



Dear Prabhu's.
Please accept my humble obeisances.
All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

In answer to SDG questions from dandavatas.com I had this text saved from [Srimad Bhagavtam 10.2.31](#) which clearly expresses Srila Prabhupada's directives for Future Devotees after He is no longer with us. Very elaborately explained and clear as day with no anomalies and paradoxes and with clear intent for Candidates and Devotees in the Future after Srila Prabhupada has Disappeared.

Hope you enjoy the read. I think its clearer than [July 9 letter](#) concerning the Future and with a clear vision of how it were to continue after Srila Prabhupada is no longer with us, which the July 9th letter did not include. Hope the attachment works!!

your servant,
Dusyanta dasa from Wales.

Srila Prabhupada's: The Acharya-Sampradaya methodology.

“The question is sometimes asked, “Are we limiting Srila Prabhupada in saying that he cannot initiate followers after his disappearance?” But that’s not the real discussion. The question more is, “Did Srila Prabhupada teach in his books, lectures, or letters, that the ritvik system was what he wanted to establish after his disappearance?””

Excerpted from an article by H.H. Satsvarupa dasa Goswami on dandavats.com 22.07.2024.

In response and in answer to SDG questions he poses in his article there are several threads we can follow. Are we limiting Srila Prabhupada, and what are Srila Prabhupada's teachings from His Books, lectures and letters, (and His Conversations). These two questions are aimed at what He wanted in the Future after His disappearance. Now another principle can also be posed within this discussion which is, why has the question concerning Srila Prabhupada's disappearance been answered in a physically present Successional system by the GBC. The questions that the 1977 GBC were answering in the Zonal Acharya announcement of March 1978 at Mayapur were ones of Succession and Replacement. So, the question related to that is, why? And ever since this 1978 announcement, the whole debate has been about surrounding this question.

Within the questions that SDG has posed for us we find it is the same styled type of question. Either the questions are related to the physically present Diksha Guru theory (I call it a Theory because I don't think it has been proven), or it is related to the Ritvik question. Why not ask exactly the same question but omit the Ritvik question, so now the question becomes, “Did Srila Prabhupada teach in His Books, lectures, or letters what He wanted to establish after His disappearance?” And was it the system as approved of by the GBC in 1978, and today?

So today I have had to respond in the form of this article because the allowed 2000 characters in a response comment box on dandavats.com is nowhere near enough to answer this question with respect and justice to SDG article, which is intense and lengthy.

As a lifelong Sceptic, and I mean that in the classical sense, not as a cynic but as a questioner, I question the original Zonal Acharya system, which I think has already been debunked, but also the concept of an exclusive pre-conceptualized Physically present Diksha Guru theory, that is present today.

Within the Srimad Bhagavatam there is the teaching of an alternative system called the “Acharya-sampradaya” methodology. I have never heard anyone in 45 years in Iskcon ever mention this system of the methodology for FUTURE devotees,

devotees who will never have the chance of meeting Srila Prabhupada physically, which began on day 1 after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance in November 1977. And this is the question I think SDG is addressing, which I am attempting to answer.

“Thus, it is the **duty** of the ācārya to publish books that will help **future** candidates take up the **method** of service and become eligible to return home, back to Godhead, by the mercy of the Lord. In **our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement**, this same path is being **prescribed** and **followed**.”

Excerpted from Srimad Bhagavatam purport by Srila Prabhupada 10.2.31. My emphasis added.

Immediately, this purport evidence from Srila Prabhupada raises answers that many devotees have been searching for throughout their devotional service. We have had the GBC's answers, with the pre-conceptualized physically present diksha guru theory almost thrust upon us that many devotees were not comfortable with, and also we have had the Ritvik-vada presented out of thin air, or so it seemed, with only The Final Order as any sort of published evidence, which only gathered momentum as time went by with more global debate. So now I am presenting a fresh new approach by illustrating from Srila Prabhupada's Books directly what He wrote about for the Future candidates AND for the time AFTER He is no longer with us physically, as an answer to SDG questions.

