

# Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

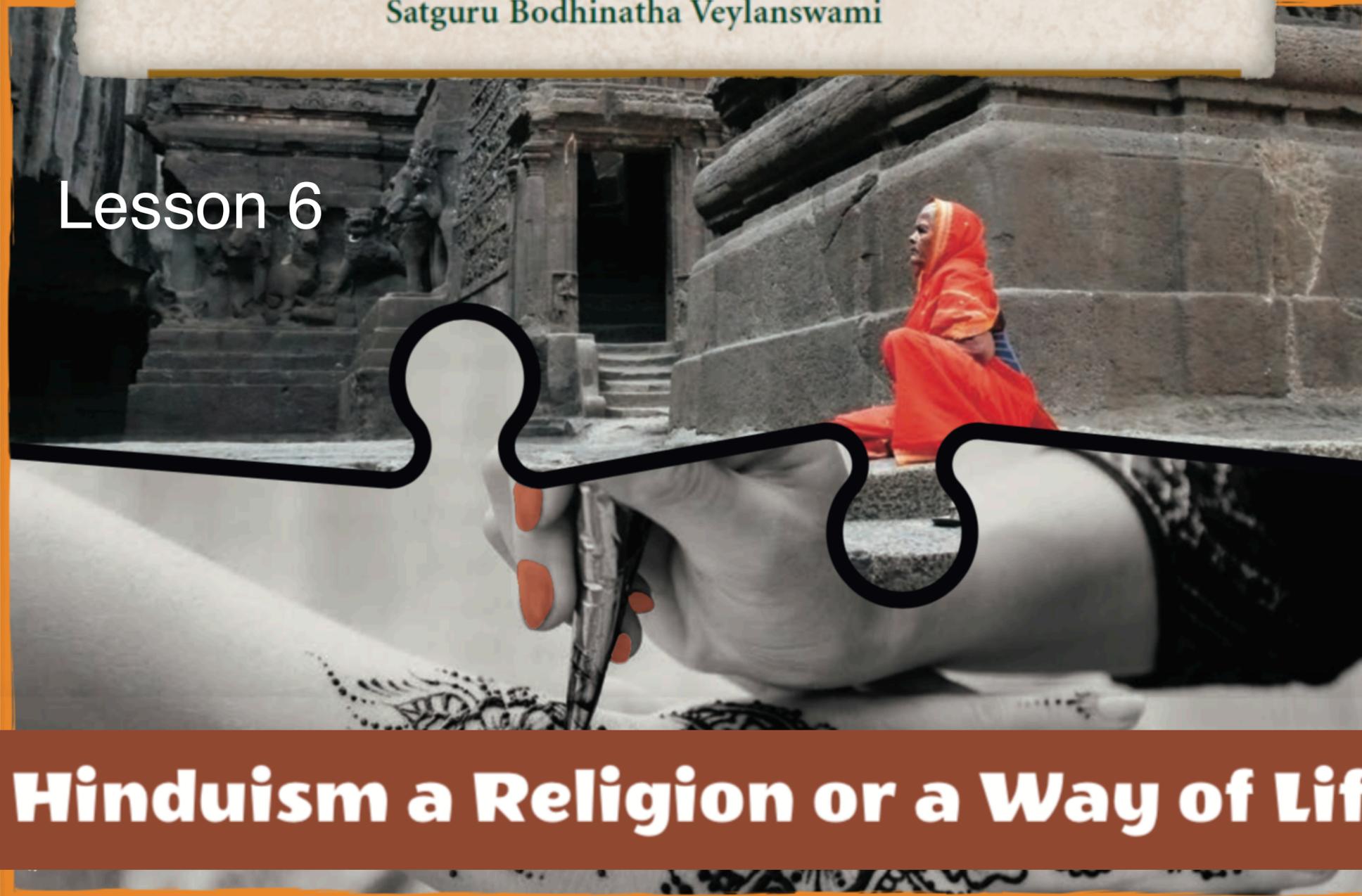
Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 6

**Is Hinduism a Religion or a Way of Life?**

NAIL

LES, SO



# Religion or way of life?



**Hinduism is a religion,  
and it is a way of life.**

**Both ideas are true.**

**It is a highly spiritual  
way of life, which is the  
perfect definition of  
religion!**

# What does 'religion' mean?

The word *religion* means a particular system of faith and worship.

---

It comes from *religionem*, a Latin word meaning “respect for what is sacred, reverence for the Gods.”

---

In that sense, Hinduism is overqualified for the term.



# No opposites...all life is spiritual

Unlike most religions, it does not divide life into secular and spiritual opposites.

---

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



# India's ancient faith.

*Religion* is a powerful word in today's world, one that we should freely use in describing India's ancient faith.

---

A related issue is the use of the term *Hinduism*.

---

This is the broad name by which Sanatana Dharma is known and honored in the world



# Hinduism no longer misunderstood.

For centuries Hinduism was misunderstood by the West and wrongly disparaged.

---

But that has changed.

---

Entering the 21st century, Hinduism is recognized as the most compassionate, mystical and enlightened faith on the planet.



