Vallalar (Ramalinga Swamigal) – Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sangam, Sathya Dharma Salai, Sathya Gnana Sabai, Thiruvarutpa & Jeeva Karunyam | TNPSC Notes

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Ramalinga Swamigal (1823–1874), popularly called **Vallalar** and also **Ramalinga Adigal** (full name **Thiruvarutprakasa Vallalar Chidambaram Ramalingam**), was a nineteenth-century Tamil saint-poet and social reformer from **Marudur near Chidambaram**. He is famous for the **Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam**, the free kitchen **Sathya Dharma Salai** at **Vadalur** (1867), the **Sathya Gnana Sabai** (1872), his book of verses **Thiruvarutpa**, and his message of **Jeeva Karunyam** – compassion to all living beings – and of a society without caste.

தமிழில் படிக்க

These notes are written for TNPSC Group 1, 2/2A and 4 aspirants and are meant to be complete on their own. Vallalar is a core topic in the unit **History, Culture, Heritage and Socio-Political Movements of Tamil Nadu** (social and religious reform in the nineteenth century) and is also asked under **History, Culture of India and Indian National Movement** (reform movements of nineteenth-century India). His works, titles and quotations come in **General Tamil** under **"Tamil scholars and their service to Tamil"**, where he is studied with Thayumanavar and Thiru. Vi. Ka. as a poet of religious harmony. Read each section, then revise with the tables, the quick revision table and the key points at the end.

At a Glance

- **Names:** Ramalingam (birth name); Ramalinga Swamigal; Ramalinga Adigal; **Vallalar** ("the generous one"); Thiruvarutprakasa Vallalar.
- **Born:** 5 October 1823, **Marudur**, near Chidambaram (now in Cuddalore district).
- **Parents:** Ramaiah Pillai and Chinnammai; he was their fifth and youngest child.
- **Main places:** Marudur (birth) – Chennai (childhood) – Karunguzhi (1858–1867) – Vadalur (Dharma Salai, Gnana Sabai) – Mettukuppam (Siddhi Valagam, 1874).
- **Organisation:** Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam (1865), renamed Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam (1872).
- **Institutions:** Sathya Dharma Salai (23 May 1867); Sathya Gnana Sabai (25 January 1872).
- **Main work:** Thiruvarutpa – 5,818 verses in six Thirumurai.
- **Prose works:** Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam; Jeeva Karunya Ozhukkam.
- **Core ideas:** Jeeva Karunyam (compassion to all lives), feeding the hungry, rejection of caste and religious divisions, God as light – **Arutperunjothi**.
- **Disappearance:** 30 January 1874, Siddhi Valagam, Mettukuppam.

Birth, Family and Childhood

- **Birth:** 5 October 1823 at **Marudur**, a village near **Chidambaram** in the then South Arcot district (now Cuddalore district).
- **Parents: Ramaiah Pillai**, a village accountant, and **Chinnammai**. He was the **fifth and youngest child**; his brothers were Sabapathi and Parasuraman, and his sisters Sundarammal and Unnamulai.

- **Chidambaram incident:** when he was about five months old his parents took him to the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram. Tradition says the infant laughed during the lamp worship – later seen by his followers as his first spiritual experience.
- **Loss of father:** his father died within a year of his birth (1824). His mother first moved to her native place near **Ponneri**.
- **Move to Chennai:** the family later settled in Chennai with his eldest brother **Sabapathi**, on Veerasamy Pillai Street in the **Seven Wells (Ezhukinaru)** area.

Sabapathi, a scholar who gave religious discourses, wanted the boy to study, but Ramalingam was more drawn to the **Kandaswamy temple at Kandakottam** in Chennai, dedicated to Murugan. Sabapathi stopped his meals to force him to study; his sister-in-law quietly fed him. He then studied at home, in a room with a lamp and a mirror, where he meditated and – according to his followers – had a vision of Lord Murugan. His early hymns, the **Deiva Mani Malai**, were sung at Kandakottam. He also visited the **Thiruvotriyur** temple regularly in his youth.

Without any formal schooling he became deeply learned. When his brother could not attend a discourse on the **Periya Puranam** (the lives of the 63 Nayanmars), young Ramalingam took his place, and his explanation drew wide praise. The Class 10 Social Science textbook stresses this point: he had no formal education, yet became highly learned.

