PART TWO

PERIOD OF SAINT RAMALINGAM
CHAPTER FIVE

PHILOSOPHY OF SAINT RAMALINGAM
PHILOSOPHY OF SAINT RĀMALINGAM

Life of Saint Rāmalīngam:

St. Rāmalīngam was born on the fifth of October, 1823 at Marudūr, a village near Chidambaram. He was the youngest child to his parents Rāmayya Pillai and Chinnammal. His parents named him as 'Rāmalīngam'. Later on he came to be known by various names such as 'Rāmalīnga Swāmīgal', 'Rāmalīnga Perumān, 'Aruṭperunjōthi Mahān', 'Sūḍha Samarasā Jñāni', and 'Aruṭprakāsa Vallalār'. He preferred to call himself as 'Chidambaram Rāmalīngam'.

St. Rāmalīngam was a mystic by birth and was born to his parents because of the boon of a gāchha. The first mystical experience came to him at Chidambaram temple when he was a five-month-old child. There are internal evidence for his happening in the songs of St. Rāmalīngam.

In Arul Vilakka mālai he sings,

Ob being, my true Kin,
who showed to me everything
as the (space and time transcending) ether
instead of the usual ceiling
when I, in my infancy,
along with my mother and others,
witnessed (the Mystery of mysteries)
Tiru Ottriyur, and the famous 'Lord Murugan Temple' at Tiruthanigai. He published three books. They were (1) **Olivil Odukkan** of Kannudaya Vallal (1851), (2) **Thondamantala Sangam** of Padikasu Pulavar (1855), (3) **Cinnaya Deepikai** (1857). Apart from these he himself wrote and published two works: (1) **Manumura Kanda Vagam** (1854), and (2) **Jiva-karunya-Oukkan**.

**His Married Life:**

St. Râmalîngam married his sister's daughter in 1850. But he was not interested in family life. This is evident from his songs. In **pillai-p-peru Vinayappam** he sings

Whether it is vengeful cruel karma
or an act of Your grace,
I do not know.

While I was free of any infatuation
over any one of several damsels of sorts,
I, still, felt inclined to touch the hand
of one of them.

But, apart from touching her
who had bend down (to touch my feet),
I did not enter her.

But thinking of this even now,
I go cold and clammy (with shame).
Life at Karunkulzhi:

St. Râmalingam left Madras in 1858 for Karunkulzhi, a small village near Chidambaram. There he lived till 1867. The early songs of St. Râmalingam show his appreciation of the city life. In teiva mani mārai he sings,

Oh Kandavel

Who are arisen in Kanthakottam
the flourishing pilgrimage centre
in the trees-abounding Cennai!

Oh pure Gem of cool faces!

Oh Gem born of the introspective face of Civam!

Oh divine Gem of six faces!

which day is the day of my redemption when
with holiness-imbued virtuous deeds
in the ascendency,

talent-increasing wealth will increase
in Your devotee,

When wisdom will increase

that closeness (to God) may increase

and (in consequence) brimming-over bliss
will increase splendidly.

When, bestowing grace on me, fragrance-wafting
rosy lotus flower-teeming flower-bed
will rise (in my heart),

When, the quality of growing mercy will
pre-dominate (in me),

When the stream of limpid ambrosia will swell,

When You assuming the form of bliss will soar up,
When the full effulgence of experience
in which the shape of gnosis rises will shoot up
When You will emerge mounted on
the proud peacock,
When Your feet, which are full of compassion
for every creature,
will arise in my heart
that prosperity may swell (in my life)?

