



Know thy Self

14 Enlightenment
Lessons for Discovering
The Divine within You

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami

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Designed by the swamis of the Saiva Siddhanta Yoga Order at
Kauai's Hindu Monastery, 107 Kaholalele Road, Kapaa, Hawaii, 96746.

Many are the ways that can lead one to seek enlightenment—a spontaneous moment of ecstatic expanded consciousness, a fear-evoking brush with death, a random meeting with an extraordinary soul or the sudden realization that there must be more to this existence than sex, money, food, clothes and power. It matters little how we stumble upon the inner, spiritual path. What does matter is how we proceed once we discover it, what tradition we embrace, what techniques we employ. This little book is designed to offer seekers a few keys about self-discovery from



man's oldest spiritual tradition, one that is unique in its devotional nondualism. It is a simple reflection, neither advanced nor arcane. *Know Thy Self* begins with a discourse that my *satguru*, Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, gave at our Hawaii ashram on the mystical, visionary oneness of God and man. This mes-

sage affirms that we can know the Divine in and around us, even in the midst of ordinary events. Then follow fourteen daily lessons that Gurudeva especially prepared for seekers on the path, discussing intriguing metaphysical aspects of self-inquiry, like affirmations, karma, *chakras* and releasing strained magnetic attachments in life and relationships. Each lesson ends with a challenge to help put these principles into practice. Finally, there is a chapter on the great *gurus* of our lineage who lived this path fully and stressed in their teachings the importance of knowing the inmost Self, the nondual Reality that exists as the silent core of every soul. In the East, this is called the Paramatman, or great Self. This is not the intellectual or emotional self. It is not the physical or personality self. This is the Divine Self deep within you. Knowing this Self is the true purpose of life on Earth. On the path to the Self, one thing is certain—change.



And the magic is that by changing your own consciousness and relationship with the world, you change the entire cosmos. The path requires you to first overcome fear, confusion, anger and selfishness. It then teaches you to live with detachment, with compassion for all other beings and with wisdom based on knowledge that all is right in the universe. Finally, the spiritual quest takes you from darkness to light, from death to immortality. Knowing who you are and what you should do, you naturally live poised in the eternal now, intuitively open, free of illusion and happy in heart. ¶ These fourteen lessons are a summary of life's path, from the beginning to the end. Read them each morning at breakfast. It will be fun for the whole family and give them a great start for the day. Each time they hear a lesson, it will be new and fresh to their mind because deeper insights will come. Take a lot of time with the inspired talk, "See God Everywhere," on a special day under a special tree, or in your favorite chair or secret place. Listen to this ancient wisdom as being a message to you and you alone and absorb it into yourself as a one totality. ¶ To know thy Self is the greatest knowing of all knowings. To know thy Self is the greatest security of all securities. To know thy Self is the greatest wealth of all wealths. To know thy Self is the greatest path of all paths. Proceed with confidence; you are on the right path. Awake! Arise! Go forward! The path has been cleared long ago by the *Vedas*. Its end is in sight. There is much to be learned along the way, but don't tarry. Keep pushing onward, upward and inward. ¶ This fourth edition of *Know Thy Self* is released to benefit a new generation of seekers. The truths it contains are indeed timeless—truths taught by Gurudeva, by me and by all the *swamis* of our order, now and into the future. Aum.



*Satguru Bodhinatha
Veylanswami*





See God Everywhere

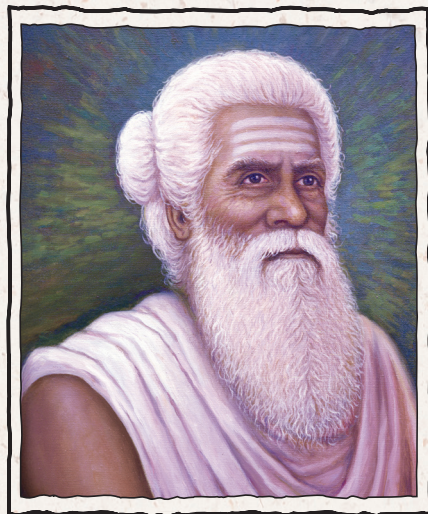
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**The following inspired talk was given by Satguru
Sivaya Subramuniyaswami at his Kauai Aadheenam
in the Hawaiian Islands. In it he urges seekers to see
God everywhere and in everyone, to worship God
outside and meditate upon God within.**

My *satguru*, Siva Yogaswami, was a great *siddha*, a master and a knower of God. He would say, "Liberation is within you." He would order his seekers to "See God in everything. You are in God. God is within you. To realize the Supreme Being within you, you must have a strong body and a pure mind." He was a powerful mystic from Sri Lanka, near India—perhaps the greatest to live in the twentieth century. His words drove deeply into the hearts of all who heard them. "God is in everyone. See Him there. God is overwhelmingly present everywhere. Regard everything as a manifestation of God, and you will realize the Truth," were his words. Simple words for a simple truth, but very, very difficult to practice.

As we go on through life, we see only parts of life. We don't see the whole. We can't see the whole. Yogaswami said, "How can a part see the whole?" So, we live with a small part, our small part. We seek to avoid the painful areas and attract to us the joyous ones. Most people live in this duality life after life, bound in the forces of desire and the fulfillment of it. Occasionally a more mature soul breaks away from this cycle of desire-fulfillment-pleasure-loss-pain-suffering-and-joy and asks questions such as: "Who is God? Where is God? How can I come to know God?"

God has no names, but all names are the names of God. Whether you call him this or that, He remains who He is. But in our tradition we call God by the loving name Siva, which is only one of His 1,008 traditional names. Supreme God Siva is both within us and outside of us. Even desire, the fulfillment of desire, the joy, the



Siva Yogaswami of Jaffna



pain, the sorrow, birth and death—this is all Siva, nothing but Siva. This is hard to believe for the unenlightened individual who cannot see how a good, kind and loving God could create pain and sorrow. Actually, we find that Siva did not—not in the sense that is commonly thought. God gave the law of karma, decreeing that each energy sent into motion returns with equal force.

In looking closely at this natural law, we can see that we create our own joy, our own pain, our own sorrow and our own release from sorrow. Yet we could not even do this except for the power and existence of our loving Lord. It takes much meditation to find God Siva in all things, through all things. In this striving—as in perfecting any art or science—regular daily disciplines must be faithfully adhered to.

Siva is the immanent personal Lord, and He is transcendent Reality. Siva is a God of love, boundless love. He loves each and every one. Each soul is created by Him and guided by Him through life. God Siva is everywhere. There is no place where Siva is not. He is in you. He is in this temple. He is in the trees. He is in the sky, in the clouds, in the planets. He is the galaxies swirling in space and the space between galaxies, too. He is the universe. His cosmic dance of creation, preservation and dissolution is happening this very moment in every atom of the universe. God Siva is, and is in all things. He permeates all things. He is immanent, with a beautiful form, a human-like form which can actually be seen and has been seen by many people in visions. He is also transcendent, beyond time, cause and space.

That is almost too much for the mind to comprehend, isn't it? Therefore, we have to meditate on these things. God Siva is so close to us. Where does He live? In the Third World. And in this form He can talk and think and love and receive our prayers and guide our karma. He commands vast numbers of *devas* who go forth to do His will all over the world, all over the galaxy, throughout the universe. These are matters told to us by the rishis; and we have discovered them in our own meditations. So always worship this great God. Never fear Him. He is the Self of your self. He is closer than your own breath. His nature is love, and if you worship Him with



devotion you will know love and be loving toward others. Devotees of God Siva love everyone.

