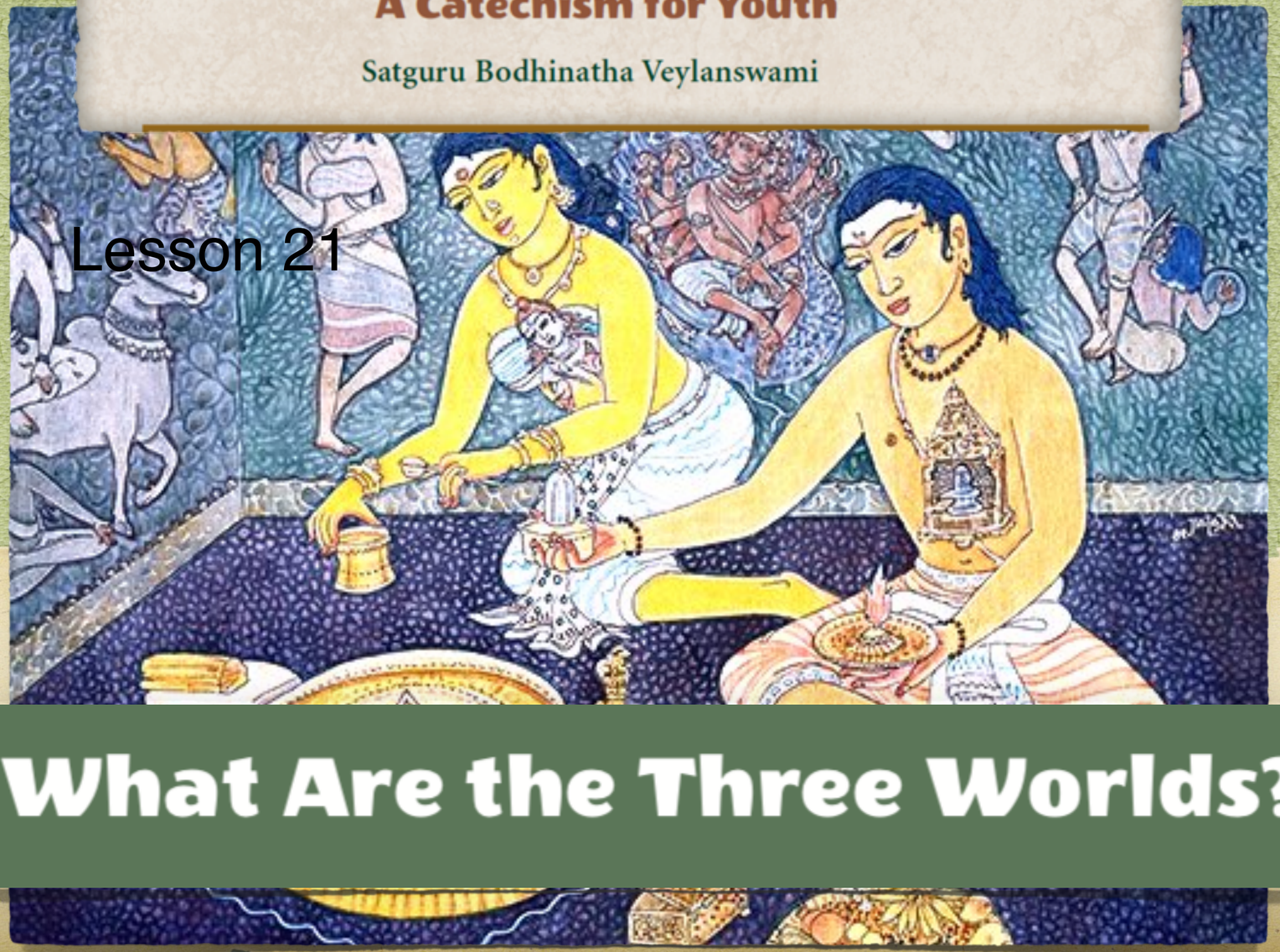
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A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami



Lesson 21

What Are the Three Worlds?

There are three worlds of existence.



The ‘Bhuloka’

The ‘Antarloka’

The ‘Sivaloka’

First World - Bhuloka

The First World is the physical universe, the gross plane called the Bhuloka.

This is the world we see with our eyes and touch with our hands.

It is the material world, where we have our experiences, create karma and fulfill the desires and duties of life in a physical body.



Second World - Devaloka

The Second World is the subtle or astral plane, the in-between realm called Antarloka.

This world exists within the physical plane.

As our thoughts and feelings are part of that inner world, we are functioning in the astral world even while we are awake.



Classes in Antarloka

During sleep, we leave our physical body and are aware in that inner world fully.

Besides dreaming, we may also attend innerplane classes held by our satguru.



The Antarloka has many levels

The Antarloka has many levels, spanning the spectrum of consciousness from the hellish Naraka regions, where the asuras, demonic beings, dwell, to the highest region of the Devaloka where the devas, or angels, live.

When our physical body dies, we live fully in the Antarloka in our subtle body.



The Third Word - Sivaloka

The Third World is the causal plane, the world of light and blessedness, called Sivaloka.

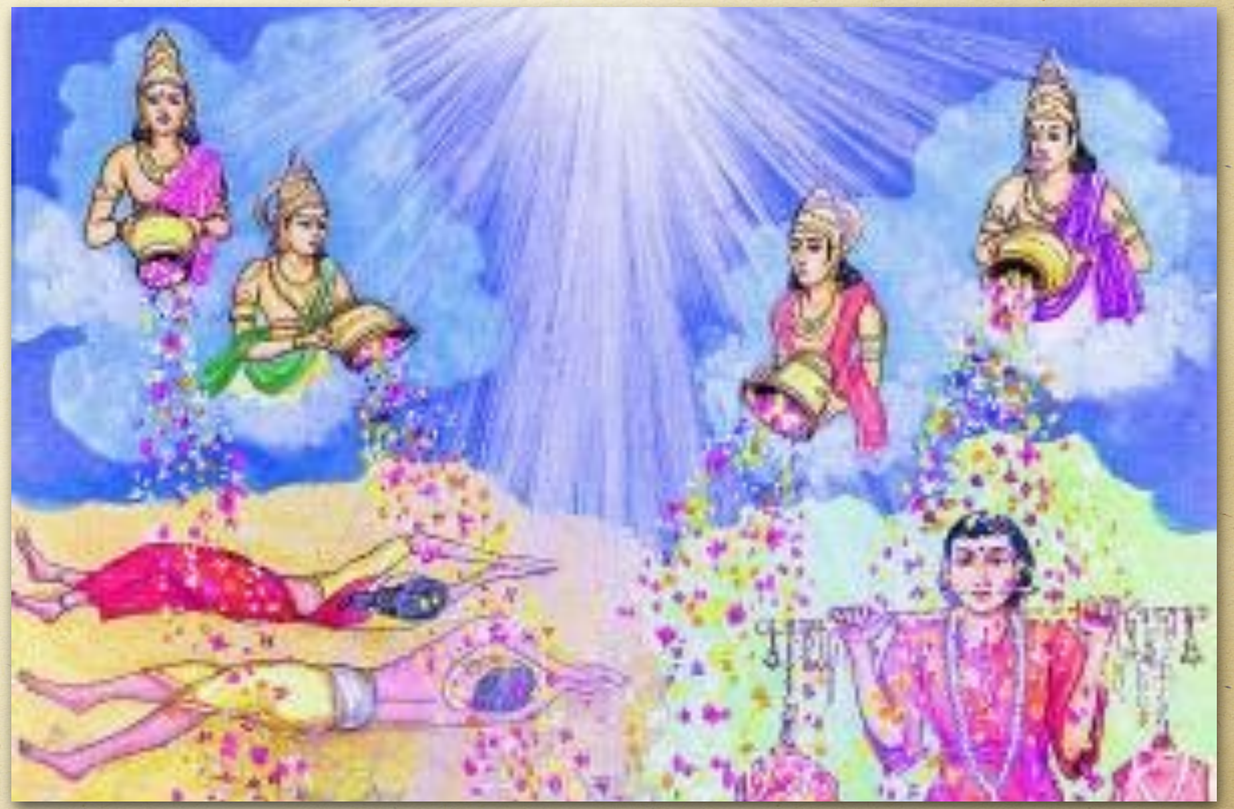
This highest plane is the home of God Siva and of the Gods who assist Him, such as Lord Ganesha and Lord Murugan.



The Third Word - Sivaloka

It is also the home of highly advanced souls who exist in their brilliant soul form.

We experience the Sivaloka when we see the inner light or have a flash of intuition.



The Temple is where the Three Worlds meet

We can worship God and the Gods anywhere.

But the temple is the best place, because it is built as a special, sacred space where the three worlds meet as one.

When we are awake, we normally don’t see or sense the inner worlds.



Feeling the presence of God, Gods and devas.

The temple enables us to feel the presence of God, Gods and devas, just as night-vision goggles allow us to see in the dark

In our form of worship, called *puja,* we chant, burn incense, ring bells and offer lights and flowers.

This ritual brings us close to God and the great beings of our faith.



Gurudeva says …

Siva's followers all believe that religion is the harmonious working together of the three worlds and that this harmony can be created through temple worship, wherein the beings of all three worlds can communicate.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 21



21.1 **Enter the letter from below of A - C that gives the correct Sanskrit name for the world.**

___ First World
___ Second World
___ Third World

(A) Sivaloka
(B) Bhuloka
(C) Antarloka

21.2 **Enter the letter from below of A - C that gives the correct English name for the world.**

___ First World
___ Second World
___ Third World

(A) Gross plane
(B) Causal plane
(C) Subtle or astral plane

21.3 **Enter the letter from below of A - B that gives the correct loka within the Antarloka for the description given.**

___ Hellish regions
___ Highest region
___ Where the asuras, demonic beings, dwell
___ Where the devas, angelic beings, dwell

(A) Devaloka
(B) Narakaloka

21.4 **The Third World**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Is the home of God Siva
☐ B. Is the home of Lord Murugan but not Lord Ganesha
☐ C. Is the home of highly advanced souls

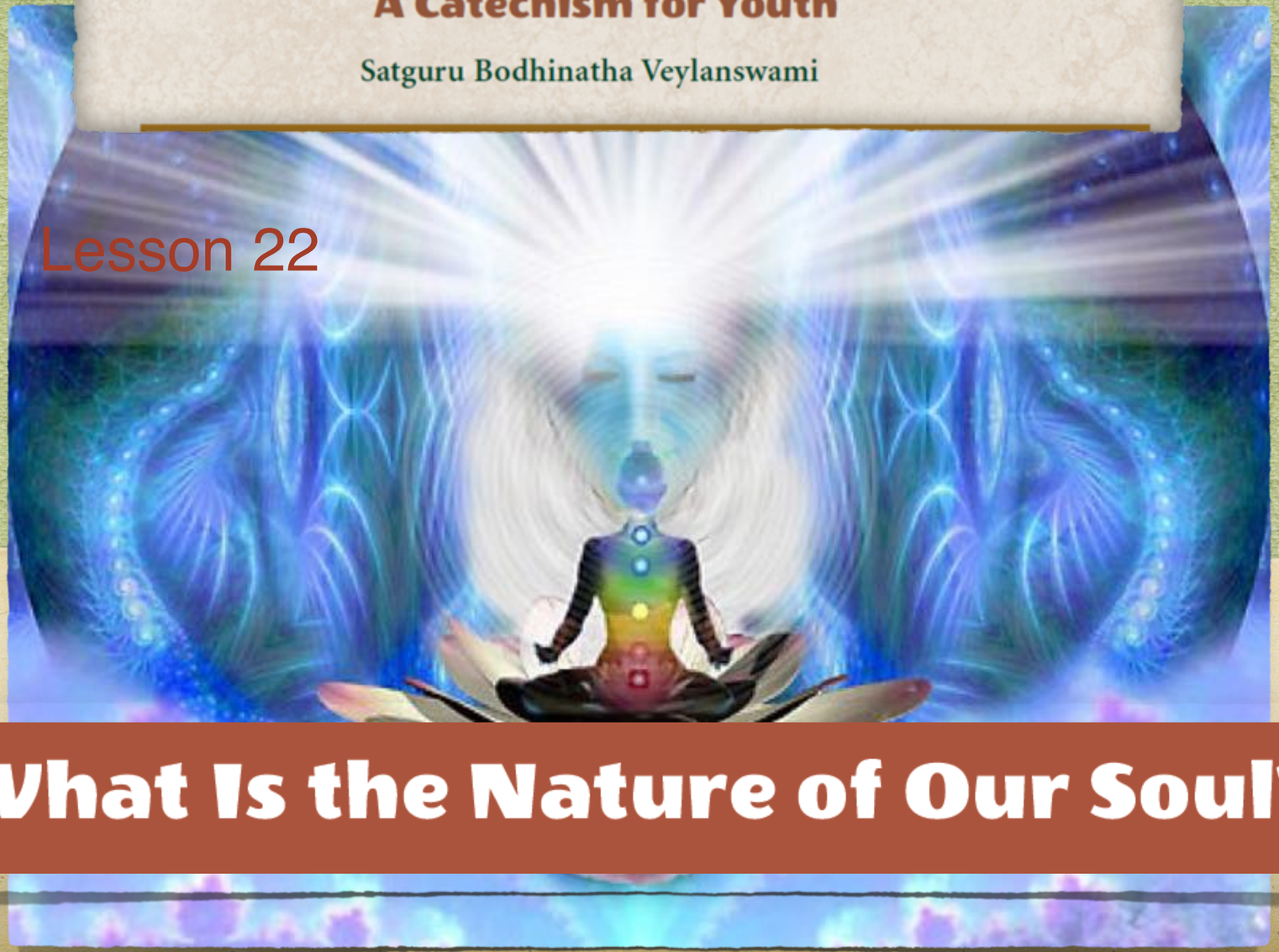
21.5 **We experience the Antarloka when we see the inner light or have a flash of intuition.**

☐ True
☐ False

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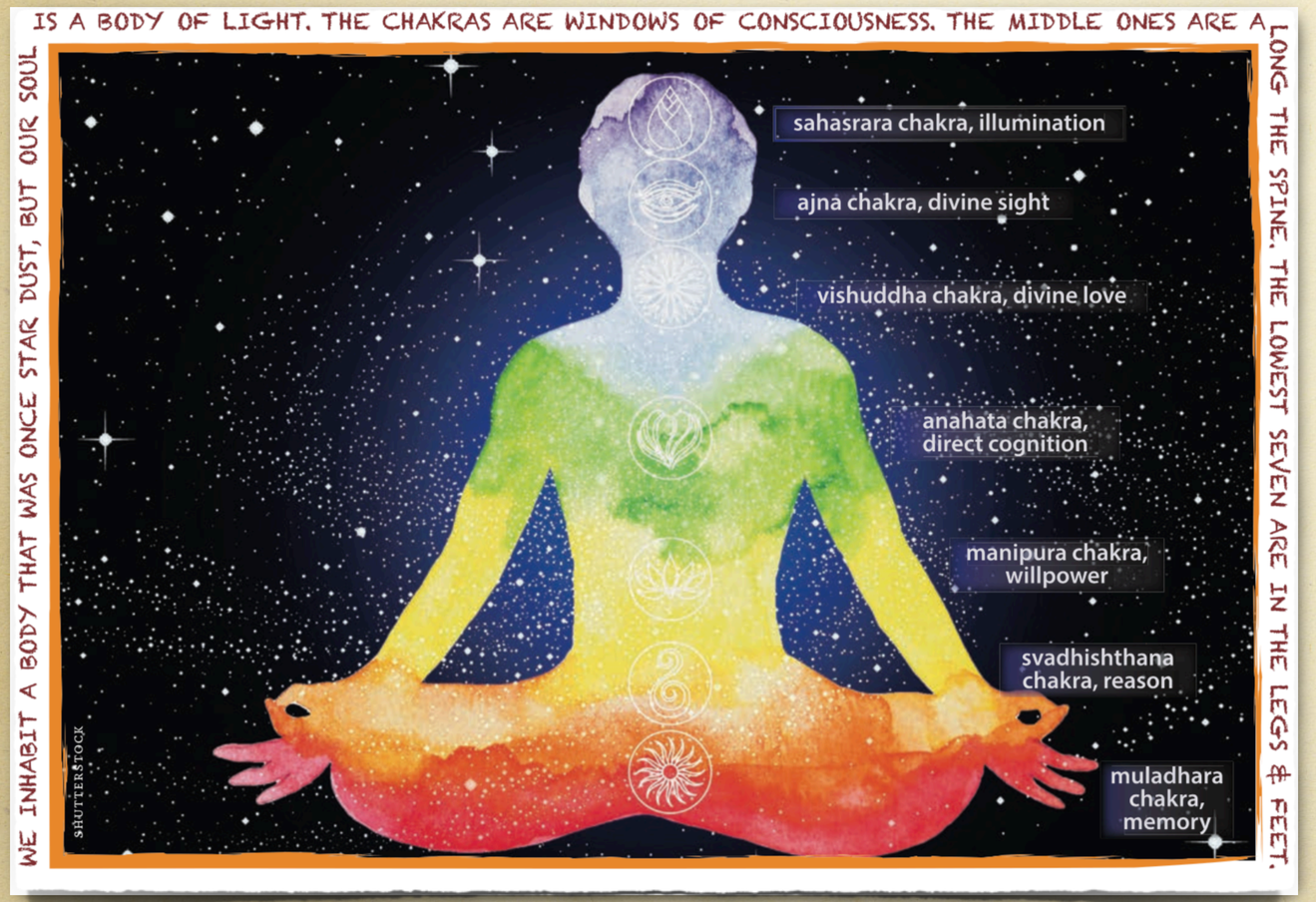
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Lesson 22

What Is the Nature of Our Soul?

Our soul…immortal spiritual being.



The essence of the soul is Pure Consciousness and Absolute Reality.

This essence is perfect, eternal and was never created.

Visualize it as a light bulb covered by five layers of colored fabrics.

These are our five bodies or sheaths

The physical body is our outer body of flesh and bones, which we need to function in this earthly world.

