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ONLY 24 MINUTES LEFT

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Once upon a time there was a war between the demigods and the demons. The demigods came to earth, to India, where there was a powerful king named Khatvanga Maharaja. They requested him to help them- to become their general, their commander. He told them, “Yes I am coming.” And he went to the battlefield. It was a very big war, and at last the king defeated the demons. Some of them were killed, and the rest fled away. All the demigods then requested the king, “Whatever boon you want, we will give you. We will give you anything you want.” The King said, “Actually, I want salvation from this world, and I want to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” The demigods said, “We are not able to give you that. You can ask for another boon.” The King then said, “Then you should tell me when my death will come.” They replied, “Very soon; in 24 minutes.” He therefore requested that, “At once you should take me to India, to earth.” And they did so.

When the king arrived, half of the time was gone and only 12 minutes remained. He sat in a lotus position like a muni, and concentrated on the lotus-feet of Krsna. Thus, in a moment, he was liberated; and he had a chance to serve the lotus-feet of Krsna.

Even a moment can give us all this; but what are we doing? We are not engaged in pure bhakti. We have so many requirements—worldly requirements. In order to maintain our life we are busy in so much aropa-siddha bhakti (the performance of those activities which may resemble devotional service but which are not actually. The word ‘bhakti,’ or ‘devotion,’ is rather superimposed on the activity). We are very busy to solve our material problems. As much as we try to solve these problems, however, the more problems are coming like waves of the ocean—one by one. We consider, “Oh, if I cross this one, everything will be alright.” But instead we see that, “Oh, now there are more problems!” So don’t try to do all this. What should we do? We should chant and remember Krsna. Thus, automatically all the waves of problems will be solved, and life-maintaining will also be accomplished. Everything will be done. We should only try to solve the problem of how to attain the service of Krsna, and especially how to attain Vraja-bhakti. If you want a little money, you can attain it by very little effort. However, if you want the highest thing, you’ll have to do so much effort. It will not be quickly achieved. And what is that highest thing? Prema-bhakti. You will have to give your precious time—everything—for this. You will have to be a street beggar, and there is no harm in that.

[Srla Narayana Maharaja gestured towards the photo of Srla Prabhupada on the wall opposite him] Oh, see Srla Swami Maharaja smiling. Perhaps this picture is of his last days?

[Devotee] It’s in Australia on a morning walk in the botanical gardens in Melbourne.

[Srla Narayana Maharaja] What year?

[Devotee] I can’t remember...early seventies... 1974.

[Srla Narayana Maharaja] (In his naravat, human-like pastimes) he was also like this in the beginning, in his early life. He was solving so many problems, but then he did like this (Srla Maharaja raised his hands

as in full surrender). Suppose someone has come to kill you. If you are doing this and that, he will try to kill you. But if someone has come to kill you and you raise your hands, then...

[Pujapada Bhaktivedanta Madhaba Maharaja (formally Navina Krsna prabhu)] White flag—surrender.

[Srla Narayana Maharaja] Srla Swami Maharaja ‘surrendered’ in Mathura (when he went there as a vanaprastha). He was a very powerful acarya. And such a powerful acarya was serving all—my Gurudeva and others.

You are seeing me. I have no problem at all—no even a death problem. Never do I have any problem, and I think that I will have no problem to solve in the future. My only worry is for your spiritual benefit. Try to realise that.

After the great battle of Kuruksetra, as told in the Mahabharata, everyone was killed except for Krsna and the Pandavas. And on the other side, Krpacarya, Ashwathama, and Krtavarma were left. Practically all were killed. One blind person, who had actually made all the problems, was also there to realize all these things. Who was that blind person? Maharaja Drtarashtra. At that time there was one blind person, and now all are blind. We have no strong faith in Krsna and Krsna bhakti, and thus we are all blind.

