

FROM OUR SAMPRADA:YA

(Part-2)

The Ashta:dasa Rahasyas help us to understand the esoteric doctrines mentioned in the scriptures in the right spirit. Of all the Rahasyas, treatises Mumukshupadi, Thaththwa thrayam and Sri: Vachana bhushanam are regarded with great reverence. All these three texts along with A:charya hrudayam that was compiled by Azhagiya Manavala Perumal, an equally eminent brother of Pillai Lokacharya is to be known by every Sri Vaishnava. They also form a part of Nithya pa:ra:yana (daily recitation) along with Divya prabandhams.

Every Sri Vaishnava should know three Manthras (incantations) and their esoteric meanings. *Mumukshupadi* precisely tells us about those Manthras and their esoteric meanings. Hence, let us first try to understand *Mumukshupadi* in this column.

The term *Mumukshupadi* is split as ‘*Mumukshu*’ and ‘*padi*.’ The term ‘*Mumukshu*’ is defined as ‘*Mo:kthum ichchu:hu Mumukshuhu*,’ which means one who aspires for liberation is a *Mumukshu*. The beings in this

creation are roughly classified into two. They are *Mumukshu* and *Bubhukshu*. *Bubhukshu* is defined as ‘*Bho:kthum ichchu:hu Bubhukshuhu*’ which means one who is fond of worldly pleasures is a *Bubhukshuhu*. The term ‘*padi*’ means path or steps. The meaning of the term *Mumukshupadi* is the path trodden by the aspirants of liberation or the path to be trodden by the aspirants of liberation. *Mumukshupadi* clearly explains the meaning of three Vaishnava Manthras namely *Thirumanthram*, *Dvayam* and *Charama slokam*, hence it is also called as *Thirumanthra:ttham*.

According to the *Samprada:ya* a *Mumukshu* should first seek the shelter of an *A:charya* (a spiritual master or a Guru) and take initiation from Him. One becomes a Sri Vaishnava only after he undergoes *Panchasamska:ras* (five fold consecration). *Panchasamska:ra* is the process of initiating a person to the practice of the *Samprada:ya* by an *A:charya*. *Panchasamska:ra* was given only to the selected and deserved persons after intensely testing their earnestness. An individual

undergoes the following five *samska:ras* by the mercy of his Guru during *Panchasamska:ra*.

- 1) *Tha:pa samska:ra*- an individual will be stamped with the marks of discus on the right shoulder and with conch on the left shoulder.
- 2) *Pundra samska:ra*- he will be formally instructed to apply the marks of Lord Vishnu's foot print with the paste of white sanctified mud and a red line to signify mother Lakshmi with processed vermilion. These all sanctifying marks are to be applied on one's forehead and eleven other prescribed parts of the body.
- 3) *Na:ma samska:ra*- he will also get a initiated *Vaishnava* name from his Guru. (Normally "**Ramanuja dasa**" which means 'the servant of Ramanuja' will be added to the already existing name.)
- 4) *Manthra samska:ra*-he will be initiated to the chanting of the above mentioned three Manthras along with *Guru-parampara* by his Guru. These Manthras are the essence of all the Vedas. They have the potential to grant all the desires of a

person who contemplates on them.

- 5) *Yagna samska:ra*- an act of sacrifice in which the initiated will receive a small deity of the Lord along with the instructions to worship the Lord in the household shrine.

Of all the above mentioned consecrations *Manthra samska:ra* which means initiating an individual to the contemplation of the above mentioned incantations is the most important *samska:ra*. The main purpose of the *Panchasamska:ra* is to initiate an individual with essential knowledge. Remaining *samska:ras* are auxiliary to the main *samska:ra*.

The meaning of these Manthras was the most cherished secret. The Spiritual masters in the ancient days used to reveal the esoteric meaning of the Manthras only to their preferred pupils. Hence after obtaining *Panchasamska:ra* from a bonafide Spiritual Master one is supposed gain his confidence by lovingly serving Him. The *A:cha:ryas* used to reveal the esoteric meanings of these Manthras when they were pleased with their disciples.

Let us know more about *Mumukshupadi* in the issues to come.

