Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami



Lesson 51

What Is the Ideal Home?

So magnetic and harmonious…



The ideal home is a place so magnetic and harmonious that it's difficult to leave.

In a true home family members enjoy love, kindness, sharing and appreciation.

The home: a place for selflessness

They help and support one another.

It’s a place of selflessness and togetherness, where each person has time for everyone else.



The duty of parents…

It is the duty of the parents to turn a house into a home.

They do this through their loving care of each another and the children, and their worship in the shrine room.

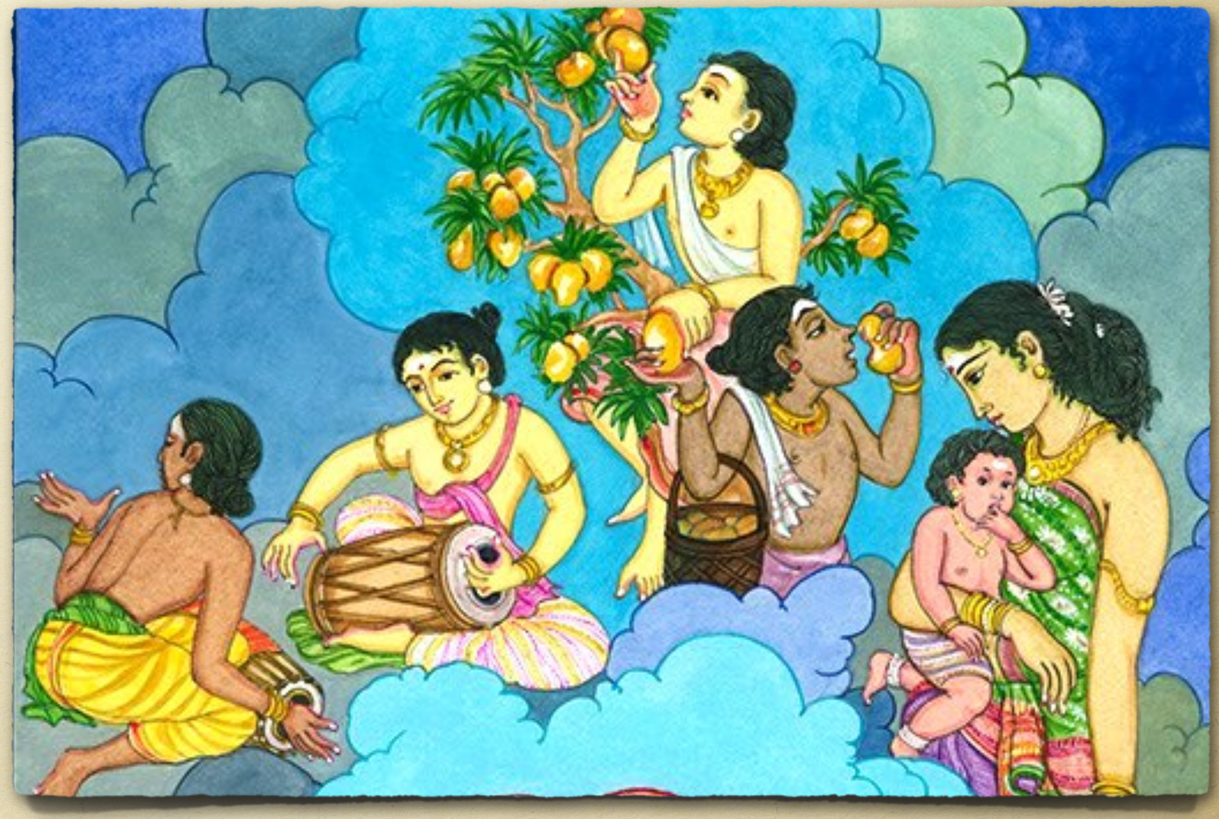


The power of spiritual vibration

This builds a spiritual vibration, giving the home a temple-like atmosphere.

The Gods are worshiped in the home.

Devas, guardian devas and ancestors are honored and invited into the home.



Cleanliness and meal taking

All the rooms are kept sparkling clean.

Puja is done every day in the home shrine.

Whenever possible, meals are taken together, preceded by the food-blessing chant.

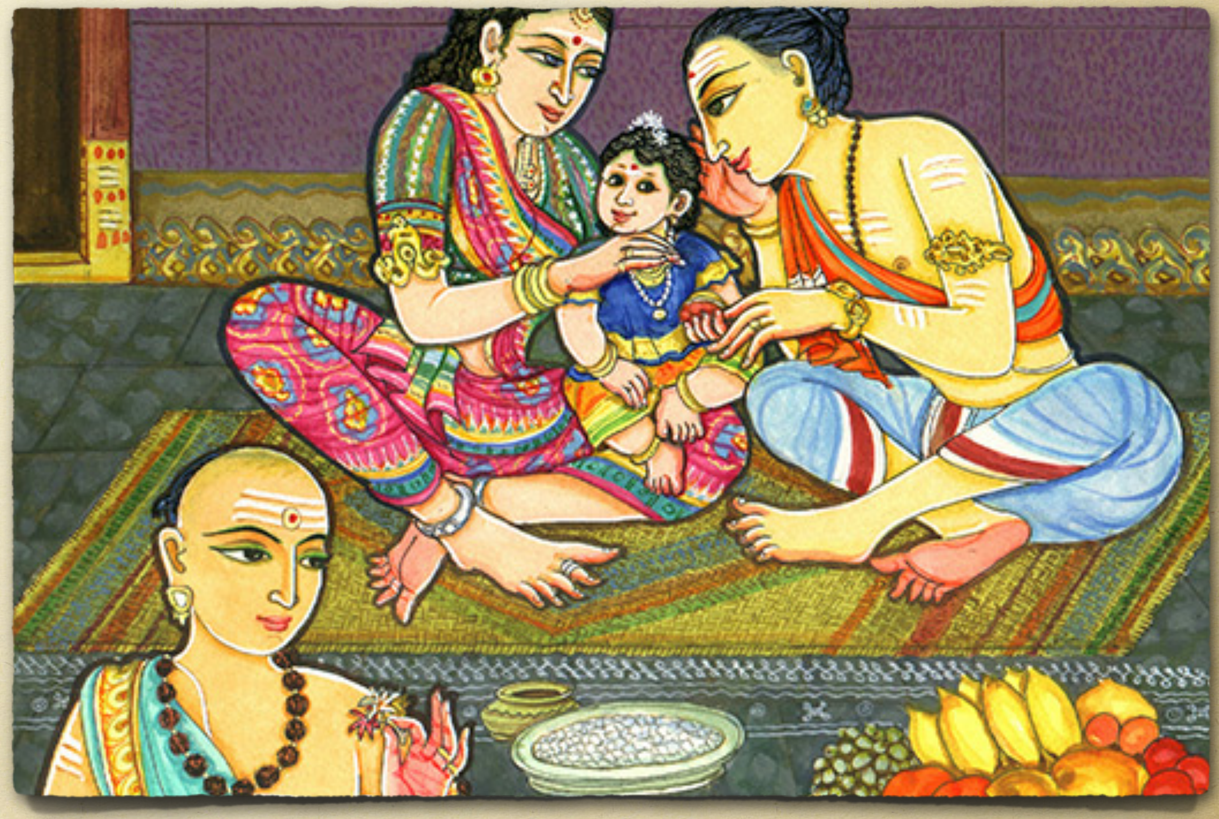


Observing Hindu festivals

The family observes the Hindu festivals together in the home.

Devotional songs are sung and traditional music played.

Saivite art and artifacts adorn the rooms.



The family protects harmony

All this creates a secure, wholesome living space, a refuge from the harshness of the world.

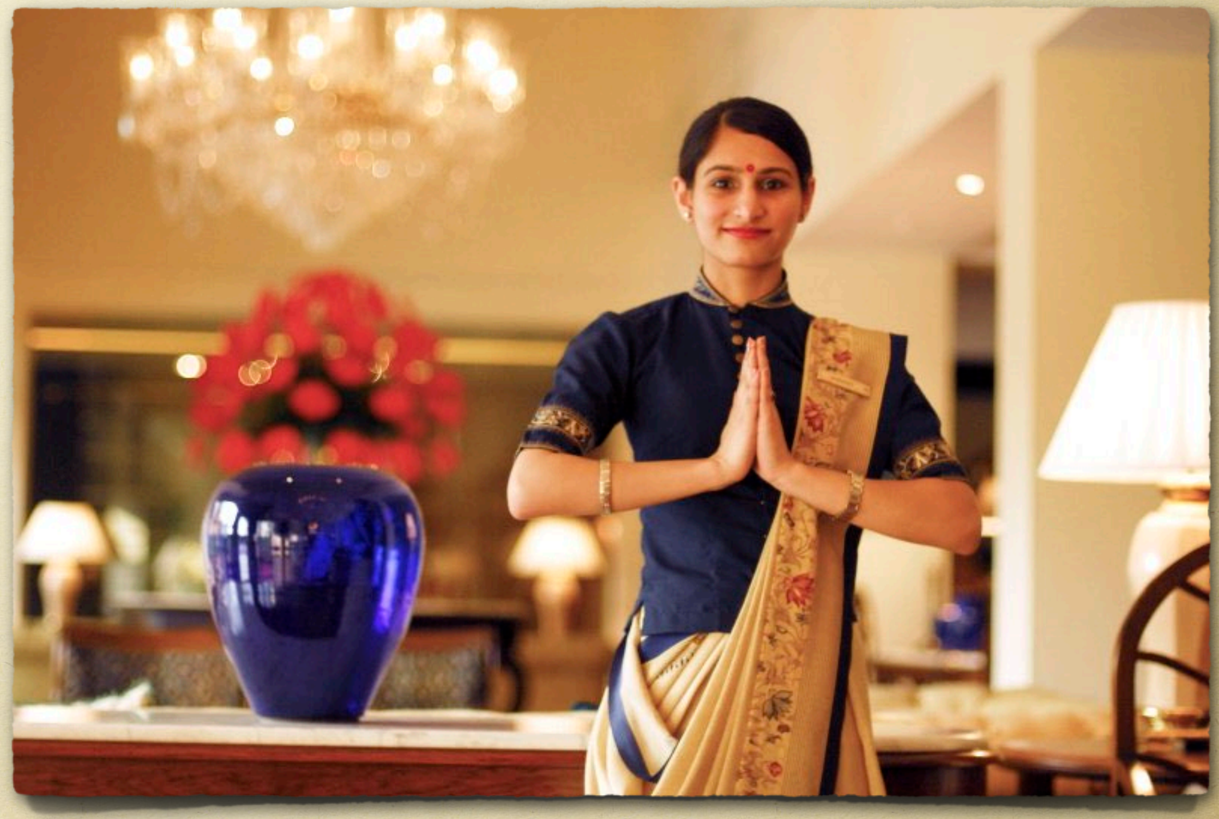
Harmony is a fragile vibration which the family protects by seeking to see one another’s point of view, finding points of agreement and avoiding argument and harsh words.

All disagreements are settled before sleep.



How does the family treat guests?

Guests are treated as God, and hospitality is given generously.



How do children help?

Children can help their parents keep the home strong.

They assist during the morning puja and annual festivals.



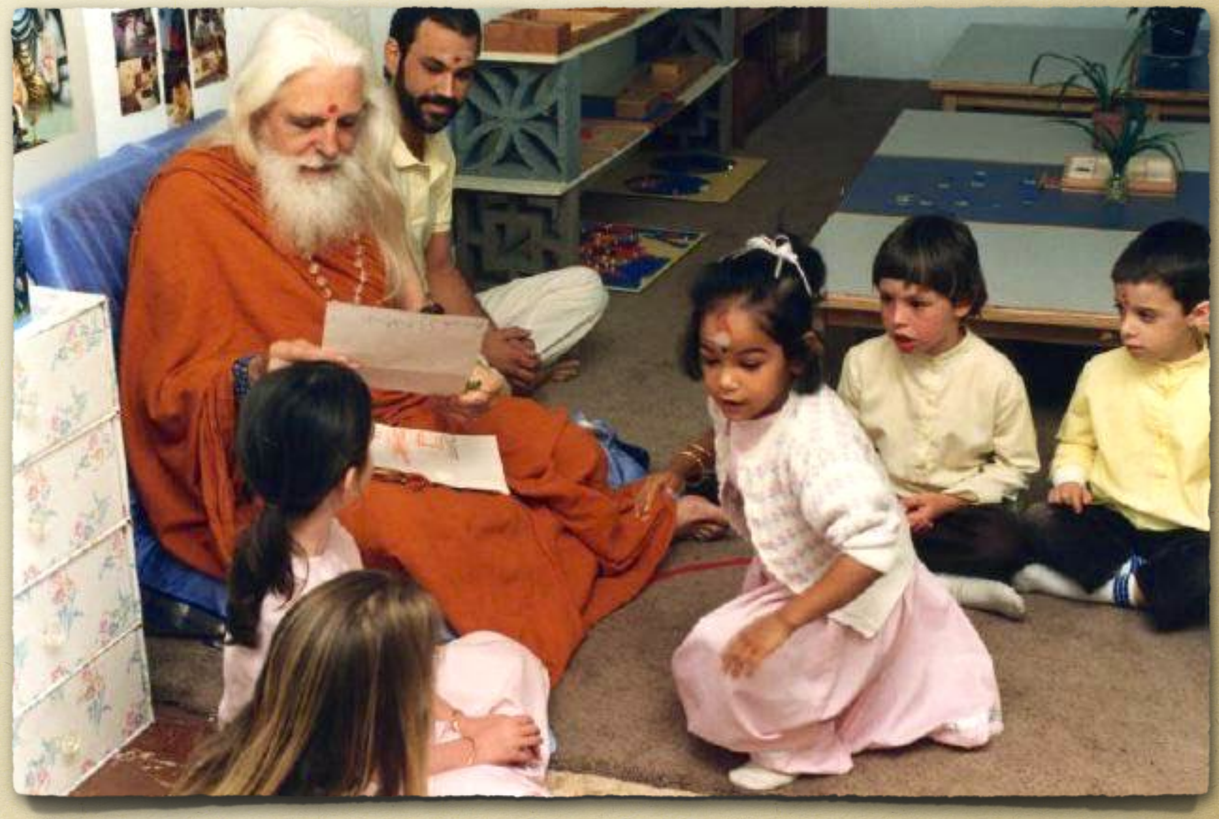
Family home evening

Gurudeva recommends a weekly “family home evening,” during which all members sit together for dinner, make plans, play games, share interests, express appreciation for one another and enjoy family togetherness without TV, digital entertainment or other distractions.



Gurudeva says…

The devas can live within a home that is clean and well regulated, where the routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner is upheld, where early morning devotionals are performed and respected, a home which the family lives together within, eats together within, talks together within, worships together within.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 51

51.1 A true home

(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Is one in which family members enjoy love, kindness, sharing and appreciation
☐ B. Is a place of selfishness where each person only has time for himself or herself
☐ C. Is a place so magnetic and harmonious that it's difficult to leave

51.2 Whose duty is it to turn a house into a home?
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. The parents
☐ B. The children
☐ C. The grandparents

51.3 The Gods are worshipped
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. Only at a temple
☐ B. At a temple and in the home shrine
☐ C. Only in the home shrine

51.4 Harmony is a fragile vibration which the family protects by seeking to see one another's point of view, finding points of agreement and avoiding argument and harsh words.

☐ True
☐ False

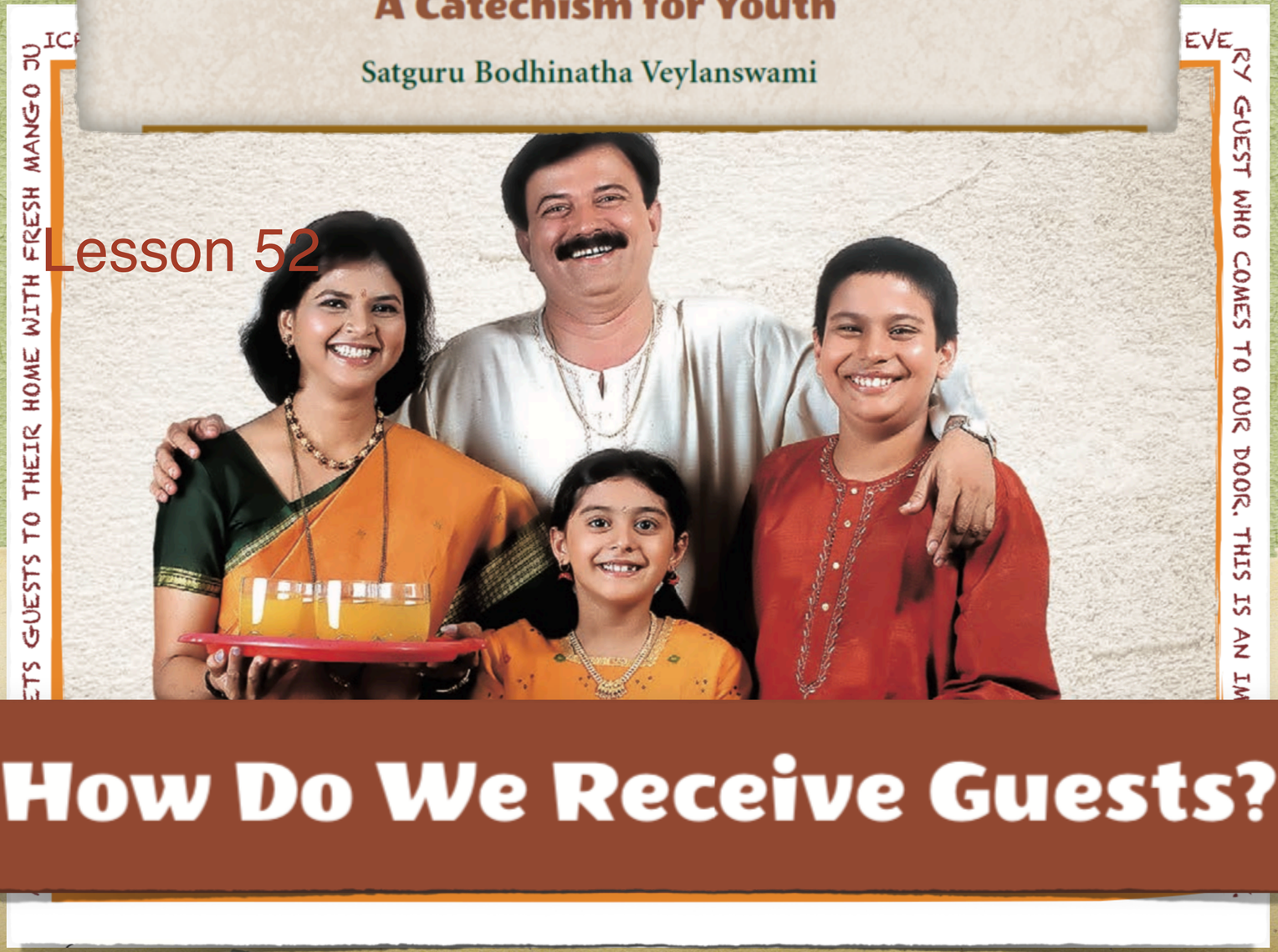
51.5 Gurudeva recommends a weekly "family home evening," during which all members sit together for dinner and then watch TV or other digital entertainment together for the rest of the time together.

