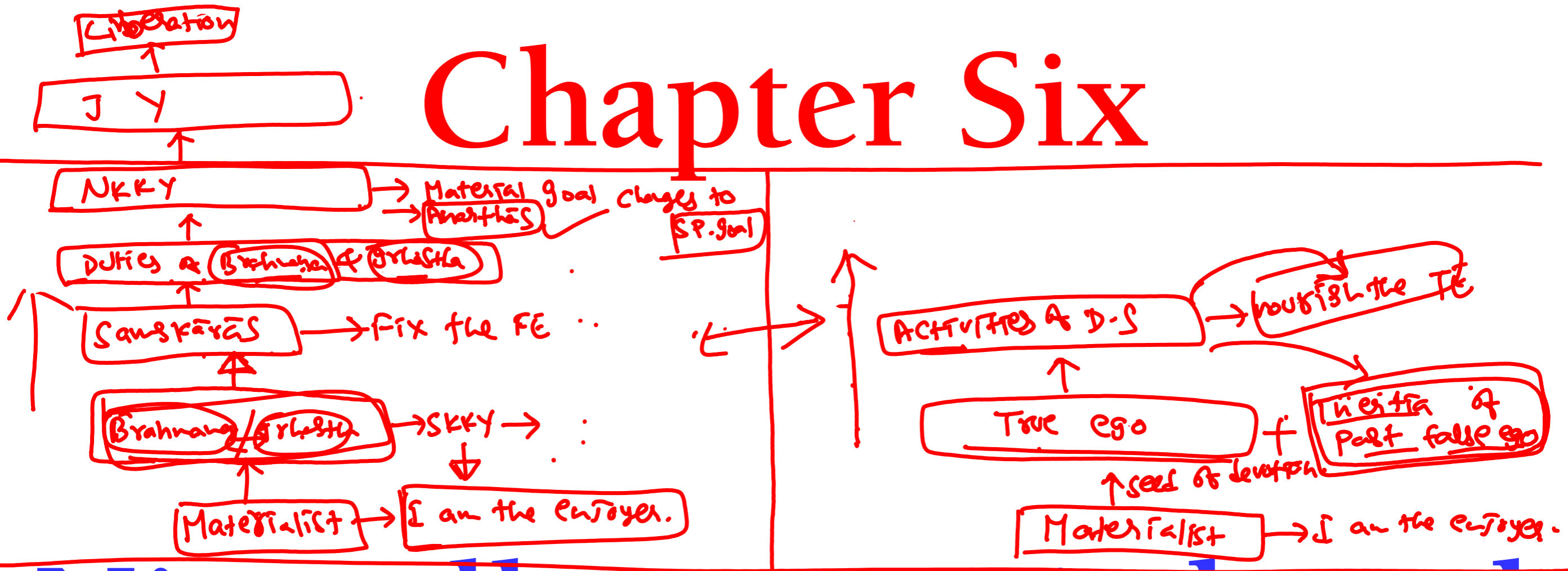


# Jaiṡa Dharma

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# Chapter Six



## Nitya-dharma: Birth and Caste Differences

Muslims are not eligible to execute varnāśrama-karma, so how can they ascend to bhakti?”

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, “Persons outside the varnāśrama system, the antyajās are also eligible to embrace the path of bhakti.

All scriptures have supported this point. The Bhagavad-gītā 9.32 states:

mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya  
ye ‘pi syuh pāpa-yonayaḥ  
striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās  
te ‘pi yānti parām gatim

“O son of Pārtha, those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower birth—women, vaiśyas, (merchants) and śūdras (menial labourers) and of sinful families—can attain the supreme destination.”

“Here bhakti is indicated by the word āśritya, taking shelter. This is confirmed in the Skanda Purāna, Kāśī-khaṇḍa 21.63, which is quoted in the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 10.106:

brāhmanah ksatriyo vaiśyaḥ  
śūdro vā yadi vetaraḥ  
viṣṇu-bhakti-samāyukto  
jñeyaḥ sarvottamaś ca saḥ

“Whether one is a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya, śūdra, or an outcaste, if he has taken shelter of viṣṇu-bhakti, he is considered to be superior to all.”

