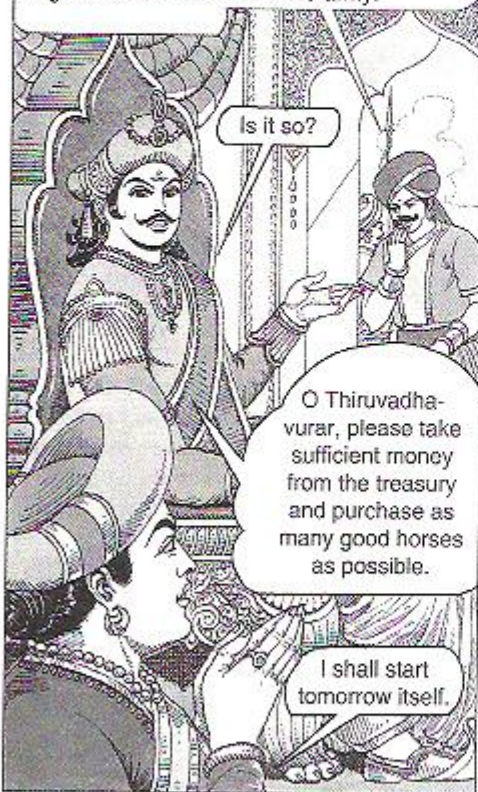


# 1. MANICKAVACHAKAR

Story : RV  
Graphics : Sankar

1 Arimardana Pandyan was ruling at Madurai. He had appointed Thiruvadhavurar as his prime minister. One day a General appeared in the royal court.

Your majesty, fine Arab horses have arrived at the eastern sea-shore of the Chola kingdom and are available for sale. We are in urgent need of horses for the army.



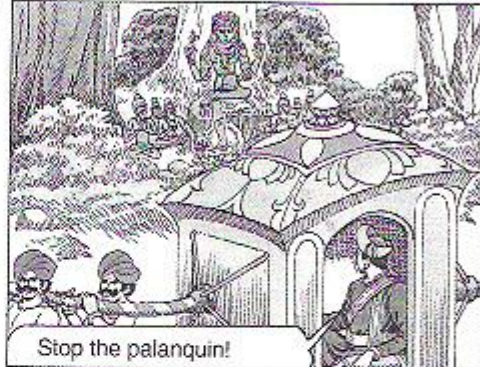
Is it so?

O Thiruvadhavurar, please take sufficient money from the treasury and purchase as many good horses as possible.

I shall start tomorrow itself.

2 The next day Thiruvadhavurar proceeded to the sea-shore riding in a palanquin and accompanied by royal troops. Camels carried the bags of gold.

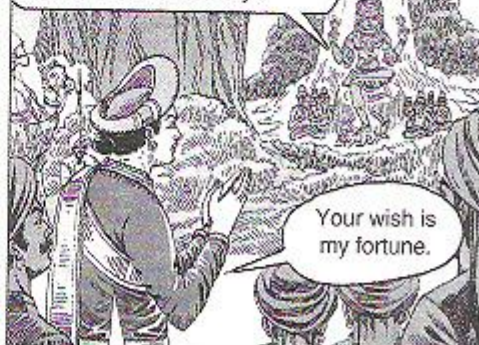
3 Lord Siva decided to shower His grace on Thiruvadhavurar. He took His seat under a banyan tree in the town of Thiruperunthurai. He was surrounded by His disciples. Seeing this...



Stop the palanquin!

