

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

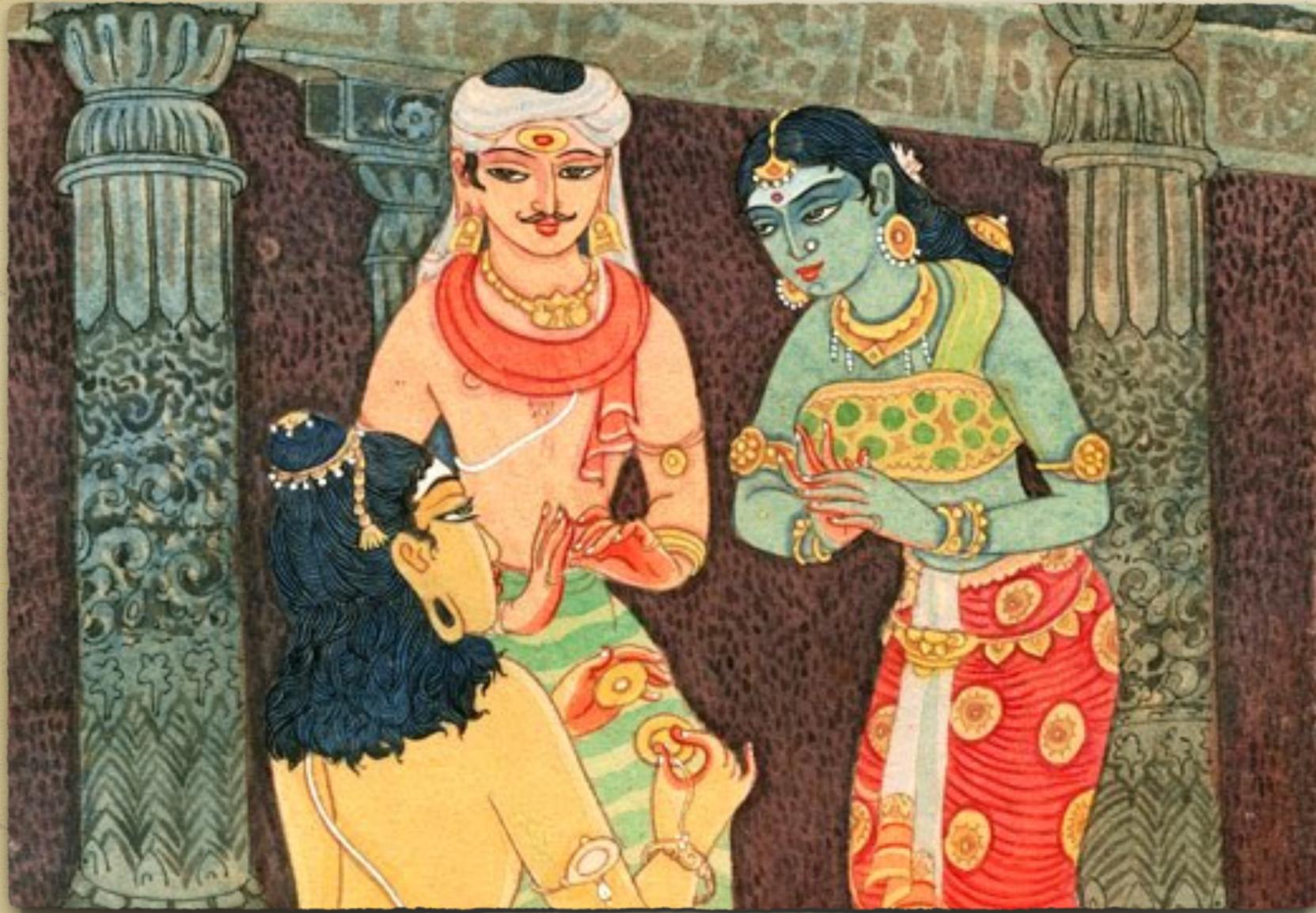
Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

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.

