

# திருக்குறள் THE GREAT KURAL

SELECTIONS FROM  
THIRUVALLUVAR'S  
WORLD FAMOUS,  
TAMIL CLASSIC



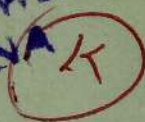
TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARY  
BY K. GNANASOORIAN, M.Sc. (Lond),  
HONORARY EDITOR 'LONDON MURASU'





N. Shanmugathasan  
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# THE GREAT KURAL

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WORLD FAMOUS TAMIL CLASSIC

Translations and commentary:

**K. Gnanasoorian** (M.Sc. Lond.)

Honorary Editor : 'LONDON MURASU'



திருக்குறள் THE GREAT KURAL

By K. Gnanasoorian M. Sc. (Lond)

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ALSO BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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- 3: உலகத் தமிழ் அரசியல் கண்ணோட்டம்
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- 6: An Introduction to Tamil Culture
- 7: An Introduction to Saivism (in print)
- 8: தமிழா விழித்தெழு (in print)



# Foreword

From

**DR. K. P. ARAVAANAN M.A., M. Litt., Ph. D.**

**PROFESSOR OF DRAVIDIAN ANTHROPOLOGY**

**University of Dakar,**

**DAKAR : SENEGAL:**

Being a lover of Tamil and the Tamils, I have become a reader of "London Murasu". But I am not a founder - reader of it. Very recently, I have started to read; then I became a regular reader owing to its views and varieties. There are two main reasons for this.

The first reason is that, this journal comes from London - far away from the main traditional homelands of the Tamils.

The Second reason is that, this London Tamils journal provides the best items.

Mr. K. Gnanasoorian's (K. G.) writing is one among them. Besides his poems and essays, his version and views on Thirukkural in English are very interesting.

Thirukkural was written, 2000 years ago by saint Thiruvalluvar, for intellectuals. Intellectuals only? Yes. It has been written by an intellectual for the intellectuals. Why? Because, Thirukkural makes its followers



as intellectuals. In this way, non intellectuals can become intellectuals, after mastering Thirukkural. But unfortunately, this monumental treatise was not written in Latin Sanskrit or its group of languages. It was written in Tamil, the lingua franca of the landless, voiceless and wandering Tamil society.

Even though 80 million Tamils are spreading all over the world, they are suffering even to day. They were the founders of Indus-valley civilization. They are the owners of classical language-Tamil, very rich and abundant in literature. But today they are struggling for existence. Their ancient culture and civilization are being threatened by others.

According to Thiruvalluvar, what is the prime need of Tamil people? Unity. No: Not only that. Unity produces goods. But unity of weak-people may not even produce goods.

ஒலித்தக்கால் ஒன்றும் உவரி ஒலிப்பகை  
நாகம் உயிர்ப்பக் கெடும்.

திருக்குறள் 703

K. G., aptly translates, "Noises of the weak mean little, even with numbers vast. Even the lone will of a mighty one, they cant stand fast"

Tamil society need sincere and, devoted and fore-sighted leadership. In the words of K. G. "A Gandhi won against an Empire, so did a Lenin: a Churchill, Mao and Mohamed. The history of individuals whose single - minded devotion to their chosen ideals made them leaders "



From the early 20th century, notable scholars at home and abroad have attempted to introduce Thirukural into English, French and other tongues. K. G.'s attempt differs from them. It has a speciality.

Through his golden pen, ideas of Thiruvalluvar are compared with modern political, economical and social trends of the present world. Valluvarism is interpreted through Communism, Marxism, Socialism, Gandhism and other isms. With precautionary words, K.G. has mentioned in one place, "The concept of non-violence as an outdated political weapon"

Is Valluvar for non-violence or violence? A general reader would immediately say, Valluvar is for non-violence. But, certainly it is not. Valluvar recommends violence but for political ends and not for individual ends.

சொல்லப் பயன்படுவர் சான்றோர்; கரும்புபோல்  
கொல்லப் பயன்படுங் கீழ். (1078)

The Great bestow (their alms) as soon as they are informed; (but) the mean, like the sugar - cane, only when they are tortured to death'' Kural - 1078

நர்ங்கை விதிரார் கயவர்; கொடிறுடைக்கும்  
கூன்கையர் அல்லா தவர்க்கு. (1077)

The mean will not even shake off (what sticks to) their hand (soon after a meal) to any but those, would break their jaws with their clenched fists''

Kural - 1077



Besides, Valluvar recommends non-co-operation with authoritarain rule. In his couplet 1036, he stresses that a movement of non-cooperation amongst the agriculturists will affect the ascetics •

\* உழவினார் கைம்மடங்கின் இவ்வை; விழைவதும்  
விட்டேம் என் பார்க்கும் நிலை. (1036)

Translation of Tamil literature into foreign tongues is not a new enterprise. But, earlier works are not sufficient. K. G.'s translation is an appreciably welcome new addition. He has not simply transformed Valluvar's words and phrases into English like others have previously done. he has introduced Valluvar's inner ideas to the English readers by his valuable comments and relevant translation. Even the Tamil titles of Kural chapters have received apt English terms.

K. G.'s comments on Kural are very short but deep. His words and styles are simple, but precise. His expression is very sharp, but nice.

24-2-79

க. பெ. அறவாணன்  
K. P. Aravaanan



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## *Dedicated*

in loving gratitude to the four noble souls who have moulded and influenced my life and thought.

TO: My beloved father Alavaiyur: Ambalavarner Krish-napillai who introduced me to the secrets of the search for Reality in one's own inner life with Thirumoolar's Thirumantiram.

TO: Venerable Swami Bhavyananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Order in U. K. for his kindness and guidance in initiating me with the Gayatri Mantra towards the spiritual path in the Holy tradition of Hinduism.

TO: Mahatma Gandhi whose supreme life of total dedication and prayer stands as a beacon light to my faltering and yet tireless search for Truth.

TO: Rajaji, the late elder statesman and Rajarishi of India whose commentaries on the Upanishads, the Epics and the Kural have been a source of un-failing inspiration in my relentless struggle in life to place values above men.



## Author's Pre Face

Perfection of human nature is the be-all and end-all of the Kural. As a masterpiece of our ancient Tamil classics, the THIRUKKURAL belongs not merely to the Tamil speaking people but to the whole world; and as long as men love Virtue for its own sake and esteem goodness as more precious than rubies, it will continue to be treasured as one of the literary masterpieces of the world.

The Kural and its universal message to man to lead an ethical life has been described as the highest and purest expressions of human thought among the Tamil people as Homer's Illyad was among the Greeks. Thiruvalluvar in one of those seers whose message is intended not merely for their own age or country but for all time and for all mankind. With the exception of the Holy Bible, the Kural is perhaps the only work in the World which has been studied and translated by scholars into not less than 56 World languages with as much as over a hundred translations in English alone.

It therefore becomes my humble duty to elaborate a little on the need for this yet another addition - however imperfect. The purpose is two fold - firstly to introduce a Smaller Version of the Kural selections to the younger generation of "English - speaking" Tamil Children growing up away from their traditional homelands so that they will then be drawn to the original, and secondly, on the personal level, for leaving something behind to claim a small corner in the memory of my



numerous friends who found something of value in my translations. If I shall be able to say to myself that I have contributed something towards the spreading of the ideas of the great Thirukkural among wider audience of Tamils living in the Western capitals of the world today, I shall consider that I have been amply rewarded for my labours.

This collection of translations's and commentary which continues to appear in the 'London Murasu' - the first international Tamil Monthly magazine - is being presented in its half-way stage at the suggestion of friends that young Tamil children studying their mother tongue in London and elsewhere could derive some benefit by their early introduction to the Kural. The Author is grateful to the Editor and publisher of 'London Murasu' for permission to present the series in this collected form.

K. G.

"A man would do nothing, if he waited until he could do it so well that no one would find fault with what he has done"

— Cardinal Newman



# An Introduction to the Kural ABOUT THE POET, HIS WORK AND HIS IDEALS

The word 'Kural' literally means a short - rhymed couplet - the shortest complete verse - type with only seven feet. It is within the compass of these seven feet that the great Thiruvalluvar has compressed some of the profoundest thoughts that has ever been uttered by man. Sparkling wit and humour, the pointed statement, naive question, the picturesque simile - in fact every trick of the born artist has been employed in this perfect masterpiece of art. But the abiding note in this varied symphony is the sublime. The book of the Kural is made up of 133 chapters - each chapter consisting of 10 couplets, all elaborating one selected theme. The book is divided into three parts - Righteousness, Economics and Love and the arrangement of the various sections are as follows :-

## Part I      **RIGHTEOUSNESS** 38 Chapters

Introduction	4 (Chapters)	
Life of the Householder		(20 Ch.)
Ascetic discipline		(9 Ch.)
Ascetic wisdom		(4 Ch.)
On Karma or destiny		(1 Ch.)

## Part II      **ECONOMICS** 70 Chapters

The Desired Qualities of a ruler		(25 Ch.)
Members of the body politic		(32 Ch.)
Miscellaneous		(13 Ch.)



## Part III LOVE

(25 Chapters)

Secret love	(7 Ch.)
Married Love	(18 Ch.)

Parimelalakar of the 14th century is still reckoned as the greatest commentator on the Kural. Although Manikkudavar and 8 others have interpreted the Kural before him, it was reserved for Parimelalakar alone to enter the very mind of the Author, as it were, and bring out every beauty and thought that lie embedded in the original. Some modern scholars have even improved on some of the misconceptions of Parimelalakar in keeping with modern interpretation; e.g. against caste sanction's in vogue at that time.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

The first part of Kural is perhaps the most widely known and the most appreciated work in Tamil literature. In the 38 chapters devoted to this part, the author deals with the duties of man as a householder and later outlines the requirements of the ascetic life of renunciation. In my view the philosophical quintessence of the whole of the Kural is presented in the five chapters 33 to 37. The treatment of Aram in part I is indeed a preparation for this great lesson on life and its meaning.

Parts II and III of the book confirm the life-affirmation of the Tamil way of life and philosophy contrary to the Vedic, Buddhist and Jain concepts on the glory of the negation of life. In the whole span of Indian



Philosophy, Thiruvalluvar alone makes the turning point in the history of life - affirmation as an eastern view several decades before the Christian era. That this life affirmation philosophy was inherent in the Tamil way of life at the time and age of Valluvar and before, is ample evidence of the glory of the ancient Tamil civilization.

The second part of the Kural consists of 70 chapters dealing with policy in worldly affairs including statecraft. Although the great Commentator Parimelalakar interprets this part mostly from the point of view of the King and Court, it is now generally held that except for a few chapters, the whole of part II contains principles of conduct that should guide the average man engaged in his day to day affairs. The work is considered to be a perfect code of morals for the universal man as well as for the state. It propounds an ideal monarchy with ideal householders and citizens and true ascetics, all enjoying the sweets of the world unsullied and eventually attaining Divine bliss. It is a great work of ethics in as much as we have a system of rules for regulating the actions of men. Thiruvalluvar conveys these teachings in a beautiful and persuasive manner appealing to our heart and head alike in a way not to be forgotten easily.

Part III is a treatise on love rendered in such an exquisite style as to convey emotional expression in subtle, suggestive words. Here the universal aspect of love in its relation between two human souls brought together as though by a divine hand, is detailed in its realistic characteristics. It is the Hindu mind acting and re-acting before actual ceremony. The Western mind - the puritanic missionary and the all - too permissive society - could



hardly understand its implications. The great seer, Valluvar had very pertinently studied the human impulses and instincts relating to the subject of love and deals with it under two sub-divisions, devoting 9 chapters on Furtive or unmarried love and insisting more on the proper aspects of Wedded love in 16 chapters.

The passionate love of youth and maid, man and wife with its joys and pains, both physical and spiritual are admirably portrayed.

கண்ணொடு கண்ணினை நோக்கு ஒக்கின் வாய்ச் சொற்கள்  
என்ன பயனும் இல்.

Transl: When eye to eye doth speak with answering  
-look

What need is there for spoken words?

(110 : 10)

There are no vulgarity nor suggestive details though there is both frankness and charm. In married life the pain of separation, the value of coyness and the pangs of jealousy are told in such beautiful moving poetry which leave much to the imagination of the reader.

Here are a few more examples of love and its expression so effectively portrayed by Thiruvalluvar.

யானோக்குங் காலை நிலன் நோக்கும் நோக்காக்கால்  
தானோக்கி மெல்ல நகும். (1094)

I look on her; her eyes are on the ground the while;  
I look away; she looks on me with timid smile.



Love is tender as an opening flower, In season due  
To gain its perfect bliss is rapture known to few;

ஊடுக மன்றோ ஜனியிழை யாமிரப்ப  
நீடுக மன்றோ இரா.

1329

Let her, whose jewels brightly shine, aversion feign!  
That I may still plead on, O night! prolong thy reign

## ABOUT THE POET AND HIS OUTLOOK ON LIFE:

Thiruvalluvar has given to the world a work to which in perfection of form, profundity of thought, nobleness of sentiment and earnestness of moral purpose, very few books outside the grand scriptures of humanity can at all be compared. The religion of the poet, coupled with the fact that he did not include the traditional fourth part, SALVATION or BLISS in his famous work, is a puzzle to this day but the chapters 25 to 37 give us his nearest approach to the subject. However his creed is not a godless one. In the first opening couplet itself he refers to God as the first cause and the Lord. His was a firm belief in the existence of God and to be free from the bonds of endless birth, the one road, he knew, lay in the Worship of the Almighty in all love and truth. The strength of this appeal was and is so great that it has induced every rival religious sect in the Tamil country to claim the work and its Author as its own and the Kural has during all these ages refused to be in any way labelled.



The grand feature of the first part on ARAM is its healthy outlook on life. Some of the grandest thoughts that have ever been uttered by man are to be found in this part with some real gems of practical wisdom. The poet insists greatly on the love of mankind and the honouring of the guest as among the chief virtues of a man. Such vices as envy, coveting, slander are condemned and such virtues as uprightness, forgiveness and goodwill to all are recommended. Thus it will be seen that it is a cheerful, benignant humanity that Thiruvalluvar wants to create in his Tamil country and beyond and in the world. At the end of a useful life in society, man must prepare himself for a life of stricter discipline and consecrate his thoughts to obtain a higher spiritual vision. He renounces attachments, conquers desire and in the the pursuit of realizing the ultimate Reality, he attain's the state of permanent bliss for his soul. All this is amply exemplified in the tales sorrounding the author's life itself.

The sheer size of the 2nd part on Economics shows what importance the sage gives to politics and economics in his scheme of life. The underlying idea seems to be that wealth cannot be enjoyed in security except under a stable and well - ordered Government. As well as a moral teacher, Thiruvalluvar shows in this part that he is equally a consummate statesman and a thorough man of the world. Everywhere he reveals the firm grasp that he has of the fundamental principles that underlie the art of government - throughout part II it is the dry light of reason illuminating the whole field of the statesman's art. But most of these couplets also address themselves to all men of the world with an implied promise of success when applied to their own respective station in life.



Even from a birds - eye view of the Kural, we find that the author is a cosmopolite citizen of the world, except that he speaks and writes in Tamil. His work is of universal interest and has found a home in England France, Germany, Italy as the following chronologically arranged Kural - Translations show:-

1. Fra Joan de Vila conde, 1521 - 51 A.D. Portugal  
(Kural quotations only)
2. Rev. G. C. Beschi de 1742 Italy
3. Rev. Kindersley 1794 London, England
4. Rev. F. H. Ellis 1812 „ „
5. Rev. W. H. Drew 1840 „ „
6. E. Ariel 1848 France
7. Karl Graul 1856 Leipzig, Germany
8. P. G. De, Dumast 1854 France
9. Rev. E. T. Robinson 1873 London
10. Rev. Dr. G. V. Pope 1886 London
11. G. De, B. De. Fointenan 1889 Paris
12. T. M. Scott 1889 England
13. V. V. S. Iyer 1912 Tamil Nadu
14. C. Rajagopalachari 1948 Tamil Nadu
15. K.T. Thirunavukkarasu 1970 New Delhi

— To name only a few from among over a hundred English translation of the Kural. There are at least over 200 learned Commentaries on the Kural in the Tamil language alone.



## THE PURPOSE OF THE KURAL

It is easy to conclude that while formulating his World famous master-piece. The Kural elaborates a guideline to attain the four major objectives of the Hindu way of life Righteousness (of conduct) Wealth, Love and Bliss (VEEDU). The Kural treats in detail only the first three - presumably the Author felt that self-realisation and bliss would surely come to those who tread the path of righteousness in life.

