

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 25

What About Evil, Hell and Sin?



In the highest sense, there is no good or bad



THIS FIERCE MONKEY GUARDS THE ENTRANCE TO A TEMPLE IN

BALI, FRIGHTENING AWAY THOSE WHO SHOULD NOT ENTER. HE IS FEARSOME, BUT LIKE SIN A

ND EVIL, HE IS NOT FEARED BY THOSE WHO ARE PURE IN HEART.

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.

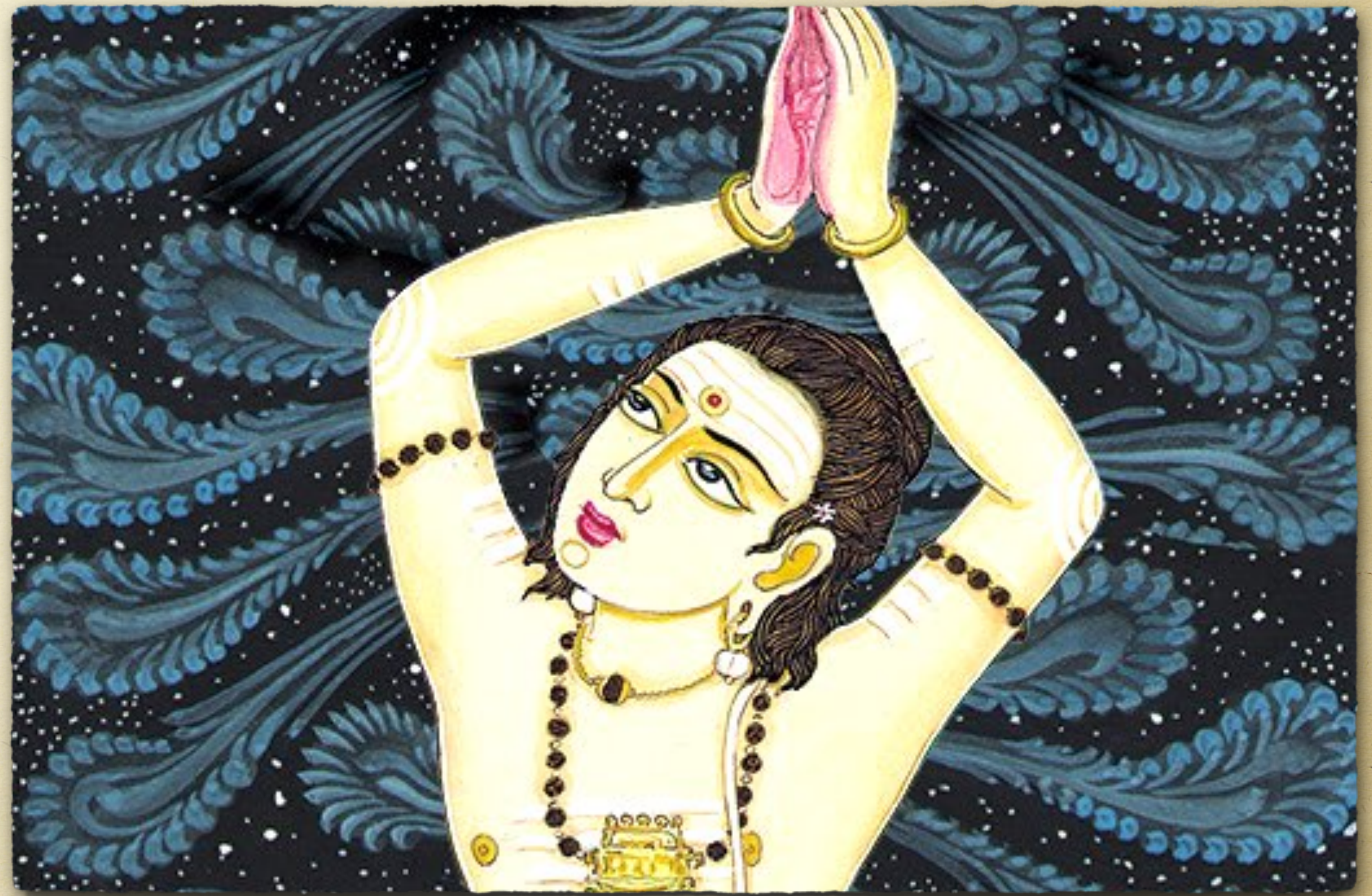


The soul is not for ever lost or damned

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.