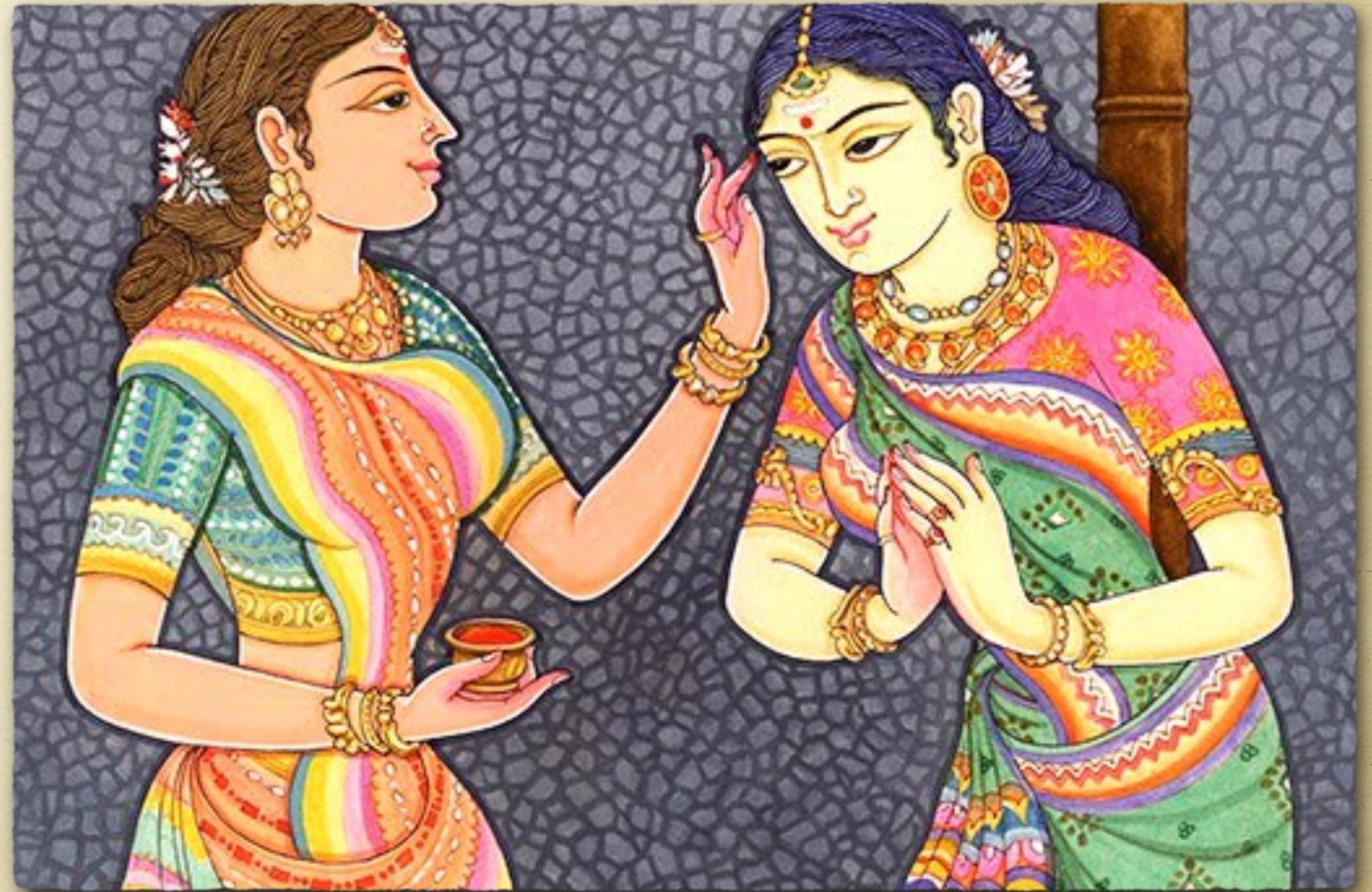
He should watch hopefully for more.

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.