☐ True
☐ False

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Lesson 52

How Do We Receive Guests?

Treating guests there Hindu way



Hindus and their homes are known throughout the world for big-hearted hospitality.

Treating the guest as God is the Hindu way.

Hindus care for guests

Even in the rush of modern life, we should never feel guests are keeping us from what we should be doing.

We drop everything, no matter how important, to care for company.



Hindus greet guests at the door

We know how it feels to be unwelcome, and would never want to send that message to visitors.

When guests arrive, even without notice, they are greeted eagerly at the door by the entire family.



Being generous and kind

We are generous with our time and kindly with our words.

Our loving care makes each one feels special.

This is our ancient and sacred duty.



The Tirukural says …

The *Tirukural* tells us, "The whole purpose of earning wealth and maintaining a home is to provide hospitality to guests. …

The host should care for the guests he has.

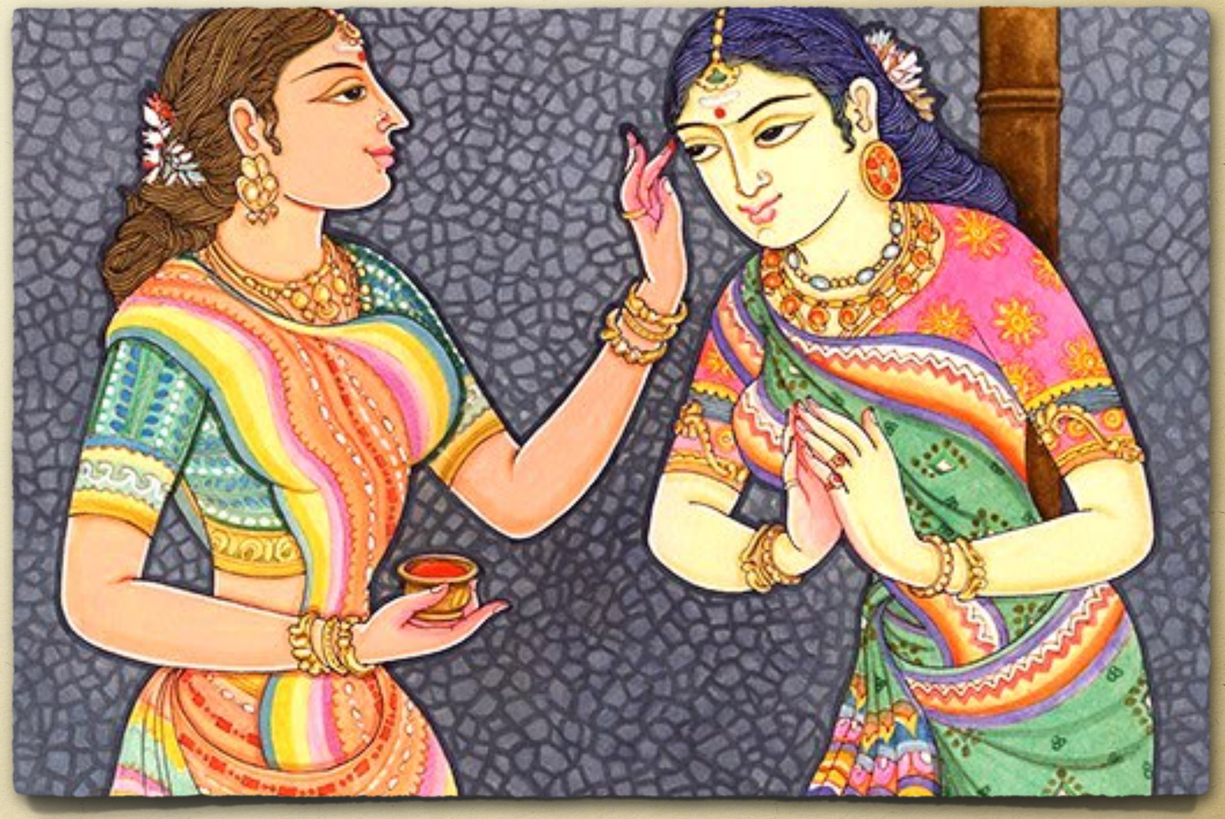
He should watch hopefully for more.

He will then himself be a welcome guest in heaven."



Hindu Shastras says…

Hindu shastras describe the ideal, saying the guest is to be honored by going out to meet him or her, offering water and a seat, lighting a lamp before them and providing food and lodging.



Honour a guest with food and beverages

There follows friendly conversation on subjects that interest them.

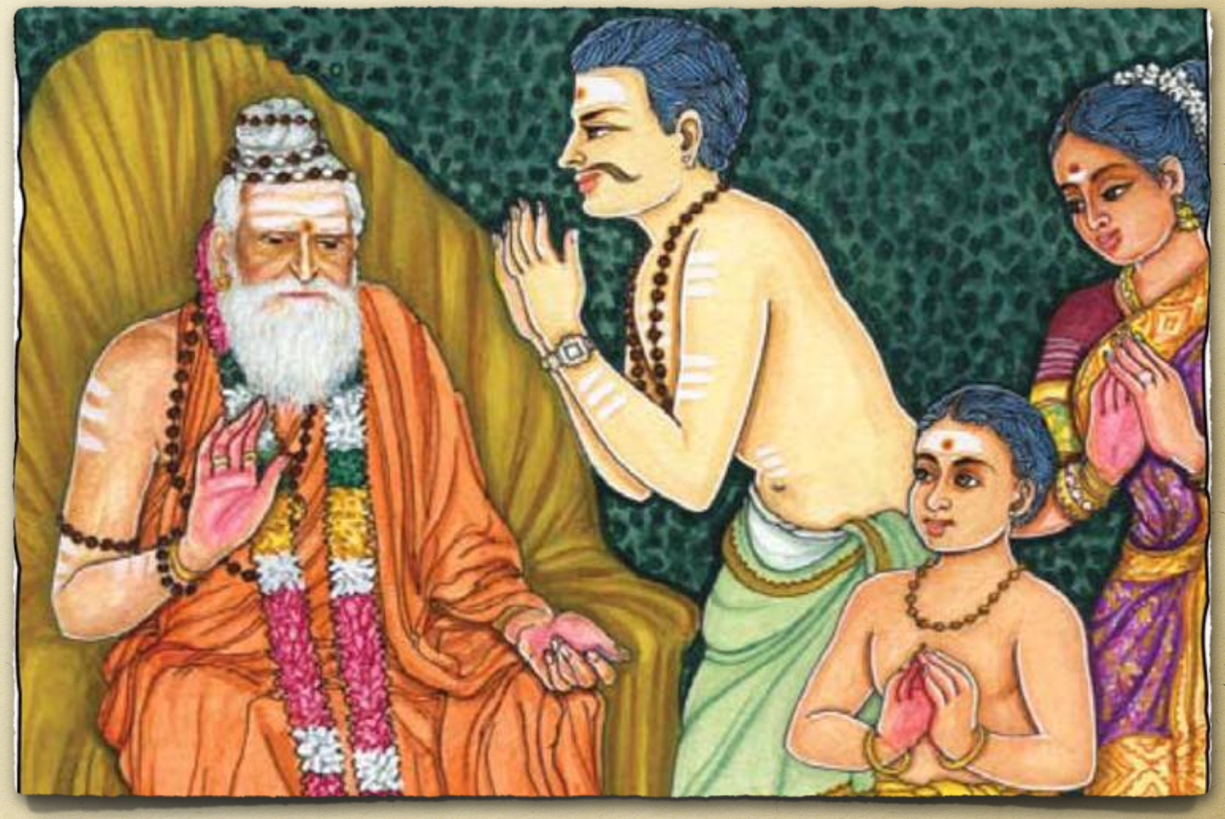
Even the humblest home will never fail to honor a guest with food and beverage.

The absolute minimum is a chair or mat to sit on and a glass of water to drink.



Welcoming a holy person

The visit of a holy person to the home is given extra special attention and may involve days of preparation, garland and gift making, cleaning and decorating.



When the guest departs…

As the guest departs, we offer good wishes and gifts, even if only a simple sweet.

Then we walk with them to their transportation, palms together, watching until they are out of sight.



Gurudeva says…

Hospitality flows from Siva's followers like sweet music from a vina.

Guests are treated as Gods.

Friends, relatives, acquaintances, even strangers, are humbled by the overwhelming, ever-willing attention received.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 52

52.1 **Guests are treated**
(Check the correct answer)

☐A. As a nuisance, and hospitality is given begrudgingly
☐B. As God, and hospitality is given generously

52.2 **We know how it feels to be unwelcome and would never want to send that message to visitors.**

☐ True
☐ False

52.3 **The Tirukural tells us, "The whole purpose of earning wealth and maintaining a home is to provide for the needs of the immediate family members."**

☐ True
☐ False

52.4 **Hindu shastras describe the ideal, saying the guest is to**

(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Be honored by going out to meet him or her
☐ B. Be offered water and a seat
☐ C. Have a lighted lamp placed before them
☐ D. Be provided food but not lodging

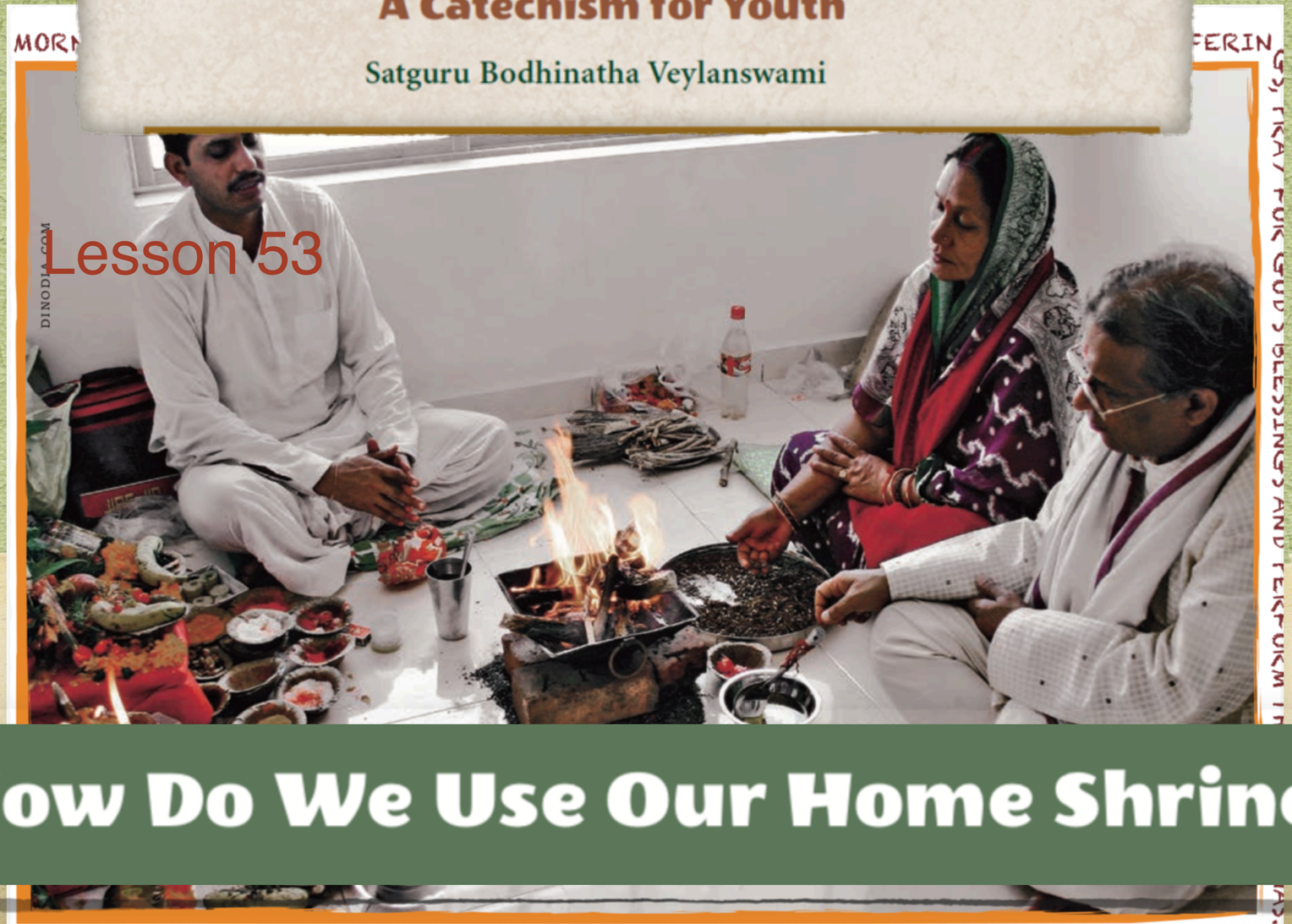
52.5 **When the guest departs we wave goodbye to them from the front door or front porch.**

☐ True
☐ False

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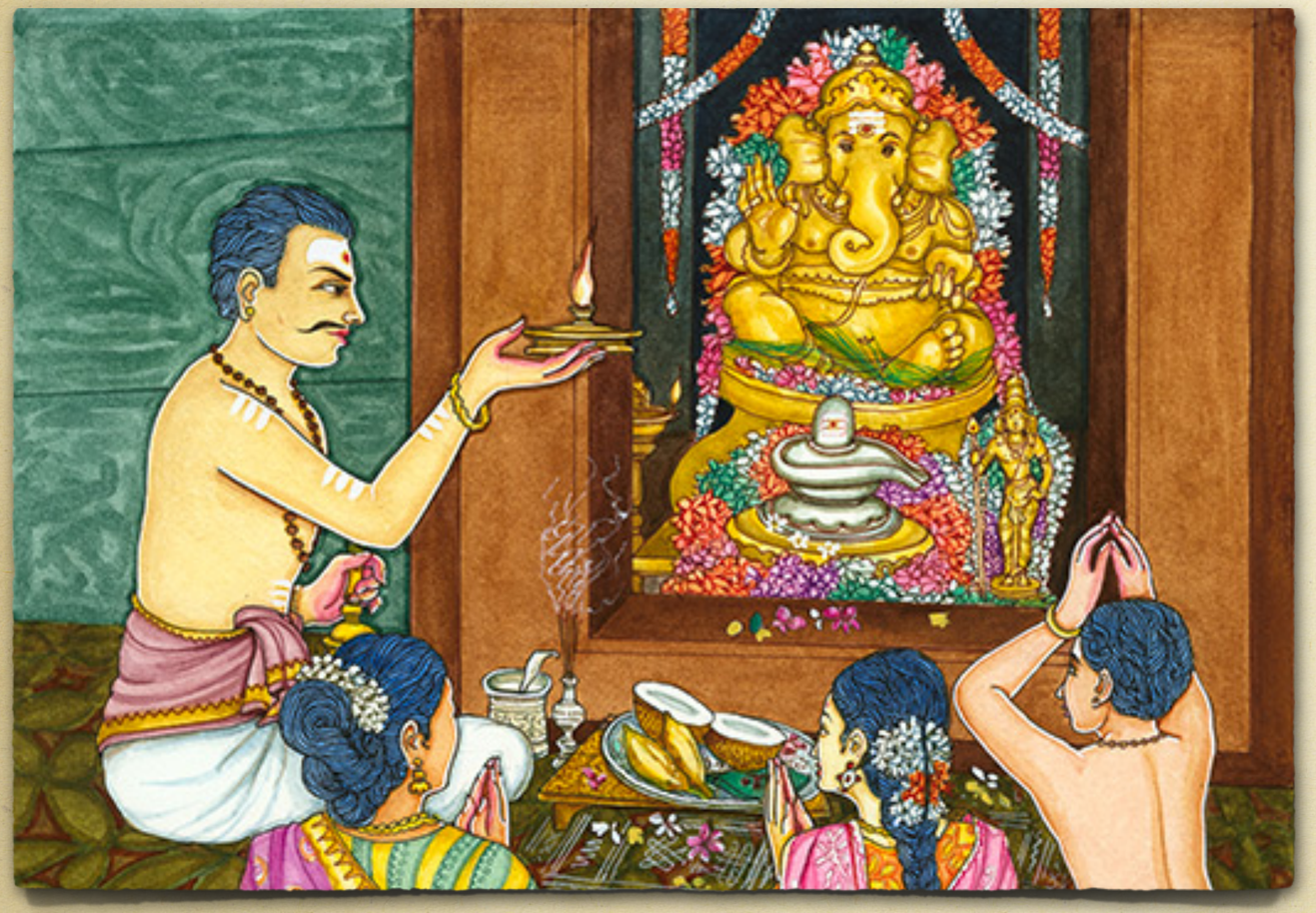
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Lesson 53

How Do We Use Our Home Shrine?

