

Tridandi Gosvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja
WHY DID IT HAVE TO HAPPEN TO ME?
Oahu, Hawaii: Jan. 19, 2002 (part 2 - eve)

In Srimad-Bhagavatam it is stated:

tat te 'nukampam su-samiksamano
bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam
hrd-vag-vapurbhir vidadhan namas te
jiveta yo bhakti-pade sa daya-bhak

"One who seeks Your compassion and thus tolerates all kinds of adverse conditions due to the karma of his own past deeds, who engages always in Your devotional service with his mind, words and body, and who always offers obeisances unto You, is certainly a bona fide candidate for becoming Your unalloyed devotee." (SB 10.14.8)

This sloka of Srimad-Bhagavatam was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, who was giving sweet hari-katha to Pariksit Maharaja. Sukadeva Gosvami explains here that it is by the mercy of Krsna that you experience happiness or distress, and I will give an example from the Mahabharata to illustrate this:

There was a great battle between the Pandavas and Kauravas. The Pandavas were fighting only by the order of Krsna, to please Him, and the Kauravas were on the side of kali-yuga and sin. Although the kingdom rightfully belonged to the Pandavas, Duryodhana was not ready to give any residence to them. He was not even willing to give them a piece of land large enough to accommodate the point of a needle. The battle thus began.

Bhisma Pitamah was the commander-in-chief for the Kauravas, and Bhima was the commander-in-chief for the Pandavas. Bhisma Pitamah was fighting so furiously that it seemed that all the Pandavas and their army would be finished in a day or two. Although he was fighting for ten days, however, he could not do anything. Duryodhana then came and accused him, "You are my grandfather. I began this battle only because I had faith in your strength. I know that you can destroy the whole universe in a moment, what to speak of destroying these weak and small Pandavas. I can only conclude that in your heart you are partial towards the Pandavas and not towards me." Bhisma Pitamah replied, "Don't accuse me like this. Don't accuse me. If you do not believe me, then come to me with your wife at midnight. I will give this boon to her: 'No one will be able to kill your husband. He will win the war.'" Duryodhana became very happy and returned to his camp. That night, when the time was approaching midnight, Duryodhana was preparing to come with his wife to Bhisma Pitamah when he was in trance and in prayer. By chance, however, there was a heavy rainstorm. The rain was so heavy, in fact, that Duryodhana told his wife, "We should not go out tonight. We'll get totally wet and suffer greatly. It's better that we go tomorrow."

In the meantime, Krsna came to Draupadi and said, "O sakhi, come with me. Get ready at once - to come with Me to see Bhisma Pitamah. And hide your face with your veil so that he cannot recognize you." The already heavy rain became still heavier than before, but somehow Krsna took an umbrella and brought Draupadi in His chariot to Bhisma's place. When they arrived, Krsna stayed in the chariot and sent Draupadi in alone. At that time Bhisma Pitamah was in trance, praying to the Lord and meditating. When Draupadi came in, he thought that Duryodhana and his wife Bhanumati had come. He opened his eyes and said, "O, you have come." Pointing to Draupadi he continued, "I am giving you a boon that your husband will never be killed by anyone. He will be victorious in the battle, and the opposite party will be destroyed."

Draupadi then took off her veil and began to smile. Bhisma Pitamah exclaimed, "O Draupadi, how did you come? How did you know? Who brought you?" Draupadi replied, "Oh, my sakha has brought me." Bhisma Pitamah asked, "Where is He?" Draupadi replied, "He is on the chariot." Krsna came at once and offered pranama to Bhisma-deva, who then told Him, "O Prabhu, I know that for those who have fully taken Your shelter, no one in this world can do anything against him. You know everything. You are the Supreme Lord. No one can do anything to hurt Your pure devotees."

