

Jaiṡa Dharma

by Śrīla Saccidānanda
Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Chapter Seven

Nitya-dharma and
Samsāra, Material
Existence

Having had some previous education, he spent his leisure time in the grocery shop reading a book called (Śrī Kṛṣṇa-vijaya) by Śrī Guṇarāja Khān.

For six months, he ran his business honestly and hosted guests daily.

By then the residents of Kuliyā-grāma had become acquainted with Caṇḍīdāsa's background and looked upon him with a new respect.

Yādava dāsa, a gṛhastha-vaiṣṇava, was also living in that village.

Every day, he held a public reading of the famous biographical work on the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya, called the Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata, which Candīdāsa would sometimes attend.

Yādava dāsa and his wife had dedicated their lives to serving the Vaiṣṇavas,
and now Caṇḍīdāsa and his wife, being inspired by this example, also began
to serve the Vaiṣṇavas.

One day, Caṇḍīdāsa enquired of Yādava dāsa, “What is this saṃsāra, material
existence?”

Yādava dāsa replied, “The holy island of Godrumadvīpa on the other side of
the Gaṅgā shelters many knowledgeable Vaiṣṇavas.

Let us both go there and place this question to them. Many times previously,
I have been there for spiritual education and at present, the Vaiṣṇava
scholars of Godrumadvīpa are known to be much more learned in the
scriptures than the brāhmaṇa paṇḍitās.

Everyone knows that recently the brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas received a good thrashing from the hands of one Śrī Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī in a scriptural debate.

So definitely the Vaiṣṇavas will be able to properly answer your question.”

Yādava dāsa and Candīdāsa decided to cross the Gaṅgā the next day and visit the Vaiṣṇavas.

Damayantī devī, whose miserliness had disappeared by regularly serving the Vaiṣṇavas, said, “I would like to accompany you both to Godrumadvīpa.”

Yādava dāsa replied, “None of the Vaiṣṇavas there is a gr̥hastha; they are mostly renounced Vaiṣṇavas who have left their homes.”

I am worried that if you come they may be disturbed.”

Damayantī insisted, “I will remain at a respectable distance and from there offer my obeisances to them.”

I will not enter inside their kuñja, grove.

I am just an old lady; certainly they will not be angry.”

Yādava dāsa replied, “Yes, it is not customary for a woman to enter their kuñja.

You should remain at another place close by and on our way back we can all return together.”

It was three in the afternoon when they alighted from the ferry-boat and proceeded towards Pradyumna-kuñja.

Damayantī devī offered her praṇāmas, obeisances, from the entrance of the kuñja and went away to sit at a distance under a shady old banyan tree.

Yādava dāsa and Caṇḍīdāsa entered the kuñja and offered their daṇḍavat-praṇāmas with sincere devotion to the assembly of Vaiṣṇavas seated upon the Śrī Mādhavī-mālatī Maṇḍapa.

Śrī Paramahaṁsa Bābājī was sitting there, surrounded by Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī, Lāhirī Mahāśaya, Ananta dāsa Bābājī, and many others.

Yādava dāsa and Caṇḍīdāsa came near and quietly sat down next to them.

Ananta dāsa Bābājī questioned, “Who is this new person?” Yādava dāsa explained the recent history of Caṇḍīdāsa and the reason for their visit.

Ananta dāsa Bābājī spoke out with a touch of humour, “Ah yes! This is actually saṁsāra!”

One who has understood what saṁsāra means is intelligent and he who is swirling unknowingly in the whirlpool of saṁsāra is pitiable.”

Nitya-sukṛti unfailingly brings great spiritual benediction and Caṇḍīdāsa’s consciousness had been becoming purified gradually through his recent activities.

↳ bhakti Saṅga
bhakti-kriyā Saṅga

Serving Vaiṣṇavas, reading Vaiṣṇava literature, hearing spiritual topics are all nitya-sukṛti, and by performing these activities the heart is cleansed and faith in pure devotional service is easily evoked.

This being Candīdāsa’s present condition as Ananta dāsa Bābājī spoke his heart softened and he enquired, “My humble prayer is that you may kindly enlighten me about the true nature of saṁsāra.”

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Caṇḍīdāsa, your question is somewhat difficult.

I would rather enquire from Śrī Paramahaṁsa Premadāsa Bābājī or Vaiṣṇava dāsa Bābājī.”

Paramahaṁsa Premadāsa Bābājī responded, “Ananta dāsa Bābājī’s capacity is equal to the gravity of this question.

Today we will receive spiritual instruction from him.”

Ananta dāsa Bābājī started, “Now that I have the approval of the assembly to speak, I will most certainly say everything within my knowledge.

At the very outset, I meditate upon the lotus-feet of my Gurudeva, Śrīla Pradyumna Brahmācārī who is an eternal associate of the Supreme Lord and beg for his blessings.

Answer → What is Samsāra?

“There are two distinctive conditions of the jīva: he is either liberated, or, otherwise, he is entangled in material life, samsāra.

The liberated jīva is a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa who has never come under the sway of māyā, or alternatively he has transcended the material nature by the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and is now in the liberated situation.

“One who has turned away from Kṛṣṇa and denied his relationship with Him falls into the clutches of māyā; thus he is in entangled in saṁsāra from a time without beginning.”

The liberated jīva, on the other hand, being fully engaged in service to Kṛṣṇa is transcendently situated.

