

Jaiṅva Dharma

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Chapter Four

The Nitya-dharma Is
Vaiṣṇavism

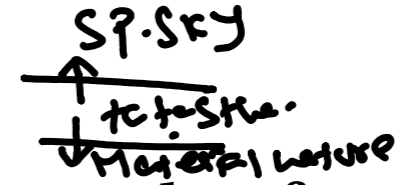
He is the embodiment of eternality, absolute knowledge, and unlimited bliss and is the fountainhead of all energies.

Although He is the self-satisfied controller of all potencies, He is driven by the urge for exhilaration in the company of His hlādinī-śakti, pleasure potency.

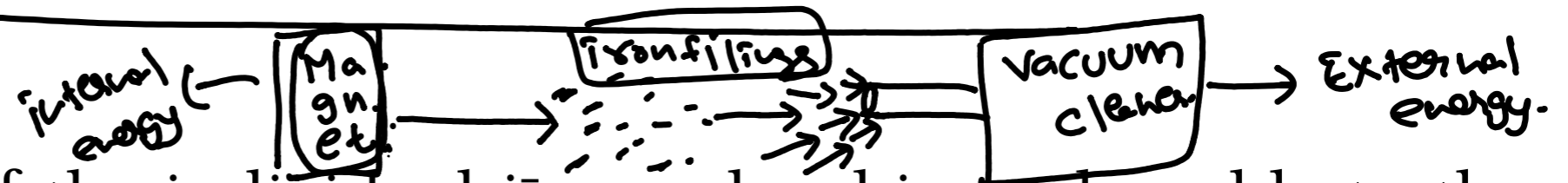
May I request you to kindly tell me about jīva-tattva, the principle of the individual souls.”

Vaiṣṇava dāsa, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa possesses countless potencies of which the taṭasthā-śakti, marginal energy, is one.

This energy is located in the buffer region between the spiritual sky and the material nature and enjoys the facility of close communication with both.



The jīva-tattva is produced from this tatasthā-śakti. The form of the jīva is cit-paramāṇu, an infinitesimal particle of spiritual energy.



The miniscule form of the individual jīva makes him vulnerable to the sway of the jaḍa-jagat, material energy.

Simultaneously however, because of his innate spiritual constitution, even with a slight spiritual support the jīva can become an eternal resident of the transcendental abode of the Lord and experience supreme joy.

“There are two kinds of jīvas: mukta, liberated; and baddha, materially conditioned.”



The mukta-jīvas are eternal citizens of the spiritual world, and the baddha-jīvas are imprisoned in the material world.

The conditioned jīvas are again two-fold: udita-viveka, those with awakened consciousness; anudita-viveka, and those with unawakened consciousness.

Human beings that have no aspiration for self-realization belong, along with the entire animal kingdom, etc., to the category of anudita-viveka and as a result are materially conditioned.

Vaiṣṇaves
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However, those jīvas that have embraced the path of Vaiṣṇavism possess uḍita-viveka.

“Besides the Vaiṣṇavas, no one is genuinely interested in attaining the supreme spiritual goal.”

Hence, the scriptures declare that service to and association with Vaiṣṇavas is by far superior to any other activity.

faith in the scriptures → relishing of chanting → creates eagerness to associate with Vaiṣṇavas

Implicit faith in the scriptures inspires the uḍita-viveka to relish the chanting of harināma, which then creates an eagerness to associate with and serve the Vaiṣṇavas.

The jīvas with anudita-viveka have not yet developed enough faith in the scriptures to take up the chanting of harināma.

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Their religious activities are restricted, at best, to worshiping the Deity form of the Lord in conformity with previously established family traditions and rules; therefore, their hearts lack the religious sentiment required to serve and associate with Vaiṣṇavas.”

Lāhirī Mahāśaya, “Master, I have grasped kṛṣṇa-tattva, the truth about the Supreme Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and have also understood jīva-tattva.

Kindly elaborate upon māyā-tattva, the principle of the illusory material creation.”

