



**TEACHINGS
OF
SAINT. RAMALINGA**



THE . TEACHINGS OF ST. RAMALINGAR

By

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Publisher's Note.

We have great pleasure in publishing this book entitled, "Teachings of Saint Ramalingar" in English particularly for the benefit of those who live abroad. This book contains the gist of St. Ramalingar's work 'Jivakarunya Ozhukkam'. The author Sri. A. Nagaswami Ayyar B. A., B. L. Retired District Judge has presented the tenets of St. Ramalingar's Jivakarunya Ozhukkam in this book in a simple and lucid style. We thank him profusely for having undertaken this noble job.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to Sri. V. Shunmuga Iyer, Chairman, The Muthulinganatha Easparar Alayam and Arutpa Kazhagam, Cato Manor, Durban, South Africa who has as usual defrayed the entire expenses in bringing out this book. His fervent devotion to St. Ramalingar is really admirable.

Our thanks are due to Sri A. M. Iyavoomurthi, Secretary Ramalinga

Swamigal Nilayam, Durban for sending a message of appreciation. We are profoundly grateful to Sri. A. Nelayappa Pillai, Tirunelveli, who has rendered a valuable help in reading the proofs.

26, East Car Street,
TIRUNELVELI-6.
(SOUTH INDIA)

S. MUTHUSAMY
Secretary,
SAMARALA SANMARGA
SANGAM



PREFACE

Sri S. Muthusami, Secretary, Sanmarga Sangam requested me to undertake the work of translating Saint Ramalingar's Jivakarunya ozhukkam. I felt reluctant and diffident but he encouraged and insisted and hence I took up the task. But I have not given a translation literally. I have only attempted to collect the basic ideas found in the treatise and given a gist of it. Jivakarunyam can be said to be the loftiest ideal of the Hindu Religion. Jivakarunyam at its lowest is the motive force impelling a good man to throw a naya pisa to the beggar, throw a few crumbs of bread to the crow and offer a cup of water to the thirsty. At the same time, it is the soul force which impelled a King like Asoka, conqueror and warrior to renounce war, a prince like Sidarthar to leave the palace and family and the great saints and sages to tread the earth beneath their feet with care and caution lest any living being crawling under should be harmed. Jivakarun-

yam enforces love of God, love of the universe and the beings in it, self sacrifice and self effacement. Jivakarunyam is more than a Yegnam (யஜ்ஞம்). It is very difficult to practice in its fullest and complete sense. It takes several births to realise its full significance and practice it in its strictest sense. Every hour man commits 'himsa' harm to some being or other. For his food or his comforts, he has to cause "himsa" harm to another being. The insects and creatives that are sacrificed for man's food, comfort and well being run into billions. But ideals are necessary and only in the course of several births, man obtain enlightenment. After several births, one is born a saint or a sage like Ramalingar. Even in modern times, we see America and Russia keen on providing food to the less fortunate brotheren in the other countries of the world. What induces these two countries to think of their poor neighbours? It is only Jivakarunyam. So this feeling of Jivakarunyam pervades the whole world. Other forces

work to efface this good feeling in the minds of the men. Ambition, selfishness, aggrandizement, and love of power, try to smother the fine feeling of (compassion) Jivakarunyam inherent in the minds of man. But that fine feeling of Jivakarunyam persists. It cannot be put out. It will glimmer through all darkness and it glows with brightness like a torch here and there and it was Ramalingar who bore the glowing torch aloft in this country. It is the sacred duty of all to keep this light of Jivakarunyam burning and glowing, each according to his means and strength.

It may be asked why there is so much emphasis on Jivakarunyam by Ramalingar. The answer is found in the french novel *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo. It is there stated as follows:

“Oh Thou who art! Ecclesiastes name Thee the Almighty; Maccabaes names thee the creator; the epistle to the Ephesians names Thee liberty; Baruch names Thee Immensity; The psalms name Thee wisdom and truth;



John names Thee light; The book of Kings names thee lord; Exodus calls Thee Providence; man names Thee father; but Solomon names Thee compassion" and that is the most beautiful of all Thy names.

