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after 1977



PREFACE

Hare Kṛṣṇa! Dear Vaiṣṇavas, please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

We are presenting this short paper in order to clarify some doubts and misunderstandings concerning the usage of the 11th and 12th cantos' translations of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in ISKM and of Śrīla Prabhupāda's BBT-edited books in Vedabase format during discourse sessions and in printed form in languages other than English.

We would like to first state that:

1. We do not use any of the purports past the 10th canto 13th chapter of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam except for the translations of the commentaries of previous ācāryas.
2. We do not support any unauthorized changes made to Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and would only use the pre-78 version of the Vedabase if it proved convenient for forefront preaching work.

This article is in no way intended to minimize the importance of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are always held in the highest esteem as they are the guiding light for at least the coming 10,000 years before kali-yuga lashes at full force.

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Chapter 1

Why There is Nothing
Wrong in Using the
11th and 12th Cantos
of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam

WHY THERE IS NOTHING WRONG IN USING THE 11TH AND 12TH CANTOS OF ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM

1

1.1: ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA WANTED THE TRANSLATIONS TO CONTINUE

If Śrīla Prabhupāda had translated the entire Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, it would have been ideal. But Kṛṣṇa seemed to have different plans. Nonetheless, the merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda made the next best arrangement for the entire Bhāgavatam, the cream of all Vedic literature, to be available to the devotees.

In 1977, he had asked his expert Sanskrit Assistant Editor Pradyumna Prabhu and his team members, including Gopī-Prāṇa-dhana Prabhu, to complete the translation of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam following his physical departure from this world. Pradyumna Prabhu says this, remembering Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions to him in late 1977:

Prabhupāda called me in when he was getting a massage. He asked me, "So, in my absence, you can complete the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam?" I said, "Yes, Prabhupāda. I'll try to do that." "Yes," he said, "Okay, good." I said, "If I have questions, I could ask Śrīdhara Mahārāj?" He said, "Yes, you can ask him questions, yes, that's good."

— *Memories: Anecdotes of a Modern-Day Saint (Volume 2)*
By Siddhānta dāsa

Following are additional references which also suggest that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam to be translated by Pradyumna Prabhu.

“It was well known in those circles that Pradyumna had been empowered and instructed by Śrīla Prabhupāda to finish the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam if Śrīla Prabhupāda departed.”

— Link: [http://www.harekrsna.com/sun/editorials/09-13/
editorials10673.htm](http://www.harekrsna.com/sun/editorials/09-13/editorials10673.htm)

“Some devotees have requested Pradyumna Prabhu to finish the service Śrīla Prabhupāda gave him. Namely finishing the translation of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.”

— Link: [https://rodpush.wordpress.com/2015/08/31/pradyumna-
prabhu-letter-to-satsvarupa-maharaj-7-august-1978-concerning-
iskcons-hemorrhage-of-devotees-worldwide/](https://rodpush.wordpress.com/2015/08/31/pradyumna-prabhu-letter-to-satsvarupa-maharaj-7-august-1978-concerning-iskcons-hemorrhage-of-devotees-worldwide/)

1.2: A DRASTIC TURN, SO THE NEXT BEST OPTION

Unfortunately, Pradyumna Prabhu was unceremoniously ostracized from ISKCON due to political maneuvers by the corrupt top order management of ISKCON, and Hṛdayānanda dāsa Gosvāmī replaced him. Gopī-prāṇa-dhana Prabhu continued to work on the translations along with Hṛdayānanda dāsa Gosvāmī, who although a Sanskrit scholar himself, usurped the service of Pradyumna Prabhu in order to gain prominence in ISKCON.

Therefore, it was not the best of scenarios under which the 11th and the 12th cantos were translated but the past is past. At least, the translations are available to be read. Although the purports have imperfections, in most of the purports, the translations of the predecessor Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava ācāryas have been presented. So those commentaries can be read.

In the absence of the best scenario, then the next best option has to be exercised as evinced from the following conversation of Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Hṛdayānanda: He (Yogeśvara) is not so much a translator.

Rāmeśvara: His wife.

Prabhupāda: You see, nobody is translator. We have to accept whatever is offered. Kānā māmā [blind uncle]. Without māmā,

better a blind māmā. That’s all. That is our policy. So to remain without māmā is not very good choice. Must have a māmā. Never mind he is blind. That is our policy. So now we are without māmā. Who is translating now?

Hṛdayānanda: The main translator, the most important translator is still working with Bhagavān, so the translating is going on.

Prabhupāda: Going on.

Hṛdayānanda: Yes. The most important translator has not gone away.

Prabhupāda: Then it is... But still, they should be encouraged. Why they should...? If they do not like, that is another thing. But our translation work, printing work, cannot be stopped. That is my request.

— Room Conversation, 1 Mar 1977, Māyāpura

Now, the question that comes to the mind of any thoughtful devotee is that the translations are not done by Śrīla Prabhupāda. So how accurate are they? How can we trust the translations of someone else to be as good as those of Śrīla Prabhupāda? These questions are addressed in the following section.

1.3: SIMPLE TRANSLATIONS CAN BE DONE BY ANYONE WITH LINGUISTIC ABILITY

What follows are shreds of evidence from Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words in which he clarifies that the simple translation of a text can be done by someone with linguistic capabilities but the purports, or commentaries, have to come from a self-realized soul like Śrīla Prabhupāda himself.

“Once Gaurasundara Prabhu and I (Pradyumna) were sitting in Prabhupāda’s room in Hawaii, and Prabhupāda said, “Now you boys both know Bengali. So, why don’t you translate some of the important works of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, like Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta or Jaiva Dharma?”

— *Memories: Anecdotes of a Modern Day Saint (Volume 2)*
Siddhānta dāsa

“You are learning Japanese language, that’s all right, but it will be better for our preaching and translating work if the local boys and girls can perform such work, instead of us wasting so much time by learning difficult languages. So if you spend your time to engage many native persons to translate for us, and train them up in our Kṛṣṇa philosophy at the same time, that will be a better use of our time...”

— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Sudāmā, 4 Feb 1972

I am very glad to hear that Louise Bourassa has joined us. Thank her for understanding our philosophy. She is PhD., so she may translate all of my books into French language in cooperation with Yogeśvara at ISKCON Press in New York, who is in charge of the foreign languages printing of my books. She may also write article for BTG why she came to KC and comparing our philosophy to others. [...] Regarding the teacher Miss Wilson, you may engage her in translating, if she can read Bengali type. She can try Jīva Gosvāmī’s ‘Sandarbhas’—that will be a great contribution.

— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Rudra and Rādhikā, 20 Feb 1972, Calcutta

“Regarding the gentleman whom you have met who speaks so many languages, let him translate in any one of these languages any of our books and that will be a great service.”

— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Hari Śauri, 1 May 1977 in Bombay, India

Note here how Śrīla Prabhupāda is asking this Miss Wilson to translate a work that wasn’t originally translated by Śrīla Prabhupāda but to translate directly from Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s Sandarbhas. This quote refutes the argument that one cannot translate a work which hasn’t been first translated by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

“Some Bengali man, Mr. Chaterjee’s son-in-law, wanted to translate. What happened to that?”

*— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Gurudāsa,
1 May 1977 in Brooklyn, New York City*

Once, he wrote that reading just the translation is alright.

*English translation of Caitanya-caritāmṛta; by Nogan Roy have been seen by me. There is **no commentary** and **therefore it can be read**. but I do not know who is this Sanjib Choudhuri. Anyway there is **no harm reading simply the translation**.*

*— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Rāyārāma and Satsvarūpa,
30 March 1967, San Francisco*

If a translation of Caitanya-caritāmṛta (which is more confidential than Śrīmad Bhāgavatam) made by these two gentlemen is stated to be harmless by Śrīla Prabhupāda, what to speak of a translation made by a group of devotees who have been reading Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books and who at least theoretically know the philosophy?

1.4: PURPORTS SHOULD COME FROM A REALIZED SOUL

Although the previous instructions are clear, we shall now present the opposing argument.

Prabhupāda: “... Our translation must be documents. They are not ordinary... One cannot become unless one is very realized. It is not A-B-C-D translation.”

*— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Room Conversation with GBC,
28 May 1977, Vṛndāvana*

Here Śrīla Prabhupāda states that one should be very realized in order to translate, which is the very opposite of his previous quotations. To understand this matter we

need to contextually analyze the last quote. Here are parts of the conversation that took place before Śrīla Prabhupāda made this statement.

***Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** In other words, there's no set principle that only the works which you have already translated can be published by the BBT. If there is some worthy translation of a bona fide Vedic reference, if it's properly done, the BBT could publish it.*

***Prabhupāda:** That we are doing, just like Hindi. We are doing other languages. If it is properly translated, it can be...*

***Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** Even if it's a work which you have not yet translated yourself.*

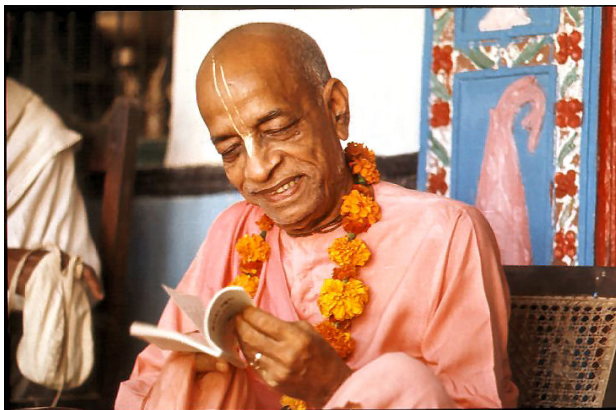
***Prabhupāda:** No, no, no, the principle is... Just like my translation, another person translating into Hindi or other languages, we are publishing. Similarly, if somebody has translated properly, it can be published. But amongst our disciples, I don't think there are many who can translate properly.*

— Śrīla Prabhupāda's Room Conversation with GBC,
28 May 1977, Vṛndāvana

The important point here is Tamāla Kṛṣṇa's suggestion. He plainly suggests that anything could be published by the BBT following Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance, a nonsense suggestion that Śrīla Prabhupāda had to cut down.

The other thing to note here is how Śrīla Prabhupāda is using the word “translation”, to also include “purports”. When he said, “Just like my translation,” he is speaking of his translation, that also includes his purports. Then he states “But amongst our disciples, I don't think there are many who can translate properly.” Prabhupāda is here speaking of a disciple giving purports to a work that has not yet been translated by Prabhupāda, this is clear, otherwise, Śrīla Prabhupāda would be contradicting Himself.

But of course, as presented before, Śrīla Prabhupāda asked Pradyumna to do the translation work by translating the commentaries of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta



Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and thus complete the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

Prabhupāda is, therefore, using the word “translate” to mean translations and purports. Before continuing, here are other instances where Śrīla Prabhupāda uses the word “translation” to also mean purports.

I recommend, therefore that all my students read Brahma Saṁhitā very carefully—especially because it was translated personally by my spiritual master Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Letter to Pradyumna,
17 Oct 1967, Calcutta, India

“I am trying to finish the translation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam as soon as possible”

— Caitanya-caritāmṛta Antya-līlā 1.11, purport

“You will be pleased to know that I am resuming my translating work here in the peaceful surroundings of a Sītā-Rāma Temple”

— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Satsvarūpa,
Nov. 4, 1970, Bombay, India

“The contemplation of sitting at Hawaii for my translating work is still alive.”

*— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Govinda,
28 May, 1971, Calcutta, India*

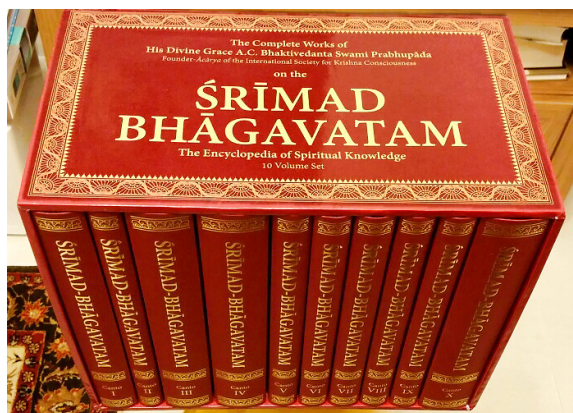
These quotes highlight the fact that Śrīla Prabhupāda often used the word “translate” to also mean purports. Now let us continue with the May 28th, 1977 conversation.

Prabhupāda: No, no, no, the principle is... Just like my translation, another person translating into Hindi or other languages, we are publishing. Similarly, if somebody has translated properly, it can be published. But amongst our disciples, I don’t think there are many who can translate properly.

Rāmeśvara: None. We’re not eager to publish anything which is not perfect, because you have already set the highest standard for the BBT. The name BBT means the highest standard right now in the world.

Prabhupāda: That is good answer.”

*— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s conversation with the GBC,
28 May 1977, Vṛndāvana, India*



Here Śrīla Prabhupāda approves of Rāmeśvara's statement of not publishing anything which isn't perfect, in other words, anything which has not been given purports to by Śrīla Prabhupāda. Again, of course, Śrīla Prabhupāda specifically wanted the 11th and 12th Canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam published despite his physical departure.

Following is the statement that makes us clearly understand what Śrīla Prabhupāda meant.

Prabhupāda: A realized soul, must be. Otherwise, simply by imitating A-B-C-D will not help. My purports are liked by people because it is presented as practical experience.

— Śrīla Prabhupāda's conversation with the GBC,
28 May 1977, Vṛndāvana, India

Śrīla Prabhupāda here states that a realized soul can do the work. What work? He states "My purports are liked", so the "A-B-C-D" example and the adjective "very realized" that Śrīla Prabhupāda used are meant for one who writes purports, not translations.

This is the reason why he asked Pradyumna Prabhu to do just the translations. That is what should have been done. But Hṛdayānanda dāsa Gosvāmī, after having usurped the service of Pradyumna Prabhu, wrote his purports which are not authorized.

1.5: HOW DO WE KNOW THE TRANSLATIONS ARE ACCURATE?

Those of us who do not know Sanskrit might find it hard to accept the translations of the 11th and 12th cantos of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam out of sentiment, but for one who does know the language and has been reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books thoroughly, the meaning is easily understood. This is confirmed by Śrīla Prabhupāda in the following conversation:

Jesuit Priest: What language, master, was your books originally written in?

Prabhupāda: Sanskrit.

Jesuit Priest: Sanskrit.

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Jesuit Priest: Don't you find it extremely difficult to get the literal meaning from the Sanskrit to the English?

Prabhupāda: No. You may, it may be difficult for you, but...

Jesuit Priest: No, no. I'm just thinking...

Prabhupāda: ... for one who knows Sanskrit, it is not difficult for him.

— Śrīla Prabhupāda's Conversation with devotee's mother and a
Jesuit priest,
25 July 1973, London, UK

In the same conversation, Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions this:

Prabhupāda: "... Our mode of presentation is, first of all, we put the original Sanskrit language in devanāgarī character. Then we give English, Roman transliteration, pronouncing the same word by diacritic mark. Then each word is translated into English. Then we give translation, the whole. And then we give the purport. This is our way. So we are giving meaning of each and every word means we have got considerable knowledge of that word. Otherwise how we can give? Yes."

Therefore, by reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books regularly and scrutinizingly, one will become a scholar in Sanskrit and Bengali languages. Equipped with that knowledge, if one examines the 11th and 12th cantos of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, one will find that the translations are very accurate.

1.6: MINOR MISTAKES ARE NOT VERY DANGEROUS

Hypothetically, even if there were some defects in the translation, it is not very dangerous to use them as evinced by the following excerpt of a conversation of Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Satsvarūpa: No. I just mean that devotees, sometimes they write an article and they say, “As it says in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta,” and they quote a book that they read by some scholar, very good Vaiṣṇava literature, but translated by somebody that may not be good.

Prabhupāda: No. Somebody... So far Caitanya-caritāmṛta, that Navina-candra Rāya... You, mean to say that...

Brahmānanda: That six volume set? That is all right?

Prabhupāda: That is all right. That is translation. That is all right.

Brahmānanda: That is the one which is in use, I believe. It's not anything, you know...

Prabhupāda: That is simply translation. But Caitanya-caritāmṛta is now presented in our TLC. Actually that is our conclusion. And Navina Rāya's translation, there are sometimes little defects, but not very dangerous, not very dangerous.

— Śrīla Prabhupāda's Discussion with BTG Magazine Staff,
24 Dec 1969, Boston, USA

So the 11th and 12th cantos of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam are presented in the same manner as described above by Śrīla Prabhupāda. So unless the translators had considerable knowledge of those words, how could they have given word-by-word translations? At least linguistically speaking, it should be admitted that all of them — Pradyumna Prabhu, Gopī-Prāṇa-dhana Prabhu and Hṛdayānanda dāsa Gosvāmī — were highly accomplished scholars in the Sanskrit language.

1.7: WHAT ABOUT TRANSLATIONS DONE BY AN OFFENDER?

One might argue that since Hṛdayānanda dāsa Gosvāmī was offensive to Śrīla Prabhupāda by disobeying his instructions and thus becoming *guru* on his own right, his translation is therefore bogus. To answer this question, let us consider a similar situation concerning Śrīdhara Mahārāja, who was a godbrother of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

“Still he [Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura] requested his disciples to form a strong Governing body for preaching the cult of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He never recommended anyone to be ācārya of

the Gauḍīya Maṭha. But Śrīdhara Mahārāja is responsible for disobeying this order of Guru Mahārāja, and he and others who are already dead unnecessarily thought that there must be one ācārya.”

*— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Rūpānuga,
28 April 1974, Tirupati, India*

Śrīdhara Mahārāja and party did to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura what Hṛdayānanda dāsa Gosvāmī and party did to Śrīla Prabhupāda, that is, they disobeyed their respective *guru*’s order regarding the continuation of disciplic succession after the *guru*’s physical departure. Even having known this truth, Śrīla Prabhupāda, two years after having written the above letter, wrote the following letter to a disciple of his:

“One of my Godbrothers attempted also to translate the same into Hindi with Sanskrit ślokas but he only completed a few pages. If you like his address is Śrīdhara Mahārāja, P.O. Navadvipa, Dist. Nadia, W. Bengal.”

*— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letter to Nirañjana dāsa,
2 April 1976, Vṛndāvana, India*

Please note here that Śrīla Prabhupāda is recommending his disciple, Nirañjana dāsa, to contact Śrīdhara Mahārāja (who is responsible for disobeying the order of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī) in order to get the Hindi translation of Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu. Why did Śrīla Prabhupāda approve of this? Because it is simply a **translation**.



1.8: REJECTING THE 11TH AND 12TH CANTOS IS AN OFFENSE

I would like to reiterate and remind the readers that we are using the translations of the 11th and 12th cantos of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam only for the purpose of supplementing Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings in all of his other books, lectures, conversations, letters, etc.

This should surely remove all doubts concerning whether it is proper or not to quote from the 11th and 12th cantos of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

Despite all these strong evidences, some devotees would like us to show them a quote from Śrīla Prabhupāda that would state that in the event of His books being changed one could use the translation of cantos which have not been translated by him only if the purports are not shown and not printed.

What foolish request is this? Such a demand is not only impractical but it promotes an inert philosophy, "to not do is better than to do". Such philosophy also supports that we should wait for one or more of the eleven *ṛtviks* that were originally appointed by Śrīla Prabhupāda to start giving *ṛtvik* initiation or to wait for the GBC to authorize *ṛtvik* initiation in ISKCON. These are impractical scenarios and therefore adjustments have to be made to carry out the order of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Surely we cannot provide any quote from Śrīla Prabhupāda that one (outside of the eleven original *ṛtviks*) can, without the sanction of the original eleven *ṛtviks* and the GBC, start initiating on His behalf. So what to do? Sit down and expect a utopian idea that ISKCON *gurus* will have a change of heart? This is hope against hope philosophy. We in ISKM are here to push this movement following Śrīla Prabhupāda's desire. We are not here to please the envious.

We are therefore firmly convinced that using the 11th and 12th cantos in order to establish Śrīla Prabhupāda as the only initiating spiritual master and to try to enlighten the conditioned souls about the science and art of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is pleasing to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

In conclusion to all the evidence presented herewith, we would like to emphatically declare that those who call the translations of the 11th and 12th cantos of Śrīmad

Bhāgavatam bogus, unauthorized, toxic or *māyā* are committing a grave offense to the Holy Name of the Lord.

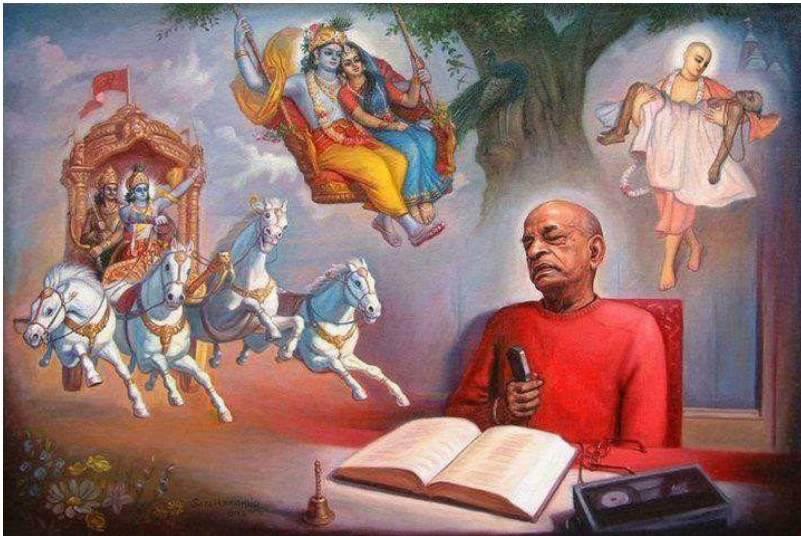
“To blaspheme the Vedic scriptures or scriptures in pursuance of the Vedic version.”

— Padma Purāṇa, Brahma Khaṇḍa 25.15–18 (4th Offense Against the Holy Name)

1.9: KNOWLEDGE TREASURE IN THE “FORBIDDEN” CANTOS

Finally, it is prudent to mention here that the 10th, 11th and the 12th cantos of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam contain a wealth of knowledge and it is, after all, the cream of all Vedic literature. In the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam [12.13.18] itself, it is said that the glorious scripture is very dear to the Vaiṣṇavas because it contains unparalleled descriptions of the pastimes of the Lord and his devotees and strengthens the minds of all devotees with the valuable instructions therein.

That part of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam [the 11th and 12th cantos] contains valuable instructions such as the symptoms of *kali-yuga* [12th canto], Uddhava-gītā



[sequel to Bhagavad-gītā, 11th canto], Aila-gītā [11th canto], the teachings of Nava-Yogendras [11th canto], the disappearance of the Yadu dynasty [11th canto], the glories of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam [12th canto], etc.

Let us see what Śrīla Prabhupāda had to say about the Uddhava-gītā:

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is factually the spiritual master of the three worlds, and He is the original source of all Vedic knowledge. It is very difficult, however, to understand the personal feature of the Absolute Truth, even from the Vedas. His personal instructions are needed in order to understand the Personality of Godhead as the Supreme Absolute Truth. Bhagavad-gītā is the evidence of such transcendental knowledge in gist. One cannot know the Supreme Lord unless one is graced by the Lord Himself. Lord Kṛṣṇa exhibited this specific mercy towards Arjuna and Uddhava while He was in the material world. Undoubtedly Bhagavad-gītā was spoken by the Lord on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra just to encourage Arjuna to fight, and yet to complete the transcendental knowledge of Bhagavad-gītā, the Lord instructed Uddhava. The Lord wanted Uddhava to fulfill His mission and disseminate knowledge which He had not spoken even in Bhagavad-gītā.

