

Catch the Boat of the Saints

Welcome to this episode of Kartik Inspirations. Today, we will hear about mining devotional feelings.

If our practice, our life, and even our heart can be infused with and empowered by deep devotional feelings, the same situation in which we find ourselves in becomes a golden opportunity for bhakti. Yes, we may look with the same eyes, and the situation may be identical, but through a new lens—eyes of devotion—we see only opportunities, we see only Krishna. We see, practically, the spiritual world manifesting.

Today, I was thinking about this as I sat by the banks of lake Syama-kunda and chanted my rounds. I just had a very beautiful experience at the Radha Damodara temple on the banks of this lake. I stood behind an elderly man who was looking at the Deities and singing the glories of the Lord in a beautiful and moved voice. He then ended his song by repeatedly exclaiming, with tears in his eyes, “doya koro, doya koro, Please give me your mercy.”

At that time, I longed for the feelings this man had. I was willing to give up everything, even my new bicycle, just to experience this kind of bhava, this kind of consciousness.

And now, I was sitting and chanting at the banks of Syama-kunda. It was dry, unfocused, and I was tired. I also felt regretful, thinking, ‘When will I be able to chant like that old man in the temple? When will my heart be filled with devotional feelings?’

As I continued chanting, I saw something completely unexpected. A boat was moving across Syama-kunda toward me. This wooden boat is used to clean Syama-kunda. However, it had somehow escaped or come free from the rope, and now it was steadily approaching across the lake. It was morning, and the atmosphere was slightly foggy. The boat drew nearer and nearer. Suddenly, I remembered a verse from the Bhagavatam that seemed to hold the solution to my problem. The verse says, “Great acaryas, great saintly souls, have crossed the ocean of material illusion, and they left for all of us the boat by which they crossed on our side so that we can also use this boat.”

What is this boat? It is the practice, the experience, the step-by-step process by which you can also cross the gap or illusory separation between you and the Lord. As I was reflecting on this verse, and it began to open up and reveal its various secrets, I very, very much appreciated that there is hope for me. I returned to my rounds, but this time with additional inspiration—hope. Spiritual practices come alive when there is a sweet hope that ‘Yes, it is truly possible! Yes, there is help! Yes, on the other side, there is someone—or the One with many names—who sends help. Either in the form of a physical boat, or sometimes through a sweet inspiration.’

Catch that boat and cross the ocean of illusion!
Wishing you all the best and lots of spiritual strength.

Sacinandana Swami
SACINANDANA SWAMI

Catch that boat of the saints,
and your spiritual practice
will come alive!