

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

FOR PEACE IN THE FAMILY

(A Lecture On Sanatana Dharma)

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[The following transcription was recently sent by Sripad Jagannatha dasa Punja, after he translated it from the Hindi lecture of Parama-pujyapada Srila Narayana Gosvami Maharaja. In this class, Srila Narayana Maharaja is setting an example of how to preach deep philosophical truths in very simple language:]

For the last four or five days I have been speaking about Sanatana Dharma, and I have especially emphasized that bhakti is its life and soul. I also gave examples from Gita in this regard. Bhakti is the life of all the sastras and it is the svarupa-shakti of the Lord. Whatever I could explain for one hour each day, I tried to explain. During my previous visit people had some doubts about Sanatana Dharma, and therefore I have also tried to remove their doubts.

First I would like to thank the president, Pratinidhi Sabha, for organizing this program, and I especially want to thank the Punja brothers, who brought me to Fiji. They organized my first visit and introduced me to the people here; and I want to thank them so much for that. Also, I would like to thank the audience, who came here in large numbers to hear hari-katha; I pray that all of you get bhagavad-bhakti. I will also try to come here in the future, to encourage those who are engaged in the practices to attain that bhagavad-bhakti, and especially those who have taken harinama initiation. It is now their responsibility to organize hari-katha (pravacana) so that people can become firm in their faith and follow Sanatana Dharma, and those who took harinama should become firm in bhakti. Every now and then, sadhus learned in bhakti-tattva should come from India. They should be called, and programs should be organized so that people are taught that eating eggs, fish, and meat, and also drinking alcohol, is against Sanatana Dharma. Do not perform these sinful activities.

Give respect to your parents and to your guru. And give your wife the respect she deserves. The ladies should try to create a peaceful environment in the house. Do not destroy the peace of the house. Do not become like Surpanakha or Putana; become like Sita or Radhika. In India we find many examples of courageous women such as Laxmibai, the famous Queen of Jhansi, and others who sacrificed so much for their country and society. Women's responsibility is not only to cook and produce children. Women should see that their children become learned in bhagavad-bhakti, and that they become strong and courageous like Bhima and Arjuna. Mothers have more responsibility than fathers, for they must teach their children, from childhood, about Bhagavan and bhagavad-bhakti. Their children should be taught Vedic Sanskrit (culture). They must not

become atheists. Women should play a very responsible role in educating children, and men should play their part and also treat women with respect. Men should not think that women are just servants of the house or that they are simply producers of children. Lord Ramacandra, the Pandavas, and others have shown how to respect women.

During the time of the Pandavas, India was at its peak of opulence and power. Do you know what Australia was at that time? It was the place where the Pandavas kept their weapons (astra-graha). Perth (a city in Australia) is named after Partha. Indonesia was connected to India, and likewise the Caspian Sea was named after Kasyapa Rsi. At that time the Pandavas had conquered the entire world; and India should be now as it was then. Wherever there are Indians, Sanatana Dharma should prevail. The principles of Sanatana Dharma should never become weak.

Similarly, Sanatana Dharma should prevail in Fiji. Fiji is like a small India – a mini India. My dear sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers: You should all follow the teachings of Sanatana Dharma. Then, everybody will be happy and the society and country will be at peace.

Yesterday I was explaining about karma, and today I want to further clarify its meaning. For example, a man went to the market, and he bought lots of sweet fruits like mangos, bananas, guavas, etc. The man bought these fruits thinking that his family will eat them and he will eat them, and their bodies will be nourished. Another person, who is detached, also bought fruits from the market. He knows that the soul should be nourished, not the body, and he therefore bought the fruits to maintain the body in a detached way. However, there is yet another person, who has Deities in his home, and he bought the fruits thinking that he will prepare them and offer them to Krsna, and then he will honor the remnants of the Lord.

The first man, who bought the fruits for himself, was engaged in karma, and the person who bought the fruits for maintaining his body in a detached way was engaged in jnana. The third man, who bought the fruits thinking that he will offer to them to Their Lordships and honor Their prasada, was engaged in bhakti.

