

Arul

Mani

Maalai



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Is The Second Book Written By Gnana Sarguru Siva Selvaraj Ayya.

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1. SPIRITUALISM (Aanmeeham)

When you ask school children, they will talk about their learning subjects and give reasons for learning them. Science deals with natural objects and their growth and history records past events. Moreover, definitions and explanations are given for other fields of study too. Likewise, those who speak about spiritualism (*Aanmeeham*), instead of defining it, beat about the bush explaining it as singing in group, yoga and its postures, meditation and in addition, their own explanations about the nature of God.

Just like school children, we can define spiritualism (*Aanmeeham*) shortly as realization of the nature of the soul. One who follows the path of love in a disciplined manner is known as a spiritual person (*Aanmeeha vaadhi*).

Let us discuss the nature of the soul, the life-giving energy (Jeevan). In fact, we are all endowed with souls; birds, animals and all which are endowed with life are also souls. How many multitudinous living souls around us! They testify to the wonders of the creation by God! There is no limit to His Grace and power as he is the inherent entity present in all living beings. To tell the truth, we are minute particles of the whole universe.

We are souls, and in our bodies dwells the omnipotent and omniscient God. Moreover, the God shines in our souls in the form of divine light.

How can I realize the presence of God, the enormous light (Jyothi) in me? How to know and understand the soul residing in me?

God, out of His divine grace, is present as soul (*Aatman*) in our body which is an exquisite blend of five elements: Earth, Water, Air, Fire and Sky (*Akash*).

Only when we have life in the body, we are treated as moving God (Siva). Once the soul departs, the body becomes corpse which soon rots and stinks.

We must understand a fundamental truth. So long as a part of the great God (*Paramatman*) stays in the human body, a human being has life and feels that it has Godliness. Once the soul departs from the body, a human being becomes a corpse. We must live as God and that is the highest level to be reached for any human being.

Where is the soul present in the human body? How can we know about it? There is no creator so wonderful as God!

Think of how a human body enters the mother's womb, develops with various parts and limbs, knows about the human nature, and eventually grows to become an instrument for fresh creation of another human body. Every human being feels joy and sorrow according to their actions in the previous births. When you think of all these wonderful activities, you will know these are not only wonderful but also remarkably miraculous.

The human body is made of bones, nerves, muscles, blood and it looks like a mud pot made by an extraordinarily skilful potter. Not only that. The creator himself as a minute part gets into the body in the form of soul. Eating, experiencing and enjoying whatever comes on the way, and believing in what one sees cannot be the purpose of this birth. Such a person is just an animal and not a human being at all.

Let us ask these questions. Who am I? A soul. Why did I come into the world? It is the divine activity, performed out of grace in order to end my virtuous and sinful actions .

How was I born? As a result of sexual relationship, my father and mother became responsible only for the growth of a baby. God gave life according to the accumulated actions (*karma*) of the soul in the previous births. The soul is made to enter the body because of the creative power of God. This is how I was born into the world with body and soul – as a living human baby.

Where does the life stay in the human body? Where does the soul live in a human being? Where is life (Jeevan)? How does it exist in the human body? If one knows the answer to these questions, he is a wise person (Jnani). If he realises this great truth, he becomes an enlightened soul (*Siddhar*). Finally he becomes one with God and realises that he is God himself (*Thaan Adhuvathal – "tat tvam asi"*).

Thus one, who realizes the God dwelling in him, becomes one with God. Thus one who becomes God nullifies the fruits of his past and the present actions. As a result, he becomes God in the midst of all other human beings, and his body, which is made of five elements, turns into illumined body of light (*Jyothi*).

It was none other than **Vallalar Ramalinga Swamigal** who attained such enthralling enlightenment in the 19th century. He spent his life in Vadalur near Chidambaram. Sixty three staunch devotees of Shiva (*Nayanmars*), twelve devotees with unflinching love for Vishnu (*Alwars*) and other numerous wise guides (*Siddhars*) including Agasthiar have already attained this supreme state of bliss. Moreover, India, being a blessed land of spirituality and wisdom, has already provided innumerable saints who have reached the pinnacle of the wise and blissful state meant for all human beings.

We must submit our grateful thanks to God for having granted his blessings to be born in this holy land. In fact, God showers his unconditional blessings to help each human being realize his true nature.

Man enjoys the fruits of his actions according to his thoughts and actions performed during the previous and present births. What is the goal to be reached in this birth? We must attain the wisdom about the nature and capability of human soul to attain everlasting state.

Think, realize and experience the purpose of this rare opportunity of human life.

There are five life-generating forces in our body. However, there are two forces which are the most important. One is Throat (*gandam*) and the other one is Head (*Thalai*). Ramalinga Swamigal, Vallalar, the divine light of blessings, has revealed this truth for us, out of sympathy for fellow beings to conquer death and live a blissful life in this world.

Life of man sparkles around the throat (*gandam*) in the form of light. Understanding the presence of life in our body, listening to the wise people and reading about the nature of life, we must realize that these are the bases of human life (*jeevan*). These are known as *Suruthi*, and *Ukthi*. Experiencing them transforms one into the same Godhood. Moreover, you must immerse in the same thought about the universal light. This is what we call the achievement of soul (Atman). One who reaches this state, will become the spiritual person. First of all, he must become a human and then a super-human; and in the next stage, he becomes a spiritualist.

You must understand that it is not a stage reached by seeing God in the world or by going to temple to worship God. This is not spiritualism. This is the path of *devotion to God*. (*Bhakthi Maarkam*)

Sometimes we install God in a place and do all religious rituals: washing the divine idol with various cleansing methods with water and other perfumes like sandal wood paste and sacred ash (*Abhishekam*) and decorating the icons with flowers and leaves (*Alangaram*) and making a holy fire and worshipping God. This is an action-based path (*Karma Maarkam*).

Some people practise yogic exercises (*Asanas*), breathing (*Praanayama*) and other strenuous physical and mental exercises including meditation (Dhyana). This will not be considered spiritualism; it is a path of yoga. Then what is wisdom? We must realise the nature of the soul and how God dwells in us and becomes the pivot around which all our actions are performed. This is the best way to realize God. This is the path of wisdom (*Jnaana Maarkam*).

Let the Almighty God shower His whole-hearted supreme blessings on all those souls who read this book. Moreover, let all those souls achieve perennial life without end, the deathless state (*maranamillaa peruvaazhvu*).

Praise, with all humility, the Lord who is installed in Chidambaram (*Thiru chitrambalam*)

The Enormous Light of Grace ! (*ArutperunJyothi*)

The Enormous Light of Grace ! (*ArutperunJyothi*)

The nonpareil grace of God ! (*Thanipperunkarunai*)

The Enormous Light of grace ! (*ArutperunJyothi*)

Avvaiyar, the wise, saintly great-grand mother(siddhar) has aptly said in a pithy saying in her treatise *Aathichoodi*: "Temple worship is highly benevolent". The wise give instructions to be followed

and practised by the people of the world. The sayings of the wise people can be, however, interpreted by two levels: surface level and deeper level.

On the surface level it means that temple visits are highly beneficial to people because these visits, in due course, will transform the general public into devotees of God.

In the deeper level, the term ‘temple’ refers to human body. Thirumoolar in his great treatise *Thirumanthiram* (The Holy Chants) refers to this in his song:

“The holy residence of God is none other than the mind of human beings; the body with flesh, blood and bones is the great temple. One who speaks good words and chants divine names will know that his mouth is the Tower (gate) for entering the holy shrine. Those who have realised the nature of man, world and God will understand the God (*sivalingam*) is immanent in their souls. The five senses, which are considered as bringers of evil things, are perennial torch bearers to guide us in the right path.”

This is what Thirumoolar meant — the body is the temple and the soul is none other than God himself. Avvaiyar reiterated the same principle, that is, becoming one with God who already dwells in your soul. She said: concentrate on the soul where the God dwells. Thus, she reinforces the path of wisdom to realize God.

The first vowel, ‘A/ அ’, according to Tamil number system, is ‘eight’ and we must reach the *eight* in our life. That is the goal in our life.

Religious speakers (spiritual) today tell us that chanting holy names of God is the best path to reach God in Kaliyuga (at present). Vallalar already preached that Kaliyuga has already ended and only the path of wisdom preached by saints (*Siddharhal*) will lead us to the God.

At present there are so many religious preachers and their wise sayings are spread in religious places (*mutts and ashrams*). This is a religious activity enforced by the wheel of time. Make use of the preaching and become wise followers to achieve your goal.

Quite recently people have started worshipping Lord Shiva during a particular auspicious day and hour called “Pradhosham” period. This practice leads man from the first stage of path of devotion (*Bhakthi*, praying and worshipping an image made of granite or metals called icons) to the next stage of transforming one to the intermediate stage of worshipping — “form and formless” – a great paradox in Hindu philosophy (*Rupa – Arupa*.) The worship of *Sivalingam* is practised on *Pradhosam day*. This is an important intermediate stage for the people who aspire for the path of wisdom to realize God. In the final stage worship becomes supreme and one practices “formless” worship (*Arupa*) then only wisdom supports you to reach this stage and finally experience enlightenment through this path.

The idol of “Sivalingam” represents the nature of soul (Atman). Those who realized God have shared their experiences. In this context, “Sivam” is used in Hindu scriptures and also in Islamic scriptures. It means “light” and “benevolence” which means *the wise path of light*.

Saint Manickavasagar in his Thiruvagasam says: we will get liberation because Lord Shiva has already started dwelling in my thought and soul. We must interpret this line that the *light of wisdom* is full in my soul. It does not refer to *idol worship*.

Saint Thirumoolar also says that soul is embodiment of Lord Shiva. (*Seevan sivalingam*) So the human soul is nothing but an illumined light.

As true followers of path of wisdom you must conquer death and make this body permanent so that the soul will stay for many more years. This is how we must attain the stage of self-realization (Athmanuboothi).

People must avoid unnecessary arguments and start thinking (contemplate). Thinking again and again, they must attain perennial life (*Maranamilla peruvaazhvu*) with the guidance of realized souls.

We are born with this body and must also transform ourselves whole-heartedly in our mind. Then only one becomes a great soul (*Maha Atma*). They are the ones who live everlasting life without end. This is the purpose of our birth in this world.

Embodiment of happy souls! Such a perennial life is in your hands!

Chapter – 2 God

Who is God (*Aandavan*)? One who rules us and then converts us into God. People call him by various names. All of them refer to one who is all-powerful basic root. Moreover, He is omnipresent – He is present in the pillar and even in the dust. He is present everywhere!

God is beyond the human minds, speech and body. Then how can we think about Him? How can we explain His nature? Can we feel Him with the help of our body? Can we see him?

Philosophers explain the nature of God depending on their limited knowledge and logical approach. How can we explain the unlimited brilliance of God with the limited knowledge acquired by us?

However, the answer to the question “*Can we see God?*” is: YES, we can.

The great saints have already defined the nature of God. *He is beyond our mind, speech and the body.* The answer to the question lies in the definition given above.

He is beyond human mind – so we must conquer our mind, that is, our mind must be quiescent. A saint warns that God is not available to one who does not quieten his mind. A saint has aptly beseeched the God, “Bless those who can’t kill their minds”. Secondly, He is beyond speech so we must keep our mouth shut and practise silence. As another saint said, “Silence is the end of wisdom”.

Thirdly, He is beyond the feelings of five senses. Feeling should not affect us. “Live like a dead person” as said by another saint. Now we have got the answer to the question.

The mind should be dead, speechless (silent) and the body must become senseless like dead wood.

If we reach the above mentioned three states, we can see God dwelling within our body.

God is beyond mind, word and senses. If the mind works, mouth speaks and body feels the senses, God goes far away from us because we will not be able to realize him. In short, we can realize God, speak to Him and see Him inside us if we have conquered our mind, word and deed. This is the secret of self-realization, that is, seeing God dwelling in us. This is a succinct truth about God.

Is it possible? Yes, we praise those who have reached this state of mind as saints (*Siddharhal*) and wise persons (*Jnanihal*). Those *Siddharhal* and *Jnanihal* had a vision of God and enjoyed chatting with Him and attained the state of Sat (truth), Chit (consciousness), and Ananda (bliss); when we put them together as one expression it is “Satchidanandam”. They found that God dwells in a small place, a shrine, which they referred to as “Thiruchitrambalam”.

God dwells in your body. First of all, you realize this by looking within you. The Tamil word (*Kadavul*) means “travel inside”. As He is omnipresent, He exists everywhere even inside every one of us.

In Tamil, “paar” means *the earth* when used as a noun, and as a verb it means *see*. Moreover, the earth as a globe, rotates itself without any axis. Likewise, our eye-ball moves around but it is not attached to any axis. So the saints said: see what is inside you, which resembles the axis-less earth.

The macrocosm (*Paramathma*) is also present as a minute atom in our soul (*Jeevatma*) One who realizes this will become the enlightened soul (self-realization). Such a person is, in truth, man, a human being.

Here is an incident which happened in the life of Vallalar Swamigal. Once Vallalar went to Thiruvotriyur temple located at a suburb of Chennai in Tamilnadu, India. In front of the temple a man was sitting naked. He was passing comments on passers-by as “a bullock is going”, “a fox is going” or “a snake is going” and so on. When he saw Vallalar coming along, immediately he commented “A great virtuous man is coming”, felt ashamed and covered his bare body with his hands. The man recognized Vallalar as embodiment of love and pointed out that he was “a man”.

Then who are we? We must have a self-analysis to understand our status.

We must become human beings. Then we will get self-realization. Afterwards, God will bless us unconditionally.

This book is about wisdom. The research is about what is inside us. When God is present everywhere, inside and outside, where can we see him in this far and wide world? We can see Him and feel His presence anywhere in this world. How is it possible? There is a way to reach Him.

A saint aptly said that “you are given human body according to your past actions in the previous birth”. One is born according to his past actions, enjoys, suffers and is frequently troubled. If one wants to escape from the bondage of birth and death cycle, he must get relieved from past actions; and the only way is “Surrender to God” (*Saranagathi*). It means “God is the only source of solace to get freedom from birth and death cycle”. According to the level of one’s surrendering quality to God, he will get guidance from a true *Guru* (religious teacher). This self-realized guru alone will deliver him to the God.

Today there are so many people who have started thinking and seeking the help of God. It is a good sign. However, the common man worships human beings as God and prays to various deities without realizing the true nature of God. Instead of following the guidelines given by the self-realized saints, people start worshipping them as God. This is also a sign of foolishness.

There are fans of film actors, who worship the chosen actor as guide and even God. Moreover, we see the followers of a leader of the political party worship the leader as God. Likewise, we find a saint in every town and hermitage (*Ashramam*), and each one has his blind followers. There is no difference between the followers of such leaders, and the followers of these hermits.

We must realize that the Omniscient and Omnipotent God dwells in us and act accordingly. Instead of following the preaching and guidance offered by those realized souls, we start worshipping them. The great saints are there to guide us in the right path. Follow their teachings, never make them Godheads.

Wherever possible, many Gods have been created. What happened to the reasoning capacity of human being? One who preaches about reasoning and atheism, later on becomes God and is worshipped, when he is dead and gone. People build a tomb and start worshipping him as a God. Where is the solution for such ignorant people?

There was a person who regularly attended Vallalar's preachings, made a small doll which looked like Vallalar, and took it to him thinking that Vallalar will appreciate his art and devotion. Unexpectedly, Vallalar broke it by throwing the idol on the floor. He said, "I am trying to make this perishing body into a brilliant golden form, but you have made it a body of mud."

Moreover, Vallalar also added: *I showed a simple, easy way to realize God and make all people live a glorious everlasting life. You have not listened to me and followed what I told you; instead, you have made me God. Is there any other folly which is more stupid than this?* These are the most precious words of Vallalar. This is the most important message we have to learn from his words. Let us take an example. A student will become the best only when he learns the lessons taught by the teacher. Instead, if he praises the teacher without learning the lessons, will he get promoted to the higher class? Likewise, many people join to create new gods today. God alone can save even these ignorant people.

Then why are there so many temples? Only saints (*siddharhal*) and great souls (*Mahaangal*) caused them to be built and then blessed the people by staying inside the temples. No saint (*siddhar*) has identified himself as so and so. They built shrines and temples and made them dwelling places of God. They blessed the people with the support of divine guidance.

One who identifies himself as a particular person is egoistic. Ego is one of three impurities which forbid God from manifesting himself to such a person.

Temples are meant for children and even for beginners. When they visit temples and worship God, they become better persons with some true knowledge about God. As a result, they realize that the body is the temple and the soul (*seevan*) is none other than God (*Sivan*).

There is no use in saying names of God throughout our lives if we do not realize the true nature of God.

Man is born, grows up to become a man and has a family and earns wealth. When he grows in the material world, his spiritual knowledge is still stagnant as he circum-ambulates the shrines within the temple, with no further progress towards the enlightenment of soul (*seevan*).

What do we mean by a temple? Who is God? Is it Siva, Parvathi or Murugan? There are so many different names for God. You need not get confused, when the saints have blessed us with so many treatises on spiritualism through the ages, they have already become enlightened souls and started showing the way for our spiritual growth. We must also aim at self-realization and attain the feet of God through total surrender (*saranagathi*) to Him.

We may start our spiritual journey with any type of worship but we must see that it culminates in the realization that there is only one God who is the supreme spiritual guide, and the end is none other than achievement of self-knowledge.

Pattinathar proclaimed: *God is only one. Believe in the omnipresence of Him.* This is the main message for human mind.

God dwells in us and the saints have explained how he lives in us. Vallalar Swamigal aptly defined God as "Arut Perum Jyothi" in his epigrammatic style, Ramalinga Swamigal (*swamigal* – a single person is

given respectful plural suffix, as permitted in Tamil grammar). Vallalar briefly says that God is embodiment of divine grace, omnipresent and reveals himself in the form of everlasting light.

Most of the saints have addressed God as “Jyothi” and “Sudar” both of which refer to the brilliant nature of God. Furthermore, Jesus Christ said: God (Devan) is present in the form of light and you can see Him through the path of light.

All religions mention that God is light which leads us from darkness to reach our goal. All religions assert that God is one. Why should people be confused about this concept?

Service to devotees, providing food to the poor, helping the needy are there to make us qualified to realize God. These are only *means* to make us broad-minded and experience universal love for fellow beings.

These activities will help you relieve you from the sins (*papangal*) committed in the previous births. These will absolve us from our sins and make us better souls. We will be blessed then.

Sundarar, one of the four saints who sang holy songs (*Thevaram*) in Tamil, said that he was the humble servant of devotees of God. This is the supreme form of humility. How much devotion he had for Lord Siva and his devotees! Likewise, all saints focused their teachings on the same concept. The nature of saints can be summarised as follows. **A saint is one who is filled with unconditional love, pity, refined behaviour, humility, and devotion to God.**

People of all nations worship and sing in praise of the same omnipotent God. There cannot be difference in their divine experience and preaching. All saints focused their words and activities on the path of love. “Love all” is the essence of their teaching. They lived in different geographical regions and spoke different languages. But their goal was one – to reach the only God without considering the regional or religious differences. So, ignoring the differences, let us aim at the joyful state of becoming one with God.

Chapter – 3 Ethical code of conduct (neethi-neri-olukkam)

A Spiritual person has to cross many stages before becoming an enlightened one. He must become a broad-minded human being and then realize the nature of God – omnipotence, omnipresence and the embodiment of light – beyond any doubt. Furthermore, it is essential for a spiritual person to understand clearly that the same God, with all such qualities, exists in his soul too.

Every spiritual person must aim at achieving everlasting life without end (*maranamilla peruvazhvu*) during the current birth itself.

So many saints have reiterated that it is rare to be born as humans but we have read it but never took it seriously and forgot to realize its importance.

Those who have studied Vedas and puranas (religious texts) have kept their spiritual knowledge in the memory, but never practised what those treatises preached, as a saint (*siddhar*) had pointed out with great concern for them.

Various Vedas, puranas, religious epics, Upanishads, numerous songs of self-realized saints (*Siddhars*) are available in Hindu scriptures. Must we read all of them? Well, all these books need not be learnt and understood by a human being. Understand that all of them treat the same theme –the relationship between man and God. Then why should we learn all of them? It is enough for a man to choose one, read it thoroughly, understand the deeper meaning and practise the message in his life.