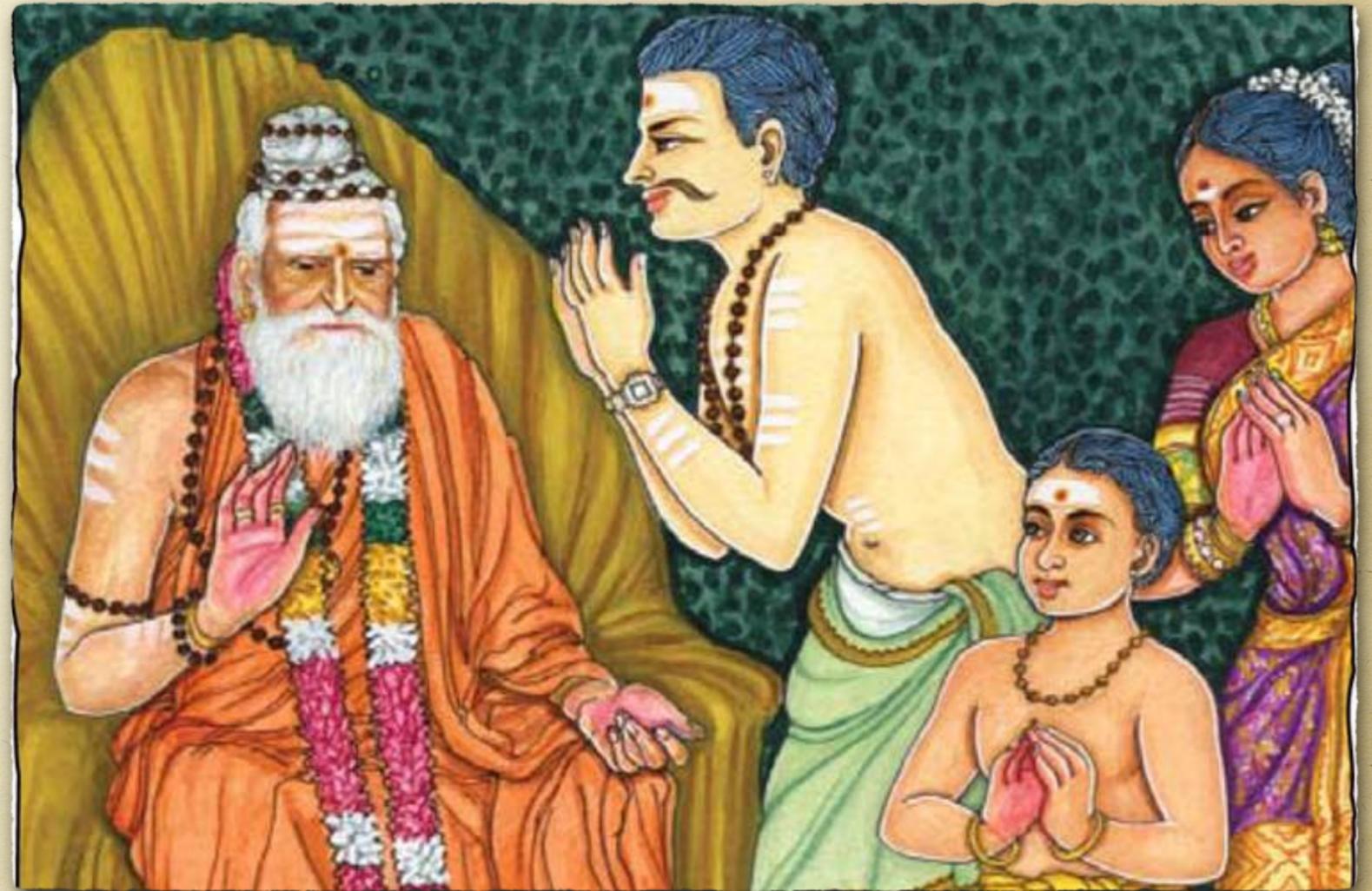
Even the humblest home will never fail to honor a guest with food and beverage.

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