CHAPTER TWO

THE GREATNESS OF TIRUVALLUVAR AND TIRUKKURAL

2.1. THE SKY-HIGH FAME OF VALLUVAR

Begot Valluvan to the world
Attained Tamil Nadu the sky high fame

It is clear from the above praise of Bharathiyar, the doctrines pertaining to life, of Valluvar have been praised by the entire world. People of all countries, all religions, all ages can know, understand and act accordingly to the couplets of the kural at all times. Hence, Valluvam is a living one. A scholar of Tamil by name Kalladar states that the three major sections of the kural can be followed by any section of the people by accepting and accomplishing its contents. The followers of six religious cults who are fond of refuting others unanimously approve the thoughts of Valluvar. (Mohanaraj, K., 1998: 15)
Madurai Tamil Naganar glorifies the *kural* that other words have no merit than the holy utterances *Valluvar*. Nattattanar points out that after learning the 1330 couplets with commentaries, nothing can be listened from others. Hence, it is clear that *Tirukkural* contains all the quintessences of life-principles. (Ibid. 15). An individual person is a part of the society and the latter gains glory when the former is a cultured one. Man is endowed with three characteristics: (a) animal, (b) human and (c) divine, which are enshrined in him proportionately. The ideal of life is to give up animal behaviour, rise above the human level and sustain in divine life. When a man organises his life with righteousness (*aram*) wealth (*porul*) and joy (*inbam*) as envisaged by *Valluvar*, certainly human qualities will predominate; animal qualities will vanish. Naturally man is elevated to the level of the divine. He who lives on earth according to the basic norms, he will be treated as a deity by the celestials, says

The men, who on the King’s true praised delight to dwell,

Affects not them the fruit of deeds done ill or well.

(kural 5)

Hence, it is not an exaggeration to say that the entire text centres on this fundamental doctrine. Divine nature, according to *Valluvar*, is not to falsify one’s own heart and such persons will be honoured by one and all. Man must be cultured and nurtured for perfection, for this high level of experience *Valluvar* shows the way through his major three divisions.
Liberation can never be explained through words. Those who have realized the highest truth in life call it *vidu peru* as supreme bliss. *Appar Swamigal*, a Saiva saint calls this state as ‘ever bliss; never sorrow’. If one leads a regularised life with perfection in all aspects and enjoys the company of the Supreme Being, bliss automatically emerges. If we treat liberation as the highest goal of life, we can hold righteousness, wealth and enjoyment as the means to attain that highest goal. If one wants happiness in life on this earth and shows progress in all walks of life at all stages, one is expected to earn wealth through virtuous means and enjoy life. This lesser joy is the key for supreme joy. The third section viz., *Kamathuppal* is not a text on lust, but it instructs the noble means of procreation in a perfect way. Hence, the ambit of the *kural* is not to hide any secret of life but to highlight all the truths concerned with life.

Sages always proclaim: youthfulness and the body are not permanent. Wealth may vanish. Hence, in the transitory nature of the world, abiding joy is inevitably to be experienced. Generally people waste their time daily by treating the peripheral and transitory things as permanent ones. *Valhuvar* maintains that the knowledge which treats the evanescent ones as everlasting is meagre and lower,

Lowest and meanest lore, that bids men trust secure,

In things that pass away, as things that shall endure!

*(Kural 331)*

When men cannot be sure of their life the next moment, their ambitious thought enlarge to above crores
Who know not if their happy lives shall last the day,
In fancies infinite begulle the hours away!

(Kural 337)

What man has to achieve in the life between cradle to grave, since birth and death are like waking and sleeping states. So Kural aims at the highest path of perfect living through proper ways of living thereby we too live perfectly and make others also live perfectly.

Scholars of are of the opinion that Valluvar has christined his work as Muppal. It has been hailed as Poyyamoli, Podumarai, Deivamol etc. This work gets the honour of being the first work on wisdom. According to Kalyanasundaranar (Thiru ViKa) “Tirukkural is a mine; it has the wealth to supply to the world. Only a few wealth has been used by the people. There are still precious materials to be supplied to the forthcoming new generation. The mine of Tirukkural can never be dried up”. (Varadarasan, Mu., 1952:9)

“There is no substance which is not found in the Tirukkural. There are earth, water, sky, air, fire and the world; rain, people, beasts, animals, birds, god, ascetic, husband, wife, children, king, minister, citizens, food, fate, agriculture, love, beauty and everything”. (Subramaniaaccariyar, V.K., 1956:2) Hence, it is evident that
Valluvar portrays all faculties of life in its stages through animate beings and inanimate things.

