

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Remembers His Own Childhood

Surrounded with Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

Prabhupāda...surrounded with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That was my great fortune. My father, mother, my relatives, my neighborhood... I had the opportunity mixing with... (break) Everywhere there was Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And they were all well-to-do, rich. This was the opportunity. Then gradually it developed. My father was a great Vaiṣṇava. He was worshiping Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Our family Deity was Dāmodara. So hereditary we are Vaiṣṇavas, followers of Nitāi-Gaura.

—Room Conversation, Vṛndāvana, July 19, 1977 .

Chicken Juice

Prabhupāda : So in my childhood, when I was one and one-half years old, I suffered from typhoid, and the Dr. Karttika Candra Bose, he said, “Please give him chicken juice.” So my father refused. “No, no, we cannot.” “No, no, he has to be given. How he has become very weak.” “No, no, I cannot allow.” “Don’t mind I shall prepare in my own house and send.” So it was sent from his house, and when it was given to me, immediately I began to vomit. And my father threw it away..... This story I heard.

—Room conversation, Paris, August 2nd, 1976.

I Did Not Like to Waste

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: You had everyone busy trying to keep up. Even now I see that you’re not at all wasting a second. Even in the middle of the night you call...

Prabhupāda: No, that, my... This is my childhood practice. I do not like to see anything wasted, nor I waste. I have told you many times that on the street I am going and seeing tap is open. I don’t liked to see. I stop. Why it should be wasted?

—Room Conversation, Mayapur, February 20, 1977.

It is Sent By God

In our childhood, actually what I am doing, it was all taught in our childhood by our parents, my family. We were taught, “There is a grain of rice on the ground, and if it is touched by your feet, you should pick up the grain and touch on your head.” This was our training. The idea behind—that the grain of rice is not man-made. It is sent by God. “O God, give us our daily bread.” So here is the bread. It is God’s mercy. Just see how idea, great idea. What is given by God, that is also God. This is God consciousness.

—Room Conversation, Melbourne, June 28, 1974.

Actually His Business Was Pūja

Prabhupāda: My father was doing business, and he was a great devotee.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: And you were also doing business during, when you were...

Prabhupāda: Yes, up to one o'clock, two o'clock, he was engaged only with his *pūjā* my father. He was going late, at twelve o'clock, to bed. Then he was to... He used to rise little late, at about seven, eight. Then taking bath, sometimes purchasing. Then from ten o'clock to one o'clock he was engaged in *pūjā*. Then he would take his lunch and go to business. And in the business shop he was taking little rest for one hour. And he'd come from business at ten o'clock at night, and then again *pūjā*. Regularly. Actually his business was *pūjā*. For livelihood he was...

Hari-śauri: Just doing some business.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Yes.

Prabhupāda: We were sleeping, father was doing *ārati*- “ding ding ding ding, ding.”

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: You heard the bell.

Prabhupāda: Hm. Then he would take his night dinner and not dinner. Some *puris* or *paraṭā*. He was also fond of this puffed rice. In later age he was simply taking puffed rice and milk. So, anyway, *pūjā* was his main business.

— Room Conversation, Māyāpura, February 18, 1977.

He Fed the Rats and Saved the Cloth

Prabhupāda: That is the system. That is mentioned in *Bhāgavata*. If the animals like monkeys, they come to your garden to eat, don't prohibit. Let him. He's also Kṛṣṇa's part and parcel. Where he will eat if you prohibit? It is very practical. I have got another. This is told by my father. My father's elder brother was keeping a cloth shop. My father also was keeping a cloth shop. So it is in the village. So my uncle, what he would do, that before closing the shop, he'll bring one, what is called...?

Bhagavān: A bowl?

Prabhupāda: Bowl, big bowl. Or it is... What do you call, where you keep water?

Bhagavān: Pot.

