Who is a Devata?

dेवता कौन ?

Swami Ramsukhdas
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tvameva mata cha pita tvameva
tvameva bandhuscha sakha tvameva |
tvameva vidyaa dravinam tvameva
tvameva sarvam mama devadeva ||

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Compared to the human bodies made up predominantly of the five earthly elements, the bodies of Devatas are made of the radiant element, they are divine and pure. Urine, feces, sweat etc. excrete from the human body. Therefore just as we get a foul smell when near a pig living in the filth, similarly, the Devatas can smell a foul odor coming from human bodies. There is fragrant smell arising from the bodies of Devatas. Their bodies do not have any shadows. Their eyelashes do not blink - drop shut. In a moment they can go very long distances, and they can manifest themselves anywhere. Due to this divine powers, they are called Devatas (demi-gods).

The twelve Adityas, the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, and the two Ashwini Kumaras - these 33 forms of Devatas are regarded as the main
amongst all the Devatas. Besides these, Marudgan, Gandharva, Apsaraayam etc are also called Devatas, due to residing in the Devaloka (where Devatas resided).

Devatas are of three kinds –

(1) **Aajaan Devata** – Those who reside in the Devaloka for one “kalp” from the time of the grand creation to the time of the grand dissolution are called “Aajaan Devata”. These have maximum rights over the Devaloka. Among them too, there are two different kinds –

(a) **Ishvarkoti Devata** – Shiv, Shakti, Ganesh, Surya (Sun) and Vishnu - these five are both “Ishvar” and “Devatas” as well. These five have different sects. These sects are called, Shivji’s Shaiva, Shakti’s Shaakt, Ganapati’s Gaanpat, Surya’s and Vishnu’s Vaishnav. Among these five, when one of them becomes the Ishvar, then the other four become devatas. In reality, all five are Ishvarkoti devatas only.

(b) **Saadharan Devata** – Indra, Varun, Marut, Rudra, Aditya, Vasu etc, these all are ordinary devatas.

(2) **Martyadevata** – the man who does yagya etc in the Martyalok and attains the heavens, he is called “Martyadevata.” On the power of his virtues he stays there, and on exhausting all his banked virtues, once again he returns to the world (abode of death), “Martyalok” –
(3) **Adhishtaatru Devata** – In this entire creation there is a master for every thing, who is called the “*Adhishtaatru Devata*”. Constellation of stars, date and time, day of the week, month, year, era, moon, sun, ocean, earth, water, air, fire, space, body, senses, mind, intellect etc. the master of all the main things in this world becomes “*Aajaan devata*” And the master or demi-god for ordinary things such as well, trees etc. becomes “*martyadevata* (jeev, embodied soul).

**Question – Who makes “jeevs” (beings) Adhishtaatru Devata ?**

**Answer** – God gave *Brahmaji* the rights to create this world; therefore as per the principles and rules laid down by *Brahmaji* the “*Adhishtaatru Devatas*” continue to be created on their own. Just like over here on earth, when someone is elected to a particular post, then he is given the rights to act as per his post, in the same way, as a fruit of virtuous deeds, when a being becomes an *Adhishtaatru Devata*, he gets the equivalent rights and authority.
Question – What work do these Adhishthaatru Devatas do?

Answer – They protect those things that are subservient or dependent on them. Just as there is a Adhishthaatru Devata for a well. If one prays to the Adhishthaatru Devata before operating the well, he who pays obeisance to the Devata, or calls out its name, then the Devata specifically takes care of the well, he does not let any harm occur as a result of the well. In the same way, even trees have Adhishthaatru Devata. If one has to live under a tree at night, and if one prays to the Adhishthaatru Devata of the tree, saying ‘Oh! Vrukshdevata! I take refuge in you, please protect me,’ then at night you are protected.

If a need arises to use the out-house in the forest, then by saying the following, ‘Uttam bhoomi madhyam kaayaa, uthaa dev mein jungle aayaa’ - one can defecate. Or else the Devatas residing there, as well as, the ghosts and spirits, can become furious, and can harm you.

At present times due to people disregarding the prayer to Adhishthaatru Devatas, brawls and disturbances are taking place everywhere.