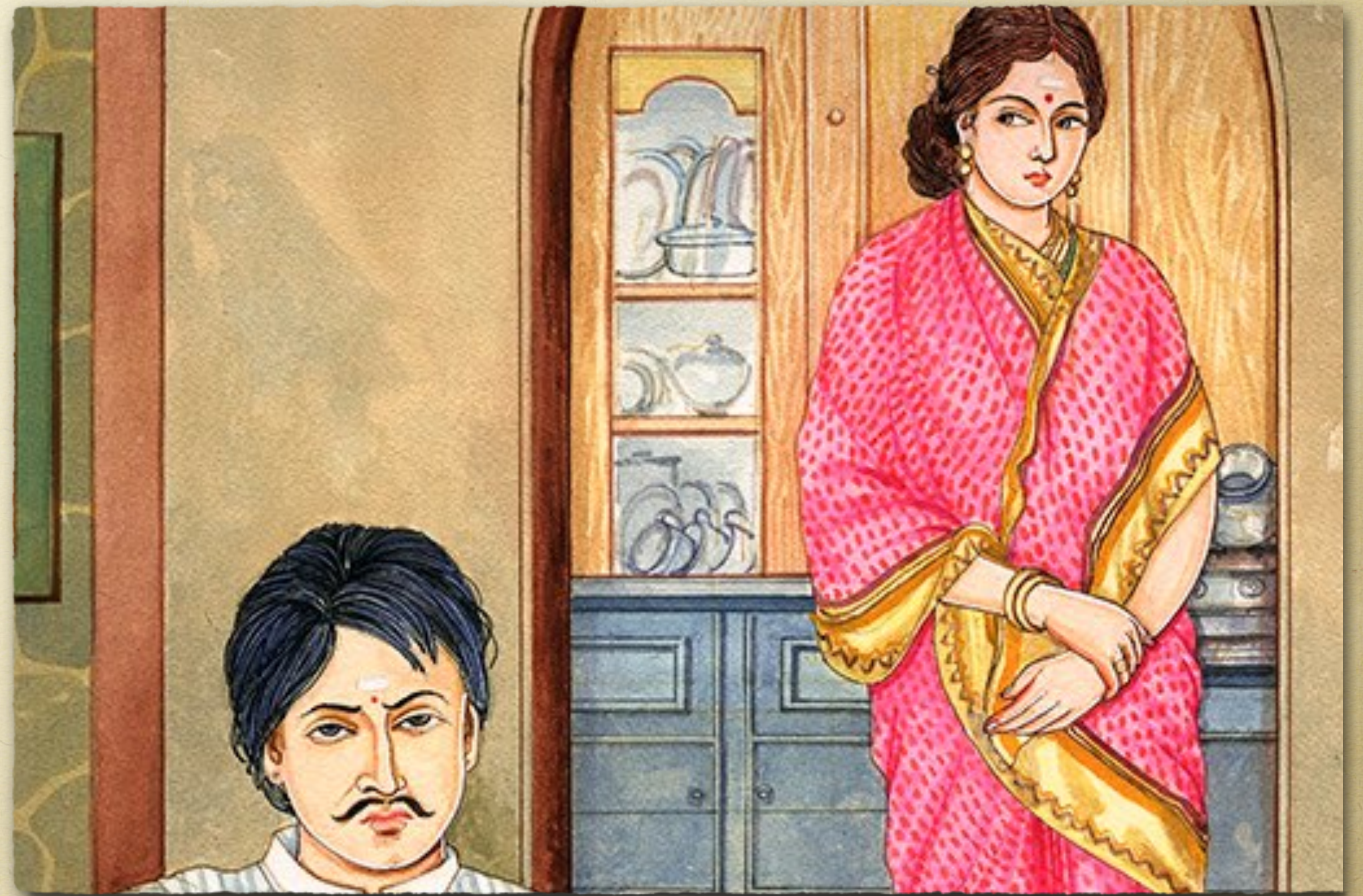
When it dominates, people become angry, fearful, greedy, jealous and hurtful.