Prabhupāda: Basin, basin. So one basinful rice he will keep in the middle of the shop. And there are rats. So the rats will take the rice, and not cut even a single cloth. It is practical. Yes. They are also animals. Give them food. They'll not create any disturbance. Give them food. Yes. Because cloth are very costly. And there are rats. If one cloth is cut by the rat, then it is great loss. So to save from this loss, he'll put in a basin... Rice was nothing. Rice... In our childhood, we have seen, two *anas* per seer. That is with profit. You see. So one basinful rice, it doesn't cost even one *ana*. So by giving one *ana* worth food, he saves so many, hundreds of rupees cloth. Otherwise, if they're hungry, they'll cut it.

— Room Conversation, Paris, June 11, 1974.

There Is a Ghost in the Fan

So one has to create the eyes to see things. Not that whatever eyes you have got you can see everything. No. Just like motorcar is being driven, a child is seeing that the car is running automatically. And the father is seeing, “No, there is driver. “So the seeing of the child and the seeing of the father is different. In our childhood we were thinking that in the gramophone box there is a man. And in the fan there is a ghost, (laughter) I remember quite. “How these records are being played? There must be one man. He is singing.” And the electric fan was running, I was thinking there is some ghost. This is the way.

— Room Conversation, Melbourne, May 20, 1975.

I Never Wanted to Go to School

I do not want to go to school. I am forced to go to school. Yes. At least, I was like that. (laughter) I never wanted to go to school. And my father was very kind. “So all right. Why you are not going to school?” I would say, “I will go tomorrow.” “All right.” But my mother was very careful. Perhaps if my mother would not have been little strict, I would not have gotten any education. My father was very lenient. So she used to force me. One man would take me to school.

— Bg Lecture 2.14, Germany, June 21, 1974.

I Was a Very Naughty Boy

You have written to say that you are my disobedient son, but I think I am your disturbing father. I am putting more and more burden upon you but you are so tolerant that you have no hesitation to accept my demands even although sometimes they are unreasonable. So practically you are acting as my father. In my childhood I was very naughty boy, and I used to catch my father in so many ways demanding unreasonable things, and my father used to satisfy me. So although I lost my father in 1930, about 40 years ago, by Krishna’s Grace I have got so many American young fathers. But the same nature continues, and I am demanding from my fathers the same thing which may be a little burdensome But I am sure Krishna will be very much pleased if you will kindly tolerate some unreasonable demands from me.

— Letter to Brahmananda, Los Angeles, 27 February, 1969.

I Must Have Two Guns

When I was a child my father gave me one red gun, and then I was not more than eight years. Then, after getting one, I said, “I must have another one.” Eh? Then father said, “Why another one? You have got already one.” So I said, “No, I have got two hands. I must have two guns.” Then my father, “No. you are not... I am not going...” Then I made so much agitation, he was obliged to give me two guns. (laughter) I was very pet child of my father.

— Morning Walk, Bombay, April 14, 1976.

The Tramcar Is Going on Trolley

In my childhood I was thinking... The tramcar is going on trolley. So I was thinking I shall stand on the tram line and just take a stick and touch the wire and I will go. I was planning like that. (laughter)

— Morning Walk At Cheviot Hills Golf Course, Los Angeles, May 17, 1973.

I Was Not Desiring to Take Medicine

I was not desiring to take my medicine. When I was a child it was very difficult to give me medicine. Three men required. (laughter) Yes. One will capture me, another (laughing) will take my legs, and then my mother will by force, I will do like this. (gestures locking of teeth, trying to force spoon into mouth, much laughter all around) This was my position. I won’t agree to take any medicine. I was so obstinate.

Śyāmasundara: So that which is really desirable...

Prabhupāda: But because it is desirable, the force was applied.

