



PARABLES FROM THE PAST

**O:m Asmad Gurubhyo: Namaha
Sri:mathe: Ra:ma:nuja:ya Namaha**



- T. Deepa, Bangalore

**Sri: Para:sara Bhatta:ryaha
sri: range:sa puro:hithaha
Sri: vathsa:nka suthas sri:ma:n
sre:yase: me:sthu bhū:yase**

Being the disciple of Bhagavad Ramanuja, as Sri Vathsa Chihna Misracharya gained popularity. Similarly, there are several more great disciples who earned fame as *Ve:da:ntha Pravarthakas*. Foremost amongst them are Kurukeswaracharya, Sri Rama Misracharya, Ananthacharya and Sri Vishnuchithacharya who composed commentaries on *SriBhashyam*, combined commentary on *Vishnu Purana* and *Dravid Prabandhas*, spread the philosophy of *Visishtadvaita* in their respective locations following the divine command of Sri Ramanujacharya. Apart from all these, the only one who adorned the position of *Sri Vaishnavacharya Peetham* as per the order of Sri Ramanujacharya after His departure, was Sri Para:sara Bhattar.

He was the elder one amongst the two sons of *Kuratha:zhwan*. As per our elders, *Kuratha:zhwan* expressed Sri Ramanujacharya's extraordinary reverence for the great *Vishnu Parathva Sttha:pakas*, Para:sara and Vya:sa, by naming his sons after them. Elder one was named as Para:sara Bhattar and the younger as Vya:sa Bhattar. As per our traditional *Grantthas*, on the 11th day after their birth, they were taken to

Mother Lakshmi's temple following Sri Ramanujacharya's order and an *Archana* was performed there. 'By being the privileged receiver of Goddess Lakshmi's blessings, these children will tread the path of an ideal *Siddhanttha Pracharakas*', saying so, Sri Ramanujacharya showered His *Mangala:sa:sanams* on the children. Hence, Great Ones like Ananthacharya refer to Sri Para:sara Bhattar as the *Ma:nasa Puthra* of Sri Rangana:yaki. Thus, being the receiver of the Divine Grace of *A:cha:rya* and also the Grace of Divine Mother in childhood itself, Sri: Para:sara Bhattar grew up to adorn the esteemed position of *A:cha:rya*.

Para:sara Bhattar fully mastered Grammar, General *Sasthras*, *Samskrutham* and *Dravida Vedantha* under His father's guidance and left for SriRangam as a genius enriched with tremendous amount of knowledge. His *Upanayanam* and other *Samska:ras* were performed by his father and for further studies, he was sent to his father's acquaintance, Sri Govinda Misra, also known as *Emba:r A:cha:rya*. Thus, in the commentary of *Sri: Vishnu Sahasra Na:ma Stho:thram*, He pays respect to both His *A:cha:ryas*, Sri Govinda Misracharya and Sri Vathsa Chihna Misracharya with the *slo:kam*, '*Vande: Go:vindatha:thau*'. Thus, in Parasara Bhattar, we can see the reflection of His Father's expertise in *Sa:sthras* by delving into His great compositions like *Sri: Guna rathnako:sa* and *Sri Rangara:ja sthavam*.

He was aptly chosen to occupy the position of *A:cha:rya Peettam* even though He was younger than many others present at that time, like Sri Ananthacharya, Sri Vathsa Chihna Misra:cha:rya, Sri Vishnuchiththa:cha:rya etc. Successively, He beautifully organized various programmes like *Ya:muna Adhyayanthsava*, *Bramho:thsava* etc for Sri Ranganatha which further brought fame to the magnificent splendor of Lord Ranganatha. Thus, Para:sara Bhattar is also popularly referred to as '*Sri: Range:sa Puro:hitha*'. It is also said that Lord Ranganatha was pleased with the numerous programmes organized and conducted by Sri Para:sara Bhattar with remarkable grandeur and the Lord relished listening to *Sri Rangarajasthava Sravanam* composed by Sri: Para:sara Bhattar. Thus, He was graded upon with a unique kind of respect and reverence which none amongst the *Pu:rva:cha:ryas* had gained.

Apart from the above mentioned compositions, He also presented us with a small and wonderful *stho:thram* called *Ashtaslo:ki* in which the meanings of *Ashta:kshari-Dwaya-Charama slo:kas* are described collectively in just 8 slo:ka:s. His commentary on *Sri: Vishnu Sahasra Na:ma Stho:thram* called '*Bhagavadguna Darpanam*' is yet another remarkable contribution. '*Thathvarathna:karam*' is another composition of Him which is saturated with extremely intricate *Sasthra:rttha* and is considered as one of the foremost *Grantthas* pertaining to *Visishta:dvaitha* philosophy. The manner in which Sri: Ve:da:ntha De:sika exemplified the *Nyayathathva*

Granttham composed by Sri Natha Muni, similarly, he also exemplified *Thathvarathna:karam* as one amongst the foremost *Grantthas*. From Sri Para:sara Bhattar's commentary on the *Prabandhas*, the fact that He was not only highly proficient in *Samskrutha Ve:da:ntha* but also had completely mastered the *Divya Prabandham* of *A:zhwa:rs*. Many great ones got sanctified by taking shelter under the guidance of this great *A:cha:rya* and by devotedly serving Him throughout their lives. His own Mother, wife of Sri Ku:ratha:zhwan mingled with other disciples as a disciple and used to take His *Sri:pa:da Theertham* daily after having recognized Him as an *A:cha:rya*.

'VEDANTHI' TO NAMJEEYAR'

This is a strange incident. In the state of Karnataka, there lived a great *Pundit* who had gained complete mastery over the *Shat Sa:sthras*. Through his proficiency, he had defeated the ruler of the state as well as all the *Pundits* in his region and hence used to collect funds from all of them. As the number of feathers in his cap increased, he grew extremely proud of himself. During the last few days of His life, Bhagavad Ramanujacharya had wished to shower His *Mangala:sa:sanams* on this great *pundit* by conquering him through argument and taking him into His fold. He wanted to accomplish this task through Sri: Para:sara Bhattar who had mastered all the *Sa:sthras* at a very young age, but it could not be accomplished within the lifetime of Bhagavad Ramanujacharya.

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