No one can disturb those who have fully surrendered to the lotus feet of Krsna and Gurudeva. No problem can check them. Take shelter, therefore, of the lotus feet of Krsna. You can do it, but you don't. This is the fact. You think, "I am the doer." Don't think that you are the doer. Don't think, "I'm so intelligent; more so than anyone. I'm even more intelligent than our Prabhupada." You have many thoughts like this, and therefore you commit so many offenses. Be humble and offer yourself totally to Krsna. Then bhakti will come to you. If any problem arises, see that it is due to the mercy of Krsna, and welcome that mercy. Don't be ready with a bomb to shoot a mosquito. Everything that happens to you is only due to your past activities.

Who made that problem for the Pandavas? Krsna. He inspired them to gamble and offer Draupadi in the match. Krsna wanted to show that He protects His devotees. Prahlada Maharaja was put in a fire, but Krsna saved him. Bhima was poisoned by Duryodhana, but he was also saved. Similarly, if you always engage in bhakti, then Krsna will bring His own umbrella to save you. Be very bold in bhakti. Don't be weak. Practice bhakti-yoga and be happy forever.

Bhakti is received in sadhu-sanga, and the supreme sadhu is the bona fide Gurudeva. Don't delay for even a moment. Wherever there is the opportunity for sadhu-sanga, you must attend and follow. Offer pranama to that Gurudeva, to the devotees who arrange the hari-katha festival, to the place where hari-katha is spoken, and to hari-katha itself; and continue in that way. Then bhakti will come. Even mukti always prays to the lotus feet of bhakti. Mukti pade sa daya-bhak.

[In 1999, Srila Narayana Maharaja gave an entire lecture on this verse beginning 'tat te 'nu kampam...' At the beginning of the lecture he said, "You should always keep this verse in your heart." He noticed that some of the devotees were distracted. Some were chanting silently on their malas, some were making garlands, some were doing different things and they were a little bit distracted. So he said, "What are you doing? Stop making garlands. Try to make this garland in your heart. Your attention is not here. I have only come for four or five days, and this is perhaps the third or fourth day. You are losing your time. You can make garlands at night, after my class. Don't even chant. You can chant when ordinary devotees like yourselves are giving class. At that time you can chant and remember. But don't neglect any senior Vaisnava who is on the level of a Guru. Don't chant or do anything. Your eyelids should not go down. You should continually drink his words, with both your eyes and ears, and also with your mouth. At that time Sri Sukadeva Gosvami may come to you. [In his previous manifestation as a parrot, Sukadeva Gosvami entered the mouth of Vyasadeva's wife while she was hearing Srimad Bhagavatam from her husband. Through her mouth, the Suka parrot entered her womb and remained there for eleven years. After that he took birth from her womb as a teenage youth.] Sukadeva Gosvami is transcendental knowledge, and he is the embodiment of bhakti.]"

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Surrender is the first step. It is the gateway to bhakti. If you are not surrendered, you cannot enter bhakti in lakhs and lakhs of births.

srnvatam sva-kathah krsnah
punya-sravana-kirtanah
hrdy antah stho hy abhadrani
vidhunoti suhrt satam

"Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramatma (Supersoul) in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted." (SB 1.2.17)

You do not see Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, if your Guru is bona fide, first try to surrender to him. Pray to him, "I don't know anything. I don't know what is wrong or right. What you will tell me, what you will advise, or what you will order, I must follow." This is the meaning of taking the shelter of Gurudeva.

Gurudeva gives diksa, that process which manifests divya-jnana. So many devotees are afraid to take diksa. They think, "I am unqualified." The whole world is unqualified; so this is not important. The important thing is to be aware that, "Without this, I cannot be happy." Bhakti is the goal of our life, and by the process of diksa, one can enter into the realm of bhakti. Without diksa it is absurd - quite absurd - to think that you can succeed in transcendental life. By the process of diksa, Guru gives a transcendental mood to serve Krsna. Without that, we can never enter that transcendental realm. There should be no hesitation; no doubt. At once, without delay, one should try to enter the process of diksa.