Marriage: the family arranged his marriage to his sister's daughter, but he showed no interest in household life and soon turned fully to spiritual work.

Karunguzhi and Vadalur (1858 onwards)

In **1858** he left Chennai, went first to Chidambaram, and then settled at **Karunguzhi**, a village near **Vadalur**, where he stayed for about **nine years**. This region – Karunguzhi, Vadalur and Mettukuppam, all in present Cuddalore district – became the centre of all his later work.

The Sangam: Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam (1865 / 1872)

- **1865:** he founded the **Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam**, a fellowship of his followers that opposed the caste system.
- **1872:** it was renamed the **Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam**. The Tamil Nadu textbook explains the name as a "Society for Pure Truth in Universal Self-hood".
- **Meaning of the words:** samarasam – equality and harmony of all; suddha – pure; sanmargam – the true path; sathyam – truth.
- **Aim:** one universal path for all people, beyond caste, religion and sect, based on compassion and on worship of God as light.

Exam tip: the word that changed in 1872 is **"Vedha" to "Suddha"** (with "Sathya" added). Questions often give the 1865 name with the 1872 year, or the other way round.

Sathya Dharma Salai, Vadalur (23 May 1867)

The Class 10 Social Science textbook notes that a **severe famine struck south India in 1866**. In the following year, on **23 May 1867**, Vallalar opened a free feeding house at **Vadalur**, later known as the **Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Dharma Salai**. It was built with the support of local people and well-wishers.

- **Open to all:** food was served to every hungry person, regardless of caste, religion or status – a radical idea in nineteenth-century society, where people of different castes did not eat together.
- **The undying fire:** Vallalar himself lit the fire of the kitchen stove in 1867. Devotees and reports state that it has been kept burning without a break ever since – firewood is added even at night when no

cooking is done.

- **Running today:** the Dharma Salai still feeds visitors every day, with provisions given by devotees.
- **Title "Vallalar":** because of this free feeding he came to be called **Vallalar** – the great giver.

For Vallalar, hunger was the worst of sufferings and feeding the hungry was the highest form of worship. The textbook quotes his description of the poor wandering from house to house, weak with hunger and finding no relief – a sight that shook him deeply. One of his best-known lines expresses the same feeling: **"வாடிய பயிரைக் கண்டபோதெல்லாம் வாடினேன்"** – "whenever I saw a withering crop, I withered too".

Education and Thirukkural Classes

- He started a school where **Tamil, Sanskrit and English** were taught – a three-language idea that was unusual for a religious teacher of his time – and encouraged learning for people of all ages.
- He held regular classes on the **Thirukkural** for the public; he was deeply influenced by Thiruvalluvar.

Sathya Gnana Sabai, Vadalur (25 January 1872)

The **Sathya Gnana Sabai** (Hall of True Knowledge) was opened on **25 January 1872**, on **Thai Poosam** day, when the first **Jothi Darshan** (vision of the light) was held. It is not a temple in the usual sense.

Feature	What to remember
Shape	Octagonal building
Object of worship	A lamp – God as light (Arutperunjothi); no idol
Seven screens	Seven curtains hide the lamp; they stand for the veils (illusions) that hide the truth from the soul
Jothi Darshan	All seven screens are removed on Thai Poosam, when lakhs of devotees gather; started on Thai Poosam, 1872
Chain	A chain of 21,600 links surrounds the hall – believed to match the number of breaths a person takes in a day
Offerings	No offerings of fruit or flowers and no rituals
Rule for entry	People of all castes may enter; meat-eaters may worship only from outside

Siddhi Valagam, Mettukuppam and the Last Years

- In his last years Vallalar lived in a one-room residence called **Siddhi Valagam** at **Mettukuppam**, a short distance from Vadalur.
- **October 1873:** he hoisted the **Sanmarga flag** at Siddhi Valagam and gave a long final discourse to his followers, popularly called the **Peru Upadesam** (great sermon). Sources differ on the exact day (20 or 22 October 1873).
- **30 January 1874** (19th of the Tamil month Thai): he entered his room at Siddhi Valagam, had it closed, and told his followers not to open it, saying they would find nothing if they did.
- **Later:** the government had the door opened, and the room was found **empty** (sources differ on when it was opened).
- The event is recorded in the **Madras District Gazetteer, South Arcot (1906)**. Followers believe he merged into the divine light; the closed room (Thirukappitta Arai) is opened for viewing during the Thai Poosam festival.