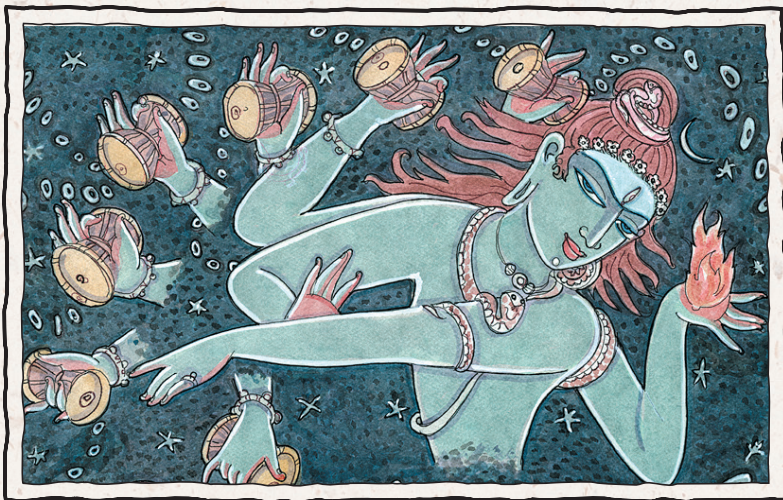
This is how God Siva can be seen everywhere and in everyone. He is there as the Soul of each soul. You can open your inner eye and see Him in others, see Him in the world as the world. Little by little, discipline yourself to meditate at the same time each day. Meditate, discover the silent center of yourself, then go deep within, to the core of your real Being. Slowly the purity comes. Slowly the awakening comes.

Does this seem too difficult? Can you just contemplate what it would take to seek the all-pervasive Siva from hour to hour, throughout the day? One would have to be detached from all worldly responsibilities to a great extent in order to begin to bring this natural internal process through and into the external mind. The external mind is built up by an intellect formed from other people's knowledge and opinions. This borrowed knowledge shrouds the soul, and the natural, childlike intelligence often does not filter through. Therefore, a period of detachment and regular spiritual retreat or separation from the external world is necessary.

On a pilgrimage we strive to see God around us, to intuit Him in the events that happen. During worship in the temple we strive to feel Him, to experience Him more profoundly than during our normal activities. Eventually, as our spiritual efforts progress, we bring that same attention, that same one-pointedness, right into the everyday experiences that life presents to us, whether seemingly good or bad, whether causing pleasure or pain. This is the experience of the mature soul who performs regular *sadhana* after taking certain vows strong enough to cause a detachment of the intellect from seeing the external world as the absolute reality. All seekers hope for an occasional glimpse of Siva during their yearly pilgrimage at some venerable temple. If they develop that little glimpse, it will grow.

Many have asked me whether everyone should worship Siva both inside and out. Yes, that is the ideal according to our Saiva Siddhanta philosophy, but which of these two comes more naturally depends





on the nature of the disciple. The more introverted will meditate on Siva within through their *yogas*, and the more extroverted will be inclined to worship in a temple or through music or religious service. The most awakened of seekers will do both with equal joy and ease.

God Siva is within each and every soul. He is there as the unmanifest Reality, which we call Parasiva. He is there as the pure light and consciousness that pervades every atom of the universe, which we call Satchidananda. We also know that He is Creator of all that exists and that He is His creation. All this we know. Yes, all this we know. Thus, we intellectually know that Siva is within and without. This is yet to be experienced by the majority of people.

The nature of the worshiper develops through *sadhana* and *tapas*, performed either in this life or in previous lives. We must worship Siva externally until compelled—as were the great rishis of yore—to sit down, to settle down, to turn within ourself, to stop talking, to stop thinking and thus to internalize our great energy of *bhakti*, devotion. This is how we evolve, how we progress along the path toward Siva, diving deeper and deeper within. Everyone must worship Siva externally prior to internalizing that worship fully and perfectly. We cannot internalize the worship that has not first been mastered externally.



When problems come in the family or workplace and emotions arise, it is only natural to forget Siva. It's so much easier to be involved in twoness rather than oneness. It takes a lot of inner strength to remember Siva all of the time, to keep the love for Siva flowing. We forget. We get involved in ourselves and others. It is impossible



when our ego is attacked or our feelings hurt. So it's easier, much easier, to forget Siva and even regard Him as a God to be feared; whereas it is our own instinctive mind and our preprogrammed, nonreligious intellect that should be feared. That's the demon in our house, the mischief-maker who causes all the trouble. If you want to remember God, then first learn to forget yourself a little.

A family provides toys for the children to make them happy. Siva provides karma and dharma to all of us to make us happy, to bring us closer to Him. He created an

expanding and contracting universe and eventually absorbs all in the great dissolution of the cosmos. He gave birth to all souls, our rishi-saints tell us; and we are evolving back into His image and likeness, they further explain. The toys of experience help us in our evolution, keeping us entertained so that we can learn and grow and experience our karma, dharma and other basic cosmic laws. Just as the children can laugh joyously as they play with their toys, or break them and cry or throw them at one another, hitting and hurting each other, we too can avoid duty and dharma, make karma, hurt ourselves and others, or help ourselves and others as we play with our own evolution, strengthening ourselves, learning and growing wise.

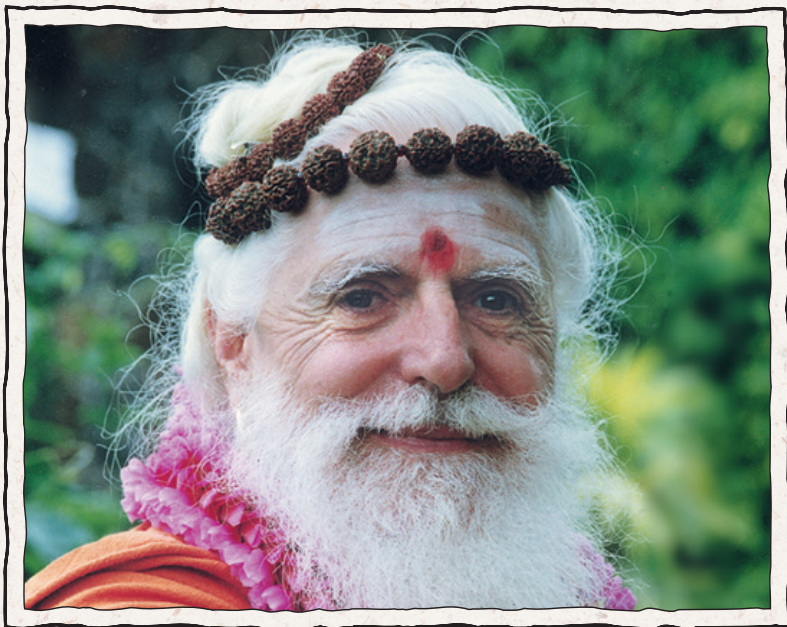


It is natural to forget about God, but there are many helpful ways that we can avoid distraction, that we can remember to keep seeing God Siva everywhere. One of the practical ways to bring God Siva into the midst of all this is to keep repeating His name. Do *japa* when you find yourself forgetting, when you just can't see God at all, let alone everywhere. Repeat "Aum Namah Sivaya." When life becomes difficult or strained, say to yourself "Siva Siva" or "Aum Sivaya" or "Namah Sivaya." Mentally put it all at His feet. See Him in everyone that you meet or confront, regardless of the circumstances. He is there as their life force, but you just need to quiet the mind to see. Smile when you feel unhappy with someone and say to yourself, "How nice to see you, Siva, in this form." Animals, beggars, princes, politicians, friends and enemies, holy men, saints and sages are all Siva to the soul that loves God. He smiles and thinks to himself, "How nice to see you, Siva, in this, another of your many forms."

Nobody can think of Siva in His formlessness. This, above all, has to be realized, and then the realizer has to realize that he has realized the Formless. The truth is that precious few will realize Parasiva, though many can and will realize Satchidananda, even in their later years or at the moment of death.