By this process, two things occur. First, transcendental knowledge will come. Without transcendental knowledge it is not possible to serve and be happy. Therefore, first Krsna and Guru give divya-jnana. Then, ksa, all kinds of anarthas, unwanted habits and mentalities, the endless chain of birth and death, all kinds of attachment to this world, and the desire for sense gratification very easily disappear. I don't know why some persons are afraid to enter this process. In the words of Srila Swami Maharaja, "They are rascals." 'Rascals' means they are most unfortunate, and they have no intelligence. They are more wretched than animals. They cannot decide what should be done and what should not be done.

In his Bhajana Rahasya, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura quotes a sloka from Srimad-Bhagavatam:

aham hare tava padaika-mula-
dasanudaso bhavitasmi bhuyah
manah smaretasu-pater gunams te
grnita vak karma karotu kayah

"O my Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, will I again be able to be a servant of Your eternal servants who find shelter only at Your lotus feet? O Lord of my life, may I again become their servant so that my mind may always think of Your transcendental attributes, my words may always glorify those attributes, and my body may always engage in the loving service of Your Lordship?" (SB 6.11.24)

A pure and surrendered devotee may be in this world or that world. Wherever they may be, they will not give up their bhakti. There was once a high class of devotee. First he was in family life, but he was not satisfied with his life. He was a very big king, with unlimited wealth, an army, very lavish palaces, and so on, but because he had no son, he was not happy. He thought, "If there is no son, who will look after the kingdom when I die? Who will liberate me by offering oblations?" In Indian culture, when one's father or mother dies, the son performs a ceremony and offers bhoga to Visnu or Krsna, and then he offers the prasada to the deceased relative so that he or she will be liberated from hell and instead be able to reside on a heavenly planet. The king considered, "Who will do this? If I have no son, it must be due to my past sinful activities." He was very, very worried.

In the meantime, Angira Rsi, a liberated soul like Narada Rsi, came to his palace and told Citraketu Maharaja, "O king, I see that you are very worried. Why are you worried? Do you have a beautiful and qualified wife?" Citraketu Maharaja replied, "Oh yes, I have." Then he asked, "Your wealth?" Citraketu Maharaja replied, "Oh, very good; excessive." Then he asked, "Then why are you so upset?" Citraketu Maharaja replied, "Everything is alright, but I have no son. After me, who will look after this kingdom? What will become of it? And I will not be liberated also. So please give me one son." Angira Rsi replied, "Looking at your forehead, I can very vividly see that for so many lives you've had no son." The king said, "All right. But I know

also that you are a very strong personality and you can do anything. If you say, 'A son must come to you,' a son will come to me."

Angira Rsi tried his level best to teach him that no one can be happy in this world by having a son. Only by bhakti-yoga can anyone be satisfied and happy. But Citraketu Maharaja persisted, "I want only a son. Somehow please give me one son."

Angira Rsi said, "Oh, I will give you a son, but that son will be the cause of both happiness and distress." King Citraketu was attacked by maya, and therefore he could not understand the deep inner meaning of the rsi's words. He thought, "He will be against me - no harm. At that time I will go to forest and do bhajana, but I want a son." Angira Rsi then personally became his son. He hid his own body, and by mystic power he became his son. A son very quickly came from the womb of Citraketu Maharaja's most qualified and beloved wife, and that baby developed day by day, as the moon gradually becomes a full moon. After five years he was very beautiful and qualified boy.

King Citraketu had one-hundred-thousand wives. Don't disbelieve this. At that time it was possible and common. His many wives became envious of the queen who had given birth to that son, and they discussed amongst themselves, "Now our king has so much love and affection for her. He doesn't even look at us. He never talks with us. Better that we remove the cause of this problem." They gave the boy a very strong poison, and he died in a moment. At that time all were weeping, and there was no one to console anyone. Angira Rsi then came with Narada Rsi, and Narada placed his hand on the heart of the boy and said, "O boy, you should get up. Get up. Where have you been? Your father and mother are both weeping bitterly for you."