Thiruvarutpa – His Great Work

- **Meaning:** Thiru-arul-pa – "songs of divine grace".
- **Size: 5,818** verses, arranged in **six Thirumurai** (books). (Do not confuse with the **twelve** Saiva Thirumurai.)
- **Compiled by:** his chief disciple **Thozhuvur Velayutha Mudaliar**. The earlier books were published during his lifetime; the **sixth Thirumurai** came out after his time.
- **Development:** the early hymns are devotional (to Murugan, Shiva at Thiruvotriyur and Chidambaram); the **sixth Thirumurai** contains his mature vision of God as light and of universal compassion, and he wanted followers to concentrate on it.
- **Language:** simple, clear Tamil, meant for ordinary people. Many of the songs have been set to music and are sung in Carnatic concerts.
- **Mahamantra:** his followers recite "**Arutperunjothi Arutperunjothi Thanipperunkarunai Arutperunjothi**" – "Supreme Light of Grace, Supreme Light of Grace, Unique Great Compassion, Supreme Light of Grace".

Other Works

Work	Type	Content
Thiruvarutpa	Poetry, 5,818 verses, 6 Thirumurai	Songs of grace; devotion, compassion, God as light
Deiva Mani Malai	Poetry (early hymns)	Early hymns sung at the Kandakottam Murugan temple, Chennai
Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam	Prose	Retelling of the justice of the Chola king Manu Neethi Cholan (who punished his own son for killing a calf); written to teach values
Jeeva Karunya Ozhukkam	Prose	The discipline of compassion to all lives; the case for feeding the hungry and for a meatless diet

Tamil Nadu textbooks and general sources also describe him as a commentator, editor and publisher of Tamil works, and as a man who knew herbal medicine.

The Arutpa–Marutpa Controversy

When his songs were published under the name **Thiruvarutpa**, the Jaffna Saiva scholar **Arumuga Navalar** objected. He argued that only the hymns of the Saiva Thirumurai deserve to be called Arutpa (songs of grace) and called Vallalar's songs **Marutpa** (songs of delusion). Pamphlets and counter-pamphlets followed from both sides from the late 1860s, and the debate went on for decades. Navalar also filed a **defamation case** against Vallalar, who denied making any insulting remark; accounts of the case differ. The controversy shows how strongly orthodox scholars resisted Vallalar's break from traditional Saivism – his rejection of caste, rituals and sectarian divisions.

Teachings of Suddha Sanmargam

Teaching	Explanation
Jeeva Karunyam	Compassion to all living beings – the main path to God and to liberation (moksha). The textbook notes it included even plants.
Feeding the hungry	Removing hunger is the highest worship; hence the Sathya Dharma Salai.
God as light	God is one, without form, and is worshipped as light – Arutperunjothi (Supreme Light of Grace).
Against caste and religious division	All souls are equal; caste, religion and sect should not divide people. His ideal is called Aanma Neya Orumaippaadu – the unity of all souls through love.
Against killing	He opposed animal sacrifice in the name of God and the eating of meat.
Against rituals and superstition	Worship of minor deities, empty rituals and superstitions should be given up; inner experience matters more than ceremony.
Universal brotherhood	His path was open to everyone; feeding, teaching and worship were all without discrimination.

In the words of the Class 10 textbook, he stressed the bonds of responsibility and compassion between living beings, and held that those who feel no pity for suffering beings have lost their clarity of mind. He is placed in the line of Tamil **gnana siddhars**.

Place in the Reform Movements of the Nineteenth Century

- Vallalar is studied with nineteenth-century reformers of Tamil Nadu such as **Iyothee Thassar**; both challenged the caste order, from different angles.
- His free kitchen at Vadalur, open to all castes, has kept running for more than 150 years – a living example of his teaching.
- Unlike many all-India reform bodies of the period, his movement grew out of Tamil devotional literature and was expressed entirely in Tamil.
- His opposition to caste, his stress on equality and his idea of a common path for all people make him a forerunner of later social reform in Tamil Nadu.