Then what is the need for so many religious texts? There are millions of human minds and they think differently. They act independently and uniquely. All saints have written or sung these texts and given their messages with an intention of making the human beings read any one of them and think about their own self-realization. Even *Arulmani Malai* (A Jewel-garland of Divine Grace) and *Kanmani Malai* (A Garland of Divine Vision) have been written with the same intention.

From time to time, these saints were born, and they came to us in order to save us from the cycle of births and deaths. They simplified the meaning of extremely difficult texts like Vedas and Upanishads and rendered them in the form of puranas, religious epics and other simplified treatises in order to make man understand the significance of birth as human being, to live longer and to find an easy way for the confused human to reach God. Ramalinga Swamikal who lived in the 19th century taught us in simple words the nature of God and he showed the path to be followed in order to realize Him.

What is the reason for such a condition? Mankind is ignorant of the fruits of actions – joy and sorrow – they enjoy in the bonded life. Saints who are embodiment of love for fellow human beings became anxious and showed the path of salvation to human beings. Their interest in other fellowmen depended on the principle, “all people in the world should also reach the blissful state which the saints have already reached”.

If a man is guided by a wise saint, the follower will also sympathise with other fellow beings and share his divine experience with others. He starts thinking about the easiest way to attain Godhead and then preaches the way to get relief from the fruits of action. This is the nature of wise saints. That is why, from time to time, so many wise souls have been born in this country through the ages – They are still there to guide others.

However, many people want to have wisdom about man and God, but only a few succeed. What is the reason? This is because most of them do not know and understand the state of wisdom, and so they are stranded at half-way through. Moreover, bogus saints who do not understand the great path of reaching sainthood, are also taken for granted as great saints. This happens because of the ignorant people who are already affected by the fruits of their past actions.

For example, children go to nursery, primary and then secondary school. After this, they go to college and then do research, step by step. Likewise, people should start with basic knowledge obtained from qualified wise teachers and be guided by them to higher levels and finally reach the supreme state of wisdom. There are four stages to reach the pinnacle of wise experience: wise devotion (*Jnana sariyai*), wise action (*Jnana kiriyai*), wise yoga state (*Jnana yogam*) and wisdom through wisdom (*Jnanaththil Jnanam*)

Thus, one who achieves wisdom crossing all these spiritual levels, is a true saint. Such a person has conquered death. He will not suffer from birth and death hereafter. He lives in the form of light leading an everlasting life. We must follow such saints only.

On the other hand, one who has not undergone even the nursery education in the state of wisdom claims that he is a great saint. Without attaining the enlightened state, many people cheat themselves and others by proclaiming that they have achieved sainthood. As a result, they lead a sinful life. If that is the condition of saints with imperfect knowledge, what will happen to the common man who follows them?

Such people, because of their ignorance, accept the deceitful saints. Thirumoolar describes the nature of such bogus saints and their followers as:

The blind person leads the blind followers and finally both of them fall into the pit of everlasting darkness.

Oh, true devotees, you are the souls born to experience happiness. Learn about the true nature of man and God through true methodology, intuition and divine experience and then surrender to the feet of God. One who can show the true path of divinity alone can be a great saint to be followed. Such guidance has been given by great saints already.

What are required to become such an enlightened soul? There are three things: understanding what is morally right and what is not; code of conduct to understand and follow the first condition and choose a disciplined approach to reach the goal.

One who follows the disciplined path of justice becomes a man possessing true knowledge about life, man and God. When he follows such a code of conduct, he becomes a highly cultured man. As a disciplined person, he turns into one who loves all living beings and thus emerges as the embodiment of love.

These three qualities will help him to become an excellent person with universal love and lead him eventually to a stage where he will feel that all which have been created by God deserve to be loved equally.

Vallalar says : *unconditional universal love towards all beings is the key to enter the heaven*. All saints have given the same message. Love all. "If one slaps you on the cheek, show him the other cheek". *Love is the fountain of joy. All of us are children of God*. All saints from various countries have passed the same message to us in different languages. If divine experience is one and the same, Gods cannot be many. Then we should also try to become one with the same God.

Those who have acquired limited knowledge ignorantly claim that they are superior to others and proclaim that their religion is far superior to other world religions. They also claim that their race is much superior to other races. All these people babble because of the limited knowledge their spiritual teachers possess. This is what is happening today.

In the past there were many systematic religious beliefs (*Sanaadhana Dharmam*) practised throughout the world, but owing to tribal and religious segregation, people have bickered and started quarrels and violent activities. This was caused due to the sheer ignorance of people. They start following the words of others blindly and end up in sea of troubles and suffering.

Our life will be joyful without any contradiction if we follow the principles of truth, true power and nature. We must practise love, compassion, joy and other good principles in our life to lead a peaceful life.

When we love all beings, there would not be any enemy. Religious, caste- based and racial differences will disappear.

Universal love and true knowledge will emerge when one leads a life with all the virtuous qualities. As a result, we will get in touch with saints and finally God himself will come to us as a spiritual guide.

Forget the past. If you decide to live a clean life from this moment onwards, the supreme guide will bless you. There are so many treatises available today on spiritual knowledge leading to wisdom and sainthood. Likewise, there are many saints waiting for more followers. Men can become wise if they learn and understand any one of the books leading to spirituality. Why have they not become spiritually wise?

This is because they have never practised the prescribed code of conduct or interested in spiritual path. One cannot get spirituality and wisdom unless he practises these three qualities – fair mind, the right path and recommended code of conduct. One who do not practise prescribed code of conduct will never become wise; one who does not practise universal love, cannot realize divine grace. Moreover, immoral person can never realize God. A great saint said : *penalty for sins is death*. Hence, a person who wants to overcome death, must not resort to sinful activities.

One who dies, is a sinned soul. One who has conquered death is the saint. If we want to live a deathless life, we must follow the path showed by such saints. It is wise to accept such saints as true spiritual teachers and follow the path of wisdom showed by those saints. One such spiritual guide is Vallalar Swamigal. He has transformed his human body into a body of spiritual light and attained the greatest position. He is the saint whom I worship and follow; he is my spiritual guide (Guru).

One who leads a disciplined life will become wise. One must abstain from smoking, eating meat and drinking alcohol. Five deadly sins to be avoided are: uttering falsehood, stealing/robbing, killing other living beings, intoxicating drinks and insatiable sexual thirst.

Uttering falsehood is acceptable if it is going to benefit others. Thiruvalluvar also says: *if it is harmless and beneficial to others, falsehood is an acceptable conduct*. Our ancestors have said: *you may tell even a thousand lies in order to solemnize a marriage*.

Let me give a wonderful episode which happened in my life. The wife of a friend of mine, came with tears in her eyes. She complained that her husband was all right so long as he was in my spiritual company. He does not meet the teacher nowadays. He has fallen into bad company and started spending all his earnings on alcoholic drinks. He picks up quarrels and becomes violent and beat us. He demands money from me for his unworthy expenses. He spends all his earnings drinking alcohol. We undergo unbearable sufferings. She pleaded that only I can solve this problem and make him a good person again.

I promised her to do something to set the matter right. However, I was not able to find a solution instantly. I resorted to the guidance of Vallalar and offered my prayers. He guided me. As a result, I told a lie to the friend. I went to his work spot and told him only one lie. He stopped drinking and shunned bad company and became a devout member in the Vallalar group. This incident happened about ten years ago. As he became a disciplined person, his family is happy now and greets me with gratitude.

The friend, afterwards, understood that I had told a lie. However, he realized his mistake and became a thankful friend. So, if it is beneficial to others, we can tell a lie.

Avviyar, a great Tamil saint said: *learn about even stealing but forget it and never practise*. This strategy will help us to understand the wicked plans of others and escape from their traps. As it yields bad results, she says that one must forget it and never resort to it again. We must never grab another's property.

Killing living beings is the next sin to be shunned. If we consider and treat other lives as our own life, then we will never think of killing even an ant. When sympathy for others becomes one's nature, universal love and non- violence will spring in the heart of a human being. This is the essence of spirituality.

However, a criminal is punished with death sentence while a nation wages war with an enemy nation and kills thousands of people. One who fights bravely and destroys the enemies is honoured with awards and gifts. Thus, killing has different definitions according to the context and situation.

Avarice can be classified as three types: extreme desire for earthly property, extramarital relationship with women and gold. *Mahabharatham* tells the story of wicked people who coveted his relatives' property (kingdom / territory). *Ramayanam* explains the fall of a great king when he coveted another man's wife. We read them understand them but find it hard to practise them. Because we are already imbued with these qualities. A monk is one who has relinquished these three types of desire. Salvation is meant for only a monk who has given up all the desires. The best examples of monks are: Buddha and Pattinathar. Very great personalities!

Desire can be channelized and people can live peacefully by following the code of conduct. Becoming one with God must be a genuine desire for all people. Enlightened souls (*siddhargal*) say that desire to reach God must also be shunned eventually. That is the final stage of liberation.

Among the five deadly sins, stealing, killing and all sorts of desire can be justified at one point of time or other. On the other hand, drinking alcohol is never justifiable. Of all these five sins, having intoxicating drinks (boozing) is the deadliest of all.

An intoxicated person loses his senses and starts doing atrocities. He will never hesitate to do any kind of violent activities. As a result, the drunkard becomes stupid, and one who manufactures intoxicating drinks is a traitor ruining human race.

The first and foremost enemy to the state of spiritualism is drinking habit, which affects the reasoning sense, spoiling the health and eventually leads him to death.

A spiritualist must also shun smoking and eating flesh and other non-vegetarian foods. A smoker spoils his health, falls sick and dies soon. Flesh eating according to scientists will lead one to dangerous disease like cancer and finally it would result in death.

Intoxicating drink or drug abuse terribly affects the body. Man must abandon addiction to any intoxication, if he wants to have divine experience. Human beings have started eating fish, egg and flesh of hen, goat, sheep, cattle and all types of creatures and birds. They are none other than animals with killer instinct.

Dead bodies are buried or cremated in the cremation ground. But human beings send the flesh of animals and birds into the crematorium called stomach. They keep hens, goats and sheep and tend them carefully as their own kids, and then sell them to the butchers or eat their flesh themselves. A non-violent person cannot tolerate this cruelty to animals. I shudder to think about this act!

Those saints who were pained to see the crops suffering due to lack of water supply, will die instantly if they happen to see such cruel acts.

There is a speaker who lectures about devotion to God (spirituality) on the television. His breakfast menu contains "Idlis" (steamed rice cakes) and chicken. What a shame!

From time to time, saints and wise people have repeatedly preached that we must love all living beings. All these messages have fallen on deaf ears. We are greatly shocked when we come to know that many so-called saints, monks and wise people have resorted to smoking, drinking and eating meat. Those who are supposed to patronize our culture are ruining it. They should be severely warned.

An advocate whom I meet very frequently is a smoker. When I asked him whether it was a good habit, he replied that his master (Guru) also smoked cigarettes and asked what was wrong if a disciple smoked? I asked him to allow his son to smoke cigarettes. When you smoke, why don't you allow your son to smoke? His master (Guru) died of cancer later on. The advocate still smokes. How can we correct them? God alone can save him.

One who is a spiritual teacher (Guru) is misguiding his followers. A few of the followers might be well off but most of them are ruined by the misguiding teacher as in the case of the advocate. A spiritual leader must follow the code of conduct and be a benevolent person. A disciple is ruined by a bad spiritual teacher. If the teacher does not set an example as a disciplined person, how can we expect his disciple to be good?

There are some spiritual leaders (Guru) who cannot control their thirst for worldly pleasures, leave their monastery and the position as the head, without any self-control. Their followers go in search of those confused teachers and with great difficulty bring them back to austere monastic life. What can we say about such leaders and their followers?

Now let us have an example of a great saint. It is Lord Shri Ramakrishna, a saint, nonpareil. Once a woman came to the saint and complained that her son, a child, ate too much of sweet. She requested Shri Ramakrishna to advise him. The saint advised her to come back after a week. The saint asked the mother to keep the child on her lap and advised the child to listen to his mother and not to eat too much of sweets. The mother retorted at once that he could have given the advice previous week itself. The saint quietly replied that he was eating sweets until last week and that he had already stopped taking sweets. That was why he decided to preach what he could practise. Saint Ramakrishna is a remarkable teacher who stood as an illustrious example for other followers.

Tholkappiar says: *Sacred words (manthiram) are those uttered by well-read saints who have complete knowledge about the universe.* When such enlightened souls bless others, their wishes will be carried out without fail. The blind cannot lead other blind persons. One leader of a monastery left all his honour, position and responsibility of a head. Another one would not hesitate to do any wicked deed in order to become head of the monastery. Yet another ego centric saint asked his follower to sing in praise of him. Another saint, a chain smoker did not care for his followers. There are heads of various monasteries that were established for their community, and different religious sects. There are many leaders like them without following the path of wisdom. These leaders are not going to become enlightened and their followers will also be in darkness without the guiding light of wisdom.

Saint Ramakrishna lived such an unblemished life. His life is the message for us. He was such a greatly enlightened personality.

Ramalinga Swamikal is one who practised all virtues of an enlightened soul every moment. He preached and practised the principles and attained endless life without death. He always insisted: *Don't praise me; praise the God and worship Him.* Thus, he guided everyone into such a meaningful life.

Mahatma Gandhi, Father of our nation, fought for Independence of India through non-violent methods. His only weapon non-violence was supported by his honest thoughts, words and deeds. Now he is a world-renowned leader, a symbol of truth and honesty.

Kamarajar, former chief minister of Tamil Nadu, was a great leader who followed the path of action and social service even though he was not a formally educated person. However, he was a well-read man who understood problems of the society through his experience and visionary dreams for the future of Tamil Nadu. He introduced mid-day meals scheme for school children, especially for the poor children who greatly benefited through formal education because of the unique scheme. The welfare of the people was his primary concern and he was not after wealth, power or position. He sacrificed his life for the well-

being of the general public. He was never after position, and was ready to relinquish all positions any time.

Let us follow these great souls in the field of politics and spirituality and honour them by following their principles in order to get wisdom.

A person is good only when he acquires and possesses good qualities. Our spiritual leader must also be a good administrator with noble qualities and must be blessed by God. We will become enlightened souls only when we follow such leaders who are embodiment of all virtues including the universal love.

Another important message for you. We have already learnt about food habits of animal kingdom in our primary school. These animals are broadly categorized into two, herbivorous and carnivorous. Let us think about it. Carnivores have got mouth, teeth and intestines specially designed for eating flesh. On the other hand, herbivores have been provided with a different type of mouth, teeth and long intestines suitable for eating plants, roots and fruits. Have we not learnt about the differences already?

Mouth, teeth and intestine of human beings are designed for vegetarian foods. God has created us only to eat vegetarian food. One who eats non-vegetarian foods, violates this principle of nature, ruins his health and faces premature death. Moreover, generally speaking, carnivorous animals are threats to human beings, but herbivores are friendly and helpful to us.

Should we not understand from the above argument that we must shun eating animal flesh? Only vegetarian food is suitable for humans and it is really a great wonder that we are provided with plenty of plants and fruits for our survival.

The behaviour of flesh-eating humans highly resemble that of carnivorous animals. Just like herbivores which are peace loving, vegetarians are also quiet and peace-loving, and guide others to live a meaningful life. Flesh-eating humans resort to such cruel eating habits, because of their uncontrollable desire for meat. Rotten fellows!

So many devotees offer food to the needy in temples and monasteries. This is known as “Maheswara pooja” (Worshipping Lord Shiva through offering food to the needy). What is the reason for naming the offer of food as Maheshwara Pooja? A spiritualist understands the meaning. If one does not know this, he must learn more and more about spiritualism. What we have learnt in this world is just a handful when compared with what is not yet known, which is, as vast as the earth. We must understand this.

We must realize that the present birth as a human being is a golden opportunity given to us. Moreover, we must avoid bad company and bad habits and understand the qualities of a wise spiritual person. These steps will help us to conquer death and God will lead us to the blissful state.

Avviyar says, “one who helps others is superior to one who does not help others.” Thiruvalluvar says. “Virtuous life leads to blissful state.” And that is why it is considered far above superior to the life of human beings. The same ancient saint assures us: *one who does not kill and avoid eating flesh is worshipped by all lives. All creatures will join their hands together and worship him who has never taken away life nor eaten flesh.*

This book, being a spiritual treatise, does not cover any of the caste system practised in this world. 'Varnashrama' was introduced based on the occupations and professions practised by men and women. Today we witness hundreds of castes, one claiming that it is superior to other castes. These were created and practised by those who had selfish motives.

God has designated only two types of his creations: Male and Female. Plant and animal kingdom have only two types: Male and Female.

A community consists of people doing different jobs. The names of different occupations were attributed to those people who were engaged in particular jobs. Later on, these job names have become caste titles. Among them can we grade a few groups as the highest or the lowest? All are necessary to form a community. All must live in harmony because everyone contributes to fulfil the needs of the society. All are equal. In order for the human race to live in prosperity happily, we must realize that we are children of God. One person does the farming another one sells goods yet another man washes clothes and irons them. Another one administers the country. Every man performs a particular type of duty. We need the help of all people and their services. We should never think of another person as inferior to us. There are differences only in the positions related to various jobs, and differences in the standard of living and even in the knowledge level. We can differentiate the people as the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the good and the wicked. This kind of differentiation leads us to two types – soul (*Jeevatma*) and God (*Paramatma*). The soul has no sex difference. However, man goes to lower level according to their segregating tendencies. Man has two sexes – male and female when he has human form. We need not think about them. We must aim at higher level.

When we understand the soul has no sex difference, we get the knowledge about the soul and this stage will lead us to godhead (divine nature). When we say that there is no sex difference among the souls, we must realize that there is no difference like caste or creed. We must not think of any caste system.

Then, is there not good and bad in thought, word and deed? Yes, there is. We must realize what is good and follow the path of righteousness in order to enjoy the divine grace. Complete knowledge is the state of wisdom. Such a wise person treats all human alike. He advises the ignorant people that path of universal love is the right route to attain godliness. He says: *Namasivayam is the path of righteousness*. The term "Namasivayam" can be interpreted as follows: Our body is made up of five elements – earth, air, water, fire and ether. We must exist and act within the scope of these five elements and go beyond with the aim of reaching the all-pervading, God. There are only two levels of human beings from the point of view of spiritualism — The wise and the unwise. When we think of higher level, all human beings fall under one of these categories.

There will be rarely a wise, saintly spiritual person in a population of one crore. All others fall under the other category. A saint is a self-realized person but the unwise grope in ignorance. The wise have conquered the death, but the other group is bound by fruits of action, and as a result, suffer and die.

So many people are trying to become the wise saints. But they need a suitable guide. If they get a qualified and wise person, they are fortunate. In addition, they must practise sincerely what is preached to them. Then only they will become the wise. Nobody can achieve success without unflinching determination. Those who aspire for sainthood must practise sincerely what is preached to them in order to reach the goal.

Everyone in this world is eligible to attempt sincerely and become enlightened through divine grace. The payment depends on the amount of work we put in. This is divine law. Good actions bear beneficial fruits and the bad ones lead to sinning. Nobody is exempt from this law. Our future birth is decided only by our actions in this life. These actions are the root cause (our previous actions) for all our sufferings and pleasures of life. All our pleasant and sorrowful experiences are results of our previous actions. It is ignorance to put the blame on others.

As a saint says, “the body is given to you as a result of your two types of action – good and bad ones”. We must realize that actions in the previous birth have led to the present birth. You must exhaust the fruits of action in order to attain the godhead.

Good and bad actions are classified under three types: *prarabtham*, *agamyam* and *sanchitham*. One who consults the universal accountant (Chitraguptan) and nullifies his account once for all becomes a wise person. This must be carried out before death knocks at your door.

You must have learnt the story of Markandeyan who surrendered to God, and escaped from the God of death.

You must catch God through unflinching faith in Him. When you think of only God who resides in you, by surrendering yourself to the will of God, then you can achieve the goal of catching and reaching God. Understand that God is trapped in this body and soul; he is in the form of mind, and knowledge. We must protect our body and clasp the soul; we must realize the God through disciplined mind.

Soon He will be under our control and we will become enlightened. This is the greatest achievement to be realized by man and nothing else.

Avvaiyar, the ancient saint, has divided people into two categories of caste. She does not talk about sexual difference. She says that those who perform charitable acts are superior human beings and those who refuse to do this are inferior persons. This is what moral code says.