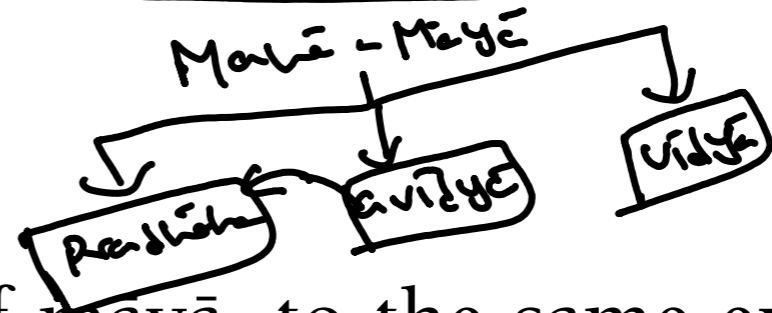
Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, “Māyā, the illusory material energy, is unique among the energies of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This potency is also designated as the aparā-śakti, inferior potency, and further as the bahiraṅgā-śakti, the external potency.

Darkness is always far away from the light; similarly, māyā remains at a good distance from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

The māyā-śakti has created this material world with its fourteen planetary systems and the material ingredients of earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence, and the mundane mistaken identification with the material body known as ahaṅkāra, false ego.

The (gross and subtle bodies) of the conditioned jīva are both products of the māyā-śakti, but liberation removes this material contamination that covers the spiritual identity of the jīva.



“As deep as the jīva is in the clutches of māyā, to the same extent he is also alienated from Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

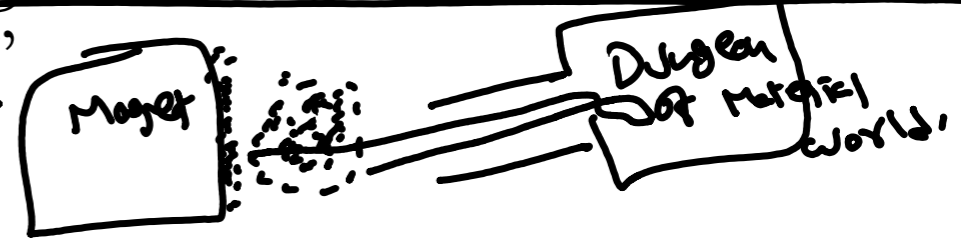
To the degree he has shrugged off the mantle of servitorship to māyā, he can advance towards the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The material world has come into existence by the desire of Kṛṣṇa to assist the jīva in his attempt to exploit and enjoy māyā.

However, this mundane universe is not a permanent residence for the jīva but merely a prison-house lodging him temporarily."

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Lāhirī Mahāśaya, "O master! Kindly enlighten me on the eternal relationships between māyā, jīva, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa."



Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, "The jīva is a minute spiritual spark; hence, he is eternally a servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa"



The material nature acts as a dungeon wherein he is held captive; however, whilst imprisoned he can also take advantage of saintly association to help him begin the process of chanting harināma.

Then, gradually, by the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he becomes situated his svarūpa, eternally perfected [spiritual identity], and relishes the sweet nectar of devotional service to the Lord in His transcendental abode.

This is the confidential truth about the eternal relationship between these three principles.

How can one actually engage in pure devotion without this knowledge?”

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Lāhirī Mahāśaya, “If knowledge is acquired through education and study, is it imperative to first become a scholar before one becomes a Vaiṣṇava?”

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, “To be a Vaiṣṇava, neither formal education, nor fluency in a particular language is necessary, but it is essential for the jīva to eradicate the nescience of material illusion.”



This can only be accomplished when he takes complete shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master who is a pure Vaiṣṇava saint and who infuses the heart of the disciple with the knowledge of sambandha-tattva through his teachings and exemplary actions.

This is the correct explanation of dīkṣā, initiation, and śikṣā, spiritual instruction.”

Lāhirī Mahāśaya, “What follows dīkṣā and śikṣā?”