The family home shrine



The home shrine is the family personal temple.

It is the heart of the home, a sacred place we go into to be close to God, Gods and the devas.

A entire room…

Hindus who are wise and serious about practicing their religion have an entire room for the home shrine.



The shrine is a sacred place

They keep it just for this purpose and maintain it with a temple-like atmosphere.

They know that a closet or a shelf is not enough to create a sacred space.

In this special room, the family gathers to conduct puja, read scripture, meditate, sing bhajana, do japa and other sadhanas every morning.



Holy days…

On holy days they devote extra time to these practices.



What can a youth do?

As a youth, you can help with the shrine room and make it your special place.

You can collect flowers from the garden, help prepare prasadam and help organize the puja items before the daily worship.

Learn the Sanskrit mantras and chant along with your parents.



The most beautiful room in the house

The home shrine should be the most beautiful room in the house.

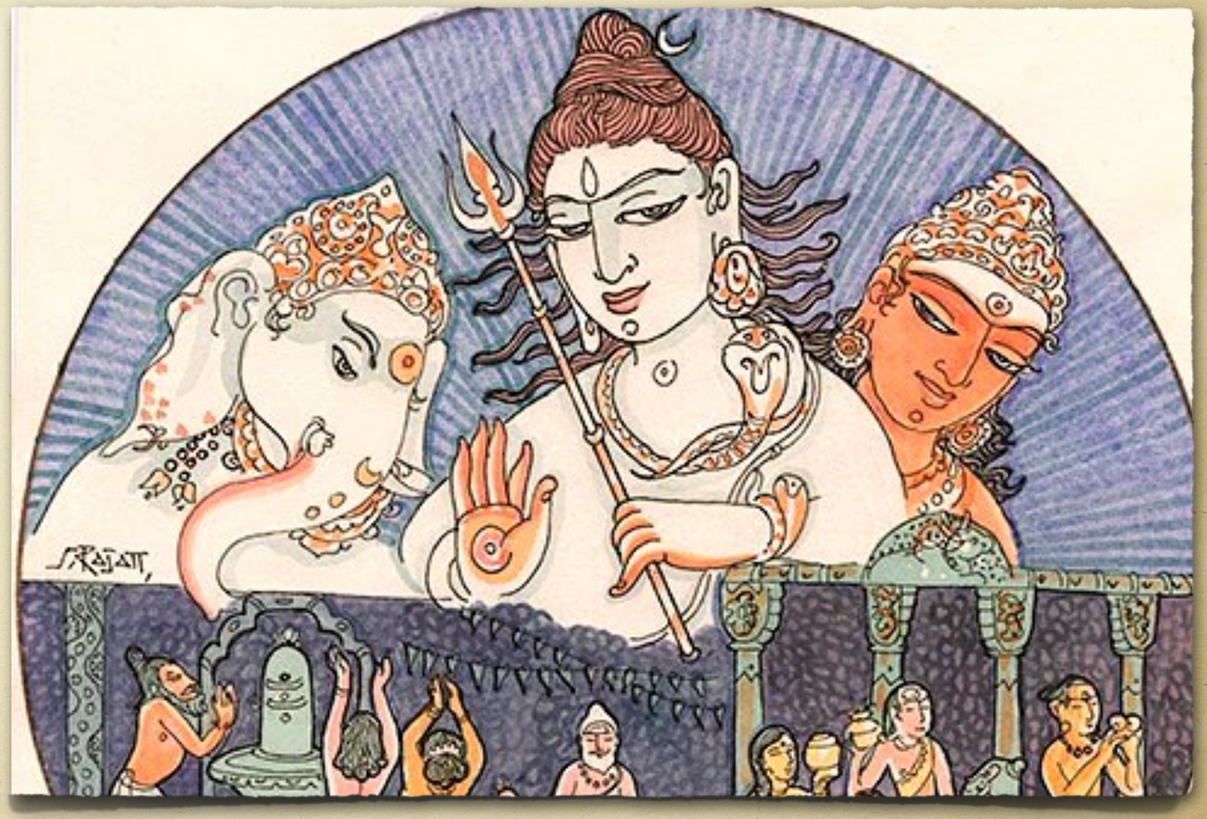
It is adorned with pictures of your guru lineage.



Deities in the shrine

The altar has images of God Siva, Lord Ganesha and Lord Murugan.

There are oil lamps, incense, bells, offering trays and flower baskets.



Devas from the temple

Each time we return from the community temple, we visit the shrine and light a lamp.

This connects it to the temple.

If the shrine is kept pure, many devas come and live there, including your own guardian devas.



Gurudeva explains…

Gurudeva said, “A room is set aside for these permanent unseen guests.

It is a room that the whole family can enter and sit in.

They can commune inwardly with these refined beings.

These devas are dedicated to protecting the family generation after generation.”



How do the beings of light help?

These beings of light bless and protect you, keeping the home secure and peaceful.

When we provide a home for God inside our own home, it is easy for the family to be happy.

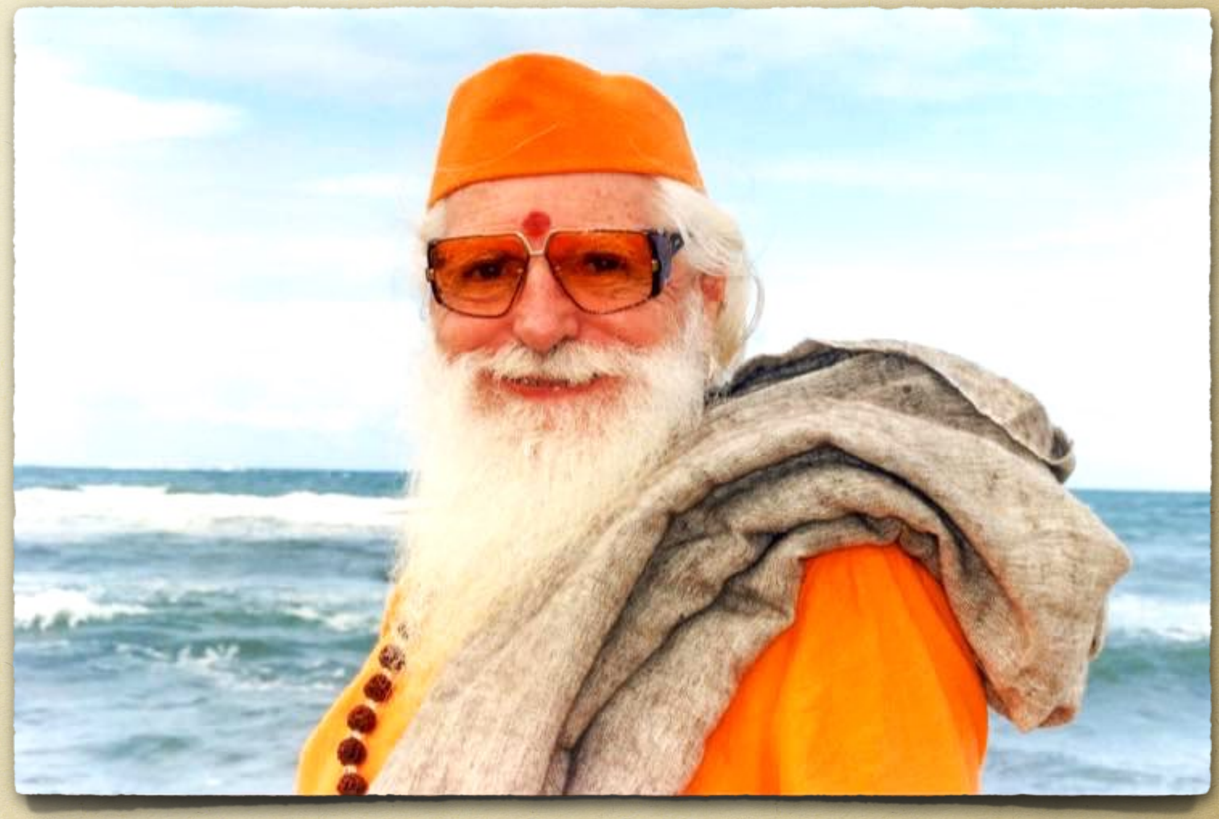
It is easy to get along and love one another.

It is easy to feel Siva's protective presence.



Gurudeva says….

Every Saivite home centers around the home shrine, a special room set aside and maintained to create a temple-like atmosphere in which we conduct puja, read scripture, perform sadhana, meditate, sing bhajana and do japa.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 53

53.1 **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

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

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

53.3 **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

53.4 **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

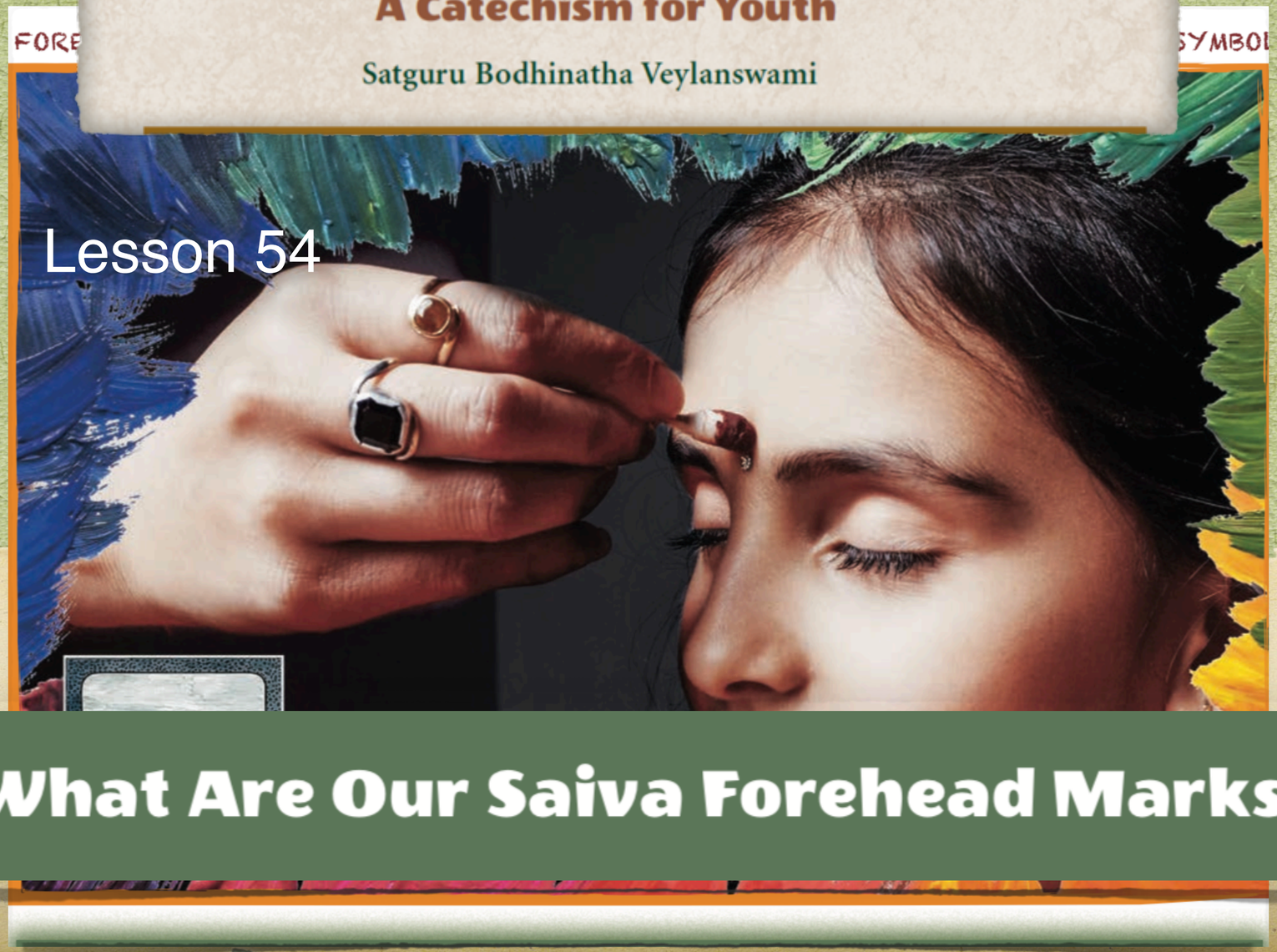
53.5 **Hindus as a religious community enjoy many protections and a respected unified voice.**

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

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Lesson 54

What Are Our Saiva Forehead Marks?

Cultural & Spiritual Practice



Our forehead marks are distinctive Hindu cultural and spiritual practice.

We wear red or black dots, white stripes and designs in sandalwood paste.

Most Marks are sectarian

Most marks are sectarian.

They tell the world which Hindu tradition we follow.

Worshipers of Lord Vishnu often wear a U-shaped tilaka made of clay.



Marks for Saivites

Saivites wear three stripes of white sacred ash, called *vibhuti* or *tiruniru,* across their forehead.

This mark is called a *tripundra*.



Holy ash can be seen by devas

These practices have mystical explanations.

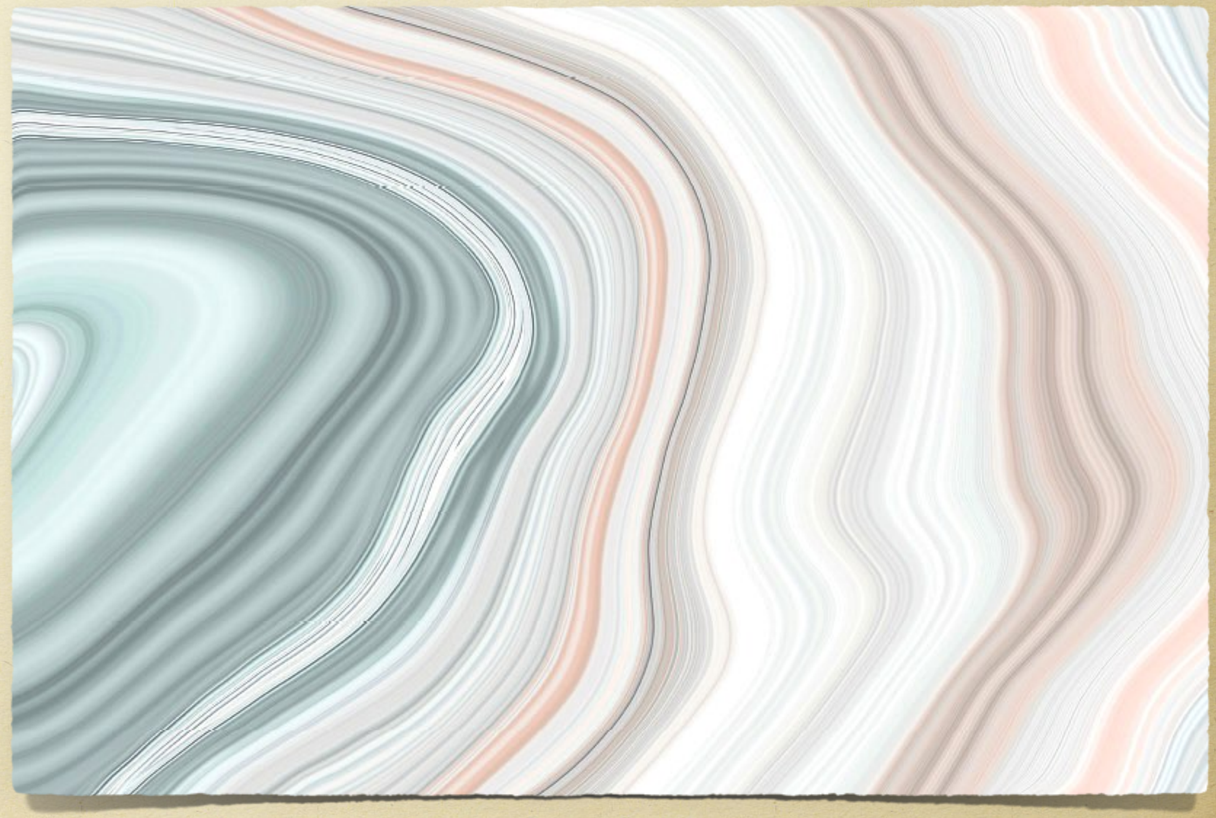
Holy ash can be seen by the devas in the inner worlds, especially during puja.