But as the days passed on, the futility of the city life, with
its luxury came to drawn on his mind. As a result he withdrew
himself, like the American Transcendentalist Thoreau, to the
simple and natural village life. He sings as,

Fearing that if I looked on
the extrovert life of this world
my mind would be disturbed
I spent everyday, all the day-light hours,
seeking (solitude) the gardens
on the outskirts of the city
and wandering in other places
Not only in the daytime but at night as well
I wandered in many many places.
What need is there for this slave to say all this?
This is nothing but what is known to You?
His songs show his close observation of the city life, and his dissatisfaction towards the same. In those songs he expressed the reason for the departure from Madras city. He felt fear for a life of luxury. City was chaotic and confusing to him. He sings as,

My mind feared that 'if I continued to stay in Cennai abounding in wealth,
my life will grow mean;
I, therefore, sought the small villages in the country,
Is it possible to record on paper the weariness I endured wandering in the forests on the outskirts of the villages through flint-strew ground and unfertile terrain?
These, Oh My Father, are things known to You.

When St Rāmalingam lived in Karunkulzhi, he frequently visited the Chidambaram temple to worship Lord Nataraja. Chidambaram the sacred place of Saivites, is the famous temple which was worshipped by almost all the Saiva saints.

Its importance can be known from the fact that the common name 'temple' was supplied to this as the proper name. St.
Rāmalingam felt that he came in the line of illustrious saints but was an unworthy successor of theirs. This shows his humility. He sings as,

Ob Lord!

Am I not one of the long line
of the holy galaxy of devotees
who has come down the ages
like bana/shoot from bana/stem?
The how of it I know not.
The misery this wretch suffers,
has it the assent of Your divine will?
If this fitting?
Is this just?
Is this righteous indeed?

Oh bounteous Lord
who dances on the Golden Hall set with gems!
Son to You and I not?
And legitimate father to me are You not?
This craven world's soul-searing grief
I cannot longer endure!
Graciously bestow on me Your benign light;
graciously bestow it right now!

The love of the saint towards this temple, and Lord Śiva are found in the songs of the saint. He used to sign his name as
'Chidambaram Bramalingam' (சின்னாமலை பிரமலிங்கம்). The Chidambaram temple was closely associated with the life of St. Rāmalingam. The first spiritual experience of St. Rāmalingam happened at Chidambaram, which was recorded in many of his songs. Later on, he was not happy with the religious practices of Chidambaram temple. He has a keen desire to change the religious practices at Chidambaram temple. In *pillai-chi-chi-rinnappam* he sings as,

> It is my desire, Oh my Father
to renovate, according to the rules laid down
in the vast Veda-s and Āgama-s the great
temple called Chitambaram where shines
the divinity-invested sacred Hall of Gnosis
and to make it shine brighter
than a fragrant flower,
to behold the hue of Your body
and delight therein,
and to witness the spectacle of the festivals
in this world teeming with life!

The nine years' life at Karumkulzi village was an important phase in the spiritual life of St. Rāmalingam. During this period he lived in isolation, spending his time in meditation and worship in the fields, and in the temples. This period
long. He disappeared from this place in the year 1874. He disappeared from this world of chaos and confusion, hypocrisy and base bestial instincts, singing the glory of the Lord, and feeling sorry for the common man who did not care to think, to know and to realise the supreme goal of deathless life. Like the Zarathustra of Nietzsche, he despaired at the thought of the common man and cried in frustration. "Lo! I opened my shop to give, but none came to receive." But ideas never die and the philosophy of St. Kâmalalingam has already started to mould the minds of the people, who are suffering from what Swami Vivekananda called, the crystalised superstitions. The radical change of society by this philosophy is not impossible of attainment. The saint's assurance that he will come again to set the people on the right path is a message of optimism and encouragement.