So the war was finished, all were killed, and the Pandavas were weeping so much. They lamented that, “We have killed everyone. Now there are only widows in India.” Only widows remained alive and all were crying. Yudisthira Maharaja and all the Pandavas thought, “We are the main cause of all the destruction. Why did we do so? We shall give up all this kingdom and become street beggars.” But Krsna told them, “You should be ready. We are going to visit Grandfather Bhisma. He is still alive.” Because he was so powerful, Bhisma Pitamaha (grandfather) was able to stop his death for six months. A boon was given to him that he will leave his body at his own will. Otherwise, death would be waiting; and now death had been waiting for six months.

Krsna took all the five Pandavas and Draupadi, and they went to Bhisma Pitamaha--where he was lying on the bed of arrows; and where his entire body was pierced with arrows. The five Pandavas and Draupadi offered him pranama(obeisances) and sat by his feet. When Bhisma Pitamaha saw Krsna, he offered pranama from his eyes, because his hands and everything else were pierced by arrows. By his eyes he prayed to Krsna to sit in front of him—very near. So Krsna sat very near, and the Pandavas sat by his feet.

Krsna said, “O Bhisma Pitamaha, you are such a high class of devotee, and you know all the Vaisnava-tattva. You should try therefore to pacify them. They are very worried, thinking that they have killed so many—all. “ When Pitamaha then began to tell something, Draupadi was smiling. In what way was she smiling? She was hiding her smile behind her veil. She was not laughing, “Ho ho, ho...”, but she was smiling. Bhisma Pitamaha looked at her and questioned, “My dear daughter Draupadi, why you are smiling? I want to know.” Draupadi replied in a very humble way, “O Bhisma, you are about to give knowledge, but where were you when Duryodhana was trying to make me naked? You are giving such high class of knowledge, but where were you then?” Bhisma very humbly said, “My dear daughter, at that time I was taking my meals from Duryodhana, the demon. The mood of a demon was there--in those meals. At that time I was knowing all these things, but I was so weak. At that time I could not check him. I could not control him. I thought that Duryodhana would be unhappy, and that is why, by weakness, I could not. But now six months have passed. All my blood, which was created by his meals has totally gone. Not only blood, the other bodily substances—everything—has gone. And now my heart is pure; especially now that I have had the darsana of Krsna. That is why I am now able to speak.”

Draupadi was satisfied. Then Bhisma Pitamaha said, “O Maharaja Yudisthira, Bhima, Arjuna, and all Pandavas. Hear carefully. There was a widow, and she had a son of only 12 years—very beautiful and qualified. The old lady used to worship and serve Deities of Narayana. Every morning she used to collect flowers, and perform arcana. One day she was engaged in any other job, and she told her son, ‘O my dear son, you should go and pick some flowers and return.’ It was Brahma Muhurta (the period of time which is 90 minutes before sunrise until sunrise). It was the end of the night, but was dark and somewhat cloudy. The boy went into the nearby forest and began to pick flowers from a bush—beli, chameli, and others. As he was picking the flowers, a very poisonous black snake—with a hood and large teeth—bit him, and in a moment the boy fell down and died. A hunter had been coming that way, and he saw that for no reason the snake had bitten and killed the boy. The hunter knew a mantra for controlling the snake and, putting the snake in a clay pot, took the boy’s dead body on his shoulders and went to the old widow. She had been waiting for her son, and now she saw that, ‘O my son is coming.’ She realized, however, that it was not her son, but only his dead body. ‘Oh, what happened?’ she asked. She began to cry and beat on her heart.

“She cried out, ‘O God, what happened? He was the only stick of my blind self.’ As a blind person uses a stick, so the son was like a stick to help her in old age. ‘What happened?’ She became like senseless. Then, after some time, when she came in sense, that hunter told her, ‘Mother, I was coming from that way. The boy was picking flowers. He did nothing wrong, but this black serpent snake came and bit him. Now you should order me to kill it at once and burn it to ashes.’

