

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 23



Why Are We Not All-Knowing Like Siva?

Siva's Perfection



Siva is perfection itself.

**Each soul shares His
perfection inwardly, but
outwardly is immature.**

Siva as a mighty oak tree

Think of Siva as a mighty oak tree and the soul as an acorn that will one day be a mighty tree itself.



Siva's veiling grace

Lord Siva's veiling grace, *tirodhana shakti*, veils the soul's all-knowingness.

This is a loving power that limits and protects us so that we may learn and mature.

This grace is in three parts.



First Part Anava

First, *anava* makes us forget that we are unlimited.

Anava is that which makes the soul finite and separate from God Siva.

Under its power, we are completely involved in the joys and sorrows of our particular life, not aware that we are a divine soul, one with God.



Second Part Maya

Second, *maya*, the world, offers us vast opportunities for experience.

This gift from Siva is our playground of experience.



Third Part Karma

Third, *karma*, the law of cause and effect, is our instructor in the play of life.



Pasha, meaning “tether” or rope

Together, anava, karma and maya are known as *pasha*, meaning “tether.”

An ancient analogy of a cowherd tending his cows illumines this idea.

The cowherd is God Siva, called Pati.

The cows represent souls, *pashu*

And the tether, or rope, with which Pati leads the cows is *pasha*.



How does Siva guide and protect souls?

The cowherd restrains and protects the cows with the rope, just as Siva guides and protects souls with anava, karma and maya.

Through many lifetimes, under the harnessing power of these three, our soul grows to maturity and the three malas begin to loosen their grip.

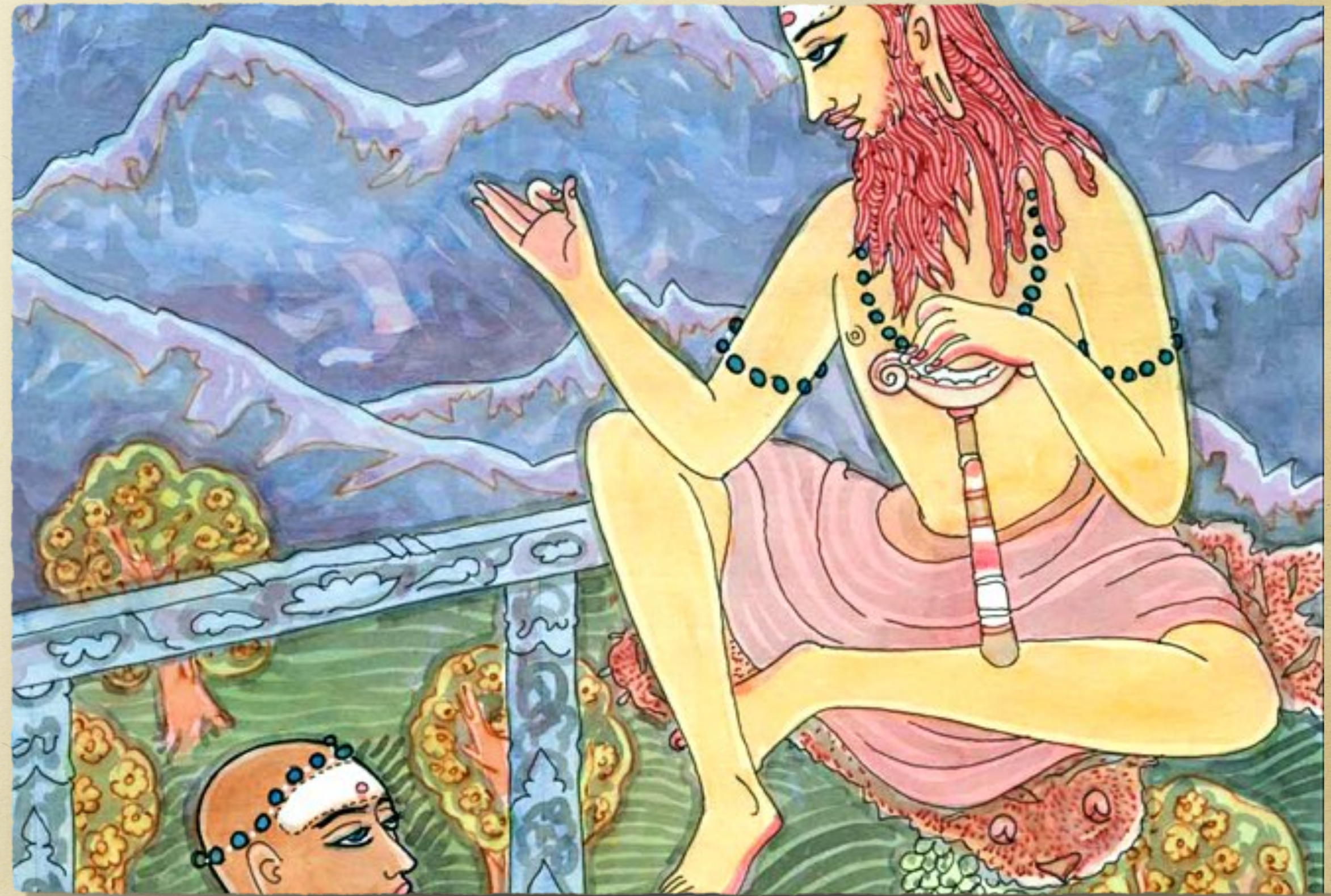


When does Siva grant His revealing grace?

When the time is ripe, Siva grants His revealing grace, *anugraha shakti*.