Identifying a person with caste, is immoral act for a spiritualist. Casteism spoils man, intoxicates him towards hatred becomes a stupid person with brutal behaviour.

It is mentioned in the beginning of this chapter that there is a caste and it does not refer to the caste system prevalent in the society. A person with divine knowledge never thinks about different castes but treats all people equally. There is a saying “An ascetic considers even the king as an ordinary person” Of course, the king is an ordinary person like others in the eyes of a monk.

Only rulers of the countries go to ascetics to make obeisance to them. The saints and monks never go to rulers for any favour, nor do they surrender to them. These saints are devotees of God, who pray and do service to God and humanity. Therefore, they do not care about worldly things.

The great poet Bharathiar proclaims in his *Viduthalai Kummi*, his folk song on women’s liberation: “Let us create a caste of divinity”. He advises women to depend on God to get over the ocean of birth and deaths. Bharathiar called those aspiring women as of “Divine caste”. After witnessing all atrocities in the world, he proclaimed that there was no caste and was terribly upset by the wicked practices of caste among humans.

Tamil word, *saadhi*, as a verbal form, means “achieve your goal”. It means that you must take steps to reach the highest level by deeply realizing the nature of God. It also means “you must achieve your aim in life”. You can do it”. The greatest achievement in life is realizing God. Of course, God will bless you. Avvaiyar refers to this state that we can achieve it through charity and austerity. This is the state of wisdom we rarely find. One who leads such austere life will realize the deathlessness state of life.

When you admit the children in the school the first question the school authorities ask is “your caste”. What a shame! Rulers of the country encourage the caste system through privileges offered to different

categories of caste. As a result, nobody wants to be in the 'high caste'. Many people claim that they belong to 'low caste' and demand more benefits from the government. It is a pathetic paradox that one who blames other high caste people for putting him in low caste category, claims many privileges and rights from the government stating that he belongs to a low caste.

Here let us use the wise words of Jesus Christ – “Oh father! They do not know what they are doing; forgive them for their sins”.

Being the children of God, we are the highest form of living beings. We, the humans, are microcosm of the huge macrocosm of the divinity (paramatma). If we realize this basic truth, there is no question of belonging to high or low caste for any human being.

All saints have uniformly said that we all belong to the same category of human beings, and the same race of mankind. Consider this line of thought.

All problems arise because of foolish human beings. A disciple of Jesus became a traitor because of his greed for thirty silver coins. His unworthy desire resulted in sad ending. Socrates, a Greek philosopher, was poisoned to death because government of his time was so foolish that the rulers did not understand the greatness of Socrates.

We read about similar incidents frequently. What have we learnt from them? We applaud the remarkable achievements of people and stop there. We read about them, but never think about the ideas given in the books and try to implement them in our lives.

A person has the sixth sense only when he thinks and understands the highest idea in life. When I published my book, “Kanmani Maalai” (A Precious Garland of Pupil in the Eye *or*, A Precious Garland of Divine Vision) every reader praised that the style was simple with fluency and ease. It terribly pained me because they did not understand the motive behind the writing. The purpose of writing the book was to make the readers realize the secret of wisdom to be achieved in everyone’s life.

Not even one-fourth of the readers have understood the spirit of the book. Many readers followed various other spiritual teachers and argued from their own point of view went away dissatisfied. I always say that all spiritual teachers try to guide us in the right path of wisdom. I often quote their teachings and acknowledge their stand point too.

A spiritual teacher never aspired for fame and popularity. The aim in their preaching was to share their spiritual experience with other people and guide them to reach the same state of spiritual level and experience the blissful state of divinity. They never ask us to worship them. They called themselves as a devotee of God and hide their true nature of divinity. Their aim was to make people wise and be better human beings. They never attempted to blow their own trumpets.

Let me summarize my objectives. All must understand what I have realized and achieve their goals by realizing the secrets of spiritualism.

Fair mindedness (*Needhi*), code of conduct (*Neri*), and perfect propriety (*Ozhukkam*) are the corner-stones leading to the building called spiritual experience. With these virtuous qualities one must be led to practise universal love. This is the crown of one’s achievements. One who tries to find an answer to “Who am I?”, will realize that a soul (*Jeevatma*) is a minute particle in the vast universal space, God (*Paramaatma*).

One who feels the presence of God everywhere will start feeling pity for all living beings. Even the crops suffering without water in the field will arouse pity in him. Such a human being is filled with pity and

sympathy for others, practising universal love (*Jeevakaarunyam*). He realizes that all pervading God is present in each soul. Such a wise person experiences the supreme bliss and thus conquers death.

Don't fight for upholding the caste system and die miserably. Let us aim at the purified nature of soul and practise universal love to become a part of God.

Human race is only one and the God also is only one. Thiruvalluvar says: *those who practise universal love without harming any living organism are austere virtuous persons.*

5. There is a religion madham undu

There are so many religions in this world. Each follower claims that his religion is the best one to be followed. Among them, which group of followers tells the truth? In fact, which religion is the greatest?

Let us think about this. Buddhism was established after Buddha left the world. The earth existed even before the birth of Buddha.

Christianity became a religion when the followers of Christ established a religion named after the founder. The earth existed even before the birth of Christ. Islam was established by Mohamed nabi. The earth existed before him and people followed a kind of religion even before these founders and followers established new religions.

Hindu religion (Hinduism) was not founded by any saint or a group of saints. Apart from the abovementioned religions, there are other religions in the world. However, Hindu religion was not established on a day or by a group of followers just like other founded religions.

It evolved out of the thoughts and ideals offered to the people of ancient times by saints, sages and philosophers who lived thousands of years ago. It is the moral path of life established modified and codified by saints who lived in various regions from time to time.

Therefore, instead of calling it “Hinduism” we can apply name it as moral code of conduct to enlighten the soul (Dharma / Sanadhana Dharma). It is universal in nature and so we cannot call it a religion. The word “religion” will not cover the wide scope of universal code of conduct.

The “Sanadhana Dharma” was practised throughout the world by people of different region and ages. It was aimed that human race must be cleansed off their impurities by following the path of virtue. Historians fix the date of “Ramayanam” around 14,000 years from today. You can conclude that the Hindu Dharma existed even before the date of Ramayana. The origin and development of this moral path can be roughly fixed to the period when human race developed in the ancient times. *Sanadhana dharma* is not a founded religion.

Of all the founded religions, Buddhism is the oldest which must have been established about 5000 years ago. Christianity emerged about 2000 years before. The origin of Islam can be attributed to roughly a period before 1400 years. Now the question is: Buddha’s thoughts and religious concepts were propagated by his followers as Buddhism. What religion was followed by Buddha? Which code of righteousness made Buddha the enlightened soul? We must understand the root of Buddha’s teachings. The foundations for the path of righteous life was already laid by Buddha’s forefathers.

All founded religions have a name to identify their codes of conduct, but *Sanadhana dharma* (Hinduism) is an intricate complex religious and social system. General public would not know the origin of this spiritual, social and philosophical concept. That was why some saints would have named it as “Hinduism” or “Hindu Religion”. Hinduism cannot be considered as a religion. It is completely a different path of righteousness. Others criticise Hindu concepts because they are comparing it with other founded religions.

Hinduism was not founded by any one saint. It is a code of conduct practised for many thousands of years before the birth of all the founders of other religions. This is a common path of disciplined life to be followed by all human beings. Followers of other religions consider it as a religion followed by a group of people. It is this wrong conception about Hinduism which is a result of confused state of mind in the people.

All the wrong conceptions and practices about *religion* must be put to death. All religions were founded only to make human beings better persons, but those religions are used to destroy the human race. This is what we witness today.

I call upon the citizens of the world to forget the racial, religious, caste differences and live peacefully. Instead of practising universal brotherhood of man, caste system divides the people into groups. Religion spoils the humanitarian qualities in us. Man has been fighting with others in the name of religion. Sharing the water in the Cauvery river has become a serious issue because of the feeling of regionalism in the people of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Nationalism would have solved this issue when people think of themselves as Indians and become united under one flag.

The conflict between India and Pakistan arose when India was divided into two dominions in 1947, because of the religious differences. Before the partition, both Indians and Pakistanis lived in the same country as Indians. Before and after Independence, Hindu-Muslim conflict has taken thousands of lives including the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

The root-cause of all these conflicts is lack of true knowledge about nature of human beings, God and the universe. All segregations – political, religious and social – are due to ignorance. All differences must be understood and tolerated if the human race wants to survive.

We must understand the basic concept, *God is one*, which has been accepted in all religions. We must unite under this concept and understand we are all children of the same God. We must practise the religion of universal love and brotherhood.

“Love and treat others with kindness as you love yourself,” said a saint. Another saint addressed the audience as “Brothers and Sisters” in the world religious conference held in Chicago, USA. We have read about so many saints. Are we practising any of their teachings that they have told us to do?

People who claim that they practise their religion never follow the teaching of founders of those religions and religious leaders. Had they practised such noble ideals, the world would have become a garden of love.

Man has become crazy as he practises different religions. Neither does he follow the teachings of the saints nor understand the meaning of their message.

In Tamil, “Madham” means “religion”. In addition, the term has other meanings such as *arrogance, pride, rudeness* and even *craziness*. People are intoxicated with the religious feelings and behave without humanitarian, moderate attitude towards people practising other religions.

That is why Vallalar has rightly put that Tamil is a divine language with different contextual meanings for a single word. Humanitarian attitude is present only in those who live beyond the fetters of religion.

Thiru Arutprakasa Vallalar found unity in diverse religions and said that all religions were true. Only when people of the world unite they can practise “Sanmargam”. Vallalar proclaimed that it was the only path for survival of this world.

Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed Nabi and all other saints advised us to love all human beings. They did not ask his followers to propagate their teachings as only solution to problems of mankind. However, the followers established different religions out of sheer ignorance.

All saints and liberated souls have ascertained that “God is one”. The essence of their teachings is “Love all”. Neither did they advocate violence nor asked them to inflict pain or sufferings on others. In fact, all the saints have identified ignorance as the root of all evils.

Think and free yourselves from the fetters of religious bondage. Vallalar said: *one who practises any one religion is like a mad, ignorant monkey, creating problems for others*. Religious fanatics today prove this statement as true.

In India, there appeared several saints and spiritual guides who have taught us that all religions are true and that the service to mankind is the service to God. We must follow the teachings of such saints efforts to practise the path of love and service sincerely.

Thiru Arutprakasa Vallalar established “Sanmarga Sangam” in Vadalur near Neyveli and preached universal love for all living beings and practised *Anma Neya Orumaipadu*.

Sri Sathya Saibaba in Puttaparthi, Andhra Pradesh has established an ashram for all humans to practise *Sanadhana Dharma*, and showed us the path of love and selfless service to humanity. This is the essence of his teachings.

Sri Narayana Guru, in Kerala preached *Sanadhana Dharma* and eradicated the evils of casteism from the society. Quintessence of his teachings are: *Man must be united whatever their religion is and become good ; there is only one religion and one caste – that is religion of human goodness.*

Vallalar implored to God: *the devil called religion must not influence my way of life. When man is influenced by this devil, he becomes mad and acts like a devil. This causes suffering to everyone.*

A religion which divides humanity is not at all necessary today. We need not become religious fanatics and it is enough if we treat all human beings equally. Let us tolerate others and practise love for the mankind.

Casteism and religion are two major stumbling blocks in the path of divinity. These two impediments make man a brutal animal.

Today people read and appreciate all spiritual books. It is a progress in the attitude of the people.

People speak about humanitarianism and equality among the members of the society. But they do not practise what they preach on the stage. This is because of the ways of the world and government policies.

A couple belonging to two different castes is encouraged to get married and the government gives gifts and award. But when these couples send their children to school, the government rules force the parents to bring their children under a caste. Casteism and religion are necessary for a citizen to get education and later an employment. Is it a fair deal?

For example, a friend of mine married a girl belonging to another caste. The people in the village excommunicated them. They were not allowed to participate in any of the celebrations or even funerals. They have a daughter but no young man from their castes comes forward to marry her. The inter-caste marriage has resulted in problem for their children. Who is to be held responsible for such a sad condition?

Media display a variety of castes and sub sects of main caste when people advertise in the matrimonial columns. There are many castes and divisions and sub sects in caste system and religious denominations.

Conversion of religion was induced by caste system and crude customs of segregation. The rich and powerful, inflict mental agony and physical suffering on the poor in the name of caste and religion. That is why the conversion is taking place even today. Some conmen cheat the unemployed, collecting huge sum of money and do not render any employment and cheat them. The basis of all these atrocities is: ignorance, poverty and government policies.

We must eradicate caste differences and religious fanaticism. India has been a country practising democratic socialism, and people are expected to enjoy equal rights irrespective of their religion, caste or region. People live in the vast Indian subcontinent stretching from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. India is a unique country with a population of above 1000 millions (100 crores), belonging to more than 1000 castes speaking more than 50 languages with their variant dialects, their diverse food habits, cultural practices, dress regulations and social customs which vary from region to region. In spite of the diversity, the strength of India lies in its unified “Sanadhana dharma”, in the best sense of the expression.

Unity in diversity is the essence of Indian culture. Art and architecture of India have been essentially spiritual and symbolic. People all over the world appreciate our traditions and cultural practices and look up to India with awe and reverence. But we have not understood the significance of our traditions. It is a great pity! People belonging to scientifically and economically advanced nations realize that something is missing in their civilized life. They started searching for it and found peace of mind, the solace in spiritual practices of India.

It is not the Hindu religion they are looking for, but only the fairly designed code of conduct for a person in any station in life. This solution they found in *Sanadhana Dharma*.

The significance of Vedas was realized by us only when European scholars explained it. A Christian priest pointed out the spiritual richness of *Tiruvacakam*. Our yogic practices including meditation and penance were brought to light for the people of the world only through foreigners.

This is what Vallalar said about 150 years ago: *you will not listen to me now. Later on, some brothers from other countries will study and realize our wise spiritual practices and then they will tell us. Only then, you all will recognize the greatness of spiritualism.* How true the predictions made by Vallalar!

No doubt people have realized that spiritual wisdom is above the religious fervour. However, the human mind is bound by certain fetters forced on it. They are for example, casteism, religious restrictions and communal regulations. People must be unfettered from all these social evils. We need not care for the restrictions enforced by community or religious leaders. Let us listen to the voice of God. The government should enact some codes of conduct in order to instil such practices in people.

Most of the religions were founded, based on a group of saints. Hence the confusion caused by the religious differences and ignorance of people are responsible for violence and terrorism prevalent today.

People have started quarrelling and fighting over the superiority of their religions. This is purely due to pride and egoistic attitude of people.

Welfare and prosperity of the fellow beings are only possible when we completely root out casteism and religion and it requires humanitarian attitude and true guidance of wisdom.

Chapter 6 - Love

Love is God. The most powerful word in this world is – LOVE. It is love which is the basis of all activities in life. Mother is at the pinnacle of the state of love. For all living organisms, whether animals or human beings, mother is the symbol of love. As we say in Tamil, *there is no temple greater than mother on the earth.* Love showered by mother is non-pareil. Even the saint who has renounced the world cannot do away with his duties to his mother. One must love her and protect her. One who does not care for his mother is a useless, rotten and confused character.

A great saint has said: Life depends on love. Love leads us to spiritual greatness. Love lays the foundation for wisdom. Humility is acquired only through universal love.

Love is the key to all problems. Love conquers all. One who loves others will feel sympathy for fellow beings. As a result, he becomes a spiritually wise person and the God dwells in him.

King Paari, while spending some time in the jungle, saw a flowering creeper (*mullai*) stranded without a support for its growth. He left the chariot, which he used as conveyance, near the creeper to provide support for its growth. The king walked the distance to his palace. He is a symbolic representation of love.

Another Indian Emperor, Sibi Chakravarthi, was in his palace when a dove fell on his lap. An eagle came there claiming that the dove was his prey and food for the day. In order to save the dove which came to the king for refuge, Emperor Sibi cut some flesh from his thigh and gave it to the eagle. Thus he had protected the dove and at the same time provided food for the eagle, following the universal order and the eco-system. Emperor Sibi proved that he was a supreme human being, illustrating his love for all living organisms in the world.

Manu Murai Kanda Cholan, a great King of Thiruvavur, displayed the sense of fair mindedness and justice. Once the Chola prince was driving his chariot madly along the streets of the town, and accidentally killed a calf on the road. The Chola king had a big bell in front of his palace. The grieved person could request for justice, by ringing the bell. The mother of the slain calf came to the palace and rang the bell of justice. The king immediately ordered for the execution of his own son in the same manner as the calf was killed. Manu Murai Kanda Cholan was such a just and fair-minded king in those days. How did it happen? The king had such an immeasurable love for all.

The king realized the irreparable loss for the cow and inflicted the same kind of filial loss on himself.

From generation to generation the universal love was practised, and Vallalar was born with the same kind of love for all living things. He felt the suffering of crops when they were dying without water supply. He realized the suffering and pain of starving people and offered food by establishing a charity for providing food for them. He showed the path of salvation for the ignorant and explained the true nature of God and paved the way for the people to become enlightened through the path of light.

He introduced the remarkable chant (*Maha manthiram*):

The enormous light of divine grace
The enormous light of divine grace
The uniquely abundant compassion

The enormous light of divine grace

Vallalar showered his divine grace on all human beings and attained everlasting life without death (end). India is a blessed land where so many supreme saints were born, lived as embodiment of love, and their loving nature blossomed into grace and sympathy for all living organisms. This is not an ordinary humanitarianism but surpassing to the pure state of love for all souls (*Aanma neyam*). This attitude of love for all living beings arose out of love for plants and animals and of course, all human beings after realizing the eternal truth that God dwells in all and pervades everywhere in the universe. We must also aspire for and attain such integration and the “universal feeling of oneness” (*Aanma neya orumaipaadu*).

Those who love all will develop this kind of love-bond with all souls. The supreme state of love is one which leads a person to help others without expecting anything in return.

A devotee of God treats every living thing as his own soul. *It is a great blessing to serve such devotees*, says Vallalar. However, will any kind of love ever match the maternal love? “Mothers are mothers”, in the best sense of the term.

Even the ferocious wild animals give birth to the cubs and look after them and protect them. The cubs too cuddle up to their mothers and get nourishing milk. Who taught them about the significance of filial love? All these animals get the knowledge through the divine grace showered on them. They live their own lives according to their nature.

Who has designed all these? Must we not know about the birth of man, the reason for his birth and how he was born into the world? Why are we born and for whose benefit? What is life? How is the body able to move around? Who is the creator of all these things? We must know the answers for all the questions and understand the sense behind them.

Atheists will easily answer to these questions as acts of nature. They believe that life is to be lived in happiness to the brim. Discussing, and analysing about the God, universal love and other philosophical questions are arising out of utter foolishness, according to them. Well, are they happy? Do they lead happy life?

When are we happy? When we are healthy and without any physical or mental problems, we are happy. Basis of health depends on the right choice of nutritious food. Clean vegetarian food is the best for healthy life. This was accepted long ago and even now people all over the world have started accepting it as harmless food for human beings. Vegetarian food offers us happiness. It is true. When we are happy, family members, friends and neighbours will also be happy.

This happens when we love others. This universal feeling of love will multiply our happiness.

Following a disciplined law-abiding way of life also generates happiness in you. *Never be wicked in order to lead a comfortable life.*

When you help others, help will come to you when you need it. This is a benevolent cycle of kindness, which is a part of the universal law of natural order. A proverb in Tamil illustrates this concept: "When you look after the children of others, your children will get the same kind of care automatically". This adage illustrates the power of love.

If you help a neighbour in suffering and pain, another stranger will rush to share your suffering at the right time when you need some help. This is the humanitarian feeling which leads one to develop universal love in him.

It may appear that end of theism is atheism. That is only appearance and not reality. The first step in the path of wisdom may look like atheism. This is also an outcome of ignorance. Ignorance is represented as darkness, and wisdom means light, that is, end of darkness. When man is led from darkness to light, his ignorance disappears and he becomes wise. As he achieves this state of complete wisdom, only love pervades his soul. Here is a story to illustrate this principle of love.

