

Introduction

Deity: When a certain nature or power of God is expressed through a certain shape or form, that form is called a deity or a god. For example- Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Durga, Kali, Lakshmi, Saraswati etc. **Brahma** is the god of creation, **Lord Vishnu** is the god of nurturing and protection and **Shiva** is the god of destruction.

Three Types of gods and goddesses: 1) **Vedic gods** (Who are mentioned in the Vedas, such as- Indra, Usha etc.)
2) **Puranic gods** (Who are mentioned in the Puran, such as- Durga, Kali, Ganesha etc.)
3) **Traditional gods** (Who are not mentioned in the Vedas and the scriptures but are traditionally worshipped by people, such as- Shitala, Shoni, Monosha etc.)

Worship: Expressing honour to gods through the offerings of flowers, leaves and things is called worship.

Festivals: It means joyful celebration. According to the norms of Hindu religion, various functions are held in the worships of different gods and goddesses. These are called festivals. It makes our devotion, concentration, deep respect towards God and other deities. It increases unity and integrity among the devotees.

Lesson-1 and 2

Worship-rules: There are many sets of customs and principles for worshipping, which are called worship-rules.

Ingredients or Upachara: To conduct the worship of different gods in the proper way and to maintain worship- regulations, different necessary ingredients or upachara are required. These items are called ingredients or upachara.

Concept of necessary worship-ingredients:

- ☛ Image or idol
- ☛ Earthen pitcher or earthen pot
- ☛ Lamp
- ☛ Conch shell
- ☛ Garlands
- ☛ Seat
- ☛ Crown
- ☛ Betel and nut
- ☛ Camphor
- ☛ Ganga Jal
- ☛ Incense stick
- ☛ Plate
- ☛ Incense
- ☛ Sandal wood
- ☛ Vermillion dust
- ☛ Rice
- ☛ Material offerings
- ☛ Five lamps
- ☛ Bell
- ☛ Turmeric
- ☛ Sacred thread

Description of the above mentioned ingredients:

Image or idol: The image or idol of god or goddess is built for worship.

Earthen pitcher or pot: At the worship hour, the pitcher is filled with Ganga jol. Mango leaves and a green coconut are placed on the top of the pitcher.

The lamp: The light of the lamp drives away darkness and so it is considered to be the symbolizes of knowledge. It symbolizes the light and soul of our life.

The conch shell: It creates the holy sound of creation. Its harmonious sound calls all to the kingdom of knowledge, kingdom of devotion.

Garlands: Garlands are used in the worship to show honour and to decorate idols of gods and goddesses.

Seat: At the worship hour, it is used for gods and goddesses to sit on.

Crown: Crowns are the symbol of high respect for gods and goddesses.

Betel and nut: The presence of different goddesses is imagined in betel. The hard nut is the symbol of our pride.

Ganga water: It is used to give bath deities. This water helps to grow spiritual thought and material assets.

Camphor: Scented camphor is to make the worship pure and fresh.

Incense stick: It symbolizes our desires which are burnt during worship.

Sandal wood: It is rubbed on stone with water and a paste is made. Its scent creates a holy environment.

Incense: When it is burnt it gives out scented smoke. This smoke keeps us free from the effect of evil powers.

Plate: Different worship items are kept in the plate.

Vermillion dust: It is also called Abir which is a kind of reddish powder and is used in worship for deities.

Five lamps: Five joint oil-lamps are lighted during worship.

Bell: It is used during worship. It is a material that produces auspicious sound.

Rice: It is used as a material item in worship.

Material offerings: Flowers, fruits, sweets are placed before gods as offerings which is a symbol of offering ourselves to God.

Sacred thread: It is needed for Yajna or sacrifice.

Turmeric: It symbolizes refined thought and it attracts our mind. It is the symbol of goddess Durga. It has herbal qualities.

Worksheet**Short Questions from Introduction:**

- 1) Who has no form?
- 2) When is God called as a deity or god or goddess? Give some examples.
- 3) Who is the god of creation?
- 4) Who is the god of nurturing and protection?
- 5) Who is the god of destruction?
- 6) How many types of gods and goddesses are there? Write their name.
- 7) Who are called Vedic gods? Give examples.
- 8) Who are called Puranic gods? Give examples.
- 9) Who are called Traditional gods? Give examples.
- 10) What will be happened if we worship gods and goddesses?
- 11) What is called worship?
- 12) What is festival?
- 13) What is a joyful celebration?
- 14) What are called festival according to the norms of Hindu religion?
- 15) What make worshipping functions more enjoyable?
- 16) What do festivals make in our mind?

Short Questions from Lesson-1 and 2:

- 1) What are worship rules?
- 2) What items are called ingredients or upachara?
- 3) What are needed for preparing offerings?
- 4) Whose image or idol is built for worship?
- 5) Why are flower garlands used in worship?
- 6) Why is seat used in worship?
- 7) What are the symbols of high respect for god or goddess?
- 8) What is imagined in betel?
- 9) What is the symbol of our pride?
- 10) What is sacrificed to gods and goddesses after the worship?
- 11) Why is scented camphor used in the worship?
- 12) When is incense stick burnt?
- 13) What does incense stick symbolize?
- 14) Why is plate used in the worship?
- 15) What is incense? From what does it keep us away?
- 16) What is vermilion dust? What is the another name of it?
- 17) What are material offerings or Naivedya?
- 18) Why is bell used during worship?
- 19) What does turmeric symbolize?
- 20) Why is sacred thread needed in worship?

Broad Questions from Introduction and Le-1 and 2:

- 1) Explain the concept of gods and goddesses.
 - 2) Write the names of different Upachar or ingredients of worship.
 - 3) Explain the significance of the use and the necessity of preserving natural items used in worships and religious functions.
 - 4) Explain the concept of earthen pitcher or earthen pot as worship ingredient.
 - 5) Explain the concept of the lamp as worship ingredient.
 - 6) Explain the concept of the conch shell as worship ingredient.
 - 7) Explain the concept of Ganga Jal/Water as worship ingredient.
 - 8) Explain the concept of Sandal wood as worship ingredient.
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