“Further, we find in the Nāradiya-purāna, which is quoted in the Hari-  
bhakti-vilāsa 10.87:

śvapaco ‘pi mahīpāla  
visnu-bhaktō dvijādhikah  
viṣṇu bhakti-vihīno yo  
yatiś ca śvapacādhikah

“O king, if a caṇḍāla, dogeater, embraces the path of pure devotion to the  
Supreme Lord, Śrī Viṣṇu, he is superior to a brāhmaṇa. On the other hand, if  
a sannyāsī is not a devotee of Śrī Viṣṇu, then he is more degraded than a  
caṇḍāla.’

Cūḍāmani, “Granted, there are numerous scriptural proofs—but it is  
imperative to draw conclusions.

What is the method for removing the blemish of a birth in a base caste?

Can this birth-slur be abrogated in any way other than with death and thus rebirth?"

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, "The misfortune of a low birth results from prārabdhakarma, sinful reactions, from the activities of previous births."

Such reactions are eliminated by the chanting of harināma. The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.16.44 declares:

yan-nāma sakrc chravaṇāt  
pukkaśo 'pi vimucyate saṁsārāt

“Merely by hearing harināma only once, even caṇḍālas, men of the lowest class, are freed from all material contamination.”

Further, in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.2.46:

nātaḥ param karma-nibandha-kṛntanam  
mumukṣatām tīrtha-padānukīrtanāt  
na yat punaḥ karmasu sajjate mano  
rajas-tamobhyām kalilam tato 'nyathā

“Therefore, one who desires freedom from material bondage should adopt the process of chanting and glorifying the name, fame, form, and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, at whose feet all the holy places stand.

“

One cannot derive the proper benefit from other methods, such as pious atonement, speculative knowledge and meditation in mystic yoga, because even after following such methods one takes to fruitive activities again, unable to control his mind, which is contaminated by the base qualities of nature, namely passion and ignorance.’

“Furthermore, in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.33.7:

aho bata śvapaco ‘to garīyān  
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam  
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā  
brahmānūcur nāma gṛṇanti ye te

“Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting harināma! Even if born in the families of dogeaters, such persons are worshipable. Persons who chant harināma must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Aryans. To be chanting harināma they must have bathed at the holy places of pilgrimage, studied the Vedas, and fulfilled everything required.’



Cūḍāmaṇi, “In that case, why cannot a caṇḍāla who is chanting harināma perform yajña, fire sacrifice?”

Maimittika  
dharma  
Kam-kendya  
↑

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, “For a person to be eligible to perform yajña, he must take birth as a brāhmaṇa.

A brāhmaṇa must first receive the gāyatrī-mantra and brahminical thread, which is sāvitra initiation, before he is allowed to perform the different Vedic rituals.

Similarly, a caṇḍāla, although purified by chanting harināma must first be born into a brāhmaṇa family before he is eligible to conduct yajña and the other Vedic rituals, which are readily available to him by such a birth.

However, the former caṇḍāla—purified by chanting harināma—can perform all the aṅgas, limbs, of bhakti, which are infinitely greater than yajñas.”

Cudamani, “This is a very strange siddhānta, conclusion.

One who is denied exercising an elementary right ends up having claim to a much superior position.

What simple proofs can you put forward?”

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, “Human activities can be categorized under two headings: vyāvahārika, mundane and social; and pāramārthika, spiritual.

There are instances where a person is spiritually advanced, but is not allowed to perform certain mundane, vyāvahārika activities.

For example, a person is born as a Muslim, but acquires the qualities the sattva-guna like a pure brāhmaṇa; in fact, spiritually, he is a brāhmaṇa, yet he is barred from the vyāvahārika act of marrying a brāhmaṇa bride."

