

## **Significance of Thevaram (Explained in English)**

### **Thirutchitrambalam...**

Many devotional songs in praise of God have been created in the Tamil language. Thirumurai is one of the first works in Saivism, one sect of the Hindu religions. It reflects important core values and preserves them literally as well as grammatically. The songs contain all the information found in the Vedas. These holy hymns have been sung by Saivite Saints, poets, in a great spiritual wisdom and in seeking only the Truth, having seen the God himself. They have numerous healing powers that make wonders, having staged many miracles such as restructuring bones into a woman and making a dumb person speak.

Panniru thirumuRai (12 thirumuRaikal) is a collection of 12 holy scriptures sung by 27 devotees in Tamil (from ThirujnAnachambandhar to ChEkkizhAr) most of whom lived in different times. The songs reflect and teach the ways of present life, after-life and the path to reach the Almighty. They help to live life and experience it to its fullest with happiness and prosperity. They are suitable for and accessible to the masses and the elite alike and apply to all in various states and conditions.

The first letter in the first thirumuRai in Tamil script is "thO" as in the word "thOdudaiya", which can be separated into the basic "th" letter and the "O" sound. The last letter is "m" as in the word "ulagelAm". Together, these sounds form the pranava "Om".

Of the panniru thirumuRai, thEvAra thiruvAchakankal is one of the most important. ThEvAram refers to songs (pAmAlai) sung in God's praise. It consists of the first 9 thirumuRaikal sung by a total of 12 poets. These songs are organized by melodies (paNmurai) or abodes (thalamurai).

ThirujnAnachambandhar lived during early 7th century and sang the first 3 thirumuRaikal. ThirunAvukarachar who lived during late 6th to 7th century sang the 4th - 6th thirumuRaikal. Sundharar lived during late 7th century and sang the 7th thirumuRai. These three poets were three of the first four pillars of Saiva SiddhAntham. The fourth was MANikkavAchakar who sang the 8th thirumuRai. The 9th was sung by the remaining 8 poets. These 9 thirumuRaikal / thOththiram, are followed by thirumandhiram / ChAththiram (guidelines), the 10th thirumurai sung by Thirumoolar, prabantham (assorted) the 11th, and purANam / periya purANam (history of the 63 nAyanmArkal) as the 12th thirumuRai sung by ChEkkizhar. All together they make up the panniru thirumuRai. Much benefit can be derived from singing these songs dedicated to God and thus, allow for His blessings in life.

### **Thirutchitrambalam.**