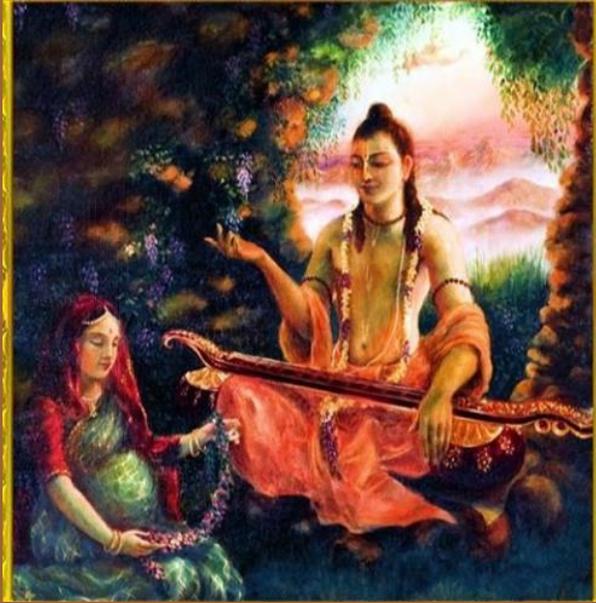


# PRAHLAD IN THE WOMB



The sons of the demons replied: Dear Prahlāda, neither you nor we know any teacher or spiritual master other than Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, the sons of Śukrācārya. After all, we are children and they our controllers. For you especially, who always remain within the palace, it is very difficult to associate with a great personality. Dear friend, most gentle

one, would you kindly explain how it was possible for you to hear Nārada? Kindly dispel our doubts in this regard.

Although Prahāda Mahārāja was born in a family of asuras, he was the greatest of all devotees. Having thus been questioned by his class friends, the sons of the asuras, he remembered the words spoken to him by Narada muni and he replied to his friends as follows.

Prahāda Mahārāja said: When our father, Hiraṇyakaśipu, went to Mandarācala Mountain to execute severe austerities, in his absence the demigods, headed by King Indra,

made a severe attempt to subdue all the demons in warfare.

“Alas, as a serpent is eaten by small ants, so the troublesome Hiraṇyakaśipu, who always inflicted miseries upon all types of people, has now been defeated by the reactions of his own sinful activities.” Saying this, the demigods, headed by King Indra, arranged to fight the demons.

When the great leaders of the demons, who were being killed one after another, saw the unprecedented exertion of the demigods in fighting, they began to flee, scattering themselves in all directions. Simply to protect

their lives, they hastily fled from their homes, wives, children, animals and household paraphernalia. Paying no heed to all these, the demons simply fled.

The victorious demigods plundered the palace of Hiraṇyakaśipu, the King of the demons, and destroyed everything within it. Then Indra, King of heaven, arrested my mother, the Queen.

As she was being led away, crying in fear like a kurarī captured by a vulture, the great sage Nārada, who at that time had no engagement, appeared on the scene and saw her in that condition.

Nārada Muni said: O Indra, King of the demigods, this woman is certainly sinless. You should not drag her off in this merciless way. O greatly fortunate one, this chaste woman is the wife of another. You must immediately release her.

King Indra said: In the womb of this woman, the wife of the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, is the seed of that great demon. Therefore, let her remain in our custody until her child is delivered, and then we shall release her.

Nārada Muni replied: The child within this woman's womb is faultless and sinless. Indeed, he is a great devotee, a powerful

servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore you will not be able to kill him.

When the great saint Nārada Muni had thus spoken, King Indra, being respectful to Nārada's words, immediately released my mother. Because of my being a devotee of the Lord, all the demigods circumambulated her. Then they returned to their celestial kingdom.

Prahlāda Mahārāja continued: The great saint Nārada Muni brought my mother to his āśrama and assured her of all protection, saying, “My dear child, please remain at my

āśrama until the arrival of your husband.”

After accepting the instructions of Devarṣi Nārada, my mother stayed in his care, without fear from any direction, as long as my father, the King of the Daityas, had not become free from his severe austerities.

My mother, being pregnant, desired the safety of her embryo and desired to give birth after her husband’s arrival. Thus she stayed at Nārada Muni’s āśrama, where she rendered service unto Nārada Muni with great devotion.

Nārada Muni delivered his instructions both to me, who was within the womb, and to my

mother, who was engaged in rendering him service. Because he is naturally extremely kind to the fallen souls, being in a transcendental position, he gave instructions on religion and transcendental knowledge. These instructions were free from all material contamination.

Because of the long duration of time that has passed and because of her being a woman and therefore less intelligent, my mother has forgotten all those instructions; but the great sage Nārada blessed me, and therefore I could not forget them.

Prahlāda Mahārāja continued: My dear

friends, if you can place your faith in my words, simply by that faith you can also understand transcendental knowledge, just like me, although you are small children. Similarly, a woman can also understand transcendental knowledge and know what is spirit and what is matter.