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 3.4.32, purport

In fact, in so many instances in the Nectar of Devotion and the Caitanya-caritāmṛta, we find several references to verses from the 11th and 12th cantos of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

Only an insane person would reject such superexcellent knowledge saying it is bogus, toxic and unauthorized.



Chapter 2

The Post-1977,
BBT-Edited Versions
of Śrīla Prabhupāda's
Books Are Still Potent

THE POST-1977, BBT-EDITED VERSIONS OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA'S BOOKS ARE STILL POTENT

2

2.1: THE SOURCE OF TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE

Now let us understand finer topics concerning the post-1977 books. Some devotees claim that the BBT-edited versions of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are useless. They call the books “bogus *guru*'s books” or “fake books”, etc. They say that those books are without any spiritual potency and that if one reads them, he is drinking poison. Such understanding is baseless and fanatical.

First, let us understand where transcendental knowledge comes from and what the process is to assimilate it.

“I am seated in everyone's heart, and from Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness.[...]”

— Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā* 15.15

“[...] It is He only who first imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmājī, the original living being.[...]”

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.1.1

“To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me. Out of compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance.”

— Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā* 10.10-11

So knowledge comes from the Lord who is situated in our heart.

2.2: HOW IS TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE REVEALED?

Now, how can such knowledge be revealed to us?

“Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.”

— Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.23

“The spiritual master is certainly very merciful to his disciples, and consequently by satisfying him a devotee gets strength from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu therefore says, guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja: one must first please the spiritual master, and then one automatically pleases Kṛṣṇa and gets the strength with which to cross the ocean of nescience. If one seriously desires to return home, back to Godhead, one must therefore become strong enough by pleasing the spiritual master, for thus one gets the weapon with which to conquer the enemy, and one also gets the grace of Kṛṣṇa. Simply getting the weapon of jñāna is insufficient. One must sharpen the weapon by serving the spiritual master and adhering to his instructions.”

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 7.15.45, purport

“As Brahmājī received the knowledge directly from the Lord by satisfying Him fully, similarly one has to receive the transcendental knowledge from the spiritual master by satisfying him. The spiritual master’s satisfaction is the means of assimilating transcendental knowledge.”

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 2.9.43, purport

2.3: CONTRADICTIONARY RESULTS

To state that “this pre-1978 book is potent and this post-1977 book is impotent” is not correct. Some senior devotees in ISKCON read Śrīla Prabhupāda’s original books, yet they still cannot accept Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions concerning initiations. Yet, we can see that many devotees are joining the original movement by reading a post-1977 book.

Tattvavit Prabhu (ISKM Singapore) had read the post-1977 Bhagavad-gītā in English and became a devotee. In India, we are distributing the post-1977 versions in Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, etc. and we are making devotees. In most of these languages, the books have not been translated from the original pre-1978 version.

Even in China, *ṛtvik*-initiated devotees read a Bhagavad-gītā which has been translated with mistakes, and past the third canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, they have to read from the changed version. But still, by the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda, they are becoming sincere devotees of Kṛṣṇa.



2.4: UNFLINCHING FAITH IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

The fact is that it was offensive to make unauthorized changes to his books after his physical departure. That act itself is the offense, but the philosophy hasn't been changed and we are concerned with the philosophy only.

“Please accept my blessings. I am in due receipt of your letter dated May 30, 1975 and have noted the contents. I don't think that Hayagrīva is at fault. He has not changed the meaning or the philosophy in any way. But if you like to use the original manuscript, then if it is possible, you can use it.”

— Śrīla Prabhupāda's letter to Hamsadūta,
8 June 1975, Honolulu, Hawaii

In the quote above, Śrīla Prabhupāda is writing to Hamsadūta Svāmī, who obviously had complained concerning the editing of Śrīla Prabhupāda's manuscript by Hayagrīva dāsa. Śrīla Prabhupāda however, was only concerned with the meaning and philosophy to be preserved.

The scholarship of a translator or the arrangement of words isn't the factor that will have everyone understand this science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A translator who thinks in such a way proves himself to be bewildered by false ego, thinking that he is the doer.

“In the Vedas also it is said that a person cannot know the Absolute Truth Personality of Godhead simply by dint of mundane education or intellectual gymnastics. One can know the Supreme Truth if one has unflinching faith in the bona fide spiritual master as well as in the Lord. Such a faithful person, even though illiterate in the mundane sense, can know the Lord automatically by the mercy of the Lord. In the Bhagavad-gītā also, it is said that the Lord reserves the right of not being exposed to everyone, and He keeps Himself concealed from the faithless by His yoga-māyā potency.”

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 2.9.32, purport

Everything therefore rests on faith, which leads us to this most important verse.

*yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

“The real import of the scriptures is revealed to one who has unflinching faith in both the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the spiritual master.”

— Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.23

The conclusion is that one who has unflinching faith in Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa will realize all this knowledge. Not by reading original books while still lacking faith in Prabhupāda’s instructions.

2.5: FAITH MEANS TO PREACH

And what is the symptom of one who has faith? He follows Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions 100%, that is full faith.

“That is advancement in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, to stick tightly to the desire or orders of the spiritual master; because my Guru Mahārāja ordered it, and I am also ordering it: Go on preaching, spread this Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world.”

— Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Letter to Trai, 27 December 1972

Here, Śrīla Prabhupāda orders us to preach and spread this Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one does not obey this order, it is due to lack of faith.

