

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 14



What Are Siva's Traditional Forms?

Every form is a form of Siva.



**Tradition has given us
several of special
sacredness.**

Nearly every Siva temple in the world has a Sivalinga, symbolizing His formless state.

It is usually a simple oval stone set in a round base.

Lingams can also be made of metal or quartz crystal

We revere God as Parasiva when we worship the Sivalinga.

Its simple shape speaks of God's Absolute Being, which cannot be described.



We revere Siva as the love that flows through everything

We revere Siva as the love that flows through everything when we worship any form of His Shakti, or feminine energy.

Ardhanarishvara, Siva as half man and half woman, is the perfect image for this, reminding us that Siva and Shakti are a one being and can never be separated.



We adore God as the Primal Soul,
creator of all souls and worlds,

We adore God as the Primal Soul,
creator of all souls and worlds, when we
worship Nataraja, the Divine Dancer who
animates the universe.

This image of Siva dancing in a ring of
fire is popular throughout the world.



Thus we worship Siva's three perfections
in three forms.

Yet His forms are infinite.

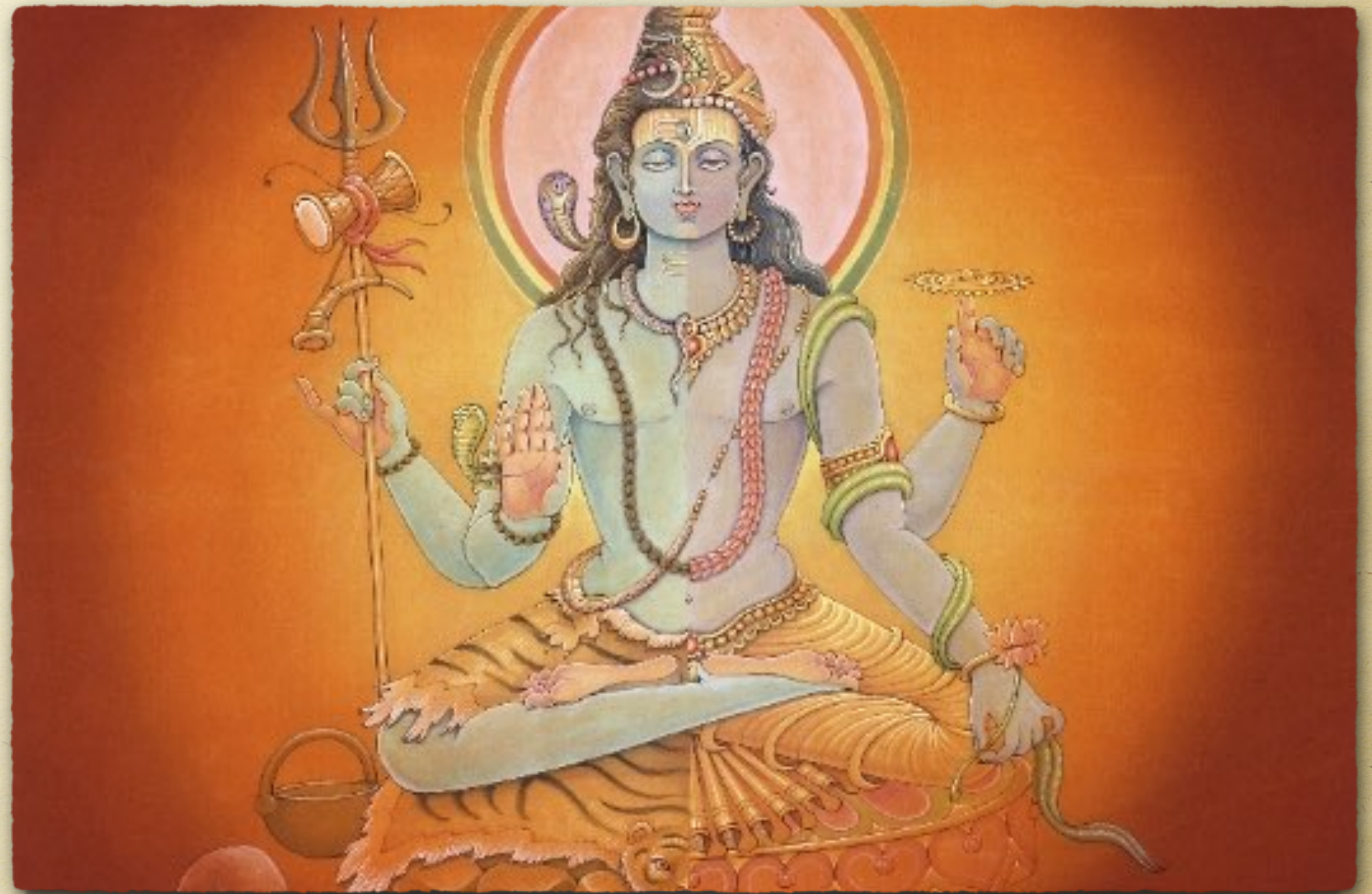
He is also, the silent guru spoken of in
the *Upanishads*.



Hari-Hara

Other scriptures speak of Hari-Hara, half Siva and half Vishnu.

This icon symbolizes the union and nondifference of the two major Gods of Hinduism.



Siva with five faces

The *Saiva Agamas* give us Panchabrahma, Siva with five faces, representing His five powers.



The three-pointed Trishula

The three-pointed Trishula, or trident, is also worshiped as Siva.

Its points represent love, wisdom and action.



Everywhere is the Divine Dance

The *Tirumantiram* reminds us,
“Everywhere is the Holy Form.

Everywhere is Siva- Shakti....
Everywhere is the Divine Dance.”



GURUDEVA: God Siva is so close to us.

Where does He live? In the Third
World [causal plane]

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.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 14



14.1 Enter the letter from below of A - C for the corresponding perfection name for each of the three murtis listed.

- ___ Sivalinga
- ___ Ardhanarishvara
- ___ Nataraja
- (A) Primal Soul
- (B) The love that flows through everything
- (C) Absolute Reality

14.2 The murti of Ardhanarishvara reminds us that Siva and Shakti are separate beings.

- True
- False

14.3 Check the one form in the list that is not a traditional form of Siva.

- A. Ardhanarishvara
- B. Nataraja
- C. Vel
- D. Sivalinga
- E. Dakshinamurti
- F. Trishula
- G. Hari-Hara
- H. Panchabrahma

14.4 The murti of Hari-Hara symbolizes the union and non-difference of Siva and Vishnu.

- True
- False

14.5 The three points of the Trishula, or trident, represent Siva's three powers of creation, preservation and destruction.

- True
- False