

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 65



How Do We Observe Pilgrimage?

Our yearly pilgrimage



We prepare ourselves for our yearly pilgrimage inwardly and outwardly.

First we have to decide where to go, how to get there and how long to be away from home.

Choose a temple first...

We want to choose a temple that inspires us.

It could be the famed Mahakaleshwar Siva temple of Ujjain, or the Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi, both in the middle of large cities.



It can be a remote temple

Or it could be a remote place, such as Rameshwaram, near the tip of South India, with its purifying wells.



Mount Kailash or Amartnath

Or it could be a holy site that is even harder to reach, such as Mount Kailas in Nepal or the Amarnath Cave in Kashmir.



It can be a holy place outside India...

We may also choose a holy place in Europe, the Americas, Malaysia or Australia.



Preparations for a good pilgrimage

Then we make sure that our affairs will be taken care of in our absence, allowing us to concentrate on the pilgrimage.

We prepare inwardly as well.

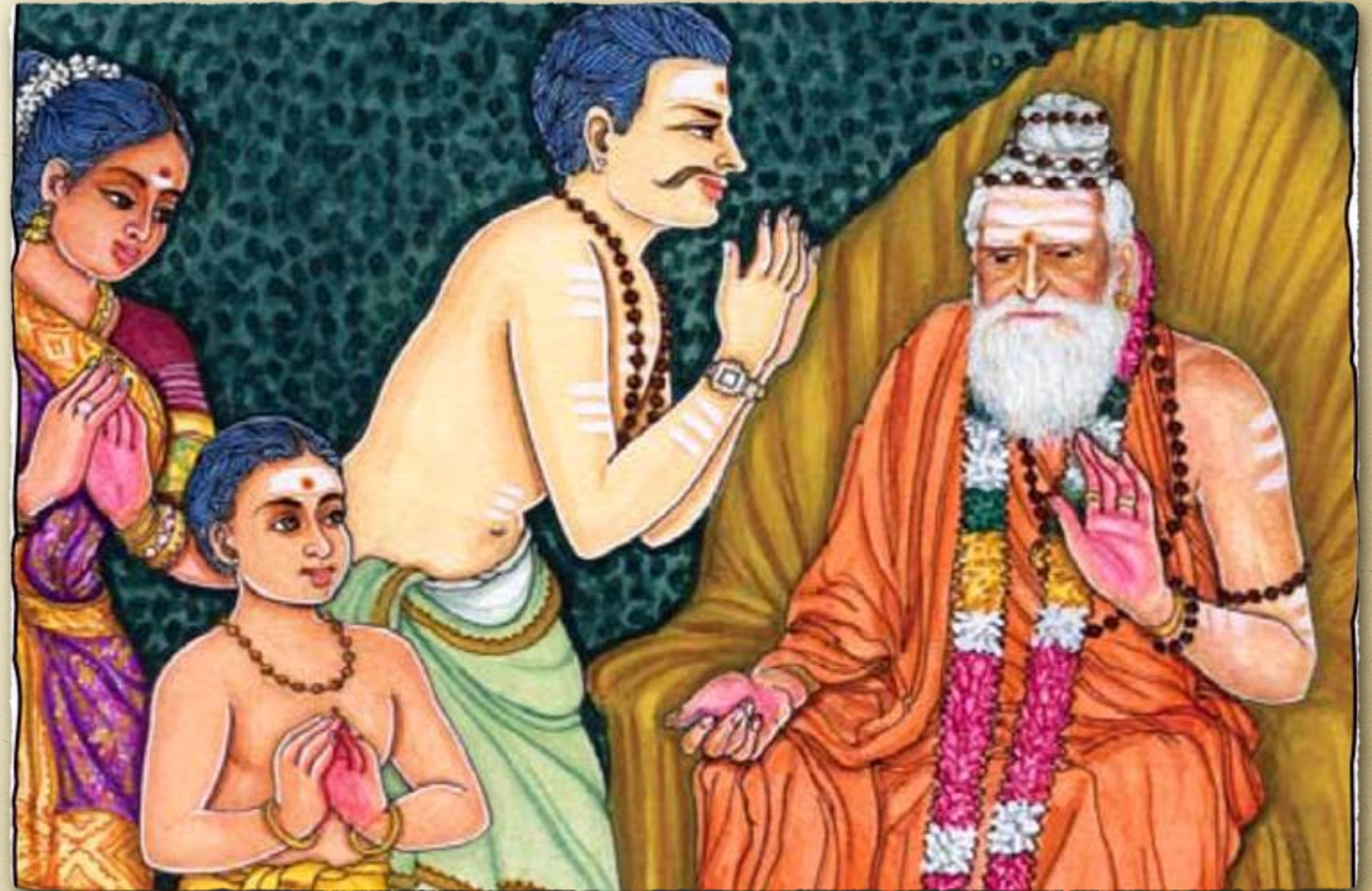
Before a pilgrimage, some devotees will fast, eating just one meal a day for a week or as long as a month..



Sadhanas and our Guru Blessings

Others do extra sadhanas and attend their local temple daily. All get the satguru's blessings for the journey.

Once we reach the destination, we throw ourself into the worship and attend every possible puja.



Leave everything at the Feet of the deity

We meditate deeply afterwards.

We put all our concern, worries, hopes
and dreams at the feet of the Deity.

We go home inspired and fulfilled. This
is true pilgrimage.



