”
- Yādava dāsa, “In the conditioned imprisoned material existence, ‘me’ and ‘mine’ are certainly prominent within the consciousness of the jīva.
- Do they remain in the liberated state of the jīva?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “In the liberated condition, the concepts of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ are purely spiritual and free of all material inebriety.
- When in transcendence, the jīva identifies himself with his pure self, which is the constitutional nature bestowed upon him by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

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- On the liberated spiritual platform, there are innumerable identities of ‘me’ that are the real egotism of the jīva.
- And being thus established as the servitors of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the jīvas experience the many varieties of cit-rasa, spiritual mellow.
- The numerous ingredients that comprise this cit-rasa inspire a sense of ‘wanting to be the possessor,’ from which the spiritual concept of ‘mine’ develops.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Then why is it a mistake to expand to such a wide range of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ in the conditioned state?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “In the pure state, ‘me’ and ‘mine’ are absolute realities, they have factual existence; but in saṁsāra, all varieties of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ are false and artificially imposed.

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- They do not represent the true self of the jīva; rather, they are transitory illusory identifications.
- All such myriad identities in saṁsāra are temporary and artificial and as such are the cause of the transient mundane joys and sorrows.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Is material saṁsāra a falsity?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “This material world is not false, it is factual—by Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s will.
- However, it is the materially conditioned jīva’s concepts of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ that are false and illusory.
- Moreover, the very instant that the jīva enters this mundane nature, his problematic false self-identity begins.

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- The māyāvādī speculators wrongly claim that this world is an illusion; therefore, they must be seen as offenders.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Why does the jīva pursue these false identifications?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Bhagavān is the pūrṇa-cid-vastu, complete spiritual being, and the jīva is an infinitesimal cid-vastu, spiritual spark.
- Initially, the jīva was situated on the borderline between the material and spiritual worlds.
- From this location, those jīvas who did not forget their relationship to Śrī Kṛṣṇa became fortified with the cit-śakti, spiritual energy, and were attracted into the spiritual realm.

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- Thus, they entered the transcendental abodes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and became engrossed in His service as His eternal associates, simultaneously experiencing divine ecstasy.
- “Meanwhile, those jīvas who desired to enjoy the material world separately from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, thus rejecting Him, were automatically dragged down by māyā and cast into the prison house of samsāra.
- Since the moment of entrance into the material world, the jīva has lost his true spiritual identity and has become overtaken by the false pride of material identity—
- he thinks himself as the lord of all he surveys and maintains other such misconceptions.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Why do we fail to awaken our real original identity, despite all our attempts?”

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- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Human spiritual endeavour may be divided into two categories: appropriate and inappropriate.
- If appropriate endeavours are made, they will definitely remove our false pride and false egoism.
- However, on the other hand, how can one expect positive results from inappropriate endeavours?”
- Yādava dāsa, “Kindly enumerate the inappropriate endeavours.”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “To follow the karma-kāṇḍa methodology, thinking that such practice will cleanse the consciousness, enlighten one with the non-dual Brahman realization, which will then in turn eradicate māyā, is an example of inappropriate endeavour.

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- Another example is to try through the eight-fold yoga system, known as aṣṭāṅga-yoga, to enter transcendental samādhi, this is almost impossible.
- There are many other inappropriate endeavours of this type.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Why these attempts are considered inappropriate?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “They are inappropriate because trying to reach the goal through these endeavours actually creates further obstacles upon the path, making success very difficult and probably impossible.
- Our material entanglement has begun from our offence to the Supreme Lord; thus, the only way to liberate ourselves from this fallen condition is to remove this initial offence and try to invoke the mercy of the Supreme Lord.



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- In this way, we can be released from illusion and earn back our pure spiritual identity.”
- Yādava dāsa, “What then is called appropriate endeavour?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Sadhu-saṅga, association with saintly persons, and prapatti, surrender, are the proper means.
- Sadhu-saṅga has been described in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 11.2.30, as follows:

*ata ātyantikam kṣemam  
prcchāmo bhavato 'naghāḥ  
saṁsāre 'smin kṣaṇārdho 'pi  
sat-saṅgaḥ śevadhir nṛṇām*

- ““O sinless Ṛṣis! Direct perception of the Supreme Lord is very rarely attained, therefore I ask you to tell me what is of the utmost benefit to humanity?”

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- After all, even half a moment of association with saintly souls within this saṁsāra, cycle of birth and death, is a priceless treasure for any man.’
- “Prapatti is described in the Bhagavad-gītā 7.14:

*daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī  
mama māyā duratyayā  
mām eva ye prapadyante  
māyām etāṁ taranti te*

- “This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is very difficult to overcome.
- However, those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it.”

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- Caṇḍīdāsa, “My dear devotee, I am unable to grasp the full import of your words.
- So far I have understood that we, the jīvas, were originally pure, but by forgetting Kṛṣṇa we have fallen into māyā’s clutches—and this has made us prisoners in this world.
- If we receive the mercy of Kṛṣṇa we can find release, otherwise we will remain in this conditioned state.”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Very true and now begin to strengthen your faith in this truth.
- Your teacher Yādava dāsa is able to comprehend this knowledge.
- You can educate yourself gradually by associating with him.

