

# Path to Siva

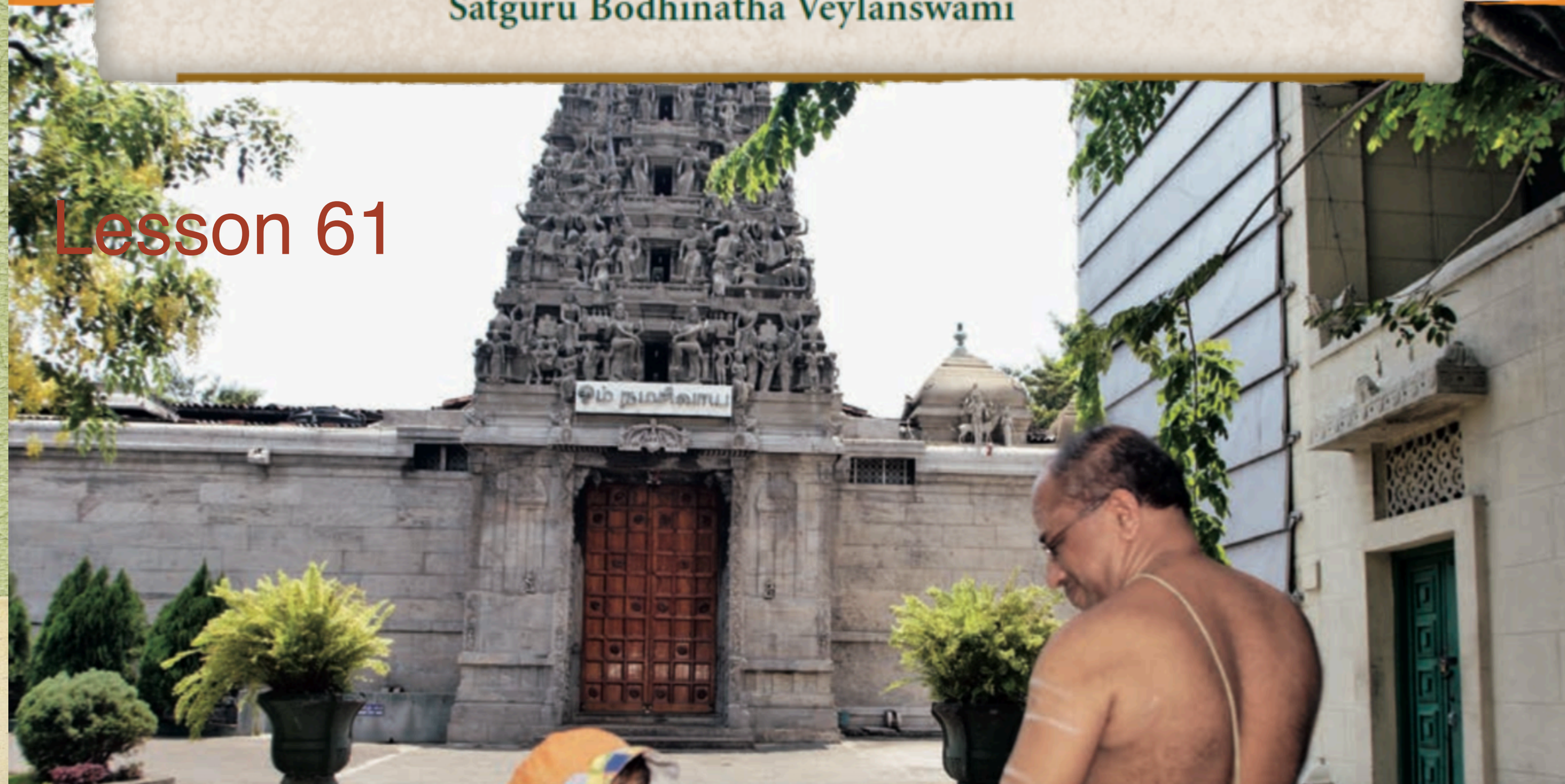
A Catechism for Youth

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Lesson 61



**How Do We Visit the Temple?**

# Visiting a Temple



**We go to the temple to be close to God.**

**Though Siva is everywhere, it is in the holy temple that we can most easily feel His presence.**

# Prior to our Temple visit...

Knowing that Siva and the devas can see us, we want to look our best.

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Before our visit, we bathe and put on clean, traditional clothing.

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We bring an offering, such as fruits, milk and incense or a lovely garland of flowers.



# Upon arrival at the temple

The act of giving makes us receptive to blessings.

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Outside, we remove our shoes and wash our hands, feet and mouth and seek blessings at Lord Ganesha's shrine.



# Walking clockwise around...

Next we walk clockwise around the temple or the central chamber, then pay respects to each Deity.

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# Temple ceremony

If it is puja time, we sit quietly and enjoy the ceremony being performed by the priest.

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Through his chants, gestures, visualizations and offerings, he purifies himself and honors the Deity with choice offerings, as one would receive a king.



# We focus on the act of worship

He calls upon God to come and shower blessings on all.

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During the puja we focus on the acts of worship, not allowing our mind to wander.

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Over time, we learn the meaning of the priest's chants and rituals and mentally follow along.



# After the arati...

After the arati we prostrate and rise to receive the flame, blessed water, holy ash and other sacraments, receiving each item with the right hand.

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# Sit and meditate

Then we sit quietly and meditate, or  
just feel the blessings wash over us.

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This is also a good time for japa.



# Worship can take many forms

Worship takes many forms in a temple. Devotees can be immersed in the joys of devotion, lost in prayerful communion, seeking consolation for a loss, singing devotional songs, chanting mantras or celebrating a rite of passage.

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# On arriving home

Arriving home, we light a lamp in our shrine room to bring the devas from the temple into that sacred space.

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# We get the chance to look inward

Pujas and rituals give us a chance to pause, look inward and concentrate on something more meaningful and profound than the mundane matters of life.

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# We focus on the act of worship

Puja is holy communion, full of wonder and tender affections.

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The indispensable part of any puja is devotion.

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Without love in the heart, outer performance is of limited value.

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But with true devotion, even simple gestures are sacred ritual.



# Gurudeva says...

In our religion there are altars in temples all over the world inhabited by the devas and the great Gods.

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When you enter these holy places, you can sense their sanctity.



# QUESTIONS for Lesson 61



**61.1** Siva is everywhere. We can feel His presence as easily at home as we can in the temple.

- True
- False

**61.2** Number the followings actions from 1 - 6 in the order they are performed when visiting a temple.

- Pay respects to each Deity
- Bring an offering such as fruits, milk and incense or a lovely garland of flowers
- Walk clockwise around the temple or the central chamber
- Remove our shoes and wash our hands, feet and mouth
- Bathe and put on clean, traditional clothing
- Seek blessings at Lord Ganesha's shrine

**61.3** During the puja it is fine to just let our mind wander.

- True
- False

**61.4** Arriving home, we place a flower from the temple in our shrine room to bring the devas from the temple into that sacred space.

- True
- False

**61.5** The indispensable part of any puja for the devotee attending is  
(Check the correct answer)

- A. Devotion
- B. Bringing lots of flowers to the temple
- C. Knowing the meaning of the chants