



DIVYA SANDESH

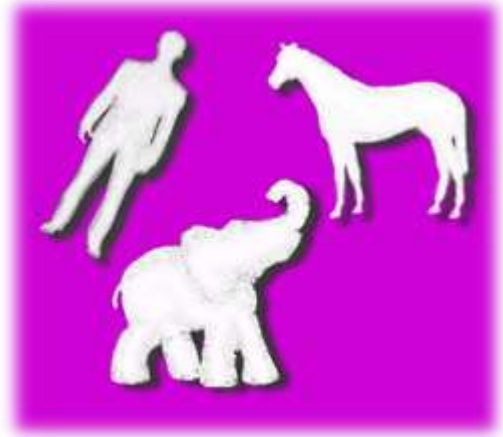
2018 NEW YEAR



The Science Behind Idol Worship

Question: God is Divine and cannot be cast into a material object. Why then, do people engage in idol worship?

Answer: In Sanskrit, every word is derived from and composed of a root word. The Sanskrit word for idol is *moorti* (मूर्ति), which means likeness within the inner and the outer form of the entity. For example, when we say, “he is the *moorti* of mercy”, it means each and every part of his being is made of mercy. Just like each and every particle of a sugar figurine is made of sugar, likewise, each and every part of a stone idol is made of stone, both inside and outside. In English, the word *moorti* is referred to for idols, sculpture, statue, or painting of a deity etc.



Let us reflect on the real meaning of *moorti* as per the eternal Vedic philosophy.

There is a most intimate part of the power of God, called the purest substance or *vishudhha sattva* (विशुद्धसत्त्व). It is divine. There is a material substance also, which is a part of Maya and that is *sattva* (सत्त्व). We are not talking about that.

God has three internal powers

1. *Sandhini*: His potency of eternal existence
2. *Samvit*: His potency of knowledge
3. *Hladini*: His potency of bliss

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When the purest form gets endowed with these powers it manifests various aspects

1. When *Sandhini Shakti* becomes predominant in *Vishuddha sattva*, it is called *Adhaar* or base. All the abodes (*loks*) exist there.
2. When *Samvit Shakti* becomes predominant in *Vishuddha sattva*, it is called *Atma-vidya* or science of self. Then it provides knowledge of self
3. When *Hladini Shakti* becomes predominant in *Vishuddha sattva*, it is called *Guhya Vidya* (the most confidential power), which is given to the devotees only.
4. But when all of these three personal powers of God fuse in *Vishuddha Sattva*, then it is called *Moorti* that is the body of God. In simple words, the body of God is God Himself.

Indra says,

“स्वच्छन्दोपात्तदेहायविशुद्धज्ञान मूर्तये ।” भा.१०.२७.११

“You are a veritable *moorti* of purest knowledge. Your body is not different from You. You are your body as well”.

When Kubja embraced Shri Krishna, She felt

“आनंदमात्रमजहादतिवीर्यतापम्” १०.४८.७

“I embraced personified bliss”.

This is a scriptural definition of idol. Now let us elaborate it from worldly point of view. We also worship idols. What is the true concept of worshipping idols and what is the outcome of doing so?



न वस्तुशक्तिर्बुद्धिमतेक्षते ।

“This is a commonly known truth that a good or bad intention or feeling about an object, does not and cannot have an impact on the nature of that object”. In other words, if someone ingests lethal poison, that person is bound to die. It matters not, how and why that person ingested the poison. Whether you jump into the river with an intent to commit suicide or your foot accidentally slipped into a deep river and you do not know how to swim, you will drown either way.

What was the idol's original form before it was transformed into its present form? It was a rock from a mountain. Someone brought it and carved it into a form and named it Ram, Krishna, Hanuman, Shiva etc. There is no specialty in that rock. It was and continues to be an inert stone that cannot see, hear, smell, taste, touch, think or know anything. Hence the result of worshipping an idol made of that rock will be the same as worshipping the raw stone.

So the question arises - why do the temples have *moortis* of different deities? Those *moortis* are made of clay, metal, stone etc. Did the practice of *moorti* worship start out of ignorance or was there an underlying reason for worshipping idols?

Let us use some logic to understand the reason;

1. **Worshipping the Divine knowing that they are Divine:** When Lord Krishna descended on earth whosoever loved Him, knowing Him as God, realized Him and attained His divine bliss. This is straightforward and simple to understand.
2. **Worshipping the Divine without knowing that they are Divine:** When Lord Krishna descended on earth, those who loved Him, knowing Him to be just a charming young boy, also achieved the same result. Some of them loved Him whole-heartedly as a son, others as a friend and yet others as their beloved. All of them went to His divine abode Golok.