Ramalingar also names God as Jivakarunyam (compassion). What similarity of thought and feeling! With these musings, I float this small pamphlet.

A. NAGASWAMI



MESSAGE FROM SOUTH AFRICA

In this modern era of man's inhumanity to man with the great powers of the world on the brink of genocide our heads are reverently uplifted to heaven in prayer to the almighty to relieve humanity of untold suffering and misery.

Coinciding with this also is the scourge of disease which is eating its cancerous way into the lives of men, women and children. How then are we going to ensure the existence of future generations, lest insensate total annihilation possess this earth?

The answer can be found readily in the revival of our scriptures and the propagation of our religion in a simple, but dignified manner so as to rearm ourselves not physically, but morally and spiritually.

Our search then must be for concepts embracing a well ordained life and an eternal light to penetrate the inky darkness of the souls of the lawless.

As one who has studied the outstanding works of the great saints and sages of India, I draw the attention of your readers to the universality of the Saint Ramalingar's teachings, his wisdom in non-sectarianism and a true compassion for all living things.

It is with reference to the latter ideal of the saint that this book is published. Jeevakaruniam is the concept of compassion for all living things. It is an innate quality to be found in man, and which flourishes from his birth to his adolescence, but tends to become latent thereafter. It is this factor which in young children manifests itself in kindness to animals or in parents their maternal instinct.

To summarise then Jeevakaruniam is the compassionate love one bears for one's fellow beings, animals, birds and insects. *VIDE*: 'வாடிய பயிரைக் கண்டபோதெல்லாம் வாடினேன்' or when he calls to the people to fill up the tills, not to enrich the coffers, but to fill the stomachs of the poverty-stricken and thus relieve hunger and its attendant evils of squalor, misery and suffering.

All such ideals of St. Ramalingar have been presented in this book in a

concise form. In this connection, I would like to make a special mention of the philanthropic attitude of Sri. V. S. Iyer, Chairman of the Muthulinganatha Easwarar Alayam and Arutpa Kazhagam, Cato Manor, Durban, South Africa, without whose financial assistance this book would not have seen the light of the day. His inestimable devotion for St. Ramalingar and his untiring zeal for propagating St. Ramalingar's teachings deserve due recognition by all. The Samarasa Sanmarga Sangam of Tirunelveli which publishes this book is all along rendering great service to humanity since its inception in the year 1946 under the able secretaryship of Sri. S. Muthuswami.

I have great pleasure in recommending this book to the public for spiritual enlightenment.

May the gracious light of the Arut Perum Jyothi cast its ever glowing light upon all and so illumine their lives as to live a peaceful life of coexistence.

A. M. Jyavoomurthy

SECRETARY,

**Ramalinga Swamigal Nilayam,
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA.**

JIVAKARUNYA OZHUKKAM

(Compassion towards all living beings)

This is one of the prose works of Ramalinga Vallalar, a treatise on the philosophical religious and ethical aspects of Jivakarunyam (Compassion). Ramalingar has written both prose and poetry. His devotional songs are well known. They are noted for their simplicity, profound thought and beauty. They bear comparison to the Thevaram hymns and the Thiruvasagam. The poems of Vallalar were the outpourings from the heart of the saint and sage. They have the sweetness of honey, the freshness of flowers and the easy flow of the running stream. They are gems radiating the pure light of philosophical wisdom. They contain in themselves high and lofty thoughts. Each verse, simple in its beauty and conception, contains profound and lofty truths. Such is his poetry.

In Ramalingar's times, writing in prose was rare and writers generally resorted to poetry when they wanted to write on any subject. Even medicine and sciences were written in poetry. Ramalingar struck a new path as was his wont! (He was a prophet and preacher for all the world. He wanted his teachings to reach all the people, not only the very learned who could understand poetry but also the half-learned. Any one could easily understand his simple prose style. So he wrote in prose. The prose he wrote is equally chaste, simple and easily understandable. He was a master in writing prose or poetry - a rare combination of talents. As regards his position as a writer, it is worth considering as to what was said about him by his great contemporary Vidwan Meenakshisundaram Pillai. Mahavidwan Meenakshisundaram Pillai was the guru of Maha Mahopadyaya Swaminatha Iyer who has written the life of his guru. Meenakshisundaram Pillai was a great poet and author and he is still an authority on Tamil Literature and grammar. It is stated that once when he was speaking about Ramalingar to the famous author

