

Śaranagati

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KṚṢṆA IS HIDDEN

In the evening, when Kṛṣṇa is about to return to the village of Vṛndāvana, a huge dust cloud appears on the horizon. The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana are eagerly expecting Kṛṣṇa's return, but this dust cloud hides him from them. Rūpa Gosvāmī writes that the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are hidden in the pages of the Vedas and in Vṛndāvana they are hidden by the dust raised by the hooves of the cows (*Lalita-mādhava*, 1.1.53).

This means that both the Vedic scholars and the devotees of Vṛndāvana have difficulties to see Kṛṣṇa. Although Kṛṣṇa is in Vṛndāvana even today, we have difficulties to see him, because he is hidden, not obvious.

Hidden things are fascinating because usually discovering something hidden means discovering something valuable. However, hidden things are only wonderful and attractive for someone who has faith that they exist. Therefore, if we wish to find Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana we need to have faith informed by sacred scripture that Kṛṣṇa is there.

That Kṛṣṇa is hidden means that he can only be found with some endeavor. What is this endeavor?

Since Vṛndāvana consists of consciousness, our effort or qualification to find what is hidden there must also be in the realm of consciousness. We cannot find Kṛṣṇa by mechanical or external means. The required qualification is our eagerness, our longing for Kṛṣṇa. Mother Yaśodā's behavior at the time of Kṛṣṇa's return gives us a glimpse of the eagerness the Vrajavāsīs feel for Kṛṣṇa: When Kṛṣṇa arrives at the outskirts of the village he lets the cows drink water, he takes a bath with his friends and accepts the worship of the demigods who use the opportunity to honor him. All of this creates a delay in Kṛṣṇa's return and mother Yaśodā wants to feed him his evening meal. So she sends the tallest *gopī* on the watchtower, so that she can be informed immediately when Kṛṣṇa is coming.

This eagerness, this looking for Kṛṣṇa is called *utkanthā* in Sankrit, which literally means "coming out of one's collar". We have to come out of our "box" of ordinary devotional service. We must spice it with this feeling of eagerness. The moment we do this, a magical turn takes place: A dusty village



with cheating Indians becomes the kingdom of God. Suddenly a depressing outlook on the Vṛndāvana that is culturally so different from the western world turns into a blissful outlook that brings tears of gratitude into our eyes.

We need to find out what can evoke this eagerness in us. In most cases it is hearing about Kṛṣṇa; how kind and merciful he is, how beautiful he is, etc. Hearing of these qualities of Kṛṣṇa will make us long to meet him.

Kṛṣṇa can be found, but he is hidden. If we can accept this and understand that we need to awaken our eagerness in order to see him, we can find him. But if we expect him to be obvious we can never find him.

from a lecture by Śacīnandana Swami at Govardhana hill, India, November 26, 2012



— ❁ ❁ ❁ — POEM — ❁ ❁ ❁ —

Why Chant

I went to the river
and asked, “Why do you flow?”
And the river spoke:
“It’s my nature – if I stop I’ll die.”

Then I went to the wind
and asked, “Why do you blow?”
And the wind repeated the river’s words:
“It’s my nature – if I stop I’ll die.”

Then I came to a cremation place
and asked a crow,
“Why do you caw so loudly?”
Sadly, it pointed to a dead man.

“Once, when I was human, I did not follow my nature
and did not chant the names of our Lord.
Then they burned my tongue and heart and
all I can do now is lament and caw.”

“All is not lost,” I objected.
“You still have some type of tongue and heart.
You can caw in the kīrtan
and come fully alive!”

ŚACĪNANDANA SWAMI, November 2012



KEEP VṚNDĀVANA SACRED

In Vṛndāvana Kṛṣṇa is only interested in relationships. Therefore, as devotees of Kṛṣṇa we should go there with the desire to stabilize our relationship with him. The moment we are uninterested in a relationship with Kṛṣṇa, the door to the spiritual Vṛndāvana closes. As soon as we think: “I’m this and that” and “I want this or that”, we will see a dusty village in Uttar Pradesh with an income rate below poverty. We have different relationships in this world, but Vṛndāvana should be reserved for the one relationship to Kṛṣṇa. In other words: we should keep Vṛndāvana sacred.

❁ from a lecture by Śacīnandana Swami at Govardhana hill, India, November 26, 2012

Photo by Mickey Shah



❁ MEET ŚACĪNANDANA SWAMI

upcoming seminars & events:

Dec. 28th- Jan. 1st	Saṅga Mela Festival, Goloka Dhāma, Germany
Jan. 18th-20th	Yoga Expo, Munich, Germany
Jan. 26th- 27th	Radhadesh Mellows, Radhadesh, Belgium
Feb. 21st-25th	Vyāsa-pūjā, Zagreb, Croatia
Mar. 10th-15th	Kīrtana Melā, Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, India

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