Once a saint was walking on the banks of a river, he saw a scorpion in the water struggling for life. Out of pity he took the creature out and left it on the bank. When he touched the scorpion and lifted, it stung the saint on the hand. Unexpectedly the creature fell into the water again. The saint did the same act and got a sting from it. The people around stated that the scorpion was stinging again and again but why the saint saved the creature again. The saint replied, stinging is the basic natural instinct of scorpion and taking pity on suffering creatures is his nature. Even though he knows that he will be in trouble, he helps the creature.

How great his love for suffering organisms! Love leads to pity which leads to sympathy for fellow beings.

There are so many stories to illustrate the power of love. Here is yet another story from the Bible. Once a young man fell in love with a charming but wicked girl. She said that she would accept his love on one condition. That was, he had to bring his mother's heart as a present to the girl he loved. The son told his mother about the condition. She was ready to oblige and asked him to kill her and take the heart so that he would live a happy life with her. He did the same and started running towards his lady love. While running he slipped on a stone and fell down. Immediately the mother's heart asked affectionately whether he was seriously wounded. That is the nature of a mother. Only then he realized his mistake and repented for the serious sin he had committed. How wonderful the maternal love is! It is non-parallel!

As Thiruvalluvar says, a mother expects his son to be wise and appreciated as an illustrious son by well-read persons.

No mother will like her son to be a wicked brutal person with all bad habits like drinking alcohol, murdering others, torturing others and similar anti-social activities. Mother of such a son will have intense pain in her mind. Even a bad mother would always try to bring up her son as an educated, well-disciplined person. A mother's love knows no bounds and the mother will always be willing to sacrifice her own life for the welfare of her children.

If a human mother has such noble qualities, how can we express the grace of divine mother? She supports and protects all living beings, transforming herself into five elements of nature.

One who has succeeded in doing penance, shows the same kind of maternal affection towards all. We must receive mother's love and blessings before receiving father's affection. Only when we receive the milk of human kindness from mother, we quench our thirst and satisfy our appetite.

As we love ourselves, we look after our bodies, cleanse our minds and surrender to the mother Goddess of universe, only then, Goddess will bless us as we practise saintly path of wisdom. As a result, we get the guidance of supreme spiritual teacher (sadguru) to become enlightened. The universal mother will be dwelling in our body and guide us to our destination. The Tamil verb says: *There is no better temple in the world than the mother.* Another ancient Tamil saying tells us: *There are no holy words better than the advice of a father.*

Our body is a temple where resides mother in the form of light and father as sound. This is what we call "Half mother, Half father" in one human form. So we describe God as *Arthanaareeswarar* in Hindu concept.

Vallalar addresses God in his song, "Oh mother! Oh father! Oh, precious gem that stands beyond comparison! Oh, divine nectar received from the ripe fruit of love!"

Mother and Father. If we realize this and do penance following the path of wisdom, we will receive the divine nectar. This principle will pave the way for spiritual wisdom. We can see God in human form. We realize God who resides in us and the one who pervades the universe. This is the blissful state of divinity. No joy can be compared with this unique experience of bliss.

Let me suggest an easy path to attain such a divine blissful state.

God in temple is represented in the form of a sculpture made of stone. This is the state of senselessness (like a stone) which must be aspired for by the man as he stands before the sculpture of God. As a result, God will reveal himself to the "stony" man. The same man becomes a devotee, who in due course becomes an enlightened person, who will be a saint finally.

Through this path man can perceive God anywhere and everywhere as He permeates through all things in the universe and displays himself in all. This is universal truth (*sathyam*).

This was what happened to me. The Divine mother of grace, appeared before me as I became a “stony” person in front of Her. She blessed me by appearing before me as a child accompanied by two girls. This divine vision was possible because I practised what Vallalar preached. This is the compassion for all the suffering and expressing love for all creatures in the world.

I perceived this divine form with my eyes. I experienced the unique blissful state which cannot be expressed in words. The divine mother appeared in my mind’s eye whenever I thought of her. I have understood the meaning of this birth. This was how I was brought to this spiritual life.

Meanwhile I went through a lot of suffering due to the sins committed in the previous births. All my physical and mental sufferings disappeared because of the divine grace of Mother, just like the mist before the sun.

It was the *Mother* who made me realize that all relatives and friends are deceptive appearances. She is the one who gave me this human form and the one who dwells in this human body. It is this universal mother who blesses me.

The Mother Goddess appeared before me in the form of a girl and saved me from all past actions and sins and blessed me with a blissful state. Mother *Kanniakumari* (Goddess in the form of a girl) has saved me, redeemed me and blessed me. I must have led a virtuous life in the past.

The supreme energy, universal mother settled in Kanyakumari has blessed my wife, my son and me and led us in the path of spiritualism. How can I express my gratitude to her for her maternal love and grace showered on us!

I was anointed into the path of light offered by Vallalar Swamigal through the saint Jothi Ramaswamy Desigar, a great saint from Tiruchirapalli. The true spiritual teacher took me as his disciple and purified me with his blessings and guidance for the spiritual path. Since that day in 1980, I have been leading a spiritual life and guiding other people around me.

I have started my spiritual journey in the path of *Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sangam* in Kanniakumari. Members of this sangam have provided me for my subsistence. Living with what is provided by others is the path for a monk leading a simple life in the monastery (ashramam) . Mother Goddess provides us with what we need all along with her blessings.

Whenever I was suffocated with sufferings I was rescued by many saints. Even the poison which came into my body disappeared without harming me. Such great saints help us by removing all past *karma* (fruits of all past actions). They are embodiment of grace, who sometimes in the form of spirit and at other times in human form, remove our sufferings and pains.

Govindan was an enlightened soul (Siddhar) who protected me in both the above-mentioned forms. He came on his own and helped me. I never knew him before. He appeared before me at the right time and guided me to reach the Mother Goddess through proper channel. I used to wonder why he showered such abundant love on me.

Enlightened souls do not pick and choose particular persons. They voluntarily go to all souls which have started leading a spiritual life. Their only aim is that everyone should attain the blissful state.

The world we live revolves around the concept of love. Once we start loving other souls, then those who believe in the efficacy of love start loving us. All the saints will come forward to help us to cut the knot of births and deaths and become the enlightened.

Oh, dear souls! Practise love. Love is God. There is a proverb in Tamil: “Child and God are pleased when we care them”. This is because we know that the infant cannot feed for itself. It is we who provide milk and other food according to the needs of the infants, dress them with clean and attractive clothes and ornaments.

The more we are affectionate towards the child, the more attached to us it becomes. Likewise, we pray God through all religious ceremonies like giving a bath, dress up the idols and provide food for them. The more devoted we become, the more we are cleansed off our sins. As we become humble, and repent for our sins, we become detached from our attachments with the world and attain saintly state. This is a universal truth. A Tamil song illustrates the forgiving nature of God: *The child and God are endowed with the same quality that is, forgiving nature which is common to both of them.*

God is present in and around us in order to protect and bless us. This is my personal experience. The Mother Goddess appeared before me as an illustrious girl and blessed me. Thus, I became ennobled.

Love is not based on sexual attraction. It is not at all concerned with human body or mind. This is a universal affection for fellow souls, showered on all living organisms – plants, animals, birds and human beings. It is a special feeling of compassion towards all. It is nonpareil.

This kind of love converts human mind and makes it feel the highest form of happiness, a blissfully happy state of mind.

We can conquer the world with the power of love. *Thirumanthiram* says: *Love and Lord Shiva are two different entities according to stupid people.* Pleasant facial expressions and smile should be present in our body language. Those who see us will also feel the same pleasant expression and reveal the happiness through their smile.

The life of man must be guided by the path of love; if otherwise, the man is just a body made of flesh and bones.

7 The true spiritual teacher sarguru

The knife which does not cut things, openly unuttered holy words,

the flower which cannot be reached by others, unused and ill-drained water in the pond, unprotected private parts, the mind which is unmindful about others, and the worship made without being realized as significant.

All these are useless.

A true spiritual teacher explains the importance of wisdom and guides us to realize the enlightened state through the path of spirituality. Thus, he makes our present birth meaningful and purposeful. The spiritual teacher through his selfless service guides us to attain liberation.

The truth about human soul, God and the light are explained by him. He guides us in the noble path of spiritualism. He makes us realize the truth about all entities and thus he becomes the true spiritual teacher.

Such a teacher follows the code of moral conduct and leads a disciplined life beyond any temptation for worldly pleasures. Only then he becomes qualified to guide genuine congregation of followers through the path of truth.

In Tamil there is a saying: *we should not explore the source of the river and the monk*. A true self-disciplined follower need not think about them.

Evil thoughts and wicked deeds will easily catch the fickle minds. We must be extremely careful to practise self-discipline, noble qualities and achieve greatness. Then only we can become successful souls.

We must relinquish all our desires and personal comforts and be ready to sacrifice many things in our life. Worldly pleasures will make our minds revolve around them and will lead us to deadly hell, so beware of these dangerous sinful-path.

A Tamil saying tells us: *identify the evil-minded persons and be away from them*.

Those teachers who take intoxicating drugs that ruin the body and blur our intellect cannot be a spiritual teacher. Neither he nor you will benefit from such spiritual teacher. As a result, there is no salvation for the teacher and the taught.

A true spiritual teacher is one who searches for the truth, one who is compassionate towards all living beings, one who tells us what is meant by truth. Who is a true spiritual teacher (guru)? One who is involved in continuous search for what is true and one who conducts others in the true path of universal love. We need only such a spiritual teacher to lead us.

A true spiritual teacher has no desire for worldly pleasures; he feels the pains and sufferings of other lives; he sacrifices everything for the welfare of others. He is the standing example for the divine love in human form. Choose such a saintly teacher and lead your life in the path he has prescribed. That is the right path of enlightenment.

One such true spiritual teacher is Bhagavan Sri Sathya Saibaba who was born in a small village, Puttaparathi, Andrapradesh. He has transformed the village into a city which attracted people all over the world. While it was a tough task for the government to provide drinking water, he was able to solve the water problem for a few districts, and provide continuous water supply to the people of those districts with the support of his devotees.

He has built a super-speciality hospital which provides free treatment for all kinds of illness to all the people who came there for treatment. We cannot see such a free medical service anywhere in India. In his ashram we cannot see any religious, racial or regional disparities. Saibaba addresses all devotees as truly blissful souls (*Dhivya aatma sorubhigal*). Saibaba's cardinal teachings are as follows: *Look after your parents and serve them first, then identify the needs of others around you and serve them all. Do selfless service. It will transform you into a soul filled with love.*

In addition, he says: *See God in all living beings and serve them. That is the time when God dwelling in all souls will bless you. Through devotion you will attain salvation.* “Service to Mankind is service to God”. This is the quintessence of Saibaba’s teachings.

Saibaba has been guiding millions of people in the path of love and non-violence and make them service-minded souls for more than sixty years (statement made around 2004). Those who have been transformed into noble souls by Bhagavan Sree Sathya Saibaba look upon him as incarnation of God. After getting the blessings of Baba, the devotees following the noble path laid down by Baba have been serving other people.

Vallalar has entreated the enormous light of divine grace (God) to bless the people and provide them with whatever they asked for and wherever they might be, by making yourself present in their place. In the same way Bhagavan Baba says: “You need not come to me. Do your service in your station. I will come and bless you wherever you are”. That is the unique nature of great saints.

Saibaba proclaimed that he was Shridi Saibaba in his previous incarnation and predicted that he would be born as *Prema Sai* in Mandya district, Karnataka. He is such a unique saint who has realized the past, present and future.

I prayed to him that I should be protected from sufferings and immediately responded that he was watching me and listening to my prayers. It was Saibaba who gave “eyes” to the book, “Garland of Divine Vision” (Kanmani Maalai). We can keep on narrating the multitudinous miraculous acts of Saibaba. Moreover, Saibaba, the incarnation of compassion, rescued my life when I was at a critical situation.

Words cannot describe the compassionate nature of him. A great saint, non-peril. Even today Saibaba is blessing all devotees in the omnipresent spiritual form. We should be fortunate to see the divine form of Baba. You must visit his ashram and feel the presence of God. All your sins will be washed away.

I have been reaping the fruits of many visits and his “Dharsans”, and doing my services as prescribed by Saibaba. I am leading a contented peaceful life with my family members.

Another saint I greatly admire is Jaggy Vasudev. He was born and brought up in Karnataka and has started a yoga centre at the foot hills of Vellilgiri, Coimbatore. He has been guiding people to saintly state through yoga and social service.

He is explaining the philosophical concepts through scientific explanations to the modern man. He follows the yogic path of Patanjali and has trained one hundred disciples to teach yogic practices and spiritualism to all people living in urban and rural areas.

There are so many monasteries (Ashramam) and many leaders teach yoga without knowing the basics of yoga and as a result, the students also do not understand what their yoga teacher teaches.

Some people have taken the yoga teaching as an activity for granted and treat ed themas recreation. Some years ago there were people belonging to various clubs, societies or circles. They proclaimed that they were doing social service or involved in literary activities. They were also proud to claim that they belonged to a prestigious club.

Today people are bragging about yoga. They claim that they practice one kind of yoga or other. Neither have they understood the principles of yoga nor have they achieved anything to uplift their souls. Some patients taking allopathic medicine have resorted to some yogic and breathing exercise and perceived

some improvement in their health. How many of them would have really understand the significance of yoga?

Sometime before, in our town, I suggested to a member who frequently visited me that we could learn yoga from the Isha Yoga Centre. He said that he knew the yoga fully well and proudly said that he had been teaching yoga to many persons. When queried further, he referred to some yogic postures such as “Suhasanam” and “Padmasanam”. He has not understood that it was one of the eight steps to have union with God. What he referred to was the first of the eight stages of yoga to reach God. Moreover, I explained to him: *Yoga means becoming one with God through the spiritual wisdom.*

Then he realized his ignorance and repented. Like him, there are so many people who make mistakes out of ignorance. They do not know what they are doing. They blindly argue in favour of what they believe to be true.

Kanmani Maalai and *Arulmani Maalai* have been written with a view to making people understand the truth about all entities. I have shared my experience with others who have misunderstood the true nature of God, man, soul and the world. The main purpose is to make all people realize the truth about spirituality. Some people do not understand when we say “Do what is good”. They understand only when we point out that certain acts are evil and must be given up if they want to reach God (attain salvation). That is why I have mentioned about those persons who misunderstood the eternal truth. My aim is to make them realize their mistakes and help them lead their life in the right path.

That is why our ancestors have insisted that spiritual teachers must lead a disciplined life of true spirituality. Our ancestors have guided us in the right path without any hesitation. Even if the Supreme Ruler commits a mistake, it will be pointed out bravely without compromising with Him. Thirunavukkarasar has rightly pointed out about the devotees of God: *we are not citizens of any ruler in the world; we are not scared of the God of Death; we will never suffer in the hell.*

This is the nature of spiritual souls and devotees of God.

Jaggi Vasudev, a truly great spiritual guru, a great saint. He has raised and installed Lord of Meditation (Dhyana Lingam) in the Isha Yoga centre. Through his power of penance, birth after birth, he has achieved the supreme power to make a most powerful symbol of meditation. Even if a person without any knowledge of meditation and spirituality will be enthralled by the positive waves emerging from the symbol of meditation if he goes and sit inside the meditation hall. He will experience the peace of mind which one gets after meditation. The power of Dhyana Lingam is so great that nobody else has performed such a miracle.

I have witnessed these miraculous acts of Jaggi Vasudev who has helped me to come out of my sufferings and guided me to lead the present life.

Another remarkable act of Jaggi Vasudev is that he has conducted *Sahaja Sthithi Yoga* classes for prisoners in Tamil Nadu and changed many of them into kind human beings. These prisoners who have been brought into the prisons with revengeful attitude, were transformed into men with human kindness and compassion for all. Such a remarkable change happened in their minds, just because of Jaggi Vasudev. He has travelled to various countries and brought many people into the path of yoga and spiritualism.

Establishing a blissful, peaceful and love-filled world is the main objective of Jaggi Vasudev. Just like the mother who feeds the baby with milk of human kindness, he feeds the people with spiritualism and strong mind, performing the role of a mother as well as a father to guide them.

Isha Yoga concept includes the teachings all saints in order to make people spiritual persons ultimately. Along with his disciples, the true guru takes committed interest to change ordinary human beings into spiritual persons. I should say that it is a self-less service without expecting any returns from the general public.

Jaggi Vasudev takes great care and patience in every step he undertakes. A spiritual refuge for those who seek the help of Jaggi Vasudev.

Moreover, I joined the Isha Yoga Centre and served the people for some time.

Everyone of us must visit Isha Yoga Centre which is located at the foothills of Vellingiri which is well known as southern Kailash (*Then Kailayam*). The Lord of meditation (Dhyana Lingam) is worthy of visit and people must visit the centre in order to experience the divine grace showered by Lord Shiva. Jaggi Vasudev shows us the spiritual path to liberate us from the cycle of birth and death.

In Tamil Nadu this is the only centre where people belonging to various castes, creeds, races are equally treated and guided in the path of love. They practice here the concept – Love is God.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Saibaba in Andhra Pradesh and Jaggi Vasudev in Tamil Nadu are serving the people of the world in their unique paths of love. Their services cannot be described in words. They are such great saints whom all of us should devotedly follow.

Generally speaking, the people will not realize the greatness and their unique power to transform others into human beings with love and kindness to all when these spiritual saints are alive in human form. People will extol them highly when they leave their physical human forms. Shree Sathya Saibaba and Sadguru Jaggi Vasudev are living Gods. Human beings must surrender to them and follow their paths of love if they want to have external life. No use in repenting after they depart from this world. Realize the truth about spirituality and saintly life. Wake up, come out of ignorance and realize the eternal truth.

From birth to death, somebody teaches you at every stage in your life. Those people are, in fact, teachers. But one who teaches you about the nature of God in you and how He works in your body and soul is a true spiritual teacher (*Sadguru*). For example, we can treat all women folk as our own mother. However, only one woman is responsible for your birth. Likewise, all teachers are to be respected but we must follow the divine path laid down by true spiritual teacher.

Only when we have spiritual teacher in the outside world, we can realize the presence of such a teacher inside us. Search for the life – giving force, God, and the spiritual guide in your transitory body. You will realize the supreme guide. Kavimani Desika Vinayagam Pillai said about God's presence:

He is in our souls and we must realize the God dwelling in us.

Thirumoolar says:

He dwells in the human body which is the temple for him.

So the spiritual guide is your own soul. Catch hold of God in your soul. All desires will disappear. The soul in you is the place of God. Aspire to surrender to the God and you will give up all other desires. This is what Thiruvalluvar says: *Clasp Him who is above all desires in order to do away with other worldly desires.*

I humbly offer my prayers to all saints born in this holy land and particularly I am indebted to nine gods and saints. As I have written in nine four-lined stanzas in Tamil, they are as follows:

Lord Shiva in Chidambaram, Anjaneya, Ramalinga Swamigal, Lord Govinda (Maha Vishnu), Guru Thavasi, Jyothi Ramaswamy Desikar, Lord Ganapathy, Shri Sathya Saibaba and Jaggi Vasudev.

One who dwells in me and my family members, guides so many spiritual saints (Siddhar) and blesses all of us is Goddess Bhagavathi Amman at Kanniakumari.

Kaakapukandar, the great saint living for many ages has sung in praise of the supreme mother at Kanniakumari. Kaakapukandar has rightly summarized the all-powerful nature of Kanniakumari in his eight-lined verse. Goddess Kanniykumari, the basis of all creations, and the root cause of all activities in the world has been blessing us in the form of a young divine girl with sacred garland of holy beads in Kanniakumari.

Ancient supreme energy blesses all who visit this holy land of Kanniakumari. Visit Kanniakumari and be blessed with many boons.

In the path of wisdom there are three stages: Form (*Uruvam*), both Form and Formless (*Aruva Uruvam*) and Formless (*Aruvam*). When the human soul journeys through all these stages of devotion, it reaches a final stage where Mother Goddess is the only refuge for the liberation of soul. This Mother is the brilliant, luminous light, the origin of all powers and energies in this world. The same Mother eventually provides us the nectar of wisdom which makes us saintly persons. The same Mother manifests herself in the form of most graceful young girl in Kanyakumari where the most brilliant Mother blesses us all in Kanniakumari.

Thirugnana Sambandar one of the four saivite saints, was blessed with the divine milk of wisdom by the Goddess when he was three years old. Thiru Arut Prakasa Valallar was also blessed with divine nectar from the Mother Goddess. Only with her support and guidance, Vallalar realized the divine presence of Lord Nataraja. Should we not aim at such an inexplicable spiritual state of greatness?