This allows them to better help us.



Holy ash signifies purity

The holy ash signifies purity and the burning away of the soul's three bonds: anava, karma and maya.



Holy ash brings Blessings

Wearing it brings the blessings and protection of God Siva.

It also reminds us of the temporary nature of the physical body and inspires us to strive without delay for God Siva’s grace.



The third eye…

A dot is often worn just below the middle of the forehead.

It is called *bindi* in Hindi and *pottu* in Tamil and is used by Hindus of all sects.

Said to represent the “third eye” of spiritual sight, it is a reminder to use our mind’s eye or inner vision and not just see life with our physical eyes.



Red and black dots

A red bindi can indicate a woman is married.

A black one, especially on a child, is intended for protection.

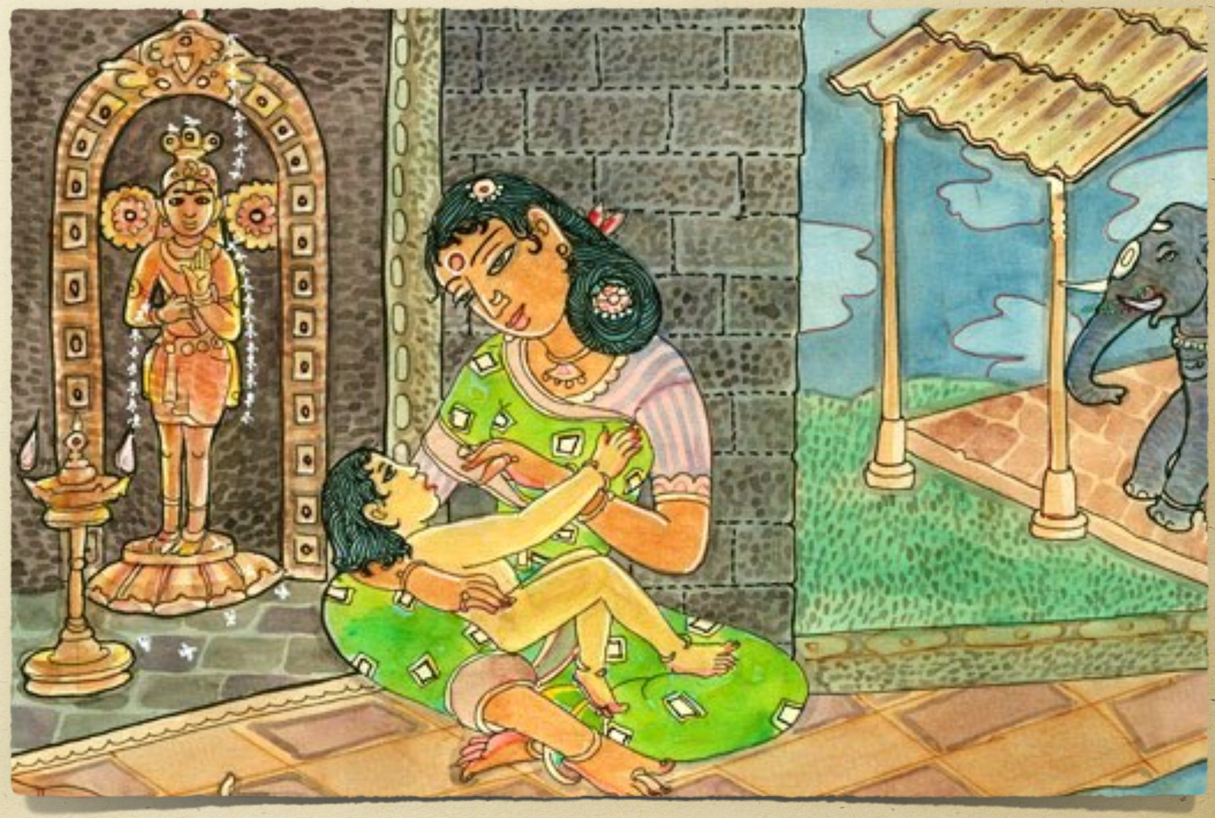


Sacraments after puja

The sacraments passed out after a puja in a Saivite temple include vibhuti, kumkum and sandalwood.

Both men and women apply all three.

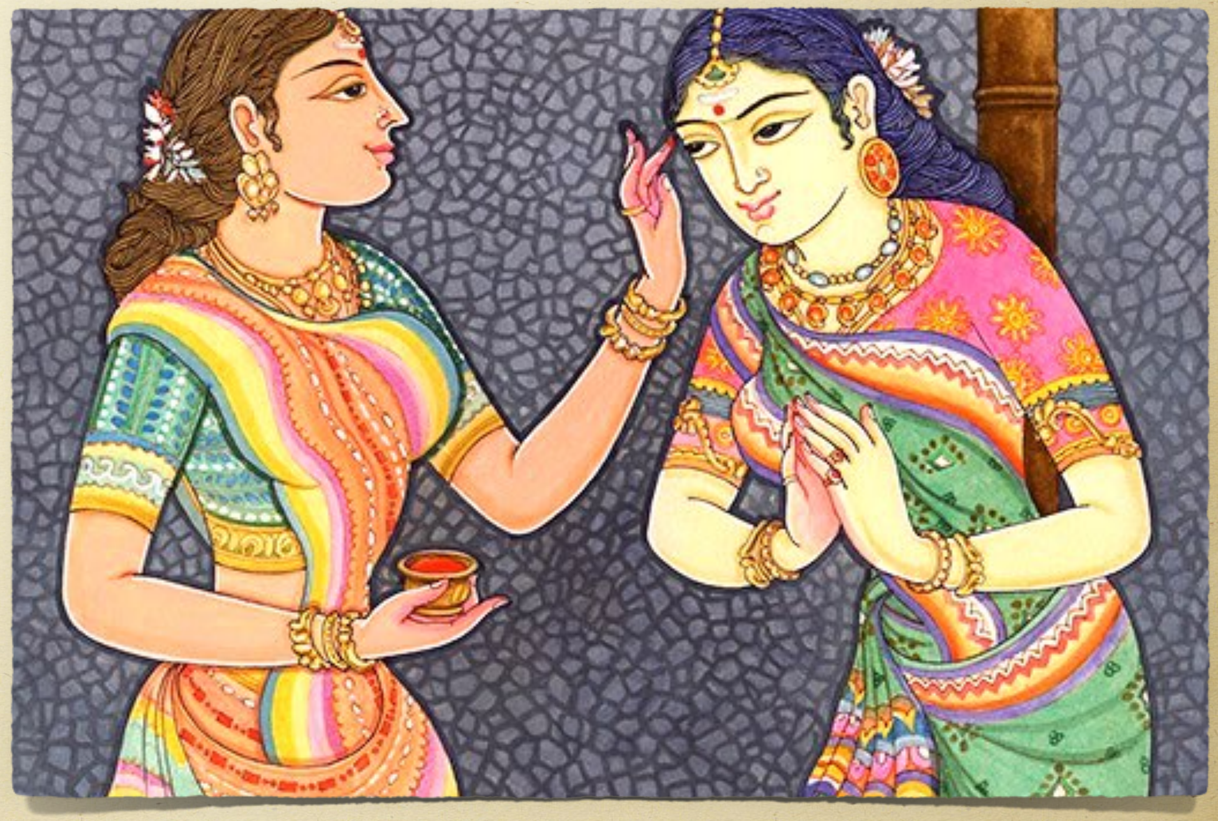
Women usually use a smaller amount of ash on the forehead than men.



Blessing visitors…

Visitors to a Hindu home are often blessed first at the doorway with a pottu.

We proudly wear our forehead marks, knowing they distinguish us as devout Hindus.



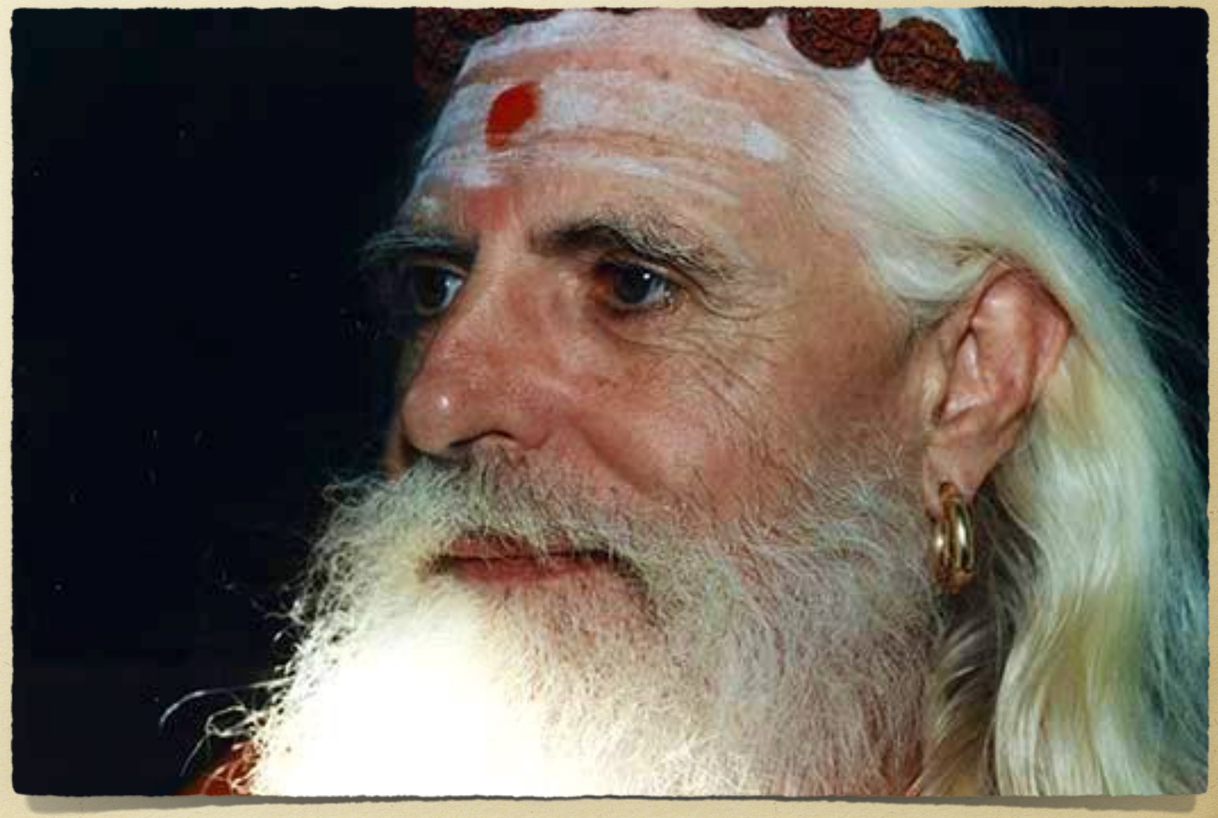
Gurudeva says…

We wear the pure white ash to alert the devas that we are members of this religion.

This vibhuti is a sign, a way of saying, “We seek your help, and we seek your blessings.” And by seeing the ash, they can distinguish your face. ...

The dot worn on the forehead is a sign that one is a Hindu. The dot has a mystical meaning.

It represents the third eye of spiritual sight, which sees things the physical eyes cannot see.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 54

54.1 **On our forehead we wear red or green dots, white stripes and designs in sandalwood paste.**

☐ True
☐ False

54.2 **Saivites wear three stripes of white sacred ash.**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. The white sacred ash is called vibhuti or tiruniru
☐ B. The mark of the three stripes is called a tripundra
☐ C. The three stripes symbolize Siva's three powers of ichcha, kriya and jnana

54.3 **Holy ash can be seen by the devas in the inner worlds, especially when we sleep.**

☐ True
☐ False

54.4 **The dot worn on the forehead is said to represent the "third eye" of spiritual sight and is a reminder to use our mind's eye or inner vision and not just see life with our physical sight.**

☐ True
☐ False

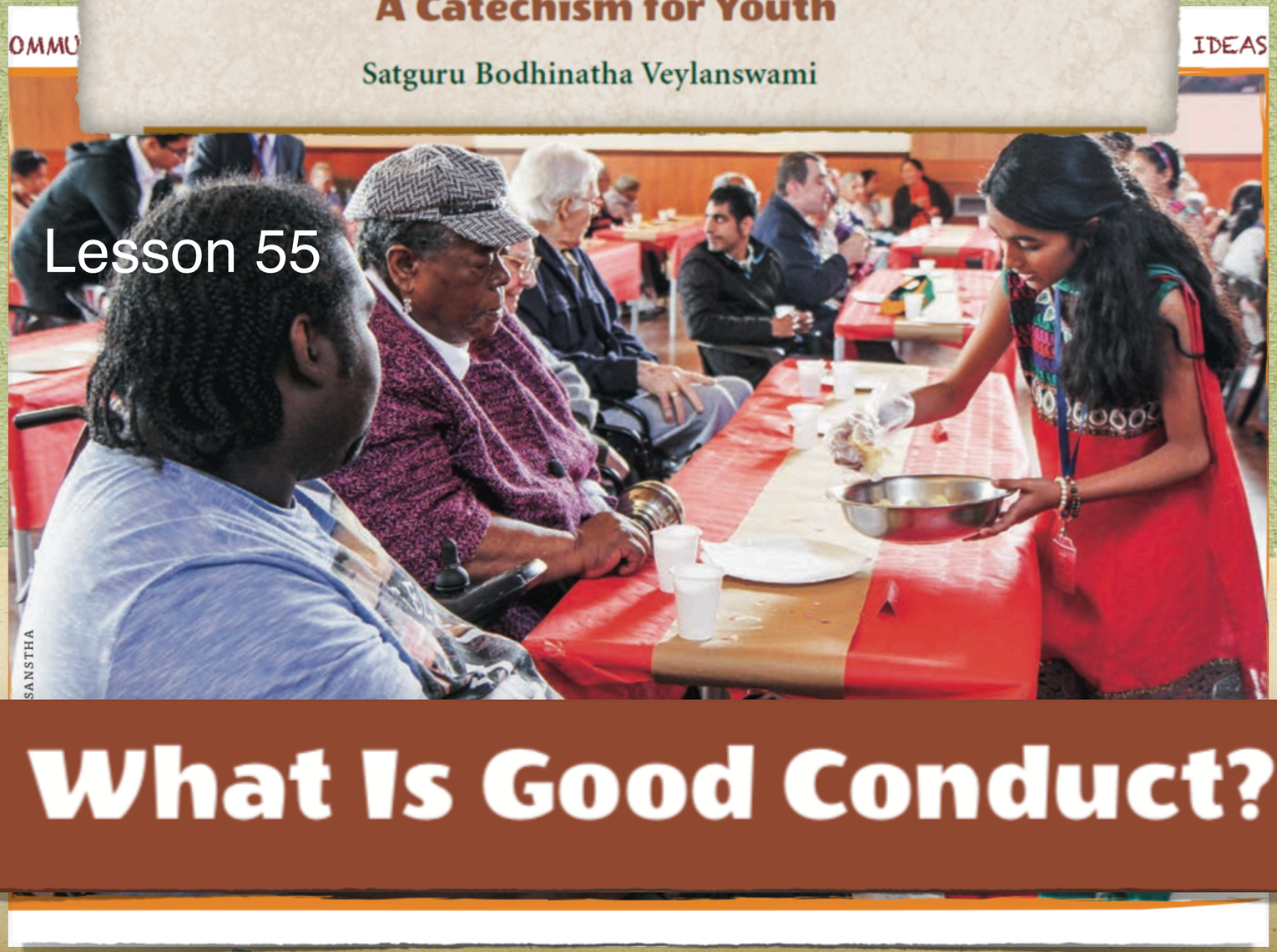
54.5 **A black bindi indicates a woman is married.**

☐ True
☐ False

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Lesson 55

What Is Good Conduct?

Cultivating good conduct



Good conduct is right thought, right speech and right action.

Being right means it agrees with dharma and our refined soul nature.

All people are divine souls

Our religion gives us the great knowledge that all people are divine souls on a wonderful journey, learning many lessons along the way.

While they may not be outwardly perfect, we learn to see the beautiful, radiant soul in everyone we meet.



We look for the best in others

We look for the best in others and overlook their faults.

We try to help others in any way we can, to always be uplifting and not critical or hurtful.



We are to be a good example

We work with ourself to be a good example and a joy to be around, not a person to be avoided.

It is our sadhana to express the beautiful qualities of love, patience and kindness.



We protect and guide

We protect, guide and encourage those who are younger.

We look up to those who are older and eagerly seek to learn from them.

We use terms of respect for those close to us, such as “auntie,” “uncle” or “elder brother.”



We never argue …

We greet others with “Namaste,” “Vanakkam” or “Aum Sivaya.”

Two important customs we follow are to never argue and never interrupt others, especially our elders.



The four keys

The four keys to good conduct are purity, devotion, humility and charity.



Purity

We cultivate purity by thinking, speaking and doing only that which is conceived in compassion for all.