“The words prabhu-datta deśa are very significant. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s devotional cult teaches one not to sit down in one place but to spread the devotional cult all over the world. [...] Similarly, everyone in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s devotional cult

should accept the words of the spiritual master and thus spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. [...] Therefore devotees in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness must go to different parts of the world and preach, as ordered by the spiritual master. That will satisfy Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.”

— *Caitanya-caritāmṛta Antya-līlā 4.144, purport*

Here again, Śrīla Prabhupāda uses the word “order”. One who doesn’t preach is, therefore, to some extent, disobeying Śrīla Prabhupāda. Of course, not everyone can give classes or distribute books but one should at least try to preach. Whatever one knows, he should enlighten others with that knowledge.

“Therefore the preacher devotee is the most dearest devotee of Lord. That is stated in the Bhagavad-gītā. They are going outside, they are preaching, they are meeting opposing elements. Sometimes they are defeated, sometimes disappointed, sometimes able to convince, there are different kinds of people. So, not that every devotee is very well equipped. There are three classes of devotees also. But that endeavor, that “I shall go and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness,” is the best service to the Lord. Because they are trying in opposition to elevate people to the highest standard of self-realization.”

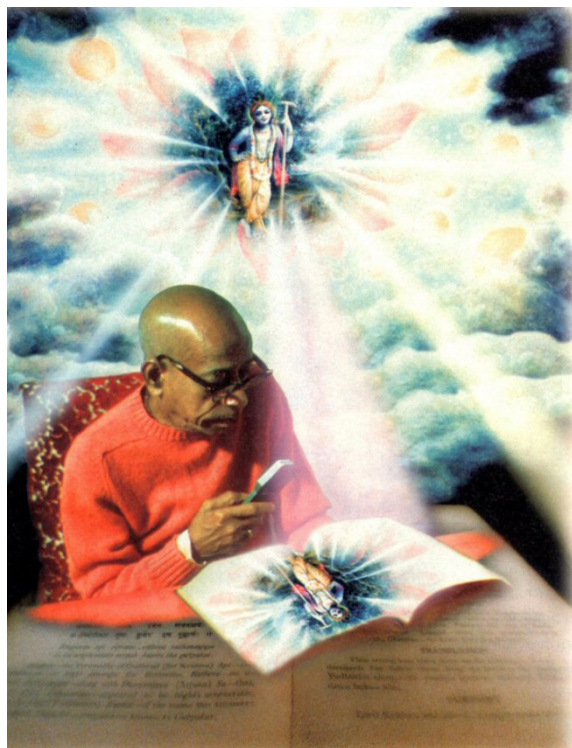
— *Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lecture on Bhagavad-gītā 6.25-29,
18 Feb 1969, Los Angeles, USA*

There are many devotees who do not even preach but are expert at finding faults with the preachers of ISKM.

“If one wants to be recognized by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he must preach the glories of the Lord. One who worships the Deity must therefore be extremely respectful to preachers; otherwise simply worshiping the Deity will keep one in the lower stage of devotion.”

— *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 7.14.40*

So those who simply worship the deity without preaching are on the lowest level of spiritual advancement, *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. A neophyte devotee (one who simply worships the deity but does not preach) has little understanding of devotional life and is sometimes found to be envious of more advanced devotees.



2.6: WHY IS ISKM USING AND SOMETIMES DISTRIBUTING CHANGED BOOKS?

We would now like to come back to the topic of using post-1977 books for preaching in ISKM. In the past, there were some pictures circulating on the internet of some ISKM devotees distributing post-1977 books. Let us now explain.

The devotees had ordered some cartons of pre-1978 version, but they received a few cartons of post-1977 and a few cartons of pre-1978. What can be done? They still have to be distributed. So they decided to distribute both editions. Preaching must go on. Logistics can be sorted out later.

Then, there are some devotees, including His Grace Sundar Gopāl Prabhu, who are using the changed Vedabase to give classes or to preach to individuals. This is simply due to the availability and ease of use of the Vedabase applications on the desktop and on mobile devices. If there was an efficient program containing the unchanged books that would make it easy to show quotes without wasting time and thus losing one's train of thought while speaking, then we would definitely be using it. Considering the factors that we have to show the verses on a large screen to the temple audience while lecturing and at the same time stream it live to Facebook, all the technical limitations allow us only to use the changed version of the books at this point in time.

We are actually thinking of making a suitable program to display the original versions of the books and we humbly ask for help from any devotee who would be willing to offer his/her service.

2.7: A STORY TO PROVE THAT DEVOTION MATTERS

Let us now read a short story which clearly illustrates how one can realize this transcendental knowledge.

“In the holy place of Śrī Rāṅga-kṣetra, a brāhmaṇa Vaiṣṇava used to visit the temple daily and recite the entire text of the Bhagavad-gītā. The brāhmaṇa regularly read the eighteen chapters of the Bhagavad-gītā in great transcendental ecstasy, but because he could not pronounce the words correctly, people used to joke about him. Due to his incorrect pronunciation, people sometimes criticized him and laughed at him, but he did not care. He was full of ecstasy due to reading the Bhagavad-gītā and was personally very happy. While reading the book, the brāhmaṇa experienced transcendental bodily transformations. His hair stood on end, tears welled in his eyes, and his body trembled and perspired as he read. Seeing this, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu became very happy.”

— Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 9.93-96

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purport to Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 9.96 sheds more light on this subject:

Although the brāhmaṇa could not pronounce the words very well due to illiteracy, he still experienced ecstatic symptoms while reading the Bhagavad gītā. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was very much pleased to observe these symptoms, and this indicates that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased by devotion, not by erudite scholarship. Even though the words were imperfectly pronounced, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, did not think this very serious. Rather, the Lord was pleased by the bhāva (devotion). In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.11) this is confirmed:

*tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavyat api
nāmāny anantasya yaśo-’ñkitāni yat
śṛṇvanti gāyanti grṇanti sādhasavaḥ*

“On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms and pastimes of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world’s misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literature, even though imperfectly composed, is heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.”