K.A.P. Viswanathan states about the hidden, information in the kural: "Tirukkural is an Ocean. The hidden treasures are the precious pearls. The divers for pearls will bring forth as much of pearls as their physical ability can afford to. Similarly the readers of this precious work will acquire knowledge in accordance to their mental ability. Not mere living as the meaning of life. Attainment of perfection is the true significance of life. Kural is a sign post for such a life. Though born as human, man has learnt to fly in the sky, like the bird, swim in water like the fish. But he has not learnt how to walk on earth. Tirukkural educates him in this regard". (Visvanatham, K.A.P., 1960: 2)

From the above views of scholars one thing is very clear. Kural paves the way for mankind to live as a man. God's preaching to mankind is Bhagavad Gita. What man spoke for God is Tiruvacakam. What man spoke for man is Tirukkural. Man's perfect life on earth alone will lead him to a life of celestial. All the required materials for life are to be acquired through righteous means and happiness lies in giving to others. This empirical happiness will be magnified as the everlasting bliss. This is the objective of life.

Tamil culture insists that everyone should cultivate the habit of giving to others. The cause for the sustenance of the world despite several calamities is due to
the inhabitance of the non-selfish people who donate even the rare nectar. They
dreaded for evil and even if the whole world is offered seldom do they accept if it
gives forth disgrace. If fame is on the way, they are prepared to even sacrifice their
life. When such men of pre-eminence with love and discipline as basic virtues
predominate the world, the maladies of mankind will be minimised. The individual
well-being will culminate in social order.

"Among the scholars who realized and emphasised the art of living, the
notable few are; Manu, Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, Canakya, Valluvar and others.
The path shown by Manu had lost its credibility because of the emphasise on
superiority and inferiority over birth, slavery of womenfolk, untouchability etc., The
wisdom of Confucious was filled with show and pomposity. The path of Aristotle and
Plato was dwindled due to jealousy, besiegement, corruption, war, murder etc.
Canakya’s approach was based on cunning, wickedness traiting etc.” (Ratinam,
K.P.1959: 114). Under these approaches to the conception of life, what is the role of
Valluvar? Other scholars before Valluvar have touched upon the art of living. But
the credit goes to Valluvar for elucidating the entire gamut of life - structure in one
work.

"Poonkunranar had the wide principle viz., ‘every place is mine, everyone is
my relative; Tirumular had the high ideal viz., the joy I enjoyed, the entire world
must get; one is the class; one is the Deity; Kurukkoliyur Kilal had emphasised that
other than the fire meant for cooking and the heat of the sun, no fire and heat should
harm the people; other than the rain bow no murderous bow must be seen; every type of army should vanish except the army of ploughing; no man-kind must survive with craziness for land acquisition. Besides three noble ideas of the above scholars, *Valluvam* is based on virtue and love. Tamils had an excellent civilized life even before mankind did emerge in the few civilized countries to-day. No poet in Tamil land had not contemplated about the principles of life. It is quite natural to find the higher universal ideals in the *Tirukkural* since it also emerged in Tamil soil". (Ibid. 115)

*Tolkappiar* was the pioneer who classified the ideals of life into *aram*, *porul* and *inbam* (righteousness, wealth and joy). *Valluvar* is accredited for classifying, analysing and expounding them with true spirit. The world of scholars has approved that no one other than *Valluvar* has explained and codified the true meaning of life. In the words of *Avvai Duraisamy Pillai*, “It is generally proclaimed that the *veda* is the ancient text. *Sekkilar* has stated that the discipline of the *Veda* pertains to worldly affairs. The *veda* classifies the empirical living into action and wisdom (*Karma* and *Jnana*). But what living beings have to perform on earth is righteousness; that which is performed through it is wealth, the effect of the above is joy. This type of viewing life is found in the *Tirukkural*. The pattern of *Tirukkural* is not found in any book in the world. Hence, *Valluvar* himself has accomplished such a structure to his works in a unique manner. In this work are seen the high ideas cherished by intellectuals on this earth. Most of the ideas found in the *Kural* are not found in any literature in the
world. This itself is the unique grandeur of this work”. (Duraisamy Pillai, Avvai, 1950: 79).