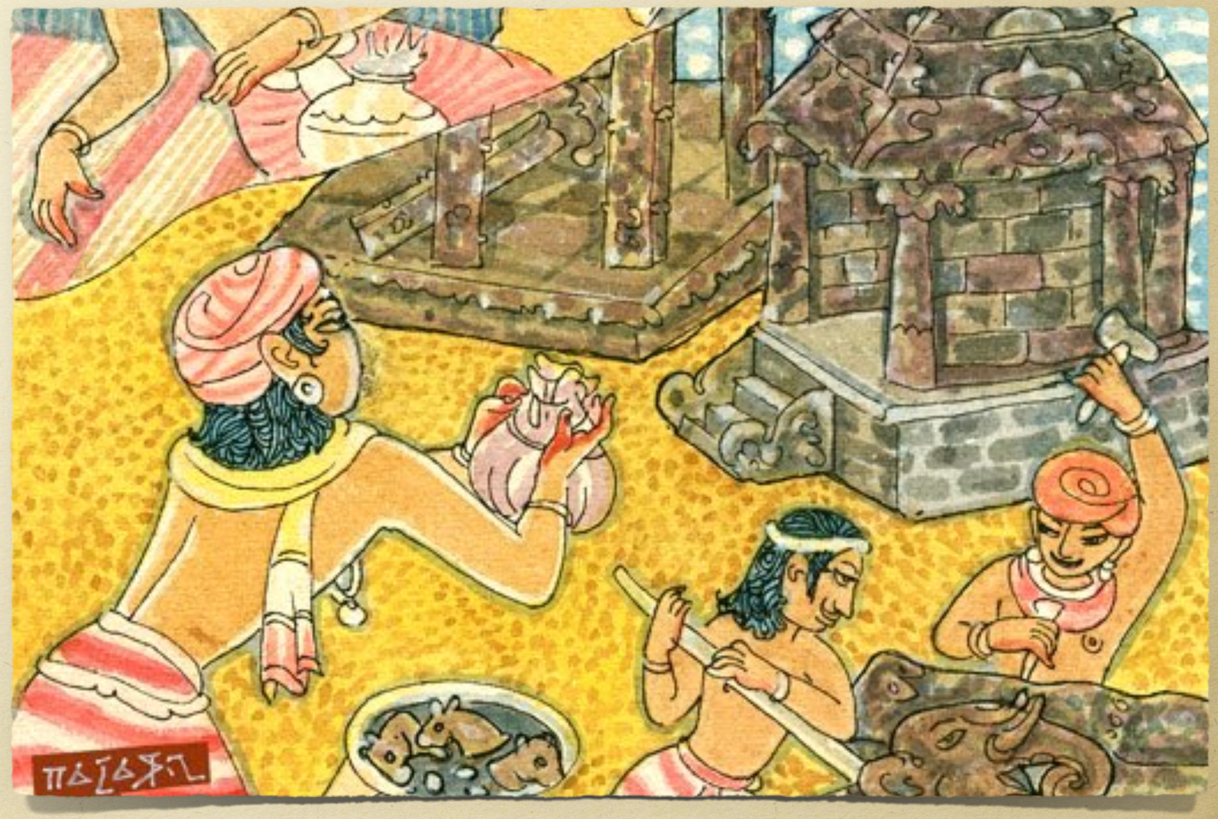
Devotion

We cultivate devotion through worship and selfless service, and by being loyal and trustworthy.



Humility

We cultivate humility through showing patience with circumstances and forbearance with people.



Charity

We cultivate charity through giving to the hungry, the sick, the homeless, the elderly and the unfortunate.

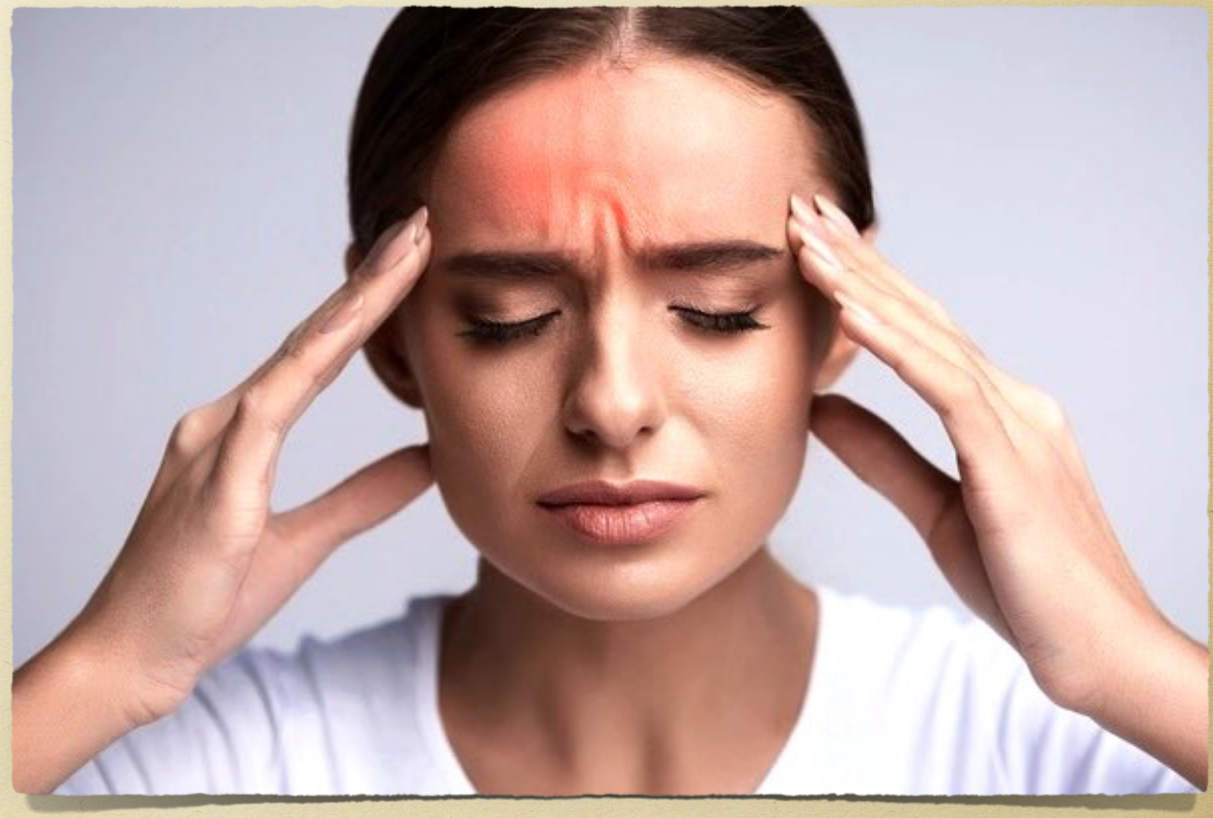


Our own conscience

The first teacher in matters of good conduct is our conscience.

It is the voice of our soul.

To know what is right and what is wrong we can also turn to God, to our satguru and swamis, to scripture and to our elders, family and trusted friends.



Gurudeva says…

The Hindu fosters humility and shuns arrogance, seeks to assist, never to hinder, finds good in others and forgets their faults.

There is no other way to be called a true devotee, but to conduct ourself properly within ourself and among our fellow men.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 55

55.1 **Good conduct is right speech and right action and does not include our thoughts.**

□ True
□ False

55.2 **Enter the letter from below of A - D for the phrase that correctly completes the idea**

___ We protect, guide and encourage
___ We look up to
___ We use terms of respect for
___ We greet others

(A) Those who are older
(B) Those close to us
(C) Those who are younger
(D) With “Namaste,” “Vanakkam” or “Aum Sivaya”

55.3 **Two important customs we follow are to**
(Check the correct answer)

□ A. Never argue
□ B. Never volunteer to help other family members
□ C. Never interrupt others, especially our elders

55.4 **Enter the letter from below of A - D for the phrase that correctly completes the idea**

___ We cultivate purity
___ We cultivate devotion
___ We cultivate humility
___ We cultivate charity

(A) Through worship and selfless service, and by being loyal and trustworthy
(B) Through giving to the hungry, the sick, the homeless, the elderly and the unfortunate
(C) By thinking, speaking and doing only that which is conceived in compassion for all
(D) Through showing patience with circumstances and forbearance with people

55.5 **The first teacher in matters of good conduct is**
(Check the correct answer)

□ A. Our satguru and swamis
□ B. Our conscience
□ C. Scripture

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Lesson 56



What Is the Hindu Way of Greeting?

Two hands pressed together



For Hindus, the greeting of choice is namaste (or namaskar).

The two hands are pressed together and held near the heart with the head gently bowed as one says, “Namaste.”

A mantra and a mudra

It is both a spoken greeting and a gesture—a mantra and a mudra.

The prayerful hand position is called anjali, from the root *anj,* “to adorn, honor or celebrate.”

In our Saiva community, we also say, with folded hands, “Vanakkam,”



“Namah Sivaya” or “Aum Sivaya.”

“Namah Sivaya” or “Aum Sivaya.”

The meaning is similar.

The hands held in union signify the oneness of an apparently dual cosmos, the bringing together of spirit and matter, or the self meeting the Self.



Higher and lower nature

It is said that the right hand represents the higher nature or that which is divine in us, while the left hand represents the lower, worldly nature.



Meaning of Namaste

In Sanskrit *namas* means “bow, obeisance, reverential salutation.”

It comes from the root *nam,* which carries meanings of bending, bowing, humbly submitting and becoming silent. *Te* means “to you.” Thus *namaste* means “I bow to you.”



I see the Deity in us both…

The namaste gesture gently reminds us that we can see God everywhere and in every human being we meet.

It is saying, silently, “I see the Deity in us both, and bow before It.

I acknowledge the holiness of even this simple meeting.

I cannot separate that which is spiritual in us from that which is human and ordinary.”



We treat the person with respect and love

This beautiful custom opens our heart to see that person's good qualities.

We remember to treat him or her with respect and love.

It would be difficult to offend or feel animosity toward anyone that you greet as God.



Also used to say farewell

Namaste **can also be used to say farewell.**

An even deeper veneration is expressed by bringing the fingers of the joined palms to the brow, the site of the mystic third eye.



Bringing the palms above the head

A third form of namaste brings the palms above the head.

This salutation is reserved for God and the holiest of satgurus.



Gurudeva says…

The mudra is called anjali. It is a devotional gesture made equally before a Deity, holy person, friend or momentary acquaintance.

Holding the hands together connects the right side of the body with the left, and brings the nerve and nadi currents into poised balance, into a consciousness of the sushumna, awakening the third eye within the greeter to worship God in the greeted.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 56

56.1 **As one says “Namaste,” the hands are pressed together and held near the waist with the head gently bowed.**

☐ True
☐ False

56.2 **The prayerful hand position used when speaking “Namaste” in Sanskrit is called**
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. Mantra
☐ B. Asana
☐ C. Anjali

56.3 **Enter the letter from below of A - B for the phrase that correctly completes the idea. It is said that**
(Check the correct answer)

___ The right hand represents
___ The left hand represents

(A) The higher nature, or that which is divine in us
(B) The lower worldly nature

56.4 **In Sanskrit namas means “bow, obeisance, reverential salutation and te means “to you.” Thus namaste means**
“I bow to you” and reminds us that we can see God in every human being we meet.

☐ True
☐ False

56.5 **A third form of namaste brings the palms above the head and is reserved for**
(Check the incorrect answer)

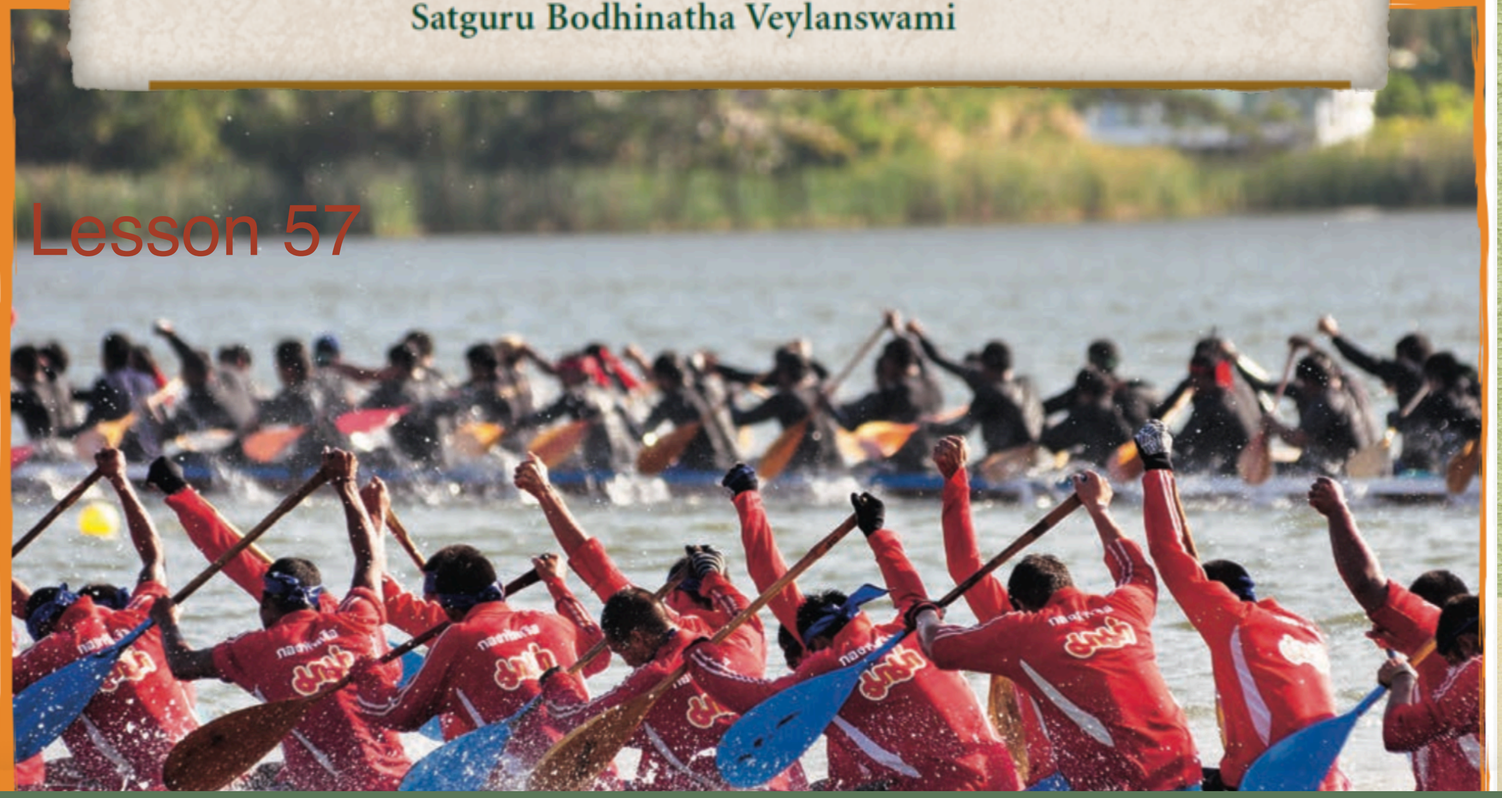
☐ A. Family members
☐ B. God
☐ C. The holiest of satgurus

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Lesson 57



How Do We Get Along with Others?

Getting along with others



Family and community are extremely important in Hindu culture, and relationships are valued above all else.

Every day we have many opportunities to do good, learn, help and uplift others.

Arguments and hard feelings

Many people find it hard to get along with others.

They are always arguing and holding on to hard feelings.



Maintaining harmonious relationships

In order to maintain harmonious relationships, we must be peaceful on the inside.

Then we can make the most of the opportunities life gives us.

We cannot do our best if we are worried or upset.



Shanti…

Peace of mind, called *shanti* in Sanskrit, is more precious than gold, and our Hindu culture gives us many tools for protecting it.



Three main tools…

Worship

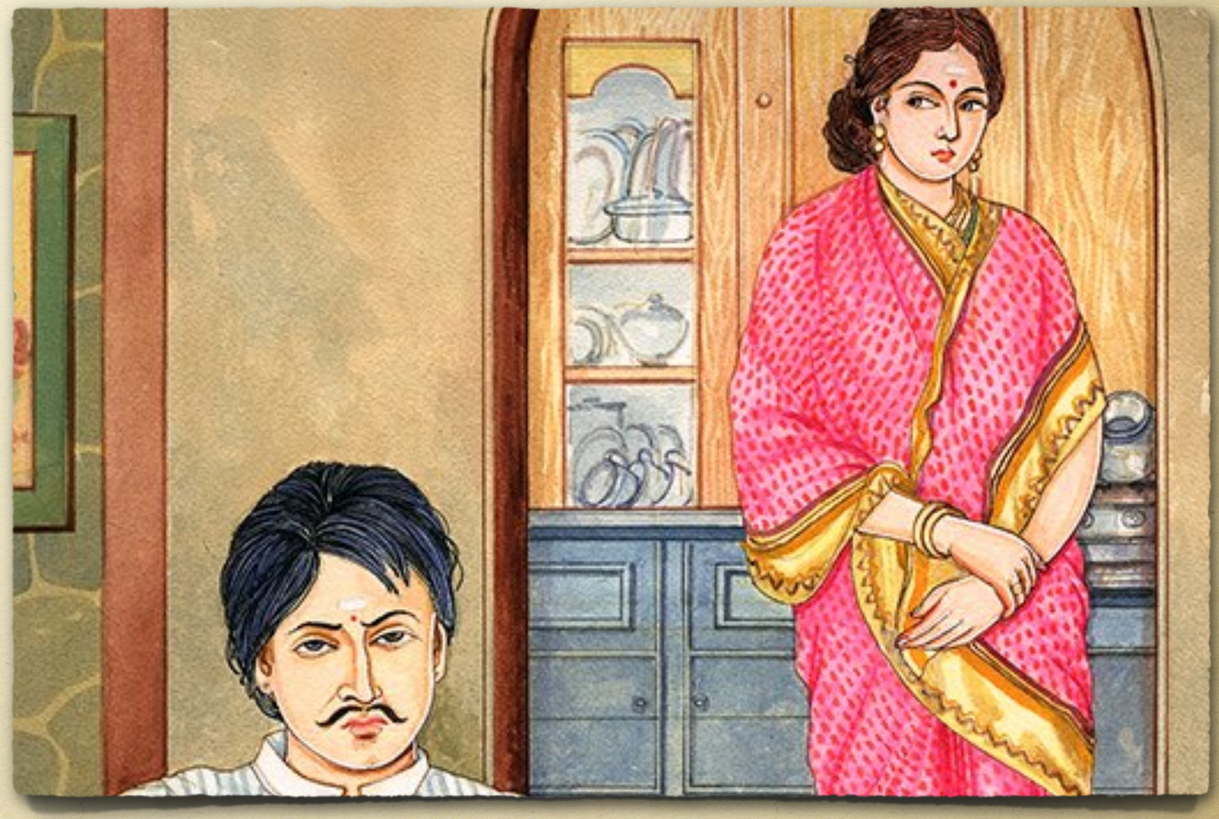
Service and

Yoga are three main tools.