The fullness of lives of experience experienced, the performance of prior goals perfected, would lead a soul to the burning desire to accomplish the ultimate goal. For each person on the planet, the immediate pattern is clear. Once it is fulfilled, the next step appears naturally. It is the same force of desire that accomplishes all of this. The desire of a mother to take care of her children and to be a good wife, the desire of the father to support his family, the desire of a scientist to discover, the desire of an athlete to excel, the desire of the *yogi* to merge in oneness with Siva—it is the same force of desire, transmuted through the *chakras* as they awaken, as the soul evolves. It is that same desire that finally draws the seeker to know That which is timeless and formless, That which is spaceless and causeless. Be patient. It comes in the course of time to all. It comes. It will come. Be patient.





Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami

In the earlier stages, before *sadhana* is undertaken, the mind is agitated by current karmas and perhaps discouraged by its inability to know or to fulfill dharma. In this agitated state the world looks bleak and terrible, and it would be inconceivable to him for God to be any place but in the temple. "Certainly God could not reside within myself," the unenlightened concludes.

In the second stage, when the mind rests peacefully in the fulfillment of a life's pattern, dharma, when it has sufficient maturity to control and to dispatch past and current karmas through meditation, prayer and penance, then indeed God is seen as a helping hand within, but most potently felt within His temple.

In the third stage the helping hand within becomes more than an aid to the troubled mind; it becomes pure consciousness itself. Rather than seeking God outside, God is enjoyed as a vital, integral dimension of the person, the Life of life, the power and radiant energy of the universe. The calm within is greater than the outside



disturbance. In this stage of bliss-consciousness, it is clearly seen and exuberantly experienced that God is indeed within us. The experiencer's perceptions become acute, and in his daily life he becomes a witness, observing that others do not see God within themselves. He has a secret that he has discovered. God within becomes soul-realized as Truth-Knowledge-Bliss, Satchidananda, the pervasive energy that glues all things together. Mind becomes serene, peace is seen to be everywhere, and the bliss so strong. A deeper inner eye opens in this stage, and it is truly perceived that this same presence of Siva is in each and every living being, permeates every atom of the universe as the great, sustaining substratum of all that exists. Only when this is experienced can one truly say that God is within man and man is within God.

To know philosophy without experience is like going on a vacation to a distant and wonderful place by simply reading a book about the destination, hearing what others claim is to be enjoyed there. It is not true experience at all. The only spiritual experience is personal experience. My *satguru*, Siva Yogaswami, made it clear that "You will not attain *jnana*, wisdom, even if you read a thousand scriptures. You must know your Self by yourself."

How can we with our finite mind come to understand Infinity, come to understand God? How can we intellectually encompass something as great as God? Our scriptures tell us that God Himself is Sankara, the author of all knowledge, creator of the intellect. He is the great architect of the universe. Then if God created the intellect, how can the intellect understand Him? Well, it is possible. It has been done. The intellect has to expand, and awareness has to transcend the rational mind and see directly from superconscious knowing. That is why we worship Siva in His highest form, symbolized by the Sivalinga, the simple elliptical stone.

It is good that you are trying to see Siva everywhere. Keep trying. It will come. Who else can give your Self to you? The unfoldment of the Self within you is but Siva. He can give you wealth. He can give you health. He can bestow everything that you would ever need or



even desire. But to worship Him as formless, as we are doing tonight, carries the mind into infinity. Mind can only encompass what it identifies with. Mind cannot identify Truth in this subtle form



which represents Siva as beyond the mind—formless, timeless and spaceless. Yet, within you this very instant, only shrouded by your ignorance, only shrouded by the ego, which is the sense of personal identity and separation, is Siva. He is there right now, not at some fictitious future time. Just get rid of the *maya*, the *anava* and resolve the karma, and there He will be. The ego is the last thing to go. It is the last bond to break.

Once the bondage of personal ego is broken, it is seen that this mysterious God is all-pervading. He is what He has created. Think about that. It is very deep. Siva pervades His creation con-

stantly as ever-present Love and Light of the mind of everyone, as Intelligence and Being; and yet God also has a form.

In the subtle worlds, Siva has the most beautiful form, not unlike a human form, but an absolutely perfect human form. He thinks. He talks. He walks. He makes decisions. We are fortunate to worship such a great God who pervades everything and yet transcends it, who is both form and beyond form, who is the Self within your very self at this very moment. So, all of you seekers of nondual Truth, you have a truly great path that offers God experience in form and beyond form. How fortunate you are!

Seekers more than often ask, "Why has Siva given us karma to go through? Could He just have made us perfect from the beginning and avoided all the pain?" My answer is: accept your karma as your own, as a healing medicine and not a poison. As you go through



your self-created experiences in daily life and seed karmas awaken, as your actions come back through your emotions, even in this life, not in a future one, resolve each and every experience so that you do not react and create new cycles to be lived through. Whether it is happy karma, sad karma, miserable karma or ecstatic karma, it is your karma. But it is not you, not the real you. It is the experience that you go through in order to evolve, in order to grow and to learn and to attain, eventually, wisdom. This is all Siva's mysterious work, His way of bringing along devotees, His way to bring you close and closer to Himself.

The great Vedic rishis have explained that Siva has created the body of the soul, permeated that body with His being, His essence. All souls are evolving back to His holy feet, and there are many lessons to be learned along the way. The lessons learned in the karma classroom are part of the process of evolution, the mechanism of evolution, the tool of evolution. Why did He do all of this? The rishis give no reason. They call it His dance. That is why we worship God Siva as Nataraja, the King of Dance. Why does one dance? Because one is full of joy. One is full of life. Siva is all life, God of life, God of death that brings new life, God of birth that brings through life. He is all life and He is everything. He danced with the rishis. He is dancing for you. You are dancing with Siva. Every single atom in this room is dancing His dance. He is every part of you this very moment. By seeing Him, you see yourself. By drawing near to Him, you are drawing nearer to yourself. Our great *satguru*, Siva Yogaswami, said, "There is one thing only that God Siva cannot do. He cannot separate Himself from me."

Siva is the God of love and nothing else but love. He fills this universe with love. He fills you with love. Siva is fire. Siva is earth. Siva is air. Siva is water. Siva is ether. Siva's cosmic energy permeates everything and gives light and life to your mind. Siva is everywhere and all things. See God Siva everywhere and His life energy in all things. First we dance with Siva. Then we live with Siva. The end of the path is to merge with Siva, the Self God within. Aum Namah Sivaya!





14 Daily Enlightenment Lessons

14 தினசரி ஞானோதய பாடங்கள்

Here now are two weeks of daily study
exploring life's fundamental questions:
"Who am I? Where did I come from? Where
am I going?" Each lesson has a simple discipline
to help you put its principles into practice.

The River of Life

Seeker: *Is there a simple key to understanding life, especially at difficult times?* **Gurudeva:** Yes. Meditate on a river. Follow it as a visual image from its source to the end where it merges into the sea. Realize that you have a river of pure life force flowing through you at this moment. Hold that realization permanently within you. You can now clearly see where you have been clinging to the bank of life's river. Openly observe just how long you have been clinging to various negative attachments by holding awareness in the area of fears, worries, doubts of the future and regrets about the past. To perceive our attachments is the first step we take toward being a detached and independent spiritual being. Through the power of affectionate detachment, we separate awareness from that which

**Let happiness
and sorrow come
and go like the
clouds.**

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

it is aware of. We lovingly let go of negative attachments. But being detached does not mean running away from life or being insensitive. When we have the ability to let go, we can at last live in the eternity of the moment. We are warmer, more friendly, more wholesome, more human. **Seeker:** *Why do we become attached?* **Gurudeva:** We become attached because we do not stop to understand that the experiences that conceived the attachment were only a rapid, a waterfall or an old tree trunk blocking one of the little rivulets as it tried to merge with the great stream ever merging into the ocean. Learn to let go of the banks of the river. Let go the past. Let go the future. Let go reaction. Live in the eternity of the moment and say to yourself, "I am the master of my body, my mind and my emotions." **Today's Challenge:** Go to a river or a stream, sit beside it in a quiet place alone and see the water as your own life force. Watch how it flows past all obstacles, accepting every change it meets, as it moves steadily toward its goal. Aum.

