

# 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.

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# Siva's veiling grace

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

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

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This grace is in three parts.



# First Part Anava

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

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

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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.

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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.

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# *Pasha,* meaning “tether” or rope

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

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

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The cowherd is God Siva, called Pati.

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The cows represent souls, *pashu*

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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.

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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?

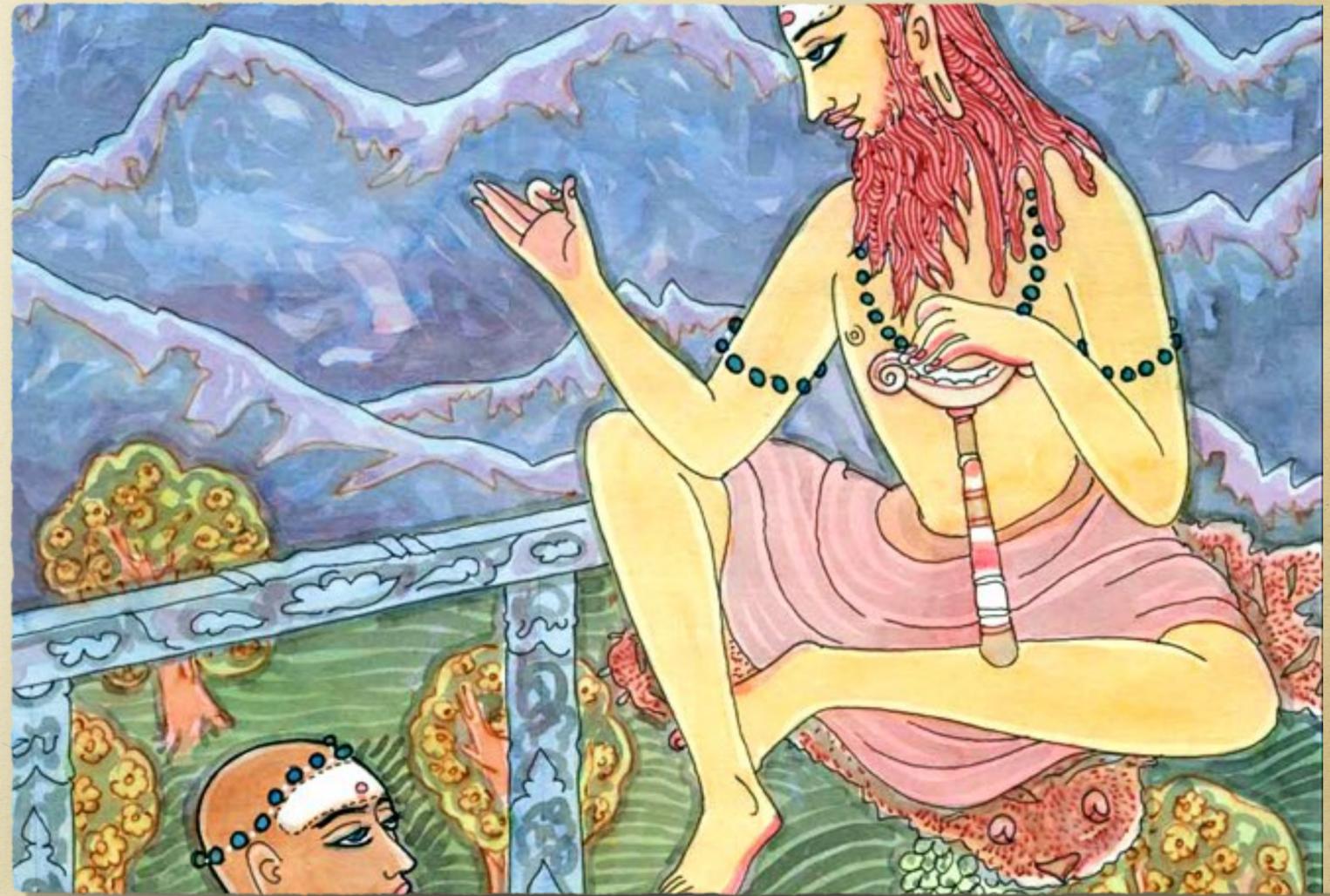
When the time is ripe, Siva grants His revealing grace, *anugraha shakti*.