Consideration

Gurudeva also valued another tool, called consideration, the art of not hurting the feelings of others.



We never argue

We are kindly and sensitive in thought, word and deed.

We treat others as we would like them to treat us.

We praise their good qualities and good deeds.

We never argue or use harsh or angry words.

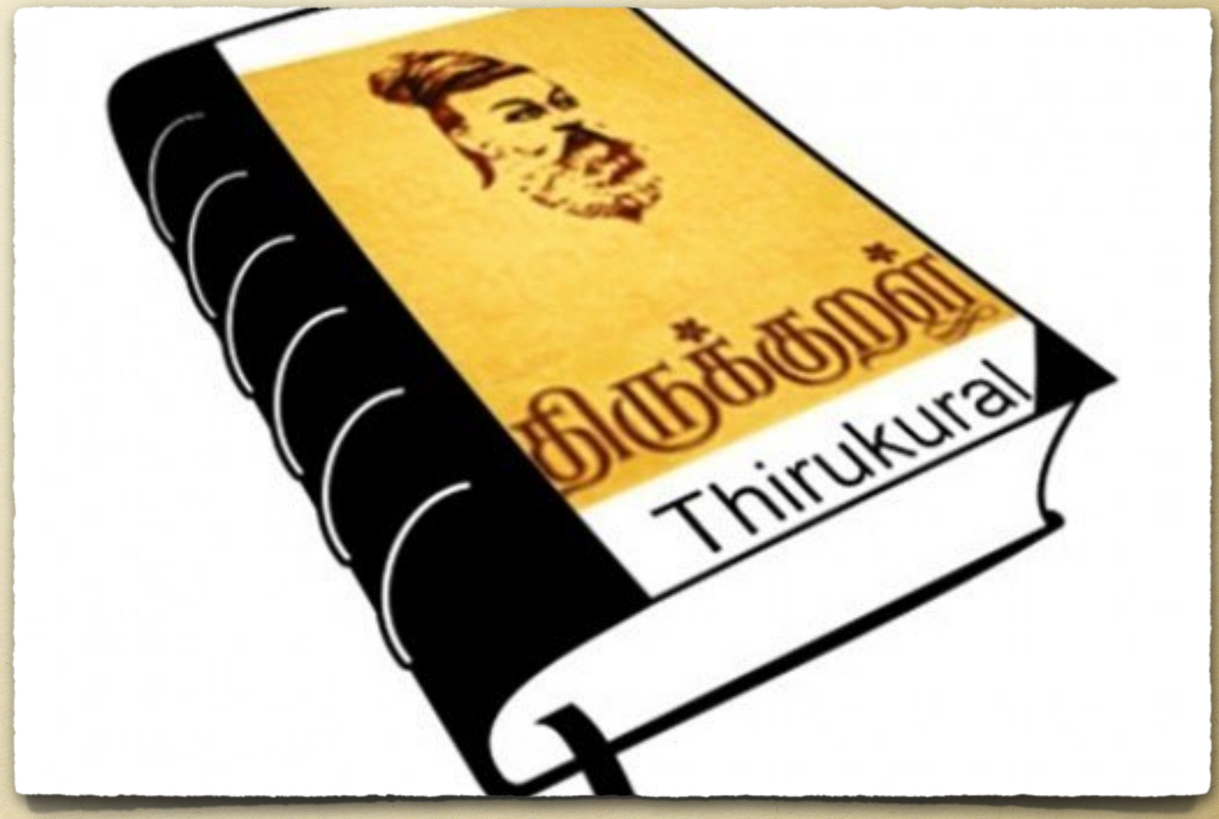
That destroys the shanti for everyone present and causes hurt feelings.



The Tirukural …

The *Tirukural* warns, “The wound caused by fire heals in time.

But the burn inflicted by an inflamed tongue never heals.”



Apologise and forgive

If we do have a disagreement, we make sure to talk with the person, apologize and forgive, and settle the matter before sleep.



More joy in our life

By living in harmony with everyone, we have more joy in our life and we are more effective human beings.

It is most important to get along with our close family.



Harmony begins at home…

Harmony begins in the home and radiates out into all parts of life, bringing light, love and good will to every relationship.



Gurudeva says…

Make friends with those who are on the path.

Be with fine, positive people.

Don’t be with negative, complaining people who have no relationship to what you are doing on the inside, or who are criticizing you for what you are doing.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 57

57.1 **A third form of namaste brings the palms above the head and is reserved for**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐ A. Be peaceful on the inside
☐ B. Not be worried or upset
☐ C. Be good at arguing

57.2 **In Sanskrit peace of mind is called**
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. Santosha
☐ B. Shanti
☐ C. Charya

57.3 **Consideration in this lesson refers to**
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. Careful investigation
☐ B. A payment or reward
☐ C. The art of not hurting the feelings of others

57.4 **It is fine to use harsh or angry words when we are right and the other person is wrong.**

☐ True
☐ False

57.5 **When we do have a disagreement, we make sure to settle the matter first thing in the morning the next day.**

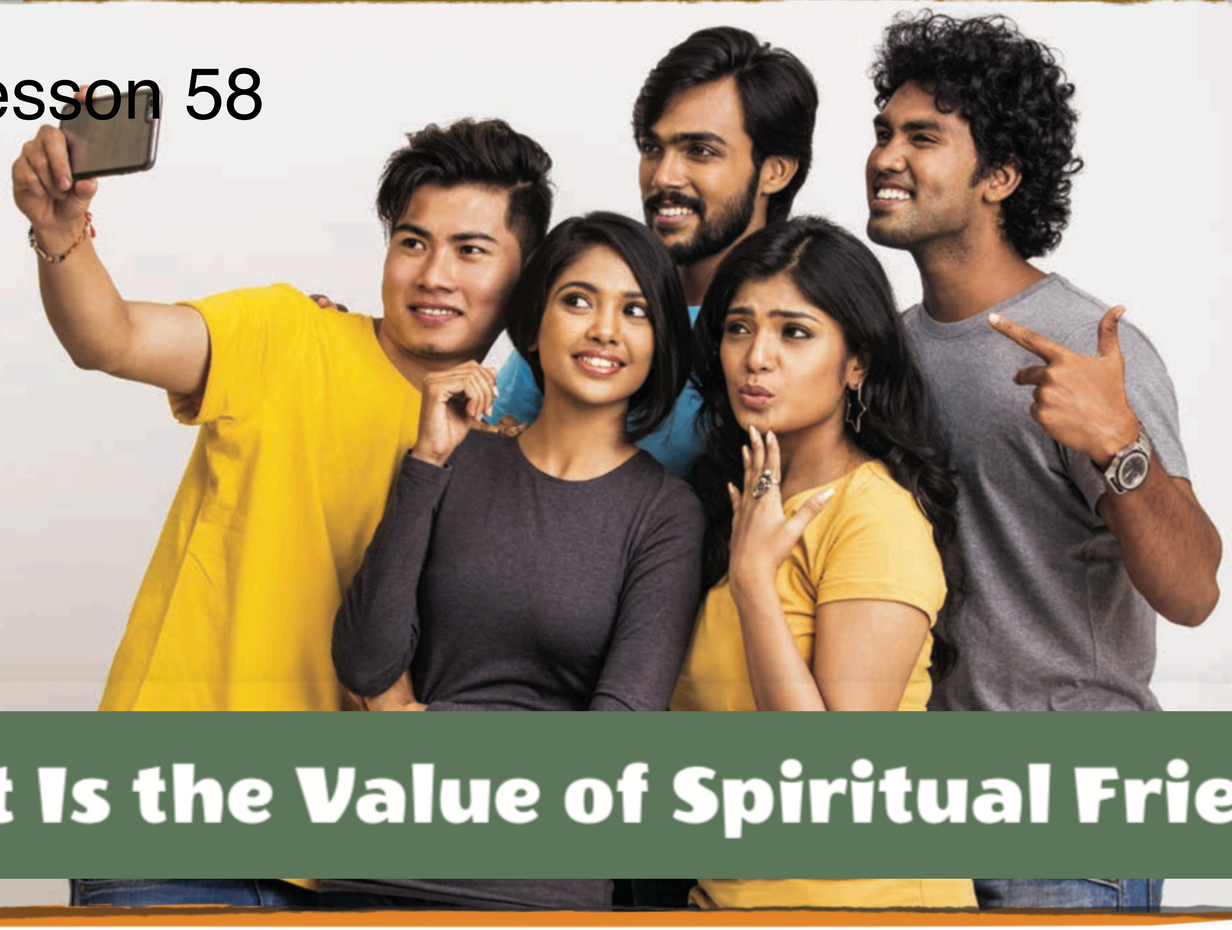
☐ True
☐ False

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Lesson 58



What Is the Value of Spiritual Friends?

This life is precious



As Saivite Hindus, we know this life is precious and are thankful for it every moment of every day.

We must be like a marathon runner

Appreciating the gift of life makes us want to do the best we can, improve our character, serve others and live a spiritual life.

Knowing life's purpose, we hold firmly to dharma.

Like a marathon runner, we must stay on the course to finish the race.



Good religious friends

Having good, religious friends helps us stay on the path.

If we mix with a worldly crowd, we may lose our way.



The *Tirukural says…*

The *Tirukural* tells us, “As water changes according to the soil through which it flows, so a man assimilates the character of his associates.”



Good Hindus

Friends who are good Hindus will help you most of all.



Who do you befriend ?

If you befriend a person who is dishonest or mean, his example will lead you into trouble.

If you befriend someone who studies hard and is kind and helpful, their example will inspire and uplift you.



Knowing the purpose of life?

Some people poke fun at religion or make mischief and resist authority.

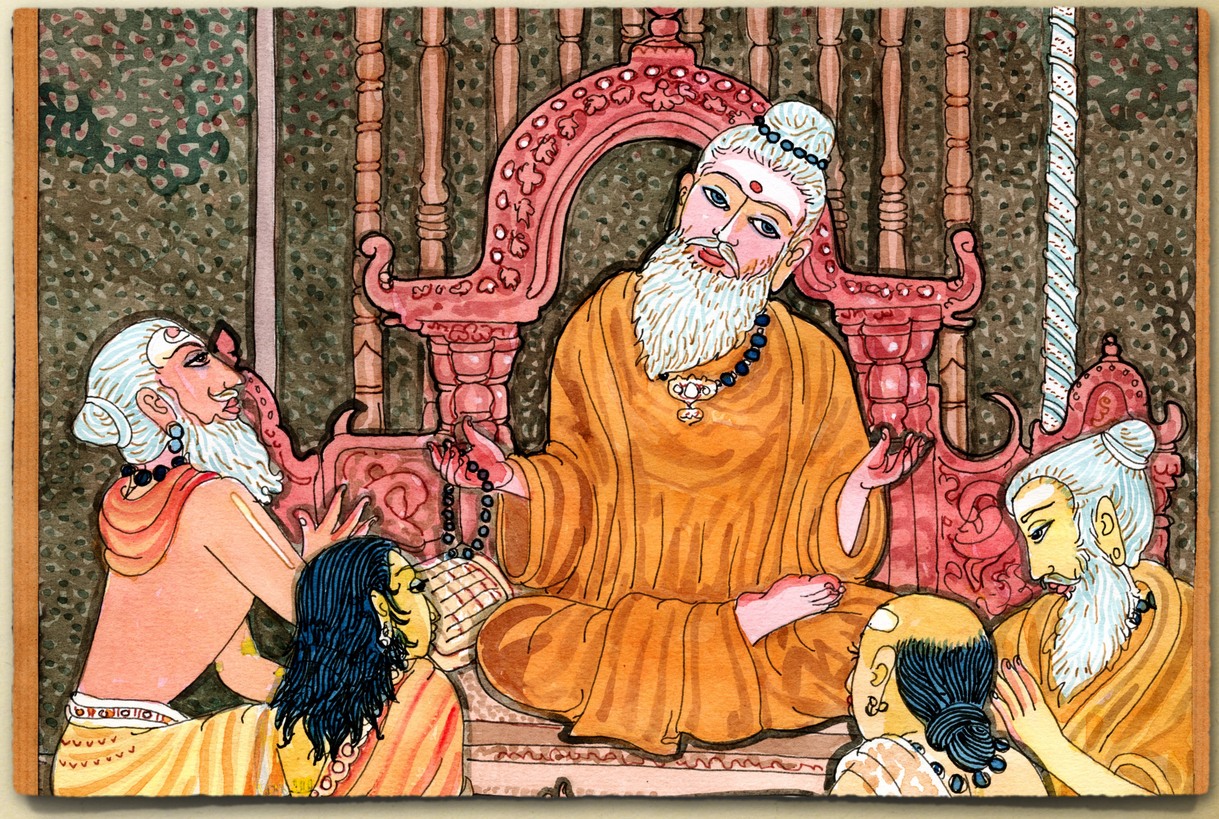
They do not know the real purpose of life.

They waste their time and cause pain to others.



What do wise teachers teach?

Wise teachers advise us to be nice to everyone, but make close friends only with those who will help build good character and set positive patterns for the future.



The Tirukural says…

The *Tirukural* tells us,

“Purity of mind and purity of conduct, these two depend on the purity of a man’s companions.”

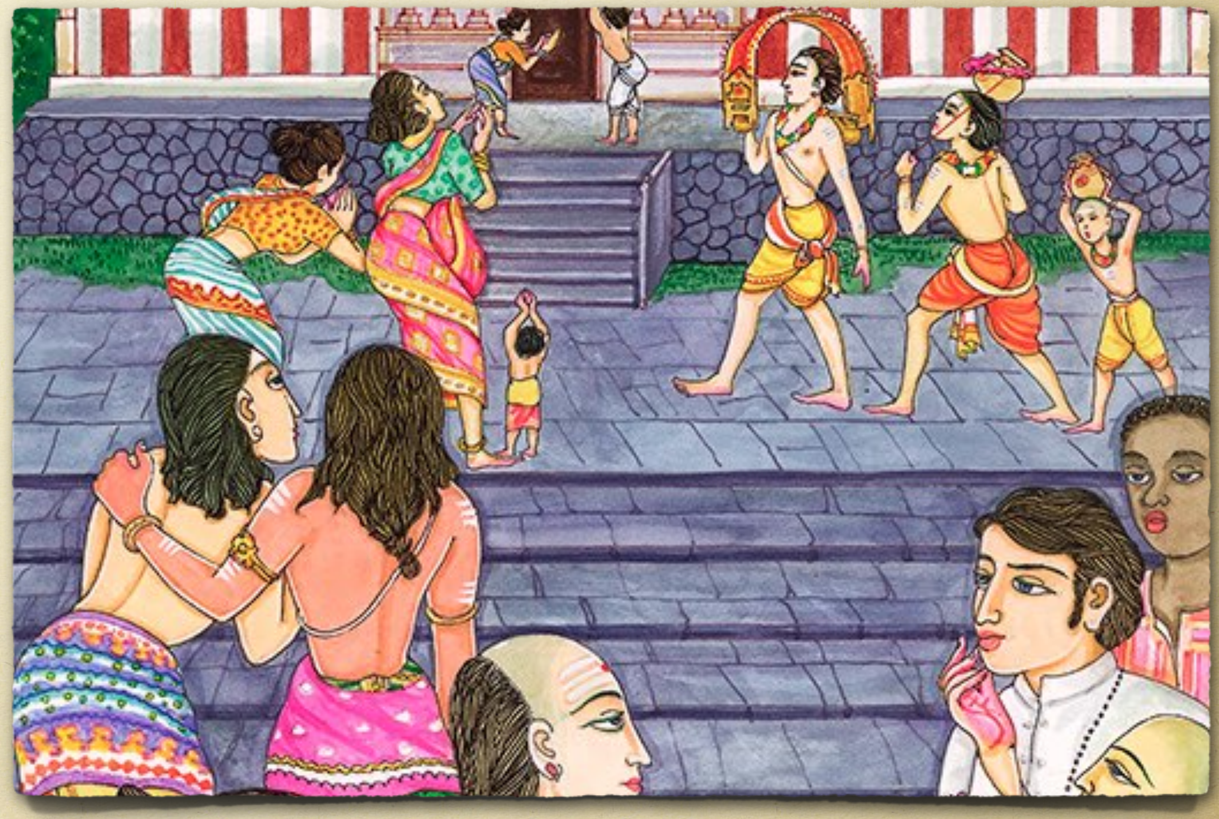


Being part of a religious group

Following our religious path is made easier when we are part of a satsang group with shared values and goals.