A great saint Vallalar was born on 5th October, 1823. He was an embodiment of compassion and was a revolutionary monk of renunciation. He taught us to give up all blind beliefs and realize that God pervades all living things and the world, and preached that we must understand this universal truth and practise love and compassion for all living things in the world.

Compassion is the only key to open the Heaven's gate. Love is the only means to reach God. He followed the same path of love and compassion and attained God, leading a life without death. He is such a great saint, non-perail.

Vallalar said: *God manifests himself in the form of light, the symbol of enormous divine grace.* He made people worship God in the form of light. He established a unique choultry to provide food for all who came there hungry. The oven where he started the first fire, has been still active and provides food for millions of people ever since his choultry was established.

Vallalar gathered and coordinated those who aspired to reach God and established a path of true wisdom (Sathya Gnana Sangam) and brought to light the wise path to all people. He humbly said that he was one of the devotees of God, who came from generation to generation in the past.

He revealed the truth about our eyes. The holy feet of God are present in our eyes. God is present as energising light in human eyes. He invited and advised all people to become spiritually great souls so that they would live everlasting happy life without an end.

Vallalar is a great saint who sang six thousand divine songs. He was endowed with all spiritual powers and transformed his human body into a bright, light filled body. Disease can be cured by singing divine grace filled songs of Vallalar. Arutprakasa Vallalar was endowed with such a spiritual powers which are beyond our description. A wonderful mystic and spiritual guide.

A branch of Vallalar's Sanmarga Sangam was started by me in Kanniakumari and the organization has been serving people . To start with I published "Kanmani Maalai" and then "Arulmani Maalai". I have accepted Vallalar as my true spiritual teacher who has been blessing me through his invisible support.

As a result, Vallalar has become my body and soul. All saints and truly spiritual persons (*siddhars*) are made of the same substance like Vallalar. Seek such spiritualists and make them your guide and live a long life of spiritualism.

8 What must be learnt (padikka-vendiyathu)

Gunamgudi Masthan rightly pointed out: *even if a man learns all scriptures of the world, god of Death will take only a second to catch him and no scholarship will save him.*

What must be learnt? If we experience the divine presence in our eyes, death will not approach us. Only this we must learn, and it has been endorsed by an Indian Muslim saint.

Spiritual wisdom is beyond all religious fervour. It is above all religions of the world.

One who has conquered the feelings of caste, creed, racism and regionalism alone will attain spiritual wisdom. Those who practise such fanatical differences will never acquire such a great wisdom.

Spiritual wisdom can be achieved only by those who treat all living things equally. There are plenty of books – Vedas, Puranas, religious treatises and scriptures of various religions. Can one read all of them and claim mastery over the subject? Yes, the lifetime is not enough to learn all scriptures. Goddess Saraswathi, the Goddess of learning in Hindu tradition, is keeping a stringed instrument (*veenai*) and it shows that she too is still learning.

Avvaiyar said: *What we have learnt is only a handful of knowledge; what is yet to be learnt is as big as the earth.* Ramalinga Swamigal asks: *What use did you find after acquiring so much of spiritual knowledge from religious scriptures?*

The saints have already advised us about what should be learnt. Thiruvalluvar says: mathematics and language are the two skills one must learn; they are like two eyes for a living being. These two types of knowledge are the result of true learning. Two eyes symbolically stand for these two sources of knowledge which is perennial.

‘Number’, he refers to are mystical numbers “eight” and “two”. In Tamil they are represented by (a) and (u) and they are right and left eye respectively. Mystically it is understood as the sun (right eye) and moon (left eye). Both of them are symbols of light, the brilliant feet of God. One who understands this principle will attain the true knowledge and live a meaningful life. A human should acquire only this knowledge. Wise learning for a human being is everlasting life-giving education. All scriptures and spiritual epics have mentioned this indirectly and expressed in a subtle code. Only a true spiritual teacher will decode these expressions and explain the deeper meaning of the spiritual message.

Instead of learning many scriptures, one who knows Tamil can learn at least the following religious treatises

Thirumanthiram – the great philosophy (saiva sidhantham)

Thiruvacakam – the great book of prayer

Thiruarutpa – the great collection of devotional songs

These are the books of ultimate knowledge by great saints — the enlightening treatises for human mind!

We all know that the human mind is like a monkey. It is restless, keeping on asking questions with a lot of doubts occurring every moment. That is why I have recommended these four books which will stop your wavering mind and make you concentrate on what is liberation for humans.

Our ancestors have pointed out that there are three stages — *Suruthi*, *Yukthi* and *Anubhavam*. They are the three terms which mean: listening to these scriptures, finding suitable path and concentrating on it, and finally experiencing the divine grace through staunchly practising what is learnt from these books.

Well, how can an illiterate acquire this knowledge and experience? what must he do? He must approach a truly spiritual teacher and realize that ‘eight’(in Tamil *a*) and ‘two’ (in Tamil *u*) are symbols of two

eyes – the sunlight and the moonlight – which are the two feet of God. One must meditate upon these two eyes. This spiritual activity is more than enough to realize God.

This is the true knowledge, explained by saints of yore. This is the highest form of penance one should perform. This is the only way to salvation; the highest form of learning. An ancient saying tells us: one who learns whatever is available to him is called a learned person (Pandithan / Arivazhi). Those who speak a lot about God, would not have seen Him. When we refer to the divine experience, we say “one who sees God, never speaks about his experience”. Most of the saints keep their mouths shut and find solace in silence. One who speaks a lot about the divine experience has not seen God. In short, the eyes that see Him will not speak but one who speaks about Him can never see Him. That is why saints advise us to have the divine experience with our eyes open, and aim at liberation quietly.

Our physical eyes, after practising penance, become brilliant eyes. Bharathiar says: *Bright light emitting eyes are the outcome of staunchly committed and well-trained mind.*

These bright eyes will shower compassion and love towards all. Thirunavukkarasar, one of the four saivite saints, says: one who blesses us in Kalahasti, (God staying in Kalahasti, a religious place) is present in my eyes.

All saints teach us the spiritual wisdom and it makes us realize the nature of God and gives us complete wisdom. To tell the truth, all arts and sciences are taught only to earn some money. There are people who blow their own trumpets claiming that they have acquired many degrees from various institutes. These people are useless because they have not received spiritual knowledge.

Let me narrate an incident which happened a few years ago. A Vallalar’s song from his *Thiruarutpa* was included in a textbook prescribed for a course in a university.

Many scholars tried to interpret a line (. The problem led the scholars to the extent of regretting for inclusion of such a mystic song in the prescribed textbook for students.. Who regretted it? It was the same doctorate professor who included this text while compiling the textbook for the university students. One professor suggested that they could consult some guide books prepared for students.

One of those scholars suggested that they could seek my help. All senior professors came to me and eulogised me that I was an expert in interpreting Vallalar’s songs. They did not tell me that they could not interpret this mystic line. Instead, they started to test my knowledge about the philosophy of Vallalar. Finally one of them asked me to interpret the above mentioned line. I explained: it is concerned with divine experience. When we meditate, we will see the sky, bright with a ray of light. After some more practice of meditation, we would hear a unique sound. Vallalar referred this mystic vision as peacock (a brightly coloured feathers) and the sound was metaphorically mentioned as ‘Kuil’ (cuckoo bird) which produces sweet sounds of music. Professors were very happy to know the meaning of this line. However, they were not satisfied with the interpretation. They asked me if there was any example or any parallel literary passage to confirm this symbolic meaning. I continued. As Science deals with light and sound, metaphysics also has the same kind of interpretation. As one continues his spiritual journey, he sees a light first, and then he sees light in different colours that we witness in a rainbow. Ramalinga Swamigal used seven screens to represent the seven colours of rainbow and finally showed us the light (Jyothi Dharisanam). Saint Arunagirinathar in his Tirupugal says: *Naadha vindu kalaathi namo nama.*

He refers to the light and sound which he experienced as a mystic. Peacock feathers have these seven colours and cuckoo is always referred to as a song bird producing mellifluous sounds.

One who practises penance will witness the light first and then ten types of sounds, as described in Tirumanthiram (Dasa vitha naatham ketkum). It is this unique experience that Vallalar speaks about in this line.

The visitors were satisfied with the explanation, but were not ready to admit their ignorance. Their intellectual arrogance prevented them from doing so. The professors remarked: *We admit that you are a well-read man!*

Teachers who teach Tamil (language) are helped by publishers of study guides. If teachers do not understand the literary texts in Tamil, how can they teach them to their students? Some teachers go to the extent of recommending the guide books to their students.

We do not teach spiritualism in schools, but we claim that ours is a land of spiritualism. Students are taught history and politics. They are not taught meaningful lessons about the nature of man, God and the ways and means to lead a happy life with healthy mind and body.

They must be taught fine arts and spiritual practices so that they will follow the right path and lead a happy life.

As a Tamil saying goes, *we can discipline anyone when he is a very young child but when he is fifty years nothing can be done.* Another saying tells us that we must learn when we are very young. This education of disciplined behaviour will make us righteous in our life.

Thirugnana Sambanthar and Vallalar did not have school education. But they learnt what is good in order to overcome the fruits of past actions and become wise. That is why they could live an immortal life. They transformed themselves into a form of light and became one with God.

Valallar says:

You taught me precious arts which are not ordinarily learnt by people.

You have made me learn those spiritual treatises which are unwritten and not yet recorded.

The Omnipotent God taught them the complete knowledge and made them wise saints. So many great saints have written about the path of righteousness. If one learns any one of them, it will do. They are written in order to provide the path of liberation to the ignorant general public who are suffering because of their past actions. Only because of the divine grace, those saints have been blessed to write about the spiritual message in different languages. Studies about the nature of God is the only way to lead a renowned life.

Chapter 9 Achievement-saathanai

Generally, 'achievement' means any remarkable performance or talent which leads one to success in a particular field. For example, sports and games. These are recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records. In our life, what we mean by achievement is doing successful penance and perform miraculous acts. So many saints have performed miracles which scientists cannot achieve. For example, some saints have brought life to a person who is already dead. Achievers in various walks of life cannot be compared with the saints who have performed such miracles.

Focusing one's attention and doing staunch penance will make him "super achiever". Astrology developed by saints are based on astronomical facts. This art of studying about the position of planets was developed thousands of years ago. Those scientific facts discovered by modern astronomers are already in

the Hindu Almanac. Foreigners are carrying coal to India, the “New Castle”. But we, Indians, are ignorant about the remarkable heritage of India.

There are five classical languages in the world – Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Sanskrit and Tamil. Except Sanskrit and Tamil, other languages have gone out of use and only modern versions of these tongues have been spoken today.

Sanskrit and Tamil are endowed with divine qualities and refined cultural practices. Being the ancient cradle of human civilization, India has taught civilization to all other newly developed continents of the world. Archaeologists have excavated many “Siva Linga” sculptures from time to time, which is the symbol of Hindu worship in various countries. This is what Thirumoolar said: *Tamil language was spoken in all five continents*. This statement has been proved with so many archaeological findings. The ancient Saivite saying, which proclaims, “*Oh Lord Shiva, the God of South India who is also the God of all people in other continents. We adore you!*”, is a universal truth. The whole world was practising the “Sanadhana Dharma” (*strict adherence to duties, as prescribed by scriptures, according to one’s position and station in life*). The most ancient form of worship is the worship of *Sivalingam*. Our tradition is full of noble ideas, but we are not aware of them.

Atheists in India criticise us because of their ignorance which forbids them from perceiving truth in the practices of Hindu religion; it does not mean that there is no God. Narendran asked the saint, Ramakrishna, to show him God. So he made Narendran realize God. Narendran transformed himself and became a great warrior saint Vivekananda and Ramakrishna became Paramahamsar.

Raise questions but to the appropriate deserving person. If you do not understand, ask yourself. Socrates said: *Ask yourself!*. Finally, you will get the answer.

Vallalar sings: *Oh Moon! show me a magical trick to reach the happy state through self-realization*. He has asked this favour from the Moon and not from the Sun. This is because the Moon is endowed with many magical, mystical powers.

Questions raised by Narendran were answered by a good spiritual teacher. So many people advocate atheism because they do not find many spiritual teachers around them. Those who can convince them keep quiet thinking that answers to the spiritual questions are divine secrets. Bogus teachers of spiritualism are found everywhere. Most of the leaders of monasteries are interested in luxurious life, spending money lavishly to satisfy their selfish lower self. They appear to be spiritual teachers but have not realized the meaning of spiritualism.

In fact, my books “Kanmani Maalai and Arulmani Maalai” are mainly meant for those bogus teachers and they must read them to understand the right path of salvation.

Vallalar aptly sings:

The Enormous light of divine grace showed me the ways and means to practise universal love.

Vallalar pointed out that the path of salvation is only through “eyes”. Of course, many saints and spiritual guides (siddhars) also have pointed out the same path for self-realization. In fact, it was Vallalar who stayed in me and made me write these two books. This is a true statement and not an exaggeration. The purpose of these books is to make all people realize the true path to attain salvation.

Agathiar says: God dances in the form of light, being emitted from the Sun and the Moon – *the two eyes*. He has explained the mystic path in a straight forward manner. One who thinks deeply will realize the truth.

Spiritual teachers must learn and interpret such multitudinous meaningful songs. Like Thirugnana Sambandar, who led a large group of people to see God, the spiritual teachers must train the devotees by describing the nature of God and showing the way to reach Him. It is a pity that they themselves have not realized the path, how can they tell others?

There are some others who give wrong interpretation to such mystical songs and make themselves fools. In turn, they make all their followers fools.

Agasthiar said: *Parappile villaathe, thalai erandaahum.* (*Don't make it public: two eyes are important parts of the body in the head.*) The eyes are the most important organs of the body for self-realization. This is what Saint Agasthiar said.

The so-called spiritual teachers interpret that you must not tell others and if you do, your head will burst. Do you think a true saint will instruct his disciples like this? Bogus teachers threaten their followers and keep them under their control as their disciples.

The spiritual teacher of Ramanujar warned him that if he revealed the “mantra” (holy words) he would go to hell. Ramanujar climbed up the short tower in Srirangam Temple and proclaimed: I don't mind going to the hell; let others who listen to this mantra (holy words) go to heaven. Then he recited the mantra so loudly that everyone would hear it and benefit from it. Then only his spiritual teacher realized his grave mistake. Ramanujar is a remarkable reform-oriented saint.

“Parappile villaathe, thalai irandaagum”. The surface level meaning is: *Don't make it public; there are two heads.* The correct interpretation is: *Don't reveal it publicly; the most important parts of the body are in the head, and they are two eyes;* A Tamil saying tells us: Head is the most important part of the human body whose length is eight measures. The head has got all five sensory organs. Among them, eyes are the most important. This kind of sayings are known as secret spiritual codes. The teachers must give right interpretation to these cryptic sayings politely with love for his disciples.

This is how a teacher must interpret the songs of mystics. One need not be a great scholar to understand the deeper meaning of these short expressions. Devotion to God and the desire to reach God are enough to understand these mystic songs. Think and feel the presence of God in your soul. Manickavasagar says: *As Lord Shiva is in my mind, I was able to get His blessings by worshipping His feet (eyes).*

It is Lord Shiva who is present in the mind who makes us think. The same God stays steadfast in our eyes in the form of life-giving light. This experience about divinity can be realized only through the spiritual teacher.

Let us understand this first. God is Omnipresent in the universe as well as the human body in microcosmic form. The eyes in the head are endowed with all five elements of the universe – earth, air, water, fire and ether. God is in the form of light in these eyes. One must understand this message, beyond any doubt. It is revealed as preachings (sruti), which clear all our doubts.

Secondly we must realize that God is present in our eyes in the form of light. The spiritual teacher is one who makes us understand and realize this truth. There is a Tamil proverb: No art can be learnt without any demonstration. So one must learn from the deserving teacher. What is heard must be understood through institution.

Thirdly, we are endowed with the power of light in the eyes. As Vallalar said we must think and feel the power of love and as a result, the eyes will be filled with tears which flow continuously and drench our body. This is the spiritual experience which provides us the unbounded bliss. This will be experienced

after continuous practice. Our enthusiasm and committed will power will take us to the higher level of spiritualism.

When we meditate upon the “true” soul we can realize Shiva in the form of light, present in our soul. Only this experience leads us to self-realization. Finally, we enjoy the blissful state – the greatest divine bliss. We achieve this blissful state through realizing the “truth” and wisdom. These three levels are called *sat*, *chit* and *anandham*. That is, ***sachidanandam***.

We must learn about these wisdom-based *perceptions* and lead a long life following what we have realized already. This is what all saints preached after reaching the highest state of bliss. Teaching about this spiritual experience is the primary duty of a spiritual teacher. This is service to God and humanity. Only this service I have been rendering for many years.

Tamil saints have blessed us with many methods of meditation in various levels. Basically, there are four levels; each of them further divided into four sub levels. In all, we can understand that there are (4 x 4) 16 levels to go through in the process of meditation. Let us analyze this combination.

Sariyai – Sariyai – Kiriyai – Yogam – Gnanam

Kiriyai – Sariyai – Kiriyai – Yogam – Gnanam

Yogam - Sariyai – Kiriyai – Yogam – Gnanam

Gnanam- Sariyai – Kiriyai – Yogam – Gnanam

Vallalar and many other saints have shown the path of wisdom. They have offered methods to the people, who have been suffering for many births, without knowing the right path of wisdom to realize God.

Thiruarutprakasa Vallalar offers a method to do meditation. He gives a three-fold path — *pasiththiru*, *thaniththiru*, *vizhiththiru*. The expression means: feel the spiritual hunger, develop the desire to realize God by remaining uniquely alone and be constantly vigilant in order to attain self-realized state. The soul must have such abundant hunger to reach the goal.

Thaniththiru: Be alone. This does not mean that one should go to forest and do penance alone. It means you must think about your own soul and be united with it. Feel the individuality of your own soul. Awareness – Be vigilant always and meditate keeping your eyes open. It is one of the most important aspects of meditation.

In short, search for answers for the questions – who am I ? who is God ? with spiritual hunger, without any distractions caused by worldly affairs. You must have the unique feeling of individuality about your soul and meditate with eyes open. It is important to keep one’s eyes open in order to achieve wise state.

Pasiththiru: You must have thirst for knowledge to find “who you are” and “who the God is”. Practise single – minded devotion without giving room for any other worldly thoughts; feel that you are a unique entity – the soul; meditate with your eyes open.

To start with, meditate upon the object – “the jyothi”. Light up a lamp and sit in front of the light. Look at the light coming out of the lamp and sit for a while with your eyes open. Never keep any picture of God or Goddess in front of you. We are trying to transcend the practice of meditating with an object or picture in front of us.

Practise meditation this way for quite some days. Slowly, you will see some changes in the light of the lamp. At one point of time, you may not see anything. You will start shedding tears continuously. You must not move, or think of anything else.

As you continue to practise meditation, you will witness many unique things and experience hither-to-unknown state of bliss. At this stage the supreme spiritual teacher will guide you to take further steps of self – realization. This state is called “Sariyai in Gnana”, the thirteenth step in meditation. Once you continue to practise until you reach this stage of meditation, you need not light a lamp in front. You can meditate anytime, anywhere with your eyes open. This is the way to salvation (Mukthi).

Would you like to know how Ramalinga Swamigal started his meditation in his early life? He kept a lighted lamp in front of a large-sized mirror in a room upstairs. He sat in front of the lamp. He saw his own image in the mirror and looked at the light of the lamp reflected in his eyes and practised meditation.

Within a few days, Ramalingar saw the divine vision of “six lights” (Arul Jyothi) which mirrored in his eyes. Ramalingar says: *seer konda deiva vadivangal arum ... en kannutrathe* (My eyes witnessed the unique six divine visions). This is the divine experience of enlightenment and wisdom. You reach God only when you meditate with unflinching determination.

You can see and experience it with your eyes through your eyes. This is the highest state of spiritual wisdom. One who realizes this truth is fortunate; one who follows it becomes a noble person; one who experiences this is the enlightened soul.

Those who practise “equality of spiritually united souls” (*aanmaneya orumaippadudaiya meyyanbargale!*) listen. Is there any better ways and means to realize the God? Start your journey of self-realization at this moment.