I will further explain karma by giving another example. A person gave someone one hundred rupees as a donation. Another person gave his father one hundred rupees. The first person was engaged in karma – by giving a donation. However, if a person gives money to his father, can this be considered a donation? Think about it. Is it possible for a son or daughter to donate money to his or her father? Here in this assembly, Punja's son is sitting and his father is also sitting. Will Punja's son give a donation to his father? How can you give a donation to your father? You cannot give anything to your father. You are enjoying the wealth of your father, the fruits of his hard labor, and you also belong to him. You have no right to think that you are in a position to give him a donation. If you are under this illusion, you will definitely go to hell. If you give anything to your father, it is called service (seva) to him, and if you give to others, that is called a donation and it is karma. By performing karma one has to take repeated births and deaths in this material

world. You cannot escape karmic reactions; therefore do not perform karmic activities. Your mood should be correct.

Whatever you do should be to increase your love (priti) for Radha and Krsna. The entire universe has come out from the Lord's body and we are all His children. Your husbands, children, and wives belong to the Lord. Nothing belongs to you; not even this body. So how can you give donations to others? If you give donations, you will have to come back to this material world to receive the fruits of your karma. Therefore, do not perform karmic activities; change the purpose of your activity.

A person asked me, "What do you eat?" I replied that I have never eaten anything in all my life. He said, "It is not possible." I replied that I offer bhoga to Thakurji. I serve Him first, and then I serve His maha-prasada. One should first serve the Lord and then honor the maha-prasada. Make your mood like this. Bhagavan is giving everything, so you should serve Him first. In this way you will not become entangled in karma; otherwise you will become entangled and be obliged to take repeated births and deaths in this material world. At the end of Bhagavat-gita it is stated (B.G.18.54):

brahma-bhuta prasannatma

na socati na kanksati

samah sarvesu bhutesu

mad-bhaktim labhate param

"A person thus situated in brahma becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires anything. Being equally disposed to all beings, he attains bhakti to Me, blessed with the symptoms of prema."

Realized souls – those who understand bhagavat-tattva - do not lament if anything is destroyed. What is there to lament about in this world? On the other hand, if their bhakti would be destroyed, then they would lament. They consider, therefore, that their bhakti must not be destroyed. If anything material is lost, they do not lament, and they also do not desire anything material. They desire only bhagavat-bhakti, which is the Supreme Dharma. Such personalities are labhate bhaktim param. In the end they achieve para-bhakti, loving devotion to the Supreme Lord, which is the essence of Bhagavat-gita.

Therefore, don't be deviated from the path of bhakti. Don't ever think that Arjuna's activities during the battle of Mahabharata was karma. Arjuna never performed any karma. Try to understand this. The purpose of all sastras is to engage one in bhakti.

Now I shall discuss today's topic. I told you about Hanuman's bhakti. He is a loving servant of Rama; he is a premi-bhakta. He is Sankara. Whenever the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears on this planet, Sankara Mahadeva also comes to serve Him in one form or another. I also told you about the Pandavas. Among the Pandavas, the bhakti of Arjuna, Bhima and Draupadi is of a very high standard. Krsna used to call Draupadi His

beloved sakhi ( pyari sakhi), and whenever she was in distress He personally appeared before her. The Pandavas are prema-para bhaktas, but they could not go to Vraja. Their bhakti is not so high that they could go to Vraja. Hanuman also does not go to Vraja. He stays in Ayodhya. If Hanuman would go to Vraja and see Yasodamaiya twisting the ears of his worshipable Lord, he would be upset and he would not be able to control his anger. He sees the Lord as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If he were to see his Lord bowing His head and putting His flute and crown at the feet of the gopis, he would want to leave Vraja immediately. Only rare souls are able to enter Vraja. So, if Hanuman has to go to Vraja, how will he go there? He is very intelligent. Do you know what he will do? He will quickly take the form of Gopisvara Mahadeva – the form of a gopi. He will dress like a gopi with a veil, etc., and he will serve the gopis there.

Once Sankara came to Vraja from Kailash. He thought, "My Lord has appeared in Vraja so I will go and have His darsana. In other incarnations Krsna does not perform His wonderful rasa-lila pastimes, so now I will go and see them." He desired to see the pastimes of Lord Krsna, and so he went to Vraja, but he was stopped at the border by the gopis. He was not allowed to enter. When the gopis inquired about his identity, he said that he came all the way from Kailash and that he is Sankara Mahadeva. The gopis told him, "You cannot enter Vraja." Sankara pleaded with them, but still he was not given permission to enter. The gopis then told him to pray to Purnamasi. She is Yogamaya and by her mercy he would be allowed to enter. Sankara prayed for thousands of years, and Purnamasi Yogamaya then appeared before him. Who is Yogamaya? She is the same Yogamaya who appeared in Gokula from the womb of Yasoda as the twin sister of Krsna.