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Important Places in Vallalar's Life

Place	Connection
Marudur (near Chidambaram)	Birthplace, 5 October 1823
Chidambaram	Nataraja temple incident in infancy; visited after leaving Chennai in 1858
Ponneri	Mother's native place; family stayed there after the father's death
Chennai – Seven Wells	Childhood home with brother Sabapathi
Kandakottam, Chennai	Murugan temple; Deiva Mani Malai
Thiruvotriyur	Temple he visited regularly as a youth
Karunguzhi	Lived about nine years from 1858
Vadalur	Sathya Dharma Salai (1867); Sathya Gnana Sabai (1872)
Mettukuppam	Siddhi Valagam; flag hoisting (1873); disappearance (30 January 1874)

Honours, Memorials and Recent Events

- **Postage stamp:** India Post issued a **Rs 5** commemorative stamp on **17 August 2007**.
- **Thai Poosam:** every year the Jothi Darshan at the Sathya Gnana Sabai on Thai Poosam draws large crowds; Vallalar societies across south India also observe the day.
- **200th birth anniversary:** marked on **5 October 2023**; Prime Minister Narendra Modi sent a message to the celebration at Vadalur.
- **Vallalar International Centre:** in 2023 the State government proposed a centre (about Rs 100 crore) on the **Peruveli** land of the Sathya Gnana Sabai. Devotees and petitioners objected that the open ground is sacred; in 2024 the **Madras High Court** ordered work to be stalled and asked for proper permissions.
- **International Vallalar Conference (February 2026):** organised in Chennai by the **Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Department**. The State announced that Vallalar's birth anniversary would be celebrated for **three days every year**, a research centre on Vallalar in Chennai, free-meal (annadhanam) centres at **Mettukuppam, Karunguzhi and Marudur**, and the renaming of **Thiruvottiyur High Road** in North Chennai as **Vallalar High Road**.

Writing Mains Answers on Vallalar (Group 1 / Group 2)

Descriptive papers ask about his social reform, his institutions and the relevance of his ideas. Use the frameworks below and support each point with a fact from these notes.

Vallalar as a social reformer (about 150–250 words)

- **Introduction:** Ramalinga Swamigal (1823–1874), Marudur; saint-poet of the nineteenth century; called Vallalar.
- **Against caste:** Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam (1865), renamed Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam (1872) – one path for all.
- **Against hunger:** Sathya Dharma Salai, Vadalur, 23 May 1867, after the famine of 1866; free food for all castes; fire still burning.
- **Worship without ritual:** Sathya Gnana Sabai (1872) – God as light, no idol, no offerings, no rituals.

- **Non-violence:** opposed animal sacrifice and meat-eating; Jeeva Karunyam.
- **Education:** school teaching Tamil, Sanskrit and English; Thirukkural classes.
- **Resistance faced:** Arutpa–Marutpa controversy with Arumuga Navalar.
- **Conclusion:** a pioneer of equality and compassion in Tamil Nadu, whose Dharma Salai still feeds the hungry.

Relevance of Jeeva Karunyam today (about 150 words)

- **Concept:** compassion to all lives as the basis of ethics and religion.
- **Food security:** his idea that no one should go hungry matches today's goal of ending hunger; the Vadalur kitchen has fed people for over 150 years.
- **Social harmony:** eating together without caste distinction builds equality.
- **Environment:** compassion even to plants and animals fits today's concern for biodiversity and animal welfare.
- **Conclusion:** Jeeva Karunyam offers a moral base for welfare policies and for a humane society.

Sathya Dharma Salai and Sathya Gnana Sabai – compare (about 100 words)

- Dharma Salai (1867) = service: feeding the hungry; Gnana Sabai (1872) = worship: God as light.
- Both at Vadalur; both open to all castes; together they show his two-fold path of compassion and true knowledge.

Practice: Match the Following

Item	Match
Marudur	Birthplace (1823)
Karunguzhi	Stay of about nine years from 1858
1865	Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam
1872 (renaming)	Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam
23 May 1867	Sathya Dharma Salai, Vadalur
25 January 1872	Sathya Gnana Sabai opened (Thai Poosam)
Siddhi Valagam	Mettukuppam; disappearance 1874
Thozhuvur Velayutha Mudaliar	Chief disciple; compiled Thiruvarutpa
Arumuga Navalar	Called his songs "Marutpa"
Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam	Prose work on Manu Neethi Cholan
21,600 links	Chain around the Gnana Sabai
17 August 2007	Commemorative postage stamp

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- **Three dates, three institutions:** Sangam 1865; Dharma Salai 1867; Gnana Sabai 1872. The Sangam was renamed in 1872.

