

Śaranagati

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DISSOLVING THE SHADOW

There are two types of darkness: the outer and the inner darkness. People have always been afraid of the dark. They don't like to walk in the dark and erect lamps everywhere. The outer darkness bears the danger that a robber could come and attack you, but in comparison to the inner darkness it is not at all dangerous.

Just like your shadow, this inner darkness follows you everywhere you go. Once you start your spiritual journey it takes on five forms:

1. First of all, when you try to chant or do other activities that help you to advance, you will feel a tendency to fall asleep.
2. At the same time, this inner darkness will pull your attention to other activities and make you chronically diverted from the spiritual path.
3. It will also make you unenthusiastic to read or chant. You will notice that unfortunately you lack taste in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
4. Also, by the presence of this inner shadow old tendencies like anger and lust rise their ugly heads.
5. Finally, the inner darkness will make you think of or even feel tempted for material enjoyment.

It is important to overcome this inner darkness because as long as it persists, saṁsāra (the cycle of birth and death) will persist. You can turn away from the inner darkness and cheat yourself, you can cheat the people around you, but you cannot cheat Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa will help you by finding a way to bring out that inner shadow so that you can perceive it. Then, Kṛṣṇa wants you to deal with it.

The first thing he does is he makes it visible for you. "Turn around! Look here!" You might say, "Oh no! That's not me! I want to be like the person I pretend to be externally. I want to be loved by others. I want to be admired. I want to be seen as first class. Oh no, now the shadow has popped out. I hope no one saw it. I hope I can hide it!" If you live like this, you live in a great illusion which will soon burst if you don't acknowledge these other aspects of your conditioned nature.

So many devotees have left Kṛṣṇa consciousness, too many. The shadow got them – because they never looked at it. And look at the life of many who are here: it is not



a joyful, ecstatic life. It's a mechanical execution of a religion, not a spiritual life! Why? Because they do not look at the shadow. They ignore it, they live in a movie, not their own life. They are not connected with reality. They allow themselves to be ruled by the fear that "What will happen if I look and find unwanted things inside my heart?" So they conclude, "Better I avoid looking there and just go on."

These undesirable parts of our personality have strength and the more we push them down, the more it increases. And suddenly – they jump out of the box. It's embarrassing for you. It is painful for you. You wanted to have a pure spiritual life, but now you see that there is this other part inside you, which is now very prominent in your mind.

There are two ways to dissolve the inner darkness: one is indirect, the other direct. The direct way is the path of *pañcāṅga bhakti*. It is blissful, but sometimes the shadow will protest if you walk it. The indirect way is painful, but you also have to walk it because you have to walk on both paths in order to be successful. The indirect way means to confront the inner darkness, your ignorance, your ego, your attachments. By confronting it, you bring it from your subconsciousness into your conscious awareness. You bring it out from the place where you wanted to hide it. Because you know if you keep on hiding it, it will break out anyway. You're honest: "I'm a fallen soul. I have this inner darkness."

DISSOLVING THE SHADOW(CONTINUED)

It's like when you cut yourself and some dirt is inside the wound. It doesn't help to close the wound with a sticking plaster. If you do that, at one stage the puss will come out – and it will be very painful. Better you open the wound a little and hold it under running water and let the dirt come out. In the same way you can heal your inner darkness by talking about it with devotees. You just need to be careful to find a sincere devotee who has a good character. You say, “I have this feeling.”, or “I have this desire... I know, it's not beneficial. I have been trying to

get rid of this already since 15 years – but it has not left me. Can you please help me? I recognize that it doesn't serve me or anyone if I keep on hiding it.” Bring it out!

Bring it into the light of the consciousness, and you will see that the shadow slowly starts to dissolve.

from two lectures by Śacinandana Swami, Serbia, July 9th and 16th, 2011

THE LORD'S ETERNAL PASTIME

*viśve uḍita, nāma-tapan,
avidyā-vināśa lāgi'
choḍata saba, māyā-vibhava,
sādhu tāhe anurāgi*

„The brilliant sun of the transcendental holy name of the Lord has appeared in the material universe in order to destroy ignorance. Casting aside all worldly attractions, the saintly souls cultivate affection for the name alone.“

*e adbhuta-līlā satata tomār
bhaktivinoda jāniyāche sār*

„This wonderful pastime of Yours is eternally taking place, and Bhaktivinoda has understood its essence“.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka, song 3, verses 1 & 6

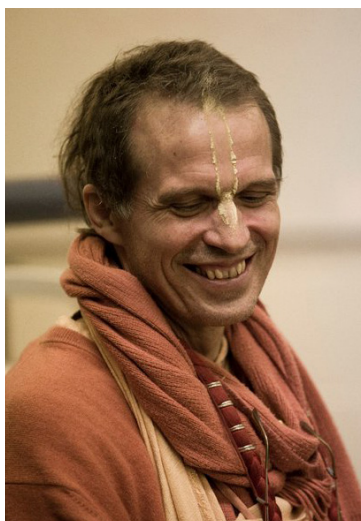


Photo by Mickey Shah

MEET ŚACĪNANDANA SWAMI

Important events over the next two months:

Aug. 22th-23th	Janmāṣṭamī Festival, Goloka Dhāma, Germany
Aug. 24th-Sep. 4th	First Worldwide Kīrtana Mela, near Chemnitz, Germany
Sep. 5th-Sep. 7th	Visit to New York City, USA
Sep. 9th-Sep. 11th	Bhakti Fest, California, USA
Sep. 16th-Sep. 18th	Sacred Space Seminar, New Vrindaban, West Virg., USA
Sep. 21th-Sep. 23th	Temple of the Heart Seminar, Alachua, USA

You can find a more detailed schedule at www.śaranāgati.net