Chapter 10 Intelligence – Arivu

Those who have immense knowledge possess many things. Others who do not have much knowledge are poor whatever worldly possessions they own (Thirukkural). So as the spiritually wise people, what we must earn is knowledge, complete spiritual knowledge – that is wisdom. Such people get everything. There is no comparison to education. One who practises moral codes of conduct realises that the God is permanent entity and attains godhead. One who does not understand this truth is poor even if he possesses all kinds of wealth and comforts.

Again another poem from Thirukkural says: Whatever other people utter, the wise will see the truth in the statement “*meipporul*” (real object) means “*thiruvadi*” (the noble feet). Moreover, it means that God is the only true, permanent entity. The God is present in the form of light in one’s eyes. His holy feet represent two eyes. Siddhars (spiritually wise people) used such esoteric language to express the universal truth about the means to realize God.

In fact, both “holy feet” and “true entity” refer to the same entity used by saints, to be deciphered by us. “Eyes” are referred to as “the wheel that does not cut” (*vettaathe chakkaram*), “unspoken holy words” (*pesaadha manthiram*) “peace and quiet” (*maunam*) and other encoded words. This is what one must understand; then he becomes a saint. A spiritual teacher is one who has understood this truth and teaches the message to his disciples.

Ramalinga Swamigal said: Now my wisdom takes me to various other zones of the Universe and even beyond them.

The earth we see belongs to the solar system. Likewise, there are so many huge planets belonging to various systems in the Universe, according to the saints. We cannot understand fully about the earth we live in because of our very much limited knowledge. We can realize various aspects of the vast universe, once we gain the supreme, complete wisdom. None but the holy path of wisdom (Jnana Margam) will help one to achieve complete wisdom.

Scientists have discovered that man uses only 5% of his potential capacity of the brain. The remaining 95% is dormant and unused. Some of the western scientists tried to perform an operation in the brain to activate the remaining unused part of brain. As they continued to search for a solution, they found that only Indian saints who have followed the path of wisdom can use the full potential of the human brain. No other way!

In order to realize the power of the path of wisdom, many foreigners have been visiting India. On the other hand, Indians are still sleeping without any awareness about the power of our noble path. There are so many self-realized saints here. Yet common people are intellectually and spiritually ignorant about this. It is because of the foolish beliefs of religious leaders who have deliberately hidden the great power of spirituality, saying that it is to be kept as a secret. People have been cheated. Let us come out of the ignorance and lead a life practising universal brotherhood of man and love and compassion towards all the living beings. As we practise this path, we become wise and lead noble immortal life.

We must hide the evil practices from the public but reveal what is good for them and teach them to lead a supreme life, become generous and make people broad-minded human beings.

However, the government paves the way for people to be led astray through manufacturing liquor and distributing it through retailers. The same government misguides people by advertising that “liquor is harmful to family, country and finally kills the users”. The government makes a lot of money by entering into retail business. This is the deadliest sin of all.

Moreover, the government has given licence to manufacture cigarettes. On the other hand, it punishes those who smoke in public places. The intention of the government seems that people must smoke at home and suffer from cancer and eventually die.

The rulers must put a ban on manufacturing these dangerous products. When you manufacture and sell such injurious products, where do you get guts to publicise slogans against those harmful products?

During the freedom struggle of India, the followers of Mahatma Gandhi protested against drinking “kallu” (an intoxicating juice from Palmyra or coconut trees) and closed the shops selling such injurious drinks. Those who came to power through atheistic principles, made the people mad after alcoholic drinks (“kudimakkal” were asked to “kudi makkale”). Eventually, the citizens were made alcoholics. These rulers paved the way for hell. To whom should I complain? Oh God ! save the people of this country and protect them.

The following is an incident happened in the life of Rama, the divine hero of the epic "The Ramayana". Once Rama put an arrow on the mud. When he drew it out he saw a frog at the piercing end of his arrow. He asked the frog why it did not make an alarm when it saw the arrow coming down on it. The frog replied: whenever I was afflicted by any pain, I recited the holy name "Rama, Rama" and invoked him for help. Now whom will I ask for help as Rama himself is the cause of my suffering? As a human being Rama made this serious blunder unknowingly.

Kings and rulers represent the God. Citizens will take their problems only to the governing people. Now the government itself sells the liquor. It is a shameful state of affairs. Cigarettes and "Beedis" (simple smoking products made of tobacco leaves) are available every nook and corner. What is a government for ? Is it the way to protect the people. Does the government act for the welfare of the people? Subramania Bharathiar sang: "My heart would burst when I think of the confused people of this country". Only the divinity must look into it and solve this problem.

The situation becomes the worst when we witness the followers of Vallalar manufacture alcohol. How can we spread spirituality? What has happened to the wisdom of the people?

How many millions of people sacrificed their lives to get freedom from the Europeans who came to establish trade centres in India? Today government gives licences to foreign companies to start industries and manufacture goods. During the freedom struggle, Indians hated using foreign goods and set fire to clothes which were manufactured in foreign countries. Today everywhere in India, we see only foreign goods. Broadly speaking, world trade must be encouraged. It is not by using foreign goods to the detriment of Indian economy. What a pity!

Both the public and the rulers elected by the public have fallen into the evil ways instead of resorting to spiritualism. This is because of their uncontrollable greediness for wealth and luxurious life. Usually, the people who have accumulated enough amount of sin in the previous births, will easily fall prey to evil ways and wicked deeds. Human mind under such circumstances, will easily follow the evil ways shown by the government. The rulers are expected to show the right path, but they are guiding the citizens into an evil path.

Spiritualism, wisdom, justice and right code of conduct are completely absent in their minds. Oh God! only you can save the country.

Don't think that I am diverting my thoughts from wisdom. The government has recommended evil ways to earn money to run the government. What is the use of that money, obtained by ruining the life of the citizens?

When the common man is guilty, he is imprisoned. What about the rulers who are committing grave sins to ruin the life of many citizens? Why are they not punished when they sell liquor to destroy the welfare of nation? There are so many confused decisions made by the rulers. If Tamil Nadu bans the business of lottery, people buy the lottery tickets sold by the neighbouring state where the business is run profitably. When the liquor is less expensive in the neighbouring state, people go there and buy the alcoholic drinks. So about cigarettes, intoxicating areca nuts, drugs etc. Rules and regulations differ from state to state and as a result, humans become animals by nature.

Man is suffering already because of the sins committed in the previous births. To make matters worse, the rulers instigate the people to practise all kinds of wicked deeds. This is just like an already drunk and disorderly monkey which is further confused and angered by a sting of a scorpion. People in our country are in the same situation and condition.

Only those who are wise lead spiritual life; others are made stupid idiots by the rulers and further they become more or less animals.

So many spiritual saints have showed us the right path to salvation from generation to generation. Try to understand their message and lead a noble life. Those who have understood such a noble path are wise and guide others in the noble path of salvation. It is important that all of us must become wise. We must understand our true nature.

Wisdom is knowing about all aspects of life. Can we learn about everything in a short span of life? Avvaiyar said, our knowledge is little and very much limited. She compared our knowledge to a handful of sand; while the knowledge yet to be gained is about the size of the earth.

Then can we realize God with our limited knowledge? Yes, it is possible. We should read and feel what is relevant as prescribed by our spiritual teachers. This is the succinct secret leading us to realize God.

Enlightenment depends on this secret. The ways and means are expressed as secret codes in thousands of songs. The quintessence of this knowledge is: the all-pervading, omniscient God (Paramatma) is present in human soul in the form of light in the eyes. One must learn about this truth from a spiritual teacher, understand it, think about it and realize the truth we gain from the knowledge. This is true wisdom. At this stage, man becomes a spiritual person with love and peace of mind.

Today people with many degrees from universities are considered knowledgeable persons. They can recite what they have committed to memory. Have they understood the meaning of what they have in their memory? Does he show affection towards others? One who leads a luxurious life is a peaceful person?

How can a man have knowledge when he is after power, false prestige and luxury?

There is a proverb in Tamil: one who has listened to the story must be corrected by beating him with a shoe. (*kathai ketta naayai cheruppaal adi*). The saying must be interpreted as follows: People listen to moral stories from the Ramayana, the Mahabharatha and other scriptures in the evening. The following day, they don't practise what they have learnt the previous day instead, fall on the evil ways as usual. Those people can be corrected with "sandals", which symbolically mean "the holy feet of God". If they surrender to the feet of God, they can control their minds, and eventually will lead a happy and peaceful life.

Focusing one's attention, will arrest unnecessary wanderings of human mind. We must see that the human mind should be made inactive as far as the worldly pleasures are concerned. This is possible when we allow our mind to be possessed by the feet of God. This is the subtle meaning of the mystical expression which must be explained by a "qualified" guru. Once my teacher was using the proverb; one who had been listening to my teacher, became furious and said: He called me a dog and said that I must be beaten with a shoe. I won't meet you again. Infact, he was a learned person, but could not understand the subtle meaning of the adage. We can't help it.

Many persons learn some tricks from their education and cheat others by various means. I met a student of engineering, who had failed many times and finally passed the examinations by hook or by crook. I asked him why he should take so much trouble to get an engineering degree. He coolly said that a qualified engineer would be given a lot of money as "dowry" by the bride's parents (as wedding gifts). Can we expect such persons to have any knowledge?

Many students study computer science in order to earn a lot of money. Generally people think of God when they encounter some suffering or trouble. They try to bribe God by offering some money or articles. Different kinds of gifts are offered.

It is a pity that they do not understand the significance of prayer. This is because they do not possess true knowledge. It is rare to see a person practising universal brotherhood of man. Tamil saying gives us this message, if you feed your neighbours' children, your children will be taken care of. That is, God will take care of your children. When we give respect, in turn we get respect. Only when we seek God, He will come towards us at once.

Knowledge does not mean the worldly knowledge alone; it includes mainly the spiritual knowledge which is the most important for us. This knowledge alone will guide man to lead his life as a humanitarian.

Chapter 11 – Married life (Illaram)

Leading a virtual married life is ethical.

Avvaiyar says : Ethics of life is followed in married life led by man and his wife. Thiruvalluvar also defines the ethics of life, the moral code in life, clearly the same way. Puranic scriptures (Religious writings in the story form) tell us that gods lead family life with children. This indicates that we should also lead an ethical conjugal life to attain godhood.

Lord Shiva has Parvathi as a half of his body. Mahavishnu keeps Mahalakshmi in his heart. Goddess Saraswathi dwells on the tongue of Brahma. Shiva and Parvathi have two children. Murugan has two wives, Deivanai and Valli. Our puranic stories tell us that great spiritual teachers lived with their wives and children and attained enlightenment through family life. From these illustrations we must understand that ethical conjugal life is not forbidden if one wants to reach godhood. The great saints have gave us the

same message. We can reach the state of godhood through family life. The great saints like Agathiar too led a married life.

A Tamil saying tells us: There is no mantra more important than the commands of one's father. Parasuraman, the son of Jamadhagni and Renuka was the illustrious example of this saying. A puranic story says that Anushuya, the wife of Athiru Maharishi was able to transform the trinity of God – Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva – as children. This was due to her austerity and power of penance.

The great saint Viswamithrar conquered himself by removing the impurity called 'ego' and was honoured with the title "Brahma Rishi" by the great saint Vashistar.

Thiruvalluvar and Vasuki led a remarkable family life, being appreciated and remembered as an excellent example of married life. Let us recall an interesting episode that happened in the life of Vasuki. Once a saint called Konkanavar did severe penance and got wonderful powers. He wanted to test his powers. Suddenly a crane which was passing far above the saint dropped its faeces on the saint. Immediately, the saint was infuriated and looked at the crane. It was instantly burnt to death with the power of his penance.

Afterwards, he went to various places and people offered food and water with great respect. Overcome by the pride and ego (these two impurities must be shunned by the saints) saint Konkanavar went to Thiruvalluvar's house. He stood in front of the door wanted for food and at the same time. There was no response and nobody welcomed him with respect. He was infuriated by the negligence of the lady of the house. Vasuki, wife of Thiruvalluvar, was attending some primary duties for her husband. So she could not receive the saint at once. When she came out of the house, saint Konkanavar stared at Vasuki with uncontrollable fury and fire in his eyes. Vasuki coolly responded with the following : Oh saint don't take me for granted. I am not a crane.

This was how she taught a lesson to the egoistic saint Konkanavar. A supreme rishi "sugar" sought spiritual counselling from Janakar who was a king, father of Sita, and who led an austere family life. How great godhood Janakar must have reached!

Sundaramoorthy Nayanar treated Lord Shiva as his friend. Sundarar, one of the four Saivite saints, had two wives, and both of them were wedded to Sundaramoorthy with the blessings of Lord Shiva himself.

Thirugnana Sambanthar, another one of the four Saivite saints, drank divine milk and was inspired to sing holy songs in praise of Lord Shiva. His songs are codified under "Thevaram" (Garland of Divine Songs). He married a girl born out of ashes and finally he went to heaven in the same human form.

Thiruvarutprakasa Vallalar too married his sister's daughter. Our forefathers have taught us that one must lead an austere life through married life.

Tamil saints have prescribed duties to all human beings. Their pithy sayings have two interpretations – one will be suitable for the worldly life; the other for the life after death, that is becoming one with God.

This is a special linguistic feature of Tamil. One will not see such a copious vocabulary and subtle semantic richness in any other classical language.

That is why Vallalar identified Tamil as a divine language and it said that it was the language offered by divine father. Subramania Bharathiar sang that he has never seen such a rich and sweet language as Tamil. Thirumoolar an ancient saint – poet says in Thirumanthiram that Tamil had been spoken in all five continents.

Tamil had been flourishing even before the ancient days when other continents were still developing with stones, pebbles and sand. Vallalar predicted that Tamil language is so powerful that it would guide us all to realize the God.

In Tamil family life is referred to as “Illaram”. (“Ill” + “Aram”) “Il” means the house one resides in this world . Another deeper meaning is “heavenly life”. Moreover “Ill” also means human body where the soul resides. One must lead a moral austere life to make God dwell in this body permanently. That is the noblest aim of the family life.

Thirumoolar says: *Oon udambu alayam ullam perunkoil*(both the body and mind are the dwelling of divinity). Everyone must follow this principle in his family life. Once we appreciate the divinity in our body, and follow the compassionate path of life, the God residing in us (in minute form of soul) will become enormous light of brilliance and stay in our body permanently. This is what Vallalar called “*maranamilla peruvazhvu*” (The great immortal life). If we ruin our body with evil ways and dangerous habits like smoking and drinking alcohol, then the soul deserts the body which is sick and becomes unfit for divine dwelling. This is what we call “death”. If we want spiritually blissful state, we must adhere to a disciplined life of compassion and love. This is what we understand about family life.

Those who followed this ethical way of family life are the wise people with divine quality. All others will be immersed in the whirlpool of births and deaths. If one wants to escape from this various cycle, disciplined, compassionate family life is the only way.

There is a reference in Peria Puranam (The great epic of remarkable devotees of Lord Shiva) about Poosalar Nayanar. The king built a huge temple for God with granites, bricks and mortar. In the meantime Poosalar Nayanar built a house for God in his mind and started worshipping God. When the king finished his temple, God appeared in his dream and said that He was going to reside in the temple of Poosalar Nayanar. This is how God made the world realize that the human mind is more appropriate for divine dwelling than the temple built of stone.

In short, the human soul merges with the divinity and the mind mingles with the God, doing disciplined penance throughout the family life. This is what Avvaiyar said : family life led in this manner is the best form of virtue.

We learn from Puranic stories that Lord Krishna has many (Gopikas) girls around him. Symbolically, this is not physical love, but spiritual unification of jeevatma (human soul) and paramatma (divine soul). Those girls always had spiritual love towards Krishna, doing their daily duties thinking about Him. This is the greatest state of bliss a human soul can achieve. This relationship is mentioned as “Nayagan – Nayagi Bhava” (God – Soul conjugal relationship). This is the most virtuous form of family life.

We must do penance thinking about various names of Lord Krishna and meditate upon the light in our eyes. This is a unique form of penance.

The great poet Subramania Bharathi referred in his poems about “Kannamma”. Many people will interpret that he had a lady – love called Kannamma. We should interpret the word as “Kan + Amma” (Eyes + Mother). He loved Krishna and realized His presence in all objects. He has realized God through divine wisdom. He was facing many difficulties and there was no one to support him financially. Yet his spiritual experiences led him to the highest level of divinity. He starved for many days and finally departed from this world. He challenged the world that he would live immortal life after listing the following events:

Gauthama Buddha died of disease; Jesus Christ was killed on the cross; Lord Krishna died of a poisonous arrow; Rama passed away falling into the flooded river.

Bharathiar has realized that all of us could lead an immortal life. His undaunted mind had never yielded to any vicious oppression thrust on him or his country. He led a spiritual family life. A super achiever of divine wisdom.

Today many people believe that monastic life alone will lead to God- realization. This is not true. Our scriptures have many illustrations to show that any man or woman belonging to any caste, creed or colour can reach the greatest state of godliness.

A highway man who robbed the public, later on, turned an ascetic and became Valmiki to write the story of Rama called *Ramayana*, the great epic of ancient India. One who was after public women, became a staunch devotee of Lord Muruga in his later life and sang many songs collected as *Thiruppugazh* and it was Arunagirinathar who was finally blessed to become a parrot in the hand of Lord Muruga.

Everyone deserves to be a self-realized human being. It is in the hands of the person who must aspire to become worthy of divine status. In short, austere mind and healthy body are essential to realize God.

We can take another example from the life of Badragiriar. He renounced his princely life, begged alms and fed his spiritual teacher. Finally, he merged with Lord Shiva in the form of divine light. Saivism in Tamilnadu has accepted 63 supreme saints belonging to various castes and occupations.

What do we need to attain the divine feet of light? Mind and body. Human body should be well fed and protected well. This is because the God dwells in miniature form in the body. Human beings, inflicted by the world of appearance (Maya) cannot identify the hiding “thief” in the body. Thirumoolar says:

Udambinul uruporul kandapin , udambinai yaan irundhu Ombukindrene

(It means: after realizing the “invaluable treasure” residing in my body, I have started fostering it.)

We must merge with God, present in the eyes in the form of light, and this unique experience leads us to the divine bliss. Man and Woman experience the temporary conjugal happiness in this world; however, at the higher level, God (*Paramaatma*), and the soul of man and woman together called *Jeevaatma*, mingle and merge and become one, out of supreme love. This is the divine bliss experienced by human soul, the highest form of happiness. This is immeasurable, and permanent appeasement. The God, macrocosm, attracts all human beings, the miniature microcosmic forms. This concept is symbolically presented: God is the superman and all souls are maid-servants of God. That is why Thirumoolar philosophically points out: *it is stupidity when a woman enjoys conjugal pleasure with another woman*. We may differ as male and female in physical form. The soul (Anma) has no sexual difference. All of them, both male and female are expected to love the supreme being. This is what Hindu religion succinctly calls: Nayaga – Nayagi (Husband – Wife) relationship.

This is the highest form of family life. Such persons will experience the divine bliss. They will have superb immortal life (life of deathlessness).

Chastity (Brahmacharyam) is necessary and obligatory for both worldly family life and spiritual family life. Those who are married must restrain themselves and have sexual pleasure once in fifteen days. This will improve their health. A married person will have sexual thirst frequently. But one must have self-control and divert their attention towards God and focus their attention only on God. This is possible when one practises self-restraint, realizing the significance of supreme bliss. If there is a will, the way is open to us.

“Brahmachari” (Chaste bachelor) is not one who remains unmarried. In the worldly sense, he is a chaste person who has not had any sexual pleasure with any one until his marriage. However, philosophically

the word is interpreted as one who is always depending on Brahman (God) with God-consciousness. Those who are in the married family life can achieve supreme state of bliss provided they follow the guidelines given by our spiritually-wise teachers.

Self-disciplined behaviour is the basis for all spiritual achievements. So many monks as heads of monasteries remain unmarried. They are not chaste bachelors. Their uncontrollable sexual desires bring ill fame to their status and the monasteries. If they are not self-disciplined with an ambition to serve people and guide them in the right path, why should they become monks and remain unmarried persons? Why should they cheat people? These monks will never change. Only the general public must identify them and avoid the company of bogus monks. Then only men and women will become good. God alone can save us.

