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## THE NATURE OF MATERIAL WORLD

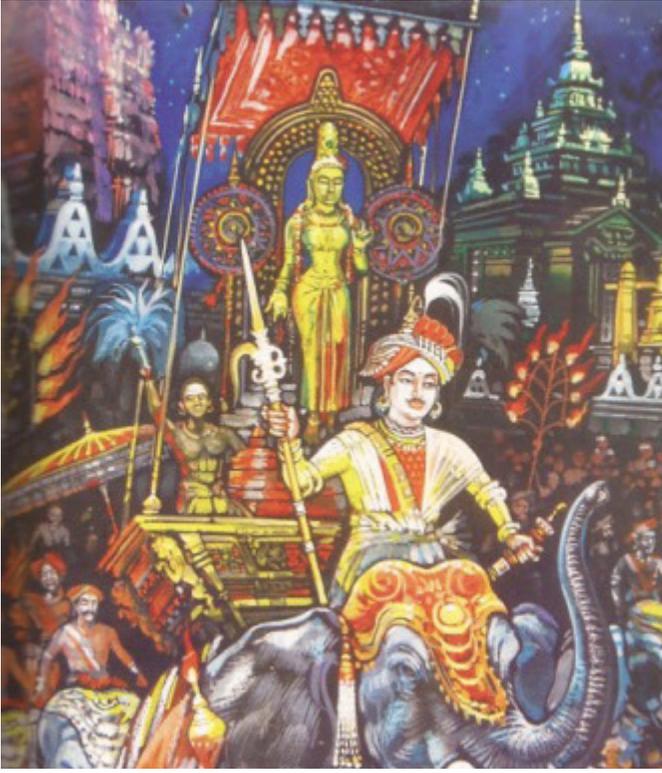
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*Sukadeva Goswami*

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THE DESCENDANTS OF KING MANDHATA  
Sukadeva Goswami

Sukadeva Goswami said: The most prominent among the sons of Mandhata was he who is celebrated as Ambarisa. Ambarisa was accepted as son by his grandfather Yuvanasha. Ambarisa's son was Yauvanasha, and Yauvanasha's son was Harita. In Mandhata's dynasty, Ambarisa, Harita and Yauvanasha were very prominent. The serpent brothers of Narmada gave Narmada to Purukutsa. Being sent by Vasuki, she took Purukutsa to the lower region of the universe. There in Rasatala, the lower region of the universe, Purukutsa, being empowered by Lord Visnu, was able to kill all the Gandharvas who deserved to be killed. Purukutsa received the benediction from the serpents that anyone who remembers this history of his being brought by Narmada to the lower region of the universe will be assured of safety from the attack of snakes. The son of Purukutsa was Trasaddasyu, who was the father of Anaranya. Anaranya's son was Haryasha, the father of Praruna. Praruna was the father of Tribandhana. The son of Tribandhana was Satyavrata, who is celebrated by the name Trisanku. Because he kidnapped the daughter of a *brāhmaṇa* when she was being married, his father cursed him to become a *caṇḍāla*, lower than a *sūdra*. Thereafter, by the influence of Vis-

vamitra, he went to the higher planetary system, the heavenly planets, in his material body, but because of the prowess of the demigods he fell back downward. Nonetheless, by the power of Visvamitra, he did not fall all the way down; even today he can still be seen hanging in the sky, head downward.

The son of Trisanku was Hariscandra. Because of Hariscandra there was a quarrel between Visvamitra and Vasistha, who for many years fought one another, having been transformed into birds. Hariscandra had no son and was therefore extremely morose. Once, therefore, following the advice of Narada, he took shelter of Varuna and said to him, "My lord, I have no son. Would you kindly give me one?" O King Pariksit, Hariscandra begged Varuna, "My lord, if a son is born to me, with that son I shall perform a sacrifice for your satisfaction." When Hariscandra said this, Varuna replied, "Let it be so." Because of Varuna's benediction, Hariscandra begot a son named Rohita. Thereafter, when the child was born, Varuna approached Hariscandra and said, "Now you have a son. With this son you can offer me a sacrifice." In answer to this, Hariscandra said, "After ten days have passed since an animal's birth, the animal becomes fit to be sacrificed." After ten days, Varuna came again and said to Hariscandra, "Now you can perform the sacrifice." Hariscandra replied, "When an animal grows teeth, then it becomes pure enough to be sacrificed." When the teeth grew, Varuna came and said to Hariscandra, "Now the animal has grown teeth, and you can perform the sacrifice." Hariscandra replied, "When all its teeth have fallen out, then it will be fit for sacrifice." When the teeth had fallen out, Varuna returned and said to Hariscandra, "Now the animal's teeth have fallen out, and you can perform the sacrifice." But Hariscandra replied, "When the animal's teeth grow in again, then he will be pure enough to be sacrificed." When the teeth grew in again, Varuna came and said to Hariscandra, "Now you can perform the sacrifice." But Hariscandra then said, "O King, when the sacrificial animal becomes a *ksatriya* and is able to shield himself to fight with the enemy, then he will be purified." Hariscandra was certainly very much attached to his son. Because of this affection, he asked the demigod Varuna to wait. Thus Varuna