Inside it is the pranic body, the sheath of energy, or prana, that flows through the physical body.

Then we have the subtle or astral body. It is the sheath of ordinary thoughts, desires and emotions.



Mental Body & Body of the Soul

Next is the mental or intellectual layer.

It functions on the higher mental plane.

Finally, we have the body of the soul.

This is the body that evolves from birth to birth, that reincarnates into new outer sheaths and does not die when the physical body perishes.



A plastic body filled with light.

Gurudeva described it like this: “The body of the soul actually looks like a plastic body filled with light.

You have seen mannequins with arms, legs, torso and head made completely out of transparent, neon-like plastic.

If you were to put a light in such a mannequin, it would glow.

This is what your soul body, your psyche, looks like: Our soul body is neither male nor female and never dies.



The Chakras

Within our subtle bodies we have chakras, twenty-one in all—colorful, spinning force centers.

The seven lower chakras, those of fear, anger and the other lower, instinctive impulses, are located in the legs.

The seven middle chakras are along the spine, and the highest seven, accessible only after Self Realization, are above the head.



The Aura

We also have an aura, radiating within and around us, whose colors change according to our thoughts and emotions.



We are the eternal soul.

Once physical births have ceased, this soul body still continues to evolve in the heavenly worlds.

We are not the physical body, mind or emotions.

We are the eternal soul, atman—consisting of the radiant soul body and its essence, Pure Consciousness and Absolute Reality.



Gurudeva says…

Reverse your thinking about yourself.
Feel that you come out of timelessness, causelessness, spacelessness.
Visualize the pure radiant body of light, the being of the soul, the “I Am, the Watcher”



QUESTIONS for Lesson 22

22.1 **The essence of the soul is**
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. Pure Consciousness
☐ B. Absolute Reality
☐ C. Pure Consciousness and Absolute Reality

22.2 **Enter the letter from below of A - E that gives the correct description of that body (sheath).**

___ Physical body
___ Pranic body
___ Subtle or astral body
___ Mental body
___ Body of the soul

(A) Of ordinary thoughts, desires and emotions
(B) Of flesh and bones
(C) That functions on the higher mental plane
(D) Of energy
(E) Is the body that evolves from birth to birth

22.3 **Our soul body is neither male nor female and never dies.**

☐ True
☐ False

22.4 **Enter the letter from below of A - C that gives the correct location of those chakras**

___ Seven lower chakras
___ Seven middle chakras
___ Seven highest chakras

(A) Are above the head
(B) Are in the legs
(C) Are along the spine

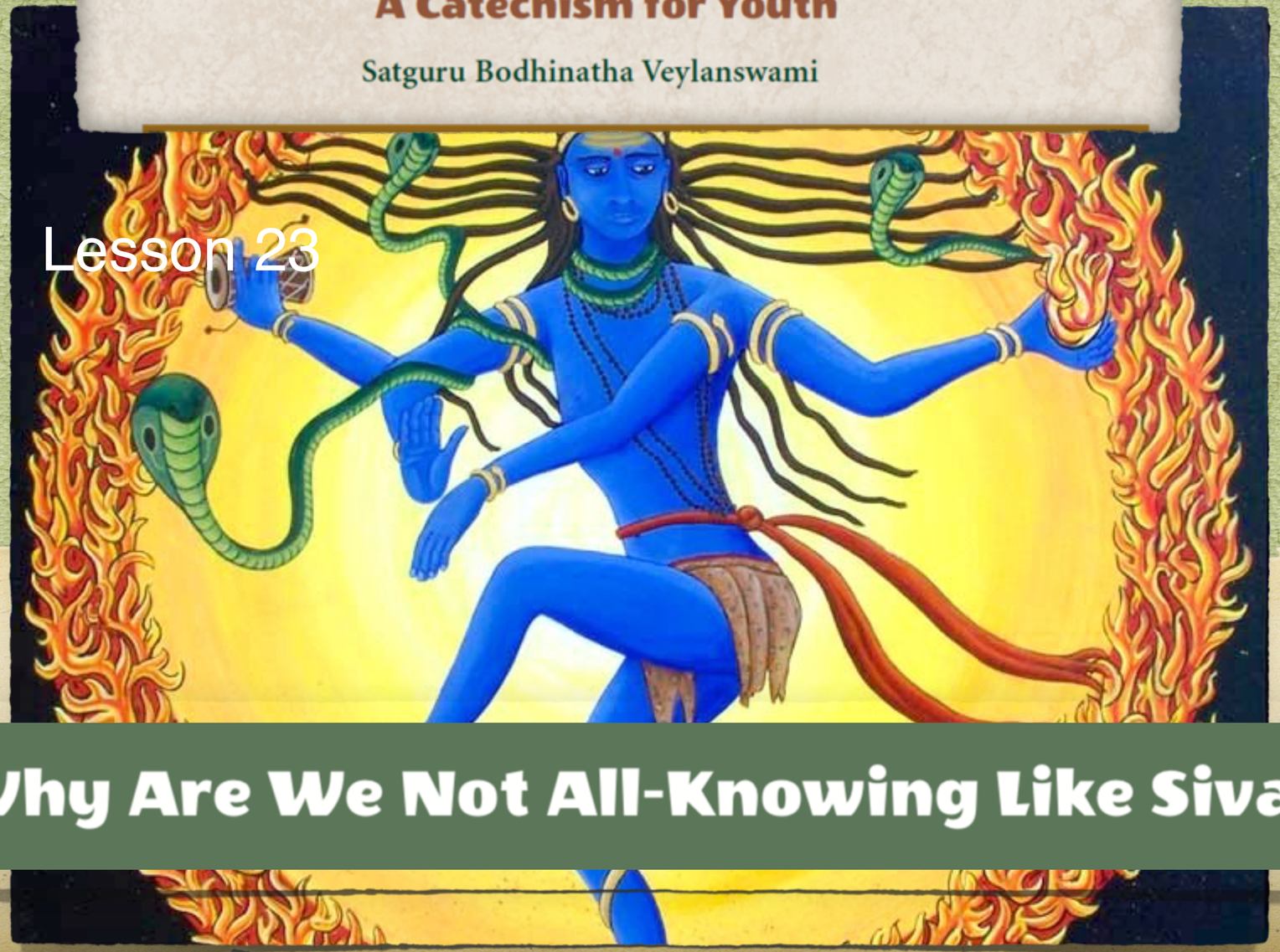
22.5 **Once physical births have ceased, the soul body no longer continues to evolve.**

☐ True
☐ False

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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.

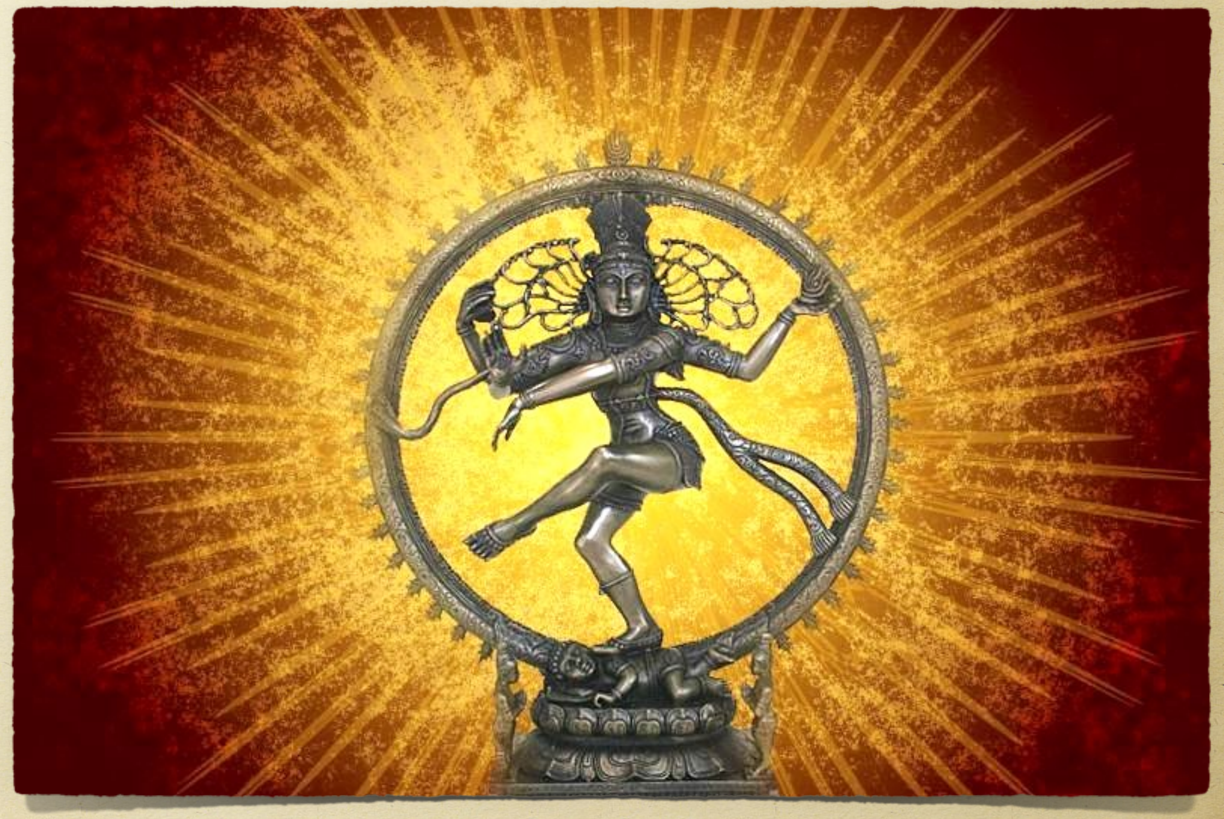


Siva’s veiling grace

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.



P*asha*, 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.

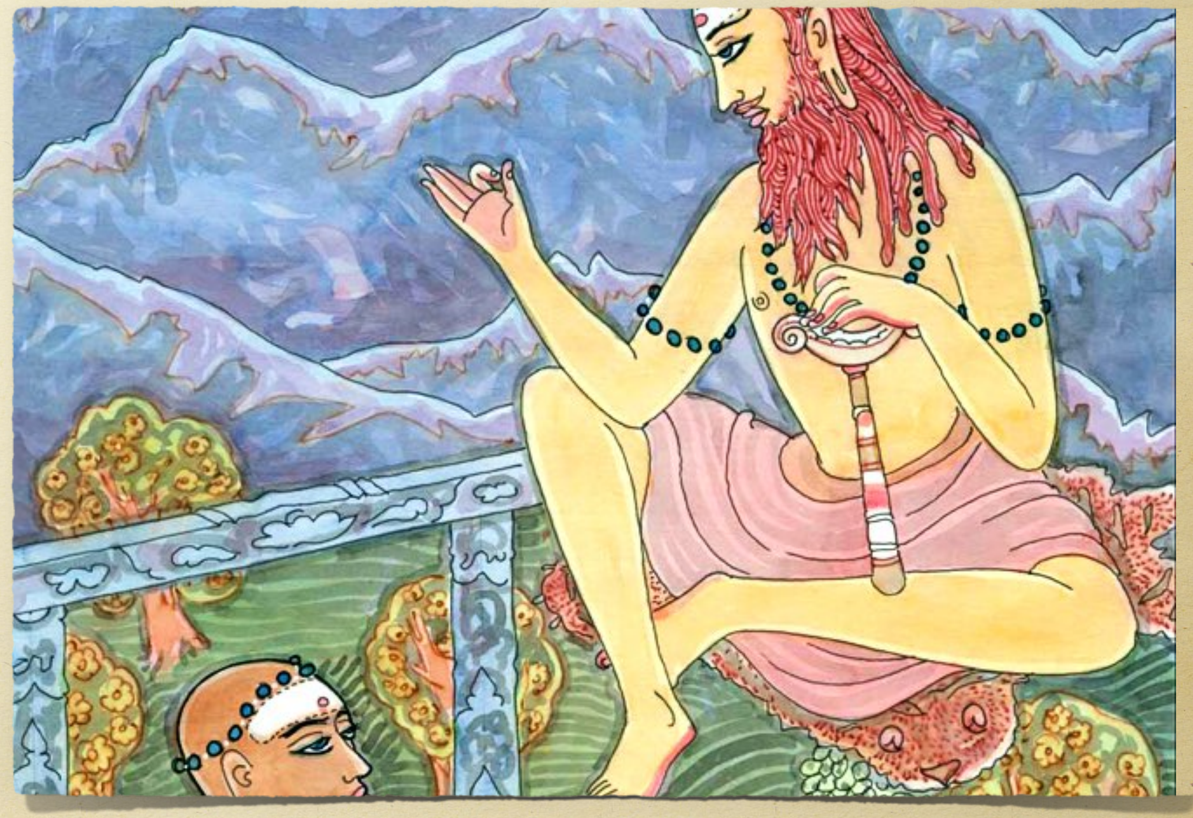


When does Siva grant His revealing grace?

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

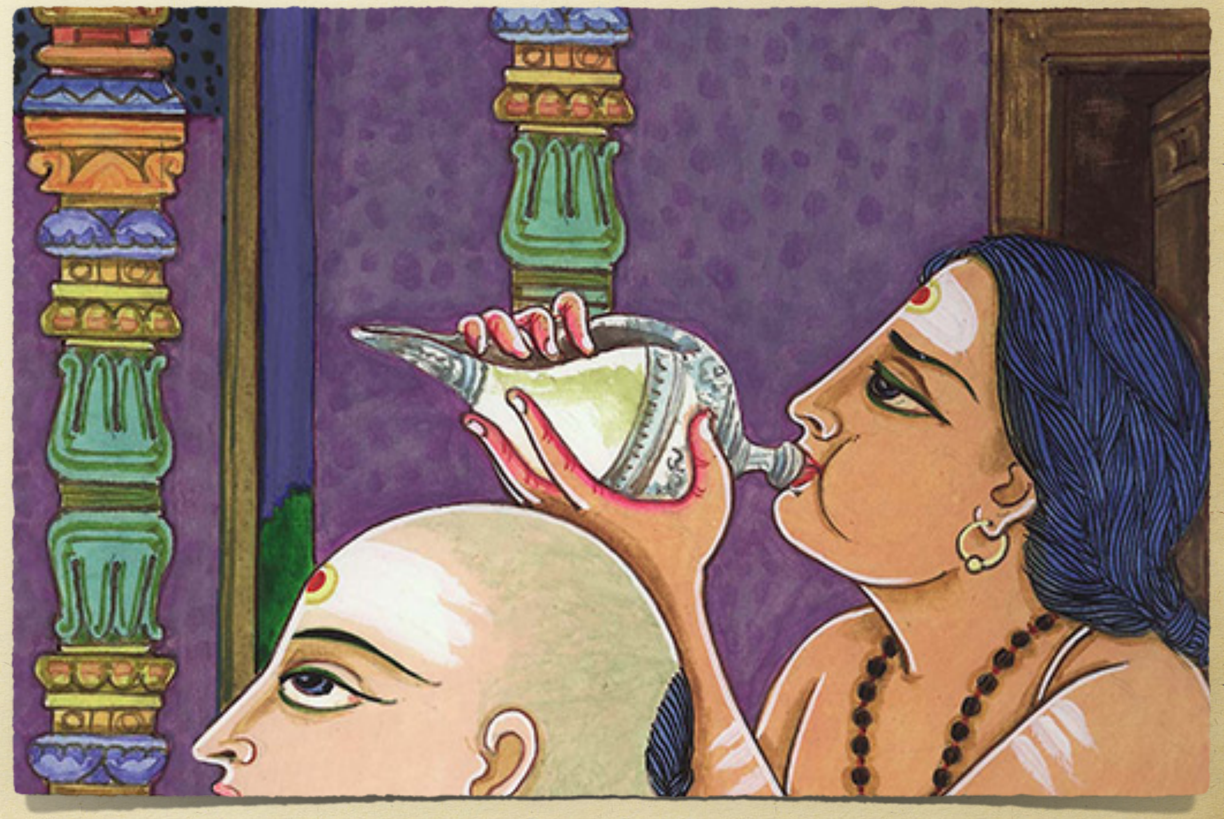
When finally we yearn to know Siva, the satguru appears in our life and gives us disciplines to help us evolve further.