and great Tamil scholar Arumuga Navalar, he said, that if Ramalingar had not taken to "*sanyasam*" and was prepared to take the role of Vidwan and Navalar, he (Arumugam) would not have got the title of Navalar and that he himself (namely Meenakshisundaram Pillai) would not have been called a Vidwan. It was in such high esteem, that Meenakshisundaram held Ramalingar. Such being his writings, Ramalingar did not undergo any training and did not study under any Vidwan. He was a rare genius. His genius was all the gift (Arul) of God. Poesy was his breath and prose his staff.

(Ramalingar's philosophy and religious creed can be stated as follows as garnered from his works. All created things and beings and the worlds are not permanent. They perish. Even Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra who respectively create, sustain or maintain and destroy are not permanent. The only permanent unchanging, all pervasive, full and complete being is "Sivam" (சிவம்) which is "sachitanandham." Parents, gurus, deity, friends and relations are the grace of God (திருவருள்).

Birth in this world as human beings is ordained only to earn the grace of God. By all efforts we must strive to attain the grace of God. That grace is obtained by the exercise of kindness (தயவு) to all living beings, non-attachment to things worldly, and unchanging love of "Sivam". This relationship to Sivam (being born into this world as human being) has been obtained by us by the past penances and in true, we should strive to attain the Bliss of "Sivananda Bogam." For attaining this Bliss, he ordained "Good conduct" (சன்மார்த்தம்) and he preached it.

The principles he laid down are: Man's birth is given only to obtain Atmic benefit (ஆத்ம லாபம்). That benefit cannot be obtained without God's kindness (தயவு). He must himself be saturated with the feeling of kindness for all beings. Such a state or condition cannot be achieved unless he practises kindness to all living beings. Though kindness (தயவு) is inherent in every human being, this would not grow and shine unless the differences based on caste etc are effaced and the feeling of fellowship and unity of all beings is firmly

established. For bringing about this feeling of fellow-ship and unity among all beings, the mind should be bent upon proper understanding. Such understanding would occur only when the true nature of God is vouchsafed and manifested,

This Sanmargam or path of righteousness is common to all religions and is true for all times. It can be called the true path (சுத்தியமார்ச்சம்). The life breath of Sanmargam is "Jivakarunya Ozhukkam" (Compassion). The basis of Jivakarunyam is proper understanding and the benefit or end of Jivakarunyam is to transform and embody one self as kindness itself (தயா வடிவு) and obtain the Arul or Grace of God.)

In explaining the practice of Sanmargam, the treatise on Jivakarunyam was preached by Ramalingar. It is the peculiar feature of every language that some at least of its words do not find exact equivalents in other languages and this is true as regards Tamil Language. It is often said that men living in different and distant parts of the world think and

act alike and that there are affinities between the languages spoken by the different peoples in this world. We find similarity in sound and structure. But yet some words remain uniquely distinct and get no counter-part in the other languages. One such word is Jivakarunyam. It can be translated into "Compassion towards living beings". But the connotation of the English word 'Compassion' cannot convey the full meaning, significance and amplitude of the word "Jivakarunyam." Schweitzer translates it as reverence for life. There are other Tamil words in this work of Vallalar which do not find exact equivalents in English like அருள், தயவு etc.

(All living beings born in this world should quickly understand and attain the Atmic benefit (ஆத்ம லாபம்) obtainable by reason of such birth as human beings. What is that Atmic benefit? It is leading a unique and noble life and obtaining of the full natural bliss of God who has created all the Universe by the power of His Grace and who has made them shine forth. Such a bliss and such a noble living