Thus, we get a hint here of the methodology that Srila Prabhupada describes in this purport of the text 10.2.31. It's interesting that Srila Prabhupada affirms that this same path of methodology is being prescribed and followed in **OUR Krishna Consciousness movement**. Here, I am translating that phrase as “Iskcon”. I don't know what other movement exists as OUR Krishna Consciousness Movement. And I don't know why the statement of intent called “Acharya-Sampradaya” is not familiar and banded about as common knowledge in Iskcon. Srila Prabhupada emphasises this methodology is prescribed and followed. So, who is following this, and why is it not popularly accepted and spoken about daily. This is a very important principle of methodology that we should all know about as Iskcon devotees and how it is followed. If we don't know about this methodology how on earth can we follow it, and why are we not following it, and if we are why has nobody acknowledged this as common knowledge???? in all the 46years since Srila Prabhupada's disappearance, and throughout all those Guru Tattva debates, papers and Magazines. Why have the words “acharya-sampradaya” not become popularized in Iskcon and used as a daily word reference like “greeting of the Deities” and “Guru Puja” and “mangala Arati” and so on if we have been Instructed by Srila Prabhupada here in this 10.2.31 text that it is prescribed and followed.

(I have conducted a straw Poll amongst devotees living locally here in West Wales and NOT ONE devotee knew anything about this methodology and the phrase

“acharya-sampradaya” , in fact most devotees looked in their faces bewildered, and wanted to know more.)

On to the text as it is, in Srimad Bhagavatam. I am only providing all of this in answer to SDG questions he has posed to the devotees in his published article “How all generations can stay with Srila Prabhupada”, and in the section called “Ritvik- a pragmatic approach?” that is found on dandavats.com. (22.07.24) So, SDG has posed some questions for us to answer. Some of the questions may be rhetoric but there is substance behind them. And what I am saying is firstly there are quite a few gems of Texts in Srila Prabhupada’s Books that relate to SDG questions. This text from Srimad Bhagavatam being one of them.

What makes this even more plausible for FUTURE candidates is that Lord Krishna HIMSELF accepts this methodology. So, we find the combination of the Acharya, Srila Prabhupada, and Lord Krishna both accept this methodology. And this methodology is specifically “left behind” after the disappearance of the Acharya for the future candidates. This methodology is specifically directed towards the Acharyas, so they publish BOOKS to help FUTURE candidates.

[Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.31 :](#)

O Lord, who resembles the shining sun, You are always ready to fulfil the desire of Your devotee, and therefore You are known as a desire tree [vāñchā-kalpataru]. When ācāryas completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, **they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because You are very merciful to Your other devotees, You accept this method to help them.**

PURPORT

This statement reveals how the merciful ācāryas and the merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead together help the serious devotee who wants to return home, back to Godhead. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in His teachings to Rūpa Gosvāmī, said:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja
(Cc. Madhya 19.151)*

One can achieve the seed of *bhakti-latā*, devotional service, by the mercy of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa. The duty of the *guru* is to find the means, according to the time, the circumstances and the candidate, by which one can be induced to render devotional service, which Kṛṣṇa accepts from a candidate who wants to be

successful in going back home, back to Godhead. After wandering throughout the universe, a fortunate person within this material world seeks shelter of such a *guru*, or *ācārya*, who trains the devotee in the suitable ways to render service according to the circumstances so that the Supreme Personality of Godhead will accept the service. This makes it easier for the candidate to reach the ultimate destination. The *ācārya's* duty, therefore, is to find the means by which devotees may render service according to references from *śāstra*. Rūpa Gosvāmī, for example, in order to help **subsequent devotees**, published such devotional books as *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Thus it is the duty of the *ācārya* to publish books that will help **future** candidates take up the method of service and become eligible to return home, back to Godhead, by the mercy of the Lord. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, this same path is being prescribed and followed. Thus the devotees have been advised to refrain from four sinful activities—illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling—and to chant sixteen rounds a day. These are bona fide instructions. Because in the Western countries constant chanting is not possible, one should not artificially imitate Haridāsa Ṭhākura, but should follow this method. Kṛṣṇa will accept a devotee who strictly follows the regulative principles and the method prescribed in the various books and literatures published by the authorities. The *ācārya* gives the suitable method for crossing the ocean of nescience by accepting the boat of the Lord's lotus feet, and if this method is strictly followed, the followers will ultimately reach the destination, by the grace of the Lord. This method is called *ācārya-sampradāya*. It is therefore said, *sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ* (*Padma Purāṇa*). The *ācārya-sampradāya* is strictly bona fide. Therefore one must accept the *ācārya-sampradāya*; otherwise one's endeavor will be futile. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura therefore sings:

*tāṇdera caraṇa sevi bhakta sane vāsa
janame janame haya, ei abhilāṣa*

One must worship the lotus feet of the *ācārya* and live within the society of devotees. Then one's endeavor to cross over nescience will surely be successful.

