



SANMARKKAM
LIFE

THE TALE OF THE JUST KING

Manu Needhi Cholan



Introduction – The Embodiment of Dharma & the Models of Justice.

To illustrate the highest ideal of equality among all living beings, Ramalinga Vallalar revised a timeless narrative.

What you are about to read is a timeless tale from Southern India, built around a choice so difficult it can take your breath away. It is the tale of a revered king who, in the name of perfect justice, makes a decision that feels both noble and monstrous. This story is not meant to be a comfortable read. It is designed to be a challenge—a trial for our own ideas of right and wrong.

The story is known as **Manu Needhi Cholan** or sometimes as **Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam**, which translated means The Just King.

It retells the ancient Tamil legend of King Manu Cholan, a monarch so committed to justice that he hung a giant bell at his palace gates for any citizen—human or animal—to ring if they had a grievance.

The story is simple on the surface: King Manu Chola, a ruler famous for his fairness, learns that his own son, the prince, has accidentally killed a young calf with his chariot. The calf's mother, a grieving cow, finds a way to demand justice from the king himself. The king, torn between his love for his son and his duty to the law, must now deliver his final verdict and make a difficult choice:

Will he spare his beloved son and at most “make him do some penance”

Or...

Will he deliver justice to the Mother Cow and execute his own beloved son the same way the calf died?

A Modern Dilemma: Two Paths for Justice

Humanity has always been caught between two very different paths:

Path 1: The System of Punishment

This is the path of “an eye for an eye.” It believes that when a crime is committed, the primary goal is to punish the wrongdoer. This system, often called **retributive justice**, is widespread. We see it in countries where the focus is on harsh penalties, such as death penalty, torture, harsh prison conditions. The conditions in these prisons are often grim, with violence, overcrowding, and little focus on healing or education.

The results of this approach are predictable and tragic. Such countries have high re-offending rates of reoffending, with studies showing that some countries have **more than 60% of people released**

from prison are re-arrested within a few years. This system often fails to heal the root causes of crime, instead creating cycles of trauma and anger that makes society less safe.

Path 2: The System of Correction

This path believes that justice should be about healing and restoration. It sees crime not as a simple act of evil, but as a symptom of deeper problems like trauma, poverty, mental illness, or lack of education. This system, often called **rehabilitative justice**, is practiced in countries like **Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands**.

Here, the focus is entirely different. Prisons are designed as correctional centers. Inmates are treated with dignity, live in humane conditions, and are given therapy, education, and job training to prepare them for a positive return to society. The goal is not to make them suffer, but to correct the path that led them to crime in the first place.

The results of this approach speak for themselves. In these countries, the reoffending rates are among the lowest in the world, **often falling below 25%**. By focusing on healing individuals, this system makes society as a whole safer and more compassionate.

How to Read This Story: A Warning and a Guide

The story of Manu Chola presents the most extreme version of the first path—the path of absolute, unbending punishment. This brings us to a critical warning.

Let us be perfectly clear: **This story is NOT an endorsement of the death penalty or a justification for killing.**

To read this tale literally is to misunderstand it completely. It is a symbolic fable, a "thought experiment" designed to teach a lesson by pushing an idea to its absolute limit. The king is not a real person to be copied; he is a symbol of an abstract principle—perfect, unfeeling law. The shocking violence in the story is a literary device used to make us confront the story's true moral.

And the story's radical moral is about **EQUALITY, not execution**.

In an ancient world of rigid hierarchies, where the life of a prince was infinitely more valuable than the life of an animal, this story presented a revolutionary idea: in the eyes of true justice, the life of the powerless is as precious as the life of the powerful. The king's terrible choice is meant to demonstrate that the law must be equal for everyone, without exception. This is the profound lesson at its core.

We must learn to separate the story's timeless principle from its brutal method. This leads us to a vital modern conclusion: **murder is never justified, and the death penalty, a tool of a punitive and less enlightened age, should be abolished.** A just society does not prove its fairness by adding more death to the world.

The Higher Path: From Justice to Oneness

This is where the teachings of the great 19th-century saint, **St. Ramalinga Adigal (Vallalar)**, show us the way forward. His philosophy offers a complete and beautiful alternative to the king's tragic logic.

He began with the principle of **Jeeva Karunyam**—a profound, active compassion for every living being. For him, preventing suffering was the highest duty. But *why* did he feel this compassion so deeply? This leads us to his ultimate teaching, the very foundation of his worldview: **Āṇma-Nēya Orumaippātu (ஆன்மநேய ஒருமைப்பாடு)**.

This beautiful phrase translates to "**the oneness of all souls**"

It is the simple but world-changing realization that every soul—in every human, every animal, every plant—is made of the same divine substance. Deep down, we are not separate entities in competition; we are a single, universal family of life. Hurting another being is, quite literally, hurting a part of yourself.

This single idea completely dissolves the dilemma faced by King Manu Chola. If the king had felt this profound oneness, the entire concept of punishment would have collapsed. He could not have placed his son on one side of a scale and a calf on the other, because he would have recognized them—and himself—as inseparable parts of the same life, both deserving of protection. The question of "balancing the scales" is replaced by the reality of "healing the family."

This feeling of oneness, Āṇma-Nēya Orumaippātu, is the root from which the flower of true compassion, Jeeva Karunyam, grows. It is the final answer to the story's brutal question. It shows us that the highest justice is not found in a code of law, but in the heart's ability to see itself in all others.

The Great List of Sins by the Just King Manu Chola

In one of the most crucial moments of the narrative, King Manu Chola, crushed by the tragedy that has afflicted him, engages in a profound act of self-examination. He asks himself what terrible wrong he could have committed in a past life to merit such a horrible fate. The list he recites is not just a catalogue of sins; it is a precious moral guidelines, a comprehensive guide to the actions that, according to the law of karma, inevitably disrupt harmony and lead to karmic suffering in the life of the wrongdoer..

Here is a detailed commentary on each "sin" or mistake, exploring its deeper meaning and relevance for us today.

1. Did I make the hearts of the virtuous tremble? (*Have you instilled fear into the minds of good people?*)

Commentary: This is about psychological violence. The sin is creating an environment where good, honest, and kind people are afraid to act or speak. It is the act of the bully, the tyrant, or the cynic

who intimidates whistleblowers, mocks sincerity, or creates a toxic culture where integrity is seen as a weakness. It poisons the very atmosphere of a society, making it dangerous to be virtuous.

2. Did I bring dishonor through false litigation?

Commentary: This is the sin of abusing the law. It is about using legal systems not for truth and justice, but for revenge, harassment, or personal gain. In a modern context, this includes filing frivolous lawsuits, using legal threats to silence critics, or manipulating the justice system to ruin someone's reputation and livelihood. It is a perversion of systems designed to protect people.

