

Pretending to be a Dog

Welcome to this episode of Kartik Inspirations, where I want to tell you something about a most extraordinary dog.

I saw him three days ago, and he behaved in a way that attracted my attention. One is, he did not mix with other dogs. The second is, the way he looked was somehow special, and even his fur was nice, almost well-kept, and white.

The second time I met him was the next day, when I stopped to talk briefly to a lady who was feeding grains to the monkeys. There were quite a lot around her, and it seemed to be a peaceful scene. The monkeys were familiar with the lady. Then the lady reached into her bag and pulled out something like white sugar cakes. I can't explain it in any other way. And the dog, recognizing this, came to her very humbly, very well behaved, and ate from her hand these white sugar cakes. I became interested and asked the lady, who seemed familiar with the animals in that part of the forest, "Do you know that dog?"

The lady smiled and said, "Yes, I know him. He is a special dog. Whenever someone chants sincerely or performs other forms of bhajan, that dog comes and sits by their side with great attention."

And then she said, 'Sastras tell us that saints or sadhus or any spiritual aspirant who was here in Vrindavan practicing sadhana, but had made a mistake — a grave mistake, who may have performed sadhana with the

wrong motivations to become known by others and then be maintained or financed by others — who were not yet perfected, take one more birth as animals."

This immediately reminded me of the famous Bharata Maharaja in the Srimad-Bhagavatam, who was born in a deer body. As a deer, he did not associate with other deer, and he always came to where the sadhus were reading and discussing, and doing bhajan.

I recognized "my" dog was also like that. He did not associate with other dogs. When dogs were fighting in the distance, he didn't join them as is often seen, but he behaved nicely.

The day after, as I sat and performed my chanting, the dog came and sat at a respectful distance, listening. Perhaps he thought, 'At the moment these dog vocal chords cannot so easily pronounce the Hare Krishna mantra, but let me hear this other chanter and chant in my mind.'

Raghunatha Dasa Goswami says, "With great longing I praise Vraja's blissful grass, the bushes, the worms, the insects, and all others whose fortunes are desired for by Brahma, Uddhava, and others."

So, you never know who is hiding in an insignificant dog body, monkey body, worm body, or insect. Our external eyes see one thing, but a totally different reality may be unfolding.

See you for the next Kartik inspiration.

Rāṅgānanda Śrī
SACINANDANA SWAMI

In Vrindavan, we never know who might be hiding in a dog's body, a monkey's body or even an insect.