

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 10

What Is Monistic Theism?

THE RED BALL IS UNIQUE. IT HAS BEEN ADORNED WITH

IBHU
TI. OCHRE-COLORED SANDALWOOD & RED BINDU ARE

L

R.

What is monistic theism?

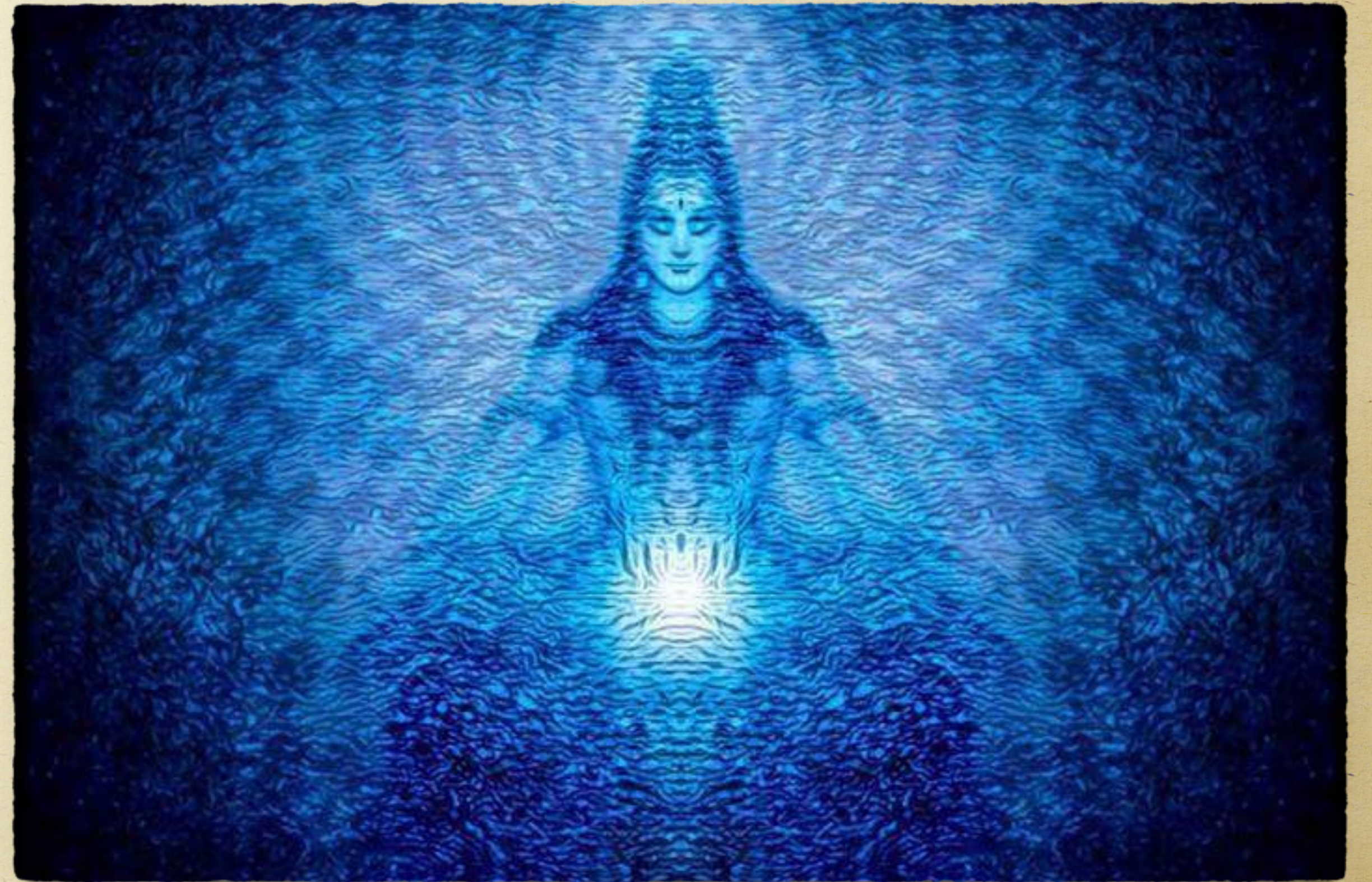


Monistic theism is the combination of two concepts: monism and theism.

Difference between monism and theism.

Monism is the doctrine that reality is a one whole. It holds that everything is God.

Theism is the belief that God exists as a loving, personal Lord and creator.



Our Saiva Siddhanta is monistic theism

These are like two sides of a coin,
present in most Hindu systems.

Our Saiva Siddhanta philosophy is a
form of monistic theism.

We see God as our personal Lord; as
the essence of all that exists; and also
as Absolute Being, Parasiva, beyond
all form.



Theistic practices

In our theistic practices, we worship God and the Gods in the spirit of devotion and humble submission.



Monistic practices

In our monistic practices, we meditate deeply to experience the essence of our soul, which is identical with God Siva's essence, which is present throughout the universe.



Siva has both aspects

Siva has both a monistic aspect and a theistic aspect.

Through our two-sided practice we honor and draw close to both.

The most complete and perfect path requires both monism and theism.



Dualism

The opposite of monism is dualism, which teaches that God and creation are separate realities.

Dualists believe that God, like a potter, creates the universe (a pot) from “clay,” cosmic matter which has always existed and is not part of Him.



Siva is all in all

In Saiva monism, Siva is all and in all:
the potter, the clay and the resulting
pot.