3. Did I stand in the way of those giving charity? *(Have you blocked charitable people from being helpful to others?)*

Commentary: This is a double harm: you obstruct the good deed of the giver, preventing them from expressing their compassion, and you deny aid to the person in need. It is an act of anti-kindness. Today, this could mean creating bureaucratic hurdles for non-profits, spreading cynical gossip to discourage donations, or talking a friend out of volunteering. It is actively working against the flow of compassion in the world.

4. Did I create discord among close friends? *(Have you ruined the friendship of good friends?)*

Commentary: This is the sin of sowing division for personal amusement or personal profit. It is the act manipulating one friend against another, or exploiting a misunderstanding to break a bond of trust. Friendships are sanctuaries of support and love; to intentionally destroy one is to create profound emotional pain and isolation.

5. Did I betray a trusting friendship?

Commentary: While the previous point is about harming others' friendships, this is about violating your own. It is the sin of breaking a sacred trust. It means sharing secrets, acting against a friend's best interests for your own gain, or abandoning them in their time of need.

6. Did I oppress my people with high taxes?

Commentary: This is a sin of governance and economic injustice. It refers to a leader or a system that extracts wealth from the people beyond what is fair or necessary, causing hardship and poverty simply to enrich the state or its rulers. It is the abuse of power to create systemic suffering. This is common in jurisdictions wherein governments or rulers overtax the citizens, and generally the tax money is used to benefit the political class and pay for their unnecessary luxuries or to simply fatten their bank account.

7. Did I cause the stomachs of the poor to burn?

Commentary: This is a visceral and powerful image for causing hunger. It is not just about failing to give food, but about creating the conditions of famine—through greed, hoarding, or unjust economic policies—that lead to starvation. It is the sin of being indifferent to the most basic and desperate human need. The necessary need for food.

8. Did I punish without regard for justice?

Commentary: This is the sin of wrongful punishment, whether out of anger, bias, or laziness. It is the act of a judge who doesn't review the evidence, a parent who punishes the wrong child, or a manager who fires someone based on rumor. It creates a world where there is no safety or predictability, where innocence is no protection.

9. Did I ruin lives through biased speech?

Commentary: This refers to the power of words to destroy. It is the sin of using prejudice—based on caste, creed, origin, or any other factor—to damage a person's reputation and opportunities. In today's world, this is amplified a millionfold through social media, where biased and hateful speech can go viral and ruin lives in an instant.

10. Did I help those who commit murder?

Commentary: This is the sin of being an accomplice to the ultimate crime. It is not just about holding the weapon, but about providing the means, the cover, the justification, or the escape for one who takes a life. It is making oneself a party to the gravest possible harm.

11. Did I aid those who commit theft?

Commentary: This is the sin of enabling robbery. It can range from being a getaway driver to knowingly assisting a thief to steal goods. It is participating in and profiting from the violation of another's security and property.

12. Did I tell lies out of desire for wealth?

Commentary: This is the sin of fraud. It is the foundation of corruption, scams, and deceptive business practices. It is about valuing material gain more than truth, and being willing to mislead others to enrich oneself. This could be in deceptive marketing and sales practices which are very common days.

13. Did I deceive by showing false hope?

Commentary: This is a subtle and cruel form of emotional manipulation. It is the act of leading someone on—in a relationship, a business deal, or a personal promise—with no intention of following through. You are toying with a person's deepest hopes and dreams, a betrayal that can be more painful than a simple lie.

14. Did I block public pathways?

Commentary: This speaks to civic selfishness. A public path is a shared resource. To block it for one's own convenience is to place your minor needs above the needs of the entire community. It is a small act that reveals a deep disrespect for the public good. Modern parallels include illegal construction, blocking public right-of-way, or privatizing shared community spaces.

15. Did I hire laborers and pay them less?

Commentary: This is the timeless sin of wage theft and labor exploitation. It is the act of taking the full value of a person's work while intentionally denying them their fair and promised

compensation. It preys on the vulnerable who may not have the power to fight back, and it is a cornerstone of economic injustice.

16. Did I turn my face from the hungry?

Commentary: This is the sin of willful indifference. It describes the moment when you see suffering directly in front of you—a hungry person on the street—and you choose to look away, to pretend you don't see. It is a closing of the heart, an active refusal to engage in a simple act of compassion.

17. Did I refuse alms to a beggar?

Commentary: Building on the previous point, this is not just ignoring, but actively refusing. It is the moment of saying "no" to a person in a state of complete vulnerability. While one cannot help everyone, the spirit of this line points to a hardness of heart, a refusal to participate in the ancient and sacred duty of giving (dhānam).

18. Did I destroy a family with slander? *(In Tamil: கோள் சொல்லிக் குடும்பங் குலைத்தேனோ! - Did I ruin a family by carrying tales?)*

Commentary: This is the sin of the gossip-monger whose words act as poison. It describes the devastating impact of spreading rumors, lies, or private truths that turn family members against each other, breaking the fundamental unit of society and causing generational trauma.

19. Did I abandon someone in mid-stream? *(In Tamil: நட் டாற்றிற் கையை நழுவவிட் டேனோ! - Did I let go of the hand in the middle of the river?)*

Commentary: This is a powerful metaphor for betrayal at a moment of extreme vulnerability. It is about promising to help someone through a crisis and then abandoning them when it becomes difficult, leaving them to face the danger alone. It is a profound breach of trust when a person is at their most helpless.

20. Did I betray those who were hiding in fear?

Commentary: This is the sin of betraying a refugee or anyone who has placed their physical safety in your hands. It is the act of revealing a hiding place to an oppressor. It is one of the deepest betrayals, as it turns a sanctuary into a trap and leads directly to the harm of someone who trusted you with their life. Think of people that were hiding the oppressed Jews people from the nazi, but then decided to reveal their position inside their house right when a Nazi official comes for an inspection.

21. Did I consort with a woman who had lost her chastity?

Commentary: In a modern context, this line can be easily misunderstood. Rather than being a judgment on a woman's sexual history, the ethical interpretation points to the sin of **exploiting vulnerability**. In ancient society, a woman who had "lost her chastity" (was widowed, was not a virgin, or was ostracized) often had no social or economic protection. The sin, therefore, is not consorting with her, but taking advantage of her precarious situation for one's own pleasure or gain.

22. Did I defile a virgin under my protection?

Commentary: This is a terrible abuse of trust and power. The "protection" implies a guardian-ward relationship (e.g., a foster father, a teacher, a family member). The sin is violating the person you are duty-bound to protect, compounding the act of sexual violence with a profound betrayal of responsibility.

23. Did I violate a woman faithful to her husband?

Commentary: This is the sin of adultery, viewed here as the destruction of the sanctity and trust within a marriage. It is an act that causes deep emotional pain, breaks families, and violates a foundational social contract.

24. Did I rejoice after causing an abortion?

Commentary: This points to a callousness towards the sanctity of potential life. Regardless of one's modern position on abortion, the sin described here is one of *rejoicing* in the act—showing a complete lack of gravity, remorse, or respect for the profound natural processes of creation and life.