Such companionship helps keep our sadhana strong, especially during difficult times in life.

As Gurudeva often said, “The group helps the individual and the individual helps the group.”



Gurudeva says…

Make friends with those who are on the path.

Be with fine, positive people.

Don’t be with negative, complaining people who have no relationship to what you are doing on the inside, or who are criticizing you for what you are doing.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 58

58.1 **Appreciating the gift of life makes us want to do the best we can, improve our character, serve others and live a worldly life.**

□ True
□ False

58.2 **Enter the letter from below of A - C for the phrase that correctly completes the idea.**

___ Knowing life's purpose
___ Having good, religious friends
___ If we mix with a worldly crowd

(A) Helps us stay on the path
(B) We may lose our way
(C) We hold firmly to dharma

58.3 **Enter the letter from below of A - C for the phrase that correctly completes the idea.**

___ Friends who are good Hindus
___ If you befriend a person who is dishonest or mean
___ If you befriend someone who studies hard and is kind and helpful

(A) Will help you the most
(B) Their example will inspire and uplift you
(C) His example will lead you into trouble

58.4 **Make close friends**
(Check the correct answer)

□ A. With those who resist authority
□ B. With those who will help build good character
□ C. With those who poke fun at religion

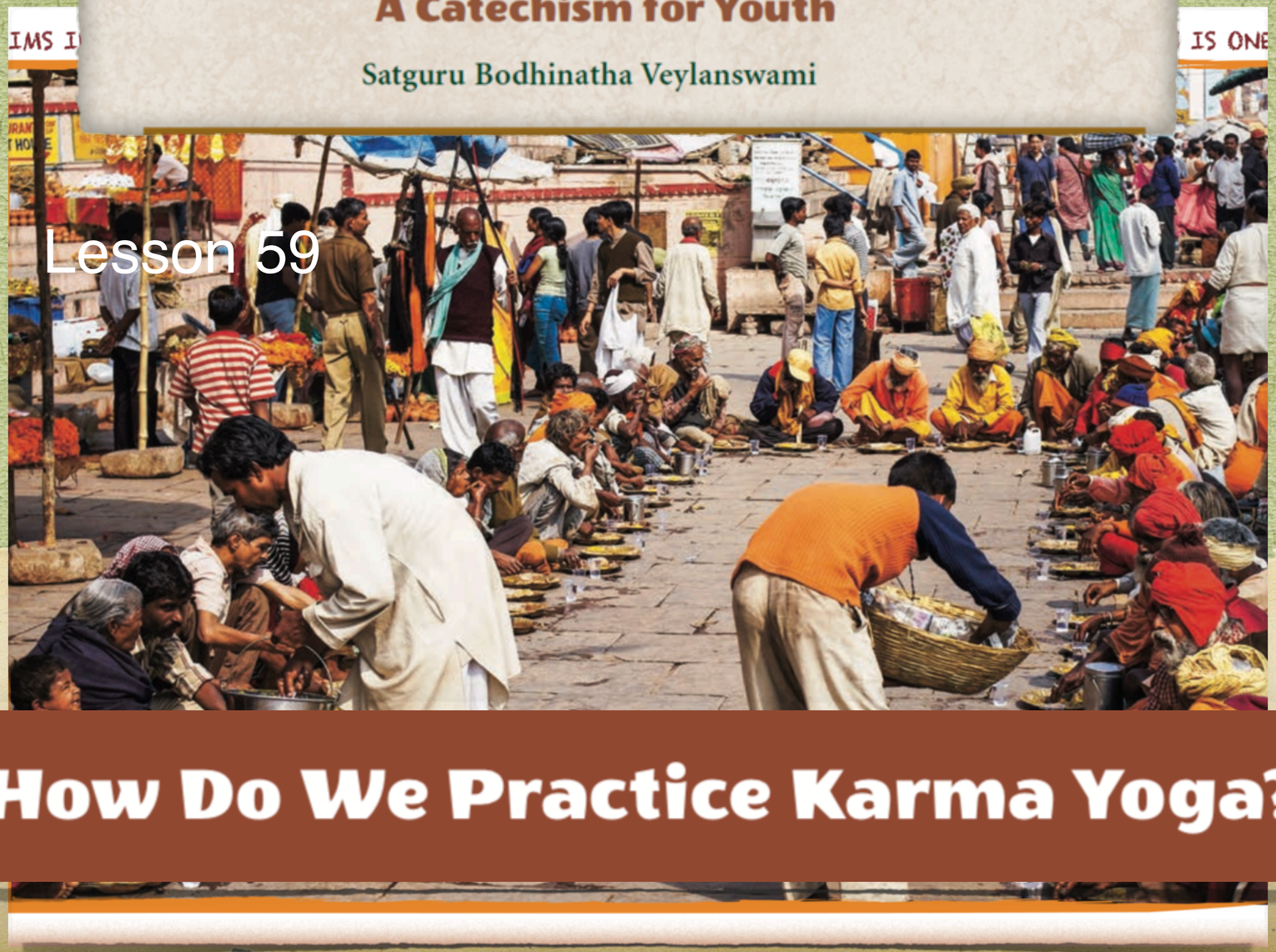
58.5 **Following our religious path is made difficult when we are part of a satsang group with shared values and goals.**

□ True
□ False

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Lesson 59

How Do We Practice Karma Yoga?

Karma Yoga



Karma yoga is selfless service, or seva .

It often takes the form of volunteer work at a temple— helping with the basic needs and events, like polishing the brass lamps, answering the phone, making garlands and preparing for pujas.

Karma yoga builds good character

This humble service helps establish good character.

The effort to do good deeds can be extended into other areas as well, such as the workplace and the home, quietly and willingly helping others, without complaint and without expecting thanks.



The karma yogi reaps hidden blessings

Such service reaps hidden blessings. In its broadest sense, karma yoga is spiritualized action.

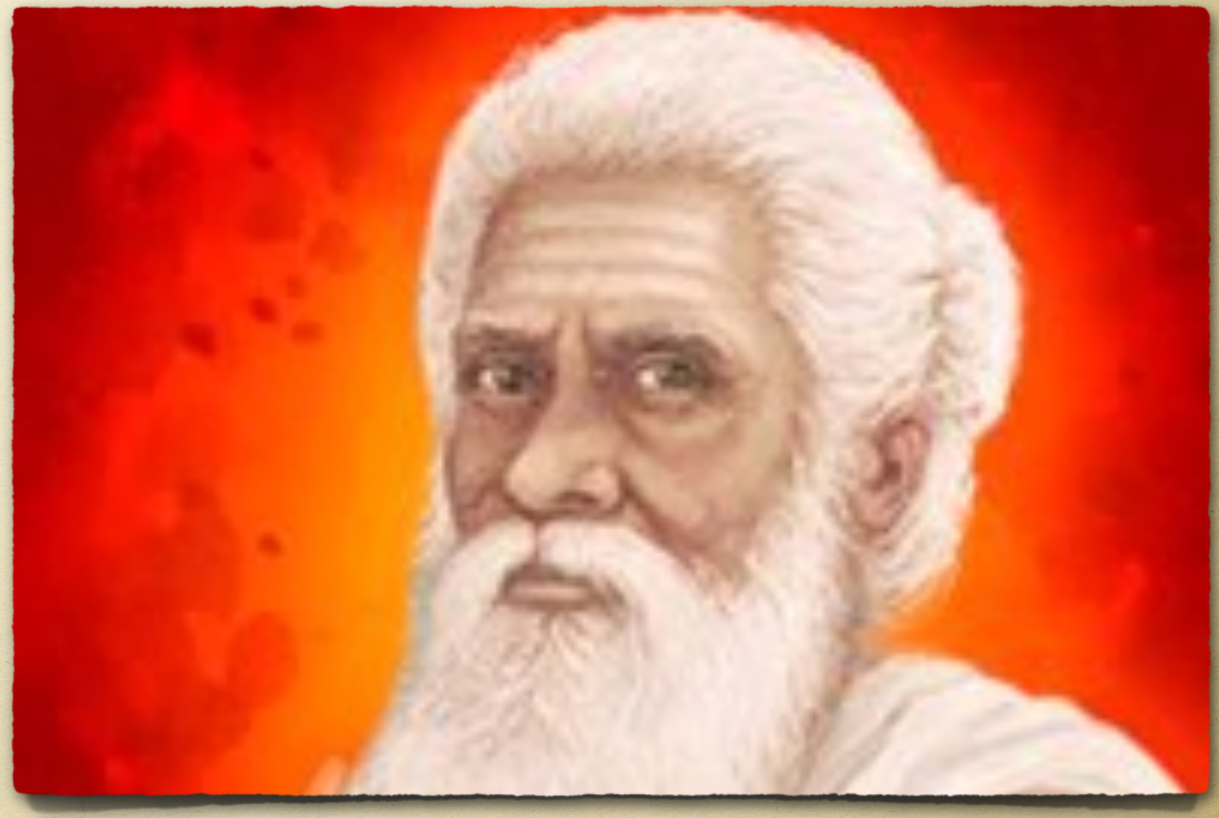
It is doing each and every task consciously, selflessly, excellently, as an offering to the Divine.



Satguru Sivayogaswami says…

Satguru Yogaswami advised devotees,

“Whatever work you have to do, do it well. That in itself is yoga.”



Karma Yoga is a powerful sadhana

Work done in this spirit is a form of worship.

Doing our ordinary daily duties becomes a powerful sadhana that contributes to our spiritual progress.

This yoga makes us more focused, effective and fulfilled.

It eliminates the false separation of secular work from religious practice.



Swami Vivekananda's advice…

Swami Vivekananda counseled, "When you are doing any work, do not think of anything beyond.

Do it as worship, as the highest worship, and devote your whole life to it for the time being."



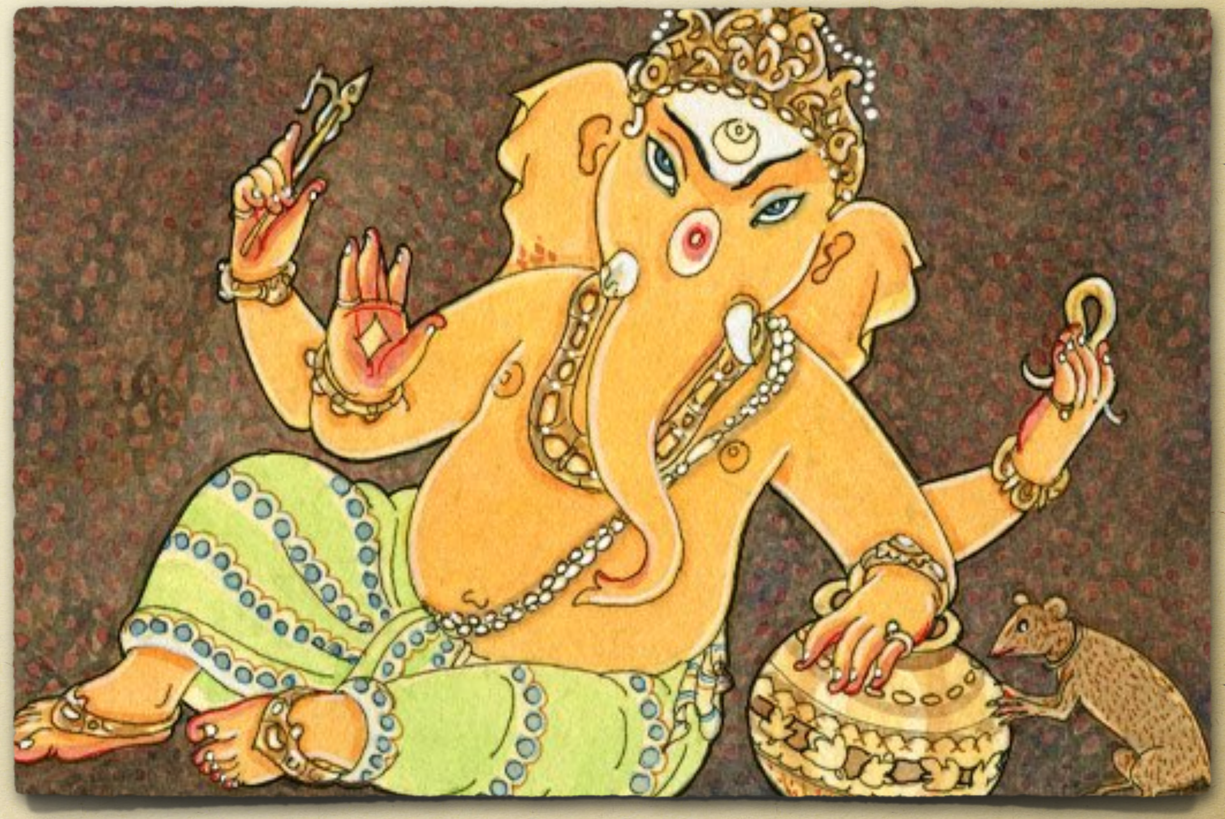
Keys turning work into worship (1)

Here are some keys to successfully turning work into worship:

1) Pray to Lord Ganesha before beginning your work.

2) 2) Act selflessly, detached from the results. Focus on serving, helping, giving.

3) 3) Work hard:



Keys turning work into worship (2)

4) Maintain harmony with others.

5) Enjoy the effort; don’t feel rushed.

6) Make the work a worthy offering, completing it as perfectly as you can. Then stop, review what you have done and make it even better.

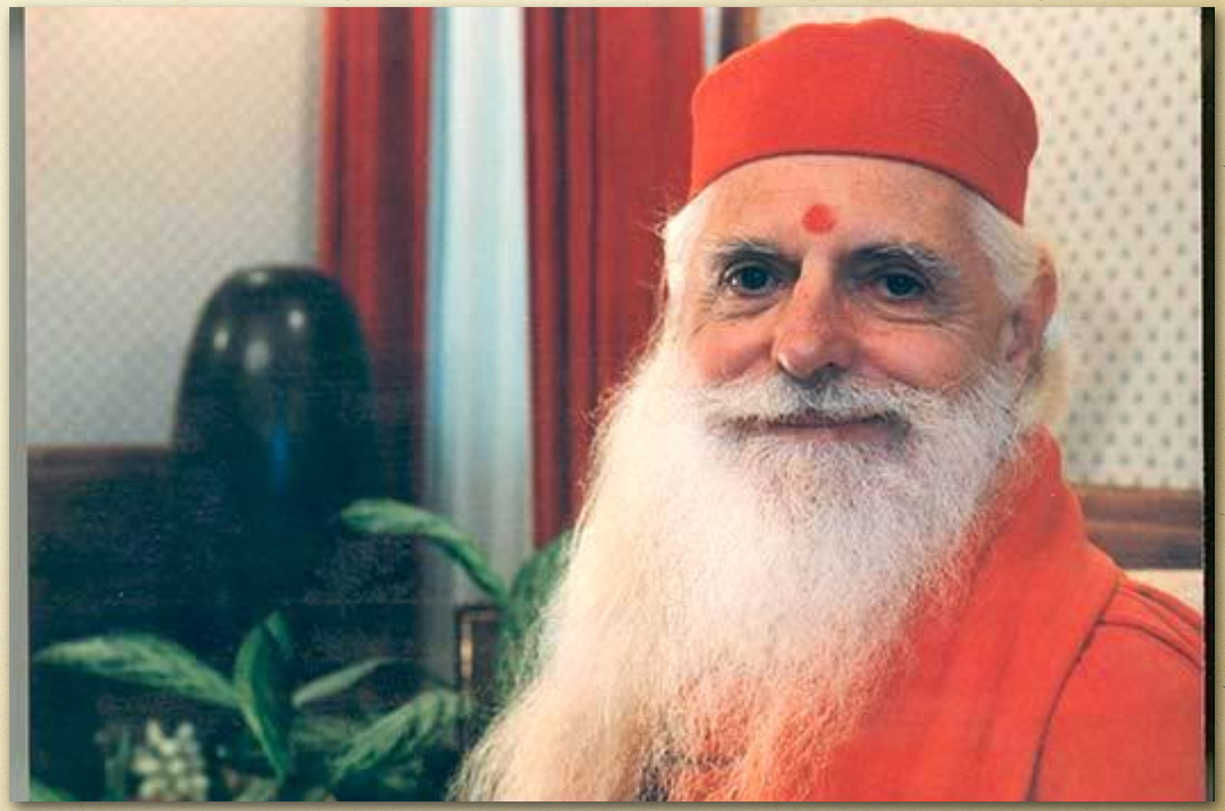


Gurudeva says …

Go out into the world this week and let your light shine through your kind thoughts, but let each thought manifest itself in a physical deed, of doing something for someone else.

Lift their burdens just a little bit and, unknowingly perhaps, you may lift something that is burdening your mind.