The Power of Affirmation

LESSON

2

TUESDAY

Seeker: *What can I do when old attitudes fight my spiritual convictions?*

Gurudeva: When we start on the spiritual path, the past, held in our subconscious mind, is there as a friend or an enemy to our quest. For years we have repeated statements and attached meaning to them in our thoughts and words. This has programmed our subconscious and helped form our life as we know it, for the subconscious brings into manifestation the impressions we put into it. To succeed on the path, we must change the subconscious and remold its magnetic force with new ideas and new concepts. This can be done through the power of affirmation. An affirmation is a positive statement repeated to oneself to create a specific effect in the mind.

Seeker: *How does one choose the right affirmation?*

Gurudeva: First we must realize what we do not want. Then we must take steps to change it. For example, if you feel “I can’t,” you cannot. But you can reverse this pattern and change the flow of magnetic mental force by saying orally and feeling through all the atoms of your body

Whatsoever you think, that you become. That is the great secret.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

“I can. I will. I am able to accomplish what I plan.” Repeat that statement fifty or a hundred times a day. Your subconscious may counter with feelings of “I can’t. I won’t. I am not able.” But you must not give up saying “I can. I will. I am able” until you find the subconscious actually creating situations in which you can and are able to be successful, happy and acquire what you need, be it temporal goods or unfoldment on the inner path. **Today’s Challenge:** Repeat the affirmation “I’m all right, right now” each time you find yourself worrying about the past or the future. Gently but firmly bring your awareness back to the present and reaffirm the fact that you really are all right, right now. Learn to live in the now. Aum.

Five Steps to Enlightenment

Seeker: *Are there definite steps on the inner path?* **Gurudeva:** Yes, there are five steps on the path of enlightenment. These steps are really regions of consciousness, each more refined than the last. As awareness becomes refined and detached, as it comes under the conscious control of the spiritual will, we are able to penetrate each layer in succession until the final goal is reached. **Seeker:** *What are the five steps?* **Gurudeva:** Attention is the first step. It is the ability to hold awareness steady, centralized in the area that we choose. From this point we evolve naturally into the next step, concentration. The hummingbird poised over the flower begins to concentrate on it, to study it, to muse over it. Through the abilities of concentration, meditation slowly becomes available. In meditation

**First step,
second step,
third step—and
so on, till you
come to the top.**

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

you are seeing the flower as it actually is. New knowledge is flooding through you from the inside, and you are joyously alert and content. From sustained meditation, we enter contemplation. We plunge deeper, deeper, deeper within, beyond the external form into the energy and the life within the cells of the flower. We are absorbed in that energy. We become that energy that pervades every atom of existence. Ultimately, contemplation leads to Self Realization, to the very deepest samadhi, wherein you, in a sense, go within one atom of that pure energy and into the Primal Source of all. There is nothing you can say about it, because there are no areas of the mind in which the Self God exists, and yet, but for the Self the mind would not exist. It is unspeakable Truth, known only by the knower. **Today's Challenge:** Find a quiet place. Put a flower in front of you and concentrate on it. Try to think ten consecutive thoughts about the flower without interruption. Keep trying. Keep trying. Aum.

Willpower

LESSON

4

Seeker: *I have been meditating for years, but with little success.*

Why? Gurudeva: Unfoldment doesn't take a lot of time. It just takes a lot of willpower. Someone with minimal willpower may sit at attention and concentrate and meditate every day for years and years and years and constantly be distracted and constantly be unsuccessful. Another person can be extremely successful in a short period of time because he has willpower. The previous way he lived his life gave a great strength to his will, and he goes soaring within on that power. Will is the fuel which carries awareness through all areas of the mind. It is that spiritual quality which makes all inner goals a reality. The will has to be cultivated, just like you would cultivate a garden. The energies have to all be

**Resolve and act.
Whatever you do,
do it with all your
might.**

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

flowing, in a sense, through one channel, so that everything you do is satisfying, complete, beautiful. **Seeker:** *How can I strengthen my willpower?* **Gurudeva:** The more willpower you use, the more you have to use. It is an unlimited power within you. Finish each job that you begin.

Keep each promise that you make. Fulfill each plan that you have set in motion, provided it is true, kind, helpful and fulfills a need. The right thing for you to do may perhaps be the hardest. This, then, is the very thing you should impel yourself to accomplish. Do this and experience your will becoming stronger and every part of your nature responding beautifully. Do a little bit more than you think you are able to do. That also exercises the will. Every time you exercise your will, you strengthen it. **Today's Challenge:** Pick a task that you have left unfinished for a long time and resolve to complete it. Schedule the time, then stick with great determination to your plan and complete the project even better than expected. Aum.

THURSDAY

The Superconscious Mind of Light

Seeker: *What is the superconscious mind?* **Gurudeva:** Out of Parasiva, Absolute Reality, ever comes the first manifestation of mind—superconsciousness or infinite knowing. The superconscious mind is the mind of the soul—the mind of God Siva. The superconscious mind is the most wonderful area of the mind that there is, but we're not always aware in the superconscious mind, because we're generally in the subsuperconscious, aware of the conscious mind. Or we are aware of our own subconscious mind or that of another. But the more we detach awareness from subconscious binds, from conscious-mind attachments, the more we become superconscious. The superconscious acts in the now. All superconscious knowing comes to you intuitively, in a flash

The source of knowledge is mine. The key of existence lies in the palm of my hand.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

out of the nowhere. Intuition is more direct than reason and far more accurate.

Seeker: *How do we know when we are superconscious?* **Gurudeva:** When we feel as if we are living totally in the moment, when we subconsciously identify ourselves as an intense, vibrating entity of

the eternal now, that is superconsciousness. Occasionally, in deep meditation we see the head filled with clear white light. That is superconsciousness. When you are superconscious, you may see yourself as pure life force flowing through people, through trees, through everything. When you are in contemplation, so engrossed in the energies within you, you dynamically feel that peace of the central source of all energy. You realize that you are the source of all energy, the center of all consciousness. That, too, is superconsciousness. **Today's Challenge:** Sit quietly in meditation. Relax your body, regulate your breathing and seek the light within your head. This light which lights your thoughts is the light of superconsciousness. Aum.

Karma: Rules of the Game

LESSON

6

Seeker: *What is karma?* **Gurudeva:** Karma is the law of cause and effect. Every action that we perform in life, every thought that we think, has its reaction. People often ask, "Why is this happening to me? It doesn't seem fair!" Were they able to observe more deeply, they would see all the ingredients that came together out of the past to create the conditions they are passing through in the now. They would observe that every action is like planting a seed. The fruit of that seed, harvested perhaps years or lifetimes later, is reaction. We face those reactions through other people and through our own actions. We throw a boomerang. It travels out into the air, turns around and comes back to us with equal force. In a similar way, our actions and thoughts, be they loving or hateful,

The present is the result of past action. Man is the architect of his future.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

set up patterns of reaction that return to us with equal force. **Seeker:** *How should we face our karma?* **Gurudeva:** By applying the wisdom of the sages to the experiences encountered in life, we resolve our karma rather than create new karma. By gaining conscious control of thoughts and attitudes,

by right action, we can control the flow of karma. Then we stop creating uncomplimentary karma and can consciously face the reactions of the past without the confusion of additional day-to-day reactions. Face each challenge by telling yourself, "This is the karma I was born to face. I came here to spiritually unfold, to face and accept the karmas of this and all my past lives." Life is the classroom. Karma is the teacher. **Today's Challenge:** Today, each time you find yourself mentally blaming others, stop. Let go of all feelings of resentment, helplessness and injustice. Act on this knowledge: all that comes to you, good and bad alike, is self-created and contains a lesson to be learned. Learn the lesson and be free. Aum.