Even those who got attached to Him with negative feelings of fear, jealousy, hatred or enmity also went to Golok e.g. Shishupal constantly remembered Shri Krishna as an enemy, Kansa was forever fearful of Him, yet both of them went to Golok.

This all goes back to the principle stated earlier “the power of an object is not impacted by the intention”. Someone brings a piece of iron in contact with touchstone (*paras*), with utmost care, the iron will turn into gold. Someone else hits the touchstone with an iron axe out of anger; the axe would also turn into gold. As soon as the two objects come in contact with each other, the power of the object manifests itself. Someone touches a live wire by mistake or to commit suicide, both will die.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, King Pareekchhit asked this question to Shukdev Paramhans:

कृष्णं विदुः परं कान्तं.....कथम् ? भागवत् १०.२९.१२

“The Gopis didn’t consider Shri Krishna as God. They took Him to be an ordinary boy and referred to Him as *Chor – Jaar* (thief and adulterer). It proves that they were attached to him as an ordinary material boy.”

Shukdev Paramhans said, “So?”

Pareekchhit continued on saying, “That means, Guru Ji, that the Gopis love was worldly love. Then how were those Gopis delivered from the clutches of Maya”.



Remember! Only Radha Krishna are yours and you belong to Them. The loving Remembrance of Their Name, form, virtues and the *leelas* with a longing heart, and the Grace if a true *rasik* saint , are the means to experience Their selfless divine love and be in Their Divine abode, Vrindaban for ev

Shukdev Paramhans answered, saying:

उक्तं पुरस्तादेतत्ते चैवः सिद्धिं यथा गतः । भागवत् १०.२९.१३

“O dim-witted! I already told you, Shishupal, who verbally abused Shri Krishna 100 times in an august assembly, also went to Golok, because His mind was fully attached to Shri Krishna but with the feeling of animosity. Since Shri Krishna is a divine entity, Shishupal received a divine result. The object gives its result, this is the law”.



If your mind gets totally attached to anyone with the feeling of passion, anger, fear, or love etc. you will get the result of that personality for sure.

कामं क्रोधं.....॥भागवत् १०.२९.१५

Reflect,

- Ganges: Ganges is a sacred personality. No matter what flows in into the Ganges, it becomes Ganges. But river Ganges never becomes impure.
- Fire: Putting any filth in the fire doesn't make the fire filthy, instead whatever goes into the fire, becomes fire.
- Sun: The rays of the Sun fall on everything alike - clean or dirty. But the refuse of things leave no effect on the sun.
- God: God is omniscient. He lives everywhere even in the filthiest objects. Yet, He never becomes dirty. Whoever goes to Him becomes pure. Hence the attachment of mind with the All Pure and Divine Shri Krishna with anger, passion, greed, jealousy or enmity will result only in the attainment of His Divine abode Golok. In the same manner, the result of attachment of the mind with God or a God-realized saint, is also attainment of divine bliss.

3. **sWorshipping material object knowing them to be Divine:** It has been clarified that intention does not have an impact on the result of the object. The object delivers the results as per its inherent power. So worshipping an idol made of stone should not deliver a desirable result, as there is no divine power in stone? The answer is No. A devotee will attain divine bliss by worshipping an idol made of any material object. Why?



- a. God is all-pervading: Since God resides in material objects (viz; soil, water, fire, air, and space etc. inert things), worshipping a material object with a Godly feeling also gives the benefit of worshipping God. So, an unflinching faith that God resides within His statue, will result in Divine benefit.
- b. God is Omniscient: Hence he understands a devotees feeling and rewards them accordingly. On the flip side, if someone creates the feeling of a human being in the statue (e.g. of our father, mother, brother, husband or wife), it is impossible to attain the benefit of their presence. Because neither is that material person present in the statue nor are they omniscient. The person cannot know your feelings. But God is all-knowing, Omniscient. So when we create a feeling of God in a statue, He knows. He gives the result of our intent and that is why we attain the divine bliss. This was the reason behind the prevalence of idol-worship in our country. If we lack the feeling that there is God within that idol, we will get the benefit of a stone only.