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**

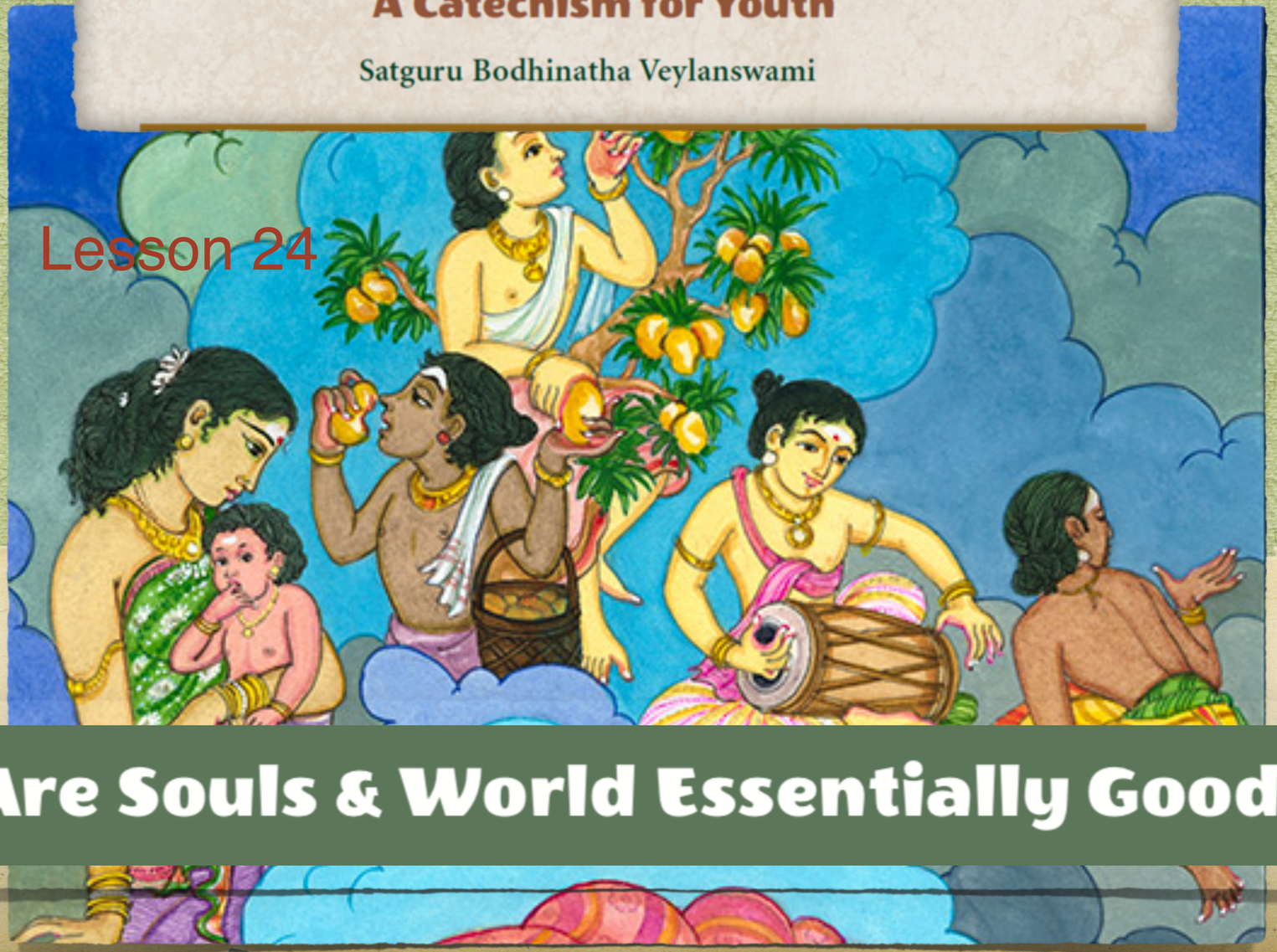
(Check the correct answer)

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

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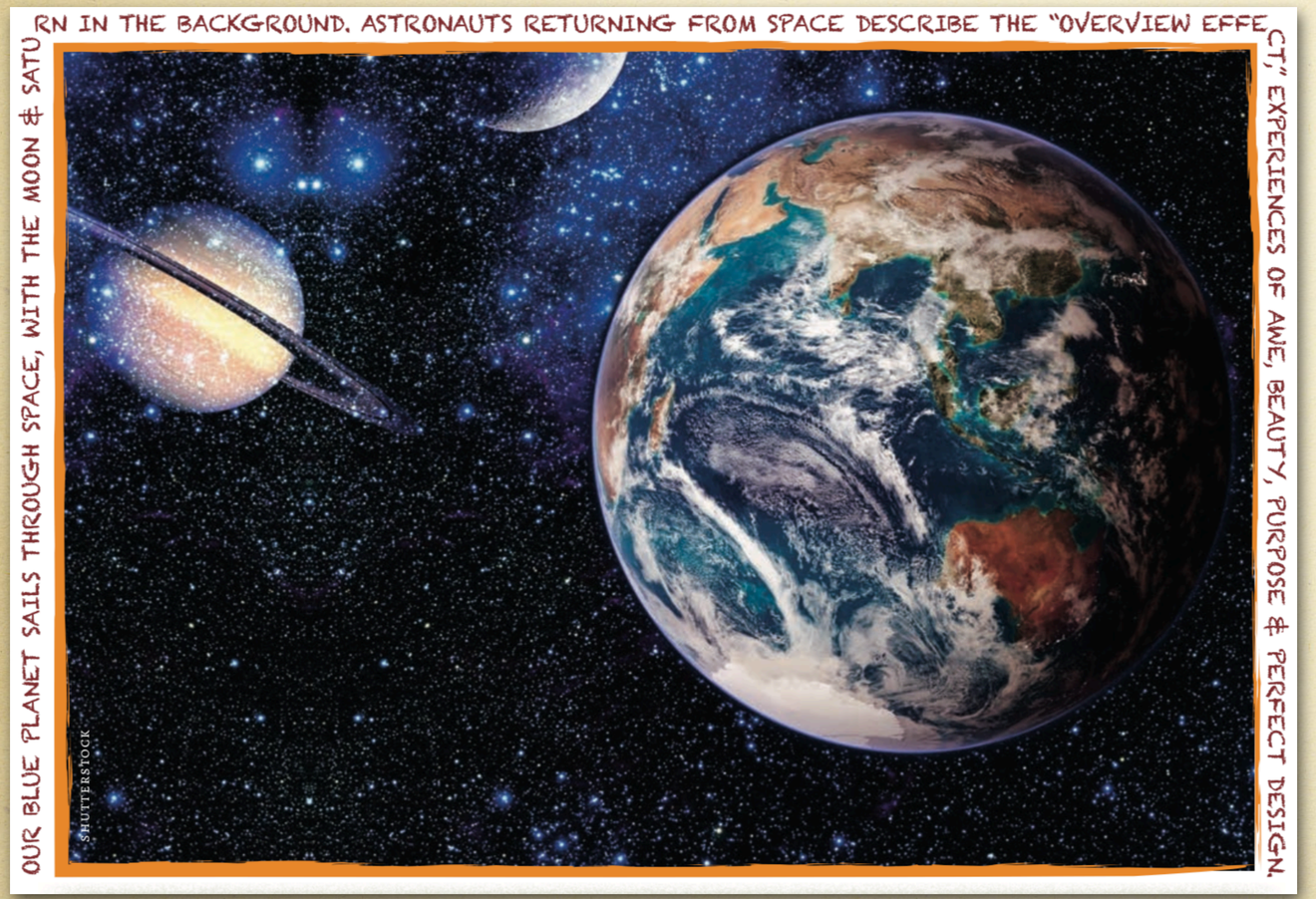
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Lesson 24

Are Souls & World Essentially Good?

All souls are essentially good



All souls are essentially good, for their inner nature is divine.

Each soul is created by God Siva from Himself. Siva's nature is pure love.

Natural qualities of the soul

So, goodness, compassion, understanding and joy are natural qualities of the soul.

Wisdom and pure knowledge are the intrinsic nature of the soul.



The world, too, is God’s flawless creation.

All is in perfect order and balance.

Since God is everywhere and in all things, there can be no place for evil.



There can be no place for evil

Since God is everywhere and in all things, there can be no place for evil.

Evil is often looked upon as a force against God.

But we know that all forces are God's forces, even mean, hurtful actions

This is sometimes difficult to understand when we see the pains and problems caused by people against each other.



What is called evil has its own purpose in life.

Looking deeper, we see that what is called evil has its own purpose in life.

Yes, bad things do happen.

Still, the wise never blame God, for they know such things are the return of our self-created karmas, tough lessons that help us learn and mature.

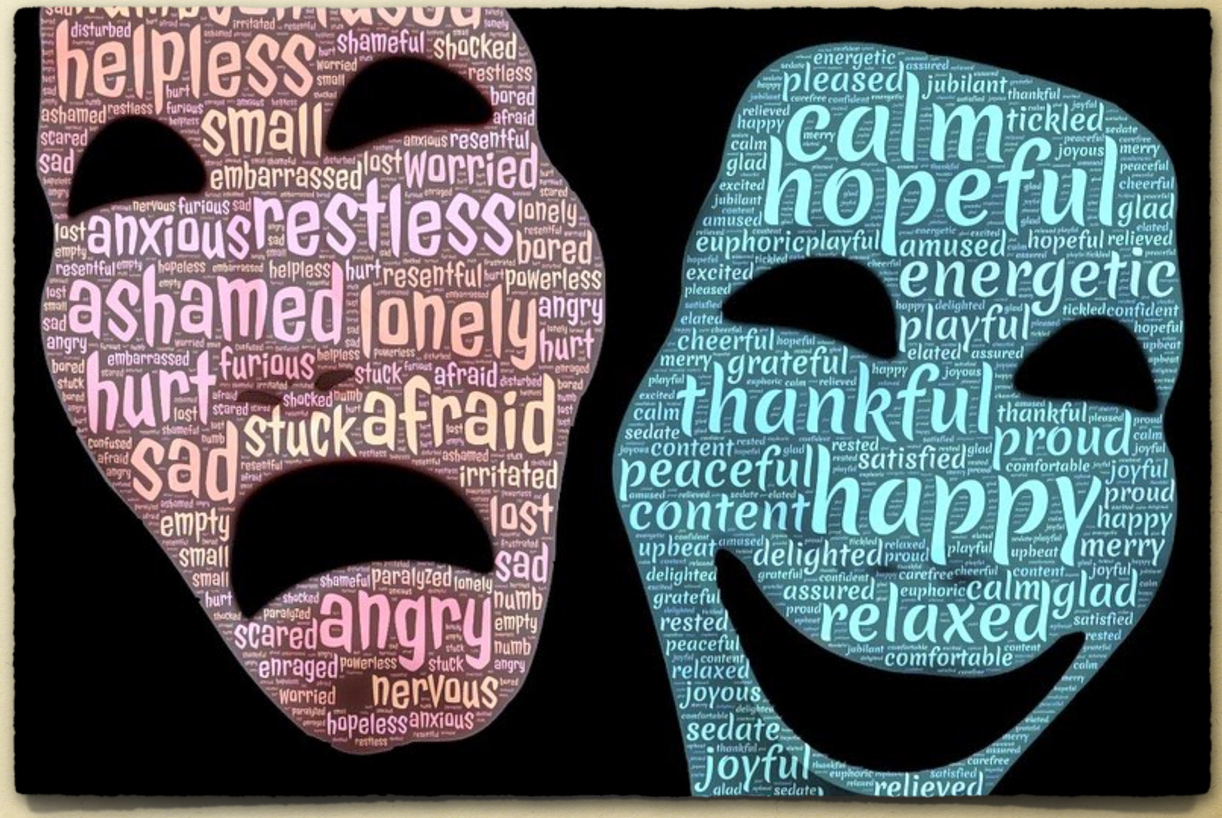


The nature of the world is duality.

It contains each thing and its opposite: joy and sorrow, goodness and evil, love and hate.

Suffering cannot be totally avoided.

It is a natural part of human life that causes much spiritual growth for the soul.



The wise accept suffering from any source

Knowing this, the wise accept suffering from any source, be it hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, famine, wars, disease or personal tragedies.

Suffering offers us the important realization that true happiness and freedom cannot be found in the world, for earthly joy is bound to sorrow.

Having learned this, devotees seek a satguru who teaches them to overcome suffering through understanding and acceptance.



The world is the bountiful creation of a benevolent God

The world is the bountiful creation of a benevolent God, who means for us to live positively in it, facing karma and fulfilling dharma.

We must not despise or fear the world.

Life is meant to be lived joyously.



Gurudeva says…

This is my advice: gain the perspective first that it is a wonderful world, that there is nothing wrong in the world at all.

All men and women on the Earth are doing exactly as they should and must do



QUESTIONS for Lesson 24



24.1 **The qualities of the soul are**
(Check the incorrect answer)

- ☐ A. Goodness, compassion, understanding and joy
- ☐ B. A tendency to act in evil ways
- ☐ C. Wisdom and pure knowledge

24.2 **When bad things happen to us it is because of**
(Check the correct answer)

- ☐ A. The hurtful nature of some people
- ☐ B. The return of our self-created karmas
- ☐ C. God

24.3 **The nature of the world is duality. It contains each thing and its opposite:**
(Check the incorrect answer)

- ☐ A. Joy and sorrow
- ☐ B. Goodness and evil
- ☐ C. Love and kindness

24.4 **Suffering is**
(Check the incorrect answer)

- ☐ A. Unnecessary
- ☐ B. A natural part of human life
- ☐ C. Causes much spiritual growth

24.5 **We are meant to live positively in the world, facing dharma and fulfilling karma.**

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

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Lesson 25

What About Evil, Hell and Sin?

In the highest sense, there is no good or bad



God did no create evil as a force distinct from good.

He granted to souls the divine laws of dharma and karma along with the freedom to act as they wish in the great ocean of experience.

There is no eternal hell

There is no eternal hell, nor is there a Satan.

However, there are hellish states of mind and painful births for those who think and act wrongfully.

Sin is related only to the lower, instinctive-intellectual nature as a transgression of dharma.

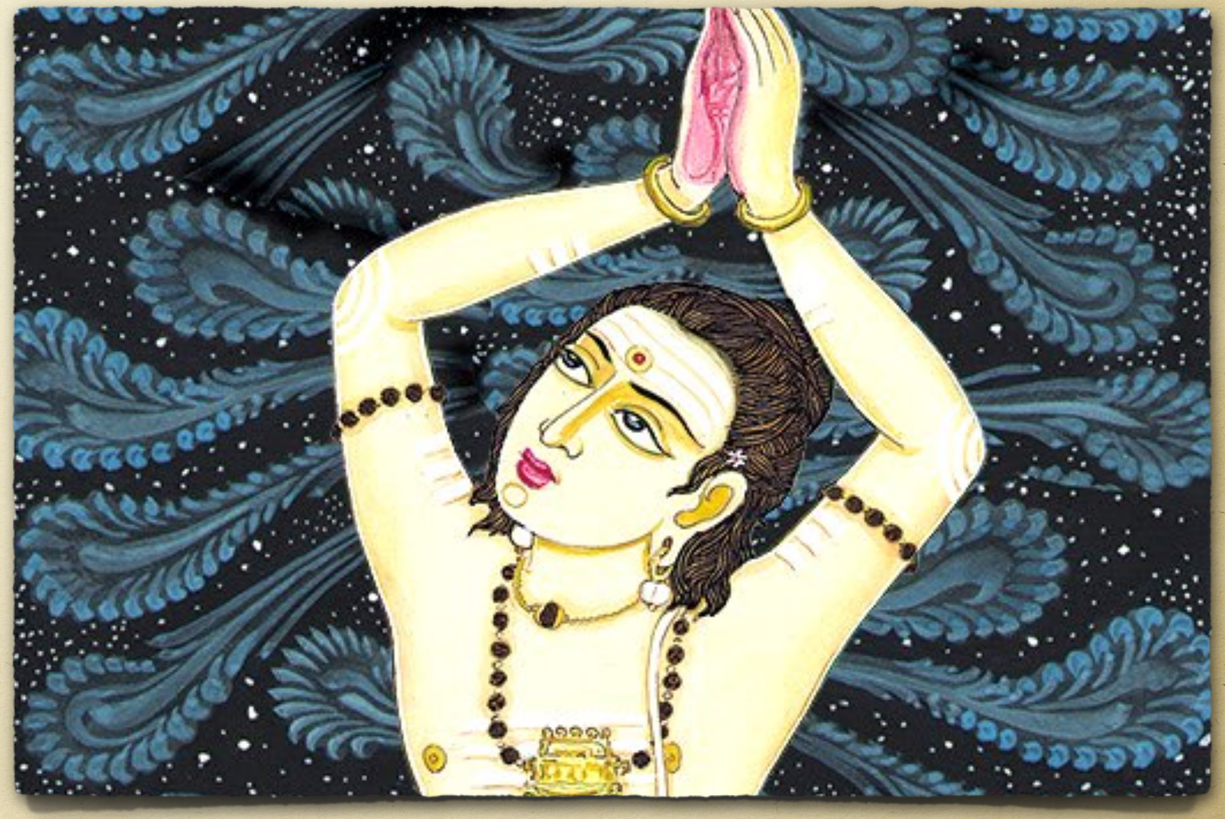


The soul is not for ever lost or damned

Man’s true nature is not sullied by sin, and no bad deed can cause the soul to be for ever lost or damned.

Still, wrongful actions are real and to be avoided, for they return to us as sorrow through the law of karma.

Bad deeds can be atoned for with sadhana, worship and penance.



Good and evil in the world?

As Saivites, we do not see a sharp contrast of good and evil in the world.

Instead we understand that all people have a threefold nature: instinctive, intellectual and spiritual.



What is the instinctive nature?

The instinctive nature is the outer, lower or animal nature of I, me and mine.

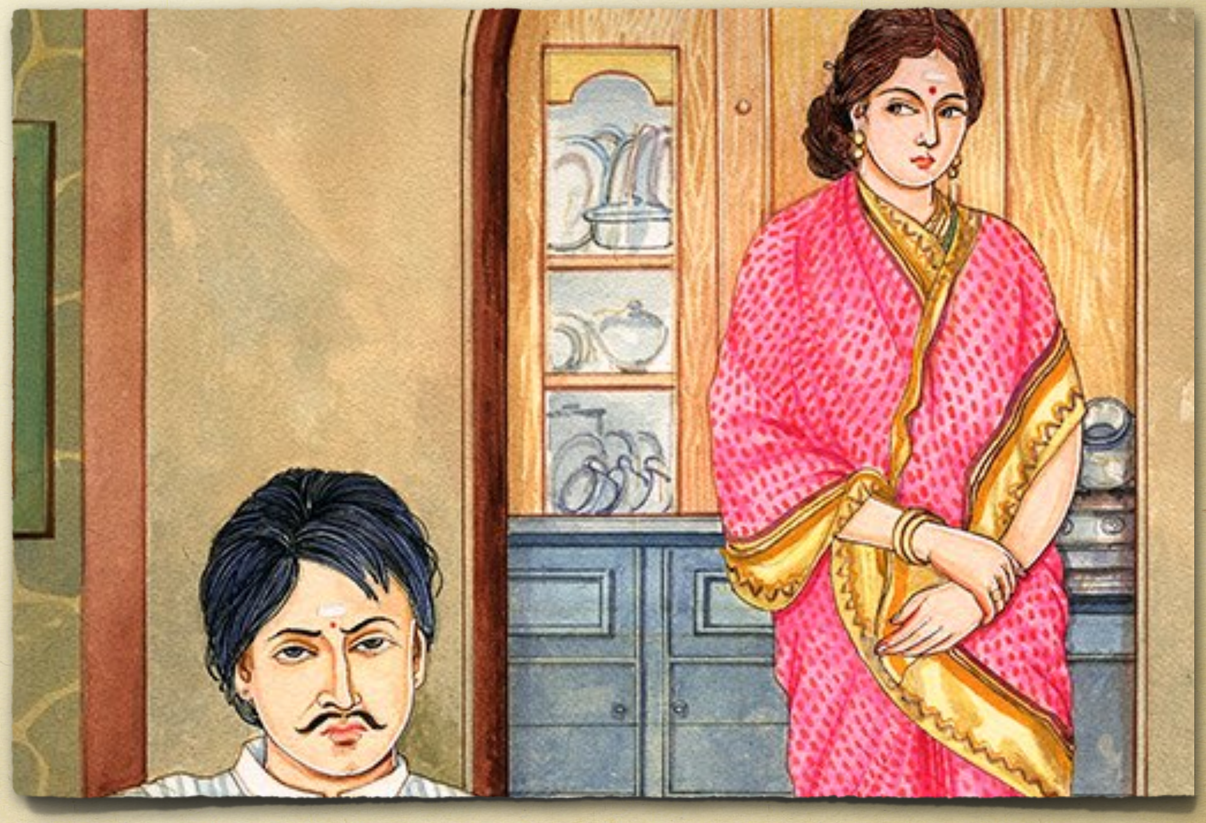
When it dominates, people become angry, fearful, greedy, jealous and hurtful.