Our culture has taught us that monogamy is the best form of family life. We must always focus our attention on God and this is the highest aim in life. One must have only one wife throughout the life. Man should not have extra-marital relationship. On the surface level, the word *kanavan* can be split into *kan* + *ava*. (Eyes + He). He must be as important as eyes, guiding the wife in the right path. Philosophically the word means “He is the eyes” – supreme God who protects all of us when the elderly people bless the girls, they say: *May you be blessed with a loving, caring husband and a prosperous life*. All these words refer to the spiritual wisdom. The presiding deity in the eyes (*kan*) will provide you with all kinds of comforts and peace of mind.

Avvaiyar, who did not want to lead a married life, prayed to God Vinayakar and became an elderly lady. Such a wise saint said these words: If the husband and wife understand each other they can live together (in good times and bad times) through ups and downs. On the contrary, if the wife is non-cooperative Avvaiyar strongly advised that the husband is free to become a monk, without informing anyone.

The great saint Aandal chose to marry the God, indweller of her soul, and staunchly prayed for fulfilment of her holy wish. At last, she became one with God. The saint Meera is another example of a human soul falling in everlasting love with God. While assuming a human body the soul has a male or female form. In fact, the soul in the human body does not have such a distinction. To tell the truth, all souls are expected to have fusion with God. Spiritually microcosmic souls are to be integrated with the universal macrocosmic divinity. This is the primary purpose of births in this world.

One who has irresistible temptation for sexual pleasures will surely be ruined sooner or later.

In this context, Vallalar pointed out: *maruvu pennaasaiyai marakkave vendum*. This means: lust for women must be shunned completely. The expression does not mean as some scholars interpret that a man must not marry a woman but become a monk. However, we must interpret the expression as given below.

Some people have excessive desire for sexual pleasure. Such people are warned against such inclination and such filthy lust must be completely abandoned from our mind. A line from Vivekachoodamani says: *seelai katriya matharai nambinal theruvil nirpare*”. This is changed as “*Selai kattiya matharai nambinal nadutheruvil nirparkal*”. It means: if you trust women you will lose everything and be left in lurches. This is a wrong interpretation. Your mother looked after you very well and advised you to become a responsible person. Has she led you in the wrong path? Has she left her son in the lurches? The expression has changed as days went by. The above expression “*Sel Akatriya*” means “giving signals to the lusty people through their eyes”. This refers to public women. If one trusts such a woman, she will desert him when he faces difficulties. He will lose self-respect and all his wealth eventually.

A chaste woman will not look at other men with lust. All men will be treated as brothers (except her husband). Vatsyayanar in his “*Kamasutra*” explains the people about conjugal pleasures and channelizes the feelings to experience the pleasures of family life in refined manner.

A systematic approach to conjugal love will give us a long health life. In order to lead such life one needs self-restraint and discipline. Scriptures advise us to have conjugal pleasure twice a month. Thirumoolar recommends that people can attain the wise state through married life with the help of a kind of yoga which he calls “pariyangi yoga”. In order to achieve this great state of wisdom one must practise self-restraint and deep love for God. Our spiritual teachers have shown the way to reach God through married life. The husband and wife must lead the family life according to the code of conduct prescribed by the spiritual teachers. Worldly life must be led with austerity; similarly, the spiritual life should also be lived with discipline. This is the highest form of family life. The male or female member must realize that union with God present in every soul is the best form of family life.

The conjugal love between a male and a female is, on the other hand, lower form of happiness. The soul endowed with male or female body seeks holy union with God. This is the highest form of spiritual joy. This truth, when realized, leads one to the highest form of happiness which is true, wise and everlasting.

Chapter 12 – Jnanam

Our ancestors have devised four paths to attain godhood. They are: Chariyai (Devotion), Kriyai(Action/Service), Yogam(Yogic exercises) and Gnanam(Wisdom). The great saints of yore have briefly explained: “Chariyai” refers to “cleaning the body (taking bath) and worshipping in the temple”. “Kriyai” includes worshipping divine sculptures, penance, chanting divine names and fire worship. “Yogam” performing different exercises for the mind and body.

“Jnanam” means “realizing one’s soul”. To reach the final stage of self-realization, we must ask the following: who am I? When was I born? How and why should we be born? What is meant by “birth”? The world has been in existence even before I was born. If so, where was I during that period? From where have I been born into this place? What is life? Why and for whom should I live? We must ask ourselves so many questions related to our existence and try to get answers for them.

Knowing about our souls is spiritual wisdom. Our souls reside in our bodies. God is present in our souls and manifests himself through the light of eyes. Our eyes are the entry points for all our experiences. If we focus our attention of our thoughts through eyes, we can see and speak to God through our mind. Being quiet and concentrating on the calmness of mind, one can acquire wisdom. The great spiritual wisdom is the outcome of quietness which provides us the greatest spiritual joy.

Our elders used to advise us: *kannum karuththumai iru*. This means: Be cautious and concentrate on the eyes. Soon you will enjoy the greatest pleasures.

Avviyar said: *monamenbathu jnana varambe*. It means: the way to attain wisdom is quiet eyes, and silence is the secret of success while attempting to obtain spiritual wisdom.

Complete knowledge is referred to as spiritual wisdom. Even if we keep on struggling to know the secrets of the universe through science we cannot succeed in these attempts. We may say that our scientific knowledge increases. However, scientists had been struggling to determine whether the earth is flat or round for many centuries. At last, they have decided that it is spherical. Our knowledge about science and other planets have developed during the past two hundred years. On the contrary, our ancestors have understood the nature of universe and position of planets through their penance and wisdom. They have designed their life constructively through their wisdom and spirituality. They have recorded their knowledge and experience about the universe in their writings called Almanac, Vedas, Epics and some other philosophical treatises.

The forms and functions of nature and the universe have been realized by our ancestors with the help of wisdom and the power of “inward eye”. The planets and their satellites have been symbolically identified by the saints. This has paved the way to understand the nature of universe and worship the planets according to their positions and movements.

In ancient days, people worshipped nature – its five elements known as earth, air, water, fire and ether. The nature of the five elements was understood by our ancestors and so they were deified. This is how the Hindu way of life (Sanadhana Dharma) was developed and practised as our tradition and then as our culture.

The saints have understood that the whole universe is made of five elements in different combinations and forms. They have realized the presence of universe in their microcosmic soul. The universe and human being are of the same substance. By sitting in a place and doing austere penance, they have understood the nature of universe and recorded the knowledge for future generations. We cannot read and understand all the treatises published by the saints even if we try to finish reading all of them in our life time.

Such a rare store house of knowledge has been offered to us. No other culture in the world is endowed with such a volume of knowledge about the universe. In fact, they are abundant in Tamil. It is difficult to read all the books, but choose the right kind of books which provide us everything about the spiritual wisdom. This is the succinct way of realizing God. All saints have told us in a special code. The world is made of five elements so also the human body is. In addition, we must understand the universe, in the minute form which is present in human eyes. God is present in the smallest part of eyes in the form of light. This is what the saints call the dance of Nataraja.

Once we realize this truth, and do penance, we will have no suffering in this life. When we lead such an austere life knowing this fundamental truth, we will realize all secrets of the universe. The God dwelling in our soul will guide us to acquire complete knowledge. Such knowledge is spiritual wisdom.

All saints of world have preached about the same spiritual state. The Bible, the Quran, the Vedas and scriptures of religious have showed us the path of wisdom. The aim is to know that God is one.

Nobody can deny this birth. However, people quarrel and differ in their views and beliefs.

Will this world become united and be one? Yes, it will. The ways and means are given in the ancient Hindu way of life. This is what we call “clean universal path” (*sanmaargam*). This path finds unity in diversity. Just as we have five fingers of different size and shape, people believing in different religions must become united with the feeling that we are children of God.

We must respect the beliefs and faiths of other people; we must never degrade them. Let us help each other make all people live happily. Everyone must be allowed to worship and follow the religion according to their choice. One must not be an impediment to others. Harm nobody through wicked or evil deeds; nor wound the feelings of others. God is one and the human race too.

If everyone realize this truth and practise these principles, the whole world will turn into Heaven. Be broadminded; treat other living beings just as you treat your own body and soul. Whether we are good to others or not, let us not harm others.

Our spiritual leaders in Tamilnadu have taught us the wisdom at all stages of life. Even the children in their play, “Blind man’s buff” have been taught about realizing God through sound waves and light. It is a game in which a player whose eyes are covered with a piece of cloth tries to catch and identify the other players by recognizing their voice.

This is the path of wisdom. We realize the power of eyes, concentrate and do penance, and eventually we hear the divine voice. Slowly it becomes ten different voices. If we carefully search for the origin of this voice, our mind will realize the divine light (Jyothi) and experience the vision of Jyothi (*Jyothi Dharishanam*)

Our eyes must be open for meditation. We must look inside and not what is presented to us in front of us. This is meditation, penance and wisdom. In India the spirituality and wisdom have been taught through games.

This is a sacred land. Saints ask others to make sure whether people know the answer. True entity is the holy feet which further means “eyes”. In short, all our attention will be towards eyes.

In Tamil, Spirituality is taught through arithmetic. What is ‘8’ plus ‘2’? Everyone will say “10”. This is a symbolic expression. Some saints have sung about this: They sang: *I do not know the meaning of “eight” and “two”*. In Tamil number “Eight” is represented as “a”, the first short vowel in the Tamil alphabet and “Two” is represented as “u”, the fifth vowel sound. These two numbers symbolically stand for the “Sun” and the “Moon” – ie., the right eye and the left eye. In short, they refer to “two eyes” Great saints used to sing that they had struggled without knowing the meaning of these two Tamil letters. Eight (a) and Two (u) becomes ten (ya). So, they stand for the sun, the moon and the fire (Agni). These three sparks are united through penance. This is what is to be achieved through meditation.

Vallalar blesses thus: these three sparks finally end in the illuminated feet of light (*Jyothi padham*).

Once a saint was giving a lecture in a religious festival. He asked the audience how many of them knew arithmetic – addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Some people put up their hands. Others did not understand the question and kept quiet. The saint further said: you know the process but have not understood the meaning.

The saint explained: first of all sweep the rubbish with a broom and collect all the unwanted things and then dispose them off. Don’t you know? All people laughed.

The speaker again asked: How many of you are doing these arithmetic operations? All of them indicated that they were doing them. Again the saint said that nobody in the congregation knew about it. Now the people were surprised.

The meaning is symbolic. He said: it is not sweeping the room, but sweeping the mind which is full of lust, enmity, jealousy and similar rubbish. All these bad qualities must not be allowed to grow, instead, they must be wiped off the mind. Then only the mind will experience the light. How many of you know the symbolic meaning of these operations? Everyone kept quiet to accept that they did not know the meaning.

One who knows the meaning of these operations will receive the spiritual wisdom after doing penance abiding by all the regulations connected with them.

Philosophically each word has a significant meaning. In Tamil we say: “Samiyaar”. It can be split into saami + yar (who is God?). One who meditates upon this question and does penance is called a “saamiyar”

Who is a saint? One who has realized that “I am in you” “Siddhar” is one who has complete control over his senses and becomes disciplined. “Kadavul” means that we will realize Him only when we come out of our mind.

The meaning of our life is to attain spiritual wisdom. Complete knowledge leads to spiritual wisdom which is achieved through disciplined approach by soul. This is what is explained throughout this book. Thirumoolar in *Thirumanthiram* says: The body is the temple; thinking about the right and left eyes will lead to unity with God. The saint points out that this is the process of penance. During the process the eyes meet the “heat” coming from the centre of the forehead and hears the sound and then experiences the sight of Shiva in the form of light. Thirumoolar explains to us about the method of doing penance and the divine experience we derive from it. Divine knowledge can be obtained by worshipping the feet of God.

Chapter 13 – Sound and Light

The whole universe is made of five elements which will come under the categories of sound and light. Likewise, the spirituality is the end of sound and light which are realized through one’s own experience.

The bases of science are sound and light. Science explores the external elements but spiritual wisdom (metaphysics) explores what are inside the mind and soul. What we explore outwardly is the same as what we explore inwardly. This is an accepted truth.

Science has been exploring new concepts and making discoveries and initiatives. There is no end to these explorations.

Saints explore what is inside and have come to definite conclusions realizing the nature of universe, human soul and God. The saints after receiving the complete knowledge, tell us what is required for our well-being. They live a disciplined quiet life with love for fellow beings.

Thunder and lightning show us the significance of sound and light.

As we do penance, we concentrate on the light in our eyes, and the light enters the body through the eyes. The light reaches the place in between top of the skull and above the throat. Right eye represents the sun and the left eye stands for the moon. The light goes inside and becomes warm, then hot and afterwards the light (Jyothi). During this process, we hear the sound in ten different notes. Finally, we get the divine vision of light.

In temple during the time of worship we start with sounds of musical instruments. The sounds are followed by lamp of lights showed before the main God or Goddess. Finally, a single light is offered to the main deity. We undergo the same steps in our meditation process. What we experience in our body and mind are symbolically demonstrated in the temple worship.

Arunagirinathar in one of his songs (Thiruppugazh) says: “Naada Vindhu Kalathi namo nama”. “Naadham” means “sound” and “Vindhu” means “light”.

Lord Muruga, as narrated by saints, was born from the rays of light which came from the third eye of Lord Shiva. Lord Muruga destroys the demons and converts one of them to a “cock” and another one a “peacock”. The cock crows in the morning . It makes noise. Peacock give colourful feathers which stands for light. There are seven colours in the feathers. The rainbow colours are reflections from the sunlight. As we do penance we first of all see the seven colours. Finally, we have the Jothi darshan (seeing the great light). Based on this philosophical concept, Ramalinga Swamigal showed the great light after opening seven curtains, one after another. This is performed in Vadalur on Thaipooam day. The divine experience is sung in the following lines :

Vaanaththin meethu mmayil aadakkanden, mayil kuil aachchuthadi

As we proceed in the path of penance we see the seven colours as divine vision and then hear the divine sound which finally ends in *Jothi dharishanam* Everlasting life is possible only through some spiritual process. Our body is made of flesh, bone, nerves and other elements. The seed of past actions must be fried and made impotent in the fire of wisdom. Thus we are washed off all three impurities – pride (ego), Past actions (karma) and illusion (*maaya*, transitory nature of the world we see) by the fire of wisdom. Then we can attain self-realized state of salvation in the present birth itself.

Thirumoolar and other siddhars (enlightened souls) have explained ten divine sounds experienced by wise saints. All temples have the religious ritual based on light and sound in order to show the divine experience through penance.

The great poet, Bharathiar has sung:

“Oh, the people with bright light in the eyes, you are thrice welcome!”

The sound of music has been used as a holy path to attain divinity. As the devotees sing sweetly, their heart melts with divine love and eventually God appears before them. Saint Thiyagarajar sang songs in praise of Lord Rama. As he rendered the songs with so much devotion, Lord Rama used to appear before him. The devotees experienced the divine presence and had inexplicable divine bliss. So many saints have attracted the divine light through the sound of sweet holy music.

So long as the body has the light and heat, man is alive, once they leave the body, man becomes a corpse. The basis of life is light. If we search for the sound with the help of the light in our body, we will become the self-realized souls.

Let us think about “beauty”. clothes, ornaments, physical beauty, youthfulness, flowers, garlands or decorations are not beautiful. When we light a lamp or series of lamps in the house or temple, the place becomes bright and beautiful. The festival of lights symbolically represents that only light will lead you to an eternal life. Thus the light makes other things bright and sparkling.

The Bible guides us through this meaningful message: “The Lord manifests himself in the form of light. If you walk in the path of light, you can see the Lord. Eyes are the guiding lamp for the human being. If your eyes are bright, your body will also be bright”.

This is enough to know and realize the state of divine wisdom.

The human mind must understand the truth behind the spiritual thoughts and start thinking about the truth and do research again and again, constantly thinking about the ways and means to attain salvation. One must approach the persons who have complete knowledge about the path of salvation. Consult the persons who have already realized the divinity through the path of spiritual wisdom, follow the guidelines offered by them. This is the beginning of the state of spiritual wisdom.

Many people came to spread religion and were dead and gone because of their arrogance and ego centric nature. However, Caldwell and G.U.Pope learnt Tamil; translated “Thirukkural” and “Thiruvashagam” into English; and thus did a remarkable service to humanity. Moreover, it was Arumuga Navalar from Yazhpanam, Sri Lanka who first translated the Bible into Tamil.

When we go beyond the religious fervour, the humanity and universal love for all living things will be realized as the ultimate path to salvation.

Vallalar says: Once I gave up dirty mean arguments about the caste and creed, I experienced the divine light of grace. Caste and creed are the dangerous viruses – stumbling blocks – that hinder our path leading to divinity.

Saints who have divine spiritual wisdom aim at the same goal even if they belong to different religions. Gunangudi Masthan, Thayumanavar, Thakkalai Peer Muhamed, Pattinathar, Agasthiar and Vallalar have spoken differently but the message is one – the path of wisdom.

They have shared their experiences with us about the God who has been in the form of light. Appar, Sundarar, Gnana Sambanthar and Manickavasagar have discussed the *complete wisdom* about divinity.

Man, wherever he is, has more or less the same body temperature. Likewise, the God is present in all living beings inside the soul as life giving light.

The secrets of birth and death of human beings is beyond the scope of science. Once a human being identifies, realizes the presence of light, and becomes a part of it, he can control his life.

When man acquires the complete wisdom, he becomes a saint whose knowledge and wisdom shine brilliantly and transform himself as a powerful saint called “Siddhar”. Bharathiar asks : “Do these two eyes represent the sun and the moon?”

Abhirami Pattar refers to Goddess: “ the eye which emits the potential light”. Avvaiyar says: “The basis of salvation lies in the light and heat emerging from the Sun when they reach the powerful Moon”

Vallalar proclaims: “I was blessed with the power to transform this perishable body into an ever-shining body of light”.

We can develop the limited heat already present in the body into an immensely great fire through austere penance. As a result, the body becomes illumined body of light. This is what great saints (Siddhars) have achieved. We can also achieve this state when we try. The enlightened saints will rush to help such souls.

All these saints have reached the supreme state, with the blessings of God. They will surely lend a hand to uplift our souls into the higher state of wisdom and liberation. They will be with us and protect us forever. Let us achieve our supreme goal with the blessings of enormously powerful saints.

Electrical and Electronic goods are made for the worldly comforts. Should we not kindle the light in us and make ourselves enlightened souls?

Let us light the lamp of wisdom in our souls to remove the darkness called ignorance. As a result, our face glows with brilliance which spreads throughout the body and an “aura” develops around the body. Eventually, there should be “aura” (circular glowing light) around one’s head

We must increase the power and lead the life with the light of wisdom.

Once Vallalar was returning from Chidambaram along with some friends and followers. Suddenly it started raining and everyone except Vallalar got drenched in the rain. Vallalar was not at all wet as the rain drops were evaporated by the heat transmitted from his body.

Once a disciple wanted to ask why Vallalar covers his head with cloth. Immediately Vallalar read his mind, and uncovered his head. There was a bright aura around his head and on seeing this the disciple could not withstand the bright light and fell unconscious.

Vallalar is the embodiment of light. That is why he insisted that enormous light is to be worshipped as God. That is why he had given us the short and succinct new adage in praise of light. The holy chant, “Arutperum Jyothi”.

Vallalar preached what he practised. He made his body into an illumined one in order to lead a perennial, everlasting life of deathlessness. Vallalar was born in Maruthur on 5th October 1823. He mingled with the divine light on January 30, 1874, the Thaipooasam day. One who lived and moved with human body became a saint with illumined body of light. This is the most recent incident of becoming an illumined body in the history.

Nandanar, the great devotee of Lord Natarajar was asked to pass through the fire – pit by the Brahmins of Chidambaram. This was a severe test for Nandanar to show that he was a great devotee born in a humble low-caste family. Nandanar made his body into a light filled body and made himself fiery (fire could not burn the fiery body). He passed through the fire and stood firm against the ill-will of the priests. As a result, he was appreciated and honoured by the temple priests at Chidambaram. Nandanar was a saint who made his body full of light and heat. In our country, there are so many saints who made the physical body into a body of light and lived a perennial, everlasting life. Manickavasagar merged and mingled with Lord Natarajar in Chidambaram after becoming embodiment of light. Let us have some more examples. Badragiriar became the light at Thiruvidadaimaruthur. Saint Gnanasambanthar reached heavenly Mount Kailash along with his wife and relatives. Andal became one with Ranganathar in Srirangam. There are so many instances to show us that many saints, and enlightened souls became one with God in the form of light.