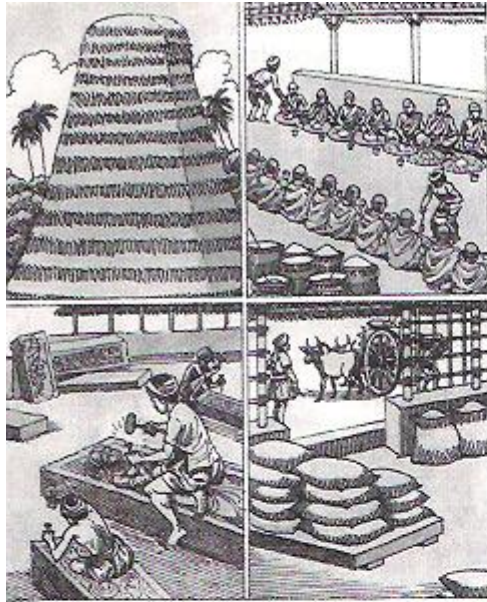
4 Thiruvadhavurar got down from the palanquin and made salutations to the Lord. Then the Lord gave him a mantra and showed him His divine form. Thiruvadhavurar forgot himself and adorned the Lord with a garland of hymns glowing like rubies. He became Manickavachakar (One whose speech is like that of ruby).

Manickavachakar, Come. Remain here a few days.



Your wish is my fortune.

Soldiers! Go and inform the king that I shall be in Madurai with the horses in June.



6 When the horses did not turn up in June the king sent the soldiers to question the Prime Minister.



arrest and bring Thiruvadhavurar. The soldiers brought him before the king.

Your majesty, the horses will surely be here on the Mulam day of July.



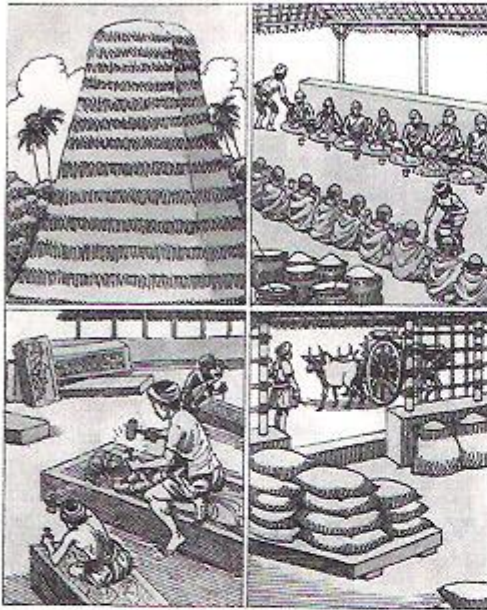
Is that so! Till then keep this cheat in prison and torture him.

8 The warders imprisoned the minister in a dark cell and made him carry heavy bricks.

9 By Lord Siva's grace all the jackals in that area became transformed into horses on the night of Mulam. Siva's attendants became the horsemen and the Lord Himself appeared as their captain. This procession entered the streets of Madurai in great splendour early the next morning.



5 Then the Prime Minister forgot the mission entrusted to him by the king. He spent all the money he had brought for purchase of horses for the renovation of the Siva temple .



6 When the horses did not turn up in June the king sent the soldiers to question the Prime Minister.

Oh Lord! What am I to do now?  
What am I to reply to the king?



ചരമം 47

Declared the Lord's formless voice.

7 The king came to know that his minister had not used the money to purchase horses but had used it all for temple construction. Extremely angry, he ordered the soldiers to arrest and bring Thiruvadhavurar. The soldiers brought him before the king.

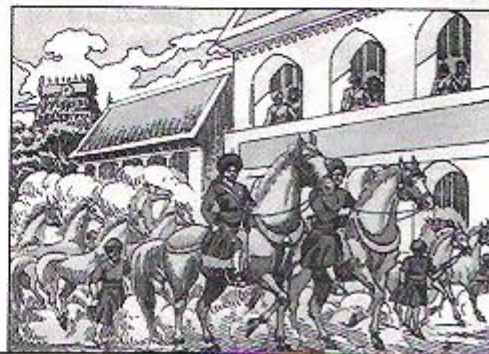
Your majesty, the horses will surely be here on the Mulam day of July.



Is that so! Till then keep this cheat in prison and torture him.