- **Vedha vs Suddha:** 1865 name = Samarasa **Vedha** Sanmarga Sangam; 1872 name = Samarasa **Suddha** Sanmarga **Sathya** Sangam.
- **Dharma Salai vs Gnana Sabai:** the Salai is the free kitchen with the undying fire; the Sabai is the octagonal hall of light worship with seven screens.
- **Vadalur vs Mettukuppam:** Dharma Salai and Gnana Sabai are at Vadalur; Siddhi Valagam (flag 1873, disappearance 1874) is at Mettukuppam.
- **Six, not twelve:** Thiruvarutpa has 6 Thirumurai and 5,818 verses; the Saiva canon has 12 Thirumurai.
- **Navalar was a critic:** Arumuga Navalar opposed Vallalar (Marutpa); Velayutha Mudaliar was his disciple.
- **1874 is a disappearance:** 30 January 1874 – he entered a closed room; when it was opened later, it was found empty.
- **Born 1823, not 1832:** his 200th birth anniversary was in 2023.

Quick Revision Table

Year / date	Event
1823 (5 Oct)	Born at Marudur near Chidambaram
1824	Father Ramaiah Pillai dies
Youth	Kandakottam – Deiva Mani Malai; Periya Puranam discourse
1858	Leaves Chennai; settles at Karunguzhi (about nine years)
1865	Founds Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam
1866	Severe famine in south India (textbook)
1867 (23 May)	Sathya Dharma Salai at Vadalur; fire lit
1872	Sangam renamed Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam
1872 (25 Jan)	Sathya Gnana Sabai opened; first Jothi Darshan on Thai Poosam
1873 (Oct)	Sanmarga flag hoisted at Siddhi Valagam, Mettukuppam; final discourse
1874 (30 Jan)	Enters closed room at Siddhi Valagam
1906	Disappearance recorded in the South Arcot District Gazetteer
2007 (17 Aug)	Rs 5 postage stamp
2023 (5 Oct)	200th birth anniversary
2024	Madras High Court stalls Vallalar International Centre work at Peruveli
2026 (Feb)	International Vallalar Conference, Chennai – three-day birth anniversary, Vallalar High Road

TNPSC Key Points (PYQ-style facts)

- Born: 5 October 1823, Marudur near Chidambaram (Cuddalore district). Parents: Ramaiah Pillai and Chinnammai.
- Names: Vallalar, Ramalinga Swamigal, Ramalinga Adigal, Thiruvarutprakasa Vallalar.

- Elder brother Sabapathi raised him in Chennai; Kandakottam Murugan temple – Deiva Mani Malai.
- No formal schooling; gave a Periya Puranam discourse in place of his brother.
- Moved to Karunguzhi in 1858.
- Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam – 1865; renamed Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam – 1872 ("Society for Pure Truth in Universal Self-hood").
- Sathya Dharma Salai, Vadalur – 23 May 1867 – free food to all castes; undying stove fire.
- Sathya Gnana Sabai, Vadalur – opened 25 January 1872 (Thai Poosam); octagonal; seven screens; chain of 21,600 links; no idol; Jothi Darshan.
- God as light: Arutperunjothi. Mahamantra: Arutperunjothi Arutperunjothi Thanipperunkarunai Arutperunjothi.
- Thiruvarutpa: 5,818 verses, 6 Thirumurai; compiled by Thozhuvur Velayutha Mudaliar.
- Prose: Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam; Jeeva Karunya Ozhukkam.
- Critic: Arumuga Navalar – "Marutpa"; defamation case.
- Teachings: Jeeva Karunyam; feeding the hungry; against caste, animal sacrifice, meat-eating and rituals.
- Flag hoisted at Siddhi Valagam, Mettukuppam – October 1873.
- Disappeared 30 January 1874 at Mettukuppam; recorded in the South Arcot District Gazetteer (1906).
- Stamp: 17 August 2007 (Rs 5). 200th birth anniversary: 2023.
- Thiruvottiyur High Road renamed Vallalar High Road (announced February 2026).

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Ramalinga Swamigal called "Vallalar"?

"Vallalar" means the great, generous giver. He earned the name after he opened the Sathya Dharma Salai at Vadalur on 23 May 1867, where free meals were served to every hungry person without any distinction of caste or religion. His fuller name is Thiruvarutprakasa Vallalar Chidambaram Ramalingam.

What is the difference between the Sathya Dharma Salai and the Sathya Gnana Sabai?

