

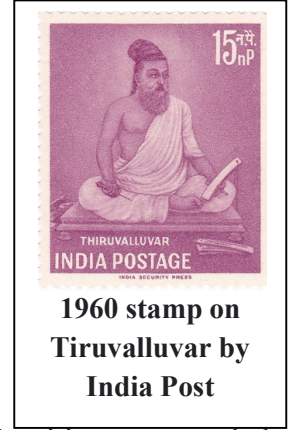
Tirukkural - an ethical guide to moral living

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Tirukkural (Tamil: “Sacred Couplets”), is the most celebrated literary work in Tamil literature. This has an immense influence on human culture and life. In its practical concerns, aphoristic insights into daily life, and universal and timeless approach, *Tirukkural* stands apart, compared to the great books of the world.

An all-inclusive ethical guide, the *Tirukkural* has as its foremost moral imperatives like the avoidance of killing and the avoidance of falsehood. It also commends to the reader a feeling of compassion for all individuals, regardless of caste, colour or creed. Its 133 sections of 10 couplets each, the book is divided into three major branches, namely, *aram* (virtue), *porul* (government and society) and *inbam* (love).

Human life should not be something that is limited and confined to a small circle. It should expand and be one with glorious traits. To expand the minds of humanity and to create a society based on morality has been the goal of *Tirukkural*



1960 stamp on
Tiruvalluvar by
India Post



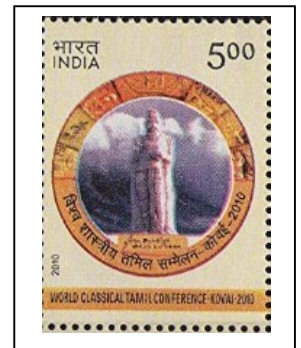
1968 stamp
depicting
Tirukkural

Tirukkural is the masterpiece of Tamil literature. No amount of writing can extol the greatness and glory of the work. Known for its brilliant and timeless elucidation of moral ethics of life, *Tirukkural* is one of the oldest literary works known to man. *Tirukkural* is regarded as the universal book of ethics because it has no relation with any religion or language. It is relevant to people at all times and climes.

Tirukkural highlights qualities like truthfulness, self-restraint, gratitude, hospitality, kindness, duty and charity. It also covers a wide range of social and political topics. The benefits of *Tirukkural* are that it increases overall happiness of men and women and gives a purpose in life.

Tirukkural was written by Tiruvalluvar in the 1st century BC. It has been translated into English by many personalities and is also in several other languages of the world. *Tirukkural* has been widely admired by scholars and influential leaders like Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, G.U.Pope, Albert Schweitzer, Joseph Beschi, Karl Graul and Kamil Zvelebil.

Dr Albert Schweitzer, the greatest humanist of 20th century, described the *Tirukkural* thus: “On the most varied questions concerning the conduct of man to himself and to the world, *Tirukkural's* utterances are characterised by nobility and good sense”.

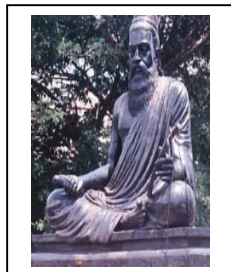


Stamp depicting
Tiruvalluvar issued
during the World
Classical Tamil
Conference, Kovai
in 2010 by
India Post



Stamp from
Australia Post
depicting
Tiruvalluvar

Tiruvalluvar statue in Mylapore, Chennai →



“Think how you feel before the strong
When to the feeble you do wrong”.
Tirukkural : 250

Life bereft of love is gloom
Can sapless tree in desert bloom?
Tirukkural : 78