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- Śrīla Jagadānanda Paṇḍita, an intimate and prominent associate of Śrī Caitanya, has written the following lines in his book Śrī Prema-Vivarta:

*cit-kaṇa—jīva, kṛṣṇa—cin-maya bhāskara  
nitya kṛṣṇe dekhi—kṛṣṇe karena ādara*

- “The living entities are infinitesimal parts of the Supreme Absolute Truth, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa is that Supreme Absolute Personality, transcendental and effulgent.
- When the living entities realize that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the eternal and absolute controller, they engage in His loving devotional service.’

*kṛṣṇa-bahirmukha hañā bhoga-vāñchā kare  
nikaṭa-stha māyā tāre jāpaṭiyā dhare*

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- “When the living entity desires to enjoy separately from Kṛṣṇa and turns away from Him, the illusory potency of the Lord, māyā, immediately takes the soul in her clutches.’

*piśācī pāile jena mati-cchana haya  
māyā-grasta jīvera haya se bhāva udaya*

- “Being māyā’s captive, he becomes bewildered, acting like someone possessed by a witch.’

*āmi siddha kṛṣṇa dāsa, ei kathā bhule  
māyāra naphara hañā cira-dina bule*

- “The jīva soul, having forgotten his constitutional position as the eternal perfect and pure servant of Kṛṣṇa, remains māyā’s slave while going from one body to the next.’

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*kabhu rājā, kabhu prajā, kabhu vipra, śūdra  
kabhu duḥkhī, kabhu sukhī, kabhu kīṭa kṣudra*

- “The jīva goes through many births, sometimes being born as a king, sometimes as an ordinary citizen, sometimes as a brāhmaṇa, and sometimes as a śūdra.
- Sometimes he is suffering, and sometimes he is happy. Sometimes he is born as an insect.’

*kabhu svarge, kabhu martye, narake vā kabhu  
kabhu deva, kabhu daitya, kabhu dāsa, prabhu*

- “Sometimes he goes to heaven. Then, he has to come down to earth again, or maybe he has to go to hell.
- Sometimes he is born as a deva, sometimes as a demon, sometimes as the master, and at other times as the servant.’

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*ei-rūpe saṁsāra bhramite kona jana  
sādhu-saṅge nija-tattva avagata hana*

- “While transmigrating from birth to birth in this material universe, if by chance the living entity comes into contact with a saintly person, he immediately becomes aware of his true identity as a pure spiritual soul, the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.’

*nija-tattva jāni āra saṁsāra na cāya  
kena vā bhajinu māyā kare hāya hāya*

- “Enlightened by this knowledge, he desires material entanglement no longer, lamenting, “Alas! Why have I served this illusory material energy for so long?’

*kende bole, ohe kṛṣṇa! āmi tava dāsa  
tomāra caraṇa chāḍi’ haila sarva-nāśa*

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- “He bitterly cries out, “Kṛṣṇa, my Lord, I am your eternal servant.
- Ever since I left the shelter of Your lotus feet, my life has been completely devastated.”

*kṛpā kari kṛṣṇa tāre chāḍāna saṁsāra  
kākūti kariyā kṛṣṇe ḍāke eka-bāra*

- “Śrī Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that if anyone entreats Him earnestly, He immediately releases him from material entanglement.’

*māyāke pichane rākhi’ kṛṣṇa-pāne cāya  
bhajite bhajite kṛṣṇa-pāda-padma pāya*

“When the jīva breaks away from māyā’s captivating spell and strives for attainment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by rendering devotional service, he regains the supreme shelter of the Lord’s lotus feet.’



## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

*kṛṣṇa tāre dena nija-cic-chaktira bala  
māyā ākarṣaṇa chāḍe haiyā durbala*

- “Śrī Kṛṣṇa fortifies him with His transcendental, internal potency, and this overbearing power of the Lord’s spiritual potency weakens māyā’s influence upon the living entity.’

*sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-nāma’—ei-mātra cāi  
samsāra jinite āra kona vastu nāi*