could be got by God's Arul or Grace. God's Grace or Arul can be obtained only by Jivakarunya Ozhukkam (ஜீவ காரூண்ய ஒழுக்கம்). (ஒழுக்கம்) Ozhukkam means practice or conduct or sadhana. God's grace cannot be obtained by any other means. God's grace is God's தயவு or kindness and God's natural enlightenment. Jivakarunyam is the (தயவு) kindness shown by human being to another and the enlightenment that the Jeeva (soul) shows. Man can get God's grace by manifesting kindness and enlightened conduct towards the fellow beings. Only by means of the exercise of (தயவு) kindness can man get God's grace.) This word தயவு also cannot be said to be equivalent to kindness, the English word. தயவு means more than kindness. It is not mere kindness. Only by the exercise of Jivakarunyam, can the grace of God be obtained, and by no other means and this requires no proof. The only mode of getting God's grace is by the exercise of Jivakarunyam. So (Jivakarunyam is nothing but the path of divine knowledge and path of righteousness. When Jivakarunyam blossoms forth in the human soul enlightenment and love pervade. Divine might and goodness prevail.

Therefore Jivakarunyam is (Virtue) “*punyam*” and the absence of Jivakarunyam is “*pavam*” (sin))

The realisation experienced and the light that dawns in the mind by the exercise of Jivakarunyam is realisation of God and the happiness obtained by the practice of Jivakarunyam is divine bliss. Persons who realise God by the practice of Jivakarunyam and obtain divine bliss are called Jivan Muktas. They get intimate knowledge of God and become merged in God and one with God.

Then how is Jivakarunyam practised? When man feels for another Jiva and lives a life of worship, then he practises Jivakarunyam. When can it be said that a man genuinely feels? When he sees or hears of suffering by hunger, thirst, illness, want, poverty fear and the use of force, this feeling arises.

It may be interesting to note that the object of the League of Nations established after the first world, and the main aim of United Nations Organisation set up after the second world was the abolition of hunger, poverty, fear and want. The

main doctrine upon which these two world organisations were concerned in a more extended and comprehensive form was proclaimed in the latter half of the 19th century long before the first world war by Ramalingar whose message was to practise compassion to all living beings in the world.

Why is Jivakarunyam demanded as a matter of right? What is the basis of its Universal application? All beings are created by God and all are God's children—The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man and other living beings. When we see our brothers suffer, there is naturally a feeling of sympathy. It is that same feeling which one feels, when Jivakarunyam touches the heart. Some feel unaffected, when they see others in distress or suffering. That is due to the fact that their eyes are blinded and their mind is hardened. If there is the divine spark in man, he will naturally be moved by the sight of suffering. A child which is unsophisticated responds to good feelings than the grown-up man for his heart has become hardened and his eyes blinded to suffering. It is the senses that come in

contact with and records suffering and pain. But they are mere vehicles. The mind cannot be said to enjoy or suffer. It is the Jivan that really enjoys or suffers. The senses and mind are parts of the body which is the house built and given by God to the Jivan to reside. When one wears the spectacles and sees suffering, it is the eyes that shed tears and not the glasses. The mind also suffers and gladdens, when it notes a suffering or a happy event. But it is not the mind that really shares these feelings. It reflects what Jivan does. When a house appears with flags and festoons and is illuminated with lamps, it does not mean that the buildings is in joyful mood. It shows that the owner or occupier of the house is happy and jubilant. When the house looks woebegone and desolate, it shows that the owner is unhappy. So it is the *Athma* or *Jivan* who really enjoys or suffers and the senses and mind are the instruments through which *Athma* acts.

+ (Hindus believe in rebirth. The 'Jiva' leaves one body after death and occupies another body. The cycle of birth and death goes on in this universe. Birth in the high order or low order, depends on the

good or bad life led by the 'Jivan' in the prior birth.) What is the proof to show that man is born again and again into this world? A man who is newly occupying a house now, must have occupied a house before and if he has to quit this house he is occupying now, he has to seek another house. So the Jivan which is now in one body should have occupied another body before and if it has to quit this body, it has to enter another body then.

(Hindus believe in "Karma theory". 'What one sows, one reaps.' If he or she leads a good life doing 'punyam' and avoiding 'pavam' (sin) he or she is rewarded by God in the succeeding births.) He or she is born in a higher status-not in the worldly sense. He or she is born with better enlightenment, and each succeeding birth takes the Jiva nearer to God. Worldly goods, wealth, and economic prosperity were not by themselves valued as criterion for advancement or elevation in life. Simple living and high ideals were the guiding principles.