Yogamaya asked Sankara what he wanted, and he replied, "I want to enter Vraja and have a glimpse of Lord Krsna's rasa-lila pastimes. I do not desire anything else." Yogamaya said, "It is not possible in your present body. You should remove the snake from your neck, put away your trisula (trident), and send the bullock Nandi away from here. And you cannot enter Vraja half-naked." Sankara then asked, "How will it be possible to enter?" Yogamaya then took Sankara's hand and made him take a dip in Brahma kunda, which is still there even today. Immediately upon taking a dip, Sankara became a very beautiful teenaged gopi. Purnamasi then told him to wait for nighttime, when Radha and Krsna would perform Their pastimes. She had him sit inside a lush kunj, and she told him not to move from there .

After some time, when it became nighttime and the full moon of Purnima appeared, Krsna began to play His flute. The gopis heard His flute and forgot what they were doing. Some were serving their husbands, some were cooking, and some were putting on makeup. Some had put kajjala on only one eye, and some had put their anklets around their neck and their necklaces around their ankles. They simply forgot everything and quickly left their homes in such a way that they would not be seen by others. When they reached Krsna, the rasa-lila took place, and Sankara, who was in the form of a gopi, began witnessing the rasa lila from a distance – from where he was sitting. The gopis sensed that an unauthorized person was present, because they were not tasting their usual

bliss. Millions in number, they began to search everywhere, and they finally found that gopi hiding in the kunjā. They asked her why she was sitting there and who she was. She did not reply; rather, she began to remember Paurṇaṁsī, praying to her to come and save her. One of the gopīs inquired who her husband was and what was his name. Paurṇaṁsī had not told her anything about this, and therefore she could not answer. The gopīs further inquired who her father was and from which village she had come. Sankara, in gopi form, did not have the answers to all these questions. Unless one is performing sadhana and receiving sambandha from his guru, these bhavas will not come.

In this way, although in the form of a gopi, Sankara could not answer any of their questions, and they slapped her until her cheeks were swollen and she cried. Then Paurṇaṁsī came and explained that she had given a benediction to her to watch the rasa-līlā, and she prayed to the gopīs to allow her to watch it from a distance. Kṛṣṇa became pleased and the gopīs allowed that new gopi to watch the rasa. Even today, in Rasasthali in Vrṇḍavana, in Isan Kunda, northeast of Vamsivata, you will find an installed Deity of Sankara, and that Deity is called Gopisvara Mahadeva.

To enter rasa-līlā in Vraja, Sankara came as a gopi. Hanuman has to come as a gopi. And you also will not be able to enter unless you become a gopi. Vraja is such an elevated place.

Fifty years ago I saw that on the banks of Radha Kunda there were five trees – and one more – six trees. These were the five Pandavas and Draupadi. When Śrīlā Raghunātha dasa Gosvāmī started to dig and reshape the Kunda, they pleaded to him not to cut them. They told him, "We are doing austerities here, in the form of trees. We will appear to dry out and leave after attaining the siddhi of entrance into Vraja-līlā and the blessings to become residents of Vraja. After that, Raghunātha dasa Gosvāmī changed his mind and did not cut those trees.

If the Pandavas did such great austerities to become residents of Vraja, then what to speak of us. It is not easy to become a resident of Vrṇḍavana, for even if one goes to Vrṇḍavana, one will not be able to see Vrṇḍavana. In order to see Vrṇḍavana, one has to be on the platform of bhava. Even by tattva-jñāna, it is not possible. Jñāna (knowledge) dries up bhakti-rasa. In order to see Vrṇḍavana, you will even have to forget tattva-jñāna – the knowledge that Kṛṣṇa is Supreme Personality of Godhead. One day you will have to forget this.

In the beginning, when you first come to the line of bhakti, you must know that Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavan. He is the God of the God of the God who creates and destroys the universes. He is the cause of all causes. When you reach the platform of priti, through śraddha, nistha, ruci, and so on, you will have to forget that Kṛṣṇa is God. You will have to remember only that He is Yasoda's lala (darling little son), He is Nandanānanda, He is the life of the gopīs, He is the friend of the gopas, and He is the lover of Radha. That is all you should know. Otherwise, you cannot perform suddha prema-bhakti, and you cannot love like the gopīs. The residents of Mathura may think that Kṛṣṇa is God, but the

residents of Vraja will never think so. Therefore, Vraja is so elevated that even the Pandavas could not enter.