waited and waited for the time to come. Rohita could understand that his father intended to offer him as the animal for sacrifice. Therefore, just to save himself from death, he equipped himself with bow and arrows and went to the forest. When Rohita heard that his father had been attacked by dropsy due to Varuna and that his abdomen had grown very large, he wanted to return to the capital, but King Indra forbade him to do so. King Indra advised Rohita to travel to different pilgrimage sites and holy places, for such activities are pious indeed. Following this instruction, Rohita went to the forest for one year. In this way, at the end of the second, third, fourth and fifth years, when Rohita wanted to return to his capital, the King of heaven, Indra, approached him as an old *brāhmaṇa* and forbade him to return, repeating the same words as in the previous year. Thereafter, in the sixth year, after wandering in the forest, Rohita returned to the capital of his father. He purchased from Ajigarta his second son, named Sunahsepha. Then he offered Sunahsepha to his father, Hariscandra, to be used as the sacrificial animal and offered Hariscandra his respectful obeisances. Thereafter, the famous King Hariscandra, one of the exalted persons in history, performed grand sacrifices by sacrificing a man and pleased all the demigods. In this way his dropsy created by Varuna was cured. In that great human sacrifice, Visvamitra was the chief priest to offer oblations, the perfectly self-realized Jamadagni had the responsibility for chanting the *mantras* from the *Yajur Veda*, Vasistha was the chief brahminical priest, and the sage Ayasya was the reciter of the hymns of the *Sāma Veda*. King Indra, being very pleased with Hariscandra, offered him a gift of a golden chariot. Sunahsepha's glories will be presented along with the description of the son of Visvamitra.

The great sage Visvamitra saw that Maharaja Hariscandra, along with his wife, was truthful, forbearing and concerned with the essence. Thus he gave them imperishable knowledge for fulfillment of the human mission. Maharaja Hariscandra first purified his mind, which was full of material enjoyment, by amalgamating it with the earth. Then he amalgamated the earth with water, the water with fire, the fire with the air, and the air with the sky. Thereafter, he amalgamated the sky with the total material energy, and the total material energy with spiritual knowledge. This spiritual knowledge is

realization of one's self as part of the Supreme Lord. When the self-realized spiritual soul is engaged in service to the Lord, he is eternally imperceptible and inconceivable. Thus established in spiritual knowledge, he is completely freed from material bondage.

- *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Canto 09: "Liberation" > Chapter 07: The Descendants of King Mandhata > Verses: 1-26, Translations by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

## VISVAMITRA AND VASISTHA

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Visvamitra and Vasistha were always inimical. Formerly, Visvamitra was a *ksatriya*, and by undergoing severe austerities he wanted to become a *brāhmaṇa*, but Vasistha would not agree to accept him. In this way there was always disagreement between the two. Later, however, Vasistha accepted him because of Visvamitra's quality of forgiveness. Once Hariscandra performed a *yajña* for which Visvamitra was the priest, but Visvamitra, being angry at Hariscandra, took away all his possessions, claiming them as a contribution of *dakṣiṇā*. Vasistha, however, did not like this, and therefore a fight arose between Vasistha and Visvamitra. The fighting became so severe that each of them cursed the other. One of them said, "May you become a bird," and the other said, "May you become a duck." Thus both of them became birds and continued fighting for many years because of Hariscandra. We can see that such a great mystic *yogī* as Saubhari became a victim of sense gratification, and such great sages as Vasistha and Visvamitra became birds. This is the material world. *Ābrahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino 'rjuna* [Bg. 8.16]. Within this material world, or within this universe, however elevated one may be in material qualities, one must suffer the conditions of birth, death, old age and disease (*janma-mṛtyu jarā-vyādhi* [Bg. 13.9]). Therefore Krishna says that this material world is simply miserable (*duḥkhālayam aśāsvatam* [Bg. 8.15]). The *Bhāgavatam* says, *padam padam yad vipadām*: [SB 10.14.58] at every step here there is danger. Therefore, because the Krishna consciousness movement provides the opportunity for the human being to get out of this

material world simply by chanting the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra*, this movement is the greatest benediction in human society.

