

[The Ageless Path of the Preceptor . . .](#)

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TRADITION

The Ageless Path of the Preceptor . . .

THE GURU-DISCIPLE RELATIONSHIP remains, as it has for thousands of years, the bedrock of Sanatana Dharma. Without it, say the wise, no serious progress can be made, no higher realizations attained. Every Hindu hopes to find a truly illumined satguru to guide his path. To portray this precious relationship, Hinduism Today commissioned I Wayan Marya to create the masterpiece below. In it a seeker approaches the guru outside his remote jungle hermitage in Bali, surrounded by shrines and protected by guardian Deities. The sage's cave-temple has been carved into the rock hill behind them.

The Kularnava Tantra, an ancient Saiva-Sakta scripture, observes: "It is only on this Earth--and that too in a human body endowed with a soul--that one can choose one's path for spiritual progress. But not all are aware of the precious opportunity afforded by human birth, which is truly the ladder to liberation. The Self is to be realized only here in this life. If here you do not find it and work out the means for your liberation, where else is it possible? It is possible nowhere else. It has to be worked out by yourself from within yourself. Remember, the physical body does not last forever. Age prowls like a leopard; diseases attack like an enemy. Death waits not to see what is done or not done. Before the limbs lose their

vitality, before adversities crowd in upon you, take to the auspicious path. Therefore, choose, then worship a satguru. Worship his feet. Cherish the very sandals which hold his feet. Remember and cherish those holy feet, which yield infinitely more merit than any number of observances, gifts, sacrifices, pilgrimages, mantra-japa and rituals."

Today's youth are encountering this Vedic system in the newest "Star Wars" movie, wherein Yoda tells his disciple, "Always two there are-- a master and an apprentice."

*Please see hard copy for the beautiful art essay on page 28.