He is not located in the material nature but is an eternal resident of one of the transcendental, spiritual abodes—such as Goloka, Vaikuntha, and Vrndāvana.

There are an unlimited number of liberated souls

bhayaṁ

← dīpīyā
abhinaya

absorption
in matter

ISāḍ apetaḥya → Turns away from
↓
tan māyayāto → Māyā devī
↓
Vīparyayo - asurītiḥ →
b) Makes his identity
with his body. c) makes him
forget his
cos + ritual
condition

“The number of the materially entangled souls is also endlessly numerous.”

Since they have rejected Kṛṣṇa, māyā, the illusory energy and shadow
potency of Kṛṣṇa, has imprisoned them in the mundane nature by covering
them with the three material gunas: sattva goodness; rajaḥ passion; and
tamaḥ ignorance.

Diversity in the material condition of the jīvas is a result of the varying
intensities and combinations of these three guṇas.

These variations are evident in the jīvas' physiognomy, mentality, habits, geographical situations, speed of movement, physical capability, and so on.

“In his pure state, the self-cognition of the jīva is ‘I am an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.’

However, upon entering the mundane plane each jīva adopts false identities throughout his many different lives and thus perceives himself in so many changing roles—‘I am a human being,’ ‘I am a deva,’ ‘I am an animal,’ ‘I am a king,’ ‘I am a brāhmaṇa,’ ‘I am a caṇḍāla,’ ‘I am a sick man,’ ‘I am a hungry man,’ ‘I am a insulted person,’ ‘I am a benefactor,’ ‘I am a husband,’ ‘I am a wife,’ ‘I am a son,’ ‘I am an enemy,’ ‘I am a friend,’ ‘I am a scholar,’ ‘I am handsome,’ ‘I am rich,’ ‘I am poor,’ ‘I am happy,’ ‘I am sad,’ ‘I am courageous,’ ‘I am weak,’ and so on, endlessly.

These false identities are known as ahaṅkāra, false egoism.

There is also a further covering energy, which is known as mamatā,
attachment.

This compels the jīva to identify himself as the possessor of material objects
and persons.

This is illustrated with such concepts as ‘This is my house,’ ‘These are my
possessions,’ ‘This is my body,’ ‘This is my caste,’ ‘This is my race,’ ‘This is
my strength,’ ‘These are my looks,’ ‘These are my qualities,’ ‘This is my
education,’ ‘This is my renunciation,’ ‘This is my knowledge,’ ‘These are my
achievements,’ ‘This is my wealth,’ ‘These are my servants,’ etc., etc.

So this massive intricate net woven by the false concepts of 'me' and 'mine' is, in a word, saṁsāra."

(Yādava dāsa) "In the conditioned imprisoned material existence, 'me' and 'mine' are certainly prominent within the consciousness of the jīva. Do they remain in the liberated state of the jīva?"

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, "In the liberated condition, the concepts of 'me' and 'mine' are purely spiritual and free of all material inebriety.

When in transcendence, the jīva identifies himself with his pure self, which is the constitutional nature bestowed upon him by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

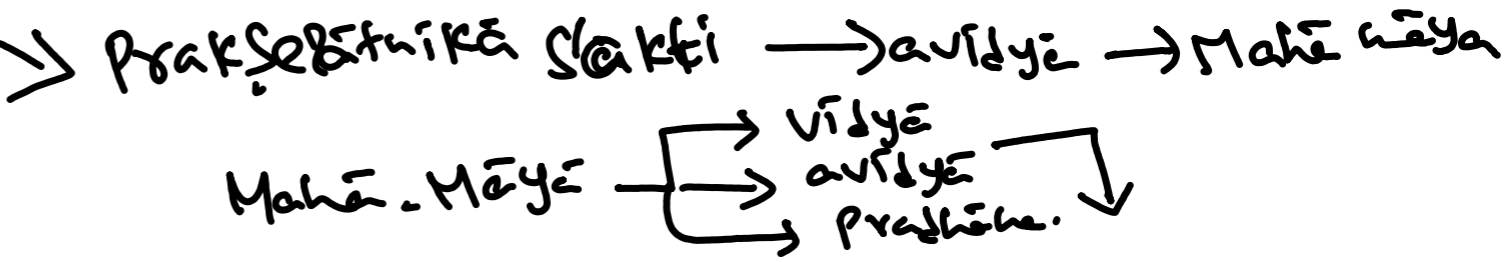
On the liberated spiritual platform, there are innumerable identities of ‘me’ that are the real egotism of the jīva.

And being thus established as the servitors of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the jīvas experience the many varieties of cit-rasa, spiritual mellow.

The numerous ingredients that comprise this cit-rasa inspire a sense of ‘wanting to be the possessor,’ from which the spiritual concept of ‘mine’ develops.”

Yādava dāsa, “Then why is it a mistake to expand to such a wide range of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ in the conditioned state?”

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “In the pure state, ‘me’ and ‘mine’ are absolute realities, they have factual existence; but in saṁsāra, all varieties of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ are false and artificially imposed.”



They do not represent the true self of the jīva; rather, they are transitory illusory identifications.

All such myriad identities in saṁsāra are temporary and artificial and as such are the cause of the transient mundane joys and sorrows.”

Yādava dāsa, “Is material saṁsāra a falsity?”