Perfection of human nature is the be-all and end-all of the Kural. In the world there is nothing great but man and in man there is nothing great but mind. Perhaps Thiruvalluvar our great Author would add "in mind there is nothing great but moral perfection"

## IN PRAISE OF THE THIRUKKURAL

By the Boards of the Sangam Era  
in Tamil Literature

சிந்தைக் கினிய செவிக்கினிய வாய்க்கினிய  
வந்த வருவினைக்கு மாமருந்து — முத்திய  
நன்னெறி நாமறிய நாப்புலமை வள்ளுவனார்  
பன்னிய இன்குறள் வெண் பா.

The Kural's sweet to mouth and ear and mind;  
'Tis balm for twofold deeds that birth remind  
'Twas sung by Valluvar, the poet wise and true  
That we might know the righteous path of old anew



ஆரியமுஞ் செந்தமிழும் ஆராய்ந்து இதனினிது  
சீரியதென் ரென்றைச் செப்பரிதால், — ஆரியம்  
வேதமுடைத்து, தமிழ் திருவள்ளுவனார்  
ஓது குறட்பா வுடைத்து.

It is difficult to say which of the two is superior,  
Sanskrit or Tamil; For Sanskrit has the Vedas and Tamil  
has the Kural of Thirvalluvar.

கடுகைத் துளைத்தேழ் கடலைப் புகட்டிக்  
குறுகத் தறித்த குறள்,

The wide world of man's duty coumpressed here indeed  
The Truth of the seven seas enclosed in a mustard seed.

## The Ideals of Thiruvalluvar

- 1) Thiruvalluvar's idea of God is that of a personal Being, transcendent and infinitely great, yet in intimate touch with the world that He has created and full of grace and truth. He is a present Helper in a time of trouble and one to whom the soul can surely cling in its quest for the higher life.
- 2) The Tamil word 'ARAM' embraces the meaning of the words Virtue & Dharma which means that body of ethical principles which is the law of all life according to Indian philosophy. Because Aram (unlike wealth and bliss) results in the acquisition of the three fold bliss of the present life, of the next life and of final deliverance, the author declares its mighty power in no uncertain terms.
- 3) The Dharma of India emphasizes duty and obligation, rather than rights, and each several class of men has its respective duties & obligations. (Right & conduct) then is the fulfilling of these duties.
- 4) Hospitality has always been regarded as one of the most important duties of the Indian householder. Guests include wayfarers, mendicants and ascetics.
- 5) Knowledge of one's duty the world shows that man must give as the rain clouds give. Marcus Aurelius expressed the same thought when he said 'we ought to do good to others as simply & naturally as a bee makes honey or a vine bears grapes.'



- 6) Ahimsa or refraining from causing pain to my living creature is another distinctive quality emphasized by Indian Ethic. The Tamil word for Ahimsa is 'Arul' (அருள்) which is love for all living things. This is also the word used for the 'Grace of God,'

One is reminded of the hymn: "For the love of God is broader than the treasure of Man's mind. And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderful kind".

- 7) On Truthfulness: The two greatest causes of lying are lust and covetousness, both of which has to be renounced.

Of all good things we have scanned with studious care There's nought that can with truthfulness compare.

- 8) The impermanence of material things is one of the deep-seated convictions of Indian Thought. It is through the knowledge of this that the soul can rid itself of the bond of earth and attain freedom.
- 9) Knowledge of the truth follows upon complete renunciation of both external & internal bonds. Bliss refers to the bliss of complete release Moksha or salvation.
- 10) Evil is due to mental confusion resulting from sensory knowledge. It is this folly or ignorance that leads to birth and looks upon the material world as real
- 11) To see God in all things and to realise Him in everything is the supreme wisdom



- 12) Fate or Karma denotes the latent force of old deeds which determines the conditions in this present life. Sir S. Radhakrishnan in his 'Hindu View of Life' forgives a new connotation to Karma. He says - It supplies man with materials in the form of the past but allows him the freedom to use the material in the light of his knowledge.
- 13) The Artha Sastra of Charakya is the standard Sanskrit work on the subject of POLITY - the subject of part ii. Karma, Artha, Dharma & Moksha are the 4 purposes of life - Bramachari, Gragastan, Vana-pirasthan and Sannyasa, are the four stages of life.
- 14) Reverence for the Guru or Teacher is a cardinal trait of Indian life, however high the position of the pupil may be.
- 15) The supreme value of detachment of mind, is that it accepts joy or grief without emotion as they come. The obstacles in this path have themselves met with an obstacle.
- 16) Honour is a most precious possession to every Indian and accounts for many Indian traits. Death is indeed better than dishonour.
- 17) The perfected ones never change their character even if the whole constitution of the world be changed. Such people are in their character the very crown of worth. (श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता) Because it cannot go beyond that.

This is the crown of greatness; a mingling of unaffected kindness with consummate tact. It harmonizes all things, while it is the result of a happy & harmonious combination of good qualities.



- 18) Family responsibility is a fundamental principle of Indian ethics & explains many things in Indian life which westerners fail to understand.
- 19) Much learning is worthless if one cannot exercise self - control in conduct and behaviour. Regulation of life and social co-operation are most important than scriptural or philosophical knowledge.
- 20) Forbearance is recommended as the highest form of all knowledge. It stops the chain of evil where you can control it. You cannot prevent another but you can prevent yourself from contributing to the progressive sequence of evil.
- 21) Poverty is wealth if it is brought about for causes that raise man in the esteem of the world. Death under certain circumstances is life ever - lasting. Such poverty which is not poverty and such death which is not death but life, come only to those who understand true values.
- 22) Detachment in conduct is the essence of the principle of renunciation and monastic life is not necessary for a man's salvation if he knows how to do his duties in ordinary life with detachment & Equanimity.
- 23) Attachment being a source of pain, every renouncement brings happiness. It need not be done all at one time. The advantage is not lost by spreading it out. Nor need renunciation wait until you are prepared to renounce all. As each thing is renounced to that extent pain is escaped. Loss of goods is not loss but an escape from pain inevitably associated with it.
- 24) Religious dogma apart, detachment is recognised as a great and necessary virtue in human endeavour.



The philosophy. of non - desire is intimately associated with detachment in work;

- 25) The doctrine of the Law of Karma as inunciated in Hinduism states that the sum of a man's thoughts, desires and actions becomes his start in the next birth or re-embodiment of his soul. The Law is unfailing in its rigour but the account is not closed by death, but carried on from one birth to another.
- 26) True understanding is that which uncovers and shows the reality behind the apparent and diverse exteriors of all thing. The enlightened man perceives the one unimonent Substance in the diverse phenomenal appearance of the world.
- 27) Success achieved without minding the prohibitions of the moral Law brings grief in the wake of achievement. Do not do that which your better sense tells you, you will afterwards regret. But if you have done such a thing, it is well you at least decide to refrain from such folly again.
- 28) The chief advantage of wealth is the security it gives. Make wealth for there is no other munition of war so effective. There is no sharper sword with which to cut the pride and confidence of the enemy.
- 29) True knowledge controls thought & conduct and keeps away from evils and help one to move in the right path. It befriends the world by fostering a spirit of equanimity. It converse on one discrimination mind which is the greatest of possessions
- 30) A sensitive conscience is a jewel that sets off the virtues of good man. The quick and instinctive shrinking from wrong & improper actions is one of the essential elements of a good character.



# திருக்குறள்

## THE GREAT KURAL

### LESSON I

Acclaimed as the foremost Tamil literary masterpiece, the Thirukkural also ranks among the renowned literature of the world. Albert Schweitzer, Nobel Laureate, has this to say: "... there hardly exists in the literature of the World a collection of maxims in which we find such lofty wisdom". Always held in the highest esteem among the Tamil people, the great reverence for the author (Saint VALLUVAR) and his work is reflected by the different titles under which the book goes: Poyyamoli (the falseless Word); Potumarai (the Common Veda), Teyvanul (The Divine Book) etc.

The KURAL is a comprehensive manual on Ethics, polity and love, consisting of 1330 couplets divided into 133 sections of 10 couplets each; the first 38 on Ethics (Aram Virtue), the next 70 on political and economic matters (Porul - wealth) and the rest on love (Kamam-Pleasure)

The basic theme of the Kural is 'man' in the totality of his relationships: within the family with his wife and children, within the community with his friends and within his country in his relationship towards the ruler and the State. After a cosmic introduction which praises God, nature and virtue, the author sets out to unfold man's



personality and leads him towards wholesome development the force behind this dynamism is sympathy, even love manifesting itself through kind thought, sweet words and right actions.

## Part 1 ETHICS (ARAM)

This part deals with Aram which can be freely translated as the moral code or righteousness. Before developing the subject proper and in keeping with Tamil literary tradition, the author devotes the first four sections as a Payiram or introduction devoted to the praise of God, Nature, Supermen and virtue in this order. Selecting one couplet in each of the 133 sections, it is proposed to give to readers a glimpse into the Treasure-house of the Kural.

### PAYIRAM - INTRODUCTION

#### Section 1 - In Praise of God

அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம் ஆதி  
பகவன் முதற்றே உலகு

எழுத்துக்களெல்லாம் அகரமாகிய முதலே யுடையன;  
அதுபோல உலகம் ஆதிபகவனாகிய முதலேயுடைத்து.

**Literal Translation:** Just as "A" is the first alphabet for all languages, So also is God the origin and vitality of the world around us.

"In words and language, the alphabet dwells  
the primeval Lord to man and world wills"

**Essence:** God is the source of all creation in this world which is sustained by His Grace. The material-wealth we enjoy, the beauty of nature we admire in its various forms and the simple joys of healthy and happy living are all gifts from the Almighty.



## LESSON 2

Continuing our study of the Kural, it is enlightening to note that Valluvar is a part of one great ethical diadectic tradition which was an integral part of Tamil literature from the Sangam periods. One unique feature attributable to earliest Tamil literature including the Kural is the concept of the Canror (சான்றோர்) or Noble men and their importance to Society.

This World lives because

Some men do not eat alone, even the Sweetest things Not even the food of the Gods.

-Puram 182 (A.K.R.)

Valluvar reiterates this view saying that the world exists because noble and cultured men exist; without them this world would vanish into dust.

### Section 2 -

#### In Praise of nature as rain

“வான்நின்று உலகம் வழங்கி வருதலால்  
தான் அமிர்தம் என்றுணரற் பாற்று”

மழையானது காலம் தவறுது பெய்து எமக்குப்  
பேருதவி செய்வதால் அதை அமிர்தம் என்று அழைக்கற்  
பாலது.

**Translation:** Our wellbeing and our primary needs are fulfilled by the unfailing rain which we value as a celestial drink from heaven.

Natures gift, unfailing boon to man

Rain! compare thee to Heaven's nectar we can!



**Explanation :** As we, in this World, enjoy nature's limitless bounties with the unfailing help of regular rainfall, we naturally rever rain as a heaven sent nectar in prayer and thankfulness.

### Section 3 -

### In Praise of noble men

“செயற்கரிய செய்வார் பெரியர் சிறியர்  
செயற்குரிய செய்கலாதார்”

அரிய பெரிய செயலைச் செய்து முடிப்பவர் பெரியவர் என்றும், தமது ஆற்றலுக்குட்பட்ட செயலைத்தானும் செய்யாதவர் சிறியவர் என்றும் கொள்க.

**Translation :** Great men are they who succeed in doing the impossible tasks while men of low calibre cannot even do that which is possible by them. Accomplish the impossible deed they noble men.

Even the possible, know not the art, we low mortals then

**Explanation :** Men are judged noble or low, according to the calibre of their achievements in the field of action. Thus, only by setting our aims high can we attain greatness through fruitful endeavour.

## LESSON 3

The immortal Valluvar now takes us to the essence of his teaching - ARAM (Ethics or righteous conduct) which embodies a whole range of codes for human conduct. Rajaji in his translation of the Kural, had noted that there exists no word in the English Language that can portray the meaning of the word, Aram, which is unique to Indian and particularly Tamil culture.



By ethics morality we mean right human conduct. The assumption is that we should be concerned not only with our own welfare but also with that of others and indeed of human society as a whole. Albert Schweitzer learnt the Kural from Karl Graul's German translation and was so impressed that he said "Those sections dealing with righteous conduct both by man himself and towards his fellow men, is unparalleled in both substance and loftiness of idealism, any where in the literature of the World".

### Section 3

#### In Praise of 'Aram' (Ethics)

அறத்தினுடங்கு ஆக்கமும் இல்லை அதனை  
மறத்திலினுடங்கு இல்லைக் கேடு;

தருமத்தின் மேற்பட்ட செல்வமேயில்லை. அத்தருமத்  
தைச் செய்வதினின்றும் மறந்துவிடின் அதைவிட வேறு  
கேடும் இல்லை என்பதாம்.

**Translation:** Charity! we know no better wealth to prosper Ignore and there can be no worse disaster

**Essence:** The very act of giving to the under-privileged in this world is a source of happiness while selfishness can lead to misery and untold harm.

### Section 4

#### Life as a Householder (Il Valkkai)

அறத்தாற்றின் இல் வாழ்க்கை ஆற்றின்  
புறத்தாற்றின் போஓய்ப் பெறுவதெவன்

ஒருவன் இவ்வாழ்க்கையைத் தரும நெறியாகத்  
தவறாது நடத்துவானாகில் துறவறத்திற் போய்ப் பயன்  
என்ன என்பதாம்.



**Translation :** Family and friends, righteous living, loving wife Renounce not: there can be no better life.

**Essence :** Family life with all its pleasures and pains in the midst of Society is better than a life of noble seclusion.

## LESSON 4

The family, in the widest sense, has been the unit of society among the Tamils from centuries past to the present day. Valluvar maintains that fulfilment in life results from discharging our obligations first to family members and then to society at large. These duties are laid down in the kural - a father's duty to earn a living, a wife's duty to be chaste, a son's duty to do well and so on. Thus shorn of non - essentials, life is duty.

I slept and dreamed that life was beauty  
I woke up and found that life was duty.      -Hooper

The great Tamil epic, Silapathikaram, is a literary monument for a chaste wife, Kannaki, later worshipped as the Goddess Paththini:-

What we sowed returns, the good and evil  
To king and peasant alike it will

Even the renowned sceptre the proud Pandyan bears  
crumbled at the just claim of a chaste wife's tears  
-Silapathikaram (transl K.G.)

Ilanko Adigal reiterates Valluvar's praise of the force and power of chastity which can confront and excel even the might of kings.



## Part 1 - Section 6

### The Ideal Wife

தெய்வம் தொழாஅள் கொழுநன் தொழுதெழுவாள்  
பெய்யெனப் பெய்யும் மழை.

கொண்ட கணவனையே உள்ளம் நிறைந்த தெய்வ  
மென்று கருதுபவள் தான் பெய்யென்றால் மழையும்  
பெய்யும் என்பதாம்.

**Transl:** Rever the husband alone. Why pray?  
refrain! Chastity can command the heavens to rain!

**Expl:** The force and power of chastity is praised  
almost to the heavens who it is said will literally obey  
the commands of such a chaste wife with rain.

## Section 7

### Dutiful Children

மகன் தந்தைக்கு ஆற்றும் உதவி இவன்தந்தை  
எந்நோற்றான் கொள்ளனும் சொல்:

ஒருவன் தனது தந்தைக்குச் செய்யும் கடமை. தான்  
நற்பெயர் பெற்றுப் பிறர் தனது தந்தையை மெச்சும்படி  
செய்தலாம்.

**Transl:** The son owes a duty earning such good  
name Society will exclaim: this his father's fame!

**Expl:** By the achievement of ability and merit  
on himself, a dutiful son will unwittingly bring happi-  
ness to his father whom society will then regard highly.



## LESSON 5

We now come to the study of LOVE (= Anpu) in the broader sense of kindness as opposed to pleasure.