How can one show that, that the sins committed in the prior birth would react in the next birth. If a person resi-

ding in one house contracts bad friends and spends his time with them, and then leaves that house and goes to another house his old friends would certainly search for him and follow him there. In the same way when the *Jivan* which commits sins in one body leaves it and takes another body, the sins would follow and attach themselves to the *Jivan* in the new body.

It may be argued whether it is proper to exercise *Jivakarunyam* towards a person who for his sins is made to suffer hunger, thirst and fear by God's decree. One can easily argue that God has given suffering to a sinner in the prior life as a punishment for his bad conduct (*Pavam*) and that it would not be correct conduct to go to the succour of the sinner and alleviate his suffering: But God is not vengeful. He is all compassion "Karunamurthi." He allows the fellow-men to rush to his assistance and the sinner-sufferer is taught by example. He is made to feel his wretchedness by the noble-conduct of his fellow-being and he is sought to be redeemed only by this suffering. The object of giving suffering is not punishment but redeeming

the sinner. Hence it would be proper, for, even when the king punishes and puts in prison the law-breakers, the king arranges for the supply of food and clothing to the prisoners. When God punishes the Jivas and gives suffering for past sins and Jivas suffer from hunger, thirst and illness, it will be proper for other Jivas to show Karunyam to them and God will not feel displeased.

Men who are in a position to help their fellow-beings by exercising Jivakarunyam, should do so. Effacing hunger and saving life is called “பர” Jivakarunyam and the other acts of Jivakarunyam are called ‘அபர’ Jivakarunyam. Persons who exercise Jivakarunyam will be blessed in this world with happiness and get the happiness of liberation according to the Vedas. Giving food to the hungry and saving life when in danger are important. Giving water to the thirsty is not difficult. The significance of appeasing the thirsty may not be understood in cold countries. But in India, distribution of water is a well known form of charity. தண்ணீர் பந்தல் charity is peculiarly a well known form

of charity. Thirst is easily remedied and is not so serious as hunger. If hunger is not appeased the body would perish. People who are keen on helping the hungry would naturally feel inclined to assist the sick. Further mostly sickness and illness are caused by want of proper nourishing food and it is by proper feeding that sickness or illness is got rid off. Even when medicine is given to the sick, regulated food is necessary for the body to survive. Even while suffering from illness the body can live on for years but without food the body cannot live for more than a limited time. Persons who help the hungry will naturally be generous to help the people in their other wants. Ramalingar attaches great importance to Annadhanam அன்னதானம் (food distribution to the hungry). It is the charity par excellence. The main want of all beings is food. The way to the heart of any being human or animal lies through the stomach. Every being moves, works, acts and strives for getting food. If there is no hunger, all activities in the world would cease. It is hunger that moves the world. Hence Ramalingar gave precedence to Annadhanam.

When people are suffering from hunger, no other remedy except food would satisfy them and they would only desire food. When a man is given food, he can attend to his other wants. So food is very important. He may console himself if he does not get his other wants satisfied. With other wants unsatisfied, one may carry on for long periods but without food one cannot live except for a limited time. Hunger is the worst of all suffering. Other kinds of suffering could wait for some time for relief but hunger has to be attended to immediately. If a man is threatened by anything else except hunger, he can still preserve his life; but hunger would jeopardise life itself and hence hunger is the worst. Hence importance is attached to the relief of hunger and it is the highest ideal of Jivakarunyam.

Importance is also attached to the help rendered to a person who is in danger of being killed by another. These two factors are constantly emphasised in dealing with Jivakarunyam. Persons who are moved to action at the sight of suffering from hunger would naturally render all assistance in the case of other distresses.