SATURDAY

Reincarnation

Seeker: *What is reincarnation?* **Gurudeva:** Reincarnation is the natural cycle of birth, death and rebirth. We are not the body in which we live, but the immortal soul which inhabits one body after another on the Earth during its evolutionary journey. Like the caterpillar's transformation into a butterfly, physical death is a most natural transition for the soul, never to be feared. The belief in reincarnation brings a great sense of peace. Knowing that the soul evolves from life to life gives a remarkable insight into the human condition and appreciation for all men in all stages of spiritual development. **Seeker:** *What happens when we die?*

Gurudeva: We simply step out of the physical body and we're in our astral body, and we carry on as usual in various refined force fields according to where we are in the mind at the time of death. There we see people who have also "died" and others who have left their physical body while sleeping. On the astral plane we relive many experiences of our earthly life, creating for ourself heavens or hells.

**Oh, the endless
anxieties of endless
births! When will
these delusions
end?**

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

When our lessons have been learned and our reactions resolved, we slough off the astral body, then enter a new physical body. The conditions we reincarnate in depend on how we have conducted ourself through our many lives and what we were thinking about when we died. The actions and reactions we set in motion in our last life form the tendencies in the next. Reincarnation ceases when all karmas have been resolved, dharma has been well performed and God fully realized. This is known as moksha, or liberation from rebirth. **Today's Challenge:** Observe in one day: a pregnant woman, a newborn infant, children at school, a wedding, an elderly person and a cemetery. Encompass the complete cycle the soul passes through, life after life. Aum.

Chakras: Centers of Consciousness

LESSON

8

Seeker: *What are the chakras?* **Gurudeva:** The chakras are great force centers or nerve ganglia in the physical body, the astral body and the body of the soul. When inwardly perceived, they are vividly colorful and can be heard. *Chakra* is a Sanskrit word meaning “wheel,” as these are spinning circles of energy and regions of mind power. The *muladhara*, the foundation or “root center” at the base of the spine, governs memory. Above it are six chakras which control reason, willpower, cognition, divine love, divine sight and illumination, respectively. Below the *muladhara* are seven lower chakras, realms of the instinctive, animal nature, making fourteen major chakras in all. **Seeker:** *Are the chakras connected one to another?* **Gurudeva:** The *chakras* are interconnected by three

**O cave-dwelling
shakti, universal
energy lying coiled
and dormant
within me, arise!**

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

major psychic nerve currents or *nadis* through which flow all forces of life and mind. The *ida nadi* is passive-feminine; the *pingala nadi* is aggressive-masculine. Directly through the spinal cord runs the *sushumna nadi* like a shaft of pure energy. When *ida* and *pingala* are balanced, the chakras all spin at the

same velocity, and awareness is released to soar within. This is accomplished through hatha yoga, controlled breathing and meditation. Finally, through sustained states of intense contemplation, the cosmic energy within *sushumna*, the *kundalini* or “serpent power,” which is at this time playing up and down the spine like a thermometer, rises to the 1,008-petaled chakra at the top of the head, and we go beyond consciousness and become the Self, in total Self Realization. **Today's Challenge:** Study the people around you. Try to intuit who is functioning primarily in the higher chakras of love and understanding and who is functioning in the lower, instinctive animal nature. Aum.

MONDAY

Our Great God Siva

Seeker: *Who is Lord Siva?* **Gurudeva:** Lord Siva is God, the uncreated Supreme Being. My *satguru*, Sage Yogaswami, proclaimed: "The Universal One is Siva. That without place or name is Siva. The splendor known as Aum is Siva. That which has no form is Siva. That which is the Truth is Siva." Lord Siva, God, was never created. He has existed forever and has created all things, including everybody's individual soul. God Siva is a one Being, yet we understand Him in three perfections. Parasiva, Absolute Reality, timeless, formless, spaceless, is His unmanifest first perfection. His second perfection, Pure Consciousness, or Parashakti, is all-pervasive, infinite, and is found in every action and particle of His creation. His third perfection, Primal Soul, Paramesvara, is our personal

Everywhere, all the time and in every-one you can hear the voice of God.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

Lord and Ruler of all three worlds. It is comforting to know that Lord Siva is the Divine Father/Mother. That close to us, that watchful and that loving is our great God Siva. **Seeker:** *Does God pervade everything?* **Gurudeva:** Infinite is Siva's all-pervasive, superconscious, exalted mind. His Being is within every animate and inanimate form—simultaneously, all at once, in every inner and outer universe. This unbounded Satchidananda has neither beginning nor end. All is within it. It is within all. Satguru Yogaswami proclaimed: "You will know Siva if you remain still. God is Love. God is Truth. God is all things. God is everywhere. The whole world depends on an unknowable energy for all its activities. It is all the same whether this energy is called God or given any other name." **Today's Challenge:** Try to find one place where God Siva is not. Search everywhere, in all seriousness, throughout your home and outside as well. In the process, see if you can prove to yourself that God Siva is All and in all. Aum.

Our Immortal Soul

LESSON

10

Seeker: *What is the nature of our soul?* **Gurudeva:** Our individual soul is the immortal and spiritual body of light that animates life and reincarnates again and again until all necessary karmas are created and resolved and its essential unity with God is realized. Our individual soul is the creation of God Siva and the source of all our higher functions, including knowledge, will and love. Our soul is neither male nor female. It is that which never dies, even when the four outer sheaths or bodies—physical, *pranic*, instinctive and mental—change form and perish, as they naturally do. The soul body is our innermost form. We are not the physical body, mind or emotions. We are the immortal soul. **Seeker:** *Does the soul actually grow and mature?* **Gurudeva:** For the sake of understanding the

It will not be an overstatement if I say that man is God.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

mysteries of the soul, we distinguish between the soul body and its essence. As a soul body, we are individual and unique, different from all others. At the core of our subtle soul body is Satchidananda, or immanent Love; and at the core of that is Parasiva, or transcendent Reality. These are the nucleus of the soul, which does not change or evolve. They are eternally perfect and one with God Siva. We may liken the soul body to an acorn, which contains the mighty oak tree but is a small seed yet to develop. The soul body matures through experience, evolving through many lives into the splendor of God Siva ultimately realizing Him totally. Even when God Realization is attained, the soul body continues to evolve in this and other worlds until it merges with the Primal Soul as a drop of water merges with its source, the ocean. **Today's Challenge:** Perform this simple exercise. Lift your arm, then lower it again. Ponder, "Is not the energy within my arm the same energy of Siva within all living things?" Aum.

WEDNESDAY

The World We Live In

Seeker: *Where did this world come from? Is it real?* **Gurudeva:**

Lord Siva created this and numberless other worlds of relative reality for souls to inhabit as they evolve. This world, and indeed all of existence, is *maya*, the principle of matter. While God is absolutely real, His emanated world is relatively real. That does not mean that the universe is illusory or nonexistent, but that it is impermanent and subject to change. It is an error to say that the universe is mere illusion, for it is entirely real when experienced in ordinary consciousness, and its existence is required to lead us to God. Therefore, we call it relatively real to distinguish it from the unchanging Reality.

Seeker: *Why is there so much suffering and misery in the world?* **Gurudeva:** The nature of the world is duality.

The world is a training college. Some are in kindergarten. Some are in the B.A. class.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

It contains each thing and its opposite: joy and sorrow, goodness and evil, love and hate. Through experience of these, we learn and evolve, finally seeking Truth which transcends all opposites. The world is the place where our destiny is shaped, our desires fulfilled and

our soul matured. In the world we grow from ignorance into wisdom, from darkness into light and from a consciousness of death to immortality. My *satguru* said, "The whole world is an ashram in which all are doing *sadhana*." We must love the world, which is God's creation. The world is a glorious place, not to be feared. It is a gracious gift from Siva Himself, a playground for His children in which to interrelate young souls with the old—the young experiencing their karma while the old hold firmly to their dharma. The young grow; the old know. **Today's Challenge:** Observe a youth playing, a mother teaching her child, a worker at his task. Strive to see the world as a classroom of experience, an "ashram in which all are doing *sadhana*." Aum.

