



## Periyapuranam and Thirukkural

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.7650773](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7650773)

Submission Date: 03 Feb. 2023 | Published Date: 17 Feb. 2023

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### Abstract

Periyapuranam is Sekkizhar's encyclopedic Hagiography, Divine and sacred literature. It is a recorded history of 63 sacred saints (Nayanmars) who attained Mukti by their uncompromising love to Lord Siva. Periyapuranam is an account of the lives of great Saints who lived in Tamil Nadu, a thousand years ago. The Sixty three saints praised in Periyapuranam are historical persons not mythical. It is written by Sekkizhar who was the Chief Minister in the court of Kulottunga Chola of 12<sup>th</sup> Century. These saints consist of devoted men and women of all ages from Tribes to Emperors of vast domains, caste, creed, wealth, and status. These saints are of different castes, different profession, different habitation and they belong to different times. Thirukkural is portrayed in many places of Periyapuranam. Many saints in Periyapuranam lead their life as illustrated by Thiruvalluvar. The great message of Thirukkural is analysed with the 63 saiva saints of Periyapuranam.

**Keywords:** Periyapuranam, Thirukkural, Agriculture, Renunciation, Social Obligation, Hospitality. Great deed

## INTRODUCTION

### Periyapuranam

Periyapuranam is one of the precious Literature of non-saturating sweet. It is an account of the lives of Great Saints (Nayanmars) who lived in Tamil Nadu a thousand years ago. The lives of Sixty three saints praised in the Periyapuranam are historical persons not mythical. Therefore it is a recorded history of 63 Nayanmar saints who attained Mukti by their uncompromising love to Siva. These saints are of different castes, different profession and different habitation and they belong to different times. Periyapuranam is written by Sekkizhar Chief Minister of Chola Kingdom on 12<sup>th</sup> Century. It is an encyclopedic Hagiography, Divine and sacred literature. In Periyapuranam the saints lived their lives according to Thirukkural, shows Thirukkural depictions in many places and they are analyzed here.

### Thirukkural

Thirukkural is a classic Tamil Literature consisting of 1330 couplets which was authored by Thiruvalluvar of Sangam period. Thirukkural considered to provide the code of conduct for the humanity of the Planet Earth for all times which makes the past, meet the present and the future it commends a feeling of compassion for all the individuals regardless of caste or creed. Thirukkural is world Master piece known for its brand and timeless elucidation of moral ethics of life.

### 1) Great Deed: (Neethär Perumai)

#### Seyarkkariya seivär periyar Siriyar

seyarkkariya seihalä dār Ascetics - Kural – 26

The great do the impossible and the mean cannot. The great people are capable of doing amazing work where as the mean people cannot do it. Almost all the saiva saints of Periyapuranam had carried out wonderful deeds. But some Saints did amazing deeds which cannot be done by normal persons. They are Sirutthondar, Kannappar, Iyarpagai nayanar. Sirutthondar with complete detachment from his family ready give up even his only affectionate son. Kannappar donated

both of his eyes to the Lord. Iyarpagai nayanar sold his wife to Lord. These are incomparable actions which are defined as Great deeds that is “Seyarkkaiya” by Thiruvalluvar .

## 2) Gifted Children (Makkatperu)

### 1. Magan thandhaikkättrum udhavi Ivan thandhai ennoträn kol ennum sol.

Makkatperu - Kural – 70

The service a son can render his father is to make the world astonishes towards his blessings.” From Periyapuranam we can exclaim

- What austerities did Sadayanär (father of Sundarar ) perform to beget such a great Son like Sundarar ?
- A great son who gained the friendship of Lord Siva himself.
- An amazing son who sent Lord Siva himself as a mediator for his love Quarrel.
- A wonderful son who became a great friend of the Chera King - the Cheraman Perumal .

### 2. Thandhai magarkkättrum nanri Avayattu mundhi iruppach cheyal .

Makkatperu - Kural – 67

The good deed a father can do for his son is to place him in the van of learned men in the world. In Periyapuranam Sivapāda Hrudayar father of Thirugnanasambandar made Samabandar world fame. The whole world saw Sambandar as symbol of Knowledge “Gnanathin Thiruvuru” he himself A divine music “Gānatthin ezhupirappu” and the king of Tamil literature ” Thamizhākaran”.

## 3. Efficiency: (Vinaith thitpam)

### 1. Uruvu kandu ellāmai vendum urul peruntherkku achchāni annāār udaiththu.

Vinaith thitpam- Kural

– 667.

