

The 'M Files'



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“...in order to receive the real message of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* one should approach the **current link, or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession.”**

(S.B. 2.9.7, purport)



by Krishnakant

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Introduction

Recently VNN posted a letter from Mayesvara in defence of Triparari Maharaja in which he makes the following claim:

" ... I wrote several articles challenging Adri and company in the Winter of 1998-1999. They were all published on VNN and Adri absolutely hated them because I was very effective in exposing the stupidity of their so called "Final Order" to the general public.

The IRM has answered Mayesvara's points several times before. Generally he just ignored our refutations and carried on repeating arguments we had already defeated. In this article we shall once more take a detailed look at Mayesvara's stated position on the guru/*ritvik* controversy. In the process we shall be highlighting the bizarre and contradictory statements found in his large and growing body of writings- what we term the 'M Files'.

- **Has Mayesvara found the truth, or is he just 'out there'?**

The reader can judge for himself.

The Beginning

As Mayesvara himself admits, he was initially impressed with *The Final Order* (TFO). For some time he was thought of as largely sympathetic to the *ritvik* cause:

"So the question remains. "What exactly are the FO RtViks proposing?" I am a sympathizer, willing to listen, and even support them if I hear a good plan..."

(A Mission For Unity Mayesvara Jan 25 1999)

But he had his own ideas, and at a fringe meeting held after the first official IRG (**now IRM**) conference in LA on Jan 16th 1999, he took the opportunity to publicly unleash his own special philosophical variant. He was disappointed with the response:

" Everyone sat patiently without interrupting but when it was time for questions it was clear that the majority of the audience was uncomfortable with some of the material I reviewed."

(The Jan 16 LA Reform Show. Mayesvara das Feb1. 1999)

Much of Mayesvara's writing consists of attacking the style with which he claims *ritviks* make their case, rather than the content itself. His case is that when arguing with other devotees...

"If the conversation becomes aggressive, insulting, belittling, or generally obnoxious, then you may still be discussion philosophy, but you are not acting very Krishna Conscious!"

... and that *ritviks* are the worst for this.

- Leaving aside whether or not he is correct, does Mayesvara himself follow his own advice?

Sour Grapes

The same conference at which Mayesvara's new theories were greeted indifferently, the TFO received a unanimous vote of approval. After brooding for a few days, Mayesvara's tone soured considerably. Gone entirely was the conciliatory idea that there

was much to be sympathetic with in the *ritvik* position. He wrote an article on the IRG conference that many delegates found 'belittling' 'insulting' and indeed 'obnoxious':

"When a gathering of FO-*sastra* groupies get together to "discuss" Prabhupada's instructions there does not seem to be a shortage of self proclaimed pontificators."

The fact that Mayesvara himself used the conference to pontificate on his own theories does not count of course. As we shall see, in the world of the "M Files" the rules only apply to others:

"The way the FO-Folks carry on about reading the FO-*sastra* one would think it contains the elixir of perfection! Are we to believe that when one finally tastes FO-Nectar one is mystically relieved of the four human defects that the rest of us struggle with?"

Such sarcasm and vitriol are fine as long as they are employed by Mayesvara against the 'enemy':

"Srla Prabhupada did not encourage fanaticism and he had no hesitation in calling fanatics dull-headed rascals."

And Mayesvara feels fully qualified to identify just who these dull headed rascals are, even though he criticises others for being so presumptuous and judgmental. Such self-contradiction is a commonplace feature in the world of the "M Files":

"What is astonishing is how both the hardcore RtViks and delusional Christians are unabashed about insulting everyone who disagrees with their interpretation of the truth and are then surprised to find that mature, intelligent, and decent people consider their highly polished and rhetorical arrogance just plain obnoxious."

So much for following his own advice. When we started answering his papers he came up with the absurd argument (which became the gloriously self-defeating title of an entire paper) that the mere fact we were disputing his theories somehow proved we were wrong:

"The thing I can't comprehend is why the RtViks spent so much time laboriously going through my last paper with the sole purpose of attempting to generate logical and reasonable rebuttals to what I reported, if I am just a dunderhead spouting off nonsense nobody is listening to? Only fools take other fools seriously!"

'He Who Knows Has No Need To Shout'

(shouted Mayesvara on VNN March 2nd 1999)

The fact that Mayesvara has tried to refute *The Final Order* must, by his own logic, prove he is the biggest fool of all. It seems that as far as absurdity and self-contradiction go, Mayesvara deserves to be taken very seriously indeed. But what is Mayesvara's objection to TFO, and what does he himself propose? Let us dig deeper into the "M Files" to find out.

Two Wrongs Make a Right

Although Mayesvara has written pages and pages on the subject, in essence his position is that the *ritvik* system should not have continued within ISKCON, and that the current guru system is seriously flawed:

"I want to make it very clear that I do not personally believe Srila Prabhupad is pleased with the current Guru system, nor do I believe he would endorse the *ritvik* system cart-blanch."

