

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

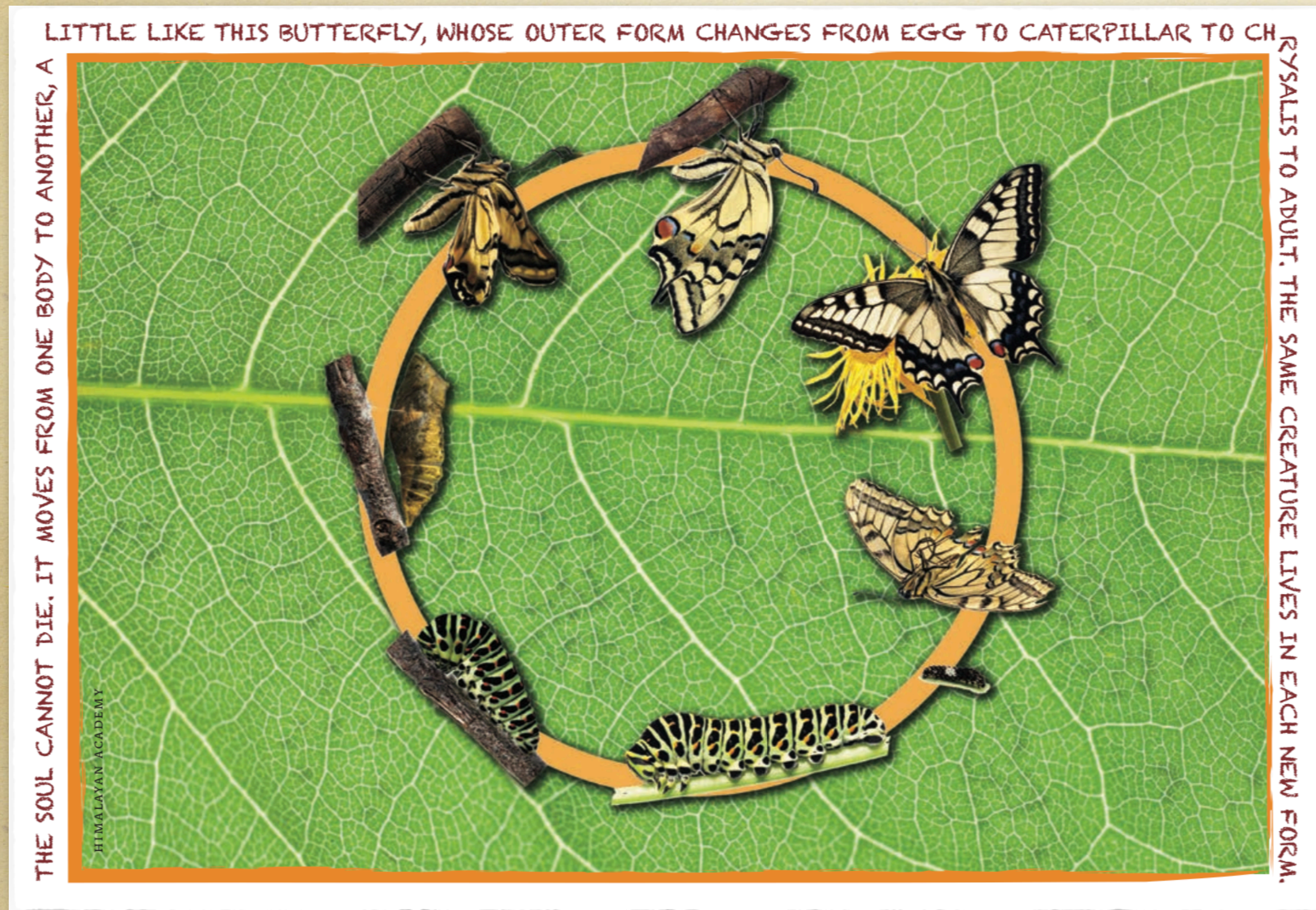
Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 33



What Is Reincarnation?

What is reincarnation?



Reincarnation is the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

Each soul has many lifetimes on Earth.

In each life, we drop off our physical body at death, but our inner self, or soul, never dies.

Leaving the physical body...

We just leave our physical body and go on thinking, feeling and acting in our astral body.

We also do this when we sleep, but we return to our body each time we wake up.

At death we don't come back into our physical body.

We leave the physical plane and remain conscious in the inner worlds.



Reborn as a baby...

After some time, we are born again as a baby in a new physical body, with a new mother and father, a new name and a new future.

This return to the physical plane in a new body is called reincarnation.



Living in a physical or astral body

Memories of our previous lifetimes fade away during childhood, though some adults can remember them.

We eventually die again, because of illness, old age or an accident.

Again we step out of the physical body and go on living in our astral body.



Born again and again...

This happens repeatedly.

Sometimes we are born as a boy,
sometimes as a girl.

The way we live in this life determines
what our next life will be.



A school where we learn...

Reincarnation is like a great school, and each life is a classroom.

Who is learning and growing in the school of life?

You, your immortal soul. You have lived many lives.

Each lifetime is but one stride on the great journey of your soul.



What is liberation or moksha?

When all the needed lessons have been learned, your soul has matured, all karmas have been resolved and you have realized God, you will not need to be born again.

That is called liberation or moksha, the destiny of all souls, without exception.



Gurudeva explains...

Through the ages, reincarnation has been the great consoling element within Hinduism, eliminating the fear of death.

We are not the body in which we live but the immortal soul which inhabits many bodies in its evolutionary journey through samsara.

After death, we continue to exist in unseen worlds, enjoying or suffering the harvest of earthly deeds until it comes time for yet another physical birth.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 33



33.1 The cycle of birth, death and rebirth is called:

(Check the correct answer)

- A. Karma
- B. Reincarnation
- C. Liberation

33.2 In each life, we drop off our physical body at death, but our inner self, or soul, never dies.

- True
- False

33.3 At death we don't come back into our physical body.

(Check the correct answer)

- A. We remain in the inner worlds and are not reborn on Earth
- B. After some time, we are born again as a baby in a new physical body

33.4 If you are a boy, you will always be born as a boy. If you are a girl, you will always be born as a girl.

- True
- False

33.5 When all the needed lessons have been learned, your soul has matured and all karmas have been resolved, you will not need to be born again.

- True
- False