

Jaiṁa Dharma

by Śrīla Saccidānanda
Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Chapter Seven

Nitya-dharma and
Samsāra, Material
Existence

Yādava dāsa, “Revered master, you have just mentioned sādhu-saṅga.

Nevertheless, sādhus are also present in and harassed by this saṁsāra.

How can they offer salvation to others?”

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Indeed, the sādhus live in saṁsāra, but the saṁsāra condition of the sādhus and the saṁsāra condition of the jīvas who are captivated by māyā differ widely from each other.

Seen from the outside, both saṁsāra conditions appear to be the same, but ontologically they are poles apart.

Moreover, the sādhus have been living in this world since time immemorial, but unfortunately gross materialistic men cannot recognize them and so saintly association has become uncommon.

“Jīvas under the sway of māyā may be categorized into two groups.

Jīvas under māyā

a) viśayi / bhubhukṣuṣ

b) viveka-yukta

One group is engrossed in the insignificant pleasures of sensuality and is immensely infatuated with saṁsāra, while the other group, after realising that māyā on the gross material level is ill-equipped to offer satisfaction, employs intelligent discrimination in the hope of attaining a higher quality of happiness.

Thus, there are two groups of jīvas living in saṁsāra: viveka-śūnya without discrimination; and viveka-yukta, endowed with discrimination.

“Scholars commonly refer to them as viṣayī, gross materialists, and mumukṣu, seekers of liberation.

The term mumukṣu should not be misinterpreted to mean a person striving for knowledge of the nirbheda-brahman, undifferentiated Brahman.

The Vedas have given the actual definition of the mumukṣu as someone who searches for the soothing escape of self-realization, after being incinerated in the fire of material existence.

Thus, the Sanskrit word mumukṣu means desire for liberation.

When the mumuksus cast aside the desire for mukti and engage in unmotivated service to the Lord, they enter into the realm of pure bhakti.

Actually, the scriptures do not urge anyone to adopt mukti as his ultimate goal.

Nevertheless, as soon as the mumukṣu person is enlightened with the tattva of Kṛṣṇa and jīva, he is automatically liberated.

→ Kṛṣṇa-dāsa → TĒ

For example, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 6.14.3-5, states:

rajobhiḥ sama-saṅkhyātāḥ pārthivair iha jantavaḥ
teṣāṃ ye kecanehante śreyo vai manujādayaḥ

In this material world (**iha pārthivaiḥ**) there are as many living entities as atoms (**rajobhiḥ sama-saṅkhyātāḥ jantavaḥ**). Among these living entities (**teṣāṃ**), a few are human beings or devatās (**kecana manuja ādayaḥ**), and among them (**teṣāṃ**), a few practice dharma (**kecana śreyo īhante**).

prāyo mumukṣavas teṣāṃ
kecanaiva dvijottama
mumukṣūṇāṃ sahasreṣu
kaścin mucyeta sidhyati

O best of the brāhmaṇas (**dvijottama**)! Out of those follow dharma (**teṣāṃ**), only a few desire liberation (**kecana eva prāyo mumukṣavaḥ**). Among many thousands who desire liberation (**mumukṣūṇāṃ sahasreṣu**), one person becomes a jivamukta (**kaścin mucyeta**) and out of many such persons, only one attains the spiritual world (**sidhyati**).

|| 6.14.4 ||

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“If a devotee of Śrī Nārāyaṇa is extremely rare, then a devotee of Kṛṣṇa is even more exceptional.”

Those who have attained the liberated state become Kṛṣṇa’s devotees after nullifying the noisome mumukṣu, the desire for liberation.

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अज्ञान

“The devotee must remain in saṁsāra as long as his bodily tabernacle exists, but his saṁsāra condition is diametrically opposed to that of the viṣayī, gross materialists.”

The devotees of Kṛṣṇa have two situations within this world: gr̥hastha, householder; and tyāgī, renunciate.”

