

Jaiiva-dharma

by Śrīla Saccidānanda
Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Chapter - 1

Palace of the Shree Srestes

Dharma of the soul
Kaivalya

→ Bhakti

Sandhya vanda
Sradha

Daily duties
Periodic duties

① Nitya-karma
② Naimittika-karma

Platform of body
Platform of FE

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

‘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.”

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.

Sattvika vikāraḥ

① Snigdha → Bhāva & Prema

② ḍigḍha → Sāḍhukēḥ

③ rūkṣa → materialists

④ katyābhīḥ → Bhakti kēḥiḥ
& anukṣa kēḥiḥ

“Later, I anxiously searched for that Vaiṣṇava saint, but without success.

I clearly perceived that by seeing this Vaisnava 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.

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.

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.

You are truly fortunate! You were blessed by seeing a real Vaisnava 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.

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.”

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 Nṛsimha-deva.

Let us visit him today after we have completed mādhlukarī.”

That afternoon, they crossed the Gaṅgā and arrived in Śrī Devapallī.

As they came down the Sūryaṭilā mound, they saw Śrī Pradyumna Brahma-cārī 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 Brahma-cārī Thākura 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.

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.”

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.

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-nisthā, unwavering establishment in the all-pervading, non-dual, Absolute Truth.

Now, moreover, he was developing realization of the divine pastimes of the parama-brahma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śri 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.

He was soon deep in meditation upon the niśānta-līlā, the dawn pastimes of Goloka Vr̥ndāvana—in particular those amorous exchanges of the Divine Couple, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, in the love groves of Vr̥ndāvana, 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.

Ṣaṇṇyāsī 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.

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 Ramana-mañjarī, and having been given this duty, you should execute it conscientiously.”

After speaking these words, Bābājī Mahārāja fell down in an ecstatic ^{firstly} swoon. Realizing that the words were addressed to him, Sannyāsī Thākura understood, at that moment, both his siddha-deha, spiritual form and identity, and his specific devotional service.

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.

Taking this opportunity, Sannyāsī Thākura 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.”

What is true dharma?

Sannyāsī Thākura, “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.

~~Taking this opportunity, Sannyāsī Thākura sat near Bābājī Mahārāja and addressed him, “Dear master! Your poor servitor would like to ask a question.~~

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.

Characteristic of Vastu → Intrinsic Constitution

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.

→ Studdha Bhakti

→ external occupational activity
external nature.

→ Māheṣ

① →

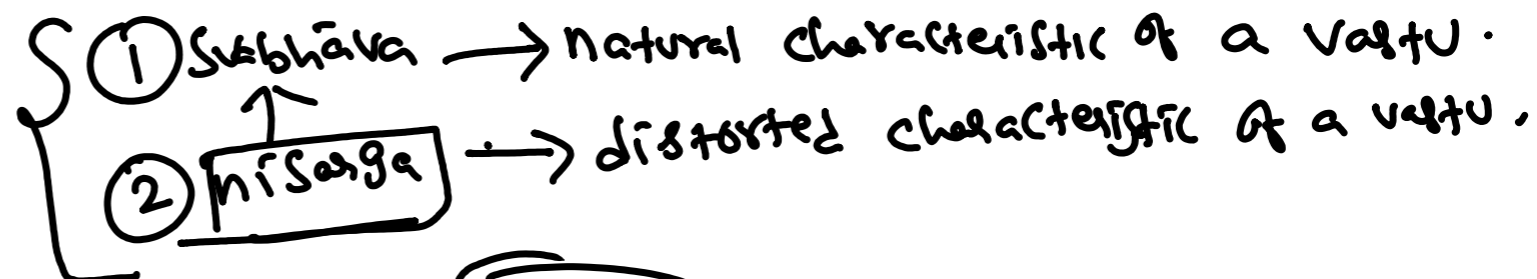
② →

“However, by force of circumstance, or by contact with other substances, the original character of the vastu may apparently be transformed and changed.”

→ body → I am the enjoyer.
→ fixed false ego → Bṛehmaṇya Bṛehaṇi
→ uṣatriye

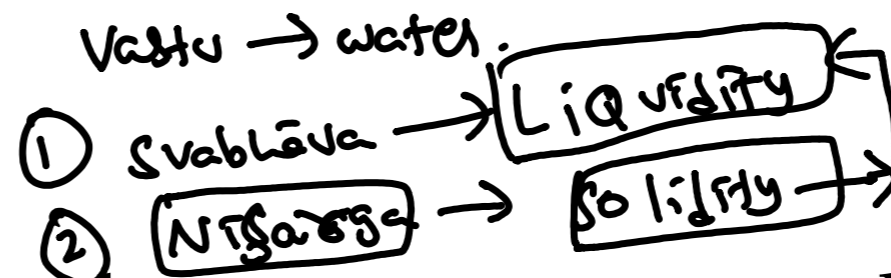
In the course of time, when this transformed character becomes stable, it then appears to be a seemingly permanent quality of the vastu—apparently being the genuine original, eternal and immanent nature.

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. → agent is the refrigerator.

When the agent is removed, the false temporary nisarga also disappears; whereas, conversely, the true inherent nature is maintained eternally.

Even if the soul vastu apparently conditioned 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.

nitya dharma → bhakti

- ① Svabhāva → nitya-dharma → JaiVa dharma.
- ② nisarga → naimittika dharma → deha dharma.

“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.

Who

Karma yogyatā

Vaṅśāśrme śloke.

However, without this knowledge, a person will falsely consider the temporary nisarga and resultant naimittika-dharma to be the nitya-dharma.

Sannyāsī Thākura 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.

⊙ Vāstava vastu → eternal spiritual substance

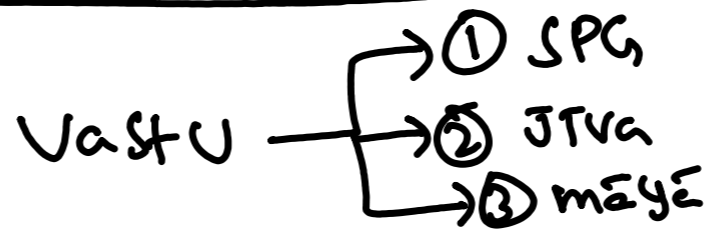
avāstava (vastu) → matter.

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 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.



True knowledge is knowledge of the relation between these 3

Proper comprehension of the relationships amongst these principles is śuddha-jñāna, true knowledge.

“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.”

↳ naimittika dharma
never about nitya dharma.

Sannyāsī Thākura 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.

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

~~Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta~~
nitya dharma → D(S)
jīvera svarūpa haya—kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa
kṛṣṇera tatasthā-śakti bhedābheda-prakāśa

“The nitya-dharma of the jīva is to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa because he
is the tatasthā-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 samsāra-dukha → misārga

“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.”

“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.

“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.