Other than the scholars of Tamil country, eminent scholars of foreign countries too praise the *Tirukkural*. G.U. Pope was very much attracted by the thought-contents of this work and has translated it. H.D. Drew acknowledges that *Tirukkural* invites our attention since among the Tamil literature it is foremost in contents and approach. Charles, E. Gover holds that there is no doubt that like the popularity of the work of Homer among the Greeks, *Tirukkural* is the literary treasure drove, the grainary of poetry and showing the path of discipline with fine words among the Tamils. According to M. Ariel, *Tirukkural* is the best work among the Tamil literary works. Professor Wintermit has appreciated *Tirukkural* as the precious ruby among the world literature since it elucidates in two sentences in 1330 couplets narrating the major three objectives of life such as *aram, porul* and *inbam”* (Parantamanar, A.K., 1963: 10-11).

*Valluvar* could not have completed such a great compendium in one or two years. For he had contemplated on several issues, experienced several issues, experienced several events on various occasions at different periods and listened to others; experience, eliminated evil events and had composed this work at different intervals. Earthily life comprised of events from birth to death. Seldom can it expose the part or one stage of the experience. It is no exaggeration if we say that *Valluvar* released *Tirukkural* to establish the truth that the gateway to the highest experience
viz. liberation is the perfect life on earth. For he had been necessitated to focus upon the permanent and abiding values of earthy life. The objective of life of the ancient Tamils was to lead a perfect life on earth leading to perfection in celestial living too. Valluvar's mission was to make everyone understand this noble goal and accept the ideas as a means to emphasise their religious ideals. (Meenatchi Sundra Sivai, 1954: 7)

Tirukkral contains the message as to how to arrange one's daily life by different categories of people. The duties of domestic persons, the grammar for asceticism, the duties of the affluent ones, the nature of chasteful women, duties of father and son, the greatness of discipline, the power of self-control, the glory of education, the evils of illiteracy, the quality of offering, purity of heart, the significance of perfection, the inevitability of truth-realization, the special feature of friendship, the government, grammar of ministry, the importance of governance, the growth of society, the path of joyous life etc. are well explained in the kural. On the whole, Kural is the text which highlights the 'Philosophy of life'. In the opinion of Avinasingam, 'Tirukkural bears the testimony for the past two thousand years to the highest ideals of life among the Tamils. The future glory of the Tamils lies in the understanding and following the purports of the couplets. Kural did not stop with mere presentation of a few philosophical truths. Like the religious scriptures it does not insist on the worship of God alone. Most of the couplets deal with the principles to be seriously adhered to in daily life. It introduces a rare goal of life before mankind and also clarifies the pathway to reach the goal. This path is meant not exclusively for
the ascetics. It shows the method of conducting oneself in all walks of life at all stages. Hence, it is a fundamental text to be adopted in our daily life. Whenever we are confronted with doubts, it clarifies and shows the pathway to perfection. It illuminates our intellect at any stage of life, grants encouragement and gives energy to organise our life according to its message." (Jagannathan K.V., 1963:209). Tirukkural is really a guide to our day-to-day life. It is a manual for the lived, living and future generation.

The entire teachings of the Kural may be classified as individual morality and social morality. The latter includes political philosophy also. The first section viz., Arathuppal (virtue) can be identified with individual morality, while the Poruppal (wealth) with social morality. Initially, Valluvar who emphasised individual ethical code keeps 'destiny' at the end of Arathuppal. Even though individual is under the clutches of destiny, he can triumph over it, if he works hard incessantly. In the social morality Valluvar gives importance to 'porul'. The term 'porul' indicates the wealth as well as the 'meaning' of life. Material comfort is needed on this empirical world. This world is not meant for those who are without wealth, says Valluvar. Tolkappiar enunciated grammar not only for letters and words but also for 'porul', 'the grammar of life'. Following Tolkappiar, starts his compendium Valluvar with the basic letter 'A' and proceeds to delineate the features of perfect living. As the end of I section the chapter 'Kayamai (baseness)' finds the place. While Valluvar's ambition was to create a society filled with people of scholarliness, virtuous qualities and noble traits, he could not resist but show his anguish and agony over the negative deviants viz., the
despicable. The unworthy man resemble like the ordinary people; seldom can see such 'great' people (1071). Valluvar's repugnancy over the despicable is revealed here. It is clear that during the time of Valluvar, the cruel men were dominant. Hence, it is but natural for him to 'see' a society where the individuals fight against destiny and not being labelled as despicable. When he says that the world is meant for the virtuous and it be proud of such great people, it is clear that the world must be filled with men of noble characters and not with base mentality to patronise their interests and to protect them, a government becomes inevitable.