Self Realization: Life's Goal

LESSON

12

Seeker: *What is life's ultimate goal?* **Gurudeva:** The goal is to realize God Siva in His absolute or transcendent state, which when realized is your own ultimate state—timeless, formless, spaceless Truth. That Truth lies beyond the thinking mind, beyond the feeling nature, beyond action or any movement of the mind. Being, seeing this Truth then gives the correct perspective, brings the external realities into perspective. They then are seen as truly unrealities, yet not discarded as such. This intimate experience must be experienced while in the physical body. One comes back and back again into flesh simply to realize Parasiva. Nothing more. Yet, the Self, or Parasiva, is an experience only after it has been experienced. Yet, it is not an experience at all, but the only possible nonexpe-

When the mind and the soul become one with God, it is samadhi.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

rience, which registers in its aftermath upon the mind of man. **Seeker:** *What is the path to the Self?* **Gurudeva:** In each birth we must fulfill more goals leading to the one ultimate goal which after many births well lived will loom before us as the only goal worthy of striving for in this

lifetime. We know the Self, which is God and which is ourself, only when we enter the *guha*, the cave within, as a way of life, not just a temporary, experimental, psychological trial. We know the Self within ourself only when we fully turn into ourselves through concentration, meditation and contemplation, and then sustain the resulting samadhi of Satchidananda in hopes of finding—determined to find—That which cannot be described, That which was spoken about by the great rishis, Parasiva, beyond a stilled mind. **Today's Challenge:** Sit and visualize above you nothing, below you nothing and all around you nothing, and try to dissolve yourself into that nothingness. Thus deepen your understanding of the Self. Aum.

FRIDAY

The Satguru: The Seeker's Guide

Seeker: *What is a satguru?* **Gurudeva:** There are many kinds of gurus, who are Lord Siva's instruments in lifting the veils of ignorance to where knowledge exists in its pristine purity—gurus of music, gurus of art, gurus of dance, gurus of philosophy, but most important is the satguru, the yoga guru, the siddha guru of enlightenment. A satguru is a fully matured and realized soul who actively helps us in our religious life and personal unfoldment. Not all gurus are satgurus. The satguru is the *jnani*, the enlightened being who sees beyond duality and knows the oneness of all. He is the illumined one, filled with light, filled with love. He sees God everywhere, in all men. He is the one who simply is and who sees no differences. That is his difference. **Seeker:** *Does one really*

The company of great souls is necessary. Love of the satguru is most praiseworthy.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

need a guru? **Gurudeva:** With rare exceptions, a guru is necessary to guide the aspirant on the path as far as he is willing and able to go in his current incarnation. The guru is needed because the mind is cunning and the ego is a self-perpetuating mechanism. It is unable and un-

willing to transcend itself by itself. Therefore, one needs the guidance of another who has gone through the same process, who has faithfully followed the path to its natural end and therefore can gently lead us to God within ourselves. It is the *satguru's* job to inspire, to assist, to guide and sometimes even impel the disciple to move a little further toward the Self of himself than he has been able to go by himself. Remember, the satguru will keep you on the path, but you have to walk the path yourself. **Today's Challenge:** Seek out and have the *darshana*, "holy sight," of a special person who lives a sacred life. Afterwards stop and carefully explore the affect that his or her presence had on your mind and awareness. Aum.

Bhakti: the Yoga of Devotion

LESSON

14

Seeker: *What is bhakti yoga?* **Bodhinatha:** *Bhakti yoga is the yoga of devotion. It is the practice of external worship which begins by attending pujas, ceremonial worship, at the temple and later develops into conducting simple rituals in one's own home shrine. The goal of bhakti yoga is to awaken a deep devotion, a heartfelt love of God that transforms our nature, giving us a softened, mellow heart. A devotee well established in the practice of bhakti yoga profoundly enjoys going to the temple and absorbing the purifying and uplifting blessings that come from the Deity during the puja.* **Seeker:** *How does bhakti yoga relate to meditation?* **Bodhinatha:** Based on his many years of teaching experience, Gurudeva came to the conclusion that it is a waste of the guru's time to give training in meditation before devotion has been awakened through *bhakti* yoga. Gurudeva found, time and again, that the attainments achieved in meditation were not sustained except where a foundation of devotion had first been established.

Cherish the Lord in the recesses of your heart. Everything everywhere is subject to His Will.

SATGURU YOGASWAMI

One of the reasons is that meditation makes us more aware of our subconscious mind, including any unresolved problems with our family and our own personal ego. Becoming aware of such matters can be quite disturbing. If we are strong in our *bhakti* yoga, then the blessings we feel when we go to the temple uplift and console us during these challenging times. If we are not, then facing these problems can be very difficult and cause us to give up regular meditation altogether. **Today's Challenge:** Gather eleven flowers in a basket or bowl. Select a picture or statue of Lord Ganesha that inspires you. Offer the flowers one at a time to the image while chanting the mantra "Aum Sri Ganeshaya Namah." Visualize Him blessing you, and feel your devotion flooding out to Him. Aum.

SUNDAY

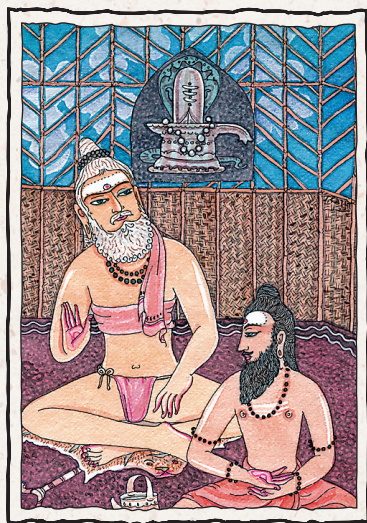


Knowers of the Unknowable

அறியப்படாததை அறிந்தவர்கள்

**It is said in scripture that more precious than gold,
and far more rare, is finding a satguru who can lead
one to God within. What follows are true stories of
such siddhas, sages, recounting some of their magic,
their words and their remarkable ways.**

Wise men who wrote the *Katha Upanishad* thousands of years ago advised seekers to “Arise, awake, approach the great beings and know the Truth!” It is a universal human imperative—the need to know the Truth within existence, the Reality beneath the appearance, the Immortal which gives meaning to our mortality. The way to this Truth, recurring in every age and culture, still exists today. It is a dynamic tradition, carrying the same force and power for contemporary pathfinders as it did for the seekers and disciples of the dim past. It is called the Sanatana Dharma, the “Eternal Path,” for it never dies. It is coexistent with man’s inquiry after the Real. ¶ The most powerful traditions all have a living master, a knower of God, an awakened soul. He provides a potency, an ability to make the journey one of personal experience, far greater than any philosophy, any dogma, any religious history or institution. One such venerable spiritual tradition is the Nandinatha Sampradaya’s Kailasa Parampara (“lineage of teachers”), which began 2,200 years ago with Satguru Nandinatha,