Pay attention please! If you are not convinced of God's presence in a *moorti*, instead you are just attracted towards the looks, adornment or beauty of the idol, you will only receive a temporary pleasure by seeing the idol. If however, you are convinced that God resides within the *moorti*, you will surely attain spiritual benefit. Please note that the bliss you attain will be proportionate to the extent of your faith in God's presence in that *moorti*.

It is extremely rare to find a person who visits a temple to see God in those idols. Most of the visitors bow down to the stone statues. This is the reason why the general public enjoys meeting their relatives and friends more than they enjoy the *darshan* of God in a temple.

4. **Worshipping material objects knowing them to be material:** This is self-evident that the person would not attain divine bliss.

Continued...

Kripalu Leelamritam – Unparalleled Performance



गरुणवास नामक स्थान में १५ दिन का प्रवचन-कार्यक्रम रखा गया था। श्री महाराज जी वहाँकीरानी वासन्ती के महल में ठहरे हुये थे। एक दिन उनके यहाँ लाठी - प्रतियोगिता थी। उसमें ये भी रानी के बगल वाले सोफे पर विराजित हुये। कुछ लोगों के प्रदर्शन को देखनेके पश्चात् श्री महाराज जी धीरे से उठे, नीच गये और एक व्यक्ति से लाठी माँग कर बहुत तीव्र गति से लाठी की अनेक कलाओं का प्रदर्शन किया जो अभी तक एक ने भी नहीं किया था। प्रतियोगिता के अन्त में रानी ने घोषणा की कि मुझे बहुत प्रसन्नता है कि आज की प्रतियोगिता का प्रथम पुस्कार मैं अपने आध्यात्मिक गुरु श्री कपालु जी, महाराज को दे रही हूँ।

इसी प्रकार श्री रानी वासंती को घोड़ों का भी बहुत शौक था। उनके पास कुल १५० घोड़े थे। उनमें से एक घोड़ा बहुत खतरनाक स्वभाव का था। उसके चारों पैर बँधे ही रहते थे। एक दिन श्री महाराज जी की दृष्टि उस घोड़े पर गई तो उन्होंने रानी से उसके पैर बँधे होने का कारण पूछा। रानी के बताने के बाद श्री महाराज जी ने आदेश दिया कि इसका बंधन खोला जाय। दो सेवकों ने आकर जब उसके बंधनखोले तो वह क्रोध से उनकी ओर देख रहा था। अब उसके ऊपर जीन चढ़ाई गई और श्री महाराज जी उछल कर एक बार में उसके ऊपर सवार हो गये। घोड़े ने उछल उछल कर और लातें चलाकर व ऐँड़े बैँडे ढङ्ग से दौड़कर सवार को गिराने का हर भरसक प्रयास किया। फिर बहुत तेजी से दौड़ा और नर्मदा नदी में छलाङ्ग लगा दी। श्री महाराज जी कस कर लगाम पकड़े रहे। तीन चार डुबकी लगा कर घबराकर बाहर निकला फिर बालू पर भागने लगा। दो तीन चक्कर लगा कर एक स्थान पर खड़ा हो गया। जैसे उसने श्री महाराज जी जैसे विचित्र सवार से पराजय मान ली हो। सभी हर्ष से करतल ध्वनि करने लगे। रानी के सेवक घोड़े का पास आये। लगाम उन्हें थमाते हुये श्री महाराज जी ने कहा, "ये लो रास सँभालो। अब यह ठीक हो गया है। कभी गड़बड़ नहीं करेगा।"



Queen Basanti of the kingdom of Garudvas was a devotee of Shri Maharaj Ji. Once she had invited Shri Maharaj Ji to her palace to grace her and her people with his divine discourses lasting 15 days. As was the custom at that time, she had hosted a bamboo stick competition. Several well-known stick fighters were invited to participate in that competition. The queen along with Shri Maharaj Ji sat in the balcony to watch the

competition. After watching the performance of a few practitioners, Shri Maharaj Ji inconspicuously went downstairs and asked one of the practitioners to hand him a stick. Then Shri Maharaj Ji started waving the stick with great agility and speed. He demonstrated several traits that none of the practitioners had yet demonstrated. At the end of the competition, the queen announced she had the great privilege to award the winning title to her spiritual master Jagadguru Shri Kripalu Ji Maharaj. Upon hearing this, the audience started clapping loudly as if to second the queen's decision. They were all in agreement that the skills demonstrated by Shri Maharaj Ji were unparalleled.

