



Dancing with Śiva

An Illustrated Course for Youth

First Edition

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Dancing with Siva, An Illustrated Course for Youth, is based on the advanced text *Dancing with Siva, Hinduism's Contemporary Catechism*, published by Himalayan Academy. It provides 155 short questions and answers that capsule the basic teaching of Saivite Hinduism. Eighty per-cent of these teachings are applicable to all Hindus.

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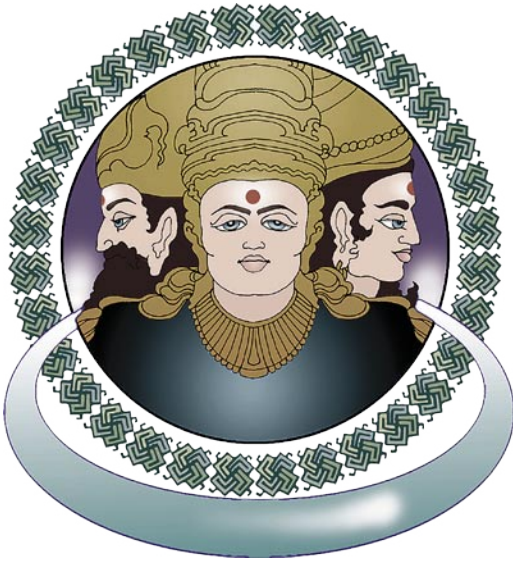
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Introduction and Dedication

Dancing with Siva, an Illustrated Course for Youth is a visual presentation of the 155 *slokas* (verses) from *Dancing with Siva*, a comprehensive book on the Hindu philosophy written by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927-2001).

Subramuniyaswami, popularly known as Gurudeva, wanted his book to be presented to children in a way that they could understand. “Children think in pictures,” he said. “They should be taught in pictures.” And so it came to be that this picture book of Hinduism was created. Each sloka is carefully illustrated with a thought-provoking piece of art that specifically relates to the subject of the *sloka*. Each sloka is also edited into simplified English. This illustrated course is a most useful tool for teachers in a classrooms and mothers in homes when such visual aids are found most convenient in attempting to convey to children or young people sometimes complex or confusing philosophical issues, usually only explained in intellectual terms. It is also helpful to students of Hinduism who do not speak English as a first language. In the future, this course will be further developed with questions, games and more imagery. You can help in this endeavor. Please let us know how you think the course can be improved or modified. We look forward to hearing from you. It is with great devotion that we dedicate this book to Gurudeva in the hope that his vision of educating children in the ways of traditional Hinduism might be fulfilled beyond even his greatest expectations.

Self Realization



Who Am I? Where Did I Come From?

Sloka 1: We are not our body, mind or emotions. We are immortal souls on a spiritual journey. We came from God. We live in God. And we are growing into oneness with God.



Where Am I Going? What Is My Path?

Sloka 2: We are all growing toward God. We learn through experience. So, experience is the path. Experience teaches us not to be angry, not to fight and not to be afraid. Someday we will experience union in God.



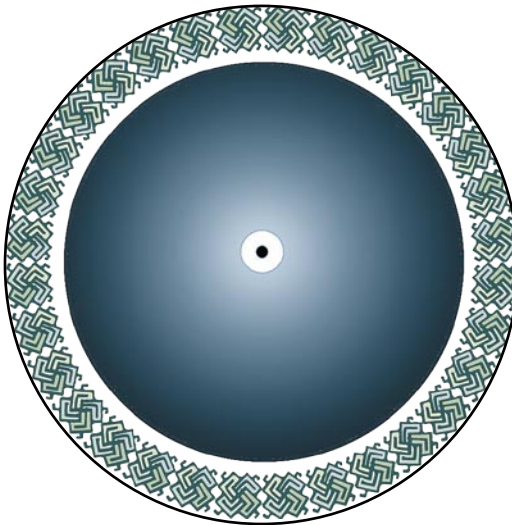
What Is Meant by “Dancing with Siva”?

Sloka 3: The whole universe is involved in action and change. This constant flow of movement is Siva’s dance. We, too, are part of this dance. We are dancing with Siva. And He is dancing with us.



How Can We Learn to Dance with Siva?