How do we worship Siva?

Some forms of Hindu monism do not include much theism.

Ours does. We worship Siva as the God of love, Parameshvara, Siva as creator, preserver and dissolver, Siva as separate from us, who loves us as His creation.

That is the theism part.

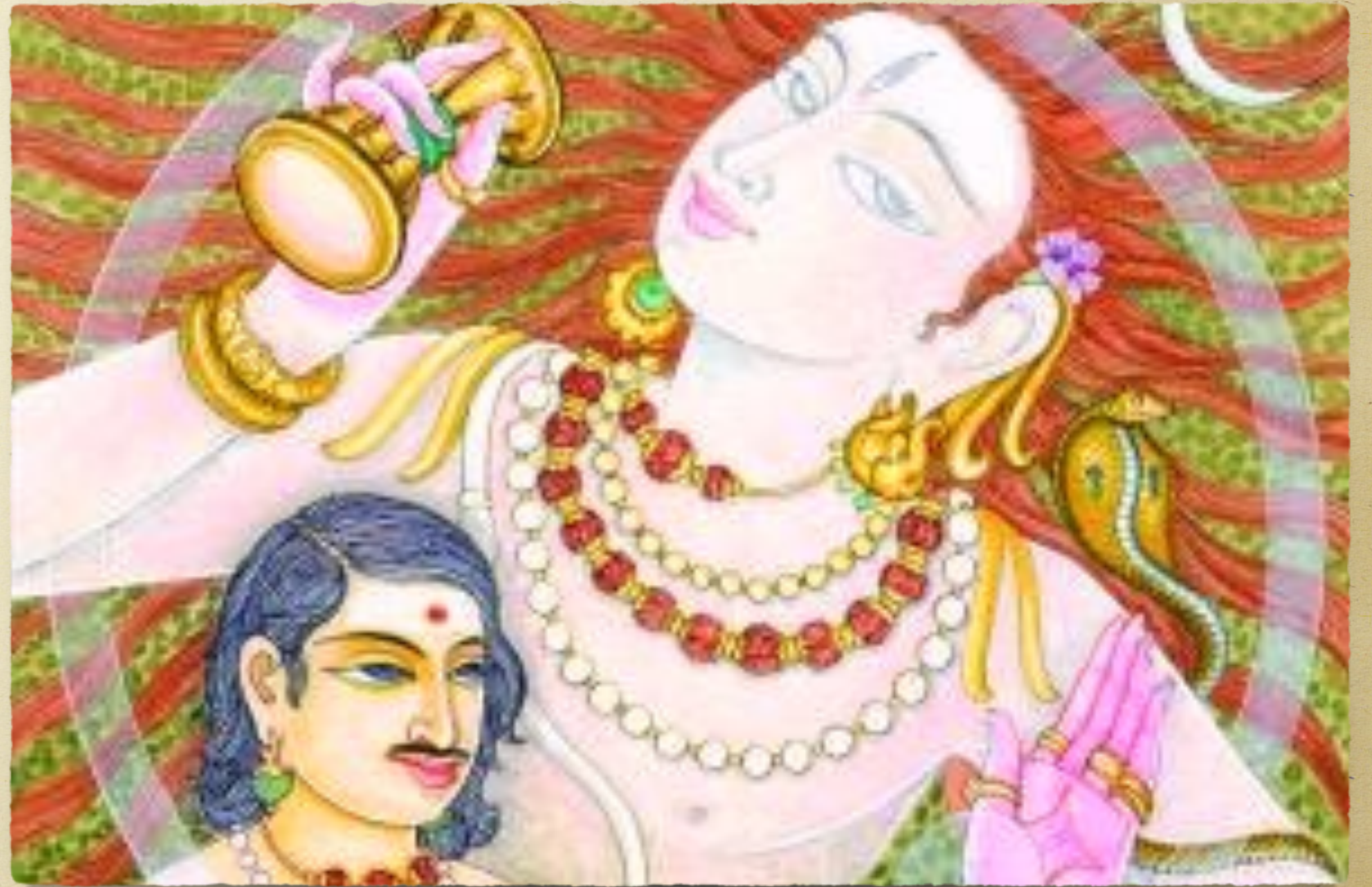


Siva is within us all.

Yet we also believe He is not separate from us.

He is within us as Parashakti, pure consciousness flowing through all form, and as Absolute Reality, Parasiva.

That is the monism part.



Gurudeva: Mountaintop perspective

Monists, from their mountaintop perspective, perceive a one reality in all things.

Dualists, from the foothills, see God, souls and world as eternally separate.

Monistic theism is the perfect reconciliation of these two views.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 10



10.1 If the concept is part of monism enter an “M”. If the concept is part of theism enter a “T”.

- Reality is a one whole
- God exists as a loving, personal Lord and creator
- Everything is God

10.2 In our monistic practices, we worship God and the Gods in the spirit of devotion and humble submission.

- True
- False

10.3 The most complete and perfect path requires
(Check the correct answer)

- A. Only monism
- B. Both monism and theism
- C. Only theism

10.4 In the comparison to the potter, if the concept is part of monism enter an “M”. If the concept is part of dualism enter a “D”.

- The clay is not part of God
- The clay is also God

10.5 If the concept is part of monism enter an “M”. If the concept is part of theism enter a “T”.

- We worship Siva as the God of love
- Siva is within us as pure consciousness and Absolute Reality