

The Beginning of all Discipline

Letter from Svami Sadananda Dasa

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Into English, within square brackets and

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[...] It seems that you are unable to understand that *every* form [co-player] in *every* lila consists of *cit*-knowledge-consciousness, that they are *eternal* forms. They don't consist of the material formed from Maya's guna-s, like the bundles of flesh and blood as yours and mine, which we have received by turning our back to God, by misusing our original freedom as atma-s.

Every human being, even the most "noble" one, lives in this prison of flesh and blood, in this covering of dirt, onto which only ignorant romantic dreamers project the illusory qualities of beauty and significance.

The most noble thing you can find in the realm of Maya is nothing but a complete distortion, the complete *opposite* of all eternal qualities in *His* realm. The only thing we can learn from the description of "eroticism" in His realm is that the service, friendship, love for the child, and love for the beloved that we find *there* are so totally *different* and noble that once heard of, they can awaken nothing but *disgust* and aversion to *everything* we find of such relationships on earth, and awaken the longing – caused by bhakti – once to be allowed to serve the eternal co-players in loving subordination as the smallest and finest servants/maidservants – *after* having discarded the physical and mental human existence, our individuality and personality.

It is the potency of bhakti that makes man's mind capable of understanding this *properly*, *not* the stupid conclusion that the solution is a withdrawal from the duties that is incumbent on man *in* the world: the duties to "serve" the children, the spouse etc. *The beginning of all* discipline in the Hindu Shastram-s is to use everything one can find of "mine" and "one's own" in human society as means and instruments *to serve Him*, to regard one's wife and child, house and home etc., as *His* property, and because it is His property, in loyalty and honesty to

manage it as His property. When a neighbouring woman asks you to take care of her child until she is back from the city, you will protect her child even more than your own child – and so much more when you are trustees of *God*.

This has to be done in honesty, *because* it is His arrangement, and gradually, gradually, one becomes mature enough, ready for the next stage. When *He* takes away something from us that belongs to *Him* (death!), it is *His* property – and, oh, we hope we are not guilty of having *mismanaged* it! And when we have managed it correctly – as long as He let us do it – there is no reason for crying and mourning, because He let *His* property “die”, because He took it away. It was not *our* child, our dog, house, friend etc.

This is a practical initial stage, and the mere *service* that consists in knowing oneself as a manager of His property gives the knowledge that all “*mine*” and “*yours*” and “*his/hers*” is a mistake: “*my*” mind, heart, soul, body, child, house, home etc. But even then you are just as distant from *His* realm and prema as the earth from the Milky Way. Slowly you come to the concept of Paramatma, the *Antaryami* [inner Guide] who is indirectly present *in* the world of Maya, and Who from within – like the Guru before you – gives the understanding that V., Sadananda, Hella etc., everyone has an atma that has just as little to do with V.’s etc. mind, heart, soul, body, etc. as an item of clothing with the body, and that the atma in the world actually is in *foreign* land, because to expect, strive and hope for weal, peace and happiness for oneself is living in foreign land, with one’s back turned towards God and in betrayal of one’s atma. [...]