What is the intellectual nature?

The intellectual nature is the soul's mental aspect.

When it rules, people can become arrogant and prone to argument and conflict.



The spiritual, or superconscious, nature of the soul

The spiritual, or superconscious, nature of the soul is the source of compassion, insight, modesty, peace and understanding.



What about young souls?

The animal instincts of young souls are strong.

Their intellect, which is needed to control the instincts, is yet to be developed.



Encounter meanness and wickedness in others?

When we encounter meanness and wickedness in others, we recall this threefold nature and have compassion for those in the lower, instinctive states.

We know they will continue to evolve, as they learn from their self-created karma.

We also know there is no intrinsic evil.



Gurudeva says…

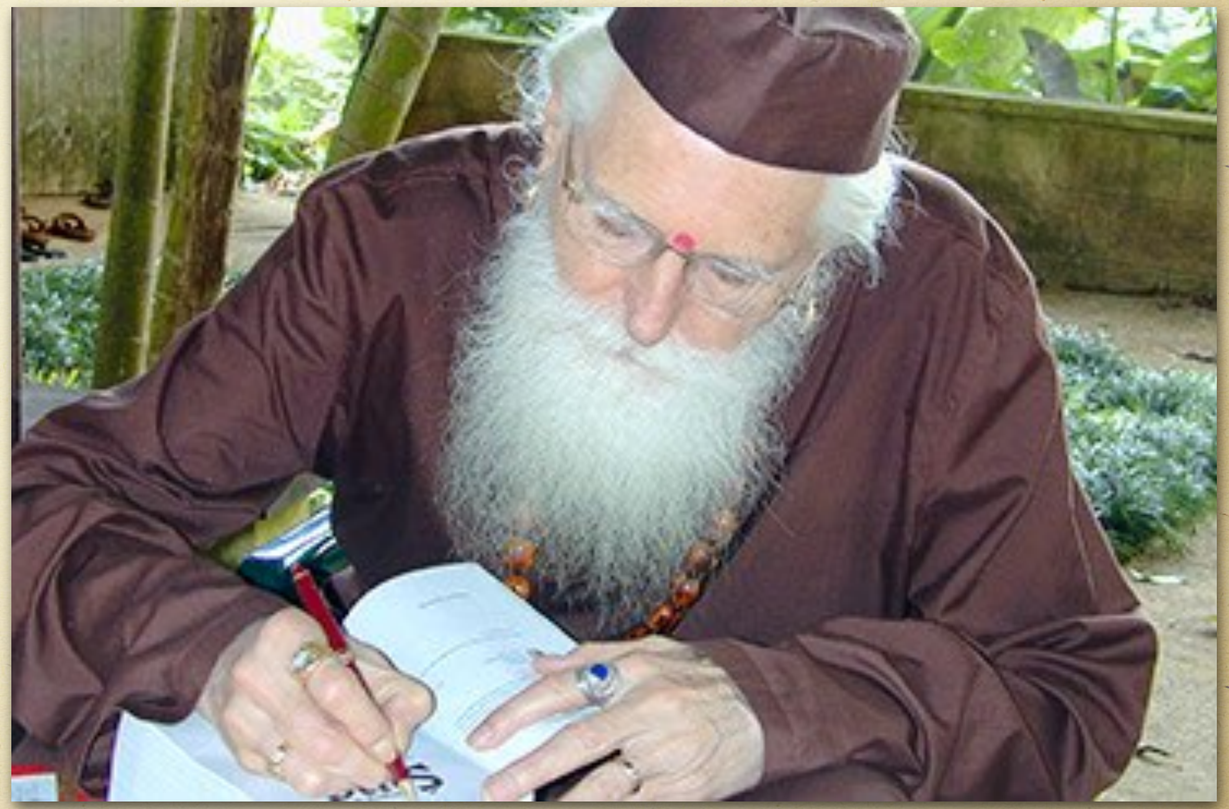
Hinduism is such a joyous religion, freed of all the mental encumbrances that are prevalent in the various Western faiths.

It is freed of the notion of a vengeful God.

It is freed of the notion of eternal suffering.

It is freed from the notion of original sin.

is freed of the notion of eternal suffering. It is freed from the notion of original sin.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 25

25.1 **God created evil as a distinct force from good.**

□ True
□ False

25.2 **Regarding hell,**

(Check the incorrect answer)

□ A. There is no Satan
□ B. There is eternal hell
□ C. There are hellish states of mind & painful births for those who think and act wrongly

25.3 **Regarding sin,**

(Check the incorrect answer)

□ A. Is related only to the lower, instinctive-intellectual nature
□ B. Is a transgression of dharma
□ C. Man's true nature is sullied by sin

25.4 **Enter the letter from below of A - C that gives the correct name of the nature described.**

___ When it dominates people become angry, fearful, greedy, jealous and hurtful
___ When it rules, people can become arrogant and prone to argument and conflict
___ Source of compassion, insight, modesty, peace and understanding
(A) Instinctive nature (B) Spiritual nature (C) Intellectual nature

25.5 **When we encounter meanness and wickedness in others, we recall the above threefold nature and have compassion for those in the lower, instinctive states.**

□ True
□ False

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Lesson 26

Who Is Lord Ganesha?

Lord Ganesha



Lord Ganesha is the elephant-faced Patron Art and Science, the Lord of obstacles and Guardian of Dharma.

He is worshiped before any of the other Gods

First son of Siva, He is worshiped before any of the other Gods, including Siva Himself.

His *vahana,* or mount, is Mushika, the mouse, symbol of this God's ability to access all places in the mind.



Gurudeva taught …

“Wherever His devotees are—in the home, the factories, the offices, the hospitals, the marketplace, orbiting in space or tilling the soil on the farm—Lord Ganesha is ever there.”



New project or major decision ?

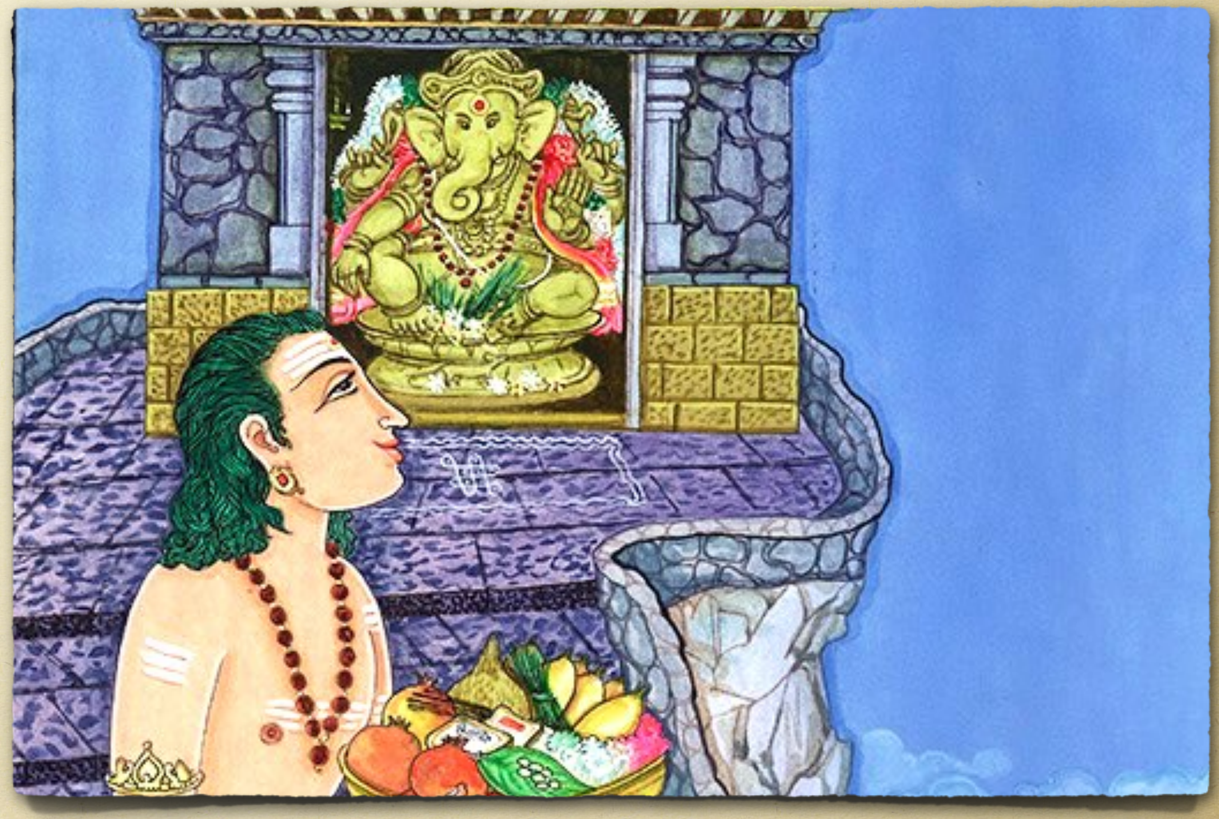
We worship Him before beginning a new project, taking an exam, or making a major decision, such as where to go to college.



The need for Ganesha’s blessings

When we feel the need for Ganesha’s blessings, we attend puja to Him in the temple or pray to Him at our home shrine.

You can get to know Him as a good friend.



How to contact Lord Ganesha?

To contact Him, hold His elephant image in your mind.

Look into His eyes.

Speak your questions and problems into His right ear.

When you are finished, open your eyes.



How does Lord Ganesha guidance come?

Ganesha's guidance will come in a subtle, indirect manner.

Over the next several days, watch for signs, perhaps a suggestion or even a casual comment from a teacher, parent or friend that suddenly makes it clear what you should do.



The shakti of Lord Ganesha is a gentle, soothing force.

Even a subtle encounter has the power to bring us into the secure consciousness of the muladhara chakra, the force center of memory where Ganesha resides.

This blessing keeps us above the seven lower chakras, home of the base emotions such as jealousy, fear and anger.



Lord Ganesha is a very old and mature.

Lord Siva, the Supreme God, created Lord Ganesha, Murugan and all the other Hindu Gods.

They are souls like us, but of a higher evolution, destined to enjoy union with Him.

They are very old and mature souls, mighty beings who live in the Sivaloka.

Though commonly depicted as male or female, they are actually beyond gender.

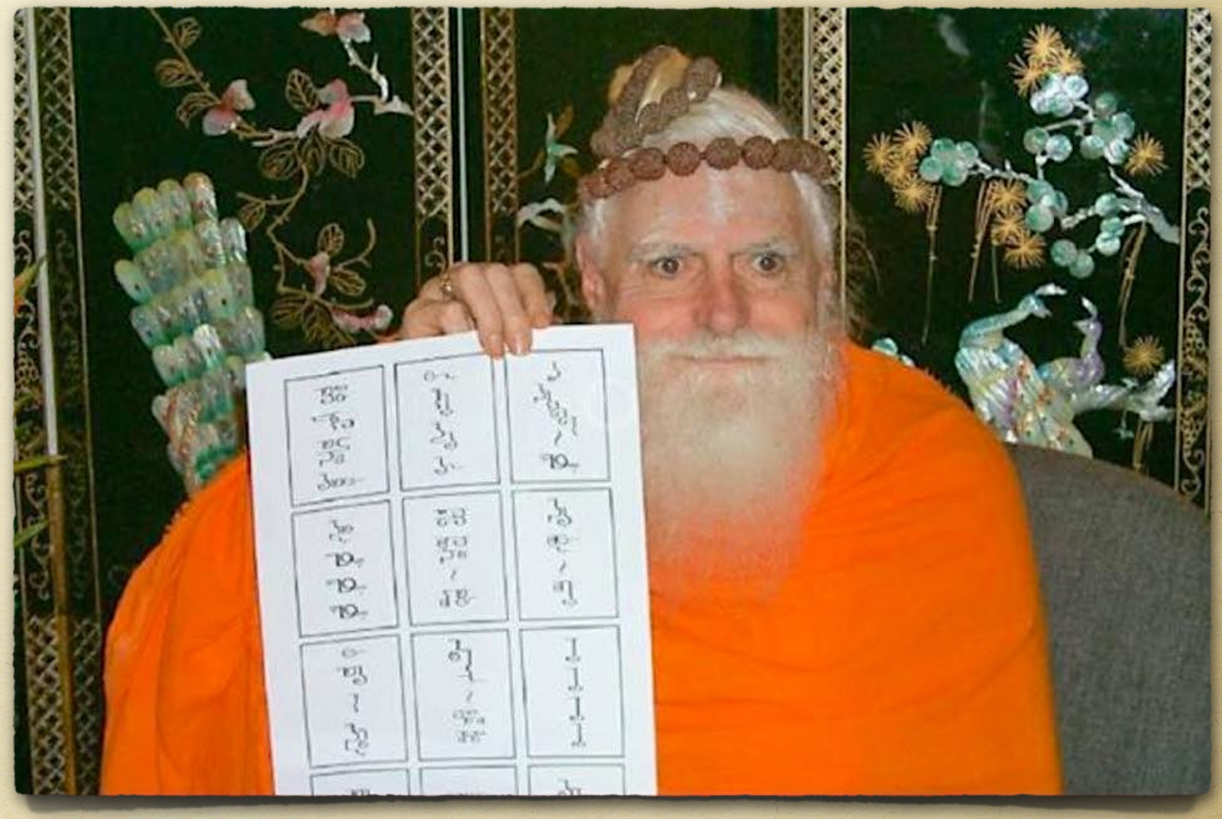


Gurudeva says …

Lord Ganesha was created as a governor and interplanetary, intergalactic Lord.

His knowledge is infinite, His judgment is just....

This Lord of Obstacles prevents us from hurting ourselves through living under an incomplete concept or making a request unneeded or beginning an endeavor not well thought out.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 26

26.1 **Lord Ganesha is worshiped before any of the other Gods except Siva Himself.**

☐ True
☐ False

26.2 **We worship Him**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. When a new project is completed
☐ B. Before taking an exam
☐ C. Before making a major decision

26.3 **Number the steps below 1 - 4 to show the correct order for contacting Lord Ganesha.**

___ Speak your questions and problems into His right ear
___ Hold His elephant image in your mind
___ Open your eyes
___ Look into His eyes

26.4 **The answer to your question will be received**
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. By His speaking into your right ear
☐ B. In a subtle, indirect manner

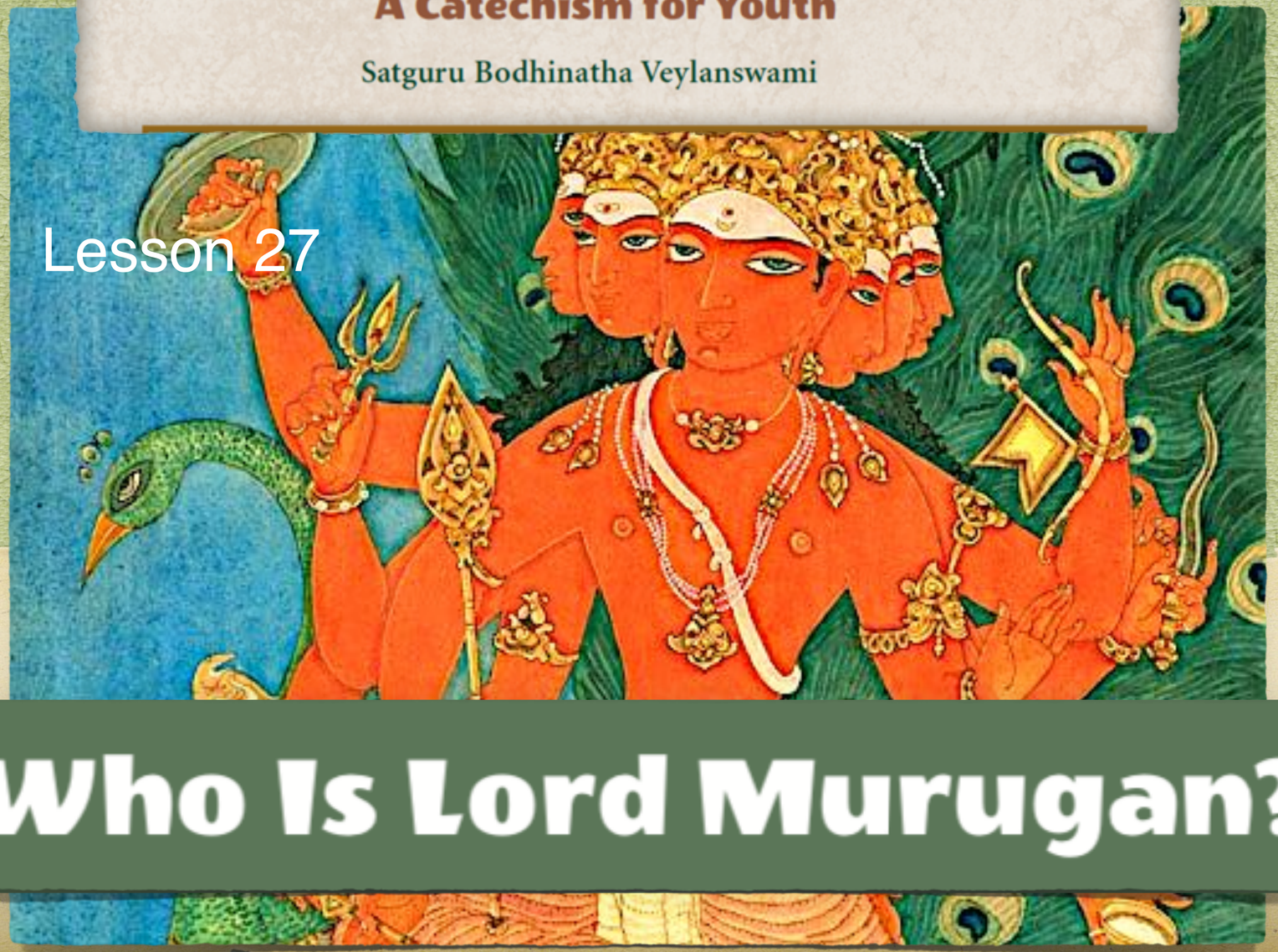
26.5 **Lord Ganesha, Murugan and all the other Hindu Gods are souls like us, but of a higher evolution, destined to enjoy union with Him.**

☐ True
☐ False

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Lesson 27

Who Is Lord Murugan?