The greatness of valluvar lies, among other equally admirable features, in the universality of his teaching. Tamil literature is unique in the world in that the Tamil poets extend their breath of vision and wellbeing beyond narrow considerations of race and country to cover the entire world. This is a continuing tradition beginning from the great poet of the Sangam period, Poongkunrarar whose words, written 2000 years ago, should be enshrined in letters of gold for its universal outlook and admirably fit even to be the motto of the United Nations:-

யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர்

The Whole World is our domain; Every man is my  
Kinsman

-*Puram* 192

Valluvar's treatment to love (Anpu) is also as a universal theme essential for mankind and reflecting the sentiments expressed in such words as:- "It is love that makes the world to round" and "love thy neighbour as thyself" Rev. J Ehal who studied and admired the kural as early as the 18th century has said: "Some of the teachings embodied in the Kural may even be earlier than those first written in the old testament"



## Section 8

### Anbu; (The Importance of Kindness)

அன்பின் வழியது உயிர்நிலை அஃதிலார்க்கு  
என்பு தோல் போர்த்த உடம்பு

அன்பு உடம்போடு சேரும்போது அதை உயிர் என்று  
கூறுகின்றோம். அன்பு இல்லாத உடம்பு வெறும் எலும்புக்  
கூடு மட்டுமே.

**Transl:** The very basis of life is love and love alone  
Without love the body is mere skin and bone.

**Expl:** Love has to manifest itself in our daily life  
and in all our actions. Without love we sink to the  
level of mere robots.

## Section 9

### Virunthombal (=Entertainment of one's guests)

வித்தும் இடல்வேண்டும் கொல்லோ விருந்தோம்பி  
மிச்சின் மிசைவான் புலம்.

விருந்தினரைக் காப்பவனது விளை நிலம் தானே  
விளையும் என்பதாம்.

**Transl:** Guests and the needy with open arms he  
meets His fields bloom plenty even without seeds.

**Expl:** Those who attend to the needs of their  
guests before minding their own, need not worry about,  
the wherewithal as God himself will provide for such  
noble people.



## LESSON 6

Thiru Valluvar's approach to moral doctrine is marked by a very thorough knowledge of human psychology and a desire to help imperfect men with practical hints in the struggle against evil. Throughout we can see how the poet brings everything down to the level of practicality without losing hold of the ideal.

Gentleness of speech is not pleasant falsehood but words coming from the depth of learning and sincerity from enlightened men. Valluvar the master of teaching technique poses the question "when gentle words are available, why do men choose the word that hurts? Is it not foolish to pick unripe berries when ripe ones can be had for the picking?"

Discussing the nature of gratitude, Valluvar says that for a deed born of sheer generosity, there is nothing that can be considered adequate repayment - it is more precious than anything in this world or beyond. How then can the Tamils or indeed the kural - knowing world pay gratitude to Valluvar for his great gift of the Kural.

## Section 10-

## Gentleness of Speech

அகன் அமர்ந்து ஈதலில் நன்றே முகன் அமர்ந்து  
இன் சொல்லாகப் பெறின.

**Transl:** The kindly word, the loving look, the heart that lifts

These tender deeds more in need than gifts.

**Expl:** To give is good. But the sweet manner accompanying the gift touches the heart of the receiver, even more than the gift itself.



## Section - 11

### Gratitude

கொன்று அன்ன இன்ன செயினும் அவர்செய்த  
ஒன்று நன்று உன்னக்கெடும்.

**Transl:** Even the one who inflicts mortal pain to  
bear  
Think of his one good deed to forget and  
forbear.

**Expl:** Painful indeed may be the evil that you  
suffer at a man's hand. But remind yourself of some  
good thing that he did once for you. It may help you  
to forget the present pain.

## LESSON 7

Religion with its accompanying threat of an ever  
-vigilant God who dispenses punishment for wrong-doers  
has been used for centuries, and is still in use, to re-  
form men and his actions. With characteristic foresight,  
the great Valluvar felt that the hold of religion on man  
may change with time and therefore chose to reform  
mna's actions by appealing to his own conscience and  
self - control.

Life, in general, is a continuing conflict between  
right and wrong; good and evil. In practice, we tend  
to first do what our heart desires and then laboriously  
try to justify later as the right thing. Although we  
sometimes convince the outside world, there is an unseen  
judge of all our actions within each of us - our conscience.



The great Valluvar persuades us "Be warned of what your own conscience tells you long before you even contemplate action".

As family men and women our most powerful motive in life is the desire to see that our children are happy and doing well after our death. Our own upright conduct and self-control, Valluvar says, will ensure that without any doubt.

## Section 12 —

### Naduvu Nilamai

(நடுவுநிலைமை) (Rectitude or Upright conduct)

தக்கார் தகவிலார் என்பது அவரவர்  
எச்சத்தால் காணப் படும்.

ஒருவனது மேன்மை அவன் விட்டுச் சென்றவற்றின்  
(பிள்ளைகளின்) தராதரத்தால் அறியப்படும் என்பதாம்.

Transl: The measure of ones greatness no better  
judge can

Than the child who is the father of the man

Expl: Who have lived a life of rectitude and who have not, can be seen from how the children they left behind, fare.

Essence: Our children are watching and learning from us all the time. If we are of upright conduct, they too are bound to be so.



## Section 13

### Adakkam Udamai (Self - Control)

(அடக்கம் உடமை)

கதம்காத்துக் கற்று அடங்கல் ஆற்றுவான் செல்வி  
அறம்பார்க்கும் ஆற்றின் நுழைந்து.

கோபத்தை ஒருவன் அடக்குவானாயின் மற்ற நற்  
குணங்கள் தாமே அவனைத் தேடி வந்தடையும் என்பதாம்.

**Transl:** Anger and pride under control: no men  
need to seek treasure

The Goddess of wealth writes on your  
pleasure.

**Expl:** If one knows how to control anger (generally  
born of pride which has been hurt), then all virtues  
and the accompanying wealth are easy to come by.

## LESSON 8

Kural means 'anything short' and is properly the  
name of the couplet as being the shortest species of  
Venpa (stanza) in the Tamil language. The brevity rende  
red necessary by the form gives an oracular effect to  
the utterances of Thiru Valluvar. They are the choicest  
of moral epigrams. Of the Kural, the famous poetess-  
Auvvai has this to say:-

அணுவைத் துளைத்து ஏழ் கடலைப்புகட்டிக்  
குறுகத் துரித்த குறள்.



Valluvar abounds in short sayings concentrating with a forceful brevity the whole truth which he desires to impart into some single phrase, forging it into a polished shaft, at once pointed to pierce and barbed that it shall not lightly drop from the mind and memory.

We now come the study of two aspects of the well-regulated life. Thiru Valluvar considers that discipline of life in its manifold functions is more precious than life itself for it is out of that life that life derives its value.

It is stupidity to entertain amorous thoughts about one who belongs to another. Anyone that knows either the way of dharma or that of worldly wisdom will avoid this folly. What is more, the disgrace will be irredeemable for all life.

## Section 14

### The Disciplined Life (Olukkam)

உலகத்தோடு ஒட்ட ஒழுக்கல்  
பல கற்றும் கல்லார் அறிவிலாதார்.

**Transl:** Who know not the disciplined life in  
harmony to dwell  
May many things have learned but nothing  
well

**Expl:** The learned really betray ignorance when in spite of their learning, they fail to regulate their lives in accordance with the principles of social co-operation.



## Section 15

### Against unlawful Love (Piran Il Vilayamai)

பிறன் மனை நோக்காத பேரரிண்மை சான்றோர்க்கு  
அறன் அன்றோ ஆன்ற ஒழுக்கு.

**Transl:** Manly excellence that looks not on another's wife

Surpasses virtue: its power towers over the whole life.

**Exql:** True manhood excels in self-control and being proof against amorous thoughts towards one that belongs to another. It is good religion as well as good social order.

## LESSON 9

Foreign scholars who studied and acclaimed the Kural as 'the masterpiece of Tamil literature - from BESCHI, DREW, GOVER, and ARIEL to PERCIVAL, CALDWELL and POPE - were all unanimous that "such a moral code as this could only arise among an essentially moral and noble race as the Tamils"'.

Ref. G U. Pope who translated the Kural in 1886 goes even further:- In these verses there seems to be a strong sense of moral obligation and a loftiness of aim that is very impressive indeed. I have felt sometimes as if there must be a blessing in store for a people that delight so utterly in compositions thus remarkably expressive of a hunger and thirst after righteousness. They are the formost among the peoples of India and the Kural has helped to make them so".



In this age of moral decadence with social attitudes reflected by "Permissiveness" and "the rat-race", the Kural has a contribution to make to the Tamils throughout the world - to provide the guide lines for a moral code as a basis for Tamil revival and advancement.

## Section 16 -

### Forbearance பொறை உடமை (Porai Udaimai)

அகழ்வாரைத் தாங்கும் நிலம்போலத் தம்மை  
இகழ்வாரைப் பொறுத்தல் தலை.

தன்னைத் தோண்டுபவர்களைப் பூமியானது தாங்கிக்  
கொள்வது போலத் தம்மைப் பழிப்பவர்களைப் பொறுத்  
தல் பெரியோர் கடன் என்பதாம்.

Transl: Patient Mother Earth the senseless diggers  
bear

The noble among us others insults so forbear

Expl: It is not a very great achievement if one  
revenges a wrong done. If a strong man shows forbe-  
arance then that achievement will remain in the world's  
memory.

## Section: 17 -

### Not to Envy அழுக்காருமை (Alukkaaraamai)

கொடுப்பது அழுக்கறுப்பான் சுற்றம் உடுப்பதும்  
உண்பதும் இன்றிக் கெடும்.

பிறருக்குக் கொடுப்பதையிட்டுப் பொருமைப்படும்  
ஒருவனுடைய குடும்பம் உணவு, உடையின்றி அழியும்  
என்பதாம்.



**Transl:** Those with envy prevent gifts to those in need.

Repent they to see their own poverty indeed

**Expl:** Envy in this context means an inability to be happy at the sight of another's well being. Valluvar says that envying of others' possessions is equivalent to poverty;

## LESSON 10

Although scholars disagree as to Valluvar's own personal religious faith, it is only fair to say that he was one those rare and greatmen whose ideas rose above all demonstrations and whose vision was not clouded by dogma or prejudice of any kind. In fact his teaching elude classification on any denominational basis. Univer-  
sality of culture, gentleness and a rationalism consistent with all religious - these are the characteristics which are well brought out by Thiruvalluvar.

He now takes us on to discuss some further undesirable human qualities which he says should be avoided in order to ensure happiness and well-being for the individual and society.

### Section 18

#### Do not be Greedy (Vehhamai)

அறனறிந்து வெஃகா அறிவுடையார்ச் சேரும்  
திறனறிந்து ஆங்கே திரு.

**Transl:** Those with no breed but follow virtue to be bold  
Wealth accrues on its own, have and to hold

**Expl:** Greed defeats its own purpose by leading us into a vicious circle. Contentment leads to victory of spirit.



## Section 19

Do not talk behind one's back  
(Purangkooramai)

ஏதிலார் குற்றம்போல் தங்குற்றம் காண்கிற்பின்  
தீது உண்டோ மன்னும் உயிர்க்கு.

**Transl:** Dwellers in glass dare not to others with-  
stones direct  
Society excels if each man himself to correct.

**Expl:** When the individual leads a a flowless life,  
the society itself will be free from wrong-doers Self-  
reform is a necessary prelude to social reform.

## Section 20-

Avoid fruitless talk (Payanila Sollamai)

சீர்கை சிறப்பொடு நீங்கும் பயனில  
நீர்மை உடையார் சொலின்.

**Transl:** Weigh the words you choose by results to  
prove  
Lest you loose all with words of reproof.

**Expl:** By talking recklessly and fruitlessly one lowers  
one's one standing in the eyes of not only the learned  
but also of tolerant friends.

## LESSON II

Thiru Valluvar's teachings emanate from the central  
theme of the well-being society as a whole. The concepts of  
"Social co-operation" (ஒப்பரவு) and "Looking after



the Clan" (சுற்றந்தாமல்) are entrenched in Tamil society for centuries and resulted from a very old compromise of Individualism with group competition as the basis of their socio-economic life.

The man and his relatives formed a unit and all such unite formed society. Everyone in the family unit did his best but everyone in the group was treated equally - thus there was a measure of communism within this limited sphere. The distribution of the benefits of wealth among relatives is not merely laid down as a moral virtue but is justified as a plan of life, with an aim. It secures happiness for Society by the intrinsic joy of social intercourse and by mutual support against common dangers.

## Section 21

### Conscience (Theevinai Achcham)

தீவினை அச்சம்

அறிவினுள் எல்லாம் தலையென்ப தீய  
செறுவார்க்கும் செய்யா விடல்.

**Transl:** Of all arts the most precious is the will  
Even for enemies never to return evil.

**Expl:** Forbearance is recommended as the highest form of all knowledge. It stops the chain of all where you can control it.

## Section: 22 -

### Social Co-operation (Oppuravu) ஒப்புரவு

ஊருணி நீர் நிறைந்தற்றே உலகாலாம்  
பேரறி வாள்ளன் திரு:



**Transl:** A Preserved tank: its water benefits all it can

The community welcomes prosperity to one noble man.

**Expl:** The essence of social service is in the mind Under each changed circumstance a new duty arises and the due fulfilment of it is what should be attended to

## Section 23

### Helping the Poor (Eehai) ஈகை

வறியார்க்கு ஒன்று ஈவதேஈகை மற்றெல்லாம்  
குறியெதிர்ப்பை நீர துடைத்து.

**Transl:** That stands alone as gift when given to the poor

All else done for returns through the same door.

**Expl:** An unqualified gift however small is made unique by the complete absence of any expectation of return by the donor.

## LESSON 12

Tamil literature has been enriched by the great contributions made by poets following different religious faiths Silappathikaram by Ilango, Jain; Manimekalai by Saththamar, a Buddhist; Periyapuram by Sekkilar, a Saivite; Ramayanam by Kamban, a Vaishnavite; The -mbavani by Rev. Beschi, a Christian; Seera puranam by Urumpulavar, a Muslim - all of which are works of distinction But Thiruvallu-var's own faith rose high above all these sentiments because his was the religion of Universal human faith for all time.



In helping us all to lead a religious life, Thiruvalluvar now gives guidance on some true values. That ends and means are equally important in one's action. That the concept of 'Love the neighbour' should, in course of time become universal love, for the practice of which flesh eating should be avoided. The last advice is typical of his subtle approach nicely wrapped up in an appeal to your head and heart alike.

## Part - I Section 24

### FAME (PUKALL) (புகழ்)

புகழ்ப்பட வாழாதார் தந்நோவார் தம்மை  
இகழ்வாரை நோவ தெவன்;

**Transl:** Unrepentent for ones own faults, those seeking fame  
Behave yourself! before others you blame;

**Expl:** The ends however noble do not justify your means Even when you contemplate famous deeds, It is vital that your actions are flawless.

## Section 25 -

### Divine Love (Arul Udaimai) அருள் உடைமை

அருட்செல்வம் செல்வத்துட் செல்வம் பொருட்செல்வம்  
பூரியார் கண்ணும் உள.

**Transl:** Divine wealth always supreme reign shigh  
Money and materials even the wicked come by.

**Expl:** True wealth is not measured by your material possessions which even ignorant fools have. A learned man will ignore this transitory wealth and seek God manifested as Universal love.



## Section 26

## Abstinence (Pulal Maruththal)

(from flesh eating)

புலால் மறுத்தல்

அவிசொரிந்து ஆயிரம் வேட்டலின் ஒன்றன்  
உயிர்செகுத்து உண்ணாமை நன்று.

Transl: Even with a thousand yogas flesh eater  
cannot gain

The celestial bliss in store, for those who  
refrain

Expl: Killing and eating the flesh of other beings  
is repugnant to divine love and right action. While  
perpetuating this crime, prayers for redemption are of  
no use at all.

## LESSON 13

Thiruvalluvar's powers of observation are marvellously portrayed in the following actions. Legend has it that he himself led a happy married life in the midst of society before becoming a wandering saint. His teachings have the stamp of his double-edged experience.

In the world of today, and definitely in his time centuries ago, disappointed men in life displayed their emotional upsets by the hair on their head lengthening or shortening it to suit their whims. His teaching in the context should perhaps reach the bare-headed adherents of Harekrishna in London and the bearded saints in Benares. "Avoid extremes with your hair, young man!



if you can avoid all temptations to err in all your wordly-actions, that alone will ensure salvation'' says the saintly man of the world.

Thiruvalluvar's teaching, apart from being direct, firmly rest on practicality. Penance is brought home from the forest to the plane of the average man - sustained patience in daily life will elevate the soul, he says.

## Part I Section 27 -

### Penance (Thavam) தவம்

உற்ற நோய் நோன்றல் உயிர்க்கு உறுகண் செய்யாமை  
அற்றே தவந்திற் குரு.