25. Did I hesitate to bow to my guru?

Commentary: This begins a series on spiritual duties. The "guru" represents the source of wisdom and spiritual guidance. Hesitating to bow is a sign of arrogance and ego. It is the refusal to show humility before wisdom, an act that blocks one's own ability to learn and grow.

26. Did I forget to give offerings to my guru?

Commentary: The "offering" (dāna or dakshina) is not merely a payment. It is a symbol of gratitude and an acknowledgement of the value of the wisdom received. To forget or refuse this is a sign of ingratitude, taking knowledge for granted and breaking the sacred bond of reciprocity between teacher and student.

27. Did I speak harshly to the learned?

Commentary: This is the sin of disrespecting knowledge and its keepers. It is the act of the arrogant person who dismisses scholars, experts, or the wise with contempt. It fosters a culture of anti-intellectualism and disrespect for accumulated wisdom.

28. Did I find fault in the words of the great?

Commentary: This is not about banning critical thinking. It is about the cynical and petty attitude of finding fault for the sake of it. It describes someone who listens to profound wisdom or scripture only to pick at minor flaws or "disprove" it, entirely missing the deeper message due to their own pride.

29. Did I cage a bird and make it suffer?

Commentary: A powerful statement on animal cruelty. The sin is the casual imprisonment of a free being for one's own amusement. It is denying a creature its natural life of flight and freedom,

causing it to languish for the sake of a fleeting human pleasure. Birds are creatures meant to experience open space and flying in large spaces. Caging them is a pure cruelty.

30. Did I tie up a calf without letting it drink its mother's milk?

Commentary: This is typical of the dairy industry. Taking away the calf from the mother cow. The drinkers of such milk also are responsible of this. The milk they drink carries karmic consequences. The responsibility is both on the Supply (dairy industry) as well as the demand (milk drinker)

31. Did I fatten my body by eating the flesh of others?

Commentary: This is a direct condemnation of meat-eating, The phrase "fatten my body by the flesh of others" emphasizes the core transaction: one being's life and body are consumed to sustain another's. This aligns with the principle of Ahimsa (non-harm) that is central to many Indian spiritual traditions, including that of Vallalar.

32. Did I sell rice mixed with stones?

Commentary: A common commercial deception It is the act of adulterating a basic foodstuff, cheating a customer, and showing no care for their health and well-being for a tiny bit of extra profit. It represents all forms of dishonest business practices.

33. Did I cause sorrow to those who loved me?

Commentary: This sin turns the focus inward to our closest relationships. It is the act of taking for granted the people who care for us most—our family and loved ones—and causing them pain through our selfishness, thoughtlessness, or neglect.

34. Did I pollute a pond of drinking water?

Commentary: A strikingly modern environmental ethic. A pond of drinking water is a vital, life-sustaining resource for an entire community, including animals. To pollute it is to selfishly endanger the health of all for personal convenience (e.g., by dumping waste). It is a sin against the community and against nature itself.

35. Did I destroy a tree that gave shade from the sun?

Commentary: Another environmental sin. A shade tree is a natural gift of comfort and respite, especially for the poor, for travelers, and for animals. To destroy it needlessly is an act of casual cruelty, a disregard for the well-being of strangers and a failure to appreciate the quiet generosity of nature. Furthermore, it's leading to global warming, causing suffering, death and destruction in our planet.

36. Did I destroy a neighbor's crops out of enmity?

Commentary: This is the sin of sabotage born of hatred and jealousy. It is not just harming a person, but destroying their livelihood, their hard work, and their source of sustenance. It is an act of pure malice designed to ruin another's life.

37. Did I demolish a public pavilion?

Commentary: Similar to blocking a pathway or destroying a shade tree, this is a sin against the community. A public pavilion is a shared space for rest, gathering, and shelter. To demolish it is an act of vandalism that harms the entire social fabric for no good reason.

38. Did I lock the doors of a temple?

Commentary: This is the sin of obstructing access to the divine. A temple is a house of God, open to all seekers of solace and grace. To lock its doors is to deny people spiritual comfort, making oneself a gatekeeper of God out of spite or control.

39. Did I rage against the devotees of Shiva?

Commentary: This is the sin of religious intolerance and disrespect for piety. Regardless of one's own beliefs, to rage against those who are sincere in their devotion is an act of spiritual arrogance. It is harming people for the crime of being devout.

40. Did I speak ill of those performing penance?

Commentary: This is about mocking spiritual effort. A person performing penance is undertaking a difficult practice for self-purification. To speak ill of them or to belittle their efforts is to show contempt for self-improvement and spiritual discipline.

41. Did I slander the pure sages?

Commentary: This is the highest form of slander. Sages (Gnanis) are considered reservoirs of wisdom and grace. To slander them is to attempt to poison the well of public wisdom, turning people away from the very sources that could help them.

42. Did I disobey the words of my father and mother?

Commentary: A foundational ethical principle in many cultures. It is the sin of ingratitude and disrespect toward those who gave you life and raised you. It is about dishonoring the primary bond of love and duty. However, this doesn't apply in all cases. This is taking into consideration righteous parents. However, some people are born into troubled families, therefore in those cases it's ok to disobey poor parental advice.

43. Did I become arrogant, scorning the divine?

Commentary: This is the final and ultimate sin of hubris. It is the ego's belief that it is self-sufficient and supreme. It is the act of scorning the very existence of a higher power, a sacred order, or a divine grace. This arrogance is considered the root from which all other sins and sorrows grow.

As you begin this translation, we invite you to read it not as a blueprint for action, but as a catalyst for thought. Appreciate its ancient lesson on equality, but filter it through the lens of a higher, more compassionate unity that a great saint like Vallalar revealed to the world.

For those who wish to read the original Tamil text, it can be accessed here:

Translation- Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam

Protection (Invocation)

(In the Nerisai Venpa poetic meter)

To narrate the tale of the righteous judgment of King Manu, who resided in the beautiful city of Tiruvarur, surrounded by fields where swans roam, the support we seek is the grace of the one with the benevolent trunk and the pure elephant face, who bestows his favor upon those who think of him with great love.

He who bears the Ganges in his matted locks, the one with three eyes, who abides among his devotees like a ripe fruit in their palm—refuge is at the feet of that ageless, blissful one, who stands foremost among the divine hosts.

The Narrative of Manu Chola

In the world surrounded by the sea, there is a nation of special eminence, the Chola country. It possesses an ever-abundant wealth of water from the divine river Kaveri. It is adorned with rows upon rows of fruitful groves—banana, jackfruit, mango, coconut, areca nut, and sugarcane.

It is dense with flowering gardens of Ashoka, Kurukkathi, Champaka, and Padiri trees where bees sing. It is filled with lotus ponds, streams brimming with water where lilies and blue lotuses bloom, as well as pools, lakes, and tanks in many places.