Murugan, the God of religion and yoga.

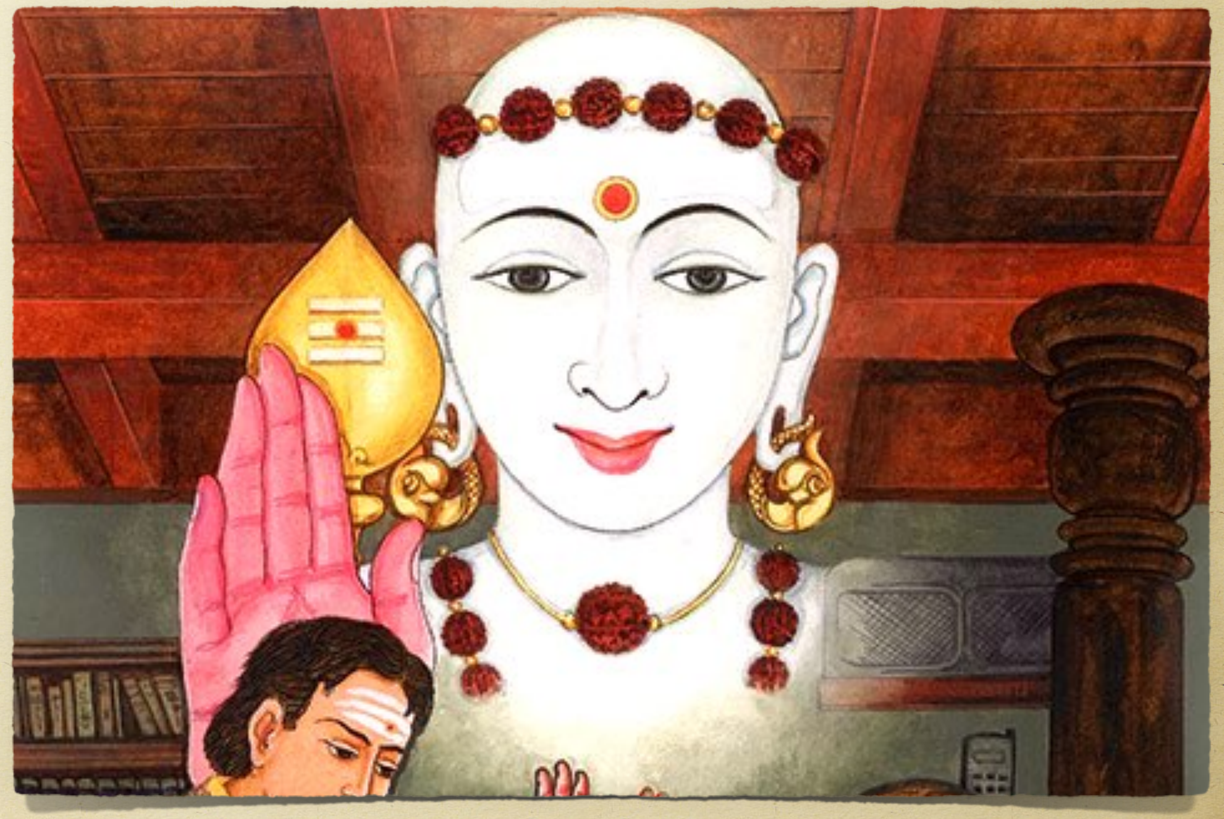


He is the second son of Lord Siva, born of his divine mind.

His electric power awakens spiritual wisdom to propel souls onward in their evolution to Siva's feet.

Lord Murugan has many names.

Also known as Karttikeya, Kumara, Skanda, Shanmukhanatha and Subrahmanya, He is worshiped not only by Hindus but by Buddhists as well, in China, Japan and other countries.



Lord Murugan and Meditation

Majestically seated on the manipura chakra, this red-hued God blesses mankind and strengthens our will when we rise to higher consciousness through sadhana and yoga.

He brings detachment, willpower and contentment, and His blessings strengthen our meditations.



The Vel of Lord Murugan

Lord Murugan carries a *vel*, or spear, representing the power to overcome darkness and ignorance.

He is the authority behind the king (nowadays, any government which rules the people), there to see that justice is done and peace prevails.



Tamil Saivites

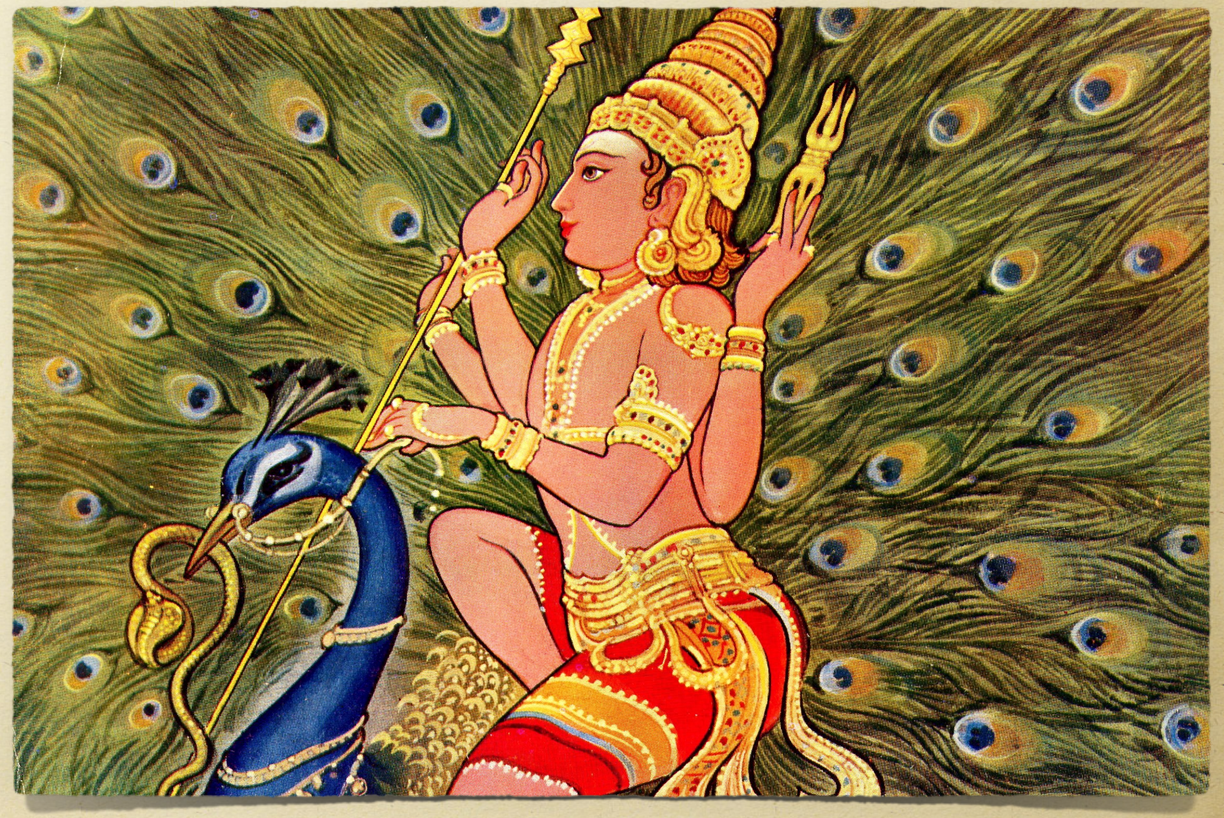
Murugan is especially loved by Tamil Saivites, who believe He guides their culture and history.

Devotees look to Him for healing of the body and mind, and for strength to face life’s challenges.



Lord Muruga vahana

He is said to love bamboo groves and hilltops, and His vahana is the proud and beautiful peacock.



The dynamic energy of Lord Murugan

When we connect with Murugan, we have to be ready to change, for He brings a dynamic energy.

He inspires penance, such as carrying kavadi during Thai Pusam, which softens karmas and purifies the mind.



Murugan’s blessings in our life

When Murugan’s blessings come into our life, we become a better person, more kind, disciplined and spiritual.

Many saints and devotees have had visions of Murugan and other Gods.

But more often we just sense their presence, as we feel the warm rays of the sun when our eyes are closed.



Gurudeva says…

Pray to Lord Murugan to unravel the great mysteries of the universe.

Pray to Lord Murugan to make you a spiritual person.

Pray to Lord Murugan to release you into the arms of Lord Siva by teaching you more about your Saivite religion.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 27

27.1 **Lord Murugan is the God of religion and dancing.**

☐ True
☐ False

27.2 **His electric power**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Awakens spiritual wisdom
☐ B. Propels souls onward in their evolution to Siva's feet
☐ C. Removes obstacles

27.3 **His Vel, or spear, represents the power to overcome darkness and ignorance.**

☐ True
☐ False

27.4 **Devotees look to Him for**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Wealth
☐ B. Healing of the body and mind
☐ C. Strength to face life's challenges

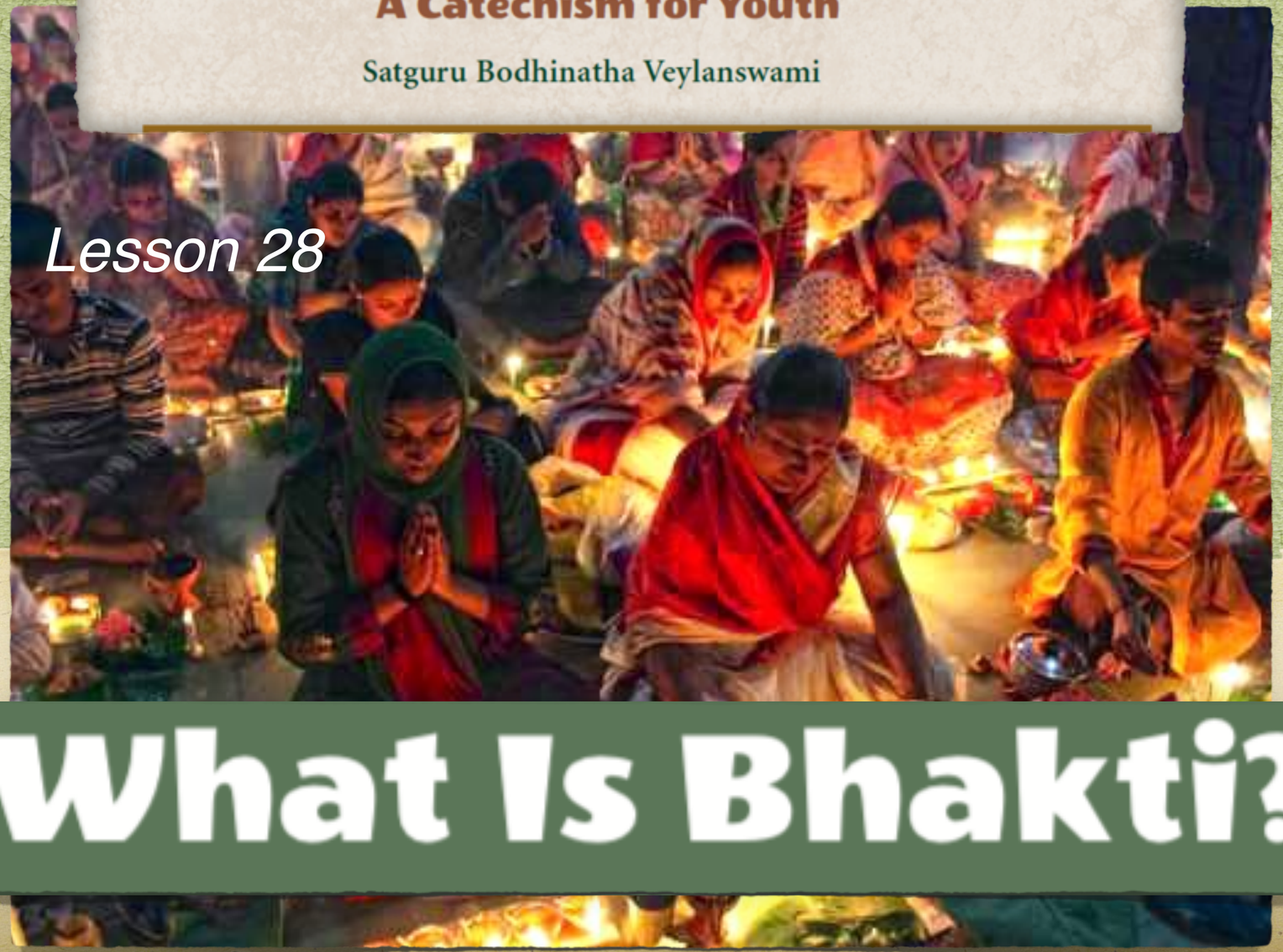
27.5 **Lord Murugan**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Can never be experienced
☐ B. Has been seen in visions
☐ C. Can be sensed as can the warm rays of the sun

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami



Lesson 28

What Is Bhakti?

Bhakti



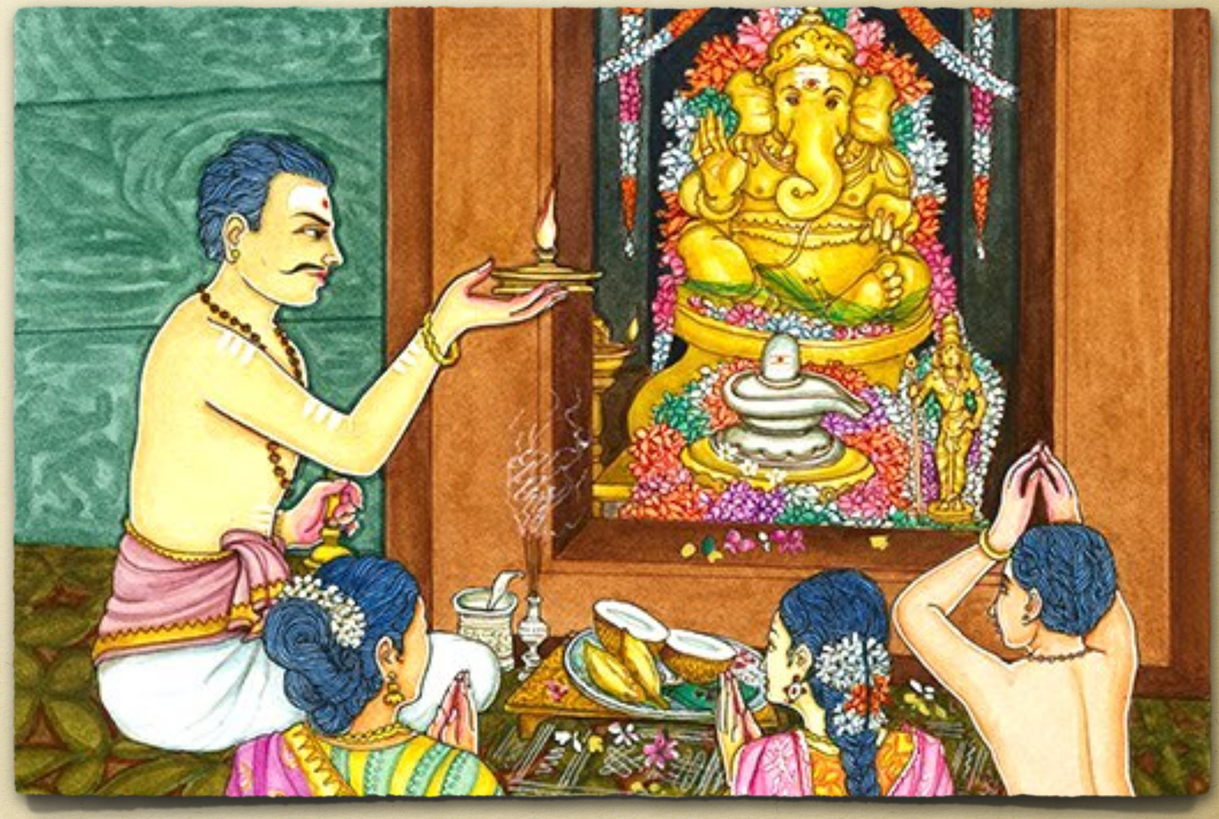
Bhakti is devotion love felt toward God, Gods and guru.

Bhakti Yoga

Bhakti yoga, the practice of expressing this love, is strong in most Hindu traditions

We express bhakti when we worship in our home shrine, attend the temple or travel on pilgrimage.”

The more we experience devotion, the more it grows within us.



Sacred songs and stories

This occurs when we sing sacred songs and chant bhajans.

Listening to stories of our great saints and satgurus inspires bhakti.



Bhakti is not just for beginners

In Saiva Siddhanta, bhakti yoga is never outgrown.