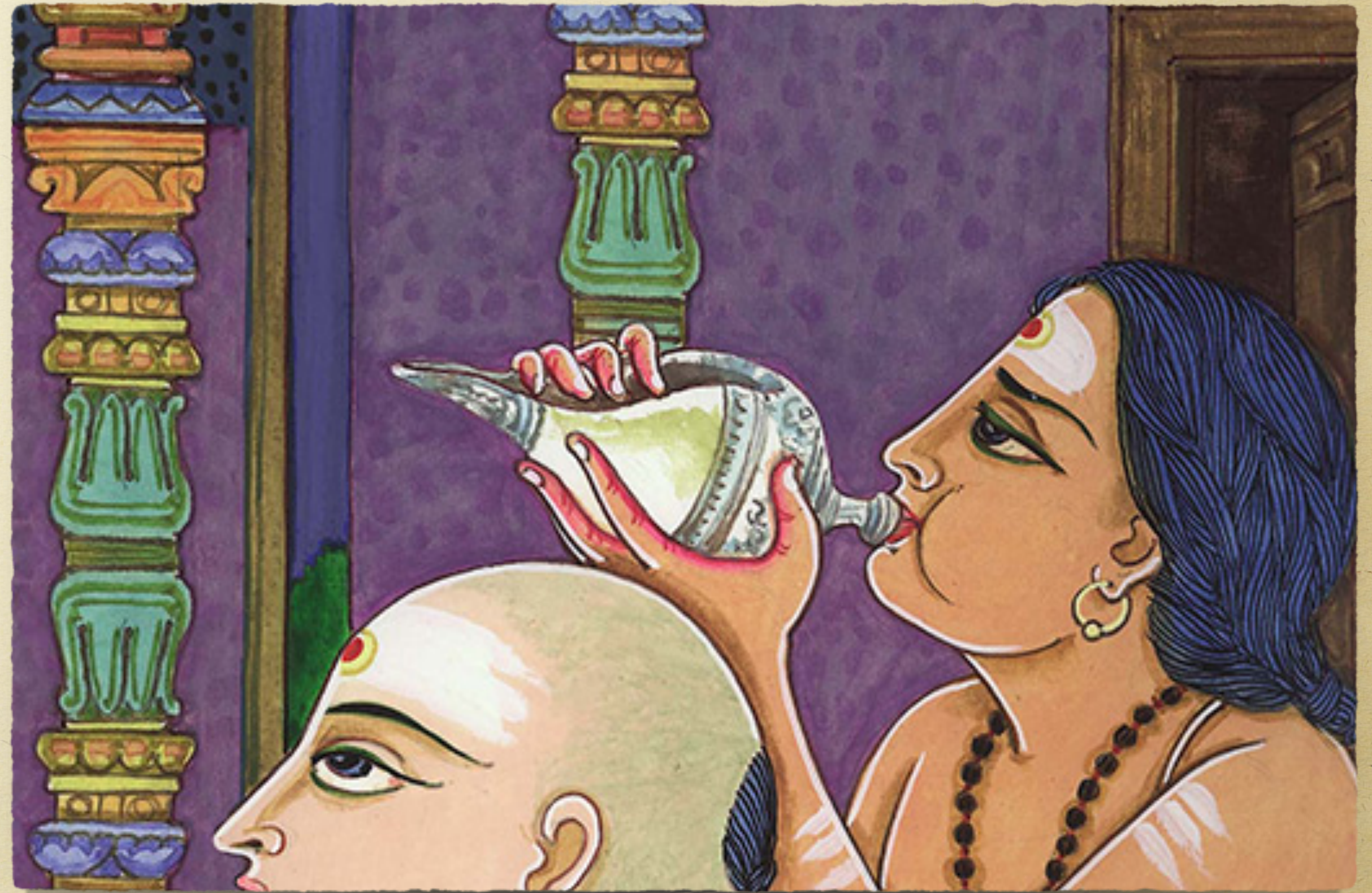
When finally we yearn to know Siva, the satguru appears in our life and gives us disciplines to help us evolve further.

Finally, through his grace, the soul realizes its true identity with Siva.



The Tirumantiram explains

“When the soul attains Self-knowledge, then it becomes one with Siva. The *malas* perish, birth’s cycle ends and the lustrous light of wisdom dawns.”



Gurudeva says...

Maya is the classroom, karma the teacher, and anava the student's ignorance. The three bonds, or malas, are given by Lord Siva to help and protect us as we unfold. Yet, God Siva's all-knowingness may be experienced for brief periods by the meditator who turns within to his own essence.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 23



23.1 Siva is perfection itself. Each soul shares His perfection outwardly, but inwardly is immature.

- True
- False

23.2 Enter the letter from below of A - B that gives the correct Sanskrit term.

- ___ Veiling grace
- ___ Revealing grace

- (A) Anugraha shakti
- (B) Tirodhana shakti

23.3 Enter the letter from below of A - C that gives the correct Sanskrit term.

- ___ The world which offers us opportunities for experience
- ___ That which makes the soul finite and separate from God
- ___ Our instructor in the play of life

- (A) Anava
- (B) Maya
- (C) Karma

23.4 Enter the letter from below of A - C that gives the correct Sanskrit term.

- ___ God Siva
- ___ Souls
- ___ Tether of anava, karma and Maya

- (A) Pati
- (B) Pasa
- (C) Pashu

23.5 When finally we yearn to know Siva, the satguru appears in our life and gives us

(Check the correct answer)

- A. Immediate realization of our true identity with Siva
- B. Disciplines to help us evolve further
- C. Devotional songs to sing