You erase and wipe clean the mirror of your own mind through helping another. We call this karma yoga.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 59

59.1 **Karma yoga**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐A. Is the path of meditation
☐B. Is selfless service
☐C. Is seva

59.2 **It often takes the form of volunteer work at home and can be extended into other areas as well such as the workplace and the temple.**

☐ True
☐ False

59.3 **The spirit of karma yoga is to quietly and willingly help others, without complaint and without expecting thanks.**

☐ True
☐ False

59.4 **In its broadest sense, karma yoga is**
(Check the incorrect answer)

☐A. Spiritualized action
☐B. Volunteer work at a temple
☐C. Doing each and every task consciously, selflessly, excellently
☐D. Doing each task as an offering to the Divine

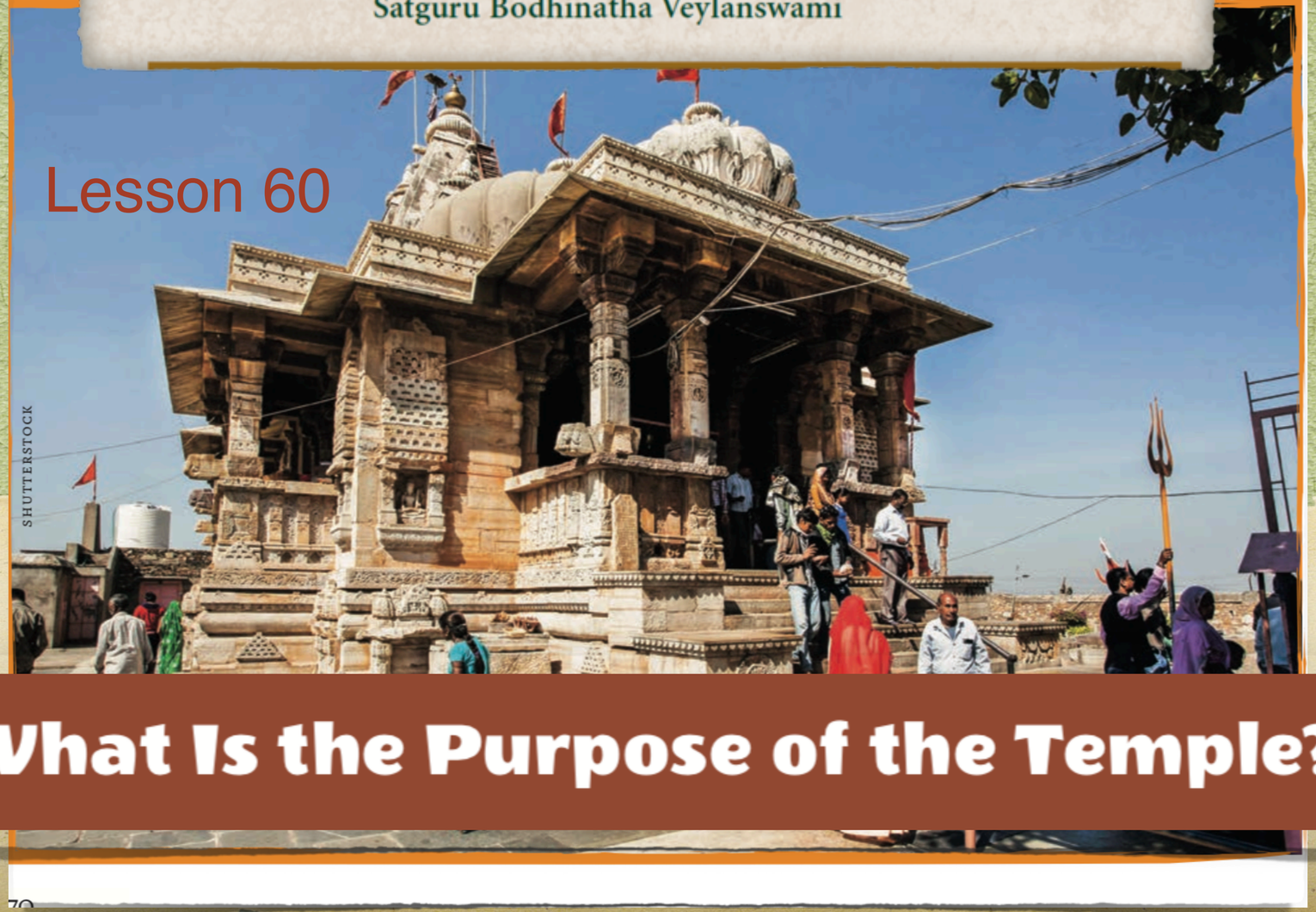
59.5 **One key to successfully turning work into worship is to work hard, overcoming lethargy, fatigue, confusion and doubt.**

☐ True
☐ False

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Lesson 60

What Is the Purpose of the Temple?

Why are temples important?



The temple is where we worship and commune with God and the Gods.

Here, devotees are uplifted and receive the inner help they need to live a positive, fulfilling life.

Temples are sacred for three reasons

Temples are sacred for three reasons:

they are constructed in a mystical manner,

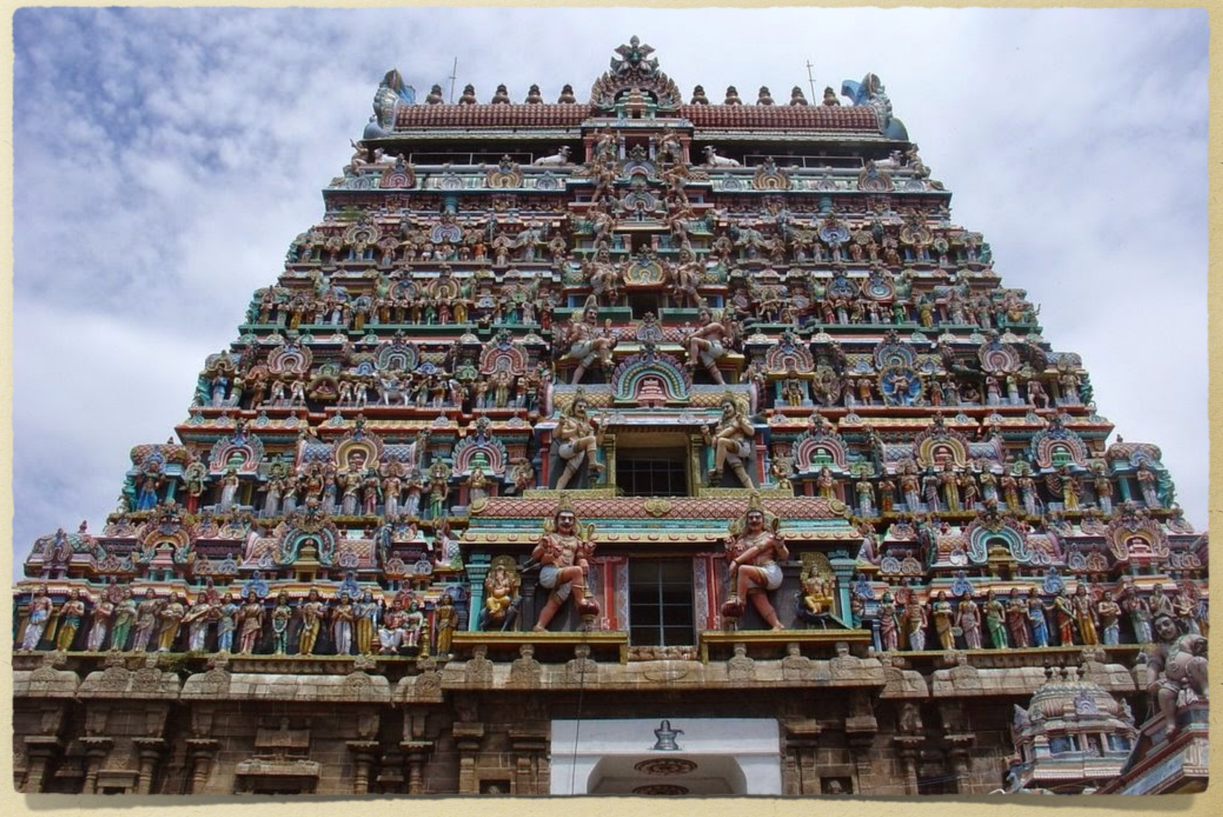
they are consecrated with special, complex rites,

and thereafter continuous daily worship builds a holy force field.



Saiva Temples…

Our grand Saiva temples are like no other place on Earth. Some are more than 1,000 years old.



Saiva Agamas on temples…

Strict rules from the *Agamas* are followed to create such holy spaces where holiness, God, can reside.

Devas, Gods and people work together to establish the temple and assure it will be used only for worship.



Glass-like bubble around the temple…

Over the years, the power becomes strong, forming an invisible, glass-like bubble or shield around the temple.

This keeps out gross vibrations and allows the heaven worlds to be strongly present.



Your prayers can easily be heard

As you approach God’s home, you can feel the spiritual energy, and as you go inside you are engulfed in peace.

Here the devas and Gods can easily hear your prayers.



A place for scriptures and festivals

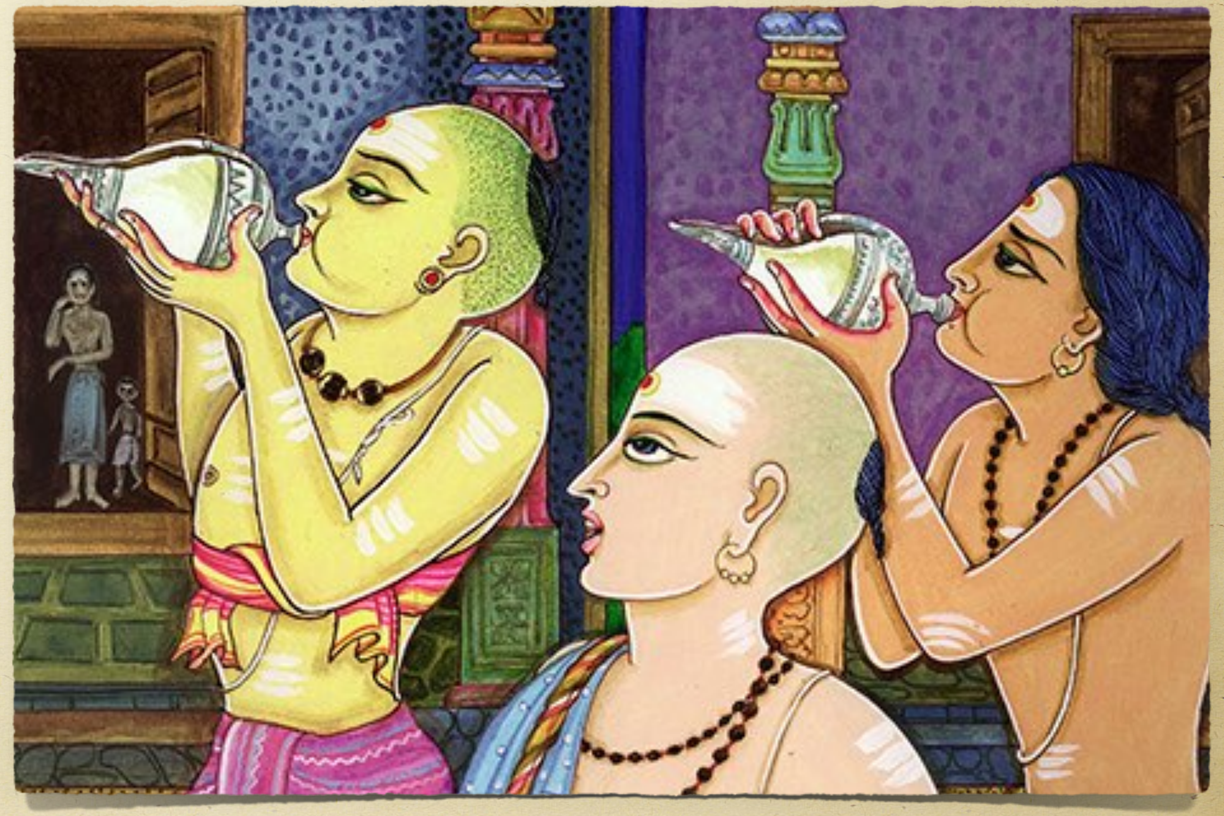
Here the ancient scriptures are chanted, the traditional rites knowingly performed.

Here joyous festivals are celebrated and arduous pilgrimages concluded.



What happens during puja?

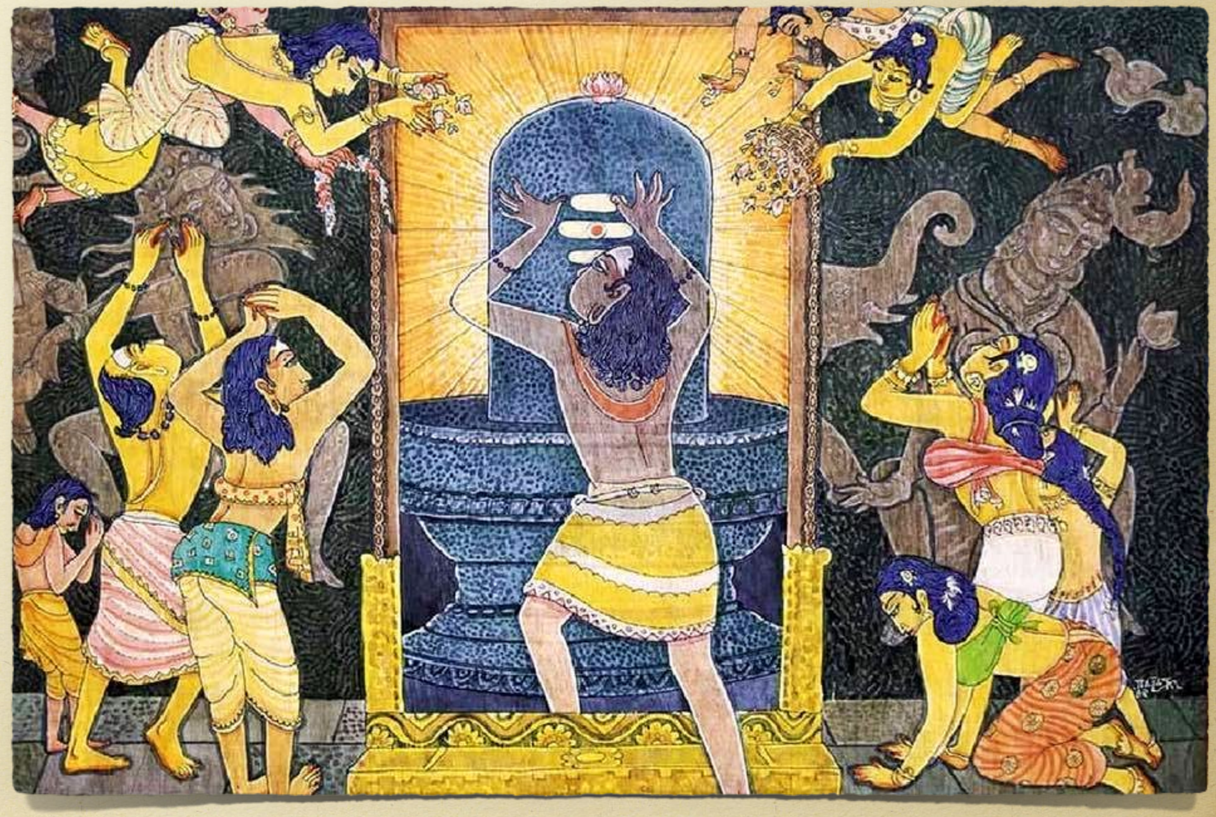
At the high point of puja, as bells ring loudly and conches blow, the Deity sends rays of blessings through the enshrined image, or murti.



How does the Temple energy work?

Flooding your aura, this energy can erase worries, clear confusion and relieve sadness.

Devotees leaving the temple feel inspired and lightened of burdens.



Temple images explained…

Gurudeva explained that the stone or metal images are not mere symbols of the Gods.

The image is the physical-plane form through which the God's love, power and blessings flood forth into this world.

The image is like a temporary physical body the God uses during temple ceremonies.



God’s home is the Temple

The temple, God’s home, becomes a truly sacred place for us when we know that the Gods are real beings and the purpose of going to the temple is to experience their blessings.

.



Gurudeva explains…

A Siva temple marks an agreement between God Siva and the people on the Earth as a meeting place where the three worlds can consciously commune.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 60

60.1 **The temple is where we worship and commune with God and the Gods. As a result, we are uplifted and receive the inner help we need to live a positive, fulfilling life.**

☐ True
☐ False

60.2 **Enter the letter from below of A - C for the phrase that correctly completes the idea. Temples are sacred for three reasons:**

___ They are constructed
___ They are consecrated
___ And thereafter continuous daily worship

(A) Builds a holy force field
(B) In a mystical manner
(C) With special complex rites

60.3 **Some Saiva temples are more than**
(Check the correct answer)

☐ A. 100 years old
☐ B. 1,000 years old
☐ C. 10,000 years old

60.4 **Enter the letter from below of A - C for the phrase that correctly completes the idea. At the high point of the puja, as bells ring loudly and conches blow,**

___ The Deity
___ Flooding your aura, this energy
___ Devotees leaving the temple

(A) Sends rays of blessings through the enshrined image
(B) Feel inspired and lightened of burdens
(C) Can erase worries, clear confusion and relieve sadness

60.5 **Gurudeva explained that the stone or metal images are mere symbols of the Gods.**

☐ True
☐ False