The land has fields with unfailing harvests, where red paddy and other crops are grown thrice a year. It is interspersed with divine shrines such as Chidambaram, Panchanatham, Madhyarjunam, and Jambukeshwaram. It is home to citizens who are complete in wealth and education and do not err in the slightest from the dharma of household life.

Shining like the very face of Goddess Earth, in this Chola country lies the city of Tiruvarur.

This city of Tiruvarur shines like a *tilakam* (a decorative mark) on the forehead of the land-maiden. It is surrounded by a moat so deep it seems to peer into the netherworld, and a rampart with towers so lofty they seem to reach for the heavens.

It contains parks, sacred gardens, and water bodies like the Deva Theertham, Brahma Theertham, and the Vasantha Odai.

It is furnished with chariot sheds, elephant stables, horse stables, army barracks, and numerous halls: the hall of audience, the royal court, the hall of wonders, the hall of amusements, the hall of justice, the hall of dance, the hall of education, the hall of accounts, the hall of music, the hall of attendants, the hall of paintings, the assembly of the gods, painted porches, halls for fencing, armories, kitchens, and halls of charity.

Its streets are marked by gem-studded platforms, golden mansions, crystal lofts, pearl pavilions, grand arches, and auspicious sounds. There are designated streets for merchants, courtesans, farmers (Shudras), traders (Vaishyas), royalty (Kshatriyas), Brahmins, Adisaivas, Saivas, Vaidikas, the dwellings of ascetics, and monasteries of Saivite sages.

Within it lies the great temple Kamalalayam, where Lord Thyagaraja resides. It is the rightful capital for the successive rule of the Chola kings.

In this city ruled the emperor known as Manu Chola. Born into the great Solar Dynasty, he was the most excellent among the Chola kings. He was a master of the sixty-four arts, a listener of good counsel that gives strength to the soul, and a doer of good to all living beings.

He possessed the six duties of a king: studying the Vedas, performing sacrifices, giving to supplicants, protecting his subjects, practicing the art of weaponry, and destroying his enemies. He had a valiant army, wealthy subjects, an unfailing treasury, a sharp-witted minister, loving friends, and a fortress impregnable to his foes.

He would readily summon to his presence those who sought justice or expressed their grievances, resolving their cases and fulfilling their needs. Like milk mixed with fruit, he spoke sweet words with a smiling face. He was a man of great wisdom, able to foresee what was to come and to understand the good and bad that arose from differences in time and character among relatives, strangers, friends, enemies, the lowly, and the lofty.

He was free, even in his dreams, from the slightest trace of faults like ego, lust, anger, greed, delusion, jealousy, deceit, ostentation, and vanity.

Never entertaining the thought of associating with wicked men, he took as his aides great men who were full of good qualities and capable of achieving even the most difficult tasks. He undertook what was proper and avoided what was not. He acted after assessing the enemy's strength, his own strength, the strength of his allies, the timeliness of the situation, and the nature of the place. He discerned the character, ability, and motivation of those around him, appointing them to positions suited to their merits. He honored long-standing service, embraced his kin, showed compassion, and acted with a deep understanding of the ways of the world.

He was like a mother in his compassion, considering even an atom of his people's suffering as a mountain and feeling it as his own. He was like a father, showing them the right path to abandon

that suffering and attain joy. He was like a guru, teaching them that good path and guiding them along it.

He was like a deity for removing the obstacles that arose when they strove for worldly and otherworldly happiness, and for meting out punishment proportionate to the crime if they strayed from the path of righteousness. He was like an eye, showing the way to escape from danger as swiftly as a hand that reties a slipped garment. He was like life itself, protecting his people from fear and distress.

He was like a buried treasure, making his people rejoice whenever they thought of him, saying, 'For us who have such a virtuous soul as our king, there is no want.' He was like a cloud for his generosity without expecting anything in return.

He was like Indra, with wisdom as his thousand eyes, his hands as the wish-fulfilling tree, his eyes as the celestial cow Kamadhenu, his countenance as the wish-granting gem Chintamani, and his mental fortitude as the diamond weapon, Vajrayudha.

He was like Brahma, with his throne as the red lotus and the four goals of life—Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire), and Moksha (liberation)—as his four faces, fostering prosperity in each of these paths.

He was like Vishnu, with his royal command as the divine discus (Chakrayudha), his righteous scepter as the Goddess Lakshmi, his great fame as the ocean of milk, and his avoidance of improper actions as his yogic sleep, protecting the beings on earth and providing ambrosia to the gods in heaven through sacrifices.

He was like Lord Rudra, with his tirelessness, purity, and truthfulness as his three eyes, and his courage as the trident, destroying all sins. He was like ambrosia for his grace that removed sorrow and brought joy. He was great in his devotion to Shiva, and like the Earth in his patience. He was the very embodiment of Dharma, ruling with justice and never straying from the laws of Manu.

During the reign of this emperor, a time of perfect harmony existed. The tiger and the cow drank together from the same stream, the lion and the elephant roamed together, the hawk and the parrot played together, and the cat and the mouse lived in accord. Likewise, all other creatures that were natural enemies lived together in friendship.

Even immobile life, like trees and grass, grew and thrived without wilting, drying, shedding, or being cut. There were no calamities like great winds, great floods, or torrential rains; only gentle breezes, moderate waters, and timely rains occurred unfailingly.

There was no suffering from hunger, disease, or fear of death; only happiness prevailed. All classes of people and followers of all religions lived without any lapse in their respective disciplines. Acts of charity like offering food and building temples flourished. Vows, penances, and sacred festivals were conducted without any shortcomings, all enforced by his royal command.

In the worlds under his rule, only flowers were plucked, only water was captured (by dams), and only the wind was buffeted.

Only stone was hard.

Only a young mango was wounded (*vadu* means both wound and young mango).

Only a banana plant was cut down in a bunch.

Only a bee drank liquor (*madhu* means both honey and liquor).

Only paddy grains were threshed, only a field was enclosed, and only a woman's waist was lacking.

Only poverty itself was impoverished, only sorrow itself suffered, and only falsehood itself was proven false.

Other than these, there were no people who were robbed, imprisoned, tormented by enemies, hard-hearted, wounded, bound, stabbed, or killed in battle. There were no poor, sorrowful, or deceitful people; only excellence prevailed.

Thus, as the emperor Manu Chola ruled the world, he was grieved by his lack of a son. For sixty years, he had performed countless charities, righteous deeds, sacrifices, and vows, but to no avail.

He lamented, "What is the use of material wealth for one who has not been blessed with the wealth of a son? If there is no heir, in the future this world will flounder, like a face without eyes or a day without the sun."

Therefore, he decided the only course of action was to worship Lord Thyagaraja. He and his wife bathed in the sacred waters and, with devotion and reverence, circumambulated the temple. Prostrating before the Lord, they prayed daily, "You must grant us a son and relieve us of this sorrow."

