

Prabhupada used to say Distribute books

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Venue: Vrindavan

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Today is the first day of the marathon. It's a very auspicious day. Srila Prabhupada's transcendental book distribution ki jay. So we should be talking, remembering book distribution service as Diti asked to do. She was asked to do worship in a given process. For us also, we worship brahmins and acarya, we serve our acarya Srila Prabhupada. One of the best services we can render on to Srila Prabhupada is by distributing his books. Book distribution was very dear to his heart. That service was given to Srila Prabhupada by Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Thakur. Right here on the banks of Radhakunda when Srila Prabhupada had come from Allahabad to join his Guru Maharaja.

Prabhupada was asked if you would ever get money print books. Then later on Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur Said: “You preach in the western world in the English language.” In the same Vrindavan at Radha Damodar, he was doing lifetime preparation. When He was translating his books, there was no help. Prabhupada was translating, typing, editing, proof-reading, traveling to Delhi in a low-class train. Now that trains are not running. They are abandoned now. He used to travel that type of low-class trains. Giving his books printed there. There is a place called Chhipiwada near Red fort. He was promoting that as an office. There is a Radha Krsna temple where he is allowed to use the facility. That was his office. And one place in Vrindavan that is Vamsi Gopal Temple that was his home also. He was promoting that. And Prabhupada was

getting his books printed. Sometimes he would carry paper on his head, just to save rickshaw money and getting books printed. Sometimes he would be coming to the print press without eating. He would save money for book printing. After the books were printed, the printer would not give all the books. The printer used to say "You sell this when you have money we will give you more books". Like that Prabhupada took so much trouble to translate and the print and publish his books. That was his instruction by his spiritual master.

And then he went overseas with those books. And on the boat Jaladuta, he sold those books to captain Pandya. He sold books worth 20 dollars. So Prabhupada had 40 rupees when he arrived in New York and he also had 20 dollars. And then book distribution continued in New York. Prabhupada was personally selling books in the books stores in sell or return basis. He would travel by bus, check how many books have been sold or not sold and check all the transactions. And then gradually the book distribution was picked up by his followers. Initially, there were some Bhagavatam but not so many copies. Millions of copies of Back to Godhead were printed. Time Magazine used to print thousands of copies.

So Prabhupada used to say that Back to Godhead also should become popular like that. And he used to call Back to Godhead as the backbone of ISKCON. Smaller and bigger books were being distributed all over the planet. In 1976 7 million books were distributed by followers from around the world. Prabhupada was pushing the book distribution. He used to say "Distribute books! Distribute books! Distribute books!" That was his instruction. Of course, he also wanted his books to be read. He had complained. Complain was disciples were not reading his books. Prabhupada wanted his books were meant for reading. Prabhupada was expecting that his followers, his disciples, grand disciples, his family members would read his books also then distribute his books. So that book distribution which is also considered as Gaudiya Vaishnava's family business.

One business we do is printing and distributing books. Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Thakura had his printing press right in the temple. The deities could see the printing press. While printing the deities were able to see that printing press. He called that as Brhad mirdanga. The sound of this mridanga, the sound which is packed in this would reach far and wide. Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Thakura was into printing and distribute books. So Srila Prabhupada took that very seriously and that is like a number one service or business. Prabhupada used to say "He will not die, he will stay alive in his books forever." And he would feel very very enthusiastic when a big pile of mail used to come through the post. There was no E-mail in those days. The postman would deliver a big bundle and Prabhupada would prefer to hear the sankirtan reports from those who were doing correspondence secretarial jobs during the last days. The reports would be the book score from various devotees like Rameshwar, Gopal Krishna Goswami or some temples. He used to give priority to such mail and used to hear those books scores.

I remember in November 1977, just one week before Prabhupada's departure we were also distributing books. The whole world was distributing books, each one of us were into book distribution. Pujaris would also rotate. They would also want to go and distribute the books. I had a traveling party that distributed books. The name of the party was Narada Muni traveling sankirtan party. And we were traveling like Narada muni all over. We had come one week before to see Srila Prabhupada and as we were allowed in his quarter. Prabhupada was off course lying on the bed. I reported my traveling party to Srila Prabhupada, he was so anxious and happy to hear. He asked, "Which book is selling the most?" He was hard, barely able to speak but he was enquiring, enthusing me to go on. He told, "Say more about book distribution". And I remember I said one thing to Srila Prabhupada. That time I returned from Badrikasram. For distribution books, we had gone all the way to Badrikasram. And then returned to see how Prabhupada was

doing health wise. So we reported to Prabhupada. I said, "Srila Prabhupada while we were in Badrikasram, we had gone to see Vyasa cave (The cave of Vyasadev), so there we showed your Bhagavad Gita As It Is to Srila Vyasadev." I thought Srila Vyasadev resides in the cave, we didn't see him but for sure he is seeing us and the Prabhupada books. So I said, "We showed your books to Srila Vyasadev." Srila Prabhupada liked it.

