

Jaiṁa Dharma

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Chapter Sixteen

Nitya-dharma: Sambandha,
Abhidheya and Prayojana

Part Four: The Jīva Swallowed by Māyā, the Illusory Energy

Vrajanātha returned home, pondering over the true nature of the jīva as he had just heard from the Daśa-mūla.

Lying in his bed at night, he considered, “My question regarding, ‘Who am I?’ has been answered and I realize now that I am but a spark of a ray emanating from the transcendental Sun, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Although minute in size, I am inherently eternal, cognizant, and of the nature of a drop of unlimited transcendental bliss.

Even though I am infinitesimal, I possess a spiritual identity and my spiritual form closely resembles the spiritual form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.



As a consequence of my spiritual form being unmanifest, I am presently experiencing the misfortunes of material life.

My good fortune will arise once I sincerely endeavour to reawaken my spiritual form and identity.

I must understand why this pall of misfortune has come to hang over me and will clarify this matter with my guru tomorrow.”

Sleep stealthily crept in around midnight and in the hours before dawn
Vrajanātha dreamt of giving up material life and becoming a Vaiṣṇava.

After awakening, he lay contemplating the hope that perhaps the Lord would
help him escape his material entanglement.

He had just gone out and taken a seat in the courtyard upon the raised
platform used for religious festivals when a group of his young students came
and touched his feet, offering him their respects and addressing him as
follows, “We have learnt innumerable arguments on logic from you in the
past.

Now our desire is to be tutored on the famous book of logic, Nyāya
Kusumāñjali.”

Vrajanātha replied unpretentiously, “I have packed away all my books for good, and just like the illustrious Nimāi Paṇḍita I am determined to take a new path.

You should approach another teacher.”

At the same time that the students were leaving, Śrī Caturbhuja Miśra came in to see Vrajanātha’s grandmother with a marriage proposal for Vrajanātha.

He explained to her, “Śrī Vijaynātha Bhaṭṭācārya hails from aristocracy and his daughter is very beautiful.

She would be an excellent match for your grandson.

The Bhaṭṭācārya has not yet promised his daughter to anyone. Vrajanātha may accept the proposal right away.”

Having overheard this conversation, Vrajanātha thought, “What a dilemma! Here I am seriously considering leaving family and home and, at this most inopportune moment, along comes a marriage proposal arranged by my grandmother.”

The question became a most contentious issue, driving his mother, grandmother and the other elder ladies of the family to one side of the dispute.

On the other side, Vrajanātha found himself alone.

The entire day became wasted in argument and counter-argument, and eventually the evening descended almost unnoticed.

However, soon rain clouds announced their presence with deep rumblings and bolts of lightning, which served to mute the loud discussion.

A heavy downpour soon followed, and so it became impossible for Vrajanātha to go to Māyāpura that day.

Early next morning the continuing contention on the marriage issue again spoiled Vrajanātha's mood and appetite. Not until after dark could Vrajanātha leave his house.

He then hurried to the little kuṭīra of Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī and falling flat upon the ground offered prostrate obeisances.

The revered Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī said, “The rains must have kept you from coming last night, I am very happy that you have come now.”

Vrajanātha burst out saying, “Dear master, suddenly I have been faced with a serious problem, which I would like to explain later.

For now I request you to clarify a certain question:

Q-1
The jīva is of pure spiritual substance, why then does he have to descend into the degraded material world?"

A gentle smile appeared on Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī's lips and he replied with the sixth śloka of the Daśa-mūla:

A-1

svarūpārthair hīnān nija-sukha-parān kṛṣṇa-vimukhān
harer māyā-dandyān guṇa-nigada-jālaiḥ kalayati
tathā sthūlair lingai dvi-vidhāvaraṇaiḥ kleśa-nikarair
mahākarmālānair nayati patitān svarga nirayau

“By his svarūpa, eternal constitution, the jīva is the surrendered servitor of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and is meant to serve the Lord eternally. The conditioned souls who are alienated from their svarūpa are wallowing in the illusion of false pride and material enjoyment. They have rejected Śrī Kṛṣṇa, hence, they are being penalized by the māyā-śakti, who binds them with three chains in the form of the three material modes, namely sattva, rāja, and tama. Furthermore, she covers the svarūpa of the jīva with the subtle body and then the gross body, thus imprisoning the jīva in the excruciating cycle of karmic reactions, which at times heaves him up to Heaven, or pushes him down to Hell.”

“In Goloka Vṛndāvana, Śrī Balarāma manifests unlimited nitya-pārṣadās, eternal associates, belonging to the jīva category for the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Similarly, in Vaikuṅṭha, Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa manifests unlimited nitya-pārṣadās also of the jīva category for the service of Śrī Nārāyaṇa.

These nitya-pārṣadās are eternally engaged in serving their object of worship, the Supreme Godhead, who is absorbed in rasa.

They are eternally situated in their svarūpa, remain constantly engrossed in satisfying their beloved Lordship, and ever possess enthusiasm and affection for the Lord that never diminishes.