How do we look at a pilgrimage?

As Hindus, we don't necessarily feel the need to take a vacation to get away from it all.

We live a moderate, unhurried life and look at our pilgrimage as a special, cherished time to take problems and prayers to God.

We know that the blessings received will recharge our batteries and inspire us to do even better in our daily life.



An encounter with God...

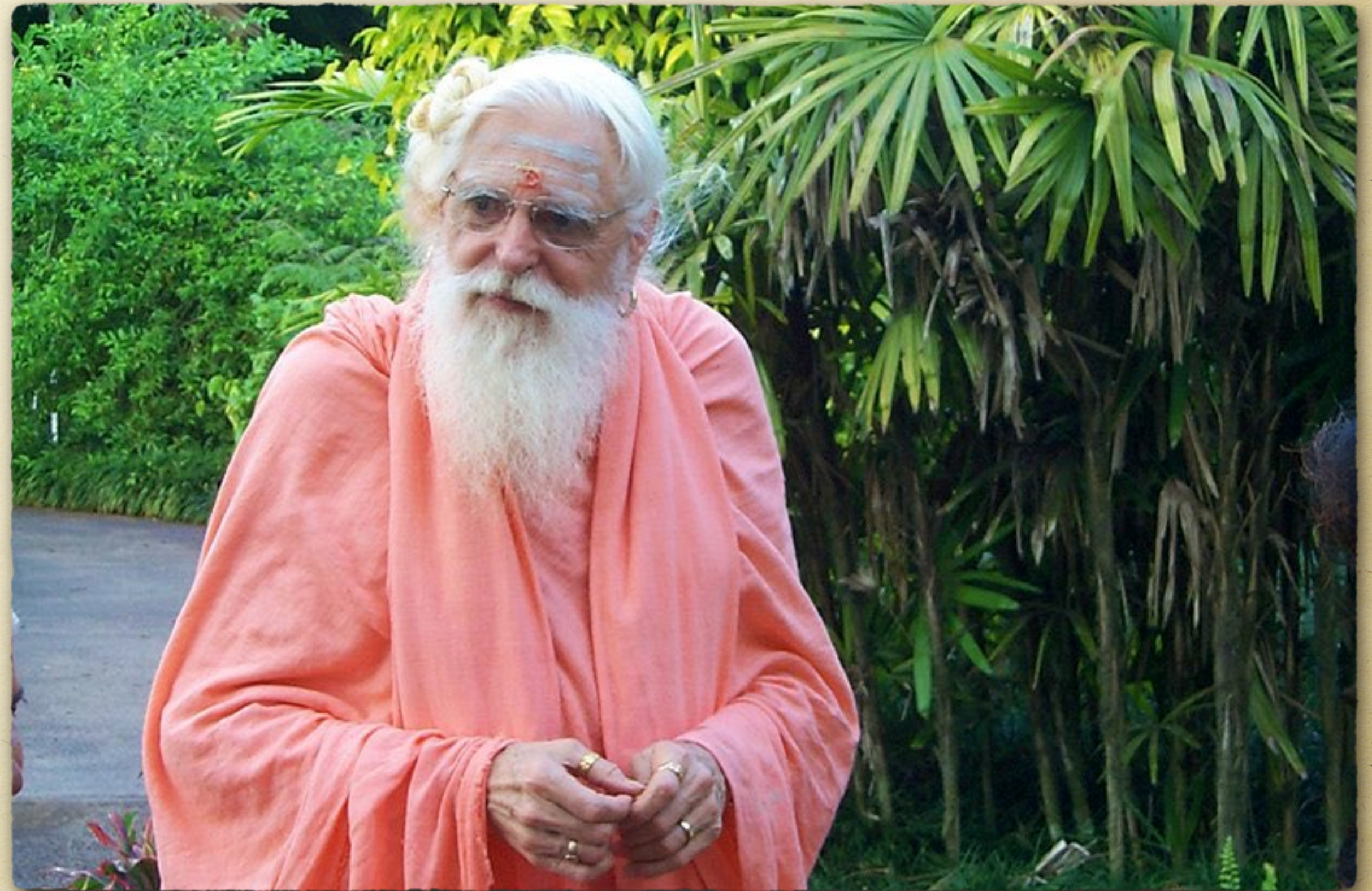
On pilgrimage we hope for special moments with the Deity, even an encounter with God at the holy destination.

These spiritual moments will grow within us for years to come.



Gurudeva says...

Different temples become famous for answering certain types of prayers, such as requests for financial help, or prayers for the right mate in marriage, prayers for healing, prayers to be entrusted with the raising of high-souled children, or help in matters of yoga, or help in inspiring bhakti and love.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 65



6.1 Hinduism is both a religion and a way of life because
(Check the correct answer)

- A. Many Hindus follow a vegetarian way of life
- B. Hinduism is a highly spiritual way of life
- C. Many Hindus believe in protecting animals

6.2 To devout Hindus, all of life is spiritual; all of our daily activities are part of our religious practice.

- True
- False

6.3 The broad name by which our religion is known and honored in the world is
(Check the correct answer)

- A. Sanatana Dharma
- B. Hinduism
- C. Saivism
- D. Indian Philosophy

6.4 The world in which we live is such a perfect place that it has no need for Hinduism's messages of peace, noninjury and open-mindedness.

- True
- False

6.5 Hindus as a religious community enjoy many protections and a respected unified voice.

- True
- False