The Sathya Dharma Salai (23 May 1867) is the free feeding house at Vadalur – the practical side of his teaching of compassion; the fire he lit in its stove is said to have burned without a break ever since. The Sathya Gnana Sabai (opened 25 January 1872, on Thai Poosam) is the octagonal Hall of True Knowledge at Vadalur, where God is worshipped as light (Arutperunjothi) behind seven screens, with no idol and no offerings.

What is Jeeva Karunyam?

Jeeva Karunyam means compassion towards all living beings. Vallalar held that kindness to every life – human beings, animals and, according to the Class 10 textbook, even plants – is the main path to God and to liberation. In practice it meant feeding the hungry, rejecting meat-eating and animal sacrifice, and treating every soul as one's own. He explained it in his prose work Jeeva Karunya Ozhukkam.

What is Thiruvarutpa?

Thiruvarutpa ("Songs of Divine Grace") is the collection of Vallalar's poems – 5,818 verses arranged in six Thirumurai (books). His chief disciple Thozhuvur Velayutha Mudaliar compiled and published it; the earlier books came out in his lifetime and the sixth, containing his most mature verses, was published later. Arumuga Navalar of Jaffna attacked it as 'Marutpa', which led to the Arutpa–Marutpa controversy.

What happened to Vallalar in 1874?

On 30 January 1874 he entered a room at his residence Siddhi Valagam in Mettukuppam, near Vadalur, and asked his followers not to open it. When the government later had the door opened, the room was found empty. His followers believe he merged with the divine light; the event is recorded in the South Arcot District Gazetteer (1906). It is described as his disappearance rather than death.

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Practice questions

1. Where was Ramalinga Swamigal (Vallalar) born?

A. Vadalur
B. Mettukuppam
C. Karunguzhi
D. Marudur

2. Who were Vallalar's parents?

A. Sabapathi and Unnamulai
B. Ramaiah Pillai and Chinnammai
C. Parasuraman and Sundarammal
D. Velayutha Mudaliar and Parvathi

3. At which Chennai temple did Vallalar sing the 'Deiva Mani Malai'?

A. Kapaleeswarar temple
B. Parthasarathy temple
C. Kandakottam Murugan temple
D. Vadapalani Murugan temple

4. What was the name of the organisation Vallalar founded in 1865?

A. Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam
B. Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam
C. Saiva Siddhanta Sabha
D. Self-Respect Sangam

5. In which year was the Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam renamed Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam?

A. 1865
B. 1867
C. 1872
D. 1874

6. On which date was the Sathya Dharma Salai started at Vadalur?

A. 5 October 1823
B. 30 January 1874
C. 25 January 1872
D. 23 May 1867

7. According to the textbook, what struck south India in the year before the Sathya Dharma Salai was started?

A. A great flood
B. A severe famine (1866)
C. A cholera epidemic
D. An earthquake

8. When was the Sathya Gnana Sabai opened?

A. 23 May 1867
B. 25 January 1872
C. 22 October 1873
D. 30 January 1874

9. What is the shape of the Sathya Gnana Sabai?

A. Circular
B. Square
C. Hexagonal
D. Octagonal

10. How many screens hide the lamp in the Sathya Gnana Sabai?

A. Three
B. Five
C. Seven
D. Nine

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11. How many links does the chain around the Sathya Gnana Sabai have?

A. 21,600
B. 5,818
C. 1,008
D. 10,000

12. How many verses does the Thiruvarutpa contain?

A. 1,330
B. 21,600
C. 4,000
D. 5,818

13. Into how many Thirumurai is the Thiruvarutpa divided?

A. Six
B. Twelve
C. Fourteen
D. Four

14. Which chief disciple of Vallalar compiled and published the Thiruvarutpa?

A. Arumuga Navalar
B. Thozhuvur Velayutha Mudaliar
C. Maraimalai Adigal
D. Thayumanavar

15. Who called Vallalar's songs 'Marutpa'?

A. Arumuga Navalar
B. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer
C. Iyothee Thassar
D. Vedanayagam Pillai

16. Which prose work of Vallalar retells the justice of Manu Neethi Cholan?

A. Jeeva Karunya Ozhukkam
B. Deiva Mani Malai
C. Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam
D. Thiruvarutpa

17. What does 'Jeeva Karunyam' mean?

A. Abolition of caste
B. Life of renunciation
C. Worship of light
D. Compassion to all living beings

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18. In what form did Vallalar ask people to worship God?

