

Jaiṣa Dharma

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Chapter Three

Naimittika-dharma: Impermanent
Religious Duties Are Incomplete,
Pedestrian, Impure and Evanescent

Valueless
mundane.

temporary.

For the encouragement of those on the spiritual ladder, the status of these religious practices has indeed been very eloquently eulogized in the scriptures, yet in comparison to the genuine nitya-karma, unalloyed bhakti, they maintain a humble position, as this verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 7.9.10, illustrates:

Nitya Nairāṅkīka karmāḥ

Śuddha bhakti

**viprād dvi-ṣaḍ-guṇa-yutād aravinda-nābha-
pādāravinda-vimukhāt śvapacāṁ varīṣṭham
manye tad-arpita-mano-vacanehitārtha-
prāṇam punāti sa kulam na tu bhūrimānaḥ**

“The twelve qualifications of a brāhmaṇa are as follows: truthfulness, self-control, austerity, freedom from maliciousness, modesty, tolerance, non-enviousness, expertise in conducting sacrifices, charity, patience, studiousness, and strictness in observing religious vows.

A brāhmaṇa of this calibre is indeed worshipable anywhere in the world.

However, if such a brāhmaṇa is not a devotee and is averse to the lotus feet of the Lord, he is certainly lower than a devotee from the lowest candāla, dog-eater, caste, who, possessing devotion, has dedicated everything—mind, words, activities, wealth and life—to the Supreme Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Such a devotee is better than such a brāhmaṇa because the devotee can purify his whole family, whereas the so-called brāhmaṇa in a such position of false prestige cannot purify even himself.'

“The purport of this verse is that if a lowborn caṇḍāla first purifies himself by associating with saintly souls and embraces the transcendental path of devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is the living entity’s actual nitya-karma, then he is far superior to a brāhmaṇa by birth who has rejected the search for the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa—which is the actual nitya-karma—and has instead busied himself with materialistic (naimittika-karma).”

“We find two varieties of human beings in this world: udita-viveka, those with spiritually awakened consciousness; and anudita-viveka, those with slumbering consciousness.”

The latter are the majority in the world, while the first type is very rare.

anudita viveka

Amongst the second type, the brāhmanas are certainly the most advanced and the secondary nitya-karma prescribed for their caste, such as sandhyā-vandana, is the foremost amongst all mundane religious practices.

“Another name for a person with uditā-viveka is Vaiṣṇava. The Vaiṣṇava demeanour, therefore, is naturally quite different from those who belong to the condition of anudita-viveka.

Despite this difference, the Vaiṣṇavas do not deprecate the secondary nitya-karma of other groups, because the Vaiṣṇavas understand that the rules and regulations prescribed for the anudita-viveka are meant for their beneficial discipline and eventual elevation.

Saṅgho vāṅhara → nitya māṅhika karvā

The essential direction of all the scriptures is the same: Persons with anudita-viveka should find themselves rigidly obedient to the simple, extraneous, and neophyte instructions of the scriptures; whereas, persons with udita-viveka should seek out and be attached to the deeper scriptural purports.

“The rituals and the applications may differ, but the purport remains the same.

anudita viveka

To the inexperienced eye of a layman of slumbering consciousness, the activities of a person in awakened consciousness may seem contrary to the social norms, but in essence, they are not.

↓
udita viveka → vciṣhava.

Vaiṣṇava

On the other hand, viewed from the position of awakened consciousness, the instructions regarding naimittika-dharma may seem appropriate for people in general, but ultimately they are incomplete, exoteric, diluted, and evanescent.

↓ temporarily

“In actual practice, naimittika-dharma is devoid of direct, transcendental activities.”

On the surface, the performer of naimittika-dharma may appear to be acting on the transcendental platform, but actually, these instrumental mundane duties merely provide the means for approaching the final transcendental goal.

Once the goal is attained, the performances of naimittika-dharma become obsolete, being simply a segment of the path leading to the goal.

Furthermore, naimittika-dharma can never be the complete path; for example, the brāhmaṇa's sandhyā and vandana rituals are like his other religious duties: temporary performances subject to stringent scriptural stipulations—they do not spring from his innate natural spiritual activity.

“At a later stage, having been purified by performing these prescribed duties for a long time, if one is fortunate to come into sādhu-saṅga, saintly association, one develops a spiritual taste for the transcendental activity of chanting harināma.