“The hunter said this repeatedly—two times, three times, four times—but the old widow was only lamenting and weeping. At last she told him, ‘Oh hunter, if you kill this snake and burn it, will my son come back to life or not?’ The hunter began to think, and he replied, ‘Oh, your son cannot be alive.’ She said, ‘Then why do you want to uselessly kill the snake? Let him go free.’ The hunter again replied, ‘Oh, I cannot do that because these snakes are very wicked and always angry. Without any purpose they bite others.’ Animals like them—snakes, scorpions, rats—will cut up all your cloths without any purpose. And another thing; termites, without any reason, without any gain—from one ant they will soon become lakhs and lakhs—will make your roof fall. Then, after some time, your whole house will be finished. If you keep any cloth or anything else—they like these ‘very precious things’ very much—in a moment they will take it all.

“The hunter continued, ‘So the snake should be killed. Otherwise, next day he will kill another, bite another, and then another. So I must finish this snake.’ Again the widow prohibited the hunter, ‘O, you should not kill him. Please set him free.’ But he told her, ‘I will not, I will kill him. Why did he bite your son?’ ”

“The hunter was just about to kill the serpent, when the serpent said, “Why are you killing me? I’ve done nothing wrong. Why did I not bite others? Why only to this child? Kala came to me. Do you know Kala? Time came. Death came and told me, “You should bite this boy.” Then I did it.’

Then the hunter replied, ‘This is not logic. If someone is biting or killing anyone on the order and inspiration of someone else, then both are guilty. So you must be punished; and that kala should also be punished. I will kill you. This is not logic.’

“At once kala appeared in the shape of a person, and told him, ‘Oh hunter, why are you accusing me?’ And he told to the serpent, ‘Why are you accusing me? I am not the cause; I have not told. The reason is this. In his past birth this boy killed that snake who had been in the form of a human being; and then his activities, in this form, have become kala. Then I, through you, bit him. The cause is not myself; it was his own activities. In this world no one is friend and no one is enemy.’ ”

So we should try to remember this. If anyone is insulting you, if anyone is beating you or doing any abuse to you, don't think him an enemy. Your activities are your enemy. So how should your activities be from now on and in the future? Do not criticize, do not offend, do not do anything wrong. Otherwise your activities will return and do this.

In this world, therefore, no one is enemy or anything. Sri Narada Goswami used to go to Kamsa Maharaja, and Kamsa used to think, "He is my guru." After that Narada would go to Vasudeva Maharaja and he also used to think, "He is my guru." Narada Rsi once went to Kamsa and said, "Oh, why are you waiting? Why are you not killing all the sons of Vasudeva? When they will come collectively, what will you do? So you should go on. I went to Kailasa, and I was present in the council of all the demigods when they were making a conspiracy and planning how to kill you. The demigods have now taken birth in the Yadu and Vrsni dynasties and they will kill you if you are not alert. So you should be alert."

After this, when he went to Vasudeva Maharaja, Narada Rsi said, "Oh, don't worry. Your bad times have gone. Now, very soon, the eighth son of Devaki will kill Kamsa. So wait a little; wait a little. Don't feel so weak." Narada Rsi knows everything.

So you should try to do bhajan always, not thinking that, "He insulted me. He is my enemy. He is my friend." Don't be like this. The only friends are Krsna and Guru. It is very hard, very rare, to find a real devotee, who is a real friend, and who, without any desire for personal gain, will do good to you and always think of your welfare. Your wife, your sons, and your friends will always bluff you, and they will try to enjoy their own sense gratification--not for you, not that you should be happy. Try to know all these things.

Wealth also cannot save you. Try to realize these things. Be one-pointed to Krsna, and then try to be very happy, without any problem. The only problem is, "Oh, how can I attain Krsna. Oh, where is Vrajendra-nandana? Where is Vrajendra-nandana? Where is Radhika?" Sometimes be in Vrndavana, sometimes here and there—like Srila Rupa Goswami and others. As Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja has told, "My office is in Bombay, my sadhana-ksetra (place of sadhana-bhajana) is in Mayapura, and my abode is in Vrndavana." In his last days, therefore he was there in Vrndavana. Always think of Vrndavana, Vrndavana-candra and Vrndavana-candri.