Question – Why are ghosts, spirits, demons, vampires etc. also called “Devayoni”? (Birth in the womb of Devatas) Just as –

“विद्याधराप्रसरोध्रक्षोगान्ध्रव- किनत्र: || पिशाचो गृह्यकः सिद्धो भूतोऽमी देवयोनयः || (अमरकोष १ १२ १२)”
**Answer** – Compared to our bodies, the bodies of ghosts, spirits etc are celestial, therefore they are called “Devayoni”. Their bodies have a predominance of “air element”. Just as air does not get stuck anywhere, similarly, their bodies do not get stuck anywhere. In their bodies there are even more exceptional elements than the air. On closing the doors of the house, the air does not come in, but ghosts and spirits can come inside. It means that unlike to the human body which is predominantly the “earth element”, the ghosts-spirit being “air-element” are called “Devayoni”.

**Question – Why are Mother, Father etc. called Devata; just as ‘Maatrudevo bhava’ etc. ?**

Answer – The name ‘Deva’ in ‘Maatrudevo bhava’ etc. is name of Paramatma. Therefore regarding mother, father etc. as incarnate of Ishvar, worshiping them without any selfish motive, God can be realized.

**Question – What diseases do the Devatas get, that is treated and cured by Ashwinikumar ?**

**Answer** – The Devatas do not get the kinds of diseases that our bodies get. The worries, fears, jealousy, envy and various mental disorders that they get, are treated by the Ashwinikumars.
**Question** – *What is the difference in the body of God and that of a Devata?*

**Answer** – The bodies of Devatas are material, physical. And God’s incarnated body, is “chinmay” (full of consciousness and blissful). God’s body is “sat-chit-anandmai” (embodiment of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss). God’s body is eternal, transcendental, and extremely divine. Therefore even the Devatas are longing to see God (Gita 11/52).

**Question** – *What is the difference between “Devaloka” (Abode of Devas) and God’s abode?*

**Answer** – *Devaloka* is the kind that will dissipate and perish, it is periodic
(time bound) and viable for work. But God’s abode, is cannot be disintegrated. It is timeless and an embodiment of God’s grace.

**Question – Why does man have the will to attain the heavens, and why do the Devatas will and long to have a human birth on earth, the abode of death?**

**Question** – For sense pleasures only man wishes to attain the heavens. With this human body, all entitlements can be attained. *Moksha* (liberation), heavens, etc. can also be attained through human birth. The Devata is a birth of pleasures (*bhog yoni*). They cannot do new karmas (work, actions). Therefore they wish to do new work, and uplift themselves to be born as a human in the abode of death. Just as in *Rajasthan*, to earn money, people go to other cities or to foreign countries, in the same way, to get a higher position, the *Devatas* wish to come to earth (abode of death).

**Question – Why is human birth such a rarity even for the Devatas?**

**Answer** – In human body one is entitled to do new actions, to achieve progress. In this liberation, knowledge, detachment, devotion etc. all can be attained. But *Devatas* are engrossed in sense enjoyments, and are only enjoying the fruits of virtuous deeds. They have no rights to perform new actions. Therefore human body is also a rarity for the *Devatas*. 
Question – Even on beholding God, why do the Devatas not attain Liberation?

Answer – Liberation is dependent on feelings and sentiments, not on actions. Devatas have gone to the heavens only for sense pleasures and enjoyment. Therefore due to being engrossed in sense pleasures and enjoyment, they do not desire liberation. Besides that there are no entitlements to liberation in the “Devalok” (abode of the Devas).

God has two forms – Sat-Chit-Anand form (embodiment of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) and “Deva” form. Every Universe (cosmos), has their own individual Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh. They are the form of God’s “Deva” form. And He who is the Master of all of these, the chief of them all, who is beyond Brahma, is Paramatma (Supreme Consciousness), that is the sat-chit-anand form of God. This embodiment of sat-chit-anand form has been called in the holy text as “Maha Vishnu”. God by coming under the enchantment of devotion, He has to manifest
Himself in the form of Sat-chit-anand form, but in front of the Devatas, He only manifests in the form of a Deva. The reason being that Devatas only call out to God for their protection, not for their liberation.

Manu and Shatrupa were performing austerities. Several times Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh came to them, but they did not leave their austerities. Finally when Parabrahma Paramatma came to them, then they left their austerities and asked for a boon.

In reality, God’s Sat-chit-anand form and the form of Devatas is one and the same. Manu-Shatrupa were desiring to see God’s Sat-Chit-Anand form (MahaVishnu), therefore God came in front of them in that very form, otherwise there is no difference between Brahmand’s Vishnu and
MahaVishnu. At the time of the incarnations too, God is not seen by all as an embodiment of Sat-chit-anand. –‘नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः’ (गीता ७।२५) “Naaham prakaashah sarvasya yogmaayaasamaavrutah” (Gita 7/25) Veiled by My divine potency (Yog Maya), I am not manifest to all”. (Gita 7:25) Duryodhan could not see God the way Arjuna could see God. Initially Parashuram could see God in the form of a Rajkumar, then he began to see the embodiment of Divinity (God) ! It means that though God is One, according to different people’s feelings and sentiments, He manifests in various different forms.