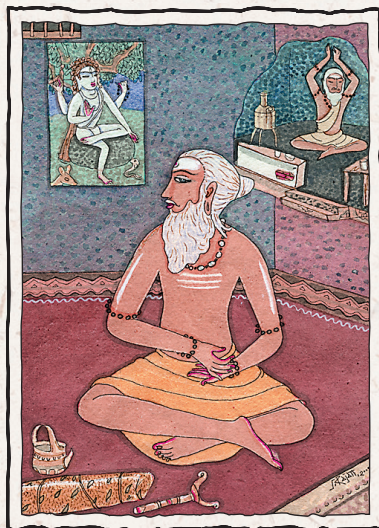


satguru to Tirumular, and whose present-day embodiment is Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami. These are not your conventional saints or typical yogis. Technically, they are called Saivite *siddhas*, which means followers of Siva who have attained the highest knowledge and perfection. It is said that such men hold Truth in the palm of their hand, that they can do anything at will—turn iron into gold, heal the sick, raise the dead, see into the future, change lives and talk with the Gods. Many are the stories told by the still-living disciples of

this satguru lineage, those who saw the miracles first-hand through tears of wonderment and awe. Such powers sometimes became an



obstacle when devotees came to these siddhas for the the lesser magic rather than for God Consciousness. So the masters “hid themselves” beneath unassuming white robes and stern ways. It helped. But these were luminous beings, engulfed in the Clear White Light day and night. Who can hide such radiance for long? People still came. The most ardent drew near, and the teachings were passed from one to the next over the centuries. Not in classes or seminars. In the old way, by word of mouth, by the preceptor’s testing the disciple, preparing the disciple, guiding the disciple in daily context and in dreams. Such men can shake the seeker’s mind loose from its shackles, arouse awareness from the slumber of so many births and turn questions like “Who am I?” into proclamations of “I am That.” All this the gurus of the Yogaswami lineage did. Here is a glimpse of these great souls and the God-centered non-dualism they taught. ¶ One afternoon sometime in the mid-1800s a white-haired man happened into a tea shop near Bangalore in South-Central India. He was a stranger, probably from the Himalayan crown of India. He sat at a wooden table and took his tea. When the time came for the shop to close, the owner found that the man had entered a state of contemplation so complete that he could not be aroused. Besides, it is considered improper to disturb a meditator. So he was left alone. ¶ Opening the shop early the next day, the shopkeeper discovered the yogi seated in perfect stillness, filling the room with a palpable sanctity. He did not move from that spot for seven years, nor did he speak. The shop closed. Villagers turned it into a shrine frequented by the crowds who wanted *darshana*, or “sight,” of this remarkable being. Many came with problems, the kind people everywhere



have—a new job, grandmother's health, daughter's marriage. To their amazement, answers always came. Sometimes in dreams. Sometimes a piece of paper would materialize in the air above the saint and float gently to the ground. On it would be written exactly what they needed. One day, as suddenly as he had come, the rishi



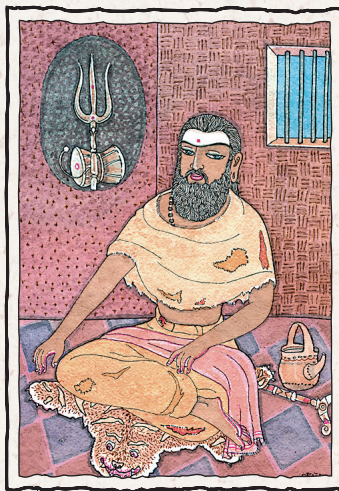
emerged from his divine state, got up and left the shop, never to return. He was the first modern-day satguru in this lineage and is known as the Rishi from the Himalayas. ¶ A few years later, farther south, a high court judge sat at the end of a trial, faced with the duty to pass a sentence of death on a convicted murderer. The man was guilty, but the judge refused to fatally condemn a fellow human being. Instead, he left the bench, quit the law and renounced the world. He became a wandering monk. In time he met

the Rishi and was initiated into the inner teachings. Eventually he settled in Sri Lanka's port city of Jaffna. It was around 1860. He had no home, no ashram or yoga school. He could be found walking in the marketplace, speaking of man's oneness with God Siva and taking his meals with common folks. The people called him Kadaitswami, the "Marketplace Swami." ¶ One day Kadaitswami was invited for lunch at the home of a devout but poor family. With little food in the house and not wanting to offend a great soul, the wife did the unthinkable—she sold her cherished gold wedding necklace to buy provisions. When the meal was finished, the swami asked her to bring a piece of iron. A rusty old rod was found. Kadaitswami took it aside, spat on it and handed it back. It had turned to gold! Today this is a wealthy coconut oil family, though it is said they never sold the golden rod. ¶ The next satguru in this tradition was called Chellappaswami (1840-1915). Chellappan



means “wealthy father.” Except in a spiritual sense, he was anything but rich. In fact, most thought him a vagrant, and mad in the bargain. He wore disheveled clothing and preferred to be alone. At age nineteen, Chellappan was initiated by Kadaitswami. Thereafter he camped on the steps of Jaffna’s Nallur Temple—that is when he was not walking the country roads, which he did frequently and energetically. Chellappaswami spoke of God only in the first person, oblivious of duality, never admitting that there was “another.” He would puzzle passersby by asking questions like “Did you know that I am the King of kings?” “Did anyone tell you that all the money in all the banks in the world is mine?” ¶ Chellappaswami was strict with himself, especially about food. He cooked his own meals—simple affairs of boiled rice and dal. His favorite curry was eggplant, for which he would sometimes walk ten miles to the market to get fresh and ten miles back. Never would he allow base desire to well up. If it did, if his mouth would so much

as water at the smell of a hard-earned curry, he would chide himself, “So, you want this tasty food that much, do you?” Laughing aloud he would pick up the clay cooking pots and break them on the ground. Then he would meditate on greater things as the crows loudly shared the scattered food. ¶ One morning a pilgrim was walking by the temple where Chellappaswami lived. Suddenly, the sage laughed, calling out, “Just who do you think you are?” It was a seemingly innocuous query, but somehow it went



deep into the heart, then deeper and deeper. Later the 35-year-old man left all worldly life and joined Chellappan as his disciple. This was Sage Yogaswami (1872–1964), who wrote many verses recounting that meeting: “I saw my guru at Nallur Temple. ‘Hey! Who are you?’ he challenged me. I saw darkness all-surrounding and could



not comprehend his meaning. As I stood perplexed, he looked at me with kindness, and the maya that was tormenting me left and disappeared. He pointed above my head, and I lost all consciousness of body and stood there in amazement. He then spoke of the essence of Vedanta, that my fear might vanish. 'It is as it is. Who knows?



Grasp well the meaning of these words,' said he. Everything disappeared and by the grace of my guru, who has no one to compare with him, I remained still, with no one to compare with me." ¶ In 1947 a 20-year-old American sailed from San Francisco to Bombay in search of his guru. His cabin on the ship was directly over the engine room. It was his habit to meditate long hours each day in his room. One morning his contemplation was particularly deep, and as he returned to normal consciousness the mechanical roar of the engines became annoying, then grating,

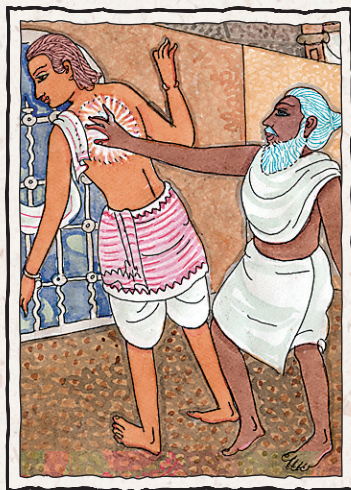
then unbearable. In his mind he spontaneously commanded the noise to "Stop!" The engines immediately halted, and the ship drifted quietly and inexplicably for two days before the voyage was resumed. ¶ Arriving in India, the youth traveled south by train. Crossing the straits to Sri Lanka, he found himself among Buddhist and Hindu mystics. His urge to realize God fully grew irresistibly intense. Entering the dense jungles southeast of Colombo, he settled in the famed Caves of Jalani, vowing to fast and meditate until he attained the ultimate illumination. An Islamic mystic from a nearby mosque observed the young man disciplining himself and growing thinner as he meditated longer and longer. One day the Muslim was amazed to see a giant snake slither across the lap of the yogi, who had lost body consciousness. Finally, the youth broke through the various wheels of consciousness, or chakras, into full enlightenment, beyond time, beyond form, beyond space. ¶ Months later, the



youth was taken to Sage Yogaswami's humble hut in the North. The 77-year-old Yogaswami named him Subramuniya, "silent teacher of light," and initiated him into the famed mantra *Namah Sivaya*. Later, on the full-moon day in May, 1949, his *satguru* initiated him into the holy orders of *sannyasa* and, with a forceful slap on the back, commanded him to carry the ancient Natha teachings back to the West. The event was acclaimed a coronation by all who witnessed.