2.8: 99% ORIGINAL, 1% CHANGED

Even if we add up all the changes, both major and minor, all of them make up a maximum of 1% of the total words. So that means they are 99% original books. Amid unlimited volumes of transcendental nectar, a spot of some material defect cannot act in any way. The example is given in the Nṛsimha Purāṇa that the spots on the moon do not impede the moon in diffusing its soothing rays of moonshine. Similarly, the changes in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books are completely powerless in stopping him from convincing everyone about the science of devotional service.

Even if we have to distribute the changed books for some reason, let people hear somehow or other. Later on, we can tell them about the changes. Many of us also learned this same way.



2.9: IT IS A TECHNICAL SCIENCE OF SPIRITUAL VALUES

We are definitely not supporting book changes. We always distribute the pre-1978 books but preaching is filled with unexpected situations. Millions of changed books have been printed. Please ask yourself, if all those books were in front of you, would you distribute them or throw them into the sea?

We disagree with the philosophy that says that the post-1977 books are impotent. Can Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa be controlled by changing some words? This

philosophy that “if one has no original books, he shouldn’t distribute the changed books”, is a wrong understanding. In every page the word Kṛṣṇa is there, the same philosophy is there, that we are all eternal servants of the Lord and that our duty is to serve Him.

Why would Kṛṣṇa punish those who receive the changed books because of the offenses committed by others? Even if they have changed some words and punctuation, we should still respect those books as pure. Our anger should be directed to those offenders who have changed the books, not to the books. The books are non-different from Kṛṣṇa.

The following words instruct us regarding the attitude we need to develop when dealing with situations like this:

“It is a qualification of the great thinkers to pick up the best even from the worst. It is said that the intelligent man should pick up nectar from a stock of poison, should accept gold even from a filthy place, should accept a good and qualified wife even from an obscure family and should accept a good lesson even from a man or from a teacher who comes from the untouchables.”

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.5.11, purport

Now, if one has to accept nectar from a stock of poison, then what to speak of accepting the nectar in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books?! From the same purport, we also find the following words:

“Our presenting this matter in adequate language, especially a foreign language, will certainly fail, and there will be so many literary discrepancies despite our honest attempt to present it in the proper way. But we are sure that with all our faults in this connection the seriousness of the subject matter will be taken into consideration, and the leaders of society will still accept this due to its being an honest attempt to glorify the Almighty God.”

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.5.11, purport

So Śrīla Prabhupāda stresses on the practical application of the knowledge more than just words and grammar.

“After all, it is a technical science of spiritual values, and thus we are concerned with the techniques and not with the language. If the techniques of this great literature are understood by the people of the world, there will be success.”

— *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.5.11, purport*

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a science which must be practically applied in order to be understood.

2.10: NEOPHYTES CANNOT UNDERSTAND

Those who do not preach cannot get such higher realizations and this is why there are misunderstandings.

“Sometimes a neophyte devotee offers all the paraphernalia for worshipping the Lord, and he factually worships the Lord as the Deity, but because he is envious of the authorized devotees of Lord Viṣṇu, the Lord is never satisfied with his devotional service.”

— *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 7.14.40*

“A prākṛta, or materialistic devotee does not purposefully study the śāstra and try to understand the actual standard of pure devotional service. Consequently he does not show proper respect to advanced devotees. He may, however, follow the regulative principles learned from his spiritual master or from his family who worships the Deity. He is to be considered on the material platform, although he is trying to advance in devotional service. Such a person is a bhakta-prāya [neophyte devotee], or bhaktābhāsa, for he is a little enlightened by Vaiṣṇava philosophy.”

— *Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 22.74*

2.11: JITAVRATA PRABHU — A CASE STUDY

There is a certain Jitavrata dāsa who read his Vyāsa-Pūjā homage to Śrīla Prabhupāda in Māyāpur. While he was reading, some other devotees came and stopped him from finishing his offering since he was glorifying the original books and condemning the changed books. The following quotes are taken from the part of his homage that he could not read due to having been forced to stop.

First of all, I would like to point out that this senior devotee, Jitavrata dāsa, is reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's unchanged books. But we can see the level of his realizations by his own statements:

“But I see hope in the horizon, happy days are returning because of your Jayapatākā Svāmī who is getting his visa extended for his visit on this earth, all by the mercy of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva and by the mercy of his disciples, so that he may finish your big plans for Māyāpur. Rāmeśvara your great book distribution general is coming back to hopefully retire in Māyāpur.”

Although Jitavrata Prabhu is reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's original books, he thinks that such an offender to Śrīla Prabhupāda as Jayapatākā Svāmī will help the cause of ISKCON. He does not understand that the original mistake was done by Jayapatākā Svāmī and other so-called *gurus*.

Their act of having accepted the post of a spiritual master without having the proper qualification and authorization is what is sinking ISKCON at the moment. So if one falsely believes such offender to be pure devotees, then what is the meaning of simply reading Śrīla Prabhupāda unchanged books when the understanding of the philosophy is changed?

Jitavrata dāsa goes on saying:

“By changing these word arrangements thinking to know English better than you is the greatest offense as it removes the bonafide value of your writings.”

This is a completely fallacious understanding and we have presented extensive evidence to support our claim. Those who have made unauthorized changes and those who support those changes have lost Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mercy. But Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa are still acting through those books. Otherwise, why are thousands of devotees joining the movement after having read the changed books?

Why are devotees like Tattvavit Prabhu and many others, who have read the changed English version, joining full-time? Why are devotees joining ISKM in places like India, Bangladesh, Philippines, Malaysia, where only translations from the changed version are available? Because Śrīla Prabhupāda is still acting through them.

So why should we call those books the “bogus gurus’ books”? The real bogus *gurus*’ books are books like “A Journey Back Home” from Radhānāth Svāmī, which are complete nonsense.

Jitavrata dāsa further states:

“No outside influence can stop your ISKCON, but to allow from within that your books may be modified is non-different than killing you.”