# It teaches open-mindedness and non-injury.

Its messages of peace, non- injury and openmindedness are urgently needed in this time of strife and bigotry.

---

These values are being appreciated, as are Hinduism's sciences of yoga, vastu, jyotisha and ayurveda.

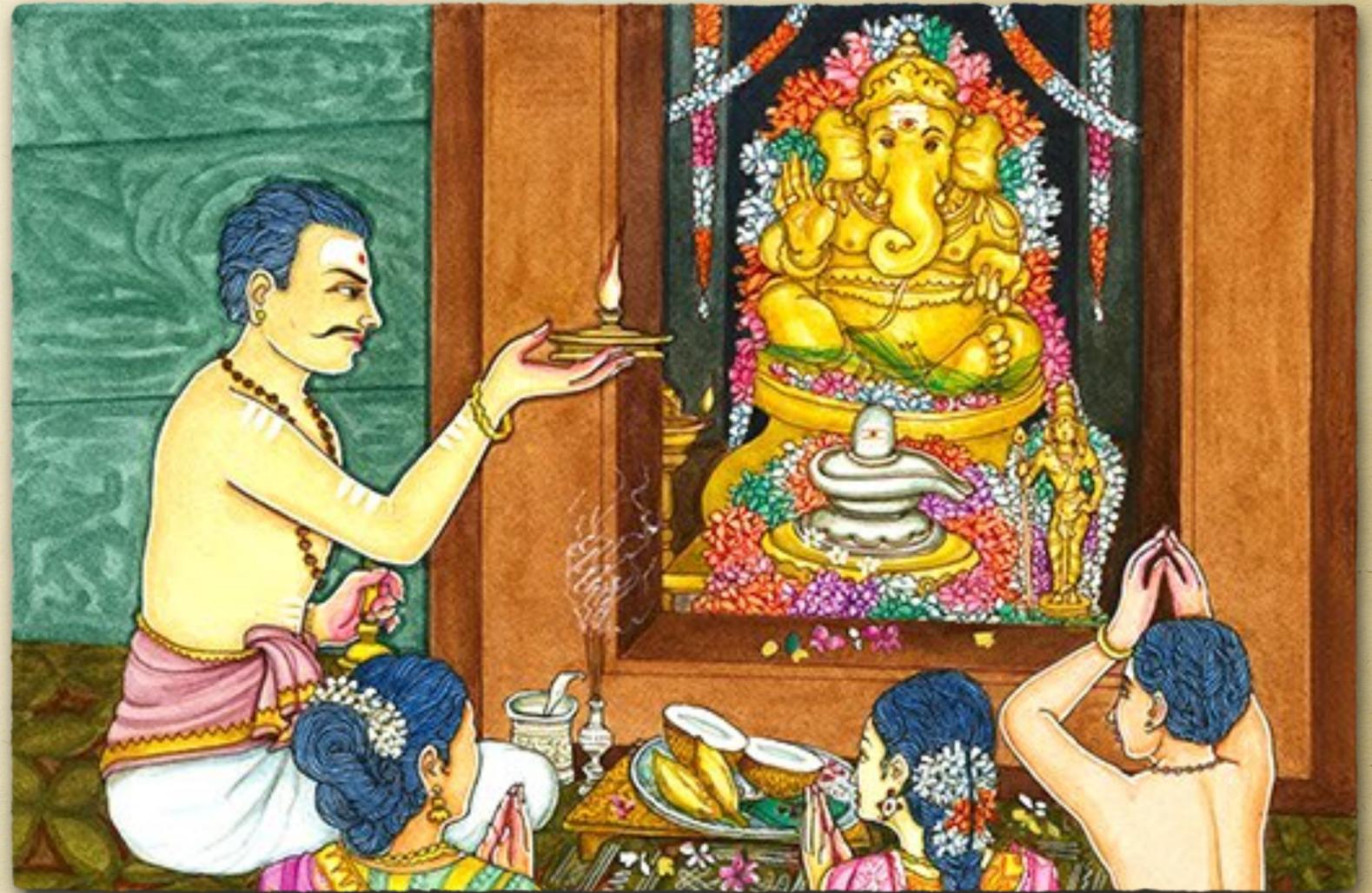


# The word 'Hinduism' cannot be discarded.

If we discard the name *Hinduism* or call it "just a way of life," we remove it from the grand, esteemed position that it holds and deserves as a major world religion.

---

We should not do that.



# United under the Hindu banner.

United together under the Hindu banner, our family of faiths enjoys the many protections given to all religions, and we have a respected, unified voice to the media, government, boards of education and planning departments.



# I am a Hindu

Hindus themselves are becoming more confident about their faith, proud to declare, "I am a Hindu."

---



# Hindu youth in international universities...

In universities the world over, Hindu youth stand proudly side by side with students of other religions.

---

That can't happen if we avoid the name *Hinduism*.

---

And it can't happen if we give up the word *religion*



# Gurudeva explains...

Dharma means merit, morality, good conduct, religious duty and the way of life of the wise person.

---



# QUESTIONS

## Lesson 6



**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, non-injury and open-mindedness.

- True
- False

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

- True
- False