-*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Canto 09: "Liberation" > Chapter 07: The Descendants of King Mandhata > Verses: 7, Purport by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.*

## THE NATURE OF MATERIAL WORLD

*Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura*

### What is the material world?

The material world is the perverted reflection of the spiritual world; that which is best in the ideal world is worst in its reflection and that which is lowest in the ideal is highest in its reflection. One can easily understand this by watching one's bodily limbs reflected in a mirror.

*(Jaiva Dharma Chapter 31)*

### Does the material world have an independent existence?

The material world has no independent existence. It is simply a perverted reflection of the spiritual world. The existence, mood, and process, which are pure and auspicious in their ideal position, become inauspicious when reflected here. The qualities that directly create eternal auspiciousness there become pious activities when reflected here. The qualities that indirectly produce auspiciousness there create inauspiciousness here and are considered sinful activities.

*(Caitanya-sikṣāmrta Part 2 7/1)*

### Is the material world false?

The material world is not false; it is real, because of the will of Krishna. However, the material concept of "I and mine," which we are maintaining in the material world, is false. Those who say that the material world is false are *Māyāvādīs*—they are offenders.

*(Jaiva Dharma Chapter 7)*

### Why is the material world not false?

If you say that this visible world is false, how can you possibly fulfill your purpose? If you bring water in a pitcher, you can use it for many purposes. You cannot say that the pitcher is false, but you can say it is temporary. Similarly, since

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

this visible world helps you fulfill your purpose, you cannot say it is false.

*(Tattva-sūtra 10)*

### How is the material world temporary even though it is not false?

To say that the material world is eternal and real because it has emanated from the eternal cognizant Absolute Truth is unreasonable. Such a statement is an outright lie. To say that the material world is the transformation of God is also unreasonable. The truth is that this material world is real but temporary. As a touchstone produces gold, the energy of the Supreme Lord has produced the temporary material world.

*(Śrī Bhāgavatārka-marīci-mālā 1/15)*

### Is attachment to the material world auspicious?

I have wasted my time uselessly in trying to become happy in the material world. I have not gained anything; rather I have created havoc. What kind of material existence is this? It is just like a magic show. I am wasting my days uselessly by becoming attached to it.

*(Kalyāṇa-kalpataru Song 4)*

### What is the value of enjoyment in the material world?

There is no happiness in material enjoyment. We simply gratify our senses. Even if there is any happiness, it is only the absence of distress. Happiness that is full of fear is not actual happiness. Learned scholars call it distress.

*(Kalyāṇa-kalpataru Song 3)*

### How is the total material ingredients (ego, five gross elements, their attributes, and the senses of the living entities) created? What are the living entities?

In the transcendental atmosphere (*paravyoma*), where spiritual majesty preponderates, there is present Sri Narayana who is not different from Krishna. Maha-Sankarsana, subjective plenary facsimile of the extended personality of Sri Narayana, is also the divine plenary portion of the propagatory embodiment of Sri Krishna.

By the power of His spiritual energy a plenary subjective portion of Him, eternally reposing in



the neutral stream of Viraja forming the boundary between the spiritual and mundane realms, casts His glance, at creation, unto the limited shadow potency, *Māyā*, who is located far away from Himself.

Thereupon Sambhu, lord of *pradhāna* embodying the substantive principle of all material entities, who is the same as Rudra, the dim reflection of the Supreme Lord's own divine glance, consummates his intercourse with *Māyā*, the efficient mundane causal principle. But he can do nothing independently of the energy of Maha-Visnu representing the direct spiritual power of Krishna.

Therefore, the principle of *mahāt*, or the perverted cognitive faculty, is produced only when the subjective plenary portion of Krishna, viz., the prime divine *avatāra* Maha-Visnu who is the subjective portion of Sankarsana, Himself the subjective portion of Krishna, is propitious towards the active mutual endeavors of *Māyā*, Siva's consort (*śakti*), and *pradhāna* or the principle of substantive mundane causality.

Agreeably to the initiative of Maha-Visnu, the consort of Siva creates successively the mundane ego (*ahaṅkāra*), the five mundane elements (*bhūtas*) viz., space etc., their attributes (*tanmātras*) and the limited senses of the conditioned soul (*jīva*). The constituent particles, in the form of effulgence of Maha-Visnu, are manifest as the individual souls (*jīvas*).