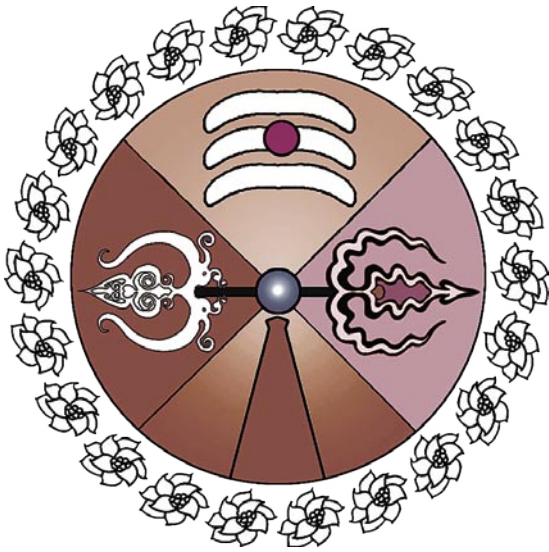
Sloka 4: Dance is movement. A disciplined dance is the best dance. Hindu spiritual practices, such as self-understanding, devotion, meditation and *yoga*, are like disciplined dance. They bring us closer to God.



What Is the Ultimate Goal Of Earthly Life?

Sloka 5: The ultimate goal of life on Earth is to realize the Self. Each soul discovers its perfect essence in deep meditation. This essence is the timeless, formless, spaceless Self God within.

Hinduism



What Are Hinduism's Main Sects?

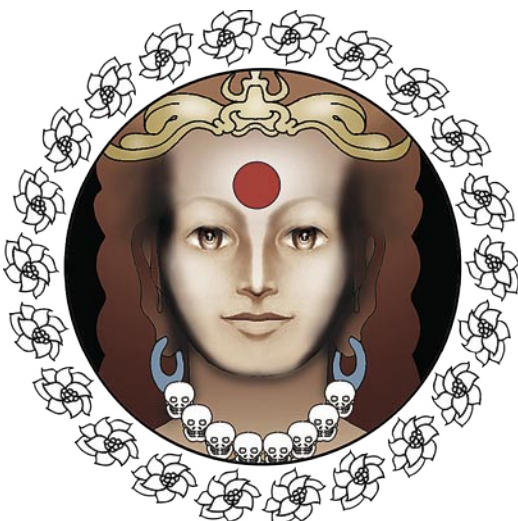
Sloka 6: Hinduism is also called Sanatana Dharma, the “eternal faith.” It is a family of religions that accept the authority of the *Vedas*. The four main sects are Saivism, Saktism, Vaishnavism and Smartism.

What Is the Deeply Mystical Saiva Sect?

Sloka 7: Saivism is the world's oldest religion. Saivites worship the Supreme God as Siva, the Compassionate One. Saivites learn discipline and philosophy and follow a *sat-guru*. They worship in the temple and practice *yoga*, striving to be one with Siva within.

What Is the Magic And Power of Saktism?

Sloka 8: Saktas worship the Supreme as the Divine Mother, Sakti or Devi. She has many forms. Some are gentle. Some are fierce. Saktas use chants, real magic, holy diagrams, *yoga* and rituals to call forth cosmic forces and awaken the great power within the spine.

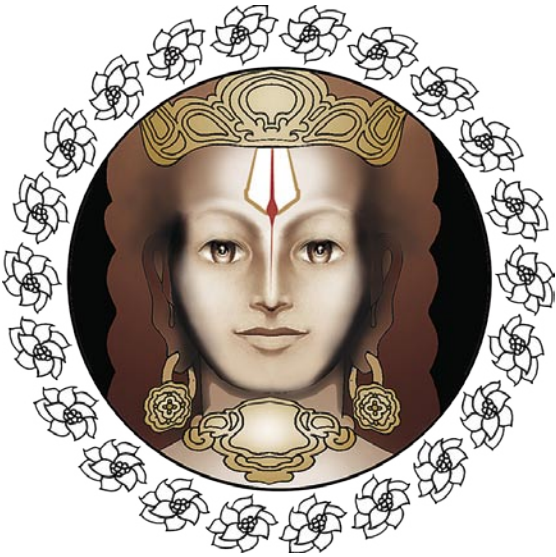


What Is the Devotional Vaishnava Sect?

Sloka 9: Vaishnavites worship the Supreme as Lord Vishnu and His incarnations, especially Krishna and Rama. Vaishnavites are mainly dualistic. They are deeply devotional and rich in saints, temples and scriptures.

What Is the Universalistic Smarta Sect?

Sloka 10: Smartas worship the Supreme in one of six forms: Ganesha, Siva, Sakti, Vishnu, Surya and Skanda. Because they accept all the major Hindu Gods, they are known as liberal Hindus. They follow a philosophical, meditative path, emphasizing man's oneness with God through understanding.