(The ISKCON Guru Crisis Mayesvara das Oct 14 1998)

Or to put it more bluntly:

"We don't need a bunch of self-appointed vigilante RtViks filling the ether with hatred, vengeance, and endless criticism anymore then we need guru's prancing around imitating Srila Prabhupada."

His solution is to be practical and pragmatic and have both systems running in ISKCON at the same time. This Mayesvara calls AIM, or Alternative Initiation Method. In a nutshell this is what all Mayesvara's reams of writing add up to.

- As anyone can see his position is utterly absurd, for how can there be any positive or practical result from combining two bogus systems?

The very things Mayesvara takes objection to, namely gurus prancing around and vigilante *ritviks*, he suggests be permanently embedded into the very fabric of ISKCON. In the wacky world of the "M Files" two wrongs do indeed make a right, or at least a practical step in the right direction.

The idea of running two systems concurrently within ISKCON was not originally Mayesvara's anyway. The concept was first proposed in *The Final Order* in 1996. But this was only to be a temporary arrangement to allow the correct system, the *ritvik*

one, to be eased in more gently. Clearly if, as Mayesvara contests, the *ritvik* system is completely bogus, then it should not be imposed on ISKCON in any manner whatsoever. So what are Mayesvara's specific objections to 'The Final Order' and the *ritvik* system its title promotes.

Substance Abuse

Desiring to insert a *ritvik* system into ISKCON, one would have thought Mayesvara would try to persuade the GBC by extolling its virtues. However, in the world of the 'M Files' the very opposite approach is taken. Mayesvara does everything he can to convince everyone that *ritvik* is just plain wrong. Unsurprisingly his present strategy has gained him few converts. He has thus been reduced to offering support to anyone he thinks will listen; most recently Triparari, which rather contradicts his stated aversion for people who like "*prancing around imitating Srila Prabhupada*." If Mayesvara's doubts on *ritvik* could only be answered, then surely his mission to INSERT it into ISKCON might be more feasible.

- So then, is there any substance to Mayesvara's arguments that in any way justifies the abuse he has heaped on TFO and its supporters?

In his first direct attack on the content of TFO he makes a huge deal out of its title:

[This (title) is rather peculiar considering the fact that His Divine Grace never indicated that his July 9th letter was either an "Order" or the last thing he would do.]

'Accepting The Challenge' VNN March 16, 1999)

He goes on and on for paragraphs about this. This type of objection is common in the 'M Files'. Poorly thought through, verbose, and all too easy to defeat. As we explained in our original response to the above in 'Mayesvara Fails Challenge':

1. The word 'Order' refers to the fact that the July 9th directive, issued by Srila Prabhupada, was a directive to be followed by the whole society. When the spiritual master tells you to do something, that is, by definition, an order. The letter clearly tells his senior men how initiations were to be conducted from that time onwards. In other words, an order.
2. We have never claimed that an 'order' must have the word 'order' within it to constitute an order.
3. The word 'Final' arises from the fact that it most certainly was the last directive Srila Prabhupada issued to the society on this particular issue, not on every issue. It clearly states on the cover of TFO that it deals specifically with 'INITIATION'.

The above are just plain facts, explained in TFO, and thus our 'phrase' 'The Final Order' is an accurate description of the July 9th directive. It was an order from Srila Prabhupada to be followed by the whole society, and there was no other instruction sent subsequently that countermanded it. For most people all this would be obvious. Mayesvara goes on to give a couple of examples where the term 'final order' appears in Srila Prabhupada's books:

["The Lord's final order, or law, is that every conditioned soul surrender unto Him, learn to serve and love Him, and thus go back home, back to Godhead." - REF. SB 11.21.28"]

'Always think of Me and become My devotee'-should be taken as *The Final Order* of the Lord and should be followed". - REF. TLC 11:

Service to the Lord. (...)Using the same literal style of interpretation that the authors of the FO-*sastra* apply to everyone else, we must conclude they believe Srila Prabhupada never issued any subsequent "orders" after July 9th.]

This is an incredibly silly objection.

- Where is it ever stated in 'The Final Order' that Srila Prabhupada never issued any instructions after July 9th?
- Did he not ask for milk, or a tape recorder?

Srila Prabhupada himself does not use the phrase 'final order' to imply that Lord Krishna issued no later instructions; only that of all instruction this was his final law for all conditioned souls. The July 9th letter was Srila Prabhupada's final order on how initiations were to run within ISKCON.

As we all know Lord Krishna instructed many things after he spoke the Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna, just as Srila Prabhupada instructed many things after July 9th 1977.

Thus Mayesvara's opening gambit fails miserably, and in his own words :

[To find such disparity on the first page renders the whole document suspect and makes it hard to take anything that follows the first few words very seriously.]