Death that may be caused by hunger, can not be averted by other means. When a man is beset with distress due to sickness, poverty and hunger, it is hunger that is first attended to. Hence emphasis is laid on relief of hunger. Even a person sentenced to death forgets his illfate and satisfies his hunger. Even the sick person and the old man who are told by the doctors that death is near, do not fail to appease their hunger even in the last moment. Hence "Anna Dhanam" is given the pre-eminent place. One can argue that if all beings would perish by hunger, we must relieve hunger of all beings created by God namely Devas, men, narakas, animals, birds, insects and plants. It is not so. For Devas and narakas are not found in this world. So far as plants, man has to supply them with water and manure. God gives them other food. As regards birds and animals, God looks after them. But man should attend to the needs of domestic animals.

All men and women know and experience suffering by hunger and they realise the pleasure of appeasing hunger. All

men know that for appeasing hunger, they have to find the food. They knew that body to survive has to be fed by man's efforts also. They also knew that men depend on one another for getting food. They realise that men by feeding the hungry realise divine enlightenment, that to be born as human beings is a rare gift, that this birth is given for attaining "Moksham" (liberation) and that God has ordained that men should perform this duty of practising Jivakarunyam.

Other creatures are provided with food by God Himself. But man alone is left to seek, work and prepare his food. As the other creatures have been given their respective births as punishment by God, God provides them with food as the State provides food for the law-offenders put in jails. What is meant by saying Jivakarunyam should be exercised to all beings? It means relief to man in case of hunger, thirst, want and danger to life. It means also relief of hunger, thirst and danger to life to birds, insects and plants. It also means that one should not be cruel to animals or any living beings.

Is it proper to supply meat food in cases where it forms the food of some creatures? (It is not proper to kill one creature and appease the hunger of another by such killing. God will never approve of it.) All are God's manifestations and in every creature God dwells and hence it would be opposed to the principle of Jivakarunyam to kill one creature for appeasing the hunger of another.

It may be asked that while trees and plants are said to have life, whether they could be killed for supplying food to others. They have no doubt life and if one could avoid causing harm to them it would be a great thing. But they have only the sense of touch and not the other senses. We generally eat only life-less seeds (फल), unripe fruits, fruits and flowers and not the seed grains which are potential producers. The grains are life-less as such because they do not grow unless they are sown. Even when sown, some grow and some do not. Seed is the origin. From seed grows the body. Life is eternal and body is perishable. Life does not need seed. Only the body originates from seed.

Hence seeds are life-less. When seeds are sown in the soil and watered, God's grace gives them life. It is often said that முளை sprouts; which has been infused with life should not be harmed.

(Even regarding animals the meat is not the God-ordained food.) It is by traditional custom that animals took to meat food. (By practice even animals could be trained to take vegetarian food as one see in the case of pet dogs and cats.) The practice of Jivakarunyam in case of want etc is called Aparā (அபர) Jivakarunyam. The supply of clothes, shelter, land to the poor and the help rendered for the performance of marriages brings to the man who performs these acts a kind of joy which is called அபர இன்பம் or Aparā happiness.

* Relief of hunger results in பர இன்பம் Para happiness. This charity confers great benefits in this world and finally gives liberation (Moksham). This charity immediately is manifested in the glow of happiness in the face of persons relieved of hunger and in the face of persons who relieve hunger and God is immanent in

both the souls, the sufferer and the reliever
Hence it is called பர இன்பம் para happiness.

(Persons who are in need of clothes, shelter, land and partner-in-life and other things, could put up with such wants and live on and make efforts to attain them. But the hungry cannot carry on for long. To them, help is immediately needed.) When suffering from extreme hunger (during acute famine) instances have been known when parents sold their children; grown ups sold their decrepit old parents. Husbands sold their wives and vice versa for food. During famine people sell their houses, lands and cattle. Even kings are powerless against hunger. Soldiers and courageous frighten who care very little for their lives quail before hunger. (Even) learned saints and sages who have sacrificed every comfort in the world and “(Yogis and Munis” are powerless against the dreaded foe of hunger.) Persons who could sacrifice their life for self-respect and orthodox people yield before the onslaughts of hunger. (Educated or uneducated and learned or unlearned, they all feel the pangs of hunger)