In this research work the social philosophy and political philosophy have been systematically exemplified. Philosophy brings to list the human values and ensures their applicability in actual life. Valluvar emphatically notes that one must 'see' in himself the grand substance which can annihilate the act of transmigration. This truth is to be realised rather than simply spoken of or discussed. This realization with sincerity results in the 'no fear' for the troubles caused by birth. A clear exegesis of this truth leads to a philosophical exposition of the statements of Valluvar. Valluvar's primary concern is to educate the people in the realms of social ideologies and political doctrines. Though they are explanatory, they have practical values too. An individual, a part and parcel of a society has to read the couplets, reflect over them with clarity and practise it in accordance to his understanding. Setting aside attachment, developing love so that 'I' and 'mine', the assertive and possessive sense of the ego are cut, the person has to curtail selfishness and raise himself to the level of
the divine. This is the path way shown by Valluvar - the objective of perfect living.
Let us analyse the tenability of Valluvar's arguments to the present day world.

2.2. THE PERIOD OF VALLUVAR

When a jnani wants to establish a new society, it is obligatory for him to visualize the prosperity or adversity of that period in which he flourishes. The ideas and ideals he express should reflect that period as well as the life-style of the people. A jnani is one who shows the pathway to perfection as to be followed by human beings who have to desist from animal behaviour. Besides this, his views must be patronised and practised not only during his time, but also must be sustained for every period, at all places and at all circumstances. Taking into consideration of the above, Valluvar is acclaimed as a true jnani since through his compendium, Tirukkural, he has portrayed the ethos of the people of his period and grand ideals to be sincerely adhered to by everyman in any part of the globe.

However, we cannot get an authentic biography of Valluvar since, as convention among the ancient Tamil poets; he did not write an autobiography. As a result, we could not understand the life history of Valluvar and we have to rely upon the writings of later scholars and myths too which seem to be whimsical. A.K. Paranthamanar, writes thus: "The story about Valluvar is only a fiction. He was a versatile genius who had mastered the ancient ethical treatises, politics, economics,
warfare, medicine, human joy etc. He had deeply observed the world and the society; he had abundant knowledge of not only books but also of the world; he had developed limitless love towards his mother; he loved his spouse and an expert in domestic life; he was an excellent exponent of political art; he loved mankind; he respected women of chastity; he was deeply interested in renaissance. We could see only such a portrayal of Valluvar in his Tirukkural, but not as a Brahmin wearing sacred thread, a hermit with matted locks nor a devotee of Siva with holy ashes. Seldom can we see even if extensive search is made". (Parantamanar, A.K., 1963: 12-13) The above view is justifiable since Valluvar’s intention was to make the world perfect through his experiences, thoughts etc. Hence, he did not write anything about himself.

It is necessary to note about the period of Valluvar and why did he write the Tirukkural as envisaged by Avvai Duraisamy Pillay. “During Valluvar’s period the truth about God, karmic link, the feeling of liberation as to reach the feet of God, the existence of heaven and hell etc. prevailed among the masses. The Veda of the Brahmins, the path of renunciation etc. were also spread. Hence, his period is in one way the mixed paths of Vedas and Tamil Saivism and in another way the new religious trends of Jainism and Buddhism. Eventually, people did not show keen interest in worldly affairs. The Vedic followers taught higher and lower strata of births as well as the transitory nature of the world. Also they preached about aversion towards worldly life and prevented people from exploring the objects of the world and to create the feeling of oneness and unity of existence. As they did not encourage
such living, people were prone to segregate and ruin themselves. The Jains and Buddhists insisted upon non-violence and non-attachment and created the scene as to not to think about politics, society and earning etc. As a result of these, Kalappirars, Pallavas and others besiegled Tamil country, captured power and it may not be false if contended that these people paved the way for ruining the Tamil Cultural history.

"According to the Buddhists, the domestic life with attachment is the cause for suffering. The Southerners, on listening to such utterances baffled without getting oneness by practising these ideals. Valluvar who was agonised over the mentality of the Tamil masses who easily become slaves to novelty, realized the truth that it was his duty to highlight the significance of aram (righteousness), porul, (wealth) and inbam (joy) as envisaged by eminent traditional scholars as the substantive objectives of life. In this process he has to bring out the basic ideals, consolidate, classify and exemplify them. "(Duraisamy Pillai, Avvai, 1950: 76-78)

There prevails confusion among the scholars in determining the date of Valluvar. Even the historians mention different periods about his life. In the absence of authentic data provided by Valluvar himself, his period is presumed based on a few historical facts and the contemporary literature of Valluvar's time. Accordingly, three periods are mentioned:

(a) Between 6th century A.D. and 8th century A.D. - Vaiyapurippillai
(b) 1st century A.D. - V.V.S. Iyer
(c) 1st or 2nd century B.C. - V.R. Ramachandra Diksitar
Unless we are familiar with the literatures before and after Valluvar, it not possible Valluvar's to be sure of period. First let us analyse the statement of Vaiyaprrippillai. In his view, it is wrong to hold that Valluvar belonged to I B.C or I A.D. based on the notion that Silappatikaram and Manimekalai belonged to II B.C. and they quote the couplets of the Tirukkural. The period of the two grand Tamil epics is not acceptable, but they belonged to 8th century A.D. However, he did not establish this view definitely. Further, according to him, Tirukkural is counted as one among the eighteen Kilkanakku works which are different from the Sangam works. The works of the Sangam era are composed in the collection of poems while the Kilkanakku works in the preaching style. Perasiriyar and other commentators maintain that the Kilkanakku works are later in time and the authors are later scholars. The Sangam era commenced during second century A.D., according to the traditional scholars. Hence, it is clear that the period of Valluvar can never be before that period, (Vaiyapuri Pillai S., 1957), i.e., the Sangam works do not belong to the category of 'advice'. They are collected works. Hence, Naladiyar and Kural do not belong to Sangam works. This view of Vaiyaprrippillai is not acceptable since the collected works like Puranamuru etc., undoubtedly elucidate about the 'advice' part. Since the ancient Tamils had the goal of perfection in life, it is not proper to classify the Sangam period in any form.

Also Vaiyaprrippillai maintains that since the impact of Sanskrit literature is on the creation of Valluvar, his period may be in accordance to the period of those works. Valluvar is indebted to the views of Manu, Kautilya, Kamantikiva and others.
as well as the works on *Ayur Veda* and *Kama Sutra*. The duties of domestic persons as stated in *Kurals* 41, 47 are borrowed from *Manu* (111.78). The method of respecting the husband by wife (*kural* 58) finds a place in *Manu* (V.155). (*Subramaniyam, N., 1984: 81*) *Vaiyapurippillai* determines the period of *Valluvar* not less than 600 A.D. probably due to his interpretations of *aram* as dharma, *porul* as artha and *inbam* as *kama* in Sanskrit tradition. Even the Indian and Western scholars differ in determining the dates of the Sanskrit works. According to Indian Scholars, the *Manusmriti* and *Arthasastra* arose during the third century B.C. while the Western scholars fix the date around third century A.D. Such being the case, without any evidence or appropriate argument, *Vaiyapurippillai* makes a futile attempt to fix the date of *Valluvar*. It will be an insult to *Valluvar* when stated that he borrowed the ideas from Sanksrit sources. It is also not proper to hold that the usage of Sanksrit words are derived from works like *Arthasastra*. Zvelebil has refuted this argument and has proved that the so called borrowed Sanskrit words have their origin in Dravidian context (Smith, 1957: 170).

When the Sangam era is indeterminable, all scholars invariably call *Valluvar* belonging to Sangam period. In the words of *Kovaikilai*, "In Tamil literature under the title Sangam works we come across *Eittuttogai* (Eight collection) *Pattuppattu* (Ten authologies), *Pathinen Kilkanakku* (Eighteen moral compendiums) composed by 49 poets. Once counted seriously, it may exceed 100 poets. All these poets did not live during the same period nor lived under the patronage of one king. They hailed from different parts of Tamil country from different communities and their works have
different subject matters. Among them, the works on *Ettuttagai* contain several lengthy lines with the themes of *akam* (inner) and *puram* (outer). Among the poems composed in different periods, other than those are perished, forgotten, destroyed, the remaining have been codified as the best. The works edited under *Patinen Kilkanakku* works are concerned with moral doctrines in *venba metre*. Each work has been composed by one poet. One such work is *Tirukkural*, the universal moral compendium. As stated earlier, it is a moral treatise pertaining to worldly affairs. It consists of three major divisions with 130 chapters and 1330 couplets. *Valluvar* has written an invocation (*payriam*) in four chapters. However, he did not mention anything about himself as the author, his time, history etc. Can *Valluvar* who intended to preach to the world about general principles of life, speak about himself? Hence, "other than stating that *Valluvar* belonged to the *Sangam* period and nothing else". (Ramachandran Chettiar, 1952: 317-318). From the above citation, it is presumed that *Valluvar* lived during the *Sangam* period.

