Searching for the lofty spiritual path, finding it, understanding it, following it to the summit, perfecting it
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Who Am I? Where Did I Come From?

Rishis proclaim that we are not our body, mind or emotions. We are divine souls on a wondrous journey. We came from God, live in God and are evolving into oneness with God. We are, in truth, the Truth we seek. Aum.

We are immortal souls living and growing in the great school of earthly experience in which we have lived many lives. Vedic rishis have given us courage by uttering the simple truth, "God is the Life of our life." A great sage carried it further by saying, there is one thing God cannot do: God cannot separate Himself from us. This is because God is our life. God is the life in the birds. God is the life in the fish. God is the life in the animals. Becoming aware of this Life energy in all that lives is becoming aware of God's loving presence within us. We are the undying consciousness and energy flowing through all things. Deep inside we are perfect this very moment, and we have only to discover and live up to this perfection to be whole. Our energy and God's energy are the same, ever coming out of the void. We are all beautiful children of God. Each day we should try to see the life energy in trees, birds, animals and people. When we do, we are seeing God Siva in action. The Vedas affirm, "He who knows God as the Life of life, the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear, the Mind of the mind-he indeed comprehends fully the Cause of all causes." Aum Namah Sivaya.

Where Am I Going? What Is My Path?

We are all growing toward God, and experience is the path. Through experience we mature out of fear into fearlessness, out of anger into love, out of conflict into peace, out of darkness into light and union in God. Aum.

We have taken birth in a physical body to grow and evolve into our divine potential. We are inwardly already one with God. Our religion contains the knowledge of how to realize this oneness and not create unwanted experiences along the way. The peerless path is following the way of our spiritual forefathers, discovering the mystical meaning of the scriptures. The peerless path is commitment, study, discipline, practice and the maturing of yoga into wisdom. In the beginning stages, we suffer until we learn. Learning leads us to service; and selfless service is the beginning of spiritual striving. Service leads us to understanding. Understanding leads us to meditate deeply and without distractions. Finally, meditation leads us to surrender in God. This is the straight and certain path, the San Marga, leading to Self Realization-the inmost purpose of life-and subsequently to moksha, freedom from rebirth. The Vedas wisely affirm, "By austerity, goodness is obtained. From goodness, understanding is reached. From understanding, the Self is obtained, and he who obtains the Self is freed from the cycle of birth and death." Aum Namah Sivaya.

What Is Meant by "Dancing with Siva"?

All motion begins in God and ends in God. The whole universe is engaged in a whirling flow of change and activity. This is Siva's dance. We are all dancing with Siva, and He with us. Ultimately, we are Siva dancing. Aum.

The world is seen as it truly is-sacred-when we behold Siva's cosmic dance. Everything in the universe, all that we see, hear and imagine, is movement. Galaxies soar in movement; atoms swirl in movement. All movement is Siva's dance. When we fight this movement and think it should be other than it is, we are reluctantly dancing with Siva. We are stubbornly resisting, holding ourselves apart, criticizing the natural processes and movements around us. It is by understanding the eternal truths that we bring all areas of our mind into the knowledge of how to accept what is and not wish it to be otherwise. Once this happens, we begin to consciously dance with Siva, to move with the sacred flow that surrounds us, to accept praise and blame, joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity in equanimity, the fruit of understanding. We are then gracefully, in unrestrained surrender, dancing with Siva. The Vedas state, "The cosmic soul is truly the whole universe,

the immortal source of all creation, all action, all meditation. Whoever discovers Him, hidden deep within, cuts through the bonds of ignorance even during his life on earth." Aum Namah Sivaya.

How Can We Learn to Dance with Siva?

Dance is movement, and the most exquisite dance is the most disciplined dance. Hindu spiritual disciplines lead to oneness with God through self-reflection, surrender, personal transformation and the many yogas. Aum.

To progress on the path, we study the Vedas, other scriptures and our guru's teachings and make every effort to apply these philosophical truths to daily experience. We strive to understand the mind in its fourfold nature: chitta, consciousness; manas, instinctive mind; buddhi, intellectual mind; and ahamkara, ego or I-maker. We perform japa, meditation and yoga each day. Such spiritual discipline is known as sadhana. It is the mystical, mental, physical and devotional exercise that enables us to dance with Siva by bringing inner advancement, changes in perception and improvements in character. Sadhana allows us to live in the refined and cultured soul nature, rather than in the outer, instinctive or intellectual spheres. For consistent progress, sadhana should be performed regularly, without fail, at the same time each day, preferably in the early hours before dawn. The most important sadhanas are the challenges and practices given by one's guru. The Vedas caution, "The Self cannot be attained by the weak, nor by the careless, nor through aimless disciplines. But if one who knows strives by right means, his soul enters the abode of God." Aum Namah Sivaya.

What Is the Ultimate Goal of Earthly Life?

The ultimate goal of life on earth is to realize the Self, the rare attainment of nirvikalpa samadhi. Each soul discovers its Sivaness, Absolute Reality, Parashiva-the timeless, formless, spaceless Self God. Aum Namah Sivaya.

The realization of the Self, Parashiva, is the destiny of each soul, attainable through renunciation, sustained meditation and frying the seeds of karmas yet to

germinate. It is the gateway to moksha, liberation from rebirth. The Self lies beyond the thinking mind, beyond the feeling nature, beyond action or any movement of even the highest state of consciousness. The Self God is more solid than a neutron star, more elusive than empty space, more intimate than thought and feeling. It is ultimate reality itself, the innermost Truth all seekers seek. It is well worth striving for. It is well worth struggling to bring the mind under the dominion of the will. After the Self is realized, the mind is seen for the unreality that it truly is. Because Self Realization must be experienced in a physical body, the soul cycles back again and again into flesh to dance with Siva, live with Siva and ultimately merge with Siva in undifferentiated oneness. Yea, jiva is actually Siva. The Vedas explain, "As water poured into water, milk poured into milk, ghee into ghee become one without differentiation, even so the individual soul and the Supreme Self become one." Aum Namah Sivaya.