



PEARLS FROM THE PU:RVA:CHA:RYAS

Part-2

Sri Na:ttha Muni's fame started to swell along with the spread of the *Divya Prabandhams*. Many earnest disciples from various parts of the country started to gather around Him. While He was thus engaged in the propagation of the *Divya Prabandhams* His father I:swara Bhattar A:Iwar shed his mortal coil and attained the eternal abode of the Lord. Sri Na:ttha Muni continued the propagation of *Divya Prabandhams* without being disturbed by that blow. He used to always contemplate on the contents of the *Divya Prabandhams* and wanted them to be present on the face of this planet forever. Hence He got the *Divya Prabandhams* engraved on the copper plates with the help of His royal disciple. He also devised various procedures that were to be followed while chanting the *Divya Prabandhams*. Even today the *Divya Prabandhams* are being chanted in the temples according to those procedures established by Sri Na:ttha Muni.

Once Sri Na:ttha Muni's wife had to go to her father's house on some purpose. As He was busy with some important

work, He asked His favorite disciple Uyyakondanar (also called as Sri Rama Misra) to accompany His wife to her father's house. Uyyakondar obediently followed his master's orders. On reaching Sri Na:ttha Muni's father-in-law's house Uyyakondar was not treated with proper attention or respect, as he belonged to the sect of Brahmins who wear their tuft on the left side of their head. In those days the caste system was rigidly followed. According to the system prevailing in those days the Brahmins who wore their tuft on the left side of the head were considered to be lower in the scale of caste than the Brahmins who wore their tuft on the right side of the head.

Sri Uyyakondar was given stale food and was made to sleep outside the house. Sri Uyyakondar returned to Sri Na:ttha Muni after leaving Na:ttha Muni's wife in her father's house. Sri Na:ttha Muni asked Uyyakondar to relate everything that transpired in His father in law's house. He also asked Uyyakondar to tell Him about the manner in which His father in law treated him. Sri Uyyakondanar obediently narrated everything to

his master.

Sri Na:ttha Muni was disappointed with the manner in which His in-laws treated His dearest disciple. He further questioned His disciple thus, "My dear were you hurt by the way in which you were treated?" To that Sri Uyyakondar with folded hands said "My dear master you had said in the past while interpreting the hymns of the *A:Iwa:rs* that one should be fortunate to get the leftovers of the great devotees. I was very fortunate to get the leftovers from none other than your own people. In that case why should I be hurt? In fact I considered it as your special mercy. I was jubilant and felt sanctified."

Sri Na:ttha Muni was very happy to listen to His disciple speak in that manner. He drew Uyyakondar closer to Him and hugged Him. He was very pleased to see His disciple follow His teachings. He started to impart the most confidential spiritual doctrines to Uyyakondar. One fine day Sri Na:ttha Muni summoned Uyyakondar and expressed His desire to teach *Ashta:nga Yo:ga* to him. To that Sri Uyyakondar said "my worshipful master the bride is not yet ready for the marriage." The esoteric meaning of that

statement is that he is not yet ready for communion with the Lord. That also highlights his faith in the efficacy of *Prapatthi* i.e. unconditional surrender to the Lord, because he was not willing to adopt the arduous process of *Ashta:nga Yo:ga* as the alternative means to attain communion with the Lord.

Sri Na:ttha Muni was pleased with His disciple's steadfast faith in *Prapatthi*. He imparted the intricacies of the arduous process of *Ashta:nga Yo:ga* to another disciple named Kurukkai kavalappan. The influence of time and fate cannot be evaded by anybody. Even a great Yo:gi like Na:ttha Muni was not an exception to it. Even as Sri Na:ttha Muni was engaged in serving His beloved Lord and in the propagation of *Divya Prabandhams*, His dearest son was snatched away from Him. His son's disappearance was a very big blow to Sri Na:ttha Muni. In spite of being a great Yogi He was shattered by His son's disappearance. He entrusted His grandson Ya:muna:cha:rya, wife and daughter-in-law to the care of His disciples and accepted the renounced order of life.