It is not just for beginners.

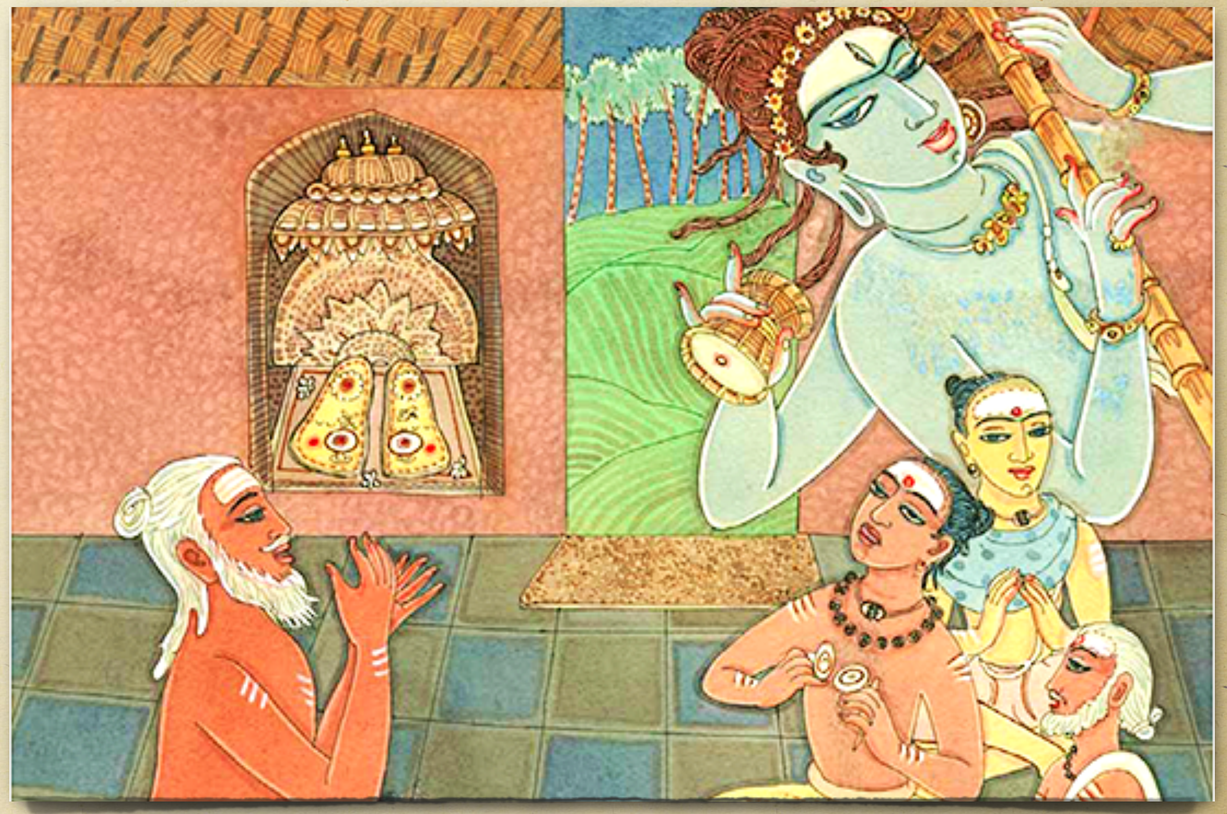
As Gurudeva said, “The yoga of pure devotion is found at the beginning, the middle and the end of the path.”



Opening ourselves to God’s Grace

By awakening this love and appreciation, we open ourselves to God’s grace.

We also express bhakti toward our guru as a way to experience his or her blessings and grace.



What is devotion?

Devotion is a calm, intelligent expression of love for the Deity.

It is not unlike the closeness felt between good friends.



How is the path in Saiva Siddhanta?

In Saiva Siddhanta, the path begins at the charya stage, with getting to know the Gods and developing a relationship with them through service, or karma yoga.



Kriya yoga

Then Bhakti is naturally experienced.

This is the kriya stage.

Our nature becomes soft, flexible and content.

Gurudeva explained, “The inner knowing that ‘All is Siva’s will’ is one of the first benefits of bhakti yoga.”



Stability and success…

A close, loving relationship with God and the Gods gives us a great stability in life and allows for success in meditation.

If problems, or negative karmas, arise, the devotee can place them at the feet of the Deity to be dissolved.

When karmas are clear, the devotee is able to internalize his devotion into deeper meditations in the yoga stage.



Gurudeva says…

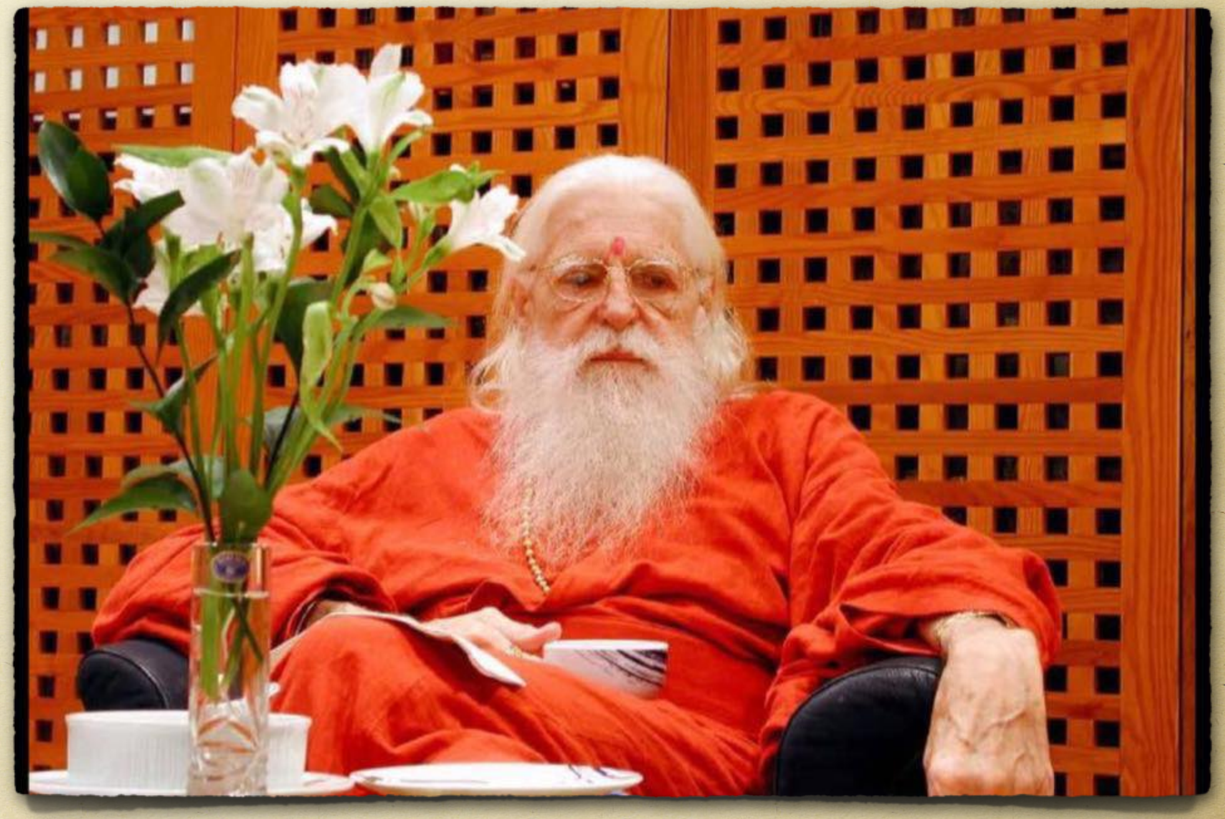
The greatest inhibiting factor in practicing bhakti yoga is the doubting, cynical, intellectual mind.

Doubt and skepticism harden the heart and narrow the mind.

When you have the energy of bhakti, of love, flowing through your body, meditation is easy.

You don't have to go through the preliminaries.

You are already functioning in the higher chakras..



QUESTIONS for Lesson 28

28.1 **We express bhakti yoga when we**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Worship in our home shrine
☐ B. Study the history of Hinduism
☐ C. Attend the temple
☐ D. Travel on pilgrimage

28.2 **In Saiva Siddhanta, bhakti yoga is only for beginners.**

☐ True
☐ False

28.3 **God's grace**
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. Cannot be experienced
☐ B. Is experienced by awakening love and appreciation through bhakti yoga

28.4 **When bhakti is naturally experienced our nature becomes**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Soft
☐ B. Flexible
☐ C. Discontent

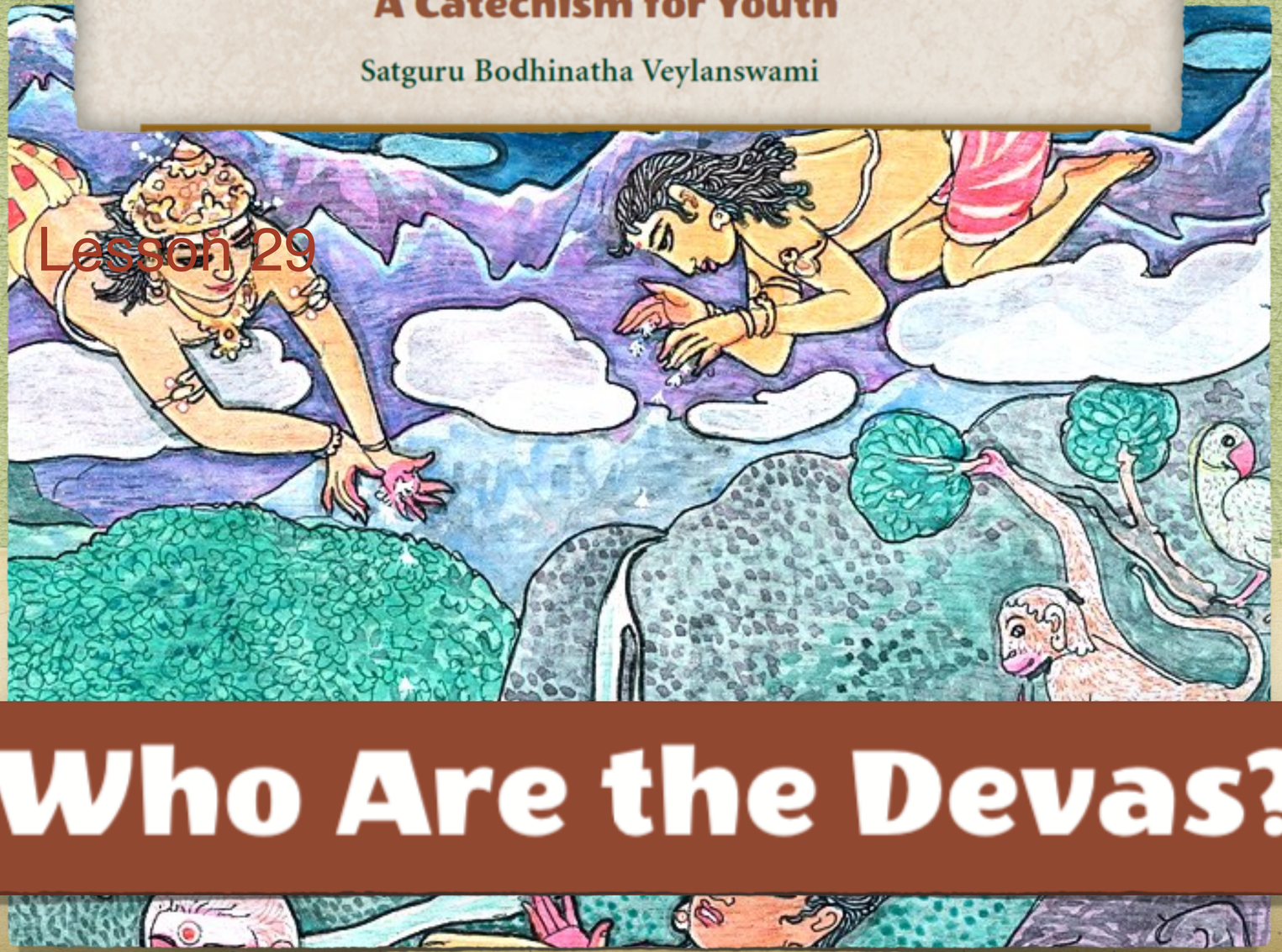
28.5 **A close, loving relationship with God and the Gods gives us a great stability in life and allows for success in meditation.**

☐ True
☐ False

Path to Siva

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Lesson 29

Who Are the Devas?

What is religion?



Gurudeva wrote:
“Religion is the bringing together of the three worlds.

Gurudeva explains…

This means that the ascended masters, angels, devas, Deities, saints, sages of each of the world's religions, living without physical bodies in the inner worlds, guide and govern, help and protect, shower forth blessings and inspiration to the members of their religious family."



You are part of a global family

As a Saivite, you are part of a large and wonderful global family with members in all three worlds.

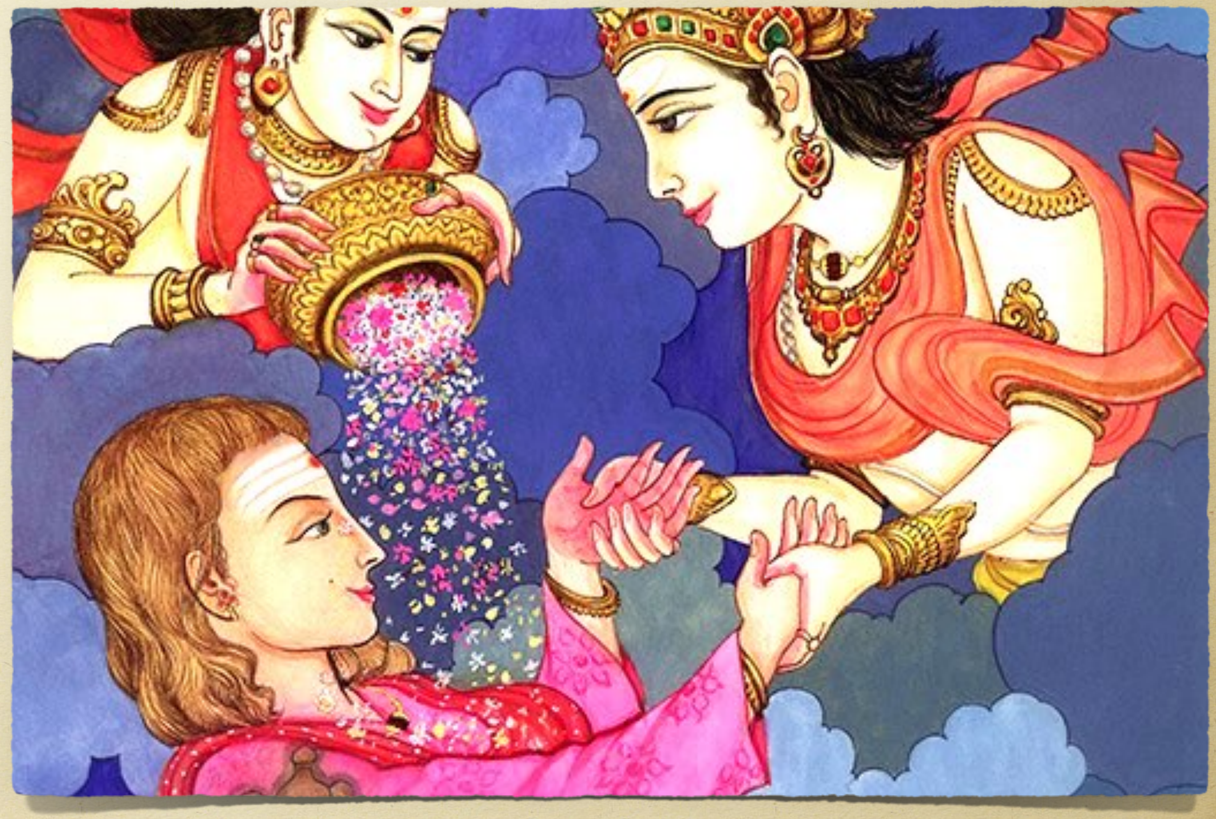
The devas are beings of light, souls living in the higher level of the Second World, Antarloka, who assist God and the Gods.



Duties of the devas

One of their duties is to help answer the prayers of devotees.

Another is to receive newcomers to the inner world—those who have died—helping them adjust to their new life without a physical body.



Who are guardian devas?

Each Hindu has special guardian devas.

They are assigned shortly after birth at the name-giving ceremony, or later in life when one enters the great tribe known as the Hindu religion.

Some devas are attached to individuals and families for many generations.