Teachings of St. Kâmalalingam From His Works:

The works of St. Kâmalalingam may be classified into the following parts, (1) Tirû-Arûtpa (6 cantos; 5818 songs, Uran Adikal complete edition of Tirû-Arûtpa), (ii) Songs (Kudumba Kôsam and Kudumba koram), (iii) Petitions (Requisitions to God), (iv) Letters (to his close followers), (v) Rules and regulations regarding the aim and purpose of the socio-spiritual institutions at Vadâlur, (vi) Invitations, and public notices, (vii) Advice given to his followers on different occasions as recorded by his disciples, (viii) Prose works: (a) Manu-murug
kundamagam, (b) jiva-karunya-ozlukkam (reverence for life),
(ix) prose explanations, (a) explanation of the word 'Tamil'
(b) explanation for the word 'ulakalam' in Periy-
durum. (c) olivilodukkam-payiram, (d) explanation of the
meaning of Thondamandala sadagam, (e) Ponvannathu anthathi 22
songs explanation, (f) explanation for 'vedanta-desikar's
Kuralpa, (x) Publication of Books: (a) olivilodukkam (1851),
(b) Thondamandala Sadagam (1855), (c) Cinmaya Deepikai (1857)
(xi) Miscellaneous explanations on sidhha medicine.

Literary works of St. Kāmalināgam range from the above
(i) to (ix). He lived for fifty years, and the works he has
given during this period are substantial in quality and quantity.
As a poet and religious seeker, his works are equal to the works
of 'Gāytram'. There are 5818 songs available in tiru-amrutam
and there are other miscellaneous songs apart from this,
(kudumbam kōsam and kudumbam koram). It is an addition to the
devotional and mystical literature of South India.

St. Kāmalināgam was one of the pioneers of the prose
writings in the early years of 19th century. His letters
and manifestos, show his contribution to Tamil prose literature.
He was not only a great scholar in Tamil, but also a scholar
in Sanskrit (His explanation on the word Tamil will reveal the
fact).
In the philosophy of St. Rāmalingam, the social life of the people is closely and inseparably related with the religious life. The mission of St. Rāmalingam (samārāsa 'iddha ganmāgām) aims at a society which is based upon spiritual love. In the works of St. Rāmalingam (especially in Tiru-Aruṭpā) we have his philosophy.

Tiru Aṟuṭpā:

Tiru Aṟuṭpā means the songs sung by the grace of God. The word 'Tiru' in Tamil denotes 'beauty', 'wealth', goodness of wealth, and 'divinity'. Tamil lexicon gives 13 meanings to this word 'Tiru'. Here this word 'Tiru' signifies 'God's grace'. Tiru Aṟuṭpā means the songs sung by the grace of God.

St. Rāmalingam himself never named it as 'Tiru Aṟuṭpā'. It was because of the repeated requests of his followers that he gave permission to publish them. His followers published the songs under the title Tiru Aṟuṭpā. St. Rāmalingam, as a true seeker of Reality, and social reformer who was keen on a spiritual revolution never wished for any name or fame. The hagiographer Irun Adikal records many incidents to show that the saint did not like any one calling him as a saint or as a prophet. But his followers, like the followers of other leaders made him a great prophet and forgot to follow his principles.
Tozhuvūr Velayuda Mudaliār, the first disciple of St. Rāmalingam compiled the complete songs of St. Rāmalingam into six books. The first edition of 'Tiru Arutpā' was published in 1867. After this many editions of Tiru Arutpā were published. The complete songs of St. Rāmalingam were published only after his disappearance. A. Balakrishna Pillai published the complete songs of St. Rāmalingam into 13 volumes in which we also have the epistles, the prose, and other literary works of the saint. A. Balakrishna Pillai considered this compilation as his life mission. After demise of A. Balakrishna Pillai, we have a definite edition of Tiru Arutpā brought out by Īran Adikal (1972) which is a landmark in St. Rāmalingam studies, because it arranges the songs in chronological order.

The first five tirumurais are grouped as one, and the sixth forms the second group. The saint's love towards God, his regard for his spiritual preceptors, and his yearnings for the spiritual attainment are recorded in the songs of the first five tirumurais. The sixth tirumurai is a part which speaks about love, and its instrumentality to attain liberation. To quote Rao Sahib S.K.V. Arasu, 'while all the five cantos abound in devotional songs reflecting his onward march on the path to perfection, the sixth canto consists of a large number of songs expounding his very progressive and enlightened views on life and religion, with a view to transform a moribund
this book on the request of Kāncipuram Sabāpathi Mudaliār. There is another view, that St. Rāmalingam wrote this book on the request of 'Sāstra Vīḷakke Saṅgam'.