They are forever extremely spiritually potent, being imbued with the cit-śakti of the Lord.

They have no connection with māyā—they are even unmindful of her existence.

They are permanent residents of the spiritual world and are very far away from māyā.

They are fully absorbed in simply relishing the bliss of devotional service to their beloved Lord.

Selfish material joys and sorrows are totally alien to these eternally liberated souls.

Prema being their life and soul, they do not even know that lamentation, death or fear actually exist.

“Also, countless, infinitesimal jīvas emanate from Kāraṇodakaśāyī Mahā Viṣṇu, lying within the Causal Ocean, whose glance impregnates the māyā-śakti.

As these jīvas are the neighbours of māyā, they witness her variegatedness.

The symptoms of the general mass of jīvas as discussed earlier are also present in these jīvas.

However, because they are minuscule in size and situated at the margin, their constitutional nature is to look at both the material world and the spiritual sky.

Their marginal condition makes them vulnerable because—up to this point of time—they have not been reinforced with cit-bala, the strength of spiritual potency, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord, their worshipable object.

Those amongst them who desire to enjoy material nature become absorbed in matter and are thus eternally enthralled by her, while those endeavouring to serve the Divine Worshipable Object, upon receiving His mercy, are elevated to the spiritual world.

Therefore, my son, we are in a most wretched state.

Having forgotten our devotion and service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, we are held as the captives of māyā, and thus, in lieu of our original transcendental status, we are in this miserable situation.”

Q-2

Vrajanātha, “Dear master! I understand that the jīva is the taṭasthā-śakti of the Lord and is situated at the taṭa, junction, of both worlds.”

However, why are some jīvas subsequently engrossed in material existence, while others are elevated to the spiritual sky?”

^{A2}
Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “The transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa are also present in the jīva, but up to a very small degree.”

The quality of free will natural to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is therefore innate to the constitution of the jīva and microscopic in content.

When the jīva makes proper use of his independence, he remains connected with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but by misusing of his independence, he dissociates himself from the Lord and is attracted to exploiting and enjoying material nature.

Developing the despicable quality of false pride, he thinks, ‘I am the enjoyer of everything I survey.’

Thus, the five levels of nescience—tāmisra, rebellious rejection of the Lord's service; andha-tāmisra, considering death to be the ultimate conclusion; tamas, ignorance of one's position as a jīva; moha, the illusory bodily conception of life; mahā-moha, attachment for material enjoyment—cloud the pure spiritual consciousness of the jīva.


The sole cause of why the jīva becomes either liberated or conditioned lies in the proper or improper use of his minute independence.”

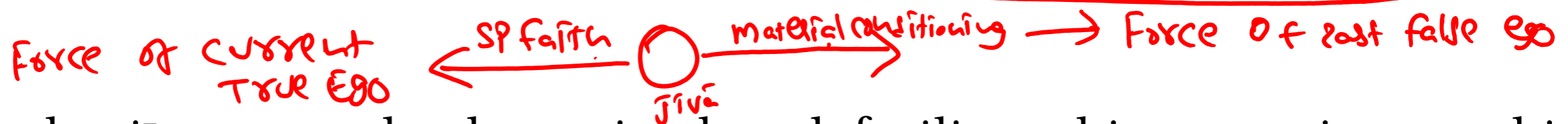
^{Q-3}
Vrajanātha, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa is karuṇamaya, unlimitedly merciful, yet why did He create such weak jīvas?”

As a result of their weakness, they become lured into subjugation by māyā.”

A-3

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “What you say is true. Kṛṣṇa is karuṇamaya, but He is also līlāmaya, dynamic and eternally engages in pastimes.”


With the view that the jīva could become an active partner for His various līlās, the Supreme Lord has made him versatile and capable of rising from his humble position as a marginal being to the soaring heights of mahā-bhāva, the highest spiritual consciousness, which is unlimited and transcendental.



To make the jīva strongly determined and facilitate his ascension to this divine position, the Lord has also created the various levels of material energy from gross matter up to ahaikāra, which reaches its depths with misidentification with matter.

Should the jīva choose the path of material progress the inert matter presents practically insurmountable obstacles in the jīva's search for supreme happiness.

The jīvas, who are moving down to this material entanglement, seeking only to satisfy their senses, are divorced from their svarūpa and thus increasingly distance themselves from the Supreme Lord.

They become more and more depraved, but the infinitely compassionate Lord, with His transcendental abode and eternal associates, descends to earth and appears before them in person to offer them the opportunity of elevation to the highest spiritual destination.

The jīvas who take this opportunity to elevate themselves gradually rise to the transcendental realm and acquire the same position as the nitya-pārṣadās.

Vrajanātha, “Why must the individual souls suffer so that the Lord can enjoy these līlās?”

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “One should consider that to possess and exercise free will is indeed a special grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Inert matter is without free will, hence non-essential and extraneous.

The jīva, on the other hand, by asserting his free will has attained the position of lordship over the material world.