

Śaranagati

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The Bell of Eagerness

Sound the bell of eagerness – and
He will open the door
Bow low – and
He will raise you higher than heaven
Surrender all – and
He will give you Himself
and everything He has.

(Śacinandana Swami, Jan. 19th, 2012)

FAITH IS BEYOND CONCEPTS

On a visit to a temple which pilgrims don't come to see very often, I asked the priest, "O Pūjārī Jī, why do you dress the Deities everyday, even when no one sees it or rewards you for it?" The Pūjārī answered, "I have faith that Kṛṣṇa is there on the altar. I act on the basis of this faith."

I thought it was a wonderful answer. We need to find out what we have faith in so that even when the world does not notice or appreciate our activities we can say, "I have faith in Kṛṣṇa". Even if our faith is only weak, if we act upon it, Kṛṣṇa immediately responds. I'm not talking about what we have learned in terms of philosophy. When I say, "Find out what you have faith in", I don't mean a concept. I'm talking about what lives in our heart. Faith is something that gives us strength to walk in a certain direction.

Sometimes people tell me, "I have faith in all aspects of the *bhakti* philosophy." I don't believe them. Someone who claims to have faith in everything is simply too lazy to think. That's not how it works. We have faith in specific things which have touched our hearts. If we say, "I have faith in everything" we most probably don't have faith in anything. But if we can find one aspect of *bhakti* in which we have absolute faith and then invest in it, we will gradually develop

faith in all the other aspects. When we try to do things we don't have faith in, things we just have heard, the results are not so significant. Therefore we have to find out where our faith lies, and then we have a basis on which to act. Kṛṣṇa will immediately answer our investment of faith. Wonderful results will come by acting on the basis of our faith.

from a lecture by Śacinandana Swami, Goloka Dhāma, Germany, January 1st, 2012



TWO TYPES OF FAITH

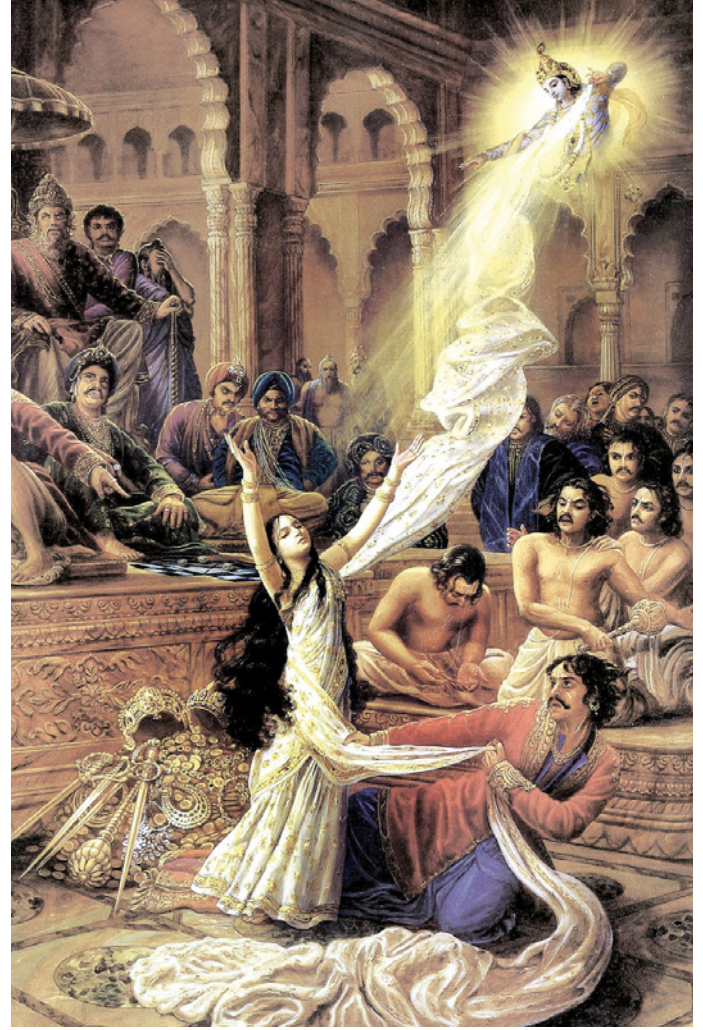
Śraddhā means “to give your heart”. There are two types of śraddhā or faith: *nirguṇā-śraddhā* and *lokika-śraddhā*. The materialistic faith is called *lokika-śraddhā*. It is based on sensual experience within this world and on what worldly people say. It expresses itself in beliefs like, “If I work hard, earn some money, buy a house, and have a relationship, then my life will somehow be alright.”