(*Brahmā-saṁhitā* 5.10 purport)

- Bhaktivinoda Vānī Vaibhava Published by Isvara dasa

## OUR REAL DISEASE

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura*

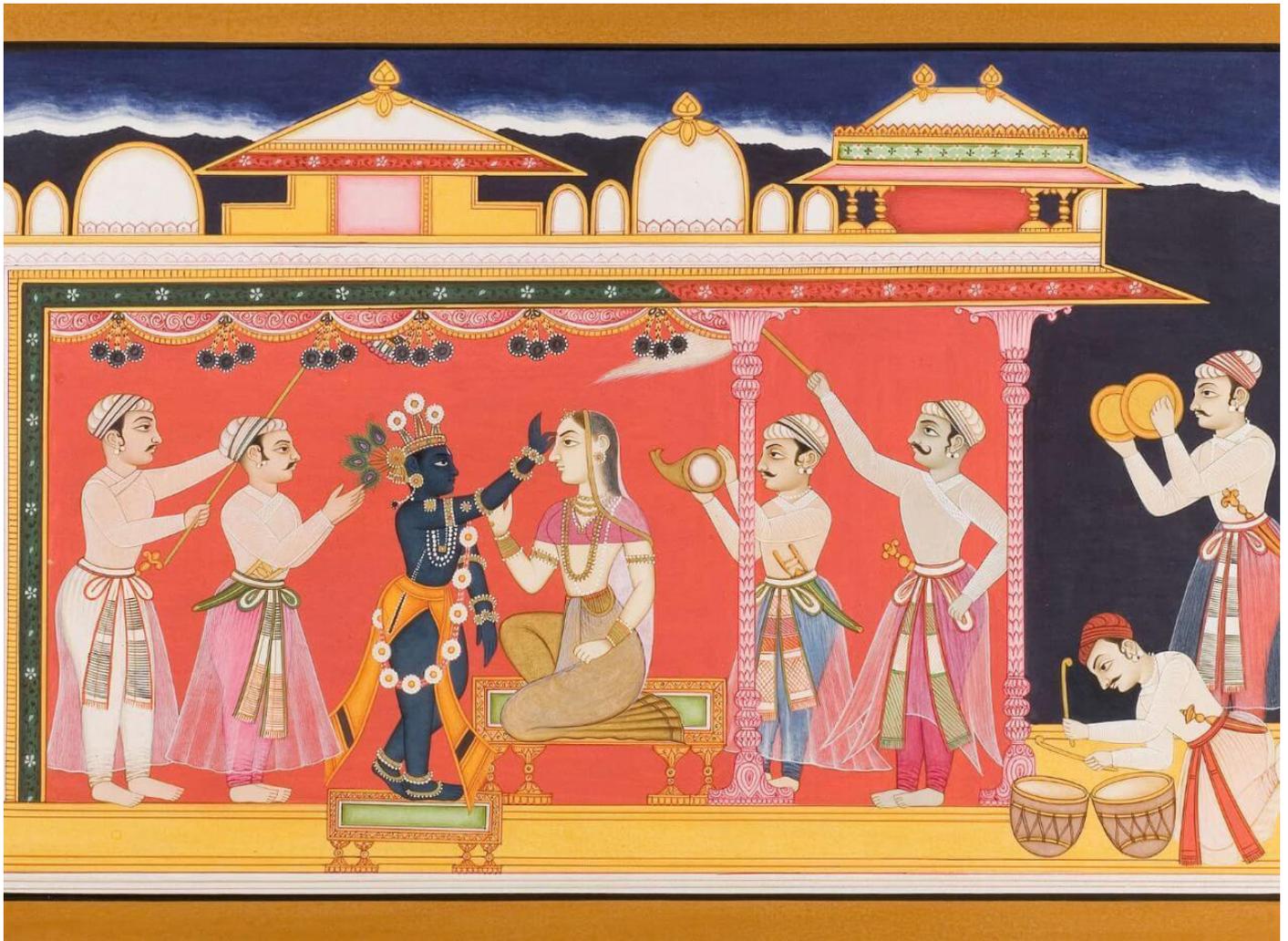
### What is material desire?

"I will simply enjoy sense gratification as long as I live in this world." To maintain such a mentality is called material desire.

### Is this material world a prison house for conditioned souls?

Those *akiñcana* devotees who want nothing from this world understand that there is nothing in this world that can give us eternal happiness. There is no eternal happiness in this world. The material world is a prison house for conditioned souls. We are imprisoned here because we are averse to Krishna. This is the result of our unlimited miseries and distresses. According to the dictation of the mind, which is compared to the superintendent of a prison house, we think our lesser miseries happiness and our bigger miseries great suffering. Fools who run after material happiness find themselves simply entangled in *Māyā's* network.