St. Rāmalingam wrote this small book in simple style as a text book for school children. During that time (19th century) Tamil prose style writing was not so prevalent, and was not developed as much as it is to-day. By writing this book St. Rāmalingam gave an impetus to prose style in Tamil writing.

The publication of the songs of St. Rāmalingam (in the name of Tiru ārutpā) aroused a great controversy among the followers of Saivism. The followers of St. Rāmalingam called it as Ārutpā and some Saivites opposed the same. Within a very short time from its publication the songs reached the public, and they sang the songs in prayers and in temple worship. Because of this quick recognition, Saivite who held the Tevāram and Tiruvācakam in great esteem criticised the claim of the title 'Ārutpā' to St. Kāralingam's songs. 'Because of the public recognition of these sweet songs', says A.Balakrishna Pillai, 'his prose writings became less popular.'

Teachings of Manu-Murai Kanda Vēcagam:

In his introduction to Tiru Ārutpā Vol.IV (in which Manu-Murai-kanda Vēcagam and Jivakāruciya Olukkam are included), A.Balakrishna Pillai says 'The Manu-murai-kanda Vēcagam emphasizes
the supreme virtue that even unknowingly a man must not kill
a living being. 'Non-killing of animals', and 'reverence
for life' are the two important principles of Buddhism and
Jainism. Their influence is echoed in Tirukkural under the
chapter 'गोपीन्द्रनायके', and 'पुराणः जनानं'. Tirumantiram
also recommends this principle of 'reverence for life'. St.
Rāmalingam practised this principle, and hence prescribed this
as one of the fundamental principles of 'Samarasa Suddha
Rāmārāma'.

The central theme of the story Manu-Murai-Kanda-Vacagam
was taken from Periapurāṇam (परियापुराणम्). This section
of Periapurāṇam explains the story of Manu Niti Colan, and
aims at emphasizing the political value of 'justice'. Some
editions of Periapurāṇam call this chapter as 'रामनायक
But St. Rāmalingam gave the title of Manu-Murai-Kanda Vācagam.

Oran Āṭikal says that the love of St. Rāmalingam for
Tamil Culture made him give this title: (class="quote"). Oran
Āṭikal quotes some of the passages from Manu-Murai-Kanda-Vacagam
to prove the skill of St. Rāmalingam as a prose writer
in Tamil. This text also shows the great skill of St. Rāma-
lingam in Tamil. Manu-Niti-Colan's story is a very simple
story that explains the place of justice, devotion to God,
and love towards living beings in the social life of man.
According to A. Bālakrishna Pillai, the main teachings of Manu-
Murai-Kanda Vācagam are justice, and non-killing of lives. If
the ruler rules the country according to justice, God will
protest him. Though this book was written for the school children, it is full of moral and ethical teachings that are essential for the good living of all. The next book written by St. Rāmalingam was Jīva-Kārūnya-Olukkam.

Jīva-Kārūnya-Olukkam:

Jīva-Kārūnya-Olukkam was the key-concept in the philosophy of St. Rāmalingam. St. Rāmalingam made this as the path to liberation. A. Bālakrishna Pillai explains it thus: 'The religious conduct consisting in the active relief of suffering in and through Atmic compassion'. Jīva-Kārūnya-Olukkam is the way of Atmic compassion. This concept is the fundamental concept of Tamil culture-namely 'reverence for life'. This work is the outcome of St. Rāmalingam's speech delivered on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Satya-Dharma-Gaḷai.