- “The only desirable goal is to chant harināma in the association of pure and saintly devotees.
- This is the best and only way to conquer nescience.’
- “These are verses one to thirteen of the sixth chapter of the Śrī Prema-vivarta of Jagadānanda Paṇḍita.”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Yādava dāsa, “Revered master, you have just mentioned sādhu-saṅga.
- Nevertheless, sādhus are also present in and harassed by this saṁsāra.
- How can they offer salvation to others?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Indeed, the sādhus live in saṁsāra, but the saṁsāra condition of the sādhus and the saṁsāra condition of the jīvas who are captivated by māyā differ widely from each other.
- Seen from the outside, both saṁsāra conditions appear to be the same, but ontologically they are poles apart.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Moreover, the sādhus have been living in this world since time immemorial, but unfortunately gross materialistic men cannot recognize them and so saintly association has become uncommon.
- “Jīvas under the sway of māyā may be categorized into two groups.
- One group is engrossed in the insignificant pleasures of sensuality and is immensely infatuated with saṁsāra, while the other group, after realising that māyā on the gross material level is ill-equipped to offer satisfaction, employs intelligent discrimination in the hope of attaining a higher quality of happiness.
- Thus, there are two groups of jīvas living in saṁsāra: viveka-śūnya, without discrimination; and viveka-yukta, endowed with discrimination.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- “Scholars commonly refer to them as viṣayī, gross materialists, and mumukṣu, seekers of liberation.
- The term mumukṣu should not be misinterpreted to mean a person striving for knowledge of the nirbheda-brahman, undifferentiated Brahman.
- The Vedas have given the actual definition of the mumukṣu as someone who searches for the soothing escape of self-realization, after being incinerated in the fire of material existence.
- Thus, the Sanskrit word mumukṣu means desire for liberation.
- When the mumukṣus cast aside the desire for mukti and engage in unmotivated service to the Lord, they enter into the realm of pure bhakti.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Actually, the scriptures do not urge anyone to adopt mukti as his ultimate goal.
- Nevertheless, as soon as the mumukṣu person is enlightened with the tattva of Kṛṣṇa and jīva, he is automatically liberated.
- For example, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 6.14.3-5, states:

*rajobhiḥ sama-saṅkhyātāḥ pārthivair iha jantavaḥ*  
*teṣāṁ ye kecanehante śreyo vai manujādayaḥ*

- “In this material world there are as many living entities as there are atoms.
- Among these living entities very few are human beings, and among them, few are interested in following religious principles.’

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

*prāyo mumukṣavas teṣāṁ kecanaiva dvijottama  
mumukṣūṅāṁ sahasreṣu kaścin mucyeta sidhyati*

- “O best of the brāhmaṇas, Sukadeva Gosvāmī, out of many persons who follow religious principles, only a few desire liberation from this material world.
- Among many thousands who desire liberation, only one may actually achieve liberation, giving up his material attachment to society, friendship, love, country, home, wife and children.
- And among many thousands of such liberated persons, one who can understand the true meaning of liberation is very rare.’

*muktānām api siddhānām nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ  
su-durlabhaḥ praśāntātmā koṭiṣv api mahā-mune*

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- “O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, only one may become a devotee of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, (Kṛṣṇa). Such devotees, who are fully peaceful, are extremely rare.’
- “If a devotee of Śrī Nārāyaṇa is extremely rare, then a devotee of Kṛṣṇa is even more exceptional.
- Those who have attained the liberated state become Kṛṣṇa’s devotees after nullifying the noisome mumukṣu, the desire for liberation.
- “The devotee must remain in saṁsāra as long as his bodily tabernacle exists, but his saṁsāra condition is diametrically opposed to that of the viṣayī, gross materialists.
- The devotees of Kṛṣṇa have two situations within this world: gr̥hastha, householder; and tyāgī, renunciate.”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Yādava dāsa, “From your explanation and the ślokas from the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam that you have just quoted I conclude that there are four different states for the viveka-yukta persons.
- Amongst these four, whose association may be called sādhu-saṅga?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Vivekī, intelligent, enlightened; mumukṣu, desirous of liberation; mukta-siddha, liberated; and bhakta, devotee, are the four different states of viveka-yukta.
- For the viṣayī association with the vivekī, who is endowed with discrimination between matter and spirit, and the mumukṣu, the desirer of liberation, is beneficial.
- The mukta-siddha jīvas may be subdivided into two groups: one who is eager for rasa, spiritual mellow; and one who is attached to māyāvādī monistic liberation.



## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Association with the first type of mukta-siddha jīva is certainly the more advantageous.
- The mukta-siddha māyāvādī, on the other hand, is an offender; his association is not recommended for anyone.
- Upon mukta-siddha māyāvādī, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.2.32, gives this verdict:

*ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninas  
tvayyasta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ  
āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ  
patanty adho 'nādrta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*

