

# Jaiṁa Dharma

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# Chapter Three

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

Valueless  
mundane.

temporary.

Vaiṣṇava dāsa offered his prostrated obeisances to the gathering of devotees and then sat down quietly to one side.

His dissertation had had an astounding impact upon the gathering of Vaiṣnavas, who were moved to profuse tears and spontaneous praise of Vaiṣṇava dāsa, the whole village reverberating with the sounds of eulogy to him.

The inquisitive brāhmaṇa singer tacitly acknowledged the esoteric truths contained in the talk of Vaiṣṇava dāsa.

Of course, some of the arguments had met with doubts in his mind, but the seed of faith in vaiṣṇava-dharma was now lodged deeper than before in his heart.

Standing with folded hands, he spoke out, “Dear respected audience, not claiming to be a Vaiṣṇava, I am nonetheless becoming a Vaiṣṇava by constantly hearing harināma.

If all of you were to kindly enlighten me with your valuable instructions, then that would dissipate the many doubts still clouding my mind.”

Śrī Paramahansa Premadāsa Bābājī, feeling compassion for the brāhmaṇa, replied, “Please try to associate with Vaiṣṇava dāsa as often as possible.

He is erudite in all branches of the Vedic scriptures. After embracing the renounced order of sannyāsa, he lived in Vārāṇasī.

Then our most beloved Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, out of His causeless mercy,  
attracted him to come to Navadvīpa-dhāma.

After diligently tutoring himself in the Vaiṣṇava philosophy, he is now fully  
conversant, and has developed deep attachment and love for chanting  
harināma.”

Upon hearing Bābājī Mahārāja’s instructions, the brāhmaṇa inquirer, Śrī  
Kālidāsa Lāhirī, decided to accept Vaiṣṇava dāsa as his guru, thinking, “A  
brāhmaṇa by birth, he has taken up the renounced order of life and is  
therefore certainly eligible to instruct another brāhmaṇa.

Furthermore, he has proven himself to be well versed in Vaiṣṇava philosophical conclusions.

I can learn a lot about Vaiṣṇavism from him.”

He thus approached Vaiṣṇava dāsa, prostrating himself at his feet, and said, “My dear respected sir, kindly shower your grace upon me.”

Vaiṣṇava dāsa reciprocated by offering prostrated obeisances to Lāhirī Mahāśaya and replied, “I would remain always grateful to you, if you were to look upon me with compassion.”

With the growing purple haze upon the horizon announcing the end of the day, the assembly stood up and dispersed to their individual dwellings.

Lāhirī Mahāśaya lived in a hut surrounded by greeneries. It was in a residential locality, but a little hidden from inquisitive eyes, the whole area being fenced-off by strong bamboo strips.

The small courtyard in front of his hut was taken up by a small bower of mādhavī flower-creepers and a miniature platform for the Tulasī devī plant.

On either side of the courtyard stood two rooms. A nīma tree sapling, a healthy hedge of mogra flowers, and other fruit and flower trees here and there lent an unassuming splendour to this quiet niche.

Mādhava dāsa Bābājī was the owner.

Initially, this bābājī had been very strict in his devotional practices, but later,  
as a result of bad association, he had deviated from the path of Vaiṣṇavism.

Intimate relationship with a woman had contaminated his devotional mood  
and curtailed his devotional practice.

Being impoverished, he had found it difficult to make ends meet and now  
went out begging.

He had also let one of his rooms and thus Lāhirī Mahāśaya was presently his  
tenant.



Late that night, Lāhirī Mahāśaya awoke abruptly. While lying awake, within his mind he reviewed Vaiṣṇava dāsa's exposition, trying to extract the essence.

However, suddenly his attention was arrested by a slight stirring outside; he peered into the courtyard and saw Mādhava dāsa Bābājī talking with a woman.

She apparently noticed Lāhirī's presence and silently slipped away into the dark. Mādhava dāsa Bābājī then came and stood quietly in front of Lāhirī Mahāśaya, hanging his head in shame.

Lāhirī Mahāśaya, "What is this, Bābājī?"

With tear-streaked cheeks, Mādhava dāsa Bābājī replied, “My disastrous fate! What can I say! Alas! What I was before and just look at me now! Paramahansa Premadāsa Bābājī used to respect me so much! But now I am too ashamed to meet him.”

Lāhirī Mahāśaya gently prodded, “Why don’t you explain everything a little more clearly, so we can understand your problem.”

Mādhava dāsa replied, “The woman you just saw was my wife before I took to the renounced life.

After I received initiation and left home, she soon took up residence in a hut on the bank of the Gaṅgā in Śrīpāt Śāntipura.

A long time passed without incident. However, once I accidentally met her on a trip to Śāntipura and asked her why she had renounced home and family life.

She tried to explain that she had grown disinterested in family life after being deprived of service to me, her former husband.

Therefore, she had decided to reside in a holy place, learn about spirituality, and maintain her life by begging.

“I immediately returned to Godruma without further comment.

After a while, she also moved to Godruma, taking up residence in the house  
of a pious milkman.

My troubles began when, almost daily, I would run into her somewhere.

The more I tried to avoid her, the more she intensified her intimacy with me.

She has now built an āśrama near here.

Every night, she is waiting until late and then visiting me, meticulously  
bringing about my downfall.

I have become infamous everywhere and my spiritual progress has been severely reversed.

I am the black sheep amongst the followers of Śrī Caitanya.

After the incident with Choṭa Haridāsa, I am the next to be condemned as a contemptible culprit.

Bābājī's sober society has so far not chastised me, but they no longer have any respect for me."

After giving him a patient hearing, Lāhirī Mahāśaya cautioned, “Mādhava dāsa Bābājī, you must be very careful!”

Both then retired to their respective rooms for the rest of the night.

His mind swarming with thoughts, for Lāhirī Mahāśaya sleep was elusive.

He concluded that Mādhava dāsa Bābājī had become a vāntāśī, one who eats his own vomit by returning to the family life he had renounced, and was now sliding further down to depravity.

Therefore, it was not advisable to remain here, not so much because of the bad association, which could be avoided, but because his own reputation could be tarnished.

The saintly Vaiṣṇavas would perhaps lose respect and no longer instruct him.

In the morning, Lāhirī Mahāśaya went to see Śrī Vaiṣṇava dāsa in Pradyumna-Kuñja.

After greeting him respectfully, he requested a small living space for himself.

~~Vaiṣṇava dāsa approached Paramahansa Premadāsa Bābājī with this request~~  
~~and Lāhirī was granted permission to stay in one of the outlying huts, and his~~  
~~daily meals were arranged with a nearby brāhmaṇa family.~~

Thus ends the Third Chapter of the Jaiva-dharma, entitled: Naimittika-  
dharma: Impermanent Religious Duties Are Incomplete, Pedestrian, Impure  
and Evanescent