In this speech St. Rāmalingam explained the sufferings due to the hunger, the necessity for maintaining a healthy body, and the spiritual value of removing the hunger of others by giving them food. A. Bālakrishna Pillai says, 'The work Jīva-Kārūnya-Olukkam states with a frank promise at the feet of the Lord that the true goal of the social life of all people is the annihilation of human sufferings caused by hunger, disease and killing.' Īrān Acikal, in the Hagiography of St. Rāmalingam explains the causes for the establishment of
the 'Aṣṭhya-Dharma-Sāla' in the following words, 'the agony of hunger and the greatness of relieving the suffering beings from hunger'. Čran Naikal quotes some of the passages from Jiva-Kāruṇya-Çulukkam, and explains the greatness of this small book. He also quotes three songs from Tiru Ārava which explain St. Rāmaḷingam's great desire for serving the people by giving food for the hungry. The songs are,

(1) Oh Being rare to be apprehended!
Of God abiding in the sacred Hall of Gnosis!
I trembled in my mind with sudden shock
whenever I heard through persons connected with me
that some starving people and some hungry people
are suffering from faintness.
It is the nature of my mind to tremble,
Oh my Father, if I hear of hunger
in this world where You have placed me!

(2) whenever I saw withering crops
I too withered;
On seeing the empty-handed ones,
worn out with unassuaged hunger
inspite of begging house to house,
fainting with hunger,
my heart shook like an aspen lead
when those who were suffering
from long-drawn chronic disease
happened to come before me
and I saw them, I shuddered;
I wilted on seeing, the down-hearted ones
who were men of unmatched self-respect,
poor though they were.

(3) You follow the path of levy-ing interest upon interest,
but you do not know the way of increasing the interest.
Boxed piled upon box you have set
and exercise proprietary rights over them.
Constantly filling up the box, your stomach,
You remain at home sticking to do it;
You will not, even by chance, look at hungry people;
even if it were only state rice water,
you will not think of serving it to them.
You live like the poison-nut (nux-vomica) tree,
You have proliferated like the ketti weed,
What kind of a succourer have you secured?
Ah!. How much sin have you gathered,
35
Oh men of the world!

In 1879, Jiva-Karanja-Olokkam was published by P.P.Krishna-
swamy of Pondicherry. We also have another publication by St.
Ramanigam, which is a public notice in the name of ' 
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Amrutha' published on 23.5.1863. In this he explain the
various aims of the Satya-Dharm-Sila. On the same day he read out some of the passages from Jiva-Karunya-Olukkam. Jiva-Karunya-Olukkam of St. Ramalingam is different from the 'Jiva-Karunya' of the previous teachers. St. Ramalingam's Jiva-Karunya-Olukkam is based upon compassion which results from the realisation of the oneness of beings. But the Jiva-Karunyam of the previous teacher was not so clearly and emphatically based upon this.

Uran Adikul, in his 'Hagiography of St. Ramalingam' says that the work of writing the book 'Jiva-Karunya Olukkam' began even before 1866 and was not completed even after 1869. The present work is an incomplete book of the complete book with seven chapters supposed to have been written but not available now. The present work contains the following chapters.

1. ജീവാ-കരുണയ-ഓള്ക്കം, (2) ജീവാ-സാന്നിദ്ധ്യ, (3) ജീവാ-സംസാരാധ്യ.</p>

The summary of the teachings of this work is given by A. Balakrishna Pillai as follows. (1) Human birth is meant for the spiritual realisation (2) The perfect bliss of the Lord can be attained only through the grace of spiritual manifestation of the Lord, (3) The only way to attain this grace of spiritual manifestation is by the way of Atmic compassion (ഓള്ക്കം കെട്ടി). (4) By way of Atmic compassion (ഓള്ക്കം നായ്ക്ക), is meant the worship of God by compassionate sense towards the living beings.
The second, and the third parts of 'Jīva-Kārūṇya-Olukkam' explain the facts which are expressed in the first part. The second part explains the pleasure of the soul which experiences the fruits of Jīva-Kārūṇya. The third part of the book explains the transmigration of souls.