Chapter 14 Become A Human

We are all human beings in form. But we have so many animal instincts hiding in our mind. We lose the humanitarian attitude on many occasions. Why? This is because of our selfishness and greed / (extreme desire for wealth/gain) avarice.

We start learning about the moral code of conduct as prescribed in our religious texts even from the first standard in the school. We read and forget. We never realize their importance and so do not practice such moral codes in our life.

We have been learning the great epics – the Ramayanam and the Mahabharatham. It is a great pity that we have not understood the message offered by them.

All these lessons are said and written repeatedly in a monotonous way. What is the use? We never aspire to become better persons like the enlightened ones. We feel that we know them already. But it is the arrogance and ignorance which stop us from going up the ladder of wisdom. What we have learnt is much less than what is still remaining. People have not realised this truth.

Human beings belong to one of multitudinous organisms living in the universe. Man differs according to their knowledge, desire, avarice and other animal instincts, even though human race is one. Among so many thousands of people only a few are humane persons. Identify them and become associated with them. Let us surrender to the feet of saints and increase the number of persons searching for true wisdom. The primary duty of a human being is to become a humane person.

A saint is one who treats all living organisms as his own soul and realizes that all have equal right and privileges to live in this world. Such a saint is the spiritual teacher for us.

Who is a human being? One who worships his mother and father as God. He gives importance to temple worship and prays there. One who surrenders to the feet of spiritual teacher and follow his teachings.

In order to reach God doing penance thinking about Him continuously is another duty of man. One who treats all humans equally as he loves himself.

One who thinks deeply about the God who resides in every one of us. He understands the significance of subtle numbers “two” and “eight” and aims at reaching the final state of “eight”.

One who has realized the truth about five elements and staunchly sticks to them is a human being. Light is the surest guide to those who want to realize the presence of God in them. One who believes that the holy chanting of “Om” is the omnipresent ruler of the world.

All time potion of perennial cure is God. One who realizes this and surrenders to Him for permanent cure is the human being. We can identify man by these qualities. One who brings peace to one’s own mind is a human being. One who walks along the path of virtues, without being diverted by evil path, is a true human being.

Once a naked monk was sitting in a corner of a street commented on the people. He said: “here goes the ox”; “here goes the fox” like that. When Vallalar passed along the road, he said, “here comes a virtuous man!” and covered his nakedness with his hands. This happened during the days of Ramalinga Swamigal. A human being must lead such a virtuous life.

A mother will be happy only when her son is appreciated as a wise person. On that occasion she will be happier than when the son was born of her womb.

One who leads a disciplined life following the code of conduct, will be praised and worshipped as a wise man. He will be applauded as a great achiever in this world.

Bharathiar sang: It is better to educate a poor person than to build many choultries to feed the people. We understand the message on the surface level. But deeper level meaning is about providing spiritual wisdom to people. There are two stages in spiritual experience: one is “outside” and the other is “inside”. Those who practise devotion must be provided with food. On the other hand, if you want to raise them to the level of “inside” stage, then teach them the path of spiritual wisdom. Providing wisdom is the best form of service to humanity.

On the deeper level, “teaching letters” is what Bharathiar meant by those words. The letters are “eight” and “two” “a” and “u”. It is better to teach the significance of these two letters and make people self realized and pave the way for their salvation than building many choultries to feed the hungry.

Teach the spiritual wisdom. I have written 12 books to illustrate the importance of spiritual wisdom and explained the ways and means to achieve it.

Kanmanimalai and *Arulmanimalai* are meant for attaining the salvation through the path of spiritual wisdom.

Let the wisdom be spread to others in the world. Once we see the world with “wise eyes”, we can lead a peaceful life. Good people will associate themselves with us. Lotus, when blossoms does not invite the bee, so also when we do austere penance and attain wisdom, God will guide you in the right path. Everything that happens to you will bring goodness to you.

As we surrender ourselves to God totally, then all our activities becomes Godly. Only when we surrender completely to the will of God, and lead our life austerely every act of ours will become divine act. Suppose people do all kinds of deadly sins like killing and claim that there are acts of God, the government and law courts will not accept your dogmatic argument.

If you kill somebody, it is the act of God. Then death sentence given to you is also an act of God. Let us think about it. How does every act become an act of God? God provides opportunities to the soul to perform good and bad acts and makes it be born again into the world. It helps the soul become free from the cycle of birth and death and liberate from the bondage of birth.

It is our duty to use the little knowledge to wash our sins through good acts by seeking the guidance of a spiritual teacher and getting spiritual wisdom through a true teacher. By doing penance and surrendering to the will of God, we must release ourselves from the fruits of good and bad acts. This is how we can achieve the great perennial state of deathlessness – the everlasting life.

To reach our spiritual goals, numerous saints and God will come to our help. We must work hard to reach such a stage. Everything lies in our hands. We must work for it.

The vast universe is managed by God, the headmaster. He gives admission to us in the school called the earth. Spiritually wise teachers teach us lessons. We learn about the arithmetic of virtues and vices and nature of human soul; appearance and reality about desire, love, relatives and the nature of bondage and liberation.

At the end of learning process, we write examinations. One who scores 100% is treated as passed candidate and will be offered a teaching position.

One who has failed and become frustrated will be given supplementary tuition by saints. Thus we must go through the tests and overcome the cycle of births and deaths. One who fails undergoes the learning process until he finally crosses over the cycle of birth and death on the earth. This is what we must realize. As a result, he becomes quiet while others clatter with useless words. Learn where you are and improve your wisdom. If you dodge, you must go through the process of birth and death again and again.

If you find the learning difficult, seek the help of saints and their books will be of immense help to make you understand the life in this exam. You cannot copy from others and cheat the examiners because all these examiners are fully qualified to teach and guide you through fair means. In this school, truth, hard work, determination, strong will power, self-discipline, humility and such other qualities are taught. When you master these lessons, you will succeed. Prepare yourself for such a test. Spiritual teachers are there to help you then and there. The best person wins.

In the field of drama, if you assume the role of a dog, you must behave like a dog and bark at strangers. In human form, our role is to learn through suffering and reach the goal. As you lead a humane life, you enjoy the perennial life of deathlessness.

Just like spiritual saints, there were many patriotic political leaders who sacrificed their lives and comforts and got independence for our country. During the freedom struggle thousands of Indians sacrificed their lives. But it was Mahatma Gandhi who coordinated millions of Indians through non-violence and peaceful demonstrations of non-cooperation. Perhaps the only country which got independence from colonialists through non-violent methods is India. Mahatma Gandhi is the only apostle of non-violence during his time. That is why he is called Mahatma (the great soul).

Our ancestors have taught us the spiritual guidance through their speeches and writings. We must learn their teachings and lead a disciplined life.

Doing penance peacefully in order to realize God makes you a humane person.

Just like the swan which can separate milk from water we must learn to follow virtues and shun vices.

How to become a humane person?

Practise what Avvaiyar has preached and follow the path of truth and love. Lead a self-disciplined life as advocated by your mother and do penance to purify yourself.

When you seek the omnipresent God by learning about yourself, control your thoughts and words. Aim at liberation and you need not renounce the family life and go to forest to do penance.

To become a permanent entity, lead a life of truth and adhere to the principles of wise leaders.

Do not search for a spiritual teacher. Realise about your self and learn the art of attaining perennial wealth of spiritual knowledge.

Learn to lead the life of love, peace and light so that you will enjoy spiritual bliss in both the present life and the life hereafter. Learn to live a life of deathlessness and sleep without closing your eyes.

Practise universal brotherhood of man and all living organisms (*Jeevakarunyam*). We must be charitable to realize the light in the forehead.

We have so many ancient saints to lead us who born in different epochs. Let us learn from them and become mellowed with their teachings.

Oh God! lead us in to the everlasting immensely great light so that we can get relief from the sufferings of this birth and become immortal without any future births and deaths.

15- Do nothing with mind – Summa Iru

Oh God! I do not know when I would be able to control my mind and travel through various worlds of the universe and be quiet and peaceful in the space beyond.

It does not mean inactivity; but find up peace, rest and happiness in the mind. The restless mind must start concentrating on one thought. As we all know the mind is restless; it goes on jumping from one thought to another. In order to anchor our mind, we must resort to certain sure ways. For example we can learn recite a particular word, or phrase continuously. We can sing religious songs in praise of God. We can avoid going to various places, but visit temples. Instead of involving in violent and undesirable acts, we can sit and read religious and philosophical treatises. We can meet spiritual teachers and have philosophical discussions. We can tell others about the meaning of life. We can write and publish books.

Somehow or other, the mind must revolve around spiritual thoughts always. Thus we must realize where our mind anchors and rests.

God dwells in two eyes in the body as the soul. Our mind stays in the eyes which are responsible for the thoughts of the mind. We often mention that we see through our mind's eye. Thus eyes are responsible for our rise and fall in the life. Eyes are the root cause of all our thoughts – both lustful feelings and

saintly thoughts are brought forth by eyes. Let us not look at things outwardly. We must see inwardly and look into eyes. This will make you experience a rare feeling, beyond the eyes. This is what one must achieve.

When the feeling is inside, mind will not go out. Mind will concentrate on the inner feeling of divinity. As we practise this experience on and off then mind will have its own control on the feelings and thoughts. Finally mind becomes inactive and restful. The soul will not feel that there is mind. This is “the supreme state of being peaceful and mindless” (_Summa Iru_).

“Being mindless” is a rare and extraordinary state of soul.

The following incident illustrates the significance of this state. Once an auditor visited a temple and checked the accounts of the temple. There was an entry about providing food (ball of rice) to someone who was sitting quietly without any activity. The auditor asked the accountant why he provided food for an inactive person, a lazy person. Servants of the temple took him to the saint who was sitting quietly. The auditor asked him what he was doing in the temple. The saint replied that he was not doing anything, just sitting with an inactive mind;. “should we provide you food for doing nothing?” asked the auditor.

The saint asked if the auditor could sit quietly. The auditor said it was quite easy for him and sat near the saint. Immediately he started thinking about his auditing work he had to finish. He also felt that he was arguing with the monk and wasting his time. He became restless and could not spend even a minute without flow of thoughts. After five minutes he admitted his defeat and instructed the temple authorities to provide two balls of rice instead of one for the same saint who sat without any activity of thoughts.

It is really a tough task to be quiet with inactive mind. Thoughts flow continuously. The penance is the way to become mindless. It is through the meditation of divine feet that we achieve this inactive, thoughtless mind. Soon we will realize that we will become Lord Shiva. “The divine feet lead you to become Shiva”, says Thirumoolar.

Mind must become inactive. Active mind generates thoughts which must be made to disappear through the power of penance. This is true successful achievement. So many saints have sung in praise of meditating upon God’s feet. They have expressed these spiritual guidelines through subtle phrases which can be understood by wise interpretations. This is because the sages of _____ expect us to think and understand the meaning independently, and analyze the meaning and become wise.

Complete knowledge leads one to wisdom. Then practise what you have learnt. This will provide you necessary experience and the experience will make you realize the significance of supreme enlightenment.

Some of the expressions about the worldly life must be interpreted carefully. The deeper meaning is beyond our imagination. For example: “_____”. On the surface level it means : The wife who had been protected by her husband, was kidnapped by another man. Succinctly it means: one who protects us is Maha Vishnu. His consort is goddess Lakshmi who symbolically represent wealth. “Another man” refers to thieves and robbers. So the subtle meaning is: one struggles hard and saves money; the hard earned money is taken away by thieves and robbers.

The messages is: “even money and property will desert you one day or other”. We create, protect and destroy things. Thus, we perform all the three activities of God. Everything is inside us. As we think more and more about the wisdom, and realize the true nature of man and our wisdom spreads far and wide throughout the universe. This is what we mean by “complete knowledge”.

Vallalar once mentioned: Now my wisdom spreads throughout the earth, planets and goes across the vast space of universe which consists of many solar systems. What we could not even imagine about the universe, the saint have experienced the presence of vast space and the universe.

Must we not understand that there is such a stage? If we lead the life of an ordinary man, it leads to rebirth. We must realize the divine path through our eyes and drink the divine nectar and grow to become one with God. This is what the exp Such a life is the perennial life of deathlessness. We are alive because of the supreme power of God.

We are “selfless” souls aiming to become one with God. This is the self-realized state of perfection for the soul (Mukthi).

The most suitable path to realize the supreme God is “summa iru” (be in the inactive state of mind).

People follow different paths of liberation, yoga and austere penance. This is not at all necessary.

Lord Murugan went round the world in order to get the fruit of wisdom from her parents. But Lord Vinayagar went round the parents and claimed the fruit. The left eye is Sakthi (the mother goddess) and the right eye is Shiva, the father. If you go around your parents you can reach the supreme state of wisdom.

Avvaiyar says: the moon and the sun are responsible for the liberation from birth and deaths.

People advocate many forms of worship to satisfy gods. But God advised “be thoughtless” (___) to Arunagirinathar. He enjoyed worldly pleasures, suffered greatly and finally decided to commit suicide from the tower of Tiruvannamalai temple. When he jumped Lord Muruga, disguised as a Brahmin priest saved him and said, “summa iru”. He sat in the pillared hall and started penance to achieve inactive state of mind. Finally when he realized God, Arunagirinathar became a parrot in the hand of Lord Muruga and became one with Him. Arunagirinathar praises God in his Thiruppugal song: “I have not understood the deep meaning of the holy phrase “summar iru”. The great master Lord Muruga has neither birth nor death”.

He also insisted: It is not necessary to wear saffron clothes, grow beard, eat fruits and live in the forest. The soul must find solace in the cool lotus feet of God (the two eyes). This is what we must achieve in this life.

Let me tell you my dearest people if you want to conquer death, “practise thoughtless mind”. The God, the purest form of divinity is to be accepted as our “husband” and become one with Him. Lord Krishna is known as “Kannan” (). Meditate upon him – the pupil of the eye. This is the greatest and highest form of happiness.

These secrets of divine wisdom must be known to all of us. The spiritual saints wanted all of us to know these succinct paths to live a life of deathlessness. I have expressed openly these secrets of attaining spiritual wisdom in both treatises – *Kanmani Maalai* and *Arulmani Maalai*. Regarding the knowledge of spiritual path there is nothing to hide. I have made it open to all.

If saints hide these spiritual knowledge they are doing irreparable harm to society. They must hide the evils of the society. Instead, through mass media, they make anything public throughout the world and spoil the mind of others. There is no one to question this.

There are many spiritual leaders and bogus monks who hide secrets of self-realization and liberation from the public and lead a comfortable life in this world.

All saints have expressed the ways and means of achieving supreme state of deathlessness, in order to make people follow the path of righteousness.

The saints wanted people to know all about the worldly life and the ways to become divine souls. The _____ about the path of wisdom lies in handling the methods and not in hiding them from the public. The saints wanted to share their knowledge and divine experience with all of us. The saints have expressed their views of conjugal love too. “Kamasutra” tells us how we should experience the physical relationship. Adhi Sankarar has talked about this. As a Tamil saying tells us : Learn about everything including stealing and then forget it. However, you must forget evil ways; learn about the wise path and lead the life of righteousness. According to saints, conjugal relationship also has relevance in this life, so long as the disciplined practice of physical relationship is maintained. If one realizes this, he can lead good life with power and efficiency.

Human soul is covered with three types of impurities. Once we burn these impurities with the heat produced from the penance and divine knowledge, the souls become pure, brilliantly shining. The true nature of soul will be revealed. This is the achievement of human soul through spiritual wisdom.

The divine light is experienced through eyes; practice of penance through the eyes will lead one step by step to the perennial life of deathlessness. Being with restless thoughtless mind is the way to reach the highest blissful state. Let the beautiful enormous beam of light shower his blessings on you!

16 Tthiruvadi-deekshai

In 1980, I was anointed by wise saint Jothi Ramasamy Desikar in Trichy.

After practising staunchly for 12 years, I was able to write “Kanmani Malai (*The Garland of Divine Wisdom*)”.

In 1992, I got married and brought forth my son after a year. Vallalar named the boy as “Suyam Jothi”.

After six years, in 1998, Jothi Ramasamy Desikar, my guru (spiritual teacher), before departing from the world ordered me to take charge of his ashram and succeed him as guru and blessed me. Jothi Ramasamy Desikar Swamigal was the disciple of Balaianandha Swamigal who descended from Adhinayaga Swamigal who had the title “Thirukayilaya Paramparai”.

Until this incident, I was conducting religious congregations and discourses to those who came for spiritual wisdom. Now, 24 years passed after anointment through holy feet. On the 180th birthday of Vallalar, the saints and their disciples insisted that I should guide the people as a leader and accept the seat of guru. By the blessings of guru and the grace of God I accepted the guru’s seat by the will of God.

12 years have passed after anointment and then I was fortunate enough to write *Kanmani Maalai*, a unique book on wisdom.

After another 12 years, I was offered the seat of spiritual teacher and soon *Arulmani Maalai* was published. I was blessed to write and publish this second book on divine spiritual wisdom.

Vallalar has made a reference to “Kanmani Maalai” in his song numbered 1371 of *Thiruarutpa*. He blessed me (the author) about 150 years before.

It is a rare privilege for me to get such a great guide and guru and as a result the rare divine experience has made my life holy.

God has blessed me with the rare opportunity to anoint the fellow beings through the guidance of so many saints and sages who have been with me protecting and blessing me always. Moreover, goddess Bhagavathi at Kanniakumari has been blessing me and I submit myself to the lotus feet of the goddess. God has blessed me with the duty of anointing the fellow beings, and provided me with joyful, loving, peaceful spiritual life.

I have been endowed with the privilege of anointing the people into the spiritual path of wisdom. My only service is to give anointment to the people who came forward to follow this path.

Oh, fellow beings with universal love and compassion for all! Read *Kanmani Maalai* and *Arulmani Maalai*. The path of spiritualism will be open to you.

Those who are interested are welcome here; realize the nature of soul; lead the life of pure consciousness.

Human race is one, as God is one. Pure path of spiritualism for all is Sanadhana Dharmam.

The path which leads us to realize God is what we call “Thiruvadi Dheekshai”. There are ten steps in this path for the follower. The tenth step is called “Thiruvadi Dheekshai”.

Symbollically “Thiruvadi” means “Two eyes”. Readers must have understood this. “Kanmani Maalai” and “Arulmani Maalai” proclaim the same conception. The spiritual saint with his highest form of wisdom infuses the self-realization in the mind of a disciple through the “eyes” called “Thiruvadi” (The holy feet). Jesus Christ says in the Bible: Another divine form will come to the world who will give you spiritual rebirth through the heat of fire and the power of his exalted pure soul.

It is the same process of giving spiritual rebirth(bath) through heat and eyes, which has been mentioned in the Bible. This is what we mean by “Thiruvadi Dheekshai”.

The path of wisdom through the eyes (holy feet) and heat is given as “Thiruvadi Dheekshai”. One who receives the path of wisdom is born again. The Bible says: one who is not reborn, will not enter the kingdom of Heaven.

“Twijayan” means “one who is born twice”. Saint Agasthiar points out: you have to find an alternative to the path of renunciation. What he means the alternative path, is the path of “Thiruvadi Dheekshai”.

It is really a rare opportunity to be born as a human being. “Dhaanam” (teaching spiritual path to others) and “Thavam” (doing penance after anointment) called “Thiruvadi Dheekshai” are extremely rare to find in human beings. In short “Dhaanam” is spreading the supreme spiritual wisdom and “Thavam” is doing penance through Thiruvadi Dheekshai and finally being in a blissful state with silent inactive mind.

Whatever I have learnt and realized as eternal truth have been told repeatedly in these treatises. This is done out of love for all fellow beings. My intention is that all of you must understand and receive spiritual wisdom.

God will bless us all. Oh, fellow beings who practice universal compassion, understand that both books – *Kanmani Maalai* and *Arulmani Maalai* are like “two eyes” for a human being. They convey the secrets of spiritual path of wisdom. You must spread this message to as many people as you can. Show them the path of spiritual wisdom. Buy these two books, distribute them and the message as far as you can. This is what we call the “Gnana Dhaanam” (doing the charitable act of spreading the spiritualism).

Come to Kanniakumari, Bountiful **Kannia Kumari** will bless you all.