Journeys of Faith: Understanding Pilgrimage

Learning objective: To understand the meaning of a pilgrimage and why people choose to undertake these significant journeys.

Read the passage below about pilgrimages carefully. Use the information to answer the questions that follow in full sentences.

A pilgrimage is a special, intentional journey made to a place considered sacred by a person's religion. For many, this is not just a holiday; it is a meaningful act of devotion. People go on pilgrimages to seek spiritual growth, ask for guidance, or show thanks for blessings in their lives. Ellie the elephant, who loves learning about history, notes that these journeys have been part of human culture for thousands of years. Some pilgrims travel to ancient temples, while others visit sites where important historical or religious events took place. During the journey, travellers often spend time in quiet reflection, prayer, or meditation. The physical effort of the journey, whether walking a long distance or travelling across the world, is often seen as a way to focus the mind away from daily distractions. Upon arriving at their destination, pilgrims often feel a deep sense of peace or a renewed connection to their beliefs. Whether it is a short trip to a local shrine or a long trek to a famous holy city, the focus remains on the inward change that happens during the experience.

Word bank: pilgrimage · sacred · spiritual · destination · devotion · reflection

1. According to the text, what is the definition of a pilgrimage? (2 marks)

2. Name two reasons listed in the text for why someone might choose to go on a pilgrimage. (2 marks)

3. Why might a pilgrim find the physical effort of a long journey helpful for their spiritual experience? (2 marks)

4. How does the author distinguish between a regular holiday and a pilgrimage? (2 marks)

5. Do you think a pilgrimage would be more effective if it were difficult to reach the destination? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing a pilgrim reaching a peaceful, sacred destination. Include details like a path, a symbolic building or natural site, and a sense of calm atmosphere.

Extension challenge: Research one famous pilgrimage site from around the world. Create a travel brochure for it, explaining its historical significance and why people visit it today.