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Changing the perspective is at the heart of pilgrimage.

With a different perspective, we can discover Krishna everywhere!

The Goddess in the Living Room

To stay in Vrindavan and maintain good consciousness often requires a change of perspective.

I was reminded of this when I was still in the West and someone showed me a video of the recent floods that happened in the Vrindavan-Mathura area. Large parts of the area had been flooded, and people were forced to leave their dwellings along the Yamuna and then tried to make their way to higher regions.

There was a boat with a journalist in Mathura, going through the Yamuna, reporting, “The water has reached alarming heights – it’s one meter above the danger level and people are struggling for their lives.” Then the camera panned to a dog on the roof. “See, even the dog is worried.” As he was talking, some people came to the boat, and thus he started to interview them, asking them in Hindi, “How are you doing? How are you coping? How are you managing this terrible flood?” The man on the other side of the microphone said, “Me, Happy! Yamuna come to my living room! She is on my sofa and sitting here. What better thing could happen?”

All these other people with him were standing waist-deep in the water, and really, there was not even a twinkle of misery on their faces. They were very happy because they had a different perspective. For them, the river Yamuna was not just a river. For them, when the Yamuna came higher, it was not a disturbing flood. For them, Yamuna was the most merciful Goddess who had gone away from her riverbed and into the houses of the people.

Seeing through the eyes of devotion gives us an entirely different world view, an entirely different perspective, of course, but also an entirely different perception. And seeing through the eyes of devotion is actually what needs to be done if you want to find Krishna in Vrindavan.

It may not mean that you have to ignore these obstacles, which can sometimes arise, such as high floods or aggressive monkeys, or other challenges, like digestive issues, and so on. No. It means to truly search for Krishna everywhere and to also pause before reacting to anything that happens, trying to find out what could be behind it. In other words: What could I learn from this? Why was this arranged to happen to me?

Changing the perspective, adopting a new set of eyes – that is really at the heart of sacred pilgrimage. And is this not the entire duty which all of us have? Or the entire project or task that we all face as we go through our days. With a different perspective, we can view things in a new light. With a different perspective, we can discover Krishna everywhere.

Thank you very much for walking with us through Vrindavan. We look forward to seeing you all for our next Kartik inspiration.

Sacinandana Swami