

Śaranagati

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BECOME A MOON

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 13.5, purport) we find a beautiful picture of Kṛṣṇa and his devotees:

“The sun has the ability to shine powerfully, and the moons reflect the sunshine and therefore look brilliant. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Kṛṣṇa is described to be like the sun. The supreme powerful is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and His devotees are also bright and illuminating because they reflect the supreme sun. [...] Similarly, the present verse also describes that by the illumination of all the moons, brightened by the reflection of the Kṛṣṇa sun, or by the grace of all the devotees of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the entire world will be illuminated, despite the darkness of Kali-yuga.”

Kṛṣṇa is compared to the sun, from whom all the light spreads and Kṛṣṇa’s devotee is compared to the moon which reflects the sunlight into the darkness of Kali-yuga. It is not his own light, but it is the light of the supreme sun, the personality of Godhead. By serving Kṛṣṇa’s devotee, the spiritual master, one can also become - as Śrīla Prabhupāda put it – a moon; that is, someone, who reflects what the main moon – the *ācārya* – has received from the sun, Kṛṣṇa.

This is an important principle which devotees of Kṛṣṇa need to understand. On their own they are not great; they are cold and dry like a desert. But when the light from Kṛṣṇa reaches them, through the spiritual master, they also shine. In 1973 Prabhupāda wrote to a disciple about this principle:

“You have written so many nice things in praise of me but I think that my Guru Mahārāja is great, I am not great – he is great. So sometimes by association of the great one appears great. Just like the sun is great heat and light and by reflecting the greatness of the sun’s light the moon in [the] dead of night also appears great, but actually the moon is by nature dark and cold, but in associ-



ation with sun it has become accepted as great, this is the real position.” (Letter to: Jāhnavā - Bhaktivedanta Manor 1 August, 1973)

It is difficult for a conditioned soul to understand, “Only when I am connected with the moon – with that great exalted *ācārya* – then I can also shine.” The ego revolts, because material life means that we want to act out another story, we do not want to be in that picture. We want to be in a picture where we are the center, where we are the sun.

But if we can understand this simple principle and act accordingly, we will not only be our limited personality but we will be empowered by the light of the *paramparā*. Kṛṣṇa is like the sun, the *ācārya* is like the moon and we need to reflect their light in order to shine too.

from a lecture by Śacīnandana Swami in Goloka Dhāma, Germany, August 11th 2012

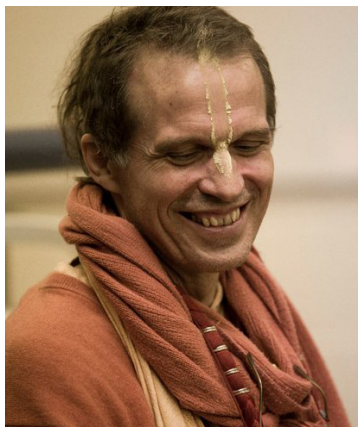


Photo by Mickey Shah

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