

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja
Is God Bad?

New Braj, Badger, California: May 5, 2001

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First, I want to explain that dusanga, bad association, is very dangerous for any devotee. In that bad association so many varieties of doubts will come — doubts about devotees, about bhakti, and about Krsna and Mahaprabhu. They are bound to come if you are not in good association. Thus, gradually, you will go very far, far, far away from bhakti and you will be ruined. I want to caution you so that you will be aware of all these dangers.

Once, with all His queens, sons, daughters and all other relatives, Krsna came to Kuruksetra before the Mahabharata battle. So many emperors and kings from all over India assembled in Kuruksetra with their entire families, because at that time Kuruksetra was the prominent tirtha-sthali, holy place, of India. It is the place where Parasurama had performed many sacrifices, and the place where Prthu Maharaja delivered his father, King Vena, from his sinful reactions. All were assembled there, including the Pandavas, Mother Kunti, Draupadi, and Subhadra, and also including Bhisma-pitama and Duryodhana and all his relatives.

Somehow Nanda Baba heard that his dear son was going to Kuruksetra, and he therefore quickly announced to the Vrajabasis, "Tomorrow we will go by bullock cart with all our relatives. Only some old persons will remain behind to look after Vraja, and the rest of us should go." Thus all the gopis, Mother Yasoda, and everyone else went to Kuruksetra.

After taking bath during the solar eclipse, everyone met with each other there, and all the pilgrims were donating whatever they had — golden ornaments, garments, and wealth.

After this Draupadi, Kunti, and others came to meet Vasudeva, the father of Krsna. Kunti was weeping very much and telling her brother, "Brother, why did you become so cruel? My sons were given poison, they were attacked by fire, and we were forced to go to the forest and give up our whole kingdom. We were all dying, but you never came to us. Why did you become so cruel?" Vasudeva Maharaja also began to weep, saying, "My dear sister, we were at that time in prison, and our six sons were killed there. This cruel Kamsa killed our sons and he was torturing us so greatly. How could we have come? We were bound under lock and key. At that time we sent Krsna to Gokula in order to save Him, when He was like a baby.

"Don't be worried about all these mishaps. We could not do anything. We were bound to tolerate all of these sufferings. My dear sister, try to realise this fact. We are puppets in the hands of Krsna. Although to some extent we are svatantra, independent to do anything new, we are bound to enjoy the fruits of our bad and good activities — we are bound to. Don't blame the supreme God or us."

We may think that Hitler was very cruel for putting so many Jews in jail. They were tortured so much — so much — and so many were killed. If God was there, why did He become cruel? Why didn't He stop that cruelty? A doubt may come as to why He

allowed this to happen? So many doubts may come. If God was there, why did He become neutral? He should not have become so hard-hearted. If you are in any bad association, they will raise all these points and say, "There is no God at all. He is not merciful. He cannot do anything because He has no form, no hands, and no mind to think. He is nirguna, He is avyakta, He is nothing — zero. What, then, is the need of worshipping Him or accepting Him? We don't want to accept Him. Why could He not have stopped Hitler?"

All these questions have been answered in our scriptures. Why could Krsna not have stopped Him if He wished? Everything could have been totally stopped. We cannot do anything. As I said, we are like puppets. You can see this in Gita:

isvarah sarva-bhutanam
hrd-dese arjuna tisthati
bramayana sarva-bhutanam
yantrarudhani mayaya
(Bhagavad-Gita 18.61)

["The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities who are seated as on a machine made of the material energy."]

Isvara, in the form of Paramatma, as a saksi, witness, is here. The jivas are standing on their karma-cakra. Just as a clay pot maker is spinning a wheel with a stick and so many pots are being made, we are all sitting on the results of the bad or good activities we have done in the past. That has become our karma-cakra.

Krsna is doing nothing. He is only witnessing. Whatever we are suffering and tasting is our own fault. It is due to our good and bad activities. Krsna is not responsible for our sufferings.