Attached householders think, "Becoming householders will make us happy. We will find ourselves some servants and will understand everything we want to know through the manipulation of our senses." To desire to become politicians, literateurs, scholars, aristocrats, philanthropists, national leaders, and good workers is simply an attempt to master the illusory energy. But Prahlada Maharaja



warned us not to engage our senses in external activity or to aspire for selfish interest.

We think we have become masters in this world because we have become attached to family life and accepted the body as the self. We think the material world and everything in it is for our enjoyment. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, sun, moon, planets, stars, animals, birds, trees, and creepers—all have been placed here for us to enjoy. Along with that idea, we think everyone and everything here has been designed to serve us. We never think about the actual purpose of this material world: it is an ingredient for the Supreme Lord's worship. If we are not worshiping Hari, we have no right to take even a blade of grass from this world.

#### Why is this material world full of miseries?

The Lord says, "I have arranged all these miseries and dangers not to give you trouble but to teach you that such miseries are unnecessary and that you should search after eternally desirable eternal happiness."

#### Can you define our disease?

Our main disease is that we wish to accumulate material enjoyment, things unrelated to Krishna, simply for sense gratification. We get pleasure from sense gratification, but we do not find pleasure in chanting and serving the Supreme Lord, who is the ultimate object of all enjoyment. This is our misfortune. Just as a jaundice patient does not relish sugar candy, we who are attached to sense gratification do not relish the sweet holy names or the Lord's service. When the body is poisoned, even honey tastes bitter.

Still, sugar candy is the only medicine for jaundice. As one applies the cure, the sugar candy gradually begins to taste sweet. Similarly, our aversion to the Lord and our attachment to sense gratification will gradually diminish if we willingly or even unwillingly chant the holy name and serve the Supreme Lord. As we are cured, we will taste the sweetness of the Lord's service and the sweet

holy name will automatically engage our spiritual senses in the service of the transcendental Lord.

**What is our primary mistake and how have we tried to rectify it?**

We all want to be happy, but we have mistaken distress for happiness. We often call a doctor to treat our illness, but if instead of following his prescription we advise him to prescribe a cure of our choice, how will we be cured? Similarly, after accepting a spiritual master, if rather than following his instruction we act whimsically, how will we find benefit? That is why a flatterer cannot be a doctor. If a flatterer, instead of prescribing suitable medicine and diet, prescribes according to the patient's taste only to collect his fee, then although the patient may gain temporary relief, his disease will not be cured.

**Why can't everyone understand transcendental subject matter?**

How can they if they are unfortunate? There must be purity. Those who are fortunate hear transcendental topics with faith and by the Lord's mercy understand them, and those who make hasty conclusions cannot understand the Absolute Truth. Such persons cannot even spend time cultivating complete transcendental knowledge. Our society is so engrossed in materialism that people are unable to spend even a moment to discuss eternal life. We are busy in worldly activities twenty-four hours a day. We don't even bother to know who we are. But human beings should spend twenty-four hours a day on spiritual cultivation. It is not the duty of intelligent persons to waste their valuable lives gratifying their senses.

We should search out our self-interest. Most of us are engaged in pursuing selfishness. The children play, the young maintain family life, and the old endeavor to protect their lives and their property. Consequently, they are indifferent to their own self-interest. In order to focus on worldly self-interest, materialists sacrifice eternal self-interest. What a pity!

Some people say one need not worry about the soul's welfare at present. Why think about the future? All that's necessary at present is to work. But this is not right, because if one fails to get an education in childhood, he will suffer inconvenience as an adult. A person desiring social welfare

necessarily also desires welfare for himself. Such a person should endeavor to see that devotional service, which is the characteristic of the spirit, is not impeded by sense gratification.

Many people may think it is enough to give up sinful activities and accumulate piety, but this is not the ultimate goal. Those who are actually intelligent consider the relationship between their present activities and their eternal existence at every stage of life. If one fails to think about this, he will find himself in trouble. Work done at the proper time reaps proper fruits in the future. If one does not use his time properly he will face difficulty. People who desire to discuss spiritual topics in old age will find themselves unable to do so because they will remain preoccupied with and disturbed by family life.

- *Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality of His Divine Grace Bahktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada; Compiled by Sripada Bahkti Mayukha Bhagavat Maharaja; Adapted and Published by Isvara dasa; Translated from Bengali by Bhumipati Dasa, Touchstone Media.*



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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