Moved by his devotion, Lord Thyagaraja granted his wish. To the king's great joy, the queen conceived. After ten months, on an auspicious day, as the deity of Dharma danced in joy and the celestials showered flowers, she gave birth to a son endowed with all auspicious signs.

The joyful news of the prince's birth was brought by the queen's maids. "O Lord! From our queen's womb has been born a jewel of a son, who is the very form of your glory and has the power to protect this world."

Upon hearing this, Manu Chola was filled with immeasurable happiness, like a merchant who hears that his long-lost ship has reached the port. He gifted the maids priceless garments and jewels, bathed, and gave numerous gifts to the learned Brahmins.

He decreed that for twelve years, citizens would be exempt from all taxes. He ordered that vassal kings need not pay tribute for seven years. He commanded the release of enemies from prison and

opened the treasury for seven days, allowing everyone to take as much as they needed. He also ordered new services and festivals in all the temples.

Then, like one who finds a long-lost treasure, he looked upon the precious child and rejoiced. "The rising of this son here is by the grace of Shiva and nothing else," he thought.

He summoned great astrologers who confirmed the child's auspicious horoscope. He was named Veedhi Vidangan, after Lord Thyagaraja, by whose grace he was born. All his ceremonies were performed with great splendor. The king cared for him with immense love, cherishing him as a student cherishes his lessons and protecting him as one who was once poor protects a newfound fortune.

Growing like a tender banana shoot, the prince began his education in his fifth year. In his seventh year, his sacred thread ceremony (Upanayana) was performed with great splendor.

Within a short time, Veedhi Vidangan became eight times more proficient than his own teacher in all the scriptures and arts. He completely mastered elephant riding, horse riding, archery, sword fighting, and even magic.

He possessed the wisdom of Adishesha, the beauty of Kamadeva, the valor of a lion, and the generosity of the wish-fulfilling tree. He was endowed with all noble qualities, including devotion to Shiva, compassion, and patience.

He spoke only the truth, uttered firm words, did what was beneficial, and greeted elders with love and fear. He brought joy to his parents by understanding their thoughts and acting according to their wishes. Having learned everything even in his youth, he reached the age fit for a crown prince.

One day, Veedhi Vidangan, accompanied by other princes, came before his father. He prostrated himself and stood with hands clasped in respect.

The emperor, overjoyed, embraced him. "My precious son, who is like ambrosia born to end my sorrow! It seems you have a wish in your heart. You must tell me what it is."

Veedhi Vidangan replied, "For me, who has been blessed to have a father like you, what want could there be? There is but one thought: a desire to go and have the *darshan* (holy sight) of Lord Thyagaraja. I pray that you graciously grant that this wish may be fulfilled."

Hearing this, the king was delighted. "Is there any obstacle to visiting the great one who ended my sorrow? Who would stop someone from wanting to see the peerless embodiment of Dharma? The merit earned by the son also belongs to the father. One must never hinder those who go for the darshan of a Guru or Lord Shiva himself. Therefore, my son, go with all due ceremony and return with divine wisdom and a long life."

Accepting the command with love, the prince then went to his mother. "O mother, who protected and raised me as eyelids protect the eyes! I wish to have the darshan of Lord Thyagaraja."

His mother's heart melted with joy. "O precious one, who has come to lead us to a good destiny! It is only fitting that you wish to see that great, compassionate Lord. Therefore, go, see him to your heart's content, and return with a boon that my wish—to see your wedding—will soon be fulfilled."

Having received her blessing, Veedhi Vidangan returned to his palace. He sent ahead rich offerings to the temple: oils, sandalwood, gems, garlands, and silks.

Then, he himself bathed in fragrant water, dressed in white silk, and adorned himself with a crown and other jewels. Holding a golden staff, he departed from the palace.

He gave many gifts to Brahmins and mounted a magnificent, gem-studded chariot drawn by four horses whose speed could outpace the mind. He was surrounded by a grand retinue of scholars, ministers, priests, and vassal kings.

Decorated elephants trumpeted, valiant warriors cheered, and singers sang auspicious songs. All thirty-two types of musical instruments resounded. With all auspicious pomp and pageantry, the prince drove his chariot down the decorated streets, appearing like Indra himself going for the darshan of Lord Thyagaraja.

The women of that street saw the prince and swarmed around him like bees around a fragrant flower. Their hearts filled with desire, they cried out, "O young prince, more beautiful than the god of love! I am a maiden; will you not cast a glance upon me?"

They praised every part of his form in exquisite detail, from his lotus-like face and compassionate eyes to his mountain-like shoulders. "What penance did I perform," one thought, "to be able to feast my eyes on this prince?"

The men of the street also marveled. "Ah! This prince is the true prince; before him, all other princes are but demonic princes!" They praised his knowledge, his virtues, and his valor. "What other sign do we need that he will protect us all just like his father?" they wondered. "His compassionate eyes show it all."

As Veedhi Vidangan proceeded in his chariot, the horses, as if by divine will, went beyond the charioteer's control and began to pull the chariot at a great speed.

At that moment, a beautiful young calf, true to the saying 'a young calf knows no fear,' came bounding forward. Obscured from the sight of everyone in the crowd by a delusion caused by fate, it darted into the path of the speeding chariot.

It was caught under the wheel, crushed, its body broken and its entrails spilled, and it gave up its life.

Immediately, upon hearing that the calf was caught under his chariot wheel, Veedhi Vidangan was stunned, like a cobra that hears the clap of thunder. He trembled and fell from the chariot.

With immeasurable sorrow and fear, he rose and saw the dead calf. His mind reeled, his heart pounded, and he collapsed in a faint. Coming to his senses after a moment, tears flowing like a river from his eyes, he stood and cried, "Shiva! Shiva! Lord Thyagaraja! Should such a calamity befall me, your devotee who came to see you?"

"I, who came with the intention of seeing you, should have come on foot with devotion. Instead, I came with the arrogance of wealth, like a hypocrite. I should lament my own mistake, not find fault with my Lord."

"Was it to commit such a great sin that I was born a son? Like poison emerging from the vast ocean of milk, why was I born into the lineage of Manu? Was I born only to heap great blame upon my father?"

"Alas, all the knowledge I learned has ended as a mere story! Harahara! The greatest of all sins is killing a cow, and killing a calf is ten times worse. And today, having become subject to that sin, I am still carrying this body. The world will blame me, saying, 'It was the arrogance of wealth that made him drive the chariot over the calf.'"

"The fame earned by my ancestors has been eclipsed by me. I have become the axe handle that came to destroy its own clan! If I feel such sorrow, what will its mother cow feel when she sees it? If my father hears this news, what will be the outcome?"

"I cannot live in this world, subject to this blame. I will give up my life this very day!"