**Question – What form does God take on in front of His devotees ?**

**Answer** – Ordinary devotees are those who are seeker of wealth and pleasures "arthaarthi", afflicted devotees (aart), and those who have quest for knowledge (jigyaasu). In front of an ordinary devotee (Aart, Jigyaasu, Arthaarthi etc) , God takes on the form of a Devata and in front of a devotee that is exclusively devoted with single-pointed feelings (ananyabhaav), God comes as an embodiment of Sat-chit-anand (Existence-consciousness and bliss) ie. in the form of Maha Vishnu. But a devotee does not know the two forms as separate. If God lets it be known, then it will be known to him.

In fact, in essence there is no difference in both forms, only in entitlements there is a difference. In the form of Devatas, God manifests with limited powers, and in the form of an embodiment of Sat-Chit-Anand, God manifests with limitless powers.
Question – By performing Yagya (sacrifices) etc. the Devatas are nourished and by not doing Yagya etc. they become atrophyed - what is the meaning of this?

Answer – Just as fruits and flowers naturally grow on trees, creepers etc.; but if they are given good soil and water, then fruits and flowers grow in abundance. In the same way, if one performs yagya (sacrifices) and various practices as per the rituals in the scriptures, the Devatas get a dose for their nourishment, and they get strength, they get pleasure. But by not performing sacrifices (yagya), they do not get exceptional strength or power.

By not performing sacrifices (yagyas), the Martyadevatas become feeble, and there is also some paucity in the Ajaandevata’s ability to do work. Due to this paucity, there is drought, floods and various disturbances etc that arise.

Question – Is worship of the Devatas (demi-gods) essential for all?

Answer – Just as all beings are to be respected and honored, by seeing

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them as a form (swaroop) of God, in the same way, the Devatas should be accepted as a form of “Ishvar,” and as per their date and time, it is essential for householders (grahasth) and those in retired life (vaanaprasath) to pray and worship them. But one should pray and worship without holding any desires, and only as an ordinance of God and the scriptures.

**Question – What is the benefit of worshipping the Devatas (demi-gods)?**

**Question – By worshipping the Devatas without a selfish motive, the inner senses are purified, and those Devatas also provide all the material for performing sacrifices “yagya” (dutiful work). By proper utilization of those materials, man can attain these materials as per his desires. [*]**

**Question – Can one attain liberation by worshipping (upaasana) of the Devatas?**

**Answer – By regarding the Devatas as a form of God, if one worships them without a selfish motive, then one can attain liberation. Even in the abode of death (earthly plain), if a child serves the mother and father, wife serves the husband regarding him to be “ishvar” without a selfish motive, then one can realize God. If one has the sentiments of the presence of God in all beings, and with the aim of only God realization, serves, respects and worships him, without a selfish motive, then by doing so, he can realize God. †**
If the *Devatas* are worshipped with a selfish motive then with that one cannot attain liberation. Yes, with the worship of the *Devatas*, your desires will be fulfilled, and the maximum fruit that you will gain is that you will attain the abode of those *Devatas* — *यान्ति देवलस्तक्ते देवव्रता देवान्* (Gita 9. २५)

Those who are vowed to the gods, go to the gods (Gita 9/25).

**Narayan ! Narayan !! Narayan !!!**

**नारायण ! नारायण !! नारायण !!!**

—

**[१]** काक्षण्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिः यजन्त इह वेतः ।
क्षिपरः हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजाता ॥

(गीता ४ १२)

Kaankshantah karmanaam siddhim yajant iha devataah

Kshipram hi maanushe loke siddhirbhavati karmajaa (Gita 4/12)

In this world of human beings, men seeking the fruition of their activities worship the gods; for success born of actions follow quickly. (Gita 4/12)

**[१]** यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानं येन सर्वभिधं ततम् ।
सवकर्मणं तमभर्त्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥

(गीता १८ ४६)

Yatah pravrultitbhootaanaam yen sarvamidam tataṁ |

Swakarmanaa tambhyarchya siddhim vindati maanavah || (Gita 18/46)

"That Paramatma by whom all beings are born and by Whom the entire creation is pervaded, by worship and adoration of That through one’s actions, man can attain
O’ Lord! O’ My Lord! May I never forget You!

perfection."

From book in Hindi “Kalyaan Path” by Swami Ramsukhdasji

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O' Lord! O' My Lord! May I never forget You!

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