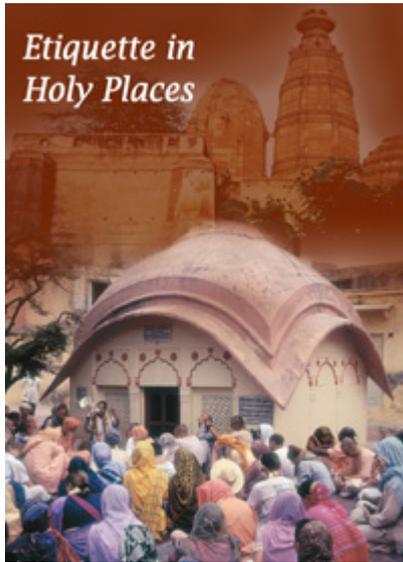


Etiquette in Holy Places



"Coming to pilgrimage means to come where the sadhus are. I am here, so why is everyone going elsewhere?" "You cannot see Vrndavana with visaya, or material spirit. The test is how much you have conquered over eating, sleeping and mating. Don't think you can just come to Vrndavana and become a Goswami!" Lilamrta V, p. 193

01. We come to a holy place to become purified, to develop our Krsna consciousness.
02. It is important not only to maintain a submissive, humble attitude with other ISKCON devotees but with all the residents of the Dhama. (We should be especially mindful of this in "mundane" dealings e.g. arranging transport, shopping).
03. To actually be in the Dhama means to be in the association of devotees, to hear from senior Vaisnavas and serve them. We cannot see a holy place with visaya (material spirit). We are reliant on the mercy of the Vaisnavas.
04. We must maintain Srila Prabhupada's good name by being clean in all our dealings. (This includes everything from eating to changing money).
05. We must be aware that Govardhana Hill, Radha and Syama Kunda etc. are Supremely transcendental personalities. If we desire to take Their darsana we must do so in proper consciousness.
06. Animals are also residents of the Dhama. We should neither befriend them nor make them our enemies. It is best to maintain a neutral position.
07. It is important to come to the Dhama in a service mood rather than an enjoying mood. Then our visit will be successful.

Quotes from Srila Prabhupada

Dhama Considerations (neophytes are not recommended to go for seeking solitude) The association of devotees is the only solace for our existence. New York might have been a little busier than Boston, but so long as it is under the guidance of an experienced devotee, the affairs in both cases are all right. The tendency for solitude is a kind of reaction on our past material activities, but solitude is not very good for a neophyte. ...The best thing therefore is not to seek solitude in the beginning, but remain in the midst of pure devotees so that even there is attack of Maya, their association will protect us. If you are, however, always busy in the matter of preaching work, that is very nice. But to remain alone in a solitary place for a new man is not advisable.

Vrindavana is of course very impressive for devotional service, but that also is not advisable to remain alone. I am trying to get a nice place at Vrindavana and when the place is there, I shall personally be present with some devotees, and appreciate the atmosphere in Vrindavana. So long we are engaged in devotional service with proper guidance, certainly we are always in transcendental position, and transcendental position is unlimited. It doesn't matter whether you are in Vrindavana or USA. But still, of course, Vrindavana atmosphere is very sweet. But so long as we have not completely freed our material attachment, even Vrindavana residence becomes uncongenial. Just like in the case of Kirtananda, it was so happened. ...Our sound position is always being engaged in service of Krsna, that is positive standing.

SP letter to Yadunandana (March 26, 1968)

Learn the Etiquettes

In the holy dhama, if one of my disciples drinks from a jug and contaminates that jug, everyone will notice it. Don't be criticized for this uncleanliness or I will be criticized. It is the duty of the disciples to follow these etiquette habits very austerely." [refer this also to "How to serve and honor prasadam"]

Lilamrta V, p. 17



All Animals are Residents of the Dhama (Dogs, Hogs, Monkeys)

Not Disturbing The Dogs

*Once in Vrindavana, the devotees tried to chase away a few stray dogs by throwing stones and yelling, but Prabhupada stopped them, "Leave them alone," he said, and he began throwing prasada from his plate to the dogs. **Lilamrta V, p. 25***

The Monkeys

*Neither be their friend or their enemies, if you make friends with them, they will simply be nuisance. If you become their enemies, they will become very vindictive. Just maintain a neutral position. **Lilamrta V, p. 42***