What is the intellectual nature?

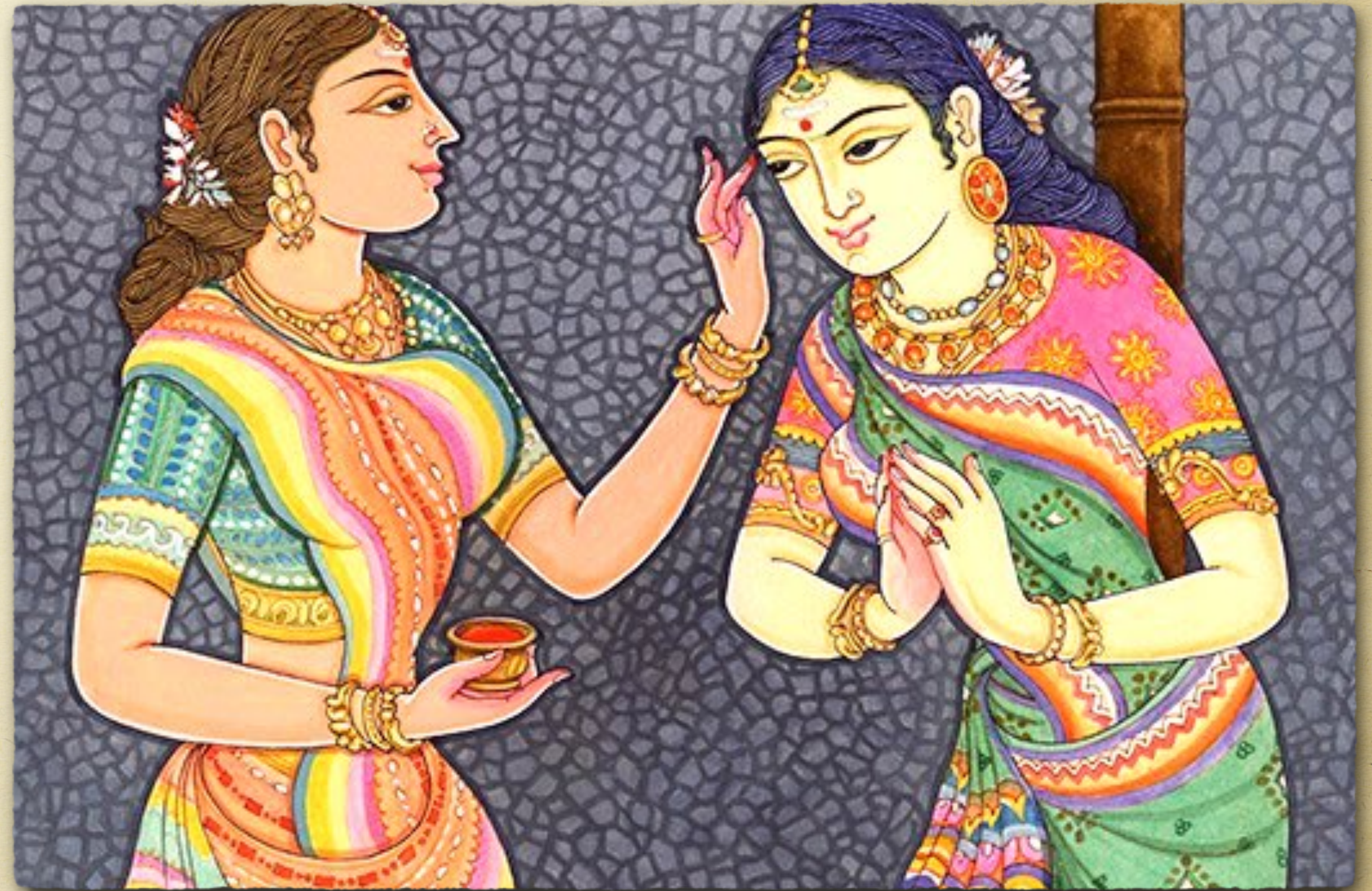
The intellectual nature is the soul's mental aspect.

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