Yādava dāsa, “From your explanation and the ślokas from the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam that you have just quoted I conclude that there are four different states for the viveka-yukta persons. Amongst these four, whose association may be called sādhu-saṅga?”

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Viveki^①, intelligent, enlightened; mumukṣu^②, desirous of liberation; mukta-siddha, liberated; and bhakta^④, devotee, are the four different states of viveka-yukta.^③

For the viṣayī association with the vivekī^①, who is endowed with discrimination between matter and spirit, and the mumukṣu, the desirer of liberation, is beneficial.

The mukta-siddha jīvas may be subdivided into two groups: one who^③ is eager for rasa, spiritual mellow; and one who is attached to māyāvādī monistic liberation.^①

Association with the first type of mukta-siddha jīva is certainly the more advantageous.

The mukta-siddha māyāvādī, on the other hand, is an offender; his association is not recommended for anyone.

Upon mukta-siddha māyāvādī, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.2.32, gives this verdict:

ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninas
tvayyasta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ
āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ
patanty adho 'nādr̥ta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ

“O lotus-eyed one, those who think they are liberated in this life, but are without devotional service to You, are of impure intelligence. Although they accept austere severities and penances and rise to the spiritual position, to impersonal Brahman realization, they fall down again because they neglect to worship Your lotus feet.’

“The fourth kind of viveka-yukta is the bhaktas, the Lord’s devotees, who may be divided into two groups.

Firstly, those inclined to aiśvarya, Kṛṣṇa’s opulence, their mood is laced with awe and reverence toward the Lord.

And secondly, those who are inclined to mādhurya, a spontaneous loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

For everyone in all respects, association with bhaktas is certainly the most edifying—and especially the association of the mādhurya-para, the bhakta inclined to mādhurya.

If one takes shelter of such a bhakta, transcendental rasa will appear within one's heart."

Yādava dāsa, "Earlier you said that Kṛṣṇa's bhaktas are found in two situations within this world. Can you speak about the bhaktas in detail, so that a dull person like me can properly understand?"

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, "Bhaktas are found in two situations: the gr̥hastha-bhaktas, the householder devotees; and the gr̥ha-tyāgī-bhaktas, the devotees who have renounced householder life."

Yādava dāsa, "Kindly describe in a detailed manner the relationship of the gr̥hastha-bhakta to saṁsāra?"

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “A person who just builds a house and lives in it is not necessarily a gr̥hastha.”

To be a gr̥hastha one must accept a suitable wife by marriage, and establish a household—both items according to the Vedic rules and regulations.

A person practicing bhakti situated in such a manner is a gr̥hastha-bhakta.

“The conditioned soul exploits this material nature through the five doors of the knowledge-gathering senses.”

With his eyes, he sees form and colour, and with his ears, he hears sounds.

He smells with his nose, tastes with his tongue, and feels and touches with his skin.

With these five senses, he probes this world and develops attachment to it.

The more he is attracted to matter, the further he moves away from the sweet Lord of the Heart, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This is known as the enchanting external phantasmagoria of saṁsāra.

Those who are thusly submerged in saṁsāra are called viṣayī.

However, when the Lord's devotee is situated in household life, he does not
abandon himself to sensual cravings like the viṣayī.

He takes his dharma-patnī, wife as a partner in realizing nitya-dharma, as a
maidservant of Kṛṣṇa and his sons and daughters are also seen as the
servitors of Kṛṣṇa.

śraddha bhakti

His eyes seek fulfilment in seeing the Lord's Deity form and other
paraphernalia connected to Kṛṣṇa.

His ears yearn to be satisfied by hearing Kṛṣṇa conscious topics about the Lord and His devotees.

He exults in smelling the fragrance of tulasī leaves and buds, scents, and flowers offered to Kṛṣṇa.

His tongue relishes uttering harināma and tasting the delicious food offered to Kṛṣṇa.

He experiences divine ecstasy by touching the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas.