At this juncture, the duties of sandhyā-vandana are superseded.

However, sandhyā and vandana may contribute to absolute spiritual dharma by elevating people to the point of accepting their prime duty—chanting hari-nāma.

That is to say, chanting harināma, in itself, the absolute transcendental activity.

Although naimittika-dharma is appreciated because it shows the way to spiritual elevation, nevertheless, it is, in itself, ineffective and adulterated, and only the absolute spiritual principle—ultimately—is desirable and useful.

“Both matter itself and cohabiting with matter are undesirable for the living entities.

Naimittika-dharma is supported by a great variety of mundane principles and results, which may keep the practitioners simply enthralled in the mundane nature.

For example, a brāhmaṇa’s worship of the Supreme Lord may be very beneficial, but if he considers himself superior to all other living entities, this spoils his worship and he then obtains detrimental results.

“Similarly, the practices of the eightfold yoga system endow the yogi with vibhūti, mystic power, a rather inferior, very inauspicious result for the living entities.

Bhukti, enjoyment, and mukti, salvation, are both inseparable from naimittika-dharma, and both of which are only fit to be rejected by the jīva.

Therefore, naimittika-dharma contains a major portion of irrelevant activities and their concomitant dangerous results for the living entities.

“Naimittika-dharma is impermanent.”

It cannot be practiced as an eternal religion under all the different conditions the living entity has to undergo.

The specific religious duties of a brāhmaṇa, or the duties of statecraft of the ksatriya, etc., are inevitably discarded with the termination of the immediate cause and reason for one's earthly duties, namely the body.

After being born in one life as a brāhmaṇa, a living entity may get a very low birth in his next life as a caṇḍāla, dog-eater.

Then, the naimittika-dharma as previously prescribed for him in his birth as a brāhmaṇa is not acceptable as the sva-dharma in his birth as a low class caṇḍāla.

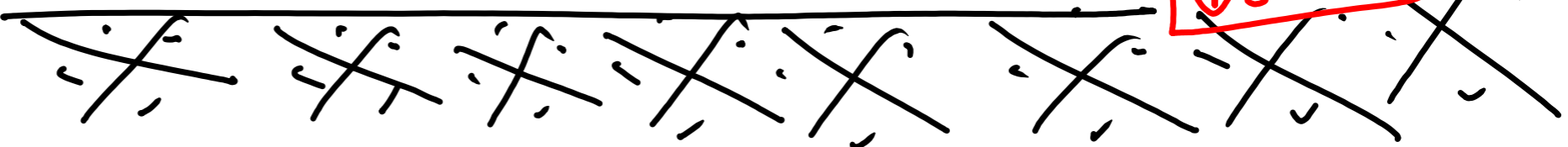
In this instance, the use of the term sva-dharma is merely figurative, because
in every new birth, the conditioned soul assumes a new and temporary sva-
dharma in accordance with the body he has attained; whereas, the real sva-
dharma is nitya-dharma and thus remains constant from life to life.

“If I were to be questioned as to what vaiṣṇava-dharma is, my concise reply
would be: ‘It is the living entity’s nitya-dharma.’”

In a liberated state, the Vaiṣṇava devotee engages in the transcendental
activity of unalloyed devotional service, kṛṣṇa-prema, in pure Kṛṣṇa
consciousness.

Even while still in a conditioned state and under the influence of material nature, the Vaiṣṇava devotee maintains his udita-viveka, awakened consciousness, and pursues transcendental devotional service.

↓ śikṣā



Acting in the material world, he accepts everything that is conducive to spiritual activity and rejects everything that is detrimental.

↓ āhukīyasya śantāḥ pṛetīkīyasya vājān.

↖ Vaiṣṇava

His actions are not hampered by superfluous scriptural stipulations, the do's and don'ts.

↓ not interested

↓

He appreciates and executes any scriptural regulation that enhances his Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Nevertheless, if such regulations are detrimental to his spiritual progress, then he discards them.

Thus, the Vaiṣṇava devotees are the jewels of the earth.

They are everyone's well-wishing friends and bring good fortune to this world.

I beg humbly to offer these points for consideration to this august assembly of Vaiṣṇavas.

Also, kindly forgive me for my mistakes.”