- “O lotus-eyed one, those who think they are liberated in this life, but are without devotional service to You, are of impure intelligence.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Although they accept austere severities and penances and rise to the spiritual position, to impersonal Brahman realization, they fall down again because they neglect to worship Your lotus feet.’
- “The fourth kind of viveka-yukta is the bhaktas, the Lord’s devotees, who may be divided into two groups.
- Firstly, those inclined to aiśvarya, Kṛṣṇa’s opulence, their mood is laced with awe and reverence toward the Lord.
- And secondly, those who are inclined to mādhurya, a spontaneous loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa.
- For everyone in all respects, association with bhaktas is certainly the most edifying—and especially the association of the mādhurya-para, the bhakta inclined to mādhurya.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- If one takes shelter of such a bhakta, transcendental rasa will appear within one's heart.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Earlier you said that Kṛṣṇa's bhaktas are found in two situations within this world.
- Can you speak about the bhaktas in detail, so that a dull person like me can properly understand?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Bhaktas are found in two situations: the gr̥hastha-bhaktas, the householder devotees; and the gr̥hātyāgī-bhaktas, the devotees who have renounced householder life.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Kindly describe in a detailed manner the relationship of the gr̥hastha-bhakta to saṁsāra?”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “A person who just builds a house and lives in it is not necessarily a gr̥hastha.
- To be a gr̥hastha one must accept a suitable wife by marriage, and establish a household—both items according to the Vedic rules and regulations.
- A person practicing bhakti situated in such a manner is a gr̥hastha-bhakta.
- “The conditioned soul exploits this material nature through the five doors of the knowledge-gathering senses.
- With his eyes, he sees form and colour, and with his ears, he hears sounds.
- He smells with his nose, tastes with his tongue, and feels and touches with his skin.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- With these five senses, he probes this world and develops attachment to it.
- The more he is attracted to matter, the further he moves away from the sweet Lord of the Heart, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
- This is known as the enchanting external phantasmagoria of saṁsāra.
- Those who are thusly submerged in saṁsāra are called viṣayī.
- “However, when the Lord’s devotee is situated in household life, he does not abandon himself to sensual cravings like the viṣayī.
- He takes his dharma-patnī, wife as a partner in realizing nitya-dharma, as a maidservant of Kṛṣṇa and his sons and daughters are also seen as the servitors of Kṛṣṇa.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- His eyes seek fulfilment in seeing the Lord's Deity form and other paraphernalia connected to Kṛṣṇa.
- His ears yearn to be satisfied by hearing Kṛṣṇa conscious topics about the Lord and His devotees.
- He exults in smelling the fragrance of tulasī leaves and buds, scents, and flowers offered to Kṛṣṇa.
- His tongue relishes uttering harināma and tasting the delicious food offered to Kṛṣṇa.
- He experiences divine ecstasy by touching the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas.
- His ambitions and hopes, activities, desires, hospitality, and worship of the devas are all carried out as a part of his main pursuit, rendering devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- His entire life is a joyous festival, consisting of compassion towards all living entities, chanting harināma, and serving the Vaiṣṇavas.
- To enjoy material pleasures without attachment is only possible in the household life of the Lord's devotees.
- For the jīvas in Kali-yuga, it is most suitable to become gr̥hastha-bhaktas for then there is no fear of falling down and full spiritual advancement is definitely achievable.
- “Many highly intelligent and self-realized gurus have been amongst the gr̥hastha-vaiṣṇavas.
- If their hereditary descendants also become pure Vaiṣṇavas, then they are also gr̥hastha-bhaktas whose association is most beneficial to humanity.”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Yādava dāsa, “Gṛhastha-vaiṣṇavas have to remain under the regulations of the smartas, the karma-kāṇḍī brāhmaṇas, otherwise they face problems in society.
- How can they cultivate śuddha-bhakti under these circumstances?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Gṛhastha-vaiṣṇavas have to conform to certain social conventions such as vivāha, Vedic marriage of sons and daughters; śrāddha, offering oblations to departed parents; and so on.
- However, they are not required to perform kāmya-karma, fruitive activities for the purpose of materialistic ambitions.
- “As one can understand, one has to admit dependence upon external things in order to maintain and care for the material body.



## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Even those who claim to be nirapekṣa, detached, have to accept this dependence.
- When a person is sick or suffers great pain, he must take medicine.
- Furthermore, he must procure food and eat when hungry, arrange for clothing against the chill, build a roof against the sun and rain, and so on.
- Such necessities are normal for the embodied soul, and he is dependent upon them.
- The real meaning of being detached is to factually reduce this dependence.
- However, as long as the material body is present, it is impossible to be totally independent of material needs.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Still, at the same time, the reduction of material necessities is certainly conducive to devotional surrender and progress.
- “If a person is able to dovetail all the above-mentioned activities with Kṛṣṇa’s service, then the imperfections are rectified.
- For example, a person should not marry with the express intention of expanding his dynasty, ostentatiously worshipping Prajapati, the deva of progeny.
- Rather, he should think that he is accepting Kṛṣṇa’s maidservant as his life-partner to establish a Kṛṣṇa conscious family.
- Such resolutions are favourable to bhakti.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Materialistic relatives, priests, and others may offer their advice, but ultimately a person accrues the result of his own vows and resolution.
- “A gr̥hastha-bhakta will observe śrāddha by giving kṛṣṇa-prasādam to the departed soul as piṇḍa, oblations, and feed and offer charity to vaiṣṇava-brāhmaṇas—this is spiritually beneficial to him.
- When the devotional practices of bhakti are integrated with the smarta rituals, then the negative fruitive results are removed.
- On account of including the Vaiṣṇava activities of śuddha-bhakti, there will be no hindrance on the path of bhakti.
- Social dealings should be conducted dispassionately and with detachment, while spiritual activities must be executed in sādhu-saṅga.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Then all these performances are pruned of their imperfections.
- Just observe that the majority of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pāraṣada, eternal associates, are gṛhastha-bhaktas.
- Since the dawn of history, many devotees who were rājarṣi, saintly kings; devas, demigods; and ṛṣis, philosophers, were gṛhastha-bhaktas.
- You must understand that gṛhastha-bhaktas are universally worshipable.”
- Yādava dāsa, “If the gṛhastha-bhaktas are so highly estimated and are heir to the treasure of the most sublime aspects of kṛṣṇa-prema, then why do some of them enter the renounced order of life and thus become gṛha-tyāgī, renouncers of home?”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “A very few of the gr̥hastha-bhaktas become suitable candidates for the renounced life of a gr̥ha-tyāgī and their association is extremely rare.”
- Yādava dāsa, “What qualifications are required to become a gr̥ha-tyāgī?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Human beings have two propensities: bahirmukha, the external material tendency; and antarmukha, the internal spiritual tendency.
- In Vedic terms, these are known as parāk, turned away from the Supreme; and pratyak, turned towards the Lord with higher spiritual aspiration.
- “The pure spiritual soul has forgotten his original identity and presumptuously assumed the gross material body and subtle mind to be his self.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- In this way, having mistakenly identified his self with the mundane mind and body, the conditioned soul views the material nature through the instruments of his senses and experiences attraction and attachment to the external objects of the phenomenal world.
- This is called bahirmukha-pravṛtti, the external material propensity.
- When this process is reversed and the consciousness flows inwards away from matter and the senses to the mind and then onwards to the soul, then the consciousness is termed as having the antarmukha-pravṛtti, internal spiritual propensity.
- “As long as the external propensity is predominant, one must, without offence and on the strength of saintly association, unfailingly dovetail all one’s propensities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- In the secure shelter of the bhakti process, the bahirmukha-pravṛtti will swiftly shrink back and change direction towards the antarmukha-pravṛtti.
- When the propensity turns totally inwards, antarmukha, the gr̥hastha-bhakta earns the eligibility to be a gr̥ha-tyāgī.
- If a gr̥hastha renounces the household situation prematurely, there is every possibility of failure.
- The household situation is a school for the jīva wherein he educates himself with ātmā-tattva, the knowledge of the spiritual self.
- Once his education is over, he may leave school.”
- Yādava dāsa, “What symptoms indicate that a devotee has acquired the eligibility to become a gr̥ha-tyāgī?”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “He must be completely free from the desire to associate with women.
- He should be very merciful to all living creatures, handle money and material possessions with indifference, accumulate just enough food and clothing for times of want, have pure love of Kṛṣṇa, avoid the company of gross materialists, be unconcerned about either praise or insult, be uninterested in ostentatious show, and be equipoised and dispassionate in life or death.
- These symptoms are described in the following verses of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 11.2.45:

*śrī-havir uvāca*

*sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanaḥ  
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātmany eṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ*



## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- “A person advanced in devotional service sees within everything the Soul of all souls, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
- Consequently he always sees the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the cause of all causes and understands that all things are situated within Him.’
- “Further, the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 3.25.22:

*mayy ananyena bhāvena bhaktim kurvanti ye dṛḍhām  
mat-kṛte tyakta-karmāṇas tyakta-svajana-bāndhavāḥ*

- “Such a sādhu engages in staunch devotional service to the Lord without deviation. For the sake of the Lord he renounces all other connections, such as family relationships and friendly acquaintances within the world.’

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- “Further, the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 11.2.55:

*visṛjati hṛdayaṁ na yasya sākṣād  
dharir avaśābhihito 'py aghaughā-nāśaḥ  
praṇaya-raśanayā dhṛtāṅghri-padmaḥ  
sa bhavati bhāgavata-pradhāna uktaḥ*