In the historical view when we look back at the March 1978 Mayapur GBC announcement of the Zonal Acharya methodology it's easier to see in hindsight the mistakes that were made. But the same methodology seems to still be in place and the 10.2.31 text and statements seem to contradict exactly the system that is presently being followed. How does the "Acharya-Sampradaya" system and methodology follow what is being followed and authenticated in Iskcon today. How do **future** candidates worship the lotus feet of the sole founder-acharya, Srila Prabhupada, and follow the "Acharya-Sampradaya" methodology if they have other Diksha Gurus to follow. Does this not create a conflict of interests? And is it not anti-shastric by accepting two Diksha Gurus? Because the "Acharya-Sampradaya"

methodology is exclusively concerned with the Process of Diksha. And the actual text 10.2.31 illustrates that ALL Sampradaya Acharyas (32) are subjected to this duty.

The concepts I am following for questioning is to understand what transpired when Srila Prabhupada disappeared in 1977. The GBC at that time came up with the question of Succession and Replacement, and a physically present succession at that, the GBC allowed there to be the time (approx. 4 months) between Srila Prabhupada's disappearance day (November 14th 1977) and the March 1978 Mayapur festival to deliberate on what the future held for devotees who had been queuing for Initiation from Srila Prabhupada, and future devotees who would never have the chance to meet Srila Prabhupada physically. They said that to be properly Initiated you must have a physically present Diksha Guru. But that seems to be just a theorized concept.

As the onus is on me to present other evidence to attempt to rebut the pre-conceptualized physically present diksha guru theory I have other gems of evidence to prove this. The next evidence is from Elevation to Krishna Consciousness chapter 4.

“This is the last word in prayer. Some people complain that when they pray to God, they do not feel His presence. We should know that this is due to our incapacities, not God's. **There are two conceptions of presence—the physical conception and the vibrational conception.** The physical conception is temporary, whereas the vibrational conception is eternal. When we enjoy or relish the vibration of Kṛṣṇa's teachings in *Bhagavad-gītā*, or when we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, we should know that by those vibrations He is immediately present. He is absolute, and because of this His vibration is just as important as His physical presence. When we feel separation from Kṛṣṇa or the **spiritual master**, we should just try to remember their words of instructions, and we will no longer feel that separation. Such association with Kṛṣṇa and the **spiritual master** should be association by vibration, not physical presence. That is real association. We put so much stress on seeing, but when Kṛṣṇa was present on this earth, so many people saw Him and did not realize that He is God; so what is the advantage of seeing? By seeing Kṛṣṇa, we will not understand Him, but by listening carefully to His teachings, we can come to the platform of understanding. We can touch Kṛṣṇa immediately by sound vibration; therefore, we should give more stress to the sound vibration of Kṛṣṇa and of the **spiritual master**—then we'll feel happy and won't feel separation.” Excerpted from Elevation to Krishna Consciousness by Srila Prabhupada chapter 4.

Now we should all know what Vani and Vapuh mean and their definitions. But this is a very well-presented definition of what Vani is and what Vapuh is. And these are Srila Prabhupada's definitions and realizations so we can't get any better ones. And they are clearly understood.

As we can see from the above the Vani is eternal and the Vapuh temporary therefore we give more stress on the sound vibrational presence. After the Spiritual master has disappeared then we only have the Vani to focus on, and for devotees and candidates who come after Srila Prabhupada has disappeared then they have the “Acharya-Sampradaya” methodology as authenticated in 10.2.31 by Srila Prabhupada and Lord Krishna. What we tune in on are the points that Srila Prabhupada writes about. He says the association between the devotee and Spiritual master are vibrational presences, and this is real association.