**Transl:** Avoid injuring life: teach yourself endurance  
No more guide there is: for prayer and  
penance.

**Expel:** The day to day problems of life are sufficient challenge to test your willpower. If you cane master these, you are on the road to salvation even more so than the monks.

## Section 28

### Unbecoming Conduct (Kooda Olukkam)

கூடா ஒழுக்கம்

மழித்தலும் நீட்டலும் வேண்டா உலகம்  
பழித்தது ஒழித்து விடின.

**Transl:** Avoid the deeds deemed bad, you! relig-  
ious man  
Why bother with the hair ? if at all you can



**Expl:** Self control in the face of dishonour and adversity is the acid test for a man claiming to be religious all else is a display of religious immaturity and self-deceit.

## Section 29 -

### Do not Steal (Kallamai) கள்ளமை

கள்ளினால் ஆகிய ஆக்கம் அளவிறந்து  
ஆவது போலக் கெடும்.

**Transl:** Stolen wealth multiplies evil plans at will  
Even the seeming wealth and health to kill

**Expl:** Temptations die hard in the present world and "successful" small-time thieves become big-time robbers who eventually end up in jail. Stealing is only a vanishing trick designed to ensure ruin.

## LESSON 14

The greatest danger to our national Tamil culture and heritage comes from within - from the ranks of the 'English - educated' Tamils who have yet to learn that the object of human life is not to waste it in a feverish anxiety and race after physical objects and comforts but to use it in developing our moral and spiritual powers.

Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, the renowned international authority on Indian art and culture regretted that 'a single generation of English education suffices to break the thread of tradition and to create a nondescript and a superficial Tamil being deprived all roots - a sort of intellectual 'pariah', who does not wish to belong to



the East and who is disowned and discarded by the West. This has been echoed at different times by our Tamil saints:.

'கற்றூரை யான் வேண்டேன் கற்பனவும் இனியமையும்'

- St. Manickavasagar 10th century

\*கல்லாதபேர்களை நல்லவர்கள் நல்லவர்கள்'

- St. Thayumanavar (19th century)

As Mahathma Gandhi said 'which we should welcome the fresh air of all the world's cultures to blow around our homes, we should not allow our own language and culture to be blown off our feet by any. Education should be oriented to the development of personality and character in man.

Thiruvalluvar's teaching fulfil this vital need and he continues to give his guidelines based on truthfull behaviour, control of passion and conduct born of the concepts of unity of life and universal human brotherhood.

## Part I Section 30

### Truthfulness (Vaimai) வாய்மை

பொய்மையும் வாய்மை இடத்த புரை தீர்ந்த  
நன்மை பயக்கு மெனின்

**Transl:** Even a lie uttered with unselfish motive, noble  
The ensuing good deems it truth, to make  
society stable.

**Expl:** Here truth embraces a wider perspective.-  
The criteria being selfless motives inspired by a duty to do common good. Living as we do in an imperfect world, Thiruvalluvar's genius bends' absolute dogma to meet the practical needs of society.



## Section 31

## The Control of Anger (Vekulamai) வெகுளாமை

செல் இடத்துக்காப்பான் சினம் காப்பான் அல்லிடத்துக்  
காக்கிலென் காவாக்கிலென்.

**Transl:** Hold your anger and prove your worth  
with inferiors

How come you dare not show anger with  
your superiors.

**Expl:** Here, the appeal is to our reasoning powers  
with a striking illustration from daily life. Society would  
be happier all along the line if only we are magna-  
nimonous enough to control our anger towards those who  
are weaker.

## Section - 32

## Not to inflct Pain (Inna Seiyamai)

இன்னா செய்யாமை

இன்னா செய்தாரை ஒறுத்தல் அவர் நாண  
நன்னயம் செய்து விடல்.

**Transl:** Offer your right cheek if one hits your left

**Exp:** In workaday life, this is easily said than  
done but knowing this difficulty, Thiruvalluvar gives  
a clue to overcome the barrier - just think of the one  
little good thing he did for you at, some time earlier  
and have pity on him. Even if he didn't, this is the  
time to show your own greatness.



## LESSON 15

The ethical behaviour of man is always controlled by nature of his ideology and the state of his cultural advancement. Unlike primitive man, the civilized citizen of today is prepared to understand his fellow - beings and extend his loyalties beyond his family group and even across national boundaries - in other words, he is prepared to sacrifice a part of his own well - being to the good of society. Tamil literature is full of this ideal:-

உண்டால் அம்ம உலகம்.....

தமக்கென வாழாப் பிறர்க்குரியாளர் உண்மையானே

- *Purananooru*

பல்லார் பலன் துய்ப்பத் தான் வருந்தி வாழ்தலே

நல்லான் மகற்குக் கடன்

- *Naladi*

The spirit of renunciation is the quintessence of all religious philosophies. Whereas in Western society, the norm is individualism sustained by competition and regulated by ethical restraint, in Eastern philosophy self-surrender and social co-operation are the hall - marks of life's mission and purpose.

The Thirukkural helps to illuminate this ideal laying down the framework for society to enjoy the healthy marriage of pleasure and wealth on the basis of Ethics. Viewed in this light, life has a noble purpose other than that of the Western world which maims and disfigures life by the very frenzy of its haste and kills the shell the happiness which it pursues. The noble purpose of life, then, is the realisation of the unity of life on the



highest good and salvation to be attained by the cultivation of detachment which is a necessary Virtue in human endeavour.

## Part - 1 Section 33

### AGAINST KILLING (Kollamai)

கொல்லாமை

நல்லார் எனப்படுவது யாதெனில் யாதொன்றும்  
கொல்லாமை குடும் நெறி.

**Transl:** Goodness and culture adorns those who  
will

Guided by the doctrine not to kill.

**Expl:** Here, in a poetical way, moral doctrine is laid before us with an appeal to 'good sense' instead of the threat of 'hell' held out by most religions. This mode of teaching moral values has even more relevance today as it had at the time of Thiruvalluvar, 2,000 yers ago.

## Section 34 -

### The Fleeting World (Nilaiyamai)

நிலையாமை

நெருநல் உளஞெருவன் இன்றில்லை என்னும்  
பெருமை உடைத்து இவ்வுலகு.

**Transl:** Yesterday's man is no more today Always  
the same

Why, pray!, give importance to this worldly  
fame.



**Expl:** Here the transient nature of human existence is stressed not to preach negation of life but to instil the urgency to lead a virtuous life here and now. The subtle lesson to be learnt is- do some good now otherwise it may be too late!

## Section 35

### Renunciation (Thuravu) துறவு

யாதனின் யாதனின் நீங்கியான் நோதல்  
அதனின் அதனின் இலன்;

**Transl:** Attachment is the source for life and pain  
Detachment teaches in stages you gain

**Expl:** Thiruvalluvar here comes down to the level of practicality. Renunciation, he says, need not wait until you are prepared to renounce all - the advantage is not lost by spreading it out and as each thing is renounced, to that extent, pain is reduced. How remarkable teaching for a world dominated by easy instalments!

## LESSON 16

True civilisation consists not in multiplying our desires and the means of gratifying them but in the refinement of their quality. The true end of material civilisation is not production but use; not exploitation but ensuring of higher standards of living; not to destroy but promote spiritual culture. Tamil religious literature, especially that of the Saivite Nayanmar and Vishnavite Alvar, promotes the search for true values in life as a necessary step to overcome the delusion of selfish desires.



The concept of karma or fate, which implies that a divine dispensation controls our lives, is an integral part of Tamil philosophy and perhaps originally used to reform society of misdeeds with the threat of severe penalties - the beauty of the concept lies in the fact that karma is no respecter of persons, even the mighty Pandyan king paid the price.

Thiruvalluvar reiterates that a society in which man cannot practice the virtues which are fundamental to a good, useful life is worthless. He says that one way to attain perfection is to purify the heart by renouncing desire. In the celebrated Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna says "work incessantly but without craving for the fruits of action." This is the essence of the karma yoga of spiritual salvation.

## Section 36

### True Knowledge (Mei Unarthal)

#### மெய்யுணர்தல்

எப்பொருள் எத்தன்மைத் தாயினும் அப்பொருள்  
மெய்ப்பொருள் காண்பது அறிவு.

**Transl:** Wordly matters many, outward beauty/  
enchanting myth

True wisdom beneath decerns the unfailing  
truth.

**Expl:** Knowledge is mere accumulation of facts and figures. The transitory nature of mundane objects and their outward appearances often conceal their true nature. True wisdom helps us to see the reality behind objects and events.



Section: 37 -

To Overcome Desire (Ava Aruthal)

அவா அறுத்தல்

வேண்டாமையன்ன விழுச்செல்வம் ஈண்டில்லை  
யாண்டும் அஃதொப்பது இல்,

**Transl:** To crave for no more, ensures mind and  
body in health

There is nothing greater even heaven can  
give us wealth.

**Expl:** There is nothing bad about one enjoying  
the normal life - what is criticised is the excessive cra-  
ving. Contentment comes from as a ripened fruit from  
the tree of wisdom.

Section 38

Karma (U1) ஊழ்

ஊழையும் உப்பக்கம் காண்பர் உலேவின்றித்  
தாழர்து உஞற்றுபவர்.

**Transl:** With ceaseless active nature, for those its  
fun

To make Fate itself turn round and run

**Expl:** It is amusing that when things go wrong we  
blame it on fate but when success comes, we claim it  
as our own achievement. True happiness is the result of  
continued activity whose fruits, good and bad, are dedi-  
cated to the almighty.



## LESSON 17

The ethical and moral concepts of the ancient Tamils of 2,000 years ago are systematically treated in the "Thirukkural". Thiruvalluvar has given to the world a work to which, in perfection of form, nobleness of sentiment and earnestness of moral purpose, few books outside the grand scriptures of humanity, can at all be compared. Although the Kural lends no great national pride, we have to remind ourselves that 'possession' of this literary treasure, does not in itself confer a life of virtue, wealth and happiness - we must strive to conform to his guidelines in our daily life.

## Part 1

## ARAM - A Composite View

Having completed Thiruvalluvar's treatment of the part on Aram, it now remains for the sake of completeness to see the overall picture of Virtue or dharma and yet at the essence of his teaching. The great Valluvar himself sums up in his inimitable style with rare gems of wisdom:-

மனத்துக்கண் மாகுஇலன் ஆதல் அனேத்தறன்  
ஆகுல நீர பிற.

So virtue is simply a matter of refining your own heart and conscience - it does not depend a lot on external factors although these may help. Control your passions and lead a life of devotion to God and charity to fellow men. If your conscience is clear at the end of the day, then Thiruvalluvar's efforts to teach Aram could have been amply rewarded.



The master of worldly affirmation wants us all to lead to normal healthy, happy family life within society and in peace and harmony with nature:-

அறன்னபு பட்டதே இவ்வாழ்க்கை அஃதும்  
பிறன் பழிப்பதிலலாயின் நன்று.

For Thiruvalluvar, the bliss of a well-regulated, family life led with a sense of respect and service to fellow-men is far superior even to the spiritual life of an ascetic or a sage. In fact we can go further and say that the Kural glorifies the sanctity of the family life which is vital to the progress of man.

Happiness in life is a very difficult commodity to come by. Even with all the material wealth and electronic gadgets of the industrial West happiness still eludes us. Valluvar had the answer even before Jesus and Marx - although they tackled the problem in different approaches, the one for spiritual sacrifice and the other for material and social revolution:-

யான் எனது என்னுஞ் செருக்கறுப்பான் வானோர்க்  
குயர்ந்த உலகம் புகும்.

The appeal for selflessness is made to the head and the heart alike. But Thiruvalluvar is not blind to the fact that this is difficult for the average man and therefore charts a course to follow:-

பகுத்துண்டு பல்லுயிர் ஒம்புதல் நூலோர்  
தொகுத்தவற்றுள் எல்லாம் தலை.

Share your wealth with fellow men and show compassion to all life - this is the fundamental theme which Thiruvalluvar elaborated with practical guide-lines with an eye on virtuous conduct in thought, word and deed.

We next proceed to a discussion of Part II  
ECONOMICS (Wealth)



## Part II LESSON 18

## ECONOMICS – Porud Pal

We live in a world dominated by material wealth directly and by politics and economics indirectly. One significant event in one part of the World could change the pattern of human life in another corner. Science and technology have contributed to the complexity of our industrial economy. In the modern world, to quote Bertrand Russell, “We are in the middle of a race between human skill as to means and human folly as to ends” resulting in strife, insecurity and sorrow.

Virtues that sustained a static agricultural age are found to be utterly inadequate to the demands of a dynamic industrial society. Everywhere we witness the crumbling down of old values. We have to visualise the consequences of this ‘root and branch’ revolution. A period of profound transition is not the time for complacency.

The greatness of Thiruvalluvar lies in his foresight and skill in helping us even today to meet this challenge by his treatment of the part on Economics in its widest sense which constitutes 70 out of the 133 sections of his immortal work. This part deals with all aspects of Social life from education to Politics, from friendship to diplomacy, all having the stamp of his practical genius and incisive reasoning. Valluvar alone, among our ancient Tamil poets, has emphasized the importance of making wealth as a pre-requisite for happiness and purpose in life. He does not mince words when he wants his ideas to have a penetrating effect:- He says பொருளிலை வார்க்கு இவ்வுலகு இல்லை your life is not worth living if you do not have requisite means and does so rather bluntly but forcefully.



Part II Section 39 -

THE MAJESTY OF GOD (Irai Madchi)

இறை மாட்சி

இன்சொலால் ஈத்து அளிக்க வல்லார்க்குத் தன்சொல்லால்  
தான் கண்டனேத்து இவ்வுலகு.

**Transl:** Kindness in word and deed brings wealth  
to hand

Such is its power to keep the world at  
its command.

**Expl:** An act of kindness shown by one to a fellow  
being starts off a chain reaction to bring success enough  
to bring the world to one's feet.

Section 40 -

Education (Kalvi) கல்வி

கற்க கசடறக் கற்பவை கற்றபின்  
நிற்க அதற்குத் தக.

**Transl:** Learn while you can, thouroughly and so  
well

to conduct yourself as learned with a will.

**Expl:** Education becomes useless if it is not reflected  
in the quality of our day to day life.

Section 41

Ignorance (Kallamai) கல்லாமை

கல்லார்கண் பட்ட வறுமையின் இன்னுதே  
கல்லார்கண் பட்ட திரு:



**Transl:** Fortune brings woe unto the hands, ignorant worse than the trial, poverty on the learned brunt

**Expl:** When unexpected reverses come to learned men, they can bear it with patience and keep their poise but sudden riches to ignorant men spell ruin to themselves and to society.

## LESSON 19

Our World is being reshaped by science and technology on the one hand and by democracy on the other. The common people, the world over, who were creatures of socio-political circumstances created by the will - to - power of a few, are becoming transformed through democracy in to individuals and ends in themselves and into repositories of socio-political power.

The 20th century has seen the spread and full development of democracy - political, economic and social. There is, in addition to these a content of universal value to democracy - the ethical and spiritual aspect which ensures the element of culture and ideals in human life.

To achieve this end, Thiruvalluvar emphasizes the need for a broad-minded education tempered by a respect for learned men with a willingness to be guided by them. The great teacher he himself is, Valluvar encourages us to teach others bearing in mind that we ourselves learn the finer points of value (நுண்மரண் நுகழ புலம்) from whatever quarter it comes from. He gives a reason for this - அறிதேதாற்றியரமை கண்டற்றால் - the



more you become aware of your limitations. Although this approach is not welcomed in the developing world, students studying in advanced countries will be struck by the readiness of professors at Universities in the West to learn some points from their own students whenever the latter have a contribution to make, however small. Valluvar knows the danger to society of men of little learning - it is to them in particular he gives the advice 'if you reform yourself, the world would need hardly a reformer to put things right'.

Part II Section: 42

LEARNING BY THE EAR (Kerlvi)

கேள்வி

செவியிற் சுவைஉணரா வாயுணர்வின் மாக்கள்  
அவியினும் வாழினும் என்.

**Transl:** Life's purpose to learn even by the ear,  
to be noble  
Of what use then if only to feed the body  
feeble

**Expl:** Thiruvalluvar is rather harsh in taking to task people who refuse to educate themselves by listening to the learned in all the arts. He echoes the sentiments of the saying 'man should eat to live and not live to eat'.

Section 43

To be Learned (Arivudamai) அறிவுடமை

என்பொருள் வாகச் செலச்சொல்லித் தான்பிறர்வாய்  
நுன்பொருள் காண்ப தறிவு.