Sanmārka Vinnappēnu (Appeal to God):

The four appeals of St. Hāmalingam are (1) Sūdra Sanmārka Sāthya Siri Vinnappēm (shortly known as 'Sūdra Vinnappēm') (short appeal), (2) the Samāraka Sūdrā Sāthya Peru Vinnappēm (shortly known as 'Sūdrā Vinnappēm' great appeal), (3) the Samāraka Sūdrā Sanmārka Jñāna Vinnappēm (Sūdrā Vinnappēm), (4) the Samāraka Sūdrā Sanmārka Sāncām Vinnappēm (Sūdrā Vinnappēm).

I Siri Vinnappēm:

In this St. Hāmalingam prays that the worldly practices of religious faiths, different paths, Ācāras, varṇas, and āśramas must not come in the way of the sāramjñā, and God should shower His grace on them in order to enable them to attain and experience the spiritual unity of beings.

II Peru Vinnappēm:

In this the saint gives many auto-biographical details. He explains here about his birth by referring to the transmi-
gration of his soul and the formation of his body in the womb, etc., as well as about his birth in Tamil Nādu, his learning of the Tamil language as the best means for knowing the spiritual truths and the gift of various bodies.

This will be a great help to any one who wishes to know the divine life of St. Rāmalingam in the words of St. Rāmalingam himself.

III Jñāna Vinnappam:

In this Jñāna Vinnappam, St. Rāmalingam explains the nature of 'Jñāna Sabbath'. 'Jñāna Sabbath' is the nature's manifestation. This 'vinnappam' explains the spiritual power of 'Sāmarassā Siddha Sammārga Jñāna', and the nature of God who gave this power to Sanmārgis.

IV Saneka Vinnappam:

'Saneka Vinnappam' says that the material body can be changed into the body of light and grace only because of divine grace. It is impossible to change this material body into such an effulgent one without divine grace. This vinnappam also explains the way to get divine grace. This Saneka Vinnappam describes the great desire of St. Rāmalingam who prays for the benefit of all the human beings.
Mr. Ramalingam - The Mystic:

'The illustrated Encyclopaedia of Mysticism and other minor religions', describes St. Ramalingam as follows; "South Indian Mystic. At the age of nine he was writing religious poetry in Tamil. Later, as he became practised in meditation he had a succession of mystical experiences. He has left an account of ecstasy in which he experienced the vision of divine Light: 'O Light of Lights! O Self-radiance the dispeller of the darkness of ignorance, I am fully illumined now. All my doubts and delusions have vanished. I am one with the Divine. I am Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Bliss. I enjoy Supreme Bliss. How can I describe it? I have attained Immortality. I behold the One All-Pervading, Self only everywhere. All dualities, distinctions and differences have disappeared. My joy is boundless. I have attained that which beyond the senses, mind and intellect. I am birthless, deathless, changeless. I am beyond time, space and causation'.

Ramalinga's teachings centered on the INNATE LIGHT. He had a voluminous but unsystematic approach. He emphasized the importance of physical health, and gave practical instructions in this. His method of meditation was to concentrate on the space between the eyebrows. The aim was to feel that the whole world is your own self, that all beings are your own self. Ramalinga disappeared mysteriously and there is no record of death.".
Uran Adikal writes that St. Ramalingam was a 'Sambh-Ayyappan' who had finished the caryā, kīrṇa, and yōka in his previous birth, and descended to this world with the specific purpose of removing the sufferings of mankind. He took birth in this world only on the command of the Almighty itself. Dr T.P. Meenakshi-Sundaram says, 'The Tamil thinkers describe them as samāmyādhyaya - as people who had this realisation (of feeling everybody as kith and kin, and every place as their place) or 'siddhi' even when they are born; they are the real 'turmavī'. They do not renounce anything. The type of 'feeling for others' that we see in them is contradictory with those of others whose 'consciousness' is still limited'. Throughout his life St. Ramalingam had mystical experiences. The 'hagiography of St. Ramalingam' records many mystical experiences of the saint from his birth to his disappearance from this world at Mettukuppam (Citti-valaham).