Is Śrīla Prabhupāda so weak? Can changing less than 1% of his words make the other 99% completely useless? Can Lord Kṛṣṇa be controlled by those rascal editors? No!

Even if we accept the philosophy that the words are the most important, then 99% are still the same, so why say that the books are Māyā? Shouldn’t we say that they are 1% Māyā? And how could 1% Māyā be stronger than 99% Prabhupāda?

2.12: SRILA PRABHUPADA’S BLESSINGS ARE KEY

In any case, the fact is that one’s faith in Śrīla Prabhupāda and Kṛṣṇa will make one understand Prabhupāda’s books, not grammar, vocabulary or punctuations.



*yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

“The real import of the scriptures is revealed to one who has unflinching faith in both the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the spiritual master.”

— *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.23*

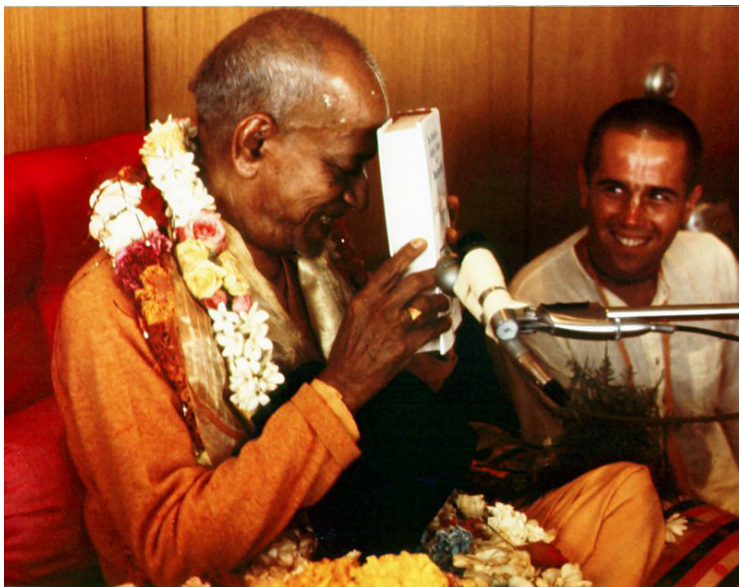
We are concerned with **how to practically apply those words in our lives, not with which word is better.**

The following quote is the secret that explains how to transform *jñāna* into *vijñāna*:

“Instruction alone cannot make one an expert. Unless one is blessed by the spiritual master, or the ācārya, such teachings cannot become fully manifest. Therefore one should seek the mercy of the spiritual master so that the instructions of the spiritual master can develop within oneself.”

— *Teachings of Lord Caitanya, Chapter 14*

2.13: CONCLUSION



The fact is that the changes in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books have not changed the philosophy. The changed philosophy was in the mind of those who have made changes to Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

Some devotees understand the philosophy by reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's post-1977 books and some devotees do not understand the philosophy by reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's unchanged books. This proves that the arrangement of words is not the potent factor and it is the faith in the process and the consequent adherence to it that matters.

This paper has been presented with the aim of clarifying any misunderstandings concerning these matters. It is presented with the purpose of helping sincere devotees not to be misled by envious persons who deride the preachers for using the changed versions in the course of their preaching. Those who are thoroughly honest will appreciate our current presentation and those who do not preach should approach the preachers in order to understand finer spiritual topics.

We would like to conclude by begging to allow us to offer our most humble obeisances to all the Vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord who are just like desire-trees, being able to fulfill the desires of everyone.

*vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca
kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo
vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*



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| Lord Kṛṣṇa first imparted knowledge to Brahmājī | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.1.1 | 22 |
| Lord Kṛṣṇa gives knowledge from within | Lord Kṛṣṇa in Bhagavad-gītā 10.10-11 | 22 |
| Knowledge is revealed to one who has faith | Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.23 | 23, 25, 36 |
| One must serve the spiritual master | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 7.15.45, purport | 23 |
| Receiving knowledge from the spiritual master | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 2.9.43, purport | 23 |
| Hayagrīva not at fault as philosophy is retained | Śrīla Prabhupāda's letter to Hamsadūta, 8 June 1975, Honolulu, Hawaii | 25 |
| Mundane knowledge cannot help one advance | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 2.9.32, purport | 25 |
| Following the spiritual master's instructions | Śrīla Prabhupāda's Letter to Trai, 27 December 1972 | 26 |
| Devotees must preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness | Caitanya-caritāmṛta Antya-līlā 4.144, purport | 27 |

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| One should at least try to preach about whatever he knows | Śrīla Prabhupāda's lecture on Bhagavad-gītā 6.25-29, 18 Feb 1969, Los Angeles, USA | 27 |
| One should respect those who are preaching the glories of the Lord | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 7.14.40 | 27 |
| The story of the <i>brāhmaṇa</i> Vaiṣṇava at Śrī Rāṅga-kṣetra | Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 9.93-96 | 29 |
| The Lord is pleased by devotion and not by erudite scholarship | Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 9.96 | 30 |
| Great thinkers pick up the best from the worst | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.5.11, purport | 32 |
| Accepting the honest attempt to glorify the Supreme Lord | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.5.11, purport | 32 |
| Concerned with the techniques and not with the language | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.5.11, purport | 33 |
| Worship done by a neophyte devotee | Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 7.14.40 | 33 |
| The neophyte devotee does not show respect to other devotees | Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 22.74 | 33 |
| Jitavrata dāsa in praise of Jayapatākā Svāmī | Jitavrata dāsa's Vyāsa-Pūjā homage to Śrīla Prabhupāda in Māyāpur | 34 |

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| Changed books have removed the bona fide value of teachings | Jitavrata dāsa's Vyāsa-Pūjā homage to Śrīla Prabhupāda in Māyāpur | 34 |
| Allowing book changes within the society | Jitavrata dāsa's Vyāsa-Pūjā homage to Śrīla Prabhupāda in Māyāpur | 35 |
| Instruction alone cannot make one an expert | Teachings of Lord Caitanya, Chapter 14 | 36 |