As he lamented, the Brahmins and ministers with him said, "O wise Veedhi Vidangan! Why do you lament so? Did you kill the calf intentionally? None of us who surrounded you knew that the calf ran out; how would you know? By the force of its karma, it willingly came to its death. What can you do? Since your mind is distressed, we can find out the appropriate penance prescribed in the Vedas and perform it. Do not let your mind be troubled."

Hearing this, Veedhi Vidangan replied, "What wonder is this! In the past, my ancestor King Sibi offered his own flesh to a hunter to save a common pigeon. If he gave his life for a mere bird, what then of me, who have killed the offspring of a sacred cow?"

"I failed to give this calf protection and instead allowed it to be unjustly killed. What can be done to atone for what I have done? You told me to perform a penance. Where can I send the traditions of my ancestors, the example of my father, and the duty to protect all life, and then perform a penance!" he said with anguish.

The ministers replied, "Listen, O Prince! We speak only the truth. It was the calf's own fate, which had decreed its death, that chased it and brought it under the chariot wheel. Since its fate was so, what is the use of you grieving? Do not fear anything; mount the chariot."

Hearing this, the prince replied, "For which of these things shall I grieve? My intellect? My fate? The stain on my dynasty? The blame on my father? The sorrow of the mother cow? I do not know what is the right thing to do! However, as the saying goes, 'For one who is completely drenched, there is no more wetness.' For me, who is completely mired in blame, what sorrow is left? I will now mount the chariot. It is now your duty to make me pure."

So saying, he mounted the chariot, turned it back the way it came, and went towards the great elders to learn of the appropriate penance.

The Cow's Lament and the Bell of Justice 🐮

After the prince had departed, the mother cow followed the path her calf had taken. Seeing her calf lying on the ground, her heart shattered. Spinning like a piece of straw in a whirlwind, she ran to it.

Seeing it lying lifeless, its body crushed and its entrails spilled, she collapsed in a faint.

After a while, she regained consciousness and circled the calf, crying out in a great wail. She sniffed its body again and again, mourning, "What evil is this? Just a moment ago, I saw you wagging your tail and leaping ahead of me! Only the gods know the pains I took to beget you. You have turned all that suffering to nothing! O my calf! You have left me in the street!"

"The weariness from the vows I took to get you has not yet faded, and already you have placed this unquenchable fire in my belly! How will I ever bear this sorrow? You, a form with all the auspicious signs of a celestial calf, have been lost to unfortunate me! Was it not for you that I lived and walked this earth?"

"Alas! How will my ears, which once swelled with joy hearing onlookers say, 'This is the most beautiful among a thousand calves,' now bear to hear the scornful words of people, 'Look at the barren cow, grieving like a fool after letting her young calf die'?"

Thinking thus, she fainted again. Reviving once more, she looked closely and saw the deep wound where the chariot wheel had run over it, gushing blood.

"Oh! In my foolishness, I thought it had died from some minor accident! But seeing this wound, it is clear that it was crushed and killed by a chariot wheel! Ah! What sin did I commit for such a calamity to befall you? O my child! How frightened you must have been! Seeing you lying here, your body mangled, my womb which bore you is on fire!"

Crying and wailing, she rolled on the ground until she fainted again from grief.

Rising once more, her grief turned to rage. "If I see the uncompassionate brute who crushed my calf, will I not make him prey for my two horns? What else will the one who dared to do this not dare to do?"

Then, she cried out, "Alas, is there no king in this city? Is there no justice? What is this injustice?"

Unable to bear the sorrow, she decided to seek redress. Covering her calf with green leaves and shedding tears, she went to the gate of Emperor Manu Chola's palace and, with her horns, struck the Bell of Inquiry—which was hung there for citizens to report their grievances to the king—with great force and might.

When the bell rang, all the people in the city were stunned. "Today we hear the sound of the Bell of Inquiry, something never heard before!"

In his assembly hall, the emperor Manu Chola heard the sound and was startled, like a deer that hears the roar of a tiger. He fell from his throne in a faint. After a few moments, he regained consciousness and rushed towards the palace gate.

The gatekeepers came forward fearfully and announced, "O Lord! A mother cow has struck the Bell of Inquiry at the palace gate with her horns!"

The king came quickly and saw the cow standing near the bell, its body emaciated, its face withered, shedding tears. His heart melted with pain, like a poor farmer seeing his withered crops. "Alas! What sorrow has befallen this gentle cow! I am not wise enough to understand its grievance!" he lamented.

He then turned to his ministers and said angrily, "Your ministerial work is truly excellent! Is it not because of your negligence that some wrong has befallen this cow?"

Seeing his anger, one of the ministers, who knew the reason for the cow's sorrow but had been afraid to speak, bowed to the king and said, "O Lord! Today, a young calf jumped in front of the chariot your son was riding, was caught under the wheel, and died. This cow, its mother, in unbearable grief, has rung the Bell of Inquiry."

The King's Judgment 🏛️

Those words were like a spear being twisted in a fresh wound. They pierced the king's ears. The pain spread like venom rising to his head. He collapsed, speechless and breathless.

After his ministers revived him, he looked again and again at the cow. Tears flowed from his eyes like a flood, and his heart melted like ghee thrown into a fire.

"Alas! I myself am the primary cause of this cow's sorrow. This cow, which by its very nature would cry with love every time it sees its calf, how must it have suffered when it saw its calf dead? My

own heart trembles every time I think of how that little calf must have writhed. This cow has come to me to resolve its sorrow. What can I do for it?"

"My ancestor, the Shaivite Chola, once brought a Brahmin's son back from the dead to uphold justice. I do not have such power. I am not even capable of bringing back the life of this one small calf! Hearing of the death of this calf due to my own negligence, have I yet given up my life?"

"If good men in my lineage hear that a king has punished a criminal with death, they tremble. Have I now appeared like a white flower on a bitter plant, shaming the nature of those good men?"

"Until today, I rejoiced, thinking I ruled with justice. Now all that joy has been thrown to the dust! I was proud of my son, dreaming of his future. And he, blinded by his own carelessness, has taken on an indelible blame! Alas! Instead of being the precious son to hold my scepter, he has become as useless as a coconut sapling!"

"A person going for the darshan of Shiva should not ride so rashly. Though he is learned, he lost his sense and became not the crown prince, but the prince of blame. Alas! For me, who thought that having a son would bring merit, it has come to a point where I think that remaining childless would have been a blessing! Did I pray to the Lord only to get a son who would be subject to such great blame?"

"But what can the son do? What can the Lord do? It must be my own past sins that have befallen my son. But in this life, I have not knowingly committed a single wrong. If not in this life, then in a past one..."

Did I make the hearts of the virtuous tremble?

Did I bring dishonor through false litigation?

Did I stand in the way of those giving charity?

Did I create discord among close friends?

Did I betray a trusting friendship?

Did I oppress my people with high taxes?