- “Śrī Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead who destroys everything inauspicious for His devotees, does not leave the hearts of His devotees even if they remember and chant about Him inattentively.
- This is because the rope of love always binds the Lord to stay within the devotees’ hearts. Such devotees should be accepted as most elevated.’
- “When these symptoms manifest in a gṛhastha-bhakta, he becomes incapable of performing karma.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Naturally, he leaves the household and becomes a gr̥ha-tyāgī.
- However such elevated and detached saints are extremely exceptional.
- If anyone in his lifetime can find the association of such a holy person, he is truly fortunate.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Nowadays, I notice a tendency for some young persons to leave their home, receive spiritual initiation, construct a small temple, and start Deity worship.
- Nevertheless, after some time they fall into the bad company of women.
- Of course, they continue to chant japa and somehow maintain their situation by begging. Would you categorize them as tyāgīs or gr̥hastha-bhaktas?”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “You have raised many points at once. I will answer them one by one.
- The criterion is not age, old or young.
- A gr̥hastha-bhakta may deserve to become a gr̥ha-tyāgī at an early age because of a combination of spiritual purification in his previous births and further spiritual enhancement in the present one.
- For example, Śukadeva Gosvāmī was eligible from the moment of his birth to renounce hearth and home.
- Utmost attention must be given to determine that worthiness is not postured, or acquired through artificial austerities.
- When genuine renunciation manifests, youth is not detrimental.”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Yādava dāsa, “What are the differences between genuine detachment and artificial renunciation?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Genuine detachment is without vacillation, a resolve that is never broken.
- False renunciation is a consequence of material cunning, a cheating mentality, and the desire for a position of respect.
- Some persons take to false renunciation with the intention of winning the respect that is naturally given to genuinely detached devotees.
- All this is useless and extremely harmful.
- As soon as such a person leaves home and family, the symptoms of detachment also wane and instead he becomes haunted with moral aberrations.”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Yādava dāsa, “Is it essential for a gr̥ha-tyāgī bhakta to change his dress, adopting the garb of a renunciant?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Actually, when all attachments to household life are completely annihilated, the nirapekṣa-akiñcana-bhakta, detached devotee, can stay anywhere, in the forest or in the house.
- Such an elevated saint purifies the whole world. Sometimes, however, they are seen as bhiksus, saints who live by begging, and so they go around dressed in kaupīna, loincloth, and carrying a kanthā, a coverlet sown from used and worn-out clothing.
- When they take the vows of ‘kaupīna and kanthā,’ they do so in the presence of other gr̥ha-tyāgī bhaktas, in order to fortify their resolve.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- This is known as veṣa, the method of receiving the garb of a mendicant, which admits them to the life of bhikṣā, begging.
- How can there be any objection to accepting veṣa in this way?”
- Yādava dāsa, “Is there a purpose to being recognized as a bhikṣu on the basis of one’s kaupīna and kanthā?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Once a devotee by wearing kaupīna and kanthā is seen by the world as a bhikṣu, then his relatives and family members will disown him very easily and thus he, in turn, will reject any thought of going back home.
- A natural attraction for detachment as well as repulsion for the company of materialistic people will consume him.
- The experienced gr̥ha-tyāgī devotee with a seasoned sense of detachment may not require a change of dress.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- However for some receiving veṣa does help.
- Elevated devotees who display the following characteristics do not need to accept veṣa, as stated in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 4.29.46:

*yadā yasyānugrḥṇāti bhagavān ātma-bhāvitaḥ  
sa jahāti matiṁ loke vede ca pariniṣṭhitām*

- “When a person is fully engaged in devotional service, he is favoured by the Lord, who bestows His causeless mercy.
- At such a time, the awakened devotee gives up all material activities and ritualistic performances mentioned in the Vedas. His only concern is the real need of humanity.’
- “There is no injunction for these awakened devotees to outwardly accept the garb of detachment.



## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- However as a matter of public consideration such acceptance may sometimes be taken as necessary.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Who can give veṣa?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “One should receive veṣa from a gṛha-tyāgī bhakta.
- A gṛhastha-bhakta has not experienced the life of a renunciant; hence, he must not give veṣa to anybody.
- The Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa states:

*aparīkṣyopadiṣṭam yat loka-nāśāya tad bhavet*

- “Without first practising spiritual life, one should not advise others, as this will create chaos in society.’

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Yādava dāsa, “What are the points a guru must consider when he initiates a devotee with veṣa?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “The first point a guru must consider is whether the disciple is competent.
- Has he, as a gr̥hastha-bhakta, been able to attain the brahminical qualities such as equanimity, sense control, and so on by practising devotional service to Kṛṣṇa?
- Has he shaken off the desire to associate with women? Has he uprooted the material cravings for wealth, opulent food and clothing, and luxurious living?
- The guru will have the disciple stay with him for some time to test him properly.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Only when he is convinced of his disciple's eligibility, and not before, will he initiate him into veṣa.
- The guru will surely fall down if he initiates an undeserving disciple.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Now I understand that receiving bheka or veṣa is not an easy affair, but is actually an extremely serious observance.
- Indeed, the unqualified so-called gurus have made this bheka or veṣa a mere meaningless ritual, a farce.
- Unfortunately this is only the beginning, I wonder where all this will end?”

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Samsāra, Material Existence

- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “It was in order to protect the sanctity of this process that Śrī Caitanya chastised Choṭa Haridāsa for a minor deviation.
- Those who claim to be followers of my Lord, Śrī Mahaprabhu, must always remember this punishment of Choṭa Haridāsa.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Is it an authorized process to receive bheka, construct a temple, and begin Deity worship?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “No, after receiving veṣa, a competent devotee enters into mendicant life, which means every day he must go out and maintain himself by begging.
- He will not entangle himself in temple construction and other large-scale enterprises.

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- He will live in a solitary hut, or in the temple of a gr̥hastha. He must not utilize money for his needs or anything else.
- He will simply use all his time and energy to chant harināma without offence.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Then what may one call those who after leaving home build their own temple and live in it as if it were a household?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “They are called vāntāśī, those who eat their own vomit. They are eating what they have regurgitated.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Is such a person no longer a Vaiṣṇava?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “When his actions are contrary to scriptural injunctions and opposed to the principles of vaiṣṇava-dharma, why should we seek his association?”