Do not despise by looks The lynch pin holds the huge wheel in place .Though the lynchpin is very small compare to huge rolling Juggernaut,without lynchpin it cannot even move a little. We cannot neglect anything of its size or look. In Periyapuranam Amarneethi nayanar when he lost the tornout kovanam ( under wear ) of Sivan devotee he was ready to give another good one which was woven on his loom. From the beginning Amarneethi nayanar had a feeling that it was a torn-out and shabby kovanam. He did not have the urge to keep it safe and perhaps more out of the disdain he felt for the cloth than from a motive of ensuring its safety. Hatred towards that small torn-out kovanam made Amarneethi to suffer a lot. The reason for his pain is he despised the kovanam by its look. Here that small kovanam is compared to small lynch pin of huge wheel.

### 2. Vinaiththitpam enbadhu oruvan manaththitpam Matriya ellām pira.

Vinaith thitpam - Kural – 661.

Efficiency is nothing but Strength of Mind. All the other aids are mere aids. In Periyapuranam Poosalār seems to be highly efficient that is he had a great strength of mind by constructing a huge temple in his heart .He raised a temple with his imagination with required materials within his mind. Like an Architect mentally he had constructed the temple with several tiers from the basement to the top portion, decorated, plastered, created architectural ornamentation and fixed a date for the invocation. Poosalār’s Efficiency came to limelight only after Lord Siva asked the king to change the date of invocation. We can understand that the efficiency of Poosalār is the strength of his mind. Poosalār ‘s mental strength is compared to Manaththitpam of Thirukkural.

### 3. Enniya enniyāngu eidhuba Enniyār thinniya rāgap perin.

Vinaith thitpam - Kural – 666

All who aims and work hard can be gained. Final result can be attained only if they are very firm in their thoughts. Poosalār was very firm in his thought, in his mind of constructing a temple for Lord Siva and achieved.

### 4. Veeru eidhi mändār vinaiththittam Vendankan uru eidhi ullap padum.

Vinaith thitpam - Kural – 665

The King himself surrendered to Poosalār because of his Efficiency (manaththitpam) of constructing a temple in his heart.

### 5. Innā seiyāmai:(Not Hurting Others) Innā seidhārai orutthal avarnāna nannayam seidhu vidal.

Innā seiyāmai – Kural – 314

Punish an evil - doer by shaming him with a good deed and forget. In Periyapuranam a very good example for this Kural is Meipporul nayanar. Mutthanādan was the evil-doer. Though Mutthanādan was in the disguise of a holy saint killed Meipporul nayanar with a dagger which was brought inside a holy book inside the palace, Meipporul nayanar made him to leave his country without any injury through his palace servant. There is no parallel to the quality of forgiveness which Meipporul nayanar displayed on his death bed.

### 6. Penance: (Thavam) Chudach chudaram ponpol olividum thunbam Chudachchuda norkir pavarkku.

Penance - Kural - 267

The fire refines gold and makes it to glow more brightly. Penance also so painful like fire. Like Gold which was cleared of all its offence when it is melted and it sparkles brightly. The more suffering scorches those who practice

Thavam the more does enlightenment shine in them. Iyarpagai nayanar in every other aspect he was found to be fit for mukti. But a small bit of attachment to his wife stood in his way of entering the kingdom of God. Lord Siva wanted to cleanse Iyarpagai of that small stain (attachment to his wife). This is the same principle underlying the chronicle of two other Nayanmar Saints Mānakkanjārar attachment towards his daughter's tresses and Siruthondar attachment towards his only son.

**7. Yearning: (Avā arutthal) Aārā iyarkkai avāneepin annilaiye Perā iyarkkai tharum.** Yearning - Kural - 370

Eternal joy is ensured when yearning ever hungry is expelled. The extirpation of desire makes a man to God. Iyarpagai nayanar, Manakkanjāra nayanar, and Siruthondar nayanar when they extirpate their desire completely they have attained Mukti. If one extirpate desires of insatiable nature that very state will confer on one the never quitting eternal state of Mukti.

**8. Renunciation: (Thuravu) Pattruga pattratṛān pattriunai appattariṇ Pattruga pattru vidarkku.**

Renunciation - Kural - 350.

Cling to the One who clings to nothing and so clinging, cease to cling. Cultivate attachment to Him who has no attachments. Cultivate that attachment in order to leave other attachment. In Periyapuranam Lord Siva asked for the supreme extirpation of attachment. For example the attachment Siruthondar towards his beloved Son. The attachment of Mānakkanjārar towards his Daughter's tresses and the attachment of Iyarpagai towards his wife. For them Mukti followed with the extirpation of desire as day follows night, and enlightenment follows ignorance.