Even the ardent lover forgets his love, when hunger overtakes him. Even vain people who glorify in their vanity, forget for a while their vanity, when stricken with hunger. (While thus, hunger is such a powerful foe how can the poor people face the demon of hunger? Now one can realise the amount of happiness that is brought to the poor when they are relieved of hunger and what immense benefit the person who gives this relief to the poor gets. When hunger increases man loses his intelligence (அறிவு). His mind loses its power. His senses become deadened. His eye-sight becomes weak. His body and organs fail to function and he becomes nearly dead. When food is supplied to such a man, he regains his former self and recovers what all he lost. His suffering is replaced by happiness. No other kind of good action (புண்ணியம்) can equate to this good act of relieving hunger. Such a person who relieves hunger can be compared to God.) The pain of hunger is worse than suffering in hell, birth-pangs and death pangs; and the joy of the person relieved of hunger can be compared to the joy obtained by getting Moksham. But

for the existence of the feeling of hunger in this world, no body would care for another and there will be no question of helping one another and there will be no place for Jivakarunyam, and in the absence of Jivakarunyam, God's grace (Arul) will not be forth coming. Hence relieving hunger should be considered as an instrument vouchsafed by God himself. To the hungry, the sight of food gives more pleasure than what they get when they see their parents, wife, children, land or gold or other valuable things. (Hence food is one manifestation of God Himself.) When the fire of hunger burns in the bodies of the poor, it is Jivakarunyam that puts out the fire. When the vicious awe of hunger attacks the mind of the hungry, it is Jivakarunyam that assuages the mind. When the bodies which are the abodes and temples of Jiva are threatened to be destroyed by hunger, it is Jivakarunyam that saves them from decay. When the tiger of hunger threatens to swallow the crops, namely the poverty-stricken, Jivakarunyam kills the tiger. When the poison of hunger threatens the life of the poor, Jivakarunyam gives medicine

to cure. When the scorpion of hunger stings the poor, it is Jivakarunyam that acts as herbs to relieve. When the poor starve the whole of the night and know not what to do after the day had dawned and fear hunger, it is Jivakarunyam that relieves them of their fear for the day. When the night advances and the poor hungry knew not where to go and find food, it is Jivakarunyam that comes to their rescue.

When the hungry poor feel ashamed to beg and regret their birth into this world, it is Jivakarunyam that saves their self respect. (Jivakarunyam is giving food to persons who are unable to work and earn their food and to persons who are deaf, blind and infirm). To whatever country they belong to, whatever caste they may belong, whatever race they may be, whatever their conduct may be, without even enquiring about their country, caste race, or conduct, Jivakarunyam should be exercised and hunger relieved realising that God is present in every being. No. It is Jivakarunyam to relieve the hunger of beasts, birds, insects and plants. Jiva-

karunyam which relieves hunger is the key to heaven. (All other 'sadhanas'—acts of piety and worship like சரியை, கிரியை, யோகம் and ஞானம் need not be resorted to for going to heaven by persons who obtain the key to heaven in time by practising Jivakarunyam.)

People who go to sacred places, who bathe in holy waters, who live in holy places, who worship famous shrines, who worship by reciting thothras, perform Japams, Vratams (விரதம்), and yagams (யாகம்) who give up food and sleep and perform yoga (யோகம்), who are siddhas (சித்தர்கள்) and gnanis (ஞானி) if they do not imbibe the noble quality of Jivakarunyam, will not get a permanent abode in heaven. Hence the only mode to liberation (மோகம்) is Jivakarunyam. People, even if they do not perform japam, penance தவம், yogam and ஞானம் and are enjoying all the pleasures of this world would deserve the grace of God, if they practise Jivakarunyam. If Jivakarunyam is not found in the persons who perform japam etc., they cannot be said to have realised the eternal truth and all their strenuous

acts will be considered only as magic.

A person with limited means should give food to his parents, wife, children and relations. He should not leave these persons to suffer and begin to feed strangers. But when he sees any one hungry, though a stranger he should not neglect him. Hence the best course would be to economise the family expenses and attend to both the family and the needy stranger. If he is in a position only to satisfy his family, he should show pity to strangers who come to him and try to induce others with better means to help them. (Persons with means should feed his family, relations, guests, strangers, enemies, animals and plants etc.)