The view held by V.V.S. Iyer that *Valluvar* lived during first century A.D. seems to be acceptable. The South Indian historians who attempted to write about the *Sangam* period state that it existed between first century B.C. to fifth century A.D. V.R. Ramachandra Diksitar maintains the above view. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar is of the opinion that the *Sangam* era existed for 1000 years from 500 B.C. to 500 A.D. V.A. Smith and K.A. Nilakanda Sastri claim that *Sangam* must have been existed during the begining of the Christian era (1st century A.D.). Subramanion.N., 1966:25)
Dr. S. Gopalan (1979) in his book 'Social Philosophy of Tirukkural' categorically establishes that Valluvar must have been lived between first century B.C. and first century A.D. (p.4). According to him, there is good reason to determine the period of Tirukkural since the Manimekalai period of the two Tamil epics viz., Silappatikaram and as well as Patinenkilkanakku (Tirukkural forms a part of it) is determined also undoubtedly they belong to the Sangam period. Silappatikaram says that in the worship of Kannaki a Sinhala king by name Gajabhagu attended. The history of Sinhala (Srilanka) refers to two Gajabhagus i.e., one belonged to second century A.D. and the other, 12th Century A.D. when looked at the structure and glory of Silappatikaram, it becomes clear that it does not belong to 12th Century. Also king Senguttuvan did not live during that period. Hence, it is clear that the said Gajabhagu must have lived during the period of the Chera King i.e. 2nd Century. The composer of Silappatikaram, Elangovadigal, the brother of Senguttuvan must have lived during 2nd century A.D. So, the periods of Tirukkural can be decided based on the asasociation of Gajabhagu and Senguttuvan.

The author of Manimekalai, Sattinar was a contemporary poet of Elangovadigal. Scholars like Vaiyapurippillai could not go against the dates of the above two epics, but pushes the period of Sangam to several centuries backwards. A couplet of the Tirukkural (Gujiam Shangram) 55 has been quoted in both the epics (XXII; 59-61) and it is evident that their period has been established. Now it is clear that Valluvar's period is one or two centuries prior to the two epics (Ibid: 5).
The above view is acceptable since the usage of words, phases, illustrations, contents etc. of the kural are similar to the Sangam works. There is no authentic evidence to substantiate the claim that Valluvar went to Madurai to give initial inauguration, but the scholars denied it, later the Sangam plate in the lotus tank accepted it. Most of the contemporary scholars have quoted verbatim of the essence of Kural in their compositions. Alathur Kilar calls Tirukkural as aram; Kokkaippadiniyar makes use of the couplet 69 in the Puranamuru verse. Hence, it is obvious that the Tirukkural is prior to Puranamuru.

It is a fabricated information that the name of Valluvar's parents is Adi and Bhagavan. In those days men of scholarly eminence seldom mention about themselves than emphatically impose their ideologies. As Valluvar did not mention anything about his community, the later poets included him in a specific community and used his own phrases Adi and Bhagavan to refer to his parents. This is an upsurd attempt according to several scholars. Avvai Duraisamy Pillai (1950) says: There are no support or evidence to show that Valluvar's parents are known as Adi and Bhagavan. The first couplet indicates that the First Being for the world is Adhibhagavan, some make use of this epithet to refer to his parents. No Tamil scholar has ever openly mentioned the names of parents either implicitly or explicitly. Hence, it is clear that to declare their names is not a Tamil tradition. It is wrong to say that Valluvar's father is Bhagavan and mother, Adhi! (Minatci Sundara Sivai, 1954: 2).
It is also absurd to state that Valluvar had six brothers and sisters such as Avvai, Valli, Adhigamam, Kapilar and others. It is only an imaginary story without an iota of truth. The Jains proclaim that Valluvar lived in Tirumayilai. Tiruvalluva Malai refers to Madurai as his dwelling place. There is also no evidence to show that his wife’s name is Vasuki. Valluvar points out several professions such as agriculture, trade, politics, ministerial, errand, warfare, chanting the scriptures etc. Never has he mentioned about weaving as his family profession.