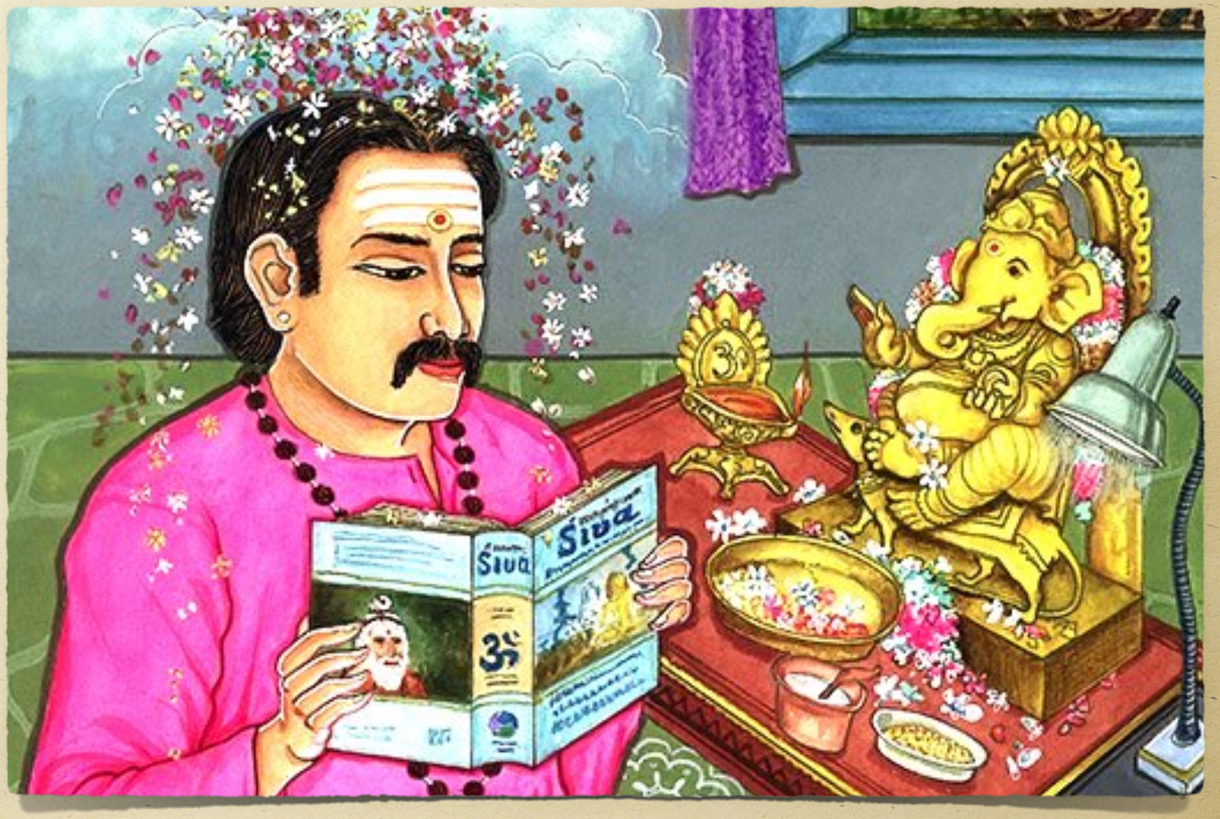


How do guardian devas help us?

Each family has numerous guardian devas who bless the home and keep the spiritual vibration strong.

Some are drawn from nearby temples, attracted by the pujas performed in the home shrine.

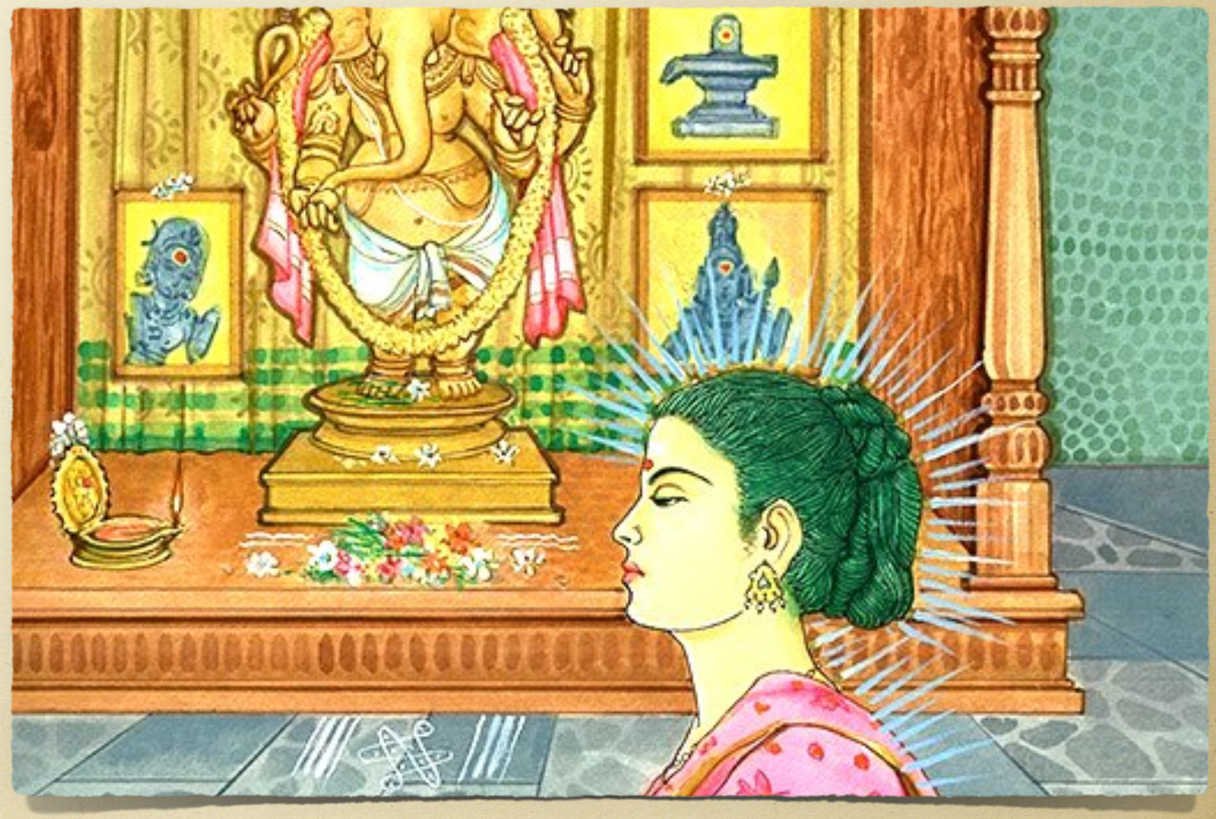
Still others are from far off temples who return with the family after the yearly pilgrimage, to help in many ways.



Guardian devas in our home.

If the family neglect their sadhana and pujas, however, the home loses its spiritual power and the devas begin to slowly drift away.

The devas guard us and the home silently and are seldom seen, though their presence in our lives is quite obvious in the form of good happenings and harmony.



Gurudeva says…

These guardian devas in the heaven world cannot be seen by you with your physical eyes, but they can be seen and are seen by those who know how to use the psychic vision of their third eye.

Nevertheless, you can feel their presence in your home.

They surround you, they help you and they communicate with the great Gods of our religion to guide you through life.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 29



29.1 **As a Saivite, you are part of a large and wonderful global family with members**
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. Only in the First World
☐ B. In all three worlds
☐ C. In the First and Second World

29.2 **The devas are**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Beings of light
☐ B. Souls living in the higher level of the Third World
☐ C. Beings who assist God and the Gods

29.3 **Guardian devas are assigned**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. To some but not all Hindus
☐ B. To all Hindus
☐ C. At the time of birth or later in life when one enters the Hindu religion

29.4 **Some devas are attached to individuals and families for many generations.**

☐ True
☐ False

29.5 **Devas in the home**

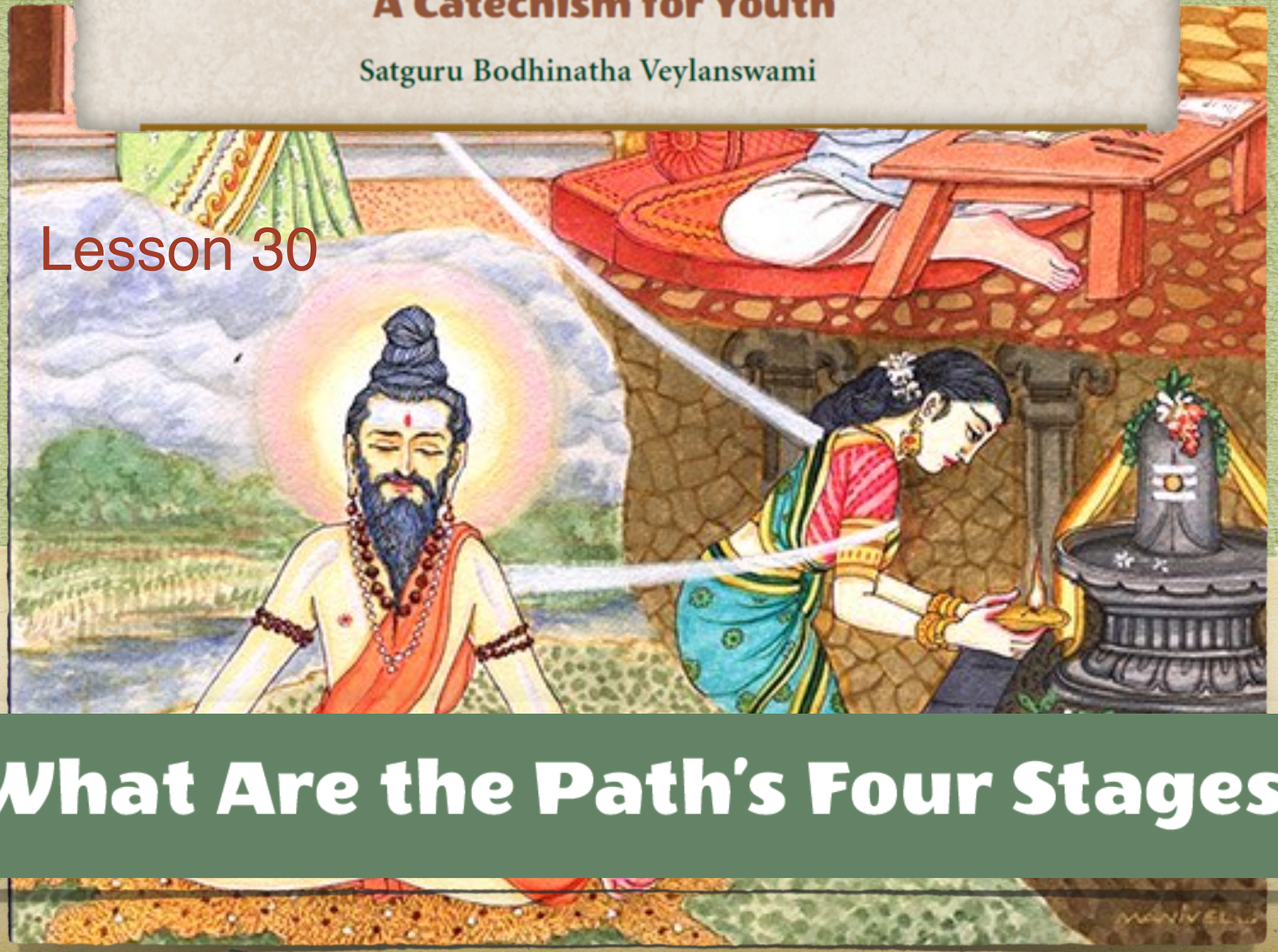
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. Will always remain there
☐ B. Will begin to slowly drift away if the family neglects their sadhana and pujas

Path to Siva

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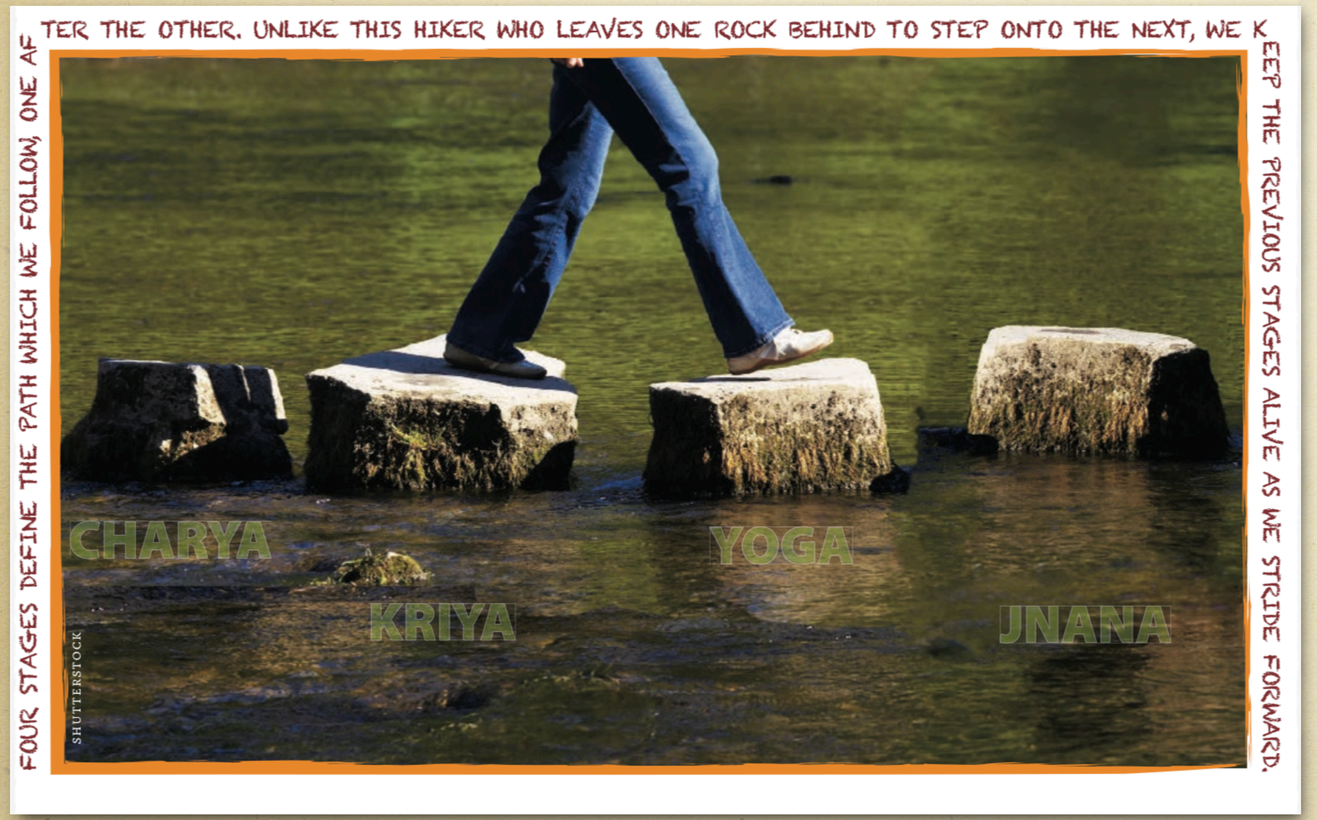
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Lesson 30

What Are the Path's Four Stages?

Four stages to “grow up”.



When created by Lord Siva, the soul is young and immature.

Its process of “growing up” over many lifetimes happens in four stages.

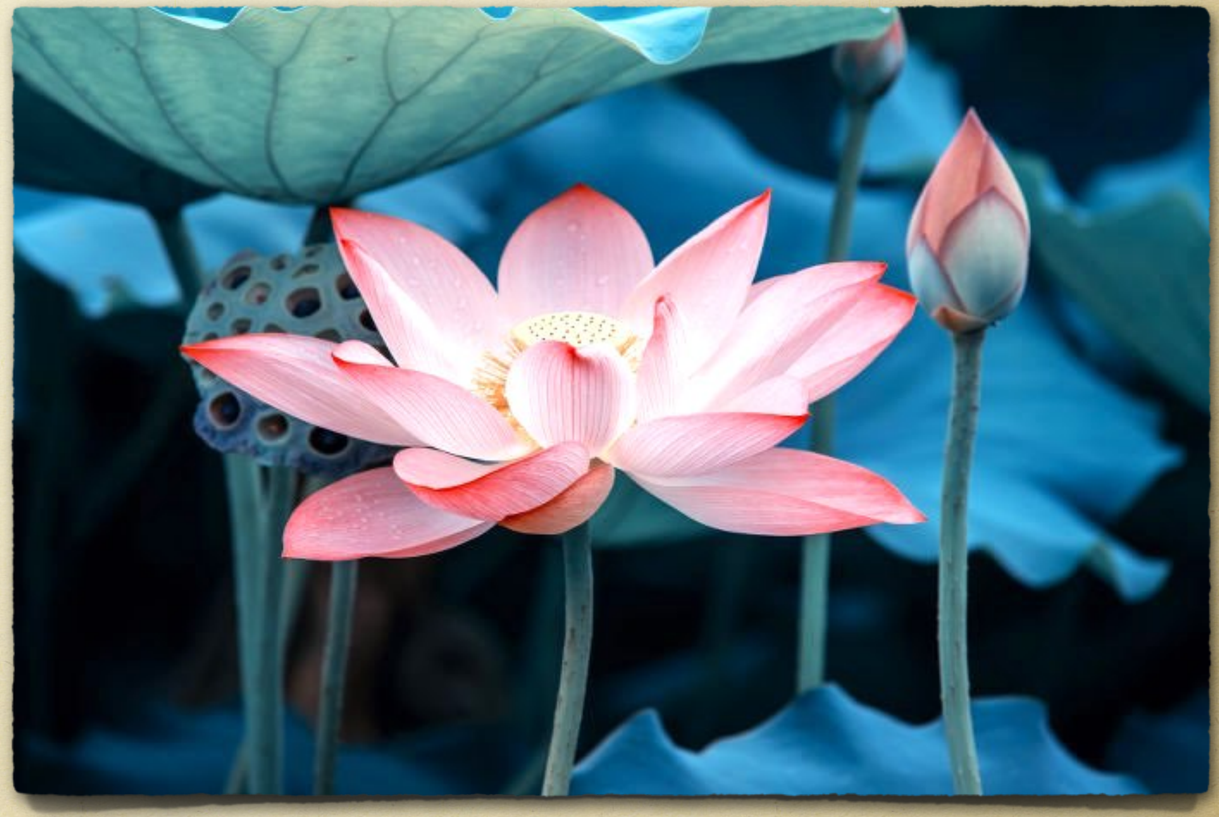
Like the lotus flower…

This is much like the development of a lotus flower.

First it sends its roots into the pond's mud, then it grows a stem and leaves that reach the water's surface.

Finally it blossoms in the full sun.

Yet each previous stage of growth is still there supporting the flower.