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- He has deviated from the path of śuddha-bhakti and adopted deceit and caprice.
- What Vaiṣṇava qualities are still left in him?”
- Yādava dāsa, “How can we say that he has forsaken vaiṣṇava-dharma, if he continues to chant harināma?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Chanting harināma and nāmāparādha, offences against harināma, are two different subjects.
- Wherever you see sinful activities being committed on the strength of chanting, that is nāmāparādha.
- You must run far away from nāmāparādha.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Can we call his condition of samsāra, Kṛṣṇa conscious or not?”

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- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Certainly not! A Kṛṣṇa conscious life is not tainted by deceit; it is filled with simplicity and honesty and offences are absent.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Then, he must be inferior to a gṛhastha-bhakta?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “If he is not even a bhakta, then there cannot be a comparison with any kind of bhakta.”
- Yādava dāsa, “How can he be saved?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “He must first give up his offensive activities.
- Then he must chant incessantly, until tears of remorse bring him back to the Vaiṣṇava fold.”

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- Yādava dāsa, “Respected Bābājī, the gr̥hastha-bhaktas follow the varṇāśrama system, therefore is it possible for a gr̥hastha to become a Vaiṣṇava if he is excluded from the varṇāśrama system?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “If only you knew how liberal and magnanimous the vaiṣṇava-dharma is!
- It is also known as jaiva-dharma, the religion for all living entities.
- Every human being from any position has the right to follow the vaiṣṇava-dharma.
- Those born in the lowest status of humanity, known as antyajas can embrace vaiṣṇava-dharma and live as gr̥hastha-bhaktas although they are outside the varṇāśrama society.



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- Another example is a sannyāsī, the highest religious order in the varṇāśrama system, who breaks his sannyāsa vows and falls down.
- Nevertheless, later, by association with saintly persons he may be reinstated in śuddha-bhakti and live as a gr̥hastha-bhakta
- although he is now an outcaste from the varṇāśrama society.
- Those persons and their descendants who are excluded from the varṇāśrama society because of unlawful actions may take up the process of śuddha-bhakti by associating with sādhus—they can become gr̥hastha-bhaktas, although they have no status in the varṇāśrama society.
- Therefore, there are two types of gr̥hastha-bhaktas: varṇāśrama-dharma-yukta, those within the varṇāśrama system; and varṇāśrama-dharma-rahita, those outside the varṇāśrama system.”

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- Yādava dāsa, “Which of the two is better?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “He who has developed the higher intensity bhakti is naturally the better.
- As for those who are in either of these two conditions but are actually bereft of bhakti, the vyāvahārika point of view of materialistic society will adjudge those who are within the varṇāśrama society as being the better of the two.
- At least they have a locus standi in varṇāśrama society, while the others are antyajās.
- However, seen from the paramārthika point of view both are the same—they are both degraded because they are without bhakti.”

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- Yādava dāsa, “Can a gr̥hastha wear the dress of a gr̥ha-tyāgī while still a householder?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “No. If he were to do so, he would be indicted on two offences, deceiving himself and deceiving the world.
- If a gr̥hastha wears a kaupīna and carries a kanthā, etc., he ridicules and insults the gr̥ha-tyāgī bhakta who is formally initiated into bhikṣā.”
- Yādava dāsa, “Respected Bābājī, is there an authorized scriptural procedure for receiving bheka or veṣa?”
- Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “It has not been clearly outlined. A human being from any varṇa can embrace the vaiṣṇava-dharma.

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- However, according to the scripture, only a brāhmaṇa can accept the sannyāsa order, no other.
- In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 7.11.35, Nārada Muni first describes the characteristics of the different varṇas and then goes on to say:

*yasya yal lakṣaṇaṁ proktaṁ puṁso varṇābhivyañjakam  
yad anyatrāpi dr̥śyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiśet*

- “If one shows the symptoms of being a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya, or śūdra, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different caste, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification.’
- “On the strength of this scriptural statement the practice of giving sannyāsa to persons having brahminical qualities, although born in lower varṇas was started.

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- If all these conditions are met with, such a practice is certainly to be accepted as authorized by the scriptures.
- Of course, this is only applicable in spiritual paramārthika consideration and is not applicable according to mundane vyāvahārika convention.”
- At this point, Yādava dāsa turned to his companion, “Dear Caṇḍīdāsa, has your question been answered?”
- Caṇḍīdāsa replied, “I was able to assimilate the following from the wonderful spiritual teachings by the most respectable Ananta dāsa Bābājī:
- Jīva, having forgotten that he is an eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, accepts the material body and under the influence of the guṇas, three material modes, he begins to try to exploit this world.

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- In return for this, he is rewarded with pain and enjoyment. In his attempt to enjoy the results of his actions, he is forced to accept birth, disease, old age, and finally death.
- He goes through many lives, sometimes with a high birth, sometimes with a low birth, but each time his soul is covered by a new false ego.
- He is driven to protect his fragile mortal body from the ravages of hunger and thirst.
- He has to suffer in many ways because of an imbalanced distribution and unavailability of essential commodities.
- His body is under constant siege from the various and inevitable distresses.
- Insufferable quarrels and disputes with wife and children sometimes drive him to commit suicide.