**9. Hospitality : ( Virundhombal )**

**i. Selvirundhu ombi varuvirundhu pārtthiruppān nal virundhu vānat thavarkku.** Hospitality - Kural - 86.

Who hosts the passing guests and waits for more, will be hosted by Gods. The best examples are Ilayānkudi Mārar, Siruthondar were waited for the devotees to come and have food at their houses. Thiruvalluvar says this aspect of hospitality is a Velvi, an oblation to God.

**ii. Inaitthunaitthu enbadhondru illai virundin thutthunai velvip payan.** Hospitality - Kural - 87.

There is no such thing as a measure for the fruits of the pleasance called hospitality. The worth of the guest is the measure and it is also called as Velvi.

**10. Social Obligation : ( Oppuravaridal )**

**i. Thālātrith thandha porulellām thakkārkkku Velānmai seidhar poruttu.** Oppuravu aridal - Kural - 212.

The worthy work and earn wealth is in order to help others. All Wealth gained by Ilayānkudi Mārar through Agriculture by great toil is to did service to the world. He served the devotees by feeding them to the complete fulfillment of their desire with food of 4 categories and of 6 tastes

**ii. Oppuravināl varum kedenin agdoruṇ vittrukkōl thakkadu udaitthu.** Oppuravu aridal - Kural - 220.

If poverty comes of doing well, one's self may be sold to do it. It is said that ruin will result from Philanthropic munificence but such ruin is worth buying even by selling one's self. In Periyapuranam Ilayānkudi Mārar has the great heart to serve food for all even in a very tough and laborious condition.

**11. Compassion: ( Kannottam )**

**Karumanj chidaiyāmal kannoda vallārkkku urimai udaitthiv ulagu.** Kannottam - Kural - 578.

The whole world is his, who does his job with Sympathy or indulgent look. In Periyapuranam Ilayānkudi Mārar, Kanam Pullar, Naminandiadigal and Kunuliyakkalayanar had never stopped their work even in heavy distressed conditions. Ilayānkudi Māran fed food for all, Kanam Pullar and Naminandi adigal lit the lamp in the temple, and kungiliyakkalayar burnt kungiliyam continued their sacred service even in unimaginable distressed conditions.

**12. Self – Control: (Adakkamudaimai)**

**Ellārkkum nanrām panidhal avarullum selvarkke selvam thagaitthu.** Adkkamudaimai - Kural - 125.

Humility is good for all but it is an added richness to the rich. Siruthondar was an Ayurvedic Physician, a great Scholar in Sanskrit, and a brave Military chief who have won many battles to his credits. Though he was this much powerful he introduces himself as "Siruthondar" which means a simple devotee, meanest of mean devotee. This shows his greatness and highly self-controlled nature which adds richness to his quality.

**13. Not Hurting Others: (Innā seiyāmai)**

**Pirarkkinnā murpagal seiṇṇam thammakinnā Pirpagal thāme varum.** Innā seiyāmai Kural - 319.

The hurt you cause in the forenoon self-propelled will overtake you in the Afternoon. In Periyapuranam Dandiyadigal was blind by birth and he wanted to increase the depth and width of Kamalalayam tank of Thiruvarur. While he was doing this sacred service, the Jains of Thiruvarur abused and assaulted Dandiyadigal and stopped the work. By God's

grace in front of the King where the sacred and social service of a truthful devotee is stopped, all the Jains became blind and Dandiyadigal regained the eyesight. So the hurt which was caused by the jains to Dandiyadigal in the forenoon reverted back in the Afternoon.

## CONCLUSION

Thirukkural increases overall happiness and gives a purpose in life the same has been followed in Periyapuranam. More benefits of Thirukkural are developing good characters that have values and respects in life such as Gratitude, Friendship, Knowledge, and Virtue which is collectively seen in Periyapuranam also. Thirukkural commends a feeling of compassion for all individuals regardless of caste or creed. The nayanmars of Periyapuranam helped all individuals in the above such manner. Thirukkural is a world Masterpiece known for its timeless elucidation of moral ethics of Life. Like that Periyapuranam also a Master piece in Bakti Literature aims at guiding human being to lead a moral, ethical and service oriented life in this world. Thirukkural and Periyapuranam equally emphasizes the vital principles of nonviolence, vegetarianism, equalism and friendly brotherhood to the people around the world.

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### CITE AS

Prof.S.Subbulakshmi. (2023). Periyapuranam and Thirukkural. Global Journal of Research in Humanities & Cultural Studies, 3(1), 24–27. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7650773>