He also says there are two bona fide definitions of presence not one. So, we can find out from 10.2.31 and Elevation to Krishna Consciousness how these fit together for future candidates, for candidates who specifically come after Srila Prabhupada has disappeared. This disappearance is called Aprakata, non-manifest. This means by definition that the Spiritual Master is still present and accessible, and a relationship of Spiritual Master-Disciple is available. So that is the Diksha Guru relationship. The Diksha Guru -Disciple relationship is based on two definitions of presence not one. And both definitions of presence are accessible and available until the non-manifested presence of the Aprakata feature is achieved exclusively. This is exactly what the Acharya-Sampradaya methodology is talking about. Since the Acharya-Sampradaya methodology is talking about Future candidates connecting with an Acharya via His books that He has left behind after He has disappeared it means connecting via His Vani, and that via this methodology the future candidate receives the help of the Acharya and Lord Krishna Himself to go back home back to Godhead.

“, and because You are very merciful to Your other devotees, You accept this method to help them.”10.2.31 Text.

To the part of this text 10.2.31 of the very special benediction included within. That Lord Krishna Himself also accepts this methodology to help His other devotees. This infers the Bhakti-Lata-Bija is transferred by the Acharya via His Vani after He has disappeared. What makes this methodology so relevant is that it is prescribed and followed in Our Krishna Consciousness movement. This illustrates very clearly exceptional circumstances of this arrangement made by the Acharyas in conjunction with Lord Krishna because of the inherent merciful nature of Them. This is relevant because this methodology transpires and dilutes the Institutional and Organizational and Traditional circumstances. It’s almost like this special arrangement is a free ticket that is even beyond the concepts of recommendations, the formalities are superseded. And this is all based on the most inconceivable merciful aspects of the Acharya and Lord Krishna simultaneously to help the future candidates Back to Godhead.

“The ācārya **gives** the suitable method for crossing the ocean of nescience by accepting the boat of the Lord’s lotus feet, and if this method is strictly followed,

the followers will ultimately reach the destination, by the grace of the Lord. This method is called ācārya-sampradāya. One must worship the lotus feet of the ācārya and live within the society of devotees. Then one's endeavour to cross over nescience will surely be successful." Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.31. Purport by Srila Prabhupada.

And because this methodology is authentically defined by Srila Prabhupada in 10.2.31 it means we follow this methodology in our Krishna Consciousness Movement for future devotees and candidates. This is an exacting proof of evidence in Srila Prabhupada's Books for what He wanted for the future in Iskcon as the Diksha Guru, the Founder-Acharya and the Current Link. This hopefully directly addresses SDG question concerning what Srila Prabhupada wanted to establish after His disappearance, found within Srila Prabhupada's Books.

Here, it is also noted that the Acharya-Sampradaya methodology is **given** to the candidates through the merciful nature of the Acharya and Lord Krishna. There is no question of the Acharya rejecting any candidates who strictly follow because the Acharya and Lord Krishna are merciful, and the Acharya is duty bound to give the methodology. Therefore, the connection to the Acharya is assured via this Acharya-Sampradaya methodology through His Vani, which Srila Prabhupada describes as real association, which is different from that of Vapuh, physical association.

Now, there many more gems of knowledge available in Srila Prabhupada's Vani but this partial side of knowledge that I have presented in answer to SDG points is dealing with the Diksha Guru side, which is what I think SDG was dealing with in his original questions on the Future. The other parts that I have not covered, and alluded to by SDG is the Initiation side. This whole subject is divided into two components. The receiving of the process of Diksha from the Diksha Guru and next the acceptance of Initiation process of the formality. There is no reason why a candidate accepts Diksha, but does not take Initiation. Taking Initiation is highly recommended but is not an axiomatic integrated part of going Back to Godhead.

Its easy to be in the society or community of devotees and follow the principles directly associated with Diksha. By chanting 16 rounds and following the 4 regulative principles means you have accepted, and you are following Srila Prabhupada's direct methodology in the Acharya-Sampradaya. This can all be found in Srila Prabhupada's Books after He has disappeared and via His eternal Vani. However, for Initiation the disciple needs recommendation which he may or may not engage in. If he receives recommendation for Initiation, then the whole style of Ritvik ceremony kicks in. As Initiation is a formality there has to be an ecclesiastical organisation to perform that 1st or 2nd Initiation. But with the knowledge that Srila Prabhupada is the Diksha Guru via His Vani and via the Acharya-Sampradaya methodology. That can all be resolved and referred to in 10.2.31.