¶ Sage Yogaswami attained oneness in 1964, and Sivaya Subramuniyaswami continued the lineage, founding temples in the West and building Kauai Aadheenam in Hawaii in 1970. Gurudeva was deeply immersed in furthering the global Hindu renaissance for half a century. He reached Siva's feet on November 12, 2001. Before departing this world, he ordained Bodhinatha Veylanswami, his senior disciple for 37 years, as his successor, who carries forth the mission of teaching the Saivite Hindu path to enlightenment, a

path that leads the soul from simple service to worshipful devotion to God, from the disciplines of meditation and yoga to the direct knowing of Divinity within. Living at Kauai Aadheenam, Bodhinatha, twelve swamis and numerous monks work full-time to strengthen all four sects of Hinduism. Bodhinatha gently guides the spiritual life of each devotee, dedicated souls who have set upon the traditional inner path, and seek—as he and his guru and his guru's guru once did—to know thy Self and see God everywhere. Bodhinatha is publisher of the international magazine *HINDUISM TODAY*. His books and discourses are published on the web, and are often based on Gurudeva's remarkable 3,000-page Master Course Trilogy of sourcebooks—*Dancing, Living and Merging with Siva*—which are an embodiment of India's timeless ways and wisdom.



A Saivite Creed

A creed is an authoritative formulation of the beliefs of a religion, of religious communities and, by extension, of individuals. Historically, creeds have developed when a religion is transmitted from one culture to another. Below is a Creed for Saivite Hindus.

1. On God's Unmanifest Reality

Siva's followers all believe that Lord Siva is God, whose Absolute Being, Parasiva, transcends time, form and space. The yogi silently exclaims, "It is not this. It is not that." Yea, such an inscrutable God is God Siva. Aum.

2. On God's Manifest Nature of All-Pervading Love

Siva's followers all believe that Lord Siva is God, whose immanent nature of love, Parashakti, is the substratum, primal substance or pure consciousness flowing through all form as energy, existence, knowledge and bliss. Aum.

3. On God as Personal Lord and Creator of All

Siva's followers all believe that Lord Siva is God, whose immanent nature is the Primal Soul, Supreme Mahadeva, Parameshvara, author of *Vedas* and *Agamas*, the creator, preserver and destroyer of all that exists. Aum.

4. On the Elephant-Faced Deity

Siva's followers all believe in the Mahadeva Lord Ganesha, son of Siva-Shakti, to whom they must first supplicate before beginning any worship or task. His rule is compassionate. His law is just. Justice is His mind. Aum.

5. On the Deity Karttikeya

Siva's followers all believe in the Mahadeva Karttikeya, son of Siva-Shakti, whose vel of grace dissolves the bondages of ignorance. The yogi, locked in lotus, venerates Murugan. Thus restrained, his mind becomes calm. Aum.

6. On the Soul's Creation and Identity with God

Siva's followers all believe that each soul is created by Lord Siva and is



identical to Him, and that this identity will be fully realized by all souls when the bondage of *anava*, karma and *maya* is removed by His Grace. Aum.

7. On the Gross, Subtle and Causal Planes

Siva's followers all believe in three worlds: the gross plane, where souls take on physical bodies; the subtle plane, where souls take on astral bodies; and the causal plane, where souls exist in their self-effulgent form. Aum.

8. On Karma, Samsara and Liberation from Rebirth

Siva's followers all believe in the law of karma—that one must reap the effects of all actions he has caused—and that each soul continues to reincarnate until all karmas are resolved and moksha, liberation, is attained. Aum.

9. On the Four Margas, Stages of Inner Progress

Siva's followers all believe that the performance of *charya*, virtuous living, *kriya*, temple worship, and yoga, leading to Parasiva through the grace of the living *satguru*, is absolutely necessary to bring forth *jnana*, wisdom. Aum.

10. On the Goodness of All

Siva's followers all believe there is no intrinsic evil. Evil has no source, unless the source of evil's seeming be ignorance itself. They are truly compassionate, knowing that ultimately there is no good or bad. All is Siva's will. Aum.

11. On the Esoteric Purpose of Temple Worship

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. Aum.

12. On the Five Letters

Siva's followers all believe in the Panchakshara Mantra, the five sacred syllables "Namah Sivaya," as Saivism's foremost and essential mantra. The secret of Namah Sivaya is to hear it from the right lips at the right time. Aum.





Our beliefs determine our thoughts and attitudes about life, which in turn direct our actions. By our actions, we create our destiny. Beliefs about sacred matters—God, soul and cosmos—are essential to one's approach to life. Hindus believe many diverse things, but there are a few bedrock concepts on which most Hindus concur. The following nine beliefs, though not exhaustive, offer a simple summary of Hindu spirituality.



Nine Beliefs of Hinduism

1. Hindus believe in a one, all-pervasive Supreme Being who is both immanent and transcendent, both Creator and Unmanifest Reality.
2. Hindus believe in the divinity of the four *Vedas*, the world's most ancient scripture, and venerate the *Agamas* as equally revealed. These primordial hymns are God's word and the bedrock of Sanatana Dharma, the eternal religion.
3. Hindus believe that the universe undergoes endless cycles of creation, preservation and dissolution.
4. Hindus believe in karma, the law of cause and effect by which each individual creates his own destiny by his thoughts, words and deeds.
5. Hindus believe that the soul reincarnates, evolving through many births until all karmas have been resolved, and *moksha*, liberation from the cycle of rebirth, is attained. Not a single soul will be deprived of this destiny.
6. Hindus believe that divine beings exist in unseen worlds and that temple worship, rituals, sacraments and personal devotionals create a communion with these *devas* and Gods.
7. Hindus believe that an enlightened master, or *satguru*, is essential to know the Transcendent Absolute, as are personal discipline, good conduct, purification, pilgrimage, self-inquiry, meditation and surrender in God.
8. Hindus believe that all life is sacred, to be loved and revered, and therefore practice *ahimsa*, noninjury, in thought, word and deed.
9. Hindus believe that no religion teaches the only way to salvation above all others, but that all genuine paths are facets of God's Light, deserving tolerance and understanding.



Affirmation of Faith

Creeds are often distilled into a single, simple statement, called an affirmation of faith, which summarizes the beliefs and doctrines of a religion. Ours gives the essence of the enlightened monistic Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. It is what you have when you take the milk from the sacred cow of religion, separate out the cream, churn that cream into butter and boil that butter into a precious few drops of ghee. The art unifies Vedanta and Siddhanta.



Siva's followers hold as their affirmation of faith *Anbe Sivamayam Satyame Parasivam*, in Tamil, or in Sanskrit, *Sarvavyapi prema ca parasacca Sivah*—"God Siva Is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality." This is a perfect summary of Saiva Siddhanta's exquisite truth.

அன்பே சிவமயம் சத்யமே பரசிவம்



Take the Next Step . . .

Are you seeking to deepen your understanding of Saivite Hinduism? Do you feel drawn to learn more about God Siva and the profound and practical religion that venerates Him. If you are searching for life's meaning, your truest purpose, and a path to a fulfilling spiritual journey amidst the bustling pace of life, reach out to us to explore the following opportunities.

Follow the Great Path

You can continue the study of these sacred teachings by reading *Path to Siva* by Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami, a catechism of Saiva Siddhanta with sixty-eight illustrated lessons drawn from the Master Course Trilogy, exploring how to live life, know the Divine, honor all creation and see God everywhere, in everyone. Scan the QR code at right to download a free PDF of *Path to Siva*.



Continue Your Inner Journey

If you are keen to make a commitment to deepen your spiritual life under the guidance of a traditional Saivite guru, sign up to become a student. This is the first step towards studying with Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami, the spiritual leader of Kauai's Hindu Monastery in Hawaii, who visits Asia every year or so.



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