8 The warders imprisoned the minister in a dark cell and made him carry heavy bricks.

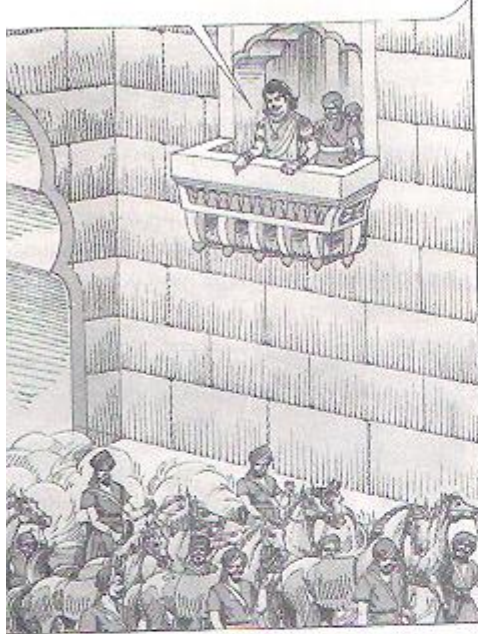
9 By Lord Siva's grace all the jackals in that area became transformed into horses on the night of Mulam. Siva's attendants became the horsemen and the Lord Himself appeared as their captain. This procession entered the streets of Madurai in great splendour early the next morning.



18

ജൂലൈ - ഏപ്രിൽ - 1981-82 - 2004

10] Oh! What marvellous horses and horsemen! Soldiers, at once go and free the minister and saluting him bring him here.



11] Thiruvadhavurar, I harassed you thoughtlessly. Please forgive me.



12] That night all over the town there was heard the howling of jackals. The king woke up and looked.

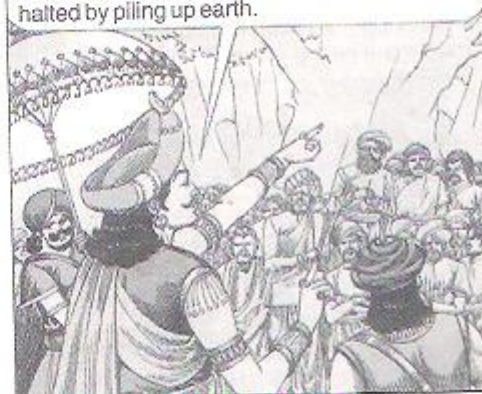
Ah! What fraud! Jackals have appeared as horses! Seize that cheat of a minister and put him in jail. Give him severe punishment.



13] Thiruvadhavurar was again imprisoned and subjected to severe torture.

14] By the will of the Lord, Vaigai river suddenly burst into floods and the water entered the city. The king came running.

One person from each house should come to close the gap in the bund. The flood must be halted by piling up earth.



15 People began to gather at the bank of the river with basket loads of earth. There was an old woman who was living by selling bread. Her name was Vandhi. She was searching for some one who would take over her share of transporting earth. The Lord Himself came to her in the guise of a labourer.

Grandma! I shall carry the earth on your behalf. Will you give me bread as reward?



My boy! You will earn a million blessings. I shall give you plenty of bread. Please go on my behalf and dig up and carry the earth.

16 All were working vigorously. Only the old woman's helper sat on the river bank, enjoying the work of the others. The king noticed this.

Hello! Who are you, having fun watching others at work?



Thanks to Ramakrishna Mission Madras.

17 The king whipped him and the blows fell on the backs of everyone there! The king also smarted at the blow, but at once he realized what had happened. He ran to Thiruvadhavurar in the jail.

Oh, beloved of Lord Siva! Please forgive me. I never realized that all the wealth that I thought was mine is really God's.

It was quite right that you spent all that wealth in the service of the Lord. It was by your grace that the Lord gave me darshan as horseman. You must pardon me for not understanding this.



18

By the Lord's grace the flood water subsided. Manickavachakar took leave of the king and took sannyas. He visited many Siva temples and finally arrived at Chidambaram. There he got merged in the Lord. Manickavachakar composed the hymn known as Thiruvachakam. It remains a priceless treasure for all Tamilians, breathing as it does the fragrance of the glory of God.