According to Uran Adikal, St. Ramalingam was not an ordinary mystic but a 'master-mystic' (Sambhār Tirumūlar), whom the mystics used to visit. Some of his letters show that he has also knew alchemy, the art of making the lower metals into gold. But he did not permit his followers to practise this science.

St. Ramalingam, as a 'siddha', was much influenced by Sambhār Tirumūlar. There are songs in Tīru Arūtyā that go to
support this point. He sings as,

Your sacred mind knows
the manner of my living (here) or faith
in the subject-matter of the true words of
You spoke that day
in the sacred Hall of Gnosis of ever-growing
felicity,
and in the content of the true words You imparted
through the Tirumantiram,
the tirumurali that grew in size, and
in the subject of all true words
which You, seated in the mind of me
who have grown from a womb, revealed to me.

In some songs of Tiru Arutpa, he even refers to God as a siddha.

He sings as,

Like people who sink to the ground
for lack of strength to walk
though they have proper legs,
through there was an opportunity
to apprehend Reality,
I have become enfeebled very much
for lack of a desire to gain You grace;
Oh Adept who transform the cruel beast into man,
Oh Lord of the Assembly of True Gnosis,
Oh Lord of my life,
I have placed faith in You only;
53
do not forsake me.

He was influenced by both the siddha tradition, and the Bhakta
tradition of Saivism, and he himself was siddha as well as a
bhakta. In his advice to his disciples, he stressed the reading
of Tirumantiram of Tirumular. He considered Tirumantiram as
the best among mantras, and recommended the intense reading of
55
Tirumantiram.

According to St. Rāmalingam, the Periapurāṇam is not
a historical work but only a story in which the siddhas explain
56
some siddhis. St. Rāmalingam sings that God Himself had re-
vealed to him the unreality of the social differences, and these
things have nothing to do with one who realised the truth.

In Natarājapathimāla he sings as,

Oh my Guru,
Oh smouldering bright Fire,
Oh darkness dispelling Light
immanent in the fire,
Oh my Spouse,
Natarājā of the dance of ethics,
Who are aloft the mountain
of attributeless bliss
and transcendent acme of the cosmic sound Om,
Who told me:
"The creatures on earth,
without realising that all
the religions, creeds, and sects
which are found in this famed world
and demotic crazy child's play,
have engaged in controversies and,
fighting here, there, and everywhere,
have died and are damned.
That they may not be further damned,
hurry up and impart to them the
creed of the goody True Path which
confers purity,
show them the true Being, and
enable them to gain
the lofty state of bliss.
Since you are my child,
I have commanded you to
do this work;
do not think differently in your mind".
The Glorious Deathless Life ((logitsam kṣaṇa śaktī) :

Many schools of Indian philosophy assert that the soul lives for ever, and that the body appears and disappears. The differences of birth, death, place, and time are due to the karma of the individual. One of the fundamental principles of the siddha philosophy is to conquer death and live for ever.

The glorious deathless life (logitosam kṣaṇa śaktī) is not an invention of St. Rāmalangam. He says that the Vedās, and the Upanisās teach this indirectly. According to St. Rāmalangam the first chapter of Tirukkurai speaks about the glori-ous deathless life. The uniqueness of St. Rāmalangam's philosophy is that it gives importance to this concept, and his whole philosophy centres on this concept. He invites everyone to come and join with him in order to attain this state. In maranamī d-peru vāzhvu he sings as,

Meditating and meditating on Him,
experiencing Him and experiencing Him,
with heart mellowing and mellowing,
with body drenched and drenched
by tears which well up as from a spring,
let us praise Him in these words,
lowing and lowing to Him:
"Oh Ambrosia of Grace! Oh Good Treasure!
Oh King of the dance of gnosis!
Oh my rightful Master.  
Come along Oh worldly men!  
Note that we can get deathless great life!  
I am not concocting this, I am not telling lies,  
I am telling you the truth!  
This is indeed the moment to enter the Golden Hall,  
the Hall of Gnosis!