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- “He is forced by greed for money to commit many sinful activities, ending up by being punished by the law, becoming a pariah of society, and thus bringing upon himself untold misery.
- There is no relief from anxiety and lamentation brought about by death in the family, loss of wealth, attacks by rogues, etc.
- Even in old age, sorrows accompany him when his family members neglect his needs.
- Rheumatic and phlegmatic conditions trouble him as the body begins to age and gradually disintegrate.
- After death, the sojourn in the next mother’s womb is at every moment a harrowing and excruciating experience.

## Chapter 7: Nitya-dharma and Saṁsāra, Material Existence

- Combined with all this suffering, lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, and envy smother the conscience and sense of discrimination into obscurity.
- This is saṁsāra, material existence.
- “Now, I have properly grasped the purport of the word saṁsāra.
- I repeatedly fall at the feet of all the assembled bābājīs.
- The Vaiṣṇavas are the real gurus of this world and today by their mercy I have gained the actual understanding of saṁsāra.”
- The entire assembly of Vaiṣṇavas burst out loudly, uttering harināma and praising Ananta dāsa Bābājī for his perceptive spiritual analysis.



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- More Vaiṣṇavas joined their group and Lāhirī Mahāśaya began to sing a composition of his own:

*e ghora saṁsāre, paḍiyā mānava, na pāya duḥkhera śeṣa  
sādhu-saṅga kori’, hari bhaje yadi, tabe anta haya kleśa*

- “There is no end to the jīva’s suffering after falling into the dark well of saṁsāra.
- However, if he associates with saintly souls and turns in surrender to the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, then he puts a stop to his distress.

*viṣaya-anale, jvaliche hṛdaya, anale bāḍe anala  
aparādha chaḍi’ laya kṛṣṇa-nāma, anale paḍaye jala*

- “This material life means being consumed by a fire, where all material endeavours are fuel for the fire.

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- When the incinerated jīva takes up chanting the transcendental name of Kṛṣṇa without offence, this merciful rain puts out the flames.

*nitai-caitanya-carāṇa-kamale, āśraya laila yei  
kālidāsa bole, jīvane maraṁe, āmāra āśrayā sei*

- “I, Kālidāsa, consider those who have taken shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Nityānanda Caitanya as my only safe sanctuary in this life.”
- Caṇḍīdāsa was extremely moved by the words of the song and began to dance along.
- At the end he fell like a stick at the feet of the bābājīs.

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- He sanctified himself by applying the dust from their feet upon his head, beginning to roll upon the ground, and crying in ineffable joy.
- The assembled Vaiṣṇavas who witnessed Caṇḍīdāsa's ecstatic emotion agreed that he was very fortunate.
- After a while Yādava dāsa said softly to Caṇḍīdāsa, “Come, let us return, we must cross over the Gaṅgā.”
- Caṇḍīdāsa replied humorously, “If you will take me across the material ocean, I will certainly accompany you.”
- Together they offered their dandavats in Pradyumna-kuñja and came out of the entranceway where they saw Damayantī offering repeated obeisances to all the Vaiṣṇavas.

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- She said, “Alas! Why was I born as a woman! If I were a man, I could unhesitatingly go inside the kuñja, behold the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇava sādhus and offer my dandavats, thus fulfilling the purpose of this human life.
- My wish is that birth after birth I may serve the Vaiṣṇavas in Navadvīpa.”
- Yādava dāsa said, “O mother! This Godruma-dhāma is extremely sacred.
- As soon as one enters, one is rewarded with pure bhakti. In Godruma played our beloved Śrī Śacīnandana Nimāi.
- This was the village of the cowherd men, gopa-palli.

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- Knowing the glories of this place, Śrīla Prabodānanda Sarasvatī Gosvāmī has prayed in his Śrī Navadvīpa-śataka, verse 36:

*na loka-vedoddhṛta-mārga-bhedair  
āviśya saṅkliśyata re vimudhāḥ  
hathena sarvaṁ parihṛtya gaude  
śrī-godrume paṇa-kuṭīm kurudhvam*

- “O foolish jīva! By taking shelter of society and the Vedas, you have tried out so many religious paths, but they have only brought you distress.
- Now renounce these uncertain methods and immediately go to Godruma, build yourself a thatched hut, and live there.”

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- The three of them returned to Kuliyā-grāma after crossing the Gaṅgā.
- A wonderful transformation took place in Caṇḍīdāsa and his wife Damayantī devī from that day on.
- They began exhibiting the Vaiṣṇava mood and qualities and it appeared that material life could no longer touch them.
- All their time was taken up in serving the Vaiṣṇavas, chanting harināma, and doing acts of mercy to all living beings.
- How wonderful was this newly changed Vaiṣṇava couple! What immense potency there is in the mercy of a Vaiṣṇava!
- All glories to kṛṣṇa-nāma! All glories to the sacred land of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma!

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*Thus ends the seventh chapter of Jaiva-dharma, entitled: Nitya-dharma and Saṃsāra, Material Existence*