— **Philosophy Discussions, John Stuart Mill.**

There Is A Scar

In my childhood, when I was three, four years old, I was saved. My all cloth burned, and there is a scar. You have seen. I would have died that day. but fortunately I was saved. The cloth was burning. That, what is that called, matches color? So I was trying to burn, and it caught my cloth. So the cloth burned, but I did not burn. Similarly, this body also burns, but the soul... *Nainam chindanti śastrāni na dahati pāvakah.* The soul is never cut into pieces by any weapon, neither it is burned by the fire, soul. That is eternity. Anything material, it will burn, it will be cut into pieces, it can be dried up, it can be moistened.

— **ŚB Lecture 1.8.30, Māyāpura, October 10, 1974.**

When Will I Have Such a Nice Deity

As a child when I was going to the neighboring Mallik temple, I was thinking then when will I have such a nice Deity to worship and now Kṛṣṇa is so kind that I am establishing so many nice temples all over the world. Now I want that there should be established 108 temples before my death, so you think how to do it. Make some program, train up devotees.

— **ŚP Letter to Madhudvisa, Bombay, 10 November, 1975.**

I Imitated My Father

So children, they generally imitate, imitate the parents habits or activities. So fortunately we had the opportunity of getting such a father. So we are imitating our father. In my childhood I imitated my father. He was worshiping Deity of Kṛṣṇa. So I asked him, “My dear father, I shall worship. Give me the Deity of Kṛṣṇa. So he gave me a little Deity of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā and I was imitating. So beginning of life... So these are actually facts. Mahārāja Parīkṣit also, he was playing with Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa dolls. Just like Mirabhai. She was playing with Kṛṣṇa doll and later on she became a very high-grade devotee. So these chances are there.

— **Bg 6.40-42, New York, September 16, 1966.**

He Wanted Me to Become a Vaiṣṇava

My father was Vaiṣṇava. He was Vaiṣṇava, and he wanted me to become a Vaiṣṇava Whenever some saintly person would come, he would ask “please bless my son that he can become a servant of Rādhārāṇī” That was his prayer He never prayed for anything. And he gave me education how to play *mṛdaṅga*. My mother was against. There was two teachers — one for teaching me A-B-C-D, and one for teaching me *mṛdaṅga*. So the one teacher was waiting and the other teacher was teaching me how to play on *mṛdaṅga*. So my mother would be angry that “What is this nonsense? You are teaching *mṛdaṅga*? What he will do with this *mṛdaṅga*?”(chuckles) But perhaps my father wanted that I should be a great *mṛdaṅga* player in the future, (laughter) Therefore I am

very much indebted to my father, and I have dedicated my book, Kṛṣṇa Book, to him. He wanted this. He wanted me to be preacher of *Bhāgavata*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, and player of *mṛdaṅga* and to become servant of Rādhārānī. So every parent should think like that; otherwise one should not become father and mother. That is the injunction in the *śāstra*.

— ŚP Arrival Lecture, Dallas, March 3, 1975.

Only Writing of Books Is New

Yes, that was the training in the childhood. This Ratha-yātrā, Rādhā-Govinda *sevā*, *prasāda* distribution. Only the new thing I am doing is writing books by the order of Guru Mahārāja. Otherwise, whatever I have introduced, I was trained up in childhood. I simply initiated.

— Conversation, Vṛndāvana, July 1, 1977.

Only Prasādam

My father would never take food at anyone's house or in the hotel. He will find out some temple and pay them and take *prasādam*. Still there are many temples. So I was about ten years old at that time, say, seventy years ago. So he paid two annas to the *pūjārī* and he gave us so much. It can be eaten by five, six men. *Kicheri*, vegetables, varieties. So much. Two *annas*.

— Room Conversation, Nellore, January 3, 1976.

My Son Is Not Going to Be a Mleccha

My father wanted me to become like this. Know everything that is going on. (everyone laughs). He never wanted me to be a worldly man earning money. He never wanted. There was some arrangement for my going to England after my college education to become a barrister, but my father refused, no, my son is not going to be a *mleccha* (meat-eater).

— Śrīla Prabhupāda Ācārya 1 Video.