Nirguṇā-śraddhā is faith in the statements of Kṛṣṇa. It is a totally different, transcendental type of faith. Therefore it is called *nirguṇā* – beyond the modes of material nature. Faith in Kṛṣṇa consciousness means to understand, “I am a servant, and I have to do service for Kṛṣṇa in order to walk my life.” This is transcendental faith. Kṛṣṇa wants His devotees to have this type of faith - faith that only by surrendering to Him their life is well taken care of.

Śrīla Prabhupāda confirms this statement: “If a sincere devotee renders service to the Lord or to the arcā-vigraha, the form of the Lord, all his activities prove successful because the Lord is present within his heart and understands his sincerity. Thus if a devotee, with all confidence, goes on discharging the prescribed duties of devotional service, he will ultimately attain success.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 4.30.29, purport)

Kṛṣṇa speaks about the absolute need of faith in our devotional life: “Anything done as a sacrifice, [for example the chanting of the holy name is a sacrifice for Kṛṣṇa], charity or penance without faith in the Supreme, O son of Pṛthā, is impermanent. It is called *asat* and is useless both in this life and the next.” (BG, 17.28)

We should not believe in the false promise of institutionalised religion that says, “You just join us, and everything is clear for you. You will automatically make advancement.” Kṛṣṇa wants that we all surrender unto Him individually. Our individual surrender will always look different from our neighbors’, because we are different - it’s our life. For this we need *śraddhā*-faith, that Kṛṣṇa is there and will accept us if we surrender our life unto Him and invite Him into our life. In order to shift your faith from the worldly, *lokika-śraddhā* to the transcen-



dental, *nirguṇā-śraddhā* you need to make a leap of faith as the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard would express it. Do something in your devotional service for Kṛṣṇa. Take a little risk. Stay away from your *lokika-śraddhā*, the worldly *śraddhā* which is based on sensual experience and what other people say. Trust in Kṛṣṇa’s promises in the scriptures. You will see that wonders can happen.

from: Śacīnandana Swami, Art of Transformation, Ch. 6-10

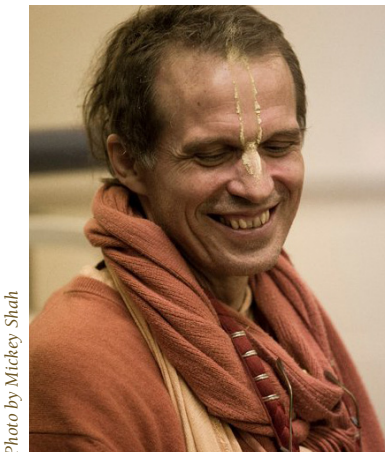


Photo by Mickey Shah

MEET ŚACĪNANDANA SWAMI

Important events in the coming months:

- Mar. 8th-11th Gaura-pūrṇimā festival & Sacred Space Weekend, Zurich, CH
- April 6th-12th Japa and Kirtana Retreat, Bhaktivedanta College, Belgium
- April 14th-15th YogaExpo (as a part of the spring expositions), Stuttgart
- May 20th-27th Kṛṣṇa Samādhi Seminar, Goloka Dhāma, Germany

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