The above dead-end arguments fill a good three pages of the 'M Files'. Not much substance, but plenty of abuse. And in subsequent papers Mayesvara completely ignored our counter arguments, as if they did not exist.

Best Not To Accept Any Nonsense

Mayesvara starts a new line of attack:

[All the thrashing about over the word "order", is really a ruse to dodge the fact that Srila Prabhupada did instruct his disciples to become Spiritual Masters.]

Wrong again. TFO never claims otherwise. Of course all his disciples were meant to become spiritual masters, that is why Srila Prabhupada set up ISKCON and trained everyone how to preach.

- How have we dodged this issue?

And the type of spiritual master we are meant to become is very clear: 'it is best not to accept any disciples' (C.c Madhya, 7.130, purport).

- And how does Mayesvara try to get around this clear order not to take disciples?

["It's also best not to go onto a battlefield because one could get very seriously hurt there, but it is the duty of the soldier to do that very thing despite the inherent dangers."]

The above displays not even the slightest glimmer of understanding of how an analogy functions. If you have a soldier, then by definition you are already dealing with an entity who has been ordered to go onto the battlefield. For the soldier not to go would mean he might be shot for desertion. Unless the author can prove that the word 'spiritual master' must always refer to a *diksa* guru, then the above analogy breaks down completely.

Pomposity

[The average devotee is not even necessarily familiar with this word (hermeneutics) or what it means and that may be a good explanation for why the FO-*sastra* has been able to ply its way into appearing credible for so many. The point is that the ability to interpret religious scripture is a refined science that has established rules and procedures that must be adhered to if the resulting conclusions are to be considered credible. That science is called hermeneutics and the type of things that we are pointing out in this paper violate these accepted standards so scandalously no religious scholar of any merit would take the FO-*sastra* seriously.]

Above Mayesvara sanctimoniously asserts that devotees may have been confused by TFO simply because they did not know the meaning of a big word. We believe that the respected professor who wrote the favorable foreword to TFO knows more about the science of hermeneutics than Mayesvara ever will.

[Linguistic magic tricks and a few manicured quotes may befuddle the casual reader but the volume of evidence that has been cited here makes it very clear that the word "Spiritual Master" does not mean "*siksa* Guru" and that Srila Prabhupada clearly wanted all his students to become "Spiritual Masters".]

Before making the above assertion perhaps Mayesvara should have read the following:

"There are two kinds of instructing spiritual masters. One is the liberated person fully absorbed in meditation in devotional service, and the other is he who invokes the disciple's spiritual consciousness by means of relevant instructions."

(Adi, 1:47)

Does Mayesvara seriously think that in the above quote the phrase 'spiritual master' does not apply to *siksa* guru! Where is the fine mastery of hermeneutics Mayesvara so pompously alluded to? But he clearly thinks a lot of himself. Take this excerpt from where he is hopelessly floundering over the Final Will:

"It actually requires a very refined spiritual maturity to be able to make the type of distinction that we are talking about here."

Thank heavens we have Mayesvara then.

Wrong End Of Every Stick

Mayesvara's attacks on TFO consist of a mixture of distortion, misrepresentation and plain old misunderstanding. He simply cannot understand basic points, like what the entire debate is about for example:

The whole debate orbits around whether or not Srila Prabhupada DID order a *RtVik* system to be set up and established for the next 9,500 years on July 9th! "Did He Or Didn't He?"

This is not what the debate is about at all. Everyone accepts that Srila Prabhupada definitely did set up a *ritvik* system. The debate is over whether there is any evidence to support its termination on November 14th 1977. *The Final Order* asks for evidence proving that the system was meant to stop, and that the appointed *ritviks* were meant to transmogrify into fully fledged *diksa* gurus (**modifications a and b**). In all of his lengthy writings Mayesvara never supplies such evidence. Instead he constantly makes accusations that have no substance:

"The intended result is that the unsuspecting reader gets the impression that all the quotes where Srila Prabhupada said "You Become Guru" become watered down to mean "You be come a *RtVik* priest".

The above is never stated in TFO. TFO never exclusively equates the word 'guru' with '*ritvik* priest'. Rather its author's use the definition given by Srila Prabhupada, that anyone who teaches about Krishna is a 'Guru' (including any *ritviks*). Look how he can barely contain himself when he thinks he may have found something:

The first one is in relation to a similar table presented in the FO-*sastra* where the authors somehow come up with data that is so grossly misleading it takes all the *tapasya* I can summon from bursting out with accusations of malicious intent!

(Who's Changing What)

- And what is this horrendous crime?