The queen was also a connoisseur of horses and had over 150 horses in her stable. One of the horses was free spirited. Despite numerous attempts, none of the equine trainers could ride or control that particular horse. Its legs were always kept tied with a rope. One day Shri Maharaj Ji



saw that horse and enquired the reason for tying its legs. Upon being told the reason, Shri Maharaj Ji asked for the horse to be untied. While being untied, the horse looked at its captivators with great detest and anger. Shri Maharaj Ji asked for the horse to be saddled and as soon as that was done, Shri Maharaj Ji sprang up and sat on the horse. The horse tried to kick, stand up on its hind legs, pawing and performing any and every trick that it knew to throw off the rider. When that didn't work, he jumped into the river Narmada. After taking three dips into the river, it came out and started running on the sandy beach. All along, Shri Maharaj Ji kept holding on to its reigns tight. After running up and down the sandy beach couple of times, it gave up and stood still, as if signaling that it was accepting defeat at the hands of such an extra-ordinary rider. Everyone witnessing the scene clapped their hands in sheer joy. The queen's assistants now dared to come close to the horse. Shri Maharaj Ji handed them the reigns and said, "You can hold these reigns now. You would not need to worry about this horse anymore."

Kids Section - A Sincere Disciple

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a great king. He was fully devoted to his Guru, Samarth Swami Ramdas. Swami Samarth was very fond of him and looking at his sincerity and devotion, loved him over the other disciples. The other disciples were jealous of Shivaji and felt that Swami Samarth was partial towards him, exclusively due to his position.

Swami Samarth decided to clarify this misunderstanding with his disciples using a practical example. He asked his disciples to accompany him to the forest, where they incidentally lost their way. Swami Samarth entered a cave and pretended that he was suffering from severe abdominal pain. The disciples also came into the cave and were pained to see Guru Ji groaning in pain. They asked Swami Samarth how they could help. On hearing their Guru's response, the disciples stood their silently, as if expressing their helplessness in helping him get rid of his intense pain.



Meanwhile, when Shivaji heard the news that Swami Samarth had gone to the forest with his disciples, he decided to go to the forest to be with his Guru. Upon reaching the cave, he saw his Guru rolling on the ground in severe pain. He could not bear to see his Guru in this condition and asked him with folded hands, what will help him get rid of his misery.

Samarth : I am having severe abdominal pain.

Shivaji Maharaj : Is there any medicine for this Gurudev?

Samarth : Yes, There is one remedy, but let it be.

Shivaji Maharaj : Gurudev, please tell me the remedy. Do not hesitate. I cannot be at peace without relieving your discomfort.

Samarth : No. it's too difficult to bring. The only remedy of this problem is to get the milk of a tigress, that too freshly milked; but it is impossible to get it.

Shivaji Maharaj – Please allow this insignificant disciple of yours to offer this service unto you.

Shiva picked up a *kamandal* (ascetic's pot), bowed down to Samarth and left in search of a tigress. After wandering for some time, his eyes fell on two tiger cubs. Shivaji thought, surely their mother must be around. Within seconds the tigress appeared. On seeing a human near her cubs she started growling. Shivaji was capable enough to fight the tigress; but here fighting was not the motive. He gathered courage and folded his hands in front of the tigress and said, 'O Mother, I have not come here to harm either you or your cubs. I need your milk to cure my Guru's illness. Please let me take it. I shall give it to my Guru and come back to you. Then if you want, you can eat me.' Saying so he lovingly moved his hands on her back.

Even mute animals can be won by those whose heart is overflowing with the love for a God-realized saint. The tigress stopped growling and like a big cat, started to lick Shivaji. On getting the opportunity, Shivaji milked her and filled the pot. He bowed down to her with gratitude and left the place. Shivaji went back to the cave where Samarth was, kept the pot in front of him and bowed down to him. Samarth said, "So finally you brought the milk of a tigress! God bless you Shiva! When there is such a faithful and devoted disciple like you, how can the Guru be in pain for long?" Samarth put his palm on Shivaji's head and looked at the other disciples as if he was answering their doubt of undue partiality towards his noble disciple.

Just like the rain gives water to all plants alike, yet different plants bear fruits and flowers that look and smell differently e.g. the rose plant bears fragrant flowers while a mango tree yields delicious mangoes and a bamboo tree yields neither flowers nor fruits and acacia tree bears thorns. Similarly, all disciples are equal in the eyes of a real spiritual master. Yet their sincerity and faith in the Guru determines how much grace and love they can receive.

Happy Bhakti Divas *(1st Jan)*



Happy 61st
Jagadguruttam
Divas
(14th Jan)