**Transl:** Teach others some, your profound matters  
made simple

Learn yourself to listen with open heart  
ample;

**Expl:** There is no finality to what can be learnt  
It is good practice and sound sense even for learned  
teachers to attend refresher courses as boundaries of  
knowledge keep widening.

### Section - 44

**The Reforming Spirit (Kuttang Kadithal)**  
குற்றங்கடிகை

தன்குற்றம் நீக்கிப் பிறர்குற்றங் காண்கிற்பின்  
என்குற்ற மாகும் இறைக்கு.

**Transl:** Reformers beware! with your own hands  
to come clean  
Society will be free, no wrong then to be  
seen.

**Expl:** Society is the aggregate of the individual:  
If the individual reforms himself, then the wider society  
needs no reformers at all

## LESSON 20

Human individuality is nowadays subordinated to the  
collective good of the State. Social and political ideo-  
logies are more state-centred than man centred. C.E.M.  
Joad, the eminent philosopher and writer has very aptly  
described the culture of today as the "stomach-and-pocket



view of life". Every thing is valued from the point of the stomach and the size of one's pocket. Our values have changed and with them our standards of ethics. This is an age without beliefs in religion, without standard in morals, without values in art and without convictions in politics - even without control for runaway inflation !

Thiruvalluvar, throughout his monumental treatise on economics emphasizes the moral foundations of politics and elaborates aspects of economics that would be conducive to the realisation of moral, ideals. He was aware that action leading to productive work contributed more than anything else to the Gross National product of a country and exhorts us all to work ceaselessly but intelligently. He perhaps knew the Tamil mind well indeed and that the Tamils might give the all-too-convenient excuse of Fate and Destiny for being inactive. Valluvar had the answers ready. "தெய்வத்தால் ஆகாது எனினும்" -even if divine help is not forthcoming, "முயற்சி தன் மெய் வருந்தக் கூலிதரும்" - the Goddess of wealth will seek out and come to you. Change your destiny through self-effort is his universal advice. In the following sections Thiruvalluvar outlines the preliminaries for a well-ordered social organisation and the paramount need for well - considered action,

## Section 45

To befriend the learned  
(Piriyaraith Thunaikkodal)  
பெரியாரைத் துணைகொடல்

உற்றநோய் நீக்கி உறுஅமை முற்காக்கும்  
பெற்றியார்ப் பேணிக் கொளல்



**Transl:** To advise one in peril and fore-warn chaos future

Pay humble tribute to those of learned nature.

**Expl:** The learned are held high in society not so much for their academic learning as to their willingness to give the benefit of their advice to others in difficulty

## Section 46 -

### To avoid undesirable Company

(Sittinam Seramai) சிற்றினம் சேரமை

நல்லினத்தி னூங்குந் துணையில்கை தீயினத்தின்  
அல்லற் படுப்பதூஉம் இல்.

**Transl:** A man is known by the company he keeps  
Joy when good and the bad brings the weeps.

**Expl:** There is always a human tendency to learn our lessons the hard way - when the credentials of the company you keep are in doubt, avoid them to avoid trouble, warns Valluvar.

## Section 47

### The Nature of Action (Therinthu Seyalvahai)

தெரிந்து செயல்வகை

செய்தக்க அல்ல செயக்கெடும் செய்தக்க  
செய்யாமை யானும் கெடும்.

**Transl:** Time and tide waits for no man for action-  
wins

Though there must be time always to weigh,  
the pros and cons.



**Expl:** Valluvar is at his best in this advice which is of eternal value to man and society, individually and collectively. There are certain actions in life which you should not do and others which you should not delay in doing - either way you face doom if you make the wrong choice. Well-ordered thought and planning must precede all action.

## LESSON 21

A man's character be it good or bad is partly, if not largely, determined by his environment, by the social and economic circumstances in which he is placed. The idea that the interaction of science and society is dependent on external factors, derived its ultimate strength from two majestic Victorian conceptions. Firstly Marx's observation that the character of a society is largely determined by its economy and secondly, the discovery of the anthropologists that 'culture' is a unity. Adding these two ideas together one is led to conclude that a man's thoughts on any one topic are not independent of his thoughts on all other topics nor of the economic state of the society in which he lives.

It is incomprehensible how the great mind of Thiruvalluvar, living as he did 2,000 years ago as a member of an enlightened though agrarian Tamil society based on a village economy, conceived a treatise on economics which can in broad terms even cope with the problems of today's space-age man. Throughout his great work one aspect stands out:- that man alone is the ultimate architect of the World's destiny - he does not seek to blame the political system or fate even the Gods for the



ills of society: when your conscience is clear and when your actions are right and are executed with diligence then Valluvar says. “அரிப என்று ஆகாத ம இல்லை” the sky is the limit for men of action who also choose the right time and place. No other Tamil poet either before or after the golden Sangam era, showed such singular devotion in producing a master - piece designed solely to shake men out of their lethargic complacency to spur them on to action and to inspire them with ideals which have stood the test of time for twenty centuries.

### Section 48

To know ones strength (Vali Arithal)

வலியறிதல்

பீலிபெய் சாகாடும் அச்சிறும் அப்பண்டம்  
சால மிகுத்துப் பெயின்.

Transl: Best not incur the enmity of many, however slight

Lest you crash like the overloaded cart,  
even with feathers light.

Expl: It is prudent in life to be aware of one's own limitations. To underestimate the strength of others, seemingly feeble, can lead to unexpected despair.

### Section 49

To know the right time (Kalam Arithal)

காலமறிதல்

பதல் வெல்லும் கூகையைக் காக்கை இதல் வெல்லும்  
வேந்தர்க்கு வேண்டும் பொழுது.



**Transl:** The crow defeats its blind bigger rival  
in day light

Even an enemy, superior, will succumb  
at time, right.

**Expl:** Is there anything impossible if the right  
means and the right time are chosen to achieve an  
objective with diligence?

## Section 50 -

To choose the right place (Idam Arithal)

இடனறிதல்

நெடும் புனலுள் வெல்லும் முதலை அரும்புனலின்  
நீங்கின் அதனைப் பிற.

**Transl:** Our strength in familiar settings great with  
power

Like the crocodile in deep waters looses  
never.

**Expl:** By contrast, the subtle suggestion is made  
here that to defeat an enemy it is wise to attack when  
he is not on home ground?

## LESSON 22

Never has mankind known such an evolutionary  
explosion. We have accomplished things beyond the  
wildest dreams of our ancestors. Our American and  
Russian friends have walked on the moon. Our scien-  
tists have penetrated to the heart of the atom and from  
it have torn the most closely guarded secrets of nature



They have harnessed unclear energy for domestic use. We lead a fairy-tale existence compared to that of our forefathers. Like spoilt children we even complain if the transmission from Telstar is a little blurred.

But, consider the anonymous multitude passing through our teeming streets, their dejected anxious faces, their tired unsmiling faces. May be we are civilized but are we happy? The remorseless struggle for money has hardened our hearts, silenced our scruples and corrupted our moral sense. A civilization which culminates in the degeneration of the species and its individuals, without even granting them some semblance of happiness must be regarded as having failed. We are imprisoned by our civilization. Today we need a change of heart, a change in the pattern of our life-style and above all change of values.

In his monumental treatise, Thiruvalluvar stresses this vital need to reorientate our values. To this end he first places in front of us certain social ideas for all of us to strive for and achieve - such as the need for education, good company, right action etc. Having laid this very necessary foundation to the electors, Valluvar then proceed to give the desirable qualities of and the guidelines for, a competent government. This pragmatic approach by the great teacher to educate the citizens first and then to discuss politics with them deserves our admiration, all the more in the twentieth century context. when uneducated electors tend to cost their votes for personalities than for their political ideologies.



## Section 54

### Diligence (Pochchavamai)

பொச்சவமை

புகழ்ந்தவை பொற்றச் செயல்வேண்டும் செய்பாது  
இகழ்ந்தார்க்கு எழுமையும் இல்.

**Transl:** Praiseworthy ends with noble means; Here  
duty fulfilment  
Wins. To neglect is to lose salvation and  
multiply sins.

**Essence:** Valluvar here stresses the need for diligence in action coupled with noble objectives. As a reward he assures that if one brings to bear a resourceful and vigilant mind, there is nothing in this world that is impossible.

## Section 55

### Just Rule (Sengkonmai) செங்கோன்மை

வானோக்கி வாழும் உலகெலாம் மன்னவன்  
கோனோக்கி வாழும் குடி.

**Transl:** The world of nature waxes and wanes with  
the rain  
Man and society guided by the justness of  
the reign.

**Essence:** Here Valluvar covers all types of government - monarchies, republics, and socialist states in his definition-but lays great emphasis on the example of justice and fairplay set by the rulers themselves.

— K Gnanasuryan (London)



## LESSON 23

Hegel's theory of change was called the dialectic according to which all change results from the clash of opposing forces which then join to produce a new synthesis, a new evolutionary stage. From Hegel's dialectic, Karl Marx learned that contradictions are the root of all movements towards progress but unlike Hegel, Marx took classes instead of nations as history's units saying "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle". But Marx and Hegel had their own differences - as an idealist Hegel believed that the ultimate stuff of the Universe is mind or spirit and Marx as a materialist, believed that the mind is derived from matter and that the forces which trigger change are to be found in the physical world.

For Hegel the ultimate fusion of opposites results in the Absolute, when evolution stops whereas for Marx, the ideal is the emergence of a classless society in which, in the words of his collaborator Engels, the state would have withered away. However, the Tamil genius of the second century B.C., the great Valluvar, felt that lofty political theories though complex, tended to look at the individual man or woman simply as a unit of society - Just another pair of hands to work at the farm or the factory. For him the individual represented the apex of centuries of civilization and development. He pinned his faith for a stable, political entity on the wisdom and mature judgement of the noble personalities who lead the nation. Hence he elaborates on the need for the sterling qualities of human compassion and tolerance among those in power towards those in society less able to exercise discretion. His appeal is to the



head and heart of man himself as the driving force of society. Not for him the approach of forcing man to conform to the rules of a society. created out of the womb of a political ideology. For the great Valluvar, the means are as sacred as the ends themselves.

## Section 57

**Tolerance** (Veru-Vantha Seiyamai)

வெருவந்த செய்யாமை

கடிதோச்சி மெல்லவறிக நெடிது ஆக்கம்  
நீங்காமை வேண்டுபவர்.

**Transl:** To Keep one's wealth for long there remains a way  
Feign anger and forgive the wrongs, whatever others say.

**Esence:** With money in one's hands, it is a human tendency to find fault with others. and increase the number of one's enemies - Valluvar's advice to forgive is tempered by a shrewd sense of practicality and mature wisdom. This is particulaly relevant to those whose heads become swollen with sterling assets.

## Section 58-

**Compassion** (Kannoddam) கண்ணோட்டம்

மண்ணோடு இயைந்த மரத்தனையர் கண்ணோடு  
இயைந்து கண்ணோடா தவர்.

**Transl:** Men without compassion when will they learn and care  
For they too resemble the trees, fellow-feeling so better fare.



**Essence:** Under the broad heading of politics, although much of Valluvar's thought provoking advice is meant for the guidance of politicians they are of equal value to the average citizen of today in whom sovereignty is vested with people's governments everywhere. Magnanimity is the true measure of ones' greatness.

## LESSON 24

In the Bhagavad Gita, acclaimed as the "Song celestial" it is reiterated by Sri Krishna that Karma-Yoga is the yoga of selfless action. Here every type of work is glorified as prayer, worship and ritual. There is no high and low in work. Each and every task is for the glory of man and God. Even the good Lord himself worked looking after the horses, feeding them and brushing them up at the end of each days' battle during the Kurushetra episode in the great epic. Thus work gets the stamp of spirituality and individual action is the keynote of life and spring board for individual and national progress.

In our collective life, there cannot be any divorce between true religion and genuine politics. Religion understood its wider implication is not a set of dogmas or practices but a continual inspiration to take man to a higher ethical life. The great Valluvar knows that ethical life cannot survive on empty stomachs. Hence his concern for relentless action, sustained by a determination even to challenge an adverse destiny. A Guided by lasting and simple moral values we have emerged idealists without illusions, realists who still know the old dreams of justice and liberty. We shall devote every



effort of body, mind and spirit to lead our nation back to greatness''. These resounding words of John F. Kennedy are surely echoes of Valluvar's Exhortation to his Tamil people. Even after 2000 years can the Tamil Nation take heed that action in all its manifestations is the keynote of national regeneration.

## Section 60

### Diligence (Uukkamudamai)

உக்கமுடைமை

ஆக்கம் அதர்வினாய் செல்லும் அசைவிலா  
உக்கம் உடையா னுழை.

**Transl:** Lofty ideals to no purpose seldom wealth grow  
Diligence the price that tilts the luck of draw.

**Expl:** Here Valluvar is not by any means, encouraging black-marketeers For him, diligence springs from the bedrock of Aram. Ends and means are equally vital to his teaching.

## Section - 61

### Against Laziness (Madi Inmai)

மடியின்மை

மடியுடையார் பற்றமைந்தக் கண்ணும் மடியுடையார்  
மாண்பயன் எய்தல் அரிது.

**Transl:** Even the riches and lands of kingdom's reign  
Laziness brings no fame thence to rack and ruin



**Expl:** Valluvar here exemplifies the simple input-output theory. He has no patience with the lazy man who neither earns nor even controls the outflow. Only a miracle can save him.

### Section 63

#### Unceasing Activity (Arl Vinai Udaimai)

ஆள்வினையுடைமை

பொறியின்மை யார்க்கும் பழியன்றி அறிவறிந்து  
ஆள்வினையின்மை பழி.

**Transl:** No destinys' hand to brighten life no harm  
No excuse, greater effort wealths' welcome  
harm.

**Expt:** The Teacher knows his pupil and excuses only too well. Fate is our standard defence. But, by implication, Valluvar appeals to our sense of judgement True you are not lucky but no harm; only action can redeem you now and ensure perhaps a lucky break later.

— K. Gnanasuryan

## LESSON 25

### EXECUTION OF ONE'S DUTY

Faith in God promotes faith in the inherent goodness of humanity. The Kural is a monument to Thiruvalluvar's great faith that man's ultimate power to shape his own destiny is second only to God's. In the section on politics and economics, what is generally held as



advice to king and court is equally useful and relevant to our everyday individual life. Hence Thiruvalluvar's obsession with the paramount need for goodness of the individual as the sole key to national well-being. But, faith in God does not come as quickly as we all learn about God. It Starts. It stops. It floods and recedes. One has to woo faith, cultivating it as one might a friend whom no one ever met. Grasping, clawing, reaching. Then a strange calmness comes to us. When we give up, we could feel His presence. There are no ceremonies. He is there and we know it. So with Valluvar's faith in man's individual rectitude. He woos the individual; he appeals to his intrinsic goodness; he motivates the reluctant man. For this stupendous task he uses only 1330 couplets-each a polished gem of Tamil language and moral expression. But at no stage does he loose faith in the intrinsic goodness of life or man himself. Valluvar knows that national character depends on individual rectitude and that this the keystone on which rests the fate and future of our public affairs, not this or that ism. In the footsteps of the great Valluvar, Mahatma Gandhi wished to spiritualize politics, holding firmly to the view that we cannot keep politics and morality apart - for better or for worse, public life can only be an extension of one's private life.

## Section 69

### Diplomacy (Thoothu) தூது

கடனறிந்து காலம் கருதி இடனறிந்து  
எண்ணி உரைப்பான் தலை.

**Transl:** With time and place, opportunity knocks, if  
chosen well  
When duty with measured speech deserves  
to excel,



**Expl:** At a time like ours, when the generation gap is narrowing, it is hardly surprising that Valluvar's advice on political diplomacy finds its ready echo in all walks of life - even in the home where children soon learn how and when to approach their parents for favours.

## Section 70-

### On the Nature of Duty (Mannarai Serathozhugal)

மன்னரைச் சேர்ந்தொழுகல்

இளையர் இனமுறையர் என்றிகளார் நின்ற  
ஒளியொடு ஒழுகப் படும்.

**Transl:** Be they young or kin, those with authority's wing  
Respect they deserve in duty for state and king.

**Expl:** In the East nepotism rears its ugly head particularly at the ministerial levels - and recently heads have rolled at parliamentary elections in this issue alone. This is neither charity nor magnanimity - it is robbing Peter to pay Paul and pretending that all is well until you fall from grace.