"We are being told by the FO Research team that the word *diksa* is found only 41 times in Srila Prabhupadas books and the word *RtVik* is found 32 times, "...only slightly less than the word *diksa*. [...] The observant reader will also note that the authors make the distinction that these references are only from the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Why has that distinction been made? [...] "The FO-*sastra* does not present the facts accurately!" This is becoming a reoccurring theme."

(Who's Changing What?)

Firstly Mayesvara accuses TFO of not presenting 'facts accurately'. Yet he also admits that TFO did indeed clearly state that the word search was limited to the *Srimad Bhagavatam*.

- **So what is the problem?**

And for spotting a non-existent fault, Mayesvara was willing to sacrifice all his *tapasya*!

The fact that the authors of TFO limited the research does not in itself mean the result was wrong, what to speak of 'grossly misleading' or 'malicious'. The passage Mayesvara attacks was meant to answer the objection "that Srila Prabhupada has not made reference to the word *ritvik* in his books". This was answered by making a comparison within the book that the word '*ritvik*' appeared. The comparison was not made to show that *ritvik* is more important than *diksa*, or any other such nonsense as the author inaccurately insinuates. It was just to show the inherent absurdity of the objection.

The only '*misleading*' thing is that Mayesvara omitted to inform his readers of the context in which the statement appears.

This is a '*reoccurring theme*' in the '*M Files*'.

"But to do what they are suggesting means either we must change all the tradition that Srila Prabhupada spent 12 years preaching to us about the Prarampara, or change what amounts to no more than a politically charged interpretation of his instructions on July 9th."

- Where did Srila Prabhupada teach for 12 years that he would cease to be the current link in the *parampara* the second he departed?

Mayesvara singularly fails to produce any such statements on 'tradition' that were taught by Srila Prabhupada for 12 years.

- **How can TFO be changing something that was never taught?**

On the contrary, Srila Prabhupada stated that whoever we learn the *Bhagavatam* from will be the current link:

"...in order to receive the real message of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* one should approach the current link, or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession."

(S.B. 2.9.7, purport)

This was quoted in TFO.

- From whom does Mayesvara think we learn the message of the *Bhagavatam*, regardless of whether or not Srila Prabhupada is physically present?
- The devotee who happened to be asked to give class in the morning, or Srila Prabhupada?

Here is yet another entirely misjudged attack:

...Jiva Gosvami clearly tells us that the initiation is done by the Spiritual Master:

“Srila Jiva Gosvami comments that the spiritual master is to be considered the atma, or the very life, of the disciple, since real life begins when one is initiated by a bona fide spiritual master.”

-SB 11.3.22

Notice that it does not say the initiation is done by a representative of the Spiritual Master.

But everyone, including Mayesvara, accepts that Srila Prabhupada did use representatives to perform initiations. The stupidity of this argument beggars belief. He is basically saying that all initiations that Srila Prabhupada did not physically attend (which might be thousands) should now be considered in violation of Srila Jiva Gosvami’s teachings. And so it goes on, page after page of complete rubbish. For more detailed rebuttals please read our other responses to him in the editorial section.

The End Game

Within the ‘M Files’ is a sinister undertone that reveals the true motive. Mayesvara gets into a complete mess over Srila Prabhupada’s Final Will. TFO points out that Srila Prabhupada stipulated that future directors were meant to be selected from amongst ‘my initiated disciples’. This is put forward as direct evidence supporting the idea that the *ritvik* system was meant to continue. Mayesvara grudgingly concedes:

At first glance it appears our FO-Scholars have actually come up with something that seems to be conclusive and actually makes sense. But before we go further let us notice that the strength of this evidence hinges totally on the single two letter word: “my”.

‘Did he or Didn’t he’

Mayesvara then tries to argue that it was most likely a mistake, in spite of the fact that the word ‘an’ did appear in the first draft of the Will, and was then deliberately changed to ‘my’- and then signed by Srila Prabhupada:

After all, who would be crazy enough to dare suggest that Srila Prabhupada... made a mistake! Heretic! Faithless! Blasphemer of the Guru! Get Out! Religious Fanatics (...) What..! Mistakes? Perhaps the skeptical reader is uncomfortable with the suggestion that Srila Prabhupada wasn’t as focused on the exact wording of his will as our FO-Scholars seem to be. (...) The argument that Srila Prabhupada was flawless in every way is a variation of the same immature mindset that the people who expect the Spiritual Master to perform miracles have.

(Did he or Didn’t He?)

So here we see where all this is leading. Mayesvara openly undermines Srila Prabhupada, implies he made a mistake in his Final Will, and all so he can stop his spiritual master from having any more disciples. Mayesvara does not just feel qualified to tell all the gurus and *ritviks* where they are wrong. No. This man is so puffed up he thinks he knows better than his own Spiritual Master, and now he seeks to join forces with those that promote his envious Godbrothers.

In the world of the ‘M Files’ it seems anything goes, as long as Mayesvara can be in the center.

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