Did I cause the stomachs of the poor to burn?

Did I punish without regard for justice?

Did I ruin lives through biased speech?

Did I help those who commit murder?

Did I aid those who commit theft?

Did I tell lies out of desire for wealth?

Did I deceive by showing false hope?

Did I block public pathways?

Did I hire laborers and pay them less?
Did I turn my face from the hungry?
Did I refuse alms to a beggar?
Did I destroy a family with slander?
Did I abandon someone in mid-stream?
Did I betray those who were hiding in fear?
Did I consort with a woman who had lost her chastity?
Did I defile a virgin under my protection?
Did I violate a woman faithful to her husband?
Did I rejoice after causing an abortion?
Did I hesitate to bow to my guru?
Did I forget to give offerings to my guru?
Did I speak harshly to the learned?
Did I find fault in the words of the great?
Did I cage a bird and make it suffer?
Did I tie up a calf without letting it drink its mother's milk?
Did I fatten my body by eating the flesh of others?
Did I sell rice mixed with stones?
Did I cause sorrow to those who loved me?
Did I pollute a pond of drinking water?
Did I destroy a tree that gave shade from the sun?
Did I destroy a neighbor's crops out of enmity?
Did I demolish a public pavilion?
Did I lock the doors of a temple?
Did I rage against the devotees of Shiva?
Did I speak ill of those performing penance?
Did I slander the pure sages?
Did I disobey the words of my father and mother?
Did I become arrogant, scorning the divine?

"What sin did I commit? I do not know what it was!"

"Alas! Shall I not pluck out my eyes, which have seen the tears welling in this cow's weary face? Shall I not pour molten copper into my ears? Shall I not burn my tongue with a hot iron? Shall I not cut off my hands? Shall I not chop off my feet? Shall I not kill my body?"

"My scepter, which I thought was a scepter of justice, shall I now call it a measuring stick? A scepter of tyranny? A broomstick? Or shall I call it the stick used to turn the corpse of this dead calf on the funeral pyre? What shall I do! To call a sinner like me 'Manu' is like the custom of calling a black goat a 'white goat'. It is not the truth!"

"Now, if there is anyone who can say that this calf's life can be revived by giving my son's life, my wife's life, my own life, my kingdom, and all my possessions, I will give them this very instant. But there is no one who can say so! How will the sorrow of this cow be resolved? I do not know how!"

The ministers, seeing the emperor lamenting, said, "O great king! We have remained silent, thinking your sorrow natural. But your son is the very embodiment of compassion. There is no reason to think he would kill this calf through carelessness. Furthermore, the calf leaped out so magically that no one saw it. Therefore, it was the calf's own fate that caused its death, not your son. To blame your son is like blaming the arrow instead of the archer. The proper course is to have him perform the appropriate penance."

Hearing this, Manu Chola looked at his ministers with anger. "Ministers! Your justice is excellent! But will the Goddess of Dharma agree? Will it soothe this grieving cow? When a king deviates, it is the duty of wise ministers to correct him, not to speak pleasing words."

"You who taught me that law must be applied by considering all lives as one's own, by not looking at fate but at the deed itself, now say that the calf died due to past karma and that a penance should be performed. Oh, ministers! The more I think of this partiality, the more my heart trembles!"

"I bear the name 'Manu Chola' because I rule according to the law. If I agree with you, the seven worlds will mock me. If I let my son off lightly today, and tomorrow execute another for a lesser crime, will not all who see it revile me? Just because it is one's own house lamp, it will still burn if you kiss it. Will not the blame and sin still attach to me?"

"Therefore, just as this cow grieves for the loss of its precious calf, it is only fitting that I too should suffer by killing my own precious son as a life for a life."

One minister argued, saying the law prescribes different punishments based on intelligence, and that a simple penance was sufficient for the death of an animal.

The king replied, "Minister, you grasp the unripe fruit, ignoring the ripe one. The scripture also states that since the Supreme Lord resides equally in all souls, one must consider all lives to be equal. My son acted out of the arrogance of wealth. He fits the analogy 'like a mad elephant destroying a forest.' Therefore, killing him is the final decision."

Another minister argued that this rule of equality was for saints, not for kings, as it would cause social chaos.

The king laughed. "I have adopted the rule of equality only for the atonement of the sin of taking a life, and for nothing else. For this sin, all lives must be considered equal. According to this justice, killing my son is the final decision."

Another minister pointed to the *Law of Manu*, which prescribes specific penances, not execution.

The emperor replied, "Minister, that law is for worldly men attached to the body. For my ancestors, who were attached to the eternal Shiva, the implied rule is that if a life is taken, a life must be given. Whatever law was for my ancestors is the law for me and my son. By this justice, losing my son is the final decision."

Another minister argued that no king had ever executed someone for accidentally killing an animal.

Manu Chola replied, "In the times of my ancestors, such a murder never occurred. When a rare sin did occur, they paid for the blame with their own lives. They are in a class of their own. To act according to my judgment is the only resolution."

Then all the ministers came together and pleaded, "This cow is a five-sensed animal. The calf was a male calf fit for plowing. Your son is a man of superior intellect. He did not kill intentionally. The world will say this was the calf's karma. The proper course is penance."

The king replied, "Ministers, you speak lightly. You say this cow is a five-sensed animal, but it has an intelligence far superior to that of humans. In what world has a cow, grieving for its calf, known that a king has hung a Bell of Inquiry, a fact unknown even to ordinary humans, and come and rung that bell? Can such a glorious cow, in whose body all the deities reside, be called a mere animal?"

"You said its calf was a male calf fit for plowing. In this sacred Tiruvarur, all beings born here are considered Shiva's divine attendants (*Sivaganas*). Should this calf be called a mere male calf?"

"You said my son is a man of superior intellect. Can one who, blinded by the arrogance of wealth, killed a calf be called a man of superior intellect?"

"You said the proper course is to perform penance. If a man has a stomach ache from eating a mountain, will you cure him by giving him a bit of dried ginger? Similarly, can the sin of murder be absolved by penance? If I do so, I will plunge my son into an inescapable hell, and I myself will fall into it and suffer."

"Therefore, there are no two ways about my word. As recompense for the murder of this cow's calf, the execution of my son is the final and certain judgment."

Saying this, he turned to a minister named Kalavallaban and commanded, "Minister! Take my son, lead him to the street where the calf lies dead, mount the chariot, and kill him by making the chariot wheel run over his body. Then return."

At that, the other ministers stood, wringing their hands, their minds in turmoil.

The Divine Intervention ✨

The minister Kalavallaban was stunned, as if he had been ordered to throw a precious gem into the sea. Fearing to disobey but unable to perform the deed, he went to the street and, with a heavy heart, drew his own sword and took his own life.

When messengers reported this to the king, he was doubly grieved. "Alas! This minister, by taking his own life, has added to my burden." He then resolved, "I myself will go and drive the chariot over my son, and then give up my own life for the minister's." He summoned his son.