## Section 71

### Intuitive Understanding (Kuripparithal)

குறிப்பறிதல்

குறிப்பின் குறிப்புணரா வாயின் உறுப்பினுள்  
என்ன பயத்தவோ கண்;



**Transl:** A word, a gesture, a look unravels a great tale

Those without intuition poor insight with eyes so pale

**Expl:** The characteristic of being rather dense is not so much an inborn trait as lack of training in mental disciplines. Thiruvalluvar's concern is to encourage racer-sharp vision as a prelude both to personal success as well as dignified statecraft.

— K. Gnanasuryan

## LESSON 26

### The Role of the Learned in Nation Building

Culture is the external expression of an essentially internal refinement of human personality. It is therefore a fusion product not only of the free way of life of a people but also of the ideology of the political system under which they are governed. Thiruvalluvar's greatness lies in his concern to relate every human activity, to the eventual task of nation building in the full knowledge that if the nation is the foundation of society, then culture is its beautiful and enchanting edifice. To achieve this end, Valluvar assigns a definite role to the learned.

The ways in which form and freedom relate, are seen in the governing of a country. If there is too much form due to an authoritarian type of government or a dictatorship, then the freedom of the individual is restricted; such a regime is oppressive. On the other-



hand if total freedom exists, to the overriding of government, there a state of anarchy ensues. There must then be a balance, a middle-way approach which underlies our great Valluvar's philosophy and which allows for the flowering of human personality in all walks of life.

And now to the role of the learned. One can go on learning endlessly, piling words upon words without ever doing anything about it. It is like a man that is ever ploughing but never sowing and therefore never reaping. Learning unrelated to social needs of the day is a deadweight. Formulas and concepts are considered vital in the world today partly because it is a convenient escape from actuality, from the drudgery of daily life without a meaning and purpose to life. Thiruvalluvar wants the learned to get out on the streets with the people and to get on with the job of teaching society in the great task of nation building.

## LESSON 27

### Section 72

To know ones audience (Avai Arithal)

அவை அறிதல்

அங்கணத்துள் உக்க அமிழ்தற்று தங்கணத்தார்  
அல்லார்முன் கோட்டி கொளல்

Transl: Know thy audience so well to weigh  
your words

It's no use casting pearls before swine herds.



**Expl:** It is not that Valluvar is against teaching the very ignorant; his concern is to see that words of wisdom are not wasted among those not inclined even to hear them. The only qualification required of a student is his thirst for knowledge.

### Section 73 -

#### To Volunteer in Debate (Avai Anchamai)

அவை அஞ்சாமை

கல்லாதவரின் கடையென்ப சுற்றறிந்து  
நல்லார் அவை அஞ்சு பவர்.

**Transl:** To learn well is to know well with a duty indeed

To teach and debate; or the learned became the last to heed.

**Expl:** Learning should always be in relation to personal and Social need. Society is always conscious of those learned men and women who contribute to solve its problems by word and deed - not those hiding in the ivory towers of learning'

### Section 74

#### The Nation Defined (Nadu)

நாடு

பல்குழுவும் பாழ்செயும் உட்பகையும் கோனலைக்கும்  
கொல்குறும்பும் இல்லது நாடு.

**Transl:** Enmity within and endless groups with vested gain

Never make the nation great, nor illegal acts of pain.



**Expl:** It appears that even in Valluvar's time, there have been far too much bickerings in public life. The Tamil nation is unable to raise its head because there are far too many organisations with conflicting interests. Personal greed for power and false prestige in society is an indication of a lack of purpose and vision in life; of a confused thinking that ends only matter but not the means; of a total rejection of God in the affairs of men

## LESSON 28

The famous words attributed to chairman Mao that "freedom grows out of the barrel of a gun" are not explicit enough on either the type of government that the gun ensures or on the political ideology that the gun enforces, after the freedom struggle. Surely we cannot blindly jump from the frying pan into the fire nor should we allow political expediency and emotional issues to prejudice our realistic appraisal of the readiness of our people to use violence as a means of political freedom. To say that we have come to the end of the road as far as democratic processes are concerned is to say little of the power even a few totally dedicated noble souls can generate and what they can achieve to change the course of history.

In the wake of recent racial conflicts, it is natural to dismiss non-violence as an outdated political weapon. Perhaps this calls for a restatement of the concept itself, to see at least why it failed. Inspired by Tolstoy's doctrine of non-violence, Gandhi's Satyagraha was conceived by him as conscious suffering not as meek submission to



the will of the evil doer but "the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant". This means the restitution of the ancient Hindu law of self-sacrifice by noble men who adhere to the highest moral code in their lives. This is the key to non-violent freedom struggle. This is where the shoe pinches. Gandhi combines the religion of the old world resting on the individual with the spirituality of the new world resting on society and thereby resolves the dichotomy of the good individual and the bad society - religion and politics here merge in the selfless service to man using a moral weapon. In this, the immediate relevance of Kural lies in the meticulous care with which Valluvar tries to mould men of the highest character who value ends and means as inseparable. Apparent contradiction in the Kural disappear as the mind soars higher.

## Section 75

### State Defence (Aran) அரண்

எனையாட்சித் தாசியக் கண்ணும் விலையாட்சி  
இல்லார்க்கண் இல்லது அரண்.

**Transl:** Of much use is not the tools and tales  
of war  
But the will to Action in the field to bear  
the scar.

**Expl:** Plans and discussions are of course vital. But Valluvar warns us of an inherent tendency to talk and not act. Action in the centre of battlefield is all what matters.



## Section 76 -

## Making Wealth (Porul Seyal Vakai)

பொருள் செயல்வகை

அறன்ஈனும் இன்பமும் ஈனும் திறனறிந்து  
நீதின்றி வந்த பொருள்.

**Transl:** Wealth indeed is vital but more so its  
acquisition hath  
For peace and self-respect, never ever  
deviate virtue's path.

**Expl:** In life's relentless struggle to make money, society has, in desperation, conveniently turned its moral, eyes away from the concepts of right and wrong. Money has become the carpet under which moral values and lapses are swept up. True happiness then becomes a mere pretence, says Valluvar.

## Section 77

## The might of an Army (Padai Madchi)

ஒலித்தக்கால் என்னும் உவரி எலிப்பகை  
நாகம் உயிர்ப்பக் கெடும்.

**Transl:** Noises of the weak mean little, even with  
numbers vast  
Even the lone will of a mighty one, they  
cant stand fast;

**Expl:** A Gandhi won against an Empire; a Churchill, Mao and Mohamed. The history of individuals whose single-minded devotion to their chosen ideals made them leaders.

— K. Gnanasuryan (London)



APPENDIX I

An Introduction To

TAMIL LITERATURE



SELECTIONS FROM  
'2000 YEARS OF  
TAMIL LITERATURE'

*With grateful acknowledgement to the Author  
Mr. J. M. Somasundarampillai*

Commencing from the Sangam Classics, Tamil literature has had a continuous literary record of master pieces that can match the best in the world, both in grandeur of thought and excellence of language and expression. Here are a few examples:-

**THE 400 LYRICS: PURA-NA NURU 100 B.O**

**“யாதும் ஊரே; யாவரும் கேளிர்”**

The Agaval is by a minstrel, known to us as Kanyan or ‘Singer’ of the flowery hill, who was a court poet and friend of Ko-Perum C’olan of Uraiyur — a little, it may be, before the date of the Kural.

**ஞானிகள் (192)**

யாதும் ஊரே; யாவரும் கேளிர்  
தீதும் நன்றும் பிறர் தர வாரா  
நோதலும் தணிதலும் அவற்றோரன்ன;  
சாதலும் புதுவது அன்றே; வாழ்தல்  
இனிது என மகிழ்ந்தன்றும் இலமே; முனிவின்  
இன்னது என்றலும் இலமே; மின்னெடு



வர்னம் தண் துளி தலைஇ, ஆனது  
கல் பொருது இரங்கும் மல்லல் பேர் யாற்று  
நீர் வழிப்படுஉம் புணை போல், ஆர் உயிர்  
முறை வழிப்படுஉம்' என்பது திறலோர்  
காட்சியின் தெளிந்தனம்; ஆகலின் மரட்சியின்  
பெரியோரை வியத்தலும் இலமே;  
சிறியோரை இகழ்தல் அதனினும் இலமே!

— கணியன் பூங்குன்றனார்

## The Sages

To us all towns are one, all men our kin.

Life's good comes not from other's gift, nor ill  
Man's pains and pains' relief are from within.

Death's no new thing; nor do our bosoms thrill  
When joyous life seems like a luscious draught.

When grieved, we patient suffer; for, we deem  
This much - praised life of ours a fragile raft

Borne down the waters of some mountain stream  
That o'er huge boulders roaring seeks the plain.  
Tho' storms with lightnings' flash from darken'd skies  
Descend, the raft goes on as fates ordain.

Thus have we seen in vision of the wise!  
We marvel not at greatness of the great;  
Still less despise we men of low estate.

Transl: Rev. Dr. G. V. Pope



## TIRU – MURUKARRUPPADAI of Nakkirar : (100 A.D.)

### திருமுருகாற்றுப்படை

This is an Idyll of the PATTUPPATTU collection.  
The structure of the Arruppadaï is this:-

One, who, had already received the grace of God, meets another who has the same, and shows him the way to salvation. This idyll is in praise of God Murukan at Tiruchir Alaivai also referred to as Thiruchendur and describes the significance of the six faces of God Murukan

### திருச்சீர் அலைவாய்

ஆறுமுகன் யானையின்மேல் ஏறிவருதல்  
வைந்நுதி பொருத வடு ஆழ் வரி நுதல்  
வர்டா மாலை ஓடையொடு துயல்வர,  
படு மணி இரட்டும் மருங்கின், கடு நடை,  
கூற்றத்தன்ன மாற்று அரு மொய்ப்பின்,  
கால் கிளர்ந்தன்ன வேழம் மேல்கொண்டு

### ஆறுமுகங்களின் இயல்புகள்

ஐவேறு உருவின் செய்வினை முற்றிய  
முடியொடு விளங்கிய முரண்மித திருமணி  
மின் உறழ் இமைப்பின் சென்னிப் பொற்பு

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நகை தாழ்பு துயல்வருஉம் வகை அமை பொலங்குழை  
சேண் விளங்கு இயற்கை வாள் மதி கவைஇ  
அகலா மீனின் அவர்வன இமைப்ப,  
தா இல் கொள்கைத் தம் தொழில் முடிமார்  
மனன் நேர்பு எழுதரு வாள் நிற முகனே;

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மா இருள் ஞாலம் மறு இன்றி விளங்க,  
பல் கதிர் விரிந்தன்று, ஒரு முகம்; ஒருமுகம்  
ஆர்வலர் ஏத்த அமர்ந்து இனிது ஒழுகி,



காதலின் உவந்து வரம் கொடுத்தன்றே; ஒருமுகம்  
மந்திர விதியின் மரபுளி வழாஅ  
அந்தணர் வேள்வி ஓர்க்கும்மே; ஒருமுகம்  
எஞ்சிய பொருள்களை ஏழுற நாடி  
திங்கள் போலத் திசை விளக்கும்மே; ஒருமுகம்  
செறுநர்த் தேய்த்துச் செல் சமம் முருக்கி,  
கறுவுகொள் நெஞ்சமொடு களம் வேட்டன்றே; ஒருமுகம்  
குறவர் மடமகள், கொடி போல் நுகப்பின்  
மடவரல், வள்ளியொடு நகை அமர்ந்தன்றே;  
ஆங்கு, அம் மு-இரு முகனும், முறை நவின்று ஒழுகலின்

## Tiruchir - Alaivai

Riding on the elephant, whose sacred head is adorned with golden shields and garlands, whose sides resound with the bells, which is swift of foot like wind, and powerful like God Yama.

So, God Muruga appears, with his head glowing like lightning with the five kinds of skilfully wrought ornaments.

With his golden ear-rings shedding light like the Moon surrounded by the inseparable stars.

His faces blossom out from the hearts of devotees, practising austere Tapas.

Of these one Face sheds rays of light brightening fully the world shrouded in great darkness.

One Face lovingly grants boons being gladdened by the praise of his loving devotees.

One Face takes care that no harm befalls the Yajnas performed by Brahmanas according to strict Vedic tradition

One Face, like the Full Moon, spreads light in all quarters removing the doubts of Maharishis, after teaching the truths of sciences difficult of reach



One Face performs the Battle-Sacrifice crushing the hostile hosts, with thoughts dark with revenge and biassed against them,

One Face smiled with joy on his young Highland Bride with the creeper-like waits.

### Cameo III

## SILAPPADIKARAM (200 A.D.)

### The great Injustice : Kannaki's Wail

We have selected this piece from Silappadikaram, one of the five great classics of ancient Tamil literature. It describes the great grief of Kannaki on hearing the tragedy of her husband Kovalan's death, and is unparalleled for its great depth and simple pathos and will melt the heart of any one who reads it. We cannot in any sense reproduce the beauty of the original in our translation, but we give it so that our readers may be enabled to understand the original.

### The Text

“ எனக்கேட்டு.

பொங்கி யெழுந்தாள் விழுந்தாள் பொழிகதிர்த்  
திங்கண் முகிலோடுஞ் சேணிலங் கொண்டெனச்  
செங்கண் சிவப்ப வழுதாடன் கேள்வனை  
யெங்கனாஅ வென்னா வினைந்தேங்கி மாழ்குவான் :

She heard

She rose bewildered and fell down on earth  
Like the moon behind the pouring rain, \*  
And with her eyes blood-shot, she cried and sighed  
Oh husband mine, where have you sped Oh, Oh !



“இன்புறு தங்கணவ ரிடரெரி யகழுழ்கத்  
துன்புறு வனநோற்றுத் துயருறு மகளிரைப்போன்  
மன்பதை யலர்தூற்ற மன்னவன் றவறிழைப்ப  
வன்பனை யிழந்தேன்யா னவலங்கொண் டழிவலோ”

Their loving husbands were swallowed by flames,  
They grieve and fast and hardships undergo;  
Like them, by the king's ill deed so loudly blamed,  
I remain behind and cry, my lover lost \* \*

நல்லுற்றுற்று தழுவானைக் கண்டேங்கி  
மல்லன் மதுரையா ரெல்லாருந் தாமயங்கிக்  
களையாத துன்பமிக் காரிகைக்குக் காட்டி  
வனையாத செங்கோல் வளைந்த திதுவென்கொல்.

They saw her inconsolable grief and sighed  
All the folks of Madurai and pitied  
And said, 'So much affliction was caused this dame,  
By the swerving of the sceptre which never swerved'  
What will happen next?

மன்னவர் மன்னன் மதிக்குடை வாள்வேந்தன்  
றென்னவன் கொற்றஞ் சிதைந்த திதுவென்கொல்

“The king of kings, who wields the umbrella, cool,  
And shining sword, The Pandyan's might is gone!  
What will happen next?

மண்குளிரச் செய்யு மறவே னெடுத்தகை  
தண்குடை வெம்மை விளைத்த திதுவென்கொல்

“The gracious King whose hot spear guards the earth.  
His cool umbrella did parch up the same.  
What will happen next?

செம்பொற் சிலம்பொன்று கையேந்தி நம்பொருட்டால்  
வம்பப் பெருந்தெய்வம் வந்த திதுவென்கொல்.



“With the Golden ankle in her hands did come  
This great deity for our destruction sure!

What will happen next?

— Transl: J. M. Nallaswami Pillai

## KARAIKKAL AMMAIYAR 450 A.D.

### அற்புதத் திருஅந்தாதி

#### In Praise of Lord Siva

அறிவானுந் தானே யறிவிப்பான் றுனே  
அறிவா யறிகின்றான் தானே — அறிகின்ற  
மெய்ப்பொருளுந் தானே வீரிசுடர்பா ராகாசம்  
அப்பொருளுத் தானே யவன்.

He knows all future and He intuitis everone,  
He the Intelligence that knows the present,  
He is the Truth that knows. And He is all  
This Earth and Akas and effulgent Sun.

அவனே யிருசுடர்தி யாகாச மாவான்  
அவனே புவிபுனல் கர்ற் றுவா — னவனே  
இயமா னனையட்ட முர்த்தியுமாய் ஞான  
மயனாகி நின்றாலும் வந்து.

He is the fire, Akas and the twin lights  
The earth and air and the water is He.  
He is *Ejaman* and *Ashrah-muri*  
And the Intelligence that transcends all.