And as far as I have found out it appears that the original question in that May 28th, 1977, conversation in Vrindavana that the then GBC members along with SDG asked Srila Prabhupada was not anything connected to the process and relationship of Diksha but exclusively about the Initiation Ceremonies. The original question only concerned the Ceremonies, not the Diksha Guru definition, access to, and availability. However, it must be said that the conversation with Srila Prabhupada on the 28th May 1977 did include the word "Diksha" but it was inappropriately used and was a misunderstanding from H.H.Tamala Krishna Goswami. He was under the impression that the Ritviks, the representatives of the Acharya, were giving the Diksha methodology themselves to the aspiring Initiates, but that was never the case. The Diksha methodology, in this case of using Ritvik representatives, is given by Srila Prabhupada, which is also the case of Acharya-sampradaya. The difference between then and now is the Vani and Vapuh definitions of presence of Srila Prabhupada. On this very point of association and relationship with Srila Prabhupada it appears that the Vani is easier to access, approach and engage with than the Vapuh relationship. In fact, it was the case that many disciples did not meet Srila Prabhupada at all in His Vapuh presence. And some disciples failed to meet Him. And some were intimidated. But this did not disqualify them from being Srila Prabhupada's Initiated disciples.

The dynamic of the Ritvik system as presented in the July 9th, 1977, letter to all Iskcon leaderships, the outline of what was defined, is approved by Srila Prabhupada. The whole approach in this letter was dealing with the Initiation ceremony and process.

Of course, that May 28th, 1977, conversation has been transliterated in several different ways. But what was clear was the first original question from SDG as follows.

Satsvarupa: "Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiations would be conducted."

Prabhupada: "Yes; I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up, I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating acharyas."

Tamala Krsna: "Is that called ritvik-acharya?"

Prabhupada: "Ritvik yes."

Excerpted from May 28th, 1977, conversation at Vrindavan illustrating the first original question was exclusively asking about the conducting of Initiation ceremonies. Srila Prabhupada's direct answer illustrates that He was going to

recommend some of His disciples to act as officiating acharyas, which are not related to the giving and receiving of the Diksha process or methodology.

None of this conversation refers to Srila Prabhupada's definition of "Acharya-sampradaya" methodology from 10.2.31 and the two definitions of the presence of the Spiritual Master as Diksha Guru in Elevation to Krishna Consciousness, both being axiomatic components of the Guru Tattva subject.

AS far as other types of evidence that circumstantially support the Acharya-sampradaya methodology found in Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.31. there is a mountain especially from Chaitanya Charitamrita Adi Lila Chapter 1 entitled The Spiritual Masters. I think that when we read Adi Lila Chapter 1 in the context of understanding the Acharya-Sampradaya methodology coupled with the two definitions of the Spiritual Masters presence that relate specifically to the Diksha Guru, the correlation becomes substantive and fits in carefully to the holistic Guru Tattva subject. This begins to explain the answer to SDG rhetoric questions. Yes, there are explanations and evidence in Srila Prabhupada's Books that illustrate what He wanted for Future disciples and candidates after He has disappeared. In the context of 10.2.31 the specific words that Srila Prabhupada writes is aimed solely at Future sincere devotees who will never have the opportunity to meet Him physically, because the text says **"they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross"** , for the future devotees and candidates. The phrase "leave behind....." means they have disappeared, and they have left behind the method for future devotees.

The Acharya-Sampradaya methodology. From Srila Prabhupada's Books.

Your servant, Dusyanta dasa, in Wales.

PS. This obviously is a condensed version of the Guru Tattva issue, there is so much more information and Transcendental Knowledge. Some of that knowledge is hard to contextualize until we read SB10.2.31 and applying the two presences of the Spiritual master as either the Diksha Guru or as the Shiksha Guru. And here we find one of the most hidden and unexplained and undebated Guru Tattva points viz-a-viz "The Vani presence of the Diksha Guru AFTER He has disappeared" and all the points related to that relationship, and there are many. There is still after all this time (46) years much to explore and debate for Iskcon devotees after 46 years of limited existentialism.