Veedhi Vidangan, who had already heard the news, came before his father with resignation. The king, without looking at his son, commanded the executioners to take him to the street. He himself mounted a great chariot and followed.

In the street where the calf lay dead, the king ordered the guards to place his son on the ground. They hesitated, paralyzed with grief. Veedhi Vidangan looked at them and said, "Why do you hesitate? I will do it myself." He turned towards the temple, prayed for forgiveness, and lay down on the ground.

Then, the emperor Manu Chola, also praying to Lord Thyagaraja, said, "O Lord who rules me! As it has been proven that Veedhi Vidangan killed the calf, I am now carrying out the sentence prescribed by Dharma—a life for a life. May my Lord be my witness that in this judgment, there is no fault known to my heart."

So saying, he spurred the horses and drove the great chariot forward. The wheel rolled over Veedhi Vidangan, crushing his body and killing him instantly.

At that moment, the gods in heaven showered celestial flowers, crying, "O noble one who looked to righteousness and not to your beloved son! May all be auspicious for you!"

The king then descended from the chariot, ready to take his own life.

Just then, Lord Thyagaraja (Shiva) appeared before him, seated on his bull mount with the Goddess Uma, surrounded by all the celestial hosts. A divine light shone.

The Lord, with a smile that dripped cool moonlight, soothed the king's body, mind, and soul. "O Manu Chola! We ourselves tested you thus, so that the world may know the greatness of your justice. Fear no more."

With another glance from his grace-filled eyes, he brought the dead calf, the minister Kalavallaban, and the prince Veedhi Vidangan back to life.

In that instant, as if waking from a deep sleep, the calf rose and ran to its mother. The minister and the prince also rose, bowing to the Lord. The people of the city erupted in joy, shouting "A miracle! A miracle!"

The emperor Manu Chola, seeing the divine form, was overwhelmed with bliss. He fell to the ground again and again in prostration, worshiping the Lord with profound devotion.

Lord Thyagaraja blessed him, "O king who loves us! May you have a life free of disease and a wealth without want. Rule this world under one umbrella, and in the end, we shall grant you the bliss of eternal liberation." So saying, the Lord and his celestial hosts vanished.

Manu Chola, after offering more prayers, saw to it that the cow and its calf were well cared for. He embraced his minister, saying, "O loving minister! Is there anyone as dear to me as you?"

Then, he, his son, and his minister went to the temple and performed many special services. They returned to the palace amidst the joyous celebrations of the people and ruled the world according to the path of Dharma.

Benediction

(In the Nerisai Venpa poetic meter)

Long live Manu Chola! Long live his son! Long live his minister, the capable one! Long live his just rule and those who hear of his fame! Long live the feet of our Lord!

Tiruchitrambalam *(The Sacred Word of Manu's Justice is Complete)*

About Us - Sanmarkkam Life



About Sanmarkkam Life: Our Story and Goal

Our main goal is to share the wonderful teachings of **Saint Ramalinga Swamigal, also known as Vallalar**. We started this project because we noticed that Vallalar's simple yet powerful concepts are not known by many people around the world, especially outside his home, Tamil Nadu.

Our Main Goal: Spreading Kindness for a Happy World

We dream big: we want to see all living beings happy as one big family. We strongly believe sharing the teachings of Suddha Sanmarkkam contributes to bring Grace. and the manifestation of Heaven on Earth, just like Vallalar envisioned.

We believe the best way to help people is by sharing true knowledge that can set them free. This kind of knowledge is called **Gnana Dhanam**. As a non-profit education project, our main job is to give this important wisdom to everyone, completely free of charge.

What We Dream Of: A World Full of Love and Unity

We picture a world where everyone lives by the simple rules of Sanmarkkam. This means being kind to all living things (what Vallalar called Jeeva Karunyam) and understanding the great divine light (Arut Perum Jyothi). Our dream is a world without sadness and sufferings, where everyone understands and respects each other, all built on Vallalar's ideas of spiritual truth.

What You'll Find Here: Many Ways to Learn and Grow

Sanmarkkam Life offers many resources to help you learn about Vallalar's teachings. We try to explain his deep wisdom in ways that are easy to understand and use in your daily life.

Here are some of the topics we cover:

- **Spiritual Living:** Simple ways to connect with your inner self and the divine, based on Vallalar's path to lasting life.
- **Healthy Food & Well-being:** Ideas about eating kindly (like being lacto-vegetarian or vegan) and healthy living, inspired by Vallalar.
- **Siddha Medicine:** A look into ancient Indian healing methods and how they relate to spiritual health.
- **Caring for Our Planet:** How to live in a way that helps our environment and shows kindness to the Earth.
- **Being Kind to Animals:** Why it's important to treat all animals with care and respect.
- **And More:** We keep exploring how Vallalar's ideas can improve all parts of our lives and the lives of others.

Our Team: Volunteers from Around the World

Sanmarkkam Life is run by amazing volunteers from all over the world. Our team comes from different places and backgrounds, but we all share one goal: to use our skills and time to translate, create, and share Vallalar's message. We work together to connect people, no matter where they are from.

Support Sanmarkkam Life: How You Can Help

Our work to spread kindness, peace, and wisdom relies on the support of people who believe in our mission. Every little bit of help goes a long way in bringing Vallalar's vision of a "Heaven on Earth" closer to reality for everyone.

Why Your Support Is Important

Your contributions help us in many ways, including:

- Keeping our website running and accessible to all.
- Creating new and easy-to-understand content about Vallalar's teachings.
- Reaching more people globally through translations and outreach.
- Supporting our dedicated team of volunteers.

Ways You Can Contribute

If you feel inspired by our mission and wish to help us continue this important work, here are some ways you can contribute:

- **Financial Contributions:** If you are able, financial help directly supports our operational costs and helps us expand our reach. You can [Donate to our Donorbox Here](#). Or you can Donate to our PayPal at jothinanda [at] sanmarkkamlife.org
- **Spreading Awareness:** Share our website and content with your friends, family, and social circles. The more people who know about Vallalar's teachings, the better!
- **Volunteering Your Time:** If you have skills (like writing, translation, web design, or social media management) and time to offer, please consider joining our global volunteer team. (We will have a separate page for this!)

Important Note About Our Status

Please know that Sanmarkkam Life is currently a **non-profit education project**. We are not yet a formally registered non-profit organization or charity in any country (although we are working on the process). This means that financial contributions made to our project are generally not tax-deductible.

We encourage you to check the laws and tax rules in your own country regarding donations to projects like ours, and if you have any questions, please consult with a financial advisor.

Your support, in any form, is a selfless act of kindness that directly helps us fulfill our mission.

Want to Know More?

If you have questions about how to contribute or wish to discuss specific ways you can help, please don't hesitate to contact us.

- [Contact Us Here](#)