In the words of N. Murugesan Mudaliyar, ‘........ the Tamil country was outside the cultural or political influence of Magadha even in the period of Ashoka as history testifies. It is thus unlikely that Valluvar was obliged to import the theories found in Kautilya. It is reasonable to accept the view of Dr. Natesa Pillai arrived at after elaborate enquiry that Valluvar’s date is not later than 200 A.D. I suggest that the dates are relevant only to prove any hypothesis of Valluvar’s indebtedness to Kautilya or vice-versa. What is more relevant is for whom Kautilya wrote and for what purpose Valluvar wrote, and what are more crucial is the radical differences in the theory and concept of polity in the two authors........ There are..... sufficient data to put Valluvar’s date indubitably not later than 2nd century A.D., (Murugesan Mudaliar, N., 1971: 521).
2.3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE THIRUKKURAL

_Tirukkural_ has been classified into three major divisions viz., _Arathuppal_, _Porutpal_, and _Kamathuppal_ (section on righteousness, wealth and pleasure respectively). As sub-divisions it has _Payiram_ (invocation), _illaraviyal_ (division on domestic virtues), _thuravaraviyal_ (division on ascetic virtues), _arastiyal_ (division on political virtues), _amaichiyal_ (division on ministerial virtues), _angaviyal_ (division on one's role in society), _ozhibiyal_ (division on residues), _kalaviyal_ (division on erratic love) and _karpiyal_ (division on chasteful love). Each couplet has two lines with seven words- four in the first line and three in the second line and the metre of composition of this grand compendium is _Kural venba_. Each _adhikaram_ (canto) consists of ten couplets and totally this work has one hundred and thirty three cantos leading to one thousand three hundred and thirty three couplets.

_Tiruvalluvar_ has succeeded in not following a single method of explanation, but a variety of methos especially elucidation through nutshell explanation. "To enunciate the grammar for the chosen theme, to narrate the reason and result, to explain the materialistic trends, to make injunctions, to deny, treating some aspects of life as support, some as glory, some as an army, making everything orderly, emphasising by viewing backward and forward, to say something as the determination of scholars, to show the allegories on men of virtues, to make some as similies, to make matter as analogy, explicating even minute points, giving ap illustrations,
condemnation, praising with deceit, etc. are found in this work manifesting emotions like awe, wrath etc." (Meenatchisundara Sivai, 1954: 10-11)

It is to be pondered over as to why *Valluvar* has chosen to state and analyse the first three values, when human values are recognised as four such as *aram* (righteousness), *porul* (wealth), *inbam* (pleasure) and *vidu* (heaven). In the *Valluvamalai* (50) it has been stated that heaven is realized. The author of this work holds that he has 'known' righteousness, wealth and the greatness of human pleasure, but while stating about heaven he says that he has 'realized' heaven. Hence, it is clear that he has not created a separate major division as vidu or *vittuppaal*. Parimelazhagar in his commentary to the invocation says. “Since heaven is a state of experience where thinking and language seldom reach, *Valluvar* has indicated about it in ascetic path than grammatical way. Hence, the remaining pathways to perfection are explained.” Now it is clear that moksa or liberation is a state of experiences and Hence, not possible to be explained in adequate terms. *Valluvar* uses the word 'vidu' in the sense of relinquishing, but in not in the sense of liberation.

As those who are of a friendly nature will not forsake (a friend) after once loving (him), there is no evil so great as contracting a friendship without due inquiry

To make an untried main your friend is ruin sure;
for friendship formed unbroken must endure.  

*(Kural 791)*
There is nothing else harmful than to make friendship without staunch enquiry. It will be difficult to get away from friendship once it is well established. Hence, 'vidu' indicates to give up or relinquish and not liberation. Naccinarkkiniyar, in his commentary on the Tolkappiyam Payiram, answers to the questions about vidu in the lines of Valluvar thus: 'Agastiyar and Tolkappiyar have mentioned about vidu without defining it that it belongs to all the three basic virtues starting with aram. Valluvar too has similar idea about vidu. Parippeumal, a commentator to the Tirukkural, holds that release (vidu) is the effect of being righteous and hence, it is included in aram. Though four basic values are enunciated, all the scholars including Valluvar had it as a convention to discuss about only three values (aram, porul and inbam) and Valluvar christened his works as Muppal (Shanmugam Pillai, 1972: 6-7)