In many songs St. Rāmalingam emphaised the need for the conqu
ing of death, which is the greatest suffering for humanity.  
He also says that the aim of sanmārgam is to attain the glor
dearthless life. In one song he sings with certainty about the 
goal of his philosophy as the attainment of deathless life.

He sings as,

I am telling you what I have experienced out  
of a sense of oneness with you;  
I am a kinsmen to you indeed,  
do not take me for an enemy.  
Oh man of the world!  
You see the learned and the unlearned perish!  
Is death,  
which comes confusing all your faculties of under-
standing,  
acceptable to you?  
My mind will not agree to this even the least;
I do not know whether your mind
is a stony or a callous mind.
Today this can be thwarted;
come and join me;
my Creed is the death-dispelling True Creed indeed!

Virah Adikal in his work 'How St. Rāmalingam disappeared?' (ஸூன்றும் நைக்கொரோள் முறையின்), explains the possibilities of 62 conquering death and living for ever in this world. He supports his views with excerpts from the Tamil Classics, (like Patippupattu, Silappadikāram, Kamba Rāmayanam, and Tirukkural). He also gives evidences from the 12 Śaiva Tirumurais, and from the Śāstras like Tirumantiram, Śuddha-rādayam, Śivajñāna sipam, and Āyvali kural. Lastly he shows evidences from the songs of the siddhas, like Pattinathār, Arunagiriyār, and St. Tāyumānavar. He refers to some of the Śaiva saints (like, Candesvara, Tirujñānasambanthar, Tirunāvukkarasar, and Pattinathār) who attained this state. The last part of this book explains the great achievement of St. Rāmalingam with evidences from his songs and prose works.

This glorious 'deathless life' can be attained only by those who can erase their egoism and dedicate themselves to socio-spiritual service. Their social work does not stop with the attainment of this glorious state, because, according to St. Rāmalingam they must continue their service for others.
The philosophy of St. Rāmalingam is strictly speaking a spiritualistic social philosophy. The world praises St. Rāmalingam not because he was a mystic, not because he disappeared in light and conquered death, but because of his great love towards God and man, for his compassion, for his real service and above all for his great desire to change the world into a better one. The transcendent aspect which underlies philosophising lends deep meaning and significance to the attitude of social concern. It is from this standpoint that the mystical experience of the religious saints of ancient India and the meaningfulness of their concern for humanity at large can be understood. They may seem to be 'individualistic', they may explain their own personal experiences but behind all that is a loving concern for humanity, while the ordinary man experiences his individual centre with all his circumscribed life, the mystic experiences the great centre as expanding to the great circumference of the Universe and beyond.

Sūdha Sanmāram and Matha Sanmāram:

'Sūdha Sanmāram,' the universal religious of St. Rāmalingam is 'a happy combination of service to fellow beings and spiritual experience.' Through this 'Sanmāram Sūdha Sanmāram', St. Rāmalingam teaches the Universal brotherhood of mankind which is based on the Ānmaneya Orumaipādu (ஏமண்யா ஓருமைப்பு).
In the philosophy of 'Samarasa Sudha Sampradham' the concept of 'Worship Through Service' is the most important characteristic that differentiates it from that of the early integrative philosophies. 'Samarasa Sudha Sampradham' is not an independent religion like Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam, but a way of life which includes all the essential aspects of different religions. The prose writings collected by the disciples of St. Ramalingam show that he was aware of other religions like Christianity and Islam. There are evidences in Tiru-Arutpa to show the influence of other faiths upon the thoughts of St. Ramalingam.