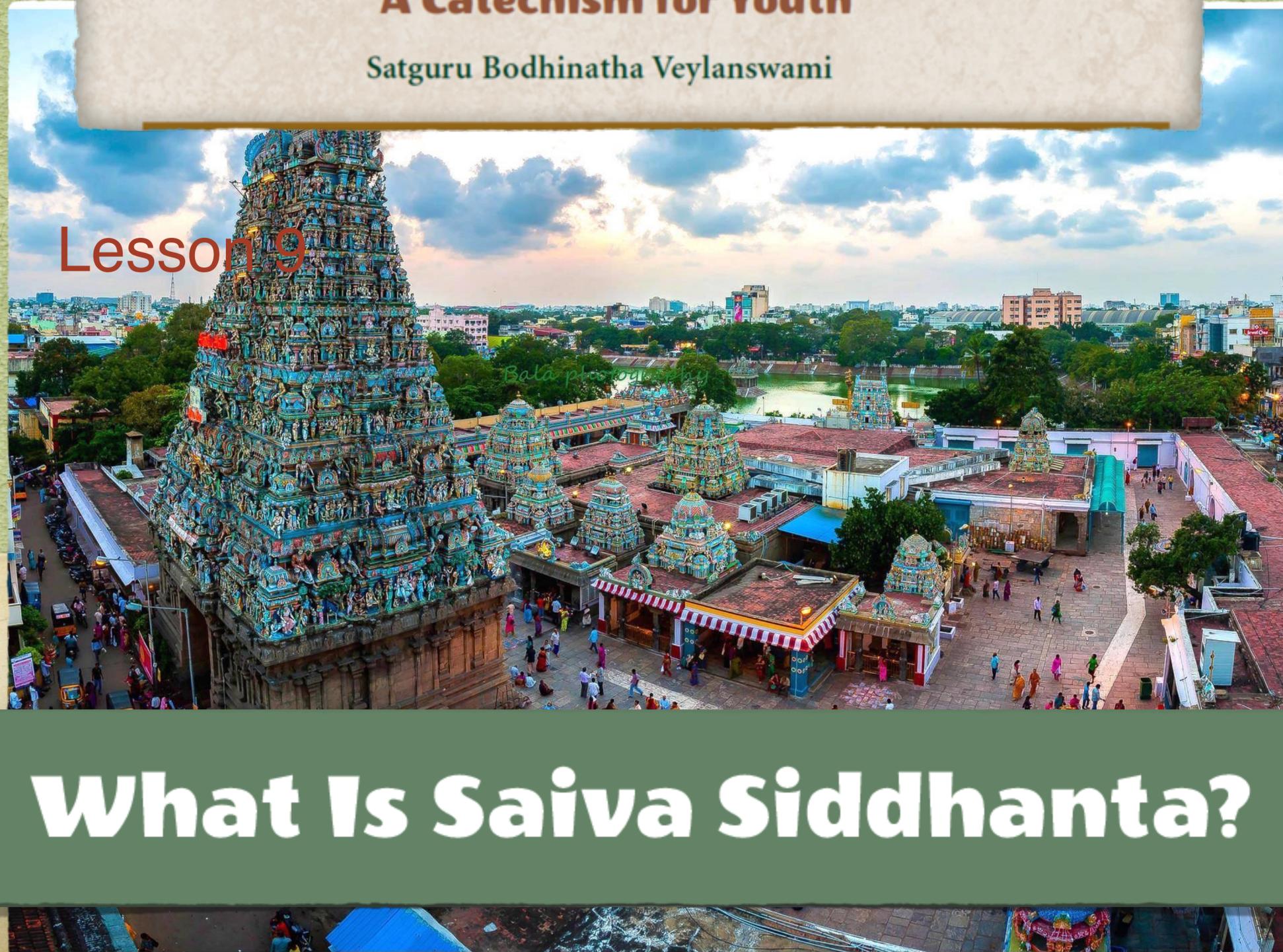


Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 9



What Is Saiva Siddhanta?

Saiva Siddhanta



Saiva Siddhanta is the name of our school of Hinduism

Saiva Siddhanta, the oldest form saivism

It is today the oldest, most vigorous and widely practiced of the six forms of Saivism.

It has many millions of devotees, tens of thousands of active temples and dozens of living monastic and ascetic traditions.

Saiva Siddhanta once enjoyed a glorious presence throughout India.

Today it is strongest within the Tamil traditions of South India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and elsewhere.



Tamil Saivism

In fact, it is sometimes referred to simply as Tamil Saivism.



Pluralistic school of Meykandar

Today there are two primary schools of Saiva Siddhanta.

One is the pluralistic school of Meykandar, which holds that God, soul and world are eternally separate.



Monistic school of Tirumular

The other is the monistic school of Tirumular, which stresses the ultimate oneness of man and God.

We follow Tirumular's lineage, which is specifically called Shuddha Saiva Siddhanta.



For both schools, Siva is All.

For both schools, Siva is All, and His divine, manifest energy, Shakti, is inseparable from Him.

In temples we often see Siva and Shakti enshrined as two separate beings, a divine couple, but in truth they are one.



For both schools, Siva is All.

We worship Ganesha and Murugan as great Lords who serve their creator, God Siva.

We chant the holy mantra Namasivaya and we wear rudraksha beads and holy ash...



Saivite saints, Living Guru, Sivalinga...

We revere the many Saivite saints.

We believe it is necessary to have a living guru.

We cherish the holy Sivalinga, keep company (sangam) with other devout seekers, and revere the great many Siva temples.



Essence of Saiva Siddhanta

These four—guru, Lingam, sangam (fellowship) and valipadu (worship) - are the essence of Saiva Siddhanta as found in ancient Sanskrit and Tamil literature.



Gurudeva says...

Saivism—and most especially the traditions and philosophy expressed in Saiva Siddhanta—is more able to provide for mankind's resurgent demands for direct spiritual awakening and enlightened living than any other religion on the planet.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 9



9.1 Saiva Siddhanta

(Check the items that are true)

- A. Is the name of our school of Hinduism
- B. Is today the least practiced form of Saivism
- C. In India never existed outside of Tamil Nadu
- D. Is sometimes referred to simply as Tamil Saivism
- E. Means “the final, or established, conclusions of Saivism”

9.2 Today there are three primary schools of Saiva Siddhanta.

- True
- False

9.3 If the concept is of the Meykandar School enter an “M”. If the concept is of the Tirumular school enter a “T”.

- ___ God, soul and world are eternally separate
- ___ Monistic
- ___ Ultimate oneness of man and God
- ___ Pluralistic

9.4 Check the items in the list that are not part of Saiva Siddhanta

- A. The worship of Lord Ganesha
- B. The worship of Lord Krishna
- C. The worship of Lord Murugan
- D. The mantra Namah Sivaya
- E. The mantra Hare Rama Hare Krishna
- F. We wear holy ash
- G. We revere the Vaishnava saints

9.5 These three—guru, lingam and sangam—are the essence of Saiva Siddhanta..

- True
- False