A. Shiva Linga

B. Murugan's Vel

C. Arutperunjothi – as light

D. Image of Nataraja

19. Where is 'Siddhi Valagam', the place of Vallalar's disappearance?

A. Vadalur

B. Mettukuppam

C. Karunguzhi

D. Marudur

20. On which date did Vallalar enter the closed room and disappear?

A. 23 May 1867

B. 25 January 1872

C. 30 January 1874

D. 5 October 1873

21. Match: (a) 1865 (b) 1867 (c) 1872 (d) 1874 — 1. Gnana Sabai 2. Disappearance 3. Sangam 4. Dharma Salai

A. a-3, b-4, c-1, d-2

B. a-4, b-3, c-2, d-1

C. a-3, b-1, c-4, d-2

D. a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

22. Which statement is correct? (i) The Sathya Dharma Salai and the Sathya Gnana Sabai are both at Vadalur. (ii) Meat-eaters may enter the Gnana Sabai to worship.

A. (i) only

B. (ii) only

C. Both

D. Neither

23. When was the commemorative postage stamp on Vallalar issued?

A. 5 October 2023

B. 30 January 1974

C. 15 August 1972

D. 17 August 2007

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24. As announced at the International Vallalar Conference (February 2026), which road was renamed Vallalar High Road?

A. Anna Salai
B. Thiruvottiyur High Road
C. Poonamallee High Road
D. GST Road

25. After leaving Chennai in 1858, in which village did Vallalar stay for about nine years?

A. Thiruvottiyur
B. Ponneri
C. Kanchipuram
D. Karunguzhi

Answers with explanations

1. **D) Marudur** – Vallalar was born on 5 October 1823 at Marudur near Chidambaram.

2. **B) Ramaiah Pillai and Chinnammai** – His parents were Ramaiah Pillai and Chinnammai; he was their fifth child.

3. **C) Kandakottam Murugan temple** – His early hymns, the Deiva Mani Malai, were sung at the Kandakottam Murugan temple.

4. **A) Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam** – In 1865 it was the Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam; it was renamed in 1872.

5. **C) 1872** – The Sangam was renamed in 1872.

6. **D) 23 May 1867** – The Sathya Dharma Salai was started on 23 May 1867.

7. **B) A severe famine (1866)** – The Class 10 textbook links the 1867 free kitchen to the severe famine of 1866.

8. **B) 25 January 1872** – The Sathya Gnana Sabai was opened on 25 January 1872, on Thai Poosam.

9. **D) Octagonal** – The Sathya Gnana Sabai is an octagonal building.

10. **C) Seven** – Seven screens; all are removed for the Thai Poosam Jothi Darshan.

11. **A) 21,600** – 21,600 links – believed to equal the number of breaths in a day.

12. **D) 5,818** – The Thiruvarutpa has 5,818 verses.

13. **A) Six** – Thiruvarutpa has six Thirumurai; the Saiva canon has twelve.

14. **B) Thozhuvur Velayutha Mudaliar** – Thozhuvur Velayutha Mudaliar compiled the Thiruvarutpa into six Thirumurai.

15. **A) Arumuga Navalar** – Arumuga Navalar of Jaffna called the songs 'Marutpa', which led to the Arutpa–Marutpa controversy.

16. **C) Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam** – Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam is a prose retelling of Manu Neethi Cholan's justice.

17. **D) Compassion to all living beings** – Jeeva Karunyam means compassion to all living beings – his central teaching.

18. **C) Arutperunjothi – as light** – He taught worship of God as formless light – Arutperunjothi.

19. **B) Mettukuppam** – Siddhi Valagam is at Mettukuppam near Vadalur.

20. **C) 30 January 1874** – 30 January 1874; when the government later had the door opened, the room was empty.

21. **A) a-3, b-4, c-1, d-2** – Sangam 1865, Dharma Salai 1867, Gnana Sabai 1872, disappearance 1874.

22. **A) (i) only** – Both are at Vadalur; meat-eaters may worship only from outside.

23. **D) 17 August 2007** – India Post issued a Rs 5 stamp on 17 August 2007.

24. **B) Thiruvottiyur High Road** – Thiruvottiyur High Road in North Chennai was renamed Vallalar High Road.

25. **D) Karunguzhi** – He stayed at Karunguzhi near Vadalur for about nine years.

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