Cūḍāmaṇi, "Why is he not eligible? What will be his offence if he does?"

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, "If one acts against social human norms, one commits a social impropriety"

Those who are proud of knowing the social etiquette will never acquiesce to such impropriety.

Therefore, in spite of <sup>Spiritual</sup> pāramārthika eligibility, one should not go against the principles of general society.”

Cūdāmaṇi, “Kindly reiterate the necessary qualifications for performing karma and for performing bhakti.”

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, <sup>Social/Mundane</sup> “Vyāvahārika qualifications such as a privileged birth and one’s nature prepare one for performing tat-tat-karma-yogya-svabhāva-janma, activities suitable to one’s social station, mentality, and birth.”

Faith, devotion, and activities according to the ultimate scriptural conclusions—bhakti-tattvika-śraddhā—bestow the eligibility to execute bhakti.”

Cūdāmani, “Please do not try to confuse me with the theological jargon of the Vedānta, but explain to me in prosaic terms what is meant by tat-tat-karma-yogya-svabhāva-janma?””

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, “Śama, peacefulness through control of the senses; dama, control of the mind; tapaḥ, austerity; śauca, purity; santosa, satisfaction; kṣamā, forgiveness; saraṭatā, simplicity, straight-forwardness; īśa-bhakti, devotion to Bhagavān; dayā, mercy and compassion; and satya, truthfulness, are some qualifications which constitute the brahminical nature.

“Śaurya, heroism; bala, physical power; tejā, physical prowess; dhṛti, resolute determination; titikṣā, tolerance; udārata, generosity; udyama, perseverance, enthusiasm; dhīratā, gravity, steadfastness in leadership; brahmanyatā, devotion to the brāhmanas; and aiśvarya, opulence, are hallmarks of the kṣatriya nature.

“Āstikya, theistic religiosity; dāna, charity; nistha, faithful dedication; adāmbhikatā, humility; artha-trṣṇā, eagerness for wealth, are the nature of a vaiśya.

“Dvija-go-deva-sevā, serving the brāhmanas, the cow, the devas; and yathā-lābha-santosa, satisfaction with whatever is obtained, are the qualifications of a śūdra.

“Āśaucam, unclean habits; mithyā, dishonesty; caurya, stealing; nāstikatā, atheism; vṛtha kalaha, quarrelling; kāma, lust; krodha, anger; and indriya-trṣṇā, hankering to gratifying the senses, are the activities and characteristics of the antyajas, outcastes.

{The śāstras recommend that a person's varna is ascertained by his guna, nature, and karma, activities, not solely by the assessment of his janma, birth, though recently this has become the exclusive practice.

A person's guna determines his psychology and preferences, and ultimately his expertise in a particular kind of work.

Those svabhāva, individual natures, which I have just now enumerated,  
prompt the corresponding ~~cat-cat~~ karma-~~kyoga~~-svabhāva.

“Sometimes janma is the dominant factor in the development of a particular  
guṇa, and sometimes association after janma becomes the dominant factor.

Association, of course, begins at janma from which time one's guṇa is  
moulded, thus indicating that janma is certainly a factor. ✘

However, janma cannot be deemed the only factor when considering the  
eligibility for a particular karma. Such an idea would be a great mistake for  
there are surely a variety of other reasons and causes affecting one's guṇa and  
resultant eligibility.



Therefore, the śāstras point out that eligibility for a particular karma must be ascertained ultimately on the basis of one's guṇa.”

Cūḍāmani, “What is tattvika-śraddhā?”

Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, “Simple, guileless faith in the Supreme Lord—and consequently sincere bhakti rendered to Him—is known as tāttivika-śraddhā.

Atāttvika-śraddhā, unreal false faith, in the Lord is developed in an impious person's heart when he performs only the external aspects and rituals of worship and—out of pride and greed—uses this mask of religiosity to pursue his cherished material goals.