

## Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami



Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami ascended the pitham, spiritual seat, of Kauai Aadheenam (also known as Kauai's Hindu monastery) as Guru Mahasannidhanam and 163rd preceptor of the Nandinatha Sampradaya's Kailasa Parampara, upon the passing of Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami on November 12, 2001. He continues the mission of Subramuniyaswami to establish Saivite Hinduism in the West and strengthen it in the East through four major areas of service: Hinduism Today international magazine, Saiva Siddhanta Church, Himalayan Academy and Hindu Heritage Endowment and. Hinduism Today magazine is the world's foremost Hindu publication. It is published quarterly and supplemented with Hindu Press International, a daily e-mail news summary service on Hindu events and issues. Saiva Siddhanta Church is the fellowship of initiated disciples and students and includes the Iraivan Temple project on Kauai, the first all-granite Hindu temple built in the West. Himalayan Academy publishes books by

the gurus of Kauai Aadheenam and conducts courses for students. Hindu Heritage Endowment as of 2006 has assets of \$8,100,000, the yearly proceeds of which fund various Hindu institutions.

Bodhinatha first met Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami in September of 1964, in Virginia City, Nevada, at age 21. He stated, "I want to realize God." A year later, upon completing his university education, Bodhinatha took monastic vows and moved to the monastery permanently. In 1970, Subramuniyaswami took him to Sri Lanka and introduced him to Jaffna Saivite culture and worship, just as Subramuniyaswami had been introduced in the late 1940s. In 1972, at his Sri Subramuniya Ashram in Alaveddy, Subramuniyaswami gave him sannyas diksha in a powerful ceremony. The young swami remained in Lanka another six months, pilgrimaging many times to the Columbuturai hut of Subramuniyaswami's guru, Yogaswami, for worship and meditation, as well as to the famed temples of Nallur, Kumbalavalai and Katirgama.

Early on, Bodhinatha distinguished himself as a gifted teacher, working closely in the 1970s with the first large group of Subramuniyaswami's Western devotees to formally enter the Saivite Hindu religion. Many of those devotees are today the senior members of Saiva Siddhanta Church. As a special discipline he lived for nine months as a solitary hermit in a small hut on the ocean in Kona, Hawaii, performing worship and meditation. In 1975, Subramuniyaswami assigned him and Acharya Palaniswami to translate the *Tirukural* from Tamil into American English (published as Weaver's Wisdom), which they completed in 1999.

In the 1980s Bodhinatha taught at Kauai Aadheenam on travel/study programs and accompanied Subramuniyaswami on his lecture tours to Mauritius, Malaysia and Singapore. In 1988, after six months of pilgrimage in India, he was the first to receive acharya diksha from Subramuniyaswami. In the 1990s, while Subramuniyaswami concentrated on his Master Course trilogy, Dancing, Living and Merging with Siva, Bodhinatha travelled abroad often to minister to members and students. In 1997, Subramuniyaswami initiated him as paramacharya, empowered to confer samaya (mantra) diksha (initiation), which he did for members in Mauritius, Malaysia, Singapore and India. Behind the scenes, he has been the financial administrator and senior trustee of the Church's four corporations for 20 years.

Bodhinatha travels extensively each year and is actively immersed in a series of educational projects and international seminars that focus on bringing spiritual instruction to Hindu youth. He is also working on a series of pamphlets and books that present Subramuniyaswami's teachings in thoughtful, step-by-step style. His activities at Kauai Aadheenam are chronicled daily at <http://www.himalayanacademy.com/taka/>.