If someone kills a person in America, is the president of America, Mr. Bush, responsible for that murder or not? He has made rules and regulations against murder, and he has announced to everyone that they should not kill anyone. However, if someone does not obey, the police and the court are there to punish that person. In the same way, Krsna has announced in the Vedas, in sastra, and through devotees, that you should not do certain activities. If you do so anyway, you will be pulled onto the karma-cakra and you will have to suffer for your actions. Krsna is not responsible because He has warned you. The jivas have some independence to do what they like, but they are bound to enjoy the fruits of their activities.

Now you can take a look at the situation more clearly. Why was the father of the Supreme Lord Krsna suffering? We should try to understand why he was suffering. He is one of the associates of Krsna, and he has come with Him to this world to give many teachings. He was playing as an actor in Krsna's pastimes to establish dharma. Secondly, if someone is a bhagavad-bhakta, a devotee, he should have tolerance. If one is a devotee but has no tolerance, then he is not a pure devotee. One must be like Sri Haridasa Thakura, like Sri Prahlada Maharaja, and like Vasudeva Maharaja. They came as examples to show the whole world how to be tolerant.

Why did Vasudeva Maharaja tolerate so many difficulties? There are many reasons. When the voice from the sky announced that the eighth child of the womb of

Devaki would kill Kamsa, he became upset and he wanted to kill Devaki — from whose womb the eighth child would come. He was in a dilemma. He heard the aerial voice and he believed that the eighth son would come and kill him, but still he wanted to make the prediction false. He thought, "I will kill Devaki, and thus there will be no womb to produce Him." He wanted to kill Devaki, but Vasudeva Maharaja had strong faith in Krsna and in what this aerial voice had said. He believed that Kamsa could not kill Devaki, that the eighth child would surely come, and that this eighth child would kill Kamsa.

As Vasudeva Maharaja had firm belief in this and was very confident, we too should be confident. If anyone will chant the name, hear the pastimes of Krsna, and do any service, he will never be able to be killed by anyone. We should have confidence like Vasudeva and learn this lesson.

There is something more to be said in this regard. Who were the six sons of Devaki? They were previously the sons of Marici Muni, who was a very high-class realised muni. His sons were in the council of Brahma, and they once criticised Brahma, who was a maha-bhagavata. For this offence, they had to come in the womb of the wife of Kalanemi, the grandson of Hiranyakasipu. By the fruit of their offence to a maha-bhagavata, Hiranyakasipu cursed them that they would be killed by their own father. After that Kalanemi became Kamsa and the six sons became the sons of Vasudeva, and they had to suffer at the hands of Kamsa. We are not seeing that their suffering is coming from their past lives' offense. We are only seeing the events externally.

We should understand that those whom Hitler killed had performed many bad activities. They also must have killed many persons in some horrible way, and thus they took birth as Jews. Why were all Jews not killed? Many were killed, but others escaped and were saved. Why did everything happen in this way? Those who were killed were guilty for their own past activities. We are so foolish. We cannot imagine what they had done in their past lives. As a saksi, however, Krsna knows, and He thus arranged all these events because they had to be killed.

Now we are seeing that many cows in India and other countries are being slaughtered. Why? In a previous birth, as humans, they had eaten meat themselves, and now they are tasting the results of their bad activities. If one keeps bad association, one may think that all this killing is going on without reason. One may doubt God's fairness, and we should be very careful about this. Don't associate with those who have no bhakti. In Gita (4.40) it has also been said: *samsayatma vinasyati*. Those who have any doubt in Krsna, in His associates, and in bhakti will be destroyed very soon. We should be very, very careful about this.

Now I am coming to the main subject of my class. I want to speak about the glorification of Srila Haridasa Thakura. He was born as a Muslim, but in reality he was both Brahma and Prahlada Maharaja. They both wanted to come and serve Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and so they came by the wish of Krsna. Though Haridasa Thakura was a Muslim, still he had so much faith in harinama. He was chanting the name from the beginning of his life.