நூலறிவு பேசி நுழை விலாதார் திரிக  
நீலமணி மிடற்று னீர்மையே — மேலுலந்த  
தெக்கோலத்தெவ்வுருவா யெத்தவங்கள் செய்வார்க்கும்  
அக்கோலத் தவ்வுருவே யாம்.



Let alone what fools with bookish lore declare  
About the Nature of our blue-necked God  
In whatever form and figure one worships  
In that same form and figure He shows grace.

# TIRUMANTRAM • 500 A<sub>1</sub>D<sub>2</sub>

By Tirumoolar

First Tantra

Chapter 18

LOVE

அன்புடைமை

அன்புஞ் சிவமு மிரண்டென்பர் அறிவிலார்  
அன்பே சிவமாவ தாரும் அறிகிலாரி  
அன்பே சிவமாவ தாரு மறிந்தபின்  
அன்பே சிவமா யமர்ந்திருந் தாரே:

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The ignorant think that Love and Sivam (the state of being Siva or Bliss) are different. They do not know that Love becomes or settles into Sivam. After knowing that Love becomes or settles into Sivam, they rest themselves in that condition in which Love has settled into Sivam.

பொன்னைக் கடந்திலங் கும்புலித் தோலினன்  
மின்னிக் கிடந்து மிளிர் மிளம்பிறை  
துன்னிக் கிடந்த சுடுபொடி யாடிக்குப்  
பின்னிக் கிடந்தென் பேரன்பு தானே.

My great Love has been directed towards Him (Siva) whose tiger skin is brighter than gold, the crescent Moon in whose head is luminous and bright, and who dances in unbroken close ways is the burning dust.



என்பே விறகா இறைச்சி யறுத்திட்டுப்  
 பொன்பொற் கனலிற் பொரி யம்வறுப்பினு  
 அன்போ டுருகி யகங்குழை வார்கன்றி  
 என் போல மணியினை யெய்த வொண்ணாதே.

Even though with bones for firewood, the flesh is torn to lines and burnt like gold in fire, except to those who internally melt themselves into Love, God is not accessible.

The Beginning of BAKTHI Period in Tamil literature

(SAIVISM and VAISHNAVISM)

SAINT APPAR 700 A.D.

also named Tirunavukkarasar

VII Century

In the beautiful hymn quoted below, Saint Triunavukkarasu \* records some facts of his own spiritual experience and exhorts all men to lead lives of piety and godliness in the world. No one can feel, more than I do, the feebleness and inadequacy of the translation and I fear I have but vainly tried to reproduce in English the music of the original \*

திருச்சிற்றம்பலம்

மாசில் வீணையு மாலை மதியமும்  
 வீசு தென்றலும் வீங்கிள வேனிலும்  
 மூசு வண்டறை பொய்கையும் போன்றதே  
 ஈசு னெந்தை இணையடி நீழலே.



The faultless harp the evening moon  
The fanning breeze the South bestows,  
The early summer's swelling time,  
The pond where bees do humming swarm,  
—As soothing is the shelter sweet  
Of God my father's holy feet.

நெக்கு நெக்கு நினைபவர் நெஞ்சுளே  
புக்கு நிற்கும் பொன் னார்சடைப் புண்ணியன்  
பொக்க மிக்கவர் பூவுநீருங் கொண்டு  
நக்கு நிற்பர் அவர்தம்மை நாணியே.

The Lord abides in hearts of men  
That think of Him and love and pine,  
He smiles at Water, flowers, shed  
In worship by the false within;  
Ashamed for them He smiling stands.

விறகுகிற் றீயினன் பாலிற்படு நெய்போல்  
மறைய தின்றுளன் மாமணிச் சோதியான்  
உறவு கோல்நட் டுணர்வு கயிற்றினால்  
முறுக வாங்கிக் கடைய முன் நிற்குமே.

As fire in wood, as ghee in milk,  
The Luminous one lies hid within  
First fix the churning stick of Love,  
Pass round the cord, Intelligence,  
Then twirl \* —and God will bless thy sight.

Saint SUNDARAMURTI

800 A.D.

VIII Century

“ஏழிசையா யிசைப்பயகு யின்னமுதா யென்னுடைய  
தோழனுமா யான் செய்யுந் துரிசுகளுக்குடனாகி  
மாழை யொன்கண் பரவையைத் தந்தாண்டாளை மதியிலா  
ஏழையேன் பிரிந்திருக்கே னென்னொருிறைவனையே”;



“Him, the seven tunes, the sweetness of these tunes the sweet Ambrosia, my friend and partner even of my mishie's. Him who gave me the beautiful 'eyed Paravaiyar' and made me His servant, Oh My Lord of Arur how can I, the senseless beggar, be separated from Him.”

## NALADIYAR

### நாலடியார்

Collection of poems written by the Jain Poets of the 8th Century A.D. on the theme of ETHICS.

கனைகடல் தன்சேர்ப்ப! சுற்றறிந்தார் கேண்மை  
நுனியின் கரும்புதின் றற்றே — நுனிநீக்கித்  
தூரின்தின் றன்ன தகைத்தரோ பண்டிலா  
ஈர மிலாளர் தொடர்பு.”

“Oh, Pandya with dominions bordering on the noisy ocean! the friendship with the learned is like eating the sugarcane from the top, while that with ungracious men is like eating it from the bottom” (That is, the company with the wise grows sweeter day by day, while company with the low becomes more and more insipid in course of time)

The characteristics of nobler men :-

களளார்கள் உண்ணார் கடிவ கடிந் தொர் இ  
என்னிப் பிறரை இகழ்ந்துரையார் — தன்னியும்  
வாயின் பொய் கூறார் வடுவது காட்சியார்  
சாயின் பரிவ திலர்.



The wise free from gross evils -

They defraud not, drink not palm wine, shun what is forbidden, never despise and speak contemptuously of their neighbours, nor even forgetfully do they utter anything untrue with their mouth: these men of faultless vision grieve not though they fall into distress.

பிற்ர்மறை யின்கண் செவிடாய்த் திறன் அறிந்து  
ஏதிலார் இல்கண் குருடனாய்த் தீய  
புறங்கூற்றின் மூகையாய் நிற்பானேல் யாதும்  
அறங்கூற வேண்டா அவற்கு.

When a man should be deaf, blind and dumb:—

Deaf to others' secrets, blind to his neighbours' wife dumb to evil back-biting - If, knowing what is befitting, a man thus abides, it is not necessary to teach him any virtuous precepts.

— G. U. Pope

VAISHNAVA ALVARS :

Divya Pirapantham

St. Nammalvar

850 A.D.

'Nammalvar's hymns are incomparable and untranslatable. They are the blossoms of Cosmic vision and realization of Vishnu in the self and in the World' and all inner experiences put in the form of beautiful poetic images. Below are two beautiful verses.

Here is his vision of the Golden Age and we sing with Nammalvar:



பொலிக பொலிக பொலிக போயிற்று வல்லுயிர்ச் சாபம்  
 நலியும் நரகமும் நைந்த நமனுக்கிங்கி யாதொன்று மில்லை  
 கலியும் கெடும் கண்டு கொள்மின் கடல்வண்ணன் பூதங்கள்  
 [மண்மேல்  
 மலியப் புகுந்திசை பாடி யாடி யுழிதரக்கண்டோம்.

"Prosperity, prosperity, felicity to all! The Cruel  
 curse upon human existence is gone! Destroyed is the  
 hell of misery! Death has nothing to do here. Kali, the  
 iron age shall be no more. We have seen the devotees  
 of the sea - hued Krishna enter the world in rich abund-  
 ance, sing His glory dance in ecstacy and prosper"

### Tiruvai-Mozhi

நீராய் நிலனாய்த் தீயாய்க் காலாய் நெடும் வானாய்ச்  
 சீரார் சுடர்க ளிரண்டாய்ச் சிவனா யயனாய்க்  
 கூரா நாழி வெண்சங் கேந்திக் கொகுமேன்பால்  
 வாரா யொருநாண் மண்ணும் விண்ணு மகிழவே.

மண்ணும் விண்ணு மகிழ்க் குறளாய் வலங்காட்டி  
 மண்ணும் விண்ணுங் கொண்ட மாயவம்மானே  
 நண்ணி யுன்னை நான்கண் வெந்து கூத்தாட  
 நண்ணி யொருநாண் ஞாலத்தாடே நடவாயே.

Thou art the water, thou art the earth, thou art  
 the fire, thou art the air, thou art the extended ether,

Thou art the two regulating lights, thou art Siva,  
 thou art Ayen (Brahma);

Thou who holdest a sharp disc and a white conch  
 to me the sinner

Wilt thou not one day come giving joy to earth and  
 heaven?

To rejoice earth and heaven thou assumedst a dwarfish  
 form and displayedst the power;



O Father of the energy which supports the earth  
and heaven,

I perceive Thee by meditation and dance with delight,  
Thou wilt assuredly one day approach me in this world!

MOOTHURAI

900 A.D.

முதுரை

of Auvai of IXth Century)

Of Auvaiyar's quatrains முதுரை claims attention

"Though not as high imaginative poetry, the grace,  
ease, simplicity, perfect classical propriety, striking inge-  
nuity, and homely sweetness of these thirty quatrains—a  
necklace of pearls worthy of the neck of Sarasvati—  
are quite un-imaginable to a western mind. They are  
wonderfully charming" — G. U. Pope.

அடக்க முடையா ரறிவிலரென் றெண்ணிக்  
கடக்கக் கருதவும் வேண்டா — மடைத்தலையில்  
ஒடிமீ னோட வறுமீன் வருமளவும்  
வாடி யிருக்குமாங் கொக்கு.

Take not as "fool" the modest wise,  
Nor venture high 'bove such to rise;  
The heron sits alert and cool  
To catch the biggest in the pool.

அற்ற குளத்தி னறுநீர்ப் பறவைபோல்.  
உற்றுழித் தீர்வா ருறவல்லர் — அக்குளத்தில்  
கொட்டியு மாம்பலு நெய்தலும் போலவே  
ஒட்டி யுலர்வா ருறவு.



Who fly, as birds from dried up lake,  
In times of want, their friends forsake,  
But, who, as lilies, cling there fast  
Make love and joy for ever lost.

சீரியர் கெட்டாலும் சீரியர் சீரியரே  
அல்லாதார் கெட்டாலு மல்லாதார் — அல்லாதார்  
பொன்னின் குடமுடைந்தாற் பொன்னு கு மென்னுகும்  
மண்ணின் குடமுடைந்தக் கால்

Tho' fallen low, the good are good;  
The bad, tho' ruined, change not their mood;  
A broken pot of gold is gold;  
Of clay is but the clay of old.

RAMAYANAM 1100 A.D.

இராமாயணம்

Kambar's justly famous Tamil Vaishnava Epic, Ramayana, was the culmination of both the Bakthi tradition and the influence of Sanskrit tradition and ideology on Tamil poetry.

எண்ணரு நலத்தினுள் இணைய நின்றுழி  
கண்ணொடு கண்ணினை கௌவி யொன்றை யொன்று  
உண்ணவும் நிலைபெரு துணர்வு மொன்றிட  
அண்ணலு நோக்கினுள் அவளு நோக்கினுள்.

So stood that maiden of a rare gem in bloom  
and eye caught eye and each the other consume  
As quiet they stood, minds into one were fused  
The hero glanced at her and she at him unconfused.



St. ARUNAGIRIYAR 1500 A D.

XV Century

Tiruppugazh

திருப்புகழ்

தேனியல் சொற் கனிமாதர் சேவைதனைக் கருதாதே  
 யானெனதற் றிடுபோதம் யானறிதற் கருள்வாயே;  
 வானவருக் கரசான வாசவனுக் கினியோனே;  
 ஆனேமுகற் கினையோனே ஆறுமுகப் பெருமானே.

Oh! My Lord with six faces!

Oh! You the younger brother of the Elephant-faced-  
 Ganesa!

Oh! You dear to Indra the Lord of all celestials

Pray! Grant me these boons

Let not my mind go astray lured by the sweet words of-  
 prostitutes

Be pleased to teach me how I can get over the bond  
 of egoism of "I" and "Mine"

பிறவியலை யாற்றினிற்  
 பிரகிருதி மார்க்கமுற்  
 உறுதிசூரு வாக்கியப்  
 உனதுபத காட்சியைத்  
 அறுசமய சாத்திரப்  
 அறிவுளறி வார்க்குணக்  
 குறுமுறிவ னேத்துமுத்  
 குமரகுரு கார்த்திகைப்

— புகுதாதே—  
 — றலையாதே  
 — பொருளாலே  
 — தருவாயே  
 — பொருளோனே  
 — கடலோனே!  
 — தமிழோனே—  
 — பெருமானே!

1298

Oh! Ye! Entity enshrined in the six religious codes!  
 Oh! Ye! the Ocean of Grace for the great who realise  
 Thee in their search of knowledge!  
 Oh! Ye! the master of all the three branches of Tamil



Culture viz., Literature, Music and Dance sanctified  
by Lord Agastya!

Oh! Ye! God Kumara! the Lord of the constellation  
Pleiades! Pray! Grant me these boons:—

Let me not enter and be entangled in the waves of  
-ceaseless births

Let me not wander in the path of worldly affairs

Let me, by following the efficacious teachings of the  
Guru (Master), be blessed with the sight of Thy Holy-  
Feet.

ST. THAYUMANAVAR 1800 A.D.

தாயுமான சுவாமிகள் பாடல்

திருவருள் விலாசப் பரசிவ வணக்கம்

அங்கிங் கெனாதபடி யெங்கும் ப்ரகாசமாய்

ஆனந்த பூர்த்தியாகி

அருளொடு நிறைந்ததெது தன்னருள் வெளிக்குளே

அகிலாண்ட கோடியெல்லாந்

தங்கும் படிக்கிச்சை வைத்துயிர்க் குயிராய்த்

தழைத்ததெது மனவாக்கினில்

தட்டாமல் நின்றதெது சமயகோ டிகளெல்லாந்

தந்தெய்வம் எந்தெய்வமென்

றெங்குந் தொடர்ந்தெதிர் வழக்கிடவும் நின்றதெது

எங்கனும் பெருவழக்காய்

யாதினும் வல்லவொரு சித்தாகி யின்பமாய்

என்றைக்கு முள்ளதெதுமேல்

கங்குல்பக லறநின்ற எல்லையுள தெதுஅது

கருத்திற் கிசைந்தததுவே

கண்டன வெலாமோன வருவெளிய தாகவுங்

கருதிஅஞ் சலிசெய்குவாம்.



## WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

“What is that which of Grace is full, which is neither here nor there only, but is everywhere as the fulness of Peace?

What is that which, willing myraids of worlds to float in the expanse of Its Grace, is the life of all things living?

What is that which the mind cannot grasp and speech cannot define?

What is that which exists impartially, while countless creeds in every land claim It, each as its own?

Amid such contending claims, what is that which endlessly is knowledge, Love and Power?

What is that whose bourne is without day or night? That indeed is soul-satisfying!

That let us worship, deeming all things visible as Phenomena in the expanse of the Silent Spirit”

Translated by Sir P. Ramanathan - *Stanford quotations of Eminent men and women*. Compiled by Ronald Petrie - p. 176.

RAMALINGA ADIKAL 1823-74 A.D.

Thiru Arudpa

திரு அருட்பா

ஒருமையுட னினதுதிரு மலரடி நினைக்கின்ற  
உத்தமர்த முறவு வேண்டும்  
உள்ளொன்று வைத்துப் புறம்மொன்று பேசுவார்  
உறவுகல வாமை வேண்டும்



பெருமைபெறு நினதுபுகழ் பேசவேண் டும்பொய்மை  
 பேசா திருக்க வேண்டும்  
 பெருநெறி பிடித்தொழுக வேண்டுமத மானபேய்  
 பிடியா திருக்க வேண்டும்  
 மருவுபெண்ணு சையை மறக்கவே வேண்டுமுனை  
 மறவா திருக்க வேண்டும்  
 மதிவேண்டு நின்கருணைநிதிவேண்டு நோயற்ற  
 வாழ்வினான் வாழ வேண்டும்  
 தருமமிது சென்னையிற் கந்தகோட்டத் துள்வளர்  
 தலமோங்கு கந்த வேளை  
 தன்முகத் துய்யமணி யுன்முகச் சைவமணி  
 சன்முகத் தெய்வமணியே.

O! Thou, the Lord Kandaswami of the Kandaswami  
 Temple at Madras, a city progressive alike in charity  
 and sanctity! Thou, the Lord gracious and spotless! Thou,  
 the immaculate soul of souls indwelling! Thou, Shan-  
 mukha, the God of Gods!