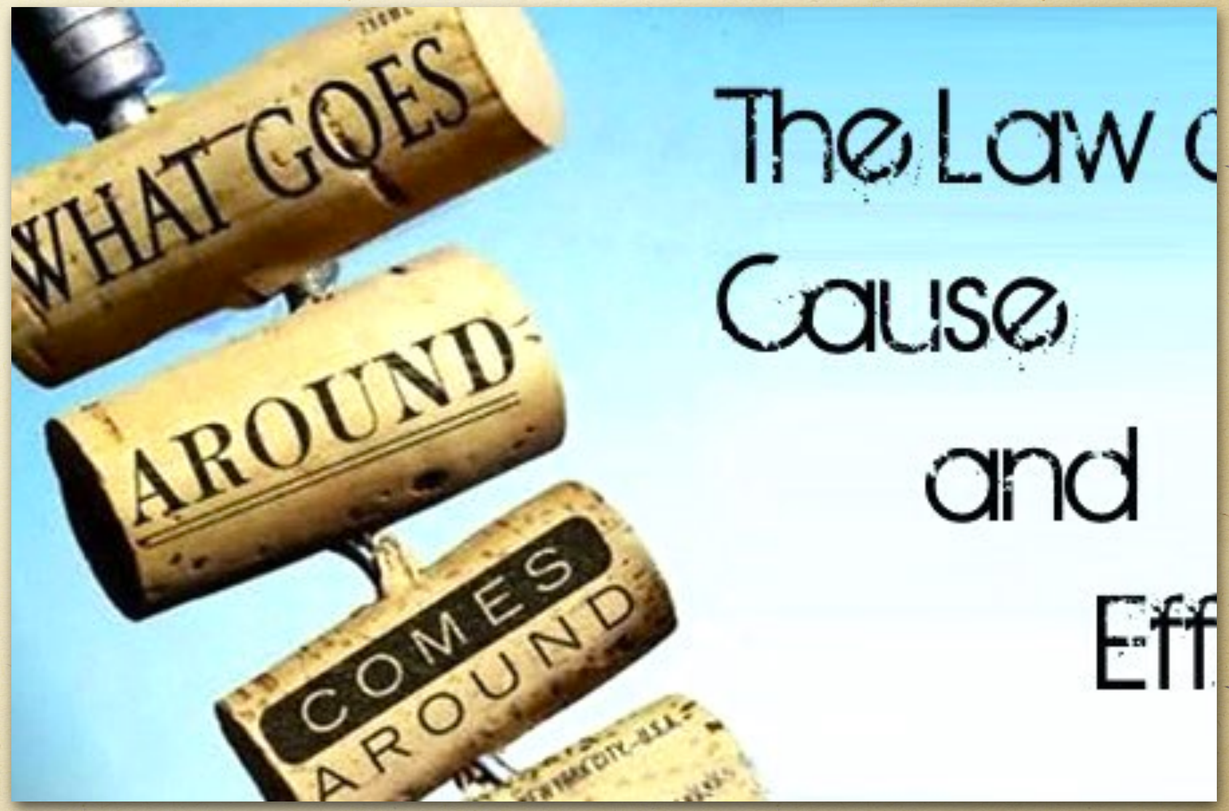


Growing under the divine rule of karma

Siva's grace guides this process so that we learn and grow toward the light through experience, under the divine law of karma.

As the soul progresses through each stage, it becomes less instinctive and more spiritual.

Siva is continually creating souls, so at any point in time, there are on the Earth young souls, adolescent souls, middle-aged souls and old souls.



The four *padas:* stages of maturation

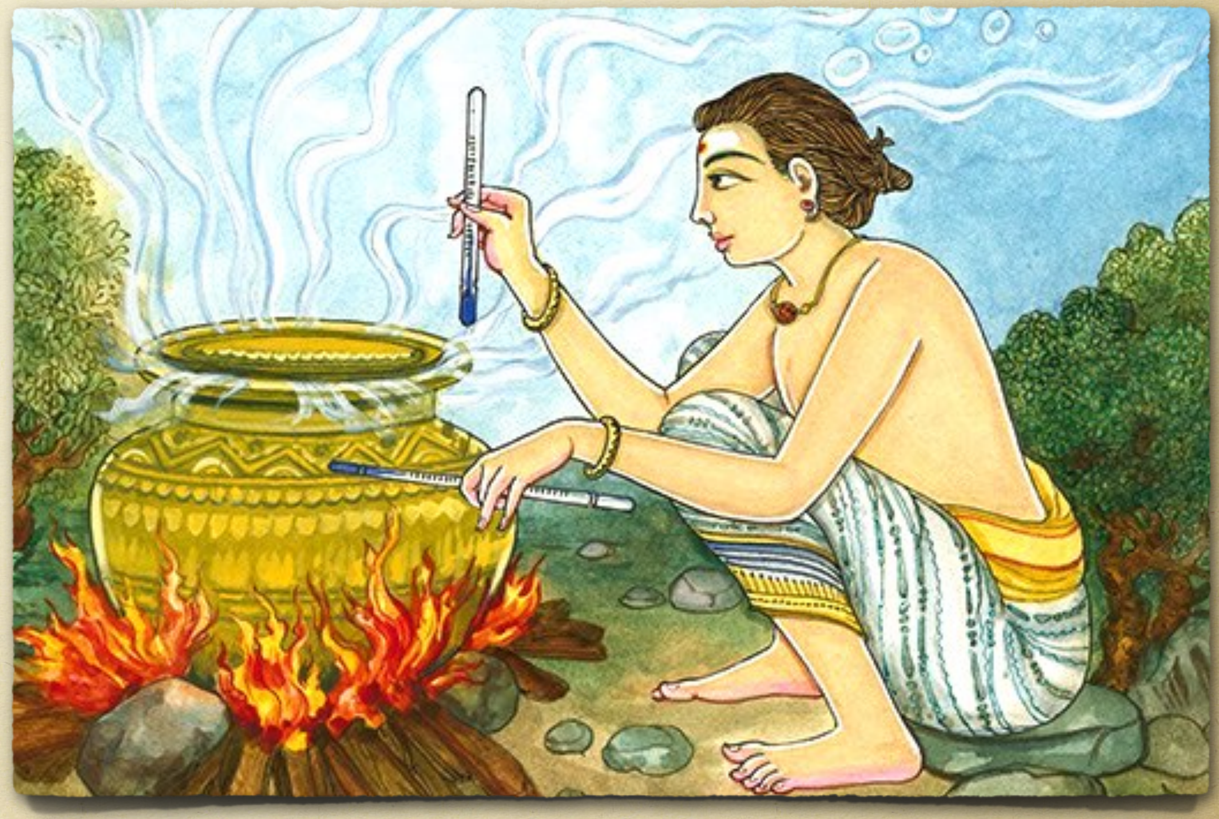
The four ***padas***, stages of maturation, are ***charya, kriya, yoga*** and ***jnana.***



First stage: Chariya

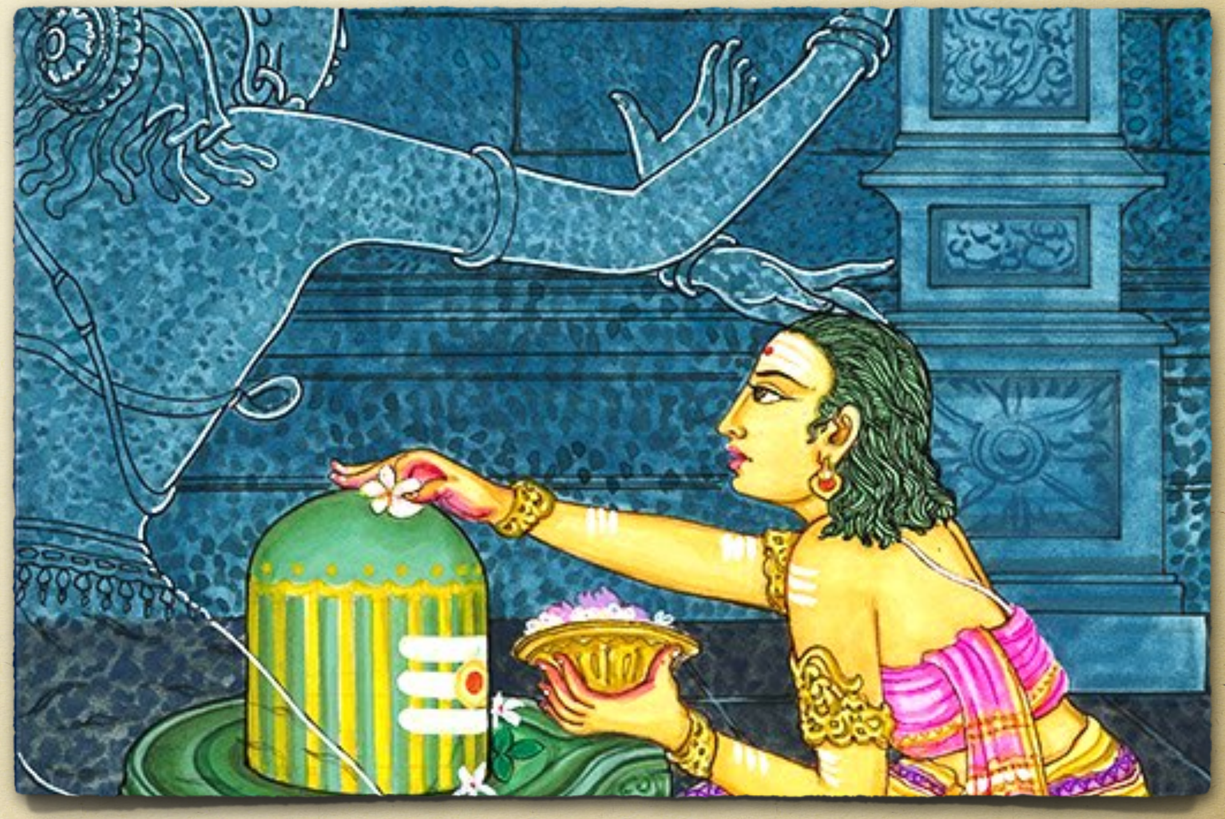
Charya **is good conduct and humble service, attending the temple and helping with temple chores.**

Here, the main work is harnessing the instincts and developing virtuous qualities.



Second stage: kriya

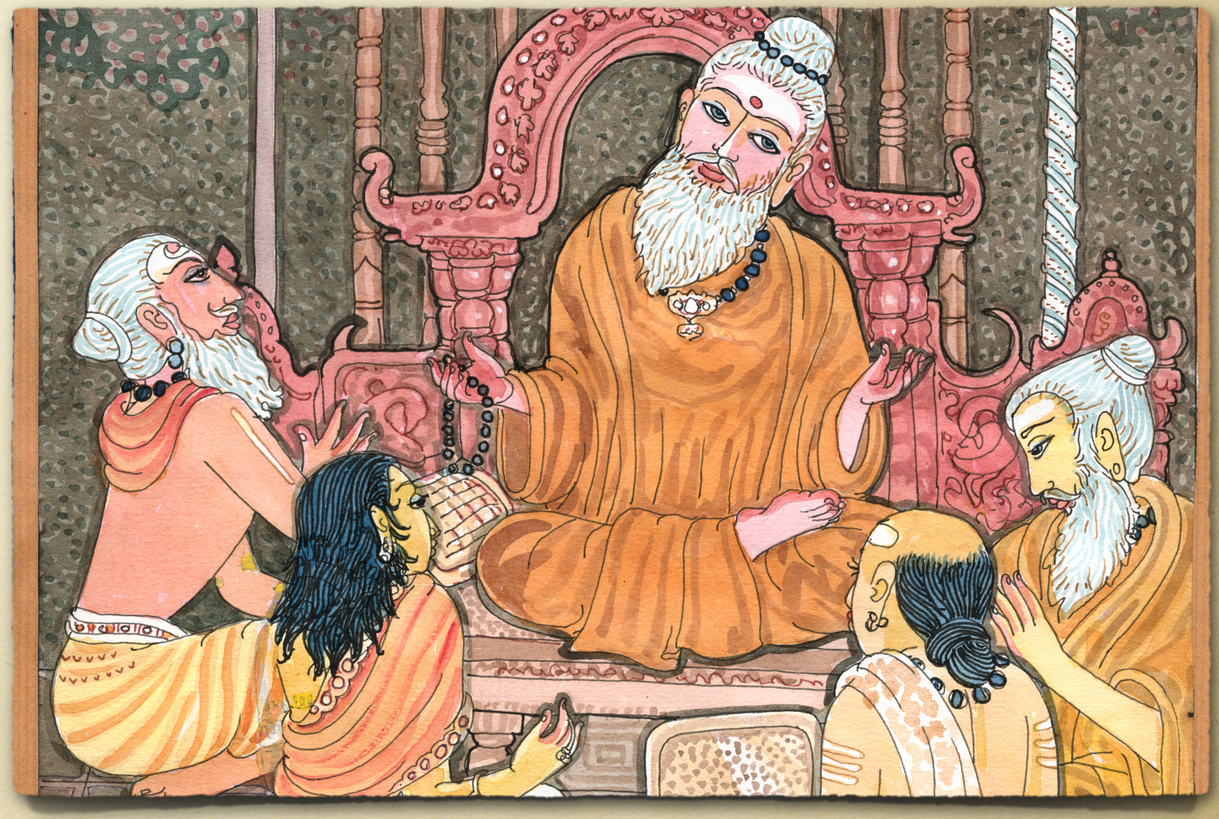
Kriya **is the stage of devotion, or love of God, expressed through home puja and temple worship.**



Third stage: Yoga

Yoga **is the period of meditation and inner striving under a guru's guidance.**

At this stage, the temple is a sacred space for contemplation as Siva's veiling power gives way to His revealing grace.



Fourth stage: Jnana

Jnana is the wisdom state, where the realized soul sees himself as one with the temple Deity.”



Padas: Not alternate but progressive steps

AsThe four padas are not alternate ways, but progressive steps on a one path called San Marga.

Next, Nor does the soul give up the practices of one pada when it enters the next.

Thus the mature soul in jnana is a paragon of wisdom, yoga, devotion and virtue.

The greatest yogis still love and worship Siva.

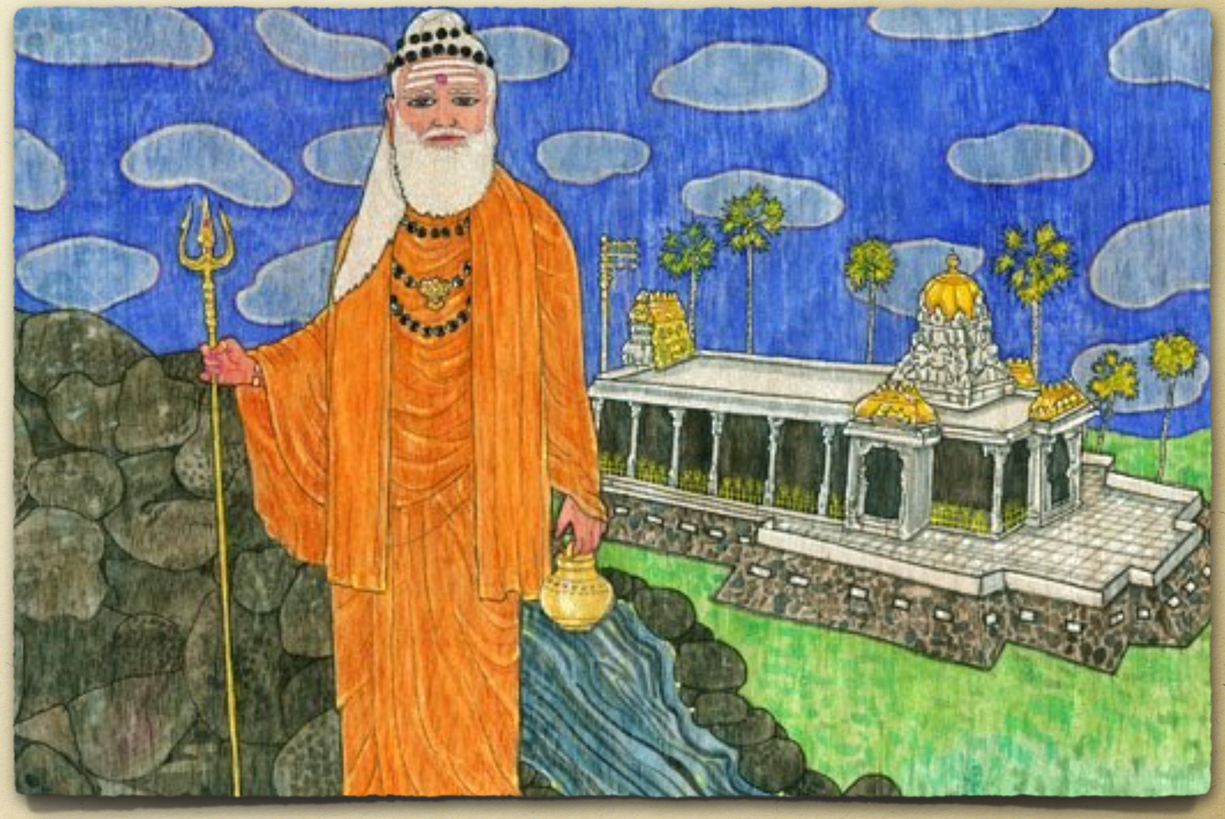


Gurudeva says…

Some people think, “When you get to the yoga stage, you don’t have to do the worship, you don’t have to do the service.

You just do the yoga.” In our Saiva Siddhanta philosophy, when you get to the yoga stage and the jnana stage, you still enjoy the worship, you still enjoy the service.

These are dear and intricate parts of your life.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 30

30.1 **Number from 1 - 3 in the correct order of the stages of growth of a lotus flower.**

___ It blossoms in the full sun
___ It sends it roots into the pond's mud
___ It grows a stem and leaves that reach reach the water's surface

30.2 **As the soul progresses through each stage, it becomes less spiritual and more instinctive.**

☐ True
☐ False

30.3 **Enter the letter from below of A - D for the pada name that matches the description.**

___ The period of meditation and inner striving under a guru's guidance
___ Good conduct and humble service, attending the temple and helping with temple chores
___ The wisdom state, where the realized soul sees himself as one with the temple Deity
___ Stage of devotion, expressed through home puja and temple worship

(A) Charya (B) Kriya (C) Yoga (D) Jnana

30.4 **The four padas are not alternate ways, but progressive steps on a one path called San Marga.**

☐ True
☐ False

30.5 **The soul gives up the practices of one pada when it enters the next.**

☐ True
☐ False