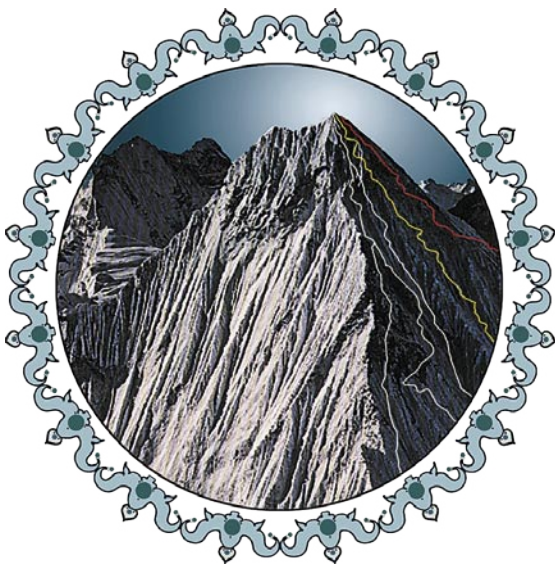


Saivite Hinduism



What Is the Theology Of Saivism?

Sloka 11: God is love. He created us. He is within all and also beyond everything. He created the world and the world is also Him. In the world, we grow into our own perfect self. When this happens, we are free from the cycle of birth and death.



How Do Saivites See Other Faiths?

Sloka 12: Different religions have different beliefs. Saivites don't expect everyone to see God in the same way. They respect and encourage all who believe in God. Saivites know that Truth is one, paths are many.



How Does Saivism Stay Modern?

Sloka 13: The inner, mystical teachings are eternal truths which do not change. While holding on to the inner truths, Saivites may adjust their outer religious practice to adapt to modern times.



How Do Saivites Live in the World?

Sloka 14: For Saivite Hindus, all of life is sacred. All of life is religion. Therefore, Saivite art is sacred art. Saivite music is devotional music. Saivites consider even their daily work as service to man and God.



What Does Siva's Dance Mean?

Sloka 15: Siva's dance is science, religion and art all in one. The drum means creation. The hand raised in blessing means preservation. The fire means destruction. The right foot on the man is His ability to hide things. The raised foot is His power to reveal Truth.

Our Supreme God



What Is the Nature Of Our God Siva?

Sloka 16: God Siva is all and in all. He is a one Being, but we understand Him in three perfections. He is Truth beyond everything. He is the light and energy within everything, and He is our dear Lord and Creator of everything.



What Is God Siva's First Perfection?

Sloka 17: God Siva's deepest Self is called Parasiva. This mysterious Self is very hard to explain. It has no shape or form. Like a point is the center of a circle, the Self is the center of everything, the core of the universe.



What Is God Siva's Second Perfection?

Sloka 18: God Siva's divine energy and pure consciousness is called the Great Power or Parashakti. It is His love flowing through all form, giving people, animals and all forms of life their existence and purpose.



What Is God Siva's Third Perfection?

Sloka 19: God Siva's uncreated, ever-existent Soul is the Supreme Lord, called Parameshvara, the father-mother Creator of all the Gods and beings of all three worlds. He rules from within, not from above.

What Are God Siva's Traditional Forms?

Sloka 20: There are many images of God Siva. Among the main worshipful forms are the simple elliptical icon, dancing Siva, half-female form, silent *guru*, half-Vishnu, the guardian and Siva's trident.



Lords of Dharma



Are there Gods Other than Siva?

Sloka 21: God Siva has created many Gods and given them existence and powers. Yet He is within all of them completely. They are separate from Siva, yet inseparable, too, because everything is Siva.



Who Is Lord Ganesha?

Sloka 22: Lord Ganesha has an elephant's face. He is the God of Art and Science. He controls obstacles in our life and guards the path of goodness. Lord Ganesha helps us to understand *karma*, to do good deeds and follow the right path.



What Is Lord Ganesha's Special Duty?

Sloka 23: Lord Ganesha holds the noose in one hand and the goad in another. The noose is the symbol of His power to prevent things from happening in our life. The goad symbolizes His power to permit things to happen in our life. We seek His blessings before any worship or task.



Who Is Lord Karttikeya?

Sloka 24: Lord Karttikeya is Murugan. He is from the Pleiades constellation. As the first *guru* and master of meditation, He awakens our understanding and helps us know His father, God Siva.



What Does Lord Karttikeya's Vel Mean?

Sloka 25: Lord Karttikeya holds a powerful lance called the *vel*. The *vel's* blade is wide, as our mind should be broad. The blade is long, as our mind should go deeply into things. It is sharp, as our mind should also be sharp.