Who was his gurudeva? He really did not have a gurudeva, but his gurudeva was Advaita Acarya — Maha-Visnu, because He is superior to Brahma. When Haridasa Thakura was in his native place, everyone was very much attracted to him. He was renounced, wearing only dor kopin and nothing else, and he was always chanting

harinama. From the beginning he was chanting three lakhas of names. Some names he chanted loudly, some he chanted very softly so that only he himself could hear, and some he chanted by mind. Sometimes he chanted without a mala, dancing and rolling down on the earth, day and night, and in this way he would complete three lakhas of names daily. All common persons became very attracted to him. In fact, they used to give him so much respect that the king of that place, Ramacandra Khana, became upset.

The king thought, "I am the king of this place, but no one respects me as they do him. He is a Muslim, and yet everyone is honoring him." He called a very beautiful teenage prostitute and said, "I will give you half my kingdom and wealth if you can deviate that Haridasa Thakura."

The prostitute replied, "Oh, don't worry. In a moment I can entice him. Give me some time. He is chaste, but as soon as he sees me, his chastity will go away. So give me time."

Thus, one night, she went to Haridasa Thakura's kutira. He was alone in the night. It was purnima and there was a cool breeze on the bank of the Ganges. He had a Tulasi plant which he used to worship daily, and he used to chant harinama the whole day in his cave under the shelter of that Tulasi. Being half-naked, sometimes revealing even more, and alluring him with so many poses, the prostitute tried very intently to attract Haridasa Thakura. He told that prostitute, "I will obey you. I will fulfill your desire, but let me finish my task to chant one crore harinama —10 million names."

Some say he was chanting 3 lakhs, but actually, since he was chanting the whole day and night, he must have been doing 4 or 5 lakhs. He said, "I have taken a vow for this. You should wait. Sit here, and when I finish I must obey you. I must fulfill your desire."

The prostitute sat down and waited, but when the morning came she returned to the king. He asked, "Have you been successful?"

"I must be successful," she replied, "Today he has promised to serve me."

She came again the next evening and stayed throughout the whole night. Haridasa Thakura said, "Oh, you should wait a little. Very soon I am going to complete my chanting."

Thus, when the third night came, she was totally changed by hearing suddha-name from a high-class devotee. At once she fell flat at the lotus feet of Haridasa Thakura and said, "I came by the order of the king. He is a very bad person. He is envious and does not want anyone else to be honored. That is why I came to you, but I have been changed now. I am offensive. I was so lusty, but now I want to take the shelter of your lotus feet."

Then Haridasa Thakura told her, "At once return to your home, and, whatever money you have collected from your work as a prostitute, distribute to the greedy brahmanas. Kali-yuga brahmanas will gladly take these things."

She went home and then, with only one ordinary white cloth, she returned to the lotus feet of Haridasa Thakura. He said, "I knew what was going on, but I remained here three days for you. I would have gone, but only to purify you I stayed here. I am giving you my asrama, my Tulasi plant, and my cottage on the bank of the Ganges. You should stay here. Don't go anywhere. Many people will come and offer you so many donations, so many kinds of preparations of prasadam, and other things. You should not accept

these. Accept only what you need to maintain your life, and nothing else. Stay here, and everything will come to you."

Many high-class Vaisnavas began to come there, to see how this prostitute had now been transformed. She had become like a maha-bhagavata by her association with Haridasa Thakura, who was a very high-class devotee. He was Brahma plus Prahlada Maharaja, and he came as an associate of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. In our next class we will glorify him further. So many teachings are found in his life, and an entire Mahabharata can be written about him — a large Mahabharata.

Now you should prepare for the drama.

Devotee: You said earlier that so many people were put to death by Hitler. They were put to death because of their past activities. But a personality like Hitler, who was inflicting the punishment, did he create bad karma for his activities?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, he was punished at once. He committed suicide.

Devotee: Also, for so many lives he will have to suffer.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, so many — for them.

Devotee: Who is the istadeva of Haridasa Thakura?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: The worshipful Deity of Brahma is Garbodakasayi Visnu.