So this book distribution was very very dear to Srila Prabhupada's heart. Books are the basics and preaching is the essence, purity is the force, the utility is the principle. So you could utilize those principles, strategy to distribute books. And this year is Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON Golden Jubilee celebration year. And this is the last month, last chance. We have been glorifying ISKCON and ISKCON is glorifying Srila Prabhupada. They are not separable. Sometimes Prabhupada would say "ISKCON is my body." So this is the last month. The best we could do in this month is to distribute Srila Prabhupada's books. I think it is GBC and book distribution ministerial together has a proposal for all of us, all the followers and members of ISKCON including members of the congregation, even visitors of ISKCON and those who are benefitted by ISKCON, each of those devotees have to distribute 50 books this year. Minimum 50 books as this year we are celebrating 50 years of Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON. Is everyone ready? This is the minimum. Prabhupada used to double it, triple, quadruple. Like Chanting, 16 rounds is the minimum. In one Conversation When I asked Prabhupada "Just 16 rounds Prabhupada ". He said you could chant 16000 rounds, who could stop you? But the minimum is 16 rounds. So I mean devotees distribute 1000 of books, there are such devotees amongst us. There are so many ways and means to distribute books. So get ready and I am sure this time devotees having special istagosti to make a strategy to distribute books. This morning I heard yesterday's scores. They were just normal. Nothing big and special. I hope from tomorrow onwards scores

have to be doubled and tripled and quadrupled. So devotees don't have to wait for the people to come here, you have to go to the people. Make some plans like that. Go to Mathura, and towns nearby and everywhere.

By hook or crook, yena kena prakarena you distribute Srila Prabhupada's books during the marathon. December is the month in which Krsna spoke Bhagavad Gita. This is also the reason we distribute more books in the marathon and emphasize the distribution of books. On the 10th of this month, there is Mokshada Ekadasi. The Battle of Kuruksetra would begin on that day and Krsna spoke Bhagavad Gita during morning hours. Battle used to begin in the morning and go on till sunset, then they would take a break and then get together. Even they would meet enemy friends. And next morning again they would become enemies and do battling and fighting. During early morning hours, Dhrtarastra spoke,

**dharmaksetrekuru-ksetre
samavetayuyutsavah
mamaka?pan?avascaiva
kimakurvatasanjaya**

Translation: Dhrtarastra said: O Sanjaya, after my sons and the sons of Pandu assembled in the place of pilgrimage at Kuruksetra, desiring to fight, what did they do?

**gita sugita kartavya kimanyah shastra vistaraih
ya svayam padmanabhaya mukha-padmad vinihsrita [Gita Mahatmyam]**

Translation: The wonderful song called Bhagavad Gita has been spoken by the lotus mouth of the Supreme Lord Krishna Himself. What other scriptures do we need to seek then?

Something that comes out of the mouth of Krsna is also Krsna. So Bhagavad is non-different from Krsna. So when we distribute Bhagavad Gita that means we are distributing Krsna. It is Krsna in the form of His speech and sound.

**krsna se tomara, krsna diteparo,
tomara sakatiache
ami to kangala, krrsna krsna boli
dhai tava pache pache**

Translation: Krsna is yours. You have the power to give Him to me. I am simply your servant running behind you shouting, "Krsna! Krsna!" [OheVaisnavaThakura song by BhaktivinodaThakura]

That Krsna is with you in the form of Bhagavad Gita, you could give that Krsna to others, be kind and share Krsna to make the whole world Krsna consciousness. Caitanya Mahaprabhu also gives this instruction:

**yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa
amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa [CC Madhya 7.128]**

Translation: Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Sri Krsna as they are given in the Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land.

Srimad Bhagavad Gita ki jay

Gita jayanti mahotsav ki jay.

Srila Prabhupada transcendental book distribution ki jay
Krsna-Balaramaki Jay
Nitai Gaura Premanande
HarihariBol