His ambitions and hopes, activities, desires, hospitality, and worship of the devas are all carried out as a part of his main pursuit, rendering devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

His entire life is a joyous festival, consisting of compassion towards all living entities, chanting harināma, and serving the Vaiṣṇavas.

To [enjoy] material pleasures [without attachment] is only possible in the household life of the Lord's devotees.

For the jīvas in Kali-yuga, it is most suitable to become grhastha-bhaktas for then there is no fear of falling down and full spiritual advancement is definitely achievable.

“Many highly intelligent and self-realized gurus have been amongst the gr̥hastha-vaiṣṇavas.

If their hereditary descendants also become pure Vaisnavas, then they are also gr̥hastha-bhaktas whose association is most beneficial to humanity.”

Yādava dāsa, “Gr̥hastha-vaiṣṇavas have to remain under the regulations of the smartas, the karma-kāṇḍī brāhmaṇas, otherwise they face problems in society.

How can they cultivate śuddha-bhakti under these circumstances?”

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “Gṛhastha-vaiṣṇavas have to conform to certain social conventions such as vivāha, Vedic marriage of sons and daughters; śrāddha offering oblations to departed parents; and so on.”

However, they are not required to perform kāmya-karma, fruitive activities for the purpose of materialistic ambitions.

“As one can understand, one has to admit dependence upon external things in order to maintain and care for the material body.”

Even those who claim to be nirapekṣa, detached, have to accept this dependence.

When a person is sick or suffers great pain, he must take medicine.

Furthermore, he must procure food and eat when hungry, arrange for clothing against the chill, build a roof against the sun and rain, and so on.

Such necessities are normal for the embodied soul, and he is dependent upon them.

The real meaning of being detached is to factually reduce this dependence.

However, as long as the material body is present, it is impossible to be totally independent of material needs.

Still, at the same time, the reduction of material necessities is certainly conducive to devotional surrender and progress.

“If a person is able to dovetail all the above-mentioned activities with Kṛṣṇa’s service, then the imperfections are rectified.

For example, a person should not marry with the express intention of expanding his dynasty, ostentatiously worshipping Prajapati, the deva of progeny.

Rather, he should think that he is accepting Kṛṣṇa’s maidservant as his life-partner to establish a Kṛṣṇa conscious family.

Such resolutions are favourable to bhakti.

Materialistic relatives, priests, and others may offer their advice, but ultimately a person accrues the result of his own vows and resolution.

“A gr̥hastha-bhakta will observe śrāddha by giving kṛṣṇa-prasādam to the departed soul as piṇḍa, oblations, and feed and offer charity to vaiṣṇava-brāhmaṇas—this is spiritually beneficial to him.

When the devotional practices of bhakti are integrated with the smarta rituals, then the negative fruitive results are removed.

On account of including the Vaiṣṇava activities of śuddha-bhakti, there will be no hindrance on the path of bhakti.

Social dealings should be conducted dispassionately and with detachment, while spiritual activities must be executed in sādhu-saṅga.

Then all these performances are pruned of their imperfections.

Just observe that the majority of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pāraśada, eternal associates, are gr̥hastha-bhaktas.

Since the dawn of history, many devotees who were rajarṣi, saintly kings; devas, demigods; and rṣis, philosophers, were gr̥hastha-bhaktas.

You must understand that gr̥hastha-bhaktas are universally worshipable.”

Yādava dāsa, “If the gr̥hastha-bhaktas are so highly estimated and are heir to the treasure of the most sublime aspects of kṛṣṇa-prema, then why do some of them enter the renounced order of life and thus become gr̥ha-tyāgī, renouncers of home?”

Ananta dāsa Bābājī, “A very few of the gr̥hastha-bhaktas become suitable candidates for the renounced life of a gr̥ha-tyāgī and their association is extremely rare.”

Yādava dāsa, “What qualifications are required to become a gr̥ha-tyāgī?”