

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Canto One

With the
Sārārtha-darśinī commentary

by

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

Introduction

Reading other Acaryas commentaries

Necessity, Mood, Procedure and
Pitfalls

So, Can I write the next Gaudiya
Vaisnava Commentary to Srimad
Bhagavatam?

Qualification for Commenting on Bhakti Scriptures

kṛṣṇa-tulya bhāgavata—vibhu, sarvāśraya
prati-śloke prati-akṣare nānā artha kaya

”Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is as great as Kṛṣṇa, (the Supreme Lord
and shelter of everything. In each and every verse of Śrīmad-
Bhāgavatam and in each and every syllable, there are various
meanings. (CC Madhya 24.318)

ei mata kahilun eka ślokerā vyākhyāna
vātulera pralāpa kari' ke kare pramāṇa?

”In this way, like a madman, I have explained the meaning of
just one verse. I do not know who will take this as evidence.
(CC Madhya 24.322)

āmā-hena yebā keha 'vātula' haya
ei-dṛṣṭe bhāgavatera artha jānaya”

”If one becomes a madman like Me, he may also understand the meaning of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by this process.” (CC Madhya 24.323)

- Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu plainly explains that Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam cannot be understood by those who are materially situated.
- In other words, one has to become a madman like Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- Apart from being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is an ācārya who exhibited love of God like a madman.
- According to His own written verse, yugāyitaṁ nimeṣeṇa.

- He says that for Him, "a moment seems to last twelve years."
- Cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitam: "My tears are flowing like torrents of rain."
- Śūnyāyitaṁ jagat sarvaṁ: "I feel as if the entire universe were vacant."
- Why? Govinda-virahena me: "Due to My being separated from Govinda, Kṛṣṇa."

- One can understand Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam only by following in the footsteps of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who was mad for Kṛṣṇa.
- We cannot, of course, imitate Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- It is not possible.
- However, unless one is very serious about understanding Kṛṣṇa, he cannot understand Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Is it ok to refer to other Acaryas
commentaries?

Aren't Prabhupada's books the
Pramana for the next 10,000
years?

Within the past five hundred years, many erudite scholars and ācāryas like Jīva Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Viśvanātha Cakravartī, Vallabhācārya, and many other distinguished scholars even after the time of Lord Caitanya made elaborate commentaries on the Bhāgavatam. And the serious student would do well to attempt to go through them to better relish the transcendental messages. (Purport – SB 1.1.1)

It is necessary, therefore, for the (serious students) of Śrīmad-
Bhāgavatam to follow the notes and comments of the great
ācāryas like Jīva Gosvāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī. To
others, who are not devotees of the Lord, the comments and
explanations of such ācāryas may appear to be grammatical
jugglery, but to the students who are in the line of disciplic
succession, the explanations of the great ācāryas are quite fit.

(Purport – SB 3.4.28)

Yes, it is perfectly true that Srila Prabhupada's books are
“THE BOOKS” for the next 10,000 years. But, as disciples
and grand disciples of Prabhupada, we should also know
how we can establish that.

Otherwise, we will just sound like fanatics. We will just be
telling others that these are “The Books” for the next 10,000
years but won't be able to defend – “Why they are THE
BOOKS?”.

Mood of referring to other Acarya's
commentaries

Try to understand the apurvatha of that particular acarya, and the socio-political conditions under which the commentary was written.
Then we can save ourselves from unrealistic expectations from any of the acaryas

For example, we won't search in SVCT gita commentary for a very sophisticated refutation of mayavad

Just because one commentary is more equipped to handle one aspect, doesn't mean that the other commentary is inferior.

Some people ask “This Prabhupada’s translation also seems right”

Seems right? – “IT IS RIGHT” – We have to have that conviction.

If we cannot figure out how a particular explanation is right, then it is our problem

Never compare commentaries, rather appreciate and get benefitted by the apurvatha the acarya is bringing in.

Pitfalls and methodologies in
referring to other Acarya's
commentaries

Avoid referring to individual verses – WHY?

1. You may miss out on the terminologies
2. You may miss out on his premises
3. You may miss out on his styles
4. You won't have proper appreciation of his apurvatha

If you have time and enthusiasm, try to refer to it parallelly – but in a systematic way, and from the beginning – because acaryas don't bother to re-define terminologies and re-explain concepts again and again