(During marriages and other occasions, there should be poor feeding.) Ordinarily when persons celebrate marriages in grand scale and spend money on decoration of pandals, music, dance, processions and feastings, they are loath even to look at the faces of poor hungry persons. But if suddenly any calamity occurs on that occasion, they lose all their happiness and are immersed in grief. All the money

spent in the pandals, music etc., do not come to their help. But on such auspicious occasions, if they resorted to poor feeding, that would have prevented such calamity due to God's grace. So poor feeding should find an important place in marriages etc. Persons who suffer from leprosy and like diseases if they give relief to hungry persons by feeding them, will get cured. Persons who have no issues, if they observe the charity of relieving hunger as a Vratham (விரதம்) will get issues. Persons who fear early death, if they observe the charity of relieving hunger, will get long life. Persons who are desirous to acquire knowledge, wealth and happy life, will be rewarded with these things, if they observe the charity of relieving hunger.

Persons who perform the charity of relieving hunger, will not be affected by the summer's scorching sun, or by heavy rain, thunder, cold or fire, or poisonous air or fever and illness. They will not be touched by floods, robbers or enemies. They will not be disgraced by Kings or Gods. Their lands will yield without

effort. Their trade will flourish and yield profit only. In their professions, they will prosper. Wild animals, insects, devils, ghosts and bad deities will not harm them. They will not be subjected to any disaster caused by their own carelessness or even fate.

The charity of relieving hunger has to be done as an important duty by all grown-up men, unmarried men, family men, persons who perform penance (தபசிகள்) sanyasis, males, females, youngmen, boys, high castemen or low castemen. It is so ordained by God. In the performance of the charity of relieving hunger, if the wife obstructs her husband from doing it or vice versa, if the sons obstruct their father and vice versa, if the teacher obstructs the student and vice versa, if the king obstructs his subjects and vice versa, evil consequences would overtake the obstructors. There should not be any stoppage in the performance of the charity. Even when one things and feel in his mind that he should relieve the hunger of another, the person is a real yogi. If he translates his

thought into action and gives food to the hungry and becomes gladdened at heart he becomes a real gnani (ஞானி). The hungry person, when relieved of hunger appears to be God to the person who feeds him and the person who thus relieves hunger realises God and is a Jivan Muktha (முத்தர்). As the persons who are relieved of hunger, look upon their reliever as God, the person who relieves is really God Himself. The persons who relieve hunger to whatever caste or religion they belong and whatsoever may be their conduct, they are fit to be worshipped by Devas, Munis, Siddhas and Yogis.

The happiness resulting in Atmic bliss is divided into three kinds. They are இம்மை இன்ப வாழ்வு, (happiness enjoyable in this birth), மறுமை இன்ப வாழ்வு (happiness enjoyable in the other world), and பேரின்ப வாழ்வு (Eternal bliss). The first kind of life consists in enjoying all the worldly benefits of this world like wealth, wife, children, relations for some time only. (Materialistic happiness). The second means enjoyment in the same manner as the first but for a long time. பேரின்பம் is divine bliss. It is realisation of Godhood in one-self or self-realisation. In the

first and second, the persons have good characteristics, enjoy all the pleasures of this world and live with fame and name.

As regards persons who obtain பேரின்பம், (divine bliss) their body itself undergoes a change and is transmitted. It becomes pure like gold but could not be touched or felt by touch sensation. It shines like ether and becomes enlightened body ஞான தேகம். Such bodies are not affected by cold, water, fire, or wind. The bodies can travel in air. Their eyes can see through walls or mountains. They can hear sounds produced far away. They have no desires. They can live for all time to come. They will shine like God's grace. These three kinds of benefits could be obtained by God's grace. The first and second by a fraction of God's grace and the third by the full grace of God.

What form does God's grace take? It is undescrivable. It is to be seen in the sayings of persons who can describe it (Nayanmars, Alwars, poets and Saints). It is found in the thoughts of persons who

can conceive of it (Sages). It is known to persons who possess divine knowledge. It is experienced by persons who enjoy it. It is all powerful and is full bliss. Where is this "Arul" God's grace found?

There is no place where God's grace does not exist. It exists everywhere and at all times.

THE END.