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

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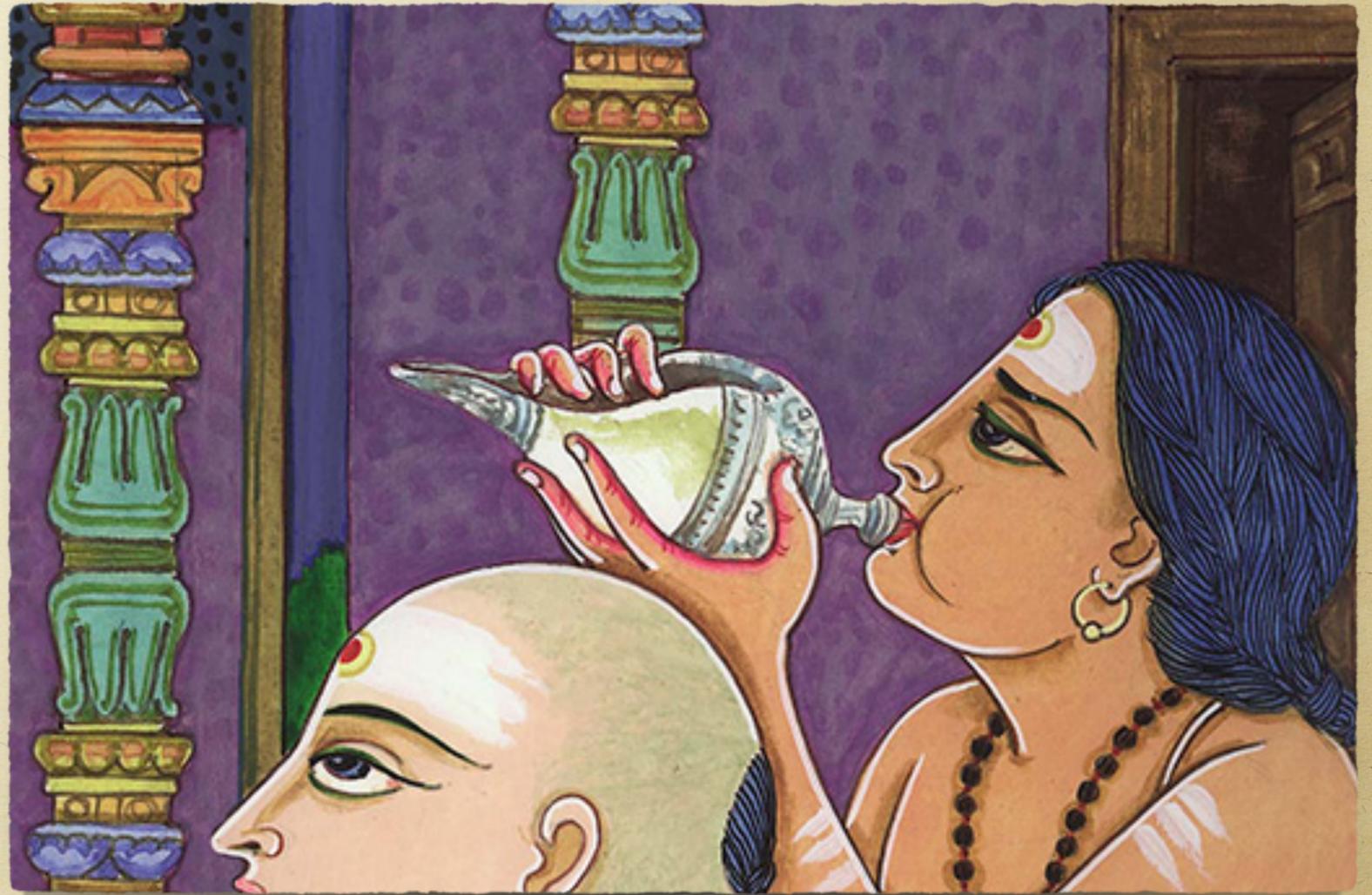
Finally, through his grace, the soul realizes its true identity with Siva.



# 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.”

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# 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.

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# 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