"The Tirukkural has been acclaimed as a world classic and its author, Saint Tiruvalluvar as a bard of universal man. Whatever its date of composition, the Tirukkural has been a source of inspiration for several centuries now. It is generally listed among the ethical works in Tamil and is considered to be the greatest of them. Its chapters are classified under three main sections, dealing with the first three out of the usually accepted four Ends of Life - Virtue, Wealth, Enjoyment and Heaven or the state of Release. The reason for the omission of the fourth viz., Heaven or the state of Release is said to be this - that as Heaven is beyond the ken of thoughts or words, its nature cannot be dealt with except in relation to what leads to it viz., Asceticism. However, if Heaven or Release is not necessarily a post mortem state but can very well be here and hereafter, if Heaven is the quality of our life, if the Kingdom of God
is within us and, if release is a matter of release from egoism or self-centredness, from the sense of 'I' and 'mine', I submit that the Heaven or state of Release is the underlying theme of the whole work. Not only the first chapter which is in Praise of God and other chapters in the first two sections emphasising ethical virtues which help to bring about freedom from egoism, not only the chapter on knowledge of the True (நிலவுமாற்றும்), which is a marvel of a Metaphysics is in a miniature, but the whole of the third section, kamathuppal (நமதுமாற்றும்/happiness) is also concerned with Heaven or Release. If I am right in understanding the central theme of the Thirukkural to be non-attachment and love, the evolution of the personality from a state of self-centredness and narrow attachments to a state of God-centredness and boundless love or compassion or benevolence, then the third section, kamathuppaal (நமதுமாற்றும்) is the best description of such a state.” (Devasenapathi, V.A., 1971: 323-324).

Hence, it is not an exaggeration, if we relinquish 'I' and 'mine', the sense of assertion and possession and develop pure love, we can attain liberation.

He who destroys the pride which says 'I' 'mine' will enter
a world which is difficult even to the Gods to attain

(Kural 346)

From this couplet we learn that those who have renounced the ego sentiments such as 'I' and 'mine' would be blessed more than the celestials. “The classification of
Tirukkural into sub topics seems to be controversial. Aruthuppal has the sections as payiram, illaram and turavaram, Porutpal as arasiyal, angariyal, olibiyal and Kamattuppal as kalaviyal and karpiyal. This division varies from edition to edition especially according to Tiruvalluvamalai and Manakkuudavar. But there is similar treatment for chapters such as Arattuppal etc. It is obvious to note, then, that Valluvar has given the chapter title, while the later scholars gave the section titles.

"The three major characteristics of souls are knowledge, desire and action. Of this knowledge is used for acquiring wealth, desire for enjoyment and action for performing righteous deeds. Tolkappiyar, keeping this psychological basis of human beings, in the Poralathikaram makes the order as inbam (joy), porul (wealth) and aram (righteousness). Valluvar declares that joy comes exclusively from righteous deeds (அறிவுடன் ஆரம் கொண்டும் இயற்னும்), this world is not for the wealthless people (சம்பவமன்னுடன் இயற்றும்). Thus virtues and wealth are the means for pure delight. Hence, Arathuppal forms the first, Porutpal in the middle and Inbattuppal in the end in the classification of Valluvar. Parimelalagar, the commentator says that worldly life, celestial life and liberated life are due to righteousness, worldly life and celestial are due to wealth and worldly life is exclusively due to joy and Hence, the three major chapters” (Minatci Sundara Sivai, 1954: 11-12).

The above view of Avvai Duraiswamy Pillai (1954) gives a vivid picture of the classification of Tirukkural i.e., the chapters are made by Valluvar himself, while the sections (iyal) are done by later scholars. The sections and the title of each canto
indicate the virtues to be followed, and the behaviour to be shunned with. The commanding statements and negative injunctions show clearly the scholarly attitude of the author. 'The Praise of God', 'Cherishing Guests', 'The Possession of Benevolence', 'The Greatness of a King', 'Friendship', 'Knowing the Fitting Time', etc. are the instructive topics. 'The not speaking Profitless Words', 'Not doing Evil', 'Avoiding Mean Association', etc. are the qualities explained in a negative way. 'Dread of Evil Deeds', 'The Extermination of Desire', 'The Renunciation of Flesh', 'The Correction of Faults', 'Inconsistent Conduct', 'Unreal Friendship', 'Evil Friendship' etc. are the unwanted behaviour to be annihilated. (Sanmugam Pillai, 1972: 22-23)

_Valluvar_ could not bear the prevalence of 'Baseness' ('kayama') during his time and intended to make people live like gentle human beings by giving up all animal characteristics. To those who resort to domestic life and to those who follow the life of renunciation _Valluvar_ prescribes virtues to be followed and the qualities to be removed. Wealth is to be attained by fair means and the political set up must promote the welfare of people. Gradually _Valluvar_ proceeds to point out the significance of 'other worldliness' 'the path of unreturn' etc. And wants that people must lead a joyous life on this earth and must prepare for a perfect future life. The political ideologies of _Valluvar_ centres around the people and their welfare with peaceful existence.