One should court the company of the good that  
 focus their thoughts on thine lotus-like feet with single  
 devotion; should shun the society of those whose heart and  
 lip disagree (differ); should extol the greatness of Thine  
 august Self: should desist from uttering falsehood; should  
 walk in the path of Righteousness; should not be poss-  
 essed of the devil *Madham*; should clean forget the  
 tempting lust of womenfolk; should never forget Thee;  
 be endowed with *Mathi* and the wealth of thy Grace,  
 and entee eternal life, free from disease.



## APPENDIX 2

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE VALUES ONE SHOULD CHERISH IN LIFE WHAT I BELIEVE — A COLLECTION FROM MY THOUGHTS AND READINGS.

1. I believe that the truest happiness can proceed only from the serenity of the private heart, and that when a man comes to his end it is in terms of this alone, not of his public achievements, that his success of failure is to be measured.
2. I believe in freedom for the flowering of human personality, for the ceaseless extension of the frontiers of knowledge and for the growth of human happiness.
3. Surely the bravest are those who have the clearest vision of what is before them - glory and danger alike - and who yet not withstanding go out to meet it.
4. The most astonishing thing about the human being is not his intellect and bodily structure, 'profoundly mysterious as these are, but the range of his vision his gaze into the infinite distance, his lonely passion for ideas and ideals for which he will endure suffering, privation and death in the profound conviction that if nothing is worth dying for, nothing is worth living for.



5. The great sin of the modern is legitimized hate, legitimized by political passion. It is an attractive trap and one can go as badly wrong by intellectual passion, legal erudition as one can by sexual passion, passion for money and so on.

‘There is nothing worth the wear of winning  
But laughter and the love of friends’.

6. I believe, that we should all, occidentals and orientals, try to tolerate each other's ways of doing things. It is not necessary to copy one another artificially: to understand is enough. And I would hate to see any universal pattern forced on the world. It is arrogance to think this desirable and its efforts would be so dull.
7. I believe in the importance of the family as the continuing unit of human life. A man ought to be really free to make his own decisions on matters of principle and conscience. He is not free if poverty and ignorance chain him; he is not so free if he is shackled by dogma and blinkered by lies or partial truths; he is not free if force or fear shuts him off from inquiry and experiment.
8. There are among us, men and women, who are wholly committed to God and who have handed their daily lives over to God, who spread love and hope and courage around them like an infection. These are the people who have discovered their inner radiant peace.
9. As knowledge advances the over-simplified faith of our fathers becomes modified and indeed shaken. Understanding more about material things, we are



less sure of our spiritual conception. The basic fact of human existence is surely isolation. Each of us locked up in our private air-conditioned watch tower of nerves and self-interest, is striving desperately to communicate; occasionally art or love provides a wavelength, on which some jumbled and never fully comprehended signal gets through.

10. Whence I had come? Whither I was going? When shall I be free?, The answer always eluded me. Then I suddenly realized that reason cannot give a certain or final answer to these questions, because they lie beyond the boundaries of knowledge which are drawn by experience. Instead of looking backwards at the wisdom of the sages or outwards at the world, I should have looked inwards, into myself.

‘The heart has its reasons which reason does not understand’

11. The quality I must envy are courage and love—the courage to say No to my own greedy desires, to place conscience above expediency, the courage to offer everything for nothing, for an idea, a principle, a belief. Love extending to humanity, truth, nature and freedom.
12. Early religious leaders were sustained by the faith that moves mountains. There is nothing beyond the power of man if he be possessed of such spiritual dynamics.
13. I should define happiness as the active and continuous expression of one's own better nature as directed by my conscience.



14. I have personally found real help in Galileo's answer to those who thought that the new astronomical universe made the idea of Gods care for each of his children impossible. 'The Sun' be said 'which has all those planets moving around it, can ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had nothing else in the world to do'. Why should I doubt the power of that infinitely greater light?.
15. Life is nought but froth and bubble  
Two things stand like stone  
Kindness in another's trouble  
Courage in your own.
16. If I can tidy up my mind before talking to God, I will have gone a long way to achieving personal serenity. Concentrate your mind on the wonders of nature, the immensity of the universe, then talk to the Great Creator if you can.
17. 'The universe is too great a mystery for there to be only one single approach to it'.  
However often our materially minded economists repeat their half truth that man's happiness lies in economic security, I believe that history shows that without religion or myth and their accompanying ritual, man will die.
18. As a mortal passing through this life for just a limited period of time, I believe that happiness is a truly basic objective-real happiness should be bound up with unselfishness and service is the essence of it.  
My credo embraces a joyous approach for me toward my fellow man and for collective groups towards each other.



19. If only each one of us can develop a sound philosophy and work out a course of conduct as individuals, then I believe we can solve our world problems at the international level - war is only cowardly escape from the problems of peace.

20. The end of being is to find out God.

‘My long search has led me to the place from which I can say with entire simplicity that I believe that you and I are part and parcel of the stream of universal life - as water drops are part of the great sea!

21. I believe with the Ancient Hindu Vedas that:-

Never the spirit was born, the spirit shall cease-  
to be never  
Never was time it was not, End and Beginning-  
are dreams

Birthless and Deathless and Changeless remaineth-  
the Spirit for ever.

22. In my youth I had what many would consider a poor and hard life. But as I recall it. I was never unhappy; rather I enjoyed my youth immensely. For I had been taught how to appreciate and get the most out of very little, and that happiness in any circumstances is primarily a matter of control over one's state of mind.

I hold that it is right to believe in oneself but is wrong ever to take oneself too seriously.

23. A keen sense of personal values and that humility which accompanies a balanced perspective are indispensable to congenial adjustment to life in society.



24. I believe in the worth and dignity of the individual and that no man can be happy within himself if he ever surrenders his dignity and self-respect. I believe also in looking always on the brighter side of things; in the ability of right somehow ultimately to prevail; in never pressing time or fate; in taking life philosophically and in stride - both the good and the bad - and I have had an ample measure of both which have been tried and tested in the crucible of living.
25. I regard the brotherhood of mankind as the basis of any true religion - and for that matter - the basis of any true democracy. Belief in the worth and dignity of the individual is entwined with the idea of human brotherhood. The differences between us, I feel certain, are mainly accidental. We have no choice as to either the colour of the skin or the place of birth. Despite these differences over which no one of us has control, we are all brothers in spirit. Some of us have advantages that others lack, but character is by no means determined by our advantages or the lack of them.
26. I find it impossible to conceive of the creation of this complex universe with all its wonders as purely the result of material forces. Somehow, somewhere, there must be a power that has brought into being the principles which govern this world. That power we term God.
27. My own faith rests, therefore, on belief in the dignity of the individual, in human brotherhood and in the existence of power that is greater than mankind and greater than the forces that shape our



physical environment. I believe in the immortality of the spirit of man and the continuance of the development of what has gone on during what we call life.

28. I believe there is good and evil in all of us. This belief helps me because so long as I remember that there are certain forces of evil ever present in me - never forget there is a divine spark of goodness in me too - then I find that the score of my bad mistakes and regrets at the end of each day is greatly reduced. Forewarned of evil is half the battle against it.

29. I have experienced 'intimations of immortality'. I can no more explain these than the brown seed can explain the flowering tree. Deep in the soil in times midwinter, my very stirring and unease seem a kind of growing pain toward June.

30. He who closes his ears to the views of others shows little confidence in the integrity of his own views.

The only way to have a friend is to be one, even after knowing his weakness.

31. I feel God's presence most when I am out in the forest and sit down on an old tree stump and see little insects, animals and flowers around me. There I see the meaning of Life and Death.

32. Thankfulness is my faith in action. But this spirit of thankfulness to my own and past generations cannot be complete without frequently lifting the face upward simply to say 'Thank you, God'. In fact it is here that the spirit of thankfulness finds



its first expression: From there I want it to flow outward toward my fellow man of whatever race, colour, creed or talent.

33. For me beauty is one of the most important things in life or perhaps I mean an awareness of beauty. It is everything from the warm, sensuous beauty of a woman, who is life itself, to the liquid rhythm of music; the fragile, fleeting loveliness of day-break; the terrible majesty of a storm. A picture, a poem, the open look of a child. I believe that as for himself, a man lives in the faces and hearts of his children, and in the friendships and the memories of his friends.
34. The twinkle of light in a friendly eye is brighter than the flash of jewels. It is beyond price. So is the beauty of a smile. However poor, we each have something unique within ourselves to give to a particular need - a gift of the human spirit itself and so a spark of the divine - whatever it takes to bring happiness to another's face. So I believe that we need each other more than anything else in this world, and that the kingdom of heaven is right here, now, inside us.
35. 'Look thy last, on all things lovely - every hour' - absorb the beauty, contribute to the goodness and above all be thankful to God.
36. I find that most true happiness comes from one's inner life; from the disposition of one's mind and soul. Admittedly, a good inner life is difficult to achieve, especially in these trying times - it takes reflection and contemplation and self-discipline. But



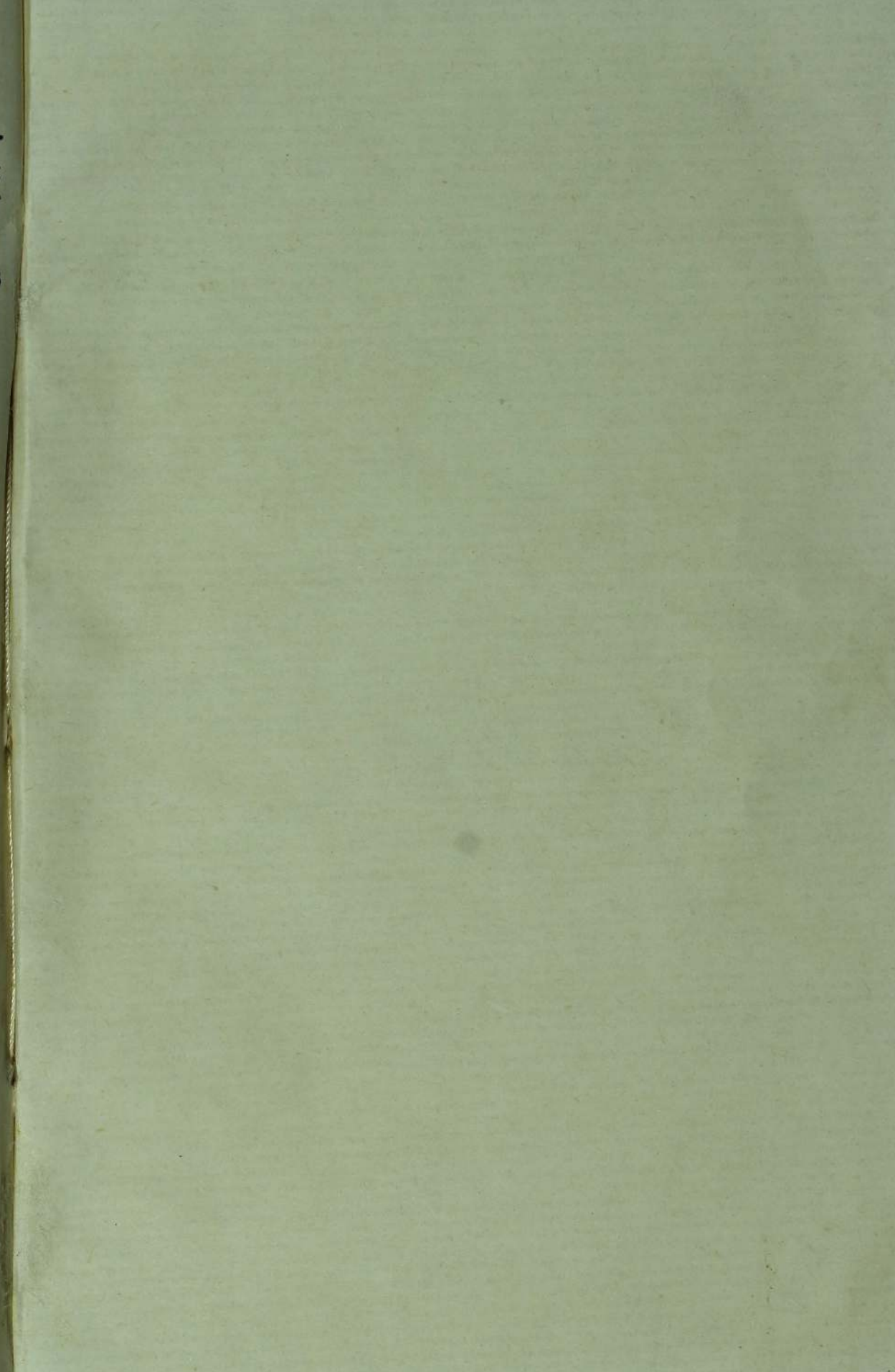
the reward of having an inner life, which no outside storm or evil turn of fortune can touch is, it seem to me, a very great one.

37. Gentleness is a sort of kindness which accumulates with wisdom. The real value of gentleness is lost if it is not fortified with bravery.
38. Treat all life as having the 'will to live'. From this beginning follows the view that 'reverence for life' is the basis for civilization; it is the ethics for a desirable way of life. This is the essence of the teachings of most of the philosophers of all history - from Socrates and Aristotle to Gandhi and Marx.
39. I believe I must keep my doorstep clean, I must tidy up my own back yard. I need keep only the two great commandments to live by - To respect the Giver of Life and my duty toward my neighbour. These upon which hang all the law and the prophets.
40. The art of successful living is the art of meeting both the expected and the unexpected, the good and the bad without being thrown off balance. The tragedy in life is that we want to eat the cake and have it also.
41. Besides a healthy body and an active mind, we need a philosophy or religion which will give a purpose and meaning to our existence. The quality of one's life can be transformed even though one is unable to alter one's environment.



42. The deep content felt in doing what pleases is scarcely surpassed by the scientist or the artist, rapt in a more spectacular achievement. The joy of fulfilment comes less from the nature of work than from the unity of mind and muscles, the singleness of purpose which engages the whole self at all levels.
43. The human potential is not fully satisfied by success in a career or any purely material achievement. To awaken the spiritual side of man's nature, it is necessary to adopt bodily discipline. The God we seek outside is in fact within each of us - and within the texture of every object you look at. Nature is not made up of separate things; it is an indivisible whole, a seamless robe and we are all part of the fabric.
44. Finding grace and beauty in every-day life is one of the achievements of Hinduism and particularly of Zen Buddhism. The crowning contradiction is that life can be joyous so long as you preserve a certain detachment. It is a mistake to take yourself seriously. Since laughter reduces tension, you must learn to laugh at yourself.
45. You cannot buy religious beliefs over the counter like proprietary medicines. Conversion to religion is no more an intellectual process than falling in Love - it is a spontaneous act over which we have little control.

















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## உண்ணாவிரத நோன்பும், ஒற்றுமையும்: லண்டனில் ஒரு தமிழ்க் காந்தி

திரு. ஞானசூரியன் அவர்களின் உண்ணா நோன்புச் செய்தியை “லண்டன் முரசு” வழி அறிந்து வியந்தேன். வருந்தினேன். லண்டனில் உள்ள தமிழர்களிடே இத் துணை அளவு பிளவா என்று எண்ணி வியந்தேன். தமிழினத்தின் எதிர்காலத்தை எண்ணி வருந்தினேன். லண்டனில் ஒரு தமிழ்க்காந்தி உருவாவதை எண்ணி மகிழ்ந்தேன்.

எந்தக் கல்வி எல்லாம் தந்துவிடும் என்று நம்பி னோமோ, நம்புகிறோமோ; எந்தப் பொருள் நிறைவு எல்லாம் தந்துவிடும் என்று நம்பினோமோ, நம்புகிறோமோ; அந்தக் கல்வியும், பொருளும், எதுவும் தராத நிலையை நம் தமிழரிடே நாம் கண்கூடாகக் காண்கிறோம். லண்டனில் மட்டுமன்று; தமிழர்கள் உள்ள எல்லா நாடுகளிலும் இதே நிலைமை. மனநிலை திருந்தினாலன்றி மார்க்கம் இல்லை. உண்ணா நோன்பு பயில்வோரையும், பார்ப்போரையும் பண்படுத்தவல்லது திரு. ஞானசூரியன் அவர்களின் உண்ணா நோன்பும் தமிழினத்துக்கு நலம்பல தர வேண்டுகிறேன்.

(‘லண்டன் முரசு’ ஆசிரியருக்குக் கடிதம், 10-10-79)

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