The boy replied, "Where I have gone - I am very happy. There was no chance to do bhajana here, but now I am very happy there. I don't want to be with them. In one birth they were my father and mother, but sometimes I was also their father and mother. Please allow me to go there - where I have a chance to do bhajana."

Narada then asked the parents, "Do you want him to remain as your son?" The replied, "No. He should go where he is happy. We have now realized that we cannot be happy without bhakti." The king fell flat at the feet of Narada Rsi and Angira Rsi and begged them, "Please help me to become actually happy." They replied, "You should take diksa at once. Don't delay." Narada Rsi gave him the mantra and inspired him, and after that he became a realized and liberated soul, and thus traveled here and here.

One day King Citraketu came to Kailasa, where Sankara and Parvati reside. Sankara was totally naked, and his wife, who was more beautiful than Miss Universe, was sitting on his lap. At that time Citraketu Maharaja was in his airplane. His airplane was not like the airplanes of this world. His plane had no possibility of accident, and it was controlled only by mind. A driver could order such a plane, "Oh, come down, come down." "You should go." "You should be bigger." "You should be cold." "You should be hot." Everything was achieved by mind control.

Citraketu thought, "Oh, my friend, my God-brother, Sankara is there." He came down from the plane and joked, "O Sankara, you are naked and you have taken your beautiful wife on your lap. There are so many rsis, maharsis, and other saintly persons here; so try to control yourself. They will not be able to digest what they are seeing."

Parvati became furious and said, "Oh, Brahma and others like Narada, Sanaka and Sanandana are present here, but they are not so bold as to say what you have said. You must think you are the guru of Sankara. You are not the guru of Sankara, and so I'm giving you a curse. You should be a demon." Citraketu at once began to take the form of a demon, and Sankara became very angry at Parvati. He told her, "Because you are beautiful, you have so much false ego. You don't recognize what an exalted devotee he is. He could have easily countered your curse. He is always satisfied, whether he will be in the body of a demon or a demigod, but that is beside the point. You did not recognize him, and therefore you did wrong. If in return he had given you a curse, what would you have done? So he's more advanced than you."

Citraketu then became the demon Vitrasura. In that body he fought with Indra. And told him, "O bogus Indra, I don't want to keep this body. It is the body of a demon. In this body I cannot have pure love and affection for Krsna. Please kill me at once." Indra carries a thunderbolt in his hand, but still he was not able to kill Citraketu. Citraketu then uttered this sloka:

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dasanudaso bhavitasmi bhuyah
manah smaretasu-pater gunams te
grnita vak karma karotu kayah

"O my Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, will I again be; able to be a servant of Your eternal servants who find shelter only at Your lotus feet? O Lord of my life, may I again become their servant so that my mind may always think of Your transcendental attributes, my words always glorify those attributes, and my body always engage in the loving service of Your Lordship?" (SB 6.11.24)

Indra heard these slokas from the mouth of Vitrasura and thought, "O, what a high class of devotee. He is more advanced than me. How can I kill him? I cannot do so." Citraketu continued to pray:

"O lotus-eyed Lord, as baby birds that have not yet developed their wings always look for their mother to return and feed them, as small calves tied with ropes await anxiously the time of milking, when they will be allowed to drink the milk of their mothers, or as a morose wife whose husband is away from home always longs for him to return and satisfy her in all respects, I always yearn for the opportunity to render direct service unto You." (SB 6.11.26)

Put in your heart what you have heard from me and be happy. Follow these processes and thus try to overcome the endless chain of birth and death. This is not your first human form. It may be the last - if you are following. Only if you are following.

[Because it was continually raining in Honolulu, in the neighborhood of the hari-katha festival, Srila Maharaja said at the end of class:] Somehow, Nrsimhadeva has told Indra, "Stop. Don't make it rain now. Don't disturb our classes. Nrsimhadeva has very quickly managed everything, but after this [after the class is over] I cannot guarantee what will happen. Rain may come at any time. It may come because we have finished our class.

Gaura premanande.

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